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SPECIAL ISSUE

Restoration Fiction (1660-1714) /  
Ficción de la época de la Restauración (1660-1714)





## INTRODUCTION

Fifty years ago, Charles Mish expressed his doubts about the contemporary appeal of the stories he had selected for his anthology of Restoration fiction (xiii).<sup>1</sup> His hesitation was understandable because, except for a few works such as John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), and Richard Head and Francis Kirkman's *The English Rogue* (1665-1671), Restoration fiction has rarely been reedited ever since.<sup>2</sup> Traditionally it has been relegated by literary historians to marginal sections (mainly focussing on Bunyan and Aphra Behn, with poetry, drama, and non-fiction prose as prominent genres). Yet, as James Grantham Turner has argued, the years after the Plague and the Great Fire, between 1666 and 1670, "proved momentous for the history of the novel, even though no major English novels appeared. We find instead fascinating experiments with the romance genre, prefaces that promote the self-conscious author and conduct lively theoretical debates over the nature of fiction, translations of canonical works [...], and a general move towards realism, loosely defined."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, throughout the last decades of the seventeenth century, there was an astonishing increase in new titles (many of them imports from France), in addition to reprints of both native and continental classical fiction. We find French heroic romances (decaying soon after the Restoration), a revival of chivalric romances, allegorical romances and quests, anti-romances, satires, jest books, popular fiction, criminal biographies, picaresque and rogue fictions, moral tales, didactic fiction, spiritual memoirs, imaginary voyages, utopian fiction, *nouvelles galantes* and *historiques*, Italian *novelle*, scandalous chronicles, epistolary modes of fiction, and oriental tales, to mention some of the broad categories or sub-genres.

From the 1980s onwards, renewed interest in the origins of the English novel, and more particularly in late-seventeenth-century female authors and gender-related subjects (often as part of the so-called long eighteenth century), encouraged by the rise of women's studies, definitely promoted academic research on Restoration (and seventeenth-century) fiction to a degree that Mish could never have imagined. In fact, Margaret Cavendish, Aphra Behn, Delarivier Manley, and Eliza Haywood (though not only for their novels) have recently achieved the same critical appeal as Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding. However, few scholarly books

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are exclusively devoted to exploring the specific development of fiction during this period. Curiously enough, though Restoration literature, culture, and history are relatively well researched, further knowledge is required about, among other aspects, the ways in which fiction addressed the anxieties and profound transformations of every kind, the configuration and evolution of narrative genres, their malleability and hybridisation, self-conscious experimentation, the gradual separation of the narrator from the authorial voice as a distinctive entity, the growth of verisimilitude and characterisation, as well as reception and reading habits. This special issue of *Revista canaria de estudios ingleses (RCEI)* on “Restoration Fiction (1660-1714)” hopes to contribute to further discern the achievements of this traditionally neglected period of the English novel.

The choice of 1714 (coinciding with the death of the last Stuart monarch) to close the temporal span under focus may be problematic. However, for the study of fiction, it seems a suitable option considering the persistence of late-seventeenth-century types of fiction in the early eighteenth century, and the effects of important cultural and political changes, such as the first copyright Act (The Statute of Anne, passed in 1710) and the 1715 victory of the Whigs, who would remain in power for many decades. The period 1660-1714 covers several phases of the development of the English novel. The mid-seventeenth-century narrative continued for a few years after 1660, but by 1665 there was a noticeable transition from the genres prevalent during the Interregnum to new modes of storytelling, mostly imported from France. The 1680s witnessed a new impetus, a notable increase in new titles and the publication of Aphra Behn’s works, among them, *Oroonoko* (1688), often regarded as the first English novel, while many of the new voices in the 1690s are associated with Augustan literature. All these stages are represented in the monograph section and offer a glimpse into the literary richness and potential of mid- and late-seventeenth-century fiction.

The opening essay by Gerd Bayer and Jaroslaw Jasenowski examines epistolary journalism in two case-studies (in John Dunton’s *Athenian Mercury* and Peter Motteux’s *Gentleman’s Journal*) to “demonstrate how these periodicals make use of the supposed reliability of epistolary writing in order to undermine the truth-claims that attach to the format.” It is followed by Jorge Figueroa Dorrego’s analysis of misogyny in three novels of prostitutes, *The Crafty Whore* (1658), Head’s *The Miss Display’d* (1675), and *The London Jilt* (1683), stories associated with picaresque and roguish narratives but with a moral aim in mind. A quite different type of women, nuns, is the subject of Sonia Villegas-López’s contribution. By addressing

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Mish, *Restoration Prose Fiction, 1666-1700. An Anthology of Representative Pieces* (U of Nebraska P, 1970).

<sup>2</sup> Nowadays, most are available online through *EEBO* (*Early English Books Online*, launched in 1998, and providing access to c. 132, 600 titles, as of December 2018).

<sup>3</sup> James Grantham Turner, “Cross-Section (3). 1666-1670,” *Prose Fiction in English from the Origins of Print to 1750*, ed. Thomas Keymer (Oxford UP, 2017) 73-88. 73.

the coincidental significance of nuns and seraglio women in Restoration fiction as symbols of secluded femininity, exoticism, and unbounded sexuality, Villegas-López's essay explores the ways in which Behn forwarded this similarity in *Oroonoko* (1688) and *The History of the Nun* (1689). Adelaide Serras's article on Neville's *The Isle of Pines* (1668) sets the story in the context of the age of discoveries to examine the gradual undermining of the *eutopian* space founded by George Pine and four women (one of them an African slave) on an uninhabited island off Australia, after having survived a shipwreck. Closely linked with Neville's story is María José Coperías-Aguilar's analysis of de Foigny's *A New Discovery of Terra Incognita Australis, or the Southern World* (1693), the sole representative of translated fiction in this collection, to highlight its relevance in the traditions of travel literature and utopian fiction, and its influence on the eighteenth-century novel. Patricia Rodrigues explains Gildon's *The Golden Spy* (1709), "the first, fully-fledge it-narrative [or novel of circulation] in English," by examining the complex relationship of both companionship and rivalry between the coin-narrators, and how the object-narrators both parody and satirically observe human behaviour. Finally, my own contribution aims to introduce Pordage's *Eliana* (1661), a romance overlooked by scholarly criticism, and in the process to suggest some innovatory aspects regarding narrative form, treatment of history, and gender.

I would like to express my gratitude to the board of the *RCEI* for giving me the opportunity to edit the present collection of articles, the authors for their willingness to publish their research in *RCEI* and for their excellent contributions, and the referees –especially the non-ULL– for their generous acceptance to assess the essays, and for their sharp observations and insightful comments.

The monograph section on Restoration Fiction (1660-1714) is a publication conducted within the framework of the research project "Orígenes de la novela en Inglaterra, 1660-1700: base de datos y edición de textos" (ENEID), funded by the Spanish Ministerio de Economía, Industria y Competitividad (MINECO), "Convocatoria de Proyectos de Excelencia, I+D+i," Ref. FFI2017-82728-P.





## ARTICLES



# DRAGGING OUT THE TRUTH: RESTORATION PERIODICALS AND THE TEXTUAL CREATION OF GENDERED IDENTITIES

Gerd Bayer & Jaroslaw Jasenowski  
Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

## ABSTRACT

This article investigates how Restoration periodicals employed epistolary modes as a means to address their own status of fictionality. In two case studies, of John Dunton's *Athenian Mercury* and Peter Motteux's *Gentleman's Journal*, the discussion demonstrates how these periodicals make use of the supposed reliability of epistolary writing in order to undermine the truth-claims that attach to the format. In both instances, letters are employed to undermine the supposed factuality of the letter, combining such metafictional gestures with a playful and highly performative understanding of gendered identities. The gendered body of the people involved in these epistolary communications becomes a site of speculation as the letters increasingly turn into questionable bodies of reliability.

KEYWORDS: Restoration periodicals, epistolarity, John Dunton, *Athenian Mercury*, Peter Motteux, *Gentleman's Journal*.

EXTRAYENDO VERDADES TRAVESTIDAS:  
PERIÓDICOS DE LA ÉPOCA DE LA RESTAURACIÓN  
Y LA CREACIÓN TEXTUAL DE IDENTIDADES DE GÉNERO

## RESUMEN

Este artículo investiga cómo los periódicos de la Restauración utilizaron modos epistolares como medio para afrontar su propia condición de ficcional. En los dos estudios de casos, el *Athenian Mercury* de John Dunton y el *Gentleman's Journal* de Peter Motteux, el análisis demuestra que estos periódicos se apoyan en la supuesta fiabilidad de la escritura epistolar para minar la aparente veracidad asociada a este formato. En ambas publicaciones, las cartas se utilizaron para socavar la supuesta facticidad de la carta, combinando guiños metaficcionales con una comprensión lúdica y altamente performativa de las identidades de género. El cuerpo (y su género) de quienes participan en estas comunicaciones epistolares resulta un espacio de especulación a medida que las cartas se van convirtiendo progresivamente en cuerpos cuestionables de fiabilidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: periódicos de la época de la Restauración, epistolaridad, John Dunton, *Athenian Mercury*, Peter Motteux, *Gentleman's Journal*.





Extending the broad consensus, proposed in early studies like that by Godfrey Singer and Robert Day, that the letter added to the early novel a modicum of reliability and enabled writers to represent their characters' interiority in more nuanced manners, as convincingly argued by Joe Bray, recent publications on forms of epistolary writing have instead stressed the form's deconstructive potential (Beebee), discussed the subversive element that the medium of the letter introduced to prose fiction (Schneider, *Culture*), and stressed the importance of epistolary culture for the formation of how individuals related to their personal and socio-political environment (O'Neill). The changing media environment of the English Restoration age, benefitting as it did from a more liberal attitude towards censorship and progressive legislation about copyright (Schwoerer), brought forth a substantial increase in literary culture (Hammond), including the birth of periodical and newspaper publishing on a large scale (Raymond).

It is in this cultural environment, driven by a public sphere as staged in the coffee houses (Ellis), that new forms of communication were tried out in which writers engaged in what Wolfram Schmidgen has persuasively described as the age's excitement about "exquisite mixture." The newly popularised form of the letter, both as personal form of communication and in its commercial version in print media, began to stake out its literary territory at the same time. The letter was seen as a readily available commodity, greatly supported by the recent establishment of the penny post (Whyman); yet it was also understood to be a form of communication that was easily corrupted and hence habitually used for deceptive purposes. The very principle of deception turned into a major trope within Restoration and early eighteenth-century literary culture (Loveman): there existed a general understanding within literary circles that the mediated format of epistolary communication lent itself perfectly to the kind of cultural criticism – criticism, that is, of the excessively Baroque culture that was clearly at odds with the lived experience of the non-courtly population – that found an outlet in this generic focus on the force of deception.<sup>1</sup>

It is from this point of the current scholarly debate that the present article takes off and presents Restoration epistolary culture as implicated in a discussion that is intimately tied to new forms of gendered corporeality. The letter as a literary form of representation allowed both readers and writers to reflect on the mediated nature of writing; and it invited a form of reception that grew increasingly aware of the tenuous relationship between sign and reality. The larger implications of this realisation were tested in early modern literary culture's slightly sceptical stance towards epistolary forms of communication. By looking at two textual sites of Restoration epistolarity, John Dunton's *Athenian Mercury* and Peter Motteux's the *Gentleman's Journal*, the present article demonstrates how letters in these two periodicals deployed the full range of generic possibilities resulting from the letter's mediated and disembodied form of communication both as a means for engaging

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<sup>1</sup> How early modern epistolarity is frequently used for deceptive purposes is discussed in Schneider, "Politics, Deception"; and Bayer, "Deceptive Narratives."



in various forms of gender performativity and, simultaneously, as an instance of textual self-reflection about the implications of textual representation.

## 1. FLEA-ING IDENTITIES

While the *Athenian Mercury* (1691-1697) may not be the first periodical to emerge from the lively literary ecosystem of the late seventeenth century, it is regarded as one of those having helped pave the way for and shape the Age of Periodicals and its main players such as the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* in the following century. Published and edited by John Dunton and his Athenian Society, a semi-fictional group of experts modelled on the Royal Society, the periodical tackled topics ranging from natural philosophy, medicine, divinity and mathematics to domestic matters, courtship advice and questions of love. Concerning form, the *Mercury's* unique selling point was “to endeavour the Answering any reasonable Question which should be proposed” to the editorial board, as “the first and most natural way to obtain [...] Knowledge, is by Questions and Answers” (Vol. 1, Preface). Questions were to be sent via “a Penny Post Letter to Mr. Smith at his Coffee-house [...], where orders are given for the Reception of such Letters” (Vol. 1, No. 1). Thus, from its very first issue, the *Mercury* made readers’ contributions an essential part of its concept. In order to disinhibit the ensuing debate, “to remove those Difficulties and Dissatisfactions, that shame or fear of appearing ridiculous by asking Questions, may cause several Persons to labour under,” the submissions were to be printed anonymously. Participatory elements such as these enabled not only the *Athenian Mercury*, but the periodical as such “to collect and define a new audience, to project an image of a community of readers mutually engaged in the production of the text” (Shevelow 38). One of the *Mercury's* explicit goals for dealing with its own “community of readers” was to include and make visible its female readers—in its own words, “to answer all manner of Questions sent us by either Sex” (Vol. 1, No. 13).

As it happens, this proclamation of the Athenian Society should not prove mere lip service. A significant amount of space in Dunton’s periodical is dedicated to interactions between women and men and questions situated in an “area of social experience [marked] as ‘feminine’ in implicit distinction from the other forms of experience represented which, by implication, are ‘masculine’” (Shevelow 71). In her seminal study *Women and Print Culture*, Kathryn Shevelow argues that “[t]he periodicals’ characteristic attention to women and ‘women’s concerns’ [...] served an emerging ideology that, in the act of making claims for women’s capabilities and social importance, constructed women as essentially—that is, both biologically and socially—‘other’ than men” (1). Thus, while the *Athenian Mercury* can be regularly observed to stand up for women’s concerns, female correspondents were often depicted as dependent on the all-male editorial board’s guidance, effectively situating the periodical in the vicinity of the conduct book regulating female behaviour and relegating women to a space identified as ‘private’ as opposed to the ‘public’ area of men (Shevelow 4). The *Mercury's* answers, therefore, reveal a rather heterogeneous perception of ‘women’ and ‘men’ fluctuating between proto-feminist



egalitarianism and misogynistic condescension. Women are mostly represented as intellectually equal, emotionally superior yet passive beings, dependant but at the same time responsible for the nation's moral well-being. Men are depicted as the active yet also aggressive part –be it during courtship, in business or in their day-to-day interactions with women in need of their sympathy and advice.<sup>2</sup> Shevelow points out these representational discrepancies as well as the regulatory practices of the *Athenian Mercury* and its successors; however, she maintains that “the construction of femininity in writing helped to encode a form of feminine authority that defined –that is, both enabled and delimited– a place for women in print culture” (15).

While Shawn Lisa Maurer concurs with many of Shevelow's observations, she emphasises the fact that numerous studies of the *Athenian Mercury* and its fellow periodicals have focused too narrowly on representations of femininity and consequently neglected the production of a corresponding masculinity. In her study *Proposing Men*, Maurer problematises the notion of separate spheres that has been investigated by critics such as Shevelow (focusing on the private, following Nancy Armstrong) and Terry Eagleton (directing his attention to the public, following Habermas) without fully considering the extent to which periodicals produced and simultaneously naturalised the boundaries between “public and private, masculine and feminine” (19). A closer examination, Maurer argues, reveals the interplay and mutual dependence of those spheres, with the figure of the family man, acting both publicly and privately, from the very start permeating the apparently exclusively feminine domestic sphere (20). This “sentimental masculinity,” in which the so-called private space of the home supplanted the polis as a locus for masculine virtue” (7), propagated the ideal of a chaste patriarch closely monitoring his family in contrast to that of the licentious rake (75). The chaste patriarch, however, could only be such by acting out “potentially dangerous sexual and economic appetites” within the sanctioned framework of marriage, whereby at the same time he is posited as a desiring subject and his wife or women in general as desirable objects (75).

Since Shevelow and Maurer, among others like E.J. Clery and Helen Berry, for example, broached the topic of gender relations in their analyses of the *Athenian Mercury*, many of the ensuing readings have, in one way or another, portrayed a rather passive femininity. Of course, this is rooted to a considerable degree in the source material. Despite defending women and their capabilities as well as providing them with a platform to articulate their experiences, the *Athenian Mercury* clearly perpetuates a patriarchal perspective on the roles and duties of eighteenth-century men and women. Yet, there seems to be a burgeoning trend to address more active

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<sup>2</sup> This observation does not only apply to Dunton's periodical. According to Shevelow, this heterogeneity was part of the periodical landscape from its inception. She notes, however, that early periodicals such as the *Gentleman's Journal* or the *Athenian Mercury* still retained a “relative openness” which “in fact, permitted them occasionally to articulate the rationalist feminist arguments which were current in the later seventeenth century” in contrast to their immediate successors like the *Tatler*, the *Spectator* or the *Guardian*, which moved in a more rigid ideological framework, more clearly limiting female agency (50).

and thereby more overtly ‘problematic’ depictions of femininity that destabilise constructions of masculinity. In a recent essay, Nicola Parsons offers a reading of various queries in the *Ladies Mercury*, a possible spin-off of its Athenian namesake,<sup>3</sup> focusing on the space the *Ladies Mercury* provides for relations of female “sexual experience” (321). In a similar vein, Slaney Chadwick Ross explores the theme of “sexual enjoyment” in the *Ladies Mercury* (336). While these recent analyses mainly concentrate on the *Ladies Mercury*, there are still parts of the *Athenian Mercury* that remain uncharted.

## 2. FLEA BITES

One hitherto disregarded passage found in Dunton’s periodical manages not only to foreground a dominant, almost dangerous femininity, but at the same time to invoke a curiously submissive masculinity and even to destabilise established gender roles altogether when it starts to conflate ‘male’ and ‘female.’ The passage in question starts off with the seemingly innocent query: “*Whether Fleas have stings, or whether they only suck or bite, when they draw Blood from the Body?*” (Vol. 1, No. 17). Right at the beginning of the corresponding answer, the ‘querist’ –the term used by the *Athenian Mercury* to refer to their correspondents– is identified as female, being addressed as “*Madam!*” by the editorial board. Accordingly, the answer starts with the typically good-natured condescension the Athenian Society tends to employ when answering women’s queries on proto-scientific topics, signifying that the ladies are entering unknown terrain: “Not to trouble you, *Madam!* with the Hebrew or Arabick Name of a *Flea*, or to transcribe *Bochart’s* learned *Dissertations* on the *little Animal.*” On the one hand, the *Mercury* hereby implies that the female proportion of its audience does neither speak Hebrew nor Arabic<sup>4</sup> and similarly is not acquainted with Samuel Bochart’s research on the flea –or that it is not even interested in this sort of information (which may be interpreted as the bigger slight due to the immense importance the *Mercury* places on the concept of ‘curiosity’ throughout its entire run). Furthermore, the word ‘trouble’ denotes the knowledge withheld by the *Mercury* as something unpleasant, something inconvenient that must be kept away from the ladies.

The *Mercury’s* reluctance to trouble its female readers with unnecessary information could, on the other hand, be interpreted as a way of actually facilitating the access to knowledge by removing barriers such as foreign languages and long-winded deliberations loaded with technical terms. Instead, the editors promise to

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<sup>3</sup> As of now the authorship of the *Ladies Mercury* has not been conclusively clarified. Propositions range from “the *Mercury* [...] may have generated the companion publication” (Shevelov 64), through “usually attributed to Dunton” (Maurer 54), to “Dunton ventured to publish a separate *Ladies Mercury* under the pseudonym of ‘T. Pratt’” (Berry 23).

<sup>4</sup> Not that the bulk of their male audience could do so either, yet statements such as these are generally directed at querists perceived as female.



“give such a *Description* thereof, as we have yet been able to *discover*,” relating the desired information in their own words and from their own experience for the lady’s “satisfaction.” After these initial remarks, the *Mercury* starts describing the flea:

It is, as we may partly discern by the *naked Eye*, of a *lovely deep Red colour*, most neatly *polish’d*, and *arm’d* with *Scales*, which can *resist* any thing but *Fate* and your *Ladships* unmerciful *Fingers*; [...] it has *two Eyes* on either side of its *Head*, so pretty, that I’d preferr ’em, to *any*, Madam, but *yours*, and which it makes use of to avoid its *Fate*, and fly its *Enemies*, with as much nimbleness and success as your *Sex* manage those fatal *Weapons* (lovely *Basilisks* as you are) for the Ruine of your *Adorers*. Nature has provided it six substantial *Legs*, of a great strength, and incomparable *agility*, [...] and *armed* each of ’em with two *Claws*, which appear of a horny substance, more sharp than *Lancets*, or the finest *Needle* you have in all your *Needle-Book*—’Twas a long while before we cou’d discover its *Mouth*, which we confess we han’t yet so *exactly* done as we wou’d, the *little bashful Creature* always holding up its *two fore-feet before it*, which it uses instead of a *Fan* or *Mask* when’t has no mind to be *known*<sup>5</sup>

What immediately strikes the reader’s eye is the flattering way in which the flea is portrayed, sporting such distinguishing features as a “*lovely deep Red colour*” and being “neatly *polish’d*,” reminiscent of precious jewellery; when it comes to its eyes, they are depicted as “so pretty, that I’d preferr ’em, to *any*, Madam, but *yours*.” It is at this point, that the *Mercury* starts comparing the flea directly to the lady in question, preferring the lustre of its eye to everyone else’s –presumably including all other women, subordinating them to the flea– but the querist’s very own. The comparison does not stop here, for the flea uses its eyes “to avoid its *Fate*, and fly its *Enemies*, with as much nimbleness and success as your *Sex* manage those fatal *Weapons* (lovely *Basilisks* as you are) for the Ruine of your *Adorers*” and owns claws which in their sharpness resemble “the finest *Needle* you have in all your *Needle-Book*.” Last but not least, “the *little bashful Creature*[’s]” legs correspond to “a *Fan* or *Mask*” that it can hold up “when’t has no mind to be *known*.” The *Mercury* hereby attributes the quality of bashfulness to the animal, also referring to it as “this *modest one*” later on, one of the traits usually reserved to define the ideal woman, as can be seen in the *Mercury*’s answer to the request for a prayer to secure the perfect wife in another issue, for example.<sup>6</sup> This is furthermore reinforced by the reference to fan and mask. A link is established between the lady and the flea, with the connection

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<sup>5</sup> Here, the *Mercury*’s account echoes Robert Hooke’s observations on the flea in *Micrographia* (1665), where he notes the creature’s “beauty,” describing its scaly armour, its head “beautify’d with a quick and round black eye,” its legs and trunk. The trunk and the tongue, he notes, “lye covert between the fore-legs,” just as the *Mercury* does several decades later (210, 211). What Hooke’s description does not provide, however, is the connection between flea and femininity.

<sup>6</sup> The editors advise the male querist in question to pray for “One to whom Nature has been liberal in good Features and Proportions of Body, but yet with a fairer Mind, Witty without Abuses, Modest without Weakness, [...] [...] Whose Virtue, Wit and Modesty can rather be imitated than equal’d by her Neighbours” (Vol. 2, No. 16).



working both ways: on the one hand, the flea is anthropomorphised and feminised, receiving the features of a lady. On the other hand, the lady is animalised, denigrated by the comparison to the flea, a creature usually perceived as an unwelcome parasite associated with a lack of personal hygiene craving its host's blood.

Yet, the figure of the lady is not exclusively realised in comparison to the flea. Despite being implicitly equated with the bloodthirsty insect, the lady furthermore emerges as a separate entity when addressed by the editorial board in its answer. However, in contrast to the conventional modest femininity represented by the bashful hematophage, the female querist's depiction resonates with dominance, cruelty and violence. As the reader learns, the animal is "*arm'd with Scales, which can resist any thing but Fate and your Ladiships unmerciful Fingers,*" which insinuates that the lady would mercilessly crush the little insect as soon as she were able to lay her hands on it, while the only other force capable of harming the flea is fate itself, which ascribes a considerable amount of power to said lady. This connection to fate is emphasised when the *Mercury* refers to the flea's eyes, "which it makes use of to avoid its *Fate*, and fly its *Enemies*" –hereby designating the lady as an enemy– using them "with as much nimbleness and success as your *Sex* manage those fatal Weapons (lovely Basilisks as you are) for the Ruine of your *Adorers*." During the course of this sentence, the editors move from referring to the querist in particular to the female sex as a whole, brandishing their eyes, "those fatal Weapons," with "nimbleness and success" –indicating a repeated use and a subsequent familiarity with the act. According to the *Mercury*, these weapons are specifically used "for the Ruine of your *Adorers*," who are presumably male and utterly at the females' mercy, a fact which is underlined by referring to women as "lovely Basilisks," further animalising them and attributing almost supernatural powers to their gaze, which enables them to turn helpless suitors into stone.

It is not only the lady's potential suitors who fall prey to her influence; not even the *Athenian Mercury's* unwavering editors can resist granting her desires. In order to "discover its *Mouth*" and thereby to answer the lady's question, the Athenians "were forced to be *guilty* of an *Act* both *uncivil* and *cruel*, without which we cou'd never have given you a *Resolution* to your *Question*": namely, they "were obliged to *unmask* this *modest one*, and cut off the *two Legs* on't to come to the *Face*." This "being perform'd (tho' it makes our *tender Hearts*, as well as yours, almost bleed to think on't)," they continue, "we immediately discovered what your *Ladyship* desired." Writing that they were "forced" as well as "obliged" to dissect the insect, the impression is created that the mutilation of the flea is not something the Athenians would have done without the express wish of their querist and that they are acting against their will.

To proceed with the deed is depicted as the only option to resolve her question and thereby to satisfy her desires. The fact that the execution of the act, described as "both uncivil and cruel," is prompted by the lady, making the editors feel "guilty" and their "*tender Hearts* [...] almost bleed to think on't," implicitly transfers the qualities of uncivility and cruelty to the querist, situating her in a different moral environment from the one the Athenians inhabit. Remarking her that taking apart the flea is bound to make the Athenians' hearts bleed "as well as yours," i.e. the female





querist's, appears almost ironic under these circumstances. Alternatively, this remark may also be regarded as an appeal to the querist to mend her ways, prompting her to empathise with the animal. This comment could therefore be read as an instance of Maurer's 'sentimental masculinity,' with the male editorial board basically telling the querist how and what to feel, encroaching on the supposedly private, female domain of emotions, implicitly regulating her behaviour. Irrespective of the *Mercury's* intentions, its compassion and emotional reaction to harming the little animal places it on the side of the feminised and meek flea in opposition to the implicitly crueller female correspondent.

Assuming that the insect is indeed assigned feminine characteristics, its dissection as well as the respective result are put into a somewhat dubious light. In order to expose the animal's "Face" along with its "Mouth," the all-male editorial board has to forcefully remove the fore-feet it uses like a fan or mask. Lurking behind the lady-like exterior, however, is

a strong *Proboscis* or *Trunk*, as a *Gnat* or *Muschetto*, tho' much *Thicker* and *Shorter*, with which we may very well suppose it *penetrates* your *fair Hand*, feasts it self on the *Nectar* of your *Blood*, and then like a *little faithless Fugitive of a Lover*, *skips* away almost *invisibly*, no body knows whither.

The previously feminized flea hereby acquires features of a masculine corporeality, namely: a penis. Determining "[w]hether Fleas have stings, or whether they only suck or bite" turns into determining the flea's sex. And that is not as conclusive as one would think. The phallic imagery of the thick trunk is further enlarged upon by referring to the act of penetration of the lady's hand. Linking the flea's proboscis to the phallus almost automatically invokes the association of the mouth hidden behind the fan with the vagina. Removing the protective feet could therefore be read as an attempted way of deflowering the hematophage –with a somewhat sobering outcome. Apart from being endowed with a penetrating trunk, it displays another stereotypically masculine –a more specifically rakish– trait: the parasite "feasts it self on the *Nectar* of your *Blood*, and then like a *little faithless Fugitive of a Lover*, *skips* away almost *invisibly*, no body knows whither." Explicitly comparing the animal to a lover fleeing the scene after feasting itself on the lady's nectar posits the sucking of her blood as a not-so-subtle cipher for sexual intercourse and the flea itself once more as a man. Contemporary readers might already have encountered a similar connection in John Donne's "The Flea" (1633), where the mingling of a woman's and a man's blood inside a flea that bit both of them stands for a sexual union. The *Athenian Mercury* hereby situates itself within a literary tradition established long before Donne's text. Apart from Aristotle's and Pliny's views on the procreation of fleas, "[t]here was a long tradition of flea poems in Latin, English, French, [and] Arabic" (Brumble 148). One of these, "Carmen de Pulice," a poem falsely attributed to Ovid, "had inspired so many imitations in this period that by 1582, [...] an anthology quoting 50 flea poems had been published in France by Étienne Pasquier, in each of which the lover envies the parasite's right to nestle in the lady's bosom and to 'taste' the joys of her flesh" (Roston 91). Interpreting the



flea as masculine thus allows for yet another reading of the *Mercury's* answer. The flea appears to be “of a lovely deep red colour, most neatly polish'd” to the “naked Eye” only; on second glance, it emerges as a male locked in deadly combat with the “Ladiships unmerciful Fingers.”

In connection to the uncertainty surrounding the insect's gender, the *Athenian Mercury's* reception history might hint at a final way of handling the flea question. Almost all scholars dealing with Dunton's periodical have at some point to tackle the question of authenticity in their own research. Countless commentators, partly prompted by the *Mercury's* contemporaries, have grappled with the unreliability of the Athenian Society's proclamations—for the simple reason that the society itself was at least partly a hoax, consisting of far fewer members who furthermore pursued other employments than those proclaimed by the *Mercury* and other publications of Dunton (Parks 75). Another problem is posed by the queries themselves. In Helen Berry's words:

One of the questions that strikes most people when they see a copy of the *Athenian Mercury* for the first time is: were any of the questions in the text real? Some contemporaries in the 1690s were no less sceptical than today, and raised doubts at the time as to whether the periodical was truly representing readers' letters in print. (35)

During its seven-year run the *Athenian Mercury* frequently addressed questions of authenticity itself, sometimes warding off attacks on its reliability and sometimes questioning the truth value of its readers' statements. Questions about its readers' gender constitute one recurring area of conflict. In one issue, one querist asking for advice on how to choose between two gentlemen, after briefly introducing them, closes her (?) question with: “*I desire to know how far Ovid's Rule must take place?* –Sed vitate Viros cultum, formamque professos, Quique suas ponunt in statione comas.”<sup>7</sup> Convinced that they are being tricked, the Athenians immediately pounce on their reader: “O Sir! or Madam! chuse you whether –Your *Hee-Ladiship* has forgot that Women don't use to *Cap Verses*, especially in *Latin*, any more than *our Lady* ought to have spoke in the Church, when she saluted St. *Bernard*” (Vol. 9, No. 26). In yet another issue, they reply to a “pretended Cookmaid,” addressing

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<sup>7</sup> Taken from Ovid's *Ars amatoria* (3.433-3.434), said rule cautions against the fickleness of certain men: “But stay away from men with pretensions to grooming and beauty, / and those who carefully put their hair in order” (Ovid 154). Following this, the passage continues by advising women to stay away from this type of man on account of the effeminacy signalled by such an exaggerated attention to one's appearance: “What's a woman to do when the man is smoother than she / and, perhaps, could have had a greater number of men? / [...] Don't let their hair deceive you, slick and gleaming with perfume, / or the short shoe-strap folded into its creases; / don't let the toga of finest thread take you in, or if / there's one ring after another upon their fingers: / it may be that the most refined of all from that crowd / is a thief, and is burning with passion –for your clothes!” (154). The effeminate cross-dresser's desire for a woman's clothes (and a lack thereof for herself) resonates fittingly with the *Mercury's* accusing answer.





them as “Thou *He-Cookmaid*” (Vol. 10, No. 3). On one occasion, they are explicitly queried about “*how you come to have the Art of discerning, and to distinguish a Male Query from a Female; wherein too we doubt you are oftentimes mistaken.*” What the Athenians, by their own account, do, is “guess by the *Hand*, the *Stile*, and the Querists own Subscription and Affirmation, which we are sure never fails unless some *Roguy Male Querist* paulms upon us in the other *Sexes name*,” deconstructing their own way of ascertaining their querists’ gender as they go (Vol. 9, No. 15). Bringing this background to the analysis of the flea query, an additional meta-textual reading becomes possible. Along with the dubious position of the flea as both man and woman complete with fan and mask, the multiple references to unmasking, hiding “when’t has no mind to be known,” its first appearance to “the *naked Eye*” and the pervading ironic undertone, the *Mercury’s* entire answer could be interpreted as an elaborate way of exposing a supposedly female querist as a male cross-dresser in textual drag.

Simultaneously incorporating masculine and feminine traits, the unassuming insect consequently emerges as a hermaphroditic being which destabilises gender roles, combining a pretty, meek and feminine exterior with a hidden masculine sexuality. Usually part of an aggressive masculinity, the corresponding behaviour is outsourced to the female querist by the Athenians, expressing itself in an unladylike propensity for violence and dominance. This is not to say that the *Athenian Mercury* automatically endorses overly subversive concepts of femininity. While the lady’s projected behaviour is not explicitly censored, the editors’ playful, mocking tone at all times hints at their regulatory function. In contrast, the stereotypical feminine meekness partly attributed to the bashful flea is acted out by the editorial board in turn, staging themselves as empathic victims fatally attracted to the lady’s desire for knowledge. The image of the flea constructed by the *Mercury’s* answer is thereby almost grossly overdetermined, overburdened with semantic energy like an actual flea gorged with blood to the point of bursting.

### 3. REVERSING GENDERED LETTERS

What happens when a gendered play on epistolary identity actually does burst is evoked in one of the short narrative prose fictions that appeared in each issue of the *Gentleman’s Journal*, the periodical produced by Peter Motteux in the early 1690s in the shape of a monthly letter written from the urban centre of London to its readers living in various provinces across the British Isles. Motteux filled his issues with a wide array of different text types, including straightforward news and reports about public events with scholarly essays about natural phenomena alongside purely entertaining elements from various aesthetic traditions covering poetry, sheet music and also short stories, creating an early example of a commercially successful periodical (Ezell). Most of these short stories are built around social comedy or matters of amorous conquest and thus fit perfectly the Restoration interest in what the stage cultivated as Restoration comedies. In these stories, letters mostly feature as direct forms of communication that transport information across spatial distance,



usually relying on truthfulness in both the identity of the sender (and recipient) as well as the content transported. The veracity at stake in Restoration epistolarity forms part of the complex problematisation of truth that Michael McKeon has accurately presented as a crucial factor contributing to the rise of the novel, and that Sonia Villegas López has studied in various examples from Restoration fiction. As if to confirm this claim and extend it to the context of periodical forms of textual self-fashioning, on a number of occasions Motteux includes epistolary encounters that draw on the format of the letter in order to put into play those very assumptions about veracity and identity. Just as Dunton's description of the flea invites readers to question the assumed gender identity of the magazine's contributors (and the actual existence of its experts), so Motteux's use of epistolarity undermines the assumption of reliability conventionally assigned to the format of the letter.

This aspect of his employment of epistolarity as a tool for questioning gendered identities is one of the central textual features in the short story called "The Nobel Statuary," which appeared in the January issue of 1691/92. At the very outset of this text about a stonecutter's pursuit of his noble beloved, the narrator directly addresses his readers to inform them that the display of emotions as frequently encountered in moments of extreme excitement are not to be fully trusted as they habitually present a front to the world that is highly staged and borders on the theatrical.<sup>8</sup> The story begins by confronting its readers with the experience of mourning:

Amidst the daily instances, we have of the unfeigned grief, which disconsolate Widows express for the loss of their beloved Consorts, it ought not to be wondred at, why those that judge of things by their exterior, are as subject to mistake an affected sorrow for a real grief, as our Cullies, the fawnings of their Misses for a true Passion. (37)

This opening passage introduces a number of themes that are highly relevant for the gender politics of Restoration epistolarity. By addressing the tricky coexistence of "affected sorrow" and "real grief" the text stresses that even the embodied presentation of extreme emotions are not always to be trusted by those who encounter them. The text immediately goes on to compare this type of duplicity to the field of romance and wooing when it brings in the easily duped "Cullies" and their misjudgement of their lovers' bodily responses. In sexualizing the manner in which communication is prone to mislead its recipients, the opening passage sets the tone for the subsequent manipulation of its protagonists as they engage in various forms of personal but also impersonal communication in the form of letters.

The stone cutter is introduced as a mixture of virile masculinity and somewhat naïve amorous enthusiasm, whose rhetorical abilities are clearly at odds with the Restoration fashion for wit and literacy:

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<sup>8</sup> See Peters for a discussion of how letters were incorporated into dramatic forms at the time.



He that was sent for, chanced to be one of those Fellows who by a small stock of Memory, and a great one of Confidence, a Magazine of Puns and Clinches [sic], a Talent in the noble modern art of bantering, and such like stuff, as is by some in the Country miscalled Wit, had gained the name of a boon Companion, a set up for Top-wit of the No-wits of the Town; and though he could not read, and therefore had neither plundered *Vitruvius* nor *Columella*, nor could challenge a Precedency with *Michael Angelo*, or a Cavalier *Bernini*, yet was a good second or third rate Stone cutter, Carver, or Statuary, as you will have it. (38-39)

The text's referencing of canonical artists and artworks, flattering as it does the cultural competence of the magazine's readers, places the artisan at an educational level below that of his immediate environment. His illiteracy, however, is seen as a welcome occasion to allow for epistolarity to replace more direct and thus revealing forms of communication.

While the plot builds towards the writing of rather explicit and deceitful letters, the two lovers initially meet in person, and the excessive physicality of their mutual admiration sets the tone for the excessive form of distant communication that will develop once the complications surrounding their love plot set in. As the newly widowed lady encounters her future lover, her reaction is described in precisely the terms of dissimulation and deception with which the short story had opened, and to which the moment of epistolarity will soon add its own kind of generic resonance:

It seems he nick'd the critical minute, for he no sooner appear'd, but like a Sun, he drove away the Clouds that hanged over the fair *Hippolita's* heart, and kindled there a flame too prevalent to be remov'd afterwards by all the weak resolves of Pride and Reason. She nevertheless call'd her dissimulation to her relief, and checking her too easy heart, hid her disorder as well as she could, yet not so well, but that our Man of Stone discover'd it, or at least imagin'd so. (39)

As the kindled flame of her desire leads to "dissimulation" and a form of "disorder," her attempt at hiding the manner in which his presence affects her fails precisely because her physical reaction is betrayed through the very affectedness of her demeanour. Since they are meeting in person, corporeal forms of meaning-making add to the much more easily dissimulated forms of mere linguistic sign-making.

Returning to the theme addressed at the beginning of the tale, of the habitual distance between reality and its textual representation, the narrative later provides its readers with information that demonstrates that what they are reading is a mere fraction of what was actually played out in reality, emphasizing that writers edit, shorten and, possibly, also alter what they present: "To tell you all she said, and what our officious Stonecutter preach'd to her, would swell my Novel to the bulk of a *Folio*, and that would be the way to have you take it for a Romance" (40). The explicit evocation of generic conventions –the references to the forms of the "Novel" and its rival, the "Romance"– and the materiality of the print object –here in the shape of the much more illustrious form of the "Folio"– address the very principle of paratextuality and generic expectations that readers use when they place particular texts into conventions and forms of knowledge they already know,



or at least assume they know.<sup>9</sup> That such predispositions are frequently misdirected is one of the themes presented to the readers.

As the stonemason prepares his suit to his beloved, he loses confidence in the powers of persuasion he may put into a letter written by his own hand, so he solicits support from his fellow members at a club. In the end, this most intimate of letters, one that woos the woman he loves, ends up being an allographic epistle, penned by a third party not directly involved in the amorous exchange between the two lovers. The narrative openly addresses the fact that there are various players and their respective desires that contribute to this development of an intimate letter becoming a scene of deception when it states that “To that end he desire’d one of the Club to write a Letter for him” (44): by explicitly referring to the fact that the letter was written with a particular “end” in mind, namely to press his case with the lady, it furthermore shifts the balance from a purely emotional outflow of personal feelings to a calculated missive to create a wished-for outcome. The letter, or so readers are invited to ponder, is a form of communication that is mostly constructed for the effect it may create; and in the process of this fabrication of results it permits elements of manipulation. What makes the present case of a deceitful letter even more fascinating is the fact that the stonemason, being illiterate, has to trust his chosen ghost-writer when it comes to the content of the text, a trust that the readers find is not well placed: “The Gentleman, to divert himself and the rest, fram’d him the following Epistle, all in his own Cant, which when he had read to him quite differently, was by our Lover sent to his Mistress” (44). The actual letter, which addresses the lady in rather confrontational tones and includes a few somewhat witty remarks about the physicality of a stone-cutter’s talents in the arena of romance, begins with these words: “Were you not harder than *Pophiry* or *Agath*, the Chizel of my Love, drove by the Mallet of my Fidelity, would have made some impression of your Heart” (44). The letter, addressing the lady as “Divine Flint” and making use of some highly allusive phallic metaphors, is clearly meant to embarrass its supposed author, the illiterate stone cutter, crudely evoking gendered clichés about romance and desire.

Yet the narrative at this point surprises readers’ expectations in that it presents the lady’s attitude as one that does not fall within the confines of ladylike romantic epistolarity. Rather than turning away in horror at the incivility expressed in the letter, she instead pursues her initial interest in the stone cutter despite the tone and content of the (allographic) missive. And to make sure that readers in fact take notice of this break in decorum,<sup>10</sup> the text actively addresses how this particular exchange of letters constitutes a departure from generic conventions:

Now you expect that I will tell you that she scornfully tore his Letter, and sent him some damn’d cross message, such as to slit his windpipe with his Chizel, or dash out his brains with his Mallet; but it happened quite contrary, Love was his

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<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of early forms of criticism, see Gavin; and for the generic self-fashioning of Restoration prose narratives, see Bayer, *Novel Horizons*.

<sup>10</sup> On decorum in Restoration epistolarity, see also chapter 5 in Barnes.



Advocate, she put a favourable construction on every thing, and sent him word to use all the means imaginable to be made a Knight, and expect to find her kind, assuring him that a Bill of Exclusion was passed on all but him, from any pretences to her Person; he had like to have leapt out of his Skin for joy, and have broke his neck for haste to give an account of this to his Cronies of the Club [...]. (46)

This passage is remarkable for a number of reasons: it begins by explicitly admitting to the existence of readers' expectations ("you expect"), suggesting that the rudeness of the letter could not but have disturbed the recipient and that she would therefore respond in kind, effectively ending the romance before it could go any further. Tellingly, the violence that is evoked here affects both the supposed author of the letter (who is advised to kill himself) and the letter itself, which the conjecture assumes she would have wanted to "tore." Instead, the relationship is allowed to continue on a positive path, not without the narrator claiming that the narrative accurately reports what actually "happened," addressing the very reliability on the trustworthiness of an impersonal communication (this time between actual author and real-world reader) that the letter which forms the occasion for this observation has just so gratuitously flaunted. To explain why this particular plot should develop along such unexpected lines, the text points to the combined effects of romance and semantics: driven by "Love," his beloved "put a favourable construction on every thing," meaning that out of the blindness that goes with an inflamed heart the mind will construct meaning out of phrases that run counter to their actual intention and proper semantic context.

What the letters in "The Nobel Statuary" thus reveal is a fascinating interest, within Restoration literary culture, in the pliability of epistolary communication, in particular when it comes to the shaping and making of gendered identities. The letter, unlike the personal face-to-face conversation, allows for the kind of posturing and self-fashioning that gained importance during the tumultuous years of the waning seventeenth century. At the same time, however, it acts as a reminder to readers that textual intention always exists at the risk of being misread or even reversed, as when the widow simply refuses to be insulted and instead reads the letter in the light of the corporeal meeting with the stone cutter that preceded the written communication.

#### 4. SIGNED "TRULY YOURS"?

As the two examples discussed above indicate, Restoration readers would at least occasionally encounter epistolary moments of communication that interrogated the identities of their respective writers, including their gender. They met with such instances of faked letters in various contexts: some invited them to read the genre of the letter as a mixing of instances of truth-telling with the much more self-critical notion of how impersonal forms of communication evoke deceptive forms of address. When epistolarity occurred in such contexts, it allowed for forms of misrepresentation that resulted precisely from the very absence of the speaking body as a means of verifying (or otherwise) what the speaker says. What Elizabeth Heckendorn



Cook discusses as the complex “construction and definition” of eighteenth-century corporealities through the flexibility found in epistolary forms of communication thus also plays a significant role in the Restoration periodicals discussed here.

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# EXPOSING THE WHORE: MISOGYNY IN PROSTITUTE NARRATIVES OF RESTORATION ENGLAND\*

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## ABSTRACT

Although the prostitute became a fairly common figure in eighteenth-century prose fiction, there were already narrative texts dealing with that type of character in Restoration England, although most of them have been largely disregarded. This article will focus on three of those texts: 1) *The Crafty Whore* (1658), an anonymous dialogue between two courtesans that is framed between a preface that presents it as a cautionary text, and an epilogue entitled “Dehortation from Lust”; 2) Richard Head’s *The Miss Display’d* (1675), a narrative in the picaresque mode introduced by an admonitory preface and told by an intrusive third-person narrator that is often critical of prostitutes and women in general; and 3) the anonymous *The London Jilt* (1683), another picaresque novel presented as a cautionary tale to warn readers against the deceit and corruption of prostitutes, but with an autodiegetic narrator who interlaces the relation with social and moral comments. In these texts the female agency and voice are often curbed by a male authorial voice that uses a misogynistic discourse in an alleged attempt to expose the crafty contrivances of prostitutes in order to ensnare men.

KEYWORDS: prostitute narratives, Restoration England, misogyny, *The Crafty Whore*, *The Miss Display’d*, *The London Jilt*.

## REVELANDO A LA RAMERA: MISOGINIA EN NARRACIONES SOBRE PROSTITUTAS DE LA INGLATERRA DE LA RESTAURACIÓN

## RESUMEN

Aunque la prostituta es un personaje frecuente en la novela inglesa del siglo XVIII, ya aparece en textos narrativos publicados en la Inglaterra de la Restauración, aunque la mayoría de ellos han sido ignorados. Este artículo analiza tres de esos textos: 1) *The Crafty Whore* (1658), un diálogo anónimo entre dos cortesanas que está enmarcado entre un prefacio que lo presenta como una advertencia, y un epílogo titulado «Disuasión de la lujuria»; 2) *The Miss Display’d* de Richard Head (1675), una novela en modo picaresco introducida por un prefacio también admonitorio y relatada por un narrador intruso en tercera persona que es a menudo crítico con las prostitutas y las mujeres en general; y 3) la anónima *The London Jilt* (1683), otra novela picaresca presentada como relato que alerta a los lectores contra el engaño y la corrupción de las prostitutas, pero con un narrador autodiegético que entrelaza la narración con comentarios de tipo social y moral. En estos textos la voz y agencia femenina se ven refrenadas por una voz autorial masculina que utiliza un discurso misógino con la intención de revelar los astutos ardides de las prostitutas con el fin de engañar a los hombres.

PALABRAS CLAVE: narraciones sobre prostitutas, Inglaterra de la Restauración, misoginia, *The Crafty Whore*, *The Miss Display’d*, *The London Jilt*.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The prostitute is a fairly common figure in eighteenth-century prose fiction, featuring in well-known novels written by authors such as Daniel Defoe, Eliza Haywood, Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson and John Cleland, for instance. However, there were a considerable number of narrative texts dealing with that type of character already in seventeenth-century England, although most of them have been largely disregarded by scholars so far. Among these texts, the following can be mentioned: *The Crafty Whore: or, The Mystery and Iniquity of Bawdy Houses Laid Open* (1658), *The Practical Part of Love* (1660), *The Wandring Whore* (1660), *Strange Newes from Bartholomew Fair, or, The Wandring-Whore Discovered* (1661), Richard Head's *The Miss Display'd* (1675), *The London Jilt: or, The Politick Whore* (1683), and *The Whore's Rhetorick* (1683). These prose fiction works, together with the publication of a large amount of pamphlets, satirical poems, character sketches, periodical essays, and other forms of what may be called *mass culture products*, give evidence of how much the English society of the period was fascinated with the topic of prostitution.<sup>1</sup>

This article will focus on three of the abovementioned texts. One is *The Crafty Whore*, an anonymous dialogue between two courtesans that is framed between a preface that presents it as a cautionary text and an epilogue entitled "Dehortation from Lust," with an obvious moralistic purpose as well. Another text that will be studied is Richard Head's *The Miss Display'd*, a narrative in the picaresque mode to which the author adds a prefatory epistle of a similar cautionary nature, and the intrusive third-person narrator elaborates a discourse very critical of prostitutes and women in general. The third text that will be analysed is the anonymous *The London Jilt*, another picaresque novel,<sup>2</sup> this time with an autodiegetic narrator who

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of these texts are *Select City Quaeries* (1660), *Strange and True Newes from Jack-a-Newberries Six Windmills* (1660), *The Ladies Champion* (1660), *The Whores Petition to the London Prentices* (1668), *The Prentices Answer to the Whores Petition* (1668), *The Citizens Reply to the Whores Petition and Prentices Answer* (1668), *The Character of A Town Misse* (1675), *The Ape-Gentle-woman, or The Character of an Exchange-wench* (1675), *The Night-Walkers Declaration, Or, The Distressed Whores Advice to all their Sisters in City and Country* (1676), Richard Ames's *The Female Fire Ships. A Satyr Against Whoring* (1691), John Dunton's *The Night-Walker; Or, Evening Rambles in Search after Lewd Women* (1696), and Edward Ward's *The Insinuating Bawd and the Repenting Harlot* (1699).

<sup>2</sup> Charles C. Mish describes *The London Jilt* as "probably the best piece of picaresque fiction of the time" (324). Charles Hinnant agrees that "it may very well be the finest (and by far the most entertaining) picaresque novel published in England in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," and suggests it may have been a model for Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* (9). Gerd Bayer also states that it "clearly draws on picaresque elements and to some extent forms a Quixotic complement to the generic tradition of the rogue tale" (181). Roger Thompson prefers the label "rogue tale" to



interlaces the relation with comments about social and moral issues, but whose paratextual material (title page and address “To the Reader”) also presents the novel as a warning to male readers against the deceits and corruption of prostitutes. I will contend that, in those texts, female voice and agency are allowed but, at the same time, curbed by male authorial voices that allegedly attempt to warn against the crafty contrivances that prostitutes use in order to ensnare men, and thus reform the conduct of mainly the male readers. This declared moral purpose is stated mostly in paratexts and occasionally throughout the narratives, and accompanied with very crude, anti-female arguments and imagery that make these texts be imbued with and contribute to the pervasive misogynistic ideology of the time. These prostitute narratives are complex texts that work in several layers and deal with a thorny subject that provoked prurient voyeurism and moral condemnation, and that was also often recurrent in the political confrontation of the time.

## 2. MISOGYNY AND PROSTITUTION IN RESTORATION ENGLAND

David Gilmore has pointed out that misogyny is so widespread and pervasive in the world and throughout history that it must largely be psychogenic (xviii), a psychic attempt to diminish the importance of men’s inner struggle in their relationship to women (9, see also Jack Holland, 5 and 272). The idea that women are inferior and dangerous to men thus may be seen as an unconscious rejection of men’s desire for and dependence on women, a reflex of men’s anxiety about women’s equal or superior abilities, as well as a manner to justify and maintain women’s lowly status in patriarchal society. Misogyny pervades widely in European philosophical, religious, cultural and literary traditions, from classical antiquity to the present day, presenting the entire female sex as the embodiment of everything that is offensive to the patriarchal order. Misogynistic approaches and comments in Aristotle and other Greek thinkers, Ovid and other Latin poets, the Bible and the doctrine of the Church Fathers, medieval literature and the so-called “querelle des femmes,” Renaissance drama and the controversy generated around Joseph Swetnam’s *Arraignment of Lewde, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women* (1615), all had established a robust tradition of anti-female thought that no doubt influenced English writers and readers of the Restoration period somehow.<sup>3</sup> Playwrights drew profusely on Jacobean and Caroline drama, poets often imitated classical satire, puritan writers often quoted the Scriptures, and thus many of them rehashed old misogynous ideas and imagery, which were also present in conduct books, ballads, jests, and other cultural products of the late Stuart decades.

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describe the genre of this narrative (290). For a study on how *The London Jilt* fits into the tradition of female picaresque, see Jorge Figueroa Dorrego (225-232).

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, the studies of Beverley Clack; Alcuin Blamires, Karen Pratt and C.W. Marx; Joan Kelly, and Linda Woodbridge.



Many elements of the socio-political background of the Restoration period may have contributed to the generation of anxiety and feelings of insecurity in (at least part of the) society that found expression in misogynistic attitudes. The social and political implications of the Civil War, the puritan rule during the Interregnum, the unease caused by the visibility and supposed power of Charles II's mistresses, the libertine and cynical atmosphere generated, and the more noticeable presence of women in the public sphere (as political activists, preachers, actresses, and writers, for example) most likely produced feelings of anxiety in many men who may have deemed their identity, role, and privileges in the patriarchal society of the period questioned or threatened, and may have felt the need to reclaim or reinforce their dominance by disparaging the nature of women following the misogynistic tradition. Anti-female comments and attitudes pervade Restoration comedy (just remember William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*), but I would like to highlight here the satires on women that were written in the period. As Felicity Nussbaum has remarked, in these poems "women came to embody the very absence of patriarchal order and hierarchy that men must fear" (19), and the satirists rage at the female power to seduce and overcome men. In the anonymous *Mysogynus: or, A Satyr Upon Women* (1682), woman is described as an "imperfect thing" (3 and 5), loud, empty, soulless, and devilish, who is dominated by malice, envy, and hatred, and who degenerates man. Robert Gould's *Love Given Over: or, A Satyr Against the Pride, Lust, and Inconstancy, &c of Woman* (1690) allegedly originated after the poet had been jilted by his beloved, and intends to "unmask" (7) female infidelity and warn other men to beware of women's "little Arts" (10), but also, as the subtitle says, of their lewdness ("if they durst, most Women would be Whores," 4) and pride ("the Deity they most adore," 5). In *The Folly of Love. A New Satyr Against Woman* (1693), Richard Ames sets out to "display" the female sex "[i]n their own colours" (5), and insists on describing women as deceitful, vain, lustful, and inconstant beings, whose only pleasure is to torment men and use them as simple toys or tools. Thus, the speaker of the poem concludes that the ideal world would be one without the presence and need of women. The misogyny of all these satires reveals men's fear of women's agency, autonomy, and consequent transgression of the established gender hierarchy.

As James G. Turner states, for early modern misogynists, the whore typified all women and, more particularly, all *public* women who did not comply with the domestic sphere or the passivity and moderated speech expected from them. She was, at the same time, an outcast and the image of worldliness, a criminal and a businesswoman, and provoked a mixture of indignation and attraction (10-11). Yet it was her rampant agency that seemed more worrying: "Every fornicatrix is assumed to be potentially a dominatrix, an Amazon, a virago" (22). The whore was a fascinating figure throughout the early modern period because it was one of the main stereotypes of the disorderly woman. Her unbridled sexuality was a challenge to patriarchal authority (being outside marital or parental control), and she lacked all the expected womanly qualities, such as chastity, fidelity, obedience, honesty, and maternal vocation (cf. Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, 69-71). The whore was characterised instead by lust, deceit, vanity, unruliness, and an unorthodox approach to marriage and maternity (notice the coincidence of at least the first three vices to



those ascribed to all women by misogynists). In the last decades of the seventeenth century, prostitution was seen as the result of individual moral failure, following the misogynistic belief that women were lewd by nature, as was explained before. So it was thought that prostitutes were motivated by an irrepressible, insatiable sexual desire. Yet they were also supposed to be moved by social ambition, greed, and a tendency to deceit, idleness and luxury, i.e. they were the very epitome of what characterised all women, according to contemporary misogynists. Thus whores were viewed as aggressors who lacked moral worth and deserved punishment.<sup>4</sup> However, social attitudes towards prostitution were ambiguous because, as Robert Shoemaker has pointed out, it was condemned by moralists as a form of non-procreative, extramarital sex, yet other people considered it a necessary evil that served as an outlet to vent men's sexual drives and to keep other women unmolested. Prostitution was not itself illegal and, in the attempts to curb it for public order or health reasons, it was the prostitutes who were harassed, not their clients (Shoemaker 77).<sup>5</sup>

In early modern England professional prostitution was largely an urban activity, as in towns and, particularly, in London there were more potential customers and leisure facilities, and it was easier to go unnoticed (cf. Sharpe 158-169). As may be expected, women entered prostitution for economic reasons, usually after becoming orphaned and finding no other means of supporting themselves due to the scarce professional alternatives available for women (Shoemaker 76). Tim Hitchcock claims that, although brothels existed, most prostitutes worked for themselves, thus they had "a surprising degree of autonomy" (95). Hitchcock also states that most of them came from poor families and often interspersed periods of life in domestic service or other largely female occupations with sex services, mostly between the age of fifteen and twenty-five (96). Besides, Mendelson and Crawford report that women who made money through sexual services when young usually turned to procuring when older (295). Their life was not easy, because their activity had serious hazards such as venereal diseases, imprisonment, whipping and other forms of public punishment (296). We can add here that they were often victims of physical aggressions and rape, and had to deal with unwanted pregnancies alone.

Laura Rosenthal argues that prostitution exposed the contradiction of the emergent bourgeois culture, as it emblematised a disturbing intersection of the economic and the personal. In many representations, prostitutes consume in

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<sup>4</sup> This attitude gradually changed throughout the eighteenth century towards a view of prostitutes as "fallen" women who were victims of male seduction and financial difficulties, and therefore in need of certain degree of sympathy and aid. See, for instance, Hitchcock (99-100), Speck (127), and Rosenthal ("Introduction").

<sup>5</sup> According to Melissa Mowry, anti-vagrancy laws were almost the only means the state had available for punishing prostitutes. They were convicted for being "lewd, idle, and disorderly women"; and they were sent to a house of correction to be whipped or put to labour (64). Local statutes forbid a woman from lying with more than one man in a given night, and a woman in a bawdy house was prosecutable for frequenting illegal establishments. Yet the actual exchange of sex for money was not illegal in England until the nineteenth century (106).



excess and tempt men into irresponsible indulgences. Thus they serve as reminders of everything threatening about commerce. Restoration moralists and libertine writers generally present prostitutes as being driven by a desire for sexual pleasure, luxury, power, and wealth (see *Infamous Commerce* 4-18). Somewhere else, Rosenthal points out that libertine narratives of the Restoration and eighteenth century position themselves as warnings against the dangers of prostitution, but they tempt readers with stories of empowerment, luxury and social rebellion, suggesting that common women can rise to wealth and status through ambition and ruthlessness. Therefore, those narratives explore anxieties generated by the increasingly mobile world of the period (“Introduction” xx). From a more political perspective, Melissa Mowry adds that most of the satirical *pornographies* (in the etymological sense of *descriptions of prostitutes*) written in the Restoration period were part of the royalist and Tory propaganda because partisan authors related prostitution to republicanism and commerce, which were challenging the traditional class and gender hierarchies. Thus we can say that the figure of the prostitute acquires a metaphoric dimension, not only epitomising the disorderly woman and embodying unrestrained female sexuality, but also projecting the anxiety created by a new economic, political, and social order.

### 3. THE CRAFTY WHORE

*The Crafty Whore* is a free adaptation of the third dialogue in Aretino’s *Ragionamenti* (1534-36), a work in which the protagonist, Nanna, tells a fellow prostitute her life as a whore. However, the English text does not mention this Italian origin, unlike other translations of Aretino’s works, which were well known in seventeenth-century England. Regula Rohland de Langbehn suggests that *The Crafty Whore* may actually be an adaptation, either directly or through a French rendering, of the Spanish translation of that same dialogue by Fernán Juárez under the title of *Coloquio de las damas* (1548) (95). She bases her hypothesis on the similarity of the use of paratextual material that intends to present them as texts that warn young men against women’s wiles. And we can add that both focus exclusively on the dialogue about Nanna’s life as a prostitute, and ignore those about her life as a nun and as a wife.

The title page of *The Crafty Whore* (Figure 1) includes a subtitle and a short summary of the contents, specifying the purpose of the publication. The title itself emphasises the figure of the whore around which the dialogue centres and who is described as sly and guileful. The subtitle is “The Mystery and Iniquity of Bawdy Houses Laid Open,” and this refers to the occult and sinful nature of the whore’s actions that need to be *exposed* to the public in order to denounce them and warn readers against them. The title page also says that the text is written in the form of

a dialogue between two subtle Bawds, wherein, as in a mirrour, our City-Curtesans may see their soul-destroying Art, and Crafty devices, whereby they Insnare and beguile Youth, portraied to the life, by the Pensell of one of their late (but now







Figure 1. Frontispiece to *The Crafty Whore* (1658). © British Library Board. General Reference Collection, E.1927. (1). Image produced by ProQuest as part of EEBO and published with permission of ProQuest and the British Library. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

penitent) Captives, for the benefit of all, but especially the young sort. Whereunto is added Dehortations from Lust Drawn from the Sad and Lamentable Consequences it produceth. (Title page)

Thus the text is presented as a kind of mirror that supposedly reflects real life, in this case, the vile and devious actions of the courtesans, who intend to cheat young men. The anonymous author claims to be one of those men who have been victims of those predatory women but that now he is repentant and writes for the benefit of young readers. The oxymoronic notion of *penitent captive* is paradigmatic of the discordant self-image that the misogynous customer of prostitution gives of himself as being both victim of deceit and culprit of lechery at the same time. He also announces that, in order to reinforce the moral message of the publication, there will be an epilogue dissuading readers from lust on account of its negative consequences. The frontispiece is also noteworthy, because it shows a young woman wearing a low décolleté that shows most of her breasts, a man whose sexual intentions are quite clear because he is slipping his hand under her skirt, and an old woman behind him with a bag of money. Therefore the illustration intends to point out the sexual and materialistic elements of prostitution.

In the preface, the author states that he wrote this text due to the large amount of prostitutes in England. He describes them as “Divells incarnate,” “lascivium et dolosum pecus” (i.e. lustful and deceitful cattle), “unprofitable Drones” (i.e. parasites), and “sin selling Traders,” who cheat men with their words, gestures,





glances, etc.<sup>6</sup> Using animal imagery again, he says he intends to teach the reader “to shun those Locusts, who still employ their time in destroying the young plants of this land” (A2). He considers himself “a Beacon to forwarne you to beware how you come neare them” (A4), because he has often been “cheated in the rottenness and deceitfullnesse of these female commodities” (A6), but he is now reformed and wishes to be helpful to his countrymen. As can be noticed, the imagery used clearly dehumanises prostitutes, who are compared to animals or seen as commodities to be bought and disposed of by male customers, and even dangerous goods that are harmful to the users. Therefore, the author of this English version presents the whore story as a text of public interest that attempts to *disclose* and denounce the immoral, illegal activities involved in prostitution, and putting the blame entirely on the female side of the transaction.

The English author also alters the name of the main speaker, that changes from Nanna to Thais, as the famous Greek courtesan during the time of Alexander the Great, and this reinforces her identity as a whore. The text is a dialogue between her and Antonia, but it is Thais who dominates most of the narrative. The way she presents herself is not very different from the manner in which prostitutes are depicted in other male-authored texts of the time, either with male or female narrators. Although old at the time of the conversation, in her youth she was clever, beautiful, and only thought of achieving wealth and pleasure. She was tutored by her mother into prostitution at an early age, her mother acting as a bawd, assisting her in the search for customers, the use of cosmetics, the tricks to pretend virginity, and so on. The procedure with most customers is usually the same: she affects modesty and often nobility, cheats them and robs them. And, as most other prostitutes, when she grows older and her beauty diminishes, she becomes a bawd, deterministically doing the same function as her mother's.<sup>7</sup>

Sometimes Thais generalises her traits as typical of all women. For example, she claims that no woman can be “satisfied with one Man” and that a man would have to be like Atlas and Hercules to content “the amorous emotions of a lustfull Woman” (39-40). She insists on this idea later when she asserts that “when the spur of lust Pricks us on to a false gallop, it requires a very lusty and experient rider to set us,” and that she needs several horsemen (55). Thais also professes that she has cheated all her lovers because “the malice and hatred of a woman is implacable” (43), and that pleasure is a woman's chief happiness (53). This clearly concurs with the

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<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the anonymous author of *The Character of a Town Misse* describes the protagonist as “a Caterpillar that destroys many a hopeful Young Gentleman in the Blossom” (4).

<sup>7</sup> Briget Orr contends that *The Whore's Rhetorick* contemplates a very sophisticated training for prostitutes, as they should be good orators, impersonators, readers, and merchants. They should be skilful in *reading* men and making men *misread* them (203-206). In *The Practical Part of Love*, the old bawd Ventricia provides young, newly-orphaned Helena with good clothes, and trains her in singing, dancing, and smiling alluringly. Yet Helena's main study is “to read men, i.e. glance in their faces and suck the Honey out of their pockets” (40).



misogynistic discourse of other prostitute narratives, which used similar arguments.<sup>8</sup> This seems to reveal the male authorship of the text behind this woman's words. Yet this is more noticeable when Antonia wonders what pleasure men can enjoy by having sex with someone "who hath lost the sence of feeling almost in that place, which should be more sensible, and which is worse (by using it so often) it becomes no better then a Jakes, for every rascall to disburthen himself therein" (82-83). A similar comparison of a prostitute's genitals to a toilet may be found in *The London Jilt*, as will be seen later.

Thais confesses that she follows Epicurus in thinking that pleasure is the "*summum bonum*" (53).<sup>9</sup> However, her approach to sex is normally cold, alienating and business-minded. From a very early age she sees sex as a source of income, has self-control and delays sexual satisfaction to tantalise her gallants and receive presents from them. As she puts it: "I was wiser at that time than the rest of our Sex, for I prefer profit before that momentary delight" (15). And, when she is having sex with a customer, "I hardly think on it, for my minde is either about some one of my friends, whom I must shortly cheat, and about himselfe in cunningly picking his pocket" (45). Other prostitute narratives of the period insist on this seamy alienation for the sake of financial profit. In *The Whore's Rhetorick*, for example, the bawd Madam Creswell teaches her young pupil Dorothea that

a Whore is a Whore, but a Whore is not a Woman; as being obliged to relinquish all those frailties that render the Sex weak and contemptible. A Whore ought not to think of her own pleasure, but how to gratifie her Bedfellow in his sensitive desires: She must mind her interest not her Sport; the Lovers sport, the ruine of his interest and the emptying his Purse. (144)

Rosenthal has pointed out that prostitution demands the female capacity to endure dispassionate sex, and this somehow contradicts the misogynistic view of women as lascivious creatures that prevailed in Restoration libertine texts. It was later in the eighteenth century when the prostitutes' alienation from their bodies and themselves was made more obvious (*Infamous Commerce*, 9). However, we can see that Restoration fictional whores such as Thais and Madam Creswell are aware of the need of such estrangement. As Thais herself says, "I ever prefer'd profit before

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<sup>8</sup> One of the protagonists of *The Practical Part of Love*, Lucia, claims that all women are whores, some are "common whores" and most are "private ones," and that there are many cuckolds because women like variety (21). The anonymous author of *The Character of a Town Misse* says that she has a French servant who supplies her with dildos, and that with her gallant's money she maintains "two able Stallions (that she loves better than him) for performance of points wherein he is Defective" (7).

<sup>9</sup> Other protagonists of prostitute narratives of the Restoration period follow Epicurean hedonism. For example, in *The Practical Part of Love*, the narrator says that Lucia lived in "all manner of Ryot, and Epicurisme" (23), meaning that she used to wear good clothes, frequent pubs and the theatre, and have affairs with several men. As a consequence of such a luxurious life, she died of what the narrator calls "surfeit" when she was still young.



pleasure, though I often joyn'd them together, otherwise poverty by this time had been my portion" (58).

Nevertheless, at the end of the story, the English male author chooses to bridle the voice and fate of the female characters in this dialogue by making them utter a sudden, hardly believable repentance, and by forcing both of them to determine to become hermits, which means a remarkable departure from the Italian original, where Antonia suggests Nanna's daughter should become a whore too. In the very same page and even paragraph in which Thais finishes telling a comic episode in which she has made a prank to a French gallant, she concludes that it may serve as a proof that such "pernitious and dissolute courses" only lead to "hell and damnation" (94); and consequently, "I am heartily sorry, that I have thus spent that time which should have been employed and dedicated to divine worship, in Idleness, Wantonnesse, Riot, in perverting others, and in destroying my owne soule" (95).<sup>10</sup> This is the blunt ending of the bawdy conversation between Thais and Antonia, which the English author inserts between the previously mentioned preface and a final "Dehortation from Lust." In this last section he says he hopes the dialogue will discourage the reader from lechery. He gives some advice on how to do so, such as avoiding idleness, intemperance, lascivious books, and bad companions, and adds some more examples of the bad consequences of lust. There is a remarkable inconsistency between the contents and tone of the dialogue on the one hand, and those of the paratextual material that frames it, on the other.

#### 4. *THE MISS DISPLAY'D*

As regards the second text under scrutiny here, on the title page (Figure 2) we may read: "The Miss Display'd, with all Her Wheedling Arts and Circumventions. In which Historical Narration are detected, Her Selfish Contrivances, Modest Pretences, and Subtil Stratagems." So again the alleged purpose of the whore story is to *expose* the coaxing actions of prostitutes. The frontispiece this time shows some men and women on a kind of binge in what seems to be an inn or brothel, with an inscription saying: "Love not Lewd Women, for you'le find'em worse / Than all that's Bad, attended with a Curse." Hence, once more, the blame of prostitution is laid on women's lust rather than on men's. In "The Epistle to the Reader," Head describes a whore using nautical imagery, because she looks like a merchant ship that is

richly Laden, but by boarding, proves a Fire-ship that infallibly blows up, wherever she comes. Like a Watch from a Fire-ship she will turn her self to a Caterpillar, and destroys many a hopefull young Gentleman's Health and Estate in the Blossom; and when she turns Land-Syrene, she proves more dangerous than those in the

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<sup>10</sup> Sarah Toulalan demonstrates the recurrent use of humour in pornographic texts of the seventeenth century. It is often a misogynistic, hostile, scatological, sexual humour, but in which it is also frequent to show men as cuckolds and butts of humiliating pranks (194-232).



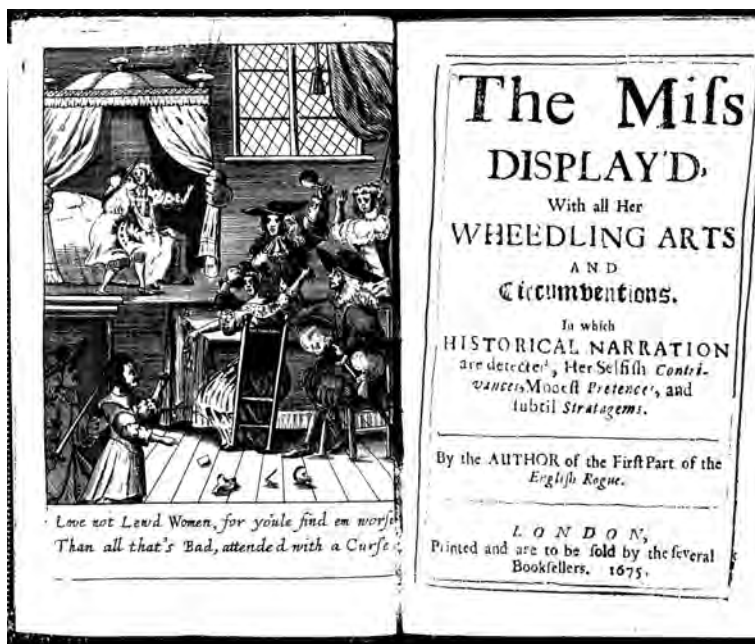


Figure 2. Frontispiece to Richard Head's *The Miss Display'd* (1675). Image produced by ProQuest as part of EEBO and published with permission of ProQuest, and Harvard U. Library. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

Ocean; for, he that falls into her hands runs a threefold hazard of Shipwrecking, not onely his Fortune, but Soul and Body to boot. (A2)

The declared aim of this treatise is to deter the male reader “from ever having to do with these pernicious people, though seeming Angels of Light,” and to advise honest women against debauchery, because if vice becomes “the Pilot of [their] fairly built and well-rigged Vessel,” it will “infallibly run her upon the Quicksands of destruction” (A2). This shipwreck imagery is recurrent in contemporary writings about prostitution.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The preface to *The Practical Part of Love* also includes similar nautical imagery when it comments that if the protagonist had “steer’d her Course by Virtues Compasse, she had never split her self against the Rock of Incontinence; Vice being the Pilot of this fairly built, and well rigg’d Ship, steer’d her a quite contrary Course to that of Virtue, and so in stead of bringing her Home to him that built her, ran her upon the quick-Sands of Destruction” (A6<sup>v</sup>). Likewise, the anonymous writer of *The Ape-Gentle-woman* asserts about a prostitute that “both her habitation and her apparel like two friendly Sea marks, forewarn us of our Shipwracks if we sail in that Channel: But an Exchange



At the beginning of the narrative, the ideas set forth in the paratextual material are reiterated: “This true History of a late famous or infamous Whore, laying open her cunning Contrivances, Intrigues, Cheats, Plots and Projects, either for pleasure or profit, is made publick to no other end then to the Reformation of Vice” (1). The narrator’s aim is to encourage chastity, although in the story he will “strip the Courtezian out of all her Finery, leaving her nakedly to be exposed to the view of all, to the perpetual infamie of debauched Women” (1-2). This racy imagery of stripping the prostitute in order to *expose* not her naked body with an erotic purpose but her lust and guile with a moral aim is also recurrent in prostitute narratives. The title of this text already points at that direction with the word “Display’d.”<sup>12</sup> We have seen above how the title page of *The Crafty Whore* announces that it will reveal “The Mystery and Iniquity of Bawdy Houses.” And, in the preface to *The London Jilt*, the author states: “For thou hast here, Reader, the Jilt displayed in her true Colours, all her Wheadling and Treacherous Decoys laid open” (41). This imagery intends to convey the declared aim of divulging, disclosing, and denouncing what is a somehow secret, clandestine activity –prostitution– for the supposed benefit of the readers. Yet Head emphasises the erotic dimension of the act of uncovering, undressing the body of the whore as well as unveiling, unmasking her debased actions. So it seems that he wishes to appeal to the voyeuristic urge of (at least part of) his readers.<sup>13</sup>

Head tries to distance himself from misogynists who state that “woman is an error, or imperfection in Nature” or that they are born for the affliction of men (4). Head claims that it is normally this kind of men who become involved in prostitution. He says they have “brutish appetites” and “are absolutely blind and irrational” (2). For him it is outrageous that, although they may have beautiful, prudent, loving wives, they “must ramble abroad, either invading other men’s rights, or hazarding their healths amongst Prostitutes” (3); and they are usually critical of all women in general, paradoxically accusing them of lasciviousness. However, Head is not immune to misogyny, as we can see when he states that “doubtlessly there are good Women in the World, but they are so few, by reason of the spreading Contagion of their vicious inclinations” (4). Later in the narrative, he includes some comments that are reminiscent of similar remarks in misogynistic texts. For example, the narrator criticises the protagonist’s proficiency in Latin and Greek by saying: “Surely, one tongue is enough for one Woman” (9), which obviously reminds us of

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Wench like a fatal Rock hid under a mild superficialities, Ruines a Man before he can say *Lord have mercy upon us*” (2). See also this imagery in *The Character of a Town Misse* (4) and in *The London Jilt* below.

<sup>12</sup> Other examples can be found, for instance in *Strange News from Bartholomeu*, where in the title page we read “The Wandring-Whore Discovered. Her Cabinet unlockt, her Secrets laid open, unvaild, and spread abroad.” Later, the protagonist says: “I spread my shrouds, unveil my Cabinet, disclose my secrets, and open the pure Linnen Curtains that hang before my chief Fortress” (4).

<sup>13</sup> For Toulalan, reading pornographic texts is an inherently voyeuristic or scopophilic act, and writing them involves a certain form of exhibitionism, as its purpose is revelation (185). Turner compares the “prurient-censorious compulsion” to witness the *displaying* of secret things in pornographic texts to that of many Londoners, such as Samuel Pepys, who went to see the spectacle of the bawdy-house riots in 1668 (174).



the misogynistic critique of women's gossipy loquacity and inappropriate knowledge. Moreover, when the protagonist, Cornelia, laughs at her bawd falling down the stairs while escaping from a furious customer, the narrator comments: "See the vanity of the female Sex, their levity and mutability like a shower in April" (52), which joins the misogynistic belief in women's vain and volatile nature.

Cornelia, whose name is meaningful and recurrent in prostitute narratives (see, for instance, *The London Jilt* below), is characterised as other fictional whores of the period. She is a beautiful, witty, conceited, greedy, and ambitious woman. She is also unruly, "she would yield to no other power but her own, and acknowledge no God but her own Will and Pleasure" (8). Therefore, neither the submission nor self-denial expected in marriage or domestic service is attractive to her. She actually hates housework and living in the country, which she finds dull and vulgar, and that is the reason why she decides to leave her native Ulster and tries to find a more glamorous and lucrative life in Dublin and London. One of the first people she meets in Dublin is Ignatius, a witty, attractive gallant who tells her stories famous mistresses of popes and cardinals as examples of "how Persons of a low fortune have raised themselves to the height of wealth and honour, only by submitting to the humours of great men" (26). Cornelia is covetous, and likes treats, fine clothes, coaches and richly furnished lodgings, and she gets all this thanks to her affairs with several men, whom she deceives and robs. That is to say, she transgresses social expectations of class and gender, and this seems to be one of the main reasons why prostitutes are such fascinating figures at a period of incipient social changes in England such as the late seventeenth century.

Like other similar anti-heroines, Cornelia usually attracts gallants by pretending modesty and a higher social rank, and then robs them with the help of a bawd, here significantly called Polyandria. Both women engage in a strong relationship with ups and downs, and which is very successful financially speaking until the authorities arrest them and Polyandria is carted through the streets of Dublin, where she is thrown rotten eggs in public, a common punishment for prostitutes at the time.<sup>14</sup> Cornelia then marries a wealthy dotard who soon dies and leaves her "a most triumphant, rich, eminent, Whore through the whole Kingdome" (116).<sup>15</sup> She continues with her whorish activity and manages to get more money from her many gallants. The story ends with no real closure, we leave Cornelia in

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<sup>14</sup> The characters of *A Dialogue Between Mistris Macquerella, a Suburb Bawd, Ms Scolopendra, a Noted Courtezan, and Mr Pimpinello, an Usher* complain about the consequences for them of the 1650 *Act for suppressing the detestable sins of Incest, Adultery and Fornication*. They comment that some prostitutes were being burned, carted, whipped or pilloried (3 and 5). And *Strange Newes from Bartholomew-Fair* ends with one of the prostitutes in this dialogue saying that, if her secrets are discovered, they will be whipped (6). Turner provides an interesting analysis of the use of violence and "ceremonies of abjection" against prostitutes and other transgressive women (24-42, and 47-73).

<sup>15</sup> This episode is actually very similar to that at the end of *The Practical Part of Love*. Helena marries an old dotard, whom she cuckolds and convinces to provide her with a considerable annuity and legacy. The old man dies heart-broken shortly afterwards and leaves Helena "a most triumphant rich now regnant Whore" (84).





“a great height of unexpected Glory” (135), and not in old age but in the prime of her life. The narrator promises further adventures of this unrepentant, unpunished whore if he knows more about her; however, no sequel appears to have been ever published. There is no repentance, nor punishment, nor final explicit lesson. This open ending questions the moral purpose stated in the epistle to the reader, because Cornelia’s career as a “miss” is certainly portrayed as reprehensible, but it proves to be profitable and is never chastised. For Raymond Gillespie, her story can be seen as a critique of the moral laxity in the Restoration period (219). He also argues that *The Miss Display’d* is a complex text that allows readers the thrill of the forbidden, with a voyeuristic glimpse of the obscure world of prostitution, and at the same time to condemn the licentious practices recounted, through Head’s moralistic warnings (225).

## 5. THE LONDON JILT

As can be seen in Figure 3, the first edition of *The London Jilt* starts with a frontispiece that shows a woman (a bawd?) counting money, the devil behind her, a man embracing a woman in the background, and above all that an inscription saying “The Politick Whore,” which is the subtitle of the novel. This suggests the materialistic, evil nature of the prostitute from the very beginning. Then the original title page says that the ensuing story shows “All the Artifices and Stratagems which the Ladies of Pleasure make use of for the Intreaguings and Decoying of Men.” Thus the narrative is presented as a cautionary tale that *exposes* the schemes used by prostitutes to coax men. This admonitory nature of the narrative is reaffirmed in the address “To the Reader,” where we are told that many dupes are deceived by prostitutes and thus ruin “their Health, their Fortune and Reputation,” so “a Mirrour of [those women’s] Damned Wheedling Arts and Cursed Devices” is necessary as a warning for men to learn how to avoid them (41). The narrative intends to dissuade men “from that Roving, Libertine, Lascivious Course of Life, and contribute but to the making Men be upon their Guard against all Female Ambuscadoes.” The expected reader is therefore male and the story of the London Jilt is here presented as “beneficial in curbing the bad and unlawful Inclinations of Men.” Consequently, this is a story of a woman supposedly told by herself, but addressed to men in an attempt to reform their conduct. The author does not intend to amend the prostitutes’ life, probably because he does not believe they (as other women) are capable of moral reform, following the misogynistic ideology of the time.

This prefatory text includes the recurrent imagery of the beacon to warn about risky navigation and prevent shipwreck,<sup>16</sup> and the aim of *displaying* the jilt’s real nature and *laying open* her wheedling. Again we see the pseudo-vigilante and

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<sup>16</sup> The protagonist “is here set before thee as a Beacon to warn thee of the Shoales and Quick-Sands, on which thou wilt of necessity Shipwreck thy all, if thou blindly and wilfully continues



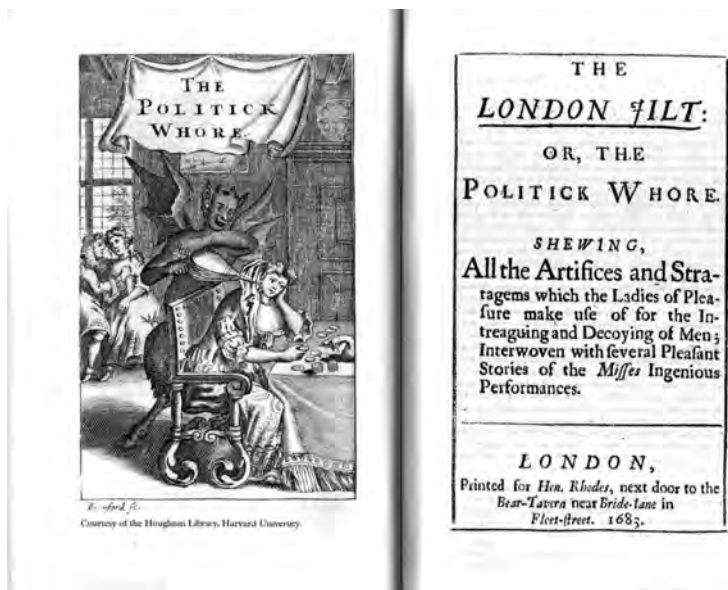


Figure 3. Frontispiece to *The London Jilt* (1683). Image produced by ProQuest as part of EEBO and published with permission of ProQuest and Harvard U. Library. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

pseudo-journalistic attempt of revealing the duplicitous nature of prostitutes and their clandestine activities as a form of public service. And, once more, we find the use of imagery that degrades the whore as grotesque monsters that embody corruption and disease. We are invited to see “our Jilt exposed naked in all her Deformities, that it may so create a horrour in thee” (42). Whores are here described as “rotten Bottoms,” and “filthy, nasty, and stinking Carcasses” (41). This morbid degradation of the prostitute is reinforced when the author states: “A Whore is but a Close-stool to Man, or a Common-shoar that received all manner of Filth” (41), i.e. not just a corrupted body but a repository of communal, seminal waste. This sordid metaphor resembles that comparing a prostitute’s genitalia to a “Jakes” in *The Crafty Whore*, and suggests a male authorship in both texts.<sup>17</sup>

After that prefatory paratextual material, the eponymous London Jilt tellingly starts her autodiegetic narrative mentioning the tradition of misogynistic literature: “There is no Nation in the World, but has in all Ages, furnished Authors,

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and perseverest in steering that Course of *Female Debauchery*, which will inevitably prove at length thy utter Destruction” (41).

<sup>17</sup> It is also reminiscent of John Wilmot’s final lines in his poem on Susan Willis, who was Thomas Colepeper’s mistress: “Her belly is a bag of turds, / And her cunt a common shore” (200).





who have made it their business to expose, as far as they are capable, the Frailties of the Female Sex” (43). She believes that the story of her life may be useful to warn men about women’s deceitfulness. She, who is significantly called Cornelia like Head’s “Miss,” is the daughter of a London victualler who opens a tavern in Islington.<sup>18</sup> As an only daughter, she has been brought up “in some sort of Libertinism” and provided with an education that included French and dancing, and was too expensive for her parents, but “it flattered their Ambition” (43). Thus her gender and class non-conformism is somehow the consequence of the excessive social aspirations of her middle class family. Cornelia has not been trained to be a conventional housewife or have an *honest* trade but as an idle gentlewoman with the typical social skills of the time.<sup>19</sup> Her expected fate is frustrated at the early age of eleven when her father dies after being injured and robbed by a rope dancer. The subsequent financial straits force her mother to resort to prostitution for an income; but three years later the smallpox disfigures her mother’s face and Cornelia must take over, and she seems to assume her new role without any hesitation or scruples. As happens to Helena in *The Practical Part of Love* and Thais in *The Crafty Whore*, Cornelia deterministically inherits prostitution from her mother. In his misogynistic satire against whoring, Richard Ames states that “She that’s once a *Whore*, is always so” (17); and her daughter too, we may add, bearing in mind what prostitute narratives seem to suggest.

Cornelia often accuses herself and other women of lust, vanity, hypocrisy, anger, and revengefulness. Her stories will help young male readers learn “to expect from the Female Sex” (81), and not only from her or other prostitutes. As happens in other whore narratives studied here, women are shown as lewd. When Cornelia’s mother has an affair with a bully after her face was marred by smallpox, the narrator comments that “it seems this Woman could not live without that Instrument” (a penis), and this proves the (unidentified) proverb: “If Lasciviousness renders Maidens mad, it makes Widdows Devils” (76). Cornelia herself acknowledges her sexual desire several times in the novel. For instance, when she has sex for the first time, she confesses that she found virginity burdensome and could not bear it any longer, but she is disappointed by her partner’s poor performance (69-70). She warns her male readers that they should not expect to find love in a prostitute, “she either does it to get Money or to satisfy her Lascivious Temper” (117). Yet, in her case, money seems

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<sup>18</sup> According to Mowry, Islington was a traditional stronghold of political radicalism, and places such as taverns and inns often had dual functions as brothels and secret parliamentary meeting places (46). There is no mention in the novel to any of those activities at Cornelia’s father’s inn while he lived, but Mowry’s suggestion of his possible socio-political background is certainly interesting and worth taking into account.

<sup>19</sup> In *The Night-Walkers Declaration, or, The Distressed Whores Advice to all their Sisters in City and Country* (1676), the narrators claim that “The fond Indulgence of our too late repenting Parents contributed not a little to our destruction, bestowing upon us a Breeding and maintenance far above our birth or their abilities. The time we should have spent in learning Good-houswifery, was trifled away at the Dancing school, in French, Music, New wanton Songs, Plays, Balls, infecting Romances, etc.” (4).



to be her main motivation: “not a Man received the least Testimony of Affection from me, unless I was assured I should be paid for it with ready Money” (75).

Cornelia also says that hypocrisy is “an inseparable property of the Female Sex” (44), that women like being flattered: “Tell a Woman but once she’s handsome, and the Devill will tell it to her a thousand times afterwards” (109), that they are proud and want to have better clothes and furniture than their neighbours (114), and that “the desire of revenge is inherent in women’s nature from birth to death” (147). Therefore she reproduces much of the misogynistic discourse of the period. However, she claims not to be on men’s side (94), and no enemy of women (155). She defends that whoring is due to an “abominable desire in the Hearts of Men” and that wives should be unfaithful to unfaithful husbands, “why should our Freedoms be less than that of the men, in what concerns the violation of the Conjugal Oath?” She argues that this double standard happens only because it is men, and not women, who make laws (120). And she thinks that the allegorical representation of Vice should be male rather than female, considering how vicious men are (142). Therefore Cornelia’s discourse seems contradictory, combining misogynous comments with statements that are critical of men. Her story, at least read from a present-day perspective, seems to contravene the aims and the sordid descriptions of prostitutes set forth in the preface. Thompson contends that, apart from the stock moralising of the prefatory address to the reader and some comments at the ending, “the author’s stance is completely amoral” (290). For Hinnant, it is difficult to establish a secure didactic message from this novel, due to the contrast between the harshly moralistic preface and Cornelia’s witty, vital, and engaging narrative (33). She is not a flat, dull or repulsive character at all. Bayer points out that Cornelia claims agency and defends her decisions, is allowed to develop certain disagreements with the social environment in which she lives, and refuses to submit to the social stigma associated with female sexuality (184-185). And, for Mowry, she is “among the shrewdest characters early modern pornography created,” because she is very entrepreneurial and learns to manipulate the conventions of the marketplace (119). Cornelia is a resolute, resourceful woman who manages to fend for herself in a hostile environment. She lives on hoaxing men, but none of those men is a model of virtue either; she usually acts in revenge of male violence, deceit, or arrogance, and benefits from men’s folly and lust.

At the end, although she claims to repent and have no intention to corrupt others, Cornelia refuses to write a bigoted moral and even defends the human pursuit of pleasure:

I am not of the rank of those who after having led a vicious life during their Youth, and then becoming Converts, pretend to bygottism. [...] it seems rather a folly than a probity to forbid Men Joy and Mirth by sad and Melancholly Grimaces. It is a priviledge that we have, preferably to all other Creatures, and for that reason I have done it as often as things required, and I do not believe that I can desist from it tho’ a number of curious Fools should tax me with being a Person of ill Conduct, until the Death has clos’d up my Mouth. (168)



This is a rather unexpected ending for a narrative whose paratexts present as admonitory and morally beneficial. Cornelia's story, like that of Head's Cornelia or Helena's in *The Practical Part of Love*, ends without a clear, convincing repentance, and with no punishment. It is another example of the moral ambivalence of these prostitute narratives, which may be due to a conscious or unconscious combination of prurience and censoriousness on the part of the author, or his attempt to cater to different types of readers.

## 6. CONCLUSION

A combination of voyeurism and self-righteousness, of allure and abjection, may be found in these and other texts about prostitution that were published in the Restoration period, because they are often dressed up in moralistic attire, mostly in the paratextual material but also in several comments throughout the narrative. Yet intending to gaze at and *expose* the whore's clandestine, illicit affairs also involves a certain scopophilia. In generic terms, these texts are multilayered, combining cautionary, condemnatory, picaresque, bawdy, and comic elements, in an attempt to legitimise the obscene content, offer variety, and appeal to different readers. In gender terms, the surreptitious, sexual activities of these "ladies of pleasure" are often presented from a sexist perspective that mainly blames *them* rather than their customers. In these narratives, prostitutes are given the limelight, agency, voice, and even success, but they are also denigrated, commodified, portrayed as filthy, devilish beings, and as unruly subjects that challenge social and gender order.

The present article has focused on three Restoration narrative texts about whores—namely *The Crafty Whore*, *The Miss Display'd* and *The London Jilt*—in which the voice of the female protagonists has somehow been suppressed or monitored by the male authorial voice, whose alleged aim is to *lay open* and *display* the crafty contrivances of prostitutes. This authorial voice often generalises the whores' traits as typical of all women, as if they epitomised the real essence of women, and adopts the misogynistic discourse that prevailed in Restoration prose fiction, satirical poetry, and drama. This discourse accuses women of lust, pride, inconstancy, deceit, and malice. Even similar imagery is used, comparing whores to devils, animals, commodities, and even latrines, and the damage caused by prostitution to a disastrous shipwreck. However, the moralistic, cautionary purpose declared in the paratexts is not as consistent as may be expected, because at the end of the narratives the protagonists do not express repentance or do so bluntly, briefly and unconvincingly, and they suffer no punishment whatsoever in the sense of being carted, pilloried, whipped, imprisoned, or contracting a venereal disease, as usually happened to actual prostitutes in Restoration England. In *The Crafty Whore*, Thais and Antonia suddenly decide to become hermits, however the (anti-)heroines of *The Miss Display'd* and *The London Jilt* not only manage to fend for themselves in a hostile environment, but even become rich and "triumphant." There is no moral closure in Head's novel, and there is an ambiguous combination of repentance and defence of hedonism at the end of *The London Jilt*, instead of a clear moral or the



strict application of poetic justice in texts that purport to be admonitory and didactic. The prostitutes of the three texts analysed here are resolute, resourceful, independent women whose empowerment and rise to wealth and status with dishonourable means implied a challenge to the traditional social order. Thus prostitution may be working as a metaphor of the increasing materialism and social mobility in English society. Yet it may also be related to political confrontation (since prostitution in Restoration libertine texts is frequently connected to republicanism or Whiggism), and to the prevailing gender tensions as well, because these texts are, as we have seen here, often impregnated with a crude misogynistic ideology.

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# SERAGLIOS AND CONVENTS: APHRA BEHN'S HEROINES IN THE HOUSE(S) OF LOVE\*

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## ABSTRACT

I argue in this article that in *Oroonoko, or the History of the Royal Slave* (1688) and *The History of the Nun* (1689), Aphra Behn forwards the connections between the feminised spaces of the seraglio and the convent, presenting them as equally exotic and gendered for the English reader, but also as equally constraining for women in their everyday lives. In *Oroonoko*, the she-narrator instructs Imoinda into the narratives of the “civilized” west by reading diverting stories of nuns to her. At the same time, her tale in *The History of the Nun* represents the convent as another liminal space of interaction between the sexes which confines Isabella and originates her bouts of love and passion, following the model of the *Lettres portugaises*. This article will explore both spaces of confinement and the strictures Imoinda and Isabella experience in them, but also Behn’s originality as creator and narrator in making the two narrative models converge.

KEYWORDS: Aphra Behn, early novel, stories of nuns, oriental tales, seraglio and convent.

## SERRALLOS Y CONVENTOS: LAS HEROÍNAS DE APHRA BEHN EN LA(S) CASA(S) DEL AMOR

## RESUMEN

Defiendo en este artículo que en *Oroonoko, or the History of the Royal Slave* (1688) y *The History of the Nun* (1689), Aphra Behn hace converger los espacios feminizados del serrallo y el convento, presentándolos como construcciones de género, igualmente exóticos para el público inglés, pero también como espacios que limitan el día a día de las mujeres. En *Oroonoko*, la narradora instruye a la princesa Imoinda en las narrativas de la “civilización” occidental, leyéndole historias de monjas para entretenerla. Al mismo tiempo, la narración de *The History of the Nun* representa el convento como espacio limítrofe de interacción entre los sexos que confina a Isabella y origina sus episodios amorosos, siguiendo el modelo de las *Lettres portugaises*. Este artículo explorará ambos espacios de confinamiento y las restricciones que Imoinda e Isabella experimentan en ellos, pero también la originalidad de Behn como escritora de ficción y narradora al hacer converger ambos modelos narrativos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Aphra Behn, novela temprana, historias de monjas, narrativas orientales, serrallo y convento.

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## 1. BEHN'S TURN TO FICTION: STORIES OF NUNS AND TALES OF THE SERAGLIO

Aphra Behn (1640-1689) was well aware of the power of stories to offer a privileged view of gender and politics, and as potential agents of ideological transformation not only in her fiction, but also earlier in her plays. In her stories of nuns –particularly in *The History of the Nun*– and in her colonial tale of the seraglio, *Oroonoko, or the History of the Royal Slave*, she compares the experience of women living in both spaces –the convent and the seraglio. I argue that Behn fuses both traditions in *Oroonoko* and that she foregrounds what it means for women to live in enclosed spaces like the cloister in *The History of the Nun*. Both places, the African Otan and the convent in the Continent, are represented as equally exotic and constraining for women. I argue that Behn fosters the similarity of the experiences of the oriental woman and the nun in her two *novellas*, in which a number of set features and elements recur: a common situation of confinement, the existence of an all-women's community, and an amorous plot or lover's discourse, associated either to the "uncivilized" west or to backward Catholic practices. In the following pages, I will concentrate on how these female types interact in their respective communities, showing how they use either passive resistance –as Imoinda in *Oroonoko*– or self-negation –as Isabella in *The History of the Nun*– as means to circumvent strict modes of social repression and public invisibility, achieving similar results in the end: Imoinda's single act of agency makes of her a willing victim at Oroonoko's hands, to leave behind the confinement of the seraglio and the pitiful experience of slavery in the colony, while Isabella "relinquishes" her moral superiority when she abandons the convent but enters wilfully another type of seclusion when she breaks her religious vows and gets married, falling into a downward spiral of polygamy, murder and finally self-destruction. I follow in this article Susan Goulding's recent study, "Aphra Behn's 'Stories of Nuns': Narrative Diversion and 'Sister Books,'" as she offers an enlightening comparative view of three of Behn's major *novellas* –*The Fair Jilt*, *Oroonoko* and *The History of the Nun*– forwarding the connection between stories of nuns and stories of the seraglio from a feminist perspective. It is my purpose to propose a complementary reading of both *novellas*, not only to identify the woman in the seraglio and the nun figure, but most specifically to foreground the narrative constituents of two contemporary and convergent novel forms: the oriental tale and the nun story. In so doing, I focus on the connections between these two species of fiction, and therefore on Behn's work as creator of amorous tales, rather than on feminist politics alone.

Behn became acquainted with prose fiction at the end of her literary career. After many years working for the stage as a successful playwright, and most probably

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due to the decline that theatre experimented after the commotion of Popish Plots and Charles II's demise, Behn penned a number of fictional stories, regarded by editorial hand as "histories and novels,"<sup>1</sup> which would influence a whole generation of later writers, starting with her epistolary romance, *Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister* (1684-1687), and following with her famous colonial and anti-slavery narrative *Oroonoko, or the History of the Royal Slave* (1688). In the thriving decade of the 1680s, Behn also translated and adapted from the French – *A Voyage to the Isle of Love* in 1684, *La Montre: or the Lover's Watch* in 1686, and *A Discovery of New Worlds* in 1688, to name a few – originals by Paul Tallemant, Balthasar de Bonnecorse and Bernard de Fontenelle, respectively.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, she wrote an essay on prose translation and other shorter novels, remarkably three which included nuns in their plots, namely, *The Fair Jilt, or the Amours of Tarquin and Miranda*, *The History of the Nun, or the Fair Vow-Breaker*, and "The Nun, or the Perjured Beauty."<sup>3</sup> Especially after the publication of the Count of Guilleragues' *Lettres portugaises* in 1669, and more specifically after Sir Roger L'Estrange's translation into English of this work under the title *Five Love-Letters from a Nun to a Cavalier* (1678), the figure of the nun complaining about unrequited love grew popular among readers, and many writers imitated the style of the *portugaises*, Behn and Delarivier Manley amongst them.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the French original and its translation, Dolores Altaba-Artal argues that there are some Spanish sources of Behn's 'nun' novels by María de Zayas – "The Vanquished Impossible" (*El imposible vencido*) and "The Most Infamous Revenge" (*La venganza más infame*) – from *Love Novels* (1637) and *Love Deceits* (1647), which the English author might have known, or at least "she [was] aware of the content of the frame, which is not included in any circulating translation" (Altaba-Artal 152). Irrespective of their national origin, Susan Goulding refers to a popular type of text, the so-called "sister books," which Behn might have found inspirational to create

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<sup>1</sup> Several editions of Aphra Behn's short fiction were printed for Samuel Briscoe and Richard Wellington between 1696 and 1700, all of them including these words in their titles.

<sup>2</sup> Line Cottagnies analyses the reasons why Behn was interested in translating works from the French, which go beyond the merely commercial to consider the intellectual and political potential of her sources. Cottagnies refers, for example, to the similarities between the intended audiences of the French originals and of Behn's texts (222-223). In relation to *Voyage*, Mary Ann O'Donnell argues that Behn's version goes beyond mere translation, and that in fact her poetic rendering improves the original (95).

<sup>3</sup> "The Nun, or the Perjured Beauty" appeared in Samuel Briscoe's 1698 edition *All the Histories and Novels Written by the Late Ingenious Mrs Behn* for the first time and is one of those works generally attributed to Behn that might raise some suspicions of her authorship. See Leah Orr's article "Attribution Problems in the Fiction of Aphra Behn" on this topic.

<sup>4</sup> Behn was one of these remarkable imitators in *The History of the Nun* and "The Nun; or the Perjured Beauty," but also Delarivier Manley in *Letters* (1696), where Manley constructs a *roman à clef* in which her nameless narrator and protagonist complains to her lover of her enforced exile from London and the court. In a very catchy title, Manley announces the inclusion of a letter in imitation of the *Five Letters from a Nun to a Cavalier*, attributed by her to some Colonel Richardson Pack (1682-1728), a miscellaneous writer of the early eighteenth century, though his authorship is improbable due to his age.

her stories of nuns. These books took the form of biography to narrate the stories of abbesses and nuns, and managed to approach women's narratives –historical or fictional– from the perspective of feminist thought. Whether historical or fictional, these texts chose women as their main focus (41).

Other types of stories of nuns different from Behn's populated the market in the 1680s, like the English rendering of the anonymously translated French *nouvelles*, *The Adamite, or the loves of Father Rock*, *Venus in the Cloister: or the Nun in her Smock*, both published in English in 1683, and *Eve Revived: or, the Fair One Stark-Naked* and *The Amorous Abbess, or Love in a Nunnery*, appearing the following year. The first three were pornographic stories and the last one a love intrigue involving nuns and a cavalier, a shorter version of Nathaniel Noel's *The Circle, or, Conversations on Love and Gallantry* (1675), itself a translation of Sébastien Brémond's homonymous novel.<sup>5</sup> In such different texts, as much as in Behn's nun novels, two common elements recur: the description of nuns as easy preys to seduction and the representation of the convent as the context of romantic discourse and as the site of sexual struggle between galloping nuns and foreign cavaliers. In more transgressive narratives, as some of the ones mentioned above, the convent becomes "the school of love" for young and inexperienced nuns who learn very soon from corrupted religious tutors and priests to give free rein to their passion, often using religious imagery and sacred objects to perform it. In *Eve Revived: or, the Fair One Stark-Naked*, for example, sister Angelica is entrusted by the Jesuit and spiritual director Father Stanislas with St Pancras' stick, a relic used to give succour to the sick and that he employs to exchange letters with her without being detected. Angelica calls the stick "the worker of Prodigies" and Father Stanislas' letter contained in it, she claims, "Fills, Comforts, and Flatters me with the most Solid hopes I was ever Fed with" (B5, 15, 16).

Sexual innuendo and female confinement were also pervasive in many oriental fictions of French origin, which were very popular among the English reading public about the same years. These narratives sometimes evoked the scandalous affairs of the French and English courts of Louis XIV and Charles II, satirising their sexual mores and their rulers' political weakness. Set in the exotic territories of Africa and Turkey, these *novellas* portrayed the life of secluded women, mistresses and favourites of the Bassa, the Grand Signior, or the King. Some of these texts were notorious for their satirical purpose and booksellers often used fictitious names to avoid public derision. In the late 1670s and early 1680s, Richard Bentley commissioned English translations and published some French editions of such works. In 1680 and 1681,

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<sup>5</sup> Robert I. Letellier attributes *The Adamite: or the Loves of Father Rock* to Paul Tallemant (*L'Adamite, or le jésuite insensible*, 1683), *Venus in the Cloister* to Jean Barrin (*Venus dans le cloître or la religieuse en chemise*, 1682), while *The Circle* he attributes mainly to François Salvat Monfort, but possibly to Sébastien Brémond's *Le Cercle, ou conversations galantes*, 1675 (370, 187, 336). He also points to William Downing as the author of *Eve Revived: or the Fair One Stark-Naked*, a translation of *Éve ressuscitée or la Belle sans chemise, aventures plaisantes*, 1683 (371). The dedicatory epistle of this work, though, is signed out by one "G.R."



respectively, Brémond's *Hattige: or the Amours of the King of Tamaran and Homais, Queen of Tunis* saw the light, allegedly published in Amsterdam by Simon the African. In the first text, beautiful and promiscuous Hattige fell from grace in the eyes of her king for using the seraglio for her own amorous intrigues, whereas in the second one, wanton and vindictive Homais often tricked her husband, the king, by taking a lover, Ibrahim, to her apartment in the seraglio. On the occasion of the early publication of Brémond's *Hattige* in 1676, though, both author and bookseller were accused of libel against King Charles II, as it allegedly described his affair with Barbara de Villiers. Apparently, Bentley was charged for commissioning and bounding six copies of the novel, which had been previously turned down by H. Oldenburg (McKenzie and Bell 106-107). Bentley also commissioned the printing of Jean de Préchac's *The Princess of Fess: or, the Amours of the Court of Morocco* (1682), a counterexample, however, of the former ones, as virtuous Alzira keeps her honour intact for Prince Ali Hamet, and uses gardens and seraglios for lawful purposes only.<sup>6</sup> It is my contention that, in very similar terms to stories of nuns, oriental fictions of the late seventeenth century were often equated with tales of seduction and forbidden love. The foreign Catholic practices, in the case of stories of nuns, as well as the distance that the exotic settings and alien customs portrayed in oriental novels, allow for stories ripe with sexual permissiveness in some cases –like *Homais*, *Hattige*, and the pornographic stories mentioned earlier– and with moral steadfastness and self-restraint, in others –as it happens in *The History of the Nun*, *The Princess of Fess* and remarkably in colonial fictions like Behn's *Oroonoko*.

## 2. "SMALL TALES, GENERALLY OF LOVE": *OROONOKO*

In *Oroonoko*, Behn deploys the constituents of the pastoral by exploring a discourse on love that focuses on two exceptional characters, Oroonoko and Imoinda, whose amours stand out against the background of the penuries of slave trade and the English and Dutch colonial rule of Surinam. In this work, which is partly a revision of the narrative conventions of romance, especially in the first African section, and an experiment with realistic techniques, in the American one (Rosenthal 159), Behn creates a contrast, or better, an illusion of alterity when she depicts her two protagonists as innately good and honest, models of absolute virtue in an unfeeling world, while most Europeans and other African characters are treacherous and unreliable. Both in the seraglio and later in the colony, a sophisticate

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<sup>6</sup> Ros Ballaster distinguishes between oriental narratives set in the Ottoman empire and those set in the independent Islamic empire of Morocco, "which were largely represented in English writing of the eighteenth century through the genre of the captivity narrative," and thus far from narratives in which the fabulous takes precedence (*Fabulous* 20).



discourse on love and its ways is developed.<sup>7</sup> For example, Imoinda recognizes Oroonoko as the prototype of the gallant man very early in the novel, when “[m]ost happily, some new, and till then unknown Power instructed his Heart and Tongue in the Language of Love” (C4, 27). In return, she is also enticed by his overpowering gallant discourse, which inspires her “with a Sense of his Passion” (27). In spite of being young and inexperienced, their sincere inclinations soon instruct them in the language of love, which, far from artifice, elevates them above their fellow men and women: “[Imoinda] was touch’d with what [Oroonoko] said, and return’d it all in such Answers as went to his very Heart, with a Pleasure unknown before. Nor did he use those Obligations ill, that Love had done him, but turn’d all his happy Moments to the best Advantage; and as he knew no Vice, his Flame aim’d at nothing but Honour, if such a Distinction may be made in Love” (C4, 27). This powerful discourse in favour of true love and true nobility anticipates Oroonoko and Imoinda’s honourable actions later in the novel, while it condemns the rotten morals of the so-called ‘civilized’ and Christian countries of the west.

Though Oroonoko and Imoinda fall in love at first sight, and make solemn vows in secret which they keep against odds, Imoinda’s plight begins very soon when the King of Coramantien, Oroonoko’s grandfather, sends her the royal veil to take her as a wife, marking in a real and a symbolic way that she is a covered virgin reserved for his pleasure alone in the Otan, reminiscent of Turkish seraglios, in Srinivas Aravamudan’s words (59). In the face of “corrupt” masculinity, represented by the King’s whimsical behaviour, Imoinda stands as the new heroine of amatory fiction, giving free rein to her true feelings when she is alone, thus showing her vulnerability, helplessness and innocence (Richetti 21). Furthermore, this practice of taking the veil, which is assumed by Imoinda as part of the obedience paid to the monarch, is also envisaged as the respect divinity is due –it “was not at all inferior to what they pay’d their Gods: And what Love wou’d not oblige *Imoinda* to do, Duty wou’d compel her to” (*Oroonoko* C4, 32)– and associates her with the heroines of stories of nuns, also related to amatory fiction. Unceremoniously, she becomes instantly the King’s favourite and learns what a life of confinement in the Otan means for women like herself: to abandon the world and the intercourse with other men, who are forbidden entry in the premises, to dress richly and to entertain her master dancing seductively only for him. A kind of seraglio, the Otan is associated with love scenes in confinement, where young and beautiful women become the easy preys of patriarchal privilege. In this feminised space, new wives are also guarded and victimised by old matrons like Onahal, who instructs new and inexperienced favourites into the “wanton Arts of Love” (*Oroonoko* E, 49). The role of these ageing

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<sup>7</sup> This is a common practice in Behn’s fiction. See, for example, the narratorial comments about the power and the ways of love in *The Fair Filt* and the importance given to Philander’s spurious use of amorous discourse with Silvia in the first volume of *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister*, and Silvia’s manipulation of the language of love to seduce Octavio in volume three.



guardians is instrumental to keep the structure of rank and privilege intact.<sup>8</sup> This representation of younger and older women sharing spaces in the Otan reminds us further of the life of confinement of nuns and abbesses in the cloister in many examples of nun fiction, and anticipates in particular Isabella's experience in her aunt's convent in *The History of the Nun*.

Imoinda's passive and heroic resistance features her attitude in the Otan, as she often cries, throws herself to the King's feet and implores his mercy to protect her virginity (D, 33-34), and most significantly she is powerless when the King tries to abuse her and she is saved by his sexual impotence rather than by her own agency. Other times she waits patiently for deliverance, smothering her feelings to save her life: "her Heart was bursting within, and she was only happy when she cou'd get alone, to vent her Griefs and Moans with Sighs and Tears" (D4, 42). The only way to freedom she can envisage, according to Oroonoko's premonitory dream, is "to fly with her to some unknown World, who never heard our Story" (D3, 38), anticipating ironically their experience of slavery. Imoinda is also passive when she becomes an attentive listener of Oroonoko's military exploits in the Otan, while Oroonoko plays the hero and conceives a plan to see Imoinda in her "miserable Captivity" (D4, 45), assisted by Aboan, his second in command, and Onahal. Their encounter is discovered by the King who sells Imoinda as a slave, who thus exchanges one experience of confinement for another. After their miraculous encounter in the colony, Oroonoko and Imoinda assume their new identities, Caesar and Clemene, and are instructed into the teachings of European figures like Trefry or Behn herself, who narrate and reproduce their captivity for the reader.

Trefry's narration only comes to us indirectly, through Behn's narrator. He becomes one of many narrative figures in the text, along with Oroonoko himself and with Imoinda, we are led to assume, as there are parts of the story, especially the events in the Otan, that might have been only related by her (Rosenthal 157). Trefry is Oroonoko's confidant when the latter tells him about his romantic engagement with Imoinda, and as narrative presence in the text, he acts as Behn's *alter ego*, encouraging an encounter with the Other, Oroonoko, in almost equitable terms which is reminiscent of some oriental novels of the period. A very popular example of such novel at the time was Brémond's *The Happy Slave* (1677), which had several editions till the end of the century. In Brémond's work, Mahomet Bassa, the most powerful man in Tunis, shows his respect for his slave, Alexander, a young Italian count, and confesses to him the new object of his love, Laura, another Italian slave. In Brémond's novel, Alexander does not reciprocate his master's confidence, though, since he falls in love with the Sultaness, with whom he finally escapes. In Behn's narrative, Oroonoko also listens to Trefry's knowledgeable and honest discourse,

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<sup>8</sup> Aravamudan identifies Onahal as a typical character in oriental fictions of the Restoration, often at the head of court intrigues, and associates this figure with Aphra Behn, as one of Charles II's "cast mistresses", previously a spy and later destitute and forgotten by her King in the Low Countries (60).





which he relies on. Oroonoko and Imoinda's fatal story, Behn's narrator anticipates, will be finally related not by Trefry himself, "who design' it" but "dy'd before he began it," but "only [by] a Female Pen" (H4, 108). Oroonoko's confession of love and his romantic idealisation of his mysterious African princess comes true for Trefry when Oroonoko meets Imoinda in the plantation. As Trefry concludes after their encounter, their love is now fitter for a novel than for reality: "Trefry was infinitely pleased with this Novel, and found this *Clemene* was the fair Mistress of whom *Caesar* had before spoke" (K4, 136). This episode deploys the meanings of "Novel" in the text, and presents the plantation as a "community," a large audience that shares Oroonoko's wonderful stories. By extension, in its reference to novelty and fiction, the scene also anticipates another crucial moment in the narrative, central to this article, when the narrator Behn tells "Stories of Nuns" to Imoinda, whose implications will be further analysed.

With the purpose of entertaining Oroonoko and Imoinda and to prevent a slave revolt, the narrator tells them edifying stories, particularly "the Lives of the Romans, and great Men" to Oroonoko and stories of nuns to Imoinda, "teaching her all the pretty Works that I was Mistress off" (K4, 142). Masculine heroism, represented by the lives of the Romans, counterbalances feminine eroticism, associated to stories of nuns by the narrator (Chalmers 155). Hero Chalmers argues that Behn instructs the two slaves into their newly-acquired roles and identities, granted by their new names, by exposing them to both heroic and romantic narratives, thus exploring "the use of representation through fictional identities in order to achieve cultural compliance and reassuringly familiarize difference" (187–88). Chalmers claims further that Behn uses the term in the sense of "novelty" or "news," but also that she means a fictional, amorous plot with which both Oroonoko and Imoinda could identify (189). The former as much as the latter stories are meant to be entertaining and edifying for the protagonists, according to the expectations of their sexes: historical exemplarity and greatness for Oroonoko, educated in the values of the west and renamed as Caesar, and amorous discourse and fiction for Imoinda, closer to Behn's experience as writer and creator. Clearly she has in mind her own nun novels – *The History of the Nun*, "The Nun; or, the Perjur'd Beauty," and *The Fair Jilt* – and her telling of the stories to Imoinda seems to reveal an interesting detail about the reception of early fiction in the period, as she addresses her nun tales to a female audience, suggesting that they might be generally the target of such stories. The telling of these tales to a female slave by Behn herself might be interpreted in different ways as well: Behn's stories of nuns could be cautionary tales for Imoinda, who is familiar with the experience of seclusion, but they might be also read, as Ros Ballaster suggests, as the narrator's way of entertaining the young slave into the love plots of apparently naïve heroines (*Seductive* 95). On the one hand, Behn might be inducing Imoinda to conform to her new fate, and on the other, the nuns' stories of love in the cloister might be familiar for Imoinda-Clemene, a former favourite in the Otan and now a slave in the colony. Jaqueline Pearson remarks about this scene that this reference to the stories told by Behn's narrator unveils ironically her own powerlessness as teller of Oroonoko and Imoinda's terrible fate: "seeming to be in the powerful position of dispensing favours on those without power, she is actually



powerless, constrained to prostitute her literary art by using as a method of social control ‘Stories of Nuns’ and Romans” (“Gender” 136). Behn’s narrator chooses a discourse based on lies –the fictional stories of nuns not merely to divert Imoinda but to procure her identification with them and to make her accept her situation of confinement. In so doing, Goulding suggests, Behn’s narrator is no innocent, but is complicit in Imoinda’s willing subordination (51).

As it was mentioned earlier, Behn rewrites romance, and thus traditional forms of heroism in *Oroonoko*, where the protagonists’ agency, and especially Imoinda’s, rely on extreme suffering and passive endurance instead of on the exercise of violence to effect change: Imoinda’s only instance of agency consists in preserving her vows till the end, even to the risk of her life. And we may interpret her behaviour in two ways: either as the logical corollary of her noble nature, or as the result of consuming transgressing stories of nuns. In contrast to *Oroonoko*, women’s power in Behn’s short fiction, particularly in *The Fair Jilt* and *The History of the Nun*, is associated to violence and crime in the form of rape and murder. In the next section, I will study such a type in relation to Isabella, the protagonist of *The History of the Nun*, a perfect example of what Ros Ballaster has called “the female plot” in Behn’s prose fiction (“Pretences” 193).

### 3. “A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY”: *THE HISTORY OF THE NUN*

In seventeenth-century England, exotic eroticism was not merely associated with oriental motifs, but it was further related to nuns and nun stories, particularly because they were both Catholic and women. While Catholic teaching proclaimed the superiority of virginity over marriage, Protestant and Anglican discourse as developed by Erasmus of Rotterdam, Martin Luther and John Calvin derided female virginity in favour of matrimony, particularly because it was an inferior spiritual state (Jankowski 11). With the exception of the Virgin cult associated to Queen Elizabeth I, for whom virginity entailed not merely an unmarried state and chastity, but most importantly a notion of unchallenged political power, female virginity and nuns by extension were considered freaks of nature, and most frequently women were denied the ability to preserve the vows of virginity, since their nature compelled them to marry (Jankowski 90-ff). In the seventeenth century, nuns played as well an active role in political intrigue, especially during the Interregnum, as many of them living in the continent became instrumental in procuring the king’s restoration to the throne. One of those relevant nuns was the Benedictine abbess Mary Knatchbull, who exercised her political influence from her convent house in Ghent, where she lived between 1650 and 1696, in favour of the royalists in exile, basically working as a spy for Charles II. Knatchbull dispatched and received letters from Charles’s advisers most times safely, since nuns were often associated with the figure of the foolish and naïve woman, and it was generally believed that no evil could be expected from them (Walker 22). In exchange for their services, Catholic nuns like Knatchbull were patiently waiting for a better





time of religious toleration in the eventual accession of Charles to the throne, as well as for his economic support to found new houses, both in England and abroad, thus strengthening their networks of influence and suggesting at least their moral authority at a time when they were officially denied political visibility.<sup>9</sup> In spite of some spare visits to the cloister in Ghent, though, Knatchbull and her community did not finally get much either from Charles's magnanimity, or from his successor, James II, who openly married a Catholic and converted to Catholicism, although the latter favoured their religious house at Ipres (Walker 19), the 'Iper' cloister where Behn situates *The History of the Nun*. The nun was, then, an ambivalent figure who became a commodity particularly in seventeenth-century fiction, often associated with sexual fantasies, as they turned into easy preys of influential men, even men of the church, who exerted their manly and public authority over them. They were also connected with the notion of exile—from their country, and more generally from the world, and from marriage—more even so in the case of English women who retired to religious houses in the Continent (see Dolan 509). Finally, the nun's renunciation to the world was often seen as barbarous, cruel and even murderous, yet another form of political passivity with terrible consequences in the public arena, as Isabella's story makes clear.

Due to their alleged inexperience of the world, nuns became objects of derision and were subject to censure in late seventeenth-century fiction, not only because they were women, but because, as Catholics, they were expected to behave according to their strict rule. As Francis Dolan notes, however, not all nuns lacked experience of worldly matters. The critic chooses as example the figure of Hortense Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin, Charles II's Catholic mistress, who eventually left her husband and for a time entered a convent where his aunt was the abbess. Behn dedicated *The History of the Nun* to this very figure (Dolan 522, 523). In the usual manner of prefaces and dedicatory epistles, Behn addresses her story, a "fair unfortunate Vow-Breaker", to another, nobler and more experienced one, with the purpose of either gaining her protection or provoking her pity (*History of the Nun B*). As Dolan continues, the nun became in the seventeenth century a gender construction by means of the repetition of a pattern of sexuality and behaviour: women living in seclusion and marginality and in trouble to channel their needs and anxieties. Though the life of fictional nuns would not exactly correspond to the situation of English nuns living in cloister in the Continent, the figure turned into a pervasive motif both in seventeenth-century writing and contemporary constructions of femininity, "because of what she can tell us about attitudes to women's sexuality, agency, and authority, about attitudes toward Catholic capacities for loyalty and critical judgment, and about the tangled worlds of sexual, political, and theological fantasy" (Dolan 512). I argued earlier in this essay that Behn plays with all these

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<sup>9</sup> Kate Chedgzoy remarks that a tradition of monastic life was also available to women in English soil, and that nuns like Mary Ward were responsible for the foundation of a large number of religious houses in the Continent (61).

notions in her construction of fictional nuns, and that the she-narrator in *Oroonoko* has this in mind when she teaches their stories to a troubled Imoinda-Clemene. It is precisely the feature of vow-breaking, Isabella's violation of religious vows, and in general the figure of the nun as promoter of romantic plots, that distinguish the heroine of *The History of the Nun* from Imoinda, who holds steadfast to her betrothal to Oroonoko even in the face of extremely adverse circumstances. Both share, though, a similar status, as they are two strong female presences, as Jacqueline Pearson contends, that face "impossible or paradoxical moral dilemmas which test them to the utmost" ("Short" 193).

In her study of female communities and convent sexuality, Kate Chedgzoy reads the convent as a fictive space "in which women's ambiguous relation to the central institutions of early modern society could be reimagined" (56). Chedgzoy's main argument finds an illustration in Behn's story, where the narrator claims that young nuns need to make "a Virtue of Necessity", very similarly to young wives, who are led "to make the best of a bad Market" (*History of the Nun* B4, 7). Behn's narrator claims to speak about her own experience, as she had also been once "an humble Votary in the House of Devotion" (*History of the Nun* B3, 6), a galloping nun who had not taken perpetual vows, a type already used by Behn to describe Miranda in *The Fair Jilt*. By bringing the models of the young nun and the young wife together, Behn appeals to women's responsibility in making the right choices in a world in which men are often perjurers, as they "broke Vows made to some fond believing Wretch, whom they have abandon'd and undone" (*History of the Nun* B1, 2). In this way, in the face of the "Vanities of the World," the narrator decides to abandon monastic life before taking her vows:

I rather chose to deny my self that Content I could not certainly promise my self, than to languish (as I have seen some do) in a certain Affliction; tho' possibly, since I have sufficiently bewailed that mistaken and inconsiderate Approbation and Preference of the *false ungrateful World* (*full of nothing but Nonsense, Noise, false Notions, and Contradiction*) before the Innocence and Quiet of a Cloyster. (*History of the Nun* B3, 6; my italics)

Isabella's wrong choices are motivated, I argue, by her faulty "reading" of the "false ungrateful World" that Behn describes in each case. Living in the cloister, as much as living in the seraglio, or the colony, amounts to a similar experience, the author seems to imply. In her analysis of the literary fortunes of *The History of the Nun*, Jacqueline Pearson emphasizes the connection between the nun and the wife, underlining the "exotic" nature of the nun figure: "[I]n Restoration fiction as a whole, nuns feature as bizarre and eroticized exotics rather like the harem women who are in contemporary fiction not their opposites but their doubles. In Behn's fiction the nun instead becomes a metaphor for the female condition" (Pearson, "History" 246). It could be further argued that, like the nun, exotic representations of women in the seraglio, such as Imoinda, are also illustrative of the female condition, regardless of the distant setting of oriental and colonial stories.

The narrator of *The History of the Nun* sets Isabella's cautionary tale at a nunnery in Iper, a continental town which was formerly a Spanish dominion but



of late a French possession (B4, 7). After his wife's death, Isabella's father divides his estate, one half going to a Monastery of Jesuits which he joins, and the other half reserved for the Monastery of St Augustine, Isabella's destination. Still a child, without experience of the world, she is entrusted to her aunt's, the Lady Abbess, guidance. She did not mean to take orders, but only to be protected and receive an education that would make her marriageable to a nobleman in the future. Her fortune was closely guarded by the Abbess, though, that had in mind to secure her niece's money for the convent: "[S]he us'd all her Arts and Stratagems to make her become a *Nun*, to which all the fair Sisterhood contributed their Cunning" (B5, 12). In the cloister Isabella grows in beauty and learning and is soon exposed to the eyes of ladies and noblemen, who come from afar to listen to her talk and have a sight of her at the grate. As other "galloping nuns" in Behn's fiction, Isabella's life was easy and devoted to gallant conversation and entertainment. Meanwhile, she excelled in her beauty, her mind and virtues, which she improved every day. The convent stands for her as a surrogate domestic space, an only-women refuge that protects her from the world outside, but also as a showcase for potential lovers or suitors. In Goulding's feminist interpretation of this story, "[c]onvents are containers, and Behn uses them to invert, literally, orders" (39). In *The History of the Nun* marriage is the order inverted, though in order to evade its constraints, Isabella accepts a subtler form of seclusion in the cloister. Not very differently from the role of women in the Otan, Isabella's power lies in her beauty and her piety within the safe walls of the cloister. Ironically, her life in the convent has not prepared her to face the reality outside (B5, 13). The news of her taking perpetual vows shocks the town, and among them young Villenoy's, who passionately proposed to her without success. He witnesses the ceremony of Isabella's taking the veil, that Behn's narrator describes as "fatal" (B5, 21). She declares herself immune to love, and her indifference to Villenoy's plight is considered an act of cruelty. Love discourse turns into religious discourse, as her suitor is said to suffer "a thousand Tortures" for her sake, and to be "dying Adoring her" (B5, 23). She mortifies herself as she feels she is responsible for incensing Villenoy's love, a "fair Cruel Nun" (C2, 27).

Isabella renounces the love of men, but she is not insensible to the discourse and the trappings of sentimentality, as she shed "abundance of Tears" when she was told that Villenoy was dying for her (B5, 24), or when she got finally infatuated with young Henault's love. Her exemplary modesty and self-restraint – Isabella had been "a Saint in the Chapel, and an Angel in the Grate" (1689, C2, 27) – brings to mind Imoinda's steadfastness in *Oroonoko*, as Trefry contends: "she deny's us all with such a noble Disdain, that 'tis a Miracle to see, that she, who can give such eternal Desires, shou'd herself be all Ice, and all Unconcern" (K1, 130). After falling in love, though, Isabella is ready to quit her vows, to leave the convent and to take her jewels back from her aunt, the abbess (*History of the Nun* E5, 87-88). In contrast to Henault's pessimistic view of his life as a farmer, Isabella has construed in her mind a sugary version of kingship, in the manner of the pastoral, an idea that she has conceived due to her youth and inexperience of the world, and that brings her much closer to the aristocratic ideal represented by the black royal pair:



I thought of living in some loanly Cottage, far from the noise of crowded busie Cities, to walk with thee in Groves, and silent Shades, where I might hear no Voice but thine; and when we had been tir'd, to fit us down by some cool murmuring Rivulet, and to be each a World, my Monarch thou, and I thy Sovereign Queen, while Wreaths of Flowers shall crown our happy Heads, some fragrant Bank our Throne, and Heaven our Canopy. (*History of the Nun* E5, 85)

In this light, the concern of Behn's female narrator in *The History of the Nun*, in a similar vein to *Oroonoko*, is with storytelling. In both *novellas*, she concentrates in the power of stories, discourses and narrative frames, to instruct characters into patterns of behaviour. In the early pages of the tale, she contends, for example, that Isabella has learnt to recognise the stereotypical symptoms of love from Sister Katteriena who had entered the convent to forget a former love. Later on, she offers a view of the nuns at the convent longing for Henault's tales at the grate, "for he always brought them all that was Novel in the Town, and they were glad of his Visits, above all other, for they heard, how all Amours and Intrigues pass'd in the World, by this young Cavalier", and he corresponded to them by "endeavour[ing] to assume all the Gaity he could, and t[elling] 'em all he could either remember, or invent, to please 'em" (*History of the Nun* E2, 76, 77). Even later in the story, when Villenoy believes Henault to have died in battle, he decides to write to Isabella and make her acquainted with the sad news. He then tried to renew his love for her, gaining her initial resistance through storytelling: "he diverted her, by giving her Relations of Transactions of the Siege, and the Customs and Manners of the *Turks*" (*History of the Nun* F5, 109).

In an ironic reversal of Behn's telling "Stories of Nuns" to Imoinda, Villenoy wins Isabella by entertaining her with stories about the Other, once more testifying to the figure of the storyteller, and to Behn's own defence of her right to literary authority. Behn's power of expression contrasts with her heroines' passive self-renunciation (Spencer 193-194). Isabella is one of Behn's most eccentric heroines, we could argue, as she oscillates between the opposite prototypes of the virtuous woman and the murderer, always relying on her good name to kill her two husbands and try to escape unscathed. After some time, Isabella's crimes are brought to the open and she is accused of double murder. Ironically, Behn's narrator claims that her mien and face were majestic at the scaffold, and that she looked "all Cheerful as a Bride" (*History of the Nun* H, 147), still an appealing and seductive image of femininity on the verge of death, as her final speech becomes a warning to all vow-breakers.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The figure of Behn as narrator and storyteller stands out in *Oroonoko* and *The History of the Nun*. Her fictional persona is often situated in the frame of the story, but sometimes she is also conversant with the characters, identifying with them, especially with female figures, with few exceptions, like her hero Oroonoko. These are tales about love and romance which explore the potential of storytelling to create new worlds, but most times to illustrate the failures of the *status quo*, as



it is portrayed by a she-narrator and woman writer who is considered an outsider. Ballaster refers to the purposes of seventeenth-century amatory fictions, and to Behn's amatory novels in particular, when she argues that "[t]he telling of a story of seduction [...] is also an act of seduction" (*Seductive* 69). In this light, I have mentioned many examples of the seductive effects of stories on Imoinda and Isabella. In particular, I have claimed that Behn's telling stories of nuns to the black female slave finds a parallel in Villenoy's telling stories about the Turks to young Isabella. Both cases illustrate the narrator's aim in favouring cross-cultural encounters with the Other and her reading of storytelling as associated specifically with the figure of the woman writer. Telling stories, were they stories of nuns or tales of the seraglio, is an act of empowerment and authority that Behn concedes primarily to her narrators, even at the cost of dispossessing her characters.

The authority of Behn's narrator contrasts in the two selected stories with the helplessness of her heroines, who are devoid of actual power, and who either choose self-sacrifice and passivity as forms of political intervention in *Oroonoko*, or employ the art of dissembling and storytelling to protect their good name no matter the obstacles they find in their way, be they polygamy or murder, as in *The History of the Nun*. Pearson contends that in Behn's fiction women are not only creators but most importantly "they are texts" ("Gender" 118). In the selected novels, stories about convents and seraglios become almost interchangeable at a time when nuns and oriental women were deemed similar exotic objects. Moreover, we are led to interpret the ending of moral tales like the former, as the author's responsibility to denounce the restrictions imposed on women like Isabella, "revealing a countertale of female power sympathetically depicted beneath a surface which seems to offer quite simple moral condemnations of dangerous female autonomy" (Pearson, "Gender" 138). In spite of her identification with Behn's ideal of royalism and true kingship, Imoinda is no exception to the rule; her goodness and extreme virtue only contribute to her death. Though fitting the type of the traditional hero, Oroonoko also accepts Behn's narrative authority, though in so doing he becomes feminised. He is another ex-centric and exceptional figure about whom we are even told that "he lik'd the Company of us Women much above the Men" (*Oroonoko* K4, 142). Told by a "Great Mistress" (*Oroonoko* K4, 143), his story, as much as Imoinda's, turns into another object of consumption and exchange in the literary market which is meant to outlast their exceptional heroism.

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# THE ISLE OF PINES: AN IMPERFECT UTOPIA

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## ABSTRACT

Henry Neville's *The Isle of Pines* (1668) is an early and popular example of fictional travel-writing. It describes the unorthodox way of living of an insular society founded by a few survivors of a shipwreck. Although in a light tone, Neville raises sensitive topics: the then current gender ideology, racism, common property, and the violent conducts of European settlers. He also ponders the role of religious doctrine in the moulding of individuals. So, measuring what Neville conveys in a positive or negative light could classify this fiction as *eutopia* or *dystopia*. It is undoubtedly the depiction of a community of imperfect mortals, an imperfect utopia, thereby contradicting the genre's prime definition as the recipe for a planned –ergo, happy– society.

KEYWORDS: utopia/dystopia, seventeenth-century seafaring, gender ideology, racism.

## LA ISLA DE LOS PINOS: UNA UTOPÍA IMPERFECTA

## RESUMEN

*The Isle of Pines* (1668. *La isla de los Pinos*), de Henry Neville, es un ejemplo temprano y popular de literatura de viajes en ficción. La obra describe el estilo de vida nada ortodoxo de una sociedad insular fundada por unos pocos supervivientes de un naufragio. Aunque en un tono desenfadado, Neville plantea asuntos muy delicados: la ideología de género predominante en la época, el racismo, la propiedad colectiva, y las conductas violentas de los colonos europeos. Él también reflexiona sobre el papel de la doctrina religiosa en la formación de los individuos. De este modo, evaluar lo que Neville presenta de manera positiva o negativa permitiría clasificar este relato como *eutopía* o *distopía*. Indudablemente se trata de mostrar una comunidad de mortales imperfectos, una utopía imperfecta, y en consecuencia entra en contradicción con la definición primordial del género como la fórmula para una sociedad planificada –y por lo tanto *feliz*.

PALABRAS CLAVE: utopía/distopía, viajes marítimos del siglo XVII, ideología de género, racismo.

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Henry Neville's *The Isle of Pines Or, A late Discovery of a fourth ISLAND in Terra Australis, Incognita* went to press in 1668 and was published almost simultaneously in different versions –Dutch, German, French and English– raising some doubts about its authorship and authenticity, though proving its popularity. Readers who believed in the geographical and navigational data it conveyed saw it as a tract; for those who mistrusted its content it was considered a hoax. Its full title was:

The Isle of Pines. Or, A late Discovery of a fourth ISLAND near Terra Australia, Incognita. By Henry Cornelius Van Sloetten. Wherein is contained. A true Relation of certain English persons, who in Queen Elizabeths time, making a Voyage to the East Indies, were cast away, and wracked near to the Coast of Terra Australis, Incognita, and all drowned, except one Man and four Women. And now lately Anno Dom. 1667. a Dutch Ship making a Voyage to the East Indies, driven by foul weather there by chance have found their Posterity (speaking good English) to amount (as they suppose) to ten or twelve thousand persons. The whole Relation (written and left by the Man himself a little before his death, and delivered to the Dutch by his Grandchild) Is here annexed with the Longitude and the Latitude of the Island, the situation and felicity thereof, with other matter observable. (Neville 62)

Apart from the hazardous editorial record,<sup>1</sup> due to the complexity of censorship and print licensing during the Restoration this text constitutes a curious example of utopian writing, a popular genre in the seventeenth century. At first glance, it seems to present a rather ordinary proposal of an Edenic society founded on an Australian island by a few survivors of a shipwrecked East India Merchant Company vessel that had sailed for the East Indies during the reign of Elizabeth I.

The date of its publication –1668– corresponds to the first years of the Restoration period when the sense of relief from the claustrophobic atmosphere of English society during the Cromwellian period and the transition to Charles II's merrier way of living triggered a sense of euphoria: the reopening of theatres and fairs, the sponsoring of the new sciences epitomised by the Royal Society and its leading figures like Isaac Newton or Pierre Boyle among many others, or the surge of baroque music (with the works of composers like Henry Purcell), all pointed to a richer and more enjoyable era. Even the Great Fire of 1666, though a tremendous disaster, brought about the hope of urban renewal in the form of a more elegant, better planned London made possible through the creative genius of architect Christopher Wren. A restored regime together with a rebuilt city worked as metaphors for a new notion of political belonging: instead of the unequal relationship between royalty and subject, an egalitarian bond among members of society seemed plausible, almost probable. Everything was possible and new models of society could be experienced.

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<sup>1</sup> For information on this utopia's editions consult Worthington Chauncey Ford, *The Isle of Pines by Henry Neville, 1688. An Essay in Bibliography*, or the more recent critical edition by John Scheckter, *The Isle of Pines, 1668: Henry Neville's Uncertain Utopia*.



The parallel between the reigns of Elizabeth I and Charles II stands clearly as the outcome of two major national crises, bearing in mind that etymologically crisis (from the Ancient Greek *κρῖσις*) means a vitally important or decisive state of things; a point at which change must come, for better or worse. The hope and prosperity during the reign of Elizabeth I and the rebirth of the monarchy with Charles II both seemed to promise social stability by means of the “artificial eternity” of this political model, as Hobbes names it in his *Leviathan* (101). However, at the same time, these reigns promised relevant changes in governmental, social and religious issues. The main difference between these two moments is that the former belonged to the past, to English history, whereas the latter was still a promise open to be shaped by intervenients, either by institutional entities, such as parliament and government, or by the emergent public opinion disseminated in newspapers, in coffee and chocolate houses, and clubs, or, in a more individualistic way, in utopian writing.

According to Nichole Pohl, “utopia is inseparable from the imaginary voyage,” but usually it is a plausible voyage within the contemporaneous reader’s view of the known world (53). The choice of going on a voyage to Australia by an employee of the English East India Merchant Company meets the premise of reliability of the following narrative. The Company was part and parcel of the English maritime enterprise which had gained momentum during the reign of Elizabeth I with Sir Walter Raleigh’s attempt to establish an English colony on Roanoke Island. There was also an increase in commercial routes across the Atlantic and the Pacific following the Portuguese and Spanish Discoveries. As the narrator acknowledges:

A Way to the East India’s being lately discovered by Sea, to the South of Africh by certain Portugals, far more safe and profitable then had been before; certain English Merchants encouraged by the great advantages arising from the Eastern Commodities, to settle a Factory there for the advantage of Trade. And having to that purpose obtained the Queen’s Royal Licence Anno Dom. 1569. 11. or 12. (Neville 65)

The history of the rise of the English –and later British– Empire registers many challenges that both rulers and merchants had to overcome. In the political arena, England was fighting the international divide of newly-found territories between Spain and Portugal registered in a Papal bull issued by Pope Alexander VI in 1494. During the first half of the seventeenth century, a long debate was underway regarding the ownership of maritime space which sowed the first premises of international law with the significant contribution of Hugo Grotius’ *Mare Liberum*, 1608. As David Armitage points out, England was simultaneously competing with Scottish maritime expansionism, a rivalry which weakened each other’s standing: “The history of British maritime ideology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries follows the history of the conception of Britain itself. There could obviously not be any pan-British arguments in favour of maritime supremacy until the state itself had been defined as a collectively British kingdom” (Armitage 102).

Therefore, the English East India Merchant Company was meant to play a fundamental role in the Elizabethan expansionist ideology. Moreover, it was an example of the recently implemented economic system, mercantilism, or the



“mercantile system,” an expression coined by Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations*. Briefly, it consisted of an economic nationalist practice and a theory which, for the first time, defined the wealth of a country by its good balance of trade, or rather, by its restraining of imports and encouraging of exports in order to accumulate precious metals –i.e. bullions– in the state coffers (Laura LaHaye 2008).<sup>2</sup> English mercantilism emphasised trade and had a rather pragmatic bias when compared with the more conceptual approach of French thinkers such as Montchrétien or Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Thomas Mun, one of the first apologists for mercantilism and a member of the said Company, wrote a pamphlet, *A Discourse of Trade, from England unto the East Indies* (1621), where he argued that as long as England’s total exports exceeded its total imports in the process of visible trade, the export of bullion was not harmful. His most famous work, *England’s Treasure by Foreign Trade*, published posthumously in 1664, was labeled the “handbook of mercantilism” by Adam Smith. This new practice also implied strong regulation on the part of the government by means of issuing charters –that is, licenses to trade or manufacture certain items or to exploit certain maritime routes– which constituted a new source of revenue and controlled competition. The creation of monopolies was a key measure defended in *Brief Observations Concerning Trade and the Interest of Money* (1668) and *A New Discourse of Trade* (1668, 1690) by Josiah Child, a most prominent mercantilism apologist of the times, though also a stockholder of the Company and later its governor, circumstances which raise questions as to his impartiality.

The East India Company is a good example of the creation of chartered monopolies. It was founded in 1600 as a joint-stock company, and after disputing the monopoly of their chosen routes with the Dutch and the Portuguese, the Company focused on trading cotton, silk, indigo, saltpeter, and spices from South India, and quickly extended its activities to the Persian Gulf, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. Later, the slave trade became a lucrative enterprise. This activity directly attacked human dignity and, more accurately, non-European human freedom and dignity. This trade fed emergent racist attitudes that went hand-in-hand with economic and political ambitions, attitudes that were soon justified by pseudo-scientific theories presented, for instance, by François Bernier’s *Nouvelle Division de la Terre par les Différentes Espèces ou Races qui l’habitent* [New Division of the Earth by the Different Species or Races that inhabit it] (1684), or later by the slave owner Edward Long whose *History of Jamaica* (1774) became quite popular. Both works characterised the different races according to physical features, such as colour, skull dimension or type of hair, and from there inferred several intellectual and ethical derogatory traits of the so-called African race considering them inferior beings incapable of civilisation.

In mercantilism, despite its darker moral or material aspects, trade and seafaring found common political and economic grounds: territorial expansionism

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<sup>2</sup> For information on mercantilism consult John J. Cusker and Kenneth Morgan, eds., *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge UP, 2001).



intertwined with the territorial ownership of the European powers involved in the maritime enterprise. This led to the hegemonic position of England in the international chess game of European states. For the common man, it paved the way to the quick acquisition of wealth and consequent upward mobility. Samuel Purchas, in *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes; Contayning a History of the World, in Sea Voyages and Lande Travells, by Englishmen and Others* (1625), praised the new economic dynamics of the sea:

It is the great Purveyor of the Worlds Commodities to our use, Conveyor of the Excesse of Rivers, Uniter by Traffique of al Nations [...] it is an open field for Merchandize in Peace [...] refuge to the distressed, Portage to the Merchant, passage to the Traveller, Customes to the Prince [...]. (Purchas 62)

Turbulent voyages, bad winds, tempests and the loss of bearings followed by shipwreck were recurring phenomena among the men who earned their living crossing the oceans. This did not deter the many men who were willing to adventure upon these rough waters, or who aspired to move up the social ladder. Bernardo Gomes de Brito's several stories –collected in his *História Trágico-Marítima*– prove the adventurous spirit of these travelers. Published in two volumes in 1735-1736, this *Tragic History of the Sea* is a collection of narratives, chronologically presented, of dangerous voyages and shipwrecks of Portuguese sailors on their Atlantic route to and from India –the spice route– between 1552 and 1602. In his autobiographical work *Peregrinação* [Pilgrimage] (posthumously published in 1614), Fernão Mendes Pinto reports the many dangers he faced on his travels to India, China, Japan and other Far Eastern countries: pirate attacks and subsequent periods of slavery, natural phenomena and shipwrecks. His account, albeit partially dubious, is considered a literary master-piece because of his educated assessment of other cultures and of the nature of the interaction between European navigators and the “Others,” as Said (1978) names those belonging to other cultures, living on other continents, and, quite often, becoming colonised by the empowered newcomers. Fictional works, especially utopias, adopted the said device: Francis Bacon, for instance, in his *New Atlantis*, tells how a crew and their captain arrived at the island of Bensalem in the aftermath of a terrible tempest which diverted them from their original route; Jonathan Swift's hero in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is also a victim of shipwreck more than once in his voyages. So, Henry Neville adopted a well-tested device to introduce the reader to the plausible arrival of a small group of survivors on a beautiful, exotic island somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, close enough to already established longitudes and latitudes. Moreover, the immense cluster of Indonesian islands and its estimated proximity to the so-called Terra Australis made the location of the subsequent narrative credible enough for some readers to consider it as travel writing, a genre then much appreciated. Neville also uses another device to ensure the plausibility of the story: a report of the creation of the colony in the form of a letter written by George Pine, the founder of the community, is passed on almost a century later by one of his descendants to a Dutch traveler, Captain Cornelius Van Sloetten, who landed on the island. To reinforce its authenticity, Neville added two other letters



signed by a Dutch merchant named Abraham Keek reporting that a French ship had discovered the island, though locating it in a slightly different place: “two or three hundred leagues Northwest from Cape Finis Terre” (Ford 56). Captain Van Sloetten even vouches for the credibility of the source: “This story seems fabulous, yet the Letter is come to a known Merchant, and from a good hand in France” (Neville 62).

This resorting to an *autoritas* to create a realistic narrative can also be found in More’s *Utopia* with the exchange of letters between his authorial *persona* and Peter Giles (112-114), Peter Giles and Jerome Busleyden (124-29), or from William Bude to Thomas Lupset (115-121), although these letters keep an ironic ambiguity never fully asserting the veracity of the Republic of Utopia. The short poem entitled “Six Lines on the Island of Utopia, Written by Anemolius, Poet Laureate and Nephew to Hythloday by his Sister” (More 121) seemed to meet the goal of authenticity if the readers were willing to “suspend their disbelief,” considering that Hythloday is but a fictional character—and a nonsensical one according to his name—and Anemolius is a Latinised version of the Greek “*anemolios*,” meaning “windy”; so, the words of the poem go with the wind, i.e. they are not to be taken seriously. Henry Neville uses More’s device but lacks More’s rhetorical mastery of *serio ludere*, i.e. playing with serious matters, a literary model used by some Greek authors such as Lucian in *True History* and Apuleius in *The Golden Ass*, and adopted by Renaissance writers besides Thomas More, like Erasmus of Rotterdam with his *Praise of Folly* (1511) and, later, Swift. In Neville’s case, the aim is simply to forge an atmosphere of reliability by means of two independent sources: a Dutchman and a French crew, two foreign entities with no ties to the English empire.

Ford, in his introductory text to Neville’s work, attempted to compare it to Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), stating that: “Life on an island, entirely separated from the rest of mankind, had formed an incident in many tales, but Neville’s is believed to have been the first employment by an English author of island life for the whole story” (59). In fact, even though Neville borrowed the model of presenting his utopia from his predecessor, there are aspects which bring his creation close to Robinson Crusoe’s proposition: life on an island isolated from the civilised world, as Ford highlighted, and the profiles of their respective protagonists. In both works, the prospective hero is an average man, someone belonging to the middling sort, that is, an individual of the bourgeoisie with some education, fairly young and keen to travel afar; someone with whom many eighteenth-century young men could easily identify. Of course, Robinson Crusoe is more adventurous and has a striking entrepreneurial energy which is absent in George Pine. Nonetheless, the latter is an accountant, a quite respectable and sought-after profession in times of trade with its inherent commercial and financial operations. They are both young and healthy and able to adapt to different circumstances through an experimental, empirical process when fate forces them to embrace a new way of living. They act as individuals, the new societies are of their own making; there is no collective ideal.

However, the similarities between Robinson Crusoe and George Pine seem to end here: Robinson undergoes a psychological and moral growth similar to the experience of bildungsroman heroes—an introspective, spiritual analysis—as



well as an external adaptation to his surroundings using the knowledge and skills previously acquired, thus changing himself and the island he inhabits. George Pine, on the other hand, discards the moral and social notions he shared with his Christian, European fellowmen, and lets himself be absorbed by the environment. The new elements he introduces into his new *locus* are scarce, putting him and the other four survivors closer to the way of living of other species than to that of polite society. George Pine lacks Robinson Crusoe's teleological drive, a commitment to social transformation, an essential utopian feature of Bloch's definition of concrete utopia as literary texts of educated hope and in relation to the Real-Possible based on current tendencies and credible possibilities. In his conciliatory approach between Marxism and utopian literature, he distinguishes between abstract and concrete utopia: the former is a non-committed day-dream, whereas the latter anticipates and effects the future: "The thus determined imagination of the utopian function is distinguished from mere fantasizing precisely by the fact that only the former has in its favour a Not-Yet-Being of an expectable kind, i.e., does not play around and get lost in an Empty-Possible, but psychologically anticipates a Real Possible" (Bloch 1: 44). Or, as Levitas explains, "For Bloch, the unfinished nature of reality locates concrete utopia as a possible future within the real; and while it may be anticipated as a subjective experience, it also has objective status" (104). George Pine's circumstances of survival, however, highlight the apparent lack of purpose of this whole adventure:

we about the break of day discerned Land (but what we knew not) the Land seemed high and Rocky, and the Sea continued still very stormy and tempestuous, insomuch as there seemed no hope of safety, but looked suddenly to perish. As we grew near Land, perceiving no safety in the ship, which we looked would suddenly be beat in pieces: The Captain, my Master, and some others got into the long Boat, thinking by that means to save their lives, and presently after all the Seamen cast themselves overboard, thinking to save their lives by swimming, onely myself my Masters Daughters, the two Maids, and the Negro were left on board, for we could not swim; (Neville 65)

The situation is reported as every man for himself: the complete lack of chivalry in either the Captain's or the Master's behaviour towards the women –and especially the latter's indifference towards his wife and daughters– and the selfishness of the sailors all fit the depiction of a rough, dangerous life with no room for the Christian love of one's neighbour, the Greek notion of altruism, or, least of all, for affection. The darkest aspects of pragmatism and ambition are evident. Faced with danger, fear and self-preservation take the lead, as Hobbes repeatedly highlighted both in *De Cive* (1647) in the Dedication to William, Earl of Devonshire: "Man to Man is an arrant Wolfe"; and later in *Leviathan* (1651): "if there be no Power erected; or not great enough for our security; every man will, and may lawfully rely on his own strength and art, for caution against all other men" (Hobbes 87). Ironically, George Pine and the four women survived because of what they could not do; it was their dearth of abilities to conquer the adverse environment that protected them, which perhaps is a hint at what would be expected from them.





An essential characteristic of utopia consists of the identification of the imagined society with the idea of “good place,” although Vieira considers it a “notion to be discarded since it is based on a subjective conception of what is or not desirable, and envisages utopia as being essentially in opposition to the prevailing ideology” (6), a point *The Isle of Pines* clearly illustrates. The island where George Pine and the women found harbour revealed itself as a kind of paradise, perhaps an epicurean paradise, but undoubtedly one of the best places to survive with neither much in the way of human help or skills, nor of tools to build something anew: “the country so very pleasant, being always clothed with green, and full of pleasant fruits, and a variety of birds, ever warm, and never colder than in England in September. So that this place (had it the culture, that skillful people might bestow on it) would prove a Paradise” (Neville 67).

The abundance of food, the agreeable climate, the absence of dangerous animals or other inimical presence, all these factors concurred to ensure their survival for as long as they lived:

We found on Land a sort of fowl about the bigness of a Swan, very heavie and fat, that by reason of their weight could not fly, of these we found little difficulty to kill, so that was our present food; we carried out of England certain Hens and Cocks to eat by the way; some of these when the ship was broken, by some means got to land, & bred exceedingly, so that in the future they were a great help unto us; we found also a little River, in the flags, store of eggs, of a sort of fowl much like our Ducks, which were very good meat, so that we wanted nothing to keep us alive. (Neville 66)

The restful, uneventful life with its abundance of food and absence of threat of human, animal, or atmospheric origin eradicated for the islanders notions of effort and commitment to improve themselves, both individually and as a community. A *dolce far niente* settled in, ingrained with the quite popular notion of “the land of Cockaigne,” a wide-spread medieval parody of a vision of bliss, albeit of an epicurean nature, as it appears, for instance, in the thirteenth century Old French poem *Le Fabliau de Cocagne*. The poem consisted of a letter written by the Bohemian notary Henricus de Irsenia to the abbess of Cockaigne about a land of milk and honey where no harmful creature could exist, where there was a river full of jewels that descended from paradise, and a fountain of youth, and sensual nuns swimming naked in a stream (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “The Land of Cockaigne”). With small variations, the theme reappeared in the Kildare’s Poems in the fourteenth-century, and a century later a Dutch rhyme called *Het Luilekkerland* [the lazy-luscious-land] described the land of Cockaigne as a mythical place where, in addition to abundance, there is no need to work. Several painters also depicted the land of Cockaigne, the most famous depiction being the 1567 piece by Bruegel the Elder. It is also the focus of the drinking songs *In Taberna Quando Sumus* “Ego sum abbas Cucaniensis” (“I am the Abbot of Cockaigne”) in *Carmina Burana*, a collection of 254 songs recorded in *Benediktbeuern*, a thirteenth-century manuscript better known for its inclusion in Carl Orff’s secular cantata composed in 1935. This dream of a way of living based



on leisure, laziness, and the satiety of the senses has never faded away and, perhaps, the Puritan exacerbation of austerity induced the awakening of such dreams.

In *The Isle of Pines* there is abundance of food, although no alcoholic beverages are available, and jewelry is not appreciated. The climate is mild and, after a while, the behavioral rules deemed necessary in polite, civilised society vanish. According to empirical theories developed during the seventeenth and especially the eighteenth centuries, in addition to their internal, moral set of rules, people were also influenced by external factors, the most important of which was climate –as Montesquieu explained in his essay *L'Esprit des Lois* [The Spirit of the Laws] (1748)– a concept that included “various characteristics of local environments (ranging from meteorological factors, such as the amount of sunshine or heat, to the landscape, and other geographical features) that were said to shape social practices, psychological dispositions, and even political institutions” (Muthu 37). Therefore, the small group of settlers somehow illustrates these theories insofar as they adapted themselves to their new environment and embraced a more natural way of living answering only to their basic appetites or passions (as Hobbes calls them in his *Leviathan*), and polygamy was adopted thus discarding Christian notions such as chastity. As George Pine was the only surviving male, monogamy did not seem relevant to happiness. The adoption of this new system happened gradually, without any evident moral qualms, yet following a kind of logic. At first, he was still attentive to considerations of rank and station, then he respected the more natural criterion of age, and finally he yielded to the then well-rooted racial prejudice:

Idleness and Fullness of everything begot in me a desire of enjoying the women, beginning now to grow more familiar. I had perswaded the two Maids to let me lie with them, which I did at first in private, but after, custome taking away shame (there being none but us) we did it more openly, as our Lusts gave us Liberty; afterwards my Master's Daughter was content also to do as we did; [...] one Night, I being asleep, my Negro (with the consent of the others) got close to me, thinking it being dark, to beguile me, but I awaking and feeling her, and perceiving who it was, yet willing to try the difference, satisfied my self with her, as well as with one of the rest: (Neville 67)

The thin veil of modesty is soon discarded, and the willingness of George Pine's female partners is lightly hinted at when mentioning the English women and more bluntly exposed when referring to the slave. This account twists the current gender ideology which still defended the need to control women's lustful appetites while confirming their inferior social and intellectual abilities by their passive role in reproduction (Kent 5-6). However, in other aspects George Pine fully complies with contemporaneous views on gender: he acts as the patriarch of his small community by organising his polygamous relationships so that his wives become pregnant in turn in order to take care of one another, and he discriminates against the Negro slave.

According to Sarah M.S. Pearsall, “beliefs about gender shaped the nature of English colonisation and indeed the British Atlantic world itself” (133). Therefore, replicating the metropolitan patriarchal order would ensure the political order of the newly-founded communities. Moreover, Englishmen claimed a moral superiority





in relation to other settlers –such as Spaniards or Portuguese people of Catholic faith– and stayed away from native women so that they would not jeopardise social and colonial stability. The classification of individuals either by gender, class, or race, or a combination of two or even three of these factors, had a clear impact on each person's identity and power. Women's identity was traditionally associated with their reproductive function, framed either by the Galenic notion of the female reproduction organs as the inverse –and, therefore, inferior to men's– or by a later theory that considered female reproductive organs as distinct from the male's. In this case, the female body was just a passive vessel to receive the male's vital fluids (Pearsall 147-148). Nonetheless, above all, during the colonisation period class and race played an important role in social structure definitions. George Pine challenged metropolitan *mores* by having a relationship with his former master's daughter, who outranked him, and with an African slave, an inferior being according to the then current mentality.

Exploitation and inferior status existed long before the Atlantic momentum, but the Spanish and Portuguese maritime merchants were the first to use African and Indian slaves for hard labour. Englishmen followed suit. In the early stages of the modern empires, racial discrimination stemmed from the logic of economics and profit, and from the symbolic assertion on the part of settlers/conquerors of their superior status in relation to the native peoples they met in the far-away regions they occupied. The easiest way to discriminate was by attributing intellectual and moral meaning to different physical features such as colour, types of hair, or strength. In this light, African people were considered physically strong, able to do hard work, although intellectually and morally inferior to Europeans. Joyce E. Chaplin acknowledges that humankind has always established distinct levels of power and status based on several factors according to the mentality of the epoch: religion, language, custom, and political identity. However, there have been two essentially different types of discrimination, one before and the other after the rise of the modern empires (Chaplin 173-187). During the Middle Ages, the focus of discrimination was on religion –being or not being a Christian. This was a reversible condition; people could be converted and become part of Christendom. The more recent source of discrimination was irreversible because it resulted from inherited features. This type was a work in progress among seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries scientists. Harvey's reproductive theory, for example, justified lineage in his final work *Exercitationes de Generatione Animalium* [Exercises on the Generation of Animals] (1651). Later on, Linnaeus added to the issue with his taxonomy system and the introduction of the concepts of *genus* and *species*. These theories circulated among philosophers and scientists, a small number of educated men, but the basic ideas were disseminated in newspaper articles and talked about in coffee shops. Even pseudo-scientists like Edward Long were seen as reliable sources. This wide acceptance is easily understandable: the scientific explanations justified discrimination and violence, making the double-standard morality inevitable in a universe inhabited by such a variety of creatures, some of them apparently in need of guidance and strict control.



During the lifetime of George Pine and his female companions, this insular community is devoid of the violent pattern frequently adopted by European settlers towards the native people with whom they had dealings. Therefore, they are able to live in a natural society without restrictive rules, rewards or punishments. However, the prejudice against the African woman –and metonymically against all the African people– is patent in the narrative, and is associated with aggressive, predatory conduct, believed to be quite common among the ‘savages’, that is, non-Christian and non-European individuals. This is illustrated by Captain Van Sloetten’s military intervention to put an end to a violent conflict between two groups of members of the Pine family. Some well-known authors rejected these notions and abhorred the voyagers’ change of conduct when out of their original societies. Montaigne plays with the meaning of ‘sauvage’ [savage] to criticise the European travelers:

Those people [Amerindians] are wild [sauvage], just as we call wild [sauvage] the fruits that Nature has produced by herself and in her normal course; whereas really it is those that we have changed artificially and led astray from the common order, that we should rather call wild [sauvage]. The former retain alive and vigorous their genuine, their most useful and natural, virtues and properties, which we have debased in the latter in adapting them to gratify our corrupted taste. (Montaigne 152)

Nevertheless, according to George Pine’s *Relation* –a first-person account of his voyage and his settling on the island– conforming to the racial prejudice of the times, he divided his numerous offspring into four groups gathered and named after their matriarchal ancestry: the English, after Sarah English (the Master’s daughter); the Sparks and the Trevors, after the maids Mary Sparks and Elizabeth Trevor; and the Phils from the Christian name of the slave, Philippa, who did not have a family name. The demographic shortage, which had apparently justified the polygamous arrangement adopted by the first settlers, had come to an end after many sons and daughters were born to the four women. George Pine planned the new generation’s marriages pairing a member of a group with someone from another group, and allowing them to live freely scattered over the island. The prejudice is later illustrated by the episode involving Captain Van Sloetten and some of his men when they were preparing for departure. The king of the Pines, George’s grandson, asked for their help to contain a rebellion of sorts which had started between two of the four existing groups, the Phils and the Trevors. However, the individual responsible for the outbreak of this riotous episode was none other than a Phils:

Henry Phil, the chief Ruler of the Tribe or Family of the Phils [...] had ravished the Wife of one of the principals of the Family of the Trevors; which act being made known, the Trevors assembled themselves all together to bring the offender to Justice. But he knowing his crime to be so great as extended to the loss of life: fought to defend that by force, which he had unlawfully committed, whereupon the whole Island was in a great hurly burly, they being too great Potent Factions, the bandying of which against each other, threatned a general ruin to the whole State. (Neville 72)



These racially motivated incidents and the consequent loss of control of the Pines' community were aggravated by its enlarged population and its dispersal over different parts of the island which weakened the spatial and social cohesion among the islanders. In Laura Rolings' words, "Perhaps this spatial differentiation between the first generation of Pines and the subsequent generations parallels the differentiation between the controlled society of the first generation and the chaotic, repeatedly threatened society of Pine's offspring" (13). The rise of discord due to a malevolent agent also echoes the biblical episode of Eve's temptation by the serpent causing the expulsion of the primeval pair from paradise, a controlled *locus*. In the case of the island of Pines, the malevolent agent has no reptilian features, but he is physically distinct from the others. The perpetrator, John Phil, who raped and attacked several inhabitants until he was put to death, was the second son of Philippa. In the next generation similar acts were perpetrated by Henry Phil. The discordant note led George's son and successor as king of the island to write a constitutional document reintroducing Christian faith and moral doctrine, as well as a penal code that included the death penalty for crimes against God –i.e. blasphemy– and crimes against society, such as rape and adultery. It also established penalties in cases of violent behavior towards other islanders. George's son also organized the governing of the island delegating powers to representatives of the several branches of the Pine family. Van Sloetten's narration thus confirms the relationship between individual moral codes of conduct and social stability, especially in distant places where political leadership is not efficient. The flippant rejection of Christian –specifically Puritan– doctrine and ethics at the first stage of the colony caused transitory episodes of disruption potentially disintegrating the social structure, even a rather loose one, as was the case. In consequence, it questions the *eutopian* –or Morean– model of a happy, benevolent society where private and public interest converge. However, Morton, in *The English Utopia* (1952) considers the possible ambiguity of utopia and points to a clearer distinction between *eutopia* and dystopia: "For utopia is really the island which people thought or hoped or sometimes feared that the Britain of their day might presently become" (9).

Henry Neville, a subdued republican at the time of writing his utopian novel, had shared Harrington's and Merton's views about the fairer way to structure society and distribute wealth among its members.<sup>3</sup> His mistrust of, and objections to, Cromwell's proclivity for authoritarian rule made him *persona non grata* and, from 1654 to 1658, he was banished from London. Perhaps the Arcadian influence of Harrington's *Oceana* (1656) made him envisage a well-ordered society ruled by a charismatic figure, like George Pine and his "royal" successors, though balanced by the division of actual executive power and a strict penal code. On the other hand,

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<sup>3</sup> He explored this subject in his *Plato Redivivus, or a Dialogue concerning Government* (1681; reprinted under the title *Discourses concerning Government*, 1698), an un-Platonic dialogue developing a scheme for the exercise of the royal prerogative through councils of state responsible to parliament, and of which a third part should retire every year. This work was much admired by Hobbes.



Neville's abhorrence of the Puritan zeal during the Cromwellian regime together with his penchant for satire—already evident in his parody *The Parliament of Ladies* (1647)—explain the polygamous relationship of the first settlers, thus defying domestic gender ideology and its impact on the imperial model of power between the metropolis and the colonies.

In *Society under Siege* (2002), Bauman considers utopia “a vision of a predesigned world, a world in which prediction and planning stave off the play of chance” (230), but Neville's narrator seems to contradict this notion attributing the changes to chance, climate, geography, and external elements in general. This approach was defended by several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century thinkers and explorers as factors responsible for the whims of human nature and their impact on the development of any society. Therefore, utopias situated in far-distant regions with external conditions distinct from the European scenario would allow for their particular conduct, sometimes exhibiting a dystopian facet ingrained in any imagined paradise from the point of view of European readers. As far as creativity is concerned, minor creators of fictional works—in the Tolkien sense of the term<sup>4</sup>—are imperfect human beings. Ergo, their creations may be tinged by imperfection. Even More's Utopia admits the existence of “rotten apples” in its bosom, individuals who transgress and have to become slaves as punishment for their wrongdoings (More 83).

Their enormous physical distance from the explored mapped lands, and further emphasized by locating the site of good life on a far-away island or at the far end of a yet undiscovered and untrodden, testing and treacherous, sometimes downright impassable track. The trials and tribulation the lonely travelers suffered before reaching or accidentally straying into the land of Utopia signaled the lack of obvious, let alone easy, passages from the world of everyday life to the world of ‘good life’ the newly discovered land incarnated. And whatever happiness could be relished within the territorial confines of Utopia could not be exported beyond its borders. (Bauman 223)

This insular social experiment that had taken place on the island for 98 years proves Bauman's reasoning: Pine's offspring never asked the Dutch captain to take them back to England; their home is there, in that island away from the established maritime trade routes. They kept the English language as their means of communication, and somehow they recovered their Christian faith. Their way of living is still characterized by the absence both of private property and the need for labour; the *otium* prevalent in that society did not meet its classical goal of spiritual, intellectual exercise free from everyday business, as Cicero uses it in *De Oratore*,<sup>5</sup> just an everlasting leisure, contrary to the Protestant and Calvinist emphasis on work: “the common human obligation to labour in the garden of the Lord, in whatever manner is commensurate with one's God-given gifts and abilities on the one hand

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<sup>4</sup> Tolkien, *On Fairy-Stories*, 1939.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Andrew Lintott, “The Search for *Otium*,” 215-53.



and the needs of the situation on the other” (McGrath 225). The narrator comments precisely on the advantages labour could bring to the Pines: with the island’s natural resources, if they chose to dedicate themselves to farming they could exceed many European countries praised for their wealth (Neville 75). Moreover, the epicurean emphasis on physical, ephemeral pleasures points to later examples of dystopia such as Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932) which focused on consumerism and transient sexual relationships by an alienated and manipulated population –an *ersatz* version of happiness.

The negative elements in *The Isle of Pines* may be viewed as the avant-garde dystopic nature of Neville’s fiction, but they are balanced against a feeling of contentedness similar to the Aristotelian notion of *aurea mediocritas*. George Pine lived a contented life and died with a clear conscience; and the second generation’s adjustments aimed to ensure the reestablishment of peace, at least for a long while. The narrator is aware of the blissful atmosphere of their society in spite of the islanders’ few possessions and limited entertainment: “[...] we may account them fortunate, in that possessing little, they enjoy all things, as being contented with what they have, wanting those allurements to mischief, which our European Countries are enriched with” (Neville 74-75).

In sum, Neville’s work may be read as a kind of challenge to the forgers of new ideologies he knew in his lifetime. To these potential builders of alternative models of society he presents a scenario with the perfect natural environment just to prove how human presence tampers with such a paradise on earth. Therefore, it is possible that he created a paradoxical literary form between the optimism of *eutopia* and the gloomy visions of dystopia: an imperfect utopia.

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# FOIGNY'S *TERRA INCOGNITA AUSTRALIS*. DISCOVERING A NEW LAND, BUILDING UP THE NOVEL GENRE\*

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## ABSTRACT

From the late fifteenth century to the seventeenth century, travellers from different European countries tried to reach an unknown southern continent supposedly situated somewhere between the African and American lands. One of the most popular accounts dealing with this continent produced in England in the late seventeenth century was Gabriel de Foigny's *A New Discovery of Terra Incognita Australis, or the Southern World*, published in 1693 by John Dunton, and, in fact, a translation from the 1692 French version. Although this piece of early prose fiction in English has been recorded by several scholars, little critical work has been done on the English version. Consequently, the aim of this paper is to bring to the light the relevance of this novel by, on the one hand, considering this fictional work within the tradition of both travel literature and utopian novels in seventeenth-century England and, on the other, exploring those elements in the story that may have contributed to the establishment of the budding genre of the novel.

**KEYWORDS:** Gabriel de Foigny, Australia, Restoration fiction, utopian literature, travel narratives, hermaphroditism.

## *TERRA INCOGNITA AUSTRALIS* DE FOIGNY. EL DESCUBRIMIENTO DE UNA NUEVA TIERRA, EL DESARROLLO DE LA NOVELA

## RESUMEN

Desde finales del siglo xv al xvii, viajeros de diferentes países europeos intentaron llegar a un continente austral desconocido, supuestamente situado en algún lugar entre las tierras africanas y americanas. Una de las narraciones más populares sobre este continente en Inglaterra a finales del siglo xvii fue *A New Discovery of Terra Incognita Australis, or the Southern World*, de Gabriel de Foigny, publicada en 1693 por John Dunton y, de hecho, una traducción de la versión francesa de 1692. Aunque esta obra de la novela inglesa temprana es citada por varios estudiosos, se ha realizado poco trabajo crítico sobre la versión inglesa. En consecuencia, el objetivo de este artículo es sacar a la luz la relevancia de esta novela, por una parte, al considerar esta obra de ficción dentro de la tradición tanto de la literatura de viajes como de las novelas utópicas del siglo xvii en Inglaterra y, por otra, examinar aquellos elementos de la historia que pueden haber contribuido al establecimiento del emergente género de la novela.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Gabriel de Foigny, Australia, novela de la Restauración, literatura utópica, narraciones de viajes, hermafroditismo.

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## 1. IN SEARCH OF THE *TERRA AUSTRALIS*

Speculations about the existence of a southern continent, a *terra incognita australis*, had been first introduced by Pythagoras in the fifth century BC (Dousset 43) and taken up again by Aristotle a couple of centuries later (Keene 131), but it was Ptolemy –the great Greek cartographer rediscovered during the Renaissance– who expanded this idea in the second century of the modern era; and some medieval tales and legends –like Sinbad the Sailor– also mentioned this continent (Phillips 127-128). However, it was Marco Polo who, in the account of his journeys in 1485, first spoke of a number of islands in the Pacific (Java and Sumatra, among others) and hinted at the existence of a vast continent (Bovetti 374). Many European maps of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries already depicted a southern unknown land yet to be discovered and, as Dousset argues (44), the graphical representation of this land in maps became a proof of its existence as well as a stimulus for the exploration and later colonization of the Pacific. It could be said, then, that Australia was real in the minds of many Europeans even before it was actually reached by them (Dousset 44, Dutton 192, 193). This representation, though, constituted the largest blank on all European maps at the time (Phillips 125), as can be appreciated on, for instance, the Abraham Ortelius map of the world *Typus Orbis Terrarum* within his collection of maps *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, first published in Antwerp in 1570.

The French had been interested in the idea of this hypothetical *Terra Australis* as a place that could be conquered by them, since the Spaniards and the Portuguese had arrived first in the conquest of the American continent. So Lancelot Voisin de La Popelinière introduced this idea in his treatise *Les Trois Mondes* (1582) (Sankey 42), although in 1503-1504 Binot Paumier de Gonneville, whose journey account would not be published until 1663, had already visited the coast of South America, calling it “third world” or “Terra Australe unknown” (Bovetti 374, Sankey 42). In 1605-1606, Pedro Fernandes de Queiros, a Portuguese-born navigator who worked most of his life in the service of Spain, led an expedition across the Pacific searching for the *Terra Australis*. In the account of his journey, first published in Latin (1612-1613) and later in French (1617), he described a rich, fertile land inhabited by tall unclothed natives drinking a liquor more pleasant than wine (Keene 131); however, Queiros had not reached Australia but what was later known as the New Hebrides and is currently Vanuatu, although it has been argued that he might have also reached the northern part of Australia (Bovetti 375).

During the seventeenth century, various Dutch navigators encountered Australian coastal waters and some of their experiences were published and incorporated into contemporary maps. Both Phillips (180) and Dutton (191) contend that Willem Jansz was the first European to reach the coast of Australia in 1605

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and document it in different maps, although not in a journal. Jansz was followed by many other countrymen (Dick Hartog, Jan Carstensz, François Pelsaert, and Abel Tasman, among others) who, one way or another, contributed to drawing the geography of this part of the southern hemisphere and to enlarging the legend of a fertile, wealthy land, with mild weather. However, the Australian coast remained a vague outline until 1770, when James Cook made his first Australian voyage (1768-1772) and landed both in New Zealand and Australia. Further journeys were made by French and, especially, English navigators providing further details and a more accurate map of Australia.

At the same time, this unknown land became an ideal setting for Utopian writings: while the American continent was by now relatively well known, more distant places, like a journey to the moon, were too unrealistic (Bovetti 376), despite the fact that some writers had already sent their characters to the Earth's satellite. Although in the Preface to his work Foigny mentioned the reports of earlier travellers who claimed to have reached Australia, or at least some kind of southern continent: Marco Polo, Magellan, and Fernandes de Queiros, among others, most probably wishing to create an idea of verisimilitude, he presented his protagonist, Sadeur, as if he were the first European to reach Australia and survive to tell his trip: "Tis therefore to our *Sadeur*, whose Relation here follows, that we are wholly obliged for the Discovery of this before *Unknown Country*."

## 2. FOIGNY AND *LA TERRE AUSTRALE CONNUE*

Little is known about the life of Gabriel de Foigny, but he was probably born into a Catholic family in Picardy in 1630. After receiving an education, he entered a strict Observant Franciscan Order and became a preacher although, due to his scandalous behaviour, he was forced to abandon this in 1666. Since defrocked monks were regarded unfavorably in Catholic France (Phillips 228), life became difficult for him there and he decided to go to Geneva, "the utopian city of the Calvinist faith" (Keene 130), where he abjured Catholicism and became a Protestant. In Geneva he worked, among other things, as a teacher of music but, once again, due to his inadequate behaviour, he was invited to leave the city. He went to Lausanne, where he married a widow of bad repute, Lea Ducrest (Bovetti 368). Later he went to Berne and tried to scratch a living as a teacher of French, Latin, Geography and Music. However, thanks to the influence of the families of some of his students he became Dean of the school at Morges, but once again he was fired for immoral behaviour, as well as for drunkenness. Only the earnest defence of his orthodox character by some of his friends made it possible for him to go back to Geneva with his wife and children (Keene 131). There, he earned a living teaching privately and also devoted some of his time to writing.

During his stay in Lausanne, he had written a religious treatise but, lacking the support of a prestigious theologian, he failed to get permission for publication. Eventually, however, he published the book without permission, thereby angering the religious authorities (Lachèvre 9). In order to facilitate the learning of both



languages, when at Morges, he had written a species of Latin and French grammar, which he published now in Geneva; and he continued publishing other minor works, occasionally having problems with publication. However, Foigny was fully convinced of his worth as a scholar and a writer and he aimed to become famous with the publication of his next book, *La Terre Australe Connue* (1676), a reflection on the political, social and religious mores of the time. Foigny, fearing a bad reception of the book by the religious authorities in Geneva, tried to conceal his authorship and even the real place of publication. With the help of the Genevan printer La Pierre, Foigny used the imprint of an imaginary French printer, a certain Jaques Verneuil, at Vannes (Keene 132). But this subterfuge was soon discovered by the members of the *Vénérable Compagnie*, a non-political clerical body consisting of all the ministers responsible for ecclesiastical affairs, who considered the book to be full of dangerous ideas. He initially denied being the author of the book; but was eventually imprisoned in 1677, although he was soon freed and allowed to stay in Geneva teaching. According to the real editor, La Pierre, five hundred copies of the book were printed. However, Storer (143) argues that the book must have had little diffusion since it was not until ten months after it came off the press that the *Vénérable Compagnie* demanded an investigation into its contents. Moreover, the theologians entrusted with the examination of the book seem to have had problems obtaining copies.

No further great scandals in the life of Foigny are known between 1678 and 1683; however, in 1684 he was in trouble again. A widower by then, Foigny was accused of getting his maidservant, Jeanne Berlie, pregnant and was taken to prison. Still in Geneva, he reconverted to Catholicism and was eventually allowed to return to France with some of his children. At some point, he retired to a monastery in Savoy, where he died in 1692. In June that year, the Abbot François Ragueneau published a posthumous second edition of the book in Paris with the title *Les Aventures de Jacques Sadeur dans la découverte et le voyage de la Terre Australe*, heavily abridged and bowdlerized (Bleiler 228). It has been argued (Bovetti 370) that this version was probably the work of Foigny himself, who wanted somehow to repair his bad reputation. On this occasion, the book seems to have sold well (Storer 146) and it was also made popular by the inclusion of an entry about 'Sadeur' as the author of the 1692 edition in Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, first published in 1697 (Baczko 359). This edition served as the basis for the English translation of 1693, as well as for translations into some other languages.

### 3. *TERRA INCOGNITA AUSTRALIS*: ITS PLACE IN THE EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERARY SCENE

The English version with the title *A New Discovery of Terra Incognita Australis or the Southern World* was published in 1693 by John Dunton and printed by Charles Hern. Dunton produced over 600 titles throughout his life in the printing and bookselling business including devotional materials and sermons, political treatises, travel literature and inexpensive chapbooks. In the 1690s, he developed the popular periodical formats especially focused on women readers, for whom



he also published *The Ladies Dictionary* (1694) (Ezell 466). In 1691, Dunton had written and published his own travel fiction, *Voyage Round the World*, with one Don Kainophilus as protagonist, and he was always attracted to unorthodox books provided they were presented in a commercially attractive format (Keene 135), which probably explains his interest in Foigny's work.

By merely looking at the title page, we immediately learn that this is the story of James Sadeur, a Frenchman, who "Being Cast [in the *Terra Incognita Australis*] by a Shipwrack, lived 35 years in that Country, and gives a particular Description of the *Manners, Customs, Religion, Laws, Studies, and Wars*, of those Southern People; and of some *Animals* peculiar to that Place: with several other Rarities." The story draws on a manuscript that Foigny had allegedly received from Sadeur himself. It tells us about Sadeur's birth at sea, a first shipwreck in which his parents perish, his education in Portugal in the Countess of Villafranca's household, his capture by pirates on his way to the University of Coimbra, a second shipwreck from which he is saved by some Portuguese seamen on their way to India, a short stay in Congo with the description of strange fish and animals, a storm, and another shipwreck near the coast of Madagascar. Sadeur's adventures thus far are quite credible and strive for realism to the point of imitating contemporary accounts of voyages (Bleier 228, Bovetti 377). Now begins the extraordinary part: Sadeur gets to an island which is in fact the back of a huge whale; then "two prodigious flying Beasts" (34)<sup>1</sup> appear and, after fighting against them, he arrives on the shore of a new continent inhabited by an isolated nation of hermaphrodites who have developed their own peculiar culture. He is accepted among these people because, on the one hand, he has proved his courage by fighting against the giant birds and, on the other, Sadeur himself is a hermaphrodite (10). After a few months, Sadeur learns the language of the country and this enables him to discuss with Suains, a "venerable old man" (64), issues such as sexual dimorphism versus hermaphroditism, the differences between animal and man, nudity and the sense of shame, reason and right, natural religion and revelation, personal immortality, and the ultimate meaning of life. Furthermore, the natural history of the land, the language they speak, and the daily life of the Australians are also described. This turns out to be an ideal society in which almost all potential sources of trouble have been removed: because of hermaphroditism, there are no sexual impulses or oppression of women; there is no inequality of rank or drive for power or wealth since there is absolute uniformity and communism of property; there are no serious illnesses, fear of death, and emotional isolation; neither are there any religious disputes, as they all believe in a sort of deism based on natural revelation; and, rather than in immortality, they believe in a form of transmigration. Indeed, some of the elements in the book could be considered as a mirror of Sadeur's own experience and way of thinking, as well as of the social and cultural atmosphere of the time (Bleier 229).

Several authors have classified Foigny's *Terra Incognita Australis* as a social satire; some place it within the tradition of utopian satire, along with Thomas

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<sup>1</sup> Pages refer to the 1693 edition published by Dunton, available on the EEBO website.



More and Cyrano de Bergerac (Keene 130); while others consider it to be more of a political satire following authors such as Rabelais, and paving the way for future writers like Swift (Kapferer 817). Additionally, there are those who consider the book to be a precursor of socialism and communism, as well as a disseminator of rationalist thinking (Bovetti 366-367).

Something that should allow little discussion, though, is the fact that *Terra Incognita Australis* has a place within both English and European utopian literature. There had been several previous works that were either set in or around Australia or had hermaphrodites as protagonists.<sup>2</sup> In 1605, Joseph Hall published his *Mundus Alter et Idem* (The Other and the Same World), initiating a tradition of anti-utopia that was later developed by, among others, Swift. It is set in *Terra Australis incognita*, and the book is “a carnivalesque satire on the futility of utopian hope” (Pohl 63). That same year, Thomas Artus brought out his novel *Description de l’Isle of Hermaphrodites nouvellement découverte* (The Island of the Hermaphrodites newly discovered) in which the author describes the main characteristics and habits of the people in this land, and hermaphroditism consists in the lack of manly virtues (Bovetti 380), rather than as the means of presenting an equalitarian society, as Foigny did. Although the book seems to denounce the vices of the court of the French King Henry IV, these actually refer to the court of the previous king, Henry III. *Histoire du grand et admirable royaume d’Antangil* (History of the great and admirable Kingdom of Antangil), published anonymously, although attributed to Jean de Moncy, saw the light in France, in 1616. Once again, there is an imaginary journey to the Kingdom of Antangil, supposedly near Java; there, the traveller will find a society based on rigid hierarchies and full of splendour and theatrical display. In 1668, Henry Neville wrote *The Isle of Pines*, a libertine fantasy that became very popular and was translated into several languages, including French. Here a fictional Dutchman, Henry Cornelius van Sloetten, writes a letter to a friend in London declaring the truth of his journey and the discovery of an island of *Terra Australis*. This “truth” consists of the story of an Elizabethan adventurer, George Pine who was shipwrecked with four young women on this idyllic island which produces abundant food with no effort; he also enjoys a leisurely existence and engages in sexual activity with all four women, producing well over 500 offspring in a period of forty years (Keene 132). It is worth mentioning that, similarly to what had happened to Foigny, both Joseph Hall, who was a bishop, and Henry Neville were punished for writing these extraordinary voyages: the former was imprisoned in the Tower of London and the latter was banished (Phillips 124, 180). In 1677, Denis Vairasse (also spelt Veiras) d’Allais published his *Histoire des Sévarambes, peuples qui habitent une partie du troisième continent ordinairement appelé Terre Australe*. The first part of the book, though, had been previously published in

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<sup>2</sup> Jacqueline Dutton (192) remarks that the first European writers dealing with stories set in this unknown southern land would emphasize its antipodean geographical situation by creating an inversion of European society represented in the signs of alterity characteristic of its inhabitants, such as humans with animal heads, hermaphrodites and flying men.



London and in English in 1675 with the title *The History of the Sevarites or Sevarambi, a nation inhabiting part of the third continent commonly called Terrae australis incognitae* (Bovetti 365, Fokkema 139).<sup>3</sup> This book coincides with Foigny's in being a social satire, but also in the invention and full description of the language spoken by the inhabitants of the island. The invention of these ideal languages does not seem to be an exception and they are to be found in accounts of several French and English imaginary voyages of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries thus reflecting a contemporary preoccupation (Knowlson 270).

According to Carey (227), in utopian fiction there is little narrative, apart from the opening description of the circumstances that make possible finding an alternative society. These circumstances usually consist of a sea voyage in which the protagonist(s) will have to face storms, attacks from pirates, native peoples or strange creatures, as well as some other adventure motifs and events that will divert the journey from their original destiny and discover a new land. Characterization is also limited, although there are abundant descriptions of the new land and its inhabitants, if there were any. Once in the new land, the traveller will usually be offered a guided tour of this society during which he or she will be explained the social, political, economic and religious organisation of the place. These explanations are usually structured around a series of questions for which some authority will provide an answer in some kind of philosophical dialogue. The island motif is often used in this kind of work as it supplies both the detachment and the coherence necessary to create a different society (Carey 228). Of course, eventually, the traveller will return to his or her own country in order to be able to spread the word about this new and better society.

This classical structure or "grammar" of utopian fiction as described by several authors (Carey 227, Parrinder 155-156, Vieira 7, Dutton 195, among many others): Journey, often by sea, of a traveller to an unknown place, guided tour with explanations of the organisation of the place by means of a dialogue with some kind of sage, settling down for some time in the new society, in which the communal sharing of work and property is a core principle, and leaving to take the message to his or her original countrymen, is closely followed by Foigny in his *Terra Incognita Australis*. Just by perusing the Table of Chapters preceding the story, we can easily see the structure of the story. Chapter 1 is devoted to telling us about the protagonist's birth and education, and in chapters 2 and 3 the eventful voyage that took him to Australia is described. In the following chapters descriptions of the island (chapter 4), its people (chapter 5), their religion (chapter 6), their opinions on life and death (chapter 7), their daily activities (chapter 8), their language (chapter 9) and the animals inhabiting the island (chapter 10) are provided. Chapter 11, in turn, introduces the reader to some "Australian commodities" that, not existing in Europe, could be useful there. Chapter 12 is devoted to explaining some of the confrontations Australians have with their enemies, the Fondins. And the two last chapters, 13 and 14, deal

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<sup>3</sup> The second part would be published in England in 1679.





with the way in which Sadeur manages to escape from Australia, where he has been sentenced to death, and his stay in Madagascar on his journey back to Europe.

Sadeur spends thirty-five years in Australia (title page, 171) and he is 57 when he eventually leaves the island (172); throughout these many years he has long conversations with Suains, the venerable old man, who becomes his guide and counsellor so that he can learn the ways of the country and survive there. As explained above, these conversations are philosophical discussions, made of questions and answers, by means of which some of Foigny's own concerns as well as those of the society of his time are addressed. He discovers several idyllic settings, first in Congo (20-31), where he also comes across some fantastic creatures, and then when he reaches Australia (61-62). And throughout his account there are continuous comparisons between Australia/ns and Europe/ans, mostly to the advantage of the new continent. The Preface already mentions that Australia is a "Country much more Fertile and Populous than any in *Europe*"; and the "*Inhabitants* [of Australia] rejoice in the possession of a Happiness, which all the *Northern* People are destitute of" (60). It is often that Sadeur admires "*a Conduct so apposite to our defective one*" (78), and he also compares the kind of food and the eating habits taken by the members of both societies to the disadvantage of the Europeans.

One of the outstanding elements in the book is the fact that Australian society is made up of hermaphrodites and that the protagonist himself happens to be a hermaphrodite too. The fact that Sadeur has such a condition is disclosed very early in the novel, when he remembers a Portuguese matron who "profest a great desire of serving me till she found that I was of two *Sexes*, I would say an *Hermaphrodite*" (10). At the very beginning of chapter 5 we are told that "All the *Australians* are of both *Sexes*, or *Hermaphrodites*" (63), and the same aversion that the matron had displayed for Sadeur, is shown now by the Australians towards those who are not hermaphrodites and "if happens that a Child is born but of one [sex], they strangle him as a Monster" (63). However, for the rest of the chapter we are told of the advantages of this hermaphroditism as it prevents carnal and brutal love among them (70), as well as the "power which man had usurped over Woman" (72) in European societies. Bovetti (379) contends that the creation of this hermaphrodite society is not the mere fantasy of a libertine, but responds to an internal logic of Foigny's utopia. At the same time the legend of hermaphroditism is very old, and this story may remind us of the Amazons of the Greek mythology and the androgynous beings in Plato. For Keene, however, even if Foigny probably drew on those models, he presented in Sadeur a more heroic and humanised hermaphrodite, in contrast to a previous "transcendent otherworldly figure or an actual monstrous embodiment" (130). Nevertheless, the creation of this kind of sexually inverted society was a way Foigny contrived to criticise contemporary European society (Bovetti 381, Keene 140).

Hermaphroditism had also been reported by travellers in their accounts of journeys both to America and India (Bovetti 379). In fact, utopia has been associated to travel literature since the time of More, who used its conventions and adapted them to his aims (Vieira 7). Utopia is also inseparable from the imaginary voyage (Pohl 53) and the very idea of the term utopia has always been associated with a spatial dimension that created imaginary geographies. Indeed, utopias situated their ideal worlds in distant



countries and undiscovered islands, or even the moon, and they were unmistakably influenced by contemporary quests of discovery and colonisation. Travel accounts also prove to be critical to some extent since, by contrasting the far-away lands and the European countries and enhancing the happiness and prosperity of the countries visited, they are somehow criticising what they have at home (Bovetti 371-372). It is also worth noting how the information given by travellers was often subjective and lacking real foundation, something that did not seem to worry the readers of the seventeenth century who took them as real (Bovetti 373). Phillips argues (124) that, despite all the extravagant adventures present, Sadeur's journey is broadly realistic and that even if most of what happens in it may appear fantastic and incredible to a modern reader, these adventures were realistic by seventeenth century standards. Pirates, terrible storms and consequent shipwrecks, as well as flying beasts and hermaphrodites were relatively common elements in medieval and Renaissance travel writing.

#### 4. *TERRA INCOGNITA AUSTRALIS*: BECOMING PART OF THE NOVEL GENRE

Utopian fiction has been associated with different genres: travel literature, for instance, has already been mentioned in the previous section. Parrinder makes the connection between utopian writing and romance and he argues that "if romance is an expression of the yearning for the unattainable, then utopia is that which cannot be attained" (154). While in romance there is a happy ending for that particular story and situation, in utopia, the happy ending affects a whole society. In Parrinder's opinion, some of the improbable and extraordinary events of utopias would also link them with romances; however, the systematic description of a new world and society often found in utopias, also relates them to the realistic novel. Parrinder also contends (155) that, on close analysis, the long-established difference between romance and novel disappears since all novels will contain romance elements and most fictional plotting relies on improbable coincidences. As Carey puts it (242), the coupling of utopian form with other forms like romance and travel accounts was part of the hybridising process that marked this period and also contributed to the emergence of the novel genre.

One of the aims the novel genre strove for was verisimilitude. In the case of Foigny's *Terra Incognita Australis*, the narrative device used is the one so often adopted by utopian writers, that is, the miraculous finding or chance transmission of a manuscript telling the story of a traveller to strange lands. In Foigny's case he had received the manuscript from Sadeur's own hand and it is presented as his authentic memoirs: "These are the contents of *Sadeurs Memoirs* written with his own hand" (186).<sup>4</sup> The author of the Preface, that is Foigny, warns the reader that extraordinary

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<sup>4</sup> In the 1676 French version there is a far more detailed explanation of how the manuscript is transmitted from Sadeur to Foigny (Lachèvre 65-67). In Bovetti's opinion, after such a detailed



things are going to be presented; however, “the Reader will not much scruple to believe them, when he shall be informed, that a *Southern unknown Land* has been talkt of these 200 Years.” And he goes on to describe the several attempts to reach the Australian continent thus emphasizing the verisimilitude of the story. At the same time, by addressing the readers, he brings them into the game that implies a kind of pact between the writer and the readers; the former writes about a society that does not exist and the latter, despite the awareness that such a society does not exist, act as if they believed the author (Vieira 8).

Another way in which Foigny emphasizes verisimilitude is through the realistic geographical imagery he uses in his story. On several pages, he provides in as accurate detail as possible his whereabouts: “having applied my self to find out the Elevation of the Sun, I judged that I was 33 deg. Lat. South, but I knew not the Longitude” (34); “the place where *I* might be, which *I* found to be about 35 deg. *South*” (40). More specifically, on page 48 he says, “I have here therefore set down the best account of the *Australian Territories* that I could get either by the relations of others, or cou’d describe according to the Meridan of *Ptolemy*,” and then he moves on to describe the geography of the continent for a few more pages. Regarding this point, Romano reports (72) that Sadeur used the meridian of Ptolemy to describe in detail all the different parts of the *Terra Australis* from the meridian 340° to the 160°, that is, land from the Indian Ocean to the American Pacific coast. And Phillips (181), quoting Fausett, contends that Foigny used as geographical sources two cosmographies by Gaston Jean-Baptiste, Baron de Renty, published in Paris in 1645 and 1657. A final note on the issue of verisimilitude is that, even if utopian writers describe completely invented worlds, in order to be able to do this, they are bound to depart from the observation of the society in which they live and work. Hence, it could be said (Vieira 8) that the imagined society is a kind of inverted image of the real one.

Despite the criticisms of some authors (Carey 228, 232) regarding the lack of narrative in utopian writings in general and in Foigny’s work in particular (Bovetti 397), *Terra Incognita Australis* deploys some narrative techniques worth commenting on. Probably, one of the most outstanding techniques is the use of the frame narrative. As mentioned above when speaking about verisimilitude, Foigny, by means of the preface, becomes an extradiegetic narrator who introduces a second narrative level in which Sadeur emerges as the intradiegetic narrator. Throughout the story, further narrative levels are created; thus, Sadeur knows about his birth and childhood thanks to the fact that he “receiv’d a Memoir from a Father Jesuit of *Lisbon in Portugal*, when I was at *Villa Franca*, which contains an Account of my Birth, and the *Adventures of my younger Years*” (2) thereby becoming the reader / narratee of the telling of his own story. And some of the protagonists of his story will also become occasional narrators; such is the case of Monsieur de Sarre who

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description of the finding of the manuscript, the reader will have no doubt as to the authenticity of the rest of the book (376-377).



“after his arrival, began to particularize his adventures to his Wife” (7). Towards the end of the book, once Sadeur is in Madagascar, he recounts his story on several occasions, not directly to the reader of his memoirs, but through his narration to several people he meets there:

I recounted to [the Captain] the History of my Birth, of my Education, of my Shipwracks, and of my Arrival in *Australia*. (178)

I was obliged to begin my History again, and recount as well as I could possibly, the particulars of the *Australian* Countrey, the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants, and the rest. (179)

Here again I recounted my History at length to the Governour. (181)

I told him all my History, my Shipwracks, my Arrival in *Australia*, the stay I had made there, and the manner of my escape. (183)

Thus, his audience, that is, his narratees –being part of the story told– are intradiegetic. Another interesting point regarding narration is that, even if Sadeur is telling us a past story from a present moment, which would turn him into a kind of omniscient narrator, when writing his memoirs, he presents the events sometimes as an actual witness, “Thus passed the first Battle of the *Australians* against the *Fondins*, at which I was present, and which I accordingly describe, as an Eye-witness” (145), and sometimes as a reporter of what he has been told by others: “I apprehended sometime afterwards, that some Guards from the Sea saw part of this Combat, and that four were come in a little Shalop to see if they could know who I was” (44).

The text also contains some metafictional elements by means of which Sadeur makes explicit his role as a writer and the process of writing. As pointed out above, he starts by making the presence of the reader explicit at the very beginning of the Preface, and even challenges the reader regarding what can be taken to be true in the story. In other parts of the book, the author also wants to make himself present and refers explicitly to the text he is writing: “[this account] I am about to relate” (2); “this History that I am writing” (45); “And now to proceed with our *Narration*” (104); “I Write that which follows of the Isle of *Madagascar*, and I begin to flatter my self, that this History may go home with me, even to mine own Country” (163). And at some point (73), he will introduce a side note in order to clarify who the *Fondins* are, emphasizing once more the process of writing.

The last aspect I would like to linger on is the use the author makes of the narrative time. To start with, the whole narration is a huge analepsis since a past story is told from the present moment; many subsequent analepses will be found in the text as we come across several characters, or Sadeur himself, telling past stories. Additionally, Sadeur skillfully introduces some prolepses scattered throughout the text intended to keep the interest of the reader: “*I was Conceived in America and brought forth upon the Ocean*, an infallible presage of the miseries which were to attend me during my whole Life” (3); “this was but the beginning of a Tragedy, which I have now continued for about fifty five Years” (6); “That what I sought most



eagerly to shun, the Evil wherewith I was threatned did justly render it inevitable” (13); “both Sexes were necessary for me under pain of being destroyed at my arrival, as I shall show in the sequel of my Story” (45). In utopian fiction, as hinted at above, narration is replaced by description and digression, thus decelerating the story. The description of the landscape in Congo occupies over ten pages (20-31), although it includes some brief narrative episodes, since the protagonist moves around the country; and then many of the chapters, as explained in section 3, are devoted to the description of different aspects of the life on the island. However, the opposite phenomenon also takes place as, in the course of our story, 57 years –the age of the protagonist– have gone by, of which 35 have been spent on the island, and we are hardly aware of that, except for Sadeur himself telling us. And in the first three chapters, in which things actually happen: an account of Sadeur’s eventful birth, childhood and youth, his voyage to several places in Africa and finally the incidents which took him to the southern world, ellipsis and summaries are frequently used. Finally, regarding frequency in narrative time, that is the relation between the number of times an event appears in the story and the number of times it is narrated, just to mention that some of the few events taking place in the story are told more than once in the text; for instance: “I have told you already of the tenderness which I shewed to a pretty *Fondin Lady*” (165) or the examples given above of how Sadeur retells his story over and over again to different people when in Madagascar.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The lack of artistic quality of Foigny’s *Terra Incognita Australis* has been pointed out by some authors (Bovetti 397). The book is presented as something loose and discontinuous, as Foigny fails to artistically combine the adventure and exotic elements with the philosophical issues. Allegedly, this would be due to the fact that his rational mind is not filled by the creative and artistic spirit. However, Foigny’s work has been considered as a radical critique of some of the basic principles and institutions of European society (Phillips 120); and, by introducing an egalitarian world, with no ranks or differences, he was rejecting the existing European hierarchies of the time (Kapferer 817). Religious institutions are also attacked when he describes how Australian morals are “inspir’d by the only light of Nature and Reason” (73) and states that religion is a personal matter (Phillips 124). And by creating a society with no gender division, he was consequently attacking the contemporary notion of patriarchy (Keene 130). Thus, Foigny posed fundamental questions concerning the social and religious orders of his time. Moreover, the book had some influence on utopias and imaginary journeys published years later and was acknowledged by scholars in the area of the history of ideas due to its philosophical, political and social contents (Bovetti 397). Finally, as remarked in the previous section, Foigny’s novel also made a contribution to the development of the budding novel genre.

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# GILDON'S GOLDEN SPIES: OR, MINTING REMARKS ON MODERN SOCIETIES

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## ABSTRACT

The sub-genre of fiction known as the “novel of circulation” (or the “it-narrative” or “object narrative”), in which inanimate objects and animals come to life to tell tales of their adventures, gained increasing popularity throughout the eighteenth century. The currency trope was a rather common one: in Britain alone, there are 37 recorded titles up to 1900. Often, the lower the face value of the numismatic narrator, the shorter the story. The first so-called novel of this kind was Charles Gildon's *The Golden Spy* (1709). In this book, the unlikely narrators, a French Louis d'or, an English guinea, a Roman crown, and a Spanish pistole, constantly quarrel to defend the greatness of their respective nations. This article aims to examine the complex relationships of both companionship and rivalry between the coins, as well as how concerns and anxieties regarding the general state of affairs were very much similar throughout the courts of Europe.

KEYWORDS: eighteenth century, novel of circulation, satire, Charles Gildon, *The Golden Spy*.

## LOS ESPÍAS DE ORO DE GILDON, O IMPRESIONES SOBRE SOCIEDADES MODERNAS

## RESUMEN

El subgénero de ficción conocido como novela de circulación (o «narrativa-it» o narrativa de objeto), en el que objetos y animales inanimados cobran vida para contar sus aventuras, ganó popularidad a lo largo del siglo XVIII. El tropo monetario era bastante común: solo en Gran Bretaña, hay 37 títulos registrados hasta 1900. A menudo, cuanto menos valía el narrador numismático, más breve era su historia. La primera novela de este tipo fue *The Golden Spy* (1709), de Charles Gildon. En este libro, los improbables narradores, un luis de oro francés, una guinea inglesa, una corona romana y una pistola española se pelean constantemente para defender la grandeza de sus respectivas naciones. El objetivo de este artículo es examinar la compleja relación entre el compañerismo y la rivalidad entre las monedas, y mostrar cómo las preocupaciones y ansiedades sobre los asuntos de estado en general eran muy similares en las cortes europeas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: siglo XVIII, novela de circulación, sátira, Charles Gildon, *The Golden Spy*.

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In the eighteenth century, the sub-genre of fiction known as the novel of circulation, it-narrative, or object narrative, became increasingly popular. From the early 1700s, there was a proliferation of autobiographies of inanimate objects, such as coins, toys, books, furniture, clothes, utensils, accessories, vehicles, statues, and food, as well as animate beings, like plants and flowers, insects, and animals, such as dogs, cats, horses, birds, and mice –even body parts narrated these stories. “For early eighteenth-century writers, objects challenge[d] subjectivity by blurring the boundaries between thought and thing, self and stuff. This challenge was especially acute because things were everywhere in the early eighteenth century” (Benedict 194).

In fact, the “transmigration of souls from person to thing became a running theme in eighteenth-century literature” (Trentmann, *Empire* 105). This sub-genre of fiction gained increasing popularity that continued well into the nineteenth century, and some forms have even appeared in recent decades.<sup>1</sup> As Trentmann put it: “Things are back” (“Materiality” 283). However, even in the eighteenth century, this literary device was not completely new. As Flint points out: “inanimate storytellers can be traced back to Pythagoras (who describes the oral capacities of rocks and trees) [...]” (“Speaking” 162). These narratives “are prose fictions that take inanimate objects or animals as their central characters, sometimes endowing them with a subjectivity –and thus a narrative perspective– of their own” (Blackwell vii). Indeed, the narrators display self- and other-awareness that is incompatible with the true nature of animals and objects devoid of conscience. It should be noted that these non-human protagonists have no power of decision regarding their whereabouts –they are continuously either lost or found, given away or disposed of, purchased or sold, and condemned or saved throughout their narratives. The narrators “are conveyed from person to person, borne by those who purchase them, exchange them, find them, or steal them, while others transport themselves, circulating to collect and deposit them” (Blackwell vii). It is interesting to note, however, that by consisting of “a transfusion of identity from human to thing” (Lamb, “Modern Metamorphoses” 147), the novels of circulation anthropomorphise while simultaneously reduce human beings to sources of entertainment. In fact, in novels of circulation “the transfer of moral initiative and speech from humans to things coincides almost always with the charge of inhumanity” (Lamb, “Crying” 959). In the case of *The Golden Spy*, “Gildon’s shower-gold establishes the value of its own soul at the expense of the human” (Lamb, *Things* 222).

The currency trope is a rather common one in novels of circulation from this period: in Britain alone, there are 37 recorded titles until 1900,<sup>2</sup> and often, the less the numismatic narrator is worth, the shorter its story. Some short narratives were

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *Underworld* (1997), by Don DeLillo, in which the narrator is a baseball, or *Accordion Crimes* (1996), by Annie Proulx.

<sup>2</sup> As per Bellamy’s list in “It-Narrators and Circulation: Defining a Subgenre” (2014), to which she added four more titles in the index of *British It-Narratives, 1750-1830, Volume 1-Money* (2012).

typically published in magazines or newspapers. Arguably, there is no more fitting narrator for these novels since banknotes and coins are objects of circulation *par excellence* as they continuously exchange owners and functions. As Smith points out in *The Wealth of the Nations*: “[...] the same guinea [that] pays the weekly pension of one man today, may pay that of another tomorrow, and that of a third the day after” (177), so perhaps there is no more appropriate narrator for novels of circulation since they are prime examples of this type of story. The very nature of money means that it can be quickly moved around in a short amount of time, and it holds no prejudice in terms of class, gender, religion, or race. A numismatic narrator, disguised as an inconspicuous object surreptitiously gathering information of both private and public life, makes it a privileged observer of human behaviour, and “[a] fresh coin was a kind of Gazette that published the latest news of the Empire” (Addison, “Dialogues” 159). Furthermore, the fact that gold coins have often undergone numerous metamorphoses, having been different objects at different points in time (such as jewellery), passing along mostly from sinner to sinner is particularly significant, especially if one bears in mind that these satirical tales may also be perceived as cautionary tales to the reader. This realisation is further strengthened by the notion that “[e]ighteenth-century commentators were describing a world they saw as replete with rogues and desperadoes of all kinds [...]” (Bell 9), and the numismatic protagonists not only described but also harshly criticised what they saw as the degradation of society.

Charles Gildon (1665-1724), “a prolific literary hack, who turned his hand to a variety of genres, among them literary criticism, biography, poetry, and drama, including adaptations or imitations of plays [...]” (Beal n.p.), penned “the first, fully fledged it-narrative in English” (Lamb, “Modern” 153). Indeed, Gildon’s work, *The Golden Spy: Or, a Political Journal of the British Nights Entertainments of War and Peace, and Love and Politics: Wherein Are Laid Open, the Secret Miraculous Power and Progress of Gold, in the Courts of Europe. Intermix’d with Delightful Intrigues, Memoirs, Tales, and Adventures, Serious and Comical* (1709),<sup>3</sup> “inaugurated a storytelling fad –the speaking object” (Flint, “Speaking” 162). In fact, “*The Golden Spy* extended the trope’s logic of exaggerated mobility, inaugurating what would become the widely imitated inanimate object-narrator, and more specifically, the money-narrator” (Englert 219). Moreover, “[o]nly gold coins, most notably Louis d’or, Spanish pistoles and English guineas, dominated the international commercial activities in this period, while silver coins, copper coins or banknotes were largely confined to domestic circulation” (Wu 245). Gildon’s choice of gold numismatic narrators, the “metal of princes, successful merchants, and the Church” (Connor 86), is particularly noteworthy since it suggests that his satire targets the upper class. It should be noted that “Gildon’s work and the object narratives it inspired [...] are particularly engrossed in textual objectification that their inanimate narrators duplicate” (Flint, *Appearance* 164).

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<sup>3</sup> Henceforth referred to as *The Golden Spy*.



One of the most popular numismatic narrators was found in Charles Johnstone's four-volume *Chrysal; Or, the Adventures of a Guinea* (1760). A sequel was published in 1764 and it had reached 20 editions by 1800. In the introduction to the 2011 edition of *Chrysal*, Bourque notes that "the 1700s gave rise to a panoply of cultural forms that exploited the noteworthiness of individuals while evading responsibility for naming them directly, carefully tempering celebrity with seeming anonymity" (Johnstone xxv). One year after the publication of *The Golden Spy*, Addison published "Adventures of a Shilling" (1710), which exhibits a much more imperial facet, as the coin has to undergo a cosmetic change so as to be accepted in the empire's metropolis. In Addison's story, the author enters an oneiric-style "delirium" (123) and dreams of a storytelling shilling that came to England as an ingot from Peru in Sir Francis Drake's convoy. Upon its arrival, the first metamorphosis happens as it is "taken out of [...] the Indian habit, refined, naturalized, and put into the British mode, with the face of Queen Elizabeth on one side, and the arms of the country on the other" (Addison, "Adventures" 123). Therefore, the very identity of the precious metal is stripped away, making it no longer an alien by virtue of having had a sort of facelift and disguising its true origins so as to assimilate into the new country. Indeed, as Pasanek observes, "the stamping of coins with the bust of an emperor or with the profile of a king or hero advances associations of character and currency" (51). Notwithstanding the fact that object narrators "seek a unified national identity [...] they are subject to a variety of dislocations that not only disrupt their storytelling but also complicate the meaning of citizenship" (Flint, "Speaking" 162).

By assuming the narrative voice of objects or animals, contemporary writers could write more freely than if they were to assume their own narrative persona, and "voice becomes an agency of moral impetus, when spiritual morbidity is able to be characterised ventriloquially" (Crowe 12). Besides, the speaking object/animal "can move unlimited by class, gender, character development, or social affiliation though diverse spheres of the society" (Lupton, "Knowing Book" 403). Indeed, these narrators are able to explore social systems through various ideological positions from a satirical perspective. Furthermore, the loose form of these narratives "enabled them to combine general social satire and social comment with elements of the *roman à clef* or *chronique scandaleuse* tradition, presenting real characters in a satirical light" (Bellamy, "Novel" 121), "often paint[ing] a grim picture of vice and folly" (Trentmann, *Empire* 105). "Satire," as defined by Johnson, is "a [text] in which wickedness or folly is censured" (4: 222), and one must not forget that

Satire has traditionally had a public function, and its public orientation remains. Although the satirist may arraign God and the universe [...] he usually seems to believe –at least to hope– that change is possible. Personal change, in his view, leads to social change; he insists that bad men make bad societies. He shows us ourselves and our world; he demands that we improve both. And he creates a kind of emotion which moves us toward the desire to change. (Spacks 363)



The moralizing role that the satirist aims to play in society by implementing the Latin maxim “*ridendo castigat mores*” is an important part of *The Golden Spy*'s genesis since Gildon, as a satirist, “demands decisions of his reader, not mere feelings, [hence aiming to arouse the reader's] energy to action, not purge it in vicarious experience” (Paulson 15). In this sense, Gildon's work is a prime example of object satire since his “object-narrators can be both parodic versions and satirical observers of human behaviour” (Bellamy, “It-Narrators” 119). The human characters of everyday life depicted in the novels of circulation, with all of their inherent triviality, focus on the lives of not only ordinary people, but of prominent figures as well.<sup>4</sup> The choice of narrators in *The Golden Spy* reveals new conceptions of knowledge since objects become “the subjects of literature and culture” as subjectivity collapses “into objectivity under the pressure of handling, collecting, owning, stepping around, and feeling things” (Benedict 194).

The reception of these kinds of narratives is rather controversial. A contemporary critic said the following of the literary technique used and the readers of these books:

It is indeed a convenient method to writers of the inferior class, of emptying their commonplace books, and throwing together all the farrago of public transactions, private characters, old and new stories, everything, in short, which they can pick up, to afford a little temporary amusement to an idle reader. (Smollett 477-478)

This claim that the writer is “of the inferior class” places this sub-genre of fiction and its advocates in a challenging situation, as it suggests that mediocre authors (presumably, from Grubb Street<sup>5</sup>) pen mediocre books consisting of little more than the patching together of previous works with little literary integrity. The hack writer of Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* (1704) had already asserted that “whatever word or sentence is printed in a different character shall be judged to contain something either of wit or sublime” (21). Moreover, the characterisation of readers of object satire as “idle” is also indicative of the contempt this critic had for these stories. Similarly, Addison complained about the power of “tasteless Readers”

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<sup>4</sup> It is worth remembering that the human characters of this sub-genre were meant to take a swing at real-life characters. For example, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, after reading Francis Coventry's *Pompey the Little* (1752), one of the most popular English novels of circulation, wrote the following lines to her daughter: “It is a real and exact representation of Life as it is now acted in London, as it was in my time, and as it will be (I do not doubt) a Hundred years hence, with same little variation of Dress, and perhaps Government. I found there many of my Acquaintance” (Montagu 363). It is significant that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu classifies the portrayal of London's society as timeless, referring to the past, present, and future, which may suggest she held a less fluid vision of the city's society.

<sup>5</sup> “Originally the name of a street near Moor-fields in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called grubstreet” (Johnson, 3: 798).



in *The Spectator*'s June 19, 1712 edition (384). Other reviews of these kinds of works also focused on their inferior nature, along with the inferiority of their authors:

Adventures of this kind are so hackneyed, that genius itself could scarcely lend them grace, or learning convey to them importance. Neither have any share in this work. All has been told before, in a better manner; and the reflections are trite, and tediously expanded: in short, all the bookmaker's art is exhausted; all the typographer's ingenuity employed, to spin out the meagre materials into a trifling and insipid volume. (Anon, "The Adventures of a Watch" 569).

The reception of this kind of narrative is not the only contentious topic, as this sub-genre of fiction raises several problems of "generic definition," according to Bellamy ("It-Narrators" 117). Some critics emphasise the character of the non-human narrator or protagonist as a defining element, while others highlight that what these works have in common is the fact that the object or animal telling the story passes through several hands. Nonetheless, Bellamy cautions that this is also controversial, concluding that the key features of these narratives are the following: "the first is a narrator that, whether animal, vegetable or manufactured object, lacks independent agency [...] the second [one is] the transference of the narrator or protagonist between otherwise unconnected characters" ("It-Narrators" 121).

It should be mentioned, however, that the denomination "novel of circulation" places the emphasis on the circulation of the narrator, and this in turn reflects the circulation of print culture itself and contemporary anxieties about the commerce of objects and books (Flint, "Speaking" 174-175). Denominations for these narrators include "eccentric-narrator," "it-narrator," and "circulating protagonist" (Englert 221). I choose to refer to works of this sub-genre as "novels of circulation" because their non-human narrators tell their tales as they circulate (or have circulated) in both distinct physical and social spaces. Furthermore, it should be noted that "[t]hings thus presented early eighteenth-century writers with a paradox: they connected identity to the material world, but they also threatened to usurp literary discourse" (Benedict 194). Classifications aside, these texts have received a great deal of attention and "have become particularly interesting as commentaries on new forms of subjectivity, imperial commerce, and the new world of commodities" (Downie 253). Moreover, their satiric vision of the world can certainly be an enticing line of study for scholars, especially when considering the reviews of such works at the time of their publication, whether good or bad. Literary criticisms of novels of circulation

focused on their limited generic, moral, or commercial function, often connecting them to British Imperialism. [...] More recently, scholars have linked [these] tales to broader economic, social and political issues, situating commodities in a complex signifying field that challenges international distinctions and complicates both nationhood and the public sphere. (Flint, "Speaking" 167)

It should be remembered, however, that "the fragmentation of transit at a moment when disciplined, systematic travel was starting to dominate (Ewers 101)"



is a central aspect of the novel of circulation since it revolves around fortuitous encounters between objects/animals and people they find while in transit:

The readiness to center fiction on moving goods –and indeed on property that repeatedly ceases to be *personal* but which instead [...] resumes its habit of circulation is not really a violation of the premise that novels ought to trade on objects of *human* interest. Better to consider it testimony to the gusto with which the novel throughout the eighteenth century defined itself as a machine for social interconnection and reflected on the marketability permitting it to fulfil that role. (Lynch 140)

Additionally, it is important to address the question of authorship since authors and narrators are separate entities in novels of circulation. *The Golden Spy* was published anonymously, and in the preface, Gildon poses as a bookseller whose customers are found in both the public and private spheres, such as “White’s Chocolate House, Tom’s and Will’s Coffee House, and the Temple [...] the Court, the Great Man’s Studies, and the Ladies’ Closets” (Gildon A3-A4). The fact that Gildon chose to pose as a bookseller is significant because there was much instability in the printing business at the time that *The Golden Spy* was written. Therefore, it follows that “[t]he speaking object figures the author’s position in a print culture in explicit (though not always systematic) ways, echoing Gildon’s claim that the author is both rewarded and threatened by the opportunities of print” (Flint, “Speaking” 163). Indeed, Gildon seems more concerned with the material consequences than with the intellectual significance of authorship (Flint, “Speaking” 163).

Ross argues that the eighteenth century epitomised a “swivel moment” (236) as “print becomes the cause of authority rather than merely its effect” (245). The Copyright Act of 1710, also known as “The Statute of Anne,” ascribed rights to authors instead of printers, representing an “Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies During the Times Therein Mentioned” (full title), and signified “the divorce of copyright from censorship and the reestablishment of copyright under the rubric of property rather than regulation” (Rose 48). This act did manage to “bring stability to an insecure book trade” (Deazley 13) while simultaneously establishing “an entirely pragmatic bargain involving the author, the bookseller and the public” (Deazley 14), which, as stated in the preamble, aimed at the encouragement of public learning and to make knowledge more available and accessible. However, its shortcomings and omissions caused some apprehension, since it confused as much as clarified issues of literary intellectual property. The unprecedented development of bookselling and publishing in the eighteenth century was symptomatic of “the burgeoning material culture of the period, driven in large part by the wealth of the middling classes and their pursuit of cultured past-times” (White n.p.). The case of Charles Gildon’s works, Flint argues, “not only demonstrates that authorship, reading, and book-making interpenetrate at crucial moments in a text’s various incarnations, but also complicates the writer’s corresponding claims to intellectual property and social status” (*Appearance* 62).



Despite not having “the immediate relevance of a more political satire” (Orr, Location no. 4106), *The Golden Spy* provides invaluable information about its time. In Gildon’s book, the “narrators” are several coins that circulate through all social ranks, recounting sensational and scandalous events. Through Gildon’s work, we follow the adventures of a Louis d’or, a guinea, a Roman crown, and a Spanish pistole that constantly quarrel to defend the greatness of their respective nations of origin. And in this sense, as with spy novels, “[t]he action is self-evidently political since it involves national rivalries and constantly veers towards a paranoid vision of ‘violation by *outside* agencies’ and ‘violation of individual autonomy by *internal* agencies’” (Seed 115).<sup>6</sup> Indeed, “[t]his internationalism both widens the boundaries of the cultural realm and indicates that national bias, competing languages, and imported ideologies continually disrupted sites of public discourse in Britain” (Flint, *Appearance* 177). The human interlocutor who puts the coins’ stories to paper acts as a mediator somewhat, but one might consider him as also playing a censoring role since the tales the coins tell are sometimes so unflattering (to say the least) to humanity that they had to be edited “for fear the Sense of Things should destroy all Confidence betwixt Man and Man, and so put an End to Human Society” (Gildon 116).

These “golden spies” come to life not only to share their experiences but also to pass judgement on all that they have witnessed. A close reading shows the similarities, but also the differences, between the eighteenth-century European courts –particularly those of London, Rome, and Versailles– as narrated by the coins. Interestingly enough, apart from defending the superiority of its country above all others, the Spanish pistole mostly remains silent. The coins take turns narrating their experiences in several courts and across several eras. The “animated coin[s] spin[-] tales of human degradation, [their] consciousness explained through a satiric discussion of materialistic ideas familiar in the Restoration period” (Nowka, “Talking” 197). The unlikely narrators, a Louis d’or, a guinea, a Roman crown, and a Spanish pistole, accomplish “most of [their] greatest Exploits in the dark” (Gildon 7), inconspicuously acting as spies, unveiling a “particular Mark of [...] Excellence so invisible to human Eyes” (Gildon 30). It should also be noted that

[b]y multiplying the number of ‘spies’, choosing as spies objects likely to be frequently exchanged, and giving those objects different national stamps and thus distinct spheres of circulation, Gildon was able to generate an even more comprehensive narrative mechanism for assembling the varied stories of characters from across Europe. (Blackwell xi)

As Johnson defined it, a spy was “one sent to watch the conduct or motions of others; one sent to gain intelligence in an enemy’s camp or country” (Vol. 4 502). It is interesting to note that “[s]py” is a very frequent word in the literary production

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<sup>6</sup> In this quote, David Seed cites Clive Bloom’s “Introduction” to *Spy Thrillers: From Buchan to le Carré*.





of the eighteenth century. A bibliographical query on the English Short Title Catalogue of the British Library in the time interval between 1700 and 1799 clearly reveals its extensive use” (Mattana 125). It should be noted, however, that “[t]he status of the spy’s disinterestedness took off [...] even as the motif of spying collapsed into that of innocuous voyeurism [...], [as with] Charles Gildon” (Backscheider & Ingrassia 59). The fact that “Gildon was able to unite the sinister ethnography of the spy [...] with the quality of the marvelous [...]” (Lamb, *Things* 204) is of particular relevance since he could criticise the current state of affairs, protected by using an inanimate narrative persona. Furthermore, it is significant that this work was first published anonymously.

*The Golden Spy* is not a cohesive work of fiction but rather a collection of tales of political and social satire, consistent with the sub-genre, taking “the episodic, fragmented world of circulation to its logical extreme, choosing objects of mobility and exchange as witness to events” (Ewers 101), such as a handful of coins, in this case. The book opens with “The Epistle Nuncupatory, to the Author of *A Tale of a Tub*,” which might suggest that Gildon recognises Jonathan’s Swift “conflation of story, object, and author [as] a conceptual foundation for later narratives” (Flint, “Speaking” 166). The following chapter, “The Introduction, or The First Nights Entertainment,” is dedicated to the “Power and Progress of Gold,” and notes that “there is no place so strong, or guarded with that Vigilance, to which Gold will not gain admittance and bring to a Surrender sooner, and with more Safety, than the Batteries of Cannon, and the Valour of Heroes” (Gildon 8). The power of gold is considered supreme. These “spies” may be perceived as a metonym for gold, an instrumental factor in isolating those who have it from those who do not. The coins “tell the human narrator what they have learned about the power of money in various scenes of life, from the court to gaming houses, and from love intrigues to the ‘reformation of manners’ movement in London” (Nowka, “Reason” 191).

The next chapter, “The Second Nights Entertainment,” addresses “The Court; or, the Male and Female Favourites” (Gildon 38), which offers myriad tales of women who capitalise on their beauty to manipulate men to their own benefit. The Roman crown narrates “[t]he History of Donna Olympia, sister-in-law and favourite of Pope Innocent X” (Gildon 49) and her power over not only Innocent X but also Urban VIII. On this topic, the guinea shares the story of “The English Female Favourite” (Gildon 79), who was the mistress of Edward III, “[a] Prince who for many years made a most glorious figure in the World [...] yet in his declining Years a Lady had the good Fortune to captivate his Heart, in so powerful a degree, as to sully his past Glories” (Gildon 79). The Louis d’or also recounts several tales of deviant women who manipulated powerful men to advance their positions and seek their fortunes, with perhaps the most famous being the liaison between Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan.

For the most part, the stories that the coins tell depict women as cunning and men, more often than not, as their unsuspecting victims: “a Whore has no Thoughts but to her herself, her own Interest, or her Pleasure; for when a Woman has once forsaken the Rules of Virtue, she has nothing to retain her within any





Bounds” (Gildon 207). However, the guinea distinguishes the English courtiers from their French and Italian counterparts thusly:

Here the Courtier or Favourite has a harder part to play to come off with Credit and Success, than in *Italy* or *France*, where they need only the Art to wheedle and impose on the Prince, and they are masters of their Desires. But here the Courtier, Statesman or Favourite must have as careful an Eye to the Good-will of the People, as to the favour of the Sovereigns, or their Prosperity will be of a very short date. (Gildon 77)

“The Third Nights Entertainment” is devoted to “Gaming,” as indicated in its subtitle (Gildon 113). The author, feeling horrified by the tales of Italy and France, privately asks the guinea: “since we are alone, pray be candid, and set my Judgement right in this Particular; Is not our Court always free from those Villainies of the first magnitude, which are so well known to prevail in all other Courts?” (Gildon 114). But the answer is predictably un reassuring: “I am willing to believe this Incredulity, from the charitable Opinion you have of your Countryman, imagining them free from all the Vices of other Nation: But that is a very great Mistake [...]” (Gildon 115). However, it is conceded that the English have a generally less aggressive temper: “The *English* it’s true, seldom make so little of Murder in their Revenge as the *Spanish* or *Italian*, but then they find to the full as small a Concern in the public Depredations as any country in *Christendom*” (Gildon 115).

A common vice described by the coins is that of gambling, as pointed out in this chapter’s subtitle. Unsurprisingly, the Louis d’or blames others for the French people’s shortcomings: “*Gaming*, which like other Vices has passed the *Alps* from *Italy* to *France*, and there has produced as many fatal Proofs of its Mischief as in most places where it reigns” (Gildon 125). The guinea criticises the practice, but places the blame on legislators: “I wonder why [Parliament] don’t put a stop to that Evil that may ruin their Sons, debauch their Wives and Daughters, and render their Families infamous” (Gildon 170). Several stories depicting the ill effects of gambling and strongly condemning it underline that this was a problem common to most nations. Numerous public establishments popular for gaming are mentioned and the guinea concludes its story on this topic with a note of caution: “Though there be a thousand Tricks in the Play between Man and Man, yet that Between Man and Woman is ten times more hazardous” (Gildon 159). Indeed, gambling was especially dangerous for a woman because she had only her body and honour to use to back the stakes. By gambling, a man might place his family, friends, property, job, and position in society at risk, but the stakes were much higher for a woman because the only “real” property she had to risk was her body (Assassi 95). The meaning of debt was very different for a woman since it inevitably implicated her sexual honour as the “specie” with which she had to trade. In fact, gaming by women was a volatile combination of flirtation and self-exposure, often becoming a sexualised activity, since well-born women gambled just as recklessly as men, as much to alleviate the tediousness of their lives as in the vain hope of growing even richer.

By the end of the eighteenth century, gambling had become a generalised obsession as everyone was drawn to the gaming table, and there were plenty of



options—from high society’s exclusive clubs to gaming houses for the lower classes. The newspapers and pamphlets of the age reflected society’s growing concerns over gambling and the added hazards brought about by cheating.

The next chapter, “The Fourth Nights Entertainment, of Love Intrigues” includes the premise that “Man differs more from Man, than Man from Beast” (Gildon 147), which is a very harsh comparison in terms. A number of tales of sexual lewdness are told in this chapter, with most featuring prostitutes. However, part of the blame for this is placed on legislators, highlighting the gendered and social double standards imposed on poor women: “[...] instead of our Reformers falling on the poor Whores who take up with Half a-Crown, they should search into these Scoundrels, that Revenge the Whores Quarrel on their Wives and Daughters” (Gildon 327). The hypocrisy of looking the other way when the female prevaricators are wealthy courtesans or adulterers, either because their wealth can procure a bribe or their lover is a man of influence in society, is also highlighted.

“The Fifth Nights Entertainment, of Godly and Reformers” addresses the clergy, and all of the coins are harsh when referring to this class. The guinea says: “In my Travels through England I have not escaped the Gripe of the *Godly*, where I have made notable Discoveries of their Hypocrisy; for while their Pretences would raise them above Men, their Practices lays them lower than the Wickedness of Devils” (Gildon 11). The godly class fares no better in France: “I have been too often in the Coffers of the Clergy, and many times in their Studies and Closets, which has brought me thoroughly acquainted with their Vicious Inclinations, Irreligion, Hypocrisy, Cruelty, Ambition, Avarice and Pride” (Gildon 9-10). The Roman crown follows suit, considering that “*Alexander* the sixth [...] was all Imposter, and applied his whole Study and Exercise in all Arts of Fraud and Malice” (Gildon 47).

The closing chapter, “The Sixth Nights Entertainment, of Peace and War, or, the Trade of the Camp,” focuses on military corruption, as the Roman crown observes: “This is the State of our Spiritual Warfare, where the Opposites being Immortal, and the Ammunition Imaginary, the Conceit is Perpetual, in which every one gets but the Devil: For the *Romans* get Peasant Sins, and the Pope gets their Money for his Pardons [...]” (Gildon 287). Undoubtedly, the Louis d’or dominates this exchange, admitting that “[...] no Man was so good as a *Louis d’Ore*, so that on any demand of Men by these fighting Generals, the Council of the King consulted how many of us were fit to be employ’ed in such an Expedition; if the Sum prove too little, Additions were made, and Success always reached” (Gildon 290-291).

It is interesting to note that the coins do not just tell their stories to the author. In a style reminiscent of the lively conversations (and debates) held at coffee houses and in salons, they quarrel quite often—usually about the greatness of their respective nations. Perhaps one of their most amusing exchanges is the following:

For there was a *Guinea*, a *Spanish Pistole*, a *Roman Crown*, and my little *Louis d’Ore* engaged in a deep dispute, in which, as the Terms went very high, so neither would yield to the other the pre-eminence, or even allow an Equality of Merit either in War or Peace.



But the most positive in this, was my little *Louis d'Ore*, who made extravagant Encomiums on those many Advantages that *France* has over other Nations; the Politeness of its Natives, and the Valour and Conduct of its King.

[...] he was interrupted by the *Spanish Pistole*, and with that Air of Haughtiness which is so natural to the *Spaniard*, said, that all other Nations were but the sweepings of the *Spanish Monarchy*; the supreme Lord of which was designed by Nature for the Empire of the World, and having already the title of *most Catholic*.

A bare Name and an empty Title, interrupted the *Roman Crown*, is of little importance without something more substantial to support it. But you must own (continued he) that all Nations submit to ours, for what we had in the Time of the old Romans by the Sword, we now maintain by the power of the *Keys*; the greatest Kings and Princes of *Europe* still paying their duty to Rome.

Not so fast, (said the *Guinea*) that time is now past, for Kings are no longer the Bubbles of the Pope; and since the days of our good King *Henry*, his Holiness has been taught, that the Subjection of other Princes is very precarious. But if conscious Worth may have leave to boast, what Nation can compare with the *English*, who are not content to be rich and free themselves when almost all the world is in Slavery, but extend their Power to the Relief of the distressed on the Continent. (Gildon 39-40)

The coins' occasional soliloquies express their personal feelings and thoughts through which they (and, by extension, Gildon) present their own vision of the world to the readers. Their assertion that they are "like the *Materia Subtilis*, the wonderful Effects of which are reveal'd by Time and Experience, tho' it entirely fly the cognizance of all the Senses" (Gildon 29), indicates that they speak from a position of authority. Furthermore, "the presence of these narrators as critical outsiders, unable to intervene in the scenes they relate, recalls the scenes in which powerless readers are represented within self-conscious novels" (Lupton, *Knowing* 42).

It is generally agreed that the protagonists of novels of circulation, by definition, must circulate –in both social and physical senses. However, such characteristics prove insufficient when considering the work of the unknown author of *Memoirs of the Shakespear's-Head in Covent Garden. In Which Are Introduced Many Entertaining Adventures, and Several Remarkable Characters. By the Ghost of Shakespeare* (1755),<sup>7</sup> for example, which does not fit the profile because the static

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<sup>7</sup> This title appears in several catalogues from 1777. Henry Sotheran lists the work in his *A Catalogue of several Libraries and parcels of books*, etc., commencing Monday, July 14, 1777 (102), as do Ralph and George Edward Griffiths in *A Compleat Catalogue of All Books and Pamphlets Published for Ten Years Past, With Their Prices and References to Their Characters in the Monthly Review*, for the period between May 1749 to June 1759 (73). *A General Index to the Monthly Review from its Commencement to the Seventieth Volume* (1785), by S. Ayscough, who was Compiler of the Catalogue of undescribed Manuscripts in the British Museum, also mentions the title (509), as does R.P. More's 1815 *Catalogue of Moore's Subscription Library* (35). The 1827 *A catalogue of the theatrical and miscellaneous library of Mr. John Field, Bibliotheca Histrionica*, also includes the work (80). Similarly, there are mentions to *Memoirs of a Shakespeare Head in Covent Garden* in Henry George Bohn's *The Biography and Bibliography of Shakespeare*, published in 1863 (2316), and William Thomas Lowndes'



narrator (i.e. the Ghost of Shakespeare) is always in the same place, and the characters who revolve around it are the ones who narrate the stories of circulation. So, while there is circulation, it is of the characters, not of the narrator.

Similarly, Gildon's coins circulate no more, having lost their "agreeable Quality, which is only maintain'd by an absolute Freedom of circulating with the Sun about the World, where [they] make far greater Discoveries than that glorious Planet" (Gildon 7), as the author becomes attached to –and even enamoured by– his "golden spies" and cannot bear to part with them. This raises a number of questions about numismatic narrators' free will, since they have the freedom to tell all the stories they wish, but they have no power to choose into whose hands they fall or where they will eventually end up. Although "[they] are given perceptions, and thoughts, and voices, they are not given agency or the ability to move about like their human counterparts in eighteenth-century fiction" (Nowka, "Object" 847).

It should be noted that "[t]he value [the] owners attribute to their possessions is affective rather than economic: object and owner love one another for their virtues rather than their monetary worth" (Festa 324). The author's attachment to the coins does appear to be emotional, and some critics (Flint, *Appearance* 178) have even suggested there is an erotic component to this relationship since every evening the author rushes home, locks the door of his chamber, puts on his nightgown, gets into bed, and picks up his "bedfellows," holding them close to his ear and even giving them hugs and kisses (Gildon 6). Gildon even uses the pronoun "he" to refer to each coin, since "for after what passed betwixt us I may, with the Grammarians leave, call it He" (Gildon 6). This choice of gender is significant, hinting at the notion that the commanding force was of a male origin. It is nonetheless interesting to remember that a great deal of the circulating animals/objects were, in fact, the property of women, and moreover, that the consumer boom of the eighteenth century was owed in no small part to the pursuit of luxury by the women of the elite. By using the pronoun "he" and anthropomorphising them, Gildon places his coins in the human realm: "[...] the former Noise began to assume a Tone of the Humane Voice" (Gildon 4).

At the beginning of the book, the author is shocked at first but is soon delighted to discover that a handful of coins have the ability to speak and are keen to reveal what they have seen and learned as they have circulated around the world and through all social ranks. Indeed, the author had just been thinking as he laid in bed of "what noble and diverting Discoveries might be made, could any of the

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*The Bibliographer's Manual of English Literature Containing an Account of Rare, Curious, and Useful Books, Published in Or Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, published in 1864 (also 2316). This last reference is a new edition, revised, corrected and enlarged by Henry George Bohn, the same author who penned *The Biography and Bibliography of Shakespeare* (1863), and which includes exactly the same entry. Finally, Samuel Austin Allibone's *A critical dictionary of English literature and British and American authors, living and deceased, from the earliest accounts to the latter half of the nineteenth century*, published in 1870 (n.p.), also includes the title. All of these mentions above do not include its author. However, Dan Cruickshank, in his *London's Sinful Secret* (2009) attributes the book to Samuel Derrick (615).



Louis d'Ore's or Guineas reveal by discourse what Affairs they have negotiated, and those secret Intrigues, which have produc'd strange and terrible Effects in Kingdoms, and Families" (Gildon 3), and therefore he was "agreeably surpriz'd [...] with the humming noise like one struggling to speak, or not awake enough to give his Words their true Articulation [...]" (Gildon 3).

As Nowka points out: "Gildon's novel uses the figure of the coins to embody satirically the materialistic hypothesis" ("Talking" 204). Sure enough, the story opens with the author's reflection on the power of gold: "Were it not a receiv'd Maxim, that nothing is more Powerful than Gold, in War, and Peace; in Courts, and Camps; in Church, and State, with the Great and the Fair [...]" (Gildon 3).

The guinea, the Spanish pistole, the Roman crown, and the Louis d'or tell stories of human depravity that are common to all social classes, showing that the love of gold and therefore of power is not unique to a single country or era. The Louis d'or is the first to speak, followed by the Roman crown. Only then does the guinea come forward. Except on one single occasion, when the Spanish pistole speaks with an "Air of Haughtiness" (Gildon 139), this coin remains silent, which seems a very atypical behaviour for a Spanish character. The longstanding rivalry between England and Spain had been well-documented even before the defeat of the Invincible Armada in 1588, and the Anglo-Spanish War (1585-1604), a recurrent conflict between these countries, had come to an end five years before the publication of *The Golden Spy*.

Interestingly enough, the French coin has plenty to say about the depravity of the English—even more so than the guinea. This realisation is further complicated by the author's special fondness for the Louis d'or, calling him "my little Louis d'Ore" (Gildon 39) and lavishing this coin with particular affection: "I took him up in my Hand, gave him a thousand kisses, and hugging him close in my Bosom, full of Pleasure [...]" (Gildon 6).

These "golden spies" are very well-acquainted with all social echelons. The Louis d'or "[has been] in every Station of Life, from the *Prince* to the *Peasant*, and can unfold all the Mysteries of Iniquity, that in all Nations have always enriched Knaves, imposed on Fools, and baffled Men of Sense" (Gildon 14), and it professes to "know the Transactions in all the Climates of *Europe*, and Ages of the World, in War and Peace, in Love and Politics" (Gildon 14). The guinea and the Roman crown also assert their authority on all courts and ages, having experienced life first-hand in different places and times.

The worst criticism of England seems to come from the French coin. Regarding the country's political class, the following account is given: "I have been of all Parties and Factions, and am perfectly acquainted with all their Rogueries; their sham Pretences to the Good of the Public, to bubble the people into their measures, for their own private Interest and Advantage" (Gildon 12), adding: "I can teach you the Art of bribing Parliaments and public Assemblies, who, drunk with this *Aurum* potable, disembugue the Rights of the People while they vote against Arbitrary Power, and boast of *Magna Carta*" (Gildon 12). The Louis d'or is not any kinder when reflecting upon the English justice system: "I can inform you in the



Art of making a *bad* Cause *good*, before a Judge that weights the *Merit* of Plaintiff and Defendant by ounces of Gold, not Witness or Right” (Gildon 12).

Still, according to the guinea, a major shortcoming of its home country is its neglect of the arts:

And it is remarkable, that the two great Courts of Concourse, the Rivals of the *English* Court, I mean *Rome* and *Versailles*, have each had their Time in encouraging the finer Arts and Sciences, such as *Painting*, *Poetry*, *Eloquence*, *Music*, &c, but the *English Court* has never yet thought it worth its while to encourage Men of Art. (Gildon 115)

This statement is rather curious since the English Restoration represented a remarkable change in society through the renewed interest in the arts and science, mainly through patronage –a major characteristic of this period.

Regardless of their origins, all the coins narrate similar tales of humanity’s common vices throughout time, fuelled by a penchant for gold. When considering novels of circulation, one must keep in mind their satirical outlook on human mores, which, more often than not, blurs the line between fact and fiction. Moreover, one must also remember that these satirical tales may also function as words of caution to the reader, warning them of the pernicious effects of their dissolute conduct. History repeats itself, and Gildon’s coins indicate that we have learned nothing from the experiences of previous centuries:

Men were always the same in their Desires, in their Sins, in their Follies, and not very different in their Knowledge; if one Age lost it, the succeeding ones revived it, and though with little variation from what was before, yet the Reviver has challenged the Honour of Discovery. (Gildon 276)

Contrary to assumptions (that through the juxtaposing of stories narrated by coins of different nationalities, the aim would be to assert the superiority of one nation through a nationalist discourse that would convince the reader of that particular nation’s superiority over all others), we find in *The Golden Spy* a discourse that somewhat seems to aim at discovering which nation is most inferior. As Wu observes:

Four transnational coins –the Louis d’or, English guinea, Roman crown and Spanish pistole– are indeed deployed to diversify the tales in his book and to create a salon-like atmosphere in which every coin can freely share its opinions on a particular topic. Yet they are endowed with a more vital polemical purpose, namely, to demonstrate that, so far as moral depravity is concerned, England is the same as its two arch-enemies, France and the Roman Catholic Church. (246)

In Gildon’s book, the coins constantly push the boundaries of companionship by continuously engaging in passionate discussions; however, it is noticeable that they relish their humorous exchanges and ultimately enjoy each other’s company. Not forsaking their status as arch-rivals, the coins nonetheless make it apparent that they are united in a sort of “fellowship of the mint,” and it is their duty to bear witness



to all that they have seen. The topics they address and their underlying concerns do not change much over the centuries. Indeed, anxiety over questions of identity (as defined by nationality) and concerns regarding addictions (whether to gambling or alcohol) and more broadly destructive behaviour in general persist even to this day.

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# “A LIBAMENT TO YOUR PALATE”: NARRATIVE FORM, HISTORY AND GENDER IN *ELIANA. A NEW ROMANCE*\*

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## ABSTRACT

*Eliana. A New Romance* (1661), attributed to Samuel Pordage, not only failed to appeal to its contemporary readership, but also remains one of the most neglected romances of the early Restoration period. In 2007, Amelia Zurcher rescued it from oblivion by exploring the notion of ‘interest’ in two stories within this “more rather than less conventional” romance. In order to introduce it further and, in the process, suggest some of its “less conventional” aspects, this essay will focus, among other issues, on the diegetic and readerly structures, the strategies to reinforce the reliability of both the intradiegetic narrators and the extradiegetic voice, the remarkable combination of fiction and ancient history, the male relationships in the homosocial-homosexual spectrum, and the extolling of friendship as the ideal prototype of love. This essay may ultimately show some of the ways in which young Pordage tried to modernise the art of fiction.

KEYWORDS: *Eliana*, Restoration fiction, narrative technique, historical novel, masculinity.

«UN APERITIVO PARA VUESTRO PALADAR»: FORMA NARRATIVA,  
HISTORIA Y GÉNERO EN *ELIANA. A NEW ROMANCE*

## RESUMEN

*Eliana. A New Romance* (1661), atribuido a Samuel Pordage, no atrajo la atención de los lectores en el momento de su publicación y sigue siendo uno de los romances de la Restauración menos estudiados. En 2007, Amelia Zurcher rescató la obra del olvido al analizar la noción de ‘interés’ en dos historias del romance, el cual describió como “mucho más convencional que menos.” A fin de ofrecer una introducción más completa y, de camino, sugerir algunos de los elementos “menos convencionales,” este artículo estudiará, entre otros aspectos, las estructuras diegéticas y de lectura, las técnicas narrativas más fidedignas y objetivas ideadas tanto para las voces intradiegéticas como para el narrador extradiegético, la extraordinaria combinación de ficción e historia antigua, la variedad de relaciones masculinas dentro del espectro homosocial-homosexual, y la defensa de la amistad como prototipo ideal de amor. Este artículo mostrará algunas estrategias empleadas por el joven Pordage en su intento de actualizar el género narrativo.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Eliana*, ficción de la época de la Restauración inglesa, técnica narrativa, novela histórica, masculinidad.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the early Restoration period, the French heroic romances by La Calprenède and Scudéry continued to be translated and reissued, whereas *Eliana. A New Romance* and others originally written in English –usually by young men– failed to attract contemporary readership. In fact, they were left unfinished and –except for *Aretina*– never reissued, since authors would publish a portion of the romance to test reception.<sup>1</sup> *Eliana* was printed in folio size by T.R. [Thomas Roycroft] for Peter Dring (at the Sun in the Poultry next door to the Rose-Tavern) in London, in 1661. It comprised only the first part divided into six books and was described in the prefatory epistle “To the Reader” as: “[...] the first part of the whole Work, and indeed but a kind of introduction to the rest. This first appears as a Libament to your palate” (A3<sup>r</sup>). The author wished to remain anonymous, as he explained in the epistle, in order to freely overhear criticism, which reveals he was aware of a more than likely dubious reception.<sup>2</sup> He concealed his identity behind the pseudonym “an English Hand.” Later on, in the 1692 edition of *Athenae Oxonienses*, Anthony Wood attributed *Eliana* to Samuel Pordage, son of John Pordage (leader of the English Behmenists –after the German mystic Jakob Böhme– known as the Philadelphians later in the 1660s).<sup>3</sup> Pordage’s pseudonym is suggestive of a self-conscious attempt to naturalise the French heroic romance within the native tradition begun by Sidney. Other young writers such as Mackenzie, Bulteel, Crowne, and even Herbert, self-consciously tried to update the genre in different ways (and with different results) as it is evident in the prefaces of their respective romances. The author of *Eliana*,

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<sup>1</sup> Apart from *Eliana*, new romances by young authors first published in the 1660s include Mackenzie’s *Aretina* (Edinburgh 1660, London 1661), Bulteel’s *Birinthea* (1664), Crowne’s *Pandion and Amphigenia* (1665), and also Burton’s *Eriander* (1661), though he was older and the romance a panegyric text about the Stuarts. The only new successful romance in the 1660s was the first part of Ingelo’s religious allegory *Bentivolio and Urania* (1660), whose second part appeared in 1664, and the full, six-book work in 1669, with new editions in 1673 and 1682. The most acclaimed romances associated with the 1660s were sequels to the earlier instalments published in the 1650s: Herbert extended his *Cloria and Narcissus* (1653, 1654) to the six-book *The Princess Cloria* (1661), re-issued in 1665, while the sixth part of Boyle’s *Parthenissa* (1651-1656) appeared in 1669, and the whole romance in 1676 in folio size.

<sup>2</sup> The other anonymous romance published in the early Restoration years was (Herbert’s) *The Princess Cloria*, “written by a Person of Honour,” a *roman-à-clef* on the sensitive issue of recent English and European history.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Pordage (1633-1691?) was a pupil at the Merchant Taylor’s School and a member of Lincoln’s Inn. He became head steward to Philip Herbert, 5th Earl of Pembroke (Mary Sidney’s grandson). Besides his own publications (such as his edition of Seneca’s *Troades*, and the plays *Herod and Mariamne* and *The Siege of Babylon*), some of his father’s controversial works are believed to appear in his name around 1660. The *Dictionary of National Biography* also states that by 1660 he had married Dorcas Langhorne by whom he had two children (Lee 151-152).



however, drew particular attention to his nationality as the distinctive quality of both author and romance, leaving readers the task of identifying and judging his achievements and “failings” (A4<sup>r</sup>).

In the prefatory epistle, Samuel Pordage introduced the romance as “the fruits of some spare hours: and of those which might justly have been given to sleep” (A3<sup>r</sup>). He confessed he had written the romance (when he was recovering from a grave illness) to “*relaxare animum*, being tyred and wearied with more serious studies, or weighty affairs” (A3<sup>r</sup>), and advised reading it in the same manner, merely as an escapist book, not as one primarily concerned with the central matters associated with the romance, i.e. “the mutually constitutive relation between genre and political and ethical philosophy” (Zurcher 4). By foregrounding the romance’s entertaining nature, Pordage attenuated the “heroic” (aristocratic) component attached to the genre, thus, drawing closer to “the comedy of romance” (13), as Samuel Johnson described his contemporary fiction.<sup>4</sup> Pordage also warned that romances “are not always farc’d with *Love-stories* and toys, though those are intertexted for delight, and that things *Oeconomical, Ethetical, Physical, Metaphysical, Philosophical, Political, and Theological* as well as *Amatory*, may be, not unaptly, nor unfitly exhibited” (A3<sup>r</sup>); however, there is no episode about political rebellions, religious intrigues, deposed monarchs or exiles, which must have displeased readers at the onset of Charles II’s reign. In general, characters support the established laws and rulers,<sup>5</sup> justifying their few transgressions and violent actions as “obligations of love” (164), whereas depictions of villainy, wickedness, vice and depravity are limited to some secondary characters in pursuit of their self-satisfaction and interests. The author also claimed to be chiefly aiming at the critical judgement of “those fair and wise ones of the female sex,” but –strikingly enough– only the last story is told in the presence of ladies, and none participates in the *questioni d’amore* episodes at the end of the third and fourth books. Furthermore, Pordage’s thematic objective was not only to entertain his readers with the adventures of his characters, but also to explore intense amatory passions and frustrations to ultimately defend the supreme love of (same-sex) friendship as a model of perfect union between two people. These are some of the reasons that may explain why *Eliana* was rather unsuccessful (as copies were still available at the bookseller’s by 1666), even though John Bulteel echoed many ideas from the epistle in his preface to *Birinthea* (1664).

Moreover, *Eliana* has never attracted scholarly attention. In 1814, John Colin Dunlop ascribed it to the French heroic romance fashion and mocked the euphuist, verbose affectation of its language (563). A century later, Charlotte Morgan aligned

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<sup>4</sup> A further step in this direction was taken by Bulteel in his claim that “I have endured my heroes with no greater strength and courage than may reside in generous persons; nor do I fill their veins with streams of blood greater, then those smal channels should contain” (*Birinthea* A5<sup>v</sup>), though his stories often attest to the opposite.

<sup>5</sup> For example, Lonoxia refuses to lead the rebellion against his tyrannical brother Marcipsius on the grounds that he is the lawful king, and Argelois and Dardanus support the Romans against the Armenian rebellion.



*Eliana* with John Crowne's *Pandion and Amphigenia* (1665) by stating: "But, alas, scarcely is there an incident or effective passage that cannot be traced to another source! The *Eliana* of John [sic] Pordage (1661), judging by the remarks of Dunlop, is a similar piece of fiction" (40). Arthur Jerrold Tieje in *The Theory of Characterization in Prose Fiction Prior to 1740* (1916) and Ernest Baker in the third volume of *The History of the English Novel* (1929) completely ignored *Eliana*, while Paul Salzman (1985) mentioned it in a footnote in his discussion of English heroic romances (190, n. 16), but classified it as a 'Sidneian romance' (356). Even in the voluminous *The Novel. An Alternative History 1600-1800* (2013), Steven Moore excluded *Eliana*, whereas he discussed at length *The Princess Cloria*, *Parthenissa* and *Aretina*. Amelia Zurcher seems to be the sole scholar to have drawn attention to *Eliana* when, in 2007, she examined the notion of "interest" in the stories of Euripedes and Lonoxia, describing the romance as "one that at first glance might be expected to be more rather than less conventional" (126).

Although, in "To the Reader," Samuel Pordage—unlike Mackenzie in *Aretina* or Herbert in *The Princess Cloria*—did not explicitly declare his intention to refine the romance genre, the author's pseudonym and the merely entertaining nature of his subject matter may indicate he also participated in a self-conscious renovation of the genre in the early Restoration period. Thus, this article—possibly the first devoted to *Eliana*—aims to offer a wider perspective of its plot and stories and, in the process, to suggest some of its "less conventional" aspects. To this purpose, the discussion will focus on its narrative structure and technique, and on some issues and episodes which may reveal young Pordage's attempt to experiment with the romance genre, such as the ways in which he fictionalised history, reinforced verisimilitude and dealt with gender matters. Although *Eliana* apparently proved inconsequential to the development of the English novel, the romance may help to identify certain concerns which young writers tried to improve (besides earning money). Given *Eliana's* length and intricacy, the sections below are organised by narrative sequence rather than by a more systematic method of analysis.

## 2. THE DIEGETIC STRUCTURE AND HISTORY (BOOK 1)

The romance opening shows melancholic Argelois walking into a solitary grove to ruminate and grieve over his amorous conflict and burning passion for Princess Eliana, whose love he does not aspire to win because he ignores his "extraction and birth" (2) and also because she is betrothed to his dear friend Prince Dardanus.<sup>6</sup> His soliloquy is overheard by an old man, Euripedes, who approaches

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<sup>6</sup> This conflict is hinted at in the name 'Argelois' by combining Arg(-entum, silver) with an anagram of (H-)elios (Sun, god Sol Invictus), from which the name of the eponymous character apparently derives, although Eliana also evokes Ilion (Troy), especially for her relationship with Dardanus (and for Pordage's 1660 edition of Seneca's *Troades*).





him and interrupts his meditation. Euripedes warns him about the tyranny of love, which he had personally experienced from youth until he decided to quit society. By way of demonstration, he offers to give Argelois an account of his life, which the young man willingly accepts. This creates the two levels of diegesis characteristic of the French heroic romances: the diegetic present and the hypodiegetic past. The diegetic story is apparently unfinished and includes the characters' acts of narrating their respective "histories." It is told by an extradiegetic-heterodiegetic voice and is set in an unidentified place, possibly in the Roman province of Asia (near Pontus and not far from Cappadocia), covering a few days over a period of a couple of months around the year 37 AD (no reference is made to the death of Tiberius). The hypodiegetic level of the past is narrated by four characters in a series of finished "histories": Euripedes (Books 1-3), Lonoxia (Book 4), Epidaurus's "Historie of Dardanus" (Book 5), and Meador's "Historie of Araterus" (Book 6), all of which conclude in the present and altogether covering a time span from the end of the Asturian-Cantabrian Wars against Rome (26-19 BC) to the recent past (36-37 AD), i.e. the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. The stories of the older characters –Euripedes, Lonoxia, Araterus– are set in Portugal (Roman Lusitania, which also encompassed north-western Spain) or in territories historically associated with –or dominated by– Portugal (north and south African areas, and East India and Siam), perhaps in support of a royal wedding with Catherine of Braganza. It could also be regarded as a poor imitation of La Calprenède's *Cleopatra* (or *Hymen's Praeludia*), which dealt with earlier historical events (including the onset of the Cantabrian Wars) around the time when Euripedes and Lonoxia were little boys.

The threads of *Eliana's* complex plot, both at the diegetic and hypodiegetic levels, are intertwined with the opening and ending of "The Historie of Euripedes." Euripedes was born in Nicopolis (Cappadocia) and grew up in Cilicia. After the death of his parents, when he was seventeen, he resolved to travel and discover the world starting at the far end of Roman Empire. He sailed from Tarsus accompanied by his servant Meador and his cousin Araterus. They had passed the Pillars of Hercules, when a huge storm drove them to an island. The three men disembarked and found it was uninhabited, labyrinthic and mysteriously haunted. While they slept, their ship departed without them. Euripedes saw a floating boat-like chest which contained a baby-boy, who was still alive. The next day Euripedes was kidnapped by a pirate ship, while Araterus and Meador remained marooned on the Desolate Island. Soon afterwards, Bruadenor, Prince of the Veneti, who had lost three vessels in the storm, attacked the pirates and liberated Euripedes, taking him and the baby to Gaul. Pordage creates one of the most notable Chinese-box narrative structures in early Restoration romances as Bruadenor tells Euripedes an account of his life, which includes the story of his beloved Floria's life who, among other events, was taken to the Court of Augustus as hostage, in order to force her father to cooperate with Roman designs. Pordage's emphasis on the story of Bruadenor by adding a fourth diegetic level for Floria's vicissitudes may betray his initial clumsiness at story-telling compared with the more accomplished tales in his later books. However, it may also be indicative of a powerful introduction to a key location and set of characters which would play a significant role in future instalments considering, firstly, that





not only Euripedes but also Lonoxia and Araterus went to Gaul and met Bruadenor, and, secondly, that Britain would soon become a Roman colony under Emperor Claudius with Trebellius (Tribulus in *Eliana*) as its governor.

At Bruadenor's palace in Vindana, Euripedes saw the portrait of the Asturian Princess Amenia and fell in love with her. His ardent passion increased when the picture was taken to his chamber and became his erotic fetish:

I made it my daily exercise whilst I was there, sometimes silently to behold it, sometimes passionately to basiate those Rubrick corals which gave so many bewitching attractions, and gave me singular delight in those cold exosculation: sometimes as if I had been infatuated, I made very foolish and impertinent speeches to those surded ears, with as much care as if before the substance of that shadow. It shames me since to remember my follies, and it would shame me more to relate them. (27)

As soon as Bruadernor and Floria were married, Euripedes left the baby –Marinus– in Gaul and hastened to the land of the Asturians, Spanish Lusitania, where he engaged in the rebellion against the Romans to prove his valour and gain Amenia (betrothed to the Cantabrian Prince Mandone), thus combining love and war, as in the French heroic romances.

Pordage chose to narrate the Roman campaign from the Asturian side, from Euripedes's point of view, but accurately unfolding the plot in accordance with the events reported by Florus, Cassius Dio and Orosius. Although the resistance leaders were not identified by these writers, Pordage derived the names of King Lilibilis and Mandone from the Iberian chiefs Indibilis (Incibilis or Iudibilis) and Mandonius, who had helped Scipio fight the Carthaginians and later rebelled against Rome. Rather than fictionalising the historical texts, Pordage supplemented them with an imaginary story on the Lusitanian side, but refrained from speculating about what might be happening in the Roman army. By so doing, he not only imitated, but revised La Calprenède's method, as outlined by the translator Robert Lovelace in his epistle "To the Reader" prefacing the first part of *Hymen's Praeludia, or [...] Cleopatra* (1652): "here is History enamel'd with Fiction, and Truth drest like a May-Lady, who through the gay disguise of her flowry ornaments, does often show her own simplicity. If thou beest an Historian, thou wilt trace his ingenius Pen through Tacitus, Florus, Suetonius, and others [...]" (A3<sup>v</sup>).<sup>7</sup>

However, Pordage's most likely source was some Renaissance annals of Roman or Spanish history rather than the ancient originals, because the different

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<sup>7</sup> Scudéry's romances were even more loosely based on history, as the stationer Humphrey Moseley observed in his prefatory note to the reader in *Artamanes, or The Grand Cyrus* (1653): "Perhaps you would know what Cyrus this is, whether the first Great Cyrus who founded the Persian Empire (whose life you have in Herodotus, Solinus, & Justin) or that other second Cyrus, whose Institution and Expedition is so well writ by Xenophon: Be pleas'd to know, 'Tis neither of them, and yet both; for our Author hath drain'd all the Excellencies of both those Two to fill and accomplish this his Grand Cyrus" (B<sup>v</sup>).

spellings of certain names and the exhaustive references to events, people and locations are scattered in several classic texts. Although the narration of the Cantabrian Wars matches the more detailed accounts by Florus and Orosius, they conclude at the fall of Lancia. However, in *Eliana* (as in Dio's *Roman History*) the conflict continues with a new rebellion in Asturias: "the approach of our enemies towards Asturica, having taken Lancia" (92). A place called "Segisama" by Florus and Orosius (not recorded by Dio) reads "Sigisama," while the Roman legate "Furnius" (in Florus and Dio) is spelt "Firmius," as in Orosius and some Renaissance texts.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, Pordage mentions Juliobriga (an important city to which none of the three classic authors referred in this episode), Flaviobriga and "the Amaene City Hispalis" (142).

In *Eliana*, the historical Roman background provides the structural framework on which the different fictional stories are fleshed out, except for "The Historie of Araterus" (in the sixth and last book). However, Pordage is not consistent in the ways in which he *embellishes* the classical records of history in his romance: he experiments with a wide range of possibilities to fictionalise the factual events in which his characters become accidentally involved. For example, the historical background of Mauritania Tingitana in Lonoxia's story loosely follows the Roman sources. In the "Historie of Dardanus," the main character actively participates in some events recorded by Roman historians: the episode of Rome under Sejanus and Caligula, while Tiberius is living in Capri (Suetonius and Tacitus), Vitellius's campaign against Armenia (Tacitus's *Annals* 6.XXXII & ff.), and Tribulus's pacification of the Cietae in Cappadocia (Tacitus's *Annals* 6.XLI). Araterus's voyage to Sornalea (from the local word "Sornau," Siam) is partly based on the Portuguese discovery of the maritime route to India and modern descriptions of the world (such as Peter Heylen's *Cosmographie*). On the contrary, the royal court and family of King Palemon of Pontus are completely imaginary.

It can be argued that *Eliana* stands out not only as a departure from the fashionable *roman-à-clef*—since historical characters and geographical settings are no longer coded (as in Herbert's *The Princess Cloria*)—but also as a worthy precursor of the historical novel in English, together with Boyle's *Parthenissa*, which owes more to the models of La Calprenède and Scudéry. Therefore, according to McKeon, "its truth is that not of strict historicity, but of a historical fruit which stands revealed once we have stripped away the mediating chaff of 'romance'" (60). Pordage thus improves the technique of "giv[ing] a more true resemblance to things" (Scudéry, *Ibrahim* A3<sup>v</sup>), especially in the episodes of the Cantabrian Wars and in the "Historie of Dardanus." In *Eliana*, unlike in *Parthenissa* and its French models, none of the main characters is historical, but fictional. They collaborate in the factual events as

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<sup>8</sup> For example, in his *Generall Historie of Spaine* (1612), Mayerne spelt these names "Sigisama" and "Firmius" and gave an account of the different stages of the war (116-118), while simultaneously referring to other events, such as the birth of Christ (117-118) and a legend by Plinius about a Nereid seen in Lisbon (the setting of Lonoxia's story). Mayerne also mentioned the two Iberian chiefs during the Punic Wars.



recorded by classic writers, but their agency does not determine the course of history.<sup>9</sup> Instead, as far as history is concerned, Pordage aimed to accomplish the effect of “verisimilitude” –rather than “the claim to historicity” (McKeon 53)<sup>10</sup>– either by contriving a possible sequence of events on the side which the classic authors did not even care to write about (in “Euripedes”), or by granting an identity to unnamed partakers in the Roman side (mostly in “Dardanus”). Yet, *Eliana* represents a rudimentary antecedent of Scott’s mature historical novel: the protagonists’ roles and psychology, as well as descriptions of places and landscape, conform to romance conventions.<sup>11</sup> The middle- and lower-class characters –except the heroes’ servants– remain unnamed under general labels (captain, pirate, traitor, maid, man, surgeon, etc.). Their speeches usually go unquoted, and their actions are reduced to the ancillary roles of saving the heroes, accompanying their masters and mistresses, executing their orders and –of course– diverting the plot.

### 3. THE READERLY STRUCTURE (BOOK 1)

Euripedes had already delivered approximately 21 000 words of his account when he was interrupted by the arrival of another old man, Lonoxia, who had been searching for him because it was dinner time. This interruption implies a third structure, this time at the level of narration, to propose a reasonable duration of reading, either private or communal.<sup>12</sup> Readers’ objections to the excessive length of romance episodes and stories evidently pressed on writers and editors alike the need to adjust length as much as possible to pleasurable reading intervals, as many prefatory epistles suggest. When Percy Herbert expanded *Narcissus and Cloria* (1653) into *The Princess Cloria* (1661), he claimed in the epistle “To the Reader” to have overcome that obstacle:

[many and divers stories are] not brought in (as I may say) by head and shoulders, as is frequently used now adayes: and as they are all digested into determinable Periods within themselves, so are they of no more length, then is convenient for

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<sup>9</sup> The exception occurs in “The Historie of Dardanus” when Caligula attributes to the hero the fall and death of Sejanus as a result of his visit to Tiberius in Capri to inform him about the prevalent corruption in Rome: “Caligula embracing him, you need not fear Sejanus now (said he) he hath expiated the fault he hath committed against you with his life” (212).

<sup>10</sup> See also Zurcher’s discussion of verisimilitude in Wroth’s *Urania* and Barclays’ *Argenis*, two *romans-à-clef*, which *Eliana* is not (101-103).

<sup>11</sup> Descriptions of real settings and landscapes are generally avoided unless required to follow the course of the events, as occurs in Pierre d’Ortigue de Vaumorière’s *The Grand Scipio* (translated in 1660), when Aspar describes the port of Carthage to his audience in that city: “and it suffices only to know the Scituation of Carthage to conceive the pitifull estate whereunto we were reduced, I beleeve, you know, My Lords, that our City is built upon a Cape, and consequently is advanced something into the Sea [...]” (22).

<sup>12</sup> See Loveman, 139-155.



any moderate Communication, either of Recreation or Discourse; when as in other Romances they are oftentimes continued for five or six hours together without intermission, which to my apprehension appears ridiculous, in that people would be altogether tired, either with hearing or making such relations; and indeed almost impossible to be performed by any of what profession whatsoever. (A2<sup>r</sup>)

Similarly, the printer of the anonymous short romance *The Pleasant and Delightful History of Floridon and Lucina* (1663) announced in the prologue that it will take “but one houre (of the time which thou sets apart for thy Recreation) to peruse it” (A3<sup>r</sup>).

For *Eliana*, besides suggestions of recesses characteristic of the French heroic romances,<sup>13</sup> Pordage’s solution was to incorporate pauses for the refreshment, meals and rest of his narrators as part of the story in the present. Since *Floridon and Lucina*’s length amounts to approximately 11 000 words, the silent reading of the portion of Euripedes’s story in the first book would take around two hours (longer if read aloud). In the second book, his account continues for about 24 000 more words (2.5 hours), from the evening until supper, and concludes in the third book in around 30 000 more words (3 hours) late into the night. In the fourth book, characters have dinner between Lonoxia’s story and the closing *questioni d’amore* episode. In the sixth book, a refreshment is served in the middle of Meador’s “Historie of Araterus.” This is the only story in the romance for which characters gather to listen to, as if suggesting a communal reading, in the presence of both men and women. However, since *Eliana* was conceived as mere entertainment –unconcerned with “serious studies, or weighty affairs” (A3r)– Pordage might have intended the romance for private reading, for “an innocent recreation” (A3r), and perhaps for a similar therapeutic purpose as writing it while recovering from a severe illness had been for him.

#### 4. THE “GROTT”, HOMOSOCIAL SPACE/S AND *QUESTIONI D’AMORE* (BOOKS 2-4)

Argelois is invited for dinner at Euripedes and Lonoxia’s lodging in a stunning (quasi-utopian) cave, where they live with some servants. As Euripedes explains, he had already decided to abandon society when he again met Lonoxia by chance, and “understanding each others fortunes, being tyed with a mutual Love and friendship, we resolved to spend the remainder of our dayes together” (113). The relationship between these “venerable” and “generous” (177) old men is not an isolated instance of same-sex intimate unions in *Eliana*, as will be shown below. However, they live beyond the social realm.

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<sup>13</sup> For example: “Euripedes here made some pause, as being unwilling to begin his more unfortunate adventures, but seeing they attended him with the like taciturnity, he proceeded thus” (97).



In the second book, Pordage transfers the acts of narration from the secluded grove in a natural setting to a more recondite space artificially crafted by man, like fiction itself. The cave or “grott” is concealed from the sight of passers-by, a fact that metaphorically may bring to mind the author’s insistence on hiding his identity. The description of the cave entrance, the bell to open it and sliding stone-gate are reminiscent of a human mouth –the author’s mouth. In fact, the cave tunnels the rock “where that little rivulet which ran through the grove had its Original” (35), as if impregnating the entire fictional space at the diegetic level. Moreover, all the forthcoming stories will be delivered inside (while the larger part of the love debate between Argelois and Euripedes occurs in the grove when the former returns to his lodgings at Tribulus’s castle, at the end of the fourth book).

In the second book, Euripedes continues his account of the Cantabrian Wars. In the next, he narrates his first encounter with Lonoxia (a pirate captain at that time), and the death of Amenia –his then wife– who embodied the virtuous, obedient, wholly passive type of romance female protagonists. Amenia’s death, while revamping the narrative action, signals Euripedes’ transformation from the romantic, idealised hero into a victim of the immoral and criminal plots of women and relatives alike, when he returns to the unheroic, Roman-civilised societies of Thessalonica, Pontus and Cilicia. His realistic pilgrimage through a series of dreadful love-affairs with inconstant, ambitious, greedy women shows him the bitter face of erotic desire. Among them, Euripedes tells Argelois of his acquaintance with the mother of his friend Prince Dardanus, Agavve, who had chosen to marry King Palemon of Pontus and had later forced Euripedes to kill the king’s eldest son, Palemedon, to ease her son Dardanus’s way to the crown. The night before the day of the crime, Euripedes had dreamt of a man who had foretold that Palemedon would live and would reappear after thirty years (110). Finally, Euripedes did not murder the child, but made him disappear. From different stories, it is suggested that Palemedon survived as Argelois, especially when Epidaurus compares him with Dardanus: “the parity of their years, their consimilitude of their featur” (207).

Argelois stayed overnight at the cave. In the morning Lonoxia told him his own life story, which occupies the fourth book. If Euripedes was driven by an overpowering proclivity to love women, leading him from full satisfaction into complete abhorrence, Lonoxia moved from one misfortune into another, doomed to failure from his early years, and often plunging into melancholic resignation. Lonoxia, loved by his mother but very much hated by his two brothers, was the youngest son of King Marcipsius, a fictional version of Bocchus II of Mauritania.<sup>14</sup> Lonoxia was punished with exile when he accidentally killed his middle brother, who constantly harassed him.<sup>15</sup> He left Africa and sailed to “Spain” (121), disembarking at Olissipo (Lisbon). During an excursion outside the city, he discovered an island in

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<sup>14</sup> Cassius Dio mentions Bogud and Bocchus of Mauritania just after the fall of Lancia (LIII, 26, 2).

<sup>15</sup> See Zurcher (168-170) for Oedipal overtones in “The Historie of Lonoxia.”





the Tagus, whose “fair groves and delicate gardens” (121) recall Strabo’s description of such an island “with fine groves and vines” (III.3.1).<sup>16</sup> He noticed it was inhabited only by women and was attracted to a young lady (Princess Atalanta) he saw at a window of the house. Lonoxia also discovered that his brother Marcipsius had employed two men (one of them usually disguised as a woman) to murder him. He cross-dressed in his pursuer’s clothes and was admitted to the island community under his new identity as Sabane. Eventually he was told that Atalanta was pregnant and had been abandoned by his eldest brother Marcipsius.<sup>17</sup> He felt he could no longer regard Atalanta as the object of his love and disclosed his true identity, but decided to stay near her –retaining his homogender identity as Sabane– and love her as a sister. After the birth of the baby, Lonoxia carried him to North Africa hidden in a chest which the huge storm cast into the ocean (and Euripedes rescued at Desolate Island). When he returned to Olissipo, Atalanta was dying. Since her pregnancy had been kept secret, she was given an impressive funeral, first with a procession down the Tagus and later in Olissipo up to “a temple consecrated to the Superbious Juno” (158), ironically the Roman goddess of marriage. On his trip back to Africa, Lonoxia was captured by pirates and eventually became their chief. Having been so ill-treated by goddess Fortuna, he was now satisfied to be the agent of mischief to others. As pirate captain, he met Euripedes and Amenia on their way to Cilicia. He learnt that Atalanta’s baby –Marinus– lived in Gaul and brought him with him. Years later, opponents to the tyrannical rule of Mascipsius asked Lonoxia to become their new king and general, which he declined on the grounds that his brother was the lawful king. Marinus, on the contrary, accepted only to be eventually killed by his own father. Lonoxia returned to his former pirate’s community. More than twenty years later, he met Euripedes again and went with him into a retired life together.

When Lonoxia concludes his narration, Argelois explains the nature of fortune through an ekphrastic description of the goddess Fortuna. He starts by asserting that she has been “depicted [...] in the form of a woman, ’cause that sex is most mutable” (166) but concludes by defending her mutability and inconstancy in terms of divine providence. After a break for dinner, the three characters resume the *questioni d’amore* matter from the previous night,<sup>18</sup> interrupted when Argelois was arguing that “for Love without virtue is Lust and Lust concatenated to virtue is Love”

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<sup>16</sup> In the description of Lusitania and the Tagus, Strabo also mentions the coast of “Maurusia” (III.3.3), a name similar to “Maurishia,” a character in “The Historie of Araterus.”

<sup>17</sup> Marcipsius illustrates the prototype of wicked character. He plays a secondary role, causing distress and grief to others as he pursues his ambition and self-interests. For example, he abandoned pregnant Atalanta for another woman because “this beauty hath a crown to give as well as pleasure” (148).

<sup>18</sup> Although the question of love is a recurrent theme throughout *Eliana*, considerable debate takes place at the end of Books 3 and 4. In any case, unlike in Elizabethan fiction (Thomas Lodge, for example), early Restoration romances do not contain the conventional sections in which men and women discuss this matter. For instance, in Mackenzie’s *Aretina*, the eponymous character, Agapeta, Philarites and Megistus engage in such a conversation. However, only Megistus was eventually able to deliver his speech (as the author’s spokesperson) because the debate was suddenly interrupted. In

(113), thus agreeing with the Stoic view that “all passions and affections [...] are to be regulated, according to the precepts of virtue” (114). At the end of the fourth book, probably the most substantial part of the romance, Euripedes vehemently contends Argelois’s opinions by putting forward the Aristotelian conception of both love and man, and examining “the effects of this passion [Aristotelian desire], which plainly exhibit the evils of it, and out of which as from the fountains head, all other evill passions have sprung” (168). Eventually, with a smile, Euripedes tacitly agrees to Argelois’s proposal of a kind of love similar to friendship:

one in which desire is not the proposed end, and doth not altogether partake of that brutality of lust but is of a purer nature, not desiring the use of the object, but to become one with it, to be incorporated with it, and not to take any thing from it, but to immerge it self in it, and very like the true love of friendship, wherein is exercised all virtue, and where love is of a more celestial nature, though that be not without desire, of the good and of the welfare and continual presence of the object. (172)<sup>19</sup>

The lives of Euripedes and Lonoxia are determined by designs imposed upon them by external powers: the former, by his uncontrollable inclination for love which always proves tyrannical, and the latter, by hostile goddess Fortuna. Dardanus’s life is also determined by his parents’ decision to marry him to Eliana. In the end, the three of them choose to reject their respective deterministic life-patterns and, in their transgression, they rank love (i.e. lust plus virtue) below the more ideal love of (same-sex, brotherly) friendship: Lonoxia (dissembled as Sabane) and Atalanta’s sisterhood, Lonoxia and Euripedes’s homosocial cohabitation, and Argelois and Dardanus’s friendship. This theme is further developed in the next section about the fifth book, in which –as the narrator explains– “The moderation which he [Argelois] confest (to Euripedes) ought to be in Lovers, was not to be found in him, he knew what ought to be, but had no power to practise” (175a).<sup>20</sup>

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*Eliana*, it is reduced to Argelois’s speech in Book 3 and to his dialogue with Euripedes in Book 4 (outside the cave, in the pleasant grove).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Montaigne, 205. For further reading about the ideas of love in *Eliana*, see Zurcher (125-127).

<sup>20</sup> Page numbers 175 and 176 occur twice.





## 5. GENDERED PORTRAITS AND MALE FRIENDSHIP VS. SODOMY (BOOK 5)

The fifth book is different from the rest. The first half narrates the events in the diegetic present, focussing on the younger characters who are staying at the castle of the Roman captain Tribulus,<sup>21</sup> while the second half is devoted to Epidarus's narration of the history of his master Dardanus.

When Argelois returns to the castle from the old men's cave, the narrator describes his appearance as "effeminate," while hinting at his courage: "His complexion was more than ordinary fair for a man, yet those that saw him could not by it judge him effeminate, if they did, the world could have justified the contrary by his prodigious valour" (176a). The beauty of Eliana, from her pace to her voice, is also accomplished in one of the finest –albeit conventional– English Renaissance portraits or blazons of romance heroines (176a-176b), conveyed through Argelois's point of view: "his eyes fix't intently on that amazing beauty they avidously devour'd her perfections, being allmost starv'd by that small absence. I lack the pen of Thalia, to give you here a discription of that matchlesse Eliana. Supply my defects with your thoughts, [...]" (176a).

Panthea, Dardanus's stepsister (and possibly Argelois's sister), arrives at Tribulus's castle after recovering from an illness, perhaps caused by her unrequited love for Argelois. In turn, she rejects Arizobanes who, in utmost despair, tries to kill himself while writing a letter to Panthea with his own blood. King Palemon's pressure on Dardanus to marry Eliana intensifies Argelois's inner conflict between his ardent love for her and his equally strong affection for Dardanus, who learns of his emotional suffering when he overhears his soliloquy in the grove. As it becomes evident that Argelois is going to put an end to his torment by killing himself, Dardanus leaves his hiding place to prevent the suicide. Significantly, the perplexed narrator renders the scene objectively, with explicit homoerotic undertones, lurking, as Alan Bray has shown, under the aura of platonic male friendship (so idealised in the Renaissance):

I know not how many changes in his countenance were seen in a moment, & whil'st Dardanus powered out kisses upon his cheeks, and kept his neck prisoner with his arms, he made a shift to draw his ponyard. [...] it stroak into his left arme quite through the flesh, the blood sprinkling in the face, and upon the cloathes of his friend Dardanus. [...] At last Dardanus seeing he could not bring him to leave his design against himself, with any remonstrance or striving, suddenly left him and

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<sup>21</sup> Tribulus is based on historical Trebellius, who was commissioned by Vitellius to suppress the rebellion of the Cietae ("Clites," 217), an event recorded by Tacitus (*Annals*, 6.XLI) and mentioned in Renaissance compilations of Roman history. Trebellius was also mentioned by Josephus, an author Pordage had possibly read for his tragedy *Herod and Mariamme*, partially inspired by the Jewish historian. Whether or not this Trebellius was the same one appointed by Claudius as Governor of Britain is still open to debate.





pulling forth his owne ponyard, and making bare his breast, ah Argelois? (said he lifting up his arme) Thou shalt see I cannot live without thee! Argelois flinging by his ponyard, flung himself upon the arme of Dardanus, and hinderd him from emitting that soule that was truly conjoynd with Argelois. (188)<sup>22</sup>

Dardanus resolves to break off his engagement with Eliana when he learns that it was the cause of Argelois's melancholy and of his attempt to kill himself. Dardanus tells Argelois he does not love Eliana passionately and fears he will fall for another and subsequently abandon her. Indeed, this is what happens when he meets Philadelphia –Arizobanes's sister– on his way to Byzantium to inform his parents about his decision to break off his engagement with Eliana. Though she was called Philadelphia because she was born in that city, the name's etymological meaning (brotherly or sisterly love) ironically suggests Dardanus's unconsciously displaced affection for Argelois onto her.

The presentation of Eliana in the fifth book is uncommon. On the one hand, the reader knows about her from Argelois's soliloquies and his conversations with Euripedes and Lonoxia, but her appearance in the story is delayed until the beginning of the fifth book (the last third of the romance). On the other hand, in the stories of the older characters, the female protagonists are more conventionally introduced by the male characters initially falling for a framed image of them –a painting (Euripedes's Amenia) or at a window (Lonoxia's Atalanta)– and meeting the real women some time later. Instead, the heroine of the new generation is directly described by the narrator as soon as Argelois fixes his loving eyes on her.

“The Historie of Dardanus,” in addition to outlining his biography, also defines his personal qualities. Compared with the description of Eliana's body, portrayed as a passive object through Argelois's infatuated male gaze, Epidaurus constructs an equally idealised image of his master but as a man of action. He embeds his features in the different episodes he performs in his true-to-history narration of events. For example, as well as Dardanus's royal birth in Pontus, Epidaurus tells of his exquisite education in Athens, where he met and befriended Argelois. In Rome, he gained real-world experience and exhibited his physical strength and skills at the Roman “Martian” Field (208). His abhorrence of sodomy becomes evident when he escapes “paedicator” (209) Caligula's attempt to seduce and rape him. His brave adherence to truth and justice is manifested when he reproves Sejanus for his moral perversion and crimes,<sup>23</sup> and when he goes to Capri (“Capra,” 211, the residence of

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<sup>22</sup> In *Poems upon Several Occasions* (1660), also published by Peter Dring, Samuel Pordage included a sequence of five valedictory, emotional poems (D4<sup>v</sup>-D5<sup>v</sup>) about the departure of a friend who sailed from England to a remote part, possibly on a business (or diplomatic) trip. In “Poema Valedictorium Perdilecto intimoque Suo amico transfreturo,” Pordage referred to him as “dear C” (alternating with “my C” in the series) and wishes that “May the twins / Be never seen apart!” in “Vota Auspicata” (ll. 13-14).

<sup>23</sup> Dardanus said to Sejanus: “Go base stuprator [...] the life of Drusus and the whordome thou hast committed with his wife, should in justice have long since finished thy dayes” (210).



the depraved and cruel Tiberius) to boldly and honestly complain about Sejanus and Caligula's governance, despite the risks involved.<sup>24</sup> Dardanus's valour and military dexterity are mentioned when he again meets Argelois and joins him in Vitellius's campaign against Artabanes (in Armenia), and befriends the Roman captain Tribulus with whom he suppresses the Cietae rebellion. Dardanus's commitment to the protection of ladies encourages him to travel again to Rome to mitigate Tribulus's concerns for Eliana's safety. This time he disguises himself as Argelois's wife to avoid Caligula's order to arrest him (to no avail).<sup>25</sup> Another feature portrayed is his wit, which emerges when Caligula again tries to seduce and rape disguised Dardanus, resulting in one of the most comic episodes in which Dardanus pretends to mistake Caligula's language of love: "We women do not understand your mysterious kind of speaking, and had I known that they had spoke in Rome by metaphors I would have brought one of those priests who use to interpret our Hieroglyphiks" (219).

The story of Dardanus –in which he insists he is neither "effeminate" nor a "spado" (209)– is placed just after the narrator has described Argelois's fair, effeminate appearance (176a), and the signs of their strong mutual affection (when Argelois returns from Euripedes's cave), in order to remove any trace of lustful sodomy between the heroes.<sup>26</sup> In *Eliana*, sodomy –"the common crimes and abominable actions not fitting to be named done upon men by the beastly buggerers of that City" (208-209)– typifies not only the pure lust of sex between males (lacking virtue and affection), but also epitomises the spread of vice and political corruption in Tiberius's Rome, controlled by "paedo" (210) Caligula and his "pandar" (209) Sejanus, while the equally depraved emperor neglects his duties by taking refuge in Capri.<sup>27</sup> Instead, like the relationship between Euripedes and Lonoxia, their love to each other as friends "is the promoter of virtue, not the companion of vice," as Arthur Keith has argued in this analysis of Cicero's *De Amicitia* (57), while many heterosexual love relationships in *Eliana* are tainted by the foregrounding of ambition and other kinds of self-interest over virtue and affection. However, unlike Euripedes and Lonoxia's misanthropic union, the heroes' friendship is an intrinsic part both of themselves and their social dimension.

Dardanus's engagement to Eliana does not raise rivalry between the two men but is an obstacle to their reciprocal life-sustaining friendship. Argelois prefers to dispose of his life than to hurt or kill Dardanus: "'tis Dardanus to whom I ow more

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<sup>24</sup> As Epidauros remarks: "the Emperour had put to death some of the chieftest men in Rome for speaking against his favourites" (211).

<sup>25</sup> Dardanus fails to fulfil his purpose of protecting Eliana because she and Tribulus's wife have left the city for an unknown place. Instead, Caligula seems to recognise him and orders him seized.

<sup>26</sup> "They embraced each other as if their absence had been for years and not dayes, and were along time e're they could expresse their joy by word. I may safe say that they were the mirror of friendship, and that they were another Pylades and Oristes, or as fast friends as Theseus and Pirithous" (177).

<sup>27</sup> See Bray (3).



lives than one, and 'tis a great comfort to me [...] that 'tis for thy sake I endure this torment [...] borne with patience as the most glorious tryall of my friendship” (186). In a similar manner, Dardanus readily chooses to remove that obstacle between them: “you [Argelois] utterly mistake your selfe if you thinke you could have slain your selfe, and not have deprived me of my life at the same time. [...] I may leave Eliana without detriment to my selfe, since I enjoy her in Argelois” (189). This climactic moment shows the limitless nature of the heroes’ mutual love and the indivisible union of their souls, which evinces the influence of Montaigne’s views on friendship and critique of Cicero on this matter: “All things being by effect common betweene them; wils, thoughts, judgements, goods, wives, children, honour, and life; and their mutual agreement, being no other than one soule in two bodies, according to the fit definition of Aristotle, they can neither lend or give ought to each other” (205).<sup>28</sup>

The highly dramatic episode of Argelois’s attempt to commit suicide and the dialogue with Dardanus demonstrates Pordage’s skills for scenic rendering of the characters’ psychology. In other romances, such as *Birynthia*, authors tend to suppress the exhibition of intense feelings (which Bulteel’s female characters dislike); instead, fevers and sickness are often somatised symptoms of the characters’ repressed sentimental passions and torments. Decorum of speech and polite restraint also moderate Euripedes and Lonoxia’s expression when addressing their stories to Argelois, a complete stranger to them. Instead, in the case of the young heroes, the extradiegetic voice, by acting more as a figural than teller narrator, focalises what the characters see, hear and tell, thus rendering the events, soliloquies and dialogues in a more scenic, unmediated way.

Pordage’s emphasis on verisimilitude is intensified by the contrast with the sixth and closing book (and the unfinished romance as it stands). It contains the rather more fantastic, conventional story of Araterus, the only one told in the presence of ladies who, therefore, missed the gallery of women featured negatively –from the adulterous and plotting Asturian Queen Clothude to murderous Agavve, whose crimes are judged as being less wicked than the pregnancy of unmarried Atalanta, who dies in childbirth.

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<sup>28</sup> Friendship is a major theme in *Eliana* and therefore deserves a deeper analysis than what can be offered here. Here is a brief sketch of its complexity: Argelois (and Dardanus) was educated in Athens by a disciple of “Cratippus” (167), a peripatetic (Aristotelian) philosopher, friend of Cicero’s, and tutor of his son in Athens. Cicero developed the etymological connection between love (*amore*) and friendship (*amicitia*), and mentioned the intimate relationship between Pylades and Orestes. Moreover, while Argelois defended ideal love philosophically and morally, Dardanus fell in love with a woman whose name, Philadelphia, denotes the realisation of that ideal. Both Aristotle’s and Cicero’s ideas on friendship were updated by Montaigne in the Renaissance (see, for example, Goodrich, Edyvane, and Bizer), and his influence is notable in *Eliana*. Moreover, it is open to speculation whether or not Pordage had truly planned subsequent instalments of the romance, and whether or not he intended to explore the politics and ethics of friendship in a hypothetical arrival of Tribulus (Trebellius) in Britain accompanied by Argelois and Dardanus, and their respective wives Eliana and Philadelphia, to set in motion the Romanisation of the island, a moment in history which could potentially mirror the anxieties and expectancies at the onset of the Restoration.



## 6. A CODA FOR THE MARVELLOUS (BOOK 6)

In the sixth book, Euripedes's servant Meador narrates the highly-entertaining story of Araterus and his own, beginning with their confinement in the Desolate Island, where Araterus discovered druid Baercellizeg's tomb and prophetic inscription about him (only disclosed in this section rather than the opening pages, as was the convention from Sidney's *Arcadia* to Boyle's *Parthenissa*), which reveals another step towards achieving "true resemblance" in the rest of the romance. Three hundred years before, the druid had foreseen that Araterus would be the only person to find his tomb, thereby predicting his destiny. Araterus and Meador were dying of starvation when a ship rescued them and took them to Gaul. They met Bruadenor, who acquainted them with Euripedes's plans. They left to search for him in Cantabria, where they came across furious Mandone and killed him. On learning that Euripedes had gone to his native country, they resolved to return to Cilicia; but the voyage home became an odyssey. Their vessel had already passed through the Pillars of Hercules when –as if by supernatural force– a storm drove them back to the Atlantic and eventually further to southern Africa, where they discovered that "the torrid Zone, contrary to the opinion of Poets was inhabited" (237). The explicitly racist portrait of the African tribe illustrates another instance of the prevalent aversion to black people in mid-seventeenth-century England.<sup>29</sup> However, their adventure in southern Africa results in one of the most comic episodes. Just after Araterus had killed the tribe's deity –the monstrous serpent Arqcebusqez– the cunning sorcerer declared them the tribe's new gods, but kept them tied up in the temple so that they could not enjoy the libations they were offered (239). This caused Meador to utter the only criticism in *Eliana* against religion at the service of politics: "What a sad thing is it that Religion should be made the decoy of Politicians! see but with what awe this impostor governs the whole kingdom, under the specious name of Religion, [...]" (240).

Araterus and Meador eventually reached the Kingdom of Sornalea, apparently located in East India and Siam.<sup>30</sup> In this imaginary, oriental country beyond the realm of the Roman Empire and adjacent territories, Araterus fulfilled his destiny by marrying bold and resolute Queen Amarilis. But this only after Meador had exaggerated Araterus's noble birth and the Council of the Kingdom had elected him for his virtue and courage in the war against the Prince of Sinana

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<sup>29</sup> "[...] their Children were born with the same nigerous hew, their hair crisped and short, seem'd just like wool, their noses flat, and something deformed, their stature mean, but their envie and malice implacable. These people which at first sight seem'd like so many Daemons affrighted those in the ship, who naming the place the land of Devils, would rather have endured the miserie of starving, than to expose themselves to the mercy of such Creatures" (237).

<sup>30</sup> In *Ibrahim*, Scudéry criticised the practice of setting stories in imaginary countries as contrary to "true resemblance," since these "Kingdomes are not in the Vniversall Mapp, or, to say better, in the being of things" (A2). Sornalea is not depicted on any map; however, its name derives from the Sornau, the local word for Siam, as recorded by the first Portuguese explorers.



(China), whose colossal army, equipped with cannons and “hellish powder” (244), offer a more realistic, updated depiction of the conventional giants and monstrous creatures in former romances.<sup>31</sup> As part of the prophecy, Araterus would never abandon Sornalea, “where thou shalt lead thy life in pleasure & end thy days in peace” (229), thus sharing with Euripedes and Lonoxia a similar state of blessing and happiness, as long as they remain segregated from (western) society and civilisation.

The story of Araterus combines the individual heroic quest and the deterministic compliance of the druid’s prophecy. It also blends travelogue (through Europe, Africa and Eastern Asia, as in the Portuguese discovery of the maritime route to India) with adventure, from the haunted Desolate Island of loneliness and starvation to an equally isolated, remote realm of the quasi-utopian Sornalea. Mere chance –but also the hero’s appearance, courage, virtue and wit– yields his successful progress towards fulfilling his destiny. To the original male audience, the story showed how to ascend the political ladder by self-restraint, control over speech and the persuasive, seductive power of silence in a man of action. Women could think of a fascinating kingdom ruled by queens –“hav[ing] not had but two Kings this three hundred yeares” (243)– who may refuse a state-marriage with a displeasing suitor, even at the cost of war, although, in the end, it is the husband who is expected to take control of state affairs: “[After] Araterus had sufficiently tasted the pleasures of his bride, he betook him to graver and weightier affairs; as in setting the Kingdome, making of Lawes, ordaining of Councils, rewarding his friends” (286).

## 7. MORE RELIABLE NARRATORS

For Gerd Bayer, Restoration fiction “present[s] narrating in a nascent stage” (154). He argues that it took some time for writers to come to terms with a separate and distinct narrative voice, which characterises the mature realist novel of the eighteenth century (150-155). *Eliana* is just a tesserae in that formation inasmuch as the narrators’ degree of reliability is noticeably reinforced in different ways.<sup>32</sup>

For example, memory may hinder the credibility of Euripedes’s autodiegesis, which occupies half of *Eliana*, but he fittingly tells at least what he can remember (39) because “I had since my retirement collected them into a book which thus imprints them in my mind” (9). Seeing all the events in retrospect, Euripedes can complete an episode with information he discovered afterwards, thus anticipating

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<sup>31</sup> Among other oriental wonders, the sailing carriage, which so fascinated seventeenth-century Europe, is also mentioned (253).

<sup>32</sup> For the narratological concepts in this section, see Susan Lanser, *The Narrative Act*. The notion of reliability was established by Wayne Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. He argued that all first-person (homodiegetic) narrators are unreliable, but this axiomatic statement must be cautiously considered in early Restoration fiction, since characters –either as protagonists or witnesses of the stories– conveyed more credibility about past events than the heterodiegetic, authorial voices, mostly not wholly omniscient, but conceived as “outside the diegetic realm” (Bayer 150).

the plot and subduing the intrigue. Lonoxia's autodiegesis is given credibility by means of the most incredible event in the romance: the survival of Marinus on the stormy ocean. After Lonoxia's first encounter with Euripedes, he goes to Gaul to raise Marinus, the living proof of the authenticity of the first half of his history. Epidaurus is not only a privileged witness of Dardanus's life, but is also endowed with a sharper perception as it was he who first noticed Caligula's lustful attraction towards his master.

The presence (or proximity) of another character involved in the events also increases the tellers' degree of honesty, credibility and reliability. At one point, Euripedes fears that "Lonoxia would accuse me of infidelitie, being well acquainted with my relation, if I should omit any thing" (39).<sup>33</sup> As with the claim to the historicity of the fictional events, their reliability is underlined by the contrast with Meador's story in the sixth book, since he is inclined to exaggerate –and possibly to fantasise– while nobody in the room can authenticate his version. Even so, he brings with him a letter from Araterus and produces transcriptions of Maurishia's and Peomontile's speeches, respectively dismissing and defending Araterus as the right candidate to marry Queen Amarilis.

The narrator of the diegetic present –largely in the first half of the fifth book– is granted limited privileges, which suggests the influence of the emerging scientific discourse. His perspective is consistently external and does not explore the characters' minds (except for Panthea's jealousy), yet he perceptively describes actions, gestures, moods and appearances. He focuses permanently on Argelois, reporting only his actions, his soliloquies, his dialogues, and the stories he hears from other characters. Moreover, he is thoroughly ignorant about the past. For example, we learn a little about Argelois's life in the story of his friend (and possible stepbrother) Dardanus narrated by Epidaurus, yet next to nothing about Eliana.<sup>34</sup> He does not even indicate the geographical location of Tribulus's castle, around which action, at the diegetic level, takes place, and cannot recount events happening elsewhere in the present, such as the Arizobanes episode reported by Epidaurus (194-202). Although he occasionally gives his opinion, his competence does not lay in his knowledge but in his sharp perception and scenic rendering of events.

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<sup>33</sup> When Lonoxia tells Argelois his story, Euripedes withdraws "in the mean time betaking him to some Philosophical contemplations, in which he daily spent some hours" (116), and Argelois goes to another room in the cave when Epidaurus narrates the life of Dardanus to the old men.

<sup>34</sup> Argelois promises Euripedes to tell him his life, but Pordage chose to postpone it for a future instalment. About Eliana, readers only learn that she is a "Princesse and daughter to the Kings [Palemon's] ancient friend and ally [...] left destitute of a crown through the usurpation of the Romans" (220), has temporarily lived in Rome under the protection of Tribulus, and is betrothed to Dardanus.



## 8. LANGUAGE AND STYLE

Notwithstanding the plurality of voices, their language and style do not differ substantially. Arguably, Euripedes's tone sounds more assertive, Lonoxia's rather melancholic, while servants Epidaurus and Meador's stories flow more easily and are more livelier (in fact, all the characters gather at the cave to listen to the latter's adventures with Araterus). However, it is highly likely that the language of *Eliana* is fairly responsible for the scant scholarly interest in the romance after John C. Dunlop's harsh criticism of the lexical affectation of its early pages:

The *Eliana* [...] is as remarkable for its affectation, though of a different species, as the novels of the school of Euphuus. In *Eliana*, when a person dies, he is said to depart into the subterranean walks of the Stygian grove –to see is always called to invisage, to raise is to suscite, and a ladder of ropes is termed a funal ladder. Flora “spreads her fragrant mantle on the superficies of the earth, and bespangles the verdant grass with her beauteous adornments;” and a lover “enters a grove free from the frequentations of any besides the ranging beasts and pleasing birds, whose dulcet notes exulscerate him out of his melancholy contemplations” (563).

To a large extent, the language of *Eliana* fits the “fourth style” of the five types proposed by Mackenzie in “An Apologie for Romances,” an introductory essay to *Aretina*: “The fourth style is where the cadence is sweet, and the epithets well adapted, without any other varnish whatsoever: and this is that style which is used at Court, and is patterned to us by eloquent Scuderie” (10). Surely, it is not this style Dunlop mocked, but the apparent combination of two other styles already ridiculed by Mackenzie in 1660: one is “the university style” of authors “who embroider their discourse with Latin and Greek termes. But this is as ridiculous, as if one who desires to make his face seem pleasant, should enamble it with red, blew, green, and other colours” (9), and the other, the *précieuse* style of “a ridiculous caball of Ladies at Paris, who terme themselves the precious, and who paraphrase every thing they speak of, terming a mirrour, the conselour of beauty, and a chair, the commoditie of conversation, &c. And thus they have progressed from painting of faces to paint expressions” (10). Pordage must have been aware of this innovative style and introduced it in his prose, especially in the opening pages –probably the ones Dunlop read. Although claims of euphuistic affectation in Pordage's prose are not applicable to the rest of the romance, the profusion of new, unsuccessful words often hampers pleasurable reading.

New words in *Eliana* usually derive from the Latin or French, but also stem from derivational additions and inflectional alternatives to recently introduced neologisms. A good number of them were also being employed by other writers, or registered in seventeenth-century dictionaries before and after 1660, such as Henry Cockeram's *The English Dictionary* (1623), Thomas Blount's *Glossographia* (1660) or Elisha Coles's *An English Dictionary* (1677), though nowadays they are considered rare or obsolete by the *OED*. Many others –like ‘agnizement’, ‘debrachiated’, ‘illecebraces’ and ‘mestitude’– seem to be unsuccessful coinages in *Eliana* and an inconvenience at (communal) readings, while simultaneously reverberating with





French echoes of modernity to early Restoration ears. In general, however, Pordage's prose differs from both Mackenzie's own digressive style of "Barrasters" in *Aretina*, and the cultivated rhetorical eloquence of Herbert's *The Princess of Cloria*. While exhibiting the verbose affectation of heroic romances, Pordage comes closer to the language characteristic of the emerging novel (for example, in the tales of Walter Charleton), which –in turn– must have displeased those readers who could afford a folio romance and found it offered neither the style nor the political or allegorical stories expected in such books.

## 9. CONCLUSION

While *Eliana* did not primarily aim to explore the multiple tensions of its age, young Samuel Pordage's updating of the form of the romance should not be ignored, even though –unlike Mackenzie, Herbert, Bulteel and Crowne– he made no mention about it in the prefatory epistle, concentrating instead on modulating the critical judgement of his readers. This essay has shown that, apart from extolling love as friendship, he experimented with different ways of combining history and fiction, and strove to grant his stories more objectivity by setting them against a true historical background and by reinforcing his narrators' reliability and, in general, their mimetic authority. After the present analysis, I cannot help but wonder whether *Eliana* is unfinished or, following the model established by Sidney, whether the first part contains all that the author wanted to say, even if the history of Argelais remains untold and the identity of the eponymous Eliana a mystery.

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## MISCELLANY



# UNPUBLISHED LETTER TO FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA FROM CAMPBELL HACKFORTH-JONES

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## ABSTRACT

This essay provides an unpublished letter from the young Englishman Campbell (Colin) Hackforth-Jones to the poet Federico García Lorca whom he met in Granada and reencountered in New York. The essay also provides photographs of Hackforth-Jones, of García Lorca's mutual friend in New York, María Antonieta Rivas and of Lorca with friends in Cuba at the end of his 1929-1930 American trip

**KEYWORDS:** Federico García Lorca, Campbell (Colin) Hackforth-Jones, Unpublished correspondence, María Antonieta Rivas, photographs.

CARTA INÉDITA A FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA  
DE CAMPBELL HACKFORTH-JONES

## RESUMEN

Este ensayo presenta una carta inédita que el joven inglés Campbell (Colin) Hackforth-Jones le mandó al poeta Federico García Lorca a quien conoció en Granada y volvió a ver en Nueva York. El ensayo da también fotografías de Hackforth-Jones y García Lorca, de su mutua amiga en Nueva York, María Antonieta Rivas y de Lorca con amigos en Cuba al final de su viaje a América en 1929-1930.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Federico García Lorca, Campbell (Colin) Hackforth-Jones, correspondencia inédita, María Antonieta Rivas, fotografías.



The young Englishman Campbell (aka “Colin”) Hackforth-Jones (1904-1988), a student of Spanish at Oxford University, was awarded in 1926 a scholarship to study in Spain (his university sought to establish an exchange program with the city of Granada). On his trip south, in a Paris night club in Montmartre, Hackforth-Jones befriended two Spaniards who soon later (during the Christmas holidays of 1926-1927) introduced him to Federico García Lorca in the poet’s hometown of Granada where “Colin” also met Federico’s brother Francisco (“Paco”) García Lorca.

Hackforth-Jones had been active in Oxford’s Dramatic Society and made instant friends with the gregarious poet and dramatist Lorca.<sup>1</sup> The poet dedicated to this new English friend the poem “Flor” published in his book *Canciones (Obra completa, I. Poesía, 389)*<sup>2</sup>:

“Flor”

*A Colin Hackforth*

El magnífico sauce  
de la lluvia, caía.

¡Oh la luna redonda  
sobre las ramas blancas!

In 1927 Lorca recommended the Oxfordian to his friend José Bello in Madrid:

Este joven es un chico inglés muy simpático estudiante de Oxford que ha estado pensionado en la Universidad de Granada. Como es escritor en seguida hemos hecho una gran amistad. Yo te ruego le acompañes y pasees con él. Seguramente te dirá cosas divertidas. Podríamos bien nombrarlo nuestro representante en Oxford pero eso lo haremos después. No ha querido conocer a nadie de literatos más que a ti [...]. Él te dará noticias mías [...]. Sé simpático con Hackforth-Jones. Llámalo Colin. Y los pocos días de su estancia en Madrid está fino con él porque con él yo lo he pasado muy bien en su compañía (*Epistolario completo, 421*).

Hackforth-Jones and García Lorca coincided in 1929 in New York where Lorca was enrolled in Columbia University and Hackforth-Jones was working on Wall Street for Beverly Bogarty & Co. (“se encontraba en Nueva York en aquella época porque su padre, un bolsista próspero, le había enviado allí para trabajar en la oficina de sus agentes asociados y familiarise con sus trámites” (*Epistolario completo, 637*)). In a letter (end of June 1929) to his family, Lorca writes about encountering “Colin Hackforth” in New York:

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<sup>1</sup> Much information in this essay was cordially given to me by Campbell Hackforth-Jones’s daughter Laila Hackforth-Jones. Of great importance too is the information found in the two essays by Andrew A. Anderson, 1985 & 2013.

<sup>2</sup> The book *Canciones* was published in Málaga in 1927 (*Litoral, Primer Suplemento, Imprenta Sur*). A second edition was published in Madrid in 1929 (*Revista de Occidente*).



Campbell (Colin) Hackforth-Jones.  
Photograph in collection of Laila Hackforth-Jones.

[D]e una ventana de un gran restaurante sale una voz grande que dice 'Federico, Federico', y veo a un muchacho que con un jersey rojo de seda da un salto, se tira a la calle con riesgo de romperse una pierna, y me abraza. Era el inglés Colin Hackforth que estuvo en Granada, y se hizo tan íntimo amigo mío [...]. He tenido realmente suerte, pues Colin es escritor y muy bueno, será realmente mi mejor maestro de inglés. Todos los días a las seis, vendrá a la Universidad y traduciremos cosas. Anoche mismo ya me hacía todas las indicaciones en lengua inglesa y me enseñaba multitud de palabras [...] no tendré más remedio que ir avanzando en el idioma y Colin me buscará un francés para cambiar conversación (*Epistolario completo*. 617).

The Hispanist and Lorca biographer Ian Gibson writes:

What Lorca did not tell his parents was that, when passing through London he had sent a telegram to Campbell, hoping to see him there. But the bird had flown, and the lad's parents forwarded the message to New York. Hackforth-Jones, appraised



of the poet's imminent arrival, was therefore on the look-out for his friend. But for all that it had certainly been a rare coincidence. Campbell lived in a rented flat near 70<sup>th</sup> Street and for several weeks Lorca visited him there, drinking his contraband gin and chatting to him and his sister Phyllis. The poet enthusiastically told his parents that his friend was going to give him English classes, but no such arrangement ensued (Gibson, 1989: 249-250).

In another letter (second week of August 1929) from New, Lorca again writes his family: "Esta mañana he estado tomando el desayuno con mi amigo Colin en el Wall Street, que es el sitio de los negocios, donde está la Bolsa, los bancos y los grandes oficinas de las oficinas" (*Epistolario completo*, 637). Ian Gibson writes: "Al poco tiempo de llegar a Nueva York, Federico, de la mano de su amigo Campbell Hackforth-Jones, había conocido Wall Street y la Bolsa –entonces eufórica–, y describió para su familia, en la segunda semana de agosto, una de sus varias visitas con el inglés al barrio financiero de la metrópoli" (<http://www.epdlp.com/texto.php?id2=9521>).

In late November 1929 Campbell Hackforth-Jones returned to England and did not see again his friend García Lorca. Andrew A. Anderson writes that Hackforth-Jones was very moved by García Lorca's death, supported the Republican cause, and carefully kept the material testimony of his friendship with the Spanish poet, volumes dedicated to him by Lorca as well as drawings and photographs (Anderson, 2013: 201)<sup>3</sup>.

We find in the archives of the Centro Federico García Lorca the first page of an unpublished letter sent in 1932 to the poet from Hackforth-Jones.<sup>4</sup> We do not know if Lorca answered this letter from Campbell Hackforth-Jones.

See here below the transcription of this previously unpublished and here unedited letter with grammatical errors in Spanish uncorrected:

Arkley House,  
Barnet,  
Herts<sup>5</sup>  
Agosto 24, 1932

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<sup>3</sup> The Hackforth-Jones family generously decided to donate the "H-J collection" to the Centro Federico García Lorca (email to me from Laila Hackforth-Jones, 19 August 2018).

<sup>4</sup> The letter is unsigned and apparently incomplete (a second page has been lost?). My thanks to the heirs of Campbell Hackforth-Jones and of Federico García Lorca for permission to publish this letter which is listed with reference number *M-Lorca COA-464* in the catalogue of Christian de Paepe, 2003, p. 236. In this same catalogue, with reference number *M-Lorca COA-463*, p. 236, a greeting card sent to García Lorca by Hackforth-Jones (end of December 1931?). The card with printed legend *To Wish dear Grandpa a Happy Birthday*: "Este es para todo el mundo... es una ilustración de como pasaba yo mi juventud".

<sup>5</sup> Thanks to the staff of the Local Studies Centre, Herndon Library, The Burroughs London, for their help and email (26 July 2018) in which they informed me that the occupant at this address was Frank William Hackforth-Jones J.P. On Frank William Hackforth-Jones, Campbell's father, see <https://search.livesofthefirstworldwar.org/search/world-records/england->



Arkley House,  
Barnet,  
Herts,  
Ago. 24, 1920

Querido Federico,

Con cierto miedo tomo una pluma (poet.) para escribirte. No se ~~si~~ si en el nuevo orden tu no estes el Ministro de Educacion y Telégrafos o Jefe del Instituto de Nóseques. Tienes barba? Pero en serio espero que tu no serás demasiado ocupado enviarme una cartecita.

Yo, al contrario, persigo los senderos a "crisscross", al izquierdo las iglesias de iccream, ya llenas de ecos de los títeres, y al derecho un poquito de luz.

Hay dos cuestiones a hacer. Primero, un amigo mio poeta se sentiria mejor, quiere traducir algunas poemas suyas. No comprando una palabra de castellano pero por este medio se podria de él, ya en español por lo que él le libro. ~~una pregunta~~ como te parece? El castellano es malo pero ~~algunas~~ cuando hallara palabras correctas referencias a un profesor a Oxford o a la poia arreglar todo con el poeta, que es irlandés, tiene una idea que con él es buen honor. Me publico algo y me trabajo.

En vez en sueno he leído unos poemas tuyos y los comprendo ahora. Me can great pleasure.

La segunda cuestion se refiere en el deseo de visitar alguna otra vez. Para hacerlo seria preciso hallar empleo en algun ~~de~~ cualquier clase, profesorado en inglés, periodista (lo soy) o secretario (lo soy), a un dibujo de los colores ~~de~~ *en home*.

No quiero que tu te ocupes con estas cosas de una manera que te hace sudor. No te escribo cosas de todo este tiempo para pedir algo, sino quiero encontrarme uno de estos días charlando en Londres, Paris, Roma o aun en Madrid.

Antes cuando tus señas halla un photo de Maria Antonista (M I R) contigo y una pelonita y el pianista, enviado por Laery. Laery esta bien.

Querido Federico,

Con cierto miedo tomo una pluma (poet.) para escribirte. No se [word deleted] si en el nuevo orden tu no estes el Ministro de Educacion y Telégrafos o Jefe del Instituto de Nóseques. Tienes barba? Pero en serio espero que tu no serás demasiado ocupado enviarme una cartecita.

Yo, al contrario, persigo los senderos a "crisscross", al izquierdo las iglesias de iccream, ya llenas de ecos de los títeres, y al derecho un poquito de luz.

[and-wales-deaths-1837-2007?firstname=william&firstname\\_variants=true&lastname=jones&y  
earofdeath\\_offset=5&o=lastname&d=asc&page= & http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/  
arthur-charles-fox-davies/armorial-families--a-directory-of-gentlemen-of-coat-armour-volume-1-  
dxo/page-214-armorial-families--a-directory-of-gentlemen-of-coat-armour-volume-1-dxo.shtml:](http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/arthur-charles-fox-davies/armorial-families--a-directory-of-gentlemen-of-coat-armour-volume-1-dxo/page-214-armorial-families--a-directory-of-gentlemen-of-coat-armour-volume-1-dxo.shtml)  
"Frank William Hackforth- Jones, Esq., J.P. co. Hertford, a Freeman of the City of London, b. 1863; m.1885; and has issue –Oliver Hackforth– Jones, Gentleman, b. i8yo[?] [m. and has issue]; Matthew Hackforth-Jones, Gentleman, M.A. Oxen., b. 1893 [m. 1924, Margaret, d. of Rev. Henry M. Elliott-Briscoe Drake]; Campbell Hackforth-Jones, Gentleman, b. 1904. Seat - Arkley House, Barnet, Herts".





Hay dos cuestiones a hacer. Primero, un amigo mio, poeta de sensibilidades, quiere traducir algunas poemas tuyas. No comprende una palabra de castellano pero por este medio mequino de mí, es encantado con los que le he leído. [two words deleted]. Como te parece? Mi castellano es malo pero [two words deleted] cuando hallara palabras dificiles referencia a un profesor a Oxford o a ti para arreglar todo eso. El poeta, que es irlandes, tiene mas anos que yo y es buen hombre. Ha publicado algo y sabe trabajar. [word deleted]

De vez en cuando he leído unos poemas tuyos y los comprenden ahora. Me dan “great pleasure”.

La segunda cuestion se [resuelve] resuelve en mi deseo de visitar Espana otra vez. Para hacerlo seria preciso hallar empleo en Espana de cualquier clase, profesorcito en Ingles, periodista (lo soy) o secretario (lo soy, a un diputado de los Cortes aquí) o un nóseque.

No quiero que tu te ocupes con estas dos cosas de una manera que te hace ascos. No te escribo despues de todo este tiempo para pedir algo, sino quiero encontrarme uno de estos dias charlando contigo en Londres, Paris, Roma o aun en Madrid.

Anoche buscando tus señas hallé un photo de Maria Antonieta (RIP)<sup>6</sup> contigo y una mejicanita y el pianista, enviado por Laery<sup>7</sup>. Laery esta bien.

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<sup>6</sup> Actress, writer and political activist, María Antonieta (María Antonieta Valeria Rivas Mercado Castellanos Blair, Mexico City, 1900-Paris, 1931). As a patroness of the arts, María Antonieta sponsored the Orquesta Sinfónica de México as well as several Mexican artists and she created the experimental Teatro Ulises in Mexico City. She met García Lorca and Campbell Hackforth-Jones in New York City: “temporalmente residente en Nueva York, separada de su marido inglés [Albert Edward] Blair y amante del escritor y político José Vasconcelos [Calderón]” (*Epistolario completo*, 664, nota 704). Early in November 1929, García Lorca escribe a su familia desde New York: “Os mando una fotografía en la que estoy con María Antonieta Rivas, una mejicana millonaria, fundadora de la revista *Contemporáneos* y el teatro “Ulises” de México, gran amiga mía, de una muchacha hindú, bailarina que es una preciosidad, y de un pianista de Hawaii, muy bueno, que ha tenido gran éxito en New York. Son *tres raros*, desde luego, pero ingteligentes y muy artistas los tres. La foto es de la Universidad de Columbia” (*Epistolario completo*, 664. En la página 665, reproducción de la foto). María Antonieta Rivas committed suicide in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris in February 1931. In a letter from Madrid (February-March 1931) to his family, García Lorca writes: “Os rogaría, si me pudieses encontrar los retratos de mi pobre amiga María Antonieta, me los enviarais, ya que tengo una gran gana de siquiera tener este recuerdo en mi estudio de un de mis mejores amigas y de una de las mujeres más inteligentes que he conocido” (*Epistolario completo*, 706). In 1982, Carlos Saura directed the film *Antonieta*, based on the novel of Andrés Henestrosa (Oaxaca, 1906-Mexico City, 2008), a novel based on the life of María Antonieta Rivas. The year 2010 saw the premiere of the opera *Antonieta* by the prolific Mexican composer Federico Ibarra Groth (b. Mexico City, 1946) with libretto by Verónica Musalem also based on the life of María Antonieta Rivas. In the archives of the Centro Federico García Lorca we find a unpublished letter (December 1929) from María Antonieta to García Lorca (reference number 853 in Christian de Paepe).

<sup>7</sup> ¿Laery = Larry? Andrew A. Anderson writes that in New York, “Con un compañero, Larry, [Hackforth-Jones] había alquilado un amplio cuarto en la calle 53 este” (see Anderson, 2013: 199, 201).





Federico García Lorca, María Antonieta Rivas, with unidentified dancer and pianist.  
Photograph taken at the sundial on the campus of Columbia University, 1929.  
The 16-ton sphere was removed in 1949.



The same group, Federico García Lorca, Antonieta Rivas and the unidentified dancer and pianist. Columbia University, 1929.





María Antonieta Valeria Rivas Mercado Castellanos Blair. Campbell Hackforth-Jones sent her a Christmas greeting which is housed in the archives of the Centro Federico Lorca (reference 464 in Christian de Paepe, 236).



José Vasconcelos y María Antonieta Rivas.  
María Antonieta Rivas supported José Vasconcelos in his 1929  
unsuccessful presidential bid.





Photograph of Federico García Lorca con María Muñoz Quevedo, Cuba, Spring 1930. Lorca's trip to Cuba came at the end of his 1929-1930 visit to the New World. María Muñoz Portal de Quevedo (A Coruña, 1886-La Habana, 1947) studied with Manuel de Falla in Madrid. In Cuba, she was a well-known pianist, choral director and music teacher. She and her husband Antonio Quevedo (Madrid, 1888-La Habana, 1977) had arrived in Cuba in 1919 and were frequently García Lorca's hosts in La Habana during the Spring of 1930. In La Habana, the Quevedos founded the Conservatorio de Música Bach, the Sociedad Coral de La Habana, the music magazine *Musicalia*, and in 1930 the Sociedad Contemporanea (Sección Cubana de la International Contemporary Music). Photograph reproduced by permission of the Residencia de Estudiantes, Madrid.



Unpublished photograph of Federico García Lorca in Cuba where he stayed for three months in 1930 after his six-month stay in the United States. The photograph perhaps taken by his friend, the Spanish composer and critic Adolfo Salazar. García Lorca here with María Muñoz Quevedo and Lydia McKenna de Callejo. The date typed on the photographs is incorrect (Lorca did not arrive in Cuba until March 1930). Reproduced by permission of the Residencia de Estudiantes.





Drawing in ink and colored pencils given to Campbell Hackforth-Jones by Federico García Lorca (480 × 310 mm).

On the back of the drawing, typewritten: “This drawing was executed by Federico García Lorca in Granada, Christmas 1927 as a present for me. It represents St. George and the Dragon, as he explained. The initials F.G.L. were added by me at some time or other. This drawing should be taken care of as it will, I believe, to be of great interest to those who are interested in his poetry, as much perhaps as some other people might be interested in any drawings by any well-known poet. Also this picture may in time to come have a money value: therefore do not let it be destroyed in case posterity wants to look at it. I think F.G.L. was very much aware of posterity and would have liked this to survive. It is as much him as his poetry. Cambridge / Arkley, 6 Sept. 1939”.

[Hand signed:] Campbell Hackforth-Jones.<sup>8</sup>

Reviews sent to author: 14 July 2019

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<sup>8</sup> Cited in Mario Hernández, number 96.



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# FORMAL EXPERIMENTATION AS SOCIAL COMMITMENT: IRISH TRAVELLER WOMEN'S REPRESENTATIONS IN LITERATURE AND ON SCREEN

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## ABSTRACT

On 1 March 2017, former Taoiseach Enda Kenny announced formal recognition of Irish Travellers' unique heritage, culture and identity by the state. This fact triggered my interest in exploring the important cultural questions surrounding Irish travellers and investigating their (mis)representation in the fields of literature and film documentary, and its effects. The aim of this essay is double: first, to focus on the role of formal innovation in representations of Irish Traveller women in examples of contemporary Irish fiction, and its consequences, because their authors use a wide range of formal devices to merge the issues of gender and Irish Travellers' lives and conditions; second, to contextualize their work by comparison with a selection of documentary films featuring Irish Traveller women. The essay will facilitate some reflections on the complexities of their representation in literature and on screen.

**KEYWORDS:** Formal innovation, ethics, Irish travellers, gender, Irish literature, Irish theatre, film documentary.

EXPERIMENTACIÓN FORMAL COMO COMPROMISO SOCIAL: REPRESENTACIONES  
DE LAS MUJERES NÓMADAS IRLANDEASAS EN LA LITERATURA Y EL CINE

## RESUMEN

El 1 de marzo de 2017, el anterior Primer Ministro irlandés Enda Kenny anunció el reconocimiento oficial de la herencia, cultura e identidad únicas de los nómadas irlandeses por parte del Estado. Este hecho suscitó mi interés por profundizar en algunas realidades culturales relevantes en torno a los nómadas irlandeses y su representación (y malinterpretación) en la literatura y el documental fílmico, así como sus efectos. Este ensayo persigue un doble objetivo: en primer lugar, analizar el papel que desarrolla la innovación formal en las representaciones de las mujeres nómadas irlandesas en algunos ejemplos de la ficción irlandesa contemporánea, y sus consecuencias, ya que sus autores utilizan una amplia gama de recursos formales para fusionar cuestiones de género y las condiciones en las que viven los nómadas irlandeses. En segundo lugar, contextualizar dichas obras literarias mediante su comparación con una selección de documentales protagonizados a su vez por nómadas irlandesas. El ensayo propone varias reflexiones acerca de las complejidades de su representación en la literatura y en la gran pantalla.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** innovación formal, ética, nómadas irlandeses, género, literatura irlandesa, teatro irlandés, documental fílmico.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This essay was inspired by former Taoiseach Enda Kenny's announcement of the formal recognition of Irish Travellers' unique heritage, culture and identity by the state on 1 March 2017. This historic announcement meant that a person could identify as both Irish and Traveller. When asked how "recognition of Traveller ethnicity" would benefit the community, Bernard Joyce, director of the Irish Traveller Movement, spoke of experiences of discrimination "several times a day" (qtd. in Holland 2016b, n.p.). Travellers also internalize shame early, "contributing to high levels of depression, ill-health, low educational attainment, unemployment rates of up to 80 per cent and a suicide rate six times that of the settled community" (qtd. in Holland 2016b, n.p.). But who are these Irish Travellers and why are they discriminated against? In Mícheál Ó hAodha's words, "Irish Travellers are a minority who have lived on the margins of mainstream Irish society for many centuries" (1):

It is estimated that there are at least 36 000 Travellers living in the Republic of Ireland with a further 6000 in Northern Ireland" [...]. They are distinct from the surrounding population due to a range of differing cultural attributes. These include family structure, language, employment patterns and a traditional preference for nomadism or mobility as is inherent in the very ascription they attach to their community [...]. These attributes [have] aided the cohesiveness and survival of this marginal community and its culture in the face of *what in recent decades, at least, has frequently been a hostile majority or settled community.* (1; emphasis is mine).

These facts, together with Enda Kenny's announcement, triggered my interest in exploring the important cultural questions surrounding Irish travellers and investigating their (mis)representation in the fields of literature and film documentary, and its effects.<sup>1</sup>

Discrimination against Irish Travellers is manifest in literature and thus, as Jose Laners argues, "It is unsurprising that many settled Irish people are still more familiar with the stereotypes surrounding that literary construct than with the real circumstances of the lives of their fellow citizens in the Traveller community" (6). This is a construct that "frequently represent[s] the Travellers as living, literally, in another world", often "associate[ing] them with figures from –mostly Celtic– mythology [...] to underline both their unworldliness and their separation from the settled cultural and societal norm" (134):

In the rhetoric of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Irish nationalism, a utopian vision of the future was contingent on the mythical construct of a unified, heroic past – an idealized and exclusionary prehistory of the Irish "race". Foundational national myths, such as those based upon the heroic defiance of

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<sup>1</sup> The research on which this essay is based was funded by research projects REGI 2018/36, EICOD 19/18 and AOCYRC 19/23 (Vice-Rectorate for Research, University of La Rioja).

Cuchulain, or the renewal of the nation through blood sacrifice, or the rootedness of the peasant in the land [...], which originated as efforts to emancipate the Irish from their colonial inferiority complex [...], draw a magic circle around the definition of Irish identity, often to the exclusion of a dialogue with any group or set of individuals that did not fall within its bounds. A minority group within Ireland such as the Travellers occupied a problematic position within these narratives of national identity and unity, and their representation had to be carefully “managed”. Revival writers uneasily tiptoed between including the “tinkers” in their projects about Irish folk life [...], and rejecting the depiction of a way of life that, in its wildness, might reinforce ingrained British preconceptions about the drunken and unruly Irish. (141)

Pursuing this line of argument, Jose Lanters notes that most Irish “mythic narratives portraying Travellers or ‘tinkers’ do not perceive them as genuine human beings” (161). Travellers’ life stories often comment on the way in which they are stereotyped by the settled community as dirty, dishonest, sexually promiscuous and given to excessive drinking. Moreover, Lanters continues arguing that “Travellers are often discriminated against purely on the basis of how they look and sound, there is a self-consciousness in their stories about ways in which they differ from settled people” (193-194). This may explain why they “often consciously try not to look like Travellers when they go out for fear of not being admitted to a pub or club” (194). Many studies present Travellers as vulnerable subjects and reinforce the notion that they are quaint and exotic if not actually in need of correction.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, several Irish women writers addressed feminist considerations in their work in order to transform ideas of what Ireland was, is, or could be, and their formal experimentation in various genres proved crucial to this end. In *By the Bog of Cats* (2002), for example, playwright Marina Carr reinvents Euripides’ *Medea* in an attempt to explore the position of women in Irish society after independence. Carr takes the figure of the strong woman embodied by the fearsome Medea and develops it into something to be celebrated. Her Hester Swane, a Traveller, is a marginalized figure corresponding to the barbarian Medea. The unfamiliar Irish midlands dialect and the landscape of the bog also play a significant part in interpreting the relevance of the Greek model to the Irish retelling, for the bog can be read as a mythical space with a supernatural undertone that makes *By the Bog of Cats* clearly Irish. Carr uses the mythical method as well as her knowledge of traditional Irish folklore and fantasy to show how her protagonist struggles with questions of identity as she raises her daughter Josie in an Ireland of the recent past. The mythical method is also used to look at violence perpetrated against these two Traveller women and to portray the tragic and traumatic consequences of such violence.

Claire Keegan also uses female Traveller protagonists to reject the Mother Ireland image of compassion and suffering, and to represent the reality of women’s life in modern rural Ireland. In “The Forester’s Daughter”, in her second collection of stories, *Walk the Blue Fields* (2007), she does so with Martha and her daughter Victoria. Keegan not only recovers the storytelling tradition of rural Ireland and its mythical narratives –seeming to doubt the ability of the realist short story form to



portray intimate female conflicts and dilemmas— but also uses of a large repertoire of rhetorical strategies of the satirical apparatus, as we shall see, to both tackle Traveller women's issues and achieve her unique tone.

The Irish Traveller women depicted by these two well-known writers have very different traits, but they share similar origins and, unfortunately, similar unworldliness and feelings of separation from the settled cultural and societal norm. The figure of the Traveller is significant to their work, which, first, opens up an ethical and political inquiry regarding Irish Travellers women's lives, social position, sense of motherhood, sexuality, and marginalization, since they represent a step backwards from the accomplishment of Irish Traveller women's self-actualization; and, second, disturbs complacency.

In the second decade of the twenty-first century, the Irish Traveller woman as a literary figure has been appropriated by some Irish writers: Rosaleen McDonagh in her play *Mainstream* (2016) and Donal Ryan in his novel *All We Shall Know* (2016). The former presents the story of four disabled characters, three Travellers who are old friends and a settled journalist who wishes to make a documentary about their lives; the latter features Melody, a settled, married teacher who falls pregnant by Martin Toppo, a Traveller student 13 years her junior. Both McDonagh and Ryan use satirical methods of rhetorical inquiry to undermine many stereotypes associated with the Traveller community in general, with a special attention to Irish Traveller women. There are some differences in their approach to the issue, since McDonagh is a disabled Traveller who writes from her feminist perspective, whereas Ryan is a man and a member of the settled community. They nevertheless both use the satirical mode to undertake an implicit criticism of society's prejudices against Irish Travellers in general, and Irish Traveller women in particular.

The aim of this essay is double: first, to focus on the role of formal innovation in representations of Irish Traveller women in examples of contemporary Irish fiction, and its effects (the four writers identified above use a wide range of formal devices to merge the issues of gender and Irish Travellers' lives and conditions); second, to contextualize their work by comparison with a selection of documentary films featuring Irish Traveller women—Perry Ogden's *Pavee Lackeen* (2005), Jason Byrne's *Rosaleen McDonagh: My Story* (2009), and Kim Bartley's *I Am Traveller* (2016). The essay will explore not only how Irish literature and documentary film engage with tradition regarding Travellers, but also the ways in which traditions are reinvented, subverted, and repositioned, facilitating some thought-provoking reflections on the complexities of their representation in literature and on screen. In this way, I attempt to provide new insights into Jose Lanters' claim that Irish Travellers continue struggling "to be acknowledged as being both Irish and different" (206).

## 2. IRISH TRAVELLER WOMEN IN LITERATURE

Carr's *By the Bog of Cats* revolves around 40-year-old Hester, who has been abandoned by her younger husband, Carthage, in order to marry a wealthy girl half her age. Hester and her daughter Josie live in a caravan by the eponymous Bog of



Cats and must leave before the marriage because Carthage wants a better life for their daughter. Hester refuses to go and tells Carthage that he will never see their daughter again if he goes through with his wedding. Later, she sets the newly-weds' house on fire. Influenced by the malefic nature of the bog, which is traditionally associated with dead matter and decay, Hester has her revenge, ultimately murdering Josie.

Through its depiction of Hester and Josie, the play shows an apparent consensus on the tinker community. Josie's grandmother tells her:

I warned him [Carthage] about that wan, Hester Swane, that she'd get her claws in, and she did, the tinker. That's what yees are, tinkers. And your poor Daddy, all he's had to put up with. [...] Why don't yees head off in that auld caravan, back to wherever yees came from, and give your poor Daddy back to me where he rightfully belongs. (279)

Hester and Josie are marginalized because they are tinkers, living apart from settled cultural and societal norms in the Irish Midlands. Imitating her grandmother, Josie presents her mother as outside Irish Catholic morality, calling her "Jezebel witch" (285). Carthage characterizes Hester in similar disparaging terms: "your drinkin' or your night roamin' [...] ya sleep in that dirty auld caravan and lave Josie alone in the house" (290).

The settled characters have an image of the Traveller community's circumstances that is based in stereotypes that are far removed from the reality of Hester and Josie. By using formal techniques, Carr confronts questions of social justice in contemporary Irish society and reveals that Irish attitudes toward the Traveller community have changed very little. The fantastical aspects of Carr's work allow her to shape tinkers to serve the imaginative requirements of her play and the purposes of her message. In a highly class-ridden society like Ireland, Carr, as a playwright, seems to feel somewhat of an outsider, a bit of a Traveller herself, because writers too are constantly judged—people always have opinions about travellers and about art. Writers often face negative receptions, and thus, like Hester the Traveller, Carr seems to feel an outsider in a way. This may be why Carr's heroine Hester has an answer for everything in the play and no one does her down.

Josie does not repudiate her mother, unlike the other characters, and learns to speak in her own voice. Josie, a modern Traveller, represents a young female voice of dissent empowered by a secure identity. Carr seems to suggest that the ascendancy of a feminine sensibility in the collective unconscious that does not conform to traditional norms or patriarchal constructions of femininity—embodied by a new generation of the Traveller community—leads directly to Hester's infanticide and subsequent suicide. The two Travellers die in the derelict Bog of Cats, they are buried in this land, thus presenting a theme that is analogous to Elliot's *Wasteland*, which tackles the theme of the regeneration and fertility of the past. Carr presents regeneration as painful because the present cannot measure up to an idealised past: Hester's experiences become a source of distress when she considers that her present life with her daughter is one of great personal and cultural suffering. Josie provides a revelation or regeneration of the figure of the Traveller in Carr's play.



Our second object of analysis is Keegan's "The Forester's Daughter", which narrates the story of Martha, the eponymous forester's daughter who marries Victor Deegan, an egotistic, emotionally stunted man she does not love in the hope that she will come to love him. One day, Martha buys roses from a Traveller with whom, unbeknown to Deegan, she has a pleasurable sexual encounter. This extramarital liaison leaves Martha pregnant with her daughter Victoria, who is a genuine tinker because Martha is herself a storyteller of tinker blood. As the story comes to end, Martha has her revenge on Deegan for focusing on their fields, and ignoring and overshadowing her and her daughter by making public the fact that Victoria (note her name) is not his daughter, and even though the reader sees it coming and realizes its inevitability, he is still a little surprised when it happens.

Martha wishes Deegan would take an interest in her and her family's feelings. She wishes he would treat her like a woman, as the Traveller had, but he is emotionally empty. She also wants to find a job and a place of her own. However, as usual in rural Ireland, pregnancy binds her to the domestic sphere. As Eve Patten argues, in "the so-called 'city-girl' novels [...] from authors such as Patricia Scanlan [...] and Sheila O'Flanagan [...], which frequently feature independent young Irish women detaching themselves from traditional family structures in order to access and enjoy the social and consumerist cityscape of 'Celtic Tiger' Dublin" (267). Keegan's Martha is determined to leave her world behind with the money she has "not put on the table". Like Carr's Hester, Martha refuses to conform to the Mother Ireland image of female compassion and suffering. Unlike Carr, however, Keegan presents the force of the mother-daughter link as ultimately unfulfilling. However, unlike Hester, Martha's tinker heritage does not prevent her from escaping or make her unwilling to do so; it is her love for her rural world and the strictures of Victor Deegan's patriarchal order that influence her decision not to walk away. She remains trapped in the blue fields.

Hester feels that escape is only possible through death and so kills Josie, and later kills herself. Eve Patten notes a similarity to Keegan's Martha (267). However, as Ní Dhuibhne rightly argues, Martha "is not really much of a martyr [like Hester]. On the contrary, she is subversive, rebellious, even something of a feminist" (2008, n.p.). She develops effective strategies to achieve equality with Deegan, or at least to ameliorate the effects of inequality in their daily communal life. For example, she puts aside some money to go the cinema in Dublin, rather than using it to buy food for the family. Here Keegan not only throws into relief the dissenting position of many women in rural Ireland, but also denounces their tragic entrenched subordination, financial dependence, and relegation to the private sphere. As Heather Ingman claims, in her "marriage of necessity" (168), Martha, like Hester, contributes to the emotional and tragic impact of the story because, as Jose Lanteris argues, she struggles "with questions of identity, fate and self-determination" (149). Martha and Hester are unemployed, serve their husbands and raise their children, have no economic independence –but want it– and live in a heteronormative, patriarchal caged family whose excessive constraints go against nature and render it dysfunctional, characterized by mental disorders or maladapted behaviours.

Keegan's witty discourse, recovery of the rural Irish storytelling tradition, and rejection of the realistic short story form serve to illustrate women's intimate



dilemmas and conflicts. In unearthing all these social malfunctions in innovative ways, Keegan shows the path to achieving her characters' psychological and social fulfilment. Keegan, like Carr, is very well acquainted with the tinkers' predicament, and uses her familiarity with Irish folklore, the storytelling tradition, and the surreal to give form and narrative structure to the "The Forester's Daughter". In fact, Martha herself tells a story to her small community, the story of Mona which mirrors her own and is very telling for other reasons besides the formal:

"They were married [...]. One day [...] a traveller, a stranger [...] was selling roses [...]. She bought every last one [...]. When she went near him, her hand touched his throat and then his thumb came up and stroke her lips. His hands were soft compared to Nowlan's [...]. Deegan cannot stand it anymore [...]. As soon as he stands, the neighbours turn to look at him [...]. In his heart he has always known the girl [Victoria] was not his own. She was too strange and lovely to be his (83-86).

In her self-reflexive recounting of Mona's unfaithfulness to Nowlan, Martha draws attention to the pressure exerted by the community regarding motherhood in rural Ireland, makes a case for Travellers' rights and undermines Deegan's authority and stance in both domestic and public contexts. Keegan experiments with storytelling techniques as an indirect vehicle for sociocultural messages:

Something about the way [the story is] told tells him Martha knows he's listening. Finally, he hears his son, the simpleton, shout, 'Mammy had a boyfriend'. Deegan's feet carry him down the yard. [...]. Finally, he goes in. [...]. All around her are the vacant chairs, the empty glasses. [...]. 'Are you happy now?', he says. 'After twenty years of marriage, you are finally asking'. (86-87)

In this way, Keegan not only reaffirms Martha's sense of herself, her sexuality, femininity, and identity, but also expresses her desire for freedom from patriarchal conceptions of women and their bodies. Keegan's formal experimentation and her disruption of traditional Irish thematic motives constitutes a good example of social commitment to Traveller issues and of how the contemporary Irish short story form is in a state of flux.

Like her mother, Victoria has discovered strategies of survival, yet, unlike her mother, she is fulfilled. In her daily encounters and interactions, she also reveals the importance of the links *between* all the characters in the story, except her mother. In this way, she becomes more tolerant and uninterested in keeping the house and the land. Victoria is Keegan's reworking of the stereotypes of the tinker literary construct and an expression of her taste for dream-like fantasy. Like Josie, Victoria refuses to repeat her mother's thwarted life, though she does not repudiate her, and she too learns to speak in her own voice. This is Keegan's narrator:

Aghowle [their house] is in flames. Deegan, in his bare feet, goes over to his wife. There are no tears [...]. Martha holds on to her daughter's hand. She thinks of her money, the salesman and all those obsolete red roses [which he bought her before their extra-marital sexual encounter]. The girl has never known such happiness; Judge [her dog] is back, that's all she cares, for now. (89-90)





Keegan reveals Martha's subjugated world in order to assert the force of the motherdaughter link. As Anne Forgarty argues, Victoria embodies "the desperate struggle of the daughter to avoid the trap of female subjugation and the calamity of duplicating the mother's experience" (113). Unlike Martha, Victoria is self-confident and positive, strong rather than a victim. She resembles other tinker girl characters that feature in many mother-daughter stories in earlier Irish women's writing, like Josie in Marina Carr's *By the Bog of Cats*. Keegan speculates about social questions to criticize society. Her deployment of rhetorical devices of the satirical apparatus in "The Forester's Daughter" not only offers profound insights into such matters as unhappy unions, marital discord, familial instability, dysfunctional childhood, unfulfilled sexuality, resistance to mothering, and the crisis of gender roles, but also allows her to question tinker stereotypes and predetermined literary forms. The different voices on marriage, parenthood, the traditional links of family life, and Irish Travellers that enter into unresolved dialogue in Keegan's "The Forester's Daughter" seem to be intended to dazzle her audience.

Rosaleen McDonagh is an academic and an activist. She worked in the Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre for ten years, managing the Violence Against Women (VAW) programme. She has been involved in initiatives on Traveller women's issues and is regarded as a leading proponent of feminism with the Traveller community. Her play *Mainstream* is about four young friends with disabilities. One day, film-maker Eleanor wishes to make a documentary about their past living together. As the story evolves, their relationships and friendship become unstable.

McDonagh uses the rhetoric of satire, particularly irony, parody, and wit, to problematize the very process of writing and to deconstruct stagnant ideas about Irish Travellers, with a special attention to women. The content of satire is criticism, which may be uttered as direct rebuke or through several rhetorical devices. Following Paulson, the satirical piece depends on its capacity to be indirect and satirists achieve this indirectness by drawing upon a series of technical devices or strategies (116). Irony endows McDonagh's writing with obliqueness and indirection. Her use of verbal irony ("We seem to be in vogue at the minute –reality TV, night-time radio talk shows") implies the opposite of what is said, and depends on wit and playfulness, because there are times when the ironic implication of a particular statement resides in the use of a word in a purposefully de-contextualized situation:

*Jack:* Tell me about you! Why are you making a documentary? Why us? We're yesterday's story.

*Eleanor:* The commissioning spec wanted diversity.

*Jack:* We seem to be in vogue at the minute –reality TV, night-time radio talk shows, most of it makes us look like fools.

*Eleanor:* I'm trying to make an interesting piece of television. My documentary will have integrity and authenticity.

*Jack:* looks at her blankly [...]. Her documentary –it's a bit like *rent-a-pavee*. Why did I ever agree to do this? Tell her she can go and kiss my *cojogs*. [...]

*Eoin:* Daddy Jack. Don't go there with her, Jack. Focus her attention on the drinking [...]. They love that. A former athlete recovering –better still... a Traveller



fein fights the demons in his head and struggles to give up the drink! You'll be such a fuckin' hero! (4-9)

Further, McDonagh's use of other satirical devices in this passage, like wit, is usually matched with an ingenious use of language that causes laughter and delight. The passage is ironic, yet its intention is not satirical, but playful. McDonagh's inventiveness is shown in the use of puns or intentional verbal incongruities, such as "rent-a-pavee" or "cojogs", and contributes to strengthening the satirical premise of indirection. Wit is an artifice employed to disguise the aggression that underlies satirical attack, making it socially acceptable. The basis of wit is distortion of the usual semantic, phonetic, or orthographic appearance of words in order to shock the reader, as we observe in the quotation above.

The next passage is another example of McDonagh's sharp description of the Traveller woman figure. Eleanor questions Mary-Anne about different stereotyped views of the Traveller community. The latter provides a view of patriarchal models within the community and reflects with irony, wit and scatology upon the triple discrimination to which she is subject as a woman, a Traveller, and disabled:

*Eleanor:* So you're not repressed or controlled by the family? [...].

*Mary-Anne:* *There you go again.* It's context. In any culture a woman's mistakes are rarely forgiven...

*Eleanor:* [...]. Traveller culture is so male. And women like you *collude with that crap.*

*Mary-Anne:* *And you are so liberated. In all politics –be it Traveller– be it disabled –be it gay– it's always about men. The gender stuff, the disability stuff, the Traveller stuff, the racist stuff.* We're the nuisance they can't get rid of. [...]. The women's movement –that's a good example. [...]. *Let's sort out sexism first. Your little issue like access or diversity we'll deal with that another day.*

*Eleanor:* So you're trying to protect your sisters and some notion of family name.

*Mary-Anne:* All sorts of women are caught in a compromise. It's not right. It's not fair, but at least try and understand our lives are complicated. I am a Traveller woman. What I call liberation doesn't mean turning my back on the values that I was reared with. [...]. It is the stuff that we're all trying to work out in our families and communities and relationships. A settled woman telling me I should do this is equally archaic.

*Eleanor:* Eoin –the gay stuff– we hear about how difficult it is for gay Traveller men. Where are the lesbians?

*Mary-Anne:* *They're rampant. (Both women start laughing.)* Female sexuality –women don't make a song and dance about it. *Regardless of circumstances, people will always find each other.* (34-35; emphasis is mine)

Mary-Anne wittily deconstructs a wide range of stereotypes regarding Traveller women based on a patriarchal perspective. McDonagh's use of the satirical mode, including repetition, contributes to an enhanced perception of Irish Travellers' situation. The playwright claims that stereotypes about Irish Traveller women can be false; they are not passive, but strong, yet their lack of opportunities and education



are often genderspecific. As a disabled woman, McDonagh shows Irish Traveller women's wish to be educated and their suffering when education is denied them, as happened to her. This sort of gender-specific discrimination does not seem to go away with the passage of time, but causes great psychological damage. McDonagh defends Irish Traveller women's claims for freedom of sexual orientation and pride in their ethnicity and culture. She draws attention to Irish Traveller women's ambivalence towards such views held by Irish Traveller men and also advocates for a strong defence of the idea of sisterhood and collaboration among Traveller women. Within this context, the journalist's last words in the play demand a more respectful, informed attitude towards Irish Travellers:

*Eleanor:* Mary-Anne and Eoin and to some extent Jack –they celebrate their lives, their bodies, and their identity. No big spectacle. [...] This virus of abuse has to stop somewhere. Their strength and dignity was the story. My camera went back in the bag. There was nothing to give my producer. (47)

McDonagh's parody turns to irony elsewhere to achieve indirection and to deconstruct unquestioned ideas about Irish Travellers. In doing so, the Traveller playwright reflects upon the act of filming itself, questions predetermined filmic standards, and problematizes the very process of filming Irish Travellers.

Our last object of analysis in this first section is Donal Ryan's novel *All We Shall Know*. The story is narrated by Melody Shee, a settled character who fails to conceive the hoped-for child with her husband Pat and falls pregnant by Martin Toppo, a Traveller boy half her age. This is the powerful opening:

Week Twelve

MARTIN TOPPY IS the son of a famous Traveller and the father of my unborn child. He's seventeen, I'm thirty-three. I was his teacher. I'd have killed myself by now if I was brave enough. (1)

Melody feels lonely and ashamed because she is pregnant by this illiterate Traveller boy: she wants her father to know that "he's not to blame" (23). She abandons her husband. Martin and his friend Mary, the children of two Traveller families engaged in a vicious feud play an important role in Melody's inner change.

Ryan uses the rhetoric of satire to present certain truths about the behaviour of Irish Travellers and settled people. Dustin Griffin argues that "In scholarly disputation, rhetoric is a means for detecting error" while "satirists [are] often concerned to explore a moral issue rather than to settle it" (41-42). Another part of satire is provocation and Estévez-Saá is right that Ryan's novel "is not exempt from controversy" (215). In a conversation printed at the end of his novel, Ryan recognises that some readers might be "upset by [some]thing I've written. But I'll just have to get over it, and so will they" (235-236). Ryan's use of the rhetoric of provocation in *All We Shall Know* may be misunderstood. According to Dustin Griffin, the rhetoric of provocation "often takes the form of paradox" (54). Satire takes the form of provocative paradox either because it seems absurd or because it



challenges received opinion. Ryan uses abrupt allusiveness to provoke his readers and to expose or demolish foolish certainties. The following excerpt shows an example of satire as provocation:

A security guard followed us around the shop. Watch your man behind, Mary said to me [...] and said in a loud voice, *Are you in love with me?* And she waited patiently for the security guard's reply, but none came [...]. *Are you in love with me, fine sir? The way you can't take your eyes off of me? Will we go way and get married, will we? And have gran little security guard children?* And a group of meaty women stopped to watch the drama, and Mary turned to them and back to the security guard and said, More in your line keep an eye on that fuckin herd of buffaloes before they go on a stampede around the place [...].

And [...] in indignation [...] one of them said, Fuck you, you little bitch, and still the security guard stood his shaky ground [...].

*What is it about me?* I haven't even a bag with me to put stuff into. *Why do you think I'm a thief?* I never done notten in here ever before. (144-145; emphasis is mine)

Ryan provokes here because he is not only telling uncomfortable truths about the lives of Irish Traveller girls in small communities, but also showing the denigration that many of them suffer in public places. Furthermore, Ryan finds the sense of paradox useful to present shockingly heterodox opinions showing the difficult circumstances of Irish Travellers. Ryan's paradox is provocative not only because it seems absurd, but also because it challenges received wisdom. By repeating pejorative stereotypes about Travellers in the dialogue, Mary shows her indignation and implicitly denounces how certain settled characters' attitudes and comments about members of her community have an extremely negative impact on young Traveller girls' self-esteem, self-confidence and identity. Ryan's appreciation of paradox is challenging too and, in Griffin's sense, "against the orthodox" (55), but it is not simply a case of writing a paradoxical statement. It is in a broad sense satirical and oppositional. By acting provocatively, Mary not only exposes the legal authorities and their *modus operandi*; she also hints at Irish society's prejudice and discrimination of indigenous minorities and diverse immigrant groups. These marginalizing social attitudes also disturb the settled character Melody, who tries to empathise with Mary and, like her, is rejected by her small community because she wishes to live her own life.

Ryan addresses the damaging effects of internalizing feelings of inferiority and discrimination on Traveller girls like Mary. The psychological impact of long-term marginalization is counteracted by a mother-daughter type bond that develops between her and Melody, which gives both of them resilience. The end of the novel is very revealing of how important is this sense of mutual trust and understanding to recovering from long-term traumatic experiences and to facing daily challenges in dysfunctional contexts, such as Mary's Traveller halting site:

Travellers *trust me now*, and tell me things. A man from Ennis came to the door [...]. He'd heard I was a person who helped Travellers and he asked me would I see



what I could do for his children. [...]. They tell me stories all the time, *and I listen*, and I don't pretend too much interest for fear they'd get nervous, or *suspicious of my interest, and stop*. (214; emphasis is mine)

Ryan courageously chooses a Traveller girl to call for confrontation of all the discriminatory stereotypes about her community, respect, honest dialogue and acceptance. The last paragraph is perhaps one of the most powerful moments of the whole book as the reader discovers that Melody hands over her newborn child to the young Travellers:

But nobody knows the whole of my story, nor will I ever tell them [...]. That the mother's name on my baby's birth certificate in MARY CROTHERY and that the father's name on my baby's certificate is MARTIN TOPPY. That I left my baby in his basket [...], and she could read it, and so could Martin Toppo, and I was proud that they both could read it, because I had taught them, and had taught them well. (215)

Melody's newborn child is where he belongs. *All We Shall Know* is Ryan's most emotional and socially committed literary rendition of "the truth of things" (235) about Travellers, his attempt to illuminate the situation of Traveller women in Ireland and what other settled women like Melody can learn about themselves from them.

### 3. IRISH TRAVELLER WOMEN IN FILM DOCUMENTARY

The second part of this essay is intended to provide the context necessary to comprehend the social relevance of formal innovation in the aforementioned literary works featuring Irish traveller women. In 2005, British director Perry Ogden made the realist film *Pavee Lackeen: The Traveller Girl* (2005) which tells a story of marginalization, recreating the daily life and experiences of a real Traveller family, the Maughans, on the outskirts of Dublin. The film is very innovative, since Ogden recorded the family's actual life over a whole year and none of them is a professional actor. His attempt to produce an authentic document of their lives is innovative because, as Seán Crosson argues, it "eschews a conventional narrative, comprising instead simple narratives threads that reveal the considerable challenges the family members face" every day (185).

Ten-year-old Winnie Maughan has a very important role throughout Ogden's film and is revealed as intensely curious and innocent. In fact, all the Traveller girls with major roles in the fictional works under analysis resemble her. Like Josie in Carr's play, Victoria in Keegan's short story and Mary in Ryan's novel, Winnie is a victim of an unfair system that denies her proper schooling. When she fights with other children in the playing ground, because they call her names, Winnie is sent home for a few weeks. After this, she no longer attends school regularly. *Pavee Lackeen* describes how, outside school, there is little for a Traveller girl to do beyond helping out in the caravan, dyeing her hair, looking after their younger siblings, and hanging around with other Traveller children. Winnie, like Mary in Ryan's novel,



is exposed on a daily basis to crime, drugs and violence; she is even discriminated against by young male members of her own group. Ogden show how Traveller girls are vulnerable and subject to the most insidious prejudice within and without their own community, yet institutions look in the other direction.

According to Seán Crosson, the film is unique because it is “made by a filmmaker coming from outside Ireland” and “tackles controversial issues which have rarely engaged indigenous directors” (185). The message is clear for Crosson: “if Irish society cannot treat her own indigenous minorities with respect how can it hope to embrace the diverse immigrant groups that increasingly make up the country[?]” (186). There is also something curious about *Pavee Lackeen*: beyond council officials and social workers, no other (settled) Irish people appear in the film. Crosson is right when he argues that this “appears sometimes overtly contrived” and it is indeed (186). This lack of inclusivity renders the film a biased representation of the Traveller Community in Ireland.

The second film under analysis is *My Story* (2009) by Irish director Jason Byrne. It is a documentary about the community worker, political activist and flamboyant playwright Rosaleen McDonagh, based on her reflections upon Byrne’s adaptation of her play *Stuck* (2007), produced by the Projects Art Centre in Dublin. *My Story* presents the experience of McDonagh over recent decades, and considers what it means to be a Traveller woman who is a feminist, disabled and a playwright in Ireland.

Regarding film technique, Byrne uses the life-story approach to oral history and relies on the materiality of the sites to stimulate McDonagh’s recollections. As Leydesdorff *et al.* argue, this approach “allows room for contradiction [...]. It gives the opportunity to explore the relations between personal and collective experience, by focusing on remembering and forgetting as cultural processes” (12). This film protocol allows McDonagh to dwell on multiple personal and collective issues, and on what is and is not said. The documentary technique aims neither to make the audience feel pity for McDonagh, nor to use her as an inspirational figure.

One of the most powerful moments in the film comes when McDonagh visits Trinity College Dublin, where she studied theology. Here, she acknowledges that attending university was transformative for her: she was already aware of issues relating to Traveller women’s access to education and, here, she calls for women’s right to education. Byrne’s use of the storytelling protocol facilitates McDonagh’s reflection upon the reasons why she, a Traveller and a woman, had to fight for her right to receive further education, craved it, and why she now writes for empowerment. Byrne’s storytelling technique also asks why Irish Traveller women are denied the right to be educated like the rest of society and why it is necessary for McDonagh to make a conscious decision to support her Traveller roots, ethnicity and culture, and why all these are issues at all.

A second powerful moment in the documentary occurs when the playwright parks outside an institutional home in Dublin which was managed by nuns, and where McDonagh lived for over a decade. The storytelling technique uncovers that she was treated well, yet felt a huge sense of guilt for having forced her Traveller family to move from their rural halting site to Dublin, because they could not get





the social services she needed in rural Ireland. McDonagh acknowledges that she felt privileged because other Traveller girls of her age did not have such a home, and that she only enjoyed advantages because she was disabled –this was her ticket to the privileges of settled society. At the end of the film, McDonagh gives a clear message: “I want to be recognised as a writer. I am not a victim. I am an independent, mobile, chic ethnic minority woman and this is a very powerful feeling”. In my view, McDonagh’s conception of writing as empowerment and a motor of social change for Irish Traveller women will be effected through their own self-representation and artistic efforts.

The last object of analysis here is *I Am Traveller* by director Kim Bartley (2016). The film features Irish actor, screenwriter, documentary film-maker and human rights activist John Connors, famous for playing pipe bomb maker Patrick Ward in the Irish crime drama *Love/Hate*. In Bartley’s film, Connors, an Irish Traveller, embarks on a personal journey to tackle uncomfortable truths about racial stereotypes and Traveller identity. In terms of film technique, Bartley uses three main protocols –inclusivity, interviews and life storytelling– and thus treats all participants equally, be they settled or Traveller.

Regarding inclusivity, the film shows as full a range of participants as possible, many of whose stories conflict in terms of experience and interpretation. By asking the audience to listen to the stories of the “other”, the film gauges people’s ability to mature and perhaps challenge their own perceptions. A very good example of this is Connors’ claim, around 11’45” into the film, that there is a problem with generalisation through stereotypes in the media and questions certain headlines. He interviews Paul Williams, an Irish media personality and writer on crime, about a horrendous attack suffered by a Traveller family in Cork in 2016. The viewer is provided with two different versions of the same event, while Byrne remains neutral: that of Williams (settled) and that of Connors (Traveller). Of course, they disagree about the flashy headlines used by the media and other issues: Connors claims that the news should have reported “a travelling gang”, not “A Traveller gang”, because the perpetrators of the crime were four settled people and three Travellers. Williams agrees that “to a degree it is society’s fault but it is also Travellers’ fault as a community group.” Williams then asks Connors: “When are you going to march for the settled community’s problems caused by drug dealers, rapists and criminals from your community and outside it?” The latter answers, “I can’t take responsibility for things I can’t control”, such as criminal elements: “I take responsibility for things in my culture that need to change: education, suicide and social attainment”.

There are other examples of inclusivity in *I Am Traveller*. Around the 39-minute mark, Connors interviews a journalist who was a panellist on a popular TV programme back in 1995. He and Connors are watching a video record of that time, where the male panellist is arguing with a female panellist about Travellers’ situation in Ireland a few decades earlier because she was expressing racist views regarding the Traveller community. After viewing the recorded excerpt, Connors listens to the panellist’s arguments on how the situation has changed for Irish Travellers in the intervening 25 years. He makes it clear that things have changed little, because the system is still discriminatory towards this ethnic minority.



As far as the third protocol is concerned, the use of the life story approach to oral history and reliance on the materiality of institutional sites to stimulate memory recollection, Connors engages in conversations with a young male Traveller whose caravan was set on fire a few months earlier, killing his younger brother. The third protocol shows not only the poor sanitary conditions in which his large family lived in a caravan in a halting site, but also how dangerous their cooking and heating facilities were. Worst of all, the viewer observes the post-traumatic effects of the accident and other traumatic experiences on one of the most vulnerable members of society, a young Traveller, who cannot attend school because he must take care of his family and earn a living.

In sum, these three protocols allow Connors to speak about the conditions of the Traveller community in Ireland. He wishes government would take responsibility for tackling lack of education, high suicide rates and poor social attainment. Bartley's documentary reveals that Irish Travellers, especially girls, feel constant discrimination, beginning with insults, such as "knacker" at school. The film's complete title, *I Am a Traveller, not a Knacker*, is very telling too for, as Connors explains, insulting words such as "knacker", used by settled Irish, make Irish Travellers feel angry, threatened, humiliated and self-loathing. These feelings of shame and rage have long-term effects upon Irish Travellers' psyche. This is why many Irish Travellers change their accent and behaviour when they seek a job in the settled community. In other words, they opt to deprive themselves of some of the most important traits of their identity to be accepted in society and earn a living.

Bartley's film also tackles other interesting issues regarding Irish Traveller women. Perhaps one of the most fascinating moments is Connors' interview with two women. They are described as being far more interested in education than their male counterparts, who are "more stuck in the past". Connors states that "women travellers have a more forward-thinking attitude than males, yet their main difficulty is that they do not receive enough support from their families"; he concludes that, if Traveller women have no right to education, their chances of finding a job are considerably reduced and they will never have opportunities for promotion, and thus for personal and professional development. This is why most Irish Travellers, male and female, are doomed to long-term unemployment, alcoholism or creating a family.

One of the main ideas that one draws from Bartley's three documentary protocols is that Travellers need a different mindset and lifestyle, and not to be enclosed, distanced. Settled people and Irish Travellers need to be better educated about each other; Travellers cannot be ignored, treated as less worthy or as though they do not even count. Unless Irish society addresses this, the stereotypes and misunderstandings will continue. At the end of the film, Connors, who is wealthy but, as Kitty Holland argues, "now back living in the Darndale halting site where he spent his childhood, remains angry at how many in the settled community treat Travellers" (2016a, n.p.).

The end of the film calls for support of young Travellers because at present, they are at a crossroads in terms of culture and identity. As Connors argues, many





of the cultural trends and traditions of Irish Travellers have disappeared, and the younger generations need a secure status to define themselves. They need something on which they can pin their identity. The final message of the film is clear: real change will only occur when there is: 1) real and practical change within the Traveller community; 2) a progressive and more open recognition of Travellers' identity; and 3) a will on both sides to confront all the discriminatory stereotypes about the Traveller community. Bartley's three protocols help the viewer indirectly to reflect upon these issues.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This essay has explored cultural products in various genres that write Travellers into Irish history by using experimental forms and devoting special attention to gender issues. Irish writers Carr, Keegan, McDonagh and Ryan deploy innovative techniques of the satirical mode to carry out a social critique that is veiled, curious, provocative and inquiring. On the one hand, settled writers Carr, Keegan and Ryan address their irony and wit at biased uses of traditional folklore and stereotypes regarding Irish Travellers women in small rural communities to defame and marginalize them. They subtly subvert the negative social constructions that are usually associated with the Traveller community in general and Traveller women in particular in the literary and popular imagination. The experimental features of their satirical discourse and thematic interests show not only that they possess a highly developed aesthetic self-consciousness and fascination with folklore and the popular imagination, but also great respect and commitment to social justice. Ultimately, they make present the Irish Traveller community's strong sense of selfhood and identity linked to its roots and culture, and the significance of strong mother-daughter bonds within the community. On the other hand, McDonagh, an Irish Traveller, shows the need for profound change in the behaviour of both Irish Travellers and settled Irish in very witty, ironic and parodic terms. In doing so, this feminist, disabled playwright subverts many cultural constructions, writes for empowerment and with an unstinting commitment to defend her Traveller identity and ethnicity.

The narrative virtuosity, detached stance and multifaceted satire exploited by these four writers undermine traditional concerns and preconceptions, not only about the Irish Traveller community, its life, identity and culture, but also, more specifically, about Irish Traveller women's social roles, sense of motherhood and sexuality which hinder their self-confidence and self-actualization at present. Their stories' impact is rational and satirical, yet also emotional and tragic.

All three documentaries analysed here use various film protocols to make sharp social observations about the Traveller community in Ireland. *Pavee Lackeen* fails to use the inclusivity protocol, yet its interviews and realist situations interrogate and reflect profoundly upon themes as varied as Irish Traveller's experience of social discrimination, poor sanitary conditions, unequal access to social services and benefits, lack of education, bad marriages, dysfunctional families, childhood and community life, and women's dissent. *My Story* and *I Am Traveller* use all the three



protocols –inclusivity, interviews and life storytelling– to tackle these issues in an indirect manner as well. They interrogate and reflect profoundly upon the dislocation of social relations within the Irish Traveller community, the post-traumatic and negative psychological effects of long-term and constant discrimination and marginalization, and gender and identity crisis. In sum, all these literary and filmic materials present a respectful and courageous treatment of conflictual issues affecting Irish Travellers in general and women in particular today. Their stories unmask, anatomize, and expose unpalatable truths about Irish Travellers' lives that need consideration: social inclusion, tolerance, equality of education and job opportunities, decent accommodation and sanitary conditions.

These writers and film-makers also show concern to lead their readers and viewers to recognise the strictures –social, political, religious and cultural– in Irish society, and the importance of accepting and preserving Irish Travellers' identity and culture for the well-being and coexistence of the younger generations. Their experimental methods and techniques help to mediate their Traveller characters' dysfunctional lives and to unveil this ethnic group, its traditions and culture. In this way, their works not only push for better treatment of Irish Travellers by the state, because its infrastructure is still discriminatory, but also attempt to disturb wider society's complacency.

All the works analysed here show that Irish Traveller women are still a distinct minority subject to the most insidious prejudice both within their small communities and in Irish society. The Traveller girls and teenagers who inhabit these literary and filmic stories open up a world of possibility and change for the other characters around them. The revelatory messages which come from this minority and marginalized youth lead the reader to contemplate the shortcomings of rural Irish society, and how they have changed very little in recent times, meaning that conflicts in private and public spheres remain commonplace.

This essay has tried to make clear the problematic nature of the artistic representation of an ethnic group by outsiders; a representation that is often troubled when the culture is so degraded and discriminated against. Inevitably, settled writers like Carr, Keegan or Ryan and film directors like Ogden, Byrne and Bartley are members of the oppressor class –the class by which discrimination is enacted. Creative works of the imagination can end up being supportive of the status quo if they are not overtly conscious of it. The Traveller community in Ireland must be allowed to represent itself or its diverse selves as we have seen in McDonagh's *Mainstream*, McDonagh's storytelling in Byrne's *Rosaleen McDonagh* and Connors in Bartley's *I am Traveller*. They all give a very personal and honest look at what it is like to be a Traveller in Ireland today. All these works show that the state's infrastructure is still discriminatory and that real, true change will come through Travellers' own self-representation and efforts.

All the main characters of the literary and filmic texts analysed here show that the younger generations of Irish Traveller women are furious and that righteous fury and their higher ambitions for themselves and their communities will bring change. Settled people like us, and institutions, must be careful not to get in the way of those movements, but to offer respect, tolerance and open-mindedness, and



assistance in social community mapping only if requested.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately, my reflections on Irish Traveller women highlight important cultural questions while situating all the works discussed as a means of returning Irish Travellers, both male and female, to their rightful place in history, and of asserting the social value of literature and film-making. In this sense, the essay has attempted to deconstruct some biased social constructions about Irish Travellers and to make us ponder what all of us do to contribute to such biased constructions pointed out by Lanthers at the outset of this essay, and what we can all do to subvert them.

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# SHALL AND WILL IN THE CORPUS OF HISTORY ENGLISH TEXTS\*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the meanings of the verbal forms *shall* and *will* in the late Modern English period, as evinced in the *Corpus of History English Texts (1700-1900)*. Earlier literature on modal verbs in historical periods includes Fachinetti (1997) and Gotti (2003). We study these modals using corpus tools in order to identify the senses of these two verbs in context and to group findings according to meaning. Our notion of modality mainly follows from Palmer (1986; 2001), Hoye (2008) and van der Auwera and Plungian (1998). Conclusions show that these verbal forms had indeed modal meanings, even if their periphrastic use to indicate future was evident.

KEYWORDS: modal verbs, modality, *Shall*, *Will*, late modern English, history texts.

## SHALL Y WILL EN EL CORPUS OF HISTORY ENGLISH TEXTS

## RESUMEN

Este artículo estudia los significados de las formas verbales *shall* y *will* en inglés moderno tardío, tal y como aparecen en el *Corpus of History English Texts (1700-1900)*. Existen trabajos específicos sobre verbos modales en períodos históricos de la lengua inglesa, como Fachinetti (1997) y Gotti (2003). Para el estudio de estos modales, se emplean herramientas de corpus para identificar los sentidos de estos dos verbos en contexto. Los datos resultantes de este análisis se agrupan de acuerdo con estos significados. El concepto de modalidad que seguimos se basa principalmente en Palmer (1986; 2001), Hoye (2008) y van der Auwera y Plungian (1998). Las conclusiones muestran que estas formas verbales tenían, de hecho, significados modales, incluso si su uso perifrástico para indicar futuro era evidente.

PALABRAS CLAVE: modalidad, verbos modales, *Shall*, *Will*, inglés moderno, textos de historia.

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## INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on the senses of *shall* and *will* in the *Corpus of History English Texts* (CHET). The study presented follows from a growing interest in the elaboration of modal meanings in periods other than PDE. We have decided to focus on these two modal forms because they have been often used with future and deontic senses. In many ways, these two forms have been argued to lack modal meaning, as they appear to be mainly deployed as a periphrastic means to talk about future events. Scholars such as Taavitsainen (2001), categorize *shall* and *will* as deontic structures to convey authority in pre-scientific documents. In general, modal verbs are used to show the authors' stance, as they are able to indicate the authors' perspective concerning the propositional content framed by these verbs, and that is a fundamental feature in scientific discourse (cf. Lareo 2010; Crespo and Moskowich 2014; Alonso-Almeida 2015, 2017). The meanings of modal verbs, we argue, are rich, and deserve attention from a historical perspective. The inspection of context is also in order to confidently disambiguate modal uses. In addition, Present day literature considers the value of person marking as a necessary constrain for the use of any of these two verbal forms. Our corpus, however, shows some difference in this respect, but we do not follow this path in depth in this article, as examples with pronouns as subjects are not sufficiently numerous as to develop a firm and influential conclusion. For the time being, we only focus on the senses they represent in CHET since they seem to be much more related to primary primitive meanings of these forms to meet the authors' demands to express stance, as we shall see in due course.

Our methodology combines corpus tools and manual examination to identify modal functions. Besides Collins (2009), we use the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) to verify senses of *shall* and *will* registered in this lexicographical work in order to compare these and the ones obtained in our corpus. Our notion of modality and modal verbs relies on such studies as Palmer (1986, 2001), Hoyo (1997), and van der Auwera and Plungian (2008), among others. As to the description and contents of the corpus, this follows from Moskowich and Crespo (2007), and Crespo and Moskowich (2015).

Conclusions will show aspects concerning certain senses of these verbs, and how they still preserve some of their lexical rather than modal substance. Contents are organised, as follows. Section 2 presents information concerning our concept modality and the categories of modals as well as the meaning and history of the two modals *shall* and *will*. This is followed by a description of the data and method used in this presentation. The discussion of findings is given in the subsequent section preceding the conclusions.

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## MODALITY AND MODAL CATEGORIES. *SHALL* AND *WILL* IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH

Modality can be broadly defined as the linguistic encoding of the speaker's or writer's beliefs and attitudes towards the proposition manifested. In other words, modality refers to the status of the proposition in context. Palmer (1986, 2) refers to modality as a 'vague' notion, but admits that 'something along the lines of Lyon's (1977, 452) "opinion or attitude" of the speaker is promising'. There are several ways in which modality can be manifested in the language other than modal verbs. These can be lexical or grammatical. Palmer (1986, 33ff) describes modal verbs, mood, and particles and clitics as examples of grammatical marking of modality. The lexical marking includes adverbs and other related expressions that may show the speaker's attitude towards the proposition.

There seems to be sufficient critical agreement that modality can be divided into epistemic and deontic modality in the fashion of Lyon's (1977), as put forward in Palmer (1986, 19). Epistemic is "concerned with matters of knowledge or believe on which basis speakers express their judgements about state of affairs, events or actions" (Hoye 1997, 42). Deontic modals refer to the "necessity of acts in terms of which the speaker gives permission or lays and obligation for the performance of actions at some time in the future (Hoye 1997, 43).

Another way of looking at modality is the distinction between propositional modality and event modality (Palmer 2001). The former concerns the speaker's or writer's judgment regarding the proposition manifested. The latter is related to the speaker's or writer's attitude towards a likely event in the future. Propositional modality divides into epistemic (judgement about the factual status), and evidential (evidence for factual status is given). In our study of *shall* and *will*, the presence of evidentials is of utmost importance in the classification of modal verbs, as we shall see in the discussion section, below. Evidentials can be both reported and sensory, and Willet (1988) has classified them according to (a) direct evidence (visual, auditory, and sensory), (b) indirect evidence (reported or inferred from reason or results).

Event modality includes a further twofold distinction: deontic and dynamic. In deontic modality, conditions are external. Senses of obligation and permission depend on external factors rather than internal ones. In dynamic modality, conditions are external, and it involves senses of willingness and ability on the part of the speaker or writer. Other classifications include more modal categories than two types according to different established pragmatic, philosophical/logical or cognitive criteria. We will not refer to any of these in our present paper.

As concluded from our working definition of modality, modality can be formally manifested in a variety of ways, one of which is a modal verb. Modal verbs can be categorized from a morphological, syntactic, and semantic perspective (Denison 1993, 292ff). Criteria are, as follows: (a) modal verbs do not present non-finite forms, (b) tense-distinction takes place in the majority of these verbs, although traditional past forms may contextually carry a different meaning, (c) modal verbs do not inflect for third person singular present indicative, (d) most modals present contracted forms for the negative (can't, won't, mustn't), and some of them also





show a phonological reduction in form of a clitic form ('ll, 'd, for shall/will and would, respectively), (e) they show no imperative forms, (f) they are followed by a bare infinitive, (g) modal verbs affect the complete proposition in which they are embedded, (h) dialectally, more than one modal verb co-occur syntagmatically, and (i) as operators, they share a same set of NICE properties: 'They can be negated by a following n't/not, take part in the subject-verb inversion, survive post-verbal ellipsis, and be stressed for emphatic polarity'.

The form *shall* traces back to OE *sceal* (pt. *sculon* – ppt. *sceolde*), and it could be followed either by a bare infinitive or stand alone, as shown in the following examples taken from the OED:

1. Seþe sculde him undred denera (The Rushworth Gospels · 975).
2. Nu scylun hergan hefænricæs uard (Cædmon · Hymn · 700).

The meanings registered in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for *shall* refer to deontic and dynamic senses. Thus, this form is used to express necessity, necessary conditions, planned events, fate-based events, and also dynamic possibility to indicate potentiality. The form *will* follow from OE *wyllan* (pt. *wolde*, ppt. *wolde*). As in the case of *shall*, *will* may carry bare infinitive or stand alone, but it could also be followed by an infinitive with 'to':

3. Wult þu castles kinedomes (c. 1225 · The English text of the Ancrene Riwe (ed. Eric John Dobson) · EETS edition, 1972 (1 vol.) · (EETS 267)).
4. Se ðe wyle soð specan (Beowulf · c1000).

The OED meanings associated to the use of *will* in the history of English concern to senses of desire, wish, intended action, the expression of habitual actions, and the expression of potentiality and capacity. Some of these uses coincide with those listed for *shall* in the same resource.

## THE DATA AND THE METHOD

The corpus used for the present research is *The Corpus of History English Texts* (henceforth CHET), which is one of the sub-corpus within the Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing, and it aims at compiling Modern English history texts. Crespo and Moskowich (2015) has offered a detailed description of this corpus in their paper 'A Corpus of History English Texts (CHET) as Part of the Coruña Corpus Project', description that is followed in the present work. The time span represented in the subcorpus comprises 1704 for the first text and 1895 for the last text. This period is marked off by changes in scientific-thought styles and by the use of new methodological procedures based on observation (cf. Moskowich and Parapar 2008 and Moskowich 2016).

The end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century have been recognised by Taavitsainen and Pahta (1997) as the moment at which the



medieval scholastic thought-style started to be gradually superseded by new patterns of thought and new methodological procedures based on observation. The foundation of the Royal Society in 1660 and the publication of the guidelines for presenting scientific works in a clear and simple way had a greater impact on accentuating the importance of style in scientific communication. As regards the genres represented in CHET, there are articles, essays, lectures, textbooks and treatises written by both male and female authors. Regarding the size of CHET, it covers about 400 000 words. For the purpose of this study we have used the *Coruña Corpus Tool* for quantification and text retrieval. Then manual analyses have been performed as well in order to evaluate and categorise the meanings of *shall* and *will*. The findings of our analysis have been grouped according to the meanings found in the text. All the examples given as evidence in this paper are excerpted verbatim, as transcribed in the corpus.

### SHALL AND WILL IN THE CORPUS OF HISTORY ENGLISH TEXTS

The results of the corpus enquiry are given in Figure 1 for the case of *shall*. Three possible meanings have been identified for this verb. Of these, volition is clearly in the lead with 71% of the cases, showing the authors' subjective stance and disposition concerning the events described, as shown in the following instance, hence the massive use of the first person occurring with *shall*:

- (1) **I shall conclude** this Year with some Foreign Affairs of Moment. (Tyrrell, 1704)
- (2) But, as it may remind us of our obligations to God, who has often appeared for us in seasons of peculiar distress, **I shall give** you a summary view of the series of calamities, which befel us, during that long war. (Adams, 1769)
- (3) In this work **I shall be** brief, and endeavour to sketch his portrait in a slight, but decided and faithful manner. (Britton, 1814)
- (4) These remarkable transactions have been a fruitful source of political discussion; and as it is difficult, indeed impossible, to refer to the various inferences that have been drawn from them with respect to the constitution of England, **I shall select** as prominent specimens, and of an opposite nature, the sermon of Dr. Price on the Love of our Country, and the Reflections of Mr. Burke on the French Revolution; and it is to them that I shall chiefly allude, in the observations which **I shall** now offer.

Second most frequent (17%) is the sense of dynamic possibility, by means of which the author offers an intersubjective view in order to share responsibility concerning their statements:

- (5) But what **shall** we say of the legislative intermeddling, which occurred in 1447, at a Parliament held in Trim, where it was enacted, that every man should shave his upper lip, under the penalty of being used as an Irish enemy? (Bennett, 1862)



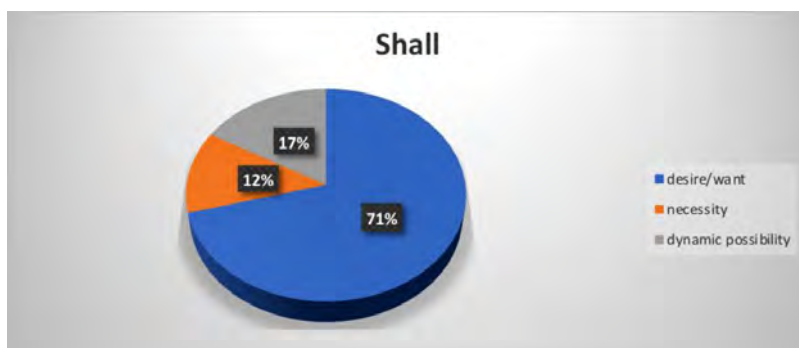


Figure 1. The meanings of functions of *shall* in the corpus.

Likewise, a deontic nuance is also perceived in the following instance with the sense of inner obligation to introduce an event deduced from the author's own knowledge of the fact, as evinced in the use of the epistemic necessity use of *must* later in the text:

- (6) I **shall here** add a Remarkable Tranfaction, which muft have been done about this time (if it were ever done at all) which I have fome reason to doubt it was not, becaufe our own Historians are wholly filent in it; but however, fince it is related by Froiffart. (Tyrrell, 1704)

A deontic meaning is also perceived in the following instances. The authors deploy *shall* in these excerpts to indicate and signal the way in which he wants to proceed in their texts. It is interesting the way in which the authors refer to their readers in these instances, below.

- (7) But, as it may remind us of our obligations to God, who has often appeared for us in feafons of peculiar diftreffs, I **shall give you** a fummary view of the ferie of calamities, which befel us, during that long war. (Adams 1769)
- (8) In profecution of this defign I **shall study** all poffible brevity, **begging your candour and patience**, hoping what I fhall fay will not be unprofitable, efppecially to our young people, who have not had confiderable advantages to know the wonderful acts of the Lord. (Adams 1769).
- (9) They were thefe; and they form a fort of fummary of the reign of James II., and therefore I **shall read** them to **you**. (Smyth 1710).

Clearly, many of the senses recorded in the OED, viz. necessity, necessary conditions, planned events, fate-based events, are not present in our sample. The use of *shall* in this period seems to lie near the sense of intention and desire, but not really to indicate a planned status of the information framed by the modal. The



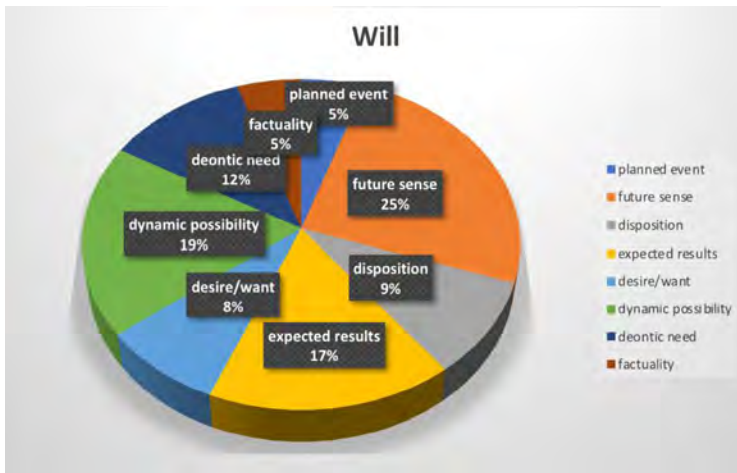


Figure 2. The meanings of *will* in the corpus.

sense of futurity may also evolve from the notion of volition as this often depicts something expected to happen later in time.

The senses recorded for *will* are richer than for *shall*; actually, *will* outnumbers the cases of *shall*, which seems to have already started into decay as suggested by the small contexts of occurrences in which it may appear. Once such context is person marking. In the corpus, *I* and *we* are extensively used with *shall* and very few with *will*. Other persons fall on the side of *will*. The cases of *I will* in the corpus suggests volition, and so *will* and *shall* seem to be functionally and semantically equivalent, as shown in (10) and (11):

- (10) The Particulars of this Embaffy, of which I have the very Minutes, in divers Letters sent to the King and Cardinal, **I will give** fome Account of; especially of fuch Things as the Lord *Herbert*, or the Right Reverend Author of the *History of the Reformation*, have made no mention of, or but briefly and imperfectly. (Strype 1710).
- (11) As it is impossible for me to detail the history, not an incident of which is without its importance, **I will just state** what that indictment was. (Smyth 1840).

The results clearly indicate a less restricted selection of contexts for *will*. A quarter of the total number of cases are associated with the sense of future, and we have found that these uses do not give much room for any further interpretation, if otherwise deontic overtones may be agreed:

- (12) If any one steal at a Fire, you may tofs them into it, without any more to do; or if any takes Servants, and keeps them above Two Days in the Houfe before



they have them regiftred in the Police, **they will be obliged** to pay such a Fine, as the Mafter of the Police fhall think fit. (Justice, 1739).

*Will* has been also found productive to indicate dynamic possibility and expected results, as in the examples in (13) and (14). In (13), the modal verb is used to indicate the inclination of some people to wear the cloak considering the properties of this piece of garment have. The use of *will* in example (14) introduces the conclusions of a logical assumption, i.e. *be in bumps*.

(13) ...they wear a Cloack, lined with rich Furr, which reaches to their Waftes; and **some will** [dynamic possibility] wear them in Summer, as they fay, to keep out the Heat; but I am of Opinion it is to fhew them, they being commonly made of rich Silk; and they will have a fine Cloack and Cap, tho' they are not worth one Penny of Money more, than what they give for them. (Justice, 1739).

(14) ...they are very much troubled with what they call *Muskettoes*, or named *Gnats* by us in *England*; and when you are bit by them, **your Flesh will** [expected results] be in Bumps. (Justice, 1739).

Senses indicating deontic need, disposition and volition are also registered in our compilation. Examples are given in (15), (16) and (17), and senses are given in square brackets. In the first example, the modal verb refers to the necessity of the proposition to be true in the context described earlier in the text. The use of *will* in (16) relies on the inner disposition of the subject to do the event. In the last example, the modal verb indicates the desire of the speaker to carry out the described event, i.e. *tell you what will be said of your conjectures*.

(15) Thus the people found themselves compleatly stripped of all their privileges, civil and sacred, and subjected to a governour and council, as to the ruling part of them, entirely devoted to the will and pleafure of a popifh prince, **whoſe arbitrary meafures will** [need] be detefted... (Adams, 1769)

(16) ...upon which ſuch great Alterations afterwards depended; and wherein our Cardinal bore ſo confiderable a Part: And that, **if you will** [disposition] believe his own Proteſtations, becauſe he judged the Marriage, in which the King lived, to be unlawful. (Styve, 1721)

(17) **I will** [volition] tell you what will be ſaid of your conjectures (Anderson, 1775)

Finally, a 10% of the cases in even percentages is deployed to accentuate factuality, as in (18), and to indicate planned events, as in (12). The contribution of *will* in (18) is to make explicit the informational quality of the book in earlier wars, and this is, therefore, taken as a fact. The case of *will* in the context of *in due time* in (19) suggests an event that is bound to occur.



- (18) I fhall bring with me also the book of Froiffart, who **will** [factuality] fhew your Grace, how the wars were led in thofe days. (Birch, 1760)
- (19) and the Lord Marfhall conveyed him to Calais, where he was kept Clofe Prifoner, till he was made away not long after, of which you **will** hear more in due time. (Tyrrell, 1704)

## CONCLUSION

The present paper represents work in progress concerning the meanings of modal verbs in scientific writing of the Modern English period. This is a first step towards a more ambitious programme to analyse the evolution of modals in various disciplinary genres. As suggested here, there seems to be some pragmatic restrictions in the use of these two verbs, and *will* appears to occur more frequently than *shall*, and the meanings are virtually identical as those given in the OED. Major functional coincidence with *shall* is found in the subjective use of this form to indicate volition, a meaning which seems to be the sole domain of *shall* in these texts, apparently a role to be taken over by *will* across the next century. Up to our present interrogation of CHET, *will* is indeed a modal verb and so is *shall*, even if some degree of semantic bleaching seems to be taken place according to some evidence which indicate grammatical codification of future tense. These findings need to be revised and analysed in terms of gender and genre-specific criteria, and CHET and CCT allow for this. The results from CHET will be compared with other corpora from CC and with the Late Modern English texts compiled by Taavitsainen and her team. From a diachronic perspective, we are elaborating the meanings of these two modals with evidence taken from the Middle English Medical Texts Corpus and from the *Corpus of Early English Recipes* to evaluate and date changing patterns of use.

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