



The Periphery

Viewing the World

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ΠΕΡΙΟΔΙΚΟ ΠΑΡΟΥΣΙΑ

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THE PERIPHERY VIEWING THE WORLD

**Selected Papers from the
Fourth International Conference
of the Hellenic Association
for the Study of English**

Edited by

**Christina Dokou
Efterpi Mitsi
Bessie Mitsikopoulou**

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Opening Address of the Chair of the Faculty of English Studies

Sophia Marmaridou

When I was first informed by my colleagues about the theme of this conference, I was extremely interested, intrigued in fact. To raise the issue of how the periphery views the world in the fields of language, literature, media studies and philosophy within the broader area of English Studies in a plurilingual and pluricultural Europe inevitably leads to challenging existing frames of reference and starting an ongoing dialogue towards alternative conceptualizations and practices.

Talking about the “periphery” viewing the world presupposes the existence of a “centre,” thereby adding one more duality to so many others that we live with: body vs. mind, feeling vs. reason, individual vs. society, to name but a few. It would appear that such dualities frame our minds and structure the way we perceive reality, talk and act. Before attempting to address issues concerning how the “periphery” views the world, one may wonder how conceptualizing reality in terms of periphery vs. centre comes about and whether, in fact, such a conceptualization reveals aspects of reality while obscuring others.

Mark Johnson in *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Reason and Imagination* has argued that pre-conceptual, bodily experience is structured in terms of some basic image schemas. One such schema is that of the “Centre-Periphery.” The argument goes that we experience our bodies as having centres (for example, the trunk and internal organs) and peripheries (fingers, toes, hair, etc.). We also experience trees and other plants as having a central trunk and peripheral branches and leaves. In this image schema, centres are viewed as more important than the peripheries in two ways: First, injuries to the central parts are more serious than injuries to the peripheral parts. Secondly, the centre defines the identity of the individual in a way that the peripheral parts do not. A tree that loses its leaves is the same tree. A person whose hair is cut off or who loses a finger is the same person. Thus, the periphery is viewed as depending on the centre, but not conversely: bad circulation may affect the health of your hair, but losing your hair does not affect your circulatory system.

Now, given Lakoff’s view that there is a metaphorical mapping from physical space to conceptual space, a spatial, directly understood image schema such as the “Centre-Periphery” one provides structure to other complex and often abstract concepts in politics, aesthetics, economy, etc. But metaphor is also known to reveal aspects of reality while concealing others.

To go back to the topic of this conference: if it is true that pre-conceptual image schemas give rise to metaphorical understandings of the world around us, this

conference has set out to challenge and re-consider such metaphorical understandings, thereby revealing aspects of reality that metaphor hides. By doing so, it seeks to lay open for inspection current discursive practices and at the same time articulate alternative views of territoriality.

Conference preparations take up a lot of effort, time and energy. This conference is no exception. I would like to thank my colleagues for all the good work they have done and done so promptly.

This conference could not have happened if it had not been for the generous support of a number of organizations and the people behind them who gladly agreed to help. We would like to thank the administration of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture. We also wish to register our thanks to the Australian Embassy, the British Council, the American Embassy, the Fulbright Foundation, the Canadian Embassy and the Centre of Canadian Studies, as well as PALSO for their support.

So, thank you all for making this event possible.

An Introduction

The present volume includes a number of selected papers presented at the 4th International H.A.S.E. Conference that took place in Athens in May 2002, offering diverse glimpses of an evolving area of study and encompassing a multitude of theoretical trends and practices in language, literature, philosophy, media and cultural studies. The conference aimed at launching a new inquiry on the notions of periphery and center, revealing attempts to re-view the world through challenge, resistance and appropriation. By showing that the act of viewing forms and re-forms itself in geographical and ideological spaces, conference papers focused on the emergent discourses in the periphery and exposed the internal contradictions in current globalizing ideologies. An important theme of the conference, which is also covered in this volume, concerns contemporary theories and global discourses which lead to linguistic and cultural (dis)empowerment, issues also connected to the politics of the English language and its teaching. Moreover, a significant number of papers examine the construction of identities in the periphery and interpret the representations of self in minority settings.

The volume is divided in six parts, three out of which present the addresses of our conference plenary speakers; the remaining parts, each consisting of six papers, offer specific readings and applications of the theoretical areas discussed by the preceding plenary speakers. The papers are linked further by tracing constant movements and shifts between center and periphery, and thus by defining and redefining the notions across time, space and cultures.

More specifically, in Part I, Ann Cacoullos considers viewing in relation to other related concepts such as imagining, sympathizing, empathizing and understanding, while she questions Richard Rorty's estimation of the center's capacity for sentimental education. Cacoullos explores the problematic of equality to reveal Rorty's paradoxical and paralyzing stance, which both allows and disallows the critical viewing of marginal peoples.

In the second paper of this part, Lilie Chouliaraki analyzes extracts of the 9/11 live footage of television in order to show how television images and language work to create meaning and to involve spectators in particular discourses and practices that moralize them. After introducing an analytics of televisual mediation, the author explores aspects of a "politics of pity" by analyzing different articulations of spacetime—the management of the distance that separates the spectator from the scene of suffering—and argues that our knowledge of the event, our emotions about it and our dispositions are not ahistorical but rather "truth effects."

The papers in Part II focus primarily on mechanisms of placement and construction of identity in the centre and periphery. Assimina Karavanta uses the recent philosophical analyses on the cultural and political reverberations of globalization to probe into the role that "ideological global apparatuses" like the UN, the World Bank and, generally, Non Government Organizations play in the

formulation of the emerging global community. She argues that such organizations attempt to crystallize a discourse of global ethics and a politics of intervention that will subdue the peripheral to the global order with the aid of subtle and micro forms of violence.

Christina Lykou investigates the relationship between Greece and the EU as this is represented in the discourse of the Greek daily press. Adopting a social semiotic account of language and conducting a grammatical analysis of the media texts, she shows how Greece has moved gradually from the periphery of the EU into its centre, after entering the Economic and Monetary Union, accepting its EU identity and constructing itself as part of the supranational state.

Apostolos Poullos deals in his paper with the construction of elderly identity, which is often considered to be restricted to the periphery of social life. Through an analysis of elder people's talk, he brings to the surface various prejudices held by other elder or younger people and shows how elderly distance themselves from negative stereotypes, arguing that the marginalization of old people is manifested in everyday interaction, often as a result of age identification work.

Arguing that visions of language(s) are different in the centre and in the peripheral European countries, whose national identities are threatened by globalisation, Europeanization and Englishization, Mary Drossou turns to analyse a series of myths about the official and other dominant and lesser-used languages which, she believes, have been produced by nationalist ideologies. Her study reports myths about language(s) that students of the Faculty of English Studies (re)produce while taking an introductory course in Sociolinguistics.

Argiris Archakis and Angeliki Tzanne investigate the negotiation and construction of identity of a group of young people who characterize themselves as marginal in society, by analyzing the ways in which they form in-group and out-group relationships through their everyday narratives. They argue that identity is dynamically construed in context and they examine the ways in which co-narration is shaped by the participants' relationship and by the group's common discursual history.

Emmanouil Aretoulakis discusses the dichotomy between public and private in the English Renaissance by focusing on Sir Philip Sidney, Queen Elizabeth's courtier and one of the most celebrated examples of mixing the personal with the political. Aretoulakis challenges the opposition between the private and the public sphere, suggesting that, in Sidney's case, the latter determines the former; Sidney was on the margin (the periphery) albeit simultaneously at the centre of the political scene.

The two plenary essays in Part III present different aspects of the role of English today as a hegemonic language and, rejecting the notion of language as culturally neutral, they examine aspects of cultural appropriations. In his paper Alastair Pennycook argues against the views of globalization as a homogenization or a heterogenization process, both of which, he suggests, operate with limited global vision of centre and periphery relations. Instead he proposes a postoccidentalist model, which explores the tensions between globalization and worldliness and sets

out to identify new uses of English in diverse settings. The author then turns to analyze forms of popular culture, such as rap and hip-hop, which he views as appropriated forms of new Englishes.

Martin Kayman's paper reflects on the spread of English around the world, a process which has historically been associated with British and, latterly, American imperialism and the imposition of cultural values. Kayman interrogates the cultural politics of language in the era of globalization and, by offering a historical reading of the ways in which the English language has been and is imagined, he challenges the portrayal of global English as culturally neutral.

The contributions in Part IV deal with the ways in which language, culture and ideology are taught and understood in different settings. In the first paper, Stephanos Stephanides presents the encounter between centre and periphery through the issues of translation and translatability. Arguing that any new critical method must start from the premise that the world republic of letters is profoundly unequal, he uses the polysystems theory to refer to the lack of symmetry in literary interference, and probes the processes of interference in literary utterance (including translating, anthologizing, and literary prizes) with a focus on the geographical dispersion and multilingual character of Indian writing.

Next, Vassiliki Markidou examines the status of Shakespeare at the dawn of the twenty-first century, after considering the employment of "Shakespeare" by countries like the UK and the USA in the past to promote specific political interests. She wonders whether the contemporary strong academic disestablishment of Shakespeare should further develop or whether there might be a reactive return to traditional ways of viewing Shakespeare, finally arguing for an alternative way of approaching this cultural and political issue.

Angeliki Spiropoulou maintains that Virginia Woolf's views toward dominant cultural discourses that (re)produce power relations and sustain exclusions are still relevant today. While Woolf now enjoys a central place in the canon, her outsideness—due to her sex—to institutions of authority in the early twentieth century turns in her writings into a powerful means of critique of such authority. Her argument rests on Woolf's approach to Greek seen as paradigmatic of her denunciation and simultaneous privileging of women's exclusion from structures of knowledge and power.

Androniki Gakoudi analyses the notion of English as a *lingua franca* as part of the Greek state ELT policy in Greek primary education. Using the example of the Greek EFL textbooks for primary education, she argues that this policy has an empowering effect for pupils, because it offers a variety of symbolic cultural references and it challenges the policies adopted by Centre ELT countries. At the same time, it has a disempowering effect since it does not challenge stereotypical representations of reality and it operates with an unspecified meaning of the term *lingua franca*.

Nicos Sifakis and Areti Sougari discuss the changes that teaching English as an International Language (EIL) has brought both in the selection of the most

appropriate pedagogy, which is suggested to be the culture-bound pedagogy, and in methodological considerations, such as course design and selection of teaching materials. In this context, they stress the important roles of the teachers as mediators, of the students as being in the position to challenge their own cultural assumptions and of the classroom as a site where intercultural learning takes place.

William Dow considers cultural education as a challenge to a multicultural, comparativist literary theory, and proposes a protean and anti-institutional opinion on what constitutes an education in other cultures. Only in going to the periphery of the US academy, bringing together the often disparate and antagonistic traditions of the written record and cultural experience, can teachers hope to go beyond canonical and noncanonical texts and immerse themselves in a broader concept of culture and literature.

The two contributions in Part V examine transformations of gender and race respectively as they shift from the periphery to the centre. Focusing on the issue of masculinity in the American poetry of the 1950s, Rachel Blau DuPlessis argues that poems and other works from the periphery, works vital to the countercultural 1950s in the US by poets such as Allen Ginsberg, Charles Olson, and Robert Creeley, need further scrutiny from another periphery—the occluded periphery of gender analysis. Although these poems voice an ideological, cultural, and political critique of the “American century”, constructing a dissident subjectivity, they simultaneously claim the powers and privileges of normative manhood.

R. K. S. Parker discusses the relations between centre and periphery in two key periods in British cultural history—(a) colonialism and imperialism (b) postcolonialism and globalization—and the literatures and critical theories that are associated with these respective periods. Parker is concerned with the space from which, and on whose behalf, interlocutors speak, as well as the possible consequences for the teaching of English(es) of a binary that is shared by many across all the key components: literature; philosophy; media; cultural studies.

Finally, in PART VI the papers expose the workings of power within closed systems, whether in the periphery or the centre. Bart Moore-Gilbert explores the ways in which transverse or horizontal relations between peripheral nation-states-to-be require modification of dominant centre-periphery models of the flows of nation-formation in the (post)colonial world. By examining collaborations between different kinds of anti-colonial nationalist movements (Japan and India) in the context of the debate on nationalism between Anderson and Chatterjee, he argues that it excludes the study of how colonized territories shaped, in part, their conception of nation-formation and national culture in relation to each other, rather than simply in relation to the centre.

Elizabeth Sakellariadou examines how women of color search in the theatre world the appropriate form that would best represent their cultural and gender specificity. Methods of stage representation by black and chicano women combine poetic diction, music and performance art in a unified aesthetic form. The black American playwright Ntozake Shange calls it “choreopoetry”, while critic Yvonne

Yarbro-Bejarano uses the term “teatropoesia” to define an analogous theatrical form of somatic and vocal language used by chicanas.

Christine Calfoglou deals in her paper with the case of the postverbal subject order in the poetic language of two Modern Greek poets, D. P. Papaditsas and A. Nikolaides, whom she calls “rhematic” poets. She argues that this postverbal subject sequence could be seen as resisting the preverbal subject patterns in English in translation process and as having a dynamic missing from the subject-verb linearization, thus coming closer to the archetypal and more apocalyptic language of poetry.

Katerina Kitsi addresses the seventeenth-century cult of anatomy as the gaze that penalizes the body’s materiality, arguing that this moment of new bourgeois sight is nothing but blindness, for scientific gaze looks not *on* the corpse, but only *around* it, ensuring that the modern subject is not what it is. After two centuries of anatomy, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* not only offers a reversal of the dissecting process—the corpse reenters life through the re-assembling of its parts—but also endows this new creation with sight, with a peripheral gaze that defies the centrality of scientific reality and cancels the primacy of vision.

Carmen Rueda examines the controversial latest novel, *Saving Grace* (1995), by Lee Smith, an author who has explored both female identity and the distinctive cultural identity of Appalachia. Smith looks at a marginal religious group found in remote areas of Appalachia, revealing the tension between periphery and centre through the full-circle journey of the protagonist, a daughter of a snake handler, who searches for an identity and a voice of her own both outside and within her community.

Christina Dokou addresses the relation between Word and World in the militant literature of the dispossessed, voices representing oppressed or marginalized peoples, such as Dee Brown’s *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* and Eduardo Galeano’s *Memory of Fire: Volume II, Faces and Masks*. Since the dominant culture co-opts them towards a hybrid language and culture, they face the dilemma of either adopting their destroyers’ prejudiced modes of expression, or transforming their own peripheral discourse into something that can truly affect wider audiences.

The preparation of a collection of papers such as the present volume is always a collaborative effort, and we would like to express our thanks to all those involved in its production. First of all, we should thank our contributors for their cooperation and patience, and then the reviewers of the essays for their careful reading and suggestions. We would particularly like to thank our colleague, Professor Aspasia Velissariou, for her help and suggestions in the arrangement of this volume. Thanks are also due to those who made possible the conference from which these papers have been selected: to the participants, to the sponsors, to the organizing committee, and to all our colleagues and students at the Faculty of English Studies who strongly

supported it. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Ministry of Culture, which generously financed the publication of this volume.

Part I:

T(A)INTED VISIONS

Viewing from the Periphery: Richard Rorty and the Politics of Viewing¹

Ann R. Cacoullos

Introduction

The term “periphery” has been put in question, along with the by now ubiquitous binary oppositions in which related cognates appear: West/East, North/South, metropolis/margin, city/country, inside/outside, in a vast literature of feminist, Marxian, and postcolonial discourses that continues to confront shifts in the meaning of the terms that interrogate geographical spaces. In this paper I suggest that “viewing,” especially from the vast periphery and margins, should also be put in question. For its pragmatic usefulness and political relevance have arguably been jeopardized by philosopher Richard Rorty. I would like to review his case briefly here as one which both allows and disallows the critical viewing of marginal peoples. As a counter to Rorty, I attempt to make the idea of viewing from the periphery more problematical, disentangling it from the by now paradoxical and paralyzing stance of Rorty mainly for the sake of ensuring its further investigation.

To proceed, I shall use the concept of viewing in its clustering with such related concepts as imagining, sympathizing, empathizing, and understanding. Among the British empiricists there were strong epistemological links between these concepts that are too often elided in the reduction of their theories as “crude empiricism.” On this extended notion, viewing might very well include imagining, sympathizing and empathizing. Thus, it is the dismissal or discounting of “viewing from the periphery” in the wider sense that I examine here. For the Rortian case constitutes a rejection, among other things, of decades of scholarship and critique by feminist, Marxian, and postcolonial writers who have attempted to demonstrate that it is the colonialist-imperialist experience of the vast periphery which “explains” the “eyes” it has to view the world. When, it has been argued, has the periphery not be viewing others, sentimentally and otherwise? Whether or not we choose to assess this viewing in Frantz Fanon’s deeply incisive terms (in *The Wretched of the Earth*), can it not be urged that viewing from the periphery is a demand for equal recognition, for justice and equality? But these ideals no longer have pragmatic “cash-value” for Rorty as we shall note below. It is not just the viewing from the periphery that Rorty is compelled to reject on the “humbly pragmatic” grounds he recommends, but also, and more importantly, a political morality constantly emerging in the periphery which still takes considerations of justice very seriously, indeed as a matter of life and death.

It should be recalled that “viewing from the periphery” is methodologically highly suspicious for many students of society and politics since it runs counter to the once and still influential epistemological claim that the *best* kind of viewing is a

viewing from nowhere, where “being nowhere” is a guarantee of objectivity. In spite of the rigorous feminist criticism of this claim in the ’80s and ’90s, (recall Donna Haraway’s devastation of the “God-trick”), the critique of the “metaphysics of presence” advanced by Derrida, and the constant reminder by postcolonial critics and others that no one is actually ever nowhere, it has a way of (re)asserting itself as a central methodological guide, albeit in another sort of guise as I shall be noting. It is well known that Rorty is among the most philosophically articulate postmodern critics of Enlightenment objectivity—rationalism and universalism—arguing that “objectivity is a matter of intersubjective consensus among human beings, not of accurate representation” of an independent reality (*Achieving Our Country* 35). In his attempt to discard the “residual rationalism” of the Enlightenment, Rorty counsels replacing justice with the idea of “a larger loyalty” to a global community, and assumes that nothing would be lost by this replacement (“Justice” 11). Moreover, his most current critique of what he calls the “cultural Left” in America today (*Achieving Our Country*) proposes once again a notion of politics that sees this arena as mostly “muddling through” conflict, needing less theory and more action. According to Rorty, the cultural critique in which the academic left in America is engaged has little or no political relevance; for the last decade, he has been anxious to argue that political thought must be freed of theory, especially of the Marxian, Lacanian, Freudian, and literary Derridean sort (*Achieving Our Country* 93).

Many who agree with his critique of varieties of philosophical foundationalism, however, where he jettisons not only Plato and Descartes but Kant as well, find his current configuration of democratic politics and his critique of the cultural left less than palatable (see Mouffe; also Palumbo-Liu). Rorty may suppose that his is a more humble and practical position, that he has ridden the West of its empty compliments to itself, i.e., as a centre of rationalism and universal values (“Justice” 19). But in downgrading justice and in setting aside equality, albeit for pragmatic reasons of what he calls conversation with and solidarity to those others who are not of one’s own community, he has also obscured a viewing from the periphery whose focus (if we associate the term “periphery” with “excluded and oppressed”) might very well be on more muscled notions of justice and equality.

The paradox of Rorty’s position lies in his own peculiar extraction of Enlightenment liberalism from the rationalism of that tradition, for while it solicits critique from the marginal and oppressed of the West’s hegemonic “tenuous self-images and provisional vocabularies” (West 271), it also renders this critique politically irrelevant. So, viewing from the periphery is not as “handsome” (to borrow from Cavell) as viewing from the centre. On my reckoning, Rorty is a “closet Hobbesian,” if I may be allowed the expression.

I shall recommend that Rorty’s argumentation recalls a very old thesis that grounds a centre of power or authority, making the viewing of others possible or fruitful *only* where an *inequality* of human expectations and power exists. The ways the argument is factored strongly suggest the thinking of Thomas Hobbes who has rightly been considered by Macpherson the exemplary theoretician and apologist of

western capitalism. For Rorty, affluence is a key condition for freedom and democracy given “the plausible hypothesis that democratic institutions and freedoms are viable only when supported by an economic affluence that is achievable regionally but impossible globally” (“Justice” 10). This is a problem, according to Rorty, not for the poor peripheries but for the “rich democracies,” and he poses the question of what these democracies are to do: “Be loyal to themselves and each other? Keep free societies going for a third of mankind at expense [*sic*] of the remaining two-thirds? Or sacrifice the blessings of political liberty for the sake of egalitarian economic justice?” (“Justice” 10). Rorty opts for preserving the “blessings,” and the loyalty of rich democracies to themselves and each other. Thus, as I shall discuss below, he reinforces and replays a classic contest in western liberalism between liberty and equality originally enunciated by Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*. Further, in moving against a relativistic stance (relativism is as untenable as realism, he argues, in “Does Academic Freedom...” 54), Rorty assumes conditions for the achievement of the intersubjective consensus with which he replaces Enlightenment objectivity and rationalism. These conditions, as I note, reassert a far more insidious “universalism” by a sleight of hand for which philosophers have become notorious from time to time. In fact, Rorty’s case composed of a number of related arguments secretes a “politics of viewing” that privileges the centre by default, and as I argue, reinserts a “universal” that negates in advance whatever viewing might emerge from the periphery.

Rambling through Rorty.

In “peeling apart” Enlightenment liberalism from Enlightenment rationalism, Rorty has issued a plea to improve the rhetoric “we Westerners use in trying to get everyone to be more like us”; the West needs to become “more frankly ethnocentric, and less professedly universalist” (“Justice” 19). He argues that non-western societies have been justifiably sceptical of the claim frequently made that western ways are more rational and embody universal values that the West “sees” objectively. But this does not mean that these societies should not adopt the ways of the West, according to Rorty, especially since these include “abandoning slavery, practicing religious toleration, educating women, permitting mixed marriages, tolerating homosexuality and conscientious objection to war.” These “reasonable” liberal reforms delineate the “kind of societies we Westerners should accept as members of a global moral community” (“Justice” 19). They are also the grounds for the ethnocentrism that Rorty advocates in so far as a global moral community is realizable only if “they” become like “us.” Related to this position is the notion offered in a later essay that only the affluent and leisured are in a position to view others sympathetically. Thus he argues that imagining of, or sympathizing with, the other or the one who is not like “us” presupposes security, peace and economic productivity. He writes:

Security and sympathy go together, for the same reasons that peace and economic productivity go together. *The tougher things are, the more you have to be afraid of, the more dangerous your situation,* the less you can afford the time or effort to think about what things might be like for people

with whom you do not immediately identify. *Sentimental education only works on people who can relax long enough to listen.* ("Human Rights" 80—emphasis mine)

If this is as good as viewing gets in the present we are all best-advised to adopt the ways of seeing of the centre, for it is the centre that just happens to satisfy the conditions that enable viewing and sympathizing with others. It would follow then that the periphery, composed arguably of the not-so-affluent and less-than-leisured, cannot view or sympathize with the "other"—an inference that is allowable since the conditions Rorty sets for sympathetic understanding are such that only the economically developed and affluent centre can satisfy. In a Rortian schema "viewing from the periphery," if at all possible, is ill-advised since mostly irrelevant and even divisive.

If Rorty is arguing that it has been shown to be the case historically and contingently that human sentiments and perception flourish under conditions of peace, security and economic productivity, his case may be of a certain kind of home-grown, materialist and pragmatic common sense which, however, does not remain incontestable, as he himself must grant. His argument, however, as I believe, may be a variant of a still-active conservative view of the best conditions for viewing and imagining the civil polity, though not for a change traceable back to Plato. This position, I argue, holds that it is the *inequality* of station and expectation that secures the peace and security for the survival of human life, the effectiveness of sentimental education, and the possibility of viewing others. It is a model of imagination/viewing based on Hobbes' theory of a state of nature, according to which all of us humans are equal in respect of our expectations and power. It is this equality, according to Hobbes that makes us competitive, diffident, and mistrustful, thus leading to a life that is "solitary, nasty, brutish and short" (100). It follows that the condition for any social transaction, including viewing others in sympathy and not solely in competition is the overcoming of this equal state by instituting, protecting and preserving a state of inequality, which is the task of an absolute sovereign for Hobbes. Rorty appears to assume that the centre—liberal America—has achieved a security, peace and freedom through its pervasive economic inequalities and thus the leisure to view the rest of the world in sympathy and understanding. The periphery would seem to be still in an unstable state of nature. Thus it is America that can issue a benign call for global solidarity with itself: "be more like us—free, unequal, and as rich as you can be—in order to achieve the peace and security that render one capable of viewing the other...." On Rorty's own reckoning, this is largely an empty exhortation since economic affluence, as he has assumed, is not achievable globally.

My attributing a Hobbesian rather than a Lockean model to the self-proclaimed liberal Richard Rorty is due to the fact that this is the model actually secreted by his case; it accounts also for Spivak's observation that Rorty's "point of view discloses its...kinship with more reactionary and less intelligent texts such as Samuel P. Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*" (354, n.59). I would want to argue further that we ignore the pervasiveness in

contemporary western political thought of Hobbes at our peril, for it is his *Leviathan* rather than the often inconclusive political theory of John Locke that initially (in)formed Enlightenment political liberalism, and the thinking of its epigones, in spite of their occasional nodding towards Kant's second formulation of the categorical imperative. Clearly, the theory of Hobbes does not enjoy the status of "truth"; no theory of social and political life does. I am saying that it has simply exercised more influence among western liberals than they acknowledge, especially in serving to implode their constant ambiguities and antinomies with the ideal of equality. In the history of political philosophy it is Hobbes, not Plato (*pace* Popper), who provides the most powerful case against equality of any kind. I am urging that Rorty is using *this* case to argue for a set of conditions of affluence, security and their *unequal* distribution, as enabling the productive exercise of imagination, sympathy, empathy and viewing. If I am right, then he is not so much suggesting a method of viewing for the sake of achieving solidarity with others as privileging a liberal, capitalist rhetoric that he takes to be the only workable one available. If he is not a crude apologist for the "eyes" of American capitalism, he is an ironic one, as though his "ironic self-awareness" can redeem his argument (Eagleton 56). But worse, his case "can undoubtedly offer an even more convenient excuse for military activity and exploitation than the argument from universalist rationality" (Spivak 367, n.76).

I am interested in urging against Rorty's ethnocentrism an argument where neither viewing from the periphery nor viewing from the centre has a politically privileged, exclusionary place/space. My aim is not simply to preserve the diversity and conflict that characterize radical democratic politics as Mouffe and Laclau have argued. Rather, I would like to put some more robust concepts of equality on the agenda. My main counter to Rorty attempts to make "equality of expectation" as necessary a condition as either peace or leisure or even affluence for viewing-sympathizing-empathizing, a condition Rorty is compelled to discount since it actually means for him needing to "sacrifice the blessings of political liberty" ("Justice" 10). It is Rorty's total lack of *desire* (to borrow the term from Lacan or Hegel) for a certain kind of equality that animates my counter-argument. Thus I move in the terrain of Spivak who has touched upon the matter in her fulsome footnote; she has put her commitment to equality on the line and has called for more cultural and historical homework. My point is that where there is viewing (in Rorty's terms of sympathizing and identifying with the other) from the periphery, there is or should be acknowledgement of difference, not sameness. That is, viewing—sympathizing with and understanding—the "other" does not require that the other be like "us" as Rorty supposes, locked as he is in a conception of equality as sameness. The equality of expectation that I urge here as the focus of "viewing from the periphery" constitutes rather an erosion of western liberal contests, and a claim to another way of seeing conceptual issues between centre and periphery.

As noted above, Rorty chastises the academic left for its irrelevant theorizing: "the Left should put a moratorium on theory. It should try to kick its philosophy habit...[since] when one of today's academic leftists says that some topic has been

‘inadequately theorized’ you can be pretty certain that he or she is going to drag in either philosophy of language or Lacanian psychoanalysis...[which are] futile attempts to philosophize one’s way into political relevance” (*Achieving Our Country* 93-94). While I have my own worries about the “dragging in” to which Rorty alludes, what he is actually doing here is not giving up philosophy (how could he when he is teaching the stuff and using it all the time?) but reinforcing and validating an Anglo-American tradition of political philosophy that he then opposes to what he considers the airy-fairy theorizing of Derridean deconstructionists (“Justice” 15). For example, Rorty presupposes philosophically that “economic social justice” necessarily requires that we sacrifice “the blessings of political liberty” (“Justice” 22). Spivak suggests that if he had “thought through the practical meaning of ‘economic social justice’,” he would not have accepted this assumption (2000: 355 n.59). I am not so sure, for, with this presupposition Rorty chooses to remain within an Anglo philosophical tradition articulated classically in the mid-twentieth century by Sir Isaiah Berlin in his 1958 *Two Concepts of Liberty*, but having its roots firmly in Hobbes, as I have suggested above. In essays by both Berlin and Sir Karl Popper among others, the great guns of analytic philosophy are applied to secure the permanent agon between the ideals of liberty and equality such that one has to choose the one or the other. Whether or not this contest is simply an instance of a clear-headed Anglo philosophically analytic tradition at work, it surely is at the core of western liberalism, and an ideological marker of globalized capitalist morality. Curiously, even when the contest is somewhat invalidated as in the recent work of Ronald Dworkin (reviewed by Appiah) who takes liberty to be a condition for equality, the problematical matters of social justice are left hanging, as it were. His egalitarian formula according to which all governments must show equal concern for all citizens does not provide further principles for determining what this equal concern entails and, as Amartya Sen has noted, any political philosophy can claim consistency with it (Appiah 63). Absent from Dworkin’s Anglo-liberal account of equality are questions about just dispositions of property across nations, in K. Anthony Appiah’s words, “the question of a suitable division of the earth’s bounties among all its peoples” (n.68). This absence signals once again the fearful difficulty liberal thinkers have with the notion of equality upon which their own liberalism is based. If we remember correctly, it is central to Enlightenment liberalism and at least one major epigone, Marxian theory. In Rorty’s political musings however, the concept is virtually dissolved.

Rorty is sensitive enough to lament the absence of a world made safe for sympathetic, empathetic viewing, and solidarity. He truly believes that the social reforms achieved in America bear imitating by other societies for they have made life better for so many different populations, e.g., women, African-Americans, etc. But he has left out of his model huge slices of American society arguably not worthy of imitation, such that in urging “them” to be more like “us” he is drawing clear battle lines between periphery and centre where further exploration would be more useful. This is another Hobbesian move in my reading of Rorty, that is, a penchant for securing consensus above all. Do we not then have a not so jocular case of Humpty

Dumpty's claim that the "question is which is to be master—that's all" (Carroll 163)? Rorty would charge that I am off the wall in evoking that other big egg in (t)his company, but in his ethnocentrism he is again reinstating a point of reference for a purpose, not truth to be sure, but becoming more like "us" in order to secure intersubjective consensus and solidarity, and a world-wide politics of piece-meal reform ("Does Academic Freedom..." 55). This sort of politics can be successful only to the extent that nonconsensual voices and other sorts of viewing are left out, for example, those of the periphery. Which is what Rorty is saying, as I believe. It is not that he is dismissing "any kind of theoretical inquiry into the political realm," as Chantal Mouffe charges (6), rather he is engaging another kind of philosophy in which political life is conceived as the domain of "muddling through" (1996:42), and consensus is the political virtue for our postmodern times.

Rorty's re-appropriation of ethnocentrism as a pragmatically more useful viewing in America's attempt to get the world to be like itself is connected to his recent call for "national pride" in an America fully imagined by Whitman and Dewey. In *Achieving Our Country* he criticizes what is left of the Left in the United States for doing what he calls merely "cultural work" in the academy, and by eschewing political involvement betraying thus its own principles as articulated in the years of the Progressive Movement and the New Deal (8). This is a plea to the American left to stop being spectators and become agents in bringing about those social practices that encode the best of Enlightenment liberalism. In this plea however he fails to mention histories, as Spivak charges, specifically the narrative history of international capital; he chooses to ignore the re-coding of "capitalism as civilizing mission (imperialism), as development (neo-colonialism) and as democracy (post-Soviet globalization)" (354, n.59). In Spivak's view, if she and others, who would be counted by Rorty as the nonpolitical "cultural left," continue to (re)examine and deconstruct a "particular heritage of the Enlightenment," it is because the presuppositions re-coding capitalism's current social practices remain unexamined, and other voices remain unheard. As one of the left, she identifies herself as feminist, Marxist, deconstructionist, Spivak agrees that it is social practices that are needed, but she sees that the battle lines Rorty draws between say a cultural and a political left, as well as a viewing from the centre and a viewing from the periphery, simply perform the disingenuous trick of writing off culture as explanation (354 n.59), while leaving intact the presuppositions of a "frank ethnocentrism." More importantly, his stance poses in the first place problems between variations of an American left that may be fudging rather than illuminating the debate that he himself urges, and secondly, in seeking a common, non-contested ground for negotiating the still great economic divide between them and us, the periphery and the centre, he is not simply fudging but closing debate among left theorists (see Palumbo-Liu). It is as if in calling for an honest opening of issues that may facilitate action, he is at the same time delimiting the domains of issue-raising.

I said earlier that Rorty is fudging debates, and I hinted that they may be of the kind that perhaps the "merely cultural" left is attempting to open or should re-

open. If Rorty and Spivak have widely divergent views of the sorts of social practices that are needed to bring about social justice this is due partly to their different views of the equality that should obtain between different stances in viewing the world. Spivak seeks the perspective of what she calls the “native informant,” as “the postcolonial subject is being appropriated into globality” (355 n.59). She hopes her position is “less locationist, more nuanced with a productive acknowledgement of complicity,” so that her work is “less clannish” (xii-xiii). What her viewing may mean practically is following the “impossible perspective of the native informant and place[ing] an always prior agency there” in a persistent effort to disclose “responsibility toward the other-as-beneficiary by effacing radical alterity” (355 n.59). In the context of the discussion here, Spivak’s viewing is linked to a desire/need that cannot not be, ethically speaking: namely, that of equality, by way not of asserting another point of reference (though it has been taken as a central Marxian agenda), but of tipping the scales now too heavily weighted on the side of the “haves.” On the other hand, Rorty truly believes that remaking not just the United States but the world itself in the image of a Whitmanesque and Deweyian America (yet to be achieved) is the key towards more social justice, relying on the intersubjective consensus and solidarity this image celebrates. Rorty’s argument that only those who are well fed and secure can view others in sympathy and empathy may well be a sincere call for securing those conditions for everyone on the planet for the sake of solidarity. Having read Dewey however, he must know that while these are necessary conditions, they are not sufficient. What he appears to slide over is the *kind* of viewing that is productively related to activating the liberal Left that he so fervently defends. Thus a constant query to Rorty must be: will viewing like “us”—the centre—do the job, or are there others kinds of viewing, other angles as it were, other perspectives that bear looking at? Spivak appears to engage this question when she writes: “I always attempt to look around the corner, to see ourselves as others would see us” (xiii). This may be a fair beginning—*αρχή*, *arche*, beginning and principle or stance—as I believe. It constitutes another kind of viewing of the other as of an equal, and as having equal expectations.

Many feminist and postcolonial scholars for the past three decades have been arguing along the lines I take here—that is, for a fecund periphery viewing. Indeed, as has been observed, “colonial discourse analysis...itself forms the point of questioning of Western knowledge’s categories and assumptions” (Young 11). It remains sadly true, however, that their work, however widely published, is still peripheral to mainstream academia, and contemporary centres of power, especially in the United States where the multicultural merges systematically into the unicultural through the re-conceiving of citizenship (see Berlant). The cultural drive towards displaying difference in American society is matched by an equally powerful propensity to eliminate where possible what is different from it by attempting in the words of Judith Williamson to “produce its opposite out of its own hat” (qtd. in Kaplan 16). The limited life and times of oppositional discourses in America—beginning with the ruminations of its classical imaginative writers like Hawthorne and Melville, and

others continuing into the present—reinforces the need for a constant intellectual vigilance and openness to opposing argumentation. This is a project with which Richard Rorty would have to agree in principle, given his trenchant critique of foundationalism and universality, and his belief that no point of view is rationally privileged. However, that he chooses “frankly ethnocentric” rhetoric mitigates, as I have argued, against his own philosophical anti-foundationalism. His stance, as I have been arguing, makes of any peripheral viewing a chimera.

In an attempt to save the possibility and political relevance of viewing for those who are not of the West or the North or the Centre, British Marxian cultural critic Terry Eagleton proposes another concept of viewing, when he urges: “It is a mistake to believe...that downtrodden societies have too little time to imagine what others might be feeling... their downtroddenness is exactly what impels them to this sympathy... [what] has been known ...as socialist internationalism” (48). Eagleton’s argument reinforces the epistemology of situated and standpoint knowledges urged by socialist and Marxian feminists (like Hartsock; or Haraway). I do not wish to undercut the lesson to be learned from these retrievals of knowing and viewing for/from the periphery in its holding out against the centre. But a counter-argument cannot rest simply with the correlation of oppression and viewing, where being “no-heeled” as opposed to being “well-heeled” helps us see more deeply and more “knowingly.” I believe there is a correlation, but there is a need for more filling in, if you will, on the side of equal conditions of viewing and the ethical (im)possibilities of engaging the “eyes” of all peoples on this planet.

The Inconclusive “Other”: Encounters with Equality

In the foregoing critique of Rorty I have been recommending though not elaborating the idea that equality of expectations be taken as a condition for viewing whether from the centre or the periphery. That is to say, we have to be able to make sense of the notion of “equal viewing” in the midst of the great cultural differences that exist in human geographical spaces. If this reminds or “reeks” of Kant, I do not apologize, since I believe with Spivak and others that he bears supplementing rather than jettisoning (354 n.59). To accept the equal moral worth of all human beings does not require, as Kant supposed, the postulating of a noumenal, rational self universally present in all persons. In asserting this moral equality, Jeremy Bentham suggested for example that we ask not whether people can reason but whether they can feel pain, (Rorty would agree). Individuals can have, or come to have, equal expectations which we confirm by really looking around us, as Spivak urges us to begin doing. The question should not be, as it is for Rorty, how to get others to be more like us, but rather what are the expectations of others where—in raising this question, as I have been urging implicitly throughout this essay—we do not take “equality” to mean “sameness.” The political thinking of most western liberals like Rorty, and even Dworkin, is locked into the concept of “equality” as “sameness,” a mathematical notion of equality that does not begin to address the problematic that liberalism itself has raised historically in Kant, Marx, and Mill and other writers down to the twentieth

century. The importance of the idea of “equal expectations” lies in opening up of the viewing of these expectations, from both centre and periphery, that while empirically different—historically, culturally, sexually, religiously, nationally-ethnically, politically, and economically—are nevertheless deserving of equal viewing. This enables the contests that exist and continually emerge, rather than securing an ideological consensus constantly evoked by the centre. It means taking everyone into account, figuring and factoring in the affluent, the middling, the poor, the wretched of the earth, those whose tongues are tamed, and those whose eyes, blinded by greed, are rarely looking around. But taking all into account does not mean allowing or endorsing every claim; the achievement of a greater equality requires a choosing among differences that are wandering, are around and emerging. Judith Butler and Ernesto Laclau have recently engaged in a dialogue on “equality” in which they suggest that the problematic revolves about the differences that are allowed or disallowed by the concept of equality. As Laclau observes, it is the very proliferation of differences that expands the logic of equality (5). Viewing from the “periphery,” as I suggest below in excavating other senses of the term, is about this kind of wandering about among a proliferation of differences, looking widely around, before us and behind us.

I began this paper by calling on wider views of “viewing” found in the tradition of British empiricism for the purpose of both relating “viewing from the periphery” to Rorty’s conception of “sentimental education” and critiquing his ethnocentric stance. I would now like to recall some of the rich ancient Greek roots of the words centre, *κέντρον* and periphery, *περιφέρεια*, in order to urge a question about loss and retrieval of the meaning of words in the present discourses of cultural and political critique—the kind of question Alice might have put to Humpty-Dumpty had she been given a chance. Words are ours to command, as the great egg on the wall said to Alice while emphasizing, to her dismay, that some meanings are in more command than others (Carroll 163). Whatever the terms centre and periphery mean today—there would appear to be, for example, some differences from the way they were used in the eighties by such political economists as Gunder Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein—some of their originary ancient Greek extensions have been dissipated, or if you will, made archaic for the most part. I think unfortunately for contemporary discourses which I would argue have become “thinner” as a result. Let me note such meanings of the centre, *το κέντρον*, now no longer a part of “central” usage, meanings as: a prickle, spike, sting, an instrument of torture, derived from *κεντάω*, to prick, sting, wound, pierce (Liddell and Scott 939), and the no longer central meanings or uses of periphery, *περιφέρεια*, derived from both a) *περιφερής*, carried round about, surrounding, and b) *περιφέρω*, to carry round or about, to wander or range about, and, to endure, hold out (Liddell and Scott 1392). In the modern Greek language the signified of “periphery” or “peripheral” is precisely that which wanders about, surrounds, and endures; the signified of the “centre” is a geographical point—the place of the government, which, however, always relies on the support it can draw from the periphery.

I think these mainly non-mathematical extensions of the terms, that is, the centre as sting and instrument of wounding, and the periphery as a wandering and an enduring, might well have wide applicability today in the discourses of feminism, post-colonialism (or “tricontinentalism” as Robert Young prefers—57), and marxism, as well as all those others who do not find it quant to speak of a central, universal norm as excluding and wounding, and a periphery as the marginal, holding out and enduring. The work of feminist, queer theorist Judith Butler on the notion of the “performative contradiction” in the universal, i.e., the norm or centre that conceptualizes and operates by exclusion rather than by the inclusion it proclaims (91), has deeply captured I believe the relevance of talk of stinging on the one hand, and persisting or holding out on the other. It is no accident that in a millenium world of globalized finance, it is the mathematical tropes—strictly geometrical—of the ancient Greek words of “centre” and “periphery” that dominate in the different contexts where the terms appear; they are “commanding” more than others. The question I raise is whether a more “free-wheeling” use of the non-mathematical extensions of *κέντρον* and *περιφέρεια* can sharpen our viewing of the present moment of globalization and issues of social justice.

Can we retrieve, redeploy, reuse words—especially where they bear equivocal meanings, for the sake of our own experience and viewing, wherever we are? Can we afford not to? Butler has urged one of the strongest cases I know for retrieval and reappropriation, calling it a “politics of the performative” where “turning the universal against itself, redeploying equality against its existing formulations [and] retrieving freedom from its contemporary conservative valence,” can secure political agency for the silenced and marginalized (93).

For example, in a rewriting of history can we retrieve enough so as to argue that American society today is among the most fearful and non-leisured on earth? One might want to include as a factor the amount of guns American citizens own as a matter of Second Amendment Constitutional Right. Is this ownership an index of freedom (as largely understood by gun owners), or is it a function of pervasive fear in the society as has been argued recently in a documentary film (*Bowling For Columbine*, directed by Michael Moore, 2002)? And if these re-deployed views of “freedom” and “fear” are applicable as Moore and others have demonstrated, can sentimental education in Rorty’s sense work among Americans today—can they really view others as others? Do they not tend to shoot first, then view? This question can be posed even while one acknowledges the great strides in the securing of social justice in American society especially in the decade of the ’60s. For it is a question about the political relevance of the idea of a “culture of guns”: in Rorty’s terms, does such a culture contribute to a democratic politics, and should it be imitated by others?

In closing, I recall the remarks of Vietnamese-American anthropologist, filmmaker and poet Trinh T. Minh-Ha who observes: “Marginalized people are always socialized to understand things from more than their own point of view, to see both sides of the matter, and to say *at least* two things at the same time, they can never really afford to speak in the singular” (6). Trinh is arguing for the inevitability of

hyphenation in self-naming. To extend her remarks to the context here: not being able to afford what the centre provides or purports to provide, namely speaking “in the singular,” with an implied unity and purity in viewing, may be for the periphery the *lack* that enables the *eros* or desire for another kind of viewing, another speaking of social justice in the world. The West has been fixing its others in monolithic ways assuming thus its “primacy and centrality.” The strong tendency in the centre, to “consolidate and package,” to present a culture of “purity and transparency,” that is knowable, verifiable and easily imitated, works as an almost overpowering lens. It is this lens Rorty has been using, drawing perhaps on the simplicity, as Trinh remarks, in the ways “marginalized cultures name the centralized cultures.” Such naming “fixes the West in the same manner that the West has been fixing its others” (15). The tendency (or need?) by “hyphenated,” hybrid (peripheral?) cultures to read and name dominant cultures in a monolithic and unitary way should be avoided, according to Trinh, since this reading-naming re-inscribes the compartments and concepts that have created, so to speak, the notion of the “other” or the marginal-peripheral. Trinh’s abiding point that no culture is monolithic has been a constant theme in postcolonial discourse, as has the “simplicity” she cautions against. With the work of Frantz Fanon and Gloria Anzaldua among many others, we are beginning to understand how it comes about that peripheral people view with the eyes of the centre, how their attempted different viewing is so easily submerged, and why it is that, to borrow from Anzaldua (53-64), they can go on to refuse to tame their tongues, and opt to reverse viewing from the centre.

What I would recommend for further exploration is the possible contrast between viewing thinly and thickly, purely and impurely, a viewing that relates self to groups and dislocates both at the same time. The one example I will use here is the instance of the Balkans, a geographical group that I would say has been viewed *thinly*, that is, as fragmented relative to a larger group of which the Balkans are a part—call it Europe or the West. The thin view, as I call it, is captured in the western journalistic concept of “balkanization” whose present dictionary meaning is dividing into small, fragmented and hostile units. Now, I am saying that whatever the emergent self-viewing by Balkan peoples themselves turns out to be, its non-affording in Trinh’s sense of a singular voice is what it cannot not want. And this not wanting of a singular voice can secure a thicker viewing, and can erode, through re-appropriation, the present and dominant sense of “balkanization.” That may constitute an instance of viewing from the periphery whose lens is not a Rortian consensus or solidarity, but an engaged practice focused on equality of expectations and working with a re-deployed sense of equality. Thus the problematic of viewing I propose for further investigation requires that “viewing from the periphery” be taken not simply as challenge, but as equal, to “viewing from the centre.”

ENDNOTES

¹ This essay is a revised version of the Opening Address I delivered to the Fourth International HASE Conference on “The Periphery Viewing the Centre” held in Athens, Greece, May 24-27, 2002. For all its revisions, however, it is still a working paper.

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Proximity and Involvement in Television: On the September 11th Live Footage

Lilie Chouliaraki

Introduction

In this paper, I discuss extracts of the 9/11 live footage on television from the vantage point of discourse, that is of how the reported event “comes to mean,” how it becomes intelligible through the meaning-making operations of television.¹ My aim is to illustrate how television images and language work to link together different locales—how they create meaning about proximity and, in so doing, involve the spectator in certain ethical discourses and practices.

To this end, I specifically focus on the question of how television mediates the 9/11, by articulating different spacetimes—the “here-there” and “before-after” dimensions of events. The epistemic claim is that spacetime articulations provide key-insights into the ways in which the mediation of the 9/11 “moralizes” the spectator, that is how it shapes the ethical relationship between spectator and spectacle and, so, cultivates specific dispositions to action- political dispositions.²

This epistemic claim derives its force from the major spacetime tension in the 9/11 mediation: the attacks in New York and Washington DC provisionally but dramatically reversed the dominant spacetimes of the “centre,” the spacetime of safe viewing, and the “periphery,” the spacetime of dangerous living. On the 9/11, the “centre,” and only contemporary superpower, entered the spacetime of dangerous living—it became the sufferer.³ The chronotopic analysis, then, is framed by a specific theoretical concern: how spacetime articulations mediate suffering from a distance; how such articulations negotiate the relationship between a spectator, safely situated at home, and a sufferer, whose misfortune—sudden, violent and gruesome—the spectator cannot directly act upon. Suffering, here, is not merely a “phenomenological” description of events. It is primarily a conceptual device for identifying how the semiotic resources of television invest the 9/11 with certain “normative” discourses, of what is legitimate and fair to feel and do *vis-à-vis* the event. In this sense, suffering is the discursive principle that constitutes the spectator as a moral subject and, in so doing, organises the social and political relationships of mediating the 9/11, of representing it from a distance (see Boltanski). Indeed, this shift of the “centre” to the spacetime of suffering is interesting because it shows us how television capitalises on this spectacle so as to articulate certain moral stances as universal and, so, link them to hegemonic political projects, such as the “war against terror.” Such substantial links are, obviously, impossible to make under the constraints of this paper. However, studying the mediation of the 9/11 for the ways it constitutes the spectator as a moral subject can usefully contribute to theorising a key-

moment within a broader socio-cultural process, which Mouffe calls the “moralisation of politics”—the contemporary reformulation and reconstitution of political rationalities and practices in discourses of ethics.⁴

My perspective on 9/11 thus concerns the televisual mediation of distant suffering and its “moralizing” effects on the spectator. This focus entails a dual analytical perspective. On the one hand, there is the perspective on televisual mediation as multi-modal discourse, as visual and verbal meaning-making. What are we to feel when watching the plane crashing onto the Twin Towers, spectacularly exploding in flames, in front of our eyes? What are we to do when watching fire brigades, medical, police and municipality forces rushing to help victims just after the collapse of the Towers? Or, how are we to respond when confronted with President Bush’s promise to “hunt down those folks who committed this act”? In the analysis, I identify the distinct role that verbal and visual media play in three television extracts, in order to see how these media represent distant locales, by inserting them in distinct spacetime dimensions. On the other hand, there is the perspective on television as an agent of moral responsibility. How does televisual discourse negotiate the spectator’s relationship to the spectacle of suffering? Under which conditions can we expect the spectator to “connect” to faraway events with a sense of moral involvement and, even, a will to act upon such events? In the analysis, I identify the semiotic features of the spacetimes available on screen, with a view to see how these organize the social relationship between the spectator and the images of distant suffering—which distinct emotions and dispositions to action they mobilize in connecting us to the locale of suffering. It is this perspective which makes Luc Boltanski’s work on “media, morality and politics” central to my argument and analysis.

Expanding on this dual perspective, the paper unfolds in the following sequence: first, I propose an “analytics” of televisual mediation, which takes into account the embeddedness of mediation both in multiple media (camera, graphics, telephone) and in social relations—what are respectively referred to as the “multi-modality” and the “multi-functionality” of mediation (“Towards an Analytics of Mediation”). Second, I introduce the problematic of representing distant suffering in terms of, what Boltanski calls, a “politics of pity”—a politics that aims to resolve the spacetime dimension of mediation in order to establish a sense of “proximity” to the events and, so, engage the spectator emotionally and ethically (“Proximity and Involvement in Televisual Mediation”). Third, I contrast three different modes (or “topics”) of representing suffering, by reference to three live footage extracts from the Danish national channel (DR): street shots of Manhattan, just after the Twin Towers’ collapse; the summary of the day events, with shots from the second plane collision and President Bush’s first public statement; a long shot of the Manhattan skyline burning. I describe each “topic” in terms of its spacetime dimensions, its distinctive semiotic elements, and the affective mode and moral horizon it opens up for the spectator (in “The Moralisation of the Spectator”). In concluding, I briefly touch upon implications for the “moralization” of the spectator, involved in the topics of the representation of 9/11 as distance suffering.

Towards an “Analytics of Mediation”

The concept of “difference”

The dual perspective on the 9/11 televisual mediation as distant suffering poses a conceptual demand. We need to integrate, on the one hand, the problematic of the multiplicity of media and their semiotics and, on the other, the representations of proximity and involvement in the live footage. I propose that we attempt this integration by referring to the concept of “textual difference.” This means that we approach the material with a view to tracing down the relationships of “difference” implicated in the Danish television text on 9/11. But what does the concept of “difference” refer to, in this context?

In all (post-)Saussurean accounts of meaning making, including Social Semiotics and Discourse Analysis, “difference” is the principle upon which texts are produced.⁵ But we need to draw a crucial distinction between two types of difference which traverse the production of texts. On the one hand, there is the semiotic medium and its meaning-making “affordances,” such as, say, camera and the privileging of the visual-pictorial *vis-à-vis* telephone and the privileging of the verbal—what I below term “difference within the semiotic.” On the other hand, there is the semiotic work that these “affordances” perform in concrete television practices, that is the representations of suffering and the ethical relationships these establish between spectator and sufferer—what I below term “difference outside the semiotic.” This distinction is analytical, not substantial. In practice, meaning-making and its mediation are not insulated processes, they are embedded into one another—there is, in other words, no “link” to distant locales which is not, simultaneously, an ethical claim on how to relate to this locale. But the distinction is useful in one important way. It exemplifies and facilitates the logic of an “analytics of mediation.” According to this logic, looking upon mediation in terms of both medium and semiotic production draws attention to the “moment” of their articulation—the “moment” in which, say, camera and telephone are brought together in a single practice to constitute a multi-modal complex of representations about the event. The meaning of 9/11 emerges, then, neither through language (the bias in much Discourse Analytic approaches to the media), nor through the pictorial alone (the bias in much social theory of the media), but as a configuration of meaning-making operations, whereby the shifting salience of such media bears effects upon the intelligibility of the event, the way it “comes to mean,” and thereby on the “quality” of involvement it establishes for the spectator. I briefly refer to “difference within the semiotic,” the specificity of the media which articulate television representations, and “difference outside the semiotic,” the specificity of these representations in the empirical material.

“Difference within the semiotic”: the “multi-modality” of mediation: On the one hand, the term “difference” points to difference that is constitutive of semiotic systems themselves. For Derrida, pushing the structuralist legacy to its limit, difference is not a social but a systemic category that resides in the very organization

of language (see Derrida). The claim is that the sign, rather than being split (*à la* Saussure) in its sound/image form and its linguistic/conceptual content, is seen as an “instituted trace,” a mark that consists of both materialities. Thus, Derrida argues, *contra* Saussure, that meaning-making does not privilege speech over the graphic, but needs both types of sign in order to come to being. Under this dual capacity, as graphic/pictorial and as spoken/conceptual, each mark makes meaning not by presenting itself as a positivity, but by differentiating itself from other marks in altering its meaning as it travels from context to context.⁶ Though Derrida has been criticized for divorcing the workings of meaning production from their social conditions of possibility (see, for example, the 1999 critique by Judith Butler), the point here is that the written sign has a distinct “immediate” materiality, permanence and a capacity for repeatability which differentiates it from speech. Similarly, in Social Semiotics and Discourse Analysis, “difference within the semiotic” is theorized as emanating from difference in the medium of semiosis, as “multi-modality.” “Multi-modality” provides a Discourse Analytic point of entry into the procedures by which televisual texts articulate language and visuality, orality and writing—and the procedures by which meaning is inseparably inscribed onto these distinct media: verbal/aural, visual/pictorial, visual/graphic.⁷ What is currently named “multi-modal” Discourse Analysis marks, therefore, not a radical break from previous analytical frameworks, but an opening. It is an orientation towards the specificity of television’s multiple media and towards the ways in which television knowledges and identities are related to the materiality of these media. Telephone and camera, from this point of view, are not innocent vehicles of information. They are constitutive of such information, as each one establishes relationships between spectators and the televisual message specific to the medium’s own mode of articulation. For example, the aural/verbal mode of the telephone enables the representation of “distant suffering” as a universal condition (“we are now all threatened”), whereas the camera’s street shots of Manhattan fix “distant suffering” onto particularized representations of individuals in their local contexts.

“Difference outside the semiotic”: the “multi-functionality” of mediation: On the other hand, the term “difference” points to a direction of difference which, albeit always semiotized, lies outside meaning-making systems—in power asymmetries that traverse social fields and in the historical and political relations within or between groups and populations. Specifically, the concept of discourse sets up a constitutive relationship between the two. Every move to meaning-making comes about from a position of power—power traversing and structuring the social positions available within a practice. Meaning, then, makes a claim to truth precisely from that power position which enunciates it. This is not the “truth” but always a truth effect, a truth that seeks to re-constitute and re-establish power through meaning.⁸ So, for an “analytics” of mediation, studying discourse, the logic of meaning-making, helps map out the logic of social relations of difference. By the same token, the study of power becomes the study of the social conditions of possibility for meaning-making. “Difference outside the semiotic,” the meaning-power dialectic, is captured in the

“multi-functionality” of semiotic practice: the claim that social relations are seen to shape and be shaped by the meaning potential of semiotic systems. The “multi-functional” claim is that each text, simultaneously, represents aspects of the world, enacts social relations between participants in social practices, and cohesively and coherently connects texts with their contexts (“ideational,” “interpersonal” and “textual” functions of language, according to Halliday’s 1985 book). In other words, studying the semiotics of mediation throws into relief the work of the text to construct reality (the proximity dimensions in the mediation of September 11th) and establish interpersonal relations and identities for the participants in the practice—here, the moral relationship between spectator (Danish audience) and sufferer (the actors portrayed in the 9/11 footage).

“Analytics of mediation” and Discourse Analysis: I consider the duality of the concept of “difference,” as “difference outside the semiotic” (the “multi-functionality” of mediation) and “difference within the semiotic” (the “multi-modality” of mediation), to be a key claim for an “analytics of mediation.” The concept of analytics places the study of mediation within a broader frame of critical interpretation, what Foucault calls an “analytics of truth”: “the quest to define the conditions under which knowledge is possible, acceptable and legitimate” (Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories* 50). This quest takes as its object specific practices and discourses of the present time in order to analyze how they have been constituted as fields of knowledge and how they have constituted us as moral subjects in specific power relations. In so doing, such an “analytics” is part of “a history of the present”—not an objectivist historical project which accurately recovers a teleological route from past to present, but a project which identifies “the political and ethical issues raised by our insertion in a particular present, and by the problem of action under the limits establishing the present” (Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories* 51). To study a single “moment” of this “insertion” in the present, and a prominent one such as the 9/11, from the perspective of how it “comes to mean,” raises the question of the historical and social conditions upon which the possibility for meaning-making rests. It follows that the Discourse Analytic project is central in an “analytics of mediation,” as it seeks to show that the conditions upon which our involvement in the event, and our dispositions to act on it, rest are not universal and a-historical potentialities but, rather, “truth effects”: they are constituted both by contemporary social and political relations and rationalities and by the “technologies of representation” available in the mass media.

In the “analytics of mediation” below, I operate on both these views of difference. I take the 9/11 television texts to be “multi-modal,” focusing on the distinct “trace” of each specific medium on representations of proximity and involvement. With respect to “difference within the semiotic,” then, questions include: are the media, brought together in the text, insulated from each other, or are they combined in certain ways? Which possibilities for the representation of proximity and temporality are enabled (or constrained) through the use of one medium rather than another, or through specific multi-modal articulations? I also take

the television text to be “multi-functional,” focusing on the work of the text to propose a certain relationship of involvement to the spectator *vis-à-vis* event. So, with respect to “difference outside the semiotic,” questions include: which social relations are imported onto our text through these articulations of spatio-temporal orders? Which specific representations of moral involvement do these spatio-temporalities give rise to?

Such questions guide the “analytics of mediation” not only in identifying proximity and involvement in language and the visual, but also in identifying the relative salience of specific “technologies of representation” over others in the selected extract. This is important because it is their relative salience that defines the hierarchy of representations in the multi-modal environment of television and privileges certain proximities over others, in certain television texts.

Proximity and Involvement in Televisual Mediation

I have so far outlined an approach to televisual mediation as discourse, as a meaning-making practice that takes into account the embeddedness of television both in social relations and in multiple media. An analytics so defined addresses the relationship between the spectator and the spectacle of distant suffering by thematizing the discursive space of mediation, the space in which this relationship is represented semiotically.

For many, this confrontation of the spectator with distant suffering is the very power of television: to compress distance and bring home disturbing images and experiences otherwise unavailable to wide audiences. Its dominant mode of address is “You cannot say you didn’t know,” “hailing” the spectator into the subject position of the “witness”—the most profound moral claim that the medium has made upon contemporary social identities (see Ellis). Yet, the function of television as an agent of moral responsibility is a controversial matter. On the one hand, there is optimism. The sheer exposure to the suffering of the world, which television has made possible to an unprecedented degree, brings about a new sensibility to audiences—an awareness and a responsibility towards the “world out there,” which has so far been impossible. On the other hand, there is pessimism. The very (over-) exposure to human suffering has “anaesthetizing,” numbing effects upon audiences—rather than cultivating a sensibility, the spectacle of suffering becomes domesticated by the experience of watching television. As “yet another spectacle,” it is met with either indifference or discomfort, and zapping is the only possible reaction to it.⁹ Ultimately, the debate is polarized between ungrounded optimism, where the spectator’s involvement to distant suffering is unconditionally possible, and unnecessary pessimism, where this involvement is *de facto* impossible.

However, rather than attempting direct responses, we should instead set in motion the key dialectic implicit in the controversy: proximity-distance. The proposal for an “analytics of mediation” focuses precisely upon this dialectic as an accomplishment of discourse. Spacetimes, here, operate to suspend the spectator’s “geo-political” centre, the home in its national context, and re-configure new senses

of proximity and sensibility towards suffering, which are inscribed onto the “geo-political” shifts on the television screen. The assumption is that the “multi-modality” of this text (television camera, talk and graphics) and their semiotic modes (verbal, visual, aural) bear a constitutive effect upon these articulations and, so, upon the production of the moral universe of the spectator. We are then interested in how the medium mediates suffering by producing certain forms of ethical relating, by inserting suffering in a “politics of pity.” How are we to understand this “politics of pity”?

Pity is not to be understood as the natural sentiment of human empathy. Rather, pity is a historically specific and politically constituted principle for relating social subjects under the capacities of a spectator and a sufferer—the former safely removed from the unfortunate condition of the latter. As the principle for establishing a generalized concern for the distant “Other,” pity intends to resolve the inherent tension in this spectator-sufferer relationship, a tension arising from the dimension of distance: “...distance is a fundamental dimension of a politics [of pity] which has the specific task of *unification* which overcomes dispersion by setting up the ‘durable institutions’ needed to establish equivalence between spatially and temporally *local* situations” (Boltanski 7). It is precisely the capacity of such a politics to re-articulate different spatio-temporal orders and establish “proximity at a distance” which renders pity instrumental in contemporary conceptions of (western) sociality and indispensable in the constitution of modern democratic collectivities. Importantly, in order for pity to act as a principle of relating, it has to act discursively, to produce meaning about suffering. The idea of a “*politics* of pity,” then, points precisely to that mobilization of semiotic resources which constitute suffering, and the spectator’s involvement in suffering, in strategically distinct ways: “in order to generalize, pity becomes eloquent, recognizing and discovering itself as emotion and feeling” (Boltanski 6). Let us now turn to the chronotopic analysis of the empirical material, in order to see the various ways in which pity “becomes eloquent” in the “direct link” with New York, in the summary of 9/11 events, and in the panoramic shot of the Manhattan skyline.

The Moralisation of the Spectator

Distant suffering in the “direct link with New York”

This eight-minute long sequence is a telephone link between the DR studio in Copenhagen and the Danish Embassy in New York. The anchorperson interviews the Embassy Consul, who describes the situation as a first-hand witness, expresses his personal feelings and evaluates the event’s longer-term consequences. The visual frame is the DR studio interior. Almost halfway through, this frame is interrupted twice to move to street shots from Manhattan, before the interview ends with a frame back to the studio. The main features of the Manhattan visuals are random shots, erratic camera movements, imperfect focus and framing, camera lens covered in white dust.

This is clearly a projection of unstaged reality. Through these visuals we enter the concrete, almost tangible, reality of Manhattan: the omnipresence of dust and ashes; scattered bits and pieces of brick, stone, concrete; people, covered in dust, walking or running away; professionals with helmets on, suggesting that relief work is already under way. Indeed, other shots show ambulances, fire brigades and municipality workers setting up street barriers in the scene of suffering. These visuals are framed by the Consul's vivid verbal description of vehicles howling, hospitals on emergency and bridges closing down, as well as of authorities trying to get an overview of the situation so as to maximize their assistance to victims and collect information for the wider public.

Which spacetime are we entering here? This "involved" camera moves us "right there" in the scene of suffering, "right now" as events are unfolding from moment to moment. This is a spacetime of "instantaneous proximity," the spacetime par excellence of the "witness" function of the spectator—and of the "direct link" genre. Simultaneously, however, this same projection of unstaged reality in "real time" gives us a sense of distance from the scene. This is evident, for example, in the ways in which the very technology of mediation makes itself visible to the spectator: the camera is covered in dust; the satellite transmission fails for a brief moment; there are no sound effects, which "cleanses" the sense of presence in the scene of action. We are called to "witness" suffering, yet we are aware of our own situatedness: we are watching it from home, with plenty of time to comment and analyze—we inhabit the spacetime of safety, of the "centre." No matter how close we get, it is not us that have to breathe the ashes or shake dust off our clothes. All we can do is keep on watching.

Obvious as this point may be, it throws into relief another fundamental tension in televisual mediation, a tension which undercuts the spectator as a moral subject, as a witness that feels compelled to act upon suffering. This is the tension between the sense of "being there" and the powerlessness to act, given the distance that separates the spectator from the "there." And it is at this point of tension that the politics of mediating distant suffering comes into focus—that pity becomes eloquent. The logic of such eloquence is that of displacement: precisely because the spectator cannot act in the scene of suffering, the "politics of pity" displaces the feelings the spectator may have towards the sufferer upon other actors who are already represented in the scene of suffering. Different possibilities of displacement give rise to distinct "topics of suffering," depending on the figure that organises the spectator's feeling potential. "Sentiment," if feelings are organised around the "benefactor," the figure that attempts to alleviate suffering; "denunciation," if feelings are organised around the "persecutor," the figure that provoked suffering in the first place; the "sublime," if feelings are organised around the spectacle of suffering itself, generating aesthetic appreciation of its scenic set up.¹⁰ Which topic of suffering is the "direct link" enacting?

The "direct link" and the "topic of sentiment": There are three semiotic elements in the "direct link," which suggest that the 9/11 is constituted via the "topic

of sentiment”: first, the figure of the benefactor; second, the emotionality of language; and third, the move towards common humanity. The figure of the benefactor emerges primarily through the visual texts but also through the General Consul’s vivid description of the scene of suffering, Manhattan. The ambulances, the fire-engines, the closing of the bridges and the hospital emergencies constitute a semantic field, in which the “protagonist,” though not explicitly named, is present as the collective agent of all such first-aid operations. The benefactor is thus visualized and linguistified as the resource for the relief and comfort of suffering in a context of frantic activity, at a time that takes no waiting. Emotionality seeps through the General Consul’s description and evaluation of the event, via constant references to his own feelings (“dramatic, impossible to overview, shocking, indescribable”; notice also the anchorperson’s question: “General Consul, you are not only a political person, you are also *a human being*. How does *it feel* to witness such a terrible catastrophe?”). Unlike “denunciation,” which is premised upon a “metaphysics of justice,” mobilizing indignation towards the unfairness of the event, the “topic of sentiment” rests precisely upon such an explication of emotion *vis-à-vis* the tragedy, upon a “metaphysics of interiority.” As Boltanski puts it, it is not enough for the spectator to report the suffering, but “at the same time he (*sic*) must also return to himself, go inwards and allow himself to hear what his heart tells him” (81). The Consul functions, in this topic, as the witness of a suffering that “fills his heart with empathy.” Finally, the move towards common humanity comes about when the Consul is called to evaluate the consequences of the event. Here, spectator and sufferer are joined in a common fate, exemplified in the Consul’s shift from a descriptive “they” (the sufferers) and through a personal “I” to an all-inclusive “we,” referring to the globe as a whole. The future of the globe is here scripted onto a gloomy scenario (“we are entering a *new phase*,” “we don’t know how it *will escalate*,” “worry, deep *anxiety*, a terrible, terrible, terrible event with *deep political consequences for all of us*”). What we have here is a crucial, for the “topic of sentiment,” leap from the spectator’s particularity towards a contemplation of universal values. This leap, Boltanski’s “imagination of the heart,” also installs the moral horizon of this topic: to empathize with the tragedy of the other as a human being, and to reflect upon this suffering as, ultimately, part of our common fate as human beings. Indeed, the topic of sentiment “consists in ‘feeling oneself in one’s fellow man’, in recognizing, in a ‘gesture of humanity’, the common interest which links the one it touches to others” (Boltanski 92).

The “summary of events” and the topic of denunciation

This two-minute text was put together to provide Danish spectators with a chronology of events up to the present moment and was inserted in the flow of the live footage in regular intervals. It is primarily a visual text capitalizing upon the enormous “news value” of some of the 9/11 shots. It begins with shots from the first burning tower, then the second plane crash, cutting to Bush’s first public statement from Georgia, before showing the Twin Towers collapse; it then moves to Washington and the

Pentagon burning. The verbal text includes no commentary, no evaluation—only time and space details of the events, information on the number and route of flights as well as the passenger numbers on board. Bush’s statement is not quoted or reproduced but, predictably, directly shown. In terms of spacetime, we are at a space of omnipresence, everywhere where the camera takes us (Manhattan, Georgia, Washington DC), at the time of immediate past (that same morning of 9/11). Which feeling potential is activated here? I point to three elements which semiotically constitute the 9/11 in terms of the “topic of denunciation”: first, the figure of the persecutor; second, the aura of strict objectivity; and third, the claim to justice.

The persecutor is faceless—and will remain, largely, invisible even though, eventually, he will be given a face. Nonetheless, the persecutor as the causal agent of suffering is already evoked in this text. The semiotic procedure is visual editing. The second plane crash, a shot with filmic spectacularity that the camera fixed upon for several seconds after the plane exploded on the tower—and without verbal text—cuts directly onto Bush’s first public statement from Georgia. The presidential address begins by condensing the national sentiment, “today we’ve had a *national tragedy*” and locating the source of evil “...in an apparently *terrorist* attack against our country.” The crash visuals and the verbal text are woven together in an intertextual link, which evokes the figure of a persecutor and organizes the spectator’s feeling potential around the cruelty and unfairness of the persecutor’s act (terrorist attack). Indeed, the evocation of the persecutor is here closely related to another one of the properties of “denunciation,” the appeal to justice. This is formulated in the concluding part of the address, in the promise “to hunt down those folks who committed this act.” Here, the president is articulating the collective expectation to identify and confront the persecutor. This claim to justice entails “an eye for an eye” logic of reiteration, which plays upon feelings of anger, indignation and revenge. Unlike the topic of sentiment, denunciation is not grounded on emotions based on empathy or subjective involvement. The emotional potential of denunciation is grounded upon the rational assessment of facts—“two planes crashed on the WTC in an, apparently, terrorist attack against our country”—and it is regulated by coordinated and calculated actions—“I have talked to the Vice President, the Governor of New York, the Director of the F.B.I.” In this manner, the aura of strict objectivity which marks the voice-over of the “summary of events” traverses the presidential statement. Both texts manage the shift from “indignation” (the national sentiment) to “denunciation” (the appeal to justice) via a careful backgrounding of the personal emotionality of the speaker—the “effacement of the speaker”: “the discourse of denunciation, thus, appears at the same time indignant and meticulous, emotional and factual” (Boltanski 68).

To sum up, the extract as a whole inserts the spectator in a spacetime where the witnessing of suffering is not from a “real space”-“real time” perspective, activating empathy with the sufferer. Rather, the witnessing of suffering takes place from successively alternating positions of witnessing the escalation of the attack—from the standpoint of “aperspectival objectivity,” as Boltanski puts it (24; and see

next part). The moral horizon of this spacetime is undercut by a “metaphysics of justice,” the promise to restore justice by “hunting down” the persecutors and, so, it contains the “promise” of practical action in terms of the logic of reiteration. It is this disposition to act practically upon the suffering, which is perhaps most transparently related to the massive military and political alliance that a month later culminated in the “war against terror” in Afghanistan.

The Manhattan skyline long shot and the sublime

This is an eight-minute shot of the Manhattan skyline burning—unusually long in duration for the tempo of television, and shot from a distance. We are given plenty of time to visually study this overview of the scene of suffering. The verbal voice-over is the talk of the Danish expert panel speculating on possible causes, commenting on international reactions and evaluating political consequences—a talk that, similarly to the visual, distances us from the specificities of the lived environment and functions as a macro-perspective on the history and politics of the event. Indeed, both visual and verbal texts take us away from the “here and now” of the “direct link,” as well as from the “everywhere” in the immediate past of the summary. We are now situated in the spacetime of, what we may call, a *tableau vivant*—a painting depicting “still action.” Like in perspectival painting, proximity here is total, you can see everything there is to see, and the temporality is an eternal present time without contingency or evolution. Let us look at three semiotic elements that constitute the suffering from this spacetime: (i) the long shot and iconic meaning; (ii) the contrast between the beautiful and the sublime; (iii) the rhetorical tropes of “anachronism” and “anatotism.”

Long shots universalize. They abstract from indexical, context-specific meaning and foreground the iconic. Indeed, this image works generically, though obviously there are particularizing elements (such as, for some, the NYC skyline). In its generic form, as an icon, the long shot represents one space, the contemporary metropolis—high buildings, modern architecture, dense mass volume. The frame centers upon the fumes covering the city and, simultaneously, it couples two image themes onto one another: the grey sky and the clear turquoise seawater. In aesthetic terms, the camera couples the horror and awe of the sublime with the domesticity and friendliness of the beautiful. These two elements visually cohere on the basis of a set of equivalential contrasts: landscape (land in smoke-peaceful water); color (grey-turquoise); and activity (obscure, suggestive in land—explicit, readily available to vision in water). Indeed, it appears as if the boat activity is oblivious to rather than interacting with the city mayhem. In this *tableau vivant*, the 9/11 spectacle lends itself to aesthetic appreciation. It is the visual medium that brings the city close to the spectator, by establishing a relationship of contemplation to it. The feeling potential of this “contemplative proximity” is displaced neither onto the benefactor nor onto a persecutor: it “stays” with us as an experience of aesthetic indulgence. This is what Boltanski discusses as the “sublimation” effect of representing distant suffering, an effect which constitutes aesthetic pleasure in a double moment: “an initial movement

of horror, which would be confused with fear of the spectator was not [...] personally sheltered from danger [...] is transformed by a second movement which appropriates and thereby appreciates and enhances what an ordinary perception would have rejected" (121).

Even though the aesthetic register of this topic entails the possibility of a "*radical rejection of pity*" (Boltanski 132), in fact, the sublime does moralize the spectator, but in a different way to the previous two topics. This happens through the use of other media that frame the visual. Indeed, if the camera abstracts from the particular to project an aestheticized view of the city as an icon, the television graphics and the voice-over particularize this abstraction.¹¹ The graphic message on screen, the recurrent "New York" bar, anchors the image of the burning metropolis onto the temporality of the present—an open sense of present time as unfolding actuality. This semiotic combination brings into focus the crucial inversion of the "centre"- "periphery" relationship that the 9/11 performed: New York, the invincible centre, in mayhem. The visual thematization of the "centre" as a sufferer, a novel and paradoxical representation, further allows for a couple of interesting inversions in this topic: an inversion in time, "anachronism," and an inversion in space, "anatotism."¹²

On the axis of time, the "unfolding actuality" of the bars combined with the "eternal presence" of the camera's *tableau vivant* evoke a new temporal context for the representation of suffering in the "centre," that of Pearl Harbour in the second World War.¹³ The effect of "anachronism" is precisely to produce, for events present, a past reference, thus linking the two as repetitions or mutations in the eternal flow of history: is this a 1941 *déjà-vu*? The "depth" thus attributed to the present event contextualizes it in a discourse of the national past as a recurrent motive that, yet again, requires a response—though the nature of the response, retaliation as then, or diplomacy, is an open matter. On the axis of space, the graphic specification of the scene of suffering as "New York" combined with the long shot on the burning skyline evoke a new spatial context for the representation of suffering in the "centre," that of *any* western metropolis. The effect of "anatotism" is to establish equivalence among disparate locales, thus producing a new configuration of possible connections amongst them. Here, "New York" as the sufferer becomes a crucial signifier, connecting the space of dangerous living with the space of safety, inhabited by other cities of the "centre": if this is possible there, which place comes next? The spectator engages with this space as a potential sufferer herself. Anatotism, then, introduces into this "sublimated" representation of distant suffering a new dimension of proximity, "proximity as vulnerability."¹⁴

In sum, the complex spacetime of the sublime, with its anachronic and anatotopic effects, construes a moral horizon radically different from either of the previous topics. At the absence of a benefactor or a persecutor, and, so, free of the urgent obligation with which these figures engage the spectator in emotion and commitment, the sublime seems to "rest" upon the spectator's reflexive contemplation on the scene of suffering. Reflexive contemplation can be understood as an arrangement which turns this scene into a passive object of the spectator's gaze,

and the spectator into a gazing subject aware of her own act of seeing—a “meta-describer” (Boltanski 19). Crucial, now, for the moralization of the spectator is the fact that this arrangement does not entail redemptive sympathy, empathetic or indignant, but sympathy distanced from its object: “The beauty extracted from the horrific through this process of sublimation of the gaze, which is ‘able to transform any object whatever into a work of art’, *owes nothing therefore to the object*” (Boltanski 127—emphasis added). The implication of the non-obligation to the suffering object is this: the spectator is given the option to make links between the 9/11 and other temporal and spatial contexts, and so to evoke points of contact with the past and with the rest of the world. Though both the links performed here belong to predictable discourses of western history and politics, it is crucial to notice that the space for a reflective and analytical exercise is opened up. It is perhaps not by chance that, in the expert panel voice-over, what was subjected to the most critical scrutiny during those eight minutes of the long-shot was the concept of “sympathy” [*sympati*] itself. The 9/11 was discussed as an opportunity of the USA to gain a long-lost sympathy all over the world: the superpower, far from invincible, having its own “vulnerabilities”; this sympathy, however, is conditioned upon the superpower’s mode of response to the event, since “retaliation,” it was said, would put such “sympathy under strain.” It is in the topic of the “sublime,” then, that the “certainties” of “common humanity” (sentiment) and of “world alliance” (denunciation) become explicitly formulated and critically evaluated.

Conclusion

In this paper, I attempted to show how a “politics of pity” constitutes the spectator of the 9/11 as a moral subject; how pity becomes “eloquent” in modalities of emotion and dispositions to action, through the multi-modal and multi-functional semiotics of television. Crucial, in this process, is the articulation of spacetimes—the management of the distance that separates the spectator from the scene of suffering. We saw that the discursive logic of mediating suffering, a logic of “displacement,” inserts suffering into a broader universe of spacetimes and, so, contextualizes it in different “topics”—sentiment, denunciation, the sublime. Each topic is articulated through a combination of different media, the salience of which varies by topic. The “topic of sentiment,” in the “direct link,” relies on the telephone and the visual shots from Manhattan, construing a spacetime of “instantaneous proximity” for the representation of suffering. “Denunciation,” the topic in the summary of events combines “high value” visuals with brief voice-overs, construing a spacetimes of “omnipresence in the immediate past.” Finally, the “sublime,” in the long-shot of Manhattan prioritizes camera work, and establishes a relationship of visual contemplation with the Manhattan skyline—a *tableau vivant* of the scene of suffering. It is via the insertion of suffering in distinct spacetimes, and the social relationships these spacetimes evoke, that certain moral horizons and orientations to the “Other” became possible, acceptable and legitimate in the televised spectacle of 9/11. And it is in this sense that spacetimes work as, what Bakhtin calls “conditions of

representability” of suffering, as chronotopes of suffering that carry specific ethical values (see endnote ii).

But which specific representations of suffering do these spacetimes make possible—both within the scene of suffering and between the scene and the spectator? Whereas the “topic of sentiment” moralizes the spectator by inscribing her onto a relationship of empathy with the sufferer, the “topic of denunciation” moralizes the spectator by inscribing her onto a relationship of indignation against the perpetrator of evil. Each topic constitutes these relationships on the basis of a specific “metaphysics,” a universal discourse that stabilizes the representation of suffering upon a specific truth claim. In “sentiment,” a “metaphysics of interiority” grounds the moral horizon of the spectator upon a claim to universal humanity—evoked through a sense of “being there right now.” In “denunciation,” a “metaphysics of justice” grounds this moral horizon upon a claim to the objective access to truth, attained through omnipresence in the immediate past, or a perspective “from nowhere.”¹⁵

Finally, which is the effect that each topic has upon the representation of suffering in the 9/11? Their effect is, predictably, that of *significant exclusions*. Each topic attempts to close off the possibility of representing suffering in alternative ways. “Instantaneous proximity” articulates a discourse of universal humanity, by excluding the possibility of historicizing the position of the sufferer in the field of contemporary political relations. In emphasizing the human dimension of suffering, it suppresses the political specificity of, and hence a cause-effect reasoning upon, this suffering as suffering from the “centre.”¹⁶ “Aperspectival objectivity” articulates a discourse of impartial truth by excluding the possibility of attributing justice outside the “logic of reiteration.” In tightly binding the “immediate” truth of terror with the promise for “hunting down” (and, ultimately, counter-attacking), it suppresses other possibilities of alternative political, diplomatic or military action.¹⁷

The third “topic” of suffering, “sublimation,” installs a relationship of reflexive contemplation with the spectacle of suffering itself. It dispenses with the figures of benefactor and persecutor and, in so doing, considers the suffering to be neither heartbreaking nor unfair. Rather, it invites the spectator to indulge in the aesthetic pleasure of a *tableau vivant*—the visual image of the Manhattan skyline. Thus the moralization of the spectator takes on a different twist. The rhetorical tropes of anachronism and anatopism open up a continuity-discontinuity tension, either in time (World War II) or in space (any western metropolis): how related is the past event to the current one? And which is the connection between this city and others? The voice-over capitalizes on this “openness” to contextualize the event in terms of the conditions of possibility upon which sympathy towards the USA can be sustained or not. Though none of these elements fix the event within an explicitly historical and political discourse, the “sublime” entails the seeds of a representation of the 9/11 that foregrounds its *historicity*. Historicity is here used in the Bakhtinian sense, where the present is not a derivative of what went on before, but a profoundly unfinalizable process that contains multiple potentials: no retrodiction or prediction can definitely determine the nature, causality or consequentiality of the event. The invitation to

contemplate the spectacle is not, then, only an aestheticizing move that divorces the spectacle from history and politics. It is, perhaps, a potentially re-historicizing and re-politicizing move, that offers the spectator a distance and a temporality of reflection.

Of course, my description of the three topics does not aspire to capture the full dynamic of the 9/11 live footage, as it unfolds in time—the “eventness” of this event, in Bakhtin’s words. In reality, none of the topics is able to bear the weight of representing the 9/11 alone. All three alternate, fuse and complement each other, constantly recontextualizing the event in a universe of “heterochronies” and “heterotopias.” This is important. In the face of events like this one, with a complex and massive impact upon all, we, as spectators, need to engage multiply with its multiple “truths.” Indeed, to humanize, to denounce and to reflect. The point is rather to explicate and theorize the conditions of possibility upon which our different engagements with the 9/11 spectacle rest. Looking upon such a spectacle from the perspective of “how it comes to mean,” thematizes the claim that our knowledge of the event, our emotions about it and our dispositions to act upon it are not universal and a-historical potentialities but, rather, “truth effects.” Though, by no means any less real for that, their status as “effects” foregrounds, rather, their historical specificities and their political “complicities.” I regard this critical project, what I earlier referred to as an “analytics of truth,” crucial for our own practices as ethical subjects, for reflecting upon the possibilities we have to think, feel and act politically in contemporary times. Especially in these post-9/11 times.

ENDNOTES

¹ “We shall use the term discourse to refer to semiotic elements of social practices. Discourse therefore includes language (written and spoken and in combination with other semiotics, for example music in singing), non-verbal communication (facial expressions, body movements etc) and visual images (photographs, film). The concept of discourse can be understood as a particular perspective on these various forms of semiosis- it sees them as moments of social practices in their articulation with other extra-discursive moments” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 38). See also Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* and *Media Discourse*; van Dijk, *Discourse as Social Interaction* and *Discourse as Process and Structure*; Scollon; Lemke; Kress and van Leeuwen; and Chouliaraki’s “Proximity and Involvement” for the concept of discourse and for the forms of Discourse Analysis used here.

² In this paper, I draw on Bakhtin’s approach to spacetime analysis, what he terms “chronotopic analysis”. The term “chronotope” captures the historical, context-specific constructedness of space and time dimensions and points to their analysis, “chronotopic analysis”, as a way of examining the basic frames in which our everyday experience is contextualized- and conceptualized: “In chronotopic analysis, time and space are regarded ‘not as ‘transcendental’ but as forms of *the most immediate reality*’” (*The Dialogic Imagination* 85—emphasis added). As such, spacetimes are not explicitly thematised in our consciousness; they are not visibly present in the representation of events. Rather, they act as “conditions of representability” of events, they structure and organize such events “from within,” and, so, their analysis gives us insight into the social and cultural implications of forms of representation (see Morson and Emerson for a theoretical discussion on the ‘chronotope’; see

Ekecrantz, "Jounalism's 'Discursive Events'..." and "Paper presented"; Chouliaraki, "Media Discourse," for analytical applications of the term on media texts).

³ See Chomsky for a similar point: "The horrendous terrorist attacks on Tuesday are something quite new in world affairs, not in their scale and character, but *in the target*. For the US, this is the first time since the war of 1812 that its national territory has been under attack, even threat. Its colonies have been attacked, but not the national territory itself" ("Interview in Radio92"—emphasis added). It is from this point of view that, in the context of mass media, we can understand the "centre"-"periphery" relationship in terms of a dominant distribution of spectator-sufferer positions. "Centre" is the spacetime of viewing; it is the space of safety and the Time of reflection and analysis. While others are suffering, "we," at home, have all the time of the world to contemplate on causes and consequences. "Periphery" is the spacetime of suffering; it is the space of danger, of dangerous living and the time of contingency, of moment-to-moment development.

⁴ See Mouffe for a critical assessment of this tendency; also Dean's "Prologue" for the "remoralization of war" in the end of the 20th century; Rose for the rise of "etho-politics."

⁵ Hodge and Kress 1988, Kress 1985, Chouliaraki and Fairclough, Howarth, Kress and van Leeuwen.

⁶ "The possibility of repeating, and therefore of identifying, *marks* is implied in every code, making of it a communicable, transmittable, decipherable grid that is iterable for a third party, and thus for any user in general" (Derrida 315).

⁷ Within media studies, this property of television texts has been studied quite closely—for example in the work of Marshall McLuhan, and others in the same tradition, though not from the point of view of how mediality relates to meaning-making in concrete practices—a neglect which led much of this work to "technological determinism" (see Tomlinson 1999).

⁸ This has been one of Foucault's basic claims and a major premise for the post-structuralist anchoring of discourse analysis in critical research—see for example Morrow 1994, N. Fraser 1997a, b; Torfing 1998. For a discussion, see Chouliaraki "The Contingency of Universality."

⁹ In media studies, see particularly Tomlinson for the question of how the re-configuration of spacetimes can effect a "closing of moral distance": "How are people to think of themselves as belonging to a global neighbourhood? What does it mean to have a global identity, to think and act as a 'citizen of the world'—literally as a cosmopolitan?" (184). See also Thompson, Mafessoli 2000 for a similar understanding of the relationship between "deterritorialization" and the spectator as a moral figure; and see Robins for the opposite view that the media "unæsthetize" or numb the spectator's ethical sensibilities.

¹⁰ Boltanski includes the "sublime" as one articulation among others in the "aesthetic topic" (114-30). Though I appreciate the logic of the argument, for my purposes, I prefer to use the term aesthetic in a broader sense, for the specific configurations of semiotic resources that constitute each topic of suffering in different ways (for the argument see Chouliaraki, *Discourse and Culture*, chapters 3 and 7).

¹¹ By graphics, I here refer to CNN-type information bars which alternate messages in the lower end of the screen. These include "New York," "Pentagon in flames," "One more plane crash reported in Pennsylvania," etc.

¹² See Bakhtin on "Bildungsroman" (*Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* 10-59).

¹³ The link between the 9/11 and Pearl Harbour was also made in the commentary of an American citizen in Denmark, who joined the expert panel in the same live footage session, fifteen minutes after this long shot. More generally, this "anachronic" link was part of the

broader repertoire of historico-political discourses used to contextualise the 9/11 in the media (Danish DR, Greek “Mega,” CNN) and, more generally, in public debate *fora* (see, for example, Paul Virilio’s interview “From Terror to Apocalypse?”). For a critical comment on precisely this link as a misguided product of media coverage see Frederik Jameson’s article.

¹⁴ The theme “proximity as vulnerability” is, in fact, enacted in the course of the DR live footage, through a different management of the chronotopes of television representation: the linking of selected European cities (such as Moscow, Brussels, London) from the point of view of the emergency measures they took on the 9/11 towards possible terrorist attacks against them. For a theoretical perspective on the theme of international security and the West see Ulrich Beck’s “The Cosmopolitan State.”

¹⁵ “Aperspectival objectivity” is a crucial spacetime for conferring upon the televisual spectacle the legitimacy of a “public sphere”: “The constitution of a public sphere and a definition of political legitimacy based on a conception of objectivity that emphasises the possibility of an observation without any particular perspective are strictly interdependent” (Boltanski 24). For an extensive discussion of this relationship in the mediation of 9/11 see chapter 4 of Chouliaraki, *Discourse and Culture*.

¹⁶ The specificity of this suffering as suffering from the “centre” raises, among other things, the moral question of the selection of the sufferer, implicit also in Chomsky’s statement (endnote iv). The question is this: if the appeal is to our common humanity, why isolate the 9/11 as a “the” tragedy, in the face of so much other suffering around the world? Indeed, one weak point of the discourse of universal humanity is that “[its] emotions can be discredited as foundations and symptoms of a moral position due to their circumstantial character [...] which does not enable one to construct a moral duty with general validity” (Boltanski 100).

¹⁷ See Tariq Ali’s “Yes, There Is an Effective Alternative to the Bombing of Afghanistan.” Importantly, the logic of reiteration requires the selection of the evil-doer, that is the specification of a collective agent of evil, who acts as the target of reiteration—a complicated case in the 9/11 event. The controversy around the appropriateness of the war against Afghanistan rest on the ethical premises of this dubious and problematic operation to specify the evil-doer.

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Part II:

CONSTRUCTING PLACES and IDENTITIES

Globalization and Its Apparatuses: Reducing the World to a Globe

Assimina Karavanta

It has been advocated that “globalization is nothing new” (Jameson 54): the “neolithic trade routes that have been global in their scope” (54); the first western attempts to travel and map the world that foreground colonialism (Marko Polo, Colombus and Amerigo Vespucci); the ideological inheritance of humanism embedded in the discourse of the Enlightenment and its conducive role in the colonial and imperial conquests of the western empires; and, finally, the expansion of the West as a “world-system” and a “civilizing mission” are few of the examples that testify to the historical events of the global tendencies of western imperialism. This genealogical perspective into the global practices that are put to use nowadays validates the position that upholds that there is nothing new about it.

However, the advent of a new and multinational stage of capitalism is an unequivocal event fully fledged in the overwhelming presence of corporations and institutions whose economic interests crucially affect the interests of different social groups in different nations and cultures all around the world. In fact, the multinational character of this corporate culture facilitates the dissemination of its centralized powers in an infinite number of localities and peripheries. In this light, globalization is something new, a “rhizome structure” (Deleuze and Guattari 21) constituted by the paradox of simultaneously deterritorializing and streamlining itself.¹ The Internet is an illuminating example of a global force that is imbued by the paradox of “decentralization” and “concentration” for the electronic space is “open” but also controlled, embedded as it is in some kind of infrastructure since “there is no fully virtualized nor fully digitalized enterprise” (Sassen 177).

In general, the economic interests of the corporate culture that manufactures and regulates its infrastructure do not only control the Internet but also other ideological apparatuses like the mass media and education. To illustrate the transformation of these two apparatuses from state apparatuses into global ones, I want to briefly refer to two illuminating texts that illustrate the implications and repercussions of such a transformation. In *The Society of the Spectacle*, Guy Debord provides a profound analysis of the way the mass media become the apparatuses that “naturalize” the spectacle that they manufacture with their discourse presenting it as a “second Nature that seems to impose inescapable laws upon our environment” (19). Hence, the mass media represent and, thus, reproduce the means and values of the global market by representing them as the “natural” and “neutral” values of an advanced society, whose needs the mass media serve as “mere apparatuses.” Debord remarks, however, “that the [mere] apparatus has nothing neutral about it, and that it

answers precisely to the needs of the spectacle's internal dynamics" (19). The mass media are apparatuses that represent and reproduce the ideology, politics and economic interests of a global market that becomes such an overwhelming spectacle that functions like an unavoidable and unquestionable Nature. In *The University in Ruins*, Bill Readings elaborates on the changes that the concept of the university has undergone, especially in the era of globalization when, as he claims, the concept of the nation-state is being dissolved. By delving into the economics of globalization and the way they affect the university as an ideological institution that produces knowledge and simultaneously is the product of knowledge, Readings shows how the university is no longer called upon to legitimize and uphold the banner of a national culture but is slowly being transmuted into "a relatively independent bureaucratic system" (14), an "autonomous bureaucratic corporation" (40), "another corporation in a world of transnationally exchanged capital" that "serves nothing other than itself" (43).

These examples in the context of this accumulated and condensed power contained and exerted by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and multinational corporations slowly substituting the state institutions² demand that we approach "globalization" as a *philosophical issue*,³ that is, as an issue articulated and conditioned by the late advances of technology and capitalism that have "conceived and grasped the world as a picture" (Heidegger 129). The world has indeed become a globe. The word "globe" represents the world in its most spatial and visible terms and reduces its potential to denote *kosmos* (the experience of being in the world) to *sphere*,⁴ a synonym of the word "globe" that signifies a roundabout gesture of turning the world into a self-encircled system, into a picture, namely, into a terrain that can be visualized, traveled, marketed, administrated and controlled at the click of a button.

In this essay, I intend to contemplate this philosophical issue of globalization by defining the role of the "ideological global apparatuses" in the light of the paradox of the "deterritorialization" and streamlining of their global forces that reduce the "world" to a "globe." It is crucial that this philosophical issue be farther elaborated in view of the options often offered in the debates about globalization, options that concern the qualification and evaluation of the term. I choose to defy the venerating discourses that celebrate the advent of globalization as one of the positive potentials of postmodernity and conceptualize globalization in the event of an "end narrative" that advocates the end of political struggle, the end of great ideologies and, generally, the "disappearance of History as the fundamental element in which human beings exist" (Jameson 69). And I also choose to defy the polemical stance against globalization that articulates it as the advent of the "end of the world" instigated by the dissolution of nations and their agendas, a polemical stance that is often imbued by religious overtones. In other words, the soothing and thoughtless celebration of an event that presumably disseminates difference by facilitating the "emergence of an immense range of groups, races, genders, ethnicities into the speech of the public sphere" (Jameson 56) is blind to the process of rapid assimilation and growing integration of the cultural diversity that the global space is assumed to expedite

through its deterritorializing forces. In similar terms, it is also naïve, if not thoughtless, to rely on a critique of globalization that harbors nostalgia for the nationalist agendas of the traditional nation-state, whose symbolic significance as a “cultural formation, a feeling of belonging, a shared heritage and perhaps primarily a juridico-economic structure” is irreversibly transformed (Negri and Hardt 336).

The question is into what. As Negri and Hardt point out in *Empire*, this irreversible decline of national boundaries, this “general equalization or smoothing of social space and withering of civil society” does not indicate that “social inequalities and segmentations have disappeared” (Negri 336). An all too welcoming and warm embrace of globalization as a joyful discourse that has contributed to the resuscitation of silenced subalternities and marginalized others can obscure the processes that consolidate globalization as a “world-system” from which “‘delinking’ (to use Samir Amin’s term) is henceforth impossible and even unthinkable and inconceivable” (Jameson 57). The imminent disappearance of peripheral cultures and communities not linked to the agendas of global institutions now speaking for nations (like the recent disappearance of several nomadic tribes in Africa and aboriginal peoples in the Amazon, the Pacific Ocean and Australia, to mention just a few devastating examples) and the vast proliferation of people without a home or with an unwanted and hostile home (refugees, impoverished immigrants, boat-people, unwanted and unclaimed people) are some of the many symptoms of this paradox that characterizes the global politics. It is a politics that is becoming evident as the indelible mark of corporate culture in various localities and that sanctions difference while constructing an agenda of global citizenship that can include by excluding, by debunking and forsaking those constituencies that cannot “link” or “log in.” Doesn’t the popular phrase “global village” after all imply the accommodation, integration and legitimization of that which used to stand for the peripheral, the parochial, the “other” by the emergent ideological global apparatuses and their formations? The phrase does not only connote the democratization of a world that is now perceived through its former margin, often esteemed as a parochial and primitive periphery that now has a voice; it also suggests how the “village” has been appropriated and legitimized by the global by being spoken for by those institutions that play a conducive role in the emergent ideological global apparatuses such as international finance institutions, multinational corporations and non-government organizations.

But I wish to return to the paradox of globalization as “deterritorialization” (often seen as the potential not only of unencumbered capital flows but also as the proliferation of speaking differences from variously informed positions) and streamlining (concentration of capital and assimilation of the peripheral/the local or what has been recently called “glocalization”). As pointed out by a number of popular scholars who have written on the subject (such as Enrique Dussel, Walter D. Mignolo, Stephen Gill, Fredrick Jameson, Gayatri Spivak and, most importantly, Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt in their most influential work *Empire*), globalization has favored the voicing of new identities that speak the language of “border gnoseology” (Mignolo 51), the language of “unassimilated and de-

differentiated difference,” against the forgetting of the history of the oppressed. No one can deny the rise of these potentially empowering discourses.

Unfortunately, the positive potential that inheres in these diversified powers of resistance is indissolubly, though paradoxically, related with the “other face” of globalization, which takes the form of the “massive deterritorialization” (Deleuze and Guattari) of capital, which “concentrates and accumulates by setting in motion a nexus of powers” (Negri and Hardt 325) that permeate institutions operating on a global level. Despite the ability of these global institutions and their global alliances (IMF, World Bank, GATT, OPEC, Non Government Organizations) to rapidly transfer capitals and ensure growth in the former “peripheries,” “villages” of the world; despite the boom in western capitalism; and despite the promises of some of these institutions like the World Bank and the IMF to alleviate “third world countries” from poverty and reconstruct them, the rising rate of exploitation, the dismantling of welfare and syndicalism and the impoverishment of the many are undeniable facts. For example, two billion people live barely on a dollar or two a day in the world population of five billions. The devastating effects of the infrastructure and superstructure of these institutions can be witnessed not only in the second and third worlds, where economic and political destitution is often excused as a symptom of local barbarisms, but also in the European Union, one of the centres from where the civilizing mission of globalization is launched. The example of the unconditioned commitment of the European Union to a Europe reduced to a single bank, a single currency, does not, as initially promised by the policies of the European Union, protect the collective action when menaced by the economic interests of the multinational corporations. As Pierre Bourdieu and Corinne Gobin point out in their articles that contemplate the reverberating effects of Euro on Europe in the recent *Maniere de Voir* (a special issue on EURO published by *Le Monde Diplomatique* and entitled *EURO without Europe*), the European Union has already been affected by the overwhelming presence of global capital that demands that nothing block its diffusion and governing. Trying to function as a multinational union that competes with other powers, and primarily with the United States of America, on a global scale, the European Union has solidified certain institutions such as its central Bank and the European Confederation of Syndicates that will regulate labor and labor powers. The transference of the power of the local and national syndicates to a central one that encompasses them all sounds like a logical and economic management of a multinational and multicultural community, a community that the European Union advocates to be. Yet, the extraordinary axiom by which the European Confederation of Syndicates has to abide does not only mollify its powers and rights for resistance but it threatens to completely annul them and reduce the confederation to a mere decoration. The axiom signed in 2000 by the European Commission at Luxembourg and entitled *The Relations of Work in Europe* reads: “The economic and monetary union favors a more cooperative development of relations that are founded on the consideration for the macroeconomic objectives of the union. The important reduction of the number of conflicts in work illustrates this change” (Gobin 24). What

it actually illustrates is the expectation of the European confederation of the syndicates to indulge the macroeconomic interests of the Union that are defined by such global apparatuses as the World Bank and other nongovernmental and multinational organizations by not disturbing them even when the rights of the laborers are disturbed, even when they are at stake. Why else would the fifteen State and government leaders of the EU decide on the immediate application of the chapter of employment of the Amsterdam treaty in November 1997, before the final ratification of the treaty, without asking for its ratification either by their equivalent national parliaments or by their peoples in the form of a referendum? Why else would they present the workers with a *fait accompli* in the form of “*fifteen petite juridical coups d’état*, thus bypassing the peoples and their elected representatives” (Gobin 23)? Is that what they mean by the overcoming of the nation?

This reduction of the “right to work” to the “right for work,” namely, of the reduction of the right of everyone to contribute not only to the forces but also and primarily to the ideology of labor (the means, laws, mechanisms of its production and reproduction) to only the right to have a job, to the right to survive, is one of the many symptoms of the destructive potential of the ideological global apparatuses that aim to carry the civilizing mission of globalization to the advent of globalism, the era of the “global village,” where other rights (strike, freedom, life) to act will be reduced to mere rights for action always suspended and postponed for the general good of the public.

These ideological global apparatuses attempt to crystallize a discourse of “global ethics” and a politics of intervention that will abate local conflicts and frictions thereby subduing “the peripheral” to the global order with the aid of subtle and “micro” forms of violence that include “the peripheral,” the “other,” the “unwanted,” the “third world,” the “exile,” the “minority” as so on, by really omitting “otherness” either by misrepresenting or by debilitating it. The power of these apparatuses lies in that their ideology does not function on a national-state level where it could be made visible and thus resisted and critiqued. With their highly diffused centres that have the double power of simultaneously accumulating and disseminating power all over the world, these emergent ideological global apparatuses can remain unanswerable to the system that they attempt to solidify, that is, the global society or “global village,” and, therefore, ethically irresponsible. For they consolidate the infrastructure of this “global society” and therefore control its superstructure without allowing the connecting links between the two to become fully visible and thus answerable to the “global society,” to the system itself. Althusser teaches us that ideological apparatuses reproduce the means of their reproduction by “representing the imaginary relationship of individuals to the real conditions of their existence” (162) and by turning this representation into a “material” reality. In comparison to the Ideological State Apparatuses into which Althusser delves, the Ideological Global Apparatuses can reproduce not only their means of production but the invisibility of their ideology that lurks behind the benign and objective language of statistics, numbers, financial aid to the “third world” peoples and their devastated

lands by wars, unemployment, thirst, hunger and diseases proliferated by the absurd and unjust distribution of wealth and labor in the first, second and third worlds, a distribution organized and orchestrated by these very institutions, whose power relies on their potential to remain un-answerable to the system of powers that they control. The local, the peripheral is paradoxically placed into the centre of trade, politics, culture, in order to be reconstructed, relieved from destitution, but also in order to be in the process of an infinite, unimaginable, violent narration, representation and abuse. The centre of this violent representation is diffused (deterritorialized and deterritorializing); its invisibility that ensures its invincibility does not however imply its benign, tolerant presence. On the contrary, its invisibility and un-answerability imply that neo-imperial and neo-colonial tactics are swiftly and discreetly diffused as the differences between centre and periphery, North and South are increasingly being accentuated creating:

a situation of permanent social danger and requiring the powerful apparatuses of the society of control (what Althusser called the “Repressive State Apparatuses” (155-6) that now emerge as the Repressive Global Apparatuses that take it upon themselves to safeguard global justice in the world with the help of the war machines of America, Europe and their NATO allies) to ensure separation and guarantee the new management of social space. (Negri 337)

If we are to fully understand this event of globalism and the processes of globalization in order to answer the question “now what?” within the context of end narratives (end of history, end of nations, end of ends), we must begin by trying to conceive the inconceivable paradox of these global apparatuses, a paradox that has become our everyday experience on this very globe of ours: the obscene power of its *glocal* institutions that *destroy the world in order to save it*.

ENDNOTES

¹ According to Deleuze and Guattari’s definition of the “rhizome,” a definition that Negri and Hardt rely on in *Empire* for their analysis of capital flows, a “rhizome” is “composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather dimensions in motion” and “it has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and which it overspills” (21). This does not imply the absence of a central administration in corporate capitalism but rather its facile “territorial dispersal,” to evoke Saskia Sassen’s term.

² Louis Althusser analyzes these institutions as the Ideological State Apparatuses in his famous analysis of ideology and its institutions in “Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses.”

³ Here I draw on Jameson’s claim in “Notes on Globalization as a Philosophical Issue.”

⁴ The Greek word *kosmos* (world) derives from the ancient Greek verb *kosmeo*, which means “to decorate,” “to evaluate,” “to experience.” *Kosmos*, the world, is conceptualized in terms of the subject who experiences being in the world. *Sphere*, on the other hand, derives from the ancient-Greek-word *sphēra* (globe) that is a schematic, therefore, economic representation of the world.

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Greece as a Member-State of the EU: Moving from the “Periphery” to the “Centre”

Christina Lykou

Introduction

This paper investigates the relationship between Greece and the European Union (EU), as this is represented in the discourse of the Greek daily press. It adopts the social semiotic account of language according to which language is viewed as social practice, which is shaped and plays a major role in shaping social reality (see Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic, Language in a Changing World*). Following Halliday, who claims (*Language in a Changing World* 7) that “language shapes experience and transforms our perceptions into meanings,” I view language as a meaning-making system and as a means for developing representations of reality. In other words, agreeing with Halliday and Hasan, I recognize that the choices in language are socially and ideologically meaningful because different ways of using language entail different representations of reality.

Subscribing to this perspective, in this paper I aim to show the gradual movement of Greece from the “periphery” of the EU into its “centre” through analysis following a systemic functional approach (Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*).¹ Focusing mainly on the modality and transitivity systems in articles from Greek newspapers,² I will show that in texts of earlier years Greece, although being one of the 15 members of the EU, was represented as belonging to the “periphery” of this institution. That is, it was not construed as an equal participant in the various functions of the EU or as a decision-maker. I will also argue that this representation has changed in the last few years. In more recent texts Greece represents itself as an actual participant in acts of European integration and therefore, as a member belonging to the centre, i.e. the core of Europe.

The data I am examining for the present paper is compiled of approximately 90 articles published in nine Greek daily newspapers: *Apogevmatini*, *Avgi*, *Eksousia*, *Eleftherotypia*, *Eleftheros Typos*, *Ependytis*, *Kathimerini*, *Ta Nea*, *To Vima*. The articles cover a period of 6 years, from 1997 until 2002, and refer to EU issues as well as to the position of Greece in them, such as the Maastricht treaty, the foundation of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the creation of the euro and the actual circulation of the euro in the European countries.

In the discussion that follows I will focus on two representational categories of the relationship between Greece and the EU: a) Greece as belonging to the “periphery” of the EU, and b) Greece as belonging to the centre of the EU, as an equal participant in acts of European integration, and I will display their grammatical realization in the data examined.

Greece as Belonging to the “Periphery” of the EU

The representation of Greece as belonging to the “periphery” of the EU, that is as an unequal member-state within that institution, is lexicogrammatically realized through negative polarity, the system of modality and metaphors. In the first case, that is in clauses of negative polarity, Greece is construed as being unable to develop and make the necessary progress so as to follow on equal terms the EU functions. Some relevant instances are the following:

(1) *Η χώρα μας δεν εξασφαλίζει κανένα κριτήριο που θα μας προσφέρει το 2000. (Ελευθεροτυπία 1997)*

[Our country does not ensure any of the criteria that will offer us the 2000. (*Eleftherotypia* 1997)]

(2) *Δεν θα εκπληρώσει δηλαδή η χώρα μας κανένα από τα κριτήρια του Μάαστριχτ και ειδικά τα δύο πιο σημαντικά... (Το Βήμα 1997)*

[Our country will not fulfil any of the Maastricht criteria, especially the two most important ones... (*To Vima* 1997)]

In instances (1) and (2) *η χώρα μας* [our country], namely Greece, is an agent in the material processes *εξασφαλίζει* [ensure] and *θα εκπληρώσει* [will fulfil] respectively. The fact that both these instances are characterized by negative polarity renders Greece an entity incapable of fulfilling any of the criteria required in order to be part of the EMU, a fact that has been achieved by the other member-states. Moreover, the use of categorical modality construes the inability of Greece, and therefore its exclusion from a Union constituted by the other member-states, an unquestionable fact.

A relevant representation of Greece is developed in the next instance, which again refers to its participation in the EMU:

(3) *Σε αντιδιαστολή με αυτά που συμβαίνουν στην υπόλοιπη Ευρώπη, ας μην ξεγελιόμαστε, στην Ελλάδα δεν έχουμε καταφέρει να συμμαζέψουμε τα δημοσιονομικά μεγέθη ούτε καν να σταθεροποιήσουμε την πορεία της οικονομίας. (Καθημερινή 1998)*

[Contrary to what is happening in the rest of Europe, let's not fool ourselves, in Greece we haven't managed to tidy up the macroeconomic indices and not even to stabilise the course of the economy. (*Kathimerini* 1998)]

In this case, apart from the use of negative polarity, the differentiation of Greece from the EU is construed through the prepositional phrase *σε αντιδιαστολή με αυτά που συμβαίνουν στην υπόλοιπη Ευρώπη* [contrary to what is happening in the rest of Europe], and the use of the adjective *υπόλοιπη* [rest of], which designate Greece as the only member of the EU that has not managed to take part in the EMU. Greece is therefore represented as an unequal member, as belonging to the “periphery” of the EU.

It is also worth paying attention to the temporal location of the events described in the three previous clauses: *δεν εξασφαλίζει* [does not ensure], *δεν θα*

εκπληρώσει [will not fulfil], *δεν έχουμε καταφέρει* [we haven't managed]. The fact that the tenses used are past, present and future construes the inability of Greece as lasting through time. Thus, Greece is represented as being unable to participate equally in the various functions of the EU not only in the past or the present but also in the future.

The representation of Greece as not belonging in the core of the EU is also developed through the fusion of negative polarity and modality, as in the following example:

(4) *Η Ελλάδα που «δεν μπορεί» να κερδίσει το ευρώ, οι Μ. Βρετανία, Δανία και Σουηδία που «δεν θέλουν», θα μείνουν...στα πίσω καθίσματα της συνεδρίασης.... Οι «4» θα μείνουν απ' έξω. (Καθημερινή 1997)*
 [Greece which “cannot” win the euro, Great Britain, Denmark and Sweden which “do not want to,” will stay...in the back seats of the Meeting.... The “4” will stay out. (Kathimerini 1997)]

In this case Greece is represented as belonging to a sub-group within the EU consisting of the member-states that do not take part in the EMU. This group is lexicalized as the “4.” However, looking at the processes, we can see that Greece is agent in the modal verb *δεν μπορεί* [cannot], which shows inability, whereas the other three members of this sub-group are Sensors in the mental clause *δεν θέλουν* [not want]. This fact further re-classifies Greece and highlights its differentiation and distance from the other members. In this case, Greece is construed as the only member-state which does not participate in the EMU not by choice, as in the case of Great Britain, Denmark and Sweden, but by its incapability to meet the demands required.

Besides the use of negative polarity, the representation of Greece as different from the EU is developed through metaphors, such as the following:

(5) *Η Ελλάδα είναι η μόνη χώρα μέλος που προσπαθεί 17 χρόνια να πετύχει στις κοινοτικές «εξετάσεις». Κι έχει μείνει πάλι «μετεξεταστέα». (Ελευθεροτυπία 1998)*
 [Greece is the only member-state that has been trying for 17 years to succeed in the communal “examinations.” And it is again “on probation.” (Eleftherotypia 1998)]

In this instance Greece is represented as a student who has to take exams in order to be part of the European community, as indicated by the circumstantial element *στις κοινοτικές «εξετάσεις»* [in the communal “examinations”]. And looking at the attributive *«μετεξεταστέα»* [“on probation”] of the relational attributive clause of which Greece is agent and the adverb *πάλι* [again] which indicates repetition, we can see that Greece is construed as always failing in these exams. The differentiation of Greece from the other members is also stressed by the use of the adjective *μόνη* [only] in *η μόνη χώρα μέλος* [the only member-state]. Looking at the representation developed, one could suggest that there is a power differential between Greece and the EU equivalent to the power differential between students and teachers.

Greece as part of the “periphery” of the EU is also grammaticalized in clauses characterized by modality marking obligation. Some relevant instances are the following:

(6) *Οφείλουμε να επιβιώσουμε μέσα στην Ευρώπη του Μάαστριχτ με τις δυνάμεις μας.* (Καθημερινή 1997)

[We have to survive in the Europe of Maastricht based on our strength. (Kathimerini 1997)]

(7) *Ακριβώς επειδή αλλάζει το πολιτικό σκηνικό στην Ευρώπη εμείς πρέπει όχι να χαλαρώσουμε αλλά να εντείνουμε τις προσπάθειες.* (Το Βήμα 1998)

[Precisely because the political setting is changing in Europe, we should not loosen but intensify our efforts. (To Vima 1998)]

In these cases Greece is construed as a weak member of the EU, which is not only excluded from the EU decisions and its various functions, but it also has to try really hard in order to survive in this institution. The strong modality *Οφείλουμε να επιβιώσουμε* [We have to survive] (instance 6) and *πρέπει να εντείνουμε* [we should intensify] (instance 7) marks the urge to make all the necessary efforts and is indicative of the strong feeling that Greece should be an equal part of the EU. It is also worth noticing the use of the first person pronoun *we* that includes all Greek people and renders this need even stronger. One could suggest that this urge and necessity for Greece to make the necessary progress, developed in these two instances, imply Greece’s capability to overcome its problems and meet the demands required so as to be an equal participant in the EU functions.

In the following example, apart from the strong modality and the use of the first person pronoun, the differentiation of Greece from the EU is also realized through a hypotactic clause which indicates condition, *εάν θέλουμε να γίνουμε τύποις και ουσία ευρωπαϊκή χώρα* [if we want to become in formality and essence a European country], and especially through the adverbial phrase *τύποις και ουσία* [in formality and essence]:

(8) *Όμως εάν θέλουμε να γίνουμε τύποις και ουσία ευρωπαϊκή χώρα θα πρέπει να αρχίσουμε να επεξεργαζόμαστε μακροχρόνιες στρατηγικές έχοντας μάτια κι αυτιά ανοιχτά στα ρεύματα που αναπτύσσονται στον ευρωπαϊκό χώρο.* (Τα Νέα 1998)

[But if we want to become in formality and essence a European country we should start working out long lasting strategies having our eyes and ears open to the current trends that are developing in Europe. (Ta Nea 1998)]

In this case Greece is represented as totally lacking its European identity and in order to become a European country it has to work out long lasting strategies.

From the analysis of the above instances it is displayed that in texts of the Greek press of the earlier years Greece is represented as dissociated from the EU. A significant role to the development of this representation plays the systematic use of *we*, which includes all Greek people and highlights the distinction between *we*, *Greece*, on the one hand as opposed to *they*, *the EU*, the Europeans on the other.

Greece as Belonging to the Centre of Europe, as an Equal Participant in Acts of European Integration

However, in more recent texts of Greek daily newspapers a different representation is developed: Greece is construed as gradually moving from the “periphery” of the EU into its “centre.” In other words, Greece is starting to represent itself as an actual participant in acts of European integration and as an equal member of the EU. This representation, which is realized particularly through choices in the transitivity system, can be detected in the following examples:

(9) *Ενέκριναν μια διακήρυξη (οι 15) για να αποκτήσει η ΕΕ ουσιαστική ταυτότητα στα θέματα κοινής εξωτερικής πολιτικής και άμυνας. (Καθημερινή 1999)*

[They (the 15) approved of a declaration so that the EU will obtain essential identity in matters of common foreign policy and defence. (*Kathimerini* 1999)]

(10) *Τέλος οι 15 επαναλαμβάνουν ότι είναι επιθυμητή η προσέγγιση της ΕΕ με τη Δυτικοευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. (Το Βήμα 2000)*

[Finally the 15 repeat that the rapprochement of the EU with the Western European Union is desirable. (*To Vima* 2000)]

(11) *Ο ευρωπαίος πολίτης νιώθει ότι οι «15» λαμβάνουν σημαντικές αποφάσεις που τον αφορούν, χωρίς να μπορεί να εκφράζει τη δική του άποψη. (Καθημερινή 2000)*

[The European citizen feels that the “15” take important decisions that concern him, without his being able to express his own opinion. (*Kathimerini* 2000)]

In instances (9), (10) and (11), the 15 member-states are agents in the material process *ενέκριναν* [approved], the verbal *επαναλαμβάνουν* [repeat] and the mental *λαμβάνουν αποφάσεις* [take decisions] respectively; that is, in processes of doing, saying and thinking. Consequently, the 15 are represented as being entitled to take collective actions and decisions. Taking into account van Leeuwen’s sociosemantic inventory concerning the representation of social actors, in these instances the 15 member-states are represented through collectivization, i.e. as a group without the dissociation of any member. This fact leads us to infer that Greece is construed as an actual participant in the functions of the EU and as a decision maker.

The representation of Greece as being an integral part of the EU is also developed in the following example:

(12) *Η μεγάλη νομισματική αλλαγή, που θα προσδιορίσει το ευτυχές 2002 και θα επηρεάσει βαθύτατα την Ευρώπη και κατ’ επέκταση την ελληνική οικονομία και κοινωνία, ξεκίνησε ήδη από τα μεσάνυχτα. (Καθημερινή 2002)*

[The major monetary change, that will determine the happy 2002 and will deeply affect Europe and consequently the Greek economy and society, has already started since midnight. (*Kathimerini* 2000)]

In this case Europe and the Greek economy and society are both Goals of the material process *θα επηρεάσει* [will affect] and are linked paratactically. Note the use of the conjunction *κατ' επέκταση* [consequently], which creates a cause and effect relationship between Europe and Greece. The representation developed is that Greece will be affected by any change affecting Europe, since it belongs to the “core” of the EU.

In the following example, Greece is also represented as an equal member of the European integration. Mark especially the attribute *ισότιμους πολίτες της Ευρώπης* [equal citizens of Europe], which is ascribed to Greek citizens:

(13) *Η Ελλάδα γίνεται πιο ισχυρή, πιο ανταγωνιστική αφού το ενιαίο νόμισμα μας καθιστά ισότιμους πολίτες της Ευρώπης. (Ελεύθερος Τύπος 2002)*

[Greece is becoming more powerful, more competitive, since the common currency renders us equal citizens of Europe. (*Eleftheros Typos* 2002)]

It is also worth mentioning that in the more recent texts a change in the in-group relations within the EU is construed: the EU is represented as being divided into two sub-groups, the countries that belong to the euro-zone and those that do not, a fact that is temporally located especially with the circulation of the common currency, the euro. This representation is developed in the following instances:

(14) *Από αύριο δεν θα έχουμε εθνικό νόμισμα. Θα έχουμε το νόμισμα που θα έχουν και άλλες ένδεκα χώρες της ΕΕ, από τις 15 συνολικά που την αποτελούν. (Απογευματινή 2001)*

[Starting from tomorrow we will not have a national currency. We will have the currency that the other 11 countries of the EU will have, out of the 15 that constitute it as a whole. (*Apogevmatini* 2001)]

(15) *Τώρα που το ευρώ είναι πραγματικότητα για δώδεκα χώρες της ΕΕ το ερώτημα είναι τι θα κάνουν οι υπόλοιπες. (Ελευθεροτυπία 2002)*

[Now that the euro is a reality for the twelve countries of the EU the question is what will the rest of them do. (*Eleftherotypia* 2002)]

The division of the EU in two groups in example (14) is realized through the agent of the relational clause *και άλλες ένδεκα χώρες της ΕΕ* [the other 11 countries of the EU] and the prepositional phrase *από τις 15 συνολικά που την αποτελούν* [out of the 15 that constitute it as a whole] which indicate comparison, whereas in the following instance (15) this division is realized by the agent *υπόλοιπες* [the rest of them] of the material clause *θα κάνουν* [will do].

Therefore, one can argue that in the more recent texts of the Greek press *we* is inclusive for Greece in relation to the EU, as it represents the member-states that follow a common economic policy and belong to the centre of Europe, part of which is Greece, and it is opposed to *they*, the countries of the EU that don't adopt the common currency.

Conclusion

The representation of Greece in the discourse of the Greek daily press regarding its relationship with the EU and its position in it has changed over the last years from its representation as belonging to the “periphery” of the EU in texts of earlier years into gradually accepting its EU identity and representing itself as a part of this institution. I believe that this change in the representation of Greece cannot be dissociated from its participation in the Economic and Monetary Union and the circulation of the common currency. So far Greece was used to following the developments and the decisions taken by others and to trying to meet the demands required, a fact that is realized in the data examined. The circulation of the common currency, the euro, constitutes the first event in which Greece is participating in equal terms. The fact that this event took place simultaneously in all the EU member-states contributes to the sense of equality and participation in the acts of European integration. It is also worth pointing out that the existence of Others—the countries not included in the euro zone—is an element that strengthens Greece’s sense of belonging to the centre of the EU.

To conclude, I believe it is important to be aware of the representation of the EU and of its relationship with Greece in the mass media discourse, since it contributes significantly to the shaping of the beliefs and attitudes of the public opinion towards the membership and belonging to that institution. I would also like to stress the importance of similar investigations in the daily press of other member-states in order to see how different member-states “view” the EU and their position in it.

ENDNOTES

¹ This particular study is part of a larger research project, which focuses on the linguistic construction of the EU and of the relationship between the EU and Greece in the discourse of the Greek press.

² According to Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) three metafunctions are always simultaneously inscribed in language: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual, which refer to the construction of reality, the construction and negotiation of social relations and identities, and the construction of text respectively. These metafunctions are realized in the lexicogrammatical level through the system of transitivity, the system of mood and modality and the system of theme-rheme correspondingly. For a more thorough description of these systems see Halliday’s *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, and Martin, Matthiessen and Painter. See also Lykou for an account of the principles of SFG in the Greek language.

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Constructing Identities in the “Periphery”: The Case of the Elderly¹

Apostolos Poullos

Introduction

This paper deals with the construction of elderly identity through talk. The elderly are often reported as being dislocated from the “mainstream” and restricted to the periphery of social life (Coupland 192). Old age has traditionally been associated with withdrawal from various forms of social relationships. A number of prejudices project unpleasant images of older people, and, as Scrutton observes, commonly held ageist ideas “restrict the social role and status of older people, structure their expectations of themselves, prevent them [from] achieving their potential and deny them equal opportunities” (13).

I will try to show how the marginalization of older people can be achieved in everyday interaction as a result of age identification work. In analyzing the construction of age identities, I adopt the ethnomethodological perspective, according to which identity is not simply an intrinsic property of a person but, rather, “an interactional accomplishment, negotiated and achieved by [people] in the course of ordinary events” (Paoletti 8). By studying everyday interaction one can examine how interlocutors “discursively offer each other identities that they can each choose to attune to, to enact...or to resist” (Williams and Nussbaum 133). This means that older people may have an ageist elderly identity constructed by younger people which they may align with or resist. Therefore, I will also try to show how elder speakers can resist their being placed in the periphery of social life, through their “identity-relevant actions or discourses” (Paoletti 9).

A systematic exploration of such actions and discourses is possible through the conceptualization of membership categories which help us analyze “the knowledge that members of a society have about the society” (Sacks 40). According to Sacks, people use language to arrange the objects of the world into such membership categorization devices, that is, collections of related things, like gender, race or age. For instance, the membership categorization device “age” includes categories like “baby,” “child,” “adolescent,” “adult,” “old person,” which evoke certain category-bound activities. When we study everyday conversation, we can find out how each category is used by speakers, how speakers align with this category or distance themselves from it, how they modify it according to the context in which they interact, how they associate this category with certain duties, obligations, rights, expectations, thus creating stereotypes.

The following fragments from authentic Greek conversations explore how speakers use the category “old person” or “elderly” to construct age identities discursively.²

Placing Elders in the Periphery

In the first two fragments elderly people are conversationally placed in the periphery of social life and are denied access to everyday activities.

In fragment (1), A(spasia), who is 84, her husband P(anos), who is 90 years old, and their middle-aged son D(imitris) are watching the news on the TV. Panos’s health condition is generally quite good but he rarely goes out because of rheumatism. Aspasia comments on the fact that the previous day’s news bulletin was exclusively concerned with the introduction of euros in everyday life.

Fragment 1

1	(f)	A:	Εχθές όλη την ημέρα μας έφαγε τα αφτιά το ευρώ (...)
2	(m)	P:	Πρέπει να συνηθίσουμε το ευρώ.
3			(2.0)
4		A:	Δεν έχεις δουλειά εσύ Πάνο.
5			(1.0)
6		A:	Τι το— θα βγεις να ψωνίσεις;
7			(0.5)
8	(m)	D:	Ποι[ος;
9	:	A	[Πώς θα τα συνηθίσουμε λέει τα ευρώ .hh θα βγεις θα ψωνίσεις λέω;
10			(0.5)
11		P:	E::: λέ:ω:: εγώ για τον κόσμο
12			(0.5)
13		A:	A:: ο κόσμ[ος ()
14		D:	[Εσ— <u>χα</u> :εσύ θα στενοχωριέσαι για τον κόσμο;

Panos’s use of a first person plural verb in “we must get used to using euros” (turn 2) seems to signal his feeling that he is or wants to be a member of the social group who are interested in getting accustomed to the use of the new currency, despite the fact that he is not going to use it, at least immediately. In other words, Panos is doing inclusion (see Watson 282). Aspasia tells him that he shouldn’t bother about euros (4) since he doesn’t go shopping (6). Although her remark implies that her husband should be relieved since he won’t face any problems in everyday transactions, she actually excludes him from social life by denying him access to the everyday concerns of active members of society. Dimitris is informed by Aspasia about his father’s concern (8-9). When Panos reformulates his concern as a general comment

(11), Dimitris goes further in excluding him from current affairs by telling him that he should not worry about other people's worries (14).

Aspassia's and Dimitris's protectionist behaviour towards Panos parallels dependency-related overaccommodation (Coupland et al. 32), a strategy which refers to overbearing and excessively directive talk to elderly people. Panos is told what he should or should not do and is induced to become more dependent. Such behaviour disempowers the person being overaccommodated (Williams and Nussbaum 109)—notice Panos's being silenced in turns 5 and 7 and his diffident attempt to break that silence in turn 11. In this fragment, Dimitris and Aspassia attribute certain features to Panos's identity: as an elder, he is not expected to be interested in everyday issues (such as the price of products) which are regarded as the concerns of active younger members of society.

In the following fragment, M(eropi), 70, is talking to F(enia), 23, about an incident that took place in the hotel in which she is staying with her friend, Leni.

Fragment 2

1	(f)	M:	Αλλά οι Αλβανοί: μετά: εξαφανί:στηκαν. (.) Δεν ήταν εκεί άραγε περιμένανε:::
2	(f)	F:	Θα βγήκανε αυτές [έξω
3		M:	[Αυτές
4			(3.0)
5		M:	Αχ μου λέει::: η κυρα Λένη:: (0.5) άσε την πόρτα θα βγω έξω να δω () όχι θα την αφήσω τέντα την πόρτα της λέω να πάρω αέρα τη νύχτα σκάω .hh >όχι όχι όχι όχι όχι < μου λέει (.) γιατί τώρα που θες νωρίς να βγεις της λέω και μετά να την κλείσω; (.) Τέντα η πόρτα όλη νύχτα της λέω.
6			(1.0)
7		M:	Φοβάσαι μην μπουν οι ↑Αλβανοί εκατό χρονών είσαι της λέω να φοβηθώ εγώ της λέω που::: είμαι::: εβδομήντα εντάξει αλλά εσύ εκατό τι να φοβηθείς.
8			(3.0)
9		M:	Ποιος έχει τη χά:ρη μας της λέω κυρά Λένη μου να μπει ένας τώρα Αλβανός μέσα της λέω:: (.) (και να μας περιμένει το πολύ να σε) σκοτώ:σει μόνο της λέω γιατί τι θα μας κά:νει της λέω (δεν βαριέσαι) (.) να δούμε κι εμείς ΧΑΡΑ (.) χι χι στα γέλια η κυρα Λένη ()
10		F:	E: ψυχού:λα είναι κι αυτή το ΘΕ:ΛΕΙ [χε χε
11		M:	[Τι της έκανα χτες ()
12		F:	Εδώ η γριά η Μαρί:να απέ:ναντι που έχει τους κουραμπιέ:δες χήρα κι αυτή (.) .hhh κά:θεται και βλέπει στην ET 2 δεν είναι ο Ασκητής ο σεξολό:γος;=
13		M:	=Ναι ναι ναι [ναι

14		F:	[Κά:θεται και βλέπει τις <u>εκπομπέ:ς</u> τα <u>ΒΡΑ:ΔΙΑ ΜΟ:ΝΗ</u> χε χα χα χα .hhh=
15		M:	= <u>Τι:</u> να [δει
16		F:	[Λέω μωρή τρελοχή:ρα λέω <u>Τι:</u> χα [χα χα χα
17		M:	[Τι να κάνει κι αυτή [()
18		F:	[Τι: <u>ΑΝΗΣΥΧΙ:ΕΣ ΕΙΝΑΙ</u> ΑΥΤΕΣ χα χα χα .hhh
19		M:	<u>Τι:</u> να <u>δει:</u> η κακομοίρα [αχ
20		F:	[Ε γιατί βλέπει κι αυτή εν[διαφέρεται (τα θέματα) χα [χα χα
21		M:	[Ναι ναι [μαθαίνει μαθαίνει
22		F:	.hhh το <u>ΚΟΚΟ::</u> (.) <u>κανεί:ς</u> δεν το ξεχνάει τελικά

Meropi has been telling Fenia about two women who are also staying at the hotel and have been flirting with two Albanians. After the Albanians had left the hotel, Meropi wanted to leave the room door open because it was a hot night (5). Her roommate, Leni, however, wanted the door closed. Meropi told her (7) that she shouldn't be afraid of the Albanians as she is too old (almost 100) to be afraid of the Albanians, especially as Meropi, herself, isn't at all afraid, though considerably younger at 70.

Two interesting points can be raised here. First, notice the “gradeable qualities” (Sacks 45) of the category “old.” Age, unlike gender or race, is a membership categorization device that does not provide clear-cut, reciprocally exclusive alternatives but incorporates more blurred categories (Paoletti 10). In other words, the categorization is relative to the subject who is producing it. We hear Meropi characterize Leni as old. Younger speakers would obviously characterize Meropi as old, too.

Another interesting point is the issue of fear. Fear has traditionally been associated with the category old (take for instance the stereotypical image of a powerless/helpless old person). Notice, however, that here Meropi believes that Leni shouldn't be afraid of anything since she is too old, thus implying that even her death would not matter so much. On the contrary, she asserts her own right to be afraid, since she is younger than Leni. In this case, fear becomes a right that is claimed by a younger person.

Meropi then goes on to mock both herself and her roommate by saying that if some man enters their room, he need not kill them; he might just rape them, which would be something both women would enjoy. Leni is reported as laughing at this comment (9). Fenia also laughs and makes fun of Leni's reaction by saying that despite her being old, Leni would enjoy having sex (10). This gives her the chance to talk about a neighbour, Marina, who is a widow and enjoys watching a sex-counseling phone-in show on TV. Both Fenia and Meropi laugh at Marina's TV preference. This is not strange as “elders are not considered sexually active and sexual elders are frequently considered to be disgusting or comical” (Williams and Nussbaum 50). As shown in this fragment, older people are even denied the right to

be interested in issues pertaining to sex life; “sexual activity” is a category bound activity normally associated with the category “young person.”

Resisting Marginalization

Old people may try to resist their being placed in the periphery of social life. For example, they can reject negatively stereotypical features that are attributed to their identities. This is illustrated in the following conversation that takes place in a peer elderly context.

Fragment 3

1	(m)	P:	Εδώ έρχονται τα κουνούπια;
2			(.)
3	(f)	I:	E;
4			(.)
5		P:	Εδώ έρχονται τα κουνούπια σε σένα όλα; (.) Θερμόαιμη είσαι.
6			(.)
7		I:	Θερμόαιμη είμαι; (.) Τι να το κάνω κι αν είμαι θερμόαιμη, ρε- ρημαδιό είμαι <u>χε χε χε χε χε χε χε χε χε χε χε χε χε</u>
8			(.)
9	(f)	M:	Χρυσafικά όμως βλέπω <u>εδώ</u> ; και [<u>πολλά</u> ; και <u>ακριβά</u> ; και-
10		I:	[Έτσι ()
11		I:	<u>Έτσι</u> .
12			(.)
13		M:	E, καλά έτσι είναι.
14		I:	Τα <u>πά:ντα</u> <u>έ::τσι</u> με την αξία μου δεν ντρέπομαι <u>κανένανε</u> .
15		M:	(Όχι καλέ τι [να])
16		I:	[<u>Ο::λες</u> τις δουλειές έχω κάνει. (.) <u>Ο::λες</u> και <u>σουβλά::κια</u> <u>πούλησα</u> και όλα και αυτά που λες εγώ τα ακούω βερεσέ (.) και σπίτι έκανα και όλα έκανα.
17			(.)
18		M:	Χρό:νια όμως είναι αυτά που [έκανες
19		I:	[<u>Α:σ'</u> τα χρόνια κι <u>ά:μα</u> θέλεις και <u>τώρα</u> ακόμα <u>πλέ:κω</u> και <u>παίρνω</u> διακόσιες κάθε κουβέρτα. .hh <u>Α:σ'</u> τα τώρα (.) <u>μη</u> με λες εμένα πράγματα.

70-year-old P(etros) tells 67-year-old I(rini) that since she is bitten by so many mosquitoes she must be warm-blooded (1, 5). Irini says that being warm-blooded does not matter as her health is poor (literally, she is “in ruins”—7). Her laughter is probably an attempt to protect herself from her own face-threatening comment. Reporting one’s own age or health problems that are connected with one’s old age is often accompanied by laughter and may be a way of releasing embarrassment (Coupland and Coupland 479). However, the other speakers do not respond to her

laughter and a significant gap occurs (8). After this gap, M(aria), who is more or less the same age as Irini, observes that “nevertheless” [“ὅμως”] the jewels Irini is wearing are many as well as expensive (9). This may be a comment on both the fact that Irini has previously told them that she was very poor in the past and on the fact that she is too old and sick to wear so many jewels. Irini states that she deserves wearing them and she is not ashamed of showing them (14) since she has worked hard in the past, doing all kinds of jobs and hence she is now able to enjoy her life achievements (16). Maria seems to agree (13, 15) and attempts to upgrade her assessment by referring to the years Irini has spent working and struggling (18). However, Irini seems to be irritated by this implicit reference to her age (19) and emphasizes the fact that she is still able to earn money by crocheting blankets and, thus, earn a good income. Irini obviously distances herself from the negative stereotypical image of the powerless old person by casting herself as a heroine of her own story which clearly shows her “personal triumph... in the face of the trials and tribulations of [her] personal past” (Williams and Nussbaum 140) as well as her perseverance despite her present health problems.

Concluding Remarks

To sum up, we have seen in the preceding fragments a number of identity features that are conversationally attributed to older people either by themselves or by their interlocutors—both younger people and peer elders. We have also seen how the elderly try to distance themselves from negative stereotypes. Obviously, there are many more ways in which elderly identities are constructed in the course of everyday interaction that have not been touched upon in this paper due to space limitations. These conversations, however, have hopefully illustrated to some extent how being old can be produced in the course of everyday activities as an interactional accomplishment and have shown how certain speaking practices can result into the marginalization of the elderly or the negotiation of their rights.

ENDNOTES

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² Due to space limitations, the number of initially analyzed fragments has been reduced. The notation utilized in the transcripts is based on Ten Have (213-214).

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Periphery Viewing the World: Myths about Language¹

Mary Drossou

Introduction

This paper is based on the claim that nationalist ideologies have led to specific viewings of language, and to a series of “myths” about the official language and other dominant or lesser-used languages. My working hypothesis is that visions of language and languages are different in the “centre” and in the “peripheral” European countries, whose national identity is threatened by globalization, Europeanization, and what Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas have called “Englishisation.” However, the results of this initial study show that there are more similarities than differences, something which, I believe, needs further investigation.

The paper presents the findings of a short-scaled investigation into the myths about language and languages produced and reproduced in the essays of second-year students at the Faculty of English Studies of the University of Athens, within the context of an introductory course in Sociolinguistics. This paper is part of a longer project, which investigates students’ discursive constructions and their views on language and languages. Their claims to truth are compared to those common in the “centre” and specifically, to language myths commonly construed by English-speaking subjects, as well as to those common in the “periphery,” construed by Greek speaking subjects. Although the data collected to this point consist also of myths about differences relating to male and female use of language, here I will focus on myths about official languages and other dominant and lesser-used languages.

Bauer and Trudgill (xvi) define a language myth as a well-established view about language that ordinary people of a particular society have. Some of these ideas are considered to be so well-established that they tend to become part of the culture, even though they are often based on a false premise, or they fail to take into account important pieces of information. It is in this sense that they are referred to as myths. Dendrinos suggests that a myth is a claim to truth that has taken on, through popular belief, important social dimensions and has become a stereotype. Many linguistic models that have been developed throughout the years have also contributed to the legitimisation of these stereotypes. Since “myth,” as defined here, can also be described as a stereotype, in what follows I shall be using the terms myth and stereotype interchangeably.

Some of the most popular language myths commonly construed by English-speaking subjects are discussed in the book *Language Myths*, edited by Laurie Bauer and Peter Trudgill, which includes a series of articles written by linguists, each dealing with a specific myth. The language myths most frequently construed by Greek speaking subjects are discussed in the book *Δέκα Μύθοι για την Ελληνική Γλώσσα* [10 Myths about the Greek Language], edited by Yiannis Haris, which also

consists of a series of articles written by linguists, each of which deals with a different myth.

Looking through the two books, we notice that many of the stereotypes described are the same for both speakers of the English and the Greek language. For instance, consistent in both books is the myth that language change is undesirable and that some languages are superior to others. In fact, it is one's native language which is usually seen as unique and superior (see Moschonas). Concerning the Greek language, it is interesting to note that many myths that Greek speakers have are generated from the myth that the Ancient Greek language is superior to the Modern Greek. The Ancient Greek language is further considered as a perfect linguistic system to which all other languages should be compared.

The Emergence of Nationalist Ideologies

The myths discussed in the present paper have originated and are in some way linked to nationalist ideologies. Historically, two events, not unrelated to one another, seem to have been important in the creation of nationalist ideologies: the emergence of standard languages and the development of national languages. These events eventually produced the idea of national standard languages and "influenced the later view that nations were, especially, groups of people speaking the same language" (Lo Bianco 95). In fact, the nation-state was "constructed on the idea of a symmetry between ethnicity, or peoplehood as expressed in and by language among other defining factors" (Lo Bianco 95), a view also shared by Christides (24) who adds that it is the idea of one national language that renders linguistic diversity unacceptable. In the same vein, Fragoudaki (121) states that one's national language was considered as the major characteristic of one's national identity, a view particularly true of Greeks (see Trudgill 245).

It seems, however, that today we are faced with a totally new situation. At a period where "complete globalisation is imminent," human movement "has made multiculturalism a global phenomenon with unprecedentedly large and differentiated population transfers in all parts of the globe" (Lo Bianco 93). Moreover, "the emergence virtually everywhere of pluralistic nations necessitates new distinctions between the political nation and the cultural nation" (Lo Bianco 97). Perhaps more than ever, Lo Bianco argues, "it is necessary that every nation comes to grips, in public policy and in educational practice, with polyglot populations" (94). However, it is rather difficult for previously homogeneous and unitary political nations to understand and finally accept the new situation. Furthermore, without disregarding the importance of the historical conditions under which a nation-state was created, it is my contention that the more a nation-state is economically and politically disempowered (and hence characterised as a periphery country—as Greece is for example), the more difficult it is for it to move away from the idea of one nation and one language. As Trudgill says, ethnicity is not an unproblematic concept (245).

For this reason, and at this particular period, I think it is important to demystify the prevalent language myths that the members of such a culture share. For

one thing, these myths may constitute part of what Schiffman calls “implicit and covert” assumptions, which often penetrate language policies (67).

Description of the Study

The subjects of this short-scaled investigation were 149 second year students taking the introductory course in Sociolinguistics (about 40% of the total number of students registered for the course).

The data were accumulated in four different ways:

1. Students were asked by the course instructor to read different chapters from Bauer and Trudgill’s book on different occasions during the semester. Each time they were assigned a different task. The responses I considered for this study were based on an assignment whereby students were asked to read the first three chapters of the book, which deal with language change and the superiority of some languages over others, and make a list of at least three ideas which impressed them, as they constituted new ways of understanding for them, since the naturalised assumption they had before reading the book was very different.
2. At the end of the semester students were asked by the instructor of the course to mention a myth they believed in before starting the course and how their opinion has changed after having followed the Sociolinguistics course.
3. The responses of students to a True-False type of exercise, assigned by the course instructor. Actually, students, having completed the course, were asked to respond to five statements by indicating whether they thought they were true or false and then explain why one of the statements they believed to be untrue was actually false.
4. Data I personally collected by taking detailed notes of the students’ participation in class discussions.

The data collected was analysed in terms of two main categories: language and nation, and linguistic superiority.

Language and Nation

In all different types of data, the stereotypes relating language and nation are rather strong. The view of language as “the soul of the nation” is prominent in the data. Specifically, language is viewed to signify “the identity of a nation,” as examples 1 and 3 below indicate, “what distinguishes it from other nations” (example 2). Moreover, language is seen as expressing a nation’s culture (example 3) and as a means of unifying a nation’s people (examples 1 and 2).²

- (1) A language usually signifies the *identity* of a nation and *unifies* its people.
- (2) Language *unifies* a nation and *distinguishes* it from another.
- (3) Everybody wants *to keep their own language* that *expresses* their *national identity and culture*.

After taking the course, students were asked to complete a brief questionnaire in which they had to state whether they agreed or disagreed with some statements given

to them. All of the statements were misconceptions about language. Three of the questions concerned issues related to language and nation. To the myths related to language the nation, students responded as follows:

	True		False		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Multilingualism is negative for a nation-state	--	19%	--	81%	149	100%
Language is the soul of a nation	--	76%	--	24%	149	100%
One's ethnic identity is determined by his/her language	--	52%	--	48%	149	100%

Table 1: Student responses to three common language stereotypes concerning language and nation

As can be deduced from the percentages of the true and false ratings of the above stereotypes, whereas students seem to believe that multilingualism is desirable for a nation, their responses indicate that they consider language as the soul of a nation. This contradiction may be due to the fact that during the sociolinguistics course it was made evident to the students that the course instructor did not view multilingualism negatively. As for one's ethnic identity half of the students believe that it is determined by one's language and half of them that it is not.

The misconceptions about language discussed above most probably reflect the notion of linguistic nationalism which "declares" that having one language leads to unity, whereas linguistic diversity leads to looser national bonds. This may be due to the fear shared by many European countries that their national identity is being threatened by globalisation and Europeanisation (see Fragoudaki 150).

Linguistic Superiority

Closely linked to the myths concerning the relation of language and nation are myths about linguistic superiority and inferiority, i.e. superiority or inferiority of one language as compared to another. These myths can be further divided into the following subcategories: the superiority of one language over another, and the superiority of one language variety over another.

The superiority of one language over another

Under this subcategory we have myths concerning the superiority of some languages over others and myths concerning the superiority of a particular language. Quite

often, some languages are considered superior to others because they have rich vocabulary, complex grammar and/or a written form, as examples (4) and (5) indicate. Particularly example (4) shows a student's change of opinion after having taken the Sociolinguistics course:

(4) I believed that there are indeed some languages which are superior to others due to their *more advanced syntax and wider range of vocabulary*, without however, taking into consideration of the country where it is spoken.

(5) *Language death* can happen to some languages of people who live in tribes, they are *not civilized*, and they have not given to their languages a *written form*.

Stereotypes related to the superiority of one language or of several languages can be further subdivided into two subcategories:

(a) Myths about the superiority of the Greek language

(b) Myths about the superiority of other languages

Greek is thought of as superior to many other languages because "it has been used for thousands of years," "has contributed to the development of the western civilization and culture" and "has developed greatly throughout the years" (example 6). Moreover, it has a rich vocabulary, complex grammar and many dialects (example 7):

(6) If Greek is a rich language, it is because it has been used for *thousands of years* and has *developed greatly*.

(7) The Greek language is superior to others because it has the "*richest*" *vocabulary*, structure, etc.

However, at the same time, English is considered the "richest" language of all, by other students, because it has borrowed many words from other languages (examples 8 and 9):

(8) Greek is not one of the richest languages. English is. It is the language of the most borrowed words both from Latin and from Greek. And this is one of the reasons why other languages are seen as not good enough languages.

Interestingly, borrowing is viewed positively in this case, although the related myth sees borrowing as something negative.

Contradicting the above claim, another student points out that:

(9) I found surprising that although English language has many "borrowed" words in its vocabulary, is regarded as a "good" language.

This view which reflects another popular stereotype, namely that borrowing is not simply undesirable but can prove to be dangerous for a language, an argument that has often given rise to interesting discussions about the so called need to preserve the purity of a language.

Furthermore, in the following examples (10 and 11) we can discern the popular stereotype of the superiority of the Ancient Greek over the Modern Greek language, frequently followed by contradictory statements:

(10) The statement "Greek is the richest of all languages" is a myth. *Ancient Greek* might have been one of *the richest language in the era of its prosperity* but *modern Greek don't share the same wealth and the same status among*

the languages of other nations. On the other hand, I personally, do not think that we are capable to “count” in a way the richness of a language, since science and experience have proved that *any language can produce terms for use in science*, art or any other domain of human activity [contradiction]

(11) Greek for many years or even centuries was considered to be the richest language of all. But this is myth. *Ancient Greek* was indeed *the richest language* in the world but *now things have changed*, Greek language has borrowed a lot of foreign words (and lent of course) and a lot of linguistic forms are of no use any longer. At the same time *other languages have enriched their vocabulary and are thought to be richer than the Greek language*

This is a widely held belief by Greeks and non-Greeks alike who view older forms of a language as better (Harlow 11).

Moreover, it is interesting at this point to note the responses to the following two common stereotypes concerning the Greek and the English languages that students gave after taking the course:

	True		False		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Greek is the richest of all languages	15	10%	134	90%	149	100%
English today is the language that can help all people in the world communicate and understand each other.	74	50%	75	50%	149	100%

Table 2: Student responses to common stereotypes concerning the Greek and the English languages

From the table, it seems that only 10% of the Greek students consider the Greek language as the richest of all other languages. On the contrary, 50% of the students consider as true the statement that the English language is the language of communication all over the world. However, it should be mentioned that students responded to these statements at the end of their Sociolinguistics course which means that they had become more sensitive to such issues. Most probably, the results would have been different if the students were given the statements at the beginning of the course.

The superiority of one language variety over another

There seem to be two main sub-categories of myths concerning the superiority of one language variety over another. The first relates to the superiority of the standard language; the second relates to other varieties of language.

Quite extensively, students in the data consider the standard language superior to other varieties. Specifically, they think of the standard languages as the “right” means of communication. This is hardly surprising, considering the role and the position of the standard languages since the creation of the nation state (see Fairclough). The standard language is considered to be the language of the educated (example 12), with “correct” grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary (example 13). In addition, the standard language is the language of a strong nation (example 14). On the other hand, other varieties of language are viewed as inferior to the standard language because they are a mutation of the standard language (example 15), they lack vocabulary, grammatical and syntactical rules (example 16) and they are spoken by low-status people (example 17):

(12) The standard language of a country is the *right means of communication* which each “educated” person should use.

(13) The standard form of a language has “fulfilled” all the criteria for being used by the majority of the community. *Grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary are more correctly used.*

(14) A standard language has *absorbed other languages* and, therefore, is the language of a high class of people, which had the power and effectiveness to conquer smallest, weak nations. Therefore, a standard language will always *be language of a “strong” nation.*

(15) The *dialects and different accents* used by people in various areas of the same country are a “*mutation*” of a specific language.

(16) Varieties cannot express new ideas or meaning because they *lack of vocabulary or some other linguistic structures.*

(17) *Low status classes* have their own language.

Concluding Remarks

The stereotypes that emerge in students’ views are also shared by the wider communities, as presented in the two books mentioned earlier. This further suggests that visions of language and languages may be similar in the “central” and in the “peripheral” European countries, i.e. in Great Britain and Greece respectively in our case. More specifically, there is a strong tendency to:

- (a) identify language with nation and
- (b) consider some languages as superior to others

It is not surprising that some students have these views about language, even after taking a relevant course because:

- (a) they have such a stronghold in the wider society and
- (b) the Greek educational system itself reproduces and reinforces the myths presented here. Thus students are trained into believing that language is

unified and the same throughout the country. As Kakridi-Ferrari shows, in the Greek school:

- (a) Students are encouraged to think that language equals vocabulary
- (b) Only the official language of the country is taught at schools. To this end, the proposal that has been made is to include in the School curriculum at least one hour a week in which students will be acquainted with a language variety of the area and/or with a minority language, spoken by some of the students of a class.

Concluding, I should like to point out that further linguistic analysis of the data collected would lend new and interesting insights. For this reason, I plan to continue this investigation and furthermore collect additional data from other sources so that it is possible to record and linguistically analyse myths about language—what they are and how they are articulated by different groups within one society but also across cultural groups.

ENDNOTES

¹ I would like to thank Bessie Dendrinou, Bessie Mitsikopoulou, Maria Sifianou and two anonymous reviewers for their comments.

² All examples given in this paper appear as they were found in our data. No attempt of correction of any kind has been made.

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Challenging the Centre: The Dynamic Construction of Identity in the Conversations of a Group of Young People in Greece¹

Argiris Archakis and Angeliki Tzanne

Introduction

In this paper we are concerned with the construction and negotiation of identity in a group of young people who claim to stand at the periphery of the status quo. The paper is intended as a contribution to the line of research that focuses on situated descriptions of identity (see Cheshire, Schiffrin, and Georgakopoulou's "Doing Youth," among others).

Our basic assumption is that identity is not a set of fixed and stable characteristics of interactants; in our view, identity emerges through situated discourse, as it is constructed dynamically in context. The paper focuses on the construction of identity in a group of young people, as it emerges through the unstructured conversations they have had with two researchers.² Particular emphasis is placed on the attempts of the group to legitimate and "centralize" themselves by delegitimizing and "peripheralizing" established and institutionally powerful figures of authority within the status quo.

This paper is part of a large-scale project on informal interactions among young Greeks. A total of 30 conversations (30 minutes minimum, 80 minutes maximum) were recorded, in the course of which we have identified more than 600 narratives.³ In the present paper, we have focused on 72 of these narratives occurring in the course of a 70-minute conversation among two young male friends and the researchers, as these narratives refer to and represent a close-knit group of four young male friends. These young informants are very sensitive in "doing" their youth identity via a succession of narrative performances (see Georgakopoulou, *Narrative Performances*) concerning school, family relations and their religious beliefs and practices.

Our knowledge about our informants (we shall call them John and Alex) comes from their own claims about themselves in combination with the researchers' observations about them. More specifically, we know that they wear their hair long, they dress casually, they wear earrings and badges of rock or punk groups, and that they usually are and/or look filthy. They also claim to believe in God (but "in the wrong way," as they say) and to be regular churchgoers. Finally, they report to often act in a way that gets them into trouble with their parents and teachers.

The informants' appearance and reported actions and beliefs indicate a prevalent group identity which, according to van Dijk (123), "involves a complex array of typical or routine practices, collective action, dress, objects [...] and other symbols." It is this group identity that we will try to unravel in our paper.

During their conversations with the researchers, the informants engaged in a succession of narratives, nearly all of which recounted personal or collective experiences, all commonly known to the group. According to Schiffrin (170), “the content of our stories (what we tell about), and our story-telling behaviour (how we tell our stories) are all sensitive indices not just of our personal selves, but also of our social and cultural identities.” Focusing on these people’s narratives, this paper sets out to examine their emerging position in relation to themselves and to other individuals and groups of people.

Identity Construction through *Telling*

As Schiffrin (199) observes, “a story displays the teller through both a tale and the telling of an experience.” In Blum-Kulka’s (363) terms, *telling* is the act of narrating in real time, the actual performance of a story before an audience.

Our informants perform their stories in such a way that it can be clearly inferred that they are not two individuals who just happen to be taking part in the same conversation, but two close friends who cultivate and maintain in-group relations of solidarity and intimacy through their stories.

The in-group status of the informants is indicated linguistically in their narratives through repeated use of the inclusive “we,” which stresses a collective rather than individual course of action. Additionally, informants who are listening to their friends’ narratives may accompany certain points of the story with minimal responses, repetitions and/or appropriate comments that confirm their familiarity with the narrated events. Moreover, most narratives in the data are told jointly, due to shared experiences. Thus, in our data there is an interesting deviation from the general tendency for the autonomy of the teller that, according to Georgakopoulou (*Narrative Performances* 46), prevails in Greek narratives. In these cases of co-constructed narratives, the informants construct a collaborative, polyphonic floor. Example 1 is a case in point.

Example 1

Γ: Ψηφίζουμε τώρα για πρόεδρο, και βγήκε ο Δημήτρης, και με το που βγήκε ο Δημήτρης λέμε εγώ, ο Αλέξης και ο Κυριάκος φεύγουμε, δε σας γουστάρουμε //⁴

A: Ναι, δε ψηφίζουμε καθόλου. Μα ελάτε να ψηφίσετε άντε ρε.

Γ: Δε σας γουστάρουμε ρε, φύγετε //

A: Και την ίδια μέρα τους λέω εγώ επειδή δεν τον γουστάρω το Δημήτρη θέλω να του κάνω σπάσιμο, όπως μπορούσα να το κάνω να πει ξέρω ’γω παραιτούμαι, δε ξέρω τι θα γίνει. Και τους λέω ότι εγώ τους λέω, με δικά μου αιτήματα θέλω συνέλευση (...)

[John: We vote now for president, and the winner is Dimitris, and as the results were announced, I, Alex and Kyriakos say we are out of here, we don’t like you//

Alex: Yes, we don’t vote at all. But come on, come and vote. Come on.

John: We don't like you, go away //

Alex: And on the same day I tell them, cause I don't like Dimitris, I want to give him a hard time, to force him in any way to say I give up, I don't know what is going to happen. And I tell them I want a meeting with my demands (...)]

As Blum-Kulka (383) suggests, “personal experience grants ownership, and shared experience grants joint ownership.” The latter can lead to joint narration of the shared experience. The occurrence of co-constructed narratives in our data is presumably indicative of the fact that most of the narrated events are not considered as property of individual speakers, but as “common property of the group,” as Cheshire (253) would put it, episodes or snapshots of the common history of their group.

Identity Construction through *Tale*

As the social identity of most groups is defined in terms of their relations to other groups (van Dijk 153), we will now turn to the position of the group of our informants towards the others, as it emerges from their stories, the tales they tell to the researchers. In Blum-Kulka's (364) terms, *tale* involves “the real-world building blocks used for the construction of the story” and their re-shaping and re-arrangement in the actual discourse of the story.

In most of their tales, our informants are presented doing the following:

- a) Ridicule other people by exposing their weaknesses and relating incidents in which these people have behaved in a socially embarrassing and unacceptable way.
- b) Challenge their interlocutors in the story with the sole aim of exposing their lack of argumentative skills, or insufficient knowledge on the issue discussed.
- c) Attack others through verbal abuse, with the aim of demeaning them in the presence of others.
- d) Belittle other people in their stories by evaluating them negatively or representing them only minimally (in terms of what they say and do) in their stories.

Ridiculing, challenging, attacking and belittling were found either in the *complicating action* (the recounting of the actual incident), or the *evaluation* (the significance of the event to the speaker and for the point of the story—see Labov). The story related in the following example is typical of the informants' reported verbal behaviour towards others.

Example 2

A: Μπαίνουμε στο μετρό πηγαίναμε πηγαίναμε, σταματάει σε μια στάση ανοίγουν οι πόρτες δεν ήταν να βγούμε κοιτάω και 'γω ξέρω 'γω από την πόρτα που 'χε ανοίξει και βλέπω ένα μπάτσο τώρα με μπότρες μέχρι εδώ πάνω κάτι πράσινους μπερέδες και ένα όπλο ξέρω 'γω που ρίχνει πεντακόσιες φορές το δευτερόλεπτο //

- Γ: Αυτόματο //
- A: Αυτόματο λες και πάει ξέρω 'γω για πόλεμο.
- Γ: Έτσι είναι ρε στους υπόγειους έτσι // είναι.
- Ερ.: Ναι.
- A: Λοιπόν και αρχίζουμε κι είχε και μια φάτσα ξέρω 'γω δε βλεπότανε ο άνθρωπος και του λέμε δε ντρέπεσαι πως είσαι έτσι ξέρω 'γω κωλόπουστα //
- Γ: Τι έχω λέει ρε παιδιά //
- A: Άντε ρε γουρούνι //
- Γ: Θα ντρεπόμουνα λέω στη θέση σου δε κοκκινίζεις του λέω τι 'ναι αυτά που βαστάς ρε; πως ντύνεσαι έτσι ρε;
- [Alex: We take the tube, we were going and going, it stops at a station, the doors open, it wasn't our stop, I look, you know, through the open door and I see a cop wearing boots up to here, a green cap and a gun, you know, that fires five hundred times per second//
- John: A machine gun//
- Alex: A machine gun getting ready, you know, for war
- John: that's how things are in the Underground, that's how they are
- Res.: Yes
- Alex: Well we start the guy had a face, you know, you couldn't look at the man and we tell him aren't you ashamed, what's wrong with you, you know, motherfucker//
- John: What's wrong with me guys he says //
- Alex: Go away you pig //
- John: I'd be ashamed, I say, if I were you, don't you blush, I tell him, what's this you're holding, what's these clothes you're wearing.]

- e) On the other hand, in some of their stories, the informants are presented to support and to try to help people who are marginalized and/or victimized by others. In example 3, John is trying to find a way to approach a classmate of his, Maria, who is considered to be a weirdo and made fun of by the whole school.

Example 3

- Γ: Πιέζονται υπερβολικά, ναι 'ντάξει. Τώρα εγώ ας πούμε, δε δεν έδινα σημασία, και να με πιάνει ο καθηγητής ξέρω 'γω, όλη την τάξη, και λέει ξέρω 'γω μη μη τη βάζετε στο περιθώριο την κοπέλα, 'ντάξει. Πάω 'γω, είχα βιβλίο εγώ, αλλά λέω εγώ, ας κάνουμε μια προσπάθεια έτσι να πούμε και μεις, της λέω Ρε Μαρία της λέω έχεις βιβλίο; Ναι μου λέει, της λέω: Έρχεσαι να κάτσεις δίπλα μου γιατί δεν έχω βιβλίο; Όχι μου λέει να βρεις από αλλού βιβλίο. 'Ντάξει ρε Μαρία της λέω//
- Ερ.: Έχει πρόβλημα διανόησης;
- Γ: Τι να πω, ξέρω 'γω.

[John: They are pressed a great deal, yeah right. Now, I myself, for instance, I wa I wasn't taking any notice, and the teacher takes me on one side, you know, the whole class, and he says, you know, don't don't put the girl in the margin, right. I go, I did have a book, but I say let's make an effort, so as to say, I tell her Hey Maria, I tell her, do you have a book? Yes, she says, I say, Will you come and sit next to me 'cos I don't have a book? No, she says, find a book from elsewhere. That's OK Maria, I tell her//

Res: Does she have a mental problem?

John: What can I say, I don't know.]

From the position our informants are shown to take in the stories, it can be assumed that they belong in a group of people who are always in conflict with others, who are always challenging and struggling against others and whose relationship with others is one revolving around mutual disapproval and rejection. The stories of our informants draw the picture of a group of people who appear to have the power (and the right) to attack and ridicule others and who have very strong negative feelings towards these others.

Looking carefully at the tales told, a clear pattern emerges concerning, firstly, who these "others" are, and secondly, where our informants stand in relation to them. On the one hand, stories of conflict, challenge and ridicule revolve around established figures of authority, people who are invested with institutional power. In the vast majority of the narrated personal experiences, the informants level a relentless ridicule and harsh criticism against priests, teachers, police officers, security guards, politicians and political parties.

On the other hand, in the stories of domination and victimization, where various figures of authority are presented as victimizers, the informants express their support to and sympathy with the dominated people, while criticising and openly rejecting the dominant figures that had victimized them.

What Do the Informants Do *with* Their Stories?

In the stories examined, the informants seem to need to show that their basic principles (ideologies) are just, and that those of the other group are wrong. This obviously implies that opposing groups, as well as their basic principles, will have to be delegitimated. It is our contention that through stories of challenge, open attack and ridicule, the informants aim at delegitimizing the figures that are invested with power in the status quo, while at the same time trying to legitimate their own views and practices in the particular context of situation.

It has been argued (van Dijk 259) that "for each social group that is seen to challenge the dominant group(s) or the status quo, the main identifying categories defining the [dominant] group may be delegitimated [our clarification]." Indeed, in the informants' narratives, priests, for example, are presented as non-believers, callous and egocentric people, while teachers are portrayed as *ignorami* concerning the subjects they teach.

Delegitimizing of authority figures can involve reference to a degrading fact (the police are bribed), to unsanctioned participation in an event (security guards have no place in the church during service), or to other, similarly demeaning, pieces of information that concern the central, powerful figures involved in the stories.

The informants, on the other hand, legitimate their group by presenting their values as emanating from the words of Jesus. In one of their stories, it is their belief in equality and just distribution of wealth that has led them to the production and distribution of pamphlets in which they cauterize the accumulation of wealth by the Church.

In the theory, “delegitimation presupposes power and implies dominance, that is, power abuse” (van Dijk 262). This makes the situation we witness here a paradoxical one, as various figures of institutional power and authority (police officers, teachers, priests, politicians) are shown to be delegitimated by an institutionally powerless group that positions itself at the periphery of the status quo.

We would like to argue that in the story world, that is, the world the informants have created through the tales and the telling of their stories, delegitimation is performed by a group of people who derive their power from their central role in the narrative event, that of author, that is of the person who edits the story by re-sequencing the events and re-constructing the dialogues (see Goffman 144-5). As authors of their stories, the informants have most probably done some serious editing on the events and constructed dialogues they present in the stories in an attempt to “peripheralize” the established figures of authority and construct for themselves a powerful, almost heroic, identity.

Concluding Remark

Narrative as a social practice of (de)legitimation can be explained in terms of the meeting with the researchers, in whose presence the informants are attempting to construct a positive and acceptable social identity through a recounting (and possible re-constructing) of shared experiences. It seems that, after having accepted them as friends, the informants are now trying to introduce the researchers to their views and practices as a group of people at the periphery of the status quo, a group which they try to legitimate by delegitimizing their “opponents,” the figures of power and authority in the status quo.

ENDNOTES

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² Our data come from the research project *K. Karatheodoris (2425)* funded by the Research committee of the University of Patras. For the particularities of the recordings and the method of data collection, see Papazahariou and Archakis.

³ Following Labov, we have identified as narratives any recountings of at least two temporally ordered clauses.

⁴ We use the following transcription conventions:

Underlining indicates the stressed parts of utterances

// indicates interruption

(...) indicates that part of a turn that has been left out

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“Central Peripheries”: Private Affectation in Philip Sidney

Emmanouil Aretoulakis

Peripheries are territories that appertain to the realm of the marginal or the “outward.”¹ The Greek *peri* signifies something that circles around a supposed “centre.” In fact, peripheries demarcate, by opposition, what we call “centre” thus, by extension, rendering themselves as significant as the centre itself. The intriguing part in such an insight would be to conceive of the centre and the periphery as two frequently intersecting or overlapping categories, and trace historical or literary examples where such an intersection or overlap can be held as “true.”

My intention in this paper is to connect the “centre-periphery” issue with the relationship between the “private” and the “public” realm in the Elizabethan era. From this perspective, the “centre” pertains to the public element—that which is exposed to the public view—while the “periphery” pertains to the private domain. The periphery represents the marginal sphere revolving around (and outside) the public and the exposed, whereas the centre *is* the public and the exposed. During the Renaissance, the ostensibly clear-cut distinction between the periphery and the centre is called into question precisely because the distinction between the private and the public becomes rather hazy. In the sixteenth century, that is, the private realm cannot really be seen as the opposite of the public/political realm but rather as a *continuation* of it. What is more, it is, at times, the public that informs, engenders and, subsequently, absorbs private space. What distinguishes the Modern from the Renaissance Age, according to Jonathan Goldberg’s famous definition in *James I And The Politics Of Literature* (1989), is that today the importance of a public figure/face is ratified by casting light on its private moments, whereas during the Renaissance “privacy was the unreal category,” since, “when persons are in private they are unobserved, withdrawn, invisible...” (150), and virtually non-existent. Goldberg calls attention to the fact that while today, on one hand, a prominent figure assumes a “real” status when seen engaged in “ordinary” everyday practices and habits and living a “true” private life like all ordinary people, back in the sixteenth century, on the other, the private, if it existed at all, was shot through with elements of the public, therefore underscoring its non-authenticity as “true” privacy. I wish to shed light on a few aspects of the dichotomy “public-private” (or “central-peripheral”) in the English Renaissance, focusing on Philip Sidney, Queen Elizabeth’s courtier and also a characteristic example of mixing personal/private life with courtly responsibilities, and more radically, allowing public role to invade, or even condition, privacy. Blair Worden has argued that “Sidney’s language of politics is full of the language of private life” and his “private life is...full of the language of politics” (*The Sound of Virtue* 87). Still, are we *really* dealing with such a harmonious and unambiguous match between political discourse and private life?

I would like to begin from the end. Philip Sidney was buried on February 16, 1587, four months after his death, while his funeral was, according to Sidney scholarship, “one of the most magnificent ever accorded to a commoner.”² Sidney was a commoner in the sense that he was not a “gentleman” literally speaking, given Lawrence Stone’s assertion, in the article “Social Mobility in England, 1500-1700,” that “the most fundamental dichotomy” in Elizabethan social structure was “between the gentleman and the non-gentleman” (*Past and Present* 17). He was a commoner, a “non-gentleman” indeed, in that he was no prince or duke or aristocrat of any kind. Yet, being a nephew to aristocrats—the Earls of Leicester and Warwick—he had an aristocratic “educational preparation” and “career expectations,” as Ronald Strickland informs us.³ A similar view has been supported by Maureen Quilligan according to whom “Sidney’s class, while still *common*, was distinctly ‘gentle’” (“Sidney and His Queen” 179—my emphasis). Still, Sidney did realize his inferior status when he was censured by Elizabeth for defying the Earl of Oxford, his superior, at the tennis court. Actually, even the very fact of his knighthood was attributed to reasons that were not related to his personal valor but, rather, to political circumstance as well as ceremony.⁴ Taking into consideration that “aristocratic funeral practices served as...propaganda in support of the dominant aristocratic ideology...” (Strickland 19), it could be argued that it is at his funeral that Sidney assumes, retrospectively, an aristocratic status in England (he was already well-known and a hero on the Continent). It is, paradoxically, on the day of his burial that he starts to live as a true aristocrat, a real “public” figure, without truly being so.⁵

This is just one extraordinary example of Sidney’s ambiguous status as someone who oscillates from the periphery of the Elizabethan world (as a common man) to the centre (as Elizabeth’s advisor) and back. Indubitably, there is a constant threat of displacement hovering over Sidney’s head: the possibility of remaining forever without the financial assistance of a patron, a simple heir presumptive to his uncles, the Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Warwick, a mere disillusionment; on the other hand, a threat of displacement attributed to the fact that, albeit a staunch supporter of Elizabeth’s Protestant kingdom, he would, at times, distance himself from the authorities, expressing an “other” opinion. For instance, he did not hesitate to question Elizabeth’s stance regarding her probable marriage, in the late 1570s and early 1580s, to the Catholic duke of Anjou, a “transaction” that, in Elizabeth’s view, would help reinforce Protestantism on the Continent through an alliance between England and France against the Spanish threat. However, it is true that he had devoted himself to the Protestant cause, only, in a far more aggressive way. As a matter of fact, he became a harsher Protestant than Protestants insofar as he consistently argued (and he was rebuked by Elizabeth for that) for the necessity of military action against Spain as protective measure against the spread of the Catholic seed all over Europe.

His celebrated work of prose fiction *Arcadia*, written around the time that Elizabeth’s marriage negotiations were carried out, also a literary product written by someone whose hopes for political promotion had vanished, is indeed a metaphorical “contamination” of Catholic indolence as well as an imaginary re-introduction of

diplomatic and robust (Protestant) military activity into Elizabethan life. In the *Arcadia*, Sidney draws upon the Italian pastoral to investigate the possibility of constructing a new English Protestant identity out of the Italian Catholic one. This, in simple terms, might mean establishing by imitation an “understanding of the right relation between worldly and spiritual goods as viewed from a Protestant perspective,” as “the signifying world of Catholicism could be reconciled with the most essential tenets of Protestant belief...” (105), as argued by Alistair Fox in his 1997 book *The English Renaissance: Identity and Representation in Elizabethan England*. From what we can see, on one hand Sidney is anxious to fight against Catholicism, while on the other, he attempts to come up with a new Protestant identity that would also *borrow* from Catholic literary tradition. On surface, the former intention contradicts the latter. This semi-schizophrenic attitude of his is re-enacted over and over again in the *Arcadia*. Basilius, king of Arcadia, desiring to know what the future will be, consults the oracle and receives an abhorring riddle as an answer: Pamela, his eldest daughter, will be stolen “by princely mean” but will not be lost, Philoclea, his younger daughter, will embrace an unnatural love, he himself will commit adultery with his wife, his sons-in-law will stand trial for murdering him, while a foreign power will sit in his throne. He takes his wife and his two daughters and resorts to the Arcadian country where he thinks the oracle will have no effect on him. However, it seems that the very attempt to prevent the fulfilment of the oracular predictions facilitates their realization.

Basilius gives up public responsibility for the sake of private life, but Sidney, by the end, leaves us little hope that privacy will be the answer to Basilius’ problems. The main protagonists in the story, the two princes Pyrocles and Musidorus, move from being sociable to being in utter isolation, from fervent assumption of public responsibilities to sheer idleness. Their behavior ranges from an exteriority to a profound interiority, from a Protestant concern with public/active life to a “Catholic” indulgence in inactivity that would eventually lead to political stagnation and personal languor. The staging—through literature—of public activity and “real” responsibility compensates for the lack of an actual political role in Sidney’s life: Elizabeth would not promote him, thus he would have to do the job himself through his fiction. In a way, the “false” or artificial has, quite successfully, replaced the real. The writing of the *Arcadia*, that is, brings Sidney back to the foreground of politics and the world of the outside, but not definitely, since the work was written in an unknown language, and “belonged,” according to Blair Worden, “to a territory of the imagination which...scholar[s]-statesm[e]n had not entered” (*The Sound of Virtue* 314). Moreover, his retreat into his personal world seemed even idler especially because he had taken to writing fictional narrative, a genre that, in that era, according to William Nelson, was said to be time-wasting, vain, childish, trifling, frivolous...and ‘salacious’” (*Fact or Fiction: The Dilemma of the Renaissance Storyteller* 56). Sidney’s message seems public but his medium (the language) is utterly private because non-scholarly and hardly decipherable.

Sidney looks like a cat chasing its own tail and never reaching it. What could possibly be Sidney's tail? What else but his first name Philip? Sidney was named after Philip II of (Catholic) Spain who was his godfather. Therefore, one could maintain that under his fervent Protestantism—interpreted as a desire for the assumption of official duties in politics—lies a deep-seated repugnance for his own Catholic name. His name is his self from which he is trying to break away without being capable of doing so: Catholicism—along with indolence and inactivity—will always be part of his identity. In his letter to his sister Mary, Countess of Pembroke, Sidney dedicates the *Arcadia* to her and gives the impression that it would never have been written but for her: “But you desired me to do it, and your desire to my heart is an absolute commandment. Now it is done only for you, only to you” (NA 57). Earlier on, he has characterized his work as “idle,” “fitter to be swept away than worn to any other purpose” (57). The choice of the adjective “idle” reflects the Renaissance view of private action as non-action. When Sidney undertook to write the *Arcadia*, he knew he was entering the realm of indolence or “idle privacy,” having already been disengaged from an active public career as Elizabeth's courtier. On the other hand, the very disclosure, through the publication of a rather personal letter, of the conditions of writing the *Arcadia* (the very existence, even, of that letter) brings Sidney back to the foreground of politics and the world of the outside (compensating for his prior exclusion from the court) insofar as he isolates himself in order to write literature while establishing, at the same time, an audience and announcing the continuation of his former role. Actually, he appears quite public-oriented in his seclusion, given that in his epistle he is appropriating theatrical and courtly linguistic conventions, particularly in praising his sister.

The assumption of a (self)deprecating tone in his letter confirms Sidney's adherence to the courtly convention of *sprezzatura*, that is, “the light dismissal of the work on which he must have spent much labor” (Nelson 57) and verifies his interest in keeping up with the predominant discourse of *feigning* and theatricality in a semi-private, semi-public mode. Daniel Javitch, in his 1979 book *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England*, describes *sprezzatura* as “the art that does most to conceal art” (55-6). Once Sidney adopts that art, he in essence adopts a twofold artificiality: first, the art of creating literature, and second, the art of concealing that art. The “natural” art of literary production has become an artificially covered construct that nobody may read but of which everyone can, at least, get a glimpse. Sidney's epistle to Mary calls his work “but a trifle, and that triflingly handled,” and suggests that it is to be read only by her and her well-meaning friends, for “indeed, for severer eyes it is not...”:

Your dear self can best witness the manner, being done in loose sheets of paper, most of it in your presence; the rest by sheets sent unto you as fast as they were done.... But his chief safety shall be the not walking abroad; and his chief protection, the bearing the livery of your name, which (if much good will do not deceive me) is worthy to be a sanctuary for a greater offender. Read it, then...but laugh at [it]. (57)

In these lines we can feel a tinge of *sprezzatura* but we can also feel Sidney’s urge to distance himself from his literary child. It is necessary not to allow the “walking abroad” of the *Arcadia* by encouraging a private reading among ladies. It is imperative not to diffuse the word lest it be misunderstood by Queen Elizabeth; at the same time, though, it is all right if the work is seen by someone with no “severer” eyes.

There seems to be a game of disclosure and concealment at work, an interplay of private and public, or a shift from the periphery to the centre and back, before even the beginning of the fiction. Sidney’s letter gives, at some points, the impression that it is the reading rather than the writing of the *Arcadia* that materializes his work. Therefore, however risky its becoming known to the English society, establishing an audience or viewership—going public with it—will make an illegitimate “child” (the actual work) an absolutely legitimate read for those interested. In fact, Sidney declares that if the work is not read and accepted by his sister’s social circle, it will turn to a monster: “His chiefe protection, the bearing the liverie of your name.” Giving a name—his sister’s name—to the *Arcadia* will “civilize” the work, clothing it with nobility. In the book *The Imprint of Gender*, Wendy Wall talks about Sidney’s dedication as “portray[ing] his writing as monstrous and involuntary pregnancy rendered acceptable only by the text’s circumscribed viewership. The *Arcadia* is ennobled (birthed and dressed) by its placement within the confines of family and social group” (154). We can understand from Wall’s words that the *Arcadia* becomes “noble” once it is read but not *widely* read. “Circumscribed viewership” renders it a public act privately known, or a private act bound to decay into monstrosity unless it is given familial encouragement.

To discuss one’s own work in accordance with the way it is to be received/interpreted by an imaginary (or not) public is a sign of *sprezzatura*. *Sprezzatura*, or deliberately thinking low of one’s own work, can be claimed to appertain to a widespread tactic of self-fashioning among the English courtship. Alan Hager, in “The Exemplary Mirage: Fabrication of Sir Philip Sidney’s Biographical Image,” says that “...assumption of roles for the purposes of advancement or self-justification, or, on a higher level, for the sheer artistry of it all, was a conscious activity perhaps of a whole generation of Elizabeth’s younger courtiers” (*English Literary History* 9). *Sprezzatura* was a common courtly convention. However, it was probably not a practice adopted consciously by Sidney who saw his life *as* irony rather than *with* irony; as humorous rather than *with* a sense of humor. Sidney’s is a “special kind of humor, a kind of constructive irony, a dissembling, a pretending that ...circumstances are less grave than they are, something far more ‘humorous’ in all senses of the word than *sprezzatura*, which is a more *voluntary* (my emphasis) posture than Sidney’s reflexive irony” (Hager 10). Sidney, therefore, by appearing less voluntarily ironic, casts a critical eye on *sprezzatura* as a fully conscious (voluntary) public discourse. However, he uses that discourse as a stepping-stone to expressing something “other” than a self-fashioned—inherently presumptuous—humility. His is more of a private—hence critical—look on courtly conventional

modes of expression. The articulation of that private view is achieved, in this case, *through* the very convention (or invention) of *sprezzatura*, which entails that the private can grow via the public rather than on its own; or even that it can grow *because of* the very existence of the public. To express his own outlook, Sidney has to play by the rules of the authority. In my view, *sprezzatura* performs the role of masking the fact that there is nothing behind it. The affectation surrounding this concept is based, in turn, on another affectation: the simulation of signification; acting *as if* there were a real meaning to it. The assumption of an air of “naturalness” on the part of *sprezzatura* as style and attitude hides its inherent artificiality.

It seems from all the above that in Sidney’s life and work it is the “outer” element, the “artificial”—or a simulation of it—that is given priority over the “natural” or “inner.” In some cases, even, the “outer” determines, creates the latter. If we translate this schema into terms of the centre/periphery affinity, we may easily identify the outer or artificial as the peripheral that circles around the inner or central domain, and finally annihilates it. A very interesting metaphor for the absorption of the private by the outer and public during the Renaissance is provided by Patricia Fumerton who, in *Cultural Aesthetics* (1996), talks about the possibility of linking ostentatious representation of ornament in miniatures with the need to veil the private self, or even, as I would argue, veil the very lack of it. Fumerton points out that “when we look for privacy, we discern only a face whose faint ‘ground’ color lacks almost all definition except, paradoxically, as supplied by the ornamental hair, clothes, and background *around* a face....To see the personality of the plain face, therefore, required looking to the impersonality of the built-up, outer layers of ornament all around” (79). What the author asserts is that it is pointless to have a sheer face in a miniature without various ornaments surrounding it. The face, being the centre, is defined by the ostensibly superfluous artifice, being the periphery. Thus, the periphery ends up getting all the “credit” for the aesthetic value and purpose of the miniature. The face, as subject, witnesses the artifice, as object, coming to the foreground. At the same time, identifying the subject as the *natural* content or meaning of the miniature and the object as the *artificial* supplement endowing the subject would lead us to realize that, to look at the natural, one has to look thoroughly at the artificial and the decorative around it; or, to go even further, to peer into the depth of private life during the Renaissance, one has to examine the surfaces of public office and external superfluities. The existence of these surfaces is likely to hide from us that there may be a lack of depth or private life, or simply that there may be no real face in the miniature but only as a redundant supplement to the peripheral artifice. It is very intriguing that, in this case, periphery becomes the centre by overshadowing the person, which is supposed to be the central focus/meaning.

Sidney uses miniature as well as the *impresa* device to play the central/peripheral (public/private) off against each other. In the *Arcadia*, some characters rely on such devices so that their affection towards their ladies remains, more or less, a secret. Nestor, for example, has as *impresa* in his shield “a fire made of juniper, with this word, ‘More easy and more sweet’” (162), while Phebilus, “a

gentleman of that country, for whom hateful fortune had borrowed the dart of love to make him miserable by the sight of Philoclea...[bore an] *impresa*, the fish called Sepia, which being in the net casts a black ink about itself, that...it may escape: his word was ‘Not so’” (163-4). This is what an *impresa* is: a small and vague picture with a few words on it as its motto. However, such a seemingly simple device plays a double role in the issue of representation: it gives meaning away, yet holds it back; it publicizes desire, yet keeps it secret, a private business. As a matter of fact, the motto is rarely consistent with the image at hand, thereby creating a—deliberate or not—confusion as to what the real meaning of the *impresa* and what the real intentions of the bearer of the *impresa* are. The motto “Not so,” for instance, might signify a multitude of things as well as nothing at all....

If *impresas* convey a sense of helplessness as to the possibility of discovering the real, and given their role as “protectors” of the private, miniatures—minute portraits of very dear persons—unlock, potentially, even more private spaces by going deeper into un-thought of recesses of seclusion. Dorus and Zelmane (that is, Musidorus and Pyrocles) dress up as the “black knight” and the “ill-appointed knight” respectively. Musidorus, under the guise of the black knight, steals the picture of Pamela which was “in little form,” worn “in a tablet, and covered with silk...fastened...to [a] helmet...” (166). Pamela’s picture then is kept like a gem in a miniature that, though, is *exhibited* in the tournament. Patricia Fumerton argues that

“[p]ublication” of the miniature, in sum, while creating a sense of inwardness—and thus appearing to respond to a real need for expressing the inner, private self—could be achieved only after submitting the viewer to a series of outer, public “rooms,” whether political chambers or ornamental casings. Seeming to acknowledge this paradox, the miniature as early as the 1560s left the privacy of the bedroom for the arena of the court and actually began to be worn in public. (*Cultural Aesthetics* 72)

If Sidney had written the *Arcadia* before the 1560s, Fumerton insinuates, the whole episode would never have happened, as Musidorus would probably not have found himself in the position to expose such a personal item to the public eye, and thus give the reader the chance to investigate the “utopian”—in the sense of the “no-place”—realm where the private and the public overlap. By the time Sidney sets out to write the original *Arcadia*, the miniature, combined with the *impresa*, is a natural “gadget” for busy gentlemen with public offices who want also to prove that they have analogously lush erotic desires: The “peripheral” desire turns central. Furthermore, in some strange way, their feelings are established as true erotic desires after they are publicized via *impresas* and miniatures. That is, the peripheral depends upon the centre.

In the *Defence of Poesy*, Philip Sidney refers to the power of the theatre, especially tragedy, to evoke emotions one can hardly feel in real life. He mentions the case of the Tyrant Alexander Phraeus from whose eyes, as Plutarch testifies,

a Tragedie well made and represented, drew abundance of teares, who without all pittie had murdered infinite numbers, and some of his owne

bloud: so as he that was not ashamed to make matters for Tragedies, yet could not resist the sweete violence of a Tragedie. And if it wrought no further good in him, it was, that in despite of himself, withdrew himselfe from hearkening to that which might mollifie his hard heart. (22)

It sounds unbelievable that a tyrant who had no qualms about killing people in reality should be repulsed by an artificial representation of violence. The “true” self of Alexander, it could be argued, comes out at the very minute that he is exposed to the staging of the atrocities he has perpetrated. He is eager to stop seeing “that which might mollifie his hard heart” by withdrawing from the theater so that “the sweete violence of a Tragedie” could by no means affect him. In his mind, what he watches on stage is real because he can have a full view of it as an outsider gazing back at actions that are familiar to him. The role of the spectator, the “reader,” of the “text” being written and performed on stage assigns an appalling dimension to the tyrant’s actions that can now be *re-presented* for someone else to witness.

To bear witness to represented acts of terror and ruthlessness, Sidney seems to say, brings one to full consciousness of one’s doings and, in a sense, establishes those doings as real facts: seeing, in the Renaissance, leads to believing, which in turn can easily manipulate the criteria of truthfulness. It could also be argued that Alexander gains full consciousness of being a tyrant, after confronting a theatrical image of his tyranny, inasmuch as the consequences of his ruling are publicized, exposed to the eyes and criticism of the citizens/spectators who have finally gained access to the raw reality of his government. Thus, witnessing a fictional demonstration of cruelty ensures the unconditional revelation of truth: the spectators of the tragedy have already heard and seen more than, say, the actual victims and eyewitnesses have in Alexander’s kingdom.

If literature evokes “real” emotions while real life evokes no emotions at all, in effect, Sidney’s sayings, his literary products, public role and political stance not only inform but also create any private, personal, deep-seated anxiety that he might have had. In a sense, they create his very own life. In Sidney then, the “outer,” or the peripheral defines the centre, while the public generates the private.

ENDNOTES

¹ According to the *New Merriam Webster Dictionary*, “periphery” is “the boundary of a rounded figure” or the “outward bounds.”

² Ian Van Dorsten and Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1973): 145.

³ Ronald Strickland, “Pageantry and Poetry as Discourse: The Production of Subjectivity in Sir Philip Sidney’s Funeral,” *English Literary History* 57 (Spring, 1990): 19-36.

⁴ “His knighthood was granted not as a mark of favour or reward but to qualify him to stand proxy for his friend John Casimir, the militantly Protestant Count Palatine, whom Elizabeth had made a Knight of the Garter in 1579 and who was now formally installed in the Order” (Worden xxiii).

⁵ Sidney’s father-in-law, Sir Francis Walsingham, attempted to present his funeral as a pompous propagandistic show of the aristocratic class (see Strickland 25).

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Part III:

RESISTANCE and APPROPRIATION

Peripheral Visions and Invisible Englishes

Alastair Pennycook

By the Way Five Guy's Name (x3)

Five Guy's Name is Rip Slyme 5

Rip Slyme, "By the Way" (2002)¹

What is going on here? Japanese rappers rapping in English? Why? Is this just another instance of the blind acceptance of the global language, English, coupled with the wholesale adoption of the global cultural form, rap? Is this nothing but linguistic and cultural imperialism at work? And yet, elsewhere on this CD, Japanese predominates, sometimes on its own, sometimes mixed with English. Indeed what is remarkable is the extraordinary mixing of Japanese *kanji* (characters), *hiragana* (syllabary used mainly for grammatical items), *katakana* (syllabary used for foreign words) and English. Thus, when, for example, in the title song ("Tokyo Classic") they describe themselves as "*Kinshichoo de freeky daburu no Japanese*" ["Freeky Double Japanese from Kinshichoo"], they not only suggest a certain sort of "doubleness" but they do so (I unfortunately cannot reproduce the original here) in *kanji* ("from Kinshichoo"—a place name), English ("freeky" and "Japanese"), *katakana* ("daburu" is the *katakana* version of double) and *hiragana* (the possessive "no" particle is, as it normally would be, in *hiragana*).

How can we start to account for the relationships between culture, identity and language use in the Rip Slyme lyrics? The overly simple view that English is for international communication and local languages for local identities (see Crystal) surely does not even come close to accounting for what is going on here. Thus, although Hanson's review of Crystal's book does at least give us a musical metaphor to work with, this surely does little more than celebrate the triumph of English: "On it still strides: we can argue about what globalisation is till the cows come—but that globalisation exists is beyond question, with English its accompanist. The accompanist is indispensable to the performance" (Hanson 22). This position is grounded in a liberal politics of accommodation, assigning to English a role of global communication while other languages are condemned to do the homework of identity.

Phillipson in "Voice in Global English," however, drawing on Tsuda's work in his review of the same book, presents us with another problematic position:

Crystal's celebration of the growth of English fits squarely into what the Japanese scholar, Yukio Tsuda, terms the Diffusion of English Paradigm, an uncritical endorsement of capitalism, its science and technology, a modernisation ideology, monolingualism as a norm, ideological globalisation and internationalization, transnationalization, the Americanization and

homogenisation of world culture, linguistic, culture and media imperialism...(274)

Here, while we at least get a more complex view than English as a tinkling on the keys while globalization marches on, we are presented with English as intimately bound up with homogenization, Americanization and imperialism. Of course, it is tempting to acknowledge some of Tsuda's and Phillipson's accusations when we hear Japanese rapping "RS5 is in the House," but this "homogeny" position is also surely too simple.

Although Phillipson's framework crucially adds a critical and political framework within which we can understand the global spread of English in relationship to global forms of inequality, it is also important to understand what it can and cannot do. As he suggests in *Linguistic Imperialism*, the issue for him is "structural power" (72) rather than local effects. He is interested in "English linguistic hegemony" which can be understood as "the explicit and implicit beliefs, purposes, and activities which characterize the ELT profession and which contribute to the maintenance of English as a dominant language" (*Linguistic Imperialism* 73). Thus, it is the ways that English is promoted through multiple agencies and to the exclusion of other languages that is the issue. What this of course lacks is a view of how English is taken up, how people use English, why people choose to use English. Such a position cannot account for a sense of agency, resistance, or appropriation. What Phillipson shows, therefore, is how and for what purposes English is deliberately promoted and spread by the agencies of the Centre in the Peripheries of the world, with the underlying assumption that English is a crucial part of the homogenizing process of globalization. What he does not show is the effects of that spread in terms of what people do with English.

A third position, which we might call the *heterogeny position*, is epitomised by the notion of *world Englishes*. Here we get the other side of the coin, the interests being in the "implications of pluricentricity..., the new and emerging norms of performance, and the bilingual's creativity as a manifestation of the contextual and formal hybridity of Englishes" (Kachru, "World Englishes" 66). Thus the world Englishes paradigm has focused on the ways in which English has become locally adapted and institutionalized to create different varieties of English (different Englishes) around the world. But, while homogeny argument tends to ignore all these local appropriations and adaptations, this heterogeny argument tends to ignore the broader political context of the spread of English. As Canagarajah points out in *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism*, while Kachru's position is a useful counter to the centrist arguments of some linguists, his challenge

...does not go far enough, since he is not fully alert to the ideological implications of periphery Englishes. In his attempt to systematize the periphery variants, he has to standardize the language himself, leaving out many eccentric, hybrid forms of local Englishes as too unsystematic. In this, the Kachruvian paradigm follows the logic of the prescriptive and elitist tendencies of the centre linguists. (180)

The WE paradigm, like the linguistic imperialism paradigm, keeps the Centre-Periphery model in place, and, perhaps unwittingly, reproduces a view that supports the former over the latter.

On the issue as to whether there is such a thing as Japanese English, Yano is fairly clear, suggesting that English “will probably never be used within the Japanese community and form part of the speaker’s identity repertoire. There will not be a distinctly local model of English, established and recognizable as Japanese English, reflecting the Japanese culture and language” (127). It is not my intention here to critique Yano’s work itself but rather to suggest that the broader body of work on which it draws—the world Englishes (WE) paradigm—has a number of shortcomings. An analysis of Greek English, drawing on the same framework, would probably come to the same conclusions. This is not to deny that the WE paradigm has been extremely important and successful in helping our thinking on the sociolinguistics of the global spread of English: By looking at the development of multilingualism, by questioning the status of errors and divergent language forms and by focusing on issues of native speaker norms and bilingual creativity, it has indeed done a great deal for our thinking about norms and standards in different Englishes. But at the same time, it has tended to operate with a limited and limiting conceptualization of globalization, national standards, culture and identity.

Looking at Rip Slyme’s lyrics, it seems to me that we have to acknowledge that English *is* being used within the Japanese community (Rip Slyme do not yet have much of an international following), and that it *is* part of these users’ identity repertoires. We might also acknowledge that it is recognizable in some ways as Japanese English. And we further have to confront what it means to suggest that it might indeed represent Japanese culture and language. Although it might be tempting to exclude language use such as this, arguing that it is indeed just a reflection of US culture, or as music it cannot be included as part of ordinary language use, such exclusions, as Canagarajah (in *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism*) and Parakrama insist, are part of the problem that the WE paradigm focuses only on standardized norms of English in limited domains. In the WE paradigm, Japanese English, like English in Greece, and many other countries, is relegated to the status of a peripheral English, always derivative of centre norms, never part of an identity repertoire, never representing Japanese or Greek culture. What I want to suggest in the rest of this paper is that we need to think beyond liberal accommodationism, linguistic imperialism and world Englishes in order to understand in greater depth what is happening in the relationship between the global spread of English and popular culture. At the very least we need a critical understanding of globalization, a focus on popular cultural flows, and a way of taking up performance and performativity in relationship to identity and culture. I shall turn first of all to a discussion of some central concerns about the WE paradigm.

The Constrictive Circles of World Englishes

I have discussed these issues at greater length elsewhere (in “Turning English inside out”) and shall here give a brief summary of the key concerns. Most importantly for the issues I am trying to address are the problems of neutrality, the descriptive adequacy of the three circles, the focus on varieties of English along national lines, and the exclusionary divisions that discount “other Englishes.” There are other concerns with which I shall not deal in any detail here, including the problems of methodology—accused of being anecdotal by Dasgupta and a form of “narrative linguistics” by Görlach—and the way in which the main “methodological strategy,” as Dasgupta (135) suggests, is to compare local forms with “metropolitan English,” thus always making the point of comparison the Englishes of the centre circle from which these world Englishes differ. According to Krishnaswamy and Burde (150), “a few Indian loan words and fossilized expressions found in Indians’ use of English do not constitute a valid base to claim ‘Indianization’ of English...”

Probably the best known and most often cited dimension of the WE paradigm is the model of concentric circles: the “norm-providing” inner circle, where English is spoken as a native language (ENL), the “norm-developing” outer circle, where it is a second language (ESL), and the “norm-dependent” expanding circle, where it is a foreign language (EFL). Although only “tentatively labelled” (Kachru, “Standards, Codification...” 12) in earlier versions, it has been claimed more recently that “the circles model is valid in the senses of earlier historical and political contexts, the dynamic diachronic advance of English around the world, and the functions and standards to which its users relate English in its many current global incarnations” (Kachru and Nelson 78). Yano refers to this model as the “standard framework of world Englishes studies” (121). Yet this model suffers from several flaws: the location of nationally defined identities within the circles, the inability to deal with numerous contexts, and the privileging of ENL over ESL over EFL.

First, and most disconcertingly, it constructs speaker identity along national lines within these circles. As Krishnaswamy and Burde argue (30), if Randolph Quirk represented “the imperialistic attitude” to English, the WE paradigm represents a “a nationalistic point of view,” whereby nations and their varieties of English are conjured into existence: “Like Indian nationalism, ‘Indian English’ is ‘fundamentally insecure’ since the notion ‘nation-India’ is insecure” (63). If on the one hand this suggests that speakers within a country belong in a particular circle and speak a particular national variety (or don’t, if their country happens to be in the rather large expanding circle), it also, as Holborow points out, “fails to take adequate account of social factors and social differences *within* the circles” (59-60). Thus language users are assigned to a particular variety of English according on the one hand to their nationality and on the other the location of that nation within a particular circle. Australians speak English as a native language, Malaysians speak it as a second language, and Greeks use it as a foreign language.

Second, despite claims to the contrary, it continues to privilege native speakers over nonnative speakers, and then ESL speakers (nationally defined) over

EFL speakers (nationally defined) (see Graddol). The WE paradigm thus continues to maintain that the core Englishes are spoken by native speakers while the peripheral Englishes are spoken by nonnative speakers. This, as U. N. Singh points out (16), is one of the more “fantastic claims” of this line of thinking. More recently, there has been a softening on this position, so that it is now conceded that we may talk of “genetic nativeness” in the inner circle and “functional nativeness” in the outer circle (see Yano). But none of this calls into question either the possibility of locating “nativeness” according to these circles, or the very divide itself. And a division between genetic and functional nativeness is surely based on an insidious division, a point that Salikoko Mufwene takes up in his discussion of the distinction between “native” and “indigenized” varieties.

Mufwene, in his work, laments that this distinction discounts pidgins and creoles: “I still find the opposition ‘native’ vs ‘indigenized English’ objectionable for several reasons,’ particularly because ‘the distinction excludes English creoles, most of which are spoken as native languages and vernaculars” (“New Englishes” 24). Furthermore, “the label ‘non-native’ seems inadequate and in fact reflects some social biases, especially when it turns out that there are some ethical/racial correlates to the distinction ‘native’ versus ‘non-native English’ as applied in the literature on indigenized Englishes” (“Native Speaker...” 119). Thus, while usefully challenging the central privilege of the NS to define the norms and standards of English, it has generally failed to question the NS/NNS dichotomy in any profound fashion, and indeed has supported an insidious divide between native and indigenized English. The WE paradigm also excludes numerous contexts where language use is seen as too complex (Jamaica and South Africa, for example). The crucial point here, then, is that the indigenized new Englishes are the codified class dialects of a small elite while creoles and all the other forms of language use are the languages of much broader groups of people. This is also why Rip Slyme are excluded a priori from using English to express Japanese language and culture or have English in their identity repertoire.

Third, one of the rather strange insistences of work within this paradigm is on the social, cultural, and political neutrality of English (see for example, Kachru in “Standards, Codification...” and in *The Alchemy of English*). As Parakrama points out, these repeated claims, are strangely repetitive, bizarre and inaccurate, hiding as they do a range of social and political relations: “These pleas for the neutrality of English in the post-colonial contexts are as ubiquitous and as insistent as they are unsubstantiated and unexplained” (22). Dua also takes exception to these claims, arguing that the notion of “neutrality” “can be questioned on both theoretical as well as empirical grounds,” English being both “ideologically encumbered” and “promoted to strengthen its hegemonic control over the indigenous varieties” (7). In his debate with Rajagopalan over the merits of linguistic imperialism and linguistic hybridity arguments, Canagarajah argues in “On EFL Teachers...” that while linguistic imperialism may be problematic, a World Englishes perspective that promotes the neutrality of English leads to an unhelpful “business as usual” line: “We

are urged to bury our eyes ostrich-like to the political evils and ideological temptations outside" (210).

While this position within the WE paradigm means on the one hand that the global spread of English is taken more or less as a given—an historical effect of colonialism—it also means, on the other, that struggles around what counts as a variety of English are overlooked. As Parakrama argues (25-6): "The smoothing out of struggle within and without language is replicated in the homogenizing of the varieties of English on the basis of 'upper-class' forms. Kachru is thus able to theorize on the nature of a monolithic Indian English...." Parakrama and Canagarajah in his "On EFL Teachers..." both point out that this focus in World Englishes on codified varieties—so-called Indian English, Singaporean English, and so on—spoken by a small elite pushes aside questions of class, gender, ethnicity and popular culture. While claiming ground as an inclusionary paradigm, it remains insistently exclusionary, discounting creoles, so-called basilectal uses of languages, and, to a large extent, all those language forms used in the "expanding circle" (Greece, Japan etc), since as uncoded varieties, non-standard forms still hold the status of errors.

Crucially, then, for the argument I wish to make here, the WE paradigm is far too exclusionary to be able to account for many uses of English around the world. It "cannot do justice to those Other Englishes as long as they remain within the overarching structures that these Englishes bring to crisis. To take these new/other Englishes seriously would require a fundamental revaluation of linguistic paradigms, and not merely a slight accommodation or adjustment" (Parakrama 17). If Dasgupta's (137) lament that "...seldom have so many talented men and women worked so long and so hard and achieved so little" is perhaps rather overstated, Krishnaswamy and Burde's call (64) for "a reinvestigation of several concepts currently used by scholars" needs serious consideration. At the very least, we need to break away from the constrictive circles with their many exclusions and to start to think more seriously about globalization, popular culture and other, invisible Englishes.

Globalization and Post-occidental Englishes

As I have already suggested, views of globalization and English that suggest that English is but background fiddle music to the inevitable global conflagration, or that English is a key tool in the global turn towards the hamburger, or that English is an uncontested and neutral class dialect around the world, are all suspect. How, then, can we start to understand globalization? According to Fairclough, globalization can be seen as "the tendency for economic, social, political and cultural processes to take place on a global scale rather than within the confines of particular countries or regions" (165). This we might see as the base-line definition: many things occur on a larger scale than they did before. According to Giddens (10), globalization is "in many respects not only new, but also revolutionary," and incorporates not only economic processes but political, technological and cultural as well. Kubota meanwhile suggests three related processes: "Globalization implies increased local diversity influenced by human contact across cultural boundaries as well as speedy

exchange of commodities and information...cultural homogenization influenced by global standardization of economic activities and a flow of cultural goods from the centre to the periphery” and increased nationalism as a form of protection (13). Kubota suggests these tensions translate into three dimensions of language education in Japan: increased local community diversity; the prevalence of English; and increased linguistic and cultural nationalism.

Putting these views together, we get a rough and generally uncontroversial view of globalization. Various processes that used to be more localized are now occurring on a global scale; these are not limited to economic relations, but also include social, cultural and political relations; globalization may well represent something far more revolutionary than just an expansion of old processes; globalization seems to involve processes of both homogenization and heterogenization; and it also produces various reactions which may be celebrations of change but often also seem to be retreats into forms of nationalism and fundamentalism. From amid these positions, I want to suggest four key concerns:

- Globalization needs to be understood both in terms of its historical continuity and in terms of historical disjuncture
- Globalization presents us with radically new conditions and theories
- Globalization needs to be understood critically in terms of new forms of power, control and destruction
- Globalization also needs to be understood in terms of new forms of resistance, change and appropriation.

An ongoing controversy in discussions of globalization concerns whether we view it as just another phase of capitalist expansion or whether it represents a fundamentally new moment in global relations. On the one hand, there is the argument that capital has always been global in its reach—European imperialism sought to create global access to resources, global distribution networks and global markets for their products. On the other hand is the argument that current globalization is something fundamentally new, involving new arrangements of states, new forms of communication, new movements of people, and so forth. I want to argue here that globalization has long historical antecedents but that these should not be reduced to a vision only of the expansion of capital. Globalization presents us with some fundamentally new concerns. Mignolo gives us a useful way of understanding the history of globalization, arguing that:

The current process of globalization is not a new phenomenon, although the way in which it is taking place is without precedent. On a larger scale, globalization at the end of the twentieth century (mainly occurring through transnational corporations, the media, and technology) is the most recent configuration of a process that can be traced back to the 1500s, with the beginning of transatlantic exploration and the consolidation of Western hegemony. (236)

These imperial designs may well have coalesced in the current form of globalization: indeed it is this coalescence that may make this new era different from the past stages.

It is also important to reiterate Mignolo's point that these designs have not replaced each other; rather, they coexist. The Christian design on the world does not appear to be any weaker in the 21st century than it was in the 16th century, but now it coexists with civilizing, developing and capitalizing missions. These designs are not driven by capital or territorial gain alone; while the political economy of colonialism was a crucial element in the expansions of European and other empires, they were also driven by other missions. Expanding and redefining Mignolo's categories, I want to suggest we have now entered a fifth phase of globalization: On top of the Discovering/Christianizing, Enlightening/Civilizing, Developing/Conceptualizing and Universalizing/Capitalizing eras, we have at the present moment arrived at the Globalizing/Corporatizing design, in which globalization takes over from universal and international concepts of the world, and it is the corporatization of many levels of society—from business to many aspects that had formally been seen as part of the state (education, health, transport)—that predominates within a new neo-liberal politics for the world.

Such attempts to locate globalization historically are often rejected because they construct this history only in terms of capital and because they then discount the radical changes that are currently underway. Thus, Hardt and Negri argue that "sovereignty has taken a new form, composed of a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule. This new global form of sovereignty is what we call Empire" (xii). Most analyses, they suggest, fail to account for "the novelty of the structures and logics of power that order the contemporary world. Empire is not a weak echo of modern imperialisms but a fundamentally new form of rule" (146). I want to suggest, however, that it is indeed possible to accommodate both historical continuity and contemporary disjuncture. Viewing Empire as part of the contemporary corporatizing designs on the world, we are then able to use Hardt and Negri's insights into the ways that unlike the old imperialism(s), which were centred around the economic and political structures and exchanges of the nation state (indeed, the two were in many ways mutually constitutive), the new Empire is a system of national and supranational regulations that control and produce new economies, cultures, politics and ways of living. From this point of view, while the state has by no means disappeared as a significant player in people's lives, analyses of global relations (or global Englishes) that focus on either imperialism in its old form, or national identities and languages, are radically out of step with the currently corporatizing world.

But the new conditions of Empire require and produce new strategies of resistance. Resistance and change, argue Mignolo and Hardt and Negri, are possible, but they will not be achieved through nostalgic longing for old forms of identification. While processes of resistance, appropriation and hybridization also have a long history (indeed they can be mapped alongside global designs), they become something new under new conditions of power. For Hardt and Negri, new conditions of opposition are produced because of the direct confrontation between Empire and people: "Empire creates a greater potential for revolution than did the

modern regimes of power because it presents us, alongside the machine of command, with an alternative: the set of all the exploited and the subjugated, a multitude that is directly opposed to Empire, with no mediation between them" (393). While this view is helpful in indicating how the new modes of power and the withering of old mediational forces such as the state may lead to alternative confrontations, it remains within a paradigm of revolution. Resistance and change, I would argue, following Mignolo's discussions of "local histories," "subaltern knowledges" and "border thinking" happen not so much through large-scale revolution but through oppositions and appropriations at a more local level.

This other, less visible side or global resistance, which I am shall call here worldliness,² may be seen in terms of "local histories *in* which global histories are enacted or where they have to be adapted, adopted, transformed, and rearticulated" (Mignolo 278). This, then, is the site of resistance, change, adaptation and reformulation. It is akin to what Canagarajah in *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism* describes as a "resistance perspective," highlighting the ways in which people in postcolonial contexts "may find ways to negotiate, alter and oppose political structures, and reconstruct their languages, cultures and identities to their advantage. The intention is not to *reject* English, but to *reconstitute* it in more inclusive, ethical, and democratic terms" (2). And this is not merely a process of appropriation and hybridization (processes commonly associated with the heterogenization position) but rather a "celebration of bi or pluri languaging," a focus on "the crack in the global process between local histories and global designs, between "mundialización" and globalization, from languages to social movements" (Mignolo 250). It is, then, a focus on the constant movement back and forth across languages.

Mignolo takes up the term *postoccidentalism* as a "local and overarching concept in the imaginary of the modern/colonial world system on which postcolonialism and post-Orientalism depend" (44). If, following Venn (19), we understand occidentalism as "the becoming-modern of the world and the becoming-West of Europe such that western modernity gradually became established as the privileged, if not hegemonic, form of sociality, tied to a universalizing and totalizing ambition," then postoccidentalism can be understood as the attempt to understand, critique and unravel the process by which the West became West, modernity became modernity. A focus on postoccidental Englishes, therefore, on the one hand embraces the global diaspora of English (as in world Englishes) as English becomes increasingly a "non-western" language, and on the other hand asks how it is that English became English. A postoccidental Englishes framework has a number of important features:

- First, it operates within a critical framework of global relations that neither reduces globalization to a benign form of heterogenization nor views it as an inevitably homogenizing process
- Second, rather than focussing on the description of new varieties of English as standardized systems, its focus is on new—and often oppositional—uses of English in diverse settings

- Third, it suggests that the standard models of linguistic analysis (which are viewed as Occidental constructions) used in world Englishes and other models need to be replaced by a form of multimodal semiotic analysis.

Popular Culture and Other Englishes

As I have been suggesting, the WE paradigm is out of step with current global conditions, simultaneously focusing on states-centric models of language analysis and excluding divergent Other Englishes. Arguing that English is a multicultural language, Kachru in "Standards, Codification, and Sociolinguistic Realism" equates culture on the one hand with literary 'high culture' and on the other with the nation or region:

The present multicultural character of English is clearly revealed in its uses around the globe, especially in creative writing. In the writing of Cyprian Ekwensi, Gabriel Okara, Amos Tutuola, and Chinua Achebe, English represents the Nigerian culture; in Alan Paton, it represents South African culture; in R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao and Salman Rushdie, it represents South Asian culture; in James K. Baxter, Witi Ihimaera and Frank Sargerson, it represents New Zealand culture; and in Edwin Thumboo, Ismail Sharif, and Fadzilah Amin, it represents Southeast Asian culture. (20)

Of course, as part of the argument that this shows that English is "now the language of those who use it" (Kachru, "Standards, Codification, and Sociolinguistic Realism" 20), and as a list of important writers who have indeed made English their own, this argument has been an important part of understanding postcolonial writing in English. Yet at the same time, the focus on works of literature, which are accessible only to a small minority in most of these contexts, and the suggestion that this work somehow "represents" the cultures of those regions is surely problematic. Does the writing in English of, for example, Apostolos Doxiadis "represent" "Greek culture"?

As Scott (215) argues, the "real question before us is whether or not we take the vernacular voices of the popular and their modes of self-fashioning seriously, and if we do, how we think through their implications." While rap and hip-hop is only one site amongst many forms of popular culture that we might explore here, it is one of particular interest because of its global popularity, use of language, and status often as a form of resistance music. According to Condry (222), "Japanese hip-hop and other versions around the world are interesting in part because they help us understand the significance of what seems to be an emerging global popular culture." It is also of course interesting because of its close associations with African American culture and the vast power of the American music industry: Is this yet another form of cultural imperialism? Mitchell (1-2) argues against the view that rap and hip-hop are essentially expressions of African American culture, and that all forms of rap and hip-hop elsewhere are therefore derivative of these origins: "Hip-hop and rap cannot be viewed simply as an expression of African-American culture; it has become a vehicle for global youth affiliations and a tool for reworking local identity all over the world." Similarly, Levy (134) suggests that hip-hop constitutes "a global urban subculture

that has entered people's lives and become a universal practice among youth the world over...From a local fad among black youth in the Bronx, it has gone on to become a global, postindustrial signifying practice, giving new parameters of meaning to otherwise locally or nationally diverse identities."

We should of course be wary of romanticizing rap/hip-hop as a form of resistance: It is only being used in the first place because of the global dominance of the US in the marketing of its forms of popular culture. As Pennay (128) comments in his discussion of rap in Germany, "Regrettably, the flow of new ideas and stylistic innovations in popular music is nearly always from the English-speaking market, and not to it." Similarly, Jacqueline Urla points out that "unequal relations between the United States record industry and Basque radical music mean that Public Enemy's message reaches the Mugurza brothers [of Basque rap group *Negu Gorriak*] in Irun, and not vice versa" (189). Nevertheless, studies of local uses of rap suggest that it is used in multiple ways: Akindes (95) argues that by bridging elements of the political self-determination movement with popular culture, the Hawaiian hip-hop of Sudden Rush has become "a liberatory discourse for Hawaiians seeking economic self-determination in the form of sovereignty. Sudden Rush...have borrowed hip hop as a counter-hegemonic transcript that challenges tourism and Western imperialism." Furthermore, as Mitchell points out, the influence is not simply from the US: Sudden Rush, for example, have been equally influenced by other Pacific Islander and Aotearoa-New Zealand hip-hop that constitutes a "Pacific Island hip-hop diaspora" and a "pan-Pacific hip-hop network that has bypassed the borders and restrictions of the popular music distribution industry" (31).

Rap/hip-hop provides, then, a complex and contested space for trying to understand language use within globalization. As Preisler demonstrates, furthermore: informal use of English—especially in the form of code-switching—has become an inherent, indeed a defining, aspect of the many Anglo-American-oriented youth subcultures which directly or indirectly influence the language and other behavioural patterns of young people generally, in Denmark as well as in other EFL countries. (244)

Preisler goes on to show the broad knowledge of hip-hop slang among a group of Danish hip-hop street dancers. If we are looking, then, for some notion of emergent global Englishes, the language of hip-hop may be one of the best candidates. As Awad Ibrahim asks from a pedagogical perspective, "whose language and identity are we as TESOL professionals teaching and assuming in the classroom if we do not engage rap and hip-hop?" (366).

Semiotic Reconstruction and Performativity

In order to grasp the implications of this view of postoccidental Englishes, we need new ways of doing sociolinguistics. I have already suggested the need to locate global Englishes within a contemporary understanding of globalization and popular culture. I also want to suggest here the need for new understandings of identity. Returning for a moment to the issue of native speakers and world Englishes, it is worth considering

Kandiah's (100) argument that most approaches to the new Englishes miss the crucial point that these Englishes "fundamentally involve a radical act of semiotic reconstruction and reconstitution which of itself confers native userhood on the subjects involved in the act." From this point we can start to consider that native userhood is not a question of being born into a language (the problematic construction of monolingually oriented linguistics) but rather of semiotic reconstruction within multilingual communities. Thus we can start to view the native user "not as that sorry, attenuated, paranoid little creature that the general use of the term and the mainstream discourse on it would make him/her, but as a free, creative, excitingly variegated human personality with hugely manifold manifestations across the globe" (Kandiah 105). And indeed, we can start not to worry any more about whether a language user is a native user or not: The issue has more to do with degrees of semiotic reconstruction.

I also think it is crucial that we open up issues of identity to questions of performativity. As Butler argues in *Gender Trouble* (25), "gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed." Performativity, then, following Butler, can be understood as the way in which we perform acts of identity as an ongoing series of social and cultural performances rather than as the expression of a prior identity. As she goes on to argue in the same book: "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (33). Taking this up within studies of language and gender, Cameron suggests that "Whereas sociolinguistics traditionally assumes that people talk the way they do because of who they (already) are, the postmodernist approach suggests that people are who they are because of (among other things) the way they talk" (49). The question for language and gender studies, then, is not how men and women talk differently, as if males and females preexisted their language use as given categories of identity, but rather—recalling Austin—how to do gender with words.

As Butler points out, "performativity is neither free play nor theatrical self-presentation; nor can it simply be equated with performance" (*Bodies that Matter* 95). Thus, it is not a question of simply putting on an identity at will: Rather this gives us important ways of understanding the local contingencies of identity formation. This also has major implications for how we conceive of cultural and other forms of difference. It is not that people use language varieties because of who they are, but rather that we perform who we are by (amongst other things) using varieties of language. Performativity in postcolonial contexts can be understood as a form of the "(re)writing of English, Spanish, Dutch, French and Portuguese;...the (re)invention of musical sound; and a plethora of other act(ion)s that make clear a notion of fashioning and invention of the self" (Walcott 99). The importance of this observation in terms of understanding transcultural flows and global Englishes is telling. English is used to perform, invent and (re)fashion identities across borders.

British rappers Asian Dub Foundation (ADF) cut across British cultural boundaries with their Jamaican-influenced rap about young British Asians: “Young Asian brothers an sisters/ Moving forward, side by side/Naya Zindagi/ Naya Jeevan/ New Way New Life.” *Naya Zindagi Naya Jeevan* means “new life, new life” in Hindi and Urdu. It was the title of a BBC programme in the UK in the seventies aimed at Indian and Pakistani immigrants. Here these second generation South Asians recall how this program “Kept our parents alive/ Gave them the will to survive/ Working inna de factories/ Sometimes sweeping de floor.” But now a new generation has arrived: “And we’re supposed to be cool/ Inna de dance our riddims rule/ But we knew it all along/ Cos our parents made us strong/ Never abandoned our culture/ Just been moving it along” (“New Way New Life”).

Such texts abound with crossings, mixings, semiotic reconstructions and identity refashionings. Fijian-Australian rapper MC Trey (*Island Style*) explains that she’s into hip-hop because, as a multimodal set of performances, it recalls the multimodality of Fijian performances: “it has all those elements that you can express yourself... like in Fiji, they have... their art and their dancing, and their music... and I feel that hip-hop has that. It’s one of the only modern art forms where you’ve got... your breaking, your DJ-ing, graffiti, your MC-ing... your story-telling.” Here again we see identity being refashioned as a Fijian-Australian connects hip-hop to traditional forms of Fijian culture. We are not therefore seeing simple flows of culture from the centre to the periphery, but rather appropriations of cultural forms to make new cultural and linguistic connections.

Thus in performing their acts of semiotic reconstruction, it is no longer useful to ask if Rip Slyme are using Japanese English to express Japanese culture and identity as if these neatly preexisted the performance. Nor is it useful to consider that they are just dupes of consumerist global culture. We do of course need to see Rip Slyme’s use of English as heavily influenced by the global spread of rap/hip-hop—just as Preisler’s Danish hip-hoppers were conversant with a large hip-hop vocabulary—but this also suggests that when we talk of global English, it is through these transcultural flows rather than more formal educational means that English operates as a global language. And we do need to see their music as a performance of the global through the use of rap and English. But when “fankastic” English is thus used and embedded alongside—indeed as part of—Japanese, so that it becomes less and less clear what is what in this mix, we have new Englishes that are no longer peripheral and no longer invisible.

ENDNOTES

¹ The lyrics in this paper are all quoted from tracks as written on the CD sleeve of Rip Slyme’s 2002 CD *Tokyo Classic*. I am indebted to Emi Otsuji for her assistance with these lyrics.

² Mignolo uses the French, Spanish and Portuguese terms. I have chosen to use the term *worldliness*, which I used in earlier attempts (e.g. in *The Cultural Politics of English*) to deal with these issues, though I then used it to cover both globalization and worldliness. It may be a more effective term in the more limited sense I am trying to give it here.

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“Just the Language”: The Disappearance of Culture in the Construction of Global English¹

Martin A. Kayman

From Kingdom to Empire

“[W]hy a Gods name may not we, as else the Greekes, haue the kingdome of our owne Language,” wrote the English poet Edmund Spenser to Gabriel Harvey in 1580 (Spenser, “Letter” 16). That’s a resonant articulation of the political and the linguistic, “the kingdom of our own language.” It is particularly resonant, I feel, precisely because Spenser is talking here about literary language. The immediate issue is something very particular: the problem of judging English verse by the standards of classical quantitative metre. But Spenser does not phrase this merely as a question of poetic technique. Focussed on the aesthetic value of English vowels, he expresses simultaneously both a profoundly intimate and an extensively cultural desire: a desire for recognition of the value of the cadences of one’s voiced language, the sounds the body, and the body politic, produces. By using the language of “kingdom,” Spenser registers this desire as an issue of national sovereignty (see Helgerson, or Blank).

I open with Spenser’s linguistic “kingdom” not only to curry favour with a Greek audience, but in order to insist from the start that the language we use to talk about language inevitably figures, imagines, a cultural polity. This, I will argue, is never more the case than when, as happens today with many discussions of English as a global language, this language is portrayed as culturally neutral.

Another, related, reason for citing Spenser’s appeal is that, used as we nowadays are to the rhythms of British or American voices echoing through our environments, it jolts us back to a time when English was very far from having the linguistic authority and prestige it enjoys today. Spenser’s call for a kingdom of English reminds us that the English language has a political history—a history of nation and empire.

Influential authors on the subject of English as a Global Language like David Crystal do recognise that a history of British imperial dominance and the growth of American power have contributed to what is commonly referred to as the “spread” of English (see, for example, Crystal 5). But a curious thing happens when we get to the present day: the history disappears. What I mean is that it disappears *as history*, as the continuing presence of the power relations inscribed in that narrative. The history of power, with identifiable colonisers and identifiable victims of colonisation, dissolves into another narrative in which, rather than nations, it is “language” itself which appears to have an autonomous existence, becoming an agent in its own narrative. This, then, is the way Crystal summarises the “common theme” of his examination of

the history of the development of English's towards a world language: “The evidence ... is that it is a language which has repeatedly found itself in the right place at the right time” (110). Note how it is the language which “found itself,” not anyone who placed it there.

How, then, did “language” become detached from “kingdom”? Indeed, are concepts such as linguistic sovereignty or independence still relevant in a post-colonial, possibly post-national world? English as a global language is presented to us nowadays as, for the first time, a “true” world language: not any longer a linguistic “kingdom” but a stateless medium for communication in a global community. If the “kingdom” of language, and the language of “kingdoms,” related to issues of national culture, what happens to the politics of language in this move from “kingdom” to “global communication”?

The question that obviously haunts the place of English in the world today is not so much that of “kingdom” as of “empire”: the suspicion of linguistic and cultural imperialism. One can hardly cite Spenser on the sovereignty of literary language and not refer to the repeated attempts through the Tudor period to enforce legislation which sought to oblige the settler population in Ireland to use English. In his *View of the Present State of Ireland* of 1596, Spenser finds that, regrettably, the imposition of language by law is subverted by a tendency for the settlers to “go native,” thanks to a different, and particularly dangerous means, of implanting the “mother tongue”: “I suppose that the chief cause of bringing in the Irish language, amongst them,” he writes, “was specially their fostering, and marrying with the Irish, which are two most dangerous infections; for first the child that sucketh the milk of the nurse, must of necessity learn his first speech of her...” (Spencer 119). In Spenser's Ireland, then, the force of linguistic legislation finds itself undermined by the (heavily gendered) “natural” flow of language acquisition.

Nowadays, of course, consent is fundamental to the politics of the liberal English “kingdom.” Thus one of the key ways in which English as a global language is distinguished from previous historical moments of linguistic expansion is precisely by the claim that, this time, it is not being imposed on the world. Rather, we are frequently told, the demand for English arises naturally from “people” or “the world” in general. In the words of a former director-general of the British Council, Sir John Hanson: “The world wants to speak English—who doubts it?” We are consistently told that the success of English as a global language is the result of the world's desire to speak it. Hence any attempt to regulate the expansion of English, particularly by law, appears as a (at the least) clumsy restriction on the natural development of linguistic demand.

However, in thinking about constructing kingdoms and empires—linguistic and otherwise—it would be a grave mistake to think of legislation only in its narrow sense. There is, after all, more than one kind of law.

Let us then link Spenser's call for a “kingdom of our own language” at the outset of English nation and empire building with another call—this one made at the height of British imperialism. In 1871, the Rev. E. A. Abbott, an influential

educationalist and grammarian, gave a lecture “On Teaching the English Language” to the College of Preceptors, in which he sought to “lay down one law for our teaching—that it shall be independent of Latin” (Abbott 1.3). Abbott goes on: “I will ask you to consider this Lecture as a kind of declaration of independence on the part of our mother tongue, a protest that the English language ought to be recognized as requiring and enjoying laws of its own, independent of any foreign jurisdiction” (4).

From a cultural point of view, Linguistics itself, as a theory of language, the enunciation of language’s laws, is a crucial source for “legislation”; not so much in the prescriptive, as in the descriptive sense: what one might call the imagining of linguistic constitutions. Schools and universities, where English is taught and ideas about it validated, likewise exercise jurisdiction over the language. The way we represent language in our classrooms and conferences contributes to the way its cultural “kingdom” is imagined by students.

Abbott was speaking there in 1871 of the laws of Grammar and his late “declaration of independence” testifies to the relative lack of success in kingdom-building in this legislative department, at least until recently. But, again, the difficulty in producing a satisfactory English grammar can be translated into another endorsement of a particular, almost “constitutional,” resistance of English to legislative restrictions—the distinctive “flexibility,” or messy vitality, which allegedly makes it different from the more “rigid” logics of other languages, and therefore more suited to its world role. Indeed, Sir Philip Sidney had in 1595 celebrated the absence of a codified grammar as a sign of English liberty: “Nay truly it hath that praise, that it wants not grammar; for grammar it might have, but it needs it not; being so easy of itself, and so void of those cumbersome differences of cases, genders, moods, and tenses, which I think was a piece of the Tower of Babylon’s curse, that a man should be put to school to learn his mother-tongue” (Sidney 140).

Nonetheless, by the nineteenth century, men—or at least, boys and girls—*were*, as we know, being “put to school to learn their mother tongue.” Being a subject of the kingdom of English was not as natural as suckling at one’s mother’s (or nurse’s) breast—quite the opposite. Precisely because language *is* cultural, children had in fact to be educated in their mother tongue as part of the process of sustaining the national imagined community. By learning their literacy through selections from the national literature in the national elementary schools, children were encouraged in what the editor of one popular anthology of 1846 called “a devotion to Nature—to Home—to Country” (Anon. i).

Whilst the children of the lower classes were put to school in Britain to become good Englishmen and women, following the victory of the Anglicists over the Orientalists in the debate over education in India in 1835, English Literature was also used to teach selected students in British India the tongue of the colonial “mother country.” In this way, the British hoped, in Lord Macaulay’s infamous words, “to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect” (Macaulay 729).

This was then the high (or low) point of the ideological instrumentalisation of English both domestically and in the imperial setting, the high-point, if you like, of a cultural politics of English—in the worst sense. English, taught through the literature, was conceived explicitly as a vehicle for the imposition of cultural values—an association which can be used to taint the image of English literature teaching still today. The modern tendency to teach “the language” divorced from its “literature” is a way of disavowing the latter’s original ideological mission and presenting “the language” as free from imperial contamination.

But language was certainly not imagined as neutral or value-free at the height of the imperial expansion of English. As Alastair Pennycook has pointed out, “in looking for the origins of the discourse of [English as an International Language] in the colonial era, it seems that more significant than the spread of English itself was the massive expansion of studies on English” (Pennycook, *The Cultural Politics of English* 103). I would say, both expansion and transformation, as the study of language began to distinguish itself as a philological *science*, rather than a branch of, often radical, philosophical speculation (see Aarsleff). In this way, the development of the new Philology also provided imperial English with a scientific vision of the value and destiny of the language.

Macaulay had argued the expanding destiny of English and the Empire, but it was left to the great German Philologist, Jacob Grimm, to make the scientific pronouncement in 1851 that:

the English language, which has not in vain produced and supported the greatest, the most prominent of all modern poets (I allude, of course, to Shakespeare), in contradistinction to the ancient classical poetry, may be called justly a LANGUAGE OF THE WORLD: and seems, like the English nation, to be destined to reign in future with still more extensive sway over all parts of the globe. For none of all the living languages can be compared with it as to richness, rationality, and close construction, not even the German.... (Grimm 109-110)

Philology made claims for the cultural density not so much of the literature, as precisely of the English *language*. It did so by shifting from language as grammar to language as lexis. Richard Chenevix Trench, Archbishop of Dublin (to retain our Irish connection) opened his influential 1851 lectures “On the Study of Words” by inverting the traditional relationship between literature and language as follows:

There are few who would not readily acknowledge that mainly in worthy books are preserved and hoarded the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which the world has accumulated; and that chiefly by aid of these they are handed down from one generation to another. I shall urge on you in these lectures something different from this; namely, that not in books only, which all acknowledge, nor yet in connected oral discourse, but often also in words contemplated singly, there are boundless stores of moral and historic truth, and no less of passion and imagination, laid up—that from these, lessons of infinite worth may be derived, if only our attention is roused to their existence.... (Trench 9)

Trench quotes with admiration Emerson's dictum that language is "fossil poetry," but finds it too narrow: "it may be affirmed of it," he says, "with exactly the same truth that it is fossil ethics, or fossil history" (11). For that reason "far more and mightier in every way is a language than any one of the works which may have been composed in it" (22). While this was true of all languages, it was felt to be particularly true of English, so historically "rich" as it was in its vocabulary and the cultural history that had produced it and which it contained. We are all familiar with the monument to this cultural linguistics, the *Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, which Trench and his fellow members of the London Philological Society did so much to promote.

"Freeing" Language from Culture

For Trench, the philological study of etymologies was both a religious and a patriotic enterprise: "There is nothing that will more help to form an English heart in ourselves and others than will this" (23). So how did the English language escape the imperial imagining of it as a world language embodying deeply English values? How has our view of the relation between language and culture altered to release it, to enable us to imagine English as a "post-imperial" world language? (see Fishman).

I want to suggest that the crucial move has been to imagine language as autonomous—the "just the language" of my title, as in the student complaint: "Why do we have to study Literature and Culture? Why can't we just learn the language?" (or the official injunction: "Why do they have to study Literature and Culture? Just teach them the language.") For it is in the teaching of English as a modern language, I will now argue, that we find the first, decisive move that disinterred English from its imaginary embedding in its imperial history. Releasing it politically from its culturally-thick imperial context resulted, in effect, in a theorisation of language that radically loosened its relation to culture as such.

It is a long way from Spenser's desire for sovereignty for the sounds of English prosody to Professor Higgins's wager in *My Fair Lady* that he can pass Eliza Doolittle off as a duchess simply by changing the way she pronounces her vowels (in the 1964 Cukor film). Here we find ourselves confronted with a very different—and recognisably modern—vision of the relation between language and culture: that of a practical instrument for social progress.

As early as 1884, the original for Henry Higgins, Henry Sweet, had attacked contemporary Philology in the name of "The Practical Study of Language" (Sweet 34-55). Sweet's critique of contemporary Philology strikingly sets up a series of what have become very familiar, abiding binaries which, I would suggest, underlay the idea of "just the language"—not least of which is the association of "language" with "practicality," rather than with cultural values.

Sweet begins his article on 'Words, Logic, and Grammar' of 1876 with an attack on what he calls the "one-sidedly historical character" of linguistic science in the name of the superiority of the contemporary: "before history," Sweet argues, "must come a knowledge of what now exists. We must learn to observe things as they

are, without regard to their origin, just as a zoologist must learn to describe accurately a horse, or any other animal” (Sweet 2).

This separation of past and present in language is, I am suggesting, a fundamentally *modern* move. It not only raises the contemporary over the past, but, by defining Linguistics as a science in this new way, it cuts off the language that is to be studied “practically” from the cultural history which had constituted language under traditional Philology. Indeed, the cultural thickness of language celebrated by Trench is consigned by Sweet to the realm of “dead” languages, whereas “the practical” is aligned with “the living” (the choice of Zoology as the analogy is hardly accidental). “[T]hings as they are,” as Sweet has it, are to be viewed, primarily, independently of their history: the sort of cultural grounding from which Professor Higgins’s elocution aims to release Eliza.

The demoting of history to the kingdom of “dead” languages is accompanied, I would suggest crucially, by a transformation of the relation between writing and speech. Sweet inverts the tendency to imagine language as fundamentally written, as consecrated in the famous dictionaries of Dr. Johnson and the *OED* project. Rather, citing the Scandinavian language reformer, Johan Storm, he defends what he calls “the general axiom—equally important for the practical and the scientific study of language—that the living spoken form of every language should be made the foundation of its study” (35). Here, then, writing (and hence literature) becomes associated with the dead past, speech with the presence of the living present.²

By making speech, rather than writing, the primary fact of language, Sweet founds his practical science of language in Phonology, “or,” as he puts it, “the form of language. We must learn,” he continues, “to regard language solely as consisting of groups of sounds, independently of the written symbols, which are always associated with all kinds of disturbing associations, chiefly historical.” In other words, more than a quarter of a century before Saussure, in the context not of theoretical or general linguistics but of the teaching of modern languages for practical purposes, a radical move is made, away from the idea of language as written and thick with cultural history, to language as acoustic material, language as form separated from what Sweet refers to as the “disturbing associations” of history.

This is also a particularly modern move at another, practical, level, in that Sweet’s theory is explicitly designed to respond to the need for an increase in access to modern languages, for the teaching of English abroad and the learning of foreign languages in England which accompanied the growing internationalisation of the economies of western states. As he points out, a correlative advantage of adopting a phonetically based model of language is that, in terms of education, “we make ourselves to a great extent independent of a residence abroad, and of foreign teachers” (40). While maintaining a native-speaker ideal of pronunciation and hence of oral authenticity, Sweet’s practical language instruction also releases teaching from the need for native speakers, preparing the ground—theoretically and technically—for its mass introduction into educational systems around the world. A number of the

audience no doubt can bear witness to the results of this, with memories of slaving in your first English lessons over mastering its phonetics.

The idea of English as a “practical” language, divorced from its cultural history, was taken up enthusiastically by the early promoters of English as an international language associated with the British Council in the 1930s and 1940s. In 1941, for example, H. V. Routh, the first Byron professor of English in Athens, looked forward to the end of the war and foresaw that: “In the eyes of the world, and especially of Europe, England will no longer be one nation among others competing for cultural prestige. She will be the dominating force in international politics, the professed and confessed arbiter of liberty. This hegemony will, of course, enormously enhance our influence, but not our popularity....” (Routh 31-32).³ Routh recognised that continuing to preach English as the literary vehicle of cultural values would be unacceptable; “so,” he concluded: “if they need our language it will not be as a cultured alternative to their own, but as a business-like amplification, a *lingua franca*; much as a calligrapher might recognise the advantages of an office typewriter.” This is English as mere instrument—or, rather, as a particularly modern instrument, like a typewriter, or, in due course, a computer, supposedly at the service of whoever uses it.

Now, English imagined as a *lingua franca* may well be a language released from its nationalist and imperialist cultural heritage—but does that mean that it is a language released from culture as such? Are the metaphors of “kingdom” or “empire,” with their relations to the power of nation states and of colonisation, the only ways of imagining the cultural politics of a language? It is not enough to say that English is no longer tied to its imperialist past, that it no longer “belongs” to Anglophone natives, and therefore it now belongs to “the world” at large for use simply as a medium for communication. The politics of language does not disappear simply because the nation-state may be passing as the framework for that politics.

In his account of the progress of English as a global language, Crystal points out that:

The prospect that a *lingua franca* might be needed for the whole world is something which has emerged strongly in the twentieth century, and since the 1950s in particular. The international forum for political communication—the United Nations—dates only from 1945. Since then, many international bodies have come into being, such as the World Bank (also 1945), UNESCO and UNICEF (both 1946), the World Health Organization (1948) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (1957). (Crystal 10)

What, one wonders, prevented English from fulfilling that now manifest destiny back in the 1950s or 1960s? From Spenser’s “*kingdom of our own language*” to Crystal’s metaphor of an “international *forum* for political *communication*,” is it? Is that what went on in the United Nations and associated international bodies from 1945 to 1989, “communication”? The political culture of this period was precisely that of the Cold War, and the cultural politics of languages in the world, particularly the English language, was likewise a Cold War politics.

Certainly, if, as Crystal observes, the independence of former British colonies after World War II gave one major push to the “spread” of English worldwide, then the fall of the Berlin Wall clearly gave it another major market for expansion. Indeed, it was this event that inspired an emblematic text of English as a global language, the *Encarta World English Dictionary*. According to Nigel Newton, the publisher, he embarked on the project because:

It was clear in this period towards the end of the Cold War that the English language was gaining a level of adoption by non-native speakers which could never have been dreamt of by propagandists among the Cold Warriors themselves. English has become the preferred language of communication in the same way that so many propositions that have been around for a long time suddenly achieve widespread acceptance, in the same way as the idea that the Earth orbits the Sun, rather than the Sun orbiting the earth, gained currency during the late seventeenth century. (Newton forward)

Rather than a result of the Cold War victory of neo-liberalism, English becomes “the preferred language of communication” with the authority of a natural process. But if we are to imagine English as a world *lingua franca* in the context of international politics, particularly the collapse of the Soviet bloc, we cannot help but raise the question of its relation to the culture or cultures of the New World Order.

In this context, we should note that the *Encarta* dictionary is also an emblematic product of the other event which Crystal associates with the spread of English: the electronics revolution. The dictionary is a multimedia enterprise, in both electronic and paper form, produced by an international network of publishers involving Microsoft, Macmillan, the St. Martin’s Press, and Newton’s own, relatively small, Bloomsbury Publishing company. Employing a huge international body of consultants and authors, the Dictionary promotes itself aggressively as a global product. As the editorial director, Richard Bready, notes on the Encarta website: “The dictionary staff lives all over the world. This is the dictionary that e-mail built.” Its ambition is likewise global: its mission, as stated on the same website, “has been to create a dictionary of the world’s language that will become the most widely used reference work in the world” (Newton). As a symbolic contribution to this end, a copy was sent into space on the Futon 12 mission, launched on 10 September, 1999. According to Intospace, the European and American consortium responsible for the commercial aspects of the mission:

For Encarta the purpose was to give the feeling that we are living in one world, the over-view you get when you are in space.... The Encarta Dictionary orbited around the Earth for 16 days and landed safely on September 26th 1999. The first World English dictionary in space is certainly an essential tool for communicating in the next millennium.

The communications revolution—computers, the internet, satellite communications—has, of course, played an absolutely central role in advancing the process of globalisation. The association of English with the electronics means of communication places it likewise as the pre-eminent medium for globalisation: the

language of communication *par excellence*. The space image is eloquent: “English” is released from its grounding in an imperial and Cold War past as a transmitter of cultural values and circulates—like the technology of globalisation itself—with the status of a transmitter of messages around the world. In a word, I would argue, it is “communication” that replaces “culture” as the “kingdom” of language, with the entire world as its frontier.

One could trace the development of a communicative theory of language and, particularly, of a whole panoply of methodological materials for “communicative approaches to teaching English as a foreign language” through the mid-seventies and eighties. One could put that narrative in parallel with that of the development of the communications technologies which have done so much to create the network of interconnectivity we increasingly understand as “globalisation.” But I think that this history is not strange to those who have taught, or learnt, English over the last twenty years or so; to document it would be tedious. Communicative theory, methodology and language-teaching materials have played an important role in imagining language as “just language,” making English into a simple instrument for communication, adoptable, like any other postmodern semiotic style, by anyone with the price of admission. Indeed, “communication” has become the great, unquestioned, “fact” of linguistic orthodoxy.

But is “communication” a culture-free concept, above all in the context of global electronic media and market flows? Surely, to treat English as a global medium separate from culture would be like treating contemporary global communications systems as mere technologies. It would be like viewing contemporary cultural products as multimedia in a merely formal or technical sense. Globalisation consists not only in the formal interconnection of media and the rapid circulation of messages, but also the substantial interconnection of cultural producers and products. As much a fact of globalisation as the “spread of the English language” among widening circles of users is the concentration of the producers of the principal English-language cultural products—such as the huge conglomerate which resulted from the merger in January 2001 between the Internet provider AOL and the massive Time Warner media corporation.

I am not claiming that English is irredeemably “tainted” by the fact that it is the medium for such enterprises; I am merely arguing that the fact that it has been disembedded from national cultures can never mean that it floats, culture-free. The culture is not inherent in the language, but to say that culture is not inherent in language does not mean that, in any particular place and time, a particular language is culturally neutral. The point may be simple, but it is often elided; and this elision constitutes a politics of English as a global language.

Again, of course, the AOL Time Warner “experience” is by no means the only cultural polity in which English operates in the global context. Increasingly people are arguing for a new cultural politics of English, emphasising the periphery and basing that politics on the hybrid cultures its use as a second language in diverse contexts generates. At the same time, others are investigating the possibilities of

producing a linguistic model of “World English,” “World Standard Spoken English,” “International English” or, the coming orthodoxy, “English as a Lingua Franca,” derived from or designed for non-native users of English.⁴

All this is truly interesting; what is at issue is a rethinking of the frameworks in which “culture” and “language” are imagined in a post-national, post-colonial environment. But the questions remain: what space will the spreading global AOL-type “communities” leave for local hybrids? How will creative “crossed” languages avoid commodification and forced entry into the circuit? If favoured as language-teaching material, as Alastair Pennycook has suggested, what impact will newly the fashionable Anglophone creoles of rap and hip-hop have on local non-Anglophone cultures of resistance? (see Pennycook’s article in this present volume) And, equally to the point, in the context of Linguistics, who will do the modelling, according to what data of usage—of whose usage?—, and according to what cultural politics of language? To what extent does imagining it within the “kingdom of communication” bind it to the politics of specific cultures of communication?

Language is cultural, if, for no other reason, that, like culture, it is a terrain tense with power, a terrain that must constantly be struggled over. A perhaps obvious point, but one from which imagining “the language” as “just a medium” does not exempt it—rather, it conceals the cultural work that that model of language is in fact performing.

ENDNOTES

¹ Lecture given at the invitation of the International Conference of the Hellenic Association for the Study of English, Athens, 24-27 May 2002. My thanks to HASE and to the British Council for making my participation possible.

² The *locus classicus* for the discussion of this position underwriting a science of linguistics (in Saussure) is Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* 27-44.

³ Routh was the first incumbent of the Byron Chair of English, founded with Council funds at Athens University to mark the centenary of the University in 1937. At about the same time a privately-run organisation called the Anglo-Hellenic League was established and began to organise English classes. In 1938 Routh took over as Director of the League, which was renamed the Institute of English Studies (IES). Staff recruitment went on rapidly in England, and in November 1939 some 4,500 students were accepted, and a separate annexe was set up in Philhellenon Street near Syntagma Square for children’s classes. Early in 1939 A. R. Burn took over from Routh as Director of the IES and became the first person simultaneously to hold the title of Representative, working independently of the Embassy. At the beginning of April 1945, N. S. Whitworth was sent from Cairo to organise the reopening of the IES which was formally taken over by the Council from the temporary authority of the Anglo-Greek Information Centre, which had been established after the Liberation. I am most grateful to a personal communication by Peter Cherney, formerly of the British Council in Athens, for this information.

⁴ “World Standard Spoken English” is something Crystal hints at (136-8). B. Kachru writes of “World English” in, for example, his contribution to Quirk and Widdowson (11-30).

Marko Modiano is developing a model of “International English”—see, for example, his 2000 book. For English as a *Lingua Franca*, see Seidlhofer, as well as Knapp and Meierkord.

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Part IV:

TEACHING and NEGOTIATING THE DOMINANT CULTURE(S)

Thresholds of Translatability between Centre and Periphery

Stephanos Stephanides

Goethe declared in 1827 that the advent of World Literature was beginning, and in 1848 Marx and Engels acclaimed its rise and cosmopolitan character over national one-sidedness. In the growing debate around globalization, the notion of world literature has taken on new conjectures. Pascale Casanova in his recent *La République Mondiale des Lettres* explores the relationship between national and international literature with Paris and, later, London and New York as the Greenwich in the world literary republic. Franco Moretti has recently stated in “Conjectures on World Literature” that literature around us is now unmistakably a planetary system and proposes a return to the ambition of *Weltliteratur* arguing for the need to find a new critical method.

Both Casanova and Moretti grapple with the relationship and opposition between national and global literary systems, which can only be understood in relation to each other. Moretti focuses specifically on the novel and points out that “in cultures that belong to the periphery of the literary system (which means: almost all cultures, inside and outside Europe), the modern novel arises not as an autonomous development but as a compromise between a western formal influence (usually French or English) and local materials” (58). The compromise between the formal and the local is the rule rather than the exception in the rise of the novel (the centre is the exception) and, Moretti ascertains, takes many different forms (62): if world literature is a system, it is a system of variations. The impact of western reality differs according to the constraints of their time and place. He reduces the variants to three: foreign plot, local characters, local narrative voice, in which the third is the least stable element. Historical conditions crack in the form of a fault line between story and discourse. He suggests that the foreign debt seems to be a complex feature in the text and the question is how symbolic powers vary from face to face. Moretti’s fault lines might well be the thresholds of translatability. While he does not develop an argument about translation practice as such, he borrows concepts from descriptive translation studies and the polysystems theory to discuss literary exchange and interference with reference to the novel. This target-oriented theory argues that interference comes from a source culture, and the destiny of a culture (usually a culture of the periphery) is intersected by another culture from the core that completely ignores it.

Like Moretti, Casanova also begins with the premise that the world republic of letters is profoundly unequal and there is no symmetry in literary interference. While this idea is the basis of polysystems theory of the Tel Aviv school of translation, Casanova (unlike Moretti) only mentions the theory once throughout his nearly 500-page book, though he emphasizes the importance of translators not only as

mediators but as actors in the creation of literariness. The periphery is linked to the centre through translation, and literariness is measured not by the number of writers and readers but by the literary capital earned through the mediation of polyglots and translators involved in “*extraduction*” and “*intraduction*,” that is, the export and import of literary texts.

This systemic approach puts writers and translators at counterpoint. The writers’ choices—like the translators’ choices—depend on where they are situated in the global system: writers and translators belonging to one of the central literatures will behave very differently to those from ex-centric literatures. Writers from central literatures will be freer to experiment with form; they will not need to worry about writing within the constraints of national culture. Literatures from the centre will attract “displaced” writers from the periphery literatures, who can only achieve worldwide recognition by being translated into a major language or by writing in that language. On the other hand, translators in the centre are more likely to be under pressure to obey the laws of literariness, whereas those in peripheral cultures may feel free to transform their own system by introducing writing from a hegemonic system.

Both Moretti and Casanova are system builders, and while they provide useful models for understanding the culturally competitive aspects of literary systems and translation, the overly structuralist approach often ignores the unpredictability of relations of transfer, the situatedness and the historical agency of the writer/translator. The interesting cases are the paradoxes, rather than the subjects that assume centrality in an apparently unified system, because these provide the possibility to divert and differentiate from the homogenizing totality of the power of the centre. Rather than pursue the battle between centre and periphery, it would seem more useful to pursue Moretti’s notion of the fault line, and how this causes diversions in the source/target flow; and the contexts and conditions, the moments of doubts that cause the warps and bends in the global space. If the fault lines are between local narrative voices and global forms, what becomes of these voices translated into different cultures?

Within the emerging body of non-territorial post-national literary paradigm, the counterpoint between writer and translator is increasingly found in the same subject, whether this be in cases of self-translation, or when the writer also translates the work of others, or when a writer adopts a language other than his mother tongue as his literary language, there is a possibility for expanding the capacity to hear diverse accents of idiom, history, memory and identity. Contending systems are found in the same subject. Casanova devotes a chapter to “*les tragedies des hommes traduits*” (347-410). If translated men are indeed a “tragedie” is open to question. Rushdie, who as far as I know coined the term of translated man in *Shame* (although not mentioned by Casanova in this context) talks of his translated condition in celebratory terms—as something gained more than lost. Kafka speaks of the predicament of this condition in a letter of 1921: the impossibility of not writing, the impossibility of writing in German, the impossibility of writing otherwise, and the impossibility of writing. The result of crossing this threshold could be said to result in translation without an original. The crisis of the untranslatable is the “poesis” of

imagined forms of communities. While he was hailed as an early modernist in the literary Greenwich, Kafka scholars have observed that he brought Yiddish literary, political and social questions into the German literature, and attempted to find a Yiddish literary tradition, in German, through tales, legends, myths and chronicles (see Casanova 366-372).

The radical indeterminacy of writing within the gap of translation seems to bring together the possibility of both the invention of something new and the salvage of cultural memory. In an essay called "The Impact of Translation," Seamus Heaney reflects on the role of translation as cross-cultural process in changing the boundaries of (the insular British poetic) tradition. He suggests that the shortest way to Whitby, the monastery where Caedmon sang the first Anglo-Saxon verses, is via Warsaw and Prague. He cites the example of Christopher Reid, a British author whose work *Katerina Brac* (1985) masquerades as a translation as a way of finding a new voice beyond the boundaries of the insular British tradition. The use of translation (or in this case pseudo-translation) marks a moment of doubt and a turn to other literary traditions to find a direction or link to "road not taken." "We are all the more susceptible to translations which arrive like messages from those...much further down the road not traveled by us" (Heaney, "The Impact of Translation" 36-44).

In his reflections on his own translation practice, Seamus Heaney seems to affirm with Benjamin that "no single language can attain by itself but which is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other" (qtd. in Benjamin 74). In the introduction to his translation of *Beowulf*, he describes how the process of translation was for him a way of overcoming a tendency to think of English and Irish as adversarial tongues. The process of recognition, he says, opened up a space like a flash of memory of "somewhere"—an imagined community where the Irish/English duality or the Celtic/Saxon antithesis (the partitioned intellect) momentarily collapsed.

Heaney says he felt he earned his right of way to translate *Beowulf* through the experience of an epiphany with the Anglo-Saxon word "*tholian*," meaning suffer or endure. The word struck a chord in his cultural memory by recalling the vernacular of his childhood. He remembers his aunt saying: "They'll just have to learn to thole," referring to a family who had suffered bereavement. He reflects on how this word had traveled north into Scotland and across into Ireland and the probably taken by Scottish-Irish immigrants to the American South in the eighteenth century so when he read John Crow Ransom's "Sweet ladies, long may ye bloom, and toughly I hope ye may thole," he says his heart lifted and his cultural odyssey with the word aroused in him a "nostalgia for world culture" that he did not know he had. His work as translator involved bringing the vernacular of his childhood into a wider tradition. He states that the words for the translator, like the writer, have to find their erotics of composition: "some sense that your own little verse-craft can dock safe and sound at the big quay of the language" ("On Beowulf"). These words seem to echo Benjamin's notion that the task of the translator is "to release in his own language

that pure language which is under the spell of another, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work” (qtd. in Benjamin 80).

Comparative criticism at the turn of the millennium is preoccupied with the meeting of languages and cultures, the threshold of the untranslatable and the spaces of translatability. Literature can perhaps speak only as translation, as an interaction of cultures performing and disrupting cultural memory. I would like to explore this idea further with the example of Indian literatures. The counterpoint between the ex-centric and the metropolitan may take on different forms: it may be more evident in the experimental and innovative Rushdie than in the conservative V. S. Naipaul where the hybridity of sensibility is immanent. As Amit Chaudhuri points out (xxvii), when one reads a description of rabbits in the snow in the Wiltshire countryside in Naipaul’s autobiographical novel the *Enigma of Arrival*, the meaning operates in the fact that it comes from a hybrid sensibility and history. The passage might be unremarkable, had it not been written by a Trinidadian descendant of Indian indentured labourers.

Naipaul and Rushdie both live in the literary Greenwich, and consecrated with major literary awards, have both been in different ways lightning rods for tensions between centre and periphery. In his introduction to the *Vintage Book of Indian Writing* (an anthology to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Indian independence), Rushdie defends Indian English writing against assaults that these writers enjoy inflated reputations on account of the international power of the English language, and of the ability of western critics and publishers to impose their cultural standards on the East; Rushdie rejoinder is that these attacks sniff of political correctness and it is too much to take for some folks that the best Indian writing is in the language of the departed imperialist. In the same introduction he goes on to agree (with some reservations) with Naipaul’s caustic statement that: “whatever English might have done for Tolstoy, it can never do justice to the Indian language writers” (qtd. in Rushdie xx) The statement, and the fact that the Vintage anthology only included Indian English writing, gave rise to angry reactions among Indian literati. While this may seem to be a row between the self-congratulatory and the sanctimonious, it also opened the opportunity to reclaim the neglected chapters of a larger cultural past that could no longer be ignored.

In 2001, Picador published another anthology of Indian writing collected and edited by another Indian English writer, Amit Chaudhuri. In his introduction he states that his anthology is not a riposte to any other anthology—though I, like many others, saw it to be just that. In contrast to Rushdie’s anthology, more than half the selection consists of literature translated from some of the major Indian languages other than English. Nonetheless, Chaudhuri also admits that it is impossible to be all-inclusive and laments that some omissions were due to the lack of good translation. However, he also affirms that there is no real problem of translatability, as the vernacular literatures themselves emerged from the cross-fertilization of colonialism with the profound impact of the West, with which they share the narrative idiom of modernity, and their difference to the West is subtle. He ascribes a cosmopolitanism to

nineteenth century Bengali literature in comparison to the relative provincialism of Victorian England. Paradoxically, he suggests that one has to turn to the vernacular traditions to understand the full impact of the English language and colonialism. The first section of the anthology begins with the Bengali renaissance, which records a response in the mid-nineteenth century to changes in history and identity with the emergent urban bourgeoisie, and begins with an excerpt from an 1854 essay called the “Anglo-Saxon and the Hindu” by Michael Madhusudan Dutt praising the beautiful language of the Anglo-Saxon which “flows on like a glorious, a broad river—and it does not despise the tribute waters which a thousand streams bring to it.”

Rather than simply pitting English against the vernaculars, Chaudhuri explores kinship and difference of contending traditions within traditions. He points out that the West often glosses over the heterogeneity of the Indian English novel and is particularly receptive to its postmodern trappings, because the rational tradition of the European enlightenment must be looked at with suspicion, because hybridity is morally preferable to purity and authenticity that have become associated with right wing politics, and because contemporary western aesthetics is sceptical about realism and representation. In effect, Chaudhuri’s does not wish to be merely critical of the western political correctness regarding hybridity, rather he wishes to wrest Indian fiction from the context of its marketability, and place it under imaginative scrutiny within the larger cultural and historical perspective of Indian literary and colonial history.

Translation was a foundational act in the formation of the modern Indian vernacular literatures (as it was for most modern literatures), so it could be said that they have their origin “in translation.” It has also been said that India, more than most nations, is a “translation area” where languages and idioms constantly interact, and translation is a sensitive indicator of cultural and literary tensions (Viswanatha and Simon 162-81). At this conjuncture, Chaudhuri’s anthology is another act of translational interference to incite comparative criticism that may breakdown the hierarchy and dichotomy between Indian English literature and the vernacular, both in India and in the context of world literature. This might give rise to a more fluid literary exchange between different forms of hybridity and to a greater awareness of the different shapings of cultural difference and alterity that they enact. For example, in a 1922 Bengali tale by Sukumar Ray, we see how the author parodies Lewis Carroll to reflect and caricature the flux and adjustments of meaning in Bengali society. This is not a dissimilar strategy to that detected in Indian English writers seeking to find their own space in English by using the different kinds of translation tactics to think through the cultural gap. While sometimes it might be so-called “chutnification,” it is also parody and celebration of the processes of change in culture and identity. Chaudhuri’s anthology emerges as a structure of postponement performing the work of cultural memory by giving a glimpse of the vernacular literatures through the fault line of Indian English fiction. Rather than repeating the ideological debate between centre and periphery, or between English and other

Indian languages, Chaudhuri recognizes a continuing dialogue between cultural partners going through changing power relations. This anthology is another interventionist moment. As an Indian English writer himself, he seems concerned to resist the trend of the Indian English novel becoming a global commonplace in the literary marketplace. He provides a historically informed comparative framework intent on avoiding national one-sidedness and, at the same time, questioning what might be swallowed whole into the hegemonic canon of world literature.

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Returning with (or without) a Vengeance: “Shakespeare” and National Shakespeare at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century¹

Vasiliki Markidou

Let me begin by spelling out that the particular essay constitutes an attempt to examine the status of Shakespeare and the nature of the Shakespearean studies at the outset of the twenty-first century. In particular, it attempts to tackle the following questions: has Shakespeare’s status as a national bard-idol suffered from the contemporary globalisation of literary studies, or has it grown in strength in contemporary Britain; and if so, why? Moreover, if from the eighteenth century to the first half of the twentieth Shakespeare was molded into a great cultural institution, while in the latter half of the twentieth century he was reassessed and his authority was seriously challenged by a wealth of post-structuralist critical works, how do we cope with the potentially “rank and unweeded garden” of that Shakespearean legacy? Should the contemporary strong academic disestablishment of Shakespeare develop to a greater extent, or should there be a reactive return to traditional ways of conceptualising Shakespeare (a re-adoption of the old cultural elitism)? Or, is there/should there be a third avenue to this crucial cultural and, by extension, political issue?

Let me, first of all, recount a fairly recent personal experience. In the summer of 1999, during a visit to California, I enthusiastically embarked on watching a performance of the Shakespearean comedy, *Love’s Labours Lost*, by one of the most highly acclaimed theatrical companies in the USA, the Santa Cruz Shakespeare company. My anticipation was reinforced by the fact that this would have been my first theatrical experience of Shakespeare in America. I was thus keen on getting a first impression of the appropriation of the Shakespearean plays on the west coast of the United States. This was an open-air performance, and just as the queuing process had begun, I watched in amazement each member of the audience rent a seat which was then transferred to the open space before the stage and meticulously organise the contents of his/her hamper which he/she would consume while watching the play.

My first reaction was shock and annoyance, which I attributed to being strongly imbued in the stock European theatre-going tradition, in which food consumption was restricted to intervals. Following that reflexive reaction, I brought to mind the 1989 discovery of the remains of the Elizabethan Rose Theatre, and more specifically, “of masses of crushed hazelnut shells in the arena where the ‘groundlings’ stood,” strongly associated by the press with “popular” Shakespeare (Foakes 60). Almost simultaneously, I realised that just two days ago I had watched a musical concert run in precisely the same way as the Shakespearean production—i.e., transformed into a festive banquet—without experiencing any disconcerting feelings.

In fact, I had thoroughly enjoyed it. I suddenly realised that an issue much more implicit and grave than cultural differences was at stake: the consumption of the food commodity was disrupting my elevation of a cultural commodity (the theatrical production of a Shakespearean play) into yet another elitist demonstration of the sacred, trans-historical genius, William Shakespeare. The relationship between admiring audience (myself) and admired (Shakespearean) play had been ruptured. An even greater shock followed the previous one: had I not, in my studies of the Shakespearean literary products, been nurtured in reading “against the grain” (to borrow Walter Benjamin’s phrase)? Having arrived at the theatrical site with my ideological “baggage,” which included years of learning how to resist bardolatry, I had been beguiled. To my horror, I realised that “the Shakespeare myth” had returned with a vengeance.

Indeed, does not the Bard consistently return with a vengeance? A few months ago, David Lodge, a renowned academic and novelist, exquisite in his rampant satire of the workings of the academic institution (eg. *Small World*) sent a note to the British newspaper, *The Guardian*. In it, he clarified that *he* had invented a game called “Humiliation” in which points are won by the player who admits not having read a book which he presumes has been read by the other players. He remarks that the game “made its first appearance in my novel *Changing Places* (1975), as did the assistant professor of English literature who won this game, but lost his job, by claiming he had not read *Hamlet*.”² Lodge’s bitter critique of the academic establishment of Shakespeare as the ultimate sacrosanct literary figure within the field of English studies during the 1930s and up until the 1960s cannot be missed. Indeed, the particular incident accurately reflects the unwritten law of the British academic institutions during that period: more than anything else, English meant Shakespeare.

It also alludes to the great cultural centrality with which Shakespeare has been endowed from the eighteenth century to the first half of the twentieth and which has survived within our contemporary era in spite of, or even due to, a wealth of post-structuralist theories that have tried to disrupt it. In other words, the application of these theories in the literary analysis of the Shakespearean products, by a multitude of literary critics with conflicting cultural and social agendas, has questioned the literary authority of Shakespeare as it had been celebrated up until the mid-twentieth century, while at the same time promoting and ensuring his reputation. To be more specific, I am referring to critical arenas such as deconstruction, New Historicism and cultural materialism, feminist literary theory, post-colonial studies, performance criticism and textual criticism, in which Shakespearean texts have been rewritten. An awareness of this crucial issue alerts one to the fact that, in spite of their great value in enabling readers/ audiences to approach literary works in new and multi-faceted ways, contemporary literary theories suffer from internal contradictions and limitations in achieving their goals.

If post-structuralist literary theories have offered a lot in reinforcing Shakespeare’s “cultural capital”³ whilst attempting to question his literary authority, the current highly globalised Shakespearean studies, which promote the phenomenon

of “International Shakespeare,” have failed to render the image of the national bard-idol obsolete in contemporary Britain. Let us, for example, take the case of the most prestigious British theatrical company, the Royal Shakespeare Company. Having only recently overturned its stern refusal to host American productions of Shakespearean plays throughout the forty years of its “life,” the RSC gives some food for thought on this particular issue. Indeed, the New York-based TFANA—Theatre For A New Audience—became the first American theatrical company to stage a Shakespearean play, in particular, *Cymbeline*, in The Other Place at the end of 2001. To start with, the company’s refusal to allow American Shakespearean productions to take place at its premises throughout forty long years indicates that the greatest British cultural export has many times been “translated” into an aggressively national banner. It is precisely this thorny paradox that the artistic director of TFANA, Jeffrey Horowitz, highlighted when he addressed the RSC directors. In his own words, “[t]he RSC *says* it believes in internationalism, so wouldn’t they like to see our work in Stratford?” (Rosenthal 18—emphasis added). In fact, can the first choice of an American theatrical company in the RSC, be influenced (among many, undoubtedly, highly complex factors) by the fact that Horowitz is a former actor who has studied at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art?

Reflecting the stock British snobbery towards American cultural products, the director of the particular production, Bartlett Sher, noted: “This *Cymbeline* shows that America doesn’t just export McDonald’s and Hollywood blockbusters; we respect the language and have our own, distinctive response to Shakespeare. It would be great if seeing us in Stratford makes some people think differently about American culture” (Rosenthal 18). Sher points out that unlike a MacDonald’s burger, which is pretty much the same around the world, Shakespearean products assimilated and transformed by American theatrical companies, once they are sent back to the U.K., can and will influence in turn the production of new English Shakespearean performances. Instead of a rigid, sterile hierarchical categorisation between “superior” British Shakespearean theatre and “inferior” American one, Sher calls for a productive reciprocal relationship between the two cultural forces.

His argument however, is viewed sceptically by a number of British cultural authorities, including theatre critics. Thus, the majority of the British critics of Mathew Worchess’s production of the Shakespearean romance, *The Winter’s Tale*, currently staged at Roundhouse theatre in London by the Royal Shakespeare Company, reacted heatedly against the transfer of the play to the 1930s America and the Italian-American mafia (Zenakou 30). Their primary objection was related to the RSC actors’ delivery of the Shakespearean discourse with a strong American accent. In their opinion, rather than having a realistic effect, such a dramatic linguistic change had a comic one. Such a critique, however, seems to me to constitute more than a clash of linguistic codes; it is, even more importantly, a demonstration of the British resistance to the “cultural imperialism of an ever-expanding global Americanism” (Joughin 281).

Along similar lines, Richard Stengel, an author and a Rhodes scholar at the University of Oxford, has recently commented on American students' disconcerting experience of British reserve at Oxford: "[t]here is a presumption among American students going to Oxford that because... they've studied Shakespeare at high school that it's going to be easy to get on in England. But it's simply not the case" (Waterhouse and Elliott 17). Clearly, the implication of this kind of commentary is that a good number of American students regard a fair amount of knowledge in the iconic British cultural authority as the gateway to the U.K. only to realise that their diligent studies of Shakespeare have been an insufficient British "passport."

The results of a recent survey conducted by *Encyclopaedia Britannica* shed more light on the reactive adherence to "national Shakespeare" in the midst of the contemporary development of a global, "international Shakespeare." The outcome of the particular survey led the authorities of the world-famous reference book to criticise British youth as "a generation of historical philistines" (Ezard 9). This comment was a product of a striking percentage of British young people's ignorance in relation to a number of key events in their national history. Interestingly enough, a considerable percentage of the questions is related to Britain's imperial past while, out of the six questions mentioned in the particular newspaper article, half of them are related, even if indirectly, to Shakespeare. According to the survey, "[o]nly a quarter of young people (compared with 36% of adults) knew that Richard III was a 15th-century king," while "57% (65%) knew that Henry VIII had six wives" and "31% (43%) knew that St George's Day is celebrated on April 23."⁴ Of the remaining three questions, two were also related to Britain's glorious historical past: "[o]nly 19% (and 38% of adults) knew Victoria reigned for 64 years," while "[o]nly 26% (63% of adults) recognised D-Day as the date of the Normandy landings in 1944" (Ezard 9).

Christine Hodgson, a *Britannica* marketing executive, revealed the ideological function of the particular survey by declaring: "As a nation whose history has shaped the face of the world, it seems incredible that the younger generation have decided to dismiss it" (Ezard 9). Hodgson's remark indicates that losing its claims to its glorious imperial past from within is twice as hard a blow for Britain than doing so from without. In other words, what Hodgson, in particular, and the *Encyclopedia Britannica* authorities, in general, are concerned with is the fact that the marked British decline in the memory of historical figures and events strongly related to Britain's imperial past (in relation either to its seeds—Richard III, Henry VIII—or to its climatic development—Victorian England) disrupt their effort to reduce British knowledge of national history to a re-production of a mythologised colonial history. Of course, an examination of such an attempt within the framework of the so-called contemporary "post-historical" era forcefully pre-empties it. For, according to Francis Fukuyama and his followers, the dialectic of history has come to its end with the glorification of liberal society, marked by "the triumph of the Western *idea*" (Fukuyama 3) over Soviet collectivism. As a result, "history as a *sign* has lost all meaning" (Lucy 42) and "is no longer able to function as the legitimating background to... knowledge" (Lucy 61). In the light of this "post-modern" disruption of the

notion of a (national) history, the *Britannica* executives' effort to lay emphasis on English history in order to promote nationalist and/or neo-colonialist aims becomes nothing more than the dream of "a patched fool."⁵

Yet, as Richard Wilson has pointed out:

[i]t was with fine irony...that the hybris of this postmodern fantasy of "the end of ideology" and its "grand narratives" was terminated so abruptly by a global stockmarket crash in October 1987 that was aggravated by overloaded computers. With the ensuing slump, implosion of Communism, and disintegration of Europe into archaic nationalisms, little more was heard about the end of history. (Wilson 24)

Such a realisation leads one to raise the following question: what about Shakespeare's strong, even if "shadowy," presence in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* survey? It seems to me that it suffices to take into consideration John Drakakis's point that *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* and the Bible have been the "two essential instruments of colonisation" (Drakakis 24). Notably, they remain the two "essential"—prescribed—texts for British survival in that they are the two books that interviewees are allowed to take with them, if marooned, on the Radio 4 programme "Desert Island Disks"!

Parallel to the turn to Shakespeare as a symbol of national continuity and pride amid the growing dissemination of a polyphonic, "international" Shakespeare, we can discern yet another, even if peripheral, reactive attachment. A number of literary critics have turned to a literary analysis of Shakespearean drama that draws on the New Critical tradition. Thus they read Shakespeare as a transcendental literary authority presenting his readers/audiences with a number of universal truths and remaining untouched by his contemporary cultural, political and ideological conflicts. In other words, they have joined the traditional New Critical voices that have persisted in the midst of the post-structuralist "revolution" of the latter half of the twentieth century. Indeed, while post-structuralist readings of the Shakespearean texts have constituted since the middle of the previous century, and continue to do so, the centre of Shakespearean criticism, the "old" centre of these studies, namely New Criticism, maintains its (peripheral) voice. R. A. Foakes, for example, has drawn two relevant examples even within the 1980s, the very decade of the blooming of post-structuralist readings of Shakespeare. In his Cambridge Shakespeare edition of *Hamlet*, published in 1985, Philip Edwards remarked: "There is no mistaking the plain sense of the Ghost's words" (Edwards 43, qtd. in Foakes 71), while two years later, in his Oxford Shakespeare edition of the same play, G. R. Hibbard commented on Hamlet's "duty" to take revenge on his father's death, thus concealing the play's marked ambivalence in relation to revenge (Hibbard 48, qtd. in Foakes 71). However, Stephen Greenblatt's *Hamlet in Purgatory* has undoubtedly put the ambivalence of the ghost back on the map.

Should New Critical works be dismissed altogether however? Let us take one such example in order to address this crucial issue. E. M. Tillyard's book, *The Elizabethan World Picture*, has been one of the focal targets of critique by new

historicists and cultural materialists for—in Leah Marcus’ words—its “normative assumptions.” Although in agreement with these critics, Marcus notes that Tillyard’s “book offered students a vocabulary by which they could analyze key speeches and metaphors involving ideas about order and degree; it has been uncommonly useful to students in the past—I will never forget what a feeling of historical enablement it gave me as an undergraduate struggling with Shakespeare. Judging by the fact that it is still in print, it may be just as useful today” (Marcus 103). It seems to me that Tillyard’s book can indeed still be valuable to students, not only along the terms noted by Marcus, but also, and in my opinion much more importantly, in highlighting the way modern ideologies re-write past literatures (especially the Shakespearean one) in order to promote their goals.

At this point, I would like to cast my mind back to my initially disconcerting experience of the Californian Shakespearean production. I can now appreciate that had I approached the particular Shakespearean production solely as an anatomist equipped with a full set of tools (my favourite historicist line of literary analysis), unwilling to enjoy the “humanist” edge of *Love’s Labours Lost*, I would have adopted an equally limiting position. That is to say, entrenched in my critical background, I would have refused to allow myself to see the play as addressing (among other issues, which can be teased out with the aid of modern literary theory) questions on human life—love, death, poetry, values. In other words, I would have become entrapped in the tangles of what Annabel Patterson has called “prefabrication.” In her own words, this term means “the tendency to apply to literary texts a concept that the reader has inherited from one or another of the new [literary] approaches, whether it be feminist theory, deconstruction, New Historicism, or the various forms of analysis ultimately derived from Marx that seek to expose the sociopolitical underbelly of the writer and his work” (Patterson 258). It seems to me that an awareness of the dangers of such a dead-end situation can constitute the outset of a more flexible and thus healthier approach to the Shakespearean texts/productions, something that Patterson herself has already pointed out when calling for “an eclectic mixture of approaches ... with humanist and ethical criticism side by side with a deconstructionist emphasis on wordplay, for example” (Patterson 259).

Bearing in mind Patterson’s call, I would like to attempt a (re)view of the online *Times Educational Supplement* (TES). The particular internet portal includes a site entitled “Talking to” which is advertised as “your chance to talk to the great names of the past,” to “find what they had to say about some of their works—and, in some cases, their most notorious exploits” (<http://www.takingto.com.uk>). The unnamed individuals that “miraculously” constitute in their conglomeration each “resurrected” literary body—a distinctly Hobbesian representation—“give voice” to the deceased literal bodies of a number of literary authorities. Those of them “present” in the particular website range from the late sixteenth to the early twentieth century and include five British and one American representative. On the left hand-side of the site, they are democratically arranged in an alphabetical order: Austen, Dickens, Hardy, Lincoln, Shakespeare, and Woolf. On the right-hand side though,

their visual representations are ordered in a way that seems to convey an elitist, hierarchical arrangement: Shakespeare comes first, Dickens second, followed by the rest. Clearly, Shakespeare's "cultural capital" outweighs that of other literary authorities.

It seems to me of equal, if not added, interest to examine the variety of questions that are addressed to the "apparitional" literary figure of Shakespeare. Among the plethora, we can discern humanist questions ("What made your understanding of people so complete that your sentiments still ring true today?"); questions related to New Historicism and Cultural Materialism ("Do you think that the Shakespeare industry uses your plays to reproduce the existing social order, or do you think that there are opportunities for resistance within your works that modern directors can take advantage of?"); questions that expose the falsity of the "literary resurrection"—by what I would like to call "literary atheists"—("I was just wondering how you are going to answer my questions if you are dead? ... I think you are actually a fake"); questions that call for proof of the "miracle"—by what I would name "literary sceptics"—("If you are really William Shakespeare, will you prove it and come to my school?"); questions reflecting bardolatry (one Rachel Quinney asks: "Is it true that one of your daughters married a man named Thomas Quinney? ... Does this make me one of your descendants? I hope so"); questions related to Shakespeare's image as a national icon ("Mr. Shakespeare, you have had such a tremendous impact on ... British literature. Could you explain how you have influenced Charles Dickens's works?"), to give just a few examples.

More than anything else, then, the particular website demonstrates that even a cultural construct entailing highly elitist elements (the omniscient power of the iconic British playwright) can ignite such a plethora of responses reflecting various, often conflicting, ideological viewpoints. In other words, it suggests that (as a number of literary critics have already pointed out) the most important issue in terms of conceptualising Shakespeare is the fight against a hegemonic voice on the subject so as to ensure cultural, social, and political progress.

ENDNOTES

¹ The particular essay has benefited from the judicious interventions of Alison Findlay and Anita Pacheco. For these, I am grateful to both.

² Lodge's letter to *The Guardian* can be traced in the "Letters" column of the newspaper issue cited here.

³ For an analysis of the issue of "cultural capital," see Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction*; also John Guillory's *Cultural Capital*.

⁴ The festival day of the patron saint of England is also the commemoration day of Shakespeare's birth.

⁵ See William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, The Arden Shakespeare, IV.I.208.

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“Outside” Culture: Virginia Woolf and a Politics of/for Outsiders

Angeliki Spiropoulou

To use the term periphery to speak of relations among societies automatically evokes the question of power hierarchies that inform definitions of cultural identity and difference. Even though the term originates in economic discourse, the notion of the periphery raises questions which are primarily cultural: namely, of how different cultures relate to each other, and furthermore, of how they *could* relate to each other on an equal and just basis rather than along relations of asymmetry, exclusion and hegemony.

In this respect, the field of culture emerges as both a prime site and a stake of the power struggle among different groups and communities within as well as across nation-states. This cultural struggle may seem more conspicuously urgent today due to the growing forces of economic and cultural globalization and the increasingly multicultural constitution of western societies. However, the engagement with the issue of cultural difference and domination is not as recent as it may appear to be. It can be found at the very heart of writing, especially since the early twentieth century, when modernising forces in the west were radically transforming the experience of subjectivity and hence the terms of the encounter with the “other.”

Virginia Woolf was a writer famously committed to interrogating authority structures and practices at work in cultural discourses and institutions. But more than this, she was also concerned with possible ways of changing those practices, of proposing alternative modes of thinking that could interrupt the perpetuation of power relations. Her approach to the issue of difference is condensed in the figure of the “outsider,” which works as a metaphor of exclusion both within and across cultures. One can be an outsider to particular institutions within one’s own culture or in relation to another culture against which one’s own is defined as marginal or peripheral.

Woolf’s noted feminism gives her notion of the “outsider” a strong gender inflection. Women’s exclusion from political, educational, and professional institutions in the early twentieth century becomes in Woolf’s writing paradigmatic of structures of dominion and discrimination deeply inscribed within western patriarchal and imperialist culture. At the same time however, her treatment of the outsider’s position is relevant on a more general level because it points to ways in which cultural difference at large has been and can be thought.

The outsider’s viewpoint is employed in many works by Woolf as a strategic means of complicating conceptualisations of cultural tradition and of subverting authority. For example, it is taken up in her approach to Greek, the dominant

discourse of the West, the origin and paradigm of western thought and civilization. Woolf's own exclusion, due to her sex, from official learning of Greek forces her into the position of an outsider as access to Greek was historically limited to a male *élite* destined to be not only scholars and poets but also, and more significantly, politicians, administrators and businessmen at the service of imperial power. In response, Woolf inverts the terms of her exclusion and uses the outsider's perspective precisely in order to undermine the putatively rightful appropriations of the Greek cultural heritage by such “Oxbridge” priestly and imperialist masculinity. Note how her essay “On Not Knowing Greek” starts by evoking this exclusion already inscribed in the title:

For it is in vain and foolish to talk of knowing Greek, since in our ignorance we should be at the bottom of any class of schoolboys, since we do not know how the words sounded, or where precisely we ought to laugh, or how the actors acted, and between this foreign people and ourselves there is not only difference of race and tongue but a tremendous breach of tradition. (93)

To justify the negative formulation of the title, Woolf appeals to a collective ignorance of a “we” alluding to the unequal access of the sexes to formal education. Because of her exclusion from the institutional sources of knowledge, the woman essayist cannot claim an “inside” knowledge of Greek. At the same time however, the insider's putative knowledge is thrown into question, for no one, apart from the ancient Greeks themselves, seem to be able to know “how the words sounded, or where precisely we ought to laugh.” Thus, Woolf in fact puts into question any claim to know a culture which has emerged from within different temporal and spatial conditions to one's own, to which one is inevitably an “outsider.” Instead of assigning to a tradition an ontological essence that can be accessed, she acknowledges the irreducibility of the other's otherness and historicises claims to knowledge of the other by suggesting that how one is *placed*, by force or chance, in relation to pragmatic contexts and structures of power will also determine one's perspective, how one reads another culture. Again she wonders: “Are we reading Greek as it was written when we say this? are we not reading wrongly? reading into Greek poetry not what they have but what we lack?” (103). Here Woolf takes outsideness a step further. Initially denoting a socially inflicted exclusion which questions that insiders know better, the outsider's position now points to a structural impossibility- how can one really know another culture? In response, Woolf turns to self-reflection. She ponders on why indeed we should desire to know Greek “today” (93). In so doing, she identifies the significance of Greek not in its inherent truth but in its being the means of measuring our own difference and reflecting on our own condition. The theme of “not knowing Greek,” of being an outsider, works then on at least two levels in the essay: on the one hand, it becomes an occasion for a critique of institutional, inside knowledge of Greek; of Greek as inside knowledge. And on the other, “not knowing Greek” suggests the alternative of (self-)reflexive understanding and of speaking for “outsideness” on which much of the originality of modern(ist) art, her art, is based.

“Outsideness” as an artistic experiment with a critical edge is encountered in her novel *Jacob’s Room* where the female narrator’s outsideness to the hero’s male experience and values forms the structuring principle of the novel. The narrator is an outsider to the male world of education, politics, sexuality and selfhood, and as such she can offer no *inside* view of the hero’s own feelings and thoughts, his “truth;” she cannot know him. Significantly, the Cambridge-educated hero fashions himself according to an image of Greekness which is all the more hollow because it is adopted with a rightful air. In what is a satire of the male genre of *bildungsroman*, Woolf exposes the hero’s ignorance and arrogant claim to the glorious status of the insider. Jacob’s ambition to engage in politics is judged by the narrative voice as “insensible” and his notes upon democracy inspired by the Acropolis are described as mere “scribbles,” unworthy of attention (146). Here, as in the essay, any claim to know another culture, to command its meaning is subtly undermined.

The outsider’s perspective also features prominently in the two of Woolf’s most powerful critiques of oppressive social structures namely *A Room of One’s Own* and *Three Guineas*. In both, Woolf shows how citadels of cultural authority are built on banning women and other outsiders. At the same time, however, she questions whether women should or would like to share in such power. In the first essay Woolf formulates her thoughts on the topic of “women and fiction” along a peripatetic line around “Oxbridge,” which is constantly interrupted by the various exclusions and discriminations she is subjected to as a woman, a categorical outsider. Having been turned away for trespassing on the grass and debarred from entering the library, her reflections revolve around the material conditions that have historically served to exclude and discourage women from writing, education, and the public sphere. Pondering on “the effect of [male] tradition and of the lack of [female] tradition upon the mind of a writer,” she makes a political and artistic proposition out of the outsider’s status women are relegated to: “I thought how unpleasant it is to be locked out; and I thought how it is worse perhaps to be locked in” (31). The question then for the Woolfian outsider is whether one should want or attempt to join the dominant culture.

This adds yet another dimension to outsideness as an opportunity to think not only critically but also alternatively, in ways that would transform present structures of dominion and injustice. In this sense, the outsider’s perspective privileged by Woolf, can be said to combine the pragmatic with the deontological. On the one hand it refers to a real state of affairs whereby women and other social categories are marginalised and subordinated, and on the other, it is proposed by Woolf as the desired position to hold so as to undermine and overthrow authority. One must simply remain an outsider in order to preserve one’s critical ability and effect change.

It is precisely this dimension of outsideness that is pursued in Woolf’s polemical work, *Three Guineas*, crucially published in 1938 and inspired by the horrors of the Spanish War and the fear of the rising fascism facing Europe. Here, Woolf explicitly calls for the formation by women of a “Society of Outsiders” (309), a society that would oppose those political, cultural and economic institutions which

are complicit with patriarchy, war, nationalism, imperialism, injustice, inequality and continuing competition. To prevent the spread of fascism means for Woolf to challenge the logic and the history of the patriarchal state, thus highlighting the mutual imbrication between the private and the public in the perpetuation of inequality.

In refusing to integrate, the Society of Outsiders would reflect instead the social and political values women have acquired as a result of their very exclusion from power. Its members should not support any activity that would “encourage the desire to impose “our” civilization or “our dominion upon other people,” but rather they should seek to achieve the ends of “freedom, equality, peace” by “the means that a different sex, a different tradition, a different education, and the different values which result from those differences have placed within [their] reach” (314, 320). The “Outsiders” should pursue a refusal to fight with arms; indifference toward patriotism; modest financial independence; state financial aid for housewives; the refusal of honours or distinctions; a rejection of acquisitiveness and competition, and constant promotion of peace. They can only contribute to change and prevent power if they remain outside traditional hegemonic institutions and find “new words,” create “new methods” (309, 366). Interestingly, Edward Said’s recent formulation of the figure and task of the intellectual resonates with Woolf’s vindication of outsideness. Said explicitly employs the term “outsider” to identify the intellectual as a critical, eccentric voice against authority, as a witness to the makings of power, calling for a commitment to *not* belonging to power structures like the media, the government, or corporations (xv)—of “absenting” oneself, as Woolf has put it.

Nevertheless, it may be argued, that such an attitude leads to a cult of the “outsider” which may fetishise this position and further contribute to a fixing of otherness which it is supposed to attack. But, Woolf’s refusal to join official societies did not prevent her from supporting their just causes. And furthermore, she may have ironised institutional appropriations of the Greek tradition but she also claimed Greek for those outsiders to official culture, the “common readers,” women and the working class. In a speech delivered to the Workers’ Educational Association, Woolf invites outsiders to freely trespass on literary ground and has the classics implore the common readers: “Don’t leave me to the wigged and gowned. Read me for yourselves” (*The Leaning Tower* 178). Here literature, is (re)deemed as “the common ground,” as it is elsewhere also evoked as a space of non-authority, where no nation proves to be superior to any other, allowing for a unity, voiced by poets, “that rubs out divisions as if they were chalk marks only,” dreaming “the recurring dream that has haunted the human mind since the beginning of time; the dream of peace, the dream of freedom” (*Three Guineas* 365).

This gesture toward unity through literature may seem naïve in the face of the complications inherent in the notion of a common ground. Or it could perhaps be seen as repeating a universalising, assimilatory tendency, a holding to a singular reality which is typical of modernity and its internationalist, expansive logic. However, Woolf’s conception of the field of culture is in fact much more akin to Walter

Benjamin's view that "[t]here is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism," thus pointing to cultural tradition as a historical line of exclusions, oppression and exploitation (248). In proposing culture as a remedy for itself, Woolf then seems to consider it as the record as well as the site of both horrors and utopian dreams.

Another objection to the privileging of a notion of the outsider could be that it reinforces binary thinking which obscures the "in-between" spaces of cultural hybridity and a vision of the world as a centreless multicultural landscape. But, supposing that power asymmetries were abolished in a idyllic state of true multiculturalism, there would still be the issue of how we can know another culture, of cultural translatability, let alone that of a measure for justice. The discussion of precisely this problem is taken up by the moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre whose conception of cultural encounter is strikingly similar to Woolf's recognition of outsideness of other cultures on the one hand, as a structural reality that does not demonise the other, and, on the other, as a means of an understanding and a critique of self.

In his book *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, MacIntyre inquires into the difficulty of making moral judgements in the face of competing claims ensuing from different cultural traditions, which necessarily hinges on the issue of the translatability between different cultures and languages. He criticises the assimilationist, rootless, symmetrical logic of modernity *vis-à-vis* the other, which is manifested in that modernity and its internationalised languages, such as English, in fact reject the thought "that there may be traditional modes of social, cultural, and intellectual life which are as such inaccessible to it and to its translators" (387). This claim is premised upon the conviction that the understanding of the inaccessible is ultimately a matter of translating it into our own language-in-use, whereas in MacIntyre's view, discovering the inaccessible in the other culture involves two stages, the first of which is learning the other language as a second first language. Significantly, for MacIntyre, such an engagement with an alien culture has the tremendously important consequence that it really provides a standpoint from which the limitations, incoherences, and poverty of resources of one's own beliefs can be identified, characterized, and explained in a way not possible from within one's own tradition (387-88). It thus enables the identification of the untranslatable in the other culture at the same time as it calls for self-reflection. A translation process among different cultural traditions then should not neutralise difference but it rather involves going outside one's own culture, recognizing areas of untranslatability that could in turn serve to criticise and transform one's own received cultural perceptions.

It is this aspect of a reflexive encounter between self and other allowed by the ability to view one's own culture as it were from the "outside," as Woolf suggests, that could perhaps form the premise of understanding and of a politics of equality and justice within and across different cultural traditions.

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Teaching English as a *Lingua Franca* in Greek Primary Education: A (Dis)Empowering Process?

Androniki Gakoudi

Introduction

This paper examines the ways by which Greek policy on English Language Teaching (ELT) in primary education contributes to empowering or disempowering Greek primary students as non-native speakers of English through the use of English as a lingua franca. This is attempted, firstly, by analysing the general aims for the teaching and learning of English as they are presented in the comprehensive 6-year curriculum for the teaching of English and, secondly, by referring to the way these ideas are reflected in the specially devised teaching material.

This work is situated within Kramsch's theoretical framework in *Language and Culture*, in which the conceptions of language, culture and discourse theory are integrated so as to explore the ways language speakers experience their social and cultural reality and share their common social space, history and imaginings. Such a conceptualisation is valuable because, as Mills points out: "within discourse theory language is the site where...struggles are acted out" (43). In this context, the current Greek ELT policy is examined as an attempt to "map" the "cultural space" as defined by Jameson (qtd. in Tomlinson 177) of ELT in Greek primary education; emphasis will be given to the struggle for power between non-native speakers of English and the "monocultural, monolingual abstraction of the native speaker" (Kramsch, *Language and Culture* 79-80). Thus using Kramsch's framework, I shall show that the current Greek state ELT policy can be empowering and disempowering at the same time. It can be empowering because it:

- challenges the typically Anglo-centred policies developed by the countries of the Centre (see also Gakoudi and Aitsiselmi)
- offers a variety of symbolic cultural references not exclusively anchored in the Anglo-American culture through the specially devised teaching material.

However, this policy can be disempowering as well, in that:

- the concepts of *lingua franca* and the so called "international elements of the English language" are used in a vague and unspecified manner
- stereotypical representations of reality have not been challenged.

The Concept of *Lingua Franca*

In applied linguistics and education (see the work of Byram, Byram and Risager, Kachru's "World Englishes...", Kramsch's *Context and Culture...*, Modiano, Risager, and Seidlhofer) the term "English as a *lingua franca*" refers to a common language code used by non-native speakers for communication. It is only fairly recently that there has been a shift in the research on non-native uses of English. This

shift has led, firstly, to the relativisation of the absolutist concept of “appropriateness” in the use of English (Kramsh, *Language and Culture* 81) and, secondly, to the neutralisation bestowed to English due to its use as a *lingua franca*. For example, for Modiano and Seidlhofer English as a *lingua franca* is seen as the discourse of a non-standard variety of English which has not only been embraced as a signal of solidarity among non-native speakers of English but it also provides English with a totally different identity whereby “ideal nativeness and claims to...ownership...must give way to multifarious combinations of language use and membership in various discourse communities more than has been up to now assumed under the label ‘native speaker’” (Kramsh, *Language and Culture* 80). Firth, House, Jenkins and Seidlhofer attempt to describe the use of English as a *lingua franca* so that it is not regarded as a deviation from English as a native language.

However, the danger of oversimplifying the complexity of defining the term *lingua franca* has already become apparent: Seidlhofer claims that “English as an international language has by definition, become independent of its origins” and Modiano contends that the ideologically neutral *lingua franca* establishes an understanding that non-native speakers of English have “a culturally distinct vision” (36). As a result, I regard it of utmost importance that the concept of the “*lingua franca*” be clearly defined especially when included in ELT policies and teaching paradigms. This is necessary because the concept of *lingua franca* may be linked into either:

- a discourse that combines ideas of collective empowerment and intercultural communication whereby students can learn English and understand language and culture while retaining their own (Kramsh, *Language and Culture* 81), or
- a neutralising discourse that “unloads” English of its symbolic power as an “international” or “global” language and removes from it the notion of cultural imperialism that any dominant language is loaded with.

Building upon the aforementioned I will indicate that the concept of *lingua franca* tends to be used in the Greek state ELT policy in a vague and unspecified manner.

The Greek ELT Curriculum in Primary Education

In Greek public schools, English is taught as a foreign language

so as to eventually allow students to communicate with native English speakers on the one hand as well as with individuals of different nationalities who use English as a common language code, on the other. Greek students, therefore, learn English so as to use it as a *lingua franca*. This means that it is not desirable to emphasize the cultural elements which characterize those countries where English is the national language. On the contrary, it is desirable to highlight the international elements of the English language. It is also important to create the conditions under which Greek students are taught English in order to comprehend the language and culture of other peoples (Pedagogical Institute 66-67).

This policy highlights the international elements of English which are regarded as the

most suitable way to fulfill the educational, cognitive, emotional and linguistic goals of raising understanding of and reducing prejudice towards other cultures and peoples. Furthermore, it could be argued that the Greek policy-makers attempt to get involved in a political struggle that occurs over linguistic ownership and hence also of power. To this end, they aspire either to de-nationalise or to *internationalise* the cultural landscape of English and urge students to learn English based upon no national culture-specific variety. In other words, the concept of cultural “appropriateness,” central in the discussion of modeling the native speaker, has been replaced by the concept of “appropriation”; this notion, according to Kramsch, contributes to the learners’ “mak[ing] a foreign language and culture their own by adopting and adapting it to their own needs and interests” (*Language and Culture* 81). This means that the English to be taught in Greek primary schools is situated in a new context shaped by the concept of the *lingua franca*, combined with the so-called “international elements of the English language.” It is of utmost importance then that these two parameters are carefully defined and demarcated by the Greek policy-makers, so that they are not essentialised and romanticised by downplaying the linguistic and cultural imperialism of English. Moreover, these parameters serve as a criterion for endorsing the Greek policy-makers authority to devise their ‘own’ policy based on the “internationalization” of the English curriculum. According to Robertson, internationalization contributes to developing a “new solidarity” among people. Hence it can be argued that the internationalisation of English in the Greek ELT curriculum can contribute to developing a “new solidarity” among Greek speakers of English and other native or non-native speakers of English. It could also be argued that the internationalisation of the Greek ELT Curriculum is examined as a form of hybridization which, to use Kramsch’s words, is an “act of identity or resistance” (Kramsch, *Language and Culture* 70). “Mapping” the cultural space of the Greek ELT curriculum is essential because according to Kramsch’s *Context and Culture...*, real power lies in the exploration of the “space” between and beyond the language learners’ culture and that of target culture(s). The “cultural space” of an internationalised ELT Curriculum may provide non-native speakers with an imagined territory where they can develop their strategy to resist the authority of the native speaker and at the same time, give Greek, i.e. non-native, ELT specialists the opportunity to develop teaching material that will liberate the English to be taught in Greek primary classrooms from the hegemonic discourse of “institutionalised English Imperialism” (Phillipson 11). Greek ELT policy-makers, by foregrounding the “international elements of the English language” and by suggesting ways through which the *lingua franca* discourse can be negotiated while teaching and learning English, can contribute to constructing an appropriated or hybrid form of English which could become not only a locus of knowledge for the acquisition of English by young Greek learners, but also a site for their empowerment.

The Teaching Material: Student Books

To draw the cultural landscape of the Greek curriculum, due to time limitations, I

shall focus on a brief analysis of the way the so-called “international elements of English” are represented in the teaching material specifically developed for the implementation of the aforementioned ELT policy in Greek primary education. *Fun Way English* (or *FWSB*, consisted of three Student books, their corresponding Teacher’s books, Workbooks and cassettes), is designed for the teaching of English to Greek 10-12 year-olds in a classroom context. It can be claimed that *Fun Way English* has moved away from the monocultural Anglo-centred way of developing teaching material and has gradually been appropriated for the “international” context of the universal school community where English is used as a common language code and its members form a distinctive discourse community and share the same “discourse accent” (Kramersch, *Language and Culture* 7). It is assumed that students can identify with the characters portrayed in the books because they share “common social space” and “common imaginings” (10) of this universal school community, i.e., they go to fancy dress parties on carnival days (*FWSB* 2: 43-52), play jokes on April Fool’s Day (*FWSB* 2: 19-28), have penfriends (*FWSB* 2: 41-51) or Euro-friends (*FWSB* 1: 103-113), or go for holidays (*FWSB* 1: 83-93), to name but a few (Gakoudi). However, sharing a language as a common communication code does not presuppose sharing ways of interpreting and understanding. Members of the same discourse community of a particular international domain, such as school, will not necessarily share a “common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting” (Kramersch, *Language and Culture* 10) when using the language in other social domains of their everyday life. For example, Native American members of the universal school discourse community are not likely to adopt the same ways of interpreting the migration of the English pilgrims to America who “did not want to live in England any longer because the King did not let them worship God as they wished....[and] then the Pilgrims and the native Indians became friends.... [and] the Indians showed them how to plant corn and catch wild animals” (*FWSB* 2: 51). Students can identify themselves as members of this community only if they have a place in that community’s history and they can “identify with the way it remembers its past, turns its attention to the present, and anticipates its future” (Kramersch, *Language and Culture* 7). However, it can be argued that the Greek policy-makers adopt a synchronic view of culture which can be disempowering in that it leads to the deceptive belief that the culture of the universal school discourse community is homogeneous. Furthermore, Greek students are led to make the inference that becoming colonised can be a synonym for becoming friends: this can be quite disempowering for them as members of this universal school community, since they will subconsciously reproduce the hegemonic discourse of “institutionalised English Imperialism” (Phillipson).

The attempt made by the Greek policy-makers to present English through a variety of symbolic cultural references is significant and cannot be underestimated (for an informed analysis of the variety of cultural references contained in the *Fun Way English* Student’s and Teacher’s books see Gakoudi 41-45, 83a-c). Also, it cannot be doubted that addressing issues such as the international problems of

pollution or deforestation contributes to the raising of the critical awareness of Greek students. Nevertheless, the text through which grammar and vocabulary is taught presents all-white European and US members of this universal school community as members of affluent societies, influencing thus the cultural imaginings of the community. These imaginings are reflected in the students' cultural reality, reproducing in this way cultural stereotypes of the non-white members of the universal school community who can only be:

- poor Peruvians and Malaysians (*FWSB* 2: 32),
- members of Amerindian tribes and tribes living in the Amazon area (*FWSB* 3: 83-85), or
- city-dwellers in exotic places like Bangkok, Thailand and Marrakesh (*FWSB* 3: 32).

Furthermore, exercises used to teach the Simple Present Perfect tense through talking about life experiences are on the same line:

- Panoko (an Amazon Indian boy) has never been to the sea
- Yarramarna (an Aboriginal boy) has never seen any snow
- Atangana (an Eskimo girl) has only seen parrots in books (*FWSB* 3: 82).

Additionally, Greek students are taught the third singular of the Simple Present Tense through the reproduction of the stereotype that a white member of the universal school community "goes to parties," "paints pictures at the Art Club," "buys souvenirs" etc., while Oscar from the Andes, a non-white member of the universal school community, "helps his father with the sheep" and Pauline from Malaysia "lives in a very small house" and "sleeps with her sisters and brothers in the same room" (*FWSB* 2: 28-32). Figures and statistics, however, reveal a totally different reality in 'affluent societies': in Britain, 2.000.000 children and teenagers are obliged to work and in the US their number more than doubles, while in Greece 15.000 out of the 85.000 children who work do not complete their compulsory education (*Eleftherotypia* 5).

Furthermore, Greek students learn new vocabulary and grammar (Simple Present Tense, Present Continuous and Simple Past) by being exposed to a stereotypical, tourist approach of language learning and from sentences such as "in London, buses are red and taxis are black"; "they are all driving on the left side of the road"; "[t]hey are having their five o'clock tea" and "English weather...changes every five minutes" (*FWSB* 2: 42; Part B). From the aforementioned examples it can be concluded that stereotypical representations of reality have not been challenged although a variety of cultures is presented in the teaching material.

Concluding Remarks

In this paper I have shown that the current Greek ELT policy is empowering because by introducing the use of English as a *lingua franca* and by highlighting the international elements of the English language it encompasses notions not pertaining to typical Anglo-centred policies. Furthermore, by including a variety of cultural contexts (Peru, Malaysia, Amerindian tribes and tribes living in the Amazon area,

Bangkok, Thailand and Marrakesh) in the teaching material, the Greek ELT policy-makers challenge the typically Anglo-centred ELT policies developed by the countries of the Centre. However, as this paper has shown, by reproducing cultural stereotypes and the hegemonic discourse of English in the teaching material, the Greek policy-makers, coming from a country of the Periphery, miss the opportunity to foreground the international elements of English as features that contribute to developing a “new solidarity” among native and non-native speakers of English.

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Language Teaching as Culture-Bound Pedagogy: Setting the Criteria for the Designing of an EIL Course

Nicos C. Sifakis and Areti-Maria Sougari

Introduction

The spread of the English language beyond the borders of the British Isles over the centuries has given rise to a new reality. Thus, centre-oriented, or British English, has given way to a host of varieties that were developed on the periphery, which was formed initially by the varieties emerging in the British colonies and subsequently by the widespread use of the English language as the established means of communication between non-native speakers around the world (see Brutt-Griffler). It is stressed by scholars like Crystal that as the number of non-native speakers of English is constantly increasing, the non-native communicators will soon outnumber the native users of this particular language. This gives rise to a phenomenon that has attracted many diverse interpretations, most of which refer to a discussion of the following issues: the role of the native speaker in the current reality (see Brutt-Griffler and Samimy; as well as Cook), the ideological and political construct of language (Gubbins and Holt), the imperialistic effect of the global spread of English (Graddol) and the development of English as a mediator of intercultural communication (Byram; Sifakis and Sougari, “Facing the Globalisation Challenge”).

Not surprisingly, this rapidly changing role of the English language in international communication has had an impact on teaching: it has essentially marked a shift from the teaching of English as a second or foreign language (ESL, EFL) to the teaching of English as an international language (EIL—an early account is provided by Smith, who also drafted the essential characteristics of an international language). This shift has imposed a number of new demands on the teaching methodology employed (see Pennycook 297-300; Crystal 59-61; Jenkins 165ff.; and also Sifakis and Sougari, forthcoming), in an attempt to render non-native speakers capable of using English intelligibly in their communication with other non-native speakers.

As regards the EIL teaching methodology, it becomes apparent that there is no widely recognised comprehensive theory that can outline the main elements of EIL teaching and training (two recent yet widely debated attempts are Jenkins’ “Lingua Franca Core,” which is concerned with the phonology of international English, and Seidlhofer’s teacher training insights). A comprehensive account of EIL theory and practice would primarily need to set the foundation for a number of criteria that EIL course designers and teachers can refer to and make use of when designing an EIL course (Sifakis and Sougari, forthcoming). An initial appreciation of these criteria is the subject of this paper.

The Culture-Bound Pedagogy in EIL Tuition

As far as language teaching is concerned, we can discern two distinct pedagogies: the norm-bound and the culture-bound pedagogy. The term “pedagogy” is taken to refer to those elements which form the foundations for the theory, practice, and study of the methods and principles of learning and teaching (Sifakis and Sougari, forthcoming). Both pedagogies are viewed in terms of how each perceives language analysis and language teaching itself.

Even though a detailed account of the norm-bound pedagogy is beyond the scope of this paper (see Sifakis and Sougari, forthcoming), it will suffice to stress that this pedagogy concentrates on imparting to the learners the linguistic, communicative and socio-cultural competencies that are characteristic of a particular standard variety of English (i.e. usually the British English or General American varieties) and its native speakers. Thus, the native speakers are regarded as the legitimate owners of the language and non-native speakers are expected to conform to native speaker norms of language use. Furthermore, non-native speakers’ performance is compared to the standard native speaker variety in an attempt to extract criteria of appropriateness or correctness. The teaching situations traditionally appropriated by the norm-bound pedagogy are the following: (i) English as a second language, (ii) English as a foreign language, (iii) English as an additional or third language, (iv) English for specific purposes, and (v) English as an international language (Sifakis and Sougari, “Facing the Globalisation Challenge” 62-64).

However, in EIL communication (i.e. in communication among non-native speakers), it is possible to envisage a situation in which the native speaker norms give way to the specifications of the communicative reality created by each participant and by each communicative setting. It is the constraints of each individual situation that will largely determine the use of English. Such constraints are, for example, the national and cultural identity of the interlocutors (as expressed through their use of language), their knowledge of each others’ communicative needs, or the need to be intelligible (rather than strictly speaking “correct”—see Hassall 420). In essence, these constraints delineate a framework of communication that prioritizes aspects that are situation-specific and culture-bound, rather than norm-bound. Thus, the main concern of culture-bound EIL is not so much about “which” English is used (and whether that English is correct), but about “how” it is put to use by non-native speakers wishing to retain their national and cultural identity when communicating with other non-native speakers.

The underlying rationale of such culture-bound pedagogy prioritises the need for mutual comprehensibility of all people involved in international communication through the medium of English. No single variety is regarded as more important than another and all users can claim equal rights regarding the “ownership” of the language used in such communicative exchanges. In fact, the very idea of a “norm” is inappropriate in culture-bound EIL communication. In essence, the “norm” becomes the variety created by each communicative encounter and it is ever changing and evolving. This instability also explains the difficulty in creating a comprehensive

descriptive account of such encounters (see above). It also implies that the emphasis of EIL teaching methodology should be two-tiered: first, on making non-native speakers aware of such instability; and secondly, on developing, as a result, their “intercultural skills,” i.e. their capacity for adapting to different uses of English by creating comprehensible communication with a variety of non-native (as well as native) speakers. It could be argued that it is these intercultural skills needed by EIL users that characterise communication by speakers who belong to the “periphery” of English language usage today.

The development of such intercultural skills (or intercultural competence, according to Kramsch) is therefore at the core of a culture-bound pedagogy. In this regard, non-native speakers are entitled to the pronunciation features of their mother tongue phonology, as long as these do not hinder comprehensibility. The same is the case with learners’ usage of grammar—as part of classroom practice, the teacher is expected to exhibit tolerance towards performance that is error-laden but intelligible (see Jenkins 119-20; and Seidlhofer 236-37). Culture-bound pedagogy focuses on teaching communication via language (Baxter 312), rather than on teaching a particular native speaker variety. It focuses on exposing learners to as great a variety of intelligible native and non-native communicative uses of English as possible.

The focus of culture-bound EIL instruction is on the development of intercultural communicative skills. By exposing learners to different varieties of communicative language as exhibited by native and non-native speakers alike, learners are offered opportunities to “experience” the use of English by a variety of culture identity groups (i.e. verbal and non-verbal behaviour, attitudes, values, etc. of as many different “kinds” of native and non-native speakers as possible). As a result, learners are led to developing their own intercultural self-awareness, as they realise their own identity in relation to others, through the use of international English. In this regard, culture-bound EIL instruction focuses as much on discussing learners’ own belief systems, attitudes and values as it does on a more “traditional” teaching of a given “norm.”

Needless to say, the burden of such culture-bound instruction is on the EIL teacher. The teacher is responsible for gauging learners’ awareness of the above intercultural issues at the beginning of the course and deciding on the effective use of carefully graded teaching materials and the integration of new technologies (see below).

Setting the Criteria for the Design of an EIL Course

In the light of the above specifications of the culture-bound pedagogy, it becomes pertinent to examine certain concerns that are related to the teaching process itself, namely those concerns linked with the learners, the teachers and the methodology implemented.

Learner-related issues

As already mentioned, the role of the learners is a key concern in culture-bound EIL teaching. Since learners have to be exposed, as much as possible, to samples of authentic communication exhibited by a variety of native and non-native speakers, one thing to consider is whether the teaching situation involves a monolingual or a multilingual group of learners. If the latter is the case, i.e. if the learning group is composed of learners with different mother tongues and from different cultural backgrounds, then the participants themselves can act as genuine EIL interlocutors, since English will be the genuine vehicle of communication among them. In the case of monolingual settings (i.e. groups of learners sharing the same mother tongue), the EIL input will mainly derive from the teaching materials (i.e. coursebooks, articles from newspapers or magazines, the Internet, etc.—see below).

Another key factor that designates or constrains a specific teaching situation is the learners' language level or the level of proficiency or fluency they have attained or believe to have attained. The actual language level plays a role when the learner is called upon to use the language in a way that is appropriate to a variety of intercultural contexts. The learner should be able to appreciate the "demands" of different communicative situations (e.g., other interlocutors may have problems understanding him/her, their pronunciation or use of grammar may be problematic etc) and make all the necessary amendments in his/her discourse (e.g., through the use of appropriate repairs) to the event that mutual intelligibility is secured.

Another issue to consider is learners' motivation for a culture-bound EIL tuition, as well as their age. The age factor cannot be played down, as the teaching of different age groups necessitates differential treatment. Young learners, adolescents, and adults approach learning in a different way, because their perception of the world differs and their awareness of the role of English is not the same (Sifakis and Sougari, "Facing the Globalisation Challenge" 65). In the case of culture-bound EIL, learners' attitudes to the use of English as an international lingua franca and beliefs about their own profile in communications with other native and non-native speakers are central to the learning process itself. It is perfectly possible that individual learners will want to approach EIL tuition in a norm-bound way, in which case a culture-bound approach might not be appropriate. With younger learners, things are more difficult since other factors might intervene (e.g. parents' beliefs and expectations). As a result, the learners' age and learning needs call for a tactful approach on the part of the culture-bound EIL course designer.

It is important to draw learners' views on issues that are pertinent to the norm-bound and culture-bound pedagogies. In this regard, an attempt should be made to receive answers to the following questions, reflecting learners' views on:

- Who are the "rightful owners" of English? To what extent can non-native speakers own English?
- What is the role of the native speaker of English? To what extent is it important for learners to be instructed by a native speaker of English? (Timmis)

- How do they see themselves in the globalisation era? What are their tendencies towards communication with other non-native speakers using the global lingua franca, i.e. English? What is the connection between the use of the English language and globalisation?
- To what extent do they believe their identity is enhanced or obstructed through the use of their mother tongue or English?

A great variability arises depending upon the target situation desired. The reasons for enrolment in a specific course, whether driven by professional prospects, personal desire or peer or parental influence, can be some kind of a diagnostic tool for the teaching procedure that will be followed. Specific communicative needs would have to be established to create opportunities for an international use of the language. Furthermore, teaching is greatly influenced by affective factors, which, together with learners' learning strategies, are responsible for enhancing their motivation for learning. It is also important that culture-specific modes of learning are identified, so that teaching becomes attuned to both individual learning needs and the needs of the culture-bound perspective outlined above (Ellis). Learners' preconceptions and perceptions about culture-specific issues (such as those raised above) need to be highlighted and brought in accordance with past learning experiences, so that learners' attitudes to learning and the use of English in international communication becomes clear.

Teacher-related issues

It is important to draw attention to the fact that each teacher's responses to the issues raised above (e.g. language ownership, the role of the native speaker in the classroom context, the function of English as an international medium of communication and the question of language identity) will inevitably shape his/her own profile as a culture-bound EIL teacher. It goes without saying that, just as learners can have a norm- or a culture-bound perspective of EIL communication, so can teachers. In this regard, three issues will probably be of significance: first, whether teachers are monolingual, bilingual or multilingual; secondly, whether they can be classified as native or non-native speakers of English; and thirdly, what sort of learning experience non-native speaker teachers have had. An appreciation of these issues can be functional in understanding how each teacher views the use of English as a global lingua franca and the way it should be taught (Timmis).

With regard to the first issue, being bilingual or multilingual can be a sign of the extent to which teachers are aware of how languages other than English are likely to operate in communication between international speakers—such an awareness would greatly help them to appreciate the widely diverse functions (and varieties) of EIL too. With regard to the second issue, native speaker teachers of English may find it more difficult to “detach” themselves from a norm-bound understanding of communication, which sees fluent and accurate speakers of English as being superior, or better able at communicating under *any* circumstances (Jenkins 227-29). In such a

case, it might be more difficult to persuade these teachers that EIL communication can be approached in a culture-bound way.

Finally, with regard to the third issue, non-native speaker teachers' learning experience and acquisition of English as a second or foreign language will probably shape the way they will subsequently teach the language (Richards 3). This implies that teachers' past experience as learners is likely to affect their choice of teaching methodology—therefore, a norm-bound teacher may well have once been a norm-bound learner.

In sum, individuals, who travel and/or teach (or have taught) abroad, are likely to attain greater flexibility in manipulating complex interactive situations, and enrich their verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Teachers with multiple communicative experiences will therefore be in a better position to transmit the knowledge accumulated, and will have a wider understanding of the intricacies involved in communicative exchanges between non-native speakers.

Methodology-related issues

With reference to the culture-bound teaching methodology itself, a number of issues need to be clarified before particular reference is made to the materials themselves and the teaching of the various skills. Within the EIL context, it is pertinent that both the present situation (i.e. regarding the learners' profile) and the target learning situation are clearly specified, so that the instruction is tailored to the needs, beliefs and aspirations of individual learners (to that end, it is very doubtful whether a culture-bound EIL pedagogy would be appropriate for learners who wish to pass the Cambridge First Certificate in English).

One of the key characteristics of a culture-bound syllabus would entail the development of intercultural communicative competence (see Byram, and also Schnitzer). As mentioned earlier, this implies that EIL interlocutors are (a) aware of the widely diverse linguistic and communicative domains of international English usage (since these include a variety of non-native speakers of English) and (b) capable of making appropriate adaptations to their discourse so that it is intelligible to their interlocutors in different EIL situational contexts. Both of these prerequisites can be catered for by the learners' exposure to and use of authentic spoken and written discourse, in close association with the implementation of in-class and out-of-class activities.

The rationale behind this call for text and task "authenticity" in culture-bound pedagogy is that learners need to be culturally challenged (through their exposure to many varieties of authentic native and non-native spoken and written discourse), while being engaged in authentic tasks (in order to carry out intelligible transactions with different native and non-native speakers). In this way, culture-bound EIL learners are carefully led away from the acceptance of a "central," single native speaker variety as the only legitimate means of communication to the acceptance of a host of "peripheral," native and non-native speaker varieties as a means for international communication. What is more, awareness also brings tolerance, respect

and empathy toward people of other cultures and nationalities. It therefore seems that the notion of “authenticity” is closely linked with the very nature of a culture-bound pedagogy. Once these texts and tasks are made available, it is up to the EIL teacher to decide on how best to implement them.

As regards the teaching materials themselves, the choice of a coursebook would be constrained both by the learners’ and the teacher’s perspectives and by the extent to which the coursebook incorporates the variety of authentic native and non-native speaker discourse and tasks that the culture-bound pedagogy necessitates. It is anticipated that no single coursebook would reach these standards, and, at any case, no single coursebook is by default appropriate for all learners (and their different learning needs). For this reason, it primarily rests with the teacher to select and implement appropriate supplementary materials so that the course is tailored to the needs and interests of individual learners. The methodology employed will have to be made culturally appropriate, as mentioned above, and the development of the receptive and productive skills will have to be carefully planned within the culture-bound pedagogy.

On a final note, here are some possible teaching constructs, which could lead to the culture-bound development of the receptive and productive skills of learners belonging in a monolingual classroom setting:

- Learners listen to live or recorded monologues/dialogues of native and non-native speakers on a given topic that is of global interest (e.g., global warming) while at the same time making notes; they then reflect on their own views and experiences by acting out roles or engaging in debates (i.e., the topic and activities can be adapted to learners’ interests and competences, but it is important that the focus is on exchanging viewpoints and personal experiences rather than on concentrating on individuals’ errors)
- The teacher organises liaisons with learners from other countries and works out tasks that prompt learners to communicate with their peers in different ways (e.g., in person, i.e. by class exchanges, or by distance, i.e. via telephone communication, teleconferencing, online chat etc.)
- Learners are exposed to and prompted to analyse a variety of reading texts (e.g. articles, brochures, e-mails, formal letters); the texts are created by different non-native speakers around the world and either discuss issues of common interest or promote the national/cultural characteristics of their authors.

Conclusion

In this paper we have sketched some preliminary methodological considerations for the design of a culture-bound EIL course and have highlighted the importance of issues related to both the teacher (methodology, input selection and task designing) and the learner (eg., language level and learning habits, beliefs and attitudes regarding English and globalisation etc.). Teachers should receive support through in-service teacher training seminars which aspire to provide them with opportunities for

exchange of cultural information (Risager 1998), raising their awareness about intercultural issues, shaping their worldview and developing an intercultural communicative competence. The starting point lies in the development of the teachers' understanding of intercultural affairs and their position as mediators for the transmission of such knowledge to their learners. On the other hand, the learners themselves ought to be trained to challenge their own cultural assumptions through the appropriate teaching methodology in a classroom conducive to intercultural learning.

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“Agents of Change”: Challenges in the Flesh and the Teaching of American Literature

William Dow

Introduction

In 1999, a proposed session for the MLA 2000 Convention in Washington, DC, entitled “Agents of Change: Peace Corps Volunteers in the Profession” was, to my immense disappointment, cancelled. The workshop was to concern “[t]he influence of Peace Corps experience on language and literature teachers and the influence of language and literature training on volunteers’ Peace Corps experience. (*MLA Newsletter* 11). For perhaps the only time in my career, as a university teacher living and teaching in France, I wanted to participate in an MLA national convention: the reason being I am a former Peace Corps volunteer, having served in Cameroon in the period 1982-84. I would have done so not so much as an exercise in self-reflection but as a response to the particularly American tendency to see undergraduates as “embryonic” literary critics, historians, philosophers, literary anthropologists, postcolonial feminists, neo-Marxists etc., whatever any of these definitional self-images might mean or lead to. And I would have done so as a resistance to seeing the world as another “text,” a position that can easily confuse symbolic exegesis and the decoding of “signs” not only with purposeful human action but also with the interaction and intersection of peoples, and therefore encourages, however inadvertently, an *unattunement* with the world. The text should not be locked outside the traditions of experience nor should it be separated from the grounds of thought based on the emotional, sensuous, and lived histories, particularly as such histories apply to the concept of culture itself.

In what follows I would like to suggest an alternative to the academic world view that overdetermines a contemplative scholasticism (and which makes students earlier versions of ourselves) while entrapping us in the text. At the same time I want to examine how such a world ignores, in Giles Gunn’s words, the “processes of textualization [that] not only reflect material circumstances and institutional patterns but frequently, and often simultaneously, generate them” (246). Instead of concentrating on such scholastic molding and largely “unattuned” exegesis, I wonder if teachers might take themselves into broader socio-cultural concerns and hence see themselves as models for students by actively participating in the political hierarchies they ask their students to monolithically reproduce. Why not establish a dialogue between the written record and cultural experience by bringing together these often disparate and antagonistic traditions? As an integral part of our teaching, why not focus on studying culture *per se*, and in so doing put meaning into the often proffered aim of a life-long cultural education? What does the Peace Corps have to do with any

of this?

I’d like to respond to this last question first by briefly referring to the acclaimed, polymathic scholar and writer, George Steiner—and his large Arnoldian ambitions. Steiner’s prolific “articulated experiences” are known, to say the least, for their no-nonsense judgements, the application of “principles,” and intricately hard-lined conclusions. As a self-professed part of the classic Arnoldian project—in the sense that he proceeds from a concern for the health of culture and a belief in the continuing validity of distinctions between high and low, serious and frivolous, enduring and transitory—Steiner invites the charge that he presumes to have “the culture which culture lacks” (Boyers 20). But what culture might this be?

As a Community Development Advisor and part-time English teacher in Cameroon, I did not witness what Steiner has called an “end to classic literacy” (423), for among my *lycee* students, there was virtually no beginning to this literacy. In fact, Steiner’s thoughts on the culturally literate and “Future Literacies,” as expressed in his essay of this name, had little to do with the representational modes and literacies of my Cameroonian students. For example, I could not concern myself with the issue of how “fullness of response depends on accord,” for there was little or no “archetypal” accord, no context of intent and agreed upon “emotional, intellectual, designative reflexes” (424-425). In fact, to somewhat inverse Steiner’s formula, the dominant proportion of literature I taught seemed to recede from the “keeping” of (a twenty-four) year-old “specialist” to the possession of the “personal immediacy” (427) of my students. Or, to put this in another way, as Kurt Spellmeyer has recently argued:

Textuality is one way to know the world, but language does not become a “text” until we contemplate it from the standpoint of alienation. Language becomes “text.” . . . only after it has failed to correspond to the character of our lived worlds and then, instead of making changes in our actual lives, we suppress the world itself. (910)

Young, living on a minimal monthly stipend, I was, nevertheless, quickly elevated (or relegated) to an elite position, embodying the inheritance and dynamics of western culture, emblemizing its social and economic predominance, sure enough of the model of culture that served as general criterion. After all, the model, complete with its world suppressing features, was more mine than western. I was the specialist who tried to seek self-replication, not of vocation but of “values,” in my students, values of which I thought myself to be, perhaps like Steiner, the neutral custodian.

The Commitment to Cultural Education

That custodianship is changing—and yet so many questions remain, particularly regarding the issues of multiculturalism and “cultural education.” Amidst the ferment surrounding multiculturalism which, more or less, denies its antinomic status and defines itself heuristically as a challenge to all existing systems and structures, how might “faculty members,” as one critic has recently suggested, “commit themselves to lifelong continuing education in cultures other than their own” (Ammons 104)? No

one could seriously think about closing herself or himself off to such an education. But how does one go about permanently educating oneself in a foreign culture(s) while rejecting the notion of literature as an “ontological category” and embracing the idea that a multicultural and institutional development will increasingly be *the* legitimizing and transforming dimension of the critical enterprise? Is “Cultural education,” in all its resonances and definitions, a challenge to a “multicultural,” comparativist literary theory?

I think it is. Which is why I don’t see how one can respond to these questions without giving a protean, anti-institutional, and ultimately a heuristically suggestive opinion on what constitutes an education in “other” cultures. If writing is foremost a “social practice” with an indelible social function, as post-colonial critics insist, does this suggest the possibility that meaning, too, is a socio-cultural accomplishment characterized by the participation of the writer and reader within a given “cultural moment”? What degree of participation should there be so that one most fully enters and understands such moments? More pointedly, is it enough to remain impervious to the many branches of knowledge and socio-cultural, gender-racial, class contact that fall outside a predetermined scope of thought and academic worldview? Should this knowledge and “education” include, at the same time, a distance from and towards the “other” culture and its texts, as the most appropriate conduit to clarity, comprehension, and communicable intelligibility? And should we now begin to revise conventional notions of the teacher—and to do so by re-examining the categories of the centre and the periphery, and the self and the other—in the very context of not virtual but actual cultural encounters?

It’s time to address such concerns. I think we first need to make the angle of our critical vision, and its comparative apparatus, transparent and manifest. “To perceive normatively is to compare” (Steiner 73), but now, the most urgent of our critical enterprises, it seems to me, is to decide how large the field of comparison should be. One helpful addition, I think, would be for the critic, while not losing the role of “counterstater” and rival to the work, to experience more “in the flesh challenges,” particularly when committing her or himself to that “life-long” cultural education. Though perhaps a little protean here, by “in the flesh challenges” I mean geographical, interpersonal contact with cultures “other” than one’s own, preferably a non-western one, preferably impoverished, preferably more in need of bread than of books, preferably one with which an experience would say that the world is not divided into monolithic binaries; it is a “whole” structured hierarchically.

This flesh to flesh challenge would belie the interest (in its postcolonial guises) to conserve the subject of the West while giving the illusion of undermining a sovereign western subjectivity, a challenge that might shed light on the linguistic and cultural consequences of imperialism as projected through anti-imperialistic discourses. Practically speaking, it might take the temporary form of teaching English to Bosnian refugees, learning Bamoun in Cameroon, or Bengali in West Bengal, or Tamil in Tamil Nadu, or volunteering for relief efforts in Ethiopia, or writing contact reports for Amnesty International, or doing fieldwork in Guatemala and El Salvador.

The anti-institutional quality of a flesh to flesh challenge would result from the fact that the (United States) academic would not be speaking for or representing an academic institution or seeking scholarly or vocational knowledge. Quite the contrary—the academic would have an essentially *un*-academic, non-networking, non-professional experience while directly facing such issues as cultural identity and the construct of the Other. The experience might very well resemble a personalized “course” on the cultural contradictions of globalization, on emergent discourses in the Third World, and serve as a testing ground for contemporary social and cultural theory.

A heuristically suggestive opinion: Perhaps we need to go beyond the canonical and noncanonical texts and immerse ourselves in a broader concept of culture and literature, and of literature as an aspect of culture among many other aspects. Perhaps more than ever before it’s time to build bridges between the academy and the real world while examining the consequences of cultural relativism and identity politics. In attempting to find a common theoretical and ethical ground from which to realize our cultural education we need to do more than merely consider communities other than our own. We need to consider establishing a cultural and literary praxis that create new paradigms of intercultural exchanges as opposed to yet more modes that merely examine existing socio-cultural states.

This cultural education, I think, can be done most effectively on an individual level. The merging of diverse cultural elements, the flesh to flesh challenge, does not have to be understood as the inevitable erasure of one element over another. Nor does it have to be understood as one cultural system coming to replace, conform to, or assimilate another. The cultural education I’m thinking of would begin as an interpersonal process based on individual contacts, translatabilities, connections, and personal relationships, very similar to a typical Peace Corps experience. The kind of life-long education I’m suggesting would be personal and transcultural, at once critical and receptive, at once multilingual and multiethnic. It would be an education recognizing that the new diversity of the world system is based relatively more on interrelations and less on massive cultural homogeneity and autonomy. The modern world is an interactive system—or as Arjun Appadurai recently put it: “The past is now not a land to return to in a simple politics of memory. It has become a synchronic warehouse of cultural scenarios.”¹ While respecting the particularist nature and the relative character of the values promoted by different cultures we must not erect impermeable cultural barriers that imprison each group in its own singularity. The flesh to flesh challenges would help to break down this singularity.

American Literature as Cultural Encounter

The study and teaching of American literature might provide a kind of blueprint here. American literature, like so many other literatures, emerges from the contexts of encounter, from the crossings and enculturations of peoples. As Joshua David Bellins has argued in his recent study on Native American literature, “the presence of Indian peoples in the land that is now the United States has been of profound significance to

the shaping of American Literature—not only to texts that overtly engage this presence, but to the whole body of literature produced in a nation itself produced by encounter—and that this presence must be ‘reckoned with’ in our reading and teaching of this literature.”² Bellins in his study provides an incisive account of mutual acculturation on the level of nations(s). But the process of this acculturation manifests itself everywhere in American literature. The new world was not merely an isolated expanse previously unknown to Europeans; it was an authentically new set of cultural relationships that would radically change over the next centuries as Europe and the American continent interacted with each other. Much of this interaction took the form of struggle rather than cooperation. “Each people,” as Wayne Franklin notes, “used its tradition or elements recently borrowed from others to endure or conquer or outwit its opposite numbers, and violence often swallowed up the primal wonder glimpsed in the earliest documents.”³ From the 17th to the 21st century, American literary works have functioned in light of their position within a network of cultural conflict, negotiation, and interchange while encompassing the geographic, the economic, the spiritual, the linguistic, and the aesthetic. Sometimes the encounters were, among other things, imposed; sometimes they were legislated; sometimes they were a necessity.

On a considerably wider scale than Bellin’s, I would place cultural encounter at the heart of American literature. Literature derived from, responded to, and contributed to continental and overseas expansion (Francis Parkman), racial struggles (Frederick Douglass), and political debate (Charlotte Perkins Gilman). As such, the history of that literature is far more complex than has generally been recognized. Indeed, this history refuses to reduce any one group to static antagonists or subjects for a Euro-American imaginary, for it views them as actors in dynamic processes in which America and its literature were (and are) irrevocably intertwined. What such encounters reveal is that cultures in contact are intercultural, consisting of the complex, intricate, and even indeterminant interrelationships among their diverse members. *A life-long cultural education, I am trying to suggest, is a natural (and necessary) supplement to the study and teaching of such encounters.*

Because intercultural encounter forms the base of American literature, it follows that American literature be taught *foremost* as a “cultural encounter.” The exploration of American literature itself becomes an encounter in which students—and in my particular case French and international students—must recognize, as Marjorie Pryse puts it, “both that the texts they read may alter their conception of ‘American’ and that this altered sense may contribute to new figurations of what has been known as American literature” (176). What exists on the page is only part of the story. What American literature reveals to students about their own lives, traditions, and histories invites intellectual encounters that fuse the “text” and the “real” but not as a fixative. These forces, rather, come together as a plurality, by which I mean that students will have a multitude of cultural encounters of literary traditions (e.g., the slave narrative; Native American fiction; literary expression of the Harlem Renaissance; Jewish and immigrant fiction; labor, protest, and populist literature). A

cultural encounters approach would assert that texts cannot be sequestered from the world. Texts are “living” as Gilles Deleuze writes, founded on “memory,” and consisting of “inventing a people who are missing” (4):

It is the task of the fabulating function to invent a people. We do not write with memories, unless it is to make them the origin and collective destination of a people to come still ensconced in its betrayals and repudiations. American literature has an exceptional power to produce writers who can recount their own memories, but as those of a universal people composed of immigrants from all countries. (4)

A flesh-to-flesh challenge would also be a natural outgrowth to an intercultural American literary history, which maintains that encounter is far more than a background into which literature can be inserted or against which it can be highlighted. On the contrary, a flesh-to-flesh challenge preceding, coming on the heels of, or integrated with an intercultural literary criticism would argue that it is precisely through intimate, rich, dynamic interactions among multiple peoples that American literature exists at all. An intercultural literary criticism would maintain that American texts, canonical and noncanonical alike, have themselves been formed through the complex interactions of peoples. Such a criticism sees texts as composed by and composing encounters, which are enriching, contested, multiply determined, and exist on changing borders among peoples in constant contact.

Yet if such encounters are, for the American professoriat, put on a wider transnational scale, is it possible, as Aparajita Sagar suggests, “that the American academy does not have enough experience with poverty and underprivilege—that it is not poor enough to brook the sort of radical estrangement that comes with genuine transnationality?” (27). Edward Said, Sagar, and others have argued that one must deal fairly with a text and its transnational circumstances, its “being” and its “being in the world” (Said 33). More pointedly, privilege, academic or otherwise, makes it not just difficult but ultimately unnecessary to deal with the estrangement or discomfort of other cultures. Privilege makes it unnecessary to ask how a work of literature might be read and interpreted in the most underprivileged areas of the world. And the privilege of the professional academic makes it all too easy to abuse such privilege by, among other things, following the kind of Arnoldian tradition that prescribes results in advance.

But the results, like the conditions of the world, are still coming in. In reconnecting the academic enterprise to more worldly concerns and in questioning our own role in such concerns, it’s time to actively promote the interactional and interrelational by repudiating the overly “superprofessionalism” that governs literature studies in the academy today. Let’s not only take our criticism beyond the text, the hegemony of “western metaphysics,” and the realm of the literary but let’s take *ourselves* beyond these concerns as well, so that we can return to them with more profound social, political, and psychological insights, so that we can give much needed substance to our continuing cultural education. Let’s make the study of the literatures of America a comparative discipline that would impose far-reaching

scholarly, pedagogical, and worldly responsibilities on us. By doing so, we might more clearly address the fundamental issues concerning how we perceive our educational mission, what we consider worthy of study and commitment, and who we are as social and cultural human beings.

ENDNOTES

¹ Some of the arguments coming out of Native American studies point to the concern that American academia may be yet another image-making industry that denies Indians their own voices. See, for example, p. 23 of Angela Cavender Wilson, "American Indian History Or Non-Indian Perceptions of American Indian History," in *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing American Indians*, ed. Devon A. Mihesuah (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998): 18-33; Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr., "American Indians, American Scholars, and the American Literary Canon," *American Studies* 33 (Fall 1992): 95-111; and Jana Sequoya-Magdaleno, "Telling the Différance: Representations of Identity in the Discourse of Indianness," in *The Ethnic Canon: Histories, Institutions, and Interventions*, ed. David Palumbo Liu (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995): 88-116.

² For an astute discussion of "the complex intersections of human encounters and human encounters with the physical environment" (3) and "the collisions and negotiations of distinct cultural groups as expressed 'en el choque e interaccion' of languages and texts" (5), see Kolodny.

³ On the issue of models for teaching American literature as cultural encounter, see Marjorie Pryse, "Teaching American Literature as Cultural Encounter: Models for Organizing the Introductory Course," in *Rethinking American Literature*, ed. and intro. Brenda M. Green et al. (Urbana IL: NCTA, 1997), 175-192. Pryse, in her article, perceptively offers ways in which "American literature...can help all students perceive themselves as members of a culture that includes them" (177). She rightly asks, "To what extent does our national literature speak for all of us, and to what extent does it record the thinking of a very few?" (181). And I would agree with her assertion that "an American literature course built on the premise that the instructor serves as a guide remains useful only to the extent that we work to overcome our own limitations" (176). Yet what those limitations are-- particularly given her "concept of instructor-as-guide" (176)—and how we might overcome them, are never made clear.

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Part V:

THE CONCENTRIC and THE EC-CENTRIC

Manhood and Its Poetic Projects—The Construction of Masculinity in the Counter-Cultural Poetry of the US 1950s

Rachel Blau DuPlessis

Here are some opening propositions: Gender is a formidable primary social division into centre and periphery, present in every exchange of cultural power. Indeed, one aspect of the post-colonial global shift is gender, for *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir (first published in 1949, and in English 1953) is a major document of decolonization. In an era of national decolonizations, it proposed a post-national challenge for decolonization: the social equality of women. To discuss gender in culture is not peripheral to contemporary issues, but central, for these discussions contribute to the decolonization of the female gender and to the social equality of the genders. Besides this, centre and periphery are not static terms, nor do they suggest static attributions of power and powerlessness. Inside any geo-cultural centre can be a critical, harrying, counter-cultural analysis, and so it was in the United States in the 1950s with work by Allen Ginsberg and Charles Olson.

The works of Beat and “New American” poets of the 1950s were overtly counter-cultural and counter-canonical. They were made on the periphery of American culture by people in chosen and flaunted marginality to the centre at the moment of the fixing of the Cold War, the fixing of United States post-War hegemony, and the construction of influential intellectual and cultural analyses justifying these global politics. The most dramatic instance of cultural marginality was Charles Olson’s; he gave up two relatively centrist career paths (in the Democratic Party and in the university), to propose an alternative United States-ness and an energetic geo-cultural vision.¹ Olson emphatically did not accept “the Americanization of the world, now, 1950; soda pop & arms for France to fight, not in Europe, but in Indo China, the lie of it” (Olson, *Origin* 9). Allen Ginsberg, who brought the Popular Front politics of the 1930s forward into the 50s, is well-known for his visceral, principled identification with the deviant Others—people in minority cultures, internal exiles for political reasons (the communists, the anarchists, anti-Bomb radicals), exiles for psychological reasons (the dissident/odd, psychotic, crazy, or driven mad), as well as with sexual exiles and outcasts (mainly male homosexuals, also the sexually promiscuous, and those who did not enter the family economy). Both poets investigated United States culture; they resisted “mere aestheticism” of the arts, wanting to integrate social critique and energies with artistic expression “as the wedge of the WHOLE FRONT” (Olson, *Origin* 95 and 11, respectively). Their poetry and statement were proudly peripheral, stylistically non-conforming, and intellectually outspoken.

The ideological, cultural, and political critique of the “American century” in the post World War II era that these poets made also implicated gender. Their writing was notable for its various but considerable opinions on manhood. Thus not only being male (a fact), these poets often championed strong-minded, pushy, outspoken, feisty, shrill, self-consciously posing and even hysterical masculinities (as ideology)—in contradistinction to the more buttoned-down manhoods of the 1950s. They constructed a dissident and analytic subjectivity on the periphery of their culture, including critiques of masculinity, yet simultaneously they claimed the powers and privileges of normative manhood.

A general observation of Australian sociologist R. W. Connell can apply to this cohort of poets. They’re “fighting against hegemonic masculinity while deploying its techniques.”² Olson and Ginsberg, like other counter-cultural United States male poets of the 1950s, engaged ideologically to bring “masculinity” and normative male expectations up to scrutiny. These poets fought against kinds of hegemonic masculinity by using mobile gender materials, fascination with male display and emotional minutiae, and (in Ginsberg’s case) critical homosexuality. Indeed, in their own ways, they participated in the “male revolt” that Barbara Ehrenreich identifies as a muted sociological motif throughout the 1950s, a critique of the “breadwinner ethic” and its economic arrangements like the family wage (Ehrenreich 12-13). In a scrutiny of some of these poets, Michael Davidson proposes that in these counter-cultural poetry groups was born a new homosocial male subject (198). One of the implications of their homosocial ethos, was that the poets also implicitly or explicitly reject the possibility of making a bilateral gender critique, thus barring women from the benefit they (the males) got from destabilizing *gender* norms. This resistance did not necessarily apply to women’s attack on the *sexual* norms of the 1950s, where there were certain benefits for both genders to what was defined as “promiscuity.” In their negotiations with orthopedic, or straight, right, correct, hegemonic masculinity, these poets attempted to alter male roles without making “femininity” and female roles budge much, if at all. In this key element, this peripheral cohort participates in centrist thinking.

These relations of centre and periphery in general can illuminate the dialectic between centre and periphery in male subject formation. Allegorically speaking, the centre claims the goods of the periphery but ignores the periphery’s co-equality and right to power. Further, to “gender” Edward Said’s work on culture and imperialism, we could say that these male poets “deconstructed and demystified” the male “centre” but neglected to continue the critique by inventing “a new system of mobile relationships” to change power relationships between centre and periphery that might moot those terms entirely (Said 274-75). We could also say, still using a binary logic, that the poems of these critical male figures “othered” men—that is, put men into the position of being marginals. This is accomplished powerfully and compellingly in key texts. But in this work, repeating binarist thinking, often enough female figures were recast as normative, centrist, controlling, a place they occupied not so much in power relations as in ideological fantasy.

Peter Middleton has suggested (1991) that we should view men's poetry *as* men's poetry, not as a universal, unmarked poetry, thus "reading the work reflexively as a negotiation with dominant masculinities, the promptings of a male body."³ Of course immediate difficulties present themselves: what is "a" male body? what, as has been asked in feminism about women, are "men"? and why does one negotiate only with "dominant" ideologies and not, also, with peripheral or emergent ones? These questions complicate the tasks of marking maleness in poetry, a task so large and intricate that one might also be tempted to shrug it off as both obvious and overwhelming.⁴ Traits and inscriptions of gender may also be mobile; there is, for instance, a carefully constructed artless and "unthreatening poetics of sincerity" that is feminine (as Barbara Johnson has argued about the 19th century Marceline Desbordes-Valmore), and a carefully constructed poetics of sincerity in Ezra Pound or Robert Creeley that is masculine in implication, involving clarity beyond baroque or obfuscatory blurriness (Johnson 112). Transgressive excess in writing as in Sylvia Plath might be female protest, in Charles Olson, masculine imperial imagination, or, in Allen Ginsberg, male feminine protest. These observations suggest that with gender figuring both in assumptions and in findings, it is hard not to find the hermeneutic circle dizzying. Perhaps the key word from Peter Middleton was "negotiation"—something that extends to critical negotiation among social, ideological, biographical and poetic variables including centre and periphery. Reading strategies are key; so feminist reception as a tactic will try to make sense of gender inscriptions. Another interest in Middleton's comment is its deuniversalizing claim. Universalizing "den[ies] the presence of sexual difference" for males (Johnson 124). Thus to mark formerly unmarked subjectivities is a necessary critical task. Bringing poetry by men up to scrutiny as negotiating with masculinities in specific and with gender in general is a move that shatters the ideological invisibility of maleness; it also challenges the claim of manhood or masculinity to be "centre" as norm, judge or standard.

Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" was written in 1955, the same year that Disneyland, California opened. "Howl" is seriously anarchic in ideology: no law, norm, rule, sense of decorum goes unassaulted; it is principled in its negation of post-war normalcy via an apocalyptic pessimism, not Whitmanic optimism. If Disneyland is centrist, "Howl" speaks from peripheries. Disneyland offers nice, sanitized rides, beneficent controls, and unthreatening sideshows, a carnival purged of the perverted, deviant, and criminal "carny"; in contrast, "Howl" speaks of endless rides across a landscape, endless drug, religious, and sex-induced highs, and crashes. One contains and commodifies pleasure; the other is outside behavioral constraints or control, seeking a somewhat imperial infinition of ecstasy.⁵ Ginsberg's "Howl" offered a radical critique of the conformism and denials of the 1950s; the "beats" (who had formed around Kerouac and consolidated with this poem) were depicted as declassed men, sultry and intellectual at once. When performed by its writer in way embodying the ecstatic heightening, the rip-out of repression was shattering. The first section of "Howl," often anthologized, is a symptomology of discrete individual crises

consolidated as if the activities of a whole cohort of unified young men. The poem thus helped form the cohort that it praised. Section two is a diagnosis of the disease—Moloch—or as Judge Horn saw it in the decision he rendered in 1957 (in the obscenity trial) that “Howl” was protected “social speech,” the poem indicts “materialism, conformity, and mechanization leading to war.” Section three eulogizes one exemplary man, a patient in a mental hospital, and verbally explodes its walls in a way that appropriates bomb anxiety and makes a cataclysm of the world that produced this, and other forms of madness.

“Howl” is a post-war poem that insists on the almost unspoken trauma of the United States’ use of the atomic bomb on civilian populations, along with the totally unspoken fissure of the Nazi Holocaust for Ginsberg as a self-consciously, if secular, Jewish poet.⁶ In perpetual extremis, the wandering characters listen “to the Terror through the wall,” and their orgasmic highs plus the “king light of mind” descend vertiginously, becoming the “crack of doom on the hydrogen jukebox.” Both bomb and the War are explicitly present at the end of the third part in which electric shock treatments, and allusive citations from the national anthem of the US become fused with apocalyptic after-time and the destruction of institutions of containment: “I’m with you in Rockland [the mental institution]/ where we wake up electrified out of the coma by our own souls’ airplanes roaring over the roof they’ve come to drop angelic bombs the hospital illuminates itself imaginary walls collapse...O starry-spangled shock of mercy the eternal war is here” (Ginsberg, *Collected Poems* 133). The work is a post-apocalyptic act, assuming that we are living beyond end time—a moral, political, sexual afterwards that is not simply aftermath, but defines a totally “new time,” in the terms James Berger sets forth in *After the End*.

The poem invites all the excluded peripheries to stream into the new-time centre: bums left over from the 1930s, addicts using just about every drug imaginable, gays closeted or not, visionaries without specific religion, people experiencing psychotic breaks, the suicidal, the radical, the communist, and those turning the tables and “investigating the F.B.I,” all who are “madman bum and angel beat in Time” (Ginsberg, *Collected Poems* 131). Beat has a variety of meanings from exhausted to exalted, from aggressed upon to pulsating, from defeated to struck and transformed all of which make a rich, cultural amalgam of intense authority from the fusion of low and high. Ginsberg’s uniting these sexual and political outcasts on the page of his poem was an act of challenge to the status quo—even claiming the replacement of the centre; his syntax supported this goal by some phrases that transcended syntactic containment and thus create new fusions by stylistic fiat. The “best minds” have become crazed and “hysterical”—a feminizing word to apply to men—having to confront “the scholars of war” and what passes for normalcy.

What was that normalcy? A primer might be in order. **A** is for Affluence. Abundance. Atomic Age. Advertising. Adjustment. “Affluence...with its cognate connotations of flow, flux, fullness. ...In the Fifties it was assumed to be a national condition...” (Gitlin 12). Meaning: cheap gas, cheap cars, increasing TV-focused culture, landgrab suburban housing (racially segregated), interstate highways, malls.

For many white people this was an unprecedented prosperity, an imperial prosperity. In the 50s the US moved “from production to consumption, from saving to spending, from city to suburb, from blue- to white-collar employment, and from and adult to a youth culture” (Breines 2). In its own smug version of a new time, painful social problems were going to end: The end of serious illness. The end of class. The end of poverty. These uninformed claims inflated a sense of US (though solely white and male) power. *C* is for CIA destabilizings and covert operations in at least Iran, Guatemala, Greece, the Congo. *A*—don’t seem to be able to get away—is also for anxiety, of which the 1950s is advisedly the “age of,” an undercurrent of strain, political apprehension, inchoate critique underneath a bright surface. *B* for the boom of 1945-1973. Brown versus The Board of Education, 1954. Bus Boycott, Montgomery, Alabama, 1955, begun when a tired and fed-up Rosa Parks did not move from her seat for a white man, and the bus driver called the police. *B* is for Blacklist, gunning for the remnants of the American left. *B* for Boy’s Clubs—everywhere; women professionals, leaders, doctors, business managers, judges, senators, professors barely exist; it’s as if they never did and never could, either. *B* is for Baby Boom (“More babies were born in 1948-1953 than in the previous thirty years”—Gitlin 13). *B* is for the Bomb.⁷ (USA exploded one in 1945; Russia in 1949.) Ban the Bomb activities were marginal, but extremely far-seeing. At the dead centre of the 1950s, mid year, mid-June 1955, members of the War Resisters League refused to take cover in a civil defense test—which was a criminal offense. They were activists Dorothy Day, Bayard Rustin, and cultural figures Julien Beck, Judith Malina, and Jackson MacLow.

In the 1950s primer, A. B. C. this was the American, or Best Century of “democracy, prosperity, invincibility” (Breines 5). But *H*—“Howl”—harried this claim in every particular. In Ginsberg’s legendary poem, democracy has to account for the amoral, rebellious and marginal others, enraged, ecstatic and mourning. And the poem details poverty and vulnerability, because of the enormities of Moloch (or the abnormal normal society). “Howl” thus becomes the anti-type of the American 1950s. In the Cold War context, there was, according to J. Edgar Hoover (FBI director), Senator McCarthy, and other right-wing polemicists, an “enemy within.” “Howl” is a brave poem that accepts and twists to advantage that callow designation: you want an internal enemy—communist, homosexual, radical, feckless, irresponsible, “sick”—we are it. The poem rejects political and psychic norms, identifies with the mad, with the cold war enemy, with criminal culture, eulogizes drugs, and idolizes men rejecting both sexual and economic “normalcy.”⁸ In short, the power of “Howl” is the dissolution of centre by periphery. The textual villains in “Howl” are not the socially deviant, but the centre, powerful institutions of control and containment: “the narcotic tobacco haze of Capitalism,” “the sirens of Los Alamos,” “Madison Avenue,” the “foetid halls” of asylums, and the anti-ecstatic “Moloch”—the Canaanite God of Fire to whom children were, according to the Hebrew Scriptures, sacrificed. The whole second section is devoted to excoriating this figure. “Moloch the vast stone of war!...Moloch whose soul is electricity and

banks!...Robot apartments! invisible suburbs! skeleton treasuries! blind capitals! demonic industries! spectral nations! invincible madhouses! granite cocks! monstrous bombs!" (Ginsberg, *Collected Poems* 131-32). Moloch is a negative force, patriarchy, the war machine, institutions of confinement (factories, jails), the government, or totalitarian conformisms. Indeed, the repression of ecstasy and male (often gay) sexuality expressed symptomatically by Moloch's "granite cocks," leads to "monstrous bombs," because this hyper-hardness without orgasm can only be relieved by atomic terror. In "Howl," normative masculinity is finished; the poem is entirely in the peripheral subject position of the male outcast ecstatic.

A new vulnerable maleness takes shape, evincing an uncontainable, unfixable sexuality—promiscuous, vulgar, aggressively homosexual, and somewhat more tepidly heterosexual. The subversion of Ginsberg's poem was enormous, because it represented a hypersexuality which was, in the poem, overt, excited homosexual sodomy and oral sex, frankly, lavishly described. The poem eulogizes both hyper-masculine and feminine men. "Howl" praises the declassed intelligentsia, affirms the impulsive lumpen and delinquent, and turns repeatedly to sexuality, promiscuously depicting bi- homo- and hyper-hetero-sexual acts. The gender anxiety of white men was central to the culture of the 1950s, and poets like Ginsberg, with his excessive hysterical rant, seemed its worst nightmare. The questions what constituted manhood, how it could be upheld and maintained, and what forces (homosexuality, effeminacy, sexual receptiveness) undermined it, were major themes in middle-brow social thinking throughout this period, along with geo-political scare words like weakness, subversion, undermining, deviousness that could as easily apply to stereotypes of homosexuals as to "reds."

However, this poetic text of 1950s subversion was gender-coded for men only. Its alternative value system of revelation and nakedness did not include female agency.⁹ While eulogizing critical and acting-out male figures, "Howl" has very terse allusions to female figures. They appear briefly as three shrews of fate, two of whom condense sites of 1950s normativeness in "the heterosexual dollar" and in sexual reproduction. A female figure appears as the oedipal mother in a brief taboo allusion. And females occur as some random waitresses and "innumerable lays of girls" (this does not mean songs) on the road (Ginsberg, *Collected Poems* 128). While male figures in "Howl" have many activities and outlets (from sexual to mental, from critical to ecstatic), the female figures are far less particularized, and they essentially have no heads. The heterosexual acts are often as grim as those female "snatches," and never as textually interesting as homosexual satisfaction. The poem "Howl" basically disparages its female figures, and therefore is passively agnostic about whether women are part of the critique of American society it offers, but the poem actively suggests that females are part of the forces of containment. In "Howl," when one looks at the gender narratives, we see that this is a 98% male world, a world of comradeship, homosocial bonding, homosexual lovers, and male-male ejaculatory happiness and flare. Female figures in "Howl" are offered a narrow band of reviled or pitied emotion, without capacity for transformation.

Despite this textual situation, some non-conformist women became charged with inspiration by this counter-cultural vision of resistance. Cultural materials are comparable to the loon in Thoreau's *Walden*; one cannot with certainty predict in what part of the lake they will surface. Beat sensibility made a notable contribution to the liberation of women despite the misogyny of Beat denizens. Some young women of the time connected to an amalgam of liberatory demands from this "on the road" mix of Ginsberg and Kerouac. Winni Breines argues that dissident [white] girls in the 1950s "utilize[d] and adapt[ed] male versions of rebellion and disaffection," identified with "outsiders, hoods and greasers" and the "oddball" rebels in Beat subcultures as well as with the increasingly mainstream disobediences of rock and roll (130). She sees as notable the way "males were the inspiration" (137-148) for this muted female revolt and sees some of this inchoate dissidence emerging as feminism about ten years later; indeed, she argues that the young women, in fact in the roles of "girlfriends and fans" of Beat men, more deeply "wanted to be them" (147). In another key, Fanny Howe comments strikingly on the dangers for women in the Beat world: "It was a man's world, even out there on the edges beyond convention. It was the men who broke themselves at the margin. It was the men who were loud and famous. The women I knew then shuffled barefoot at perhaps a farther edge—the edge where anonymity either creates subversion or self-annihilation" (Fanny Howe 199). A more optimistic refraction of Beat importance in 1950s culture, despite gender attitudes, is chronicled in a 1994 letter by Anne Waldman, included in *Iovis, Book II*, answering a woman who had asked about the "boy's club mentality" of the Beats. Waldman acknowledges the general misogyny in their early writings (145), and goes on to remind her interlocutor: "the Beats are popular because they represent an alternative...to the status quo. An antithesis to bald commercialism, selfishness, spiritual vacuity, political advantage, double-dealing, lying, dishonesty, racism, general all-around uptightness" (143).

Primer: *C* is for "containment," a geo-political theory and activity of the 1950s. Containment operated domestically in the policing of personality against delinquency, dissent, deviance (whether social, political, sexual). Containment operated internationally in the universalized struggle against the Soviet Union and against both freely chosen and imposed communist or socialist political systems. A them vs. us (US) mentality became chronic. The anxiety was invasion, infiltration, undermining, sapping; science fiction dramatized this by fantasizing about "aliens" invading—another A-list A word. If the US in the 1950s was a "culture of containment," internally this meant protection of the white and male core against deviant forces: strong women, feminization, blacks as icons of difference, and homosexuality imagined as weakness and perversion (Breines 10). The post-war policy of containment can be metaphorically applied to the real relations of males and females. Although "containing Soviet aggression" often meant containing autonomous liberation movements and civil wars, the "domestic version of containment" in Elaine Tyler May's phrase, proposed a strict, and idealized, and

ideologically normative set of sex-gender roles (complementarity, inequality) that are still the subject of both nostalgia and parody (qtd. in Savran 7).

While “Howl” proposed the uncontained male, and thus male figures who seemed critical, it posited women as incidents along the way, or as icons of containment. To have maleness shift to absorb feminization, deviance, otherness is a very large social gain in ranges of subjectivity—for men. For the imaginative new masculinities emerging on the peripheries of US culture of the 1950s, the feminine and certain flamboyant male display are interesting and attractive for men, but strangely fetishizing when attached to women, especially such icons as Marilyn Monroe.¹⁰ Nor was female border-crossing—strong or masculine women—viewed as engaging; indeed, this kind of female challenge to gender norms was reviled and taboo. The net gain in mobility is for men; in this worldview, the female has far more limited gender options.

Primer. *K* is for The “Kitchen Debate” of Nixon and Khrushchev in Moscow, 1959. The two world leaders hectored and heckled each other over the model American kitchen, trying to best each other and toast each other at the same time. It was a nasty, staged moment, in a “get tough on communism/ capitalism” mode. They could not agree even to disagree, except when *K.* said “Let’s drink to the ladies.” *N.* responds affirmatively: “We can all drink to the ladies.” They toast the waitress. Here the two pugnacious representatives of two rival world systems could agree. So—To the Ladies, that icon whose deployment solves, or covers over, all contradictions between whatever centre you are and whatever periphery you want to excommunicate. (Savran 31)

M is for Mad. Ave. *Mad* Mag. Middle Class. McCarthyism, a climate of anti-leftist purge and hysteria against liberalism in key US institutions—labor, government, university.¹¹ *M* is also for Manhood from the Marlboro Man to the *Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*. Once the question is raised, once masculinity begins to be culturally legible, that is.¹² Manhood had once seemed natural, total and unparseable, to be admired or deplored, but never seen in motion nor changing, taken as a force of being or essence, not a construction with arranged, affirmed and reaffirmed aspects. Indeed, a certain mode of feminist readings in the 1970s and 80s held “maleness” static, as a backboard to bounce off. This assumption, itself contrary to most feminist ideas about analyzing women, had contributed to the naturalizing of manhood as static (for a parallel critique, see Friedman 1998, 33-34). But the logic of feminist cultural criticism with its critiques of gender formation and meanings, and the logic of the gay and lesbian critiques of sexuality, and of queer critiques of sex-gender and social normativity have made necessary—and inevitable—thoroughgoing studies of maleness and its ideologies of masculinity. These have emerged slowly during the past twenty-five years (in literary studies since Eve Sedgwick’s book *Between Men*).¹³ Notably influenced by feminist work on gender construction, Michael Kimmel sums up some findings in his book, *Manhood in America*: “Manhood is neither static nor timeless. Manhood is not the manifestation of an inner essence; it’s socially constructed. Manhood does not bubble up to consciousness from our

biological constitution; it is created in our culture” (5). Because of the varieties of manhood inside one culture and cross culturally, because manhood is inflected with class, age, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and social location, he uses the term “masculinities” to indicate these plural options.¹⁴

In the introduction to his edition of the *Selected Poems of Charles Olson*, Creeley speaks of the year 1950 as an epistemological break, symbolized by a shift in gender relations:

What changes immensely in the few years separating Williams’ *Paterson* from Olson’s *Maximus* is the literal configuration of that world which each attempts to salvage. All previous epistemological structures and, even more, their supporting cultural referents were displaced significantly, if not forever, by the political, economic, and technological transformations following the Second World War. The underlying causes were well in place at the turn of the century but by 1950 the effects were even more dominant. There could no longer be such a “father/son” disposition of reality as either Pound or Williams, tacitly, took as a given of their situation. (qtd. in Olson xviii)

This definitive outline links ideology and culture to major socio-political transformations, including ones in gender relations. Yet Creeley’s comment raises many ancillary questions.¹⁵ This shift in gender relations is imagined only as male-male relations, without cultural curiosity about women and their situation. As I have already argued, to ask for change on only one of the faceted sides of the gender compact without involving any other notable facet is a hope compromised from inception.

These male-male relations are now presumably non-authoritarian, horizontal, dialogic, egalitarian, and neither law-bearing nor invested with the issue of oedipal challenge and replacement. This would be revolutionary if true, but even if not true, the statement indicates some of the transformative gender stakes for these poets. They wanted a new psycho-political world of manhood.¹⁶ Yet Creeley’s account of this new egalitarian world for male gender is supported, in the selection of Olson that he edited, by the exclusion of two of Olson’s most important poems, “I Mencius,” a reading of Olson’s relationship with Pound as poetic patriarch and “Lordly and Isolate Satyrs,” a poem of hypermasculinity, and hierarchic ranking. Robert Duncan debates this very point in a lecture on Olson (in February 1982 at New College). In ways similar to Creeley’s theoretical linkage of poetry, ideology, and material conditions, Duncan calls Olson’s poetry “a record of our times...a deep record of a hidden man’s house from which this poetry comes. Something more than the picture is that society is patristic, but Olson’s was in an entirely patristic world. I mean, the figure of his father is huge in his mind and then Maximus and then the huge father figures that appear, bigger than all that, are amazing in his poems” (“Projective Project” 26).¹⁷ Patristic means specifically relating to the fathers of the early Christian church and their writings as establishing canon, interpretation, and institutions. It also may be Duncan’s way of acknowledging or playing with the word most prominent in feminist analysis of culture in the 70s, the word “patriarchal.” In any event, the debate

between two significant participant-observers of the impact of Olson turns on interpreting the version(s)/ example(s) of masculinity he promulgated and embodied.

The crucial role of masculinity as an ideological force in the poetry of the 1950s is plain from Olson's 1950 essay "Projective Verse," an essay that generations of male, and female, poets have found inspiring. "Projective Verse" contains enthusiastic exhortations from a male vocabulary and affect to the "sons of Pound and Williams," like a coach to his team, a prophet to his followers, a general to his troops (Olson 23).¹⁸ In this influential work, poetry and poetics are gendered male, property of the "brothers," or the "boys," carefully segregated and contained against any implication of equal participation from the female, although a feminine "ear" has some rich, though passive role. This "ear" is an allegory of an actual, though unnamed, woman who had a defining place in Olson's early career take-off: Frances Boldereff.¹⁹ The Olson manifesto also rings with its own homosocial enthusiasms. "There it is, brothers, sitting there, for USE" (Olson 16). Certainly one is not exiting from tense and obsessive male ideology in this 1950 Break, but simply altering the narrative from father/son dispositions to something close (boys, brothers), but not exactly the same. Creeley's statement denying father-son dispositions may summarize *their* particular relationship and indicate a desire, a tendency, a wish, a hope for a Break with the patriarchal that should be respected as such.²⁰ However, in the main, Olson worked as a patriarch in poetry; one might point to Olson's lived relations at least later in his career, when he sought, created, produced, sustained and held to a series of young men whom he consciously viewed as disciples. Whatever the male students were enlisted in (a coterie, a homosocial cohort, the vanguard of cultural transformation) was not equally available to women—and there is a curious Olsonic instability on the issue of the adequacy of gay men. This matters because a large part of Olson's cultural impact was in a person's enlistment in or engagement with his claims. Simply to read his poetry was to gain only part of what could be gained from immersion in the Olsonic world. Walter Benjamin remarks about Baudelaire: "Baudelaire's readers are men. It is men who have made him famous; it is them he has redeemed" (*Arcades* 332). To date this has been almost as true of Charles Olson.²¹

Primer. *H* is for Holocaust. Hiroshima. Highways. ("The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 authorized forty-one thousand miles of interstate roads..."—Gitlin 16) For Hoover, for homosexuality. Right-wing J. Edgar Hoover amid his G-Men is now known as a closeted actor within transgender games: precisely in drag. The closet was 1950s sexual containment. *H* is for Homosociality. Homosexuality. There was compact of hetero- and homosexual men in the formation of 1950s poetic manhood, no matter the possible homophobia of the straight men, or the exclusionary campiness of the gay men (Davidson 1995).²² As Davidson has argued, masculinity in 1950s poetry was produced in an intense homosocial compact, across lines of sexual preference. This homosocial compact, was not particularly interested in triangles of romantic love, using an "exchange of women" to get to male bonding, in the foundational terms Eve Sedgwick set forth. In the case of the poetry and letters

circulating, between Creeley and Olson in their major, staggering correspondence (1950-52, nine volumes for those two years), it was not the naming of homosexual desire (nor a homosocial rivalry over a woman), but the homosociality of admitting male emotion, vulnerability, blockage. The affirmation of male emotionality. Their homosocial pattern was the accelerated exchange of emotionally complex manhoods with each other: outspoken excess, hysterical intensities of hopes for poetry and for their own achievement were the “feminine” that they exchanged.

Homosexuality was a seriously stigmatized identity/ choice/ set of desires in the 1950s and at any moment, any straight poet could evince homophobia or homosexual panic at the rich homosocial terrain they inhabited (Sedgwick 89).²³ And yet in these counter-cultural poetries, despite ambivalence to homosexuals even unto homophobia, and despite fear of the effeminate, the construction of masculinity for heterosexual poets was also seriously affected by the sexual frankness and body consciousness of gay male poets and the confrontative flamboyance of non-hegemonic cultural figures who manifested forms of male display.²⁴ There was a forceful pressure from homosexuality on straight male self-fashioning, on the male imaginary, on the splits and debates about what masculinity was in the 1950s, given the sensual attention to male embodiment, sexuality, and physicality in overtly gay works.

In the 1950s, centrist manhood spoke its name in The Organization Man, a new kind of socio-economic type of large national (now global) corporations. No longer were the small town, local elites, small bankers, businessmen, journalists, producers in small scale production central; they were superseded, by a corporate identity to which one was obliged to conform in dress, attitude, choices—a standardization and flattening of “independent” manhood, as Levittown, also from the 50s, homogenized housing styles. William Whyte's influential, ironic 1951 book analyzing and criticizing the middlebrow sociology and social engineering that supported this ethos let people know “How to Cheat on Personality Tests” to achieve the centrist, normal, run-of-the-mill answers to conceal any social deviance. The areas to be avoided on conformist manhood were effeminacy, of course, but also virile display and swashbuckling hyper-masculinity as forms of male masquerade. The New American and Beat poets/writers of course resisted, negated, and berated these Organization Man, conformist and centrist types, whether from a position of localist particularity (Creeley) or global entrepreneurial mythopoesis (Olson and Ginsberg).²⁵ Yet in the 1950s, certain semi-taboo but attractive cultural icons combined these deviant traits—the James Dean, the Elvis Presley phenomena (of the early and mid 50s) proposed a value in petulant, wilder, bodily display and flaunting of style, and hyper-masculine forms of manhood that were more than slightly scandalous. Alternative poetry was positioned as, and staged as cultural protest against “conformity”; thus it made a discursive identification with virile display and/ or hyper-masculinity in class terms and sexual terms.

Olson's poem “The Lordly and Isolate Satyrs” (*Collected Poems* 384-87) is a major poem from 1956, four pages long, self-consciously examining masculinity,

itself a central concern of Olson's poetry.²⁶ It is one of Olson's "Homeric hymns" with very long lines, six or seven full lavish beats each, a poem of grandeur and breadth, reaching behind the façade of civilization for some active, animating principle of power. Using materials from a dream, and in a plural voice ("we" is the pronoun of choice), Olson writes of hyper-masculine "satyrs," a motorcycle club invading a beach, exhibiting a terrific male power and self-possession that might, if allowed to, complete the speaker as it "completes the beach" by which the poem is set. Their ceremonial emergence and virile display challenges the viewer. Normalcy and the normative have been totally changed, a shift in vision provoked by their hyper-masculinity, whose climactic image is of "their huge third leg like carborundum," a simile assimilating a penis, a motorcycle, and the trade name of an industrial abrasive (Olson, *Collected Poems* 387). The movement of the poem occurs through the meditative elaboration of the facets or angles of this vision, a recording of the stages of realization in a diction combining the vatic, the discursive and the colloquial.

"One of the most powerful archetypes of manhood" says Peter Schwenger, "is the idea that the real man is the one who acts, rather than the one who contemplates" (110). Action and contemplation are, however, interestingly mobile in this poem. The action of the "we" who speaks the poem is contemplating these avatars, meditating their significance, actively "talking" the poem. The contemplation of the poem is a kind of action, responsive, twisting and braiding a complex reaction. The action of the poem is simply that the motorcyclists show themselves in epiphanic splendor, sitting on their very male equipment, then they start to leave ("now stirring/ to advance, to go on wherever they do go restlessly never completing/ their tour"—Olson, *Collected Poems* 387). Olson carefully reinterprets contemplation as action to allow the force of "real manhood" to be distributed to the speaker of the poem.

The speaker evinces identification and wariness: "Hail the ambiguous Fathers....Hail them, and watch out" (Olson, *Collected Poems* 385).²⁷ The word "hail" now theoretically marked by its status in an Althusserian understanding of subjectivity is precisely germane: as the speaker pays homage to the figures of the motorcycle gang that he has conjured, these figures from his own subconscious are "hailing" him—calling him into an enriched maleness. The poem offers a narrative in which the onlooker, at first awestruck and fearful of the "monumental solidity" and phallic totality of these invaders, ends by an identification with them.²⁸ "They are our counterparts" and "they're here, the Con-/ temporaries. They have come in" are two lines indicating this transformative, awe-struck connection with what, after all, is a "temporary" vision projected from himself, but seems to have been awarded historical status as bringing the self into the absolute present (Olson, *Collected Poems* 386). The poem provides an account of the bliss of identifying with these Fathers, and is drenched in awe and satisfaction. It is as if Olson has seen a vision of patriarchy itself, and found it good, so good, one must "watch out."²⁹ That watchfulness may concern the constant temptation of a taboo and despised homosexuality that might cast a shadow on the power of mentor-epigone relationships. To achieve male-male

eroticized intellectual and poetic ties without a hint of sexual relations seems to have been an ideal state for Olson.

Thus the poem is the fantasy of patriarchy confronting itself, and completing itself in several ways: with its own mysterious androgyny, its own male/male gaze, its own introjection of the size and outlaw status of some males. The power and the types of maleness evoked are varied, but all are on the periphery of orthopedic masculinity. The poem seems to be a way of recuperating masculinity despite Olson's macro-cultural analysis of the end of the humanist phase of human history. That is, the end of humanism is not the end of manhood. The orthopedic centre is exactly marginalized, while the marginal men enter into their patriarchal endowment and heritage. The poem gathers these marginals together into one gigantic Male presence, even if the components are uneven, conflictual and vulnerable.³⁰ The mentions of the Yiddish vegetarian poet, of bodisattvas, and of "on the road" activities makes at least part of this work a displaced fantasy about the Beat poets, alluding to Ginsberg, whose poem "Howl," first performed in October 1955 (and published in 1956), was one step ahead of Olson in gathering the despised (male) others into a social compact of outsiders.³¹ The motorcycle figures have come from Marlon Brando in *The Wild One* (1954), playing "the tough but sensitive motorcycle gang leader" in one of the breakthrough films about mid-fifties male outlaw figures (Miller and Nowak 333). Other of the male figures manifest wounded maleness: "fifteen year old boys," "red-neck farmers" (and they, as many figures in Part I of "Howl," undoubtedly could be identified with actual men).³² All male figures in the poem can be completed by the solidity and challenge of the "lordly and isolate" figures, "the Fathers behind the father" and "the Androgynes," who are compared to the hieratic Easter Island statues and to gods (Olson, *Collected Poems* 384). So this motorcycle gang is an amalgam of hypermasculinity, homosociality, male display ("he was dressed in magnificent clothes"—*Collected Poems* 385), and outright phallicism as knowledge.

These figures are "Fathers": but "ambiguous Fathers," and "the Androgynes/the Fathers behind the father, the Great Halves" (Olson, *Collected Poems* 384). The speaker sees these male figures in a vision of another side, "the ambiguous Fathers," who open out a whole terrain of manhood that involves the feminine or a nurturing paternal. In this poem, Olson seems to draw on striking a pre-oedipal connection with the maternal father; this poem is illuminated by Freud's "Wolf-Man" analysis of a "narcissistic masculinity predating the oedipal crisis" that "implies a powerful cathexis of male genitals" (Connell, qtd. in Brod and Kaufman 14).

This terrain can also be glossed by Olson's poem concerning Melville's poetry ("The Collected Poems Of"—*Collected Poems* 278-282), in which he proposes a theory of gender that involves an ideal of male hardness, along with an alchemical tincture of the feminine, so that the base of imagination is the "hermaphrodite"—man who can assimilate the feminine.³³ The precise logic is that a male figure garners the feminine as a further enhancement of his importance; in no sense, in this world view, is he feminized. In the "Lordly and Isolate Satyrs," these mythological dreamed figures have totality and presence because they contain both

genders while remaining uncompromisingly male. This is signaled by a metaphor of size—the satyrs are larger than us. They are large because they contain the feminine, too. Their totality supports and guarantees the power of the (small f) father by the power of the large F, Fathers.

The observation that these counter-cultural poets sought to transform maleness without transforming femaleness is again illustrated by this poem. For at the very centre of this poem among these Male avatars is one female, the partner of the Leader in the convertible, described as a “dazzling” figure using hair dye (something still both tacky and glamorous in the 1950s). At first the female figure is not singled out, since “She was as distant as the others. She sat in her flesh too” (Olson, *Collected Poems* 386). Yet the poem’s speaker cannot sustain this similarity between the dream males and the dream female. At the moment of male transformation, the mystery and self-possession of the female figure is neutralized, and she is cut down to size, brought back to the regime of binary and unequal sexual difference. This utopian dream of an enriched centre for manhood still works according to normative ideological rules about male and female that keeps females on the periphery. Of the dream men Olson says: “These are our counterparts, the unknown ones./ They are here. We do not look upon them as invaders. Dimensionally/ they are larger than we--all but the woman. But we are not suddenly / small. We are as we are” (Olson, *Collected Poems* 386). “All but the woman...” There is no imagining of female transformation even in a dream, and further, the female figure cannot, apparently, be larger than the human men in the way the dreamed Fathers are. One cannot “be familiar” with the males, but one could want to “be familiar with” the imagined female (Olson, *Collected Poems* 387). The male speaker(s) accept themselves “as “we are” both by introjecting the gigantism of “Fathers behind the father” and at the same time maintaining the female figure not as gigantic, but of a manageable size and of heterosexual access, and thus containing the tremendous male-male eroticism of the dream. Within the dream, love, adoration, touching, caring from man to man are part of this picture, but so is an awe-struck distance: “We have no feeling except love. They are not/ ours. They are of another name. These are what the gods are” (Olson, *Collected Poems* 387). Olson keeps these materials in play, evoking male-male love without homosexuality. Indeed, the function of the one woman in the poem is as a guarantor of normative sexual structure. She provides the right outlet for all the almost taboo eros of the poem, and has only one other function—to be inferior.

This poem is a collection point for any number of key materials of 1950s counter-cultural maleness: pure phallic imagery, careful androgyny, the supplement of femininity without its taint, affirmative heterosexuality, homosocial cohorts without homosexuality, male display and hypermasculinity, marked gender asymmetry or the enforcement of male-female difference, conflicts between actual social power and a sense of powerlessness, even an off-handed misogyny.³⁴ But many of these traits are as centrist as they are counter-cultural.

These poets offer three kinds of peripheral maleness all examining taboo or counter-cultural forms of masculinity in their poems. One is overt about intense,

orgasmic homosexuality as part of transformative vision, while another draws on the male display of heroes of hypermasculinity. In specific ways, both poets make a critique of hegemonic maleness. At the same time, they draw on ideologies of the centre in order actively to resist the sense that textual females (or real females) could themselves have a large stake in the gender shifts in male subjectivity occurring on the counter-cultural periphery.

ENDNOTES

¹ In his study of Olson, von Hallberg reminds us of that Olson's achievement were to fuse a political vision and a cultural vision, to insist of the interpenetration of these realms. It is a lasting aspect of his heritage. See the discussion from 10-21, about American imperialism, democracy, and the experimental enclave of Black Mountain.

² R.W. Connell, "Long and Winding Road: An Outsider's View of US Masculinity and Feminism," in *Masculinity Studies and Feminist Theory: New Directions*, ed. Judith Kegan Gardiner (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002): 193-209.

³ Middleton: "We can all read men's poetry as men's poetry...by reading the work reflexively as a negotiation with dominant masculinities, the promptings of a male body, and the placement in a language that speaks too strongly for men." (Middleton, *fragmente* 76) Of this reader, too: "She will also exhibit 'the breathlessness of the person who refuses to be a man when she listens.'" This is Charles Bernstein's allusion to the socialization of professional readers in hegemonic listening, something that was early argued by Annette Kolodny in feminist contexts (Bernstein 23). In this myself as reader gets some support from the redoutable Charles Olson, who, as Michael Davidson has found, told Nancy Armstrong "that [his] course [at SUNY-Buffalo] was going to be about 'Men's Poetry,' and any women who wanted to attend would have to watch from the hallway"—an incident probably from the first of Olson's two years at Buffalo, 1963 (undated in Davidson). (Davidson, "Compulsory Homosociality" 204).

⁴ Bob Perelman on Gary Snyder, "Poetry in Theory," *Diacritics* 26.3-4 (Fall-Winter 1996): 163, speaks of "ignoring the masculinist condescension" in a Gary Snyder poem. Of course I am also sympathetic to the desire to ignore lines like "fuck the hag,/ and all the celestial angels/ and maidens perfumed and golden" in favor of another kind of critique of the Snyder poem "What You Should Know to Be a Poet" as "ahistorical, atheoretical." However, I would engage those latter terms as deeply involving gender queries about poetic practice.

⁵ Disneyland, opening in 1955 in California was for social historian Warren Susman "the mythic essence of what life was supposed to be like in the 1940s and 1950s" (Susman, qtd. in May 31). "It represents a structure of desire in which the repressed is held down, where nothing is dirty, where everything is manageable and life-sized, where sex and social conflict are eliminated, where the family never changes except to receive more goods and services, where it seems possible for a world of modern culture to satisfy every conceivable want" (33). It is a psycho-historical version of American culture that Susman tell, claiming that valuable cultural materials—from film noir to the Beats—actually allowed the "repressed" to be revealed.

⁶ Paul Boyer tracks the intense, diffuse, rich ideological and cultural questions about the atomic age and atomic warfare in his 1985 *The Bomb's Early Light*. About Shoah in "Howl,"

perhaps hinted at in “who broke down crying in white gymnasiums naked and trembling before the machinery of other skeletons,” but this is more overtly about military induction or hospitalization. Ginsberg’s religious affiliation became Buddhist in the post-“Howl” period.

⁷ E. L. Doctorow writes: “Every small loss of moral acuity, I see collectively as the secret story of American life under the bomb. It was first our weaponry and then our diplomacy, and now it’s our economy. How can we suppose that something so monstrously powerful would not, after forty years [w. 1987], compose our identity? The great golem we have made against our enemies is our culture, our bomb culture—its logic, its faith, its vision” (*Nation*, Feb 21, 1987, 331, qtd. in Breines 207).

⁸ The FBI reciprocated with an FBI file on Ginsberg and others that he later, under FOIA received, selected, photocopied, and distributed under the title FBI**Narcotics Bureau**CIA files, “Exemplary Shockers & Smoking Typewriters, 1968-1970”—what is especially interesting in these files are the many tactics the FBI used for “disrupting political minorities” (with informants, disinformation, anonymous letters, spying).

⁹ For Ginsberg’s specific textual misogyny, see, for instance, the first poem in Ginsberg’s *Collected Poems*, a work dating from 1947. “Queertalk” is one of the discourses mentioned; another is “hiptalk.” A third is invective against women “Why you narcissistic bitch!” A fourth is “a violent/ and messianic voice” which prevails, “dominating the whole room” (*Collected Poems* 3). There is an allegory here about the development of his male voice: the alternative modes (queer, hip, messianic) all seek domination; this task is accomplished by uncompromising positioning of women, whose judgmental opinions are dismissed with cant adjustment-psychology phrases.

¹⁰ An exception that finds female display fascinating (a camp analysis of it) is John Weiner’s *WOMAN*. My finding depends on my choice of Ginsberg, Creeley, Olson. Where Spicer is concerned, his homosocial network was devastatingly rejecting of effeminacy and the feminine, as well as of females (see Davidson’s “Compulsory Homosociality”).

¹¹ McCarthyism was named for a right-wing, thuggish senator elected in 1946 and dethroned in 1954. He spearheaded fierce and damaging anti-leftist and anti-Communist purges in unions, universities, and government, including the erosion of New Deal social policies. But this climate of purge and suspicion was not the work of one individual, but rather “Cold War hysteria” in foreign policy as the Truman Doctrine and at home “in a series of repressive acts aimed at eliminating left-wing activity in labor organizations, government administration, and public culture: the Smith act (1940), the Taft-Hartley Act (1947), the McCarran Internal Security Act (1950), the McCarran-Walter Act (1952), the Communist Control Act (1954)” (Ross 16).

¹² The witty and knowing work of Michael Davidson in his San Francisco Renaissance book and an essay called “Compulsory Homosociality” that parallels this analysis (ours were originally written at the same time) emphasizes the homosocial formation of these groups and, as a side issue, the misogyny. In both our papers the contradiction between liberatory ideologies and gender materials is proposed. My paper features close readings that specify how textual manifestations of manhood as ideology are made. A new book by Davidson—*Guys like Us*—promises strong and cogent analyses. (Chicago, forthcoming). Peter Middleton’s work, in and after his self-reflexive book *The Inward Gaze*, an anthology or two—like *Engendering Men: The Question of Male Feminist Criticism* (Joseph Boone and Michael Cadden), some discussions of Creeley by Ted Pearson. The discussion of Olson by Susan Howe points to the contradictory heritage of these magisterial poets; after papers by two of Olson’s committed inheritors, Don Byrd and John Clarke, Howe remarks: “I am a poet. I

know that Charles Olson's writing encouraged me to be a radical poet. When I was writing my first poems I recall he showed me what to do. Had he been my teacher in real life, I know he would have stopped my voice." Then, playing on her status as a "respondent" to papers: "Can daughters ever truly respond to factors that come into play in such a patronymic discourse?" (Susan Howe 166, 168, respectively). She follows with a cited catalogue of intensely misogynist passages and then with some others. "When he is at his best, frontiers are in constant flux" (Susan Howe 172).

¹³ There are some beginnings in the general study of masculinity—social criticism, sociology, psychoanalytic theory, and historical study, as well as the good-and-ambiguous-faith efforts of men's movements: the HQ 1090's are beginning to extend over two or three shelves. The work in psychoanalytic theory of Kaja Silverman, and the socio-personal reading of culture offered by Peter Middleton, and the study of boys' fiction and imperialism by Joseph Bristow are very suggestive. There is a coming consolidation of "masculinity studies" with the following consensus, outlined by Judith Kegan Gardiner in her introduction to her book: that maleness as a gender is constructed and reconstructed in social, historical, and ideological processes. That there are numerous ideologies of masculinity and many kinds of maleness. That gender issues are inflected with all other kinds of social location from sexuality to age and class. That power and gender inequality in the relations between and among genders can never be forgotten in these studies.

¹⁴ Kimmel also follows Goffman and Connell in insisting that there is an ideal type—it is not clear whether this type is ideological or statistical—of "hegemonic manhood."

¹⁵ Including the one Perloff raised in her 1973 discussion of Olson—whether his poetics and the thrust of his poetry differed definitively from Williams or Pound, a difference and distinction claimed assiduously by supporters of Olson's distinction, including Creeley's statement. Another issue is the positioning of Pound and Williams in the past, from an earlier formation, even when both continued to publish parts of their long poems into the 1950s: *Paterson* IV in 1951, and V in 1958; *Rock Drill* in 1955, *Thrones* in 1959, *Drafts and Fragments* in 1968.

¹⁶ One might ask whether the father-son disposition was indeed obsolete as charged. In the letters of the 50s, Creeley signed himself "lad" to Olson, and this articulation of an elder to younger brother disposition is often belied by his canny advice. The new was riddled with the old, not least in the exclusion of mentioning Olson's other great provocative interlocutor at the time—Frances Boldereff. She is discussed by Sharon Thesen and Ralph Maud in their introduction to Boldereff-Olson letters, by Clark in the Olson biography, by me in *Manifests*, by Andrew Mossin in a article in *Sagetrieb*, by Faas in the biography of young Creeley. I will be writing about this again in the third part of a monograph called *Marble Paper*, historicizing the muse figure in four male poets.

¹⁷ In this essay, I do not treat the Maximus poems, but discuss work from the *Collected Poems* excluding *Maximus*.

¹⁸ I have commented on this at some length in my 1996 essay "Manifests." One of Charles Bernstein's most significant (and funnier) cultural interventions parodies "Projective Verse" exactly in "Introjective Verse," carefully reversing all the male-based terms.

¹⁹ It turns out that he has a female part on his body, an opening on his head, metaphorically a "sister," a helpmeet. Maybe this is another "person" in a subservient relation living on the poet's body, or maybe this is a new organ of the male poet's body. She is an ear. Ear is an open orifice which cannot close itself; Ear is obedient to the authority of sound. Ear is feminine and female. Two ways of seeing this: that the man has poised a necessary sister

goddess in his space for his uses, or that the man has opened out a new organ on his (creative) body. Men are getting a lot of poetic advantage either way, or both. This is an appropriation of femininity.

²⁰ The evidence of *Charles Olson and Ezra Pound: An Encounter at St. Elizabeths* shows several problematics in the relationship of these poets in the immediate post-war period (1946-48): the clash between Olson's left-liberalism and Pound's maintained fascism; the clash between Olson's desire for a blessing from a poetic father by whom he felt mentored and his yearning to reject and to replace that father. The writing (only a few years before the encounter with Creeley) are a mix of filial yearning and jealousy and political fascination and revulsion. It may be that the relationship with Creeley was cure for this, and as well a cure for the fierce bond between Olson and Dahlberg (beginning in the late 30s and up to the 50s), the anger, abandonment, disloyalty and cranky accusations that occur when an apprentice outruns the master.

²¹ Indeed, it is important for Marjorie Perloff's investments that one of her first—and much criticized—published essays announced a rather polite resistance to Olson, on the grounds that there is nothing new in him—it had already been said by Pound. The men whom Olson redeemed found this essay contentious. (see Ralph Maud and so on, letter to me from Andrew Crozier). Perloff points out that “the Olson cenacle of the 70s was, I believe, the last all-male group in the US gathered around a particular poet.” She remarks the “pure adulation the Olsonites gave their hero.”

²² A homosocial thesis animates Ted Pearson's discussion of Creeley, Tom Clark's discussion of Olson, and Michael Davidson's analysis of the “gender of poetics” at this period.

²³ “The construction of ‘I’ as a masculine ‘subject’ is determined by his capacity to recognize (both within and beyond himself) an Other ‘male’ who is met *in* the ‘woman,’ and who, in witnessing ‘I’ perform as a ‘male,’ confirms him as such. It is no great secret that ‘males’ tend to measure their masculinity against other ‘males’ and, in the domain of heterosexual relations, that a ‘woman’ as such can be little more than the medium within or upon which the construction of an arguably homosocial masculinity is inscribed.” (Pearson, *Poetics Journal* 163)

²⁴ It's not hard to scout the gay male frankness in central poems of masculinity in the 1950s: from the delicious scandal of Duncan's “cocksuckers” in *The Venice Poems* (1947?) to Allen Ginsberg's frank and noble 1956 gay sex poem, “Many Loves” (*Collected Poems* 156), to the vatic sublime male sexuality of *HOWL* (1956), to Spicer's coterie judgment poems in *Admonitions* (1958) and elsewhere.

²⁵ “You admire too many men—not to practice. The bourgeois are a bore. They are not interesting. No poet can make them interesting—even by slaying them” Olson wrote in 1955 to Raymond Souster (Olson and Boldereff, *Charles Olson and Frances Boldereff* 235).

²⁶ Mossin eloquently analyzes the “critical juncture between postwar constructs of masculinity” and the projective imagination in Olson, discussing how for many “New American” poets “absorption in issues of masculine self-definition would become a major factor in their production as poets,” arguing that their oeuvres are simply not understandable without gender analysis (ts 9).

²⁷ As I have noted, this poem is astonishingly not one that Creeley selects for his version of Olson's *Selected Poems* in 1993 nor for the *Selected Writings* of 1965, perhaps because of the fullness of its discussion of Fathers, thereby cutting against Creeley's denial of the “father-son disposition” in Olson. The poem has some similarities—the magisterial greeting “hail”—with the 1955 “A Newly discovered ‘Homeric’ Hymn” dedicated to the classicist Jane

Harrison. This much shorter poem is structured of repetition like a sestina. It is a haunted poem about the pressure of the strong dead, demanding how to get things from them without being taken over. The “pot” and its fecundity that is at issue is an androgynous, gender mobile set of images, suggesting fellatio or male pregnancy (seeds in mouth), suggesting womanhood from which man drinks, and the inspiration of initiates into a dangerous site (death).

²⁸ It is tempting to evoke Lacan here, but there are debates not useful at the end of a paper about whether the Lacanian idea of a totalized entity called the Phallus is not simply Lacan before 1960, an incomplete account. In *Beyond Sexuality*, Tim Dean argues that Lacan is most usefully seen as proposing a “queer” theory of desire without gender (in *objet petit a*), given that “desire emerges before sexual difference...” (Dean 265). Hence Lacan “theorizes sexuality in terms not of gender but of jouissance” (Dean 193).

²⁹ A pleasure and eroticism that extends to Olson’s appreciation of the first publication of this poem, in *Evergreen Review*, 1958. Praising, with rich sexual and narcissistic language, editor Donald Allen’s photograph of motorcyclists on the cover, Olson writes “Did anyone tell you how it is to be put out there by another man who has covered you like your own skin?” (Olson, *Selected Letters* 273).

³⁰ There are almost gratuitous “red-headed people,” an image that seems to be a refraction of Olson’s conflictual relation with Pound (a red-head), or even an image of the penis itself. On the double meaning of the red head; Pound is called “Big Red” in the correspondence (Olson-Creeley 7: 245) This because of a circuitous explanation for Olson’s realization that a certain Mayan figure resembles the red priapus figures of Greek culture, herms. As Olson says about the red herms in the ancient world, “my assumption is that [the ancients] took the phallus--& sex—as simply man’s most immediate way of knowing nature’s powers” (Olson, *Origin* 57, 58). The letter is from 1951.

³¹ According to Tom Clark, Olson was quite jealous of the Beats, during the later 1950s, as they emerged into notoriety, but this poem offers a purer moment of the formation of an all-male company, by the joining of more normal and outrageously counter-hegemonic figures.

³² I can’t identify them, but it is notable that Creeley and Olson met face to face for the first time in 1955 (after four intense years of letter-writing), and Weiners is important at precisely the time in 1955-56 that this poem emerged.

³³ In support of this thesis, Olson mis-quotes a stanza of a poem by Melville from *Timoleon*, about the tragic splitting asunder of the integral human—a male-female androgyne (*Collected Poems* 282; he cites it accurately in *Call Me Ishmael* 103).

³⁴ It only lacks homosexual panic, self-divided “victimized” maleness, and mythologized, a-historic females.

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Be-longing(s)

R. K. S. Parker

Introduction

While arrival of the unexpected repeat invitation to participate in a conference of the Hellenic Society for the Study of English led to the onset of mild presumption, that fleeting moment of hubris was immediately overtaken by speculation concerning the shape and form of the nemesis that would follow inevitably from acceptance. You see, the invitation arrived at more or less the same time as British newspapers carried fulsome valedictions for the American by birth but long resident-in-London musician, Larry Adler; about whom this (probably apocryphal) anecdote. Invited to perform in one of the cities in central Europe famous for a musical reputation that dates back several centuries, Adler apparently insisted that he should play his transcription of a Bach fugue. “On a mouth organ, Mr Adler?” On a mouth organ. Or no concert. Came the first evening, and recital was followed by loud and insistent hand-clapping that signalled the demand on the part of the full house audience that the soloist should return. The latter’s in-passing observation to the conductor as he briefly left the platform before returning there for the fourth or fifth time that the applause was evidence of approval of his interpretation was greeted with the response: “You misunderstand, Mr Adler. You are playing to probably the most knowledgeable Bach audience in the world. Their clapping is not applause but signal of their wish that you return to practice until you get it right!” Nemesis. Updated to the present. Leaving no visible marks.

So, while I am delighted to return as often as I can to a city in which I feel “at home” (a phrase used advisedly, in view of what will follow), the point about the Larry Adler anecdote is not simply now to highlight the invariably ever-present dialectic between hubris and nemesis—which, since it is a theme done to death for aeons I will not seek to resuscitate it. Instead, I would like to signal that my endeavour will be to attempt to uncover some of the unarticulated yet nevertheless active cultural as well as critical foundations upon which that decision-making processes deployed by both sides—centre as well as periphery—depend; and from there to proceed to address the theme of this conference: that of the periphery viewing the world.

Let me, however, hasten to assure that, while not wishing to look the gift horse of the wonderfully kind invitation in the mouth, I nevertheless remain constantly aware of that famous admonition: “Whatever it is, I fear the Greeks even when they bring gifts” (Virgil, *The Aeneid* 2:1.48). That wariness is not only about those who offer gifts; it is a wariness, as well, about reactions—and justifications for those reactions—on the part of those who are the recipients of gifts—especially those that come unsolicited. Recall that not only was the speaker, Laocoön, but his sons as

well, strangled by serpents; more importantly, it was those who claimed to speak from within the ranks of the Trojans who interpreted the deaths as evidence in support of their subsequent interpretation that those deaths were proof of the disapproval of their gods of Laocoön's warning.

My task will therefore be to attempt not only to tease out the meanings that might be connected to the title of my talk, but also (and perhaps to signal my trajectory in advance) to show how the differential longings of notional centre and of reputed periphery have transformed, as well as trans-formed both spaces. To do that, a brief story from yet another different place and a different time: that tale told in Yoruba oral tradition in West Africa of a tortoise, on a narrow path that bisected a forest, performing what appeared to the teller of the story a strange dance; one that left obvious scuff marks on the path. Asked about what it was doing, and why, the tortoise responded: "I am on the point of leaving the path in order to go into what appears to be an impenetrable forest in which I shall most probably meet my death. The marks I leave behind are signs to those who come after that I did not go without a struggle."

Ways of Seeing

If, in undertaking that journey it is not clear which of the two, path and forest, is centre, which is periphery, it should be borne in mind that between the two spaces there is a borderland; defined as follows by Renato Rosaldo: "Borderlands should not be regarded as empty transitional zones but as sites of creative cultural production" (208). Furthermore: in the publicity materials for the conference, why is the former (periphery) in scare quotes—or, stated more neutrally, in inverted commas—while the latter (centre) is free of such entanglement? Is the scare-quote evidence of fear of threat from periphery? Or is my question once again a verbal demonstration of one manual characteristic that my ancestors from these northern parts of the world found actually off-putting about their counterparts they encountered at the southern tip of the African continent: that of nit-picking? While the former invariably portrayed that action on the part of the latter as unutterably other [Other?], my reading of their responses is that their conclusions were mis-constructions. The act of picking off nits was an act of essential hygiene, and a case of the personal as the cultural and political. Indeed, since it was a ritual that was apparently as often performed communally as individually, it clearly had characteristics recognised as characteristic of conference proceedings!

Belonging/Be-Longing /(be)-Longing(s)

The Larry Adler anecdote was re-told in order to seek to demonstrate one of my key propositions: that, in this example, the centre that is *mittel-Europa* not only arrogates unto itself the right to decide on the appropriateness of the instrument upon which to play, but also (and perhaps above all) the capacity (some would say "right") to interpret the performance. Noteworthy, too, is that the process is applied to someone whom those at that centre choose to include within their ranks, as they have defined

it—and precisely because of the extent to which he appears to them to be like them. Fascinatingly, in their keenness to impose their dominant way of seeing, they perhaps also unwittingly reveal their awareness (therefore resistance) to the nature of the act that had been performed: that of the interpellation of that dominant centre by that bracketed-off periphery, as coded by the instrument being played. Audience response that requires the manifestation of familiar objects delineated in familiar ways before the act of performance can be adjudicated as acceptable, is interrupted, turned upon itself in such a way that that audience is forced to consider not only the performance just heard, but (more fundamentally) the very foundations themselves of the decision-making processes they hold.

But why their discomfort? Because the performer will have highlighted not only the familiar but also the transgressive that is innovative and transformative while yet remaining rooted in the traditions of the centre. In literary and cultural studies, the equivalent example might be the drama, *The Bacchae*, notably re-worked in 1973 in London by the later-to-be Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka, in which the drunken Dionysus in the Euripides original becomes the god of the people of the recently-independent Nigeria: a figure more akin to the Yoruba deity, Ogun, who is not only god of iron (therefore, of war), but also of creativity; while Pentheus, King of Thebes, is a megalomaniac despot whose death is prerequisite for the freeing of not only the slaves but also the liberation of the free-born.

So, to look at some of the general features of which the Larry Adler anecdote is a specific outcome and then to extrapolate from there some possibilities for action with reference to the teaching of literature in the context of the scare-quoted periphery viewing the not-scarified world. Two, in particular, concerning the interactions between centres and peripheries which tend to be either marginalised or elided: firstly, that centres contain their own margins inside them, and peripheries their own centres; secondly, correspondences of interest between those who inhabit and interpret at centres: whatever their other differences, these latter share a common belief in their right to interpret. The effect of these two, in conjunction, is that while Greek and Trojan interpreters may disagree about how to read the events they describe; they are in no doubt that theirs is the right, as well as the capacity, to describe events on behalf of their worlds—including their internal peripheries.

As in classical Troy, so too in 20th-century *mittel-Europa*. Perhaps the core of the Larry Adler story is that he clearly did not think of himself or of his performance as being alien to either the beliefs or the expectations of that centre. Rather, the combination of choice of an iconic figure, Bach, together with innovation in interpretation of the composition, pointed to a shared heritage that he saw as characteristic of the ways of the centre. His choice of Bach was signal to show his audience his longing to belong to the dominant tradition, the mainstream he thought that he belonged: though clearly not in the ways in which those who saw themselves as arbiters of his actions saw it. So, how to belong! Especially for those whose education at the periphery inculcated a belief not only that they belonged to the centre

but also that their arrival at that centre with that sense of be-longing as well as other be-longing(s) they brought with them would enable them to fit in: be-long?

The title of my talk today is triggered by observations made by the heroine in the novel, *The Coral Strand*, a text that (and I quote from the claim on the outside front cover) is “An intricately woven tale of PASSION, DECEIT, and LOST HERITAGE set in the dual lands of ENGLAND and INDIA.” That this Indian-born writer who had moved to the United Kingdom as a child, and was one of the founders, in 1984, of the Asian Women Writers’ Workshop out of which came the collection *Right of Way*—and, before that, one of my students—is less interesting than the fact that she wrote the by-now-renowned first novel, *A Wicked Old Woman*, in which Kuli/“Coolie” disrupts all the conventional stereotypes about how a middle-aged (and as political correctness has it) “physically challenged” Asian woman should behave. The extract from *The Coral Strand* (the last word meaning either the delicate yet strong filament on which the jewellery is strung or the constantly-changing space that separates—or joins—land and sea, is as follows:

Belong! The word fills the Universe. From possessions to passions, the world has been riddled, ruined, and resurrected by it. Belonging is a B word. Longing comes into it, being-ness too. To belong and to be? By that which belongs to me?...Belong! The word carries wars and battles tucked inside it, from Helen of Troy to *Kramer vs Kramer*. Atlas didn’t carry the world on his shoulders; he carried the word “belong.” (Randhawa 295-96)

Centres and Peripheries

Alternatively stated, the extract highlights not only that difference inscribed in terms such as “centre” and “periphery” and particularised as that of the contest between “Europe” and its “Others” (as in Barker et al.), or Occident and Orient, or binaries of a similar kind, it also proceeds to under-mine the foundations upon which those distinctions rest: particularly that aspect of the binary by which means the centre is, in each case, seen as performing the task of defining the parameters as well as perimeters for itself as well as for the peripheries. Familiar as well as enormously influential observations might include those on “ambivalence” and “mimicry,” associated with the work of Homi Bhabha (in *The Location of Culture*), of the “silence of the subaltern” as articulated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (in “Can the Subaltern Speak?”) and those of “contact zone” and “transculturation” in the work of Mary Louise Pratt (in *Imperial Eyes*). Perhaps exaggeratedly stated, though not without considerable justification, the common feature of these interventions is that of either minimising or (more often) eliding the historical dimension in the interactions as well as relations not only between the two spatial dimensions that separate coloniser from colonised, but also within each of them in the metropolis, the minority who made common cause with the oppressed in the colonies; in the latter, a minority who sided with and assisted in the task of maintaining the power of the colonial rulers.

One task for critical theorists in the present is therefore not simply to draw attention to the nuances, but to highlight the actual and material ways whereby to account for the varieties of practises by which different components of those centres that are European and American sought to achieve hegemony over the peripheries that are Africa, Latin America and the Indian sub-continent in colonial and imperial times. Confronted by the critical purchase of some of the terminologies cited a few moments ago (“ambivalence,” “mimicry,” “contact zone,” “transculturation,” etc.) by scholars of great eminence and repute, but how these can often function as euphemisms for aggressive Western interventions (thus “contact zone” as “conflict zone,” “transculturation” as intervention by coloniser of colonised’s culture—often to obliteration of the latter) I not only want to echo the refusal made so tellingly by the USA-based Indian scholar, Sara Suleri, to being cast of the role of an “Otherness-machine” (105), but I also find refuge in the observation by the Bulgarian-born but resident in France Julia Kristeva, who writes of:

...becoming weary of it and walled up in one’s tarnished, neutralized disagreement, through lack of having the right to state it. No longer knowing what one truly thinks, except that “this is not it”: that the words, the smiles, the manias, the judgements, the tastes of the natives are excessive, faltering, or simply unjust and false, and he cannot imagine—proud as he is of being on his own ground—that one might speak, think, or act differently. In that case, why not tell him so, “argue”? But what right do we have? Perhaps we should ourselves assume that right, challenge the natives’ assurance/ No. Those who have never lost the slightest root seem to you unable to understand and liable to temper their point of view. So, when one is oneself uprooted, what is the point of talking to those who think they have their feet on their own soil? The ear is receptive to conflicts only if the body loses its footing. A certain balance is necessary, a swaying over some abyss, for a conflict to be heard. Yet when the foreigner—the speech-denying strategist—does not utter his conflict, he in turn takes root in his own world of a rejected person whom no one is supposed to hear. The rooted one who is deaf to the conflict and the wanderer walled in by his conflict thus stand firmly, facing each other. It is a seemingly peaceful coexistence that hides the abyss: an abysmal world, the end of the world. (17)

To avoid falling into the abyss that separates the deaf one rooted to the conflict (in my perception, the centre), from the wanderer walled in by it (in my view, the periphery), there is an absolute obligation, as Anthony Kwame Appiah argues so cogently, with specific reference to the African experience, but applicable more widely, to develop strategies by which means to:

transcend the banalities of nativism—its images of purgation, its declarations, in the face of international capital, of a specious “autonomy,” its facile topologies. The language of empire—of centre and periphery, identity and difference, the sovereign subject and her colonies—continues to structure the criticism and reception of African literature *in* Africa as elsewhere. And that

makes the achievement of critical balance especially difficult to maintain. On the one hand, we find theorists who emphasize the processes of demonization and subjection, the ways in which the “margin” is produced by the “cultural dominant”—Europe defining her sovereignty by insisting on the otherness of her colonies. On the other—Other?—hand, talk about the production of marginality by the culture of the centre is wholly inadequate by itself.../ The point to be borne in mind here is not that ideologies, like cultures, exist antagonistically, but that they *only* exist antagonistically; domination and resistance are a large part of what they are *for*. (71-72)

If one fascinating typesetting/proof-reading error in the Appiah volume is that the “c” in “centre” (as they have it in the “New World”) is here omitted—make of that proof-reading error what you will!—another (and much more relevant to our theme) is that Appiah observes, in his Preface, that:

This book is dedicated to nine children—a boy born in Botswana, of Norwegian and Anglo-Ghanaian parents; his brothers, born in Norway and in Ghana; their four cousins, three boys in Lagos, born of Nigerian and Anglo-Ghanaian parents, and a girl in Ghana; and two girls, born in New Haven, Connecticut, of an African-American father and a “white” American mother. These children, my nephews and my godchildren, range in appearance from the color and hair of my father’s Asante kinsmen to the Viking ancestors of my Norwegian brother-in-law; they have names from Yorubaland, from Asante, from America, from Norway, from England. (viii)

Within the terms of the conventional binary, where, and how, do these children “belong”?

One further omission in the conventional codification of encounters between centres and peripheries: that the European continent itself as marked by similar distinctions within its own boundaries, with the definitions once again determined by those from the self-defined centre that are those parts at the western ends of the landmass. England (and later on, Britain) is, of course, in the unique position of being separated by “our” Channel, “this precious stone set in a silver sea,” by which means it manages to maintain a semi-detached status. Though they would never call in by that term, the continuing reliance on that sense of “nativism” in those islands is perhaps best expressed in the consistent recall of elements from other potent images in that speech made by the dying John of Gaunt—a designation that shows his origins on the periphery that is a city in a state now known as Belgium. Almost without exception, the many who quote his celebration of:

This sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This fortress built by nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war...

forget or ignore or deliberately choose to omit his accusation that “This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England”:

Is now leased out...

Like to a tenement or pelting farm.

...

That England that was wont to conquer others
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself. (Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second* 2:I.40-66)

My endeavours to make connections between past centre and present periphery will probably be dismissed as oversimplified, grossly devoid of even the semblance of scholarly rigour. And such criticism may well be valid. But look again. It is not just post Second World War that, for that centre that called itself 'western Europe' that Czechs were on the periphery and Hungarians rather far out. As for those further East, they were simply lumped under the catch-alls of either 'Slavs' or "Balkans," or both. I recall an explanation made to me a few years ago at a conference in Zagreb about why no Serb scholars were invited: "Because we are Western Europeans. Serbs are Slavs." Recall that that sense of "Europe" as "western," containing within it its own "Others," forged in the process of a very long history or reciprocities as well as antagonisms with the Ottoman Empire. If one of the great joys of the work I have been doing in recent years on stories told by English Renaissance travellers to foreign spaces is that of looking at the maps of those times, then the one that, in my view, takes pride of place is that depiction of "Queen Europe" by Sebastian Münster, published in Basel in 1588. While the head of that figure is Hispania, the sceptre held in the left hand that is Dania and the orb in the right that is Sicilia, not only is the heart that is Bohemia buttressed against internal dangers, but the conduit that drains away the effluent generated by that body evacuates itself on the shores of the land marked Bulgaria. But, to substitute Hamlet's reference to Hecuba (Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 2:I.i.561ff.), "what am I to Europa, or Europa to me,/ that I should speak for her? What would she do/ Had she the motive and the passion/ That I have?" Especially in the present that is the dis-placement of the late-20th century interlude between a dying (mostly western) European colonialism and imperialism on the one hand and the muscle-flexing of an emerging yet not totally dominant globalism associated, on the other, with the United States of America.

Since those times that spatial (therefore mental) relation has, of course, been severely altered. No longer is there either land mass or sea that separates one from the other, but descendants of former subjects from those colonial and imperial spaces now dis-rupt not only by their presence but also—and perhaps especially—by their participation in debates concerning the constitution of the nature of the centre. The impact of that phenomenon on Britain can be precisely dated. The key moment in history for the nation, that of the ignominious return of a British fleet refused permission by Egyptians (a.k.a. Arabs) to transit the Suez Canal, and for the British Left that of coming to terms with the realities of Soviet tanks suppressing popular uprising in Hungary, was mirrored by trans-formations not only in literary production but also in critical theories and practices: the former manifested in plays by John Osborne, Arnold Wesker, Shelagh Delaney and the John Arden/Margaretta D'Arcy combination, followed by Tom Stoppard, David Hare, David Edgar, Howard Brenton,

Caryl Churchill and others whose plays might be described as concerned with explorations into the “Condition-of-Britain-Question”; the latter by the beginnings of the collapse of, to use Francis Mulhern’s title, the “Moment of Scrutiny.”

The comprehensive demolition of imperial certainties that had begun to be eroded in the aftermath of Second World War reconfigurations of the map as well as the naming of “Europe” was precursor to the articulation of anxieties about identities hitherto, if not unquestioned, then certainly not perceived as needing to be theorised: “Englishness.”¹ What rankled about this intrusion was not only that it came from abroad. That was to be expected. What offended was the speed with which this new phenomenon took root within the hitherto impregnable walls of our best institutions of learning and culture.

It is a world long gone. The question that arises is whether, in the era of globalisation in which one of the most arresting features is that of the central role being played by the descendants of former slaves from the African continent shipped to the New World in the imposition of that globalist agenda, it is not now largely irrelevant to concentrate upon “Englishness.” It is not only that black (or, to be “politically-correct”: African-American) police join with their white colleagues in beating up white as well as black protestors from within those centres who question the objectives of those centres, but even more arrestingly is the awareness that some of these are now in positions as formulators of theories which justify such globalist agendas. While the Moor, Othello, was hired for his military skills as general in command of the Venetian army sent to Cyprus to resist the Turkish invader, nobody would seriously accuse him of fulfilling the role of political theorist with reference to international diplomacy. He cannot be cast in the role of being precursor to the likes of Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice or, indeed, my favourite example, Pierre-Richard Prosper, United Nations Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes, who could argue that, post-September 11, the Geneva Conventions are outdated and need to be rewritten in order to deal with the threat of terrorism (qtd. in Sengupta and Buncombe 2). This from the son of immigrants to the United States from Haiti, that island whose slaves were, as told so splendidly by C. L. R. James in *The Black Jacobins*, the makers of the first successful revolt against their French oppressors.² To rephrase Portia’s question in *The Merchant of Venice* (Shakespeare 4:I.169): “Which is the centre here, and which the periphery?”

To reformulate Portia’s question in the manner in which I have done has the effect of highlighting the recognition of the absolute need to jettison conventional binary forms of logic that, are, in their very formulation, oppositional, of which the classic instance is probably “no a’s are b’s.” Substitution of binary terms that might fit the needs of the present not only results in the re-formulation “no usses are thems,” but even more so, such substitution highlights the dangers of the consequences that might result from the rigid fetishisation of binary divisions founded upon ideological rigidities. In that regard, consider the intervention by Robert D. Kaplan, *Warrior Politics: Why Leadership Demands a Pagan Ethos*, in which he attempts to offer not only an answer, but also a way of looking at the methodologies by which centre keeps

out periphery; fascinatingly, in the process, revealing the nakedness of the objectives of the centre that has displaced Europe.

Kaplan, a journalist who has earlier written evocatively-titled tales about his journeys to Central Europe—*Balkan Ghosts*, to 1980s Afghanistan: *Soldiers of God*, and, venturing into the prediction industry, *The Coming Anarchy*—now, in this switch to international relations theory, not only makes what, in my view, are glib comparisons (Achilles with Radovan Karadzic; Hannibal with Hitler; the Punic Wars with those of the 20th century); it is the names associated with the kind of policies that he labels “constructive realist,” therefore “virtuous” that reveal the nature of the “Warrior Politics” he advocates. His iconic figures are: at the beginning of the 20th century, Teddy Roosevelt winning a Nobel Peace Prize for mediating between Russia and Japan yet doing that in the context of awareness of the need for American interests and security; towards the end of that century, Yitzhak Rabin, when he was Israel’s Minister of Defence, dealing with the first Palestinian intifada. These are examples, in his view, of the dictum first enunciated by Machiavelli that, in an imperfect world, good men who seek to do good must learn how to be bad.

The confidence with which, post-September 11 makers of opinion are willing to advocate views that until recently would not have been given house room in the journals concerned might be illustrated from three brief examples. Firstly, that of Peter Watson who asserts that “overall, throughout the 20th. century, the non-western traditions lagged far behind the west in the realm of new ideas”; from which he goes on to draw the conclusion that “...the evidence is incontrovertible: there is a link between civilisation and intellectual achievement; there is a link between intellectual freedom and political freedom, between the ability to change, on the one hand, and scientific advance, technology-based prosperity and intellectual satisfaction, on the other” (31). Secondly, that of Philip Hensher who, writing about post-Taliban Afghanistan argues (and note the nature of the terminology): “Let’s be honest: we need to impose our imperial rule on Afghanistan.” And why? Because “Afghans would benefit from the imposition of our cultural, political and even religious values” (4). Finally, coincident with the British Prime Minister’s visit to several Central African states in February, the right-wing journalist, Bruce Anderson, in an article under the caption “Africa was set adrift before it was ready to rule itself,” confidently goes on to predict that “It is absurd to claim there is any way forward which would not include a large measure of neo-colonialism” (3).

Now, it will probably be objected to that I am introducing too much politics into literary and cultural studies: to which objection the following thesis brilliantly stated by Stendhal some 150 years ago: “Politics in a work of literature are like a pistol-shot in the middle of a concert, something loud and vulgar and yet a thing to which it is not possible to refuse one’s attention” (xxvii). Furthermore, and with particular reference to the event that is commonly referred to as “9/11” (though, for some of us it is “11/9”), recall the response, as well as admonition, in W. H. Auden’s “September 1, 1939”:

I sit in one of the dives

On Fifty-second Street
Uncertain and afraid
As the clever hopes expire
Of a low dishonest decade:
Waves of anger and fear
Circulate over the bright and darkened lands of the earth.
Obsessing our private lives;
The unmentionable odour of death
Offends the September night.

...
Exiled Thucydides knew
All that a speech can say
About Democracy,
And what dictators so,
The elderly rubbish they talk
To an apathetic grave;
Analysed all in his book,
The enlightenment driven away,
The habit-forming pain,
Mismanagement and grief:
We must suffer them all again.

...
Faces along the bar
Cling to their average day:
The lights must never go out, The music must always play,
All the conventions aspire
To make this fort assume
The furniture of home;
Lest we should see where we are,
Children afraid of the night
Who have never been happy or good.

...
Defenseless under the night
Our world in stupor lies:
Yet, dotted everywhere,
Ironic points of light,
Flash out wherever the Just
Exchange their messages:
May I, composed like them
Of Eros and of dust,
Beleaguered by the same
Negation and despair,
Show an affirming flame. (*Another Time* 57)

Dis-Orientation

The status of the scholar as nomad (or is it the other way round?) under conditions of postcoloniality is succinctly stated by Manthia Diawara. Born in Guinea, he grew up to hero-worship Sékou Touré (1922-1984; President of Guinea, 1958-84). But when that postcolonial moment turned sour a few years later, because Diawara's parents were from the neighbouring state of Mali, they were therefore not simply not citizens of the new state, they were also regarded as potential enemies to it, and expelled. Post-colonial dis-placedness thus not only offers the opportunity of interconnectedness for those from the peripheries who meet at the centre; it also imposes a particularly characteristic sickness to which many are exposed in that new environment. Diawara, now living in New York, describes himself as suffering from what he calls "identity fatigue," which he states, had been brought about because he is someone whose past no one knows: he belongs "to the independence generation in Africa which has been forgotten or neglected in the debris of modern history" (12-13). Where, and how, does he belong?

It is a theme that finds its place especially in the range of poetry of recent times; of which, the following, by the white New Zealand-born poet (wonderful oxymoron, that!) Fleur Adcock's "Immigrant":

November '63: eight months in London.
I pause on the low bridge to watch the pelicans:
They float swanlike, arching their white necks
Over only slightly ruffled bundles of wings,
Burying awkward beaks in the lake's water.

I clench cold fists in my Marks and Spencer's jacket
And secretly test my accent once again:
St. James's Park; St. James's Park; St. James's Park. (*Selected Poems*

91)

Fascinating. Pelicans so "at home" that they can float "swanlike," can hide so well all but their "slightly ruffled wings" and "awkward beaks" that they epitomise some of the characteristic qualities of belonging that the poet betrays the minute she opens her mouth. Not even the camouflage of a Marks and Spencer jacket is sufficient. But then, too, the surface that shows an apparent calm at the centre that is "swanlike" also hides the sheer effort required to keep afloat! Though perhaps not seen in those terms, if you are a swan!

The such a sense of dis-location highlighted by Fleur Adcock is, to a larger or lesser extent, shared by many prominent scholars as well as writers in all genres is evident from the large body of writing that has emerged since the end of the Second World War. But what of alternative stories as well as of earlier times? Of which, one (perhaps tendentious) example. A very long time ago, at university at the southern tip of the African continent, the courses in philosophy that I studied as an undergraduate commenced not with Plato and Aristotle, but with those figures before them who had

come to the centre that was Athens from the peripheries that were Samos (Pythagoras); Ephesus (Heraclitus); Melitus (Thales and Anaximander); Elea (Parmenides); and so on. Not only were my professors (who were all white and male and born in South Africa and had studied in Europe: Cambridge; Heidelberg; Leiden, etc.) offended to the core by remarks to the effect that these writers were all migrants from the peripheries, they were even more offended when they were questioned about their claim that Herodotus, though born in Halicarnassus, could, when travelling in foreign parts, carry with him a sense of his Greekness—a term that was itself the subject of keen dispute in the context of a politics that had a local habitation and a name: apartheid.

If one welcome feature of post-Apartheid South Africa is that the scholars who now go abroad are no longer dominantly either male or white, it is perhaps salutary to note that their destination is now overwhelmingly the “New World.” The consequence is that South African periphery as trans-formed, European centre destabilised. Since the direction of travel is, in our times, increasingly from periphery to centre (though not exclusively so: dare I mention that it seems to me that the journey to the “New World” is as much a feature of scholars from Greece as from South Africa) there would appear to be scant need for those at the periphery to be wary of the implications of the observation (admittedly in a different context) by the Roman, Horace, who had traveled to Athens, who famously observed about those who travel from the centre to other spaces that: “They change their sky, not their soul, who run across the sea.”³

That dictum was, of course, famously updated, as follows, to serve the needs of the successor 18th and 19th century imperialism, by J. R. Seeley, who in one of his famous lectures in the University of Cambridge could assert that when European emigrants left their native countries, they should not be regarded as going out of it, but carrying it with them: “Where Englishmen are there is England; where Frenchmen are, there is France” (41). Unlike the Englishmen and Frenchmen [sic] celebrated by Seeley, Herodotus was not engaged in an imperialising mission. Indeed, if Homer is to be believed, the reason why the Greek gods went to that space they referred to as “Ethiopia” was that it was where they went on holiday. If one speculation about that decision on their part was because the Cyclades were probably being overrun by barbarians on package tours, recall the role of Ethiopia in the history of Europe: Poseidon, who was not best pleased with Odysseus for blinding Polyphemus, is even more annoyed when he hears about Athena’s intercessions to Zeus on behalf of Odysseus at the time that he (Poseidon) is tucking into a hecatomb of oxen sent in his honour by the Ethiopians. It is an aggravation sufficiently serious to drive a god to kill.

But that was then. How now to account for the sense of awareness of being dis-placed, even on the part of those who, coming from those peripheries that are not the “West,” on the face of it, would appear to move with ease across boundaries that might, in their lives, to be said to neither-here-nor-there? It will be my case that it is the trans-formative as well as the trans-gressive impact upon centre on the part of the

so-called periphery that is the crucial relation. Evidence (if needed) can be found in efforts to include—but at the margins—and thereby to give a local habitation and a name to the literatures aggregated under terms such as “Commonwealth” or “New Literatures” (how long before the “new” can be dropped?), or “Third World” or “postcolonial” or “post-colonial”; about which terms, the following telling story of resistance, as reported in a London newspaper:

...the Queen will not be pleased to learn that a leading author has snubbed the commonwealth. Amitav Ghosh, who won the Best Book category in the Eurasia region of the Commonwealth Writers Prize for his novel *The Glass Palace*, has refused to accept the honour. He objects to the classification of his books as “Commonwealth Literature,” and believes that the phrase “anchors an area of contemporary writing...within a disputed aspect of the past.” (“Sunday Review” 11)

Having neither space nor time to deal adequately with it, I will say nothing about one of the most important elements of the processes of the phenomenon that Graham Huggan refers to as the “post-colonial exotic” that is ideology as well as methodology for “marketing the margins.” Instead, the bibliography is one possible way of structuring and disaggregating the variety of forms and texts in order to distinguish with reference to differential spaces, as well as times, in the attempt to tease out that process of be-longing(s).

Illusions and Realities

It is a sobering recognition that while some of the key inaugural texts of Cultural Studies in Britain—Richard Hoggart’s *The Uses of Literacy* (1958) and Raymond Williams’s *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* (1958)—offered no comment either on post-war Britain transformed by immigration or how to theorise that new phenomenon, the work of their immediate successors, including that of the Caribbean-born Stuart Hall did not, for a long time, attempt to make use of the literary texts being produced by writers from the former colonies as part of their data for sociological or historical interventions around debates about “Britishness.” Furthermore, since they by and large saw these texts as slotted in towards the “high culture” end of their construction of literary production meant for middle-class readers and their betters, Cultural Studies theorists largely ignored these texts: certainly until well into the Seventies of the last century. Yet, from the very start, it is in these writings—chiefly fiction and poetry, but also some drama—that the themes of “belonging” as well as of “longing(s)” were not only first addressed, but continue to be teased out into the present.

Interrogations

With regard to post-war migration, pride of place must be accorded to *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), by the Trinidad-born and of East Indian descent writer, Sam Selvon. That novel, as well as the subsequent *The Housing Lark* (1965) and *Moses Ascending* (1975) trace the shattering of illusions of notions of “belonging,” of the

fiction learnt in the Caribbean islands of emigration to Britain as coming “home” to the “mother country.” For the evocatively-named Moses and his friends from different Caribbean islands who meet each other, for the first time, in London, the departure from the islands of their birth was the equivalent of the Biblical story of the escape of the Jews from their bondage in Egypt. But, standing on the banks of the Thames that for him is also the Nile, Moses muses that they may well have led themselves into bondage, rather than out of it. For, how, as well as where, to establish roots in a society riddled with a pervasive racism that is not only a dominant mindset but also a recurrent practice intended to keep the immigrants at the bottom of the social and economic heap? “Lark” it was not! The reference back to the precedent instance of Marlow, who, lying in the yawl *Nellie* at anchor in the Thames, observes to the others with him that “this also...has been one of the dark places of the earth” is clear (Conrad 48).

Further, that Selvon’s people speak an English that is markedly different from varieties at home to which the locals will not admit, creates further problems. The English woman, Daisy, is affronted by the way in which the Jamaican, Henry Oliver, Esquire, now renamed Galahad, makes tea. The latter explains his way with that most evocative of signifiers for the natives:

No foolishness about it. Tea is tea—you just drop some in the kettle. If you want it strong, you drop plenty. If you want it weak, you drop little bit. And so you make a lovely cuppa.

He takes a kettle off and puts it on a sheet of the *Daily Express* on the ground. He brings two cups, a spoon, a bottle of milk and a packet of sugar.

“Fix up,” he says, handing Daisy a cup.

They sit down there sipping the tea and talking.

“You get that raise the foreman was promising you?” Galahad ask, for something to say.

“What did you say? You know it will take me some time to understand everything you say. The way you West Indians speak.”

“What wrong wit it?,” Galahad ask. “Is English we speaking.” (*The Lonely Londoners* 77)

By *Moses Migrating* (1983), the protagonist has developed the wish to visit his birthplace, now on the point of achieving independence. But that dream, too, is shattered by that act of return. When Moses finally manages to hail a taxi, in order to impress his two white travelling companions, his instructions to the driver about the route to take to the city centre is met with the response that he must have been away for a long time, since the one street he had mentioned was now one way. Symbolic? Or what! Because later that day, when he finally gets around to see one of his aunts, she almost immediately observes: “You sounding strange, Moses. You learn to talk like white people” (Selvon, *Moses Migrating* 65).

And not only for the Moses generation. It is felt even more by the British-born children whose experience of modernised as well as continuing versions of practices of marginalisation and exclusion at “home” which is Britain engender the

desire to return to the lands of their mothers and fathers. Novels like Caryl Phillips' *A State of Independence* (1986), Vernella Fuller's *Going Back Home* (1992) and Joan Riley's tellingly entitled *A Kindness to the Children* (1992) chart journeys that lead to the recognition that these are not places in which the returnees will experience the sense of being "at home." In the Phillips novel, Bertram Francis is told bluntly by a former school-friend, now in a key position in the civil service of the newly-independent state:

England is where you belong now. Things have changed too much for you to have any chance of fitting back, so why you don't return to the place where you know how things are? You coming on here like a fool, just dropping by Government House, and so on.... You English West Indians should just come back home to retire and sit in the sun. Don't waste your time to get into the fabric of the society for you're made of the wrong material for the modern Caribbean. You all think too fast and too crazy, like we should welcome you back as lost brothers. Well, you may be brothers alright, but you lost for true for you let the Englishman fuck up your heads. (136)

For Sylvia, in Riley's *A Kindness to the Children*, the impetus for return to Jamaica is to visit the place where her husband, buried in London, had been born. By means of the deployment of quite complex flashbacks and interweaving of time sequences between memory and present, Sylvia muses on how, in London, her parents had sought to convince her that she was British. Now, in her encounters on the island in which she hears derisive shouts of "English" and "foreign lady," crystallises inside the head of a Caribbean-born returnee the realisation that the conventional binaries of white colonial oppressor/black colonised oppressed are called into question in the process. Very much as in the case of Vernella Fuller's Joy who cannot make up her mind about whether or not she should she, once she had completed her degree in law, go and work in Jamaica, or live in London: should she stay in a country in which she feels, as a black person, she is not wanted; or is her mother right when she cautions that Joy "should stay and fight for your right as a British person" (Fuller 14).

As with those from the Caribbean, so with their counterparts from Africa. Buchi Emecheta's Ada leaves a highly-rated professional job as librarian in post-independence Nigeria to join her student husband in London, only to find that there she has become a *Second Class Citizen* (1974)—and not only in the public sphere of everyday life, but also in the private, in which she is saddled with a philandering husband, who not only fails his studies, but also dumps his wife. To survive, Ada/Emecheta becomes spokesperson for the voices of those harnessed with the double yoke of sexism allied to spatial and cultural dis-location.

Almost coterminous with the postcolonial moment in Africa there is the massive body of writing—from Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka in Nigeria, via Nuruddin Farah in Somalia and the Zimbabwean Dambudzo Marechera (who committed suicide aged 35) to more recent examples such as Ben Okri and Kojo Laing—that traces the nuances of the postcolonial disaster zone that pressurises the

writer to celebrate a newly-forged (and the pun is deliberate!) sense of national identity, of a notion of “authenticity,” of a sense of “home”: all themes with which writers feel deeply at odds (as I show in Parker, “Home Is Where the Heart...Lies!”)—especially in the case of texts written by Afro-Caribbean as well as Indo-Caribbean writers: V. S. Reid; Dennis Williams; O. R. Dathorne; V. S. Naipaul being best-known.

Arguably the most disturbingly thorough is *Other Leopards* (1963), by Dennis Williams, who was also a distinguished scholar and for some time Director of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Guyana. Lionel Froad goes to Africa in order to seek his identity. The names carefully chosen for him trigger the appropriate associations. While the first name Lionel evokes the name of the archetypal animal, connoting savagery as well as nobility, associated with the continent, the family name might be seen as a play on (at least) that of the psychiatrist, Freud, as well of that historian, J. A. Froude, best remembered for his assertion with reference to the Caribbean that “There are no people there in the true sense of the word, with a character and purpose of their own” (306). Above all, Lionel cannot forget what his sister used to call him:

She called me Lobo, and Lobo I became, except that Lionel remained on my birth certificate and is set to plague me like a festering conscience for the rest of my days, look of it. I became Lobo and that’s the whole trouble; I am a man, you see, plagued by these two names, and this is their history: Lionel, the one who I was, dealing with Lobo, the one who I continually felt I ought to become. (Williams 19).

Further, Froad is employed as an architectural draughtsman (neither architect, nor surveyor) and sent to a region that he describes as being similarly in-between: “Sudanic belt. Not quite sub-Sahara, but then not quite desert; not Equatorial black, not Mediterranean white. Mulatto. Sudanic mulatto, you can call it. Semi-scrub. Not desert. Not sown” (Williams 9).

For Froad, that is precisely the disadvantage. The space, as well as the people, are “inauthentic,” mule-like: mulatto—to my mind arguably the most offensive term in the register of racist abuse. The complexity of his relations with the variety of expatriates Froad meets there simply serves to exaggerate his sense of alienation: with Chief, the Caribbean-born Christian missionary (neat touch, that!) who had preceded him some three years earlier; with Mohammed, a Sudanese politician; and with Eve, the Chief’s daughter. While the Christians appeal to him to side with them since “You’re the only person we could turn to...they trust your word as a Christian Negro interested in the future of Africans in Africa. They may need help, I tell you, against what’s coming from the Moslems” (Williams 65), Mohammed wants him to write a pro-Arab, pro-Muslim article because he is “particularly suited to do so,” since, “as a western Negro, well, of course, there must be judgements you could make in a situation like this; unique light you could possibly throw...” (Williams 46).

In other words, Arab as well as black Africans see Froad as an ally—precisely because he is a foreigner: one who is not, can not be, one of them. He is from the centre. If not part of it, yet not apart from it, attached to it. But if he is not “one of them,” he is also not the familiar figure of the white colonial expert figure. Indeed, he finally does the research required of him because he cannot stand the contempt of his white manager. But, confronted with an artefact dug up from the ruins of Meroë, capital city of the Kingdom of Kush that predates Pharaonic Egypt, he finds the portrayal of the statue of the dead queen, still with the reins holding prisoners in her left hand, and with slaves around her in the process of being flogged, simply too much. All his links—actual, as well as mental—snap. He climbs a tree and stays there. Whether his is a case of returning to the proverbial womb I am not competent to say. His explanation for his act is that “Now, having removed my body and the last traces of it, I am without context, clear. Going up this new tree, picking the thorns bare, I am in a darkness, nowhere at all. I am nothing, nowhere. This is something gained” (Williams 221).

While what that “gain” might be is not specified, note that the theme is continued in novels such as *Navigation of a Rainmaker* (1989), *Wings of Dust* (1994), and *In the Hour of Signs* (1996), by the London-born Jamal Mahjoub, son of a Sudanese father and English mother. In the first-named text, the hero, Tanner, returns to the Sudan, where he works as a cartographer for a multinational mining company. As the internal politics of the post-colonial state becomes more and more complex, enmeshed as it is within the web spun by those who determine globalist agendas, the company sends out its own trouble-shooter, Gilmour. To Tanner it is not clear whether this man is technocrat or terrorist: solution to the political problem, or part of the creation thereof. The conflict between them therefore takes on symbolic form of roles played by two black men—respectively, from Britain, from the United States—both engaged in the making and maintenance of present-day multinational capitalism. From those clashes between them, as well as with the locals, there emerges the strong sense that a politics based upon notions of identity—no matter how constructed—cannot be challenged successfully if based only upon notions of so-called “authenticity.”

How to cope with “belonging” in the context of the excesses committed in the name of that “authenticity”? Perhaps one example, from the wonderful range of texts in which women writers challenge and confront male authority: *Juletane* (1987), by the Gadeloupe-born Myriam Warner-Vieyra; the story of a Caribbean-born and French-educated woman who marries an African student with whom she returns to the continent she had thought of as ancestral home, but in which place she finds post-independence male oppression modernised by resort to invention of freshly-minted “tradition.” Finding the manuscript of a diary left behind by a dead woman inspires her to keep her own, and by doing so, set down her experience. It is writing alone that gives shape to her existence.

I want to turn, briefly, to one fascinating category—one about which it is perhaps still too soon to offer any kind of definitive assessment: that of the fiction

being produced by writers who have at least one characteristics in common: that, irrespective of the origins of their parents, they are British-born. Their themes manifest their concern with the chasm between the myth and the reality of the dominant constructions of that identity. British they may be; but they are on the periphery: whether Oxbridge educated (Diran Adebayo; Zadie Smith) or from the tenement blocks of West London (Courtia Newland) or that part south of the Thames that is forever enshrined in the term “Brixton” (D. J. Edwards; Samuel Johnson; Rocky Carr); whether from African (Bernadine Evaristo) or Caribbean (Andrea Levy) or Asian (Ravinder Randhawa; Meera Syal; Hanif Kureishi) ancestry, the one element they all have in common is an exploration of late 20th. century and present-day meanings of the experiences charted in the 19th century by Carlyle, Dickens, Disraeli, Mrs. Gaskell, Dinah Mulock and others that critics later subsumed under the title “The Condition of England” novel. It is these writers, rather than their better-known counterparts (Martin Amis; Julian Barnes; Irving Welsh; Sebastian Faulks; Peter Ackroyd) who engage with that theme: not simply with that of charting the details of the experience, but also with the problem of how best to find appropriate form for setting it down.

Conclusion

Aware that I have thus far made only a fleeting reference to poetry, let me conclude with a few brief examples that bear on our theme.

In Derek Walcott’s epic, *Omeros*, whose setting is transferred from a Greek to a Caribbean archipelago, the narrator is a displaced person who now lives (as does the poet) in Boston. My concern is here not with the shapes in which *Omeros* appears in different geographical settings: as the blind fisherman, known as Seven Seas, in the island of the poet’s birth, St. Lucia; as the griot story-teller in West Africa who reminds us of the names of those who had died in battle; as the tramp who, “clutching in one scrofulous/ claw his brown paper manuscript” is thrown off the steps of St. Martin-in-the-Fields by an official offended by the presence of such a person at the most centrally-situated church in London. Rather, it is on one wonderfully evocative moment near the end of Book One when the narrator’s dead father reminds him not only that:

Because Rhyme remains the parentheses of palms
shielding a candle’s tongue, it is the language’s
desire to enclose the loved world in its arms... (75)

but also that the vision of black women carrying heavy bags of coal on their heads as they walk up steep wooden ladders of a ship; women who, according to the dead father, are “Helens from an earlier time,” imposes upon the son a task:

because the couplet of those multiplying feet
made your first rhymes. (75)

The instruction to the son is that it is not only his “duty” but also that it “...is the chance you now have, to give those feet a voice” (Walcott 75-76).

Lastly, Caliban's often-quoted observation, near the beginning of *The Tempest*, made, with fascinating implications for theories of gender as well as that of the theme of this conference, not to Prospero but to his daughter Miranda: "You taught me language; and my profit on't/ Is, I know how to curse" (Shakespeare, *The Tempest* 1:II.365-67) is splendidly stood upon the head by poems by the Guyana-born but resident in London, Grace Nichols. If, in the poem "Wherever I Hang" (in her collection *Lazy Thoughts of a Lazy Woman* 80) she offers a sharp riposte to the likes of Professor Seeley, quoted earlier, "...divided by de ocean/ Divided to de bone/ Wherever I hang me knickers—that's my home," in "Possession" she not only states the nature of the changed relation between centres and peripheries; she also highlights the continuing interrogative quest (*Hinterland* 310):

Europe has become part of my possession
but how to come to terms with the architecture

The walls too sealed and solid
the closed door against the cold

the ivy of my voice
can no longer climb towards the ceiling

To overhang
green and listening

It is her famous quatrain, "Epilogue," to that multi-layered with meaning first collection, *i is a long-memoried woman*, that might be cited as prologue to the demolition of the boundaries between centres and peripheries, that will contribute to the creation of that aesthetically attractive object, the coral strand that might lead to "be-longing":

I have crossed an ocean
I have lost my tongue
from the root of the old one
a new one has sprung. (80)

ENDNOTES

¹ Englishness—a random sample of recent work: David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Tony Crowley, *Proper English? Readings in Language, History and Cultural Identity* (London: Routledge, 1991); Antony Easthope, *Englishness and National Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999); Geoffrey Elton, *The English* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness. Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Stephen Haseler, *The English Tribe. Identity, Nation and Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Edwin Jones, *The English Nation*.

The Great Myth (Stroud: Sutton, 1998); Roy Porter, ed., *The Myth of the English* (London: Polity, 1994); Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991).

² Translations of the book were published in: French 1949, 1983; Italian, 1968; German, 1984.

³ Quintus Horatius Flaccus, "Caelum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt," *Epistulae* XI, 27.

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Part VI:

THE DYNAMICS OF THE OCCLUDED

Transnationalism, Peripheries, Viewing the World: Japan as a Model for Indian Nationalism 1895-1918

Bart Moore-Gilbert

Unsurprisingly, postcolonial cultural studies has been dominated by “centre-periphery” models in its discussion of anti-colonial nation-making (even though one of its primary aims, ironically, has been to undo this binary). Symptomatic of this is the continuing hegemony within the field of two major political-scientific models of non-western nationalism, those of Benedict Anderson, and Partha Chatterjee. Both in his 1983 *Imagined Communities* and in his 1998 *The Spectre of Comparisons*, Anderson explores what he calls the “unbounded seriality” of nationalist imaginings. That is to say, in a world shaped by capitalism and the long-distance transportation networks of empire and neo-empire, a nation may be realized in one part of the world just as well as in another (Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons* 31). However, while concerned to challenge “the unselfconscious provincialism” of established Anglo-American discussions of nationalism, and dismayed that so many reviews of the first edition of *Imagined Communities* ignored “the crucial chapter on the originating Americas,” it remains debatable whether Anderson has ever really remedied what his new 1991 edition of the text described as his initially “‘oversimplified’ account of the processes whereby early non-western nationalisms were modelled” (*Imagined Communities* xiii). Certainly, his subsequent modifications of the paradigm of the world-wide diffusion of the national idea do not in practice encourage the perception that “horizontal” or “periphery-periphery” cross-national(ist) interactions might be *form-giving*, or contribute significantly to the process of anti-colonial nation-making.¹

In clear contrast to Anderson, Chatterjee argues that the relationship of non-western to western nationalist thinking is

not a simple relation of correspondence, even of derivation. First of all [non-Western] nationalist thought is selective about what it takes from Western rational thought.... Even when it adopts...the modes of thought characteristic of rational knowledge in the post-Enlightenment Age, it cannot adopt them in their entirety, for then it would not constitute itself as a *nationalist* discourse. (*Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* 41-2)

Nonetheless, Chatterjee’s conception of this process of adaptation remains within the same “centre-periphery” conceptual mapping as Anderson’s. *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* sees the dynamics of contestation of colonial authority in terms of an exclusive, binary relation between colonizer and colonized in India. *The Nation and Its Fragments*, originally published in 1993, insists that this “formula” is generalizable as “a fundamental feature of anticolonial nationalism in Asia and

Africa” as a whole (*The Partha Chatterjee Omnibus* 6). To this extent, arguably, Chatterjee does not fully capitalize on his crucial opening remarks in the latter text (which, significantly, he originally wanted to entitle *The Crooked Line*):

It is in the shifts, slides, discontinuities, the unintended moves, what is suppressed as much as what is asserted, that one can get a sense of this complex movement [in the transmission of nationalist ideas from the West to the non-West], not as so many accidental or disturbing factors but as constitutive of the very historical rationality of its process. (Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* vii)

This paper seeks to contribute to the gathering restiveness within postcolonial cultural studies with the dominant, “vertical” axial model of the transmission of nationalist ideas in the non-western world represented in their different ways by Anderson and Chatterjee; and, in doing so, to modify their conception of the “historical rationality” of nationalist imaginings outside the West. This restiveness can be dated back at least to Paul Gilroy’s 1993 *The Black Atlantic*, with its strong emphasis on the multiple *transverse* alliances across the oceans in the production of nineteenth- and twentieth-century black nationalism. More recent examples include Robert Young’s 2001 *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, with its welcome attention to the even more ambitious project of “tricontinentalism” as a conduit of anti-colonial resistance and nation-formation. Such initiatives attempt to sketch not so much the (still generally “vertical”) “crooked line” which Chatterjee alludes to, but the “zig-zag” which perhaps more properly characterizes “horizontal” axes of anti-colonial nation-making. They see inflections and modifications of the national idea as taking place not only within the centre-periphery axis, but *between* different national(ist) locations and contexts, in the space of *transnational* mediation and interaction.

Historically, the transmission of nationalist ideas along “periphery-periphery” axes was always a vital part of anti-colonial nation-formation, even if this is only belatedly beginning to be given due attention. The example that I want to explore today is the impact on the development of early twentieth-century Indian nationalist thought of the rise of Japan as a modern polity, particularly in relation to the emergence of new forms of anti-colonial politics represented by the *swadeshi* (self-reliance) movement and agitation against the partition of Bengal from roughly 1903. *Swadeshi* in turn engendered the first widespread articulation the goal of complete independence from Britain (*swaraj*) and some of its proponents advocated the use of violence as a legitimate means to pursue this end. The apparent success of Japanese nationalism was instrumental in encouraging the ‘Nationalist’ or ‘Extremist’ elements of the Indian National Congress to break with their hitherto dominant “Moderate” or “Mendicant” colleagues, who advocated negotiation with and persuasion of the British to achieve a greater measure of autonomy. In the period 1895-1918, on which I focus, the inspiration was primarily—though not exclusively—at the level of ideas.² But this laid the foundations for the increasingly substantial material links between Japan and Indian nationalism which are such a

prominent feature of the period 1918-1945, culminating in the formation of a Japanese-controlled Indian National Army which fought the British in South-East Asia after the fall of Singapore in 1942.

Partly because I am a literary critic, partly because of the emphasis laid by Anderson on the crucial role of imagination in nationalist ideology, and partly because of the relatively undeveloped material links between Japan and Indian nationalism in the period 1895-1918, I am going to anchor my argument in relation to a novel, S. K. Ghosh's *The Prince of Destiny: the New Krishna* (published in 1908, at the peak of the *swadeshi* agitation), which I will link to the thinking of some of the leading Indian nationalists of the time. *The Prince of Destiny* is a "state of the nation-to-be" text which examines relations between Britain and India, primarily in the first decade of the century, centring on the divided political, cultural and emotional loyalties (represented most graphically by Barath's dilemma over whether to choose a British or an Indian woman as his mate) of a young ruler of a nominally independent Indian "native" state.

According to the narrative voice of the novel, the inspiration which Japan represented for the "new" Indian nationalism at the turn of the twentieth century can be dated back to the war between Japan and China which was concluded in 1895, only for Japan to be "robbed of the fruits of victory by a coalition of European powers" (Ghosh 137). For nationalists such as Vashista, the young ruler's principal advisor, the exemplary force of this aborted victory is nonetheless considerable, demonstrating the ability of an Asian nation to modernise itself successfully and, in so doing, to assert its autonomy as a nation-state through an independent foreign policy which reflects its particular self-interest. This outweighs any possible embarrassment that this otherwise ostensibly anti-colonial novel might have about Japan's imitation of western imperial ambitions, which are assumed to be a consequence of its transition to modernity. This paradox is reflected in the attitudes of some of the leading Indian nationalists of the time. For example, Lokamanya Tilak,³ one of the most influential figures in the I.N.C. until he was exiled by the British to Burma in 1908, recognised the significance for India of Japan's emergence well before he formally entered the ranks of the "Extremists." In an article of 1895, he had commented of Japan's victory that "[t]he lesson taught by Japan to India is not a small one" (Arti 125). He, too, was prepared to over-ride his own anti-imperialist politics because Japan's emergence as a modern power had been definitively demonstrated by this war of territorial expansion, prosecuted by the latest military technologies, with a "backward" fellow Asiatic nation (Thawale 145).

The Prince of Destiny suggests that the Japanese defeat of Czarist Russia in 1905 provided even greater inspiration to the new generation of militant Indian nationalists. The first major victory of an Asiatic people over a European one in the modern era, Japan's success fired the "Extremists" with ever-greater confidence, since it exploded once and for all the myth of the intrinsic inferiority of Asiatics (Thawale 146-8).⁴ For the narrative persona of Ghosh's novel, this event consequently constitutes "a revolution in human thought" (Ghosh 148), a perspective

which is echoed in an article entitled “India and the Mongolian” (1908), by Tilak’s colleague, the renowned radical Aurobindo Ghose: “In the genius, the patriotic spirit, the quick imitative faculty of Japan ... Providence found the necessary material force which would meet the European with his own weapons and outdo him in that science, strength and ability which are his pride” (Mukherjee and Mukherjee 285). Indeed, Ghose was one of the first to look to Japan (as well as a soon-to-be resurgent China under Sun Yat-Sen) for India’s liberation: “It will therefore be the first great enterprise of a Chino-Japanese alliance to eject the English from India, and hold her in the interests of Asiatic freedom and Asiatic Unity” (Mukherjee and Mukherjee 286).

While seconding Aurobindo Ghose’s sense of the importance of Japan to the liberation of India, *The Prince of Destiny*, however, sees its role in somewhat different terms. The stress here is on the adaptation of the Japanese model *within* India in order to attain independence, albeit by force if necessary. Noting Japan’s policy of sending its youth for training in Europe and America in the ways of the West, Vashista follows suit. More than this, Japan itself becomes the object to be imitated. For example, Barath spends six months in Japan, where he is well-received at high levels of the host society, observing at first-hand the latter’s negotiation of modernity. In this respect, he anticipates the career of another leading nationalist, Lala Rajpat Rai, who in 1907 had advocated approaching Japan to supply any vital imports which the boycott of British goods prevented. Rai spent six months in Japan in 1915 (where he was also sympathetically received at the highest levels), in order “to study things to see for himself the secrets of Japan’s marvellous progress” (Dhanki 165).⁵ Rai’s observations of Japan were published in the nationalist *Modern Review* in Calcutta and finally collected as *The Evolution of Japan* in 1918.

The next stage in *The Prince of Destiny* is the importation of Japanese instructors in a variety of fields within Barathpur itself. Through such means, the ancient Indian state undergoes a transformation, both materially and politically. Such representations chime in with elements of “Extremist” thinking of the time. One of the chief grievances of figures like Rai and Tilak was that the British had failed to encourage the development of industry in India, partly to prevent competition with British manufacturing. Crucial to the development of indigenous industry and therefore to India’s transition to modernity, was access to the kind of technical education which had underpinned the success of Japan’s military-industrial complex. This, Tilak felt, the British were deliberately obstructing: “Compare the educational system of Japan ... and you will realise the worthlessness of [India’s]” (*Tilak’s Speeches* 107).⁶ In *The Prince of Destiny*, then, Japan constitutes a crucial inspiration for the imagination of a free India. The novel ends with Barathpur ready to negotiate a new relationship with Britain, which possibly presages independence for the nation as a whole.

It might be objected that to the extent that Indian nationalist thinking was inspired by Japan, however, this simply represents a displacement of the influence of the centre upon the periphery in terms of the transmission to the non-West of the

concept of the autonomous modern nation-state. In other words, the argument might run, India was simply imitating the West at one remove, through the mediating example of Japan. There can be little doubt that Japanese self-modernisation was to a great degree influenced by imitation of the West. However, as some of Tilak's biographers have noted, the force of the Japanese example had a somewhat different basis for many of the "Extremists". For Tilak, Japan's path did not involve the "wholesale imitation and grafting of Western ways" but instead emphasized "taking up judiciously only that in western reform which was fit to be imitated, at the same time retaining their self-respect and pride in things Japanese" (Pradhan and Bhagwat 148). For Tilak, who had so bitterly opposed the Age of Consent Act of 1891 as an unwarranted intrusion of the imperial power into the domestic or "spiritual" sphere of Indian life, such a distinction was crucial.

The Prince of Destiny takes a similar line; certainly Japan to some extent represents within the novel a western model of modernity—thus the British Resident's approbation of certain aspects of the programme of reforms instituted in Barathpur. But it is not an exact replica of that paradigm, as the role of jiu-jitsu in Barath's programme symbolically suggests. Vishasta's protege Virandra comments on "how self-sacrificing the Japanese are. Though a colonel, Kaneko is willing to teach us the wisdom of his country; for jiu-jitsu makes a man of the lowest wreck of humanity" (Ghosh, *Prince of Destiny* 471).⁷ This observation is interesting for a number of reasons. First, jiu-jitsu is, of course, a martial art. Secondly, as the embodiment, too, of an indigenous national spiritual wisdom (which can, however, assist in the redemptive regeneration of non-nationals as well), jiu-jitsu represents an Asiatic alternative to hegemonic forms of western rationality. This suggests that Japan's road to modernity is not incompatible with the retention of an autonomous pre-modern spiritual/cultural tradition. Japan's route to modernity therefore represents an inflection of western modernity on local ground, and thereby becomes an appropriate model for Indian nationalism. This helps explain why Vashista is happy to send the youth of Barathpur to the West for technical training while at the same time being the most obdurate opponent of the British Resident's desire to "modernise" aspects of the domestic sphere of Barathpur tradition, for example the prohibition against widow remarriage.

The position taken by *The Prince of Destiny*, as well as leading nationalist figures like Tilak, requires some modification of the argument of later theorists of anti-colonial national-formation like Anderson, and Chatterjee in particular. The latter certainly argues that the phenomenon was distinguished by its modifications of and challenges to the discourses of western nationalism. However, the evidence I have presented suggests that the "zig-zag" gaze sideways to countries like Japan, quite as much as "the crooked line" of influence from the West, characterises Indian nationalist imaginings during this phase of Indian history. Japan represented for many Indian observers in the period 1895-1918 a distinctively "Asiatic" form of negotiation with the discourse of modernity and nationalist ideology that Indian nationalism

could follow without simply imitating the master and thus perpetuating his hegemony through implementation of a “derivative discourse.”

ENDNOTES

¹ In his various investigations of “Long-Distance Nationalism” since 1992, Anderson adds to the model of national transmission elaborated in his previous work. However, his focus in this context has been on links between exiled and diasporic nationalist formations and their homelands, rather than on transverse links between different anti-colonial nations-to-be.

² During this period, Japan was a haven for Indian nationalists sought by the British authorities in India. Surendramohan Bose fled there in 1906 and was followed by Maulvi Barakatullah in 1909. Most famously, 1915 saw the arrival of Rashbehari Bose (who eventually became a Japanese citizen) and Bhagwan Singh. Despite pressure from Britain, Japan’s ally in World War One, the Japanese government tolerated the exiles’ anti-British agitation and they won the sympathy of public opinion, as well as many Japanese political figures and newspapers. Such sympathy prevented their deportation, to the fury of the authorities in India. See Arun C. Bose, *Indian Revolutionaries Abroad, 1905-1922* (Patna: Bharati Bhawan, 1971); T.R. Sareen, *Indian Revolutionaries: Japan and British Imperialism* (New Delhi: Anmol, 1993); T.R. Sareen, *Indian Revolutionary Movement Abroad (1905-1921)* (New Delhi: Sterling, 1979); J.G. Ohsawa, *Two Great Indians in Japan: Sri Rash Behari Bose and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose* (Calcutta: Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, 1954).

³ His name is sometimes transcribed as “Lokmanya.”

⁴ Compare Pradhan and Bhagwat 148.

⁵ There is some argument as to whether Rai was an “Extremist”; Dhanki argues that he was not. For a contrary view, see V. P. Gupta and Mohini Gupta, *The Life and Legacy of Lala Lajpat Rai* (New Delhi: Radha, 2000).

⁶ Compare Ravindra Kumar, *Selected Documents of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1880-1930)*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Anmol, 1992): 12.

⁷ Interestingly, Tagore’s biographers claim that he was the conduit of judo to India in 1929. See Krishna Dutt and Andrew Robinson, *Rabindranath Tagore: the Myriad-Minded Man* (London: Bloomsbury, 1995): 252. Tagore appears to have been interested in judo for much the same reasons as *The Prince of Destiny*.

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Working Bodies/Falling Words: Choreopoetry and Teatropoesia as Alternative Performance of Ethnicity and Gender

Elizabeth Sakellaridou

This paper is about alternative theatre language devised by women of color, who felt that theatrical forms and strategies used by conventional western theatre were inadequate to express their marginalized colored female subjectivity. Black and Chicana women in the US during the 1970s and 1980s both used performance alternatives based on poetry, dance, music and song—that is, elements borrowed from artistic forms other than traditional theatre. These new types of performance were *choreopoetry* and *teatropoesia* respectively. My aim is to analyze these parallel artistic activities and discuss the efficacy of the developed forms.

I will start with three strong statements, which problematize on the one hand the importance of body movement and on the other the possibilities of verbal language for the expression of the female self. A frequently quoted interview of Jacques Derrida, significantly entitled “Choreographies,” begins with the striking statement of the 19th-century maverick feminist, Emma Goldman, about the feminist movement: “If I can’t dance I don’t want to be part of your revolution” (Derrida 66). The second statement is by the gifted African-American poet, playwright, novelist, dancer and installation artist Ntozake Shange, who, commenting on her own work, suggested that “we demolish the notion of straight theater for a decade or so, refuse to allow playwrights to work without dancers and musicians” (Shange, “Unrecovered Losses” 8). Both statements stress the power of bodily movement and rhythm for self-expressivity, live or enacted. They both enhance a heightened visibility for embodied subjectivities, so far marginalized in society and on the theatrical stage, like women, for instance—especially colored women. The third view interestingly contrasts with the former two by claiming that “black women suffer from the problem of ‘high visibility,’ a problem that is aggravated by ‘their total lack of voice’” (Cheng 208). The well-known black feminist writer bell hooks emphatically condemns black women’s recent visibility for its extreme commodification in the western capitalist system (hooks 112).

In this emerging contradiction one trend advocates emphasis on visibility and corporeal practices; the other prioritizes the voice and verbal practices. This fundamental disagreement on the politics of women’s representation is neither new nor surprising. It can be placed within the current debate on the body’s status either as text/discourse or as corporeal practice. Especially Lacanian theory, which was in its apogee in the 1980s, forestalled a strong critique of the visual and promoted a theory

of the disappearance of the real into the symbolic: the textual and discursive aspects of language. The Lacanian influence has had tremendous consequences on feminist theory and practice. French feminist theorists, in particular, made continuous slippages into a reductive, metaphorical use of the body. For instance, Hélène Cixous's article "Aller à la mer," her manifesto for a new women's theatre, is full of paradoxes as it gradually drives the body out of sight by shifting focus onto the female voice. Cixous's theoretical position on the politics and aesthetics of the feminist stage appeared in the middle of the 1970s, at about the time she was also crafting, together with the feminist director Simone Benmussa, her model feminist play *Portrait of Dora*.

But the consequences of the Lacanian theory of the gaze carried well into the 1990s. In her remarkable book *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, the feminist theorist Peggy Phelan voices a vigorous critique on the ideology of the visible and sets out to prove it valueless for a feminist strategic practice. Her almost joking but memorable example that, if marked visibility of the body brings power, then almost-naked white women would now be running western culture, together with her other suggestion raising doubt about the reliability of skin color as a stable race marker, are serious issues to consider (Phelan 8-10). Especially her latter argument about the untrustworthiness of skin color as some kind of identity indicator is strongly confirmed by the recent advancement and current practices of biomedicine and cosmetic surgery.

Under such deconstructive critical tendencies, the women's performance art, which was initiated in the 1970s and flourished throughout the 1980s (following mainly strategies of female mimesis/masquerade according to the psychoanalytic model proposed by the French feminist theorist Luce Irigaray,¹ or tactics of direct exposure of the biological body), was attacked as essentialist, crude, naive and inadequate, and has led to a radical rethinking of the body in representation practices.

On the other hand, the eminent feminist thinker Judith Butler, among others, gave a new orientation to the feminist quest by moving away from the rather restrictive Lacanian readings of the gaze and the spectacle to the direction of phenomenology, especially the theory of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, which she adapted to her gender-directed interests. Butler's important book *Bodies that Matter*, which interestingly appeared in the same year as Phelan's *Unmarked* (1993), reasserts the value of a new sophisticated reading of corporeality both in theory and in artistic creation.

Butler's influential book corresponds to the redefinition and reevaluation of "body art" in the 1990s, expanding and also replacing the earlier, limited forms of "performance art." Body art today is understood as a synthetic form, ranging from painting, sculpture and installation to dance and performance, emphasizing in all its multiple expressions the dynamic process of artistic creation in synchronic complicity with the audience. In a number of new books on body art and choreography the moving and dancing body gains a new significance in articulating personal and communal cultural experience of sexuality and ethnicity in immediate interaction

with the spectator.² Thus the former critical stance of passive looking at bodies, as exemplified for instance in Laura Mulvey's feminist psychoanalytic reading of the spectacle,³ is replaced in contemporary body art theory by a concurrent move of the interactive embodied subjectivities of the artists and the spectators alike. In other words body language is reintroduced in new complex configurations of intersubjectivity between artist/spectator.

Through these dynamic new perspectives of corporeality Elaine Scarry's basic claim about the suffering body in culture and in art (in her seminal book *The Body in Pain*), namely that violence is a threat to language and that pain remains inexpressible in verbal terms, finds very satisfactory answers. Many contemporary forms of corporeal art seek in this practice alternative expressive models for the articulation of the pain and terror inflicted on phenomenological bodies living different types of marginalized existence. Among such extra-linguistic expressive modes, music and dance are considered as the most effective vehicles of expression for variously terrorized, muted bodies. Interestingly, however, the emergence of the suffering phenomenological body in artistic practice does not eclipse altogether the possibility of linguistic articulation. On the contrary, it leaves space for a phenomenological reading and application of verbal speech, whereby language, rather than viewed under the threat of physical violence, is given an inverted position of power, that of a physical assistant to violence. In this respect Judith Butler's recent book *Excitable Speech* gives new phenomenological dimensions to J. L. Austin's earlier "speech act theory." Looking at language not only as a preset hegemonic discourse but also as a means of personal agency of our embodied subjectivity reopens the much debated issue of the possibility for the subaltern subject to reclaim language (often emphatically identified as the "oppressor's language") as a means of expressing personal and cultural experiences of the margins.

The contemporary African-American writer and dancer Ntozake Shange, whom I quoted earlier, is the best example of a black female artist who combines dance, music and poetry in a unique synthesis of a kinesthetic experience in the realm of the performance arts. Shange devised in the mid-1970s a composite art form, the *choreopoem*, in which color and form, musical sound and rhythm, and choreographed body movement collaborated to give stage expression to her poetic diction. Shange gives an extraordinary description of the black woman artist's experience through the practice of this composite art, *choreopoetry*:

Knowing a woman's mind and spirit had been allowed me, with dance I discovered my body more intimately than I had imagined possible. With the acceptance of the ethnicity of my thighs and backside, came a clearer understanding of my voice to move in space, to demand of my own sweat a perfection that could continually be approached, though never known, was poem to me, my body and mind ellipsing, probably for the first time in my life. (Shange, *For colored girls*... xi)

The recite-and-dance experience, as described by Shange, is both a liberating move away from biocultural logocentrism and a rediscovery of the historical body as well

as a journey back from the body/mind split to a Merleau-Pontian embodied knowledge of the world, which combines corporeal and verbal articulation in balanced synergy. Thus the practice of choreopoetry is as much the enactment of anger, revolution and rejection as that of a healing method of rhythm and punctuation, in other words of orchestration and order. One more quotation from Shange's introduction to the published text of her first choreopoem, the much anthologized *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf*, illustrates the synchronic labor of the poetic voice and the dancing body in the process of the performance and, equally, the interactive function of the audience:

With the selection of poems changing, dependent upon our audience and our mood, and the dance growing to take space of its own, so that Paula [Shange's dance partner] inspired my words to fall from me with her body and The Sound Clinic working with new arrangements of Ornette Coleman compositions and their own, The Raggae Blues Band giving Caribbean renditions of Jimmi Hendrix and Redding, we set dates for Minnie's Can-Do Club in Haight-Ashbury. The poets showed up for us, the dancers showed up for us, the women's community showed up, and we were listed as a 'must see' in *The Bay Guardian*. (Shange, *For colored girls*... xiii)

This description highlights several interesting aspects of this creative process: first, the phenomenological mobility of this collaborative form; second, the articulation of words as embodied practice (cor)responding to the choreographed movement of the dancer's body; and third, the direct appeal to the audience's similar interests and activities. All these aspects constitute the novelty of this performance genre not as a fixed, prearranged spectacle but as a production in progress in a space and time shared intersubjectively with an interactive audience.

Various contemporary approaches to dance underline its twofold, emancipatory-cum-integrationist effect on human subjectivity. Contemplating dance in a more philosophical manner, Derrida, in "Choreographies," sees it as a constant bodily displacement, therefore as a vehicle for "escape [from] those residencies under surveillance" (Derrida 69)—in other words as an effective strategy for the oppressed individual to avoid the pressures of the Law, of any hegemonic authority. At the same time he praises dance for providing the subject under threat with "punctuation," "rhythm" and "steps" (70) so as to safeguard its internal orderly function. For Derrida, dance stands for a double gesture, that of civil disobedience but also of personal order. Peggy Phelan in her recent essay "Dance and the History of Hysteria" makes an interesting cross-reading of dance and psychoanalysis as regulators of the body's and the psyche's temporal order respectively. In her highly imaginative reading, on the one hand she invests psychoanalysis with artistic qualities as a "psychic choreography" (Phelan 94) and on the other she forestalls dance as a regulatory mode of the temporal and spatial dimensions of the phenomenological body (92). More culturally-oriented contemporary studies on dance, like Ann Cooper Albright's *Choreographing Difference: The Body and Identity in Contemporary Dance*, speak of the possibility, during a dance performance, for "the dancing body

[to] split itself to enact its own representation and yet simultaneously [to] heal its own fissure in that enactment” (Albright 125). Borrowing a psychoanalytic terminology, Albright attributes to dance the ability to deconstruct but also restore the human personality. Considering the particular new dance/drama form which she calls the “New Epic Dance,” the critic reclaims the use of voice for the dancing body not only as a metaphor for a dance narrative (a traditionally “mute” art form) but in order to stress, in phenomenological terms, the function of the body as “the physical ground of the voice” (124). Drawing in particular on the example of the African-American cultural and artistic experience, she highlights the epic dance narrative as an effective expressive mode for the representation of the African-American “bio-mythography”—that is, a combined personal/communal cultural experience (151). Similarly, Meiling Cheng, in her recent article “Renaming Untitled Flesh: Marking the Politics of Marginality,” attacks Phelan’s earlier denigration of feminist practices of visibility (in *Unmarked*) and calls for a new complex form of performance, combining sight, voice and text. Having in mind again the African-American feminist paradigm, she names this new representational mode “speaking sight” (Cheng 208).

All these new theoretical views on corporeality and the importance of dance in contemporary representational practices of marginality converge in the performance process of Shange’s choreopoetry, an art she elaborated and theorized upon in a series of five consecutive pieces she developed and staged in a span of ten years until the mid-1980s.⁴ The choreopoem genre she devised was a pioneer form in the field of the new body art as it was mainly conceptualized in the following decade, that of the nineties. Critic Philip Uko Effiong, in a recent psychoanalytic reading of Shange’s work, highlights her choreopoem form as “Africa’s methexic drama” (Effiong 125), thus promoting it as an appropriate aesthetic model for African-American theatre. More recent black artists like the poet/performer Dael Orlandersmith, carry on Shange’s choreopoem tradition into more contemporary postmodern performative styles of the new millennium.⁵

A similar composite performance mode, based on different combinations of poetry, dance, music and pantomime, was interestingly introduced around the same time and geographical region by another ethnic group of women in the US, the Chicanas. This theatre form took the name of “*teatropoesia*” and its emergence in the California area in the 1970s coincided with the production of Shange’s choreopoems. The spatial and temporal simultaneity of these two related performance styles deserves a deeper study of the cultural conditions of their concurrent appearance than this short paper allows for.

The genesis of *teatropoesia* as a unique Chicana type of theatre was the result of the Mexican-American women’s discontent with the androcentric concerns of Chicano theatre. More specifically, the paucity of Chicano theatre scripts focusing on women’s experience, the richness of contemporary Chicana poetry and the women’s desire to present their artistic work to wider audiences led them to devise a form that would fuse two media, poetry and theatre, and would bring together the beauty of words and the physicality of the stage (Yarbro-Bejarano 79). In reality, this fusion

was much more complex than a mere dramatic elaboration of performance poetry. According to Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, who has closely studied this form, *teatropoesia* is equally rooted in the Mexican tradition of the historical narrative and that of the *corridos* (the Mexican ballad tradition) and it allows for free mutations of various elements from the performing arts—dance, music, pantomime, performance poetry and dramatized narrative. Thus *teatropoesia* developed into a flexible form which could range from more performative pieces, like *Chicana* (1974) and *Voz de la mujer* (1981), to more literary works, like the more widely known *Tongues of Fire* (1981).⁶ Yarbrow-Bejarano analyses *Tongues of Fire* as the most representative model work of the *teatropoesia* genre because it is based on a series of highly acclaimed Chicana poetry pieces, thematized around the experiences and problems of the contemporary Chicana writer. The creation of this piece was the outcome of collaboration among different Chicana artists, a poet, a dancer and two actresses, of which one was also a folklorist and the other a visual artist. This combination of skills guaranteed high artistic expertise in all aspects of the production.

Both Shange's choreopoetry and Chicana *teatropoesia* have set up alternative theatrical modes, which allow women of color to valorize their poetic diction by better publicizing it to wider (theatre) audiences, while also developing the performativity of their doubly-colonized bodies into a complex form of corporeal art. Poetic language shares with music and dance a similar sense of rhythm and punctuation. By bringing all three together into one phenomenological experience, choreopoetry and *teatropoesia* affirm the power of these alternative body art activities to lead the oppressed or terrorized body/subject to self-regulated and creative emancipation. As words are induced to fall from the mouth to the rhythm and the sight of the dancing body (according to Shange's fascinating experiential account), spectators are also drawn into a similar interactive experience that calls up the articulation and enactment of their own embodied cultural identity.

But how far are these ethnic feminist stage alternatives actually breaking away from some new methods and devices of contemporary western theatre? The mainstream cannot exist without its own margins; its progressive, even oppositional, avant-garde. Anti-establishment voices have always striven to break the canon. It would be very close to the core of this paper to remember that Nietzsche resurrected the dancing Dionysus, in triumph, against a stilted western culture and theatre, looking into the very origins of the western tradition—Greek classical theatre—while Artaud, a few decades later, recaptured the living, the performing body for the stage, by looking into the dance and theatre traditions of eastern cultures in order to correct the stultifying western logocentrism. By combining a high form of literary language, poetry, with their own indigenous musical and dancing traditions, ethnic theatres reintroduce verbal language to the stage and inject logocentrism with a new visual plasticity, a new physical vitality of the dancing body. It seems to me that if we view the centre and the margins (or the periphery) in terms of concentric circles, the movement is as much outwards as it is inwards; that the ripples of influence are centrifugal as much as centripetal; that the centre and the periphery, despite their

different lenses of looking at the world, are in fact in a mutual cross-cultural negotiation, leading to new creative forms of difference but also of communion and exchange. Performing and attending theatre is an open public transaction, creating spaces for the subaltern subject to speak and interact with other split subjects.

ENDNOTES

¹ See Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, for the concept of women's double mimesis (playing with mimesis). Also Mary Russo's article "Female Grotesques; Carnival and Theory," which discusses at length all the pros and cons of female strategies of masquerade and the grotesque.

² Consider, for instance, Ann Cooper Albright, *Choreographing Difference*; Susan Leigh Foster, ed., *Corporealities: Dancing, Knowledge, Culture and Power*; Lea Vergine, *Body Art and Performance: The Body as Language*; Amelia Jones, *Body Art/Performing the Subject*; and Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson, eds., *Performing the Body/ Performing the Text*.

³ See her ground-breaking article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema."

⁴ Her subsequent choreopoems were: *spell 7* (1979), *a photograph; lovers in motion* (1979), *boogie woogie landscapes* (1979) and *From Okra to Greens/ A Different Kinda Love Story* (1985).

⁵ Orlandersmith has already been recognised for her individual style as a stage poet and performance artist and has won an Obie Award for her work.

⁶ Most of these performance texts were pieces devised by the various members of ephemeral groups, assembled just for one theatrical project, hence the difficulty of obtaining them in published form.

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The “Peripheral” Gains Dominance: Verb-Subject Order in Poetry

Christine Calfoglou

Introduction

As D. P. Papaditsas puts it in his preface to *Poetry*, 2 (11), “like islands, poems are the extension of the seabed towards the sky,”¹ an allusion to the entity of a poem engulfing space. He contemplates the “inner experiencing of infinite space and eternal time, two concepts that...scare us, annihilate and constitute us at the same time” (*As through a Mirror* 37). It is this extension of the poem through space—and time—and, more specifically, the linguistic expression of this process as manifest in verb-subject sequencing that I will be focusing upon in this paper. More specifically, I will first try to demonstrate the relevance of space and time to the work of the two poets considered, D. P. Papaditsas (1922-1987) and A. Nikolaides (1922-1997). Then, I will attempt to illustrate how their poetry realizes itself by gradually unravelling through time and space, as reflected in the linear arrangement of constituents, as well as how this arrangement may challenge subject-verb dominance, both in Greek and in English, a preverbal subject language *par excellence*. My analysis will draw on Enkvist’s association of word order with experiential iconicity as well as on the arguments advanced in Functional Grammar (especially Firbas’s 1992 book) concerning “basic instance” word order.

Space and Time: The Poetry of D. P. Papaditsas and A. Nikolaides

Somehow in line with the cognitive linguistics approach, whereby space and time are the two major “domains” of human cognition, one often reducible to the other (see, e.g., Tabakowska, “Translating a Poem”), Papaditsas admits to having read somewhere that “time and space, from a certain point on, in some uniform dynamic system, coincide, that is they are one and the same thing” (*As through a Mirror* 151). Karantonis actually describes him as “ceaselessly moving among the ‘space-time-life-death’ complexes” (274). Thus time is more or less identified in the poet’s work and ideas with the Heraclitean flow while space with Parmenides’ “solid” worldview. The former, time, is “ever-living fire,” the latter, space, “rests in mutation” (Roussos 15-16).² And Nikolaides, whose *Collected Poems* open with a Parmenides quote while his first group of poems, *Trial and Pyre* (*Collected Poems* 9-76), is capped by a Heraclitean quote, dances a sinister dance with light avidly conquering space:

- (1) Light
lit low
lighting
the sky-fearing skylights.

Light
 from above
 light underneath, light
 through triple
 slits... (*Collected Poems* 87)

Except that in "stereo-lectic"³ Papaditsas the combination of the two dimensions results in the "motionless fluidity" referred to both by the poet himself (e.g. in *As through a Mirror* 151) and by his critics (esp. Athanassopoulos) and illustrated in lines such as (2) "Let thoughts be motionless like uninhabited houses" ("The Window," *Poetry* 95), while the "stone nucleus" is shaken into motion by "neo-lectic" Nikolaides's explosiveness, and time in his poetic paradigm apparently has a liberating effect on space-boundedness: "Stones inhabit space,—but the metal of the word is cast into time—for it is time that carves them—and out of space moves them" (*The Mode of Language* 216). For "our soul is full of words, not stones or fossils alone but words, often indeterminate ones or wounded syllables" (*The Mode of Language* 211).

The time-line recedes into the depths of human experience and the distant yet close past, and the two poets meet in Nikolaides's olive-groves. Compare Papaditsas's (3) "My self who is dead and in my ear has lain awake/ for ages" ("Contrary-wise," *Poetry* 313) to Nikolaides's apostrophe to Sappho:

(4) Psappha,
 in three thousand years
 we agreed to meet again
 in the aeolic winds
 inside the same olive-groves. ("Psappha," *Collected Poems* 228)

strongly reminiscent of Virginia Woolf's "He began talking about the forests of Uruguay which he had visited hundreds of years ago" in *Kew Gardens* (36).

The focal point of this discussion being the verb-noun (subject) complex, it is important to note that, as entailed by the experientially grounded conception of space and time as the two major domains of human cognition referred to above, nouns are defined as "entities...extending through space" and verbs as "relations—among things—extending through time" (Tabakowska, "Translating a Poem" 32; see also Langacker).

It is also important that the two poets referred to are "rhematic," that is verbal, in multiple ways. First, in Athanassopoulos's (301-302) sense of rhematicity as the strength of language rather than the narrative, since both poets, though in different ways, somehow reside in the surrealist tradition. Thus, what Papaditsas calls the "poem-opening" seeks to "track down and restore the real movement of thought" (Athanassopoulos 303, n.11) while Nikolaides, "verbal" par excellence, denies the "starlit sky" its very existence in the absence of language (*The Mode of Language* 101).

Second, the two poets possess strongly rhematic, "verbal" qualities established through the association they make between language and action. The

mediator in the language-action pair is the poem: “Today there are no readers of poetry, there are poets who create it [τὴν ποιοῦν] and poets who receive it,” says Papaditsas (*As through a Mirror* 35). Is all this about “poetizing,” in Gadamer’s terms? It is indeed worth noting the salience of verbal action, perhaps the constant search for the word, Heidegger’s “*Sprachnot*,” especially in Nikolaides’s poetry: “we pine for the word,” he will say in “Psappha” (*Collected Poems* 228) while “existential silence” is the “zero point of language” (*The Mode of Language* 275-76, n.2).

I will argue that this search for the word may be linguistically expressed through the gradual realization of the poem as especially manifest in verb-subject—rather than subject-verb—serialization. Most interestingly, being more iconic experientially, that is mimetic of an “*ordo naturalis*” (to use Enkvist’s term), where the fact that something occurs precedes the denotation of what has occurred (see also Calfoglou), and involving no presupposed knowledge, such serialization may be argued to be closer to the language of an infant and the “true” language of poetry.⁴ Further support for the basicness of postverbal subject sequencing will be adduced from the Prague School Functional grammar and, more specifically, the work of Firbas. This, I will go on to suggest, challenges the generally increased frequency of preverbal subjects in Greek, and may be well worth retaining in the transfer of the poems into a language like English, which is characterized by preverbal subjects par excellence.

The Linguistic Realization: The Gradual “Apocalypse”

It is of course beyond the scope of this paper to go into the issue of “truth” in poetry in any detail. Suffice it to say, for our purposes, that, referring to the “true” and apocalyptic language of poetry and the way it traces the beginning of life ontogenetically, Papaditsas (*As through a Mirror* 155) confesses that “a poet is he who talks like an infant, that is incomprehensibly for those who have forgotten their original, most real language” (see also Veis) and, blending in the collective, “the best part of our syllogisms does not belong to us” (*As through a Mirror* 28). So, here we are again in the olive-groves, diving into primeval language and collective memory. Memory is an important word, for the language poetry speaks is “real” [“*α-ληθινή*”], signifying non-lethe, non-oblivion, *non-death*—see Heidegger’s “unconcealment”—as pointed out by Nikolaides (see, e.g., *The Mode of Language* 280). Here the revelatory dive is more violent, for “...in shocking a language through its expression, (poetry) shocks it creatively” (Nikolaides, *The Mode of Language* 111).

On the micro-language level, where the instantaneous in Papaditsas’s description of a poem (*As through a Mirror* 25) as a “flash of lightning, which instantly and instantaneously makes the trees of the ‘dark forest’ stand out one by one” (*As through a Mirror* 25) becomes gradual, word sequencing is essential for the progressive unravelling of the poem’s thread in the process of effecting the reality of the poem, its somatic presence. As already noted, then, a most characteristic illustration of this gradual process of apocalypse is that of postverbal subject sequences, which often, though not always, denote the appearance of an entity,

coming or rather springing into existence, and involve a clause-initial adverbial whose function usually is to locate the origins of the sequence. Consider:

(5) *Κι από τις πορφυρές ραγισματιές*
Πετιούνται χίλια ουράνια τόξα,
 [and from the scarlet fractures
 spring-intr. a-thousand-neut.nom.pl. rainbows-neut.nom.pl.]
And from the scarlet fractures
There spring a thousand rainbows, (Papaditsas, “Dance of the Stars,”
Poetry 15)

or,

(6) *Σαν από στόματα φυκιών αμέτρητοι*
Βγαίνουν οι ψίθυροι
 [like from mouths of-algae incalculable
 came-out-intr. the-masc.nom.pl. whispers-masc.nom.pl.]
As if from algal mouths incalculable
Emerged the whispers (Papaditsas, “In Patmos,” *Poetry* 177)

And then again,

(7) *Στο πρόσωπό σου σέρνεται*
Χέρι ψιθυριστό.
 [on-the face your creeps-intr.
 hand-neut.nom.sing. whispering-neut.nom.sing.]
Upon your face there creeps
A hand that whispers. (Nikolaides, “Upon Your Face,” *Collected*
Poems 20)

or

(8) *Από τα κρυφά του σώματος*
Βρίθουν οι ουσίες της σαρκός
 [from the hidden-points of-the body
 swarm-intr. the-fem.nom.pl. substances-fem.nom.pl. of-the flesh]
From inside the body’s hidden recesses
Swarm the substances of the flesh. (Nikolaides, “Midwives,”
Collected Poems 199)

In Nikolaides, the “apocalyptic” character of postverbal subject order is often enhanced by its location in the poem, profoundly portentous in the midst of verbless or adjectivally fraught phrases, as in the surrealist lines below:

(9) *Αδιάφορη, σχιζοπεπλούσα, διαστελλογενής*
με τα σπασμόλυτα τριφυλλοχίτωνά που εντρέμαν
δορυφλεγής νυχοβατούσε η Ερωφάντα
 [immaculate, cleftrobed, dilatory
 with the spasm-loose threefold-tunics that trembled
 spearhot tiptoed-intr. the-fem.nom.sing. Erofanta-fem.nom.sing.]
Immaculate, cleftrobed, dilatory
with her spasm-loose threefold tunics in fibrillation

spearhot *tiptoed Erofanta*. (“Erofanta,” *Collected Poems* 56)

Where poetry is action and the need for the word is most urgent, word sequencing assumes a revelatory role—consider the fortunate fusion with apocalyptic content in Papaditsas’s

(10) *Κι όταν του νου οι ψαλμοί κινούνται πάνω σε πρόσωπα
Όπως του άστρου η λάμψη στα νερά, από μακριά
Από της πρώτης μέρας την ανάσα διακρίνεται
Ο προορισμός αυτού του κόσμου.*

[and when of-the mind the psalms move on to faces
as of-the star the glimmer on-the waters, from far-away
from of-the first day the breath is-discerned
the-masc.nom.sing. destination-masc.nom.sing. of-this-the world]

And when the mind’s psalms move upon faces
As does the star’s glimmer on the water, from far away
From the first day’s breath *can be discerned*

The destination of this world. (“Descent,” *Poetry* 121)

Indeed, it might be worth comparing these postverbal subject sequences with the more strongly “volitional” character of preverbal subjects, as in the rather atypical:

This star
Survived
Pierced
the stones
Went through the trees,
burnt the roof
And fell off the hands
Dead

This water
Ran off the glance
Tumbled downhill
Mirrored a tiny

Little fern... (Papaditsas, “The Little Incidents of Life,” *Poetry* 136).

But it would be beyond the scope of this article to go into this aspect of pre- and post-verbal subject differences in more detail.

The “Peripheral” versus the Dominant

In attempting to answer the question of whether verb-subject sequences are generally peripheral or dominant in Greek, we are presented with research supporting the basicness of such structures, in structural as well as in pragmatic terms (see, among others, Philippaki-Warbuton, Alexiadou, and literature therein). In terms of frequency counts, however, postverbal subject sequences seem to lag behind, S-V-O rather than V-S-O being the dominant order (see Lascaratou’s corpus-based work), a fact that also gains support from language typology (see Tomlin). We do then appear

to have a case of the “peripheral” challenging the dominant in our poetic paradigm, a case boosted by the dynamics the specific sequences apparently possess. A closer look at our examples, however, will point to the fact that the verb-subject sequences obtained basically involve verbs or verb forms that can assign no accusative case, that is objectless, VS structures.

Interestingly, Lascaratou’s research suggests that VS frequency rises dramatically in passives, that is non-accusative-assigning constructions, as well as that no basic vs dominant order distinction is obtained in the intransitive paradigm. In other words, on the basis of such evidence it seems that VS cannot be treated as a ‘peripheral’ sequence in objectless clauses. However, things are far from straightforward. For on the one hand, the SV over VS supremacy still holds in *main* clauses, which we are concerned with, according to Lascaratou, while on the other the correlation found in her research between subject position and indefiniteness in intransitive clauses, namely that subjects tend to appear postverbally when indefinite, is essentially questioned in the poetic genre discussed in this paper—consider, for instance, (6), (8), (9) and (10) above.

It therefore appears that our postverbal subject orders are indeed more or less peripheral and, I would perhaps venture, specific to the poetic paradigm (see Duskova),⁵ though of course for any such conclusion to be drawn the corpus involved would need to be substantially enlarged.⁶

I would suggest that, in line with what has been said so far concerning the agonising search for the word in the gradual unravelling of the substance of the poem and contrary to claims made in the literature as to postverbal subject strings involving no information distribution fluctuation (see, e.g., Alexiadou 59; Philippaki-Warbuton; and Kuno), the verb-subject sequence types presented possess clause-internal information dynamics, in the sense that each item in the clause makes its own contribution to the dynamics of the phrase as a whole. Somehow as suggested in Seferis’s characterisation of poetry as a kind of dance, the previous step is never lost in the next but remains transfixed in memory to the end. The parallel may be especially pertinent because of the large number of candidate verbs expressing movement of some kind. At the same time, however, each step builds on the previous one, making a progressively greater contribution to the development of communication.

Invoking the Prague School Functional Grammar lexicon, the VS sequences considered in this paper and referred to as experientially iconic are “basic instance level” sequences, that is closer to the “raw” state of information distribution in the clause (see, e.g., Firbas, *Functional Sentence Perspective*) and, as such, reflect a “gradual rise in Communicative Dynamism” (Firbas, *Functional Sentence Perspective* 135), as testified in the poetic genre this time. Sequences involving the presentation of a phenomenon, as in “from the scarlet fractures/ there spring a thousand rainbows” in our paradigm, can thus be said to move from the adverbial that sets the scene, contributing to the development of the communication least, to the transitional verb, to the most dynamic, element, the subject, which is the phenomenon

being presented itself. I would further argue for an extension of this view to subsume instances of no explicit presentation, as in

(11) Στο σώμα σου βαθαίνει μια κλειστή πληγή.

[in-the body your deepens-intr. an-fem.nom.sing. old-fem.nom.sing. wound-fem.nom.sing.]

In your body deepens an old wound. (Nikolaides, “Ashes,” *Collected Poems* 14)

Translating the “Peripheral”

A relevant question at this point is whether and to what extent the dynamics of the VS sequence can be preserved in a predominantly preverbal subject language like English, which demonstrates strong structurally motivated resistance to SVO modifications. As must have become clear by now, the line pursued is that of retaining the peripheral sequence whenever possible, even if this necessitates observing the preverbal subject norm by inserting a pseudosubject which carries no informational content. Consider

(12a) μέσα στους άδειους κώδωνες

συνέρχονται οι ιδέες

[inside in-the empty bells

convene-intr. the-fem.nom.pl. ideas-fem.nom.pl.] (Nikolaides, “Probing,” *Collected Poems* 60)

becoming

(12b) inside the empty bells

convene ideas,

or

(13a) και σέρνονται στα χείλη μας

οι σαύρες της αφής.

[and creep-intr. on-the lips our

the-fem.nom.pl. lizards-fem.nom.pl. of-the touch] (Nikolaides, “Psappha,” *Collected Poems* 228)

becoming

(13b) and *there creep* on our lips

the lizards of touch.

Support for this course of action comes from a number of inversion instances in English literature (see Dillon, esp. 218-220), the Eliot lines in footnote 5 being a most salient case. Bending the “rules” is apparently possible in the poetic paradigm generally treated as marked, atypical and therefore peripheral in the linguistics literature. An interesting example of such rule bending is the acceptability of “there creep on our lips/ the lizards of touch,” featuring “there” with a definite subject, a construction disallowed by formal grammar (see, e.g., Haegeman and Guéron). But it is, I believe, important that this sequencing should be preserved whenever possible, so that the spatiotemporal pattern of the poem can also be maintained, though of course wider translation theory considerations are also involved in such a decision.⁷

The gradual amplification of the strength of clause components in the verb-subject schema, where the steps of the choreography, to take up the metaphor raised earlier, somehow chase each other in an agonising need for emergence on the stage, challenges its subject-verb counterpart, with its more relaxed and less apocalyptic progression from the subject-theme to the rhematic verb. Consider how the galloping halts in the verb-subject > subject-verb shift in:

(14) *Μ' ευλογούν καστανιές, ο ήχος των νερών σκεπάζει τις ακρίδες*

[me bless chestnuts-fem.nom.pl., the-masc.nom.sing. sound-masc.nom.sing. of-the waters covers-trans. the-fem.acc.pl./locusts-fem.acc.pl.]

I'm blessed by chestnuts, the sound of the waters drowns the locusts (Papaditsas, “The Little Incidents of Life,” *Poetry* 135)

Concluding Thoughts

In information distribution terms, verb-subject involves no presupposed knowledge, so it could be argued to be closer to the zero point of language, not on the side of existential silence now but allowing words the freedom to “spring like flowers,” as suggested in Hölderlin (Gadamer 147). In terms of experiential iconicity, it involves a stage before the opacity of symbols (Enkvist 110), where “sentence space and perceptual space have the same structure” (Simone 158). It is, perhaps, in this sense, among others, that the “poem-opening” tracks down the real movement of thought, somehow iconically representing it—and, it might further be ventured, forming it. It may also be in this sense, among others, that poetic language marks itself out as more archetypal, more genuinely apocalyptic, its “threatening” lucidity guaranteeing non-oblivion, non-lethe in a world of forgetfulness, thus acting as an “antidote to death.”

ENDNOTES

¹ All translation in this paper is the author's.

² The originals are “πυρ αείζωο,” “μεταβαλλόμενο αναπαύεται.”

³ Characterisation attributed to the poet himself and pointing to the ‘solid’ verbal framework of his poetry.

⁴ On related aspects of iconicity, see also Tai, as well as Tabakowska's *Cognitive Linguistics and the Poetics of Translation*, among others.

⁵ That this may be so—regardless of definiteness—may be suggested through T. S. Eliot's lines from “The Hollow Men” (78):

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the shadow...

Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion

And the response
Falls the shadow...

Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
and the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the shadow...

⁶ It might indeed also be interesting to explore the distribution of postverbal sequences with a fronted, thematized, object, which also occur in our paradigm, though not so frequently. Consider, for instance,

M' ευλογούν καστανιές,
[me bless-trans. chestnuts-fem.nom.pl.]
I'm blessed by chestnuts

or

με γέμισαν οι αστροφεγγιές
[me filled-trans. the-fem.nom.pl. star-glitter-fem.nom.pl.]
I'm sated with star-glitter. (Papaditsas, "Principia," *Poetry* 144)

⁷ In the case of OVS strings in Greek—see endnote 6 above—a passivisation sequence would essentially leave the source text order unchanged, though aesthetic objections might need to be countered.

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The Gaze of the Object: Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* Re-Visioning the New Science

Katerina Kitsi-Mitakou

On the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican there is an endless succession of Michelangelo's illustrations of biblical scenes. Their accuracy and detailed precision are breathtaking. In the very centre of these rows of infinitely varying figures lies the most fascinating story of all: *The Creation of Adam* (**Figure 1**). It must have been of course Michelangelo's dissecting practices in his workshop that rendered him a master in drawing the human body in any position and from any angle. And so, despite the myth-like quality and the over life-size images of Adam and God, the fingers that touch are real, their bodies are photographic reproductions of flesh and blood muscles and limbs. Too real perhaps. For the painter is so carried away by human anatomy that he tends to forget the holy scripts at the risk of becoming a heretic. He does not only depict an umbilicus on Adam, but goes as far as suggesting one under the veils of God's garment. The Creation of Adam, the two navels seem to suggest, has already taken place in a time and space unknown, somewhere in the backyard of the Sistine Chapel. The story the viewer of this painting is *told* speaks of a divine hand magically infusing life by a mere touch; the story the viewer *sees*, however, is that of a human God having been hosted in a womb and nursed through an umbilical cord.

If Michelangelo had undermined the omnipotence of the Christian God from within the very centre of Christianity, the Vatican, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, I will argue, likewise exposes the hypocrisy of the bourgeois scientific gaze, from within the very genre that belonged *par excellence* to the rising middle-class. With *Frankenstein* the novel is no more expressing the ideal of scientific objectivity desired so much by the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it calls attention to its fictionality, it exhibits the ability to criticize itself, it even cancels the primacy of vision, a vision bound to be delusive. Realism can no more be a naïve and transparent filter, whereas reality, if such a notion exists, may be revealed to the reader only through a process of radical de-centring.

The creation of *Frankenstein*, as Mary Shelley confesses in her preface to the first edition, was inspired by the German ghost stories she read in 1816 during her stay in Villa Diodati in Switzerland. "These tales" excited in her and the rest of her company (Percy Shelley, Lord Byron and Polidori) "a playful desire of imitation," and so they agreed "to write each a story founded on some supernatural occurrence" (Shelley 268). Yet despite this disclosure that the story is an imitation of an imitation, a fantasy tale, Shelley assures the reader that "the event on which this fiction is founded has been supposed by Dr Darwin and some of the physiological writers of

Germany, as *not of impossible occurrence*,” as well as that she has “endeavoured to *preserve the truth* of the elementary principles of human nature” (267—emphasis added). *Frankenstein*, Shelley realizes, is a hybrid of imagination and science: it is a fantastic monstrosity and at the same time the application of Erasmus Darwin’s thesis on the power of galvanism to reanimate a corpse. *Frankenstein*, like invention, as Shelley declares when prefacing its 1831 edition, cannot be created “out of a void, but out of chaos; the materials must, in the first place be afforded: it can give form to dark, shapeless substances, but cannot bring into being the substance itself”; as in the story of Columbus and his egg, Shelley continues, “invention consists in the capacity of seizing on the capabilities of the subject; and in the power of moulding and fashioning ideas suggested to it” (262).

Her materials had been lying there for more than two centuries: the anatomy table, the open corpse, the surgeon’s scalpel are the reality to which Shelley applies her magical ‘if’. What *if* the corpse came back to life? What *if* its dismembered parts and organs were reassembled? What *if* it were given a gaze? The cult of anatomy has since the sixteenth-century celebrated the centrality of vision and the power to penetrate the body’s hidden interior. The “Eye of all solid knowledge whatsoever” (Isbrand de Diemerbroeck, *The Anatomy of Human Bodies*, qtd. in Sawday 181), anatomy recapitulates more evidently than any other modern science, the occulocentricism of western thought. Since the mid sixteenth-century when dissections were still very few (the medical schools of Cambridge and Oxford, for example, were receiving two bodies a year—Sawday 56), and of course after the passage of the “Murder Act” of 1752, which, as a result of the increasing demand for bodies, offered executed felons to be “dismembered after death for the utilitarian investigation of the body’s internal structure” (Sawday 54), dissection had been the zenith of surveillance. The infamous, criminal body was transferred from the gallows to the very centre of the anatomy theatre. The dead, abject body was then metamorphosed with the hygienic power of the anatomist’s knife and gaze that permeated its hidden secrets into a source of knowledge. The anatomy ritual “invested [the corpse] with transcendent significance. The human body [having lend its proportions for the design of temples—Sawday 70] was indeed a temple, ordered by God, whose articulation the divinely sanctioned anatomists were now able to demonstrate” (Sawday 75).

The transgressive gaze of the subject who pries into his interior. The fascination of abomination. Yet the gaze of the new scientist is not merely transgressive, it is also deceptive, as Rembrandt’s painting *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* (1632) testifies (**Figure 2**). The painting records an actual occurrence: the dissection of Aris Kint, convicted of stealing a coat, by Dr. Tulp, anatomist to the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons; the middle-class gentlemen that surround the corpse were some of the “wealthier members of the guild, who had paid to be included in the portrait” (Sawday 149). Despite its dense realism, however, the picture is profoundly unrealistic. As William Heckscher has argued, no procedure “of the period ever began with the dissection of the hand, but with the opening of the

venter inferior and removal of the viscera which were most prone to rapid putrefaction" (Barker 79), then moved to (the thorax, the heart and lungs), the skull, and finally the limbs. As for the dissected arm, it is not only "grossly over-large," but also "anatomically inaccurate": "the tendons revealed belong not to the palm of the left hand—the position of the thumb indicates that the hand is palm upwards—but to the back of the right" (Barker 79).

In Cappella Sistina the story is overlooked for the sake of corporeal reality; in Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson* corporeal reality is overlooked for the sake of the story. Strikingly enough, the new scientific gaze is blind to the real body: none of the surgeons is focusing on the corpse, but they direct their gaze either around it, outside the painting, or towards the open atlas at the bottom right-hand corner of the canvas. As it is the text of the atlas that is inscribed upon the body rather than the other way round, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp* exposes a crass class error: realism is founded on the pretense that bourgeois culture is "natural"—this is actually David Lodge's phrasing in summarizing Barthes' critique of realism (121-22). Nature vs. culture, death vs. life, object vs. subject, chaos vs. order, body vs. reason. Bourgeois science, in direct descent from Descartes, is founded on such splits, as it can define itself only through negation of otherness.

So far, all this has been real. Now the fantasy begins. "I collected bones from charnel houses and disturbed with profane fingers, the tremendous secrets of the human frame.... I kept my workshop of filthy creation: my eyeballs were starting from their sockets in attending to the details of my employment. The dissecting room and the slaughter-house furnished many of my materials" (Shelley 315). The dismembered parts of dissecting cadavers are reassembled in a playback mode; the lying corpse on the anatomy table acquires a pair of dull yellow, watery eyes, which he dares fix on his creator (Shelley 318-19). His *creator*? Not likely. "You are my creator, but I am your master," we hear the monster cry out to Frankenstein (Shelley 437). The "profane fingers" of the modern scientist seem to be as much capable, or rather incapable, of originating life as God's sacred finger is of creating Adam. The quest for origin was simple: did the chicken lay the egg or the egg the chicken? Still it proved an inevitable slippage. Despite three centuries of anatomical practices the myths concerning genesis—such as epigenesis or preformation—were abandoned by scientists only as late as the 1820s, around the same time *Frankenstein* is created, when with the use of the microscope they were able to discover the ovum and realize that conception took place when the egg was fertilized by the sperm (see Horowitz).

All they needed was change in perspective. For this is where truth's secret lies. To imagine that a corpse would sympathize with and learn from Milton's, Plutarch's or Goethe's heroes is a radical revisioning of science at the hope of discovering the truth. "Who was I?... Whence did I come? What was my destination?" (Shelley 395); "Like Adam I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence...I was wretched, helpless, and alone" (Shelley 396). Hidden in his hovel, "unseen and unknown" (Shelley 387), the Monster discovers the world through a microscopic chink on the wall, an "imperceptible chink through which the

eye could just penetrate” (Shelley 373). Shelley’s narrative is formed on the model of the concentric rings of benches of the anatomy theatre (**Figure 3**). From there the audience would peer down at the dissected body, whose navel, open intestines or uterus, in case of a woman, occupied the centre of these rings. The truth for the anatomist would lie there. Her story, however, is neither umbilico- nor utero-centric; her corpse bears neither a navel nor a uterus. In *Frankenstein* this agonizing process of peeling off one layer after the other at the hope of finding the kernel inside, the archetypal, most true story of all at the centre, is futile. The voice of Shelley introduces the tale, Walton’s letters encompass Frankenstein’s narration, which encloses the Monster’s tale; at this point we think all husks are off, still the Monster’s narration, hitting deeper at the centre, is hurled at the periphery. For through the Monster’s chink there are more stories to be discovered. The tale of Felix, Agatha de Lacey, their father, and Safie, which in itself contains Safie’s Arabian tale, which decentres and disperses reality.

We may have at this point reached the heart of darkness. To Marlow, Conrad’s “untypical” narrator, “the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze” (1761). And don’t all Scheherazade’s Arabian tales lure Schahriar, the sultan, into the captivity of her tales’ concentric web, only to let him discover at the end of each tale that he has been darted even further away from truth? Invention, to remember Shelley’s words, is the power of remodeling ideas. Safie, the middle of the three sisters in “The Story of the three Calenders, Sons of Kings; and of the five Ladies of Bagdat” from the *Arabian Nights’ Entertainments*, like the cleft on the wall through which her story emerges, are such remodelings. “Poor Polidori,” Shelley writes, “had some terrible idea about a...lady who was so punished for peeping through a key-hole—to see what I forget—something very shocking and wrong of course” (Shelley 262). And so, Polidori, and all the other “illustrious poets” of the company, not knowing what to do with her, and “also, annoyed by the platitude of prose, speedily relinquished their uncongenial task” (Shelley 262). Writing a novel, is, after all, “tak[ing] the rooftops off the buildings and peer[ing] inside” (Shaw 51), as Dickens, our nineteenth-century “Big Brother,” had put it; it is stooping down at the keyhole, and, in Ian Watt’s words, “eavesdropping” as reality unfolds (29). And who would be more fit to get dirty with reality than a woman?

Women and novels have always been faithful allies. Not only because, as Virginia Woolf has shown, this newly born genre concentrated on character and “analysis of emotion,” issues that female eyes had been trained to focus on (*A Room of One’s Own* 64). But most importantly perhaps because of the novel’s capacity to accommodate a diversity of perspectives and voices, to criticize itself and embody a subversive potential, as Bakhtin argues in *The Dialogic Imagination*. As a developing, open-ended genre, the novel can reflect more deeply, “sensitively and rapidly reality in the process of its unfolding” (Walder 264). Reality unfolding through an imperceptible chink; reality perceived through the eyes of a corpse, the ultimate form of abjection for Kristeva; reality as a grotesque fantasy of the real.

Monstrosity and women, likewise, were lifelong associates in the nineteenth-century, as a number of critics have shown (see Kearns). It is important to remember at this point that Mary Wollstonecraft was proclaimed a monster by the voice of public opinion for her feminist radicalism (as well as her Jacobinism) (Walder 74, 76). This is the ultimate truth that the Monster discovers through his voyeuristic experience. Like, Safie, like Safie's mother, Christian Arab hybrids enslaved by Turks, imprisoned within a harem, and striving for "a country where women were allowed to take a rank in society" (Shelley 390), the Monster makes his own struggle to enter society and unmask in this course and through this limited and distorted perspective a series of deceptions.

Shelley's novel, like Rembrandt's anatomy painting, reveals a well-preserved secret: the hypocrisy of the 1832 Anatomy Act, which granted permission to surgeons to dissect unclaimed bodies from hospitals and workhouses. As Tim Marshall has very convincingly argued, in the spirit of Utilitarianism the living were to benefit from the dead (Jeremy Bentham himself "left instructions that after his death his body was to go to the surgeons for public dissection"—Marshall 19); in practice, however, as it was only poor or potentially poor people that were threatened with dissection, the Anatomy Act benefited the "rich and the middle classes with the prospect of improved medical education and exemption from dissection" (Marshall 12). The Monster unveils the slippage between the terms dissector and murderer by supplying the middle class anatomist with a provision of corpses, for whose death Frankenstein is mainly responsible. The new Act, which was meant to eliminate the notion of penal dissection, was nothing but the criminalization of poverty, as the Monster reveals. Foucault's theses on the political economy of the body are verified once again: society is after "the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission" (25). The body of the poor, the lonely, the rejected, the outcast. Frankenstein's marriage to Elizabeth, is, Marshall argues, "a proleptic allegory of the 1832 political marriage between the aristocracy and the (upper ranks) of the middle class" (15); a marriage for which the Monster will take revenge in the novel.

More importantly, however, the Monster is there to cancel otherness by annulling the truth of vision. Whether we interpret monstrosity as female, colonial or working class "other," monstrosity, the novel clearly announces, is nothing but a socially constructed myth based solely on appearances. Interestingly enough, it is the *face* of the Monster that causes terror and abhorrence, not his voice, or his capacity to feel love and compassion. The face of the Monster, constructed out of cultural rather than natural elements, is the most solid proof that nature and culture jointly make up each other. It is society and its rejection that shape the Creature into a criminal. As he protests, "A fatal prejudice clouds their eyes, and where they ought to see a feeling and a kind friend, they behold only a detestable monster" (Shelley 401). Physiognomics, which date as far back as Aristotle, (who "adopts the Greek term *physiognomonein* to indicate 'judging the nature of something based on its body structure'"—Magli 98), become in the nineteenth century "a method based on

circumstantial evidence, a search for the truth, for what was hidden” (Magli 114) (**Figure 4**). And as appearance becomes the indicator of behaviour, Giovanni Battista della Porta contends, “if a man appears similar to an animal in any of his features,...he shall behave in a similar fashion” (qtd. in Magli 103). If a man *looks* like a pig, he *is* a pig. If a man *looks* like a monster, he *is* a monster (**Figure 5**).

When Gall, the founder of phrenology, exerted himself around 1810 in measuring the brains of primates, blacks, lunatics, women, and children, he did so at the hope of emphasizing the quantitative differences that separated the middle-class white man from the “other.” Yet, the harder science strives “to establish a solid foundation for itself, the more it loses itself in fantasy” (Magli 126). No reader can ever avoid the error of calling the Monster “Frankenstein”; no reader can ever be blind to Frankenstein’s monstrous self. More than anything, creator and Monster wish to be united, as the obsessive pursuit of Frankenstein by the Monster and later that of the Monster by Frankenstein indicates. “...I uttered a wild cry of ecstasy when I distinguished a sledge and the distorted proportions of a well-known form within. Oh! With what a burning gush did hope revisit my heart! ...I wept aloud” (Shelley 480).

“Subject and object and the nature of reality” (Woolf, *To The Lighthouse* 33). I have often shared Lily Brisco’s reflections on Mr. Ramsay’s philosophy: What happens to a kitchen table or an anatomy table when you are not there to perceive it? The anatomy table is, of course, shaped by our gaze. When it is not seen, it is invisible. Still it will always encapsulate its own story. And this is perhaps why stories are more real than gazes; because they can tell us more than what we see Shelley’s Monster is never deceived by vision; he never passes through the delusion of wholeness which Lacan’s subject experiences during the mirror stage. “I was terrified when I viewed myself in a transparent pool!” we hear him exclaim; “...when I became fully convinced that I was in reality the monster that I am, I was filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification” (Shelley 379). This is perhaps the reason why he is real; because he believes in stories.

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Marginality and Ambivalence in Lee Smith's *Saving Grace*

Carmen Rueda

Though often labeled a Southern writer, Lee Smith prefers to consider herself an Appalachian writer. She has repeatedly manifested that the term "Southern writer" is too vague a denomination and that it overlooks the peculiarities of the mountain region she portrays in her fiction. The mountains, the language, the customs, and the poor people of Appalachia have truly nurtured her literary imagination, not an aristocratic past with great mansions and genteel manners. In her more mature novels, Lee Smith has sought to portray the dignity of a region, often described as a backward and uncivilized area, and the pride of mountaineers, who are noble first generation frontier people, yet often regarded as hopeless, ignorant and degenerate. With her mountain novels, Lee Smith has gradually penetrated into the heart of a region isolated both geographically and culturally from the rest of the American South and even considered a sort of internal periphery of America itself. Smith has portrayed the uniqueness of the area in novels like *Oral History*, *Fair and Tender Ladies*, and *The Devil's Dream* (published in 1983, 1988, and 1992, respectively). In these novels, the author explores both female identity and the distinctive cultural identity of Appalachia in several different ways. However, it is in her 1995 *Saving Grace* where, through a bizarre religion, Smith has most powerfully explored the marginality inherent in Appalachian experience and confronted her deep ambivalence towards her own roots).

The serpent-handling congregations in the isolated areas of rural Appalachia, from the early 1950s until the present day, provide the setting for *Saving Grace*. In this novel, Lee Smith allows protagonist Florida Grace Shepherd to tell the story of her journey to spiritual salvation. We hear the voice of Florida Grace, the daughter of a snake-handling preacher, as she recalls her wandering life throughout Appalachia since the age of seven. Her narration is a story of struggle with identity, faith, and the acceptance of her prophetic powers. Tormented by the fanaticism of her father's belief, her mother's spiritual powers, and the terrifying discovery of her own gifts, Grace spends her life turning her back on God, on her religious community, and denying herself a prophetic voice. Hers is a long struggle to escape from the misery of her family's itinerant life, from her two failed marriages, and from herself, until in her middle age she finds the answers. In a disturbing conclusion, following a scene of religious ecstasy, Smith articulates a complex vision of Grace's acceptance of her gifts, of her father's marginal religion, and ultimately of her most essential self which has shocked several reviewers.

Saving Grace is a pilgrimage from the periphery to the centre and back. In a personal interview, Lee Smith described her latest novel as a "spiritual quest." Throughout her journey, Grace searches for an identity and a voice of her own both

outside and within her community. In fact, Lee Smith has created a female character that lives for the most part as an exile, not only from her religion and community but also from herself and her prophetic powers. Grace crosses several cultural, linguistic and geographical boundaries, repeatedly moving between periphery and centre, as she changes her identity and her language. She moves from the periphery of the mountains to different towns and cities, only to return to her home up on Scrabble Creek. Hers is a journey carried through full circle, back to her home up on the mountains, to her true self and prophetic voice, and to her family's religion.

With *Saving Grace*, Lee Smith offers an imaginative view of centre and periphery, power and powerlessness, and mainstream and marginal cultures. In this novel, Smith has associated socially accepted southern religions with the notion of the centre, whereas she has clearly correlated the marginal snake-handling rituals found in some Appalachian mountain churches with the periphery. Often portrayed as outsiders living on the margins of mainstream society, snake handlers are a group of powerless people who invoke God's power to speak in tongues, handle serpents, cast out demons, drink deadly things, and heal the sick. Banned in most Southern states and outlawed in every Appalachian state except West Virginia, the practice of snake handling has been negatively presented by the media, which regard it as a weird spectacle of poor and fundamentalist mountaineers. However, the singular spiritual powers of snake handlers, particularly their ability to speak in tongues or prophesy, turn snake handling into a powerful allegory for a writer who is so deeply concerned with exploring new expressions of female creativity and linguistic empowerment within her region.

The snakes used in the rites of snake handlers are thus the central and polyvalent metaphor in *Saving Grace*. Throughout the novel, Lee Smith skillfully weaves a tapestry of allegorical meanings around the snake, in which the mythological association of snakes and language resonates with force. By setting her novel within a snake-handling community, Lee Smith links snakes and prophetic powers to the ancient, oracular feminine function of the snaky sibyl. As a powerful symbol of authoritative utterance and feminine powers, the prophetic and poetic qualities of the sibyl in this novel also suggest the capacity for artistic, vocal expression, and the recovery of linguistic authority. But more importantly, in *Saving Grace* Lee Smith has also incorporated the ambivalence that the snake symbolism often embodies. That is, in the novel, the destructive implications of serpents contrast with their empowering qualities, their deadly poison with their healing attributes, and their threatening tongue with their capacity to enable prophetic language.

As the practice of snake handling takes place in isolated areas of rural Appalachia, Lee Smith has also correlated the centre-periphery dimension of her novel to the opposition between urban centres and rural mountain areas. The protagonist of the novel—who “want[s] a pony, not to be a servant of the Lord” (Smith 30)—is well aware of the difference between her school friends' families and her own. When Grace goes to school in the town of Waynesville and meets Marie Royal, she cannot help comparing the economic and cultural differences between the

two. Grace, who “lives way out of town on Scrabble Creek” (Smith 43), realizes that the margins of city life belong to the world of the periphery (that is, the world of the disinherited, the poor, and the culturally ignorant), whereas Marie Royal’s family belongs to the rich and artistic urban elite who lives on the wealthy quarters of the centre of the city. At Marie’s home, although Grace is fascinated by Mrs. Royal (a Northern painter) and her husband (a university professor), by their style and the abundance she sees everywhere, she is also tortured by her ambivalent feelings towards them. When she discovers a newspaper clipping in Dr. Royal’s study, with a picture of her father preaching and holding a snake, she wonders whether her loyalty is to the centre and the Royals or to the periphery and her family. She feels that giving in to the power of the centre means betraying her family and the world that defines her as an individual.

Lee Smith also uses Grace’s relationship with the Royals to dramatize the double cultural otherness of her region. As Cunningham claims, Appalachia is subject to a double alterity in that it “is...an internal Other to the South as the South is the internal Other of America” (45). Lee Smith has projected the double cultural difference of her region onto the novel by associating Grace with Appalachian identity and culture, Marie with the South, and Mrs. Royal with American mainstream culture. Indeed, the fact that Marie has been adopted by a Northern woman who first teaches her art and then wants to extend her drawing lessons to Grace is not a mere coincidence, but a powerful metaphor for cultural colonization. Through Mrs. Royal, Lee Smith alludes to the almighty centre of power of American mainstream culture, which has already adopted (and thus domesticated) a once odd and rebellious Southern culture, but now wants to conquer the last bastion of otherness and wildness that Appalachian culture represents. New clothes and a touch of high culture become the different forms of colonial discourse that Mrs. Royal uses to make Grace accept her customs, just like Marie has. However, the real world of Grace’s family—their marginality and wildness—proves to be too shocking for Marie and her parents, which reveals, as the author suggests in the novel, that the new South is just as shocked by Appalachian otherness and backwardness as mainstream America is.

Yet the protagonist of the novel is still caught in a sort of borderline, neither willing to embrace the centre nor ready to accept the singularity of the margins. The seventh-grade graduation ceremony at school reveals the ambivalence Grace still feels towards the marginality of her family and the centrality of the Royals. She refuses to tell her parents to attend because she thinks that their low standard “would have embarrassed me” (Smith 89), but at the end of the ceremony she also refuses Mrs. Royal’s hug and sympathy. Trapped by her constant opposing feelings, Grace feels equally detached from her family’s religion and reluctant to accept any possible form of empowerment it might offer her. Although she starts prophesying and speaking in tongues after the Homecoming meeting, she chooses to hide her abilities from her family. She rejects the poetic language and the power that her religion offers

her because she does not want to be like her parents, living in poverty and hoping for the Lord to provide, nor live on the edge of society like them.

Through Grace's brief stay in Chattanooga, where her father is seized by the police, Smith again explores the way mainstream America seeks to save a marginal culture. When her father is in jail for handling snakes and Grace is all by herself with no place to stay, Mrs. Thoroughgood—another rich Northern lady—rescues the preacher's daughter from despair and trouble. This good Samaritan, curious about snake handlers' world, turns Grace into her personal assistant. When a passer-by tells Grace "Everybody in town knows about you. Everybody always knows about Carol Thoroughgood's projects," she painfully realizes that "I am a project" (Smith 134). In fact, with Mrs. Thoroughgood's attitude towards Grace, Lee Smith subtly hints at the colonial projects (and programs of cultural colonization) with which the American policy tried to change the region in the early 1930s and then again in the 1960s. At that time, Appalachia became the national *project* and many do-gooders from the North like Mrs. Thoroughgood came in the region to improve its conditions. However, in the novel Lee Smith mocks all these humanitarian causes on the periphery with a subtle touch of irony. When Grace starts dating a boy and having a normal life, she realizes that her savior does not quite approve of it because "They like you a lot better when you're down-and-out" (Smith 135). Mrs. Thoroughgood's change of attitude reveals Smith's conviction that the policy of a colonial culture is not to save but to make marginalized people understand themselves only as other, as marginal, in relation to the centre.

In *Saving Grace*, many people variously try to save Grace by giving her a new identity and language. In the novel, she recalls the different names and kinds of patriarchal language she has adopted until she discovers and accepts her own voice. As a child, she is called Buddy by a half-brother with whom she discovers sexuality. As a young woman, she is called Missy when she becomes the wife of a gloomy preacher and the mother of two daughters. At thirty-eight, she is called simply Florida by her lover and then second husband. And finally, back home alone and free from external male definition and language, she hears the voice of her dead mother telling her to return to Jesus to save herself. In a scene of magic realism, Grace holds the burning coals and joyfully receives the Spirit like her mother did, to finally accept her religious side, agree to develop her own prophetic voice, and rename herself "Florida Grace, Florida for the state I was born in, Grace for the Grace of God" (Smith 273). Grace's different renamings throughout the novel become an allegory of Appalachian identity. In fact, Smith has equated male definition on Grace with external definition on Appalachia, and Grace's riddance of new names with the region's repudiation of all the stereotypes foreigners and centres of power have used to define it.

Grace's final return home to her old religion seems to have been completely misunderstood by some reviewers who neglected Lee Smith's subversive use of snake-handling congregations. It seems not to have been primarily the return home that shocked reviewers, but Grace's possible acceptance of snake handling. The point these reviewers have missed is that, within marginal and cathartic religions, Lee

Smith's women find subversive ways to express their creativity and fulfill their urging desire for a language and a voice of their own—like Katie Cocker at the end of *The Devil's Dream* and Karen in the novella "Tongues of Fire." In *Saving Grace*, Smith uses Grace's ability to speak in tongues and prophesy, together with "the oral component" and "the rhetoric of power" coming from God (see Rueda), which snake handlers constantly practise and invoke in their ceremonies, as an allegory of female linguistic empowerment. Several reviewers have missed this important aspect of her fiction and have undeservedly accused Lee Smith of having created an ending which is "strange and dreadful," for David R. Slavitt, and "forced and literary," according to Gregory Blake Smith. However, in a personal interview, Lee Smith claims that

[w]hat I meant there in the end is that Grace is receiving the Spirit just the same way her mother did. I mean,....she's going to church, and she is going to pick up serpents. And that is going to be, for her, what she wants: to receive the Spirit, to be empowered, to get the power, which is the way they—snake handlers—see it. [...] I think she has to make her own spiritual quest which, for her, has to come full circle. (Rueda)

Indeed, when Grace journeys "full circle" and back to the periphery, she does so to be empowered, to gain her voice by finally retaking linguistic control over her self and her experience, and to save herself.

As in her previous mountain novels, in *Saving Grace* Lee Smith reveals a strong ambivalence towards the marginality of her own cultural roots. The novel's controversial ending, with the main protagonist returning to the religion that so severely limited and defined her as marginal, clearly points to Smith's own conflicting emotions concerning identity and artistic expression within the Appalachian culture that has shaped her. Undoubtedly, in *Saving Grace* Lee Smith presents the alterity of the world of snake handlers as a microcosm of Appalachia's own culture and marginality within the South and mainstream America. Grace's struggle between centre and periphery, denial and acceptance, silence and voice, entrapment and individuality, indicates Smith's effort to come to terms with her own world. In her exploration of snake handling and, ultimately, of Appalachia as a whole, Smith portrays the double-edged nature of finding a voice within a *cult(ure)* which can limit as well as empower the self. As the author implies, even the prophetic voice along with the spiritual powers which Grace finally accepts have ambivalent connotations, reminiscent of the dual symbolism inherent in snakes themselves: they can be creative as well as destructive, empowering and restrictive, healing and harmful. However, in turning all the negative aspects of snake handling and of Appalachian culture into positive elements of difference, in making marginality a locus for personal and linguistic empowerment, Smith creates a space that allows for self-definition and the achievement of a voice precisely within one's own peripheral community, rather than in other centres of power. In linking Grace's experience of religious marginality to her pursuit of a voice and identity, Lee Smith reveals once again the importance she attributes to acknowledging one's own cultural roots, but

also the reason why, for Grace Shepherd, returning home becomes her only way to voice her self and, thus, her only means of salvation.

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The Limits of Your Language, the Limits of My World: Impossible Testimonies in Dee Brown and Eduardo Galeano

Christina Dokou

One of the first significant American literary documents and also one of the first records of the conquest of the American continent and the destruction of its indigenous peoples is Fray Bartolomé de las Casas's 1552 *The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies*, a work that later engendered the Protestant "Black Legend" of the Spanish reign of terror in the West Indies, though it had little impact on the concentration-camp policies of the *conquistadores* then (Baym, *The Norton Anthology* 15)—or on the Euro-Americans after them. Casas, a Catholic priest and later Bishop of Chiapas, writes mainly as a first-hand witness of actual atrocities, but not in the dried-up factual language of a history ledger. His clear-cut and vivid style, full of indignation against the so-called "civilized Christians," reaches us today with a raw and graphic power that cannot be denied:

They [the Spaniards] usually dealt with the chieftains and nobles in the following way: they made a grid of rods which they placed on forked sticks, then lashed the victims to the grid and lighted a smoldering fire underneath, so that little by little, as those captives screamed in despair and torment, their souls would leave them.

I once saw this, when there were four or five nobles lashed on grids and burning; ...and because they uttered such loud screams that they disturbed the captain's sleep, he ordered them to be strangled. And the constable, who was worse than an executioner, did not want to obey that order (and I know the name of that constable and know his relatives in Seville), but instead put a stick over the victims' tongues, so that they could not make a sound, and he stirred up the fire, but not too much, so that they roasted slowly, as he liked. (Casas 16-17)

It is worth noting the contrast between Casas's authentication of his voice—he saw, he knows of what he speaks—and the eradication of not only the natives' words, but even their screams. Also, the masterful irony of the last phrase—"as he liked": this silencing of the victims as an aesthetic choice of their tormentor, with huge theoretical implications; but also as an aesthetic element that, placed there, gives potency to Casas's own text.

The passage above is the very first selection in Volume 1 of the not-so-distant 5th edition of the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, the textbook *par excellence* for many scholars of American literature. However, how many of us have actually taught Casas, or even know of his importance—then or now? Why feature Casas in an anthology of predominantly Northern Anglo-Saxon authors? Most

importantly, does relegating a work of historical testimony—by name, claim and function—into literature (that is, more fallible art than its privileged counterpart, science) have anything to do with the virtual and functional demotion of Casas's message in contemporary Western culture, at the same time that a lot of lip service is paid to his text inside the US academia? These questions, as well as some possible answers, will be the focus of this paper that looks at two literary descendants of Casas today, only to reaffirm that the problematic of the marginal polemic testimony is still alive and kicking, but also, due to literary politics, kicking itself, so to speak. The two texts are historian and researcher Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*, a 1971 shocking retelling of "How the West Was Lost" to the Natives, and the 1984 *Faces and Masks*, the second volume of Uruguayan author and journalist Eduardo Galeano's *Memory of Fire*, a monumental chronicle of how the Euro-American invasion destroyed Indian Latin America in both substance and spirit.

Their polemical nature and theme are not, however, the only similarities between the two books. What is noteworthy here is how they follow similar lines of questioning the established cultural order that is responsible both for their creation and their limits. To begin, both texts question the traditional boundaries set between history as a science and literature as an art—a practice sanctified today by Comparative Literature, Deconstruction and New Historicism—to indicate "the forces that caused, governed, entailed, or were expressed by literary texts...and the routes by which these forces exerted their influence upon literature" (Patterson 250). Brown's book baffles genres in functioning like history, but reading like literature, with heartfelt, raw, Casas-like prose: "Powerful and painful... Though the book reads like skillful fiction, tragically it is not," says one reviewer (Brown i). One finds casual mentions throughout of how Native magic gave prosperity or protected warriors (Brown 102, 114)—is this less true because we Westerners doubt the metaphysical? As for Galeano, he craftily declares at the Preface to his book that "It is not an anthology, but a work of literary creation. The author proposes to narrate the history of America, and above all the history of Latin America, reveal its multiple dimensions and penetrate its secrets" (xv). Then he gives explicit details about his painstaking listings of the real time and place of each "occurrence," "literal transcriptions," "principal works consulted," and "documentary sources" (xv)—which are indeed awesome in number and scope. And even though his book is written in the vein of magic-realist acceptance of Native miracles and beliefs, Galeano himself declares that "By writing it is possible to offer, in spite of persecution and censorship, the testimony of our time and our people—for now and for later" (Galeano, "In Defense," 125). Such vacillation then *must* be deliberate, insofar that, as Elizabeth Meese notes:

The transgression of literary boundaries—moments when structures are shaken, when language refuses to lie down meekly, or the marginal is brought into sudden focus, or intelligibility itself refused—reveal not only the conditions of possibility within which women's [and I should think any

minority's] writing exists, but what it would be like to revolutionize them. (*Crossing the Double Cross: The Practice of Feminist Criticism*, 1986: 120, qtd. in Lazer 36)

Further on, both books play games with history itself, in terms of content as well as format. First of all, they give the lie to official history, revealing unspeakable brutalities heaped on the Indians that our white Western history and culture taught us to expect only from "Calibans," like the 1863 slaughter of a camp of peaceful Paiutes by Star Chief Patrick E. Connor, for which "he was hailed by the white men as a brave defender of the frontier from the 'red foe'," (Brown 102), or the 1864 unprovoked massacre at Sand Creek of an entire defenseless Cheyenne village of women and children by Colonel Chivington's army regiment, whose soldiers murdered and scalped every Indian, including infants, and made pouches out of the Indians' cut off privates (Brown 88). That crime, among others, as Brown proves, was done to force the Cheyennes and the Arapahos to sign Colorado over by a treaty to the whites; yet what survives as history is Colonel Carrington's later observations that Indians are "compelled by some paganistic belief" to scalp or mutilate enemies—even though they had learned that custom from the English and the Spaniards (Brown 133). Likewise, how many know of the conditions of forced starvation, murders and disease in the reservations, where Natives were shot if trying to escape, or that, in the Tonto reservation, "They made the Apaches wear metal tags like dogs, and these tags had numbers on them so that it was impossible for anyone to slip away...even for a few days" (208)? We know our tale of Auschwitz and Dachau atrocities and tattooed arms well to make comparisons, but there was never an American Nuremberg trial. Physical demolition is thus paralleled by historiography, both ending in the silencing of the defeated.

In terms of form, moreover, Brown's book opens each chapter with a dry summary list of the most important white historical events of the year/s examined in it, dates names and places we all know; and follows immediately with quotes from Native spokespersons of that time, whose perspective and revelations, direct and replete with poetic feeling, suddenly expose our well-ordered linearities for the complacent, partial accounts they are. Incidentally, whether it is deliberate or not, the ratio of quote-to-history listings increases dramatically by the middle of the book (Brown 261-63), in the thick of the white-Native engagement, and then slowly decreases, as if to signal the gradual choking out of the Indian voices. Thus juxtaposing fact to fact, the book elicits an undeniable and anti-dogmatic irony, mainly in order to prove how, in Michael Dorris's words, "An enduring benefit of success, when one culture clashes with another, is that the victorious group controls the record. It owns not only the immediate spoils but also the power to edit, embellish and concoct the facts of the original encounter for the generations to come" (149). Nothing rings truer when reading in *Bury My Heart* and *Faces and Masks* about the countless times and ways that white colonizers blatantly twisted accounts of events, laws and factual evidence by brute force so as to suit their purposes. According to Lawrence Fuchs, even later edicts that were advertised as restitutions and solutions to

the Indian problem, such as the 1953 “termination” policy for equal rights, were actually tricks to deny Indians federal protection for communal lands and their self-governing status (86). One historical incident, though, mentioned both by Brown and Galeano, stands out paradigmatically because it reads also like a perfect metaphor of itself: in 1883, the Northern Pacific Railroad celebrates the completion of its coast-to-coast line, and they invite the most respected Chief, Tatanka Yotanka, the heroic Sitting Bull, “to make a speech at that great inauguration party”:

Sitting Bull arrives from the reservation where the Sioux survive on charity. He mounts the rostrum covered with flowers and flags, and addresses himself to the president of the United States, the officials and personalities present, and to the general public: “*I hate all the white people,*” he says. “*You are thieves and liars...*”

The interpreter, a young officer, translates: “My red and gentle heart bids you welcome...”

Sitting Bull interrupts the clamorous applause of the audience: “*You have taken away our land and made us outcasts...*”

The audience gives the feather-headdressed warrior a standing ovation; and the interpreter sweats ice. (Galeano 222-23)

Brown adds that “The Hunkpapa chief was so popular that the railroad officials took him to St. Paul for another ceremony” (401). What do we hear in this speech? That a voice from the margin can learn and turn the oratorical tricks of the dominator against them; but also that you can also gag a person’s factual, historical screams with applause and flowers; Sitting Bull’s angry protest is interpreted aesthetically, with much enthusiasm and goodwill (such as abounds in today’s academia too), and therefore, in the literary, the literal is lost. Sitting Bull, moreover, was not the only Native acutely aware of this irony of testimony covered over with white-out, for, as Brown reports, not only did they know that no printing press would publish their side of their story, but even when asked by newspapers to speak, “Some feared reprisals for telling the truth, while others delighted in hoaxing reporters with tall tales and shaggy-dog stories” (xi-xii). Thus was the history of the Native Americans turned into the bogus Buffalo Bill show (Galeano 213), and, as Brown observes, of the dozens of exterminated Indian tribes, only Pocahontas and Uncas, the serviceable ones, were remembered (7).

Irony is further sharpened in the continuous countering of official verbal pomp with the recorded silence of the dispossessed and their champions, physical or verbal. For Galeano, “History, the pink-veiled lady offering her lips to those who win, will have much to hide. She will feign absent-mindedness or sicken with fake amnesia; she will lie that the black slaves of Brazil were meek and resigned, even happy” (28). To prove this, the author quotes, first, the torrents of turgid official abuse that were published against the rebel hero José Artigas (117), only to witness later the silent yet immensely dignified crossing of the river Paraná by Artigas going into exile with this comment: “Your land. [...] every time that fools believe her dumb or sterile, she will miss you. Because you, Don José Artigas, general of plain folk, are

the best *word* she has spoken” (121—emphasis mine). Similarly, the turgid praise of enthusiastic sycophants towards Simon Bolivar when his fortunes were riding high is undercut sharply by the sentence following immediately after: “The Rimac, *the river that talks*, is the only one that keeps quiet” (125). To rephrase it in Zen, does a fact not happen if nobody is allowed to speak it? Or, to confound Derrida, here we have the claim that word and act don’t appear in linear succession, but in quantum coexistence?

Galeano also juxtaposes skillfully fact and commentary, such as when he follows a chapter titled “Portrait of the Indians” by European sages, where the Natives are branded as lazy liars, only artful in scalping, vengeful, and “incapable...of understanding any abstract idea,” with a chapter called “Songs of the Chippewa Indians in the Great Lakes Region,” breathtaking in their beautiful abstract metaphors and profundity (Galeano 17); or when he titles the reported edict of the viceroy of Mexico in 1785 that the Indian workers—slaves rather—“are to receive fair wages, good food, and medical attention; and they will have two rest hours at noon, and be able to change employers whenever they like” as “Fiction in the Colonial Era” (69). Speaking of fiction, a new canon slowly comes out of Galeano’s book, who hails Lautréamont (171, 208) and Jose Martí (210, 235, 241), Rubén Darío (237) and Mark Twain (250) next to Flora Tristán (243) and a slew of Native artists as warriors of the pen, and confounds other literary venerables such as Daniel Defoe, who changed cruel historical pirate Alexander Selkirk into fictional patronizing colonialist Robinson Crusoe (7); or Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (162) and Alexandre Dumas (170) that became apologists for the dominators’ brutality; or the writers of trashy sentimental romances (see today’s soap-operas), who stupefied the public mind, averting their eyes from real pain (198); or, finally “the intellectuals of the Literary Society” who supported black slave importation: “It will be easy, they insist, to bring them from Africa. *They will run joyfully to the Spanish ships, when they see them arriving*” (184-85). As for Brown, one incident is, I believe, key in showing how the format of juxtaposition reveals history to be copying fiction: when in 1868 the Comanche chief Tosawi brought his defeated people to surrender to General Sheridan, and presented himself to him, the friendly Indian “spoke his own name and added two words of broken English. ‘Tosawi, good Indian,’ he said. It was then that General Sheridan uttered the immortal [—note, *immortal*—] words: ‘The only good Indians I ever saw were dead.’” A lieutenant present recorded the words for posterity, “until the time they were honed into an American aphorism: *The only good Indian is a dead Indian*” (166).

Finally, both authors expand the scope of their historico-testimonial vision to include voices and perspectives not simply suppressed, but not even recognized as “voices” *per se* by Western logic. Surprisingly, in *Bury My Heart*, the title of perhaps the cruelest act in the eradication of the Native Americans by whites is reserved in the Natives’ judgment not for the atrocities at Sand Creek or Wounded Knee—and that’s saying a lot—but for the following 1864 event following the surrender of the last of

the fleeing and starving Navahos to Kit Carson and his soldiers at the Canyon de Chelly:

...Carson ordered complete destruction of Navaho properties within the canyon—including their fine peach orchards, more than five thousand trees. The Navahos could forgive the Rope Thrower for fighting them as a soldier, for making prisoners of them, even for destroying their food supplies, but the one act they never forgave him for was cutting down their beloved peach trees. (Brown 27-28)

Here it is the voice of those who are twice removed from Western speech—the cries of the trees revered by the Natives, and given voice through the Navahos' inconsolable anger—that speaks most eloquently to an audience glutted since the *Iliad* with gory battle descriptions. If we mourn for Chekhov's despoiled Eden and its noble dispossessed Ravenskayas in *The Cherry Orchard*, what should we feel when this murder of Eden happened—happens today in the Amazon rainforests—for real? In Galeano's "Sacred Corn" chapter, also, the murder of Indian rebel hero Canek is paralleled to the soldiers' deliberate "hurting [of] what is most sacred," by burning the communities' corn fields: "The corn is alive," Galeano explains, "It suffers if it is burned; its dignity is hurt if its trodden on. Perhaps the corn dreams about the Indians, as the Indians dream about the corn. It organizes space and time and history for the people made of corn flesh" (27-28). *Faces and Masks* further challenges the empty formality of official records and discourse (155) with a number of creative textual inserts: pieces of history converted into mini-plays (83-4, 163-4); photocopies of sale posters where slaves are mixed in semantically with cattle or leeches (152); the inscription on the door of Simón Rodríguez, wise mentor to Bolívar, advertising the sale within of: "AMERICAN LIGHTS AND VIRTUES: That is, tallow candles, patience, soap, resignation, strong glue, love of work" (153)—even Marx couldn't have phrased the material basis of ethics better; a dadaist transcription of lively "Street Cries in the Santiago de Chile Market" (142) and "Mexico City" (155); words set—literally—in stone, like "Inscriptions on a Rock in the Atacama Desert" (including "Antonia, for you I die" and "The Administrator is a lout"—198); and, finally, a praise of Guaraní, the language of the Paraguay Indians, that, embedded in the jungle, survives the devastation of the country: "Paraguayan soldiers gave passwords and pep talks in Guaraní, while the war lasted, and in Guaraní they sang. Now the dead fall silent, in Guaraní" (204). All these show that history was never an one-sided, "just the facts, ma'am," victor's account on plain paper, but a reality broiled out of many South-American spicy ingredients, and if we refuse to open our mouth and acknowledge its hot flavor, speak its own voice, the spice has the power to make our eyes water nevertheless. It should be mentioned here that this technique of "alternative scripts" has been followed extensively in militant/testimonial literature in the last years, including the nameless writing on the wall of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (a mock-testimonial autobiography): "*Nolite te bastardes carborundorum*" (69), or the chokecherry tree stigmata of Sethe in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (97).

There is little doubt, I believe, that the two authors' array of communicative techniques analyzed so far is hugely inventive and determined. The crucial question is, however, how much of this testament reaches the ears of today's audience intact? The twentieth century gave rise to proliferating marginal discourses challenging a univocal historical truth, but simultaneously, as noted before, challenged theoretically the fundamental existence of *any* such transcendental truth, turning those agonistic peripheral voices into "much ado about nothing." Patterson, for example, observes that, "the deconstructive movement revealed all of the self-designated human 'sciences'...to be discourses that not only relied upon the literary devices that literature had always taken for its own but that told a truth that was itself constituted by the discourse within which it was told" (257). And although not fully in agreement, Edward Said cites a large number of thinkers and critics, from Nietzsche to Frye and Foucault and Fanon, who see the textualization of fact as a digression: texts "compel attention away from the world even as their beginning intention as texts, coupled with the inherent authoritarianism of the authorial authority...makes for sustained power" (1218). He also cites Foucault's assertion that, "far from being a type of conversation between equals, the discursive situation is more usually like the unequal relation between colonizer and colonized, oppressor and oppressed" (Said 1219). What this means here is that, paradoxically, not only are testimonies theorized as a silencing of the voices of the oppressed, but they also duplicate the "violent hierarchies" of history into the world of patriarchal Western white "high" theoretical criticism versus minority, textual, "outside of academia in the 'real world,' or the Third World" (Showalter 169) materialist "low" criticism: "If the last conference of the School of Criticism and Theory is any model to go by, soon they will have retreated so far from life and literature that they will be analyzing the songs of birds in the garden of Paradise..." (Marcus 169).

It is precisely for this reason that many minority authors and theorists oppose the need for theory in their textual worlds, like Barbara T. Christian, who in "The Race for Theory" "argues for the primacy of literary experience," and believes "that the academic preoccupation with theory may be detrimental to third world scholars, who have the great responsibility of creating institutional room for a literature that has been ignored or even suppressed by the dominant culture" (introduction to the text, 123). Theory-obsession turns fact into object, fit only for contemplation or autopsy: "the theory leads to a dehumanization of the arts, to a paralysis of criticism, to a surrender of our primary concern for truth," René Wellek notes (562). Galeano concurs in pointing out that:

Those countries which do not offer the option of political participation...offer the most fertile ground for the proliferation of a so-called culture of protest, originating outside the country, a sub-product of the leisure and waste which is focused on all social classes and originates in the spurious anticonventionalism of the parasite classes. ("In Defense..," 118)

Minority authors and critics, of course, have every reason to mistrust theory, as most dominant culture theories historically have been tools for the justification of

atrocities. Brown repeatedly refers to Andrew Jackson's "Manifest Destiny" dogma that made Native land seizure a mission for the "Chosen" white people of God (8, 31). Furthermore, theories have been weapons of assimilation and control of the periphery (inside or outside the world of letters), and are today questioned as white, universalist and hegemonic even by former disciples of their dogmas because they "are designed to constrain what may allowably be said or discovered" (Baym 154), in order to maintain the privileges of élites who fatally seduce new voices to repeat dominant discourse as a "twice-told tale" (Du Bois 716). The biggest proof of both counts of this has, of course, been the colonizers' Christian religion, a theory of much good intention, but a historical practice most blind and disastrous for the periphery (see Brown's views of missionary zeal—353), in contrast to the native religions that literally speak out to/for their people, like the talking-cross god in Galeano (171) or Wowoka, the Messiah of the Paiutes in Brown (407). Galeano's chapter on "The Mariapalito," the praying mantis which, being "extremely devout," "always keeps her arms folded in prayer" as she calmly eats her male partner after impregnation seems incongruous, unless interpreted as an eloquent satire on the cannibalistic function of the Christian *conquistadores* towards the world that gave them new life (10-11).

In this context, the use of alternative material that renders historical testimony more inclusive or authentic to its origin and deliberately exposes the fictionality of fact can inversely work as a boomerang, designating such narratives as lesser, "folkloric" or "ethnic" literature instead of fact. As Juliet Flower MacCannell shows, "Distance is socially charged with value insofar as it bears the burden not only of a masquerade of presence but also of hierarchy and level" (317)—in other words, when the addressee of the text becomes not God or Truth or History on a universal level but an audience of critics, the text loses value and respect, becoming a prop among many. After all, the purpose of a tragic tale in literature is to incite us to Aristotelian "*phobos* and *eleos*," pity and fear, while the purpose of the tragic fact is to arouse us to moral outrage and action. As Chief Joseph of the Nez Percés put it, "I have heard talk and talk, but nothing is done. Good words do not last long unless they amount to something. Words do not pay for my dead people." (Brown 313). Galeano himself affirms the same: "One writes out of a need to communicate and to commune with others, to denounce that which gives pain and to share that which gives happiness" ("In Defense..." 113); but the problem is that those who need most this writing don't have the luxury of access to it ("In Defense..." 113), while "The prevailing social order perverts or annihilates the creative capacity of the immense majority of people and reduces the possibility of creation...to its professional exercise by a handful of specialists" ("In Defense..." 116).

Similarly, eyewitness accounts that contradict official verdicts, when not silenced (as it happened about Custer's defeat by Crazy Horse's Oglala Sioux), are dismissed as not statistical or theoretical enough to be credible, not to mention that the Natives' oral culture is at an *a priori* disadvantage within the written culture context of the Centre. And that, of course, despite the fact that the Indians are proven to have an enormous reverence for both the power of the word—speech being,

according to Paul Zolbrod, “the highest human faculty” in the hierarchy of the Navajo body (13)—and the printed page, “the skin of God” as the Southern Natives named it when they were introduced to it (Galeano 3-4). At the same time, testimonial texts are said, ironically, to display a displeasing lack of “*objectivity...impersonality, detachment, disinterestedness, neutrality*”—qualities much prized in contemporary criticism and authorship, as Wayne Booth remarked (565). In other words, the very virtues of those testimonies, their vigor and immediacy, become their handicap in the all-theoretical arena. Anette Kolodny also articulates the double bind that plagues minority criticism, in the sense that, on the one hand, its discovered texts are “questioned on aesthetic grounds,” while on the other its revisionist criticism is dismissed as “too narrow” and distorted by militancy (101). One should note also here that, sometimes, those marginal narratives that are promoted by the Centre are precisely examples of what Dinesh D’Souza calls “bogus multiculturalism,” i.e., they belong to authors (D’Souza mentions Rigoberta Menchu; I would name Toni Morrison and V.S. Naipaul) that differ drastically from their ethnic group in experiences or privileged status, but because of that competitive advantage they have gained the skills to market themselves successfully to their dominant audience (205). It is perhaps for all these reasons that testimonial narratives or polemical literature were much more socially effective before the early twentieth century, as can be evinced from the example of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* or Frederick Douglass’s *Autobiography*.

Finally, let us not forget that a major trait of Native American culture has been its gynocentric character (or, according to Zolbrod, rather androgynous—6), and that has not boded well for their representation in patriarchal capitalism since, as Paula Gunn Allen shows, “the woman-based, woman-centred traditions of many precontact tribes were tightly bound to ritual, and ritual was based on spiritual understandings rather than economic or political ones” (“How the West...,” 390), and so dominant interpretations of Native thinking are bound to be wrong (“Kochinnenako in Academe,” 713-14). Native literature, as well, is feminized in its forced silencing and appropriation of history, as “aphasia and amnesia...appear and reappear in women’s writings in frankly stated or disguised terms” (Gilbert and Gubar 1241), while traditional models of poetics, according to Rachel Blau DuPlessis, “can only write by imputing silence (or its corollary—gibberish), or passive reception of semen or sound to a specific social group” (48). In terms of style, definitions of *écriture féminine* as “open...fragmented, polysemic, attempting to speak the body, i.e. the unconscious, involving silence, incorporating the simultaneity of life...” (Christiane Makward; qtd. in Baym 157) resemble much Native American expression, and the meta/physical bricolages of Galeano and Brown. Galeano especially privileges herstory, including many women’s paradigms and perspectives in his narrative—from Bolívar’s significant other, Manuela Sáenz (117), to rebel thinker Flora Tristán (243), to the heroic amazons of Cochabamba (106), to Jane Franklin, the American equivalent to Shakespeare’s sister (50), and Juana Sánchez, martyr against machismo (208-09). Such writing, however, runs the risk of being

either pigeonholed “as insular” instead of “global” (Jehlen 76) by male establishment critics, or annexed under enthusiastic feminism.

It is small wonder, then, that both authors examined here offer biting metaphors for the digression from history/life which is the dominant interpretation of their testimonies: Galeano’s chapter “The World inside a Diamond” is a telling image of ivory-tower theory, personified in a real protagonist named Chica da Silva, “also known as Chica Who Commands.” This corrupt mulatto mistress of the king’s regent in Brazil “wears a wig of white rolls. The rolls cover her forehead and hide the mark left by the branding iron when she was a slave” (Galeano 31-32). Thus theory disguises in rolls of white paper the raw ground of life from which texts derive, and to which they should return, like rain. As for Brown, he again allows a historical incident to take on symbolic dimensions, by telling us how, upon leaving Buffalo Bill’s Touring Circus to which he was conscripted, Sitting Bull was given a white horse, trained to perform tricks on the sound of successive gunshots. And as Sitting Bull was falling, shot and betrayed by Indian police—read “those seduced by the Centre”—at dawn of December 15, 1890, “the old show horse...began to go through his tricks. He sat upright, raised one hoof, and it seemed to those who watched that he was performing the Dance of the Ghosts” (Brown 411-12). It was a very aesthetic yet absurd reaction to the drama unfolding nearby, one that any good graduate student researcher might be trained to have while reading similar testimonies. Yet this piece of absurdity is nothing compared to the incident that ends Brown’s book in utmost situational irony, an incident that can be read as the ultimate metaphor for the impossibility of interpreting correctly those testimonies in the context of contemporary academic blitheness, but also the incident that ended Native American culture: the infamous Massacre at Wounded Knee. After the soldiers had exterminated 300 of the 350 starving Sioux that had surrendered along with their aged and sick Chief Big Foot, the dead were left to freeze where they had fallen, while the few wounded were loaded in wagons and taken to a nearby agency:

Because all available barracks were filled with soldiers, they were left lying in the open wagons in the bitter cold.... Finally, the Episcopal mission was opened, the benches taken out, and hay scattered over the rough flooring.

It was the fourth day after Christmas in the Year of Our Lord 1890. When the first torn and bleeding bodies were carried into the candlelit church, those who were conscious could see Christmas greenery hanging from the open rafters. Across the chancel front above the pulpit was stung a crudely lettered banner: PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TO MEN. (Brown 418)

I think with irony like that, all commentaries are unnecessary.

Have, then, after all this time, Casas’s Indians still been roasting slowly, mouths gagged, in vain—especially in view of the continued cultural blindness on Native matters? Mark Twain’s Yankee hero in King Arthur’s court refers to the brute British aristocrats as “white Indians” (Twain 19, qtd. in Sollors 296), a denigrating practice which, as Campbell and Kean report, US soldiers used for the Vietnamese,

for easier extermination (253). It was only in December 2000, moreover, that the MLA Delegate Assembly voted to condemn the use of native ethnic or racial caricatures as mascots for college sports teams ("Governance," 7), while one would think that all those World or ethnic literature or diversity courses and programs would have done more by now. Yet, according to Zolbrod, not only has Native American literature been ignored for over a century by mainstream literary critics (2), but its orality and communal importance is unfortunately continuously mis-read (28). What is one to do then, if not abandon literature and criticism as innocuous to the establishment ("In Defense..," 115)? It seems to me that what these texts exhort us to do is to read (testimonial) literature not as a purely aesthetic or theoretical construct, but also—primarily—as a factual message with an action agenda: as Galeano says, "*We are what we do, especially what we do to change what we are*" ("In Defense..," 121), so, "If what is written is read seriously and to some extent changes or nourishes the consciousness of the reader, a writer has justified his or her role in the process of change," but otherwise, "those who reject the word are the ones who cultivate monologues with their own shadows and with their endless labyrinths" and, thus, come to the conclusion that the human situation is hopeless ("In Defense..," 122-23). In that sense, if this paper is taken as another academic exercise, then I have been up to no good; but if, in encountering our next testimony, we are moved to treat it as history, as fact not fiction, disseminate it, and urge ourselves and our students not just to analyze and theorize them, but to listen with respect and practice what they discover, then we will, hopefully, hear those impossible voices at last.

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