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NÚMERO 6. Palabras preliminares

Queridos lectores, autores, miembros de los Comités Científico y Editorial:

Otro número aflora con gran entusiasmo en medio de la pandemia del siglo XXI. Es imperativo, antes de presentar el nuevo número y pronunciar los agradecimientos, desear mis mejores deseos de salud. De manera similar al número anterior me gustaría hacer alusión a cómo se ha forjado, y ha salido a la luz el número 6 de Verbeia como producto de nueva forma de vida. Seguimos viviendo una situación anómala provocada por el aislamiento social, hoy por hoy más acostumbrados a ella, y no por ello menos desconsolados. No obstante, desde finales del año 2020, nuestra esperanza creció cuando se publicó la noticia de la aprobación de la primera vacuna contra la COVID-19, un acontecimiento que avivó la esperanza de escapar del encierro, y salvar vidas. Sí, un halo de vida que nos regala la ciencia y que nos tranquiliza. Es por eso, que hoy presento este nuevo número de Verbeia con cierto alivio y con el deseo de seguir trabajando en muchos más números llenos de entusiasmo y esperanza, y continuar una labor que nos llena de alegría y satisfacción. Este número 6 es una muestra más de la diversidad investigadora, y de una trayectoria que nos ha dado muchas satisfacciones y forma parte de nuestra identidad, y que, desde perspectivas diferentes, como venimos haciendo en números anteriores, se da vida a la investigación a través de diversos entornos literarios como la literatura gótica, de género y poesía; y ensayos periodísticos y lingüísticos. Publicaciones que, como una inyección paliativa de la nueva vacuna, nos llenan de ilusiones y nuevas expectativas, y nos llevan a dar otro paso prometedor para seguir adelante con otros números venideros. Con estas "Palabras preliminares" quiero agradecer a todos el hecho de que Verbeia sea nuestra realidad esperanzadora. Una vez más, gracias a todos los que hacéis posible Verbeia.

Isabel Morales Jareño. Coeditora y Secretaria de Verbeia

Dear readers, authors, members of the Scientific and Editorial Boards:

another issue is published with great enthusiasm in the midst of the 21st century's pandemic. It is imperative, prior to introducing the new issue and expressing my gratitude, to wish you all my best desires of health. In a very similar way to the previous number, I would like to allude to how the number 6 of Verbeia has been forged and has come to light as a result of a new way of life. We continue living in an anomalous situation caused by social isolation, and even if we are now more used to it, we are not less heartbroken for that. However, since late 2020, our hope grew when we heard the news of the approval of the first vaccine against COVID-19, an event that raised the hope of escaping from confinement and saving lives. Yes, it was a halo of life that science gives us and reassures us. That is why today I introduce this new issue of Verbeia with some relief and with the desire to continue working on many other issues full of enthusiasm and hope, and to continue a work that fills us with joy and satisfaction. This number is another example of the diverse research of Verbeia; a sample of a trajectory that has given us many satisfactions and is part of our identity, and that, as we have been doing in previous issues from different perspectives, research is fostered through different literary genres such as gothic or gender literature and poetry, journalistic and linguistic essays. Manuscripts that, like a palliative injection of the new vaccine, fill us with hopes and new expectations and lead us to take another promising step to move forward with other issues to come. With these "Preliminary Words" I want to thank everyone that Verbeia has become our hopeful reality. Once again, many thanks to all of you who make Verbeia possible.

Isabel Morales Jareño. Co-editor and Secretary of Verbeia.

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LINGÜÍSTICA

Quality in translation through the combination of CAT tools and CohLitheSP

La calidad en la traducción por medio de herramientas TAO y CohLitheSP

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Resumen

Siempre ha habido profundas discusiones sobre el papel desempeñado por la traducción automática y la traducción humana en procesos de calidad de traducción. ¿Cuál es mejor? O, ¿deben usarse combinadas para obtener una traducción de calidad? El presente trabajo responde a estas cuestiones por medio del cálculo de varias métricas de evaluación para estudiar la calidad que ofrece la traducción automática comparada con la traducción humana. Además, se introduce una herramienta novedosa (CohLitheSP), basada en la comparación de un texto de referencia con el texto traducido por humanos, con índices que incluyen Narratividad, Lecturabilidad, Cohesión Referencial, Cohesión Profunda y Concreción,. Toda esta tecnología se ha aplicado en un T. F. G. sobre traducción turística, de un alumno que han acabado el grado de Traducción e Interpretación, no habiendo utilizado nunca estas herramientas previamente.

Palabras clave: Calidad en procesos de traducción, traducción especializada, Inglés para Fines Específicos.

Abstract

There have always been long-winded discussions on the role played by both human and MT in quality translation processes. Which one is better? Or, should they be used in combination to achieve a quality translation? The present paper provides an answer to these matters by

means of the calculation of several evaluation metrics to study the quality offered by MT compared to human translation. Moreover, there is a implementation of a new tool (CohLitheSP) based upon the comparison between a reference model text with a text translated by humans, with some indexes including Narrativity, Readability, Referential Cohesion, Deep Cohesion, and Concreteness. All mention technology has been applied to the final year dissertations on tourist translation of one student who have already finished a degree in translation and interpreting but have never used this technology before

Keywords: Quality in Translation processes, Specialized translation, English for Specific Purposes.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The concept of translation

The concept of translation has always been difficult to define. The Royal Spanish Academy (rae.es) defines the verb translate as "to express in one language what is written or has been expressed before in another", a simple definition and, from the point of view of a person studying translation, imprecise.

To address the concept of translation, linguistics have been based on four different approaches or conceptions:

- As an activity between languages; translating is going from a language A to a language B to express the same reality (Vinay and Darbelnet 55)
- Its textual character; the replacement of a text in a source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language (House, "A Model for Translation Quality Assessment" 29)
- As an act of communication; translation is a communicative process that takes place in a social context (Hatim and Mason 1)
- As a process; translating activity is defined as the operation that consists of determining the significance of linguistic signs based on a meaning concretized in a message, and then restoring that message in its entirety through the signs of another language (Delisle 319)

However, if you want to make a good translation, you also have to take into account other crucial aspects such as the purpose of the text, the addressee, the primacy of communication, the appropriateness to the target language, the context, cultural aspects, textual ascription and translation as a mental process (Hurtado 31-37).

For all this, it is necessary to mention at this point the "translation competence" in terms of an expert knowledge that is very necessary for professional translation. This concept is defined as "the combination of abilities, skills and knowledge which are manifested in specific actions in situations" (Hansen 2005).

Bearing in mind that English is currently the lingua franca, tourist texts should be well written so that tourists from all over the world get a good image of the country that emits the tourist text. However, the reality is that tourist translation does not receive the importance it deserves. It is due to "the lack of professionalization and inexperience of those who carry out these translations and the scant importance given to them by the tourist agents who order them" (Fuentes 30). On the other hand, tourist translation is mostly done in reverse, something that reduces the quality of the translation; Furthermore, the translator must deal with terms coming from fields of specialization, cultural terms, the subordination of the text to the image and the abundance of double meanings (Durán 355). Finally, we could add a reason that, in many cases, is the main one: the lack of budget. Many small or local family businesses cannot afford to hire a professional, so the translation is done by a machine translator or an unqualified person. To this we can add the widespread "ignorance" that exists in Spain about the importance of translation and the undervaluation of this work, something that we can easily observe in the rates offered by many companies. Above all, the biggest problem arises when translation is viewed as an expense rather than what it really is: an investment. The fact that tourist translations are carried out by translators with very low professionalism can lead to economic losses and, of course, to the deterioration of the image of our country by tourists, who may come to think that it is about from an uneducated country, which does not care about its tourists and in which the information provided to them is not valued (Fuentes 30). All this can directly affect what we know as «the Spain brand», which is the image that our country gives abroad (Durán 355). In fact, when searching for texts to be translated, we frequently find on a considerable number of official and unofficial web pages the option of "Google Translate service"; In other words, they have not hired a professional or bet on quality - especially in English-speaking countries. Many others are translated in parts, but not complete, which shows the undervaluation of the translation and the ignorance of the impact of not offering a quality translation to the potential tourist. Besides, the quality of tourist texts is also diminished by other factors unrelated to and not so related to translation. The tourist agents that issue these texts have to consider a series of parameters to attract and persuade travellers. Therefore, the marketing department of the company issuing the text will be in charge of meeting all the necessary requirements to achieve it. If, on the contrary, it is not achieved,

it is that the text is not fulfilling its objective, so it does not have the quality that it should have. In this way, the tourist texts that want to fulfil their objective of persuading the tourist, must comply with the parameters established by the AIDA sequence (attention, interest, desire and acquisition). Thus, from a psychological point of view, the texts in which a product is advertised are intended to produce this sequence in the potential customer: "to capture their attention, enliven their interest, generate their desire and achieve the acquisition" (Beltrán 57). In this way, the translator must be aware that he has to transmit this sequence in order to fulfil the objective of the text and not deteriorate its quality. If this is not taken into account, the translator could "be responsible" for the deterioration in quality and the text not working in the target culture in the eyes of the tourism agents who hired him. However, this does not mean that the quality of the text is based on maintaining everything that is established in the source text, but that it must be adapted to a new culture, always taking into account the format, images and other extra linguistic elements. In fact, the translator, as an expert in both languages —source text and target text—, must cooperate with the team for which he works in order to adapt the text. By this we mean that it is important to notify clients of possible inadequacies of the text —for example, for religious reasons or sensitive topics or taboos in certain countries— (Beltrán 57). Finally, we will emphasize that currently there is practically no academic training for tourist translators. In this way, when considering tourist translation as a general translation, the tourist translator will not fulfil the necessary skills to carry out this work, due to his low knowledge of the characteristic features of the tourist discourse (Durán 2).

House starts most of her works with questions such as "What is a good translation?" ("A Model for Translation Quality Assessment" 127). In fact, it should be "one of the most important questions to be asked in connection with translation". Also, House ("Translation: The Basics" 2) defines translation as 'the result of a linguistic-textual operation in which a text in one language is re-contextualized in another language'. For her, there are some interaction factors which should be taken into consideration ("Translation: The Basics" 2-3):

- the structural characteristics, the limitations of two languages (source and target language);
- the extra-linguistic world
- the source text with its features;
- the linguistic-stylistic-aesthetic norms of the target language;
- the target language rules;

- intertextuality in the target text;
- traditions, principles, etc., in the target language;
- the translation company's instructions given to the translator;
- the translator's workplace conditions;
- the translator's knowledge and expertise;
- the translation receptors' knowledge and expertise.

House ("Translation: The Basics" 5) also insists on the cognitive aspects of translation, and specifically, the process of translation in the translator's mind; a matter studied over the last 30 years. O'Brien ("The Borrowers: Researching the Cognitive Aspects of Translation" 6) states that any translation process has a lot of connections with other disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, cognitive science, neuroscience, reading and writing research and language technology.

Equivalence is another key point in translation, and authors such as Jakobson ("On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" 233) and Nida ("Toward a Science of Translation" 159) stating on 'different kinds of equivalence', and Catford ("A Linguistic Theory of Translation" 20); House ("Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited" 37); Neubert ("Elemente einer allgemeinen Theorie der Translation" 451-56, "Text and Translation" 18); Pym ("European Translation Studies, une science qui dérange, and why Equivalence Needn't Be a Dirty Word" 153-76); and see Koller ("The Concept of Equivalence and the Object of Translation Studies" 191-222, "Einführung in die Übersetzungswissenschaft" 29-45.). On the contrary, Hatim and Mason ("Discourse and the Translator" 36-38) and Reiss and Vermeer ("Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie" 114) do not give equivalence much importance. Riccardi ("Translation studies: Perspectives on an emerging discipline" 86) says, "The translated text is well anchored in the target culture and, in transposing the original; the translator will often be confronted with culture-bound expressions or situations", and for Ahikary (oapub.org) this means that "The term equivalence refers to the sameness, similarity or correspondence between SLT and TLT in terms of form and meaning. Equivalence can be observed at various levels in linguistic units".

1.2. The introduction of MT

Quality translation should be mentioned here associated to the goals of MT and new 'interactive' and/or 'adaptive' interfaces have been proposed for post-editing (Vashee Benjamin.com). Therefore, in this case, human and MT are inextricably linked. Some recent

studies mention that MT is almost 'human-like' or that it 'gets closer to that of average human translators' (Wu et al. arxiv.org) and, also that MT quality is at human parity when compared to professional human translators" (Hassan et al. arxiv.org). Ahrenberg ("Comparing machine translation and human translation: A case study" 1) states that the aim of MT is 'overcoming language barriers', although human translation is aimed at producing 'texts that satisfy the linguistic norms of a target culture and are adapted to the assumed knowledge of its readers'. In order to do that, MT is used with human post-editing (O'Brien et al. 200-218).

Other authors, Popovic' and Burchardt ("From human to automatic error classification for machine translation output" 265– 272) emphasize the fact that errors produced by MT are useful since the comparison of human and MT can be an excellent exercise, and they claim for automatic error classification. Moreover, we should include here studies on effects of mentioned tools on translations (Jimenez-Crespo 79–102; Lapshinova- Koltunski aclweb.org; Besacier and Schwartz 114–122).

Nevertheless, there are authors who claim that it is almost impossible to overcome the perfection of human translation (Melby and Warner jbe-platform.com) and Giammarresi and Lapalme ("Computer science and translation: Natural languages and machine translation" 205–224). MT Translation has gone through three stages 'from early dictionary-matched machine translation to corpus-based statistical computer-aided translation, and then to neural machine translation with artificial intelligence as its core technology in recent years' (Zhaorong iopscience.iop.org). Papineni et al. (aclweb.org) focus mainly on 'developing metrics whose ratings correlate well with human ratings or rankings' Ahrenberg ("Comparing machine translation and human translation: A case study" 2).

In accordance with Christensen and Schjoldager ("Computer-aided translation as a distributed cognitive task." 443–464) it is known that professional translators, when working, only interact with computers, although we have very little information on what is really happening between translators and machines (Muñoz Martín 70), up to the point that "when we ask what translators really do with translation memories and machine translation, there is not an enormous amount of empirical data to speak of" (Pym "What technology does to translating" 2). In this paper, we are studying the role of CAT tools in the translation processes from a translator-computer interaction (TCI) approach, if we use a term first used by O'Brien (journals.sagepub.com), which is connected to an area of study within the scope of computer science, which is human-computer interaction (HCI), and applied psychology (Carroll "Human-Computer Interaction: Psychology as a Science of Design" 61–83 and interaction-design.org). Now, we are referring to some experiments

carried out within this framework of research. We should first refer to the comparison established between the quality of post-edited MT output and human translation by Fiederer and O'Brien ("Quality and Machine Translation: A Realistic Objective?" 52-74). They discovered that skilled evaluators place the same value on the quality of post-edited texts and the quality of human translations, if we refer to accuracy and coherence. Then, we should mention the experiment by Guerbero Arenas ("Productivity and quality in the post-editing of outputs from translation memories and machine translation." 11-21), in which it is shown that higher productivity is achieved by professional translators when using MT matches than when processing fuzzy matches, making fewer errors in MT matches than in TM matches. The same study shows that there were significantly more errors when translating from scratch. It is also interesting to refer to Tatsumi's research (doras.dcu.ie), focused on editing speed and degree of editing. She reached the conclusion that MT matches are faster to edit than 75-79 % of fuzzy matches. It is also a fact that the usage of CAT tools is dramatically changing the procedures and content in translators' translations (Folaron "Translation tools." 429-436; Muñoz Martín "A blurred snapshot of advances in translation process research" 70). Moreover, we should not forget the experiment by Garcia (Translating by post-editing: is it the way forward?" 217-237), in which there was a comparison between post-editing of MT-generated text with human translation, resulting in marginal productivity gains when using MT. Furthermore, there is a shift in the role of the translator, moving from a phase based exclusively on linguistic transfer to a constant interaction with computers without forgetting linguistic matters. This could be illustrated with the process of segment-by-segment translation using CAT tools, which is more linear as translation is accomplished, as opposed to "traditional" translation, which was constantly going backward and forward (Bowker and Fisher "Computer-aided translation" 4). It was also found that the process of segment-by-segment translation gives rise to the reproduction of source-text structures (Jiménez-Crespo "Conventions in localisation: a corpus study of original vs. translated web texts" 233, and Dragsted "Computer-aided translation as a distributed cognitive task." 443-464). It is also worth remembering that there was a study on student-translators' impact on TM tools when translating by Christensen ("Studies on the Mental Processes in Translation Memory-assisted Translation – the State of the Art." 137-160), in which it was found that MT is more efficient, easier, more interesting, and obviously faster. It was also found that MT is more consistent, and conversely, the results were not so creative and personal, being also more mechanical. There was also an experiment by Teixeira (Knowledge of Provenance and its Effects on Translation Performance in an Integrated TM/MT Environment." 119-130) in which the

speed and quality of the translation is not greatly affected if translators are given MT or TM matches. Guerberof Arenas' 2012 research (researchgate.net) was called into question by herself at the moment she discovered no striking differences in quality or productivity between MT and TM matches (Guerberof Arenas "The Role of Professional Experience in Post-Editing from a Quality and Productivity Perspective." 51–76, and "Correlations between productivity and quality when post-editing in a professional context." 165–186). Another fact to be taken into consideration is the time saved when translators are supplied with MT and TM matches, since the post-editing effort is diminished Federico *et al.* ("Measuring user productivity in machine translation enhanced computer assisted translation." amta2012.amtaweb.org). Finally, quality and translation speed was analysed by Läubli *et al.* (arxiv.org), reaching the conclusion that the translation time was reduced by 17.4 % when adding MT matches to other translation aids, and that the quality was also superior.

1.3. CohLitheSP

Apart from MT, to analyze the appropriateness of the texts as regards reading, a code in Python language has been developed. The first operation carried out by this code is sequencing words of the text to recover the number of paragraphs, sentences, words and syllables in total, and later, it determines five metrics based on the studies in Coh-Metrix, but simplified. Coh-Metrix (cohmetrix.com), in accordance with its web page, is «a Computer tool which produces indexes in linguistic and discourse representations of a text». It is important to say that these mentioned indexes «are used in many different ways to research cohesion of the explicit text and coherence of the mental representation». Cohesion is understood here as «the features of an explicit text which plays a role helping the reader to connect ideas in the text mentally» (Graesser, McNamara, and Louwerse, "What do readers need to learn in order to process coherence relations in narrative and expository text?" 82–98). Coherence, in this context, is «the interaction among linguistic and knowledge representations». When the focus is in the text, coherence coincides with the characteristics of the text which can contribute to the coherence of the mental representation. It is important to consider that Coh-Metrix was originally created to analyze texts written in English, being this reason why a new technique was developed to analyze texts written in Spanish.

This new technique is called CohLitheSP since it is based upon Coh-Metrix, and does not need large dictionaries nor corpuses formed by thousands of words to offer consistent results. Furthermore, on the other hand, specific formulae have been introduced for tests written in Spanish, when just a few changes have to be made to adapt it to any language

without any extra cost. For example, to calculate the number of syllables in a text, it is imperative to know the language it belongs to. In this case, it is needed to calculate how many vowels there are and subtract the diphthongs that, according to Spanish language, are formed by open and close vowels. Furthermore, additional exceptions should be calculated, bearing in mind the rule of hiatus when there is stressed close vowel, among others.

In the course of this didactic experience, four tourist texts will be translated using the CAT tool called Matecat. Next, the evaluation metrics will be calculated from the comparison between the translation options given by the machine and the human translation. Then, the CohLitheSP tool will be introduced to calculate a series of indices of the translations obtained. The last step will be the comparison of the data obtained from the evaluation metrics with the data from the CohLitheSP tool to study the improvement or not of the quality and readability of translations from English into Spanish.

In accordance with the present experiment on the use of CAT tools combined with CohLitheSP, and bearing in mind the previous research, the following research question is formulated: can we improve quality of translation and readability of translated texts by the combination of the different tools mentioned?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Contextualization and sample

This didactic experience was implemented in a final dissertation on the university course of Translation and Interpreting at the University of Murcia, in the academic year 2017-2018. For this work, four tourist texts translated from English into Spanish have been selected: Dartmoor, English Food, Royal Collection and Venture Extreme. Dartmoor is a text from the National Park of Dartmoor (dartmoor.gov.uk), where we can find terminology on Geography and Geobotany. English Food is related to the English cuisine webpage (essentially-england.com). The intention of this text is to trigger a potential customer to know and try the typical cuisine. It has basic information on the typical food. The text Royal Collection comes from the official website of the Royal Collection (rct.uk) and offers information on the history of Windsor Castle. And Venture Extreme has been found on another website (venture-xtreme.com) and deals with adventure sports. It describes the current situation of the tourist and sports sectors.

2.2. Development of the experiment

The steps followed in this didactic experience were:

- Evaluation metrics for MT compared to the reference translation (student's translation)

- Calculation of the amplification constant for each specific corpus
- Calculation of marks of easibility of texts

2.2.1. Evaluation metrics for MT

In order to check the results of applying a translation environmental tool and study the advantages and disadvantages, we are introducing Matecat, to the final year dissertation mentioned above. The reasons of choosing Matecat are:

- “Matecat is a free and open source online CAT tool. It is free for translation companies, translators and enterprise users.” (Matecat, 2014). The founders and main contributors of Matecat are the international research center FBK (Fondazione Bruno Kessler), the translation company Translated srl, the Université du Maine and the University of Edinburgh.
- In Matecat translation, assignments are organized into projects in which the user specifies the source language and the target language. One project comprises one or several texts to be translated, and each project has a translations memory.
- Matecat provides, by default, a connection with Google Translate as a machine translation system, and a connection with MyMemory as a public translation memory. It is important to mention that MyMemory is an open, available translation memory including the translation memories of the European institutions, the United Nations and automatically extracted data from multilingual websites. The first operation to be carried out is the analysis of the project. By clicking Analyze, Matecat shows how many words need to be translated in the preliminary analysis report it produces. In this report, the total number of words of the source text is displayed under Total Word Count. Then the post-editing is started and it is possible to see some translation suggestions.
- The translator has to decide how to adjust the translation and click Translated when the work is done. Matecat also offers the concordance function to look up words and phrases in the active translation memories. Once the post-editing is finished in the last segment, we can download the translated text and the translation memory. The Editing Log allows the translator to view adjustments made to the MT suggestions in the whole process.
- Finally, the average Post-Editing Effort (PEE) can be observed. It is important to mention that Matecat counts words according to industry standards, so “words or phrases with a 100% Translation Memory match are given a weighting of 30% and words or phrases with a partial TM match are given a weighting of 60%” (Matecat, matecat.com).

At this point it is important to reiterate that we are comparing a reference translation with a machine translation within the context of the underlying idea that “the closer a machine translation is to a professional human translation, the better it is” (Papineni, Roukos, Ward and Zhu “BLEU: a method for automatic evaluation of machine translation” 311-318).

The first evaluation metrics we are introducing here are Precision and Recall. First, we must count the number of words in both the machine and the reference translation. In order to do a calculation with Precision, the number of common words is divided by the number of words in the machine translation. The calculation of Recall is achieved by dividing the number of shared words by the number of words in the reference translation. We consider a system to be good if scores are high, so the best system is the one with the highest scores. WER (Word Error Rate) is another metric we are implementing. In this method, differences such as substitutions, insertions and deletions are taken into account. This metric is based on Levenshtein distance calculated at word level. In this case, the lower the WER result, the better.

The most common metric used is BLEU (Bilingual Evaluation Understudy). This method discovers how many n-grams are overlapping between the machine translation and the reference translation. This metric is based upon the idea that the larger the number of n-grams overlapping between the machine translation and the reference translation, the better the machine translation is. The machine translations should be as near to 1 as possible to be considered good translations. The formula to calculate BLEU is:

$$\text{BLEU} = \min \left(1, \frac{\text{number of words in MT}}{\text{number of words in ref}} \right) \prod_{i=1}^4 \text{precision}_i$$

In order to obtain the results, a programme¹, written in Python language, was used to implement the WER, BLEU, Precision and Recall functions from the information dumped in a file. The file recognized a header, followed by different text segments corresponding to the original, a reference translation and several translations to be compared. The code proceeded to calculate each function by combining the reference with each translation to generate another file in table format that could be used directly and sent to a spreadsheet. When performing translation tasks, three different machine translations were offered. The average is calculated for each suggestion offered by the machine, taking into account the

above metrics. We can go a step further and consider students' translations as a reference translation and compare them to the MT. Then, when calculating the above-mentioned evaluation metrics (WER, BLEU, Precision and Recall), the results are refined. Following this, a mark can be calculated using this formula:

$$(3 \cdot (1 - W) + 1 \cdot B + 1 \cdot P + 1 \cdot R) \cdot 10 / 6$$

When $W=0$ no mistakes, maximum mark 1-W

Following the above results, a mark can be calculated using this formula:

$$(3 \cdot (1 - W) + 1 \cdot B + 1 \cdot P + 1 \cdot R) \cdot 10 / 6$$

When $W=0$ no mistakes, maximum mark 1-W.

2.2.2. Definition of the tool used to calculate easibility of the text

To obtain the metrics by means of CohLitheSP, the following are needed:

- A reference text conforming to a valid corpus,
- A glossary of technical or specific terms which is helping to know which words are specific within a corpus. These terms will not include measurement units nor "words of stop" (prepositions, determiners, etc), and
- A set of connectors allowing to know when, in a sentence, something is being inferred from something previously said.

The selected metrics and their changes are:

- PCNARL. Narrativity. It is calculated determining which words of the text to be evaluated are already being recognized in the reference text.
- PCSYNL. Readability. It determines the simplicity of the text in its language. In the case of Spanish, the readability of Fernández ("Medidas sencillas de lecturabilidad" 29-32) has been chosen (based on Flesch), which is using a number of sentences, syllables and words. If someone wants to do it for the English language, it only needs to be changed with the Flesch-Kincaid2, whose formula is also based on a similar calculation.
- PCREFL. Referential Cohesion. In this version, the same referential cohesion as in Coh-Metrix is calculated; but instead of considering all nouns, it is only applied in technical or specific terms recognized in the glossary.
- PCDCL. Deep Cohesion. It determines the incidence of the connector over the recognized sentences.
- PCCNCL. Concreteness. In this version, instead of calculating the concreteness over the whole corpus of the language, the incidence of the terms of the glossary is

determined from the recognized words in the reference text within the text to be evaluated.

This reduction in the cost of programming also requests to adopt mechanisms of compromise to be able to recognize the belonging of a word within large sets in such a way that the closest word is given back within some margins of tolerance.

In order to do that, a structure (a decision tree) has been created to order words in such a way that we know instantly whether words are included in the structure or not: we are interested in this version not only in the lexemes of Spanish, but also in their cases. That is, considering that we have not been working with an extensive dictionary of Spanish language, nor the rules determining its lexemes, when it is masculine or feminine, in singular or plural. Furthermore, if it is a verb, it should recognize its verbal tense (present, past, future, conditional, etc.). The algorithm proceeds to repeat, as it were, a process of stressing a word, the first characters in every word several times, and more times than the last ones. In this way, when calculating the movements (Levenshtein's distance), errors will have less weight at the end of the word (morphemes) and more weight at the beginning (root).

By using this mechanism under a tolerance of 25% (the words whose ratio of Levenshtein is not below 75% are accepted) an approximation closely related to a process of lematization is obtained.

For the calculation of the narrativity, it is necessary to use these techniques, as well as for the calculation of the concreteness – to be able to generate two decision trees.

The following ideas have been considered to separate in sentences:

A sentence is formed by more than ONE word.

After a dot a sentence begins in upper case.

The sentences that do not comply with 1 and 2 will be separated by “; -¿? ¡!..”

If a sentence complies with 1 or 2, it will be added to next sentence.

2.2.3. Determination of the weights

By analysing the different students' texts, it is interesting to point out that the best marks should come from metrics where each student has the most dissenting marks and those metrics where students have better marks should weigh more. Therefore, after multiplying the media and standard deviation of each metric and normalizing the results, the following weights have been generated:

Table 1. Percentage of Weights

Narrativity	PCNARL	49%
Readability	PCSYNL	20%
Referential Cohesion	PCREFL	9%
Deep Cohesion	PCDCL	17%
Concreteness	PCCNCL	5%

2.2.4. Calculation of the amplification constant for each specific corpus

Below, the results of evaluating the reference texts can be seen.

Table 2. Results of evaluating reference texts

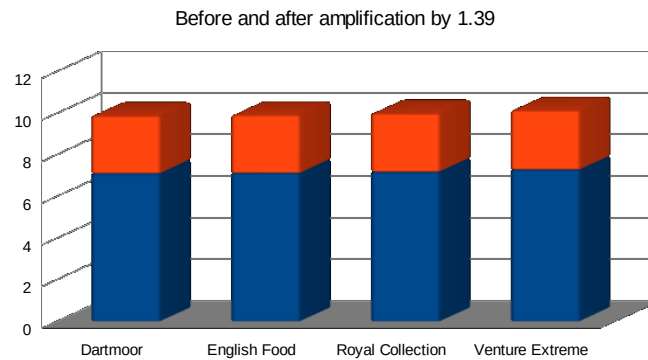
Text Easibility Lithe Version					
PCNARL	PCSYNL	PCREFL	PCDCL	PCCNCL	ENTRY
1000	188.02	39	184	87	Dartmoor
1000	185.25	61	162	214	English Food
1000	188.34	0	275	6	Royal Collection
1000	181.92	359	133	169	Venture Extreme

As we can observe, with the exception of Narrativity, the maximum mark is not achieved in each parameter, so, first, the weights for each case are applied and, later, a rule of three with the maximum mark (10). The result will be the constant by which all texts using this reference document are multiplied. For example, if the amplification constant (K_{TEC}) over the texts of the technological corpus as reference is needed, then this formula is being used, after calculating the coefficients from the programme:

$$K_{TEC} = \frac{10}{\frac{PCNARL_{TEC}^{REF}}{1000} \cdot 0.49 + \frac{PCSYNL_{TEC}^{REF}}{206.82} \cdot 0.2 + \frac{PCREFL_{TEC}^{REF}}{1000} \cdot 0.09 + \frac{PCDCL_{TEC}^{REF}}{1000} \cdot 0.17 + \frac{PCCNCL_{TEC}^{REF}}{1000} \cdot 0.05}$$

Under these weights, marks of the fourth reference texts have been studied, and it has been found an amplification of 1.39.

Figure 1. Marks of reference texts



For that reason, if we do not want to multiply the amplifier within its corpus, it seems that it is not inexact to multiply by 1.39, regardless of the reference text.

2.2.5. Calculation of marks of easibility of texts

Regarding the calculation of the marks of the texts, the amplification constant must be applied by the addition of each metric divided by its maximum and multiplied by its weight. For example, the following formula can be observed over the technology texts:

$$Score_{TEC}^{PUPIL} = K_{TEC} \cdot \left(\frac{PCNARL_{TEC}^{PUPIL}}{1000} \cdot 0.49 + \frac{PCSYNL_{TEC}^{PUPIL}}{206.82} \cdot 0.20 + \frac{PCREFL_{TEC}^{PUPIL}}{1000} \cdot 0.09 + \frac{PCDCL_{TEC}^{PUPIL}}{1000} \cdot 0.17 + \frac{PCCNCL_{TEC}^{PUPIL}}{1000} \cdot 0.05 \right)$$

3. RESULTS

3.1. Evaluation metrics

The tourist texts had the following results:

Table 3. Evaluation metrics for the tourist texts

	W1	B1	P1	R1
Dartmoor	0.5992	0.1980	0.8916	0.9206
English Food	0.6742	0.0755	0.8282	0.9212

Royal Collection	0.6790	0.0899	0.8974	0.8752
Venture Extreme	0.6165	0.2648	0.7884	0.8466

Table 4. Marks obtained from table 3

Text	Mark
Dartmoor	5.35
English Food	4.67
Royal Collection	4.71
Venture Extreme	5.08

3.2. Evaluation of the documents using CohLitheSP

After applying the corresponding formulas already described above in 2, the following results are achieved:

Table 5. Marks obtained by pupil from table 2

Text	Mark
Dartmoor	6.42
English Food	7.04
Royal Collection	7.67
Venture Extreme	6.96

Table 6. Marks obtained by machine from table 1

Text	Mark
Dartmoor	7.31
English Food	7.22
Royal Collection	7.65
Venture Extreme	6.61

Figure 2. Evaluation amplified by its reference

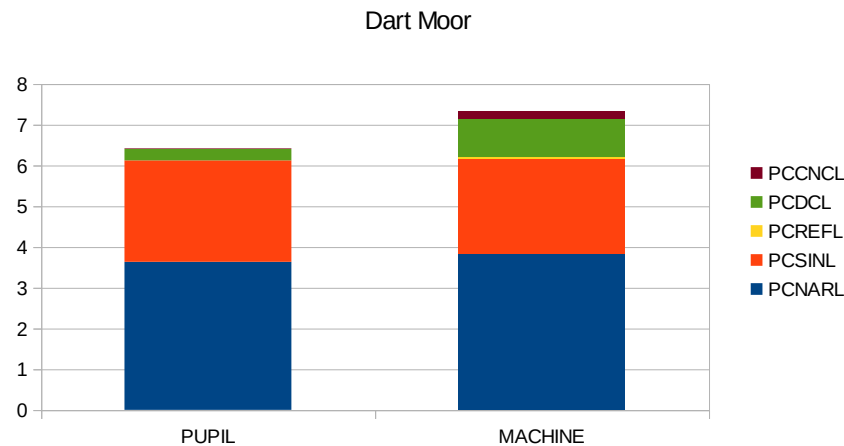


Figure 3.

Evaluation amplified by its reference

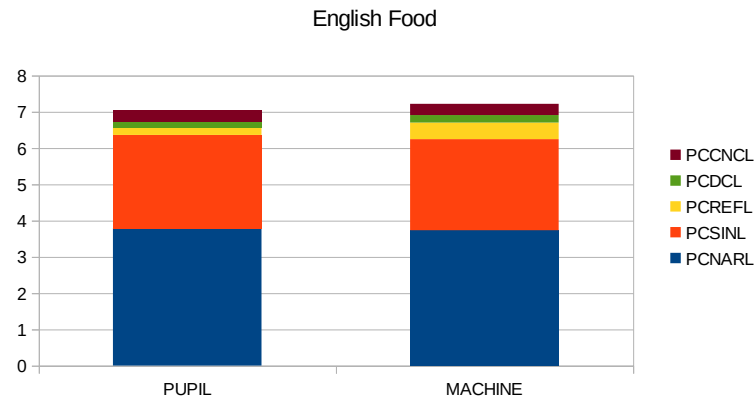


Figure 4.
amplified by it:

Evaluation
reference

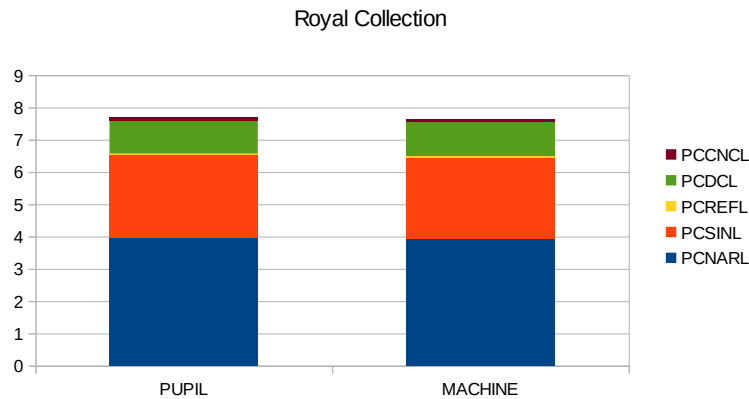
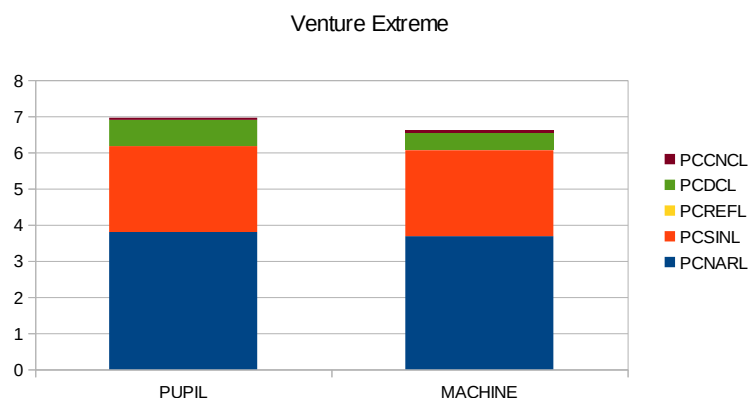


Figure 5. Evaluati
by its reference

amplified



4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Evaluation metrics

The aforementioned pieces of research show the pros and cons of CAT tools concerning the translation process. The first advantage to be taken into consideration is the so-called recycling process with previous translations that translation memories accomplish. Therefore, specialized texts including many repetitions benefit from this system. Another advantage to be considered is efficiency. The aforementioned specialized texts, which have a high degree of repetition, are translated very rapidly with these translation memory systems. Translation memories also support different file formats, keep the original layout of the text and make search queries easier with the bilingual concordancer. Considering terminology, it is important to stress the consistency in translations of translation memories. Moreover, one of the most important advantages is the time gained during the translation process. Taking disadvantages into consideration, the translated texts may show inconsistencies in cohesion and coherence, since this system divides the source text into segments, and the translator may lose the importance of the text as a whole. In addition, emphasis should be placed on inaccurate translations because they could be saved and reused later.

If we compare the translated texts from the precision metrics offered in table 3 to establish correlations using the hypothesis F-test, it is observed that the tool distinguishes two classes of documents under a very high level of correlation.

Table 7. Correlations obtained by precision

	Dartmoor	English Food	Royal Collection	Venture Extreme
Dartmoor	100.000%	78.763%	79.688%	91.460%
English Food	78.763%	100.000%	99.039%	87.095%
Royal Collection	79.688%	99.039%	100.000%	88.043%
Venture Extreme	91.460%	87.095%	88.043%	100.000%

However, if we look at the correlations generated from the results in Table 1, then the documents are classified as highly correlated in another way.

Table 8. Correlations obtained by CohLitheSP

	Dartmoor	English Food	Royal Collection	Venture Extreme
Dartmoor	100.000%	96.882%	94.818%	94.542%
English Food	96.882%	100.000%	91.712%	91.437%
Royal Collection	94.818%	91.712%	100.000%	99.724%
Venture Extreme	94.542%	91.437%	99.724%	100.000%

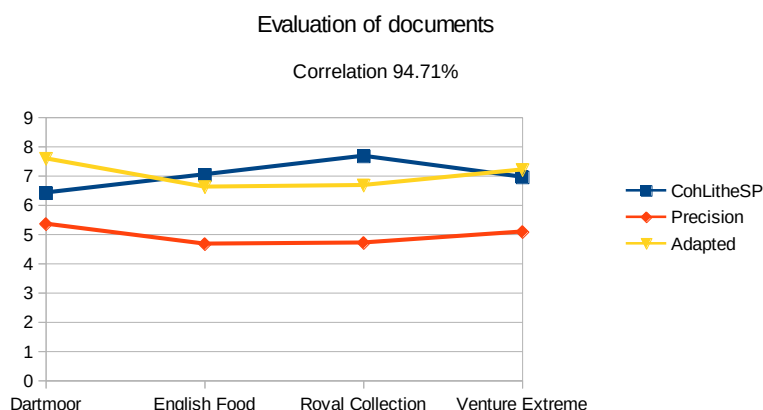
4.2. Evaluation of the texts

As can be seen in Figures 2 through 5, MT gets better results than reference translations (student's translations). This may be due to the fact that the Spanish translation mechanisms used by the machine are well conditioned to evaluate its easibility. However, this easibility may not match the accuracy of the translation.

Without going any further, when verifying that the tool that determines the precision is so different from the Coh-metrix tool as seen in tables 7 and 8 due to the fact that they correlate the texts in a very different way, perhaps we should think that both tools evaluate not so much quality but two different elements of it.

However, as soon as we collect the results of tables 5 and 6, only by increasing the precision results so that they have the same mean as CohLitheSP, it can be verified, as seen in figure 6, that the correlation of both systems of evaluation is 94.71% under a Chi square hypothesis test.

Figure 6. Correlation of both evaluation Systems



It is observed that students' evaluation approximately coincides with the CohLitheSP's evaluation.

5. CONCLUSION

In this work, a new and different tool has been shown which adds a supplementary challenge for students: the possibility of improving the readability of their own translations from English into Spanish.

Given the facts, the technique explained before is working properly mainly due to two results: on the one hand, it is proved that different texts coming from different jargons in the same typology, including MT texts, get good or bad marks in the same metrics. On the other hand, the Figure 6 also show that, after refining the final mark, the result is approximate to a student's evaluation.

Moreover, it is important to stress the easy programming, which does not require large corpuses, despite the fact it comes from systems needing an enormous extra charge in the development of programming. This last feature is complemented by the fact that it is easily transformed to be working in any language.

The procedure used to test the new tool implemented with the use of MT and the calculation of its evaluation metrics (Precision, Recall, WER and BLEU) should also be highlighted.

Finally, in response to the research question (can we improve quality of translation and readability of translated texts by the combination of the different tools mentioned?) it should be concluded that this combination offers a proper and stimulating procedure for students and translators to check their translations from English into Spanish.

6. SOFTWARE

The programme written in Python used to calculate the statistics with commentaries in English can be found in the following address: [mailto: https://archive.org/details/coh-lithe-sp-012](mailto:https://archive.org/details/coh-lithe-sp-012)

NOTES

¹ This programme was developed by Juan Manuel Dato Ruiz (qualified computer technician) taking into consideration the evaluation metrics mentioned above.

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Act Up For Equality! Improvement of Reading Comprehension in a Second Language Through a Gender Perspective

Act up for equality! Mejora de la comprensión lectora en lengua extranjera a través de la perspectiva de género

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Resumen

Este artículo ofrece una propuesta didáctica para mejorar tanto las estrategias de lectura como la fluidez del inglés como primera lengua extranjera. La intervención está implementada con alumnos de 4º de la ESO y 1º de Bachillerato y basada en una adaptación de la técnica de drama pedagógico conocida como Lectura Dramatizada. Creados y compilados específicamente para este proyecto, los materiales de *Act Up for Equality!* son muestras reales de literatura, redes sociales y otras fuentes auténticas relacionadas con el movimiento #MeToo y la antología *Milk and Honey* de Rupi Kaur, cuya temática principal versa sobre el acoso sexual y la desigualdad de género. Así pues, este trabajo está adscrito a la asignatura transversal de Igualdad de Género, como se especifica en la ley educativa actual LOMCE 8/2013.

Palabras clave: inglés L2, comprensión lectora, perspectiva de género

Abstract

This article shows a didactic proposal to improve both reading strategies and fluency in students of English as a first Foreign Language (EFL). The intervention is implemented with 4th ESO and 1st Bachillerato students and is based on an adaptation of the drama pedagogy technique known as Reader's Theatre (RT). The materials used for Act Up for Equality! were specifically created (and compiled) for this project and they are real samples of literature, social networks and other authentic sources related to the #MeToo movement and the poetic anthology *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur, which revolve around the subjects of sexual harassment and gender inequality in an attempt to work on the cross-curricular subject of Gender Equality, as specified in the current educational law LOMCE 8/2013.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language (EFL), reading comprehension, Gender perspective.

1. INTRODUCTION

As Prensky foresaw at the turn of the century, a new generation was emerging. The digital natives, as the scholar coined them, brought a completely different manner of understanding the environment surrounding them and a new way of intercommunication was established from that moment up to now, both in terms of social relationships and inside the classroom (Prensky 1). Digital natives have a particular set of features that widen the gap between preceding generations and themselves. These implications, then, urge for a transformation in the design of the curriculum, as it no longer suits the needs of the people attending the educational system.

The Council of Europe has acknowledged some of these differences and has updated the Common European Framework of Reference that “reflects the increasing awareness of the need for an integrated approach to language education across the curriculum” (22) and changed the traditional view of language as a division in four skills to a more realistic perspective of how language works. Nevertheless, there is still a lot of improvement to make, especially when it comes to reading comprehension in an era where digital natives are overloaded with textual information, and yet, they are not able to develop critical skills towards what they read. Most teenagers spend hours and hours browsing over the Internet, reading digital content in different social networks and videogames, and still find it difficult to discuss what they read or answer questions about the global meaning of texts. And this is even worse when they are asked to do it in a foreign language like English.

On the other hand, during the past decade there has been a polarization of ideas regarding feminism. Whereas the number of people attending Women's March has increased in a considerable way during the former years, far-left wing parties have won many adepts as well all over the world. These attitudes can be discerned both on social media and in high school classrooms. Nevertheless, apart from the clichés and fake news that revolve around in the discussion of women's discrimination, many students are completely detached from their real context and problematics.

These two aspects, the need to improve students' reading comprehension and to become aware and eradicate sexism, shape the project *Act Up for Equality!*

2. AIMS

This project was implemented because the authors realised that students had serious problems in engaging in the activity of reading as well as understanding both the explicit and implicit information in the text. This was due to several factors: their lack of reading strategies to tackle a text, their demotivation with regards of the textual genres included in textbooks which are not appealing to teenagers, and their misconception that understanding a word and being able to translate the information included in the text presupposes its comprehension. Such diagnosis was alarming, taking into account that textual input has a fundamental role in students' everyday lives.

To become aware of the socio-cultural and cross-curricular content they come across both in the classroom and on the Internet, it is essential to develop reading strategies and a critical attitude. Among the wide range of topics they face, gender equality and prevention of discrimination and sexual harassment are of key importance — especially if the new waves of sexist attitudes among teenagers are taken into account. All these aspects have been considered in the design of the project *Act Up for Equality!* and to achieve the following goals:

1. To give students reading strategies to improve their reading comprehension and fluency.
2. To encourage students to become independent readers through a progressive building up of knowledge.
3. To develop a critical attitude towards Gender Inequality through literary texts and social media as well as group discussion.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To tackle the problem and improve their reading skills and critical perspective, a series of materials were created following the needs and motivation of students. The proposal deals with the subject of gender inequality in general, and in Hollywood in particular, as the movement #MeToo originated and was spread in the social media.

a. Reading Comprehension

This project was mainly based on the recommendations made by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), a guideline used by teachers to create materials, develop their syllabus, adapt their teaching practice and evaluate students who are in the process of learning a foreign language. The CEFR has adopted an approach that leaves behind the four linguistic skills and replaces them with four models of communication: reception, production, interaction and mediation — which offer a more realistic representation of the complex reality of communication (Council of Europe 30). Inspired by the proposals made by the CEFR, both the Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte (MECD) and the Generalitat Valenciana (GVA) have designed specific curricular concretions in every stage of Secondary education, from Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (ESO) to Bachillerato.

Reading comprehension can be worked in many different ways to fulfil the goals established in the syllabus. In this sense, Halliday proposes a theory of language called Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). This theory argues that texts owe their existence to context, as language users have a reduced number of choices due to context constraints (Brisk 3). As stated by Eggins (2) in Brisk's work, SFL is "a very useful descriptive and interpretive framework for viewing language as a strategic, meaning-making resource" (4). Thus, this theory provides teachers with the necessary tools to teach students how language should be used in different contexts.

It is also worth mentioning the project developed by Rose and his colleagues, the Reading to Learn (R2L) Project, which guides teachers to help students to examine and understand texts Through R2L. Here, students become skilled to interpret and analyse a text, deconstruct it and interrogate the meaning underlying the social conventions and the choice of words that appear in it. Nevertheless, context does not only depend on sociocultural aspects and the lexis used. The purpose of the text and the genre conventions also frame the meaning of the text (Acevedo and Whittaker 39-40).

Nonetheless, this is a challenging task in today's society because of two main reasons. On the one hand, learners belong to the digital age and are used to interact with their surrounding environment by means of technological gadgets. These social and technological changes are neither contemplated in textbooks nor as a pedagogical tool.

In fact, the most popular gadgets among students are punished and forbidden in the classroom most times. This results in them being exposed to conventional and old-fashioned genres which are not appealing to teenagers at all. In turn, although students are constantly exposed to Facebook posts (Espinosa) and WhatsApp messages, most of them do not engage in another type of reading. According to De Azúa, 40% of the Spanish population has never read a book. The problem lies in the fact that people confuse the cultural need or social elegance of reading with the mental practice deriving from it. Furthermore, many teenagers lack the literacy to express their thoughts with words and resort to violence and aggressivity. Although this might not be the only reason, more cases of bullying and exclusion are taking place in the school context in the present time.

b. Drama Pedagogy in Foreign Language Teaching

Drama Pedagogy in Foreign Language (FL) Teaching has achieved a considerable growth since the 1970s, both as a field of research and as a pedagogical technique (Schewe 5). This is due, in part, to the holistic nature of drama, as it “encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts language into context and, by giving learners experience of success in real-life situations, it should arm them with the confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom” (Belliveau and Kim 7). Among the many dramatic approaches adopted in the FL Classroom, Reader’s Theatre seems to be a useful technique to learn languages, as it fosters language improvement in many areas at once. In a nutshell, RT focuses on reading skills and comprehension, fluency and expression, allowing a multidirectional practice of these skills. Students have to analyse a text to understand its meaning. Therefore, a repeated and fluent reading of a text allows a better comprehension of the extract. Similarly, when students comprehend what they read, they are able to read a text with more confidence and at a more rapid pace.

RT is especially interesting in Second Language (L2) and FL Teaching because teaching reading to Secondary students is particularly challenging as they are exposed to texts which are not meaningful for them (Macalister 387). Conversely, RT provides students with a purpose to practice a text orally, as Readers Theatre International suggests, as cited in Chard and Tyler: “Students read from the scripts, focusing their energies on interpreting and sharing their understanding of a character through appropriate intonation and oral expression” (166).

In addition to all the aforementioned aspects, Drama Pedagogy in general and RT in particular, have beneficial outcomes at social level. Many times, people who are learning an L2 do not feel confident enough to start up a conversation with strangers in a language

different from their mother tongue. However, theatre offers students a secure scenario that prompt learners to interact with each other.

c. Gender Perspective

Finally, there is a third approach worth mentioning in the development of the classroom experience dealing with a gender perspective. Due to many different factors, an increase of sexist attitudes is now taking place in Secondary high schools all around Spain. In a survey conducted in a high school in Zaragoza, 80-85% of students said that violent behaviours were a common practice (Lasmarías). Notwithstanding, this is not an isolated case among students. Female teachers also feel threatened by male students. In Andalusia, a survey was carried out among teachers and results were startling: 84% of female teachers had suffered verbal abuse or physical aggression, some of them even both at the same time (Díaz).

Therefore, teachers have an important role to play in stopping sexism from achieving an unbearable stage. This is why, despite having a shortage of resources that deal with equality among genders, and in spite of what textbooks disregard because they are controversial topics, teachers have the duty to bring questions about female discrimination to the classroom and teach students ways of fighting sexual discrimination and abuse, or what some people call despite being politically incorrect, feminism.

Moreover, according to Serra (4), most students feel that the main objective of studying English is acquiring skills to obtain a better job, disregarding the cultural and social component inherent to a language. Thus, in an attempt to show students appealing, contemporary cultural content of the American and British culture and tackle gender discrimination at the same time, we decided that the #MeToo movement was an interesting choice. It started in 2006 to support victims of sexual abuse and was popularised in 2017 as it spread on the social media and was adopted as a motto by many Hollywood celebrities in different events with international media coverage such as the Golden Globes and the Oscars Ceremony Awards. The #MeToo movement seemed convenient for three main reasons: (1) despite being an international movement, many students were oblivious of the movement and its strength; (2) they could get acquainted with some well-known actresses, writers and singers from different English speaking countries, and (3) most importantly, they became aware of the power of social media in terms of political and social vindications.

4. TEACHING PROPOSAL: ACT UP FOR EQUALITY!

a. Context and participants

The project Act Up for Equality! was implemented in two different levels of a state secondary high school: a group of 4th of ESO (15/16-year-old students) and a group of 1st

of Bachillerato (16/17-year-old students). The first group was formed by 23 students (11 men and 12 women) and the latter group was made up of 26 students (11 male students and 15 female students). This experience was developed as a part of the curriculum of the English subject in a conventional classroom. The group of 4th of ESO devoted 4 sessions of 55 minutes to the project due to time restrictions, whereas the group of 1st of Bachillerato worked on the project for 7 lessons of 55 minutes. It took place in the first fortnight of March to celebrate International Women's Day.

b. Procedure

Each session devoted to the implementation of Act Up for Equality! was based on a Task-Based Learning Methodology following Ellis' guidelines in *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Thus, the activities were sequenced in a Pre-Task, Main Task and Post-Task. The main objective of this project was devoted to providing students with reading strategies in order to become independent readers taking into account the contents and indicators of success included in the Decree 87/2015, which defines the curriculum in 4th of ESO and 1st of Bachillerato in the Valencian Community. To engage the learners in the readings and develop their critical attitude, students were offered texts related to the topic of sexual harassment. Some of them were poems from the Indian-Canadian poetess Rupi Kaur but some others were extracts from Instagram and Twitter posts. The introduction of new genres had a twofold purpose: to attract students to the readings and raise awareness of sexist attitudes on online manifestations.

After an initial questionnaire on students' reading strategies, a running dictation was performed only with 1st of Bachillerato students due to time restrictions. Students had to rewrite an excerpt from Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* to check their actual performance. Then, a first presentation was delivered to activate reading strategies, as they pondered over what steps had to be taken into account when they read. In addition, it was intended to foster the learners' predictions about the topic that would be introduced in the Main Task (critical thinking) by getting them involved in a group discussion. Then, students performed the first Main Task. It consisted of a poem analysis at class level taken from *Milk and Honey* (Kaur 39). Some biographical data and literary features about the Indian- Canadian poetess were also presented to the students to help them contextualize the poem. The second Main Activity proposed was a poem analysis taken from the same book (Kaur 19, 22, 35, 36, 38). However, its analysis was developed in smaller groups (four or five students). Furthermore, students were distributed a nine-question worksheet focusing on the overall meaning of the women to work firstly on the semantic level of the text, both at micro and macro-level so as to understand the general meaning of the text and, secondly, to deal with some questions of

evaluation and personal response. In this part, the students had to relate the content of the poems with events from the real life, developing a critical attitude towards what they had read and relate it to news and facts from their contemporary society.

In the next stage, a handout and a worksheet with tweets and comments made by celebrities were handed out to the students. These worksheets contained comments made by celebrities and extracts from posts on social media. The aim of this worksheet was that students could be able to understand and evaluate comments they could find on the Internet. The worksheets were divided into three sections. The first one dealt with sexist and discriminatory comments; section two included female celebrities' responses to discriminatory comments and finally, the last section had some Instagram and Twitter posts on the #MeToo Movement. Thus, examples of materials from section 1 included sexist comments made by President Donald J. Trump, an extract from an interview made to Chris Evans and Jeremy Renner referring Scarlett Johansson as a 'slut' and an excerpt from Kanye West's Famous. In Section 2 students could find a reply by Mayim Bialik to an interviewer undervaluing her intelligence, Rihanna's confirmation that she did not need a man in her life, Jennifer Lawrence's complaints about body shaming among Hollywood actresses and Megan Fox's experience of her sexual objectification in most of the roles she was offered. Finally, Section 3 dealt with comments made by female celebrities on the #MeToo movement vindicating her rights and some of the mottos established during the media campaign, as for example Uzo Aduba's speech: "I want all the girls watching here now to know, a new day is on the horizon. And when the new day finally dawns, it will be because of magnificent women".

Regarding the worksheet, each group had a different document for section one. Nonetheless, in regards to sections two and three, questions were the same for all groups. As an extension to what students had done in class, and with the aim to check if they had understood the main aspects of the project, as a Post-Task activity, students had to record themselves reading the texts that had been worked in class with the proper intonation. For that purpose, apart from practising the interpretation of texts in class, the students were given access to a Drive Folder with the worksheets and audio-recordings made by native speakers to rehearse pronunciation at home. Each group was handed in a QR Code with all the materials and recordings.

The audios in the folder were recorded by Erasmus students at the Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació (FFTiC) from Universitat de València coming from different parts of the United Kingdom. They were asked to read the poems in a comprehensible way and with a neutral tone. That way, students could check the pronunciation of the words they

found more difficult to utter but could not be influenced by their intonation when they recorded their own creations. The QR Codes were given along with a document containing the instructions for video or audio recording. Once they had their files recorded, they had to send them by email to the teachers.

c. Data Collection Tools

The project Act Up for Equality!, far from aiming at students' improvement of their linguistic attainment in just one area of the four main language skills, was an ambitious project where language, expression and critical thinking were worked simultaneously. Therefore, different procedures of evaluation were needed to monitor their progress in every step of the sequence as well as in every sphere of learning, despite they had taken place at the same time. For such purpose, the best method of assessment was a holistic evaluation. This is the reason why students were assessed taking into account not only an initial evaluation of their knowledge in reading comprehension, but also a formative and summative assessment at different stages of the project.

Table 1. Data Collection Tools

Type of Evaluation	Description	Function
Diagnostic Test: Running Dictation Reading Comprehension Questionnaire	Examine students' level of reading comprehension both through a survey and practice and find out the reading strategies they use.	Become aware of the different levels of students to adapt the materials and distribute the groups.
Summative Assessment: Audio/Video Recording	Check students' level of understanding of the concepts and skills learned in class.	Determine the student's grades at the end of the project.
Formative Assessment: Students' Participation Poem Analysis Tweets and Comments Analysis	Determine students' progress in different areas throughout the sessions.	Monitor students' performance and give them feedback to improve their results. Conclude what aspects need to be reinforced and what elements are already acquired.

d. Results and Discussion

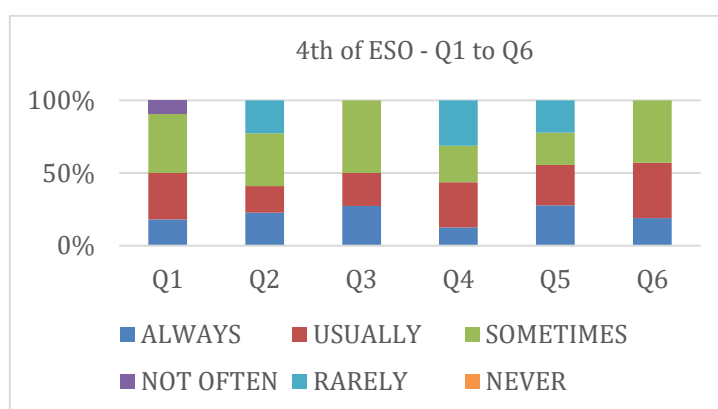
In this section, the results obtained and the conclusions drawn in the intervention are shown. Within each type of evaluation –diagnostic test, informal assessment and content

evaluation— there is a description of each group's performance in every activity or survey carried out throughout the sessions included.

i. Diagnostic Test - Initial Questionnaire

22 students of 4th of ESO carried out the Initial Questionnaire. Most students stated that they usually (32%) or sometimes (41%) understand what they read, whereas a smaller part (18%) always recognized what they read (Q1). Only two students said that they often do not understand the information given. Thus, this was a good starting point to give students strategies to improve such aspect. Regarding the use of other elements inside the text (Q2), there was a great variety of responses. 36% of students sometimes used titles or illustrations to generate meaning, whereas others either always (23%) or rarely (23%) used them. These elements were usually ignored by students. Thus, it was surprising that at least 23% of them admitted using them to generate meaning. In terms of reading strategies (Q3), half of the class (50%) sometimes used the information they already have to guess the meaning. A 31% usually gave up when they did not understand the text, but the same number of students used strategies that helped them continue reading, although in the end they sometimes surrendered (Q4). This can be explained by a surprising factor: a 28% of students never used a dictionary if they did not understand a word, the same amount of people who usually used it (Q5). Hence, it can be inferred from these results that students did not usually comprehend what they read and such fact discouraged them and they abandoned the task. As far as the mental representation of the reading is concerned, most students either usually (33%) or sometimes (38%) tried to see the pictures of what they read in their heads (Q6). Thus, this strategy could help them to visualise the information better.

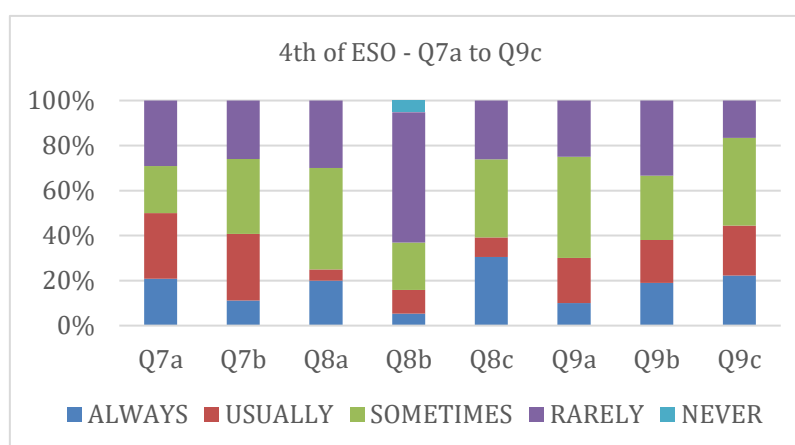
Graphic 1. Initial Questionnaire 4th of ESO. Q1 to Q6



The anticipation of events did not characterise students of 4th of ESO. Most students either sometimes (33%, 21%) or rarely (29%, 26%) guessed what would happen both before the story started (Q7a) and when it progressed (Q7b). The fact that learners did not make predictions about what they were going to read affected comprehension considerably, as they did not reflect on the topics that might be related to the text. On the other hand, they sometimes (48%, 45%, 35% respectively) reflected upon what they read at the different stages of reading (before the story Q8a; during the story Q8b; after the story Q8c). This strategy helped them ponder over what they had read and review key aspects.

Moreover, they sometimes linked what they read to both their personal experiences and scenes they watched on TV. But rarely did they make a relation among texts (Q9a,b,c). This is something common among students and this is why the referential level of reading was one of the central aspects of this project.

Graphic 2. Initial Questionnaire 4th of ESO. Q7 to Q9

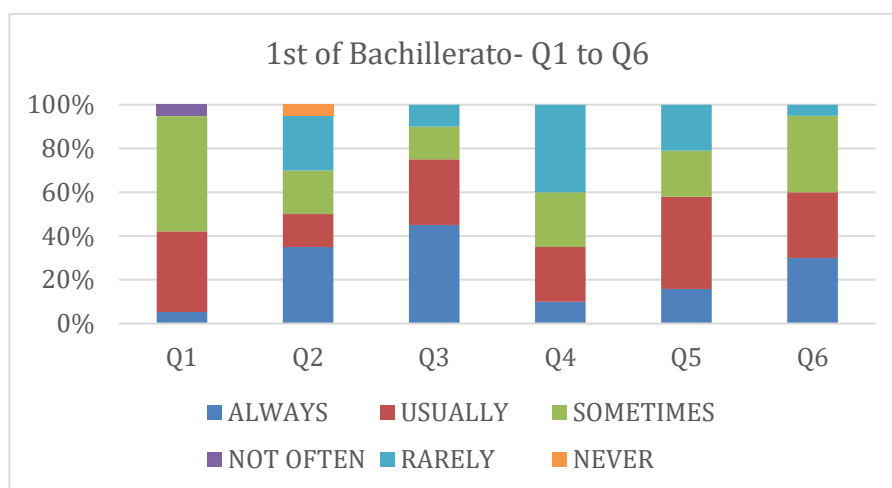


These results were challenging in some aspects, especially in regards to the referential level. Nonetheless, the fact that students sometimes used strategies to guess the meaning of the words and did not generally compare the texts to experiences from other sources allowed more room for improvement.

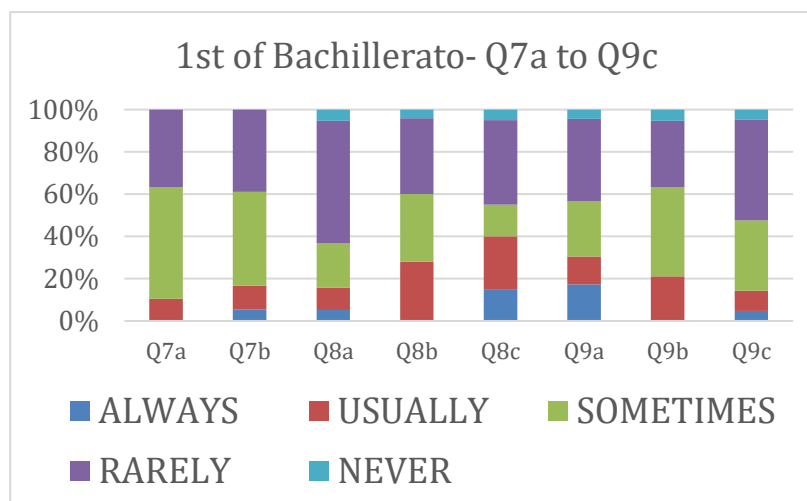
Regarding the 1st Bachillerato group, out of 20 students in 1st of Bachillerato, 53% of them informed that they sometimes understood what they read, but sometimes they did not. 37% of students usually understood what they read and a small percentage of 5% of students stated that they either always, not often or rarely comprehended the text (Q1). Similarly, the fact that a small part of students admitted always understanding the text encouraged us to mainly focus on providing them with tools to improve such aspect. Seven students used illustrations or figures to convey the meaning of the text. Nevertheless, five of them rarely

paid attention to those elements (Q2), a common practice among most readers. These elements are important sources of information and this is why they should not be disregarded. 45% of students used the information they already had to predict the meaning of words they did not know (Q3). If not, 42% of the class usually resorted to a dictionary when they were not familiar with some lexical items (Q5). The fact that students used dictionaries generally means that students are interested in understanding what they read. Furthermore, 40% of students usually used strategies when they did not understand a word, although 25% of them admitted giving up (Q4). Regarding the mental representation of the reading, there was a diversity of responses. 7 students pictured what they read in their heads (Q6). A small percentage of students rarely (4%) or never (17%) did it. This could mean different things. Maybe, they did not understand the text and could not make a picture of what they read or maybe they had a particular form of processing information that did not imply making mental representations of the information understood.

Graphic 3. Initial Questionnaire 1st of Bachillerato. Q1 to Q6



Besides mental representation, they sometimes anticipated the events before (Q7a) a story started or throughout (Q7b) the reading. In addition, they rarely asked themselves questions at any stage of the reading (Q8a,b, c). This showed that students could relate information within the text to obtain a global perspective of its meaning. However, they could not make a link between what they read and what they had experienced in real life. As to the referential level, they rarely made links with other texts, their personal experience or TV programs (9a, b, c).

Graphic 4. Initial Questionnaire 1st of Bachillerato. Q7 to Q9.

This was at odds with the result of the other group, who made a greater link with the latter sources rather than the former described here. As said before with 4th of ESO students, as they hardly used the referential level of reading to create relations between texts and other sources, the activities proposed would improve such an aspect.

ii. *Running Dictation (1st of Bachillerato)*

From all the stages carried out during this activity, the synthesis of the excerpt was the most relevant task for the project. Although some summaries had been exceptionally well elaborated, the majority of students copied some words literally. Nevertheless, the final product had no sense or was little related to what the original source said.

Here are some samples:

Figure 1. Running Dictation Sample 1

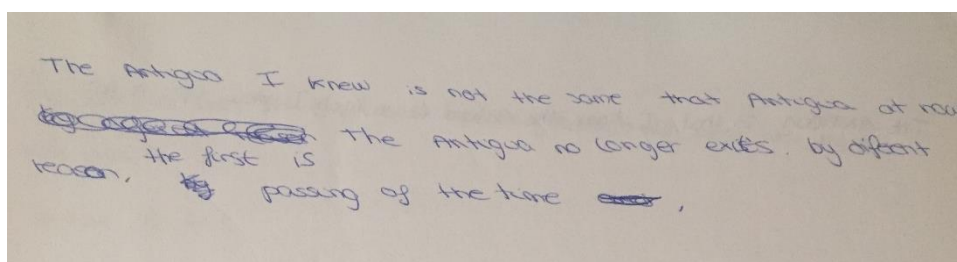


Figure 2. Running Dictation Sample 2

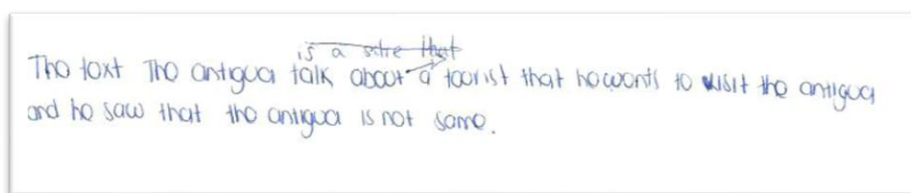


Figure 1 is a literal transcription of some lines of the text: “The Antigua that I knew” (l.1); “That Antigua no longer exists” (l.3); “the passing of time” (l.5). Even the 1st person singular used by the narrator is kept in the summary. In contrast, figure 2 shows inconsistencies. For example, students wrote that “the text the [A]ntigua talk[s] about a tourist that he [who] wants to visit the [A]ntigua”. This idea of a foreigner collides with the first sentence of the text: “the Antigua in which I grew up” (l.2). Besides that, students assigned a masculine profile to the narrator despite not having evidence to prove that, as discussed before. These facts made us realise that students were able to memorise several lines literally. And yet, they had little idea of what the text was about. For this reason, questions in the worksheet aimed at general aspects about the context of the extract rather than specific questions that could be answered by copying a sentence identically without the need of understanding it.

iii. *Informal Assessment*

Classwork was an important aspect of the process of learning as well as the grades. In fact, 10% of the final mark of the project was students’ participation, attitude and work.

4th of ESO students showed an active engagement in all the activities proposed – both the Drive Presentation and the worksheets. Although students had different levels, groups were arranged in a balanced manner. Therefore, differences in attainment were reduced because learners at a lower level had the support of their classmates. In general, group work during the sessions was gratifying, as students were equally implied. Obviously, there were exceptions and in a specific group only one girl did all the hard work. Nonetheless, their team members paid attention to her work. Besides students’ interest in the topic and appreciation of the activities proposed, part of the success might be due to the help of the other teacher. The fact that there were two teachers to monitor students’ undertaking of the tasks made it easier for all of us.

The analysis of 1st of Bachillerato was a bit more challenging. Students seemed more reluctant to participate –be it because of the nature of the activity or because they were shy. Nevertheless, they were more mature in some aspects and could perform the task more efficiently. There were two groups of performance clearly distinguished. On the one hand, some students served an active role and performed the task responsibly. Within this group,

some students were highly attracted by the topic—in fact, one of them was acquainted with Kaur's work— and showed a great commitment towards the activity and discrimination issues. Others simply wanted to obtain a good grade and completed the worksheet thoroughly to achieve their purpose. On the other hand, a small number of students showed a negative attitude towards the task. Although they participated when they were monitored, other students were in charge of the completion of the worksheet.

iv. *Content Evaluation (Worksheets: Poem Analysis and Tweets and Comments made by Celebrities)*

The completion of the worksheet by 4th of ESO students was quite satisfying. Despite time restrictions during the 1st session, students could complete most of the questions. Some of them offered more elaborated responses than others. Nevertheless, the main aspects of the poems were reflected in all the worksheets. Furthermore, most students could relate the scenes described by Rupī Kaur with some personal events, news or books and films. Only two groups could answer the last question on the poem analysis worksheet: "How can sexual harassment be prevented?", to what they responded that education and women's self-esteem and sense of power were the solutions. In addition, an improvement in the comments in the second worksheet could be discerned. Despite the complexity of texts, they offered more detailed answers and used the vocabulary reviewed at the beginning of the class.

Students of 1st of Bachillerato also did a great job completing the worksheets. They had more time to perform the poem analysis which is reflected in their responses. Nonetheless, a difference in the level of English and maturity could be distinguished across the groups. Out of the five groups, three of them offered well-argued responses, whereas the other two responded with short answers or did not complete the task despite having enough time to do so. These students were more acquainted with the terms explained at the beginning of session two. Thus, they already used them in the first worksheet. This is the reason why less progress between activities could be discerned in this group. They also were very critical towards sexual harassment and education and a more severe punishment were their suggestions to prevent sexual discrimination and abuse.

v. *Audio or Video Recording*

Eighteen 4th ESO students out of twenty-three recorded themselves reading the poem and five did not complete the task. In general, students' interpretation of the task was good. Fluency was the most remarkable aspect of this group. With some exceptions, most people obtained more than 7 out of 10 in this section. Nonetheless, the marks on pronunciation were more varied. Some students did an amazing job, whereas others made little effort in

rehearsing at home. Since they had all the materials to check the pronunciation of words, this section was the most strictly graded. Finally, with regards to intonation, students also performed differently. In contrast to pronunciation, this was the most difficult part, so students were not graded particularly low. Moreover, it has to be taken into account that this group did not have as many chances to practice intonation as the group of 1st of Bachillerato. Nevertheless, some of them expressed the feeling required for the excerpt. However, others did a more lineal representation of the poems and tweets.

In turn, twenty-one out of the twenty-six students in 1st of Bachillerato sent the recording and five did not perform the task. In their case, fluency was also the most salient section of all three. Grades in pronunciation were also good in general and only 6 students had a grade below B. Finally, regarding intonation, most students offered an acceptable interpretation of the excerpts they read. However, only five students obtained a grade A. Students had practised intonation at different stages during the sessions. In addition, they had recorded their videos and audios in class, so they could ask for feedback. For all those reasons, the researchers were stricter with their products than with 4th of ESO students. Nevertheless, they still obtained good marks.

vi. *Evaluation Sheet*

4th ESO students were given the evaluation sheet as a homework task a day prior to Easter Holidays. Some of them did not attend school on the following day and this is why only twelve students handed in the document. It is surprising that, despite allowing them to respond in their native language, except one student all of them answered in English.

Regarding the part of reading comprehension, there was a disparity of opinions: five students found the meaning of the texts difficult whereas seven had no problems in understanding all the words. Nevertheless, they all agreed in the fact that context is important to understand specific words of a text and the meaning underlying and framing it.

In terms of fluency, all students admitted being able to read the text quickly enough to sound natural. Although some of them attributed this fact to practice or the memorisation of passages, most of them thought that meaning was also a factor influencing their lack of fluency. For instance, a student said: "After working on it, I could read it quicker because I knew all that I was reading so it was easier". Also, they thought that the purpose and attitude of the speaker were important when a text was read aloud. However, although eight of them empathised with the writer or the speaker, four had problems expressing the same feelings. One of the most repeated reasons was: "Those people have had experiences and feelings which I haven't had". All of them, though, agreed on the fact that reading comprehension

and fluency were linked. However, rather than considering it a bidirectional relation, some thought that comprehension affected fluency and others stated that it was vice versa.

Finally, with regards to critical thinking, two of them said they never judged what they found on the internet, four of them said they sometimes did (depending on the content), and the rest said they always analysed online content. From the two former groups, two of them were not sure if they would have a critical view of what they read on the internet in the future. However, all of them enjoyed the activity and found it really interesting. Three of them referred to group discussion as a useful tool to learn.

In turn, twenty students of 1st of Bachillerato completed the evaluation sheet. Eleven of them did it in Spanish and nine in English. As to reading comprehension, there was also a diversity of opinions regarding the difficulty of the text: 15 students thought that it was easy to understand whereas the rest had problems in understanding the meaning without help. All of them considered that context was important to guess the meaning of words and to have a better comprehension of the purpose of the text. Nevertheless, some students admitted having used a translator to check words in Spanish. As to the introduction of background information about the author and the text, a student said: “Leer el texto varias veces y tratar de entender no solo lo que pone, sino también lo que quiere dar a entender el autor ayuda bastante”.

In terms of fluency, except one, all students agreed that after analysing the texts, they could be read more easily. For example, a student explained: “After reading it and answering all the questions, it was easier to read and understand the text because we got used to the words and the topic.” They also agreed on the fact that the purpose and attitude of the speaker were important to understand what they wanted to represent and to empathise with the text. However, 17 learners had difficulties in interpreting the text. Some of them attributed their problems to pronunciation issues; others said they had problems in expressing feelings in English: “En inglés no sabía poner voz de enfadada”; others had not been through the same experiences and could not position themselves in the speaker’s shoes; others were aware of the fact that they had to interpret and did not consider themselves good actors and actresses: “Es algo actuado y no natural”. Yet all of them were aware of the link between reading comprehension and fluency.

Finally, regarding critical thinking, most students acknowledged having analysing skills when reading posts on the internet, either always (50%) or sometimes (40%). Nevertheless, 10% did not pay attention to the content of discriminatory tweets. Five of them were not sure of if they would analyse the posts they encountered in the future as in detail as they had worked in class, but they would be more critical. In relation to the question “Do you think

these activities are interesting and helpful?”, one student admitted not having learned anything new. Therefore, he would not like to do these types of activities in the future. However, the rest assured enjoying them and there was positive feedback: “I think this topic is very important because we never ‘study’ it at school. They are interesting and helpful because if we talk about it, some people raise awareness. Nowadays we talk about this topic on social media. However, it still happens”; “Sí me gustaría, porque trabajando cosas de la sociedad podemos aprender mucho más y también aprender inglés.”

5. CONCLUSIONS

Act Up for Equality! was a project designed for a three-fold purpose: teaching different reading strategies to digital native students; for a specific target: Secondary students of 4th of ESO and 1st of Bachillerato; and in a specific way: through the sequencing of activities designed from authentic materials.

Regarding the first objective formulated, it was successfully achieved. Although some students were already acquainted with different reading strategies, especially at the word and semantic level, they improved them both and adopted a new perspective towards reading. Thus, from then on they were also capable of relating the texts under analysis to personal experiences or events from other textual or visual sources.

Besides that, through the drama technique known as Reader’s Theatre, they worked on texts in a completely different way and learners became aware of the strong relationship between reading comprehension and fluency. In addition, they worked on expression and interpretation of texts in order to turn them into meaningful sources and deeply understand the attitude and purpose of the writers or speakers. However, this latter part was quite challenging for most students as they were not used to perform texts or could not empathise with the feelings and events depicted in the texts.

The interdependence among elements and across skills and topics was encouraged rather than the teaching of specific words and structures. This was proved in the students’ analysis of texts, which showed a correlation of knowledge and an improvement of expression and understanding from one session to another. This was done through the use of genres familiar to the students. Although they analysed literary texts in the form of a poem, which they were not used to, they also examined formats which were much more common in their everyday lives, such as tweets and Instagram posts among others. This way, they engaged in the task and offered a more positive attitude than they had done with reading activities included in textbooks.

Finally, they also participated in a discussion on Gender Inequality. Some students were more attracted to the topic than others, as reflected in their daily performance in class. However, they developed a critical attitude towards content they are prone to find when they surf on the Internet on different social networks and websites. In fact, most students stated that this project helped them to adopt a more judgmental attitude towards online content in the future.

In general, the results of this experience have been fruitful. Nevertheless, there are some factors to take into account that might have affected the final outcomes of the project. First of all, time constraint regarding the duration of a class had negative effects. Although classes in Secondary Education are supposed to last 55 minutes, the truth is that they only last for 45 or 50 minutes. Similarly, as students worked in teams and groups were large, the teacher could not monitor if all of them had worked in a balanced way.

Regarding Reader's Theatre, two approaches could be adopted in drama pedagogy: small and large scale. Due to time restrictions, a small scale approach was developed in this project. Notwithstanding, to take full advantages of the benefits of theatre education in EFL, a large-scale approach towards RT would be much more effective. Hence, a future research project could be oriented towards the implementation of Reader's Theatre in a large-scale in the learning of English in Secondary Education. Therefore, the dramatic reading of a whole play could be considered. That way, more time could be devoted to aspects of fluency and expressive reading of a text in a foreign language, as most students have problems in reading aloud and showing their feelings both in their native tongue and in a foreign language.

It is also worth mentioning that from all the students who completed the final evaluation sheet, only one admitted his reluctance to repeat this kind of activity. Nonetheless, the rest of the students stated their enjoyment of the project. Therefore, this approach could be adopted to work other cross-curricular subjects such as immigration, refugees, politics or media manipulation among others. Both to fill the lack of information in textbooks on these kinds of subjects and to work on critical skills towards content related to these topics that students can find on the Internet.

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LITERATURA

Representing Dissenting Voices in the Digital Press: Victims of Sexual and Physical Abuses in Irish Industrial Schools

Representado Voces Discordantes en la Prensa Digital: Víctimas de Abuso Sexual y Físico en los Colegios Industriales Irlandeses

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Resumen

De acuerdo con Butler, como individuos políticos todos estamos involucrados en constantes relaciones de poder, pero los grupos minoritarios están más expuestos a la violencia; sus vidas valen menos y su reconocimiento en la esfera pública es negado (Butler, *Precarious Life* 20, 34). En Irlanda, esas voces discordantes eran niños que no se atenían al código moral católico siendo apartados de la esfera pública y confinados en reformatorios durante el siglo veinte. Tras su liberación de estas instituciones, donde sufrieron abuso físico, psicológico y sexual, estas víctimas fueron silenciadas y apartadas de la vida pública. Usando la teoría de poder de Butler y estudios de Trauma (Kaplan, Herman, Laub), nuestra intención en este artículo es doble: primero, ver cómo la prensa digital ha desafiado el poder normativo dando visibilidad a los sujetos desplazados y segundo, ver cómo la prensa digital ha pedido a la sociedad y a los responsables una respuesta ética para curar las heridas de las víctimas.

Palabras clave: Escuelas Industriales, prensa, vulnerabilidad, trauma, curación.

Abstract

According to Butler, we are all engaged in constant power relations as political individuals,

but minority groups are more exposed to violence; their lives are worth less and their recognition in the public sphere is negated (Butler, *Precarious Life* 20, 34). In Ireland, those dissenting voices were children who did not conform to the Catholic moral code of behaviour, being banished from the public sphere, and confined in Industrial Schools during the twentieth century. After their release from these institutions, where they suffered physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, these victims were silenced and concealed in the public sphere. Using Butler's theory of power and Trauma Studies (Kaplan, Herman, Laub), our intention in this article is twofold: firstly, to see how the digital press challenged normative power by giving visibility to displaced subjects and secondly, to see how the digital press asked both society and perpetrators for ethical responses to heal the wounds of victims.

Keywords: Industrial Schools, press, vulnerability, trauma, and healing.

1. INTRODUCTION

During the twentieth century, Ireland was characterised by a strong nationalism, a deep Catholic identity, and a repressive and coercive system subjugating those who deviated from the norm (Smith, Ireland's Magdalen 2; Luddy, Women in Ireland 157-161). A sovereign power, camouflaged under the guise of governmentality, decided who was accepted in society and who was excluded. Apart from that State's power, the Church displayed its authority controlling people's morality and punishing those who deviated from the established code of behaviour. The procedure during the twentieth century was to send marginal sectors of society to reformatory institutions. Among those institutions that crowded the Irish landscape, we could find Magdalene Asylums, Mother and Baby Homes, Lock Hospitals, Mental Hospitals, Workhouses, and Industrial Schools. All of them welcomed those considered "outcasts" such as prostitutes, unmarried mothers, lunatics, and orphans (Smith, Ireland's Magdalen; Finnegan). Our focus in this article is on Irish Reformatory Schools which were created and managed by the state since the 1850s; the first one was established in 1859. By 1870 ten of those schools had been certified, and during the 1870s most of them were reclassified as Industrial Schools. By 1871 the number grew up to fifty-one, and by 1900 seventy Industrial Schools could be found throughout Ireland (O'Sullivan and O'Donnell 23).

Poverty, illegitimacy, orphanhood and delinquency were the main causes of children's confinement in Industrial Schools (Keating 97). The aim of these institutions was to help those in need but given the high rise of imprisonment rates during the first decades of the

twentieth century, these institutions worked as alternatives to the prison. These institutions were recognised under several laws namely, the Youth Offenders Act (1901), The Criminal Justice Act (1914), The Children and Young Person's Act (1908), The School Attendance Act (1926), and the Probation of Offenders Act (1907), among others (Fahey; Groome; Kenny; Lynch and Minton). According to Tony Fahey, schooling was compulsory in Ireland; the 1926 School Attendance Act imposed a fine on those parents whose children missed school and if this practice persisted, offenders were sent to Industrial Schools where they had to remain up to the age of seventeen (Fahey 380). These reformatory institutions played the same role as the prison where they were controlled and punished (Fahey 380). Despite the fact of being founded by the State, it did not take much time for the Catholic Church to manage these institutions (O'Sullivan and O'Donnell 24). Throughout the twentieth century, the Irish Catholic Church took control of the education and health systems and became "the principal provider of social welfare and service agencies and the principal force of consequence in developing social policies" (Crotty 121).

Both the State and the Catholic Church collaborated in the spread of a national identity discourse in which marginal sectors of society did not fit (McCormick 79). Considered a potential threat to society, problematic children's confinement in Industrial Schools was not really meant to reform them but, as Smith claims, "to confine and render invisible segments of the population whose very existence threatened Ireland's national imaginary, the vision of Ireland enshrined in President Eamon de Valera's 1937 constitution" (Smith, "Remembering Ireland's" 112). Yet, the existence of Industrial Schools came to an end in the last decades of the twentieth century. The disclosure of morally doubtful historical facts about the Irish Catholic Church endangered the hegemony of this group especially after the publication of The Ryan and Murphy Reports (2009). These reports investigated cases of abused children by priests in Industrial Schools and offered implementation plans for those traumatised victims. These documents confirmed the rumours about the immoral attitude of religious members who made use of their power to subdue young children.

After the Murphy Report (2009) and the Ryan Report (2009) were published, the press mediated in this social, cultural and political conflict standing on the side of the victims, condemning the Irish Church and the State as perpetrators, and challenging normative power, which established what should be represented in the media. Butler claims that one of the ways of granting public recognition to people is precisely through the media, allowing those who are not supposed to appear in the public sphere to be seen and heard:

... Media can function as part of 'infrastructural support' when it facilitates modes of solidarity and establishes new spatio-temporal dimensions of the public sphere, including not only those who can appear within the visual images of the public, but those who are, through coercion, fear, or necessity, living outside the reach of the visual frame. (Butler, "Rethinking Vulnerability" 14)

But the press did not only offer visibility and recognition to the victims, it also claimed justice and compensation exposing the trauma these victims suffered. According to Trauma Studies, verbalising trauma is the first step towards the restoration of the victim (Laub 70). In that process, the help offered by the community is of paramount importance (Herman 70). In our case of analysis, the press acted as a supportive device for the victims in their healing process against the silencing attitude of the Church and the State: it encouraged the victims to speak up and claim justice and compensation.

Much literature has been written about these reformatory institutions since the 1990s, but the main focus has been on the abuse these children suffered: Sinead Pembroke analysed in her article *Industrial Schools as forms of violence* following Foucault's theory of discipline, Harry Ferguson offers a historical analysis of child abuse prior and during Industrial Schools, and Anthony Keating adopts a political stance in his analysis of child abuse in Industrial Schools. Some other scholars have focused on providing a historical overview of these institutions such as Moira J. Maguire, Jane Barnes, and Sarah-Anne Buckley's research. These articles and books have provided us with the historical background to analyse Industrial Schools from a different stance. In this article, we offer the perspective of the journalists, who have also mediated in this social and political conflict, standing on the side of the victims. Our focus in this article is on the representation of this political and social topic in the digital press throughout the twenty-first century. With that aim, we make use of a wide range of digital newspapers such as *The Irish Post*, *The Journal.ie*, *The Guardian*, *The Irish News*, *The NBC News*, *The Independent.IE*, and *The Irish Times*. However, we have also used non-digital newspapers with an online version like *The Associated Press*, *the Irish Examiner*, *the Irish Mirror*, *the Daily News*, and *The Daily Mail*. All these newspapers serve us as sources of analysis where dissenting voices have been given voice and which have allowed the spread of a concealed reality in Ireland for so long. In this digital era, online newspapers have gained momentum against the printed press as accessible sources of information. The possibility to reach a wider audience makes the digital press the perfect tool to discuss international events and to stimulate public debate (Khalid and Ahmed 8). Furthermore, the reader becomes an active part by being able to comment the news and post their opinion (Nielsen et al. 14). Nevertheless, the speed with which articles are posted can make us question the veracity of the news. For that reason, we have selected several

sources to contrast the information analysed here. Anyway, it is undeniable that the digital press has an important role in society nowadays as one of the main sources of information. Most of the papers employed here are Irish, but some of them are also American namely, The Associated Press, The NBC News and the Daily News, which shows that this social issue has great transcendence not only in Ireland but also overseas. Although some of them do not clearly ascribe to any political party, the majority have a centre ideology except for The Daily Mail and The Independent.IE which have a conservative one, and The Irish Times with a liberal one. Taking into account that these snippets were published between 2006 and 2019 when both the centre party Fianna Fáil and the right party Fine Gael governed, this varied ideology present in these newspapers shows that the press put aside their political ideology in order to reveal the truth about a traumatic past Ireland tried to hide. As Khalid and Ahmed claim, “The relationship of the press with the government primarily depends on the existing political order. In countries, which espouse liberal democracy, the press has evolved as an independent institution (the fourth eState) acting as a moderator or watchdog on behalf of the public” (8). Either conservative or liberal, all of them raised awareness of the damage caused to thousands of children in Ireland, as we shall see.

Our intention in this article is twofold: firstly, to see how the digital press challenged the normative power by giving visibility and voice to displaced subjects and secondly, to see how the press demanded both society and perpetrators for an ethical response to heal the wounds of traumatised victims. For the first part, we will employ Butler’s theory of power focusing on her idea that some people are less worthy of recognition than others in the public sphere. We will explore Butler’s ideas of representation, vulnerability, and power relations in connection with Irish reformatory institutions to see how the press acknowledged the existence of thousands of victims whose voices had been negated. For the second part, we will use Trauma Studies to explore issues such as accountability, restoration, and healing. In this section, we will employ Kaplan’s idea of silence as a political mechanism to see how it was challenged by the testimonies of survivors. We will also explore Laub and Herman’s concept of witnessing as a healing tool for the victims in connection with the press. We will see how the press recognised the victims publicly and how they helped in their healing process claiming justice and compensation for them.

2. GIVING VISIBILITY AND VOICE TO THE ABUSED

As political individuals constantly engaged in power relations, our bodies are controlled and undone by others. Yet, minority groups are especially vulnerable and more exposed to violence. Their lives are less worthy and their recognition in the public sphere is negated

(Butler, *Precarious Life* 34). Thousands of children in Ireland, mainly orphans and illegitimate children, were ascribed to this minority group and hidden behind the walls of Industrial Schools during the twentieth century. Their recognition in the public sphere would suppose the acceptance that something was going wrong in the Catholic country. Dissenting voices have always been banished from the public sphere otherwise they would destabilise the nation and its foundation (Butler, *Precarious Life* 34-36).

In 2007 James Smith coined the phrase “Ireland’s architecture of containment” to refer to the conspiracy of silence in which Ireland has been immersed since the last decades of the twentieth century concerning sexual immorality. The Carrigan Report (1931), which dealt with immoral practises such as prostitution and illegitimacy, was concealed and never published since its findings contradicted the ideal image of the country fabricated in the post-independent period (Smith, *Ireland’s Magdalen* 2-7). Instead of looking for solutions to put an end to these social problems such as prostitution, sexual crime, abuse and infanticide, the government, in coalition with the Church, adopted some punitive legislation against women and children by which they were marginalised and confined in reformatory institutions such as the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1935) and the Illegitimate Children Act (1930) (Smith, *Ireland’s Magdalen* 17-19).

According to Butler, there is a path towards the dehumanisation of anyone: violence through omission (*Precarious Life* 34). In the case of twentieth-century Ireland, those who did not conform to the Catholic code of behaviour did not only suffer violence through omission during their confinement, but also after their release. Being offered no representation implied the failure in addressing the victims, therefore they did not exist:

The structure of address is important for understanding how moral authority is introduced and sustained if we accept not just that we address others when we speak, but that in some way we come to exist, as it were, in the moment of being addressed, and something about our existence proves precarious when that address fails. More emphatically, however, what binds us morally has to do with how we are addressed by others in ways that we cannot overtake or avoid. (Butler, *Precarious Life* 130)

Despite the silence surrounding Industrial Schools, the reality behind these institutions finally came to the surface through reports, newspapers, literature, popular culture, and survivors’ testimonies at the end of the twentieth century (Smith, *Ireland’s Magdalen* 115). The analysis of all these cultural products is beyond the scope of this article. Alternatively, our focus here is on the digital press’s coverage of these dramatic events.

Some of the main concerns for journalists have been to break the wall of silence surrounding the abuse of thousands of children under the guardianship of the Church. The fact of incarcerating an individual, either in a prison, in an Industrial School or any other reformatory institution, is a display of power executed by those who can deprive someone of his/her freedom. But, apart from incarceration, thousands of children suffered constant physical and sexual abuses from the part of the nuns and priests who took care of them. Child-rearing used to rely mainly on corporeal punishment which was legal up to 1982 and did not become a criminal offence until 1996, however, the punitive discipline used in Industrial Schools went farther as a display of power over those vulnerable children (Fahey 391; Groome 474-479; Keating 98; Lynch and Minton 79).

Within some of the headlines about Industrial Schools published from 2009 to 2019 we can read the words “abuse” (Kelly; *Daily News*), “raped” (Pogatchnik) and “dead” (Ó Fátharta), which summarise the reality thousands of children lived in Irish Industrial Schools. To break the wall of silence surrounding the wrongdoings of the past and recognise the victims of abuse, the press offered the testimonies of some of them. As examples, *The Irish Post* offered the testimony of Mary Lodato who was sent to an Industrial School where she suffered sexual, physical and psychological abuse (Audley); *The Independent.IE* echoed the death of Fergus who was beaten by a Christian Brother in an Industrial School and died in hospital days after. And, *NBC News* echoed the sexual abuse Tom Sweeney, Mannix Flynn, and Christine Buckley suffered during their stay in an Industrial School (*NBC News*).

These testimonies have been key in the understanding of thousands of children’s reality in Ireland. The fact of openly discussing this matter challenges the official version given by the government and the Church about the functioning of reformatory institutions. As we can see, the press recovered banished voices and broke the silence surrounding Industrial Schools and the abuse victims had suffered inside. Butler claims that violent events should be openly discussed to find the roots of the problem, to learn from them and to avoid future violent acts; we must challenge power and tell our stories (Butler, *Precarious Life* 2-3). The challenging attitude of the victims supported by the press did, on the one hand, enable them to break the wall of silence and, on the other, question official versions of what happened inside these institutions. The reality is being revealed and the perpetrators are being accounted responsible for what they did or allowed to happen. By offering the direct testimonies of the victims, the digital press presented a hidden social reality supporting the victims and granting them a space to talk freely.

In recent years, we have also discovered that further damage to these children was exerted by the Church and the State, which experimented on some children who inhabited Mother

and Baby Homes. Carried out by the pharmaceutical company the Wellcome Foundation, they investigated the response the children had to diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, and rubella (Ó Fátharta). These vaccine trials were firstly investigated in 1997. In 2000, the report came out—the “Report on Three Clinical Trials Involving Babies and Children in Institutional Settings, 1960/61, 1970 and 1973”. Yet, when the hearings were going to start, they were stopped following a 2002 Supreme Court sentence (McDonagh). As McDonagh’s article shows, thousands of victims are still claiming justice for the damage caused to them during their childhood. These experiments carried out on them should be considered a violation of their integrity since they did not give their consent (Ó Fátharta). But instead of persecuting the perpetrators of this crime against humanity, the State drew a veil over the issue. Contrary to the silencing attitude of the government, which stopped the investigation of this issue, the press unveiled this scandal by bringing it back and by allowing the survivors to speak up. Some examples are the *Irish Examiner* which offered the experience of Mari Steed as a victim of these trials, and *The Independent.ie* which echoed the desire of the victims to be compensated: “The victims’ basic requests appear to be far from unreasonable; an apology for what was done to them; full medical screening to see if they have suffered any damaging long-term effects from the trials; and psychiatric counselling to help them get over their ordeal” (McDonagh).

The latest news about Irish reformatory institutions concerns Mother and Baby Homes and the adoption business that existed in Ireland during the twentieth century. The public discussion of this event granted by the press, which had been concealed for many years, should be considered another example of social denounce and of giving voice to the victims. Illegitimacy and unmarried motherhood were the main concerns for the Irish government since the 1930s. Maternity out of wedlock in Ireland was considered a sinful act contravening the religious morality of the time and bringing shame to the family (Luddy, “Unmarried Mothers” 109-126). As a result of the high rates of illegitimacy from 1923 to the 1970s, different laws were enacted to control and regulate women’s sexuality (Luddy, “Unmarried Mothers” 111). After the enactment of the Adoption Act (1952), Magdalene Laundries helped with the adoption of illegitimate children given the prohibition for their mothers to raise them (O’Sullivan and O’Donnell 130; Smith, *Ireland’s Magdalen* 53). During World War Two, a black market of adoption was set in America and they found Ireland a potential country to obtain babies (Milotte 22). Sean Ross Abbey in Tipperary, St Patrick’s Home in Dublin, Castlepollard in Westmeath, St Patrick’s Guild in Dublin, St Clare’s in Stamullen, Co Meath, and The Sacred Heart in Cork were some of the adoption societies Mike Milotte highlights in his article; these institutions were involved in the business of

sending Irish illegitimate children to America until the single-mother's allowance in the 1990s ended with this black market (Milotte 83, 186).

In January 2019, the *Irish Mirror* covered the social campaign initiated by survivors of Mother and Baby Homes. These women started to put pressure on the government to inquire into these institutions and the illegal adoptions carried out by religious orders (Pownall). As this article claims, survivors are still seeking restitution and help from the government and the Church. Yet, some children were not lucky enough to be adopted, some of them died inside these institutions. The Tuam scandal came out to light in 2017 when the excavation of a burial site revealed thousands of human remains. After that, survivors claimed a meeting with the Taoiseach to inquire into the deaths in Mother and Baby Homes (Carty). Two years later, the *Irish Mirror* put on the spotlight the scandal surrounding the Tuam Mother and Baby Home again, where thousands of infants died and were buried in unmarked graves (Flanagan). This article outlines the mistreatment and malnourishment thousands of women and their illegitimate children suffered inside these institutions. In the same line, the *Irish Examiner* highlights from the records that 470 infants and 10 women died in Bessborough between 1934 and 1953, and that were 269 deaths between 1934 and 1967 in Sean Ross Abbey (Ó Fátharta). Most of those women and children were buried without even being recorded. Their bodies were concealed under unmarked graves and their lives and identities negated. This silence and lack of recognition may be considered a kind of violence against them, a deprivation of these children's identities and histories. In Butler's words, "... obituary functions as the instrument by which grievability is publicly distributed. It is the means by which a life becomes, or fails to become, a publicly grievable life, an icon for national self-recognition, the means by which a life becomes noteworthy. As a result, we have to consider the obituary as an act of nation-building" (Butler, *Precarious Life* 34).

As *The Daily Mail* claims, the victims "long demanded that the truth of their experiences be documented and made public" (Kelly). Thanks to the publication of these snippets, Amy Coles affirms in the *Irish Mirror* that all Irish society is aware of the past now; in this article the voice of Irish people commenting on the baby home scandal is heard. The victims' willingness to tell their stories contrasts with the silencing and concealing attitude adopted by the State and Church. Hence, it should be considered a proof of the generally accepted idea that the perpetrators have hindered the victims' discussion of these events. In that process of revealing the truth about a hidden past, the press challenged normative power by giving visibility, legitimacy as well as recognition to displaced subjects and by allowing them to raise their voices.

The challenging attitude of the digital press revealing a truth hidden by the government, makes us question these newspapers' political ideology. Either with a conservative (*The Daily Mail* and *The Independent.IE*) or centre ideology (*The Daily Mail*, the *Daily News*, the *Irish Examiner*, *The Irish Post*, *NBC News*, and the *Irish Mirror*), these snippets reveal the damage caused to thousands of children in Ireland against the silencing attitude of the Church and the State. This attitude leaves clear the newspapers' involvement in the spread of a social reality away from the political influence.

It is true that in the process of rehabilitation after trauma, the victim loses his/her voice when the witness speaks in their name; in that case, the victim is objectified, as Fassin claims (517). Moreover, these oral and life narratives are shaped by the presence of an interviewer who conditions the performance by interpreting the oral testimonies and by focusing on those aspects he/she wants to emphasize (Gray 13). Yet, in our case of study, the press did not objectify the victims but empowered them; the victims have been given all the possible resources to recuperate their voices and identities against the homogenising discourse, which objectified them. Finally, all these snippets from the press have given us a complete view of this historical event, which came to light thanks to the active participation of the press in it.

3. TRAUMA VICTIMS: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RESPONSES

In the healing process of any traumatised victim, Herman affirms that the response of the community is of paramount importance:

... The response of the community has a powerful influence on the ultimate resolution of the trauma. Restoration of the breach between the traumatized person and the community depends, first upon public acknowledgement of the traumatic event and, second, upon some form of community action. Once it is publicly recognized that a person has been harmed, the community must take action to assign responsibility for the harm and to repair the injury. These two responses- recognition and restitution- are necessary to rebuild the survivor's sense of order and justice. (Herman 70)

Irish society has been involved in the spread of Industrial Schools' reality trying to give recognition to the victims. To help them, several political and social demonstrations have been held throughout Ireland. In 2009, Justice for Magdalenes organisation started its campaign to achieve a State apology and a compensation scheme for the survivors. Although they focused on Magdalene Laundries, they also gave voice to those who were confined in Industrial Schools. This response can be explained using Kaplan's concept of "vicarious trauma", defined as the empathetic response a witness experimented when bearing witness

to a traumatic event in the media (Kaplan 87-90). After reading about these traumatic events about the children in Industrial Schools, Irish society felt the ethical commitment of helping the victims.

Concerning the role of the perpetrators in healing the wounds of traumatised victims, the Church still negates its accountability and conceals the records:

Victims of the system have long demanded that the truth of their experiences be documented and made public, so that children in Ireland never endure such suffering again. But most leaders of religious orders have rejected the allegations as exaggerations and lies and testified to the commission that any abuses were the responsibility of often long-dead individuals. (Daily News)

After the publication of the Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (2009), the Church denied the abuses and refused to appear in public (Pogatchnik). As an example, the Sisters of Bon Secours denied the existence of the burial pit at Tuam when the investigation started (Gold). Some of these institutions' records were made public, like Sean Ross Abbey's one. These Mother and Baby Homes' records registered the death of 269 children, but the death of many children, whose bodies were discovered, had not been listed (Ó Fátharta). As a result of the demand to make the names of the perpetrators public, the Church continued to protect the identity of those accused of abuse (*NBC News*; *The Daily Mail*). The fact that both centrist (*The Associated Press*, *The Guardian*, the *Irish Examiner*) and conservative (*The Daily Mail*) newspapers criticise the Church's avoidance of responsibility leaves clear, once again, that the main premise of the digital press was to denounce the abuses children suffered and to claim justice for them.

As for the State, it turned its back on the victims denying their collaboration with the Church. The publication of the Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (2009) did not alleviate the uneasiness among victims due to its biased nature. Mentioning the report, *The Irish Times* claims: "The Residential Institutions Redress Board process was badly flawed—it was a goldmine for lawyers while damaged survivors were aggressively subjected to humiliating interrogation and intimidation" (*The Irish Times*). The inconsistencies found in the report led survivors to attack it. *The Associated Press* and *NBC News* highlight that despite the body of evidence existing about children's abuse inside reformatory institutions, and the State's recognition of those abuses, these religious orders involved were not taken to prison. Therefore, there has been neither social nor penal justice for the perpetrators which increases the damage caused to the victims. As we said before, Herman claims that recognition and restitution are two main responses to heal the victims, however, the lack of justice granted to the victims hinders their recovery. The lack of accountability from the

part of the perpetrators and the concealment of the victims' identities reduced the possibilities of overcoming a traumatic past.

Moreover, no real names, whether of victims or perpetrators, appeared in The Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (2009) final document. Instead, the victims would receive economic compensation as long as they did not sue the State and the Church. This subornation, as we can interpret it, reinforces Smith's idea of "Ireland's architecture of containment" which is still existent today. The silencing of the Irish past works in detriment for those victims whose voices and identities were being negated. However, the Irish State finally acknowledged its responsibility by offering a public apology and a compensation scheme. Yet, it changed nothing for the victims: "Some victims emphasized that nothing—not even criminal convictions of their long-ago tormentors—would ever put right their psychological wounds and make their nightmares go away" (*NBC News*). The fact that the perpetrators have not been criminally persecuted supposes the avoidance of responsibility towards those affected (Pogatchnik). In commenting the Tuam Home scandal¹, *The Guardian* claims that many women were placed outside the scope of the inquiry, which supposed the impossibility to achieve justice and compensation (Gold). Given this lack of commitment towards the victims, the press made a call to the Irish society to achieve justice. According to Kaplan, silence and forgetting are the common mechanisms used by traumatised people to survive (74). Added to that, the imposed silence from the part of the Irish Church and the State contributed also to the invisibility of Industrial Schools' victims. As Kaplan affirms, silencing is encouraged for political and social reasons since acknowledging the truth could damage whole nations (74). In the light of the persistent silence surrounding reformatory institutions, the press initiated a restorative project aimed at revealing the truth and claiming justice for the victims.

In the complex process of overcoming the traumatic experience they suffered during their stay in an Industrial School, some of the victims have found the courage to raise their voices against the injustices committed. As examples, Mary Lodato published an autobiography about her time in an Industrial School and the abuse she suffered there (Audley), and Mary Collins—a survivor—wrote a book entitled *Stolen Lives* about the abuse hundreds of children suffered in Industrial Schools (Brown). These survivors' testimonies are forms of actions which liberate them; in Doris Laub's words, " ... repossessioning one's life story through

¹ The Tuam Home scandal refers to the discovery in 2019 of hundreds of children's remains who had been buried in unmarked graves in the Mother and Baby Home in Tuam run by the Bon Secours Sisters.

giving testimony is itself a form of action, of change, which one has to actually pass through in order to continue and complete the process of survival after liberation” (70).

Following Trauma Studies, one response to trauma is resignation, but the most common one is action, that is, finding the perpetrator and demanding justice and compensation (Laub 70). In these testimonies gathered by the press, the victims pinpoint the State and the Church as the responsible ones and urge them to recognise their fault. As examples, Christine Buckley says to the *NBC News*: “I do genuinely believe that it would have been a further step towards our healing if our abusers had been named and shamed” (*NBC News*). In commenting The report on the Commission to Inquire Into Child Abuse, John Kelly, from victim group Irish Survivors of Child Abuse, criticises the government for not having taken care of them as children and for allowing the Church to have control over their lives (Kelly). Finally, Derek Leinster, of Bethany Home Survivors group, criticises in the *Irish Mirror* the government’s inaction and the necessity to pursue the perpetrators legally (Pownall). Herman affirms that by making a public complaint or accusation, the survivor defies the perpetrator’s attempt to silence and isolate her/him, and she/he opens the possibility of finding new allies (210). In the case of Industrial Schools’ victims, they found in the digital press a tool to be able to talk about their traumas and claim restoration.

These survivors’ testimonies have been echoed by the press, which became a supporting device for spreading their truth and for helping them with their healing. Herman claims that when others bear witness to the testimony of a crime, they share the responsibility for restoring justice (210). The first witness that can be pointed out is the journalist. Once he/she listens to the victim, they develop a sense of commitment and responsibility towards the sufferer. The journalist’s response is to publish the victim’s story and to claim compensation; the press asked the perpetrators—Church and State—and the whole society for ethical responses to heal the wounds of victims as well as to restore and recognise their identities. The tone used by Finlay and the attack he makes to the Church and the State, reveals the necessity to name the perpetrators of this crime and claim justice and restoration. Moreover, Finlay’s attitude confirms Laub and Herman’s idea that no observer can remain untouched when bearing witness of traumatic events (Herman 7; Laub 66):

As someone who has always believed in the public service and will tend to come to its defence when it’s attacked, I find that deeply shocking. The thought that anyone could allow terrible, unspeakable things to happen to children and young women, and then try to hide their own mistakes behind bland generalities and formulaic apologies, is a betrayal of everything public service is supposed to be about. Justice cannot be done to Grace, and to other children whose names are seldom mentioned but whose lives were also terribly damaged, unless we know who, and why. If people

in the public service or in politics were complicit in any way with what happened, they must be identified and prosecuted. (Finlay).

The words “never forget”, “reveal”, “justice”, “shame” and “scandal” in the following headlines display the press’s attitude towards this event and the necessity to remember: “We must never forget terror of industrial schools” (*The Irish Times*); “We must stop claiming that ‘we never knew’ about child abuse at Catholic institutions” (Dwyer); “Survivors of Ireland’s mother and Baby scandal deserve justice” (Gold); “Catholic Church shamed by Irish abuse Report” (*NBC News*). The main claim of these newspapers was one of justice revealing the abuses hundreds of children suffered under the guardianship of the Church. Within these articles, journalists criticize the role of the State and the Church in not recognising the victims of sexual abuse in Industrial Schools, those who were separated from their mothers, and those who died inside and were buried in unmarked graves. As Herman claims, “remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of social order and for the healing of individual victims” (Herman, 1). After that, “a social context that affirms and protects the victim and that joins victim and witness in a common alliance” is needed (Herman 9).

In this healing process, the digital press has recognized and restored the victims offering them a platform to spread their truths. Taking responsibility is what these snippets claim not only for the perpetrators, but also for the whole society: “As a society, Ireland needs to address this fact that many knew of the abuse of children and ask why they did not or could not act. This will involve looking at the historic role of the Catholic Church in shaping ideas around morality and sex which made discussion of sexual abuse very difficult” (Dwyer). As Gold and Finlay put it in *The Guardian* and the *Irish Examiner* respectively, “The community doesn’t want a hierarchy of victims with so many left behind, but justice for all” (Gold); “If people in the public service or in politics were complicit in any way with what happened, they must be identified and prosecuted” (Finlay). By knowing the truth, more pressure was exerted on those who denied their fault.

After the response of the victim to blame the perpetrators and to claim justice and compensation publicly, a restoration process was initiated. In our case of analysis, reconciliation is not a possible alternative for these victims since they have not been recognised and helped by the government and the Church. However, these survivors have found support in the press, which has been completely involved and determined to bring this issue to light. As witnesses, journalists have contributed to the empowerment of the victims as one requisite for the victims’ recovery, as Herman claims (133).

Thanks to the digital press, some survivors of Industrial Schools have had a happy end since they have found their biological mothers, as it is the case of Cathy Crabb, who was reunited with her mother 62 years after she had given her in adoption (*Irish Mirror*). This article's story is a reflection of thousands of women who are still looking for their lost babies in Ireland. As Kaplan claims, trauma can never be completely healed, especially when the perpetrator still denies his/her fault (19). But the press, no matter their political ideology as we have seen, helped Industrial Schools' victims in coming to terms with their past and in their healing offering them recognition and visibility. To avoid silence, forgetting and denial, and to promote the healing of traumatised people, a political movement that supported and listened to those people is required (Herman 9). If an apology was offered to these victims in 1999, and a Redress Board was set up to give economic compensation to these victims in 2002, why is the press still persistent in claiming justice and restoration for the victims? The answers are varied: it seems that nothing has been restored to the victims who still urge compensation after more and more cases of abuse come to light; many of these victims fell out of the compensation scheme, and the Church still negates its implication in this historical crime. Hence, a long path is still to be trodden until a full acknowledgement and restoration of these victims is achieved.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Catholic moral rigidity during the twentieth century supposed the stigmatization of thousands of children in Ireland. Their confinement in Industrial Schools for their moral reformation was supported by several laws so the State was also accomplice of the damage caused to them. Butler's focus on vulnerable bodies and the invisibility of particular sectors of society produced by those in power serves us here to realise how thousands of marginalised children—illegitimate, truants, delinquents, poor and orphans—were confined and abused during the twentieth century in Ireland. Considered deviant from the religious perspective and delinquents from a legal point of view, they were excluded from society and their lives and identities negated.

During the 1970s, when the Industrial Schools system came to an end, the abuse and ill-treatment of thousands of children within these institutions were revealed. The Ryan and Murphy Reports (2009) were published out of the necessity to restore the victims, however, not much justice was granted to them. The silence surrounding institutional abuse is still persistent nowadays which hinders the restoration of the victims. The victims' lack of recognition and representation from the part of the Church and the State were translated into further damage. In that process of recognition of the wrongdoings of the past, the press

acted as a mediator between the victims and the perpetrators. By allowing the victims to speak up and to appear in the public sphere, the press challenged normative power that decides who is worthy of representation and recognition. The testimonies of survivors, together with the information provided by the press, have offered a new version of events which contrasts with the official one. The adoption business, the vaccine trials and the abuse of children are some unresolved issues in the history of Ireland, which have been concealed for fear of damaging the image of the country. Yet, the victims' necessities to come to terms with their pasts have brought them to light.

The wall of silence surrounding the institutionalisation of children built by the Irish State and the Church contributed to the invisibility of and damage to these victims. Yet, the press broke that silence rising awareness of the past and claiming now justice for these damaged people. In the complex process of overcoming the traumatic experience of having been confined in an Industrial School, the victims have raised their voices supported by the press. It did not only spread the truth of survivors, but the press also covered every step the victims have taken such as the social demonstrations carried out. As witnesses, journalists have joined the cause and have helped the victims to achieve justice and compensation.

We could say that the press offered those victims the possibility to be acknowledged gaining back their denied voice and agency. It also contributed to the individualisation of each victim against the homogenising and discriminatory discourse that existed. Furthermore, the press contributed to the easiness of the victims' healing caused by the trauma left on them after a life of sexual, physical and psychological abuse from the part of those who were supposed to take care of them. Journalists have not only spread the news, but they have also asked the responsible parties to compensate the victims. Yet the healing process is not still completed since the perpetrators still deny their accountability and many children have not been compensated yet. As we have seen, there is still much to do if we want to fully recognise, compensate and heal those victims.

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Ted Hughes's Nature Poetry and the Reconfiguration of the Sublime

La naturaleza en la poesía de Ted Hughes y la reconfiguración de lo sublime

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Resumen

Los animales y la naturaleza ocupan un lugar destacado en la poesía de Ted Hughes, que con frecuencia recrea su lado más salvaje. Hay quien desestima sus versos debido a esa violencia, pero hay también quien propone analizar sus efectos desde una perspectiva estética. En esa línea, este artículo explora las distintas maneras en las que la poesía de Hughes proporciona una experiencia de lo sublime, cuya teorización ha evolucionado en paralelo a la manera de entender nuestra relación con la naturaleza. Christopher Hitt, en particular, propone un modelo de lo “sublime ecológico” que no descarta enteramente el modelo anterior, pero que modifica su carácter antropocéntrico. En el artículo, propongo utilizar la poesía de Hughes para mostrar las posibilidades que ofrece el enfoque de Hitt y este concepto alternativo de lo sublime basado en una experiencia más ecocéntrica de la disrupción y la transcendencia que definen dicha categoría estética.

Palabras clave: Ted Hughes, Christopher Hitt, lo sublime ecológico, poesía de la naturaleza

Abstract

Animals and nature figure prominently in Ted Hughes's poems, which often focus on the savagery of both. Some have dismissed his verse on account of this, while others suggest adopting an aesthetic perspective to consider the range of effects it produces. More specifically, this article explores the ways in which Hughes's poetry affords the reader an

experience of the sublime, a concept that has evolved in parallel with changes in the understanding of our relationship with the natural world. Christopher Hitt, in particular, has reconfigured the traditional version into an “ecological sublime” that rewrites the anthropocentrism of the conventional approach but does not dismiss the old theory entirely. Within this frame, I will use Hughes’s nature poetry to illustrate the possibilities of Hitt’s model of an “ecological sublime” for literary analysis, focusing on concrete poems and showing different ways in which they enhance an ecocentric experience of sublime disruption and transcendence.

Keywords: Ted Hughes; Christopher Hitt; nature poetry; ecological sublime

1. INTRODUCTION

When he was appointed Poet Laureate, a newspaper headline described Ted Hughes as a “poetic voice of blood and guts” (Skea, online). Animals and nature figure prominently in his poems, which often focus on the savagery of both. Since the publication of his first collection, *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957), critical responses have been divided regarding his depiction of a natural world of dark forces and violent energies. For some, Hughes goes beyond describing violence, he rather celebrates it, as suggested by Calvin Bedient in his often-quoted description of Hughes as a “voyeur of violence” (107). To others, Hughes is just trying to mirror the world faithfully, without excluding anything, since to him what defines poetry is precisely what culture elides or represses. As Keith Sagar puts it, “[f]or Hughes, the poet cannot see too much or experience too much. He tries [...] to forge a vision which evades as little as possible and which the soul must learn to bear as best it can.” (*The Art of Ted Hughes* 33)

These two critics represent a polarised debate that can be redressed by other approaches such as that of Michael Malay, who suggests considering “violence from an aesthetic perspective, rather than a straightforwardly literal one, asking what violent imagery might elicit or provoke at the level of psychological experience” (110-11). In line with this, this article approaches Hughes’s fascination with what Tennyson called “nature red in tooth and claw” (Canto 56 of *In Memoriam A. H. H.*) by focusing on the ways in which his poetry affords the reader an experience of the sublime or, more specifically, of the sublime as reformulated by environmental literary critic Christopher Hitt (1999).

There is no denying, Hitt remarks, that the sublime has become the target of criticism. He mentions critics as diverse as (historically-oriented) Laura Doyle and Sara Sulei, (Marxist) Terry Eagleton, and (feminist) Patricia Yaeger, Anne Mellor, and Barbara Claire Freeman in

order to illustrate his point that “it has been the overwhelming tendency of literary criticism over the past few decades to evaluate the aesthetic of the sublime primarily as an expression of asymmetrical power relationships: between the human and nature, self and other, reader and text, male and female, conqueror and oppressed” (603). Narrowing his focus to criticism emerging from a position of environmental advocacy, he distances himself from the predominant tendency to dismiss the aesthetic of sublimity we have inherited, all the more so since some of the critics that take this stand, as is the case with William Cronon, do concede that the Romantic aesthetic of the sublime still continues to inform our conceptions of the natural world in important respects (Hitt 604). Instead, Hitt proposes exploring the concept of the sublime in order to determine what should be rethought and what can be rescued from its old formulation so that we do not throw the baby out with the bath water. The title of his article — “Toward an Ecological Sublime” — thus announces the nature of his project and his main aim: rewriting the theory of the sublime so that the emerging model becomes more attuned with and relevant to our present-day ecological sensibilities.

Hitt begins by tracing back the notion of the sublime to Longinus, although he soon focuses on two most influential theorists of the sublime: Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant.¹ Special attention is paid to the latter as the author of a theory of the sublime that links aesthetics and ethics, and that can therefore be useful when it comes to fostering an environmental ethic. Drawing on Thomas Weiskel's *The Romantic Sublime* (1976), Hitt elaborates on the structure of the sublime experience as mapped out by Kant, which can be seen as consisting of three “phases or economic stages”: first, “a normal, essentially pre-sublime stage”; secondly, “a sort of rupture in which a disequilibrium between mind and object is introduced”; and, finally, a reaction to the previous phase, a third stage defined by the fact that “equilibrium is restored [...] by the triumphant emergence of reason”, which eventually reveals to us our superiority over nature (608). This trajectory of the sublime in Kant can also be appreciated in nineteenth-century literary representations of sublimity, an assertion Hitt supports with examples from Wordsworth's *Prelude* (1850) and Emerson's *Nature* (1836). Traditionally, then, the sublime experience is depicted as a temporal movement that first diminishes and then aggrandises the subject. And yet, while this calls for a reformulation, it does not invalidate the Kantian sublime as an aesthetic model that can be reoriented and used to the advantage of environmentalism. Nature plays a relevant role in Kant's theory of the sublime and there is in it an element of transcendence, an

¹ Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, published in 1757, and Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, also translated as *Critique of the Power of Judgment*), published in 1790.

experience of revelation that Hitt sees as worth keeping. However, an ecological sublime should ideally “offer a new kind of transcendence which would resist the traditional reinscription of humankind’s supremacy over nature” (609).

Although nature is important in Kant’s formulation, he was an Enlightenment philosopher, and his focus was the human subject and the conflicting faculties within human consciousness. In his theory, the subject benefits from the disequilibrium brought about by the second phase of the sublime encounter in that it eventually reveals that reason can encompass what the senses cannot. Nature thus becomes a vehicle for the strengthening of human prowess, an aid to unveiling—in the third and final phase of the sublime experience—the superiority of reason, which becomes the basis of the Kantian moral law. It cannot come as a surprise that it should be the third stage of this sublime experience that Hitt is most critical with, the reactive phase ennobling the rational subject that returns to the centre position after the second, disruptive phase. Consequently, his proposal for an ecological sublime constitutes an attempt to reconfigure the Kantian structure by remaining relatively faithful to its first two stages, while proposing an alternative to the third: one that maintains the revelatory experience of the sublime without making it incompatible with a post-anthropocentric worldview (Hitt 608). Eu Jin Chua makes clear the significance of Hitt’s reorientation of Kant’s theory when he explains that:

Instead of focusing on the internal conflict of the faculties, Hitt re-jigs the model so that the sublime becomes primarily about the encounter between the internal and the external, between human beings and non-human nature. Suddenly it is as if the drama of the sublime has been recast with new actors. Whereas previously the main players in Kant’s account of the sublime were the human faculties of Imagination and Reason, now the main players are Human Subject and the Non-Human Object. [...] In Kant’s description of Imagination’s rescue by Reason, it was the latter that was named as the transcendent party. Reason, however, no longer plays a role in Hitt’s reconfigured version of the sublime. So in Hitt’s description of an encounter between Human Subject and Non-Human Object, it is the latter—non-human nature—that is said to be transcendent. (55)

It is my contention that Hitt’s project can throw light on certain literary works whose treatment of nature may instantiate his theoretical proposal for an ecological sublime². In what follows, then, I will try to show how Hitt’s model provides a perspective from which to approach Hughes’s work, where nature and animals are at the centre of a vital, wild and often violent but also awesome poetic world.

² Hugh Dunkerley (2017) has seen the possibilities of Hitt’s theory, which he considers in an article on Hughes that invites further exploration.

2. WATCHING VIOLENCE

As Sagar explains, Hughes “watches, and makes us watch [...] violence”, but he does so with a view to “estrangement. He wants to undermine our sense of the ordinary” (*The Art of Ted Hughes* 33). This estrangement is central to the sublime, to the experience of rupture that the subject feels in the face of overwhelming, raw and/or brutal natural forces. While nature was often opposed to war in the poetry of the First World War —the conflict that marked the life of Hughes’s father and overshadowed his childhood— nature itself was a battlefield to Hughes. Even when nature seems peaceful and harmonious there is a war going on, as he conveys in “To Paint a Water Lily”, a poem that does indeed defamiliarise the calm beauty of a flower traditionally associated with innocence and purity. Xoán Abeleira (32) explains that this piece was not among Hughes’s favourites, and yet, he always included it in his selected poems because he saw it (together with “Pike”) as a turning point in his poetic quest: it does indeed illustrate what would become Hughes’s typical way of looking at nature, cold and scrutinising, conducive to a kind of beauty that may seem cruel, even terrifying, but that is truer and definitely more enlightening. What this poem demands is nothing but what many readers and critics welcomed and always admired about Hughes. As Derek Walcott puts it, although some may turn away from Hughes’s poetry

as a girl might from a dead frog [...], it was about time that a language which did not distance itself from nature by botanical pastoral catalogues thrust its vision through a cloud of flies and examined the carcasses with the disturbing casualness, the long, guttural offhand phrases in Hughes’s rhythm [...]. But this is not the poetry of our day-to-day lives. These truths are too big and we think they will go away if we concentrate on small, consoling things. So, naturally, we wish Hughes would go away. (177)

In “To Paint a Water Lily” (Hughes, *New Selected Poems*³ 31-32), the poetic speaker addresses a hypothetical painter and urges him/her not to turn away from the truths that the contemplation of the flower reveals to those that dare to watch and hear. The speaker thus gives advice on how to paint a water lily —an apparently idyllic theme— but also asks the painter to think of what the eye misses as a prerequisite to starting work on the painting. While studying the flower, the attentive ear can hear the insects over the water and under the trees. There are “battle-shouts/ And death-cries everywhere hereabouts” (9-10) as dragonflies are hunting for their next meal and flies are fighting for survival. The poem goes

³ In what follows, the abbreviation *NSP* will be used to refer to this volume, followed by the page number(s) of each of the poems discussed. When lines are quoted (or paraphrased) from a specific poem, line numbers will be indicated between brackets after the quotation (or paraphrase).

on to describe the even more truculent bed of the pond, another battlefield full of creatures with Latin names that crawl in the dark waters, “[j]aws for heads, the set stare/ Ignorant of age as of hour” (20). The water lily lives between air and water, and stands still between these two worlds of warfare. They must be part of the picture, too, as they reveal a deeper, though darker, kind of truth. In this light, the lily flower may be seen as the Western equivalent of the lotus in many Eastern cultures (Abeleira 32). With its roots latched in mud, the lotus submerges into river water at night and blooms again in the morning. It is a symbol of death, rebirth, and spiritual enlightenment; of the connection between the light of the rational mind and the darkness of the unconscious, which needs be explored and delved into in order to reach wisdom. Similarly in the poem, the speaker urges the addressee to study “the two minds of this lady” (4), which must be imaginatively apprehended by the painter and conveyed through the painting, as the poem does.

What at first escapes the eye while watching the water lily of the previous poem becomes a formidable force in other poems that depict the overwhelming power of nature and its ability to transform the world into a war-like, threatening place. This is the case with the unabatable storm described in “Wind” (NSP 14). As in the previous poem, the estrangement effect operates in “Wind” to show an entirely different aspect of the element, in this case not the beauty and the calm of a gentle breeze, but the godly strength of the wind that Hughes knew so well from stormy days on the Yorkshire moors, where he grew up. The opening line is simple but effective — “This house has been far out at sea all night” (1). The house as epitome of what is safe and solid becomes, through metaphoric comparison, a flimsy boat that has barely survived the night, when a sea gale tossed it around for hours as if it was made of paper. The second line continues building the effect of chaos and thundering noise, with hills booming and fields running in stampede until the morning. The start of a new day (5) may suggest the end of the storm, while, in fact, the chaos that follows is almost more intense: a mad eye of green and black shows its terrifying look from above (7-8) and this oddly-coloured daylight reveals that “the hills had new places” (6), each like a tent that “drummed and strained its guyrope” (12). Personification, hyperbaton, enjambment, alliteration and onomatopoeia contribute to picturing the wind’s demented onslaught. The poem closes by showing how the wind invades people’s minds, just as it has already invaded the landscape, ultimately highlighting in this way the insignificance of man compared to such strength: “Now deep/In chairs, in front of the great fire, we grip/Our hearts and cannot entertain book, thought,/Or each other” (17-20). The speaker and those with him feel as if the wind were about to blast the house itself, and so the poem ends at that climactic moment, with the rage of the wind pressing close and the people paralysed while “[h]earing

the stones cry in the horizons" (24). As La Cassagnère puts it, the text decentres the subject, gradually placing him/her in an ex-centric locus until there is nothing in the end "but a hearing, that of an unthinkable sound" (35). "Wind" affords an experience of the sublime brought about by a cold and powerful nature, an Other that refuses to be tamed and that imposes its voice. The poem builds on the phase of rupture typical of the sublime —the second stage according to the Kantian structure— but the restoration of the subject in a third stage never takes place, leaving us with an uncanny feeling.

Similarly uncanny are many of Hughes's animal poems, like his famous "Hawk Roosting" (*NSP* 29-30). From the previous poem, where a human subject observes and is diminished by the powerful wind, we move here to the disappearance of the subject, as the poetic speaker is the hawk itself—a hawk perching before a hunt, a predator in its true essence, a symbol of violence:

I kill where I please because it is all mine.
There is no sophistry in my body:
My manners are tearing off heads—

The allotment of death.
For the one path of my flight is direct
Through the bones of the living. (14-19)

In Hughes's poetry, animals are usually presented as superior to men, with their lack of self-consciousness, free from inhibitions and fears, all courage and concentration. Animals are far from rules and social values, they are capable of fully adjusting their lives to their own true nature and that makes for their power and wisdom. In "Hawk Roosting" nature thinks through the hawk and declares its power, precluding any attempt to reinscribe human superiority, or even understanding. As Hughes declared in a 1971 interview:

The poem of mine usually cited for violence is the one about the Hawk Roosting, this drowsy hawk sitting in a wood and talking to itself. That bird is accused of being a fascist [...]. The symbol of some horrible totalitarian genocidal dictator. Actually what I had in mind was that in this hawk Nature is thinking. Simply Nature. (qtd. in Bentley 29-30)

The will to live for the hawk is a will to kill. Those that cannot stand the fear and awe of the sublime, unable to stand in front of this pure will that is pure freedom, may feel upset by such violence. But violence as depicted by Hughes is the principle of life in nature and his animals are embodiments of this energy, which modern man has distanced himself from. Even when the animal is caged, as in "The Jaguar" (*NSP* 4-5), its vitality endows it with an

awesome dignity. The jaguar in its zoo cell has more liberty and holds more power than the poetic speaker, a visitor to the zoo who is as mesmerised by the animal as other onlookers, and who soon concludes that “there’s no cage to him/ more than to the visionary his cell” (16-17). The jaguar’s stride is “wilderness of freedom” (18). The same goes for the hawk (as seen above), the pike (“Pike”), the otter (“An Otter”), the thrush (“Thrushes”), the fox (“The Thought Fox”), the wolf (“A Modest Proposal”, “February”) and other animals that crowd Hughes’s poetry. Natural elements also bear witness to this relentless force and power, being as they are manifestations of that “wilderness of freedom” that Hughes’s animals exhibit. In “Thistles” (NSP 55), for instance, the plants are angry warriors growing from dead Viking invaders. They “spike the summer air” (2), each of them “a revengeful burst” (4), and when they die, the new plants are “their sons” who appear “[s]tiff with weapons fighting back over the same ground” (11-12). Even when the feeling described is one of love, it is a love that may turn fatal due to its intensity, as in “Emily Brontë” (NSP 173). Here Hughes presents the Yorkshire moors as Emily’s dangerous beloved in order to recreate a relationship between human and place that draws on Charlotte’s well-known reflection on her sister’s seeming inability to live away from home:

Liberty was the breath of Emily's nostrils; without it, she perished. The change from her own home to a school [...] was what she failed in enduring. Her nature proved here too strong for her fortitude. Every morning when she woke, the vision of home and the moors rushed on her, and darkened and saddened the day that lay before her. (qtd. in Barker 236)

Hughes takes this love and longing for the moors one step further in his poem, where the famous Yorkshire writer first welcomes the wind’s fierceness and fatal kiss (1-3) and then becomes one with the landscape: it returns her love with such craving that it eventually engulfs and consumes her. Consumption, the real cause of Emily’s death, is given a twist here, as if the poem played with the word’s etymological roots in *consumere*, Latin from *con* (altogether) plus *sumere* (take up). She is indeed entirely taken up in the poem, caught, filled and absorbed by the landscape. Her death, which resonates like a baby-cry on the moor (12), fuses her with nature and is also a birth.

Such natural forces —incarnated by animals, plants, the landscape, or natural elements like the wind— are the unabated and unabatable breath of the universe. As Walcott explains, nature poetry before Hughes was “a place of contemplation, not terror”, but it is precisely because the poetry of Hughes is bright *and* brutal at the same time that it succeeds like no other in bringing us “closer to nature, its complete workings” (179). It also succeeds, I would say, in redefining the human by presenting a natural world that recalls Derrida’s

“divinanimality”. The term refers to the “ahuman”, to what is situated beyond the category of humanity, but it also designates “the quasi-transcendental referent, the [...] disavowed, tamed and sacrificed foundation of what it founds, namely, the symbolic order, the human order” (Derrida 132). The human has been understood in opposition to its Other, the ahuman, but Derrida’s ahuman, his “divinanimality”, purportedly collapses the distinction between the animal and the divine. If that against which the human was traditionally defined is reconfigured, then the category of the human must be redefined.

In all the poems discussed so far the human subject is overwhelmed in different ways by forces that produce estrangement, awe and fear. The rupture associated with the sublime experience is recreated, but it is never relieved. In the light of the three-part structure of the sublime as explained above, one could say that the second phase —disequilibrium between mind and object— is prolonged in the poems, made to last and even to stay with the reader beyond the end of the poem, thus erasing the third stage in the traditional configuration of the sublime —that in which equilibrium is regained and the subject reasserts him/herself. In Hughes’s poems, by contrast, the human is displaced, diminished, and even obliterated or swallowed by the natural elements, never to be restored to a central position. This is not to be lamented, though, as what Hughes was proposing several decades ago was the decentring of the human subject necessary for the development of an ecological consciousness.

To Hughes, Western civilisation was sick, wounded. As he puts it in his review of Max Nicholson’s *The Environmental Revolution* (1970): “The story of the mind exiled from Nature is the story of Western Man. It is the story of his progressively more desperate search for mechanical and rational and symbolic securities, which will substitute for the spirit-confidence of the Nature he has lost.” (“The Environmental Revolution” 130) He saw as his task to save man from the increasing tyranny of materialism and the intellect, which had led, by the time he started his career as a poet, to a belief in progress predicated on the exploitation of nature. To cure the spiritual malady afflicting man, his poetry sought reconnection with the natural world and with the life we share with other creatures. He saw the role of the poet as comparable with that of the shaman, an intermediary between material and spiritual realms. In ancient cultures, the shaman’s acquisition of knowledge that can heal himself and the community is predicated on a journey where animals or some natural element act as guides. As Britain’s current Poet Laureate explains:

Hughes aligned himself with the ancient role of the poet. [...] He saw beyond the power to communicate, aiming instead for a kind of “contact”, or sensual comprehension, where poem and reader took possession of each other through

the medium of poetry, or through the poet as medium. And he saw language as one of the least understood powers in the universe, ranking alongside electrical, gravitational, atomic and magnetic energy as a force to be manipulated and controlled. His view of the poet as shaman was one he took seriously, and many of his poems are unembarrassed shamanic flights of fancy into the spirit world, excursions to the “other side”, where he might properly inhabit the nature of his subject, be it animal, vegetable or mineral, be it jaguar, snowdrop or rocky crag. (Armitage, online)

In his passage, the shaman penetrates the supernatural, leaves ordinary reality behind, and also his conscious ego, in order to become one with the world. His visionary flight is a mystical-creative experience, and so, in some of his poems Hughes's imaginative efforts result in the recreation of that mystical moment, which is also one of transcendence of the self and fusion with what he called the “elemental power circuit of the universe” (qtd. in Bassnett 33). In line with this, I will deal in what follows with yet another way in which Hughes's poetry invites the reader to see the human and the non-human in terms that depart from the hierarchical binary opposition that underlies Cartesian thought and also the traditional configuration of the sublime. Specially in his river poetry, what does away with the hierarchy, what decentres the subject, is the latter's recognition of nature as an astonishing event that transcends thought and that has much in common with a religious experience. It is precisely this approach to nature, related to the notion of the “wholly other”, that Hitt proposes as not only a way of imagining our relationship with the natural world, but also as “the crucial piece of the puzzle in our formulation of an ecological sublime” (613), something with which to replace the third phase of the traditional structure.

3. NATURE AND THE “WHOLLY OTHER”

The concept of the “wholly other” (with its pun on holy) can be traced back to the German theologian and philosopher Rudolf Otto, who proposed it in an attempt to understand the “otherness” of the numinous, the non-rational aspects of the sacred or the holy at the core of religious experience⁴. Otto's *The Idea of the Holy* became well-known in theological and religious studies circles and had a remarkable impact on the work of scholars like Carl Jung, Mircea Eliade and Ninian Smart (see Sarbacker on this). But, as has been the case with the sublime, later critics have also reconfigured the notion of the “wholly other” as a means to approaching man's experience of nature. For instance, in “Man Apart: An Alternative to the Self-Realization Approach” (1989), Peter Reed appeals to Otto's concept in order to rethink

⁴ *Das Heilige. Über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen* was published in 1917, and translated into English in 1923 as *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*.

our conception of nature, stressing the numbness and awe generated by our encounter with nature as a unique event. It is this encounter with nature as “wholly other” that provides in Reed’s view an ideal basis for deep ecology.⁵ Rather than seeing nature as one with us, he highlights the mystery of nature as Other, which inspires wonder and astonishment, dwarfs us, and reveals to us our relative insignificance. In line with this, the strategy Reeds proposes to overcome the gap between man and nature has less to do with identification than with an experience of it as “wholly other”. Regaining respect for nature depends as much on resisting its objectification and exploitation as on preserving its radical alterity and accepting its intrinsic value (Reeds 61-63). This line of argument, shared by other critics like Neil Evernden (1992), is incorporated by Hitt into his discussion of an ecological sublime because he finds in the connection of nature with the “wholly other” something radically different from the Kantian sublime: the notion of the “wholly other” departs from the kind of alienation dealt with by Kant in that it defines nature’s “sublimity” as resulting from the fact that it only exists beyond conceptualization. That is, what Hitt sees as relevant here is “the incommensurability between actual ‘nature’ and that which *logos* would purport to define and contain”, in contrast with the Kantian sublime, where the blockage in which the mind fails is temporary and its structure “depends, as a matter of course, on *logos* –on the emergence of what Kant calls ‘reason’” (Hitt 614). The traditional sublime both humbles and ennoble the subject, but for a long time after the eighteenth century more emphasis was made on the latter than on the former. The recourse to Otto’s “wholly other” as the basis for a third stage of the sublime experience allows Hitt to save the humility, the wonder and awe that are there in the Kantian theory, as well as to reformulate it by placing nature outside the mind of the observer, freeing it from conceptual categories. It is this experience of the holy/wholly other, of what radically escapes reason and language—in sum, of the numinous—that much of Hughes’s river poetry illustrates.

Hughes’s river poems draw on a lifetime of angling since, apart from writing, his greatest passion was fishing. He pursued this passion throughout his life and rivers, from those in Devon to those in Alaska,⁶ inspired many poems, especially those in *River* (1983), which also includes photographs by Peter Keen. Hughes is at his best in the three volumes published between 1979 and 1983 —*Moortown*, *Remains of Elmet* and *River*— which Sagar (*Ted*

⁵ Deep ecology is an environmental philosophy and social movement based in the belief that humans must radically change their relationship to nature from one that values it solely for its usefulness to human beings to one that recognizes that nature has an inherent value. (Madsen, online)

⁶ Hughes’s son Nicholas moved to Alaska, where he worked as a fisheries biologist and pursued scientific research in the field. He also loved fishing, and father and son went on many a fishing trip together throughout their lives. Hughes visited Alaska with Nicholas in 1980.

Hughes and Nature xiv) sees as the work for which previous books were a preparation: the poetry of the seventies and early eighties constitutes in this scholar's view the culmination of the poet-shaman's quest, as it definitely links the ecological crisis to the role of the poet and to the myth that stands for all myths, that of the quest. However, it is *River* more than any other, Sagar adds, that best conveys Hughes's quest for a remedy to heal Western man, the one that best contributes to his effort toward "the spiritualization of a fallen world" (xiv). Sagar is not alone in considering this work as Hughes's finest collection (see also West and Scigal), whose publication closely preceded his appointment as Poet Laureate.

Hughes's verse conveys something terrifying about rivers, which is there in *River* but also in earlier poems. In "Earth-Numb" (NSP 193), for instance, he writes: "Something terrified and terrifying/ Gleam-surges to and fro through me/ From the river to the sky, from the sky into the river" (23-25). But, though frightening, Hughes's rivers also afford a most powerful experience of reconnection. In an interview with Thomas Pero, he explained that his fascination with rivers and fishing had to do with something else, more than just fish: "It's something to do with the whole world [...], the fascination of flowing water and living things coming up out of it —to grab at you and be grabbed. Throughout the whole of religious tradition, rivers have been gods. Water has been the soul. And water is the ultimate life. [...] Somehow we make that connection" (56). In tune with this, Hughes's river poems revolve around the encounter with nature as "holy", as an astonishing Other that nonetheless runs through the poetic speaker, grabs him, lifts him, and connects him with that which is beyond the subject's ability to understand and put into words⁷.

"The Gulkana" (NSP 250-55) is perhaps the most eerie of his river poems. In it, the sense of nature's mystifying otherness is recreated and intensified by the poet's ability to conjure up an alien landscape for this Alaskan river. It is so alien that it seems a prehistoric place evoking a primeval awe, and also a primeval fear that invades the poetic speaker from the very first lines. In the language spoken by Alaska's most widespread First Nation group, the Athabaskans, "Gulkana" means "tearing river" (Bright 159). And so the speaker is torn by one inside him, "a bodiless twin", "a doppelgänger other" (57-58) that can be seen as the poet's shamanic self who exultantly recognises the river as his home and grants the speaker access to the rituals of life and death by taking over his consciousness (Roberts 66). The river exerts its power through its "deranging cry" (29), a fearsome voice that possesses the

⁷ In the above-mentioned interview, Hughes says to Pero that if he has to speak to somebody after he has been fishing alone, he finds it difficult, he cannot form words: "The words sort of come out backwards, tumbled. It takes time to readjust, as if I'd been into some part of myself that predates language" (56).

fishermen, and the natives, and the fish. The salmon become sacrificial victims heading toward a certain death that is described in terms of “consummation” (99) and “ecstasy” (120). Like them, the speaker can be said to be “[d]evoured by revelation” (122), and is presented as emerging from his trance as “a spectre” (125) that has lost and found himself at the same time. He is welcomed by the enigmatic face of a native that smiles at his standing dumb (147-48), overcome by what has happened, as man’s experience of the holy can be revived but never comprehended.

In “Go Fishing” (*NSP* 255-56), the poetic speaker invites the addressee/the reader to experience communion with nature and with the depths of his/her own being. Then, lost in the river, among the fish, s/he will feel words recede and the rational intellect cease:

Join water, wade in underbeing
 Let brain mist into moist earth
 Ghost loosen away downstream
 Gulp river and gravity

Lose words
 Cease (1-6)

In this poem, neither personal pronouns nor punctuation marks are used in order to better describe a process in which the subject divests him/herself of the ego, dissolves into nature and is reborn as a new being that emerges from the experience feeling, once again, humbled and ghostly. Human centrality and the sense of control conferred by language are replaced, to use Yvonne Reddick’s words, by a powerful sense of “ecological interconnection” (224), as is also illustrated by “That Morning”.

“That Morning” (*NSP* 265-66) similarly resorts to river symbolism and unfolds in almost the same way. Deep-waist in a river, the poetic speaker feels his body “[s]eparated, golden and imperishable,/from its doubting thought” (10-11). Soon the men are progressively lifted “toward some dazzle of blessing” (15) by throngs of salmon that act as “a spirit-beacon” (11). Fishing is presented here as a dramatization of a profound mystical experience. The light that inundates the scene as the poem advances stands for the harmony of body and spirit, human and animal, man and world: the sacral multidimensionality of nature. It is by merging with this whole that transcendence is reached by the poetic speaker, who tells about him and his companion: “So we found the end of our journey./ So we stood, alive in the river of light,/ Among the creatures of light, creatures of light” (28-30)⁸. And so the poem

⁸ These lines are engraved onto Hughes’s memorial stone in the Poets’ Corner, Westminster Abbey.

ends, suspended in the sublimity of nature, in the radiance and the mystery of the “wholly other”. The alliteration of sibilant, liquid and nasal sounds rounds off the effect and ultimately produces a feeling of softness, fluidity, and fusion that contributes to portraying the subject as astonished in the alterity of what paradoxically makes him feel part of a greater whole.

This unmediated experience of nature could be described in terms of entanglement, which Nowak-McNeice situates on the spectrum of possible human–non-human relations, and in opposition to classic humanist criteria that define the subject as distinct from other categories. As she puts it, it is the rejection of traditional anthropocentric positions that allows us to see the human and the non-human in the light of “proximity, contiguity and, ultimately, entanglement” (4). The subject’s loss of ego in the three river poems discussed above —evoked in more radiant or more sinister terms— makes for the weaving of a poetic web of life where distance is precisely replaced by proximity, contiguity, and entanglement. Even the reader is directly addressed, in “Go Fishing”, and asked to join the river and let him/herself get “[s]upplanted by mud and weed and pebbles” (10), “[d]issolved in earth-wave” (16), “[d]ismembered in sun-melt” (17), etc. This experience of closeness and entanglement in Hughes’s river poems —which evokes a whole range of things, from the flow state of positive psychology to the dismemberment that precedes healing in the shamanic journey— does not devoid nature of its sacredness, nor does it reduce its grandiosity or its power to induce fear. Sagar is right, though, when he says that “such innegotiable realities as stone and blood, the inevitability of suffering and death” do not have in Hughes’s later poetry the terrifying quality they have in previous poems (*Ted Hughes and Nature* 263). They do not seem oppressive and alienating, as in “Wind” and “Pibroch”, for instance; they are rather recognised and translated into a language of the spirit, of the sacred, which is religious in the way poetry is religious for Hughes —at the opposite pole of organised religions. This modulation, I would say, is in tune with the experience of nature as “wholly other”, which Hitt makes a key part of his proposal for an ecological sublime.

4. CONCLUSION

There is an ominous tone in Hughes’s assertion that when something abandons (or is abandoned by) Nature one should see it as “an evolutionary dead-end” (“The Environmental Revolution” 129). The same sense of urgency is conveyed by his claim that “[t]he lost life must be captured dead-end” (“The Environmental Revolution” 129). The need to recover this “lost life” constitutes one of the main reasons for reconsidering the sublime, since, as

Hitt argues, “in an age of exploitation, commodification, and domination we need awe, envelopment, and transcendence.” In other words, now more than ever it is crucial to be confronted with the wild otherness of nature and, at least occasionally, “to be astonished, enchanted, humbled by it” (620). Hitt’s reconfiguration of the traditional model of the sublime maintains the disruption caused by something that surpasses and dwarfs the human, but then eschews the reinscription of the subject at the centre of the sublime experience. There is no reactive phase where control is regained, but rather an approach to nature as “wholly other”. Hughes’s poems illustrate well the consequences of this move, as they build upon a confrontation between the human and the non-human that may be disruptive, painful, frightening, but that is also transformative. The exposure to the unexplainable, indomitable, often violent forces at the core of his poetry serves a function, which is that of reconnecting us with the natural world in a way that subverts anthropocentrism and encourages a deeply ecocentric mindset.

Hughes’s verse is informed by his belief that, to heal, we have to loose our grip on the world and the self. Only in that way we will be reawakened, woven into the fabric of life in a process where transcendence comes, as in Hitt’s model of the sublime, from nature. The intellect becomes ineffectual as the subject plunges into the materiality of the natural world, which is what affords us transcendent moments. And because that reconnection does not deprive nature of its (wholly) otherness, but is rather grounded on it, the response elicited from the subject is one of humbleness and concern for the Other in all its manifestations, which ultimately reveals the ethical dimension of a far from outmoded aesthetic category. In Hughes’s poems a powerful sense of the sublime persists, an ecological sublime that stops us from trying to rationalise or objectify nature, that enlivens our respect for it/for the Other, and that immerses us in feelings that range from terror to exhilaration and wonder⁹.

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**Narratological functions through the female lens:
the cases of *The All Souls Trilogy* and *The Winternight Trilogy***

**Las funciones narrativas desde una perspectiva femenina:
los ejemplos de las trilogías *All Souls* y *Winternight***

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Resumen

Este artículo ofrece un análisis comparativo de dos reconocidas trilogías fantásticas escritas por mujeres y con protagonista femenina, la trilogía *All Souls* de Deborah Harkness y la trilogía *Winternight* de Katherine Arden. Al poner el foco en un análisis cualitativo de las funciones narrativas desde la teoría narratológica estructuralista y a través de las acciones de los personajes principales (héroe/villano), el artículo considera que la heroína demuestra una motivación personal en ambas trilogías, que resulta en un impacto más amplio de su misión en lo colectivo. La motivación personal aparece relacionada con la protección de la familia y la subyacente construcción de una percepción particular del afecto. Esta motivación modifica los roles tradicionales y el impacto de las funciones narratológicas en otros personajes, y ofrece una alternativa de las relaciones de poder.

Palabras clave: narratología, literatura comparada, heroína, Trilogía de *All Souls*, Trilogía *Winternight*.

Abstract

This paper offers a comparative analysis of two acclaimed fantasy trilogies by women writers, *The All Souls Trilogy* by Deborah Harkness and *The Winternight Trilogy* by Katherine Arden. By focusing on a qualitative analysis of structural narratological functions

through the actions of the main characters (hero / villain), the article argues that the hero displays a personal motivation in both trilogies, which results in a larger impact of their mission. The personal motivation appears to be linked to the protection of family and the underlying construction of a unique perception of affection. This motivation modifies the roles and the impact of functions on other characters, while offering an alternative in power relations.

Keywords: Narratology, comparative literature, female hero, *The All Souls Trilogy*, *The Winternight Trilogy*

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

When Forbes published their 2019 bestselling authors, J.K. Rowling once again topped the list, with an estimate profit of 92 million dollars (Cuccinello and Shapiro). Alongside other issues, such as the predominance of English language authors in the bestselling lists, this announcement could be considered to illustrate two trends in the contemporary literary industry. On the one hand, the ubiquitous inclusion of fantasy and young adult/children's fiction in these lists (Nielsen Bestseller Awards, "The top 100 bestselling books of all time") and, on the other, the increase of the presence of female writers in the field of fantasy and sci-fi publications ("Best Fantasy Books of 2020", "Book Release Dates").

This female presence might not appear to represent a new trend, as Ursula K. Le Guin already addressed the gendering of certain types of literature and the anticipation specific outcomes to stories (Le Guin 36) while she also generated some of the most representative pieces of science-fiction and fantasy of the last century by rethreading the framework presented in traditional narratology (Malmgren). In historical examples, contemporary literary criticism arguably considers fairy tales as literary pieces that present equal agency and decisiveness in male and female protagonists (Campbell 4) or could even represent criticism of the patriarchy (Ashley). Literary examples such as Margaret Atwood's *Handmaid's Tale* or Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games* dystopias have been amply studied from a feminist perspective and generate a critical role for the female protagonist (Woloshyn et al, Stillman and Johnson). While data on comics and superheroes indicate there is still a long way to go in way of equal representation (Shendruk), a hypothesis takes shape: is fantasy a fertile ground for female creation to reshape the representation of female protagonists? Can it be a space where the creation is not only based on rewriting the typical male hero story by switching the hero's gender or modernizing a fairy tale (Campbell 5) and open a discussion for a new perception of heroism altogether?

This paper intends to address this question by analyzing the narratological functions of characters and their link to the stories' structural units through a qualitative comparative interpretation of two contemporary fantasy trilogies written by female authors: *The All Souls Trilogy*, by Deborah Harkness and *The Winternight Trilogy*, by Katherine Arden. Differences and similarities can indicate causal inferences to be contrasted and complemented in further research. In this case, the use of narratological functions optimizes the search for variations in the structure of the story telling. For this reason, the characters, as operating within narratological functions, are examined with the intention of pinpointing deviations. To complement this analysis, traditional characters which are consciously subverted in their roles are also analyzed. The evaluations intend to pinpoint recurrent themes in the change of narratological functions and their relationship to the larger contemporary literary context.

2. THE CONTEXT

The two trilogies are selected due to their similar contextual productions, albeit being examples of two different generations of creators. Both authors are white women from the United States, who have completed higher education degrees. Deborah Harkness was born in 1965 in Philadelphia, studied humanities in college (specializing in History of Science and Medicine) and lived abroad while studying at Oxford University. She has completed an MA and a PhD and is currently a Professor at University of Southern California ("Deborah Harkness", "Deborah Harkness. Professor (teaching) of History"). Katherine Arden was born in 1987 in Texas and currently lives in Vermont. Arden has studied modern languages (French and Russian) in college and has lived and worked abroad in Europe and Russia ("Katherine Arden").

While *The All Souls Trilogy* was published from 2011 to 2014, *The Winternight Trilogy* was completed from 2017 to 2019, pointing to significant differences in the age of the authors at the time of their productions. Both trilogies are based on specific historical moments and, to an extent, integrate existing historical characters. *The Winternight Trilogy* is set in 14th century Muscovy and culminates in the historical battle of Battle of Kulikovo in 1380, while *The All Souls Trilogy* is set in both contemporary Oxford and Elizabethan London.

Both trilogies incorporate preexisting folklore or mythological creatures. *The All Souls Trilogy* is focused on the dynamics between three groups of creatures through history (Vampires, Witches and Daemons), while *The Winternight Trilogy* builds upon traditional Russian fairy tales and folklore, mostly *Father Frost*. Arden commented:

I had a book of Russian fairy tales growing up. I absolutely loved it and read it until it fell apart. I had this background interest in Russian fairy tales before I went to Russia, but living in Moscow really deepened and enhanced my interest in Russian literature. When I came back and wanted to try to write a novel, basing it in Russia made sense for these reasons. (“Katherine Arden”)

The inclusion of historical settings and elements that are recognizable as part of a collective’s *mythos* (folk tales, legends and archetypes) might aim to “confuse our notions of the boundary between the possible and the impossible” (Wolfe 80) with “allusions that seem intended to confound the ‘impossibility’ of the setting” (Wolfe 80), effectively rewriting through fantasy the context of the historical moment they reflect and engaging in a conversation with genres that are supposedly rooted in ‘the possible’, such as fiction.

The trilogies have received critical acclaim, with Arden being the recipient of the Goodreads Choice Awards for Best Fantasy (2017, 2019), Hugo Award for Best Series (2020), and Goodreads Choice Awards Best Debut (2017), and Harkness being the recipient of Goodreads Choice Awards Favorite Books (for *A Discovery of Witches*, 2011), Goodreads Choice Awards Best Debut (2011) and Goodreads Best Fantasy, 2014, besides being a New York Times bestseller. Both trilogies are the debut work in the fantasy genre of their respective authors. As far as fandom impact, *The All Souls Trilogy* has a wiki fandom site, including 115 pages on September 2020 (“All Souls Trilogy Wiki”), while Katherine Arden’s website includes a fandom gallery. *A Discovery of Witches* has been adapted to television by Sky/Sundance, released in 2018 (“Deborah Harkness”) and *The All Souls Trilogy* has its own convention dedicated to both academic and esoteric research related to the trilogy (Allsoulscon.org).

3. NARRATOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS

a. The Hero

Both trilogies present a female protagonist in the role of the hero. Campbell (1949) considers:

The hero, therefore, is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms. Such a one’s visions, ideas, inspirations come pristine from the primary springs of human life and thought. Hence they are eloquent, not of the present, disintegrating society and psyche, but of the unquenched source through which society is reborn. (18)

However, both trilogies offer a unique perspective on a hero who integrates elements of the fiction novel, bringing together the collective and striving towards self-fulfillment with constant examples of the awareness of the role of the protagonist in the developing story. Harkness highlights how her intention in the trilogy was to “explore from the very first page of the series the truly traditional basis of family: unqualified love and mutual responsibility. That is certainly the meaning of family that my parents taught me” (Harkness et al. 9).

Both heroes, Diana Bishop and Vasya Petrovna, unwillingly participate in feuds for power and ultimately deconstruct traditional structures (the Convention in *The All Souls Trilogy*, the division between Christianity and paganism and the political structure of Muscovy in *The Winternight Trilogy*) to complete a larger mission. The purpose of the mission does not represent the function of ‘the hero is recognized’ (Propp 62), but the generation of a balance that does not settle into binary opposites, instead, it provokes a new order. It could be considered to reflect Todorov’s theory (Todorov 29-30) of narrative.

In the case of *The All Souls Trilogy*, the recognition of the hero does appear as a function, when Diana Bishop displays the extent of her power the Convention through her assimilation of The Book of Life (The Book of Life 625) and the use of her weaver powers in the battle against Peter Knox and Benjamin (The Book of Life 657-662), but the collective impact of her mission affects all creatures. In the case of *The Winternight Trilogy*, the recognition of the hero does not take place in the eyes of the other main characters, however, it influences the outcome of the Rus’ war through the ‘invisible’ participation of the Chyerti. In both cases, ‘the hero is recognized’ becomes a minor function contingent to the completion of the tasks themselves and their impact on the larger environment.

Nonetheless, in both trilogies the mission itself stems from the instinct to protect and belong to family and, consequently, to protect the relationship generated between the female protagonist and a secondary male protagonist who appears initially as an ambivalent character and ultimately becomes a co-hero due to his link to the female hero. This co-hero, Matthew Clairmont in the case of *The All Souls Trilogy* and Morozko in *The Winternight Trilogy*, experiences transformation through the relationship, with the resignification of many of the actions and viewpoints prior to this connection. Both hero characters (male and female) help each other develop through the story.

A personal drive that could be defined as ‘protection of family’ appears to be the recurrent call to action for both female protagonists. Therefore, the hero does not fit the ‘seeker’ or the ‘victimized hero’ character (Propp 36). Following narratological parameters, the ‘resolution of the task’ is linked to protecting others and ‘the individual’ drive of keeping the family safe, at whatever the cost, results in a bringing together of the collective. Vasya

connects different spheres from her experience and family: the church through her brother, the Chyerti, ghosts through her grandmother and gods, while she also links the domestic female space and the military male space. In *The Bear and the Nightingale*, she runs away from home because is being sent away to a convent and she wants to stay in the area to protect her family:

“The dead are walking,” Vasya whispered. “The domovoi will disappear if I am gone. My family will die if they send me away. I don’t know what to do” (*The Bear and the Nightingale* 247)

The Girl in the Tower opens with chapters dedicated entirely to the sociopolitical position of Vasya’s siblings and the immediate impact the arrival of Konstantin to Moscow has on them. In the meantime, Vasya is at a broken home after the death of her father. She has helped her people overcome the threat of Medved (and Konstantin) but they shun her in return, so she decides to dress up as a boy and visit the world. She encounters the increasingly present Tartars, who threaten the Prince of Moscow’s throne and saves some girls from their grasp. Here, her connection to family begins again:

Sasha was only half-aware. The pale, smudged creature before him could not be his younger sister.

Absolutely not. His sister Vasilisa must by now be married to one of her father’s sober, earnest neighbors. She was a matron, with a babe in arms. She was certainly not riding the roads of Rus’ with bandits at her back. No. This was some boy who resembled her, and not Vasya at all. His younger sister could never have grown tall and gaunt as a wolfhound, nor learned to carry herself with such disturbing grace. And how could her face bear such a stamp of grief and steady courage? Sasha met the newcomer’s stare and he *knew* - Mother of God, he knew that he was not mistaken. He could never - not in a thousand years- forget his sister’s eyes. (*The Girl in the Tower* 117)

Much as in the first book, a conflict arises between the knowledge Vasya holds of the deeper conflicts of power, and her position in this conflict, while creating very aparent conflicts in her family, as they have to cover for her lie. She is aware of these issues when conversing to Morozko:

“I want freedom,” she said at length, almost to herself. “But I also want a place and a purpose. I am not sure I can have either, let alone both. And I do not want to live a lie. I am hurting my brother and sister.” She stopped abruptly and turned. “Can you solve this riddle for me?” (*The Girl in the Tower* 234)

There is a noteworthy detail in the construction of the female hero in *The Girl in the Tower* and it is that she is constantly compared to her grandmother, Tamara. Tamara appears as an instrument used by one of the villains, Kaschei the Deathless. However, when her family is threatened (Vasya and Masha), Tamara steps in to defend them, regardless of the cost. By stating this pattern, Arden skillfully integrates the aforementioned drive 'protection of family' as a linking quality that threads together the heroic deeds of the female characters. The presence of this drive can also be observed in *The All Souls Trilogy*. Diana connects creatures in an unorthodox family structure and binds diverse collectives in different moments of time. The impact of this search for happiness and fulfillment, in both cases linked to the family, unites opposites and unfolds the global impact of the mission of the hero. Her family grows around her, and she is considered throughout the trilogy as the gravitational force of the different collectives. Her function is defined by her role, which requires creatures to confront their differences and work together.

One of the key elements in the definition of 'family' in *The All Souls Trilogy* is motherhood, exemplifying a trend found in other narratives written by female authors. Maternity has been considered a key element and has proven to be a factor that influences the development of female characters in other fantasy pieces. According to Kniesler, in the *Harry Potter* saga, for example, Narcissa Malfoy's function in the story shifts drastically precisely due to the fact that the main instinct and motivation of the character is maternal love, and this drives her to accomplish deeds which could be deemed heroic. This complicates the character classification, considering the "attempt to determine whether Narcissa can be classified as a villain, or if she is simply an adversary" (Kniesler 269).

The construction of the concept of family is active in both trilogies, albeit more sophisticated in *The All Souls Trilogy*. Diana and Matthew chose to mate, effectively creating an unbreakable bond in *A Discovery of Witches*, unleashing a conflict in a world where creatures are not allowed to create relationships. Their relationship is described through carnal intimacy, sharing of knowledge, constant support and mutual admiration. When they travel in time in *Shadow of the Night*, they build their own nuclear family, officially marry with the blessing of Matthew's father, Phillipe, and adopt members and friends into their household while suffering the loss of a child through a miscarriage. The presence of family in Diana's thoughts is constant and is equivalent to her worries about situations with the search for The Book of Life and conflicts with the Convention. While in Prague, Diana highlights how her adoptive family is in her thoughts when she mentions how she "missed Annie's cheerfulness and wide-eyed approach to the world, as well as Jack's unfailing ability to get

himself into trouble” (Shadow of the Night 423). With the creation of an official public family, the Bishop-Clairmont family, Matthew highlights that:

The secret is that I may be the head of the Bishop-Clairmont family, but you are its heart,” he whispered. “And the three of us are in perfect agreement: The heart is more important.” (Shadow of the Night 447).

This main motif of family protection and, subsequently, self-fulfillment generates numerous selfless actions and character connections, and contrasts with one of the main themes when analyzing heroes, which is “issues of power” (Campbell 2014 12). In these cases of a female hero, shared power resolves conflicts and illustrates a greater strength. In this way, the understanding and recognition of “‘female hero’ is a positive term in its ability to highlight and celebrate her femaleness in tandem with her heroism - and with heroism more broadly” (Campbell 2014 7) is displayed, in the conversation of these constructs with the larger perception of heroism. It also links to a distinct ideology towards the concept of bonding (love and relationships), born from a female perspective, which is stated throughout the trilogies and is linked to loyalty and trust. Diana speaks about this perception in relation to children: “All that children need is love, a grown-up to take responsibility for them, and a soft place to land” (Shadow of the Night 279) and in relation to adults “If you truly love someone, you will cherish what they despise most about themselves” (The Book of Life 279). Vasya voices her unwavering love for her family members, and they express the same towards her. Her love for Morozko is seen to grow and develop throughout the trilogy, and they both save each other on several occasions and share thoughts, mistakes and hopes. They build it slowly, as Morozko mentions:

Love is for those who know the griefs of time, for it goes hand in hand with loss. An eternity, so burdened, would be a torment. And yet—” He broke off, drew breath. “Yet what else to call it, this terror and this joy? (The Winter of the Witch 163)

It is when love is understood as the opposite (therefore, as possession, subordination or as built on fear) where the definition of love in *The Winternight Trilogy* can be seen clearly and is illustrated in *The Bear and the Nightingale*. As Medved speaks to Konstantin, he mentions: “-Wanting despite yourself, and hating where you love.” The voice sighed. “Oh, you are beautiful” (The Bear and the Nightingale 167), highlighting how this definition of love entitles ownership and dominion, which brings pain when not achieved.

b. The Villain

Both trilogies offer diverse villains, with a main subjacent one (Medved in *The Winternight Trilogy* and Benjamin in *The All Souls Trilogy*) who is often connected to the other villains, as Benjamin is to Peter Knox or Medved is to Konstantin.

Both female protagonists have lost parents prior to the actions of the story, Diana having lost both her parents and Vasya having lost her mother. A villain proves to be an agent in these deaths of family members, with Peter Knox being responsible for the death of Diana's parents and her aunt Emily, while Medved kills Pyotr in *The Bear and the Nightingale*. The death of Diana's parents and Pyotr can be considered sacrificial to protect and save the rest of the family.

The main motivation for the villains seems to be that they covet the female hero's power and abilities. There are differences, since in *The Winternight Trilogy* Vasya becomes an element in the eternal fight between brothers at the time the story is set. As is commented in *The Winter of the Witch*: "you denied both the winter-king and his brother, didn't you? You made yourself a third power in their war" (104). The combination of villains in both trilogies, and including Kaschei the deathless, fulfill most of the functions proposed by Propp in relation to the female hero: they assume a disguise (Konstantin as a benevolent priest, Peter Knox as a worried and respected member of the witches); they cause harm to other members of the family; the hero and the villain join in direct combat; the hero is tortured and branded by the villain.

Additionally, in both cases the co-hero is directly related to the villain. In *The All Souls Trilogy*, Matthew and Benjamin are father and son (as Matthew transforms Benjamin into a vampire); in *The Winternight Trilogy*, Medved and Morozko are brothers. Since the female hero becomes romantically involved with the co-hero, not only does the aspect of power interest the villain, but also the availability of an element that can directly harm their opponent. Benjamin displays this in *The Book of Life* while torturing Matthew:

Given enough time - and vampires have plenty of that - I will be able to witness every touch you've bestowed upon her. I will know what brings her pleasure as well as pain. I will know the power she wields and the secrets of her body. Her vulnerabilities will be as open to me as if her soul were a book." Benjamin stroked Matthew's skin gradually increasing the circulation to his neck. "I could smell her fear in the Bodleian, of course, but now I want to understand it. So afraid, yet so remarkably brave. It will be thrilling to break her.
Hearts cannot be broken, Matthew reminded himself. He managed to croak out a single word. "Why?" (474).

By constructing this combination, both Arden and Harkness are highlighting the role of co-hero, since the villain also impacts upon Morozko and Matthew through many of the previously enumerated functions. This combination also has a dual reading to the villains' motivation: mainly, power; secondly, revenge.

I would also like to highlight the character of the stepmother. Although it is dramatically different in each of the trilogies, nonetheless, they both subvert the traditional function of the stepmother in fairytales, which would be the villain.

In *The Winternight Trilogy*, Anna Ivanovna becomes the main character's stepmother after her marriage to Vasya's father, Pyotr. Anna is presented as an impressionable character who becomes fascinated by Konstantin, the power-seeking priest who fulfills the function of the false hero to Anna and a secondary villain to Vasya.

Anna has the power of vision, the ability to see the traditional protecting spirits of Russian folklore. She considers them 'demons' and reacts harshly when she realizes Vasya has her same power of vision. Following the original story of Morozko (in English "The Story of King Frost"), she plans to either marry Vasya or send her to a convent. The reader is not invited to view the character with animosity, however, but with a complex pity and whose actions prompted that other women of the household "looked at each other and slowly shook their heads" (*The Bear and the Nightingale* 71).

Her perception of the vision as a burden is clear from the moment she is introduced.

Pyotr's house was alive with devils. A creature with eyes like coals hid in the oven. A little man in the bathhouse winked at her through the steam. A demon like a heap of sticks slouched around the doorway.

In Moscow, her devils had never looked at her, never spared her a glance, but here they were always *staring*. Some even came quite close, as though they would speak, and each time Anna had to flee, hating the puzzled stares of her husband and stepchildren. She saw them all the time, everywhere - except here in the church. (*The Bear and the Nightingale* 71)

She finds solace in the church and in Konstantin who is enthralled by Vasya, creating an unwilling affective triangle.

Anna saw the girl and the priest, their steady mutual regard, and her furious face turned redder than ever. She put all the strength of her arm into the sharp willow. Vasya stood still for it, biting her lip bloody. But the tears welled, despite her best efforts, and hurried down her cheeks. Behind Anna, Konstantin watched, wordless. (*The Bear and the Nightingale* 117).

Her ultimate death as a sacrifice to free the primary villain of the story, Medved, fulfills the function of 'Villain is punished' without resolving the conflict: Anna ceases to be an agent

in the narratology of the story, but her demise precipitates the presence of another, more powerful, villain.

The stepmother character in *The All Souls Trilogy*, is Diana. By mating with Matthew, she effectively becomes the stepmother of Matthew's (vampire) child Marcus Whitmore. Not only is she immediately willing to bond with him, but her inclusion in a thousand-year-old family with firm traditions fosters numerous changes in a very short amount of time, offering space for the growth of several of the members. Marcus becomes the Grand Master of the Knights of Lazarus and consummates a relationship with a human partner, Phoebe Taylor. Since Diana appears as the hero *and* the stepmother she is an example of how the conventions of the genre can be challenged through retelling (Williams 255).

Lastly, although there is not much depth in the relationship between humans and creatures in *The All Souls Trilogy*, *The Winternight Trilogy* points out an ultimate villain, and the ability to tarnish the function of the 'wedding' (Propp 63) or celebration of the story's conclusion: the public opinion. *The All Souls Trilogy* points towards a similar function when it refers to witch hunting and the dwindling presence of creatures. The public opinion is clearly manipulated in *The Bear and the Nightingale* against Vasya and is ever-present as her characters breaks expectations and displays agency. Morozko defines it as:

"Men fear what they do not understand", murmured the Bear. "They hurt you. They beat you, spat on you, put you in the fire. Men will suck all the wilderness out of the world, until there is no place for a witch girl to hide. They will burn you and your kind." (The Winter of the Witch 104).

c. Additional Characters and Functions

The aim of this last section is to point out contemporary deviations from traditional narratology, to invite consideration on how this can shape the functions and the characters. The concept of love, the main drive to the task of protecting family by both heroes is supported and stated by other characters. An example can be seen through the love stated by Fernando Gonçalves's unwavering loyalty to his lost mate:

"You were father's mate!" Gallowglass protested. "You are as much a de Clermont as Ysabeau or her children!"
Fernando carefully shut the oven door. "I am Hugh's mate," he said, his back still turned. "Your father will never be a past tense to me." (The Book of Life 9)

The All Souls Trilogy integrates issues of inclusiveness and exclusiveness in both the construction of the division between creatures and humans, as well as in the relationships displayed. On the one hand, "Harkness [...] crafts her supernatural creatures scientifically"

(Szanter 116) albeit with complaints and contrasting information from geneticists and the scientific community (Szanter 117), as it is the possession of an extra chromosome or extra chromosome pair that affecting whether the character will be human (no extra), daemon (one extra) vampire or witch (both have two extra). The inherent villainism of vampirism is withdrawn as “the human never physically dies, as is the case with many vampire narratives. Nor does the human become infected with vampirism, which is usually the case for more traditional vampire mythologies” (Szanter 121). This distinct feature allows the possibility of addressing mental disabilities, integrated in *The All Souls Trilogy* through the introduction of blood rage since “Phillipe likens blood rage to a mental disability” (Szanter 122) and how it is addressed and treated in the story.

On the other hand, there are numerous homosexual relationships in the story, which do not appear to affect any of the stories’ functions. This could represent a meaningful step towards normativity, representing the last stage of integration as considered by Butler since “one or more characters happen to be gay - but their sexuality is not the crux of the story” (“The Portrayal of Trans People...” 17)

Lastly, non-human interaction is a key element of both stories, with Vasya creating a connection with horse Solovey and Diana with her familiar fire Drake Corra. The relationships represent both service and independence of the non-human characters, and the female hero decision-making on how to develop these friendships engages with their moral compass.

4. LIMITATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

Although the narratological and comparative analysis optimizes the conditions to find deviations in the traditional folkloric tale, and albeit their inspiration, neither of these trilogies is strictly folklore. Fantasy has been taught through narratology (Chester 2016) and examined through narratology (Campbell 2014), since the character types that operate within narratological functions tend to be well-defined. Nonetheless, this paper joins other research (Helford 2016; Campbell 2014) in illustrating how fantasy offers, in fact, the depths of reading and sophistication of the novel and they are part of a corpora “superseding the worlds of myth, of epic poetry, and oral storytelling” (Parrinder 2015 xv), following the premise that comparative study is proposed by Propp as genres “mingle” (100) and by Campbell (1949) as a way to find an essence that can be taught about myth and storytelling (xxii).

This assertion points towards the wider discussion on genre. And while in library science “fantasy novels are normally imaginary tales about the struggle between good and evil in

non-real or fictional settings” (Omar 95) and “heroes usually have superpowers that enable them to destroy villainous creatures and save the world and the human race” (Chester 94-95), the boundaries between fiction, fantasy and science fiction are in constant discussion (Suvin 2000, Petzold 1986) as is the development within each field.

The qualitative comparative analysis of the two trilogies presented also has its limitations. Additional elements of the trilogies can be focused on and discussed. With the object of completing the comparative study, nuances of some of the elements analyzed have been condensed and a closer examination could bring up additional narratological functions. In the larger context, a broader sample of publications would need to be explored to confirm whether the findings proposed in the paper are generalized or distinctive. However, the success of these two trilogies can be used as an example to view the flexibility of narratological functions in the fantasy genre and to explore them through a gender lens.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Although the analyzed sample can be considered insufficient to define a literary movement and additional studies would be required to infer causal relations between these narratological trends and other examples, several interesting issues are reflected that can be applied in critical reading activities.

On the one hand, character depiction applied to narratological functions can be subverted by the division of power. The heroes depicted in these trilogies chose to have other characters partake in responsibilities, muddling the differences between the functions of co-hero, helper and donor through the division of agency. Whether or not this sharing is directly linked to the femininity of the hero is presented as an open discussion. The analysis considers that the female heroes of *The All Souls Trilogy* and *The Winternight Trilogy* share power and responsibility linked to the search for their own fulfillment, which is connected to protecting and preserving their family relationships. This effectively presents unique traits in the hero character and subverts the general motivation of hero stories presented by traditional narratology.

The inclusion of the romantic relationship in both trilogies influences this motivation. With previous works of female writers in the fantasy field, especially in the young adult section, including the element of the love triangle as a main theme (*Twilight Saga*, *A Court of Thorns and Roses*, *The Mortal Instruments*) or as a secondary element (*The Hunger Games*), a larger topic for research is presented: has inclusion of love and romance become a requisite for a female hero story? Is it this element what sets a distinction between fantasy productions through a gender lens?

As Butler comments, “not only do we view fictional characters as people, but we also respond emotionally to them” (“Literary Studies Deconstructed” 49). It is for this reason that representation is paramount for the reader. However, *The All Souls Trilogy* and *The Winternight Trilogy* not only present female hero characters, but these characters contest many of the traditional functions of narratology and offer a stepping stone to understand future developments of fantasy literature.

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**A Ghost 'Dressed in Deepest Black'? Evoking *Dracula*
through Victorian Gothic and Gender Archetypes
in Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black***

**¿Un fantasma que 'viste del negro más profundo'? Evocando a
Drácula a través de arquetipos victorianos góticos y de género
en *La mujer de negro* de Susan Hill**

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Resumen

Susan Hill ha publicado una serie de novelas de fantasmas que rinden homenaje a las narraciones clásicas victorianas. La crítica neo-victoriana investiga obras contemporáneas que evocan el pasado victoriano con el propósito de visitar y reinterpretar este periodo histórico desde una perspectiva actual. La novela *La mujer de negro* (1983) de Susan Hill presenta importantes paralelismos con la novela victoriana tardía de Bram Stoker, *Drácula* (1897), especialmente en la caracterización de la Mujer de Negro, puesto que, pese a tratarse de un fantasma, este personaje muestra una similitud reveladora con la mujer vampiro Lucy Westenra e incluso con el propio Drácula, a la par que rememora arquetipos victorianos de género, como la mujer caída o la figura del dandi que el arquetipo gótico del vampiro simboliza. Este artículo pretende aproximarse a ambos textos desde una perspectiva comparatista, centrándose en el análisis de los arquetipos góticos del fantasma y del vampiro, así como de los arquetipos de género de la mujer caída y del dandi, con el propósito de probar la intertextualidad existente entre ambas obras, mostrando así el efecto hipnótico que el pasado victoriano aún ejerce en las narraciones góticas contemporáneas y la necesidad de recuperar las voces que todavía permanecen en los márgenes de las obras clásicas victorianas.

Palabras clave: Neo-Victorianismo, Goticismo, fantasma, vampiro, género, mujer caída, dandi, estudios comparatistas.

Abstract

Susan Hill has published a series of ghost novels which pay homage to classic Victorian narratives. Neo-Victorian criticism looks into contemporary works that evoke the Victorian past with the purpose of revisiting and reinterpreting this historical period from a current perspective. Susan Hill's novel *The Woman in Black* (1983) presents important parallelisms with Bram Stoker's late Victorian novel *Dracula* (1897), especially in its characterisation of the Woman in Black, since, despite being a ghost, this character bears significant resemblance with the female vampire Lucy Westenra and even with Dracula himself, together with Victorian archetypes of gender, such as the fallen woman and the figure of the dandy, which the gothic archetype of the vampire symbolises. This article aims to approach both texts from a comparative perspective, focusing on the analysis of the gothic archetypes of the ghost and the vampire, along with the gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy, with the purpose of proving the intertextuality existing between both works, thus showing the hypnotic effect that the Victorian past can still exert on contemporary gothic narratives and the need to recover voices which still remain in the margins of Victorian classic works.

Keywords: Neo-Victorianism, Gothicism, ghost, vampire, gender, fallen woman, dandy, comparative studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

From our contemporary perspective, the Victorian past is often approached through a blending of the familiar and the ghostly, since, as Cora Kaplan admits, in contemporary narratives which seek to invoke the Victorian period, there lies "the mix of familiarity and strangeness which Freud theorised as the uncanny" (1). Nonetheless, any attempt at evoking the Victorian past can only aspire to obtain a mediated image, which Simon Joyce describes as that which is reflected in a rearview mirror and that gives away "a recognition of a surprising closeness" (3), thus paving the way for considering the Victorian past through either its otherness or rather through those traits that look more familiar to us and resemble our own time more faithfully. Since the fact of re-examining the past necessarily implies conjuring it up in spite of its absence, Neo-Victorian theorists, such as Rosario Arias and Patricia Pulham, have resorted to gothic tropes which metaphorically regard the

Victorian past as a spectre that haunts us, in the same way that John Kucich and Dianne Sadoff also consider Neo-Victorian textualities as “ghostly forms of the past in fictional pastiche” (xxiv). Bearing in mind how critics often resort to the figure of a ghost as a metaphor to refer to Neo-Victorian textualities, the contemporary writer Susan Hill has given rise to a series of ghost novels which are not only rooted in the classic nineteenth-century ghost story, but which are also frequently set in this historical period. As David Stevens admits, her ghost narratives have turned Hill into a writer influenced by classic gothic trends, as well as into a contemporary author deeply interested in evoking the Victorian past. In an anthology of ghost stories which she edited in the same year that her ghost novel *The Woman in Black* was published, Hill acknowledges that “the traditional classic English ghost story [...] has its origins in the nineteenth-century,” arguing that it is, in fact, “really Victorian” (“Introduction” 9). As far as this genre is concerned, Hill also contends that ghost stories ultimately “tell us about things that lie hidden within all of us, and which lurk outside all around us” (15), thus complying with Julia Briggs’s proposition that the figure of the ghost in most narratives symbolically represents the return of the repressed, which, in Neo-Victorian gothic fiction, can be interpreted as the personification of the haunting Victorian past, along with those latent Victorian voices that still remain to be heard.

Even if she has mostly become a prolific writer of ghost stories since the turn of the century, it was in the year 1983 that Hill published her first ghost novel, *The Woman in Black*, which granted her immediate public acclaim. So far the story lying behind *The Woman in Black* has been adapted to the stage through Stephen Mallatratt’s play in 1987, and it has also been turned into two successful films, such as Herbert Wise’s British television film in 1989 and James Watkins’s blockbuster film adaptation in 2012, together with Tom Harper’s sequel in 2014, thus giving evidence of its prevailing popularity extending well into the twenty-first century. Hill’s first ghost novel, *The Woman in Black*, exhibits a self-conscious will to evoke Victorian times, as its narrator, Arthur Kipps, admits to himself at the commencement of his narrative that “the business was beginning to sound like something from a Victorian novel” (31), thus disclosing the author’s explicit awareness of the pervasive influence that the Victorian past exerts as an underlying presence all through the novel. Taking into consideration this eloquent metatextual reference, to use Gérard Genette’s terminology, Donna Cox argues that it is possible to identify reverberating echoes existing between *The Woman in Black* and classic Victorian textualities. In particular, from its beginning, Hill’s novel is deeply evocative of Bram Stoker’s novel *Dracula* (1897), insofar as, like Jonathan Harker, who is summoned to visit Dracula in his castle, the narrator in *The Woman in Black*,

Arthur Kipps, recollects that, as a young solicitor, he was also requested to leave London and set off on a long journey to look into Mrs Drablow's legal papers, which eventually led him to encounter the Woman in Black. Owing to the characters, narratological features and plot development that both novels have in common, it can be argued that *Dracula* frequently arises as a paradigmatic Derridean trace within *The Woman in Black*, insofar as Stoker's novel can be considered, to use Derridean terms, as a mark of the absence of a presence in Hill's novel. The dyad of the ghost and the vampire that the character of the Woman in Black personifies, as she amalgamates features pertaining to these two gothic archetypes, also gives evidence of the Derridean concept of *différance*, since, as a Neo-Victorian reinterpretation of *Dracula*, *The Woman in Black* is rooted in Stoker's novel, but it also necessarily differs and defers in time from this Victorian classic.

The fascination that Stoker's seminal novel still exerts on contemporary readers may find its justification in Ronald Thomas's thesis whereby he claims that *Dracula* retains "its special power for us 'moderns' because it functions in historically specific ways as a mechanism of reversion and preservation, one that both divides and connects our modern present and our Victorian past" (307). Given Hill's overt purpose to bring back to life the 'ghost' of the Victorian past in her novel and its blatant parallelisms with Stoker's late Victorian novel, this article aims to identify the intertextuality existing between *The Woman in Black* and *Dracula*, which is not only rooted in significant narratological similarities, but especially in the portrayal of the Woman in Black, as it bears an acute resemblance with the archetype of the vampire —particularly, with the characters of Lucy Westenra and Dracula himself in Stoker's novel— in spite of the fact that the Woman in Black is a ghost. The figures of the vampire and the ghost can be considered recurrent myths in popular gothic fiction that share a series of mythemes based on their liminal nature and ambivalent quality which form a dyad in Hill's novel, even though the archetype of the ghost, in its spectral condition, has often been associated with the subconscious part of the psyche, whereas the archetype of the vampire, which conventionally acquires more physicality in comparison, has frequently been related to sexuality. As Mark Llewellyn claims, Neo-Victorian textualities are consciously set in the Victorian era with the aim to "rewrite the historical narrative of that period by representing marginalised voices, new histories of sexuality [...] and other generally 'different' versions of the Victorian" (165). In this respect, the pervasive intertextuality existing between the ghost of the Woman in Black and the vampire characters of Lucy Westenra and Dracula also paves the way for analysing the character of the Woman in Black as engaging in dialogue with the Victorian gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy that Lucy Westenra and Dracula respectively epitomise. The

gothic archetypes of the ghost and the vampire, along with the gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy, personify the repressed past that is brought back to life, as these Victorian gothic and gender archetypes arise as tropes which blend together to refer to the latent and uncanny influence that Victorian textualities still exert on contemporary gothic narratives.

2. THE WOMAN IN BLACK AND THE TRADITION OF THE VICTORIAN GHOST STORY

The Woman in Black comprises a series of features which have traditionally been interpreted as pertaining to the Victorian ghost story and, as such, Hill's ghost novel contributes to updating its classic literary formula. As Julia Briggs claims, figuratively emulating Mister Scrooge's encounter with the three ghosts of Christmas in Charles Dickens's novella *A Christmas Carol* (1843), Victorian families would sit, bunched around the fireside on Christmas Eve, to tell each other ghost stories, first beginning in a placid way and then introducing disturbing elements that blended the familiar and the unknown, with the symbolic purpose of reinforcing family solidarity, but also of disclosing its vulnerability. Clearly evoking the classic Victorian ghost story, at the beginning of *The Woman in Black*, it is Christmas Eve and, as an aging man, the narrator, Arthur Kipps, declares that, after tragically losing his first wife Stella and his son Joseph, and having been a widower for twelve years, he lives with his new family, Esmé and her sons, who entice him to tell them a ghost story. Resorting to this frame narrative, which underlines family unity, but also reveals its fragility given Kipps's personal misfortune, the homodiegetic narrator starts disclosing the tragedy which befell his family as a result of the ghostly intrigues of the Woman in Black, thus ultimately finding himself telling a ghost story in which he plays a major role.

As Briggs further argues, the traditional Victorian ghost story often addresses the tension between the familiar world of life, which symbolically stands for domesticity and the home, and the mysterious world of death, which is considered the embodiment of the uncanny that, for Freud, represents everything that remains concealed and must eventually come to light. In this respect, in Victorian times, the ghost story unveiled that traditional institutions, such as the family, could also become a source of hidden secrets veering between reinforcing family values and disclosing their latent deceptive quality. Similarly, in Hill's novel, upon commencing his narrative, Arthur Kipps presents himself as a young lawyer whose journey from London to the rural town of Crythin—which propitiates his encounter with the ghost of the Woman in Black—not only challenges the rational order in which he has been raised as a Victorian man, but it also enables him to gain insight into the secrets of

the Humfrye family and its dishonest past actions to preserve its alleged propriety and respectability, when one of its members, Jennet Humfrye, gives birth to a child out of wedlock.

As a gothic archetype, the spectre in Victorian ghost stories symbolises a series of prevailing cultural concerns and anxieties which menace to disrupt the cements of Victorian standards and values. In particular, threatening to destabilise the *status quo* and being expunged as a result, the ghost usually personifies a function related to “the most primitive, punitive and sadistic impulses” (Briggs 128), which is that of revenge. The Victorian archetype of the ghost that the Woman in Black represents is precisely rooted in reprisal after being exposed to injustice, since, in her lifetime, Jennet Humfrye is obliged to abandon the family home and forbidden to disclose her real identity to her illegitimate child, who is adopted by the Drabblows and eventually perishes in a tragic accident. After Jennet dies in utter ostracism and destitution, she returns to the world of the living as the ghost of the Woman in Black to take revenge for the wrongs she was made to suffer and with the malevolent purpose of depriving all the villagers of their children to vindicate herself for what they had done to her own son.

According to Mackenzie Bartlett, the archetype of the ghost in nineteenth-century ghost stories mainly stands for a symbol of emotional and psychological distress, tormenting the protagonists of such narratives, since apparitional encounters are considered “highly individualistic and subjective” (36) and bring to the surface the individual’s latent subconscious drives. When Arthur Kipps sets off on a personal journey into the unknown, he is a young man engaged to his fiancée Stella, but his anxieties and fears about marriage and domestic life begin to take shape once he is away from home. His encounters with the ghost of the Woman in Black, who ultimately personifies his dormant fears and desires, stir Kipps’s dread and interest on equal terms, revealing his insecurities about commitment and family life. The character of the Woman in Black thus appears to respond to classic functions of the figure of the ghost in Victorian narratives, insofar as she is mostly conceived as the product of the subconscious and, in particular, of subliminal latent dreads which materialise in a spectral shape, thus turning into a symbolic double which personifies cultural anxieties that are eventually brought to light despite any attempt at repressing them.

Hill’s novel *The Woman in Black* thus presents many features pertaining to the Victorian ghost story, as its frame narrative evokes the Victorian Christmas tradition of telling each other ghost stories, while it brings to the fore Victorian anxieties about the institution of the family and its hidden secrets. Besides, the primary function that the ghost of the Woman in Black acquires remains inherently related to primitive impulses of the psyche, which

associate the gothic archetype of the ghost with the collective and individual subconscious, as the figure of the ghost personifies those latent fears that not only haunt the protagonist, but also the whole of the Victorian society. The Victorian concern about repressing those elements that could destabilise the fundamentals of the *status quo* ultimately contributes to strengthening social anxieties which materialise in the figure of the ghost. In this respect, Hill's reinterpretation of the Victorian ghost story pays homage to the classic formula of the Victorian ghost narrative, but as a Neo-Victorian novel, it gives major centrality to the figure of the ghost as well as significant weight to its vindications in comparison with classic Victorian ghost stories, which mostly conceived the figure of the ghost as the materialisation of discordant social voices that had to be silenced and were exorcised when the narrative came to a close. In comparison, the ultimate triumph of the ghost of the Woman in Black ratifies Hill's intention as an author to vindicate those voices which were only allowed to remain latent in Victorian narratives and which are not only recovered, but granted prominent attention, in Hill's contemporary reinterpretation.

3. A GHOST IN A VAMPIRE'S FOOTSTEPS: AN INTERTEXTUAL GOTHIC DYAD

The characterisation of the Woman in Black in Hill's novel appears to comply with Bartlett's classic description of an apparition as "a sudden visual manifestation of an ethereal and transient figure" that responds to "someone who is deceased" (35). As a ghost, the portrayal of the Woman in Black highlights her spectral and insubstantial traits, since individuals become aware of her presence only through the senses of sight and hearing, but never through the sense of touch. When the narrator first sets eyes on the Woman in Black upon attending Alice Drablow's funeral in church, he perceives the Woman in Black exclusively through the sense of sight, stating that he "caught a glimpse of another mourner, a woman," while he discerns she was "not holding a prayer book" (48), thus hinting at her impious nature, but also suggesting that the Woman in Black is merely an apparition and, as such, she is deprived of the sense of touch. As representative of the classic figure of the ghost, the presence of the Woman in Black is also often described by means of resorting to synaesthesia, which involves sense transference, since, it is by means of appealing to one sense, hearing, in terms of another, sight, that the narrator infers the visual appearance and disappearance of the ghost through the subtle sounds that she produces, as Kipps admits that he "heard the slight rustle of clothing [...]" and realised that the unknown woman had already slipped away" (49), thus contributing to underscoring the ghost's ephemeral quality, along with her capacity to suggest her appearance by means of appealing to the sense of hearing. Nonetheless, despite her evident intangible condition, along with the fact

that she can merely be perceived through sight and hearing, the characterisation of the Woman in Black betrays a series of iconic characteristics that are mostly evocative of another Victorian gothic archetype, which is that of the vampire.

In comparison with the ghost, the gothic archetype of the vampire is mostly portrayed through traits that bring to the fore its physicality, along with the discourses of gender and sexuality, which stand in sharp contrast with the ethereal and spiritual quality that traditionally characterises the ghost as a gothic archetype mostly connected with the psyche and the subconscious. According to Anna Chromik, Stoker's *Dracula* is frequently considered the most "influential piece of vampire fiction ever written" (708), as it introduced the attributes that have traditionally characterised the gothic archetype of the vampire, mostly in terms of its distinguishing appearance, primarily its black attire and pale complexion. In Hill's novel, it is significant to notice that, when the narrator first sets eyes on the Woman in Black, he describes her as "dressed in deepest black" (48) in spite of the fact that she is a ghost. In the collective unconscious, spectres and apparitions have traditionally been associated with white, as is customarily established in classic ghost stories, but in Hill's novel, even if it pays homage to the Victorian ghost tale, the figure of the ghost is always clad in black clothes. Besides, the title of Hill's novel is clearly evocative of Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1859), whose title refers to the character of Anne Catherick, who is precisely mistaken for a ghost because she is always dressed in white. By means of her intention to match the title of her novel with that of Collins's and then modify it, Hill is drawing attention to the explicit change in the colour of the title of Collins's novel, thus implying some divergence between the character that gives name to her novel, the Woman in Black, and the image that is customarily associated with the figure of a ghost. Moreover, Hill also seems to be taking advantage of Collins's own strategy to induce the reader into thinking that the character in his novel, Anne Catherick, must be a ghost, even though it is ultimately discovered that she is not, as it is only in appearance that Anne matches the iconic image of a ghost. The characterisation of the Woman in Black as a spectre peculiarly dressed in black is thus thoroughly evocative of the gothic archetype of the vampire.

Correspondingly, in Stoker's novel, attired with her bridal gown, which also turns into her shroud according to Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, Lucy Westenra's first appearance as a vampire closely resembles that of a ghost, as Lucy is portrayed as "a dim, white figure, which held something dark at its breast" (175). A significant intertextual link can thus be established between the description of Lucy Westenra shortly after turning into a vampire and the characterisation of the Woman in Black as a ghost, insofar as Lucy as a vampire

looks like a ghost, while the Woman in Black as a spectre is described in such terms that are suggestive of the figure of the vampire. Lucy is dressed in white although she is a vampire, whereas the Woman in Black is a ghost in black clothes, which, in turn, necessarily brings to mind the character of Dracula himself. When Jonathan Harker beholds Dracula for the first time, he sees a figure “clad in black from head to foot,” while he also points out that “the general effect was one of extraordinary pallor” (17). In clear analogy, when Arthur Kipps first sets eyes on the Woman in Black in Hill’s novel, he admits that she looks “extremely pale, even more than a contrast with the blackness of her garments could account for” (49). The respective descriptions of Dracula and the Woman in Black underscore both their black attire and their astonishing pale complexion, which bring them definitely close to each other, while Lucy’s portrayal as a female vampire resembling a ghost presents an equivalent intertextuality with the Woman in Black as a ghost whose traits are evocative of those of a vampire.

As Chromik further argues, the gothic archetype of the vampire also possesses the distinguishing quality of not betraying its vampiric condition, as its outstanding physicality and corporeal features allow the vampire to “easily pass as a human [...] under the façade of an eccentric aristocrat” (708). The characterisation of the Woman in Black often accentuates her physical traits, as Arthur Kipps immediately notices that she is “suffering from a terrible wasting disease” (48), in spite of the fact that she is a spectre and, as such, she is presumably deprived of corporeal features. Similarly, in Stoker’s novel, although the figure of the vampire is mostly characterised by its physicality as its corporeal traits are exhaustively portrayed, as liminal beings, the appearance of vampires is also sometimes depicted through oxymoronic descriptions, which bring to the fore some ethereal quality in them in spite of their outstanding physicality given their vampiric condition. As a case in point, when Lucy Westenra makes her appearance as a female vampire, it is declared that such a being is “her body, and yet not it” (177), thus stressing her corporeal quality, but also her lack of it, while, when Jonathan Harker first shakes hands with Dracula, he encounters “more like the hand of a dead than a living man” (15), hence underscoring his physicality as an apparent living being, but also his lack of it, as his liminal condition ultimately relates him to the undead. This oxymoronic component characterising the figure of the vampire is recaptured in the depiction of the Woman in Black, since she is mostly described through her corporeal traits, which allow her to pass as a human being, as if she were a vampire, but her spectral condition is also accentuated owing to her fleeting and transient nature. As Arthur Kipps concedes, he aims to escort the Woman in Black when he sees her in church as a result of her apparent illness, and thus he admits to himself that “he intended to look

for the sick-looking woman" (50), thus stressing her corporeal features, even if he also states that "she was nowhere to be seen" (50), hence also emphasising her ephemeral quality and spectral condition allowing her to vanish into thin air.

Its ability to defy the dictates of aging in spite of its outstanding physicality is also a feature commonly associated with the gothic archetype of the vampire. Even though she is a spectre, the Woman in Black also shares this feature with the vampire since, despite her remarkably wasted facial traits, Arthur Kipps declares that "nor did she look old" and that although "the effect of her illness made her age hard to guess, [...] she was quite possibly no more than thirty" (49), thus unveiling that she looks ostensibly younger than her actual age. In Stoker's novel, the young and aging traits of the vampires are also often juxtaposed, as Lucy's body is frozen in youth and she is described as "a dark-haired woman" (175) when she turns into a vampire, even if some of her physical features, such as her "distorted face" and the fact that her "brows were wrinkled" (176), already betray that her youthful appearance does not truly reflect her age. Besides, upon meeting Dracula, Jonathan Harker describes him as an "old man [...] with a long white moustache" (17), even though the young man also stresses Dracula's "astonishing vitality in a man of his years," while, later on, when Harker meets him again in London, he is astonished upon realising that the Count "has grown young" (143) and remains unscathed by the effects of old age. The liminal characterisation of the vampire in terms of aging is also brought back in the portrayal of the Woman in Black, as Arthur Kipps refers to her as "the young woman with the wasted face" (51), thus accentuating her youthful appearance, but also her inherent protracted age, in a description that once more resembles the classic archetype of the vampire more faithfully than that of the ghost.

In relation to the youthful appearance that is usually representative of the vampire, Gina Wisker puts forward that vampires nourish on the youth, as they are endowed with "child-draining" qualities that deprive children of their life ("Horror Fiction" 330), so that vampires can retain their infamous condition. In analogy, in Hill's novel, a curse unleashes every time that someone catches sight of the ghost of the Woman in Black since, one of the villagers, Samuel Daily, divulges that "whenever she has been seen [...] in some violent or dreadful circumstance, a child has died" (149), thus implying that the Woman in Black nourishes on the lives of young children to preserve her infamous preternatural condition. Similarly, in Stoker's novel, when Lucy Westenra turns into a vampire, she is witnessed in the company of "a fair-haired child [...], growling over it as a dog growls over a bone" (175), thus insinuating that Lucy intends to drain the child's blood in order to sustain her condition as a vampire. In the course of his captivity in Dracula's castle, Jonathan Harker also notices

that, when Dracula agrees to satisfy the demands of his brides to feed them, “there was a gasp and a low wail, as of a half-smothered child” (34), which denotes that vampires nourish on young children to retain their eternal youth. This characteristic feature pertaining to the archetype of the vampire is explicitly elicited in the characterisation of the Woman in Black, as her apparition always anticipates the death of one of the children in the village, which arises as the infamous motivation that brings her back as a ghost, but also the reason that enables her to remain in the world of the living.

As Wisker further claims, the figure of the vampire is also inextricably connected with blood, both literally and figuratively, since vampires are creatures that resort to “blood-drinking” (“Horror Fiction” 330) to preserve their vampiric condition, but this intrinsic association of vampires with blood also brings forward issues related to unorthodox sexuality and, by extension, as William Hugues claims, issues involving “the complexity of sanguine relations” (“Blood” 74), such as legitimacy and heredity. When Arthur Kipps is requested to look into Alice Drablow’s legal documents, he is obliged to leave behind his fiancée Stella and, instead, gain insight into the Woman in Black’s malevolent intentions to raise her family of ghostly children, after being forbidden to act as a mother of her own illegitimate child. Similarly, in Stoker’s novel, Jonathan Harker must also abandon his fiancée Mina to travel to Count Dracula’s castle and make arrangements so that Dracula will be able to spread his lineage beyond his native country. In both cases, their respective acquaintance with the Woman in Black and Dracula implies that the prospects of getting married and raising their own family on behalf of the male protagonists, Arthur Kipps and Jonathan Harker, is gradually put in jeopardy, since they adopt such ambivalent attitude of attraction and repulsion towards the preternatural creatures that they must confront that their former beliefs about marriage and domesticity remain at stake. In relation to the Woman in Black, although Arthur Kipps notices that her appearance is “pathetically wasted, so pale and gaunt with disease,” he cannot help observing that “there was still some faint trace on her features, some lingering hint, of a not inconsiderable former beauty” (49-50), which underlines the narrator’s ambiguous feelings towards the Woman in Black, who arises as a personification of the abject, but also as a latent figure of potential temptation.

In analogy, in Stoker’s novel, when Lucy Westenra turns into a vampire, she is depicted as a temptress, as a fallen woman “with outstretched arms and a wanton smile” who lures her former fiancé, Arthur Holmwood, to approach her to embrace her, while it is stated that he “fell back and hid his face in his hands” (175-6) in order to be able to repel her tempting and sinful charms as a female vampire. Besides, when Jonathan Harker meets Dracula, the male protagonist declares that he “found him of a very marked physiognomy” (16) and begins to

indulge in a significantly detailed portrayal of Dracula's physique, paying special attention to his red lips and long nails, thus highlighting Dracula's remarkable androgynous features, and finally declaring that "as the Count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder" (17). Given its outstanding physicality, which comes hand in hand with sexuality issues, the gothic archetype of the vampire often contributes to destabilising beliefs about orthodox sexuality which had to be preserved according to Victorian standards. The tempting and voluptuous portrayal of Lucy Westenra as a vampire marks her as the Victorian gender archetype of the fallen woman, while Dracula's depiction accentuating his androgynous and even effeminate traits brings him closer to the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy. Given her strong association with the gothic archetype of the vampire, the Woman in Black also amalgamates features pertaining to the archetypes of the fallen woman, as well as of the dandy, which bring to the fore Victorian concerns about gender and sexuality that are further elaborated in Hill's novel.

4. FROM LUCY TO JENNET: VINDICATING THE VICTORIAN FALLEN WOMAN

As Maureen Moran argues, in Victorian times, middle-class women who stepped outside social conventions and engaged in sexual activity outside marriage became outcasts in need of reform, inasmuch as their conduct threatened to destabilise established social and moral conventions. The figure of the Victorian fallen woman became an issue which raised outstanding public concern, as it is evinced by the proliferation of literary manifestations which revolved around this character in Victorian times, mostly in novels with patent gothic undertones. In particular, the characterisation of the fallen woman in literature often sought to explore prevailing cultural and social anxieties in relation to fears of sexuality and even moral degeneration. Critics such as Val Scullion argue that, set in the decade of the 1860s, *The Woman in Black* brings to the fore Victorian hypocrisies as regards the figure of the unmarried woman. In this respect, the character of the Woman in Black can be claimed to be based on the Victorian archetype of the fallen woman, personified by the female vampire Lucy Westenra in Stoker's novel, since, like Lucy, the Woman in Black must also face the ostracism that women had to bear upon defying the established dictates of gender in Victorian times. Hill's evocation of Lucy Westenra in the characterisation of the Woman in Black responds to critics such as Wisker who claim that contemporary women writers have often resorted to the potential of the figure of the female vampire for "radical re-appropriation" ("Love Bites" 167), especially given her defiance and subversion of conventional roles assigned to women.

Although Stoker never spoke in favour of the women's movement explicitly, his mother was a fervent advocate who might have drawn her son's attention to gender issues, which remain so latent in *Dracula* that contemporary interpretations have often reassessed the novel from a gender perspective. In this respect, critics like Jean Lorrah claim that the character of Mina Murray, who has traditionally been considered as the heroine in *Dracula*, personifies "the positive aspects of the New Woman" (32), given her intelligence and intellectualism. As Moran argues, the archetype of the New Woman was exemplified by Victorian women who resisted conventions and rejected the repressive roles imposed on them, struggling to attain equality and emancipation in all spheres of life. In fact, Mina refers explicitly to the figure of the New Woman when she reflects upon men's prerogative to offer marriage proposals, as she states that "I suppose the New Woman won't condescend in future to accept; she will do the proposing herself", even concluding that "a nice job she will make of it" (75). Nonetheless, in spite of Mina's approval of some of the ideals pertaining to the archetype of the New Woman, as Lorrah further argues, Mina represents "none of the sexual promiscuity that men feared the New Woman would exhibit" (35), since, she also often displays features pertaining to the more orthodox archetype of the Angel of the House, whereby Victorian women were conceived as having an inherent tender and pious nature, which propitiated that they had to be protectively enclosed in the home and subordinated to male figures (Moran 36). In fact, when she receives Sister Agatha's letter informing her that her fiancé Jonathan Harker is safe and sound, Mina exclaims that "I have cried over the good Sister's letter till I can feel it wet against my bosom," as she declares that "it is of Jonathan, and must be next my heart, for he is in my heart" (83), thus accentuating Mina's mainly pious and devoted qualities as a Victorian woman.

Conversely, as Carol Senf argues, Mina's friend, Lucy Westenra, displays more generally deprecated features according to the prevailing Victorian discourses of gender, such as rebellion, overt eroticism and even sexual initiative, which stand in contrast with those that Mina represents ("*Dracula*: Stoker's Response" 35-37). All of these traits, which have traditionally been connected with the male, were considered, to use Senf's term, "absolute evil" ("*Daughters of Lilith*" 204) if associated with women in the nineteenth-century, hence relating sexually liberated women like Lucy Westenra to decadence and turning them into epitomes of the archetype of the fallen woman. In the 1890s, the aesthetic philosophy of decadence sought to explore what was perceived as exotic and anomalous, since, as Moran declares, decadents achieved fulfilment by cultivating sensations arising from "bizarre experiences, sometimes including sexual perversity" (144), which contributed to the popularity of female characters in gothic literature, such as *la morte amoureuse* and the

female vampire. In Stoker's novel, through subtle allusions, it is implied that Lucy's fall from grace unleashes her eventual transformation into a female vampire, as Mina explains that Lucy "has lately taken to her old habit of walking in her sleep," stating that "her mother had spoken to me about it, and we have decided that I am to lock the door of our room every night" (61), thus unveiling Lucy's propensity to indulge in an alternate sensuous and forbidden existence at night. Bearing in mind these premises, the character of Lucy Westenra can be interpreted as Mina Murray's rebellious double, in analogy with Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert's seminal reading of the character of Bertha Mason as Jane Eyre's double in Charlotte Brontë's novel, hence paving the way for interpretations which would draw more attention to the character of Bertha Mason to the detriment of Jane Eyre. Similarly, in *Dracula*, although Lucy Westenra has not traditionally been granted much critical weight, theorists such as Nina Auerbach have noticed the chameleonic and potential quality pertaining to this female character, in comparison with the actual heroine Mina Murray. In fact, it is not Mina, but Lucy, who presents more features in common with Dracula himself, insofar as she is also aristocratic in origin, eccentric, and sexually licentious, while she also eventually turns into a vampire, even though she is not granted the literary relevance that Dracula enjoys. In correspondence with contemporary readings of Stoker's novel, through her Neo-Victorian reinterpretation of *Dracula*, Hill draws attention to the archetype of the fallen woman, the Woman in Black, by turning her into the protagonist of her novel and giving her the critical relevance that Lucy Westenra lacks in Stoker's novel. Lucy Westenra begins to fall from grace as a woman when she indulges in her frivolous ways and gives free vent to her sexual instincts. Upon receiving several marriage proposals on behalf of different suitors, Lucy displays her turn for promiscuity; a feature only associated with the male according to prevailing Victorian discourses of gender, as she feels unable to choose among them, wondering "why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble?" (51). Besides, when Lucy falls prey to Dracula's charms, Van Helsing feels obliged to give her blood transfusions, stating that "that poor creature that we all love has had put into her veins within that time the blood of four strong men" (126), thus subtly implying Lucy's symbolic intercourse with different men. In analogy with Lucy Westenra, in Hill's novel, the character of Jennet Humfrye, who eventually transforms into the Woman in Black, also personifies the archetype of the fallen woman, as she is envisioned following Victorian gender discourses whereby women who dare step outside the established conventions of appropriate sexual behaviour can only face utter ostracism. Upon reading Jennet's letters, the narrator, Arthur Kipps, realises that "the writer, a young woman and apparently a relative of Mrs. Drablow, was unmarried and with child," while he

also finds out that, “at first, she was still living at home, with her parents” and “later, she was sent away” (113). In Hill’s novel, Jennet Humfrye becomes a single mother at a time when women’s sexuality was restricted to marriage and deviation from the customary rules necessarily involved social exclusion. As a woman with a child out of wedlock, Jennet is ostracised from her family and is even obliged to forsake her own son to avoid disgracing her family.

Lucy’s ultimate surrender to Dracula’s charms in Stoker’s novel is sanctioned by her transformation into a vampire, which echoes the blatant alteration that has taken place in her inner nature. Her moral disgrace immediately involves that she is repudiated by her fiancé, as Arthur Holmwood catches sight of “Lucy’s eyes unclean and full of hell-fire, instead of the pure, gentle orbs,” ultimately admitting that “at that moment the remnant of my love passed into hate and loathing” (175). Similarly, in Hill’s novel, Jennet’s social ostracism, together with the eventual death of her son in a tragic accident, shows patently in her altered appearance owing to a mysterious skin disease with which she becomes afflicted. As is stated in Hill’s novel, Jennet “contracted a disease which caused her to begin to waste away,” which involves that “when she went about the streets, people drew back” and “children were terrified of her” (149). Even before her death and her eventual transformation into a ghost, Jennet already turns into a symbolic source of the abject for all the villagers. The illness which she contracts following her fall from grace as a woman, which stirs fear and rejection from all the residents, is interpreted by her neighbours as a providential retribution resulting from her sins, even though it is implied that her physical alteration also reflects her inner ordeal and responds to utter suffering as a mother who has lost her child.

As fallen women, both Lucy Westenra and Jennet Humfrye also illustrate anomalous experiences of motherhood according to prevailing gender conventions. In the passage in Stoker’s novel in which Lucy is witnessed to hold a child in her arms shortly after turning into a vampire, it is implied that she is eager to infuse new life into a baby through her newly-acquired condition as a vampire, thus indulging in an alternate kind of motherhood, since she was unable to get married and become a mother in the established orthodox manner. In analogy, when Jennet turns into a ghost and becomes the Woman in Black, she also intends to deprive the children in the village of their mortal life and adopt them metaphorically as a mother, with the purpose of making up for the tragic loss of her own child. Both female characters thus stand for symbolic experiences of motherhood gone wrong, especially in contrast with their respective counterparts, Mina Murray and Alice Drablow, who exemplify motherhood according to conventional Victorian standards. Upon

her engagement to Jonathan Harker, Mina admits to herself that “I was the happiest woman in all the wide world, and that I had nothing to give him except myself” (89), thus representing the female embodiment of Victorian values, such as chastity and compliance with marriage and motherhood. In resemblance with Mina, in Hill’s novel, Alice Drablow also epitomises tenets related to the Victorian ethics of morality and traditional femininity, which contribute to preserving the dictates of established gender roles for women. As Jennet’s elder and more mature sister, Alice takes care of Jennet’s son, Nathaniel, pretending to be his actual mother and, thus, seeking to defend the respectability of their family name after her sister, Jennet, has conceived a child out of wedlock and has been deserted by her lover. In contrast with Lucy Westenra and Jennet Humfrye, who subvert the *status quo* as personifications of the fallen woman, Mina Murray and Alice Drablow rather contribute to preserving the values pertaining to the conventional Victorian discourses of gender.

In her recent analysis of the female ghost, Robin Roberts claims that this gothic archetype often challenges gendered assumptions and roles, as it stands for a metaphor of the feminine. Hill’s conception of the Woman in Black as a ghost who brings back to life the Victorian archetype of the fallen woman—which Lucy Westenra represents in Stoker’s novel—takes a contemporary and vindictive approach, since, in Hill’s novel, this archetype is granted the centrality of which it was generally deprived in many Victorian representations. At the end of Hill’s novel, the narrator, Arthur Kipps admits that he “had seen the ghost of Jennet Humfrye and she had had her revenge” (160). Consequently, the Woman in Black ultimately responds to a Neo-Victorian purpose of vindicating those Victorian figures that had to be silenced according to the prevailing discourses of gender, especially attending to the harsh treatment that the figure of the fallen woman, personified by Lucy Westenra, receives in Stoker’s novel. Besides, the character of Lucy Westenra plays a minor role in Stoker’s novel, since the sexual liberation that she personifies is quickly put to an end when a gang of men, who defend the Establishment and the preservation of conventional gender roles, slay her soon after she becomes a vampire. As is explicitly stated in the novel, it is significantly her former fiancé, Arthur Holmwood, who “took the stake and the hammer, and when once his mind was set on action his hand never trembled nor even quivered” (179), thus indulging in a cruel punishment inflicted upon her former fiancée for having trespassed the established boundaries of decency and having turned into a fallen woman. Conversely, in Hill’s novel, as a contemporary reinterpretation of this Victorian gender archetype, the Woman in Black arises as a central character, in analogy with the pivotal role that Dracula plays in Stoker’s eponymous novel. By means of personifying the archetype of the fallen woman who is finally given the prominence she deserves, the Woman

in Black is brought back to life as a defiant and ever haunting ghost, willing to take revenge for the injustice she was made to suffer both as a woman and as a mother as a result of the Victorian conventions of gender.

5. FROM DRACULA TO THE WOMAN IN BLACK: THE DANDY AND THE VICTORIAN SPECTRE OF ANDROGYNY

The popularity that the gender archetype of the fallen woman gained in Victorian cultural manifestations came hand in hand with a latent and pervasive menace to established standards of traditional masculinities. As Moran claims, the rise of aestheticism, which rebuked a moralistic and dogmatic function of art, was often condemned because its opponents detected that aestheticism was connected to what they considered “a sexually ambiguous, possibly homoerotic, sub-culture” (121). In the context of the *fin de siècle*, the decadent movement, rooted in aestheticism, found beauty in artifice and sensuousness, as decadents rejoiced in dandyism; an eminently aesthetic philosophy defined by Oscar Wilde in his novel *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* (1890), which featured the figure of the dandy as a sophisticated intellectual aristocrat deeply concerned with elegance to the point of flamboyance and exhibiting exquisite mannerisms that verged upon effeminacy. If the female vampire often embodied the gender archetype of the fallen woman, the figure of the male vampire often personified the aesthetic and decadent tenets of the *fin de siècle* which gave rise to the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy. In particular, the characterisation of Dracula in Stoker’s novel closely matches the archetypal characterisation of the decadent figure of the dandy, while it also underlines his androgyny, which is recaptured and adjusted to devise the prominently androgynous portrait of the Woman in Black provided in Hill’s novel.

When Jonathan Harker first beholds Dracula, the young man pays close attention to a series of features that highlight his host’s effeminate traits and are highly evocative of the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy. Harker notices the Count is “clean shaven” (15), he has a “thin nose” (16), his lips possess a “remarkable ruddiness” (17), his nails are “long and fine, and cut to a sharp point” (17), while he also catches sight of Dracula’s “cloak spreading out around him” (30); all of them features that accentuate Dracula’s concern about aesthetics and suggest some sense of taste for androgyny and even effeminacy. In analogy, upon looking at the Woman in Black, Arthur Kipps also notices that she is dressed in a stylish and refined manner, stating that her clothes are in the style of “court circles on the most formal occasions” (48). Kipps also observes that the Woman in Black’s wasting illness has erased any feminine traits on her face, as he detects that a “thinnest layer of flesh was tautly

stretched and strained across her bones" (49), while her extreme slenderness, "as though she had been a victim of starvation" (49), also prevents Kipps from distinguishing any corporeal features that may betray the Woman in Black's femininity, which contributes to accentuating her androgyny. The Woman in Black's menacing presence is also highlighted through features like vehemence and determination, which sanction her deviance from the prevailing ethics of femininity, as Kipps notices that she acted "as though she were searching for something she wanted, needed, 'must' have, more than life itself" (65), thus underpinning some sort of fervour and insolence which was often associated with traditional patterns of masculinity in Victorian times and, conversely, excluded her from conventional standards of submissive femininity. Moreover, it is also significant to notice that, owing to the Woman in Black's sudden and unexpected appearances, Kipps often resorts to the use of unmarked gender to refer to her presence, simply declaring that he "caught a glimpse of someone standing" (131), thus subtly suggesting the narrator's latent incapacity to define her in terms of gender.

According to Christopher Lane, the prevailing Victorian discourses of gender compelled men to identify with rigid sexual categories under culturally established premises which defended that "virility" had to be exalted to the detriment of "effeminacy" (37). Given the cultural anxieties arising from the haunting spectre of effeminacy in Victorian times, Hughes contends that the gothic archetype of the vampire emerging at the time represented the liberation of those sexual practices which were "censored in society or repressed within the self" ("Fictional Vampires" 145), as the vampire preys upon both genders, thus subverting conventional patterns of desire and sexual behaviour, and suggesting, to use Hughes's terms, "a thoroughly Victorian displacement of the traditional sex act" ("Fictional Vampires" 145). During his vampiric intercourse with three female vampires in Dracula's castle, Jonathan Harker notices that two of them "had high aquiline noses, like the Count" (34), while he also mentions that, at all time, he "was conscious of the presence of the Count" (34), hence explicitly stating that, through his intercourse with these female vampires, Harker is rather envisioning Dracula in a symbolic homoerotic encounter, which is ultimately confirmed when the Count makes his appearance and exclaims to the female vampires that "this man belongs to me" (34). In a similar passage in Hill's novel, Arthur Kipps also gives evidence of his symbolic unfaithful intercourse with the Woman in Black, as he declares that she "seemed to haunt me, even here, to sit on the end of my bed, to push her face suddenly close to mine as I lay asleep" (152), thus betraying latent forbidden desires and even homoerotic impulses, given the Woman in Black's androgynous characterisation, thus

visualising an allegedly unorthodox encounter which would allow them to join together in a homoerotic embrace.

As a result of the prevailing discourses of gender, the latent homoerotic tendencies that haunt Jonathan Harker and Arthur Kipps turn into a source of unfathomable fear and apprehension for the heroes of both novels. When Jonathan Harker encounters the Count again in London, Mina describes Dracula's face as "sensual" and observes that his lips are "so red" and "pointed like an animal's" (143), while she empathically notices that her husband "kept staring at him" (143) until she feels obliged to ask Jonathan why he feels so disturbed, ultimately concluding that "the poor dear was evidently terrified at something" (143), which, given Mina's description, is indicative of Harker's subtle homoerotic attraction towards the Count and the covert anxiety he feels upon trying to quench his homoerotic sexual drives. In analogy, in Hill's novel, Arthur Kipps also seems at a loss to give voice to the source of the feelings of ire and dread that he experiences as a result of his encounters with the Woman in Black, as he admits that "I was angry, yes, *angry*, with her for the emotion she had aroused in me, for causing me to experience such fear" (66), thus giving evidence of both his attraction and revulsion toward the Woman in Black and the haunting spectre of veiled homoeroticism that she symbolises.

As Lane further claims, Victorian thinkers such as William Hazlitt contended that effeminacy of character was grounded in the prevalence of "sensibility over the will" (48), while, similarly, Thomas Carlyle considered that the philosophy of dandyism, which was intrinsically related to effeminacy, "depleted men's vigour" (Lane 48) and could be interpreted as unbridling a relentless process of symbolic emasculation. At the beginning of Stoker's novel, in a letter addressed to Dracula, Mister Hawkins refers to his apprentice Jonathan Harker as a man "full of energy and talent" (16), although when Harker comes back from Dracula's castle, in a letter that Mina addresses to her friend Lucy, Harker's wife describes her husband as "so thin and pale and weak-looking" that "he is only a wreck of himself" (87), which indicates Harker's symbolic process of emasculation as a result of his encounters with Dracula. Harker's sensibility and delicacy following his encounter with the Count stand in sharp contrast with the model of traditional masculinity that Van Helsing embodies, as he is depicted by his disciple, John Seward, as a man endowed with "an iron nerve," "indomitable resolution" and "self-command" (94). In clear resemblance, before meeting the Woman in Black, Arthur Kipps is portrayed as a man with "a schoolboy's passion for everything" (26), whereas, after his encounters with the Woman in Black, Kipps confesses that he often finds himself "near to weeping tears of despair and fear, frustration and tension" (125), which he struggles intensively to suppress, thus giving evidence of his

personal fight to defend his manhood so as to comply with the established conventions of gender. As happens with Harker and Van Helsing, Kipps's refined sensibility differs significantly from Samuel Daily's initiative and sagacity, as he is a villager whom Kipps befriends and describes as "a big man, with a beefy face and huge, raw-looking hands" (36). Kipps's portrayal of Samuel Daily categorises this villager as the epitome of traditional manhood according to prevailing Victorian standards in contrast with Arthur Kipps's more sensitive and vulnerable qualities.

The respective encounters of the heroes, Jonathan Harker and Arthur Kipps, with Dracula and the Woman in Black bring to the fore male anxieties about effeminacy and emasculation which subvert the discourses of traditional masculinities that were upheld in Victorian times. In Stoker's novel, immediately following his return from Transylvania, Jonathan Harker marries Mina Murray, in an attempt to exorcise any latent homoerotic impulses that Dracula has stirred in the hero. Such interpretation of this pressurised marriage to soothe these impulses is educed in Hill's novel, since, when Arthur Kipps returns to London, he explicitly admits in relation to his marriage to Stella that their "original plan had been to wait at least until the following spring but my experiences had changed me greatly" (156), which lead him to get married in scarcely few weeks after his symbolic encounters with the Woman in Black and the uncertainties about his sexual identity that she has roused in him. Nonetheless, in Stoker's novel, the ultimate defeat of Dracula paves the way so that the Harkers have a son who ensures the perpetuation of the family lineage and contributes to upholding conventional gender dichotomies, even though the haunting memories of Dracula—and, by extension, the latent homoerotic impulses that the figure of the vampire personifies—still haunt Jonathan Harker in his late years, as his incapacity to forget them is conceded in his journal. Conversely, in Hill's novel, although Arthur Kipps and Stella raise a family and have a son, the memories of the Woman in Black still literally and metaphorically haunt the hero and, as a result of one eventual spectral apparition of the Woman in Black, Stella and Joseph perish in an emblematic narratological twist which sanctions the hero's impossibility to raise a family of his own after his symbolic encounters with the Woman in Black and the hesitations about his sexuality that she has incited. When Arthur Kipps gives voice to his narrative, which acquires significant confessional undertones, he still feels tormented by the memories of the past and it is concluded that, although he has joined a new family and he lives with Esmé and her sons, he has been barred from raising his own family, hence once more evoking his troubled sexuality and the homoerotic impulses that he feels unable to release owing to the pervasive Victorian

discourses defining sexuality and the constraining preconceptions of gender prevailing at the time.

6. CONCLUSION

Critics such as Marie-Luise Kohlke claim that Neo-Victorian novels revise and rewrite Victorian textualities with the ultimate aim of reinforcing as well as subverting the Victorian period. Bearing this premise in mind, it can be argued that Hill's *The Woman in Black* engages in dialogue with Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, as it unveils a self-conscious purpose of addressing the Victorian past, but also offers a new interpretation drawn from current critical readings of this late Victorian novel. In this respect, as Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn also argue, Neo-Victorian novels, as is the case with *The Woman in Black*, are "self-consciously engaged with the act of (re)interpretation, (re)discovery, and (re)vision" (4), acting as mediators of the experience of reading Victorian textualities and producing, to use Mark Llewellyn's term, a sense of "critical f(r)iction" (170). As representative of the gothic archetype of the ghost, the Woman in Black is rooted in Victorian characterisations of spectres and apparitions, which personify cultural anxieties and the individual's subconscious and, as such, she evokes as well as pays homage to the Victorian ghost story and, by extension, to the Victorian past from a contemporary perspective. Nevertheless, the Woman in Black is mostly characterised through evident features pertaining to the gothic archetype of the vampire, which is inextricably linked to the discourses of gender and sexuality. In this respect, drawing on current interpretations of Stoker's novel that focus on gender, Hill's *The Woman in Black* resurrects from oblivion the Victorian gender archetype of the fallen woman, personified by a female vampire, Lucy Westenra—a rebellious woman who defies the dictates of gender assigned to women in Victorian times—while it also revisits the Victorian gender archetype of the dandy, represented by Dracula, whose androgynous and effeminate traits menace to subvert the Victorian standards of conventional masculinities. Nonetheless, unlike Lucy Westenra and Dracula, who are finally defeated as vampires, the Woman in Black cannot be destroyed owing to her ghostly condition and rather arises as an eternal entity which, no longer constrained by the conventions of gender, threatens to perpetuate her dominion and make up for all those fallen women and dandies whose voices were silenced in Victorian times. The diverging conclusions of both novels—Lucy's death and Dracula's defeat as opposed to the Woman in Black's triumph—display the different points of view of both writers, as Hill's revision of the dialectics of gender at work in *Dracula* aims to give prominence to the Victorian gender archetypes of the fallen woman and the dandy. If vampires had to be defeated in *Dracula* to

protect the prevailing Victorian discourses of gender, Hill rather allows the eternal ghost of the Woman in Black to hold dominion, take revenge, and vindicate the Victorian gender archetypes that she brings back in this contemporary reinterpretation of Stoker's late Victorian novel.

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Los límites y las fronteras del espacio: la imaginación espacial en varias novelas shanghainesas y barcelonesas

The limits and the borders of the space: the spatial imagination in several novels about Shanghai and Barcelona

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Resumen

El presente artículo toma algunas novelas de Shanghái y de Barcelona del siglo XX como objetos de investigación. Se estudian las metáforas de la casa, y se analizan las funciones de sus límites y fronteras en la narración, como la puerta, la ventana y el balcón, especialmente el caso de que aparecen disparidades espaciales y conflictos en la historia. Además, en el presente trabajo también se investiga la narración de los límites en espacios públicos de ambas metrópolis, como la calle y el río, y se estudian sus significados culturales para las dos ciudades.

Palabras clave: ciudad, espacio, límite, narratología.

Abstract

This paper takes some novels about Barcelona and Shanghai in the 20th century as the research object, to analyze the meanings and the roles of "house", as the stage on which stories take place, in narration of novels. On this basis, this paper further discusses the special role of limits and borders in showing the meaning of "house", and reveals how the differences and conflicts between the two different spaces are clearly displayed in the narration of boundaries. In connection with this, the article also analyzes the narrative style and cultural meaning of urban public space elements, such as streets and rivers, as space boundaries in the novels.

Keywords: city, space, limit, narratology.

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Los seres humanos siempre conferimos a los espacios significados sociales, y según ellos los dividimos en varias partes. Por ejemplo, el espacio de nuestro planeta se divide en continentes o países, y en la ciudad tenemos diferentes distritos o barrios. Además, los espacios más pequeños se segregan dependiendo de sus funciones en la sociedad, como la escuela, el parque o la casa. En los sitios donde se realizan la mayoría de las actividades humanas, la separación espacial es más exacta y evidente, de tal manera que los límites entre dos espacios son más obvios y fáciles de reconocer. No podemos decir exactamente cuál es el fin de una llanura, pero somos capaces de distinguir dónde acaba un patio de la casa.

Georg Simmel considera que “una cualidad del espacio [...] consiste en dividirse en trozos para el aprovechamiento práctico, trozos que se consideran como unidades y –tanto por causa como por efecto de ello– están rodeados de límites” (649). Los espacios, con sus límites, conforman las diferentes partes de un espacio entero, de igual forma que las paredes separan diversas habitaciones en la casa, o una carretera divide dos pueblos. Asimismo, los límites pueden ser claramente establecidos para señalar una función o una restricción; así, por ejemplo, cuando nos enteramos de que una playa es propiedad privada buscaremos su frontera para evitar la intrusión. En la sociedad contemporánea, con sus ciudades muy pobladas, existen varios tipos de límites espaciales: a veces es una pared, una estacada o una línea de otro color en el suelo; o también puede ser una calle, un río, una plaza, etc.

Mieke Bal indica que la frontera entre dos lugares puede jugar un papel especial, que opera como mediador (52), y toma la puerta principal, la playa y el jardín como ejemplos. Esas fronteras se pueden clasificar en dos partes. Los elementos como la pared o la puerta principal son límites espaciales que no se pueden convertir en sí mismos en los lugares donde sucede la historia. No obstante, su aparición en el texto destaca las relaciones posicionales de los espacios a ambos lados y el contraste o conflicto entre ellos. En la narración, cuando el movimiento puede constituir una transición de un espacio a otro, a menudo uno será opuesto al otro (Bal 104), y el límite entre ambos fortalecerá la oposición. Bal considera que hay tres sentidos con especial implicación en la percepción del espacio: vista, oído y tacto (101). Los límites espaciales a menudo eliminan uno o dos sentidos mientras que destacan y exageran el otro sentido en la narración. Por ejemplo, si entre el jardín y la calle hay una pared de ladrillo que bloquea la vista, en ese caso la historia se

enfocará en la contrariedad acústica: la calle bulliciosa y el jardín silencioso. Por otra parte, si el texto pone énfasis en la contraposición de las imágenes, como la calle con un pobre sin hogar y la casa con una familia feliz, con frecuencia aparecerá una vidriera en el límite entre ambos espacios.

A diferencia del primer caso, los espacios como la calle, el balcón y el río son lugares que funcionan como demarcaciones de dos partes y al mismo tiempo se pueden convertir en el escenario de la historia. Tienen una posición particular en la narración. El espacio en que se sitúa el personaje se suele considerar como “marco” (Bal 102), y cuando el personaje aparece en el espacio fronterizo, el marco se convierte en un estado especial. El significado del espacio fronterizo a veces es una mezcla de los espacios a ambos lados, y otras veces su oposición le otorga un nuevo significado.

Barcelona y Shanghái son dos metrópolis contemporáneas típicas en el mundo. Aunque pertenecen a dos culturas muy distintas, son dos ciudades similares por su situación geográfica, disposición urbana y nivel de desarrollo, en otros factores. Ambas urbes presentan espacios compactos, así que los límites y las fronteras espaciales son muy claros. Se toman las novelas de estas dos ciudades para investigar los significados y las funciones de los límites espaciales en la narración.

En el caso de Barcelona se han elegido dos novelas, *La ciudad de los prodigios* de Eduardo Mendoza y *El embrujo de Shanghái* de Juan Marsé, para la investigación. Son dos obras que se publicaron en la misma época, al final del siglo XX, y cuya acción transcurre en Barcelona. *La ciudad de los prodigios* muestra la expansión de la urbe y los cambios espaciales de la ciudad vieja y las zonas nuevas, y por otra parte *El embrujo de Shanghái* confiere a esta metrópoli un ambiente miserable y crea un espacio misterioso con las imágenes del Oriente. En la parte shanghainesa, se estudian las novelas *La canción de la pena eterna* (长恨歌) de Wang Anyi y *La historia en una calle larga* (长街行) de Wang Xiaoying. Son dos obras que se consideran como novelas representativas de la literatura shanghainesa contemporánea. Las dos historias prestan especial atención a la narración de la transformación espacial de Shanghái del siglo XX y de sus diferentes barrios. También se investiga otra novela especial, *La crónica de la orilla este* (东岸纪事) de Xia Shang, cuya historia se concentra en presentar las diferencias de cultura e identidad entre la zona este y la oeste de Shanghái.

2. LOS SIGNIFICADOS DE LA CASA Y SU PUERTA

Uno de los espacios que aparecen con frecuencia en una narración es la casa. Tanto en la ciudad como en el campo, el hogar siempre es un sitio importante para las actividades humanas. La representación de la vida cotidiana en la novela no se escapa de la narración

de este espacio privado. En las novelas de Shanghái y de Barcelona también existen muchos escenarios domésticos. Según las tramas de las distintas obras, las viviendas tienen significados que van más allá de un simple lugar para estar y vivir.

En el *Diccionario de los símbolos*, la casa se interpreta como la imaginación del universo, como el centro del mundo (Chevalier y Gheerbrant 257-258). En este sentido, la novela *La canción de la pena eterna* incluye espacios característicos del mundo cotidiano de los shanghaineses comunes, que tienen el nombre de *longtang*. Son viviendas tradicionales de la ciudad de Shanghái, con series de casas de dos o tres pisos y callejones estrechos que se prolongan hasta el fondo. En *La canción de la pena eterna*, los *longtang* son “el telón de fondo” de la ciudad y “un inmenso manto de oscuridad como el abismo” en la noche (Wang 11-12). La primera casa de la protagonista, Wang Qiyao, está en un *longtang*. Es una típica joven shanghainesa que ha nacido y crecido en ese barrio, y que tiene una vida similar a la de todas las otras chicas. Para ellas, los *longtang* son el centro de mundo. Al conocer a un alto funcionario militar, el Director Li, la vida de Wang Qiyao cambia totalmente. En la narración, cuando la joven vuelve a su casa después de asistir a un banquete con ese señor, por primera vez percibe que su mundo, los *longtang*, es muy diferente al del Director Li.

Después del banquete, el Director Li se ofreció a llevarla a casa en su coche y esa oferta cogió a Wang Qiyao por sorpresa. Observando cómo la multitud se apartaba para que pasaran mientras abandonaban el banquete, Wang Qiyao le siguió dócilmente hasta su coche. Se percató de las miradas serviles que les dirigían todos mientras se acercaban al vehículo. Aunque también percibió que su reacción estaba en parte motivada por el miedo, a Wang Qiyao le gustaba aquello. Comenzó a comprender qué tipo de persona era el Director Li. [...] El automóvil continuó deslizándose por la carretera y las luces que atravesaban las cortinas blancas ahora se sucedían con regularidad. Esta ciudad que nunca duerme es como un acertijo y la respuesta a ese acertijo no se revelará hasta que no llegue el momento oportuno (Wang 162-163).

Cuando está con el Director Li, la chica es el centro de las miradas de la multitud. El ambiente del banquete es elegante y Shanghái por la noche ya no es un “telón de fondo”, una oscuridad, sino un espacio brillante que “nunca duerme”. La novela compara el mundo del Director Li y el de la chica cuando ella llega a la puerta de su casa en los *longtang*.

Mientras esperaba a la puerta de su propia casa, observando cómo el automóvil desaparecía en un abrir y cerrar de ojos del *longtang*, Wang Qiyao tuvo la sensación de estar soñando. [...] El mundo de Wang Qiyao era muy pequeño, era el mundo de una mujer, compuesto de telas para vestidos, colorete y polvo de maquillaje. [...] El Director Li, por el contrario, pertenecía al inmenso mundo exterior, a uno que le resultaba completamente incomprensible. [...] Abrió lentamente la puerta. Las escaleras de la salita estaban oscuras y un olor a comida grasienta procedía de la cocina iluminada, donde varias sirvientas se

agolpaban para cotillear de sus señores. Subió las escaleras hasta su habitación y permaneció un rato levantada, sentándose en la ventana y mirando hacia la calle. La ventana del vecino quedaba sólo a un brazo de distancia. Aunque las cortinas estaban corridas, se podía ver claramente lo que estaba sucediendo en la otra habitación, aunque todo era normal.

Wang Qiyao comenzó a imaginar cómo sería la cena del día siguiente. Todo lo que había sucedido el día anterior parecía estar tan lejano que apenas podía recordarlo. Puso su mente a funcionar, planeando la ropa y los zapatos que iba a llevar al día siguiente y decidiendo qué iba a hacer con su pelo (Wang 163-164).

En este fragmento, la historia ofrece una comparación entre el mundo del Director Li y el de Wang Qiyao, basada en el contraste espacial del banquete espléndido y de la casa de los *longtang*. La narración muestra que para la chica el espacio de la casa es el centro del universo que representa toda su vida diaria. Su mundo es “pequeño”, justamente como el espacio estrecho de los *longtang*, donde “la ventana del vecino quedaba sólo a un brazo de distancia”, y está “compuesto de telas para vestidos, colorete y polvo de maquillaje”: un mundo donde la joven, al volver a su habitación, empieza a planear la ropa y los zapatos que va a llevar al día siguiente. Es un mundo normal que tiene un fuerte sabor a la vida, un mundo típico en los *longtang*. Sin embargo, el Director Li pertenece a un inmenso lugar exterior e invita a la chica a salir de su casa y participar en la ceremonia de inauguración y el banquete. Todo ello es tan distinto a los *longtang* oscuros como “el telón del fondo” de la ciudad; es un mundo brillante y elegante que está en el centro del escenario de Shanghái. La casa de Wang Qiyao es un espacio central como una raíz, al que ella, sin importar qué ha visto y experimentado en el exterior, tiene que volver; es un sitio que no es ni grande, ni elegante, ni luminoso, pero que resulta muy familiar.

La comparación y la transición en la narración entre los dos tipos de espacio, el del Director Li y el de la casa, se realiza por la puerta de los *longtang*. Como límite espacial de la casa, la puerta frecuentemente tiene la función de transición entre dos lugares. En el *Diccionario de los símbolos*, la puerta tiene el significado del “lugar de paso entre dos estados, entre dos mundos, entre lo conocido y lo desconocido, la luz y las tinieblas, el tesoro y la necesidad” (Chevalier y Gheerbrant 855). La puerta es el único paso formal de la casa. La narración, a veces, cambia de tono cuando el personaje pasa por una puerta, y tras ese cambio la trama sigue su desarrollo o presenta nuevos conflictos. En el fragmento de *La canción de la pena eterna* la transición entre la chica que deja de ser una dama de la alta sociedad y retorna a su anterior vida en los *longtang* es posible solo por el hecho de abrir la puerta de su casa. Ese límite espacial es una entrada hacia el mundo real en el que Wang Qiyao realmente está. Para ella representa un símbolo de cambio entre dos identidades muy distintas en el mismo personaje; esa disimilitud se nos presenta de una manera directa y comparativa.

En la parte de la novela dedicada a los Apartamentos Alicia, la protagonista permanece todos los días en su habitación esperando a su hombre. Su vida se limita a ese espacio tranquilo y solitario: viendo el paisaje dentro de esa casa lujosa y pensando en el hombre que le ha dado esa vivienda. Los Apartamentos Alicia se convierten en todo el mundo que la chica tiene:

El Director Li nunca le dijo cuándo regresaría. Wang Qiyao dejó de contar los días en el calendario. El tiempo se convirtió en una línea recta, sin registrar el día ni la noche. Mientras comía y dormía, sólo tenía un propósito, y éste no era otro que esperar a que apareciera el Director Li. Sólo después de conocerlo, Wang Qiyao comenzó a darse cuenta de lo inmenso que era realmente el mundo. También se dio cuenta de lo aislado que se podía volver el mundo personal de cada uno. El ruido de los tranvías sonaba muy lejano, como si no tuviera nada que ver con ella. Comprendió lo que significaba la separación y lo que era la temporalidad. Algunas veces se decía a sí misma: «Estoy segura de que el Director Li va a regresar la próxima vez que llueva». Entonces, cuando llovía, solía decirse: «Estoy segura de que va a venir cuando salga el sol». Solía lanzar monedas al aire tratando de predecir si el Director Li iba a aparecer o no. Solía mirar a los capullos de flor que había en un jarrón, diciéndose a sí misma: «Estoy segura de que va a aparecer cuando las flores se hayan abierto». En lugar de contar los días, contaba cuántas veces alcanzaba la luz de la calle cierto punto en la pared, jugando con la idea de que la palabra china que indica «tiempo» estaba compuesta por los caracteres que forman las palabras «luz» y «sombra» (Wang 206).

En ese fragmento, la historia transcurre cuando la ciudad de Shanghái queda envuelta en la Guerra Civil de China. No obstante, dentro de los Apartamentos Alicia la atmósfera es tranquila y cómoda, pero al mismo tiempo solitaria y aburrida. El ruido de los tranvías, que puede considerarse como una representación de todos los asuntos del exterior, es algo lejano para el mundo personal de la chica. La segunda casa de Wang Qiyao es un espacio aislado y apartado. El Director Li la saca del estrecho mundo de los *longtang* y la encierra en otro orbe, lujoso pero igualmente pequeño. Todas las cosas que aparecen en el texto se pueden ver dentro de la habitación, como las flores en el jarrón o la luz y la sombra en la pared. Los paisajes dentro de la casa son invariables en apariencia, pero la novela muestra el transcurso del tiempo mediante la lenta transformación de las cosas, lo que refleja un espacio de espera y soledad.

La puerta como límite espacial “muchas veces no simboliza solamente la entrada, sino también el espacio que se esconde tras ella” (Biedermann 384). En *La canción de la pena eterna*, el estado de la puerta de los Apartamentos Alicia es un reflejo de la casa de la protagonista. Cuando la amiga de Wang Qiyao, Jiang Lili, intenta visitarla, encuentra el ambiente raro de ese barrio:

Jiang Lili nunca había ido a los Apartamentos Alicia, aunque sabía de su existencia por la fama que tenían. [...] La tarde estaba nublada y el cielo aparecía cubierto de

nubes grises. El conductor de la bicitaxi le dedicó una mirada extraña. Una vez que pasaron el club Paramount, las calles tomaron un aire diferente. Mientras Jiang Lili pagaba al conductor y se encaminaba hacia la puerta de acero del longtang, podía sentir cómo a su espalda todas las miradas se depositaban en ella. Dentro del complejo reinaba el silencio. [...] Llamó al timbre de la puerta invadida por cierta conmoción, sin acabar de estar segura de si ver aparecer a Wang Qiyao era lo que esperaba o lo que temía. [...] Se abrió una rendija en la puerta, revelando un pedacito de un rostro borroso. Con un acento de la provincia de Zhejiang, la persona que estaba al otro lado de la puerta le preguntó a quién buscaba.

—Busco a mi compañera de clase, Wang Qiyao —replicó Lili—. Me llamo Jiang. La puerta se volvió a cerrar, pero poco después se reabrió para dejarla pasar (Wang 192-193).

Antes de esta visita de Jiang Lili, la narración presenta los Apartamentos Alicia solo desde el ángulo de Wang Qiyao, quien vive dentro de ese espacio. En ese fragmento, sin embargo, la novela muestra su atmósfera misteriosa y su aislamiento desde la visión de una persona externa. Cuando Jiang Lili entra en el barrio donde se sitúan los Apartamentos Alicia, la narración enfatiza la rareza de la atmósfera: las miradas extrañas, el cielo oscuro y el silencio en el aire. En consonancia con el sentido de aislamiento dentro de la casa de Wang Qiyao, la puerta y las ventanas están cerradas, lo que también incrementa el aire de misterio del espacio. En el fragmento la puerta se abre dos veces; la primera la puerta no se abre por completo sino tan sólo una rendija, y no se ve la cara que hay detrás. Esta serie de movimientos de la puerta muestra la característica más acusada de lo que la novela describe como “lugares tan misteriosos y fascinantes” (Wang 182).

3. OTRO LÍMITE ESPACIAL DE LA CASA: LA VENTANA

A diferencia de la puerta, la ventana no es un paso por el cual los personajes puedan moverse de un espacio a otro. De los tres sentidos implicados en la percepción del espacio que Bal propone, la ventana privilegia al de la vista en la narración (101). Tras la puerta, el movimiento del personaje puede permitir la transición de un espacio a otro (Bal 104), pero la ventana produce una modificación de perspectiva narrativa. Bal propone el término “focalización” para señalar “las relaciones entre los elementos presentados y la concepción a través de la cual se presentan” (108). En la narración, cuando un personaje observa algo tras la ventana ocurre una transición en la focalización: del punto donde se encuentra hacia el espacio del otro lado. Un fragmento en la novela *La ciudad de los prodigios* muestra ese cambio:

Onofre decidió aguardar fuera y ver en qué paraba todo aquello. Soplaban un viento frío, húmedo y salado, por la proximidad del mar, se cubrió la boca y la nariz con la bufanda que había tenido la precaución de coger. No tuvo que esperar mucho: a los pocos minutos la mujer salió del local seguida de gran algarabía. [...] Lanzó un aullido

de perro satisfecho y se dirigió a la taberna próxima, que tenía ventana a la calle. El aire caldeado por una salamandra se condesaba en los vidrios, ya de por sí muy sucios, formando un velo que dificultaba la visión del interior, pero que permitía espiar sin ser visto; eso hizo Onofre Bouvila: los parroquianos eran de la catadura más truculenta. Unos jugaban a las cartas con las mangas repletas de naipes y los cuchillos prestos a hundirse en la garganta de un fullero. [...] En un rincón la mujer a la que había seguido discutía con un guapo de pelo ensortijado y tez cobriza. Ella hacía aspavientos y él iba frunciendo el entrecejo. Onofre vio cómo el guapo propinaba un cachete a la mujer (Mendoza 80-81).

[...] Oculto de nuevo en el quicio, la vio salir dando traspiés. De la comisura de los labios le manaba un hilo de sangre que se tornaba violácea en contacto con el maquillaje. [...] El viento había cesado, el aire estaba ahora quieto, seco y cristalino, tan frío que dolía el pecho al respirar (Mendoza 81-82).

En este fragmento, la narración produce una transición desde un objeto focalizado en la calle hasta el interior de la taberna a través de la Ventana. Con la vista de Onofre, la historia presenta la percepción de un espacio que pertenece a la zona de “las agrupaciones urbanas muy pobres” (Mendoza 80). Al inicio del párrafo, Onofre, como el focalizador, está en la calle viendo a la mujer andando. En ese momento, la novela se concentra en el sentido del tacto del espacio exterior, donde “soplaba un viento frío, húmedo y salado”. Cuando la vista del protagonista sigue a la mujer que entra en la taberna, con una descripción del estado de la ventana, la historia cambia de escena: de la calle al interior del recinto. Con el acto de “ver” del focalizador, la novela describe con detalles el espacio interior, y finalmente focaliza a la mujer en la esquina. Durante la narración dentro de la taberna, el ámbito de la calle desaparece del texto. Pero cuando la mujer sale a la calle, se vuelve a la descripción del aire exterior. La variación del viento demuestra el transcurso del tiempo.

La ventana tiene implicaciones más allá de la función visual. En las obras shanghainesas está a veces funciona para la narración del espacio del *güigue* (闺阁), que es el dormitorio tradicional en los *longtang* para las chicas que todavía no se han casado. Está en la zona trasera de los *longtang*, en un espacio escondido y tiene un ambiente secreto. En este caso, la ventana para el *güigue* (闺阁) tiene el significado de exteriorizar el misterio de este espacio. La novela *La historia en una calle larga* presenta la vida de una chica cuyo crecimiento va acompañado de los cambios de una calle antigua. Al inicio de esta novela, la narración toma el ángulo visual de la joven protagonista que abre la ventana de su dormitorio para mirar los paisajes de la calle larga:

En alguna parte de estos tejados, una ventana frente al norte se abrió con un crujido, y se asomó la cara de una chica de dieciséis o diecisiete años, fina y clara como una flor de ciruelo. Esa chica como una flor primero dio su mirada al noroeste, allí sobre los caballetes como dientes de sierra, donde se posaba una parte del sol dorado con luz roja, tan encantador como una naranja recién cortada de una rama. Las tejas

grises, tan viejas y gastadas en ese momento, estaban pintadas por el sol de colores brillantes, como un hierro líquido que baja a torrentes del alto horno; también eran parecidas a las llamas furiosas (Xiaoying Wang 3)¹.

Este fragmento pertenece al inicio de la novela. Ésta cambia de focalizador desde el narrador a la chica protagonista, Chang Tianzhu, y con la vista de ella detrás de la ventana de su *gūigüe* el texto muestra con detalles el espacio de esa calle larga. Por una parte, el acto de la protagonista representa su salida desde su propio universo secreto hacia el mundo exterior, donde hay un nuevo inicio para ella.

Por otra parte, en el primer capítulo, entre las descripciones de los paisajes se intercalan varios relatos. Cuando la chica posa su mirada en cierto objeto, se presentan en la novela varios textos narrativos intercalados que cuentan su memoria de dicha cosa, y así se extiende la historia del pasado de ella y su familia. Es una “narración marco”, es decir, un texto narrativo donde “se cuenta una historia completa en el segundo o tercer nivel” (Bal 148). En ese fragmento de la novela se presenta una narración marco mediante la función de la ventana y la vista de la protagonista. Por ejemplo, en la parte donde se habla sobre el suicidio de la madre de Chang Tianzhu, la narración se desarrolla mientras la vista de la chica se dirige a las paredes de la calle:

La chica levantó lentamente su cara de las manos, mirando los últimos rayos del sol poniente: ¿dónde estaban las hojas verdes de las hiedras como jaspes sobre las paredes? Al inicio de la Revolución Cultural, las personas de la revelación querían pegar sus *Dazibao* en la pared y quitaron todas las hiedras. [...] Poco después del suicidio de la madre de la chica, sus familias se mudaron obligadamente desde la villa *Hengshu* al desván del piso actual de tres plantas. Aunque no estaba lejos de la villa, la situación era tan diferente como del cielo a la tierra. [...] La cuenca de los ojos ya estaba llena de lágrimas, pero la chica se mordía sus labios y reprimía las lágrimas para que no cayeran. El sol en forma de abanico estaba cada vez más pequeño, ahora no era más grande que el tamaño de un cuchillo de fruta. La chica atropelladamente volvió su mirada otra vez hacia el noroeste (Xiaoying Wang 3)².

¹ Traducido desde el texto original: “这一片屋脊中的某一处，一扇稍稍突起的老虎窗口，北向的窗户咻地被推开了，急急地探出一张十六七岁光景女孩子的面口，苍白细巧，腊梅花似的一瓣。她先是将花瓣儿朝向西北，那里半轮金红的夕阳正停在锯齿般的屋脊上，像刚刚摘下枝的鲜橙子，十分诱人。那一片灰脱脱陈年旧瓦被涂上鲜艳的色彩，像刚从高炉里倾泻出的铁水，像熊熊燃烧的火焰。”

² Traducido desde el texto original: “女孩子缓缓地从手掌中抬起脸来，迷惘地望着余晖残余处——哪里还有满墙碧玉般的爬山虎绿叶？运动初始，造反派要在山墙上贴大字报，将满墙爬山虎都扯完了。[...]就在女孩子的母亲跳楼自杀后不久，她们一家就被迫搬出了恒墅，搬进现在的三层阁里。虽然相距恒墅不远，却已经天地两重世界了。[...]女孩子略略凹陷的眼窝里已蓄起两汪晶莹的

En *La canción de la pena eterna*, tras la ventana ocurre una transición del espacio focalizado, desde la habitación hacia los paisajes del exterior. Ese cambio tiene un significado metafórico y présago:

Por fin, el señor Cheng comenzó a describir a Wang Qiyao la primera impresión que tuvo de ella. Aunque sus palabras tenían cierto tono de confesión, ninguno de ellos las tomó de ese modo. Simplemente habló con el corazón en la mano y Wang Qiyao las escuchó con el suyo, mientras entre los dos existía un ambiente de cordialidad. [...] Y entonces, los dos se pusieron de pie... se sentían tan próximos. Sus ojos relucieron, sus miradas se encontraron durante una fracción de segundo antes de separarse.

El señor Cheng abrió la cortina y el sol entró en la sala, llenándola de estrellas flotantes de polvo que danzaban bajo la luz con tanta intensidad que apenas podían mantener los ojos abiertos. Mirando el río que corría por debajo de su ventana, vieron anclados algunos barcos extranjeros, con sus banderas multicolores ondeando al viento. Las personas que se veían debajo eran como hormigas, moviéndose en grupos, separándose y reagrupándose, pero todo parecía estar orquestado y sus movimientos tenían un comienzo y un final definido. El agua del río Huangpu venía desde la vasta tierra y avanzaba hacia el horizonte ilimitado. Sus dos lados desaparecían en el extremo del cielo de tal modo que el río delante de los ojos era solamente un trozo de paisaje en su camino. Mientras los dos se inclinaban sobre la ventana, la campana del Edificio de Aduanas sonó dos veces: ¡ya era por la tarde! (Wang 150-151)

En la historia, los dos personajes viven un momento amoroso, pero nadie los descubre; luego el señor Cheng rompe el encuentro de las miradas y mueve su vista hacia el espacio fuera de la ventana. Al igual que los textos de *La ciudad de los prodigios* y *La historia de una calle larga*, en ese fragmento el cambio de espacios focalizados también se realiza mediante la vista. No obstante, esa transición en la narración espacial se utiliza para sustituir el silencio embarazoso entre el señor y la chica protagonista en la habitación. La historia no focaliza lo que sucede en el dormitorio ni indica cuánto tiempo dura el silencio, sino que, por el acto de abrir la cortina, la ventana aparece en la narración y cumple su función. Cuando un espacio se presenta extensamente, es inevitable una interrupción de la secuencia temporal (Bal 105). No se menciona en la novela cuánto dura ese silencio, pero la larga narración de los detalles del río fuera de la ventana revela que es un momento tan emocionante para la chica y el señor que ambos se olvidan del tiempo.

En ese fragmento aparece una particular estructura narrativa. Combinando el relato de los paisajes fuera de la ventana con el desarrollo de la historia en los siguientes capítulos, se

泪，她咬住薄唇，强忍着没让它们滚下来。夕晖笼着的扇形愈来愈窄，只剩下水果刀似的一条了。女孩子慌忙将目光调开，重又投向西北面。”

descubre que las frases que describe el río Huangpu son un presagio metafórico del destino de la relación entre Wang Qiyao y el señor Cheng. Aunque los dos se acompañan durante un período de tiempo, luego se separan en la época turbulenta y cada cual marcha por su propio camino. Cuando se presenta la narración del río Huangpu, la historia menciona que “sus dos lados desaparecían en el extremo del cielo” y esa corriente de agua fuera de la ventana es “solamente un trozo de paisaje en su camino”. Los dos lados son una metáfora de la protagonista y el señor Cheng, que se marchan en direcciones opuestas; hay una similitud entre el río y los destinos de los dos personajes, y ese momento en que los dos se enamoran es solo un breve paisaje de su vida.

4. EL BALCÓN COMO ESPACIO FRONTERIZO DE LA CASA

El balcón, a diferencia de la puerta y la ventana, es un espacio que forma parte de la casa y que está al descubierto, a la vista de los caminantes. Es un punto fronterizo entre la casa y el mundo exterior. Es un sitio que pertenece a la casa, a la vez que se expone a la mirada del público. El espacio interior, el balcón y el espacio exterior componen un marco especial. Como el ejemplo tomado de Bal de la famosa escena de amor en el balcón (104), la joven está hablando con el chico que está abajo. En ese momento, el balcón es un espacio contradictorio: la joven está aún en su casa, un espacio que simboliza su procedencia (Biedermann 93), pero la comunicación entre la joven y el chico permite que el balcón se desvincule del significado de la casa para hacer referencia a la libertad del mundo exterior. Como la ventana, el balcón privilegia el sentido de la vista representando la frontera entre la casa y el exterior. Sin embargo, cuando el balcón funciona como una entrada de la casa, a veces contiene un significado imprevisto y repentino, y puede revestir a la trama de un efecto de comedia. En la novela *La ciudad de los prodigios*, cuando el protagonista, Onofre Bouvila, está esperando al gato, se encuentra con el amante de Delfina en el balcón de su habitación y así tiene lugar una conversación humorística entre los dos hombres:

Esa noche no pasó nada. A la siguiente, cuando se había dormido aburrido de la espera (el reloj de San Ezequiel había dado las dos) lo despertó un ruido. Del balcón llegaban lamentos y maldiciones. Temió que *Belcebú* hubiese caído encima de un trasnochador. Sería el colmo de la mala suerte, se dijo. Abrió el balcón y se asomó. A la luz de la luna se llevó un buen susto: de la baranda colgaba un individuo que pedía socorro mientras trataba en balde de afianzar los pies en algún intersticio de la fachada. Por favor, suplicó al ver a Onofre, dame una mano, que me mato. Onofre asió al individuo de ambas muñecas, lo izó en vilo y lo metió en la habitación. Cuando el individuo puso los pies en el suelo, resbaló y se cayó sentado. Me he roto el culo por veinte sitios, volvió a lamentarse. Onofre le conminó a que no alzase la voz. Encendió la palmatoria. Ahora me dirás qué hacías tú colgado de mi balcón, le espetó.

—Y yo qué sé —dijo el hombre—. Un hijo de puta habrá untado de grasa el tejado,

o algo parecido. Suerte que pude agarrarme a los hierros, o no lo cuento.
— ¿Y qué hacías tú en el tejado a estas horas? —preguntó Onofre.
— ¿Y a ti qué te importa? —fue la respuesta.
—A mí nada —dijo Onofre—, pero quizás los dueños de la pensión y la policía quieran saberlo. (Mendoza 95)

En ese fragmento la entrada en el balcón por accidente está descrita con humor. La barandilla pertenece al ámbito privado del protagonista en la pensión, al tiempo que es una zona fronteriza, sin paredes y expuesta al espacio exterior. Esa peculiaridad lleva al personaje que se sitúa en el balcón a un estado indefinido. Sisinio no allana realmente la habitación de Onofre, y la narración tampoco propone la atmósfera tensa que suele aparecer en las tramas que cuentan el allanamiento de una casa. Al estar en el balcón, Sisinio se encuentra en un estado entre “ha entrado en el espacio privado” y “todavía no entra en la habitación”. Al escuchar el ruido, el protagonista piensa que es un asunto que sucede en la zona exterior, que tal vez el gato ha caído “encima de un trasnochador”. Es una manifestación de la característica fronteriza del balcón, por lo que la aparición de Sisinio supone una sorpresa tanto para Onofre como para los lectores. Con la sorpresiva llegada de Sisinio se desarrolla la conversación entre los dos chicos; aunque, con las palabras del intruso, la trama vuelve del lado del personaje principal, Delfina.

5. LA CALLE COMO ESPACIO FRONTERIZO

Los límites o zonas fronterizas del espacio privado tienen diversos sentidos, y desde otra perspectiva, los espacios públicos de la ciudad también son susceptibles de convertirse en zonas fronterizas en una narración. La calle en un relato no siempre aparece para marcar determinado espacio fronterizo, sin embargo, en algunas tramas sí posee características de límite entre dos áreas que comportan significados opuestos o totalmente diferentes.

En la novela *El embrujo de Shanghái*, la calle entre la taberna y la plaza se puede considerar como un espacio fronterizo entre ambas zonas. Al inicio, en esta vía se propaga un olor a gas y luego acuden tres hombres, de quienes no se sabe a qué organización pertenecen, levantan la acera y abren una zanja. Lo extraño es que transcurren varios días, pero los tres hombres no realizan alguna reparación, sino que a diario se sientan alrededor de la excavación frente a la taberna y esperan. Al mismo tiempo, un personaje misterioso llamado Forcat vuelve a la ciudad y se aloja arriba de la taberna. El protagonista, Daniel, considera que hay una relación entre estos dos asuntos, que los tres hombres están espiando a Forcat y que en la plaza esconden a más personas para matarlo. Por fin, Forcat aparece a la puerta de la taberna:

Antes de disponerse a salir pisando las tablas, Forcat miró el fondo de la zanja que se abría ante él, vio seguramente el amasijo de tubos y cables eléctricos retorcidos y roídos por la humedad, vio las hojas muertas y la mandarina podrida, y luego abarcó con una lenta mirada circular la plaza macilenta y tranquila que se abría ante él, sin fijarse ni un segundo en los tres hombres sentados en el banco; sus ojos escudados en las gafas negras se demoraron solamente en un punto del vacío, en no sabíamos qué, en la derrota de su vida tal vez, en algo que más tenía que ver con su sombrío corazón que con lo que podía verse ahora en torno al quiosco y la parada de tranvías bajo un cielo plomizo, esa luz sobresaltada del atardecer y la gente transitando como sombras furtivas, los niños con sus gruesas bufandas y sus rodillas moradas de frío correteando de la churrería a la fuente y dos o tres palomas que picoteaban en el charco.

[...] Dispuesto por fin a traspasar el umbral de nadie sabía qué, le dio un par de caladas al cigarrillo pero luego, inesperadamente, lo arrojó a la zanja, dio media vuelta y le vimos desaparecer al fondo del zaguán. (Marsé 24-25)

En este fragmento, la existencia de la zanja provoca que el espacio de la calle esté en una situación anormal que fomenta la atmósfera de peligro entre la taberna y la plaza. Desde el inicio hasta el final, Forcat no da ni un paso fuera de la taberna. La calle con zanja y tablas para pasar se contrapone a las significaciones de la taberna, la cual representa un espacio de seguridad, un refugio para Forcat, mientras que la plaza, donde están sus posibles enemigos, representa un ámbito peligroso. Además, la zanja sugiera la división especial de la calle.

6. EL RÍO COMO LÍMITE ESPACIAL DE LA CIUDAD DE SHANGHÁI

Para la ciudad de Shanghái, el río *Huangpu* es un límite natural de dos zonas, *Pudong*, que significa la orilla este de *Huangpu*, y *Puxi*, la orilla oeste. Aunque Shanghái está cerca del mar como Barcelona, no está a lo largo de una costa, sino del río *Huangpu*, que va hacia el mar. La antigua ciudad de Shanghái solo ocupa la parte de la orilla oeste, mientras que la zona del este es nueva y no se empieza a desarrollar hasta el final del siglo XX. Según el libro *El desarrollo de la ciudad de Shanghái y su evolución cultural*, “desde el desarrollo de la zona económica de *Pudong* del año 1992, el barrio nuevo de Shanghái se levantó abruptamente, y la superficie de la ciudad se extendió continuamente” (Yang 280). Con la diferencia histórica y del nivel de desarrollo entre ambos lados del río, las zonas de *Pudong* y *Puxi* son dos partes que tienen distintas características e incluso divergencias culturales.

La novela *La crónica de la orilla este* es una historia de las personas que viven en la parte oriental durante el desarrollo de la ciudad; en dicho relato se enfatiza la distinción existente entre la identidad de las dos zonas:

Nongfang dio una mirada a Qiaoqiao y dijo: “¡Qué guapa esa chica! ¿Por qué quiere trabajar en nuestra tienda? ¿De dónde eres?”.

Qiaoqiao contestó: “Soy de Chuansha³”.

Nongfang dijo: “Mentira. Al oír tu acento, sé que eres de la orilla oeste. Hablas un shanghainés muy normal”.

Qiaoqiao se queda atontada un momento y cambia su acento al dialecto de la orilla este: “No, no, lo que hablo es dialecto de Chuansha⁴”. (Xia 92)

Aunque están en la misma Shanghái, las dos zonas de ambos lados del río son muy diferentes en su acento, su cultura y su identidad. En la anterior escena, Qiaoqiao cambia rápido de entonación para que Nongfang crea que ambos pertenecen al mismo territorio y la acepte como uno de ellos. El río *Huangpu* es un límite espacial que crea dos Shanghái en la narración: el antiguo y el nuevo, el desarrollado y el que está en vías de desarrollo, el puro y el mezclado.

7. CONCLUSIÓN

Los límites y las fronteras disponen de una función espacial en la narración. Los límites como la puerta y la ventana otorgan diversos significados a los espacios de ambos lados. A través del movimiento de los personajes entre los dos lugares se presenta en la narración un contraste manifiesto entre los espacios existentes a ambos lados de la puerta. Como la casa frecuentemente tiene el significado de “el centro del mundo” o “nuestro mundo”, tras la aparición de la puerta, la novela construye un conflicto entre el espacio familiar y el desconocido. Por otra parte, la ventana produce en la narración una modificación de la focalización entre el interior y el exterior de la casa. Y ese cambio permite la introducción de la “narración marco” o interrupción de la secuencia temporal.

A diferencia de los límites espaciales, si bien el significado del espacio fronterizo a veces es solo una mezcla de los espacios de ambos lados, otras veces su oposición otorga un nuevo significado a esa frontera. El balcón es un espacio fronterizo típico en la narración, que pertenece a la casa, pero su foco de atención se desvía desde el interior hacia el exterior de la casa.

En cuanto a los espacios fronterizos, en la novela barcelonesa, *El embrujo de Shanghái*, la calle entre la plaza donde se halla el protagonista y la taberna donde vive Forcat está envuelta en la atmósfera misteriosa que genera el desconocido, mientras que, en la obra shanghainesa, *La crónica de la orilla este*, el río se convierte en un límite espacial que divide la ciudad en dos partes con distintos acentos y culturas.

³ Chuansha: un pueblo en la zona de la orilla este.

⁴ Traducido desde el texto original: “农芳朝乔乔瞥一眼：这么漂亮的小姑娘到我们店打工？你哪里人啊？乔乔道：我川沙人。农芳道：吹牛，一听口音就是浦西来的，上海话讲得这么标准。乔乔愣了一下，马上改口用浦东土话：没有啊，我说的是川沙话呀。”

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RESEÑAS

Libros álbum que desafían los estereotipos de género y el concepto de familia tradicional

Picture books that defy gender stereotypes and the traditional family concept

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En este volumen colectivo se estudian historias recogidas en *libros álbum*, que surgieron en el inicio de la década de los años 60 del siglo xx (Durán, 2009). Se caracterizan por establecer una sinergia entre texto e imagen, de manera que ambos modos se complementan y relacionan: la imagen no se entiende sin el texto y el texto no se entiende sin la imagen. En concreto, el análisis se centra en las estrategias verbales y visuales que los autores de dichas historias usan para promover la inclusión social de familias homoparentales, y romper con los estereotipos de género tradicionales. El objetivo fundamental consiste en crear discursos inclusivos y progresivos a través de un enfoque multimodal y literario.

El capítulo de introducción de los editores define el libro álbum como un texto multimodal y subraya la importancia de adoptar enfoques multimodales e interdisciplinares que contemplen la sinergia entre los distintos modos semióticos, esencialmente verbales y visuales, que crean significado en las narraciones visuales destinadas a jóvenes lectores (sección 1.1). A continuación, los editores resumen las principales líneas de investigación desde las que se ha abordado este género de la Literatura Infantil (sección 1.2), así como los estudios de género que sobre el libro álbum se han realizado (sección 1.3), entre otros Sunderland (2012) y Evans (2015). El capítulo concluye con una descripción de la estructura capitular del volumen (sección 1.4) en la que se presentan las investigaciones llevadas a cabo en cada uno de los capítulos que lo integran.

En la parte primera titulada *Personajes femeninos en libros álbum que rompen estereotipos de género* hay tres capítulos. El primer capítulo de Santamaría aborda las relaciones de interacción en libros álbum que desafían los estereotipos de género femeninos desde un enfoque semiótico y multimodal a partir de los modelos propuestos por Unsworth y Ortigas (2008); Kress y van Leeuwen (2006). Santamaría examina el potencial interactivo de las imágenes de dos libros álbum protagonizados por personajes femeninos que no se ajustan a los roles de género tradicionales: *Arturo y Clementina* y *Los tutús no son mi estilo*. Los resultados de este interesante estudio revelan que el uso de imágenes de contacto y ángulos medios permite al lector niño identificarse con los personajes de las narrativas visuales e involucrarse en sus aventuras y problemas cotidianos.

El capítulo de Rodríguez y Ruiz Domínguez, *La subversión de los estereotipos de princesa en tres álbumes posmodernos*, es un estudio narratológico y, a su vez, lingüístico-discursivo, que ahonda en la subversión de los esquemas narrativos, argumento y arquetipos en tres libros álbum que cuestionan los comportamientos de princesas: *La princesa Isabella* de Funke y Meyer (2012), *La princesa vestida con una bolsa de papel* de Munsch y Martchenk (2017), y *La princesa rebelde* de Kemp y Ogilvie (2018). Estos libros equiparan el rol femenino al masculino, lo que influye tanto en la percepción social como en el propio concepto de género por parte de las mujeres. Son princesas expresivas que muestran sin tapujos su incomodidad ante su *statu quo* tradicional.

El capítulo de Díaz Armas, *Parodia e ironía intertextual como estrategias subversivas. Tradición literaria y ruptura de estereotipos*, plantea la ironía intertextual, la parodia y la transtextualidad como estrategias subversivas utilizadas en el texto e ilustraciones de una muestra de cinco libros álbum, la mayoría protagonizados por mujeres, que rompen con los estereotipos de género y los comportamientos de los personajes de los cuentos maravillosos. Son historias que desmitifican los valores y personajes propios de los cuentos tradicionales y promueven el cambio de modelos anteriores de masculinidad y feminidad por otros nuevos. Resultan muy sugerentes las reescrituras posmodernas de estas historias, por su relación de conflicto y diálogo con la tradición previa.

La segunda sección del volumen aborda el análisis de libros álbum que presentan a personajes masculinos que no se adaptan a los estereotipos de género tradicionales. Así, en el capítulo quinto, desde un enfoque sistémico y semiótico-social, Izaskun Elorza explora la identidad y los atributos de personajes que no encajan dentro del estereotipo de género masculino, en los modos verbal y visual, en cinco libros álbum actuales: *10,000 Dresses*, *Ballerino Nate*, *Prince Cinders*, *The Sissy Duckling*, y, por último *Oliver Button Is a Sissy*. Elorza

analiza la estabilidad y el cambio de los rasgos identificativos y atributivos de los protagonistas masculinos a lo largo de las narraciones, como aspectos relacionados con la aceptación social de los mismos y su relevancia para una educación en valores de tolerancia y aceptación de la diversidad.

En el capítulo sexto, Emanuel Madalena y Ana Margarida Ramos estudian tres libros álbum partiendo de una sugerente reflexión sobre las cuestiones de género y su representación en la literatura para niños en relación con el tema de la transgeneridad, que esquiva el esquema binario hombre-mujer. El estudio se construye a partir de las teorías del libro álbum contemporáneo posmoderno (Moya, 2014; Kümmmerling-Meibauer, 2018) y se investigan tres libros álbum contemporáneos: *Os vestidos do Tiago* de Joana Estrela, *El niño perfecto* de Álex González y Bernat Cormand y *Julian is a mermaid* de Jessica Love publicados en Portugal, España y Estados Unidos, respectivamente. Las historias promueven la aceptación de la diferencia y la inclusión.

En el capítulo séptimo, los autores Jesús Moya y Cristina Moya plantean un análisis semiótico y multimodal de los espacios y escenarios en los que se mueven y actúan personajes masculinos que no se ajustan a los estereotipos de género esperados. Se identifican las relaciones intercircunstanciales y las localizaciones espaciales de cinco libros álbum ilustrados. La semiótica social de Kress y van Leeuwen (2006), desarrollada por Painter, Martin y Unsworth (2013) para el estudio del libro álbum, es el modelo utilizado para llevar a cabo esta exhaustiva investigación.

En la tercera sección del libro, *el libro álbum y su apertura a las familias homoparentales*, se presentan libros álbum que presentan a niños y niñas que viven en contextos diferentes a los patrones clásicos del modelo familiar. Esta tercera parte se inicia con el capítulo octavo, en el que Lirola analiza la construcción multimodal de las nuevas masculinidades en una muestra de cinco libros álbum escritos en inglés y protagonizados por niños con padres gais. El análisis revela que estos libros muestran aspectos relacionados con las nuevas masculinidades, rasgos que pueden influir positivamente en la educación y socialización del joven lector.

El capítulo noveno de Pinar explora las relaciones interpersonales que se establecen entre los personajes, y entre éstos y el lector, en una muestra de tres libros álbum que cuestionan el modelo de familia tradicional, en concreto, son familias compuestas por dos madres y sus respectivas hijas. Desde una perspectiva multimodal, tras identificar las estructuras modales que predominan en el modo verbal, la autora indaga en cuestiones tales como los tipos de mirada, la distancia social, el grado de intimidad y los distintos planos y ángulos

que utilizan autores e ilustradoras para fomentar la interacción personajes-lector y presentar nuevos modelos de familia homosexuales femeninas.

El volumen concluye con el capítulo décimo en el que Quílez, Martín-Martín y Rovira-Collado indagan, desde el enfoque *Queer*, la diversidad de modelos de familia en una muestra de libros álbum que abordan la temática de las familias homoparentales. Los autores examinan los epitextos virtuales públicos que de ellos se han derivado, así como la repercusión de dichas obras a través de los espacios de Internet que se hacen eco de las mismas.

Este libro resulta apasionante para cualquier lingüista y educador que quiera ahondar sobre cómo poner en valor la gran diversidad de familias que existe en la actualidad y busque superar los estereotipos de género tradicionales. Los álbumes ilustrados educan en valores, enseñan a niñas y niños el respeto a los demás, a los que son diferentes, a promover la aceptación y a “no juzgar” al otro. La diversidad en los géneros significa variedad, diferencia y riqueza. Está por doquier. Aunque las personas seamos diferentes, también somos a la vez iguales: todos queremos que nos acepten, que nos ayuden y formar parte de la sociedad con los mismos derechos y obligaciones.

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José Manuel Correoso Rodenas, La literatura gótica llega al Nuevo Sur: Influencia y reformulación del gótico en la obra de Flannery O'Connor, Madrid, Fundación Universitaria Española, 2020

"Gothic Literature Reaches the New South. Influence and Retelling of the Gothic in the Works of Flannery O'Connor", by José Manuel Correoso Rodenas, Madrid, Fundación Universitaria Española, 2020

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La tesis de José Manuel Correoso Rodenas es una investigación y un homenaje. Un concienzudo ejercicio académico en torno a la figura de la fascinante Flannery O'Connor (1925-1964), pero que no renuncia a la autoridad que, ya no como especialista, sino como lector entusiasta, le ha sido conferida. Así pues, el estudio arranca con la ventaja o el privilegio de quien escribe sobre una época que admira y conoce, sobre unos autores cuyos tomos ha seleccionado de la estantería en las tardes de invierno. En fin, estas páginas, al explorar la obra de la narradora de Georgia, se posan en los hombros de toda una generación, la segunda del Renacimiento sureño estadounidense, de la que formaron parte nombres como Truman Capote o Carson McCullers. Desde los primeros compases del siglo xx, en un salto a través de las décadas, se aventura hacia los entresijos de la literatura gótica, cuyo concepto será necesario acotar. Si algo se hace patente en este proceso de acercamiento es que Correoso Rodenas y O'Connor comparten las mismas lecturas: desde Hawthorne a Faulkner, pasando por Poe o Henry James.

Esta predilección común conduce a un lógico objetivo: revisar la producción de la novelista al calor de lo gótico y reivindicar la firme influencia que ejerció este movimiento tanto en su imaginario como en su *modus scribendi*. La conquista de tal meta se aborda desde

perspectivas complementarias que, a modo de subobjetivos, articulan el libro en tres grandes secciones, a las que volveremos en seguida. Pero antes, el autor se enfrenta a un escollo inicial a la hora de lidiar con la ubérrima bibliografía que nutre las líneas de investigación consagradas a O'Connor, marcadas significativamente por «su condición de mujer, de católica y de sureña» (p. 27). Por este panorama multidisciplinar dominado con minuciosidad por la crítica norteamericana, bucea Correoso Rodenas hasta dar con un vacío notable que viene ahora a subsanar. La riqueza misma de los trabajos precedentes dota al autor de un sólido haz de conocimientos que revierten en el estado de la cuestión, así como en la metodología, que se apoya de forma confesa en la literatura comparada.

Para cuando ha finalizado el recorrido panorámico por las principales calas de los estudios críticos —acaso la contrapartida inevitable de este ambicioso planteamiento—, nos hallamos a las puertas de la tercera parte del volumen. De acuerdo con esta disposición estructural, el análisis de la producción de O'Connor, que constituye el núcleo de la tesis, llega escoltada por un amplio apartado de corte conceptual. Si en la primera parte se delimitaban las cuestiones procedimentales de rigor, la segunda gira en torno a la definición de lo «gótico». El extenso segmento bien puede asimilarse como una tesis independiente y cohesionada, un espacio donde se exploran las ramificaciones que germinan en la literatura de la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII —cuyo acontecimiento inaugural se ha fijado convencionalmente en la publicación de *The Castle of Otranto*, de Horace Walpole, en 1764— para filtrarse con ímpetu en la cultura popular y consolidarse en forma de estética, con unos ingredientes prototípicos explotados, más adelante, por la industria cinematográfica. Correoso Rodenas propone un trazado que desgana el gótico desde distintas miradas, partiendo de un punto de vista estrictamente etimológico que sirva de anclaje para comprender las causas histórico-ideológicas, aun políticas, que contribuyeron desde Gran Bretaña a asentar el movimiento.

Así, el establecimiento de unas características reconocibles para el receptor contemporáneo se plantea como consecuencia de un largo proceso que halla reminiscencias ya en el *Poema de Gilgamesh*. Tal proceso se manifiesta en una exposición cuajada de referencias que articula el recorrido histórico tomando los rasgos sobrenaturales como hilo conductor y que permite comprender la vigencia de la literatura gótica a través de los siglos, tras la reformulación del género en el XIX. Dibujadas las bases, el panorama se traslada al Nuevo Mundo siguiendo la ruta de los colonos y abriendo un debate terminológico a vueltas con la legitimidad de afirmar la existencia de un «gótico norteamericano». El grueso de esta segunda parte lo conforma un catálogo cronológico de escritores desde la época colonial hasta el decisivo *American Renaissance*. Al tiempo que se recalca en voces de renombre como

Washington Irving, se rescata del olvido otras menos afortunadas en este campo de estudio, caso de William Gilmore Simms.

Es en la tercera parte donde el foco se traslada definitivamente a Flannery O'Connor, una vez contruidos, con notable exhaustividad, los asideros teóricos en los que hierve la simiente gótica de su producción. El *corpus* sujeto a examen incluye las obras narrativas, pero también un compendio de textos de no-ficción formado por cartas, el diario personal de la autora —el *Prayer Journal*— y el conjunto de sus ensayos y reseñas reunidos en los volúmenes *The Habit of Being* y *The Presence of Grace and Other Book Reviews by Flannery O'Connor*, respectivamente. Esta selección se toma como materia para prefigurar una suerte de poética en la que se vislumbra una atracción por lo oscuro, lo sobrenatural o lo macabro, que al cabo aflorará en sus composiciones. Las publicaciones en prosa se abordan en los capítulos siguientes, cuyas páginas analizan las piezas cortas y las novelas a la luz de la influencia o la apropiación particular del universo gótico. Junto con el escrutinio de *The Violent Bear It Away* (1960) y de *Wise Blood* (1952) —su primera obra magna, encumbrada y frecuentada por la crítica—, Correoso Rodenas pone de relieve la colección de relatos tempranos *The Geranium* (1947), en los que detecta los rasgos que se desarrollarán con todo su potencial en los escritos posteriores. A este título se suman *A Good Man is Hard to Find* (1955) y *Everything that Rises Must Converge* (1965). La mirada incisiva del autor se hace patente de nuevo en el rastreo de las fuentes a través de la biblioteca de O'Connor, donde percibe el rastro de Walpole, Radcliffe o Austen. Allí se fundirán los elementos fijos más superficiales de la atmósfera gótica con los condicionamientos religiosos e inquietudes espirituales, que cristalizan en una simbología personal atravesada por la fascinación que despiertan las tribulaciones profundas y obsesiones de la naturaleza humana.

Mientras se encamina a la consecución de sus claros propósitos, la tesis de Correoso Rodenas —que, por lo demás, cumple con las exigencias y convenciones formales del género— transita por la historia de la literatura norteamericana y ofrece un rico tejido de perspectivas y aproximaciones dialogantes a la elástica noción del «gótico». En el centro de esta tradición, la figura de O'Connor se resitúa en un espacio hasta la fecha no considerado, no solo para contribuir al conocimiento de su obra, sino, quizá su más honesto objetivo, servir, en palabras del autor, «como púlpito desde el que la obra de la escritora de Georgia abandone su enclaustramiento académico y llegue al gran público, el reducto que le queda por conquistar» (p. 14).

Lola Pons y Marta Torres. *Las hablas andaluzas: glosario de una realidad lingüística*

Lola Pons y Marta Torres. *Andalusian speaks: linguistic reality glossary*

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La reseña que se va a presentar a continuación se enlaza con la revista *Archiletras* y se corresponde a un suplemento editorial de su número 10. Se trata de un glosario destinado a revelar términos que tienen vinculación con las hablas andaluzas. Si bien no es común localizar reseñas sobre documentación léxica, la obra analizada plasma perfectamente las expectativas previstas por Arsenio Escolar, director de *Archiletras* que encomendó el proyecto a Lola Pons y Marta Torres. Numerosos trabajos preliminares “*El español hablado de en Andalucía*” (Narbona y Cano y Morillo, 1998); “*Las hablas andaluzas*” (Cano y González, 2000); “*Estudios sobre léxico andaluz*” (Ropero, 1989); “*El andaluz*” (Jiménez, 1999) presentan estudios sobre el andaluz y, en esta aspiración, el trabajo de Pons y Torres continúa proporcionando visibilidad a la variedad geográficamente conocida como andaluza.

Según Rodríguez-Iglesias (2018: 92), ya en el siglo XVI, Juan de Valdés escribió en su obra “*Diálogo de la lengua*” críticas a Elio Antonio de Nebrija por ser andaluz y ser una figura relevante en la gramática española. En este ámbito, con la total esperanza de clarificar la realidad lingüística andaluza, consideramos necesario realizar una reseña que recoja los aspectos más trascendentales de este estudio y que no se siga cayendo en la ignorancia de juzgar esta variedad o cualquier otra.

Asimismo, este glosario resulta atrayente para un público general, ya que gracias a él podemos extraer una lista útil de conceptos claves que nos ayudan a comprender componentes lingüísticos de Andalucía.

Siguiendo el contexto en el que nos hallamos, la estructura de la obra se desarrolla a lo largo de dos planos fundamentales: el primero acopia información en forma de prólogo sobre aspectos relevantes de Andalucía y, el segundo, está compuesto de los términos ordenados alfabéticamente que se han incluido en el glosario.

La primera parte *Hablemos del andaluz* ha sido redactada por Lola Pons y se compone de siete páginas introductorias al glosario. Al inicio, la autora aporta información geográfica y poblacional de Andalucía y hace referencia a los acontecimientos históricos que experimentó el territorio andaluz: época prerromana, época romana, época germánica y época andalusí.

Seguidamente, se desmontan, a través del rechazo, 6 falsos tópicos que suelen divagarse sobre el español de Andalucía:

- 1- El andaluz no es el castellano del futuro
- 2- El andaluz no es una variedad peor o ininteligible
- 3- El andaluz no es una variedad más rica ni más expresiva
- 4- El andaluz no es históricamente una mezcla de árabe y castellano
- 5- Los romanos oriundos de la provincia de la Bética no hablaban con acento andaluz
- 6- El andaluz no es resultado del clima andaluz

La segunda parte es el escenario central del trabajo, pues, encontramos en forma de glosario los conceptos ordenados alfabéticamente. Se alcanzan casi 200 términos que nos brindan la oportunidad de conocer más a fondo algunos rasgos propios de Andalucía.

Para la recolección de los datos analizados (*tablas 1 y 2*) se emplea la técnica de observación directa y de recopilación documental. Posteriormente, se construyen ambas tablas basándonos en una escala numérica y porcentual que posibilita cuantificar algunos aspectos principales del glosario. La escala de medida utilizada aporta atributos resultantes de carácter cuantitativo y, en el caso de que el valor sea 0 nos indicaría ausencia de la muestra. En esta primera tabla, se encuentran contabilizados los conceptos según las letras iniciales; 167 entradas diferentes. Si estableciéramos un ranking total de palabras, la letra A se situaría a la cabeza, pues, encontramos un total de 32 conceptos, lo que supone un porcentaje del 19.16%. Asimismo, existe ausencia y no se describen términos que comienzan por las letras: K, Ñ, U, W, X.

Tabla 1. Cantidad de términos clasificados alfabéticamente

Letras	Número de palabras	Porcentaje	Ejemplos
A	32	19.16%	alhucema, aljofifa, angustia...
B	9	5.39%	bandear, bimba, bulla...
C	27	16.17%	cacharritos, capillita, compadre...
D	8	4.79%	damajuana, delantal, dornillo...
E	7	4.19%	enagüillas, endiñar...
F	6	3.59%	fatiga, flama, frangollón/a...
G	11	6.59%	gañafote, gitanilla, guasa...
H	4	2.4%	habicholilla, hartible...
I	1	0.6%	impersonalidad
J	1	0.6%	jándalo
K	0	0%	■
L	5	2.99%	levante, ligar...
M	7	4.19%	malaje, mascada...
N	4	2.4%	neologismo, neutralización...
Ñ	0	0%	■
O	2	1.2%	ochío, oliva
P	16	9.58%	palangana, pechada, pejuguera...
Q	2	1.2%	Qué (pluralización), Quevedo
R	7	4.19%	recacha, regañá, reolina...
S	10	5.99%	salmorejo, saltamontes, sultana...
T	4	2.4%	tamear, tela...
U	0	0%	■
V	2	1.2%	Valdés, Valera
W	0	0%	■
X	0	0%	■
Y	1	0.6%	yeísmo
Z	1	0.6%	zagal/a
Total	167	100%	

Elaboración propia a partir del registro constatado en *Las hablas andaluzas: glosario de una realidad lingüística (2021)*

Siguiendo en lo referente al glosario, percibimos entretanto, una amplia variedad de campos semánticos que enriquecen nuestro bagaje léxico de andalucismos. En el corpus de la obra se aprecian, entre otros, fenómenos lingüísticos, entradas sobre productos gastronómicos,

nombres propios de autores relevantes, obras históricas que se han elaborado, zonas geográficas que se vinculan con Andalucía, así como otros términos característicos de origen heterogéneo, tales como palabras concernientes a los enseres: *búcaro*, *cuajadera* o *palangana*. En la siguiente tabla, hemos querido plasmar conceptos asociados a los campos léxicos más presentes en el glosario.

Tabla 2. Distribución de los conceptos del glosario según sus campos léxicos

Campos léxicos	Número de palabras	Porcentaje	Ejemplos
Fenómenos	22	13.17%	lambdacismo, heheo...
Gastronomía	32	19.16%	ochío, pionono...
Nombres propios	18	10.78%	Elio Antonio de Nebrija
Obras históricas	7	4.19%	ALEA, TLHA...
Zonas geográficas	10	5.99%	Caribe, Gibraltar...
Total (campos léxicos)	89	53.29%	
Otros	78	46.71%	
Total	167	100%	

Elaboración propia a partir del registro constatado en *Las hablas andaluzas: glosario de una realidad lingüística (2021)*

Este glosario también ofrece la congruencia de distinguir, si procede, las entradas según las categorías gramaticales. En este aspecto, existe un claro predominio en la tipología de las palabras: 83 sustantivos, 8 verbos, 8 adjetivos y 1 adverbio. Se recogen, además, dos términos que pueden emplearse como sustantivos y como adjetivos: *jándalo* y *malaje*.

Con respecto a la semántica de las distintas entradas, las autoras han procurado que la red de palabras sea inteligible y accesible. En general, el glosario es generoso y define los términos de forma precisa y simple. Muchas de las definiciones contienen las variantes que existen según las zonas geográficas andaluzas y manifiestan el recorrido histórico de las palabras. Así, *enagüillas* se puede registrar en Jaén como *faldillas* o *senagüillas* y deriva de la lengua amerindia taína *naguas*.

Se introducen ejemplificaciones e imágenes que permiten contextualizar las definiciones. En concreto, se registran un total 42 representaciones pictóricas o fotográficas que sirven de apoyo visual. Por ejemplo, cuando se hace referencia a *paisaje lingüístico* se aporta una imagen que retrata su significado. En el transcurso del trabajo se introducen acrónimos o siglas. En las entradas del glosario, de hecho, es habitual encontrar reciprocidad con respecto a las definiciones de otros trabajos significativos. Los más destacados son:

- **ALEA** (Atlas Lingüístico y Etnográfico de Andalucía)

- **ALPI** (Atlas Lingüístico de la Península Ibérica)
- **COSER** (Corpus Oral y Sonoro del Español Rural)
- **DLE** (Diccionario de la Lengua Española)
- **RAE** (Real Academia Española)
- **TLHA** (Tesoro Léxico de las Hablas Andalusas)
- **VA** (Vocabulario Andaluz)

Es conveniente añadir que *Las hablas andaluzas* tiene un carácter descriptivo y que consigue transmitir a los receptores la realidad lingüística de Andalucía, su historia y su situación actual. Además, se incluyen términos que captan la atención del lector y que conforman un repertorio léxico muy atrayente: *albérchigo* (albaricoque), *aljofifa* (fregona o bayeta), *chiribaila* (inconstante), *ochío* (torta de aceite), *recacha* (lugar soleado y abrigado) o *tamear* (promediar).

Aunque es evidente que el trabajo se podría ampliar en un futuro porque falta información que incorporar, estamos ante un glosario que, a ciencia cierta, crea conciencia sobre la variedad del español de Andalucía y que será objeto de investigaciones ulteriores, pues, una de las funciones del profesorado se centra en enseñar a hablar bien en las diferentes situaciones que se puedan originar, ya sean coloquiales, intermedias o formales.

Por último, esta obra desmiente tópicos de las variedades lingüísticas, tratando muy de cerca el andaluz. Así pues, no es posible conseguir una neutralización absoluta de la lengua, ya que, por ejemplo, el modelo de norma formal no debería tener nunca carácter monolítico. Las investigadoras señalan que hablar correctamente no está asociado a ninguna pronunciación concreta y, efectivamente, hablar es mucho más que pronunciar. Realmente, no es una cuestión objeto de debate exclusivamente en Andalucía, ya que todos los idiomas presentan variantes y la lengua está llamada a enriquecerse a partir de todas ellas.

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Anacronía de Gerardo Rodríguez Salas

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Anacronía. Poemario que ya desde su título supone conmoción y destiempo. Caída que precipita un viaje de búsqueda y de regreso. Anacronismo, del griego “anachronismós”, se define como ‘error consistente en confundir épocas o situar algo fuera de su época’ (*DRAE*). Esta anacronía cruza todo el libro, en su permanencia; de su mano, también el desconcierto.

Las dos citas que abren el poemario, así como la dedicatoria, nos orientan en sentido descendente en lo físico, pero también hacia el vuelo. El lector, junto al yo lírico, no acabará de caer, pese a todo; el viaje mantiene una promesa a la que habremos de aferrarnos, en un tenso juego de dicotomías.

Contundentes y claves para la lectura que nos aguarda son los tres poemas iniciales. En la declaración de intenciones que es “Palabras de papel” (14), la voz lírica, el oficio de poeta, busca palabras como piedras despeñándose; “nombrar la mariposa” que sea huida o ensoñación, “palabras que te invoquen”, que huelan, suenen, contengan su sabor. Tres estrofas que son presente, futuro y pasado. Búsqueda sin norte y una segunda persona en los pronombres. Comienza desde el dolor más íntimo, a ciegas, esta búsqueda que será el poemario, esta ansia de encontrar lo tangible que queda.

*Pero las letras se hacen humo
y el fuego quema tanto
que no sé si la bruja que crepita
tendrá tu rostro
o el mío.*

(14)

El papel se consume entre los dedos. Las letras no sirven y, fuera, ese incendio que es la realidad tiene apariencia de ambos.

A partir de este inicio el poemario se divide en tres partes “Ayer”, “Ausencia” y “Porvenir”.

Dos citas, de Javier Egea y Juan Carlos Friebe respectivamente, nos dan las coordenadas del primer bloque con tres sustantivos abstractos: “soledad”, “memoria”, “ausencia”. Esa luz extraña que hay en la soledad y en la memoria se abre paso a través de “Luciérnagas”, el primer poema. Cargado de infancia, sonidos de cigarras y arroyos en un lecho de musgo, somos capaces de sentir la noche. Aunque hoy sea ese sonido más tenue, los dos hermanos regresan a ese bote salvavidas que es el ayer, suyo e inquebrantable, a “mirar boquiabiertos el manto de las luces”, a la zaga de la luz más interior.

El siguiente poema ya es augurio que precipita la caída. Asistimos a la mejor metáfora de la infancia perdida, que rueda cerro abajo, resquebrajada. Los niños han perdido su juego, el corazón se ha hecho pedazos. Tanta dulzura y frescor, esparcidos por la tierra.

*riega la abuela sus sandías
gigantes y rayadas.
Con orgullo nos trae la más grande
y la chutamos,
y rueda y rueda monte abajo (...)
(...) rueda y se ensucia el corazón*

*de nuestra abuela,
pues es tarde en la cumbre
y abajo sangra el sueño en mil pedazos
dulces y rojos.*

Más tarde, ya no queda escapatoria (23). Como en *Ulises y las sirenas* de John William Waterhouse¹⁷, la voz lírica busca un mástil al que aferrarse. El poema recoge el que abre el libro, “Odisea” (13), y asistimos a un mar tempestuoso de flores, de sangre y gasolina, de cirios apagados. Una cicatriz, un casco rojo y un sonido capaz de derretir *la cera en sus oídos*. Fotograma detenido en el tiempo, sumido en una ensoñación muda e imposible. Después, rutinas diarias llenas de aturdimiento: “ropa dispersa en el terrazo”, “dolor sordo de tus ojos”, “insomnes hilos”, “esferas chifladas” de un tiempo sin rumbo, relojes y memoria desorientados. La banda sonora, un saxo, guitarra, Bon Jovi, “maullidos de estrellas”. “Frenazo en seco”.

Cierra el primer bloque el poema “Despedida” (32) y se escucha aún el corazón temblando en el oído. Después, imágenes yuxtapuestas sin sonido descifrable y precipicio.

Con el segundo bloque, titulado “Ausencia”, el yo poético inicia su viaje de búsqueda. Escuchamos el motor de un avión hacia la bruma. Rodríguez Salas nos da las coordenadas de esta cartografía neozelandesa en la cual, como el autor explica en *Cartografías*, al final del poemario, “los poemas dialogan con obras literarias, artísticas o musicales de dicha cultura” (81). Como un mapa mal doblado sobre el desorden de una mesa, tiempo y espacio se curvan y suceden. No hay entonces pasado, ni futuro ni presente de los cuales salir indemnes. El poeta escoge tres citas, de Katherine Mansfield, Shelina Tusitala Marsh y Janet Frame, que nos asoman a lo imprevisible del viaje y al tiempo como una percepción. Todo episodio presente se engarza con un recuerdo en un discurso continuo entre realidad y literatura.

Ya desde el poema que abre la sección, “Aotearoa” (39), nombre mahorí de Nueva Zelanda, la voz lírica conoce la respuesta a su pregunta: “viniste a este lado de la bruma buscando el infinito.” Humo, niebla, polvo, como esta “tierra de la larga nube

¹⁷ Pintura realizada en 1891, que recrea el episodio de Ulises, amarrado al mástil para no sucumbir al canto de las sirenas. Sus hombres, tal y como le había aconsejado la maga Circe, llevan cera tapando sus oídos. V. V. A. A. (2010). *Mitología clásica e iconografía cristiana*, pág.91.

blanca” que es ahora su punto de inflexión, son motivos espaciales y simbólicos a lo largo del poemario. Ya Unamuno nos avisaba “la vida es esto, la niebla”.¹⁸ En esta incertidumbre nos hallamos sus lectores, igualmente sostenidos por una leve esperanza que no acaba de soltarnos al vacío. Y, sin embargo, son constantes las imágenes de caída. Como *Alice in Wonderland* desde la primera cita del poemario, se sigue hundiendo, ahogando en nuestra memoria fotográfica, el piano atado al tobillo de Ada McGrath (protagonista de *El piano*¹⁹). Esta recompensa con fotogramas del film ahonda en la misma humedad del alma, el mismo hueco o la misma mutilación. De nuevo, discurso ininterrumpido entre arte y realidad. Son los de todo el libro poemas breves y contundentes. Tensos en su lirismo.

*“Estoy aquí,
mazacote de bronce
rodeado de gente
que me soslaya,
de edificios modernos
que engulleron mi tribu
y mi pasado (...)
acepto mi derrota(...)
pese a mi cuerpo,
pese al dolor opaco.”*

De “Guerrero mahorí” (44)

Abundan las sinestesias así como las imágenes que nos refieren continuamente a los sentidos: sollozo de “ballenas pulidas por la luna”, liras lejanas, “olor a sangre que inunda el cuadro” (54). Se van adentrando profundamente, igual que un perfume nos va calando, y continúa la caída. “El descenso es mi rumbo”, vuelve a decir Alicia en el poema del mismo nombre (54).

¹⁸ Stevens, Harriet S. y Gullón, Ricardo. *Introducción a la novela Niebla*, Edición Temas de España (Madrid, Taurus, 1965) p. 12.

¹⁹ También conocida como *La lección de piano* (1993), escrita y dirigida por Jane Campion, está rodada en Nueva Zelanda.

Como continuas son también a lo largo del poemario las anáforas y otras figuras de repetición que consiguen, a modo de mantra, crear un estado de meditación que avanza a lo largo de todo el poemario y, así, en “He Wawata” (canción tradicional maorí) todo el canto elegíaco rompe, al fin, en este primer verso en el término “esperanza”.

*que las olas furiosas
te arrastren hacia mí,
que se cumpla mi anhelo
y regrese a casa.*

(57)

Esperanza que cabe en el condicional de la última estrofa de este bloque “*Habrà más horizontes/ si redobla mi pecho*” (58).

En el último bloque, “Porvenir”, sabemos del regreso. Los versos nos adentran en rincones de la ciudad de Granada. Dos citas, de Teresa Gómez y Ángeles Mora, nos avisan de la humedad futura y del viaje interior que se sucede. Lugares secretos, tatuajes y susurros. Huecos, escisiones, desbordamientos.

La ciudad es paisaje del alma. Luces y sombras en el camino por estas soledades y arrullos de un agua incontenible. Bajo el asfalto suena el Darro, “desbordado de lluvia y de memoria”, “torrente en blanco y negro” (68). Lugares místicos, temblor de tierras, huecos y cantos nocturnos de una historia. Sin “diques que contengan el ayer” (74), sin saltos capaces, ni rocas... la voz lírica es “gota del río cristalino” que abraza la ciudad y la piedra se horada como está el alma.

Delicadísimos son los versos de “Sala de los secretos” (71). Entre las calles, plazas y edificaciones de la ciudad, en los sótanos de la Sala de Dos Hermanas del recinto de la Alhambra, como aquella mariposa del principio, revolotean las palabras dichas un día entre los ladrillos y regresa la voz que no se irá nunca “desde el sótano inverso del planeta”.

Este viaje por los entresijos interiores termina con el poema “Nunca” (79). Metáforas visionarias del olvido, “piedra que no termina nunca de caer”. La cita de L. García

Montero, sostenidos aún de las poleas en la gruta de Waitomo, nos devuelve en el abismo al fulgor de sus luciérnagas. Suficiente combustible será hasta el alba.

