
CONFERENCE REPORT

“Material Traces of the Past in Contemporary Literature” (Málaga, 6-8 May 2015)

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It was for the third time that the notion of *trace* was critically explored by international researchers at the University of Málaga, Spain, on the initiative of Rosario Arias. *Trace* as a potent trope and epistemological category in contemporary literary studies was first debated in October 2011 during the “New Critical Perspectives on the Trace” conference. Much attention was devoted to the various interplays and tensions that the idea of the trace entails: that between presence and absence, memory and forgetting, and, perhaps most evidently, past and present. In turn, the last relationship became the focus of the 2013 event, entitled “Transactions and Connections: Memories of the Past in the European Context,” which was reported on in the 2014 summer issue of *The Messenger* by Celia Cruz Rus and Juan José Martín González.

The most recent academic event in the series and the object of this report took place between 6 and 8 May 2015 and focused on the physicality of the trace. “Material Traces of the Past in Contemporary Literature” brought together scholars interested in the ways material trace “reveals not only the tangible endurance of the past into the present but also the inherent potential of the material object to reanimate memory and history.”¹ Along these lines, speakers explored the significance and the role vestiges of the past play in (re)constructing meanings and agendas in contemporary literature.

The very notion of *material trace* is open to different interpretations. Thus, the scholars gathered at the conference recognized the productive potential of the embodied past in biographilia, books and journals, the human body, physical locations, academic discourse, historical/cultural objects, as well as items of clothing.

In her keynote lecture, Ann Heilmann (Cardiff University, UK) addressed contemporary perceptions of transgender identity by analysing textual reworkings of the nineteenth-century figure of Dr James Miranda Barry, who concealed her female identity throughout her career as a physician in Cape Colony. In exposing the ambiguity of literary responses to Barry, Heilmann posed questions about the social construction of selfhood, suggesting a thought-provoking parallel between neo-Victorianism, as the genre characterized by boundary transgression, and the indeterminacy of Barry’s gender identity. The question about (unstable) identity lay also at the heart of Laura Monrós-Gaspar’s (University of Valencia, Spain) erudite analysis of Essie Fox’s *Elijah’s Mermaid* (2012). Unpacking the significance of mythological imagery in Victorian and neo-Victorian fiction, Monrós-Gaspar revealed the grotto as a liminal site of female transformation in *Elijah’s Mermaid*, or, in the scholar’s words, an “intricate crossroads of identities.”²

Fox’s novel was also the subject of Lin Pettersson’s paper (University of Málaga, Spain) who, however, approached it from the perspective of corporeality. Pettersson explored corporeal deviance (both as “the imaged body” and the textual, “imaginary body”), casting it as a powerful mirror-like trace reflecting historically and culturally specific forms of conceptualising selfhood and otherness. Notably, several other scholars recognized the productive poetics of the trace in (female) body and its literary configurations. Thus, Saverio Tomaiuolo from Cassino University in Italy interpreted the “freak body” as the vehicle for constructing the past to reflect the present. Focusing on one of the most notable freaks of the Victorian Age - Julia Pastrana “the Ape Woman” - Tomaiuolo demonstrated how Pastrana’s story has been re-worked in different cultural circles and literary genres, complicating the notion of cultural memory and precluding the possibility of a unique and coherent reconstruction of Pastrana’s life. Along similar lines, though within a different cultural context, Patricia Álvarez (University of Cádiz, Spain) approached the scarred female body in J.M. Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), interpreting the marks

¹ Quoted from the conference website: <http://thetraceinliterature.com/project/conferences/2015/materialtraces/>

² This and all the subsequent quotations come either from the abstracts or the speakers’ contributions.

of brutality engraved on the body of the barbarian girl as tangible signs of destructive imperial history which cannot be redeemed. The trope of the body as the palpable record of one's life story resurfaced in Laura Lojo's paper (University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain), concerned with the mother/daughter relationship in Michèle Roberts' short fiction. Drawing on the psychoanalytical theory of psychological development as well as Paul Ricoeur's understanding of trace, Lojo showed how the process of constructing the past and thus recovering the maternal body becomes a means of coming to terms with oneself in Roberts' "Charity." While Lojo's paper posited a necessary coherence between body and mind, Marie-Luise Kohlke (Swansea University, UK) was concerned with exactly the opposite - bodily traces, such as hair, teeth, and skin, which become detached, dehumanised, and anonymised to serve as forensic evidence, archeological artefacts, and mementos, to name but a few. Kohlke's contribution delved into the ethical implications of the above and other uses of bodily traces, asking about the role artists and audiences play in what the scholar termed "a questionable politics of consumption."

The fetishisation of the trace alluded to by Kohlke was central to Maria Grazia Nicolosi's study (University of Catania, Italy), which exposed how Angela Carter's appropriation of certain iconic nineteenth-century figures for her short fiction opens up an imaginative space in which these "fetishised phantasms" become "resurrected as reflective surfaces of fantasy projections and affective investment by the readers." In other words, Carter's present-day exploration of the "embodied historicity" of these figures is not just a form of mediating between past and present, but rather a way of creating new meanings, shaped by the culturally-sanctioned representational frameworks and individual desires - those of the writer and readers alike.

The trace's capacity to illuminate and create meaning came to the fore also in Patricia Pulham's paper (University of Portsmouth, UK) in which the eponymous material trace of the past assumed the form of a photograph. Speaking in the year which marks the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), Pulham shed light on the disturbing subtext of this literary classic - Carroll's nude studies of young children, dramatised in Gaynor Arnold's *After Such Kindness* (2012). In doing so, she posed questions about the uneasy relationship between photography, literature, and pornography in the Victorian period, while also reflecting upon our contemporary perceptions of the author and his work.

As two papers notably demonstrated, physical locations may provide insights into the past, but also complicate our relationship to it. This was well visible in Elodie Rousselot's paper (University of Portsmouth, UK), which focused on the once renowned, but now vanished, military hospital fictionalised in Melissa Pritchard's 2011 novella, exploring the presence-absence dynamics inherent in this particular trace, and, in a broader perspective, contemplating the hold and significance that absent object may exert on the present. For her part, Patricia Duncker (University of Manchester, UK), in her paper on Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder* (1997), took the audience to the streets of Paris, demonstrating how the author's auto-fictional search for the past - the process of tracking the story of the Jewish girl who disappeared during the Occupation - is a meditation on the nature of remembering.

While literary texts often function as traces of the past themselves, reanimating or constructing the past for the reader, several speakers focused on the "thingness" of textual material and its narrative potential. Particularly Victorian and neo-Victorian fiction exhibits a fascination with the book as an artefact/cultural object. In this connection, Kym Brindle (Edgehill University, UK) delved into the significance that handwriting assumes in Andrea Barrett's historical fiction, particularly when juxtaposed with today's pervasive digital culture. The materiality of the book was also tackled by Mariaconcetta Constantini (D' Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara, Italy), who pursued the question of authenticity of archival manuscripts (and their role in (re)interpreting the past) in relation to Dan Simmons's *Drood* (2009) and Charles Palliser's *Rustication* (2014). Also Roberta Gefter Wondrich, from the University of Trieste in Italy, addressed the trope of the artist's/writer's secret papers in neo-Victorian and postmodern fiction and its potential for retrieving and reviving the past, as well as its relationship to the broader question of the commodification of cultural memory. Finally, text as a material object, but also an imaginative site for exploring the self was approached by Akira Suwa from Cardiff University, UK, in connection with Sarah Waters's neo-Victorian works *Affinity* (1999) and *Fingersmith* (2002).

The ambivalence of the textual trace, which is at once an artefact and a space for enacting various scenarios, underlay the contribution of Leonor Martínez (University of Córdoba, Spain). Martínez demonstrated how, in Tim Bowling's *In the Suicide's Library. A Book Lover's Journey* (2010), a single book (Stevens's poems) triggers off an intensely lyrical journey into the American literary past, but also the quest for the answers to some of life's most fundamental questions.

While the above scholars all hinted at trace as a form of intertextuality, some speakers turned this issue into the focal point of their contributions. Thus, in her analysis of the literary representations of "the naughty kid," Lea Heiberg Madsen from the University of Málaga revealed the uncanny connection between two neo-Victorian novels and the world famous book of children's rhymes, *Struwwelpeter* (1845), while Jessica Cox from Brunel University in the UK traced the legacy of Victorian popular fiction in the neo-sensation novel, exploring the implications of this inheritance for contemporary culture. An interesting transnational connection between the worlds of art and literature was proposed by Mario Jurado (University of Córdoba, Spain), who recognized a common pastoral mode in the artistic output of Joseph Cornell and Alain Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes* (1913). Finally, Megen de Bruin (Cardiff University, UK) introduced the audience to the twenty-first century concoction of contemporary and historical texts and contexts - the mashup - pointing to how ironic distance complicates reading the past in the present, but also serves to generate new meanings.

It comes as no surprise that the trope of the historical/cultural object as the embodiment of the past came up several times in the contributions. Specifically, Celia Cruz Rus and Juan José Martín González from the University of Málaga delved into the double significance of museum exhibits as a means for interacting with the past, but also as a dark trace of colonial history, through their reading of some lesser known late-Victorian and Edwardian tales. In a similar vein, Dany Van Dam (Cardiff University, UK) discussed the piano in Jane Campion's famous film of 1993 and Daniel Mason's 2002 novel *The Piano Tuner*, indicating its diverse colonial connotations, as the bridge between cultures on the one hand, and the material trace of European domination on the other. Through her elegant analysis of the glove in the neo-Victorian fiction of Michel Faber and Sarah Waters, Danielle Norman (University of Portsmouth, UK) foregrounded the sartorial as a fundamental tool for accessing and re-thinking the genre's relationship to the past.

More theoretical approaches to the materiality of the trace were delivered by two plenary speakers: Roberta Maierhofer (University of Graz, Austria), and Bran Nicol (University of Surrey, UK). In her thought-provoking lecture, Maierhofer employed Derrida's notion of the trace to track changes of perception in the academic discourse. Focusing on Simone de Beauvoir's work on age and aging, the scholar directed the audience's attention to the fluctuations that theoretical approaches and ideas undergo in time, reflecting not only cultural, social, and political changes, but also functioning as "material evidence of our own identities in flux." Bran Nicol's compelling keynote contribution took a close look at the implications and productive potential of the crime scene in literature, film, and the visual arts. Exploring the relationship between trace and materiality which the crime scene embodies, Nicol addressed the crime scene's role as a significant narrative device in literature and other arts, but also proposed to view it as a framework for exploring broader ethical and philosophical issues.

The conference culminated with the round table held by the members of the research project "Material Traces of the Past in Contemporary Literature", Rosario Arias (University of Málaga, Spain) Carmen Lara-Rallo (University of Málaga, Spain), and Marta Cerezo-Moreno (UNED, Spain). The scholars presented their current research and opened up a round-up debate during which various strands of discussion were brought up and new lines of research suggested. The participants pointed out the remarkable interconnectedness of the contributions, their high quality, as well as the lasting academic (and interpersonal) trace which the event was bound to leave. Lastly, one cannot forget about the special treat prepared by the main organiser, Rosario Arias: the first international reading of Patricia Duncker's latest novel *Sophie and the Sibyl* (2015), delivered by the author with her trademark charm and panache.

REVIEWS

Lívía Körtvélyessy 2015. *Evaluative Morphology from a cross-linguistic perspective*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 277 pp., ISBN-13: 978-1-4438-7160-0, ISBN-10: 1-4438-7160-5

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The field of evaluative morphology is a relatively new one, basically inspired by Scalise's idea of 'third morphology' (1984). While Scalise was not right in all of his assumptions, his work instigated vivid interest in this area of linguistics. Körtvélyessy's work is one of a series of publications that try to penetrate to the nature of evaluative morphology. Its significance lies in its innovative approach: it is the first work on this topic that is based on extensive cross-linguistic approach, covering 200 languages; then, it comes up with a new, original theory of evaluative morphology, based on an onomasiological theory of word-formation (Štekauer 1998, 2005). This is most evident in her cognitive model of evaluative morphology that offers a brand new perspective on the theoretical foundations of evaluative morphology.

The book is divided into two main parts, examining evaluative formations from two different, however, complementary points of view. Each of the main parts provides theoretical considerations supported by relevant empirical and experimental research.

Part one of the monograph concentrates on various aspects of evaluative morphology. Since it is intended as a contribution to Whorf's (1956) concept of Standard Average European (SAE), extensively studied in recent decades, primarily within the Eurotyp project, the first sections discuss various methodological problems and theoretical approaches to the idea of SAE, including those by Haspelmath (1998, 2001), van der Auwera (1998a, 1998b) and Heine and Kuteva (2006). Körtvélyessy aptly notes that Euroversals (characteristic and universal features of SAE languages) as well as borders of the SAE linguistic territory can only be identified by comparing two samples – a sample of languages that potentially belong in the SAE territory and a world sample of languages. In this way, one can determine the borderline between languages which have selected European features and those in which these features are absent or are less characteristic. Importantly, this borderline can change with features under examination and, therefore, each research of this kind should delimit the SAE borderline tentatively only. It is an analysis of the (non)occurrence of specific features that can only decide on whether or not a particular language is a part of SAE. Given the feature-dependence of the borderline and the core of SAE, Körtvélyessy argues for more comprehensive and complementary examination of SAE, ranging over all main fields of linguistics (phonetics/phonology, inflectional morphology, word-formation and syntax). Conclusions drawn from an analysis of only one or a few features may lead to distorted results.

Based on her own research, Körtvélyessy demonstrates that this observation also applies to the determination of the core languages of SAE. Evaluative morphology is viewed by her as a single, although fairly complex, feature that can provide further refinement to the diverse questions of SAE. However, being a fairly complex area, evaluative morphology – before any empirical research – must be defined as a field. Körtvélyessy reveals numerous pitfalls accompanying this kind of research. They are primarily related to the delimitation of the field of evaluative morphology. She provides a range of fuzzy cases from various languages. This is a serious obstacle to any objective data analysis and makes a researcher concentrate on prototypical cases.

In order to arrive at a theoretically justified conception of the field of EM and the basic nature of morphological evaluatives, Körtvélyessy provides an in-depth analysis of major EM theories, including Jurafsky (1996), Dressler and Barbaresi (2001), Grandi (2005, 2011), Grandi and Körtvélyessy (2015), Prieto (2015) and Mutz (2015). Then, she proposes her own approach to the nature of EM, embodied in two models which, in my view, represent one of the most valuable contributions of this monograph to the field in question: a model of evaluative formation, interrelating evaluative morphology to extra-linguistic reality and to the cognitive level represented by four fundamental cognitive categories (SUBSTANCE, ACTION, QUALITY and CIRCUMSTANCE). In addition, there are two other important interrelations, that between the quantitative and the qualitative aspects of EM, and that between the langue and the parole levels.

In this way we are provided with a comprehensive and well underpinned model of evaluative formation. This model is a point of departure for another crucial model, a cognitively founded onomasiological model of EM semantics. It is based on the postulation of a quantitatively defined default value as a central reference point. Evaluatives are then viewed as deviations from the prototypical value in any of the cognitive categories.

The empirical research itself is based on analysing and comparing two samples, an SAE sample counting 71 languages and a world sample with 132 languages. An important methodological innovation of this part is introducing the parameter of saturation value that reflects the productive use of morphological evaluatives in a language in terms of cognitive categories, word-classes and word-formation processes. This kind of data is projected onto a saturation map that facilitates the identification of the core and the external borders of SAE. Körtvélyessy's observations give support to her initial idea that the internal SAE structuring and the external borders are heavily dependent on a linguistic feature explored. For this reason, it is only a complex of features that can provide us with an unbiased and objective picture of SAE.

Furthermore, her analysis of more than 200 languages shows that morphologically formed evaluatives are not a self-evident and inherent feature of all languages of the world. There are languages without morphological diminutives and even many more languages without morphological augmentatives.

The second part of the study is devoted to iconicity, in particular, to phonetic iconicity. How is phonetic iconicity related to evaluative morphology? It has been observed that in some languages, and especially in that of young children, certain sounds indicate the meaning of smallness and largeness, respectively. Körtvélyessy responds to Payne's (1997: 110) assumption that this kind of semantic capacity of certain sounds is a universal feature of languages. Her extensive language sample provides her with ample evidence that this phenomenon is rather of areal nature.

Inspired by Berko-Gleason's (1958) experiment, Körtvélyessy undertook her own cross-linguistic experiment in order to verify the hypothesis that iconicity is primarily bound to the language of small children – in contrast to the language of adult speakers who prefer to express evaluation by way of morphologically complex words. She 'tested' five age groups (from the age of 4 up to above 18) in four languages (Spanish, Hungarian, German and Slovak). The experimental results make her conclude that there is a correlation between an EM saturation value of a particular language and phonetic iconicity, on one hand, and that there is unambiguous preference for iconic expression of evaluative meaning in lower age groups of language speakers. Körtvélyessy is aware of the fact that her observations must be taken provisionally. Given the fact that this field has been more or less unexplored, she points out the role of other factors that may affect experimental results, including education/profession, the role of bilingual environment, gender differences, cognitive types of language users, etc. In this respect, her Conclusions indicate directions of future research.

Körtvélyessy's monograph is a valuable contribution to both theory and empirical/experimental research in the relatively young field of evaluative morphology. It is innovative both methodologically (saturation value) and theoretically (EM models). Consequently, the work brings a lot of interesting observations worthy of further development.

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Bénédicte Guillaume 2014. *A Corpus-Based Study of SINCE-Clauses in Contemporary English*. Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 207 pp., ISBN 978-2810703234.

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Bénédicte Guillaume's study, *A Corpus-Based Study of Since Clauses in Contemporary English*, is an analysis of the subordinator *since*, introducing both causal and temporal clauses in contemporary English, based on a selection of more than 500 occurrences extracted from its almost 26 000 uses listed in the British National Corpus.

It can be debated whether we are faced with a single or two different markers. The etymology of the word does not give a clear-cut answer. It is mainly argued that *since* comes from *sibþan* (Old English) and has temporal origin (Molencik 2007). Some linguists (De Cola-Sekali 1992) still put forward that two meanings have co-existed from the start, while others consider that *since* has evolved into two different markers.

The purpose of the current analysis is to take into account the various parameters within an enunciative context and to assess their relevance for a temporal or causal interpretation. This corpus-based analysis, resorting to graphs and charts, confirms some of the results of previous analyses, but also questions some former conclusions. The author mainly adopts an enunciative approach (Culioli 1985, 1990, 1999a,b, Adamczewski and Delmas 1982), but varies her theoretical approaches, resorting to the concept of subjectification (Traugott 1989, 1992), or that of the remainder ("parts of language that no grammar can ever reach", Lecercle 1990). She also pays tribute to linguists who have studied this field more closely (Deléchelle 1989, 1993, De Cola-Sekali 1992, Bourdin 2008, 2011).

The first chapter of the monograph is devoted to the causal *since* clause, the more numerous and complex type, its relation with the main clause and its position in the sentence. The *since* clause has a relation of cause and effect with the main clause, which the author discusses referring to Huddleston & Pullum (2002), Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Quirk et al. (1985). She also studies the semantic specificity of *since* (given information not open to debate) in comparison with other causal subordinators, like *because* (new debatable information) or *as* (given information, but, still remaining mainly a marker of identity). Syntactically, it is shown that causal *since* clauses are not prototypically fronted and that both causal and temporal *since* clauses tend to be postponed. The postponed position is more typical of the temporal *since* clauses, but no direct link can be established between the syntactic position and the nature (causal or temporal) of the clause. This is proved with the help of chi-square tests, backed up by a study of the presence of punctuation, and put into perspective in examples where the internal textual cohesion accounts for the placement of *since* clauses. The concept of presupposition may explain the preference for one or the other of the two positions of causal *since* clauses. When fronted, the subordinate is taken for granted to be a starting point. When postponed, it tends to correspond to a reminder. The position of the causal *since* clause might also be dictated by the emphasis laid on the constituents of the causal relation, either by focusing on the main clause, and fronting it, or by fronting the *since* clause and focusing on the cause-effect relations and underlying a strong reasoning. This tends to be the case in scientific texts, where simple present tenses are often used.

Indeed, tackling the difference between causal and temporal relations might be less elusive if one considers the use of tenses, aspects and modality. The author refers to M. De Cola-Sekali's hypothesis that there are aspectual constraints both on the causal and the temporal *since* clauses and that the encoding of the meaning of *since* as a coordinator takes place within the matrix clause. She shows on charts that the matrix clause has strong compatibility with simple tenses and modality (from root to epistemic) for a causal reading. The interpretation of the *since* clauses in relation to the presence of aspect in the main clause is less clear cut and is therefore debated according to Culioli's theory on the prototypical notional domain, applied to the uses of verbs. In the few examples in which the perfective aspect is used, it occurs with discrete or dense continuous verbs, never with compact continuous verbs or with the progressive aspect. Precise analyses of examples eventually lead to the following question: what are the regularities within the combinations between the *since* clauses and their matrix clause? The most common association is that of the present with the present and that of simple tenses used with an aoristic value.

The second chapter tackles temporal *since* clauses, which are less numerous than the causal *since* clauses. To put forward a hypothesis regarding the nature of *since*, the author takes into account a number of syntactic as well as semantic characteristics of both types of *since* clauses. Temporal *since* clauses are quite homogenous and mainly tend to be postponed and give a temporal locator, usually corresponding to new information added to the verb phrase contained in the matrix clause. The closeness of the link between the two clauses is such that no punctuation is necessary, so we can speak of mutual dependency. In rare cases, the temporal *since* clause is fronted, separated from the main clause by a comma and we have mixed examples, the hybrid *since* clause being both a temporal locator and an explanation. The fronting can also be accounted for by contrasting purposes between a former situation and a new one.

After studying the overall distribution of tenses, aspects and modality in temporal *since* clauses, Bénédicte Guillaume concludes that the range of verbal markers compatible with such clauses is more limited than that of the causal clauses. The presence of the perfect in the main clause, with preterite in the *since* clause represents the main pattern. Two special temporal *since* clauses are eventually added to the category. The author first deals with clauses where noun phrases contain an ordinal or a superlative, putting to the fore a salient element (*n years since* or *the first time since*) or designate a span of time. Both configurations are modified by a postponed temporal *since* clause, where the simple preterite is the most frequent tense and indicates a starting point. An analogy is suggested between postponed temporal *since* clauses and restrictive relatives (from a semantic perspective) or *that*-complement clauses (from a syntactic perspective). The author also deals with cleft sentences of the type *it is ... since* that is used to highlight the length of time elapsed between the event and the speaker's time reference. We notice the fronting of the period of time that is thus emphasised, which is very reminiscent of cleft and pseudo-cleft sentences.

The third chapter examines ambiguous and hybrid remaining cases, reassessing the unicity of the marker. After a detailed report on the etymology of *since*, it is clearly stated that the two meanings of *since* have not always existed, with the causal use dating no earlier than Middle English. Still, in current English the meanings have a complementary syntactic repartition. Ambiguous or polysemic *since* clauses have more than one meaning and the conditions for this ambiguity are to be found both at the syntactic and at the semantic level. The fact that *since* itself is polysemic accounts for the ambiguity of the *since* clauses and then for that of whole sentences. Disambiguation criteria, such as the endophoric context or the internal syntactic features of the sentence can be resorted to. Such tools are used on invented examples quoted from Aarts (1979) and Wyld (1993). Punctuation, the place of the *since* clause, the use of tenses, aspects and modality tend to combine toward one interpretation. Elements from the corpus are thus analysed. There still remain hybrid examples, in which components of different origins combine and where both syntax and semantics are not reliable enough. The same event can be considered both as the cause and as the temporal locator of the main clause and the two interpretations coexist. Such examples can be considered as part of the remainder, which is produced by language, such as it is developed in Lecercle's theory.

To conclude, this book gives a comprehensive corpus-based analysis. It mostly confirms already existing hypotheses, but the use of examples and statistics makes it a very well researched and reliable account that enables to target and explain some irregularities. The analyses are also backed up by various theories and are very well documented. The fact that the author limits herself to written examples makes it possible to present a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon with its regularities, as far as punctuation is concerned. No doubt, a study containing oral occurrences of *since* clauses would be most welcome, with tone units being quite revealing of the nature of *since* clauses.

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John Eppel and Togara Muzanenhamo 2014. *Textures*. Bulawayo: 'amabooks, 91 + viii pages, ISBN 9 780797 494985 (soft cover).

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In material terms this small volume of poetry by two Zimbabwean poets, John Eppel¹ and Togara Muzanenhamo, appears modest in its scope. Its title is unpretentious: simply “*Textures*”, which both Eppel and Muzanenhamo explain in the Introduction in terms of its etymological and metaphorical links with weaving. There are a fair number of poems, 43 in all, numerically speaking a majority of them by the elder poet, Eppel, in contrast to the sixteen by Muzanenhamo, although they vary in length, and several of Muzanenhamo’s are more expansive and perhaps more demanding than Eppel’s.

Inevitably, a number of too easy contrasts can be drawn up between the poets themselves. Eppel is a Zimbabwean whose South African roots were transplanted in early childhood into Bulawayo soil, a city – and its gardens – a location that has grown and sustained him for many decades, a place where he continues to teach literature in English to a schoolboy clientele whose ethnicity is now 90 per cent black. As other commentators have noted, Eppel’s rootedness in Bulawayo has given him access to a full range of references to the natural environment, in particular the abundant flowers and birds that frequently find their place in his poetry. Muzanenhamo, for his part, is a full generation younger, and grew into young adulthood along with the emergence after 1980 of the liberated Zimbabwe. To some degree, in contrast to Eppel, his subsequent education has been acquired in the First World, and unlike Eppel’s, his writing has more readily achieved recognition both within Southern Africa and also further afield – although since the 1960s Eppel has undoubtedly produced a wider range of poetic and prose writing, much of the latter subtly satirical, that would deserve wider recognition from an international audience, including one that has sometimes resorted to over-simplistic categorizations.

The generational shift represented in this collaborative volume of poems through the voluntary yoking together of two such poets – one ostensibly bearing the memory of the world of white, colonial and post-colonial “privilege”, the other perhaps a voice of contemporary Zimbabwe, with its all-too-familiar litany of implicit fractures – has been nicely subverted by the layering, or interweaving, of their poetry into eight alternating sections, although none of them is headed, and there is no clear progression or comparison to be inferred from the selections of poems, other than the final “Epilogue” of Muzanenhamo’s fourth section.

The volume itself has been usefully introduced by a fellow Zimbabwean, Drew Shaw, who points out that both poets are “dedicated to excellence in form” and to a “meticulous attention to the craft of poetry” (ii); Shaw also points out the domestic, inward-looking quality of much of Eppel’s writing, in contrast to “the more international Muzanenhamo” (iii).

¹ A small selection of John Eppel’s poetry appeared in *The European English Messenger* 18.1 (2009).

It might also be of value to consider the ways in which such a volume of poetry by two poets can be read: my own approach was initially to read each poem and each alternating poet consecutively, noting small details of composition and thematic focus, and considering the similarities and differences predicted by Dash. But a later reading of each poet's work in its entirety, first Eppel's and then Muzanenko's, more strongly emphasized some of the craftsmen's brush-strokes that make up their connections and differences.

Eppel's writing is very much that of an older generation, and for a reader of similar age (as this reviewer is) there is the pleasure of recognizing Eppel's subversion of over-quoted "classics", such as the sonnet titled "Beauty is Truth, Truth Death" ("So: put down your pen and take a deep breath") (9), and the melancholic recognition of the failure of so many hopes for a better post-colonial world, contained in the echo of Doris Lessing's first novel: "grass has forgotten to sing" ("Giving up on the Rains in Curious Rhyme") (10). In somewhat more mischievous vein, in "Dorothy Recollects [a pastiche]", he has the physically degenerating Dorothy Wordsworth repeatedly distracting her brother away from his newly-acquired bride Mary Hutchinson on their wedding-day: "I gave him the wedding ring .../from my forefinger where I had worn it the whole of the night before" (48).

Eppel's poetic vision is also shaped by an accumulated awareness of ageing and the failure of the individual voice; poem after poem rests on an awareness of this failure – "I put down my pen, give up on the rains" (10), and "I chose to solve it, not by talking/but ... by walking" ("*Solvitur Ambulando*") (3). From the very start of Eppel's selection, relationships fail ("A Suburban Night in August"), and even when walking his dog he notes: "At the Upper Dam we'll rest/where the dead bodies of platanna bloat,/and two discarded beer bottles float" ("Looking for You") (11).

Muzanenko's work draws on a range of reference that, whilst also meticulously crafted, expresses a bitterness and a tenderness that are more generalized than Eppel's. "Gondershe", for instance, depicts simultaneously the innocence and unwitting victimhood of a child soldier: "Having never fired a gun before, he held the rifle/as though the weapon were a dying child about to say something/only they could share", a poem that ends with the inevitability of the child's death: "Come the dawn there would be no escape./He would die. Even the sea would burn." (13). The world is a place that victimizes the young. But some, in their innocence, resist: in "The Battle of Vågen, Bergen, Norway – August 3, 1665" a young Dutch soldier who has "never seen real war,/and had no will to die", recalls "fucking/a shy local girl", a youthful vision that motivates him to desert his national army despite "the shame of running, the fear/of loving" (36-37).

Muzanenko's writing is, if anything, more conscious of suffering, physical corruption, and death than Eppel's. His "Zvita" invites the reader to "Study the bone" of a corpse, "The waxed coat stiff with flies./... The back's awkward/arch parting rigid legs, pushing the pelvis forward/to give birth to death's black oozing grease" (63). A vision of something of the horror that seemingly inevitably accompanies the struggle for both love and freedom.

Dragoş Ivana, 2014. *Embattled Reason, Principled Sentiment and Political Radicalism: Quixotism in English Novels, 1742-1801*. Amsterdam-New York: Rodopi, viii + 297 pp., ISBN: 978-90-420-3773-1.

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*'A Mind at once so enlighten'd, and so ridiculous':
Eighteenth-Century Quixotes*

The topic of Dragoş Ivana's book is generous, exciting and thought-provoking: the appropriation of the figure of Don Quixote in eighteenth-century British novels. In seven Chapters and a Coda devoted to texts that invented a variety of Quixotes for the delight and instruction of English readers in the second half of the eighteenth-century, Ivana shows us that what may look like a strictly literary topic lies in fact at the intersection of literary with moral-philosophical, religious, economic and political thought. The interesting thing that happens when such a complex perspective is adopted is that it allows us to understand anew analytical concepts like 'genre', which we tend to treat as confined to literary history. Indeed, the interplay between the cross-

disciplinary approach and the analysis of the vagaries of such generic labels as ‘romance’ and ‘history’ during the chosen period is one of the noteworthy aspects of this book. But behind all this theoretically stimulating apparatus there lies the conundrum of the Don’s figure, one that is possibly the trans-historical core of his so many historical incarnations: in the words of a character in Charlotte Lennox’s *The Female Quixote* (1752), it is the conundrum of ‘a Mind at once so enlighten’d, and so ridiculous’ (qt. p. 209), one that inhabits the liminal realm between what is wise and what is unreasonable, between the morally refreshing and the outrageous.

This double liminality of the Quixote figure, at once epistemological and moral, is the master theme of the book. Ivana pursues it through his texts with the aid of two critical authors who are his constant theoretical guides: Michael McKeon, who in *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002) advanced the idea of the interplay between ‘questions of truth’ and ‘questions of virtue’ in the rise of the novel, and Wendy Motooka, whose *Quixotism, Sentimentalism and Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Routledge, 1998) argued for the relativizing effect of Quixotic ‘unreason’ in the context of eighteenth-century moral and political thought. Armed with this perspective, the author proceeds to anatomize the English Quixotes by first setting the scene (in Chapters 1 to 3) with two texts by a canonical author: Henry Fielding’s comic play *Don Quixote in England* (1734) and his ‘comic romance’ *Joseph Andrews* (1742). These are followed by two chapters on relatively well-known, although hardly canonical, authors: Sarah Fielding with her *Adventures of David Simple* (1744) and its sequel, *Volume the Last* (1753); and Henry Mackenzie with *The Man of Feeling* (1771). It is in these chapters, which comprise half of the book, that the main themes of the study are established and developed in detail: the scandal of reason and morality figured by the Quixotic characters, put forth by these texts as exemplars both of human folly and of the possibility of human renovation; their indebtedness to the eighteenth-century culture of sensibility, understood to rest both on an empiricist epistemology and on the theory of moral sense; relating to the latter, their promotion of the values of benevolence, which are read here not only in a moral, but also in an economic-political sense; and encompassing all of this, the grounding of their portrayal in the new ethical-aesthetic-political endorsement of (Whiggish) amiable laughter, which gradually superseded the older (Tory) cultivation of biting satire in the first decades of the eighteenth-century.

The second half of the book brings in much less known texts, by marginal authors, but whose contribution to both the shapes of Quixotism and the generic and political shapes of the novel is defended by the author. Chapters 6 and 7 discuss Charlotte Lennox’s *The Female Quixote* (1752) and Richard Graves’ *The Spiritual Quixote* (1773), while the Coda closes the book with Charles Lucas’ *The Infernal Quixote* (1801). These are more evidently political Quixotes, in both the broad and the narrow sense of the term: the first two filter Quixotism through what we today call the politics of genre and of religious identity, respectively, while the third is a participant in squarely political events. These chapters are thus concerned with explaining the place of these Quixotes within ideological struggles, between gendered attitudes, between Methodism and the established Church of England, between Jacobin radicalism and British conservatism.

One might think that this group of texts is distinguished from the former precisely on account of its political-ideological thrust, yet it becomes clear that the analysis adopts an ideological tone early on. Indeed, the main thrust of the argument, as Ivana announces in the Introduction, is that the English Quixotes are ‘marked out as political tools or reformers engaged in both satirizing and renovating an ethically corrupt society’ (14). The author is thus engaged in unraveling the ‘Quixotic ideology’ (15), which should be understood as ‘an alternative ideology’ (243), opposing, criticizing and aiming to renew established cultural norms. While the first half of the book seeks to go back to eighteenth-century intellectual sources so it can explain empiricist epistemology and such moral and economic concepts as ‘sensibility’, ‘sympathy’, ‘benevolence’, ‘charity’ or ‘interest’ (via Locke, Shaftesbury, Hume, Smith and Mandeville), this potentially intellectual-historical endeavour is in fact subsumed under an ideological, cultural-studies inflected agenda. Which is, of course, fine, but then Ivana’s claim that his study ‘has been substantiated by a history-of-ideas approach’ (267) is less convincing.

The Quixotes’ reformist ambitions come in a variety of shapes. It is only in the two Fieldings’ and in Lennox’s novels that we find successful Quixotes who, although ‘cured’ of their madness, are ultimately recognized as carriers of heart- and mind-lifting values. The others fare

less well: Mackenzie's is an exemplar of the failures of excessive sentiment, and is thus more of a Quixote *raté*; Graves' is prey to religious 'enthusiasm' (not a word of praise in the eighteenth century) and is himself the butt of (admittedly ambivalent) criticism; and Lucas' is simply a political villain. Quixotic 'ideology' seems thus uneasily poised between positively and negatively portrayed reformism, which is in itself a political issue that would have warranted some more pointed discussion.

Overall, the author's analysis gives us a good sense of the interplay of madness and alternative/reformist reason in the novelistic depiction of the Quixote characters. However, while the reformism is well grounded in the core stance of the book, this reviewer was left wondering how best to understand their madness. To see it in a relativist key (via Motooka), as the author generally does, is perhaps less than helpful, since the reformism appears thus rather implausible. Ivana gestures towards two other possibilities: a Foucauldian perspective (in Chapter 6) and one rooted in an intellectual-historical inquiry into the religious-philosophical-medical phenomenon of early modern 'enthusiasm' (in Chapter 7). While the book does not solve the problem, it certainly opens up the question and may well inspire further research.

Liliane Louvel 2011. *Poetics of the Iconotext*. Ed. Karen Jacobs. Trans. Laurence Petit. Farnham, Surrey, UK, and Burlington, Vt: Ashgate, 206 p. ISBN 978-1-4094-0031-8; (eb). ISBN 978-1-4094-3116-9.

Liliane Louvel 2010. *Le Tiers pictural. Pour une critique intermédiaire*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, coll. "Interférences", 300 p. ISBN : 978-2-7535-1030-2

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Poetics of the Iconotext undertakes to introduce the work on text/image relations of prominent French iconographer Liliane Louvel to the English speaking audience. Editor Karen Jacobs entitles her Introduction to the volume "Infinite Dialogues" to highlight the major organizing principle of Louvel's theoretical agenda that pursues a systematic study of a series of intricate interactions rooted in the complex crossover between the literary and the pictorial form. Besides the dialogue between Louvel's major fields of expertise, the British novel and Western painting, the multifocal perspective of the Louvelian oeuvre also establishes an innovative interface between the French and the Anglo-American semiotic schools, the formalist structuralist and the more ideology critically oriented post-structuralist approaches, as well as canonized mastertexts of the *ut pictura poesis* tradition (from Aristotle to Gombrich) and lesser known francophone semiographers' voices from the 1980s (from Fontanier to Garagnon). The kaleidoscopic methodology fuses insights of art criticism with those of phenomenological philosophy, the psychology of perception and the physiology of vision to explain the reading/viewing experience in terms of Greek-Roman myths of representation, ranging from Medusa and Orpheus to Narcissus; hence it is applicable to both old and new literary and visual media. As a result, this cutting-edge analytical take is worthy of the attention of scholars of classic illuminated medieval manuscripts and hypertext-enhanced digital e-books alike, as the editor rightly points out. In fact dialogism surfaces on the volume's structural organizational level too, given that the collection offers a synthesis of Louvel's two most seminal theoretical works which together constitute her poetics: chapters 1, 2, 3, 5 are derived from *L'oeil du texte: Texte et image dans la littérature anglophone* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1998), while chapters 4, 6, 7 were extracted from *Texte/image: Images à lire, textes à voir* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2002).

The polyphony of dialogues is meant to overturn fossilized binary oppositions by breaking down barriers between image and text, space and time, form and content, false and true sense, manifest and latent content. The three parts of the book clearly uncover how Louvel's iconotextual "typology of the in-between" succeeds in resisting rigid classificatory schemata to foster creative critical reflection. Part I begins with explaining the function and the nature of image, focusing on intersemiotic rhetorical practices like ekphrasis or hypotyposis. Key terminological notions are

¹ This review was supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

contextualized within the most significant and current debates of text/image studies, as Louvel enters into a productive dialogue with critics of arts and literature from the Antiquity to Postmodernism, from Horace, Lessing and Burke to Merleau-Ponty, Didi-Huberman, Barthes, Derrida and W.J.T. Mitchell.

Already the first definition of the most basic concept, “iconotext”, is illustrative of Louvel’s unique style, distinguished by the presentation of theoretically challenging ideas in a highly enjoyable, poetic, metaphoric manner. Tellingly, iconotext is described as a pluriform fusion of text and image, reminiscent of the rhetorical trope of the oxymoron that conveys a desire to converge two irreducible objects into one new, ambiguous, aporetic, in-between object, while allowing each term to maintain its difference in the text’s pictorial subconscious vibrating with a fruitful tension. The “poetics of the iconotext” indicates the project to circumscribe a typology of modes of image insertion within texts, which produces new hybrid iconotextual artifacts whose *modus operandi* needs to be scrutinized. The discussion of iconotext is placed under the sign of two mythical circular forms, ekphrastically including a work of art within a text: Achilles’ and Perseus’ shields, “mirrors laden with ancient knowledge,” are compared by Louvel to representation itself, emblemized by an apotropaic shield protecting both artist and reader/viewer against death.

This vision is inspired by psychoanalytically and phenomenologically informed poststructuralist theoretical approaches, suggesting that representation reduces the distance between the viewer/reader and the flesh of the world, but it necessarily implies absence, a feeling that the thing it-self and its meaning are inevitably slipping away, too. This simulated presentification, the immortality of the artwork, reminding us of our own mortality, generates an ambiguous experience, leading to self-reflexive insights concerning the metamediality of any representational practices. Perhaps one of Louvel’s most instructive conclusions is the following: artworks do not only represent the world, but also signify the way they/we perceive and conceive of it. Moreover, this inherent self-reflectivity is enhanced by the image that functions as “the eye of/in the text” mirroring – in an analogical or oxymoronic manner – artistic creativity itself.

The following chapters of the book put forth a series of exciting questions regarding the constitutive aporia in the dialectic between seeing and being seen, the interplay of the powers of the image, the roles of figures as figuration of the real, the strategies of reproduction, mimesis, and phenomenological experience. Part II tackles the modes of inserting pictorial images within literary texts. Besides studying the narrative figures that the pictorial can take as well as the different pragmatic functions, modulations, and productions of the iconotext, Louvel’s text/image typology distinguishes degrees of pictorial saturation so as to provide an efficient tool for measuring the formative influence of figurative and literal images upon writerly and readerly textual spaces. Part III explores variations on the pictorial, focusing on image-substitutes, ranging from mirrors and maps to *tableaux vivants* and tapestries – all semiotic mediators, ocular prolongations, which render the text vulnerable to both the referential and the imaginary. The final, 7th chapter challenges the assumption of spatio-temporal division by arguing for the coexistence of arts of simultaneity and arts of continuity. Outlining a poetics of pictorial rhythm, Louvel differentiates between four categories: the image in the text can be “seen from the perspective of the figuration of time as it is represented through the journey of the eye or the body,” it can be “envisaged through its relation to rhythm, or as time in the form of movement,” the image can be conceived “as the flesh and voice of the text, a supplement of being in a synaesthetic mode,” or as speed provoking emotional movement and figures as an acceptance of the other (171).

From an infinite variety of word/image interactions, Louvel chooses to concentrate on “the opening of the image’s eye within the visible/legible text” (13), instances when visual representations generate a verbal representation, or if inserted within the text, disrupt the narrative flow causing a cinematographic freeze-frame effect. Her concern with images translated into words or embedded as props to fiction sticks with the literary texts’ incorporation of two dimensional artworks and vision-related artifacts, ranging from painting to photographs and mirrors, all kinds of reflection. She claims to deliberately exclude works in which text and image have been produced together as a homogeneous work by a single multimedially talented mastermind like William Blake or through the fertile co-productive exchange between two artists (even if unmentioned, the creative partnership of Lewis Carroll and John Tenniel comes to mind here).

However, despite Louvel's deliberate delimiting her conceptual categorizations to pictorial moments in verbal texts, I believe that many of her insights are also applicable to the illustrated literary texts she excludes from the scope of her analysis. Hence her work is worthy of the attention of scholars of picturebook studies too, and, by means of an exciting addendum to classics like Perry Nodelman's *Words about Pictures. The Narrative Art of Children's Picture Books* (1988) or Hillis Miller's *Illustration* (1992) or the more recent *How Picturebooks Work*, co-authored by Maria Nikolajeva and Carole Scott (2001, 2006), and *Postmodern Picturebooks: Play, Parody, and Self-Referentiality*, edited by Lawrence R. Sipe and Sylvia Pantaleo (2010), which propagate a new spelling of "picturebooks", serves to emphasize the word/image interdependence. For example, one of Louvel's particularly inspiring insights that gives food for thought for further research on a larger spectrum of textual/pictorial relations is her distinction between a "paternal" and a "maternal" model of image-generation. On the one hand, paternal images trigger a text referentially to establish a space of the real authorizing a documentary character, while, on the other hand, maternal images' gestation self-reflexively poses questions about its own falsehood, represents the suspense of interpretation, and opens up gateways to the imaginary, embracing tautological, antithetical, transgressive counter-narratives. In my view, Louvel's models can also be useful when trying to make sense of postmodern picturebooks' challenging image/textual gambits from Hannah Höch's dada photomontages and Melinda Gebbie's art comics, to Harriet Russell's visual nonsense or Su Blackwell's movable papersculptures.

Since Louvel celebrates iconotexts as "textual events" involving the inscription of visual representations within verbal ones, the volume seems to slightly prioritize texts over images; especially because the collection, alas, remains short of actual ocular stimuli, as it entirely lacks illustrations. However, the absence of pictures is compensated for by a delightful variety of literary texts in English, which provide examples for the various stages of pictorial saturation. These range from Virginia Woolf's visual writing, fuelled by the memory of a dolphin's fin cutting through the surface of the ocean, a mental image that creates the whole system of thought and experimental narrative structure of her "mystic playpoem" *The Waves*, to further exciting cases, such as the transgressive force of the repressed image disrupting the text in D.M. Thomas' *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a hypopictorial novel that describes paintings by Munch, while tracing a verbal montage of Holocaust scenes located in Auschwitz and their traumatic repercussions in the psyche of survivors living in England – just to mention two examples.

This latter iconotext, like many other literary examples Louvel analyses, raises important pragmatic questions of an ethical nature, including historical dilemmas related to collective memory burdened by cultural trauma, like "How to pose the question of aesthetics when it coexists with horror and unspeakable cruelty?" (132) Such queries add up to the greatest merit of Louvel's endeavor: her interpretation of the apotropaic shield of representation "may protect us from harm of political blindness or indifference" (10).

Editor Karen Jacobs – specialized in contemporary American literature, visual culture studies and critical theory, author of *The Eye's Mind: Literary Modernism and Visual Culture* (2001) – does justice to Louvel's oeuvre: the excerpts selected from Louvel's five books and four edited collections published on the subject clearly add up to a unique iconotextual poetics. Laurence Petit's English translation of Louvel reads well despite some minor problems pointed out by reviewer Claus Clüver (in *H-France Review*, Dec. 2012. Vol. 12/No. 161): namely, a number of texts Louvel translated into French from an English source have been retranslated from the French by Petit and hence inevitably their original meanings got distorted.

In place of conclusion, I wish to briefly mention Louvel's book *Le Tiers pictural. Pour une critique intermédiaire*, published a year earlier than *Poetics of the Iconotext*, but containing a follow-up to the ideas presented in the volume edited by Jacobs. Louvel revisits *ut pictura poesis* to challenge the preeminence of language as a consensually privileged means of communication assimilating visual signs. Besides reading images, she emphasizes the significance of picturing texts and exploring an economy of the visible within the verbal regimes of representation. "Voyure," a porte-manteau of contemplative *la lecture* (reading) and rebellious *la vision* (seeing), akin with transgressive voyeurism, denotes her tactics of deciphering text/images. "Intermedial, interartistic transpositions" replaces the term "intersemiotic transpositions" in order to stress the incommensurability of different media dialectically coexisting with each other in a single artwork, and to foreground this dynamics' material, affective, sensorial effects upon the recipient. The titular "pictorial third" tackles what images in/of text do to the reader's corporeality, how in-

between impressions are formed on the internal screen of the mind's eye. Louvel's intermedial typology takes into consideration the threefold factors of the internal or external presence of pictorial reference, modes of manifestation on an integrated microtextual level, as well as the functions and patterns emerging on the macrotextual level. This volume is, yet again, full of inspiring insights containing innovative readings of well known images – enriched by twenty illustrations in color – which serve as examples for the iconotextual dilemmas problematized: eg. anamorphosis in Holbein's ambassadors, graphic signs by Paul Klee preceding the separation of painting and writing, the double vision of Jastrow's duck/rabbit figure. We can also learn about textual pleasures of art criticism, the functions of paintings' titles and the grammar of artistic signatures, as well as the sensorial reactions incited by the pictorial third, interpreted as a moving event sprung from the passage between the two media. The reinterpretation of the text/image relation within the context of hegemonic domination (sexism, colonialism, imperialism) is particularly rewarding. Louvel's latest book convincingly reveals how/why "Art is the outside where the inside exiles to make itself visible" as "a return with no return", as the motto by Bernard Noël claims. I really hope that the exciting explanations of this *bon mot* as presented in *Le tiers pictorial* will soon be made available to English speaking audiences, too.

Thomas Durfey. 2014. *The Marriage-Hater Matched*. Edited by Manuel J. Gómez-Lara, María José Mora, and Paula de Pando. Barcelona: Publicacions i Edicions Universitat de Barcelona, 245 pp., ISBN 978-84-475-3829-4.

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Since 1997, with Thomas Shadwell's *The Virtuoso*, the Restoration Comedy Project of academics, based at the University of Seville, has been painstakingly producing fully annotated critical editions of important but unrecognized comedies. Shadwell's *Epsom Wells* (2000), Joseph Arrowsmith's *The Reformation* (2003) and the anonymous *The Woman Turned Bully* (2007) are notable instances of a project that in a modest but systematic manner amounts to a reconsideration of the Restoration comedy canon, since it addresses the academic demand for [re]viewing neglected comedies. Its valuable contribution to Restoration scholarship lies essentially in the crucial albeit implicit questioning of the prevalent criteria with which, for example, *The Marriage-Hater Matched* (1692) has been deemed a second-rate comedy, and, at the same time, Thomas Durfey's work in general has been neglected presumably for its inferior quality. With the notable exception of John Mc Veagh's book that has the salient subtitle *Thomas Durfey and Restoration Drama. The Work of a Forgotten Writer* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), there has not been a book-length consideration of Durfey's drama since Robert S. Forsythe's study in 1916-17. Furthermore, the availability of only a handful of Durfey's comedies shows the neglect of a prolific and successful dramatist. In this sense not only does the present edition successfully "contribute to a reappraisal of his work" (21), as the editors rightly claim, but it also fully achieves an equally challenging aim, namely, "to offer a text that may permit the reader to visualize the action" (47).

This edition displays the thorough, systematic and all-inclusive quality characteristic of the Restoration Comedy Project. It consists of a lengthy introduction to the dramatist and his time, a general discussion of the classic antithesis of wit versus humor in a genre that at the turn of the century heads towards more moralist forms, such as the exemplary comedy where the editors set the play. Finally, it reads *The Marriage-Hater* in connection with Restoration performance. Carefully edited with rich, though not exhaustive annotation, the text consistently offers a panoramic view of the historical conjecture through a variety of topical allusions, ranging from contemporary warfare, psychological traits to cultural trends and manners, with numerous useful cross-references to contemporary plays. The atmosphere of the period produced synthetically by the annotation as well as the modernized spelling and capitalization are conducive to a truly delightful reading in that they convey a vivid sense of immediacy. The edition closes with a chronology of Durfey's life and major works in the historical context and the bibliographical references. Finally, the appendix with the songs in the play is a novel and important contribution to a possible theatrical production.

In the very informative section on Durfey's life (15-21), it would have been worthwhile to introduce a more nuanced image of the contemporary political complexities and heated conflicts, culminating in the Exclusion Crisis (1678-81) and the Glorious Revolution (1688) that determined his affiliations as a Tory and a Whig respectively. Such an approach would, on the one hand, problematize his party opportunism, exposed solely as a personal trait, namely his "adaptability and capacity for self-fashioning" (17), in the context of the embattled terrain which the theater was in its effort to accommodate multiple and contradictory socio-political demands. On the other hand, it would help to shift the emphasis from two diametrically opposed positions sustaining either his Whiggism (Hughes) or his staunch Toryism (Canfield), both equally convincing, depending on the play considered, to a different kind of politics, that borrows elements from both positions: an essentially syncretic discourse that extols libertinism and mocks puritan morality while, at the same time, containing their opposites: the disappearance or rather the extenuation of libertinism and a measured promotion of marriage. As Laura Brown suggests, Durfey's "moral or partially moral plays, scattered though a large corpus consisting predominantly of farce and intrigue, ... reflect the kind of disunity that characterizes the moral invasion of social form" (109).

This disunity inscribes *The Marriage-Hater* in a frankly amoral manner and this is precisely what completely destabilizes its position within the new model of exemplary comedy in the relevant section (24-28). Insofar as a basic criterion of the genre is how the heroes are placed vis-à-vis marriage, the play's glaring ambivalence as expressed, on the one hand, in its glorification by Lady Subtle as a divine institution and, on the other, in Sir Philip's obsessive hatred of matrimony is only superficially resolved in its eventual acceptance as a work of Providence by the eponymous hero. The rather vicious rake is not reformed (27) by means of marriage in which he is finally entrapped, because his own tricks backfire. The seven marriages that provide the closure, all of them involving deception and mercenary interest, mark in a grotesque manner the lack of a stable moral framework on which both the reformation of the rake and companionate marriage could be grafted. Consequently, the idea that *The Marriage-Hater* is an exemplary comedy is questionable, despite the concession that it basically lacks a moral "message" (28).

In the relevant section (28-32), there is a meticulous presentation of the humour characters, whose eccentricities make them highly entertaining. One would expect, however, amongst the carefully annotated oaths, a commentary on truly novel tags and oaths, such as Lady Bumfiddle's "as I'm a Protestant" and Sir Lawrence's "by the parliament" respectively. Do they signify Whiggery "as a Jonsonian or Shadwellian 'humour'" (195), as Susan Owen comments on *Sir Barnaby Rudge*, or, surprisingly, its opposite, royalism, as suggested by one of the characters with regard to Sir Lawrence's oath (90)? Therefore humour has to be addressed as yet another slippery area, where clear-cut notions and practices seem to collapse into absurdity. This is the case with the main characters too. Although Sir Philip is correctly seen as verging on humours for his abhorrence of matrimony, Berenice is left out of the category for all her "freakishness" (Charles Gildon, *Letter to Mr. Durfey*, 62). But it is because of this, rather than "love," that the tortuous love test to which she submits her suitor Darewell is essentially a self-destructive gesture.¹ Excessive humour in the protagonists simply plunges the world of the play into chaos from which no sustainable social value is salvaged.

This morally disturbing sense is further reinforced by casting Anne Bracegirdle, usually enacting passive and innocent femininity, in the part of the fallen woman and simultaneously a plotter. The prologue, which expresses her "outrage" for being "forced" into the immodest breeches, theatricalizes precisely the disruption of the conventional expectations of the identity between actress and role. However, a chaste actress in breeches might linger as a contradiction, especially in view of the rumour that William Mountfort, cast as Sir Philip, and Bracegirdle were lovers, and that the actress after all was not as chaste as she claimed (Holland 143). This would further obfuscate the moral affiliations of the play while, at the same time, increasing the sexual dynamics of the protagonists.

The Marriage-Hater hesitates on the verge of moral form, but for this reason its formal and ideological contradictions and ambiguities pose a true challenge to Restoration scholarship to

¹ "Character as Jonsonian humour becomes obsessive and inescapable. ... Even Phaebe, who recognises the irrationality of her love for Sir Philip, cannot stop" (Holland 1979: 149).

reconsider the canon. Combined with the enjoyable reading of the text, this reconsideration is a most substantial contribution that we owe to the tradition that the valuable research of the editors has painstakingly established for nearly twenty years.

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Anna Despotopoulou, 2015. *Women and the Railway, 1850-1915*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 202 pp. ISBN 978-0-7486-7964-1

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Anna Despotopoulou's recent book *Women and the Railway, 1850-1915* is a perfect illustration of the boundless seduction exerted by the analytical category of gender. Viewed within the framework of the impressive series of the Edinburgh Critical Studies in Victorian Culture, it embraces an interdisciplinary approach *par excellence*, bringing to the fore a strongly revisionist stance, and challenging received wisdom, clichés, unreflective and uncritical perceptions of Victorian culture. The railway as space of transit becomes a metaphor for the ceaseless renegotiation and reimagining of the ideologically construed boundaries set between the private and the public, inner and outer, male and female. Iconic among the impactful changes ushered in by the 19th century and an epitome of the modernist age of mobilities, the train is seen by Anna Despotopoulou as a gendered space fraught with ambiguities that not only shed light on the misconstrued and artificial public/private divide, but also circumscribe a whole range of opportunities, a space of freedom from social constraints, where women can give free vent to their long repressed desire to explore, to transgress, to probe geographical, emotional and mental boundaries. Victorian and early modernist representations of women's experience of such spaces, of locomotion, velocity and unprecedented mobility point out the transformative potential of such experiences. Women's conquest of this liminal and transitory space will undoubtedly help to destabilize their domestic confinement and dismantle Victorian gender ideology, accelerating their participation in public life; yet this is no triumphal march, but an advance into uncharted, beleaguered territory, stimulating yet disorienting, exhilarating yet terrifying, a powerful symbol, as Rita Felski remarks in her seminal study *The Gender of Modernity* 'of both the dangers and the promises of the modern age'.

In the context of the literature on the topic, the novelty of Anna Despotopoulou's study of women and the railway, compared to those authored by Amy Richter, Ana Parejo Vadillo or Wendy Parkins, consists in her thorough exploration of texts, fictional and non-fictional, by and about women, texts that deal primarily with women's experience of the space of the railway as a gendered space 'within a British, European and Imperial context in the Victorian and early modernist period' (9), with one exception only, in chapter 4, where she considers an American railway journey undertaken by Edith Wharton. Aptly titled 'Geographies of Fear in the Age of Sensation', the first chapter deals with women's vulnerability in the confined space of the train compartment, an erotically charged space, whose very architecture with a corridor-less compartment at first encouraged sexual predators, the women being conceived of as the 'weaker link' in the accelerated race of urbanization, enhanced mobility and technological progress. The train compartment is an ambiguous space, both *locus amoenus*, an extension of the domestic haven, intimate and secure, and *locus suspectus*, the site of the unfamiliar, of the dangerous and of libidinal licence. A spate of newspaper and journal articles, as well as short stories and sketches by

Marcia Whiteside, Ellen Wood or Rhoda Broughton represent both this socially constructed version of femininity as vulnerable, weak and sexually gullible and a more complex response to the train, including a reflection on the potentially dangerous sides of women's tentative appropriation of public spaces. At the turn of the previous century, The New Woman is bound to leave her mark on such representations of vulnerability, displacing the 'damsel in distress' trope and imposing a heroic womanhood version, complete with detective skills, pistols and extreme physical prowess. In this context it comes as no surprise that some important sensation novels of the second half of the 19th century have the railway as a setting and as an important catalyst of the plot, speed, liminal spaces, and fast transitions featuring prominently in the prose of Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Ellen Wood, Margaret Oliphant or Wilkie Collins. I would also comment that particularly in the second chapter of the book - 'Railway Speed' - the train compartment becomes a truly *maieutic space* for women, a space of self-questioning, self-realisation and reinvention.

I find the third chapter, 'Breaching National Borders: Rail Travel in Europe and Empire', particularly convincing, as it takes the narrative of the exploratory and transgressive woman, conqueror of interstitial spaces and shatterer of paradigms, beyond local and national borders towards the appropriation of cosmopolitanism and of an 'international geographical consciousness' (101). Women become tourist gazers, appropriating and consuming landscapes and spaces, and Anna Despotopoulou gives us a brilliant analysis of texts by Anthony Trollope and Henry James, pursuing the emergence of this 'consumer mentality of female tourists' (103). I think that the author rightfully underscores the worth of an unduly neglected and one of the most 'understudied British authors of the colonies' (127), Flora Annie Steel, a most prolific and interesting Anglo-Indian writer, who, although displaying the arrogant pride and cultural righteousness of the colonizer, shouldering the 'white woman's burden', gives us, nonetheless, many instances of empathetic identification with the natives in her prose, and an impressive degree of cultural openness. Jenny Sharpe argues in her famous study, *Allegories of Empire*, that Flora Annie Steel 'embodies the memsahib in all her contradictions' (93), as she lived for twenty-two years in India, gaining a very good knowledge of the country, its history and culture and even becoming conversant with one of the main languages of the subcontinent - Punjabi. Colonists and disenfranchised subjects of the Empire share a common ground, and imperial feminists such as Mary Carpenter, Josephine Butler or Christabel Pankhurst, Harriet Taylor or Flora Shaw had no difficulty envisaging themselves as the Other in the imperial discourses. She is also an interesting example of the ambiguities riddling the Raj matriarchs, who went to India with a sense of mission to uplift Indian women, the post-Mutiny India providing them with a vast socio-political laboratory and a testing ground for their feminist agenda, with significant opportunities for intervention in the field of education and socio-political advancement of Indian women. Four of Steel's short stories are analysed and, in their economy, the train journey is seen as a space of both chance and meaningful encounters, a trope meant to destabilize seemingly monolithic narratives of fixed identities, sometimes openly challenging the legitimacy of British rule.

The author could not fail to consider her topic in the light of the neurosis of modernity, the 'alienating and dehumanising effects of mechanised mobility' (148), the modern woman's experiences of displacement and relocation that sever ties between the self and the world, between an individual perception of time and standardized time. Railway contributed crucially to the emergence of disciplined and standardized time; after all, even in the 1850s, a most chaotic concept of time prevailed, with practically every town having its own time. It was precisely the dramatic expansion of the railway that changed all that, and it was in 1884 that representatives of twenty-five nations met in Washington, DC for the International Meridian Conference, where almost unanimously Greenwich was accepted as the site of the Prime Meridian and the base from which the world's mean time should be measured. A short story by Margaret Oliphant 'A Railway Junction: or the Romance of Ladybank' of 1873 masterfully explores the tension between wild and tamed time, whereas Mona Caird's *The Daughters of Danaus* of 1894 links temporal and spatial perceptions to the flow of consciousness, to imagination and subjectivity, thus undermining the uniformizing and ordering principles of standardized time.

From geographies of fear to resistance, empowerment, agency and unbounded imaginative forays, the gendered literary railway spaces as they are configured in Anna Despotopoulou's study will, no doubt, engage the interest of gender studies and Victorian studies specialists as well as that of the general reading public.