THE CHILD AS OTHER IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

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Abstract: Although there are not many children in Shakespeare's plays, his treatment of them is quite unique, both for his own time and today. Shakespeare's children are authentic selves who frequently possess extraordinary intellect and vision. Shakespeare's introduction of child characters as victims highlights his implicit condemnation of violence as embodied in people in power.

Keywords: child, other, representation, violence.

Introduction

There are a relatively small number of child characters in Shakespeare's plays, but there is an obvious interest in childhood–a view expressed by Morriss Henry Partee in his *Childhood in Shakespeare* (7), which I share. According to an estimate quoted by this author, "of the roughly one thousand characters that Shakespeare creates, only about thirty are children, and only thirteen of these have fairly significant roles" (40). However, although the number of child characters in Shakespeare is not large, it is still larger than in most plays by his contemporaries, who did not have a very high regard for children. The other aspect of my theme, the question of the conceptualization of otherness in Shakespeare's plays, has generally been related to race and ethnicity, above all in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello* (Nyoni 1-10). Discussion of otherness has also focused on the representation of "other worlds", that is, non-English and non-European civilizations, in Shakespeare's plays (Bartels 111-38). My argument here is that Shakespeare was aware of the evident othering of children in the eyes of callous and powerful villains who had lost innocence and compassion, and that this theme is obvious in some of his plays.

Writing about children and suffering in Shakespeare's plays, Ann Blake expresses the view that Shakespeare's children "are tender-hearted and loyal, brave, and idealistic.

Moreover, they are free from adult vices, and emphatically innocent" (Blake 293). Other critics, too, have described Shakespeare's child characters from a sentimental perspective. Bradley, for instance, thought them to be "affectionate, frank, brave, high-spirited, of an open and free nature like Shakespeare's best men" (332).

Some other critics, however, stress the "precocity" of Shakespeare's children. These include Marjorie Garber (30), who sees them as "both pert and malapert, disconcertingly solemn and prematurely adult," while "their disquieting adulthood strikes the audience with its oddness and we are relieved when these terrible infants leave the stage. We may feel it" writes Garber," to be no accident that almost all go to their deaths", which would appear callous if it were not ironic. In Partee's view, such interpretations stem from a fallacy of associating Shakespeare's alleged "awkward handling of children" with the view of the "general populace" in Elizabethan England, who regarded children as "miniature adults" and actually "lacked a complete sense of childhood," who had "little sense of the child's potential" and did not "appreciate the natural qualities of children" (9).

Another line of interpretation finds autobiographical elements in Shakespeare's handling of children, hinting that "a fanciful composite of these child characters may give a sketch of Shakespeare's son". Thus De Chambrun observes that "Hamnet Shakespeare will always live in his father's words, where we feel that he is recalled in each portrait of a delicate, charming and intelligent boy destined for a premature death" (198). Shakespeare does demonstrate an extensive awareness of the special nature of children, thinks Partee. The precocity and sometimes even cruelty that Shakespeare attributes to children may have stemmed from his "observation of children nurtured by a demanding society and its rigorous educational system," and the existence of pronounced "parental and social violence" (11).

An Overview of the Representation of Children in English Literature

In order to fully grasp the aesthetic and ethical significance of Shakespeare's special treatment of children, we need to give a brief survey of the representation of children in English literature before and after Shakespeare.

Daniel T. Kline (2), in his essay on theorizing the figure of the child in Middle English Literature, begins with a case of child kidnapping recorded in 1373 and states: "I'd like to begin this paper with an … observation: when children are featured in Middle English literature, they are often abused in some way-regularly threatened, violated, killed, or already dead." He then goes on to illustrate his statement with examples from the medieval poem "Pearl," from *Canterbury Tales*, and from some lesser collections of medieval texts. Kline

believes that literary and historical accounts of violence against children highlight the fact that children were stripped of subjectivity "by powerful socio-political forces, often embodied in specific adults, parents, or parent-surrogates, who usurp the child's subjectivity for their own purposes" (2). He argues that this usurpation is in itself a form of violence that features as both physical and social, and as a textualized or discursive phenomenon. The medieval child, according to the accounts quoted by Kline, was a commodity whose desires were subordinated to the interests of his masters (3). This childish *Other*, continues Kline, has its subversive side: "to be childish, transgressive, and capricious" means to test the boundaries and the culture, by defying "accepted social and behavioral standards" (8-10). This last point can throw some light on the role of children in Shakespeare's plays, as further analysis will demonstrate.

Representation of children as transgressive and as miniature adults has its roots in the *Bible*. As Dupeyron-Lafay points out**,** the *Old Testament* books of *Genesis*, *Job*, *Psalms* and *Ecclesiastes* express a view that even children are sinful, being born of woman's "polluted flesh." This view was further elaborated in Augustine's *Confessions* (fourth century AD). In Part I of the book, chapter 7 is entitled "Infancy Itself is Not Sinless," and chapter 19 "The Corruption of the Child's Soul" (Dupeyron-Lafay 2). This view persisted up to the Renaissance and beyond and ceased to be universal only with the coming of the Enlightenment, which rejected the notion of original sin. One of its leading thinkers, Voltaire, believed that man is born good and that the system of government, including all social institutions, corrupts him. By the mid-eighteenth century the child was no longer seen as a miniature adult, but rather as "a being in its own right" (Dupeyron-Lafay 3). This theory was further developed by the Romantics, who saw children as endowed with special visionary power, and it might well be that they were partly inspired by Shakespeare. William Wordsworth held that "the child is father to the man", the idea being central to his major ode "Intimations on Immortality, from Recollections of Early Childhood" (1803-1806) and to other poems.

In nineteenth century representations, children became full characters and "could enjoy a literature that had been specifically designed for them" **(**Dupeyron-Lafay 7). Charles Dickens must be singled out from the rest of his contemporaries for his affectionate treatment of children, for which he was both praised and also criticized when he became too sentimental, as in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. The character of the child in his *Dombey and Son* has something "of the Romantics' wise and visionary children," and, I would add, something Shakespearean, too, when faced with imminent death, as Dupeyron-Lafay points out (5). As

we know, Dickens also wrote at length about cruelty, humiliation and violence directed against children.

In recent times, burdened, as they have been, with war and carnage, the theme of child victimization has again become central to many literary works, especially drama, as summarized in the conclusion of this paper.

Innocent Sufferers: Shakespeare's Wise Children

My argument is that Shakespeare valued and appreciated children, and was extremely sensitive to violence done to them, this violence being one aspect in which institutional power exerts its lethal force in Shakespeare's plays. In some of them, especially the histories, the child figures as the hateful *Other*, perceived as something to be insanely and irrationally feared and eliminated. Why does Shakespeare give children this status? Conceivably because he sees them as possessing extraordinary natural wisdom and insight which best expose the institutional cynicism and criminal intellect of the adult people in power, as I will now illustrate with episodes from *Richard III*, *Macbeth* and *King John*.

Richard III presents some of the cruellest scenes of child butchery in literature. The scenes showing Clarence's children after their father's murder are an introduction to the bloody elimination of children by those in pursuit of absolute power. The children mourn together with the adults, but they also see through the adults' crookedness: when King Edward dies in his turn and his wife Elizabeth begins to mourn, the Boy ironically comments: "Ah, aunt? You wept not for our father's death. How can we aid you with our kindred tears? "And the Girl: "Our fatherless distress was left unmoaned: Your widow-dolour likewise be unwept!" (Shakespeare, *Richard III* 38,II,i) The relative callousness of these children is an indication of the kind of cruel world in which they have grown up, not of their inborn cruelty. And generally speaking, throughout Shakespeare's opus, it can be inferred that Shakespeare believed in the natural goodness of man.

Richard heartlessly orders Tyrell to kill the princes, "those bastards in the Tower". After the "deed is done," Tyrell and the executioners he employs, Dighton and Forest--but not in the least Richard--show tenderness towards "the gentle babes" as Tyrell calls the princes, described in their death as "girdling one another / Within their alabaster innocent arms./ Their lips were four red roses on a stalk, / Which in their summer beauty kissed each other." "We smothered / The most replenished sweet work of nature / That from the prime creation e'er she framed," concludes Dighton, while Tyrell reports that "Hence both are gone with

conscience and remorse: /They could not speak; and so I left them both, / To bear this tidings to the bloody king." (133, IV,ii)

In *Macbeth*, the wise child is the Son of Macduff, a child that seems to understand well the ways of the world in which he sees himself as one of the "poor birds" that "are not set for," just before he learns that he has become important in Macbeth's political game. He speaks with "wit", expressing his knowledge of the world in which "there are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men and hang up them" (Shakespeare, *Macbeth* 66, IV,ii). In his wisdom he is the equal of his mother, who knows that although she has done no harm, she is in "this early world, where to do harm / Is often laudable, to do good sometime / Accounted dangerous folly." The woman and the child confront the murderers against whose accusation the Son defends his father's honour. Another Child is ultimately crowned in *Macbeth*. Malcolm is young and innocent of crimes and faults: he comes with the green branches that symbolize new life, but he is not quite ignorant of the world--he knows all the vices, though only by name. Yet before Malcolm can be crowned, Macbeth's head has to be brought on a sword. In the same way Malcolm's father, the saintly old King Duncan, had his rule secured by savage butchery in battle, with Cawdor's head impaled on a sword. "Power cannot be gained without violence" is Shakespeare's implicit irony, and the violence frequently hits children. Partee observes that "The young children in the early *Richard III* have the same courage and precocity as does young Macduff in the later *Macbeth*." He also notes that there is scarcely any representation of a happy and affectionate family in Shakespeare, one exception being the picture of the Macduffs, where we see both the parental couple's love and the affection between mother and children (Partee 10).

In his first history play, *King John*, Shakespeare deals with the suffering and death of a child to appease the gods of war. (Cf. Aeschylus's *Oresteia* and the sacrifice of Iphigenia). For this purpose Shakespeare makes his Arthur a child of nine or ten, while the historical Arthur was a young man of fourteen or so. The characters in *King John* are obviously divided into children or very young people and females, who all ultimately rebel against violence, and the older generation of men in power, kings and top clergy, whose basic motive appears to be greed.

Contrary to the view held by many eminent scholars that Shakespeare was acquainted with only one source when he wrote this play–the anonymous play *The Troublesome Rule of Iohn King of England*, dating from 1591--more recent research has shown that he must have known at least three historical sources as well, Holinshed and two Latin chroniclers, Matthew Paris and Ralph Coggesnall. Despite his historical knowledge,

Shakespeare was not at all interested in important historical events, not even in the famous *Magna Carta*, as many historians have pointed out, including G.M.Trevelyan who wrote: "Shakespeare's *King John* shows that the author knew little and cared less about the Charter" (Trevelyan 149). This might be taken as Shakespeare's explicit comment on "democracy".

Shakespeare puts the child Arthur, nephew to King John, in the centre of his story. The child becomes the instrument of fulfilment for his own mother, the French King, his Uncle John, and even his grandmother Elinor. The loving and innocent child, "the pretty boy" as he is described, pleads with both sides for peace, but his words have little effect; the older generation is blinded with ambition, and the child consequently desires to die. Arthur pleading with the murderer resembles Dickens' sufferers, the difference being that Dickens portrayed his characters with great emotion, which is absent in Shakespeare's play, though the scenes with young Arthur provoke deep emotion in the reader and the spectator. Arthur promises he "will sit as quiet as a lamb" (Shakespeare, *King John* 55, IV,i), like an innocent sacrificial victim. Once he has fallen into the hands of an utter villain, King John, Arthur is imprisoned and is about to be blinded. Even his cruel goaler Hubert and the executioners, who, as elsewhere in Shakespeare's plays, appear to be much more compassionate than their kings, wince and are deeply touched. Although they do melt and free him, Arthur is nevertheless killed while attempting to escape by jumping from the castle wall. The function of the episodes portraying Arthur's martyrdom is to shed more light on John, whom Shakespeare imagined not only as a criminal, but as a prototype of criminal rulers.

As in *Macbeth*, it is ultimately another child who is brought forward to reconcile the embattled nobility in *King John*–the young Prince Henry (future Henry III). Unlike the historical Arthur, who was older than Shakespeare's creation, the historical Prince Henry was younger than Shakespeare's Henry, who is wise and controlled. This is both encouraging and ominous, for there is a hint that the Bastard will be the shadow ruler, and that the cycle of crime may be repeated.

The other young and innocent peacemaker in *King John* is Princess Blanche, daughter to the Spanish king, niece to John through his sister Elinor. The young Dauphin is only human while inspired by his love for her. He is not perfect without her--it is the "she" that he is lacking; she likewise becomes whole only in her relationship with him:

> He is the half part of a blessed man,
> Left to be finished by such a she;
> And she a fair divided excellence,

Whose fullness of perfection lies in him (26, II,i).

They are married to unite lands in England and France, but when the kings of France and England are faced by the indomitable Cardinal Pandulph with the choice of breaking their friendship or being excommunicated by the Church of Rome, Blanche has to plead with both to choose the easier way, that is, excommunication. At this point the Dauphin betrays love by taking loss of friendship to be the easier way, and consequently suffers and repents. Blanche, unlike the men in power, thus stands for faith that does not need institutional reinforcement. She begs her husband on her knees, but he rejects her pleading, and she realizes that she will lose no matter which side wins the war. It does not take Lewis long to realize that he lost everything when he rejected her love for the sake of ambition, and that life, "a twice-told tale" (49, III,iv), has lost its glamour. "All days of glory, joy and happiness" (50, III,iv) are gone. When he is further persuaded that he will gain from young Arthur's death, he knows that he will lose even his life. For the Cardinal, he is "green and fresh in this old world," (51, III,iv) and the Bastard despises his "weakness." Lewis finally opts out of the war and leaves the stage to others.

Although Lily B. Campbell's essay on *King John* (1968) is chiefly devoted to an analogy between King John and Elizabeth I, who was similarly under threat as a ruler and was confronted with domestic treason and foreign enemy united (Arthur being represented by Mary, Queen of Scots), her apparently secondary remarks reveal what I deem to be the main issue Shakespeare was dealing with in this play: his primary interest in the child Arthur and the violence done to love and youth:

1) Shakespeare departs from historical sources, which mainly, starting with Holinshed, defend John against Arthur's "treason." But Shakespeare was not at all interested in Arthur's struggle against John.

2) There is no evidence in Elizabethan chronicles that John admitted the death of Arthur, whereas Shakespeare makes him clearly the murderer.

3) Historically, the Pope and Pandulph did not participate in the fight between John and Arthur, but Shakespeare makes the representative of institutional religion an accomplice to the murder of the child, using it as a cause for rebellion (158-9). Faulconbridge, who is Shakespeare's invention, can be interpreted as Shakespeare's implicit commentary on the nature of institutional power. It is he who ultimately rules and embodies power; he is brave in battle to the point of criminality (he loots monasteries); he is opportunistic in trying to explain the political significance of Arthur's death. He receives the news of Arthur's death almost

coldly, and immediately pushes it aside as *raison d'état* requires: "Be great in act. As you have been in thought", he consoles John. "Away, and glister like the god of war,…" (73, V.i.). The Bastard's dislike for Lewis, who is himself little more than a boy, is immense: "Shall a beardless boy, A cock'red silken wanton, brave our fields, And flesh his spirit in a warlike soil" (73, V.i) In his turn the Dauphin calls him the "brabbler," a term that suits him well, since he uses a lot of empty rhetoric. This is important because it is the Bastard who pulls the strings of power and who is obviously positioned against youth and innocence, together with John.

Lily B. Campbell challenges the views of others that in his history plays Shakespeare does not "seem to call for explanations beyond those which a whole heart and a free mind abundantly supply" (Mark Van Doren), that he betrays no bias (Stoll) and that he "shuns the problems of contemporary politics" (Campbell 4). Her own view is that in Shakespeare's history plays there is "a dominant political pattern characteristic of the philosophy of his age" (6). To me it seems that in Shakespeare's history plays this pattern is both constructed and deconstructed, as the previous analysis has, hopefully, shown[1].

Conclusion: Shakespeare Our Contemporary

His representation of child suffering is another theme that makes Shakespeare our contemporary and brings him close to the playwrights of today, whose primary interest has been the oppression of children by a system of violence which seems to be reverting to some medieval methods. Neil Postman based his study of the disappearance of childhood from around the 1950s onwards on, among other things, "the rise of crime perpetrated by and against children" (133). Edward Bond has devoted much of his playwriting and theoretical skill to illustrating crimes against children as the basis of modern systems of tyranny and war, and has shown how "The radical innocence [also observed by Shakespeare–my comment] becomes corrupted with the ideological social overlay, but never completely destroyed" (251). This theme was initiated in Bond's early play *Saved* with its notorious stoning of the baby. The same theme is prominent in a number of other British playwrights, notably Pinter and

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[1] The subject of children in Shakespeare has been also treated in the book *Tragedija i savremeni svet*, Nastić, 2010, pp.53-58.

Kane. I shall focus here on Bond's *Red, Black and Ignorant*, Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes* and Sarah Kane's *Blasted*.[2]

The most appalling consequence of the rule of evil in these contemporary plays is the victimization of children as the most damaging symptom of moral disease. Bond's *Red, Black and Ignorant*, like most of his other plays, is about the process of how children, misused and abused by the system, become criminals. As in Pinter's and Kane's plays, in this play babies are taken away from their mothers. The root of wickedness is in the system of education that does not teach the truth. Each subsequent step in young people's growing up is a stage towards moral degradation (Learning, Eating, Selling, and Work). Eating is not satisfaction of basic human needs but expression of emotional starvation, though hunger is also presented as real in the images of starving children in camps. In a "free country" children are sold and bought like goods, as proof of their parents' cooperation with the state. The children of the system become soldiers whose only "basic training" is "kill or be killed." "You killed us for freedom", concludes the Monster. But freedom and democracy mean that "truth is suppressed and freedom hustled away to prison." (40) All this (brutality) begins at home when the Monster beats his wife and sells his son to the state to teach him how to become a murderer. Bond seems to have completed Shakespeare's project of the study of children in the society of adults, especially in his "The Dramatic Child" (1992).

In Harold Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes*, the woman gives up her child and engages in a morbid sexual excitement with the persecutor. In Kane's *Blasted*, Ian detests children, including his own grown-up son: "Who would have children. You have kids, they grow up, they hate you and you die" (Kane, *Blasted* 21) His hatred culminates in his eating the baby. The Soldier's description of the atrocities that target the weakest seems to build on Ian's hatred. Cate's initial care for the baby entrusted to her by the mother ends in her failure to protect the baby, and the baby dies. And so on: there are numerous instances of such representation of children in British drama, to mention only the unavoidable Mark Ravenhill and his bitter plays.

There are notorious examples in American drama of the representation of child sacrifice as built into the construction of the American Dream. The two notable cases are Edward Albee's *The American Dream*, an expressionistic rendering of the mutilation of

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[2] These writers and plays have been the subject of another more extensive study presented at a conference (Nastić, ESSE 10, Torino 2010), and the afterword to a book, *Harold Pinter: Novi svetski poredak* (Nastić, 2011).

children in order to fit them into the preconception of a successful life, and Sam Shepard's *Buried Child*, which shows how the sacrifice of children results in disaster and misery.

Thus we may conclude that Shakespeare was a pioneer in the representation of child characters, and in this sense has remained a model to this day, and end this discussion with Harold Pinter's introductory note on Shakespeare in his *Various Voices* (5-7), where he states that in the art of theatre everything begins and ends with Shakespeare, who knew how to dramatize the "open wounds" of life, the deepest one, surely, being victimization of children.

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TO SEE AND HEAR LIKE OPHELIA, OR HOW NOT TO TAKE LEAVE OF ONE'S SENSES: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MADWOMAN IN YOUTUBE CULTURE

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Abstract: Ophelia, fated to insanity, has attracted incomparably more interest than any other Shakespearean heroine. As an archetype of a madwoman Ophelia has been in the limelight for a wide range of supporters and adversaries: literary critics, theatre and film directors, actors and actresses, psychiatrists, philosophers, writers, poets, painters, photographers, feminist and gender revolutionists, and ordinary people, especially women who want to act the story of her losing her senses. The last-mentioned category appear to be fulfilling their dreams of becoming madwomen by posing as lunatic Ophelia and being filmed. The destiny of these amateur films is to be posted on YouTube.

Keywords: Ophelia, performance, popular culture, YouTube, the senses

Though This Be Madness, There Is (Opheliac) Style in It

She speaks much of her father; says she hears

There's tricks i'th world, and hems, and beats her heart,

Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt

That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,

Yet the unshaped use of it doth move

The hearers to collection. They aim at it

And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts

Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,

Indeed would make one think there might be thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily. (4.5.4-13)

The case of Ophelia (the causes and symptoms of her unusual state of mind and body, her body language and articulated language) has been "put under the microscope" so many times and at such different times that another attempt might be called a mad deed and each new investigator could be advised to have their head examined. Yet I believe I have found my ramification within this huge artery—the topic of the madness of Ophelia—by analyzing her most contemporary representations, the very postmodern ones. My intention is to put these representations into the broader context of YouTube culture. Simultaneously, I shall be posing a provocative question that appears in the title of my essay: "To see and hear like Ophelia, or how not to take leave of one's senses", pertaining to the recurring cultural motif of a madwoman in *Hamlet,* yet arranged according to Internet aesthetics.

I do not aim to fully explore the complicated representational history of postOphelias, yet I wish to signal a relatively fresh cultural phenomenon that has a strong connection with self-expression through a videotaped act of "going mad like Ophelia". Additionally, "going mad like Ophelia" might be comprehended as a category referring to numerous amateur video scenes posted on YouTube. They characteristically capture the abnormal psychosomatic state of this Shakespearean female protagonist in performance. In our e-culture, the shape, function and representation of women are still typically created and re-created by active participants in cultural life, while emblematic fictional female figures like Ophelia function as possible "skins" to be worn or masks that enable playing-out. Lois Potter notices that: "In fact, the cyber-media are still exploring Shakespeare's potential, with YouTube, for example, allowing anyone to perform Shakespeare at virtually no cost, and transmit the result to an invisible but potentially enormous audience" (430).

I wish to examine the widely disseminated representations of Ophelia in YouTube culture, which derive both from works by visual artists and writers and from interpretations of her character in theatrical productions of *Hamlet*, revealing her as a nexus of the struggle for the subjugation of the female body. By considering a broad range of amateur materials and paying special attention to images women have produced, I want to present Ophelia as a figure whose story has crossed traditional media and entered the space of YouTube. My analysis yields insights into this most visited of video-sharing websites and reveals the compelling associations between popOphelia, gender, madness and non-professional techniques of performance.

The new media seem to have galvanized innovative interpretations of Shakespeare, yet for my analysis I narrowed the data down: my choice was to watch YouTube versions of Ophelia's mad scene. In her article *iShakespeare* Laurie Osborne informs us that:

The explosion of YouTube Shakespeare videos suggests that his plays provide a useful starting place for do-it-yourself video production. From stop-action Claymation (http:// www.youtube.com/watch?v q5OKUBVb4sI) to musical performances of *Macbeth*
 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?vYVOEoWR44ug), Shakespearean YouTube hosts more than rare performance recordings like the summary film of the Wooster Group Hamlet (http://www.youtube.com/watch?vwAO2XOOsbK8). "Canonical" films prove useful, even recyclable, for example, in the mini-boom of YouTube Ophelia music videos⸺such as Ophelia's Immortal (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v qs0m9dGI5zQ) and Hamlet's Immortal
http://www.youtube.com/watch?vAZm4gRBzY20), which set clips of Kate Winslet's performance in Branagh's Hamlet to an array of pop songs" (48).

The Choice of Going Insane and Dying Like Ophelia

For most of the play, assuming in a simplistic manner that it consists of both a visual and a verbal layer, Ophelia is hardly perceptible to the eyes or ears of other *dramatis personae* or the audience's senses of hearing or sight. She steps into the course of events not by uttering a sentence but by directing a question at her brother: "Do you doubt that?" (1.3.4) during their farewell dialogue before Laertes' departure ("that" in Ophelia's question paradoxically relates to her confirmation that she will remain in contact with Laertes while he is away). It is however possible that Shakespeare's idea was to "throw" her figure into the play one scene before scene 3 (only the First Folio informs us about her silent presence in 1.2). Some theatre and cinematic productions allow for her to make a "beautiful" entrance, for her to witness Hamlet's revelation, *inter alia*, that he has "that within which passes show" (1.2.85). She grows in importance as she immerses herself in lunacy. The transgressive figure of Ophelia is a threatening one because of its prophetic words and unpredictable actions. Even if only for a while, insanity thrusts her into the limelight. This altered psychosomatic state is also responsible for attracting public interest, namely YouTube-performers.

Unquestionably, portraying the mad scene from *Hamlet* is second best to acting the death scene. In the course of my previous research into the topic of NecrOphelia I found that the proliferation of Ophelia-like images within popular culture during the last twenty years has—on the one hand—rendered her figure "ophelia-less", that is to say has taken it away from any detectable original source, displacing it from the context of the play, while on the other hand it has made her "ophelia-ful", in other words has made her contain all Ophelias up

to the present, by conflating pieces of this female necro-figure into a single yet paradoxically "defragmented" Ophelia. [1]

Our contemporary ocularcentric reality allows us to generate many more representations of Ophelia than in the past, when "pre-digital" technical development provided very limited means to translate the existence of this literary figure into the language of another art such as painting or music. I focused on Ophelia's floating dead body, which partly accounts for postmodern thanatophilic imagination. These representations included video scenes available on YouTube, amateur photographs in bathtubs, reproductions and remakes of classical paintings (e.g. John Everett Millais), and musical allusions (e.g. Nick Cave's song "Where the Wild Roses Grow").

In a similar way, in this article I will centre on globally shared images of psychOphelia. Insanity, the dangerous zone that merges fascination with fear, is *terra incognita* for any daredevil who wishes to understand its intricacies. Any effort to imitate the state in which mind and body are "driven into desperate terms" (4.7.27) can be accepted only on condition that it involves nothing but a mere experiment. Performative experiments by YouTube content producers rely on the assumption that in enacting madness, they are deliberately violating their personal integrity in order to exist in the Web 2.0. culture in this act of Ophelia-revival. The twofold motivation of amateur role-playing can be expressed as the YouTubers' desire to wake up the uncanny (in themselves), and as their wish to become visible/socially recognized by virtual others. Thanks to user-friendly websites such as YouTube, such longings are within reach of attainment. For some Internet users, Ophelia is an inevitable step to extending their personal identity.

YouTubers Like Shakespeare

While trying to categorize the reasons for the YouTube Shakespeare boom, I realized that some of the clips are created by students preparing for their "Shakespeare English project". Many student-produced and thus amateur bits and pieces of Shakespeare on YouTube are a response to the *Zeitgeist*: as we are part of a visual culture, the innovative aesthetics of generating images and making them accessible almost at the speed of light is starting to achieve triumphs, especially among the young. In his book *Watching YouTube: Extraordinary Videos by Ordinary People* (2010), Michael Strangelove reminds us of the

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[1] My article "Too Much of Eroticism Hast Thou, Poor Ophelia": Postmodern NecrOpheliac Fantasies in Popular Culture" was accepted for publication in *Text Matters: A Journal of Literature, Theory and Culture* 3, Łódź: Łódź University Press (forthcoming 2012).

obvious yet easily forgotten fact that YouTube does not involve high-cost video production and that it allows mass participation due to the Internet culture being globally accessible (27).

It is also worth bearing in mind that YouTube material is quickly disseminated and of much briefer existence than typical cinematic material. It is also fractional in comparison with the duration of e-material itself (understood in terms of the editing of the material). Moreover, as Christy Desmet explains, the notion of transparency does not harmonise with the YouTube-window, since it is "a layered composite of different frames" (548). To substantiate her statement, she elaborates:

> The actual video is a small screen embedded in a Web page that includes other kinds of information, from the submitter's description, and metadata to viewer comments and suggested videos for further viewing. Sometimes even an advertisement intervenes between the viewer and the video's virtual reality, so that the viewer of a YouTube page moves constantly from looking at and looking through the screen (548).

Internet culture offers totally original and hi-tech modes of mass production, mass participation and mass reaction that were unfamiliar before 2005, the year when YouTube in its embryonic stage originated.

The Past and the Present: Ophelia's Madness Performed

Once performed only by men, the role of Ophelia has undergone incredible metamorphoses. Artistic practices—which are both cultural products and influence cultural production—are determined by and interwoven with the media landscape of subsequent times. Therefore, the Shakespearean Ophelia was inseparable from the theatrical practices of Elizabethan times. For many centuries Ophelia in performance was confined to the stage, where from the reign of Charles II onwards women biologically appeared in the theatrical space. Ophelia commenced her theatrical life in the bodies of male actors, who, according to Renaissance notions of madness, performed it "as the predictable outcome of erotomania" (Showalter 81). Later, female incarnations of a madwoman differently exploited the potential of a sexually frustrated body finding relief in nonsensical speech, pulsating bodily movements and indecipherable gestures.

Theatrical practices were not isolated from other artistic and creative domains such as critical writing, philosophy poetry, painting, music, and, later, photography and film. Performative embodiments of Ophelia evolved along with the revolution in the media world. Their realization ranged from page and stage through still and moving images to digital and

cyber representations. They started to permeate into the soil of their predecessors and even to merge into one cultural organism.

It is no secret that the twenty-first century feeds on images. Their provenance is almost invisible for the viewers, yet the outcome (the image itself) can even be hyper-perceptible to their sight, for example, billboards that advertise products may attract them with representations that are the result of manipulation or compilation—the intertextual game of "cut, copy and paste". Mass consumption of visible signs enhances their production. With regard to representations of Ophelia, the re-creation of amateur video scenes available on YouTube is the epitome of the postmodern frenzy of remixes, reproductions and re-workings. One quick search for the mad scene on the Internet and the "chain" of YouTube windows flashes on to the main screen. In each of the small screens the viewer finds no more than a hint at what might be the content of the videoclip, e.g. the duration of the film or a still from it. Selection of the right item on a display screen is, therefore, a matter of intuition or luck. Sometimes the content disappoints, while another "click" brings amusement and visual pleasure.

Interestingly enough, Strangelove observes that: "YouTube is home to all forms of sexual fetishes and marginal or underground sexual practices" (87). From one standpoint, a YouTube viewer may find pleasure in watching a pretty woman go insane, while from another, a pseudo-actress who plays Ophelia's mad scene might–through an act of self-expression—discover unknown forms of taking pleasure in acting with her body, in taking leave of her senses like Ophelia. As the culture of non-professional pop-performers flourishes, many of them are turning to immortal motifs from Shakespeare, without any deeper knowledge of his works. Generated at home or in any other place, as far from the stage or a professional setting for the film as the Earth is from the Sun, these YouTube videos inevitably leave a trail in our cultural (Internet) universe. Amateur video film that exploits the theme of Ophelia becomes another form of prolonging her afterlife, more and more distant still from the prototype and even gradually more aberrant (as in the case of acting out insanity).

As I searched for "mad Ophelia" videos on YouTube, I realized how right Christy Desmet was when in her article "Character" she observed that the contemporary status of Shakespeare's protagonists—what she calls "Shakespearean characters after computers" (540)—is that "in the digital or post-human age [they] are dispersed as packets of data that circulate through the porous membrane between self and environment" (541). Self-made videos in Opheliac style also belong to this virtually available data.

As I stated earlier, different "Internet content producers" (Strangelove 53) have different reasons for their actions. Some decide to share their own piece of YouTube Shakespeare after preparing a clip as part of a classroom assessment. I wish to focus first on an English project, described as such by a female YouTuber, who entitled her project: *Hamlet, Act V Scene IV 'Ophelia's Song'*. The e-material was posted by carlojacartist Lauren Allan (Glasgow Caledonian University).

This amateur video presents a two-minute-scene showing Ophelia on her own, a scene that evokes death. Shakespeare's madwoman is portrayed by a non-professional actress, a student dressed in black, as if in opposition to the traditional image of the white and innocent "Rose of May". The viewer sees a young girl sitting on the ground, which resembles a stage and thus gives the impression of a theatrical-like performance. In her description of the clip, the author provides information about having used a three-dimensional technique in her project. The first impression is that of a stage scene rather than of a virtual one. Before Ophelia delivers her first lines, the viewer's attention is attracted by the monumental scenery of the ruins of a Gothic building with stone blocks surrounding the heroine. A dark and paranoid atmosphere, evoking horror scenes, dominates this performance of madness. Ophelia asks about "the beauteous majesty of Denmark", but paradoxically she is not searching for other human beings in the immediate vicinity. Aware of her own presence only (her shadow being a special effect), Ophelia performs a monologue. While in the play it is impossible for her to be unwatched or not overheard, on this occasion she is allowed to deliver a monologue, which consists of a number of lines from 4.5. Gertrude's and Claudius' interruptions are omitted and the world revolves around Ophelia. As she sings "He is dead and gone", the upper parts of the walls start breaking and fall into pieces just behind her back. Her psychosomatic state is thus stressed by the reaction of the objects nearby. Another example is a large spot of blood on a cloth hanging over a gate. The spot somehow "grows" and becomes more and more visible while Ophelia is spinning around frantically and spewing out an excess of words and emotions in the form of her song about a lost relative or lover. Another special effect used by the author of the *Ophelia's Song* clip is a rain of sheets of paper, probably letters that imitate the "true love showers" of the girl's song. Unexpectedly, water starts pouring from the stone walls, as if they were weeping. The video ends with Ophelia's calm observation: "Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we will be. God be at your table!." The figure of Ophelia fades away, by contrast with the background, which comes more into focus. Ophelia leaves the viewer with uncertainty and premonitions about the

events to come. To my mind, the amateur video discussed could be a music video, where Ophelia is the soloist singer, screaming out her altered state of mind and body.

As I inspected more Opheliac amateur performances on-line, I found *Ophelia's crazy song* posted by dukeenglishvideos. This videoclip is set in a modern garden with a small fountain as the focal point of the scenery. Before the viewer hears Ophelia's first line, their attention is attracted by a sound of pouring water. This monotonous sound is interrupted by Ophelia's question: "Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?" which is directed at the figure of an angel—the upper part of the fountain. The small grey angel is the only addressee of the girl's words, which are communicated with fluctuating intensity. Again, other characters' lines are eliminated from this one-actress performance. Although the author of *Ophelia's crazy song* implies that it will be a musical performance, overall there is little singing in this mediocre piece of YouTube Shakespeare. The young amateur actress, wearing a long creamy-peach lace dress (but also glasses, earrings and a watch), balances on the rectangular edge of the fountain as she tries to encircle the water. If her bodily movements and gestures are taken into consideration, this performance is full of bows, snatching at her dress, and strange looks into the incorporeal air, sometimes with the aim of catching the eye of the unresponsive viewer or the angel.

Without the shadow of a doubt the performance discussed can be described neither as a sophisticated rendering nor as characterized by finesse. Rather it presents simplistic everyday scenery, naïve choreography, and an untrained rendering that bears a resemblance to a rehearsal. I had the impression that this non-professional Ophelia was having her first practice session, her constant awareness of the camera being an example of such behaviour. The clip was recorded with a number of cuts that become obvious, for example, when a transition from the image of Ophelia sitting on the edge of the fountain to one of her standing beside it is shown not as a smooth movement but as a discontinuous change of position. The last shot within this typical poor-quality YouTube video zeroes in on Ophelia's Saint Valentine's song, which is unexpectedly broken off after the girl manages to utter the words: "You promised me to wed". It does not leave the viewer with any reflections on the madwoman's subsequent actions, since a mood of unfulfilled voyeuristic expectations takes over. Perhaps the shaky camera ran out of power at this point.

Finally, among numerous interpretations of popOphelias, I decided to pick a completely different clip entitled *Ophelia/Complete psychological degeneration*, posted by mashele. This video includes music, in particular a song "Dig Ophelia" by an American cello-driven band, "Rasputina" (the text originates from the album *Thanks for the Ether*, 1996):

Dig Ophelia, consider it dug.

Flowers madness and polar bear rug

Here's the water, just ankle deep high.

Lay back and relax and look up at the sky.

Your eyes never close, your mind's not at rest,

Lay back, get waterlogged

Give us a kiss.

Water spreads the small seed

Water kills the tall weed.

Ophelia.

Cut the stem and you'll see how you feel

Floating orchids just ain't no big deal

Never knowing's like knowing too much

Tap the table, oh here's more bad luck.

Your eyes never close, your mind's not at rest,

Lay back, get waterlogged

Give us a kiss.

Water spreads the small seed,

Water kills the tall weed.

Ophelia.

Ophelia.

Not being a typical YouTube Shakespeare, this video does not use any quotations from his works. Nevertheless it might still fall into the category of "Shakespeare-inspired material" (Ophelia remains the leitmotif of the song). It is noteworthy that the material discussed is not an official musical videoclip (unavailable either on YouTube or anywhere else on the Internet). The author's purpose was to create her own illustration of the lyrics, and the outcome of this is *Ophelia/Complete psychological degeneration*. The audio track of the clip serves more as a background to the visual, not the other way round. In a very postmodern style, the material is selected, fragmented and put together into a composition of pictures of Ophelia, now black-and-white, now colour. Starting from this toying with colour, the entire clip is based on oppositions: immobile/active Ophelia, the presence now of water (in a cup) and now of fire (candles), scene set outdoors (a field, a park)/indoors (a room, a bathroom), freedom/captivity, light/dark settings.

Ophelia, reincarnated by a short-haired blonde amateur actress with a headband, appears to be suffocating, living in a state of turbulence, similar to agitated water (the clip

abounds in representations of either water overflowing from a cup, or Ophelia immersing herself in a bathtub). The viewer experiences it both aurally and visually when Ophelia becomes more and more "divided from herself and her fair judgment": she whirls around, spills water, eats cork, smudges her make-up, points at the sky without any reason, unnaturally inspects her reflection in the mirror and finally integrates with the watery element. Even when Shakespeare's words are not exploited, one of the most inspiring female embodiments of insanity in Western culture, Ophelia and her story, is being compulsively translated by YouTubers armed with cameras and pictorial imagination—into the language of the medium of our contemporary visual culture, thus rendering her presence iconic.

The song "Mad Girl" by the American singer, violinist and poet Emilie Autumn is my last example of the Ophelia theme being taken up by popular culture and confirms that Ophelia, herself a soloist and a balladeer, has become an inspiration for contemporary vocal artists (and along with Ophelia, the tragic story of her descent into madness). The performance of the song came to my attention, once again, via the platform of YouTube ("Mad Girl"). The author of "Mad Girl", a song from *Girls Just Wanna Have Fun & Bohemian Rhapsody* (2008), exploits the archetype of a madwoman in the body of Ophelia to comment on postmodern preoccupations and reflections on femininity. Playing a harpsichord and using her voice to render the madwoman's narrative a melodious tale, Autumn sets out to express her emphatic personal attitude towards victimized and tormented women figures. Ophelia is revived as a dreaming/dead doll, a weaver of 'faerie' tales, whose reduced impact on others within the play (as portrayed by Shakespeare) is continuously re-compensated for by her ever-flourishing afterlife.

> Mad girl
> Can you believe
> What they've done to you?
> Wouldn't they stop
> When you asked them to leave you alone
> In all your faerie tales
> How did the prince say he loved you?
> How did your father die?
> Was he a good man?
> Maybe someday you'll know
>
> The beginning and the end
> Much closer than they seem

Death is but a dream, I know
Dolls are meant to grow away
All broken and bent from petty play
My friend in this world
Is a bottle of nothing
Still I fly
Still I fall

Mad girl
Can you believe
What they've done to you?
Wouldn't they stop
When you asked them to leave you alone
In all your faerie tales
How did the prince say he loved you?
How did your father die?
Was he a good man?
Maybe someday you'll know

Like the water in the well
My melancholy state
Folly, fear and hate, I know
Even time will never tell
She teetered, she tripped
And then she fell
My faith in this world
Is a bottle of nothing
Still I fly
Still I fall

Mad girl
Can you believe
What they've done to you?
Wouldn't they stop
When you asked them to leave you alone
In all your faerie tales
How did the prince say he loved you?
How did your father die?
Was he a good man?
Maybe someday...

The reference to Ophelia is more than inevitable, given the fact that Autumn dedicates one of her albums—*Opheliac* (2006)—solely to this "minor personage of the tragedy" (Camden 247). The body of compositions included in this album might be interpreted as a tribute to all women experiencing unequal treatment, being abused and stigmatized as other(s) in Western culture. Interestingly enough, Autumn integrates her own story as a girl who was raped, a person who attempted suicide (she even spent some time in a mental asylum) and was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, with the Ophelia narrative. The artist raises this uncomfortable and controversial topic and comments on the condition of mentally ill people by making references to literary figures, especially to the Shakespeare heroine. The rendition of "Mad Girl" is an acoustic version, thus "ear-catching", yet simultaneously the artist, who is famous for her postVictorian preferences, creates the impression of a theatrical performance. The stage operates as a site designed both for a concert and for a theatre performance. As the vocal story of Ophelia develops, four "real" Ophelias appear on stage, one after another, dressed like courtesans. The performance encompasses a wide range of elements of sexuality, protest, mockery and cabaret. Autumn puts her soul into this song, which is full of refinement and delicacy.

Post/Pop/PsychOphelias:
"We Know What We Are, but Know Not What We May Be"

Unrecognized by the troops of male critics, directors, editors, and writers, up to the flowering of the feminist concept of "her-story", Ophelia remained an insignificant figure in the shadows, a mere reflection of the sun of the play, Hamlet. She was immortalized both as a lunatic and as a corpse, but there was little to remember about this girl/woman before her passing away. Although Ophelia was reinvented for every epoch, the patriarchal tissue of Western culture penetrated every autonomic cell of her organism, leaving no space for a truly independent cultural life. Left in the spiral of silence, she was almost accused of "penis envy", to use a Freudian term. To face up to the truth, when we consider this character's significance we have to conclude that she was not given equally treatment with the male characters in the play. Eventually, some light has been thrown on her afterlife, along with the discovery of her miscellaneous cultural representations.

Judging by academic research to date, YouTube Shakespeare is still a neglected aspect of Shakespeare in performance. To some extent this might be put down to the fact that the history of the website is limited to seven years and thus "YouTube Shakespeare is still a

child", still in its nascent stage. It should also not escape our attention that not all Shakespearean characters have inspired YouTubers to adapt them to the needs of this practical and globally accessible social medium. Ophelia has acquired another dimension of cultural existence. While still remaining an archetype of a madwoman, she has become a post/pop/psychOphelia. She has fulfilled her own prophetic words: "We know what we are, but know not what we may be". Ophelia's future will definitely be shaped by the contours of the new media and the creativity of users. They may be inspired not only by the case of Ophelia as depicted by Shakespeare, but also by feminist "risky revivals" such as T. M. Peiris's conjectures about the madwoman in "Ophelia. A Theory" (1996):

Ophelia was a florist in a former life. Ophelia had endometriosis. Ophelia wore too many clothes for her own good. Ophelia slipped and fell. Ophelia was a slut. Ophelia considered becoming a nun. Ophelia was a junkie. Ophelia was violated. Ophelia was bright. Ophelia had potential, her grade five teacher said so. Ophelia was an angel. Ophelia drowned (144).

The sky is the limit for any storyteller, and Ophelia will wait patiently.

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READINGS OF THE QUESTION OF RIGHTS IN *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE*--A ROMANIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: It is the main aim of this essay to analyse the modulations and inflections introduced in the treatment of law in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* in the process of cross-cultural transmission and dissemination of the play in the nineteenth century. Focus will be placed on the shift of emphasis from issues related to the law in Shakespeare's text to issues related to rights in two Romanian adaptations derived from French and German texts.

Keywords: audience reception, adaptation, dissemination, cross-cultural transmission, vocabulary of the rights of man, *The Merchant of Venice*

Introduction

In the French adaptation of the *Merchant of Venice* by Du Lac and Alboise Shylock confesses to his daughter:

> J'étais né avec une âme tendre et généreuse … et le juif comme le chrétien était *un frère* à mes yeux; … je croyais qu'une âme grande, une figure humaine me rendait *l'égal des autres* hommes; je ne savais pas que le titre d'esclave était attaché aux vêtements de ma nation.

I was born with a loving and generous soul … and the Jew just like the Christian was a *brother* to me … I believed that a large soul and a human appearance would render me the *equal* of other men; I did not know that the label 'slave' had been attached to the clothes of my nation. (Du Lac and Alboise 14)

Parisian audiences at the *Théâtre de la Porte de Saint Martin*, the theatre where the play was first performed on the eve of the July Revolution of 1830, would most probably have recognised the reference to the famous slogan of the 1789 Revolution--*liberté, égalité, fraternité!*. So would Romanian audiences in 1854, whose experience of this adaptation, advertised as an imitation of the famous play by Shakespeare, represented their first theatrical contact with him. *The Merchant of Venice*, as disseminated in the south-eastern margins of Europe in the nineteenth century, was strongly inflected by the vocabulary of human rights that had been developed in France.

The present essay aims to investigate the modulations and inflections introduced in the treatment of law in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* in the process of cross-cultural transmission and dissemination of the play in the nineteenth century. Focus will be placed on the shift of emphasis from issues related to the law in Shakespeare's text to issues related to rights in two Romanian adaptations derived from French and German texts. One of the assumptions that the essay starts from is that the study of adaptations is crucial to the understanding of the dissemination and reception of Shakespeare in nineteenth century Europe. The plays as staged until well into the nineteenth century in Europe were mostly French or German adaptations, as well as translations of these adaptations. Hardly any theatre (particularly east of Vienna) staged a play that was a direct translation from the original and that had not been re-worked for performance so as to meet the expectations of the audience. In view of this reception of Shakespeare in European theatres as well as of contemporary developments, adaptations and "remakes" of Shakespeare's plays can no longer be dismissed as derivative and of little relevance to Shakespeare studies. A more productive approach is to include these texts as part of Shakespeare's "work", understood in a much more inclusive sense. Shakespeare's "work" is no longer restricted to the texts produced in early modern England but is in a process of continuous cross-cultural construction.

At the same time, a discussion of the adaptations of *The Merchant of Venice* can be helpful in illuminating meanings related to law and the vocabulary of rights in Shakespeare's text that have so far been marginalised.

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The Merchant of Venice and the Rights of Man

The Merchant of Venice seems to have had a particular resonance with the Parisian public on the eve of the July Revolution, as no fewer than three versions were submitted to French theatres: one was a loose, three act translation that Alfred de Vigny submitted to the Théâtre Français, which was rejected; the other two were adaptations that, unsurprisingly, proved to be more successful: Lamarche's *Le marchand de Venise. Comédie en 4 actes et en vers*, staged at the Odéon, and the above quoted *Shylock, drame en trois actes, imité de Shakespeare* by Du Lac and Alboise, performed at the *Théâtre de la Porte de Saint Martin*. The Shakespeare performed in Paris in 1830 inevitably found itself placed at the intersection of Romanticism, theatre and revolution. Hugo's famous *Preface to Cromwell*, published in 1827, had already established the relationship between Romantic drama (*le drame*), Shakespeare and emancipation, understood as freedom in both art and politics. (Hugo 75) To the French Academy this was nothing short of revolutionary effrontery. Jonathan Bate sees the storming of the barricades of the French Academy with Shakespeare in the avant-garde as a prelude to the 1830 Revolution (Bate 26). The latter put an end to the French Restoration and re-established a large number of rights and liberties ushered in by the great 1789 Revolution. Battles in the theatre and on the barricades were closely related--to be a Romantic meant to be against the government (Uebersfeld 20). At times of fierce political censorship and repression (what finally triggered the July revolution was the suppression of the liberty of the press), political issues were fought indirectly on the stage in the form of clashes over literary and theatrical norms and institutions. The Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin was itself a hotly contested place during the July Revolution, with theatre people fighting on the barricades (Duby 462).

Given this political context and the role theatres and Shakespeare played in it, it should come as no surprise that Shylock was not merely presented as a victim of persecution, as English actors had shown him in the early 1820s, but was further revalued as a champion of the struggle for human rights: the right for religious freedom and most importantly the right to equal treatment. These were enshrined in the famous *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* (*Déclaration de droits de l'Homme et du citoyen*) of 1789. Both the right to equality, the major achievement of the Great Revolution, and religious freedom were later assimilated into the Civil Code introduced by Napoleon. The limitations and violations of the Rights of Man and Citizen

that the subsequent Restoration governments had introduced led to the outbreak of a sequel to the Great Revolution, namely the 1830 July revolution. The adaptations of *The Merchant of Venice* can be said to have participated in the preparation of this event by increasing the audience's awareness of the need to take action against ongoing violations of the Rights of Man. Even if religious freedom, foregrounded in the Shakespeare adaptations, was not high on the new revolutionaries' agenda, a critical attitude in this respect was designed to have a symbolic metonymical value, standing for the violation of other basic rights; it also functioned as a stab against the much resented dominant role of the Catholic Church in the Restoration period. The reading of Shylock as a victim of religious persecution became the dominant perspective in France until the late nineteenth century. The popular *Galerie des personnages de Shakespeare,* (Pichot, 1844) an illustrated collection of excerpts from Shakespeare in both English and French issued in 1844, also emphasised Shylock's tragic dignity as a champion of this right, whereas Mézières, an important mid-century Shakespearean scholar, considered Shakespeare's play "a plea for religious and racial tolerance made well before these notions were defined theoretically" (Mezières 165).

The two adaptations expand on Shylock's sufferings, as originally depicted, and introduce narratives that unambiguously project him as the representative of the normative, oppressed Jew. The narratives sum up the history of the persecutions of the Jews in Europe: in Lamarche's play Shylock was first expelled from Spain, then moved to Rome where his eldest son was burned alive; when he came to Venice, famous for its tolerance towards whoever brought money, he suffered further persecution which caused his wife's death. Du Lac and Alboise's version also includes Shylock's wife, who was seduced and abandoned by a Christian, as well as Shylock's father, whose property was illegally seized when his son dared to defend himself and his honour and responded to the physical abuse that Antonio had heaped upon him. These additions are shown as solidifying the motivation of Shylock's desire for revenge and re-read it from a political perspective: his action should not be viewed merely as a form of personal revenge but as a form of protest against the violations of man's "natural rights".

Most interestingly, the claim to universal humanity--"Has a Jew not eyes" (3.1.46), which Shylock makes in Shakespeare's play is re-modulated in the French adaptations as a claim to the right to equal dignity and equal treatment: "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded upon the general good" (Lupton 73-103).

Du Lac and Alboise's version, the adaptation that was translated into Romanian, foregrounds the difficulty Jews faced when seeking redress. The plot of the play is organised around the description of the asymmetrical power relations which allowed a Venetian to abuse a Jew with impunity. (Du Lac and Alboise expand on the speech in Shakespeare's play and rewrite the situation in legal terms, as one governed by an unfair law in Venice that forbade a Jew to strike a Christian, even when the latter physically abused the Jew. In the prehistory to this adaptation, Shylock was physically attacked by Antonio and tried to strike back in order to "defend his honour". At that moment he was almost lynched for having transgressed the law. Shylock is therefore projected from the start as an agent, who does not take abuse lying down but seeks equal treatment and redress for injury. His desire to take revenge is coupled with a more impersonal legal initiative. He proposes to the Jewish community that they should use their financial clout and oblige the Duke and the Senate to pass a law that secures "*les franchises de notre nation*"[the rights/freedoms of our nation] (Du Lac 3.1, 50-51). The rights to be guaranteed by the new law are the rights to equal and non-discriminating treatment, to individual liberty and to the inviolability of property. One of the conditions attached to the loan is Shylock's personal request for justice related to his bond with Bassanio. This is the way that Du Luc and Alboise's adaptation re-establishes the link with the plot in Shakespeare's play.

The French Shylock feels confident that he has a right to become a full citizen of Venice without having to give up his religious and ethnic identity. Since the right to equality, as formulated in the French declaration, is universal and hence applicable to all men, this Shylock feels entitled to this right, from within the particularity of his Jewish identity. Jessica's assimilation into the dominant society via marriage and conversion to Christianity is rejected as a betrayal of her nation. The French adaptation makes a bolder bid for Shylock's emancipation: his absorption into the dominant culture is no longer acceptable. The French Shylock can no longer "disappear" at the end of the play, he can only die as a problematic tragic hero performing the unthinkable, the act that goes beyond the *horizon impensable* of Shakespeare's play. Shylock rejects any exchange, and carries out his vengeance. He transcends the "limits of hatred" that Greenblatt discusses, and since he is given the choice he performs the sacrificial act. When Shylock kills, he sacrifices both his victim and himself to the greater "cause". Though the act provides the French Shylock with a position of active mastery as opposed to the one of passive

obedience that he eventually accepts in Shakespeare's text (Shylock is "content"), his gesture is still inscribed with powerlessness, as it is necessarily a suicidal act (Schutz 2008).

Little is known about the translator into Romanian, but the two signatories who certify the quality of the translation at the end of the manuscript, I. Voinescu and Grigore Alexandrescu, are known as important literary and political figures who belonged to the generation of the 1848 Revolution (called the "forty-eighters"). In the 1853-4 period, preceding the production of *Shylock,* the "forty-eighters", at home and in exile in France and England, were organising a follow-up to the 1848 movement for national and political liberation. The revolutionaries were determined to use the Crimean War for the opportunities it opened up for liberating the country from its status as a Russian protectorate and for negotiating a greater measure of autonomy for the two Romanian principalities from the Ottoman Empire. Their goal was to oblige the Sublime Porte to acknowledge their republican government and grant extended political rights for the Romanian population. General Magheru, who was in charge of organising the military insurrection, makes explicit reference to the rights stipulated in "a new Constitution of the Romanian Principalities, drawn up on the basis of the desires of the Romanian people, the progress of time and the security of the Ottoman Empire" (Barbu 76). The topicality of the rights issue, the militant position that Shylock adopts in Du Lac and Alboise's version, might have led the translator to opt for this version of Shakespeare's text. The success of the performance met the expectations of the translator and his supporters. It exceeded by far that of a performance of *Hamlet,* based once again on the translation of a French adaptation, this time by Alexandre Dumas.

The Merchant of Venice--Another Translation

The other adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice* to be published in Romanian in the nineteenth century was *Chezăşia* [*The Warrant*]. The title page describes it as "a drama in three acts after Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*" and further specifies that it is the translation of a play written by C. Almert. (The author could not be identified for reasons detailed below). The translation was published in Blaj, a city in Transylvania, in 1899. At the time Transylvania had lost its autonomy and had been incorporated into Hungary and its Romanian population was subjected to an aggressive campaign of Magyarization (aimed at the erasure of the national and cultural identity of the non-Magyar populations) undertaken by the Tisza government. Blaj was,

in fact, the political and cultural centre of the Romanian national movement, which was campaigning for rights and political recognition for the Romanian population. In 1899, when the play was published, the leaders of the movement had just been imprisoned for drawing international attention to the denial of civil and political rights to the Romanian population by submitting a Memorandum to the Habsburg court in Vienna. As the Memorandum resulted in large-scale persecution, there were serious doubts about the effectiveness of legal means as a strategy for the pursuit of rights.

In what ways does this particular context inform the adaptation of Shakespeare's play? On close inspection, the title page is only a red herring designed to circumvent censorship. The text is no more than a translation of Schlegel's version of *The Merchant of Venice*, albeit with the romantic Portia and Jessica plots left out and the action streamlined to focus exclusively on Shylock. Though the German text is translated faithfully, Schlegel's translation of the English word "law" as "Recht" is exploited so as to surreptitiously displace the play's concern with law and re-read it as an enactment of Shylock's claim for legitimate rights.

The German dictionary *Das grosse Duden* specifies that the word "Recht" means a) the totality of norms which are institutionally established in a set of laws and b) what can be translated by the English word "right", in the sense of "democratic right", "the right to work", etc. (Duden Bd 7). Schlegel translates the word "law" in Shakespeare's text using sometimes the German word "Recht" and at other times the word "Gesetz", which unambiguously means "law". Thus Shylock's claim in 4.1.141 "I stand for the law" is translated as "Ich steh hier um mein Recht", whereas his demand "I crave the law" (4.1.202) is translated by the unambiguous equivalent "Gesetz"-"Ich fordere das Gesetz" [I demand the law].

The Romanian version follows Schlegel's text faithfully and introduces changes only in the meanings given to the word "Recht". The result is a shift of focus from an insistence on law to a demand for rights. The above quoted German translation "ich steh hier um mein Recht" is translated further, in Romanian, to give a reading of "Recht" to mean "right" and not "law". Therefore Shylock's claim "I stand for the law" becomes in Romanian "I want my right" [*Eu voi dreptul meu*]. The same displacement occurs with the term justice: in her great mercy speech Portia says "though justice be your plead" (4.1.194). Schlegel translates the line by "suchst du nun Recht schon an"; the Romanian text not only reads "Recht " to mean "right" but further

disambiguates the German version to make the pursuit of right clear. Thus, in the Romanian version, Portia tells Shylock: *"Dacă-ți ceri chiar dreptul tău"* [if you claim your very right].

Sometimes the Romanian text misreads Schlegel so as to be consistent in focusing on the rights issue: when Shylock exclaims "I crave the law" (4.1.202) Schlegel, as mentioned above, translates "the law" with the word "Gesetz", the Romanian text however, uses the term "drept" [right]. "I crave the law" becomes *"Îmi pretend dreptul"* [I claim my right].

The political context of the trials of the promoters of the Memorandum suggests that the subtle manipulations of the meanings of the word "Recht" in the Romanian version were designed to encourage the audience to identify Shylock as an image of the underprivileged and oppressed Romanian minority, claiming its rights from the superior authority in Vienna. The fictitious name of the author in the absence of any mention of Shakespeare on the title page would suggest that the translator wanted to circumvent censorship and distract attention from the changes introduced in the translation of Shakespeare's play. The changes were politically charged and focused on the highly controversial issue of the rights of minorities in the Hungarian part of the Habsburg empire.

Both adaptations of *The Merchant of Venice* which circulated in Romanian in the nineteenth century introduced a displacement in the play, from the focus on the reading of law to an emphasis on the right of oppressed minorities to the recognition of their cultural identity and the full enjoyment of their political rights. These adaptations can be said to have fully developed Shakespeare's comedy into a citizenship drama.

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THE EARTH, THE PILLAR AND THE STONE: DOES TESTING THE FEMALE MEAN EMPOWERING THE FEMALE IN VALMIKI'S *RAMAYANA,* SHAKESPEARE'S *THE WINTER'S TALE* AND THE TURKISH TALE *SITTI NUSRET*?

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Abstract: This chapter discusses three memorable female characters: Sita from Valmiki's *Ramayana*, Hermione from Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and Sitti Nusret from the eponymous Turkish fairytale. It will focus on the universality of the many trials that the characters have to undergo, in order to prove their innocence, chastity and capacity to endure, both in front of their male counterparts and society at large.

Keywords: female, gender, individuation, trials

Introduction

In *Aspecte ale mitului (Aspects of the Myth),* Mircea Eliade, referring to the novel as an extension of the mythological narrative, claims that:

> In both cases, the aim is to tell a significant story, to relate a series of dramatic events which occurred in a more or less fabulous past . . . What should be emphasized is the fact that the narrative prose, particularly the novel, in modern society has come to take the place that once upon a time was occupied by the act of reciting myths and fairy-tales, in traditional and popular societies. Moreover, one can recognize the "mythical" structure of certain modern novels and argue for the literary survival of great themes and mythological characters (this is particularly obvious regarding the initiation theme, the theme of the trials that the Redeeming Hero is submitted to and his battles against monsters, the mythology of Woman and Richness) (178-79, my translation from Romanian).

Bearing in mind the particularity of Eliade's statements which concern the novel genre, I nevertheless posit that such shared features can be extended to other genres and literatures, situated at various poles, in terms of chronology as well as geography. Eliade's *common themes and motives*, passed down from the ancient past, had been previously acknowledged by Jung, in the field of psychology, as *archetypes*; more recently, comparatists like Adrian Marino and Paul Hogan used the terms *invariants* and *literary universals*, respectively. Jung, Eliade, Marino, Hogan are just a few of the many scholars who focus on universality as a constructive reading strategy. Mostly, this present study is conducted with Hogan's definition of *literary universals* in mind. According to Hogan:

> … literary universals are properties and relations that are found across a range of genetically and geographically distinct literatures, which is to say literatures that have arisen and developed separately at least with respect to those properties and relations. More exactly, a property or relation may be considered a universal only if it is found in distinct bodies of literature that do not share a common ancestor having that property or relation (228).

Taking my cue from the above-mentioned theorists (Hogan, in particular), in the present study I will refute many of the tenets that inform contemporary literary theories. As such modern theories thrive on and gleefully celebrate *difference, cultural and historical specificity,* using them as interpretational lens would have refuted the claims to universality that the present reading makes. This does not mean that particular contexts will not be touched upon; however, the acknowledgement of particulars will be read as sustaining the existence of cross-cultural themes, motives, and plots precisely in spite of the many differences and peculiarities. On the whole, this study willingly evades the obsession with particularities, and consciously assumes the risk underlined by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back* where they refer to the notion of universality as a "hegemonic European critical tool" (149). Instead, this paper urges for a reappraisal of *universalism* as the only remaining option that we are left with if we are ever to reinstate the benign domination of rationality, empathy, and peace, in an age ripped apart by so many *particular* conflicts, *historical* traumas, and *cultural* divisions.

This is not to affirm that the unjust, humiliating, and absurd tests that the female characters in discussion here (who can very well be extend to represent the category of *woman* as such) can be conceived of as a datum, as universally inescapable*,* and thus vital for

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the recognition of the 'positive' characteristics of femininity, wherever and whenever it was under scrutiny. Sita in *Ramayana*, Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* and Sitti Nusret in the eponymous Turkish tale share a problematic sisterhood defined by (generally) male preconceptions and paranoid tendencies to see *woman* as the very embodiment of betrayal, improper behavior and even as the murderess of her own children (Sitti Nusret). It is this universality of misconceptions regarding woman that constitutes both the focus of my criticism and the narrative thread that joins the literary texts of my choice, which belong to remote cultures and civilizations.

To further clarify this distinction in my reading of universals, besides Hogan, I am also borrowing from Lalita Pandit's differentiation into "hegemonic" and "emphatic" universals (*Caste, Race and Nation* 207). Although Pandit applies such distinction to Tagore's works, I claim here that it may also facilitate the interpretation of other masterpieces of world literature. In Pandit's vision "Tagore's universalism … refers to a moral/intellectual/emotional discipline based on the principle of empathy" whereas "the imperialistic notion of universalism, in contrast, is nonempathic, fixed and hegemonic" (207). For the scope of this paper, Pandit's distinction will be applied to *gender*, although I am quite aware of the fact that I may also be blamed for the essentialism of such quick adaptations. Thus, I am reading Pandit's "hegemonic" universals as the *male* gender universals, imposing on the *female* its own set of beliefs, laws, standard practices, and class or caste interests, so as to ensure its undisputed domination and oppression. Such universals are the focus of my critique. In contrast, Pandit's "emphatic" universals, assume that all people (in the present reading "all women") share a type of benign subjectivity that can enrich experience and ethics and thus may constitute "an antidote to this annihilating, nonassimilative, separatist universalism" (207). Such universals (*female* in my reading) have a double significance for the aims of this study. On the one hand they are the underlying foundations and the justification of my choice of texts and their consequent analyses; on the other, they invite a celebration of *womanhood* and its capacity to survive in all its historical, cultural, social and political avatars.

Sita

Ramayana is one of the foundational texts of Hindu literature. In Sanskrit only there are twenty-five versions of this text, and about three hundred in different other languages and genres. Over the centuries, many Hindu poets and playwrights focused on this beautiful epic

poem, following the path opened by Valmiki in 200 B.C.E.-200 C.E. Bhavabhuti (sixth century, *Uttararamacarita*), Kamban (twelfth century), Tulsidas (sixteenth century, North India), as well as the novelist R.K. Narayan who, in 1972 wrote a shortened modern prose version of the *Ramayana* (based on Kamban). All the above authors were in turn fascinated by this story of love, war, betrayal and death and added new layers to its already rich content. The epic still speaks to Hindus of all castes even today, as it can be inferred from a huge number of cinema adaptations, as well as the famous *Ramlila* (a North Indian performance tradition, enacted every year) (Hess, 1999 3).

Although universally praised in India, Indian critics themselves did not fail to notice the elitist message of this sacred text, and denounced it as a work which "excels in aesthetic transformations of the ideology of dharma, an ideology that politicizes religion and provides moral, spiritual, and mystical justifications for systematic disenfranchisement of women and lower castes" (Pandit *Patriarchy and Paranoia* 105-6). More recently, drawing on Mukherjee, who made similar remarks some three decades ago, Khair also pointed out that *The Ramayana* "is the wellspring of upper-caste, largely Brahminical value systems in India" (150).

Briefly, *Ramayana* tells the story of a war led by Rama, the god-hero and his many allies to free his wife, Sita, from the hands of her demon abductor, Ravana. When Ravana is killed by Rama, husband and wife are finally reunited, at the end of eleven months of painful separation. Paradoxically, the said reunification does not ensure the couple's happiness, as Rama, plagued by doubt, acts like a jealous husband who refuses to believe that his wife's celestial beauty did not trigger her defilement at the hands of her abductor. Sita's only recourse to prove her chastity is to demand for a funerary pyre to be erected so that she can submit herself to the *agnipariksha* (the trial by fire) in order to prove her innocence. Agni, the Vedic god of fire performs a miracle and allows her to emerge from his flames as she entered it, resplendent, even more beautiful than she was before the divine embrace of Agni. Not only does Agni protects Sita's physical shape from harm, he also joins his voice in the chorus of all the other gods and goddesses, who demand that Rama acknowledges the innocence of his wife and accepts her next to him as the most virtuous queen that has ever lived, close in stature to a goddess. After a few months of happiness in Ayodhya, when Sita is already pregnant, Rama again unreasonably plagued by doubts raised by the gossip of his subjects, banishes his wife to the forest where she lives for twelve years in the care of Valmiki (the author of the epic himself) and the wives of the other sages. Sita gives birth to two boys who twelve years later make their way to their father's palace, in Ayodhya. Upon hearing their

story, Rama summons Sita to his palace and demands that she prove her innocence and fidelity once more. Although she seems to obey, Sita, tired of the burden of repeatedly having to prove her chastity, asks the Mother Earth to swallow her. A golden throne carried by snakes appears from the bowels of the Goddess Earth, Sita is placed on it, and she is swallowed never to be seen again. The unconsoled Rama understands his mistakes when he twice doubted his wife's purity; he is now left to live the rest of his days on earth next to his two sons, his brothers and a golden statue of Sita.

Sita's destiny bears exceptional traits form the very beginning. We learn that her birth is not an ordinary one and her very origins are divine. She is accidentally found by King Janaka in a furrow of the earth, at the time he is plowing the field, in preparation for a sacrificial ritual. Her magical birth–*ayoniya*–places her character in the goddess tradition, not born of a womb, but part of the *numinous, the taboo, the magical*, a fact that her husband, Rama, although himself an incarnation of Vishnu, fails to understand. Sita, as *archetype of fertility* and her consequent myth bears similarities to that of the Demeter-Proserpina, Ceres-Proserpina, and Kore-Proserpina (Pandit, *Patriarchy and Paranoia* 127). Besides her divine birth, there are other characteristics that connect Sita with her divine sisters from the Graeco-Roman pantheon. Valmiki and subsequent writers who approached the *Ramayana* myth depict Sita as a nature-lover, fond of gathering flowers, a woman/goddess in tune with the life of the earth that gave birth to her. Even more significantly, at the very moment she is kidnapped by Ravana, she gathers flowers, in an image close to that of Pluto's abduction of Proserpina (Golding 491-5).

Before submitting herself to the presumably final ordeal of the *fire test*, Sita reproaches Rama his unworthy behavior, invoking in her defense the fact of her divine birth, in itself undisputable proof of the nobility of her conduct, under any circumstances, and hence the impossibility of her sinning:

> Why do you talk to me like that, oh hero, like a common man talking to an ordinary woman? ... You, lion among men, by giving way to wrath and passing premature judgment on a woman, have acted like a worthless man … I received my name from Janaka but am the daughter of the earth. You have failed to appreciate fully the nobility of my conduct… (Valmiki 335-36).

Agni's refusal to devour Sita, although miraculous in essence, may also be understood as the intervention of one divinity in order to save another; thus, it is symbolic for less the classical *deus ex machina* and more for the inter-deities fraternal cooperation meant to

preserve the superior essence of gods. However, if we also bear in mind that Rama and Sita are human incarnations of the divine, then they are also expected to embody those human values that can render their characters as exemplary for eternity. As mentioned by Endl:

> The Rama story, more than any other sacred story in India, has been interpreted as a blueprint for right human action. Although the Ramayana is a myth that can be approached on many levels, it is the human level that has had the most profound effect on the Indian people. Certainly Rama, much more than Krishna, Shiva, Durga, or other popular Hindu deities, has been held up as the exemplary ethical deity, as dharma personified (167).

The worshipping of Rama has been a continuous phenomenon, especially, but not only, within the Brahmins' cast. However, such a uninterrupted celebration of Rama as either the perfect man or God supreme can only be maintained, I think, through an equally strong suppression of the *female* character and its casting into an impossible mould of virtue. Extrapolating, there seems to be little doubt that for the human audience of *Ramayana,* the act of consigning to the flames the body of "a living woman's body" represents the "culmination of her career of perfect devotion to her husband" and also the "final test of her sexual and psychological purity" (Hess 6). Apart from the dangers of implicitly encouraging women to emulate extreme behavior and submit to inhuman tests in order to demonstrate and sustain their 'value' even after the death of the husband (see the *suttee* ritual, forbidden by the British as late as the nineteenth century), Sita's character is nowadays politically commodified. Recently, the mythical character has been reclaimed by a certain segment of the Hindu population, keen on obliterating other influences (like the Moghuls', for example) from the formation of the present identity of the subcontinent's inhabitants. Thus, although by comparison with Rama, read as an embodiment of an exemplary life led according to the precepts of *dharma* Sita's character is of secondary importance, she nevertheless is included in the mythology of the *Hindutva* movement–the hard-core, right-wing nationalist extreme of the Indian political spectrum, "the promoters of a narrowly Hindu view of Indian civilization" (Sen ix). The *Hindutva* adherents often invoke *Ramayana* to justify their politics of exclusion and their acts of aggression against practitioners of different religions (x). Such apologists conveniently seem to suffer from collective amnesia, and interpretational blindness, as further argued by Sen:

Similarly, the adherents of Hindu politics–especially those who are given to vandalizing places of worship of other religions–may take Rama to be divine, but in much of the *Ramayana*, Rama is treated primarily as a hero–a great 'epic hero'–with many good qualities and some weaknesses, including a tendency to harbor suspicions about his wife Sita's faithfulness (xi).

Instead of reading *Ramayana* the way Tagore did, not as "a matter of historical fact" but "in the plane of ideas", as a "marvelous parable of "reconciliation" (10), the *Hindutva* movement has been attempting to enforce the idealization of the *male* hero, treated as God and as such, placed above sin, guilt and mistakes:

… many Hindu political activists of today seem bent on doing away with the broad and tolerant parts of Hindu tradition in favour of a uniquely ascertained–and often fairly crude–view which, they demand, *must be accepted by all*. The piously belligerent army of Hindu politics would rather take us away from these thoughtful discussions and would have us embrace instead their much-repeated public proclamations, for example that Rama, the epic hero, is an *incarnation of God*, that *all Hindus worship him*; and that he was born on a well-identified spot 'nine lakh (900,000 years ago) (48, emphasis mine).

Sen's view of the *Hindutva* movements adherents clearly resonate with Pandit's definition of *hegemonic* universals. In this unilateral gender perspective focused on glossing over the man's faults and minimizing the woman's sacrifices, and extraordinary capacity for endurance, the lethal power of *hegemonic* universals is revealed, and so is their non-engagement with the principle of empathy. Thus, my own translation of *hegemonic* universals into *male* universals (mentioned at the beginning of this study) is particularly applicable to nowadays Indian realities. Unconditional glorification of Rama can only imply the eternal consignment of both the mythological female principle and the living bodies of real women to the metaphorical and/or real fire of recurrent sacrifices.

From this perspective, Sita's decision to ask for Mother Earth to offer her eternal shelter appears not so much as resistance to absurd male power and refusal to embrace *testing* as guiding life force, but as refuge into death, oblivion and self-annihilation. Agency still reads as suicide, regardless of its liberating powers. As Pandit also argues, although "death is constantly represented in metaphorical terms as Sita's return to her mother" this "myth of her continuity in the timeless womb of death does not contradict the occurrence of physical death" (*Patriarchy and Paranoia* 126). The recourse to *ekphrasis* through the detail of Sita's golden statue which Rama keeps next to him after losing the corporeality of Sita, notwithstanding the masochistic implications, nevertheless reads as the ultimate reifying act.

A Sita turned into a beautiful golden statue is but a Sita who can no more raise doubts related to her chastity and thus 'torment' her husband; instead, she can be safely and from a distance worshipped as a magnificent work of art.

Hermione

Shakespeare's female characters have been analyzed by critics of different formations. Particularly in the twentieth century feminist critics' opinions embraced a multitude of perspectives, ranging from Ann Thompson's interpellation: "Miranda, Where's Your Sister?" (155-67), to Sexton's more or less overt accusations of authorial and personal misogyny in *The Slandered Women of Shakespeare.* Co-existing with this harsh criticism of the Bard's treatment of female characters, there have also been critical voices emphasizing Shakespearean "female protagonists" as "remarkable for their totality of being that eludes and defies, disrupts and subverts male constructions of the female" (Lyons 126). No less than a stern refusal of employing fixed coordinates in the creation of characters can be expected from an author situated at the very center of the Western Canon, who "surpasses all others evidencing a psychology of mutability" (Bloom 48). Like father, like fictional daughters.

Having emphasized Shakespeare's generous treatment of his female characters in allowing them to 'mutate', "elude", "defy", "disrupt" and "subvert male authority", I also wish to discuss a very different perspective. Thus, I posit that the said acts of female resistance stem from a similar root, that is the necessity of resisting and surviving the *tests* to which male authority feels entitled to submit the female characters. The curious male propensity for doubting female characters' purity and marital chastity, dully followed by a series of trials and tests is particularly noticeable in Shakespeare's tragicomedies, although tragedies like *Othello, Hamlet,* and *King Lear* may be said to revolve around the same theme. What changes in the tragicomedies is the outcome of such trials; if Desdemona, Ophelia and Cordelia do not survive the maelstrom of emotions that they unwillingly set in motion and fall victims to their male counterparts' (husband, would-be husband and father) misjudgments, Marina from *Pericles,* Imogen from *Cymbeline* and Queen Hermione from *The Winter's Tale* are allowed to celebrate social and personal harmony at the end of strenuous hardships and trials.

The pregnant queen at the heart of *The Winter's Tale* is falsely and irrationally accused of adultery by King Leontes, her husband, driven mad with jealousy when, at his own request, she persuades his childhood friend to prolong his stay at their court. An absurd trial

follows, during which Hermione collapses and is taken for dead. Sixteen years of hiding follow, enough for her husband, prompted by Paulina, one of her ladies in waiting to understand the extent of his mistakes, and attempt to atone for the loss of a most virtuous queen. Away from her husband, Hermione gives birth to Perdita, Leontes' daughter, who is raised by shepherds in an idyllic forest. After sixteen years, Paulina stages a reconciliation scene and, pretending that she will show the king a statue of his lost wife, she brings the real Hermione to her repentant husband. What follows is a happy reunion of parents and daughter, the classic happy ending of fairy tales.

Like Sita, whose origins are divine, Queen Hermione also belongs to that elevated class of women who, although compelled to obey the dictates of male authority (as daughters and wives), nevertheless enjoy a preferential status in a gender confrontation. In Renaissance and Middle Ages, various authors focused on the age-long issue of female virtue and attempted to offer models of ideal femininity. Tasso and Castiglione mostly, perhaps in an attempt to dissolve preconceptions regarding the *evil* to be found at every woman's heart, the subordinate and inferior position of women, claimed that feminine virtue should not be conceived as a quintessence of static characteristics, but rather as determined by *class origin*, *class status*, *social role* and *function* (Maclean 62). Although elitist in purpose, their analysis of high rank women's behavior and roles in both the domestic and the public sphere represents the incipient stage of a fairer appraisal of women by comparison to former assessments. Thus, for both Tasso and Castiglione, a princess or a queen could not be expected to conform to the same standards as a woman belonging to the bourgeoisie or lesser nobility; codes of conventional morality should not be applied to women of royal status (Maclean 62), whereas the traditional virtue of silence--*taciturnitas*–was even presented as a fault in a woman of high rank, who should instead display wit, eloquence and flamboyance in her social interactions (Maclean 64).

The element that sets the Shakespearean play in motion and causes Hermione's misfortunes is specifically her awareness of her role as a queen, a role which ideally performed, has to fuse the *personal* and the *political*. Queenship, as elevated position, is defined, in a fair measure, by the witty and skilful employment of language, through which Hermione persuades King Polixenes (Leontes' friend) to prolong his stay at their court. Although her conduct is both innocent and determined by her husband's request, Leontes reads in her words betrayal and transgression of marriage vows:

Leon: (Aside) Too hot, too hot!/To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods./I have tremor cordis on me; my heart dances,/But not for joy, not for joy. This entertainment/ May a free face put on; derive a liberty/From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom/And well become the agent (Shakespeare 1.2.105-115).

Leontes' sudden and irrational jealousy appears difficult if not impossible to comprehend, especially in the context of the royal court where wit, word games, and exercises in flamboyance were quotidian past-times, during the Renaissance. However, we should also remind ourselves (as Shakespeare probably did), that not so long before *The Winter's Tale* was written, not one but two living Queens were put to death by their royal husband. Among others, the reason for their beheading was their presumably having committed adultery with other young men from the court. In reality, both wives (maybe more so Anne Boleyn) displayed exceptional abilities to 'perform' in court and make their royal presence the center of attention. Nevertheless, those exceptional abilities that had earned Anne Boleyn a throne also caused her demise. As Fraser explains, evoking the gruesome parody of a queen put on trial by her royal husband:

> The Queen was tried first. She arrived in a calm frame of mind. According to the herald Charles Wriothesley she gave 'wise and discrete answers to her accusers', excusing herself with her words so clearly 'as though she was not actually guilty'. But the evidence was hardly of such a convincing nature as to bring about a volte-face and a confession. Queen Anne never admitted to any offence and the evidence against her was a patchwork of half-truths and outright lies. All this, however, is less cogent than the sheer psychological improbability of the Queen endangering her position by adultery, let alone attempting to destroy the one man on whose favour she was totally dependent-the King (141).

Although the impossibility of providing justifications for the murderous madness of Henry the eighth and its fictional correspondent in *The Winter's Tale* needs no further reinforcement, both Henry's and Leontes' otherwise incomprehensible jealousy can be interpreted through the lens of one of the most relevant Renaissance texts, Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy.* According to Burton:

> … the atmosphere of royal courts is a breeding place for the sexual jealousies of bourgeois men, because courts present a lethal combination of "opportunity and importunity", a combination that might lead to violations of sexual morality. More importantly, courts facilitate impudent deviations

from specific manners and gestures that function as reassuring signs of prudence and chastity among the bourgeoisie (qtd. in Pandit, *Patriarchy and Paranoia* 121-2).

When unjustly accusing his Queen, Leontes conveniently forgets not only the noble, but also the *foreign* origins of Queen Hermione. Leontes unreasonably treats Hermione, as Rama treats Sita that is, as a "common woman." As the daughter of "the emperor of Russia"– we are somehow encouraged to believe–she may be expected to exhibit even more freedom of speech. Hermione is after all, a foreign woman of royal rank who could not have possibly been brought up to conform to the same restrictions as those from the kingdom of Sicilia. However, as Burton is fond of repeating "Italy is hell for women" (qtd. in Pandit *Patriarchy and Paranoia* 122), a hell which as Hermione will be soon to discover, is the oeuvre of her own husband. What follows is, as mentioned above, a mere parody of a trial, bearing uncanny similarities to the historical one of Queen Anne, the second wife of Henry the eighth, but also the mythological one of Sita when Rama mutely agrees to his wife's *agnipariksha*. As Pandit notices:

> As a king invested with sovereignty, Leontes meges paranoia with legal justice, the private with the public. Hence, he drags his wife to a public trial in open air right after she has given birth inside the confines of a prison, before she has "got strength of limit", as she puts it … The conflict between public/political (royal) virtue and domestic (bourgeois) virtue occurs when the passion of jealousy causes Leontes to see the queen only as his wife; he imposes domestic limits to the permissible largesse of her royal behavior (*Patriarchy and Paranoia* 123).

The gratuitous accusations of infidelity thrown at their wives by husbands of elevated/non-elevated status stem from the age-long and deeply ingrained male belief in the female potential for evil and betrayal. They can be safely situated within the categories of the "nonempathic" *hegemonic universals* (*male universals*) in the present reading. Like Sita who while reproaching Rama the unawareness of his divine origins and hence his denial of the same prerogatives for her, nevertheless accepts his judgment, Hermione both rejects Leontes' accusations *and* agrees to submit to her unjust fate. Thus, both Sita and Hermione, in fulfilling the duty of obedience to their husbands, become the victims of the *hegemonic universals.*

 Although painfully aware that his "tyranny" (Shakespeare 13.2.28) has branded her as a fallen woman, "proclaim'd a strumpet" (3.2.99), "The child-bed privilege denied"(3.2.101), Hermione agrees to be "condemn'd /Upon surmises (all proof sleeping

else/But what your jealousies awake"(3.2.110-111). Not even the divine intervention of the oracle of "the great Apollo" (3.2.132), attesting Hermione's chastity can alter her destiny and free Leontes of his paranoid beliefs.

At the unexpected news of her first born, Mamilius' death, Hermione faints and is declared dead by Paulina, one of her ladies in waiting. For sixteen years, Hermione is hidden by Paulina, the play strangely silent on the details of her hiding place; in the meantime, Paulina acts as the queen's *alter-ego*, engaged in daily interaction with Leontes, with the sole purpose of extracting his painful repentance and remorse. Hermione's metaphorical death of sixteen years bears remarkable similarities to Sita's twelve years spent in the Dandaka forest, protected by Valmiki and the wives of the other sages. Both Sita and Hermione, while still alive, nevertheless pass for dead to their husbands and the world, but they both preserve the quintessential female power of childbearing. As Sacks claims, Shakespeare's heroines of the tragicomedies posses a "natural ability to better the human condition" (95). Their miraculous children, who are born and who survive against all odds, in the protective and *female* bosom of nature rather than in the corrupted (and *male* society), are endowed with a regenerative force, capable, to a certain degree, to purge their fathers' sins.

Unlike Sita, who deserts her husband in favour of eternity spent in the protective bosom of Mother Earth, Hermione is restored to her husband by Paulina's plot:

> Music; awake her-strike! *Music/(To Hermione)*'Tis time; descend; be stone no more;/approach;/Strike all that looks upon with marvel–come;/I'll fill your grave up. Stir – nay, come away,/Bequeath to Death your numbness, for from him/Dear life redeems you./(To Leontes) You perceive she stirs./*Hermione descends* (Shakespeare 5.3. 98-103).

Although Barkan reads in Hermione's resurrection "the central dream of all ekphrasis" which "can be finally realized, that is, that the work of art is so real it could *almost* come to life" and the fact that "Theatre removes the *almost*" (343), other critics (Meek, particularly) and myself do not entirely agree with this over-optimistic interpretation of the final events of the play. Quite the opposite, the Shakespearean text seems to invite an ambiguous reading regarding the possibility of Hermione's miraculous resurrection, since, in Paulina's own words, the 'statue' only "*appears* she lives,/ Though yet she speak not" (Shakespeare 5.3.115-118, emphasis mine). Meek, while discussing others' readings of this scene, claims (as also clear when perusing the OED) that there are enough alternative definitions of the verb "to appear" (ranging from the straightforward "to become visible" to a

possible suggestion of deceptiveness of appearances) so as to sustain "that only a "superficial observer" would be wholly convinced by the appearance of Hermione" (404).

Even if we are to fully believe in this miraculous resurrection, the fact remains that it only occurs at the end of sixteen years, that it leaves behind a visibly-aged Hermione and that, after the suffering of many indignities at the hands of her royal husband, a happy reunion between a victimized queen and her victimizer (albeit softened by remorse) *appears* less than plausible. I would therefore, tend to consider the end of the Shakespearean play more in terms of a wish-fulfillment of the author himself, or perhaps, a fictional, Elizabethan reparation for the gruesome death of the unhappy Anne Boleyn.

Sitti Nusret

The richness of Turkish folklore results from a harmonious mixture between Central Asian traditions, and Anatolian ones, Anatolia being the land where the Oğuz Turks from the Kayı tribe settled in the thirteenth century. Both Anatolia and Central Asia are famous for the extreme variety of overlapping cultures and civilizations, which constitute even nowadays a focus of interest for many anthropologists, folklorists and ethnographers. Oral/popular Turkish literature [Türk Halk Edebiyat] consists of three distinct branches: *Saz şiiri* [creations of the wandering bards of Anatolia], *Halk tasavvufu* [popular mystic/lyric genre] and *Sözlü edebiyat* [oral, anonymous literature] (Dinescu v).

One of the masterpieces of popular Turkish literature is the epic poem called *The Book of Dede Korkut* [Dede Korkut Kitabı] whose final form was crystallized some time between the thirteenth and the fifteenth century. At its heart lies/acts the valiant figure of a female character who disguised as a man, takes her father's place and goes into battle. This model of the warrior woman, the Amazon-type who does not hesitate to act like a man, either when pressing social issues needs resolve and the male character is somehow incapacitated, or when a passive attitude would lead to the loss of one's true love can be found in many Turkish fairy-tales [masal]; moreover, it can also be found in early Turkish novels, such as Ömer Seyfettin's *Yalnız Efe* [The Lonely Efe]. Co-existing with the type of the fighter woman, the Amazon, Turkish folklore displays the opposite model of the ideal woman, the *peri* [fairy]-like in appearance, blessed with all the traditional virtues that define perfection. Such a woman (always a young girl or wife) is pure, faithful, sensitive and sensible at the same time; under the most hostile of circumstances she knows how to persevere and her exceptional qualities never fade. As Dinescu notices:

Patience is the fundamental attribute of the female character in Turkish tales. It is so limitless, that it surpasses the very embodiment of this virtue, the patience stone [*sabır taşı*], very often being–as in the case of Sitti Nusret from the eponymous fairy-tale-, the only modality for the heroine's survival in a world of hostile, implacable circumstances (xıı, translation from Romanian mine).

As mentioned above, the story of Sitti-Nusret is centered on her endless capacity to endure the misfortunes of life; submitted to numerous gory tests, apparently necessary for her true value to be revealed, Sitti Nusret barely survives, her human identity is almost obliterated, and she is only saved at the very last moment by the very male character who designed the network of her multiple trials. A happy-ending is supposed to follow and it does so in the text, but the memory of a contorted and distorted female destiny at the hands of may be read as the Turkish equivalent of Old Testament's capricious/and *male* God lingers long after the act of reading.

Similarly to the other two fictional heroines discussed in this paper, Sitti Nusret's origins secure her position among the ranks of divine children. She is begotten not as the routine consequence of the act of physical love between a man and a woman, but at the miraculous intervention of a *dervish* [the Turkish holy-man of many a fairy tale]. A rich merchant and his wife are blessed with a beautiful baby girl as the result of a chance encounter with a dervish and the many prayers that accompanied their wish for children. This apparent act of generosity and divine intervention has its high price though, the little girl herself. After seven years, the dervish's house will become hers, as he will be taken from her parents and mad to live in the care of the real author of her birth, the dervish himself. Significantly for the *objectification* of the female marked by the traditionally patriarchal stigma of anonymity, the girl has no name during the first seven years of life.

The dervish's *konak,* a sumptuous residence with many rooms, far from a safe heaven, is an authentic Bluebeard's castle. One day, opening the only door forbidden to her, Sitti Nusret witnesses a Gothic horror scene, with both cannibalistic and necrophiliac accents, a scene featuring her protector surprised in the act of eating the liver of the dead, in a cemetery. True to her patient and pious upbringing, the girl does not act upon her macabre discovery; instead, when interrogated by the dervish she confesses her full confidence in him and the appreciation of his many qualities, among which parental care, piety and the ritual reading of the Koran reign supreme. More tests follow, the dervish metamorphoses successively into her father, mother, and nanny, attempting to extract the truth regarding Sitti

Nusret's true opinion of him but she stands firm by her initial confessions. A reverse journey occurs and after eight-nine years she is returned to her parents, as a completely docile, beautiful and pious maiden, who constantly avoids human company. Her exceptional beauty and her piousness attract the prince's [*sehzade*] attention who asks for and obtains her hand in marriage.

Nevertheless, this love-based marriage does not end Sitti Nusret's misfortunes. While her husband is away to perform the sacred pilgrimage to Mecca, she gives birth to a beautiful child; immediately after birth the child is taken away from her, again by the same dervish, the implacable patriarchal figure in control of her life, but only after he smears her mouth with blood, so that she is believed by her mother-in-law to have devoured her own child. Although interrogated by her husband's mother, she refuses to disclose the truth, in what appears to be an act of extraordinary patience, endurance and loyalty to the dervish, the source of all her misfortunes and the initiator of bizarre tests. When the same occurs twice, with two more children, her mother-in-law, believing that her son has married "a human-looking beast" (*Sitti Nusret* 20), reveals what she believes to be the truth of her grandchildren's disappearance. As a result, Sitti Nusret is banished from the palace and starts her new life, imprisoned in a small room, among the servants of the lowest order. Years pass by, a new wife is looked for and found, and the royal wedding is supposed to proceed as soon as the groom will return from yet another journey. Everybody will get a gift, so will Sitti Nusret, who asks for a comb, a dagger and a *sabır taş* [a patience stone]. To that stone, alone, in the *hammam* [Turkish bath], Sitti Nusret pours her heart out and tells the story of her misfortunes. Interestingly, while acknowledging her cruel treatment at the hands of the dervish, she never expresses resentment. As she is telling her story, the patience stone is gradually swelling and at the end of the story, it suddenly breaks into a thousand pieces. Upon seeing this, Sitti Nusret grabs the dagger with the intention of killing herself; at that moment, miraculously the walls of the *hammam* part, the dervish appears and prevents the suicide by congratulating her and telling her that he is the artisan of her misfortunes and that they were only meant to test her character (*Sitti Nusret* 23). Now that she has proved her value, she is like a daughter to him and she will be allowed to get reunited with her children – who are all alive and well–and her husband. Happy ending, but not quite; at least, not for the readers troubled by the bizarre set of inhuman tests that a woman has to pass in order to confirm her value in what is obviously a cruel and very patriarchal world, albeit situated in the land of fairy-tales.

In her *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontes*, Diane Long Hoeveler argues that female gothic novels written between the end of the seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth century were instrumental in propagandizing the type of ideal femininity. Hoeveler focuses on "professional femininity"–a cultivated pose, a masquerade of docility, passivity, wise passiveness, and tightly controlled emotions" (xv); her concept of "professional femininity" is inspired by Rachel Brownstein's "female heroinism" which has at its center "the young woman perfectly chaste, dutiful, obedient, religious, useful, orderly, charitable, thrifty, and kind", who "acts and requires others to act according to a firm ethical standard" (qtd. in Hoeveler:xv). Although both Hoeveler and Brownstein apply such characteristics of ideal femininity to the historical context, the rise of the bourgeoisie and the need to strictly define gender distinctions in a nascent world, in my opinion their concepts of "professional femininity" (Hoeveler), "female heroinism" (Brownstein) and even "victim heroism" (Naomi Wolf, qtd. in Hoeveler:xiv) can be applied to other, remote geographies and eras. Thus, Sitti Nusret's extraordinary qualities, among which her capacity to endure without ever complaining, or rebelling against fate, people, and the dervish himself, bear an uncanny resemblance to those of an Emily St'Aubert, an Emmeline, an Ellena, the staple gothic-heroines who are allowed to secure domestic happiness only after surviving incredible adventures and repeated attacks on their virtue, innocence and sense-of-being in the world. The Turkish fairy-tale heroine, like her English Gothic sisters is constantly victimized by the strange dervish, the failed father-figure, expected to survive the worst of circumstances (*male*-created), while graciously displaying the best of *female* qualities.

One hardly knows what to read into this victimization/self-victimization and the recurrence of fantastic tests to which Sitti Nusret--the *female* principle is subjected by the *male* one. A possible interpretative lens is offered by Von Franz, who, in her analysis of fairy tales observes that "in his attempt to sever the woman's connections with the outside world, the *animus* may take on the aspect of a father" and that "the *animus* appears first as an old man who then turns into a youth, which is a way of saying that the old man–the father image –is only a temporary aspect of the animus and that behind this mask is a young man" (170-1). Although my analysis here is not Jungian, I find Von Franz's observations highly relevant for an attempt to comprehend Sitti Nusret's non-engagement with life, her internalized refusal to actively participate in the creation of her own destiny and her compliance with annihilating behavior. Read from this perspective, Sitti Nusret is simply a woman whose path to adulthood

is marked by her objectification at the hands of patriarchy, safely but in effect lethally disguised as father (or father-figure) and husband.

In this bizarre capacity for endurance, Sitti Nusret's character surpasses even Sita and Queen Hermione. My first two heroines, notwithstanding the gruesomeness of their own trials, are at least sheltered from the ghastly test of witnessing their respective husbands engaged in acts of cannibalism and necrophilia while embracing the female virtue of *taciturnitas* and not shouting the horror for the world to hear. For, although the Turkish tale ends with a happy resolution, we are never actually *told* whether the dervish, did indeed, vampirically consume human flesh, or he merely made it *appear* so, in order to test Sitti Nusret's infinite patience. Not that it matters much, except for arguing that, among others, professionally 'playing the woman' may also imply complicity with one's own private, patriarchal tormentor. From this perspective, the happy-ending of the tale also appears as unconvincing. On the one hand, it is very unlikely that the "broken" woman, having suffered enormously and unjustly, in the name of a bizarre code of ideal femininity designed by patriarchal forces can be so easily reconciled with the artisans of her misfortunes. On the other, since neither the male arbitrariness (the dervish's), nor the male passiveness (the husband's) are satisfactorily justified – at least not form a feminist perspective – the so-called restoration of order and the reconciliation of male and female principle lacks authenticity.

Conclusion

The present study offered a comparative reading of three texts belonging to remote geographies and chronologies, where a clear history of literary influences cannot be traced. However, as previously argued, there are obvious similarities between *Ramayana*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Sitti Nusret,* in terms of protagonists, settings, plots and gender implications.

The three heroines are women of elevated status, either divine or noble. Their origins are comfortably and paradoxically 'forgotten' by their male counterparts, who, while very much aware of their own growing power, can only conceive of it in terms of depriving their wives/daughters of the privileges of their extraordinary birth. All the three heroines are subjected to recurrent tests, fashioned by their patriarchal counterparts; the aim of such tests is to prove their *ideal femininity*, centered on qualities of chastity, virtue, patience, resilience and ultimately forgiveness. Although there are differences between the said tests which can be explained through the particular eras, geographies and ideologies which constituted their

background, the principle remains unchanged. It refers to the implacability of male verdicts regarding the fate of the women they are supposed to protect, as either husbands of fathers. As mentioned by Pandit in her discussion of *universals*: "The imperialist universalist expects to see only its own reflection in the Other, tests the value and validity of the Other solely in terms of an already established normative self. In its most aggressive forms, it seeks to annihilate the Other" (*Caste, Race and Nation* 207). If Pandit's categorization of universals in terms of the colonizer/the colonized can expand borders–as I have suggested here–and become significant for *gender* issues as well, then it follows that the three heroines underwent a monstrous correction of self (female) so as to fit the norms of the other (male). Such tests obviously stem from a universal/patriarchal assessment of women as potential sinners, adulteresses, even murderous of their own children. To this *politics of testing* consisting of *hegemonic/male universals* the *emphatic universals* can be opposed, and they consist of women's resilience, power of endurance, boundless fertility, and even capability to "forgive and forget", as an antidote to "this annihilating, nonassimilative, separatist universalism" (Pandit, *Caste, Race and Nation* 207).

I would like to end by drawing attention to the question mark contained in the title of the present study which is meant to raise doubts regarding the benign potential of counteracting the male universals with the female ones. My chosen heroines (except Sita, who will end her life on earth, and will have to wait for many hundreds of years to be reunited with Rama as God Vishnu and herself as Goddess Laxhmi) appear to have gained their right to happiness by employing their female virtues *par excellence*. However, Hermione is old by now and "wrinkled", perhaps in spirit as well as in flesh and Sitti Nusret was only returned from the gates of death at the very last moment. Considering these 'happy'-endings, can we truly claim that *testing* the female means *empowering* the female? It seems that the title's initial question mark is here to stay.

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NINETEENTH CENTURY ROMANIAN PUBLIC SPACE: THE FINAL FRONTIER FOR WOMEN?

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Abstract: "Far from being unitary or monolithic or autonomous things, cultures actually assume more <foreign> elements, alterities, differences, than they consciously exclude." (Said 15). Building on gender studies discourse, the present paper builds on Said's view of cultural experiences at large as stated in the quotation above and attempts to illustrate what was at stake in the (trans)cultural relationship between space, place and textuality in the making of the Romanian romantic novel.

Keywords: gender roles, alterity, modernity, identity construction, spatiality, romantic novel.

Mid-nineteenth century Romanian culture provides exemplary proof that this postcolonial interpretation of literature needs to be fully adopted by contemporary literary scholars, as the phenomenon of the novel was "foreign" *par excellence* in Romania from the very outset, being imported (and eventually translated and adapted) from French culture. My paper sets out to offer an analysis of how the impressive body of evidence regarding women's reception of mid-nineteenth-century novels played a crucial role in shaping the new Romanian perception of spatiality. For this purpose, I have taken into account research in the field which situates the origins of the early-modern Romanian novel roughly between 1840 and 1865, where the 1840s witnessed the lead-up to the 1848 Modern Revolution in Romania and the 1860s symbolically mark the birth of the very first Romanian literary-critical institution, the *Junimea* literary society, and its publication, *Convorbiri literare* [*Literary Debates*]. Taking into consideration the fact that

the whole importing-translating-adapting process is an intricate phenomenon, I have further grounded my argumentation on the extensive research into both the early to mid-nineteenth century romance novels' audience and to their production, from translations to the *domestication* of the imported formula, which has been carried by Romanian scholars.

The setting of the reception of French influence in Romania is well known. From Pompiliu Eliade's *De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie: Les Origines* (1889) [*The French Influence over the Public Spirit in Romania. The Origins. A Study of the Condition of Romanian Society at the Time of the Phanariot Rulers*] onwards it has been established that the replacement of the Oriental influence that held sway in the first part of the nineteenth century with French influence within a few decades was the effect of a combination of factors. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the elite had rediscovered the ideas of Latinity and of national rebirth; this was based on the seismic effects of the French Revolution, and was further extended by the 1848 Revolution. In addition, the beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed a fashion among the rich for sending their offspring to study in France, and the number of Romanian students there increased exponentially. Moreover, as Eliade explains, the history of French influence on Romanian culture goes back beyond this period, via the French lifestyle introduced to the Romanian aristocracy by the Tzarist armies and especially by the gallant officers who socialised at Court and became involved with local beauties. French novels became the preferred genre, and among them *La Nouvelle Héloïse* [*The New Héloïse*], *Paul et Virginie* [Paul *and Virginie*], *Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers* [*The Sufferance of Young Werther*] (in a French version), probably Richardson's works, so popular at the time, and those of Restif de la Bretonne and Mme de Staël were the most common in private libraries. Regarding the popularity of *Corinne* (Madame de Staël, 1807*)*, an interesting detail is revealed by Kosmali, a foreign traveller from the end of the Phanariot period. He recorded that he had found Madame de Staël's book in an aristocratic home, annotated by the mistress of the house, a devoté of romantic literature ; also, a certain Marieta Cantacuzino, a young woman from the aristocracy, had in her personal library *La vie et les amours du chevalier du Faublas* [*The Life and Love of Faublas the Knight*] (14 volumes!) before 1821 (Kosmali qtd. in Xenopol 209-210), thus showing that women's reading habits had become modern long before the official modernization brought about by the men having their political revolution in 1848. Moreover, it is a documented fact that women took the

lead in giving up Turkish Ottoman dress and embracing European styles; this took place as early as the late eighteenth century.

Consequently, analysis of the early-modern Romanian novel from a gender perspective must not ignore the mediating, and catalyzing role which translations played in Romanian culture, under the influence of French culture. Here, as elsewhere, the defenders of public morality raged against the dangerous new reading practices. The only difference is that in the Romanian culture the reason for rejecting the so-called *belle litterature* was not triggered by aesthetic reasons, as happened, for example, in the case of French Classicism. In our case, the reason lay purely in morality, but the effects were the same. Consequently, due to very lax contemporary notions of intellectual property and to a concern not to frighten the reader with unusual ideas, translators would frequently and blatantly tamper with the text: they would suppress details, soften the tone, and add their own commentaries and sometimes entire passages to the "translated" text, because: "… the novel was suspected of circulating subversive ideas, French ones in particular, of propagating a dubious morality, triggering, eventually, the deconstruction of traditions and stirring of senses." (Cornea, *Translators and Translations* 60)

Translators as intermediaries are very much aware of their audacity: all Romanian versions are, with no exceptions, entirely wholesome, with their moralizing discourses and politically correct attitudes towards social hierarchy and moral precepts. Starting from the existing research in the field and limiting the scope of my research to the 1840-1865 period, I have managed to bring to light the following statistical data: 92 translated novels; 14 women translators; 26 foreign novels written by female authors translated into Romanian; 5 novels written by foreign women authors translated by Romanian women. The fact that my own statistics reveal that out of the impressive body of translators (92) active between 1840 and 1865 only 14 were women can be explained when we remember that men were viewed as the defenders of morality.

However, even though female translation activity (regarded as production) is meagre in comparison to male, when we look at it from the perspective of reception things are completely different. Once established, this type of literature consumption becomes the dominant fashion, as was constantly pointed out both in the period itself and subsequently. For instance, as early as the 1840s Alecu Russo reveals how powerfully this (female) fashion for reading romances had spread through the less exalted strata of society: "Following the elegant and fashionable women,

the second class aristocracy will only speak of Balzac and Soulie, Lamartine and Hugo, Kock and Dumas; especially Paul de Kock–they adore". (73)

Referring to the same phenomenon, and basing his conclusions on extensive research into the phenomenon of reception, Paul Cornea unequivocally asserts that:

"After 1860 … *women represent a significant percent that stimulates translations* [emphasis mine] from widely accessible novels, namely 'romances'" (Cornea, *The Rule* 282)

According to Cornea, the proportion of novels translated compared with other genres reveals the ever-increasing importance the novel gained around the 1860s: translations of French novels had increased by 400% compared to 1840, and by 250% compared to 1850.

However, the connection between women and romances as a major vector of spatial modernity is a complex one, especially given the negative reactions to their reading habits. If we apply it to our study at this point, Said's contrapuntal reading theory (*Culture and Imperialism,* 1994) allows a better understanding of this oxymoronic relationship between women and the novel. As Said explains "The point is that contrapuntal reading must take account of both processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it". Within this context, love as a theme and preoccupation plays a subversive role, which women perceived (often unconsciously) as a breach carved into the traditional system of values, which no longer corresponded to their (and the overall society's, for that matter) underlying need for emancipation. Women and their lifestyle, especially their reading practices, were operating as a phenomenon of alterity, to use Virgil Nemoianu's terms (see *A Theory of the Secondary*), something which, he claims: "... appears as a guiding nucleus, that ... attracts incipient noise and starts building a world with a certain structure." (172) Demand from the female public stimulated the translation of romance novels and eventually the production of home-grown versions, which came as a natural solution to satisfy both the censorship imposed by traditional morality and the public. The early Romanian novels are thus grounded on a dual foundation: written by men, read by women, arguing against women's emancipation and yet propagating it. Consequently, the image of modern women constantly overlapped with that of the novel, a state of affairs which located the fight for gender dominance in the agora of literature; this is revealed by the fact that the "devastating" consequences of women's reading practices became a topos in the early Romanian novel, transgressing reality and becoming a recurrent literary theme, involving issues such as **what women should read** and above all **who** should decide what they should read. Here is the

voice of a male writer put into the mouth of a protagonist in one of the early novels: "You'd rather read French romances, claiming that this is true reading and, perhaps, to learn how to fulfil your duties as mistresses. But this is hilarious! You are not even able to take advantage of this situation! I know you: you even lack the ability of loving properly!" (Kogălniceanu 27)

As we may observe, reading was constantly linked to loving, and it is therefore not far-fetched to understand these early romances as a codified discourse speaking about the new phenomenology of love, where the text might be romance, but its sub-text was eroticism and sexuality. **Therefore,** within the early Romanian novel we can detect this phenomenon of alterity which triggered an intrinsic erosion of the gender roles in the couple, with irreversible consequences: from the display of feminine and masculine bodies, to new gender roles **and a reorganizing of space itself around this gender shift**. The imported mentality changed the status quo, swiftly swallowed up what had existed before and produced, within a very short time, a new content: new values, new morality. One narrator sheds light on this "underground" revolution triggered by women's emancipation when he complains that women's behaviour was working to the detriment of native Romanian literature: "They will not speak in their beautiful Romanian language; they write, speak, read everything in a foreign language." (Pantazi 145) Consequently, research into the mechanics of women's demands for romance novels in particular reveals new connotations of the context of Romanian modernity, thus perfectly illustrating Pierre Bourdieu's theory which postulates that both reading and writing involve aspects which display the power conflict between individuals, as long as any book contains within itself the potential to meet the reader's horizon of expectation. Within this context, my conclusion is that via the imported romances, the erotic legacy of Western courtly love penetrated the heavy traditional Eastern mentality with a conquering force, consequently coming to the forefront in the daily life of the aristocracy, and, in a few decades, of the whole of the bourgeoisie, all due to the phenomenon of women's *erwartungshorizont.*

Once secondary social players, women came to the forefront of modern existence, with their *frivolous* preoccupations: reading romances, erotic display, love for luxury and entertaining, proposing their own version of modernity: a local adaptation of the broader network of mentalities emerging in the entire modern European space. Women's reading practices thus brought about in mid-nineteenth century Romanian culture what Anthony Giddens calls the

European "transformation of intimacy" (I am referring here to Anthony Giddens' *The Transformation of Intimacy. Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* of 1992 in which he analyses the wider context of the changes which occurred in gender relations in Europe in the nineteenth century, as a result of the evolution of modern capitalism and democratic societies).

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TRAUMA DRAMA: VICTIMS' TRAUMATIC MEMORIES IN KAY ADSHEAD'S *THE BOGUS WOMAN* (2001) AND TIMBERLAKE WERTENBAKER'S *CREDIBLE WITNESS* (2001).

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Abstract: In our contemporary society there exists a fascination with trauma and testimony. Thus, my paper looks at traumatised protagonists in the above-mentioned plays that testify to the manifold victimization of asylum seekers. First they were tortured and persecuted in their home countries, and then subjected to new traumatic humiliation in prison-like detention centres in Great Britain. Both plays assume a political position by appealing to the individual conscience of the audience who, through the characters' outrageous narration, become witnesses to appalling violations of human rights.

Keywords: Adshead, detention centres, persecution, testimony, trauma/asylum drama, Wertenbaker, witnesses.

Introduction

Wiesel (qtd. in Felman and Laub 6) has written "our generation invented a new literature, that of testimony". Thus, the question can be asked: "What is the relation between literature and testimony, between the writer and the witness?" (Felman and Laub xiii.) As theatre audience, we witness the narration of traumatic experiences through the testimony transmitted by victims of violence. Witnessing implies an ethical obligation towards the Other, to assume our responsibility for the victimized. In Trauma Drama, traumatised protagonists show signs of clinical syndromes, referred to as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a term that has replaced "shell shock" or "traumatic neurosis". "Trauma Drama engages with a concept that has been prominent in a number of contemporary Western discourses, among them psychiatric, psychoanalytical, artistic, journalistic, legal and cultural theoretical discourses" (Wald 93). Scholars describe British society as "traumaculture"

(Luckhurst 2003) and North American society as "wound culture" (Seltzer 1997, 1998); "trauma" literally means "a wound in the flesh". Wald explains that "[t]rauma was first used to indicate a general form of injury and came to be associated with a wounding of the mind by the end of the nineteenth century, when it designated the sudden prostration of the nervous system through surgical shock" (93). Present-day psychiatric explanations of traumatisation are based on Freud's and other physicians' psychoanalytic theory, which designated trauma as "an event in the subject's life defined by its intensity, by the subject's incapacity to respond adequately to it, and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects that it brings about in the psychical organisation" (Laplanche and Pontalis 465 qtd. in Wald 93).

Wald refers to the "fascination with trauma in contemporary society which is reflected in literature and film" (94). Trauma drama stages the person's response to the traumatic event that necessarily involves intense fear, helplessness and horror, and often provokes the re-experiencing of the traumatic event or recurrent, distressing dreams (Wald 94). One of the most common issues of Trauma Drama is child sexual abuse, as explored in a series of plays written in the last fifteen years by Mark Ravenhill, Alan Bennett, Sarah Daniels, Phyllis Nagy and David Eldridge, to name but a few. In recent years, however, several authors have explored the trauma suffered by asylum seekers in their repressive home countries and in prison-like detention centres in a supposedly democratic country such as Great Britain. Among stage work that deals with the asylum seeker, the following should be mentioned: Jonathan Dove's modern opera *Flight* (libretto by April de Angelis, performed 1998), Sonja Linden's *I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me by a Young Lady from Rwanda* (2002), Tanika Gupta's *Sanctuary* (2002), Kay Adshead's *The Bogus Woman* (2001) and Timberlake Wertenbaker's *Credible Witness* (2001). I have chosen the two last-mentioned plays as examples of trauma or asylum drama. Both plays narrate the persecution and violence migrants endured in their homelands and the hostile circumstances they were confronted with in the UK.

Trauma Drama or Asylum Drama

Significantly, asylum drama started to be written at a time when the asylum issue was at the forefront of public awareness. Globalisation and political conflicts around the world have caused an ever-increasing number of refugees to ask for political asylum in democratic countries such as Germany, France and Great Britain. "According to a special BBC report published in 2003, one person in three hundred globally is a refugee" (Kritzer 199). The Refugee Council in the United Kingdom stresses that, "[a]pplications for asylum

have soared in the United Kingdom, from 4223 individuals in 1982 to 103,080 in 2002" (Kritzer 199). Kritzer explains that "[a]lthough only one out of four applications is granted, the increased costs of immigration control, along with demands on the NHS, social service, and the state education system, have created resentment" (199). Not only the tabloid press such as the *Daily Mail* but also the liberal press have expressed their fears about social impact, terrorism and crime. It should be recalled that "all people have the right to asylum from war or persecution" (Aston 5), something established in the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees and promised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, the asylum seeker is seen as an "unwelcome supplicant and encourages racist and nationalist thinking so that seekers are viewed as "bogus" rather than genuine, despite evidence to the contrary" (Aston 5). The Labour Government, rather than guarantee the welfare of refugees, adopted penalizing measures and placed "[a]sylum seekers without housing or resources in detention centres while their claims are reviewed or appeals considered" (Kritzer 200). Kay Adshead states in the Author's Note (2001): "I could not believe that the violation of human rights of vulnerable people was happening in England in 1997 (outside Oxford no less) and more shocking still in the first year under a Labour government for which I had waited eighteen years!" In such a hostile climate, "it was left to theatre-makers to give an insight into the experiences of asylum-seekers and other migrants", as Sierz (115) expresses it. This is precisely what Kay Adshead hopes to achieve in her play, to give "an insight into what it can really be like to seek asylum in this country" (Author's Note, 2001).

The Bogus Woman (Traverse Theatre, 2000; The Bush Theatre, 2001)

Adshead's play *The Bogus Woman* was directed by Lisa Goldman and acted by the black actress Noma Dumezweni. In this one-woman show, a nameless young black woman from an unnamed African country (allegedly Zimbabwe) narrates her traumatic story in the form of a poetic monologue, giving vent to her indignation and anger. She also embodies some forty roughly-observed characters and their viewpoints, through making subtle changes in her accent and posture: the members of her murdered African family, and the people she has met during her refuge-seeking odyssey to England. Aston (7) has rightly observed that there are two parallel stories: that of atrocities in a war-torn African country in which the black woman, a human rights journalist, witnesses her family, including her new-born baby, Anele, being shot in front of her eyes, while she herself is brutally raped by the soldiers who have murdered her family; and that of how she is treated in England once she has managed to

flee from her homeland. "In the juxtaposition of the atrocities in Africa with the woman's detention in England, Adshead superimposes the treatment the young woman receives by the various British authorities with the brutality of the crimes committed against her and her family" (Aston 7). In fact, "[t]he play not only dramatises the horror of the massacre, but also denounces the woman's treatment in Britain" where, indeed, "she is treated as a bogus refugee and subjected to one humiliation after another" (Sierz 116). Rather than finding protection and freedom after her traumatic experiences, the young woman is detained, distrusted, dehumanised and ill-treated by an English immigration system that finally sends her back to Africa.

Based on Adshead's personal research, the work of The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture and source material from the Refugee Council, the play is set in the infamous Detention Centres of Campsfield--which was the scene of a real-life protest riot by detainees in 1997 (Campsfield Nine)--and Tinsley House. Adshead states in her Author's Note (2001) that (she) read hundreds of stories of refugees seeking asylum in this country. "All of them were sad, but some were sickening, so horrifying as to be almost unreadable". It was out of these shocking stories that Adshead created her own story of *The Bogus Woman*. In this sense, as the spectator is participating in the real experience of asylum seekers, Billington has observed in "The Theatre of War" that theatre that "establishes the importance of fact", providing real information, is "[t]he key to the political drama of the future" (qtd. in Aston 9).

Aston explains the set of the production of *The Bogus Woman*, designed by Ti Green, as follows: "a stark, bleak construction [was] designed to create a diasporic "space" of Africa and England and visually impressed upon spectators that England is not the safe, civilised haven one might imagine it to be" (10). Roughly-hewn pieces of wood on one side of the theatre space were evocative of Africa while on the other side there was a corrugated sheet, suggestive of England. The young woman imagines a country that is "holding out/ its one good hand/ … its one good hand to me" (Adshead 22). Distressingly, that dream gives way to her astonishment when she finds herself in "Campsfield Detention Centre. A tangled tower/ of twenty foot high razor wire", uttering the anxious question: "Where am I?" (Adshead 22-23). In this appalling, prison-like institution, the deeply traumatised woman is subjected to bureaucratic incompetence, official prejudice, a lack of compassion and casual racism. In spite of all the atrocities the young woman has suffered and continues to endure, "she demonstrates a strength and will to live that are rooted in her desire to communicate the story of family members who are now dead" (Kritzer 200-201). "And I would like one day/ to write

a history/ of my people". Hence, she imagines "a hole in the sky" made by the strong magic of "her grandfather, the witch doctor" (Adshead 39), through which she may be able to get in touch with her ancestors.

But what actually happens is that her need to tell her story is belittled by the doctor at the centre, whose sarcastic reaction is deeply shocking in that he disbelieves her terrible account of rape and subsequent conception: "I had a baby/ then miscarried/. I was raped/ the day/ after giving birth/ to my husband's child. [...] I got pregnant/ then miscarried/. God has been good to me/. Not your God" (Adshead 28).

To my mind, it is significant that the young woman denies the goodness of a "white, western God" who does not provide anything good in her present desperate condition. According to trauma theory, a person can only get sure relief from traumatic incidents through narration, speaking about them, and doing some memory work (Grehan 56). However, victims of trauma "find it difficult to give a narrative account of the original event" (Grehan 56). In fact, though the young woman is capable of delivering her truth-claim in front of the doctor, she starts to waver when she is subjected to the cold, cynical questioning of the interrogator. She is actually accused of lying and has to endure the interrogator's negative response to her need to *re-externalise* the traumatic events of the massacre of her family, her rape by three soldiers, and the fact that this resulted in her conceiving again the day after giving birth (Adshead 83). "*Faltering, in difficulty*" (Ashead 81), the woman's memory seems to fail her and she can only answer in monosyllables, though she seems to recover her memory at times as she tells the terrifying account of the bayoneting of her whole family, while the baby was killed "with his (the taller soldier's) machete" (Adshead 82). Strikingly, the young woman becomes *[v]ery tense, tearful, distraught*" when she affirms: "I was raped/ by the soldiers/ I.../miscarried a foetus/ in a bucket/ while hiding" (82). Sierz has explained the importance of the way "Adshead reproduces the uncertainties of a traumatic experience–while it is clear that the woman was raped, it is uncertain whether her memory of a miscarried foetus is a real event or a horrific nightmare" (116). Indeed, it may be true that she miscarried a grinning foetus, wishing to eject from her body the outgrowth conceived through violence instead of love, but this might also be a hallucination resulting from the brutal rape, the effect of a need to liberate herself from the traumatic experience by metaphorically expelling the semen introduced by force. A healing process can only be achieved when "a therapeutic process–a process of constructing a narrative, of reconstructing a history and essentially, of *re-externalising the event* (Felman and Laub 69; italics in original) can be set in motion.

Tragically, there is no qualified specialist at hand to help the young woman to initiate a healing process, though she does receive some occasional unofficial kindness, as, for instance, from the resolute solicitor, Pennington, who fights her case out of altruism, or the prison social visitor, Agnes, who finds her a home during her "Temporary Admission". However, "these sympathetic people are without power and the powerful people have no sympathy" (Kritzer 200). Her story is disbelieved because there are no longer any external signs of the rape on her body, or any records of her family's massacre, or of her work as a journalist, because "the English authorities/ have been writing/ to the wrong fucking paper" (Adshead 37). The appalling treatment she is given "evoke[s] a system where people with neither the skill nor the will to understand a traumatised individual are making decisions about whether to apply the 'bogus' label" (Halliburton 137). Thus she becomes a victim of racism and xenophobia and gets called "a little nigger woman" (Adshead 23). The guard orders menacingly: "Don't piss about/ or we'll make burgers/ out of you/ black meat" (Adshead 57). In addition, she has to put up with a total lack of washing facilities, yet is accused of being dirty. She suffers from an unremitting upset stomach because the food she is given has gone off. Furthermore, she is denied any communication with the outside world and is not even allowed to speak with a solicitor. So she exclaims: "That is a fundamental breach/ of human rights" (Adshead 63).

One of Adshead's outstanding achievements in the play is to provide the young woman with the poetic skill "to distil her experiences into rapid, rough and ready stanzas" (Sierz 116). From her cell, suffering from insomnia, she watches "the small/ grey rectangle of England/ the veins of English cloud, and weep" (Adshead 19). In these frightening moments, lying ill in her chilly cell, she dreams of her baby girl, Anele: "One night/, mad with waking dreams/ I suck from my own breasts/ hoping to taste Anele/ and my old sweet life" (Adshead 31). These moments, when she dreams of her murdered baby, are exceptionally moving and almost unbearable to watch, as most critics have commented.

The young woman's resolution to survive as an unwanted refugee, in spite of all the adversities she endures, exact "a physical toll even greater than that she suffered in her own country, as it starves, exhausts, ages, and cripples her" (Kritzer 201). From Campsfield she is sent to another detention centre, Tinsley House, near Gatwick, "run by the American Company/ Wackenhut/ their ethos/ famously/ non-confrontational" (Adshead 67). Her appeals for asylum are dismissed first by the Special Adjudicator, and then by the Special Appeal Tribunal. In her miserable rented room, she has to report weekly to the police station, and she has to survive on a "thirty pound food voucher" (Adshead 98). At length, turned out, she ends

up in the street, totally penniless and terror-stricken, humiliated by a young man who takes her for a prostitute when she uncovers her breast in her agitation, wanting to feed her baby. She has lost her bag with her only possessions–photos of her family, her address-book, and "Anele's shawl" in which she once wrapped her newborn baby. After this, "*[s]he breaks down, she sounds like an animal*" (Adshead 119). In a last moment of futile despair, the young woman tries to contact her solicitor or Agnes. Her fate is a downward plunge towards Dante's Inferno. She is finally arrested and taken to Holloway Prison, where she has to stay in a strip cell for six and a half weeks (Adshead 126). Refused asylum, she is deported and finally killed, along with the friends who are sheltering her. Thus, violence has come full circle, but, sadly, she could have been saved had the British Authorities acted according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which she was a defender, a fact which ironically provoked her tragic fate.

Credible Witness (Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Upstairs, London (2001))

Timberlake Wertenbaker's play, like Kay Adshead's, is based on real information. Aston explains that "[s]he was originally approached by the International Department of the Royal Court to get involved in a research project on refugees" (9) over a period of two and a half years. Actors and directors called on refugee and detention centres in pairs to interview people and afterwards shared their experiences. Wertenbaker used this research for her play *Credible Witness*, which, like Adshead's, is set in a detention centre. In the stage directions for Scene Three, Wertenbaker asserts: "*It could be a refugee camp anywhere in the world, but in fact it is a detention centre in England*" (192). The references to "[a] *grey space* and "*[b]arbed wire*" evoke a confined, prison-like space, even a concentration camp. While *The Bogus Woman* takes the form of a moving monologue uttered by a single woman, in Wertenbaker's play the asylum issue is reported through a mother-son relationship and includes other refugees as well. In spite of this human connection, the play "is less a personal drama than a wide-ranging vision of Britain as a global crossroad" (Sierz 116). Sierz conveniently summarises the storyline:

> [T]he play follows Petra, a Macedonian woman, who comes to London on a false passport, trying to find her son, Alexander, who has fled his homeland. When she eventually finds him, he is no longer the fierce nationalist he was brought up to be, and she disowns him. At the same time, other refugees appear–a Sri Lankan, a Somali and an Algerian. In the play's climax, Petra confronts the immigration official, symbolically named Simon Le Britten, with Ameena, a credible witness whose body bears the scars of multiple rape. Petra finally blesses her son and speaks on behalf of all the detainees (116).

The plot, as the summary illustrates, "is concerned with ideas of history, nation, and identity as they arise in the context of asylum seeking" (Aston 8). Es Devlin's design, a rising, circular walled environment, is evocative of a layered or fossilized history (Aston 11). In the Prologue to the play, the stage directions read: *A small archaeological dig in Northern Greece. Alexander Karagy guides a group of children* (Wertenbaker 185). Alexander explains to the children the different layers of history, from the Iron Age onwards. Now they can look back on "five thousand years of Macedonian history" (185) that can be traced back to Alexander the Great, though contemporary Northern Greece refuses to acknowledge its Macedonian past. He stresses the importance of adhering to one's history, because it is a question of identity that enriches you. Alexander then suffers an explosives attack by "*shadowy figures*" (185) who turn out to be the local police. He succeeds in fleeing to England on a false passport, where, again, now in a "dilapidated community centre", (Wertenbaker 188) he is teaching a group of refugee children and explaining the meaning of exile and the importance of retrieving their personal histories. His statement that they are "guests in England" (188) is sniggered at and spat at by the children, who recall the hostile reception they received. Alexander has been denied asylum, and subsequent scenes show him doing menial jobs as an illegal immigrant. Petra, likewise, is denied asylum on her arrival in Britain and ends up in a detention centre. She assumes, incorrectly and ironically, that the British authorities will be glad to help her find her son, whom she also believes to be being treated as a welcome guest and not as an unwelcome stranger. It gradually dawns on her, once she is deprived of freedom and placed in a prison-like institution, that she is no welcome guest. She encounters other refugees, from Algeria, Sri Lanka, and Somalia, who have fled appalling tortures and are waiting for permission to remain in England. Petra eventually establishes a close and familiar relationship with them, above all with Ameena, a young black girl from Somalia.

When Alexander is finally found, there is a decisive confrontation between mother and son in the detention centre. He disowns his history and asks his mother: "Why should I die for your obsessions?" (Wertenbaker 223) Though Petra curses her son, she eventually understands that one has to leave behind one's Macedonian history of violence "to embrace a new trans-national community" and also grasps "that overcoming the paralysis of history is not a lack or a "deficiency", but a gain" (Aston 15). History eventually "shifts in the detention centre, because those detained and those officially in charge of the detention begin to

exchange different histories, and crucially because spectators too are being invited to "see" differently" (Aston 11), to see "identity" in a different light.

Petra's liberation from her obsessive sense of history and identity enables her to help Ameena, who is suffering from a traumatic shock. Though she has been having horrific nightmares, shaking and crying, nobody has approached her to hear her story, not even the doctor. She was raped when she was seventeen and still a virgin. She suffers from PTSD as a result of sexual trauma. In *The Bogus Woman* the feminine body was the *site* of violence but the woman is disbelieved because there are no longer any wounds on her body. Ameena's body, however, bears the external *signs* of her traumatic past: thirty-four cigarette burns on her front. Twenty-five on her back (Wertenbaker 232). These multiple cigarette burns provide testimony to the truth of her story of rape, humiliation and torture. Petra forces Mr Le Britten, the detention official, to look at Ameena's tortured body, to provide him with "credible testimony" (Wertenbaker 233). When Ameena unbuttons her blouse, - "*[a]ll turn away except for Shivan and Petra*" (232). Shivan, himself a doctor, accuses the centre practitioner of never having taken the trouble to examine Ameena; to make things convenient for him, he has "given her the strongest tranquilliser he could find" (232). Ameena is finally able to recount her traumatic, tormenting experience:

> **Ameena** (*struggling*) I – was – (*inaudible*) They sur-round me in the street. Take me inside – dark –at first I don't see… Eight. Eight men. I thought: for a beating – for names, I was prepared – for beating.
> …
> They don't want – names. For an hour, they shout – not at me – at each the other – who gets me first.
> …
> *She stops.*
> Then. Many hours. Turned – turned over. Turned. *Pause.*
> They stop to smoke and crush cigarettes – on –
> Crush cigarettes. On.
> Some. Others – start again. They – on my knees. Together now – they – everywhere. (*She gags slightly*). Then. They throw me – on the street. It is light – sun.
> My mother – No! I can't go home (234).

Ameena suffers the frightening anguish of the rape victim, feeling the shame instilled by a patriarchal system that blames women for men's sexual violence.[1] Critics have agreed

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[1] The theme of rape and the feeling of shame instilled by patriarchism is dealt with as well in Wertenbaker's feminist play *The Love of the Nightingale* (1988). Cf. Klein, Hildegard, "Violence, Silence and the Power of

that the pain of this scene is unbearable, not only for the asylum official, forced by Petra to watch, but also for the spectators, who are likewise forced to become witnesses of the young girl's testimony. "The body is the site /sight of a double violation: the juncture of a violent heterosexist culture of the masculine from which the woman is in exile, and the colonialist, imperialist gaze of the asylum authority" (Aston 17). Up to that moment, nobody has listened to Ameena's excruciating story. But now, with Petra's supportive, protective mother-like role, she is perhaps able to find "liberation or healing" (Grehan 45) from the pain of the past. The overworked immigration official, too symbolically called Simon Le Britten (Billington 184), represents the policy of the British immigration system. However, he has finally "looked" at the wounds inflicted on Ameena and this may induce him to change his attitude in the future. Petra tells him, after her own learning process, not to wall herself up in his own history but to look around at the globalized world, represented by all the refugees: "History shifts, Simon, we can't hold it. And now, when we turn to you, don't cover your eyes and think of the kings and queens of England. Look at us: we are your history now" (Wertenbaker 236).

In the same way, the audience too is forced to come in as witnesses and entreated to take on responsibility, to move towards a new ethics, and to look differently. Adshead wrote her play in the hope "that it may change minds" (Author's Note 2001). In fact, "Kay Adshead hasn't set out to offer solutions but rather to wake us up to the infamies perpetrated in our name" (Woddis 138).

Conclusion

The plays depict an arbitrary and opaque system that turns a blind eye to the terrifying dangers in the asylum seekers' homelands (Kritzer 203). They manifest their political position through appeals to individual conscience. They generate empathy through the humanist construction of admirable characters who have survived extraordinary violence in the past and now encounter institutional callousness and incompetence in Britain. The plays suggest that the failures of the current immigration system can be attacked by those who sympathize with the refugees' fate, but that the impact of their opposition is limited because of their lack of power. However, this individual opposition will eventually "galvanize change". In fact, "[t]he Committee to Defend Asylum Seekers, which began life in 2001, provides organizational support for refugees in Britain" (Kritzer 204).

Language in Edward Bond's *The Woman,* and Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love Of The Nightingale:* Transformation of Greek Myths for Our Time". *Gender Studies* 2/2 (2003): 19-32.

However, although the treatment of asylum seekers has become an international human rights issue, Kay Adshead, in her Author's Note (2009) to the reprinting of the play, declares as follows:

> It (the play) is still being performed, because tragically the asylum debate remains at the centre of not just British politics, but international policy making. Campsfield is still there, no women now, but still 200 detainees. So are Oakington, Harmondsworth, Lindholme and the others, most notoriously Yarl's Wood (infamous for detaining not just women but children with learning disabilities) … Innocent people who have committed absolutely no crime, often fleeing the most terrible circumstances, bloody slaughter, destruction of their homes, traumatised after seeing loved ones killed are still being locked up in the equivalent of high security prisons, without charge, without a release date, without access to adequate legal representation, in the vain hope that this will deter others from exercising their rights under the Geneva Convention to claim asylum in Britain. … Amnesty International recognises it as a breach of human rights. Yet it happens every single day.

I would like to conclude this work by quoting Adshead's ardent statement in reference to *The Bogus Woman* being an ideological sister to Medea or Antigone: "I look forward to the day when my play and the character's terrible journey can be seen and enjoyed as universal mythology and not as current social documentary" (Author's Note, 2009).

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CAPTIVE BODIES: VICTORIAN CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININITY IN *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* AND *THE CRIMSON PETAL AND THE WHITE*

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Abstract: This paper argues that both *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and *The Crimson Petal and the White* (2002) investigate, expose and condemn the multifaceted inscription of a specific culture on the female body (via the construction of femininity)–the defleshing of female bodies, which in turn makes them docile (at least temporarily). With different degrees of explicitness, the two novels demonstrate how this specific--capitalist, imperialist, patriarchal--culture forces itself onto the bodies of girls/women: the legalized, scientifically justified process whereby female bodies, regardless of class, are defleshed, skinned alive and made to emit signs of subjugation to the patriarchal will--this being their assigned role, without exception, in various male-dominated economies.

Keywords: body, capitalism, captivity, disenfranchisement, docility, fashion, femininity, ghosts, power

Introduction

The starting point of this paper is Foucault's notion of a docile body and Sherry Shapiro's *bodies that are skinned alive:* the thesis, that both Bronte and Faber investigate the culture-specific construction of femininity that in turn produces docile, defleshed and literally/fashionably captive female bodies.

Foucault postulates the docile body in *Discipline and Punish* in wide terms as the body "that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved (136)." While the body has always been the object of power, from the eighteenth century onwards, with the rise of capitalism, it has

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become the direct object of various *disciplines* that aim to simultaneously "increase the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminish those same forces (in political terms of obedience) (138)." The result is a disciplined, manipulable body–useful and physically powerful but with political power carefully dissociated from it.

Foucault finds the docility perfectly embodied in the figure of a soldier. John Berger, on the other hand, detects the same paradoxical power and disempowerment in the bodies of workers: the five Turkish men he observes are physically very dissimilar, but "with their clothes taken off, in a public bath, a police or army officer would have little difficulty in identifying them as workers." Berger continues: "Most workers in the world carry the same physical stigma: a sign of how the labor power of their bodies has been wrenched away from their heads, where their thoughts and imagining continue, but deprived now of the possession of their own days and working energies (qtd. in Shapiro 58)."

Though Foucault's and Berger's docile bodies are clearly male, I will apply their insights primarily to the bodies of young girls and women in both *Wuthering Heights* and *The Crimson Petal and the White*–as well as the more general thesis that "[t]he body is directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest in it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs (Foucault 25)." Especially relevant for my purposes here, moreover, is Foucault's clarification that "a useful body and an intelligible body overlap in a docile (manipulable) body (137)." As we will see, Victorian culture, with its ways of "knowing" the female body–making it intelligible by medicine and sexual science in particular–was, in fact, discursively producing the fragile, weak, and ultimately captive female body as the norm. The norm was then reflected in, and reinforced by, fashion, beauty manuals and conduct books that shaped actual women's bodies, thus creating the vicious circle of self-evident "truths" regarding the (inferior) nature and (limited) usefulness of women that directly affected the position of real women in society.

While building on Foucault, Sherry Shapiro, as a former dancer and a feminist, is more obviously interested in female bodies in the context of capitalism and its "social relations of exploitation and enforced poverty (xiv)." Bodies, she claims, are primary means by which capitalism does its job (xii), and in the proces, they are defleshed and skinned alive because "[t]o work within a particular economic structure is to be inserted into a way of life that appropriates

one's productive energies for specific purposes (57)." Within capitalism, in other words, merely having a body is likely to get one exploited – the insight summarized as: "[t]he body is the prison house of injustice (ix)."

Building on these starting points, therefore, this paper argues that both *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and *The Crimson Petal and the White* (2002) investigate, expose and condemn the multifaceted inscription of a specific culture onto the female body (via the construction of femininity)–the defleshing of female bodies, which in turn makes them docile (at least temporarily). With varying degrees of explicitness, the novels demonstrate how this specific– capitalist, imperialist, patriarchal–culture forces itself onto the bodies of girls/women: the legalized, scientifically justified process whereby female bodies, regardless of class, are defleshed, skinned alive and made to emit signs of subjugation to the patriarchal will–this being their assigned role, without exception, in various male dominated economies. *Defleshed* and *skinned alive* are, moreover, deliberately used without the adverb "metaphorically": since the metaphors and cultural constructs are enacted on the living bodies, the boundaries between literal and metaphorical are blurred.

The Most Discussed Animal in the Universe: the Context

Women's bodies within capitalism in general are docile bodies: productive and powerful, yet aggressively disempowered–nowadays more than ever by means of mainstream pop culture images and the cosmetics industry, though the law and economics are never far behind. Women in capitalist culture, Shapiro writes, are limited, restricted, and reduced as their bodies and senses are appropriated by either economic or sexual language. Somewhat paradoxically, "the attention of women *is* turned toward their bodies (61, italics mine)", but it is not the power women are encouraged or even expected to recognize. On the contrary,

> they are made to constantly confront their own imperfect bodies. Something is to be hidden (cottage-cheese thighs), shaped (bums of steel), toned-up (flabby tummy), or criticized (being too short) … The boundaries of this ordering of existence reek with oppression and subordination, and are shot through with questions about the delineated boundaries of human identity (61-2).

It is oppression and subordination which link the modern-day production of female bodies with the Victorian version. In the nineteenth century England, dominated as it was by the mutually reinforcing practices of capitalism/imperialism, economic and philosophical materialism, and, above all, "pervasive patriarchalism" (Stearns 13) distilled into the so-called "Woman Question" and aggressive scientific antifeminism, women's bodies were discursively, legally and fashionably defleshed, constructed and performed as captive bodies. The outcome of this ubiquitous defleshing of women's bodies is expressed in a powerful insight shared by both novels and rendered in Gothic terms: the capitalist-patriarchal Victorian culture is in both novels shown to be actively turning living, flesh-and-blood women (of all classes) into *ghosts*. (This also applies to the workers of both sexes, and to the majority of children.) The cultural project of mass ghost production is, ironically, achieved by quite practical actions: by denying women economic independence (the Married Women's Property Act was passed as late as 1882), by making them legally invisible in marriage (as Cynthia Eagle Russett puts it with brutal clarity, women experienced "legal death" in marriage (8), yet went on living), and by restricting their freedom on all possible levels, including that of the body and body movement–even the intake of air. This results in wasted female bodies in fashionable cages, tied to a specific (domestic) place–ghosts indeed. The ghost production/female docility project was, not suprisingly, sanctioned and carried out by the most esteemed representatives of society--critics, scientists, medical doctors, from Ruskin to Darwin--and was disseminated through a variety of discourses, fashion magazines, beauty manuals and conduct books.

Femininity in Victorian Britain–the culture into which Catherine Earnshaw inevitably *falls* (borrowing the verb, and its implications, from Gilbert and Gubar)–is constructed upon a notion that goes back to Plato and Aristotle and links women with children in terms of their general foolishness and animalistic appetites; in this context, Virginia Woolf's wry (1929) declaration that the woman is the most discussed animal in the universe (qtd. in Russett 1) is far from accidental. In the *Republic*, for instance, Plato explicitly links women, children and slaves on the basis of their cognitive defects and incontrollable passions; whereas for Aristotle the female sex is a deformity of nature, and women and children resemble one another even in appearance (Cohen and Rutter 4).

However, this long tradition of patriarchal misogyny finds an unparalleled expression in the sciences and disciplines of the nineteenth century, especially sexual science, which, according to Russett, attempted to be far more empirical and precise than Plato and Aristotle and which drew on anthropology, psychology and sociology (3). The *scientific* construction of femininity is all the more pernicious if we bear in mind that it was taking place in an already patriarchal culture and at the time when

> science and scientists had never enjoyed greater prestige, a prestige accorded them on the basis of perceived connection between scientific knowledge and the great achievements of the nineteenth century technology and even more because they held out the dazzling promise of certain knowledge (Russett 5).

In this context it is hardly surprising that "[s]exual science spoke with the imperious tone of a discipline newly claiming, and in large measure being granted, decisive authority in matters social as well as strictly scientific (4)."

The disciplines bent on producing docile bodies and, by extension, docile subjects–anatomy, physiology, evolutionary biology, physical anthropology and sociology–were, moreover, guided by the theory of evolution in their construction of "comprehensive theories of sexual difference (Russett 10)": by the turn of the century "a genuine scientific consensus (10)" emerged. Women were inherently (incurably) different from men in their anatomy, physiology, temperament and intellect. What is meant by "different" is of course "weak", on both the physical and the intellectual levels. Rather than being recognized as a socially enforced construct, this weakness–reflected in the distribution of social and political power–is regarded as the direct outcome of evolution. Darwin himself famously postulated that "it is in the struggle for existence and (especially) for the possession of women that men acquire their vigor and courage (qtd. in Russett 2)." "Thus women became fragilely attractive, while men grew muscular and courageous, each sex loving in the other what it did not find in itself (12)." Women's bodies are accordingly scientifically constructed to complement male bodies: they are positioned as the lack of everything defining a man, serving in turn to delineate masculinity. The process is logical: as Calvin Thomas puts it, "[o]ne cannot productively address the production of men's bodies (masculinized, empowered, and superordinated) without also addressing the production and the oppression of women's bodies, feminized bodies, queered bodies, and raced bodies (6)."

This theorized physical and intellectual weakness, masquerading as the attractiveness of fragility, is forced onto women's bodies through a variety of practices that intersect in the widely emulated ideal of the "lady" (Silver 35). Being a "lady" in Victorian Britain, as both history and the two novels under discussion demonstrate, meant discipline and restriction of freedom, of the body, of desire and appetite: eating (sparingly) "female" foods (Silver 45-6), tight lacing, dressing, with considerable effort, in wire *cage* crinolines and corsets–the captivity forced onto the body is not merely metaphorical or discursive. On the contrary, the female body as the object of power is made to signal its legal and economic disenfranchisement directly: Silver quotes one nineteenth-century advertisement for a corset which states explicitly that a girl should "lie face down on the floor in order that [her mother] might then place a foot in the small of the back to obtain the necessary purchase on the laces (36)"–the gesture and iconography clearly reminiscent of sado-masochistic practices. Faber also mentions an important detail: Sugar, at one point in the novel, "wields a pair of 'whore's hooks'–curved, long-handled instruments so nicknamed because they enable a woman to don a lady's dress without the aid of a maidservant (762)." A woman who can dress herself is not a lady in the Victorian age: the implications are clear–being a lady equals forced invalidism.

Thus all those pale, weak, breathless, fainting ladies dying in childbirth (and fiery Catherine Earnshaw is, in the end, one of them) who dominate Victorian fiction are not created in the imagination of writers, but are actual products of the culture that creates virtual ghosts out of living women. Speaking of England in 1874, Faber actually coins the phrase *wraith-like ladies*:

> … a dead faint is not very difficult to provoke in a modern female: pitilessly tapering bodices, on any woman not naturally thin, present challenges above and beyond the call of beauty. And it must be said that a good few of the wraith-like ladies gliding across St James's Park got out of bed this morning as plump as the belles of the previous generation, but then exchanged their roomy nightgowns for a gruelling session with the lady's-maid. Even if (as is now becoming more common) there are no actual laces to be pulled, there are bound to be leather panels to strap and metal hooks to clasp, choking their wearer's breath, irreparably deforming her rib-cage, and giving her a red nose which must be frequently powdered. Even walking requires more skill than before, on the higher heels of the calf-length boots now fashionable (155)."

The vulnerability and invalidism forced onto concrete bodies, the fact that a woman cannot defend herself (or run in her cage crinoline and calf-length boots), is, moreover, in the context of "social relations of exploitation and enforced poverty" (Shapiro xiv), sexualized and sexually arousing. The *physiognomist* Alexander Walker, for instance, declared with great joy in 1840 that:

> [woman's body is] precise, striking, and often brilliant. From its proportions, it sometimes seems almost aerial; and we would imagine, that, if our hands were placed under the lateral parts of the tapering waist of a woman thus characterized, the slightest pressure would suffice to throw her into the air (qtd. in Silver 44).

This is the ideal of the Victorian age–a woman so emaciated that the slightest pressure, applied correctly, throws her in the air–not merely an angel in the house, but an (almost) actual one. Of course, the problems arise when this almost-angel is supposed to bear children, since that is her role in the family economy, the usefulness and the (re)productive power of her docile, disempowered body inserted in the specific division of labour.

The Heights

In *Wuthering Heights* the legal and discursive production of docile female bodies, which in turn transforms flesh-and-blood women into ghosts, coincides with puberty and is sharply contrasted with the relative freedom of the body in childhood. In this respect, *Wuthering Heights* is both a tragedy of growing up into a specific culture and a Gothic story that begins and ends with ghosts: the children who grow up and into *gentlemen* and *ladies* are, as Beth Torgerson convincingly argues, transformed into vampires, ghosts and (then) corpses in this violent and literally *bloody* process (89-127). Emily Bronte's verdict on "England in 1847" (Arnold Kettle qtd. in Caldwell 82) is thus clear, sharp and merciless. Furthermore, the novel qualifies as a tragedy in the old-fashioned, Aristotelian sense of the word: the *inevitability* of the bodily transformation of boys and girls with the passage of time necessarily takes place in the context of a specific cultural system that should give it shape and meaning, but here the context is a patriarchal, capitalist-imperialist society, built on the ruthless production and exploitation of numerous disenfranchised *others* (women, lower classes, dark-skinned nations, children).

Bronte's novel, in fact, quite openly demonstrates that while there is no inherent mercy in biology/nature, there is no mercy in culture that is supposed to curb biology either: hence the inevitability of tragedy, Gothicism/fantasy as the preferred mode of expressing verdicts, and the angry responses from early reviewers – more often than not, in ladies' magazines[1].

Despite sharply contrasting childhood and adulthood in terms of freedom and desirability, Bronte does not however subscribe to the Victorian cult of childhood: the above-mentioned tragedy is not the fact that "all children, except one, grow up" (Barrie 1) but the fact that they grow up into the culture that, among other things, posits The Woman Question, and, worse, creates the notorious Angel in the House as the solution. The culture that simultaneously cherishes the innocence of childhood and exploits actual children's bodies in mines, factories, and brothels. In other words, the tragedy is not that childhood is necessarily left behind with growing up, but that it is *betrayed*–and what is betrayed the most is bodily freedom from enforced "relations of exploitation" in the form of class, gender and capital. Once a palpable, living reality for Catherine and Heathcliff, this freedom is, with the passage of time and enculturation, displaced into ghostly, haunting yearning, the long ache that finally kills them both.

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[1] The first responses to Ellis Bell's *Wuthering Heights* are quite revealing–for instance, Graham's *Lady's Magazine* published the following anonymous review in July 1848: "How a human being could have attempted such a book as the present without committing suicide before he had finished a dozen chapters, is a mystery. It is compound of vulgar depravity and unnatural horrors…"

This appeared in *Atlas*, 22 January 1848: "We know nothing in the whole range of our fictitious literature which presents such shocking pictures of the worst forms of humanity. There is not in the entire dramatis persona, a single character which is not utterly hateful or thoroughly contemptible ... Even the female characters excite something of loathing and much of contempt. Beautiful and loveable in their childhood, they all, to use a vulgar expression, 'turn out badly'."

But perhaps the most important for our purpose here is the remark published in *Paterson's Magazine* in March 1848: "We rise from the perusal of *Wuthering Heights* as if we had come fresh from a pest-house. Read *Jane Eyre* is our advice, but burn *Wuthering Heights* (How Wuthering Heights caused a critical stir when first published in 1847). "

If we bear in mind that the majority of the novel readers (the upstart, new genre that was born and grew with the middle classes) were women, the weight of these remarks becomes greater, and the implicit views on women, literature, and the function of novels not so implicit–novels are apparently supposed to teach women/young girls something about their place and position in society–the advice to read *Jane Eyre* is more than indicative of this enculturation/socializing role of novels in general. *Jane Eyre* is invoked, without doubt, because it ends with marriage, and a new-born son: the girl who once 'gasped for liberty' but was wise enough to 'abandon' praying for it and to form 'a humbler supplication' (Bronte 87) found her place as the active/willing participant in the continuation of patriarchy.

Building on Terry Eagleton's insight (108), it can be argued that what Heathcliff offers Cathy in their childhood is, in fact, total equality–physical and bodily, like everything else in the novel, but not necessarily sexual or gendered. The epitome of this relationship is their sleeping together in a coffin-resembling bed, hiding (though they do not know it yet) from the patient, always-already victorious culture, with its "economies too shameful to be acknowledged" (Foucault 140). It is the equality of two relaxed, free bodies that do not recognize one another as a threat, or an object to be dominated and possessed sexually (yet). Arthur Rimbaud rightly called such a state "dark heaven" in his *Season in Hell*, and described it in terms that apply to Cathy-Heathcliff perfectly, down to their financial situation and their hiding in the coffin-like bed:

> … his friendly arms around me were just like heaven–a dark heaven, that I could go into, and where I wanted only to be left--poor, deaf, dumb, and blind. Already, I was getting to depend on it. And I used to imagine that we were two happy children free to wander in a Paradise of sadness.

It is this total, very real, very physical, pre-gender, pre-social, heavenly equality that Bronte, in direct opposition to the dominant Victorian trends regarding children, attributes to childhood. This is what Cathy dies for–not (only) love for a man but the vivid memory that a non-socially mediated (i.e. non-exploitative) physical relationship between human beings was possible once. It is this haunting memory that is slowly killing the "greatest woman of the neighborhood (Bronte 78)." As Shapiro claims, "[m]emories of life where one is able to touch, be touched, feel and respond, becomes the ever-nagging memory within the human body; the desire for pleasure, and for intimacy as experienced in flesh and blood (59)."

Attributing heavenly equality to childhood, on the other hand, does not mean Bronte idealizes it, or Heights for that matter: this is the household in which children's bodies are punished: a servant can slap Cathy across the mouth, Heathcliff is regularly beaten and whipped by the son of the family patriarch, pinched by Nelly Dean, has his ears boxed by Frances. Yet even this, Bronte unambiguously shows, is infinitely more desirable than the "intelligent compromises of adulthood" that Joyce Carol Oates celebrates in her notorious essay–at least the dynamic between "crime" and punishment is very clear: rebellious behaviour of the body is punished on the body.

If the child's/girl's body is freely punished in childhood, the body is also free–the fairy tale beginning of the story has Cathy asking her father for a whip. While Gilbert and Gubar (264) correctly interpret this desire of a six-year-old girl as the yearning of the disempowered for power (and the definition of power is sobering and brutal in its simplicity, as a six-year-old has already learned that it means wielding the whip, hurting someone else), Nelly Dean's plausible explanation is equally important: "She was hardly six years old", Nelly says, "but she could ride any horse in the stable (Bronte 44)." And later, when Heathcliff arrives, their two bodies are in constant movement, they are depicted as running/walking across the moors, and Catherine in particular is always "singing, laughing and plaguing everybody who would not do the same … defying us with her bold, saucy look, and her ready words, turning Joseph's religious curses into ridicule (49)."

And it is this body–healthy, powerful, subversively energetic--into which a specific culture is inscribed, the body that will be restricted, disciplined, and made captive. In a multilayered scene which marks the beginning of the end, twelve-year-old Cathy is bitten by the Lintons' dog and simultaneously introduced, with the shedding of blood, into puberty *and* society --because puberty means sexuality and it is one of the most important characteristics of civilized society to regulate it. This being Victorian patriarchy, it is female sexuality that is regulated more forcefully, through the economies of marriage and motherhood, but also through fashion. Namely, when Catherine is recognized as one of the Earnshaw children (only then do the Lintons express some concern for her wellbeing; before being identified as their social equal, the bleeding child was not even offered water–unlike the dog) she is asked/forced to stay, fed cakes, given wine and a fashion accessory–"enormous slippers (56)." Just like Heiner Mueller's Ophelia, Cathy is then wheeled to the fire, because she quite literally cannot stand on her own two feet: being a lady is thus exposed as fashionable invalidism forced on the (once) healthy body of the child.

Narrating the "incident of the window" to Nelly Dean, Heathcliff adds an important detail: "they combed her beautiful hair (56)", he says. On one level, this establishes the sinister link with an early version of Snow White: while combing her hair, Snow White's stepmother stabs her in the head with the poisoned comb (the comb which in later versions becomes a poisoned apple) and "kills" her, but not completely. The unconscious girl, neither fully alive nor

fully dead, is then placed in a glass coffin which has to be changed every year because her body, tied to a specific place, continues to grow. This is in itself a perfect insight into the nature of a lady, and into the culture whose ideals are Sleeping Beauties, Snow Whites on display in glass coffins, Angels in the House–expressed using the language of fantasy. But the comb is itself important as it is a fashion detail–unfortunately, not much attention has as yet been devoted to the clothes and the role of fashion in *Wuthering Heights'* criticism of a society which produces ladies-ghosts and gentlemen-vampires. Cathy is introduced into culture as a child of nature–appropriately barefoot, wearing the socially inappropriate cloak of a dairy-maid--when she reappears at Heights five weeks later she looks like this:

> … instead of a wild, hatless little savage jumping into the house, and rushing to squeeze us all breathless, there lighted from a handsome black pony a very dignified person, whose brown ringlets falling from the cover of a feathered beaver, and a long cloth habit, which she was obliged to hold up with both hands that she might sail in. Hindley lifted her from her horse, exclaiming delightedly, 'Why, Cathy, you are quite a beauty! I should scarcely have known you: you look like a lady now. Isabella Linton is not to be compared with her, is she Frances?' 'Isabella has not her natural advantages,' replied his wife: 'but she must mind and not grow wild again here. Ellen, help Miss Catherine off with her things–stay, dear, you will disarrange your curls let me untie your hat' (57).

The difference between Catherine's earlier appearance and behaviour and what we see now is drastic: the body of a pubescent girl is placed in the kind of clothes that actively prevent free movement–the previously fierce rider now needs a man's help to lift her from a horse; she "sails" into the house, attention and hands focused on her skirt. Also, accessories such as "a feathered beaver" signal her social status and add value to her body–the implication, in keeping with patriarchal hatred of women, being that girl's bodies on their own are not worth much (hence the necessity of a dowry). Her energy is conspicuosly reduced: as Nelly is pleased to note, there is no more jumping and rushing and squeezing. These changes accompany a new awareness of the importance of money and a new crime-punishment dynamic: for Catherine, at least, it is no longer possible to expect *obvious* physical punishment for deliberate acts of disobedience. As Heathcliff ironically says, "she was a young lady, and they made a distinction between her treatment and mine (56)." As a child, Catherine was slapped by Joseph, but in civilized Britain, in the Age of Progress, young ladies are decidedly *not* slapped (and certainly not by servants), since

that would be barbaric. (Needless to say, the female body is still punished[2], though arguably in a less obvious way–if we take into consideration wire cage crinolines, laced-up corsets "assaulting the midriff" (Silver 35), self-inflicted starvation/defleshing and a general lack of air–it is not for nothing that the dying Catherine begs Nelly to open the window). The body of a pubescent girl is now a docile, captive body, held still in her assigned position of disenfranchisement with regard to economics and the law, *improved* by clothes and manners that constitute the ideal: the lady.

The body of the lady is, moreover, in the period of three years, progressively defleshed. Once a running and laughing "stout, hearty lass (Bronte 119)", Catherine becomes a thin, pale specter who dies from a loss of blood occasioned by childbirth (Torgerson 115). Heathcliff calls attention to her physical transformation when, in the most passionate deathbed scene in the history of English literature, he says: "It's hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands (144)." Catherine, the lady, the Victorian ideal of femininity, is literally drained of blood, strength, energy, defiance, laughter, life. The transformation happens *before*, not after death, and it is not the result of hysteria in the spoiled, immature girl who did not know what marriage meant–this *is* the lady, the patriarchal ideal, disenfranchised like a child, but without the freedom childhood once allowed: "Exhaustion of body had entirely subdued her spirit, our fiery Catherine was no better than a wailing child (115)." Appropriately, it is Nelly Dean–"patriarchy's paradigmatic housekeeper" (Gilbert and Gubar 291)–who, perhaps unwittingly, summarizes the great Victorian project of female docility: exhaustion of the body, breaking the spirit of resistance.

Crimson and White

In *The Crimson Petal and the White*, the body of a lady is regulated, disciplined, made docile and defleshed simultaneously by sets of carefully detailed rules/manuals/costumes that determine her appearance, behavior, speaking, walking, sitting and eating habits, and, last but certainly not least, the amount of air she takes in. But this is not the only female body in the novel: the body of "the lady's social shadow, the prostitute (Faber 156)", is perhaps more brutally regulated by the twin forces of market economy and patriarchy, without the civilized veneer of marriage. (Though at one point Sugar has to sign a document which explicitly states that from

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[2] This time punished not for disobedience, but for being the female body.

then on she will have sex only with Rackam: Faber unambiguously depicts it in the discourse of marriage.)

While *Wuthering Heights* at least posits the possibility of bodily freedom to be found on the fringes of society/adultood, in *Crimson Petal,* being a woman (or a child, for that matter) on the fringes of highly urbanized society means being skinned alive. Shapiro's stunning phrase is the apt description of the amount of vulnerability this gender and this social position involve – and it is further accentuated by the ichthyosis that Sugar suffers from, her body painfully aware of every inch of patriarchy inscribing itself into it. Much attention is devoted to Sugar's dry, flaky, peeling skin: yet equally often she is connected with "glistening" fruit–a delicacy to be devoured by the very many *connoisseurs,* "to whom a woman is more than a carcass after all (11)." Being a lady, on the other hand, does not involve a significantly greater degree of comfort for either body or mind–the fasting, starving, constantly ill Mrs Rackham being the indisputable proof. While Sugar "never says no" to anything her customers desire (and they desire a lot, Faber delights in telling us, including putting a knife on her throat "just a little too hard" (83)), Mrs Rackham takes laudanum to quell hunger pangs because in order to stay thin she lives on boiled green beans. (Or, to put it slightly differently, in order to live up to the ideal of the lady, having internalized the norm, she is actively defleshing her own body–with the side effect of dying.)

And they are both ghosts–the fundamental closeness of their respective positions of disenfranchisement and captivity being already hinted at by the word "shadow". Emaciated and (ghastly) pale, Mrs Rackham physically resembles one, embodying--at the price of that very body –the above-mentioned ideal praised by Alexander Walker. (Mentally, she is "off with the fairies (Almond 156)"–or, in her case, angels and nuns and her Savior[3].) As a married woman, she does not exist: she is legally a *feme* (sic!) *covert* (covered woman), forming a single body with her

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[3] Unlike Catherine Linton, Agnes Rachkam does not have that powerful memory of a different living (subversive equality and bodily freedom from ladies' magazines and beauty manuals) but there is something, Faber shows, which even education in a boarding school for ladies will not erase: the desire of the body for healing. Intuitively, Agnes knows she is ill, and she knows that the culture, whose feminine ideal she embodies, is making her ill–is killing her, actually. Lacking intellectual framework and instruments to elaborate on her insight (yet another product of her education as a lady), Agnes (dis)places this desire into religious longing and fantasizing: she dreams (and, equally importantly, writes) about the Convent of Health, where she will be nurtured back to life and health by the kind nuns/sisters–this being convent, there are no men. The convent as the ultimate fantasy of a high-class young lady demonstrates just how sickened she is by the culture that so ruthlessly perpetuates male supremacy.

husband--that body, needless to say, being his. (Agnes Rackham, of course, does not understand the law–her education has seen to that.) The terminology and the imagery the phrasing evokes (two bodies coming together, female body sliding fully into male, disappearing in it) sounds like fantasy literature, but it is the actual terminology of the nineteenth century English law. The lady is a covered female, invisible female, controlled on so many levels–from the hierarchical observation and normalizing judgment of her fellow ladies, to the numerous medical examination scenes that, according to Foucault, combine the previous two techniques of control almost ideally (177). In addition, in keeping with Victorian sexual science and the scientific construction of femininity, it is the lady's genitals that are examined regularly as a potential site of trouble: that is how her brain tumour goes undiagnosed.

Sugar, on the other hand, despite her carefully detailed physicality, her body, the smell, the sight, the appetite, the intellect and *life*, is also a ghost–it is no accident that Agnes mistakes her for her guardian angel. (And, moving beyond the initial irony, it is not a mistake.) Just like Agnes Rackham, she does not exist legally, but she is a *feme covert* socially as well: in a point typical of Victorian Britain's hypocrisy, guides to brothels describing (and grading) specific places and the girls' bodies and skills are published and circulated among the Cambridge-educated gentlemen, but are never discussed in polite company. (In society as a whole, interestingly enough, some discourse is permitted, even encouraged, as long as it is within the framework of the Rescue Society, which positions prostitutes as fallen women in need of moral guidance, thus shifting the responsibility from capitalism and patriarchy to individual virtue (or lack thereof).) Without legal or social recognition, earning a living *with her body* as a woman in a male-dominated economy, fiery and intelligent Sugar is also captive and docile, body and mind appropriated and exploited. To give just one illustration, when Rackham loses a governess, Sugar enters his house as a new governess/teacher, while his wife is locked in her bedroom, cutting birds out of her silk dresses. At this point, *The Crimson Petal* becomes a twisted version of *Jane Eyre*: there is a mad wife in the upstairs bedroom, and the governess (who is an obvious interest of the employer's) in the attic. This being a neo-Victorian novel, however, some things are spelled out more clearly and, perhaps, more brutally than in Charlotte Bronte's novel: both the mad wife and the prostitute/governess are at the mercy and whim of the husband, who has this power over them both because he owns the means of production, having inherited the perfume

factory from his father. He stops renting Sugar the house where he used to visit her and brings her under his roof, to teach his child, work as a governess and provide sexual favors–and this time she is not even paid, as in the beginning, but does all that in exchange for food and a roof over her head. Her body, at this point, is multifunctional, efficient and above all captive: the ideal of Victorian patriarchy**.**

A Way Out?

Wuthering Heights opens with Lockwood's famous observation that he has stumbled upon a "misanthropist's heaven", and "the situation so completely removed from the stir of society (19)." But Lockwood is proved wrong by the story: the body is the prison house of injustice and there is no escaping society in physical life. This, on the other hand, does not mean there is no escape whatsoever–as Catherine discovers very soon, leaving the prison house behind and running into madness, darkness and death–arguably returning to Rimbaud's and her own "dark heaven" of childhood.

Another lady, Mrs Rackham, also runs away, literally. Her destination and the outcome of her journey are not disclosed–however, bearing in mind that she is seriously ill, it is not too difficult to guess. Appropriately for a novel that borrows its title from Tennyson, Agnes ends her life like the Lady of Shalott–her one and only gesture of freedom ends in death. But let us not forget that the Lady of Shalott, just like William Blake, died singing.

Sugar, too, runs away, kidnapping her client-employer's daughter and heading in an unknown direction. The novel ends with the simultaneous affirmation of the woman's stunning physicality–the warmth of her body, the thickness and glossiness of her hair–and the multiple goodbyes, including one from the narrator.

Yet the last sentence is not only a goodbye–in a novel that traces the multi-layered captivities of the majority of the characters, it is an understated cry for freedom, a warning, and a threat in disguise: "But now it's time to let me go."

Conclusion

To work within a particular economic structure, Shapiro claims, is to be inserted into a way of life that appropriates one's productive energies for specific purposes. Furthermore, having

one's productive energies appropriated, being (violently and bodily) inserted into the flow of the economy, equals being skinned alive–the condition Victorian women and the heroines of the two novels under discussion have in common with the working classes, children, and colonized others (though the actual degree of vulnerability varies). Under Victorian capitalist patriarchy, moreover, women's (re)productive energies–their bodies–are quite literally restricted and at the same time made sexually appealing in their vulnerability and the performance of submission, captivity and docility, forced on them through a variety of officially sanctioned practices and discourses, including science and fashion. In both novels, in addition, the cultural construction and positioning of female bodies as docile and captive bodies finds its uncanny expression in the common trope of Gothic fiction, that of a ghost. Both novels, finally, express some hope of escape: more often than not this involves literal escape from physical life, or physical removal from society. A drastic solution such as escape from the body is preferred because, to borrow and rephrase some lines from a well-known protest song, "the only chain that a woman can stand is that chain of hand on hand": hence the always temporally limited nature of female docility.

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EXOTICISM IN JEAN RHYS'S *WIDE SARGASSO SEA*

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Abstract: The notion of an endless and exotic space reflected in the title of Jean Rhys's novel includes the possibility of hidden meanings as well as an intense feeling of the unknown and the inexpressible, which permeates the entire story and becomes an important source of the sublime. The self-conscious use of exoticist techniques and modalities of cultural representation might be considered less as a response to the phenomenon of the postcolonial exotic than as a further symptom of it, a result of the commodification of cultural difference.

Keywords: exoticism, cultural differences, colonial conflicts, sublime

The Margins of Exoticism

Although the word "exotic" currently has widespread application, it continues to be commonly misunderstood. For the exotic is not, as is often supposed, an inherent *quality* to be found 'in' certain people, distinctive objects, or specific places; exoticism describes, rather, a particular mode of aesthetic perception–one which renders people, objects and places strange even as it domesticates them, and which effectively manufactures otherness even as it claims to surrender to its immanent mystery. The exoticist production of otherness is dialectical and contingent; at various times and in different places, it may serve conflicting ideological interests, providing the rationale for projects of rapprochement and reconciliation, but just as easily legitimising the need for plunder and violent conquest. Exoticism, in this context, might be described as a kind of semiotic circuit that oscillates between the opposite poles of strangeness and familiarity. Within this circuit, the strange and the familiar, as well as the relation between them, may be reworked to serve different, even contradictory, political needs and ends. As Stephen Foster has argued, the exotic functions dialectically as a symbolic system, domesticating the foreign, the culturally different and the extraordinary so that "phenomena to which they … apply begin to be structured in a way which makes them

comprehensible and possibly predictable, if predictably defiant of total familiarity" (Foster 21). Exoticism is a control mechanism of cultural translation which relays the other back again to the same; but to domesticate the exotic would neutralize its capacity to create surprises. Thus, while exoticism describes the systematic assimilation of cultural difference, ascribing familiar meanings and associations to unfamiliar things, it also denotes an expanded, distorted, comprehension of diversity which effectively limits assimilation "since the exotic is kept at arm's length rather than taken as one's own" (Foster 22). As a system then, exoticism functions along predictable lines but with unpredictable content.

As a technology of representation, exoticism is self-empowering; self-referential even, insofar as the objects of its gaze are not supposed to look back. For this reason, exoticism has proven over time to be a highly effective instrument of imperial power; the exotic splendour of newly colonized lands may disguise the brutal circumstances of their acquisition. The exoticist rhetoric of fetishised otherness and sympathetic identification masks the inequality of the power relations without which the discourse could not function. In the imperial context, this masking involves the transformation of power into spectacle. For Said, exoticism functions in a variety of imperial contexts as a mechanism of aesthetic substitution which "replaces the impress of power with the blandishments of curiosity" (Said 159). The massification of the exotic also entails a reconsideration of the conventional exoticist distinction between the (imperial) "centre" and the "perpheries" on which it depends. The arrival of the exotic in the "centre" cannot disguise the inequalities–the hierarchical encodings of cultural difference–through which exoticist discourses continue to function. What is clear, in any case, is that there are significant continuities between older forms of imperial exoticist representation and some of their postcolonial counterparts. Two of these continuities are the aesthetics of decontextualisation and commodity fetishism. The three aspects of commodity fetishism–mystification (or leveling-out) of historical experience; imagined access to the cultural other through the process of consumption; reification of people and places into exchangeable aesthetic objects–can help the literary works of those much-traveled writers (such as Jean Rhys, in this case) who are perceived as having come from, or as having a connection to, "exotic" places to acquire an almost talismanic status. Exoticist spectacle, commodity fetishism and the aesthetics of decontextualisation are all at work, in different combinations and to varying degrees, in the production, transmission and consumption of postcolonial literary/cultural texts. If exoticism has arrived in the "centre", it still derives from the cultural margins or, perhaps more accurately, from a commodified discourse of cultural marginality, embedded in the valorized discourses of cultural otherness.

In contemporary cultural theory, marginality is often given a positive value, being seen less as a site of social exclusion or deprivation than as a locus of resistance to socially imposed standards and coercive norms. As the African-American cultural critic bell hooks defiantly puts it:

> Marginality is a central location for the production of a counterhegemonic discourse that is not just found in words but in habits of being and the way one lives … [Marginality is] a site one stays in, clings to even, because it nourishes one's capacity to resist. It offers the possibility of radical perspectives from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds (hooks 341).

This view is frequently echoed by large numbers of postcolonial writers/thinkers, for whom marginality represents a challenge to the defining imperial "centre" or a transvaluation of the lived or remembered experience of oppression. The embracing of marginality is, above all, an oppositional discursive strategy that faces up to hierarchical social structures and hegemonic cultural codes. This strategy is self-empowering, not just because it draws strength from opposition, but because it conceptualizes the transformation of the subject's relationship to the wider world. The postcolonial deconstruction of the opposition between a monolithic "centre" and its designated "margins" envisages the possibility of multiple centres and productively "intersecting marginalities" (Ashcroft *et al*. 104). The exotic is the perfect term to describe the domesticating process through which commodities are taken from the margins and reabsorbed into mainstream culture. This process is to some extent reciprocal; mainstream culture is always altered by its contact with the margins, even if it finds ingenious ways of looking or of pretending to look, the same. Exoticism helps maintain this pretence; it acts as the safety-net that supports these dangerous transactions, as the regulating mechanism that attempts to manoeuvre difference back again to the same. To define the margins can thus be seen as an exoticising strategy: as an impossible attempt to dictate the terms and limits of intercultural contact, and to fix the value-equivalence of metropolitan commodity exchange. To keep the margins exotic–at once strange and familiar–is the objective of the mainstream; it is an objective which it can never fail to set, but which it can never attain. Contemporary forms of exoticism are arguably misrecognitions of these changes–attempts to ensure the availability of the margins for the mainstream, and through this process to "guarantee" the mainstream, keeping it out of reach of harm. Spivak does not reject marginality *per se*, but she rejects it as exotic–as a legitimizing category for different versions of cultural otherness.

The confrontation and incorporation of exoticist discourse(s) in postcolonial writing forms the principal subject of its main concept, the postcolonial exotic. Thus, the postcolonial exotic occupies a site of discursive conflict between a local assemblage of more or less related oppositional practices of assimilative codes. More specifically, it marks the intersection between contending value regimes: one regime–postcolonialism–that posits itself as anti-colonial and that works toward the dissolution of imperial epistemologies and institutional structures; and another–postcoloniality–that capitalizes both on the widespread circulation of ideas about cultural otherness and on the worldwide trafficking of culturally "othered" artefacts and goods. This constitutive tension within the postcolonial might help explain its abiding ambiguity; it also helps us better understand how value is generated, negotiated and disseminated in the postcolonial field of cultural production. In this case, "strategic exoticism" could be an option, but it is not necessarily a way out of the dilemma. The self-conscious use of exoticist techniques and modalities of cultural representation might be considered less as a response to the phenomenon of the postcolonial exotic than as a further symptom of it; for the postcolonial exotic is, to some extent, considered a pathology of cultural representation under late capitalism–a result of the commodification of cultural difference.

Exoticness in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*

The notion of an endless and exotic space reflected in the title of Jean Rhys's novel includes the possibility of hidden meanings as well as an intense feeling of the unknown and the inexpressible, which permeates the entire story and becomes an important source of the sublime[1]. This feeling, in fact, arises from the paradox inherent in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*: one of its most important characters is given only marginal and scant attention. It is Rochester's first wife Bertha who enables the author to develop the plot, evoke a mysterious atmosphere and create an "objective correlative" for the main heroine's anxiety of otherness. Nevertheless, the characterization of this disquieting figure is reduced to the unconvincing

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[1] Contemporary concepts of the sublime follow the ideas of Longinus (the experience of transcendence as an effort to express and to share intense feelings) as well as those of Edmund Burke, in particular his analysis developed in *The Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*. In the period between Boileau and Kant, Burke contributed to the theme by creating a sharp distinction between the beautiful and the sublime. The feeling of the sublime, according to Burke, is connected with fear and the instinct for self-preservation. Immanuel Kant, one of Burke's followers, in his *Critique of Judgement* defines the sublime as something which arouses the suprasensuous faculty of mind and brings man to the realization of his freedom from all external constraints. The link between the experience of the sublime and the feeling of powerlessness is further observed by J.-F. Lyotard, who focuses on the desire to express the inexpressible in the process of overcoming the feeling of emptiness.

description of an evil inhuman monster. Drawing on her own experience of the West Indies, Jean Rhys portrays the fate of a young, unhappily married Creole heiress in a wider context of cultural differences, colonial conflicts and racial hatred. Born in Dominica as the daughter of a Welsh doctor and a white Creole mother, Jean Rhys came to England at the age of sixteen. Like her heroine, she had to undergo a complicated search for identity, and Antoinette's story reflects her own sense of alienation and displacement. According to Rochester, it is her exotic origin and Creole blood that causes Bertha's lunacy and, accordingly, her propensity towards sin and crime. The emotional intensity connected with the feeling of the sublime is linked to "unconscious fears and desires projected on to other culture, peoples and places" (Botting 154) and insanity is viewed in terms that imply racial prejudice.

In Jean Rhys's novel, the conflict between European and West Indian consciousness is worked out through the same fatal relationship but from a variety of points of view. As in *Jane Eyre*, on a surface level it is a conflict between conventional attitudes and emotional excesses. In contrast to *Jane Eyre*, it becomes the crucial subject of the narrative, and its psychological, social, historical and geographical aspects are employed without suppressing the effects of the irrational and the mysterious. The "projective method" of landscape description, which is an important device of characterization in the novel, contributes to the escalation of the conflict. By contrast with the wintry landscapes that form the setting of *Jane Eyre*, the summery climate of the West Indies in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is typical of Romantic topography and evokes the space of the traditional Gothic romance. Rochester's violent denial of Antoinette's exoticism is the result of his own identity crisis as an Englishman in the West Indies. His trouble with the lush Caribbean landscape is the most significant aspect of his feelings of alienation in the West Indies. At first, he is enticed by the island of Dominica just as he is by Antoinette: "It was a beautiful place–wild, untouched, above all untouched, with an alien, disturbing, secret loveliness" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 51-52). He describes his lust for his wife in similarly fierce terms as well; for example, "One afternoon the sight of a dress which she'd left lying on her bedroom floor made me breathless and savage with desire" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 55). Then, the unfamiliar, oppressive heat, colors, tastes, and sounds overwhelm Rochester's senses and his consciousness. Combined with Antoinette's sultry manner, the warm climate makes him feel intoxicated and sexually defenseless. As with Antoinette's search for her reflection, Rochester feels as if he is drowning: "Everything is too much … Too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flowers too red, the mountains too high, the hills too near" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 41). Much of Rochester's apprehension is grounded in his fear of himself and his own "primitive" desires.   The

"extreme green" (Rochester) notes in the landscape may be interpreted as an awakening of primordial emotions and 'irrational' powers, which are anathema to him. The result of this turmoil is Rochester's displacement of his fear and desire for the land and people on to Antoinette:

> I hated the place. I hated the mountains and the hills, the rivers and the rain. I hated the sunsets of whatever colour, I hated its beauty and its magic and the secret I would never know. I hated its indifference and the cruelty which was part of its loveliness. Above all I hated her. For she belonged to the magic and the loveliness. She had left me thirsty and all my life would be thirst and longing for what I had lost before I found it (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 103).

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the author's response to *Jane Eyre* entails greater focus on a single character (Antoinette/Bertha). The effect of doubling is a dilution of the self as Antoinette's identity is divided. Antoinette's doubling with Annette, for example, means that the madness that was seen as an integral and defining aspect of Bertha's character is revealed to have been shared by her mother too: "Look the crazy girl, you crazy like your mother…" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 49-50). Antoinette's childhood double, Tia, further dilutes Antoinette's sense of self when she takes her clothes and by extension, her identity. Tia is an external projection of Antoinette's self; she is the active and powerful double that Antoinette wishes she could emulate, "fires always lit for her, sharp stones did not hurt her bare feet, I never saw her cry" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 23). Tia's presence in this last dream is explicable in terms of a yearning, on Antoinette's part, to return to her childhood innocence and a renewed desire to embody Tia's strength and independence. Even as she contemplates the ultimate act of will– self-annihilation–Antoinette is keenly aware of the psychological traits she lacks.

Just as important as what her doubles take from her is what Antoinette herself loses. Over the course of the text, she gradually becomes distanced from herself until she finally becomes her own Other, Bertha. The process starts at least as early as Antoinette's time in the convent, where she cannot see herself because there is "no looking-glass in the dormitory" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 46). This divorce from self is further developed during her analogous confinement in Thornfield Hall: "There is no looking-glass here and I don't know what I am like now. I remember watching myself brush my hair and how my eyes looked back at me. The girl I saw was myself yet not quite myself. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely I tried to kiss her. But the glass was between us–hard, cold and misted over with my breath. Now they have taken everything away. (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 147)

Her transformation culminates when Antoinette finally does glimpse herself in a mirror, unexpectedly: "It was then that I saw her–the ghost. The woman with streaming hair. She was surrounded by a gilt frame but I knew her" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 154). In this moment of forced recognition, Rhys "makes Antoinette see her *self* as her Other, Brontë's Bertha… the so-called ghost in Thornfield Hall" (Spivak 250). So weakened and deteriorated is Antoinette's identity by the novel's end that there is not even an Antoinette to see in the mirror; only Bertha remains. Under the pressure exerted by the Rochester-figure, Antoinette has been reborn as the Bertha-figure. She is forced to recognize herself as she is perceived, and in the process is forced to abandon her own conception of her identity that she had previously held as an accurate, inviolable truth. This splitting can be explained in psychoanalytic terms. After the formation of the ego–which Lacan refers to as the mirror stage–the child's desire will become more specifically narcissistic than erotic, as he becomes captivated no longer by the mother's body but by his identity as perceived, as the imaginary complement of his lack. Antoinette's forced acceptance of this Other image signals her acquisition of a new level of consciousness and, as it were, a new fashioning of identity. Her new identity is bound by the constrictions imposed by the colonizer-husband it is not one that is self-fashioned. Furthermore, Antoinette's earlier attempt to kiss herself in the mirror suggests a narcissistic yearning for the self who is, of course, thwarted by the mirror that mediates the encounter between self and reflection. Her subsequent glimpse of herself as Bertha reveals the complete loss of her former self, no longer attainable even in the form of a reflection. This is a metaphor for psychological development and maturity, for the emergence of the Other's fully individuated identity from the shadow of the colonizing self; a metaphor which acknowledges the degree to which the two are for a time co-dependent, but which also ultimately allows for the Other to be considered separate.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, there is a strongly analogous passage in which the same theme, the theme of the Other, is treated with greater pessimism. In this scene, Antoinette and her childhood friend Tia enter a virtual "narcissus-mirror" stream to swim. Antoinette somersaults at Tia's request, but turns and "came up choking" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 21), clearly distressed by the experience. Although it would be easier for the colonial mindset if the two Others (Tia and Antoinette) could be successfully collapsed into one counterpoint to the imperial self, Rhys's point is that though they are both Others Tia and Antoinette are substantially different even from each other and cannot be merged.

Rhys's text resists the positing of a single, immutable Other against which the colonizing self can oppositionally define its identity. Instead, Antoinette apparently loses her

identity, which is symbolically appropriated by Tia, who now wears Antoinette's clothing: "I looked round and Tia had gone. I searched for a long time before I could believe that she had taken my dress–not my underclothes, she never wore any–but my dress, starched, ironed, clean that morning. She had left me hers and I put it on at last and walked home in the blazing sun feeling sick, hating her" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 21). Antoinette's failure to successfully reconstitute herself after this exchange is allegorized when Tia mirrors her one last time, in an incident which sees Antoinette's one-time friend turn against her and side with the black villagers. As Coulibri burns, Tia attempts to destroy Antoinette's physical identity:

> Then, not so far off, I saw Tia and her mother and I ran to her, for she was all that was left of my life as it had been. We had eaten the same food, slept side by side, bathed in the same river. As I ran, I thought, I will live with Tia and I will be like her… When I was close I saw the jagged stone in her hand but I did not see her throw it. I did not feel it either, only something wet, running down my face. I looked at her and I saw her face crumple up as she began to cry. We stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking-glass (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 38).

Tia's attempt to kill Antoinette, her mirrored image, anticipates Antoinette's own self-annihilation as the Bertha-figure of *Jane Eyre* and externalizes her subconscious desire for the liberation of death. These events also foreshadow the colonial encounter represented by the Rochester-figure's arrival as the colonized Other. Antoinette has her identity erased by this interaction with Tia, thus emphasizing the inherent risks involved in such exchanges. The failure to reconstitute the self to be reconstituted or even extricate the self from the Other after a temporary merging of identities is an anxiety which becomes fully realized in Antoinette's marriage. After marrying she loses not only economic independence, but her very name: "Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 121). Doubly subjected to control, she loses her maiden name through marriage and her first name through her husband's violent, colonial renaming of her as "Bertha". The patriarchal oppression of marriage and colonialism are thereby depicted as being linked. Antoinette's identity was, of course, precariously balanced from the start, for she exists as she does in the margins of race, and on the border of European whiteness and Caribbean indigenousness: "Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 56). Antoinette and her family occupy a liminal position in Jamaican society: they are rejected by the English and alienated from the locals. She is dubbed a "white cockroach", a foreigner-within: "That's

what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa sold them to the slave traders. And I've heard English women call us white niggers. So between you, I often wonder who I am and where is my country and where do I belong and why was I ever born at all" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 85).

The balance between dominance and marginalization is crucial: the Other's presence is tolerated only as long as there remains a potential to subdue it and indoctrinate it in the ways of the self, for the purposes of strengthening the self. The Other emerges as a source of concern when it threatens to overrun the self and undermine its identity, assimilating itself so successfully that the self runs the risk of culturally degenerating to the level of the Other instead of civilizing it.

This loss of boundaries between self and Other at the very site of invasion has an unimaginably destructive potential in English Gothic romances, but it is important to remember that it is the anxieties attendant upon the entrance of intruding colonizers in an imperial context that provides the impetus for much postcolonial writing. The fear and the very real consequences of imperial invasion register clearly in postcolonial texts like *Wide Sargasso Sea*, in which the tension between Caribbean culture and European values and power structures is keenly felt. The loss of Caribbean culture, debased and made subservient by the imposition of European laws and customs, bears striking parallels to the Gothic fears of reverse colonization. Christophine is quick to recognize the essential similarities between the introduction of European law and the recently abolished system of condoned slavery it purports to redress: "No more slavery! She had to laugh! "These new ones have Letter of the Law. Same thing. They got magistrate. They got fine. They got jail house and chain gang. They got tread machine to mash up people's feet. New ones worse than old ones–more cunning, that's all" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 22-23). Antoinette soon falls victim to this very law, as is intimated in the following exchange between her and Christophine:

> He will not come after me. And you must understand I am not rich now, I have no money of my own at all, everything I had belongs to him.
> 'What you tell me there?'she said sharply.
> That is English law. (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 91)

For all her attempts to avoid the laws of the invaders by resisting marriage, Christophine, who claims, "I keep my money. I don't give it to no worthless man," (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 91) ends up as poor as Antoinette in a land where European powers and

not indigenous ones decide wealth and poverty, slavery and emancipation The erasure of Caribbean culture at the hands of their oppressors is evident in a telling scene where Antoinette's husband is welcomed to Granbois with a gift of frangipani wreaths. The Rochester figure crowns himself with one of the wreaths, but in contradiction of Antoinette's assertion that he looks "like a king, an emperor," he then declares, "I hardly think it suits my handsome face" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 62). One need hardly explain the symbolism of what follows: "[I] took the wreath off. It fell on the floor and as I went towards the window I stepped on it" (Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* 62). Perhaps the fullest expression of the success of the colonizer is the acceptance and internalization of the colonizer's beliefs by the Other. The detrimental effects of the aggressive and arrogant European power structures imposed on the "Oriental" lands and their peoples, and the consequent damage to local culture and customs, exemplify what it was that the English feared, as reflected in the reverse-colonization anxieties of Gothic fictions.

Conclusions

Although postcolonial texts differ substantially in terms of the sensationalism they encourage and the emphasis they place on effect-driven strategies of reader involvement, they are interested in issues of representation and can be seen to employ similar representational *topoi* in their engagements with the unknown. In particular, the exotic tropes and the fear of the foreign lend themselves admirably to explorations of postcolonial anxieties over loss of identity on the individual and cultural levels in direct consequence of colonisation.

In conclusion, this paper has scratched the surface of the interfaces between exoticism and postcolonial interests. A fuller account would consider in greater detail related issues such as the role of women and madness, superstition and "civilization", sexual desire (both repressed, as it finds a metaphorical place in colonization), the relationship of the past to the present, and a consideration of patriarchy and paternalism (and female-empowering alternatives) as they pertain to imposed and traditional models of society.

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CONCEPTUALISING TIME AND SPACE IN WINTERSON'S *THE PASSION* AND *WRITTEN ON THE BODY*

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Abstract: Time and space are major themes in Winterson's novels. My goal in this paper is to focus on the way these concepts are analysed from the perspective of two of her novels, *The Passion* and *Written on the Body*. Winterson succeeds in creating and conferring new values on these concepts in her novels, thus allowing them a different interpretation.

Keywords: body, social space, space, time, water.

Introduction

"A book is a magic carpet that flies you off elsewhere." (Winterson, *Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?* 34) Quoting from her book of memoirs, *Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?,* she offers an image that frees literature from its material constraints: her work takes the reader on a journey through different times and places as if on a magic carpet. "Books, for me, are a home. Books don't make a home–they are one, in the sense that just as you do with a door, you open a book, and you go inside. Inside there is a different kind of time and a different kind of space." (Winterson, *Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?* 34)

"All of my books manipulate time, in an effort to free the mind from the effects of gravity. The present has a weight to it-the weight of our lives, the weight of now. By imaginatively moving sideways, I try to let in more light and air." (*Art and Lies*, Winterson website)

Winterson's novels are proof that time and space are crucial elements in her fiction. She juggles with these elements in order to get escape from the weight of our present life and to step aside from under its burden. These two concepts are crucial in all her novels, and she is very conscious of the function time and space serve in her narratives.

In the present paper, we shall try to discuss these two concepts from the perspective of two of Jeanette Winterson's novels: *The Passion* (1987) and *Written on the Body* (1992). There are not many similarities between their plots, except for the theme of unfulfilled love, but the same literary approach to time and space can be found in both, even if they appear from a different angle.

The Passion tells the story of two characters and is set in the aftermath of the French Revolution, at the time of the rise and fall of Napoleon. The story is told by two characters: Henri was Napoleon's wringer of the necks of chickens in the Grande Armée, while Villanelle was a casino croupier in Venice, the city of mazes. Henri starts out as Napoleon's personal waiter and chicken cook, but then his destiny intertwines with Villanelle's, only for him to finally discover his call to write his memoirs/diary, mainly for himself. Villanelle, by contrast, is a web-footed Venetian woman, whose life is so tough that it often resembles a man's. She leads a bisexual life, arousing passion in both sexes. At the moment of their encounter, Henri falls deeply and helplessly in love with her, but at that point Villanelle's heart is given away. Later on, when she recovers her heart, she starts to love Henri like a brother, in an incestuous way, and the passion he bears for her soon turns into an obsession and sends him to a madhouse, where he eventually finds his freedom of mind.

Written on the Body is a story of love and loss, but Winterson has managed to create something as uncommon as an original novel about love. The storyteller of the book falls in love with Louise, who is married to a cancer specialist called Elgin. Interestingly enough, Winterson never reveals the gender of the storyteller and we are left to work out for ourselves whether the story is about a heterosexual or a homosexual relationship. Louise leaves Elgin and moves in with the storyteller, who is unaware of the fact that his/her beloved is seriously ill.

The story is told mainly through flashbacks and turns into a love poem, in which the loved one's leukaemic body is described in every detail in words both wonderful and terrifying. It is a tragic tale that Winterson gives us in *Written on the Body*, but she delivers it with the humour that is always present in her work.

Time and Space

In *Technospaces*, Sally Munt explains the tremendous importance time and space possess.

> Human knowledge passes through two forms of cognition before it can be conceived: space and time. These two forms can be described as intuitive, in the sense that they precede conscious awareness–in other words, we know that, before we experience things, we will perceive them as phenomena in space and time, which are the first filters of knowledge. (Munt 1)

Sally Munt's explanation of space and time as first filters is closely related to the Biblical *Genesis*, where time and space precede any form of civilization, or indeed, any experience. Winterson makes use of these pure concepts to create novels from a literary point of view in which she can re-create historical time and geographical space from her own point of view.

The Passion is a deeply historical book, but contrary to some opinions that declare that "history gets rewritten" (Asensio Arostegui 83), I would say that history is seen from a subjective, limited angle or maybe under a magnifying glass. Historical facts abound, the data are accurate, but everything is perceived from a whole new perspective. Despite the beginning of the novel and its description of Napoleon's greatness as a general of the Grande Armée, the focus falls on a tiny character, Henri, who is at first insignificant. Winterson reverses the habitual patriarchal view and deconstructs the gendered perception of space which associates women with domestic activities, while men are given the primordial public space.

The two main characters occupy inverted roles from the point of view of traditional expectations. Henri, the man, reigns in the kitchen, after having dreamt of "drums and a red uniform" (Winterson, *The Passion* 6), and despite serving Napoleon in the Army for eight whole years, he has never succeeded in killing anyone but only in wringing the necks of chickens. The chicken is one more symbol to represent fear and the female side. Henri is an atypical soldier who does not enjoy going to the brothel, a very common practice in the Army, but when he sees Villanelle he develops a passion for her that will consummate his existence. The female character, on the other hand, has the determination and strength of a man. Villanelle's name has

male influences; it seems to be made up of the noun *villain* followed by the suffix–*elle,* just to emphasize its male aspect. Villanelle works in a casino and occasionally dresses as a man, sometimes just out of fancy or as a disguise, whereas at other times she reveals her true gender. Born into a family of boatmen, she is said to have webbed feet that she can never reveal to anyone; this is a secret pact among all boat people. In addition, she is not as sensitive as Henri, and states that her heart is a "reliable organ" (Winterson, *The Passion* 60). She has always been a gambler both with her life and with the men in her life.

Social Space

> Social space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather it subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity--their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder. It is the outcome of a sequence and set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object. (Lefebvre 73).

Space, according to contemporary thinker Henri Lefebvre, is a conglomerate of elements containing raw materials and energy that can not be separated from productive forces or from the social division of labour. What Lefebvre seems to imply is that every country creates its own social space by starting from the data its inhabitants have created throughout time, their history, and their anthropology in accordance with present times. This implies that the social space is in constant change, and that this in its turn leads to alterations in the superstructures of society.

Although Henri and Villanelle populate space in an unusual manner, as judged by the reversed male/female roles we are accustomed to in society, Winterson makes them comfortable in their positions. Since happiness is a universal human quest, she keeps her male character waiting until he can develop into an accomplished person. Setting her scene at the time of the Enlightenment, a period of tremendous progress in the sciences and of industrialization, Winterson creates a character, Henri, who seems deeply interested in the cultural and intellectual value of the movement. Although his job is a humble one, this chicken-neck-wringer has always aimed at being an intellectual, even if he has never known exactly what that meant. In this spirit, he starts "to keep a diary. I started so that I wouldn't forget. So that in later life when I was prone to sit by the fire and look back, I'd have something clear and sure to set against my memory tricks." (Winterson, *The Passion* 28) So Henri is very involved in following Enlightenment

theories, including the power to take decisions about his own life without being forced to live under the rule of tyrannical despots. Even at the end of the novel, many years after his time working for Napoleon, Henri believes that he needs "the freedom to make [his] own mistakes" (Winterson, *The Passion* 157). Henri often thinks about the French Revolution and the way in which Bonaparte changed his whole life. "In this sense, *The Passion* pictures Henri as a modern man who dreams of being considered an intellectual and shares the same illuminating experience with such contemporary German philosophers as Hegel and Fichte." (Asensio Arostegui 78)

Space

Space, just like time, is a pivotal concept in Winterson's understanding of the novel. Space is so much more than geographical space. Although Winterson relies heavily on geography, she places a great emphasis on human space and the human body. The eyes are not only the light of the soul but also stand for metaphorical representations. Henri lost an eye in the Army, but this only enhanced his ability to perceive reality, while the story of the Princess whose tears become jewels is a philosophical approach to happiness. In the same sense, we have human space mainly dealing with questions of the heart, as the title of the novel suggests.

In *The Passion*, time and space are connected through the geography of palms. Winterson makes use of the practice of palmistry in order to possibly decipher the future, or maybe to understand how the past has led to the present.

Recalling the Greek philosopher Heraclitus' famous dictum "you cannot step twice into the same river; for other waters are ever flowing on to you", Winterson constantly uses the image of a river to reflect the problematic nature of time. In *The Passion*, the image of Venice appears as that of an ever-constant land of change, where nothing is set or fixed.

> The idea of flux strikes a chord not only with the Bergsonian concept of time but also with Edward de Bono's 'water logic', one of the categories of lateral thinking he formulates. De Bono contends that traditional logic is static and based on solid foundations which he calls 'rock logic' In contrast to this traditional way of thinking, he proposes 'water logic' based on the flow of the mind interrogating the reasons for things, rather than finding and clinging to fixed definitions. He uses the term to denote 'movement and flexibility in thinking'. (Sonmez and Ozyurt 15)

The image of the river stands for a new way of thinking and a new consciousness. Winterson uses annexes to changing waters with their particular meanings as well. "Bridges join, but they also separate" (*The Passion* 61) is a reference to connectedness on a temporal level once again, because figuratively you cannot have a future without a past. The future predicted for us can only come as a consequence of our past.

If Venice stands for flexibility in thinking, the repeated image of the sea has a different meaning. The sea is not running water, where you could wash away your past and start all over again; the sea is still and immense. In the Napoleonic wars, the sea is the cemetery for 2,000 drowned soldiers, or company for mermaids.

In *Written on the Body*, water is Louise's natural element. And water is one of the basic elements of life. The productive cycle of nature is less fertile if it lacks water. And so is Louise.

Memories recall a "certain September" (Winterson, *Written on the Body* 9) when everything was as it should be. Love "breaks out in tongues of praise, the high note that smashes the glass and spills the liquid." (Winterson, *Written on the Body* 9) The damp soil parallels the beauty of Louise, her body fed by the purity of water. Winterson excels in romantic depictions of Louise, confounding her with the magnificent both healing (female) and destroying (male) powers of water/rain. Starting from the assumption that the male body is a destroyer, Winterson contours a female entity with comforting powers. The body of the beloved woman is immersed in water and is sometimes portrayed as a corpse floating on or swimming under water. Competing here with painters, Winterson never omits the colourful palette that water envelops Louise in: "You turned on your back and your nipples grazed the surface of the river and the river decorated your hair with beads. You are creamy but for your hair your red hair that flanks on you either side." (Winterson, *Written on the Body* 11)

The two colours, red and white, obviously have very strong symbolism. Red is the vividness of love and passion, but red is also the blood of a wound; more probably Winterson's chosen hue relates to menstrual blood. In a female context, a creamy colour represents the maternal milk for a woman's unborn child. The red and white flows representing the maternal body are incorporated into the bloodstream, and as red and white blood cells they become subject to disease: "Marrow where the blood cells are formed red and white. Red and white, the colours of Louise" (Winterson, *Written on the Body* 110).

Space is the human body, Louise's body, which in the case of this novel is the physical body inhabited by a cruel disease. The personal space that is Louise's body has turned from her companion into her enemy: it is her body turning upon her, leaving her and disappointing her. Her personal space is being invaded.

Louise's body is a 'battlefield' at war with itself and is also the locus of a war between the narrator and her husband. As Susan Sontag has demonstrated, there is a direct link between politics and disease. Sontag argues that disease metaphors have often been employed to describe political and historical events: " … military metaphors reached to inspire always more, all the aspects of the medical situation description. Disease is seen as an invasion of foreign organisms, to which the body responds by its own military operations." (Sontag 97)

Rubinson asserts that Winterson uses political metaphors to describe Louise's diseased body: "Mixing political and medical language genres, is a poetic strategy that challenges the authority of medical discourses over the body by refusing to abandon its representation to a depersonalized, exclusive vocabulary." (Rubinson 227)

If we parody the standard depiction of T-cells as the police force, the narrator is describing an army out of control: "the security forces have rebelled. Louise is the victim of a coup. … Here they come, hurtling through the bloodstream trying to pick a fight. There is no-one but you Louise. You are the foreign body now." (Winterson, *Written on the Body* 115-16)

The political description of the body fighting against the immune system as police is carried to its logical conclusion: the putsch of the security forces, causing death and the destruction of the body. Dissected under the doctors' magnifying glass, Louise's body splits. But the terrible disease involves the entirety of her bodily organs, which have to fear a bomb attack over the battlefield. Cancer cannot cope with the army of invaders that spreads through the organism. Neither can Louise's body cope with the harsh treatments she is subjected to.

Space is not just the biological body with its maimed parts, it is also the confined space where everything seems to be bursting out. At the very end of the novel, when it is not very clear whether Louise is dead or alive, and when the narrator has already lost track of her, he/she sees Louise one more time, but maybe it is just a dream.

> This is where the story starts in the threadbare room. The walls are exploding. The windows have turned
> into telescopes. Moon and stars are magnified in this room. The sun hangs over the mantelpiece. I stretch
> out my hand and reach the corners of the world. The world is bundled up in this room. Beyond the door,

where the river is, where the roads are, we shall be. We can take the world with us when we go and sling the sun under your arm. Hurry now, it's getting late. I don't know if this is a happy ending but here we are let loose in open fields. (Winterson, *Written on the Body* 190)

The room is a place under high pressure where almost everything explodes, where objects have grown to incredible sizes. It appears as if the room has been under pressure and is finally giving way. Beyond the door, by contrast, is freedom, where the open fields offer you freedom of mind as well. This paragraph, where space is at first limited, will eventually open up and let you breathe in new perspectives. It offers the reader a set of binaries: inside/outside, confinement/freedom, closed/open, bundled/loose. The brief image of the river suggests the necessity of flexibility and open-mindedness, and together with the images projected above, these qualities stand for the dynamic of postmodernism.

Time

The events in *The Passion* are presented chronologically and in parallel, but we may notice many and frequent flashbacks to Henri's childhood. Chronologically, Henri's and Villanelle's lives develop in parallel, with one of them in the Army and the other mainly living in Venice, until they meet and the discourse becomes common. Space and time are pivotal in their existence. Henri was five when the Revolution came and extremely young, still a boy, when he enlisted in the Army. Winterson uses time and a number of space coordinates (France, Russia, Venice) to show his growing up. She also makes use of grammatical tenses in her discourse. In the first three chapters, Henri's narrations are in the past, just as Villanelle mentions events she has lived through. But in the last chapter, where the two characters' narrations intertwine, Henri, now imprisoned in the San Servelo madhouse, uses the present.

So, in his narration story time and narrative time overlap in a present that projects itself into the future as the novel ends: 'I will have red roses next year. A forest of red roses.' In this sense, although Villanelle's narration in this chapter refers to the same events Henri describes and theoretically enjoys the same status as Henri's, it is psychologically contained within Henri's ending, for her account remains past with respect to Henri's and the reader's presents. The impression is further enhanced by the obvious fact that Henri's ending literally puts an end to the novel, as it is printed after hers. (Onega 15)

Temporality can be seen under several facets. In *Written on the Body*, we have the biological time that encompasses the love story. It is the duration of the romance between the ungendered narrator and Louise. Louise's illness, on the other hand, is measured differently. Winterson makes use of Einstein's theory of relativity in presenting time in her work.

Time is always an important factor in the matrix of life, according to the novelist. "My experience has been that time always ends. In theory you are right, the quantum physicists are right, the romantics and the religious are right. Time without end. In practice we both wear a watch." (Winterson, *Written on the Body* 18)

In this brief paragraph we already find a contradiction between the limited time we all have on Earth and scientific endless time. It is the time used in science, in quantum physics, as opposed to real life time and real life experiences. Time appears as very precise; you feel the ticking of the clock as a threat throughout the novel. In this case the ending is closely related to the possible ending of a relationship, but on the other hand Louise states that "Time is a great deadener"(*Written on the Body* 189) just at the end of the novel. It implies the passing of time, as one needs time to heal and cure its wounds.

We do not live to realize our dreams for the future. In *The Passion*, Winterson affirms her focus on the present: "Domino said it was in the present, in the moment only that you could be free, rarely and unexpectedly." (Winterson, *The Passion* 154)

Conclusion

Time, space and the narrative are all common points in Winterson's narrative and help her build up her fictional universe. She is a novelist who "aims to transgress the boundaries of time and space, and narrate what it is to be a human being living within the bounds of a patriarchal, traditional and polarised culture. Her novels present moments of being to illustrate how it feels to be liberated from these boundaries." (Sonmez and Ozyurt 10)

Jeanette Winterson's voice is unique in literature. She can always make innovations in such a worn literary genre as the novel. *The Passion* represents history in a non-conventional way, although history occupies a distinct function in the text. *Written on the Body* focuses on love in an ungendered world, in a place where conventions have collapsed. Nevertheless, time and space connect these novels, and Jeanette Winterson teaches us that we have to dispense with the rigidity that reigns over us and to learn to live in a flexible universe, where everything involves

change and relativity. Time and space do not have a merely literary significance but represent an exercise of the mind and spirit we should all experience.

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POSTMODERN ROMANCE AND THE ILLUSION-MAKING TENDENCIES OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

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Abstract: The paper proposes a reading of romance in terms of postmodernism by establishing a connection between feminism and postmodernism's questioning of historical and cultural representation. The aim is to reveal how history, no longer governed by the urge to find the "truth", gives prominence to the uncertain, the extraordinary, the fantastic, which are the main ingredients of romance.
Keywords: history, romance, storytelling, time.

Introduction

Any discussion of romance should start by acknowledging the rather infamous status of the genre, which is generally given by its identification with a love affair. In an age of lost innocence, the rhetoric of love becomes increasingly difficult to approach, since the lover's discourse is extremely marginalised and love needs ironical, obligatory inverted commas. On the other hand, literary theory and criticism have tended to identify romance with texts largely denigrated as genre literature—romantic fiction, detective fiction, fantasy fiction—which most often fall into the category of mass/popular culture. In spite of the fact that romance novels have enjoyed a fabulous success, or perhaps precisely because of this, romance has generally been disregarded as "an unworthy form of literature" (Fuchs 2), sold cheaply in supermarkets or railway stations and addressed to a public consisting of "infantile" female readers. Such considerations have thus given rise to two interrelated debates concerning the "low" status of romance and its implied "feminisation".

These "accusations" have largely been overcome by the advent of postmodernism, which proposes abolishing the division between highbrow and popular culture, between the dominant and the marginal, and ultimately between masculine and feminine. In addition,

postmodernism and its focus on historicity have cleared the space for a new understanding of romance as a postmodern genre which challenges traditional notions of history and its grand strategies of making sense of the past according to one single "truth". In what follows we shall analyse romance and history as both grounded in or emerging from stories and the implied act of storytelling. Perhaps the most relevant examples for our discussion are provided by Jeanette Winterson's work, which is focused on the intimate relationship between history and fantasy. In an explanatory note to *The Passion*, which Winterson wrote for the 1996 edition, that is, 10 years after the initial publication of the book, the writer explains how her novel (and her whole work *in extenso*) is neither history nor romance, but rather both history and romance: "*The Passion* is not history, except in so much as all our lives are history. *The Passion* is not romance, except in so much as all our lives are marked by the men and women with whom we fell in love".

Postmodern Romance

Along the new lines of thought opened up by the postmodern debates, in her *Romancing the Postmodern* Diane Elam suggests a reading of romance in terms of postmodernism, by "revaluing the romance of women's desire as 'postmodern' rather than simply 'unrealistic' or 'foolish'" (2). Her aim is to establish a connection between feminism and postmodernism's questioning of historical and cultural representation, by arguing that history is no longer governed by the urge to find a clear finality or judgement; instead, it gives prominence to the uncertain, the extraordinary, the fantastic, which are the main ingredients of romance. Elam coins the term "postmodern romance", which shows romance as a postmodern genre, and postmodernism as romance, in that they emerge from a common excess: "the inability to stay within historical and aesthetic boundaries" (12). Many contemporary writers are turning to romance in order to appear "postmodern", and this trend is not merely fashionable but reveals the fact that romance, "by virtue of its troubled relation to both history and novelistic realism, has in a sense been postmodern all along" (Elam 3).

By displacing realism, postmodern romance interrogates the problematic nature of the historical event itself. Several questions arise: "What constitutes a historical event? How can we represent it? And why, if the event is indeed historic, does it keep becoming a matter for romance?" (Elam 14). Postmodern romance states the impossibility of knowing the past, since any attempt to assign a meaning to a past event implies a loss of meaning, a loss of representability. As Linda Hutcheon explains:

both history and fiction are discourses, … both constitute systems of signification by which we make sense of the past … In other words, the meaning and shape are not *in the events*, but *in the systems* which make those past "events" into present historical facts. (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* 89)

Or, as Jeanette Winterson states in *Lighthousekeeping*, the meaning emerges from the story itself: "You don't need to know everything. There is no everything. The stories themselves make the meaning." (134)

Jeanette Winterson's work can be inscribed into the feminist theory and practice which have been particularly important in this postmodernist refocusing on historicity. Her novels expose the myth- or illusion-making tendencies of historiography. In the introduction to *Weight* (2005) Winterson explains how, in a world more and more enthralled by mass media, advertising and reality shows, humanity is passing through a crisis of "the inner life, of the sublime, of the poetic, of the non-material, of the contemplative" (XIX). It is therefore the writer's duty to resort to the power of storytelling and its mythic qualities in order to give voice to the forgotten life of the mind and the soul.

History: Fact or Fiction?

The way in which Winterson approaches history, attempting to modify myths, playing with the fantastic and the utopian, juggling with space and chronology, underlines the fictional nature of history-writing, which constitutes an essential feature of historiographic metafiction. *The Passion* and *Sexing the Cherry* are two texts that exhibit their historical contents as intertwined with folklore, the supernatural, myths and fairytales in order to show how "truth" can be found through various channels, which are not necessarily those of reason or the intellect. Conversely, the irrational can be revealed unexpectedly, even within the most objective historical facts, as when George III addressed the members of the Upper Chamber as "My Lords and peacocks" (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 142). From this perspective, the writer intends to provide a different angle from which historical facts can be regarded, an imaginary one which is characteristic for romance fiction. A suggestive example is provided by the alternation of "real" history with the fairy tales of the twelve dancing princesses in *Sexing the Cherry*, which implies that "history is only another form of the discourses by which we interpret the world, no more privileged than a child's story" (Wallace 198). On the other hand, by valuing fantasy more than rationality, Winterson attacks mainstream, male-made historiography, and "passion", the title she chooses for her novel, announces an original way of relating to the past, "emphasising emotions, impulses and affects; in short, all that

historiography, as a field of study, rejects as obstacles in any attempt to establish objective, reliable knowledge" (Letissier 126).

The artifice of history is further revealed in the choice of events: the events which achieve the status of historical facts are the ones that the writer chooses to narrate. For instance, in *Sexing the Cherry* Jordan is presented as an explorer involved in the discovery of exotic fruits, whereas it is well known that the most rapidly expanding trade in seventeenth-century Britain was not in pineapples or bananas, but in slavery. In *The Passion* the most important feature of Napoleon's character is his "passion" for chicken, a passion which becomes the symbol of his lust to turn Europe into a battlefield and send French soldiers to their deaths. In this sense, in Winterson's novel Napoleon is the patriarchal figure associated with war and destruction. As Letissier observes, the story of a conqueror is always "a narcissistic romance" (128):

> Perhaps all romance is like that; not a contract between equal parties but an explosion of dreams and desires that can find no outlet in everyday life. Only a drama will do and while the fireworks last the sky is a different colour. He becomes an Emperor. (Winterson *The Passion* 13)

The novel counterbalances Bonaparte's masculine thirst for power and his patriarchal world with Villanelle's feminine versatility and "the much more irrational and uncanny world of Venice", a complementariness reflected by the two trumps in the Tarot: "The Emperor"/Napoleon vs. "The Queen of Spades"/Villanelle (Onega 68-9). The card motif and the obsessive emphasis on playing and gambling highlight the importance of chance in people's lives, as well as in our knowledge of the past. Existence as a wager becomes the leitmotif of *The Passion*: "You play, you win, you play, you lose. You play. It's playing that's irresistible … Does it matter whom you lose to, if you lose?" (Winterson 43). Villanelle, the person who repeats these words several times throughout the story, is a professional card player and croupier in a casino that figures as the social and symbolic heart of Venice. In his turn, Henri, Napoleon's personal attendant and one of Villanelle's lovers, was educated by a priest who "had a hollow Bible with a pack of cards inside" and who taught him "every card game and a few tricks" (Winterson, *The Passion* 12). Susana Onega points out that the gambler's awareness that his own life is at stake underlines "an existentialist conception of life that goes back to Pascal's conception of faith in God as a Wager on human destiny" (67).

In *Sexing the Cherry* the motif of chance translates as "the undecidable in both the past and our knowledge of the past" (Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* 63). "What

would history make of tonight?" (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 133) wonders Artemis, pondering over Orion's death. History will always be rewritten and the events that Winterson depicts are "already too far to see" (*Sexing the Cherry* 133), and therefore it is difficult to establish whether they actually took place or whether they have been altered or embroidered or are straight fiction. In other words, it is by chance that certain events become historical facts. Jordan articulates the problematic veracity of past events in the claim that:

> Everyone remembers things which never happened. And it is common knowledge that people often forget things which did. Either we are all fantasists and liars or the past has nothing definite in it. I have heard people say we are shaped by our childhood. But which one? (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 92)

The uncertain dividing line between history and literature also emerges in another feature of historiographic metafiction: the blending of historical personages with purely fictional characters. In *The Passion*, Napoleon, Joséphine and the Czar coexist with Henri and Villanelle, while *Sexing the Cherry* mingles the stories of Cromwell and Charles the Second with those of the Dog-Woman and Jordan. Linda Hutcheon explains that "in all fiction historical characters can coexist with fictional ones within the context of the novel because *there* they are subject only to the rules of fiction" (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* 153). The significance of the referent is thus brought into question, since it can be both real and fictive. This bi-referentiality allows Winterson to lend historical verisimilitude to her fictional characters and at the same time to interrogate the "reality" of well-known, historical personages. The idea is emphasised at the end of *The Passion*, when Henri declares:

> I am in love with her; not a fantasy or a myth or a creature of my own making. Her. A person who is not me. I invented Bonaparte as much as he invented himself. My passion for her, even though she could never return it, showed me the difference between inventing a lover and falling in love.The one is about you, the other about someone else. (Winterson 157-58)

In Henri's account, therefore, a real, historical figure like Napoleon can be more of an invention than a fictive character like Villanelle, yet at this moment, as Catherine Belsey underlines, "Henri is mad, alone, imprisoned on a rock, exactly like Napoleon" (80): in other words, can he be trusted? It is in fact impossible to draw a line between reality and invention in Winterson's fiction.

Similar effects are produced by the interplay between real events and imaginary stories. In *The Passion*, Bonaparte's battles at Ulm and Austerlitz, his divorce from Joséphine, the Russian campaign in the "zero" winter, and the Emperor's death on the island of Saint Helena alternate with Henri's accounts of his dialogues with Bonaparte and Josephine, of his camaraderie with two other fictional "soldiers", Patrick and Domino, and with Villanelle's descriptions of Venice as a simultaneously real and unreal place. Using a similar strategy of juxtaposition, *Sexing the Cherry* mingles the English Civil War and Cromwell's death with references to the imaginary and the fantastic, as in the case of the pineapple's "historical" arrival in England in 1661, or the enchanted city whose inhabitants abandon gravity and prefer to float rather than walk.

Past vs. Present: Winterson's Poetics of Temporality

Another feature of historiographic metafiction as described by Hutcheon refers to the "dialogue with the past in the light of the present" (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* 19). This strategy is best illustrated in *Sexing the Cherry* by the interrelation that the novel creates between events set in an earlier period and issues relevant to present-day society. Winterson's goal in presenting scenarios located in the past is to create an adequate framework for the analysis of contemporary topics, or to raise "a screen on which to project for readers' scrutiny the sensibilities and identities of modernity itself" (Doan and Waters 24). In seventeenth-century England, London is "a foul place, full of pestilence and rot" (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 13), thus resembling contemporary Britain, where the mercury levels in rivers and lakes are growing dangerously high, while men in suits "build dams, clear the rain forests, finance huge Coca-Cola plants and exploit the rubber potential" (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 122).

If past events announce modern topics, characters share similarities over centuries. Thus the Dog-Woman's zeal in literally applying the Law of Moses—"an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 84)—her exaggerated behaviour and her abuse of men are to be found in the alter ego of her double, who has hallucinatory dreams of herself being a savage woman. Doan and Waters consider that this fantasy, coupled with the split banana as the visual icon of the twentieth-century female narrator, may lead to the conclusion that the Dog-Woman has been all along "nothing more than an invention of the contemporary woman's fragmented postmodern imagination" (23).

I am a woman going mad. I am a woman hallucinating. I imagine I am huge, raw, a giant. When I am a giant I go out with my sleeves rolled up and my skirts swirling round me like a whirlpool … Men shoot at me, but I take the bullets out of my cleavage and I chew them up. Then I laugh and laugh and break their guns between my fingers the way you would a fish-bone. (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 121-22)

In a similar way, Nicholas Jordan shares with the other Jordan a fascination with sea voyages and heroism, and decides to join the Navy.

If in *Sexing the Cherry* characters merge their identities over time, in *The Passion* Henri and Villanelle appear as two sides of the same coin, their lives and perspectives forming an "intricate pattern" which suggests a shared identity, Henri representing the conscious or ego and Villanelle the spirit or anima (Onega 58-60). Thus Henri, a sensitive man with romantic dreams, raised by a pious mother and a Roman Catholic priest, joins Napoleon's army in order to become a drummer, but ends up slaughtering chickens as the Emperor's personal cook, although he abhors the thought of killing any living being. By contrast, Villanelle, the cunning, bisexual woman who can literally live without a heart or walk on water, is a professional gambler in Onega's understanding of the concept, that is, a player who enjoys the thrill of dangerous bets: "Pleasure on the edge of danger is sweet" (Winterson, *The Passion* 137).

The way in which both novels engage in a permanent dialogue between complementary characters and events creates a sense of continuity and fluidity, or rather abolishes the neat distinctions between the remote past and the urgent present. Jordan concludes *Sexing the Cherry* by pondering that "the future and the present and the past exist only in our minds, and from a distance the borders of each shrink and fade like the borders of hostile countries seen from a floating city in the sky … Empty space and points of light" (Winterson 144). Winterson's obsessive preoccupation with time and space is announced and explained from the very beginning by the two epigraphs which open *Sexing the Cherry*. The first epigraph recounts the language of the Hopi Indian tribe, a language otherwise as complex as our own, which lacks verb tenses. "What does this say about time?" (*Sexing the Cherry* 8), Winterson asks. Just as her fiction illustrates her view that history and fiction are false dualities, so she uses the structure of the novel to suggest that time, too, is only a construct of the human mind, used to shape human experience. Human notions of space and borders are equally hallucinatory, the second epigraph suggests. We experience the world as solid matter,

although we know from physics that it is mostly empty space. In other words, our perception of reality is a fiction that we willingly adopt.

Winterson transforms chronological time into "a poetics of temporality" (Letissier 126) which states that the passing of time is arbitrary: "Dicing from one year to the next with the things you love, what you risk reveals what you value" (*The Passion* 43). In *The Passion*, the tempo of events defies any notion of a progressive unfolding of time, in spite of the historical dates frequently mentioned. Progression is further destabilised by the relation between the story's time and the time when it is written. In the beginning Henri keeps a diary lest he should forget something, but he writes the final version only later, in his San Servello cell. Therefore, there is a gap in time which leaves room for possible memory tricks. On the other hand, as Domino remarks, events may be interpreted differently in time: "The way you see it now is no more real than the way you'll see it then" (Winterson, *The Passion* 28). Time cannot provide any sense of firm grounding, a fact which renders the present the only palpable experience.

The Passion anticipates Winterson's concern with tenses in *Sexing the Cherry*. Thus Henri prefers the past tense of history, which is ultimately masculine, whereas Villanelle sticks to a more feminine present tense: "It was New Year's Day, 1805" vs. "It is New Year's Day, 1805" (Winterson, *The Passion* 45, 76). It is Villanelle who offers perhaps the best definition of Winterson's understanding of time, which will reverberate in all her later novels:

> Our ancestors. Our belonging. The future is foretold from the past and the future is only possible because of the past. Without past and future, the present is partial. All time is eternally present and so all time is ours. There is no sense in forgetting and every sense in dreaming. Thus the present is made rich. Thus the present is made whole. (*The Passion* 62)

Commenting on this sophisticated concept of time, Doan and Waters point out that, since "all paths lead ineluctably to the present, … and retrospection seems to be simultaneously indulged and refused", history as such "hardly matters" (23). History thus becomes an unbounded, metafictional space, much like the one envisaged by Jordan at the end of *Sexing the Cherry*, a space where "There is only the present and nothing to remember" (Winterson 43). If we consider the historical past a masculine discourse, then Villanelle's assertion that the present is the only certainty which matters comes to undermine the supremacy of male history, and consequently to create a space for female agency.

The Narrator's (Un)Reliability

A parallel is then drawn between the fictional character of reality and the whole act of narration. The narrator's reliability is overtly doubted, to the extent that it becomes difficult for both the reader and the writer to assert whether one story or another is true or entirely made up. In fact this is one of Winterson's literary ambitions, as she herself states in *Lighthousekeeping*:

> I believe that storytelling is a way of navigating our lives, and that to read ourselves as fiction is much more liberating than to read ourselves as fact. Facts are partial. Fiction is a more complete truth. If we read ourselves as narrative, we can change the story that we are. If we read ourselves as literal and fixed, we find we can change nothing. Someone will always tell the story of our lives–it had better be ourselves. (20)

There is a certain degree of uncertainty in all the characters' stories. In *Sexing the Cherry*, for instance, after describing his first encounter with Fortunata, Jordan immediately remarks that the scene may belong to the future or to the past, that he may already have found Fortunata or not, and that he may even have imagined her all along. In the same manner, the princesses admit that their story "is true, although it is not" (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 95), while Fortunata ironically insists on the veracity of her account of the dancing city:

> Now I have told you the history of the city, which is a logical one, each piece fitting into the other without strain. Sure that you must believe something so credible I will continue with the story of our nightly arrival in that city. (Winterson, *Sexing the Cherry* 97)

Similarly, *The Passion* questions the credibility of events and of their narrator, and a leitmotif of the text becomes "I'm telling you stories. Trust me" (Winterson, *The Passion* 12), which is Henri's confident assertion at the beginning of the novel, as well as Villanelle's reassuring sentence throughout the story. This is also Henri's last remark, which concludes *The Passion.* Read in the context of Henri's situation as a prisoner in the madhouse of San Servelo, telling stories becomes a "therapeutic activity" which makes the character not a madman but a "mythmaker", that is, someone who can translate his life experiences into "archetypal stories that give sense to human existence at large" (Onega 75). The ending serves to reinforce the connotation of the title, which, according to Onega, refers to the "original" passion, which is repeated in the multiple trajectories of passion envisaged by Winterson's

text: "The definite article in the title, then, gives the life stories of the protagonists a representative, archetypal character" (55).

This distrust of both stories and narrators underlines Winterson's commitment to "an ironic re-thinking of history" (Grice and Woods 1), which can be associated with Hutcheon's idea that historiographic metafiction creates worlds that are "both resolutely fictive and yet undeniable historical", worlds that have as a common point "their constitution in and as discourse" (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* 142). Since the representation of history appears as an ideological discourse, it comes as no surprise that Winterson rejects notions of narratorial identity or objective reality, and prefers to tell stories that do not aim at revealing any singular truth but are rather different accounts, based on various kinds of narrative. Intertextuality thus becomes a necessary tool in shaping the writer's conception of history as "a sandwich laced with mustard of my own" (Winterson, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* 93). And Winterson encourages her readers to make their own sandwiches, that is, to create their own stories which, unlike history, provide "a way of explaining the universe while leaving the universe unexplained … of keeping it alive, not boxing it into time" (*Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* 93). Discussing the writer's preference for stories and romance over history, Lynn Pykett stresses that:

> In Winterson's avowedly anti-realistic fictions, stories are less a way of trying to explain or understand the universe than of (re)experiencing it, or alternatively, of shoring oneself against its confusions and complexities; less a way of understanding material history or "the historical process" than of transcending it or escaping from its confines. (56)

Conclusion

The conclusion we reach after reading Winterson's fiction is that the heterogeneous mixture of real and fictional characters and events renders history not as an objective record of events but as a baroque labyrinth of historical facts filtered through private, individualised consciousnesses. From this perspective, the focus shifts from the master narratives about Bonaparte, the Civil War or the Plague to narratives produced by marginalised sections of the community, such as women or "unmanly" heroes. In effect we get what Hutcheon calls "the histories (in the plural) of the losers as well as the winners, of the regional (and colonial) as well as the centrist, of the unsung many as well as the much sung few, …of women as well as men" (*The Politics of Postmodernism* 63). In so doing, both *The Passion* and *Sexing the Cherry* give voice to the unwritten histories of minor cultures and ordinary people.

The exposure of the illusion-making tendency of history writing results in a critique of mainstream, male-made historiography which boasts about its search for final and absolute truths. In order to fracture the masculine discourse of history and enable women to claim their stories, Winterson relies on myth, fairy tale, fantasy and especially love, the very ingredients of much of women's writing. It can be argued that love as a form of knowing and discovery is the locus where all of Winterson's novels converge. Her fiction celebrates romantic love in an attempt to place *the* passion beyond the borders of a neglected discourse. At the same time, Winterson's stories envisage an escape from the confines of time. If time is a masculine convention and space a feminine experience (Irigaray 9), Winterson attempts to counterbalance the teleological representation of time by an emphasis on space perceived not so much as real geography, but as a fictional reconfiguration in which the ultimate reality is *the* passion repeated *ad infinitum*.

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THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S *THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS* AND ANITA DESAI'S *CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY*

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyse women's state in Arundhati Roy's The *God of Small Things* and Anita Desai's *Clear Light of Day*. In both novels, women struggle with the world they live in because of their womanhood. Their situation can be discussed briefly in terms of Gayatri Spivak's famous essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

Keywords: Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Gayatri Spivak, subaltern, womanhood

Anita Desai and Arundhati Roy are two significant contemporary Indian novelists who write in English. In their novels, both writers employ women characters whose position at home and in society can be analysed in terms of Gayatri Spivak's famous essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988). Desai's *Clear Light of Day* and Roy's *The God of Small Things* have been selected for a brief study in this paper.

Discussing the context of the colonial process, Spivak suggests that *the subaltern* cannot have a history of his/her own and cannot have a voice and that if the subaltern is a female, she cannot be heard at all because she exists in absolute silence:

> It is, rather, that, both as object of colonialist historiography and as subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. (28)

Richard Lane points out that Spivak's basic intention is to resist the "essentialist positioning in Third World subjects" (247). Since the marginalized subject is denied due to his/her difference from the elite, Spivak stands against the "essentialist underpinnings" (Lane 247). For Spivak, in this respect, the key subject position is that of a female subaltern in relation to the practice of *sati*, which means *widow immolation*. That is, since the female is considered to have no identity apart from being her husband's possession, when the husband dies, she is supposed to die as well, and therefore, in India, she is burnt. In this practice of *sati*, there is, as Spivak suggests, *double displacement*, because the female is silenced under both the British colonial power and the power of masculinity within Indian patriarchal traditions (24-28).

For Ramesh Kumar Gupta, the "new woman" is today challenging the traditional notions of "Angel in the house": "The new woman is essentially a woman of awareness and consciousness of her low position in the family and society" (152). For Gupta, this has brought a kind of revolution in literary studies. But it can be discussed to what extent this new woman exists under the double displacement highlighted by Spivak.

Clear Light of Day, a significant novel shortlisted for the Booker Prize, is the story of the Indian Das family, the members of which are (since the partition of India in 1947) no longer all together. Bimla, or Bim, is an unmarried history teacher who has never left her home and family in Old Delhi. She is the person who has the responsibility of taking care of her autistic brother, Baba. Her younger sister, Tara, is married with children and comes back to visit her family in Old Delhi with her husband Bakul, India's ambassador to America. The story moves back in time from the characters' adulthood to their adolescence and then to their childhood. When they were children, Tara's wish to become a mother was often ridiculed by Bim and Raja, another brother now living in Hyderabad, as these two wanted to be a heroine and a hero respectively. In the final part, apart from family decisions such as whether or not to attend Raja's daughter's wedding, the significant climactic point is when Bim explodes at Baba and then decides that familial love can cover all wrongs:

> [A]nd in their shade she saw how she loved him, loved Raja and Tara and all of them who had lived in this house with her… They were really all parts of her, inseparable, so many aspects of her as she was of them, so that the anger or the disappointment she felt at herself. Whatever hurt they felt, she felt. Whatever diminished them, diminished her… Although it was shadowy and dark, Bim could see as well as by the clear light of day that she felt only love and yearning for them all, and if there were hurts, these gashes and wounds in her side that bled, then it was only because her love was imperfect

and did not encompass them thoroughly enough, and because it had flaws and inadequacies and did not extend to all equally. (Desai 165)

In "Tradition and Deviation", Swain defends the idea that although Desai's women protest the commonly accepted societal norms, they are ready to face their consequences, and her portrayal of women is as people who are not completely cut off from familial and societal ties but do stand against "monotony, injustice and humiliation" (15). For Swain, Desai's women characters are not goddesses or robots but "self-actualising and self-realising individuals" (15). On the other hand, Bim's giving herself up in the above-mentioned paragraph can be interpreted in terms of Spivak's essay, because we can clearly see that even if at one point she reacts to her position within the family, she later accepts her sacrificial situation, or her *subaltern* position in Spivak's terms, and associates it with an endless love that covers all the wrongs within the family.

Looking at the examples, one may comment that the women in the novel keep their traditional position alive despite all their various reactions to the patriarchal system, such as having jobs of their own, getting married and leaving the country (which is often described as unchanging, static or decaying rather than improving over time), or even staying unmarried in order to gain their own economic power (unlike those who get married in order to assert their existence within society as wives rather than as individuals with their own identity), and so forth. A discussion between Tara and Bim taken from much earlier times is quite relevant here:

> 'What else could there be?' countered Tara. 'I mean,' she fumbled 'for them.'
> 'What else?' asked Bim. 'Can't you think? I can think of hundreds of things to do instead. I won't marry,' she added, very firmly.
> Tara glanced at her sideways with a slightly sceptical smile.
> 'I won't,' repeated Bim, adding 'I shall never leave Baba and Raja and Mira-*masi*,' … 'I shall work–I shall *do* things,' she went on, 'I shall earn my own living–and look after Mira-*masi* and Baba and–and be independent. (Desai 140)

Although Bim seems to have taken on the traditional role of a male within the family as the economically dominant person and the protector of the other members of the family, her mind is still busy with how to look after the others at home, or in other words, how to sacrifice herself and her own life. Bim is depicted as the advisor, the protector and the decision-maker, the life-giver, representing *family unity*. Thus, as Hena Ahmad suggests,

Clear Light of Day involves "the conflict between independence and solitude on the one hand and attachment and the need to connect on the other" (91).

The idea of being a life-giver or a nurturer is reaffirmed in the personality of Mira-Masi, the woman who took care of the children after their mother's death. She later becomes an alcoholic, and when she loses her independence and needs care like a little child, Bim is there to take over the role of the mother (Desai 79-89). So we may also suggest that the role of woman as the life-giver and the mother of the whole family does not disappear at all but instead, it switches from time to time among these female characters in the novel.

When it comes to Tara, although she seems to be a more independent woman, a conversation between her and Bakul is significant in revealing the *double displacement* Spivak talks about. After a small unlucky event, Bakul says:

> And you won't let me help you. I thought I had taught you a different life, a different way of living. Taught you to execute your will. Be strong. Face challenges. Be decisive. But no, the day you enter your old home, you are as weak-willed and helpless and defeatist as ever. (Desai 16)

Bakul's words can be analysed in two ways: Firstly, he claims to be the person who gave Tara a new and better life. This puts him into the position of the dominant male who directs the female subject. This means she is not considered to have an identity without her husband's authorisation. Secondly, Bakul's attitude towards Tara reveals the colonial power that still exists in some way even in people's everyday conversations and directs their minds and lives by emphasising the idea that the West in general terms is more like a proper life and a way of existence, unlike Tara's life back in India, a country which is often described as decaying, unchanging, unmoving and so forth. So Tara's voice is doubly silenced: both by her husband and by the colonial power that is still perpetuated in various ways.

It is, therefore, possible to suggest that the women in Desai's novel maintain their subaltern position. Even if these women were to choose not to surrender and were instead to try to break the conventions and confront their situation as female subjects under the patriarchal and colonial power, their voice would not be heard and they would, at some point, be silenced by the system.

As for *The God of Small Things*, "small things" refers to overlooked events, "small" people and other creatures which, in fact, deserve more attention than "big things." Even from the title, one may comment that small, silent or hidden things should be heard, should be given their voice. The novel contains stories of death, broken marriages, unreasonable hate,

revenge, sexuality and violence. When an overall analysis of the novel is conducted, it is not only the story of a family that comes to the fore, but it is also the story of *suffering* in a wider perspective, which does not seem to have an end (Kulkarni 173). That is to say, the characters in the novel have their unfulfilled desires and are punished and silenced by the system in various ways.

The women in *The God of Small Things* are mostly confronted with marital and family problems. Estha and Rahel's mother, Ammu, marries Babu in a beautiful ceremony; however, her husband turns out to be an alcoholic and even urges her to sleep with his boss, Mr. Hollick, after which Ammu leaves him and returns with the twins, Estha and Rahel, to Ayemenem. Then she has a secret love affair with Velutha, an *untouchable*, and so she is banished from her home and dies in another place. Her situation could represent the typical problems an Indian woman who is dependent on her husband can face. Her relationship with Velutha is particularly significant in that their affair is considered to be both a sin, as it is extra-marital, and a crime, as it is between the members of two different classes in the caste system. In fact, the untouchables are not even regarded as a part of the caste system. In this respect, we can regard the untouchables as subaltern subjects as well, people whose voice is lost both in the social class system and also under the colonial rule. The narrator also refers in the novel to Velutha as "the God of Small Things":

> *If he touched her, he couldn't talk to her, if he loved her he couldn't leave, if he spoke he couldn't listen, if he fought he couldn't win.*
> Who was he, the one-armed man? Who *could* he have been? The God of Loss? The God of Small Things? The God of Goose Bumps and Sudden Smiles? Of Sourmetal Smells–like steel bus-rails and the smell of the bus conductor's hands from holding them? (Roy 217)

Even when Sophie Mol dies, Velutha is unfairly punished simply because he was there near the river, where he used to meet Ammu. In all these situations involving discrimination, Ammu as a woman is punished and totally silenced, as Velutha is. As Sunaina Singh also emphasizes, "in India a woman's life is governed by tradition and family customs. A good woman is one who is a good daughter, wife and mother. To be good means to be of a sacrificing, self-abnegating, meek and quiet nature" (27).

Another woman, Mammachi, the grandmother, also has an unhappy marriage with Pappachi. She is constantly beaten by her husband. Her playing the violin comes as a contrast

to all the violence performed upon her and may be a suggestion that music is her attempt to be heard, to be given a voice.

In the middle of this highly oppressive system, the reader witnesses an innocent love between the non-identical twins Estha and Rahel. Their love goes beyond the boundaries of societal norms, the caste system, and even sexual identity in general terms. The narrator in the novel describes them as sharing a love even before the world existed (because of being twins):

> In those early amorphous years when memory had only just begun, when life was full of beginnings and no Ends, and Everything was For Ever, Esthappen and Rahel thought of themselves together as Me, and separately, individually, as We or Us. As though they were a rare breed of Siamese twins, physically separate, but with joint identities. (Roy 2)

The important thing here might be that their relationship as twins, including their sexual relationship, is practised in silence, even if there are other people who have the same type of relationship. From time to time, they watch each other dressing or showering with a hidden desire, but their desire is silenced for years under heterosexual and patriarchal dominance. Thus, one may comment that Roy probably intends to give many possible reactions to the dominance of patriarchal power, but her attempts cannot give voice to the subaltern subjects of this novel and they still cannot exist within their own identities. If they attempt to do so, they are eventually punished.

To conclude, both Desai and Roy exploit common everyday Indian issues in their novels. Their stories involve sorrow, grief, problematic marital relationships, non-marital affairs, and violent punishments for breaking social rules (involving incest, the caste system and so forth). We also see personal challenges, courage to stand against the taboos, women seeking their identity as human beings, as individuals, but the dominant masculine voice is so oppressive that these women are silenced in various ways, which is what Spivak also speaks about in her well-known article. It is, thus, ironic that even if some female characters in these two novels intend to move outside the boundaries of the patriarchal system, they eventually become lost in the system. As Bimaljit Saini also remarks, "despite the various forums focusing on the women's physical, financial and emotional exploitation together with their mental anguish, traces of oppression seem to have stayed" (171). Therefore, this dominant social cycle silences its subaltern subjects, and the female subaltern subjects are doubly silenced, doubly lost…

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BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER IN *THE BLUEST EYE*

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Abstract: The present work aims at finding relevant correspondences between Body Dysmorphic Disorder and the literary context of this novel's main character, Pecola. The creation of such strong interdependence between a literary character and a psychological phenomenon represents a challenge on account of their apparently disparate natures but is nevertheless an enterprise capable of offering great literary and artistic satisfaction to both the reader and the author.

Keywords: abuse, Body Dysmorphic Disorder, racism, trauma

Introduction

The present paper approaches the continuous relationship between a psychological level and a literary one. It focuses on the combining of the two spheres and on the correspondences resulting from the blending of the two levels. It emphasizes the role of society as the constant perpetrator and the culprit for all the damage done in Pecola's life. Society, represented by the actions of its individuals, is not only the mirror reflecting distorted images but also the death penalty for a victim already on death row. Society functions as the source of physical and psychological evil and, through the example of Pecola, represents the ultimate, destructive consequences of evil: "There are five major toxins in our society which contaminate our state of well-being … prejudice, aggression, societal indoctrination, segregation and sex … being promoters of those belief systems or being spectators and watching their negative consequences affecting the people around us…" (Liau 3).

Pecola, the main character in the novel *The Bluest Eye*, is the victim of a society where the supreme standard of beauty is considered to be whiteness. Not being white is, in Pecola's case, the pretext for her being bullied and subject to manifestations of racism. Pecola's existence is illustrative of the fact that the set of values called beauty generally implies prejudice and damage done to individuals; "Millions of people have a secret obsession. They're obsessed with how they look, with a perceived flaw in their appearance. They worry that their nose is too big, their breasts are too small, their skin is blemished, their hair is thinning … any body part can be the focus of this obsession…" (Phillips 3).

The subjectivity of beauty, associated with the ruthlessness of racism, represents the poisoned cocktail for the black girl, the generator of BDD. The clinical manifestations of BDD find an accurate correspondence in the outworking of events in *The Bluest Eye*. The impact of the term "beauty" not only alters the way people think and interact but also produces disorders that shatter the inner psychological world of the individual. "…*Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary* (1983) defines self-esteem as 'belief in oneself; self-respect'…self-esteem has to do with value. If we hold something in esteem, we believe it has some value or worth…" (Claiborne Cherry 166).

BDD as Othering

Behind Pecola's existence stands a vicious monster which affects the lives of millions of people. The internal, psychological grinding of Pecola is reflected, from a figurative point of view, by psychogenic excoriation, a common manifestation of BDD. The skin lesions, the swelling, the blisters, the cuts, the burns and scars are a suggestive metaphor for the interior tragedy and metamorphosis of Pecola, who is gradually becoming a monster because of all the hate and prejudice reflected upon her. The process of causing damage, by mechanical or chemical means, is symbolic of the violent and caustic interior impact of the prejudice, hate and injustice of the society towards the sensitive psyche of teenage Pecola: "What exactly are the symptoms of BDD? Two major features make up BDD: the preoccupation with the defect and the actions people take to reduce their feelings of distress. The person with BDD spends a lot of time thinking about the defect and her worrying about how others will react or what they will think… "(Veale Neziroglu 12).

In Pecola's case the illness called BDD is in some way represented metaphorically by society itself, which embodies both the causes and the results of the illness reflected upon the individual. The BDD sufferer's thinking about the defect is, in Pecola's case, a metaphor for society's constant reminders of her ugliness, of its obsessive emphasis on the main character's so-called ugliness. "…How others will react and what they'll think..." represents, at a transcendent level, the self-consciousness and the insecurities of a society which constantly plants the seeds of doubt not only in Pecola's mind but also in the mind of any other individual who does not fit into that society's standards of beauty. As a consequence, the severity of BDD applies not to Pecola as a patient who suffers because of her ugliness but to society, which in itself represents a complex and severe case of BDD. Society is the severe generator and source of the illness but shifts the fault on to the victim rather than taking it upon itself. The society in which Pecola lives exacerbates the nonexistent or minimal defects in a person's appearance, just as BDD implies. In this lies the hypocrisy and injustice of the behaviour of society: instead of dealing with its own frustrations and problems, it projects them upon fragile and innocent lives:

> Letting herself breathe easy now, Pecola covered her head with the quilt. The sick feeling, which she had tried to prevent by holding in her stomach, came quickly in spite of her precaution… "Please, God," she whispered into the palm of her hand. "Please make me disappear." ... Her fingers went, one by one; then her arms disappeared all the way to the elbow. Her feet now. Yes, that was good. The legs all at once. It was hardest above the thighs … The face was hard, too … Only her tight, tight eyes were left. They were always left. Try as she might, she could never get her eyes to disappear. (Morrison 33)

The wish to disappear reflects Pecola's desire to annul her being, her existence as a human being. The gradual disappearance of her being reflects her immediate and powerful wish to become invisible, at a metaphorical level, to stop existing, to self-destruct. Her powerful desire to disappear represents, at an unconscious level, her innermost need to become someone else, to change into someone else, which is a common trait of the BDD patient. The impossibility of her eyes changing reflects her drama, the drama of the society in which she lives. The eyes are not only the means through which a person sees, but also embody a kaleidoscope of immutable experiences gathered in the cradle of the eye. At this point the eyes represent a paradox. They symbolize, from one perspective, the unchangeable and, from another perspective, the strong desire for change. "...Try as she might, she could never get her eyes to disappear." The wish for

the eyes to disappear could represent an unbearable environment to be watched and to be dealt with and can also mean the drama of the unchangeable symbol of beauty. "'Please, God,' she whispered into the palm of her hand. 'Please make me disappear'" represents Pecola's recreation of the archetypal moment of guilt for Adam, who calls on God for help to make his suffering disappear. The guilt is unbearable and is equivalent to the immutable evil, to the implacable outcome that derives from pain:

> There was the sidewalk crack shaped like a Y, and the other one that lifted the concrete up from the dirt floor … The newly paved walks were bumpy and uncomfortable, and the sound of skate wheels on new walks was grating … They were real to her. She knew them. They were the codes and touchstones of the world, capable of translation and possession. She owned the crack that made her stumble; she owned the clumps of dandelions whose white heads, last fall, she had blown away…. (Morrison 35-36)

In an ironic way, the crack in the pavement and the dandelions represent the only moment of equilibrium in Pecola's life. She has always depended on someone or something, or someone or something has made her dependent on them/it. In this way, a sense of fragility, of insecurity, has characterized her most of the time. The crack in the pavement is associated with the moment in which she truly feels alive. This made her feel she belonged to the world she lived in. The crack shaped like a Y, by the manner in which it is configured, can also symbolize a downfall, a pit or a funnel shape, representing the descending trajectory of the main character, Pecola. The crack can be the deceit of her destiny which makes her stumble repeatedly and is the premonition of bad things to come. Ironically, the crack in the pavement, despite giving Pecola a sense of stability, is the symbol of her cracked, fractured life, which follows her everywhere, no matter the efforts she makes to get rid of it:

> A group of boys was circling and holding at bay a victim, Pecola Breedlove. Bay Boy, Woodrow Cain, Buddy Wilson, Junie Bug … Heady with the smell of their own musk, thrilled by the easy power of a majority, they gaily harassed her. "Black e mo. Black e mo. Yadaddsleepsnekked. Black e mo black e mo ya dadd sleeps nekked. Black e mo ..."…That they themselves were black, or that their own father had similarly relaxed habits was irrelevant. It was their contempt for their own blackness that gave the first insult its teeth…. (Morrison 50)

The behaviour of the group of boys is a metaphor for the extreme psychological aggression and pressure that BDD sufferers experience at an emotional level. The violent language, the gang-like behaviour, the extreme intimidation were not turned against Pecola, one of their kind, but against themselves, against their inner insecurities, frustrations and hate. This is a self-destructive image of a group of boys who are unconsciously taking part in a ritual of self-destruction. The act of harassment represented the power of prejudice, hate and instinct against innocence and purity. It is the same power that consumes these boys from the inside, consuming not only their rational judgement but also their power to feel, appreciate, to discern right from wrong and, most importantly, to love. The last verb, "to love", is a big puzzle for Pecola, who is a stranger to it, and she tries to understand the meaning of it, despite the fact that no one has been capable of manifesting it towards her:

> …Into her eyes came the picture of Cholly and Mrs. Breedlove in bed. He making sounds as though he were in pain, as though something had him by the throat and wouldn't let go. Terrible as his noises were, they were not nearly as bad as the no noise at all from her mother. It was as though she was not even there. Maybe that was love. Choking sounds and silence…. (Morrison 51)

The tragedy resides in the words *choking sounds* and *silence.* "The choking sounds" are a metaphor for the strange perception of the feeling in Pecola's life, while "silence" is almost analogous to the emptiness, the void of significance she feels in relation to the word "love". She can only grasp the feeling called love from the outside, through her hearing; she cannot grasp it from the inside, she cannot experience it appropriately, because she has never been given the occasion to feel it or to manifest it. In this way Pecola much resembles a BDD sufferer who is incapable of projecting love on the outside because he has never been able to fully experience love on the inside. The crack on which Pecola continuously stumbles is a piece of substitute love. The crack is the only form of mediation between the main character and the derivation of love symbolized by the dandelions and the fissure in the pavement. She feels that she is important because she belongs to the dandelions and the fissure and they both, in turn, belong to her. This relationship transforms itself in a form of protection exchange,

> Each night, without fail, she prayed for blue eyes. Fervently, for a year she had prayed. Although somewhat discouraged, she was not without hope. To have something as wonderful as that happen would take a long, long time. Thrown, in this way, into the binding conviction that only a miracle could relieve

her, she would never know her beauty. She would see only what there was to see: the eyes of other people. (Morrison 35)

Pecola's constant prayer and hope to receive the longed-for eyes, blue ones, comes from a sense of weakness and lack of appreciation of her own beauty. The fact that Pecola's own standard of beauty means having blue eyes shows that this whole absurd ideal certainly comes from the equally ludicrous standard of beauty that is promoted by the society in which she lives. Psychogenic excoriation, characteristic of BDD sufferers, is analogous to Pecola's almost fanatical desire to have blue eyes, to become her dream actress, to become something that she will never be: the materialization of her inner ideal of beauty which is not something naturally belonging to her but is an ideal imposed by society. BDD patients spend most of their existence in search of an illusion, of the perfect lie that will put all their insecurities to rest:

> Psychogenic excoriation is characterized by excessive scratching, picking, gouging, lancing, digging, rubbing or squeezing of normal skin or skin with minor surface irregularities … Psychogenic excoriation causes significant distress and handicap and may lead to marked scarring, infections, and visible disfigurement. (Veale Neziroglu 84)

The eye is the most important sense in an individual's existence. Without it the person would not be able to live and survive normally in a society in which, although normality is represented by the act of seeing, this is only a performance intended to cover the actual blindness existing in the eyes of the individuals. In this context the eyes have a double meaning: from one point of view they are the promoters of opinion, establishing what beauty stands for and what ugliness means, and, from another point of view, they are, metaphorically speaking, the culprits for the blindness which forbids the individual to see beyond the narrow, superficial standard of beauty. The perspective of society on the idea of beauty is reinforced by the following quarrel between two girls, one defending Pecola and the other poking fun at her:

> ...What do I care about her old black daddy?" asked Maureen. "Black? Who you calling black?" "You!" "You think you so cute!" I swung at her and missed, hitting Pecola in the face. Furious at my clumsiness, I threw my notebook at her … Safe on the other side, she screamed at us, "I am cute! And you ugly! Black and ugly black e mos. I am cute!" She ran down the street, the green knee socks making her legs look like wild dandelion stems that had somehow lost their heads…. (Morrison 56)

The key sentence: "I am cute! And you ugly! Black and ugly e mos. I am cute!" represents the quintessence of the shallow, destructive *etalon* of beauty. It represents the death penalty for free will and for freely deciding what is beautiful and what is not. It stands for the incontestable slogan of a way of thinking and is part of a larger construction called indoctrination. This phenomenon also occurs in the case of BDD sufferers who, as in Pecola's case, do not project their true, authentic feelings about themselves into the mirror in front of them, but the projection of what others have thought and projected onto them. Maureen's running down the street is the flight from responsibility of every character who mistreats Pecola, of everyone who has harmed a BDD individual and felt no remorse when doing so. In this case the BDD sufferer is identified with Pecola who, as in her situation, is surrounded by people who induce in her a false reality, a surrogate reality of their own unfortunate lives. The BDD individual, like Pecola, cannot distinguish right from wrong because his mind, his thinking, is distorted by all the negativity and evil projected on to him:

> …Long hours she sat looking in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of the ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike … She also knew that when one of the girls at school wanted to be particularly insulting to a boy, or wanted to get an immediate response from him, she could say, "Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove! Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove!"… It had occurred to Pecola some time ago that if her eyes, those eyes that held the pictures, and knew the sights–if those eyes of hers were different, that is to say, beautiful, she herself would be different. (Morrison 34)

One can see here an accurate depiction of how beauty, represented by whiteness, was treated by society and how ugliness, represented by blackness, was perceived in the given situation. All the flattering behaviour shown to Maureen increases the gap between whiteness and blackness and is at the opposite pole from that directed at Pecola. All this negativity coming towards Pecola represents metaphorically the reason for glancing in the mirror of every BDD sufferer who looks in the mirror to see their so-called ugliness and does not understand whether it is true or false. By contrast with Pecola, the BDD sufferer does not question his ugliness, nor is he curious about it when he looks in the mirror; the BDD individual absolutely and fully despises his appearance and projects this as an implacable fact of his life. Pecola, on the other hand, while reflecting in the mirror for long hours, undergoes a process of self-understanding which is also a

damaging, destructive process because of the recollections it brings. By "...looking in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of the ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike…" Pecola tries to understand the ugliness manufactured and imposed on her by society while at the same time attempting to understand the justification for her mistreatment from the outside. In the case of Pecola her sense of ugliness is constantly fuelled by the society in which she lives; in the BDD patient's case, every glance that they take in the mirror accentuates their feeling of ugliness and unworthiness in spite of the support provided by specialists: "Being *dissatisfied* with one's appearance is normal, but BDD is different. Someone with BDD is *preoccupied* with their appearance, is excessively self-conscious, and experiences marked distress and handicap…" (Veale, Neziroglu IX).

Pecola's constant desire to have blue eyes and her admiration for a white child star masks a deep preoccupation with her appearance. She constantly faces the white-black duality in the contexts of life, and this implicitly and inevitably creates an excess of self-consciousness. This is a consequence of the collision between the exterior world and her appearance, and it is this that creates her inner pain and anger. Her perpetual wish for blue eyes is suggestive of "marked distress and handicap…". It is the result of a chain reaction in which her strong desire masks an inner wish to switch races, to become a member of a different race.

> Most clients with BDD acknowledge that they are not *disfigured*, but believe themselves to be ugly or very unattractive. Some clients may be preoccupied not with "a defect," but with one or more features being not perfect, not "right" or not equal. They might accept that they look "normal" to others but are preoccupied by self-disgust. A variation on this is a hatred of one's own race and a desire to pass as a different race. (Veale Neziroglu 8)

Pecola believes herself to be ugly or unattractive as long as society believes this and consequently determines her to believe in the same way. She had not considered herself to be ugly before society passed this clear judgment on her. Her ugliness is in a direct proportion to the ugliness promoted by her society. She knows the meaning of beauty as far as society lets her know what it means. She knows that beauty is whiteness and, consequently, this is the form of beauty she wants to achieve: "The internal body image and external objective attributes of appearance are thus completely different constructs. This is counterintuitive to most people's

experience and is probably a contributory factor to the stigma experienced by people with BDD…" (Veale Neziroglu 56).

Pecola's internal body image is different from her external one because society has distorted the former to such an extent that it has made her hate herself and implicitly her own race too and has determined her to want to become someone else. Society has produced in her being a yawning gap between her appearance and her internal body image. That is why Pecola, like any BDD sufferer, carries a stigma which is a constant reminder of the conflict between her internal body perception and the "external objective attributes of appearance": "Individuals with BDD define their self almost exclusively through an *idealized value* about the importance of their appearance…" (Veale Neziroglu 56).

This *idealized value* comes from the outside world, which transforms it into a standard of beauty. In the world that Pecola lives in the *importance of appearance* is connected to the idea of beauty symbolized by actresses such as Shirley Temple. Appearance is important in the social context as long as it is associated with *whiteness*: "The cornerstone of the diagnosis of BDD is *preoccupation* with an imagined or minor defect in appearance…" (Veale Neziroglu 6).

The preoccupation of the BDD sufferer with "an imagined or minor defect in appearance…" is the result of people's fanatical search for beauty, for perfection. This creates tension among individuals who are no longer governed by healthy, solid principles but by superficial, ephemeral ones. Pecola's *preoccupation* is connected to her eyes, more exactly to changing them. Her eyes represent a *defect* only in her view and cannot be considered a defect in the true meaning of the word. The so-called *defect* in appearance, represented by her eyes, is a continuation of a broader one, propagated by the community, called "ugliness",

> Except for the father, Cholly, whose ugliness … was behavior, the rest of the family–Mrs. Breedlove, Sammy Breedlove, and Pecola Breedlove--wore their ugliness, put it on, so to speak, although it did not belong to them … You looked at them and wondered why they were so ugly; you looked closely and could not find the source. Then you realized that it came from conviction, their conviction. It was as though some mysterious all-knowing master had given each one a cloak of ugliness to wear, and they had each accepted it without question. The master had said, "You are ugly people."…. (Morrison 28)

In the case of Pecola and in the case of her entire family the word "ugliness" is associated with the term "conviction" and they are the manifestation of the sentence "You are

ugly people" imposed on them and not coming from them. Their so-called "conviction" is a metaphor for society's indoctrination and pollution of their minds, while "…You looked at them and wondered why they were so ugly; you looked closely and could not find the source…" represents the voice of reason, the inner voice of the characters who "…wore their ugliness…although it did not belong to them". Their ugliness is, in fact, a social construct, a hypnotic process which keeps them under control. It is a form of brainwashing that comes from a master who is interested in not being contradicted in any way. They have not been given free will to judge whether they are beautiful or not; everything has been imposed upon them. This is why Pecola's glance into the mirror reflects the first audacious attempt of a black mind to question and understand "ugliness". The condition in which Pecola's family finds itself is analogous to the condition of BDD sufferers. In both cases, the sense of ugliness comes from a supreme, undeniable touchstone of judgement called society and not from an inner, conscious sense of ugliness. The BDD sufferer has to bear the burden of ugliness which comes not from a well-founded belief but as a result of unconditional obedience to the order of the master "You are ugly". Instead of resisting the mirror which states "You are ugly", the BDD sufferer becomes more and more confused and states "You are right" when in fact they should have asserted "You are wrong". In this way it all comes down to a person's distorted internal image: about themselves, and about their importance to the exterior, the forever-judging society.

A relevant example for the statement "You are ugly" is shown in the following paragraph, in which Pecola goes to a grocer's store for some candy and ends up adding another unfortunate event to her insecurities and unhappiness:

> …She looks up at him and sees the vacuum where curiosity ought to lodge. And something more. The total absence of human recognition--the glazed separateness. She does not know what keeps his glance suspended … But she has seen interest, disgust, even anger in grown male eyes … She has seen it lurking in the eyes of all white people. So. The distaste must be for her, her blackness … She holds the money toward him. He hesitates, not wanting to touch her hand…Outside, Pecola feels the inexplicable shame ebb. (Morrison 36-37)

The distaste and the coldness that she creates in the grocer are evident when she wants to buy some candy from his store. Again the conflict is relevant in the collision of the two worlds, the white one and the black one. This meeting of the two sides is another testimony to prejudice,

lack of appreciation for the human being, and racial blindness. Every gesture that the grocer makes turns into a threat of prejudice, which is not manifested violently or openly but leaves him as almost the silent, introverted hater, who becomes even more dangerous in his discreet but insidious way of manifesting his distaste towards blackness. "The total absence of human recognition", "the glazed separateness", "the distaste" are assimilated by little Pecola and transformed into guilt, shame and pain. The vicious circle represented by the judger-judged relationship is also present in the case of BDD sufferers, where negative, traumatic events trigger the illness called Body Dysmorphic Disorder. All the other traumatic events that add up to these experiences fuel and magnify the negative consequences that derive from the illness. Pecola is, from this point of view, a BDD subject, permanently carrying with her an interior mirror that constantly reflects a distorted, evil, manufactured image about herself that comes from the society that this mirror embodies. The words "…disgust, even anger in grown male eyes...", "distaste", "…not wanting to touch her hand..." are, in fact, a metaphor reflecting the BDD patient's interior pain and reflecting the vicious circle of destruction that humiliation creates.

It is interesting how the human beings have always defined themselves through the image of the other and how the other becomes a sort of deity in the destiny and the evolution of the receiver, represented in this case by Pecola. Anger is salutary for Pecola, who feels in anger the sense of belonging to someone, or something:

> …Anger is better. There is a sense of being in anger. A reality and presence. An awareness of worth. It is a lovely surging. Her thoughts fall back to Mr. Yacobowski's eyes, his phlegmy voice. The anger will not hold; the puppy is too easily surfeited. Its thirst too quickly quenched, it sleeps. The shame wells up again, its muddy rivulets seeping into her eyes. What to do before the tears come. She remembers the Mary Janes. (Morrison 37-38)

Anger gives her the never-before-encountered experience of feeling like a normal human being. But, unfortunately, when the anger disappears, Pecola is thrown back into the same feelings of shame and pain to which she is so very well accustomed: "The shame wells up again….What to do before the tears come…",

> White kids; his mother did not like him to play with niggers … Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud. He belonged to the former group--he wore white shirts and blue trousers; his hair was cut as close to his scalp as possible to avoid any suggestion of wool, the part was etched into his

hair by the barber … The line between colored and nigger was not always clear; subtle and telltale signs threatened to erode it, and the watch had to be constant. Junior used to long to play with the black boys…. (Morrison 67-68)

The prejudice and the pain that Pecola faces are the result of the situation depicted above: a certain kind of racism in which coloured people turn against their own kind, other non-white people, thus succeeding in formulating their way of thinking into a simple sentence: "Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud". The extent of this amazing hatred in black society is amazing if one considers the efforts that Junior's mother makes in order to keep her child "neat and quiet". These efforts are not only meant to communicate an exterior message of abjuring one's black roots but are also intended to strengthen the subtle and telltale signs of "the line between colored and nigger". In order for the repudiation to be successful, Junior: "…came to agree with his mother that neither Bay Boy nor P.L was good enough for him…" (Morrison 75). The denial of their own kind did not manifest itself only at an exterior, physical level but also came to be reflected at a psychological level. The seeds of prejudice and hate insinuate themselves into a child who, through his actions, tries his best to disperse them into the world outside. For his family blackness does not represent only a threat that may link them to the idea of blackness but is more of a plague, something to be dreaded and fled from. The actual manifestation of the seeds of prejudice and cruelty is evident in the following lines:

On a day when he had been especially idle, he saw a very black girl taking a shortcut through the playground. She kept her head down as she walked…Nobody ever played with her. Probably, he thought, because she was ugly. Now Junior called to her…I got something to show you … "Show me what?" "Some kittens…Here!" Pecola turned. "Here is your kitten!" he screeched. And he threw a big black cat right in her face. (Morrison 70)

Junior's approach to Pecola is the continuation of the seeds of racism promoted in his family. The way Junior lures Pecola into his house is analogous to the lie and the hypocrisy that Junior's mother promotes when she wants to keep her boy white not only externally but also on the inside. Both situations have in common the same belief in deceit. The trap that Junior prepares for Pecola is the same as the trap that the negative effects of racism spring on people. The black cat thrown in Pecola's face is a metaphor for the racism of the coloured towards their own roots: black ones. The gasping high-pitched laughter of Junior is representative of the cruel,

sadistic laughter of racism which drives people to act foolishly and irrationally. Racism dominates the society in which Pecola lives and is an imported element in the reflection of the mirror called society upon Pecola's existence. Racism is the caustic, violent light that can be reflected out of a mirror which, having a dispersive function, is of utmost importance in the Pecola-society relationship. The Pecola-society image recreates the classic image of the BDD patient in front of a mirror, which reflects not the reality of the patient but a previously constructed reality induced by a cruel society. Pecola, like the BDD patient, stands for the victim of a society which is too consumed with promoting its own absurd beliefs and too cruel to have thought of the consequences when promoting them:

> Up over the hump of the cat's back she looked. "Get out," she said, her voice quiet. "You nasty little black bitch. Get out of my house."… Pecola backed out of the room, staring at the pretty milk-brown lady … The pretty lady's words made the cat fur move; the breath of each word parted the fur … Outside, the March wind blew into the rip in her dress. She held her head down against the cold. But she could not hold it low enough to avoid seeing the snowflakes falling and dying on the pavement…. (Morrison 72)

The adjective "pretty" associated with milk-brown is not accidental. Pecola is black and, as a consequence, she is ugly; Junior's mother is milk-brown and, as a result, she is pretty. The connotations of black or milk-brown represent the ultimate form of hypocrisy derived from discrimination. The cold weather outside is synonymous with the cold with which the world greets Pecola every time it has the chance to. The snowflakes falling and dying on the pavement are the symbol of the shower of discrimination and accusing words that always seems to rain down on her. But as the snowflakes die on the pavement, so does the meaning of the rough words addressed to Pecola:

> In BDD, the beliefs (or negative thoughts) and evaluations are based on appraisals of one's appearance…An individual with BDD might experience a mental image viewed from an observer perspective of how he appears to others and *believe* that his skin is scarred and wrinkled. He might then evaluate his appearance as being as awful and ugly as the Elephant Man…. (Veale Neziroglu 65)

Pecola, like any normal human being, is intricately linked to society's beliefs about and evaluations of her own appearance, and the resulting feedback has induced in her a feeling of ugliness. The outside world has constantly reflected on to her a negativity which is greatly

increased by her blackness. Pecola not only experiences a mental image of her appearance as viewed from an observer's perspective, but she also constantly experiences the cruel remarks of others. The same "other" in the case of the BDD sufferer is not only the destructive force that triggers the illness but is also the salutary force which, in Pecola's case, does not exist. In spite of other people's cruelty, Pecola still has doubts about their way of judging her appearance. The moment comes when she looks in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of her ugliness, and, as every BDD sufferer does, discovers the element which makes her look ugly: in her case, her eyes. This preoccupation with changing just one part of her body, which is, in her opinion, the reason why people consider her ugly, is synonymous with the obsession that the BDD sufferer has about one particular body part, which they consider responsible for their supposed ugliness, "People with BDD often experience either ideas or delusions of self–reference depending on severity and degree of insight. Typically, clients believe that others are taking special notice of their defect…" (Veale, Neziroglu 65).

The belief of BDD sufferers that others are taking special notice of their defect is, in Pecola's case, a reality. She does not imagine that people are taking special notice of her defects, but that people truly function as the unbreakable, omniscient mirror reflecting a distorted image of herself, an image that conveys ugliness only as a consequence of society's own distorted beliefs about beauty:

> …Body shame is a multifaceted experience with various components … a) A social or external evaluative component. The effect of shame elicited in social contexts is associated with thoughts about being inferior, defective, ugly … This is referred to as external shame. b) An internal self-evaluative component. This is the internal critic and global self-evaluation as being inferior, defective, ugly, or bad…. (Veale Neziroglu 77-78)

The external shame in the case of the BDD sufferer is in Pecola's case an equivalent, a symbol for the emotional pressure that society has exercised upon her, pressure that came not from an objective point of view but from a harsh, subjective one. The internal shame of the BDD patient is, in Pecola's situation, synonymous with the idea of ugliness associated with her entire family. It is the ugliness which comes in the form of a burden from the Lord and becomes a certain kind of duty for Pecola's family. It is an ugliness which does not necessarily involve an exterior correspondent but rather a psychological obedience that corresponds with the master's

wishes. "…It was as though some mysterious all-knowing master had given each one a cloak of ugliness to wear, and they had each accepted it without question…" (Morrison 28). As a result, the interior psychological pressure of the BDD sufferer is, in Pecola's case, more an external psychological pressure coming from a judge whose verdict cannot be contested.

There is a special relationship with the mirror where Pecola and the BDD sufferer are concerned. In both cases it is the destructive element because it is the intermediary between the individual and his distorted image of himself:

> BDD patients also spontaneously reported that they were more likely to use the mirror if they were feeling depressed. Overall, BDD patients retained some insight into their behavior. They were more likely than controls to agree with the statements: "Looking in a mirror so often and for so long distorts my judgement about how attractive I am" and "Every mirror I look in I see a different image"…. (Veale Neziroglu 79)

In Pecola's situation, society shows a very different image of her in every context of life. "….Every mirror I look in I see a different image…" is suggestive of the multitude of reflections that the mirror called society projects on to the main character. This multiplicity of images is, in the case of BDD, a construct of the patient's imagination, which creates pathology derived from the patient's early negative experiences. In Pecola's situation, this multiplicity of images is the multitude of negative, traumatic experiences that Pecola constantly faces. "...Looking in a mirror so often and for so long distorts my judgement about how attractive I am…" translates into the prison and the torture chamber that society is for the black girl. She does not know who she really is or what her true identity is because her identity is a multiple one and depends on the whims of society. She is a puppet who is dressed in different clothes each day according to the needs and wishes of the puppeteer. Pecola and the BDD patient represent, through these various images, society's need to externalise its frustrations and anxieties.

Conclusion

The quest for perfection has become a worldwide phenomenon and people have voluntarily participated in it and in their self-destruction. Not only have they destroyed themselves, but they have also destroyed other people through perpetually looking for and idolizing perfection. People nowadays are developing inner insecurities and anxieties concerning their looks, because standardized beauty is an absurd model. It is no wonder that some of them

perceive their hair as thinning and their skin as becoming blemished if they are constantly bombarded with images of bodily perfection. This creates an inferiority complex which affects the individual from multiple points of view, and the main culprit is not their exterior flaws but a more perverse one: the ever-changing collective standard of beauty.

The situations portrayed in the novel and their algorithm resemble Dante's *Inferno*. Every perspective of the novel is realized through the lens of the characters' actions, which recreate the racist-centred movement in endless dramatic instances. The delirious perpetual movement of the novel's plot is relevant in the tragic situations which the main character has to face. The circular movement does not have an upward direction but a downward, destructive one. The movement is hypnotic and unstoppable because it affects almost all the characters in the novel, who become the inevitable tools of destruction for Pecola. The narrative instances in *The Bluest Eye* recreate the line of a circle, which swirls endlessly, as if eternally.

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CONFLICTING VIEWS OF WOMEN IN HAWTHORNE

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Abstract: The present paper focuses on the nature of women in Nathaniel Hawthorne's work. There is an obviously divided way of thinking about gender here and we will try to highlight the extremes and the inbetween position, as far as the typology of feminine characters is concerned.

Key words: feminine entities, gender role, limitation, symbolic characters

Introduction

Probably the best way to start writing about Nathaniel Hawthorne is to offer a concise statement of his acknowledged merit. Such an expression was given, among others, by Roy R. Male (5), who stated that "before *The Scarlet Letter* no American writer understood the values of time, tragedy, or womanhood well enough to create a woman in fiction".

The title of the present work mentions the existence of conflicting views of women: these conflicting views can be historically accounted for and will represent the starting-point in a proposed classification of female characters. The conflicting views are best expressed in the way this "feminist" author makes the narrator of *The Scarlet Letter* attract the readers' sympathy and leave the readers convinced that there can be only one possible dénouement. Maybe Edward Wagenknecht (57) was right when he stated that "Hawthorne's genius had its limitations. His range was deep, not wide … His prose is as fine as any we have to show in America, but the eighteenth century still kept her hold upon him." In calling Hawthorne's genius limited this critic was surely not thinking primarily about the author's treatment of women in his prose. Nevertheless, one of the limitations one can speak about concerns the way in which Hawthorne

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as a "creator" encroached upon the world of women. It has been stated that his use of female characters had a cathartic function and that he chose them as a method of working out his gender-related anxieties. Whether or not Hawthorne's treatment of women reflects pre-Victorian expectations of female behaviour, whether he managed to solve the conflict generated in his soul by his early years spent with his mother–always dependent on others, always facing established social and gender roles–is a question the answer to which could be inferred from the typology of female characters in two of his important romances, *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables*.

Female Characters in *The Scarlet Letter*

Being a woman brings into discussion the concept of "female", which is historically and socially determined, and it is natural that Hawthorne's writing should depict it as "connected with and complicit with structural social contradictions at the base of the domestic tensions" (Pfister 104). As Joel Pfister (80) states, "Hawthorne's interest in the cultural 'making' of women took some seemingly oddball twists and turns, especially in his concept of their evolution". The critic underlines the coarse fiber in "those wives and maidens of old English birth and breeding" as opposed to their six-generations-later "fair descendants". The transformation of Puritan women is remarkable if we consider the paleness as meaning not just physical alteration but also different discourse and behaviour:

> Morally, as well as materially, there was a coarser fibre in those wives and maidens of old English birth and breeding than in their fair descendants, separated from them by a series of six or seven generations; for, throughout that chain of ancestry, every successive mother had transmitted to her child a fainter bloom, a more delicate and briefer beauty, and a slighter physical frame, if not a character of less force and solidity than her own. … The bright morning sun, therefore, shone on broad shoulders and well-developed busts, and on round and ruddy cheeks, that had ripened in the far-off island, and had hardly yet grown paler or thinner in the atmosphere of New England. There was, moreover, a boldness and rotundity of speech among these matrons, as most of them seemed to be, that would startle us at the present day, whether in respect to its purport or its volume of tone. (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 63-64)

The nineteenth-century beholder would surely be startled by women's public activity. The "feminine" is understood as "the whole range of potential meanings for woman which are seen as natural but are in fact socially constructed" (Pfister 80). Such traits that define a woman

are the starting point of our classification of women in Hawthorne's two novels. Their behaviour and their appearance are defining elements according to which they are judged in society. Depending on how much they accept what is expected of them, they fall into one of three categories: women who do not challenge their role, women who challenge their role but are ultimately somehow forced to accept social constraints, and the last category–that of uncontrollable women. The criterion according to which this classification is made relies upon the following definition: "To be born a woman has been to be born, within an allotted and confined space, into the keeping of men. … A woman must continually watch herself. She is almost continually accompanied by her own image of herself. … From earliest childhood she has been taught and persuaded to survey herself continually." (Berger, Blomberg, Fox, Dibb and Hollis 46) This is precisely why Hester is worried when she sees she can no longer control Pearl. Pearl is the only female character in *The Scarlet Letter* who belongs to the *third category*. A natural child, she is very frequently associated either with a devil or with an angel. While Hester seems to give in, although this decision is felt to be a little forced, Pearl, the living result of her decision not to conform to the rules, chooses to reject the judgment of others and thus becomes dangerous to the social order:

> The child's own nature had something wrong in it which continually betokened that she had been born amiss—the effluence of her mother's lawless passion—and often impelled Hester to ask, in bitterness of heart, whether it were for ill or good that the poor little creature had been born at all. Indeed, the same dark question often rose into her mind with reference to the whole race of womanhood. (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 198)

Pearl could thus be seen as nothing more than the "major symbol" of the novel: "In Hawthorne's novel, the strict authoritarianism of Puritan patriarchy finds its object in the child Pearl, who, as the living 'likeness' of the letter … becomes the target of the Puritans' efforts to control both human sexuality, and its literary, historical expression." (Daniels 221) Pearl is not such a complex character as Hawthorne might have wished: her function is that of a "living symbol of Hester's adultery, ability, affection, and role as feminine angle, connected to the story only through Hester's heart and emotional acuity" (Daniels 221). She is nothing but the embodiment of the message encoded in the letter–the passion that made Hester transgress contemporary rules and the subsequent sufferings that her punishment involved. Pearl's

relationship with nature is of a similar type to her relationship with the Puritan community. Both these relationships share the impossibility of control: the community is able to control neither nature, nor Pearl. Pearl gives a new significance to the end of the novel: she becomes "grace" and thus reflects the changing role of women, proving a new view of the power of women in a male-dominated society.

The connection between women of type three and type two may be made at the symbolic level by an unusual female presence described in "The Custom House":

> Over the entrance hovers an enormous specimen of the American eagle, with outspread wings, a shield before her breast, and, if I recollect aright, a bunch of intermingled thunderbolts and barbed arrows in each claw. With the customary infirmity of temper that characterizes this unhappy fowl, she appears, by the fierceness of her beak and eye and the general truculency of her attitude, to threaten mischief to the inoffensive community; and especially to warn all citizens, careful of their safety, against intruding on the premises which she overshadows with her wings. (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 9-10)

Critics have viewed this eagle as a symbol of both Hester and Pearl, of their major influence upon the community, upon women in general. The reference to the shield has been interpreted as having "a direct link to the scarlet letter Hester wears throughout the novel, and, in fact, willingly re-places on her breast again at the end of the work" (Daniels 221). This description of the eagle could also be connected to Pearl's description as "bird-like", and thus it could lead us to view her as a symbol of a nation:

> She seemed rather an airy sprite, which, after playing its fantastic sports for a little while upon the cottage floor, would flit away with a mocking smile. Whenever that look appeared in her wild, bright, deeply black eyes, it invested her with a strange remoteness and intangibility: it was as if she were hovering in the air, and might vanish, like a glimmering light that comes we know not whence, and goes we know not whither. (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 113),

"But the child, … escaped through the open window, and stood on the upper step, looking like a wild tropical bird of rich plumage, ready to take flight into the upper air." (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 135)

The description of the eagle at the beginning of the novel has been interpreted as "a moment of foreshadowing that points to the influence both Hester and Pearl are going to have for

the entire Puritan community, and also to their influence for future generations of women." (Daniels 221) As she grows up, Pearl is not willing to accept the judgment of her society. This is why Hester is fearful, especially now that she is powerless–she can no longer control her child's behaviour, and she can no longer convince her to accept what she only recently accepted: the rules of the community she lives in.

Hester Prynne belongs to *the second type of women*: her rebelliousness is depicted, but only for it to be contained and censured at the end of the novel. Her "voluntary" return to New England means manipulation, sadly confirming the theory according to which what is desirable for men significantly differs from what is desirable for women. Hester is ultimately left in a marginalized and irredeemable state. She is a kind of "liminal" character: "Adam may happily fall and rise again to redemption, but Eve in falling must be destroyed lest she introduce the chaotic into a highly ordered system" (Onderdonk 73). Her liminality is the result of her passionate transgression and is "emblemized by her virtual marginality, her abode located in the border region between city and forest, between the urban and the wild" (Egan 26).

Hester's dwelling places her in the position the collective conscience requires:

On the *outskirts* of the town, within the *verge* of the peninsula, but *not in close vicinity* to any other habitation, there was a small thatched cottage. It had been built by an earlier settler, and abandoned, because the soil about it was too sterile for cultivation, while its comparative *remoteness* put it out of the sphere of that social activity which already marked the habits of the emigrants. It stood on the shore, looking across a basin of the sea at the forest-covered hills, towards the west. A clump of scrubby trees, such as alone grew on the peninsula, *did not so much conceal* the cottage from view, as seem to denote that here was some object which would fain have been, or at least *ought to be, concealed*. (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 99)

Her marginal position in society is very well reflected by the position of her dwelling: *she lives at the outskirts, within the verge, not in close vicinity*. In her study of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Marble Faun*, Olivia Gatti Taylor mentions Kai T. Erikson, who states that "an individual deviant–or sinful behaviour may actually impart a sense of unity to the rest of society, as the deviant individual serves as a necessary element" (135). For the Puritan society it was necessary to have Hester there: it was a society that did not want to eradicate deviance, but only to keep it within bounds (Gatti Taylor 135). The explanation lies in the fact that "the rates of deviancy remain relatively stable in a given society as certain offenders are singled out to fulfill

the deviant role, while others practicing the same behaviours remain undisturbed" (135). The very proof of others' sinfulness is felt by Hester:

"the scarlet letter had endowed her with a new sense. She shuddered to believe, yet could not help believing, that it gave her a sympathetic knowledge of the hidden sin in other hearts. She was terror stricken by the revelations that were thus made." (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 106)

The first category of female characters contains those women who do not challenge their status/position, and here we can mention the matrons described in the first part of *The Scarlet Letter*. The individual minor characters and the whole of society dictate the strict code according to which individuals are expected to live and "by which they are judged when they engage in wrongdoing." (Ştefanovici 434)

Within this category a clear distinction can be drawn between the matrons and some other characters in *The House of the Seven Gables* (Hepzibah, Phoebe, Alice Pyncheon) and a subcategory of *symbolic feminine entities*. The element that distinguishes this sub-category is their connection to the idea of witchcraft and secrecy. Mistress Hibbins appears at four critical points in the novel. On her first appearance she pleads with Hester to come to the forest with her and sign her name in the Black Man's book; on her second, she is in the darkness and witnesses the minister standing alone on the scaffold and crying out in anguish. In the third scene she meets Arthur after he has seen Hester in the forest. The last scene is the longest and involves an interchange with Hester in which Mistress Hibbins claims fellowship with her and her lover. The witch is always surrounded by horrified stares: other people even avoid touching her garment "as if it carried the plague among its gorgeous folds" (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 205). Yet despite her critical role in the book, the gloomy-faced witch is rendered more as a hallucination than as fact.

Female Entities in *The House of the Seven Gables*

The House of the Seven Gables is built on an implicit substructure of Puritan myth. On this is erected a historical reconstruction of folk belief in witchcraft as it varied over two centuries. Like Mistress Hibbins, whose presence brings mystery and secrecy, the house is doubtful in extent and shape, no matter how solid other details may appear. And this reflects its metaphorical nature–the secret of the house is the secret of the Pyncheon family.

The house is a complex symbol of various hereditary forces. Although it is to be perceived to be feminine only at a symbolical level, it still bears traits of the subcategory of symbolic characters. It somehow bears traits of the timid lady aristocrat of another era. Resembling a great human heart, the house also represents the inner life of the psyche. Through its dim mirror flow shades of the past that blend into the present. The orientation of the house signifies its place midway between two civilizations. It faces the commerce of the street on the west, while to the rear, on the east, is an old garden. What is impressive about the house is its darkness, its mystery. The house is described as a "*rusty* wooden house, with seven acutely-peaked gables," (Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables* 1), "through the shadow of these two *antiquities*–the great elm-tree, and the *weather-beaten* edifice,"(1), "with the scent of an *old and melancholy* house" (6), "Its whole visible exterior was ornamented with *quaint* figures, conceived in the *grotesqueness* of a *gothic fancy*" (8), "threw a shadow and *thoughtful gloom* into the lower rooms" (9), "how the *rustiness and infirmity of age* gathered over the venerable house itself" (19), "gave the house *such a meditative look*, that you could not pass without the idea that *it had secrets to keep*" (27), "this *desolate, decaying, gusty, rusty* old house" (28)

The house is viewed by Roy R. Male (125) as subsuming ambiguous qualities of womanhood. He considers that in the relation house-street the house is organic, temporal, feminine and integrated while the street is essentially mechanical, spatial, masculine, atomistic. The representatives of the street are Judge Pyncheon, Uncle Venner and Holgrave. As a veritable womb of time, the house hides within its depths the "letters and parchments" that Old Colonel Pyncheon left in his will to his posterity.

We connect the presence of Hepzibah with that of the ghosts of the past. She is overheard in the house with "*heavy sighs* that laboured from her bosom with little restraint as to their *lugubrious depth and volume … gusty sighs … the creaky joints …* now whispered, now a *groan*, now a *struggling silence*" (Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables* 31).

She is described as follows: "In the aspect of this *dark-arrayed*, *pale-faced*, *lady-like* old figure, there was a *deeply-tragic* character … It seemed a *queer anomaly*, that *so gaunt and dismal a personage …*" (39), "*a gaunt, sallow, rusty-jointed maiden …* with a *strange horror* of a turban on her head" (44).

Her physical decay parallels that of the house she lives in. She is very much a product of and resembles very closely the environment that surrounds her: "She had dwelt too much

alone,–too long in the Pyncheon-house,–until her very brain was impregnated with the dry rot of its timbers." (Hawthorne *The House of the Seven Gables* 66)

Considered to be the most complex figure in the romance, she is on the one hand a Pyncheon. Like her ancestor, Alice, she wants to be viewed as a "lady," as a female representative of the power of wealth and prestige and art. On the other hand, she is forced to emerge from her gloomy world, in which she is much like the Gorgon Medusa rather than the wise Minerva, as Hugo McPherson states (138).

Phoebe's symbolic role in the novel is to act in the romance. She clearly belongs to this first type of women, as she seems to possess qualities accepted by Puritan dogma: she was good at things such as "give a look of comfort and habitableness to any place which, for however brief a period, may happen to be their home." (Hawthorne *The House of the Seven Gables* 80)

Therefore she is the person who has the power to modify Hepzibah's environment. After she has slept in it once, her room becomes purified of all former evil and sorrow, her presence exorcizing the gloom of the house. To the social and psychological decadence of the house she brings one supreme virtue that has been lacking, that of not being morbid.

Alice Pyncheon is a representative character who is destroyed by male power. A bold and independent woman, she finally becomes enslaved to the carpenter Maule. All these three women in *The House of the Seven Gables* are to be found only in the first two categories given by Randal Stewart, as quoted by Smaranda Ştefanovici (430). In "Hawthorne's Female Characters", he divides Hawthorne's female characters into three main types: (1) "the wholesome New England girl, bright, sensible, and self-reliant," (2) "the frail, sylph-like creature, easily swayed by a stronger personality," and (3) "the woman with an exotic richness in her nature".

Conclusion

Among Hawthorne's four novels, only *The Scarlet Letter* has a satisfying ending. There seem to be historical as well as fictional reasons for this, as Klaus Lanzinger (1) asserts. Hester Prynne returns to a community that has a defining purpose and spiritual values. As Hester can never be more than half-penitent, her dwelling has to remain between town and forest. Unlike Holgrave and Phoebe, Hester occupies an enriching marginal place. We can conceive it because Hester's grim and shadowy perception of life, subversive though it is, is linked to a society of "demonstrable value".

The three types of female characters demonstrate Hawthorne's preoccupation with the role of women in the nineteenth century. It is true that he shows a certain amount of ambivalence as far as their condition is concerned, but this attitude is to be accepted if one takes into consideration the Puritan background. Nevertheless, there is hope, as there are characters such as Pearl who represent a threat to the social order of the time. She belongs to the third category of women, whose option is "the most dangerous to the social order because it challenged the extralegal power of public opinion and social respect." (Daniels 221)

Hawthorne's awareness of women's substantial qualities has been well-documented, yet this position should not be misunderstood as feminist. His women seem to rehearse "familiar stances in new contexts, angelically innocent victims of destructive male projections of purity or sin, or essentially tainted embodiments of 'carnal pride' and dissenting social tendencies." (Baym 63)

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COMMODIFICATION AND IDENTITY IN CHICK LIT

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Abstract: This paper looks at the parochial facets of femininity versus their globalized avatars as apparent in two chick lit novels, Helen Fielding's "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason" 1999 and one of the novels in Sophie Kinsella's The Shopaholic series, "Shopaholic Abroad" 2001. The paradigm I am operating within is that of consumerism and commodification as the new forms of globalization. More specifically, the paper sets out to investigate the extent to which global and local facets of (feminine) identity overlap, thus engendering what I label 'glocal' femininities, and the role of the commodification thereof.
Key words: commodification; global / local persona; femininity.

Introduction

As stated above, it is the assumption of this paper that there is paradigmatic oscillation in terms of two questions: where exactly is the new archetypal heroine of chick lit situated on the global vs. local continuum, and what part does commodification–as the new form of globalization–play in this kind of identity equation?

Global versus Local Facets of Femininity

First, a rundown of the main tenets of globalization would be in order. There are three types of globalization:

(a) Globalization as cultural relativism;

(b) Globalization in the aftermath of colonialism;

(c) Globalization as the leveller of time and space;

Globalization is also about "hegemony", ideological depredation and dominance:

"From 1939 to the present, leading theorists and policy-makers have continued to view the world through realist lenses (real politik). The prescriptions it offered were particularly well suited to America's rise to become the global 'hegemon' (or leader.)" (Baylis and Smith 110)

I argue that consumerism is the new type of globalization, as there are invasive and pervasive strategies, that the postmodern cornucopia/horn-of-plenty promulgates, that the ubiquity of brand alongside uniformization (see "jeanification") indeed purports to be. All this is redolent of the hegemonic strategies that are indeed appropriating the world. With a difference: this new breed of globalization is de-centred, dissipated, disparate, and its placeless-ness is apparent in the dispersion of excess.

Indeed in this post-industrial, post-Fordist day and age, the operational framework as regards strategies of "seduction" has shifted from what political scientists call "the capability of a Great Power to bribe, cajole and blackmail the protagonists of its encounters" (Baylis and Smith 120) to the more subtle but equally pervasive types of ploy fitting for a consumer society: its techniques for enticing and enthralling the unsuspecting consumer. Thus the potential for the emergence of such archetypal characters as the Shopaholic (see Everyman, see medieval drama) is now overwhelming.

Equally saliently, another question that crops up is this: to what extent is consumerism, this new type of globalization, free-floating, deregulated, dissipated and disparate, by contrast with the stronghold and iron grip of the super-powers of yore?

Indeed Becky's (Becky a.k.a. Shopaholic) indiscriminate appropriation of consumer space (the malls in her native Britain and in the US) is a case in point. Not only does she replicate her habit of indulging in excess, irrespective of where she finds herself on her business trips, but in her consumer frenzy she actually obliterates any boundaries of specificity or local-ness:

> God, I adore shopping abroad. I mean, shopping anywhere is always great–but the advantages of doing it abroad are:
> 1. You can buy things you can't get in Britain.
> 2. You can name-drop when you get back home. ('Actually, I picked this up in New York.')
> 3. Foreign money doesn't count, so you can spend as much as you like.
> Ok, I know that last one isn't entirely true. Somewhere in my head I know that dollars are proper money, with a real value. But I mean, *look* at them. I just can't take them seriously.

I've got a whole wodge of them in my purse, and I feel as though I'm carrying around the bank from a Monopoly set. Yesterday I went and bought some magazines from a newsstand, and as I handed over a $20 bill, it was just like playing shop. It's like some weird form of jet-lag–you move into another currency and suddenly feel as though you're spending nothing. (Kinsella 163-64)

Apart from this newly-acquired invisibility of foreign currency–money becomes impalpable–one can also note the playful, ludic overtones (see *homo ludens,* i.e. playful man) that the game of Monopoly yields–consumers become infantile players in a topography of infinite possibility, i.e. the shopping mall, that caters for every absurd, child-like, whimsical consumer desire. Note also the reference to jet-lag--a state of mental dissipation in which your senses atrophy, as it is suggested that they do in the post-hedonistic experience of purchasing. If the act of purchase is associated by authors in the literature in the field with the intoxicating act of drug-taking and the gratification of so doing, then this too is bound to have its side-effects, referred to here as 'jet-lag'. Dazed and amazed by the novel–yet repeated-experience of shopping, Becky does experience some rather more serious side-effects, namely she becomes immersed in the world of debt, bank overdrafts and perpetual procrastination of payment. (The situation becomes ludicrous at times, when Becky is hunted down by her creditors, who follow her everywhere.) It is what some authors–(see Andrews 3)–call "the never-never-land culture of credit", i.e. a downspiralling of accumulated debt that you forever fail to face up to. It is, one might argue, the new Utopia of postmodern times. And all this with high finance, the banks, the new form of globalizing excess–or austerity, as the case may be.

Becky, the consummate shopaholic, has an ideological avatar in Bridget Jones--see Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996) and its sequel, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*, published in 1999.

Bridget's appropriation–and as I will endeavour to demonstrate in what follows, her gentrification of–global–space is evident in such scenes as the ones in Thailand, where she goes on a jaunt, and where she is arrested by mistake for some putative drug-dealing/smuggling. The interplay and indeed shift of paradigms is apparent in exchanges she engages in with the locals:

'So why haven't you captured him?'
'He's in Dubai,' he said dispassionately.
Suddenly I felt really quite annoyed.

'Oh, he's in Dubai, is he?' I said. 'And you know he did it.

You know I didn't do it and he made it look as though I did and I didn't.

…

because you can't be bothered to get someone to confess to something I didn't do.'

He looked at me in consternation.

'Why don't you get him to confess?' I said.

'He is in Dubai.'

'Well, get somebody else to confess, then.'

'Miss Jones, in Thailand, we …' …

'We are doing everything we can,' he said coldly. 'Our government takes any breach of the drug codes very seriously.'

'And my government takes the protection of its subjects very seriously.'

(Fielding 315)

If we are to acknowledge Edward Said's East-West dichotomies (see his seminal work *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient* 1978*),* i.e. the prophets and soothsayers in the East, a land of makeshift architecture and improvisation, versus the West with its doctors, i.e. scientists, and positivist thinkers, then we can notice here a very volatile positioning at the two ends of the east-west continuum as defined by Said. Indeed there is ideological resonance in the prison scene, no stiff-upper-lip for Bridget. Her attitude on her business trips to Asia is prescriptively colonial, but on this particular occasion–as a result of her temporary imprisonment–she becomes a flawed imperialist, it is she who readily sheds her rationalistic, positivist persona and fleetingly assumes a new mask, that of an accommodating individual, ready to negotiate and compromise, surprisingly willing to relinquish all her veneer of righteousness, integrity and lack of bias in pursuit of the re-definition of justice, as she sees it when under duress. Here Bridget comes to resemble some unprincipled "trader" in a bazaar, a market with no fixed prices–or principles or regulations, for that matter–and her plea for justice pathetically degenerates into bathos. There is a crescendo in her illicit, under-the-counter negotiation with the Thai official: "Well, get somebody else to confess, then." Is this cue to be paradigmatically located in the volatile East or in the stable, solid West? Is Bridget here her "local self", the reliable, trustworthy, quintessential Brit–or has she undergone metamorphosis into her Eastern counterpart, the sly and versatile Easterner?

The posture–that of an out-of-time colonial–that Bridget finds herself in comes at a personal price. Bridget is minutely describing and bewailing her physical condition, to say nothing of her precarious mental state at this point:

Monday 25 August. 7 st 2 (attention-seeking thinness), no. of–oh fuck it, brain has dissolved. Good for slimming, surely.

Noon. Bad, low day. Must have been mad to think I could influence anything. Am bitten to death by mosquitoes and fleas. Am nauseous and feeble with constant diarrhoea …

(Fielding 314)

All this can be said to portray her as a colonial with a difference: this is the unlikely insecurity of the one who travels to conquer, to bring along their set of values, indeed to gentrify. Bridget in her feeble state is here a caricature of the generic colonial. Not only is she a Brit, replicating and globalizing mainstream values, the values of western society, but she is also a bearer of the institutional prestige of a global TV network. Now the mass media is another crucial promoter of globalization and inter-connectedness, the intricate worldwide networks that pervade all continents and promote events that instantly and ubiquitously become breaking news, making the whole wide world a captive audience.

Bridget is quite significantly portrayed as working for a major British TV network, similar to the BBC or to CNN, and the clout she is supposed to have in her position is again parodied, in the sense that there is an incongruous juxtapositioning at work here between the serious, power-laden discourse of news reporters / current affairs programmes on the one hand and the frivolousness of details about clothes on the other, as when the bikinis she is made to wear make her look like a bimbo, and a flawed bimbo at that. Her mental imaginative repertoire includes a scene with her boss, Richard Finch, who supposedly utters a somewhat licentious remark involving Bridget's bikini (the juxtaposition of the two words 'campaign' and 'bikini' is indicative of the appropriation of consumerism).

The Thai man cleared his throat to speak. "We …'
'And I am a journalist,' I interrupted him. 'On one of Great Britain's top television current affairs programmes,' I said, trying to fight back a vision of Richard Finch going 'I'm thinking Harriet Harman, I'm thinking black underwear, I'm thinking …'
'They're planning a vigorous campaign on my behalf.'

Mental cut to Richard Finch: "Oh, Bridget droopy bikini hasn't come back from her holiday, has she? Snogging on the beach, forgot to get the plane." (Fielding 316)

Bridget emulates her peers–another Briton in a postcolonial stance:

'How's your career going here?'

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'Bit bloody static, to be perfectly honest,' he said cheerily. 'Black bloody hole of Calcutta, unless you get down to the islands of course. Oh sorry.'

(Fielding 315)

The man utters "black bloody hole of Calcutta", apparently, one might argue, as if to point out that there's nowhere else to go from here, it's a dead end, no more globalizing to do, that it has all come full circle.

Conclusion

All in all, as I have shown above, the heroine of chick lit inhabits an ideological dystopia; she is neither local nor global, but she is, one might say, "glocal".

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ECOFEMINIST STUDY OF MARGARET FULLER'S
SUMMER ON THE LAKES IN 1843

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Abstract: The present paper concerns itself with a great American feminist-writer Margaret Fuller. It is a critique of patriarchal industrial society. It is an expression of ecofeminist's concern for environmental degradation triggered by rapid industrial and technological growth. It deals with her encounter with the external world, and her responses to the rapid material development in America. The article unfolds her concerns for humanity in general by endorsing a simple way of life, the idea which she shared with her friends Emerson and Thoreau, the great figures in American transcendentalism. This article is primarily about her delicate, feminine love for nature that she considered the only sustenance in her life.

Keywords: nature, ecofeminism, materialism, development, transcendentalism, capitalism

Ecofeminism is a movement that sees a connection between the exploitation and degradation of the natural world and the subordination and oppression of women. It emerged in the mid-1970s alongside second-wave feminism and the green movement. Ecofeminism brings together elements of the feminist and green movements, while at the same time offering a challenge to both. It takes from the green movement a concern about the impact of human activities on the non-human world and from feminism the view of humanity as gendered in ways that subordinate, exploit and oppress women (Mellor 1). Maria Mies and Vanda Shiva in their introduction to *Ecofeminism* argue that:

> Th(e) capitalist-patriarchal perspective interprets difference as hierarchical and uniformity as a prerequisite for equality. Our aim is to go beyond this narrow perspective and to express our diversity and, in different ways, address the inherent inequalities in world structures which permit the North to

dominate the South, men to dominate women, and the frenetic plunder of ever more resources for ever more unequally distributed economic gain to dominate nature…

…everywhere, women were the first to protest against environmental destruction. As activists in the ecology movements, it became clear to us that science and technology were not gender neutral; and in common with many other women, we began to see that the relationship of exploitative dominance between man and nature, (shaped by reductionist modern science since the 16th century) and the exploitative and oppressive relationship between men and women and prevails in most patriarchal societies, even modern industrial ones, were closely connected…

If the final outcome of the present world system is a general threat to life on planet earth, then it is crucial to resuscitate and nurture the impulse and determination to survive, inherent in all living things…. (2-3)

The fate of nature had been linked to the fate of women. Feminist theoreticians have argued endlessly over this issue of interlinking woman and nature. While some like Vandana Shiva state that nature in its essential form as *Prakriti* is integrally linked to the organic existence of woman, many other postfeminists argues against this view as nothing but another facile move by the ever-powerful patriarchy to surreptitiously hold back the identity of the woman.

Summer on the Lakes, in 1843 is Margaret Fuller's first original book-length work, the product of her journey to the Great Lakes and western prairies in 1843. This book is not only an intensely personal account of Fuller's inner life during the summer of 1843, but also an expression of her ecofeminist concerns. Fuller shared with the Transcendentalists the belief that internal travel—what Emerson called travel within the mind—was the most significant kind. In 1843 Margaret Fuller, already a well-established figure in the Transcendental circle of Emerson and Thoreau, traveled by train, steamboat, carriage, and on foot to make a roughly circular tour of the Great Lakes. *Summer on the Lakes, in 1843* was Margaret Fuller's journey through far western frontier in mid-nineteenth-century America. In this book Fuller appreciates all aspects of nature and grieves for degradation of human existence due to patriarchal development projects. She believed that excessive use of science and technology tamed and exploited nature, and robbed the society of all human sensibilities. Thus, the patriarchal pattern of society subjected both women and nature to subordination, oppression, exploitation and misery. Her travel away from New England to visit such places as Niagara Falls, Mackinac Island, Rock River and Illinois, is indubitably a larger journey that Fuller was making in her mind towards an ecofriendly simple way of life. Hence, *Summer on the Lakes* occupies a pivotal position as far as her eco-vision is concerned. The whole array of sketches,

poems, stories, anecdotes, dialogues, reflections, and accounts of a leisurely journey to the Great Lakes is a reaction against the material and industrial development that was taking place in America in general, and in and around New England in particular.

Nature had been a source of comfort for Fuller since her childhood. She looked to it for sustenance in the midst of her demanding academic activities. She would take refuge from her academic endeavours in the quiet beauty of her mother's garden. According to Kornfield, Fuller wrote in her private journal:

> I loved to gaze on the roses, the violets, the lilies, the pinks; my mother's hand had planted them, and they bloomed for me. I culled the most beautiful. I looked at them on every side. I kissed them, I pressed them to my bosom with passionate emotions, such as I have never dared express to any human being. (11)

Her only times of solace when facing the physical and emotional pain of academia were her transformative forays into her mother's garden where she could enjoy the beauty of plants and flowers. In the midst of the exceedingly demanding male pursuits deemed appropriate by her father, Fuller was able to relish the feminine refinements of her shadowlike mother's delicate and sensitive nurturing nature. Steel writes, "Her mother's garden provided a welcome refuge from the strain of academic recitation in her father's study; and, in later years, flowers became powerful maternal symbols in Fuller's essays and poetry" (128).

Thus, Fuller finds nature most intimate to her, and it is nature only she identifies herself with. Fuller all through her life was aware of a bounty of love, kindness and the resources that nature has showered upon us, and thus made us eternally indebted to it. But she was also aware of the exploitative patriarchal society's amnesia to nature's charity that we are all blessed with.

The technological and industrial history of the United States describes the country's emergence as one of the largest nations in the world as well as the most technologically powerful. The availability of land and labour, the diversity of climate, the ample presence of navigable canals, rivers, and coastal waterways, and the abundance of natural resources facilitating the cheap extraction of energy, fast transport, and the availability of capital all contributed to America's rapid industrialization. Most historians agree that the period in which the greatest economic and technological progress took place began at the end of the eighteenth century, and due to this technological and industrial development the nation was transformed from an agricultural economy to the foremost industrial power in the world.

Science, technology, and industry not only profoundly shaped America's economic success but also contributed to its distinct political institutions, social structure, educational system and cultural identity. American values of meritocracy, entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency are drawn from its legacy of pioneering technical advances.

However, this material progress resulted in the spiritual degeneration of American society. It could not bring about the ultimate well-being of society but rather had an adverse effect on it. Therefore, the leading American transcendentalists, Emerson, Margaret Fuller and Thoreau, articulated a protest against self-centred, commercialized American society, while voicing their concerns for the spiritual well-being of humanity in general.

In *Summer on the Lakes*, Fuller consistently differentiates between the materialistic or utilitarian motivations of settlers, on the one hand, and the spiritual or aesthetic aims of tourists on the other. Her trip took place between 1837 and 1844, which was a period of widespread questioning of the historical progressiveness of capitalism. Her assessment of socio-economic maladies focused on the idea that a materialist, instrumentalist and rationalist civilization had lost touch with the organic "laws of nature." *Summer on the Lakes*, then, is structured by the tension between a vision of a just society rooted in nature and the stark reality of America's westward expansion.

Thus *Summer on the Lakes* presents a strangely contradictory picture of the physical setting of the western settlements, a picture by turns disparaging and idealizing. Through much of the narrative, the frontier is a ravaged landscape, a place "where the clash of material interests is so noisy" that religion and spirituality are almost forgotten (12). The conventional elements of the picturesque have been destroyed by the advance guard of capitalist expansion. Alongside this ecological damage, *Summer on the Lakes* details the social destruction the settlers have left in their wake, displacing and impoverishing whole native tribes. More, the text focuses closely on the isolation and alienation, especially for women, bred by the societies the settlers have built.

In *Summer on the Lakes* there are several passages of description, such as those concentrated in Fuller's account of the Rock River country, west of Chicago. This Illinois material is a kind of gauzy vignette inserted into what is elsewhere sharply focused on the seamy side of the capitalist region. Fuller describes the region as possessing great grandeur. In addition, it is a restorative retreat the equal of which Fuller feels she may never see again:

> Ye fairy distances, ye lordly woods
> I go,—and if never more may steep

An eager heart in your enchantments deep,

Yet ever to itself that heart may say,

Be not exacting; thou hast lived one day;

Hast looked on that which matches thy mood

A tender blessing lingers o'er the scene,

Like some young mother's thought, fond, yet serene,

And through its life new-born our lives have been. (54)

Given her intense literary activity during the preceding few years, it may seem unsurprising that Fuller experienced personal renewal on the prairies and in the forests of the West. But the Rock River country is a social utopia rendered in the idiom of the picturesque:

> [It] bears the character of a country which has been inhabited by a nation skilled like the English in all the ornamental arts of life, especially in landscape gardening. That the villas and castles seem to have been burnt, the enclosures taken down, but the velvet lawns, the flower gardens, the stately parks, scattered at graceful intervals by the decorous hand of art, the frequent deer, and the peaceful herd of cattle that make picture of the plain, all suggest more of the masterly mind of man, than the prodigal, but careless, motherly love of nature. Especially is this true of the Rock River country. (37)

This enchanted landscape is markedly empty of both architectural monuments to the old-world ruling class and the hedges that were the main mechanism of early capitalist agricultural rationalization in New England. What remain are the stylized pastoral settings of the neo-classical country estate, settings that were dedicated exclusively to leisure activities. In this countryside where both social hierarchies and labour are invisible, Fuller finds what she told Emerson she was looking for: "There was a peculiar charm in coming here, where the choice of location, and the unobtrusive good taste of all the arrangements, showed such intelligent appreciation of the scene, after seeing so many dwellings of the new settlers, which showed plainly that they had no thought beyond satisfying the grossest material wants" (39). Here in the Rock River country, Fuller and her friends felt "free to imagine themselves in Elysium [and] the three days passed here were days of unalloyed, spotless happiness" (39). This place was once inhabited by the native Indians whose traces could still be perceived and who had lived in complete tune with nature: "The Indians who chose the most beautiful sites for their dwelling, and whose habits do not break in on the aspect of nature under which they were born, we feel as if they were rightful lords of a beauty" (39).

The idea that Fuller's portrait of the Rock River country offers a heuristic glimpse of an ideal can be combined with a line of inquiry to which Kolodny makes a brief allusion. She

notes that Fuller "recognized in the fertile and well-watered grasslands a potential economic refuge from the hard scrabble farms of her native New England, where sons fled to the cities or the frontier to seek a livelihood and daughters left home for fourteen-hour days and slave wages in the proliferating textile mills and shoe factories" (Kolodny 115). The rapid development of capitalism in New England in the decades of Fuller's youth had changed the region from an agrarian colony into a thriving centre of industrial production. It had also sharply intensified both the rural poverty and the urban exploitation that Kolodny suggests were at the back of Fuller's mind. This total transformation of her home is the key to understanding Fuller's apparent contradictions (quoted in Newman).

Summer on the Lakes was a polemical reaction to negative assessments of the early nationals of the USA that had been published in the preceding two decades by, among others, Harriet Martineau, Frances Trollope, and Charles Dickens. These Victorian travellers had commented extensively on the crudeness of the frontier, the brutality of slavery, and the provincialism of the Northern cities. Fuller criticises them for their focus on the real rather than the ideal. In *Summer on the Lakes*, she "describes an actual world in terms of its potential, [because, for her] the realist absorption with the present … militates against the exploration of the possible" (*British* 197). But she sets out to do more than defend the American experiment against these non-specialist detractors. She also attempts to answer what Thomas Carlyle--in *Chartism*, his 1840 assessment of social progress under capitalism-- called "the Condition-of-England question" (151). Carlyle suggests that the fantastically productive textile mills of England's industrial cities are as sublime as the most famous of American natural scenes: "Hast thou heard … the awakening of a Manchester, on Monday morning, at half-past five by the clock; the rushing off of its thousand mills, like the boom of an Atlantic tide, ten-thousand times ten-thousand spools and spindles all set humming there,—it is perhaps if thou knew it well, sublime as a Niagara, or more so" (quoted in Newman).

Fuller, like many others in New England, valued Carlyle's sharp analysis of the class tensions in Old England's capitalist social order. On the first of June, 1843, she was at Niagara Falls, and she wrote to Emerson about the book she had been reading there, Carlyle's *Past and Present*. This volume (which Emerson had just arranged to have published in the US) extended *Chartism*'s diagnosis of "the bitter discontent grown fierce and mad … of the Working Classes of England" (151). Along with his revulsion at the impoverishment of the urban working class, *Chartism* had also recorded Carlyle's horror of "the mob"-- of, in other words, the working class's efforts at self-emancipation. *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, a lecture

series published the next year, had prescribed an authoritarian cure for the condition of England. Two years later, *Past and Present* combined diagnosis and cure. Carlyle begins *Past and Present* by maintaining that:

> England is full of wealth, of multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition. With unabated bounty the land of England blooms and grows; waving with yellow harvests; thick-studded with workshops, industrial implements, with fifteen millions of workers … and behold, some baleful fiat as of Enchantment has gone forth, saying, "Touch it not, ye workers … no man of you shall be the better for it; this is enchanted fruit!" (qtd. in Newman).

Fuller also valued Carlyle's forecast of danger, but she was not so enthusiastic about the solutions he offered. In her letter to Emerson, she writes:

> There is no valuable doctrine in [Carlyle's] book…. His proposed measures say nothing. Educate the people. That cannot be done by books, or voluntary effort, under these paralyzing circumstances. Emigration! According to his own estimate of the increases of population, relief that way can have very slight effect. He ends as he began; as he did in *Chartism*. Everything is very bad. You are fools and hypocrites, or you would make it better (*Letters* 128).

Summer on the Lakes, Fuller's answer to the Future-of-America question, begins with a chapter that describes an eight-day visit to Niagara Falls and that operates as a parable about aestheticist and utilitarian ways of seeing and valuing nature. Upon arriving at the Falls, she finds that her appreciation of the scene is blocked by the mediation of reproduced images and the tourist conventions that governed such encounters: "When I first came here I felt nothing but a quiet satisfaction. I found that the drawings, the panorama, &c. had given me a clear notion of the position and proportions of all objects here; I knew where to look for everything, and everything looked as I thought it would" (14). The book is her encounter with the American landscape at large. At Niagara Falls she writes:

> For here there is no escape from the weight of a perpetual creation; all other forms and motions come and go, the tide rises and recedes, the wind, at it gales and gusts, but here is really an incessant, an indefatigable motion. Awake or asleep, there is no escape, still this rushing round you and through you. It is in this way I have most felt the grandeur–somewhat eternal, if not infinite. (13)

She captures the flatness of this moment by comparing herself to "a little cowboy" she once saw looking at "one of the finest sunsets that ever enriched this world" and saying

gruffly: "that sun looks well enough" (4). In order to uncover a satisfying meaning in the prospect of the Falls, Fuller experiments with various customary modes of perception:

> All great expression which, on a superficial survey, seems so easy as well as so simple, furnishes after a while, to the faithful observer its own standard by which to appreciate it. Daily these proportions widened and towered more and more upon my sight, and I got at last a proper foreground for these sublime distances. Before coming away I think I really saw the full wonder of the scene. After a while it so drew me into itself as to inspire an undefined dread, such as I never knew before, such as may be felt when death is about to usher us into a new existence. (4)

After abandoning the picturesque, with its painterly conventions of "position and proportions," Fuller here tries the alternative tradition of the Burkean sublime, in which natural scenes trigger intense emotional responses. Finally, on "Table Rock, close to the great fall", she experiences a fulfilling moment of sublime immediacy: there "all power of observing details, all separate consciousness, was quite lost" (5).

But just when she has at last discovered a satisfying perspective on the Falls, she is interrupted in the rudest way possible. A "man came to take his first look. He walked close up to the fall, and, after looking at it a moment, with an air as if thinking how he could best appropriate it to his own use, he spat into it" (15). This interruption, she writes, "seemed worthy of an age whose love of utility is such that [it would be no surprise to see] men coming to put the bodies of their dead parents in the fields to fertilize them…" (ibid). The spitter's rushed, homogenizing way of seeing is directly linked to what he sees: a nature whose sole purpose is appropriation for personal profit; his crude realism and his utilitarianism are two sides of the same coin. Disgusted, Fuller tries to drown out the image of this utilitarian by losing herself again in an awe-inspiring whirlpool at the base of the falls. There, the "river cannot look more imperturbable [and seems] to whisper mysteries the thundering voice above could not proclaim…" (15). The reason why Fuller's reaction is so strong is because she has come to Niagara Falls precisely to escape a New England ruled by utility, by the spirit of commerce. She represents this land where "buying and selling were no longer to be counted on" as Eden before the Fall, as a place where nature "did not say, Fight or starve; nor even, work or cease to exist; but merely showing that the apple was a finer fruit than the wild crab, gave both room to grow in the garden" (38). In this land of natural plenty, there is neither property nor commerce: "there was neither wall nor road in Eden [and] those who walked there lost and found their way just as we did" (40). Fuller is travelling through the American imperial frontier at the moment when it is being settled and developed at the

most breakneck pace. But she sees the land as a poet, "adding the beauty and leaving out the dirt" (18). She makes believe that she is lost in order to experience nature's beauty and blind herself to the ever-present reminders of the degraded commercial world she has left behind.

Fuller's initial disappointment and poetizing response are only the beginning of the story. What is unique about *Summer on the Lakes* is that, just as her journey takes her for the first time beyond the physical bounds of New England, she also crosses ideological borders in search of a mode of optimism built out of these disappointing materials, a mode of optimism that goes beyond the limits of the transcendental idealism she has brought from home. She attempts "to woo the mighty meaning of the scene" by using her perspectival experiments to clear the foundation for a carefully built hope (18). Susan Belasco Smith notes that "the closest Fuller comes to defining such a worldview [is in a] long meditation on the character of the medieval Flemish nobleman Philip Van Artevelde" (*British* 202). Fuller describes him as "no thin Idealist, no coarse Realist, but a man whose eye reads the heavens while his feet step firmly on the ground" (64).

Fuller's approach to Rock River offers several glimpses of what is to come. First, she again finds that she has to experiment in order to learn how to appreciate the landscape properly. She begins by attempting to see the immense prairies as sublimely monotonous, but in the end finds that they are no more than infinitely dull. After a time, though, she begins "to love because [she] began to know the scene, and shrank no longer from 'the encircling vastnesses" (Fuller 21). Intimacy with a place, particular knowledge of the material world, she suggests, engages her more than responses generated by homogenizing conventions. Fuller's nature is both a concrete material world and immanently divine. And if there is any hope of transcending the crude utilitarianism of the America of her time, she intimates, western settlers would do well to harmonize themselves with nature's simultaneously physical and moral truths. Fuller finishes this preliminary essay by driving home her point with a negative example, a comic anecdote about "a young lady who showed herself to have been bathed in the Britannic fluid…by the impossibility she experienced of accommodating herself to the indecorums" of a roadhouse, because she refuses to adjust to the world around her.

In the description of the Rock River country that follows, Fuller gives a picture of the kind of society that might be built by a community of people who have learned to harmonize themselves with nature. She begins with a visit to the "large and commodious dwelling" of an "Irish gentleman," where she establishes a series of complex distinctions between those who can and cannot make such adjustments: "There was a peculiar charm in coming here, where the choice of location, and the unobtrusive good taste of all the arrangements, showed such

intelligent appreciation of the spirit of the scene, after seeing so many dwellings of the new settlers, which showed plainly that they had no thought beyond satisfying the grossest material wants" (29). Old World aristocrats like this absent gentleman are sensitive enough to fit their dwellings into "the natural architecture of the country," whereas the vast majority of settlers "do not see it at all" and build slovenly "little brown houses" (29). However, both aristocrats and commoners occupy land that once belonged to others: "Seeing the traces of the Indians, who chose the most beautiful sites for their dwellings, and whose habits do not break in on that aspect of nature under which they were born, we feel as if they were the rightful lords of a beauty they forbore to deform" (39). The natives are natural aristocrats whose rights have been forcibly extinguished by the democratic mass of settlers, who "do not see" the beauty of nature at all: "it breathes; it speaks in vain to those who are rushing into its sphere" (*ibid*). The westward progress of these settlers "is Gothic, not Roman, and their mode of cultivation will, in the course of twenty, perhaps ten, years, obliterate the natural expression of the country…" (*ibid*). Imperial expansion, with its displacement of natives and radical transformation of the landscape, may be painful to contemplate, but it "is inevitable, fatal; we must not complain, but look forward to a good result" (*ibid*).

After quietly making this suggestion, Fuller sketches a portrait of the seedbed of that future republic. To begin, she reaches for a rhetorical peak, describing the auspicious natural beauty of the area around the town of Oregon. Again she sees a natural cathedral:

> Here swelled the river in its boldest course, interspersed by halcyon isles on which nature had lavished all her prodigality in tree, vine, and flower, banked by noble bluffs, three hundred feet high, their sharp ridges as exquisitely definite as the edge of a shell; their summits adorned with those same beautiful trees, and with buttresses of rich rock…. Lofty natural mounds rose amidst the rest, with the same lovely and sweeping outline, showing everywhere the plastic power of water,—water, mother of beauty, which by its sweet and eager flow, had left such lineaments as human genius never dreamt of. (42)

In this "capital of nature's art," there are still many traces of a native village, whose inhabitants had been "driven away" only quite recently: "As usual, they had chosen with the finest taste"(33). Surveying the site, Fuller grieves for the natives as noble predecessors, marked by a "Greek splendor," to whose spirit their Roman conquerors should turn for guidance. The picturesque beauty and historicity of the place, she believes, bodes well for the community that will grow there. Viewing the area from above, she writes: "I think I had never felt so happy that I was born in America. Woe to all country folks that never saw this spot,

never swept an enraptured gaze over the prospect that stretched beneath. I do believe Rome and Florence are suburbs compared to this capital of Nature's art" (33). What could appear to be jarring patriotism is part of Fuller's vision of Nature as the ground of an ideal society.

Summer on the Lakes, in 1843 is a critique of American capitalist society in the mid-nineteenth century. Fuller's journey out of New England to visit such places as Niagara Falls, Mackinac Island, and Rock River, Illinois, is symbolic of her longing for a simple, eco-friendly and sustainable existence. However, it also has a symbolic significance. It is, at least in part, an intensely personal account of Fuller's own inner life during the summer of 1843.

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"LOOK AT ME!" PERFORMING THE BODY AND SELF ON STAGE

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Abstract: The paper aims to explore some exemplary pieces of dramatic literature from antiquity and the Renaissance and especially from modern and postmodern works such as *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams, *'Night Mother* by Marsha Norman and *A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White* by Adrienne Kennedy through the lens of body, disability and gender studies. While the paper mainly focuses on these three plays, it is not restricted to them. The pieces illustrate how the stage representation of physically or mentally challenged characters has changed and the process through which disabled performance has transferred into performative acts.

Keywords*:* performance, performative acts, disability, race, feminist theatre, social roles, subversion

Introduction

In the world of theatre, it is difficult to define exactly what qualifies as disability or disability theatre. What criteria, for example, qualify a piece as disability theatre? Are there specific plot points or protagonist characteristics that qualify it? Furthermore, it is debatable whether authors both with and without personal disabilities should be included in the field. The question is also complicated by the fact that the non-disabled theatre world is also full of images of characters with certain disabilities. Victoria Ann Lewis points out that "It is not that the nondisabled theatre world knows nothing about disability and is waiting to be enlightened. On the contrary, the depiction of disability is over-represented in dramatic literature (93)."

For our purposes, I have included examples from antiquity and from Renaissance and nineteenth century dramatic literature as well as the modern playwrights Tennessee Williams,

Marsha Norman and Adrienne Kennedy, in order to represent a range of avenues into the interdisciplinary field of disability studies and to explore how it fits into the wider theatrical discourse, for example its connections to feminist theatre, its links with racial issues, and how its theories of subject can be constructed through performative acts. Disability theatre lies at the intersection of such disciplines as body studies, feminist theatre and gender and disability studies. The last-mentioned field is the newest area of study, dating back to the 1980s and with roots in the disability rights movement, which started in the mid 1950s.

The theory of performativity developed by Enikő Bollobás, which describes a social phenomenon that constructs new subjectivities through performative acts (activities that go against socially ascribed normative gender, racial and class behaviours (*They Aren't, Until I Call Them,* 10)), is also applicable to individuals with disabilities. As explained by the Brechtian technique, because theatre is community-based–and thus an educational social phenomenon–it is able to trigger political activism. Therefore, like feminist theatre, disability theatre also advocates the rights of a particular marginalized group via the performing arts. Feminist theatre, being material, Marxist and political, is defined by Fox and Lipkin as seeking to "effect social change through questioning the traditional apparatus of theatrical representation, and by extension, calling attention to the social construction of identities upon which privilege is based. (80)" As the theatre critic and feminist scholar Jill Dolan writes:

> [f]eminist theatre is concerned with more than just the artifact of representation—the play, film, painting, or dance. It considers the entire apparatus that frames and creates these images and their connection not just to social roles but also to the structure of culture and its divisions of power. (47)

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams, '*Night Mother* by Marsha Norman and *A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White* by Adrienne Kennedy all portray physical and/or mentally challenged people: Laura Wingfield, Jessie and Clara respectively. These female figures all have a common feature: their behaviour transgresses the stereotypes that are based on normative gender, class and racial (as well as physical) condition.

The Emergence of Disability Theatre

Communities such as organizations for the blind and the deaf and the mobility-impaired citizens' movement provided the infrastructure and confidence for disabled groups to successfully lobby for new legislation. The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1973

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provided equal rights in federally funded programs. In 1980, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibited discrimination and provided civil rights protection for the largest minority group in the USA and, as Marsha Sexton writes, also helped to:

> … bring about a profound change in the collective self-image of an estimated 45 million Americans. Today, many disabled people view themselves as part of a distinct minority and reject the pervasive stereotypes of disabled people as defective, burdensome, and unattractive. (105)

For centuries, however, physical and mental disabilities were, at best, politely overlooked, and people with disabilities were left uncared for or eliminated. Mentally handicapped people were often treated as criminals, and it is common knowledge that many of the women who were burnt during witch hunts in the late medieval and Renaissance period in Europe and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in America were mentally or physically challenged.

Society has had an ambivalent attitude towards its members with physical or mental handicaps, as the elimination or forced invisibility of these people stands in sharp contrast to the popularity of freak shows during the nineteenth century. These were largely based on gazing at bodily defects, such as abnormally large and fat or skeleton-like human bodies, dwarfs, or even indigenous people from exotic places. As Rosemary Garland Thomson points out, this is due to the fact that "[s]crupulously described, interpreted, and displayed, the bodies of the severely congenitally disabled have always functioned as icons upon which people discharge their anxieties, convictions, and fantasies (56)."

In 1834, P. T. Barnum founded one of the first circuses in the United States in New York City, in an area which is today known as Madison Square Garden. He called his circus Barnum's Grand Scientific and Musical Theatre and often used it to promote human curiosities such as the smallest man on Earth, General Tom Thumb, and the half-mammal, half-fish creature, the Feejee Mermaid. Such spectacles were based on the assumptions of eighteenth and nineteenth century eugenics, which had created the myth of the perfect, idealized human body: the corporeality of the everyman. As Lennard J. Davis argues, the aim of eugenics--to standardise human bodies--is in and of itself a paradox, as the phenomena, like the human body, will "always conform to a bell curve. So norming the non-normal is an activity as problematic as untying the Gordian knot (6)." Such activities were, however, the reason for the great, though dubious, success of Sarah Baartman, better known as the

"Hottentot Venus". This girl, who originated from South Africa, was exhibited in England and France and became a symbol of colonial imperialism, along with other women such as Tono Vlaria, the "Latin Venus". The performance of these women, as Thomson writes, "testified to an inherent female sexual deviance, indolence, carnality, and appetite tempered only by Western civilisation (56)." These performances functioned on two levels. Spectators not only experienced curiosity, fascination and astonishment at the same time, but, as Thomson points out, "[p]ersonifying cultural and sexual aberration did not only confirm the Englishman's sense of physical self-mastery, but also provided a cautionary tale of the natural female appetite, unmanaged by social sanctions (57)."

As we have seen, the public space of theatre has often made the deformed and the disabled seen. However, it took a long time for the bodies that were shown as spectacles and the objects of gazing to become a subject, with agency, and for their performances to become performativity, i.e., performative acts. The terms "performance" and "performativity" refer to the social phenomenon through which the subject is constructed by the acquisition of certain socially and culturally determined roles, as well as the overwriting of such pre-fabricated positions. This phenomenon includes normalizing strategies, such as the learning of gender, racial and class-based acts, as ascribed by society. There is a difference, however, between the subject's constitution via performance and its construction through performativity. According to Enikő Bollobás, the subject comes into being through the acts of perform*ance* and perform*ativity* (21). These notions are derived from Austin's Speech Act Theory, but in performance theory the concept of performativity is definitely an expanded and more abstract phenomenon, underlying both social and linguistic discourses. Perform*ance*, according to Bollobás, is a "particular mode of performativity, characterized by a mimetic replaying of norms and the replaying of ruling ideologies when constructing the subject" (21), whereas "performative acts allow people to construct themselves" (10). She argues that "subjects are created performatively in the speaking and the doing." (10). Performative acts have "ontological force" (10) because they create new discourses which "allow for new subjectivities." In the case of characters with disabilities this means that the character goes beyond his or her boundaries which are created by his or her environment that marks him or her out as abnormal.

Theatrical representations have often contributed to the widespread belief that bodily disorders are signs of moral deficiency. Disability as an issue has been presented in the past twenty centuries of dramatic history by featuring various physically challenged characters. It

is enough to think of the blind Oedipus Rex of Greek tragedy or the numerous mentally or physically handicapped characters in Shakespeare's oeuvre, such as the hunchback Richard III or the mute Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*. Many of these characters bear the physical markers of some kind of bodily deformity or disability as a visible symptom of their moral corruption (as in the case of Richard III, the play's chief villain), or as a result of some kind of punishment for their purposefully or unknowingly committed sins. Oedipus, for instance, blinds himself for the murder of his own father and his incestuous relationship with his own mother. In his case, the act of self-blinding at the end of the play is indeed an allegory for the sins that Oedipus cannot bear to see. In Shakespeare's oeuvre most of the blinded, muted or mentally disabled characters are emblems of this kind, and thus they do not set up the discourse of disability. Richard III, however, is a peculiar example. Being the main villain, he embodies the characteristics of the medieval morality play. On the other hand, it is his physical deformity that leads up to his self-fashioning as an evil character:

> But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
> Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;
> I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty
> To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;
> I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
> Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
> Deformed, unfinish'd, sent before my time
> Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
> And that so lamely and unfashionable
> That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;
> Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
> Have no delight to pass away the time,
> Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
> And descant on mine own deformity:
> And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
> To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
> I am determined to prove a villain (*Richard III.* 1. 1. 14-30.)

The passage from Richard's opening soliloquy exemplifies self-fashioning resulting from physical condition. This act is entirely performative because in his statement: "I am determined to prove a villain",--which in and of itself is the Austinian speech act--a new

subject, Richard III, comes into being. He constructs his new identity as the villain and becomes an agent.

In the nineteenth century, with its widespread belief in eugenics, its Darwinian views and the growing interest in genetics, the stage representation of the handicapped also changed. In Ibsen's plays, for example, certain physical disorders, such as blindness, are not the symbols of the given person's morality but appear as results of a genetically inherited disease, pointing to the immorality of the parents. In *The Wild Duck* (1884) the Egdal family is seen disintegrating when it turns out that the wife, Gina, once had an affair with the father of her husband's friend. Upon learning the truth, Hjalmar, the father, realizes that his daughter, his "greatest sorrow and joy", may well be the daughter of his friend's father, Håkon Werle. Hedvig (the daughter) is losing her sight. This sensory disease, interestingly, links her to both her presumed grandfather, Old Egdal, and to Werle, both of whom are also losing their sight. It is not proven directly that Hedvig's biological father is not Hjalmar, but he nevertheless comes to this conclusion, which eventually leads to the girl's suicide.

From Object to Subject: Sympathetic Staging of the Disabled

Not until the twentieth century do we see characters with either mental or physical disorders being represented with sympathy. They became central characters in the stage representation as well as in the plot. We must make a distinction, however, between this and the use of disability as a metaphor of female oppression, such as with the paraplegic character Julia in *Fefu and Her Friends* by Maria Irene Fornés, or the MaGrath sisters, who suffer from depression among other conditions, in Beth Henley's *The Crimes of the Heart.* These representations, however, as Fox and Lipkin point out: "emulate, rather than challenge" that of the iconic disabled figure of Laura Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* (78).

In *The Glass Menagerie* the crippled daughter Laura Wingfield-–standing for the memory of Rose, the author's sister–is the central figure in the stage representation. Indeed, she is the iconic figure of disability, being the metaphor of isolation, virginity and martyrdom. Her representation on stage emphasizes her "purity" and fragility. The spotlight–according to the script–falls on her and provides her character with an aura-like atmosphere. Laura is marginalized in both her micro and her macro spheres, i.e., family and society, for not being able to act out her traditional feminine performance. In other words, as a result of her physical disability, she embodies the isolated martyr; her marginalization in the family and in society

restricts her ability to perform the traditional roles of wife and mother. As a consequence, her disability, which sets her up for a particular role, paradoxically disables her from fulfilling it.

Feminist playwrights are often celebrated for their sensitivity to women's issues. One such playwright is Marsha Norman. Her play '*Night Mother* also deals with the issue of disability--in this case, epilepsy. The play revolves around Jessie and her mother. Jessie, who is in her thirties, has suffered from epilepsy ever since her early childhood. Jessie never leaves the house. Like Laura, she is isolated from the world; it is as if we were looking at Laura and her mother some ten years after the story of *The Glass Menagerie.* While Laura's mother is eager to find a gentleman caller for her daughter, Jessie's marriage has disintegrated by the time the plot begins. Her marriage and her role as a mother both turn out to be a failure, as we learn that her son became a criminal. She is isolated and lonely and suicide seems to represent the only possible way left for her to put an end to her suffering.

> Mama (beginning to break down): Maybe I fed you the wrong thing. Maybe you had a
> fever sometime and I didn't know it soon enough. Maybe it's a punishment.
> Jessie: For what?
> Mama: I don't know. Because of how I felt about your father. Because I didn't want any
> more children. Because I smoked too much or didn't eat right when I was carryingyou. It has to be
> something I did.
> Jessie: It does not. It's just a sickness, not a curse. Epilepsy doesn't mean anything. It just is.
> Mama: I'm not talking about the fits here, Jessie! I'm talking about this killing yourself. It
> has to be me that's the matter here. You wouldn't be doing this if it wasn't (Norman 71).

Interestingly, at the time of her suicide Jessie has been physically well for a whole year. She claims that it is not her chronic sickness that has led her to this decision. The question remains with us at this point: why does Jessie commit suicide? The suicide is celebrated as a performative action which finally gives Jessie agency, the choice in her life (Bollobás *The History of American Literature* 765). But is such an action a true performative? In the sense of uttering the word *no* as a rejection of her life, it certainly is. But, as we will see in the next section, it is problematical to state that in her case suicide is a truly performative action.

Subverting Bodies

Both Ann M. Fox and the feminist playwright Joan Lipkin point out the parallel between feminist and disability aesthetic through mentioning three scripts. One of these is *But What Have You Done for Me Lately?* (in the *Scyklon Z* series by the playwright Myrna Lamb). In this episode play a man experiences pregnancy:

> MAN: Was I too healthy? Was that it? Did some secret-society deity
>   decide I should be given a handicap to even up the race?
> WOMAN: Well, that is an interesting conjecture. (Lamb qtd. in Fox and Lipkin 164–5)

These plays, according to Fox and Lipkin, exemplify how we might begin to answer the questions raised above and further the exploration of the ways in which feminist and disability theatres can inform and enhance one another.

Pregnancy is the central issue in Adrienne Kennedy's play *A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White* as well. The play tackles the issue of childbearing and disability in an unusual way. As the Man character implied in Lipkin's play, pregnancy is regarded as a kind of sickness, and this work may therefore be classified among disability plays.

A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White features Clara, a young African American woman, whose marriage is disintegrating at a time when she is pregnant and is also working on her career. The play addresses the issue of the construction of identity through, and later in opposition to, Hollywood movies. It also represents the double bind of the racial and gender oppression of African American women and of Clara in particular.

> EDDIE. I have enough money for us to live well with my teaching. We could all be
>   so happy.
> CLARA. *(From boat.)* Ever since I was twelve I have secretly dreamed of being a
>   writer. Everyone says it's unrealistic for a Negro to want to write. (76)

From Clara's words it is clear that race, gender and disability–as both socially and linguistically constructed categories–have similar effects on the individual's life. All these categories generate marginal positions and place the individual in a subject position which constructs a binary opposition to white, heterosexual male identity. Disability indeed comes in many forms, and we have seen a wide spectrum of such challenges represented by these characters. Apart from physical and cognitive disabilities we must also mention a third

category: social disability, which is a secondary result of the categories previously mentioned by Fox and Lipkin in The DisAbility Project. Social disability refers to the individual's *paralysis* regarding dealing with the micro- and macrocosmos around themselves. It may result from either an actual physical disorder, as in the case of Laura Wingfield, or a mental one, as with Jessie's depression, or simply be the outcome of a role imposed on the individual. Thus in *A Movie Star* Clara is expected to perform as a mother and a wife when in fact she wants to become a writer:

> CLARA. I'm not unhappy mother.
> MOTHER. Yes you are.
> CLARA. I'm not unhappy. I'm very happy. I just want to be a writer. Please don't think I'm
>   unhappy.
> MOTHER. Your family's not together and you don't seem happy.
> CLARA. I'm very happy mother. Very. I've just won an award and I'm going to have a play
> produced. I'm very happy. (Kennedy 72)

The common features of the plays discussed above is that their protagonists Laura*,* Jessie and Clara are all characters in a "liminal phase" (Turner 11). In Turner's understanding, liminal refers to a "life crisis", a detachment from "mundane life" and "monstrous images" (13). I am using the phrase to describe these heroines in the life circumstances described. In a way these female characters are all in a transitional phase of their lives. Laura is a young adolescent between childhood and adulthood. The plot revolves around her mother's efforts to find a gentleman caller for her, which eventually fail. Jessie is also a "liminoid subject" as she is on the threshold of life and death (the play presents her last few hours before she commits suicide.). Clara *is* pregnant throughout the plot, which is the quintessential liminal phase in Turner's theory.

The liminal phase is typically followed by a reintegration on the part of the liminoid subject (Turner 10) in which he or she acquires a new position in his or her community. In these plays, however, the protagonists do not live happily ever after their liminal phases but either continue living as liminoid subjects (Laura and Clara) or commit suicide. In Enikő Bollobás' subject theory, such acts are performative acts rather than performances, because they contradict the ascribed social scenario of these subjects.

Clara's case is the most outstanding one, as she does not suffer from an actual physical disability. Although floating anxiety and catatonia are mentioned as possible

cognitive disorders affecting her, she is not declared mentally challenged. Her only disability is pregnancy.

Pregnancy does not inevitably fall into the category of disability, if the latter is understood as an insufficiency in the sensorial or motor or even cognitive functioning of the human body. Nevertheless, the performance of pregnancy often conforms to the same mode of representation as disability. Firstly, pregnancy is stereotypically identified with mood changes, which are characteristics of depression. Impaired mobility also characterises this state of being. But, more importantly, both pregnancy and disability signify a physical condition that is altered and in some ways different from the standardized norm, i.e., it is "othered".

The previously quoted dialogue between Clara and her mother clearly signifies the debilitating effect of ascribed performances, according to which Clara as a *black woman* cannot even be happy outside of the traditional family framework, let alone dream of becoming a writer. Nevertheless, she puts artistic career before her traditional duties, and as her pregnancy progresses, she meticulously writes a page a day and watches her play "coming together". (Kennedy 65)

The protagonists of these plays represent the difference between performance and performative actions. If we are to understand the performativity spectrum as having two opposite poles, one end would be performance, in line with expected social norms as prescribed by a particular social role; whereas the opposite end would be identified as performative acts against social roles. Laura's action is performative in the sense that she does not take the job as a secretary (i.e., she does not conform to the social role typically assigned to women) and, thus, by not getting married (i.e., rejecting the familial role prescribed by society), she is rejecting the performance of prescribed social roles. The situation is made more complex, however, by the fact that the anti-performance does not result from her own free choice but rather occurs because her physical disability marginalizes her. In this sense, her acts cannot be interpreted as *real* performative actions.

Laura's actions would usually be considered as performative because she is rejecting the social roles traditionally assigned to women. Her disability, however, re-frames her situation. Being disabled, she is assigned an isolated role in society, and this trumps the roles assigned to her as a woman. Laura is adhering to the social role assigned to the disabled; her performance defines her self in terms of this prescribed social role.

In contrast to Laura, both Jessie and Clara are given a choice over how to live their lives. It is however debatable, to say the least, whether Jessie's suicide is a truly performative act, as Enikő Bollobás argues (*The History of American Literature* 765). Killing herself does not challenge or even question the patriarchal order or any social norm. Jessie is supposed to perform a traditional feminine role, that of a care-taker of her son and mother, which she rejects when she kills herself. Dubious as it is, such a performative action transgresses the supposed performance of a female role. Considering the disability layer of depression, though, suicide is the performance of the depressed subject. Jessie is supposed to be introverted. She kills herself, which is a rejection of her role of taking care of others. So, just as Laura's performative action against feminine roles becomes a performance of disability, Jessie's performativity becomes the performing of the stereotypical disability performance.

Clara, on the other hand, becomes performative as she subverts the norms by valuing her play production over reproduction. Clara as a woman is assigned the role of wife and mother. The racial element would reinforce her exclusion from the public sphere i.e., it would deny the option of a career as a writer from her:

> CLARA. *(From boat.)* Ever since I was twelve I have secretly dreamed of being a writer. Everyone says it's unrealistic for a Negro to want to write. (Kennedy 76)

The racial layer intensifies the effect of her gender. As both an African American and a woman she was not supposed to have a career. When we add the layer of pregnancy as form of disability, the effect becomes even more intense. Pregnancy would definitively exclude her from the public sphere that a career as a writer would suggest. Clara''s performative action transgresses her assigned performance.

This is in contrast with Laura, who as a woman is supposed to be a wife and mother. But when we add the layer of disability, she is supposed to be isolated. Thus, Laura's seeming performative action that is her rejection of feminine performance becomes a performance of the role of disability.

As Claudia Barnett argues, Clara's "play production cannot compare in value to her reproduction" (143). However, she does not choose her family over her artistic career. She does not go back to her husband, and instead of fulfilling her traditional feminine role, she meticulously writes one page a day and sees that the play is coming together. She writes:

Eddie comes every evening right before dark. He wants to know if I'll go back to him for the sake of our son. … Before I left New York I got my typewriter from the pawnshop. I'm terribly tired, trying to do a page a day, yet my play is coming together (Kennedy 63).

Clara thus becomes an agent through artistic creation.

Conclusion

In selecting the examples I have given, my aim has been to prove that it is not their racial, gender or physical attributes that "disable" a given person but that it is rather the socio-political/cultural environment that makes a person disabled. In the plays I have discussed, the protagonists all subvert the norms of their macro sphere--their traditional feminine role of becoming obedient daughters and nurturing mothers is not fulfilled. The reasons for this range from an actual physical disability in the case of Laura Wingfield to mental/psychological disorders and pregnancy in the cases of Jessie and Clara. The common denominator of these three characters is that it is not their actual physical condition that hinders them from performing their social roles; rather, their micro sphere (i.e. family) and macro sphere (i.e. their community) construct circumstances of life in which their performance is necessarily a performative and subverting act.

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WHAT DID THE ENLIGHTENMENT LEAD TO: WOMEN'S ACTIVISM, WOMEN'S MOVEMENT OR FEMINISM? A CASE-STUDY OF FRANCE AND THE USA

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Abstract: The Enlightenment triggered different reactions among women in Europe (the most illustrious case is France) and in the USA. The present paper analyses these reactions kindled by the Enlightenment in the two above-mentioned geopolitical and cultural realms. It also analyses the development of certain social movements triggered by these reactions. Therefore, the epicentral question that I will attempt to answer is: what did the Enlightenment lead to in Europe (as exemplified by France) and in the USA: women's activism, women's movement, or feminism? Why did the Enlightenment influence the women's rights movement differently in these two countries?

Keywords: *dames francoises, dames sans culottes*, "maternal societies", the Quakers, the "Women's March on Versailles".

Introduction

The epicentral preoccupation of the present article is to investigate the possible differences and similarities between the sequential development of women's social activism in Europe and in the USA. My target is to argue for the conclusion that there is one similarity between these two social movements, namely in terms of *end result*: the Enlightenment led to feminism in both places. There are two capital differences in terms of *typology* and in terms of the *pace* of the unfolding events.

Body: Defining Terminology

All three terms need to be clearly defined. Firstly, let us consider the definition for women's activism. According to Annemieke van Drenth and Francisca de Haan (46): "women's

activism includes all social and socio-political activities of women undertaken on behalf of 'others'". The two authors also provide examples: "helping the poor, fighting slavery, working for peace and so forth" (*ibid*.). The goal of women's activism is to improve social conditions for everybody around them, namely "to make the world a better place" (*ibid*.). Such women try to reach out and provide everybody in need with philanthropic aid and at this point gender, race and social status do not constitute differentiating factors to women who perform women's activism. In the present case, activist women reach out to everyone, regardless of the above-mentioned categories.

Secondly, the two authors provide a definition for women's movement: "it concerns activities of women on behalf of other women, based on identification with 'those of their own sex'" and on "the notion of 'sisterhood'" (*ibid*.). The notion of women's movement presupposes that women identify their common self / identity and their common issues, frustrations and gender-related capital problems. The definition implies the birth of the first sense of "belonging together".

Thirdly, feminism or the feminist movement is defined (*ibid*.) as: "a social movement characterised by the fight for equal rights and / or activities aimed at ending male domination and privileging, a struggle for which arguments of women's and men's 'equality' as human beings, or of women's 'difference' could be used".

Case Study: France

I will commence my investigation by explaining the reasons why I have decided to investigate the case of France. Firstly, as a network of socio-political and human rights institutions, France is the most striking example of the then historic(al) sequence of events. It witnessed both impressive *avant-garde* achievements (the deeply humane ideals of the French Revolution, at a time when Central and Eastern Europe were still slumbering from this point of view) and painful failures in terms of women's rights and human rights: the Napoleonic Code smothered human rights in practically all nineteenth-century West European societies and almost entirely annulled the human rights programme promoted by the French Revolution. The French Revolution's successful example in terms of ideals was later picked up by women's groups both in Europe and in the USA.

Secondly, the fast changes triggered by the short-lived success of the Revolution were the first revolutionary acts directed and acted out by women, in an organised campaign. For the first time in two millennia women in France officially rebelled in a co-ordinated way and acted according to clear-cut, yet unwritten laws. Later on, these impulsive acts and laws were carefully framed in different petitions and official documents, both in France and in Britain. Thus the French women's revolutionary movement became the milestone and the groundbreaking example that all other European societies followed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Moreover, unlike in the case of the USA, the Enlightenment triggered a shattering historic event in France: the Revolution broke out under the direct influence of the liberal and democratic philosophy of the Enlightenment. It is paramount to note that it was the French Revolution that offered French women the necessary opportunity, terrain and liberty to start their fight for equal rights, because of the Revolution's ideological frame of "liberty, equality, fraternity".

Leading female figures appropriated the Enlightenment's philosophy of equality during the French Revolution. These *avant-garde* women took up the Enlightenment's principle of equality and used it as the paramount argument in their struggle against male domination and in their campaign to carve out equal gender rights.

The 1789 *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* was indeed designed to guarantee equality to all members of the French society. Yet the paradox was that it only referred to the rights of men and completely neglected the rights of women (as the word "man" in the title suggests). Having guaranteed equal rights to men, the *Declaration* acted as if women were completely non-existent in France. This was precisely what most female leaders attacked in the *Declaration*: the fact that women's rights were absent from the document.

At the outset, one of the most important female figures was Olympe de Gouges (1745-1793). It was she who wrote the famous *Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Female Citizen* as a caustic reply to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*. De Gouges commenced her historic document (*The Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Female Citizen*) by openly accusing men of being "blind" and "degenerate" tyrants "oppressing" women in all domains. She denounced male domination and argued for equal rights for women in all areas of life. Not only did she militate for an end to male socio-political domination, but she also

demanded equal political rights for women, namely "to be constituted into a national assembly" (ibid.).

Next, she asserted that any "woman is born free" (ibid.) and equal to man and that no male authority had the right to withdraw this natural freedom of hers (Articles 1 and 2). De Gouges also argued for certain extremely progressive rights for women, considering the patriarchal (sub)systems of the eighteenth century: women's right to vote and their equal public employment opportunities (Article 6 and 13). What is more, she strongly supported women's right to public speech, in caustic tones: "woman has the right to mount the scaffold; she should equally have the right to mount the rostrum" (Article 10).

Article 11 and the Postscript of her *Declaration* contained those two arguments which the eighteenth century found the most challenging. De Gouges based her discourse on the right to "free communication of thoughts and opinion" (Article 11) and from there, she subtly arrived at her first argument, which attacked the French patriarchal system: each woman had the right to communicate to her partner that she was pregnant with his child. Consequently, all women were freed from "barbarous prejudices" and stigmatisation (ibid.). In addition to this, men were thus forced to recognise their illegitimate children (ibid.) and women who gave birth to "bastards" should not have to shoulder alone all the economic and psychological burdens of raising their joint, illegitimate child(ren). Men would also have to play their fair part in the education and upbringing of their illegitimate children.

Next, let us consider de Gouges' second argument, the one that shocked French society so deeply that it considered her to be mentally insane and suffering from sick imagination and delirium. She maintained (in the Postscript) that "the married woman can with impunity present her husband with bastards" (*ibid*.) and that she may also request that her out-of-wedlock children receive her husband's name and the same share of the family wealth as their legitimate children. What is more, she went on to fight for equal rights for unmarried mothers, whose children deserved their fathers' official recognition and name and the same share of his wealth as their half-siblings.

It is obvious that in both cases de Gouges was vehemently arguing for equality between sexes and for the two sexes to bear equal responsibilities in the case of illegitimate children. She devoted special attention to the unfair way that society despised women when she called into question the social norm that stipulated that only men had the freedom to satisfy their sexual

desires outside of marriage, while women who did so were abandoned to shoulder all the consequent responsibilities and hardships on their own.

To conclude, Olympe de Gouges openly denounced male domination and the oppression exercised by men over women. In addition, she strongly militated for equal political, social and economic rights, equal employment opportunities and equal sexual freedom. If we glance back to the definition of "feminism" stated at the beginning of the paper, it becomes clear that de Gouges' demands and concepts fit the definition of this term.

The second category of female leaders who strongly militated for women's rights was the *dames sans culottes*. Firstly, on January 1, 1789, they submitted a petition to King Louis XVI in which they voiced their fury at gender inequality, male domination and exploitation: the exclusion of women from the political sphere, women's lack of education and employment opportunities and consequently, their sexual exploitation at the hands of men (Bock 33-4).

Later that year, on October 5th-6th, 1789 these Paris women actually marched to Versailles (the "Women's March on Versailles"), stormed the Royal Palace and forced the King to come to Paris and face the growing political and economic crisis. This way, the present historic march represented the birth of constitutional order in France and according to Bock (36) "it became a symbol of the early revolutionary phase".

It is a fact that these lower- and lowest-class women from Paris played a crucial role in the French Revolution as they geared all their efforts towards the deconstruction of gender inequality. Moreover, they became *the* dynamic catalysts of the battle against gender inequality, as they literally fought against the embodiment of normative patriarchy, King Louis XVI, outside the gates of Versailles.

Therefore, revisiting the definition of "feminism", I conclude that this social class of Parisian women was struggling for feminist claims and that they did so in the form of a feminist movement. They were actively fighting for the abolition of women's exploitation and for equal rights and opportunities: political, educational and sexual rights.

The third category of French women that I will analyse is the *Dames francoises*. They became quite active members within the political field, moreover they proposed a parliament "composed of 'our sex'" (Bock 35). Further on, some of the highly educated ladies among the *Dames francoises* (for example, Madame B. B. of Caux) requested the instant liberation of black slaves, equality for men and women, women's right to vote, the equal right to own property and

equal political participation in the French parliament. Their main argument was that only female representatives could have the same interests as the women they represented; only female political leaders could fully understand the needs and troubles of women. As Bock (35) underlines: "women, therefore can only be represented by women".

Therefore, it is extremely important to note how revolutionary and prescient these *Dames francoises* (especially Madame B. B. of Caux) were: as far back as the eighteenth century, they were voicing the same feminist claims as the twentieth century suffragettes (especially the right to vote and equal representation participation in decision-making bodies). They served as a platform for the nineteenth and twentieth century feminist movements.

In conclusion, the women's rights movement in France may be considered a feminist movement. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that this feminist movement in France was not led only by feminist women. Surprising as it may seem, there were some notable men who took up the French women's cause, the most remarkable example being the Marquis de Condorcet.

The Marquis de Condorcet (Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas Caritat, 1743-1794) was a French philosopher, mathematician, political scientist and a promoter of equal human rights. Much ahead of his time in many respects, the eighteenth century thinker advocated not only equal rights but also free public education for both genders. What is more, he argued for equal suffrage for men and women, for the abolition of slavery and for equal political career opportunities (Bock 35).

Taking all this into account, I may now answer the first part of the epicentral question of my paper: in France, the Enlightenment led to feminism from the very beginning. Unlike in the USA, there was no need for a number of intermediate stages or steps. Also, what is most remarkable is that the French feminist movement was not represented solely by Frenchwomen but it was also embraced by illustrious Frenchmen.

Case Study: the USA

In the USA, the Quaker community played a major role in setting up a democratic ideology, after having fled England and settled in Pennsylvania in the mid seventeenth century. The Quaker community's liberal and democratic set of beliefs became the benchmark for the upcoming social reforms in the USA (van Drenth and de Haan 30). It was the Quaker community whose ideology almost completely coincided and overlapped with the ideology of the (French)

Enlightenment. The Quakers were the first group on the American continent to disseminate the doctrine of equality in all fields: gender, race/ethnicity as well as in the socio-political sector. Nevertheless, it is vital to mention that the Quakers were not preaching the ideas of the Enlightenment *per se*. They had their own democratic and egalitarian set of rules, which were based on their religious convictions. Secondly, they had developed these principles as early as the mid seventeenth century, when George Fox founded the first Quaker community. Thus, the Quakers' democratic and egalitarian beliefs were born *before* the Enlightenment appeared in Europe in the eighteenth century.

Consequently, the Quakers did not disseminate their democratic beliefs and rules under the direct impact of the Enlightenment, as the French revolutionaries did. The French indeed wrote their *Declaration* under the unmediated impact of the Revolution, which was triggered by the philosophy of the Enlightenment. On the other hand, the Quakers' democratic and progressive ideology did offer fertile terrain for the Enlightenment's egalitarian theories to flourish in the USA, because they overlapped with the philosophy of the Enlightenment. The Quakers were deeply religious and rejected any human hierarchy that was based on gender, race/ethnicity, social status or political power. This very same hierarchy was deconstructed by the philosophy of the Enlightenment. The Quaker community strongly believed that all human beings were equal due to their divine spark: there is a tiny particle of God in each human being and that is why God may speak through any human being, regardless of their race, gender or social status. Consequently, all human beings are equal before the Divine Law, so they must be equal before any human law as well (van Drenth and de Haan 30).

Based on such democratic theories, an anti-racist and abolitionist social movement had appeared within the Quaker community by the end of the eighteenth century. Quaker travelling missionaries, both men and women, took a leading role in many eighteenth–nineteenth century social movements and social reforms, including abolitionism, education, prison reform and the combating of alcoholism (ibid. 46). The strongest social movement and the one taken up by the most powerful social activists / reformers was the abolitionist movement. For this reason it was abolitionism that constituted the first step towards feminism in the USA.

Two of the most important social activists were the Grimke sisters, Angelina and Sarah. In the first half of the nineteenth century these two young women left their prominent slave-owning family in South Carolina and joined the Quakers in search of "religious alternatives"

(Sklar 4). Both of them were deeply impressed by the Quakers' philosophy and identified whole-heartedly with the Quakers' theory on the equality of races. Thus Angelina and Sarah became leading figures of the abolitionist movement in the USA. In 1835 the two sisters started touring the north-eastern and later the southern states of the then America, promoting gender and racial equality and the abolition of slavery. Their meetings and speeches soon received added support from Lucretia Mott and William Lloyd Garrison. These four became the first group of powerful social reformers, and their chief aim was the abolition of slavery.

Lucretia Mott had been a Quaker minister since 1821 and, like many other female Quaker missionaries, was active in the abolitionist movement in the period prior to the Civil War. She was also well known for her eloquent speeches against slavery. William Lloyd Garrison was the most famous antislavery journalist in the USA and the founder of *The Liberator*, the nation's main abolitionist newspaper (Sklar 8).

At this point it becomes clear that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Quaker female missionaries had developed a quite strong social activism, which may be considered women's activism. If women's activism includes women's socio-political activities geared to help the poor or slaves (van Drenth and de Haan 46), this was precisely what this group of Quaker social reformers did in this first stage of their activism: they reached out and tried to provide philanthropic aid, that is, they took up the fight against slavery in general, defending both male and female slaves. At this point *race was the most important issue* that mattered in fighting discrimination. *Gender did not yet matter as much as race did*. Consequently, these ladies' social activism at the dawn of the nineteenth century should be considered women's activism.

Nevertheless, the social movement soon underwent a substantial gender-sensitive alteration. A certain sense of belonging together appeared among women in the 1830s, followed by common self-identification with this "sisterhood". By 1833 the first exclusively women's organisation had appeared in Philadelphia, the *Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society*, founded by Lucretia Mott and William L. Garrison (Sklar 8). This society united both white and black women fighting *together* for one *common* goal: abolition.

Secondly, women started to find sufficient sense of belonging together to found the first maternal societies (ibid. 10). These maternal societies gave them the opportunity to self-empower themselves by organising meetings where they could discuss the gender-specific issues they were

addressing on a daily basis: the burdens of motherhood and marriage, racial prejudice and inequality in terms of employment and education (ibid.).

Thirdly, American women's empowerment took one further step: black women in the free/non slave-holding states of the USA founded the *Female Anti-Slavery Society of Salem*, the nation's first exclusively black women's abolitionist organisation (ibid.). Women in ethnically mixed organisations, but also in exclusively black race/ethnic groups took up the fight against slavery. This anti-slavery activism slowly became characteristic of female activists, who far outnumbered male ones.

Moreover, prominent female activists grew concerned with gender-specific issues, such as the higher level of exploitation of female slaves as compared to males and the different forms it took: sexual harassment, rape and torture. Catherine Beecher, a well-known teacher in Hartford, started lecturing about and promoting the feminisation of education, as a means of providing economic independence for women (ibid. 7). Needless to mention, women's activism slowly became concerned with gender-specific issues and a strong sense of sisterhood, of belonging together and of networking emerged. Therefore, women's activism slowly moulded itself into a women's movement.

To move on, a decisive breakthrough came in 1832, when Maria Stewart, an African American woman, delivered a public speech in Boston. This event marked a breakthrough from two points of view. Firstly, Stewart publicly denounced not only racial inequality but gender inequality too (ibid. 11). Secondly, this was the first time that a woman had delivered a public speech addressed to "a mixed audience of men and women" (ibid.). Speaking in public was considered highly immoral for women, as the public sphere was exclusively reserved for men and women were restricted to the private sphere. That is why Maria Stewart was breaking a fundamental social code. The fury that followed Stewart's speech served the American women's movement by gearing it towards the first steps of feminist activism / feminism.

A few years later, in 1836, Angelina Grimke wrote her *Appeal to the Christian Women of the South*. In this she again took up her fight against slavery and she also tackled a paramount women's rights issue: women's right to speak in public (ibid. 16). This way she implicitly criticised gender discrimination: while men enjoyed the right to speak in public, women were banned from the public sphere.

This violation of women's rights to public speech became a national issue when a national convention of antislavery women took place in 1837. Angelina Grimke presented her *Appeal to the Women of the Nominally Free States*, "a long pamphlet that defiantly defended women's right to speak and to act" (ibid. 26). Not only did Angelina Grimke fight for women's right to speak; she also defended their right to take action. The scope of the fight against the violation of women's rights was broadening from the right to speak in public to the right to act. A few radical activists stressed gender inequality to such an extent that they even called women "the white slaves of the North" (ibid. 22).

The roots of American feminism sprang from the anti-slavery movement, initiated by the Quaker abolitionists. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to highlight that these feminist roots required certain steps along the way that resemble a chain reaction. First, he Quakers' religious beliefs promoted the same egalitarian principles as the Enlightenment did in Europe, thus serving as a platform for the embedding of these ideals in the USA. Later, female Quaker missionaries engaged in women's activism, focusing on abolition. Next, female abolitionists began to construct a strong network and an identity of sisterhood. Unawares, women's activism melted into the women's movement. Starting from the lack of the right to public speech, female activists became aware of all the other gender inequalities that they suffered from and engaged in their first feminist steps.

The birth of feminism in the USA was not a spontaneous socio-historical event. It did not explode spontaneously, as it did in France under the impact of the outbreak of the Revolution. The birth of feminism in the USA needed to pass through a number of stages in a domino effect from women's activism to the feminist movement. This is the difference in terms of *pace*: French women arrived at feminism as early as 1789, while American women reached this point in 1848. This brings us to the second difference, which is in terms of *typology*. Female activists arrived at the *roots* of American feminism in 1837, when Angelina Grimke presented her *Appeal to the Women of the Nominally Free States*. It is of paramount importance to underline that these were only the *roots* of American feminism, a kind of proto-form of the feminism that developed later. At this point American feminism was still in its embryonic stage. Women had started to realise their gender inequality but were still too timid to embrace true feminism as they did between 1848 and the 1850s. At the national antislavery convention in 1837, women agreed that only "certain rights and duties are common to all human beings" (Sklar 26). Also, "not all women

abolitionists were willing to be associated with the radical claim that women and men had equal rights" (ibid.).

A much stronger and more courageous feminism unleashed its forces eleven years later at the *Seneca Falls Convention* (1848) and subsequently at the *First National Women's Rights Convention* (1850) and at the *Second National Women's Rights Convention* (1851). This is when women all over the free states of the USA united their forces to thrash out their demand for equal rights in all domains and especially regarding the franchise.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the women's movement in the USA developed the roots of feminism in the 1830s and turned to a more radical stage of feminism in 1848. That is why there is a difference between the two historical 'types' of feminism, feminism in France and that in the USA. This is the difference in terms of *typology*. While French women achieved a daring form of feminism in 1789, the feminist movement in the USA was much milder until the middle of the nineteenth century. I am specifically thinking here of the progressive claims argued by Olympe de Gouges, the *Dames francoises* and the Marquis de Condorcet as early as 1789.

As a final conclusion, the Enlightenment led to feminism both in France and in the USA. This is the similarity in terms of the end result. However, there is a considerable difference in both pace and typology between the 'lines' of feminism that women achieved in these two countries.

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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE IMPERATIVES

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Abstract:The paper deals with the concepts of public and private spheres as defined from Plato and Aristotle to more recent sources. The two issues are considered as being distinct from each other. The link between them is mediated by education.

Keywords: education, family, private, public, state

Introduction

The paper deals with the binary of public/private, two concepts that have undergone significant changes in the course of history. The private area refers to all those activities that are carried on within the household, whereas the public area implies activities concerned with the space outside the house, i.e. society.

According to Professor Reghina Dascăl, the distinction between the public and the private spheres has been a central feature of liberal political discourse since its beginning. Aristotle regarded the public sphere as an arena for free discursive interaction, where free and equal citizens engage in striving together toward the common good. The liberal theorists defined the zone of privacy as a way of delimiting the power of the state, taking individual freedom as their departure point. There was a question for many theorists about where the line of demarcation between the state power and the private realm should be. The private includes everything that is not political; it is not a locus of constructed power relationships, and largely

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irrelevant to politics. The private is not the domain where rights reign but is governed by norms of duty, love, and custom. (Dascăl, 2001 145-49).

According to the very origin myths of liberalism, men came out of the state of nature to procure rights for themselves in society; they do not establish the state to protect or empower individuals inside families. Thus, the liberal subject is a man who moves freely between family and civil society, bearing prerogatives in the former and rights in the latter. This person is male rather than generic, because his enjoyment of civic rights is buttressed rather than limited by his relations in the private sphere, while the opposite is the case for women within the standard sexual division of labour, women's access to civic society and its liberties being limited by household labour and responsibilities. Liberalism's discursive construction of the private sphere as neither a realm of work nor of power but of nature, of comfort and regeneration is inherently bound to a socially male position within it; it parallels the privileging of class entailed in bourgeois characterization of civil society as a place of universal freedom and equality (Dascăl 149).

Education

As a link between the two spheres I intend to take up the issue of education. Before the invention of reading and writing, people lived in an environment in which they struggled to survive in the face of natural forces and wild animals. To survive, preliterate people developed skills that grew into cultural and educational patterns. Peoples had to transmit their culture from adults to children. The earliest educational processes involved sharing information about gathering food and providing shelter, making weapons and other tools, learning language, acquiring values. Since they lived before the invention of writing, preliterate peoples used oral tradition to pass on their culture from one generation to the next.

When Europeans began to invade the American continent in the 1500s, the most devastating assault on Indian life came from the unseen viruses they brought with them. As cultural and economic contact grew, the differences between women and men began to change. These various changes were shaped by the sexual division of labour in indigenous cultures. (Evans1-18).

Perhaps the most striking evidence of change among women was the emergence of the college-educated and self-supporting new woman. After the Civil War, the first generation of such women was formed in the intense world of women's colleges. By 1870 there were 11,000 women students enrolled in higher education. I would like to single out Mary Jane McLeod, an outstanding example of a woman who by assigning great importance to becoming educated also

contributed to education of other women. She was born on July 10, 1875, the fifteenth of seventeen children of Samuel and Patsy McLeod. Some of their children were born into slavery and sold to nearby landowners, but they reassembled after President Lincoln's Proclamation. Although Mary Jane was born free, she was no stranger to the evils of slavery. In the hard-working family every one had to do her or his part. Mary learned to cook, sew and chop cotton. She sang as she worked in the fields and in the Methodist Episcopal church where the family worshipped. They all worked on the farm, praying together every night and morning.

Most of all Mary prayed to be able to go to school. More than anything else, she desired to read. She did so well at her studies that after finishing elementary school she was awarded a scholarship to Scotia Seminary in North Carolina. In 1887 she left her family to ride alone on a train, frightened but proud, to her new school. After graduation from Scotia, she continued her education at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, the only African-American in a school of a thousand students, and her world expanded again. She had a dream, that of establishing a school of her own, where African-American girls could be educated. Mary believed that by means of education, these girls' low social status could be raised. On October 3, 1904, the *Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls* opened its doors. Her school grew faster than she could have imagined. In addition, she started a library and a tiny hospital, which eventually became a school for nurses. In 1928, while Mary was involved in transforming her school into a junior college, she received an invitation from President Calvin Coolidge to attend a child welfare conference. She became the country's expert on the education of African-Americans. (Wright 31-41).

She died on May 18, 1955, leaving as her legacy to all her people: "I leave you love I leave you hope I leave you a thirst for education I leave you faith I leave you racial dignity I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow men I leave you finally a responsibility to our young people" (Wright 42).

Ancient Greece is considered to be one of the places where Western formal education originated. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, epic poems attributed to Homer and written sometime in the eighth century BC, created a cultural tradition that gave the Greeks a sense of group identity.

Ancient Greece was divided into small city states (Athens, Sparta, etc). Athens laid the stress on a humane and democratic society and education. Only the sons of free citizens could attend school. The Athenians believed a free man should have a liberal education in order to be

able to perform his civic duties and for his own personal development. Women's education depended on the customs of each particular Greek city-state. As in Athens women had no legal or economic rights, most women did not attend school. However, there were girls who were educated at home by tutors.

In the fifth century BC, the Sophists began to teach in Athens. They claimed that they could teach any subject or skill to whoever wanted to learn. They specialized in teaching grammar, logic and rhetoric, subjects that eventually formed the core of the liberal arts curriculum.

The Greek philosopher Socrates wanted to discover and teach universal principles of truth, beauty and goodness. He considered that true knowledge existed within everyone and needed to be brought to consciousness. Plato believed in the unchanging world of perfect ideas or universal concepts. He said that since true knowledge is the same in every place at every time, education, like truth, should be unchanging. He described his educational ideal in the *Republic*, a fundamental work of Western philosophy.

Public versus Private

Public has meaning in relation to what is not public, the private sphere. The Greeks made a distinction between two lines of inquiry: the first was concerned with the study of goodness in the collective life of a community, while the second dealt with the goodness of an individual. They also differentiated between the *polis* (the city-state) and the *oikos* (the household). In the *Republic*, Plato considers that private interests have divided citizens and undermined their interest in the well-being of the *polis* as a whole. Plato's ideal republic opts for equality between the sexes in the guardian class. This is to be achieved by eliminating the internal divisions within a state which pull leaders away from the collective good towards their own private interests.

For Plato to eliminate these divisions, the private sphere had to be abolished. So Plato has to find a place in the public sphere for women who had previously filled the roles of wife or slave in the private area. He focuses attention on the guardian class and claims that men and women should be trained equally for the role of ruler. He also brings in the concept of education for the guardian class.

Unlike Plato, Aristotle believed strongly in the need for both a public and a private sphere. His description of political society begins with the description of what he calls *first societies*, namely families. The purpose of the private realm is to meet biological needs. The public area, on the other hand, exists for the sake of a good life. Aristotle considers that a man should rule over his wife; the man is fitter to rule because he possesses moral goodness and reason in a perfect form. He asserts that men have authority over their wives, but it is the rule of the statesman over his fellow citizens rather than of the monarch over his subjects. This limitation of men's authority is rooted in the recognition that wives have some authority over the children in any marriage and that they have a capacity for rationality (Arneil 28-31).

For Plato, the private sphere must be eliminated (in the guardian class) if the interest of the whole community is not to be divided by the interests of private families. The radical implications of eliminating the family for wives of the guardians is understood by Plato, and hence the need for his elaborate schemes of reproduction and equality between the sexes in training and education. Some have argued, however, that by creating a sphere in which only the public may exist, Plato actually leaves no choice but for these wives to become *masculine* in political life, by the very way he defines the virtues of the guardian class. Equality, therefore, may be at the expense of retaining a difference between the genders and in particular those qualities traditionally associated with femininity. Plato ignores the majority of men and women who fall outside of this category of *guardian* in his analysis, seeing them as providers of the biological needs of the guardian class. Aristotle, on the other hand, has anchored the origin of his political societies on the more primitive household societies. The key difference is that the *polis* is both public and part of the cultural rather than natural world. The family, in particular the wives and slaves, on the other hand, meets the needs of mere life. Rule within the family naturally falls to the man for reasons of morality and his capacity for rational thought, yet his authority over wives is different from his authority over female slaves: Aristotle claims that the former has some capacity for reason, while the latter has none (Arneil32).

According to Sara M. Evans, the rhetoric surrounding the American Revolution was rooted in classical Greek assumptions and presumed a sharp dichotomy between public and private. As Hannah Arendt has stated, the public was the realm of politics, where citizens who commanded independent resources and private households, gathered to debate the future of the community. This political sphere was the locus of freedom, an arena for action through which individuals made themselves visible by using impressive discourse and seeking public recognition of their achievements. It was also important to have a strong sense of virtue, to assume responsibility for community affairs. By contrast, the private area was concerned with producing food and bearing children. On account of the fact that women devoted themselves to

the necessities of life, male heads of households had the freedom to engage in politics. Jean Bethke Elstain has asserted: "The flip side of a coin that features the public spirited visage of the male citizen and dutiful father, is the profile of the loving, virtuous, chaste, selfless wife…. Without someone to tend the hearth, the legislative halls would grow silent and empty, or became noisily corrupt" (qtd. in Evans, 1997 2).

American women reshaped the boundaries of the private sphere in ways that have not up until now been explored. They changed the meaning of public life itself. The realities of seventeenth century life, however, ascribed to the family many activities and responsibilities such as education, health and welfare that we now associate with public life and institutions. Even though women were excluded from most formal public roles, they had access to private sources of social control over public action. The most outstanding example is represented by Iroquois women who, unlike their colonial counterparts, could act as a group to nominate council elders and vote on the appointment of chiefs.

As a consequence of the Revolution, a new political meaning was given to domestic life; this raised the role of women to a problematic status in the new political order, a status that has persisted to the present. Women created a different form of public life. In different ways and to different degrees, every group of women (middle class, immigrant, black, and working class) used voluntary associations to express their interests and to organise themselves for public activity. This made possible the public expression of private perspectives.

Among the peoples of North America, whose tribes lived in the woods, along the rivers and on the edges of the plains, women were essential to group survival. Their work as gatherers and processors of food and as nurturers of small children was not only visible to the whole community but also shaped ritual life and processes of community decision making. In most Indian societies, women's activities were different from those of men. They gathered seeds, roots, fruits and other wild plants. They were also responsible for cooking, preserving foods and making household utensils and furnishings. Male activities centred on hunting and warfare. After the hunts, Indian women had an important role in processing the hides of deer or buffalo into clothing, blankets, floor coverings or trade goods. Indian societies differed in their definitions of which tasks were appropriate for women and men and their degree of flexibility. In some groups people would be ridiculed for engaging in tasks inappropriate for their gender, while other groups were more tolerant. Sometimes man and women performed complementary tasks. Among the

Iroquois, men cleared the fields and women planted them. Societies with a clear sexual division of labour encouraged gender solidarity.

In Iroquois society women farmed in a highly organised way. Their work is described by a white woman as follows:

In the summer season, we planted, tended and harvested our corn, and generally had all of our children with us; but had no master to oversee or drive us, so that we could work as leisurely as we pleased …. we pursued our farming business according to the general custom of Indian women, which is as follows: in order to expedite their business and at the same time enjoy each other's company they all worked together in one field, or at whatever job they may have on hand. In the spring they choose an old active squaw to be their driver and overseer, when at labor for the ensuing year. She accepts the honor and they consider themselves bound to obey her. When the time for planting arrives and the soil is prepared, the squaws are assembled in the morning and conducted into the field where each plants one row. They then go into the next field and plant once across and so on till they have gone through the tribe (Evans 9).

In many tribes there were public forums, such as a council of elders, where decisions could be made for the community as a whole. In spite of most scholars' belief that women had no significant political roles, there were many female chiefs and traders. Iroquois women represented the apex of female political power. The land was theirs; the women worked it and controlled the distribution of all food. This gave them essential control over the economic organisation of their tribe. They could withhold the food at any point – in the household, the council of elders, at religious celebrations etc. The Iroquois institutionalised female power in the right of matrons or older women to nominate council elders.

Conclusion

The public and private spheres coexist in people's lives all over the world. One of the links, as I have tried to show, is education. Everybody must have access to education, irrespective of gender, nationality, social status or age. Women, as well as men, have always and at all times made their contribution visible in the two areas under discussion. All the citizens of a state should enjoy full access to both of them. They exist as different areas, but this does not mean that they belong to only one segment of humanity. One's existence has to benefit equally from the achievements of both spheres.

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METAPHORS AND IDEOLOGY – GENDERED METAPHORS IN ECONOMIC DISCOURSE*

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Abstract: Under the theoretical wing of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Critical Metaphor Analysis we deal with one specific aspect of economic discourse in English in an attempt to draw attention to the distinctively gendered metaphor of SLENDERNESS on which the concept of the ideal company is based today. The analysis is based on the notion of *downsizing* and metaphorical expressions that give linguistic voice to the LEAN IS HEALTHY metaphor. Our aim is to demonstrate how ideological values are subtly intertwined with metaphors in economic discourse, so that seemingly harmless metaphors support and reconstruct an aspect of social reality–an androcentric world view.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor, downsizing, economic discourse, ideology, gendered metaphors.

Introduction

Under the theoretical wing of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Kövecses 2002, Semino 2008) and Critical Metaphor Analysis (Charteris-Black 2004), in this paper we will deal with one specific aspect of economic discourse in English in an attempt to point out the value-laden SLENDERNESS metaphor on which the concept of the ideal company is based today, as well as its distinctively gendered nature. The analysis is based on the concept of *downsizing* (defined as "reducing the total number of employees at a company through terminations, retirements, or spinoffs") and on many metaphorical expressions which linguistically embody the LEAN IS HEALTHY metaphor. Our aim is to demonstrate how ideological values are subtly intertwined with metaphors in economic discourse, so that seemingly harmless metaphors support and reconstruct one existing aspect of social reality–an androcentric world view. We will point out how "the tyranny of slenderness" (Tyler &

Wilkinson 2007), which has been around for a long time and mostly pertains to women and their attitude to their own bodies (and consequently to the position they take up on a social ladder), is metaphorically applied to the physical appearance and internal structure of companies, their efficiency and profitability, which in turn may result in a distorted understanding of some aspects of the reality in which we live.

In this paper we combine two theoretical frameworks: Conceptual Metaphor Theory, as developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and later modified to better accommodate metaphors that occur in authentic discourse (e.g. Semino 2008; Deignan 2005), and Critical Metaphor Analysis (Charteris-Black 2004), a version of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which draws heavily not only on the main insights of CDA but also on the cognitive theory of metaphor. According to the proponents of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, conceptual metaphor refers to the understanding of one, usually abstract and less structured, concept, expressed as the *target* conceptual domain, in terms of another, more physical and more easily comprehensible concept, expressed as the *source* conceptual domain. However, the mappings from the source to the target domain are only partial, which is why metaphors represent a simplified and sometimes distorted picture of phenomena. In their seminal work *Metaphors we live by*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest that metaphors are much more than a mere rhetorical or poetic device used for decorative purposes, but that they are pervasive throughout everyday language. They structure the way we think and act, not only the way we talk–therefore, metaphor is a matter of mind, not only and not predominantly one of language. This claim is a radical shift from previous traditional approaches to metaphor, which stated that the main role metaphor plays in a text was ornamental.

The metaphorical expressions linguistically embodying the conceptual LEAN IS HEALTHY metaphor which form the data collection used in our analysis have been gathered from various sources: several English economics and business dictionaries, some business and finance oriented dailies and weeklies, websites and personal blogs published in English, and a number of papers downloaded from the Internet which deal with the topic of company restructuring. The method of metaphor identification we have applied here is that proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). We have used it as a reliable tool with which to check the metaphoricity of the lexical units relating to downsizing as well as to establish their basic and in context meaning.

Metaphors and Ideology

The tenet of Conceptual Metaphor Theory that metaphors shape the way we not only talk but think and even act as well provides the basis for a view according to which metaphors play a vital role in cultivating and reinforcing ideologies, since metaphors allow us to emphasise some desirable aspects of a concept at the expense of those aspects which we want to keep hidden or out of focus. Ideology is understood here as a cognitive phenomenon, a "(shared) conceptualization[s] of particular aspects of reality" (Semino 90). "The combination of different parts of long-term mental representations of (particular aspects of) 'reality' constitutes a particular ideology, which will be socially shared by the members of particular groups" (Semino 90). The relationship between discourse and ideology is "a dynamic one", since "discourses reflect particular ideologies, but also contribute to shape them and change them; ideologies result from discoursal and social practices but also determine and constrain these practices" (Semino 90). As a linguistic phenomenon, discourse is in this paper examined in relation to ideology, which is a predominantly cognitive phenomenon.

Metaphors may have great persuasive power, since they usually demonstrate a biased interpretation of situations and events. This derives from the main characteristic of metaphors –one phenomenon is presented in terms of another phenomenon, which necessarily leads to downplaying or foregrounding certain aspects of the phenomenon in question. By choosing which aspects of a phenomenon they will highlight or hide, metaphor creators consciously or unconsciously reveal their own value judgements and ideological stances. A strong ideological basis of metaphors allows their creators to influence the way we conceptualise certain concepts and phenomena, which makes them a powerful and dangerous weapon in the process of shaping opinions. Critical Metaphor Analysis, on the other hand, is an approach to discourse which "enables us to challenge existing ways of thinking and feeling about human behaviour and its relation to language" (Charteris-Black 252), as well as to activate our own ability to be aware of the ideologies on which metaphors are grounded and to present "alternative ways of thinking and feeling about the world", which is "a fundamental aspect of human freedom." (Charteris-Black 252). As Deignan (23) claims, "[t]he case for metaphor as ideological is developed from the observation that the interpretation of situations and events presented by any metaphor is only partial, and therefore flawed", which stems from the principle of *metaphorical highlighting and hiding* (Lakoff & Johnson 1980), according to which the metaphorical source domain focuses on a single aspect of the concept, while at the same time hiding some other aspects of the concept. This allows for metaphor to serve as a potentially ideological tool, presenting "a particular interpretation of situations and events"

(Deignan 23), desired by their creators. Moreover, metaphors often distort "because they are over-simplifications" (Deignan 23), since target domains are much more complex than they are presented as being by the use of source domains, thus suggesting "an artificially simple understanding" (Deignan 23) of concepts. Being "among our principal vehicles of understanding", metaphors "play a central role in the construction of social and political reality" (Lakoff & Johnson 159). Charteris-Black (21), the originator of Critical Metaphor Analysis, argues that metaphor, viewed as a blend of semantic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions, serves the purpose "of influencing opinions and judgements by persuasion" (Charteris-Black 21). We will argue here that corporate discourse dealing with downsizing is characterised by metaphors which perpetuate dangerous gender-based stereotypes and may influence perceptions and judgements.

Metaphors in Corporate Discourse

The term "corporate discourse" (a subtype of economic discourse) refers here to all types of texts written or spoken with the aim of describing the size of a company and the number of its employees. In a discourse thus defined, the idea of company is conceptualised and perceived by means of several conceptual metaphors. All of these are based on an overarching COMPLEX ABSTRACT SYSTEMS metaphor, which is used to stress "the function, stability, development, and condition of the system." (Kövecses 128-129). These four characteristics of abstract systems are conceptualised by means of four different source domains: MACHINE, BUILDING, PLANT and HUMAN BODY, which means that the concept of *company*, being itself a kind of a system, is also conceptualised in these ways. In corporate discourse, however, the concept of company is most frequently anthropomorphised–the company is conceptualised as a human being to which various human properties are attributed. In our case, the COMPANY IS A PERSON metaphor is most frequently realised by means of the COMPANY IS A HUMAN BODY metaphor in which the parts of the corporate structure and its human resources match certain parts of the human body. Thus we speak of the *head* of a company, *the backbone* of a company, old *hand*, new *blood*, *body* of employees, etc.

By conceptualising the company as a human body we give it an ontological status, which in turn allows us to attribute to it various human characteristics, *inter alia* that of being sick. Thus, the company conceptualised as a human body may become sick and be in need of a cure, due to its inability to outcompete other companies in the market, incompetent management, an economic crisis, or a surplus of employees which slows down its

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development. In such cases, the company is often conceptualised as a patient suffering from a disease which impedes its further progress. Metaphorically speaking, "a high level of economic activity is a symptom of good health and vitality" (Boers 232), while efficiency and profitability are also valued positively, as illustrated by the expressions such as *vibrant* enterprises, *thriving* company, *nimble* company, etc. Here are some examples of the COMPANY IS A PATIENT metaphor (henceforth all metaphorical expressions will be underlined).

(1) Do you know why companies <u>fall sick</u> and <u>die</u>; that there are <u>panaceas</u> that can turn a critically <u>ill organisation</u> around into a <u>healthy</u> one and <u>proper treatment</u> is necessary as the <u>remedies</u> can sometimes be worse than the <u>disease</u>?

(2) Cost control is an important <u>antidote</u> or effective <u>remedy</u> to administer in desperate turnaround situations.

(3) The key here is how the costs can be cut to restore <u>financial health</u> in the short term without hurting the <u>ailing company</u> in the long term.

When the company is *in good health*, there is no need for a *company doctor* who will give their *diagnosis*, help the sick patient (*ailing company*) with their advice and prescribe a *cure* against the *disease* the company is suffering from (corporate *disease*, a *chronic* deficit, financial *anemia*, etc.). In order to *heal* the company, it is sometimes necessary to remove the *sick tissue* which threatens to spread to the whole of the organism and we talk of *amputation*, *financial injection*, even of corporate *surgery*, which leads to *recovery*. This is illustrated in the following examples:

(4) There are many companies <u>falling sick</u> due to <u>corporate diseases</u> such as global economic recession, rapid changes brought about by globalisation, terror attacks and incompetent management.

(5) To <u>rehabilitate</u> a strong and healthy corporate <u>immune system</u> or culture in order to sustain long-term growth.

(6) <u>Prescription</u> without <u>diagnosis</u> is malpractice, and thus carrying out corporate restructuring without knowing the <u>ailments</u> is disastrous. The key is early <u>diagnosis</u> as it increases the chances of curing most diseases.

(7) So, those most affected by the compulsory cost cutting (<u>corporate surgery</u>) find extraordinarily effective ways to resist it.

(8) It is not the only <u>remedy</u> available to managers to improve a company's performance.

(9) It is better to <u>amputate</u> all loss-making ventures and unprofitable sales whenever possible.

(10) For complete corporate <u>recovery</u>, it is important to finish the full course of <u>antibiotics</u> <u>prescribed</u> in all the three phases.

In the processes of metaphorisation and personification companies are structured as human beings. However, the metaphor which is the focus of our paper, the SLENDERNESS metaphor, is characterised by a highly gendered source domain, so that the metaphorical structure of a female body (not the human body in general) is mapped onto the abstract target domain, the company. This will be dealt with in greater detail in subsequent sections.

Downsizing as Metaphor

Closely connected with the COMPANY IS A PATIENT metaphor is the LEAN IS HEALTHY, i.e. FAT IS UNHEALTHY metaphor. The domains of health and physical activity are very productive in economic discourse in English, which is again due to the fact that conceptual metaphors are grounded in human bodily experience and that we conceptualise phenomena around us in terms of our own knowledge about the ways the human body functions. As quoted in the *Dictionary of Economics* (Aćimović *et al.* 76), "an intensive wave of downsizing in a large number of organisations and industries is typical of the early ninety-eighties", since when metaphorical expressions linguistically embodying the LEAN IS HEALTHY metaphor have been present in economic and corporate discourse in English, and it is on those expressions that the DOWNSIZING metaphor is essentially based. Companies characterised by an excessive number of employees, especially in middle management and administrative jobs, started to be called *fat* or *obese*, were forced to *go on a corporate diet*, and the only way to *get rid of* and *trim away body fat* was to *slim down*. Let us illustrate this by several examples from our data collection:

(11) In a world where diets and diet metaphors abound, companies have been obsessed for the past several years with trimming away the fat, getting lean and mean, and shedding weight in order to survive the recession and compete in the new global economy.

(12) It is known as downsizing, rationalizing, streamlining and, perhaps most commonly, restructuring. With a bow to the diet culture, some prefer to call it just plain slimming down.

(13) The War on Obesity: Corporate Downsizing

Corporate "body fat", as it turned out, was trimmed away most frequently through massive and uncritical layoffs, and the hysteria surrounding corporate slenderness and the exaggerated "starving" of companies soon reached an extreme degree, to such an extent that the term *corporate anorexia* was introduced, by analogy with the disease increasingly seen in women, especially in young women suffering from various eating disorders. The following

examples illustrate the *corporate anorexia* metaphor, in which *starvation*, *dieting* and *exercising* are recommended as suitable ways of achieving competitiveness, if employees and the company itself are ready to use such a strategy:

(14) Some business bosses unfortunately have blinders on and feel that drastic cost-cutting alone is the answer when times are tough. They develop corporate anorexia. Those companies have become so skinny they'll be the last to get healthy again.

(15) Is there a way to prune without starvation? Diet and exercise alone will not create the structure needed to cope with the demands of mass customization.

(16) Anorexia, whether it be human or corporate, is a disease, not a cure. Corporate anorexia is a fear-and-denial-driven, dangerous reaction to often real competitive threats.

(17) However, the economic ups and downs of the past decade have prompted some companies to cut so much fat and become so lean that they are no longer healthy–they suffer from what some experts call "corporate anorexia."

(18) Even if an anorexic company manages to retain its best, most experienced people, how effective can they be?

(19) What really takes the calorie-laden corporate cake however, is keeping the Chief Executive Officer in place when that's who was basically responsible for the unhealthy weight gain in the first place.

(20) They treat downsizing not as a fad diet ... but as just one part of a long-term program to renew their corporate prosperity.

(21) Conversely, however, as with a diet that is taken to extremes, the health of a business can be compromised if Slim Down strategies are taken too far for too long.

Due to massive layoffs of employees, companies have become thinner, more slender and leaner, while the HEALTH and FITNESS metaphors have become inevitable in corporate discourse in English when restructuring and a permanent reduction in workforce are being discussed:

(22) Contrary to popular belief, a lean staff is not necessarily more entrepreneurial.

(23) And this obsession with size and shape may well be why ours will be known as the era of right sizing – downsizing, rationalising, trimming, cutting back, call it what you want, it all amounts to the same thing – waging a war against organisational fat

(24) It's come to the fore all the more so recently as a result of the global recession – companies forcibly put on a starvation diet, retaining just enough of a skeleton staff to survive, rather like war-time rationing.

(25) A diet is nothing less than a philosophy for living, yet when we try to apply a sensible dietary regime to our organisations with a view to trimming them and turning them around, the emphasis

seems always to be on the number of bodies we have as opposed to the weight of skills and talent they individually and collectively contribute.

It is easy to see the analogy between the SLENDERNESS metaphor used in corporate discourse, on the one hand, and the ideology of women's magazines in which metaphors and other cognitive and verbal devices embodied in the discourse manipulate readers. The SLENDERNESS and HEALTH metaphors are positively valued in contemporary society, particularly due to the importance attached to regular physical activity in maintaining good health, but much more importantly, to the significance and symbolism attributed to slenderness, especially that of women. The trend of a toned, worked-out and muscular female body has been with us since the early 1980s, when the actress Jane Fonda published a book on working out and aerobics that became very popular among babyboomers and marked the beginning of a fitness frenzy in the US and Europe. Parallel with this trend, however, there has been a trend for eating disorders to become increasingly prevalent among women, the two most serious being anorexia and bulimia. A face without wrinkles, a body without cellulite, and especially slenderness as the main prerequisites for women's success have themselves become a metaphor–they are the most prominent symbols of women's achievement and a large amount of effort, willpower, deprivation and self-control are needed to realise them. Metaphorically mapped onto the corporate level, the process of *slimming down* and *becoming fit* by means of iron discipline, dedication and sacrifice refers to layoffs of employees and their reductions in pay. The results will, however, make up for all the effort and pain, as clearly indicated in the following examples:

> (26) Is there a silver lining in all of the <u>pain</u> and <u>suffering</u> associated with corporate America's <u>downsizing diet</u>?
>
> (27) The tendency to prolong a Slim Down by executing it in slow motion is natural and human. Leaders often want to delay taking action, recognizing that it will be <u>painful</u> to people in the organization. However, in their desire to avoid <u>pain</u>, they can actually cause even more <u>harm</u> by drawing out the process.
>
> (28) The <u>emotional repercussions</u> of a Slim Down can never be avoided entirely. However, they can be minimized by <u>slimming down</u> quickly.

The implications of the SLENDERNESS metaphor in corporate discourse are clear and analogous with reality: companies need to take care of their "bodies" and their physical appearance, have healthy habits and go on exhausting weight-loss diets in order to achieve

perfect looks which guarantee good performance, increase profitability and improve business results.

In the real world, however, the obsession with thinness leads to a second eating disorder, *bulimia*, which immediately found its place among the other metaphorical expressions characteristic of the DOWNSIZING metaphor. This disease refers to binge-eating interrupted by deliberate efforts to avoid the consequences of such eating by vigorous exercise, fasting, and self-induced vomiting. The major cause of such behaviour is dissatisfaction with one's own body weight and looks and a powerful desire to be thin. Metaphorically speaking, at the corporate level, companies are experiencing a vicious circle of employing and dismissing employees. On the one hand, companies suffer from *corporate anorexia*–they lay people off and "starve themselves", maintaining only skeleton staff, while on the other hand, with the aim of outsourcing their business, they purge their existing personnel, thus becoming "victims of corporate bulimia". The following examples illustrate the above-mentioned metaphorical expressions:

(29) It is therefore abhorrent for companies to embrace a 'hire-and-fire' approach in their human resource policy. This is equivalent to <u>bulimia</u>, an illness in which there is a great and uncontrollable desire to eat, usually followed by induced vomiting in order not to gain weight. Such "<u>corporate bulimia</u>" rips the fabric of corporate cohesion, self-interest replaces corporate interest as suspicions among staff increase and loyalty towards the company wanes.

(30) And we see it time and time again in our corporations which seem <u>obsessed</u> with severe organisational <u>dieting</u>. The downsizing is usually followed by what appears to be a <u>raging appetite</u> to <u>get bigger</u> again instead of <u>maintaining leanness</u>. It's the <u>bulimic</u> diet cycle.

(31) And the "last in, first out" downsizing tool is really a killer because it essentially says toss out the new, clean, invigorating blood. I guess it amounts to <u>organisational bulimia!</u>

(32) Unless we apply those <u>strict standards of corporate fit</u> and value, those organisations will quickly return to where they were–fat and unhealthy and too out-of-shape to move.

The cognitive framework of corporate slenderness, with its ideologised metaphorical vocabulary, is grounded in an entrenched and stereotypical representation of the female body, which is attractive only if it meets the unattainable criteria the mass media sets for women, predominantly through advertisements and women's magazines. Such a cognitive framework serves as a partial justification for the massive layoffs caused by downsizing, since it conveys the following message: just like women, companies have to watch their weight, go on strict and exhausting diets and trim away fat if they want to remain successful in a severely competitive market. And just like women, they are facing a vicious circle of alternative over-

eating and starving, dissatisfied with both the profit they are making and the position they are achieving in the race for business prestige and success.

Corporate Slenderness, Metaphors and Ideology

The connection between ideology and metaphors most frequently functions unconsciously–ideologies are neatly hidden behind the metaphorical veil, since metaphors structure concepts and phenomena in a simple and artificially simplified manner. The most effective metaphors are those that are built into the language and mind unconsciously by means of established conventions and serve as perspectivisation and attention-grabbing devices–they highlight certain attitudes, views and opinions, while downplaying some other irrelevant and undesirable aspects of a phenomenon. Thus, apparently harmless metaphors may be an ideologically charged weapon, relying on simple explanations and strong emotional effects. However, as Lakoff and Johnson claim, metaphors do not only reflect reality but "may create realities for us, especially social realities" (156). If they are repeated long enough, they may be "a guide for future action" (156). And although "words alone don't change reality", "changes in our conceptual system do change what is real for us and affect how we perceive the world and act upon those perceptions" (145-146). The creation of a new reality happens "when we start to comprehend our experience in terms of a metaphor, and it becomes a deeper reality when we begin to act in terms of it" (Lakoff & Johnson 145).

The SLENDERNESS metaphor, in the way it is used in corporate discourse, may be understood as a powerful ideological tool. It helps create an analogy between the socially desirable ideal of female slenderness on the one hand, and corporate "slenderness" on the other, thus perpetuating and reinforcing stereotypical representations of the social, personal and business success of women as a result of their physical appearance.

Conclusion

In this paper an attempt has been made to illustrate how ideological stance is subtly intertwined with metaphors in corporate discourse, as well as how seemingly harmless and benign metaphors are in fact ideologically loaded and depict the values our contemporary society is based on. Ideology forms an integral part of the downsizing terminology "without its presence becoming obvious, overbearing or overly assertive" and in such a way as to cause it to be consumed "unconsciously or inadvertently as another logical component of the argumentation in question." (White & Herrera 319). In this way, "what easily passes as commonsensical, as an absolute truth, in fact contains marked ideological values." (White &

Herrera 319). The cognitive framework of slenderness on which the downsizing metaphor rests, despite the fact that it was most probably unconsciously selected, accepted and used for the conceptualisation of the declining number of employees in a company, reflects the importance attached in contemporary society to a female body. In this sense, these metaphors may be regarded as one of the instruments for reinforcing stereotypical gender roles and a biased mindset in regard to the evaluation of women's contribution in society. The downsizing metaphor and the metaphorical expressions linguistically embodying it thus become "more cognitively accessible to the reader by the use of stereotypes" (White & Herrera 318), while simultaneously supporting and reconstructing an existing aspect of social reality–a dominant androcentric worldview.

It is of the utmost importance to raise awareness of the existence of metaphors which are saying much more than appears superficially at the level of language, as well as to build mechanisms which will help reveal and disclose systems of metaphorical mapping and thus free economic discourse of those metaphorical expressions which, sometimes even unintentionally, reflect ideologies, especially ideologies of power and their value judgements. According to cognitive linguists, the unconscious, unquestioning and uncritical acceptance of such metaphors, together with a lack of awareness of the motives for the selection of some metaphors and not others, affects not only the way we think but, even more dangerously, the way we act as well.

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TANTRISM AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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Abstract: It is the purpose of this paper to explore some aspects of Tantrism, an esoteric system of spiritual advancement by the cultivation of physical and psychic resources rooted in the ancient Hindu philosophical concept of *shakti*. Between 900 and the fifteenth century it not only contributed immensely to feminizing and galvanizing Hinduism, but it also gave rise to a scriptural corpus, rewriting goddess theology, her relation to male deity, her cosmic functions, being at the same time subversive of dominant Brahmanical values and speaking directly to women's experiences.

Keywords: Tantra, Buddhism, Hinduism, goddess, empowerment, shakti, bhakti

Introduction. Tantra from a Western Perspective

Tantra is a heterodox movement within Hinduism and Buddhism, an esoteric system of spiritual advancement carried out by the cultivation of physical and psychic resources rooted in the ancient Hindu philosophical concept of *shakti*. *Shakta* Tantrism gave rise to a scriptural corpus, it rewrote goddess theology, her relation to male deity, her cosmic functions, and it creatively undermined patriarchal assumptions of women's roles. The *shakti*, or life force, manifest both in the make-up of the universe and in women vivified culture and social institutions, restructured family relations and religious ritual kingship.

Although by 600 the female goddess started to compete with male deities, between the ninth and the fifteenth centuries she made a sweeping comeback, feminizing and galvanizing Hinduism. The main consequence of this development was an unprecedented liberalization of attitudes regarding the status of women that marked Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism

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alike. Disciple Ananda, personal attendant and close follower of Buddha is famous for having persuaded Buddha to set up an order of nuns, whereas the *Bhakti* movement of late mediaeval India, hinging on the individual's relation with a personalized deity, gave women the right to be religious teachers in their own right. Kabir and Nanak encouraged women's attainment of saintly status, Lalla, and particularly Mirabai serving as examples of such poets-cum-mystics (Thapar 5-15).

However, most Western exegetes reflecting their own values and hermeneutical lens comment negatively on such pro-woman developments which they think do not reflect women's lives or accomplishments, many Western scholars averring that Tantra is an oppressive movement in which women are degraded and marginalized, as the human counterparts of the powerful yoginis of Tantric iconography were abject prostitutes, low-caste women totally devoid of agency, whose sexual services were exploited for ritual ends. David Snellgrove in his *Hevajra Tantra* and Mircea Eliade in *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* underscore time and again the fact that the more depraved and debauched the woman, the more fit she was for the rite. This, however, proves to be a fundamental misunderstanding of the cultural roles of such women in Indian society.

As ethnographer Frédérique Marglin argues in *Wives of the God-King* (1985) women of low caste such as dancers, courtesans, washerwomen may occupy a low rung socially, yet their cultural meaning is high as they master the powers of fertility and auspiciousness and they possess and embody energy, transformative power, s*hakti*. It was from such sites that Buddhism and Hinduism were receiving infusions of cultural energy at the time of the Tantras--a particular synthesis of soteriology, archaic religious practices, symbols and rites of fertility being all part of the genius of the Tantras. For the great Romanian historian of religions, Mircea Eliade, Tantra stands for a new "valorisation" of the powers of nature, a vindication of the human body and sexuality, which had been repressed by the dominant patriarchal society; it represents a rekindling of remnants belonging to the foundational, most primordial layer of Indian consciousness, dating back to the pre-Aryan days, when popular religion and worship of the Goddess had not yet been overtaken by the priestly, androcentric Aryans; it embodies the "great underground current of autochthonous spirituality". (202-12; 259)

Whilst some Western scholars acknowledge the egalitarianism and a few of them even the gender-inclusiveness of the Tantras, they keep to their sexist perspectives unaware of the

radical inconsistency of their views: the Tantric methods serve only for male liberation and privilege men while exploiting women. The evidence gathered by ethnographers, anthropologists in the last century witness the fact that women not only participated fully in the Tantric movement but that this meant an unprecedented valorisation of the feminine in Hindu and Buddhist religions, advancing at the same time a new and revolutionary model of partnership between the sexes, one of cooperation and mutual enhancement, a transformative and liberating relationship.

Westerners like Sir John Woodroffe (better known as Arthur Avalon) and Lilian Silburn who spent long periods of time in India as Tantric novitiates, together with a whole array of Indian scholars reported on the great respect in which women were held in both Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism. Tantric women were independent, rebellious, they flouted conventional constraints, they served as gurus, they performed rituals of initiation (*diksa*) and initiation performed by them was considered to be even more efficacious than that given by men; they were even regarded as preferable to men as gurus. In her anthropological fieldwork on women ascetics in Varanasi, Lynn Teskey Denton found female Tantrics who were independent women, choosing their own male partners and life styles. (Shaw 6)

The views held by Western scholars are typical reactions to aspects of India that seemed alien, repugnant and incomprehensible to their own outlooks; it is a reaction marked by lack of cultural empathy, on the one hand, and on the other, it is a prude expression of Victorian indignation not only at nonmarital sexual activity but above all at the religious exaltation and worship of women. In this context, Swiss theologian Hans Küng remarks that religious awe of women is so antithetical to Jewish and Christian values that it poses a major barrier to understanding. (Shaw 9)

Tantras epitomize a cultural realm animated by dualities entirely different from those shaping the Western mind: the polarities of purity/pollution and auspiciousness/inauspiciousness, and not the prevalent Western dualism of nature/culture, matter/spirit, humanity/divinity. The Western understanding of personhood regards the self as substance bounded by flesh that may undergo certain changes but retain an identity throughout, allowing a process of commodification that turns the self into an object that can be used as a means to an end. Yet, this commodified version of the self is at variance with traditional Indian and Buddhist understandings of personhood. The concept of women's bodies being subjected to promiscuous uses implies the

Cartesian dualism of mind and body that is alien to the Indian context where there prevail more fluidic and dynamic concepts of the human body and of its exchanges and complex interactions with the outside world, biological, ritual or social.

> Embodiment, which is understood to be not a 'soul' in a 'body', but rather a multilayered mind-body continuum of corporeality, affectivity, cognitivity, and spirituality whose layers are subtly interwoven and mutually interactive. This nonessentialist self … the site of a host of energies, inner winds and flames, dissolutions, meltings, and flowings that can bring about dramatic transformations in embodied experience and provide a bridge between humanity and divinity. It is in light of this model of a dynamic, permeable self, without fixed boundaries, that the Tantric Buddhist paradigm must be interpreted. (Shaw 11).

In his *History of Sexuality* Foucault identifies specific strategies whereby sexuality became an object of knowledge and thus a particular instrument of wielding power in the industrializing West, beginning in the seventeenth century as part of the rise of specific movements and disciplines. Foucault himself contrasts the Western objectification, pathologisation and manipulation of sexuality (*scientia sexualis*) with the *ars erotica* of the East which he characterizes as sexuality developed and explored for its own sake, for a bliss that leads to transcendence (57-58).

Tantric Hinduism and Buddhism offer a model not of exploitation but of complementarity and mutuality and hence, the erotic being of woman was not condemned and far from being conceived of as a sin, the sexual act was symbolic of creative energy. Tantra means a distinctive understanding of maleness and femaleness and of the ideal, spiritually transformative relation between them. At the same time, Tantra encourages a sense of reliance on women as a source of spiritual power.

The Novelty of Tantrism

Tantra Buddhism represents the most vibrant cultural achievement of the Pala period in India (eighth-twelfth centuries) a time of flourishing monastic universities. Tantric Buddhism arose in protest against the mainstream Mahayahna Buddhism, outside the powerful Buddhist monasteries, yet building heavily on their achievements; initially they were championed by lay people desiring the reform of Mahayana, envisaged as a return to classical Mahayana universalism, a protest against ecclesiastical privilege and arid scholasticism and for making

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Buddhism a more accessible and socially inclusive system. In several ways, this reformation attempt is reminiscent of the Western monastic reform of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and of the emergence of canons and canonesses regular who defied the cloistered and vow-centred monasticism, in order to preach and be part of their communities--Premonstratensians, Beguines, Franciscan friars, Poor Clares, Cathars, etc (cf. Bynum 14-21). Self mastery was no longer to be tested solely within the austere precincts of the monastery, but in the midst of family life, in the tumult of the marketplace, in the spectacle of the cremation grounds or in isolated wilderness. Desire, passion, ecstasy were no longer demonized but they were to be embraced on the religious path, a major paradigm of Tantric meditation and practice being the mastering of desire by full sexual intimacy leading to enlightenment.

Tantrism gained popular and royal support, made its way into the monastic university curriculum at Nalanda, Vikramsila or Somapuri (Shaw 21). Tantrics drew adherents from competing faiths, expanded geographically into every region of the subcontinent and continued on a triumphal sweep of the Himalayas, East Asia and South-East Asia. A new body of scriptures was created, for which the status of divine revelation was claimed. Tantra takes over Mahayana Buddhism's creed in emotions as the nourishing substratum in which the lotuses of compassion, generosity and sensitivity can take root and blossom but goes beyond it when it perceives passion, desire and the experience of the senses as pure.

Mahayana decrees that the gradual purification is processual, and therefore many lifetimes of arduous meditation and perfecting of wisdom, compassion and patience are necessary for its attainment. Tantra Buddhism revolutionizes this belief by insisting that enlightenment is attainable in a single lifetime and that it consists in a fearless confrontation of every aspect of the psyche--anger, desire, fear, guided throughout by an experienced guru. At the outset of the path the guru performs an initiation *abhiseka* that prepares the disciple to receive esoteric knowledge ("no psychic stone is left unturned": long repressed memories, childhood traumas and longings, buried sources of pain from the present and previous lifetimes), helping the disciple to get rid of all kinds of mystifying pretensions, personal or cultural. Tantra offers many practices but no single method or path is formally required to cut through ordinary awareness as directly as possible to attain enlightenment in a single lifetime (Shaw 21-27).

Tantric methodologies create with language, image and motion an aesthetic realm that the practitioner initially enters by means of meditation and ritual. A well-known path and

technique is deity yoga (*devayoga*) in which the meditator envisions herself as a deity, the mandala being central to such practices of meditation. The celestial mandala is a means of visualizing the perfection of the world and is one of the templates used for remodelling the practitioner's subjective reality--it becomes the objective correlative of enlighted vision. The basic pattern of the mandala is a palace resting on a lotus flower that rises out of the cosmic sea and analogically the journey through the mandala symbolically asserts the unity of the universe with its worldly, bodily and celestial realms, recreating thus the path to enlightenment. (24-26) The meditator enters by the eastern gate and encounters a series of Buddhas that represent different aspects of the personality and their enlightened counterparts. Somatically, the meditator envisions her body as containing the entire world, with its subterranean, earthly and celestial spheres. She then mentally arrays the divine yoginis within the world, thereby turning her body into a yogini mandala. Visualization and imagination are used to turn the five poisons of self-centred existence into the five nectars of Buddha-wisdoms: anger, arrogance, desire, ignorance and jealousy, become mirrorlike wisdom, wisdom of equality, all-accomplishing wisdom, and panoramic wisdom of all encompassing space or discriminating awareness.

Female Buddhas added a dramatic dimension to Buddhist soteriology and iconography as they confirmed the possibility of attaining Buddhahood in a female body. Although earlier Buddhist texts aver that women can attain enlightenment they also decree that there could never be a female Buddha. When a woman becomes enlightened (a *bodhisattva*) she completely relinquishes womanhood, because on the throne of enlightenment she is never reborn as a woman.

Goddess Theology and Indian Women

We cannot underline enough the importance held by the Tantric system in furthering the status of women, because particularly in the most revered codes of conduct–*dharmasastra*--women's subordination is emphasised and although both in *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* we come upon idealized versions of femininity, the epics prevalently advance male interests and causes. (Gupta 87-108)

It certainly represents a first effort of its kind in Hindu religion, aiming to introduce an ethos of equality and respect for women, thus attempting to take a stand against social evils besetting women such as wife beating and sexual abuse of women. As the *Kularnava Tantra*

states: "One should not beat a woman even with a flower, even if she is guilty of a hundred misdeeds, one should not mind the faults of women and should make known only their good points" (7.97-98). All aspects of women's anatomy and physiology are considered sacred; they can become priestesses, gurus, hold positions of power, as female saints, they can impart initiation--*diksa*. All in all, it is no exaggeration to call it a "pro-woman code" as it marks a subversion and undercutting of the dominant Brahmanical values and it is a rare instance of gender inclusive *dharma* in Indian religious history, speaking directly to women's experiences.

The *bhakti* movement in its turn as a synthesis of beliefs advancing the unconditional love between humans and divinity, further subverted gender and caste divides, so that even *sudras* (the lowest caste of labourers) could become gurus. *Bhakti* devotion represents a non-violent, yet firm and functional defiance of the brahminical canon, which first decreed that *jnana* or knowledge through the sacred texts is the only means to salvation and subsequently denied to *sudras* and women the right to seek or acquire such knowledge (Chitnis 259).

Devi-Mahatmya, the classic text of Hindu goddess worship, one of the major religious documents produced on the subcontinent features Devi as a singular and unique *Shakti*. The most celebrated story in the text is that of the creation of the goddess out of a flood of energy emitted by the male gods as they were outpowered by a demon and on the point of being shunned from their celestial paradise. Out of that spectacular pool of energy a woman was born, who thereupon was given an animal vehicle, weapons and thus she was created to contain the *shakti* of the universe and, moreover, was placed above the gods with her power to delude and defeat the demons. It is impressive how the goddess was not only empowered by gods with their potency but was also invested with the most ponderous task, that of restoring the balance of the cosmos.

The great *Shakti* is represented as Durga, Kali, Tripura, Camunda, Bhairavi, or the goddess Kundalini, who dwells in the subtle body of the adept. She is acclaimed as the highest principle of the cosmos--the power of creation, preservation and destruction, the ground of being. The goddess herself explains that her function is to intervene like an *avatara*, an incarnation and to restore the balance of the cosmos. Although all goddesses of the Hindu pantheon embody the *shakti* of the male gods, they are only partial *shaktis*, never given the occasion to manifest their power fully and openly, but Durga represents the epitome of the full blossoming of the *shakti* concept in its totality (Khanna 111-112).

Durga, the overarching example of *shakti* embodiment in the Hindu pantheon, a vessel of polarities, can be both benign and maternal but when outpowered as a battle queen she will split into her most terrible form as Kali:

> At the time of giving birth she is a mother
> At the time of worship, she is a divinity,
> At the time of union, she is a consort
> And at the time of death she is Kalika herself. (*Maharthamanjary* 7)

However, the creativity of Tantras is boundless in iconographic and ritualistic practices. One of the most exclusive deities of Tantra is Tripurasundari, often referred to simply as Tripura, who is a most sublime personification of the goddess, worshipped as an iconic symbol–*Srichakra*, consisting of nine interlacing triangles, two rings of lotus petals and a square centred around a *bindu* (a sacred symbol or energetic vortex that is hailed as the point of creation or where the turning of multiplicity into oneness is effected), recalling the two dynamic flows of the cosmos-–emanation and involution. She has a triadic nature, as Bhakacharaya, the great authority on mother Goddess devotion and theology, explains: "There are three gods, three vedas, three fires, three energies, three notes, three worlds, three abodes, three lotuses, three categories of Brahman and three letters of mantra. Whatever in this world is threefold as the three objects of human desire, O Goddess, your name is in accordance with all these" (qtd. in Khanna 112).

The most fundamental teaching of the Tripura theology is that the entire universe is androgynous, composed of the two opposite but complementary categories--male and female, underscoring that at all levels of the manifest creation, from the minutest atom of the universe to entire galaxies, everything has this androgynous kernel and is an amalgamation of the two principles of creation: Siva the male principle static and inert, pure consciousness in the all-inclusive transcendent essence and Shakti the dynamic, energetic aspect of creation, her potent energy empowering her male consort. Siva being devoid of energy is unable to accomplish anything unless empowered through his union with Shakti.

Several sources nevertheless reiterate that the power and strength of the holy trinity comes from the goddess alone, as she appropriates the attributes of the holy trinity, she thus not only contains the functions of the trinity but transcends them.

The tradition of female saints is not uncommon in Tantric tradition, where we often come upon semidivine and legendary women such as Lopamudra who started her own lineage and transmitted her knowledge to her husband, sage Agastya or Muktakesini, a seeress and prophet of the cult of goddess Tripura in the eleventh century. Women were endowed with the authority to become priestesses and gurus, to initiate disciples but also to act as the purest source of the transmission of sacred revelation and traditional knowledge. The author of *Maharathamanjari* recounts how a yogini revealed the text to him in a dream. The text of the *Kaulajnana Nirnaya* speaks of the yogini kaula sect. It embodies an orally transmitted tradition by a line of female ascetics who were accomplished (*siddha*) in the *kaula sadhana* tradition originating in Assam in Northeastern India (Khanna 120). Surviving stories about female Tantrics tell of magical and ritual attainments, many of them serving as gurus: Dinakara was an expert in ritual gazes (the ability to control people, animals and objects with one's stare), she had the power of flight and like many other women Tantrics had other *siddhis* or supernatural gifts.

Dombiyogini, another guru, was a master of the gazes but also of the four types of ritual activities (peaceful, prospering, conquering and destroying) and she could walk on water. Lakshminkara, Yasodatta or Yasobhadra wrote manuals giving instructions on the use of mantras, on rituals to accomplish specific ends and imparted detailed esoteric knowledge, ritual substances and action. (Shaw 79; 84-5)

Tantric women introduced rituals that feature even nowadays in Tibetan Buddhism. They created new female deities such as the Wrathful Red Tara presented as Buddha Tara practice introduced by Vajravati and the Severed-headed Vajrayogini practice introduced and taught by Laksminkara, Mekhala and Kanakhala.

In Tibetan Buddhism the foremost female Buddha is Vajrayogini, whose iconographic rendition is dramatic in the extreme, she looks ferocious, blood red with flowing black hair, with bone ornaments, dancing and brandishing a skull-cap full of ambrosia. Sometimes she tramples corpses underfoot. *Vajra* in the name of the goddess is a Sanskrit word meaning both "thunderbolt" and "diamond" and thus representing absolute firmness of spirit and spiritual power, a great spiritual and ritual tool symbolically used in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. In the Tantric traditions of Buddhism, *vajra* is a symbol for the nature of reality, or *sunyata*, indicating endless creativity, potency, and skilful activity.

The Severed-Headed Vajrayogini is a spectacular iconographic representation detailing some recurrent motifs of Tantric philosophy: the illusory character of duality--the couple at Vajrayogini's feet representing the originating couple, the duality from whom all creation springs but which she mocks, being herself the unique source of everything; swords and knives do not signify aggression but they are symbolic of the arduous path of removing obstacles to omniscience; arrows stand for clear understanding and penetration of the ultimate experience. What is severed with the sword of wisdom is the narrow and arrogant ego and what is celebrated in such images is the triumph over the self-centredness at the root of all suffering; dualistic thinking is cut off in order to reach a level of direct knowing beyond conceptual dualities.

This iconographic hypostasis of the Vajrayogini can certainly be related to the representations of the Goddess beheading her consort, although this is an instance of symbolical castration that frees him to copulate with her. The Goddess is sometimes holding a severed head while engaging in intercourse with the corpse of Siva or straddling a copulating couple. We can cite several other mythical instances of death as an erotic release or of the severed phallus of Siva as an instrument of universal fertility, the cosmogonic dismemberment of Purusa or the self-sacrifice of the Mother Goddess. In an ancient ceremony the queen copulates with a dead stallion or in a medieval myth Siva dances with the corpse of Sati. (Doniger 94;115)

Another revolutionary novelty featuring in Tantra iconography is the representation of Buddha couples–male and female Buddhas–in *maithuna* (sacred union). A lot of ink has been spilt on the sexual yogas and in this area Western exegesis was often contaminated by sensationalism and yet again by lack of empathy and of properly contextualized cultural knowledge. Practices preparatory to the sexual yogas are meant to inculcate a sense of universal responsibility, of compassion and understanding and of abandoning the illusion of a separate, isolated ego. Tantric union involves passion and intimacy without hysterical attachment; it is a passion free from desire and common lust--sex in reverse. As it is aimed at annihilating the ego it involves detachment, the yoga of union being predicated upon the ability of the fluidic body to be infused by the energy and mental states of another person. These mental and spiritual aspects of the union are paramount since in the process the karmic and spiritual destinies are merged, hence the name of the practice: *karmamudra*. (Shaw161-171)

Only when sensuality is truly satiated, entirely internalized is lust truly conquered and, when truly united, there is no longer desire. As Alan Watts remarks the Tantric androgyne

symbolizes a state in which the erotic has no longer to be sought or pursued because it is always present in its totality. (204-205) Yet again, in the sexual yogas the threatening dominance of the male principle is not only challenged but also turned on its head as the Tantric goddess is represented as a life-giving figure that revives the corpse of her husband and infuses him with her own powers. As we have already seen the supreme goddess is a vessel of polarities, she is concomitantly erotic and maternal, but by reversing the flow of energies and power from the female to the male, from the orthodox tradition to the esoteric, Tantric myth and ritual create a washback effect on mainstream Hinduism and Buddhism to release some of the tensions between male authority and female power--be it at the celestial level from Shakti to Siva and on earth from high caste male to low caste male or woman (Doniger 78).

The attempt to actualize the divinity of women on the social level, to introduce an ethos of equality and reverence for them is undoubtedly one of the most compelling consequences of Tantrism. One of its most important traits is that women share with their goddess a continuity of being: all women irrespective of caste, creed, age, status are regarded as the physical incarnations of *Shakti*, they are already at birth vehicles of an intrinsic *Shakti*.

In several Tantra texts we can catch glimpses of this pro-women code, as ordinary and secular women are regarded to be on a par with their male partners:

> Every woman in this world, is, indeed my [human] form (*Durgasaptasati* 6.2)
> All women are Thee, and all men are myself, O beloved
> Merely by knowing this, the devotee attains spiritual powers (*Niruttara Tantra* 6.4)
> Every woman is born into the family (Kula) of the Great Mother. (*Kularnava Tantra* 11.64).

> Woman is the creator of the universe.
> The Universe is her form
> Woman is the foundation of the world
> She is the true form of the body,
> Whatever form she takes
> Is the superior form.
> In woman is the form of all things.
> Of all that lives and moves in the world.
> There is no jewel rarer than woman,
> There is not, nor has been, nor will be

There is no kingdom, no wealth,
To be compared with a woman
There is not, nor has been, nor will be,
Any holy place like unto a woman.
There is not, nor has been, nor will be
Any holy yoga to compare with woman,
No mystical formula, nor asceticism to
Match a woman.
There are not, nor has been, nor will be
Any riches more valuable than her.
(*Shaktisamagama Tantra*, ch.2 13.43-49 qtd. in Khanna 116)

As the body is seen as divine and a miniature cosmos, all its aspects, pertaining to physical appearance or physiology are revered, her breath, physical acts, postures, her bodily substances, including her menstrual blood are all sacred and loci of purity. It can also be placed in the context of the Kundalini Shakti yoga and the intricate symbolic code of the chakras, energy vortices and subtle channels. Accordingly, there is an etheric double behind the corporeal frame that manifests subtle forms as pulsations of cosmic energy. The Shakta Tantras apply a subversive gloss to the orthodox brahmanical traditions concerning the female body and its generative powers. The idea of menstrual pollution is linked to the episode from the Dharma Sastra of Indra slaying the demon Vrtra, and later on being punished for the crime as Vrtra has assumed the status of a learned Brahmin; he is aware of his heinous deed and runs for protection, asking the women to take upon themselves part of this guilt of Brahmincide:

The menstruation of women
Emanates from her body,
How can it be impure?
[It is a substance] through which [the devotee]
Attains the supreme state. (qtd. in Khanna 118)

Conclusions

Indian women under Western eyes are a mind-boggling intermeshing of low legal status, of ritual contempt, yet at the same time they are subjects of deification and of sophisticated sexual partnership. The Women-goddess equation performed in the Tantras continues to haunt

Indian women and to inspire their social, political and cultural aspirations. The esoteric, subversive beliefs fuel many extraordinary expressions of the Indian religious and artistic genius. We still have Shakti pujas, during which unmarried girls are worshipped on certain auspicious days during the autumn festival of goddess Durga, particularly in Kolkata where they are looked upon as incarnations of the weapon-wielding Durga. In the Suvasini Puja both married and unmarried women are worshipped by their husbands as living incarnations of Lalita or Tripura. At the beginning of the twentieth century, following the model of Tantrics some centuries before him, a man has passed his spiritual prowess to his wife (SriRamakrisna to Sarada Devi, who is considered to be a divine embodiment). Madhu Khanna relates in her study that she has come across several Tantric yoginis of a very high calibre. Her Holiness Madavi Ma had five male gurus who passed their spiritual mantle to her who is regarded as a living human icon of Goddess Kali and Tara: a guru, a ritualist and a healer.

On an artistic level, in his famous study *The Women Painters of Mithila*, Yves Vequaud finds a distinct Tantric vein underlying a unique genre of painting handed down from generation to generation among women in the Indian state of Bihar (whose capital Patna is the ancient Pataliputra--the seat of emperor Ashoka, who made Buddhism an official religion and who contributed so massively to the dissemination of Mahayana Buddhism throughout Asia; Buddha was Mithili, as was his contemporary Mahavira, founder of Jainism). The first to draw attention to this expressive manifestation of Indian art was W. G. Archer who happened to travel in the area in the aftermath of the 1934 earthquake, which broke open the rural mud houses and consequently exposed their interior beauty to outsiders. (9-31)

From times immemorial such paintings were executed on the mud walls of women's homes, illustrating a variety of religious and ritualistic practices ranging from Hinduism, folk-Buddhism but having a common Tantric foundation. The main iconographic motifs recurring in the *Kohbar* (marriage painting) usually depict Shiva and his erect member and Durga as *yoni*, the six surrounding yonis standing for the endless possibilities of the feminine principle or Vishnu the Preserver and his 10 avataras; the divine couples, Rama and Sita or Krishna and Radha; Chinnamasta, the decapitated Kali intoxicated with divine energy feeding upon her own blood, while drenching two others of her aspects, symbolic of the illusory character of duality (57-58); Kali as Divine energy dancing on the body of her sleeping consort, Shiva (59-60).

Vequaud's reading of Mithili Women's painting was criticized by ethnographers like Henning Brown for indulging in "free-floating symbolic interpretation and bad ethnography", revealing the Western fascination with India's Tantric tradition, so that "Tantric discourse tends toward hegemonic domination of the whole field: anything shakti, anything about Devi, anything valorising women, even anything about reproduction is potentially captured by Tantric discourse".

Despite such criticism, we cannot dismiss the fact that this traditional genre of painting does certainly celebrate the feminine principle in cosmic and social terms and detecting the Tantric streak in the generative structures and artistic genealogy of that particular genre of painting is certainly not to be contested or regarded as too far-fetched.

Such occurrences, cultural or social stand witness to the boundless creativity of the Tantras. Not only did they undercut dominant patriarchal brahminical values, acknowledging femaleness as ontologically primary but they also show that the Shakta tradition is still speaking directly to women's experiences and to their innermost dreams and aspirations, a "rare instance of gender-inclusive dharma" (Khanna 121) in Indian religious history.

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CONSCIOUS INCLUSION OF WOMEN MUSICIANS

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Abstract: This paper discusses the vast divide between performance opportunities and income earned by male and female musicians. Although female singers are quite visible on the world's stages, few female instrumentalists are employed on a regular basis and even fewer women composers have their music commissioned for programs or films funded by private and public monies. Several proficient female jazz musicians are identified, and how and why women are omitted from performance is discussed. The need for everyone–producers, promoters, funders, and bandleaders–to consciously choose to include women musicians in programming, especially where public funding is involved, is emphasized.

Keywords: musicians, women, men, composer, performance, inequity, inclusion, jazz, classical

Music, the sound of the spheres, begins in the womb! ~ Diva JC

People first experience music is in the womb. The sound of blood rushing through the mother's veins is like the sound of strings. The heartbeat is the drum, while mother is singing and humming. However, out of the womb, women instrumentalists are omitted, particularly in Jazz. Although women comprise only 35% of classical orchestras because "culturally constructed differences between women and men have always been present, typically restricting women's music-making while preserving the most profitable musical careers for men" (Phelps 14), women are employed by symphonic orchestras on strings and woodwinds, while but few are in big bands. The National Endowment for the Arts study entitled *Changing the Beat: A Study of the*

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Worklife of Jazz Musicians examined the lives of jazz musicians in New York, Detroit, San Francisco and New Orleans found that 84.1% of jazz musicians were male (Jeffri 2). For decades, big bands neglected to engage women, except for singers, and the occasional pianist. Sarah Vaughn worked in Billy Eckstein's band and Marylou Williams arranged for Duke Ellington and worked with the Mighty Clouds of Joy.

The Lincoln Center Big Band led by Wynton Marsalis has no women. The Carnegie Hall Big Band led by Jon Faddis is defunct but only one woman performed in that band, trombonist Janice Robinson, who performed and recorded with Dizzy Gillespie, Billy Taylor, Marian McPartland, Thad Jones/ Mel Lewis, Slide Hampton, The Jazzmobile All Star Big Band, Gil Evans, McCoy Tyner, George Gruntz and Mercer Ellington. Her seat was not filled by another woman, when she became pregnant.

Trombonist Melba Liston led a 16-piece all-female band in the 1970s. She was an important jazz arranger in a field dominated by men. She recorded with classmate Dexter Gordon in 1947. When Gerald Wilson disbanded his orchestra on the east coast, Melba joined Gillespie's big band. She toured with Billie Holiday in 1949, but disliked the rigors of touring. She took a clerical job, supplementing her income as an extra in Hollywood, where she appeared in "The Prodigal" and "The Ten Commandments." Liston toured with Gillespie for the US State Department to Europe, the Middle East and Latin America in 1956 and 1957, and her best known solo is recorded on Gillespie's "Cool Breeze" at Newport Jazz Festival. She formed an all-women quintet in 1958, and toured Europe with the theatre production "Free and Easy" in 1959, then worked with the show's musical director, Quincy Jones. In the 1960s, Liston worked with Milt Jackson and Johnny Griffin, and began her long association with pianist Randy Weston. For four decades, Liston arranged and performed Weston, whose song "Mischievous Lady" was composed for her. In 1973, she taught in the West Indies at the Jamaica School of Music. Upon her return in 1979, she formed Melba Liston and Company.

Tenor saxophonist Kit McClure led a 19-member band but few venues could pay a big band. Her five-piece ensemble with Leticia Benjamin on alto sax, Jill McCarron on piano, Kim Clarke on bass and Bernice Brooks on drums performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and JVC Jazz Festival in New York. McClure's big band did a tribute to the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, an all-female big band formed in Mississippi, in 1937, and renowned by 1940. *American Legacy Magazine* (Summer 2008) featured the Sweethearts in an article entitled

The Ladies Who Swung The Band, along with the Diva Jazz Orchestra. Nat Hentoff wrote, "From the earliest days of jazz, women were excluded from the all-male club. But somehow they kept on swinging, and today we celebrate their names." Bassist Carline Ray (81) still performs in New York City, long after the demise of the Sweethearts that was comprised of highly talented females who remain obscure.

Organizations like International Women in Jazz in New York, Fondazione Adkins Chiti: Donne in Musica in Rome, Italy, and Women in Jazz South Florida, Inc. struggle to present female musicians and composers. Revealing statistics on the disparity of music programming of women's music in Europe reported that,

> Only 1% of [women's] music (traditional, popular, classical, and contemporary) is programmed by public funded institutions; and 89% of public arts and culture institutions are directed by men. Throughout Europe, [women] composers are unable to earn a living only from their musical compositions and performing." (WIMUST 3)

Women in Jazz in Texas and Instrumental Women in California presented several talented females like violinist Karen Briggs, guitarist Lois McMorris (Lady Mac) and bassist Nedra Wheeler. Each of these organizations suffer from budget cuts for the arts in the US.

In 2008, drummer Alvin Queen, who lives in Geneva, Switzerland, led a band designated as Jazz Ambassadors to the United Nations. Queen defended his choice to not have women in his band. I thought it was important to have at least one woman in a band that represented the United Nations. But Queen did not agree. How can this omission by male band leaders of women instrumentalists in the field of jazz be rectified? It takes a conscious effort on the part of all musicians to understand the importance of including women instrumentalists. Even female musicians will not work with other women. One singer said she would never hire women, again, when a female drummer took another gig, after agreeing to perform with the singer. The drummer said she would help the singer out but did not consider the date a real job. A female horn player said she does not work with female musicians at all!

Since 1984, I've worked as a leader with bassists Carline Ray and Kim Clarke, Bertha Hope on piano, and Paula Hampton and Bernice Brooks on drums in New York; pianists Tina Schneider and Mariette Otten in Europe; and in Florida with pianists Melody Cole and Alison Weiner, bassist Te'ja Veal, Rochelle Frederick on tenor sax and Renée Fiallos on flute. An adept

jazz pianist Joanne Brackeen was with Freddie Hubbard and the Kool Jazz All-Stars of 1983, when they recorded my composition *Sweet Return* on Atlantic Records. Brackeen scored the tune for the quintet, brilliantly! But there are no adult, female drummers or bassists in Florida, so my own band *Jazz Hotline* is comprised of men because they know my music and are happy to work with me.

Many women instrumentalists do not know standard songs like men do. Distracted by studying, teaching, mothering, homemaking, working a job or volunteering in the community, women have less time to practice. Women resist rehearsal and may be argumentative and unprofessional, when following another woman. Even though men omit them from the "good ole boy" club, women contradict the authority of woman leaders. Pianist Melody Cole had a tough time with men, who worked against her. Yet, she resisted me, when I paid her. Mistrust, resistance and contrariness are reasons for omitting women from the playing field. Still, there should be conscious inclusion of women musicians to counter the all-male musical environment.

The middle school jazz band I volunteer with has seven girls in the saxophone section. They are 13, and have less enthusiasm than the boys. The two female bassists are into the music because they play throughout the score. But the saxophones sit out on many measures. Some are there only to fulfill a requirement. Encouraging girls to play *hard,* practice and care about performance is what community musicians can do at schools.

Legendary blues pianist and vocalist Jeannie Cheatham (84) was the *first* woman to induct anyone into the Smithsonian Jazz Hall of Fame. Her friend pianist Dorothy Donegan was that musician. Cheatham said it is a choice to be a musician. "Professional musicians, men and women must be conscientious about their decision to live that lifestyle. They must promote, book, schedule, rehearse, do the accounting and take responsibility for their career," said Cheatham. Each member of Cheatham's *Sweet Baby Blues Band* had their own band and worked with musicians they liked. Cheatham worked with trumpeter Clora Bryant from Texas, saxophonist Vi Redd in Los Angeles and drummer Patty Patton in San Diego, where she resides.

Besides being co-leader with her husband Jimmy Cheatham of Ellington Band fame, Jeannie accompanied Cab Calloway, whose sister Blanche had her own big band in the early twentieth century. "Sidemen want to be called, hired, have fun and go home," said Cheatham. "Agents may like to book all-female bands. But most touring bands do not hire women because of rooming arrangements. Since it is easier to sleep four men to a room, a woman in the band

means an extra room must be arranged," said Cheatham, who believes women have it much easier, today. "When I was young, a woman had to put a man's name on her music to get it played." Cheatham insisted that women who choose to be professional musicians must work just as hard as men and have equal success, if they apply themselves.

For Kim Clarke, "women musicians must be tenacious and cultivate a following, unless they're with a major record company that builds their fan base." Men have no problem being sidemen but women must have what Clarkes calls, "The look--the right age and the right size." If she's not good looking, she accepts gigs men will not take or she's a Diva, throwing her weight around." Clarke said gay women work more often in the gay arena. Clarke worked with Kit McClure in a wedding band for several years, until McClure tired of that kind of gig. Also, Clarke works with Bertha Hope on piano and Paula Hampton on drums in Jazzberry Jam, a dynamic group whose spectacular ability to communicate with each other produces the best in musical improvisation, and informs the audience of their humor and humanity. Clarke said, "Grace Kelly is a Korean alto saxophonist whose father owns a candy factory. Grace works the big festivals because her father pays to promote her. But without a sponsor, most female musicians are on their own, and club owners are about the money. You must hustle to get people interested in your music."

Vocalist and composer Beverly Lewis lives in Italy and said, "You do not find female musicians on the level we have here." She said there are no female drummers in Italy because "there are no drumming schools in Europe, except in Amsterdam and at the Swiss Jazz School in Berne, Switzerland. Women drummers are rare and in such demand that they usually work with famous singers, making them unavailable for gigs with local artists. The biggest problem for Lewis is that "musicians are not acting out of authenticity but out of a program. They will go where the money is rather than be loyal to a musical genre." However, drummer Terri Lyne Carrington is a professor at Berklee College of Music in Boston and Cindy Blackman Santana is at the top of the charts in the jazz world, along with Brazilian bassist Esperanza Spaulding.

In New York City, where *pay-to-play* is policy, women musicians stay away. Cheatham said musicians must meet people and let other musicians and club owners know they are musicians. "If you're not willing to socialize, you will not work," she insisted.

When pianist/vocalist LaVelle lived in Paris, she was grossly under-appreciated. In Switzerland, she's a big fish in a little pond. She performs in Russia, France, Switzerland and

other European countries with organist Rhoda Scott. The two make a dynamic duo and enjoy working with each other.

Online social media helps musicians expose their music to a wider audience. Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, CDBaby, YouTube, iTunes and Reverbnation are sites for music promotion. The world consists of men and women. So, the jazz scene should consist of men and women. However, women are left out so often that it is "normal" to omit them. What are some of the reasons women musicians are overlooked?

Women do not get to work in ensemble as men do, so their "chops" are weaker. They are soloists because they only get to play solo. Women's menstrual cycle results in mood shifts, body pains and ailments that make them irritable. They may be untrusting, insecure, critical and selfish, wanting to be the headliner rather than accompany a singer or horn player, while males do not mind being sidemen. Women do not support each other the way men do. Men are better team players. This is based on the fact that, in secondary school and college, boys work with each other in sports, while girls learn run households, where they are in charge. Boys engage in teamwork, while girls learn to clean, cooking and sew, all solitary endeavors.

Dr. Malcolm Black, 20-year big band leader at Broward College said girls who play instruments in middle and high school drop music in college because "their priorities change to fashion, romance and other studies. This is proliferated by the belief that music is traditionally a male field. Lugging a saxophone or contrabass is a male thing and does not fit in with the girl's outfit," said Black. Bassist Kim Clarke said, "Girls believe it is fashionable to wear make-up, weaves, high heels, short skirts and hate on other women. So, it is boys versus music. If her boyfriend is insecure and does not like her to be in the band with other boys, she drops the instrument, abandoning music. Women quit sooner than men, if they feel threatened by competition."

Recently retired vocal instructor Lorna Lesperance said, "Girls take up an instrument at performing arts schools to get credit for that class. But they're interested in singing, dancing or theater. Once the class is finished, they forget about the instrument." Peer pressure dictates that, if a girl's friends are not interested in music, she discontinues music studies to be with her friends, even if she has talent. Parents, teachers and community mentors must encourage girls to stick with music and groom them for music careers. Girls must transcend the stigma that musicians are not respected like teachers, nurses, doctors, lawyers, accountants, engineers and other

professionals. Although most musicians study from an early age, they are said to be *playing*. Parents do not encourage children to be musicians, fearing they will not be able to provide for themselves and their families in the future. Other deterrents in the music industry are drug abuse and alcoholism, especially in Jazz and Rock.

But women musicians excel and are leaders in their own right.

- Renowned pianist Junior Mance told this author that, "Melba Liston is one of the best jazz musicians, not just one of the best women in jazz."

- Pianist, composer, and educator Gerald Price told this author that, "Organist Trudy Pitts handled herself formidably in an arena of musicians made up mostly of men."

- Pianist Tania Maria "The Lady from Brazil" was an attorney in her homeland. She suffered from omission in that field to the point that she left Brazil and came to the United States, where she pursued a musical career that brought her great notoriety.

If there is no female bassist, pianist or drummer, a band leader can invite a woman to join as a singer, percussionist or woodwind player. Since women pay taxes, it's only fair that women are represented, globally, on the Jazz Scene, especially when bands are funded through federal, state and local grants. Wanda Wright, President of Bethune Cookman's Alumni Marching Band said, "People just do not want to change the all male tradition of the marching band." Perhaps, that is across the board. But, in this high-tech world, where information is disseminated, rapidly, inequities like this can be rectified, rapidly. For five years, our grant awards have funded concerts, featuring women musicians at least twice a year. We engage students and adults to perform original compositions of members of both genders.

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TO MAINSTREAM OR NOT TO MAINSTREAM GENDER
IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM?

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Abstract: This article presents the results of a UNESCO project that focused on gender mainstreaming higher education curriculum. It deals with some critical issues involved in addressing the problem: what type of gender should be mainstreamed, who should do it, how can it be done and what costs are involved? The premise of the article is that looking at curriculum from a gender perspective is beneficial for the adaptation of academic knowledge to the current requirements of the labour market. One conclusion is that there is still a long way to go before gender will be regarded as legitimate knowledge in higher education.

Keywords: inclusive curriculum, higher education, gender mainstreaming

Context

In the knowledge-based, global, multicultural society of today higher education is one of the major institutions responsible for rethinking and redefining reality, helping the younger generation to adjust to and integrate into complex social, cultural, political and ethical contexts. The higher education curriculum should be seen as a major transformation tool in the hands of educators, playing a key role in shaping identities, destinies, opportunities and dreams. Only through the development of a democratic, inclusive curriculum, one that responds to the needs and values of societies, one that includes rather than excludes, may we be sure that our future is in good hands, that younger generations are being prepared to face the complex social realities of today. The curriculum deals with the actual content of education and serves as a means of social

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control, legitimating existing social relations, expressing a particular vision of what is regarded at a given moment as important knowledge. It deals with the facts and, more importantly, with the culture and values of society. It should consequently deal with gender. Does it?

Taking such basic reflections and question as a starting point, through UNESCO European Center for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES) I had the opportunity to design and implement a two-year project *From Gender Studies to gender IN studies* (2010-2011) with the aim of gathering and assessing experiences of gender mainstreaming higher education curricula in various countries in South East Europe. The rationale for the project was that, apart from success in the area of designing and delivering Women/Gender/Feminist studies within higher education institutions as separate, independent programmes, gender sensitive and gender differentiated approaches are currently being neglected in higher education curricula. The main objectives of the project were: to present and disseminate good practice in gender mainstreaming higher education curricula; to identify institutional support for curriculum transformation and innovative approaches to curriculum development in general and gender sensitive curriculum in particular but also some of the obstacles to gendering higher education curricula in various cultural and political contexts; to explore the dynamics of efforts to reconstruct the curriculum in the past decade in the countries selected; to share experiences between countries with different degrees of experience and tradition in the area; to make gender issues visible for national and regional policymakers carrying out higher education reforms.

Methodology

A group of experts from different countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Germany, Serbia) were chosen to participate in the project and to elaborate two kinds of thematic case studies: *institutional case studies*–analysing what is happening within a specific higher education institution in the area of gendering curricula–and *discipline case studies*–analysing how specific disciplines (sociology, history, medicine, mathematics, architecture, etc) are/are not gender mainstreamed within one/various higher education institutions. Additional examples of good practice in gender mainstreaming were gathered from Central European University (CEU/Hungary) and from Germany (more precisely from the Integrate Women's and Gender Studies into the Curriculum Project, Women and Gender Network-NRW, University of

Duisburg-Essen). A set of guidelines for promoting gender-inclusive curriculum in higher education completed the structure of the project. All case studies were elaborated according to a common framework with a view to making comparison possible. Each was worked out by focusing on the following main topics:

- *The gender dimension of the higher education system:* a synthetically updated report on the situation regarding gender equality in education/higher education in the country concerned;

- *Gender Studies: Gendering higher education-separationist approaches:* a synthetically current report on the situation in the field of gender studies in the country concerned, with a special emphasis on developments in the area of Gender Studies/Women's Studies/Feminist Studies;

- *Gender IN studies: Gendering higher education--integrationist approaches*: presenting developments in the area of integrating gender knowledge and gender sensitivity within various disciplines at higher education institutions. Depending on the specific focus of the study, the experts were asked to provide information and answers to questions and issues such as: What are the domains where gender dimension is included/is absent?; What are the reasons for this situation?; How do the various disciplines and fields of studies compare from the perspective of their gender inclusiveness, and what are the possible explanations for such differences?; What political support exists to engender the curriculum in higher education?; What technical support exists to engender curricula in higher education?; What financial support exists to engender curricula in higher education?; What human resources are available: who is teaching such courses (gender experts, or academics trained for this)?; What training opportunities exist for academics?; Is the adjusting of the curriculum rewarded in some way (e.g. via promotion, academic recognition)?; Who are the protagonists of curriculum reform along gender lines?; What are the legal, cultural or organizational barriers to the process of gender mainstreaming higher education curricula?; What role do Gender Studies Programmes play in efforts for gender mainstreaming in other disciplines?; Has any gender-sensitive content analysis of the curricula and textbooks ever taken place? If so, how, by whom was it carried out, and for what purpose? Reflection on other questions focusing on gender sensitive pedagogies and research aspects (such as: Are gender sensitive research

programmes undertaken within higher education institutions?; Has any debate on gender sensitive pedagogies taken place?, etc.) was also encouraged.

- *Conclusions and recommendations* for gender mainstreaming higher education curricula, looking at issues such as: Is gendering curricula a priority?; Should it be?; Why include gender mainstreamed knowledge in the higher education curriculum; What are/should be the benefits of doing this?; How can a gender inclusive curriculum be designed?; What are/should be the main principles of a gender sensitive pedagogy within higher education?; How can we include gender mainstreaming in higher education teaching and research?; Who are the key players who need to be involved in the effort of gender mainstreaming learning and teaching in higher education?; Are higher education institutions ready to adjust their academic programs, organizational structures and cultures in order to become more permeable to gender sensitive knowledge?; If not, what can/should be done?

The specific questions formulated within the Terms of Reference could be considered as an epistemological effort to gather and structure the main topics included in the general reflection upon the need to make the content of higher education more sensitive to gender. The studies have proved the usefulness of splitting the global problem into small parts, looking at details in order to see the whole picture. Beyond expected differences between institutional or individual approaches to various aspects, a core of common findings has been identified and will be briefly outlined below.

General Conclusions

➤ Gender mainstreaming is not a priority at higher education level in the countries investigated. From all the case studies it may readily be observed that gender usually does not form part of the mainstream knowledge proposed by higher education institutions but that there is an awareness of the need for it to do so. At best, gender is marginalized within the area of Gender Studies--relatively developed and institutionalized in the majority of the countries– but it is rarely included in the higher curricula of other disciplines.

➤ Gender mainstreaming is regarded as necessary but there is a wide spectrum of understandings about what kind of gender knowledge should be mainstreamed. The whole range of conceptualizing gender is found, from traditionalistic, conservative approaches

(talking about gender equals talking about women and their different roles in societies) to more contemporary ones in which gender is perceived in terms of its dynamics and multidimensional aspects. Depending on the understanding of gender, the solutions for mainstreaming also differ significantly. Simply introducing more content dealing with women (in history, the sciences, etc.) is more accessible than trying to offer an alternative type of knowledge, to criticize the masculine monopoly of knowledge, or to discuss the importance of learning about embodied, not abstract realities. Just talking about women's specific contributions to various disciplines could be done quite easily by any of the specialist professors in those domains. By contrast, introducing a gender sensitive critique to particular disciplines and revising the basic paradigms and ideologies embedded in history, science, literature or technological education would necessitate having professors with fuller expertise in gender. That alternative imposes a different institutional strategy--one in which one should first create the group of informed academics and researchers and then ask them to genderize their disciplines.

➢ As expected, domains such as the hard sciences and natural sciences are less gender mainstreamed (many would be quite virgin territory for gender information) in comparison with the human, social and political sciences.

➢ There are also visible similarities in terms of problems encountered and in terms of the stage of development of mainstreaming gender in higher education curricula. As a general observation, where gender is incorporated, the courses or modules concerned are, in most cases, elective and not compulsory, which confirms the marginalized position occupied by gender sensitive content within curricula. Learning about gender roles, power relations and the gender dimension of social institutions is regarded not as an important area of knowledge but only as an additional, alternative, optional educational possibility.

➢ There are distinct stages of development in Women's Studies/Gender Studies. Countries such as Serbia and Romania are more advanced in terms of institutionalizing the field, by comparison with other countries such as Moldova or Albania. This is not merely a matter of how many Gender Studies programmes there are in each country. More importantly, there is the issue of the content of the teaching about gender. Some countries are still in a stage of recovery, doing mainly Women's Studies focusing on Women and Media, Women and

Family, etc., and a few others have evolved to a more modern approach to gender conceived as intersectionality, discussed from the perspective of multiple categories of analysis.

➢ A positive link may be detected between the integration of countries into the European Union and the improvement at least of the normative framework in the area of mainstreaming gender in all domains, including education. Several experts mentioned positive pressure resulting from EU requirements to strengthen gender equality. The Bologna process was also indicated by many as an incentive towards paying greater institutional attention to inclusive education, which also implies gender sensitivity. These pressures have created a good gender friendly environment (albeit imposed and not truly internalized) that is willing to accept initiatives in the area of gender mainstreaming education in general and higher education in particular.

➢ Certain similarities can be observed between the case studies regarding the source of change, initiatives and reforms in the area. Symptomatically, in many cases, good practice is related to individual efforts and enthusiasm rather than to national or institutional gender mainstreaming policies. The issue of promoting gender sensitivity within higher education is more of an individual matter than an institutional objective. If in particular academic environments there are people (usually women) in strategic positions who are committed to moving gender from the periphery to the centre, the chances of success become much greater, but this is the result of their personal persuasiveness and determination rather than of specific institutional decisions.

➢ There is a general awareness of the need to budget for the issue. Gender mainstreaming involves financial support from faculties and government ministries in order to make it possible to design courses, train specialists, and organize conferences and support libraries and research. Scepticism concerning the future of the process of refining curricula comes primarily from the lack of financial resources to do so.

➢ There is also a recognized and declared need in many of these countries to have "gender expert" as a national qualification and to have common quality standards for the evaluation of gendered education. There is a need for official recognition of this expertise, so that specialization in gender studies may be granted a valid legal status.

➢ Critical gendered reflections on the content of the teaching exceed the interest in the pedagogies involved. In the area of *how* to deliver a genderised body of theories in various domains, the expertise and implicitly the debates are less visible–although, by no means, less important!

For our final remarks we may return to the main question formulated in the title of this article: to mainstream or not to mainstream gender in the (higher) education curriculum? Is this a question, or it is not? It should not be one. In an ideal world, the option of not doing so would not exist. Mainstreaming gender, in a perfect environment, should be something natural and should be done instinctively. Gender sensitive people can only do gender sensitive teaching, be it in mathematics, history, arts or sociology. Mainstreaming gender should no longer be an open question. Integrating gender is a legal obligation today. Any education system that considers itself to be moral cannot systematically ignore women and gender issues. The production of knowledge has been for too long a masculine monopoly, and we should not lose sight of the fact that higher education is feminized in terms of percentages of students. So there are more than enough obvious political, ethical, epistemological and sociological reasons for having a gender inclusive curriculum (Miroiu 229-31). What is needed is inter- and multidisciplinary cooperation, money, academics willing to invest time and creativity in finding the adequate contents, and methodologies to make it happen.

To mainstream or not to mainstream gender in the (higher) education curriculum? Is this a question, or it is not? The only viable question is whether there is a proper context within which to address it--if there is a political curriculum (e.g. legislation on education) that is sensitive to the problem. It makes no sense to raise such a question if gender knowledge is not regarded as legitimate at all. In a sterile environment nothing will grow. As one of the experts mentioned:

> inclusion of gender studies in higher education … should be integrating within the larger, multiple and overlapping kinds of national and transnational social economic and political transformation started in 90's in the region. Within this framework, the appropriation of gender related concerns, equal opportunities legislation and gender studies as a valid field of teaching and research could be read as part of the greater endorsement of the democratization agenda. (Văcărescu 147).

To mainstream or not to mainstream gender in the (higher) education curriculum? Is this the real question? Or are the correct questions: *How* to mainstream gender in higher education curricula and how to adequately assess this institutional effort? *Who* can and should mainstream gender? *What* "gender" to mainstream? What is needed in terms of human and financial resources? I do believe we have reached the point of having enough arguments to be convinced ourselves and to convince others about the need for a truly inclusive curriculum in higher education (and not only). We should now move forward and find (as fast as possible) answers to the *how*, *who* and *what* questions.

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GENDER ASPECTS IN THE ATTITUDES OF THE STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD TOWARDS MULTICULTURALISM

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Abstract: The objective of this paper is to present the results of a case study conducted at the University of Novi Sad which examined the students' attitudes toward multiculturalism (particularly in educational processes) with a special focus on the gender aspect, and the intersections with their opinions regarding ethnic tolerance and stereotypes against ethnic communities in Serbia.

Keywords: multiculturalism, education, students, gender.

Introduction

The paper presents the results of the research conducted in the period of three years at the University of Novi Sad. Our objectives were manifold. We wanted to examine the students' opinions on whether elements of multicultural education are present in educational processes at the University of Novi Sad, and if so, to what degree. Another aim of the research was to examine the students' perception of multicultural education and their attitudes toward such education, and to investigate whether there is a correlation between these attitudes and the students' attitudes toward ethnic tolerance, their perception of ethnic minorities, and the

stereotypes members of the ethnic minorities have to struggle with. Due to the complexity of the research and data analysis we cannot present all the results in one article, so we decided to focus in this article on the gender aspect. We were particularly interested in seeing whether the gender aspect has any bearing on the students' opinions. Empirical research was conducted from 2009 to 2011 at the following faculties which make up the University of Novi Sad: Faculty of Philosophy, Biology, Ecology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Geography, Hotel Management and Tourism, Electrical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Architecture, IT, and Economics and Management. The variables in the research included gender, age, ethnicity, religious background, and political affiliation of the respondents and their family, ethnic composition of the respondents' community, and social class of the respondents and their parents. We wanted to see which of these variables were more dominant in relation to the students' attitudes toward multicultural education. The questionnaire was filled by two hundred and thirty students. Our statistical analysis was based on percentage share within the structures of the categories in the questionnaire. The calculations were performed in the program package "Minitab".

Multicultural Education

Serbia has a rich multicultural heritage due to its diverse population which includes thirty-seven ethnic communities. This richness of diversity is an asset to Serbian society which should be nurtured and used as a treasury of invaluable resources in education (Izgarjan and Prodanović-Stankić 159). Multicultural education gains special importance in diverse settings such as ours since it offers both students and educators strategies for addressing this diversity. Obviously, culture and education are inextricably linked, since culture is a vital part of the educational processes. Multicultural education foregrounds this mutual dependence of culture and education by acknowledging the importance of culture in educational processes. It promotes cross-cultural understanding and cultural pluralism, which means that its primary aim is equal education for all students. Educators should always bear in mind that each student belongs to different status groups (race, ethnicity, gender, social class) and that these "simultaneous memberships in interaction with dynamics in the broader society influence the students' perceptions and actions" (Banks and Banks 62). If educators approach all students as the same, disregarding their specific backgrounds and memberships of different status groups, they are also disregarding the inputs that shape students' attitudes not only towards educational material but

towards life in general as well. Although it may seem on the surface that this uniform approach favours equality, the downside is that it does not appreciate the fact that all students are unique. So, instead of cultivating the same approach for all, education should respect different backgrounds and experiences of each student. In short, it should foster equity, that is, provide "equal opportunities for all students to reach their fullest potential" (Bennet 174).

The principle of inclusion which governs multicultural education implies that the skills, talents and experiences of all students should be regarded as the starting points for further schooling (Nieto 10). When students see that they are respected and that their opinions and different cultural, ethnic and social class experiences serve them in the educational process instead of being ignored, they are engaged and their results are better. Multicultural education creates a space for students to discuss their different cultural experiences and to engage with their colleagues. In this way, multicultural education also teaches students about democracy and encourages them to take an active part not just in their education, but also in society. Therefore, it can be said that multicultural education serves the purpose of teaching students how to be responsible citizens in the world outside educational institutions and participate in democratic processes. Having learned about democratic principles and, what is more important, having implemented them within the classroom, the students are more confident when it comes to using these principles in their lives and striving to achieve social justice in their environment (Izgarjan and Prodanović-Stankić 159).

Another important task of multicultural education is the revision of the curriculum. According to Nieto, "curriculum is [an] organized environment for learning what is thought to be important knowledge" (96). A curriculum which respects students' ethnic and cultural diversity must encompass the languages, cultures and histories of the diverse ethnic and class groups to which students belong. It must not be limited to the language, history, culture and religion of the dominant community. "As such, curriculum is never neutral but rather represents values of the dominant community which manages political and economic systems in the society including education" (Izgarjan and Prodanović-Stankić 159). A curriculum that predominantly promotes the culture, history and religion of the dominant community makes students from minority groups feel that their language, culture, history and religion are not equally valid or good since they are not featured in educational processes. This can lead to serious identity crises for students from minority groups, since not only do they feel undervalued, they are also forced to constantly

navigate between the dominant culture endorsed by the curriculum and the culture of their family and community. This cultural gap can cause poor academic achievement by minority students.

> What is additionally dangerous in case of exclusive and monocultural curriculum is that it teaches all students that multiculturalism is not an option and that cultural diversity is not appreciated and nurtured. This undercuts the education of students from both dominant and dominated communities. Neither is given a chance to learn from and about each other. Moreover, they obtain a distorted vision of the world in which only certain cultures and languages are respected and others are not. Student may draw a conclusion that it is of no significance whether they know anything about the culture and language of their peers and neighbours in their community since it is not part of the curriculum and this only exacerbates invisibility of the minorities (Izgarjan and Prodanović-Stankić 160).

Therefore a multicultural curriculum should use students' potential to enrich their learning experience by tapping into their diverse cultural experience and teaching them to promote diversity. This will also enable them to become functional members of a growingly globalised world, capable of cooperating with people from different groups, be it in business or in other fields of expertise.

An equally important element of multicultural education is the critical examination of negative activities and of systems of beliefs which lead to discrimination and hatred, such as sexism and racism. Multicultural education draws attention to the dangerous practice of generalizing attitudes about the members of microcultures, a practice which can lead to stereotyping and discrimination. Educators should emphasize that discrimination is a systemic problem and not merely a case of individual dislike (Nieto 36). Students should be made aware of the mechanisms behind discrimination that rest upon a false sense of superiority and on prejudice against the members of microcultures, in order for them to be able to oppose such practices. Racism, ethnocentrism and nationalism which stem from ignorance and cause hatred can never be part of educational processes. On the contrary, educators and students together should actively engage in open discussions of such negative practices and learn from them. All of us live in a world inhabited by people who come from diverse macro- and microcultures. By encouraging our students to understand people who are different from them, by fostering dialogue about the values of various communities, we are also preparing them to live in a multicultural environment. As Banks and Banks argue, it is of crucial importance that education "help students acquire the

knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively within the national macroculture, their own microcultures, and within and across other microcultures" (11).

Research

The research was conducted at the University of Novi Sad since it is situated in Vojvodina, whose 26 ethnic communities make it the most culturally diverse province in Serbia. The focus of the research was on the elements of multicultural education at institutions of higher learning in Serbia, because, apart from the need to address Serbia's ethnic diversity, multicultural education has also become increasingly important in higher education in Serbia in the past decade due to the implementation of programs such as the Bologna declaration, which reformed higher education, and programs such as Join EU, Erasmus Mundus, Basileus and Forecast to name but a few, which promote educational exchanges. By making sure that students at the University of Novi Sad are given sufficient exposure to multicultural education, we are achieving at least two goals. On the one hand we are preparing them to be active citizens in Serbian society, to become engaged in democratic processes and critical examination of the past; on the other, we are also preparing them to participate fully in exchange programmes, to benefit from learning about educational processes and materials at different universities, and to interact with professors and fellow-students from different parts of the world.

However, while there have been some studies which dealt with the analysis of the elements of multicultural education in primary and secondary schools in Serbia, very little has been done in relation to multicultural education at the institutions of higher learning, and there have been no studies which have examined the relationship between gender and multicultural education. That is why our research was aimed at ascertaining what kind of perceptions students at the University of Novi Sad have of multicultural education and how these perceptions are related to their attitudes toward different ethnic communities in Serbia, toward stereotypes about ethnic minorities, and towards ethnic tolerance. As was mentioned above, the research was conducted specifically at the University of Novi Sad because of the diversity of its student population and the diversity of the province of Vojvodina in which it is situated. It is therefore of crucial importance to address the issue of multicultural education at this university, since multicultural education can significantly improve educational practices, should be an important

part of curriculum building, and ultimately should equip both university staff and students to function well in our increasingly diverse society.

The University of Novi Sad has also become one of the leading educational institutions in the region, with students coming from different parts of Serbia and neighbouring countries that are characterized by a variety of cultures and traditions. Educators at the University of Novi Sad should therefore be ready to take into account the diversity of students' backgrounds instead of adopting a monocultural outlook. As Guo and Jamal state: "The degree to which students feel comfortable in the learning environment will depend on the congruence between their cultural background and the dominant culture of the educational institution" (29-30). Apart from examining curricula and textbooks at the university, in our opinion it is also important to analyze the opinions of students about multicultural education, since we cannot really begin critical examination of our educational institutions and their policies or implement strategies which address the challenges of educational reform if we do not take into account the attitudes of those who are the most important factors in the educational process and its major beneficiaries. Moreover, we believe that quality education needs to be integrative and inclusive, which means that it must take into consideration political, class, ethnic and gender discrimination in society and challenge them. This is why we decided to examine students' opinions regarding multicultural education in relation to their perception of ethnic minorities, ethnic tolerance and ethnic stereotypes. Analysis of students' opinions about multicultural education at the University of Novi Sad can help us to determine which parts of the educational processes can be improved. It can also give us insight into students' (dis)satisfaction with the presence of elements of multiculturalism in the courses they are offered at the university; this can significantly improve future efforts at curriculum building and ensure that the cultures of the various communities the students belong to are represented in the curriculum so that our students do not feel marginalized. It can point to stereotypes about minorities that potentially exist in the student body and suggest ways to correct negative practices of discrimination against the minorities.

The reason why we decided to focus on whether the gender aspect has any impact on students' perceptions of multicultural education and ethnic minorities is the fact that Serbia is a predominantly patriarchal society in which binary oppositions between men and women are still strong. Discrimination against women is present and they are not as active in the political, economic and public spheres as men are. Since multicultural education is geared towards equity

and the elimination of discrimination, it can certainly help reduce elements of sexism as well. That is why it is important to make a connection between the gender aspect and multicultural education. Moreover, research shows that members of groups who have been discriminated against, such as ethnic minorities or micro cultures, show greater support of multicultural education than members of the dominant groups and macro cultures (Frazier, Nieto). This is why we wanted to find out whether there was a correlation in the students' opinions between the gender aspect and multicultural education, i.e. whether women as members of a discriminated-against group favour multicultural education more than men, who do not experience gender discrimination.

Results

As was mentioned above, the whole sample consisted of 230 students. In relation to gender, there were 48.14 percent male students and 51.86 percent female students as can be seen in Chart 1. The slightly higher number of female students in the sample reflects the slightly higher number of female students at the University of Novi Sad in general and allows us to see the impact of the gender aspect specifically.
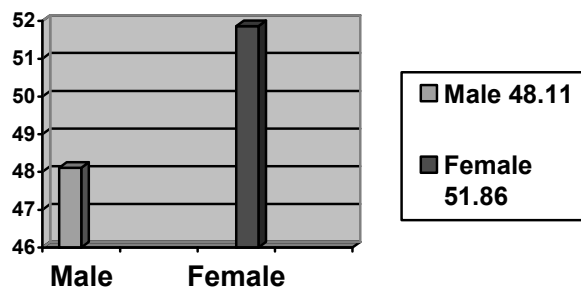
Chart 1

The national affiliation of the students who comprised the sample can be seen in Chart 2. This corresponds with the national and ethnic make-up of the student body at the University of Novi Sad. In our sample, the majority of the students are of Serbian nationality, followed by students who belong to the Hungarian, Romani and Ruthenian communities.
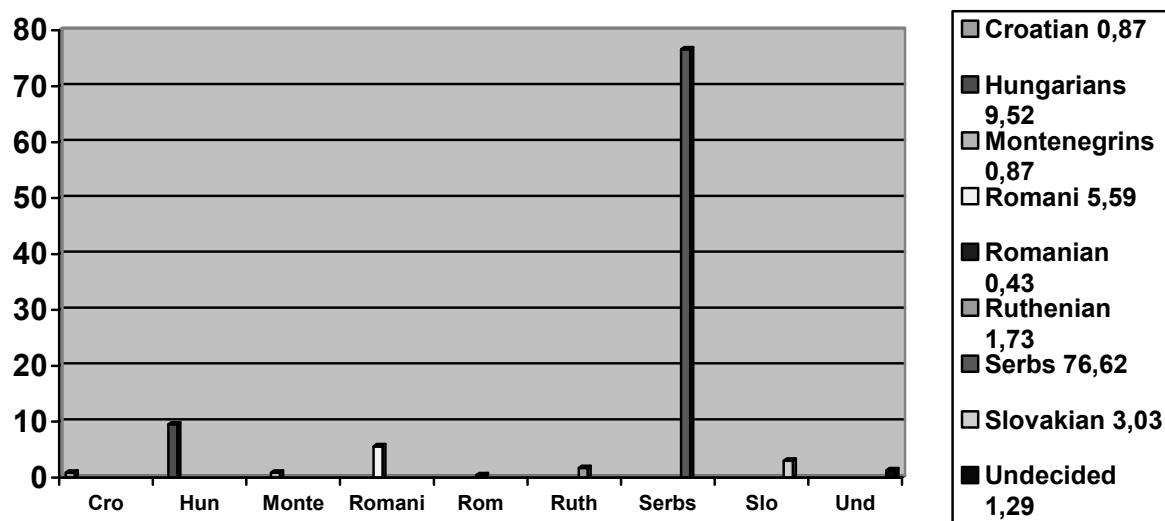
Chart 2

Our sample comprises students with varied political affiliations, as shown in Chart 3, and includes all the major political orientations in Serbia at present.
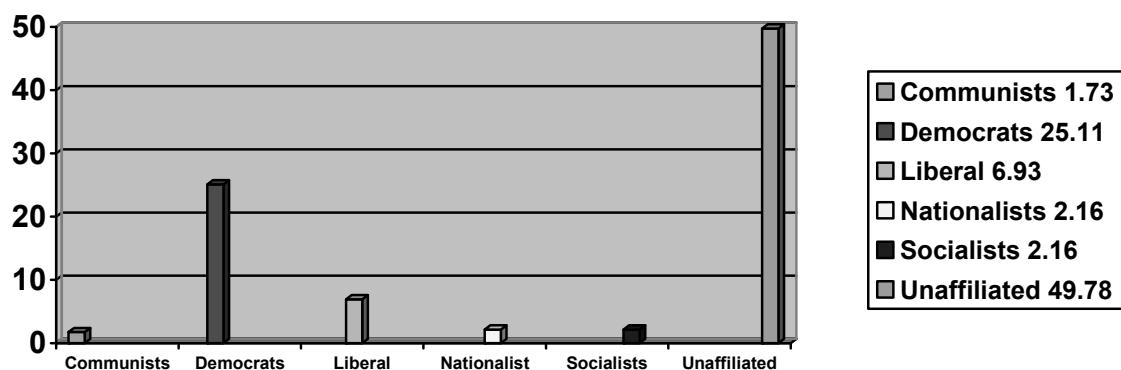

Chart 3

When we compare the results of the whole sample with those of male and female students respectively, it is clear that the gender aspect does have some relevance and that it shapes the way male and female students view multicultural education. Chart 5 shows the difference between the answers of male and female students to the question of whether they were exposed to elements of multicultural education during their studies at the University of Novi Sad and if they were, to what extent (partially, sufficiently, or insufficiently). It is evident from the

results that some students (0.87 % of the whole sample) were undecided, which shows that they are not acquainted with the concept of multicultural education, since they were not able to decide whether their education contained multicultural elements. We also see that the gender aspect is relevant here: only female students were uncertain about their exposure to multicultural education, while no male students were undecided.

When we look at the whole sample, we can conclude that the majority of students think that they were either sufficiently exposed to multicultural education (43.29%) or partially exposed to it (51.95%). Only 3.9 percent think that they were insufficiently exposed. However, when we consider the gender aspect, female students appear to be more dissatisfied with their exposure to multicultural education. Also, more female students (4.22 %) think that they were insufficiently exposed to multicultural education in comparison to 3.08 percent of male students, and more female students (53.61 %) think that they were partially exposed in comparison to male students (47.69 %). Male students appear to be more satisfied with the multicultural education they received since 49.23 percent of them think that they were sufficiently exposed to multicultural education, in comparison to 40.96 percent of female students.
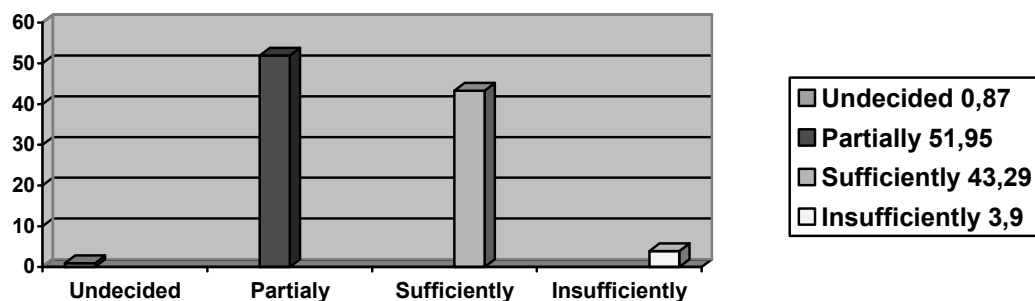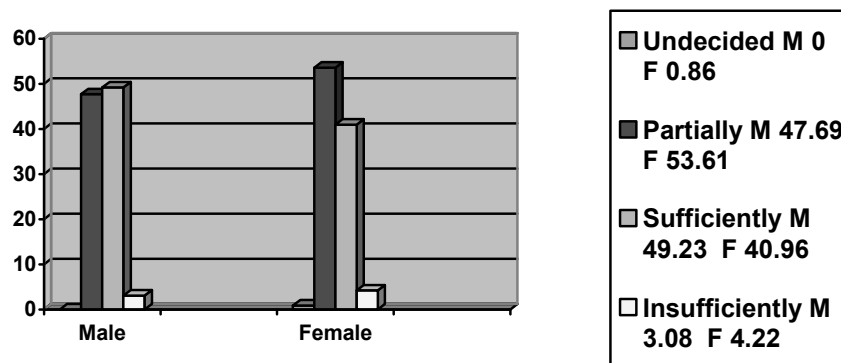

Chart 4

Chart 5

When we consider students' responses to the question of whether they think that multicultural education influences ethnic tolerance, a very large majority of the whole sample think that multicultural education has a great influence on ethnic tolerance (87.01 %), 9.09 percent of all students think that it has some influence and 3.46 percent are undecided. Only 0.43 percent think that there is no influence. These results are encouraging, since it is obvious that the majority of students recognize the importance of multicultural education and its impact on ethnic tolerance. These findings, which reflect students' awareness of the cause and effect relationship between multicultural education and ethnic tolerance, echo studies that demonstrate that multicultural education at university level has benefits for both majority and minority students:

> These benefits include an improvement in intergroup relations and campus climate, increased opportunities for accessing support and mentoring systems, opportunities for acquiring broader perspectives and viewpoints, and participating in complex discussions, all of which can contribute to increased learning. There are a growing number of empirical studies that provide support for these benefits. In a study designed to examine the relationship between the diversity of the student body and interactions among students, Pike and Kuh (2006) found that a diverse student population is related to increased interaction among diverse groups of students, and that the more diverse the student population, the greater the exposure to diverse perspectives and viewpoints (Guo and Jamal 30).
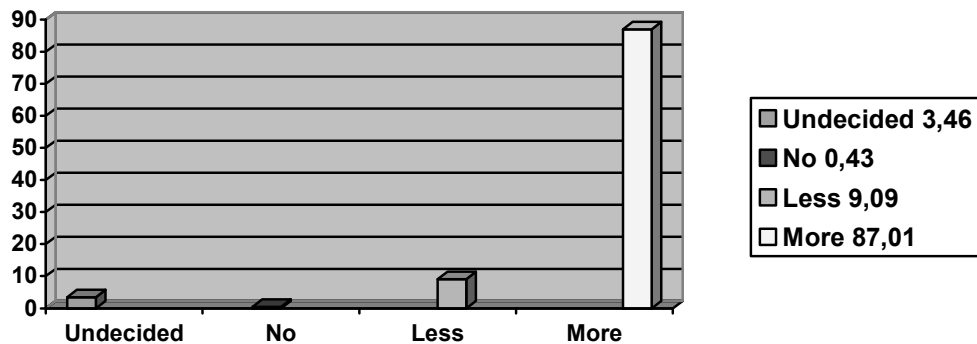
Chart 6

When we take the gender aspect into consideration, the differences between male and female students are not as pronounced as in the case of the previous question. Slightly fewer female students are undecided on this question (3.01 % to 4.62 % respectively). Again, only female students (0.6 %) think that multicultural education has no influence on ethnic tolerance. There are more nuanced differences between male and female students when it comes to the degree of influence. More female than male students are certain that multicultural education has a great impact on ethnic tolerance (87.95 % to 84.62 % respectively). By contrast, more male students than female think that the influence is not very important (10.77 % to 8.43 % respectively).
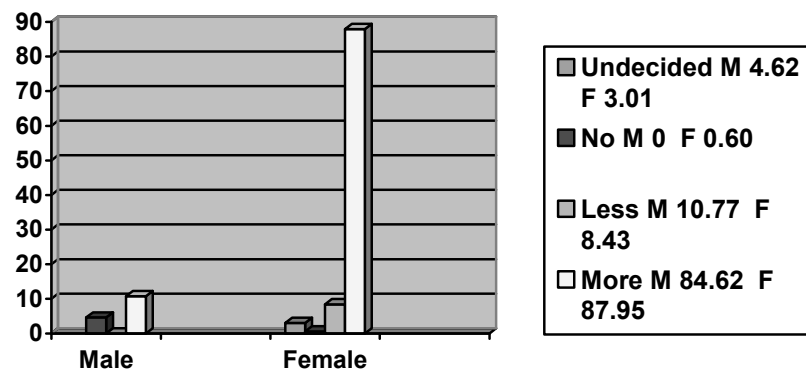
Chart 7

We were also interested in finding out whether the students think that multicultural education has played a part in their perception of ethnic minorities. The sample taken as a whole shows that the majority of students (83.55 %) think that multicultural education has influenced their perception of ethnic minorities, 15.59 percent of all students do not think that multicultural education has influenced their perception of ethnic minorities and 0.87 percent are unsure. When we take the gender aspect into account, differences between male and female students in this respect are negligible. Only slightly more male (84.62 %) than female (83.13 %) students think that multicultural education has influenced their perception and slightly more female students (15.66 %) than male (15.38 %) think that it has not. We may conclude that when the gender aspect is added to the analysis the answers to this question differ in comparison to the previous one, since we have more male students who are certain of the importance of the influence of multicultural education than female.
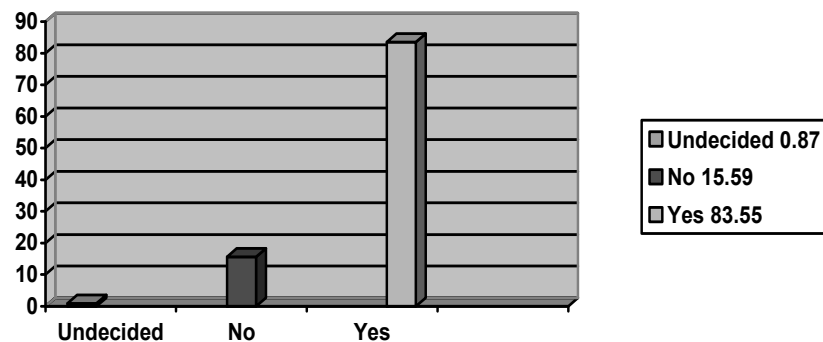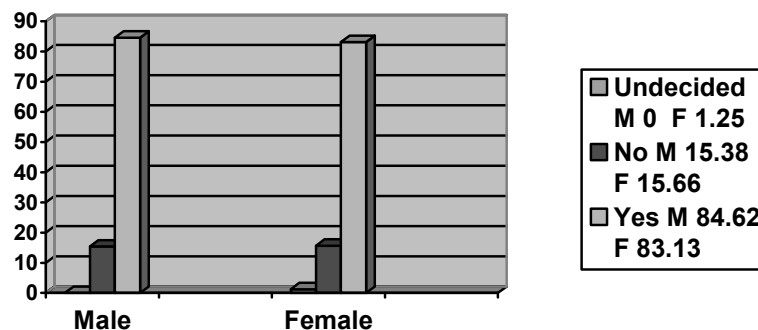

Chart 8

Chart 9

Looking at Charts 10 and 11 we can see that there is a more noticeable difference in the answers of male and female students to the question whether in their opinion multicultural education has an influence on stereotypes about ethnic minorities. The whole sample shows that students are not as confident about the influence of multicultural education as was the case in previous questions. 76.62 percent think that multicultural education influences stereotypes, while 21.21 percent think that it does not. 2.16 percent are undecided.

When we compare these findings to the answers of male and female students, we see that once again only female students (3.01 %) are undecided and that the percentage is higher than in questions about exposure to multicultural education and its influence on perception of ethnic minorities, while it matches the percentage of undecided female students on the question of the influence of multicultural education on ethnic tolerance. These findings are in accordance with the results of other research done at the University of Novi Sad, which also show that female students tend to be more indecisive and less confident in their answers than male students (Markov and Izgarjan 2010:329). This can be ascribed to the fact that in a patriarchal society they do not feel valued and their opinion is not taken into account, which affects their self-confidence.

However, it is also important to point out that when they do give answers to questions about multicultural education, female students tend to be more positive about its influence, as we have seen in the examples above. In the case of the question about stereotypes, more female (78.92 %) than male (70.77) students think that multicultural education does have an impact on stereotypes about ethnic minorities. On the other hand, more male students (29.23 %) than female (18.07 %) do not believe that such an influence exists. Thus we can say that the general trend when it comes to the impact of the gender aspect on students' attitudes about multicultural education is that female students consistently show more belief in the positive aspects of multicultural education and are more confident that it can influence students' perception of ethnic minorities and ethnic tolerance. This heightened interest in multicultural education and its benefits can also explain why female students are not as satisfied as their male colleagues about the degree to which they have been exposed to elements of multicultural education.
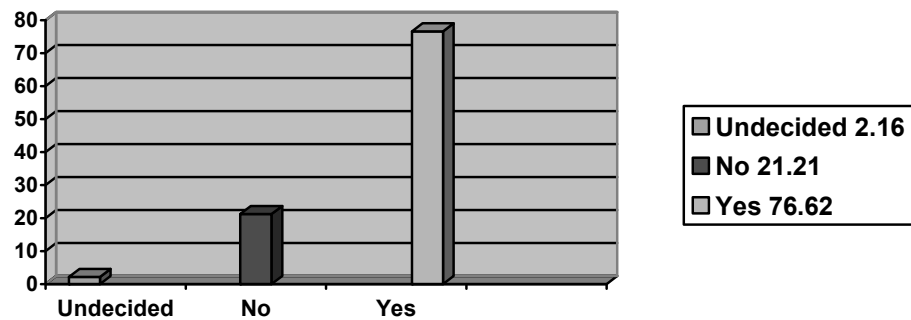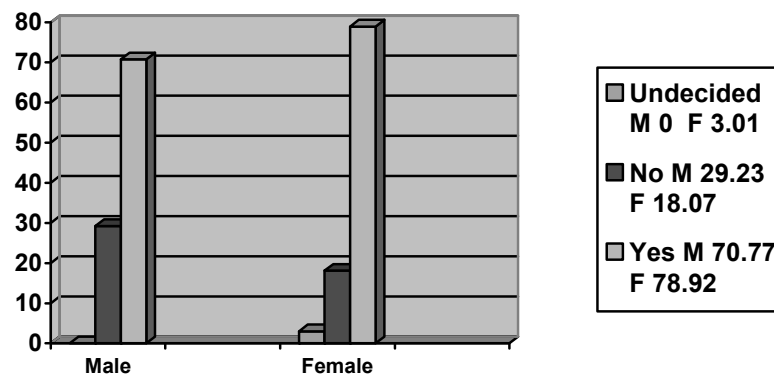
Chart 10

Chart 11

Conclusion

There will always be some degree of prejudice and discrimination in society. However, this is precisely why multicultural education is an active process whose goal, equity for all, is something all participants in educational processes should continue to strive for. As Banks and Banks insist: "[m]ulticultural education must be viewed as an ongoing process, not as something that we 'do' and thereby solve the problems that are the targets of the multicultural reform" (4). As an ongoing process, multicultural education has to be part of the university level of education as well. It must ultimately have as its objective fostering not just equality but also respect and understanding among students and preparing students to operate successfully in multiple cultural contexts. Precisely for these reasons it is imperative that we factor students' opinions into our examination of educational practices and benefit from their input. Research which analyses

students' attitudes toward multicultural education can give us much needed insight into students' needs and their perception not just of education but also of their environment and the people who are part of it. Once these findings are taken into account and used to improve educational practices and processes, students can feel that their opinions matter, and this can influence them to become more interested in participating in the work of the university. Our research has also shown that gender aspect is a factor which influences students' attitudes toward multicultural education. Female students are more in favour of multicultural education and are less satisfied with the amount of multicultural education they are receiving at the University of Novi Sad. These findings should be taken into account at the University and addressed in future educational reforms. Further analysis of the data obtained in our research will show a correlation between the gender aspect, political affiliation and national affiliation of students which will be presented in forthcoming articles.

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"VIOLENCE IS COMMON AND A DAILY EVENT; IN THIS PLACE HER DOG HAS MORE RESPECT THAN US": A STUDY ON CYCLE OF VIOLENCE FACED BY WOMEN IN MEXICO[1]

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Abstract: This paper sets out to explore the violence against women is a new form *femicide* taking into consideration the case of trafficked women. Once women arrived at their destination, suffer various kinds of never-ending violence and exploitation. Thus, in this article we have defined and demonstrated how the trafficking of women constitutes a new form of "*femicide*". The analytical section of the paper is based on interviews with one hundred and ten trafficked women in Mexico. The results indicate that trafficked women are experiencing a wide range of physical and sexual violence, where they face a constant threat to life.

Keywords: Violence against women, Sexual exploitation, Trafficking, Femicide and Mexico

Introduction

Violence against women causes pain, disability and death to an untold number of individuals every day, in every country in the world (Bloom, 2008). Violence against women

was declared to be a violation of human rights by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1993, in its Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The UN Declaration defined violence against women as including physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family and general community, which is perpetrated or condoned by the state, and includes traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital cutting/mutilation. Violence strikes women from all kinds of backgrounds and of all ages and it can happen at work, in the street, or at home under different form such as: dating violence, domestic and intimate partner violence, emotional abuse, human trafficking[2], same-sex relationship violence, sexual assault and abuse, stalking, violence against immigrant and refugee women, violence against women at work and violence against women with disabilities.

Trafficking in women is synonymous with violence. Violence and threats of violence are common forms of coercion employed against trafficked women. Rape and other forms of sexual violence are often used to break trafficked women physically, mentally and emotionally to obtain their enforced compliance in situations of forced labour and slavery-like practices. Sexual violence is also used to condition trafficked women for forced sexual exploitation[3]. The majority of victims are women and girls trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. However, recent data indicate that there are also significant numbers of human beings trafficked for other forms of exploitation. These include labour exploitation in domestic work, agriculture, construction, small manufacturing and other occupations[4].

Human trafficking, especially the trafficking of women and girls, is a reflection of many of the complex social issues that global society is facing today. Recently, the growing concern about violence against women worldwide has put "trafficking" on the international agenda, and its connection with the sex industry, forced and exploitative labour, HIV/AIDS and others forms of human rights violations has added urgency to global anti-trafficking efforts (Huda, 2006). Research indicates that social and economic inequality between and within countries has led the trafficking of women to become a rapidly expanding global

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[1] This research was funded by the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT), Mexico. Project No. CB-2007/83065.

[2] The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, defined *trafficking in persons* as: recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

[3] Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequence, Radhika Coomaraswamy, on trafficking in women, women's migration and violence against women, E/CN.4/2000/68.

[4] Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, E/CN.4/2005/71.

industry. Women trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, are at serious risk of unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and physical and sexual violence (ICWAD Trafficking Facts, 2004).

In the last two decades, the focus of research in Mexico has shifted towards an understanding of the heterogeneity of those involved in the sex industry, but to date it is difficult to tell the exact number of women being trafficked into the prostitution business. There is evidence regarding numbers involved in prostitution, but it is complicated to work out which women have been trafficked. Teresa Ulloa, President of the Regional Coalition Against the Trafficking of Women and Children in Latin America and the Caribbean, has stated that every day 400 women enter into prostitution (this figure includes trafficked and non-trafficked women) in Mexico City, of whom 80 per cent do so against their will (González, 2003).

In another study, Acharya and Stevaneto (2005) found that every year nearly 10,000 young girls and women are trafficked within Mexico to six different Mexican cities (Cancun, Acapulco, Mexico City, Ciudad Juarez, Tijuana and Monterrey) for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The same study also underlines that in Mexico, of every ten trafficked women seven are trafficked inside the country and three are taken outside the country.

Sex trafficking, which is violence against women also known as gender-based violence, is a serious violation of women's human rights. Data shows that worldwide, one out of five women becomes a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime (UN Millennium Project, 2005), while one out of three women is beaten, coerced into sex or abused by a family member or an acquaintance (Heise *et al*., 1999). Gender-based violence, which includes physical and emotional violence, dowry death and female infanticide as well as forced prostitution, sex trafficking and slavery, is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace; it violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In her study Lagarde (2001) defined gender-based violence as a politics of patriarchal domination over sex and sexuality and termed it a kind of *femicide* (*feminicidio* in Spanish). According to her, femicide is *violence against women, and it occurs when historical conditions generate social practices which have negative effects on the integrity, health, liberty and life of women.*

In recent years, violence against women has received increased attention from international law. For example, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, 1979/1999 call on states

to pursue a '*policy of eliminating violence against women*'. We may also mention the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993); the chapter devoted to violence against women in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the UN World Conference on Women (1995); the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998), which includes sexual violence such as rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution and forced pregnancy within the definition of crimes against humanity and war crimes; and the Beijing review (Beijing+10), which called for the criminalization of violence against women on the basis of racial grounds, included the trafficking of women and girls for the first time and stated that trafficked women were exposed to multiple forms of discrimination, exploitation and xenophobia[5]. Nevertheless, up until now it has not been possible to observe any effective results. On the contrary, the number of victims of gender-based violence, such as the trafficking of women for the purpose of sexual exploitation, is constantly growing (Lagarde, 2001, UNFPA, 2005, WHO, 2005).

Thus, with the above discussion in mind, this paper sets out to explore and document how trafficked women, once they reached their destination, experience various kinds of never-ending violence and exploitation. The article has three specific objectives: firstly to analyze the socio-demographic profile of trafficked women, secondly to investigate the major causes of violence faced by trafficked women in Mexico, and finally to examine and develop a model and explain how trafficked women become trapped in a cycle of violence.

Research Methodology

Because trafficked women are treated as hidden population, an appropriate and flexible methodology was followed during the fieldwork. To locate trafficked women, we first went to the downtown area of the city, where the brothels are located. We entered a brothel and talked with a woman. Later we paid her 300 pesos (US$30) and took her to a private room to talk more personally. We gave her details related to our project and asked her to find trafficked women who were working in the same brothel and in nearby ones. At the beginning she declined to help, but after regular interaction she agreed to co-operate with us by locating trafficked women for a payment of 100 pesos per woman located (US$10). Whenever she had obtained information and arranged an interview, she would call us.

After receiving the information we would go directly to the indicated woman, produce an ID and ask her for an interview. As all brothels are under constant surveillance by

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[5]http://www.unescap.org/esid/GAD/Issues/Beijing%2B10/ARES59166Trafficking%20WomGirls.pdf, consulted on April 5, 2012.

pimps and traffickers, it is not possible to talk with a woman for a long time in front of all the observers. We would therefore pay whatever amount was asked and take the woman to a private room inside the brothel. This method was also adopted in order to keep our identity hidden from the pimp and the traffickers. Once inside the room we would proceed with the interview.

At the start of these interviews we would invite the women concerned to come to where we were staying or to another hotel or restaurant, but they always responded in the negative. They used to tell us: " ... *this is our area; it is not possible for us to go out from this place, because madrina (the madam) does not permit us to work in other places …*." Since the women were not allowed to leave the brothel, we acted like "clients". Once we were inside the private room, we would interview them for around 30 minutes. After completing an interview, we would also request the woman to help us find other trafficked women like her. With the help of these women, we constructed a chain, discovered other trafficked women and ultimately interviewed 110 women in Mexico (70 in Mexico City and 40 in Monterrey) during 2002-2005 and 2008-2011.

### Trafficked Women as "Sexual" Objects

Taylor and Jamieson (1999) state that the sex industry like other industries, operates on the basis of supply and demand. According to this study, trafficked women are treated as a sexual object. Pimps buy them on the basis of certain features of the women and keep them in a brothel until there is a demand for them. Our study explored the fact that trafficked women in Mexico were strikingly young; out of the 110 women interviewed, 93 were less than 20 years old and the rest were between 20 and 25 years old.

When we analyzed the marital status of the trafficked women, around 87 women were unmarried; 17 women were single mothers but not currently living with their children, and only 6 women were married but not living with their husbands. In addition, among the other characteristics of trafficked women, it could be clearly seen that 78 of the women belonged to the *mestizo* ethnic group (Spanish mixed-race) while the rest were indigenous. We observed that *mestizo* women were very much preferred due to their lighter skin colour.

To turn now to some other aspects, the trafficking of women in Mexico is a "*multi-factorial phenomenon*". During the interviews women cited a wide range of factors as reasons why they had fallen victim to a trafficking network. On the basis of their answers, we have here divided the root causes of trafficking into two factors: Push and Pull factors (see figure 1). Push factors typically include poverty, lack of job opportunities (unemployment), gender-

based discrimination, desertion by husband, ethnic conflict, infertility, infidelity and domestic violence. On the other hand, based on the women's responses, the research found that employment opportunities, the ambition to earn more money, and the better standard of living in Mexican cities and in the United States are the main explanatory pull factors for women who are trafficked in Mexico. It is important to mention that these push and pull factors can be mutually reinforcing and that some of them can also be the consequence of others.

Figure 1   Push and Pull factors in the trafficking of women in Mexico

Push factors   **Pull factors**

Poverty, Lack of job opportunity, Gender discrimination, Infidelity, Infertility, Deserted by husband, Ethnic conflict, Domestic violence		Employment opportunity, Better standard of living, Ambition to earn more money

Trafficking of women
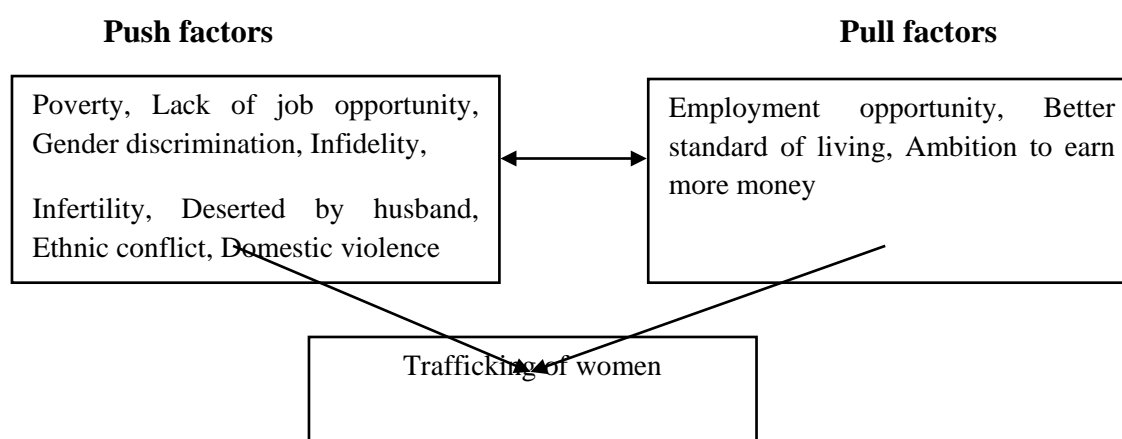
Once the traffickers have taken women from their place of origin, they usually put them in different intermediary places and give them different kinds of training covering points such as how to perform sexual relation(s), ways of negotiating with clients, and how to dress, as well as other brothel rules and regulations, including not leaving the brothel without the permission of the owner, not talking and giving any personal information or any other information to anybody, and so on.

Information obtained from the fieldwork indicates that the false promise of employment and an exotic life in Mexican cities and in the United States is a common tactic used by traffickers to trap women. When women come to know the truth about the kind of employment they have been recruited for, in most cases they refuse to agree to it. When this happens, the pimp and traffickers use various kind of violence to force them to stay and work in the brothel. Many women said that after they left home their life became a "life of violence". This kind of violence has a serious impact, above all on women's health.

Violence against Trafficked Women: *a New Form of Femicide*

It is a simple fact that the overwhelming majority of victims of violence and sexual violence are female. Research into violence against women points to social inequalities in the

distribution of power, authority and control between men and women as factors. In a study of violence against women, Dobash and Dobash (1979, in Barnard, 1993) argue that the motivation for attacks is often centred on the notion of "*keeping a woman in her place*". Male role socialization incorporates the notion that women are subordinate; hence men should have the right to punish and discipline women (Scully, 1990, Sandy, 1986 and Dobash *et al*., 1992, in Barnard, 1993). Thus, violence is a *means* by which to dominate and suppress a woman, which we can clearly see in the case of trafficked women. Studies indicate that trafficked women and commercial sex workers experience high levels of violence including, but not limited to, physical assaults, sexual assaults, verbal threats or abuse, and psychological abuse (Lowman, 2000, Raymond, 2004, Acharya and Clark, 2010).

While this new emphasis on the significance of power and suppression in the trafficking of women is long overdue, this study suggests that we need to proceed cautiously when assessing claims about the frequency and nature of the violence perpetrated by pimps, traffickers and clients. During our interview and analysis process, it was clearly found that the occurrence of both physical and sexual violence at the hands of traffickers and pimps is a commonplace in the lives of these trafficked women. Here we have placed women who were exposed to some kind of physical and sexual violence in three different categories according to the frequency of violence, namely with attacks occurring frequently, occasionally or rarely in the six months prior to the time of interview. These levels are to be interpreted as follows: frequent violence is aggression faced every day, occasional violence is aggression faced once every two weeks and rare violence means attacks faced once a month.

The results show that trafficked women in Mexico face a wide range of frequent violence, including verbal abuse, being locked in a room without food for days, death threats from pimps, being forced to have sex with more than one client at a time and being slapped by both pimps and clients. With occasional violence, the study found that women were beaten with various objects, burnt with cigarettes, raped by pimps, and sometimes pimps put chilli powder into their eyes and vagina. In case of rare violence, pimps tried to burn and stab trafficked women.

Analysis indicates that women face physical and sexual violence every day and that these attacks are sometimes also of an extreme nature and cause severe wounds or injuries to the women concerned. One woman indicated during an interview:

> … for us violence is common, it is nothing new, we are habituated to this, here we do not have rights
> over our body, here we are treated just like an animal, it is *madrina* (madam) who decides everything

for us, when we have to work, with whom we have to work, what to do or not to do, when we have to eat, sleep etc., all these depend on her, we do not have the right to say 'no', if we do not follow her words she just uses her power in many ways, for her our life is nothing, in this place her dog has more respect than us…."

Thus, for women forced to enter the profession, their life is in constant danger. In sum, these kinds of exploitation construct them as victims and in many cases women would prefer to die rather than stay living in such places. As a 17-years-old girl put it:

…. Mi patrona me pega cuando rechazo tener sexo con los clientes. Te comento que una vez me pegaron con un palo en mi cabeza, me sangre mucho, pero no les importó … me tratan muy mal … me tratan como objeto ... pienso que la muerte es mejor de este sufrimiento (My madam beats me when I refuse to have sex with clients. I can tell you that once they hit me on the head with a stick, I bled a lot, but they didn't care … they treat me very badly ... they treat me like an object … I think death is better than this suffering).

The study also found that once trafficked women had reached their destinations they underwent different stages of violence. Here we have divided violence suffered by women in the post-trafficking situation into three stages. In the study we saw that as a woman's age increases the violence changes. The three stages are (see figure 2):

Stage 1: Sexual-physical violence

Stage 2: Psychological violence

Stage 3: Discrimination and social exclusion

Information and data obtained from the field indicate that women aged below 20 are exposed to an extreme level of sexual and physical exploitation. As they are young, the pimps are intent on earning more money by making them have sex with as many clients as possible in a day (the study found that these women received at least 10-15 clients per day and charged $100 USD per client). For example, during a discussion a *madrina* (madam) said: "*A jovencita (young woman) is a golden hen for me. As long as she is young, I have to exploit her as much possible to earn my money. Once she is grown up, clients will not prefer her, so I cannot earn more money*".

Once a woman reaches the age of 20, the sexual exploitation against her reduces significantly. Clients pay less for a woman of this age than for a woman below 20. This results in less financial gain for the owner, so the pimp plans to replace her with some other, younger woman. In order to be able to replace her, the *madrina* embarks on many kinds of

psychological abuse as well as verbal-physical suggestions aimed at making the trafficked woman decide to leave the brothel. In addition, the woman also faces racial discrimination from traffickers and pimps. For example, a woman of twenty-three said:

> Now *madrina* does not like me, every day she is scolding me, beating me and discriminating against me by comparison with other younger women, telling me that now I am "una vaca vieja" (old cow), the clients do not like me, whenever I try to do good she is not satisfied with me. I have already worked with her for more than seven years, now where will I go? … she has already spoiled my body and my life … I do not know what to do now and where to go …."

Trafficked women aged 25 or older who leave the brothel often try to lead a normal life like anyone else in society, but their former profession makes them vulnerable in many ways. As Mexican society is conservative, cultural taboos make the process of social assimilation difficult for them. These former trafficked women experience a wide range of discrimination, such as isolation, since people consider them bad luck. Thus at this stage the women's suffering (social this time) increases once more, leading many of them to consider suicide, and some return to the brothel as a pimp or as a lower category sex worker.

Figure 2: Violence faced by trafficked women in the post-trafficking situation

Stages	Age	Violence	Type of violence
Stage 1	Below 20	Sexual and physical violence	Rape by traffickers and clients, forced sex with more than one client, beaten with objects, slapped, kicked.
Stage 2	20 to 25	Psychological violence	Verbal abuse, offensive behaviour, insults, isolation, stalking.
Stage 3	Over 25	Discrimination and social exclusion	Not making friendships, isolation, excluded from social and cultural events.

From the above discussion, it is evident that trafficked women are treated as no more than sex objects and that they suffer many kinds of abuse and violence from pimps and

clients. Thus we are looking at severe exploitation and violence and it can be concluded that trafficking is a form of *femicide*.

Forced Sex and Sexual Exploitation: *a Threat to Women's Bodies*

As we have seen from our earlier discussion of trafficked women being regarded as sex objects, it is clear from the analysis that women are forced into sex at any point in time, as well as being forced to accept any number of clients per day. We have analyzed this sexual exploitation by taking into consideration the number of clients received in a day and the typical forms of sexual relations. To get a fuller idea of the sexual behaviour of trafficked women, a number of questions were asked during each interview.

Information collected on the number of clients received in a day by the women shows that in general these women receive around ten clients per day, although there were some women who had physical relations with more than ten clients per day. The study found that there are inverse relationship patterns that dictate the number of clients seen by women. It was found from the interviews that as the age of the woman increases the number of clients per day decreases.

In order to grasp the sexual activities of trafficked women I asked some questions such as whether they used condoms during sexual relations. The study found that the women's clients seldom used condoms because the pimp forced the women to have sex without a condom so that they could earn more money. (When a woman has sex without a condom, the client pays more.) As this was an order imposed on the women it was impossible for them to negotiate with their clients to use a condom. In addition, the sexual practices described by these women indicated that they practised a wide range of sexual activities at a time according to their clients' demands. From interviews it emerged that women were frequently (every day) practising vaginal and oral sex with clients. However, there were some women who indicated that they occasionally practised anal sex with clients, and very rarely some clients demanded both anal and vaginal sex.

Conclusion

In the case of trafficking, it can be clearly observed that women experience a range of violent treatment. From the discussion it can be concluded that these women suffer serious physical, sexual, mental and personality damage, which is a clear example of "*femicide*". The trauma of sexual coercion and assault at different stages of their life cycle leaves many of these women with severe loss of self-esteem and autonomy. This, in turn, means that they do

not always make the best sexual and reproductive health decisions for themselves. Many of them accept victimization as part of being female.

In the interviews conducted for this study, we found that the frequency with which women reported violence was higher than in the data on domestic violence in Mexico. Violence is a means by which the pimps control the sexuality and bodies of trafficked women. This results in women being exposed to the risk of disease by being forced to have unprotected sex. Woman's ability to negotiate condom use by their male partners is inversely related to the extent or degree of abuse in their relationship.

It is important to note that at the current time in Mexico about 153,109 persons (125,783 male and 27,326 female) are living with the deadly HIV virus (CONASIDA, 2011)[6], and that 97,773 of them have been infected through sexual transmission. Most studies have revealed that there is a pervasive attitude that stigmatizes prostitutes and blames them for the spread of disease and identifies sex workers as a major source of sexually transmitted diseases. This has resulted in prostitution being seen as the cause of disease rather than as the consequence of economic marginalization. Inevitably, it has also helped to draw attention away from male sexual behaviour, and put the onus of disease prevention on women. While much of the literature has focused on the potential of sex workers to infect others with HIV, with them often being regarded as disease transmitters, little has been written about the need to protect sex workers from abuse and disease.

This study provides some documentation regarding the level of sexual and physical violence against trafficked women and underlines the need to address safety for sex workers, who are caught up with issues of legality and stigma. It is likewise imperative that governments take appropriate measures to address the root causes of the problem, including the feminization of poverty and gender inequality, as well as other push factors that encourage young women to fall prey to trafficking networks.

At the present time, the trafficking of women cuts across a variety of social and economic conditions and has become deeply embedded in various cultures around the world, and therefore millions consider it a way of life. This kind of *femicide* rarely results in easily managed consequences that can be addressed with a prescriptive or band-aid approach. Trafficking harms women in insidious ways that create health hazards. The physical and mental health consequences are not a side effect of trafficking, but a central theme. That being so, programmes for victims not only need to encompass advocacy, awareness and shelter but

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[6] http://www.censida.salud.gob.mx/descargas/2011/vih_sidapub31dic2011.pdf

must also focus on psychological and physical health needs and provide education and rehabilitation so that victims can transition back into a normal existence.

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