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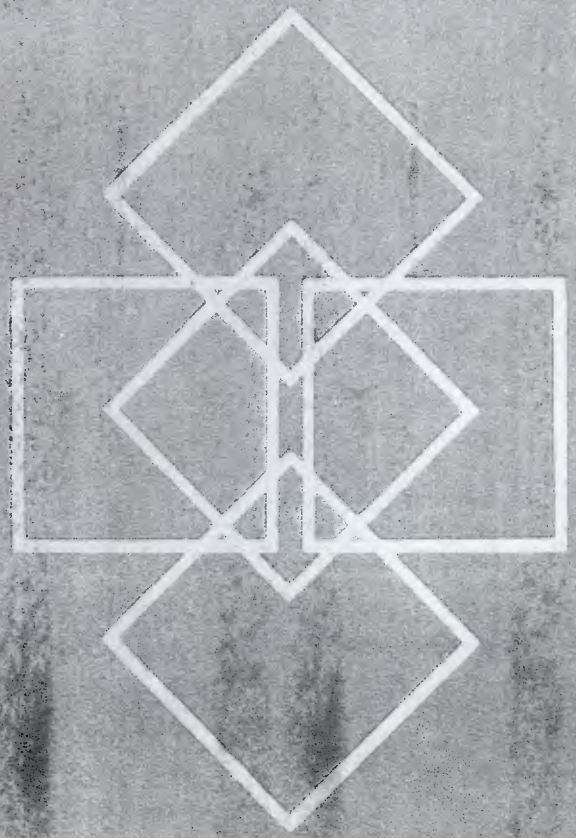

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Agradecimentos

Agradecemos a colaboração que nos vem sendo dada pelos associados, para a publicação desta revista, a qual é indispensável para sua continuidade.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH WILSON HARRIS

MUNIRA H. MUTRAN

Last year the British Council arranged for me to meet Wilson Harris, the Guainese novelist living in Chelmsford, near London, with his Scottish wife Margaret. I much enjoyed meeting them. We had lunch, and tea, and talked for hours. Wilson Harris was interested to know more about Brasil, suggesting that we may have many problems in common. In relation to Caribbean literature he pointed out that many Caribbean novelists tend to say there is no History; he prefers to go into ancient time, pull things together, and by doing this, take into account his understanding of History. When he writes, he revises his drafts, and often finds "intuitive clues" in passages which seem not to be written by him; he takes them, finding that his depth is greater than it was before, by reaching some new state of life. As to the Modern movement in literature, he believes that it was locked in *one* world, in which tradition was pretty fixed, solid. The modern writers never had the cross-cultural experience as those of the so-called third world.

Wilson Harris was born in Georgetown, British Guiana, in 1921. His native language is English, but he has many cultures in his blood, and these "buried voices of the unconscious produce an indefinable music", he says.

His very first novel, *Palace of the Peacock* (1960), shows why "Wilson Harris is one of the most significant writers in English in this century."[1] From 1960 to the present the author has written ten novels and many critical, influential essays. A new novel, *The Four Banks of the River of Space* is coming out in September this year (London-Boston, Faber and Faber, 1990). One of the epigraphs of that book shows that Harris' concern with past and present, tradition, and a cross-cultural dialogue between civilizations, has not diminished:

> I am part of all I have met
> Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'

Gleams that untravelled world whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
(Alfred, Lord Tennyson. "Ulysses")

The following questions and answers constituted the focal point of our conversation.

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Question: Would you say something about myth and how it works in your novels? My sense is that it works differently from certain accepted criteria of absolute ethnicity and nationality.

Reply: Myth relates I feel to underlying and complex necessities arising within and *through* levels of being. The roots of such complex and enduring necessity are mysterious. There are times when myth may embody itself in particular legends and characters that we tend to associate with a particular race or culture. Ulysses for example is associated with ancient Greece, Quetzalcoatl with ancient Mexico. As a consequence we tend to be conditioned by a certain kind of formula to do with a race or a people that we may wittingly or unwittingly reinforce across the centuries and generations. That formula in my view gradually becomes a static address. The myth in such circumstances should wither away or atrophy or at best assume the proportions of ornament and nothing more. The roots of the myth however run far deeper than one ever understands and it comes alive again within profound, creative, cross-cultural proportions.

In a recently completed novel called *The Four Banks of the River of Space* (to be published in 1990) the character of Ulysses is played and performed, so to speak, within the action or imaginary theatre of the novel by three actors from implicitly different cultural positions. The formula of the myth is subtly broken and transformed to bring into focus, in this violent age, a different grasp of the shadow of fate and evolutionary possibilities that may enhance an equation or far-flung, numinous balance between inimitable glory and necessary freedom. Expectations in regard to an identity of fate are set in reverse within parallels and alternatives that may prompt one, I believe, to visualize ann extension of the rhythms of community through and beyond ethnic and national rigidity and identity. Thus the innermost reality or content of the myth offers itself, I believe, through diverse perspective in a new light.

The figure of Mariella in *Palace of the Peacock* possesses extremities that need to be read and re-read, I feel, within the entire fabric of the novel as this encompasses the ancient/young Arawak woman in the waterfall and the vision of the mother, the child, the carpenter in precipice or cliff. The burden of inimitable myth is seen as implied above from various

levels and extremities and within the body or bodies of a cross-cultural crew within a river or place that is the gateway to other imaginary landscapes and places.

The question of myth could take me far afield but I have restricted myself to two illustrations that may say something of how myth affects my intuitive imagination.

Question: In your article *Character and Philosophic Myth* which appears in *A Sense of Place* you write "a price stimulation to 'inner space/outer space' creativity may be motivated by the enigmatic textures of ancient civilisations of which no official record remains to explain their sudden demise. One senses this enigmatic texture in the rainforests and savannahs of South America where cultures have perished and the fatality that overcame them remains obscure." Would you say something more about this?

Reply: An intuitive key I feel to such creativity resides indirectly in what I said at the end of my last reply, namely, "a river or place that possesses in its levels and extremities gateways into other imaginary landscapes and places". A landscape may be visualized as a living text. Its fossil characteristics in all their particularity are imbued with imprints of life. That living text bears upon the genesis of the imagination though that genesis in all its complexity remains elusive. Yet our antecedents—sometimes drawn from many cultures and ancient peoples—have built their codes, their settlements, within that living text. Those codes and settlements were often an inadequate reading of a complicated world of nature and spirit. Whatever difficulties and crises may have overwhelmed them a rapport was established between 'inner space' (if I may so put it) and 'outer space' that continues to dwell in the living texts of being and nature even when the imprints of that rapport are denuded or apparently invisible. The mystery of creativity arises from a stimulation within the unconscious that sets in train a series of far-reaching manoeuvres between the life of intuition—however frail—and the elements (water, sky, rock, earth etc.) that become a focus of visionary and re-visionary counterpoint between the past and the present. It is as if the legacies of the past remain ceaselessly unfinished within the living text of being—being that enfolds absences-in-presences, presences-in-absences.

Thus the extraordinary sensation one may have that 'place' (apparently known 'place') is a gateway into 'imaginary place' reflects I think the truths of 'imaginary place' to mirror at many levels a re-entry into a theatre of being that moves through us into future generations. At a certain level the life of the imagination validates itself—re-discovers itself—within an intensity of visualization that imbues the real world so-called with edges and dimensions that may unshackle formidable blockages between cultures that threaten to overwhelm us. The living text begins to yield up as it were, unsuspected connections, potential for genuine breakthrough.

Question: It has been said that your work sustains a dialogue between cultures. There are complications within and around that dialogue. Could you say something about these?

Reply: May I start by taking up the issue of "blockages between cultures" of which I spoke in my last reply and the dangers inherent in such bleak polarisations. The term "culture" is a flexible one and clearly the pollution of the globe, the threat to animal species, the threat to the rainforests of the globe, reflect both a cultural inner malaise as well as an environmental predicament. It is as if humanity's immersion in the living text of nature has been so exploitative and biased that the consequences now leave us bereft and endangered. When I spoke in my last reply of "inner space/outer space" creativity I was suggesting—amongst other things—that the blockages and dangers that hem us in—however incorrigible they seem—are susceptible to a numinous break and extension into dimensions through which we may re-interpret and grasp differently our responses to past and present and future being within the living text of nature and spirit. The substance of such a different response must, I feel, inform what one calls 'dialogue between cultures'.

In my amended note on the genesis of the *Guyana Quartet* which appears in the reissued paperback edition of *Palace of the Peacock* I touch upon imageries in the novel which appear to be one and the same even as they udergo a subtle revision and inner space translation of content. Such images become thresholds into "dialogue" because they are susceptible to re-visionary potential within the text or narrative of the novel. Such text I feel mirrors a rapport between the unconscious and the conscious to make itself a live or living text through extremities of 'place' and 'imaginary place' (and the paradoxes these involve which I attempted to bring into play in my previous replies to questions).

"Dialogue between cultures" can never be straighforward in a world that has been long governed by conquistadorial habit. I am suggesting—it is my personal conviction—that the mystery of creativity never bypasses such fixtures of habit by which human activity has been long governed but rather penetrates and revises contending poles of attraction. Such poles may seem absolute or destined but they are partial frames that may be so dislodged and transformed that they yield a different medium of values to take up the legacies of the past into subversive parallel and alternative, regenerative possibility.

PALÁCIO DO PAVÃO: DEPOIMENTO DO TRADUTOR

CARLOS FELIPE MOISÉS

*Palace of the Peacock** é dessas raras novelas que se lê de uma assentada só: difícil resistir ao fascínio de sua linguagem poética e ao seu ritmo acelerado, que mescla presente, passado e devaneios semi-alucinatórios, tudo tocado por uma incessante proliferação de imagens e metáforas.

O cenário não chega a ser original: a densa floresta equatorial da Guiana, repleta de lendas e mistério. A trama, idem: aventureiros rudes empenhados na tarefa elementar da sobrevivência e na satisfação de caprichos e obsessões. Matéria rasa, não resistiria ao crivo da leitura exigente, não fosse o amálgama aí operado entre primitivismo e refinamento, entre instinto e consciência. A novela contém o relato de uma experiência de *vida selvagem*, sagazmente impregnada de uma sutil especulação sobre o destino humano e os muitos sentidos da vida e da morte. Com isso, reflete a sofisticação *ultracivilizada* de uma mente clara, ciosa de uma competência literária que mal disfarça a premência dos instintos. A simetria não esconde nenhuma receita, apenas demonstra uma concepção artística: inspiração, sim, mas servida e modulada pela pesquisa rigorosa. E denuncia uma obsessão filosófica: a fusão dos contrários.

Wilson Harris não quer ser confundido com os muitos escritores telúricos do terceiro mundo, que exploram o exotismo colorido e pitoresco de suas terras de origem. Exemplo: a sintonia fina das epígrafes (W. B. Yeats, G. M. Hopkins, John Donne, de novo Hopkins), que balizam um hiper-roteiro paralelo à perambulação errante pelo interior das savanas. Outro: o estilo apurado, de léxico riquíssimo, orquestrado por longos e insinuantes períodos de orações intercaladas e adjetivação farta. A malha expressiva do texto reproduz mimeticamente o emaranhado da floresta e compõe com a imagem desta o símbolo do labirinto: inconsciente coletivo. Nada de regionalismo pictórico, daqueles concebidos para aliciar o enfastiado leitor europeu. Wilson Harris trabalha com muito pouco: um retalho qualquer, de terra e gente, a partir do qual se descortinam os demônios e ilumi-

(*) Wilson Harris, *Palácio do pavão*, trad. Carlos Felipe Moisés (São Paulo, Globo, 1990).

nações comuns a toda a humanidade. O desejo do autor é fazer da Guiana uma espécie de microcosmo mítico. Isso deixa claro que sua ambição é ser, ao mesmo tempo, o escritor de dois mundos, a colônia e a metrópole. Um escritor que reúna o melhor desses dois mundos. Por isso, Harris tem menos afinidade com autores de língua inglesa do que com Lezama Lima, Carpentier, García Marquez, Guimarães Rosa...

Como se deduz, o fundamento da sua concepção é a própria linguagem. *Palace of the Peacock* engendra a visão de uma realidade pendente das palavras, porque sistematicamente transfigurada por estas. Nada é o que parece, tudo é só o que as palavras puderem representar ou sugerir. A marca da originalidade estilística do autor é praticamente lugar-comum entre seus pares latinos: fartura lexical, profusão de detalhes, ritmos largos e espraiados, sintaxe quase-labiríntica. A ponto de o leitor imaginar-se lendo, não um original inglês, mas uma tradução do espanhol ou do português, ou, em menor escala, do francês ou do italiano. O efeito mágico e envolvente desse estilo barroquizante, parece que naturalmente barroquizante nessas línguas, quase sempre descamba, ali, para a prolixidade ou a pirotecnia verbal, mais ou menos gratuita. Não assim em Harris, para quem o abundante e profuso convive, surpreendentemente, com o preciso e conciso. Seu segredo é o artesanato minudente, capaz de deter-se, com mão segura, nos limites do necessário, sem jamais transbordar para o demasiado. Trata-se de um estilo determinado pela matéria essencial e não pelos acidentes de trama e cenário ou pelos caprichos do escritor.

Traduzir esse estilo para o nosso idioma foi um desafio dos mais gratificantes. Não que fosse difícil traduzir a sua espontaneidade; difícil foi deixar claro que não se trata de espontaneidade autêntica, mas de artifício literário. Difícil foi induzir o leitor brasileiro a experimentar, diante do texto traduzido, a mesma surpresa vivida pelo leitor inglês, diante do original. E há também o problema da linguagem estropiada, falada por personagens mestiços, incultos. Nada fácil encontrar em português uma estropiação equivalente, que o ouvido brasileiro não associasse a qualquer dos nossos falares regionais ou acaipirados, e sem resvalar para o hermetismo.

Mas o mais gratificante da tarefa foi o compromisso de manter o clima poético da novela, resultante da profusão de símiles e metáforas e da intromissão, aqui e ali, de termos e torneios eruditos ou semi-eruditos. O tom dominante, que resulta dessa mescla invulgar, é de tensão e estranheza, certo enfeitiçamento que brota da natureza selvagem e do psiquismo primitivo dos protagonistas. Mas é um tom que deve ser dado quase que exclusivamente pelas palavras, pelo refinamento verbal. Pela maneira de dizer e não pelos eventos, pela ambiência ou pelas circunstâncias. Tudo se passa como se o olho do narrador — aquele "cerrado olho espiritual vivo", avesso de um certo "morto olho material vivente" — é que estivesse impregnado de magia, aquela magia que alimenta a imaginação verbal, aí mais luxuriante que a própria realidade. Que por sua vez, e por isso mesmo, como já afirmei, está sempre pendente das palavras.

Esta surpreendente novela, em suma, não parece dirigir-se ao leitor-glutão, devorador de entretenimento literário descartável, apesar de lhe aguçar intensamente o apetite, logo de saída. Dirige-se, antes, ao requintado *gourmet*, apreciador de finas iguarias. A abundância polimórfica do seu estilo não passa de metáfora e aponta para a inquietação metafísica de quem, cabralinamente, jejua pelo excesso. Não obstante, a narrativa contém em sua camada aparente, embora diluídos por notável ebulição poética, os ingredientes convencionais de uma típica aventura na selva. Por isso, deverá agradar a todos os leitores.

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"LATE AT NIGHT": THE EPIPHANY OF THE READER OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD'S STORY

CRISTINA GARIGLIO

As the reader first enters the world of Mansfield's story through a reading of its title, his/her mind initiates a process of expectation for some significant event. The phrase itself suggests the particular moment the story is to deal with. The representation of this moment opens with a parenthetical short summary of the situation of its protagonist: "(Virginia is seated by the fire. Her outdoor things are thrown on a chair; her boots are faintly steaming in the fender.)"[1] So, the reader is told that, as in most short stories, a single character is being prepared to experience a climactic moment, which, in Virginia's case, may be a moment of loneliness late at night. Her moment carries the criteria of incongruity, paralysis, insignificance or triviality, suddenness, psychological association, and fragmentation that James Joyce established as pertinent to the literary epiphany in his *Stephen Hero.* Elements pertaining to the structure of such literary device, such as the mirror, the senses of smell, hearing, and specially that of sight, motifs indicative of the dark/light polarity that express the revelatory epiphanic process are recurrent throughout the story. The fire by which the protagonist is seated can be regarded as the first element pertaining to the structure of the literary epiphany to appear in "Late at Night." The description of her things as thrown on a chair represents the concretization of the disorganized state of her mind. It is true that Virginia is alone in the story. Having read a letter of thanks from a man to whom she has sent a pair of socks, she undergoes a moment of revelation, of knowledge of the self, of recognition of the fact that she is becoming old. The critic Sylvia Beckman describes Virginia's moment as "the inner ruminations of an unwanted, introspective spinster."[2] These "ruminations" can be viewed otherwise if we consider them as the dramatic interior monologue of the protagonist. Very explicitly do the structural elements of "Late at Night" (1917) make it the representation of an interior monologue. Virginia's moment is graphically expressed in three pages through a narrative in the first person singular in which every action external to her thinking process is italicized as it is presented in parentheses. Thus, the reader's first

contact with the story may render it as a play that opens with the reading of a letter:

> VIRGINIA (*laying the letter down*): I don't like this letter at all. I wonder if he means it to be so snubbing—or if it's just his way. (*Reads.*) "Many thanks for the socks. As I have had five pairs sent to me lately, I am sure you will be pleased to hear I gave yours to a friend in my company." No; it can't be my fancy. He must have meant it; it is a dreadful snub. (p. 299)

Here, the letter is shown as the trigger to the protagonist's moment of illumination, which, in its turn, initiates an epiphany of the negative kind to be experienced by the reader. When Virginia recaptures the past event of her writing a letter to the man to whom she sent the socks, she places extraordinary significance on that act that would be trivial on any other occasion. She finds uniqueness in the fact that she wrote the letter on a Sunday evening, something fatal to her:

> I can't think why Sunday evenings always have such a funny effect on me. I simply yearn to have someone to write to—or to love. Yes, that's it; they make me feel sad and full of love. Funny, isn't it! (p. 300)

Virginia's recollection of her acute desire for writing a letter leads her to recognize her volition to give love. The reader finds incongruence in the protagonist's view of her own intentions as funny, even though he may read funny as strange here. At this moment, his impetus toward closure of the story is instigated, and he may begin to ask himself meaningful questions in preparation for a moment of reflection about the human condition of loneliness. Virginia's own thoughts proceed as she makes decisions for the future and recognizes the whatness of trivial actions of her ordinary life:

> I must start going to church again; it's fatal sitting in front of the fire and thinking. There are the hymns, too; one can let oneself go so safely in the hymns. (She croons) "And then for those our Dearest and our Best"—(but her eye lights on the next sentence in the letter). "It was most kind of you to have knitted them yourself." Really! Really, that is too much! Men are abominably arrogant! (p. 300)

This passage carries a few elements that follow the criteria pertaining to epiphany. First, Virginia seems to acknowledge the fatality of the trivial act of sitting by the fire. In doing so, she seems to be commenting on her new reality warp that the letter has initiated, and her reflection can be regarded as metalinguistic. Moreover, the light brought by the fire may

fall upon the thoughts of the protagonist who does not seem to be willing to experience any illumination concerning her own private reality. Thus, for her, it is crucial to think by the fire. Then, the criterion of suddenness is followed by the parenthetical description of her reading of another sentence in the letter. As "her eye lights on the next sentence in the letter," sight is reinforced as the sense that monopolizes Virginia's moment of perception of the essence of a trivial object. Her eye not only sees, but "lights," clarifies the object she perceives.

The passage above also carries the last parenthetical statements to appear in the story. They are moments of interference by the author. This kind of author's interference appears in other stories by Mansfield, such as "The Tiredness of Rosabel." Nevertheless, in "Late at Night," the interference takes the form of stage directions in a play, probably because these were regarded as more appropriate to achieve the reader's involvement as a live observer of the the protagonist's aloneness. A lonely character in a play has the audience to whom he can exhibit his loneliness. The statements that begin the story in a short summary in parentheses are not italicized perhaps because they are not directions to any action by the protagonist. The summary they express sets "Late at Night" as a "middle story," i.e., a story that does not conform with the Aristotelian requirements of beginning, middle and end. At the same time that they are the only indication that we are reading the beginning of an account. As Virginia's moment proceeds, the reader grasps her feeling of loneliness, and her impetus toward change:

> If only I felt that somebody wanted me, that I was of use to somebody, I should become a different person. Yes; that is the secret of life for me—to feel loved, to feel wanted, to feel that somebody leaned on me for everything absolutely—for ever. (p. 300)

As we can notice here, the protagonist does not experience any change, even though she wants to. She regards her compulsion to love as a sort of change. Metaphorically, she describes her yearning to express as "to come into flower, almost" (p. 300). At the same time, she recognizes that she is "shut away in the dark, and nobody cares" (p. 301). Because she feels the dark in which she is with no probability of change, she feels like crying. Then, she recollects her moment before the mirror, when nothing sublime was revealed to her:

> I never was really pretty, not in the ordinary way, but I did have lovely skin and lovely hair—and I walked well. I only caught sight of myself in a glass today—stooping and shuffling along... I looked dowdy and elderly. Well, no; perhaps not quite as bad as that; I always exaggerate about myself. But I'm faddy about things now—that's sign of age, I'm sure. (p. 301)

The mirror plays the significant role of revealing to the protagonist the signs of her old age. It is not a revelation of something sublime. Thus, Virginia's moment is considered as one of the negative kind. As she sees the changes her face has undergone with the coming of age, she remembers other changes that have not enhanced her private circumstances and thus cannot be viewed as changes of the positive kind that pertain to the conception of epiphany that Joyce developed with regard to the sublime revelation experienced by the Magi's visit to Jesus on the 6th of January:

> The wind—I can't bear being blown about in the wind now; and I hate having wet feet. I never used to care about those things—I used almost to revel in them—they made me feel so *one* with Nature in a way. But now I get cross and I want to cry and I yearn for something to make me forget. I suppose that's why women take to drink. Funny, isn't it! (p. 301)

The crucial moment in front of the mirror recaptured by the protagonist calls to memory other similar important occasions in which other characters of Katherine Mansfield's stories contemplate their own mirrored images before the outcome of any important revelation. In "Bliss," Bertha Young sees herself as a beautiful and radiant woman waiting for something divine, which does not happen. In "The Tiredness of Rosabel," the protagonist feels angry and ridiculous as the mirror at the store gives her back an image that is not truly one of herself, but one she would dream about later. Virginia's moment before the mirror does not bring her any sublime revelation; it shows her as a rejected woman without anything worthwhile to preserve. The revelation Virginia experiences in "Late at Night" leads her to a decision concerning the object that has become the trigger of her moment of self-analysis. She wants to destroy the object that has made her realize the essence of herself as a lonely woman: "The fire is going out. I'll burn this letter. What's it to me? Pooh! I don't care. What's it to me?" (p. 301). As this moment, the protagonist regards the letter she has perceived very intensely as the trivial object it would be on any other occasion. The fire goes out before she can burn the letter. When she decides to go to bed the reader assumes that her inner reality will remain in a state of disorder: "Often when I go to bed now I want to pull the clothes over my head—and just cry. Funny, isn't it!" (p. 301). Virginia's act of lying in bed with the clothes over her head in bed can be viewed as the paralysis that overcomes her before a reality she is not willing to face. When the reader achieves the cognitive closure of Virginia's moment in "Late at Night," he is prepared for a moment of serious reflections concerning the human condition of loneliness.

The epiphanies found in most of Katherine Mansfield's stories can be viewed as moments of preparation for epiphanies that more specifically concern the reader. When the protagonist experiences an unexpected revelation, different novements, somehow in the manner of those in a musi-

cal symphony, constitute her moment of preparation for an event that occurs at the closure of the story. Then, the epiphany is charged to the reader who can assume reactions that the protagonist would experience. As parts of long moments of preparation, the different movements of Katherine Mansfield's stories carry motif clusters that follow epiphanic criteria especially that of incongruence, essential to the literary epiphany. The reader is prepared for the epiphanic process he experiences not only by the movements in the moment of preparation, but also by explicit interferences of the author. As they show distance on the part of the author concerning the moment of the protagonist, they make the epiphanies they interfere with become less intense on the part of the reader.

Notes

(1) This and subsequent citations of "Late at Night" refer to *The Short Stories of Katherine Mansfield.* Introduction by John Middleton Murry. New York: Ecco Press, 1983.
(2) Sylvia Beckman, *Katherine Mansfield: A Critical Study.* Yale University Press, 1981, p. 81.

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TRAVELLER'S NOTES: THE TENNYSON COUNTRY

OLGA CREIDY

Visitors coming from every corner of the world find *Somersby* in the county of Hampshire, a place of outstanding interest. It is set beautifully in a choice position overlooking a range of hills reaching here and there the height of over 150 metres. The scenery is authentically rural in atmosphere. For its simple loveliness and rural peace there are few places that can be compared to Somersby.

This village retains many old houses of which the most notable is the "Rectory". It was at this little old manor house that *Alfred Tennyson* was born on 6th August 1809. The old Rectory lies in a pleasant valley amidst the many lovely things that formed the basis of Alfred's late similes and descriptions.

The place is still kept as a shrine for literary pilgrimages. The garden and the unpretentious doorway do not prepare visitors for the interesting interior. It is only when stepping inside that one immediately feels the spell of this pleasant domain "half cottage, half hall, the manor house of old time". Visitors also enjoy seeing the attic where Alfred and his brother had their room and study. The mill which is believed to be the one described in Tennyson's poems, arouses pleasing recollections.

After this visit to Somersby, people like to visit also the places where the poet studied. They go to *Louth*, a market town and the centre of a large agricultural area. It was at a *Grammar School* there that Tennyson studied for five years. But most of Tennyson's studies were supervised by his father, and he only returned to formal education at the age of 19, when he went up to *Trinity College, Cambridge.*

The pilgrimage continues to *Warninglid, in Sussex*, where the poet took a home for some time. He loved the undulating countryside which presents a scene of unsurpassed loveliness.

Visitors should not miss the *Isle of Wight* packed with interesting places. Its capital is *Newport* and was founded in the Roman times. The town, like everything in the isle, is small but full of history, with its two *Roman villas* and their mosaics, and buildings like *Carisbroke Castle*

where King Charles I was imprisoned for nearly a year at the conclusion of the Civil War, and *Osborne House* which was Queen Victoria's country retreat, partly designed by her Consort Prince Albert.

This diamond-shaped island is not very large, but it has a variety of charming things. Visitors love the place for its sandy beaches and other holiday attractions. The sun, of course, is an attraction in itself; the lengthy coastline which also offers many small and quiet places at which to stay, is full of interest; among its characteristic features, apart from the impressive cliff scenery, are the thickly wooded "chines" or ravines, through which narrow paths twist their way down to the sea.

The inland of the Island is no less attractive. It is known as "The Garden Isle" for its green hills and valleys. There are delightful villas and thatched roof cottages.

This Isle is one of the classic geological areas of Britain, and the geological museum at *Sandown* is an interesting place for tourists to visit.

One hundred years ago, when literary men began frequenting the isle it was already very fashionable. And Tennyson, the great Victorian poet also fell in love with it. He lived at *Farringford House*, near Freshwater Bay. In 1853 the family moved in and later on Tennyson bought the estate. His wife was delighted with the flowered gardens, the wild cherrytrees, and the park with its elms, chestnut and apple trees. As we approach the estate today it looks magically unchanged, the Gothic vision of the battlements gleaming white against a mist of noble foliage. The big grey house has turned into a hotel, but mementos of the Tennyson family are kept in the attic study and may be shown to those who are interested. There is also a winding turret staircase which leads down from the study directly into the garden. Visitors watch the sunset fade over the hills that mark the western extremity of the island, and quite understand that this beautiful place, ringed round with trees, entered into Tennyson's life and coloured it with its delicate enchantment.

Tourists enjoy another place preferred by the poet. It is "The Needles", a dramatic part of the coastline, with three detached rocks that enter the sea, and which is guarded by a lighthouse. Tennyson loved to watch the movement of the waters" breaking on thy cold grey stones". His association with this place is commemorated in the monument which stands on the hill, named after him and known as "Tennyson Down". This is probably the finest coastal view point from which you can look down on the rocks. People also like to walk along the beach that stretches the full length of the downs!

Interested people may continue their tour and reach *Aldworth*, in the southeastern county of Surrey, where Tennyson had determined to make for himself a retreat, and where he lived from 1869 until his death in 1892. The house, a *Tennyson Museum* now, remains as when the poet lived there. It contains many personal objects, furniture, pictures, books, etc. It was the house of his dreams—large and comfortable, with plenty of sun entering the rooms—where he could live and write his lovely poems.

Someone said "the poetry of Tennyson is chatacterized by a sense of beauty, precision and delicacy of language, and a perfect matching of sense and sound to express his wide outlook on the problems of life and thought".

As *Poet Laureate* Tennyson received a public funeral and his burial place is in *Poet's Corner*, in Westminster Abbey, London. No living poet has ever held England quite so long under his unbroken sway!

Porto Alegre. RS

CONRAD AND IMPRESSIONISM

STEPHEN L. SCHWARZ

Applying the techniques of one art form to another is dangerous at best. The dangers are increased when these two art forms have points in common. Literature and painting have one striking aspect in common: they are both taken in by the eye; a book is read, a painting is "read." A multitude of differences immediately present themselves. Among these is the fact that a painting remains pictorial. The eye is engaged and we see. The other senses struggle below the surface; a vast undercurrent, unperceived for the most part. The object before us, a permanently fixed visual experience, occupies all the attention. The printed page, on the other hand, offers no one overwhelming sensory experience. The fixed object here is the book which is not, strictly speaking, the work of art. That part of literature with which this essay will be concerned, the descriptive passages of Conrad's novels *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness*, makes different demands on its readers than would paintings utilizing the same subject matter. When Conrad writes of the sea, for instance, the reader must complete the picture for himself. What he finally sees with the mind's eye will be determined partially by Conrad's description and partly by the reader's own experience of the sea. A person who had never seen the ocean could not possibly appreciate a verbal description of it, no matter how skillfully constructed. A painting of the sea, however, presents the artist's conception directly to the viewer whose previous experience is not now as significant as in the reader's case. A painting, a verbal picture; alike and different: the techniques involved can therefore be expected to differ with their respective mediums. Impressionism in painting and impressionism in prose fiction will vary widely from a common purpose.

Impressionism in painting is a term that has never quite gotten over the disadvantage of being first applied and widely circulated without any regard whatsoever for the rules of definition. At first it was applied derisively to a group of young painters whose works har been almost uniformly rejected by the Salon. These painters held a group exhibition in 1874 in Paris. Among the paintings was one entitled "Impression: Sunrise" (1872)

by Monet which inspired the comment "Wallpaper in its embryonic state is more finished than this seascape."[1] The name "Impressionism," therefore, sprung from a Monet painting and Monet's paintings can be said to illustrate typical characteristics of Impressionism. There is some doubt, however, whether any painting or painter can be termed typical of impressionism, for the Impressionists had different backgrounds, different interests, different ideals. They were united in their desire to break through the rigid hierarchy of French art and achieve recognition for their work, so different from that of the Salons. They did not form a school; there was no single impulse or theory from which their art derived. They shared certain subjects in common and a certain handling of color and line, and they were friends and influenced each other with their work. Yet there was no organized movement. The unity came from without, consisted of a name, and was imposed without discrimination upon their painting.

Since the Impressionists studied their subjects in the open air, light and the effects of light on objects became a subject. The painter would note the effect of the sun in placing certain objects in sharp relief while obscuring others in shadows. He would note the change in color with the passing of the day. He discovered that distance could not only be rendered by change in shape, but also by shading and subtle coloring. He saw the effect of the air intervening between him and the subject of his painting; the refraction of light on warm, cold or windy days; the influence of mists and fogs, of overcast skies. These he would try to capture in his painting which, in itself, would be the object transmitted by the light and the atmosphere to his senses. And this would be his impression. The picture would not have the clear, sharp outlines of the object-in-reality, but would be blurred, indistinct; color would be of primary importance. The Impressionists were concerned with faithfully portraying what they saw. They did not project their feelings into their subjects; they painted the sense-impression in their minds, objectively.

The characteristic subject for Impressionist painting is, therefore, a landscape or any scene in nature. There can be figures in the landscape, but when the figures become the subject of the picture, Impressionism is no longer so "impressionistic" (the great exception being Renoir, of course, as Manet did not consider himself an Impressionist). Portraiture has traditions of its own, but a portrait-painter is generally concerned with the portraying of his subject, not the effect of light or the distortions of atmosphere *on* his subject. The method is subjective, ie., the painter tries to read his subject's hidden personality while giving the outward characteristics in recognizable form. And it is not until the early Twentieth century, until Cubism, that the portrait was placed with material objects as the subject for distortion. The distortions of the Cubist are different from the distortions of the Impressionist, for the latter records distortions as a cartographer records the coastal warpings of a continent while the Cubist purposely distorts his perspective from within.

Just as the typical subject for an Impressionist painting may be said to be the landscape, in Conrad Impressionist technique is used in the descriptive nature scenes. When Conrad describes a character, be does it traditionally: the pattern of description might follow Dickens, for example. It is in the landscape that Conrad varies his technique to the extreme.

The viewer is first attracted to an Impressionist painting by the way streaks of color are placed on the canvas. This is the technique of Impressionism as opposed to the theory, the "how" as opposed to the "why." Color is a form of light and the Impressionists used color to indicate the influence of light on their subjects. They discarded with scorn the academic technique of carefully tracing the outline of their subjects on the canvas and then perfunctorily filling this outline with color. Color for the Impressionists was form: it was alive and glowed with brilliance; it not only filled outlines, it overflowed them. The Impressionists would brush streaks and dabs of alternating, contrasting color, often primary color, on their canvases according to a quite scientific method with the effect that when the viewer was located at a certain distance from the picture, the form would spring into being. A Monet picture, viewed at close range, seems to be nothing more than a surface of swirls and clashes of color. Surat (a pointilist) used dabs of pure color alternating with dabs of white to produce a picture, a method adapted in modern printing. Eventually Impressionism became so cancerned with color and light that objects began to disappear from its pictures, a road that led to non-objective or "abstract" art.

Conrad, too, is concerned with color, with light and darkness as subjects. But the subject of a novel is contained in other places besides the descriptive passages to be considered here. These passages do show Conrad's concern with light and darkness in a pictorial sense, its influence on forms, its changing colors. Eventually, the passages become symbolic. The following passage illustrates this shifting light pattern:

> I don't know why, listening to him, I should have noted so distinctly the gradual darkening of the river, of the air; the irresistible slow work of the night settling silently on all the visible forms, effacing the outlines, burying the shapes deeper and deeper, like a steady fall of impalpable black dust.[2]
> ...while the clouds passed above his head; while the sky from an immensity lustreless and black, diminished to a sombre and lustrous vault, scintillated with a greater brilliance, faded to the east, paled at the zenith; while the dark shapes blotting the low stars astern got outlines, relief; became shoulders, heads, faces, features,—confronted him with dreary stares, had dishevelled hair, torn clothes, blinked red eye lids at the white dawn—.[3]
> The water shown pacifically; the sky without a speck, was a benign immensity of unstained light; the very mist on the Essex marshes was like a gauzy and radiant fabric, hung from the wooded rises inland, and draping the low shores in diaphanous folds. Only the gloom to the west, brooding over the upper reaches, became more somber every minute, as if angered by the approach of the sun.[4]
> An abrupt heavy rumble made me lift my head. The noise seemed to roll away, and suddenly a searching and violent glare fell on the blind face of the night. The sustained and dazzling flickers seemed to last for an unconscionable time. The growl of the thunder increased steadily while I looked at him, distinct and black, planted solidly upon the shores of a sea of light. At the moment of greatest brilliance the darkness leaped black with a culminating crash, and he vanished before my dazzled eyes as utterly as though he had been blown to atoms. A blustering sigh passed; furious hands seemed to tear at the shrubs, shake the tops of the trees below, slam doors, break window-panes, all along the front of the building.[5]

Conrad can also approach abstraction in description. The following is a brief scene so removed from reality that the narrator must step in and explain its significance. The picture conveyed by the description is one of non-objectivity. The description: "Flames glided in the river, small green flames, red flames, white flames, pursuing, overtaking, joining, crossing each other—then separating slowly or hastily." The significance: "The traffic of the great city went on in the deepening night, upon the sleeping river."[6] This too is concerned with light.

Conrad delivers his scenes in short bursts of disconnected details which the reader must connect through his imagination and past experience. A flash here, a reflection there, a part of an object is illuminated, a part obscured; this is Conrad's descriptive method. The following is an extreme form also approaching abstraction:

> But suddenly, as we struggled around a bend, there would be a glimpse of rush walls, of peaked grass roofs, a burst of yells, a whirl of black limbs, a mass of hands clapping, of feet stamping, of bodies swaying, of eyes rolling, under the droop of heavy and motionless foliage.[7]

The scattering of images, a few illuminated details suggesting a far greater whole is Conrad's counterpart of the Impressionist technique; streaks of color blending to form a picture.

> The coast of Patusan... is straight and sombre, and faces a misty ocean. Red trails are seen like cataracts of rust streaming under the dark-green foliage of bushes and creepers clothing the low cliffs Swampy plains open out at the mouth of rivers, with a view of jagged blue peaks beyond the vast forests. In the offing a chain of islands, dark, crumbling shapes, stand out in the everlasting sunlit haze like the remnants of a wall breached by the sea.[8]

> There was, as I walked along, the clear sunshine, a brilliance too passionate to be consoling, the streets full of jumbled bits of color like a damaged keleidoscope: yellow, green, blue, dazzling white, the brown nudity of an undraped shoulder, a bullock-cart with a red canopy, a company of native infantry in a drab body with dark heads marching in dusty laced boots, a native policeman in a sombre uniform of scanty cut and belted in patent leather, who looked up at me with orientally pitiful eyes as though his migrating spirit were suffering exceedingly from that unforeseen—what d'ye call 'em?—avatar—incarnation. Under the shade of a lovely tree in the courtyard, the villagers connected with the assault case sat in a picturesque group, looking like a chromo-lithograph of a camp in a book of Eastern travel. One missed the obligatory thread of smoke in the foreground and the pack-animals grazing. A blank yellow wall rose behind overtopping the tree, reflecting the glare.[9]
> The slopes of the roofs glistened, the dark broken ridges succeeded each other without end like sombre, uncrested waves, and from the depths of the town under his feet ascended a confused and unceasing mutter. The spires of churches, numerous, scattered haphazard, uprose like beacons on a maze of shoals without a channel; the driving rain mingled with the falling dusk of a winter's evening; and the booming of a big clock on a tower striking the hour, rolled past in voluminous austere bursts of sound, with a shrill vibrating cry at the core.[10]

Conrad presents not only visual, but also aural pictures in this manner.

> The patent log on the taffrail periodically rang a single tinkling stroke for every mile traversed on an errand of faith. Above the mass of sleepers a faint and patient sigh a times floated, the exhalation of a troubled dream; and short metallic clangs bursting out suddenly in the depths of the ship, the harsh scrape of a shovel, the violent slam of a furnace-door, exploded brutally, as if the men handling the mysterious things below had their breasts full of fierce anger: while the slim high hull of the steamer went on evenly ahead, without a sway of her bare masts, cleaving continuously the great calm of the waters under the inaccessible serenity of the sky.[11]

Sometimes the picture is revealed by two strokes, as it is in this passage, high and low:

> Trees, trees, millions of trees, massive immense running up high; and at their foot, hugging the bank against the stream, crept the little begrimed steamboat, like a sluggish beetle crawling on the floor of a lofty portico.[12]

Conrad's method reveals itself in other ways. At one point in *Lord Jim*, Marlow reacts to Jim's narrative in exactly the same way as the reader should react to the descriptive passages:

> And on my side his few mumbled words were enough to make me see the lower limb of the sun clearing the line of the horizon, the tremble of a vast ripple running over all the visible expanse of the sea, as if the waters had shuddered, giving birth to the globe of light, while the last puff of the breeze would stir the air in a sigh of relief.[13]

Both these tales are impressions, Marlow's impressions of Jim and of Kurtz. They are visual images engraved on Marlow's mind. He relates them objectively as the Impressionist painter portrays his subject. Yet the reality behind the stories of Jim and Kurtz is hidden from Marlow by some indescribable force—light and darkness, perhaps. For the Impressionists, darkness was only another form of light. Marlow chooses to portray this light and darkness. "The meaning of an episode (to him) was not inside like a kernel, but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze."[14] Marlow remains the objective narrator of the tales of Jim and Kurtz. He was "fated never to see [Jim] clearly."[15] Telling Kurtz's story is like "trying to tell you a dream."[16] Marlow portrays the dream, the light and the darkness; the only subject, the only reality.

Footnotes

(1) L. Leroy, "L'exposition des impressionistes," *Charivari*, April 25, 1874. Quoted and translated in John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism* (New York, 1946), p. 259.
(2) Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim* (New York, 1958), p. 197. Riverside edition Hereafter referred to as *Lord Jim*.
(3) *Lord Jim*, pp. 78-79.
(4) Joseph Conrad, "Heart of Darkness," in *Three Great Tales* (New York, n.d.), p. 218. Vintage edition. Hereafter referred to as *Heart of Darkness*.
(5) *Lord Jim*, p. 114.
(6) *Heart of Darkness*, p. 256.
(7) *Heart of Darkness*, p. 256.
(8) *Lord Jim*, p. 156.
(9) *Lord Jim*, p. 101.
(10) *Lord Jim*, p. 218.
(11) *Lord Jim*, p. 11.
(12) *Heart of Darkness*, p. 255.
(13) *Lord Jim*, p. 79.
(14) *Heart of Darkness*, p. 220.
(15) *Lord Jim*, p. 241.
(16) *Heart of Darkness*, p. 245.

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JOYCE'S "SCRUPULOUS MEANNESS" (Letters, 83)

MAGDA VELLOSO FERNANDES DE TOLENTINO

I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile and cunning.
(A Portrait)

James Joyce's *Dubliners* is read here as a unit, instead of being seen as a collection of discrete stories. It is seen as a whole, with all its intersections, the repetition of patterns, the many common denominators in each story as related to the other/others.

There is a movement in the narrative of *Dubliners*, both in the gradual change of the characters' groping for understanding and in the mode of narration. The first story, "The Sisters", can be seen, in Joyce's life and work, as the beginning of an entire trajectory of literary accomplishment in prose from *Dubliners* to *Finnegans Wake.* As early as in this first story the reader can detect Joyce's exploration of the resources of language and his method of construction that show the direction of his art. Thomas Staley says that

> *The first paragraph of "The Sisters" is more than the narrative event which opens the story; it draws the initial line of a larger narrative enclosure, and is every bit as much the beginning of the first movement in the orchestration of* Dubliners *itself.*[1]

The first sentence of the story "*There was no hope for him this time: it was the third stroke.*" introduces the idea of death, which makes a full circle to the last story "The Dead", where the circle closes with the last words "*like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead*".

If the first sentence represents the starting point in a circle, the first paragraph is a clue to the pervading theme and subject of the collection. The boy who starts the narrative does not know exactly the meaning of the words he uses—paralysis, gnomon, simony—nor does the reader at this stage. The words sound strange in the boy's ears, not their meaning. Independently, each word may not have sufficient meaning in the single story, though we understand why the words are there as we progress in our reading. But as a beginning for the whole collection, these words have a great significance—their appearing in the first paragraph is like a Greek chorus

telling the audience what the performance is about. So this is what the stories in *Dubliners* are about: paralysis, unity and religion—(1) the word paralysis is here representing the impossibility of breaking free: (2) unity is disguised in the word "gnomon", which in geometry means that part of a parallelogram which remains when a similar parallelogram is taken away from one of its corners: for me it means that if any part of the stories is detached from the whole, what remains still bears the same characteristics—one or all Dubliners are alike; and (3) religion, which is present in all the stories as a commanding force, represented by the word "simony", which means worldly traffic in spiritual things. Each of these words also convey their own particular meaning in the story.

So the opening paragraph is an overture for the themes, conflicts and tensions that are to be evoked again and again in the story and in *Dubliners* as a whole. This first story was written in 1904, revised in 1905 as one of "*a series of epicleti... to betray the soul of that hemiplegia of paralysis which many consider a city*", as Joyce himself wrote in a letter, and re-revised it in 1909. The story was patently redesigned to introduce the major themes and motifs of *Dubliners*. It was this later revision that brought into the story the boy's preoccupation with the sound and meaning of the three outstanding words of the first paragraph. Joyce's care with words is reflected in the boy's attitude of attentive listener rather than of talker throughout the story, in his endeavour to understand the words, and in his groping for meaning in the fragmented sentences of old Cotter and the two sisters.

The three words—paralysis, gnomon, simony—are each preceded by the word "word", stressing the word rather than the meaning. It is a fitting beginning for the story, the collection, and Joyce's prose: in each consequent work he would play differently with words: *The Portrait* begins with baby talk and ends with philosophical observation. *Ulysses* varies registers, like the use of mock romantic language in the "Nausikaa" episode, the parodying of English prose styles in the "Oxen of the Sun" episode, the use of stream of consciousness culminating in Molly Bloom's uninterrupted flow of thoughts in the "Penelope" episode, to cite but a few examples. And in *Finnegans Wake* there is the creation of a new world with words, or of new words to form a different world. Harry Levin says that in *Finnegans Wake* "*a universe of discourse, seemingly unlimited in space and time, is spanned by associations of thought and play upon words*".[2]

It is not only in the presentation of the themes of the collection, however, that Joyce's use of language is outstanding in *Dubliners*. With him, form and content always go together. His narrative technique sets the tone of his presentation of characters, for example. The attitude he adopts towards his fellow citizens in *Dubliners* is one of friendly pity, even while exposing their defects. This is depicted in the feelings Gabriel experiences towards his sleeping wife at the end of "The Dead" with the words: "*a strange, friendly pity entered his soul*" (D, 222). Joyce never condemns or ridicules the characters in the stories: he rather presents them for what

they are. Even when he seems to expose some people to ridicule, he does so sympathetically. His narrative relies more and more on a sympathetic narrator, or even on several narrators, as in the case of "The Dead". In all *Dubliners* Joyce employs different voices. He does not depict heroes, but what is "constant" in human experience. His task is not to chastise his protagonists but to understand them. There is no contempt in his presentation of low characters. The voices he uses are those of the characters themselves. The text of *Dubliners* appears to have been woven out of the characters' minds, not Joyce's. This is clearly a successful attempt on Joyce's part to use Flaubert's authorial distance from the text. He chooses the words carefully to present the text from the characters' point of view even when the narrative is third person.

Hugh Kenner calls this narrative device the "Uncle Charles principle"—the use of words in a third person narrative in which the words are not those a narrator would really choose from his wide range of vocabulary, but those the character himself would probably use. Kenner named this principle from the paragraph in the *Portrait* where Uncle Charles "*repaired to his outhouse but not before he had greased and brushed scrupulously his back hair and brushed and put on his tall hat*" (P, 60). Kenner's argument is that words like "repaired", for example, would not be used by the narrator, but by Uncle Charles himself.[3]

This principle is widely used in *Dubliners*. The opening paragraph of "Eveline" starts with "she", but clearly shows the protagonist's way of seeing things:

> *She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne.* (D, 36)

The awareness of the odour of the cretonne is Eveline's. This paragraph shows, through the "Uncle Charles principle", Joyce's sympathetic presentation of the shortcomings of Dubliners: there is no judgement of values in the existence of the odour: it is something the character herself is aware of. One can well imagine Eliot's condescension toward Eveline, if one considers how the characters in his early poems are looked down on. He would consider the "odour of dusty cretonne" window curtains with fastidiousness rather than with Joyce's sense of the girl's plight. And Becket might have taken note of Eveline's final catatonic state, but he would probably have stressed the absurdity of her having come to that state. This focus on the mind of the character pervades the few pages of the story, showing that Joyce is as concerned with the operation of cowed and undeveloped minds as with superior and delicate ones.

The first words of "The Dead" prove these two points: Joyce's sympathetic understanding towards Dubliners and the Uncle Charles principle, which often come together:

Lily, the caretaker's daughter, was literally run off her feet. Hardly had she brought one gentleman into the little pantry behind the office on the ground floor and helped him off with his overcoat than the wheezy hall-door bell clanged again and she had to scamper along the bare hallway to let in another guest. (D, 175)

One can easily visualize Lily later recounting the episode to a companion and exclaiming, after describing her incessant rushing to and fro: "I was literally run off my feet!", as well as her using the word "gentleman" to refer to the Misses Morkan's male guests.

"The Dead" is narrated in many voices, and often the shift of narrative is so swift and unannounced that it takes the reader some prying into the text to realize it has taken place. There are also some touches of an outside narrator, even if scattered through the story, such as the paragraph descriptive of Gabriel, in-between Lily's and Gabriel's shifting views. The first four pages of the story present, like the movement of a camera in a film, the narrative moving from Lily's point of view in the first paragraph to a description in the second one of the Misses Morkan's circumstances and guests as the hostesses themselves would have thought of them. Then, after a brief exchange of conversation, the narrative shifts back to Lily's mind, then to Gabriel's, to the narrator's, and to Gabriel's again. The perception of the shift is the reader's, as the narrative does not explicitly state the changes. This movement goes from one character to another all through the story, finally concentrating exlusively on Gabriel from the moment the party ends and the guests leave the house. Although the shifting is not explicit, many clues are given for the perception of the different voices in the text. In Lily's flow of thoughts, the Misses Morkan are "Miss Julia" and "Miss Kate"; for Gabriel they are "Aunt Julia" and "Aunt Kate". The Misses Morkan's own narrative is being presented when they are referred to simply as "Julia" and "Kate". Likewise are the other members of the family named in different ways: Kate and Julia think of Gabriel's mother as "Ellen", but when Gabriel himself thinks of her she is referred to as "his mother". The narrator speaks of Gretta as "Mrs. Conroy"; when she is called "Gretta", the voice is Gabriel's.

This paper concentrates on examples in the first and last stories of the collection, but all the *Dubliners* stories are illustrative of the Uncle Charles principle. "The Boarding House", for one, goes from Mrs. Mooney's mind to Polly's, to her tenants', to Doran's. The shift of one to the other is also swift and unannounced. Being a book of narrative rather than of dialogue, the few that there are in *Dubliners* are broken into indirect speech of flow of thoughts. See for example this interchange between Polly and Doran:

She cried and threw her arms round his neck, saying:—O, Bob! What am I to do? What am I to do at all? She would put an end to herself, she said.

(D, 66)

The shift from direct speech to indirect discourse conveys a rhetorical shift of emphasis, from what Polly is saying to what Doran is hearing. And the narrative goes on from the young man's flow of thoughts until it comes back to Polly's, only this time with asterisks breaking up the narrative. Doran's musings end the moment he is going down the stairs to face Mrs. Mooney, with the words:

... but Jack kept shouting at him that if any fellow tried that sort of a game with HIS sister he'd bloody well put his teeth down his throat, so he would.

(D, 68)

and asterisks separate his words from the beginning of the next paragraph, which introduces Polly's narrative:

.....

Polly sat for a little time on the side of the bed, crying...

(D, 68)

The asterisks at this point have a clear objective. They represent a break in circumstances. Where there was uncertainty and despair, now there is solution and calm. The fear of facing a situation and the hope of escaping have been replaced by hard fact and inexorable entrapment. Whether favourably or unfavourably, things have been settled. Anxiety disappears where other feelings prevail. For Mrs. Mooney, there remains the feeling of something accomplished—she has achieved a respectful marriage for her daughter. For Doran, the unhappiness of having been entrapped into a situation he had not really desired. For Polly, an ambiguous mixture of relief at the happy outcome and misgiving as to the validity of having secured a husband through dubious means.

But one is not sure Polly has reached this realization, while the reader himself is aware of it.

"Counterparts" reveals Joyce's compassionate feelings toward Dubliners in spite of his unsparing and satirical presentation of his characters. Farrington is a brute and a bully: he is strong towards the weak (his family) but weak towards the strong (his boss, socially his superior; Weathers, physically stronger). Nevertheless, there is not a hint of judgement in Farrington's depiction. He is presented as he is, as a representative of a class of Dubliners, and the reader cannot but feel for him in the rash circumstances he has to undergo, through his successive failures to secure dignity, money, drink, intoxicated oblivion, respect. He is ground down by successive humiliations until he cruelly beats his son. One feels sympathy for them both: for Farrington, in his incapacity to break up a chain of failures, taking it out on his defenceless son; for the boy Tom, in his incapacity to break free from a truculent father in his need to exorcise his frustrations.

Again in this story there is a play of voices between Farrington and an occasionally interfering narrator, as in the paragraph:

> There was a pause in the very breathing of the clerks. Everyone was astounded (the author of the witticism no less than his neighbours) and Miss Delacour, who was a stout amiable person, began to smile broadly. Mr. Alleyne flushed to the hue of a wild rose and his mouth twitched with a dwarf's passion. He shook his fist in the man's face till it seemed to vibrate like the knob of some electric machine.
>
> (D, 91)

There is a moment in the story where the voice is neither Farrington's nor a narrator's, but rather that of a collective conscience, to use Jung's expression. It comprises the scenes at the Temple Bar, the Scotch House and Mulligan's, where Farrington joins his companions in drink and play. The narrative does not go from one mind to the other, but belongs to all of them at the same time. During this period the protagonist, who had been referred to as "the man" from the beginning of the story, becomes Farrington, named the same way his companions are—Nosey Flynn, O'Halloran, Paddy Leonard, Higgins, Weathers. When he leaves his friends, he becomes not only "the man" again, but "a man", as his son becomes "the boy", which, in Beck's appraisal, makes of them "*generic figures enacting a typical inhumanity and a typical human attempt to appease fate*".[4]

In "Clay" we can clearly hear Maria's voice in the first paragraph with the inversion of noun and pronoun ("her" where a narrator would have said "Maria") bringing us to the conclusion that it is not the device of first-person narrative that personifies a narrator. The use of third-person does not by itself make the narrator omniscient, nor does it distance the character from the narrative. Joyce mastered the art of presenting different characters and different voices in the same text, as well as the ability of removing himself from it. The narrtor, when he surreptitiously enters the text, is unannounced, impersonal and detached.

Sydney Bolt summarizes Joyce's sympathetic understanding in the paragraph:

> *In* Dubliners *he produced a text which does not appear to come from himself, but from his characters. The style is not a parody. It is not a caricature, set up for ridicule. Its object is sympathetic understanding. Instead of mocking the style appropriate to his characters, he forges it meticulously and faithfully.*[5]

I call this device Joyce's cunning, his authorial absence from the text exile, and proceed to look at his silence.

The bulk of the *Dubliners* text is not dialogue but narrative. In "The Sisters", the only words the boy utters in direct speech are

> — *Who?*
> *(...)*
> — *Is he dead?* (D, 10),

although the narrative is his, explicitly depicted here in the first person. The scarcity of dialogue is not only the boy's, however, for even when dialogue is reproduced, it is fragmented and often has no linear continuity. Old Cotter's words, to begin with, lead to conclusions not openly stated, but liable to be interpreted:

> — *I think it was one of those... peculiar cases.*
> *... But it's hard to say...* (D, 10)
> — *... let a young lad run about and play with young lads of his own age and not be... Am I right, Jack?* (D, 10)
> — *... When children see things like that, you know, it has an effect...*(D, 11)

There is fragmentation in the uncle's words too, when he fails to complete his sentence, leaving the boy—and the reader, for that matter—free to interpret what lies beyond his words: "*Education is all very fine and large...*" (D, 11). The final dialogue between the boy's aunt and the two sisters is also full of silences:

> — *Did he... peacefully? my aunt asked.*
> ...
> — *And everything...?* (D, 15)
> .....
> — *And was that it? said my aunt. I heard something...* (D, 17)

The silences in the text, or the reproduction of them by the narrator, reveal the preoccupation of the boy, or of the boy grown adult, with the meaning behind the words. This makes of the boy not only a narrator, but also an interpreter, although no one is sure he has arrived at any correct interpretation. When he visits the dead priest's house with his aunt, the house and its inhabitants are full of silence. So is the text: "*A silence took possesion of the little room*"... (D, 17).

The only thing he meets at the end of his narrative is again silence, counterpointing the silence that is expected of a priest in the confessional. The confessional had been part of Father Flynn's life, as it had been part of the boy's dream earlier in the story. So in the end Eliza "*stopped suddenly as if to listen. I too listened; but there was no sound in the house.*" (D, 18).

The boy even refuses the cream crackers offered him, lest he makes noise eating them. He is seen throughout the story, but not heard.

In Joyce, form and content are one. The reader must rely on guesswork to make sense out of the narrative, which mirrors the narrator's relation to Cotter's—and the others'—discourse. The boy goes to bed puzzling his head "*to extract meaning from [Cotter's] unfinished sentences*" (D, 11). Reader and boy alike must puzzle out the meaning from sentences that are, in different ways, unfinished. There is ellipsis, for example, in the sentences uttered by the aunt, reproduced above. ("*Did he... peacefully?*", etc.). Halliday and Hasan say that

> *The starting point of the discussion of ellipsis can be the familiar notion that it is "something left unsaid". There is no implication here that what is unsaid is not understood; on the contrary, "unsaid" implies "but understood nevertheless", and another way of referring to ellipsis is in fact as SOMETHING UNDERSTOOD, where "understood" is used in the special sense of "going without saying". (...) Where there is ellipsis, there is presupposition, in the structure, that something is to be supplied, or "understood".*[6]

We know then that something is to be supplied in the silences of the text. In the case of "The Sisters", the narrator is showing us how to read his own text. He himself, as he recounts the episode, seems to be trying to extract meaning from the words as well as from the absence of them.

Joseph Chadwick says that Father Flynn's discourse, which is also full of silences,

> *... like Flynn's body and spirit, is paralyzed, unable to fulfil its linguistic function just as he is unable to perform his priestly offices.*[7]

Brown and Yule quote Labov on the question of interpretation and say that he

> *argues that thre are "rules of interpretation which relate what is said to what is done" and it is on the basis of such social, but not linguistic, rules that we interpret some conversational sequences as coherent and others as non-coherent.*[8]

Silence is constitutive of the narrative of *Dubliners*, not simply revealed by it. Silence is what James Duffy faces at the end of "A Painful Case", after Mrs. Sinico's death:

> *He waited for some minutes listening. He could hear nothing: the night was perfectly silent. He listened again: perfectly silent. He felt that he was alone.* (D, 117)

This final silence in the story is the outcome of Duffy's attempts to explain his theories to the "attentive listener" that Mrs. Sinico was, her attemps to act out the implications of what he left unsaid, and his response to what he saw as a misinterpretation of his words. He was glad when she "*became his confessor*", but broke away from her when she "*caught his hand passionately and pressed it to her cheek*": "*Her interpretation of his words disillusioned him*" (D, 111). As a consequence he chooses silence and the dull routine of his former like. Duffy reads the paper where the news of Mrs. Sinico's death in printed "*not aloud, but moving his lips as a priest does when he reads the prayers SECRETO*" (D, 113).

In "Araby", the boy's soul luxuriates in silence (D, 32) and he meets nothing but silence after his mounting expectation of going to the bazaar: "*I recognized a silence like that which pervades a church after a service*" (D, 34). Eveline does not utter a single word throughout her narrative, and her speechlessness reaches its apex at the end, when her lover urges her to board the ship and she "*kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer*" (D, 41). Eveline's silence echoes the silence of the text: recognition is lost, no sign is given, the narrative is broken off. Corley, one of the "Two Gallants", silently answers his friend's insistent questioning with a gesture, merely exhibiting the gold coin in his hand. His silence is not directed at his friend only. He never tells the slavey girl his name. He is "*too hairy to tell her that*" (D, 51).

In "The Boarding House", there is a tacit understanding between mother and daughter, and their complicity is woven in "*persistent silence*" (D, 63). Annie's aim is to silence the child, at the end of "A Little Cloud", and behind the attempt there may well be the wish to appease Little Chandler's incipient revolt against family life. Farrington, in "Counterparts", is constantly silenced by authority, and the only time he breaks his silence at a "*felicitous moment*", he is made to regret it with the demand for an apology. The text is silent here—whether he apologizes or not is not stated, but left for the reader to surmise. What we witness is Farrington's reflections: "*He had made a proper fool of himself this time. Could he not keep his tongue in his cheek?*" (D, 92).

Maria's silence, in "Clay", is depicted in her refusal to sing the second verse of the song "I Dreamt that I Dwelt". The refusal is probably subconscious, as this second verse tells of experiences which have not been a part of her actual life.

"The Dead" is full of silence. Gabriel is silent after Lily's bitter retort about "*the men that is now*" (D, 179), and is equally silent when Miss Ivors questions him as to why he is sick of his own country. "*Gabriel did not answer for his retort had heated him*" (D, 189). The three young ladies, at Mr. Browne's rallying tone, "*received his speech in silence*" (D, 183). The subject of the monks sleeping in their coffins discussed at the dinner-table "*had grown lugubrious*" and "*was buried in a silence of the table*" (D, 201). "*A few gentlemen patted the table gently as a signal for silence*" and "*the silence came*" (D, 201) at the end of dinner, as a prelude to Ga-

briel's speech. Gabriel silently beholds his wife in the stairs while she listens to a male voice singing. "*Under cover of her silence*" his erotic fantasies emerge. In one single paragraph "*they followed the porter in silence*" and "*... in the silence Gabriel could hear the falling of the molten wax into the tray and the thumping of his own heart against his ribs*" (D, 215).

"*Gabriel was silent*" when Gretta starts telling him about Michael Furey. He contemplates his future silence at Aunt Julia's death, when words would be inadequate for the occasion. And it is in the silence of the hotel room that he faces his epiphany.

But there is another kind of silence in the *Dubliners* text, for which "The Boarding House" is an apt example—the silence of deeds that are not explicit. Not much "happens" in *Dubliners.* Joyce deliberately avoids anything like an event. The important events are the deeds NOT done, the inaction, the failure to respond. The careful critical compilation of all the drafts of Joyce's works, plus a detailed study made by Hugh Kenner[9], show clearly that Joyce's care in the choice of words is not only the result of his desire for an aesthetic effect. With "scrupulous meanness" he manages to build his stories with no waste of words so that not only "The Boarding House" but all the stories are examples of a technique in which the readers are not even presented with the main scenes of the events in the story but are rather shown the outcome of these events. In this story, the tacit agreement between mother and daughter is not put into words; nor is the relationship of Doran and Polly—the reader does not witness their coming together, but is left to infer what happened between them through the silences of the text. "*It was not altogether his fault that it had happened*" (D, 67). Here "it" has to be guessed at, the understanding of which is arrived at by means of the social rules referred to by Labov, as mentioned before. Polly's interview with her mother, when Mrs. Mooney decides it is time to intervene, is not shown in the text, either. Nor is Doran's meeting with her at the end, nor the bulk of his confession to the priest the night before.

So what the reader has to do is what the boy-narrator of the first story does—to try to extract meaning from whatever words he has. As well as from the ellipsis and the silences. Sydney Bolt states that for many writers, before Joyce and since,

> *Style is a means of sharing their deepest perceptions with the reader. For Joyce, style is a means of presenting the reader with a problem: why is the text written in this particular way?* (...)
> *It is to cater for such a reader—the reader who pores over a text—that Joyce loaded his sentences with meaning, to the point of burying it, so that finally, in* Finnegans Wake, *reading becomes an exercise in excavation.*[10]

To discuss style is very natural when one studies Joyce's works, but his style is not discussed here for its own sake: every point raised is an argument that reinforces the study of *Dubliners* as a unit. To grasp the narrative technique in the collection is essential to bring the reader to an understanding of the characters, as well as making him aware that the form is an indication of the content in each circumstance in Joyce's stories.

ABBREVIATIONS:

Unless otherwise noted, all references to Joyce's own writing will be abbreviated and cited parenthetically in the text, with page numbers cited, from the following editions:

D *Dubliners, Text, Criticism and Notes.* Ed. Robert Scholes and A. Walton Litz. England, Penguin Books, 1986.

P *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Text, Criticism and Notes.* Ed. Chester G. Anderson. England, Penguin Books, 1986.

NOTES:

(1) Staley, Thomas F. "A Beginning: Signification, Story and Discourse in Joyce's 'The Sisters'". In: Bernard Benstock. *Critical Essays on James Joyce.* Boston, Ma., G. K. Hall & Co., 1985.
(2) Levin, Harry. Introduction to *The Essential James Joyce.* London, Granada, 1981, p. 16.
(3) Kenner, Hugh. *Joyce's Voices.* Berkeley, LA, London, University of California Press, 1978.
(4) Beck, Warren, *Joyce's Dubliners: Substance, Vision and Art.* Durham N.C., Duke University Press, 1969, p. 189.
(5) Bolt, Sydney. *A Preface to James Joyce.* London and New York, Longman, 1981, p. 49.
(6) Halliday, M.A.K. & R. Hasan. *Cohesion in English.* London, Longman, 1976, p. 142.
(7) Chadwick, Joseph. "Silence in 'The Sisters'". In: *James Joyce Quarterly, 21* (3): 247, Spring 1984.
(8) Brown, Gillian & George Yule. *Discourse Analysis.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 226.
(9) Hugh Kenner is cited by Warren Beck in *Joyce's Dubliners. Substance, Vision and Art.* Durham N.C., Duke University Press, 1969.
(10) Bolt, Sydney, Op. cit., p. 49-50.

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REFLEXÕES SOBRE O NARRADOR EM MRS DALLOWAY

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A proposta deste texto é levantar algumas questões sobre o narrador no romance moderno, tendo como referencial o narrador no romance tradicional. Não pretendemos nos remeter aos primórdios da narrativa, nem aos caminhos que ela percorreu, e estamos entendendo moderno no sentido de ruptura com uma forma tradicional.

Dentro de nosso objetivo, o de fazer algumas reflexões sobre o narrador, marcamos, formalmente, o início deste século como o momento de ruptura com a forma do romance tradicional. Dizemos *formalmente* porque, se de um lado, ainda no século XIX, quando por exemplo, em Dostoievski *não é a seqüência de eventos*, como no romance tradicional, que constitui o romance; por outro lado, no século XX, romances como aqueles convivem com romances que estamos chamando de moderno.

Em nossas reflexões, estaremos considerando alguns posicionamentos que sustentam nossas colocações: uma concepção de linguagem enquanto discurso, que remete à História, e a relação dinâmica do leitor com o texto.

Para iniciar nossas reflexões, partimos de dois textos sobre o narrador: "O Narrador" de W. Benjamin e "A Posição do Narrador no Romance Contemporâneo" de T. Adorno. Ilustraremos nossas observações sobre o narrador em *Mrs Dalloway*, romance de V. Woolf.

Benjamin faz, em seu texto, considerações sobre a arte de narrar que ele considera como troca de experiências. "A experiência que anda de boca em boca é a fonte onde beberam todos os narradores", diz ele. O narrador é, assim, quem tem algo para contar. É o contador de histórias. Histórias que se repetem e que se recriam no comércio das experiências humanas e que perduram na memória.

Esse olhar que Benjamin lança sobre a narrativa, mostrando que ela é a experiência que se faz presente naquilo que o narrador conta, revela que ela não se exaure, que ela marca o limite do homem no tempo, na História, e que ela é capaz de desdobramentos pela sua própria forma de ser. Borges, nas suas reflexões sobre a linguagem e a literatura, reflexões que perseguem toda sua obra, fala, com bastante recorrência, dessa contínua

reinterpretação e repetição e de apropriação, pelo artista, de enunciados que perpassam a prática discursiva de toda a gente. "Creio que as pessoas continuamente dizem frases memoráveis", diz ele numa entrevista, "talvez a função do artista seja recorrer a estas frases e retê-las". Ainda nessa entrevista, ele afirma: "Eu penso que meu dever de escritor não é descobrir temas novos nem inventar nada; devo repetir, no dialeto de meu país e de minha época, certas poesias que estão sendo sempre repetidas, com ligeiras variações que podem ou não ser preciosas".

Voltando a Benjamin, ele fala dessas histórias contadas, dessa narrativa verdadeira que é a própria imediatez da experiência, para argumentar que a arte de narrar tende para o fim. "Dentro de um processo que vem de longe", diz ele, "esse fenômeno é uma manifestação secundária de forças produtivas históricas seculares que aos poucos afastou a narrativa do âmbito do discurso vivo". Ele coloca a narrativa em contraste com o romance (cujo nascimento deu-se no início da Era Moderna) que para ele depende essencialmente do livro e não deriva da tradição oral. "O local do nascimento do romance é o indivíduo na sua solidão que já não consegue exprimir-se *exemplarmente*". Mas a distinção se faz mais presente na própria ação de narrar. "O narrador colhe o que narra na experiência própria ou relatada, e transforma isso outra vez em experiência dos que ouvem sua história". O romance segregou-se na visão de Benjamin.

Essas histórias de que fala Benjamin, inseridas no âmbito do "discurso vivo", que são a própria imediatez da experiência, estão, em nosso entender, que remete a Foucault, aí, no próprio discurso, na palavra da História. O narrador, aquele que conte a história não é a fonte do discurso.

Esse narrador faz dessas histórias, ficção, reinventa-as, conta-as, e assim as transforma outra vez em experiência dos que ouvem, em discurso. Assim as imaginações de um narrador convertem-se em memórias pessoais de outros.

É esse narrador que atrofiou no romance tradicional, em que se dá o contrário: cria-se a ficção para *representar* a "realidade". Esta "*realidade*" não é a vida, não são as legítimas relações entre os homens, não é a história dessas relações, não é a experiência compartilhada; antes, é a representação da vida através da ficção. Aqui, *a vida* é apagada pela ideologia; uma outra é criada na ficção.

A diferenciação entre romance tradicional e romance moderno, dentro de nossa linha de argumentação, não traz em si nenhuma evidência cronológica.

Virginia Woolf, que escreveu nos anos 20 e 30 deste século, traça, em um ensaio sobre o romance de consciência, uma linha divisória entre escritores contemporâneos seus, colocando de um lado aqueles a quem ela chama de escritores materialistas e de outro lado aqueles a quem ela chama de espiritualistas. Os primeiros apontam para o romance tradicional, os outros, para o romance moderno, no sentido que vimos atribuindo a essa categoria. A autora afirma textualmente, "Se tentássemos formular o que queremos dizer em uma palavra deveríamos dizer que esses três escritores

(referidos, por ela, antes—Wells, Bennett e Galsworthy), são materialistas. Pelo fato de estarem preocupados não com o espírito mas com o corpo é que eles vêm nos desapontando, e deixa-nos com o sentimento de que tão logo a ficção inglesa vire as costas a eles, e marche, mesmo que no deserto, melhor para sua alma". Mais à frente, ela comenta: "Em contraste com aqueles que chamamos materialistas, *Joyce* é espiritual, ele está preocupado, a qualquer custo, em revelar as fagulhas da chama mais íntima, e para preservar isto, ele desconsidera com total coragem, qualquer coisa que lhe parece acidental (...). Se nós queremos a própria vida, aqui seguramente a temos".

É esse o ponto que consideramos de ruptura no romance que estamos chamando de moderno. Um resgate das narrativas de que fala Benjamin: "a narrativa que não pretende transmitir o puro em si da coisa. Mergulha a coisa na vida de quem relata, a fim de extraí-la outra vez dela". A vida vivida é a matéria de onde surgem as histórias.

O romance moderno, contudo, é, nas palavras de Adorno, um paradoxo com relação à posição do narrador. Diz ele: "Não se pode mais narrar, ao passo que a forma do romance exige a narração".

Nossas reflexões, neste texto, que remetem a reflexões anteriores em outro texto nosso, privilegia esse ponto. Entendemos que essa discussão sobre a posição do narrador no romance moderno leva a ver este romance sob a luz de uma teoria do discurso e da enunciação que dê conta do paradoxo que Adorno coloca.

À sua afirmação, de que não se pode mais narrar, colocamos restrições por acreditarmos que o romance coloca-se dentro de uma formação discursiva que, resumidamente, da ótica de Foucault, sustenta-se numa regularidade, em regras de formação. Estas regras são condições de existência em uma dada repartição discursiva. O romance moderno é uma forma discursiva e um dos limites desta forma é a narração.

A questão que se coloca, a nosso ver, é como entender esse narrador, e nós procuramos entendê-lo da perspectiva do discurso. Este, o discurso, entendido como descontinuidade em que o sujeito é destituído de unidade por si mesmo. Ele é, antes, uma dispersão, e é nessa dispersão que o romance moderno dá conta da vida, das relações humanas na História (homem-homem; homem-universo; homem-natureza; homem-instituições; homem-poder, etc.).

A autoridade do narrador ter em mãos toda a história, de controlá-la, ficou historicamente com o romance tradicional. Neste o narrador é dono da unidade, no romance moderno, essa unidade só se constrói a partir de um campo complexo de discursos. O que conta aqui é a função enunciativa, ou seja, as posições que constituem o sujeito. Assim o narrador, que se representa como *eu*, é função enunciativa que se dispersa enquanto posições. Este narrador narra do lugar do autor que é a origem da textualidade (textualidade que se dá desta ou daquela forma e que traça limites entre romance tradicional e moderno, e, conseqüentemente, princípio de agrupamento do discurso).

Essa concepção de autor leva à destituição do sujeito enquanto individual, enquanto consciência coletiva ou enquanto subjetividade transcendental. Ele é, antes, uma ausência que não se sustenta dentro de qualquer dessas acepções. Dentro dessa visão não faz sentido analisar as relações entre um autor e o que ele disse, ou quis dizer, ou não disse. O dizer dá-se de uma determinada posição, inclusive da posição de narrador que remete ao discurso da ficção romanesca.

A garantia da continuidade do discurso está ligada à garantia de uma história pronta da posição de autor/narrador. O romance, enquanto instituição da era burguesa não remete a narrativas primeiras que, como sugere Benjamin, não tinham a pretensão de *representar* as relações sociais como o romance pretendeu: criar uma ficção que refletisse, que representasse a realidade. Alguns romances dos séculos XVIII e XIX (por exemplo, *Moby-Dick* (século XVIII) impregnado de simbologia e de mito) fugiram dessa linha de representação da realidade. Contudo, o narrador, nesses romances, ainda parece ser o dono do destino da palavra. O mesmo parece dar-se com relação ao chamado romance psicológico.

Sobre este tipo de romance, o psicológico, Adorno faz considerações fundamentais quando afirma que "a esfera da psicologia não está excluída da crise da objetividade literária". "Não é só o fato", diz ele, "de informação e ciência terem confiscado tudo o que é positivo, apreensível — incluindo a factividade do mundo — que força o romance a romper com isso e a entregar-se à representação de *essência* e *distorção*, mas também a circunstância de que, quanto mais fechada e sem lacunas se compõe a superfície do processo social, tanto mais, hermeticamente, esta esconde como véu o *ser*".

Reconhecemos a pertinência desses comentários finais de Adorno para nos remeter a *Mrs Dalloway*, romance de V. Woolf, que mencionamos como ponto de referência. O mundo dos personagens, neste romance, é uma Londres do após guerra onde convivem indivíduos que trazem a marca viva da época vitoriana, sobreviventes da guerra, jovens deslumbrados com uma Londres que saiu de sua condição insular para abrir-se ao continente. Neste mundo está colocada a impossibilidade da relação genuína entre os indivíduos e consigo mesmos; relacionam-se nos seus estereótipos mas não na sua legitimidade humana; interagem dentro de padrões determinados.

O romance apresenta-se como a própria tentativa de captar a essência, rompendo a couraça ideológica que imobiliza a manifestação da própria vida e conseqüentemente das relações humanas. Este rompimento dá-se na própria construção do romance, na possibilidade criada de distanciamento do narrado. Enquanto no romance tradicional o leitor indentifica-se com o próprio objeto, o narrado, no romance moderno o leitor distancia-se do narrado para entrar na vida. Identificar-se com a vida é distanciar-se do narrado. A história narrada, rasteamento de eventos imediatos, em *Mrs Dalloway*, coloca-se nos limites de um dia na vida de Clarissa Dalloway, dia que termina com sua festa de aniversário, em contraponto com o dia de outro personagem, Septimus, que finda com sua morte.

Mas nessa história, outras histórias são contadas: a história da mulher vivendo no século XX mas determinada ainda pela época vitoriana, encouraçada pelos seus padrões, a do psicótico que vivenciou a guerra, a da própria psiquiatria enquanto instituição. Estas histórias não são posse do narrador porque não são conhecimentos objetivos, não têm uma completude em si, não são unidades em si mesmas, não se mostram numa continuidade. O narrador, enquanto função enunciativa é que se dispersa na massa descontínua do discurso, e da perspectiva do autor constrói a textualidade, onde estas histórias se constroem e onde a perspectiva do leitor tem o seu espaço na produção da leitura.

Retornando às considerações de Adorno e tentando fechar este texto, colocaria que *Mrs Dalloway* evidencia que o romance moderno, na perspectiva que vimos discutindo, não é o romance psicológico no sentido em que o narrador se coloca na consciência dos personagens para expor seus sentimentos; ou então, aquele em que os níveis de consciência são colocados simbolicamente. Psicológicos, aqui, significa o *desvendamento* das próprias relações sociais, da condição do homem frente a elas, das diversas perspectivas em que ele pode colocar-se para entender estas relações ou a si mesmo num plano maior. Daí o caráter do narrador ser outro. Ele não é mais o *contador de histórias*, estritamente, no entender de Benjamin, nem o relator dos sentimentos dos personagens; ele é, sim, o *responsável por um dizer* que não lhe pertence, mas, sim, ao discurso. E este discurso pode até mesmo ser o do narrador enquanto instituição, o que narra, dá as coordenadas de ordem temporal, espacial. A aparente unidade desse sujeito dá-se, como já falamos, na própria organização discursiva que não se confunde com uma organização do lugar das relações lógicas ou gramaticais.

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AN APPROACH TO GREENE'S FICTION VIS-À-VIS LATIN AMERICA

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Greene's "fixation" on Latin America

Perhaps more than any other British writer Graham Greene has fictionally reproduced Latin American issues in his novels. After a decade of Europe-centered novels he produced a two-fold picture of Mexico, the travelogue *The Lawless Roads* (1939) and the novel *The Power and the Glory* (1940). After this brief spell on Mexico, Greene's interests shifted and he focused his novels on Africa and South-East Asia where a shadowy imperialism put these regions in an international tragic limelight. However, in the late 50s he shifted once more his focus on Latin America. Just before the Castro revolution he published *Our Man in Havana* (1958). In 1966 and 1969 he denounced the dictatorial regimes in Haiti and Paraguay through the publication of *The Comedians* and *Travels with My Aunt. The Honorary Consul* (1973) portrays revolutionary attitudes in Argentina and Paraguay, interpreting these phenomena in the light of the Theology of Liberation. Similar themes on Central America involving Panama and Nicaragua are given fictional substance in *The Captain and the Enemy* (1988) linked to his 1984 travelogue *Getting to Know the General.*

Statistically Latin American theme novels comprise twenty-five percent of Greene's corpus. A plausible interpretation for this fact may be found in the perhaps indelible impression of the 30s on Greene and in his "protestantism".

An Explanation

Greene repeatedly asserts in his fiction that "the impressions of childhood are ineffaceable".[1] Re-reading this statement not in the light of physical childhood but in the context of the writer's first decade in producing literary works, it may be said that the 30s gave Greene's fiction the indelible mark of an inconformity and protest complex. Conceding a wider inter-

pretation to terms, this "fixation" is portrayed in the 1950 essay on *The Young Dickens*: "The creative writer perceives his world once and for all in childhood and adolescence, and his whole career is an effort to illustrate his private world in terms of the great public world we all share".[2]

Sandwiched between the Great Depression and the second World War the 30s were the hotbed of political strife depicted in the fiction of the time. They reproduced not merely Catholic or Communist alternatives but a gradual revolutionary commitment registered in practically all of Greene's literary work.[3] Taking a bird's eye view of Greene's novels of this period it can be observed that the subject matters include smuggling, dictatorship, a death sentence passed on a Communist, international Capitalism, juvenile delinquency and civil war. However, the ubiquitous leftwing scenery with bad men as millionaires, dictators and armament manufacturers and with good men as revolutionaries and communists is not an adequate sign of a bipolar or Manichean frame of mind. It rather reveals a nonconformist attitude in face of shackled humanity in present world politics.

The kind of interpretation Latin America is given in Greene's fiction is essential to our analysis. Obviously, as an outsider, Greene developed a certain interpretation in a forty-year-old span of time during which he modelled his theories according to the sociological and theological interpretation of each decade. The object of the study, limited to only three novels, is an interpretation of the Latin American "milieu" in which Greene's characters are situated, together with their actions and reactions—symptoms of an oppressed and marginalized continent still to be redeemed by its own people.

The Power and the Glory[4] *and the Spiritual Interpretation*

The aftermath of President Callas's socialist revolution in the late 1920s with the anticlerical purges, land redistribution and oil nationalization is the background of *The Power and the Glory*.[5] In opposition to Evelyn Waugh,[6] Greene didn't present "a political thesis or history but wrote instead a triumphant interpretation through the eyes of an artist of an unhappy place at a miserable time".[7]

The narrator's description of the peasants' lot which remained identical to that of prerevolutionary times is remarkable (42). However, the priest's interpretation of poverty, misery, subsistance and exploitation typically deviates from the effective and true method for human beings to achieve their proper dignity. The "sub specie aeternitatis" argument is rampant in his sermon (69). Exhorting the people to accept their lot resigned to God's will without any questioning of the legitimacy of the present situation and without any hint as to an opposing attitude or commitment is downright humiliating and an anachronism for a priest's preaching after Church manifestoes such as *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931).

The priest's interpretation of the tragic exploitation of the land and its

people is Manichean while there is a blatant justification of poverty and suffering (194-195) but no interpretation in terms of a result of the twin evil of industrial capitalism and cultural imperialism (25). Moreover, the priest's fatalism is certainly misleading: "You'll have all the old starvation, beating, get-rich-anyhow". (195)

However, Greene is not so naive as to assert the paradise of Communism and the hell of Capitalism. In *The Power and the Glory* he puts religion and politics in opposite camps: the priest as representative of the old order destined to vanish; the lieutenant as representative of the new order authorizing itself to implant social justice in the land. "This was his land, and he would have walled it in if he could with steel until he had eradicated from it everything which reminded him of how it had once appeared to a miserable child". (25) The "priestly" zeal of the lieutenant to transform a Latin American country from the peripherical sphere in which it was placed by Capitalism through upheavals and structural changes is highly idealistic.

> It was for these [children] he was fighting. He would eliminate from their childhood everything which had made him miserable, all that was poor, superstitious and corrupt. They deserved nothing less than the truth—a vacant universe and a cooling world, the right to be happy in any way they choose. He was quite prepared to make a massacre for their sakes—first the church and then the foreighner and then the politician. (58)

Concrete proposals for the liberation of the subdued people are present in the lieutenant's mind. "We'll give them food instead, teach them to read, give them books. We'll see they don't suffer". (194)

In the dialogue between the priest and the lieutenant there is the revelation of the deep structural differences in Mexico and of the Church's failure to cope with them. The lieutenant accuses the Church of maintaining class distinction "Señora So-and-So, the druggist's wife, would say the family wasn't really deserving of charity, and Señor This, That and the Other would say that if they starved, what else did they deserve, they were Socialists anyway". (193) He accuses the Church not only of bestowing privileges on rich people but of shutting her eyes to human rights violations. "Have you ever told the landlord he shouldn't beat his peon... You come out and have dinner with him and it's your duty not to know that he has murdered a peasant". (194)

On the other hand, the assistential aspect of religion constitutes a priority on the priest's mind. Consequently he refuses categorically to allow the people to gain power and self-determination.

> I know we are told to give to the poor, to see they are not hungry—hunger can make a man do evil just as much as money can. But why should we give the poor power? It's better to let him die in dirt and wake in heaven—so long as we don't push his face in the dirt. (199)

The justice he demands is on the spiritual rather than on the material level and situated on a totally different wave-length as understood by the socialist lieutenant or today's Liberation Theology.

Through the story of *The Power and the Glory* Greene seems to suggest that the Mexican socialist state was a failure; that the Church is culpable for the maintainance of unjust social structures; that the Church's solutions to social problems should be rather and adequately placed on a "higher" and spiritual level; that material progress and human rights (and politics, for all that) are somewhat different from religion.

Our Man in Havana and Latin American Symbols

In the fabula of *Our Man in Havana*[8] Greene does not reach the crucial point of Castro's revolution. However he knew Havana in Batista's days[9] and became gradually aware of the unhappy situation there.[10] The novel gives glimpses of torture (36,85,107), human rights violations (60,64,70), existence of rebels, troop movements, curfew (63,107), corruption in high government circles (36), and unjust social stratifications (25,133). In this aspect and in spite of its entertaining function, it denounces Batista's right-wing regime.

Contrary to DeVitis's opinion[11] on the inexistence of deep philosophical and religious meaning in the novel, however, a re-reading of the novel indicates Wormold and his "spying" activities in Cuba as symbols of Latin America and its deep structural and moral problems. Wormold's life is initially uncommitted and has little to do with politics until these intrude in the form of a foreign power. Later on, he "stood on the frontier of violence, a strange land he had never visited before" (184). He became committed, forced by circumstances and to protect human beings. Here Greene seems to imply the emergence of violations committed by foreign forces working blatantly and unscrupulously in Latin America (symbolized by Cuba) as an "adequate" ground for matching their differences in the Cold War process.

The play between reality and fiction created by the novel symbolizes the shifting Cold War geopolitical context where Cuba's structural social and political problems (a kind of synecdoche of Latin America) are underrated by both Communism and Capitalism alike to satisfy their hegemonic policies.[12] The Protean characters of Wormold, Milly, Carter and Captain Segura are symbols of the foreign powers' impotence to grasp Latin American reality and, least of all, to understand it.[13]

Wormold's farsical role in this amusing secret-service fantasy reveals his quest for freedom and the ideals of justice. Perphaps this is the novel's deeper and inherent theme, especially when it is seen in a Latin American context. Thus, freedom and justice become the ideals of Latin American countries in face of Communist or Capitalist proposals. This kind of freedom, typical of Wormold and the continent he seems to represent, is thus expressed:

> Wormold said to himself, At least if I could kill him, I would kill for a clear reason. I would kill to show that you can't kill without being killed in your turn. I wouldn't kill for my country. I wouldn't kill for Capitalism or Communism or social democracy or the welfare state—whose welfare? ... A family feud had been a better reason for murder than patriotism or preference for one economic system over another. If I love or hate, let me love or hate as an individual. I will not be 59200/5 in anyone's global war. (186)

Beatrice, his secretary and lover, air the same view when she professes freedom—the subtle underlying Latin American theme in the novel

> I don't care a damn about men who are loyal to people who pay them, to organizations... I don't even think my country means all that much... Would the world be in the mess it is if we're loyal to love and not to countries. (189-190)

Our Man in Havana constitutes a progress in Greene's interpretation of Latin America. Besides being a denouncement of human rights violations, it brings forth to the reader the arbitrariness and intrusion of political forces alien to Latin American interests. Moreover, Latin America's ideals of freedom and justice are subtlely embedded in the novel's structure so as to impart the idea of repulsion and affront in face of exploitation on one hand, and to enhance freedom and brotherhood on the other. Still Greene refuses to make Latin American voices speak for themselves and though Wormold feels himself a Cuban, "in their eyes he never became a resident; he remained a permanent tourist". (34)

The Comedians and Latin American Voices

When published *The Comedians*[14] provoked the anger of Haiti's Papa Doc because it denounced his tyrannic regime and exposed the neocolonial struggle on the island.[15] Coupled to this are the Latin American voices which resound in denouncement for the first time in a Greene novel.

The ubiquitous Tonton Macoutes (15), the Orwellian ministeries (16,164), the hungry people (21), police search and violence (31), curfews (43), personality cult (47), corruption (53, 109), violent deaths (97), illiteracy (100) and public executions (189) pervade the novel forming the substrata of its texture to reveal Papa Doc's dictatorship in Haiti. This "black comedy which life in Haiti, as the novel reveals, indeed is"[16] presents the reader with three comedians: Brown, the rootless and cynical hotelier; Smith, the ex-Presidential candidate; Jones, an English hustler. These operate on the fringes of the Capitalist power group. On the other hand, three Haitians are ushered in: Marcel, the Countess's lover; Dr Magiot, the Communist and young Philipot, the poet and revolutionary. In different degrees they

are engagés in the Haitian revolutionary cause. They are conscious of the powerless and agonizing situation in which they are "trapped by external power allied to internal tyranny".[17] In the novel there are clear remarks on the polarization of the revolutionary context: Papa Doc represents the concepts of stagnation, repression and corruption while Dr Magiot reveals the freshening ideas of change, freedom and compassion.

Even the idealist Mr Smith realizes that "wars are made by politicians, by capitalists, by intellectuals, by bureaucrats, by Wall Street bosses or Communist bosses—they are none of them made by the poor". (21-22)

Still more radical is the symbolism of the Post Office's and Durvalierville's scenes (193, 166) where Smith emptied his purses and flung coins to the beggars. These scenes express "the irrelevance of individual charity when institutionalized aid itself buttresses imperialist activity".[18] In Brown's microcosmos Capitalist activity concretized in the tourist industry is good for Haiti but its financial gains will not reach the poor. In Duvalier's macrocosmos financial gains are reserved to the very powerful few to the detriment of the great majority.

> Papa Doc's lobbyist in Washington is the lobbyist of certain American-owned mills (they grind grey flour for the people out of imported surplus wheat; it is astonishing how much money can be made out of the poorest of the poor with a little ingenuity). And then there's the great beef-racket. The poor here can eat meat no more than they eat cake, so I suppose they don't suffer when all the beef that exists goes to the American market—it doesn't matter to the importers that there are no standards here of cattle-raising—it goes into tins for underdeveloped countries paid for by American aid, of course. It wouldn't affect the Americans if this trade ceased, but it would affect the particular Washington politician who receives one cent for every pound exported. (232)

Coupled to this is the web-like corruption scheme existing between the Ministeries, the Haitian Government and the U.S. Government. In this scheme the least benefited are the people. (156-158)

The Smiths went out of Haiti a disappointed couple (201) but on their arrival in the Dominican Republic they found the same capitalist tentacles stalking around. "'I must admit', he [Smith] wrote, 'that conditions here are more peaceful, although there is a great deal of poverty'". (246) Moreover, he is disgusted at the arrogant inquisitive policy of an American entrepreneur in Latin America. "It's not at all pleasant to feel ashamed of a fellow countryman". (276) Somehow Smith acquires the knowledge about the truth of America's (and capitalism's) exploitation and begins to understand the neocolonial situation of Third World countries.[19]

Greene, however, does not limit himself to denouncing the insidious neocolonial relationships and the political situation in Haiti. Removing his characters to the Dominican Republic he underscores and denounces

subtler conditions of existence. Civil war, road-blocks and military junta were absent but "poverty was out of sight, down in the city". (273) Moreover, the description of the bauxite concession is symbolic of the country as a whole and, by extension, of Latin America. Mr Schuyler Wilson's enclave is protected by barbed wire, barricades and bodyguards. A private landing ground, a harbour and clean administrative buildings—signs of an aloof and exploiting proprietor—are extant on the site. For Mr Wilson every insurgent against tyranny is a Communist and those who wish to educate the people as to their fundamental rights are troublemakers. (272) In short, Greene seems to make plain that if Latin American problems are structural the shifting of people from one place to another is unimportant. It is like jumping out of the frying pan and falling into the fire. In contrast to Haiti, the Dominican Republic may be called "freedom" on the surface level. On a deeper level it still means insidious neocolonialism and structurally perverse conditions.

The problem of neocolonialism is presented especially in the shape of culture in a colonial situation. Freedom from slavery introduced cultural tyranny. Henri Philipot, the young Jesuit-trained revolutionary who studied at the Sorbonne and edited his poetic works on hand-made paper, recognizes the derivative aspect of his verses. (131, 133, 172) The fact that Greene puts in young Philipot's mouth the need of Haitian modern culture being recognized by developed countries (132, 166) is symptomatic of the inexistence of cultural autonomy due to an economic marginal position and inferiority complex attitudes. Cultural neocolonialism is so deep that Haitian novelists and painters prefer to live in the central countries. (132, 172) Dr Magiot was very realistic when he said: "In the Western hemisphere, in Haiti and elsewhere, we live under the shadow of your great and prosperous country. Much courage and patience is needed to keep one's head". (177) Fully aware of their country being "an evil slum floating a few miles from Florida" (232), Haitian voices registered in the novel propose a two-fold solution to this political and cultural tyranny: revolutionary groups and spiritual Voodoo movements. "We Haitians haven't fought for forty years except with knives and broken bottles. We need a few men of guerilla exprience. We have mountains just as high as those in Cuba", (132) remarked Philipot, who believes "in the future of the Bren gun". (177) Dr Magiot, older and more experienced, believes in the future of Communism as a means of deliverance from the present tyranny. He considers a return to Voodoo practice as a root-seeking legitimate inheritance of the people which will link them to the past and to their innate national strength. Both stands are capable of delivering them from the slavery context they live in. (176) Henri Philipot is more enthusiastic and says "And why not [go back to Voodoo]? Perhaps the gods of Dahomey are what we need now". (172)

These traditional cultural strengths are the basis of personal freedom and one of the fundamental prerequisite factors to the liberation movement. (176) The second factor is deep internal solidarity as a first step to

national integrity and liberation against the Marines and, paradoxically, together with Papa Doc. (232) The heroic stature of Dr Magiot and Henri Philipot, symbols of the history of the Haitian struggle, bestows upon them the success of engagement in existential terms, very much in contrast to the failure of engagement in love and political commitment experienced by the cynical narrator.

Harking a future well-known theme from Latin American Liberation Theology, the Haitian priest's sermon makes a breakthrough in the Gospel interpretation of violence in a political context.

> Violence can be the expression of love... In the day of fear, doubt and confusion, the simplicity and loyalty of one Apostle advocated a political solution. He was wrong but I would rather be wrong with St Thomas than right with the cold and the craven. (283)

This invitation "to go up... and die with him" echoes the profounder theme of later Greene novels such as *The Honorary Consul* and *The Captain and the Enemy.* Greene's approach to Latin America is highly progressive and exhibits deeper positions as his fiction evolves. From the alcoholic priest's exclusively spiritual approach with regards structural political problems to Dr Magiot and Philipot's committed positions rooted in religion and in the social inheritance of exploited people, great progress has occurred in Greene's fictional conception of Latin America.

Notes

(1) *Ministry of Fear*, p. 94.
(2) *Collected Essays*, p. 83.
(3) Johnstone, p. 30.
(4) For brevity's sake quotations from and references to *The Power and the Glory* are placed between parentheses in this section of the text.
(5) Nierdergang, pp. 260-264.
(6) Sykes, pp. 183-184.
(7) Ibid., p. 188.
(8) For brevity's sake quotations from and references to *Our Man in Havana* are placed between parentheses in this section of the text.
(9) Couto, p. 239.
(10) *Pontos de Fuga*, p. 178.
(11) DeVitis, p. 69.
(12) Shapiro, p. 91; Stratford, p. 323.
(13) Shapiro, pp. 93-94.
(14) For brevity's sake quotation from and references to *The Comedians* are placed between parentheses in this section of the text.
(15) *Pontos de Fuga*, p. 200.
(16) Couto, p. 139.
(17) Ibid., p. 177.
(18) Ibid., p. 179.
(19) ibid., p. 177.

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WILLIAM GOLDING AND THE KÜNSTLERROMAN: THE ROLE OF ART IN *THE INHERITORS*

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Three of William Golding's novels—*Free Fall, The Spire* and *The Inheritors* stand out as instances of the subgenre *Künstlerroman*, defined by Ulrich Weistein as fictional narratives "in which the esthetic and technical problems attended upon an art are structurally integrated with the plot and where artistic solutions are shown to be conducive to resolving problems on the human plane as well."[1]

In *Free Fall*, the central character, the painter Samuel Mountjoy, takes the artist's vision as the touchstone of truth. It is this vision that presides at his long attempt to locate the moment of moral downfall in his unravelling memories of things past. In *The Spire*, the building of a spire for a Gothic cathedral, as well as the contemplation of a stained-glass window and of a few stone carvings provide the focusing point for the questions raised by the nóvel. In *The Inheritors* an ice cave and a twisted root resembling a woman's body are concretized by a primitive mind as quasi-artistic objects. These, two drawings and an ivory dagger carved by a primitive artist provide a focusing point for the central characters' struggle to solve the puzzle of the universe and of man's relation to it.

With the possible exception of *The Spire*, where critics have spotted allusions to Salisbury Cathedral, the esthetic artefacts in Golding's novels are mere linguistic objects, created in the same way as characters and action. The question of intertextuality between works of art belonging to different media does not pose itself. No previous knowledge of a real painting or sculpture is thus necessary for the reader's concretization of the novel.

This paper is intended as a study of the role played by artist and artistic objects in *The Inheritors*. Facing these objects, which contribute to the structuring of the text, the reader finds himself in a position which inverts that of a semiotician analysing a real carving or painting. His analysis—at least according to theoreticians like Michel Butor, J. Greimas, Louis Marin, Marcelin Pleynet and Roland Barthes inevitably goes through a stage of lexicalization, which follows upon visual perception. Michel Butor says: "all our experience of painting includes in fact a considerable verbal part.

We never simply see pictures, our vision is never pure vision".[2] Barthes's similar conviction that all semiological systems have a linguistic mixture is such that, for him, the concretization of works of art is simply impossible without verbalization. According to such a view the semiotician, in order to analyse a given work of art, will "read it, verbalize it and thus constitute its approximate" matrix. In Louis Marin's words:" It is in fact from a reading, that is, from a meaning that signifiers can be found (...) and a matrix isolated (...) [Reading this matrix] it would ideally be possible to re-write the painting."[3]

The reader or critic of a *Künstlerroman* follows the opposite path: starting from a "reading" (which includes the linguistic interpretation of the work of art), he first tries to constitute it; only later on will he try and pinpoint its function.

The Inheritors tells the story of the tragic consequences of a meeting between a tribe of hunters and magicians (to which the primitive artist Tuami belongs) and a family of Neanderthal men—*homo sapiens neanderthalensis*, the extinct subspecies of man living in Europe and central Asia between 100.000 and 40.000 B.C. The narrative focus of *The Inheritors* limits itself mostly to the mind of Lok, the Neanderthal man. He, his wife Fa and the other members of the family come out as loving, gentle creatures. They invade the *homo sapiens* camp only to bring back two Neanderthal children kidnapped by the hunter's leader, Marlan, so that his wife Vivani could nurse a baby and thus stop the pain in her milk-swollen breasts. A tragic misunderstanding results. The *homo sapiens* tribe, horrified at the Neanderthals' ogre-like appearance, mistake them for devils from the forest. In order both to propitiate and to kill them, Tuami makes a clay painting of Lok and Fa, runs an arrow through them and places some poisonous drink beside this "portrait."

The clay figures display features attributed to the Neanderthals elsewhere in the novel: short bristling red hair, long ape-arms, hairy noseless face. Lok and Fa do not, however, recognize themselves in the portrait:

"This figure was red, with enormous spreading arms and legs and the face glared up at him for the eyes were white pebbles. The hair stood up round the head as though the figure were in the act of some frantic cruelty and through the figure [...] was a stake driven deep, its end split and furred over."[4]

Lok and Fa fail to "read" this "painting" properly. "What a painting represents is not what it displays" says Louis Marin. The Neanderthal couple see the representation but are unable to establish a matrix for its interpretation. From this plastic "dislexy" all the tragic events follow. Not realizing the *homo sapiens's* terrified murderous intention, Lok and Fa do not run away while it is still time. As a consequence they and their daughter Liku meet their death. Plastic dislexy thus proves a fulcral point from which the *dénouément* hangs.

Fa and Lok's portrait, as drawn by Tuami, is a fetish—an illustration of the manipulative functions of art which once fascinated Picasso in Afri-

can masks. The same function reappears in Tuami's drawing of a deer, meant to attract real hunting prey.

Before considering this piece of work, apparently reminiscent of Rupestrian art, we'd like to consider two natural objects, which the Neanderthal people, unable to create artefacts, treat in a way clearly evocative of the artistic experience.

The first object is a root, "old and rotted, worn away at both ends but presenting the exaggerated contours or a female body."[5]

This realistic description appears at the end of the novel, in the characteristic transparent language used when the narrative focus centres on the *homo sapiens* mind. For Lok and his group, however, the root becomes the girl Liku's doll, the "little Oa." But it is also a magic object, a miniature of Oa, the great mother goddess. The idea of divine power is one of the structuring elements in the Neanderthal group, represented as having incipient social institutions and an obscure, poetic language, full of animist personifications and suggesting an artist's or child's innocent vision. The group has an incipient oral literature (Mal, the old leader, recites a history of creation, a kind of Genesis according to *homo neanderthalensis*). His old wife is a primitive Vesta, in charge of hearth and fire. There are clear-cut sex roles. Women follow Ca, the like principle. Men follow what they call "pictures" (we could call them *ideas*), which justifies the authority attributed to them. As Mal falls ill, Fa and Lok visit a cave where the hanging snow suggests giganting female forms, worshipped as goddesses.

This ice cave and the old root are natural objects. However, their function in the Neanderthal world makes them into quasi-artistic objects, equivalent to cathedral and madonna in Christian societies. The social meaning attached to them, the awe they inspire in Lok and Fa, give them their artistic dimension. Root and ice cave also remind the reader of Kant's reflections on the sublime in nature:

The apprehension of an otherwise formless and unpurposive object gives merely the occasion through which we become conscious of such a state. The object is thus employed as subjectively purposive, but it is not judged *in itself* and on account of its form (it is, as it were, a *species finalis accepta, non data*).[6]

The pleasure the Neanderthal group takes in the contemplation of the old root—the little Oa—, the social meaning attributed to it, relfect their delighted perception of contours, volumes, spacial limits. The discovery of form—and a form particularly dear to the Neanderthal group, that of a pregnant woman, divinized in the great Oa—emerges in Lok's contemplation. This discovery of form is of an esthetic nature, as implicit in Schiller's words:

"Beauty is nothing but the form of a form, and that which one calls its matter must needs be formed matter. Perfection is the form of matter, beauty, on the one hand, is the form of this perfection, the latter thus standing to beauty as matter stands to form..."[7]

Lok's delight in the "statuette" he sees in the twisted root also recalls Nietzsche's belief in the power of sculpture and of epic poetry:

"Epic and sculpture are able to (...) force the contemplative eye to a tranquil delight in individual forms (...) The sculptor, as well as his brother, the epic poet, is commited to the pure contemplation of images."[8]

In the icy recesses where they worship the great Oa, the Neanderthal people find the same mixture of esthetic and religious emotion. The cave, their version of the cathedral, has the round shape of the natural refuge, the mother's womb. The sanctuary rouses in Lok the sacred terror of the numinous, especially when the echo of his and Fa's voices bring some small stones tumbling down.

He looked up and saw the ice women. The caverns where the ivy branches led were their loins. Their thighs and bellies rose out of the cliff above. They impended so that the sky was smaller than the floor of the sanctuary. Body linked with body, they leaned out, arching over and their pointed heads flashed in the light of the moon. He saw that their loins were like caverns, blue and terrible.[9]

The mixture of fear and admiration in Lok's contemplation also supports the notion of the sublime, which, for Kant, is characterized precisely by this blending.[10] Lok's "reading" of the ice cave and of the twisted root likewise confirms their interpretation as artistic objects. For, as Louis Marin remarks, "the constitution of the [plastic] text does not lie in the painting, but in its reading."[11] The Neanderthal "cathedral" and "statuette" honour the group's most cherished value, motherhood, projected in Oa, the goddess. This might give birth to a theology, a moral code, a whole body of principles and precepts structuring a given society's worldview, its creation of the world by the mind. The Neanderthal esthetic experience —and the role it plays in framing their society—illustrates the role of art as an essential tool for the development of consciousness, in the selection and fixation of the significant in human experience. In this connection, Herbert Read remarks:

"The artistic activity might therefore be described as the crystallization, from the amorphous realm of feeling, of forms that are significant or symbolic. On the basis of this activity, a symbolic discourse becomes possible and religion, philosophy and science follow as a consequent mode of thought."[12]

This way of looking at art as a tool for knowledge helps explain why the geometrical shapes of neolithic art could precede the creation of mathematics, and the Gothic cathedral could precede Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, which it has been said to chrystallize.

The specifically aesthetic act is to take possession of a revealed segment of the real, to establish its dimension and to define its form. Reality is what we thus articulate and what we articulate is communicable only in virtue of aesthetic form.[13]

Lok's attempt to come to terms with reality through natural objects experienced as art finds a logical sequel in the more active stance of Tuami.

The *homo sapiens* artist, endowed with a degree of control over nature and with greater power of verbalization, is also, unlike the Neanderthals, able to create artistic artefacts. At first the primitive artist uses art only to try to manipulate reality. Such is function of the portrait of the Neanderthal couple. Tuami also makes a coloured clay deer, similar to the Lascaux drawings, and presumably also meant to attract animals to be hunted. The Neanderthal man watches him, as he moulds the animal in coloured clay. Hidden on top of a tree, Lok eats fruit mechanically, perceiving the artist's gestures without understanding them. The representation of the deer seems to him a real animal, created by magic—a probable metaphor of the artist's creative power:

> "Tuami became very busy. He began to throw things on to the marks. He reached forward and made important movements. There was colour on the bare patch, colour of autumn leaves, red berries, the white frost and the dull blackness that fire will leave on the rock (...)
>
> Tuami sat back. The skin that had tightened over Lok's body went wintry chill. There was another stag in the clearing. It lay where the marks had been flat on the ground. It was racing along and yet like the men's voices and the water below the fall, it stayed in the same place. Its colors were those of the breeding season, but it was very fat, its small dark eye spied Lok's eye through the ivy. He felt caught and cowered down where the food ran and tickled. He did not want to look."[14]

The pictures of the deer and of the Neanderthal couple by Tuami result from the *homo sapiens* attempt to manipulate reality, secure food or defeat the enemy. They recall Rupestrian art, the artist's response to the vital needs of his group. Tuami's carving on the haft of an ivory knife has another function: to express his bewilderment before the enigma of the universe, and his effort to work out its meaning. In the carving he represents Vivani—the tribe's *femme fatale*—nursing the Neanderthal baby, supposedly a spirit of evil, the only survivor of his family. Tuami thinks of the time when the strange baby would become adult. "What sacrifice would they be [then] forced to perform to a world of confusion?" (p. 231)

Tuami had started to carve the ivory knife meaning to stab Marlan, to take his revenge on the chief's brutal ways and to keep Vivani for himself. However, while he watches the woman with the baby on her shoulder, the artist has an apprehension of a new beauty, which he associates with evil. Tuami hesitates. "Restlessly he turned the ivory in his hands. What was the use of sharpening it against a man? Who would sharpen a point against the darkness of the world?" (p. 231)

The artist no longer wants to kill Vivani's husband. For a moment, the baby's rump and the woman's profile create a new, strangely beautiful shape, in which he glimpses the promise of an answer for his perplexity.

His inspired response is to start carving a pre-historic madonna on the handle of the dagger. He substitutes beauty for death, turning the weapon from a utilitarian tool into a thing of beauty. In the discovery of form, he finds his reconciliation and a chance to bring together some pieces from the puzzle of the universe. The novel thus ends up by pointing at another function of art: to provide an alternative way to reach for knowledge.

This is another frequent theme of the *Künstlerroman*, which also emerges in *Free Fall* and *The Spire*. In these novels, as in *The Inheritors*, the presence of the artist and of a work of art plays a double role: summing up plot structure and character portrayal, and acting as a metalinguistic commentary on artistic creation.

Notes

(1) Ulrich Weisstein, "Comparing Literature and Art: Current Trends and Prospects in Critical Theory and Methodology". In: *Literature and the Other Arts: Proceedings of the IX Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association.* Koram Konstantinovic, Steven P. Scher and Ulrich Weisstein (ed.) (The University of Innsbruck: 1981), p. 23.
(2) Michel Butor, *Les Mots dans la Peinture* (Génève: Albert Skira Editeur, 1969), p. 8. Tradução da autora.
(3) Jean Louis Scheffer, *Scénographie d'un Tableau* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1969), p. 104 and 111. Tradução da autora.
(4) William Golding, *The Inheritors* (New York: Harcout Brace & World, 1955), p. 199.
(5) *The Inheritors*, p. 219.
(6) Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trad. J. H. Bernard (London: the Heffner Press, 1951), §30, p. 121.
(7) F. Schiller, letter to Korner, 25-1-1793, in *Briefe*, Frits, Jones (org.), vol. 3. Trans. and quotation by Eva Schaper. In: "Friedrich Schiller: Adventures of a Kantian", in: *British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol 4, nº 4, October 1964, p. 357.
(8) F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Frances Golfing (New York: Doubleday, 1956), p. 141 and 39.
(9) *The Inheritors*, p. 84.
(10) In this respect, see Kant's *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Meredith (Oxford University Press, 1952), II, §27 and §23.
(11) Louis Marin, "Pour une Sémiologie Picturale" In: *Études Sémiologiques* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971), p. 54
(12) Herbert Read, *Icon and Idea. The Function of Art in the Development of Human Consciousness* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1955), p. 17.
(13) *Icon and Idea*, p. 20.
(14) *The Inheritors* p. 146.

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BORGES E POE: O OUTRO, O MESMO

LUIZ ANTÔNIO DE FIGUEIREDO

William Wilson — o conto do eu duplicado e da morte refletida no pesadelo de um espelho imaginário — é, sabemos, a ficção mais auto-biográfica de Edgar Allan Poe: até a data de nascimento dos dois William Wilson, 19 de janeiro de 1813, reflete sua vida — ele nasceu nesse mesmo dia e mês, em 1809. Entre 1817 e 1820, na Inglaterra, Poe estuda no colégio dirigido pelo pastor John Bransby, o mesmo colégio que surge no conto, só que transfigurado em um verdadeiro labirinto:

> *... que estranho aquele velho edifício! As ramificações laterais eram inumeráveis — inconcebíveis — e de tal modo* dobrando-se *sobre si mesmas, que a idéia mais exata da casa não é muito diferente das imagens que construimos do infinito.*

E o outro pesadelo, o núcleo do enredo: alguém, de nome William Wilson, sofrendo a presença de outro William Wilson —

> *o mesmo nome! a mesma figura! o mesmo dia de chegada ao colégio! E em seguida, a imitação sem sentido e obstinada de meu andar, minha voz, minhas roupas e meus gestos!*

É a própria construção de um sonho — esse espaço encharcado de tempo infinito, onde, literalmente, se apaga o limite entre eu e o outro, como na estrofe de Omar Khayyam, em *Rubayiat*:

> *Já te desdobras nas coisas criadas,*
> *E todo conhecido é teu conhecedor;*
> *Só tua alma recebe esse assombro, assustada!*
> *És o espetáculo e o espectador.*

Como no sonho, *William Wilson* reproduz essa fusão, o duplo reverbera em detalhes, numa constelação minuciosa de contrapontos: a dupla personalidade do pastor Bransby, as capas e os baralhos duplicados no jogo de *écarté* ("separado"), Glendinning propondo *dobrar* a aposta, as portas duplas do quarto, o baile de máscaras, a cena final do espelho imaginário duplicando a morte. O sonho, no texto de Poe, nunca é produto do automatismo psíquico (ilusão tardia do Surrealismo). Ele sabia que, para alcançar o efeito onírico, é necessário uma vigília rigorosa no ato criativo; sabia (como Borges) *que una cosa es atribuir a libros y a sueños un origen común y otra tolerar en los libros la inconexión y la irresponsabilidad de los sueños*. Mas o seu requinte de construção chega ao extremo, no momento em que William Wilson diz:

> *In this narrative I have therefore designated myself as William Wilson — a fictitious title not very dissimilar to the real.*

Nesta narrativa — neste conto — chamei-me de William Wilson, nome fictício — título fictício! — não muito diferente do real: WILL I AM WIL(L) SON, DESEJO SOU FILHO DO DESEJO — um trocadilho gráfico-fonético.

E o desejo, *will*, raiz do nome, se ramifica nas linhas do texto:

> *I grew self-*willed, *and I was left to the guidance of my own* will, *and became, in all but name, the master of my own actions.*
> *Tornei-me voluntarioso (auto-centrado no* desejo*), e fui entregue ao comando de meu próprio* desejo, *e me tornei, em tudo, menos no nome, o dono de minhas próprias ações.*

E o personagem fala ainda em "interferência em meu *desejo*" ("interference with my *will*"), ou submissão ao *desejo*" ("submission to the *will*").

Mas em *William* também podemos ler *Allan*, o padrasto de Poe, com quem passou a vida em eterno conflito, e que numa carta acusou a irmã do poeta, Rosália, de ser filha ilegítima. No conto, Poe se vinga de Allan em William — *a very common, if not plebeian praenomen* — nome muito comum, talvez de origem plebéia. Simultaneamente, no jogo do trocadilho (WILL SON), Poe se assume como filho do desejo de Elizabeth Arnold Poe, sua mãe, a artista de teatro ambulante que morreu aos 24 anos, quando ele só tinha dois.

Desde a infância, a miséria e a morte acompanharam Poe, até a queda final, aos 40 anos e drogado, numa sarjeta de Baltimore. A humilhação, a infelicidade e a discórdia povoaram sua vida, e talvez seu desejo secreto esteja contido naquela estrofe de Fray Luis de León, que ele sabia de cor:

> *Vivir quiero conmigo,*
> *gozar quiero del bien que debo al cielo,*
> *a solas, sin testigo,*
> *libre de amor, de celo,*
> *de odio, de esperanza, de recelo.*

(Canción de la vida solitaria)

Mas Poe não conseguiu a solidão pacífica, ou *gozar o bem do céu, por recebê-lo*. Ao contrário, sua solidão foi estigma — a morte da mãe, de sua prima e esposa Virgínia, aos 26 anos, com quem se casou secretamente em 1835 (ele, com 26 anos; ela, com 13). Por isso, a estrofe de Fray Luis de León (1528-1591) sintetiza melhor a vida de Poe. Biografias são necessárias, mas não passam de um número finito de palavras grafadas, mal tocam na complexa trama de prazer e dor que envolve uma existência. Afinal, quem foi Edgar Allan Poe? Deixemos que Borges responda:

> Hay un libro titulado El florecimiento de la Nueva Inglaterra, *de Van Wyck Brooks. Este libro trata de un hecho extraordinario que sólo la astrologia puede explicar: el florecimiento de hombres-genios, en una breve parte de Estados Unidos, durante la primera mitad del siglo XIX. Podríamos nombrar a Emily Dickinson, Herman Melville, Thoreau, Emerson, William James, Henry James y, desde luego, a Edgar Allan Poe.*
>
> *Yo creo que Poe fue un extraordinario poeta romántico y fue más extraordinario en el conjunto de su obra, en nuestra memoria de su obra que en una de las páginas de su obra. Es más extraordinario en prosa que en verso.*

O leitor moderno talvez encontre nessa prosa — extraordinária — um excesso de ênfase, se esquecendo de que a ênfase, em Poe, se ajusta à enormidade sobrenatural dos temas. Ele foi, acima de tudo, *un proyector de sombras múltiples.*

Cuántas cosas surgen de Poe? O conto policial, a ficção científica, o poeta como um racional da intuição, a poesia como sonho (ou pesadelo) construído. E surge a obra do próprio Borges, igualmente múltipla e original, projetando suas luzes num estilo que foi se apurando ao longo do tempo.

> *El tiempo me ha enseñado algunas astucias: eludir los sinónimos, que tienen la desventaja de sugerir diferencias imaginarias; eludir hispanismos, argentinismos, arcaismos y neologismos; preferir las palabras habituales a las palabras asombrosas; intercalar en un relato rasgos circunstanciales, exigidos ahora por el lector; simular pequeñas incertitudes, ya que si la realidad es precisa la memoria no lo es; narrar los hechos (esto lo aprendí en Kipling y en las sagas de Islandia) como si no los entendiera del todo; recordar que las normas anteriores no son obrigaciones y que el tiempo se encargará de abolirlas.*

Tomemos *El Sur, que es acaso mi mejor cuento.* Como *William Wilson*, é declaradamente autobiográfico: a descendência germano-argentina de Dahlmann é a descendência anglo-argentina de Borges; seu avô paterno, Francisco Borges (que no conto é materno e Francisco Flores) encontra a

morte, em 1874 numa guerra civil. Como Dahlmann, Borges também foi bibliotecário, também sofreu o ferimento, a febre e o risco da morte, e leu *As mil e uma noites* (terá sido o *Quixote*?) numa edição com gravuras em aço.

Como Poe, Borges construiu *O Sul* com uma atmosfera de sonho: o quarto do hospital é uma cela do inferno — um pesadelo, e as descrições da cidade e da viagem são paisagens deformadas. O percurso do sol, da manhã ao crepúsculo, vai transfigurando tudo — o carro, a planície, os vagões do trem. *O Sul* também é a história de um duplo, Juan Dahlmann, que se identificava com o passado guerreiro de sua vertente argentina: Dahlmann gostaria de ser Juan, e quem criou esse sonho foi a metade alemã de sua alma. Na cena final do duelo (de novo *Willian Wilson*, repetido e transformado), o sonho reencarna na vida, o tempo da memória se atualiza no tempo sucessivo, e então a eternidade se refaz como uma frágil esperança... Dahlmann aceita duelar não só porque se lembra das (mil e uma) noites más do hospital, mas porque está fascinado pelo eterno. A vida — suas simetrias, seus anacronismos — lhe oferece a chance de resgatar o gesto argentino do avô e inscrever o sonho na vida e no nome — Juan Dahlmann, *Juan del Alma*, outro filho do desejo — e da decisão.

Certa vez, falando sobre seu pai e sua avó, Borges disse que eles morreram *ciegos, sonrientes y valerosos, como yo también espero morir.* Assim, *O Sul* pode ser lido como o desejo secreto de Borges de repetir a coragem de seus antepassados, porque sente que a repetição de um gesto essencial faz renascer *esa fatigada esperanza, la eternidad...* Sob os temas d*O Sul* está o tempo, esse *problema para nosotros, un tembloroso y exigente problema, acaso el más vital de la metafísica...* Se o passado (a memória) são imagens de um sonho reencarnando no presente, a vida bem pode ser uma sucessão de estados oníricos — quem sabe um pesadelo. É nessa dúvida metafísica que se inscreve *O Sul* — e *William Wilson*.

Mas William Wilson está lançado na desrazão de seu pesadelo, só sentindo que o duplo trazia o atropelo de lembranças fragmentárias de tempos imemoriais. A morte do sósia é uma *fissura* irreparável no seu eu. Juan Dahlmann, ao contrário, escolhe sonhar, e a atualização do sonho (também na morte) é um *reencontro*, uma fusão com seu duplo.

Entre tantas coisas, a obra de Borges mostra, repetindo Poe, que a poesia é imaginário e construção num só tempo, e que a complexidade temática (o tempo, a permanência no sucessivo, os deslizes do duplo...) pode ser expressa numa escritura enxuta, quase falada — um dom da cegueira.

> *No permití que la ceguera me acobardara. Además mi editor me dio una excelente noticia* (Borges estava com quase 80 anos): *me dijo que si yo le entregaba treinta poemas por año, él podia publicar un libro. Treinta poemas significan una disciplina, sobre todo cuando uno tiene que dictar cada línea; pero, al mismo tiempo, la suficiente libertad, ya que es imposible que en un año no le ocurran a uno treinta ocasiones de poesía.*

Com pleno domínio da palavra, Borges chegou àquele ponto desejado por todo criador: extrair a poesia dos detalhes que povoam o cotidiano, e que, se não nos emocionam, é porque perdemos a capacidade de fruir as coisas mais simples: *el hecho estético es algo tan evidente, tan inmediato, tan indefinible como el amor, el sabor de la fruta, el agua.*

Poe não teve essa felicidade; sua vida, desde a morte da mãe até a própria morte, foi marcada pela neurose, o alcoolismo e sucessivas perdas. Conheceu, simultaneamente, a miséria e a fama — que pode ser outro nome da miséria; foi, literalmente, um ser dividido. No poema *Cambridge* (cidade de Nova Inglaterra, perto de Boston, terra natal de Poe), escreveu Borges:

> *Somos nuestra memoria,*
> *somos ese quimérico museo de formas inconstantes,*
> *ese montón de espejos rotos.*

Os versos se aplicam a Poe. William Wilson, ao ouvir o duplo pronunciar seu nome, sentia que *a entonação evocava obscuras visões de minha mais remota infância — memórias estranhas, confusas e atropeladas de um tempo em que a memória não havia nascido.* É a dispersão em busca da unidade mal vislumbrada, que só retém o acúmulo de espelhos em caco.

Nada disso impediu (fascinante paradoxo!) que Poe produzisse uma obra marcada pela não-dispersão, pela lucidez — não parece a obra de alguém em perpétuo pesadelo. Se William Wilson é um ser tumultuado, o conto é rigorosamente coeso. A paz de Juan Dahlmann e o tumulto de William Wilson de algum modo correspondem aos homens que forjaram esses personagens.

Agora, as imagens do fim.

Após a morte de Virgínia, em 1847, Poe publica *Eureka*, texto hermético que ele considerava sua obra máxima, mas que foi um enorme fracasso editorial. Novembro, 1848: tentativa de suicídio, com láudano. 1849: entre crises de alcoolismo, apaixona-se simultaneamente por diversas mulheres, entre elas um amor de juventude, Elmira Royster, agora viúva, com quem marca casamento para o dia 17 de outubro. 23 de setembro: parte de Richmond para Nova York, a fim de trazer a tia, Maria Clemm (mãe de Virgínia) para assistir à cerimônia. De passagem por Baltimore, Poe teria sido drogado e manipulado por cabos eleitorais que o fizeram votar como eleitor falso — imagem final do duplo. É encontrado por seu amigo, Dr. James E. Snodgrass, em 3 de outubro, e após três dias de delírio, morre no dia 7.

Novembro, 1985: em Buenos Aires, onde morava, ninguém sabe o paradeiro de Jorge Luis Borges. O que se soube, depois: atacado por doença incurável, Borges tinha partido para Genebra, *una de mis patrias*, para aí morrer, aos 86 anos, a 14 de junho de 1986. Junto, a secretária Maria Kodama, com quem se casou poucos dias antes do fim. Se não elegeu sua morte (como Juam Dahlmann), pôde exercitar a coragem e organizar os últimos dias. O inverso de Poe, perdido em Baltimore. Desgarrados entre

si pelo modo de viver e de morrer, eles se encontram no ponto que mais importa: ninguém pode, conscientemente, prescindir do sonho construído que eles inventaram.

*

Este texto consta de minha tese de Livre Docência — *Edgar Allan Poe e Jorge Luis Borges: o outro, o mesmo* — defendida junto ao Departamento de Literatura da Faculdade de Ciências e Letras, UNESP de Assis. Às vésperas da defesa, graças ao Professor Doutor Carlos Daghlian, tomei conhecimento do ensaio de Sigrid Rénaux — "Paralelismos entre William Wilson e Sr. Goliádkin, os duplos de Poe e Dostoievski" (*Estudos Anglo-Americanos*, n.os 7-8, São José do Rio Preto, ABRAPUI, 1983-1984). Aí, anteriormente à minha "descoberta", já se decifrara o trocadilho — WILLIAM WILSON/WILL I AM WIL(L) SON.

A ausência de outras indicações bibiográficas no corpo do trabalho visou intensificar o fluxo e o prazer da leitura. Reproduzo, agora a bibliografia básica utilizada:

Borges, Jorge Luis, *História de la eternidad* (1936); *Ficciones* (1944); *Elogio de la sombra* (1969). In: *Obras completas*. Buenos Aires, Emecé, 1974.
_____, *Siete noches*. Madrid, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980.
_____, *Borges oral*. 3ª ed., Barcelona, Bruguera, 1983.
Poe, Edgar Allan, *The complete tales and poems*. New York, Penguin Books, 1983.

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INITIATION AND DISILLUSIONMENT IN SHERWOOD ANDERSON'S "THE EGG"

CLEIDE ANTONIA RAPUCCI

Childhood, adolescence, maturity—the process of transition from one to another of these stages has attracted the attention of many writers. Why does the process of growth so often cause disillusionment and frustration? How is the world perceived by the child's eyes? What does a boy expect from the adults around him?

In this short story, "The Egg", the central figure is an "I" who looks back to his boyhood and remembers an incident that he now realizes to have been crucial to his life, a moment in which he took one of those painful leaps that bring the process of growth to a climax.

The structural base of "The Egg" is an oral narration, which starts with a positive characterization: "My father was, I am sure, intended bv nature to be a cheerful, kindly man".[1] Besides being "cheerful" and "kindly", the father was "quite happy". And the narrator gives the reason for this paradisiacal stage: his father had "no notion of trying to rise in the world".

The second paragraph introduces the negative element, disturbing his father's peacefulness—he gets married and something happens to the couple. They become ambitious. The narrator presents his diagnosis: the American passion for getting up in the world. The narration is filtered through the point of view of the adult with his sense of value characterized by bitterness.

It is remarkable that he attributes the responsibility to the mother. The sources of her "guilt" are two: reading books and magazines and dreaming of a change. The narrator shows her as the instigator: "she induced father to give up his place as a farmhand". And he describes the mother as a "tall silent woman", with "troubled gray eyes". Each noun in the description has a physical and a psychological meaning: tall/gray (physical attributes) and silent/troubled (psychological characterization). The latter adjectives show the complexity of this woman: in spite of being "troubled", she remains "silent". But she seems to know how to use the words, since she is the one who makes the decisions.

The first adventure of the family is on the chicken farm: "I grew into

boyhood on the place and got my first impression of life there". Since that world is hostile, these are "impressions of disaster", and the narrator characterizes himself as a "gloomy man inclined to see the darker side of life".

The chicken is thereafter a crucial symbol, as well as the egg. The narrator enumerates the disasters that can happen to a chicken, in the "dreadful cycle" that is life. And it is easy to notice a similarity to human life: the egg (the beginning), the process of growing up, the necessity of food, disease problems, maturity, reproduction, death. It is clear that this is a pessimistic vision of life, or even a false one, for it simply considers its animal aspect. But this is the perspective through which the boy perceives life. Now he knows that "one hopes for so much from a chicken and is so dreadfully disillusioned". Following the events in the story, we could replace the word *chicken* in that sentence by *man* or *life*, and we would have the final balance of the story—the failure of the parents' dream of success, the boy's disillusionment towards life.

The second adventure of the family, the restaurant business, was also one of the mother's ideas. The family ("a tiny caravan of hope") leaves the chicken farm, but their lives continue to be centered on the egg—they take live chickens with them, as well as the deformed ones preserved in alcohol. The malformed chickens represent the grotesqueness of the father, who is ill-suited to his new way of life.

Another symbol is the baby carriage, which is useless because it is motionless (the wheels were broken). Could we infer that this is a symbol of the boy's disillusionment, his "broken" childhood, already interrupted in the presence of so many disasters? In fact, the boy *walks*, going towards his growth. He wants to go to a "beautiful place", without chicken farms "where life was a happy eggless affair". However, this will not be possible. His early life has been tainted by pessimism and now he does not allow himself to be happy (hopping and singing) because he thinks this is not right for "one who, like myself, had been raised on a chicken farm where death was a daily visitor".

We are thus aware that nothing will change him; the process of initiation and disillusionment has already occurred. The sequence of the story will just reinforce it.

One day, while the mother slept, the father "had time to think", for her influence is temporarily absent. He wants to entertain the customers. The family tries to substitute "smiles" for "glum looks". The narrator uses a technical word to characterize the phenomenon, an *infection* he catches. But while the mother smiles at the boarders, he smiles at the cat. There is no difference in his conception.

By the way, this idea ruined the father—or an egg (*the* egg) ruined him, since the narrator clearly associates *eggs* and *idea*: "There was something pre-natal about the way eggs kept themselves connected with the development of his idea". The episode between the father and Joe Kane shows the "final triumph of the egg", as the narrator concludes. This is the father's

absolute failure, the boy's consummation of the process of disillusionment. The father "began to cry like a boy, and I, carried away by his grief, cried with him". But the narrator does not say that *he* cried *like a boy*. He has in his blood the question on the relationship between the egg and the hen associated with the relationship of son to father.

Then, as Irving Howe asserts, the egg "dominates the story with a crazy and malevolent exuberance".[2] There are two main forces that are the moving agents: the father and the egg; and we realize the "sheer power of the egg to frustrate the father".[3] Human defeat is what the boy learns from this; man's very hunger for life is the source of his humiliations: his wish to live becomes his impulse to death. The energy of the egg destroys man.

Therefore, this short story, told in first person, represents the child's growing self-consciousness, the painful process of breaking free from the child's world, which ends in disillusionment. The boy's hopes and dreams of a fuller life, far from his environment, are frustrated. This endangers the adult's view of the world; he will just "see the darker side of life", with "eyes burned with anguish and anger".

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Notes

(1) All the quotations from "The Egg" were taken from *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*, ed. R.V. Cassill (New York, 1981), pp. 6-14.
(2) *Shewood Anderson*, William Sloane (New York, 1951), p. 168.
(3) *Ibid.*, p. 170.

ORDENAÇÃO DO CAOS PELA POESIA

ALMIRO PISETTA

Este trabalho está dividido em duas partes: análise e meta-análise. A meta-análise visa a explicitar o caminho percorrido para se atingir a interpretação da análise. Tal caminho vai do extremo da ignorância ao extremo do prazer estético proporcionado pela apropriação adequada da obra. Essa apropriação adequada, que alguns chamam de entendimento, é o resultado de um conjunto tríplice de noções formuladas ou concretizadas na presença do texto. Há as *noções inerentes ao leitor*, que ele vai, consciente ou inconscientemente, buscar na memória e na imaginação ativada pela meditação; há as *noções inerentes à obra* do poeta, que se percebem através de um processo de leitura com referências internas; e há as *noções externas*, que se conseguem lendo a crítica especializada.

Na análise das três poesias de Wallace Stevens que aqui apresentamos, as seguintes noções podem ser consideradas externas, ou tomadas da crítica especializada: a oposição constante realidade/imaginação; a busca de semelhanças que permitem a metamorfose ou metáfora; a negação das doutrinas institucionalizadas, substituídas por doutrinas pessoais. As noções inerentes à obra, que nasceram da comparação dos poemas entre si ou deles com outros poemas ou escritos de Stevens, são as seguintes: a noção de realidade duplamente composta de objetos naturais e de artefatos; a noção de artefato como objeto capaz de ordenar e dominar os objetos naturais que só existem em estado de caos; a noção da força (destruidora) da poesia. Finalmente, as noções inerentes ao leitor, entendido como indivíduo resultante de um processo histórico e apanhado num determinado momento histórico, são as seguintes: para a primeira poesia: a noção de perfeição associada pelos gregos à forma do círculo; a noção do significado religioso associada pela Bíblia aos lugares altos; para as outras duas poesias: a noção do êxtase estético associada pelos românticos à experiência do sublime; a noção de alteridade associada pelo pensamento pós-modernista ao "*leitor*" ou receptor de obra de arte.

A partir desse conjunto tríplice de noções construiu-se a análise que se segue. WALLACE STEVENS (1879-1955), para quem a realidade/imaginação

foi sempre um dos principais objetos de observação e meditação, via naquela o "*velho caos*" e nesta o instrumento mediante o qual o poeta consegue propiciar ao homem — possuído da "*paixão pela ordem*" — momentos de experiência extasiante, caraterizados pela unificação da realidade objetiva e subjetiva. Três breves composições poéticas foram escolhidas para ilustrar, de maneira clara e distinta, esse aspecto da filosofia de Stevens: "Anedocte of the Jar" (*Harmonium*, 1923), "The Idea of Order at Key West" (*Ideas of Order*, 1936) e "The House Was Quiet and the World Was Calm" (*Transport to Summer*, 1946).

A *realidade*, na poesia de Stevens, é constituída não somente pelo conjunto de tudo o que existe independentemente do homem, mas também pelas coisas que o homem criou. A própria poesia é parte da estrutura da realidade. Essa dupla realidade, feita de objetos naturais e de objetos criados ou artefatos, está presente nas composições aqui analisadas. Assim temos, na primeira poesia, o matagal desalinhado e o cântaro; na segunda, a voz selvagem do mar e um canto de mulher; na terceira, o leitor e o livro.

A realidade total é contraditória. Se, por um lado, pode ser caracterizada como um "velho caos",[1] por outro lado ela, em seu conjunto, constitui-se no "texto da vida". Cabe ao homem ver no caos o texto, que se revela através de semelhanças, que possibilitam a metáfora, que, por sua vez, é "poesia no seu nascedouro".[2]

A interpretação da realidade ou leitura do texto da vida requer a ação da *imaginação*. A imaginação, mais do que simples faculdade criadora de imagens, é a capacidade de se perceber as relações ocultas, de se estabelecer semelhanças, de se ligar as coisas da realidade. A imaginação possibilita a poesia, que tem o poder de destruir velhas crenças ("Poetry Is a Destructive Force"), mas também tem o poder de criar e recriar novas crenças individuais. Foi graças à ação da imaginação que o cântaro foi colocado no alto da colina, onde aparece em estado de perfeição, como centro detentor de força ordenadora e dominadora, ocupando o lugar e desempenhando o papel tradicionalmente reservado a monumentos e entidades religiosas. A arte, a historieta sugere, tomou o lugar da religião. Foi também graças à imaginação que a voz informe do mar, com seus turbilhões sem sentido feitos de água e vento, foi totalmente subjugada pelo canto da mulher, cuja performance, além de concentrar em si a própria essência do mar, também é capaz de se estender no tempo e no espaço, "*arrumando, aprofundando, encantando a noite*", impondo uma ordem que afeta os circunstantes até na profundeza de suas origens. Finalmente, foi também graças à imaginação que o leitor e o livro se fundiram numa coisa só, numa verdade que engloba tempo e espaço.

Em cada uma das três poesias que estamos analisando está implícita ou explícita a presença do artista e do receptor da obra de arte. O papel do artista, curiosamente, parece ter menor importância que o do receptor. Assim, nem sabemos quem fez o cântaro ou quem escreveu o livro. Essa impressão, porém, se dilui quando observamos a ênfase com que o poeta descreve a mulher e seu desempenho de cantora: é ela que faz a canção, e a canção contém o espírito; ela é o único artífice do mundo unificado

que resulta de seu poderoso canto. Isso talvez nos devesse levar a concluir que também nas outras duas composições o milagre da ordenação de caos, da unificação da realidade objetiva e subjetiva, em última análise, acontece graças ao desempenho do artista, seja ele oleiro ou escritor ou cantor.

O milagre, porém, só se completa se houver para a obra de arte um receptor competente. O receptor, então, antes de ser o grande beneficiário da arte, deve ser um receptor capaz. Na primeira poesia, o receptor, que identificamos no pronome "*I*", mostra sua capacidade ao colocar o cântaro no alto da colina, o que lhe propicia uma perspectiva nova e reveladora; na segunda poesia, os receptores, que identificamos no pronome "*We*", mostram sua capacidade através de sua sensibilidade, quando, além de perceberem o efeito do poder da arte, também se mostram capazes de analisar tal poder, ao mesmo tempo que analisam o papel desempenhado pela artista; finalmente, na terceira poesia, temos dois receptores: um explícito, o leitor; outro implícito, o observador do leitor. Ambos se mostram competentes. A competência do leitor está evidenciada na sua absorção total — absorção conseguida não sem esforço de vontade e predisposição favorável: deliberadamente o leitor se debruça sobre o livro e deliberadamente busca no livro a sua verdade. A competência do observador aparece na sua capacidade de análise da absorção, que é o próprio assunto da poesia.

Retornando ao título inicial, vemos nestas poesias uma tentativa de ordenar, individualmente, o velho caos que é a realidade circunstante. Na concretização de sua tentativa, Stevens se serve da força criadora da imaginação, o que o aproxima dos poetas românticos.[3] A imaginação, porém, não é privilégio do artista; é também do outro — do receptor, e isso possibilita uma cadeia infinita de experiências estéticas. Nisso Stevens é moderno, e mais moderno ainda ele se apresenta na medida em que faz da arte e do artefato um tema constante de sua poesia. Como romântico, ele se vincula à corrente do otimismo individualista americano, cuja maior expressão foi Walt Whitman. Como modernista, ele aparece como a voz talvez mais forte dos poetas americanos modernos que ficaram em casa, em oposição aos "*internacionalistas*" Ezra Pound e T.S. Eliot.

NOTAS

(1) Na parte final do antológico poema "Sunday Morning" lê-se: "*We live in the old chaos of the sun*". Wallace Stevens, *The Collected Poems*. New York: Vintage Books, 1982, p. 70.

(2) O conceito de realidade como "*texto da vida*" e a teoria das semelhanças como "*poesia no seu nascedouro*" são apresentados por Stevens em "*Three Academic Pieces: I*", que aparece em *Wallace Stevens* — A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Marie Borroff. Englewood, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963, pp. 24-29.

(3) Frank Kermode, *Wallace Stevens*. Endinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960, p. 58. "*Esse poema pode ser tomado como o ponto culminante, talvez tardio, de toda uma época de poesia que começa em Coledridge e Wordsworth; celebra o poder da mente sobre o que eles chamavam de 'um universo de morte'. O poema significará sempre alguma coisa desde que tenhamos algum tipo de crença na lâmpada que Coleridge pôs no lugar do espelho de Locke. Recebemos apenas aquilo que damos.*"

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LANGSTON HUGHES'S ORESTEIA

GEORGE MONTEIRO

We mustn't forget to make that trip to Brazil. Reckon you and me would be o'fays down there—no?
Arna Bontemps to Langston Hughes[1]

Langston Hughes (1902-1967), perhaps the finest of the Harlem Renaissance writers, "illustrated well the mulatto antiquity of the [Black] vanguard," writes Joel Williamson; "two of James Hughes's [Langston's father's] four great-grandfathers were white."[2] Perhaps that fact is sufficient to account for Hughes's early and lasting empathy for the "tragic mulatto" in the United States. As early as 1925 he imagined the American mulatto's plight to be inherently painful. He wanted no part of the sanguine view of the mulatto expressed by others, such as the writer Georgia Douglas Johnson, whose 1922 poem "Exaltation" reads in its entirety:

Not wholly this or that,
but wrought
Of alien bloods am I,
A product of the interplay
Of traveled hearts.
Estranged, yet not estranged, I stand
All comprehending;
From my estate
I view earth's frail dilemma;
Scion of fused strength am I,
All understanding,
Nor this nor that
Contains me.[3]

Hughes, whose features and light skin prompted the observation by his friend Arna Bontemps quoted as an epigraph to this piece, saw the plight of the American mulatto, with which he closely identified, very differently.

Some of the work for which Hughes became famous is on the theme of the mulatto. In 1925 he published the poem "Cross," which, along with the poem "Mulatto," published in 1927 (it opens with the challenge: "I am your son, white man"[4]) remained for the rest of Hughes's life an obligatory part of his public performances.

Out of the poems "Cross" and "Mulatto" emerged a play that in draft form even carried the working title of "Cross: A Play of the Deep South." Later given the title of *Mulatto*, the play complicates Hughes's treatment of the tragic mulatto theme but its affective power, oddly enough, does not match that of Hughes's early three-quatrain monologue, "Cross."

"Against the backdrop of time, he invokes dynamic feeling in order to subordinate and control personal loneliness," writes R. Baxter Miller biographically of the great Northamerican poet, "but he never excludes the communal response to social history. In retrospection, the Black poet plays down the narrative of miscegenation" in his quintessential poem "Cross."[5]

My old man's a white old man
And my old mother's black.
If ever I cursed my white old man
I take my curses back.

If ever I cursed my black old mother
And wished she were in hell,
I'm sorry for that evil wish
And now I wish her well.

My old man died in a fine big house.
My ma died in a shack.
I wonder where I'm gonna die,
Being neither white nor black?[5]

If Hughes plays down "the narrative of miscegenation," he does so by focusing not only on the mulatto's specific difficulties endured throughout his life but on the matter of where he will spend his last hour. Where will he find a final home? "Spoken by a once bitter, now repentant but still confused young mulatto ("I wonder where I'm gonna die, / Being neither white nor black?')," writes Hughes's biographer, Arnold Rampersad, "the poem ... on the theme of the tragic mulatto ... would reduce audiences, both black and white, to an uneasy silence for decades to come."[7]

The complexity of this poem begins with its punning title. "Cross" signifies first of all, of course, the dilemma posed for the speaker by his genetic and sociological reality (society identifies him as a crossracial being—falling between the "pure" white and the "pure" black); then, it points to the perhaps excruciating life that this insistent identification has forced upon him; and, finally, it suggests the Christian cross-tree used to crucify Jesus.

The speaker identifies himself as the child of miscegenation: the progeny of a white father and a black mother—the former affluent enough to die in "a fine big house," the latter poor enough to die in "a shack." He ponders ruefully about death—not about when it will take place but where he will be when it happens.

Being both white and black and therefore neither entirely black nor entirely white, this person is perforce excluded from both his father's house

and his mother's. Behind this fact lies the Scriptural notion that in the Lord's house there are many mansions. But there is apparently no rightful "mansion" for this black-white/white-black to die in. He has no home such as the kind that a person does not have to earn (to paraphrase one of Robert Frost's definitions of "home" in "The Death of the Hired Man") or one where they have to take you when you go there (paraphrasing Frost's second definition from the same poem).

The speaker's cross, then, may be seen as the curse (a word that shares its three consonants with the noun in the title) to have been born without a birthright. Here, the term "curse" used in conjunction with "house" may well invoke memories of the Greeks—the murderous house of Atreus, perhaps, with its accursed familial relationships. Like Orestes, the son who is compelled to kill his mother, the speaker of Hughes's poem might well regret his birth, though unlike his Greek counterpart, he takes no revenge. His is the more Christian way (if we can still call it revenge) by voicing regret at having cursed his father and his mother. If the child did curse them, he now says that he wishes them well, even though the truth remains undeniable that their coming together condemned him to his fate. It is worth reiterating that the speaker's preoccupation, as it is in a way for Orestes, is not with the uncertain time of his death but that he has no "house" in which to die.

This either black-white or white-black man (or the man, as the poem says, who is neither white nor black) bears the cross of an indeterminate identity that he must carry to his grave and which, given the determining cultural "truths" of his time and particular place, was unacceptable to the society into which he was born nearly four decades after the Abolition of Slavery in the United States of America during the Civil War.

Notes

(1) *Arna Bongemps—Langston Hughes Letters, 1925-1967*, sel. and ed. Charles H. Nichols (New York: Dodd Mead, 1980), p. 77. This epigraph is taken from Bontemps' letter of March 18, 1941.
(2) Joel Williamson, *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United States* (New York: Free Press/London: Collier Macmillan, 1980), p. 146.
(3) *Bronze* (Boston: B. J. Brimmer, 1922), p. 59.
(4) *Selected Poems of Langston Hughes* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 160.
(5) *The Art and Imagination of Langston Hughes* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1989), p. 49.
(6) *Selected Poems*, p. 158. "Cross" was first published in *Crisis*, 31 (Dec. 1925), 66, and "Mulatto" in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, 3 (Jan. 29, 1927), 547. *Mulatto* was produced in New York City in 1935. An opera version of *Mulatto*, retitled *The Barrier* was performed in 1950.
(7) *The Life of Langston Hughes: Volume I: 1902-1941: I, Too, Sing America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 104, 191.

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SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER: ATONEMENT AS A WAY OUT OF FRAGMENTATION

ELIANE B. BERUTTI

The play *Suddenly Last Summer* written in 1957 opened in an off-Broadway theater on January 7, 1958 together with *Something Unspoken* under the title of *Garden District*.

Sebastian Venable, the unseen protagonist of *Suddenly Last Summer*, is the element that links all the other characters. His life and mainly his death are at the center of this work by Williams. Accordingly, the aim of this reading of the play is to study Sebastian Venable's fragmentation and the means he employs to try to overcome it—atonement. All aspects of Sebastian's life and personality are not explored in the play; however, his role as son and artist as well as his relationship with others, God and the universe are presented and, consequently, his fragmentation is shown.

Sebastian is a poet. Every summer he travels with his mother, Violet, producing on this trip the one poem he writes during the year. The summer before the play opens Violet could not travel with him due to a stroke. Catharine Holly, his cousin, goes with him instead. Unable to write his poem, he goes with her to the Island of Cabeza de Lobo. There he is violently killed through an act of cannibalism. Violet Venable, in order to save her son's reputation, wants Doctor Cukrowicz to perform lobotomy on her niece so that she stops "babbling" the terrible story concerning Sebastian's death. These events take place off-stage before the play starts.

Both in *The Glass Menagerie* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* Williams has made use of narration in order to explore his characters and the mood of the play more thoroughly. However, the same does not happen exactly in *Suddenly Last Summer*. With the exception of the introduction to the play in which he establishes the mood of the action to follow, the playwright as narrator uses mainly dialogue to convey his ideas and develop the characters.

This time the narrative voice is Catharine's. In Scene Four, she narrates not only part of her own story and how she got involved with Sebastian but also the horrible facts which led to his death. It is important to observe here that Catharine's voice is both the core and climax of the play illustrating Violet's cry: "Cut this hideous story out of her brain!"[1]

Since Sebastian does not appear in the play (he is already dead before it opens), all the facts about his life are revealed to the audience through his mother and cousin. Apparently, this device creates a distorted vision of Sebastian. The focus of narration seems to prevent the audience from having a complete, unbiased view of him since these two characters refer to Sebastian as they see him. In this play, due to the absence of the main character one can only know him through the people related to him. After being exposed to both Sebastian's mother's and cousin's revelations, the audience like Doctor Cukrowicz, is left to make a decision—either to choose whose view is the true one or to accept both as best describing the fragmented personality of Sebastian Venable.

It is true that spectators, at the end of the play, may be led to agree with the Doctor: "I think we ought at least to consider the possibility that the girl's story could be true... " (423) due to the unflattering depiction of Violet Venable's character.

Violet does not treat her son as such. She is proud of forming with him "a famous couple. People didn't speak of Sebastian and his nother or Mrs. Venable and her son, they said 'Sebastian and Violet, Violet and Sebastian'..." (362) Rejecting her husband's company even at his very end, Violet refuses to get old. Skipping one generation, going on a strict diet and looking like Sebastian's wife not his mother, she continually fights for youth and beauty. Needless to say that Sebastian in his turn follows in his mother's footsteps—at forty he looks twenty, he lives on pills and salads, he enjoys being seen as his mother's companion. To Violet, their relationship is fantastic and constructive. Living with Sebastian is compared to creating a work of art: "... we would—carve out each day of our lives like a piece of sculpture." (363)

However, Catharine Holly does not see her cousin-aunt relationship in the same light. She refers to it as "that string of pearls that old mothers hold their sons by like a—sort of a—sort of—*umbilical* cord..." (409) Catharine considers her aunt an over-protective, possessive and domineering mother to whom her cousin Sebastian succumbs. When Violet has the aneurism "the umbilical cord" is broken. Because of his mother's disfiguration Sebastian cannot go with her on his usual trips so he takes Catharine. The latter mistakingly tries to show him her love which he avoids since he can only accept it in "a sort of motherly way." (397)

Unlike his mother, Catharine does not find his way of keeping young healthy. Quite the contrary, to her Sebastian is "really half-starved from living oin pills and salads..." (375) Likewise, she connects his starvation to the way he teats people—like "items on a menu." (375) Being starved from real food as well as from real communication with people and unable to satisfy his hunger and isolation, Sebastian turns his appetite to people.

An important aspect of Sebastian's fragmented personality lies in his artistic talent which contributes to the understanding of his incompletion as presented by Williams.

Sebastian's role as an artist is indeed a very peculiar one. In the C12TS

manuscript, Mrs. Venable states that he has several vocations—besides being a poet he is also a musician and a painter. As a musician he composes music in 12-tone scale which differs from ordinary music both in strictness and purity of form. As a painter he has invented a new kind of egg tempera. He uses such a light pencil when he sketches that it requires a closer look in a strong light in order to see the line on the paper.

In the published version, Sebastian Venable writes only one single poem a year. The act of writing takes place in the summer when he and Violet always travel. "The other nine months of the year were really only a preparation." (354) "The imagery of the play brings Sebastian into focus as a hothouse poet needing nine months to deliver a work."[2] During the trip Violet helps him constantly since it is very difficult for him to write his poem. Violet compares a poet's vocation to the web of a spider and last summer without her, Catharine "wasn't able to keep the web from—beaking..." (408) Every summer Sebastian carries with him the Blue Jay notebook; still, the last one contained only the title "Poem of Summer" and the date—1935. No poem has been written in it. Besides writing only one poem a year, Sebastian does not want to show it to anyone. "Sebastian does not write poetry to communicate; rather he writes it ritualistically. Only his mother praises his work; no one else assesses its worth."[3] Sebastian even uses an eighteenth century hand press so that he can print his poem by himself and no one can see it. The reason for this is that he refuses to have a public name. "He *dreaded, abhorred*!—false values that come from being publicly known, from fame, from personal—exploitation..." (353) And the irony contained in this quotation is obvious for Sebastian was a person who really enjoyed being surrounded by people and attracting attention to himself and his "little entourage." As everything in his life is peculiar so is his career as an artist. Refusing to being known as an artist still alive does not necessarily mean that Sebastian avoids being famous and remembered. Once again Williams explores the paradox in Sebastian's life for he "thought it unfitting to ever take any action about anything whatsoever!" (419)

It is impossible to dissociate Sebastian's fragmented artistic vein from his own fragmented personal life for both of them reflect his inner incompletion. According to Mrs. Venable: "... a poet's life is his work and his work is his life in a special sense..."; "the work of a poet is the life of a poet and—vice-versa, the life of a poet is the work of a poet..." (352) Unquestionably, Sebastian's last poem was his own death. "Without me (Mrs. Venable) he died last summer, that was his last summer's pooem." (354) Sebastian consciously seeks his death in the form of cannibalism.

> He literally gives himself to medicants who eat and drink his flesh and blood. Thus, the old lady, with Sebastian's blood on the steps of her altar-ego—elevates the thin volume like "the Host before the altar," and the artist is purified and transcendent.[4]

As far as Sebastian's relationship with others goes, *Suddenly Last Summer* presents two ways of treating this subject which suggests another fragmentary aspect of his being. One is through his mother Violet who is very proud of Sebastian's aristocratic way of dealing with people and the other is shown through his cousin Catharine who reveals to the audience a version less romantic than Violet's. According to the latter, "Sebastian was a snob! He was a snob about personal charm in people, he insisted upon good looks in people around him, and, oh, he had a perfect little court of young and beautiful people around him always, wherever he has..." (359) It is perfectly clear that Sebastian is also peculiar in thye way he relates to other people. He does not make friends the same way that people normally do—following their emotions, having similar desires. He carefully selects the people who will be around him. Being such a snob he does not have a circle of friends; on the contrary, as long as someone had beauty, talent and youth this person would be allowed to be part of the "entourage" that followed him like a prince. Later in the play Mrs. Venable mentions another trait of Sebastian's personality that reveals his detachment from the common people. Sebastian would never swim in a public beach. Contesting Catharine's story she asks: "A man that had to go out a mile in a boat to find water fit to swim in?" (410) Concerning his private life, Mrs. Venable is very positive: "My son, Sebastian, was chaste... I mean he was c-h-a-s-t-e!—Chaste..." (361) However, the doctor is reluctant to believe that a man could be chaste at the age of forty. Mrs. Venable thinks Sebastian does not need anyone else but her: "... I was alctually the only one in his life that satisfied the demands he made of people." (362) Furthermore, she tells the doctor that her son demanded purity from the people around him and if their attitude towards him was not so he "would let people go, dismiss them!" (362)

Catharine Holly does not agree with Violet's point of view. She reverses her aunt's position—from being the only one that satisfies Sebastian's demands of purity in people she becomes a procurer for her son. To Catharine, both of them are used by Sebastian though in different ways: while Violet is doing it unconsciously, Catharine is conscious of it. "We both did the same thing for him, made contacts for him, but she did it in nice places and in decent ways and I had to do it the way that I just told you!"[5] (412) For instance, wearing a transparent bathing suit to attract young men's attention which led Leonard Quirino to compare the image of Catharine in the water to the Venus Anadyomene—"Sebastian was using Catharine as a Venus mantrap."[6]

What is more, Catharine's point of view about Sebastian's relation to people differs again from his mother. The first does not consider Sebastian a proud prince surrounded by a court of admirers, aiming at cultivating life with beauty, sensitivity and spirituality. According to her his ideals were not so high: "Cousin Sebastian said he was famished for blonds, he was fed up with the dark ones and was famished for blonds... that's how he talked about people, as if they were—items on a menu." And then she

quotes Sebastian: "That one's delicious-looking, that one is appetizing," or "that one is *not* appetizing..." (375) Friendship, love, affection do not exist in Sebastian's world. Taking people as "items on a menu", using both his mother and cousin as procurers for his homosexual liaisons define Sebastian's relationship with other people: "We all use each other and that's what we think of as love..." (396) The presence of God in Sebastian's world is consistent with his view of people. It should be examined separately though since it constitues the main stream of Sebastian's fragmented personality revealed in the play.

However, before doing so his homosexuality has to be examined. Whereas the subject of Brick's homosexuality remains impossible to be acknowledged in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, there is much evidence of Sebastian's homosexuality in *Suddenly Last Summer*. Although his mother persists in calling him "chaste" it is pretty obvious that Sebastian is not. Besides not having any involvement with women except his mother and refusing to accept Catharine's love, there are references in the play to Sebastian's being surrounded only by young men—either in the "fashionable" places that he used to go with his mother or in the public beach in Cabeza de Lobo. Although there is no direct statement as to Sebastian's practising homosexuality on the island one may infer from his own words that he actually did it: "That gang of kids shouted vile things about me to the waiters!" (421) Moreover, Catharine's use of the word "procurer" does not refer to any innocent relationship because, as she herself says, "I knew what I was doing. I came out in the French Quarter years before I came out in the Garden District..." (413), which provokes a shocked reaction from her mother. Catharine also mentions that Sebastian used to distribute money in Cabeza de Lobo: "He'd pass out tips among them as if they'd all—shined his shoes or called taxis for him..." (413), possibly implying that Sebastian was paying them for their sexual services.

Another reference to Sebastian's homosexuality lies in the very figure of his patron saint. Having used the poem "San Sebastiano di Sodoma" in a longer version in the C12TS manuscript but eliminating it from the published version, Williams ironically brings their lives together. In the same manuscript, Catharine (Valerie) refers to a painting of the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian hanging between the windows and that had been bought by Sebastian (cousin Bertie) in Florence. Then, she tells the main facts of the martyr's life as her cousin described it to her. Gilbert Debusscher has found points of contact between their stories. Both of them are related to two women. While St. Sebastian is "nursed back to health by a pious widow"[7] after being shot with arrows by his own archers, Sebastian Venable is rescued by his mother from the Buddhist monks. Whereas the saint is buried by a Roman matron, "the American girl figuratively inters her cousin's usurped reputation."[8] Moreover, the critic connects the instru-

ments of torture of their deaths. "The context of the play allows us to endow the arrow with sexual symbolism and thus to view the young phallus bearers who pursue Sebastian up the mountain as corresponding to the instruments of torture of the legend."[9]

Why would Williams refer to St. Sebastian as homosexual, as "an emperor's concubine"?[10] Neither Butler's *Life of the Saints* nor the *British Encyclopedia* contains any allusion to his homosexuality. "St. Sebastian was a Roman martyr traditionally considered the lover of Emperor Diocletian..."[11] However, Debusscher does not explain the origin of this tradition. In the introduction to the book *Saint Sebastien dans l'histoire de l'art depuis le XV siècle* this explanation can be found though.

> ... L'on sait que Dioclétien le nomma capitaine de la première compagnie des gardes, charge réservée à des grands seigneurs et à des personnes fort illustres. Comme, de naissance, il n'avait aucune de ces qualités on pensa que cette nomination était due à une faveur particulière et donc qu'il était le "Favori" de l'empereur. En effet il vécu exclusivement à la court et dans l'intimité de Dioclétien.[12]

Certainly, the period in which this occurred has to be taken into consideration. In the Roman Empire, according to Boswell:

> Neither the Roman religion nor Roman law recognized homosexual eroticism as distinct from—much less inferior to—heterosexual eroticism... Roman society almost unanimously assumed that adult males would be capable of, if not interested in, sexual relations with both sexes.[13]

In the history of art, St. Sebastian and St. Gerome are the most represented of all saints. The first, however, has been portrayed as a young man whose body is shown almost completely, creating thus a perfect image of the fusion between the sacred and the profane. The famous Japanese writer Yukio Mishima has captured this fusion of the Christian martyr depicted with "a strong flavor of paganism" in *Confessions of a Mask*: "The arrows have eaten into the tense, fragrant, youthful flesh and are about to consume his body from within with flames of supreme agony and ecstasy."[14] Describing a reproduction of Guido Reini's "St. Sebastian", Mishima has expressed the attraction that the saint's paintings exert over young men. "The youth's body... shows none of the traces of missionary hardships or decrepitude that are to be found in depictions of other saints; instead, there is only the springtime of youth, only light and beauty and pleasure."[15]

Accordingly, Sebastian Venable and his patron saint have another factor in common—youth. Although Sebastian is not young he looks so. He,

like his mother, seeks youth and is followed by groups of young people. Likewise, Saint Sebastian has many followers due to this youth. In spite of all these similarities between the two Sebastians, there is a striking difference between them which lies in the purpose of their deaths. And this is the point that Williams tries to make: using irony the playwright echoes the saint's life and death reversing the very reason of the latter. Their way of seeing God is quite paradoxal: whereas the Christian martyr is killed because of his faith in a God of love and fraternity, his modern American namesake sacrifices himself to a God of hatred and destruction. Nevertheless, Williams' use of irony does not aim to point out that Sebastian is depraved and his analogy with the saint is sacrilegious. In the article already quoted "Tennessee Williams' Lives of Saints: A Playwright's Obliquity," Gilbert Debusscher after comparing the modern Williams' characters Sebastian, Shannon and Christopher to their patron saints, concludes that the cause of the distortion found in the comparison does not lie in the characters themselves but rather in the world which turns them into its representative martyrs. This aspect of Sebastian's view of God and how it contributes to the fragmentation of his personality will be examined later in this study.

Since *Suddenly Last Summer* does not present the same characters as the ones in the short story "Desire and the Black Masseur" it has been impossible up to here to draw any connection between these two works by Williams. Having explored so far Sebastian Venable as son and cousin, artist and social person it is now necessary—in order to further examine the fragmentation of his being—to focus his world vision which includes his relationship with God. In this part of the analysis, then, it will be feasible to draw parallels between the short story and the play not only due to the fact that both present similar themes and devices but also to show the roots of Sebastian's broken world vision.

Tennessee Williams begins the short story "Desire and the Black Masseur" stating that Anthony Burns had a tendency to be surrounded by everything that swallowed him up. Throughout the short story, Williams uses images related to devouringness and destruction as a foreshadow to the end of the story. The playwright employs the same device in *Suddenly Last Summer.* The play opens with a description of Sebastian's garden which "sets the tone for the play and the universe which it images."[16]

> The interior is blended with a fantastic garden which is more like a tropical jungle, or forest, in the prehistoric age of giant fern-forests when living creatures had flippers turning to limbs and scales to skin. The colors of this jungle-garden are violent, especially since it is steaming with heat after rain. There are massive tree-flowers that suggest organs of a body, torn out, still glistening with undried blood; there are harsh cries and sibilant hissings and thrashing sounds in the garden as if it were inhabited by beasts, serpents and birds, all of savage nature... (349)

Sebastian's garden can be compared to the bath-house in "Desire and the Black Masseur." In the bath-house, the colors black and white contrast violently "setting the tone" for the short story. Likewise, in the jungle-garden the colors are "violent." The steam-room is compared to "the inside of a tremendous mouth."[17] Also, the jungle-garden is "steaming with heat after rain"; the tree-flowers inside look like torn out organs of a body, giving the impression of having been partially devoured. Another analogy that can be made with "the tremendous mouth" lies in the presence of an insectivorous plant in the garden—the Venus's-flytrap. "The plant is a small herb with a rosette of radical leaves with broad leaf-like foot stalks.[18] When an insect touches a leaf and is consequently imprisoned the leaf glands start to produce a secretion that dissolves the insect. "The Venus flytrap, like Sebastian to be kept under a glass nine months a year, feeds on fruit flies grown for experiments in genetics."[19] Satterfield refers to the fact that Sebastian needed nine months of preparation at home to be able to write his poem during a trip abroad in the summer.

Why would Sebastian choose such a plant to be "the queen" of his garden? He can only see love as a relationship where people use each other; accordingly, he has made use of his own mother and cousin for his connections with people whom he considers "items on a menu." Besides this, Venus is the Roman name of the goddess that represents love in Greek Mythology. Therefore, the Venus's-flytrap contains in its very name the conflicting forces represented by love and destruction. It is perfectly clear that Sebastian chooses the Venus's-flytrap as his favorite plant since it symbolizes his own relationship with people.

The sounds coming from Sebastian's garden—"harsh cries," "sibilant hissings," "thrashing sounds"—can be heard throughout the play, creating thus a constant image of what nature represents to Sebastian—an image of violence, destruction and savagery. Sounds likewise accompany the other images referring to violence that appear in the play.

Those "tree-flowers that suggest organs of a body, torn out, still glistening with undried blood" and the very presence of the Venus's-flytrap without doubt foreshadow not only the sea-turtles being devoured by the birds but also Sebastian's own death at the end of the play.

Sebastian's jungle-garden portrays his own concept of the world. His is not a typical garden where flowers in delicate size and color, singing birds and sunshine blend in order to create an atmosphere of peace and happiness. Quite the contrary, his garden is situated in a most elegant mansion in a fashionable district of his city; it is called a "jungle-garden"; the flowers are extemely big—"tree-flowers"—with "violent" colors; the sounds emitted are associated with savage animals—"beasts, serpents and birds"; there is rain with its consequent "steaming heat." At the beginning of the play when Doctor Cukrowicz is shown Sebastian's garden he is simultaneously introduced to Sebastian's world: "It's like a well-groomed jungle," realizes the doctor. (351) As it has been stated, "Sebastian's garden, then, is the fanciful hobby of a man obsessed with the savage face of nature."[20]

Sebastian sees the universe as a savage place inhabited by wild creatures that prey one upon the other, and yet, he lives in a civilized, sophisticated world, apparently in search of art and beauty. All these elements put together definitely contribute to show Sebastian's fragmented view of the universe.

Another image constructed by Williams which relates to violence and helps the reader better understand Sebastian's fragmentary ideas and feelings towards God and the universe is the description of a trip to the Encantadas Islands.

When Sebastian read Melville's series of sketches on the Encantadas Islands he immediately wanted to go there in order to see this place that perfectly fit his vision of the universe.

> Take five-and-twenty heaps of cinders dumped here and there in an outside city lot; imagine some of them magnified into mountains, and the vacant lot the sea; and you will have a fit idea of the general aspect of the Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles...[21]

Melville attributes a special curse to these islands—"to them change never comes; neither the change of seasons nor of sorrows..."[22] Furthermore, the lack of rain contributes to emphasize the aspect of desolation and despair that emanate from this place. "Have mercy upon me," the wailing spirit of the Encantadas seems to cry, "and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame."[23] Accordingly, human and animal life cannot be found in this inhospitable place. "... The Encantadas refuse to harbor even the outcasts of the beasts. Man and wolf alike disown them. Little but reptile life is here found..."[24]

Sebastian could also be a temporary outcast on the Encantadas. On these islands nature expresses his own concept of the universe where there is no room for love, friendship and human feelings but only for non-human relationship and dominance of the strong over the weak.[25]

Nevertheless, Melville suggests that nature is not completely dark. One may be able to see some light even in the desolation of the Encantadas. "... Even the tortoise, dark and melancholy as it is upon the back, still possesses a bright side; its calepee or breast-plate being sometimes of a faint yellowish or golden tinge... The tortoise is both black and bright."[26] However, Sebastian does not see this dual, contrasting aspects of nature. "Sebastian's fascination with Melville's account is consistent, then, with his own fascination with the primeval and with his own vision of the evil face of God."[27]

What Melville does not describe in his sketches is exactly what has impressed Sebastian much more than the natural environment of the Encantadas: he and Violet witnessed there the egg-laying of the great sea turtles.

> It's a long and dreadful thing, the depositing of the eggs in the sand pits, and when it's finished the exhausted female turtle crawls

> back to the sea half dead. She never sees her offspring, but we did... And we returned in time for it... Terrible Encantadas, those heaps of extinct volcanos in time to witness the hatching of the sea turtles and their desperate flight to the sea!... —The narrow beach, the color of caviar, was all in motion! But the sky was in motion, too...—Full of flesh-eating birds and the noise of the birds, the horrible savage cries of the— ... And the sand all alive, all alive, as the hatched sea turtles made their dash for the sea, while the birds hovered and swooped to attack and hovered and—swooped to attack! They were diving down on the hatched sea turtles, turning them over to expose their soft undersides, tearing the undersides open and rending and eating their flesh. (355-6)

In this quotation, one can find some points in common with the short story "Desire and the Black Masseur." Through this image of violence, the same elements lreappear—heat, whiteness, blackness, mouth. Williams again uses the color white in its negative quality which symbolizes death. Blending whiteness with heat Williams creates an image of agony in the slow death of the sea turtles. And the irony in it is that he also inverts an act of life—the egg-laying—into a picture of death. Williams, once more, sharply contrasts the colors black and white. The white sand it covered by the hatched sea turtles which, due to their geat number, transform the narrow beach into "the color of caviar"—black. Once more, black and white are together, blending one into the other, to create the mood needed for an act of violence, an act of destruction. The turtles are not only threatened in their propagation by the natural environment: predatory birds come from the sky in order to devour their offsprings in "their desperate flight to the sea." "The flesh-eating birds" attacked the sea turtles, tearing their flesh and eating them. This image of the sea turtles being devoured by the birds reminds one of other images employed in the short story that likewise refer to swallowing up—Burns' family, high school and job, the movies, the bath-house, the steam-room. The mouth-element that connects all these images used in the short story is, in the play, transformed into the beak of these predatory birds that are called "flesh-eating."

Besides these similarities with the short story, Williams adds a new element to the play—the use of sounds. Not only in the jungle-garden are there sounds—"harsh cries," "sibilant hissings" and "thrashing sounds"—used in the background to convey the idea of destruction; but also, on the Encantadas, the scene of violence is accompanied by sounds—"the noise of the birds—the horrible savage cries..." (355)

Thus, as one of Williams' critics has noted, "from the plant world of the Venus flytrap to the animal world of the sea turtles and the carnivorous birds—the image of the universe remains fixed. The third image is related by Catharine in the final scene when she tells the story of Sebastian's destruction."[28] Using the animal world Williams emphasizes the same theme of destruction employed in the plant world—the Venus's-flytrap eating insects and the tree-flowers suggesting "organs of a body, torn out." In Sebastian's vision of the animal world, the birds attack the turtles creating thus the same image of dilacerated bodies with their organs showing. "And ironically the world which Sebastian sees mirrored in the spectacle of the turtles and the birds will turn and devour him as it devoured the turtles."[29]

It is important to examine here the reason for Sebastian's trip to the Encantadas. When he went there, paradoxically, he was looking for God, for "a clear image of Him." And the scene of violence that he witnessed there, contrary to most expectations, became a "clear image" of God: "... Well, now I've seen Him!—and he meant God." (357) "God, Sebastian implies, presides over a sterile, decimated world in which helpless creatures (the baby sea turtles, man) are brutalized by death (the carnivorous sea birds)."[30]

This vision of God can be explained by the fact that Williams shares with his characters a double vision of Him: "God is perceived either as an Old Testament God of Wrath ruling over a semi-Calvinistic cycle of guilt-submission-atonement-uncertainty or a New Testament God of Love offering a cycle of need-submission-communication-salvation."[31] Unquestionably, Sebastian's God is the wrathful God of the Old Testament. It is this God that Anthony Burns sees ruling over a violent universe.

In order to strengthen this idea that Williams could also see God as violent and wrathful, it can be pointed out that another Williams' character —Reverend Lawrence Shannon (*The Night of the Iguana*)—shares Sebastian's view of God as the Old Testament Deity. Like Sebastian Venable, Shannon is aware of his fragmentation. Not accepting his own sexuality, Shannon feels guilty when he yields to his desire so he turns to God afterwards for forgiveness. Both characters look for evidence of this God of Wrath in the world around them. Whereas Sebastian sees God on the Encantadas through a violent scene of slaughtering, Shannon finds Him on an island witnessing an incident of coprophagy—two old natives looking for undigested food in a pile of excrement.

> The island of excrement becomes Shannon's Encantadas for it also symbolizes the harshness of human existence. Man, like the two old natives, picks his way through life in an attempt to find something of value, but he is always frustrated because life is a dungheap.[32]

When a tropical thunderstorm is approaching the hotel Shannon acknowledges his view of God: "It's going to storm tonight—a terrific electric storm. Then you will see the Reverend T. Lawrence Shannon's conception of God Almighty paying a visit to the world He created."[33] And the image Williams creates to describe this storm is similar to the one of the predatory birds of the Encantadas: "The storm, with its convulsions of light, is like a giant white bird attacking the hilltop of the Costa Verde."[34] Although Shannon is "a man of God, on vacation"[35] as Hannah brilliantly describes him, he refuses to continue serving God whom he sees as an

"angry, petulant old man... a cruel, senile delinquent, blaming the world and brutally punishing all He created for His faults in construction..."[36]

Sebastian Venable, like Reverend T. Lawrence Shannon, desperately tries to find in the plant and animal words a reflection of his own violent image of God. Furthermore, Sebastian seeks in the human world the same projection of his fragmented personality.

The third image that completes the cycle plant-animal-human worlds concerns Sebastian's tragic end and is particularly important in exposing Sebastian's fragmentation, according to Catharine's account. Failing in writing his summer poem, Sebastian went with her to Cabeza de Lobo where he was constantly followed by groups of young boys—a crowd that got "bigger, noisier, greedier" (413) each passing day.[37] While in a restaurant, Sebastian was serenaded by this "hungry crowd with instruments made of tin can strung together." (417) Unable to bear this scene because of its vulgarity and noise, Sebastian asked the waiters to stop it. However, when he tried to run away from the boys he realized that they were following him.

> But he walked faster and faster, in panic, but the faster he walked the louder and closer it got! ... The music... The oompa-oompa of the—following band... The band of naked children pursued us up the steep white street in the sun that was like a great bone of a giant beast that had caught on fire in the sky!—Sebastian started to run and they all screamed at once and seemed to fly in the air, they outran him so quickly. I screamed. I heard Sebastian scream, he screamed just once before this flock of black plucked little birds that pursued him and overtook him halfway up the white hill. (421)

Once again Williams employs the same elements—colors, heat and sounds—which he has previosly used, in order to create an image of violence. On Cabeza de Lobo, the children become the personification of both animals described on the Encantadas—the sea turtles and the birds. Just like on the Encantadas the white sand was full of black sea turtles, creating then a violent contrast between them, here the white street in the blazing sun is swarmed by a band of black children. Once more, Williams produces the same deep contrast. The street like the sand becomes "all alive." As birds, the children "seemed to fly in the air," being described as a "flock of black plucked little birds." As it has been suggested, "the Encantadas struggle returns with Catharine's description of Sebastian's death, Sebastian becoming a frightened sea turtle running in the wrong direction —away from the water—and the dark, naked children replacing the birds."[38] Besides this, the children, like the birds in the animal image, are responsible for the sounds in the scene. They not only produce the loud music but also "they all screamed at once." Catharine and Sebastian increase the sounds with their screams. Blending the three elements (colors, heat and sounds), Williams establishes the mood and suspense for a scene

of ultimate violence to follow: Sebastian's own destruction on Cabeza de Lobo as reported by Catharine.

> When we got back to where my Cousin Sebastian had disappeared in the flock of featherless little black sparrows, he—he was lying naked as they had been naked against a white wall, and this you won't believe, ... —They had *devoured* parts of him.. Torn or cut parts of him away with their hands or knives or maybe those jagged tin cans they made music with, they had torn bits of him away and stuffed them into those gobbling fierce little empty black mouths of theirs. There wasn't a sound any more, there was nothing to see but Sebastian, what was left of him, that looked like a big white-paper-wrapped bunch of red roses had been *torn, thrown, crushed*!—against that blazing white wall... (422)

The musical instruments—"those jagged tin cans they made music with"—become instruments of destruction, of violence, of cannibalism. When the act of violence finishes, so does the music—"there wasn't a sound any more."

Sebastian's own death at the end of the play reflects not only the images of destruction found in the plant and animal worlds but also Burns' body being devoured by the Negro masseur. From this quotation, one can observe that a fourth element—mouth—is added which is responsible for the scene of cannibalism.

The children here are once more compared to birds—"flock of featherless black sparrows." Curiously enough, this time Sebastian himself becomes the victim just like the sea turtles had been before victims of flesh-eating birds. Sebastian's body becomes then "a particle of food" being dissolved in the "fierce little empty black mouths of theirs." The image here is the same as in the short story. In the movies Burns becomes a "particle of food dissolving in a big hot mouth."[39] The small black mouths of the children can also be compared to the black masseur's big mouth which devoured the body of Anthony Burns. The mouth-element this time is emphasized by the multiplication of black mouths, amplifying thus the same image of violence through cannibalism. One can also establish a parallel between this image and Sebastian's own life as a critic has done: "As he carved out the days of his life, so the urchins carve out his vital parts, cleaning up the debris of his life."[40]

The black naked children "against a white wall" form once more a vivid picture with the two contrasting colors—black and white. Nevertheless, the black color attributed to them is not a symbol of evil. The starved black children are not evil doers just like the black masseur is not. They play the same role he does; they may be considered instruments of Sebastian's own sacrifice to his Old Testament God. Sebastian, as well as Burns, is trying to atone for his sins and incompletion. The way he chooses to

reach wholeness is "the surrender of self to violent treatment by others with the idea of thereby clearing one's self of his guilt."[41]

Such behavior is justified by Fritscher in the following manner:

> Sebastian could only agree that he was indeed priest-victim of the Black Mass on his own death. As he ran up the street to the "Glorious" Hill of his Golgotha, he completed "a sort of!—*image*!—he had of himself as a sort of!—*sacrifice* to a!—terrible sort of a ... God...—a cruel one.[42]

According to mediaeval Christian art, the black color symbolizes penitence, the white color purity and the red color both charity and love. Having white as a set—the white street looking like a great white bone on fire; the white wall—as well as wearing a white suit himself, Sebastian reaches for purification through the black mouth of the children as his instrument of penitence.

> This whiteness is the same ambivalent color in which man, as Melville notes, has seen beneficence and malevolence all through history, but which is, in fact, completely neutral. Only a man like Ahab (or Sebastian) can turn this symbol of mindless energy against himself and, by his own choice, destroy himself, paradoxically, with the evil which he himself imagined in this neutrality.[43]

After his self-sacrifice his own body is compared to torn and crushed red roses—a perfect image to express Sebastian's pledge of love and charity to his God of Wrath.

Sebastian Venable and Anthony Burns are not the only Williams' characters that consciously seek for self-sacrifice in order to cleanse themselves of their guilt. From the one-act plays *Auto-da-Fé* and *The Purification* to the longer *Sweet Bird of Youth,* the main characters acknowledge their sins and want to purify themselves violently to put an end to their fragmentation.

In *Auto-da-Fé*, Eloi after discovering "a lewd photograph"[44] in the mail has to face his desire and consequent guilt since he was brought up by a strict mother (Mme. Duvenet) who loves cleanness and "harp(s) on purity."[45] Unable to cope with his feelings, he sets the house on fire, thus liberating, purifying himself as has already been mentioned in the discussion of the short story.

The Purification is a play written in verse which tells the story of a forbidden love between brother and sister. When Elena marries a rancher from Casa Rojo her brother (Rosalio) incapable of renouncing her visits her at night. They are caught by her husband who kills her. In the trial, disturbed by his guilt Rosalio kills himself in order to obtain purification —his and his sister's. Plunging the knife into his breast he utters these words: "Elena!... Witness—in this thrust—our purification!"[46]

Chance Wayne (*Sweet Bird of Youth*) "manages to mature beyond the pathetic role of pure victim he had assigned himself by his earlier words: '... all my vices were caught from other people'."[47] At the end of the play, when he becomes conscious of the evil he had brought to Heavenly, he acknowledges his guilt and deliberately chooses to stay in St. Cloud to be castrated. "Chance's surrender to Boss Finley's gang is his auto-da-fé. Similarly, Sebastian in *Suddenly Last Summer* at last renounces his corruption in an act of self-sacrifice."[48] Torn between their desire and guilt, both characters reach a moment of impatience with their fragmentation and beg to be set free from it. Concerning this aspect, one could also think of Shannon.[49]

In "Desire and the Black Masseur," Anthony Burns suffers and dies through the hands and mouth of the Negro in order to atone for his guilt. The Negro, in his turn, devours his white flesh following a savage ritual of cannibalism in an attempt to acquire some qualities and privileges generally attributed to the white race.

As it was previously discussed, in *Suddenly Last Summer*, cannibalism is also an act of atonement. The bird-like starving children play the role of torturers inflicting violent treatment on Sebastian who in his turn surrenders himself passively to them. "By acting upon his definition of himself as a victim, he creates the conditions of his own victimization."[50] Sebastian, who sees people as "items on a menu," becomes ironically an item on the children's "menu," as Williams compares these children to the birds that eat the hatched sea turtles on the Encantadas. They also perform the same devouring task of the Venus's-flytrap. Likewise, these three images can be seen as a mirror of Sebastian's relationship with others, especially with Violet and Catharine since he uses both of them in order to procure for him. Moreover, these images reflect Sebastian's view of a world which is ruled by a cruel God and contribute to suggest his awareness of his own fragmentation.

Unquestionably, cannibalism is an inversion of human values. Eating another human being is considered an act of the utmost violence, much more than killing or just destroying a fellow man. Another element which is an inversion is homosexuality: it is a sheer inversion of one's sexuality. Sebastian's fragmentation lies in his inversion—not exactly in his homosexuality which can be seen in this play as a metaphor for his own basic inversion—but in his inversion as a human being, his inability to communicate with others, his inability to love. Even being loved by his mother and cousin he cannot reciprocate this feeling. The only thing he can do and think of is to use them in his own benefit—that of being looked at, admired, envied, even chased by others. Williams uses an inversion which clearly shows Sebastian's attitude. Violet reveals that: "... he was frightened and I knew when and what of, because his hands would shake and his eyes looked in, not out ..." (408) This image of Sebastian looking in, not out perfectly defines what he is and how he deals with people. "Instead of entering into communion with other people, Sebastian inverts the normal

flow of love, turning it back in upon himself."[51] Looking in, concentrating on himself and ignoring his fellow men's feelings and concerns "represent a sort of self-cannibalism."[52] Like Anthony Burns, Sebastian is therefore destroyed by his own inversion.

However, one may take a further step in this reading of *Suddenly Last Summer* and not see the play as only a story of canibalism and homosexuality. "... I DIDN'T invent it. I know it's a hideous story but it's a true story of our time and the world we live in and what did truly happen to Cousin Sebastian in Cabeza de Lobo ..." (382) Through Catharine's words Williams states that the story of the play does not lie only in a fictional level but it also mirros the horrors of "our time and the world we live in." Sebastian's death takes place in Spain in 1935, an era when the country was destitute, full of despair and on the brink of a civil war (1936-1939). Therefore, the violence that occurs in Cabeza de Lobo metaphorically foreshadows the atrocities that were soon to envelop Spain.[53] What is more, the play itself presents much evidence of social cannibalism. Mrs. Venable is a perfect cannibal—being possessive and domineering she does not let Sebastian live his own life, contributing thus to his fragmentation as a man and human being. Concerning Catharine, there seems to be no question about it—she literally wants her niece's brain destroyed in order to "save" her son's reputation. "In the blond doctor we are presented with another potential sacrifice to the cannibalistic elements of money and power."[54] Mrs. Venable attempts to destroy Doctor Cukrowicz's professional ethics by bribing him—if he performs the lobotomy he will get the funds that will enable him to develop his discovery as well as get married. In this analysis of the play, Sebastian Venable has been seen as a cannibal too. Having preyed upon other people all his life he ends up being literally devoured by the hungry and poor children of a country torn apart by political rivalries. "Sociologically, in the lean summer of 1935 in an economically depressed country Sebastian is exploiting the poor, paying for their sexual services."[55] Both Catharine's mother and brother are unquestionably portrayed as destroyers as well. Being totally consumed by their greed and ambition they do not seem to be aware or to care about what will happen to Catharine. To them it is just a matter of forcing her to change the story so that they can lay their hands on their money. "WE DO HAVE TO GET WHAT SEBASTIAN HAS LEFT US IN HIS WILL, DEAREST!" (382-383) They could be compared to the predatory birds of the Encantadas that attack their victim with their beak (their mouth) emitting "horrible savage cries" (355) (their terrible words) leaving no room for defense (they to not hear Catharine's answer). Thus, *Suddenly Last Summer* can be seen as a play which reflects through its elaborated imagery the violence and social cannibalism of "the world we live in."

After this study of the play, one comes to the conclusion that its subject has determined its form—fragmentation is present both in the content and the structure of the play. Like *The Glass Menagerie, Suddenly Last Summer* does not show a story with a beginning, a middle and an

end with a consequent solution for the main conflict: whereas the former rotates around a part of Tom's life, the latter centers on Sebastian's death. Sebastian's fragmented personality as well as the world he lived in constitute the content which is shown in a fragmented manner (the structure) through the versions of Mrs. Venable and Catharine. As it has already been remarked at the beginning of the analysis of this play, instead of choosing between the two versions it is proposed that both should be considered. This play is about a fragmented *dead* character coming to life through the fragmented vision of the people closest to him. One version does not necessarily invalidate the other but rather complements it to a certain extent. Nevertheless, spectators leave the theater and readers finish reading the play with an incomplete image of Sebastian Venable because both his mother and cousin can only try—in vain—to convey a complete view of his fragmented being.

Notes

(1) Williams, Tennessee, *The Theatre of Tennessee Williams.* 5 vols. New York, New Directions, 1971, p. 423. Subsequent quotations from this play refer to this edition and are identified by page number in the text.
(2) Satterfield, John, "Williams's *Suddenly Last Summer:* The Eye of the Needle." *Markham Review*, 6: 27-33, 1977, p. 30.
(3) *Ibid.*
(4) Tharpe, Jac (ed.) *Tennessee Williams: A Tribute.* Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1977, p. 480.
(5) In the C12TS manuscript, Catharine whose name was then Valerie acknowledges that she and Mrs. Venable were used to hiding Sebastian's habits. Williams, *The Manuscripts of Suddenly Last Summer.* Humanities Research Center. University of Texas at Austin. Various dates.
(6) Quirino, Leonard Salvator, "The Darkest Celebrations of Tennessee Williams: *A Study of Battle of Angels, A Streetcar Named Desire, Orpheus Descending, Camino Real, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Suddenly Last Summer.*" Phd Dissertation. Brown University, 1964, p. 412.
(7) Stanton, Stephen (ed.), *Tennesse Williams: A Collection of Critical Essays.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice Hall, 1977, p. 151.
(8) *Ibid.*, p. 152.
(9) *Ibid.*
(10) Willians, T., *In the Winter of Cities: Poems.* Norfolk. Connecticut, New Directions, 1956, p. 108.
(11) Stanton (1977), p. 151.
(12) Damase, Jacques (ed), *Saint Sébastien dans l'Histoire de l'Art depuis le XV Siècle.* Paris, 1979, p. XX.
... It is known that Diocletian has appointed him as captain of the first company of guards, a position reserved to the great gentlemen and to very illustrious people. As, of birth, he did not have any of these qualities people thought that this nomination was due to a private favor and thus, that he was emperor's "favorite." Certainly, he lived exclusively in Diocletian's court and intimity.
(13) Boswell, John, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality.* Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 73.
(14) Mishima, Yukio, *Confessions of a Mask.* New York, New directions, 1958, p. 39.
(15) *Ibid.*

(16) Nelson, Benjamin, *Tennessee Williams: The Man and His Work.* New York, Ivan Obolensky, 1961, p. 249.
(17) Williams, T., *Tennessee Williams: Collected Stories.* New York, New Directions, 1985, p. 208.
(18) *The Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Chicago, London, Toronto. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1957, p. 1014.
(19) Stterfield (1977), p. 28.
(20) Hurt, James R., "*Suddenly Last Summer*: Williams and Melville". *Modern Drama*, 3: 396-400, February, 1961, p. 397.
(21) Melville, Herman, "The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles." In: —, *Pierre, Israel Potter, The Piazza Tales, The Confidence Men, Uncollected Prose, Billy Budd, sailor.* New York, The Library of America, 1984, p. 764-818, p. 764.
(22) *Ibid.*, p. 765.
(23) *Ibid.*
(24) *Ibid.* The three stories that Melville tells about the temporary inhabitants of the islands confirm in the sadness of the destiny of these human outcasts the desolation of this place. The Dog King not trusting human beings puts dogs on his guard; later he is overthrown by his angry and badly treated subjects and Charles' Isle becomes "the unassailed lurking-place of all sorts of desperadoes." (792) Hunilla, the Chola Widow, meets loneliness and despair on Norfolk Island in "two unnamed events" (801): the death of both her new-wedded husband Felip and her brother Truxill as well as the refusal of passing whale-boats to rescue her. Hermit Orbelus whose very appearance "was that of the victim of some malignant sorceress" (807) kidnaps a Negro in order to make him a slave. Failing in this, he first persuades and then forces seamen to stay with him turning them into "reptiles at his feet" (811). He ends up in a prison in Payta (Peru).
(25) Like the Dog King, Sebastian avoids human relationships; he lives isolated as the Chola Widow does; he treats people as "reptiles at his feet" just like Melville's Hermit Orbelus.
(26) Melville (1984), p. 769-770.
(27) Hurt (1961), p. 399.
(28) Nelson (1961), p. 251.
(29) Hurt (1961), p. 399.
(30) Tharpe (1977), p. 560.
(31) Fritscher, John, "Some Attitudes and a Posture: Religious Metaphor and Ritual in Tennessee Williams' Query of the American God." *Modern Drama*, 13: 201-215, September, 1970, p. 204.
(32) Tarpe (1977), p. 563.
(33) Williams (1971), p. 305.
(34) *Ibid.*, p. 325.
(35) *Ibid.*, p. 315.
(36) *Ibid.*, 304. Thomas Adler calls attention to the fact that William's characters are constantly searching for God. From the early *The Lady of the Larkspur Lotion* (1945) to the late *The Mutilated* (1966) his characters seem to be looking for God's presence or manifestation. In the first one-act play, the writer who calls himself "Anton Pavlovitch Chekhov" asks the crucial questions: "Is there no mercy left in the world anymore? What has become of compassion and understanding? Where have they all gone? Where's God? Where's Christ? "At the end of the play *The Mutilated*, the reconciliation of the characters Celeste and Trinket is immediately followed by a manifestation of God in the room through the presence of Our Lady Mary. A character that is not mentioned by Adler though but who is Sebastian's and Shannon's companion in search for a savage god is D. H. Lawrence as portrayed in the one-act play *I Rise in Flame, Cried the Phoenix*. Concerning his search for God, Lawrence states: "If I find mine—ever—If I found mine, I'd tear the heart out of my body and burnn it before him."
Stanton (1977), p. 138-148.
Williams, T., *27 Wagons Full of Cotton and Other One-Act Plays.* New York, New Directions, 1966, p. 69.
Williams, T. *Dragon Country: A Book of Plays.* New York, New Directions, 1970, p. 62.
(37) In the C12Ts manuscript though, Williams sets the final scene in Barcelona.
(38) Satterfield (1977), p. 28.

(39) Williams (1985), p. 205.
(40) Tharpe (1977), p. 481.
(41) Williams (1985), p. 206.
(42) Fritscher (1970), p. 208.
(43) Hurt (1961), p. 400.
(44) Williams (1966), p. 116.
(45) *Ibid.*, p. 108.
(46) *Ibid.*, p. 60.
(47) Tharpe (1977), p. 746.
(48) *Ibid.*, p. 23.
(49) However, the difference between the first two characters and the last is that Shannon does not "surrender himself to violent treatment by others."
(50) Tharpe (1977), p. 561.
(51) Stanton (1977), p. 141.
(52) Hurley, Paul, "*Suddenly Last Summer* as 'Morality Play'." *Modern Drama*, 8: 392-398, February, 1966, p. 393.
(53) One can only remember now the famous painting *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso in which he depicts all the atrocity and violence caused by the civil war in a composition that could be interpreted as the fragmentation of a city and its people brought about by their own fellow men.
(54) Quirino (1964), p. 136.
(55) *Ibid.*, p. 160.

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ABOUT THE POINTLESSNESS OF PATRICIDE: A LACANIAN READING OF DONALD BARTHELME'S *THE DEAD FATHER*

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> *La mort du Père enlèvera à la littérature beaucoup de ses plaisirs. S'il n'y a plus de Père, à quoi bon raconter des histoires? Tout récit ne se ramène-t-il pas à l'Œdipe? (75).*
> *Le texte est (devrait être) cette personne désinvolte qui montre son derrière au* Père Politique *(84).*
>
> Roland Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte*

The Dead Father, like many other contemporary works, belongs to a metafictional trend in which literary and critical discourses mirror each other.[1] In these books the characters, and the texts themselves, reflect upon language and the problems of representation. Chinese-box structures problematize the relationship between reality and fiction and the narrative is conceived as a multi-vocal crossing point of intertextual dialogue.[2] Barthelme's novel describes with caustic humor the journey of a half-dead giant (the Dead Father) who is searching for the Golden Fleece. In his quest (a hilarious parody of the traditional epic journeys and the *rites de passage*) he is hauled across a dream-like landscape by his nineteen children, who are actually leading him to his grave. Throughout the novel, and especially in the interpolated "Manual for Sons", Barthelme discusses the father and son relationship in a way that echoes the Hegelian Master/Slave opposition and thematizes some of the most remarkable Freudian and Lacanian postulates (the "death instinct", the "Oedipal complex", the relationship between the "Imaginary" and the "Symbolic" axes of the self, etc.). Even though parodies of various discourses pervade the novel (psychoanalysis being one of its targets), *The Dead Father* coincides substantially with Lacan's theory of Language and the Arts.[3]

In this paper I trace the path of the Dead Father as a metaphor for the Lacanian discussion of the function of Language.[4] I do not view Barthelme's novel as an up-to-date morality play in which plot and characters mechanically respond to a previously set structure, to a "pre-text".[5] On the contrary, *The Dead Father*, like other examples of postmodernist fiction, resists classification and explicitly mocks the taxonomic spirit of science. My reading of the novel is thus one of the eventually infinite number of possibilities opened to the audience. Lacan's theory of knowledge and Barthelme's narrative show a common sensibility in portraying a multifaceted reality which can only be approached by rethinking those concepts inherited from Western tradition, without excluding other perspectives.[6]

After a general overview of Lacan's linguistic theory, I will focus on some of the most significant moments in the text, presenting them chronologically. Although the novel breaks with the traditional linear account by means of postmodernist devices such as digressions, repetitions, interpolations or nonsensical dialogues, the narrative generally dramatizes the different stages in the formation of the self and in the father-son relationship.

I

As its name implies, Lacan's structural psychoanalysis attempts to unify Freudian psychoanalysis and the discoveries of anthropological structuralism and linguistics. His materialistic theory of the subject is thus expressed in linguistic terms. According to Lacan, individuals enter a preexisting system of signifiers which only acquire significance within a particular language system. Cultural and linguistic structures, therefore, precede and shape the subject's entrance into the "Symbolic" order. Before that entry the subject, as a child, has been living in what Lacan calls the world of the "Imaginary". In this world there is no difference between subject and object.[7] Since the self is not yet formed, the child cannot distinghish his own form from that of others. Its only possible identification is with the Mother. To express the strength of this liaison and dependence Lacan uses another of his trademark ambivalent expressions: *Désir de la mère*, implying the desire for the Mother and, at the same time, the desire to be what the Mother desires. The child wants to complete all the Mother lacks-in psychoanalysis the "phallus".[8] This identification will be progressively displaced to the Father as the child enters the world of the Symbolic.

The Symbolic order is dominated by the repressive figure of the Father. We enter the Symbolic order by accepting his name and prohibitions. Among these prohibitions, incest provides the structure underlying the organization of society as culture.[9] The dual opposition characteristic of the Imaginary order is, therefore, transformed into the triangular relationship which gives place to the Oedipal crisis. A symbolic castration occurs when the Father restores the phallus as the Mother's primary desire, no longer the child's complement to what is lacking in her. The child finally overcomes this crisis when it comes to terms with the patriarchal law. The Father's prohibition projects the child into the world of differences (masculine/feminine, father/son, absent/present), allowing it to distinguish itself from the others and to approach a self of its own. But Lacan goes beyond Freud's discussion of the Oedipal complex and transforms it into a linguistic phenomenon. Though Lacan's idea stems from Saussure's view of the sign as split into two parts (signifier and signified, sound and concept), he stresses the arbitrariness of their connection. For Lacan the signified slides beneath a signifier which floats. In learning the inner workings of language, the child apprehends the grammatical category of the "I" and, in doing so, enters the Symbolic order of singularities.

Lacan illustrates the transition from the Imaginary to the Symbolic

order through his mirror metaphor. The child's first articulation of the "I" occurs at what Lacan calls the mirror stage. When it is still living in a pre-linguistic phase the child starts to project unity into the fragmented image of a mirror, producing a fictional ideal ego. This specular image is still imaginary but helps the child to recognize himself as a different being. Once the subject has entered the Symbolic the imaginary will not be obliterated but kept in check. It will come out occasionally in the form of condentations and displacements of significance (the metaphoric and metonymic movements which characterize the world of the unconscious).[10]

A third dominion of the self studied by Lacan is the "Real", the most problematic of the three orders. For Lacan, "the Real is the given field of brute existence over which the Imaginary and Symbolic range in their rival attempts to control" (Wright 1984:110). The Real is conceived as that which resists symbolization. It lies beyond language and therefore can never be apprehended by either the Imaginary or the Symbolic.

In short, Lacan interprets psyche in textual terms. Since the unconscious is identified with an unstable signifier reality cannot ever be fully grasped, but only approached by the subject's appropriation of its constitutional principle: the Father's Law, that is, the order of Language.

II

The introductory chapter in *The Dead Father* establishes the role of both Father and children as questers in their allegorical pilgrimage. The Father is described as a gigantic figure of anachronistic appearance: the severe features corresponding to the honorable father of the Western tradition (the "broad" and "noble" brows, serenity, gray hair, etc.) contrast with ridiculous details (the "bit of mackerel salad lodged between" his teeth).[11] He is portrayed as half-God and a half-automaton, with omniscient powers over his children: "Controls what Thomas is thinking, what Thomas has always thought, what Thomas will ever think, with exceptions" (4).[12] Through a series of clues, the reader becomes aware that the figure of the Dead Father is a metaphor for Language, or more specifically, for the cultural and linguistic structures preceding the child's entry into the Symbolic order. The Lacanian idea that knowledge of the world, of others and of ourselves is determined by Language is implicit in the Father's control over Thomas's thought, a control which nevertheless cannot be absolute because of the very instability of the linguistic sign. This imperfection of the linguistic Father is stressed by the narrator's commentary (probably Thomas's): "He is not perfect, thank God for that". A few lines later another narrative statement points to a concept which turns out to be recurrent in both Barthelme and Lacan, i.e. Language as the presence of an absence (Lacan 1977:65): "Dead, but still with us, still with us but dead" (3).[13]

There are further indications of the Father's omniscient nature in the Barthelme's description of his mechanical leg as "the administrative center of his operations". The leg includes "facilities for confession" in the form of a series of "small booths" where "people are noticeably freer in confession to the Dead Father than to any priest" (4). These confessions are subsequently taped and dramatized, and are finally performed on stage in public theaters. This comic and surrealistic idea inaugurates a Kafkaesque atmosphere which pervades some of the most intense moments in the novel. The semi-mechanical nature of the Father suggests the semimechanical workings of linguistic structures, but also the mechanization of culture, a culture where private life is of public dominion. Privacy in post-modern societies vanishes as a consequence of the obscene traffic with the other's self.

By the end of this introduction the children openly express their hatred for the Father: "We want the Dead Father to be dead. We sit with tears in our eyes wanting the Dead Father to be dead..." (5). The Oedipal structure of the conflict is thus set in unquestionable terms. Facing the Law of the Father, his offspring react with contradictory emotions: hate in one case, disgust, fear, or respect in other situations.[14] But aggressivity is the dominant feeling in the book at this initial stage of Thomas's self-formation. For Lacan this aggressivity "is the correlative tendency of a mode of identification, that we call narcissistic" (1977:16). The aggression stems from the subject's awareness of his dependence on the Father, and his frustrated attempts to overcome it. One of the roles of the symbolic is the normalization of the subject's aggressive instincts, which is exemplified by "A Manual for Sons" and by the end of the novel itself.

The subject's linguistic apprenticeship is dramatized by Hilda and Lars, the young couple who explains to the Dead Father and his convoy how they are taught through Language "from which there is no way to escape" (15): "We are invigorated with the sweet sensuality of language. We learn to make sentences" (16). What comes next is a series of unconnected sentences which only have in common the mechanical repetition of the verb "to come". The texture of the discourse itself refers back to the father's words opening the chapter, when he elaborated a panegyric of "machines", which connects, as well, with his half-mechanical nature. The chapter ends with the Father confirming his role as cultural origin and source of all texts. Responding to Julie's question about the possibility of having become an artist in his youth, the Dead Father answers: "It wasn't necessary,... because I am the Father. All lines my line. All colors mine. You take my meaning" (19).[15] Barthelme makes the Dead Father into the archetypal intertext, a point of juxtaposition where other texts encounter and interact, a monument to literary paternity which is permanently actualized by its influence upon new lines, upon new texts. This permanent revival of the ancient is also deduced from the Dead Father's ambiguity towards his own age. In answering Hilda's question about it (she guesses he must be nearly a hundred years old), the father says: "Wrong, but close. Even older than that, but also younger. Having it both ways is a thing I like" (15).

Thomas's individuation progresses in the first three chapters. His ten-

dency to adopt positions of leadership in the group and his repressive attitude towards the other members of the expedition show that he is gradually learning the father's rules.[16] The way this learning is described is closely associated with the act of writing. At a given moment Thomas starts to write with lipstick on Julie's stomach. This action, along with a series of sexual approaches performed as though on stage, provoke the irritation of the others, who want to share Thomas's sexual play. The latter's act of inscription represents an appropriation of the desired object which obliterates the others' possibility of participating in a communal rite. A triangular relationship is thus established between Thomas, Julie and the rest of the members, evoking the Oedipal triangle in which Thomas had previously played the role of the neglected child.[17]

However, everything in Barthelme's novel indicates that Thomas is a learner who has not yet been able to "manufacture whole". He seems to be trapped in the initial phase of the mirror stage (the analogue of Freud's oral phase) in which the subject begins to project a certain unity into the fragmented self-image in the mirror, though is not able to grasp the totality. Thomas's condition is dramatized in his dialogue with the Dead Father: "My criticism was that you never understood the larger picture, said the Dead Father. Young men never understand the larger picture" (32). Thomas's answer expresses his self-consciousness about the process of his self-formation: "I don't understand it *now*. I do understand the frame, the limits" (32) [my emphasis]. The conversation reveals Thomas's hope for a future undestanding of "the larger picture", in other words, the whole, instead of the fragments. But, on the other hand, his previously acquired understanding of the limits implies an evolution from the shapelessness characteristic of l'hommelette (the pre-verbal subject). Furthermore, the dialogue can also be understood as a new discussion on the struggle between the avant-garde text—Thomas's aesthetics of the fragment—and its literary paternity, embodied by the Dead Father. What is thus being represented is an opposition between the obsessive longing for "wholeness" characteristic of all Western literature until modernism, and the interest of postmodernism in foregrounding (and ultimately breaking) the narrative frames. By focusing on the limits of the work, postmodernist fiction exercises a defamiliarizing effect upon the reader, making him aware of the novel's condition of artifact.[18]

Chapters 5 and 6 have parallel structures. In both chapters the novel becomes a parody of initiation journeys and *rites de passage*.[19] The "hero", however, is different in each situation. In chapter 5, the Dead Father narrates his descent to the underworld and his overcoming of difficult trials. His goal is to rescue Tulla, his "raven-haired" maiden for whom he turned himself into a "hair cut". Related in the style of Greek, Scandinavian and Eastern mythologies, the Dead Father's ludicrous story describes his quest for the principle of Fatherhood. This primordial Fatherhood is achieved at the end through the figure of Tulla, who, we are told, died after having mothered thousands of children. The Father's account ends with the assertion of his paternal role: "I am doing this for you, essentially, the Dead Father said. For the general good and thus, for you...But you never *knew*. In the fullest sense. Because you are not a father...A son can never in the fullest sense become a father"(33).

Together with "A Manual for Sons", chapter 6 is the thematic center of the novel. Here Thomas undertakes a quest, but unlike his father, who searches for the principle of Fatherhood, he suffers "tests" which become an allegory for the understanding of his inner feelings (his repressed desires for patricide) and his final coming to terms with the Law of the Father.[20] The opening words of the chapter establish a switch in the father-son relation, a new inversion of the master and slave opposition: "Tell me a story, said the Dead Father. Certainly, said Thomas"(40). The listener becomes now the speaker. From the very beginning Thomas's telling does not merely evoke, but exactly reproduces, the discourse of dreams, as explained by Lacan. Thomas's Kafkaesque story works on two different levels: paradigmatically, his verbalized unconscious tends to condense in metaphors expressing his pathetic search for identity; and syntagmatically, the signifiers slide in a chain that never seems to close.

In one of the most disturbing scenes of his dream-like story, Thomas tells how he is taken by four men in dark suits "to a large room or ring with sand on the floor" and given a piece of paper he has to grasp in his mouth: "Then I was pushed into the ring where wandered a dozen others similarly bound gripping between their teeth similar pieces of paper with things written on them..."(4).[21] We never learn what is written on those papers; neither do the characters who wander around in the ring trying to read each others' messages, and reacts aggressively to anybody's approach. The scene, like all others in Thomas's story, is left unended, only to be replaced by another nightmarish situation. In a hospital room Thomas faces a corpse whose hands are "erect in the air clutching"(42). A significant detail in the description of the corpse's hands is that its fingers are "missing"; this introduces the theme of amputation—evocative of the castration that is characteristic at this phase of Thomas's formation of the self. The next scene is set at the top of a building, where he encounters "a man with a mask", another image of the father who pushes him to accept his submission and to embrace the simulacrum on which the Symbolic world is built up: "The man in the mask said that I was wrong and had always been wrong and would always be wrong and that he was not going to hurt me. Then he hurt me, with documents"(43). Thus the son is punished in a textual way, alluded to in the scene of writing. Only after Thomas's painful initiation into the mechanisms of language in chapter 6 do his guardians agree that he is "maturing" and "growing older".

Just after damaged "with harsh words", Thomas is taken to the Great Father Serpent, in whose presence he is required to solve "the great riddle": "What do you really feel?"(46), the Serpent asks. As Gordon points out, the situation is "a parody of both Freudianism and the Oedipus riddle asked by a monster" (1981:46).[22] Though he cannot think of any answer, Thomas manages to read the right answer in a sheet in the serpent's

mouth: "Like murderinging", he stutters. In doing so, he "wonders" and "marvels" as he discovers his most hidden and lost feelings, that is, his wish to kill the father. The Serpent's response states explicitly for the first time the futility of patricide: "...having the power is often enough. You don't have to actually do it"(46). As Thomas demonstrates he has learned the lesson, he is released, concluding the story. The riddle's resolution proves to be satisfactory also for the Dead Father, who accepts the son's demand for the Father's attractive belt buckle. The Father's reward has a broader metaphoric meaning: by accepting one of his Father's emblems of power, the son initiates his progressive identification with him.

In the intermediate chapters of the book Barthelme emphasizes the various character's difficulty in communicating with each other. The Dead Father's "Papsday Speech" proves to be a digressive and meaningless discourse about the silence of words.[23] Though he continues talking using a sophisticated jargon borrowed from science and philosophy, the only answer he can give Emma when she asks him about the meaning of the speech is "It meant I made a speech"(51). Similarly, the conversations between Julie and Emma show a disconnected syntax in which question and answer, statement and response, do not follow each other in a logical order. This throws into question the validity of the cause-effect relationship, leading the reader's attention to the mere play of the signifiers.[24]

As stated earlier, if syntax seems to flow according to the horizontal axis of metonymy, the semantics of the text tend to condense following the vertical organization provided by metaphors. Through one of these metaphors, the novel provides an explanation for some of its main topics: the formation of the self, the workings of language, and the act of representation, of which the novel is just one example. In discussing the nature of fatherhood, Julie concentrates in a few lines the whole discourse of the novel: "The fucked mother conceives, Julie said. The whelping is, after agonies I shall not describe, whelped. Then the dialogue begins. The father speaks to it. The "it' in a paroxysm of not understanding. The "it' whirling as in a centrifuge. Looking for something to tie to. Like a boat in a storm. What is there? The father"(77).

Julie's epiphany retells the child's first encounter with the Father, its surprise and lack of understanding. But this description of conception and birth also refers to the process by means of which significance is created. As Gordon suggests, the "it" could be understood as "the sign looking for signification" (1981:171). This signification can only be hinted at through mastery of the Sumbolic code. Finally, Julie's dream of Genesis can be interpreted as a fantasy of how the novel is produced, how it cannot avoid the legacy of literary tradition, how it can only overcome "the anxiety of influences" by accepting the presence of the "text-father".[25]

"A Manual for Sons" was originally published as a kind of short story or extravaganza in the *New Yorker*.[26] But even though it seems to be an independent book, it is closely connected with the thematics of the whole novel. Moreover, it is the central part of the work where all the elements

hinted at by Barthelme in the previous sections find their systematic organization. This book within a book is not Barthelme's exclusive device, nor is it unique to postmodernist fiction. The device goes back to the origins of literature itself, and its most illustrious example is in *Don Quijote*.[27] In fact, the situation described in Chapter 17 of *The Dead Father* bear a close resemblance to the one narrated by Cervantes in Book I, Chapter 32 of his masterpiece. After arriving at a *venta* (country inn) the characters in Cervantes's novel find a mysterious book in one of the rooms ("La novela del Curioso impertinente). The book turns out to be a parody of the psychological and sentimental novel, which was still in fashion during Cervantes' time. When *Don Quijote* was first published, it was criticized for including interpolated novels and stories which interrupted the linear account of the plot. Cervantes incorporated these critiques into the second book of the novel (Ch. 3) with some self-deconstructive ironic commentaries in which Don Quijote blamed his narrator for his stylistic incompetence. Likewise, in Chapter 17 of Barthelme's novel Father and children arrive at a town and decide to shelter in a bad "flophouse". While Thomas and Julie are in their room a bizarre character named Peter Scatterpatter gives them a book, "A Manual for Sons", that he has translated from the English (sic). The interpolation of the Manual within the novel and the conversion of the characters into readers produces one of those Chinese-box-structures or Russian-doll-effects so precious to metafiction. As a result, the structural frames are broken and the borderline between fiction and reality becomes blurred.

But the interpolation of the Manual within Barthelme's novel goes beyond pure metafictional play; it compiles, summarizes and mocks the actions and events which have taken place in the novel so far. If the interpolated stories in *Don Quijote* served Cervantes as a vehicle to parody the literary genres of his times, "A Manual for Sons" parodies Barthelme's novel, which in turn is a reflection on various contemporary discourses. The self-reflective quality of the text is thus maximized and foregrounded, becoming one of its major motifs.

The organization of the Manual follows a rational and taxonomic pattern which contrasts with the seeming absurdity of its contents and chapter titles ("mad fathers", "the leaping father", "the falling father", "lost fathers", etc.). Since the characteristics of the father listed by Scatterpatter (or Barthelme) seem to be inexhaustible—very often they have just the healthy intention of provoking the reader's hiliarity—I will focus on some of the features described by the Manual in light of Bethelme's and Lacan's insights into language and the self.

In subchapter 8 of the Manual fathers appear as texts. Their exegesis aims to increase their prestige on the basis of sacralization: "Many fathers are blameless in all ways, and these fathers are either sacred relics people are touched with to heal incurable illnesses, or texts to be studied generation after generation, to determine how this idiosyncrasy may be maximized. Text-fathers are usually bounded in blue" (123). The last commentary

mocks the bourgeois tendency to make the book into an object of fetishistic worship, or into a mere adornment on a shelf for private enjoyment. Having established the textual nature of the father, the narrator provides three different examples of his voice. In all three cases the father is portrayed as a tyrant who uses education (conceived as the repressive teaching of rules) as the most effective instrument for his "terrible pertinaciousness".

Most paternal figures in the Manual are described in the same fashion as the Dead Father was in the previous chapters—a gigantic construct staying always in his children's way: "Fathers are like blocks of marble, giant cubes, highly polished, with veins and seams, placed squarely in your path. They block your path. They cannot be climbed over, neither can they be slithered past. They are the 'past,'..."(129). The father-son relation is thus expressed as inescapable. The son cannot avoid the presence of the Father. If the former wants to achieve his individuality it has to do so by coping with the latter's impositions and rules.

Even after the Father's death, his presence continues to be felt (as in the case of the Dead Father). Through the son's identification with the paternal figure, he becomes part of him, but this identification also has its shortcomings: self-knowledge cannot be wholly achieved. In this sense Barthelme's text proves again to be closer to Lacanian than to Freudian postulates. Freud's concept of the "harmony of the ego" (the result of the subject's identification with parental figures) is doubted by Lacan, who regards the ego as illusory. Bathelme/Scatterpatter summarizes this conflict in the following way:

> Fatherless now, you must deal with the memory of a father. Often that memory is more potent than the living presence of a father, is a inner voice commanding, haranguing, yes-ing and no-ing—a binary code, yes no yes no yes no yes no, governing your every, your slightest movement, mental or physical. At what point do you become yourself? Never, wholly, you are always partly him (144).

The Manual's allusion to the impossibility of a true self outside the sphere of the father's domination echoes Lacanian notions about the "infinity of reflection" and "the dialectic of recognition." Lacan insists that knowledge of ourselves is always built up on the foundations of the others' relations to us.[28] There are no isolated selves or stable egos. The self is only approached through representation—ruled by the Father's Law—and, as we have proved, representation can never capture us completely. In Lacan's view, representation is an imperfect mediator between the self and the Other, between the subject and the object.

Patricide, which could seem to be an alternative,is discussed in the last section of the Manual. Nevertheless, as was shown in the episode of the Great Father Serpent's riddle, the Manual proves the uselessness of the literal act. It provides three basic and conclusive reasons: first, "it is contrary to law and custom," i.e. it is illegal; second, it would demonstrate that the

father's accusations against the son were correct; third, it is unnecessary to slay the father since "time will slay him" (145). The Manual's conclusion points to reconciliation as the only possibility of leaving behind the overwhelming pressure of the paternal figure.

When Thomas and Julie finish reading the Manual, Julie throws the book into the fire, with a pejorative commentary: "I hate relativists" (146). However, the rest of the novel will allegorize the message of reconciliation Scatterpatter outlines in his psychoanalytic extravaganza. The penultimate chapter (22) is shaped in the tradition of Beckett's and Joyce's interior monologues, being in addition a parody of them. The novel at this point assumes a tragic humor. On the eve of his death the Dead Father recalls different moments of his life from adolescence to maturity, stammering about his human condition, lack of freedom, and fear of dealth.[29] The Dead Father's physical decadence is mirrored in a discourse in which the syntax does not conform any more to grammatical rules, whereas the semantics achieve a maximum degree of concentration.[30]

A new Kafkaesque scenario sets the background for the Dead Father's burial: "They came then to a large gap in the earth surrounded by hundreds and hundreds of people holding black umbrellas"(174). As he is invited to lie down in the hole that will be his grave, he recognizes having known about the end of their journey from the outset. His last wish is to grab the Golden Fleece, which turns out to be Julie's public hair. The wish is denied. Thomas places his hand on the Fleece and the Father admits being covered with admiration. But ironically, what covers him is not admiration, but the load of earth shoved on him by the bulldozers. In the last moment both Thomas and Julie express their wonder at the Father's voice.[31]

The death of the Father corresponds with an increase in Thomas's awareness of and compromise with what Fatherhood represents. As Maire Jaanus points out in relation to Lacan, "Death, the sepulchre, is the first symbol in every awareness. In a sense, all that we retain of nature in consciousness is the awareness of its death, the knowledge that it has been put aside, murdered, lost. The symbol is "the murder of the thing" (1979: 243). In Barthelme's novel this suggestive idea acquires a high degree of complexity, since what seems to be murdered is the Father—the embodiment of the privileged signifier, the symbol through which all other signifiers gain significance. The novel itself provides the solution to this riddle, the same riddle Thomas is required to answer in the presence of the Great Father Serpent. And the answer in this case is identical: "Murderinging": the murder of the murder which is not literal, but metaphorical. (The Dead Father cannot be murdered since he is already dead).[32]

Thomas's acceptance of Name of the Father—the order of Language—is confirmed in the last scene. Through he will never achieve self-knowledge and the Real will remain out of his reach, Thomas has endured the required "tests" and overcome the "trials" to enter the territory of the Symbolic, where identily can be approached through the discourse of the

Other. Language (the Father) proves to be the source and vehicle of the socially given, cultural prohibitions and laws, but, at the same time, ir is also the precondition for the act of becoming aware of ourselves as distinct identilies. Knowledge of the world, of others and of ourselves is determined by Language, and the unity of the self, in turn, is approached only after identification with the Father. The most relevant conclusion of Barthelme's novel is thus enchanced in light of Lacan's linguistic interpretation of human psyche: subjects are produced by learning the mechanisms of textual discourse.

In *The Dead Father* signifiers seem to follow one another in a carnivalesque verbal play, without hinting at a clear referent. The novel in its own texture mirrors Lacan's description of the metaphoric condensations and the metonymic displacements of significance. Barthelme's constant emphasis on the linguistic nature of the novelistic discourse and everyday world leads to the notion of literature and reality itself as constructs—cultural artifacts—explored through textual self-reference. If communication is going to take place, nevertheless, it has to be verbalized. We cannot get rid of the Father as we cannot get rid of language or the literary heritage. As "A Manual for Sons" argues patricide is not only impossible but also pointless: "Fatherhood can be, if not conquered, at least 'turned down' in this generation" (145). That is the challenge taken up by Barthelme's generation, that is the challenge of postmodernist fiction.

Notes

(1) Metafiction and Postmodernism are two terms which have become commonplace in contemporary fiction studies. They are frequently used indiscriminately together with a constellation of similar concepts ("fabulation", "surfiction," "literature of exhaustion," "narcissistic narrative," etc.) Patricia Waugh offers one of the most comprehensive definitions of this mode: "Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of theirown methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literaly fictional text" (1984:2). The tendency among critics is to consider metafiction as one of the many characteristic manifestations of literary postmodernist (Hutcheon 1980:xiii).

(2) In addition to this concept first mamed by Bakhtin, some other postmodernist elements which can be found in Barthelme's novel include: self-reflexivity (every novelistic enterprise ends by becoming a reflection upon language and the narrative form), the substitution of perspectival coherence by a conglomerate of dispersed voices, the shift in language from the referential to the phatic or metalinguistic function, the transgression of the traditional limits assigned to each of the genres, and the conception of the book not as a piece of museum, but as a game, as a ludic expression which has been liberated from the truth and coherence of empirical thought (Coy Ferrer & García Díez 1986:5-10)

(3) In discussing Lacanian theses I will explore in depth the English anthology of his writings (*Ecrits* 1977) and Anika Lamaire's introduction to Lacan's work (1977). Other useful essays that I have consulted are Gallop (1985), and Kerrigan & Smith (1983).

(4) Although my reading of *The Dead Father* follows in general the schema provided by Lacanian analysis, I will occacionally use some expressions characteristic of Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the novel. Terms such as dialogism, carnivalization, alterity, and intertextuality are now widely used in literary criticism, going in most cases beyond the specific frontiers of the Bakhtinian approach. Unfortunately, as a consequence of the usual division and isolation among schools of criticism, the maintaining of connections between different fields has become increasingly difficult. In the case of Lacan and Bakhtin this is especially surprising and regrettable, since these two theoreticians have many common concerns. David Patterson's collection of essays on Bakhtin and his contemporaries is the only notable exception to this tendency. Patterson's collection of essays on Bakhtin and his contemporaries is the only notable exception to this tendency. Pattersons writes: "Like Bakhtin, Lacan approaches the selfin terms of a discourse between the self and the other" (1988:68). Both critics conceive language and reality as socially-constructed systems.

(5) Henceforth I may occasionally refer to Barthelme's novel as an allegory, but the concept of allegory that I have in mind is remote from the naive traditional works of the genre (*Everyman, Pilgrim Progress, Piers Plowman*, etc.). It originates instead in Linda Hutcheon's (1980) and Brian McHale's (1987) studies of postmodernist fiction. For Linda Hutcheon, there is a tendency among "overtly narcissistic texts" to reveal their "self-awareness in explicit thematizations or allegorizations of their diegetic or linguistic identily within the text themselves." (1980:7). Hutcheon also analyzes examples in which texts mirror extratextual materials, and especially, contemporary literary theories dealing with the acts of writing and reading. The resulting effect is an overlapping of literary and critical discourses and an emergence of what she calls a "composite identity" formed by the reader, the writer, and the critic. Likewise, McHale sees in contemporary writing a resurgence of allegory. He specifically subscribes *The Dead Father* in this trend, along with John Barth's *Giles Goat-Boy* , Jerzy Kosinski's *Being There*, Ishmael Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo*, Günter Grass's *The Flounder*, Robert Coover's *The Public Burden*, and Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. In McHale's view the founders of the dominant mode in postmodernist allegory are Kafka, Beckett and Joyce. The complexity of this new version of the genre stems from the fact that a work such as *Finnegans Wake, The Castle* or *Waiting for Godot* "invites us to read allegorically but refuses to satisfy our drive" (1987:141). What these novels do is to expand the scope of their exegesis *ad infinitum*. They offer themselves "as a tool for exploring ontological themes" (1987:141).

(6) As deconstruction has attenmpted to demonstrate, the hermeneutic activity itself can be regarded as allegorical. For Paul de Man (1979) every critical writing is ruled by the literary figure we call allegory (a sequence of signs which stands for and displaces another sequence of signs). Since language is contaminated by figurality, both the act of writing and the act of reading are mediatedand distorted by tropes. Every reading will therefore be a misreading. De Man, however, distinguishes between correct and incorrect misreadings, the former beingthe ones which do not preclude all other possible interpretations.

(7) In this phase of its formation, the child's psyche is still something amorphous. For that reason Lacan calls the pre-verbal subject *l'hommelette*, a pun meaning both "litle man" (*homme-lette*) and "shapeless mass" (*omelette*) (Lacan 1977:197; qtd.in Wright 1984:107-8).

(8) As Anika Lemaire notes, "the term 'Phallus,' as used by Lacan, is not to be confused with the real, biological sex, with what is called the penis" (1970:87). In the Lacanian system, the "Phallus" has basically two different meanings: on the one hand, it is the privileged signifier restoring the lost unit between all other signifiers and their signifieds; and on the other, it is a symbol for the cultural structures of domination within a patriarchal society. For a discussion of the role of the phallus as "the privileged signifier" see chapter 8 of *Écrits* (Lacan 1977:280-291).

(9) Lacan draws his idea that language reflects the taboos and laws of society (and particularly the prohibition of incest) from Freud (1913) and Lévi-Strauss (1949). According to Lévi-Strauss, access to culture, and therefore to the Symbolic, is originally determined by the "Forbidden" (the coincidence between relationships of kinship and relationships of alliance).

(10) As early as the 1920's, Bakhtin used the mirror as the archetype of deluded self-perception. For Bakhtin, as for Lacan, individual consciousness can only be explained through the mediating role of the Other. Specular images are incomplete, since we cannot perceive

ourselves as a whole: "...the *other* is necessary to accomplish, even if temporarily, a perception of the self that the individual can achieve only partially with respect to himself" (Todorov 1984:95). For more information on Lacan's use of the mirror metaphor, see *Écrits*, Ch. 1.

(11) Robert Con Davis sees in this "cryptic caricature" of the father the most recent in a long genealogy of Anglo-American fictional fathers, which includes the "stern but ultimately benevolent" Squire Allworthy, John Jarndyce and Edward Overton, and also such "child haters" as Mr. Murdstone, Mr. M'Choakumchild, Sir Austen Feverel, Huck Finn's Pap, and Thomas Sutpen (1981:169-70). In his analysis of Barthelme's description of the father's great body, Davis emphasizes the symbolic magnitude of the character.

(12) All Barthelme quotations are taken from *The Dead Father* (New York: Penguin, 1986).

(13) In Lacan's view words indicate the absence of the concept they stand for. But, as we have seen, there is no such thing as a sound-concept stable relationship. Signifiers only gain significance within the chain of all other signifiers. For example, the meaning of a word is not apprehended till the whole sentence has been completed, but its meaning will also depend on the particular context in which the sentence is uttered. There is always the fading presence of something which is irremediably missing. Language, like identity, is thus defined not only by what is, but also by what is not. The role of negativity in Lacan's psychoanalysis has been studied by Marie Jaanus in *Literature and Negation:* "Language for Lacan is always doubly negative: a presence made of an absence and the symbolic forever lacking the real" (1979:65). Barthelme's allusion to the Dead Father's being dead-but-still-alive makes the latter into an embodiment of the symbol as "the murder of the thing."

Other post-structuralist critics, such as Louis Althuser and Jacques Derrida, also construct their respective theories on the concept of a "metaphysics of absence."

(14) Chapter 1 ends with Julie in awe of the father: "I have the greatest possible respect for him and for what he represents" (12). (Julie's declaration is ironic, since just before she has called the father "an old fart"). This love-hate relationship and the previous portrayal of the father as a totem-like figure sets in motion a humorous analogy between Barthelme's novel and Freud's description of patricide in *Totem and Taboo* (1913), chapter 4. According to Freud, the ritual and communal slaughter of the totem animal by the clansmen in primitive societies is the repetition and commemoration of an original patricide. The act of killing the father began the process ofinitiation of tribal communities social organization, moral restrictions, and religion. The feelings of remorse and guilt at the murderous act led the clan to establish the two taboos of totemism: patricide and incest—the first two prohibitions, which became the foundations of all cultural systems.

(15) As Verschuren points out, "in naming himself as such, the Dead Father pronounces himself as being before figuration, before language (*pro-nomem*)" (1984:127)

(16) An example of Thomas's drive to repress in the other "children" is his interruption of a porno movie, which causes a general protest (including the Father's). But Thomas does not censor the film for moral reasons. He stops the film because "it does not represent the parameters of human love"(22). Thomas's reaction to the movie is emblematic of his progressive assimilation of the Father's Law, since one of the powers of this Law is to rule over the act of representation. On the other hand, the switch in the leading roles point to a continuous reversal of the Master-Slave opposition.

(17) The readers may wonder whether there is a mother in the Oedipal conflict dramatized in the novel. As if anticipating this doubt, Barthelme makes the characters ask the very same question:

> Where is the mother? asked Emma.
>
> The mother hath not the postlike quality of the father. She is more like a grime.
>
> A grime?
>
> Overall presence distributed in discrete small black particles all over everything, said Julie (77).

At the same time the Oedipal structure of the story is outlined in the novel when the mother appears for the first time. She is described as a horseman who follows the group "discretely" from a distance. Just as Julie describes her, the mother becomes a recurrent and "overall presence", but her identity is not revealed till the end of the novel.

(18) The whole novel could be interpreted as a reflection on the limits of representation: "the nature of details given the Dead Father...is such that one comes to realize that Barthelme's subject is language—or any frame of reference or creative activity—as a necessary and yet inadequate index of reality" (Gordon 1981:162).

(19) The longing for the origin, manifested in its myths—such as the initiation rites parodied by Barthelme, assumes increased importance in those societies in which the reality concept has come into crisis. As Baudrillard points out, "Lorsque le réel n'est plus ce qu'il était, la nostalgie prend tout son sens. Surenchère de vérité, d'objectivité et d'authenticité secondes. Escalade du varai, du vécu, réssurrection du figuratif là où l'objet et la substance ont disparu. Production affolée de réel et de référentiel, parallèle et supérierure à l'affolement de la production matérielle: telle apparait la simulation dans la phase qui nous concerne—une stratégie du réel, de néo-réel et d'hyperréel, que double partout une stratégie de dissuasion" (1970:17).

(20) Unlike the Father's story, which is a search for assertion, Thomas's is oneof constant victimization. The allusions to physical punishments recur throughout this chapter.

(21) The arena into which the chacacter is thrown is reminiscent of the settings of primitive sacrificial rites of initiation, the kind of symbolic scenario that can be found nowadays in bullfights. The fact that all this action takes place within (or behind) a car wash suggests ironically the degeneration of myth and ritual in postmodern society.

(22) For Régis Durand, this Oedipal scene is oneof Barthelme's many demonstrations that he is "thoroughly familiar with the catchwords of psychoanalysis and determined to beat it at its own game" (1986:163).

(23) "Papsday Speech" certainly serves Barthelme to disclose the meaninglessness of contemporary public discourses, but paradoxically it has also a therapeutical value: it both fills up and hides the existential emptiness that Barthelme's characters fear so intensely, saving them from falling into their wrath. As Josephine Hendin points out, "anything that produces enough boredom to blow out feeling and ward off the emotions that "damage" the mind stabilizes the collapsing personalities Barthelme loves" (1978:62). The Dead Father's children may not understand a word of what the god-like figure says but they automatically respond with a "prolonged and fervent applause. Whistles. Stamping of feet. Waving of handkerchiefs (the women)" (51). Thomas, July and the other "pilgrims" remain ignorant of the father's code but their potential anger (a tendency Hendin considers inherent to most of Barthelme's characters) is momentarily kept in check.

(24) Barthelme in his fiction exhibits recurrent tendency to disrupt the linear rendering of the plot. The dialogues in *The Dead Father* produce, as well, a dispersion of the point of view, a multiplication of the narrative voices. As Barthelme himself has stated, "the dialogues in *The Dead Father* are really collections of *non sequiturs*, intended to give the novel another kind of voices, to provide a kind of counter-narration to the main narration" (Brans 1982:134). Robert Con Davis interprets the function of the dialogues between Julie and Emma in relation to the mother's enigmatic participation in the novel. The daughter's language of free association ("a language of the oppressed," according to Davis) and the mother's erratic wandering "suggest an a-linear model of behaviour foreign to the rational economies associated with paternal authority" (1981:174).

(25) Harold Bloom argues that since Milton all poets have suffered what he calls "the anxiety of influences" (1973), a poetic interpretation of Freudian Oedipus complex according to which literary influence is seen as paternity. No text can stand on its own, but it refers inevitably to a previous one. The role of the new poet is to kill (or castrate) symbolically the father in order to make room for himself in literary history. He does so by misreading his predecessors.

(26) New Yorker 51 (12 May 1975):40-50. Some small changes were added to the final version as it appears in *The Dead Father*.

(27) As Brian Stonehill has noted: "The history of the novel begins and ends in self-consciousness" (1988:32). In tracing the history of metafiction, Stone agrees with Robert Alter (1975:3) in considering *Don Quijote* as the first example of "the novel as a self-conscious genre." As both critics comment, self-consciousness is thus an innate characteristic of the novel and not the exclusive privilege of a particular national literature. Robert Con Davis's analysis of *The Dead Father* in the light of the English tradition seems to neglect

other powerful influences, such as those of Cervantes or Kafka. In his Lacanian approach to *The Dead Father*, Davis says: "Both of these conventional literary devices, the quest and the book-within-a-book, create a picture, and an accurate one, of a novel solidly ensconced in the English tradition"(1981:172). But it should be obvious that these two *Motifs* are actually universal and as old as literature itself.

(28) This brings us back to Bakhtin's theory of alterity, since, acoording to the Russian formalist, "...it is impossible to conceive of any being outside of the relations that link it to the other" (Todorov 1984:94).

(29) Barthelme hints at an irreverent parody of Christ's meditations at Gethsemane in this passage. We should not forget that the Dead Father is frequently described as a Messianic figure, and the analogy with Christ has been occasionally insinuated since the introductory chapter.

(30) In the father's final monologue we witness not just the character's agony but the agony of language itself. His approaching his death seems to plunge the father into a regressive process of decomposition. Different tongues (English, Latin, Spanish etc.) are introduced into the father's chaotic discourse, evoking a Babel of the mind: "Andl. Endl. Great endifarce teeterteeterteetertottering. Willit urt. I reiterate. Don't be cenacle. Conscientia mille testes. And having mad them where now? what now? Mens agitat molem and I wanted to doitwell, doitwell. Elegantemente. Ohe! jam satis, Andl" (171). The father's regression is thus manifested in the regression of language to that primordial state that Lacan calls *Lalangue* and Jacques Alain-Miller interprets as a "pregrammatical" and "prewritten level of language" (1990). *Lalangue*, as Lacan notes, works at the level of the sound. It is that kind of shapeless verbal mass upon which grammar is constructed: "*Lalangue*, as one word (without an article or with the article soldered onto the substantive, instead of *la langue*): general equivocation, universal babble, or 'Babelonian'" (Lacan 1990:6).

(31) The solemnity of the scene—occasionally interrupted by puns and jokes—and the children's mutually opposed feelings evoke Freud's description of the ritual celebration of patricide. According to Freud, the clansmen "rejoice over the killing of the totem and mourn over it as well" (1952:140). At this point the Father-Christ identification is invested with new meaning in the light of Freudian analysis. By means of Christ's sacrifice, Christianity provided a way of redemption for an original sin committed against God the Father, which Freud interprets as just another version of the primordial patricide. Julia Kristeva goes beyond Freud in her reading of Christ's passion myth. In connecting that event with the process of acquisition of language, she offers a connection between Freud and Lacan for the interpretation of the event in Barthelme's novel. The mourning quality which permeates the last scene of *The Dead Father* mirrors the sadness that Kristeva cites as characteristic in young children before their acquisition of language: "If it is true that language begins in mourning inherent in the evolution of subjectivity, the abandonment by the father—the symbolic 'other'—triggers melancholy anguish..." (1987:41)

(32) In French "le Nom-du-Père" is punningly pronounced as "the no-of-the-father," being language the first of these negations and subjections which will affect Thomas in the domain of the Symbolic.

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HENDERSON THE RAIN KING: THE HERO AND ANTI-HERO

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This article[1] deals with the Protagonist of Saul Bellow's novel *Henderson the Rain King*, inside M. Bakhtin's concepts of the Menippean satire and of the carnivalization of literature, Thus, we shall be examining him not only by way of the Menippean characteristic of moral-psychological experimentation—the representation of man's unusual, abnormal moral and psychic states[2]—but also through other Menippean characteristics, always forming an organic unity: the comical element, underworld naturalism, scandalous scenes and scenes of eccentric behavior, incongruous speeches and performances, sharp contrasts and oxymoronic combinations. All of them contribute, one way or another, to project the protagonist's personality as an "exceptional amalgam of vehement forces" (228). And, as the Menippean satire is "one of the chief carriers and implementors of the carnival attitude to the world"[3], we shall at the same time be commenting on some of carnival's performances, categories and images, because the deep relationship between the menippea and carnival cannot be forgotten.

Herderson's characteristics—heroic and anti-heroic or picaresque, semi-god like and slavish, legendary and contemporary, serious and parodic, royal and clownish, as befits the hero of a carnivalized world—are apparent from the start. For, from the beginning of the novel, we are made aware that Henderson is a contemporized mythical hero, whose adventures prove that the serio-comic genres (to which the menippea belongs) are "*consciously* based on *experience* (...) and on *free imagination*" and that "their relationship to legend is in most cases deeply critical", which is "indeed an upheaval in the history of the literary image".[4]

Presenting first of all Henderson's heroic side, striking parallelisms become evident: in his name, ancestors, physique and imagination, Henderson has a touch of the noble, of the heroic and legendary. His first name bears already the onus of meaning "well-born" (Eugene in Greek), while Henderson is an old and traditional family name in America. His father was a famous scholar, Willard Henderson. His great-grandfather was Secretary of State and his great-uncles were ambassadors to England and

France (10). As Charles Grivel suggests, "*le nom de personne*" (dans le système linguistique, dans le roman), *bien qu 'arbitraire', n'est cependant pas dépourvu de signification*".[5] By this we infer that Eugene H. Henderson, besides his "noble" ancestry, has himself striven to add to his inherited Gentile aristocracy, to his millions and to his estate: he has a beautiful mansion, a "regular work of art" (282), he is a graduate of an Ivy League university (7)—he even has an M.A. (23)—, a Purple Heart veteran with "martial blood" (216)—he held up a mined bridge in Italy and kept it from collapsing until the engineers arrived (75)—, a captain with "a soldierly rather than a civilian temperament" (22). For Dahfu, Henderson was "royal material" (265). Henderson himself tells us he is "a man of wealth and an aristocrat" (112).

If this background is more than sufficient to qualify Henderson as the hero of romances and of legends—Gillian Beer shows with the example of *Henderson the Rain King* and other modern novels "how richly the 'romance' tradition is still yielding in recent literature"[6]—his Titanic dimensions corroborate even more his kinship with mythical heroes and legendary figures. Keeping in mind that in the menippea the hero is presented without epical distance, we learn of Henderson's six feet four inches, a twenty-two neck (75), his two hundred and thirty pounds (8), his colossal strength. As he describes himself, he is "strong and healthy, rude and aggressive" (23), the winner of a contest with the Arnewi's prince Itelo, the man who lifted Mummah, the cloud goddess, among other feats. Built to last ninety years (201), he could even "walk across Siberia" on his hands with his "Valley Forge element" (268) which brings out "the best" in him. All this brings him close to the dimensions expected of ancient Hercules. He is "like a monument" (132), in Dahfu's words, and, as his wife Lily remarks, "Oh, he's so strong. He's unkillable" (9). Adding to his physical endowments, his "powerful and original though blockaded imagination" (228), his "high-spiritedness" (233) and his "rudiments of high character" (219) make us realize that Henderson has been granted the status of being high-born and high-bred.

But, if in one aspect Bellow's hero has evident characteristics from romance and legend—he even resembles the romantic questor, looking for his lost or never-found Grail, for, as he later tells Itelo, the African prince: "I'm really kind of on a quest" (58)—these same asttributes are counterbalanced by the author's freedom of invention in endowing this same hero—who formally resembles the traditional "superman"—with eccentric, comic[7] and crude naturalistic qualities. Henderson is the very image of the king of carnival, he is a "syncretic spectacle" who combines in his personality the high and the low, the serious and the parodic. Heroic and anti-heroic forces split his personality[8] and make him prone to becoming the mock-hero of the modern novel, who makes use of profanation, *mésalliances*, disguises, in a truly Menippean moral-psychological experimentation. Henderson violates the ordinary course of events, using the incongruous word and free gesture, in a never-ending list of oxymoronic com-

binations which seem to include the whole syncretic pageant of carnival. Henderson's mock-heroic mask—evident in his clothing, gestures, speech, actions and thoughts—almost annuls his better qualities. For Bakhtin, such manifestations as parodies, caricatures, grimaces, eccentric postures, and comic gestures are per se derived from the mask. It reveals the essence of the grotesque", for "the mask is connected with the joy of change and reincarnation, with gay relativity and with the merry negation of uniformity and similarity; it rejects conformity to oneself".[9]

Again, this anti-heroic ambivalence[10] is established from the very beginning of the novel, when Henderson complements his aristocratic forefathers' story by saying that they "stole land from the Indians. They got more from the government and cheated other settlers too, so I became heir to a great estate" (22). He also shows the seamy side of some other Hendersons, for he came "from a stock that has been damned and derided for more than a hundred years", the "loony ones". "There have been plenty of impulsive or imbecile parties im our family" (75). Henderson even mentions the founder of the family: "he was a Dutch sausage-maker and became the most unscrupulous capitalist im Amerca" (72). Then he concludes—"a service ideal exists in our family, though sometimes in a setting of mad habit" (75).

Henderson's powerful physique is also deflated by his being "very fierce-looking", crowned by "an inormous head, rugged, with hair like Persian lambs' fur. Suspicious eyes,[11] usually narrowed. Blustering ways. A great nose" (8). As Henderson comments on his belly,[12] "the name of Frances once tattooed [on it] had suffered some expansion" (59), and this expansion is also corroborated in another direction, when he refers to his "belly full of troubles" (18). Henderson himself realizes he is "a regular bargain basement of deformities" (73), with a face like an "unfinished church" (67), "half the length of another person's body" (265), while others compare his size and strength to an "old locomotif" (73), a "human Galápagos turtle" (59), and so on. Comparing himself to the ants, ostriches and mountains in the strange background of Africa, Henderson again observes that he came out "still more exotic and fantastic always" (98) than they were.

These different quotations also illustrate the deep relationship that can be established between Henderson's outward aspect and Bakhtin's concept of grotesque realism, for Henderson is the "grotesque image" himself, a "phenomenon in transformation, an as yet unfinished metamorphosis, of death and birth, growth and becoming"[13]. And, in the same way that Bakhtin mentions how "Sancho's fat belly (panza), his appetite and thirst still convey a powerful carnivalesque spirit"[14], Henderson's outward aspect, too, reminds us of an immense clown,[15] which is of course complemented by his outfit, gestures and speech.

Carnival has been apparent in Henderson's clothing since his college days, when he wore gold earrings "to provoke fights" (23). Later on, when his second wife Lily is entertaining friends, he wears, in addition to his

"filthy plaster cast" and "sweat socks", a "red velvet dressing gown" plus a "red wool hunting cap" (9). This extravagant outfit is further enhanced by his incongruous gestures and speech:

> And I wipe my nose and mustache on my fingers and then shake hands with the guests, saying, "I'm Mr. Henderson, how do you do?" And I go to Lily and shake her hand, too, as if she were merely another lady guest, a stranger like the rest. And I say, "How do you do?" (9).

A parallelism could also be established between degradation (the lowering of all that is high, ideal, abstract—a transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body), the assential principle of grotesque realism,[16] plus the clown's role in medieval times (the transfer of every high ceremonial gesture or ritual to the material sphere) and the example above, where the greeting scene is debased through Henderson's incongruous behavior and words.

Henderson's clownish and foolish behavior is further stressed when he recalls—already in Africa—making faces at himself in the toilet of Doctor Sphor's office in New York (105) and later, "like a fool" (109), kissing Mrs. Sphor—the wife of the painter who was doing Lily's portrait—back. One of the best instances of his clownish behavior, as a great child among children, is masterfully depicted in a scene in the hospital in America, with a broken leg—again set as a contrast to his heroic behavior in Italy, during the war—when he recalls:

> I spent all my time in the children's wards, entertaining and cheering up the kiids. On my crutches I hopped around the entire place in a hospital gown; I couldn't be bothered to tie the tapes and was open behind, and the old nurses ran after me to cover me, but I wouldn't hold still(75).

As Bakhtin points out, "carnival celebrates the destruction of the old and the birth of the new world", and this is the reason "why in carnivalesque images there is so much turnabout, so many opposite faces and intentionally upset proportions"[17]: to show one's backside, makes part of the same logic of the "wrong side out" and of "bottoms up", expressed in gestures like to walk backward, to stand on one's head, etc.

Henderson's grotesque and clownish appearance is also brought out in the crabs episode, when he is stripped naked in the open, soaped and lathered and shaved by the medics, at the crossoroads near the waterfront at Salerno. Abused and mocked by bystanders, Henderson in a way anticipates in this "ceremony" his future crownings ans discrownings in Africa, for here too he resembles the clown, metamorphosed into a naked giant, subjected to the laughter or he public:

> Trucks filled with troops were passing, and fishermen and paisanos and kids and girls and women were looking on. The GIs were cheering and laughing and the paisans laughed, the whole coast laughed, and even I was laughing as I tried to kill all four. They ran away and left me bald and shivering, ugly, naked, prickling between the legs and under the arms, raging, laughing, and swearing revenge (23).

Another incongruous scene is the one in which Henderson tries to kill a tom cat that belonged to his ex-tenant's wife:

> I carried a shopping bag from Grusan's market and in it was the pistol. There was plenty of light in the small wallpapered attic room. I said to tue tom cat, "They've cast you away, kitty." He flattened himself to the wall, arched and bristling. I tried to aim at him from above and finally had to sit on the floor, sighting between the legs of a bridge table which was there. In this small space, I didn't want to fire more than a single shot. From reading about Pancho Villa I had picked up the Mexican method of marksmanship (...) and fired, but my will was not truly bent on his death, and I missed. That is the only explanation for missing at a distance of eight feet (80).

Henderson's foolish behavior of course is further stressed when he arrives in Africa. As he himself comments, "setting bushes on fire,and performing the manual of arms, and making like a regular clown. I felt extremely ridiculous"(49). But he also realizes that "a damned fool going out into the world is bound and fated to encounter damned fool phenomena"(54).

Henderson's thoughts also move with an admirable quickness from high to low, and sharp transitions from one state to another become evident in the same flow of speech or thought:

> Lily thought I had a prejudice about her social origins, which are German and lace-curtain Irish. But damn it, I had no such prejudice. It was something else that bothered me.
>
> Nobody truly occupies a station in life anymore. There are mostly people who feel that they occupy the place that belongs to another by rights. There are displaced persons everywhere.
>
> "For who shall abide the day of His (the rightful one) coming?" (32)

Thus, Henderson's actions and thoughts display a duality characteristic of the anti-hero, in scenes of scandal and of eccentric behavior. He behaves "like a bum" (7), as he says himself. In the same way, he is not only a slave to his urges, but also a clown and a fool in his own eyes ("as Lily knows,

it was done on purpose" (9)), disastrous, "doomed always to bungle" (35), while trying to reach purification from the moral downfall he was in.

We could still mention Henderson's character in relation to the picaro, for his clownish and anti-heroic qualities achieve an extra dimension if we compare him to the hero of sixteenth century picaresque novels:

> le picaro constitue un contretype à la figure décandente du héros chevaleresque. Sa situation originelle de serviteur, en fait tout le contraire d'un héros—un antihéros (...) auquel rien ne peut arriver de grave. Son astuce et sa ruse—qui excluent le meurtre—l'ecartent du registrè des actions nobles. Etranger à tout code moral, voué à vivre au présent, sous la pression de la nécessité, le picaro voit son existence placée sous le signe du désordre et de la discontinuité, dont il retrouve l'image dans la société qui l'entoure. Or en même temps, son trajet présente une analogie avec celui du héros noble: tous deux sont des héros de l'aventure qui attendent de la *rencontre*, et non du *travail*, le changement de leur destin; la bassesse de condition, le picaro ne l'accepte pas, mais déploie, pour y échapper, des qualités étrangères à l'homme commun et n'hésite pas à courir les risques les plus graves."[18]

Although references to Henderson as a picaresque hero have already been made by many citrics, we want nevertheless to refer to it again, as this aspect presents an evident similarity to the Menisppean characteristics mentioned above in connection with Henderson's oxymoronic amalgam of forces. Henderson is a slave of these forces, we know that nothing really dangerous happens to him in Africa because he has come back to tell us about his adventures, he tries to perform noble actions but they turn out to be comic, it is the disorder and discontinuity in his surroundings that makes him leave the chaos of American life for Africa. And Henderson, in spite of his heroic qualities has found remedy not in hard work, but in his meeting strange African kings and queens. He has also not accepted the images of death and junk that surrounded him in America and prefers to engage himself in adventures in Africa.

These commentaries on the picaresque aspects of Henderson's character show the parallelisms that can be established not only between our hero and the picaro,[19] but even one step further, between *Henderson the Rain King* and the picaresque novel, for, as Démoris comments, "si le roman picaresque entend divertir, il prétend aussi informer et instruire",[20] and Henderson tells us right at the beginning: "something of the greatest importance has been presented to me so I am obliged to communicate it" (22). But if Démoris stresses the fact that the picaresque novels do not criticise directly the chivalric unreality, and content themselves to ignore it, Bellow's novel, on the other hand, is a parody of the nineteenth and twentieth century adventure stories in Africa.

Returning to the discussion of Henderson's ambivalent characteristics,

if his relationship with the picaro, clown or antihero can be established through these few instances of his incongruous behavior and comic attitudes before leaving for Africa, other aspects of his carnivalistic personality, intrinsically associated again with the menippea, could be explored. Having seen the two sides of Henderson's background, one could still add to his "exceptional amalgam of vehement forces" by inquiring into his not gratuitous similarities with the mythical figure of Dionysus or Bacchus, the Greek demi-god, son of Zeus and Semele.[21] Although many authors have dealt with the mythological references in *Henderson the Rain King*—as D. Hughes has indicated: "Henderson himself calls up, either directly or in a parodic mode, Oedipus, Moses, Joseph, Jacob, Falstaff, Lear, etc., and his entire quest has a familiar mythic pattern"[22]—none has, to our knowledge, noticed the striking similarities which could be established between Henderson and Dionysus. For, although there are no explicit links in the novel between both, such as there are between Henderson and other legendary or Biblical figures—as mentioned by Hughes—we might justify the discussion of Henderson's similarity with Dionysus, by the fact that these parallelisms would be in keeping with the unrestricted freedom of invention when the menippea deals with the "historical and legendary figures".[23]

Thus, even though the hero's chararcter is not based on legend and myth without parodic purposes—as many critics emphasize[24]—but even creates his own archetype according to David Galloway,[25] we could still discuss Henderson's mythical connotations in order to better grasp the comic or Dionysiac element in him, which we all share to a certain extent, in contrast to the Apollonian element.[26] It is this carnivalistic element that makes Henderson "unkillable" (9), like the Greek god. And, for William Righter, "the identification of the myth is the art of catching the essence of a situation".[27] In *Henderson the Rain King*, mythic Africa is regarded by Henderson as still in the Golden Age, as "the embodiment of human aspiration and its appropriate imaginative form".[28] In the same manner, by finding relationships between Henderson and Dionysus, one would catch the "essence" of Henderson's carnivalistic character, for the novel as a whole is the prototype of carnival performances, categories and images. And, inside it, Henderson's personality is at the same time essentially the same as that of the god of wine and fertility, from whose rituals and festivals were born Greek tragedy and comedy, in the same way that from oral carnival folk genres were born the serio-comic genres.

Righter claims that for him the intentional use of myth is a "means of deepening and enriching a poem or narrative",[29] and that in the novel, "the myth is as serious as the degree to which a character takes it seriously or to which it has some consequence for that character".[30] Nevertheless, Righter warns us (similarly to Bellow's "Beware, Deep Readers!") that we should always ask ourselves if the "design" seen enriches the work as a whole, for the use of "mythical patterns, divine presences the discovery

of underlying structures of ritual origin (...), have all become the commonplaces of modern critical practice".[31]

We propose to adopt the first sense of Righter's "getting the right clues", which is the one involving some "intentional connection" between Henderson and Dionysus and not the second sense, of seeing only a mere "resemblance" between both. For in identifying Henderson partly with Dionysus—with parody as a seminal part of it—we would add to the grasping of his protean characteristics and make him move again, through his carnivalistic nature and Dionysian qualities, from the particular individual to something larger:[32] Henderson would become "the personification of certain natural powers" which are inherent in man and which have been explained in Jung's theory of archetypes.[33] This view, of course, does not contradict the above opinion of Galloway, to consider Henderson an archetype in his own right.

Turning then to Dionysus character, the figure of the primitive god has acquired traits from other gods and thus his influence and character has extended and became enriched with new contributions. From god of wine he became god of vegetation and warm moisture, then god of pleasures and of civilisation and finally, a kind of supreme god.[34] Dionysus is also presented as god of the fertility of nature, a suffering god, who dies and then comes back to life again, and who loosens care and inspires to music and poetry and in this way is connected with the dithyramb, tragedy and comedy.[35] Nietzsche contrasts the words Dionysian—which means "uninhibited, emotionally uncontrolled, orgiastic"[36]—to Apollonian—serene, well-balanced, poised and disciplined—, to convey reason versus instinct, culture versus primitive nature, etc. And the same general opposition may be found in the wider terms "classicism" and "romanticism", Hellenism and Hebraism, naive and sentimental, aristocratic and democratic, stasis and kinesis.[37]

These different characteristics are all to a certain extent applicable in explaining Henderson's character, for his uninhibited, emotionally uncontrolled personality is apparent in his "mask"—as already mentioned in relation to his anti-heroic qualities—as a striking example of the Dionysian concept. As Henderson himself tells us, "anyway, I am the inspirational and not the systematic type" (206).

The novel starts with Henderson recalling what made him take the trip to Africa:

> A disorderly rush begins—my parents, my wives, my girls, my children, my farm, my animals, my habits, my money, my music lessons, my drunkenness, my prejudices, my brutality, my teeth, my face, my soul! I have to cry, "No, no, get back, curse you, let me alone!" But how can they let me alone? They belong to me. They are mine. And they pile into me from all sides. It turns into chaos (7).

In this explosion of grief, Henderson refers not only to the "orgiastic" facts that crowd on him, remembering his drunkenness (the god of wine and revelry), his music lessons (the god who inspires to music and poetry—M. Gilbert Porter even dedicates a whole chapter following "Bellow's score as it provides musical support for Henderson's development"[38]), his teeth, his face and his soul which make him suffer so much (the suffering god), his "fertility"[39]—two wives, seven children, girls—(the god of vegetation and fertility of nature), his "Instinctive" brutality, acting in a way that reminds us of his "primitive" nature.

If this first quotation has given us a superficial insight into Henderson's Dionysian characteristics, in order to grasp his essentially carnivalistic nature, we might further explore his similarities with the Greek god of revelry. Most of all, Henderson seems to be all the time in a state of "physical intoxication", due not only to drunkenness, but mainly because of his inner "frenezy" (*sic*) (72) or pressure. "Suffering is about the only reliable burster of the spirit's sleep" (68) he says, and his suffering is confirmed by Willatale, the African queen: '"Suffah', said Itelo, and Mtalba picked up my hand in sympathy" (72). It is again relished by Henderson, who was "monstrously proud" of his suffering (255), while during the rain-making festivities with the Wariri, he muses: "Oh, my body, my body! Why have we never really got together as friends? I have loaded it with my vices, like a raft, like a barge. Oh, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (155)

According to Nietzsche,

> the peculiar blending of emotions in the heart of the Dionysiac reveler—his ambiguity—harks back to the days when the infliction of pain was experienced as joy while a sense of supreme triumph elicited cries of anguish from the heart.[40]

We see again the deep relevance of these words in relation to Henderson's "gay" suffering, his ambiguous attitude toward it, feeling pride and pain in experiencing it. When threatened with the loss of Dahfu's friendship, if he should not establish a relationship with Atti, the lioness, Henderson also feels this as "exceedingly painful", even when he realizes that the king suffered "almost as hard" as he did. And Henderson continues: "Almost. Because who can suffer like me? I am to suffering what Gary is to smoke. One of the world's biggest operations" (218-9). He is "a suffering type of man" (182), he stresses again and again.

Additional insights of Henderson's drunkenness are given when he mentions filling a whole water tumbler with bourbon and drinking it, to "coat the terrible fact" of Miss Lenox's sudden death, while she was preparing his breakfast (37-8); or when he recalls being drunk in a taxi with Charlie's bride, with Mozart's Turkish Rondo in his pocket, as also afterwards his obnoxious behaviour in the restaurant (237). Henderson is incapable, like any Dionysian reveler, of avoiding drinking. When he is served a banquet by Horko, Dahfu's uncle, he tells us:

> I ate some sweet potatoes and drank the pombo, a powerful beverage which immediately acted on my legs and knees. In my excitement and fever, I swallowed several cups of this, since nothing external gave me support (...) (128).

His drunkenness is even commented on by Dahfu, who asks him: "I say, Mr. Henderson, have you consumed much amounts of alcohol in your life? The face suggests you have, the nose especially" (224).

This Dionysiac state of intoxication and being emotionally uncontrolled are apparent to Henderson himself, who calls himself a "changeable and irrational employer" in relation to Romilayu (214). His madness is also emphasized from the start, together with his anti-heroic qualities; as he says, "I, too, am considered crazy, and with good reason—moody, rough, tyrannical, and probably mad" (8). To Prince Itelo of the Arnewi, he stresses "look here, I'm kind of an irrational person myself" (54), while his guide Romilayu was also beginning to realize that Henderson was "rash and unlucky and acted without sufficient reflection" (81).

But if Henderson's calling himself, during the rain-making ceremonies with the Wariri, their "crazy rain king" (235) has comic overtones, his suicide threats to Lily show us another more serious symptom of his "insanity"[4]—the already mentioned Menippean characteristic of representing man's unusual, abnormal moral and psychic states. According to Bakhtin, too,

> the theme of madness is inherent to all grotesque forms, because madness makes men look at the world with different eyes, not dimmed by "normal", that is by commonplace ideas and judg-ments. In folk grotesque, madness is a gay parody of official reason, of the narrow seriousness of official "truth". It is a "festive madness".[42]

And Henderson, a compound of serious and comic traits, besides being filled with festive madness—as in the rainmaking ceremony—has also peculiarities of the madness of romantic grotesque, where "madness acquires a somber, tragic aspect of individual isolation"[43], as in his suicide threats.

Henderson's feelings always betray his Dionysian sentimentalism: he is "heartbroken" after having exploded the Arnewi frog cistern (96), for he had expected the natives to take him to their hearts, after he had performed his "great deed" against the frogs (86). In the same way, his heart was "expanded with happy emotion" when saying good night to Mtalba, Queen Willaterale's sister, so after Romilayu went to sleep, Henderson lay "with eyes open, bathed in high feeling" (86). Even while realizing how different his son Edward had turned out, he nevertheless "felt a shock of love in my heart for this boy. My son! Unrest has made me like this, grief has made me like this" (108).

Dionysian Hebraism—the Hebraic sentimentality associated by Nietzsche

with the Dionysian concept—could also be a virtual element in Henderson's personality. Although this has been denied by Bellow himself in an interview,[44] when he affirmed that "Henderson is not a Jew, but he has been accused by some of being a sort of a convert. But that's a fake, that is simply not the case", nevertheless we can detect an overtone of this Dionysiac characteristic in Henderson's sentimental temperament. As Ihab Hassan comments, "there is in Henderson a quality of emotional abundance or humility, Slavic or Hebraic perhaps but not entirely American, that puts a higher spiritual valuation on events than the events actually warrant".[45] S. Gould Axelrod confirms this, when he asserts that

> in creating Henderson, Bellow has reversed the symbolizing forces characteristic of most Jewish fiction, including his own. Instead of discovering the universal within a Jewish character, Bellow discovers the Jewish within an American Everyman.[46]

We could in a way harmonize Bellow's and the critics contrary opinions, by saying that, in the same manner that all these different aspects of the hero's personality discussed up to now help us in having a deeper and richer insight into a complex character, Nietzsche's concept of Dionysian Hebraism cannot be completely excluded. It is a possibility, a virtuality,[47] which points again to Henderson's "amalgam of vehement forces".

Dionysian kineticism is also evident in Henderson. He is a "becomer", always on move—as befits a true picaresque hero—, always in search of adventures, in a state of "maximum entropy". As he tells King Dahfu,

> if I had the mental constitution to live inside the nutshell and think myself the king of infinite space, that would be just fine. But that's not how I am. King, I am a Becomer... I've just got to stop Becoming (162).

References to the Dionysian inspiration in music and poetry are also interspersed in the novel. Henderson, besides playing and singing Mozart—"Rispondi! anima bella"—and Händel—"He was despised and rejected, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (30)—, also echoes Whitman, Shelley and other poets; he quotes from the Bible and sings with the natives in Africa.

Dionysus as a deity of agriculture[48] and corn becomes evident in Henderson's being a farmer—even if raising pigs—and also in his mentioning the stewardess's golden hair (on his flight back to America) like ripe corn:

> Every twenty years or so the earth renews itself in young maidens. (...) Her cheeks had the perfect form that belongs to the young, her hair was kinky gold. (...) She was all sweet corn and milk. (...) Blessings on that rough gold (280).

In a characteristic Dionysian outlook, Henderson cherished the sight of such an image of spring and youthfulness, of "the eternally renewable",[49] and "blessed" her.

Parallelisms between Dionysus as the god of vegetation and of fertility of nature, who dies and is reborn, and Henderson, become also apparent in the fact that Henderson is "unkillable", as already mentioned, both physically and spiritually. As he says, "Nature has tried everything. It has thrown the book at me. And here I am" (277), thus reminding us of a god-like and heroic quality, ever if deflated by his clownish and anti-heroic side.

We might still mention the physical resemblance between Henderson and the theantropical Dionysus, in sequence to their spiritual nearness: Dionysus is first depicted as a bearded man, of mature age, with his brow crowned with ivy. Later, he is shown as a young man, with long curly hair, holding the thyrsus in one hand and in the other grapes or a wine cup.[50] Henderson is middle-aged—fifty six (again an anti-heroic feature)—and his appearance during the preparations for the lion hunt, with the Wariri, bears a striking similarity to the Greek god: the women carry "the brutal white rain king with his swarthy, reddened face", his hair resembles "Persian lambs' fur", his beard has "begun to grow out like a broom" (244) and his "growing black curls, thicker than usual, like a Merino sheep" are very black (229). The image of Dionysus with a bearded mask to represent his head and leafy boughs, his image in the shape of a natural tree-stum and references to him as "teeming" or "bursting"[51] again find echo in Henderson running naked, clad in vine leaves, during the rain ceremony, with his beard, his "pitiful and rude" body, his bursting vitality. And, later on, his green transparent Sungo pants make him look once more like Dionysus as "he of the green fruit".[52] The Sungo, or rain-king, was also in charge of fertility: "You see, it goes together with moisture" (204) Henderson tells us. Thus, we are made aware of the relation between Dionysus—as god of vegetation and moisture—and Henderson—as rain and fertility king—once more.

But Dionysus is also represented as a child, with clusters of grapes around his brow[53], and in this aspect he could bear a slight resemblance to the Persian child Henderson carries in his arms, coming home from his trip to Africa. The child symbolically manifests Henderson's new life, for the boy sees the world with child's eyes" (285). As Willatale also muses to Henderson, "World is strange to a child. You not a child, sir?" (73). If Henderson acted sometimes like a great child himself, he still needed to see the world with child's eyes, and his symbolic transformation at the end of the novel into a child, in a way finds echo in Dionysus assuming, among his different forms, also the aspect of a child.

Parody of course is at the basis of all these parallelisms, as befits two characters as carnivalistic as Henderson and Dionysus. This is nowhere better exemplified than in the way Dionysus mimics his father Zeus—the great god—by sitting on his throne as a child and brandishing the lightning

in his tiny hand[54], while Henderson at the end of the novel mimics Churchill's—the great hero—victory sign, back in Baventai (275).

One might still mention the winnowing fan where Dionysus was placed as in a cradle,[55] while Henderson, in his rain-king duties, is most of the time lying inside a hammock, covered by umbrellas and fans:

> I was helped into this hammock and lay at the bottom of it, a bursting weight, looking up at the brilliant heaven made still by the force of afternoon heat, and the taut umbrella wheeling, now clockwise, now the other way, with lazy, sleepy fringes (203-4).

As already mentioned, besides his different human forms, Dionysus could also appear in animal form, as when he turned successively into a bull, a lion and a panther to terrify the daughters of Minyas.[56] This reminds us once more of Henderson roaring like an "Assyrian bull" (146) during the rain-making festivities, for "to be the center of attention" always stirred and disturbed him as now, in the middle of the Wariri crowd, feeling "the spirit of the occasion—pervaded by barbaric emotions" (145), as he says. And Henderson's later dramatizing and acting the lion, first physically with Dahfu and then in spirit, as the future Leo Henderson, again bears a resemblance to one of Dionysus' animal forms.

A last reference could be made to the fact that Dionysus, after having discovered the art of making wine, was struck with "madness" by Hera, and to cure himself he went to Dodona to consult the oracle. When he was cured he undertook long journeys across the world to make the gift of wine known among mortals. And marvellous adventures mark his passage through the countries he visited.[57] Again a parallelism with comic overtones could be established between Dionysus and Henderson, "often drunk before his lunch"(8), who consults his father's books and finds the prophetic words "the forgiveness of sins is perpetual and right-eousness first is not required" (7), as he also consults Willatale, the Arnewi queen, about what she sees in him and she answers "Grun-tu-molani": man-want-to-live (72). Henderson too, after having traveled in Europe, visits the African continent, and stays among African tribes. Even Dionysus' love affairs and his revenge on people striking them with madness, finds a grotesque echo in Henderson's love affairs in France and America and in his "revenge" on wives, friends, children, through his behaving like a madman and thus enraging all of them.

But actually the parallelism that seems to have the most relevance for us, between Dionysus and Henderson, because of its deep relationship with the Menippean characteristic of man's unusual, abnormal moral and psychic states, is the one of Dionysus—as the god of wine and fertility—also representing many of the world's irrational forces. His worship was a recognition of man's elemental passions, even if its basic purpose was the inducement of fertility.[58] It is this theme of "madness", which destroys "the epic, tragic integrity of man and his fate", as already stated, and which is so apparent in Henderson as a personification of Dionysian forces,

which we shall further develop. In so doing, we shall not only be deiving further inside Henderson's rich and complex personality—as Scholes and Kellogg affirm, "characters are the primary vehicles for meaning in narrative"[59]—but shall also, through this theme, point to the cause for the action of the novel—Henderson's quest. Thus, having examined several aspects of Henderson's two-sided character, either stressing the heroic or the picaresque or carnivalistic side of the hero, we shall now move, through the Dionysian characteristic of man's irrational forces, to exploring much more his abnormal psychic state.

Although Bakhtin remains our basic text for the analysis of Henderson's characteristics, several other authors help us to further develop or enrich Barkhtin's ideas as applied to Bellow's hero. And by the fact that Henderson is not only a comic anti-hero, as has been seen up to now, but also a tragic one, this side shall be completed and further enhanced by the perspective Gaston Bachelard gives the four elements of poetic imagination: fire, earth, water, air. But we should not forget, in our associating Henderson with Bachelard's method of investigating the four different types of poetic imaggination, that we are just pointing to tendencies inside the hero's character—as Bachelard stresses, "il ne s'agit point de matière, mais d'orientation. Il ne s'agit point de racine substantielle, mais de tendances, d'exaltation".[60] And, just as Wetherill very aptly comments, that "the contexts in which an author uses images are just as important as the sources from which he draws them",[61] in our case, the sources from which Bellow draws the imagery connected with Henderson's character are fire and earth.

Thus, if for Bakhtin carnival fire has the ambivalence of simultaneously destroying and renewing the world,[62] Bachelard confirms this basic assumption of the profund ambivalence of the image of fire in carnival, when he says that "toujours et dans tous les domaines, l'explication par le feu est une explication *riche*".[63] Fire is the only phenomenon, according to Bachelard, that can neatly receive "les deux valorisations contraires: le bien et le mal". Il brille au Paradis. Il brûle au l'Enfer",[64] and, in this way, it is placed also inside the carnivalistic two-in-one images, uniting within themselves both poles of change and crisis: birth and death, benediction and dammation, praise and condemnation, and other contrasting pairs.[65]

Although Bachelard explains that

> les âmes qui rêvent sous le signe du feu, sous le signe de l'eau, sous le signe de l'air, sous le signe de la terre se révèlent comme bien différentes[66]

for in psychic life, in inspiration, in literary creation, no image can receive the four elments—which would be an unbearable contradiction—be confirms Scheneider's[67] distinction that there are two forms of fire by its direction or intention, the fire of the fire/earth axis and of the fire/air axis, when he allows that "les véritables images, les images de la rêverie, sont unitaires ou binaires".[68] And Henderson's complex character—his "amal-

gam of vehement forces" once again—really needs two predominant elements to explain it, the binary image of fire and earth. And, as Bachelard says, "l'eau et le feu restent ennemis jusque dans la rêverie",[69] the action of the novel confirms how water remains Henderson's "enemy" and how his position as rain king is set as an ironic and incongruous contrast to his fire/earth personality.

Henderson's fire or burning becomes apparent immediately from the start of the novel: it is a demonic, malevolent, sexual, violent, restless, impure fire, projected through his drunkenness, labor, fights, fever, outward aspect, words and soul—all of them acting as outward images of his internal longing, his desire or "want". For Bachelard explains, in relation to fire, that "l'homme est une création du désir, non pas une création du bésoin".[70] The novel, then, starts with the projection of Henderson's violent, internal fire in his outward attitudes, for "le feu est le phenomène objectif d'une rage intime, d'une main qui s'énerve",[71] forcing him to act like a madman: he realizes, as mentioned above, that he is considered to be crazy, because of his roughness, his moodiness. And he continues to tell us how he was "adjusted to a bad life" (8):

> I got into brawls in the country saloons near my farm and the troopers locked me up. I offered to take them all on, and they would have worked me over if I hadn't been so prominent in the county. (...) Then I had a fight with the vet over one of my pigs, and another with the driver of a snowplow on US 7 when he tried to force me off the road. Then about two years ago I fell off a tractor while drunk and ran myself over and broke my leg. For months I was on crutches, hitting everyone who crossed my path, man or beast, and giving Lily hell. With the bulk of a football player and the color of a gipsy, swearing and crying out and showing my teeth and shaking my head—no wonder people got out of my way (8-9).

Henderson was not only rude and aggressive, as metioned, but also provoked fights. He was a creature "seething with lust and seething with trouble" (14) as when he was going up the staircase for a rendez-vous with Lily, as if he were "brûlé [e] des flammes intimes d'un amour désespéré".[72] His fire is also a sexualized fire, for something burns in him, his need comes from within, and he asks himself: "Do you want some nasty whore? It has to be some lust?" (25) to find an answer for the "disturbance" (24) in his heart. Thus, "le feu est le premier facteur du phénomène".[73] And, exactly as "penser à une puissance, c'est dejà, non seulement s'en servir, cést surtout en abuser",[74] Henderson knows he has the power to strike, because of his fiery inner want, and he makes consciously use of it: "*yes, go on,* I said to myself, *Strike, strike, strike!*" (14)—in sequence to his going up the staircase, to see Lily.

Fire is the objective correlative for his inner rage, the sign of his restlessness, one of the seminal images connected with the hero, to display his inner "want". It can also be "captieux" and "ambigu"[75] as carnival fire itself, for if on the one hand Henderson is restless and aggressive ("I will break him in pieces" (17) he tells Lily when he hears her husband had punched her in the eye), on the other hand he is also tender and weeps easily. When he quarrels with Lily in France, for instance, he begins to weep "from all the unbearable complications" (20) in his heart; or when he plays violin to his father, he played "with dedication, with feeling, with longing, love—played to the point of emotional collapse" (30). These are again the contradictory properties of carnival fire, which become apparent in the hero. As Bachelard stresses once more, it is "le feu intime [que] se dialectise. (...) il suffit de s'enflammer pour se contredire. Dès qu'un sentiment monte à la tonalité du feu, dès qu'il s'expose, en sa violence, (...) il va accumuler une somme de contraires".[76]

Still another aspect of fire becomes apparent through Henderson's drunkenness, for "qui boit de l'alcool peut brûler comme l'alcool,"[47] "l'eau qui flambe", the only occasion in which fire becomes an ally to water, its enemy, to burn without flames in alcohol,[78] according to Bachelard. But, like fire, "l'eau-de-vie" produces a double effect on Henderson: first, it provokes his drunkenness, to which references are made all over the novel, but mainly before his leaving for Africa. Thus, either at home—"Violent suffering is labor, and often I was drunk before lunch" (8)—or working—"I fell off a tractor while drunk" (8)—or visiting the cathedrals of France with Lily—"And I began to drink, harder than ever, and was drunk in every one of the great cathedrals" (18)—or sitting in the train—

> A bunch of people waited to sit down but I kept the table to myself, and I was fuddled, but no man in his right mind would have dared to bother me. I was talking aloud and groaning and the cards kept falling on the floor. At Danbury the conductor and another fellow had to help me off the train and I lay on a bench in the station swearing, "There is a curse on this land. There is something bad going on. Something is wrong. There is a curse on this land!" (35-6)

—Henderson is drunk. And, in the same way that Henderson's Dionysian characteristics make him move from the individual to the general, in this last quotation we can also observe how Bellow makes Henderson move, through his fit of drunkenness, from the particular to the general—from the hero's own problems to the curse theme which seems to beleaguer the land itself.

While drunk, Henderson also "swears and cries out" at people—"Curse you, you're nuts!" (20) he tells Lily—and he injures his family, friends and society with "fights, drunkenness and labor" (25) to silence the disturbance, the fire in his soul. Henderson's swearing can again be explained by Bachelard's ideas about "l'eau de feu", for "l'alcool ne vient simplement exciter des possibilités de langage. Il enrichi le vocabulaire et libère la syntaxe",[79] in this way bringing us to the second effect bourbon has

on him: liberating his syntax. (the more elevating aspect of alcohol, of enriching the vocabulary, is of course excluded in this context.)

On the other hand, Henderson also condemns drunkenness, for he says of Lily's father, who had broken her teeth: "Damn these weak drunks! Damn these unsteady men. I can't stand these clowns who go out in public as soon as they get swacked to show how broken hearted they are" (11). As if he himself were not always in a similar situation!

But not only Henderson's heart is "consumed" (16) by fire, his desires do not only flame inside, as through his anger: "but in my anger heaving up the little car and pushing the rock under the axle" (15); "How could I be blamed—because my voice was loud, and my anger was so great?" (37). Through his despair: "by three o'clock I was in despair" (25). Through his lust—his sexualized fire. Through his "blustering ways" (8). Through his aggressiveness: "Rude begets rude, and blows, blows; at least in my case: it not only begot but it increased. Wrath increased with wrath. So what do you do with yourself?" (24). Through his fights. Through his ceaseless need to strike which is as ceaseless as his "want": as he explains, "this was what made me behave as I did" (25). Through his toiling: "In my own way, I worked very hard" (8). And through his suffering: his heart "ached for Lily" (27) and she tells him, "Gene, you suffer harder than any person I ever saw" (32); for "tous les *complexes* liés au feu sont des complexes douloureux, à la fois nevrosants et poétisants, des complexes renversables: on peut trouver le paradis dans son mouvement ou dans son repos [Henderson and Lily], dans la flamme ou dans la cendre".[80]

Fire also becomes apparent outwardly, in Henderson's physical appearance: "my face is black and angry, my gums are aching" (29). While playing the violin for his father, too, fire is evident on his face: "My collarbone ached and a flaming patch, like the hives, came out on my jowl" (31); its red color is even visible in his robe together with his face: "And I stooped over it in the red robe and the Wellingtons, my face flaming so that my head itched under the wool cap" (34).

The best description of his face, in relation to fire, is given later on in the novel, when he is already in Africa. As Henderson muses about himself,

> my fleshiness, and the nervous, fierce, yet appeasing contortions or glowers of my face. This face, which sometimes appears to me to be as big as the entire body of a child, is always undergoing transformations making it as busy, as strange and changeful, as a creature of the tropical sea lying under a reef, now the color of carnations and now the color of sweet potato, challenging, acting, harkening, pondering, with all the humanity of human passions at the point of doubt—I mean the humanity of them lying in doubt. A great variety of expressions was thus hurdling my nose from eye to eye and twisting my brows (111-2).

Here, all the changing, transforming, glowing qualities of fire seem to become manifest in the description of Henderson's face, expressing his human passions "in doubt". A grotesque touch is also added to this description for, as Bakntin mentions in relation to grotesque imagery and ornaments, there was no border line dividing the kingdoms of nature, no static presentation of reality, nor the movement of finished forms; "instead the inner movement of being itself was expressed in the passing of one form into the other, in the ever incompleted character of being".[81] Carnival fire is of course also a part of this description, in the transformations of Henderson's face, reminding us of the image of fire as "destroying and renewing" at the same time.

Thus Henderson moves on, in his incongruous behavior and words, with his "syntax" liberated by drink and his actions dominated by his fiery rage, until "all is grief" (71). He acts like a madman, giving Lily "hell", making people get out of his way, while the outward sign of his inner misfortune and lack is further projected in still another way—through the voice within, through the desire that consumes his heart like fire, which burns in his soul like drink burns in his body. This voice, which repeats "I want, I want", is heard by Henderson on several occasions, before his going to Africa:

> and a ceaseless voice in my heart that said *I want, I want, I want, oh, I want* (14).

(while going up the steps to see Lily);

> But at this time my heart was consumed with the demand I have mentioned—*I want, I want!* (...) but this terrible repetition within —*I want! I want!*—was not stopped by any face I saw (16)

(when living in Paris with Frances);

> Now I have already mentioned that there was a disturbance in my heart, a voice that spoke there and said, *I want, I want, I want!* It happened every afternoon, and when I tried to suppress it it got even stronger. It only said one thing, *I want, I want!*
>
> And I would ask, "What do you want?"
>
> But this was all it would ever tell me. It never said a thing except *I want, I want, I want!* (24)

(mentioning it to us).

The demand increases with time: "The demand came louder, *I want, I want, I want, I want, I want!*" (25). Even after having married Lily, and the children were born, the voice continues: "Presently the daily voice, *I want, I want,* arose again" (28). And also during his violin exercices, Henderson hears the voice: "But the voice within me continued, *I want, I want!*" (31).

This voice, this fire which "no purchase, no matter how expensive, would lessen" (25), which "went right on, in the country in the city" (25), is like a corrosive power inside his soul, and it would only let up "toward sunset" when America itself stopped working (25). In this way, Bellow expands again the madness theme from the individual to society, embracing all of America, for Henderson tried "every cure you can think of" but, "in an age of madness, to expect to be untouched by madness is a form of madness. But the pursuit of sanity can be a form of madness, too" (25),[82] as mentioned above.

In a manner this internal fire reaches its climax in Henderson's suicide threats—which Bachelard calls the Empedooles complex, the death instinct[83]—for the hero mentions twice that he is going to kill himself. Once in France, after a quarrel with Lily:

> Finally I told her at Chartres, "If you don't quit it I'm going to blow my brains out."
>
> This was cruel of me, as I knew what her father had done. Drunk as I was, I could hardly bear the cruelty myself (18-9).

Then during their stay at a resort hotel on the Gulf, when after a discussion Lily starts to cry:

> when I saw tears I lost my head and yelled, "I'm going to blow my brains out! I'm shooting myself. I didn't forget to pack the pistol. I've got it on me now." (10-11).

But fire has contradictory properties, like carnival fire, for this element of Henderson's character can be not only "le signe du peché et du mal",[84] of wrath, with its demonic properties, as seen above. It can also have its positive sides, through the very voice Henderson hears, for fire also suggests "le désir de changer".[85] In the same way that "le surfeu préfigure le surhomme"[86] Henderson's heroic side—as superman—is also burning inside with a fire that could be ranged under the Prometheus complex—"toutes les tendances qui nous poussent *à savoir* autant que nos maîtres".[87] This complex makes Henderson seek the answer to his voice "I want!", and it is shown when he looks for some words in his father's books, which he cannot find anymore: "The forgiveness of sins is perpetual and righteousness first is not required" (7). It is the "complexe d'Oedipe de la vie intellectuelle" that Henderson is following, when he leaves for Africa. His hidden want, his internal fire, his consuming discontentment need an antidote, an appeasement, a satisfaction: "c'est le feu caché qu'il faut mettre en ceuvre pour guérir et engendrer". Henderson's fiery restlessness is the outward indication of his possibility to become another man and have another life, as befits the Menippean characteristic discussed above.

That this possibility is and remains, throughout the novel, always in a

virtual state, always a potentiality, becomes apparent in the fact that Henderson, while in Africa, will be suffering rom a fever[88] until he returns to America—together with his inner voice, which continues to speak to him (40).

Having commented on Henderson's connection with fire, as a means of grasping one of the aspects of his many sided character—still inside the menippea's moral-psychological experimentation and inside Henderson's unheroic side—let us turn now to the discussion of the other seminal element in Henderson's personality (again completing it with the help of Bachelard's theories): earth.

Earth imagery is directed by the dialectic "du dur et du mou, dialectique qui commande toutes les images de la matièra terrestre".[89] Both hard and soft matter are present in Henderson's personality, through his association with pigs, wood, stones, the violin—again projecting his aggressiveness, his harsh words, his toiling, his eccentricity, his injurious actions and angry thoughts, his fear of death. We shall see then how Henderson moves from the realization of his commitment to pigs, to his wondering how much he himself resembled a pig, which is a change directed by the "master-image"—earth, mud, as a negative image of soft matter in which pigs muzzle: "le finalisme de l'ordure".[90]

Henderson's deep involvement with pigs, and thus with mud, actually starts when he decides to breed pigs on his estate, on returning home from Europe after VE day—in defiance of his friend Nicky Goldstein, who was going to have a mink ranch in the Catskills, and incited by the "demon" (21) inside him. He transforms his beautiful property into a pig kingdom,

> with pig houses on the lawn and in the flower garden. The greenhouse too—I let them root out the old bulbs. Statues from Florence and Salzburg were turned over. The place stank of swill and pigs and the mashes cooking, and dung (21).

which illustrated what he "thought of life in general" (21). He even identifies himself with pigs for, as he stresses, "I was a pig man" (22). This identification with pigs makes it very clear that Henderson unconsciously wishes to assume the role of an animal that puddles in the mud, "pour s'accomplir dans la matière"[91] and this identification is remembered by Henderson, during his talks with Dahfu in the lion den, in great detail:

> I must have been committed to pigs long before I laid eyes on Goldstein. Two sows, Hester and Valentina, used to follow me about with freckled bellies and sour, red, dust-gleaming bristles, silky in luster, stiff as pins to the touch. (...) These animals have become a part of me."
>
> Well, had these creatures become a part of me? (...) Secretly investigating myself, I felt my cheekbones. They stuck out like the mushrooms that grow from the trunks of trees (...) Under my hel-

> met, my fingers crept toward my eyelashes. Pigs' eyelashes occur only on the upper lid. I had some on the lower, but they were sparse and blunt. (...) And now I felt my jowls, my snout; I did not dare to look down at what had happened to me. Hams. Tripes (...) Trunk (...) It seemed to me that I couldn't even breathe without grunting (227-8).[92]

On another occasion, after having been exposed to Atti, the lioness, Henderson again describes himself in terms of a pig, thus showing in the rind "all the strange abuses and malformations of a lifetime" (230):

> Sometimes I imagined that I was from the trotters to the helmet, all six feet four inches of me, the picture of that familiar animal, freckled on the belly, with broken tusks and wide cheekbones (230).[93]

This outward and inward similarity to pigs, as Henderson himself later realizes, is a consequence of the fact that "the spirit of a person in a sense is the author of his body" (200)—as Dahfu tells him, for Henderson's roaring reminded the king of another animal: the pig (224). Thus, "you are in the flesh as your soul is" (226) the king tells him again. Bachelard seems to corroborate and enlarge this idea, when he comments about "la páte modelée" by our emotions: "La monstruosité formelle peut être une grande vérité dynamique. Si le rêve fait des monstres, c'est parce qu'il traduit des forces".[93]

A further parallelism could be established between Henderson's attraction to pigs, to the point that he even wears objects made of pig leather,

> I came, a great weight, a huge shadow on those stairs, with my face full of country color and booze, and yellow pigskin gloves on my hands (...) and pigskin shoes, a pigskin wallet in my pocket (14).

plus the fact that he works in a barn "among pigs" (25), "with these hands I've pushed around pigs. I've thrown down boars and pinned and gelded them" (29) as he says, and the analogy Bachelard establishes between "la psychologie de l'injure, l'étymologie ordurière, la littérature des 'gros mots'" and "la psychanalyse de la matière"[94]. For, in the same manner that the pig digs in his own dung, Henderson is all the time revolving and bringing out what is worst in himself, by his incongrous behavior and his "inconvenient word" towards his family and friends, to become each time more miserable and restless.

Even when Henderson lost interest in pigs, and his wife asked him to get rid of them (30), he did not sell some of the prize animals: he "wasn't ready to part with them yet" (32). We could still go so far as to mention Bachelard's conclusion about "ce finalisme de l'ordure" which is a "cas particulier du finalisme de la peur".[95] It is this fear of life as chaos leading

to death—which Dahfu will present later as a molding force second only to Nature itself" (218), for "fear is the ruler of mankind"—that Henderson unconsciously feels, in his finality of filthiness, in his commitment to pigs, to the point that even outwardly he bears a similarity to them, as we have seen in the quotations above.

Henderson's eccentric behavior, his split personality is further put into evidence through his toil with "hard matter"—in contrast with his connection with "soft matter"—by inflicting his "anger on inanimate things": following the advice of a student of the mind, Henderson tried with all his heart "chopping wood, lifting, plowing, laying cement blocks, pouring concrete, and cooking mash for the pigs" (24), in order "to spare the living and get rid of the bad stuff" in him (24). His aggressiveness is also comically projected by his throwing stones at bottles with a slingshot—in a carnivalistic free gesture, as a great child again—on the beach of a resort hotel on the Gulf (10). In this typical example of inflicting pain on "inanimate things", Henderson uses his "ignorant force" to annoy his wife and guests. But release of his "anger" on inanimate things is only partial. As he stresses again and again, "on my own place, stripped to the waist like a convict, I broke stones with a sledgehammer. It helped; but not enough" (24). Bachelard's explanation of anger in relation to earth helps again to visualize Henderson's toil with hard matter: "La matière dure est dominée par la dureté coléreuse du travailleur. La colère est ici accélératrice (...) Dans la colère, on se sent nouveau, rénové, appelé à une vie nouvelle".[96] Henderson's anger, his choleric hardness which makes him resemble a "convict" when he is breaking stones, is an anger which is not only a "force de la main", but is "dans l'homme entier, dans l'homme rassemblé en son unité dynamique".[97]

Henderson's aggressiveness is once more evident in another instance of his toil with hard matter: his violin lessons, in which his inner pressure is released by "toiling up and down on the Savcik, "clutching the neck of the little instrument as if there were strangulation in my heart", until he has cramps in his neck and shoulder (30). Wood seems to have become a "sur-ça"[98] against which Henderson wants to use his force, his accumulated will, by using the bow of the violin as if it were an ax or a knife. On another occasion, he even wounds his finger, "indented especially by the steel E string" of the violin (30). Here, fire and earth (as wood, hard matter) imagery work together, for in consequence of Henderson's clutching the violin, his collabone ached and the "flaming patch" already referred to as projecting his consuming internal fire, comes out on his jowl. If Henderson's main purpose in playing violin was to reach his father (30), for he played "with dedication, with feeling, with longing, love—played to the point of emotional collapse" (30), he at the same time seems to be releasing his inner pressure, his anger-fire and earth together again. Henderson mixes "feeling" with violent "cramps" while playing on the instrument, producing noise like "smashing egg crates" together with melodies

from Mozart and Händel, in a carnivalistic contrast of high and low, of sacred and profane, of love and anger.

Paralleling his suicide threats, the climax of his violent actions (in relation to fire) before leaving for Africa, a similar climax is achieved in his violent actions (in relation to earth as hard matter) concerning Miss Lenox—indirectly provoking her death:

> And I was sore and yelling at the breakfast table, hammering with my first until the coffee pot turned over. (...) I went into the kitchen and saw this old creature lying dead on the floor. During my rage, her heart had stopped (36).

As Henderson regretfully realizes, "the old lady had fallen under my violence as people keel over during heat waves or while climbing the subway stairs" (38). Here again his fierce and fiery rage merges with the provocation of matter—hammering on the table—to produce the paroxysm of emotional stress that leads to his inadvertently killing the old lady who used to come in to prepare his and Lily's breakfast. Actually, Henderson will only be rid of this rage, this restlessness much later, after having gone through many ordeals in Africa, for right now, even inflicting his anger on inanimate things—as already seen—brings only partial release to his inner needs.

Although Henderson's "split personality" can be still further developed[100], we hope to have shown, through these examples, how the protagonist's heroic and anti-heroic qualities can be better grasped if examined through the Menippean characteristic of moral-psychological experimentation, as well as by the other characteristics mentioned above, all of them deeply imbued with carnival categories, performances and images; Henderson's similarity with Dionysus, as a primitive king of carnival—the god of revelry and disorder—projects him also as a modern king of carnival, who "lives" it to the very core in all its characteristics, allowing us to discover in him a new outlook on life, of life "turned inside out", as becomes carnival, to discover in him virtualities which reach far back through romance and legend to myth. At the same time, his complex personality is further enriched by his relationship to the elements fire and earth, which act as physical correlatives to symbolise mental states, projecting Henderson again inside the Menippean characteristic of man's incompleteness, his non-coincidence with himself, thus binding all aspects examined into a coherent whole, and reinforcing our picture of him as an "amalgam of vehement forces".

Notes

(1) This article corresponds to Chapter II, Part I, of *Bellow's Carnivalistic Vision of the World in Henderson the Rain King* (Ph. D. Dissertation, USP, 1978). This dissertation examines Bellow's novel by way of M. Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, in which he discusses, among other aspects, the carnivalization of literature, the Menippean satire and polyphony. In the *Introduction*, after reviewing the American criticism on the novel, a summary of Bakhtin's basic theories is presented, in order to show how Bellow is not only a follower but also an innovator of the Menippean satire and of carnivalistic literature. *Chapter I*—The Land—deals with space and time in the novel, inside the Menippea's social utopia, showing how both can be placed on the levels of dream and reality simultaneously. *Chapter II*—the Hero—is concerned with the different aspects of Henderson's character which would place him inside the Menippea's moral-psychological experimentation. The hero's speech, in its turn, is examined by way of polyphony. *Chapter III*—The Quest—places the action of the novel inside the most important of the Menippean characteristics, the creation of extraordinary situations to provoke and test a philosophical idea: the word or the truth. These extraordinary situations are in their turn imbued with a whole series of carnivalistic categories, rituals and images, making ambiguous any monological interpretation of the novel. In the *Conclusion* we show how all aspects of the novel are brough together and how the novel acquires a much richer and complex perspective, if examined through the carnivalistic vision of the world, which Bellow has conveyed to us.
All quotations from *Henderson the Rain King* (New York, Fawcett, 1959) are indicated by page numbers cited in parentheses.

(2) M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Ann Arbor, Ardis, 1973. p. 96. Helen Weinberg corroborates this characteristic, when she mentions that "exploration of the varietal forms of self becomes Bellow's pervading theme, as well as his method; his vision affirms the possibility of vital human existence". (*The New Novel in America*. Ithaca, Cornell Univ. Press, 1974. p. 36).

(3) M. Bakhtin, *Problems*..., p. 93.

(4) M. Bakhtin, *Problems*..., p. 89.

(5) C. Grivel, *Production de L'Intêrêt Romaresque*. The Hague, Mouton, 1973, p. 129.

(6) G. Beer, *The Romance*. London, Methuen, 1970, p. 8.

(7) Scott Nathan Jr., commenting that Henderson is "more a presence than a man", even goes so far as to state that "he is certainly the most memorable comic presence in recent fiction". (Bellow's Vision of the "Axial Lines". In: *Three American Moralists: Mailer. Bellow. Trilling*. Notre Dame, the University Press, 1973, p. 130).

(8) M. A. Klug corroboratès this, when he comments that "Bellow's heroes contain both the heroic self and the ordinary self. The roles which the naturalists and realists tend to assign respectively to their central characters and their minor characters, Bellow locates within his central characters as the basis of their conflict. His herces are driven in pursuit of self-perfection and at the same time paralyzed by immersion in a hostile environment of death". (Saul Bellow: the Hero in the Middle. *Dalhousie Review, 56* (3): 464-5. Autumn (1976).

(9) M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*. Cambridge, MIT Press, 1968. p. 39-40.

(10) As Aguiar e Silva very aptly remarks in relation to the anti-hero, "o herói, em vez de se conformar com os paradigmas aceites e exaltados pela maioria da comunidade, aparece como um indivíduo em ruptura e conflito com tais paradigmas, valorizando o que a norma social rejeita e reprime (...) Nestas condições, o herói assume o estatuto de um *anti-herói* quando perspectivado e julgado segundo a óptica dos códigos sociais maioritariamente prevalecentes. A criação destes anti-heróis, já verificável nos romances picarescos, tornou-se freqüente na literatura romântica e pós-romântica, sendo bem reveladora de um grave dissídio que se estabelece entre o escritor e a sociedade em que este se situa" (A Estrutura do Romance. Separata de: _____, *Teoria da Literatura*. 3ª ed. Coimbra, Almedina. 1974, p. 30-1).
As we can see from this statement, Henderson is an anti-hero because he is being judged according to the point of view of his social code; and, as in the picaresque novels, it reveals a serious dissension between the writer and his society.

(11) Dahfu will later refer to them as "magnificent mixed eyes" (225) thus corroborating Henderson's being an amalgam, a compound.

(12) As Bakhtin comments, "Rabelais presents a number of typical grotesque forms of exaggerated body parts that completely hide the normal members of the body": men with

monstrous bellies (a typical grotesque hyperbola), King Carnival himself is related to the family of fat paunches. Hunchbacks... monstrous noses, abnormally long legs, gigantic ears (*Rabelais*... p. 327-8). As Bakhtin also points out, the images of the material bodily principle in Rabelais are the heritage of the culture of folk humor, and he calls this peculiar aesthetic concept "grotesque realism" (p. 18).

It is striking how Henderson's physical characteristcs parallel to some extent Rabelais' grotesque forms and his concept of grotesque realism. This relationship has only been mentioned due to its importance to the concept of carnivalistic images, but the whole of Bellow could actually be studied in connection with Bakhtin's work on Rabelais, for the similarity between Bellow and Rabelais, in spite of the gap of centuries, is not to be ignored.

(13) M. Bakhtin *Rabelais*..., p. 24.

(14) *ibid.*, p. 22.

(15) According to R. Pearce, Henderson is a "modern manifestation of Harlequin" and he accepts his role as clown and his own foolishness with complete awareness. (*Stages of the Clown.* Carbondale. Southery filinois University Press, 1971, p. 103-b)

(16) M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais*..., p. 19.

(17) *Ibid.*, p. 410-11.

(18) R. Demoris Le Roman a La Première Personne. Paris, A. Colin, 1975, p. 16.

(19) W. M. Frohock points out the dissimilarities between the real picaro and Augie March, which might also apply to Henderson, in "Saul Bellow and His Penitent Picaro" (*Southwest Review, 53* (1): 36-44. Winter 1968). But nevertheless we think the points we examined could be taken into account.

(20) R. Démoris, p. 15.

(21) Arnold Goldman even refers to Henderson as living through "a series of myth-situations which cast him as a ritual god-figure." Remnant to Escape: The American Writer and the Minority Group. In: M. Cunliffe. (ed.), *American Literature Since 1900.* London, Sphere Books, 1975, p. 323. And although Helen Weinberg does not refer to Dionysus, she nevertheless asks and explains, in relation to *Henderson the Rain king*: "In this fantasy of the modern self, what are the roles of the persona of the lost and then redeemed natural and concurrently ideal self? They are god roles. Henderson's largeness of physique, his physical strength, his extravagant nature, his abundant emotional energy (everything about Henderson is big and strong), all these are dissipated in the aimlessness of his American life, dissipated in petty anger, in yelling, in pig-farming. In primitive Africa there is a true place for strength and largeheartedness: it is a god's place (p. 87-88).

(22) D. Hughes, "Reality and the Hero: *Lolita* and *Henderson the Rain King.*" *Modern Fiction Studies*, *6*: 345-64, Winter, 1960-61.

(23) M. Bakhtin, *Problems*..., p. 93.

(24) Helen Weinberg, for instance, commenting that "*Henderson*, more than any other of Bellow's novels, appears to be an allegoristic interpretation of experience", nevertheless continues by emphasizing that "an allogory of one-to-one relationships never takes shape. Instead there is a kind of pseudo-allegoristic playfulness, seemingly parodying archetypes and archelypal situations for the fun of it, for the exercise of wit and imagination" (p. 215-16, note 82).

(25) D. Galloway: "We can, and invariably must, approach his character through the mythological suggestions which surround him, but we must always see Henderson as an archetype in his own right, a character with sufficient substance and importance to stand alone". *The Absurd Hero in Modern Fiction.* Austin, Univ. of Texas Press, 1974, p. 111-12.

(26) F. Nietzsche, "Dionysus and Apollo." In: R. Ellmann & C. Feidelson C. (eds.), *The Modern Tradition.* New York, Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 548-58. Dionysus is actually mentioned in Bellow's *Herzog*, when the hero asks himself: "Do I see myself to be after long blundering an unrecognized son of Sodom and Dionysus—an Orphic type?" (p. 23) There is even a letter by Herzog to Nietzsche in which he mentions the power of the Dionysian spirit, which has "the same power of recovery as Nature itself" (p. 326)—confirming in a way the fact that Henderson is "unkillable", as mentioned above. (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972).

(27) W. Righter, *Myth and Literature.* London, Routledge & K. Paul, 1975, p. 10.

(28) *Ibid.*, p. 3.

(29) *Ibid.*, p. 28.

(30) *Ibid.*, p. 32.

(31) *Ibid.*, p. 45.

(32) On this same subject, Scholes and Kellogg also comment that "mythic archetypes, being the products, after all, of the human imagination, appeal powerfully to even the most empirically oriented audiences through their manifestaion of universal psychic pattern". *The Nature of Narrative.* London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1971, p. 137.

(33) According to W. Righter, they are "transcedental symbolic forms found universally in the psychic life of man, embodied in a collective unconscious in which the individual psyche unknowingly participates" and which reveal themselves in "dreams, myths, magic, ritual and art" (p. 17).

(34) *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. London, Hamlyn, 1959, p. 155 ff. All further refeences to the legend of Dionysus, if not explicited, are taken from this sources.*

(35) The Oxford Companion to English Literature. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1955, p. 226.

(36) Dictionary of World Literary Terms. London, Allen & Unwin. 1970, p. 87.

(37) *Ibid.*, p. 17-18.

(38) M. G. Porter, *Whence the Power? The Artistry and Humanity of Saul Bellow.* Columbia, Univ. of Missouri Press, 1974, p. 129.

(39) The same exaggeration of the body and bodily life, which for Bakhtin has a positive, assertive character, for the leading themes of images of bodily life—fertility, growth, and brimming over-abundance—refer to the collective ancestral body of all the people (*Rabelais*..., p. 19), can be found in Henderson's exaggerated physical appearance, as a positive aspect of his heroic qualities, his fertility and his being unkillable.

(40) F. Nietzsche, p. 550.

(41) Richard Chase refers to both Henderson's "tragi-comic madness" and "divine insanity" (like Dionysus'), which make us think of him as "the momentary equal (...) of the greatest heroes of comic fiction". "The Adventures of Saul Bellow: Progress of a Novelist". *Commentary*, 27:323-30, April 1959, p. 330.

(42) M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais*..., p. 39.

(43) *ibid.*

(44) C. A. Kulshrestha, "Conversation with Saul Bellow." *Chicago Review*, *23* (4) & *24*(1): 7-15, 1972.

(45) I. Hassan, *Radical Innocence: Studies in the Contemporary American Novel.* Princeton, the Univ. Press, 1973, p. 321.

(46) S. G. Axelrod, "The Jewishness of Bellow's Henderson." *American Literature, 47*(3): 442, Nov. 1975.

(47) As M. Zéraffa states, "concevoir un personnage, c'est se laisser transformer par lui, le personnage prenant en retour certains traits de l'écrivain". *La Révolution Romanesque.* Paris, Klinsieck, 1969, p. 92.

(48) J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough.* London, Marmillan, 1974, p. 510.

(49) M. F. Schulz, *Radical Sophistication.* Athens, Ohio Univ. Press, 1969, p. 120.

(50) New Larousse..., p. 157.

(51) J. G. Frazer, p. 509-10.

(52) *Ibid.*, p. 510.

(53) *Ibid.*, p. 513.

(54) J. G. Frazer, p. 511.

(55) *Ibid.*

(56) New Larousse..., p. 159.

(57) New Larousse..., p. 158.

(58) O. G. Brocket, *The Theater: an Introduction.* New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964, p. 52. Brockett further comments that contests were held for choral dances

at the festivals in honor of Dionysus. Accompanied by dithyrambs or hymns, in honor of the god, out of these choral dances aristotle says drama developed.

(59) R. Scholes & R. Kellogg, p. 104.

(60) G. Bachellard, *La Psychanalyse du Feu.* Paris, Gallimard, 1976, p. 148-9.

(61) P. M. Wetherill *The Literary Text: An Examination of Critical Methods.* Oxford, Blackwell, 1974, p. 126 (quoting Ullmann).

(62) M. Bakhtin, *Problems...*, p. 104.

(63) G. Bachelard, *La Psychanalyse du Feu*, p. 121.

(64) *Ibid.*, p. 19.

(65) M. Bakhtin, *Problems...*, p. 103.

(66) G. Bachelard, *La Psychanalyse du Feu*, p. 147.

(67) Schneider's distinction, discussed by J. E. Cirlot in his *Diccionario de Símbolos* (Barcelona, Labor, 1969, p. 48), stresses that hte fire of the fire-earth axis is erotic, related to solar heat and physical energy, while the fire of the fire air axis is mystical, purifying, sublimating, related to spiritual energy. This distinction can again be applied to Henderson—at the level of physical passion—and to Dahfu—at the level of spiritual force. Henderson, as god of fertility, wine, revelry, vegetation has the energetic image of fire visible at the level of physical passion—in his suffering, his inner want, his ruthless energy. As Cirlot stresses, fire is an agent of transformation and regeneration, a mediator between forms in disappearance and forms in creation (p. 219-20), a statement which again seems to explain Henderson's ambivalent personality in relation to fire.

(68) G. Bachelard, *L'Eau et les Rêves.* Paris, J. Corti, 1973, p. 129.

(69) G. Bachelard, *La Psychanalyse du Feu*, p. 147.

(70) *Ibid.*, p. 34.

(71) *Ibid.*, p. 64.

(72) *Ibid.*, p. 39.

(73) *ibid.*, p. 95.

(74) *Ibid.*, p. 130.

(75) *Ibid.*, p. 93.

(76) *Ibid.*, p. 182.

(77) G. Bachelard, *La Psychanalyse du Feu*, p. 152.

(78) M. Mansuy, *Gaston Bachelard et les Éléments.* Paris, J. Corti, 1967, p. 40.

(79) G. Bachelard, *La Psychanalyse du Feu*, p. 144.

(80) *Ibid.*, p. 183.

(81) M. Bakhtin, *Robelais...*, p. 32. Cf. also this description with the ones above in relation to Henderson's outward aspect.

(82) The theme of madness also recurs in *Mr. Sammler's Planet*, such as when Sammler asks himself: "Is our species crazy: Plenty of evidence. All of course seems man's invention. Including madness. Which may be one more creation of that agonizing inventiveness. At the present level of human evolution propositions were held (...) by which choices were narrowed down to sainthood and madness. We are mad unless we are saintly, saintly only as we soar above madness" (p.87). Bellow significantly refers to this [theme] again in his essay "A world too much with us" (*Critical Inquiry*, *2* (1):9. Autumn (1975) when he comments that "Wordsworth warned that we laid waste our powers by getting and spending. It is more serious than that now. Worse than getting and spending, modern distraction, worldwide irrationality, and madness threaten existence itself. We may not make it".

(83) G. Bachelard. *La Psychanalyse du Feu*, p. 35.

(84) *Ibid.*, p. 167.

(85) *Ibid.*, p. 35.

(86) *Ibid.*, p. 90.

(87) *ibid.*, p. 26.

(88) The fire imagery of Henderson's fever (which is, according to Bachelard, "la marque d'une impureté dans le feu du sang; elle est la marque d'un soufre impur" (*La Psychanalyse du Feu*, p.171)). shall be discussed in connection with Henderson's quest

(see Renaux, S. *Bellow's Carnivalistic...*), as it is not an inherent trait of his character, but rather a symptom of his "impurity", his restlessness, his incompleteness.

(89) *La Terre et les Rêveries de la Volonté*, Paris, J. Corti, 1971, p. 10.

(90) *Ibid.*, p. 110.

(91) *Ibid.*, p. 129.

(92) and (93) Both passages bear a remarkable similarity to Lanza del Vasto's report of the incarnation of Vischnou in a wild boar, which Bachelard quotes as an example of "la volonté de fouiller la terra" which pigs have:

"Pour s'accomplir dans la matière, il faut s'enfoncer dedans et jusqu'au fond.

Et Dieu ne pouvait choisir pour opérer enfoncement meilleur outil que l'entonnoir d'un groin.

Chez nul être au monde l'enfouissement dans sa propre masse n'est plus perfaite que chez le porc. Nul ne possède un tel acharnement dans la voracité, nul, grognant et fouillant, n'a si faim de s'enfoncer davantage" (...)

Fourre partout, ô porc, la plaque de ton nez et travaille des mâchoires: plus bas, plus profond se cachent la racine substantielle et le truffe de l'essence." (*La Terre et les Rêveries de la Volonté*, p. 129-30.)

(94) G. Bachelard, *La Terre et las Rèveries de la Volonté*, p. 104.

(95) *Ibid.*, p. 111.

(96) *Ibid.*, p. 110.

(97) *Ibid.*, p. 60.

(98) *Ibid.*, p. 58.

(99) As Bachelard explains, "si l'on tient un couteau dans la main, en entend tout de suite la provocation des choses (...) Pour comprendre cette provocation directe d'un object du monde résistant, il foudrait définir une instance matérielle nouvelle, une sorte de sur-ça contre quoi nous voulons exercer nos forces (...) La lutte contre le réel est il plus directe des luttes, la plus franche. (...) Pour l'imagination dynamique, il y a (...) au delà de la chose. La sur-chose, dans le style même où le moi est dominé par un sur-moi. Ce morceau de bois qui laisse ma main indifférente n'est qu'une chose, il est même bien près de n'être que le concept d'une chose. Mais si mon couteau s'amuse à l'entailler, ce même bois est tout de suit plus que lui-même, il est une sur-chose, il prend sur lui toutes les forces de la provocation du monde résistant, il réçoit natursllement toutes les métaphores de l'agression" (*La Terre et les Rêveries de la Volonté*, p. 36-40).

(100) See S. Renaux, *Bellow's Carnivalistic Vision...*, chapter II, parts II—The Hero's Double, and III—The Hero's Speech.

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INTEGRATING VISUAL AND AUDITORY CHANNELS IN E.F.L. TEACHING

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INTRODUCTION

When I started using video with my students in the Letters Course I had a surprise. My expectation was that it would be easier for them to understand video sequences than the usual audio-tapes. I expected the visual audio-tapes. I expected the visual element to provide additional help to the understanding of the spoken message. What happened was quite the opposite. Their first contact vith video was through the BBC programme "Words and Pictures" which is especially designed for children who are learning to read and write. The main part of that programme was the story of "The Three Little Pigs". They found no difficulty with that because sentences are uttered very slowly, some of them even appear on the screen and the same patterns are repeated in the different parts of the story. Besides, the story was already known to them.

However, when a news programme was shown to them, they found it incredibly difficult to understand. They were able to get some of the main points but misunderstood many details. Some of them reported their difficulties to me litterally saying that the visual element distracted them, sometimes leading them to conclusions that did not match the spoken message. Some said that they found the audio-tapes of the course-book we use easier to understand. There were even a few who closed their eyes in order to concentrate their attention on the auditory part.

Later we introduced the British Council's Video English as a regular part of the course and, although they enjoy the video sessions very much, they still cannot cope with much of the language presented in the sequences.

From this observation a question arose as the starting point for this paper—What makes the language used in audio-tapes easier to understand than that of video-tapes?

The first step to be taken was a survey of current research on the field of interaction of verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication in normal every day use of the language.

The second part of the paper is an attempt to analyse some samples of

audio-taped and video-taped teaching materials and detect how the presence or absence of the visual element affects the choice of language.

1. INTERACTION OF VISUAL AND VERBAL ELEMENTS.

1.1. As Riley (1979) points out the inter-relation between the visual and aural elements in face-to-face interaction is not the same as that presented in the audio-visual approach of the 1960's. There, what was intended was a parallel coding of the message—a reiteration of the verbal features by means of visual signs. In real communication, however, visual and aural elements are mutually supplementary. There are, of course, real communication situations where the visual element is completely lacking, for example, telephone conversations and radio programmes. In these cases there is a need for the language to be more explicit in order to make up for the missing visual information. "The same is often true of language laboratory tapes; to make up for the absence of the visual channel audio-tapes tend to use more verbally explicit language than is usual in real life" (Willis: 1983). It is also possible to find examples of messages conveyed through a purely visual channel. After eye-contact is established, one can successfully communicate by facial expression and gestures.

1.2. The components of the visual element.

Visual information stems from two different sources: physical setting and the body language of the speakers. The importance of the shared knowledge of the physical setting can be easily realized if you imagine yourself, as Jane Willis (1983) suggests, talking to a blind person in an unfamiliar setting. In a situation like that, one would have to use a more explicit kind of language to compensate for the other's lack of sight.

Under the heading of body language I subsume Abercrombie's (1968) categories of paralinguistic features. These are:

posture — the way the whole body is disposed during conversation;
proxemics — the distance people stand from each other;
gesture — involves part of the body and changes more rapidly than posture;
facial expression;
eye contact.

Posture can give "indication of the participant's attitude both towards each other and to what is being said" (J. Willis: 1983). Agreement, willingness to participate in a discussion, challenge can all be expressed by different postures. J. Willis (1983) reports some research which shows that leaning forward is likely to punctuate the beginning of an explanation while leaning backwards usually coincides with the end of it.

Proxemics is an aspect which varies across cultures and we all have heard of embarrasing situations caused by failing to perceive the cultural differences in this respect.

Eye contact has a similar status in western societies as a pre-condition to starting conversation. It is different in the East where Moslem women cannot make eye contact with people outside their family.

Gestures can be used for deictic reference accompanying a sentence like "Put them here" or to give attitudinal information such as the dismissive arm gesture which can accompany "Never mind". There are also gestures which are verbal surrogates (V-sign, thumbs up); others which induce to action (come here) and the so called 'batons'—movements of the head or hand related to rhythm. As Gillian Brown (1977) says "rhythm is part of the general look of how the speakers of their language speak it". In the case of English, whose rhythm is based on the contrast between stressed and unstressed syllables, the speaker's nods, raising of eyebrows, waving of arms, frowning and other muscular movements are made in time with the stressed syllables.

Facial expression gives information to the participants of the interaction about each other's attitude. As a listener, the participant gets information as to the extent to which the speaker is committed to the literal meaning of the meassage. As a speaker he monitors the effect of his words on the listener.

1.3. Differences between spoken and written language.

Brown and Yule (1983) call our attention to the fact that information is "more densely packed" in the written language than in the spoken language. According to their research, spoken language is characterized by the use of simple noun phrases, loosely organized syntax with very few subordinate declarative structures, non specific words and phrases (thing, do, sort of) and interactive expressions (er, erm, uhuh). Written language is quite the reverse since it makes use of highly organized syntax, and heavily modified noun phrases.

The implication of what has been stated above about the nature of typical spoken language is that this less specific kind of language is "quite hard to understand unless the listener has access to information about context and background knowledge of a sort which conventional listening comprehension teaching tends not to supply" (Brown & Yule: 1983).

2. AUDIO-TAPES VERSUS VIDEO-TAPES.

After a detailed examination of some examples of audio-taped conversations from course books of O'Neil's Kernel series, I have come to the conclusion that the language used in them is closer to the written language than to the spoken one. In fact it is oralized written language especially prepared to give the students the opportunity to apply the structures being taught.

Since the setting and the participants of the interaction are not visible, deictic reference is nearly impossible. That explains the overuse of nouns which in normal every day language would be substituted by pronouns. Crucial information such as the participants' attitude towards each other and towards the subject, their age, sex, social role has to be conveyed trough vocal signs—either verbal or non-verbal. No wonder this kind of language is more explicit than in real interaction; it is language meant to be overheard. Thus one of Grice's (Brown & Yule: 1983) maxims of cooperative conversation, which says that the speaker should not tell the listener what he or she knows already, is constantly disobeyed.

The use of "stage directions" is a device which helps compensate for the lack of visual support.

Let us examine now an audio-taped conversation which takes place in a department store. (Kernel Lessons Intermediate p. 66)

> "Two months ago Julia bought a pullover from a large department store. The pullover is worn out already. Julia took the pullover back during the lunch hour today. She went there with a friend, Mary, who works in the same office. This is what happened.
> Mary: It's certainly very busy here today, isn't it?
> Julia: Yes, and there aren't enough salesgirls. We've been standing here for at least five minutes!
> Mary: Quick. Catch that salesgirl's eye! She's just finishing with a customer."

It is obvious that Mary's role in the dialogue is just to give information about the physical setting: busy shop; not enough sales-girls; a sales-girl just finishing with a customer.

As to the language the structural intention is too strongly evident from the absolute presence of the present perfect, as if most of the sentences had been forced into it. The examples listed below belong to the same dialogue:

> "It's this pullover. I've only had it for two months and it's already worn out.
> "Look at the sleeves .....
> They've worn very badly."
> "And how long do you say you've had it?
> "For only two months. Since Christmas, in fact."
> "We've been selling this particular make for years and we haven't had any complaints in all that time.'
> "It's this lady. She's had this pullover for two months and it's already worn out."
> "I've been wearing it at the weekends, that's all."

Video English cassette three contains a similar sequence in a boutique. Of course the setting presents itself. It looks and sounds much more authentic, probably because it is not aimed at reinforcing any particular structure.

In Kernel Two p. 55 there is a dialogue taking place in a restaurant. Stage directions were needed to introduce the situation and to indicate different sections of the dialogue.

> "One evening a young couple, Tony and Helen, decided to eat out.
> They stopped in front of a restaurant to look at a menu.
> Tony: They've got photographs of all the food they serve.
> Helen: Hmm, it looks good.
> Tony: Would you like to eat here?
> Helen: The food smells good!"

Tony's first sentence is a superfluous comment, since Helen can also see the photos on the menu on the outisde wall of the restaurant. Obviously the textbook writer put this sentence into Tony's mouth just to give the user of the book information about this aspect of the setting. And the photos are an important detail—they justify the use of *look* (visual perception) by the other speaker. As one can easily see, one of the main purposes of the dialogue is to practise *look*, *smell* and *taste*.

In the same dialogue we can notice the overexplicit way of asking permission to sit down: "Excuse me, may we sit here? I mean are these seats taken?"

In Video English cassette three, in the sequence called "The Hotel Lounge", the woman just asks "May I?" and the setting does the rest.

There seems to be a tendency in this sound-only material to re-state things with "I mean..." I have found plenty of examples in the Kernel dialogues:

> Kernel Lessons Intermediate p. 90:
> "I want to use the car this evening.
> Do you think I'll be able to?
> *I mean*, will it be ready by then?"
>
> Kernel Lessons Intermediate p. 48:
> "And is it very far? *I mean* how long does it take to get there?"
>
> Kernel Intermediate p. 138:
> "You've had a very dangerous life, haven't you Joe? *I mean*, you've almost been killed several times, haven't you?"
> "You must enjoy danger. *I mean*, you wouldn't be a racing driver if you didn't, would you?"
>
> Kernel 2 p. 82:
> "I'm not sure. I mean, perhaps it's right."

The examples which follow give more evidence of the use of explicit forms which could be replaced by pro-forms if the visual information were available.

> Kernel 2 p. 82:
> "The number is here in this book somewhere."

If you could see one of the participants handing the telephone book to the other, the phrase "in this book" would be entirely dispensable.

> Kernel 2 p. 63:
> "Two children on their way home from school find a strange object in a big hole in the ground.
> Girl: Hey, look at that big hole over there..... What are you doing? Don't *go into the hole*!"

It seems to me that the phrase "big hole over there" could perfectly well be omitted in a real situation. As to the phrase *go into the hole* the surrogate *do* would sound more natural if it were not for the need to give clues about the setting.

For a contrast with the examples just mentioned we can look at the transcript of Video English cassette 3 for the sequence called "The car keys".

> "Sarah, give me a hand with these, will you?" "*Sorry, Mum.* Shall I bring the rest in?" "Oh, I can manage a couple more, I think."

If this were a audio-tape we would need verbal clues to know what things they are talking about, what the girl apologizes for and where she should take the things.

CONCLUSION

As language intended to the overhearer, audio-taped conversations are more transparent to the students than those shown in video recordings.

The danger of this artificial facilitation is that "students get used to more than usually explicit language and find real life interaction very difficult to cope with." (Willis: 1983)

Although being able to use the visual channel in their native language at a subconscious level, it is amazing how little students can "see" in the foreign language.

One of the main advantages of using video in FL teaching is, therefore, helping sensitize the learner to the integration of the visual and aural elements in real communication.

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COMPARING READING PROFICIENCY IN PORTUGUESE AS A NATIVE LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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1. INTRODUCTION

In many parts of the world there is the need for a reading knowledge of English, as so much professional, technical and scientific literature is published in that language. But despite this specific need for a foreign language, it is the common experience, at least of EFL teachers, that most students fail to learn to read adequately in a second language.

Is there a significant relationship between reading comprehension in the native language and reading comprehension in the foreign language? The problem seems to be whether reading in a foreign language is simply a problem of knowing the words and the grammar of the language, or whether there are other causes of the difficulties experienced by learners.

Therefore the question is, if the relationship occurs, how far can skilled readers in their native language transfer their reading strategies to the new language reading-situation, and to what extent will they adopt a different and probably regressive approach because of an imperfect second-language knowledge? Answers to these questions may help understand how pupils who are fluent readers in their own language begin to read a second language and may, as well, give insight into their first-language reading strategies.

Before we can study the possibility of a relationship between L1 and L2 we must identify those components of reading we wish to compare. In this study the students were given two tests: one in Portuguese and one in English. Both reading tests contained questions aimed at testing four strategies: skimming, looking for main points, finding detailed information and applying ideas in the text.

2. HYPOTHESES

There has been a great deal of research about whether the strategies

used for reading L1 are transfered to L2. Alderson (1984) mentions two researchable hypotheses:

1. Poor reading in a foreign language is due to poor reading ability in the first language. Poor first-language readers will read poorly in the foreign language and good first-language readers will read well in the foreign language.
2. Poor reading in a foreign language is due to inadequate knowledge of the target language.

Alderson suggests at least two modifications of these hypotheses:

1a Poor foreign language reading is due to incorrect strategies for reading that foreign language, strategies wich differ from the strategies for reading the native language.

2a Poor foreign language reading is due to reading strategies in the first language not being employed in the foreign language, due to inadequate knowledge of the foreign language. Good first-language readers will read well in the foreign language once they have passed a threshold of foreign language ability.

3. IMPLICATIONS

These competing hypotheses may have relevant implications for the teaching of reading. In short, when dealing with foreign language reading problems:

- If poor first language reading is the cause, we must improve first-language reading.
- If poor foreign language knowledge is the cause, we need to improve FL competence.
- If first-language reading ability is short-circuited by low FL competence, we need to improve FL competence first, then improve the reading strategies of poor first-language readers.
- If processing is different for different languages, then we need to teach reading of the foreign language, regardless of the first-language ability.
- If transfer of reading ability takes place across the native/non-native language distinction, then we can teach reading in either first or foreign language to those readers who are poor in their first-language reading. Readers who are poor in foreign language reading but not in their first language are either logical impossibilities or merely in need of familiarization with the foreign language code.

4. SPECULATIONS

A brief examination will be made of the extent to which empirical evidence is available to support the previously mentioned hypotheses.

Evidence for hypothesis 1

Some research evidence is available from studies of bilingualism which suggests the transferability of reading ability across languages. Such transferability would lend support to a hypothesis that poor foreign language reading is essentially a reading problem. Other studies (Lapkin and Swain 1977) would seem to provide evidence for some relationship between first and second-language reading abilities.

Evidence for hypothesis 1a

In an experiment by Cowan and Sarmad (1976) it was suggested that bilingual children did not read as well in either first or foreign language as their monolingual controls. This would argue against complete transfer of reading ability across languages. Cowan and Sarmad's finding corresponds to the hypothesis that poor foreign language reading is due to incorrect strategies for reading that foreign language. If this is right, we must consider the structural characteristics of the first language and the foreign language if we wish to understand the nature of perceptual strategies and the manner in which they operate in foreign language reading. It seems that differences between languages lead to different processing strategies: the greater the differences between two languages, the less likely one is to read the first language in the same way as the foreign language, and therefore the less likely it is that there will be a positive effect of transfer of reading strategies from first language to foreign language.

Evidence for hypothesis 2

However, another study by Ulijn (1978) presents evidence which contradicts Cowan's finding. This study suggests that contrasting structures between first language and foreign language are much less problematic for the foreign language reader than the parallel processing finding predicts. In a further experiment, Ulijn manipulated the presence of what he called "conceptual information". This conceptual knowledge appears to be both the reader's knowledge of the text's subject area and knowledge of word meanings, particularly content words. Thus, according to Ulijn poor foreign language reading comprehension is not due to insufficient knowledge of grammar, but to lack of conceptual knowledge: The meanings of words and subject knowledge.

Alderson, Bastien and Madrazo (1977) provide evidence which suggests that a student's knowledge of the foreign language is more important to the comprehension of foreign language texts than is reading ability in the first language. Therefore, it was concluded in this study that the best predictor of reading ability in a foreign language was not reading ability in the mother tongue, but rather proficiency in the foreign language.

Consistent with the hypothesis that foreign language reading ability

will be affected by competence in the foreign language, is the prediction made by Cziko (1978) that foreign language readers, who lack competence in the language, will have difficulty in making full use of contextual constraints. The use of contextual constraints is held to be crucial to the reading process an to the extent that foreign language readers are not able to utilize such constraints, they will be ineffective/inadequate readers.

Evidence for hypothesis 2a

Cummins (1979) and Clarke (1979) arrived at a statement of the relationship between reading ability and language ability in foreign language reading that predicted that foreign language readers will not be able to read as well in the foreign language as in their first language until they have reached a threshold level of competence in that foreign language. This conclusion would support the commonsense of Coady's (1979) statement that "it is obvious that the ESL student is going to be defficient in process strategies which involve substantial knowledge of the target language".[1]

5. *POPULATION*

The population consisted of 58 post-beginner students of English for Academic Purposes from the Federal University of Pernambuco. Most of them had studied English for about 4/6 years in elementary and high school and were enrolled in a required English course. The purpose of the course is to help students improve their reading comprehension of English academic texts. The students were enrolled in all the various departments of the humanities (Arts) and technological sciences, and abilities and language proficiency varied considerably. The purpose of the test was explained: to discover whether the level of reading comprehension in their native language correlated with the level of reading comprehension in English. Testees appeared to be cooperative and interested in participating.

6. *METHOD*

The evaluative tools were two tests of reading comprehension, one in English and one in Portuguese. Each test consisted of one text of general interest followed by thirty varied comprehension questions involving different strategies: skimming, finding main points, looking for detailed information and applying ideas in the text. Two hours were alloted for the entire test (both tests: in Portuguese and in English), as this is the length of a regular class lesson and was the most convenient arrangement of time. Tests which were not completed, in either English or Portuguese sections or both, were excluded from the study and are not considered as part of the results archieved by 58 subjects. Generally the students completed The

Portuguese tests first, although no specific instructions were given about this. Most were able to finish the Portuguese portion in approximately 40/50 minutes and then spent the rest of their time working on the English section. Individual reactions to the level of difficulty varied greatly. Most of the students completed the entire task in two hours or less, and, as previously stated, the few who did not finish were excluded from the study.

7. RESULTS

The results of the test are shown in Table 1. Table 2 shows the correlation measures used in order to compare the students' reading performance in both Portuguese and English. For the 58 subjects reported in Table 1 the correlation between reading ability in Portuguese and English was 0,82 which was highly significant (vide Table 2). This indicates that the relationship is meaningful (a considerably high coefficient of correlation) and that the possibility that it occurred by chance is quite small. An analysis of each question showed that, for the most part, they tested the strategies being examined and that students who answered a particular question correctly usually scored well on the whole test, while students who answered a particular question incorrectly did poorly on the test.

As expected, the score results for the native speakers of Portuguese were higher than had been anticipated. It should also be mentioned that there was no specific control of variables, and that the students tested in this study were the ones who were highly interested and motivated[2] to improve their reading comprehension ability in English. Would this fact account for the students' considerably high level of competence shown here in reading both English and Portuguese? It might be worthwhile investigating further to ascertain which factors could account for the difference in correlations of the native and target languages. It might also be revealing to spend some time helping native users of Portuguese improve their reading skills in order to determine whether this could improve reading comprehension in the target language as well.

The results gathered in the present study—that there was a significant correlation between reading abilities in Portuguese and English—seem to give reasonable support to the claim that there is inevitably transfer of reading ability from one language to another, provided that correlations of different levels have been established when the same individuals are studied in both languages.

The study by Alderson, Bastien and Madrazo (1977) concluded that the best predictor of reading ability in a foreign language was not reading ability in the mother tongue, but rather proficiency in the FL. This conclusion seems to raise some questions on the results of our study. Why then some significant correlation between learners' reading abilities in Portuguese and English would occur? Could be subjects (reported in Table 1) have been proficient in reading both the FL and the native language?

And if so, could this proficiency in reading the FL be explained by evidence from research which suggests that foreign language reading ability may be more closely associated with proficiency in the FL? Reading ability in the FL would then, as the research Alderson et al. suggest, be a matter of "a general proficiency" or a special kind of functional reading ability.

Table 1

	Portuguese	*English*
Number of questions	30	30
Population	58	58
Skimming	92.7	79.3
Main Points	84.4	72.7
Details	79.1	67.3
Application	77.9	63.8

Overall total score in percentage (%) per strategy.
Correlation between Portuguese and English: 0.82 (vide Table 2)

Table 2

Correlation	*Measures*		
0.00	0.30	=	very low
0.30	0.50	=	low
0.50	0.70	=	regular (moderate)
0.70	0.90	=	strong
0.90	1.00	=	very strong

8. CONCLUSION

It seems that (although it was not tested in this study) where the higher levels of reading comprehension are involved there is a correlation between the level of the student's reading comprehension in his native language and the level of reading comprehension in the target language.

There has been some research evidence relating to the question of whether poor reading in a foreign language is due to problems with the foreign language, or problems with reading as a set of strategies. The first hypothesis presented in the introduction was that reading problems in a foreign language were due to poor reading ability in the first language. This hypothesis has been hotly disputed.

Alderson, Bastien and Madrazo (1979) provide evidence which suggests that proficiency in the foreign language may be more closely associated with foreign language reading ability. This constitutes a measure of support for the second hypothesis presented, namely that reading problems were due to language problems. The weight of evidence seems to support the second hypothesis, at least at relatively low levels of competence. More plausible, but elusive, is the notion that problems in foreign language read-

ing which are due to language have to do with semantic and discourse processing, and are related to problems of conceptualization and word meaning.

Elley's claim (1984) seems to offer some support to the results of our research. He claims that it is becoming increasingly clear that second-language learning has much more to learn from first language learning than is commonly thought. He has found: first, a similarity in the reactions of L2 and L1 users to different reading tests; second, a similarity in the pattern of errors; and third, a similarity in their attitudes and their language development as a result of reading programmes derived from first-language settings. Clearly there are limits in the extent of these parallels, but he has been more impressed with these similarities in the language growth of L1 and L2 users than with the differences. Perhaps there is more we can learn about these similarities that will enable us to improve the reading performance and general language knowledge of our EAP/ESP students from the different areas of study.

On the other hand, if we pose the question: is foreign language reading a language problem or a reading problem? Personally I follow Alderson in that it appears to be both a language problem and a reading problem. Further evidence is needed though in order to explain this duality and to establish a definite answer—if there is one—for this issue. Only from here on will teachers be able to help readers in comprehending reading effectively, and therefore more profitably, not only in the foreign language but also in the native language.

Notes

(1) From J. Coady (1979:10).

(2) Spolsky (1989:10) includes a *Motivation Condition* (Condition nº 32) among his 74 conditions for second language learning. According to him, "the more motivation a learner has, the more time he or she will spend learning an aspect of a second language".

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TUTORIAL MEETINGS AND THE REWRITING PROCESS: THE LOVELY TWINS. WHY NOT?

MARIA DA GRAÇA GOMES PAIVA

> *"Interviewer: How much rewriting do you do?*
> *Hemingway: It depends. I rewrote the ending of A Farewell to Arms* thirty-nine times before I was satisfied.
> Interviewer: Was there some technical problem there? What was it that had stumped you?
> Hemingway: Getting the words right."
>
> *Hemingway*
>
> "I can't understand how anyone can write without rewriting everything over and over again".
>
> *Leo Tolstoy*

Rewriting, divising a set of evaluation criteria to promote students' self-correction in the rewriting process and, hopefully, to improve their writing skill, have been, by and large, "jargon" terms among experts in good writing as well as second and/or foreign language teachers of English composition (see Sullivan, 1979; Brooks & Warren, 1972; Lemos, 1981; James, 1983; Rackman, 1984, to mention a few).

Likewise, no one can deny either the effectiveness or the validity of the rewriting process as one of (if not the most) the most essential steps in learning how to write in a language. To illustrate that, let me quote Lemos (1981:37) who, to me, has clearly summarized the real significance of the whole rewriting process in few but precise words. For her, rewriting is an opportunity for the student to "rethink what he has written, elaborate on some aspect he may have only touched on, and rewrite until he can produce clear, smooth, vigorous prose".

However, experience has proved to me that, providing a set of criteria for self-correction, and giving the students a chance to rewrite their assignments are not sufficient aids to dovelop rethorical skills in English, mostly when better content (rather than better fluency and/or better accuracy) is the major aim to be achieved throughout a writing course. In other words, if the goal is to improve self-expression within a special kind of written discourse in English, one will have to take the students' own ideas/thoughts much more into account, rather than focusing only on the grammatical or spelling mistakes they make. And that is when "tutorial meetings", or private instruction with the teacher, have proved to be an additional and useful tool in the production of final, well-written passages. Needless to say that the present article will mainly focus on this particular subject.

In the paragraphs that follow there is a report of an experiment that I have been carrying out since August 1983: the teaching of narrative and

descriptive compositions to undergraduate students attending the fifth semester of the Language and Interpreter—Translator Courses at the Federal university of Rio Grande do Sul.

At our institution, as a general rule, students attending writing classes from the first up to the fourth semesters have their evaluation based on (if not only on!) language accuracy and fluency. There is some or no concern at all for content, though.

Teachers, including myself, claim that those first semesters should serve as the basis for the following ones in which a more elaborate type of discourse is required. The objectives, in this case, seem to be two: developing the students' habit of writing in English, and making them feel more confident in one specific foreign language skill.

Nevertheless, at the time I was invited to teach fifth-semester students how to write, I realized that the same set of objectives only would not suit the students' and the teacher's needs, being not very adequate to that particular level.

"If I am to teach different written styles in English—such as narration and description—how can I evaluate my students on language accuracy and/or fluency only? Would that be fair?" "Isn't it through their ideas, feelings and attitudes that I will be able to identify, such elements as suspense, chronology of events and descriptive details?" "What could be done to overcome both language and style problems while at the same time trying to make the students acquire the taste for writing longer and more elaborate passages?" Questions like these kept coming to my mind.

As a possible answer, I have designed a writing course which, so far, has proved to be quite successful and useful, due to my inclusions of thirty to forty-minute weekly meetings for individual or small group talk as a further step in the rewriting process. They are the socalled tutorial meetings.

I — THE RELEVANCE OF THE TUTORIAL MEETINGS

During the last five semesters in which I have introduced the idea of having tutorial meetings as a follow-up to the rewriting process, I have noticed that there are some recurrent errors in the content which are shared among most of the students attending the course, namely:

a) ideas tend to be repeated throughout;
b) there is a tendency to use very general ideas;
c) ideas are usually not well-supported (lack of justification);
d) ideas are not clearly and/or fully stated (lack of clarity);
e) ideas are not properly connected, being isolated;
f) there is a lack of sufficient use of specific, concrete details to support any generalizations made;
g) new ideas are added in the conclusion, leaving the composition open-ended;
h) all the ideas previously discussed are not summarized in the conclusion.

Due to some—or all—of these mistakes, for instance, the element of suspense—so important in a narration—has sometimes been totally absent or has only been vaguely approached in some of the students' assignments.

Another quite serious problem has to do with balance or unity, either in the chronology of events, if it is a narration (before the event—the event itself—after the event) or in the basic layout of a description (introduction-development-conclusion). Too much is usually being said in one part and too little in the remainder.

Nevertheless, in my opinion none of the problems mentioned above may be compared to those derived from faults b, c, d and f.

Students, recurrent use of quite elementary or ordinary-type of vocabulary may be claimed to be the cause of usually plain, isolated, not well-supported or incomplete ideas found in their assignments. Such types of errors in the content, in turn, may be claimed to lead the reader—in this case, the teacher—to infer from the context what the writer's (the student, I mean) real feelings and thoughts actually were. For example, questions like: "What does he mean by this/that?" "Does he want to say this or may be something else?" "Should things work out this way or the other?" "Is X the real conclusion he wants to reach?" "Is it X or Y the element of suspense here?" have always come to my mind while reading students' assignments. The reason was either lack of clarity or even lack of sufficient details.

Then, in order to avoid the tendency to make inferences from the students' own words and, on the other hand, to make their writing more vivid by means of a more "picturesque-type" of language, I have finally come across the idea of holding tutorial meetings outside the classroom.

Tutorial meetings have proved to be a useful teaching aid to the extent that they have helped students overcome their problems of self-expression in writing in different styles in English. Besides, they have proved to be quite effective in promoting better teacher—student interaction by clearing up doubts that both have concerning the content of the assignments.

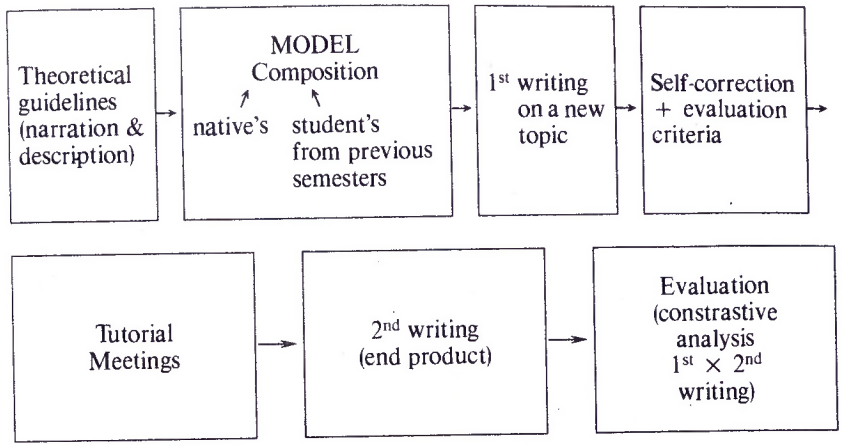
Another relevant role played by such type of meetings is that hints not answers are provided to the students to help them improve their ideas, because the purpose is not to interfere or change what is said but to make what is to be said more meaningful, less misleading and more effective to the reader.

By giving the students a chance to solve their difficulties after having done all the necessary corrections in the rewriting process, their end-product, that is, the final clean copy has revealed remarkable progress in their writing of good narratives and descriptions in English.

II — THE DYNAMICS OF THE COURSE

The following chart shows how the course has been designed so as to include the tutorial meetings as a further step in the rewriting process.

Table I



Such an approach to the teaching of writing whose final evaluation relies heavily on the content (70%) and less on the accuracy (20%) and fluency (10%) has promoted higher levels of motivation and interest, besides better engagement in the tasks.

III — ON THE SAMPLES OF COMPOSITIONS

In the paragraphs that follow, some samples of students' first writing (before having gone through the rewriting process and the tutorial meetings) and second writing are presented and briefly commented in order to show the relevance of the tutorial meetings in the rewriting process.

The first 2 paragraphs (Márcia's and Paula's) seem to be good examples of improvements that may be made in the element of suspense when writing a narrative. Before the tutorial, features of suspense were very few if not absent, from the assignements. However, either by inserting descriptive details or by improving the word choice, or by inserting descriptions of feelings and/or reactions, in the 2nd version—after the tutorial—the element of suspense becomes transparent and, consequently, raises the reader's interest.

PASSAGES

Before the tutorial

Title: *Steps*

Alone in the house she was sleeping quietly in her bedroom. Her husband

After the tutorial

Title: *A strange thief*

Alone in the house, she was sleeping quietly in her bedroom. Her husband

had travelled and would return only on the following day.

Suddenly, she woke up in a jump. "Am I dreaming or have I heard something strange?", she thought.

She held her breath for some moments but the house was in silence again. She was preparing to sleep again, when she heard the noise of steps. She got up, picked up a wooden hanger and went throughout the dark corridor. She stopped, because the noise seemed to be nearer, and she was getting more and more scared. She wanted to call somebody.

By: MÁRCIA

had travelled and would return only on the following day. But, in spite of the seemingly peaceful atmosphere of her bedroom, something was happening in that house.

She was dreaming about her vacations when, suddenly, she woke up with a start. "Am I dreaming or have I heard something strange?", she wondered. She stood stone-still for some seconds, holding her breath and listening. However, not a sound could be heard. She drew a long breath and was getting to sleep again when she heard clearly the sound of steps. Stoutly she got up, picked up a wooden hanger and crept through the dark corridor. In the middle she stopped, because the steps seemed to be getting closer. She had the sensation that the thief was walking throughout the house as if he was acquainted with it. With her heart in her mouth she waited quietly in the darkness. Her only wish was to call somebody for help.

By: MÁRCIA

Title: *I got there*

I shall never forget the day I passed Vestibular. As soon as I finished the last test, which was on "Estudos Sociais", I felt a relief deep inside. That slow walking out of the building in which I was taking the "vestibular" left me back in my brains the feelings of some secluded days when I was apart from the world. Oh, boy! Hardly could I imagine it could have been that exhausting!

By: PAULA

Title: *I got there*

I shall never forget that day! That slow walking out of the building, in which I was taking the examinations, brought back the feelings of some secluded days when I was cut off from the world outside. Hardly could I imagine it would have been that exhausting!

By: PAULA

Rosane's first paragragh, on the other hand, may be pointed out as a good example of improvements that may be made when writing a description of a house. If the purpose is to keep the reader's interest through very vivid and effective language, then richness of details plays an important role so as to convey to the reader the very picture of a haunted house.

Before the tutorial

Title: *The Haunted House*

There was a very old stone house on Bill's street. It was empty since the end of the last century. It was almost in ruins and there were many trees ans bushes around it. The old house was quite hid by the yard, full of weeds and high grass.

By: ROSANE

After the tutorial

Title: *The Haunted House*

There was an old fashioned stone house on Bill's street. It has been empty since the end of last century. The ancient brick walls were covered with plaster and supported by heavy wooden beams. All the windows were made up of small squares of glass held together by thin strips of lead. The house, grey and weather-beaten, looked as much a part of the landscape as the trees that surrounded it: an avenue of elms led from the street to the garden, full of weeds and high bushes.

By: ROSANE

IV — STUDENT'S EVALUATION OF THE COURSE

Special attention should now be reserved to students' own views about the tutorial meetings, for their testimonials usually tend to be the determining factors of either failure or success of any new procedure that teachers may find suitable to follow.

Among many, the ones presented below are quite illustrative.

> "I find the tutorial meeting as the only chance when the student can tell his teacher the difficulties he's having during the semester as well as the teacher can feel how his student is developing along the course".
>
> Henrique

> "It was a nice experience that has given better results under normal circumstances. I do think it must go on and I profit from this opportunity to repeat my point of view as far as writing is concerned: "in order to improve our writing we have to write a lot".
>
> José

"Trying to be as impartial as possible, I wish to thank you for providing your students of this semester (84/2) with a view of the English language which is completely different from that which has been conveyed to us up to the moment. All at once, English became something closer to us.

The approach you follow stirred up in me various different feelings: surprise, curiosity, fear, daring. And I believe these were feelings everyone of us felt.

In the form of a challenging invitation, you pushed us toward the discovery of something unknown to us until then: the possibility of "creating" in English.

Rosane

V — OTHER TEACHER'S OPINION

Wondering about how good or bad tha actual student's performance in writing was in the semester that followed, I decided to ask one of the teachers to write a brief overall evaluation on that, pointing out the major differences between former groups' performance in writing in the sixth semester, who have not undergone the experiment of having tutorial meetings and those who have. Her answer, quoted below, is definitely quite reassuring and motivating.

> "Overall, the class performance was good (5As, 8Bs and 6Cs). The students worked on the assigned topics with relative easiness, displaying a sense of planning and organization previously acquired. They wrote their thesis statement particularly well. Their use of grammar could be considered quite good, with two of three points to be somewhat improved, such as the use of the definite article, if clauses, and the sequence of tenses in complex sentences. From the stylistic point of view, there were some shortcomings observed now and then, such as generalization, missing transitions, lack of punctuation and fragmented ideas, the latter due to the students' inability to expand and explore the potentiality of their chosen subjects".
>
> Prof.ª Dr.ª Schmidt
> Let 542—Essay Writing

VI —FINAL REMARKS

Summing up what has been discussed so far, I must say that the experiment of introducing tutorial meetings in the rewriting process as part of the writing course was quite successful, and I would certainly rocommend it to those teachers of writing whose major aim is evaluating students' self-expression (content) first and, secondly, fluency and accurary.

Again, I would like to stress the fact that I do not think that a set of criteria for evaluation alone would be enough to improve students' way of expressing their ideas and feelings. A more direct contact between teacher and student is needed in order to clear up doubts and, consequently, to avoid misinterpretations or even inferences from the part of the teacher.

On the other hand, one must be aware of two or three drawbacks—if

they may be called that—when designing a writing course such as the present one (see TABLE ONE).

The experiment is certainly time-consuming. Compositions are read twice (first writing and second writing) which means double work. Setting up a time schedule to meet the students outside the classroom seems to be the second disadvantage. If the goup is small, arrangements can be easily made; however, if it is a large one, individual talk will not be feasible, only in small groups.

In addition, students should be strongly recommended to hand in the assignments in time, and that no late homework will be accepted; otherwise, the teacher will end up with a heavy load of work to do.

Finally, a word must be said about the final evaluation of the course.

Tutorial meetings, the whole rewriting process and the set of evaluation criteria have proved to be useful aids to prepare the students for the final writing, which is done in class, with no help from the teacher or from any other source, so as to check how much the students have actually progressed.

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IMPROVING ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS OF BEGINNING STUDENTS

ANTONIA DILAMAR ARAUJO

I. INTRODUCTION

Most English Language teachers would agree that listening and speaking are two of the most important and difficult skills to teach students of English, especially in Brazil, where English is a foreign language language and where they do not have opportunities to practice these skills in an authentic setting nor do they hear English spoken outside the classroom.

The purpose of this article is to show how communicative activities can be used to provide students with opportunities to practice the language in communicating their ideas.

During the second semester of 1989, I had a group of fourteen beginning students of English at the Federal University of Piauí. They had studied English for only four months. So their English was minimal. They could barely use English naturally in real-life situations. This led me, the teacher, to try to involve them in communicative language activities in the classroom to help them to improve their oral language skills.

II. REASONS FOR USING SUPPLEMENTARY EXERCISES

Even though our adopted book — *Opening Strategies* by Brian Abbs and Ingrid Freebairn contains the functional approach, I felt the need to conduct some extra communicative activities as supplementary exercises to help these beginning students improve their oral language skills.

The reasons which led me to use the communicative activities were: firstly, I wanted to motivate the students to speak English. Second, I wanted to help the shy students to overcome their inhibitions and use English naturally. Third, I wanted to provide students with opportunities to use English in real situations. Fourth, I wanted to help them to speed up their acquisition of English and finally, I wanted to encourage language

learning through the use of lively and interesting materials and activities that brought the students' world into the classroom.

The communicative activities also provided opportunities for personal relationships among learners and between learners and teacher which personalized the classroom and supported the learner in his efforts to learn the language.

The teacher's role was to select the activities which were suitable for the age group, interest levels and language ability of the students. The purpose of each activity and the context or situation were explained when introducing the students to the activities. The teacher also provided language items or structures to be used in the activities and the teacher ignored mistakes in pronunciation while the students were engaged in real communication. No interruptions were made to avoid inhibiting fluency in speaking and distracting the students when communicating ideas. Mistakes were corrected after the language activities.

III. PRESENTATION OF ORAL LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

Here are the instructions for five supplementary activities which I used last semester. After the description of each activity, I will make some comments about each one and the results in my classroom.

1. *Informal interview* Instructions:

- Ask the students to sit in a circle and write three questions on a piece of paper that they would like to ask the teacher;
- The teacher only gestures agreement/disagreement to the student's answers;

This activity helps break the ice at the beginning of the semester and help the shy students to produce and speak the language without inhibition. It also revised the language structures that they had studied the semester before coming to this course. My students asked questions like: where are you from? How old are you? Do you like being a teacher? How long have you been teaching English? What do you do in your spare time? Do you speak another language? and so on.

2. *Interest pie* Instructions:

- The teacher asks the students to draw a pie on a sheet of paper;
- Next, the students should divide the pie into several slices and write a word related to an activity or thing which they are most interested in;
- The width of each slice depends on the importance each student gives to a certain thing or activity;
- The students pin the piece of paper on the front of their shirt or dress;

- Then, in pairs, they talk to each other about the information they see in the partner's pie. They have 15 minutes to carry out this part of the activity;
- Finally, the students sit in a circle and each one talks about his/her partner's interests.

Again this activity provided opportunity for the students to review the language structures previously taught (e.g. simple pressent) which express likes/dislikes as well as to talk to each other about himself or helself. After the activity was finished, I commented on their mistakes in structure, pronunciation, vocabulary, etc.

3. *The integrated activity* Instructions:

- The teacher chooses two different texts (stories from 10 to 15 lines long) that he/she judges suitable for his/her students;
- Pairs are formed. Text A is given to one student and text B to the other student forming each pair;
- The students read the stories silently;
- When they have finished reading, in pairs each student tells his/her story to each other in his own words;
- Next, the students write the stories they have heard;
- Then, two groups of students are formed: Group A which has text A and B with text B;
- Group A asks Group B five questions to check comprehension about their text and vice-versa;
- After this, the written compositions are compared to the original texts.

This activity was successful and lasted the entire one hour and thirty minute class period. It integrated the four language skills at the same time. My main aim was to develop the students ability to tell stories in their own words practicing the past tense of verbs as well as writing summaries of the stories. As the final step (which is optional) I read the two texts aloud in order to clear up their doubts about pronunciation. The texts used in this activity were taken from intermediate *Stories for Reproduction*, by Alexander Hill, whose sample can be seen in the appendix of this article.

4. *Who knows most about...?*

This game is carried out with a set of pictures that shows several important persons. Here are the instructions:

- The teacher places the pictures on his/her table and writes a question on the board like: Who knows who Michael Jackson is?;
- The student who wishes to answer the question is asked to go to the teacher's table, take the picture of Michael Jackson and place it on the board;
- Then the student starts describing out loud what he knows about this famous American popular singer;
- This procedure is repeated with 2 or 3 students and the one who knows most about Michael Jackson is the winner;
- After this, the teacher presents more pictures and the game is continued.

The aim of this game is to give the students chance to communicate ideas orally through the use of pictures as well as of increasing vocabulary related to the pictures discussed. Most of the pictures that I used are of national personalities such as famous politicians, singers, TV and cinema actors, soccer players, and so on.

Instead of using pictures, a variation of this game could be in the form of an interview. A student pretends to be Michael Jackson or someone else, and the other students ask questions to him/her about his/her life, his/her interests, etc.

5. *Songs* — Instructions:

- The teacher writes the title of the song on the board and asks the students to predict the content or message;
- Then, the teacher gives some words from the lyrics to help them in the prediction of ideas;
- Next, the teacher distributes copies of the song with blanks in it;
- The students fill in the blanks as they listen to the song two or three times.
- After they have filled in the song, the teacher asks the students to read it silently to confirm or not their predictions.

Folk and popular songs are a very good language teaching instrument, especially, for practising listening and speaking provided that the students can listen to the lyrics with comprehension and discuss or comment on its message.

That was what I did. My students enjoyed the songs I brought to them very much. As a follow up exercise, the teacher can ask them to write a paragraph about the message of the song.

IV. CONCLUSION

The activies presented above proved to be a success. They are simple and easy to apply in the classroom. At the end of the semester the students showed that they had increased their vocabulary, dominated many language structures and could express their ideas more freely.

The teacher's role, while the students are performing the activities, is of an understanding listener without demanding perfect responses from the students as well as creating situations and exercises which provide opportunities for and stimulate students to try to communicate orally, overcoming all the obstacles that hinder them. While the students perform, the teacher can monitor their strengths and weaknesses and, at the end of each activity, can use the weaknesses as signs of learning needs and plan remedial work.

Every language teacher can think of additional ways to use interesting techniques to supplement language instruction. What teachers should bear in mind is that the most important thing is to help the students become

more confident in their ability to communicate orally with a limited knowledge of English.

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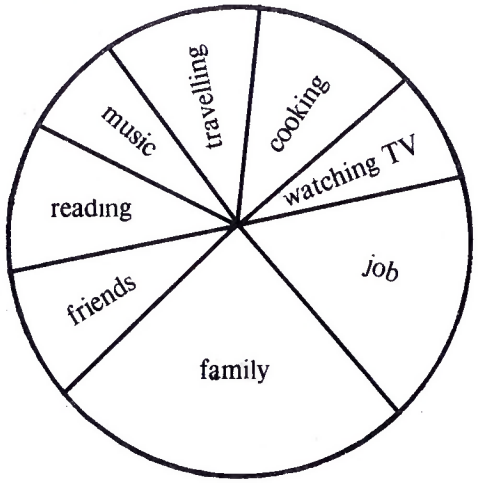
Appendix

Activity 2 — Interest Pie



Activity 3 — The Integrated Activity

TEXT A

On Saturday mornings our cinema shows films for children. One such morning an old man took his grandchildren to the cinema. At the door there was a list of the prices of tickets, but he could not see any price for tickets for adults for Saturday mornings. The only price which was shown for that time was for children's tickets, so he asked the lady who was selling the tickets how much it was for adults.

'Adults!' she said. 'No, we don't have prices for tickets for adults for our Saturday morning films. Any adult who is brave enough to go in there to see films like that — and with all those children — can go in free!'

TEXT B

A man was travelling abroad in a small red car. One day he left the car and went shopping. When he came back, its roof was badly damaged. Some boys told him that an elephant had damaged it. The man did not believe them, but they took him to a circus which was near there. The owner of the elephant said, 'I am very sorry! My elephant has a big, round, red chair. He thought that your car was his chair, and he sat on it!' Then he gave the man a letter, in which he said that he was sorry and that he would pay for all the damage.

When the man got back to his own country the customs officers would not believe his story. They said, 'You sold your new car while you were abroad and bought this old one!'

It was only when the man showed them the letter from the circus man that they believed him.

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INVESTIGATING THE NATURE OF COMPOUND WORDS

LUZIA MARA MONIZ FREIRE
HELIO AUGUSTO MONTEIRO FILHO

In trying to establish criteria that will accurately help to describe what a compound is we are faced with more questions than answers.

Many a writer has suggested that the learner of English should consult a good dictionary if there is any doubt as to the form or use of a compound. Should we, then, assume that a lexical entry in a dictionary is necessary to characterise that as a compound word?

If so, we will observe that there is no agreement among lexicographers in what concerns the choice of two items as making up a compound or its form (open, solid, or hyphenated) or its stress-pattern.

To illustrate this point, we have made a survey of fifty compound words[1] in nine different dictionaries[2]. These words were presented in an exercise called 'Compounding' from the book *A University Grammar of English Workbook* by R. A. Close. The exercise proposes that the learner should draw up a scheme for the classification of those compounds using *A University Grammar of English* by Quirk and Greenbaum as a guide. We have used these words since they are supposedly compounds. The result of our survey is very surprising. Of the fifty words, two do not appear in any of our nine sources as a dictionary entry (*bus driver, telephone call*). Eleven words appear only in five or less than five of the dictionaries (*birdcage, brick red, eating apple, factory-worker, ocean-going, power plant, spring-clean, steam engine, theatre-goer, working party, writing desk*). Eighteen words may be written in, at least, two forms (*brick red, daydream, dragonfly, frying pan, gamekeeper, glowworm, handmade, motorcycle, ocean-going, safety belt, spring-clean, steam engine, sunbathing, toothpaste, washing-machine, working party, writing desk, watchdog*) and four may have three different forms (*birdcage, facecloth, fathead, new-born*). As to stress-patterns, there is a wide number of words that have primary stress on the same component and only some sources mention a secondary stress on another component. However, even the placing of primary stress presents differences with the following words: *handmade, hothouse, new-born, self-service, spring-clean, steam engine, washing-machine,*

and *working party*. It is interesting to observe that one of the dictionaries that we have examined is the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1987, new edition), which received advice from Sir Randolph Quirk and which does not present six of the fiffy words as dictionary entries. Can we assume, then (if we assume that a compound has to have a lexical entry in a dictionary to exist), that these six words classified as compounds by Quirk et alii (1985) are not compounds? Who will decide when a compound is a compound? L. G. Alexander (1988) says that when a compound is accepted as a single word (e. g. it has an entry in a dictionary) the tendency is to write it as one word. Nevertheless, we have seen that a large number of compounds will have an entry in a dictionary even if they are hyphenated or open items.

Compounds are complex words and, as Quirk et alii (1985) point out, "they associate bases drawn from the whole lexicon in a wide range of semantic relations and, although, both bases are in principle open, they are, normally in a relation whereby the first is modifying the second." The problem is that, for us to have a compound, it is not all lexical items that can be placed in iront of others. They must have relations of resemblance, function or some other defining characteristic. Quirk et alii (1985) exemplify this fact with the compound darkroom which is different from dark room (a room which is dark). The item *dark* is used not because the room happens to be dark (many darkrooms are not dark rooms, nor need darkrooms always be in darkness). We cannot expect the meaning of darkroom to be implicit in the meanings of the separate items. A darkroom, then, is a room for (+ the purpose of) photographic processing.

Another problem that the foreign learner has to tackle is that of 'productivity'. Compounds are productive features of English. This means that any native speaker may at any time form a new compound, one that he has never heard before and that is not listed in the dictionary.

This point is well focussed on by Quirk et alii (1985), who are also very concerned with the productivity of compounds resulting, above all, in new nouns and, to a lesser extent, in new adjectives. They write a long description of compounds using as a basis clause-structure functions (cf. pp. 1571-1578). In this way they concentrate their attention on the language's productive capacity. They remark that there are many instances of productivity and we have chosen five cases out of the thirteen very or highly productive types they have mentioned:

— subject + deverbal nouns
  e. g. 'sun,rise (the sun rises)
— verbal nouns in '-ing' + subject
  e. g. 'dancing, girl (the girl dances)
— object + agential noun in '-er'
  e. g. 'tax-,payer (X pays taxes)
— $noun_1$ + $noun_2$ (noun 2 is for noun 1)
  e. g. 'ash, tray (the tray is for ash)
— verbal noun in '-ing' + adverbial
  e. g. 'swimming, pool (X swims in the pool)

Newton (1972) observes that there are certain regularities of occurrence that tend to suggest patterns of conformity within a limited range of application. The combinations with 'juice' and 'tree' as second elements, for instance, are compounds. The speaker can invert other compounds on this pattern, using names for other kinds of fruit or other species of trees.

Most writers use a phonological criterion to differentiate between a compound and a noun compound.

As a rule, American writers present the phonological pattern 'primary-tertiary stress'[3] to characterise a compound. In *Stress and Intonation* (published by the English Language Services in 1978), they go on to say that "the only reliable guide to noun compounds is the stress combination of primary-tertiary stress."

e. g. clássroōm
schóolbōōy
hóusewīfe
hēadáche

Roach (1983) presents a simple rule to distinguish between compounds receiving primary stress on first constituent and primary stress on second constituent. He states that if the first part of the compound is (in a broad sense) adjectival, the stress goes on the second element, with a secondary stress on the first.[4]

e. g. ,loud'speaker
,bad'tempered
,three'wheeler

He points out, however, that this is not conclusive, because some words, with the passage of time, have become more like single words and less like compounds, and their meaning is no longer derived from their constituent parts.

e. g. 'greenhouse
'gentleman
'background

But, if the first element is (in a broad sense) a noun, the stress goes on the first element.

e. g. 'typewriter
'sunrise
'teacup

Daniel Jones' description (1960) seems to be the most subjective and imprecise of all treatments that we have analysed. He believes that some compounds have single stress on the first element and others have double stress. He says that *single-stressed* compounds are by far the most common in the following contexts:

a) where the compound denotes a single new idea rather than the combination of two ideas suggested by the original word.

e. g. 'black-smith

b) where the meaning of the whole compound noun is the meaning of the second element.

e. g. 'birthday

Here he mentions exceptions of words in which "the second element is felt to be *of special importance.*" (?)

c) where the first element is either expressly or by implication contrasted with something.

e. g. 'fluteplayer

d) where the compound adjective is practically synonymous with its first element.

e. g. 'ovalshaped

e) where the nouns are compounded of a verb and an adverb.

e. g. 'make-up

Some people, however, pronounce them with double stress: 'make-'up.

Double stress is used in compound adjectives of which the first element is an adjective ('good-'looking) and when "the second element of a compound is felt to be *of special importance.*" (?) He then goes on to discuss what his criterion of *importance* means and since he used it abundantly (notice that every time he mentions it we have placed a question mark in parentheses) we have realised that, without knowing what is important nowadays in the various communities where English is spoken, we will not be able to understand when and why a compound will receive single stress or double stress.

Quirk et alii (1985) explain the differences of stress among compounds in the light of *thematisation.* They begin by saying that the semantic structure of compounds tends to entail a focal first constituent. As a result, they point out a contrast between the prosodic pattern of a noun phrase and that of a compound, the latter having primary stress.

e. g. a ,dark 'room	a 'dark ,room
a ,hot 'house	a 'hot ,house
a ,black 'bird	a 'black ,bird

They then explain that almost all compounds have this accentual pattern, whether they are nouns, adjectives, or verbs and the exceptions can be explained in terms of theme and focus. We expect to find that the second constituent in a compound is thematic, with focus on the first constituent, whereas the convert is true of a premodifier and head in a noun phrase.

e. g. a *'blackbird* (compound) is contrasted with the noun phrase a *,grey'bird.*

In the examples *,ash-'blonde* and *,bottle-'green* we have focus on *blonde* and *grey* since the premodifiers merely denote degrees or shades.

Quirk et alii (1985) believe that the stress distribution on a 'modifier + noun' structure and on a compound provides a firm basis for distinguishing not so much between compounds and phrases as between different semantic relations. For non-native speakers of English, however, the phonological content is a valuable tool to help answer the puzzling question of when we have a compound and when there is only a phrase. For this reason, we have put together various examples of this contrast. Some of them were found in English Language Services' *Stress and Intonation,* some in Ann Newton's article and still some others in *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language.*

e. g. A 'toy ,factory produces toys.
A ,toy 'factory is a model of a factory used as a toy.
A ,yellow 'jacket is a yellow coat.
A 'yellowjacket is a wasp, a bee-like insect.
A ,hot 'plate is any plate that is hot.
A 'hot ,plate is an electrical cooking service.
A 'dancing ,teacher (one who teaches dancing)
A ,dancing 'teacher (a teacher who dances)

Quirk et alii (1985) believe that the conditions under which the different stress-patterns are adopted are by no means wholly clear, but are connected with the degree to which a sequence is institutionalised as a lexical item, that is, as a compound.

We understand that absolute rules, without exceptions, are difficult to be achieved. Nevertheless, we think that some possible guidelines with some degree of accuracy could and should be established.

Firstly, lexicographers should concentrate on the selection of all institutionalised compounds and include them in the dictionaries.

Furthermore, we believe that some combinations other than, for instance, the ones with 'tree' and 'juice' can be found in the language. Consequently, a logical measure to be taken would be to investigate what other elements will foster productivity in compounding.

Last but not least, we consider it vital that all possible attention should be devoted to the study of grammar in connection with Phonology. Controversial items, such as compounds, must not keep on being systematically left out of the English grammars intended for foreign students. They must be analysed and presented in the light of the latest contributions of Theoretical Linguistics if the grammars are to reflect the actual language spoken nowadays.

NOTES

(1) The fifty compound words surveyed are the following: birdcage, blackboard, bloodstain, bluebell, brainwash, breathtaking, brick red, bus driver, day-dream, dragonfly, dressmaking, eating apple, everlasting, facecloth, factory-worker, fathead, frying pan, gamekeeper, glow-worm, haircut, handmade, handwriting, headache, homework, hothouse, housekeeper, motorcycle, new-born, ocean-going, power plant, raindrop, rainfall, safety belt, scarecrow, self-service, silkworm, sleep-walking, springboard, spring-clean, steam engine, sun-bathing, fax-free, telephone call, theatre-goer, toothpaste, treadmill, washing-machine, watchdog, working party, and writing desk.

(2) For the list of dictionaries consulted, see the bibliographical references.

(3) Primary and tertiary stress are being indicated in this case, respectively, by the symbols and ¯ placed above the vowels of the strong and weak syllables.

(4) In Roach (1983), primary stress is indicated by a high vertical stroke (') placed before and above the word that bears the stronger accent, while secondary stress is indicated by a low vertical stroke (,) placed before and below the word that bears the weaker accent.

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JEFFRA FLAITZ, *THE IDEOLOGY OF ENGLISH. FRENCH PERCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH AS A WORD LANGUAGE*

(Contributions to the Sociology of Language, 49). Berlin; New York, Amsterdan: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988, xiv+225p.

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Flaitz, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and instruments, does research on French perceptions of the English language as an international *lingua franca*. She says that the purpose of her work "is to determine whether the English language is ideologically encumbered or if it is simply ideologically marked" (p. 15). Before going straight to the core of her work, which comprises of French attitudes toward the English language, speakers of English, and American ideology, she introduces the subject, after referring to important works on the spread of English, she then states that "the relationship between English as a linguistic entity and as an ideological vehicle needs to be better documented" (p. 10). She relates ideology to "political and economic systems while "culture" will be reserved for application to social system" (p. 15). She also reminds the reader of the expression "ideological encumberedness", coined by Joshua Fishman, in reference to a language which works as a symbol of the ideology of its native speakers. She states further that Fishman's work "concluded that English is not ideological encumbered: that is to say, it does not appear to provoke negative connotations" (p. 15).

The purpose of chapter two is the examination of relevant literature in the area of language diffusion, in the area of attitudes toward English, and in the area of language as it relates to ideology and culture. Data from different works are provided in order to show the causes and processes of language diffusion and the attitudes of non-English mother-tongue populations toward the English language and its speakers all over the world. As far as culture and ideology are concerned, she limits herself to some "speculations" about language and culture, but nothing is said about ideology.

The diffusion of English in France is discussed in chapter three, and five fields are chosen to be examined. They are the following: language borrowing, education, the media, science, and business and industry. Five tables show the preference for English, contrasted with other modern languages, in French education. Other tables show the predominace of American films and songs among the foreign ones. Table 23, taking twelve issues of the

French paper *Le Monde* into account, shows the occurrence of English in the paper from September 1984 through August 1985. She found a total of 254 English words. The average numbers are twenty-one English words per issue, not including eigth words on the front pages. Flaitz comments that words such as "thriller", "scoops", "checklist", "readymade" and "bunker" had their French counterparts in "pièce à suspense", "exclusifs", "liste de contrôle", "prêt-à-porter" or "tout fait", and "abri bétonné". She says "*Le Monde*'s journalists have on these occasions ignored the government's pleas to avoid the use of English terms if French words are available" (p. 88).

Chapter four, concerning the French "Guardians" of the language, reveals that the group os journalists, academics and public officials, who represent a small segment of the French population, "appear to regard the presence of English with considerable hostility and suspicion" (p. 116). They view the anglicization of French as linguistic corruption and ideological colonization and make it responsible for "the declining prestige of French (and France) on the international scene" (p. 105). Flaitz points out the resistence of French élite toward the changes in their native language and lists the movements, organizations, and legislation created in defense of the French language.

The last two chapters, based on qualitative and quantitative research, investigate the attitudes of the average French people in order to check if they share the same animosity of the élite toward English and its cultural attributes. Four French respondents, following certain criteria, including being born and raised in France, and never having lived outside France for any longer than three to four years, etc, were selected for ethnographic interviewing (the transcription of the interviews are provided). The quantitative data were provided by 145 persons who responded to questionnaires in a marketplace. The conclusions of both qualitative and quantitative studies are summarized in the last chapter.

The ethnographic interviews showed that "three subjects exhibited positive attitudes, especially toward the American variety of English" (p. 190), and only one demonstrated negative feelings toward the English language, the language being seen by that person as a symbol of American imperialism. The summary quantitative analysis indicates that French attitudes toward English are positive, although slightly more favorable to British English, but the results of the research showed that "the United States is seen to function as the source of English as an international *Lingua Franca* in France" (p. 193).

Flaitz ends her work by reminding the teachers of English that they are "representative and unofficial ambassadors of the English-speaking world" (p. 201) and recommends them to "be prepared to present lessons on the cultural and ideological norms and values of English-speaking people, but especially of Americans" (p. 201). She advises the teacher to be unbiased in the portrayal of either American or British culture and be aware of the possible negative or possible reactions of positive or negative nature. She

emphasizes that the student's interest in anglophone culture is a motivational device to be exploited. Flaitz states the results of her research "reinforce the belief held by many teachers that the teaching of culture is an integral part of language instruction" (p. 202).

CONCLUSION

Flaitz reveals herself as a good data hunter and a serious researcher. The way data were collected and analyzed is carefully explained and the transcript of the four interviews and all the questionnaires are available for the reader to examine.

Her finding that public opinion with respect to attitudes toward English differs from official or academic response brings immediately into the reader's mind the articles showing French resistance to the borrowing of English words published in Brazilian and American press. She says,

> Despite the fact that voices or echoes of this group of French men and women are heard throughout France and even in the United States, the finding that their views are not necessarily shared by the more "common" counterparts has emerged from the analysis of survey data. (p. 197).

Unfortunately her naive reading of the data added to equally naive concepts of culture and ideology spoiled the very last part of her work. Although her data show a high degree of acculturation and alienation and great fascination with the United States, she keeps encouraging teachers to be "unofficial ambassadors of the English-speaking world" and use cultural units as motivation. She says that "the notion that English carries an ideological messasge has been suggested, not proven" (p. 203).

Flaitz ignores the role of the teacher as an educator who is expected not only to be critical but also provide opportunities for students to analyze and criticize the reality around them. Although she prescribes "cultural items" for communicative activities, she ignores the cultural critical approach and shows no worry concerning the student's own cultural identity. Although she demonstrates knowledge in the area of ethnomethodology, she does not call the readers' attention to possible cultural differences in conversation organization, which is essential in the acquisition of communicative competence.

It is not my intention at all to say that specific content about either American or British culture should not be part of lesson planning. I just would like to ask for caution in accepting Flaitz's conclusions under the heading "Implications for the Profession" (p. 201-202) and argue for an approach based on intercultural communication, keeping always in mind that one culture is neither better nor worse than another, but only different.

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DESIGNING TASKS FOR THE COMMUNICATIVE CLASSROOM

David Nunan. Cambridge University Press Great, Britain, 1989, 211p.

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É crescente nos dias de hoje a preocupação dos especialistas em ensino de línguas estrangeiras com a elaboração de programas que possam realmente levar o educando à comunicação efetiva. *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom* reflete tal preocupação. Dirigido a professores de segunda língua e de língua estrangeira, esse livro tem por objetivo oferecer um arcabouço teórico para a análise de tarefas ou atividades de aprendizagem ("learning tasks"), o que os auxiliará na seleção, adaptação e criação de suas próprias atividades comunicativas. Sugere a completa autonomia do professor, a libertação de métodos e teorias que direcionam e limitam seu trabalho, e a valorização da própria observação da sala de aula. Baseando-se nas novas tendências da pedagogia, mais especificamente nos princípios da educação humanística, Nunan apregoa um currículo centrado no aluno, onde o mesmo participa de todas as etapas do processo ensino—aprendizagem. O curículo passa a ser visto não como um conjunto de regras prescritas, mas sim, como a documentação e sistematização da própria prática da sala de aula. Isso significa planejar o ensino com base naquilo que realmente ocorre e não em afirmações abstratas sobre o que deveria ocorrer. As atividades ou tarefas de aprendizagem são vistas como a pedra fundamental na preparação e desenvolvimento de uma unidade de estudos.

Compõem o livro uma introdução, sete capítulos, seguidos de referências bibliográficas e indicações de leituras suplementares, três apêndices, uma bibliografia geral e um índice. No capítulo um, o autor discute o uso do termo "task" em relação às diversas áreas de estudo, incluindo a pedagogia e a linguística aplicada, apresentando a sua própria definição, além de tentar delinear as diferenças e relações entre "task design", "curriculum development", "syllabus design" e "methodology". Há ainda nesse mesmo capítulo uma seção onde o ensino comunicativo e o papel do professor são abordados. No capítulo seguinte, são analisados os aspectos envolvidos no desenvolvimento das quatro habilidades — ouvir, falar, ler e escrever, denominadas "macroskills" pelo autor, e sua incorporação às

tarefas ou atividades de aprendizagem. Além disso, discute-se também a distinção básica entre "real-world" e "pedagogic tasks", ou seja, tarefas que refletem ações realizadas no nosso dia-a-dia e tarefas elaboradas com finalidade pedagógica, que somente ocorrem nas aulas. O capítulo três nos apresenta os componentes básicos de uma tarefa ou atividade de aprendizagem: objetivos, insumos (linguíísticos ou não), atividades decorrentes dos insumos, cenários ou ambientes e papéis do professor e aprendiz. Nos três capítulos subseqüentes esses componentes são devidamente discutidos e exemplificados, tanto isoladamente, quanto interrelacionados. O capítulo cinco refere-se aos problemas e dificuldades encontradas na gradação de atividades, enquanto o seis oferece opções para a integração e seqüenciação de tarefas, para se formar assim lições e unidades de estudo. No capítulo final, Nunan procura demonstrar como as idéias apresentadas nas seções anteriores podem ser aplicadas, como o conceito de tarefa pode ser relacionado à prática didática, delineando assim como essas atividades podem ser organizadas e avaliadas.

Nos três apêndices que se seguem, além de serem oferecidos exemplos utilíssimos de atividades variadas, o livro traz também, de forma esquemática e clara, um panorama dos principais métodos e abordagens de ensino de línguas estrangeiras, o que proporciona ao leitor uma quantidade de informações importantes, para que melhor possa situar-se.

Desenvolvido de forma bastante didática, apresentando uma linguagem clara, citações atuais e precisas, esquemas e gráficos explicativos, essa obra é de fácil e agradável leitura, constituindo-se em um instrumento de real importância para levar o professor a refletir sobre seu papel e seu trabalho. Constitui um guia ou manual eficaz para aquele que pretende selecionar, adaptar ou até mesmo criar atividades ou taretas de apredizagem para a aula comunicativa.

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"SECOND-LANGUAGE ACQUISITION, SOCIAL INTERACTION, AND THE CLASSROOM"

Teresa Pica, *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 08, nº 1, Oxford University Press, 1987.

MARIA HELENA VIEIRA ABRAHÃO

É grande a preocupação dos especialistas em ensino de línguas estrangeiras em desvendar caminhos que realmente levem à aquisição de uma segunda língua. Teresa Pica, no artigo "Second-Language Acquisition. Social Interaction, and the Classroom" demonstra tal preocupação. Com base em recentes constatações teóricas sobre os processos de aquisição de segunda língua de Hatch and Long (1978, 1983), Krashen (1981, 1982) e Long (1981, 1983), que afirmam que aprendizes podem avançar nas suas capacidades receptivas e expressivas em segunda língua, se obtêm a assistência do interlocutor para entender o repertório linguístico não corrente no seu repertório de segunda língua, e de Corder (1978), Higgs and Clifford (1982) e Swain (1985), que ressaltam que aprendizes obtêm oportunidades para desenvolverem suas capacidades produtivas em segunda língua, se exigências são feitas no sentido de manipularem seus sistemas de interlíngua correntes, a autora procura demonstrar a importância de movimentos interativos no discurso de sala de aula e relatar descobertas empíricas para ilustrar como esses movimentos auxiliam a compreensão e produção da língua alvo.

Consta esse artigo de cinco partes, referências bibliográficas e um apêndice que descreve, embora de forma confusa, as atividades desenvolvidas na pesquisa realizada pela autora. A parte inicial compõe-se de uma introdução, onde Pica procura rever a bibliografia vigente, para demonstrar que o ambiente liguístico deve incluir oportunidades para que os aprendizes se engajem em interações sociais significativas com usuários de segunda língua, para que descubram as regras linguísticas e sociolinguísticas necessárias para a compreensão e produção. Refere-se principalmente aos estudos de Pica, Doughty and Long (1986), que demonstram que a compreensão mútua pode ser atingida quando o aprendiz e seu interlocutor modificam e reestruturam sua interação, como resultado de três movimentos: pedidos de clarificação, confirmação do insumo recebido e verificação de suas próprias produções. Esclarece também quanto aos tipos de dados de pesquisa que vai utilizar para demonstrar como a interação social fora da

sala de aula, envolvendo falantes nativos e não nativos, é mais rica que aquela característica da sala de aula. Na seção dois, intitulada "Restructuring Social Interaction Toward Mutual Comprehension", a autora procura demonstrar, através de dados coletados fora da sala de aula que retratam interações de falantes nativos e não nativos, como os aprendizes avançam em suas capacidades receptivas e expressivas através da negociação de significados. Frisa entretando, que nada de comprovado existe ainda sobre a possibilidade de que a compreensão e produção imediatas, como resultado de reestruturações interacionais, possam ser incorporadas pelo repertório linguístico do aprendiz, embora já haja muita evidência indireta e afirmações teóricas a respeito desse fato. Na seção seguinte, "Modifying and Restructuring Social Interaction in the Language Classroom", Pica procura retratar o discurso na aula de línguas, ressaltando a pequena freqüência de movimentos para a reestruturação da interação social existente, como conseqüência do relacionamento assimétrico que a situação de sala de aula tradicional impõe, em três tipos de atividades: em uma aula de gramática, em um jogo comunicativo e em uma discussão sobre as condições de vida nos países dos estudantes. A quarta parte do artigo, "Towards Achievement of Mutual Comprehension in the Classroom", descreve a pesquisa realizada pela autora com o objetivo de examinar modificações interativas no desenvolvimewnto de dois tipos de atividades, amplamente utilizadas em aula por professores que se dizem comunicativos: "decision making discussion" e "information exchange tasks". Essa pesquisa envolveu aprendizes adultos de Inglês como segunda língua, de diferentes "backgrounds" linguísticos, incluindo línguas européias e asiáticas, com nível intermediário, professores nativos e foi desenvolvida em duas etapas. Na primeira, essas duas atividades foram desenvolvidas em aulas mormais, com a direção do professor, e na segunda, os alunos foram envolvidos em grupos de quatro e sozinhos desempenharam a tarefa solicitada. Foram gravados dez minutos de cada atividade e posteriormente esses dados foram analisados, levando-se em conta o número de movimentos de reestruturação constatados. Na quinta parte do artigo intitulada "Results and Discussion", Pica discute os resultados de seu estudo, embora apresente nessa publicação apenas um excerto dos dados coletados e apenas um quadro com resultados estatísticos. Esses resultados acabam por indicar que dentre as duas atividades observadas, a do tipo "information — exchange task", centrada na necessidade de troca de informações, facilita a participação na interação social. Mostram também que os próprios aprendizes podem estruturar ou reestruturar suas interações sociais para atingirem uma compreensão mútua, uma vez que a eles seja oferecida uma atividade que requeira a troca de informações, e não uma outra que simplesmente os convide a participar, com é o caso do "decision — making discussion". Em "Conclusion", sexta e última parte do artigo, a autora retoma teorias de aquisição de segunda língua e os próprios resultados dessa sua pesquisa, mostrando como a inclusão de atividades do tipo "information — exchange" na sala de aula, poderá levar a uma redefinição de papéis tanto do professor como

do aluno, equalizando seus status enquanto participantes. Mostra também como a recente atenção à importância da interação social na aquisição de segunda língua tem ajudado a rever o significado de aprender uma segunda língua.

Muito embora esse artigo seja bastante interessante, discutindo um aspecto relevante relacionado às teorias de aquisição de segunda língua e trazendo uma rica variedade de excertos de diferentes tipos de interação social fora e dentro da sala de aula tradicional, pareceu-nos um pouco falho ao tratar da pesquisa realizada pela autora. Como leitores, esperávamos uma descrição mais detalhada das atividades desenvolvidas, dos dados coletados e até mesmo dos quadros estatísticos, para que pudéssemos melhor compreender os resultados apresentados. Com base na bibliografia citada, conseguimos localizar então um artigo que recomendamos para completar essa leitura. Trata-se do artigo "Information Gap Tasks: Do they Facilitate Second Language Acquisition?" da mesma autora, em co-autoria com Catherine Doughty, publicado anteriormente, em julho de 1986, no *Tesol Quarterly*, vol. 20, nº 02, que relata a mesma pesquisa de uma forma mais cuidadosa e detalhada. Com essa leitura complementar, podemos ter uma visão mais nítida da pesquisa desenvolvida, pesquisa essa que sem dúvida nenhuma é de real importância, por apontar novos caminhos tanto para o pesquisador quanto para o professor de línguas estrangeiras, no que diz respeito aos precessos de aquisição de segunda língua.

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TRAINING TEACHERS AS EXPLAINERS: A CHECKLIST

FRANCISCO GOMES DE MATOS (UFPE)

INTRODUCTION

Although there have been significant advances in teacher training and, commendably, in *learner* training, a serious gap still remains namely that of preparing English language teachers as explainers. I recall my own professional preparation while getting a Bachelor's degree in English as a foreign language: no mention of what is now acknowledged as "an important pedagogical issue — the problem of explanation" (cf. Elaine Tarone and George Yule, *Focus on the Language Learner,* Oxford University Press, 1989, p.16). If you agree with me that teachers and learners have both rights (linguistic, padagogical) and responsibilities, the learner's right to receive explanations should be matched by the teacher's right to be trained as an effective explainer. This is far from being the case, though. By and large, teachers of English (and other languages) improvise as best they can during the explanation phase of a class, because they have not been trained to systematize their knowledge of aspects of English grammar, (even if we focus on linguistic organizational elements alone, rather than uses or pragmatic aspects). Having helped train many Brazilian teachers of English and having written about teacher-preparation problems, I would like to draw international attention to the need for fruitful application of theoretical knowledge (concerning the structure and uses of English) to the training of teachers in giving grammatical explanations, particularly to adult learners.

To help bring about such explanatory competence, an initial, open-ended checklist is provided. Colleagues are asked to add to it and diversify it so as to do justice to local sociocultural and educational contexts.

A CHECKLIST FOR TRAINING TEACHERS AS EXPLAINERS

1. How prepared are you (as a teacher-trainer) to help trainees become explainers? What reference grammars, pedagogical grammars, teach-yourself grammars do you have/use?

2. Have you ever translated scientific (descriptive) grammatical statements into pedagogically useful explanations aimed at your learner's cognitive abilities? Have you and your colleagues (in your school) ever organized and activated a file of grammatical explanations for use at different levels of teaching—learning?
3. Have you ever compared/contrasted statements from reference grammars, (such as Quirk et al *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language,* Longman, 1985) with grammars for non-native users of English? What changes did you have to make on the consulted statements? How much paraphrasing and terminological adjustment did you have to do?
4. Have you ever tried constructing dual explanations, one at a more demanding intellectual level, another at a less challenging conceptual level, so as to match your students' processing abilities?
5. How do you assure yourself that your explanations are clear, accessible, effective? What kind of feedback do you get from your students on the effectiveness of your explanations? Could your learners re-explain or translate your own explanatory statement and thus demonstrate that they have understood your intended meanings?
6. Do you turn to up-to-date, context-sensitive dictionaries, for realistic exemplification or do you prefer to make up your own examples? (An example of the former: the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary.* See especially the section Using the Explanations, in the accompanying workbook called Learning Real English, edited by Gwyneth Fox and Deborah Kirby, Collins ELT, 1987, pp. 11-12).
7. Are your explanations focused on aspects that (may) cause serious communicative problems for your learners or are they bits of information that could be dispensed with entirely?
8. Do you and your colleagues ever challenge yourselves to translate discursive explanations into explanatory diagrams and/or formulae? Opting for a discursive style seems to be a universal trait among language teachers. To what extent can trainees be prepared to explore different ways of presenting grammatical information? How can on-the-spot, spoken explanations be recorded for later analysis and translation into carefully systematized, written or diagrammatic equivalents?

What can teacher trainers learn from such documentation? Teacher trainers should be models as explainers. How can this come true? What needs to be done? Why? Here is a call for international co-operation and exchange.

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D. H. LAWRENCE, ALGUMA POESIA

AÍLA DE OLIVEIRA GOMES
(seleção, tradução e introdução)
T. A. Queiroz, Editor
São Paulo, 1991

A poesia de D. H. Lawrence ocupa um lugar muito especial na literatura moderna britânica, conquanto até recentemente como que esmaecida pelo perturbador furacão com que entrou nas letras inglesas como romancista: é quase impossível dissociá-lo, numa primeira reação, principalmente do discutidíssimo *O amante de Lady Chaterley,* mas sua obra, de um homem temperamental e de precária saúde, — falecido com apenas 45 anos, — atinge proporções pasmosas, sobretudo levando-se em conta a extensão maciça da maioria dos romances.

A frescura de visão, nos planos da técnica literária e da linguagem, que perpassa toda essa imensa obra, a humanidade profunda e sensível que a rudeza mal cónsegue disfarçar, a amargura com que seus mais ditirâmbicos hinos à vida transportam como uma atração da morte que o perseguia, implacável, dão força e beleza à sua poesia. "Poemas de morte para a vida, do oblívio para o renascimento, ou poemas da fênix, no ritual da renovação de sua juventude."

Poesia de que temos, nestas páginas tão bem cuidadas de Aíla de Oliveira Gomes, amostra superiormente ilustrativa de um conjunto que só agora começa a projetar-se por inteiro, inclusive através de estudos e traduções como os que enriquecem as páginas deste volume, neste sentido sem nenhuma dúvida pioneiro. É esta uma das maneiras de compensar e anular a estupidez e a malevolência que sempre perseguiram Lawrence ao longo das duas décadas em que escreveu e também após sua morte. E é, ainda, certamente uma dádiva aos leitores brasileiros, que apenas agora começam a ter contacto com um poeta, como diz Paulo Rónai, "de extraordinária originalidade, um panteísta moderno de irresistível força vital".

Lawrence, que sempre desdenhou um pouco de sua poesia em relação aos romances, ficaria hoje — diz a autora desta coletânea — surpreendido se ouvisse o coro novo que, desde meados do século, se vem levantando, cada vez mais forte, a exaltá-lo como poeta mais que tudo, e poeta em tudo que escreveu.

"Li com toda a atenção e com o mais vivo prazer *Alguma poesia,* de D. H. Lawrence, modelarmente selecionada, traduzida e introduzida por Aíla. É obra não menos meritória que sua adaptação das poesias de Emily Dickinson, há tempos publicada pela mesma editora. Graças a esta nova coletânea conheci um grande poeta de extraordinária originalidade, um panteísta moderno de irresistível força vital. As traduções, fiéis e artísticas, dão uma idéia exata do original, idéia que a Introdução completa. Tudo no livro, até os mínimos detalhes das notas e da bibliografia, reflete o amoroso cuidado com que foi feito.

"Como é gratificante tomar conhecimento da obra de um grande poeta na interpretação de um tradutor excepcional!" (*Paulo Rónai*)

JAMES JOYCE E SUA OBRA LITERÁRIA

PAULO VIZIOLI
E.P.U. — Editora Pedagógica e Universitária
São Paulo, 1991

Mais um livro sobre Joyce? Sim, mas desta vez não se trata de uma biografia, nem de uma coletânea de enfoques parciais — mesmo porque, com essas características, já existem (em tradução) algumas excelentes obras ao alcance do público de língua portuguesa. Trata-se, isto sim, de um novo e abrangente estudo de toda a produção literária de James Joyce, apresentada como um conjunto orgânico, numa abordagem séria sem ser hermética, clara e acessível sem ser superficial. Apontando as influências que moldaram os textos joyceanos, ressaltando as suas linhas temáticas, interpretando o seu simbolismo e analisando os seus demais aspectos estilísticos, este livro constitui um guia precioso para o leitor comum, desejoso de travar conhecimento com os trabalhos iniciais do autor irlandês ou enfrentar as complexidades de *Ulisses e Finnegans Wake.* Constitui, ao mesmo tempo, um valioso instrumento para o estudante de literatura, pelo seu esforço de sistematização, pela revisão que faz aqui e ali de algumas posições da crítica, e pela orientação bibliográfica que fornece. Igualmente útil, no Apêndice, é a sua avaliação das traduções de obras de Joyce e dos principais estudos a seu respeito publicados em nosso país.