

Metamorphosis

Transformations across Time, Culture & Identity

Proceedings of the University of Glasgow College of Arts Postgraduate Conference 2021

Edited by R. Cameron, Wu Y., A. Kushairi and L. Tomanek

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Postgraduate Conference 2021

Edited by Ross Cameron, Wu Yunong,
Azalea Kushairi and Liudmila Tomanek

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Preface

Dear Reader,

You are about to delve into the very first publication of the University of Glasgow College of Arts Postgraduate Conference proceedings. These carefully selected articles provide a snapshot of the diversity of papers presented at the 2021 Conference, entitled 'Metamorphosis'.

Metamorphosis refers to a dramatic change in the form, structure or character of an entity, distinctly characterised as a process whereby the old is subsumed, absorbed or self-devoured to provide the substance to forge the new. The aim of this conference was to explore how this concept has been experienced across time, culture and identity.

On 1st–2nd June 2021, our conference brought together postgraduate researchers in the arts and humanities from a range of universities around the world. Our gratitude is extended to all those who participated and in particular those who made the extra effort to submit extended versions of their papers for this peer-reviewed publication. Their academic passion and commitment to interdisciplinary research made this publication what it is.

We would like to thank all the members of the original Conference Committee who helped to organise and successfully deliver the conference, despite the difficulties of remote working throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, the conference would not have been the tremendous success it was without the tireless work of Lucy Killoran, the Committee Chair and designer of this publication.

We are very grateful to everyone at the College of Arts, especially to Professor Bryony Randall and the communications team who were always ready with advice and to support our enthusiasm. This journal would not have been possible without their ongoing support.

While the conference is held annually, and you are warmly invited to attend the forthcoming event in June 2022, this journal is our first edition. We hope other conference teams will continue with this tradition, creating a digital archive of the excellent postgraduate research highlighted at subsequent conferences.

We very much hope you will enjoy reading this journal!

Glasgow, UK
March 2022

Ross Cameron
Wu Yunong
Azalea Kushairi
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List of Contributors

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The Language of Flowers as Metamorphosis from Medieval Art to Nineteenth Century Photography

Ashleigh Black

Introduction

The University of Aberdeen's Special Collections holds around 38,000 glass plate negatives taken by George Washington Wilson and his photographic firm from 1850 until 1908. The photographic collection comprises portraits, landscape and cityscape images taken across the world, including the UK, Australia, South Africa, and the Mediterranean. Wilson first entered photography as a portrait artist and eventually came to be renowned for his cityscapes and landscape work. This paper considers the symbolic role of flowers using his portrait photographs as a case study; with special reference to *The Language of Flowers or Floral Emblems of Thoughts, Feelings and Sentiments* by Robert Tyas published in 1869. Tyas' book has been chosen for this paper as it was relevant for the flowers depicted in Wilson's photographs.

This article analyses the metamorphosis of the language of flowers starting with the use of flowers in ancient manuscripts, most notably the fourteenth century text *The Carrara Herbal*. The study of flowers in pre-photographic art is also discussed, with a focus on Sandro Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* and how flowers were used to translate meaning to the viewer. Transitioning into photography, the article investigates the impact of flowers in post-mortem photography and the evolution of the language of flowers from painting into photography. The language of flowers as metamorphosis constitutes an evolving semiotic system, a hidden network of communication which developed across time and different cultures. As Nancy Sheley (2007, p. 3) points out, language is not the only way we communicate:

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it is also one means by which we construct our lives. . . for the nineteenth century reader, the language of flowers was part of that communication.

In the ancient world, amaranths were a sign of divine honour and everlasting life. Homer described the crowns of amaranths that were worn by the Thessalians at the funeral of Achilles (Philips 1814, p. 250). The amaranth flower can range in colour from light red to white or pink and can grow very tall. The leaves are rhombic in shape and can either present as red or green. Amaranths are native to Central America and are widely cultivated in Asia and Africa. Notably, amaranths can retain their colour and vibrancy even when dried and pressed and were used by ancient civilisations during rituals and ceremonies. The ability of the amaranth to retain its form and endure the weathering of time is how it became associated with everlasting life. Since antiquity, flowers have been used to communicate hidden messages and they were used in a multitude of ways, from the giving and receiving of flowers, to flowers depicted in writing, manuscripts, and art.

Culturally, flowers 'have been employed to represent our ideas and emotions' (Seaton 1995, p. 38). Although the use of decorative flowers in illuminated manuscripts reached its zenith during the fifteenth century, its origins can be traced back to earlier civilisations. In the Medieval era, many plants and herbs were ascribed healing properties. For example, lavender was used as an ointment for burns and mustard seeds were employed as an emetic. According to Fisher (2004, p.5), 'plants appear in art for two principal reasons: because they are decorative or because they mean something.' *The Carrara Herbal* is an example of both of these reasons. *The Carrara Herbal* is an Italian translation of an Arabic text on pharmacopeia. Serapion the Younger was commissioned by Francesco Carrara, the ruler of Padua, to translate the text and manuscript which boasts beautiful hand-drawn illustrations of flowers, plants, and their properties. Alongside these illustrations are detailed sections of text describing each plant and its benefits to the human body. Manuscripts such as this provide an insight into how our forebears observed the natural world and their understanding of the roles that nature has for mankind.

Flowers in Pre-Photographic Art

Red roses have been closely related to love and romance, and, in a lesser-known connection, they were also associated with royalty. Jessica Roux (2020, p. 4) explained that meanings for flowers were derived 'from literature, mythology, religion, me-

dieval legend, and even the shapes of the blooms themselves.’ In literature, roses represented a love that was fresh, vivid, and sweet. The most well-known example of this is Robert Burns’ 1794 poem ‘A Red Red Rose’. Burns’ use of the imagery of the red rose embodies the experience of love on a universal level. Tyas claimed that the rose is ‘the emblem of every age; the interpreter of all our sentiments mixed up with our joys and our sorrows.’ The rose was also known as the ‘queen of flowers’ which is why it is often linked with royalty. According to Tyas’ dictionary, white roses meant silence and the keeping of secrets. In 1783 artist Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun painted *Marie Antoinette with a Rose* which depicts the Parisian queen in a silk dress holding a pink rose. According to Tyas, pink roses were emblematic of gentleness, grace, and friendship.



Figure 1: Portrait of Anne Boleyn by an unknown artist, C16th.

Figure 1 is a portrait of Anne Boleyn, who was the second wife of King Henry VIII and was Queen of England from 1533 until her execution in 1536. Anne is holding a red rose which speaks to the reputation of her beauty as well as her status as Queen. The rose also symbolises the red rose of Lancaster which was a heraldic badge used by the royal House of Lancaster in the fourteenth century. Anne’s father-in-law, King Henry VII, led the Lancaster forces against the Yorkist faction during the Wars of the Roses. Subsequently, Henry VII emerged victorious after the Battle of Bosworth

Field in August 1485 which also saw the demise of King Richard III. The white rose of York and red rose of Lancaster was combined to produce the emblem of the House of Tudor after Henry VII married Elizabeth of York in 1486.

Floriography has been used for centuries by artists as a way of adding profundity to their imagery. Sandro Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* ranks among some of the most famous paintings in the world (Figure 2). As Venus emerges from the sea, the woman to her left is offering her a cloak patterned with spring flowers. This figure is a representation of the season of spring who is wearing a dress decorated with cornflowers, which indicate delicacy, youth, and healing. The cloak she holds out to Venus is also sewn with daisies which mean innocence as well as yellow primroses which signify early youth. The embodiment of spring is wearing around her neck, a garland of roses and myrtle which is believed to be the tree of Venus. A cascade of pink roses surrounds Zephyr, the God of the west wind, who is embracing his wife, the nymph Chloris, and her status as the goddess of flowers.

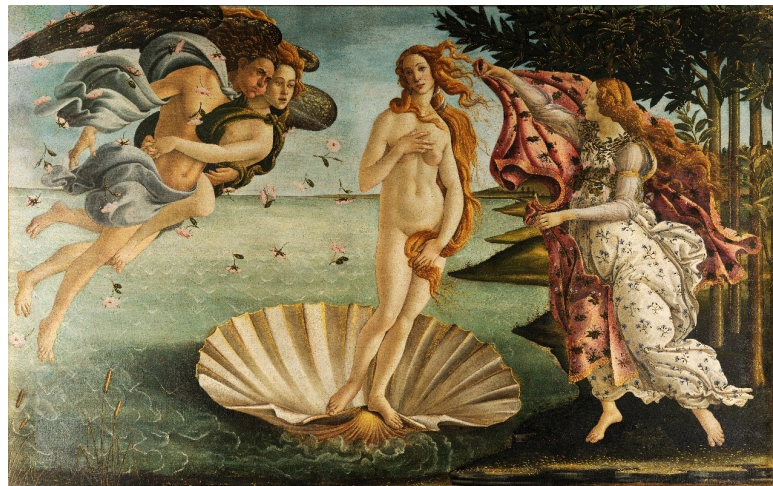


Figure 2: The Birth of Venus by Sandro Botticelli, c.1484-1486, tempera on canvas.

Flowers in Post-Mortem Photography

As the Victorian period progressed so did science, art, and technology. According to Coulthard the 'buttoned-up Victorians' were restricted in what they could openly express in words. Therefore, the 'coded symbolism of flowers, or *floriography* provided an outlet for these feelings which could not be spoken' (Coulthard 2021, p. 2). During the nineteenth century many flower dictionaries were printed. In particular, two dictionaries were fused together as one book; one alphabetised the flowers with their

meanings and the second listed the meanings and the corresponding flowers. Floriography was also printed in contemporary periodicals and magazines. Botany and gardening were considered important aspects in nineteenth century domestic life across all social classes. Poet George W. Bungay (1888, p. 20) declared that flowers are 'the sylvan syllables that spell their epitaphs in sweetest words. . .'. For Bungay, flowers were not just a visual delight for they also represented a living universal language. As products of the natural world, the language of flowers can be understood in any country in the world. Bungay's description of 'the sylvan syllables' alludes to the pastoral tranquillity of nature and its ability to transcend the spoken word.

The advent of photography brought new ways of remembrance. A photograph, unlike a painted portrait, memorialised the dead as they were in life. Photographing the dead in the Victorian era became a normal part of the grieving process. The deceased person was often pictured with other living relatives or posed doing things that they enjoyed when they were alive. Children were sometimes photographed in their coffins, surrounded by toys and flowers, or were shown playing with their siblings. Post-mortem photographs often pictured the deceased surrounded by flowers. A few examples of the types of flowers used in post-mortem photography include the dandelion and damask roses which symbolise, 'beauty ever new', a kind of eternal youth. Dandelions, according to Tyas, are representative of an oracle. In this sense the use of dandelions suggests the inevitability of death, a memento mori. In Western culture, making a wish as one blows and disperses the dandelion's seeds supports the link with oracle and fortune-telling. Beverly Seaton (1995, p. 11) explains that a person in their sickbed could be presented with flowers as a gesture of wellness, but if that person died the flowers assumed a greater significance.

When I am dead my dearest, Sing no sad songs for me; Plant thou no roses at my head, Nor shady cypress tree: Be the green grass above me With showers and dew drops wet; And if thou wilt, remember, And if thou wilt, forget.

The preceding quotation is the first stanza from a poem entitled *Song* written by Christina Rossetti in 1862 (Rossetti 2006, p. 67). As Tyas tells us, the cypress is the emblem of death and also despair. In *Metamorphoses* the poet Ovid narrates the tragic story of Cyparissus who accidentally killed his beloved pet stag. Long exhausted from weeping, Cyparissus 'became a stiff tree with a slender top and pointed up to the starry heavens.' The Gods decreed that he shall 'forever stand in grief, where others grieve'. Branches of the cypress tree were carried by mourners at funerals

symbolising the irreversibility of death because, once cut, the branches will never bloom again.

In the poem, Rossetti requests that the reader does not despair when she is gone and objects from the natural world become metaphors for remembrance. Rossetti asks that her beloved should not seek to remember her in conventional ways, for instance, through the placing of flowers on her grave and the singing of sad songs. Rossetti tells the reader that life will not falter and will go on after she is dead; the passing of time is symbolised by the rain which will also tend to her grave. The green grass above her can also be interpreted as an emblem of earthly vanity. Rossetti's acknowledgement of the fading of the green grass above her echoes a passage from the Bible:

all flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth and the flower fadeth.¹

Flowers in Scottish Folklore

In 1852, George Washington Wilson established his portrait studio on Crown Street, Aberdeen and the following year began his first commissions at Balmoral Castle photographing the Royal Family. Figure 3 was taken at the Braemar Gathering in 1887. Queen Victoria is seated with two of her daughters: Victoria Princess of Wales and Princess Beatrice. They are seated at the Royal Pavilion, which is decorated with heather and conifers, also known as pine trees. The pine tree is Scotland's national tree and is capable of thriving in poor environmental conditions. The pine tree standing steadfast against the elements is a symbol of empire, towering over the earth itself. Tyas (1869, p. 158) described the pine tree as 'daring' in his dictionary because it prefers 'to bathe its head in the moisture of the clouds above' and when moved by the wind its branches mimic the sound of the ocean. In its daring nature, the pine tree braves 'the winds of heaven, and the raging waters of the deep abyss of ocean'. Because they are evergreen, pine trees are emblematic of immortality and resilience as well as marital happiness and fertility.

The heather plant has been an enduring symbol of good luck, its origins being found in the roots of Scottish folklore. Heather grows white, red, pink or purple and is commonly found in moors, bogs and mountainsides in Europe. Roux (2020, p. 80)

¹ Isaiah 40:6,7.



Figure 3: The Royal Pavilion Braemar Gathering by George Washington Wilson, 1887.

recounts the story of Malvina, a woman renowned for her beauty in the Ossian cycle of poet James Macpherson, who was betrothed to a warrior named Oscar. As he lay dying on the battlefield

he instructed a messenger to deliver a sprig of purple heather to [Malvina] as a token of his eternal love.

Upon receiving the sprig of heather, Malvina's tears turned the purple heather white. From this lore heather was said to transfigure sorrow into good luck from Malvina's enduring wish that no one should suffer grief like hers. In Scottish folklore, heather was believed to bloom only on ground where blood has not been shed in battle and that it grew over the resting place of fairies. Like the pine tree, the heather plant can flourish in inhospitable conditions and is often found on the solitary mountainsides of the Scottish Highlands.

Flowers in Portrait Photography

Rosemary has multiple meanings and was often employed as a symbol of remembrance. In Christian tradition, it served as the representation of commemoration and faithfulness. Figure 4 is a photograph of a newly married couple known only as Mr & Mrs Beaton. The bride is wearing a garland of petals and is holding a large bouquet of flowers which immediately captures the eye. Mostly unnoticed, however, is



Figure 4: Mr & Mrs Beaton by George Washington Wilson. c.1880s-1890s.

the sprig of rosemary on the groom's lapel. Coulthard (2021, p. 137) explains that because the rosemary plant is evergreen (grows all year round) the Romans believed that symbolised stability. It is clear why it was used to celebrate milestones in life as well as marking the inevitability of death.

In William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, there are several references to floriography and flower symbolism. After Hamlet mistakenly kills Polonius, Ophelia's descent into madness begins to emerge. In Act IV Scene V she refers to rosemary 'that's for remembrance, pray you, love, remember.' Later, Ophelia remarks to Gertrude: 'there's fennel for you, and columbines' which denotes adultery. To Claudius she declares: 'oh, you must wear your rue with a difference' and in this instance she is making a point about repentance. Roux (2020, p. 158) explains that rue is bitter-smelling and was often sent, not as an expression of regret, 'but as a warning... as in, "you'll regret what you've done."' Therefore, Ophelia's reference to rue can be interpreted as a foreshadowing of Claudius' comeuppance and the retribution of Hamlet.

The lily flower is known for its pure white petals and sweet smell and featured prominently in ancient Roman mythology. Poet William Cowper (Anon 1855, p. 389) regarded the lily as an imperial flower 'seemingly designed for Flora's hand, the sceptre of her power.' Flora was the counterpart of the goddess Chloris in Roman

mythology. The Romans also believed that the lily was born from the milk of Juno's breast, who was the wife of Jupiter. Conspiring with the god Somnus, the Roman god of sleep, Jupiter made Juno fall into a deep slumber. Once asleep, Jupiter placed the baby Heracles at Juno's breast so that he would become immortal. A few drops of milk from the mouth of the suckling infant fell to earth 'from which this flower immediately sprang up' (Phillips 1814, p. 9). In this context, it is clear how the imagery attached to the lily is one of royalty, grandeur, and beauty.



Figure 5: Miss Jones Jackson Terrace by George Washington Wilson, c.1890s-1908.

A young woman known as Miss Jones, shown in Figure 5, is posed before a painted studio backdrop with lilies adorning her clothing, and with a bouquet in her hands. Her stance paired with the use of lilies suggests elegance as they traditionally symbolised grandeur and majesty in Western culture. In Christianity, it was held that the lily represented purity and chastity 'and is the symbol of resurrection and Easter' (Lehner & Lehner 2003, p. 33). In the Middle Ages the lily flower was associated with the Virgin Mary. Roux (2020, p. 112) clarifies this further using paintings of the Annunciation (the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to Mary that she would conceive the son of God) as an example of this association. The Virgin Mary is often depicted as receiving a lily from the Archangel Gabriel as a symbol of her purity. The Christian interpretation of the lily metamorphosed from its Roman roots, retaining

the link with purity from the breast of an ancient goddess and mother of a significant figure in Roman mythology, Heracles.



Figure 6: Miss Ross
Esslemont Avenue by
George Washington Wil-
son, c.1880s-1890s.

The colour of a rose says a lot about what kind of message the sender is giving. Roses come in a variety of colours including red, pink, orange, peach and yellow. A red rose signified beauty and love, and for the Victorians, yellow roses meant unfaithfulness or jealousy. As previously discussed, pink roses tended to symbolise gentleness and friendship. Figure 6 is a photograph of a woman wearing a hat decorated with roses, her right arm is resting on a column with a stalk of a rose with leaves in her hand. Rose leaves symbolised to the viewer of the photograph that the sender is never importunate (Tyas 1869, p. 135). The use of the rose leaf in Figure 6 demonstrates that it was not just the petals that held significance in the language of flowers, and that every aspect of a flower was considered to have a coded meaning.

Cross-Cultural Symbolism

Across the centuries, meanings attached to plants and flowers have changed. One example of this is the common poppy or *Papaver Rheas*. Prior to the First World War, poppies were traditionally emblematic of sleep as they were associated with the Greek god of sleep, Hypnos who slept in a cave full of poppies. Also, poppy

seeds were used to derive an opiate used for sedation. Tyas (1869, p. 58) described the common poppy as 'the inducer of sleep' and is thus 'the emblem of consolation.' Sleep relaxes and dulls the senses so 'that it bears a close resemblance to the insensibility of the dead' (Tyas 1869, p. 59). The name of this species of poppy were named so after Rhea the mother of Zeus, or the mother of the gods. Traditionally, she was worshipped through the wearing of poppy wreaths. For the Victorians, the wearing or gifting of a poppy could be used to show the recipient that they are in the dreams of the giver (Roux 2020, p. 70). In the present day, the meaning of the red poppy is tied to remembrance and the symbolism of death as sleep.



Figure 7: Portrait of Miss Marnoch by George Washington Wilson, c.1860s-1890s.

Another example of cross-cultural symbolism in the language of flowers is the cherry blossom. In Japan, the cherry blossom signifies the arrival spring which is considered to be a time of rebirth and renewal. According to Tyas' dictionary, cherry blossoms in western culture are emblematic of a good education. In Figure 7 a woman can be observed; she is seated with her left elbow resting on top of a book with a cluster of cherry blossoms in her lap. Seaton (1995, p. 40) points out that one major variance between Western and Eastern floral emblems lies in the meanings themselves. The use of cherry blossoms together with the book in Fig VII is intended to show that the woman is educated.

Conclusion

The symbolism in pre-photographic art, such as the portraits of Anne Boleyn and Marie Antionette and Botticelli's masterpiece, transitioned into photography breaking down barriers posed by staunch Victorian morality. Across time, flowers and plants have been ascribed various meanings and in turn, hold specific cultural meanings. Whether they were worn or used as accessories,

these coded messages of affection, desire, or sorrow allowed Victorians to show their true feelings in an enigmatic and alluring display (Roux 2020, p. 4).

As Coulthard (2021, p. 2) points out, 'we all speak the language of flowers, even if we're not aware of it.' Ultimately, the language of flowers forms part of a shared cultural knowledge which has evolved and metamorphosed across time into expressive mediums such as painting, writing and photography creating its own visual language.

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Modernist Scots: Linguistic Regeneration in the Poetry of Hugh MacDiarmid, Violet Jacob, Helen B. Cruickshank and William Soutar

Fiona Paterson

Introduction

When the new Scottish parliament was sworn into Holyrood earlier this year, MSPs took their oaths in Scots, Gaelic and Doric as well as English. Others did so in Urdu, German, Arabic, Welsh, and BSL (British Sign Language), indicative of the present government's aims to further and maintain a supportive framework for the representation of linguistic diversity and plurality (Nutt 2021). Each of Scotland's 'modern makars', the fourth of whom, Kathleen Jamie, assumed the post in August 2021, have written in languages other than English, utilising their platform to bring greater recognition to, and proudly celebrate, Scotland's cultural multiplicities.

This wealth and variation of linguistic and expressive modes is a rich heritage which has long been engrained in the fabric of Scottish society and literature. The encouragement and recovery of such plurality was of particular significance to the Scottish literary renaissance which arose in the first half of the twentieth century. Instigated by the momentum of political, social, and cultural upheaval across Europe created by the First World War (1914-18), the Easter Rising in Ireland (1916), and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (1917), the so-called renaissance – as coined by Denis Saurat in 1924 – marks a collective of individuals who sought to regenerate a unique Scottish culture, more of an organically developed constellation than a uniformly constructed group. The effort was contributed to by writers and artists from various localities across Scotland, with an emphasis upon the reclamation and revitalisation of a unique, autonomous national identity: as Alan Riach writes, the incentive 'was

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to reach back [...] into the singular vortex of British imperialism and the First World War and attempt to bring forward a multifaceted but singular nationality from the violence that war made unavoidable' (Riach 2020, p. 32). 'Multifaceted' is the key word here, as the collective looked outwards beyond the boundaries of Scotland for inspiration – note Scott Lyall's remark that the Scottish renaissance was 'decidedly a modernist European revival', continental influence integral to its aims and configuration (Lyall 2019, p. 215). The revitalisation and reclamation of language was at the heart of their project, the impetus which united poets, novelists and translators across otherwise varying aims and approaches.

At the centre of it all, based in the east coast provincial town of Montrose, 'the original cultural capital of modern Scotland', was Hugh MacDiarmid, pseudonym of Christopher Murray Grieve, and around him Edwin and Willa Muir, Violet Jacob, Helen B. Cruickshank, and a multitude of writers, artists, and musicians. MacDiarmid and Muir, considered the key leaders of Scottish modernism, pursued quite different paths of linguistic regeneration, as exemplified in Muir's 1936 essay 'Scott and Scotland'. Here, Muir claimed that Scottish literature ought to be written in English if it were to be awarded any international recognition, arguing for the adoption of a 'homogenous' language in place of the perpetuation of Scotland's pluralities (McCulloch 2004, p. 41).

MacDiarmid famously disagreed, and he was not alone. This essay considers the work of those writers who exhibited a commitment to Scots, as well as English, reinforcing Scotland's autonomous cultural identity alongside forming bridges with Europe, through language, imperative in a time of such fragmentation. Enquiries into the transformative qualities of MacDiarmid's language will be analysed alongside that of other key figures – Violet Jacob, Helen B. Cruickshank and William Soutar – as categorised along lines of national, international, and planetary variation and diversity. Whilst emphasis is given to MacDiarmid as the intellectual spearhead of Scotland's cultural campaign, there is a simultaneous endeavour to elevate discussion of his female contemporaries, typically neglected despite their significant contributions and contemporary recognition.

Hugh MacDiarmid

In the first instance, Scottish writers in the early twentieth century looked to older, neglected forms of Scotland's own language and languages to revitalise its modern

condition, believed to have grown stale due to its subjugation at the hands of standardised English. The initial aim was to shake up and replenish vernacular Scots, the approach adopted by MacDiarmid and outlined in his early prose – published under the name of Grieve – in the *Scottish Chapbook*, which he founded in 1922:

The Scots Vernacular is a vast storehouse of just the very peculiar and subtle effects which modern European literature in general is assiduously seeking [...] the resumption of the Scots Vernacular into the mainstream of European letters in a fashion which the most enthusiastic Vernacularist may well hesitate to hope for, is inevitable. (ibid., p. 28)

Here, MacDiarmid famously turned to *Jamieson's Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1808) for material – ‘time eneuch then to seek the Omnific Word / In Jamieson yet’ (MacDiarmid 2017, p. 223) – and, aided by this and his upbringing around Langholm’s ‘racy Scots, with distinct variations in places only a few miles away’ (MacDiarmid 1994, p. 16), to the poetry and vernacular of the fifteenth century makars, Robert Henryson and William Dunbar, a return to the roots of a classic poetic diction. In his construction of a modern ‘synthetic’ Scots, MacDiarmid utilised vocabulary of ‘far greater psychological satisfaction’ (ibid., p. 17) to liberate the suppressed national psyche and to bring Scotland in line with the ‘tendency in world-literature today which is driving writers of all countries back to obsolete vocabularies and local variants and specialised usages of languages of all kinds’ (MacDiarmid 1996, p. 14). As Laura O’Connor explains, ‘The literary Scots of MacDiarmid exploits the discrepant registers of his hybrid linguistic heritage in order to dramatise, interrogate, and reconfigure the high/low hierarchy established between the encroaching English and marginalises Scots vernaculars.’ (O’Connor 2005) MacDiarmid dismantled linguistic boundaries in the bringing together of vocabulary and idiom from disparate settings in time, context and region, revitalising a modern Scots.

And poetry provided a uniquely flexible and fluid medium in which MacDiarmid was able to pursue his aims, as embodied in the early Scots lyrics of *Sangschaw* (1925) and *Penny Wheep* (1926). Ann Boutelle supports the achievement of MacDiarmid’s language in these early poems, stating that his ‘ear for language [...] is as sure and as masterly as that of the greatest lyric poets, his choice of Lallans as a poetic language has resulted in effects barred to standard English’ (Boutelle 1971, p. 499). Poems such as ‘The Bonnie Broukit Bairn’, ‘The Watergaw’, ‘Somersault’ or ‘Sea-Serpent’ set the precedent for revitalisation, each a coherent modernist exercise in linguistic dexterity replete with obsolete and obscure vocabulary alongside contemporary modes of

expression. 'The Bonnie Broukit Bairn' summons elemental imagery, evoking far-off planets, moon and stars – both as they are in conceivable reality and as they exist in the imagination, 'braw in crammacy' and replete with 'gowden feathers' – before rooting them in the tangibility of the Earth, the particular, mappable location of 'thou bonnie broukit bairn' (MacDiarmid 2017, p. 17). In 'The Watergaw', MacDiarmid borrows his title from the specific Scots term for an indistinct rainbow, highlighting the innate connection he saw to exist between language, landscape and untranslatable understanding on a national scale; where 'yow-trummle' is recognisable as a certain time of year, suggesting coldness, and 'chitterin' implies a particular flickering or shivering motion, again with an implication of cold weather conditions (ibid.). The particular and the universal, the known and the unknown, are also related in 'Somersault':

I lo'e the stishie
 O' Earth in space
 Breengin' by
 At a haliket pace. (ibid., p. 47)

The vocabulary adopted here is all related to movement – 'stishie' being a disruptive commotion, 'Breengin' implying a reckless kind of rush and 'haliket' highlighting the headfirst approach – affirming Scots as a dynamic language with words that capture shades of difference indistinguishable in another tongue. The poem is light-hearted, yet it does serious work in dismantling Victorian and kailyard misconceptions of Scots as being limited to the depiction of rural, local scenes. Likewise, in 'Sea Serpent', MacDiarmid's liberated Scots addresses God and Leviathan, contemplating ideas of heaven, life, and death, limitless concepts bound up in the coherent thought process of the poem. The speaker of the poem recognises his individuality amidst the moving fabric of the universe, equal parts solitude and belonging:

Whiles a blindin' movement tak's in my life
 As a quick tide swallows the sea.
 I feel like a star on a starry nicht,
 A'e note in a symphony,
 And ken that the serpent is movin' still,
 A movement that a' thing shares,
 Yet it seems as tho' it twines in a nicht
 When God neither kens nor cares. (ibid., p. 50)

Less reliant upon singular instances of illustrative or archaic vocabulary, metaphysical consciousness is here expressed in the language understood by MacDiarmid to represent speech and close community, bridging the gap between otherwise lofty ideas and a level of attainable comprehension. The synthesis of language from various contexts, backgrounds and registers recharges the modern poetic Scots which MacDiarmid and other writers in the literary renaissance promoted, demonstrating the flexibility of the language for deployment in both brief, evocative lyrics and protracted contemplation. Whilst the examples referred to here constitute a meagre selection amidst MacDiarmid's prolific output, each illustrates how the reclamation of Scots vocabulary in modern poetic diction instilled it with a sense of connection through time and tradition. Scottish experience, shared through history, was shown to be tied to the specific words used to denote it, irreplicable in English.

MacDiarmid used his position to promote others who wrote in the vernacular, as in his decision to publish poetry in Scots alongside that in English in *Northern Numbers*, the series of anthologies he edited in 1920-22. He endeavoured to 'do for some of the leading tendencies in contemporary Scottish poetry what the "Georgian Poetry" series has done for a particular group of mainly-English poets of our period' (Grieve 1920, p. 9). Not only do the volumes feature poetry in Scots, but they increasingly include poetry by women – including Mabel Christian Forbes, Mary Symon, Marion Angus and Muriel Stuart – representing the plurality of voices which constituted the diverse, modern literary scene of the early renaissance. Tentative navigations of and challenges to the hierarchies of marginalised and oppressed voices, as determined by gender, class, language and locality, also feature in MacDiarmid's prose of the 1920s – see 'Following Rebecca West in Edinburgh' for a particularly rich example – but it was in poetry which the creativity of his linguistic efforts flourished.

Violet Jacob

Violet Jacob was one of those individuals published by MacDiarmid in *Northern Numbers*, an integral member of the Montrose circle who was of an older generation than the young poet and who had accomplished literary success prior to his arrival in the east coast; a guiding influence in the configuration of his campaign rather than somebody swept along in its tide. Jacob's poetry, first published in *Songs of Angus* (1915), offers a female perspective of local labour, tradition, and community, conveyed through casual repurposing of the Scots vernacular, embodying the united drive to reclaim land, language, and identity in the face of modernity and the devas-

tations of war. Her verse was contemporaneously recognised for its ‘distinction,’ as highlighted in John Buchan’s remarks that Jacob ‘writes Scots because what she has to say could not be written otherwise and retain its peculiar quality. [...] above all it is a living speech, with the accent of the natural voice’ (Jacob 1916, p. *viii*). The organic rhythms and sonic qualities of the language as speech, intimately understood yet communally, publicly shared, is evident most profoundly in the poems which exhibit a proud attachment to environmental locality, words and spaces working in partnership. In ‘Craig Woods’, Jacob provides a stillness:

i’ the licht o’ September sleepin’
 And the saft mist o’ the morn,
 When the hairst climbs to yer feet, an’ the sound o’ reapin’
 Comes up frae the stookit corn,
 And the braw reid puddock-stules are like jewels blinkin’
 And the brambles happs ye baith (Jacob 1916, p. 49)

The image provided is specific in its place, rich with personal association – ‘I’m hame!’ – yet situated in an undeniably modern moment is tainted by contemporary considerations of displacement and diaspora:

There’s a road to a far-aff land, an’ the land is yonder
 Whaur a’ men’s hopes are set;
 We dinna ken foo lang we maun hae to wander,
 But we’ll a’ win to it yet (ibid.)

Language forms the bridge, therefore, between the past, present and future, all impressed upon the mediation of the poem. Similarly, in ‘The Gowk,’ published in the same volume, Jacob repurposes the idiom of an old Scots rhyme, the original of which she references in the epigraph: ‘I see the Gowk an’ the Gowk sees me / Beside a berry-bush by the aipple-tree’ (ibid., p. 37). Jacob alludes to modern revisitations of language, literature, and tradition, illustrating how, though the content and form of the language itself may stay the same – and an important correlation with MacDiarmid is to note his reliance upon existing vocabulary over the establishment of neologisms – its context, perception and the intentions of its deployment are changeable over time. The character of the Gowk (a cuckoo), recurrent at the end of each of the three stanzas, provides a symbol in stasis to which the poem’s speaker returns, a silent presence that watches on as the seasons change and the tree he re-

sides in blossoms, fixed although the context in which he is visited and understood morphs around him:

Aprile-month, or the aippled flower,
 Tib, my auntie, will rage an' ca';
 Jimmie lad, she may rin an' glower –
 What care I? We'll be far awa!
 Let her seek me the leelang day,
 Wha's to tell her the road we'll gae?
 For the cannie Gowk, tho' he kens it a',
 He winna say! (ibid., p. 38)

The life of the locality she knew and experienced in Angus, of the people, the environment and the animals, plants and weathers which were intrinsic to it, are concentrated within Jacob's language, conscious at once of the value of change and of holding on. Marion Lochhead notes the meeting of 'love of home with all its intimate appeal, and the thirst for space and voyaging' in Jacob's poems, themes which Katherine Gordon relates to concepts of exile and homecoming amongst writers of the Scottish diaspora, namely Charles Murray and Robert Louis Stevenson (Gordon 2006, p. 39). There is value in studying Jacob's output both independently and as it communicates with the aims and priorities of the inter-war renaissance. In terms of the latter, it is the focus on the revitalisation of a native and natural language to Scotland and, within that, to specific Scottish regions, which forms the strongest sense of affinity between Jacob and the likes of MacDiarmid, whose poetry took different forms. Each illustrated alternative routes by which the vernacular could be utilised as a literary language capable of reflection, communication, and visualisation, of arousing feelings of attachment, of conveying understanding, and of affirming a secure self-identity and self-expression. Jacob, as MacDiarmid, revisited the past to establish a modern Scots which was flexible, malleable, and worth committing to as Scotland navigated and progressed into a new age.

Helen B. Cruickshank

Likewise committed to the propagation of Scots as a poetic medium was Helen B. Cruickshank, who wrote in her autobiography, *Octobiography* (1976), that 'Our Scots language is so colourful, graphic, economical, pungent or poignant that I am constantly surprised that it is not oftener used by poets' (Cruickshank 1976, p. 77). Following an amateur contribution to MacDiarmid's *Northern Numbers* anthology,

Cruikshank did not publish her first independent volume of poetry, *Up the Noran Water*, until 1934, with subsequent volumes only appearing after the Second World War. Each feature writing in Scots and English but it was the former in which her creativity flourished: as Jenni Calder considers, ‘The Scots she used was the real, lived language of her growing-up and it retained the pulse and vigour of its origins’ (Calder 2020). Cruickshank’s personal friendships with the renaissance writers and her involvement with Scottish PEN rendered her a central figure, simultaneously committed to both vernacular and continental engagement. In ‘The Ponnage Pool,’ Cruickshank exhibits her characteristic Scots, in rhythm with the landscape it depicts. Her language is self-aware of its sources and influences, a musical meandering of consciousness and apprehension. She borrows an epigraph from MacDiarmid’s poem ‘The Oon Olympian’, in which he calls upon the poet to ‘Sing / Some simple silly sang’ of nature; in response, she provides a philosophical contemplation of the landscape, earth and water and living thing, before her. As in Jacob’s subtle dialectic of stasis and change, Cruickshank reflects upon the endurance of ‘A tree I’ Martin’s Den / Wi’ names carved on it’ in contrast to flashes of movement in the salmon which ‘rins up Esk frae the sea,’ ‘The martin fleein’ across’, and amidst this scene, the situation and questioning of her own self-identity (Cruikshank 1968, p. 71). Through reflection and a command of language, the poem’s speaker is able to develop from the pronouncement that ‘I ken na wha I am’ to the contended proposition that ‘Ae day I’ll faddom my doobts’, looking to the future, albeit in no haste. Cruickshank engages with Scots poetry – in her allusion to MacDiarmid – and with Scots vocabulary’s applicability to matters of deep thought and comprehension as well as in a ‘simple silly sang’. In doing so, she illustrates the viability of the vernacular as a poetic medium, thus contributing to efforts of linguistic regenerations.

Through her involvement with the renaissance group, Helen Cruickshank became an important member of the Scottish branch of International PEN, founded in 1927 to promote Scotland’s autonomous participation in European culture.¹ Its establishment prompted travel between Scotland and Europe and increased the frequency of exchange between writers of different backgrounds, emblematic of ‘the crossing

¹ PEN International, founded in London in 1921 by Catharine Dawson-Scott, initially stood to represent ‘Poets, Essayists, Novelists’ – this was later expanded to include ‘Poets, Playwrights, Editors, Essayists, Novelists’. MacDiarmid lamented in a letter to Neil Gunn of May 1927 that ‘Scotland is one of the few European countries in which a centre of the PEN Club has not yet been formed’; a Scottish centre, with MacDiarmid as secretary, was founded within months; C. M. Grieve, letter to Neil M. Gunn, 16 May 1927 (Bold 1984, p. 217).

or dissolution of boundaries' which Tim Youngs highlights as a key component of modernism (Youngs 2010, p. 270). When MacDiarmid's attentions were diverted elsewhere – such as the foundation of the National Party of Scotland in 1928 and the 'intolerable burden' of mounting commitments – it was Cruickshank who took the reins, assuming the role of honorary secretary in 1929 (Robert 2010, p. 52). Her home at Dinnieduff, in Corstorphine, Edinburgh, became a central meeting point for figures involved with Scottish PEN, most of whom were also associated with the Scottish renaissance. Cruickshank's role with Scottish PEN reinforced the belief in Scottish literature and culture that informs her use of the vernacular in poetry, an opportunity to pursue the implementation of a secure national identity abroad as well as at home, in the real world as well as on the page.

Translation in Scotland

In 1926, a year before the founding of Scottish PEN, MacDiarmid wrote that 'We're ootward boond frae Scotland' (MacDiarmid 2017, p. 100). In this, a line from *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle*, he refers to the construction of a secure national self-identity which rejected insularity, opening its mind and eyes to interaction with Scotland's continental neighbours, a relationship built around language. In literature, this was engaged with, primarily, through the translation of European poetry and novels into both Scots and English.

In the first instance one thinks of Edwin and Willa Muir, who pursued careers as translators of German language literature outwith the writing and publication of their own work. The couple published over twenty translations, including English language versions of texts by Franz Kafka, Lion Feuchtwanger, Hermann Broch, Sholem Asch and Heinrich Mann. Sherry Simon considers their translation work as being 'closely tied to their commitment to "Europeanize" the British world of letters' (Simon 1996, p. 77). Moreover, Willa's own prose later exhibits a sensitivity to languages and linguistic structures acquired from the practice of translation. This is evident in *Imagined Corners* (1935), particularly in the interactions between her two female protagonists of Scottish and German backgrounds: in one instance the latter, Elise, tells the former, Elizabeth, that 'a nation must be held guilty of its language' (Muir 1987, p. 170), referring to correlations between grammatical gender and a society's subjugation of women. Edwin and Willa Muir's profession as translators was unique amongst the inter-war renaissance writers, yet many others experimented with translation, particularly in poetry.

The renaissance marked both endorsement of cultural interaction between Scotland and Europe and increased recognition of Scotland's history of translation. John Corbett emphasises the centrality of translation to Scottish experience, suggesting that 'Given the various speech communities which contribute to the linguistic diversity of Scotland [...] translation would have been essential for interaction' (Corbett 1999, p. 13). MacDiarmid, in particular, recognised this plurality as a long-standing feature of Scottish life and letters, encouraging 'healthy intromissions with the whole range of European literature', 'like a veritable return to the Good Europeanism of our mediaeval ancestors' (MacDiarmid 1994, p. 354). The degree of his achievement is suggested by Peter France and Duncan Glen, who speak admirably of his modernist translations, stating in the introduction to their anthology *European Poetry in Scotland* (1989) that 'it is hardly an exaggeration to say that no important translations of poetry were produced in Scotland until the work of Sir Alexander Gray and Hugh MacDiarmid' (France & Glen 1989, p. xv). Here, MacDiarmid's translations are considered alongside those of William Soutar, both having enriched and refreshed the vernacular with vocabulary, sentiment and connotation borrowed and adapted from other languages, revitalised for use in the modern age.

MacDiarmid's Adaptations

In the 1920s, MacDiarmid adapted European poetry into Scots using English cribs provided by translators including Babette Deutsch, Avrahm Yarmolinsky and Jethro Bithell. The adaptations are suggestive of MacDiarmid's conscious effort to assimilate continental voices into his creative work. His engagement with the foreign language poetry reflects priorities of translation proposed by Walter Benjamin in 'The Task of the Translator' (1923). Benjamin argued that 'A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully' (Benjamin 2002, p. 260). This concept was later reinforced by Jacques Derrida, who claimed that 'A translation would not seek to say this or that, to transport this or that context, to communicate such a charge of meaning, but to re-mark the affinity among the languages, to exhibit its own possibility' (Derrida 1985, p. 186). Both MacDiarmid and Soutar, as poets, sought to retain the 'pure language' and poetics of the original, whilst communicating it in their native Scots, finding a meeting point between the two – or three, considering the English cribs used – languages which did not detract from the strengths or particularities of either.

In *Sangschatw*, MacDiarmid includes 'The Last Trump', a poem suggested by the Russian of Dmitry Merezhovsky. The adaptation acts as a prime illustration of MacDiarmid's playfulness with vocabulary, as the Scots 'noo' is rhymed with the nonsense 'hullabaloo' and the onomatopoeic 'Tootle-ootle-ootle-oo' (MacDiarmid 2017, p. 29). Subsequently, *Penny Wheep* includes an adaptation from the German of Rudolf Leonhardt's 'The Dead Liebknecht', a poem rooted in the co-existence of devastation and hope which defined European socialism in the aftermath of the First World War: 'And wi' his white teeth shinin' yet / The corpse lies smilin' underfit' (MacDiarmid 2017, p. 57). MacDiarmid's acknowledgement of the death of Karl Liebkecht, co-founder with Rosa Luxemburg of the Spartacus League and German Communist Party, indicates his awareness of the local significance of continental politics, aligning Scottish and European priorities.

Yet the adaptations in *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* are the most significant of MacDiarmid's experiments with translation as linguistic regeneration. *A Drunk Man* incorporates Scots versions of poems by Alexander Blok, Else Lasker-Schüler, Zinaida Hippis and Georges Ramaekers, European influence integral to its hypothesis of a national post-war revival. The drunk man's discourse emulates the confluence of foreignness which MacDiarmid had experienced on the front in the First World War, typified in his nickname of Salonika as 'Thistleonica', coined to reflect the meeting of Scots and a 'polyglottery' of European languages.² The poem includes Russian, German and Belgian translation in Scots alongside references to sources and vocabulary from both home and abroad. MacDiarmid adds a Scottish touch to the scenes depicted in his adaptations, indicative of his desire for assimilation: Blok's 'restaurant' becomes a 'howff' in the Scottish slums, for instance, and the drunk man's illusion of the 'silken leddy' is viewed in a haze of whisky, Scotland's national drink, rather than wine (Deutsch & Yarmolinsky 1921, p. 29-30).

MacDiarmid's translations emphasise the expressive capacities of Scots vocabulary which has no equivalent in English: 'repulsion' becomes 'scunner', 'flaccid' becomes 'thowless', 'still' is 'dowf' (Deutsch & Yarmolinsky 1921, p. 70; MacDiarmid 2017, p. 94) and 'twilight' is 'the dumb-deid' (Deutsch & Yarmolsinsky 1923, p. 110; MacDi-

² Both 'Thistleonica' and 'polyglottery' come from a letter written by C. M. Grieve to George Ogilvie (2 September 1916): 'So many Scotsmen are here that it has been suggested that it should be called, not Thessalonica, but Thistleonica. But that would not be just to our allies. East and west meet and mingle here in an indescribable fashion. Soldiers of half-a-dozen different nations fraternize in canteens and cafés. Naturally and necessarily one picks up an incredible polyglottery. Even the coins in one's pockets are representative of almost every nation in Europe.' (Bold 1984, p. 16)

armid 2017, p. 96). The drunk man's ability to recall and translate the words of European poets, even in his inebriated proliferation of self-determination, highlights the affinity which MacDiarmid saw as existing between Scotland and his idea of Europe. MacDiarmid judged Scotland's achievements against the successes of its European counterparts, as evident in the adaptation of George Ramaeker's ode to a thistle, Belgium being a country 'comparable in size' (McCulloch 2004, p. 22) to Scotland, yet frustratingly more successful in the development of a national literary revival - 's'all a Belgian pit it into words / And sing a sand to't syne, and no a Scot?' (MacDiarmid 2017, p. 93). Yet MacDiarmid remained confident that 'What Belgium could so achieve, Scotland can also achieve' (MacDiarmid 1996, p. 29), particularly in the implementation of Scots as a modern literary language in conversation with European languages, functioning independently from English. His translations were received positively: D. S. Mirsky, for instance, described MacDiarmid as 'one of the few living poets of the European world', claiming that 'Your translations from Blok and Hippus are the only real re-creations in English of modern Russian poetry' (MacDiarmid 1994, p. 66).

After the 1920s, in which MacDiarmid's project of linguistic regeneration was confined to Scotland and Europe - 'Europe's far eneuch for me' (MacDiarmid 2017, p. 97), as the drunk man admits - a vision of broader geographical, temporal, and linguistic scope took precedence, adaptation substituted for referentiality, vocabulary plumbed from dictionaries and journals and a paradoxical endeavour to reclaim the plurality of the world's languages through poetry written predominantly in English.

William Soutar

William Soutar also referred to English cribs in the translation of Russian poems in *Theme and Variation*, unpublished as a whole until his posthumous *Collected Poems* (1948). The selection includes poems by Boris Pasternak, the title being a nod to Pasternak's 1917 collection of lyrics, *Themes and Variations*. Pasternak was a prolific translator in his own right, and his work exhibits a sensitivity to the metaphorical flexibilities of language. Soutar challenges the idea that, because of this, his poetry might be irreplicable, recognising and relying upon similar qualities in the Scots vernacular in his translations. In 'Star Swarm' (1934), the vocabulary used reflects the movement and mood of the imagery depicted, an effect enabled though the sonic impact of the Scots:

Up and attour the Grampian snaw
 Gaed sterns; and owre the sauty links;
 And owre the rocks that runch'd the sea:
 Wa's murl'd in mirk;
 And thochts breeng'd oot o' chinks
 Whaur tears forgat to fa':
 Alane in its Sahara smirl'd the Sphinx (Soutar 1988, p. 301)

It is poetry designed to be read aloud in emphasis of the dramatic onomatopoeia: 'runch'd' emulates the crunching sounds of the crashing waves and 'murl'd in mirk' creates the eerie atmosphere of gloominess, whilst the 'Sphinx' which 'Alane in its Sahara smirl'd' achieves a specific expression somewhere between a smile and a smirk whilst also providing an internal rhyme that unifies the separate images.

Elsewhere, Soutar provides a Scots version of 'The Prophet' by Alexander Sergeievitch Pushkin, a modern revisitation of Romantic sentiment achieved through the trans-mogrification of language and concepts conceived in an imperial Russian context – a world away from Soutar's working context when the poem was adapted in 1936. Pushkin, a keen and accomplished linguist, utilises archaic religious language in 'The Prophet', the 1828 poem since translated into English by numerous poets and translators, including Ted Hughes. Stephanie Sandler argues that Pushkin 'set the standard for what a vibrant, flexible Russian literary language might sound like' (Sandler 2020); Soutar, in engaging with this language through the versification of his Scots version, pays worthy tribute to Pushkin's literary and linguistic legacy whilst accentuating similar standards in his own language. Soutar's version highlights sounds specific to Scots, particularly the unvoiced 'ch' sound repeated throughout, including in the opening stanza:

Time gaed by him, flaucht on flaucht:
 Nicht cam owre him as he wrocht
 Hameless on the hichts o' thocht. (Soutar 1988, p. 307)

The Scots vernacular aspires to Pushkin's linguistic priorities, a marrying of rich, illustrative national languages and their capacity to capture multitudes and affinities across boundaries of time and space. Soutar's conscious selection of root languages, texts and writers is also suggestive of both cultural and political affinities, as in the case of Pasternak – note the correlation between the suppression of Scots by the English language of the British Union and Empire, and the suppression of Pasternak's

Russian dialect within the USSR – and Pushkin – renowned for his contribution to the existence of modern Russian. As Susan Bassnett argues, ‘The question of power relations is fundamental to any thinking about translation’ (Bassnett 2007, p. 368). This is relevant also to Soutar’s adaptations from English into Scots, including those from poems by W. B. Yeats, William Blake and Walter de la Mare. His practice engages, as MacDiarmid’s does, with Lewis Grassie Gibbon’s proposition of the ‘essential foreignness’ present in the work of Scottish writers who wrote in English, ‘as though he did not *write* himself, but *translated* himself’ (Gibbon 2001, p. 125). Whilst his repertoire illustrates his extensive capabilities with English as well as Scots – an aptitude if not a comfort – the decision to translate poems from other languages into Scots reinforces the idea of Scots as an autonomous language with a distinct culture, literature and identity, purposely distinguishing it from English.

MacDiarmid and Soutar, through their translations and emphasis upon Scotland’s links to Europe, connections between languages, cultures and socio-political priorities are made, borders of geography, time and genre crossed in affirmation of the creative viability of Scots, alongside akin minority languages.

Conclusion

It was language, linguistic regeneration, and the affirmation of cultural identities as founded upon understandings of language as encompassing plural and diverse forms of communication, knowledge, and expression, which united the various approaches encompassed within the Scottish literary renaissance. Hugh MacDiarmid’s construction of a synthetic Scots tapped into bygone elements of speech, literature and the specific modes of consciousness or connotations of experience which they implied, whilst vernacular poetry by the likes of Violet Jacob and Helen B. Cruickshank reflected the existence of intimate connections between landscape, locality, and language, complementing MacDiarmid’s national perspective. Each supplements Scots with fresh words, themes, and attitudes in their navigation of how to characterise the language in a rapidly modernising, changing world. Edwin and Willa Muir’s translations of German fiction and MacDiarmid and William Soutar’s adaptations of poetry from languages including German, Russian and Belgian each enrich Scotland’s languages through interaction with, and an improved understanding of, others. Their translations provide a nod to the international cultures which each was informed and influenced by, whilst illustrating the continental affinities

of Scots with other minority languages and reinforcing the value of a strengthened connection between Scotland and Europe.

The projects of the writers discussed in this essay took different forms and featured different priorities, but each was driven by the same incentive: to recharge Scottish culture through its language, and to do so with a heightened emphasis upon Scotland's place within Europe and beyond, as a small nation with a rich history and literature that deserved to be revitalised for future generations. It is, in part, the legacy of this dynamic approach which encouraged future generations of poets to engage with language as a fluid, malleable medium and to refuse to see it as static, singular, or homogenised by either internal or external pressures, contributing to the diverse languages which interact in speech, literature and politics in Scotland today.

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David Wojnarowicz's *Magic Box*: Transformation in the Lives of Affective Objects

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Our galleries, museums, and archives proliferate with affective objects. While an indistinct and nebulous concept, the idea of affect gestures to the ways in which people and objects create and sustain a wide variety of emotions and impacts. When focusing particularly on the role of objects, Sara Ahmed's (2010) description proves particularly useful: 'Affect is what sticks, or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects'. This affective power gives objects a particular agency, making them capable of animating change—both in themselves, and the worlds around them. This change can transform the experiences of visitors, and the significance of the objects themselves. This essay, by comparing David Wojnarowicz's *Magic Box* with religious relics, suggests some of the ways affective objects can transform and the impacts this can have.

Broadly defined, religious relics are the traces a notable individual leaves behind. These relics are often corporeal—in the form of blood, bone and other bodily remains. In other cases, relics are non-corporeal, made holy by contact with the divine. Examples of these contact relics include cloth, oil and even footprints (Walsham 2010). Relics exist around the world. Due to the nature of different faiths and associated corpse taboos, relics on a global scale share—at most—a family resemblance (Tambiah 2013). Here, I am focusing on the specific ways in which medievalist scholars have defined Christian relics.

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Religious and liturgical items have been discussed widely as lively, affective objects. This can be seen most notably in the work of medieval scholars such as Caroline Walker Bynum (2011) and Sarah Salih (2019), drawing on the especially embodied nature of medieval Christian worship. The ways in which they transform when placed within heritage and culture institutions has also received sustained attention from the likes of medieval art historian Cynthia Hahn (2017) and anthropologist Jan Geisbusch (2012). At once desacralised, these objects also gain new meaning and significance when enshrined within the pseudo-spiritual space of the museum or gallery (Branham 1994). While not a unique overlap, this scholarship creates a particularly valuable opportunity to use theological and historiographical studies of religious items to further analyse the embodied, affective impact of art objects on visitors to art and heritage institutions. In this paper, David Wojnarowicz's *Magic Box* is viewed through the same lens as a religious relic in order to draw out themes of transformation, absence and dissolution.

Over the course of at least four years, American artist, poet and AIDS activist David Wojnarowicz created an artwork entitled *Magic Box* that he kept under his bed. A secret until after his death in 1992, this wooden citrus fruit box is filled with fifty-eight different objects, ranging from small plastic figurines, to a prayer card, to sex toys. *Magic Box*, as a collection and container, has a clear lifetime of addition and collation. Largely mass-produced, cheap objects were inscribed with new, additional significance by Wojnarowicz, who labeled them as distinct, artistic and—most importantly—*magic* objects. This altered their meaning and context, granting individuality and emotional value to the objects held in *Magic Box*.

A secondary, but no less important, form of transformation is continuing to take place within this artwork. *Magic Box* is disintegrating. At once testament to a process of creation, in which mundane objects are made sublime, it is also a demonstration of how artistic and emotional significance can be created and sustained through material dissolution. As Lisa Darms (2009) describes in her paper 'The Archival Object: A Memoir of Disintegration,' the contents of the fruit box are being broken down through chemical and physical interaction with each other. This is a conservation problem that could be easily solved through the division of the items housed in *Magic Box*. Despite this, the staff at New York University's Fales Library and Special Collections have decided to preserve the original context and meaning of *Magic Box* by leaving it whole, at expense of its material integrity. *Magic Box*'s metamorphosis is two-fold.

Magic Box, in part due to this sense of transformation, has garnered sustained attention from journalists in the past few years. Many of these personal essays reveal a keen understanding of this artwork and the affective power it wields. Many written descriptions of *Magic Box* present the idea that amidst the feathers, rocks, and beads, a profound trace of the artist remains. This experience is often articulated through linking *Magic Box* and religious relics. While some of the objects that make up this artwork are devotional in nature—such as the assorted prayer cards and photos of gurus—even the most everyday items conjure up a pseudo-religious experience of the absent Wojnarowicz. ‘The holy cowboy, the hallowed cock ring,’ writes Hugh Ryan (2019), after describing himself as both ‘pilgrim’ and ‘acolyte.’ This kind of language—‘amulet’ (Laing 2014), ‘ritual’ (Ryan 2019), ‘remembrances’ (Ryan 2014)—permeates written descriptions of *Magic Box*. Even when bordering on comedic, these descriptions point to the different ways that *Magic Box* has a similar impact to traditional relics and reliquaries.

Relics enact agency on the world around them. They are ultimately used to manifest saints and gods through the fragments—bone, cloth, blood—they have left behind. This presence gives intangible experiences of the divine a sensory dimension, allowing believers to see, smell, touch, and taste the holy (Brazinski and Fryxell 2013). Their presence and holiness permeates the space around them, spreading into their containers, and the bodies of those who make contact with them (Hahn 2017). A similar presence can be seen within and around *Magic Box*. In particular, this artwork is described as a lively, sensorial experience, creating and sustaining emotional response through the body. This can be seen in Ryan’s (2019) description of hoping to ‘imbibe a mystical vibration’ through an object held in his palm. Writer and curator Tess Charnley (2019) is even more explicit in describing the physicality of her encounter. She imagines the last time Wojnarowicz sorted through these objects, before dwelling on the fact that ‘this is the closest I’ll ever come to touching him. My skin on his skin, the object as the medium between us.’ All of these writers mention the smell of *Magic Box*—cigarette smoke and citrus. Working through the body, the objects contained within *Magic Box* become capable of imparting a profound physical impact on those who interact with it.

This impact, like affect more broadly, is hard to define. It is, inescapably, an emotional response. Writer Olivia Laing (2014), for example, describes herself as being ‘sick with rage’ as they handle and sort the small collection, which evokes painful thoughts of Wojnarowicz’s AIDS-related illness and death. More pervasively, *Magic*

Box seems able to conjure up the deceased artist, who is felt as a physical presence. Charnley's experience, as suggested by her preoccupation with Wojnarowicz's touch, is particularly poignant. The objects of *Magic Box* 'produce a hum of the person, that you'll chase for hours and never quite locate.' In the narrative of her visit to the archive and gallery, she leaves with a 'familiar grief inching into my periphery' (Charnley 2019). Through the words of these writers, *Magic Box*'s liveliness can be seen in the indelible mark they carry away from exhibition and archive. In line with scholarship that conceptualises affect as something close to corporeal, the contents of *Magic Box* transform its surroundings with a remarkable physicality. Like the infectious divinity of a relic, *Magic Box*'s influence is profoundly difficult to contain or account for. To quote Laing, '[The contents of *Magic Box*] settled in my heart, as I expect they have settled in the heart of everyone who's seen them' (2014).

In the written descriptions of *Magic Box* it becomes clear that this artwork is able to mediate between the worlds of the living and dead. The objects contained within have transformed into spiritual mediators, inextricably linked with the bodies of both contemporary viewers, and the absent artist. *Magic Box*'s comparison to relics, then, is not too far from the truth. Whatever he found in these fragments of his life is realised through their enshrinement and labeling. Like the semi-grotesque leftovers of saints, the crumbling remains of Wojnarowicz have transformed from anonymous miscellany to something distinct, autonomous, and powerful. Treating *Magic Box* like a reliquary helps demonstrate how these transformations function within museums, galleries, and archives in some of these key, affective ways. *Magic Box*'s influence on those who come into contact with it serves as a clear example of how affective objects transform in value, and impact the world around them. *Magic Box* allows the divide between the living and the dead to wear a little thin, conjuring up the smell of oranges and tobacco, phantom touch, and ultimately the absent Wojnarowicz.

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There is no Self, there is only Perception: The Transitional Power of Pan Yuliang's Self-Portraits

Beth Price

Introduction

The life story of the Chinese artist Pan Yuliang¹ (1895 – 1977) has been immortalised in films, television series, novels, and even operas, but her work is startlingly unknown in the West. Sold to a brothel by her uncle as a teenager, escaping by marrying a client, becoming a key player in the cultural and social revolution of 1920s China, moving to Paris and going onto host solo exhibitions the world over, it is hard not to marvel at her experiences and the obstacles she overcame. The sheer number of her extant works is quite remarkable, now mostly housed in the Anhui Provincial Museum in Hefei, west of Shanghai, and the National Art Museum of China in Beijing.

Despite Pan's production outnumbering Van Gogh, ("Vincent Van Gogh Paintings" 2022), she is little known, particularly in the West. Her relative anonymity can partly be explained by the deeply ingrained sexism and anti-Chinese racism that permeated Europe and North America during the twentieth century. In her home country of China, Pan's main subject matter of nude women was considered unacceptable, and she was essentially exiled in 1956, unable to return for the rest of her life.

It is quite understandable, therefore, that Pan Yuliang's life story has been narrativized and commodified. However, this has come at the cost of analysis of her art-

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¹ Also Romanised as Pan Yu Lin.

work, leading to Pan being pushed into a passive role in her own history. My research aims to address this imbalance and re-centre Pan Yuliang's work as the main source. In this paper I will analyse two of Pan Yuliang's zihuaxiang self-portraits; the 1929 nude portrait *guying* (translated as *Reflection*, *Narcissism* or *Lonely Shadow*) and her *Untitled* self-portrait from 1963. Pan Yuliang's body of work provides a vital and underused insight into the development of Chinese feminism and the idea of constructing modernity and identity through art. My analysis will demonstrate the metamorphosis of Pan Yuliang's conception of the self, and the intersection between her self-conception and changing gender roles in China.

New Women, New Culture, New China

Pan's education and early career is inseparable from the intellectual, political and cultural reforms that took place in the 1910s and 1920s. Proponents of the *xin wenhua yundong* New Culture Movement explicitly rejected Confucian traditions in favour of a Westernised path to "modernity" (Zarrow 2005, p. 134). Pan's artistic education was heavily informed by teachers who believed that emulating Western culture and art was superior and more "modern" than following Chinese traditions (Teo 2016, p. 46).

Unlike European art tradition where the human body was a central element (Nead 1992, p. 1), the nude as a form of portraiture was not part of Chinese artistic practice (Jullien 2007, p. 42). Chinese art focused on humans as part of nature and the world around them rather than as an isolated and idealised form (Ibid, 61). Therefore, by producing European-style watercolour and oil paintings, Pan's very art style was transitional.

Visual Analysis

There are three core elements of analysing any image: the site of production (where it was made), the site of the image itself (where it was set), and the site of audiencing (where it was seen). For Pan, the site of production changed from art schools in Shanghai to studios in Europe. The site of audiencing similarly varied from paintings hung in galleries and observed by crowds, to private studies that were never meant to be publicly viewed. In a lot of her self-portraits, there is little in the way of setting (the site of the image). Instead, we look at signs to decode the meaning behind the image.

The sign is the basic unit of language whether written, spoken, or drawn. Signs are made up of two integrated components—the signified and the signifier. The signified is a concept or object, and the signifier the way we explain or codify the signified thing (Saussure 1959, p. 16–17)². By analysing the different signs in Pan's artwork, we can draw out themes of gender roles, the public and private performances of femininity, national identity, and aging.

Portraits of a Changing Woman

There is a stark visual difference between Pan's vulnerable portrayal of herself as a young woman in *guying* and the more confrontational aging woman seen in her 1963 work, *Untitled*. In *guying* (1929) Pan Yuliang sits on a chair covered with a colourful blanket. Her naked body faces the viewer, one breast exposed and one covered by her long hair that drapes over her shoulder and falls to her thigh. Pan's face is turned away from the viewer, looking instead at a hand mirror she holds. In *Untitled*, a much older Pan sits comfortably behind a round table, laden with bottles of alcohol and an ashtray full of stubbed out cigarettes. This version of Pan is more comfortable than her younger self in *guying*. *Untitled's* Pan smiles, green jacket falling open to expose both her breasts. She leans on the table, hugging her leg with her right hand.

Three elements of *guying* and *Untitled* demonstrate the transformation of Pan's self-identity and self-expression: setting, gaze, and modesty. With regard to setting, there is little that roots Pan in a specific time or place in either image. She is not wearing fashion that invokes a specific place or era, and the props that she chose could be found anywhere. This connotes that both as a young and an older woman, Pan did not have a strong sense of national identity, rather defining herself first and foremost as a woman. Pan's life and art were defined by liminality. Living between two cultures, she had to negotiate Chinese and European femininity, feminism, and gender roles. This meant that her social identity was ambiguous, and she was unable to fully participate in definitive rites of passage in either her native China or her adopted France. She, like many migrants of the twentieth century, lived in 'a state of "in-betweenness" belonging neither in one place nor the other... an indeterminate state of hybridity' (Rutherford 1990, p. 25).

² Gillian Rose (2007) provides an excellent introduction to methods of visual analysis and applying Saussure's linguistic theories to images.

Berger (1972, p. 55) argued that '[w]omen watch themselves being looked at'. That is, women are the audience to their own objectification in art. In *guying*, Pan holds a hand mirror and gazes at herself, whilst simultaneously being watched by the viewer. She is the ultimate object, observed both by herself and by the audience. In contrast, in the later self-portrait, her gaze is drawn by the bottles of wine and whisky on the table. Although she is still viewed by the audience, she is not viewing herself; her self-presence is shaped by her actions (in this case drinking and smoking) rather than how she is perceived.

Pan's modesty in these two portraits is completely opposed. In *guying*, her head is turned away from the audience and her long hair covers one breast. She is carefully choosing which elements of her body she is prepared to display. In the later portrait, however, Pan's face is turned towards the viewer, and both breasts are exposed by her open shirt. Where she is naked and trying to cover herself in *guying*, there is an air of not caring in *Untitled*. Environment and props such as these act as paradigmatic signs of womanhood (Rose 2007, p. 84) and "performative" femininity (Butler 2006). The decadent, unfeminine (for Chinese women) props connote that Pan is not concerned with her identity fitting into a narrow category of femininity.

Finally, it is useful to consider the medium of both paintings. The earlier *guying* was an oil painting whilst *Untitled*, created in Pan's later years, is in *caimo* ink-and-colour. Pan's training in oil painting — her favoured medium in her earlier career as in *guying* — was focused on emulating European art. In contrast, her use of ink and colour, as in *Untitled*, reflects Chinese artistic traditions, combining oil painting with traditional Chinese ink drawing. Pan increasingly favoured *caimo* as a medium in the mature stage of her career (the 1950s and 60s) after she was established as an artist of some renown and when she was living in isolation in Paris, unable to return to China (Ng 2019, p. 21). Pan's development of *caimo* ink-and-colour merits further research in itself. In his preface to volume five of the *Collected Artworks* Tao Yongbai summarises the significance of Pan's synthesised technique:

Her lines conceived oriental charms, creating a new style of line drawings, merging the Chinese and the West. . . . to form her "new line drawing", displaying her individualistic and aesthetic character with her oriental charm, providing valuable references for the development of Modern Chinese painting. (in Pan and Fan 2015, p. 4)

It is arguable that Pan's painted identity as an older woman was drawn from a reinvention of Chinese traditions in combination with European life. We know that Pan

wanted to return to China and made repeated attempts to do so in her later years (Clark 2013). This strengthens the argument that her chosen *caimo* medium is reflective of a kind of imagined nostalgia for China. If her nude self-portraits can be seen as manifestations of Chinese modernity (Teo 2010, p. 70), then Pan's transition to a Chinese-adjacent medium can be seen as a manifestation of her own Chinese identity alongside the reality of her life in Europe.

Conclusion

The female body was a cultural 'battlefield' (Ko and Wang 2007, p. 9), and a key signifier in the evolution of gender roles and femininity in China. Pan's position as artist and creator gave her an unusual level of control of both the image of female bodies and her own self-determination. Her portraits are increasingly self-critical and yet also confident, documenting a process of physical transformation (aging) as well as the metamorphosis of her own conception of self and self-image.

Chinese feminism, as it developed in the twentieth century, was not merely a reworking or translation of Western feminism but created by Chinese women who wanted to 'construct their own modernity'. In much the same way, Pan's self-portraits were not merely an interpretation of Western artworks, but a means through which she constructed her own cross-cultural modernity and autonomy.

Where the version of Pan portrayed in *guying* can be seen to perform traditional femininity, 'offering up [her] femininity as the surveyed' (Berger 1972, p. 55), the older version of Pan that she created in *Untitled* is very much that of a self-assured woman who no longer defines herself by how she is viewed by an external observer. Through her use of framing, signs, and medium, Pan Yuliang's self-portraits document the metamorphosis, or transformation of her self-identity and femininity.

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Empowerment through Transformation in Japanese Magical Girl Anime

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The Mahou Shoujo (magical girl) genre is one of the most well-known subgenres of shojo manga and anime mediums, having been cemented in Japanese pop culture since the 1960s with the element of transformation as a defining feature of the genre. Aimed at a young female viewership, they typically feature a female protagonist who possesses magical powers, usually providing her with a visual transformation sequence which can alter her physical appearance. The metamorphosis can result in a diverse range of forms for these protagonists, from superheroes in cute costumes to older versions of themselves. One example to take the latter approach is the 1983 anime *Magical Angel Creamy Mami*, where the titular heroine is the pop star alter ego of the young protagonist. However this paper will also argue that the element of metamorphosis in these narratives allow for complex and nuanced stories to be told from an emotional and psychological standpoint. As a result, magical girls allow their young female audiences to experience fantastical and empowering situations while learning to navigate adulthood at a digestible pace.

The majority of magical girls access their transformations by activating a supernatural item, which are usually conventionally feminine objects. These can include but are not limited to, wands, brooches and compact mirrors. This is a clear display of the protagonist's agency as they must often do this by reciting an incantation specific to their own ability, choosing to empower themselves when they wish as they can only access the entirety of their magic once transformed. A famous examples of

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this can be seen in the well-known magical girl series, *Sailor Moon*, with the titular heroine's iconic catchphrase: 'Moon Prism Power, Make Up!'

The genre existed since the 1960s, with the earliest examples being *Mahoutsukai Sally* (Sally the Witch) and *Himitsu no Akko chan* (The Secrets of Akko-chan). These have set two defining categories for magical girls to fall under, the Sally type and the Akko type. Heavily inspired by the American sitcom, *Bewitched*, Sally was a princess from another kingdom who already knew how to use her magic, therefore she could serve as a paragon for a child audience while utilising her powers to blend in with the humans. Whereas Akko was an ordinary girl who received her abilities from a magical compact mirror, meaning she has to learn how to use it responsibly. This means that the audience could follow her learning from mistakes she made from experimenting with her new power and initially using it for childish purposes, such as taking on the appearance of her teacher. Sally was a role model, while Akko was a relatable peer. Nevertheless, both narratives cemented the portrayal of femininity as a positive trait. Akiko Sugawa Shimada states 'Akko's magical transformation serves simultaneously as a vicarious fulfilment of the desire to change and gain self-confidence among girls, and as a site in which Japanese hegemonic femininity (e.g. demure feminine behaviour and cute appearance) is interplayed with powerful femininity' (Sugawa Shimada 2011, p. 152). Therefore, not only were magical girl narratives popular with the young female demographic, they served as a platform to present femininity as empowering. Many modern magical girls and the two examples I will be discussing are of the Akko type, which means the protagonists begin the narrative as civilians and therefore gives the audience the opportunity to learn about their magic system alongside them. This category is also effective in creating strong internal conflicts for the girl as she must learn to navigate balancing her new alter ego with her original identity.

Even though magical girls are now widely known as a type of Japanese superhero, before *Sailor Moon* redefined the magical girl's status as warriors in the 1990s, magical girl narratives were not always about fighting crime. They presented an opportunity to tell smaller scale stories that focused on the protagonist solving conflicts, while still using the metamorphosis element to provide fantastic wish-fulfilment for young girls. Early transformations were often episodic, where the girls could change into various forms of their choosing depending on the situation. They could take the forms of animals, adults in various careers, or older versions of themselves. One notable series to have used the latter was the 1983 anime, *Creamy Mami the Magic Angel*.

Created by Studio Pierrot, it is the story of Yu Morisawa, who is granted magic powers for one year with a transformation that allows her to physically age to a grown-up version of herself. Through a series of events, she is scouted by a talent agent and as a result, becomes a glamorous pop star, creating an entirely new identity under the name *Creamy Mami*. Once transformed, no one who knew Yu could recognize her anymore, even her own parents become fans of Mami without ever realising she is their daughter.

Yuji Nunokawa, representative director of Studio Pierrot stated in an interview that:

We wanted to make an animation that was not just cute, but also dramatic. The story of a young girl who transforms into an idol allowed us to pursue surprisingly deep themes... Her transformative powers allow her to suddenly become an idol, a young woman that is older than Yu, more mature and in charge of herself, which is why little girls are attracted to her. (Galbraith 2014, p. 58)

Sugawa Shimada explains the appeal of the transformation presented in *Creamy Mami* when she writes 'Young girls often fantasise about being glamorous women in the adult world, but being permanently trapped in adulthood would be scary. In the *Maho Shoujo* anime of the 1980s, magic offers the heroines as a means of self-expression and self-affirmation by allowing them to experience adulthood temporarily' (Sugawa 2015). In this way Yu's double life allows her to be both a child with a loving family and a young adult with a successful career, as she is still able to return to her original younger self at the end of the day after experiencing moments of adult independence. Many of the conflicts stem from Yu finding herself placed in situations where she must figure out how to be in the same place as Mami without anyone discovering her secret identity. It further affects her personal life when her childhood friend Toshio develops feelings for Mami, placing Yu in a love triangle with her alter ego. Nunokawa stated further in the interview that 'Yu has to struggle to get him back, but this is a struggle with herself. We wanted to depict psychological conflict' (Galbraith 2014, p. 58). Yu often feels frustrated at Toshio's admiration of Mami but is unable to tell him the truth, due to the strict rule that her magic must remain a secret. The importance of this secrecy is highlighted halfway through the series when Toshio accidentally witnesses Yu's metamorphosis, resulting in the loss of her magic, and leaving her trapped as Mami. Despite retaining the glamour of her alter ego, this fixed state makes Yu deeply unhappy as she is unable to return to her family. It is only when Toshio agrees to erasing his memory of Mami's real identity, that she is able to return to her original self with her powers intact. This is one of the

key instances where the anime emphasises that ultimately Yu's original self prevails over her magically created self. Even when in the persona of Mami, Yu's personality and priorities remain unchanged, and she mostly uses her magic out of necessity. When the time comes for her to relinquish her powers during the series finale, Yu has fully accepted this outcome, only wishing to hold one final concert as a farewell to everyone who supported her as Mami. Kumiko Saito explains that Yu's treatment of her magical persona is a metaphor for her coming-of-age narrative. 'The heroine seeks magic to prove, although retroactively, the importance of adolescence preceding the possession of 'magic' that enables (and forces) female maturation' (Saito 2014, p. 134). Nevertheless, the text implies that Yu's experience with her magical alter ego equips her with self-confidence and allows her to reinforce and assert her true self, as her 'tripartite factors—the unadulterated self, idealised female identity and legitimated desirable self—are ultimately integrated into a single subjectivity' (Sugawa Shimada, p. 179).

Even in more traditional good versus evil narratives, psychological and emotional drama has continued to be a focus for the genre, which is a typical feature for shojo manga as a whole. While *Sailor Moon* was the one to reinvent magical girls as the 'transforming warrior', the Sailor guardians are able to maintain a strong sense of femininity. Instead of conventional battle armour, their warrior costumes are sailor dresses with matching manicures and jewelled tiaras. This is an indicator that more emphasis is placed on resolving conflict from a peaceful perspective, offering an alternative to the action sequences in traditional superhero narratives. This is highlighted in the fact that many protagonists in Magical Girl narratives, including *Sailor Moon* herself, possess a strong dislike towards violence. According to Sugawa Shimada, 'Although her weapons increase in power as the series proceeds, her tasks are concentrated on 'purifying' the negative aura of enemies and 'healing' them with the Moon Stick' (Sugawa Shimada 2011, p. 181). As a result, there is more emphasis placed on *Sailor Moon's* healing abilities. It is also important to note that in contrast to Akko and Mami, the protagonists of *Sailor Moon* operate as a team of five. Sugawa Shimada explains that there is extreme significance in their matching uniforms, stating 'The transformation with the sailor uniforms signifies female solidarity and femininity as an expression of power' (Sugawa Shimada 2011, p. 187). These complementing costumes convey how the girls reinforce positivity in belonging to a group, and demonstrate the power of feminine solidarity.

Overall the concept of the Magical Girl continues to be a source of empowerment for its young female demographic. Sugawa Shimada further explains that the transformation presented in narratives such as *Creamy Mami* gave their protagonists confidence to assert their own selves through their ultimate reconciliations of their dual identities when she writes '[i]t (magical transformation) served as a site for expressing and asserting the 'self'. Akko asserted her 'self' when she failed in her transformation. Yu's power of transformation into her adult self was eventually lost, whilst Yu expressed satisfaction with her unadulterated 'self'" (Sugawa Shimada 2011, p. 279). Therefore the element of metamorphosis continues to play highly significant role for the genre as it provides the protagonists with unique abilities which allow them to access desirable spaces at their own pace and enable them to grow and develop as people.

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The Need of a New Personal Culture in the Time of Uncertainty: Transformation of Július Koller into U.F.O.-naut J.K. in the Light of Franz Kafka and the Covid-19 Pandemic

Peter Tuka

Introduction

'In this difficult time-space (of uncertainty and worry), I feel the need of a new culture.' (Koller 1968-1969). With these words, Slovakian artist Július Koller (1939-2007) began the draft of his manifesto *The Need of Cosmo-Humanist Culture* [Potreba Kozmohumanistickej Kultúry, 1968-1969], in which he reacted to the political, social and cultural changes happening in Czechoslovakia during the year 1968. It was an extremely dramatic year for Koller and all the country's citizens. The communist government led by Alexander Dubček began the reform movement known as the 'Prague Spring', through which they aimed to introduce some measures of democracy into the country's communist establishment. This movement was referred to at the time as a 'socialism with a human face'. It brought widespread hope for many people as Czechoslovakia was heading towards becoming one of the most liberal countries of the Eastern Bloc. However, a dramatic shift of development suddenly appeared on the 21st August 1968, when the military forces of the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia to stop the reforms and to bring the matters 'back to normal.' What followed is known in history as a particularly oppressive regime of the so-called 'normalization', which was enforced by the presence of the occupation army from August 1968 to November 1989. Czechoslovakia thus suddenly switched from being one of the most liberal to one of the most oppressed countries of the Eastern Bloc. Koller labelled the events of 1968 as 'Shockialism'—the play with the words

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‘shock’ and ‘socialism’—and remembered the year as the time when he ‘lost his identity and freedom’ (Koller 1994).



Figure 1: Július Koller, Self Portrait (Anti-Picture), 1969.

The loss of identity of Július Koller is effectively captured in his *Self Portrait (Anti-Picture)* of 1969 (Figure 1), where we see only gloves and a beret marked with question marks attached to a perforated wooden support. Július Koller disappears and he returns in 1970 as a strange new being called *U.F.O.-naut* (Figure 2). Koller later described his transformation as becoming ‘the extra-terrestrial with terrestrial origin’ (Koller 2003). He emerged as a new being with double identity, existing between two worlds. Between the known earthly world and the unknown world of unidentified flying objects. The suffix *-naut* in *U.F.O.-naut* comes from the ancient Greek and is used to indicate someone who navigates certain vehicle on a journey. The best-known example from Greek mythology are the *Argonauts*—the group of heroes sailing on the ship called *Argo* beyond the borders of the known world to retrieve the Golden Fleece. *U.F.O.-naut* journeys on U.F.O. as Koller indicates in one of his texts of 1970 (Koller 1970b). Koller’s U.F.O. is inspired by unidentified flying objects, but for the purposes of his art concept, he altered the meaning of the abbreviation

to 'Universal-cultural Futurological Operations', which he manifested at the time of his Metamorphosis to *U.F.O.-naut*:

'Universal-cultural Futurological Operations (Manifesto):

Subjective cultural actions – operations which form (create) cultural situations (directed to the future) in the universal objective reality. Instead of new art and aesthetics, 'U.F.O.s' give rise to a new subject, consciousness, life, creation, i.e. to Cosmo-Humanist Culture. Cultural situations are carried out via my action infiltration into everyday reality' (Koller 1970a).

What we read in Koller's manifesto is the determination to create the so-called cultural situations instead of art in a traditional sense. The mission of *U.F.O.-naut* is to infiltrate everyday reality and create situations that alter people's perception of this reality. Koller believed that in this way he could facilitate transformation or Metamorphosis of other people around him, and give rise to new subjects, new consciousness, new way of being – to the new *Cosmo-Humanist Culture*. He led the way with his own Metamorphosis to *U.F.O.-naut*. Koller's idea to create new *Cosmo-Humanist Culture* as a new way of being for transformed subjects came as his reaction to the dramatic changes people in Czechoslovakia experienced during and after 1968. Koller's loss of identity, his ontological death and subsequent re-birth as *U.F.O.-naut* were a response to the threshold experience of crisis.

This article is written at the time of global crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic,¹ which has created for many people a drastic change in their lives – a threshold experience similar to that of Július Koller in 1968. In his study of the global crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic, Kevin Aho reflects on the Heideggerian concept of 'the uncanny' (das Unheimliche) that we experience when our comforting and familiar feeling of 'home-like' (das Heimliche) or feeling of being at-home in the world gets disrupted. In such situation, when our old routine ways of being shatter as the result of a crisis, we find ourselves alienated or disconnected from the world, confused and anxious. Our sense of self-interpretation breaks. Aho concludes his paper by demonstrating Heidegger's argument that the uncanny does not simply occur at the time of crisis, but that it is always present, and the comforting sense of being securely grounded in the

¹ The original proposal for the Metamorphosis postgraduate conference was conceived in January 2021, during the peak of 2nd wave in the UK driven by the Alpha variant. It was presented online at the conference in June 2021, at the time when Delta variant began to emerge in the UK. The final touches to the article for post-conference proceedings are being made in January 2022, during the peak of yet another wave driven by the Omicron variant.



Figure 2: Július Koller, *U.F.O.-naut J.K. (U.F.O.)*, 1970, photo by Milan Sirkovský, Slovak National Gallery, UP-DK 2731.

world is just an illusion, and that in fact the uncanny is who we are. Therefore, he argues that the Covid-19 pandemic

'has certainly unsettled our sense of being at-home, but this unsettling is at the same time freeing; it loosens our rigid hold on things, opening up a 'room for free play' [...] where we can let go of our fallen routines and envision new meanings and possibilities for living. When we face the uncanny in this way, we are afforded something that policy makers and public health experts could never provide, the space to collectively recreate or reimagine who we are' (Aho 2020 p.17).

Aho's argument offers us a premise that the experience of alienation at the time of crisis creates an opportunity for personal transformation and construction of new ways of being. Aho reflects on the current crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the same argument seems to fit very neatly to Július Koller's experience of the crisis during and after 1968 and his idea of turning the crisis experience into an opportunity for personal transformation and creation of a new culture.

This paper will demonstrate that Koller's art implements to practice what Aho indicates in theory. Consequently, it will argue that our current experience of crisis helps us better understand Koller's situation in 1968 and the circumstances of his personal

transformation. At the same time, it will ask what we can learn from Koller's experience and his dealings with the crisis that could inform our current experience of the crisis today.

U.F.O.-naut and the uncanny

The situation during and after 1968 in Czechoslovakia could be understood in a similar way to Aho's analysis of the current Covid-19 pandemic. The military invasion and the subsequent regime of normalization had a significant impact on the lives of ordinary citizens. The shocking experience of the political and social crisis shattered the comforting illusion of being at-home in the world and resulted in the split of the peoples' existence. The main goal of normalization was the restoration of the unity of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, consolidation of the leading role of the party in the society and re-establishment of the party's control over all spheres of the social, political, and economic system including everyday life of the country's citizens. In practice, it meant a wide-spread system of public surveillance and control directed at identifying any abnormal, suspicious or potentially disruptive behaviour. As a result of the omnipresent surveillance of the public sphere, people very quickly learned to present certain desired opinions in the public and to keep the non-desired ones for the safety of their privacy. The external political normalization was thus reflected in the internal normalization of people's behaviour (Tuka 2021, p. 8-9). The true identity of an individual no-longer belonged to the public sphere, which resulted in a perceived rupture between the self and the other. The illusion of belonging, of being at-home in the world was broken and the uncanny was exposed. This explains Koller's earlier quote that the military occupation of the country and the change of political regime resulted not only in his loss of freedom, but also in the loss of his identity.

As the result of the crisis experience, Koller's world was shattered, his ties were broken, he found himself lost among the chaos and as expressed in his self-portrait of 1969, and he remained detached from the world, alienated, hidden behind the question mark. He immediately began to address this experience in his art. Already in 1968, Koller began to draft the idea of *Cosmo-Humanist Culture*, which was a direct response to his lived experience of that time. He started the draft by writing: 'In this difficult time-space (of uncertainty and worry), I feel the need of a new culture.' He continued by lamenting that modern art has already exhausted all of its means to make any impact. Therefore, he determined to become the author of 'signals, the

aim of which is no longer a modern art, but a Cosmo-Humanist Culture' (Koller 1968-1969).

Koller's ambition to facilitate a new culture instead of making art gained sharper contours in 1970, when he read an essay *Artist without Art* [*Umělec bez Umění, 1970*] by the Czech art historian Josef Kroutvor. In this text, Kroutvor engages with the development of modernism in art. Similarly to Koller, Kroutvor reaches the conclusion that art has already exhausted its means, and the future of creativity lies not in the making of art, but in the facilitation of the new culture of living. He proposes that instead of creating new objects, artists should focus on transformation of subjects – human beings. Kroutvor envisions this as a new form of ritual culture that replaces traditional aesthetic culture (Kroutvor 1970).² Koller fully identified with Kroutvor's ideas in the manifesto of his *U.F.O.* programme in 1970. A year later, in his manifesto titled *Secession* (detachment), Koller even appropriated Kroutvor's argument that 'the essence of live and living art is not a variation of an object, but a mutation of human,' adding in the brackets '(transformation into *U.F.O.-naut*)' (Koller 1971).³

Koller realised his own transformation into *U.F.O.-naut* at the time of his solo exhibition in the Gallery of Youth [Galéria Mladých] in Bratislava. The exhibition known as *Ping-Pong Club J.K.* took place between the 5th and the 29th March 1970, when Koller simply installed a ping-pong table in the premises of the art gallery and invited the visitors to join the game. The exchange of blows between two people playing ping-pong was meant to be a metaphorical confrontation between the self and the other. Igor Gazdík, the exhibition's curator explained in the accompanying text printed on the exhibition leaflet that the aim was to 'provoke within the subject a conflict between the spiritual and the physical.' Through the assertion of this confrontation the ping-pong environment 'seek[ed] to establish a spiritual connection with, and to highlight certain parts of the world in which a man lives' (Gazdík 1970). In other words, Koller affirmed the internal conflict of an individual's dual existence that occurred in people's lives following the events of 1968. Rather than identifying it as a problem that needs to be solved and returned back to its original state, Koller began building on it, discovering the potential of renewal after crisis.

² Július Koller's archive contains multiple annotated copies of the text, proving Koller's close engagement with Kroutvor's theory – Slovak National Gallery, Archív J.K., IM358/A28.

³ The sentence in Koller's manifesto is quoted from Josef Kroutvor, *Hra a Pojem* (Kroutvor 1971).

In the light of Koller's U.F.O. manifesto, we can understand *Ping-Pong Club J.K.* as a cultural situation created by Koller via his action infiltration into the ordinary reality. A simple game of ping-pong was given an added meaning within the context of the current political and existential crisis. Or perhaps it was the other way around – the threshold experience of crisis was given a new meaning when perceived from the perspective of the game. In ping-pong, conflict or confrontation is a natural part of the game and is essential in order for the game to even exist. *Ping-Pong Club J.K.* was meant to embrace the uncanny – the conflicting and fragmented identity of an individual – as the true identity. Koller sought to evoke this kind of transformative experience that would give rise to a new consciousness, a new subject and a new way of being as a part of the *Cosmo-Humanist Culture*. *Ping-Pong Club J.K.* was the kind of cultural situation through which Koller hoped to offer people an opportunity to transform into *U.F.O.-nauts*. In 1971, Koller noted that 'everyone already is *U.F.O.-naut* but not everyone realises it' (Koller 1971) as if hinting towards the assumption that the uncanny had always been present and it is in fact who we truly are.

Metamorphosis

Koller described his transformation into U.F.O.naut as becoming 'the extra-terrestrial with terrestrial origin' (Koller 2003). This characterization can be understood similarly as one of the Baudelairean flaneur (Baudelaire 1863) – as someone who is present but does not quite belong, as someone who is a detached observer of the society. *U.F.O.-naut* can also be perceived similarly as characters of Franz Kafka, whose routine world suddenly changes. Kafka's characters typically find themselves in a strange situation, over which they seem to have no control and they can only observe what is happening around them. They undergo a feeling of detachment and alienation as a result of the experience of the uncanny at the time of crisis.

Particularly close to the problems discussed in this paper is Kafka's short novella *Metamorphosis* (1915). It begins with Gregor Samsa waking up and discovering that he has been transformed into a huge insect. This new shocking change turns his life upside-down. Gregor cannot communicate with his family and cannot continue his job as a salesman. He is learning to live with this new situation, in his new body, locked up in his room, completely separated from the outside world, with his family (parents and a younger teenage sister Grete) turning away from him in disgust and fear.

The situation of Gregor's transformation is made even worse by the fact that he is the breadwinner and the sole provider for the family. His sister Grete is a minor, talented violinist, whom Gregor fully supports and saves money in order to send her to a fine conservatoire. Gregor's mother is having a health problem with asthma and is thus unemployed. His father, also an unemployed aging man has left substantial debts that Gregor is paying off. The financial situation of the family changes dramatically with Gregor's inability to continue working and supporting his parents and sister. All three are forced to find employment and they no-longer depend on Gregor. In fact, Gregor is becoming a greater and greater nuisance for the family as the time progresses. One night, when he is lured out of his room by Grete's violin playing, he scares a group of tenants to whom the family rented a spare room in order to secure more income. Disgusted and afraid, the tenants refuse to pay any rent for the time they had spent in the apartment and even threaten the family with legal action. The events escalate to the point when Grete suggests that perhaps it is time to get rid of 'it' – referring to Gregor. Saddened, alienated, able only to passively observe his family, unable to communicate and join in, Gregor accepts his fate and dies of starvation in his room. This causes both sadness and relief for the family. After Gregor is gone, they take a trip to the countryside, discussing the possibility of selling the apartment and buying a smaller and cheaper one. The parents notice how Grete has grown up and matured into a pretty young woman and realise that perhaps it is already a good time to find her a husband.

Kafka was a widely debated author in Czechoslovakia since the 1960s. The popularity of his work was triggered particularly by the 1963 conference in Liblice near Prague, which focused on the interpretation of Kafka's work. Edvard Goldstücker, one of the conference's main organisers, later explained the consensus that began to emerge: 'Kafka's aim was to escape the feeling of alienation, in which he found himself during his life. He could not overcome it, and that was his chief problem, and his oeuvre is actually a series of attempts to resolve this problem, how to overcome the feeling of alienation from the human society' (Goldstücker 1983). More recently, the Germanist Milan Žitný argued that 'Kafka's work is a certain form of autotherapy' (Žitný 2013). Kafka's dealing with his own problem was considered the most interesting aspect of his work in the communist Czechoslovakia:

'while attempting to solve his own problem, he created works, in which people around the world keep finding echoes of their own most intimate, most internal worries, fears and thoughts. He penetrated deeper and closer than any other author to the solution of the un-

solvable problem – to create for the modern society full of doubts and skepsis, some kind of mythology that would bring it back together’ (Goldstücker 1983).

The reason why Kafka’s work echoed so strongly at the time of normalization in Czechoslovakia is quite apparent. People’s experience after 1968 was very similar to that of Kafka and his characters. Particularly relatable was the sudden encounter of crisis, which disrupted the routine of everyday life and turned comforting security into discontent and anxiety. For Gregor Samsa, as well as for the citizens of Czechoslovakia, the familiar feeling of homelike was replaced with the experience of the uncanny. In both cases, we talk about a rapid change in the course of time that overturned the existing set of values and disrupted the connections in the natural organization of the individual’s or the collective structures. These broken ties resulted in the collapse of the existing structures, in the virtual collapse of one’s world and in the feelings of alienation and detachment. As Goldstücker explains, many people in Czechoslovakia used to say: ‘we don’t read Kafka that much now, perhaps we cannot even read him properly, because here we live Kafka’ (Goldstücker 1983).

Július Koller was an informed reader of Kafka’s work.⁴ However, he clearly refused to identify with characters like Gregor Samsa who became the victims of a sudden change and had no power over the new situation they found themselves in except for being passive observers. Koller wrote a following note in the margin of an article he read about Kafka: ‘I am an observer, but with the endeavour to change anything I don’t like’ (Koller 1966). Thus, in his determination not to remain a passive and helpless observer, Koller gets closer to the other members of the Samsa family, particularly to Gregor’s sister Grete. She took an active stance in dealings with the nightmarish situation the family found themselves in. From being a carer of Gregor at the beginning, Grete turned into the one who decided it was the time to get rid of him. She embraced the new situation and decided to move on with it. Because of this active decision to make a change, Grete emerged as a new transformed being – as a mature young lady who was ready to move on into the new ventures of life.

Metamorphosis begins with Gregor’s transformation and ends with Grete’s. Gregor was not the only one affected by the sudden change. His *Metamorphosis* into a giant

⁴ Although, it is difficult to determine which specific works by Kafka Koller read, or whether he read *Metamorphosis* in particular or not. The material in his estate at the Slovak National Gallery contains mostly Koller’s secondary literature about Kafka – articles and his research notes that often give an indication of the extent to which Koller was informed in the area, but they do not always indicate which primary texts he read.

insect caused a huge change in the lives of his parents and sister Grete too. The sole provider for the household turned overnight into the greatest burden for his family. Their world turned upside-down as the result of a dramatic event. They started learning to cope with the situation and adjusting to the new way of living under the changed circumstances. In the end, each of Gregor's family members emerged from the experience as completely transformed subjects with the new direction in life and the new future ahead of them. Consequently, if people in Czechoslovakia 'lived Kafka' as the subjects of the unexpected rapid change, Július Koller shows that there was always a choice between the characters they could live – Gregor, a passive victim of the uncanny or Grete who embraced the uncanny and actually benefited from it.

When Grete's transformation is understood from the perspective of Heideggerian thought, as discussed by Kevin Aho, it again highlights the notion that the alienation connected with the experience of uncanny does not simply occur at the time of crisis, but it is always there as the actual true form of being. The secure and comforting feeling of being at-home in the world is just an illusion, and the experience of crisis simply breaks this illusion and reveals the uncanny (Aho 2020, p.14). This idea can be clearly seen in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. Gregor's transformation into the giant insect did not suddenly change him from the provider to the burden of the family. He was the burden all along. By providing the family with income, he created the false illusion of comfort and security that hindered the individual growth of the family members. Only through the experience of the uncanny, when the illusion shattered, they could emerge as new transformed beings, assuming new active roles within the society. Kafka's work was interpreted in the former Czechoslovakia during the 1960s from precisely this kind of existentialist perspective. Referring to the work of Edvard Goldstücker, Milan Žitný explains that it was understood at the time that

'the principle of Kafka's work was the feeling, that between the individual and the world rises a false façade, which obscures the true reality of our life. Kafka's work, in other words, attempts to penetrate behind this façade in order to remove all the deposits that prevent an individual from being exposed to the real conditions of life in a complicated modern society' (Žitný 2012, p. 129).

Kafka attempted to shatter the illusion of comfort and belonging through his characters, who often 'oscillated between two forms of existence,' between the spiritual and the physical world, representing 'variations of the relationship to the self and the close environment' (Žitný 2013) – relationship between the self and the other.

Július Koller's *Ping-Pong Club J.K.* closely relates to the aim of Kafka's work as it was understood in Czechoslovakia at the time. The installation publicly embraced the uncanny by highlighting the necessity of the inner conflict between the spiritual and the physical, between the self and the other. Július Koller emerged from this confrontation as *U.F.O.-naut*, as the new transformed being who combines both sides, who oscillates between two forms of existence, and who can see as a detached observer behind the 'false façade' of the true reality of life. Koller's transformation can be understood similarly as that of Grete.

Personal transformation as the heroic journey

Personal transformation resulting from the incorporation of the uncanny and the subsequent oscillation between two forms of existence – between two worlds of the old and the new – are characteristic traits of heroes and heroines. Július Koller was inspired by heroic stories in his active dealings with the sudden experience of alienation and uncanny. As mentioned earlier, his transformation into *U.F.O.-naut* drew inspiration from the ancient heroic story of *Jason and the Argonauts*. We can therefore read Koller's endeavours through the framework of The Hero's Journey.

The term Hero's Journey was coined by Joseph Campbell in his book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (Campbell 2008) first published in 1949. The Hero's Journey has its complexities but for a quick and basic understanding, it can be divided into three phases. The first phase is a departure, where the hero or the heroine needs to leave the boundaries of the known world and they find themselves facing the unknown world, in which they need to pass a series of difficult challenges. The second phase of the journey is death and rebirth. Here, the hero or the heroine faces the ultimate challenge that requires them to defeat themselves – either to fight the villain who is the mirror image of the hero or the heroine, or they need to overcome the bias of their own character. This challenge means the ontological death of the hero or the heroine and their subsequent rebirth as a new being. The cycle of death and rebirth means the hero or the heroine is now the offspring of both worlds and they assume the wisdom and the powers over both the known and the unknown worlds. The hero or the heroine can now proceed to the third phase, which is return to the original world. But upon their return they are no-longer the same person they were at the beginning. The Hero's Journey is a process of the personal transformation, of Metamorphosis of the hero or the heroine that leads them to become a more complete person, and

to integrate within themselves the potential of both the known and the unknown worlds (Campbell 2004, p.111-133; Campbell, 2008).

Július Koller found himself facing the unknown after the sudden rapid changes in Czechoslovakia in 1968. He challenged himself in *Ping-Pong Club J.K.* and was re-born as *U.F.O.-naut* in 1970. Grete found her life turned upside-down by the sudden transformation of her brother whom she loved and cared for. She defeated herself by making the decision to get rid of Gregor and changed into a mature young lady, no-longer dependent on her brother.

As Joseph Campbell argues, The Hero's Journey as it appears in myths, legends and the popular culture is not a literal journey but a metaphor for the rite of passage (Campbell 2004, p.111-133). It is a ritual that bridges the rupture or the sudden shift in the natural development of orders. It helps to overcome the threshold experience such as the one described earlier in relation to the Samsa family in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, or Július Koller's experience of 1968 in Czechoslovakia, or indeed our present experience of the Covid-19 pandemic as analysed by Kevin Aho. However, such ritual is not the return to the original state before the crisis. It is the integration of and the harmony between the old and the new, the known and the unknown, the self and the other. It is the affirmation of the in-between state of existence that draws power and wisdom from both sides. Such is also the idea of Koller's new *Cosmo-Humanist Culture* – the new culture of being that connects the Earth and the Cosmos, the known and the unknown. It is a 'universal connection of individuality with the metaphysical in a balanced harmony. [It is a] philosophy of a midpoint between theism and atheism. Action transformation of reality by personal culture' (Koller 1969).

We can therefore read Július Koller's transformation into *U.F.O.-naut* and his idea of creating the new *Cosmo-Humanist Culture* in a similar way Kevin Aho reads our current experience of the global pandemic. He argues that when our familiar world collapses, 'we are unable to understand ourselves in the ways that we used to' (Aho 2020, p.7). From this he concludes that there are more ways of dying during the pandemic. Besides the threat of actual death through contagion, there is also the Heideggerian idea that 'the temporal experience of the uncanny represents a kind of ontological dying' (Aho 2020, p.7). And it is the latter, which, 'although unsettling, always presents an opportunity for transformation. When the world collapses it creates an opening where previously concealed meanings and possibilities can emerge' (Aho 2020, p.17).

Julia Kristeva assumes a similar perspective as Aho. She argues that the sense of normalcy and consistency is just an illusion that breaks at the time of crisis, resulting in an inner conflict between the self and the other. She maintains that the realisation that the human 'innerness' essentially consists of the 'in-between state of the self and the other' is essential in order 'to accept that the necessary rituals can evolve.' (Kristeva 2020) Through his artistic programme of *U.F.O.* as demonstrated on the example of *Ping-Pong Club J.K.*, Koller aimed to embrace the inner state of in-betweenness within his subjects, and thus to 'give rise to a new subject, consciousness, life, creation, i.e. to Cosmo-Humanist Culture' (Koller 1970a). In other words, Koller's work can be understood as that of a magic helper in the hero's or the heroine's quest for the personal transformation. When the hero or the heroine leave the known world and embark on the journey through the unknown, they usually require the aid of a magic helper, who guides them and helps them to pass the challenges, complete the Metamorphosis, and make a successful return. Campbell argues that in our modern society, artists are the magic helpers: 'Evoking symbols and motifs that connect us to our deeper selves, they can help us along the heroic journey of our own lives' (Campbell 2004, p.132). Július Koller must have been thinking along similar lines when he wrote the following line in his manifesto *Secession* (detachment) in 1971: 'the essence of live and living art is not a variation of an object, but a mutation of human (transformation into *U.F.O.-naut*)' (Koller 1971).

Conclusion

Július Koller's work and his Metamorphosis to *U.F.O.-naut* centres around the problem of the dissolution of order at a time of crisis. Koller considers in what ways a sudden drastic change may impact and shatter individual human integrity, and consequently, he investigates the ways in which he as an artist can help put the pieces back together and facilitate a passage or a journey through the rupture. For this reason, his work holds strong relevance for our experience of the present world in crisis – of the sudden rupture that appeared as the result of the global pandemic. The orders of the past are falling apart, and the new ones are not yet established. We are in the void between the worlds. We were forced to cross the threshold and to leave our old familiar world. For almost two years now, we have been navigating our way through the new unknown world, having to overcome difficult challenges that required renunciation and sacrifice – the ontological death. The magic behind Koller's thinking, behind his facilitation of the new *Cosmo-Humanist Culture* and his idea of

transforming people into *U.F.O.-nauts* is in shifting the question from *what has been lost in the rupture* to *what can be gained from it*.

It is a very similar idea to Kevin Aho's reading of the Heideggerian concept of the uncanny and its relevance to our present experience of the Covid-19 pandemic. Reflecting on our gradual emergence out of the series of lockdowns, Aho urges that 'rather than simply fleeing from the uncanny back into our comfortable routines', we should take the opportunity of being exposed to the uncanny and learn from it. We should 'accept the unsettling frailty of all human projects and embody a measure of 'steadiness' [...] when confronting it. This involves a willingness to be open to new ways of being or to give up on former ways of being that are no longer liveable' (Aho 2020, p.16).

The work of Július Koller, as demonstrated in this paper, suggests that the theoretical opportunity for personal transformation presented by the experience of the uncanny is practically possible. Therefore, following from Aho's claim that the pandemic, although 'unsettled our sense of being at-home,' has given us 'the space to collectively recreate or reimagine who we are' (Aho 2020, p.17), I argue that artists are among those who hold the power that can make it happen. The ontological death experienced as the result of the crisis cannot be resolved with solely political, economic or health measures. Ritual of transformation and the new personal culture are needed in such a difficult time-space of uncertainty and worry.

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Writing From the Edge: Seeing Glasgow as an 'Outsider Within'

Esther Draycott

Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins stated in 1986 that our knowledge of the modern city could greatly benefit from the theoretical standpoint of the 'outsider within' (Collins 1986, p. 14). Using the example of Afro-American women in the United States, Collins described 'outsiders within' as individuals whose personal experiences do not align with certain paradigms by which the social world is defined and understood. While such individuals are made 'marginal' and often low-status by virtue of that misalignment, those who are able to gain access to the 'inside' world are afforded a uniquely enlightened viewpoint, as Afro-American women living in poor peripheries were able to gain through generations of domestic labour for wealthy, white, inner-city families. Cleaved between margin and centre, these women observed the social world both in great detail, yet also, crucially, from a distance – a 'way of seeing' (Collins 1986, p. 29) insiders conspicuously lacked.

The following essay will draw on Collins' notion of the 'outsider within' to identify paradigmatic representations of Glasgow from the late-nineteenth to the late-twentieth century. In particular, it will analyse the characterisation of working-class women as a potential threat to civic order, while dangling the offer of 'insider' status to those who behaved complicitly and transparently. Regardless of whether such representations were positive or negative, it will note the power of working-class women to absorb the work of civic authorities in Glasgow, suggesting they presented the uncomfortable possibility of a city lived on different terms. Returning to Collins,

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it will present the 'edge' as a fruitful theoretical counterpoint to dominant narratives of urban space: suggesting that perhaps those best placed to analyse the paradigmatic city are those able to transcend its limits.

Glasgow's accelerated expansion in the late-nineteenth century was the first event that necessitated widespread demand for educated 'insiders' able to administrate, discipline and house an exploding population. At that time, one of the main concerns among middle-class Victorian society was not only the spread of disease and squalor as a result of the private, unregulated building of slums, but the danger of social 'residuum' spreading beyond poorer enclaves to the East and North of the city (Gairdner 1905, pp. vi-vii). The establishment of centralised branches of Glasgow Corporation such as the Glasgow Public Health Department in 1863 were not simply aimed at combatting disease, but, as Seán Damer writes, the 'surveillance, control and moralisation of the burgeoning working class'. As those able to reproduce, women were at the fulcrum of such measures, which counted among them the close surveillance and matriculation of out-of-wedlock mothers; the regulation of women's sartorial choices such as width of skirts or prominence of cleavage; and their involvement in private finance such as credit clubs or loan societies (Anon 1864, p. 46).

Tracing the evolution of official discourses around inner-city Glasgow, developing from the mid-nineteenth century and continuing into the late-twentieth, it is possible to trace continuities in the way working-class female subjects were broadly represented. On the one hand, there were the 'good' women of the city's multiplying slums, those who took care of their children, tidied their homes and supported their husbands in dire material circumstances (Mahood 1992, p. 42). Administrators such as members of the Public Health Department deployed these figures not only as political leverage but also to encourage insidious social pressures – outlining working-class women's social duty to nurture a productive, civilised family and alleviate any gaps in Council provision left by bad planning (Abrams, 2010, p. 59). Despite their overtures to scientific accuracy, they were often shaped by what Carolyn Steedman calls middle-class 'dream-work' – nostalgic, semi-fictionalised portrayals of women who preside over a working-class landscape that radiates with warmth, their light, feminine touch setting every object in its right place (Steedman 2001, p. 127). Performing her duties tirelessly and without question, the narrative function these content, industrious figures play is one of reassurance to the middle-classes, fearful that the 'spread' of an unruly underclass could eventually 'contaminate' their own lives

(Damer, 2006, p. 2011). Their dutiful complicity, emanating through the orderliness of their homes, serves as demonstration that measures to discern, analyse and review working-class women's interior lives can succeed and that in this way these subjects – or rather their place in the world – can truly be known.

On the other hand, there are the 'bad women', identified in the same reports as societal threats to be cordoned off and dealt with. They first appear in a proliferation of police, housing, sanitation and medical analyses in mid-nineteenth century Glasgow, in which 'prostitution' was identified as one of the greatest threats to civilised life, and simultaneously became a term liberally applied by authorities to any women that 'did not comply with the rules or norms established by society' (Auer 2019, p. 7). In a dawning era of mass demolition, these women, ranging from young girls forced to sell sex on the street to single women, socialists and the immodestly dressed (Dent 2000), were taken as signs that not only were some historic areas of the city ruined beyond repair, but that as harbingers of prostitution, they posed a threat to areas beyond their borders if they were not completely eradicated. They are the 'women of all grades of abandoned condition' (Shadow 1858, p. 69) seen marauding the streets in *Midnight Scenes and Social Photographs*, an undercover report on the slums of Gallowgate, Trongate and Saltmarket published just before they were demolished for the first time in 1866 – 'herself ruined, she ruins others' (Shadow 1858, p. 69) – and those in rags at the foot of dark alleyways in Thomas Annan's *The Closes and Wynds of Glasgow* (1868-71). And through decades, these caricatures persist, appearing in Seán Damer's reports of the 'single women' in the city's famous Moorepark scheme in the early 1970, 'emaciated', 'very shabbily dressed' and 'at times filthy' (1989, p. 134), or the photograph by reporter Raymond Depardon in his collection *Glasgow, 1980*, in which a woman crouches between two tenements clutching a stuffed plastic bag and a bottle of vodka, face hard and open, an open fire licking the wall behind. Impervious to efforts of investigators to exhume a Glasgow they do not know, she makes her home in the rubble, address unknown, thoughts concealed.

Depardon's photograph was demonstrative of a wider anxiety that the more comprehensive attempts by authorities in Glasgow to control or stratify the city, the wider the gaps, oversights and loopholes in those attempts became. Similarly, the more fearful or disdainful the 'insider' of the marginal subject, the more opportunities arose for those subjects to negotiate some power over their watchers, to maintain some tantalising element of unknowability. Writing in *The Sphinx in the City*, Elizabeth Wilson takes the sphinx, 'half woman, half animal', as a feminist metaphor for

such unknowable subjects in the cities of the Western world. Frequently the target of state attempts at discipline, control and surveillance, the creature alludes to all those who have made their home in a space just beyond the acceptable limits of the city: negotiating urban life in a way that preserves a measure of freedom from the oppressive systems maintained by its elites.

Wilson's reference to Greek mythology is not incidental – rather, it alludes to how the enduring face of the city's underworld is so often that of a shapeshifting woman. It is a statement that the sphinx which guarded the city of Thebes with an unsolvable riddle, consuming every man that failed to answer her correctly, remains a thorn in the side of modern authorities similarly attempting a totalising feat of civic control. 'Rome is changing her shape as she grows', Ovid prophesied in *Metamorphoses*. 'Some time in the future she'll form the head of the boundless world.'

Historically, the outsider within has often tried to resolve the essential tension between their own marginal viewpoint and the institutional view of the 'insider', either by fully reconciling with normative sociological discourses or abandoning them entirely. However, Collins concludes her article by staking out a third way: preserving the creative tension of outsider within status by insisting on the presence of such individuals within the institution, thus demanding a shift in viewpoint away from the centre. bell hooks argued similarly when she wrote of the moment at which marginality becomes a 'site of resistance and possibility' (hooks 1990, p. 22): the moment when an audience has to assume a different standpoint to understand what they are seeing, exposing the true limits and contingencies of paradigmatic forms of representation. Taking instruction from Collins, the question of how to disrupt or challenge dominant representations of working-class women in Glasgow is not to rid the city of its centre and periphery, thereby taking women away from their home on the margins. It is instead to preserve the 'edge' as a place where the city as we know it becomes unstable, and transforms: a position from which to stand before any riddle can be solved.

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The Eclipse of G. E. Trevelyan

Brad Bigelow

Gertrude Eileen Trevelyan's life is a cautionary tale. She may have come closer than any writer of her time to fulfilling Virginia Woolf's vision from *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Give a talented young woman writer 'a room of her own and five hundred a year, let her speak her mind and leave out half that she now puts in', Woolf predicted, 'and she will write a better book one of these days. She will be a poet' (Woolf 1929, p.98). In Trevelyan's case, she found her room at 107 Lansdowne Road in Kensington in 1931, had at least five hundred a year thanks to her father's modest fortune, and put the two to good use, producing eight novels of striking originality in the space of nine years. She had a small circle of friends, avoided the limelight, reviewed no books, neither taught nor edited, made no trips abroad or otherwise diverted her time and energy from the task of writing. This allowed her to take great risks in style, structure and approach, exploring the theme of metamorphosis in works of imaginative intensity unequalled by any novelist of her time aside from Woolf herself. Then a German bomb hit her flat and she and her books were forgotten.

Ironically, Trevelyan's own career underwent its own cruel transformation. It began with a burst of worldwide publicity. 'First Woman Winner of Newdigate Prize' announced a headline in *The Times* of Wednesday, June 8, 1927 (*Times* 1927, p.7). In her last year as an undergraduate at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, Trevelyan won the Newdigate Prize for English verse for her poem 'Julia, Daughter of Claudius'. Al-

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though the prize amounted to a modest £21, the novelty of its award to a woman led papers throughout the English-speaking world—from Kenosha, Wisconsin to Auckland, New Zealand—to print the story with similar headlines in the following weeks. When she died in early 1941, the few papers that printed an obituary cited the Newdigate Prize as her primary achievement.

The actual presentation of her award at the Oxford Encaenia on July 1, 1927, proved anticlimactic. For the first time in its history the ceremony had been shifted one day later to allow participants to witness the first total eclipse of the Sun visible in England since 1724. Most students took the opportunity to leave Oxford early. Trevelyan's award was the last presented, coming after dignitaries including Field Marshal Ferdinand Foch and Field Marshal Viscount Allenby were awarded honorary degrees. Her win was seen as a symbolic victory for women at Oxford. 'This', *The Oxford Times* concluded, 'doubtless, explained the presence in the gallery of many undergraduettes in their quaint hats' (*Oxford Times* 1927, p.11). Basil Blackwell printed five hundred copies and a handful of reviews appeared. *The Daily Mail*, while noting that 'Many winners of the Newdigate Prize have subsequently lapsed into obscurity', predicted that 'Miss Trevelyan's future work will be watched with interest' (*Daily Mail* 1927, p.11) Many articles about Trevelyan's prize drew attention to her family connections. It was true, as stated, that she was related to the historian George Macaulay Trevelyan and a line of Baronets and Cabinet ministers. These were not close relations, however. Her grandfather—the historian's great uncle—was a vicar who had been removed after speaking out against Church reforms and spent the rest of his life as a 'Priest without care of souls'. Her father's career was even less distinguished. Having inherited a comfortable legacy, Edward Trevelyan spent his time riding and managing his garden. He married in his forties; Gertrude, born in Bath in 1903, was their only child. She remained close to her parents all her life.

There was also nothing exceptional about Gertrude Trevelyan's childhood. She attended the Princess Helena College in Ealing as a boarder, winning the school's essay prize two years in a row but graduating without distinction. She went up to Oxford without a scholarship, entering Lady Margaret Hall in the fall of 1923. Of her time at Oxford, she once wrote, 'Did not: play hockey, act, row, take part in debates, political or literary, contribute to the *Isis* or attend cocoa parties, herein failing to conform to the social standards commonly required of women students' (Trevelyan 1933, p.134). She was thereby able to maintain 'a position of total obscurity' (*Ibid.*).

After Oxford, Trevelyan did little of note at first. She published a few poems, wrote some forgettable articles for minor magazines. She lived in a series of women's hotels, then moved to the flat in Kensington in 1931. And here, Gertrude Trevelyan's biography effectively stops. Until her death in 1941, there is almost no record of her life outside the reviews of her novels.

The unremarkable facts of Trevelyan's life offer a stark contrast to the originality and intensity of her novels—none more powerfully than with her debut, *Appius and Virginia* (1932). Its story is novel enough: a 40-year-old spinster buys an infant orangutan and takes him to a cottage in a remote country village where for the next eight years she attempts to raise him as a human. Some compared the book to John Collier's 1930 novel, *His Monkey Wife*, in which a schoolteacher marries a literate chimpanzee. Phyllis Bentley, writing in *The New Statesman*, felt, however, that *Appius* 'emerges triumphantly from the comparison' (Bentley 1932, p.11). She found *Appius* a tragic figure. 'One lays down the book grieving oddly over this half-man and feeling that in some sense he is symbolic of human destinies' (*Ibid.*). Bentley understood that this book was much more than a bit of exotic novelty.

Trevelyan's aim, in fact, was broader: to reveal the impossibility of genuine communication and understanding between species. Virginia Hutton undertakes an experiment to transform an ape into a human: 'I believe that if a young ape were taken at birth and brought up completely in human surroundings,' she writes in her diary, 'exactly like a child, it would grow up like a child—would, in fact, *become* a child' (Trevelyan 1932, p.14). As her experiment plays out, Virginia is able to produce from the ape behaviours that convince her that *Appius*, the orangutan is becoming not merely human but, potentially, super-human:

He would bring to his learning an untired brain and a completely untouched stock of mental energy. His physical strength, too, would be greater than that of an ordinary man, and this, because he had learnt to think, would be transformed into brain power. He had boundless possibilities. He would be tireless. He would be able to do more in ten years than any man had achieved in a lifetime (Trevelyan 1932, p.95).

Virginia is living in a fantasy world, however. *Appius*'s responses are not demonstrations of his cognitive development but merely of his ability to reproduce the actions which Virginia has trained him to perform through repetition and positive and negative stimuli. The real transformation is not the ape's but the woman's. She admits that what she had been seeking all along was not an intellectual achievement

but something far more basic: 'I only wanted you to be human and talk to me. And I thought perhaps you'd grow to be fond of me, too, if I'd always looked after you when you were small' (Trevelyan 1932, p.225). But she is looking for a connection across an uncrossable divide. Virginia's 'words had no meaning' for Appius; instead, 'her tone exasperated him, goading him into movement... In a moment he was upon her and she was falling backwards, screaming weakly' (Trevelyan 1932, p.278).

Trevelyan's aim was so ambitious that many reviewers failed to grasp it. In *The Daily Mail*, the veteran James Agate dismissed the book as 'pretentious puling twaddle ... saved from being disgusting only by its frantic silliness' (Agate 1932, p.6). *The Sketch* found it 'absorbing but horrible, and almost entirely devoid of beauty' (Hartley 1932, p.213). American reviewers tended to take the book literally: 'an absorbing study in the education and environmental adjustments of a young ape,' said *The New York Times*' reviewer (*New York Times* 1932, p.BR7). On the other hand, Gerald Gould, then one of England's most influential critics, was in awe of Trevelyan's accomplishment. He wrote in the *Observer*: 'So original is it, indeed, that I have scruples about writing the word "novel" at all.' Instead, he argued, 'one must feel grateful to anybody with a sufficiently strong mind to break such new ground'. Gould chided those who would be put off by the eccentricity of the book's premise: 'One reads a story for the story,' he argued; 'if it makes its own world, and compels our judgment inside, that is all we have the right or reason to ask.' 'In this difficult and surprising task,' he concluded, 'the author succeeds' (Gould 1932, p.6).

Leonora Eyles, who remained Trevelyan's most steadfast supporter among critics, applauded the novelist's ambition. 'It must have required considerable courage to conceive *Appius and Virginia* and to carry out the conception so carefully', she wrote in *The Times Literary Supplement*. She warned, however, that 'Miss G. E. Trevelyan demands equal courage from her readers.' Eyles recognized how the nature of the relationship between Virginia and Appius shifts in the course of the story: 'So by degrees she forgets his subhuman origin and her own scientific project and demands of him the affection of a son'. For Eyles, though, Appius's lot remains throughout that of a victim, meekly accepting what he understands only as 'incomprehensible and indigestible scraps of information from his loving torturer' (Eyles 1932, p.496). Indeed, some today will find *Appius and Virginia* a prescient account of the perils inherent in playing with the boundaries between humans and the animal world.

Trevelyan's second novel *Hot-House* (1933) drew far more from her own experience. Set at a fictional version of Lady Margaret Hall, *Hot-House* is a clinical dissection of the organism of a women's college, focusing on its deleterious effects on an impressionable undergraduate, Mina Cooke. Mina tries to gain attention through exaggerated affect, but she fools herself more than her classmates, blowing the casual courtesy of instructors into romances of operatic proportion. Trevelyan succeeds perhaps too well into taking us into the mind of a ruminator, filling too many pages with Mina's broodings over a glance, a misunderstood invitation, a suspected slight. Three years in the '*Hot-House*' of the college turns an immature and high-strung girl into a demented and, ultimately, suicidal young woman. On the other hand, *Hot-House* amply demonstrates the extent to which Trevelyan committed to her fictional experiments. If in this case the experiment proved less than successful, it was not because she approached her task half-heartedly.

Trevelyan's third novel *As It Was in the Beginning* (1934) was her boldest venture into the use of stream of consciousness narrative. The book takes place entirely in the mind of Millicent, Lady Chesborough, widow of Lord Harold, as she lies in a nursing home, dying from the effects of a stroke. Nurses come in and go out, always adjusting her sheets, lifting her numb left arm as they do. As Millicent floats in and out of consciousness, she revisits moments from her life, rerunning these memories as one sometimes gets a bit of a song caught in mind. Trevelyan manages deftly to weave two opposing lines of transformation. One—externally apparent through the actions taking place in Millicent's room—is the approach of death. The other, shown solely through Millicent's thoughts, takes her back through her life, from her final foolish affair with a handsome but untrustworthy young man through her unhappy marriage to her girlhood, infancy, and, in her last moments, to birth. Millicent struggles for a sense of self, feeling herself 'there, but not in the body: watching it from the outside and feeling responsible for it, without having it firmly in hand. Having to creep back in to pull the strings' (Trevelyan 1934, p.178). Trevelyan builds a powerful sense of a woman whose life was a constant struggle to define her identity—a struggle she often lost—until, at the end, she fades into nothingness.

War Without a Hero (1935), which followed, is in some ways even more claustrophobic in mood than *As It Was in the Beginning*. Its story is implausible: a sophisticated socialite takes a room with a fisherman's family on a remote Channel Isle to ride out the initial storm over her divorce. She takes pity on family's blind son, marries him to wrest the young man from his domineering mother and arranges for surgery in

London to restore his sight. When the couple return to the island, however, she herself falls into a battle of wills with the mother and loses, transforming slowly into a grey, hopeless scullery maid as her husband, now able to see, changes from a timid recluse into a bold philanderer. As a novel, *War Without a Hero* is an unconvincing failure. As a psychological horror story, however, it's as powerful as a vortex.

In contrast, *Two Thousand Million Man-Power* (1937) takes the lives of its two leading characters—Katherine, a schoolteacher, and Robert, a chemist (as in scientist, not pharmacist)—and sets them against a backdrop of national and international events. Trevelyan adopts John Dos Passos' technique from his *U.S.A.* trilogy (1936) and peppers her text with snatches of news of the world, using the headlines like the chorus in a Greek tragedy. Though the couple see themselves as superior to their neighbors and co-workers, they are no more in control of their lives than any other pieces of flotsam on the tides of social and economic change. Robert loses his job and one by one their appliances, car and house are lost. They find themselves trapped in dismal rooms with nothing to do but scour job notices and write ever-more-desperate letters of application. Trevelyan's depiction of the grim ordeal of unemployment rivals anything in Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937). And she shares Orwell's cynical assessment of capitalism's effects on the individual. 'That was what the machine had done to them', Robert thinks, 'shown them one another. Each had seen the other as something the machine didn't want' (Trevelyan 1937, p.219-220).

William's Wife, published the following year, represents Trevelyan's greatest fictional transformation. She takes us step by step through the metamorphosis of Jane Atkins from an ordinary young woman in service (a good position, more of a lady's companion) to a queer figure haunting the streets of London, bag in arm, scavenging for food and firewood. When Jane marries William Chirp, a middle-aged widower and grocer, the little nest-egg she'd earned in service—twenty pounds—becomes William's property. But this small transaction comes to symbolize William's assumption of ownership over all aspects of Jane's life. As the story is seen entirely through Jane's eyes, the reader is slow to recognize her metamorphosis into a suspicious, miserly, and tight-lipped old woman until the process is irreversible. In the end, long after William is dead, his wife is still at the mercy of his small-minded penny-pinching ways. 'Whatever William would have said?' she constantly wonders when faced with the least expense (Trevelyan 1938b, p.218):

She was about due for a new pair of boots. Three or four years she'd worn these, or more: it was a good two years before William went that she got them. . . . It was a wicked waste; only if ever William had seen more than two pairs lying about he would have wondered. A wicked waste it was (Trevelyan 1938b, p.229).

The ability of Oxford-educated Trevelyan to slip inside the mind, culture, and language of a woman of a different age and class is a testament to her powers of observation. Trevelyan's discontent with the status quo is even more apparent in her next work, *Theme with Variations*, published the same year as *William's Wife*. 'Samuel Smith was the best part of thirty before anyone told him he was a wage-slave', the book opens. Trevelyan's theme is entrapment and its effects on a personality. Her variations are three individuals—a working man, a wife and an ambitious young woman—each trapped in their own cage. The bars may be economic circumstances, class prejudices, social mores, fear, or just bad luck, but they rule out any possibility of escape and freedom as effectively as those made of steel. The saddest of Trevelyan's three trapped specimens is Evie Robinson, a bright girl held back by her family's mutual enabling society. Evie's younger sister, Maisie, suffers from some unnamed disability — something physical but also mental — that draws in all the family's energies. Her mother and father look to Evie to take over the burden of caring for Maisie, but Evie has the spunk to plan her escape. And she does, at least at first, training as a secretary, reaching the head of her class, gaining a spot in a local business, cramming for the civil service exam. 'I've got to get out. I've got to do *something*', she thinks as she contemplates taking a post in a government office (Trevelyan 1938a, p.184). But the power of her family's dependency overwhelms her. 'Dear Sirs, I am sorry that owing to family reasons I am not able to take up any appointment', she writes tearfully at her father's insistence, all the while wondering, 'Oh lord, now what am I going to do?' (Trevelyan 1938a, p.242-3).

Trevelyan's last novel *Trance by Appointment* (1939) tells a simple and sad story. Jean, the middle daughter of a working-class London family, is a psychic. As she grows, her family comes to recognize this talent and introduce her to Madame Eva, who runs a fortune-telling business from a basement flat in Bayswater. Jean marries an astrologer who sees the commercial possibilities of a '*Trance by Appointment*' business, and from this point forward the story will be familiar to anyone who has read Tolstoy's *Kholstomer*, usually translated as 'Strider: The Story of a Horse': a vital resource used up in a relentless quest for profit, then tossed aside in contempt. Lacking the will to resist, Jean is ground down from an innocent girl with a magical gift into

a money-making machine whose sole purpose is to churn through her daily allotment of clients. Leonora Eyles, Trevelyan's most consistent advocate, wrote in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 'Once again Miss Trevelyan gives us an insight into human minds that is quite uncanny, and her Jean, though such an unusual character, is completely convincing' (Eyles 1939, p.537).

Trevelyan might well have continued to write ground-breaking fiction and become recognized as one of the leading novelists of her generation. Unfortunately, on the night of 8 October 1940, a German bomb struck 107 Lansdowne Road and Trevelyan's room of her own was destroyed. Though rescued from its ruins, she had been severely injured and died a few months later on 24 February 1941 while being cared for at her parents' home in Bath. Her death certificate identified her as 'Spinster—An Authoress'.

For the next seventy-some years, Trevelyan disappeared from English literary history. From the world-wide fame of her Newdigate Prize and the steady critical acclaim of her novels, she was quickly and ruthlessly transformed into a non-entity. Her name appears in no survey of the literature of the 1930s, in no study of the 20th Century English novel, in no memoir or biography of her contemporaries.

Trevelyan first resurfaced in 2018 in the cryptically titled *Women's University Narratives 1890-1945, Part II Volume II*, edited by Anna Bogen, which compromised a brief introduction by Bogen that noted the paucity of information about Trevelyan's life and the text of her second novel *Hot-House*. (Bogen, 2018) Around the same time, I read *Appius and Virginia* and wrote about it on my Neglected Books website. (Bigelow, 2018) The power of Trevelyan's writing and the near-complete absence of any mention of her work in any sources I could locate online or off led me to hunt down copies of her other novels and write about them over the course of the next year. In the case of *A War Without a Hero* and *Trance by Appointment*, there were no used copies to be found for any price and I had to resort to reading them at the British Library, one of a handful of libraries worldwide where the books are available.

A chance conversation I had with the publisher Scott Pack in early 2020 led to his decision to reissue *Appius and Virginia* under his Abandoned Bookshop imprint. The book's publication attracted significant attention, most notably an article in *The Guardian* that took a quote from Pack for its headline: 'If she was a bloke, she'd still be in print' (Flood, 2020). As part of its new Recovered Books series, Boiler House Press, the publishing arm of the University of East Anglia, will publish *Two Thousand*

Million Man-Power in 2022 and *William's Wife* in 2023. With any luck, these reissues will encourage more readers and researchers to discover Trevelyan's work and begin to bring her place in literary history from the shadows in which it has been hidden for over eighty years. In her novels, Trevelyan consistently portrayed metamorphosis as a matter of degradation and destruction. Her reputation does not need to suffer the same fate.

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Cultural Policy in a Changing Regime: Characteristics of the Hungarian Cultural Policy during the Post-Communist Transition

Anna Molnar

Introduction

Culture is, of course, a commodity, because it is sold, it is bought. But not as in capitalist countries, since in our country no small part of culture is an indispensable service, and it is not simply market automation that regulates its distribution, but its value and the socialist value system. (Aczél quoted in Csibra, 1981; emphasis added by Csibra, translation mine.)

So goes the somewhat ‘infamous’ (Krausz, 2007) quote by György Aczél, a key figure in the late communist Hungarian cultural policy. The quoting author’s decision to add emphasis to the first part of the statement highlights its unconventional nature in the context of socialist cultural policy, an uneasiness which is not lessened by the second, explanatory part of the statement. Beyond the statement’s anachronism in its immediate context of communist cultural policy, what is even more striking is its similarity to a statement made in the same year by Mark Fowler, the Federal Communications Commission Chairman under Reagan in the US (Hesmondhalgh 2019, p. 51-52). Fowler’s statement that ‘television was “just another appliance . . . a toaster with pictures”’ (quoted in *ibid.*) has become the epitome of neoliberal cultural policy. Without giving too much relevance to anecdotal quotes, the parallel between the statements prompts the question—is it possible to observe any similarity between the late communist cultural policy of Hungary and the global turn towards neoliberal

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eral cultural policies in the early 1980s despite the supposedly dissimilar political environments?

Recent developments in the literature on the late communist Hungarian transition to a post-communist country after 1989 argue that neoliberal tendencies were present before the change of regime. Fabry (2019) maintains that the international turn towards neoliberal policies could also be observed simultaneously in the Hungarian context by the rising prominence of market-oriented solutions to the burgeoning economic crises and by the more and more conscious joining into the world economy. The following work aims to observe if these tendencies were present in the cultural policy as well. Focusing on cultural policy is supported by two reasons. First, in the international context, the more and more pronounced presence of the creative industries and a 'marketisation [of] the media and communications sectors' (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005, p.5) warrant the need to take a closer look at the possibly similar developments in the late communist environment. Secondly, studies of different fields within the creative sector in the 1980s in Hungary draw attention to similar outcomes. Varga (2020), detailing the trajectory of the film industry, highlights market-oriented and 'proto-capitalist' approaches prior to 1989, while Horváth (2015) in the visual arts sector details the steady decline in public funding. This work aims to synthesise the analytical approaches of the two studies by focusing on the film industry and the ministerial body responsible for the organisation of the sector. For this aim, the Film Directorate (Filmfőigazgatóság), a sub-ministerial body within the Ministry of Culture was chosen as a case study. The relevant data to assess shifts in cultural policy via the actions and correspondence of the Film Directorate had been collected through archival research in the National Archives of Hungary.

The relevance of the above-mentioned tendencies is that their backdrop is the late communist Hungary. Eyal, Szelényi and Townsley (1998), through the lens of the post-communist power elite, paint a picture of how the late communist regime was perceived and, most importantly in the context of the present work, how the regime's behaviour towards markets was understood. The authors highlight that the new post-communist elite wanted to see the population purged of 'non-market modes of behaviour, such as dependence on government assistance' (ibid. p. 12). From the point of view of the new elite, socialism was understood as a political and economic system, that did not marketise or monetise, that was paternalistic, favoured excessive dependence and involvement in management. Crucially, the new elite argued that 'society lived beyond its means under socialism' (ibid. p. 102). Similarly, in terms of

cultural policy, the communist regimes are often understood to be characterised by a centralised organisation, extensive support of culture, nationalised property and ideological-propagandistic directives (Vojtiskova and Larancova 2015; Ilczuk and Wienczorek 2000). The present work takes a closer look at those cultural policies that were directed at the creative industries, especially the film industry, to observe whether market-oriented practices were a characteristic of the regime prior to 1989.

Beyond its immediate scope of describing the late communist cultural policies directed at the film industry in Hungary, the present work aims to have a somewhat wider-reaching relevance. Pinpointing pre-1989 changes in cultural policy that can be understood as neoliberal in their character challenges the perception that the change of regime was a drastic, watershed moment and rather emphasises a porosity, a fluctuating back and forth within the post-communist transition over a longer period of time. The present work argues that in terms of cultural policy, the 1989 change of regime did not bring an overnight metamorphosis from communist cultural policy tendencies into neoliberal ones, instead a much slower and longer lasting transition can be observed. Revisiting major cultural and socio-political shifts with an intention of understanding them as slower and less straightforward transformations can be beneficial.

Theoretical Background

The theoretical background of the topic is centred around three overlapping contexts—the international, the late and post-communist and the more specific Hungarian—and the interaction of these contexts with the global shift towards neoliberal tendencies. The international backdrop is contextualised by studies teasing out the rising dominance of creative industries-influenced cultural policies and the consequence of this shift. As Throsby (2008) highlights, government and policy-making bodies' conceptions of the cultural or creative industries determine culture's assumed benefit to the wider economy and consequently influence the policies themselves. The author points out that if a government or its cultural policy-making body prefers economic values, those industries will be highlighted that are favourable for such aims; however, if the focus is on a 'government's artistic or cultural objectives' (ibid. p. 222), those industries will be supported that are able to serve that goal. An approach to changes in cultural policy directives that bears in mind the connection between conceptions of cultural industries and their economic impact allows for a detailed understanding of these shifts and their wider contexts. While Throsby

(2008) highlights how the back and forth between conceptions of cultural industries and their economic impact shapes the policies, Potts and Cunningham's (2008) approach emphasises an analysis of the existing relationship between the creative industries and the wider economy to inform policies. The four models identified by the authors and their observation that certain models 'are more appropriate at different times and places' (ibid. p. 239) further aids our understanding of shifting cultural policies. Out of the four models, the Welfare model, where culture is a net drain and the Competition model, where culture is treated as any other industry serve as most useful in the context of the present study.

Shifts in the ideological context and political aims impact cultural policy. Such shifting can be observed in the international context starting around the early 1980s (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005). Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (ibid. p. 2-3), in tracing the rise of the cultural industries-related policies within the wider cultural policy framework point out, that '[t]he rise of the cultural industries was very much bound up with the rise of "mass culture"' that led to cultural policies aiming to combat this tendency by subsidising arts and strengthening public broadcasting. Nevertheless, this strategy seemed unsustainable by the early 1980s (ibid. p. 3). One pivotal shift in cultural policy—used expansively to cover media and communications—that accelerated the rise of cultural industries was the turn away from state-owned monopolies towards 'marketisation [of] the media and communications sectors' (ibid. p.5). Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (ibid.) argue that this shift started:

in the United States in the early 1980s, spread to other advanced industrial states from the late 1980s onwards, hit a series of nations emerging from the authoritarian rule in the early 1990s, and spread across much of the world since then.

The present article aims to observe if the rising dominance of the creative industries policies within cultural policy appeared in Hungary, as the authors suggest, after the 1989 change of regime, or if it is possible to discern similar tendencies leading up to the change of regime.

When aiming to see if any neoliberal tendencies were present in late communist cultural policy in Hungary, McGuigan's (2005, p.231) observation that '[i]t is wiser to deconstruct neo-liberalism, to analyse its particular doctrines and operations in different places and fields of activity' is of crucial guidance. McGuigan's (2005) description of neoliberalism highlights two key characteristics, an advocacy of free trade internationally and limited state intervention domestically. More specifically,

McGuigan (2005, p.235) points out a diminishing intention for 'public provision' and 'the insertion of market principles into ostensibly public service institutions' as hallmarks of the neoliberal turn in cultural policy.

Communist cultural policies are often invoked as a condition contrasted to which the post-1989 shifts manifest as a drastic change. Associating the change of regime with a major break in cultural policy in the Polish context, for example, suggests that the 'transition from state monopoly to a free market' (Ilczek and Wiczerek 2000, p.63) created the necessary conditions for the development of the creative industries. In the wider context of former Soviet Bloc countries, Jakobson, Rudnik and Toepler (2018, p.299) argue that the break in cultural policy left these countries with 'no established blueprints' for these industries. Similarly, Vojtiskova and Lorencova (2015) argue that, after 1989, post-communist countries needed to come up with entirely new cultural policy, influenced by neoliberal ideas, privatisation and decentralisation. Furthermore, not only does the literature tend to depict a major break in cultural policy following 1989 but it also avoids distinguishing between different possible phases of cultural policy within the communist era. Pre-1989 cultural policy is treated as homogenous, characterised by centralised cultural life, nationalised property and state subsidies (ibid.) and by a cultural sphere 'subjected to the constraints of the planned economy' (Ilczuk and Wiczerek 2000, p.53). However, some works approach the shift in a more nuanced way and identify contingencies, which carried over from communist cultural policies to the post-communist ones, and, as such, paint a picture in which the change of regime brings a less drastic shift to the cultural sphere. Becut points out that the cultural infrastructure that allowed the communist era 'educat[ion] in the spirit of the socialist doctrines' (2016, p.66) also kickstarted the creative industries in the post-communist era. The transitory period's complexities are ensured by the simultaneous presence of communist remnants, such as 'state planning, monopoly, the centralised economy' as well as an 'uncritical adoption of neoliberal economic and political tenets' (Turcus 2020, p.354-355) and a trust in the free market.

In the late communist Hungarian context, works such as Varga's (2020) analysis of the film industry and Horváth's (2015) retelling of the Art Fund's history establish a link between the international and the domestic developments in the creative industries. Crucially, Varga (2020) points out that the changes in cultural policy in the transitory period are the result of the dynamic of different shifts in the key elements, such as 'the exclusivity of state film production, direct political control and bureau-

cratic conditions' (ibid., p.366) that define cultural production. Shifts in cultural policy amidst a regime change can be seen as gradual, as these different elements move in and out of focus. Horváth's (2015) account of the Art Fund, a major state organisation in the visual art, literature and music, demonstrates such gradual shifts playing out over decades. Policy changes in the Ministry of Culture resulted in more payment obligations for the Art Fund towards the Ministry and demanded the organisation to prioritise financial goals over the welfare of artists. Policies that led to the shrinking of the Art Fund's financial support resulted in a turn away from a system that saw the government's role in supporting the arts to a structure that prioritised the cultural industries' capacity to contribute to revenues. The shift corresponds with the international turn to seek the regeneration of 'national and local economies [...] through the cultural industries' (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005, p.5).

The wider political economy context to Varga's (2020) and Horváth's (2015) observations is given by Fabry (2019). Fabry argues that Hungary's development in terms of its political economy cannot be divorced from the wider international frame of neoliberal tendencies springing up in the mid-1970s. Fabry suggests that the Soviet-style state capitalist countries of Central and Eastern Europe responded to the crises brought about by rising debt and stagnation by turning to neoliberal ideas before the 1989 change of regime. Two such waves of reforms could be identified, first in the early 1970s, the other in the early 1980s. The second wave of reforms saw the solution in 'open[ing] up the economy to the exigencies of the world market, while simultaneously seeking to reconfigure the role of the state in the economy' (ibid. p.50-51). The development in the cultural and creative industries and the associated cultural policies need to be assessed in this context.

Case Study of the Film Directorate

While Varga's account of the changing film industry in the late and post-communist era focuses on the empirical visibility of 'trends and dynamics of the transformation' (2020, p.369), the present work observes the role ministerial bodies and their policy initiatives impacting the film industry played in the transitory period. Consequently, the Film Directorate has been chosen as a case study because of its central role in supervising film production and mediating between the Ministry of Culture and the film industry at large. Amid 'nationalisation in the late forties, monolithic centralisation in the fifties, then decentralisation in the sixties' (Varga 2008, p.4) that characterised the Hungarian film production during the mid-20th century, the

Film Directorate was created in 1955 by the unification of the different governmental bodies that separately dealt with production and distribution. The Film Directorate emerged as a singular governing body within the Ministry of Culture and remained relevant until the 1989 change of regime. The Film Directorate, being the node where intentions and expectations of the Ministries of Culture and Finance as well as the film industry itself intersected, is well suited to illustrate how a specific segment of cultural policies changed over the transitory period. The film industry, being not only ideologically important but also potentially profitable, came more and more into focus in the late communist era (Keresztényi 2017). The shifts prompted by this tendency repeatedly upheld a tension between political and ideological demands, on the one hand, and economic needs, on the other.

Qualitative data collection and analysis of the materials related to the Film Directorate held by the National Archives of Hungary proved to be fruitful in taking ‘a look “behind the curtains” of political processes’ (Frisch et al. 2012, p.11). It enabled observation of how cultural policy was transforming in the late and post-communist transitory period. Based on Fabry’s (2019) work two preliminary directions guided the field research. On the one hand, materials held by the archives were searched for any indication of an opening up of the film industry to the world economy; on the other, documents were surveyed for instances of reshaping the role of the state vis-à-vis the economy domestically. Through the Film Directorate’s correspondence, memorandums and reports, it has been possible to find instances that demonstrate a turn towards market-oriented approaches that were to address the burgeoning economy crises of the 1970s and 1980s.

The interdepartmental discussions on the role of cultural propaganda in the international context proved to be illustrative of the shifting cultural policy directives. In terms of international cooperations, repeatedly the emphasis was on those that were either with neighbouring or nearby countries within the Soviet Bloc or with Western countries such as the US, the UK or France, going as far as including Western coproductions and Hollywood films shot in Hungary (Varga 2020). Regarding film production, the surveyed documents contained repeated discussions of several French-Hungarian coproductions that suggest that Hungary’s role in the international structure of film-making was influenced by global neoliberal tendencies. Hungary’s part in the global division of cultural labour (McGuigan 2005) was in part to ensure cheaper labour. When it came to distribution, the correspondence between the Ministry of Culture and the Film Directorate often highlighted the poten-

tial revenue arising from films successfully showcased at prestigious Western film events such as the Cannes film festival, or the 1982 Oscar win for best foreign film by *Mephisto*. Those international cooperations that would have held more ideological relevance, such as the Hungarian-Vietnamese or the Hungarian-Ethiopian—which was also noted in the documents by the Film Directorate as ‘expected by the Soviet partners in Moscow’¹ (MNL XIX-I-22-4-4, 1984)—were limited to low-scale cultural and educational exchanges without serious financial demands.

An even more poignant manifestation of the wider cultural policy directives regarding Hungary’s international presence can be observed in the disagreement between the Film Directorate and the Ministry of Culture on the importance of propaganda, on the one hand, and economic goals, on the other. The Director-General of the Film Directorate in his September 1985 commentary on the Department of Agitation and Propaganda’s foreign propaganda directives emphatically focuses on cultural products’ ability to effectively message a favourable picture of Hungary. The author stresses that:

[t]he most important substantive question is the presentation of the human and social essence of socialism. [...] The arts need to be given a much bigger role in our propaganda. Since our opponents accuse us of being totalitarian, inhuman, self-aggrandising, unable to admit our mistakes, we must bring the image of Hungary to the world with *authentic*, convincing works. (MNL XIX-I-22-4-1, 1985, emphasis in original.)

A November 1985 memorandum sent to the Economic Deputy Director-General for the Film Directorate by the Director-General highlighted the same arguments. The Director-General sums up his disagreement as such:

out of the complex and multi-faceted processes, within which we must understand and aid the mutually reinforcing *interplay* and *joint* development of cultural propaganda and economic processes, the document draft only covers one of the aspects, that of the economic values; and the substantive functions of our Ministry [of Culture]—the cultural values—are explicitly pushed into the background. (MNL XIX-I-22-4-1 1985, emphasis in original.)

The divergent opinions between the Director-General and the Economic Deputy Director-General highlight a tentative shift in cultural policy. The Director-General’s firm stance for emphasising the cultural values of the creative industries, such as the

¹ All quotations from the materials held by the National Archives of Hungary were translated by the author.

film industry suggests an approach that sees economic objectives in Hungary's integration into the global cultural production and distribution system as secondary. His response also suggests that a considerable segment of voices in important economic positions within the Ministry of Culture advocated for financial and commercial aspects instead of primarily cultural considerations when it came to the issue of Hungary's presence within the international film industry.

Besides opening up the Hungarian film industry to the international structures of production and distribution, domestically the reshaping of the state's role in the economy of the film industry can also be observed. This second aspect of the neoliberal shift suggested by Fabry (2019), within the film industry is clearly illustrated by the discussion around the deregulation of cinema ticket prices. In the surveyed documents, the topic of cinema ticket prices appeared consistently either in relation to specific films and determining the suitable price category or as a major issue between the Ministry of Culture and the Film Directorate discussing if the right to determine these prices should be reassigned to a different level in the ministerial structure.

The individual cases illustrate how the Film Directorate had the right to determine prices and how they utilised that right. In the case of the rock opera, *Stephen, the King*, the Film Directorate sent out a letter to all county and capital cinema companies that set out a price that was double what the standard price would have been. An earlier correspondence between the Motion Picture Distribution Company and the Film Directorate details the reasons for the raised prices

[as] we can count on increased interest, [...] we intend to make an individual copy of the film available to all cinema companies. The use of the increased price is supported by the high cost of copying and the potentially high public interest. (MNL XIX-I-22-12-2, 1984)

The Motion Picture Distribution Company also suggested that 1/6 of the ticket revenue should be paid as cultural contribution by the companies and that no discounted tickets should be available during the raised ticket price period—a suggestion that would run counter to the general assumption of state subsidies' dominance in late communist cultural policy. Yet, in the final letter to the cinema companies, the Film Directorate determined that no contribution needed to be paid off the ticket revenue and that senior discount should be available. The Film Directorate's revision of the distribution company's recommendations suggests, on the one hand, their aim in keeping culture accessible, on the other, their position as the final authority on cinema ticket prices.

While in the case of *Stephen, the King*, both the distribution company and the Film Directorate agreed on the need for higher prices, in the case of *The Music of Life*, determining the ticket prices led to contention between the director of the film and the Film Directorate. Within the programme political categories, category A collected films whose artistic and ideological value allowed for subsidised ticket prices, while category C represented those films where a higher share of the cost of production needed to be borne by the audience, meaning higher ticket prices and cultural contribution obligations (Záhonyi-Ábel 2007, p.15-16). According to a March 1985 letter, *The Music of Life*'s director expected the film to be category A, stressing that the film's possible associations through its ticket prices with the wider category of entertainment films, category C, might negatively impact its success. The Film Directorate's response sternly defended their decision to place the film in category C, arguing that,

[w]e consider it justifiable, that the film's profit should pay back through cultural contribution some of its high costs. This should prove that it is worth supporting films of high quality from the cultural fund. (MNL XIX-I-22-12-2 1985)

The programme political categorisation of prices provided space for both subsidising tickets and for recouping expenses. How category C itself was used in both cases suggests a market-oriented approach, where those films that are expected to be popular are also expected to be bringing in more money through higher ticket prices and the obligation for cultural contribution to be paid. Nevertheless, while these instances can be seen as market-oriented, they still firmly illustrate the Film Directorate's definite role in defining ticket prices.

Several of the surveyed documents dating from the first half of 1985 discussed the Film Directorate's and the Ministry of Culture's Economic Department's approaches to restructuring the process that determined the price of a movie ticket. A paragraph from the 1985 'Guidelines for price policies in the VII. five-year planning period' succinctly sums up the direction culture and cultural policy was to take in the context of the overall economy:

In the case of non-productive infrastructure, besides cultural policy, social and economic aspects, the need for cost-effective solutions must also be taken into account in the provision of services. In some areas, the *commodity nature of services* needs to be strengthened. (MNL XIX-I-9-gg-7-3, 1985, emphasis mine.)

The Film Directorate in their response to the Ministry of Culture's Economic Department's request for commentary on how to adjust the department's framework to the new legislation regarding price control repeatedly express concerns over the reallocation of the right to determine the price to the county level cinema companies instead of the Film Directorate itself. In one of their more forceful replies they stressed the necessity of not treating the film industry just like any other industry:

[w]e agree with the cessation of textual references to the price determination capacities of the authorities, however, in the field of film production, we consider it necessary to specify the minimum-maximum indication of prices to protect the interests of the directors and creators, as well as for politico-cultural reasons. We also consider it necessary for the head of the Film Directorate to maintain the right of legal approval, according to which, in justified cases, the company may deviate from the announced direction. (MNL XIX-I-22-7-1, 1985)

The relevance of the Film Directorate's response is three-fold. Firstly, their opposition suggests that, at least, the Economic Department of the Ministry of Culture was in favour of freer price control. Secondly, the Film Directorate valued cultural reasons and creatives' rights protection over economic gains in the film industry. Thirdly, their opposition highlights the different understandings the Ministry of Culture and the Film Directorate had of their roles in the economy of the creative industries. The Film Directorate explicitly voiced their view of their role as such:

By delegating the right to determine the ticket prices for certain successful films to the county level cinema companies we would [...] unintentionally impel the companies to favour the distribution of the commercially successful films, thus pushing the distribution of culturally and politically important films into the background. (MNL XIX-I-22-7-1, 1985)

In the context of Fabry's observation, the above-detailed correspondence between the Film Directorate and the Economic Department of the Ministry of Culture suggests that the Ministry of Culture intended to reconfigure its role in the economy of the creative industries, yet its sub-ministerial body, the Film Directorate opposed this tendency.

Discussion

As these observations suggest, it is a rewarding endeavour to reassess cultural policy developments in the context suggested by Fabry (2019), arguing that Hungary as a late communist country was not immune to the global neoliberal tendencies.

The Hungarian film industry's relationship to the global film production and distribution in the early 1980s, on the one hand, was influenced by the internal demand for rising profits, and, on the other, by the external demand to outsource aspects of cultural production to cheaper labour markets (Varga 2020; McGuigan 2005). In the surveyed documents, economic potentials were considered both in the case of coproductions with Western countries and in the case of distribution (of foreign films domestically and domestic films internationally). Even in the context of cultural cooperation, those cooperations that would have been costly for Hungary and mostly beneficial for the other cooperating parties were limited to symbolic cultural exchanges. Particular documents clearly juxtaposed the Ministry of Culture's priorities regarding the Hungarian film industry's international presence with that of the Film Directorate's. The Film Directorate's repeated advocacy for the politico-cultural relevance of Hungary's international presence suggests that the Ministry of Culture emphasised the economic processes and gains over the cultural ones.

Besides integration into the international film industry, an attempt by the Ministry of Culture to reconfigure its role vis-à-vis the economy and, more specifically, the economy of the creative industries can also be observed. The correspondence between the Ministry of Culture's Economic Department and the Film Directorate regarding the right to determine movie ticket prices clearly illustrates the different approaches. The Ministry of Culture's financially minded approach aimed to further decentralise the process of price determination and thus incentivise cinema companies to aim for more profit. However, the Film Directorate argued to keep the right for politico-cultural reasons, such as better ability to support ideologically important or artistically relevant films over commercially successful ones.

Taken together the specific detailed instances paint certain trajectories regarding the behaviour of the Ministry of Culture and the Film Directorate over the studied period of time. Firstly, the Ministry of Culture's approach to the connection between culture and the economy seemed to shift from the 'Welfare Model' to the 'Competition Model' (Potts and Cunningham 2008) over the period. In 1981, the Ministry still maintained a view that allowed for the creative sector to be understood as unlike other industries. However, over the following decade, decisions such as the decentralisation of movie ticket price determination process indicate a view that emphasised the creative sector's equal status to other industries. Secondly, the Film Directorate consistently seemed to be walking a tightrope between justifying its relevance and the financial potentials of the film industry and, on the other hand, maintain-

ing that politico-cultural objectives should determine the direction of cultural policy instead of economic consideration. The Film Directorate's comments and reports suggest that their position was to negotiate the Ministry of Culture's demands and champion a moderate stand towards more economically focused cultural policy initiatives.

The above instances of contention between the Ministry of Culture and the Film Directorate demonstrate not only the direction of the shifts in late communist Hungarian cultural policy, that is the strengthening presence of neoliberal tendencies prior to 1989, but also illustrate how cultural policy could change preceding a change of regime. The prioritisation of economic concerns over the explicit socialist politico-cultural aims suggests that market-oriented neoliberal tendencies were present before the change of regime. The slow transition of what considerations directed the cultural policy played out in the back and forth between the Film Directorate and the Ministry of Culture. While the Film Directorate, a sub-ministerial body, was consistently reluctant to favour economic reasons to shape cultural policy over the ideological and political reasons, the umbrella organisation, the Ministry of Culture advocated for economic concerns to determine the direction of cultural policy. While the 1989 change of regime is often associated with a drastic socio-political and cultural shift, at least in terms of Hungary's cultural policy, it is possible to argue that a much slower change of muddled political systems took place.

Conclusion

At the core of the present research project has been the tension between how socialist and communist cultural policy is understood and the actualities of cultural policy initiatives of the decades leading up to the 1989 change of regime. Besides the centralised cultural life, nationalised property and state subsidies (Vojtiskova and Larencova 2015), certain market-oriented directives can be observed as well. The backdrop of this tension is, on the one hand, the international context, a global turn towards neoliberal tendencies in cultural policy, a rising dominance of creative industries-focused cultural policies. On the other hand, the tension is also contextualised by Fabry's (2019) observation that in response to the global economic crises in the 1970s and 1980s, late communist Hungary also demonstrated neoliberal policies by opening up to the world market and intending to restructure the state's role in relation to the economy domestically.

The collected data indicated that economic concerns became more and more relevant in defining cultural policy regarding Hungary's international presence. Those bilateral cooperations that implied more costs for Hungary and were mostly advantageous for the other participating country, were consistently scaled down to symbolic exchanges. Yet, those international cooperations, such as coproductions with Western countries and international sales that could lead to considerable financial gains were supported and encouraged. The disagreement between the Ministry of Culture and the Film Directorate regarding Hungary's international presence came to the forefront when discussing Hungary's international propaganda. The documents explicitly detail the different understandings, with the Film Directorate arguing for politico-cultural objectives, while the Ministry of Culture favouring economic benefits. The surveyed documents also detail a shift towards a more decentralised management of the cultural sector. The Ministry of Culture's desire to permit county-level cinema companies to determine movie ticket prices, thus allowing for more competition and better prices, was met by fierce opposition from the Film Directorate, who argued that the decision would lead to overproduction of commercially successful films over ideologically and politically important ones.

One observation based on the findings is that culture increasingly became a commodity for the Ministry of Culture, while the Film Directorate resisted prioritising economic aims over ideological and political ones. Even though the 1981 quote by Aczél argues that cultural products' distribution is not only influenced by the market but also by the socialist value system, the divergent directions in cultural policy by the Ministry of Culture and the Film Directorate seem to suggest otherwise. The Ministry of Culture more and more readily employed reasons based on economic concerns to direct its cultural policy, and less and less inclined to prioritise ideological and political aims. As guidelines for price policies suggest, instead of an 'indispensable service', more often than not, cultural products' commodity aspect needed to be emphasised.

Beyond the specifics of the late communist Hungarian cultural policy, the present study aimed to highlight the importance of continuously reassessing previously held ideas about past social, political and cultural structures. The post-communist transition, in terms of policy shifts, might be rewardingly recontextualised as a slower change, an unhurried transformation, characterised by fluctuation and porosity instead of a watershed moment in 1989.

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“I Only Fear Danger Where I Want to Fear It”: Agency and Rhetoric in Kafka’s *Metamorphosis* and Shelley’s *Frankenstein*

Salena Parker

Although we are not waking up as bugs or revived body parts, we must all wrestle with the same challenge Shelley and Kafka’s characters face: do we adapt to metamorphosis and learn from it, do we refuse, or do we blur the line in between these choices? Harvey Hix explores the definition of metamorphosis and how it functions within literature and present day in ‘Hybridity Is the New *Metamorphosis*’ by stating that the metamorphosis is less accurate than a hybridity, especially with Kafka’s novella. Metamorphoses, according to Hix, are events that happen and make a specific (most likely physical) change to an individual, while hybridity is an ongoing event that can make changes, is adaptable, and easier to understand with current literature and popular, relatable characters. Hix explores the juxtaposition of hybridity in metamorphosis in this way: ‘permanency and uniformity is what metamorphosis threatens. I need to be able to count on waking up as a human tomorrow. . . but metamorphosis says I might not’ (Hix 2012, p. 276). In this paper, I argue Kafka’s Gregor and Shelley’s *Frankenstein* embody a blend of hybridity and metamorphoses in their respective works.

Throughout Kafka’s novella, Gregor—a man-turned-insect— must relearn how to use his body to not only function, but also survive within his family’s home. Gregor is rejected, ridiculed, and abandoned because of neglect and selfish individuals who did not attempt to fix the situation; yet his untimely metamorphosis grants him emotional awareness and aids him in accepting his family’s neglect. Readers can glean

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the importance of work, independence, and most importantly, agency, in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. Walter Sokel draws heavily upon the post-modern ideals of individualism and labor in his article 'From Marx to Myth: The Structure and Function of Self- Alienation in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*':

For not only is his labor alien to his true desires, but its sole purpose, its fruit—the salary or commission that it affords him—does not even belong to him. Gregor's toil does not serve his own existence (Sokel 1983, p. 218).

Since Gregor completes his work out of necessity for his family, and not himself, he is emotionally cut off from his family as a human; and, once he wakes up as an insect, his physical connection to his family is completely severed.

As a representative of Marxist ideology, broken individualism, and unbalanced emotion, Gregor Samsa scuttles forward despite the several unfortunate events that occur to him. Gregor's family attempts to care for Gregor, but those attempts suddenly transform into acts of forced charity and disdain. Grete and her mother converse about moving furniture around so Gregor had more room to move, but by this point Gregor's mother's perception of her son was warped. Gregor's mother explains:

I think it would be best to keep his room exactly as it has always been, so that when he comes back to us, he will find everything unchanged and be able to forget all the more easily what has happened in the meantime (Kafka 2011, p. 10).

Gregor becomes devastated by his mother's rejection of his insect-like form, and later his father and sister show distaste for him by calling him a "disgusting condition" and a creature who 'persecutes [the family] . . . and would have [the family] all sleep in the gutter' (Kafka 2011, p.15-16). Even after these negative comments were made, Gregor rebuilt and retained his affection towards his family until the end of the novella; as Gregor attempts to manage his emotions, he does the same with his creature-like agency. Fortunately, Gregor gains emotional stability but dies in the process.

Frankenstein's creature undergoes the same terrible, ignorant treatment by individuals throughout the novel as Gregor does in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. Unlike Gregor, Shelley's creature is not confined to a single space throughout his metamorphosis. The creature embarks in travels as diverse as the body parts he is made with. Shelly juxtaposes the tranquility of nature with the emotional and mental tribulations of

the creature as he learns to manipulate language and channel his frustrations against his creator. Like Gregor, the creature has an ultimate wish—to give affection towards another female-like creature of *Frankenstein's* forced creation; unfortunately, the creature's wishes are denied, and *Frankenstein* is subject to a frenzied, murderous rage. There is an emphasis on one's nature to be simultaneously tumultuous yet safe, the boundaries of a person's emotions, and the almost frantic need to gain knowledge to lure readers into the creature's journey across Europe. Alan Rauch illustrates how the creature represents the acquisition and implementation of knowledge, while Victor takes up the mantle of representing the creator of that vehicle for knowledge:

Victor must, at the creature's request take responsibility for having created a social being artificially. That *Frankenstein* is unable to understand that he owes the creature companionship, in one way or another, is consistent with his inability to see any value in social exchange' (Rauch 1995, p. 231).

The creature's quest to use information to his advantage lies directly in response to his mental awareness; the more the creature learns, the more aware he becomes to want to seek refuge, revenge, and later, reconciliation. During an encounter between Victor and the creature in the mountains, the creature goes into detail about the mental strain from his attempts to take hold of his emotions:

I wished sometimes to shake off all thought and feeling... I admired virtue and good feelings, but I was shut out from intercourse from [the DeLacey's] except through means which I obtained through stealth... Miserable, unhappy wretch! (Shelley 1994, p. 85).

The ties that emotions have upon one's agency are like the way Ronald Britton discusses Shelley's writing method in 'Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*: What Made the Monster Monstrous?'. Britton says, 'In our terms, she is saying the unconscious has to provide the raw material for 'invention' to shape a story' (Britton 2015, p. 3). The creature uses his newfound knowledge of happiness, warmth, pain, and affection as "raw materials" for his inventions, or actions, to move forward in Shelley's novel; interestingly, Gregor Samsa uses the same process as an opportunity for emotional growth in Kafka's novella.

Kafka and Shelley modeled their narratives to attract readers and encourage them to relate to claiming or improving one's agency and emotional stability. Yet, it is by waking up in morphed forms that Gregor and the creature grow physically and emotionally; this is something readers truly appreciate—People use body language

almost as much, if not more than, spoken language to communicate with others. A concrete understanding of how to manipulate one's body and language to get a message across is needed to survive and maintain one's agency. *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe* illustrates this with: 'because corporeal parts have individualized functions, locations, and differentiated relations to the body as a whole, they can become concentrated sites where meaning is invested' (Hillman and Mazzio 1997, p. xii). In other words, both the hidden and stated expressions, metaphors, and meanings body parts exhibit can impact characters and texts in huge ways. Gregor and the creature's metamorphoses enable them to use corporeal rhetoric to their advantages; Gregor's frantic movements as an insect reflect his internal turmoil while the creature's gestures and movement across Europe depict his gradual emotional and mental growth.

Hanif Kureishi discusses the intricacies of Kafka's relationship to Gregor and his insect form in the article 'His Father's Excrement: Franz Kafka and the Power of the Insect'. Kafka created Gregor to be weak, ill, and to eventually succumb to his family's neglect and their ability to improve financially without his support: 'The abject believe that their suffering is sacred and a virtue, that their sacrifice will save the other, and, ultimately, themselves' (Kureishi 2015, p.12). Not surprisingly, Gregor and Shelley's creature take this to heart by secluding themselves within a bedroom and a cave and wrestle with their physical deformities in the hope that suffering will grant them emotional support; sadly, their suffering only renders them distraught with emotion. Readers see through their actions the paths their emotional stability and agency take in their stories. Kafka writes:

During the daytime he did not want to show himself at the window, out of consideration for his parents. . . nor could he bear lying quietly at rest all during the night. . . he was fast losing any interest he had ever taken in food (Kafka 2011, p. 9).

Gregor's recreation of crawling on the ceiling and neglect of sustaining nutrition mirrors his quickly declining hope of retaining his human agency.

The creature's treks across Europe 'were long, and the sufferings [the creature] endured intense' in Shelley's *Frankenstein* (Shelley 1994, p. 100). The farther Shelley's creature moved across Europe, the closer he became to finding his creator and, eventually, appreciating his metamorphosis. The 'yellow skin. . . watery eyes, and shriveled complexion', matched with his various, meshed body parts matches the tumultuous wave of emotions that the creature wrestles with throughout Shelley's novel

(Shelley 1994, p.35). The actions the creature takes to survive in the wilderness as well as combat his creator's adversity to him are vital to appreciating the creator's significance in *Frankenstein*; his body movements vary from quick to violent, mimicking the tasks he completes to reach his goal of finding his creator and forcing him to suffer for his own enjoyment and revenge. Shelley's creature's actions (like Gregor's) directly mirror his emotions and intentions in the novel, from the graphic, violent actions the creature gives to Clerval and Elizabeth to the controlled, judgmental movements he exhibits with Victor and the drowning woman in the river.

Kafka and Shelley intertwine corporeal rhetoric into their novella and novel to promote a response in readers that has the capacity to be physical and emotional. Gregor and the creature's mental and emotional development would have stayed stagnant if not for the vivid, physical movement these authors gave to each character. Kafka's Gregor and Shelley's creature made up for unspoken ideas and emotions by putting corporeal rhetoric to use so readers could understand the importance and necessity of verbal and nonverbal communication. After all, when the mouth is silent, other body parts can speak and regain an agency that was once lost. Readers see the transgression from old to new identity almost immediately in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. As Gregor's family and his supervisor entice him to come out of his bedroom after his (to them) unknown metamorphosis, Gregor begins to recognize that 'the most sensible course was to risk everything for the smallest hope of getting away from it' (Kafka 2011, p. 2). Gregor knows there is no way to regain his position and agency towards finances in his family; this is where readers begin to watch Gregor slowly rebuild and accept his new identity as a creature in his home rather than a profitable member of society. That is not to say there are no complications in his path towards being content with his new identity.

Cristina Nicolae explores how Gregor reverts to using his bedroom and window to preserve 'the quality and privilege of being and staying humane' (Nicolae 2015, p. 143). Gregor uses his propped door to maintain his human identity despite his insect-like appearance. When he locks and closes the door, it 'mirrors the individual's relation with the outside world, his 'cautiousness in communicating, if not his inability to approach the others and to allow him in' (Nicolae 2015, p. 146). However, Gregor uses the window to reflect on his past and attempts to watch the outside world regardless of his horrific situation. Nicolae writes that Kafka's use of Gregor's bedroom, door, and window 'are to be seen as means of communication, either allowing it or blocking it, compensating for the character's loss of a comprehensible language'

(Nicolae 2015, p. 146). His struggle to preserve his human agency is evident; but it is moving forward and embracing his insect form and mindset that allows him to give back to his family in an odd way and embrace his newfound freedom.

Frankenstein's creature maneuvers through waves of confusion as he strives to find a way to achieve emotional companionship and ensure his survival, but not without first realizing his agency is far from being lost—his creator eliminated it completely. The creature laments: 'My person was hideous and my stature gigantic. What did this mean? Who was I? What was I... These questions continually recurred, but I was unable to solve them' (Shelley 1994, p. 91). Through his encounters with Victor, the drowning woman, and other characters the creature does create his own purpose, albeit a cruel one. After realizing that he has the capacity to create and make his own mission/identity, the creature departs from his first mission of forcing Victor to create a mate for him and instead puts all his being into making as much pain as possible for Victor. This violent turn is gruesome but beneficial for Shelley's creature because he eventually comes full circle and laments his dreadful deeds; his lost agency had cemented the work of his newfound identity and purpose:

Fear not that I shall be the instrument of future mischief. My work is nearly complete... when I felt the cheering warmth of summer, I should have wept to die... soon these burning miseries will be extinct (Shelley 1994, p. 165-166).

Frankenstein's creature must, and does, lose his human agency to create a new identity in his disfigured and rebirthed form; further, *Frankenstein* had to suffer in a cave surrounded by knowledge and emotion, and learn from those ideas and concepts, to move forward in his life and in Shelley's novel.

In sum, both characters gain agency through a recurring process of transformation—their journeys and mental growth did not occur in a fixed moment in time. From the darkness of sleep, Gregor transformed into an insect and ultimately assisted his family emotionally and financially while also achieving emotional awareness through his turmoil. In the darkness of forests, caves, mountains, and his own doubts, *Frankenstein's* creature adopted the language of man, knowledge of emotion, and displayed a beautiful yet tragic amount of humility and violence; this solidified his physical, emotional, and mental awareness. I have found their metamorphoses (as well as my own) are not things we should fear, but instead, respect and learn from if we are to better understand our own fears, mortality, and growth.

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A Posthuman Understanding of Alienation in Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*

Anna Dijkstra

Introduction

Posthumanism is frequently defined as a move beyond humanism, that is not its rejection, nor its mere continuation: Rosi Braidotti (2013, p.37) describes it as:

the historical moment that marks the end of the opposition between Humanism and anti-humanism and traces a different discursive framework, looking more affirmatively towards new alternatives.

It is a way of thinking about the human subject that embraces its plurality, in line with post-structuralist thought, but moves beyond deconstruction towards affirmation. In this way, posthumanism, with respect to discussions about bodies, presents a way to regain the autonomy that was disavowed through the humanist master narratives prevailing in modernity (Halberstam and Livingston 1995, p.4). This disavowal provides a bodily counterpart to Lyotard's 'incredulity toward metanarratives' (1984 [1979], p.xxiv), as the humanist standards of Man are deconstructed, which opens up the floor to new and alternative conceptualizations of bodies.

At first glance, this theoretical location might seem to limit the domain of post humanist thought to exploring the subject after its post-structuralist reconfiguration, as, genealogically, posthumanism succeeds, and builds on, deconstructive thought. However, posthumanism can be useful in thinking about problems surrounding autonomy in contexts that are deemed classically humanist. This paper will use posthu-

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manism to think about modernist alienation. As the modernist notion of alienation relies on a strongly humanist conception of the mind-body distinction, it is useful to rethink this with posthumanism.

Modernist alienation has classically been defined by thinkers from the period such as Lukács in the following way: it depicts '[m]an [as] by nature solitary, asocial, unable to enter relationships with other human beings' (Lukács 1964 [1962], p.20). This is an ontological condition best understood in terms of the Heideggerian idea of the subject as thrown-into-the-world: the world is meaningless and incomprehensible to them. It is then no surprise that one of its common depictions is that of a mind trapped in a body, which prevents the subject-as-mind from interacting with the world around them meaningfully. For example, many of Beckett's characters are physically stuck in ways that prevent them from living their lives, such as those in his play *Happy Days*, or, on a more metaphorical level, Murphy in the novel of the same name, who wishes to resort to his mind to experience freedom but is constantly forced to recognize the demands made by his body (Cornwell 1973, p.42). This clearly recalls Descartes's famous theory of dualism, which views mind and body as two separate, irreconcilable entities: 'the nature of the intellect is distinct from the nature of the body' (2006 [1637], p.31). The postulations of such understandings of alienation as presented by Beckett rely heavily on Cartesian dualism, as the distinction between mind and body is placed at the forefront.

Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* can be considered a key instance of the trope that presents a mind as trapped in a body. The tale describes Gregor's experiences adjusting to his new body after he wakes up one morning as a giant insect, and an incongruence between a human mind and an insect body is posited especially at the beginning of the tale. Because his body is initially unfamiliar to Gregor, it makes it difficult for him to do what he wants, which gives off an idea of a mind trapped in a body in accordance with the classical presentation of alienation mentioned above. Considering the assumption of dualism that underlies this notion of alienation, this paper will provide an analysis of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* that explores the relation between dualism and alienation more closely. Specifically, the aim is to argue that a posthuman reading of *The Metamorphosis* shows the instability of alienation in the face of embodiment. Such a reading can complement understanding of bodily metamorphosis through a posthuman lens in a way that emphasizes the importance of embodiment, and, consequently, the insistence of a monistic universe – a view that understands all matter as one unified, self-organizing substance. Such a worldview

stands in contrast to the dualistic dichotomy of mind and body and can provide an alternative worldview to the alienated one.

This exploration can add a phenomenological dimension to the posthuman refutation of the classically humanist mind-body dichotomy, and its relevance to modernist alienation. In a post-structuralist move, many post humanists actively turn against the mind-body binary, some doing so in favour of highlighting the importance of embodiment. N. Katherine Hayles (1999, p.1), for instance, asks: 'how could anyone think that consciousness in an entirely different medium would remain unchanged, as if it had no connection with embodiment?' Embodiment is brought to the forefront of the debate, as she argues for a revised conceptual framework with which to consider subjectivity (Hayles 1999, p.198). Such an approach proves particularly useful to analyze Gregor's condition in *The Metamorphosis*, as it grasps his experience of transitioning into his new body and provides an alternative to viewing him as a mind trapped in a body.

Another dimension important to understand Gregor's condition, which Hayles leaves mostly unacknowledged, is captured by Rosi Braidotti's monism. Also turning against the mind-body binary, Braidotti pleads for a monistic worldview as the affirmative alternative to follow the deconstruction of the dualist one. To this aim, she draws on Spinoza's notion of the 'monistic universe' according to which 'matter, the world and humans are not dualistic entities structured according to principles of internal or external opposition.' Instead, 'matter is one, driven by the desire for self-expression and ontologically free' (Braidotti 2013, p.56). Drawing on this concept, she argues for:

a very active concept of monism [...] to define matter as vital and self-organizing [...] Monism results in relocating difference outside the dialectical scheme, as a complex process of differing which is framed by both internal and external forces and is based on the centrality of the relation to multiple others. These monistic premises are for me the building blocks for a posthuman theory of subjectivity that does not rely on classical Humanism and carefully avoids anthropocentrism. (Braidotti 2013, p.56)

Such a view of matter as universally connected and self-organizing allows for a unifying understanding of the relation between humans and their surroundings, as well as of humans among each other. However, it also highlights a radical sense of estrangement that could befall the subject when they fail to understand, and take part

in their interconnectedness with the world, as it means that they lack understanding about their existential condition.

Braidotti's monism therefore provides an alternative way of understanding the condition of alienation as discussed by Lukács; she presents it in terms of a lack of comprehending the subject's relation to other people as well as the world. This view stands in contrast to the classical definition of modernist alienation, according to which such relations are ultimately impossible. This shift in comprehending alienation provides a useful lens through which to read *The Metamorphosis*, as it facilitates understanding of Gregor's material connections to the world. However, it does not explore the significance of embodiment in the case of a displaced consciousness such as Gregor's. It can therefore be useful to combine the lenses of Hayles and Braidotti, so that they can complement each other and bring forth a new understanding of Gregor's condition, as well as a more complete way of comprehending modernist alienation at large. In order to analyze the alienation Gregor experiences in *The Metamorphosis* in the context of his body, this paper will therefore draw on Hayles's model of subjectivity. Complementing this model with Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology and posthuman thought on prostheses, the aim is to explore how embodiment dissolves the alienation following Gregor's initial break between mind and body. As embodiment shows the importance of the subject's materiality, it can finally highlight the importance of a monist approach to subjectivity. In this way, posthumanism can help understand the difficulty that comes with drastic bodily metamorphoses and show the untenability of alienation in the face of embodiment, while presenting a monist worldview as a solution.

Gregor's (Dis)embodiment and the Mind-Body Binary

Gregor's state of alienation can be found in his bodily condition: with the opening of the story, he has, in alignment with the classical modernist interpretation, been thrown into the body of an insect – a body that, initially, is meaningless and incomprehensible to him, and limits him in his interactions with the world. As will become clear, this specifically *bodily* alienation dissolves through the occurrence of embodiment, which will shed light on the role of monistic thought in a story so immersed in dualism.

Hayles's model of subjectivity that focuses on embodiment is well suited to Gregor's in-between status: he is not quite human, not quite insect. Approaching the matter

through the mind-body binary, tension is present from the beginning. Understandably, Gregor's first inclination is to distrust his senses, believing with a human mind that his insect body is illusory: '[w]hat about sleeping a little longer and forgetting all this nonsense, he thought' (Kafka 2018 [1915], p.95). Here, a clear break is introduced between his mind as a human, and his body as that of an insect. This brings to mind thought experiments in which minds are transferred to bodies different from their own, such as those presented by the transhumanists,¹ who set out to explore the opportunities of improving human life through technological intervention and are founded on ideals emerging from Enlightenment humanism (More 2013, pp.3-4).

Contrary to the transhumanists' thought experiments, though, in *The Metamorphosis*, the distinction between mind and body quickly becomes ambiguous. This ambiguity may be most clear when Gregor's mother and sister start removing his cherished furniture from the room, in order to give him more space to crawl around in. He had been looking forward to them doing so, until he heard his mother question if removing the furniture would not appear as if they had given up hope. Gregor then questions:

Did he really want his warm room, so comfortably fitted with old family furniture, to be turned into a naked den in which he would certainly be able to crawl unhampered in all directions but at the price of shedding simultaneously all recollection of his human background? He had indeed been so near the brink of forgetfulness that only the voice of his mother, which he had not heard for so long, had drawn him back from it. (Kafka 2018 [1915], p.124)

This section emphasizes the in-between status of desire as related to the mind, but also not completely cut off from the body. Gregor's insect body has altered his desires into wanting the furniture taken away. This bodily desire is contrasted with another, conflicting desire that appears to be not just disconnected from his body but turning away from it entirely: Gregor wants to keep the furniture in place, to cling to his humanity. These observations lead to the question why such a conflict is present in Gregor.

To explore the answer to this question properly, it is useful to look at how the initial example of a clear break between mind and body continues:

¹ For an example, see Moravec (2013, p.178).

What about sleeping a little longer and forgetting all this nonsense, he thought, but it could not be done, for he was accustomed to sleep on his right side and in his present condition he could not turn himself over. However violently he forced himself toward his right side he always rolled onto his back again. He tried it at least a hundred times, shutting his eyes to keep from seeing his struggling legs, and only desisted when he began to feel in his side a faint dull ache he had never experienced before. (Kafka 2018 [1915], p.95-96)

In this scene, the body foregrounds itself; it imposes itself upon him. It could be said that the mind wants to turn over, but the body limits him in doing so. Therefore, the body is opposed to the mind. This opposition is in tension with it still being Gregor's body nevertheless – which his mind logically wants to cooperate with. Hayles points out that embodiment is what is missing from the transhumanist perspectives. This lack of embodiment is also why a basic understanding of Gregor's situation as a human mind in the body of an insect proves insufficient. After all, such an understanding fails to recognize the impact a body has on its mind.

To explore embodiment further, it is useful to consider the concept of bodily intentionality as discussed by Merleau-Ponty: the subject is directed towards the world *through* their body. He writes: 'I can only understand the function of the living body by accomplishing it and to the extent that I am a body that rises up toward the world' (Merleau-Ponty 2014 [1945], p.78). The body functions in its process of interacting with the world; in its lived direction towards the world. It is in this bodily direction that a subject exists; they exist in the possible ways they have of interacting with the world. Positioning himself against the Cartesian foregrounding of thought, Merleau-Ponty therefore writes: '[c]onsciousness is originally not an "I think that," but rather an "I can"' (2014 [1945], p.139). These possible ways of interaction, the things they *can* do, orient the subject towards their particular world.

It is useful to note here that the application of Merleau-Ponty's philosophical thought in this context will remain limited to its use regarding the experience of embodiment. This decision is deliberate, since the debate about whether a consciousness should be assumed is a large one, which falls outside of the scope of this paper. In this context, it should be noted that while this paper does not intend to follow Merleau-Ponty's assumption of a consciousness, it also does not claim to refute it. What the implications of either of these positions would be for conceptualizing both Gregor's metamorphosis and modernist alienation at large, could be explored in further research.

Merleau-Ponty's theory of embodiment facilitates understanding of Gregor's behaviour. For instance, when 'he could not resist snapping his jaws together at the sight of the streaming coffee' (Kafka 2018 [1915], p.110), his insect body is clearly directing him towards the world; it is shaping his responses to and interactions with the world, not just in what he is physically able to do, but also in what he feels naturally *inclined* to – his body alters the potential the world has for him in terms of interaction. For instance, the walls have become suitable for crawling. Embodiment therefore plays a large part in understanding Gregor's relation to his transformed body.

Settling into the Body

As mentioned above, Gregor's body imposes itself upon him: the body becomes an object before him that he must discover, for instance when he tries and fails to roll over or struggles with the use of his legs. To understand this imposition in terms of embodiment, it is useful to draw upon posthuman thought used to describe prostheses, and on Merleau-Ponty's idea of the body schema. Specifically, Vivian Sobchack provides a discussion of prostheses that can be of value in analyzing Gregor's experience. Following her criticisms of using prosthesis as a metaphor, I will refrain from thinking of his insect body as a prosthesis, merely using thought about prostheses to think of an aspect of Gregor's situation. Such use of her framework can apply because of the similarity of a body (part) being unfamiliar to its subject. The distinction between this latter analysis, and between viewing Gregor's body as a prosthesis, is important, not just because of Sobchack's criticism that wider thought about prostheses often ignore prosthetic realities (2006, p.21), but also because of the insensitivity inherent to thinking of a famously repulsive insect as a prosthesis.

Sobchack distinguishes between a metonymic and a synecdochical understanding of the relation between a subject's prosthesis and the rest of their body. While a metonymic relation is the combination of two objects that are viewed as absolute separate wholes, a synecdochical relation is a combination of two objects that form one whole together (Sobchack 2006, p.25). Therefore, if a subject is in a synecdochical relation to their prosthesis, they view it as a part of themselves that is indistinguishable from the rest of their body. As Sobchack (2006, p.26) explains:

[m]y 'real' leg and my 'prosthetic' leg are not usually lived as two absolutely different and separate things since they function as an ensemble and are each a part of my body participating in the whole movement that gets me from here to there.

Following Merleau-Ponty, it could be said that Sobchack's prosthesis has been taken up into the body schema. The body schema is a pre-conscious system that makes interaction with the world possible: it allows the body's 'being-towards-the-world' (Toadvine 2019 [2016], §3). As Merleau-Ponty writes: 'the body schema is not merely an experience of my body, but rather an experience of my body in the world' (2014 [1945], p.142). A metonymic relation between a subject's body and their prosthesis would lead a subject to view their prosthetic limb as something that is not part of their body. The prosthetic limb has then not been taken up into the body schema.

To understand Gregor's situation, it is useful to draw upon Merleau-Ponty's example of the organ player familiarizing himself with an instrument: '[h]e sizes up the instrument with his body, he incorporates its directions and dimensions, and he settles into the organ as one settles into a house' (Merleau-Ponty 2014 [1945], p.146). For the experienced organ player, the organ has become part of his body schema, as playing it has become a habit. Over the course of the story, we see Gregor moving into his new body as settling into a house, too. Initially, he struggles with basic movements and how his body inhabits, and can interact with, the world. An example of this is his initial attempts to roll over onto his side: his body schema has not aligned with his new body yet. In Sobchack's terms, a metonymic relationship can be spotted of Gregor as a subject to his body. However, rather than in the case of a prosthesis, it is his entire body that does not seem to belong to him. Later, though, we see Gregor moving around confidently, even climbing over the walls and ceiling. This can be seen as the moment where Gregor has inhabited his new body properly; through it, he relates to the world, and this relation is different from the one he had before. He is, as it were, in a synecdochical relation with his body.

This move is reflected in the ways Gregor is described throughout the tale. For instance, the following description of Gregor's voice occurs at the beginning of the story:

Gregor had a shock as he heard his own voice answering hers, unmistakably his own voice [...] but with a persistent horrible twittering squeak behind it like an undertone, which left the words in their clear shape only for the first moment and then rose up reverberating around them to destroy their sense, so that one could not be sure one had heard them rightly. (Kafka 2018 [1915], p.97)

In the phrasing 'he heard his own voice,' a distance is established between Gregor and his voice, that is characteristic of a metonymic relationship. This is emphasized

by the rest of the passage, which elaborates its strangeness, and, more importantly, its *otherness* from what Gregor had expected. This stands in contrast to the later passage: 'Gregor hissed loudly with rage because not one of [his sister and mother] thought of shutting the door to spare him such a spectacle and so much noise' (Kafka 2018 [1915], p.135).

After describing Gregor's hissing, the sentence elaborates on why he did so, rather than what it sounded like, or how a dissonance was present between Gregor's mind and the hissing sound he makes. Instead of 'Gregor heard himself hissing,' the text simply states: 'Gregor hissed loudly,' implying that the previous distance between Gregor and his otherness has been dissolved, and both have become parts of the same whole; a synecdochical relation is at play. Gregor's initial mind-body break can then be understood in Sobchack's terms. Initially, there is a discrepancy between mind and body as they stand in a metonymic relation to each other, but as the story progresses this turns into a synecdochical relation. As this shift occurs, the initial mind-body break caused by the thought experiment-like situation Gregor is put in is dissolved, and a sense of embodiment emerges in its place. It can therefore be seen that even when a situation is presented that appears to argue for a separation of mind and body, embodiment still gradually brings the two together. This act of bringing together can be viewed as a dissolution of Gregor's body-related alienation, as it emerges from a disconnect between mind and body.

A Monist Critique of Alienation

To properly explain the significance of this dissolution in the posthuman context outlined in this paper, it is useful to explore the materialist implications of Gregor's transformation, specifically analyzing the passage that considers his relation to his old furniture. This relation was previously framed in terms of a conflict between mind and body. However, at this point it is valuable to look at the implications emerging from Gregor's altered body in a materialist context. His changed body allows him to enter new relationships with the world around him – most explicitly mentioned, he is now able to climb the walls of his room. Such emergence of new relationships can highlight the multiplicity of the interconnected nature of matter to Gregor, as so many new aspects are introduced to his phenomenological world, which give the world additional ways of being significant for him (Merleau-Ponty 2014 [1945], p.139). This world is specific to the subject and arises from how he relates to the objects around him; through the possible ways he has to interact with

these objects – through the ‘I can.’ New possibilities of this sort, emerging from his altered body, then increases the significance the world has for him.

Gregor’s transformation can be seen to take a stance against alienation as a whole. The ways in which he relates to the material world around him change in accordance with his body. Rather than viewing this as limiting or changing him on an individual scale, it can, on a larger scale, be seen to highlight the interconnectedness of materiality. By showing that there are many ways in which we are, or can be, connected with the world, the text highlights that we truly are not separate from the world at all – no matter whether we are insects, human, or something completely different. This view stands in sharp contrast to the dualist reading of the subject as closed off from the world, and unable to interact with it. Instead, the world is full of potential connections to be established.

These new significations Gregor gained after being reorganized in materialist terms can be clearly understood in the context of the discussion of monism at the beginning of this paper. Matter is self-organizing and interconnected. Therefore, a self-organizing subject can always revise their connections with the world and try to find new ways of interacting with it. The potential is there, which Gregor’s drastic metamorphosis highlights in an extreme way, but which is also emphasized by his family intending to start a new life after his death, enabled by the new house they plan to move into which will offer them new possibilities of interacting with the world (Kafka 2018 [1915], p.149).

The knowledge that there is an always present potential for entering into new relations with the world, namely through establishing new material connections, stands in radical opposition with the central belief of modernist alienation: the ultimate impossibility of establishing meaningful connections with other people, and the world at large. *The Metamorphosis* therefore dissolves alienation in two ways: by highlighting that mind is never truly separate from body, which emphasizes the subject’s materiality, and by emphasizing the interconnectedness of matter. A posthuman reading of *The Metamorphosis* therefore problematizes the concept of modernist alienation as an inescapable condition, putting forward awareness of the interconnectedness of the world as a solution.

Conclusion

Gregor's transformation into an insect radically alters his relation to his body. Post humanist thought can help understand the initial discrepancy between mind and body as an experience of body-related alienation that is gradually dissolved through embodiment. In this way, posthumanism can provide an understanding of the expression of modernist alienation in Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and show the importance of embodiment in countering alienation that is bodily in nature, specifically through dissolving the mind-body binary. By foregrounding the role of the subject's materiality in Gregor's condition, this analysis highlights how a post humanist monism can help problematize the modernist condition of alienation as fundamental and inescapable. In this way, a posthuman reading of bodily metamorphosis can help understand the inner workings of the modernist condition of alienation and show how a recognition of the interconnectedness of matter may be what it is truly lacking.

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Between Betrayal and Redemption: The Metamorphosis of *La Malinche* Through Contemporary Chicana Literature

Viola Nassi

Sí, soy hija de la Chingada.
I've always been her daughter.
No 'tes chingando.

Gloria Anzaldúa, Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza

When Spanish Conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived at Potonchán, Mexico, in 1519, he was introduced to a woman who would heavily influence the course of Mexican history: Malinalli Tenépatl or Malintzin, commonly known as *La Malinche* (1501–1529). This paper considers the transformation of *La Malinche*'s legacy through contemporary Chicana literature – namely, literature written by Mexican American women. More specifically, it analyses how Chicana feminist author Sandra Cisneros's collection of short stories *Woman Hollering Creek* ([1991] 1993) gives *La Malinche* the agency she had never been able to acquire throughout her life. Before engaging in a textual analysis of Cisneros's work, this article first presents a historical overview of *La Malinche*'s life and then proceeds to assess the status of her legacy in contemporary popular culture and Mexican life.

There are several different accounts recounting *La Malinche*'s personal history: for instance, historian Reed Fehrenbach's text *Fire and Blood: A History of Mexico* (1995) explores *La Malinche*'s alleged 'traitorous' enterprise as Cortés's helper and consort. However, the overarching account of *La Malinche*'s life story is that Malinalli (as

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most historians have gathered this to be La *Malinche's* birth name), was first sold as a slave at a young age by her noble mother to an Aztec chief, or *cacique*, following the death of her father, who also was a *cacique*. She was then enslaved by multiple other *caciques* until Cortés's arrival to Mexico. La *Malinche* was offered to Cortés as a slave along with nineteen other Indigenous women by the city leaders of Potonchán. Her eloquence and level of education soon stood out, and she became known amongst the Spaniards as 'Doña Marina' ('Lady Marina'). Since she was fluent in both Yucatec Maya and Nahuatl, indigenous languages which were widely spoken across the Yucatan peninsula, she soon became Cortés's interpreter, in addition, she quickly learnt Castilian Spanish. It could be argued that La *Malinche's* role in the Spanish conquest of Mexico was pivotal: she successfully negotiated with indigenous chiefs who were worn out by the Aztec rule, and she unearthed plots by indigenous people against the Spaniards so that Cortés could take action (Tate 2019, p. 397). However, it is necessary to note that accounts relating La *Malinche's* time with the Conquistadores are only to be found in the recollections written by Spaniards; there is no record of La *Malinche's* own voice, as she was never given a possibility to tell her story. Although conquistador Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España* ([1632] 2005) presents La *Malinche* speaking with her voice once, when she learns of the Cholula plot from an elderly woman, this is still known through Díaz del Castillo's indirect and likely biased recollection of the exchange. Indeed, even after she was 'freed' in 1524, she was given in marriage to one of Cortés's captains, thus throughout her life La *Malinche* never had a real opportunity to choose for herself, and as such the development of her legacy was out of her control.

In fact, although the figure of La *Malinche* is integrated within contemporary Mexican culture, her legacy is largely negative. The negative reputation is, for instance, expressed through commonly used pejorative Mexican term *malinchismo* which, according to the *Academia Mexicana de la Lengua*, means '*actitud de quien muestra apego a lo extranjero con menosprecio de lo propio*': 'attitude of whom shows support towards a foreign culture, with a detrimental behaviour towards one's own [culture]' (2021) (translation mine). Moreover, several – predominantly male – historians and scholars see La *Malinche* as a figure of utter betrayal, as they mainly focus on her alleged role as Cortés's mistress and traitor to 'her people'. For instance, in his essay *El Laberinto de la Soledad (The Labyrinth of Solitude)* (1950), Mexican Nobel laureate Octavio Paz insists that the violation and rape of La *Malinche* forms the basis for historical Mexican identity, whereby, La *Malinche* betrays her people upon the Conquistadores' arrival by allegedly becoming Cortés's lover. Paz violently re-names *Malinche* as *La Chin-*

gada, 'the fucked one', significantly changing the way she is viewed in contemporary Mexican cultural thought. La *Malinche* is thus ambivalently ingrained in Mexican literary history both as the 'opened', violated Native woman and as a cynical betrayer of her people.

Nonetheless, contemporary Chicana feminists have significantly revisited La *Malinche*'s legacy in their literature, offering her own perspective and presenting her as a subject capable of telling her story. As a matter of fact, La *Malinche* embodies the Chicana's very contemporary condition of straddling two countries and two cultures, seen as an outsider by white Americans whilst considered an 'Americanized' traitor by Mexicans. Chicana scholars such as Norma Alarcón have begun a critical 'contemporary recuperation and positive redefinition of her name' (Alarcón 1989, p. 60), and contemporary Mexicana and Chicana feminist authors' works have attempted to undo the linguistic violence that has overwhelmed La *Malinche*'s figure (Gaspar de Alba 2014). Sandra Cisneros's short story collection *Woman Hollering Creek* offers two *cuentos* (short stories) that fully explore the figure and impact of La *Malinche*, interweaving her life story with the Chicana's. In Cisneros's *cuento* 'Never Marry a Mexican', the protagonist, a Mexican American woman named Clemencia, has a relationship with a white American man whom she apostrophizes throughout the whole story. The narrative opens with Clemencia's recollections of her time with her former lover:

Drew, remember when you used to call me your Malinalli? It was a joke, a private game between us, because you looked like a Cortez with that beard of yours. My skin dark against yours (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 74).

The juxtaposition of the lovers' skin echoes not the *mestizaje* – namely, interracial/intercultural mixing (Martínez-Echazábal 1998, p. 21) – but rather a stark opposition underlined by the word choice of 'against'. As Clemencia/La *Malinche* and Drew/Cortés are together only in bed, La *Malinche* almost seems to take the shape of an intimate roleplay between the Chicana and her married lover. Clemencia further appears to play with the epithet, saying: 'Malinalli, you called me, remember? *Mi doradita*. I liked when you spoke to me in my language' (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 74), hence consolidating the symbol of La *Malinche* as a flirtatious game between the two.

However, it would be naïve to dismiss La *Malinche*'s representation in Cisneros's story as superficial; in fact, although La *Malinche* herself is not mentioned after this initial reference, her presence lingers throughout Cisneros's narrative. Clemencia

consciously reflects on the role she plays within this man's life, asserting her stance as a woman who rejoices in sex, although she is certain she will never marry. *La Malinche*, taking the form of the self-conscious though resolute Clemencia reclaims the power she has long been denied: her own voice through which she can assert her presence in a male-dominated environment, 'Making the world look at you from my eyes. And if that's not power, what is?' (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 75). Still, critics such as Alexandra Fitts (2002) and Jean Wyatt (1995) argue that, in 'Never Marry a Mexican', Cisneros does not so much restore the rightful story of *La Malinche* as she complicates it through Clemencia's character. For instance, Fitts writes,

La Malinche did not fare exceptionally well in Cisneros's retelling of her story. While she does modernize *La Malinche* and provide some shading to her villainy, ultimately, she is still a traitor. The reader can comprehend Clemencia's confusion and anger, but she is still an overtly sexualized figure who trades her body for power (2002, p. 24).

Clemencia certainly is not an 'uncomplicated' character – throughout the story she displays petty and vengeful behaviours towards her former lover. In this re-evaluation of *La Malinche*'s legacy nevertheless, she is not a traitorous figure, as she is not the one who betrays within the narration: it is the Cortés of the story, Clemencia's lover Drew, who repeatedly cheats on his wife. Claiming that Cisneros simply 'provides some shading to [La *Malinche*/Clemencia's] villainy' is arguably a reductive reading of Cisneros's re-elaboration of the figure of *La Malinche*. Clemencia is a woman who is well aware of her gendered position within a patriarchal society, and she uses her sexual power to navigate life, rather than merely trading her body for power. Although Drew reunites with his wife leaving Clemencia alone, the whole story is recounted from Clemencia/*La Malinche*'s viewpoint, as the retelling is framed by her command over her behaviour towards the man in front of her: 'Nothing. I'd knew you'd say that. Let's not talk. We're no good at it' (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 78).

Chicana scholar Cherríe Moraga contends that 'there is hardly a Chicana growing up today who does not suffer under [La *Malinche*'s] name' (1986, p. 175). Accordingly, *La Malinche* is also widely known as '*La Chingada*', namely, the raped/violated woman, within contemporary Chicana culture, which is an epithet that strongly emphasizes her status as a sufferer and a victim of history itself. Cisneros reverses this perspective in her fiction, transforming *La Malinche* into the subject, as Clemencia, the Chicana, can actively refute the legacy of alienation from one's own story which

is historically and culturally attached to La *Malinche*. Ultimately though, it is in 'Little Miracles, Kept Promises' ('LMKP') that La *Malinche* displays her nuanced complexity. In this patchwork-style *cuento*, La *Malinche* is embodied by a young Chicana called Rosario (Chayo) de Leon, a girl who firmly refuses to accept the radically different expectations that patriarchal society has for women and men:

I don't want to be a mother. I wouldn't mind being a father. At least a father could still be artist, could love *something* instead of *someone*, and no one would call that selfish (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 127).

Unlike 'Never Marry a Mexican', La *Malinche* slips into this story early in the narrative, subtly appearing within Chayo's first-person narration as she describes the *pueblo's* malign chatter regarding her life choices, 'Don't think I didn't get my share of it from everyone. Heretic. Atheist. *Malinchista*' (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 127). Moreover, Chayo is shunned in the same way even by the women in her family:

Acting like a *bolilla*, a white girl. *Malinche*. Don't think it didn't hurt being called a traitor. Trying to explain to my ma, to my *abuela*, why I didn't want to be like them (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 128).

Chayo is thus reprimanded merely for her identity as a Chicana, as she recognizes the clear implications of being called a '*Malinche*': to her family's eyes, she is a traitor. However, after reflecting on it, Chayo is able to see 'power in my mother's patience, strength in my grandmother's endurance' (Cisneros [1991] 1993, p. 128). As she reconciles her present identity with the multifaceted stories of the women before her, Chayo can embody a version of La *Malinche* 'with a voice and an attitude' (Nan 2011, p. 118). As a result, in 'LMKP' Cisneros introduces a contemporary *Malinche* who can and does disclose her own story, as she at the same time acknowledges the suffering brought by external judgments and shows the determination to move past them. Cisneros thus portrays a Chicana who is aware of how she is seen from the outside whilst also being able to freely make her own choices, and hence take control in being her own person. The epithet of 'La *Malinche*' is then transformed, highlighting a multidimensional representation of womanhood.

In the words of pioneering Chicana feminist Gloria Anzaldúa, 'the worst kind of betrayal lies in making us believe that the Indian woman in us is the betrayer' ([1987] 2012, p. 44). By presenting Chicana protagonists who grapple with her history

and legacy in their subjective ways, Cisneros eventually ‘makes peace’ with the figure of La *Malinche*, seamlessly interweaving the historical element with the cultural and gender struggles of contemporary Chicanas. Therefore, whilst still considering the complications and ambiguities of her historical account, La *Malinche* is rescued through Chicana literature: as her story is ultimately redeemed, she is rightfully elevated as one of the Chicana’s cultural mothers.

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Eco-Cultural Metamorphosis in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat*

Ana Victoria Mazza

Referring specifically to postcolonial novels, Anthony Carrigan claims:

continue to confront the most heinous abuses of power while representing [...] the creative negotiations needed to survive in the context of monumental economic disparity and ecological crisis (2015, p. 93).

Similarly, Elizabeth DeLoughrey et al. identify '[l]anguage and narrative' as 'integral to conceptualizing both the legacies of rupture and the possibilities of imaginative recuperation and transformation' (2015, p. 5). That is, in postcolonial novels, there is not only an element of critique that looks to the past and the present, but also an element of hope and optimism that looks to the future.

Published in 1967, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* is an example of the so-called 'post-independence "disenchantment" novels' (Whyte, 2013, p. 10), and is no exception to this double movement of rupture and transformation. In Ngũgĩ's words, the novel is 'both a celebration of independence and a warning about [the] pitfalls [of decolonisation]' (1993, p. 3), in which the author 'faces the problem of reconciling his society to landscapes transformed by imperialism' (Binder and Bur-

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nett, 1994, p. 49). As Byron Caminero-Santangelo explains, 'the narrative [...] offers a strong historical vision that [...] suggests the need for adaptation [...] rather than simple return' (2014, p. 49). *A Grain of Wheat*, then, is both a critique of externally imposed colonial transformations and a call for a metamorphosis that will lead the way into the future.

The object of this paper is to explore this double movement in *A Grain* from an environmental humanities perspective; to analyse how the representation of colonial geographical modification, and its effects on people and the environment, participate in anticolonial denunciation in a novel that does not seem to foreground ecological concerns, but in which they are nevertheless present. Through the critical lens of postcolonial ecocriticism and building mainly on the analyses by Renee Binder and G. W. Burnett, and Byron Caminero-Santangelo, this study examines how environmental and geographical concerns are at the heart of *A Grain of Wheat* and underpin a vast number of the issues raised in it, while at the same time constituting the central element around which a healthy future can be imagined and built.

In essence, the paper argues, in *A Grain of Wheat*, a subjugated nature ultimately means metamorphosis. For Ngũgĩ, colonial landscape modification means loss of freedom and sovereignty, but it also represents 'the seeds of a new tomorrow' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1993, p. 24), the seeding of a new Kenya and the promising potentialities of postindependence, whose actuality depends on the discovery of what Edward Said terms a 'third nature', 'which is not pristine and prehistorical [...] but one that derives historically and abductively from the deprivations of the present' (1990, p. 79). In other words, Ngũgĩ portrays colonial geographical modification as desecration of the land which leads to loss of autonomy and identity and that, consequently, calls for a new connection with the liberated territory. This connection is not one of domination, it does not simply imply taking back control of the land from colonial administrators, nor does it mean a return to precolonial times, but has to do instead with the recovery of a meaningful and respectful, albeit metamorphosed, relationship between human and nonhuman nature that allows for fruitful growth in a postcolonial future.

Nonhuman nature, an essential 'part of the human experience of landscapes', at once independent from and integrated into the places created by human activity (Chadwick 2004, p. 1), has also been witness and victim of the multiple acts of what Said calls 'geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world [was]

explored, chartered, and finally brought under control'; a kind of violence systematically exercised by the colonial enterprise from the 16th to the 20th centuries (1990, p. 77). This geographical violence has irreparably damaged the environment as well as fundamentally altered the relationships between native peoples and their territories. In other words, during colonialism, 'ecological disruption [has been] coextensive with damage to the social fabric' of native cultures, whose landscapes were destroyed, modified or altogether relocated (Huggan 2004, p. 704). In fact, as William Adams explains, the subjugation of human and nonhuman nature and alienation of the former from the latter during the colonial enterprise took place as a single process:

the disciplining of unruly nature and unruly people was achieved [...] by paternalistic external imposition. The relations between local people and nature were restructured by the colonial state, and made subject to external rules (2003, p. 43).

Consequently, it could be argued that postcolonial literatures in general, and African literatures in particular, often represent racial violence and subjugation of peoples hand in hand with descriptions of environmental manipulation and devastation. Elizabeth DeLoughrey and George Handley focus on the relationship between land and colonial history and claim that 'the land and even the ocean become all the more crucial as recuperative sites of postcolonial historiography' (2011, p. 8). This is reflected in the cultural production of former colonies, since 'postcolonial environmental representations often engage with the legacies of violent material, environmental, and cultural transformation' (DeLoughrey et al., 2015, p. 5). That is to say, land constitutes another field of postcolonial critique, in which authors both expose and challenge colonial practices that set the bases for future environmental, economic and sociopolitical problems.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, mainstream literary critics and academics in the environmental humanities and postcolonial ecocriticism have started to consider the colonisation of nature as a necessary and concomitant process of the colonisation of a people, and to identify embedded environmental discourses in postcolonial works that had hitherto been labelled as anthropocentric. However, when it comes to African literatures, as opposed to Caribbean, Latin American or Asian literatures, it is possible to observe that the former '[have] been more marginalized than other regions of the postcolonial world' (Caminero-Santangelo 2014, pp. 8-9). Moreover, existing criticism tends to concentrate on more overtly environmental works, such

as those concerned with oil extraction, mining and deforestation, fauna and flora extinction or neocolonial environmental exploitation, particularly in Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya, which might in turn result in a generalised tendency to view ecological concerns as separate or independent from issues of race, gender and class traditionally dealt with by postcolonialism.

There is, nonetheless, a growing body of research that focuses on a wider range of works and highlights the interconnection of sociopolitical and environmental critiques (for example, Okuyade 2013; Caminero-Santangelo 2014; Thieme 2016; Iheka 2018). Reading such a classic postcolonial novel as *A Grain of Wheat* from an environmental humanities approach 'means [...] focus[ing] attention on how power relations affect environmental decision making and practices' (DeLoughrey et al., 2015, pp. 9-10). It serves as a revaluation of the work, which adds not to the novel itself, since the elements have always been there, but to our own understanding and interpretation of it, by including in the analysis an environmental dimension that is nothing but central to the novel's aim, in 'the search for a transformed anticolonial struggle' (Caminero-Santangelo 2014, p. 49). Even if this is not the first study of the novel from this perspective, it does offer a thorough examination of the ecological aspects of the text that gathers previous research, and links it with Said's theory and Ngũgĩ's own later work, thus situating it within wider postcolonial debates.

A Grain of Wheat is mainly set in the Kenyan rural village of Thabai in 1963, in the days prior to Uhuru, Independence Day. It is the story of the Gikuyu fight for independence and their subsequent preparations for self-government. It delves into historical issues regarding the Emergency declared by Great Britain in 1952 after an escalation in the activity of the Mau Mau, an anticolonial militant group, as well as into the personal lives of a number of characters playing diverse roles during the conflict.¹ Through flashbacks expertly intertwined with the December 1963 events, Ngũgĩ also tells us of the beginnings of British rule and the initial 'colonial transformation of place' through 'land alienation' (Crowley, 2013, p. 17).

Several authors have noted the importance of land and landscape for Ngũgĩ and the 'close affiliation of people and place' that mark his earlier works in particular (Crowley 2013, p. 46).² In fact, this preoccupation with the land is in line with Jomo Keny-

¹ For more on the Mau Mau Uprising, see the project carried out by the Museum of British Colonialism: <https://www.museumofbritishcolonialism.org/emergencyexhibition>.

² See also Binder and Burnett 1994; Gikandi 2000; Lovesey 2002; Nicholls 2005; Simatei 2005.

atta's description of the vital role of land tenure for the Gikuyu, and initial colonial land appropriation (1965, p. 22). *A Grain of Wheat* not only maps territorial transformation from the beginning of British settlement, but also utilizes a discourse of agriculture and connection with landscape, both literally and figuratively, to construct notions of anticolonial resistance and describe nature's role in a truly decolonised nation. The first flashback sets the backdrop against which the narrative develops, describing colonial occupation by missionaries and the roots of the liberation movement in the same act. The reader learns how the first converts spoke 'a faith foreign to the ways of the land' and 'trod on sacred places' ([1967] 2002, p. 11). Moreover, the narrator tells us how, when the British buried alive a warrior-leader, Waiyaki, they also planted the seed of resistance, because his

blood contained within it [...] a grain, which gave birth to a movement whose main strength thereafter sprang from a bond with the soil (p. 12).

Thus, initial colonial violence is also the origin of a 'cultural and ethnic nationalist identity', grounded in the same earth that is being stolen (Lovesey, 2002, p. 144). The next leader, Harry Thuku, accused the coloniser of denying the Gikuyu 'land and freedom' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 12). He created the Movement and strengthened the union of people and soil: the men killed demanding his liberation were said to clutch 'soil in their fists' (p. 13). The last leader, Kihika, is described as 'a son of the land' (p. 14). He holds 'the secrets of the forest' (p. 17) and is believed to be able to 'move mountains and compel thunder' (p. 16).

Ngũgĩ also documents subsequent landscape transformations. From the very beginning we read that 'the iron snake [...] wrigg[ed] towards Nairobi for a thorough exploitation of the hinterland' (2002, p. 12). In Binder and Burnett's words, 'the railroad provides the imagery of colonial power, [...] devouring forests and linking African villages to the larger world' (1994, p. 55). Even if the railway platform later became a business hub and 'the meeting place for the young' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 2002, pp. 69-70), the disruption and pollution it causes, 'coughing and vomiting smoke as it rattled along' (p. 69), is hinted at by the detail about Thabai's desertion when it first appeared (p. 70). The railway is thus the perfect example of colonial capitalist development, rightly perceived by the natives as a violent intruder.

Another project exposed by Ngũgĩ, as Caminero-Santangelo also notes (2014, p. 50), is that of the Githima Forestry and Agricultural Research Station, an instance of sci-

ence exercising Johan Galtung's 'cultural violence' to legitimise colonial land appropriation (2013, p. 41). In the same way as with the Kikuyu Reserves during the 1930s and 40s (Mackenzie, 2000, p. 699), the discourse of ecology and 'development' enabled 'scientists and administrators' to set up the research station in what used to be a 'thick forest' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 33). In Adams' words:

Forest policy focused on the reservation and commercial exploitation of timber at the expense of other uses of land, tree resources and wildlife, and at the expense of those groups [...] who had previously used the forest (2003, p. 26).

The image of Western science objectifying nature is reinforced later when Dr Lynd, a plant pathologist at the research station, tells of her experiments with potatoes, a foodstuff introduced by colonialism (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 159). As the last colonial stronghold in the novel, the Station constitutes an entirely separate space from the rest of the village.

An interesting detail about Githima is the Thompsons' garden, with its 'neatly trimmed hedge', its arch of creepers and 'roses of all shades' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 36), the epitome of contrast between 'Gikuyu and British landscape ideals' (Binder and Burnett, 1994, p. 51). The transformation of native landscape into colonial gardens that become bubbles of British aesthetics is the domestic complement of administration-level projects like the research station. By mentioning this garden, Ngũgĩ manages to concentrate in a single image at least three of Val Plumwood's 'othering' mechanisms: 'stereotyping', 'assimilation' and 'instrumentalism' (2003, pp. 54-9), the same that, according to Fiona Mackenzie (2000), are responsible for Kenya's environmental problems of deforestation and soil erosion.

During the State of Emergency, especially after Kihika's capture of Mahee Police Post in what is called the White Highlands, change becomes more abrupt and significant. All African shops are closed and abandoned, and people are forced to 'move into fewer and less-scattered villages' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 136), so as to be more easily controlled. In one of the novel's confessional instances, Mumbi narrates to Mugo the violence of this forced relocation that results in the 'unbroken orderliness' (p. 3) and 'neatly hedged fields' (p. 115) of the New Thabai. She also tells of her time working in the white farmers' tea-plantations, once again alluding to colonial settlement that gave rise to the Kikuyu Reserves, and the restrictions on free movement imposed on the natives. Even detainees in one of the concentration camps are forced to work on 'a new irrigation scheme' (p. 240).

It is also during the Emergency that 'the sense of a larger Gikuyu identity [is] actively cultivated for political purposes' (Crowley, 2013, p. 17). Appealing to a mythical relationship, Kihika and the Movement consolidate the unity of land and people that rests on the injustices of colonialism. Tirop Simatei and Caminero-Santangelo identify the key role of the forest in this process (2005, p. 88; 2014, p. 52). Diametrically opposed to Githima, the forest is free nature, it becomes the Mau Mau's shelter and an agent in the fight. Moreover, before the conflict, it is in the forest that Gikonyo and Mumbi—whose names, Dustin Crowley says, mirror the mythical Gikuyu progenitors (2013, p. 17)—have their first love encounter, and where Kihika refers to Kenya as 'our mother' and the 'common shamba' that 'belongs to Kenyan people' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 96), thus making the Gikuyu struggle 'part of the discourse of nationalism' (Crowley, 2013, p. 18). While this paper does not reject altogether Brendon Nicholls' interpretation of these words as part of Ngũgĩ's 'gendering of the landscape' (2005, p. 190), it argues that Kihika's speech should also be read as extending from tribe to nation the Gikuyu conception of 'the earth as the "mother" of the tribe', and the traditional system of land inheritance (Kenyatta 1965, pp. 22 and 32).

The time of Uhuru finds the New Thabai as 'another detention camp' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 115). The general atmosphere of uncertainty and corruption matches the 'battered land' and the 'sickly crops' (p. 102). Mugo is still 'coaxing the hard soil for food' (p. 169) and cannot recover his previous fascination for farming (p. 6). Gikonyo is deceived by his own MP and cannot buy Burton's land. After Uhuru, there is a seemingly endless drizzle that brings stagnation to the village and washes away the remnants of hope. Wariu repeats: 'Something went wrong. . .' (p. 237). There seems to be no place for a liberated future in the geography '*out of place*' (Thieme, 2016, p. 3) that has become the New Thabai: rigid, artificial, imposed.

However, when in hospital, Gikonyo returns to his idea of carving a stool as a wedding gift and imagines a future with 'a new Mumbi' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 243). After the indescribable trauma they have both been through, he decides to carve a woman 'big with child' (p. 243). In line with a feminised Kenya, says Nicholls, a pregnant Mumbi becomes a symbol of fertility and the rebirth of the mythical Gikuyu nation (2005, p. 191). Building on the symbolism of these two characters' names that Crowley identifies (2013, p. 17), Gikonyo's creative impulse can be thus interpreted to imagine a *third nature*, a new landscape, that is born out of a new relationship with a recovered territory.

It is Mumbi who gives Mugo 'a glimpse of a new earth' with her trust, which moves him to confess his betrayal of Kihika and the fight for independence, to the entire village (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 230). According to Caminero-Santangelo, his confession transforms Mugo 'into a new kind of hero embodying new values', and it is this kind of self-sacrifice that will free the nation from 'false heroes' that only care about individual advancement. In fact, as this critic points out, it is Mugo's confession that makes Gikonyo want to speak to his wife Mumbi again, making Mugo directly responsible for the first step towards healing (1998, p. 147). However, Mumbi says, 'things are not so easy' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 2002, p. 243): a prosperous Kenya will only be attained with time, care and hard work, 'by forging a collective culture that counters the values of self-interest and exploitation' (Caminero-Santangelo, 1998, p. 147) that have justified the destruction of human and nonhuman nature.

In one of the last chapters of *Moving the Centre*, Ngũgĩ writes about his experience going from England to New England to teach Comparative Literature at Yale University. All of a sudden, we come across this statement:

Writing has always been my way of reconnecting myself to the landscape of my birth and upbringing. [...] I was back in Africa of the twenties and thirties. I lived its landscape, its rivers, its history (1993, p.156).

Ngũgĩ is here reflecting on the absurdity of dictatorships and the paradoxes of living in exile, removed from one's own landscapes. However, this claim can also be recognised in *A Grain of Wheat*, written while he was a student in Leeds, many years earlier. Rewriting history and constructing a postcolonial cultural identity presuppose the revaluation of one's own landscapes, their own agencies and stories, acting upon the fact that 'knowing oneself and one's environment [is] the correct basis of absorbing the world' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1993, p. 9). This means, using Crowley's words, rejecting 'an ahistorical, natural, uniform association of people and place' (2013, p. 16), rejecting the *geographies out of place* fashioned by colonialism. This is what *A Grain of Wheat* does.

As Caminero-Santangelo points out, even if Ngũgĩ appeals to mythical origins and precolonial 'communal bonds' (2014, p. 49), for him 'society and nature are always historically situated' (p. 153). In line with the traditional role of the earth for the Gikuyu, colonial land appropriation in the novel marks the origins of a freedom movement and a distinct national identity grounded in the alienated earth. In turn, the rebirth of 'a truly *postcolonial* Kenyan nation necessitates [...] a collective [...]

consciousness' born out of 'evolving history' (1998, p. 146). Since this history involves both human and nonhuman nature, this new collective consciousness can only be possible when the connection with the ravaged land has been recovered and reconstructed. However, if this metamorphosed relationship is not simply a recovery of precolonial bonds, it is not the replacement of colonial for native control of the landscape as a symbol of society, as Binder and Burnett suggest (1994), either. This, it is argued here, would mean perpetuating the 'malignant fiction' (Achebe 1990, p. 148) of eurocentrism 'as the universal reality' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1993, p. 4), according to which there is only one possible way of relating to nonhuman nature, namely, the extractivist one which forms the basis of historical capitalism in general and colonialism in particular (Mukherjee, 2010; Moore 2015).

Said asserts:

For the native, the history of his or her colonial servitude is inaugurated by the loss to an outsider of the local place, whose concrete geographical identity must thereafter be searched for and somehow restored (1990, p. 77).

Because of this, both the critical and transformative impulses in *A Grain* are necessarily partly geographical. Once the initial relationship with the land has been ravaged by colonialism, a metamorphosed *third nature*, a liberated and newly experienced geography, is essential for a healthy postcolonial future; not just as a source of livelihood, but also because a lived, meaningful relationship with one's environment is essential for growth. *A Grain of Wheat's* metamorphosis is based on the recuperation of authenticity, a crucial element in the creation of 'space for a hundred flowers to bloom on a global scale' (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1993, p. 24).

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'For after the battle comes Quiet': Masculinist Science, Evolution and Degeneracy in H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*

Rebecca Jones

Introduction

Launching the protagonist, known only as the 'Time Traveller', on a many-levered contraption from the late Victorian period to the year 802,701 AD, H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) hypothesises a distant future in which humanity has evolved, or rather *devolved*, into two separate species. Sustained security, ease and luxury have turned the upper classes and aristocracy into the Eloi, a profoundly ineffectual, weak and vulnerable overground population. The working class has co-evolved alongside the Eloi to become the Morlocks, for whom millennia of hard manual labour have resulted in increased physical strength and productive skill, but a pale and beastly body type resulting from their subterranean existence. As the true nature of this distant future is eventually revealed to him, the protagonist discovers that the two species co-exist in a manner shocking to his late Victorian sensibilities and scientific perspective.

Initially, the Eloi seem to the Time Traveller to live a quasi-Edenic life of bucolic innocence above ground. However, when it transpires that they are preyed upon at night by the cannibalistic Morlocks, he must contend with the realisation that the distant and degenerate descendants of the hegemony of the late Victorian period so familiar to him have been 'reduced' to the status of farmed animals. Wells' vision of the distant future, then, is of a world where both the wealthy and the impoverished have become animalised, albeit in strikingly different ways. A prolonged life of ease for the upper classes and possessors of capital has caused an atrophy of their power

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and abject defencelessness, while hardship for the working class has produced the opposite result, rendering them beastly in their strength. It is a world in which perpetual inequality and an ever-growing gulf between the rich and the poor have been realised in degeneracy and dehumanisation for both, a bifurcated metamorphosis of the human animal over hundreds of thousands of years. The reader perceives this distant future through the gaze of Wells' Time Traveller, a character conceived of during, and who frequently reflects in vivid detail, the post-Darwinian epoch in the history of male-dominated and male-centred science.

In this article, I offer a textual analysis of *The Time Machine* in relation to its post-Darwinian context. This analysis employs theoretical work from gender and masculinity studies, ecofeminism, and critical animal studies to consider what the text's portrayals of regressive zoological metamorphosis tell us about attitudes to the human/animal boundary, human and masculine exceptionalism, scientific progress and the pivotal epoch of socio-political and socio-cultural flux of the *fin de siècle*. I conclude with some reflections on the text's continued relevance over a hundred years after its publication, and why the study of it remains useful to us in considering attitudes to scientific hegemony, co-existence, co-evolution and shared metamorphosis, both literal and figurative, in the post-pandemic twenty-first century.

Darwin, Dominance and Degeneracy

That Wells' writing, both fiction and non-fiction, is fundamentally indebted to Charles Darwin's work on natural and sexual selection in the latter part of the nineteenth century is scarcely open to debate. Wells' own extensive autobiography, *Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (Since 1866)* (1934) makes clear the influence of Darwin on his work. For Wells, the Darwinian shift in science and evolutionary biology that would come to disrupt 'the Victorians' complacent view of themselves as the chosen people located by providence at the centre of a stable universe' (MacKenzie and MacKenzie 1987, p.12) underpinned an education that also involved a spell studying under Thomas Henry Huxley, a noted advocate of Darwin, at the Normal School of Science in South Kensington. Huxley and Wells shared a mutual interest in the theory of degeneration or 'devolution', which was emergent from the work of Darwin and its attendant exploration of natural selection. Expressed in the simplest of terms, this theory held that evolution was neither necessarily teleological (i.e., having a purpose) nor orthogenetic (i.e., always progressive), but that a process that might be perceived as 'backwards' evolution, or

devolution, was possible. In essence, the theory questioned the idea that evolution must be, by definition, a linear progress to the ever-greater improvement, or even perfection, of species. While evolution was a continuing process of fitting out the species for suitability to its environment, it did not necessarily follow that such an environment must always be conducive to making that species 'better' *per se*.¹

It was suggested that a cause of this phenomenon could be limited biological competition, and prolonged ease and security, which could result in an eventual weakening, a degeneration or devolution; a 'zoological retrogression' or 'retrogressive metamorphosis'. In his *Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism* (1880), Edwin Ray Lankester, among earlier theorists on retrogressive metamorphosis, cited the example of the parasite as an organism that loses the ability to adapt because of such security. Huxley, too, contributed his 'The Struggle for Existence in Human Society' (1888), in which he discusses the role played by over-population in human evolution and regression, to the debate. Wells' own intervention on the subject soon followed in the form of his 'Zoological Retrogression' (1891), in which he suggested that even Man himself was not immune to such a phenomenon; an assertion that doubtless savoured of heresy to both religious and scientific standpoints which persisted in categorising man as radically separate from the rest of the animal kingdom. *The Time Machine*, in which Wells fictionalises theoretical thinking about retrogression, degeneration and metamorphosis through the medium of scientific romance, speaks directly to one of the live scientific concerns of his day.

While Darwinism created something of a gestalt shift in the nineteenth-century scientific intellectual landscape, it did little to alter the largely homogenous make-up of what we might call, admittedly somewhat anachronistically, the 'scientific community' of the time. The post-Enlightenment scientific community was a brotherhood which, despite being figured as a subversion of religious doctrine, had done little to subvert the hegemony of the white European male and the oppression of women and racialised others. The struggle of women to enter scientific professions, or to gain education on a par with their male peers at all in the late Victorian and Edwardian period, is well-documented. Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Man-Made World: Or Our Androcentric Culture* (1911) laments the androcentric nature of education, both historically and at the *fin de siècle*, and Gilman challenges the notion of Man as the 'race

¹ A full discussion of the merits of such a theory will be beyond the scope of this article. It is, however, worth remarking that there is an innate cultural and historical subjectivity to the notion of perfection and betterment, and so to the very notion of any kind of evolution as being 'regressive'.

type', or default human; a topic which is still discussed and debated in feminist discourse in the twenty-first century. The task of deconstructing this androcentrism has been taken up by many scholars of ecofeminism, posthumanism and critical animal studies, who have continued to interrogate the androcentric approach to science, education and culture and in the twentieth century and beyond. Their work has helped to make clear the links between the androcentric oppression of women and the anthropocentric and androcentric oppression of the more-than-human world. For example, Carolyn Merchant has offered a comprehensive contextualisation of the connected subjugation of women and nature throughout the Scientific Revolution in *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (1980), and Lynda Birke's *Feminism, Animals and Science: The Naming of the Shrew* (1994) remains one of the most revealing and cogent feminist analyses of androcentric anthropocentrism and the objectification of animals in scientific processes and method. These contributions form part of a broader corpus highlighting the links between the radical separation of the hegemonic white, wealthy, European man from other forms of life, the oppression of those others, and their exclusion from the knowledge and practice of science, technology and medicine. The historical codification of nature as a female force, and of both nature and women as things to be uncovered, conquered and controlled by the male scientific elite, emerged from the Baconian science of the Enlightenment. It survived the gestalt shift of Darwinism, and remains resonant even in the twenty-first century. Science did not, as is often mistakenly assumed, liberate either women or nature from subjugation based on essentialism; the justification for such subjugation simply shifted from the religious to the scientific. In fact, the phase of the Scientific Revolution heralded by Darwin resulted in a form of social Darwinism that was brought to bear on long-contentious social issues such as race and gender roles, entrenching the notion, for example, that the demands of child-bearing made it impossible for women (or, at least, 'normal' women) to succeed in intellectual pursuits such as scientific enquiry (Merchant 1980, p.162-3). More recently, Elinor Cleghorn's *Unwell Women: A Journey Through Medicine and Myth in a Man-Made World* (2021) traces the history of the blatant sexism and hostility women have faced in their attempts to work in scientific fields, especially in medical and physiological fields such as endocrinology and gynaecology, and how women's role in such fields has tended to be as objects for experimentation, rather than as agents or practitioners in their own right. Masculinised science has been discussed in depth by theorists in ecofeminism and posthumanism over several decades. Rosi Braidotti's *The Posthuman* (2013) is a particularly useful example. Braidotti references Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man

as a symbol of Eurocentric masculine self-making, and this image remains one of the more useful illustrations of the positioning of man as the individual subject in binary with the pejorative 'other' (2013, p.13ff.). Braidotti describes this image as 'the classical ideal of "Man"', the Humanist 'universal model', an emblem of 'teleologically ordained, rational progress' (Braidotti 2013, p.13). It is this privileged category of intellectual masculinity that I am suggesting is 'hegemonic' in this analysis.

The debates around one specific scientific practice of the time are particularly revealing of the nature of the masculinist science of the *fin de siècle*. The perceived primacy, and socio-political sway, of what Frances Power Cobbe termed 'the smooth cool men of science' have been discussed in detail by Coral Lansbury in *The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers and Vivisection in Edwardian England* (1985) in relation to the practice of, and campaigns against, vivisection. Lansbury takes as her defining moment the Brown Dog Riots of 1907, in which attempts to erect a statue in Battersea commemorating dogs killed in vivisection were eventually foiled by male medical students, supported by the Research Defence Society, of which Wells himself was a member, and vivisectionists. This was a furious and often violent debate with a distinct gender dimension; the anti-vivisection movement shared much common ground with those women engaged in the feminist movement and the call for women's suffrage of the time (Kean 1995, p.17). It is vitally important to understand scientists as a privileged class at the *fin de siècle*, as Kean intimates:

The perpetrators of vivisection were from those layers of society from whom moral guidance was traditionally sought: educated, often wealthy middle or upper class men. (Kean 1995, p.20)

In essence, the rhetoric of scientific practice idolised the man of science as exceptional, as embodying that knowledge and power that was the epitome of what it was to be 'human'. The man of science considered himself at the vanguard of human progress, immune to feminised emotion, and leading the charge of Man further and further from his animal roots. However, such progress was selective at best, carried out by a group from which anyone but the white, wealthy, European male was effectively excluded, and to which those others represented little more than resources for experiment. Procedures that were ground-breaking at the time and made the name of many an ambitious doctor were frequently tested first on the poor and marginalised, and particularly on women. The Contagious Diseases Acts and the existence of lock hospitals sanctioned the forced intimate physical exami-

nation of women on the flimsiest of pretexts (Kean 1998, p.106-7; Lansbury 1985, p.83-95; Cleghorn 2021). Vivisection without anaesthesia was practiced not solely to further knowledge, and certainly not to benefit those species upon which it was performed, but often out of idle curiosity and scientific egotism. Those outside of the scientific hegemony, then, frequently became collateral damage in its search for control, and poor, female and animal bodies all became sites of experimentation by white, wealthy, educated men. Crucially, criticism of scientific endeavour was carefully framed as 'anti-modernist and anti-science' and, perhaps most importantly 'an attitude peculiarly linked to women and therefore befitting the hostility shown it by some male opponents' (Kean 1995, p.23).

None of this is to suggest that either Wells or the Time Traveller were physiologists or vivisectionists specifically. Nor is it to suggest that vivisection is and was the beginning and end of science more generally. I suggest that what it does show is that vivisection, and opposition to it, provides us with a 'snapshot'. I suggest that vivisection is a useful topic for viewing the texture of the debate about what science really was and who was considered fit to do it at the *fin de siècle*, when Wells was working on *The Time Machine*. Science at this critical time, then, was not simply a purely objective, unprejudiced antidote to the religious superstition that predated the Scientific Revolution, and it is important to establish the attitudinal state of science as a masculine (and masculinist) pursuit at Wells' time of writing. To overlook the scientific landscape and, crucially, who is considered subject and who object in that landscape, is to elide a very important part of the world from which Wells' Time Traveller emerges. The terms under which vivisection was justified – that human progress, health and longevity were prizes worth any kind of moral or ethical sacrifice of non-hegemonic life – were held to be true of scientific endeavour more generally.

In Darwinism there lies a contradiction that, I would suggest, masculinist science struggled, and still struggles, to untangle. Connell (2005) and Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) have developed a theory which asserts the existence of a form of contextual masculinity (the hegemonic) which is considered ideal and aspirational but is, in reality, only possessed by a small group of privileged men. It is a type of masculinity that is reified and validated by subjugated possessors of complicit masculinities, and defined in opposition to marginalised masculinities, which are considered overtly undesirable for any number of reasons. These masculinities are not fixed, but in constant flux, conflict and renegotiation. This, as we will see, is a very useful lens through which to view late Victorian and Edwardian masculinist science, which was

dominated by the hegemony of the day, as well as Wells' own authorial position and the position of the Time Traveller within the text. Paradoxically, science was both the means through which members of the hegemonic masculine group gained and maintained ascendancy, and at the same time the very discipline through which, because of Darwin, that ascendancy was being undermined. Donna Haraway evokes Freud's theory of 'three great historical wounds to the primary narcissism of the self-centred human subject', the second of which 'is the Darwinian, which put *Homo sapiens* firmly in the world of other critters [...] without the sureties of directional signposts that culminate in Man' (Haraway 2008, p.11). There can be little doubt that Darwinism did much to destabilise the notion of the Great Chain of Being, or the Aristotelean *scala naturae*, but this is not to say that attempts were not made, in both scientific and religious contexts, to regroup and return to a recognisable sense of hegemonic masculinity, the justice of which would this time be evidenced by science rather than biblical teachings.

While purportedly revolutionary discoveries about evolution and the origins of humanity led to new questions about what it really meant to be human, they did very little to reset the belief that there was a pre-destined hierarchy relating both to humanity and to other animal species. Indeed, this was a belief so engrained that it survived the challenges of the Enlightenment and Romantic periods to the supposed divine order upon which life had apparently been arranged and hierarchised for millennia. Man may have descended from the apes, but he was, in Wells' own words, 'the culminating ape', and to read 'Man' as an inclusive, non-specific term is, in this context, to fail to appreciate the very real value judgement inherent in it. In practice, the discovery that man was once ape did little to expel the notion that he was still the superior and exceptional species; that he was, in effect, the most evolved animal in an evolutionary scale of which he was the pinnacle. The paradox here is that scientific enquiry and discovery, uncovering the secrets of a feminised nature and finding ways to control and change it, was the very lifeblood of hegemonic masculinity in the late Victorian period. However, that same spirit of enquiry and discovery was already revealing facts that could undermine the exceptionalism upon which hegemonic masculinist science was built.

Much of Wells' work, and particularly his early science fiction, conjures with this pathological fear of human loss of control over nature. Patrick Parrinder describes this phenomenon as a 'sense of dethronement', a 'source of fear, horror and irony throughout the scientific romances' (Parrinder 1995, p.49). Wells subscribed to the

notion of a world unified under the influence of a scientific elite. In fact, in his later novel *A Modern Utopia* (1905), he presents a fictionalised utopia controlled by an all-male group of scientific socialists which he calls the 'samurai'. The samurai are, somewhat unfeasibly, practically incapable of injustice; that they are men of science supposedly confers upon them unimpeachable morality and decision-making. Haynes describes them as 'morally upright and virtually incapable of a selfish use of power', a group who are 'the prototypes of Wells's noble scientists' and suggests that the Utopia is conceived as a more progressive, technologically mechanised response to the anti-industrial, pastoral utopias of contemporaries including William Morris (Haynes 1980, p.77). That the envisaged power group is all male is neither coincidental nor trivial. While an avowed socialist, there are several of Wells' texts, including *A Modern Utopia*, that cast doubt on his commitment to women's political emancipation and his much-vaunted feminist principles. Ann Veronica (1909) and *The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman* (1914) both present examples of suffragettes who are shrill and ridiculous, and whose suffragism is an outlet for sexual frustration (Kemp 1982, pp.114-18). Kemp evidences this with reference to Wells' own autobiographical work, in which he professes to have been disappointed that the suffragettes turned out to be a 'screeching rabble' and not the 'goddesses' he had hoped for (Kemp 1982, pp.114-15). While Wells' initial willingness to tolerate the suffragette movement, if only he could have found the women in it appealing, may make him seem like a gender equalist in relative and historically contextual terms, the caveat is doubtless problematic in retrospect.

I suggest, then, that it is possible to understand Wells' utopian vision as a patriarchal one, that is broadly exclusionary of women and indeed any people who had not had the privilege of accessing a scientific education. Even though he himself came from relatively humble beginnings into a middle-class intellectualism, he seems to yearn to join the exclusive yet magnanimous hegemonic group. Wells was not opposed, in principle, to one governing group under whom all others existed, provided it was a group of men with whom he himself identified, or at least aspired to identify. It is important to understand, then, that the sense of dethronement noted by Parrinder is less 'human' in a broad sense than it is masculine and patriarchal. It is also important to appreciate that the fear of zoological degeneration is, at its heart, a fear of hegemonic man reverting to that status perceived as so inferior and *not* human, in the history of religion and science alike – the status of animal. In a hierarchy that places hegemonic man at the pinnacle of creation, to be feminised and/or animalised is a

dethronement indeed, and it is the primal fear of facing the animal in himself that makes the prospect of degeneration so chilling to the Time Traveller.

Wells and his Time Traveller

Wells' own position as a middle-class scientific socialist author certainly doesn't fit perfectly with the notion of what we would now call the hegemonic masculine of his own era. However, as a brief consideration of his corpus shows, the *fin de siècle* pre-eminence of a masculinist science is evident in his writing, to an extent that we might, after Connell, suggest a complicity both on the part of Wells and in his work.

The experience of the Time Traveller in 802,701 AD is presented within a frame narrative, the whole relayed by an anonymous narrator who is, we are to understand, one of an inner sanctum of intellectual middle-class men—the Psychologist, the Medical Man, the Provincial Mayor, and so on—who are gathered in after-dinner conversation. In simple terms, the outer frame of the narrative is this conversational setting, and the inner frame an account of what takes place in 802,701 AD. There are no women present, which echoes the hegemonic context dominated by the middle-class, professional, male, Eurocentric gaze discussed above. Indeed, there are no women in the text at all, excepting the ill-fated Eloi girl Weena and the Time Traveller's entirely silent housekeeper Mrs Watchett. In the outer frame of the narrative, the Time Traveller is simply engaged in trying to convince his male peers of an enviable achievement; that he has conceived of, built and successfully travelled in, the world's first time machine. They are mostly sceptical, reluctant to credit their peer with such an unthinkable achievement. The novel ends with the anonymous narrator informing the reader that the Time Traveller has again set off on his time machine and has so far failed to return. At the close of the novel, the Time Traveller remains the heroic figure in pursuit of mankind-furthering knowledge, who has ventured into unplotted space and time to a fate unknown. The extent to which the character of the Time Traveller ought to be regarded as autobiographical is, of course, debatable. Parrinder suggests that:

He [the Time Traveller] is a heroic figure within the confines of the story, as well as an avatar of the visionary personality that Wells was discovering, with growing confidence, in himself. (Parrinder 1995, p.37)

Wells is recognised as a writer who used his scientific romances to offer dialectics, rather than to present monomaniacal didactic arguments, so in some respects the

extent of autobiography in the novel is beside the point. However, to accept that this is true of Wells is not to accept that his work is without very powerful and persuasive prejudices and value judgments. It is far too simplistic to assume that the Time Traveller is merely an objective, neutral figure, a plot device to tell the reader about the distant future. In fact, these value judgments, particularly in relation to the putative human/animal boundary, are in evidence throughout *The Time Machine*.

The Time Traveller starts out with a vision of a humanity that has evolved and improved, that has reached a sort of perfection:

When I had started with the Time Machine, I had started with the absurd assumption that the Men of the Future would certainly be ahead of ourselves in all their appliances. (Wells 1895, p.54)

Here we see reflected the idea that Wells, in his adherence to degeneration theory, sought to dispel, that evolution and improvement must be one and the same. However, this vision quickly gives way to some very revealing anxieties:

What if in this interval the race had lost its manliness, and had developed into something inhuman, unsympathetic, and overwhelmingly powerful? I might seem some old-world savage animal, only the more dreadful and disgusting for our common likeness – a foul creature to be incontinently slain. (Wells 1895, p.22)

These anxieties lay bare a great deal about the Time Traveller's sense of masculine self, and lead to a fascinating contradiction about the state of the rational man of science at the *fin de siècle*. He fears a superbeing, inconceivably more technologically powerful than man, which will, in accordance with late Victorian hierarchies of life on earth, regard him as something of no more consequence to it than non-human animals are to himself in his own time. This anxiety presages the events of Wells' *The War of the Worlds* (1898) in which the invading Martians, so much more advanced than man, cull humans as humans have for so long culled non-human lives. Despite his fear that the human of the distant future may have 'lost its manliness', he quickly identifies himself as the superior to all that surrounds him, a Promethean figure who (quite literally, using the humble match) delivers the spark of science to an age which has forgotten fire altogether. He regards his own historical epoch as something of a golden age by comparison with 802,701 AD, and laments how rational and scientifically informed he is in comparison with the ineffectual Eloi all around him:

I came out of this age of ours, this ripe prime of the human race, when Fear does not paralyse and mystery has lost its terrors. (Wells 1895, p.58)

Despite this claim to superiority, he 'often fails to live up to his ideal of scientific detachment' (Parrinder 1995, p.45). In fact, Parrinder points out that his actions 'in moments of crisis' tend to the 'hysterical, panic-stricken, negligent and, when he confronts the Morlocks, ruthless and desperate', all of which emphasises 'the blood-thirstiness of Well's anti-utopian realism' (Parrinder 1995, p.45). The Time Traveller experiences fear, particularly in his direct encounters with the Morlocks, in very primal, and animal, ways. While the Eloi invest him with a sense of superiority, a reinforcement of his hegemonic masculine authority, the Morlocks undermine this. The Morlocks are a threat not just because in their beastly physicality they most vividly symbolise man's devolution back to a more abject animal state, but because despite this animalisation they are more technologically and scientifically adept. They seize the time machine, the symbol of the Time Traveller's scientific masculinity, effectively emasculating him.

Effete Eloi and Monstrous Morlocks

The Eloi and the Morlocks, then, represent different iterations of the same ontological tremor experienced by the Time Traveller – animalisation. Of the Eloi and the Morlocks, Parrinder asserts the following:

The words Eloi and Morlocks signify angels and devils, and the two races, the products of natural selection, are held together in a predatory and symbiotic relationship – a perpetuity of aggressions without which neither could flourish. (Parrinder 1995, p.43)

It is his encounter with the Eloi that confirms the Time Traveller's belief that a process of retrogressive metamorphosis has taken place in the wide expanse of time between the late Victorian period and 802,701 AD:

I thought of the physical slightness of the people, their lack of intelligence, and those big abundant ruins, and it strengthened my belief in a perfect conquest of Nature. For after the battle comes Quiet. Humanity had been strong, energetic and intelligent, and had used all its abundant vitality to alter the conditions under which it lived. And now came the reaction of the altered conditions. (Wells 1895, p.32)

He theorises the cause of this dramatic bifurcation of the species, and posits that the division has taken place along the lines of class already existent in his own day:

At first, proceeding from the problems of our own age, it seemed clear as daylight to me that the gradual widening of the present merely temporary and social difference between the Capitalist and the Labourer, was the key to the whole position. (Wells 1895, p.48)

In essence, the lack of an imperative to evolve in the face of threat or lack of security has resulted in a kind of atrophying of the capitalist class, while the Morlocks have seized the means of production.

It is the Eloi that the Time Traveller meets first, and his Promethean, quasi-divine sense of superiority is reinforced by their reaction to him, and to the matches and fire he uses to entertain and cajole them, as if they were children. Fire, that element that also stands as a symbol for man's exceptionalism and scientific-technological progress, has long been forgotten by the Eloi. They are portrayed as infantile, weak and consumptive, but crucially, still recognisably human. This becomes particularly important later on, when he encounters the Morlocks, who are so animalistic by comparison. The Time Traveller declares that despite the 'intellectual degradation' of the Eloi, they 'had kept too much of the human form not to claim my sympathy' (Wells 1895, p.62). He initially perceives their surroundings as naively bucolic and remarkably communal:

There were no hedges, no signs of proprietary rights, no evidences of agriculture; the whole earth had become a garden. (Wells 1895, p.30)

They also appear to live lives of complete leisure, and sex distinction in clothing has fallen away (Wells 1895, p.29). Somewhat disconcertingly for the Time Traveller, the Eloi are frugivorous, and the animals farmed for consumption as meat in his own time have become extinct:

Fruit, by the bye, was all their diet. These people of the remote future were strict vegetarians, and while I was with some, in spite of some carnal cravings, I had to be frugivorous also. Indeed, I found also that horses, cattle, sheep, dogs, had followed the Ichthyosaurus into extinction. (Wells 1895, p.27)

There are two significant points to note here. The first is the disappearance of meat, a diet choice historically associated with ostentatious masculinity (Adams 1990),

amongst the Eloi, which is to be understood as yet another marker of their inferiority. The second relates to the Morlocks' cannibalisation of the Eloi, which is revealed later, and effectively means that it is in fact the more human of the two species that is now edible. As a symbol of the degeneration of man, his edibility is powerful indeed, and it transpires that the Eloi are effectively farmed for Morlock consumption:

These Eloi were mere fatted cattle, which the ant-like Morlocks preserved and preyed upon – probably saw to the breeding of. (Wells 1895, p.62)

Very pleasant was their day, as pleasant as the day of the cattle in the field. Like the cattle, they knew of no enemies and provided against no needs. And their end was the same. (Wells 1895, p.78)

There is a gulf of meaning between the image of the human being hunted by animals and that of the human degenerating to the point of being strategically farmed by them, and it is partly this distinction that is so viscerally horrifying to the Time Traveller. Peter Kemp has described that moment in *The Time Machine*, which mirrors a similar moment in another of Wells' most famous scientific romances, *The Island of Doctor Moreau*:

[...] a particularly creepy moment when a character, hunted by carnivores, hears the blood-vessels throbbing in his ears, and so catches, as it were, the sound of his own substance, what the predators are closing in to eat. (Kemp 1982, p.4)

Of the ontologically shocking things about both the Eloi and the Morlocks, one of the most shocking to the Time Traveller must surely be the spectre of his own huntability and edibility. To a 'smooth cool man of science' such as he, there can be few images quite so horribly animalising.

There is also a sense of the benevolent dictator in the Time Traveller's relationship with the Eloi, and particularly with Weena, a young female Eloi who attaches herself to him. Superficially, Weena may seem like a minor and even meaningless character in a text dominated by men and masculinity. However, she has a very important role in affording the Eloi individuality and subjectivity, and in enabling the Time Traveller to relate to the species as the 'more human' of the two human-descended types. The true nature of the Time Traveller's relationship with Weena has been the subject of some debate, with Adam Roberts even seeming to imply that the relationship is a sexual one (2019, p.46-7). However, the true sense of the relationship seems to

be more akin to the paternal (and paternalistic), or dog and master. She is certainly portrayed as having stereotypically dog-like loyalty:

She tried to follow me everywhere, and on my next journey out and about it went to my heart to tire her down, and leave her at last, exhausted and calling after me rather plaintively. (Wells 1895, p.42)

Towards the end of his visit to 802,701 AD, the Time Traveller accidentally sets fire to a forest after using a match to frighten Morlocks who are in pursuit of him and Weena. It is doubtless a point of deliberate irony that it is the Time Traveller's Promethean spark that brings about such devastation to Morlock and Eloi alike. He and Weena become separated in the fire, and it becomes clear that Weena has been killed. The Time Traveller engages in a revealing attempt to reassure himself that the Eloi girl, while possibly having been burned alive, has at least avoided that worse fate, being cannibalised by Morlocks:

I searched again for traces of Weena, but there were none. It was plain that they had left her poor little body in the forest. I cannot describe how it relieved me to think it had escaped the awful fate to which it seemed destined. (Wells 1895, p.76)

Roslynn D. Haynes describes the Time Traveller as 'essentially a sympathetic figure', a 'dedicated scientist steadfastly seeking knowledge' who demonstrates 'instinctive moral reactions of justice, benevolence and pity' that 'lead him to become involved in the affairs of the Eloi and to strive for the welfare of their community' (Haynes 1980, p.70-1). This seems an over-positive interpretation of the events that really transpire in the text. In fact, the only Eloi about whom the Time Traveller seems more than curious is Weena, for whom the outcome of the Time Traveller's visit is as far from positive as is possible to imagine. The Time Traveller's outlook on the Eloi certainly errs towards the paternalistic, but it is by no means the case that this is necessarily an outlook driven by either justice or morals. In fact, for the most part, the Eloi seem rather more objects of scientific enquiry than creatures upon whom the Time Traveller confers any significant subjectivity. They are the objects of scientific observation, being gazed at by the privileged Victorian male scientist in the form of the Time Traveller.

By comparison, the Morlocks are imbued with characteristics altogether more beastly:

You can scarce imagine how nauseatingly inhuman they looked – those pale, chinless faces and great, lidless, pinkish-grey eyes! (Wells 1895, p.55)

This distinction is made ever clearer as the Time Traveller's antagonism towards these underground dwelling creatures builds:

And I longed very much to kill a Morlock or so. Very inhuman, you may think, to want to go killing one's own descendants! But it was impossible, somehow, to feel any humanity in the things. (Wells 1895, p.67)

The Time Traveller considers the Morlocks killable because of their animal appearance. Parrinder also emphasises this, pointing out that 'Rightly or wrongly, the Traveller registers the Eloi as a man, and the Morlock as a beast' (1995, p.60). The Time Traveller has arrived at 802,701 AD with the late Victorian scientist's belief in the human/animal binary intact. In fact, his encounters with the Morlocks, and his difficulty recognising the root of humanity in them, rests in their uncanny sense of animality. However ineffectual the Eloi, there is something far less animalistic in them as a spectacle.

It is intriguing, then, that when The Time Traveller returns, the frugivorous nature of his Eloi descendants has not stuck, and his dietary inclinations return to something more Morlock than Eloi:

"I'm going to wash and dress, and then I'll come down and explain things. . . . Save me some of that mutton. I'm starving for a bit of meat." (Wells 1895, p.14)

"What a treat it is to stick a fork into meat again!" (Wells 1895, p.15)

The prospect of a man like the Time Traveller one day distant degenerating into Eloi or, worse still, Morlock, is thus never far from the surface.

Interesting, too, is the suggestion that it is the Morlocks and not the Eloi who are technologically and scientifically adept. As a scientist himself, a man who has designed and realised his own time machine, is it possible that the Time Traveller recognises something in the beast-like, cannibalistic Morlocks that sparks in him a sense of ontological horror? Haynes suggests of Wells that he:

[...] saw only too clearly the potential danger of a society in which a sense of the inevitability of technological advance has subtly infected the public consciousness with an amoral, machine-derived ethic. (Haynes 1980, p.71)

However, this interpretation glosses over Wells' own visions for a world government founded on scientific socialism, with men of science at the head. The suggestion that Wells is apprehensive about 'technological advance' is inaccurate. Rather, *The Time Machine* fictionalises his anxiety about technological progress *that falls into the wrong hands*, that is subject to the hoarding impulses of capitalism or the nationalistic impulses of governments, or that empowers other species at the expense of men like him.

Conclusion

Parrinder contends that Wells displays 'Moses' impatience to lead mankind away from its bondage to natural contingency' (Parrinder 1995, p.29), and it is this that rests at the heart of *The Time Machine* – an expression of yearning for man's ability to seize power over evolution and degeneration and to defy otherwise inevitable entropy. Bound up with this, however, is an ontological fear in man of his own animality. In common with Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau* and *The War of the Worlds*, the text portrays a man of science, a figure who, to a considerable extent, typifies the *fin de siècle* model of masculinist science, and who is forced to confront, in very literal terms, the prospect of his own animality, and the subversion of everything that he believes sets him apart in the Great Chain of Being.

In writing *The Time Machine*, Wells' intention was to emphasise the importance of scientific socialism as a means of taking control of a natural process of evolution that would result in the kind of degeneration portrayed in the text. The overarching argument of the text is that the scenario presented is avoidable if the right humans can use science and technology to change its course. Parrinder agrees:

Wells was determined to show the results of hypothetical natural evolution, not of artificial or eugenic processes in *The Time Machine*. (Parrinder 1995, p.39)

The Time Machine, whether intended as prophetic or hypothetical or something of both, illustrates an idea, and a profound anxiety, that was central to scientific enquiry at the *fin de siècle*, and continues to be of relevance in a twenty-first century context. The progression towards transhumanism that is evident in so many areas of twenty-first century life, from social media as a means of communication to 'body-hacking', render the questions raised in the text as relevant as ever. Where women are still underrepresented in science, technology and engineering disciplines, scien-

tific research is often hidden behind expensive paywalls, and access to medicines and vaccines is subject to apartheid systems of gender, race and class, it is important that we continue to interrogate scientific hegemony and the myth of objectivity, and to ask who will really wield power in a world where science is the ultimate authority. *The Time Machine* offers a site where the science and literature of an epoch have comingled, and an opportunity for us to consider what might happen if the human species is allowed to bifurcate along lines of wealth and power. Science is not a purely objective force that springs from the earth fully-formed, but a structured and hierarchised process of theory and practice carried out by people with specific biases and worldviews. More than ever, hegemonic masculinist exceptionalism and anthropocentrism, the persistent and pervasive belief in a hierarchy of life on earth and even that different groups of humans have different inherent value, threaten to foreclose solutions to matters of our collective survival like climate change and pandemic. It is helpful to look back to works like *The Time Machine* to better understand the humanistic, modern *and* postmodern evolution of ideas like these. It is also a useful text for thinking about the trajectory that capitalism and the military industrial complex are setting for human survival, and our co-evolution with other species.

The Time Machine is inextricably tied to the post-Darwinian context in which it was written; a context dominated by a form of scientific and technological innovation that was made and modelled on white, wealthy, European male worldviews, to the exclusion of both human and non-human others. However, that is not to say that it lacks value or currency as a useful text to think with today. As this article has demonstrated, theoretical work in gender and masculinity studies and ecofeminist animal studies is a neglected yet extremely useful lens through which to analyse the text anew, and to appreciate its contribution to discussions about regressive metamorphosis, the human/animal boundary, human and masculine exceptionalism, and scientific hegemony both at the *fin de siècle* and in the post-pandemic twenty-first century.

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