Revista Canaria de
ESTUDIOS INGLESES

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SMALL PRESS PUBLISHING: CIRCULATING NEW FORMS, NEW IDEAS

Manuel Brito, guest-editor

INTRODUCTION

In the last half of the 20th century American small presses and little magazines focused on innovation followed a "systemic de-totalization" in Barrett Watten's terms, and sources for inspiration were found through other disciplines such as social theory, philosophy, linguistics, and art, mainly generated at both sides on the Atlantic ocean, and beyond. All them provided a flowing networking and access for formal innovations and new conceptual approaches in various continents. Particularly, they were within the great aquarium of language, and linked to the diagram of social consciousness and poetic activity. An approach to the role of these publications should focus on some considerations like their aesthetic groundwork, the examination of multiple intellectual bases, or drawing dissenting energies to reinforce innovative navigation, and reinforcing the sense of renewal and exploration. In this context, this special issue of the *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* will serve to highlight the influential presence of these publications of experimental poetry.

It is obvious that traditional literary modes were being challenged, especially those related to New Criticism or writing centered on the self. They tried to enlarge the design of the avant-garde literary line initially proposed by American and English Modernists. As I said earlier, many of these poets/editors coincided with many other voices in developing a new sensibility all over the world. However, the literary proposals crystallized in many presses and magazines left behind a sociocultural presence that has been profusely discussed in the intellectual world, not only in America and the United Kingdom but also in other countries. The presence of this poetry can be seen in Italian, Russian, French, Chinese, Spanish, or New Zealand poetic environments through the publication of magazines following a similar line: *Nuova Corrente*, *Soviet Life*, *Parataxis*, *Change*, *Gendishi Techo*, *Nerter*, or *Tyuonyi*. Most of these new writers became important in wider spheres. They were accepted by their academic peers and recognized as a definitive influence on the American and English poetry scenes, publishing in university presses like Chicago, California, Southern Illinois or Harvard. What I am suggesting is that to publish innovative small presses and little magazines began as the romantic initiative of a few people. However, experimental writing went further, and was certainly conceived of as ideology or social criticism. Firstly, because of political and cultural dissidence against conventional paradigms, and secondly, to leave self-reflection open to approach any text and to avoid any narcissistic urge, which may lead to the post-lyrical subjectivism legitimated by the death of the author enunciated by Barthes.[1]

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[1] Michel Deville mentions specific language poetry texts like Steve Benson's *Blue Book*, Michael Palmer's *Sun*, Alan Davies's *Signage*, Steve McCaffery's *Panopticon* and Ron Silliman's *Tjanting*, as a sign of these poets' moving from a strict attention to linguistic assumptions to a writing self-enjoying the strategies used in the self-verbalization of its composition. Michel Deville, *The American Prose Poem: Poetic Form and the Boundaries of Genre* (Gainsville: UP of Florida, 1998) 237.

According to Len Fulton's *Directory of Small Press & Magazine Editors & Publishers*, there were over 5,000 small press publishers and editors in the United States by the early 1990s. This issue of *RCEI* analyzes how this significant circulation of innovative American literature appealed to the pattern of bringing inequalities to light through the publication of small presses in the late 20th century. Some contributors study how the editors of these small presses overcame diverse factors related to their own marginality and material poverty. Others focus on excluded literary voices involved in cultural deprivation and their involvement in the publishing of small presses: Chicanos, African Americans writers or Ian Hamilton Finlay in Scotland. Suggested thoughts derived from for this whole issue, but not limited to, would lead to reflect upon 1) what role/s small publications played in changing literature and social perspectives in the late 20th century? 2) How academy subsumed innovations and creative research published in little magazines and small presses? 3) Market vs. individual position in the publishing industry. 4) What are the benefits of these publications considered as 'high' culture? Were they useful? Or 5) how technological production affected potential readers of this kind of publications? Similarly, there is an overall discussion about the practical attributes in any small press that Loss Pequeño Glazier mentions: 1) not "corporate", 2) locally based, 3) small scale administration, 4) integrity of the publication rather than conceived as a commodity, and 5) well-defined, limited readership. All these conditions usually associated with small presses do not impede that their authors have become successful in the market, as can be seen through their continual presence in bookstores, awards lists, and regularly accepted submissions in major trade publications.

David A. Hollinger has argued that non-essentialist versions of identity propitiated the proliferation of transdisciplinary forums designed to facilitate a discourse across the lines separating the social sciences and the humanities:

> Foucault, feminism, antiracism, and Kuhn thus together fostered the exploration of identity that "problematized" (as it was often put, to the horror of those valuing "good English") a number of ideas that the previous generation rarely felt obliged to defend. The ensuing debates drew heavily on the energies of historians, anthropologists, and sociologists, among others, but this collection is about the particular history of four other disciplines: economics, English, philosophy, and political science. (345)[2]

The editors of small presses and little magazines published material usually ignored by official literature or Academia and the corporate market. Being amply

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[2] For Hollinger the publication of transdisciplinary journals was a focal point to present the distinctive impulses and innumerable forces affecting American culture in the 1970s and 1980s. Academic and not-quite-professional magazines such as *Public Culture*, *Diaspora*, *October*, *Representations* or *Social Text* reached out "to the most humanistic elements within political science, anthropology, sociology, history and geography" (334). David A. Hollinger, "The Disciplines and the Identity Debates, 1970-1995," *Daedalus* 126.1 (Winter 1997): 333-351.

and internationally distributed, and addressed to common readers, teaching profession, students, or diverse communities of poets, the edition of these publications was a cultural, political, and economic gesture. The editors intended to introduce a new sequence of intellectual ideas into encapsulated and over-stated rules of Academia and the publishing industry. An analysis on the role of these publications will allow for a more fine-grained analysis of the contemporary self and its social articulation in this kind of poetry. The academic positions got by many of these innovative poets in important American and British universities reclassify these oppositional practices from poetry for minorities into the category of voices really concerned with a new society in which experimental artistic forms really matter.

This *RCEI* special issue shows the talent and achievement of many editors definitely moving in a cosmopolitan direction, influencing foreign approaches, and transnationalizing similar poetic avant-garde explorations in the last decades of the 20th century. Most American innovative poets published single-author poetry collections and magazines. In this context, many American and British independent literary presses—like Tuumba, This, Gaz, The Figures, Hard Press, Sun & Moon, O Books, Potes & Poets, Roof Books, Chax, Granary Books, or *POTH* to name a few—were felt ascendant in the emergent set of new cultural conditions in the form of new small presses reaching England, France, Italy, Spain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. This is clearly visible in their correspondence with other small presses—like ECW Coach House, The Gig, Hole, Talonbooks in Canada; Akros, Cape Golliard Fulcrum, Prest Roots Press, Reality Studios, and Shearsman in England; Salt, and Post Neo Publications in Australia; Black Light Press, Jack Books, and Van Guard Xpress in New Zealand; Atelier le Feiugraie, Le Seuil and Spectres Familieres in France; Oferta Speciale in Italy; and Zasterle in Spain.

By working out and showing up conventions of intelligibility at a wider cultural frame, the editors of these small presses became concerned with the "politics of the referent" in the various relations between language and ideology. The eruption of this kind of writing and publishing also helped to increase reader's awareness that "poiesis" was put back into poetry. Indeed, the American editors of these diverse small presses and little magazines (Lloyd Addison, Claude MacKay, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Clarence Major and diverse Chicano editors among others) became cultural guides in investigating the political implications in literature, through which they extended their comprehension to specific philosophical schools and literary theoreticians, ranging from Russian Futurism to Marxism. Their success was to synchronize the poetry avant-garde with the sparking debate and catching imaginations of many other poets in the world interrogating and intervening in the discursive construction of social reality through poetry.

This *RCEI* monograph grew from numerous sources, though I benefited most importantly from an extensive feedback from my colleagues associated with the Research Project, "An Historiographical Analysis of Small Presses Publishing American Avant-Garde Poetry and Poetics between 1970-2000," Hélène Aji, Wolfgang Görtschacher, Matilde Martín González, and Kevin Power. I should thank an exact number of stimulating contributors, Aldon Lynn Nielsen, Alison Van Nyhuis, Abel Debritto, Stewart Smith, Roberto Dr. Cintli Rodriguez, Charles Bernstein,

ARTICLES

KID CREOLE AND HIS *BEAU-COCONAUTS*: LLOYD ADDISON'S ASTRO-BLACK INFINITIES

Aldon Lynn Nielsen
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ABSTRACT

This essay takes the example of Lloyd Addison's *Beau-Cocoa* as a case study in African American small press activism. Lloyd Addison, one of whose poems gave the name to the Umbra group of poets, began *Beau-Cocoa* with collaborator Justus Taylor in the late 1960s, and the journal continued through format and personnel changes through 1973. While the journal continued to include writings by others, by far the bulk of the work, encompassing poems, plays, and political and critical writings were contributed by Addison himself, who frequently created concrete and visual works for the publication. Across the several numbers of *Beau-Cocoa*, Addison published 600 pages, including over 130 of his poems. Sometimes signing himself "the Beau-Coconaut," Addison used this journal to create a community of readers at the farthest reaches of his black, theoretical poetics.

KEY WORDS: African American literature, poetry, Lloyd Addison, *Beau-Cocoa*, small press activism, Umbra group, Black Arts.

RESUMEN

Este ensayo se centra en la revista de Lloyd Addison, *Beau-Cocoa*, como un caso práctico del activismo de las pequeñas editoriales afroamericanas. Lloyd Addison, uno de cuyos poemas dio nombre al grupo de poetas Umbra, comenzó *Beau-Cocoa* con el colaborador Justus Taylor a finales de los años sesenta del siglo XX y la revista continuó tras diversos cambios de formato y plantilla hasta 1973. Al tiempo que la revista incluía colaboraciones externas, el gran grueso de lo publicado, abarcando poemas, teatro y obras críticas y políticas, era del propio Addison, quien a menudo escribía poesía concreta y visual para dicha publicación. Él fue el autor de unas 600 páginas, incluyendo más de 130 poemas, en los diversos números de *Beau-Cocoa*. A veces y bajo la firma de "the Beau-Coconaut", Addison utilizó la revista para formar una comunidad de lectores más allá de su poética negra y teórica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: literatura afroamericana, poesía, Lloyd Addison, *Beau-Cocoa*, activismo de las pequeña editoriales, grupo Umbra, artes afroamericanas.

"Where Do Words Go From Here?" (Addison, "Paranoia" 75) That question, posed in prose by poet Lloyd Addison in the midst of an autobiographical self-critique, remains as obstinately polysemous (and as ultimately neglected) as his writings. We can read it as a question regarding the future of experimental writing in the wake of his own texts while at the same time reading it as musing over the potential fate of his published words. Elsewhere in the same work he asks an equally rhetorical question, "Where do (short) subjects go from here?" (98), summoning up thoughts of his own lyric verse, of cinema, and even of the subjectivity of small persons (he alludes to his own relatively short stature at several points in his autobiographical writings). By placing the word "short" within metacritical parentheses, Addison seems also to be raising a question about the future of the subject itself, the directionality of subjectivity. That, it has to be said, remains even now a subject that the discipline of literary criticism somehow does not expect to find raised by African American poets writing out of the heat of the Black Arts and Black Power movements, but such were the questions set before us by Lloyd Addison, writing from his subject position, writing himself as a black American subject, in Harlem in the late 1960s.

On the most immediate reading, we needn't read far to find where Addison's words were going at the time. In his editorial note at the opening of the Summer and Autumn 1969 issue of his journal, *Beau-Cocoa*, Addison reports having just received word that his work is to be published as a small volume in London publisher Paul Breman's landmark Heritage Series of African American poets, a project wonderfully documented by Lauri Ramey's recent volume *The Heritage Series of Black Poetry, 1962-1975: A Research Compendium*. Addison also notes that Russell Atkins, editor of the *Free Lance* journal and another wildly experimental African American poet, will have a volume in Breman's series as well. Paul Breman, among the first British editors to feature the works of the newer black American poets, additionally promoted Addison's work by including him in the anthology *You Better Believe It: Black Verse in English*. Rosey Pool, another early European champion of African American letters (and like Breman, Dutch by birth), had included Addison in her classic 1962 anthology *Beyond the Blues*, at which time Addison quipped: "My only question is: which side of the Blues is she going beyond?" (*The aura & the umbra* jacket copy). Scanning the emerging prospects of African American poets in the early 1970s, one might well have thought there would be no end to where Addison's words might conceivably go. Not only had he appeared in the first collection published by the important collective of African American poets known as The Society of Umbra, they derived their group's name from one of his poems. He was named poet in residence for the Harlem Afro Arts Summer Festival in 1967 and published work in the resulting anthology. These events along with Addison's

appearances in the Breman and Pool anthologies, might have seemed to betoken an emerging poetic career on the threshold of greater, or at least some, recognition.

It had certainly been long emerging. Addison had been seeking publication of his poems and several novels since the 1950s. He had submitted to such journals as *New Mexico Review* and *Black Mountain Review* without success. He had been rejected by the Yale Younger Poets competition. Throughout, he seemed to maintain a good sense of humor about these efforts at public circulation. In a letter to Rosey Pool responding to her request for a submission of his materials he wrote: "Recently snubbed by the Yale Series for 1960's award, I have a few scratches, but I heal quickly" (Pool Papers, nd). In his autobiographical essays he remarked that "Refusing to be bitter about missing a boat that never sailed is not an index of unawareness of what a good idea it is to build ships, and of what a masterbuilder's product is, and of the wonder of horizons that many may never know to miss (and few risk falling off the world to essay)" ("R.S.V.P." 40). This comment eerily prefigures in one direction a later poem by another neglected African American experimentalist: Bob Kaufman's "For All Those Ships That Never Sailed." That a black poet setting out on a voyage of formal and philosophical exploration might well risk falling off the edge of the known literary world was something that Addison

was prepared to essay. By 1969, the edge of that world was in sight. "I have devoted much (which is never much) of my spare time," he writes, "to inking paper but of works in printer's ink (other than my own) I can scarcely at the moment exhibit a half dozen twenty-cents-a-piece pages" ("R.S.V.P. 39-40). In the end, those few anthology appearances and that one small book in the Heritage series were all of Addison that was to come before a public, at least as inked by presses other than his own. Fortunately for Addison, and for us, the Breman volumes and Pool's anthology gained an international audience and Addison's verse could be read, in libraries if nowhere else, around the world. In 1965 Addison had privately published a chapbook with the wonderfully punning title *Rhythmic Adventures beyond Jazz into Avowal Sound Streams,* but his primary, very nearly only mode of address to a larger public would prove to be the journal *Beau-Cocoa*, which first appeared in 1968 and ran to eight volumes in the five years of its publication history. At a time when serial composition in arts ranging from music to poetry was becoming an ever more prominent aesthetic mode, Addison literally serialized his literary life, placing nearly six hundred pages of his life's work simmering in, as he put it, his own ink.

Every small press magazine has its own origin myths and reasons for being, often intimately tied to an individual poet's efforts to find a way in the contemporary literary world. Robert Creeley used the occasion of his announced intention to publish a magazine (which magazine he never did publish) as a ground upon which to approach Charles Olson and commence a productive correspondence that would stretch across decades. Clarence Major commenced what he titled *Coercion Review of Contemporary Power in Literature* in 1958, working out of Chicago. He announced his fervent hope "to expand this mag into a large widely circulating mag eventually, without any changes in policy" (1). That the magazine was in need of expansion was clear from the sixteen page length of the first issue. Still, within those sixteen pages one encountered writings by Kenneth Patchen and Lawrence Ferlinghetti as well as work in translation from Valery and Eluard. That *Coercion Review* was essentially the project of its poet editor was made plain in that very first number, which was labeled "A Clarence Major Venture," as well as by the fact that the journal's mailing address followed Major's own peregrinations from Chicago to Omaha and beyond. Some journals, *Hambone* being perhaps the most obvious current example, begin as group projects but become essentially the project of one person. *Hambone* was, at its inception, the creation of university students, but poet Nathaniel Mackey carried the project out of its collegiate origins and developed it into one of our major organs of innovative writing.

The poets of what came to be termed "The New American Poetry" in the post World War II American literary universe recognized that their works were unlikely to meet with a warm reception in the established organs of the regnant New Criticism and set about creating their own venues for readings and publications. In subsequent years, the loose associations of poets who came to be known as "Language Poets" after the name of one of their early low tech journals, Charles Bernstein and Bruce Andrews's *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*, followed much the same course. This much has been widely discussed and mapped in the critical literature. Less well known is the story of African American avant gardes and their small presses. Around

the same time that Clarence Major was publishing *Coercion*, LeRoi Jones was publishing *Yugen*, with his wife, Hettie Jones, and *The Floating Bear* with poet Diane Di Prima. Neither of these was at the time thought of especially as a *black* publication, but each provided important publishing opportunities for African American artists such as Harold Carrington, Stephen Jonas, Allen Polite and others. When Baraka left Greenwich Village and moved into the Black Arts era he took this do-it-yourself political and publishing aesthetic with him. This was a time when new black poetry journals erupted nearly everywhere, and the Black Arts emphasis upon creating black-controlled cultural institutions eventuated in the appearance of *The Journal of Black Poetry*, *Soul Book*, Third World Press (still going strong more than four decades later) and a host of others. It was in the midst of this movement for racial self-determination and cultural revolution that the first issues of *Beau-Cocoa* appeared.

Beau-Cocoa was never a one man operation. From the beginning, Lloyd Addison was listed on the mast head as Editor and Publisher, and Justus Taylor was identified as Editor at Large. Richard Taylor was credited as Manager of Promotion and Distribution early on, followed by Martin Fisher. From the outset other writers were invited to contribute, and some who responded, such as Biafran poet Onwuchekwa Jemie, are still on the scene today. Jemie, for many years an actively publishing scholar in American universities (perhaps best known for a book on Langston Hughes and another on decolonizing African literatures), is now editor-in-chief of the Nigerian *Business Day*. Among the small number of *Beau-Cocoa*'s published contributors we can discern a diversity that some journals today have yet to match. The fourth issue of *Beau Cocoa* included poems by Linwood Smith. Smith was a graduate of Galludet University, America's foremost university dedicated to higher education for the deaf and hard of hearing. Galludet has always placed a premium on building cultural institutions, its internationally recognized theater program standing as perhaps the best known instance of that dedication. Especially relevant to discussion of *Beau Cocoa* is Galludet's leadership training program in theater arts for deaf and hard of hearing people of color. At the time of his publication in Addison's journal, Linwood Smith was teaching deaf students in North Carolina and had already published in such venues as *Negro Voices*. Today, even with the advent of disability studies, scant critical attention has been given to the poetry of deaf African Americans, yet another way in which *Beau Cocoa* might be seen to have been an avant garde.

Still, the preponderance of work published in *Beau-Cocoa* over its life-span came from its editor/publisher and Addison seems to have found in his journal a novel mode of serial publication suited to the wildly ambitious explorations of his far-ranging aesthetics and cultural politics. His works of the 1950s appeared in the journal's pages interspersed among Addison's more recent writings and the smattering of works by other writers. When issue number one made its debut in Autumn of 1968, its cover made a particularly honest publisher's appeal to potential subscribers. The magazine, which bore a cover price of seventy-five cents, found humor in the so often failed announcements of publication schedules in the small press world. "(Try) Quarterly," it advised, asking readers to give the new quarterly a try.
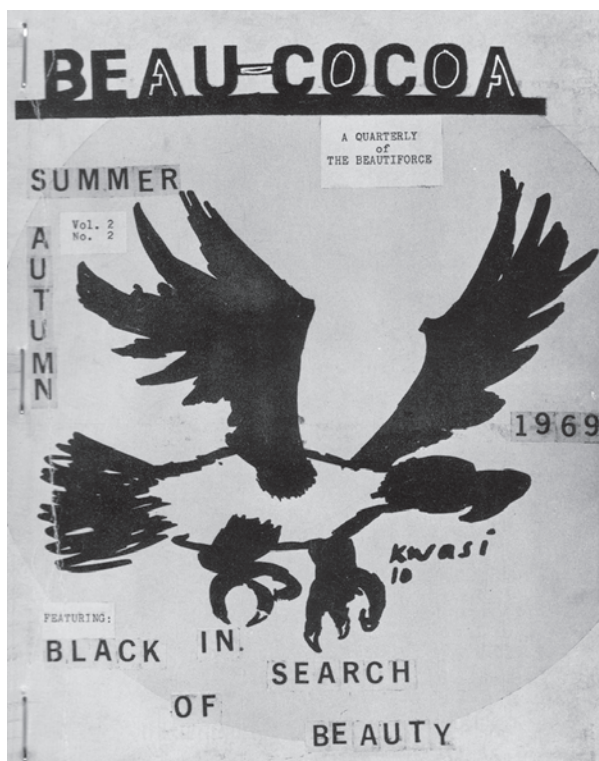
The publishers went on to advise "(if not, try) 3 annually." Joking aside, even that proved a problem, as only four issues appeared in the first two years, but they grew in size and ambition. That first issue carried the usual announcement of the journal's mission, but couched in the highly unusual diction of its chief writer:

> B-C aspires to fill the hiatus of the homesick <u>NO</u> in the pantheon of beauti-force, with the (black, touch-light, blackbox Ahha, having-and-not-to-have, uptowndowntown brown) tobac-cocoa, coffee, honey, sugarcane, licorice, liver, prime soil, lamblack, silhouette and thousand faces of the body of <u>YES</u>. The B-C body-social will be paradise regained black beauti-force. The vital catalytic agent in the birth of the supersummerman, summerwoman, to Isis-cycle away old winterman yesterday & black dynamo naturalize and shabazz-zam open-osaseme the mystery of black esthetics and awaken the twilight goddess.

The outside cover promised "young black brown handgrown seedlings" and the editor's mission statement surely followed through on that promise. Addison's commitment to opposing YES to NO and to seeking what he termed, over the course of many years, "beauti-force" were of a piece with mid-sixties, hippy yea-saying, more than a bit reminiscent of the literary effusions of Jimi Hendrix. At the

same time, however, the mission statement takes on a number of crucial conflicts within the late-sixties community of black creators. Addison playfully addresses himself to the long history of color confusion and prejudice in America, already signaled in the journal's title. *Beau-Cocoa* says that black is beautiful in all its shadings. Further, Addison dissolves antagonisms between uptown (Harlem) and downtown (East Village) art scenes without in any way diluting his allegiance to an aesthetics growing out of the lives of black peoples. Clearly this is not the prescriptivism so often ascribed to Black Arts Movement poets, but neither is it in any way a wandering away from a fundamental belief in the powers of the imaginations of black peoples. Well before the concept of the social construction of race had gained a firm hold in the academic firmament, Addison presented his journal as an instrument for the coalescence of a racialized social body. It will be in the writing and reading of *Beau-Cocoa*'s modes of black beauty that a social body will come into being. This is a blackness without essentialism growing out of the debates over black aesthetics in the America of 1965-1975 and out of Addison's prior experiences with the Society of Umbra.

The geographical designators of African American literary history have always been as problematic as any other. The term "Harlem Renaissance" has long encompassed artists from Virginia, Washington, D.C., Chicago and farther reaches. (Sterling Brown made this point often, sounding an intertextual echo of Addison's talk of ships that may never have sailed: Brown responded to people who asked if he'd missed the boat when it came to the Harlem Renaissance by insisting that he'd never even gone down to the dock [*After Winter*].) Not every member of the Harlem Writers Guild resides in Harlem. The Society of Umbra's workshop may have been loosely associated with New York's Lower East Side, but it attracted writers from uptown, including Lloyd Addison. The organization was effectively initiated by writers David Henderson, Calvin Hernton and Tom Dent. Dent had become acquainted with Raymond Patterson and Lloyd Addison at Harlem readings organized by Langston Hughes's secretary, Raoul Abdul, and those poets quickly joined with the downtown group. Umbra was unusual in having several couples in its membership, such as Calvin and Mildred Hernton and Lennox and Maryanne Raphael. The group was never exclusively African American; Art Berger was a participant in its programs. Neither did the group prescribe any narrow formal focus. It did, though, quickly become an early forum for the more experimental of black writers. Among its alumnae are such well-known figures as Ishmael Reed and Lorenzo Thomas. Some, such as Tom Feelings and Leroy McLucas, became better known for their work in the visual arts. Addison came to the group as an already formed writer who, while obviously well-and broadly read, sounded like none among his modernist, Beat or Black Mountain predecessors. Lorenzo Thomas, who has spoken of Addison as a "frighteningly intellectual" poet, wrote that "Addison's poems, though indebted to T.S. Eliot and Melvin B. Tolson, seemed to emerge from the black community without any foreign influences; his language and themes were those expected from a people who grew up reading the Bible" ("Shadow" 66). One hastens to add, however, that the Bible, in none of its translations, approaches the wild innovation of Addison's syntax and idiom. The spectrum of black thought

indicated by the title of Addison's "The Aura and the Umbra" found its incarnation in the poetic explorations of the literary workshop who took their name from it. In the same way that Addison's poem had served as catalyst for the aesthetics of the Society of Umbra, Umbra had served as a major catalyst in the emergence of the Black Arts Movement in the later nineteen-sixties. Writing out of the dark hot center of that moment, Addison's mission statement for *Beau-Cocoa* envisioned his new venture as a catalytic agent in the laboratory of the new black arts, as the charge that would enliven the social body of the new black.

Despite its far reaching influence, both as namesake and as instigation, Addison's poem "Umbra" only appears at its full length in his own journal, where he included it in the first number. His Heritage Series chapbook included a truncated version of the poem and later reprintings followed Paul Breman's lead, and the full text remained, as it were, a textual fugitive. In the pages of *Beau-Cocoa* Addison precedes his poem with a brief note. Starting out by acknowledging the difficulties awaiting authors of long or even medium length poems, the poet describes his poem as "flourishing in its wilderness of wordpower since 1961-62" ("Umbra" 28). In a rare instance, the poem's namesake journal and organization preceded the full poem into print, though, as Addison goes on to note, the poem had long enjoyed life as a repeated performance, one much appreciated by those so fortunate as to have been among its audiences.

That first issue of *Beau-Cocoa* bore the traces of the violent era into which it was born. Beginning on page five, readers encountered a sustained poetic meditation, experimental in form, on the season of assassinations that had just passed. The series begins with Addison's "After MLK: The Marksmen Marked Leftover Kill," a poem also selected for Addison's Heritage series volume. The theme is picked up again two pages later in a poem titled "The Kennedy-King Sting (Rays)," the parenthetical portion of the title completing a verbal leap that conjoins the vernacular expression for a con job (a "sting") with an oceanic metaphor and the name of King's assassin, James Earl Ray, who was captured and convicted of the crime. This is followed by a lament titled "Bobbie... Bobbie...," a poem that continues Addison's characteristic wordplay. The piece opens with Robert Kennedy "in the eye of death, / surprised by its pointblank bead" (9), then moves to a punning address to America's seemingly never-ending fascination with firearms and debates over the scope of Second Amendment's guarantee, in light of the necessity of a militia, of the people's right to keep and bear arms:

> casuistry? no: principles; but whose? got to go?
> well, lets see/saw down across, fill in proposition
>   for "proven by bullets": rights to arms—
> and all debates in the chambers discharge
> quite unfulfitting, & unfitting eleventh hour erasure:
> in an agony of composure... (9)

Here legislative chambers and the chambers of a gun both discharge to ill effect. The right to bear arms intersects in a sort of ideological crossword puzzle

with the taking to arms of those seeking their rights. A proof by bullets proves that the principled are not bullet-proof.

The assassination sequence concludes with a longer poem titled simply "MLK." This intense, lyric elegy makes use of a technique of Addison's that was not visible in his *Heritage* chapbook, the placement of hand drawings and hand writing in his printed poems. "MLK" opens with handwritten notes surrounding its title, asking rhetorically: "*Were you at / Selma, / Montgomery, / Memphis...*" (11), followed by a passage that plays upon Biblical usage while seeming to comment on the processes of its own scripting:

> *do you believe...*
> *howsoever you write MLK looks like milk,*
>   *and, honey, he's dead*
> *and, brother, hoodwinked soul heaven you think of love,*
> *seems nobody knows how to get abreast the march-on...* (11)

A second eruption of handwritten script comes on the poem's second page when the poet speaks of "inflationary" shame and reproduces the word *shame* in large-font majescules. Reflecting upon government's efforts to use its funding powers to stave off more "long, hot summers" of the sort that so marked the decade of the sixties, Addison remarks the "Sunday funnypaper money / for an anti-poverty entertainment / to shadowbox the summerheat" (12), and foregrounds the "Bitterness of blacks against whites against black power / in lieu of powerlessness and borrowed hope" (13), predicating and predicting the dialectics of promise and backlash to come. Picking up on a theme from "Bobbie... Bobbie...," the poet writes of "unbulletproof Blues burning Beale Street" (13), which street runs through the city in which King was slain in the midst of his work with the striking sanitation workers, Memphis. "To lift the white trash cans you need black powerful muscle dignity" (13), Addison observes sardonically, then, seizing upon a pun made available in King's most famous speeches pointing to the difficulties Reverend King faced in those final confrontations, the poet writes:

> :::Free at trash rally: gift cabbage miscegenation uplift,
> a king shell-shocked and shut-up,
> heaped humpty-dumpty disharmoniously humdrum
> in unceremonious sing-out martyrdom's doom:
> grayday motto of overcoming::: (13)

Addison's multiplying colons seem to me more than simply typographical markings setting off the stanzas through this section of the poem. The triplicate colons fore and aft the stanzas strike me as providing visual reminders of the functions of that punctuation mark: segmenting, introducing, setting in apposition and drawing readers to logical consequences. In the antepenultimate stanza of "MLK" Addison asks: "And now / the overoutlook of April '68: / how might his summers not look back lastly..." (17). The poem, in the poet's turn of phrase "an epitaph of eloquence for the lost exemplar" (17), concludes with the inevitable recollection of

"a dreamer at the Lincoln Memorial" (17), concludes on the ground that was that summer to become the muddied campgrounds of the Poor People's Campaign.

Addison's sequence of meditations in a time of assassination is followed immediately by a sort of modest proposal from *Beau-Cocoa*'s editor at large, Justus Taylor, a proposal Taylor reports having sent to President Johnson, Governor Rockefeller, Governor Romney (father and forerunner as presidential candidate of erstwhile son, "Mitt"), New York's moderate Republican mayor John Lindsay and Bayard Rustin, all of whom responded with form letters "advising him of the impracticality of any other form of response" (18). Taylor's proposal is "That the Federal Government undertake a promotional effort of substantial proportions to reverse the existing image of Afro-Americans in the eyes of the white majority, and in the eyes of some Afro-Americans themselves" (18). One wonders what the initial recipients of Taylor's proposal might have made of such a thing, but it is worth noting that Taylor harbored no utopian delusions about what he was proposing. It was not, in fact, aimed at moral suasion. "This country actually does not function on such bases," argues Taylor (20), going on to clarify that what he has in mind is that "the methods should be the same as have been used to make Americans consume more material things that they don't need than in any other country in the world" (20-21). Taylor is proposing that America turn its advertising genius to improving the Black image in the White (and Black) mind.

Addison inserts another of his hand-written notes at the outset of his report on the 1966 Afro Arts Cultural Conference which immediately follows Taylor's "Proposal," and we are again at once thrust into the poet's linguistic imaginarium. Introducing his report, Addison scrawls a description of it as "*another prose posing all... the an... other prose...*" (22). The piece is, assuredly, another prose offering, but it is also, as Addison's self-interruptive writing proclaims, an *other* prose: both prose of the other and prose like no other. The Afro Arts Conference had been held at the famous Teresa Hotel in Harlem. The tallest building in Harlem at the time, the Teresa had played host to everybody from Louis Armstrong to Jimi Hendrix. Its widest fame probably came from the coverage afforded the visit of Fidel Castro, who welcomed the delegation of Nikita Kruschev at the hotel, but around the time of the Afro Arts meetings the hotel was probably better known among black cultural activists as the site for the meetings of Malcolm X's (by then rechristened El-Haj Malik El-Shabazz) Organization of Afro-American Unity. Despite this powerful legacy, the hotel had already closed by the time Addison's report of the conference appeared in the first issue of his journal. The report itself is a poetic distillation of the debates surrounding the Black Aesthetic Movement, and effectively argues that: "Black Power... follows from the reality of White Power (as an aspiration)... and would constitute the cultural maturation of black folk (operatively), the black community, etc.; in consequence of which growth it negates the racial significance (conflict) of White Power as well as any (conflict) in and of itself" (24).

While the greater part of *Beau-Cocoa*'s second issue is given over to Addison's three act play *Mr. Black and Miss Integration*, The critical views expressed by Addison in that first issue find their strong echo in Justus Taylor's review of the controversial "Harlem on My Mind" exhibition of New York's Metropolitan Mu-

seum, a show that was already being protested before it opened and which was picketed by cultural activists. Responding to white critics of the show, many of whom argued there was no "art" in the exhibit heavily weighted towards photos and video, Taylor argued that:
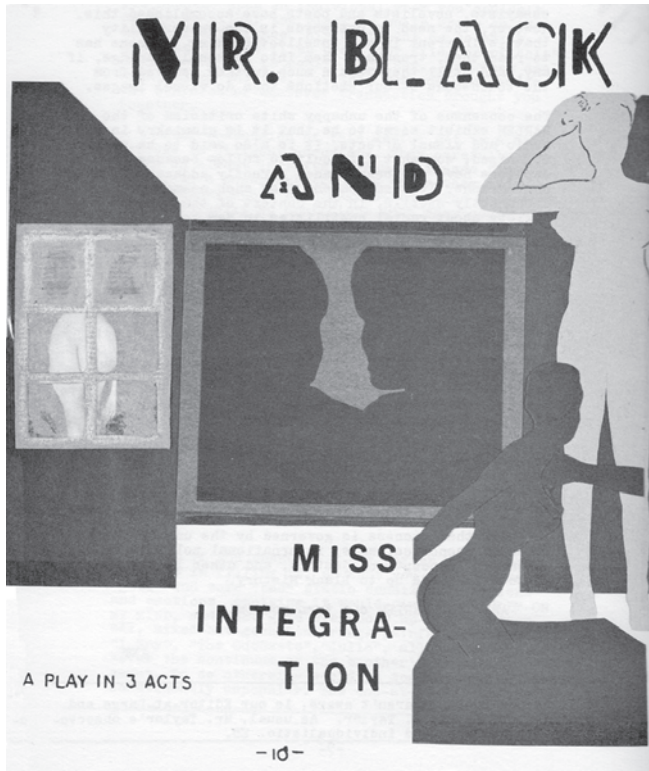
> The consensus of the unhappy white criticism of the HARLEM exhibit seems to be that it is gimmickry in its audio and visual effects... It seems patent that such commentary is dishonestly sterile in the context of the present anxiety about racial hostilities in New York City. (9)

Taylor also had a few words for the militants picketing outside the show, many of whom were outraged that a white man had been selected to curate the Met's first ever show taking Harlem as its subject:

> ...if the exhibit truly depicted blacks through whites' eyes we would have much less hostility and much less anxiety about it. If his eyes had ever revealed to him that we have a whole bag too, the sets would have been permanently unsettled long ago. (9)

Prefiguring notorious comments from Bill O'Reilly decades later, Taylor imagines white visitors to the exhibit of black life commenting, "I never knew they ate from tables" (9). What comes across most clearly from Taylor's review is a point of agreement between him and Addison regarding the very nature and structure of race. "The race in racism," Taylor writes, "is not a matter of color, but rather a matter of a bag of attitudes" (8).

As if to underscore this point about the shiftiness of race, the play by Addison that takes up most of this issue is accompanied by a repeating black and white illustration that calls to mind the figure/background shifting optical illusion in which we alternately see the outline of a lamp or of two faces. The black and white of the illustration cause a constant figure/background shift of racial definition as we read the play. (In passing, the journal's habit of signing pieces with the author's initials creates a journalistic pun as Taylor's initials, provided all in caps as "JET", would inevitably put contemporary readers in mind of *Jet* magazine, a sister publication to *Ebony* in the Johnson family of African American mass market magazines).

That Addison's conceptions of race link to his conception of the individual subject comes into view most forcefully in those autobiographical writings that appear in the journal under the title "R.S.V.P.," couched as always in Addison's verbal playfulness:

> I was undressing one day considering that since I seemed committed to writing I should have something to write about, oh—like Yerby writes historical stuff, and Elison [sic] writes invisible stuff, and Wright writes Dostoyevskian stuff, and others wrote rote stuff—aha, I'll write black stuff, about the lost esthetic, black beauty. It came to me. (39)

But who is this "me" to whom it came? In the second paragraph of his autobiography, Addison declares: "There is in fact no I to put the finger on except the hands are of emotional time and replace some of the conglomerate gone thither, in which (emotional) physico-chemical transformations I regain the rib and the covenant" (39). Addison, who could never be accused of relying on the rote, was in pursuit of a dynamic black aesthetic and in his explorations we can see his engagements with critical positions more frequently associated in literary history with later moments of literary theory.

Addison is always beginning from a point asserting a Black power. Indeed, writing in a 1970 issue under the wildly punned title "Fanon Fodder," the poet argues that "the manifest destiny of the black is cultural decolonization" (102), putting himself in opposition to some he saw as "trying to make a NEGRO rather than a black literary establishment" ("R.S.V.P." 40). In this he clearly fits within what most literary historians have chosen to remember of the Black Arts Movement. What this meant in Addison's politico-aesthetic practice, though, serves as a powerful reminder that the breadth of critical thought during the era of the Black Arts could be far more encompassing than has been commonly thought. When contemplating what received wisdom has given us of the Black Arts, we'd do well to recall Addison's apothegm, "where prejudice poses, genius disposes" ("R.S.V.P." 42).

Addison did find himself jousting with a mode of poetic prescriptivism early on. "I've been told," he reports, "...to avoid esoteria (verbiage of rhythm and ideas). But it seems no coincidence that most of the better music is notationally difficult. Are Jazz and Ragtime too elegant for the black spirit?" ("R.S.V.P." 41). Addison will reject both the expectations of white readerships still looking for the two stops of bathos and pathos James Weldon Johnson had thought to leave behind at the opening of the Harlem Renaissance and the more limiting prescriptions of some among his black colleagues. He sees the struggle around writing in terms familiar from African American cultural history:

> ...our real job, ladies and gentlemen, is not to be literary Booker T. Washingtons, consigning blacks to literary (artistic) meniality (perhaps you're telling the establishment that elegance is the last thing blacks WANT and telling blacks it's the last thing they NEED accordingly) but to assist him in developing, creating, defining, delineating, etc. that which of his own encompasses the vast range of human spiritual aspirations. ("R.S.V.P." 43)

Reading this it is difficult not to think of those passages where W.E.B. DuBois skewered Washington for his too ready relinquishing of black aspirations for learning and aesthetics. On the one side, Addison will not reconcile himself to a reductive cultural nationalism that would have the effect, in his view, of relegating blacks to "a rental-unit reservation of beads and dashikis" ("R.S.V.P." 43; and note well how closely this position coincides with the later Marxist critique Amiri Baraka was to direct towards 1960s cultural nationalist perspectives). But on the other side, Addison had no patience whatsoever with the limiting expectations of the white critical establishment. "Don't let anyone tell you, blackman," he admonishes, "that elegance is no part of your style, or that literacy is not your thing" ("R.S.V.P. 42). Addison cannot abide anyone telling a race of people who produced a Duke Ellington that elegance is not their possession; will not reconcile himself to a critical modality that denies complexity of invention to a people who gave the world jazz. Clearly the warnings he had received in the 1950s against the esoteric in poetic style still rankled; as clearly, he saw a racial agenda not so well concealed within those warnings.

By the late 1960s Addison was deploying a new term for what he hoped to accomplish in verse, an "Addisonism" as he termed it, *surromanticism*, which he describes as "an allowance for song—words, music... arrived at through accompanying efforts to reassess the African scene" ("Adolescent Romance" 77). Following in the path of the *negritude* poets, Addison was to break with the mainstream verse culture of his day, a verse culture which had never permitted full entry to black poets in the first place. Like Senghor and Césaire, he refused to be bound by the strictures of realism, seeking a *beyond* that took an African diasporic past as its point of departure. In some regards his poetics was on a track parallel to the aesthetics championed by mordenist poets and their subsequent progeny. Unlike Russell Atkins, for example, Addison hewed to a principle of *condensare*, though the results in his case were far different from the work of an Oppen or a Creeley or a Niedecker. Writing in *Beau-Cocoa* in 1970, Addison commented that:

The condensation of IDEAS is one of the sweaty tasks in poetry wherein the attempt is to create new "words," new ideas and the creation of a new world. This is not always the attempt, of course. More often, the poet is trying to present the view from other or several vantage points—a matter of dimension. On the other hand, the world changes drastically by dint of such 'new dimensions.' ("Adolescent Romance" 71)

The cubist modernism of *Tender Buttons* is one predecessor for what Addison was attempting, though shorn of the racism of Stein's model. Closer to what Addison was after were the dimensions opened to Euro-American arts by the African art works that had done so much to inspire cubism in its inception, those statues that, in the words of Addison's senior contemporary Melvin B. Tolson, "gave lyricism and / Space reality to modernistic art" (cont. 8). Addison's way into the post-African modernist dimensions was by way of *condensare* applied at the semantic level. Thus, in addition to arguing for his Addisonism "surromanticism," Addison propounded a black beyond of signifying, a "sursemantic. And here Addison comes into alliance with such a radical experimentalist as Atkins, a poet who rooted his verbal art in a revolutionary view of the visual. For Addison, the *sursemantic* was "intended to transcend visual primacy, yet sustaining romantic enchantment, & otherwise to appropriate the page (primarily visual media as such) in black and white to move BEYOND THE BLUES with a life-assertive music" ("The Off-Black Road" 62). There is much to remark in this passage. It is accompanied by yet more of Addison's hand-writing, but also by a line drawing, seemingly illustrating the very appropriation of the page the poet writes of while at the same time moving the attention back to the writing as mark. The space of the page additionally appears to make manifest Addison's observation later in the same issue that "present absence is timelike; absent presence is spacelike" ("Reminiscences" 125). In Addison's reading of his own page, "the picture mood is romantic, whether or not the image is displaced," but further, "the picture person is OTHER…" (62). The original model is absent in both time and space; the image itself is of an other, and is other both to the poet and to his writing. The writing itself is a "picture mood" of an absent other. And while there is much more to be made of this page, it must be read as finding that beyond of the blues that offers a response to Addison's own question of Rosey Pool and her anthology: "which side of the blues is she going beyond?"

Lloyd Addison continued his radical aesthetic searching through each subsequent volume of *Beau-Cocoa*, a group project with a singular projection rising from the moment of the Black Arts. That Addison saw the journal as a serial projection of his own poetics becomes evident near the end of 1973's combined issue eight and nine, where readers discover an "Inspirational Index" reminiscent of the then not yet published index to Zukofsky's "*A*" and headed with a note referring to the issues of *Beau-Cocoa* as "The Works of LEA." As if to further complicate matters, the words selected for the inspirational index are, we are told, a random choice. Here are found entries for "Integration" and "Inarticulate(ness)," for "Drugs (orientation)" and "Esthetics," for "Surromanticism" (though not for "sursematic"), for "Style," for "Africa" and for "God (sexo-esthetic)."
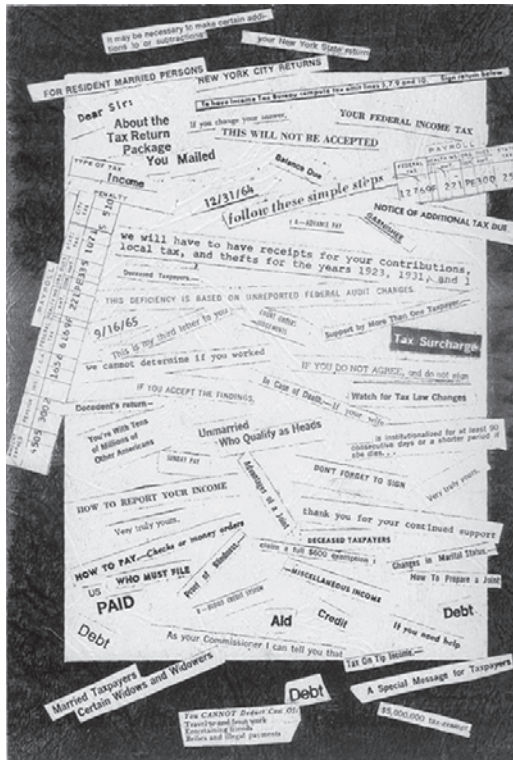
That inspirational index was not the end of *Beau-Cocoa*'s final volume, though. There is a beyond the index as Addison had found his beyond of the blues. The last poem *inside* the issue (an issue whose contents overflowed onto the back cover), a poem titled "Looking Black and Feeling Followed," is far more than a black American man's sense of being profiled in white America; it's a looking forward to his own beyond, to the poetics that might follow him:

> it's gonna be a badddd-haddd!
> Anti-precedent to follow hot...

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AMERICAN DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES: MIGRATION AND MYTH IN CLAUDE MCKAY'S TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN POETRY

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ABSTRACT

Literary critics have narrated Claude McKay's early-twentieth-century Jamaican American migration in terms of a popular conceptualization of the American dream. This essay analyzes the ways in which McKay wrote in terms of and against the popular rhetorical tropes of the American dream and the American nightmare, especially in poetry submitted to and published by American editors, magazines, journals, and presses. In effect, this essay exposes the degree to which McKay represented the realization of the American dream as a myth and the pursuit of the American dream as a nightmare, especially for black Caribbean migrants and African American citizens.

KEY WORDS: American literature, Caribbean literature, Claude McKay, Harlem Renaissance, migration, myth, poetry, protest poetry, twentieth-century literature.

RESUMEN

Los críticos literarios han descrito la emigración de Claude McKay de Jamaica a Estados Unidos en la primera parte del siglo XX como una conceptualización popular del sueño americano. Este ensayo analiza cómo McKay escribió en función de y en contra de las metáforas retóricas populares del sueño americano y de la pesadilla americana, especialmente en la poesía que enviaba y le publicaban editores, revistas, publicaciones y prensa americanos. En efecto, este ensayo expone hasta qué punto McKay personificó la realización del sueño americano como mito y la búsqueda del sueño americano como pesadilla, especialmente para los emigrantes negros del Caribe y los ciudadanos afroamericanos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: literatura americana, literatura caribeña, Claude McKay, Renacimiento de Harlem, emigración, mito, poesía, poesía política, literatura del siglo XX.

In the wake of the 1929 stock market crash, the American historian James Truslow Adams reconsidered centuries of American history in terms of the conceptualization and realization of the American dream. Adams identified the American dream as the defining factor of American history in *The Epic of America*, which originally was published in 1931: "If America has stood for anything unique

in the history of the world, it has been for the American dream, the belief in the common man and the insistence upon his having, as far as possible, equal opportunity in every way with the rich one" (135). In the epilogue, Adams clarified, "It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position" (404). In addition, Adams represented community and intellectualism as integral factors in the realization of a more equitable American social order (411).

In twentieth-century American poetry, the Jamaican-born Claude McKay protested black Caribbean migrants' and African American citizens' exclusion from the American dream of equal opportunity. Although McKay periodically represented the American-controlled Panama Canal Zone as place where Jamaican workers could pursue better salaries than in the West Indies, such as in the 1912 poem "Peasants' Ways o' Thinkin'" (11; lines 81-88), he subsequently and repeatedly protested the degree to which black Caribbean migrants and African American citizens did not experience equal opportunities on American soil.[1] In effect, McKay's twentieth-century American poetry repeatedly exposed the realization of the American dream as a myth and the pursuit of the American dream as a nightmare, especially for black Caribbean migrants and African American citizens.

Literary critics have alluded to the popular conceptualization of the American dream, an individual's successful pursuit of socioeconomic advancement on American soil, while narrating McKay's Jamaican American migration in 1912. In the introduction to McKay's American autobiography, *A Long Way from Home*, which originally was published in 1937, for example, the African American sociologist St. Clair Drake wrote (Untermyer 788), "Claude McKay was one of the more talented individuals in the stream of immigrants from the British West Indies who have been seeking their fortune in the United States since the turn of the century" (Drake x). As the educated son of a Jamaican landowner (Maxwell xiii), McKay did not share West Indian economic refugees' need to pursue socioeconomic advancement on American soil. In the "American Beginning" section of *A Long Way from Home*, McKay mentioned two more reasons for his American migration: "education" and "a bigger audience" (4, 20).

The early-twentieth-century American publishing industry afforded McKay more opportunities than were available in Jamaica, which as late as 1948, did not have a "general means of publishing books" (Herring qtd. in Ramchand 73). McKay was one of many Caribbean writers and intellectuals who migrated to the United States and published work in America, including Cyril Briggs (Hill 432), W.A. Domingo (Lowney 417), Marcus Garvey (Hill 1091-92), Hubert Henry Harrison (Perry 1230), Adolphe Roberts (Herring qtd. in Ramchand 73), Joel Augustus Rogers

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[1] See William J. Maxwell's *Complete Poems: Claude McKay* for poetry references.

(Ahmed 2361), Arthur Schomburg (Lowney 417), and Eric Walrond (Lowney 417). In *The West Indian Novel and Its Background*, Kenneth Ramchand noted "the large numbers of West Indians who emigrated to the United States in the Harlem era and before the immigration laws of the 1920's" (240). Although McKay rarely submitted verse to American editors during his early years in the United States when he studied at Tuskegee and in Kansas (Ohrimenko xvi), he submitted four 1916 poems, "In Memoriam: Booker T. Washington," "Remorse," "My Ethiopian Maid," and "My Werther Days," to William Stanley Braithwaite, a black contributor to the *Boston Evening Transcript* and editor of the *Anthology of Magazine Verse* (Maxwell 302-03; McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 26-27).

McKay's earliest American poetry submissions signaled his English colonial education. McKay's English-born mentor, Walter Jekyll, questioned the masculinity, rationality, and maturity of McKay's writing in the preface to *Songs of Jamaica,* a collection of McKay's poetry published in Jamaica in 1912 (*A Long Way from Home* 250). Jekyll introduced McKay's "negro" writing as "a feminine version of masculine English; preeminently a language of love" and as "naïve" (qtd. in Maxwell 283-84). McKay embodied Jekyll's infantalization, feminization, and sensualization of his poetry in his early American poetry submissions. In 1916 and 1917, McKay used the following two pseudonyms when submitting poetry to Braithwaite and *The Seven Arts*, a monthly American magazine (Hart 681): Rhonda Hope, which echoed the name of McKay's daughter, Rhue Hope McKay; and Eli Edwards, which echoed McKay's mother's name, Hannah Ann Elizabeth Edwards McKay (Maxwell 303-04; McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 26).

In response to McKay's early American poetry submissions, Braithwaite advised the author "because of the almost insurmountable prejudice against all things Negro... to write and send to the magazines only such poems as did not betray... racial identity" (*A Long Way from Home* 27). Although McKay continued to mask his gender in poetry published under the pseudonym Eli Edwards in *The Seven Arts* in 1917 (Maxwell 303-04; McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 26), McKay did not follow Braithwaite's advice to mask his racial identity. The sonnet's speaker in "Invocation" referred to "my sable face" and "the Ethiopian's art" (132; lines 10-11), and the sonnet's speaker in "The Harlem Dancer" described "black players" and the Harlem dancer's "black shiny curls" (172; lines 4, 9). Eventually, McKay published poetry in America under his own name, and by extension, more openly alluded to his identity as an accomplished, black, male, Jamaican American migrant.

After McKay lived and worked in the socioeconomic base of American society, he also emphasized the ways in which America's social mores of racial segregation restricted blacks' socioeconomic advancement and movement on American soil. In 1918 and 1919, McKay published poetry in *Pearson's Magazine* (Maxwell 304-305), which Frank Harris edited from 1916 to 1923 according to "a policy of being 'frankly opposed to the mad individualism we Americans name Liberty'" (Hart 577). In "To the White Fiends" in 1918 (Maxwell 304), for example, McKay protested fiendish, savage white men's murder "[o]f my black brothers" (132; line 4). In 1919 and 1922, McKay also published poetry in *The Liberator* (Maxwell 304-05, 309-10), which Max Eastman founded after the American government

"suppressed" *The Masses* in 1918 (Hart 477). In "The Dominant White," which McKay published in *The Liberator* in 1919, McKay presaged a reckoning day for those who "stultify the dreams of visioned youth / All in the prostituted name of Duty" (135; line 33); however, he did not prescribe the means to amend America's racially segregated socioeconomic system and national space.

During the "Red Summer" of 1919, a term which James Weldon Johnson coined to describe race riots and lynchings in the United States (Erickson 2293), McKay continued emphasizing America's unequal treatment of blacks and whites. In "A Roman Holiday," which McKay published in *The Liberator* during the summer of 1919 (Maxwell 305), McKay contrasted the "torture" of blacks in the American South with American aid for Europeans during World War I (137; lines 4-5, 13-14). Near the poem's conclusion, the speaker satirized American democracy: "Bravo Democracy! Hail greatest Power / That saved sick Europe in her darkest hour!" (lines 13-14). Similarly in the second and final stanza of "The Little Peoples," which McKay also published in *The Liberator* that summer (Maxwell 305), McKay stated,

> But we, the blacks, less than the trampled dust,
> Who walk the new ways with the old dim eyes,—
> We to the ancient gods of greed and lust
> Must still be offered up as a sacrifice[.] (136; lines 9-12)

During the "Red Summer" of 1919 (Maxwell 332), McKay represented death as an inevitably bleak outcome for blacks in "If We Must Die," one of his most popular (Hegler 23), republished (Ramchand 243), and quoted poems (Brathwaite 19):

> If we must die, O let us nobly die,
> So that our precious blood may not be shed
> In vain; then even the monsters we defy
> Shall be constrained to honor us though dead! (177; lines 5-8)

As Ramchand has noted, "The piece was reprinted in almost every pro-Negro magazine and newspaper in America" (243). In 1919, seven years after migrating to the United States, McKay physically distanced himself from the violent symptoms of America's racially exclusive democracy and industry; he sailed to England.

Britons' racism destabilized McKay's youthful admiration of England. Londoners did not even want McKay to "[i]nn" temporarily in England (McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 57); they repeatedly refused to rent him a room when they realized he was black (303-04). Yet McKay contributed to *Negro World*, which McKay described as "the organ of the Garvey Back-to-Africa Movement" (67), and Sylvia Pankhurst's *Workers' Dreadnought* (76). Although McKay published *Spring in New Hampshire and Other Poems* in London in 1920 without the racial protest poem, "If We Must Die" (Maxwell 307; McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 147), reviewers still wrote racist reviews of the collection of poetry (Drake xii; McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 88). Even the Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw, whom McKay had

regarded as "the wisest and most penetrating intellectual alive," encouraged McKay to exchange poetry for a more lucrative career for a black man: boxing (McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 60-61). McKay continued writing in England until the Scotland Yard investigated, arrested, and deported people affiliated with the *Workers' Dreadnought* (82-83, 86-87). Then McKay accepted financial assistance, including from an Industrial Workers of the World affiliate who may have been deported from America to England, to return to the United States (87).

In the 1920s and 1930s, McKay contrasted the visual beauty of America's industrial cityscapes with the ways in which America the beautiful rejected and harmed him. In the "Back in Harlem" section of *A Long Way from Home*, McKay wrote the following on his 1921 return to the United States:

> Oh, I wished that it were possible to know New York in that way only—as a masterpiece wrought for the illumination of sight, a splendor lifting aloft and shedding its radiance like a searchlight, making one big and great with feeling. Oh, that I should never draw nearer to descend into its precipitous gorges, where visions are broken and shattered and one becomes one of a million, average, ordinary, insignificant. (95)

Despite the ways in which America had "broken and shattered" his "visions," McKay returned to New York; "The grim pioneer urge of the great pragmatic metropolis was a ferment in my feeling" (133). In McKay's first collection of American verse, *Harlem Shadows: The Poems of Claude McKay*, which was published in 1922, McKay personified the modern American metropolis as a mistress who lured him away from the Jamaican countryside, which he represented as the speaker's natural love in Jamaican verse, such as "Sukee River" in *Constab Ballads* in 1912 (126-29), and American verse, including "North and South" (159) and "When Dawn Comes to the City" (180-81) in *Harlem Shadows* in 1922.

In the poem "America," which McKay originally published in *The Liberator* in 1921 and republished in *Harlem Shadows* in 1922 (Maxwell 315)*, the speaker personified America and its culture as a bestial, vampiristic, formidable female monarch who invigorated him even as she embittered, strangled, and tested him:

> Although she feeds me bread of bitterness,
> And sinks into my throat her tiger's tooth,
> Stealing my breath of life, I will confess
> I love this cultured hell that tests my youth!
> Her vigor flows like tides into my blood,
> Giving me strength erect against her hate.
> Her bigness sweeps my being like a flood. (153; lines 1-7)

The speaker's emphasis on America's feline attributes and teeth gestures towards reading McKay's navigation of America as an interaction with the alluring and threatening Freudian figure of the monstrous-feminine.

The speaker in the poem "America" apparently loved and feared the ways in with America seduced him. The speaker's "erect" entry into America and the capitalist society that she symbolized authenticated McKay's masculinity and inspired

McKay's writing, which brought him great personal joy (153; line 6). McKay has described the significance of publishing *Harlem Shadows* in America as follows: "The publication of my first American book uplifted me with the greatest joy of my life experience... For to me America was the great, difficult, hard world. I had gone a long, apparently roundabout way, but at least I had achieved my main purpose" (*A Long Way from Home* 148). The speaker's description of the potentially emasculating teeth of the fierce feline beast in "America," imagery which McKay also used in the 1920s to represent "American capitalism" as "extraordinarily aggressive" (*The Negroes in America* 31), and later in the 1940s to represent the American "white man," and by extension, American "Democracy" ("The Cycle" 259; lines 1, 4), also indicated the degree to which fear and exclusion accompanied McKay's penetration of America's attractive veneer.

In "The City's Love," which also was published in *Harlem Shadows* in 1922 (Maxwell 319), McKay elaborated on the city's rejection of him and other black migrants. According to the poem, the city would love the speaker if unaware of the speaker's "skin" and "alien" birth (158; lines 3-4): "The great, proud city, seized, with a strange love, / Bowed down for one flame hour my pride to prove" (lines 7-8). "The White House," which McKay published in *The Liberator* in 1922 (Maxwell 309), similarly emphasized McKay's strong sense of exclusion from America. According to McKay, the title symbolized "the vast modern edifice of American Industry from which Negroes were effectively barred as a group" (*A Long Way from Home* 313). Elsewhere McKay described America's social mores of racial segregation as "the white unwritten law which prohibits free social intercourse between colored and white" (*A Long Way from Home* 132). In addition, the middle-class elements of literary movements, such as Alain Leroy Locke's New Negro movement (Wright 1642), and the aesthetically restrictive elements of proletarian publications, such as Michael Gold's *The Liberator*, tested McKay's allegiance to literary movements and publications.

In the 1920s, McKay met black radicals in order to discuss increasing class-consciousness in such organization as "the Garvey Back-to-Africa Movement (officially called the Universal Negro Improvement Association," and he met with "some of the more conservative Negro leaders, such as the officials of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" (McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 109). McKay wrote that he "lost the rare feeling of a vagabond feeding upon secret music singing in [him]" after only briefly circulating with the black "elite" (114-15). McKay also lost his desire to work for *The Liberator* after Eastman resigned and Gold significantly limited the aesthetic scope of the magazine's content in order to emphasize proletarian issues (*A Long Way from Home* 138-39). Despite McKay's expressed alienation from twentieth-century radical and conservative movements and publications, he has emerged "as a central figure" for these movements and publications (Smethurst 356). As James Smethurst has clarified in *American Literary History*,

> In recent years such scholars as William Maxwell, Kate Baldwin, Michelle Stephens, Winston James, and Brent Edwards have advanced the poet, novelist, and activist Claude McKay as a central figure of this new black internationalist radicalism of

the twentieth century, a figure who disrupts many long-held assumptions about the moment, movement, and even the sociogeographical context of the Harlem Renaissance, particularly as codified and promoted by Alain Locke in, among other places, the 1925 Harlem issue of the *Survey Graphic* that became the core of the anthology *The New Negro*. (356).

Shortly after *The Liberator* became affiliated with the Communist party in 1922 (Hart 477), McKay further broadened his experiences with "internationalist radicalism" (Smethurst 356). McKay worked as a stoker on an Atlantic steamer in order to travel to Russia, a geographical center of proletarian reorganization (Drake xiii; Maxwell xvi; McKay, *A Long Way from Home* 150, 158; Ohrimenko xviii).

After living and writing in Jamaica, the United States, England, and Russia, McKay acknowledged that America afforded people more freedom of expression than England or Russia (*A Long Way from Home* 179-80, 198). America also afforded black West Indians more economic opportunities than in the British West Indies; however, America still limited black Caribbean migrants' and African American citizens' "individual freedom" (*Negroes in America* 51). In *Negroes in America,* which McKay wrote while traveling through Russia in 1922 and 1923 (McLeod vii), McKay stated, "The American Negro is the nightmare of American democracy. It never knows peace because the black spirit stands before its eyes day and night" (*Negroes in America* 51). Furthermore, McKay grounded blacks' limited "individual freedom" in "the American system of racial oppression." In order to express the extreme degree to which white Americans excluded blacks in America, McKay stated, "in the United States there is not room for a Negro, even in the area of sports. Only in the national American sport called lynching is he assigned first place" (53). Yet leaders of black and proletarian organizations historically had not focused on organizing blacks "as a group and as workers" (*A Long Way from Home* 353; *The Negroes in America* 23), which McKay has described as "historically the most exploited class in American life" (*The Negroes in America* 23).

Although McKay expressed blacks' ability to organize as workers in America and his "love with the large rough unclassical rhythms of American life" (*A Long Way from Home* 244), he traveled through Europe after he left Russia. "[A]ntiradical surveillance," according to Maxwell, "did its part to dislocate McKay from a number of black modernist movements, including the Harlem Renaissance" (xviii). In Europe, McKay read and discussed modernist literature, including James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Gertrude Stein's "Melanctha," and Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* (246-49). Whereas McKay questioned the originality of Stein's work (248), he valued the modernity of D.H. Lawrence's work, "the sexual inquietude and the incertitude of this age, and the psychic and romantic groping for a way out" (247), and the "artistic illumination of a certain quality of American civilization" in Hemingway's work, that is, "the hard-boiled contempt for and disgust with sissyness expressed among all classes of Americans" (252). Ironically, McKay's physical distance from modernists in the United States and proximity to modernists in Europe played a significant role in his movement towards the center of literary discussions on the Harlem Renaissance and Negritude, which Léopold Sédar Senghor has described as "*the sum of*

the cultural values of the black world; that is, a certain active presence in the world, or better, in the universe" (28). While living in Europe and Africa, McKay adapted his own experiences as an educated Caribbean migrant working in the American service industry in his first and best-selling novel, *Home to Harlem* (Cooper ix; Maxwell xix), and his experiences traveling through Europe in *Home to Harlem's* sequel, *Banjo: A Story without a Plot*.

In *Home to Harlem* and *Banjo: A Story without a Plot*, McKay gestured towards Pan-African solutions to modern American imperialism in the Caribbean and capitalist exclusion and exploitation in the United States. As John Lowney observed in "Haiti and Black Transnationalism: Remapping the Migrant Geography of *Home to Harlem*," "Ray's narrative in fact underscores the hegemonic power of primitivist stereotyping as it appeals to a pan-Africanist vision that can embrace such divergent experiences as those of Jake and Ray, of the African American and the African Caribbean, of the proletarian and the intellectual" (421). On the characters in *Banjo: A Story without a Plot*, Leah Rosenberg similarly stated, "The internationalism of the group is an explicit rejection of nationhood" (223). Near the conclusion of *Banjo: A Story without a Plot*, McKay specifically criticized the American nation vis-à-vis Ray's thoughts on the relationship among morality, social Darwinism, and racism: "It seemed a social wrong to him that, in a society rooted and thriving on the principles of the 'struggle for existence' and the 'survival of the fittest' a black child should be brought up on the same code of social virtues as the white. Especially an American black child" (319), because "the Negro child was a pathetic thing, entirely cut off from its own folk wisdom and earnestly learning the trite moralisms of a society in which he was, as a child and would be as an adult, denied any legitimate place." In effect, McKay used American racism to question the morality of believing in the realization of the American dream.

In *Banana Bottom*, the first novel that McKay published after the American historian Adams popularized the concept of the American dream in *The Epic of America*, McKay even more strongly rejected the American dream concept for West Indians. McKay emphasized the ways in which economic migration to the American-controlled Panama Canal Zone negatively affected West Indian migrants and West Indian communities. As the Reverend Priscilla Craig stated early in the novel, which was published in 1933, "Yes, but it is a pity that that Canal is swallowing up some of our best native lads who might be better here using their talents as preachers and teachers" (35). By extension, McKay rejected American imperialism in the Caribbean, which Adams also criticized in *The Epic of America*. On America's means of leasing the "'Canal Zone' in perpetuity," Adams stated, "The rawness of such imperialistic methods beat almost anything that Europe had been guilty of or anything which the worst of our 'Christian men' might have attempted in the business world" (357). In *Banana Bottom*, McKay proposed a clear solution to American imperialism in the Panama Canal Zone and the outbound migration of 146,000 Jamaicans from 1888 to 1920 (Maxwell xiv); he proposed a return to one's cultural roots and native land vis-à-vis the novel's English-educated Jamaican protagonist, Bita Plant (1, 314-15). Yet McKay returned to the United States and did not return to Jamaica before his death in 1947.

The Harlem Renaissance had faded by the time McKay returned to the United States in 1934 (Lewis 1199), and McKay's romanticized portrait of America the beautiful continued to crumble under the pressure of America's nightmarish realities. Since McKay earned little from his prolific literary career (Maxwell xix), he entered a work camp and worked with the Federal Writers' Project (Maxwell 367-68), the United States government's work-relief program for writers and researchers (Hart 244). In the circa 1934 poem "Dreams" (Maxwell 219), which McKay included in the "Years Between" section of his 1935 "New Poems by Claude McKay" notebook (351), the speaker confessed that dreams had devolved into "horrible nightmares" (219; line 2):

> They are not bountiful now as before
> More often they are horrible nightmares,
> So many have been murdered in the roar
> And bloody terror of the marring years. (lines 1-4)

In the second and concluding stanza of "Dreams," the speaker stated,

> O I have even drugged myself to dream
> Of dear dead things, trembling with hope to capture
> The sunlit ripples laughing on the stream
> That bathed my boyhood days in foamy rapture. (lines 9-12)

The speaker, like the educated Haitian American migrant Ray in *Home to Harlem* (157), used drugs to cope with the "horrible nightmares" ("Dreams" 219; line 3) and "that the old dreams were shattered" (*Home to Harlem* 228). Ray's drug usage in *Home to Harlem* similarly resulted in dreams of his Caribbean "home" (157). In the circa 1934 poem, "New York," which McKay also included in the 1935 "New Poems by Claude McKay" notebook (Maxwell 367), the speaker stated, "Our thoughts, our dreams are little prostitutes" (240; line 32). In other words, McKay's prolonged separation from his Jamaican homeland apparently haunted him while he pursued literary dreams abroad.

In the 1940s, McKay used religion to emphasize and reorganize racial and class divisions. Early in "The Cycle," a collection of poems which McKay unsuccessfully attempted to publish in his lifetime, the speaker identified with Jesus Christ (Maxwell 368):

> But though I suffered much I bore
> My cross and lived to put my trouble in song
> I stripped down harshly to the naked core
> Of hatred based on the essential wrong! (241; lines 5-8).

In "The Cycle," McKay also used the Bible to move beyond protesting perceived injustices and to propose solutions to injustices, such as America's focus on extending democracy to foreigners while oppressing blacks in the United States:

> Remove the beam
> (Nearly two thousand years since Jesus spoke)

From your own eye before the mote you deem
It proper from your neighbor's to extract! (253; lines 6-9)

After McKay joined the Catholic Church in 1944 (Drake xxi; Maxwell 384), he also published socially-conscious religious poetry in such publications as the *Catholic Worker* (Maxwell 385). In "The New Day," which McKay published in the *Interracial Review* one year prior to his death (Maxwell 387), for example, the speaker stated the following on "The Christ Child" (273; line 12): "His power through the world must penetrate / Till it is cleansed of cruelty and hate" (lines 13-14). In effect, McKay ultimately used Biblical allusions to inspire people to work collectively towards making a more equitable world. In this sense, McKay's rhetorical methods in the forties prefigured those of Martin Luther King Jr. in the sixties, who then also used religion in such popular speeches as "I Have a Dream" to expose injustices and to promote unity across racial, class, and national lines (Washington 217).

In conclusion, after McKay migrated to the United States in 1912, he used varying means, including proletarian writing in the 1920s and religious sonnets in the 1940s, to expose, protest, and change the ways in which America and Americans limited black Caribbean migrants' and African American citizens' experience of equal opportunity. Over time, McKay moved from protesting injustices related to American racism and imperialism to proposing national, transnational, and even global solutions to racial and class divisions. In effect, McKay's twentieth-century poetry and prose repeatedly represented the early-to-mid-twentieth century realization of the popular American dream trope of an individual's successful socioeconomic advancement through hard work as a myth and the pursuit of American dreams as accompanied by personal and collective nightmares, especially for black Caribbean migrants and African American citizens. More broadly, McKay's early-twentieth-century American migration and American publication history from the teens through the forties supplements traditional accounts of West Indian literature, which have focused on West Indian authors' "Drift Towards the Audience" in England (Ramchand 63). Early-to-mid-twentieth century Caribbean authors and intellectuals also migrated to the United States and published significant work in America in terms of and against the rhetorical tropes of American dreams and nightmares.

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"SUNLIGHT COMING DOWN":
THE EARLY CHAPBOOKS OF CHARLES BUKOWSKI

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ABSTRACT

While Charles Bukowski's early chapbooks (1960-1968) were instrumental in turning him into a popular figure in the alternative publishing scene, their relevance in Bukowski's early career has been largely overlooked. As Basinski accurately noted, it "remains an immense arena to explore." Chapbooks showcased Bukowski's best work to date in little magazines, which were the ideal outlet for his ever prolific output. This previously uncharted territory is here illustrated by means of a critical journey through both Bukowski's published chapbooks and failed projects, highlighting the author/publisher feedback.

KEY WORDS: Poetry, magazines, chapbooks, biography, bibliography, literary criticism, Charles Bukowski.

RESUMEN

Si bien los primeros libritos de Charles Bukowski (1960-1968) fueron clave en su camino hacia la fama en los círculos literarios alternativos, apenas se ha estudiado la relevancia de los mismos en su carrera literaria. Los libritos servían de escaparate para los mejores poemas publicados anteriormente en revistas alternativas, que constituían la válvula de escape idónea para su inagotable producción literaria. Este "territorio inexplorado", tal y como Basinski apuntara con acierto, se ilustra aquí mediante un recorrido crítico tanto por los libritos publicados como por los proyectos inconclusos, haciendo especial hincapié en la interacción entre Bukowski y los distintos editores.

PALABRAS CLAVE: poesía, revistas, libritos, biografía, bibliografía, crítica literaria, Charles Bukowski.

Charles Bukowski's first periodical appearances in the 1940s, such as *Story*, *Portfolio* or *Matrix*, after a four-year period when his work had been constantly rejected by *Esquire*, *Harper's*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Yorker* and other well-established magazines, were to pave the way for his slow transition into acceptance during the mid to late 1950s. That transition period, in turn, would be instrumental in encouraging Bukowski to increase his already prolific output and submit his work to the emerging little magazines that were trying to topple the Modernism-

influenced journals and quarterlies that still prevailed upon the literary scene. By the very late 1950s, Bukowski began to bombard the "littles" unrelentingly, and, despite the customary rejections and his dissatisfaction with most editors' approach to publishing, his hunger for exposure was finally rewarded by the mid 1960s, when the so-called mimeograph revolution reached its peak and his work was featured in so many alternative publications that he was eventually hailed as "a spiritual leader" (Fox 57) and "an American legend" (Katz 1848).

The little magazines constituted the most logical outlet for Bukowski's incessant creative process because, unlike the subsidized academic journals, they allowed and encouraged experimentation and originality. The "littles" fearlessly promoted new authors while quarterlies and journals were restricted to publishing well-established writers. This pattern worked to Bukowski's advantage, who submitted to the little magazines on an almost daily basis during his lifetime. Editors and publishers alike began to discover his work in the "littles" in the late 1950s and, realizing the potential of this supposedly new voice, they contributed to his burgeoning popularity by printing his material so frequently that he would become the most published author of the 1960s.

Some editors were so taken by Bukowski's poetry that they not only championed him in their little magazines, but they also published Bukowski-only chapbooks in an attempt to consolidate the unequivocal value of his work. One such editor was E.V. Griffith, who first printed Bukowski's poetry in *Hearse* (1958)*, a key periodical in his early career because it featured his work from 1958 to 1972, and its editor also published Bukowski's first chapbook, *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail* in October 1960. Bukowski had first submitted old material to this little magazine; "Some Notes of Dr. Klarstein," a poem published in the February 1958 issue, had been rejected by *Accent* in 1954. Presumably, the short-stories that *Hearse* did not accept in 1958 had been written in the early 50s as well. Yet, Griffith sensed that Bukowski's work had a unique quality to it and solicited more material from him. Bukowski gladly complied, and Griffith would publish him regularly in *Hearse* in the 1960s and early 1970s, as well as in over fifteen *Poetry Now* issues from 1974 to 1983, including a special 1974 issue showcasing an interview with Bukowski, several poems, and his photograph on the front cover.

Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail, published by Griffith under his Hearse Press imprint after a painful thirty-month long gestation, was undoubtedly Bukowski's most important publication in 1960. Shortly after having printed Bukowski's material in *Hearse* in 1958, Griffith decided to release a chapbook of his best work to date, culling the poems he considered more accomplished from several little magazines. Bukowski would express his disagreement over Griffith's selection in his correspondence, claiming it was not representative of his best poetry, but he was nonetheless pleased with the idea of having a chapbook published. The exasperatingly slow process which ensued would infuriate an otherwise patient Bukowski, used to the inefficiency of most little magazine editors, who would, on many occasions, accept his poetry and publish it several years later.

Apparently, Griffith was so plagued by financial difficulties that Bukowski decided to split the cost of the publication with him and sent him "between 30 or

40 bucks" (*Screams* 24); growing increasingly restless, Bukowski even suggested Griffith that he could keep any profit from the sales. He would convey his uneasiness in a letter to editor Jon Webb: "Still nothing on the Hearse chapbook ... This thing has been going on for over two years ... Also he has a batch of accepted poems and stories he has had over 2 years and never published" (McCormick, 30 Sept. 1960). A week later, he would confront and threaten Griffith with making public his apparently editorial slovenliness: "I am going to wait a short period longer and if no results are achieved I am going to write [to] *Trace*, the San Francisco newspapers and the editors of other literary magazines of the whole history of this notorious and impossible chapbook nightmare. I can not see it that sloppy and amateur editorialism ... cruelty and ineptness go unchallenged" (*Screams* 24). It is not known whether Bukowski's threats were effective or the chapbook had already been mailed to him, but he received the first copies of *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail* on October 14, 1960, barely seven days after he had written the last letter to Griffith.

He would describe on several occasions the joy he experienced when he finally saw his first chapbook of poems, as he expressed in an essay written in the early 1990s: "The package of books had arrived in the mail and I opened the package and here were the little chapbooks. They spilled on the sidewalk, all the little books and I knelt down among them, I was on my knees and I picked up a *Flower Fist* and I kissed it" ("My Madness" 335). In a letter where he would apologize to Griffith for the menacing tone of his last missive, Bukowski's words were tinged with a similar elation: "I opened the package right in the street, sunlight coming down, and there it was: *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail*, never a baby born in more pain, but finally brought through by the good Doctor Griffith—a beautiful baby, beautiful! The first collected poems of a man of 40, who began writing late" (*Screams* 25). Two months afterwards, Bukowski would insist on the fact that the painfully long gestation of his first publication, a most "notorious... nightmare" (*Screams* 24), had been worth the wait: "I am awfully pleased about the clean and fresh little job done with these poems here, the chapbook, I mean, and it was worth all the agony-waiting and delays" (Delaware, Dec. 1960). As a matter of fact, Bukowski would soon forget that "agony" and he would enthusiastically discuss with Griffith the details of a new chapbook of poetry, even suggesting him two titles: *Trinkets for Whores, Gamblers and Imbeciles*, and *Our Bread Is Blessed and Damned*. Though Griffith would publish several of his poems in *Hearse* and in *Poetry Now* in the 1970s and 1980s, the projected second chapbook never materialized.

Bukowski's eloquent, ecstatic reaction when he first saw a copy of *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail*, kneeling down on a sidewalk and kissing the chapbook, stands out in stark contrast with Ciotti's assessment of the publication: "a poetry aficionado in Eureka, Calif., published Bukowski's first book of poetry... It was 30 pages, mimeographed. Only 200 copies were made, and few people saw it" (17). It could be argued that Ciotti's view is somewhat more realistic in that the limited circulation of the chapbook did not bring about a noticeable increase in popularity, but Bukowski was certainly entitled to believe that the publication was relevant, especially because Griffith would claim, almost two decades later, that "seventeen [chapbook] titles were published under the Hearse Press imprint, the most signifi-

cant of which was Charles Bukowski's *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail*" (142). Bibliographer Al Fogel places this publication in the sixth place in his "Top 20 Bukowski Rarities," and sets its value at 2,500 dollars (215), but copies are extremely scarce and whenever they are made available to the general public their price easily exceeds Fogel's estimate by several thousand dollars.

While *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail* was in gestation, there were other chapbooks projected, but they were either aborted or discarded. However, the fact that several editors considered publishing those chapbooks attests to Bukowski's growing popularity in the alternative literary scene. The first one was to be released by Carl Larsen in late 1956 or early 1957 as a special *Existaria* issue. In a 1960 letter to Webb, Bukowski explained to him that Larsen had planned to "bring out an edition with nothing but Charles Bukowski" (McCormick, 30 Sept. 1960), but Bukowski had the audacity to reject a group of poems that Larsen had submitted to *Harlequin*, which Bukowski was co-editing with Barbara Fry at the time. Larsen was obviously hurt by Bukowski's editorial decision and he cancelled the scheduled chapbook. As Bukowski remarked to *Trace* magazine editor, James Boyer May, "*Existaria* returned a whole mass of poems that were to be published as a special edition" (Fullerton, 1 June 1959). To Larsen's credit, he would eventually publish a Bukowski chapbook in 1961, *Longshot Pomes for Broke Players*, and he would print several of his poems in *Existaria* in 1957, and in *Brand "X"* and *rongWrong* in the early 1960s.

Clarence Major, who would be one of the first reviewers of Bukowski's work, was the editor of *Coercion Review*, a little magazine published in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Bukowski probably found it listed in *Trace*'s directory and proceeded to submit several batches of poems to Major in 1958 and 1959. As Major would put it in 1961, "I remember when I first read Bukowski... when I was editing a little magazine myself in Chicago... We planned in a big way to boost Bukowski... We wanted to publish 'all' of Bukowski's works" ("4 (Book) Reviews"). Apparently, the customary financial issues that most "little" editors had to face during that period hampered Major's willingness to promote Bukowski's poetry; hence, the special *Coercion Review* issue exclusively devoted to Bukowski did not crystallize: "I had a ton of his poems on hand at one time with the hope of publishing a special issue of his work but he got tired of waiting and asked for the poems back and I returned them" (Major, "Coercion Review"). Most little magazine editors would keep submissions for several years before publishing or rejecting them. Bukowski was used to such an annoying practice and he seldom complained in that regard, though he would occasionally criticize those editors in his correspondence; Major seemed to be aware of the discouraging effect that the return of previously accepted material had on authors such as Bukowski: "The little magazine world was notorious for keeping mss. for long periods of time, usually not returning them, not answering queries. I apparently became one of the usual" (Major, "Coercion Review / Existaria"). Major did not publish any of the many poems that Bukowski had submitted to the *Coercion Review*, but to his credit he favorably reviewed *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail* in the *Anagogic & Paideumic Review* in 1961.

Incidentally, the two Bukowski poems that appeared in the first *San Francisco Review* issue (1958) were later collected in *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail*. Two

months after his first chapbook had been published, when Bukowski was discussing with Griffith the details concerning the second chapbook that did not materialize, he explained to Griffith that "The *San Francisco Review* has taken a handful—he [Roy Miller] speaks of a 'multi-page spread of what we feel is the best of Bukowski'" (Delaware, Dec. 1960). Miller, co-editor of the *San Francisco Review*, was as overtly enthusiastic as Clarence Major about the prospect of publishing a special issue of the little magazine featuring Bukowski's work. As in Major's case, however, the initial eagerness seemed to dwindle in time. Even if Miller published three Bukowski poems in the March 1961 issue of the *San Francisco Review* and he was still considering "8 or 10 poems" for the aforementioned "multi-page spread" later that year (McCormick, Nov. 1961), the project was finally aborted. Major argued that financial difficulties prevented him from publishing the special *Coercion Review* with Bukowski's poetry; in the *San Francisco Review*'s case, given the rather negative opinion of Bukowski's work held by co-editor George Hitchcock, who claimed that Bukowski was a "terrible" author (Hitchcock), it seems common sense to believe that the editorial disagreements over the value of his poems were the probable cause of the cancelled multi-page spread.

Professor William Corrington became one of the earliest supporters of Bukowski's work after he discovered it in a 1958 *Quicksilver* issue. They corresponded extensively in the early 1960s, and Corrington would suggest to Bukowski several outlets for his prolific output; in July 1961, he mentioned a little magazine named *Choice*, co-edited by Marcus Smith, a friend of Corrington, in Madison, Wisconsin. Two months later, Bukowski duly sent over twenty poems to Smith. Upon receiving them, Smith was so impressed that he decided to publish a joint chapbook of Bukowski and Corrington poems: "Marcus says we've got us a book. He's got the poems picked, and only the title is slowing him down," Bukowski explained to Corrington (Centenary, 10 Oct. 1961). Over the course of the following months, both authors tried to come up with a title that represented their styles convincingly; thus, they considered *Double Shot*; *The Professor and the Horseplayer*; *Jawbreakers for People Who Drive Tanks in Berlin*; *Plug This in Your Bathtub When You Turn Out the Lights*, or *Snake Eyes*, but they were not entirely satisfied with any of those titles.

In November 1961, after several letters to Smith, Bukowski realized that the supposed joint chapbook had become a special section with their poems in *Choice* because Smith had mentioned to Bukowski that he would place adverts in the publication to subsidize it. Nonetheless, in early December 1961 Bukowski sent Smith a further group of previously rejected poems for the magazine, sensing that the chapbook had been definitely discarded. Indeed, by early January 1962 Bukowski suggested to Corrington that he request Smith to return his poems so he could submit them to other editors. A year later, Smith eventually admitted his not being able to produce the chapbook and asked Bukowski if he wanted his poems back (Centenary, 20 Jan. 1963). Smith did publish Corrington's poems in the third and fourth issues of *Choice*, but Bukowski's work was conspicuous by its absence. That Bukowski would occasionally lose his "famed patience" (*Screams* 24) seemed entirely justified given the large number of examples of editorial slovenliness such as this failed joint chapbook with Corrington.

After *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail*, and the chapbooks and special sections in little magazines that did not materialize, Bukowski's second chapbook, *Longshot Pomes for Broke Players*, was published in October 1961 by Carl Larsen under the 7 Poets Press imprint—bibliographies and biographies claim that the chapbook came out in early 1962, but Bukowski's correspondence with Sheri Martinelli confirms the October 1961 date (*Beerspit* 254-62). The Bukowski/Larsen editorial and epistolary relationship dated back to late 1956, when Larsen considered a group of Bukowski's poems for their inclusion in *Existaria*, and Bukowski rejected Larsen's poems when he was co-editing *Harlequin*. Bukowski would subsequently submit large batches of poems to the other little magazines edited by Larsen, *Brand "X"* and *rongWrong*. By March 1961, Larsen had so many Bukowski poems that he decided to publish a chapbook of his best poetry to date. As Bukowski explained to Corrington, "Larsen said he had 150 poems to pick *Longshot* out of" (Centenary, 10 Oct. 1961). Out of the 26 poems that Larsen eventually chose for the chapbook, only three of them had not been previously published in little magazines, which evidences the importance those alternative publications already had in Bukowski's burgeoning literary career.

Larsen would stress Bukowski's prolific output and the significance of his work when reminiscing about the inception of the chapbook: "Although the invitation was quite casual, I did tell him we would consider a chapbook. Shortly thereafter I received the whole manuscript, illustrations and cover art included... Everyone I knew recognized his obvious talents and energy. He was generous with his work, both written and drawn... I believe it was the best book we ever put out" (Larsen). Like E.V. Griffith, Larsen considered that Bukowski's chapbook stood out from the other publications he had been involved in as an editor. Interestingly, as in the case of *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail*, Bukowski was not satisfied with the poems Larsen had chosen, as he explained to Martinelli in late November 1961: "I did not select the poems that appeared in *Longshots*. Many of them I do not care for either but I let the editors have their head and it looks as if their head were not so good, but I cannot be bothered because those poems are behind me" (*Beerspit* 260). Except for *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard* (1965), Bukowski never selected the poems that appeared in his chapbooks, hence his somewhat uncalled-for criticism; Bukowski's output was so massive and uneven in quality that editors were faced with the arduous task of choosing the "right" poems; not surprisingly, according to Bukowski, they erred more often than not.

Dissatisfaction with editorial choices notwithstanding, Bukowski kept submitting his work in ridiculously large quantities. Bibliographers and biographers alike list *Poems and Drawings,* an *Epos* extra issue published by Evelyn Thorne and Will Tullos in March 1962, as his second chapbook (Krumhansl 19; Dorbin 15). However, *Poems and Drawings* was actually released in late 1962, preceded by *Longshot Pomes for Broke Players* in October 1961 and by *Run with the Hunted* in June 1962. The latter, dedicated to his friend William Corrington, and published by R.R. Cuscaden as the first Midwest Poetry Chapbook, was indeed Bukowski's third chapbook, as he remarked in a letter dated June 1, 1962 to Martinelli: "Cuscaden writes that my 3rd. collection of poems *Run with the Hunted* will be out in about 2

weeks" (*Beerspit* 274). Similarly to the previous chapbooks, the 20 poems that made up *Run with the Hunted* had been already published in several little magazines. As Griffith and Larsen had claimed, Cuscaden also believed that Bukowski's chapbook had a special relevance in his editorial career, as he would maintain almost three years after its publication: "Frankly, I consider the book one of the most significant things I've published" (Davidson, 6 Feb. 1965). Indeed, Cuscaden had been one of the most ardent supporters of Bukowski's work; he had printed Bukowski's poetry in his *Midwest* magazine as early as 1961, and he had penned the first lengthy review of Bukowski's work for the British magazine *Satis* in 1962. He would later publish his poems in several other *Midwest* issues in the early to mid 60s, and a review written by Bukowski in September 1961 about Diane Di Prima's *This Kind of Bird Flies Backwards* (1958) was slated for *Midwest* #5 and then *Midwest* #8, but Cuscaden finally discarded it because he found it too long for that little magazine.

Bukowski's fourth chapbook, *Poems and Drawings,* edited by E. Thorne and W. Tullos, was released in late 1962—and not in March 1962. Bukowski expressed so in a letter to Corrington, where he also stressed his discontent with most editors' incompetent approach to publishing as opposed to Thorne's admirable efficiency: "Thorne took 14 of my poems which will come out in a special edition of *Epos*, I'm told, sometime before next Jan [1963]... I do not care for most of the stuff she publishes but her method of operation is refreshing and is a good lesson to those slow, haphazard, pretentious, slovenly, siffed-up jackoffs who piddle dwadle yawn sleep upon our own dwindling time" (Centenary, June 1962). Thorne would corroborate the date in an October 1962 letter reproduced in the third issue of *The Outsider* (1963), where many of the editors who had previously published Bukowski congratulated him on having received the magazine's "Outsider of the Year" award: "*Epos* is honoring him too with an all-Bukowski issue this Fall (1962). As this is the only one-poet issue we have done in all our 14 years you will understand we thoroughly agree with your choice" (McCormick, 7 Oct. 1962; Thorne 59). While Bukowski praised Thorne's editorial skills, he considered *Poems and Drawings* to be the least accomplished of all his chapbooks to date, as he confided to Jon Webb in early 1963. In all probability, the subject matter of most poems was the main cause of his disapproving assessment: "The *Epos* thing is mostly poems on the Art and Writing thing, which I am now pretty tired of doing," he would confide to Corrington (Centenary, 8 Oct. 1962). However, it could be argued that Bukowski was partly responsible for his own dissatisfaction since he deliberately submitted his most "fancy" and "classical" work to *Epos* (McCormick, 29 Aug. 1960). Indeed, Bukowski would directly send such material to Thorne, and the fact that the 14 poems published in *Poems and Drawings* had not previously appeared in the "littles" evidences this pattern. Whereas the other chapbooks could be taken as a culmination of the work printed in alternative publications in that they collected poems from the "littles," *Poems and Drawings* stands on its own as a *rara avis*.

While *Poems and Drawings* contained new poems only, Bukowski's next chapbook, *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard*—released in 1965, although Bukowski had begun working on it shortly after the publication of the *Epos* Extra Issue in late 1962—had poems directly taken from the "littles"—much like his first three

chapbooks. In the summer of 1965, when *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard* was eventually published, Bukowski was still edging his way through the literary turmoil of the mimeograph revolution. Jay Robert Nash, who "published the venomous *Literary Times* in Chicago, a sporadic experiment in bringing journalism, literature and pugilistics together" (Fulton 29), had printed Bukowski's work in several issues of the newspaper from 1963 onwards, partly prodded by its literary editor, Ron Offen, who had previously printed Bukowski's poetry in his little magazine *Odyssey* in 1959. Nash and Offen "offered to put out another chapbook under their Cyfoeth Publications imprint. Bukowski agreed, on the condition that *he* select the works" (Baughan 42). As in the case of *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail*, the gestation process was agonizingly long, as if it were a fierce boxing match between Nash and Bukowski. Bukowski mentioned the chapbook to Neeli Cherry as early as April 1963: "*Cold Dogs in the Courtyard*, Cyfoeth, Chi. Lit. Times, out in May, I'm told" (*Screams* 69). Two years later, after many a bitter, reproachful letter to Nash, the chapbook was finally released: "Nash has been slow in getting this out," Bukowski would stoically confide to poet Steve Richmond (Richmond, 27 July 1965). By the mid 60s, he was so used to the slap-dash approach of most small press editors that his complaints were no longer vitriolic.

   As Baughan noted, Bukowski selected the poems for *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard*, which would have the dubious honor of being the only book that he ever edited in his long career. Significantly enough, he chose to print previously rejected poems instead of new material, hence the title; Bukowski considered those poems his own abandoned "dogs." He explained the selection process in the foreword to the chapbook: "These are the poems the editors didn't want for the earlier books. So, I went through the magazines looking for the turned-away poems. I found 20 poems I wish I had never written, 20 I didn't give a damn about one way or the other. The others you will find in here" ("Foreward" (sic) 3). He concluded the foreword with a condescending statement that revealed that his editorial decision to include previously rejected material was not entirely accurate: "And Jon, Rob, Carl, E.V., I forgive you—this time" ("Foreward" 3). To fully understand this apparently innocuous comment, a recapitulation is called for: Jon [Webb] had published *It Catches My Heart in Its Hands* in October 1963, Rob [Cuscaden] *Run with the Hunted* in the summer of 1962; Carl [Larsen] *Longshot Pomes for Broke Players* in late 1961, and E.V. [Griffith] *Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail* in October 1960. An analysis of the 13 poems printed in *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard* indicates that Jon Webb was the only editor who could have rejected all of them. The other three editors could have discarded four poems only, the ones published before 1962, namely, "Layover" (1957), "The Death of a Roach" (1959), "It's Nothing to Laugh About" (1960-61), and "Face While Shaving" (1961). Two other poems had already appeared in *Poems and Drawings* (1962); since those two poems had not been rejected before, editors Tullos and Thorne were spared Bukowski's accusations in the foreword to *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard*. Webb was the only editor who could have turned down the remaining seven poems.

   Therefore, Bukowski's comment was misleading since only four out of the 13 poems published in the chapbook could have been rejected by Webb, Cuscaden,

Larsen or Griffith, and Webb was the only editor who could have discarded the bulk of them. Furthermore, two of the poems did not even qualify as "cold dogs" as they had never been confined to the "courtyard." Bukowski was dissatisfied with the selections made by Griffith, Larsen and Cuscaden for his earliest chapbooks, and *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard* was the ideal vehicle to take revenge on them. However, chronological information and empirical evidence show that, as in the case of *Harlequin* (1957) or *Renaissance* (1968), Bukowski's editorial decisions and comments could be deliberately deceiving, error-inducing and controversial.

Bukowski's next chapbook, *Poems Written Before Jumping Out of an 8 Story Window* (1968), had been planned by Jan Kepley and Mel Buffington, editors of the little magazine *Blitz*, as early as May 1965, that is, before Nash had published *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard*. As per custom, Bukowski had submitted to Kepley and Buffington a large batch of poems in early 1965, and they were so impressed by the material that they not only printed seven of his poems in the first three *Blitz* issues (1965-66), but they also persuaded him to put out a Bukowski-only chapbook with his poetry. The book was even advertised in *Blitz* #1 (Summer 1965) and in the *Wormwood Review* #18 (July 1965) as being published later that year by Mad Virgin Press. In a July 1965 letter to Canadian poet Al Purdy, Bukowski would corroborate this: "Mad Virgin Press to bring out some poems of mine—mostly those Webb didn't want for *Crucifix* and I didn't feel like throwing away—to be called *Poems Written Before Leaping Out of an 8 Story Window*" (*The B./Purdy Letters* 89). Interestingly, as in the case of *Cold Dogs in the Courtyard*, and as it would happen two years later with At *Terror Street and Agony Way*, the poems selected for the chapbook had been previously rejected by other editors.

Nevertheless, in yet another instance of editorial carelessness, the book was apparently discarded halfway through. Kepley and Buffington had abandoned the project, but a friend of them, Charles Potts, who had recently discovered Bukowski's work in *Grande Ronde Review*, a little magazine edited by Ben L. Hiatt in Oregon, was so taken by the poem "The Hairy Hairy Fist, and Love Will Die," that he decided to revive the aborted chapbook and release it with the help of yet another editor, Darrell Kerr, under their Poetry X/Change imprint. Kerr had been eagerly corresponding with Bukowski in 1967, and he was so captivated by his work that he had convinced David Laidig, editor of *The Flash of Pasadena*, to reprint Bukowski's essay "A Rambling Essay on Poetics and the Bleeding Life Written While Drinking a Six-Pack (Tall)" in his little magazine. Potts, with Kerr's enthusiastic support, finally published the chapbook in the summer of 1968; he recalled its inception quite vividly: "I didn't 'edit' *Poems Written Before Jumping Out of an 8 Story Window*, so much as rescue it from Jan Kepley... It was already put together. Kerr printed it; I paid for the paper and the cover. The reason I did it is for the poem, 'The Hairy Hairy Fist and Love Will Die.' This is a great poem. As far as I know, the best one he ever wrote" ("Charles Potts / Bukowski"). Curiously enough, while the poem was reprinted the following year in *A Bukowski Sampler*, and Potts would publish it again in his little magazine *Litmus* in 1971 as well as in the anthology *Pacific Northwestern Spiritual Poetry* in 1988, it has not been collected to date. A second printing of *Poems Written Before Jumping Out of an 8 Story Window* appeared in 1975, in-

cluding "a dozen letters Bukowski wrote to me during the first time of the printing, back in '68" (Potts, "How I Came" 97), which shows how relevant Bukowski's correspondence was to most editors, who repeatedly reproduced his letters in their periodicals.

The fact that editors such as Griffith, Larsen, Cuscaden, Thullos and Thorne, Nash, Kepley, Buffington, Potts, and even Miller and Smith, planned—and published—several chapbooks of Bukowski's poetry definitely attests to his relevance as a key author in the alternative literary scene. Not only did they consider that his poetry merited chapbook publication, but they also believed that Bukowski's work unquestionably stood out from the other publications released under their imprints, which undoubtedly enhanced his ever-growing popularity and stature as a cult figure in American letters.

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THE POET'S BLUEPRINT:
THE PASTORAL AND THE AVANT-GARDE
IN IAN HAMILTON FINLAY'S *POOR.OLD.TIRED.HORSE*

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the Scottish poet-artist Ian Hamilton Finlay's 1960s little magazine *Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.,* locating it within Scottish and international contexts, and analysing its role in the development of Finlay's work. The magazine opened Scotland up to new international developments, rejecting the nationalist dogma of the Scottish Renaissance movement led by Hugh MacDiarmid. It also built upon the networks established by such poet-publishers as Cid Corman, Robert Creeley and Gael Turnbull, making an important contribution to the international poetry scene of the 1960s. Often associated with the concrete poetry movement, *POTH* was in fact open to a number of avant-gardes as well as more traditional forms. Out of this eclecticism came Finlay's unique blend of the pastoral, the classical and the avant-garde, while the magazine's experiments with the visual presentation of poetry anticipated Finlay's later work.

KEY WORDS: *Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.* (*POTH*), Ian Hamilton Finlay, little magazine, concrete poetry, eclecticism.

RESUMEN

Este ensayo se centra en la pequeña revista *Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.* que editó el artista y poeta escocés Ian Hamilton Finlay durante los años sesenta del siglo XX, situándola dentro de su contexto escocés e internacional y analizando su papel en el desarrollo de la obra de Finlay. La revista permitió que Escocia se abriese a los nuevos avances internacionales y rechazase el dogma nacionalista del movimiento Renacimiento Escocés que lideraba Hugh MacDiarmid. También se basó en las conexiones establecidas por otros poetas-editores como Cid Corman, Robert Creeley y Gael Turnbull, contribuyendo así al panorama poético internacional de esos años sesenta. *POTH* se asoció en numerosas ocasiones al movimiento de poesía concreta pero la verdad es que estaba abierta tanto a las vanguardias como a otras formas tradicionales. A partir de este eclecticismo surgió la mezcla original que Finlay llevó a cabo de lo pastoril, lo clásico y la vanguardia, al tiempo que los experimentos de la revista con la presentación visual de la poesía anticipaba la obra posterior de Finlay.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.* (*POTH*), Ian Hamilton Finlay, pequeña revista, poesía concreta, eclecticismo.

The cover of issue 13 of Ian Hamilton Finlay's magazine *Poor.Old.Tired.Horse (POTH)* is graced by a short poem by Mary Ellen Solt, "Bird," beautifully illustrated by the English artist John Furnival *(POTH* 13*,* 1965). In warm, brown ink, using smooth, rounded lines, Furnival draws a bird to the left of the handwritten lyric, with trees and hills in the background. Beneath the bird, running across the bottom of the page, is an urban environment, rendered in a contrasting geometric style. In one continuous line, Furnival links hexagonal shapes to form houses and rooftops. This marriage of the natural and built environment, folk art and constructivism, offers an attractive, if incomplete, summary of the different ideas and approaches brought together in *POTH*. For all his modernism, Finlay drew much inspiration from the pastoral, and *POTH* can be seen as part of a process of exploration that culminated in his life's work, Little Sparta, the celebrated neo-classical garden he created with his wife Sue at Stonypath near Edinburgh.

It is well established amongst commentators that Finlay's experiments with concrete and visual poetry began an investigation of materiality. As Ken Cockburn and Alec Finlay write, "his ability to create poem-objects, inscriptions and sculpture is the prime example of the possibilities concrete poetry represented" (Cockburn 19). Although concrete poetry was only one element among many in *POTH,* the magazine did explore, in more general terms, the visual language of poetry, making use of illustrations, typography, calligraphy and the spatial field of the page.

POTH also allowed Finlay to find a context in which to place his own work. Running over 25 issues from 1962 to 1967, *POTH* took its name from a line in Robert Creeley's poem "Please"—"This is a poem about a horse that got tired/ Poor. Old. Tired. Horse." (Creeley 156)—and the American avant-garde had a considerable impact on the magazine.

As the Scottish poet and regular *POTH* contributor Edwin Morgan noted in 1968, the magazine represented "Finlay's own unformulated but formative view of the world of art" and a desire to "keep certain lines of communication open, in particular those from country to country, but also those between poet and artists, and those between present and past." Finlay himself has said that he was looking for "'connections between... *apparently* different categories'" and this is borne out in the magazine's eclecticism (*Lines Review* 26 42). Yet as Morgan acknowledges, this eclecticism, in retrospect "seems to belong so much to the spirit of the sixties as to have gained more unity and harmony than it appeared to possess at the time." He adds, *POTH* "certainly succeeded in its aim of opening Scotland out to new names and new ideas" (Morgan, *Wood Notes* 21). This essay will locate *POTH* within both a Scottish and international contexts, and analyse its role in the development of Finlay as a poet.

Ian Hamilton Finlay (1925-2006) was born in the Bahamas to Scottish parents but educated in Scotland. In the mid 1940s, Finlay spent a year at Glasgow School of Art, before joining the army. After the War, Finlay lived between Glasgow and London where he came to know the poets Hugh MacDiarmid, W.S. Graham and Dylan Thomas. The 1950s saw Finlay living in Perthshire and the Orkney island of Rousay, where he worked as a shepherd, painted and wrote (Finlay, *Dancers*, xiii-xiv). Rural life provided much of the inspiration for his early writing, in-

cluding the short story collection *The Sea Bed and Other Stories* (1958), a number of radio and stage plays, and many of the poems in *The Dancers Inherit the Party* (1960).

When Finlay came to poetry at the end of the 1950s, he was living in poverty in Edinburgh, and felt marginalised by the Scottish literary establishment. In a 1961 letter to Lorine Niedecker, Finlay wrote "all the Scotch poets say, you MUST write like THIS and THAT, and if you don't you are *washed* and we shan't speak to you" (Finlay, *Dancers* 11). Although they had once been friends, by the 1960s Scotland's great modernist poet Hugh MacDiarmid had become a reactionary, dismissing Finlay and some of the more experimental young Scottish writers as "Teddyboy Poetasters" (MacDiarmid, 813). The older poet publicly denounced Finlay's 1961 booklet *Glasgow Beasts an a Burd,* arguing that the working class Glasgwegian dialect it used "is not the kind of Scots in which high poetry can be written" (MacDiarmid 687). MacDiarmid and his followers failed to appreciate how original Finlay's fusion of the Scots vernacular with Japanese tanka forms was. Edwin Morgan defended the younger writers, accusing the Scottish Renaissance of beginning "to loosen its hold on life... the result... is a gap between the literary and the public experience which is surprising and indeed shocking" (Morgan, *Essays* 174).

Morgan and Finlay had become aware of each other as contributors to Gael Turnbull's magazine *Migrant* between 1959 and 1960. Produced on a second-hand duplicator in Turnbull's California garage, *Migrant* is very much part of the small press revolution. The magazine rejected traditional standards of 'quality' publishing, aiming to get the poetry out there, as cheaply and as efficiently as possible (Price). *Migrant* drew on the legacy of Cid Corman's *Origin* and Robert Creeley's *Black Mountain Review* as well as 1950s British little magazines such as WP Turner's Glasgow based *The Poet* and John Sharkey's *The Window,* and sought to reinvigorate a staid British scene through connections with the international avant-garde.

It is unclear how Finlay first heard of *Migrant*, but by the end of 1959 he was in correspondence with Turnbull's British deputy Michael Shayer who agreed to publish his poems. It was through *Migrant* that Finlay became aware of the Objectivists and Black Mountain poets, and he soon recognised a kinship, writing to Turnbull: "Your new American poets, Creeley, Dorn, etc—I feel they are my brothers" (NLS, 5 July 1961). Through Turnbull, Finlay made contact with Creeley, Louis Zukovsky, Lorine Niedecker, and many others, soon building an impressive network of correspondents. *Migrant* the magazine closed in September 1960, Turnbull and Shayer feeling that it had served its purpose. An identity had been established, and the press would now concentrate on producing pamphlets by the roster of writers who had come through the magazine, including Finlay's *The Dancers Inherit The Party* (1960) and Morgan's *Sovpoems* (1961). These publications only enhanced the Scottish poets' reputation abroad and helped put Finlay in a position from which he and his partner Jessie McGuffie could launch their own Wild Hawthorn Press in 1961. As Ken Cockburn notes:

> Finlay's agoraphobia... prevented him travelling, so his publications
> formed a crucial part of his engagement with the wider world. Both
> *POTH* and Wild Hawthorn Press emerged from a need to define an

art and aesthetics separate from MacDiarmid and his influence, and to create a "support structure" of like-minded practitioners, though... this was the opposite of closed and exclusive' (Finlay, *Dancers* xvi).

In a letter to Turnbull, Finlay explained that the "idea is to publish *human* poetry, small books, well done, with good lineocuts" (NLS, 22 July 1961). Finlay readily acknowledged McGuffie's role in running the day to day business of the Press, and her earnings as a teacher helped subsidise their activities. In January 1962, Finlay wrote to Turnbull to say that McGuffie and a friend from the folk circuit, Paul Pond (aka Paul Jones of the pop group Manfred Mann), were starting "a monthly poetry sheet" called *Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.* (NLS, 29 Jan 1962). While the magazine never included any editorial comment, McGuffie herself described the project to Turnbull as an attempt to "counteract the terrible depressing kind of writing that always gets published here in Edinburgh these days. I want the series to be non-provincial, but Scotch or American or Wherever-from art, looking all beautiful with lino cuts too" (McGuffie, NLS July 1961). A free sheet inserted into *POTH* 3 (1962) declared that "The Wild Hawthorn Press believes in BEAUTY TRADITION EXPERIMENT" (*POTH* 3 insert). As Alec Finlay writes, Ian Hamilton Finlay had "no interest in experiment for its own sake, and, although *POTH* came to represent the new [concrete] movement, there was no poetic party line; rather, it extolled his timeless themes, the sea and domestic life" (Finlay *Selections*). Pond soon dropped out and *POTH* was edited by Finlay and McGuffie, and later Finlay and his second wife Sue.

A Scottish identity was important to Finlay, but, as he explained to Turnbull, he was opposed to MacDiarmid and his followers' "intellectualism," which he saw as "naïve and phoney and corny... They all want to be 'big', 'huge', 'important'—what is *beautiful* doesn't matter to them at all." Finlay admired MacDiarmid's early lyrics for their beauty and economy, but felt that the older poet had lost his way. Still outraged from the *Glasgow Beasts* debacle, Finlay felt that MacDiarmid and the "academic snobs" who followed him were "not the side of man, and feeling" and loathed "MacDiarmid's sneering contempt for people." Of his own idea of an audience, Finlay told Turnbull, "I believe at heart, that people can really enjoy poetry—not just poets" (NLS, 7 April 1962). This reflects, in part, Finlay's own interest in the emergent folk revival. Finlay was friends with the poet and folklorist Hamish Henderson, and his early poetry shows an interest in folk forms and rural life, as well as the popular Music Hall tradition (Alec Finlay, email to author, 10 Jan 2011). This is in marked contrast to MacDiarmid, who denounced folk-song as "the ignorant drivellings of swinish shepherds" (Calder: Henderson, intro) and saw Music Hall entertainers, as David Goldie notes, as "part of a cultural racket that panders unashamedly to a debased popular taste and thus makes the work of serious art impossible" (Goldie).

As a riposte to those who found the Glasgwegian dialect uncouth, Finlay invited the popular newspaper cartoonist Bud Neill to contribute a poem and cartoon to *POTH* 7. Writing to Turnbull, Finlay noted that Neill was a "vernacular cartoonist, who the posh ones don't like, but really, at odd times, can have a recognising quality that is delightful" (Finlay, NLS, 12 March 1963). Neill's cartoon

depicts a lazy husband lounging on the beach while his wife holds a bawling infant. While the wife complains "AW, TOAMY—THE WEANS ERSE IS A' SAUN'" ("*Oh, Tommy—the child's bottom is covered in sand*"), the husband dreams of being out on a row boat, "miles awa'/fae them/ bloody flies" ("*miles away/from those/bloody flies*") (*POTH* 7 1963). This coarse Glasgwegian humour was the perfect riposte to high-minded literary sensibilities.

POTH's playful but pointed anti-elitism also saw it include a poem by the infamous Dundonian poet William Topaz McGonagall (1825-1902), affection- ately described by Hamish Henderson as the "unchallenged prince of bad verse" capable of moments of "sublime banality" (Henderson 274-277). Both Henderson and Finlay were fans of MacGonagall, the former publishing an illuminating essay in 1965 on the folk-song roots of his "hobbling and broken backed" verse (Henderson 276). A 1962 feature in the *Daily Express* about *Glasgow Beasts* had compared Finlay to the Dundonian versifier. In a letter to Turnbull, Finlay commented "E. Morgan asks why [MacGonagall] is popular, and me, I'd say it's because he really is the first stream of consciousness writer, the one who writes as one REALLY thinks. Also he is very Scottish" (NLS 1 May 1962). Finlay is perhaps being slightly facetious here, but nonetheless, he has a point: MacGonagall's poems have a wonderful innocence, and his misshapen verse forms are inimitable:

> 'Twas in the month of December, and in the year 1883,
> That a monster whale came to Dundee,
> Resolved for a few days to sport and play,
> And devour the small fishes in the silvery Tay. (*POTH* 7 insert)

The poem was presented as "AN AMAZING FREE GIFT!" and came printed on a separate insert, accompanied by a woodcut illustration, not unlike those used in *Glasgow Beasts* or *The Sea Bed*. With these two inserts, Finlay was making explicit the popular and folk elements in the "oddly homely," as his son Alec puts it, avant-garde that *POTH* helped shape (Finlay, *Selections*).

Finlay also published poets who used forms of Scots that were closer to the spoken language than the dictionary derived Lallans of MacDiarmid. Among them were the Edinburgh poet Robert Garioch, who was treated coolly by MacDiarmid, but recognised by Edwin Morgan, among others, for the vitality of his language. Perhaps the most unusual contribution, however, is an elegiac poem in the Shetland dialect by Veng, "Da Lad at Deed Owre Young" ("*The Lad Who Died Too Young*":

> Da streen ida kirkyard we laid him doon,
> Brucks o da boannie man he might a been;
> Wi muckle speculation I da toon,
> An gairded teets ahint the window screen... (*POTH* 3 2)

> *Last night in the churchyard we laid him down,*
> *The scraps of the handsome man he might have been;*
> *With great speculation in the town,*
> *And guarded looks behind the window screen...*

Another way in which *POTH* set about defining a new Scottish aesthetic was to publish overlooked Scottish poets whose style and subject matter were at odds with the high modernism of MacDiarmid. Among these were Hamish MacLaren (1901-1987), a naval officer whose poetic career ended with the Second World War. His best known collection was *Sailor with Banjo* (1929), which he described as "a narrative poem interspersed with lyrics" (Spillane). Finlay published three of MacLaren's lyrics in *POTH*, including "Little Sea House" in *POTH* 15:

> Little sea house,
> When I found you,
> The yellow poppies
> Were nodding round you.
>
> Your blue slate hat
> That the four winds
> Came to tug at
> Over the tamarinds:
>
> I remember it well:
> The Salmon nets drying—
> Laugh, violin shell,
> And cease crying.
>
> For I will return
> Through the sea-haze:
> I am sailing back there
> Always, always. (*POTH* 7 7)

The number this poem appeared in was entitled "Boats tides shore fish" and features experimental and traditional poems that evoke fishing communities, a major preoccupation of Finlay's. The traditional form, simple language and clear images of MacLaren's poems are recalled in early lyrics of Finlay's such as "Scene"—"The rain is Slant. Soaked fishers sup/Sad Ellipses from a cup" (Finlay, *Dancers* 212)—or "Island Moment"—"And the little herring barrel./The light just strikes it over/Islands and miles and miles of water/That tilts to the North Pole." (Finlay, *Dancers* 198).

Several of the contemporary Scottish poets featured in *POTH* shared Finlay's interest with island life and rural communities, including the Orcadian George Mackay Brown and the Hebridean Ian Crichton Smith. To define *POTH* purely in terms of its "Scottishness," however, is limiting. An interest in the rural and domestic is not exclusive to Scottish poets, after all, and *POTH* highlighted such commonality with themed issues such as *Teapoth* (*POTH* 23 1967) and *Boats Shores Tides Fish* (*POTH* 15 1964). While *POTH* undoubtedly helped reinvigorate Scottish literature, this was not its sole aim. *POTH* belonged to the world.

POTH sampled widely from a range of modern European poets, placing figures from the first half of the century (Apollinaire, Mayakovsky, Trakl), alongside contemporary voices such as Gunter Grass and Hans Arp. One of the key transla-

tors was Morgan, whose interest in the Eastern-Bloc saw him bring translations of Russian Futurists such as Mayakovsky and Pankratov to early issues of *POTH,* as well as the contemporary Russian poet Andrei Voznesensky. Anselm Hollo, a London-based Finnish poet who had been a major contributor to *Migrant,* submitted his own work, as well as translations of Finnish and German poetry.

Americans such as Jerome Rothenberg, Dave Ball, and Cid Corman further extended the scope of work in translation, from the contemporary avant-garde to medieval Japan. The New American Poetry, as defined by Donald Allen's seminal 1960 anthology, was heavily represented too, with Jonathan Williams, Lorine Niedecker, Robert Creeley, Theodore Enslin and Ronald Johnson among the many prominent voices. South American and African poetry were also included. This rich mix shows *POTH*'s commitment to opening Scotland up to different international voices, reclaiming the internationalism of the early Scottish Renaissance for a new generation. It also maps an idiosyncratic path through modernist poetry, locating *POTH,* and its roster of emergent poet-translators, within the avant-garde continuum.

POTH's most significant engagement with the international avant-garde, however, was to come with its embracing of concrete poetry. While concrete was not as dominant a feature of *POTH* as some may think—most of Finlay's own concrete poetry appeared elsewhere—its presence was nonetheless significant, not least for being the first Scottish publication to feature the form. Furthermore, concrete informed the magazine's approach in a number of ways, encouraging Finlay to experiment with the visual presentation of poems, and poetic form itself.

In Spring 1963, Finlay wrote to Turnbull of his attempts to write concrete poems:

> I think I'll call mine 'thingpoems': I want them to be simple
> objects, gay or sad, and no more complex than potatoes. It
> doesn't seem a big departure for me, since I've been feeling
> toward it for a long time... I want to do it so they are just
> things, simple and good, an subtle in a subtle way, i.e., simple
> on top, but full of hidden life. (NLS, 12 March 1962)

The following month he told Turnbull "I feel that I have come—at least for the moment—to the end of poems that are *about*, and want to do poems that just *are*" (NLS, 29 April 1962). This suggests that Finlay was already familiar with Eugene Gomrigner's definition of the concrete poetry aesthetic, *From Line to Constellation:* "In the constellation something is brought into the world. It is a reality in itself and not a poem about something or other" (Solt). In a widely quoted letter to Pierre Garnier from September 1963, Finlay set out his philosophical case for concrete poetry:

> I should say—however hard I would find it to justify this in theory—
> that 'concrete' by its very limitations, offers a tangible image of
> goodness and sanity; it is very far from the now-fashionable poetry
> of anguish and self... It is a model, of order, even if set in a space
> which is full of doubt... I would like, if I could, to bring into this,
> somewhere the unfashionable notion of 'Beauty', which I find

compelling and immediate, however theoretically inadequate. I mean
this in the simplest way—that if I was asked, "Why do you like concrete
poetry?" I could truthfully answer "Because it is beautiful." (Finlay, *Model* 22-23)

This interest in order brings Gomringer to mind once again: "restriction in the best sense—concentration and simplification—is the very essence of poetry" (Solt). The emphasis on order and moral goodness, meanwhile, reflects Finlay's neo-classicism. Yet as Susan Howe argues, Finlay brings "sensibilities that are romantic and even religious" to his work, citing his preoccupation with the sea, "both word and thing" (Howe 5-6). For all his emphasis on order, beauty —particularly that associated with the natural world—is deeply felt in Finlay's work.

Concrete poetry made its Scottish debut in *POTH* 6 (March 1963), its back page featuring three poems by the Brazilian Noigandres school: Marcelo Moura's "sal/sol," Pedro Xisto's "aguas/glaucas" and Augusto de Campos's "pluvial-fluvial." While the rest of the magazine is printed in a traditional serif typeface, the three concrete poems are printed in the original sans serif font. A symbol of modernity, sans serif fonts also give the poems a classical coolness and uniformity of shape. The concrete poem is designed as an object for contemplation, and the openness of the form allows the reader to bring their own associations and interpretations. As Eugene Gomringer wrote, "The constellation is ordered by the poet. He determines the play-area, the field or force and suggests its possibilities. the reader, the new reader, grasps the idea of play, and joins in... The constellation is an invitation" (Solt).

Finlay published one of his first concrete poems in *POTH* 8 (1963), a number that pays tribute to the Russian constructivist poets and artists of the 1920s. In "Homage to Malevich" Finlay draws explicit connections between the constructivists and the concrete poets. His "black block" is a homage to Malevich's "Black Square" paintings. Finlay referred to these "abstract word compositions" as his "suprematist" poems, as opposed his "fauve" poems, which, Alec Finlay notes, "recreated 'sensed experience'" (Finlay, *Selections*). The latter are more epigrammic in form and use colour to produce different effects. The two approaches are featured in Finlay's first concrete book, *Rapel*, from Autumn 1963.

Finlay had also made contact with American poets engaging with visual and concrete poetry. The same issue also features a "concrete metamorphosis" of a poem by the Russian Tatlin by Jonathan Williams, and one of Mary Ellen Solt's "Flowers in Concrete" poems, "White Rose," subtitled here as a homage to Gonchorova. Solt's poem, which is shaped like a flower, resembles earlier forms of pattern poetry, as well as the mimetic form of Apollinaire's *Calligrammes*. However, in Solt's poem there is no clear relation of form to content. As in a Gomringer constellation, Solt presents a shaped collection of words for our contemplation: 'Say—today—no one— hears—tell—eternity—displays—no such—hear'—(*POTH* 8 4).

POTH 10 (October 1963), the first concrete number, presents historical examples of the form by Gomringer and Augusto de Campos, alongside new poems which take the form in different directions, from the abstractions of Robert Lax, to the typewriter poems of Dom Sylvester Houedard. As Alec Finlay writes, "from the beginning Finlay understood the [concrete] movement had many aspects and

possibilities" (Finlay, *Selections*) and *POTH* features some of his experiments with related forms and new developments. His contribution to *POTH* 14 (1965) is, on one level, a play on colour-object associations. The "correct" pairings—"blue sky," "red roof," "green field"—are systematically rearranged so we have "blue field," "green roof" and so on (*POTH* 14 2). The mismatched colours have a long, spear-like dash through them, while the "correct" pairs are left intact. Yet how incorrect are these alternative pairings? A "red sky" is familiar enough, and it is possible to imagine a "blue field" of flowers, or even a "green roof" of verdigris. And if we think like Finlay's beloved fauvists, then all manner of colour-object associations become possible. The reader is therefore invited to contemplate the poem on a visual and semiotic level. This extends to the poem's form. It resembles some objectivist poems in that it takes the form of seven lines, some made up of a single pair of words, others made of two pairs spaced well apart. In a mimetic concrete poem, we might expect to see the "sky" at the top, with the "roof" and "field" below, so as to represent a picturesque landscape. Indeed, Finlay does just that, placing "red sky" on the first line and so on. However, he confuses matters by, for example, placing "red roof" on the fifth line, with "green sky" to its right on the line below. As a result, the poem becomes a cubist landscape, its features seen from multiple angles. What at first appears to be an inscrutable arrangement of words and dashes is revealed to be a highly sophisticated play on linguistic and visual signs in poetry and art.

POTH 13 (1965) is subtitled "Visual—Semiotic—Concrete" and includes concrete and visual poems, alongside what the Noigrandres group called semiotic poems, where words are exchanged for symbols, with a lexical key revealing what these symbols stand for. Finlay's own experiments with the semiotic or code poem take Gomringer's conception of the poem as "play-area" to its logical conclusion: a game, or a puzzle, which the reader attempts to solve. "Semi-idiotic poem," drawn by John Furnival, takes the form of a 5 × 5 grid on which various symbols are arranged (*POTH* 13, insert).[1] The lexical key reveals that a white circle represents "buttonhole and flower" and a x-shaped cross represents "windmill and cancel." In an ingenious inversion of the homophonic play of his concrete poems, Finlay also presents objects which, when reduced to a stylised basic form, look alike: an "anchor and umbrella," and a "funnel and cloud." These are arranged, in different combinations and sequences, in the grid and it is up to the reader to make sense, if any, of the poem. The sequence of windmill, cloud and umbrella suggests a pastoral scene, as does the later appearance of a flower, but what are we to make of the black squares or the partially filled in crosses and squares? A windmill against a cloud? Or the cloud passing, being cancelled, allowing the flowers to grow in the sunlight? Like any good puzzle, "Semi-Idiotic Poem" is as delightful as it is frustrating.

Other poems in this issue go further than the semiotic poems in their attempts to challenge received modes of linguistic communication. Mary Ellen Solt's

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[1] Reprinted in Emmett Williams, *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* (New York: Something Else, 1967).

"Moon Shot Sonnet" features no letters, and no key, only inverted T shapes arranged into "stanzas" (*POTH* 13, insert). One way of reading this is that it reclaims a traditional form for its visual qualities, while its subject becomes that which is suggested by the title and the poem's rectangular shape: a rocket. Or perhaps she is projecting the sonnet into the future, envisioning a new kind of visual language. Solt's abstraction invites the reader to explore the space of the page *and* outer space. In two untitled works by the Austrian Heinz Gappmayr any linguistic signs are obliterated by Malevichian black squares. In one, typewritten letters peak out the sides. It is just about possible to make out an "i" and an "n," but these could just as easily be an "f" or an "m." In the other a beam of white cuts into the square, revealing the tails of typewritten letters which become blurred as they move towards the blackness. (*POTH* 13, insert) Both subvert concrete's "invitation" to the reader by suggesting the existence of a "poem" beneath the monolithic black block. The black block therefore acts as both a barrier, rendering any linguistic elements out of grasp, and an invitation, a blank canvas on which we can impose our own meaning.

In parallel to *POTH,* Finlay produced a number of innovative poem-objects for Wild Hawthorn Press, from postcard and poster poems, to kinetic books and fold-out standing poems. He would take these poem-objects a step further, however, with the outdoor works he produced with a number of collaborators. "All this is quite new, and I think no-one—not even the poets—has quite understood the possibilities. Far from being an end... it is really only a beginning... I think the garden, and the church, and the side of the block of flats, are the places for poems" (letter to Henry Clyne, 1966, *Selections*). At the 1967 Brighton Festival he presented poems on sandblasted glass, stone and metal, which were placed outdoors. Photographs of some of these appear in *POTH* 24 (1967) alongside some of the other concrete poetry installations, including Morgan's poster-poems and the typographical columns of Hansbjorg Mayer, foreboding perspex tubes printed with abstract poems in dense typescript. While this issue, in effect, marks Finlay's move away from concrete towards poem objects, it does suggest new paths. Gomringer's aim of giving "poetry an organic function in society" was being fulfilled (Solt).

It is significant then, that the final issue of *POTH* (*POTH* 25, 1967), side-stepped concrete poetry for the kind of epigrammic one-word poems Finlay would later inscribe on stone, wood and metal. This sub-genre of the short poem was a Finlay invention, a zen-like distillation of the monostich, or one line poem. The influence of concrete, should not be underestimated however. While one-word poems may seem more verbal than visual, their shape and layout contribute to their overall effect. The title of the poem could be of any length, but they were to be set out in a particular way. As he explained in a letter to his friend Kenelm Cox:

> the one-word poem should be composed of a title plus one word.
> All (true) poems have form, and in this case one should see the title
> and the word as being 2 straight lines, which come together forming
> a corner; the corner is the form of this poem. Only, these corners
> must be so constructed as to be open (opening) in all directions.
> That is the paradox. (Finlay, *Model* 39)

Their form, as we see below, is very much a model of order:

The Boat's Blueprint

Water (*POTH* 25, 1967 8)

Placed in the centre of the page, surrounded by negative space, the form achieves the openness Finlay talks of. Like his concrete poems, Finlay's one-word poems are an invitation. The test of these poems was, for Finlay, whether they were memorable and resonant. This example certainly achieves such an aim. As Finlay explained himself, "the shape of the boat is determined by the nature of water, or he who understands water may calculate the appearance of the boat; further, water is blue, water is blue print (on white stones), water is clear and has lines on it, like a blueprint…" (Finlay, *Model* 40) As Finlay commented in a letter to Ernst Jandl, one of several poets he invited to contribute to the one-word *POTH*, the form has "haiku-brevity, without reading like a pseudo-Japanese poem. Or in another way, it is very close to the classical Latin epitaph or epigram" (Finlay, *Model* 41). Or, indeed, the Poundian epigram, or William Carlos Williams short poem. It should come as no surprise, then, that American poets responded enthusiastically to Finlay's request, with Ronald Johnson, Jerome Rothenberg, Jonathan Williams and Aram Saroyan among the contributors. Concrete poets, from Britain to Brazil, also submitted, as well as poets known for more traditional forms such as the Scots George Mackay Brown and Douglas Young. It seems appropriate that Gael Turnbull, who played such a pivotal role in Finlay's development, is also among the contributors to the final *POTH*. Finlay was less interested in one-word poems that were "merely witty" (Finlay, *Model* 41), but Edwin Morgan's playful objectivist tribute clearly amused him:

Homage to Zukovsky

The (*POTH* 25 3)

The form lends itself to the pastoral, and Ronald Johnson combines this with concrete-style word play to create different levels of meaning:

Moon-tree

Horn-beam

Mist-Tree

haze-l (*POTH* 25 2)

"Mist" connects to "haze," of course, and the obscured tree also becomes a "Mist-Tree" or "mystery." The hazel is part of the birch family, like the hornbeam of the previous poem in the sequence. A crescent moon could be seen to resemble a horn, while the beam could represent moonlight.

Sean Latham and Robert Scholes are critical of the tendency to see magazines "essentially as aggregations of otherwise autonomous works, similar to literary anthologies. As a result, archivists have freely disaggregated periodicals, separating their 'linguistic codes' from what Jerome McGann calls their 'bibliographic code'" the semantic elements of design, typeface, binding and so on (Latham and Scholes). These two signifying systems "work together to generate the overall meaning of a text" argues (McGann 12). In order to gain a "more global and more uniform view of texts and the processes of textual production," as McGann puts it, a discussion of *POTH*'s bibliographical codes is necessary (McGann, *Textual Condition* 12). As McGann writes, "All texts, like all other things human, are embodied phenomena, and the body of the text is not exclusively linguistic," (McGann, *Textual Condition* 12).

As we have seen, concrete poetry influenced Finlay's approach to the visual presentation of poetry in a number of ways, and the later issues of *POTH* "became the epitome" of the magazine, as Alec Finlay writes, "each a unified design" (Finlay *Selections*). Just as concrete poems can be reduced to the formula content = form, perhaps we can also reduce these later editions of *POTH* to content = form = design. These numbers might not have achieved the total integration of meaning, form and design that Finlay's innovative kinetic and sequential poem-books did, but they do represent a move away from the miscellany of the magazine, towards the unified form of the artists' book.

Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker make McGann's bibliographic codes more precise "by discussing a particular subset, the *periodical codes* at play in any magazine" (Brooker and Thacker 6). Periodical codes encompass a wide range of features, including page layout, typefaces, price, size of volume, periodicity of publication, use of illustrations, "use and placement of advertisements, quality of paper and binding, networks of distribution and sales, modes of financial support, payment practices towards contributors, editorial arrangements, or the type of material published" (Brooker and Thacker 6). Those periodical codes relating to design are most relevent to this discussion, but it is worth briefly discussing the codes that refer to the magazine's external relations too.

Throughout its entire run, *POTH* sold for "astonishingly unelitist" price of 9d (4p), regardless of the size or format of each issue. (Morgan, *Wood Notes* 21) The magazine was available directly from Wild Hawthorn Press, and was distributed internationally with the help of Finlay's many publisher-poet friends. It was also available in Britain's more progressive bookshops and galleries. Unlike some avant-garde publishers, Finlay and McGuffie were happy to promote their works in the mainstream press, albeit provocatively; a 1963 advertisement in *The Scotsman* newspaper mischievously quoted Hugh MacDiarmid's appraisal of *POTH:* "utterly viscious and deplorable." (Morgan *Wood Notes* 20) So while the magazine itself contained no editorial comment, Finlay and McGuffie used the public realm to reinforce *POTH*'s oppositional stance towards the Scottish literary establishment.

Unlike *Migrant, POTH* did adhere to basic standards of quality publishing. Furthermore, there was nothing in the design of the earlier *POTH*s to suggest an avant-garde or oppositional stance. Until issue 15, *POTH* used the same basic layout, with a typeset masthead and minimal use of illustrations or colour. The maga-

zine was, until the concrete number, *POTH* 10, a single folded A4 sheet, although some issues came with loose inserts. The reasons for this are practical, rather than aesthetic. Staples cost money and time, and the design choices were limited to the typefaces and templates the printers could offer. It was only with the advent of photo-offset printing technology that Finlay could finally experiment with modern design styles and illustrations (Finlay *Selections*), resulting in the more ambitious designs of the later numbers. The sheer variety of design approaches in the later issues of *POTH* is dazzling. As Edwin Morgan writes, "few magazines encouraged such a marked sense of anticipation from number to number... as soon as you decided that heavily portentous numbers devoted to the art theory (not even the art!) of Ad Reinhardt or Charles Biederman implied an equally unyielding or abstract literary commitment, you were presented with a 'teapoth' number rich in unportentous homely fantasy and charm."

    The Reinhardt number (*POTH* 18 1966) is a collaboration with the leading optical artist Bridget Riley, and each page shows his beautifully handwritten text wrapped around her large, stylised zeros. Susan Howe notes that Finlay sent the blank cards to Riley first (Howe 6), meaning that Reinhardt's text is a response to her artwork, inverting the normal relationship whereby any illustrations would be a response to the content or theme of an issue. *POTH* 22 sets Biederman's "art credo" in austere neues typographie on the recto, with stark black and white photographs on the verso. With both numbers, it is clear that the design complements the contents. Its successor, *Teapoth* (*POTH* 23), designed by John Furnival, is, as Morgan notes, altogether more cheerful, and while it uses modern typography, the typeface used is less stark, set in a warm red ink. Bringing together the homely and the avant-garde, the cover boasts a 'T' shaped poem by Ronald Johnson in celebration of the domestic pleasures of "spoons, shirts, chests, things" (*POTH* 23, 1967).

    The homely and pastoral were more explicitly realised in hand-illustrated issues, such as *POTH* 15 "Boats shores tides fish" (1965), drawn by the Scottish artist Margo Sandeman, and *POTH* 20 "The Tug, The Barge" (1966), a collaboration between Finlay and Peter Lyle. The former features work by a number of poets, but these gain a sense of unity through the shared sea theme, and Sandeman's graceful line-drawings and handwriting. In some respects it is *POTH*'s 'folk' issue, with traditional verse from Hamish MacLaren and Mackay Brown accompanied by Sandeman's pastoral and sea scenes. Finlay's own contributions combine his interest in folk themes and avant-garde forms, being found poems based on boat names and port registration codes, motifs he would use throughout his career. A short poem by Edwin Morgan, "Boats and Tides"—"row the sea/row it easy/Rothesay"[2]—is surrounded by Sandeman's drawings of boat signs bearing registration codes such as 'LH20' and 'OB326'. (*POTH* 15 4) 'Green Waters' finds the lyricism in the names of fishing trawlers, arranging them so as to create a sense of the changing environ-

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   [2] Rothesay is a popular Scottish seaside resort on the Isle of Bute in the Firth of Clyde.

ment: 'Constant Star/Daystar/Starwood/Starlit Waters/Moonlit Waters/Drift' (*POTH* 15 5). Sandeman illustrates these poems with boats, moons and stars.

POTH 20, "The Tug The Barge," was, like the two previous issues, a unified work created by one writer and one illustrator/designer. But while *POTH* 18's Riley/Reinhardt number was resolutely avant-garde, and *POTH* 19's Ronald Johnson/John Furnival collaboration deployed cutting edge typographical design, "The Tug, The Barge," as its title suggests, was altogether more homely, yet it is arguably as radical as its predecessors. The cover design is in landscape format, and features a Finlay poem illustrated by Lyle (*POTH* 20 1). In comparison to Sandeman's detailed folk-art, Lyle's black marker-pen drawings, set against a white background, possess a child-like primitivism. This simplicity neatly complements Finlay's pared-down lyricism:

> The tug
> the barge
>   the water
>   the wind
>   the sky
>   the cloud

The boat's hull is a rough tear-drop shape, topped with a square and a tube for the cabin and funnel. Each cloud is a single joined-up pen-stroke, while the water is represented by curved strokes and dashes. A yellow blob of a sun rises from the bottom left corner of the page. The following pages feature variations on this poem, and further faux-naive scrawls, as Finlay and Lyle work through a deliberately limited set of images. Although the style of execution is very different, this number is very similar to its apparently more sophisticated predecessors in that it focuses on the collaborative exploration of a single idea. It is considerably more charming, however, with a simplicity and openness that reflects Finlay's best concrete poems.

As we have seen, *POTH* is not a magazine that can be tied to any one aesthetic or movement. Yet its eclecticism should not be confused with a lack of direction or discrimination. There were a number of contemporary trends which *POTH* chose not to cover, notably the Beats or the English pop-poets. Non-expressionist poetry was favoured, with the Objectivist/Black Mountain representing one line, and concrete poetry another. But to suggest the magazine or its contents lacked feeling would be quite incorrect: *POTH* resonates with luminous details and timeless images. *POTH* is testament to its creator's interests, but it also captures a moment in cultural history.

In a Scottish context, *POTH* can be seen as a reclamation of the 1920s Scottish Renaissance's modernist and internationalist values. Like the younger MacDiarmid, Finlay made a great effort to bring Scotland up to date with the latest international developments. But Finlay's aim of reinvigorating the Scottish cultural scene was not tied into a nationalist political agenda. Early issues of *POTH* see Finlay attempting to engage with the aspects of Scottishness that MacDiarmid had rejected. Folk-art, popular culture and the avant-garde come together to create a new, heterogenous vision of Scottish culture.

The post-war avant-garde was enabled by the small press publishing revolution, which, as Alec Finlay writes, "allowed Finlay to be in touch with new ideas and rapidly absorb new forms" (*Selections*). Finlay did have strong connections with particular schools, but, as Alec Finlay writes the "generous principles" of the small press revolution "had a more lasting impact than any particular variant of the avant-garde" (*Selections*). The international avant-garde we now recognise in all its variety was forged by little magazines and small presses in the 1960s.

This impact can also be measured in Finlay's own work. *POTH* played a crucial role in his development as a poet and artist, as he absorbed new forms, experimented with the visual presentation of poetry, and developed his particular blend of the pastoral, the classical and the avant-garde. Rural imagery and folk forms became a vehicle for innovation, while concrete poetry lead Finlay to a new form of lyricism. In its own playful, discursive manner, *Poor.Old.Tired.Horse.* was both a manifesto and a laboratory. Or, as a one-word poem might have it:

The Poet's Blueprint

poth

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STEWART SMITH

HISTORY OF RED-BROWN
JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS:
OR THE ART OF STORY-TELLING

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ABSTRACT

My point of reference for Mexicans and Chicanas/Chicanos is maiz culture, which is meta-phorically 7,000 years old—when scientists estimate that corn was created in Southern Mexico. This essay, however, tends to concentrate on what is referred to as Chicano Jour-nalism—a journalism associated with the 1960s-1970s. In one sense, Chicano or Chicana journalism refers to a style, however, it also refers to publications that had their apex during that era. Thus, that style of co-mingling Spanish and English, of being irreverent and po-litically left and in pursuit of justice has not gone away. At the same time, some publica-tions from that genre continue, particularly on the internet.

KEY WORDS: Maiz, indigenous, culture, Chicano movement, Chicano and Chicana journal-ism.

RESUMEN

La base para mi investigación sobre los mexicanos y chicanos/chicanas siempre ha sido la cultural del maíz, que metafóricamente tiene unos 7,000 años de existencia, y que es cuan-do los científicos estiman que el maíz aparece en el sur de México. Sin embargo, en este ensayo me concentro en lo que se conoce como periodismo chicano, que normalmente está relacionado con los años sesenta y setenta del siglo XX. En cierto sentido, el periodismo de chicanos y chicanas se refiere a un estilo en particular, pero también se refiere a publicacio-nes que tuvieron su apogeo en esa época. Además, ese estilo de mezclar español e inglés, de ser irreverente e izquierdista y buscando justicia no ha desaparecido del todo. Al mismo tiempo, algunas publicaciones de ese género todavía continúan, especialmente en la internet.

PALABRAS CLAVE: maíz, cultura, indígena, movimiento chicano, periodismo de chicanos y chicanas.

Over the past few years, I've been teaching a class at the University of Arizona that I created, titled: "The History of Red-Brown Journalism and Communications."[1] When many people hear the title, many assume that it is a class related to Latino Journalism. They believe this because it coincided with the Voices of Justice Project—a project that celebrated 200 years of Latino Journalism in 2008.[2]

As a journalist and columnist of 39 years, my view of Red-Brown Journalism is a bit more expansive. If I were teaching strictly about the pre-Colombian era, perhaps a more appropriate title to the class would be: *in tlili in tlapalli*, "the red and the black." In the Nahuatl (Aztec) language, this refers to the writing of the Aztec-Mexica.[3] But my view of writing is even more expansive than that.

Part of my view derives from the historiography I employ. My point of reference for Mexicans and Chicanas/Chicanos is maiz culture, which is metaphorically 7,000 years old—when scientists estimate that corn was created in Southern

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[1] In the United States, the color Red within the context of racial/ethnic politics connotes American Indian or things American Indian. The color Brown, on the other hand, connotes Mexicans/Mexican Americans or more broadly, Latinos/Latinas. Within this context, Brown is also synonymous with La Raza.

[2] The Voices Project is a joint project by Accion Latina, based in San Francisco. It can be accessed at the following site: <http://www.eltecolote.org/voices/>.

[3] The writers of this genre were referred to as the possessors of the red and black Ink.

Mexico.[4] It is estimated that writing developed perhaps initially among the Olmecs some 3,000 years ago (Florescano, *Historia*). While this makes up my worldview regarding writing or the "written word" in the Americas, my classes do in fact tend to concentrate on what is referred to as Chicano Journalism—a journalism associated with the 1960s-1970s.[5] In referring to the Chicano Movement, some scholars have given it the set dates of 1965-1975, though most historians do not assign specific start and end dates to this movement.[6]

This is not a case of either/or. Within that context, for me, ancient methods of communication fall within the red-brown journalism paradigm. For thousands of years, in the Americas, many systems of communication developed—from knotted strings to amoxtlis or codices and from petroglyphs to Wampum belts. These systems communicated astronomical data, migration information and information related to planting seasons, the location of water, historical information, etc. The United States is a rich repository of petroglyphs and intaglios, many of which report constant migrations (Orozco; Figueroa). Whereas others might not view this as journalism, my journalism background tells me it is, because similar to modern journalism, ancient methods of communications also communicated useful and timely information.

For example, in the central and southern parts of Mexico, the *escrituras-pinturas* or painted-books were known as *pop* in Maya or *amoxtli* in Nahuatl. They were written/painted by peoples from Teotihuacan, Maya, Toltec, Nahuatl and Mixtec peoples. We now know that similar to the Maya, the Nahuatl and Mixtec forms of writing were actually phonetic and not simply pictographs. We know this through the works of Joaquin Galarza, who spent 40 years deciphering these writing systems (Galarza).

Another form of writing was the *quipu* or *khipu*. Long thought to be an amazing method of mathematical accounting by ancient peoples of the Andes, it is now known that they were also actual [non-Western] books or repositories of memory and historical events. The peoples of pre-Aztec Mexico also used a similar device called the *Nepohualtzinzin*. They are used nowadays by some as calculators (Florescano, *National*).

Similarly, Wampum belts are traditional places where history is stored by Six nations peoples (Boone and Mignolo). A note regarding the pre-Colombian era

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[4] Traditionally, 1848 has been used as the marker for the creation of the Mexican American population. Others, particularly feminists have pushed it back to 1519 or even 1492, marking the beginning of "mestizaje" or the mixture of this continent. My adherence to the beginnings of maiz culture comports more with the idea of maiz as a marker for cultural origins on the American continent.

[5] In one sense, Chicano or Chicana journalism refers to a style, however, it also refers to publications that had their apex during that era. Thus, that style of co-mingling Spanish and English, of being irreverent and politically left and in pursuit of justice has not gone away. At the same time, some publications from that genre continue, particularly on the internet.

[6] Carlos Velez, in *Border Visions*, is one scholar that sets the parameters of 1965-1975.

is that with the arrival of Europeans to the Americas, most indigenous systems of communication were destroyed, diminished or badly misinterpreted, generally up until the present era, when Native peoples began to write for themselves in Western publications. The reason for this was twofold: 1) the belief that they were demonic, and 2) that indigenous peoples were not smart enough to be capable of creating a phonetic system of communication (Galarza).

It is important to remember that the arrival of Europeans was in and of itself a news event; the reporting and reaction to the European invasion, including their arrival into what is today the United States, were recorded. When Cortes arrived on Mexican shores, they were met by Moctezuma's emissaries. Tlacuilos or writers/painters were permitted to record on amoxtli papers, the arrival of the Spaniards. Moctezuma had the news of their arrival within hours.[7] Also, the Lienzo de Tlaxcala records the arrival of Europeans into New Mexico... along with the arrival of Tlaxcaltecas, as they accompanied the Spaniards on this and other colonizing endeavors.

During the Spanish colonial era, Europeans began to rank communication systems as advanced, primitive and even, demonic. Bishop Landa in 1562 held an Auto de Fe in Mani Yucatan, This event was a three-day book-burning predicated on the idea that the books and related objects were "things of the devil" (Landa). Of course, things "Western" always equaled advanced in the colonial era and these biases continue even to this day. This is one major reason why it has taken up until the modern era to decipher these writings.

Because of time and space, this is not the proper forum to go into details of how knowledge by indigenous peoples of these communications systems actually survived. Suffice to say that the cultivation of maiz as a technology had a large part to do with this, plus, the oral tradition, pre-Colombian calendrical systems, ceremony, poetry, song and danza were other places where the same knowledge was transmitted and stored. All of these supplemented the written traditions that have been a part of the Americas since time immemorial.

For Latinos in the United States, the early era of Western-style journalism begins in the early 1800s through the 1900s. The first known Spanish-language newspaper in what is today the United States was *El Misisipi*, published in 1808 in New Orleans (LATINOTECA: <http://www.latinoteca.com/>). As such, the year 2008 marked the bicentennial celebration of 200 years of Latino journalism. After *El Misisipi*, hundreds more publications followed.[8] Many writers from the 1800s and 1900s functioned not simply as journalists, but also as human rights champions and also as community intellectuals (because no tradition of college existed). Many of these first newspapers assisted Independence movements against Spain.

ROBERTO DR. CINTLI RODRIGUEZ

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[7] Cortes states that upon their arrival, Moctezuma's envoys painted him and his people and sent the paintings back to Moctezuma (Cortes).

[8] The first known American Indian publication in the United States was the bilingual newspaper, *The Cherokee Phoenix*, first published in 1828.

Later Mexican journalism in the United States was more typified by *El Clamor Publico* of Los Angeles, circa early 1860s. *El Clamor*, published and edited by Francisco Ramirez, fought for the rights of Mexicans, including land rights.

At the turn of the 20th century, *Regeneracion* carried on the tradition of fighting for the rights of Mexicans, though it was also part of a movement that advocated revolution in Mexico before the 1910 Revolution. The publication reemerged more than 50 years later in the 1960s, led by Francisca Flores.

La Opinion newspaper in Los Angeles, which has been publishing since the 1920s, is an example of a newspaper that has spanned several eras. *La Opinion*, founded in 1926 in Los Angeles, was moderate, but did fight for the rights of Mexicans. It is the largest Spanish-language newspaper in the country. It was founded by the Lozano family and it continues in the hands of Monica Lozano. It began publishing during an era when the Mexican communities of the United States were hard hit by repatriation campaigns (Balderrama and Rodriguez). This was followed by desegregation and anti-discrimination battles, through the Chicano Movement militant era, and it continues to publish today in what might be dubbed the anti-immigrant era.

The era that I was a part of was the Chicano journalism era (though I continue to write), an era characterized by a brand of militant and unapologetic form of journalism from the 1960s and 1970s.[9] In effect, this form of media didn't simply document this movement; it was part and parcel to the Chicano Movement. This ushered in an era that resulted in the explosion of Raza oriented newspapers and magazines throughout the United States. Most were English-dominant or bilingual. The primary characteristic of this media at the time was their militancy and their preaching of Brown Power! The importance of Brown Power cannot be overstated. Prior to the Chicano Movement era, people of Mexican descent generally played up their Spanish roots at the expense of their indigenous roots. In legal cases, in cases of desegregation, lawyers argued that Mexicans should be treated fairly—because they were white—as opposed to simply be treated as fully human.[10]

This is what differentiated the Chicano Movement era, from previous eras. Activists from this era were both unapologetic about their indigenous roots, and in fact publically celebrated their mixed roots. This "primary process" or political volcanic eruption of the 1960s, was reflected in their publications—including their titles (Turner). This idea of a primary process was first applied to the Mexican Independence Movement of the 1800s, but also to the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1920. Accompanying this idea of a primary process was also the concept of "principio"

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[9] My initial foray into Chicano media was reading *La Raza Magazine* and *La Gente Newspaper* in high school, then later writing for *La Gente* when I enrolled at UCLA between 1972-1976.

[10] In "When Discrimination Was the Color Brown," Gonzales and Rodriguez cite nearly a dozen court battles, prior to Brown V. Topeka (1954), in which Latinos triumphed. However, in many of the battles, the victories were predicated on the idea that Latinos were white and thus should be treated as such. An example was Alvarez v. Lemon Grove School Board of Education, 1930, Lemon Grove Ca. (Gonzales and Rodriguez).

or a return to the root (Florescano, *Historia*). In the case of the Mexican Independence Movement, the Mexican Revolution and the Chicano Movement, this root was the Aztec-Mexica as typified by the resistance by Cuauhtemoc to the Spanish invasion. This explains the predominance of Aztec-Mexican imagery and iconography in Chicano Movement-era publications, imagery that was inherited from the earlier movements.

If the Chicano Movement begins in 1965, so too its publications. However, several prominent newspapers preceded that era: *La Carta Editorial*, began publishing in 1963 (publisher, Francisca Flores) and *El Malcriado* in 1964 (United Farm Worker's movement). Most of the publications associated with this movement were "left" and militant. While some were affiliated with organizations, many were fiercely independent. Tired of being misrepresented, they ushered in not just militancy, but also, the cultural desire to "tell our story."

The following were Chicano Movement era newspapers and also members of The Chicano Press Association circa 1969: *El Papel* (Albuquerque), *El Chicano* (San Bernardino, CA), *El Deguello* (San Antonio, TX), *The Forumeer* (San Jose, CA), *La Voz Mexicana* (Wautoma, WI), *Carta Editorial* (Los Angeles), *La Revolucion* (Uvalde, TX), *El Grito del Norte* (Espanola, NM), *El Yaqui* (Houston, TX), *Bronze* (San Jose), *Chicano Student Movement* (Los Angeles), *Lado* (Chicago), *La Raza* (Los Angeles), *Infierno* (San Antonio), *El Malcriado* (Delano, CA), *La Raza Nueva* (San Antonio), *Inside Eastside* (Los Angeles), *El Gallo* (Denver, CO), *Compass Houston*, TX), *La Verdad* (San Diego, CA), *Nuestra Lucha* (Delray Beach, FL) and *El Coraje* (Tucson, AZ).

Other major movement newspapers from that era were *Regeneracion* (Los Angeles), *Hijas de Cuahtemoc* (Long Beach, CA), *El Tecolote* (San Francisco, CA), *La Gente de Aztlan* (UCLA), *El Popo* (Cal State University at Northridge), *Si Se Puede* (UC Santa Barbara) and *Sin Fronteras* (Los Angeles). This is just a small sample of newspapers because during that era, virtually every city with a Mexican/Latino population had a Movement newspaper.

What appears to have been the common story or common denominator of the newspapers of that era were stories about struggles for dignity, justice and equality, in the streets, in the courtroom, in the classroom and in the factories and the fields. Not ironically, many struggles were about fighting stereotypes and complaints about the lack of proper coverage in the mainstream media, whether in advertising or the little or big screens.

As such, much coverage was dedicated to mass protests, rallies, marches, pickets, strikes and boycotts. Much of this protest coverage involved struggles against police brutality, school walkouts for educational equity, farm worker organizing efforts, and then later, marches against the Vietnam War. In effect, they served to document their own movement. Today, most of these newspapers are in "special collections" section of libraries.

All if not most of these newspapers also were responsible for the cultural explosion or the cultural [indigenous] rebirth of Mexican and Latino peoples. Art and poetry—known as Floricanto—were part and parcel to many if not all of these newspapers. Floricanto was the Spanish translation for *In Xochitl—In Cuicatl*—

Flower and Song. This in part is what produced this indigenous cultural explosion that resulted not just in the publishing of this form of expression, but also, national and international Floricanto and Canto al Pueblo art and poetry festivals.

While the explosion of Chicano journalism was indigenous and organic, it also was influenced by worldwide events, in particular, the uprising in Mexico in the late 1960s. Enriqueta Vasquez, author of Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement, affirms that *El Grito del Norte* in Northern New Mexico was co-founded by New Mexico Chicana/Chicano activists, along with several Mexican political refugees.[11] Mexican political refuges were active politically in the United States in many other cities, including Los Angeles, Chicago and San Antonio, Texas.

Chicano Movement era publications were influenced not just by the Mexican student movement, but also by other national and other worldwide movements and events. Yet they did not simply get influenced by these movements; they covered them, and in many cases, developed relationships with them. For example: The Movimiento Nativo Americano or Native American Movement (1961-1963), led by Jack Forbes—foremost American Indian scholar, had a profound effect on the Chicano Movement. Forbes, who grew up among Mexicans in Southern California, argued that Mexicans/Chicanos were Native American. He did this nearly 10 years before the unveiling of El Plan Espiritual de Aztlan, the document many view as the foundational document of the Chicano Movement. The later American Indian Movement also influenced and cross-pollinated with the Chicano Movement on political, land and cultural issues.

The Cuban Revolution ideologically influenced many of the revolutionary Latin American movements in the 1960s, including the Chicano Movement. In part, the primary contribution may have been the iconography of the Che Guevara poster: beret with red star. Che signified the unity of the continent with the slogan: "Somos Uno porque America es Una—We are One because America is One."

Latin American Movements were also influenced by liberation theology; the Chicano Movement was no different. For example, "the preferential option for the poor" was the guiding ideology of priests and nuns who worked with the farm worker's movement.

The Black Power or the Black Liberation Movement absolutely influenced the Chicano Movement, ideologically, but also directly. Several prominent Chicana activists were active members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. This included Betita Martinez, who went on to co-found *El Grito del Norte*, and Maria Varela, a human rights activist in Northern New Mexico.

Unbeknownst to people of this era is that the United Farm Worker's Movement never saw itself as part of the Chicano Movement, though it actually trained

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[11] While repression against political activists in Mexico was common, the most famous act(s) of repression occurred on Oct 2, 1968 at Plaza Tlatelolco where it is estimated that some 300 students were gunned down by the Army during a political rally in Mexico City. However, repression was by no means limited to one event but was generational, lasting perhaps until the 1990s.

many of the urban Chicano Movement activists that followed the birth of the UFW. Such an example was UFW organizer, Ramses Noriega, who went on to co-found the National Chicano Moratorium against the Vietnam War in Los Angeles. He viewed that action as a means to organize and birth a national movement in the cities.[12]

The UFW saw itself as part of the labor movement, with historic ties to field labor organizing efforts going back to the 1930s, etc. (Kushner). Ironically, the Chicano Movement always saw the UFW and specifically Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, as icons of the Chicano Movement. Its newspaper, *El Malcriado*, was as popular in Chicano Movement circles as was *La Raza Magazine*.

On the cultural/political front, Mexican scholar Luis Leal (1927-1908), came to the United States in 1927, looking for the ancestral Aztec home of Aztlan in what is today the United States. One of his students, Alberto Urrea or Alurista, became the author most associated with the 1969 El Plan Espiritual de Aztlan, penned in Denver, Colorado—perhaps the manifesto most associated with the Chicano Movement and the document, along with the *Yo Soy Joaquin* poem by Corky Gonzales, perhaps most reproduced in Chicano publications in the 1960s and 1970s.

One myth to dispel involved the role of women in Chicano Movement publications; many did not remand women to secondary roles. Many of the most important publications were published and edited by women. For example, *Carta Editorial* and *Regeneracion*, were edited and published in Los Angeles by Francisca Flores and *El Grito del Norte* in New Mexico were edited by Betita Martinez and Enriqueta Vasquez.

To understand the Chicano Movement was to understand its publications and to understand Chicano publications, was to understand the Chicano Movement. To be sure, all the Chicano Movement-era publications were not ideologically on the same page. They may have generally started that way, but once the movement was in full swing in the early 1970s, many of the publications began to ideologically harden to the left, where there was less unity. Despite that, they fulfilled a need, one that had apparently not been filled by English-language newspapers, and generally, not by Spanish-language newspapers that often found themselves at odds with the young radicals that often wrote for these movement newspapers.

The Chicano Movement newspapers, like the Chicano Movement, never actually ended. Newspapers such as *La Gente* continue to publish. What perhaps did end is the cultural explosion associated with that era. And yet, today, virtually all the best-known Chicana/Chicano poets and artists of today had their beginnings in such publications. In that sense, the cultural explosion continues to reverberate through their art and writings.

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[12] Personal conversations with Ramses Noriega, 2007-2011.

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THE IMPACT OF THE POET-EDITOR:
SOME QUESTIONS*

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The intellectual routes taken by poets like Charles Bernstein and Barrett Watten are radical in their mistrust of their approaches to humanism, not based on ensuring continuity but rather on testing out and highlighting variety, favoring inclusion instead of discrimination and exclusion. These positions respond to an impulse to show how things and ideas are related. Both poets have been involved in the editorship of innovative poetry since the early 1970s. The first thing everybody learns about American innovative poetry is that some decisive change occurred in this period. Exactly what that change consisted of is more debatable.

I simplify, but I don't think I distort unduly, when I say that both Bernstein and Watten propitiated a change that led to focus on language itself—that is, undoing the correspondence between the signifier and the signified, decentering the self and seeing knowledge as uncertainty, ruining the illusion of stable poetic forms, and continually searching for connections between writing and social issues.

As editors both Bernstein and Watten have invoked a range of cultural forms to continually generate possibilities. They have edited small presses and little magazines that show an emphasis on composition rather than trying to show the coherence of the self or seek valorization for the technique used. Centering on writing as such is sure to receive multiple evaluations, discourse and reaction, and also to be conscious of the author/reader. These recurring issues speak of the enigma of deciphering the public and private aspects of a society which has so rapidly had to assimilate new roles and acceptance of historical and class issues, especially in the last few decades. For each, poetry should act as a vehicle of communication for a new social status, assimilating diverse forms, which exchange values that mass society finds difficult to assume. This is despite this type of avant-garde poetry having been treated as elitist. This open eclectic sense of both form and content is one of its most valuable assets, sustaining the liveliness of its proposals through volumes of essays, lectures, and conferences, and whose importance has grown proportionally to the furious diatribes of official media like *The New Criterion* or *Partisan Review*.

Along with this, we should realize that the primary goal of Language writing is not centered in stylistic renewal as such but in reaching out to new ideological and political meanings. They pointed out that they developed a poetics that insisted

on rejecting "received and beloved notions of voice, self, expression, sincerity and representation" (Bartholomae 42).

If we take Bernstein's association with the small press Asylum's Press or the little magazine $L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E$, or Watten's with This Press and *This* magazine, as objective references due to their appearing as their organ of expression, American innovative poetry as such did not last very long, in fact only up the early 1980s. However, I should say that the literary production of these innovative poets has continued to spread since then, despite the gradual officialization of some of its members by absorption into academic institutions or respectable established journals. In any case, the most stimulating aspect of this collective is that they always expressed their desire to blur the limits of what is literary. And editorship served to reflect upon one of the most outstanding motifs of poetic experience: to experience words as raw material to be deciphered.

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES BERNSTEIN

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Charles Bernstein is a New York City native, who now teaches at the University of Pennsylvania. He writes poetry, and has written about poetics, art, and social issues. Bernstein was the cofounder of the emblematic *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* magazine with Bruce Andrews and has authored over 40 books, most recently *All the Whiskey in Heaven: Selected Poems* (2010) from Farrar, Straus and Giroux. I am very happy to have been involved in some of his work through my editorship of his *The Absent Father in Dumbo* (Zasterle, 1991). This led me to understand his poetry as a cultural force, and how he has participated in creating some of the most American avant-garde writing. Over 400 essays and reviews on his work, 500 readings and lectures/talks since 1975, throughout the world, numerous prizes, and his election as Fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in 2006, speak of his significant role in contemporary American poetry. His experience as editor has not been limited to print publications—"American Poetry after 1975," *Boundary 2* (2010); *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word* (Oxford University Press, 1998); *The Politics of Poetic Form: Poetry and Public Policy* (Roof Books, 1990); or "Language Sampler," *Paris Review* 86 (1982) and "43 Poets (1984)" *Boundary 2* (1986)—since he is the co-founder and co-editor, with Al Filreis, of PENNsound (writing.upenn.edu/pennsund); and editor, and co-founder, with Loss Pequeño Glazier, of the Electronic Poetry Center (epc.buffalo.edu); and has been host and co-producer of *LINEbreak* and *Close Listening*, two radio poetry series. This talk is part of a continuing discussion of the perspectives of editorship in these early decades of the 21st century. I hope it will be helpful to see the new perspectives, not only of creators, but also of means to produce culturally significant work.

MB: *Would you explain your explicit purpose for editorship, if any, and how this tropes some acts of reading experience, discussion, etc.?*

CB: I don't know where editing ends and poetry begins, when teaching stops and essays start, when organizing is set aside and contemplation takes center stage. The relation of one to the other is rhythmic: an oscillating rhythm. Maybe it's a derangement of personality; my inability to draw boundaries or adequately shore my borders against the waves of poetic energy I feel engulfed in and by, and which, by a kind of wind energy, powers what I do. Or maybe it's a kind of textual weaving, warps and wefts, sparks and crests, cunning and conundrum. It's all of a piece in any given day (and the days not given too, the rare days that are earned). It started early for me. I was the editor of my high school newspaper (*Science Survey*) and two literary magazines at college (the official freshman lit mag, *The Harvard Yard Journal* and an entirely ephemeral affair, *Writing*, when I was a senior). A small press editor, first with Asylum's Press in the 1970s, where Susan Bee and I published ourselves, but also Peter Seaton, Ray Di Palma, and Ted Greenwald; then in the later '70s *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* with Bruce Andrews, which also had an out of print book xerox service, which morphed into the Segue Distributing service (with James Sherry), where we did a catalog of a dozen related small presses and magazines. This was all very intensive work, involving endless time in production and mailings. Jump to the present, where I edit, with Eduardo Espina, *S/N: NewWorldPoetics*, a print journal; with Régis Bonvincino, *Sibila*, a web magazine from Sao Paulo (formally print); with Al Filreis and Michael Hennessey, *PennSound*, a digital sound archive, and still the Electronic Poetry Center, with Loss Pequeño Glazier, a web site; as well as my own "web log." And that leaves out quite a bit in between. It seems like much of my day is spent on one or another of these things: bringing disparate stands together, or, better to say, making an imaginary space for those works for which I've developed a great enthusiasm. The key thing with editing is the desire to bring things together, in the same place, that otherwise might not be; to make constellations; but also to archive, collect, display, acknowledge, appreciate. To mix all these metaphors: a way of weaving a context into being. Maybe that context was there and it's just recognizing it, that's probably the most reasonable way to put it, but it can feel like you are making the context by the force of the activity, the editing itself, and that is why it's a kind of poetics; something like making poems via constellation. For me editing always has a fundamentally aesthetic dimension: not doing something already prescribed, but making it—well not "new" necessarily but *making it happen*, making it come into being.

MB: *My first impression is that as editor you have painted a scene that located the poets in and* around L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*, which, as you mention, also had an out of print book xerox service: poets mobilizing both the concept of the text and social issues, sometimes even before your books came up for discussion... No group of contemporary American poets demands more sustained effort in figuring out*

what you have done, and why, than the Language poets over the last 40 years. Even though the group designation is controversial, most everyone agrees that many conceptual and formal elements were in common in these poets. How have you assumed the evidence of becoming more credible, marketable?

CB: *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* was an editorial project: willing something into being more than mapping an already existing formation. Something of a fantasy, *bien sur*. That was the fun. In retrospect, it seems more fixed, more of a school or coterie, and it's hard to find a gracious way to get out from under that, like the statue that replaces the damp air of the dawn. Resisting school and coterie (the dog and pony show of the avant-garde) was the inspiration, though I see from a recent memoir by one of our New York company that a fatuous sense of entitled boys club remained a viral presence in our midst, so that brings me back to the less than idealized reality that I helped to form. But that's why for me subsequent editorial projects have been as much a swerve and as a continuation. The hard part is responding to present conditions. As I get older, I find myself stuck in the agonisms of youth. That partly serves me well, especially in terms of a kind of paranoid grounding in the Cold War and resistance to an Official Verse Culture of which I have long been a marquee name (though not top billing!); but it also can make it difficult to see emerging formations, which is why it's best to let the current lead, to go with intuitions of the moment rather than received ideas, even my own!, from the past. And teaching offers the benefit of being around more young people than people of my own generation, younger people for whom what I have long taken for given is not a given. Though I do think I might be better off at the beach in Boca, getting the early bird special as the waiters come and go, talking of Art Basil.

MB: *Editors and publishers cannot afford the increasingly difficulties involved in to-day's economic crisis. Prestigious small publishers have disappeared or simply been taken over by larger companies. Is this a time for a promotion of new products, a new publishing ethos? How do you see the controversial issue of print culture vs. digital culture?*

CB: Poetry in North America in the postwar years has remained remarkably mobile, entrepreneurial, ingenious. The social networks and publishing methodologies of the alternate, small press, poets are a valuable model, structurally, even apart from the aesthetic achievements of the poems. Radical small press poetry has been astonishingly versatile in sustaining small scale, unpopular/unprofitable cultural products; indeed, thriving in the face of their unpopularity/unprofitability. Talk about *epaté la bourgeoisie*. There has been an exquisite response to available publication technologies from mimeo to xerox to desktop to the web. Unfortunately, due to the fascist dictatorship in Spain, you were not be able to fully participate in this and that took a great toll, as it is not so easy to make up for this lost history. For the last fifteen years, innovative, small press poetry has been moving inexorably to the web, where production and distribution costs are minimal, compared to print and postage; the focus can be on editorial selection and distribution. Much of web space

promotes the absence of selection as the democratic vista, everybody gets their say in unlimited comments' fields. But everyone getting their say on a proscribed set of issues may effectively block dissent against the terms in which the "issues" are posed. And of course that "everyone" is in the comments boxes below the official content. I-pads and I-phones turn the computer revolution toward consumption rather than production. Yet poetry remains an extraordinary area on the web of independent, non-commercial production. And the number of readers/listeners is probably bigger than we ever had with the small press. Millions of mp3 downloads every year on PennSound.

MB: *You have pointed out in your essay, "Provisional Institutions: Alternative Presses and Poetic Innovation," that some difficulties derive from management, and especially the threatening standardization of literature for bulk-buying public.*

CB: Homogenization of product! Even the forms of the unconventional get conventional. Lately I have been talking about the poetics of "pataque(e)rical"— the pata- from Alfred Jarry; trying to keep the querulous and query in queer. But the pataqueeronormative is always on the horizon; and I don't mean just in others, I mean primarily in ourselves, in myself. There are so many formulaic products that are so appealing, so seductive. And the unformulaic, non-standard can seem so messy, chaotic, disturbing... Self-indulgent. And sometimes it is. So there is always a risk, and the odds are none too good. But, like the man, says, "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

MB: *Within this context, is it important that poets understand that there is, after all, no money?*

CB: Absolutely. I always say: don't think about how much you will make but just *not to lose too much*. Stemming your losses: that's the key. But there is cultural capital too, which is quite real. And the work you make, if outside of the capital economy, is part of a semiotic economy that is far more substantial and sustaining than those outside it realize; like the grey economy in some ways. Today is the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, where so many mostly young women workers died in a sweatshop where the owners had chained the exits. So I think of James Oppenheim's 1912 poem:

> As we come marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
> Go crying through our singing their ancient cry for bread.
> Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew.
> Yes, it is bread we fight for—but we fight for roses, too!

MB: *How do you understand editing, as a lonely activity, focused on becoming innovatively competitive? Generally speaking, I should say that my view on your role as editor is that of creating communities... am I too wrong?*

CB: Communities is a vexed term: you can't live with and you can't do without. Literary communities are, at best, "uncommunities" in Jean-Luc Nancy's sense: they are elective affinities. In your neighbourhood or school or pre-

cinct or political alliance, the community is given and present in a way that may underlie the concept of literary community but which is fundamentally different. You don't choose your neighbours, while a literary community, at least one with aesthetic rather than regional or local commitments, is all about choosing. You might come together with like-minded people in a political alliance but, at least in a progressive context, the criteria for the community will be toward collective action or policy goals, such as forming a union or fighting environmental destruction. The beauty, if I can use that word here, of a poetry community is that it can be a constellation of unlikeminded individuals toward an amorphous aesthetic horizon. It is based on taste, on preference, not explicit goals or shared geographic/civic space. But I agree with you that these poetic constellations, so necessarily provisional, are indeed created, are syncretic. Poetry communities are speculative and imaginary; they form a kind of counter-reality to the actual communities and families and alliances that make up the fabric of our everyday life.

MB: *Your own involvement as editor in the Electronic Poetry Center, founded in 1995, has served to see how practitioners have shared their creativity within a transnational and transcultural context. Was this Center modelled for both networked creativity and a forum for research? I mentioned the term "transnational" because you are editing the print journal,* S/N: NewWorldPoetics, *which is intended to re-open the dialogue between the South and the North. Once again you are focusing on interacting communities...*

CB: Yes; and I'd add also an archival space. So much of the web imagines itself as transactive; at the EPC, as at PennSound, our first attention is to the archive. You are also quite right to note the transnational aspect, though I like to think of it as nonnational more than trans-. My work with Régis Bonvicino in Brazil (as in our magazine, *Sibila*), with Eduardo Espina, of Uruguay, in *S/N: NewWorldPoetics* (the Americas: everything translated from or to Spanish, English, or, to a lesser extent, Portuguese), or with Leevi Lehto in Finland is as much my poetics "neighbourhood" as those in New York and Philadelphia.

MB: *I should also notice that the over 20-year existence of the electronic poetry centers in the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and France has provided an allegorical dimension of* L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*, that is, an international apparatus by interpretive circles subsuming your poetry and facilitating the critical gesture of the group. What do you think on this?*

CB: You're right to think of extensions of *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*, but where that early project is as much subsumed as subsuming. My key points of intersection also include the OEI group in Sweden and long-term connections with poets in Canada, the U.K., Russia, and Portugal (thought my affiliation with Graça Capinha in Coimbra). One of the problems is the tyranny of my own abysmal monolingualism, since so much of what I do takes place in English, so my conversational partners are bilingual while I am not. I see how much this limits what I do. But then English has become very common among poets in Europe. Still, I couldn't have the close rela-

tionship I feel with Arkadii Dragomshchenko if he didn't speak English. (When I said something like this to Marjorie Perloff, she said, then why don't you learn Russian? The truth is probably as simple, and indefensible, as—because I don't have to, so other things take priority.) I should mention also a strong connection over the last decade with China, including forming an association, with Marjorie and Nie Zhenzhao and Luo Lianggong for exchange between Chinese and American poetics and scholars, involving conferences, translations, and a stream of visiting scholars at Penn. And then out of the blue this Fall I was given a book of my essays translated in Burmese; totally unexpected. But when I contacted Zeyar Lynn by email, his reply was so totally current with developments in poetry here, well, I could have been writing to you or a friend in Los Angeles. So there is a kind of warped space going on here where poetic affiliations are bringing us together in ways that would have been difficult in the past. These are not networks or communities, exactly, but virtual constellations. We've cast our fate with the stars, as if our quest was for cosmology as much as communion, the cosmococcic as much as the heteroclite.

AN INTERVIEW WITH BARRETT WATTEN

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Barrett Watten was asked by Peter Davis to select the "most essential" books to him as a poet. His response clarifies the formal and theoretical issues in his thoughtful poetic work. These are the works or categories he found "most formative" for him: modernism, postmodernism, proto-Language writing, Language writing, hybrid texts, New York School, word/image texts, new music/jazz, literary theory, cultural theory, film, and great books.[1] Watten invokes a range of cultural forms that continually generate possibilities, while revealing the poet's intention to search for the limits of language. His poetry makes the reader to feel the urge to look twice, to ask what kind of translation is going on between the world and its representation. Watten's published works, *Opera—Works* (1975), *Decay* (1977), *Plasma / Parallels / "X"* (1979), *1-10* (1980), *Complete Thought* (1982), *Progress* (1985), *Conduit* (1988), *Under Erasure* (1991), *Frame 1971-1990* (1997), *Bad History* (1998), *Progress/Under Erasure* (2004), and his essays in *Total Syntax* (1985) have always laid emphasis on the mode of poetic composition that sets off from exploration to appear as testimony to various ideological preoccupations. In the early 1970s he co-edited the little magazine *This* initially with Robert Grenier. Later he edited with Lyn Hejinian the critical journal *Poetics Journal* from 1981 to 1998. He has held teaching positions at San Francisco State University, the University of California, San

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[1] Should you wish to amplify this point, please visit Watten's site: <http://www.english.wayne.edu/fac_pages/ewatten/posts/post36.html>.

Diego, and is currently professor of English at Wayne State University. His book of essays, *The Constructivist Moment: From Material Text to Cultural Poetics* (2003), was awarded the René Wellek Prize in 2004.

MB: *You now live in industrial Detroit, but you were born in Long Beach, California (in 1948). You first studied biochemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, then you became enrolled in the Writers Workshop at the University of Iowa, and finally got your Ph.D. in English from the University of California, Berkeley in 1995. This combinatory education in science and the humanities makes me ask if poetry was a kind of empirical given for you?*

BW: Do you mean, how did I make contact with poetry, or how did it make contact with me, as something "empirically given," as existing in the world?

MB: *Yes, how did you come into contact with poets like Robert Grenier, Ron Silliman, Bob Perelman, and others...*

BW: In *The Grand Piano*, I describe my early relationship with Robert Grenier, whom I met as an undergraduate student at Berkeley in 1968. This was a turbulent time, which I also wrote about in an essay published in *Critical Inquiry*, "The Turn to Language in the 1960s." Poetry was a part of a volatile mix of radical politics and cultural change; everything was in process and up for grabs—somewhat like the "La Movida" moment after Franco, though we were responding to the Vietnam War and multiple demands for liberation rather than emerging from a dictatorship. One can imagine that the 60s was a period of great political and even epistemological unsureness—"How do I know what I know" was a question one might ask of everyday life. In addition, I was quite young—I started college at age 16 and graduated at 20, only to face the possibility of the draft and being conscripted to fight in Vietnam. I resisted the draft, through a torturous series of legal maneuvers, which finally resolved after the 1970 draft lottery. At Berkeley, before I met Grenier, poetry was beginning to emerge like a series of signals from the beyond—I am thinking of messages Orfée picks up in Cocteau's film of that name—that I scarcely knew how to evaluate. Poets like Robert Duncan, W.S. Merwin, Robert Creeley, and Denise Levertov were reading at Berkeley at the time, and I started to pay attention to them. I took a course on the English lyric, as well, from the well-regarded critic Josephine Miles, who patronized the San Francisco Renaissance, as did the erratic but brilliant Thomas Parkinson, a specialist on the Beats. I started to become interested in the postwar avant-garde (here, however, I might recall that my first "material" connection with poetry was in the 50s, when I heard inklings of the Beat movement from afar, and later connected with *Howl* in high school). But it took the personal connection with Grenier to "make poetry happen" for me. As I put it in *The Grand Piano*, "The transmission of poetry is a passion unlike any other." Life changed, materially, due to poetry: I left Berkeley for the Iowa Writers Workshop, on the recommendation of Josephine Miles, and found my way back to the Bay Area in the early 70s—when I came into contact, in real time and space, with the group

of poets who would become the Language school, at least in its West Coast emergence.

MB: *Let's talk about your decisive role as editor publishing poetry and essays in* This *(1971-1982) and* Poetics Journal *(1982-1998). Were you a visionary diagnosing innovative culture in those twenty-seven years, or was editing an act of essential definition for your poetry?*

BW: You seem to be constructing some kind of allegory of my editorial work on *This* and later *Poetics Journal*, and your use of the term "visionary" is certainly unusual in the context of the Language school, which reacted almost violently against the bardic tradition. But it is worth remembering that there was a significant influence of that tradition—and the entire context of myth—in the late 60s and 70s, understandably a reaction to the constraints of "official verse culture" but also following on many of the more intellectually respectable interests of the New Americans, particularly Charles Olson. Myth, in our work, would morph into the "material signifier," but there was still a possibility of a kind of allegory that would stem from the works we composed. Let's say *This* was entirely concerned with the poetry of the material text or signifier, at least once it consolidated its poetics about number 7 until discontinuance at number 12. There was not one shred of myth or bard in any of that work. However, the interpretive work of *Poetics Journal*, in retrospect, could be seen as a kind of allegorical expansion of the material text—into a wide range of literary and cultural domains. Such a reading would be supported by the influence of deconstruction, on the one hand, and Walter Benjamin, on the other. While there has not yet been a proper account of allegory in the Language school, it might well be profitable.

MB: *Since 2006 you were involved in* The Grand Piano *serial publication, which has been completed with ten volumes in 2010. I have been following the series and I might say that each volume contributes more privately than ever to the kaleidoscopic alternatives proposed by the authors. In reading the different passages, don't you have the sensation of that period as animated by a universal humanism, especially one centered on community, which is still prevalent today?*

BW: Your question might be broken into two components: what is *The Grand Piano* doing with time; and does its use of narrative and description involve the kind of positive claims to knowledge that one might associate with humanism (rather than some kind of radical scepticism of the postmodern). On the former: I've been thinking—and writing—on the tension between "the present" and historical periodization in our collective autobiography. The present is both the present of writing and the present of the text, which could have been written in the past. In the gap between the two, a space opens up for historical construction—the kind that frames movements of the avant-garde or contextualizes art. As for the latter: I don't see a "humanism" in *The Grand Piano*. There might be a "posthumanism" in distributing the "author function" among the ten of us, but I think that would be overreaching. The most that I would say is that it took "the death of the author"

to imagine a work with ten authors, but they are not identical. Perhaps this movement—from poststructuralism to our present moment—could be seen as historical. As for community, it is always being reinvented—and could fail entirely. I see more "socialism" than "humanism" there—that is, I see community as historically constructed, not assumed.

MB: *To obtain an idea of the complexity and anti-official emergence of the Language poets, it is instructive to review the scenario for the antagonism between the up-to-then dominant poetic current in San Francisco, heralded by Robert Duncan, and the Language poets. You have not talked too much on this historical event. Apparently you irritated Duncan with your defence of the autonomy of language, and the presence of ideological issues in poetry. This same situation has been repeated more recently with Amiri Baraka. How did these stories filter through your life?*

BW: In fact, there is quite a lot out on the Louis Zukofsky fête of 1978, at which Duncan tried to rush me off the stage for my Marxist reading of Zukofsky—which I have never recanted. The resulting collective trauma—as the audience streamed from the room—was widely taken from that moment on as inaugurating a faultline between the speech-based poetics of the New Americans and the writerly interests of the Language school. There are several places where this is discussed in *The Grand Piano*, so I will let that text stand—and I do feel that I am done with processing the implications of the event. As for the debate with Baraka—I would be interested to return to that discussion. What I think both Amiri and I wanted, at a conference on the 60s, was to encourage "speech" as a public act, in the context of poetry but more widely in social terms. So we devised an alternative event, not on the schedule, where we took over a cafeteria at the University of Maine and held an impromptu teach-in. Amiri was pretty amped, and I think in general attempted to overdramatize the faultlines between his position and mine. That's an understatement. There was something charming and even comedic about the whole thing. I remember Baraka's repeated compliments on my son, Asa—who had held his own, at age 16, at the conference. We started sharing talk about our kids and their politics. Unfortunately the poetics of public display trumped that level of contact, but it was still worth doing.

MB: *Your detailed presentation of the Language school as a never-ending avant-garde due to the intersubjective discourse and textual materiality propitiated by multiauthorship, and the Listserv ultimately, is fascinatingly presented in "The Secret History of the Equal Sign: L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Between Discourse and Text." How is the reader induced to become an observer of this avant-garde in continuous process?*

BW: Somehow through my critical writings "the reader" is shifted from the open position of "the reader makes meaning," a commonplace and wholly inadequate account of how the "writerly" work is processed by the reader, to something closer to systems theory, where the reader is a second-order observer of the avant-garde as system (articulated in text, discourse, listserv, performance, audience, institutions, and so forth). I would say that simply

to locate such a position for the observer of the avant-garde as a system is a step forward from the merely subjective interpretations of the poststructuralist cliché. However, I would also like to go farther and consider both the social and historical construction and meaning of this position. In writing about the avant-garde in terms of specific institutions (such as the 90s Poetics Listserv, the 00s blogosphere, or the current use of social media), I making a case for a historical as well as formal account of avant-garde agency, which works by enacting networks of production and distribution, not merely radical forms.

MB: *In a quite similar spirit you present American innovative poets as precursors in that same essay, since they elaborated a discourse and wrote in a technique clearly analogous to hypertexts and hypermedia texts. And you turn your attention to some ideological remarks so decisive for these poets regarding alternative book distribution, new formal approaches in poetry, political power... Would you comment more on these issues?*

BW: Do you mean, what is the relation of innovative poetics to digital media? In the early 00s, it seemed that there was a boom in digital poetics; I attended several conferences on e-poetry and started to imagine what my contribution to such a poetics would be. In fact, I published a chapter in Dee Morris's edited volume *New Media Poetics* about that time. It has been a bit troubling to see that the initial boom in digital poetics—which produced a number of stand-out works such as Brian Kim Stefans's *Dream Life of Letters*, Talan Memmott's *Lexia to Perplexia*, or Giselle Beiguelmann's public media works—somewhat bust, much like the boom-and-bust dynamic of digital technology itself. While there was an initial redefinition of the possibilities of poetry in digital media, I don't see that that initiative has continued. On the other hand, I now look to earlier figures like Jackson Mac Low for paradigms of poetics that inform the possibilities of later innovative poetry using digital media. I recently wrote on his sampling procedures in *Stanzas for Iris Lezak*, and have used them in the classroom not only to create poems but as a reading strategy, a way of reading across poetic *oeuvres* rather than simply focusing on the interpretation of single poems through close reading.

MB: *Maybe the members of the Language school did not intend to lay down teachings, create followers or be successful in the market. How do you explain that what were marginal texts have become central to modern readers and to university programs. From trendy outsiders to academic insiders... and once margin and center are obliterated may we ask which is the next dream?*

BW: The dream here is one that was perpetuated early on with fantasies of the instant canonization of the Language school; I could assign names to that fantasy, but it was indeed out of touch with reality. We were going to come in a bus and take over the MLA! What has happened has been relatively otherwise. The position of avant-garde poet, or even critic of the avant-garde, has become increasingly tenuous with the downsizing and corporatization of the academy. The institutional focus of poetics has shifted consid-

erably from the MLA to the AWP, as the generation of "post-avant" poets who have entered the academy are teaching creative writing, not literature or poetics (as I and a very few others are doing). There are, in fact, a handful of avant-garde poet/critics who have made their way into the university system, and I happen to be one of them. "Academic insiders" is both a wild projection of power—which I am sure is profitable to the few who want to maintain that illusion—and actually denigrating to the amount of sheer labor that is necessary to obtain a tenure-track teaching position in a field other than creative writing. This is a fantasy that needs to end.

MB: *Why do you think that contemporary tendencies in the U.S. like the School of Quietude and Post-Language poetry have not been able to replace the Language poets? Did they fail to provide a new substantial orientation or did the Language poets really reach the limits of poetry procedures?*

BW: Are you referring here to Ron Silliman's "School of Quietude" and "post-Avant," which he makes about as much use of as humanly possible, for such portmanteau terms, on his blog?

MB: *Yes, that's right...*

BW: If there is any sense among younger writers that Silliman is holding them back, it might be in the deployment of such categories, into which anything might be placed, depending on whether you like it or not. In fact, the real meaning of "School of Quietude" is "moderately boring," and for "post-Avant," "moderately interesting"—neither of which says anything except the subjective vagaries of taste. On the other hand, Ron was very attentive to and enthusiastic about the emergence of Flarf and conceptual writing as new schools. Finally, the idea that Language poets have "reached the limits of poetry procedure" is equal to a death sentence, even for Language poets. Nonsense—this is formalism with a vengeance.

MB: *How is your rewriting of modernism an emancipatory act; and how does such a rewriting stake out a discrepant approach that differs from others of your generation (let's say the East Coast Language writers, with their closer ties to New York modernism)?*

BW: I see my rewriting of modernism, first, as a social and historical act, but it interests me that you see its conceptual nature as part of what is emancipatory about it. Let's imagine this is something that Jackson Mac Low did when he rewrote Pound's Cantos in *Words 'n Ends for Ez*. I endorse that move, and think an aspect of my own work, and its concern with rewriting or overwriting, shares a common ground with Mac Low, coming from the conceptual moment of the 60s. But there is also a more aesthetic or formal reading of such a move, which I would associate with the formalism of some of the East Coast Language writers. In such a reading, Mac Low's formal invention is merely a play on tradition. There is something conservative, rather than emancipatory, about such an interpretation of radical formal procedures as leading back, inevitably, to the tradition that gave them birth. Certain politically conservative modernist critics have made much use of this misreading.

MB: *Your intention for witnessing and anonymity is another big issue. You mention in* Total Syntax *that style includes ideology, is there a provocative effort to read your materialist work qua theoretical impulses?*

BW: In my argument in *Total Syntax*, the style of Charles Olson's reading at Berkeley—which exceeded the style of his poetry in the public performance of it—tells us something important about the nature of the "poetic function," after Roman Jakobson. If we bring the "poetic function" in line with "ideology," after Marxist critics like Terry Eagleton, we see that it is both determined by unresolved contradictions *and* a moment of ideology critique in itself. I believe poetics, then, solves a major question of ideology critique that arose in the 80s—how to be outside false consciousness, if all one can know within capitalism is precisely limited to false consciousness— through the foregrounding of signification. "The signifier stands in a certain relief"—this is the basis for the belief that poetry enacts an effective ideology critique. The denial of this effect, as well, might be the strong claim of cultural critics who think poetry *lacks* such effective agency.

MB: *In your poetry there has been an overload of information, taking for granted the discontinuity of the text to the past. However, this constructivist approach is historically contextualized since you take up specific historical moments, through memory or travel, such as your own education, your view on East Berlin, your California experience, the 1990-1991 Gulf War, the 1994 Los Angeles riots or O.J. Simpson on TV, as you develop in* Bad History. *Once I have been re-reading your work your interpretation of literary and other cultural artifacts seems closer to a project based on the heterogeneous ruins of history, downsizing grammar and syntax, emphasizing the reality of the present instant, "an act in instantaneous history" (*Conduit *68). Has this instant, this Benjaminian "jetzt" that erupts and disrupts, been approaching to silence in these later years?*

BW: I have been writing in multiple genres—poetry, poetics, blog posts (which you cite on my travels to Berlin and the former East Germany), criticism, autobiography. In the last decade, *The Grand Piano* was my most engrossing creative project, and it had to be produced in that time frame due to the necessity of coordinating the efforts of the ten authors involved. It took quite a bit longer to produce than I imagined—twelve years of reflection and writing, in fact, compared to the six formative years it refers to, 1975-80). While I am interested in the attenuation of the historical to a null point in the present, and in the historical past (I am thinking of Stunde Null in Germany, the "zero hour" after the war), that would only be one concern among many. The title of my current MS of shorter poems, which I plan to complete this year, is *Politics of Nothing*; it refers to the Bush Era, 2001-8, during which time *nothing* was indeed the political agenda, and we wrote *The Grand Piano*. A more elaborate, and partly completed, poetic project is titled *Zone*; it works with the overwriting of history (in the form of an overwriting of William Carlos Williams's *Paterson*). I hope this gives a good answer to a question that is rather broad in its implications.

MB: *Windows, frames, squares, paralleles, appear and reappear in your work. However, these apparently allegorical and graphic codes of perception impose the task of non-immediate viewing. This motivates playful complication and demands to see and to discover. I wonder if this implies an act of construction of the unbearable reality, or confidence generated by this sort of friction between worlds...*

BW: What I think you are getting at here is something like this: in my work, there are many instances where "frames" for viewing, interpretation, cognition, representation are presented, but they are detached from what they see, interpret, understand, or represent. It is as if the frames themselves (windows, squares, parallel lines, and so forth) have a reality of their own. This could imply two things: that these figures for framing enable the viewing, interpreting, cognizing, representing of something; or that they obscure or prevent it, by their own material or phenomenological existence. Whence came this emphasis on frames? Do they derive from the conflict between systems, discourses, regimes of knowing? Or are they original elements of cognition, components of an abstract capacity of perceive and know? Do we side with Kant on the a priori nature of categories, or do we see a material history that produced them? I think poetry, finally, sides with the material and historical, even as these may be elucidated by the a priori. These frames, then, were generated by the acts they represent, but also by the conflicts and differences between them. They are differential.

MB: *There is always something happening in your work, with every new reading the words change, the structure simply becomes a series of signs, another identity emerges... I mean that both temporalization and spatialization enact your use of language as a system of Derridian différance. Do you have some idea or topography when you begin to write a particular poem, or the original intentional consciousness is missing from everything?*

BW: Deconstruction was an initially brilliant, then somewhat obstructive, and finally historically specific philosophical project that one can consult with profit (but without buying into it as a discourse of "mastery" by any means). As such, it partakes of the same historical and spatial effects that you see in my poetry, and that would obtain in any work that challenges the reader in the act of interpretation. I am interested in a poetry that can be continually reread, yes—that is how I read *Progress* or *Under Erasure*, as different every time—because time and space are factored into the poems as differentials. There is no final horizon, but there is an obligation to act decisively after the confrontation with interpretation, rather than merely remain in an aesthetic state of free play. I want the challenge of my work to be decisive.

MB: *After four decades in which your work has clamoured to assert its meaningfulness, are you still directing matters from off stage?*

BW: Am I the dark genius of the Language school? If so, thank you. I am interested in the workings of negativity in its effects. But can that account for everything? I doubt it.

MISCELLANY

AN ACCOUNT OF SELECTION RESTRICTIONS
IN ROLE AND REFERENCE GRAMMAR*

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper is to explore how selection restrictions can be easily incorporated in the Ontology in the form of conceptual schemata like thematic frames (TFs) and meaning postulates (MPs). These, in turn, will be connected to the RRG logical structures via conceptual logical structures, which are abstract representational mechanisms that bridge the gap between the cognition-oriented TFs and MPs in the Ontology, and the particular lexico-syntactic idiosyncrasies represented in logical structures (Periñán and Mairal, "Bringing"). As for selection restrictions, or selectional preferences, they are stated in TFs and MPs when they exert constraints typically related to the cognitive situations displayed by the events. The domain of POSSESSION is employed to illustrate this kind of preferences within an ontology.

KEY WORDS: Selection restrictions, Role and Reference Grammar, selectional preferences, FunGramKB, POSSESSION.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este trabajo es explorar cómo las restricciones de selección pueden ser fácilmente incorporadas a la ontología en forma de esquemas conceptuales como son los marcos temáticos (MMTT) y los postulados de significado (PPSS). Estos, a su vez, estarán conectados a las estructuras lógicas de la GPR a través de las estructuras lógicas conceptuales, que son unos mecanismos abstractos de representación que hacen de puente entre los MMTT y los PPSS de la ontología, y las idiosincrasias léxico-sintácticas recogidas en las estructuras lógicas (Periñán y Mairal, "Bringing"). En cuanto a las restricciones de selección o preferencias de selección, se expresan en los MMTT y en los PPSS cuando ejercen constreñimientos normalmente relacionados con las situaciones cognitivas mostradas por los eventos. Se muestra el dominio de la posesión para ilustrar este tipo de preferencias dentro de una ontología.

PALABRAS CLAVE: restricciones de selección, Gramática del Papel y la Referencia, preferencias de selección, FunGramKB, posesión.

1. INTRODUCTION

Selection restrictions have been a much debated issue since their first appearance in Generative Grammar in Katz and Fodor. Many scholars have dealt with them from a variety of theoretical stances: from syntactic perspectives, for example, Chomsky, to more semantic approaches, such as Weinreich and Coseriu, as well as cognitive ones, like Taylor, to name just a few. Within Role and Reference Grammar (hereafter RRG; Van Valin; Van Valin and LaPolla), selection restrictions are not expressed directly in logical structures but are stipulated on an *ad hoc* basis. For example, there is a general lexical principle to account for the fact that the first argument in the logical structure of verbs of perception, cognition, propositional attitude, emotion and internal experience must be a sentient, animate entity (Van Valin and LaPolla 156). This is certainly so because there is not yet a lexico-semantic representation that provides a full decomposition of all these aspects of meaning, since the idea is that "the RRG semantic representation would ultimately have to be given a full interpretation in a formal semantic theory" (Van Valin 50).

The goal of this paper is to present selection restrictions from a conceptualist framework such as the lexico-conceptual knowledge base *Functional Grammar Knowledge Base* (FunGramKB[1] henceforth; Mairal and Periñán, "Anatomy"; "Teoría"; Periñán and Arcas, "Meaning," "Microconceptual," "Cognitive," "Deep," "Architecture," "Ontological"; Periñán and Mairal, "Bringing," "Gramática"), specifically, its Ontology or the module where semantic knowledge is stored. We believe that, if the current RRG semantic representations —stored in the lexicon— are linked to the conceptual information stored in the FunGramKB Ontology, the *ad hoc* stipulations previously mentioned could be dispensed with.

This article is structured as follows. In section 2, concepts such as *collocation* and selection *restriction* are discussed within the context of FunGramKB. In section 3, the cognitive domain of POSSESSION is employed to exemplify the most relevant selectional constraints captured in the basic concepts (subsection 3.1), terminal concepts (subsection 3.2), and subconcepts (subsection 3.3) of this dimension. In subsection 3.4, we also detail how the selectional preferences coded in

[1] FunGramKB was born as a user-friendly online lexico-conceptual natural language processing system that sought to develop a conceptual approach based on deep semantics. Drawing from previous work by Periñán and Arcas ("Meaning", "Microconceptual", "Cognitive"), this knowledge-base system has fused with the comprehensive theory of meaning, grounded on the RRG framework, known as the Lexical Constructional Model (hereafter LCM; Mairal and Ruiz de Mendoza, "New," "Levels"; Ruiz de Mendoza and Mairal, among others) in an attempt to build an updated and robust FunGramKB that benefits from the best of both worlds, that is, a lexico-conceptual knowledge base with rich semantic and syntactic information. For further information on FunGramKB and the LCM, we refer the reader to the Lexicom group research webpage: <www.lexicom.es>.
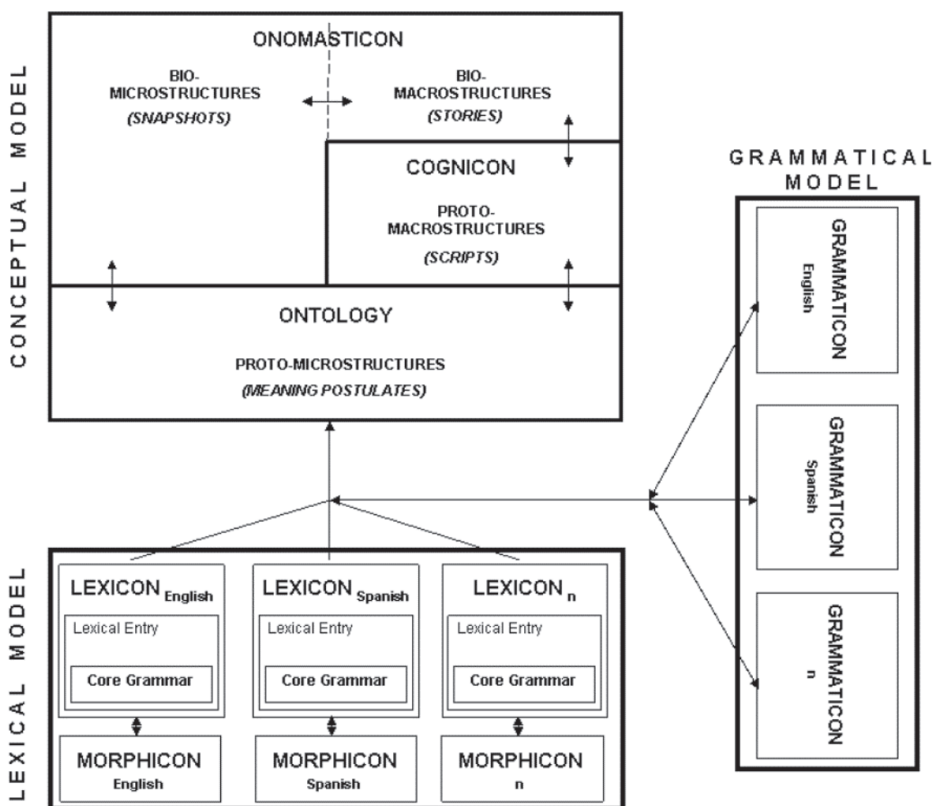
Fig. 1. FunGramKB modules (<www.fungramkb.com>).

these three types of concepts are arrived at and where collocations are incorporated in FunGramKB. Finally, some conclusions are provided in section 4.

2. THE CONCEPTS OF COLLOCATION AND SELECTION RESTRICTION WITHIN FUNGRAMKB

As Mairal and Periñán ("Anatomy" 220) point out, FunGramKB is made up of three information levels (see Figure 1):

i) Lexical level = linguistic knowledge
ii) Grammatical level = linguistic knowledge
iii) Conceptual level = non-linguistic knowledge

Each of these information levels in turn consists of several independent but interrelated modules. The *lexical level* comprises a) the various lexica (e.g. English,

Spanish, Italian, German, etc.),[2] which store morphosyntactic, pragmatic and collocational information about lexical units, preserving the major linguistic assumptions of RRG—logical structures, macroroles, and so forth—and b) the Morphicon, which handles cases of inflectional morphology. The *grammatical module* or Grammaticon is currently being developed within the Lexicom group. Its function is to capture the properties that are specific to the most relevant constructional families in the languages under consideration in the Ontology which, so far, are English and Spanish. The *conceptual level* consists of three modules: a) the Ontology or the hierarchical structure of concepts; b) the Cognicon, where procedural information is kept; and c) the Onomasticon, where information about instances of entities and events is stored. This division of labor between linguistic knowledge in the lexical and grammatical levels and non-linguistic knowledge in the conceptual level conditions the way selectional preferences and collocations are treated in FunGramKB. Since the lexical level accounts for morphosyntactic, constructional and pragmatic lexical knowledge, collocations, but not selectional preferences, belong in here. Let us explain this in detail.

Since its first occurrence in Firth, the term collocation has been discussed extensively in the bibliography and under various names too: co-*occurrences* (Harris), *lexical solidarities* (Coseriu), *lexical selection* (Bosque, "Más"), and so on.[3] In FunGramKB, however, collocations are understood in a broad sense to refer to those combinations of lexemes that commonly and frequently co-occur in a language, including both grammatical and lexical collocations. Thus, the fact that in English something depends *on* something else, but in Spanish it depends *de*—"of" —or that one *takes* a size five in shoes in English but in Spanish the verb used is *calzar*, find their way into the various lexica of FunGramKB, depending on the language the collocations are associated with.

As for selection restrictions, unlike the restrictive treatment given by Generative Grammar, they are understood not as semantic requirements on the nature of the arguments a predicate subcategorizes for, but as conceptual constraints prototypically related to cognitive situations. They are not word-oriented, so their place in FunGramKB is the conceptual level, specifically, the Ontology. For instance, let us take the concept EAT. Among the 350 events or so stored in the Ontology, which presents the hierarchical catalogue of all the concepts a person has in mind when talking about everyday situations, the first participant of the concept EAT is codified as being prototypically human or animal, whether you are using English, Spanish or Japanese to express it. The reason for this is that our commonsense

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[2] Although so far English and Spanish are fully supported in the current version of FunGramKB, in the near future other languages such as Italian, German, French, Bulgarian and Catalan will also be contemplated (cf. Periñán and Mairal, "Anatomy" 266).

[3] The interested reader can find a thorough review of the main authors that have studied this topic in Koike. Among others, one can mention the studies on English, German and French collocations by Halliday ("Categories", "Lexis"), Sinclair, Coseriu, Mitchell, Mel'cuk or Cruse, as well as the accounts of Spanish collocations by Mendívil, Alonso Ramos, Corpas, and Wotjak.
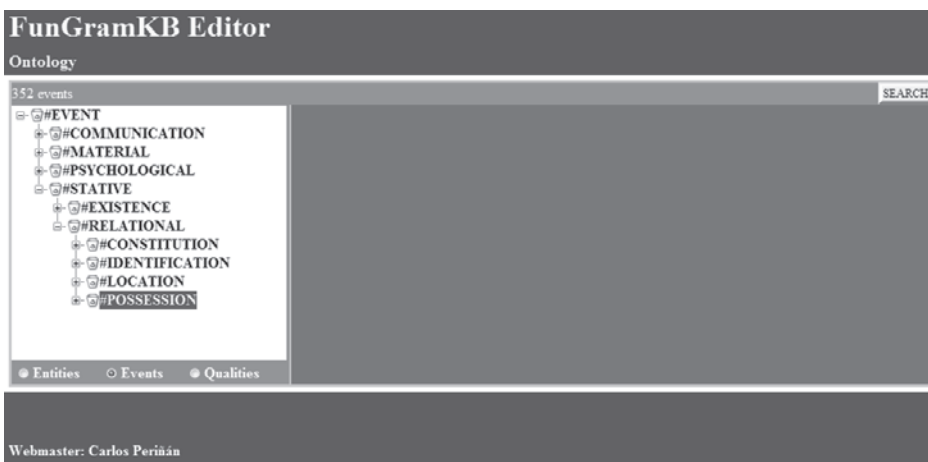
Fig. 2. Possession in the FunGramKB Ontology.

knowledge tells us that, if we want to be consistent with our world model, in order to eat you need a mouth, which is something that only animals and people have. Therefore, traditional selection restrictions are better known as *selectional preferences* in FunGramKB. In the next section, we detail where selectional preferences appear and how they are described in the Ontology within POSSESSION.

It should be emphasized that the approach FunGramKB takes on selectional preferences as belonging in the conceptual level of information is totally consistent with the view, sustained by most linguists—Coseriu, McCawley, Fillmore, Bosque ("Combinatoria"), to name just a few - that selection restrictions provide non-linguistic information, since the information expressed through features like *human*, *animal*, and so forth, has no relation whatsoever with our knowledge of languages like English, Spanish or Japanese, but with "the real world" and our experiences there.

3. FUNGRAMKB SELECTIONAL PREFERENCES: THE DOMAIN OF POSSESSION

Selectional preferences appear in the Ontology in two conceptual schemata known as thematic frames (henceforth TFs) and meaning postulates (hereafter MPs). They will be exemplified in the dimension of POSSESSION which, according to Faber and Mairal (264) is:

> an artificial relationship established between two entities, one of whom has the right or authority to use the other as he wishes and has the right or authority to control anyone else 's use of the other, and to impose sanctions for uses other than those he permits. (Jackendoff 79)

In the figure 2, we can see the domain of POSSESSION in the Ontology as hierarchically connected to relational > stative > events:

As explained in Periñán and Mairal ("Bringing" 267), TFs and MPs provide the semantic properties used to characterize the basic and terminal concepts that populate the Ontology.[4] The former, which appear headed by symbol +, are explained in 3.1, whereas the latter, preceded by symbol $, are presented in 3.2.

At this stage, it is worth highlighting the importance of basic concepts, terminal concepts and subconcepts for a fine-grained knowledge base such as FunGramKB, based on deep semantics. As posited in Periñán and Arcas ("Cognitive"), the FunGramKB MPs offer rich conceptual descriptions with which lexical units are then associated, that is, each lexical unit is provided with a real definition formalized employing what has been termed Conceptual Representation Language or COREL (Periñán and Mairal, "Bringing", "Gramática"). On the contrary, other knowledge bases grounded on surface semantics, such as DOLCE (Gangemi et al.; Masolo et al.), SIMPLE (Pedersen and Keson; Lenci et al.), and Mikrokosmos (Beale, Nirenburg and Mahesh; Nirenburg et al.), describe the conceptual content of lexical units relationally, i.e. via associations with other units in the lexicon, which restricts its expressive power and amounts to redundancy (cf. Velardi, Pazienza, and Fasolo). Therefore, all the detailed specifications done by knowledge engineers on the MPs and TFs that bring about terminal concepts and subconcepts can only but contribute to the fine-grained granularity of the FunGramKB Ontology, as opposed to other NLP systems.

3.1. Selectional Preferences in Basic Concepts

One must bear in mind that both TFs and MPs employ concepts to formally describe meaning. Consequently, they are language-independent conceptual schemata, not lexical representations. Example (1) shows the TF and MP of the basic concept +WEAR_00, to which lexical units like English *wear, have on, dress* or Spanish *llevar, llevar puesto, traer*, and so forth are linked:

(1)   +WEAR_00:
       TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00 ^ +PET_00)Theme (x2: +CLOTHING_00^
       +ORNAMENT_00)Referent

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[4] The FunGramKB Ontology distinguishes three different conceptual levels, each one with concepts of a different type (Periñán and Arcas, "Meaning"): (a) Metaconcepts (e.g. #abstract, #psychological, #possession, etc.), which form the upper level in the taxonomy and, as Periñán and Arcas ("Reusing" 72) point out, can be regarded as "hidden categories", that is, concepts that, since they are not associated with specific lexical units, can be employed as hidden superordinates and avoid circularity; (b) Basic concepts, preceded by symbol +, which are used as defining units that enable the construction of MPs for basic concepts and terminals, as well as taking part as selectional preferences in TFs: for example, +HUMAN_00, +ON_00, or +BE_00; (c) Terminal concepts, which are headed by symbol $ but are neither hierarchically structured nor have definitory potential to take part in MPs: for example $GRASP_00, $SPORT_00, $SUBTITLE_00.
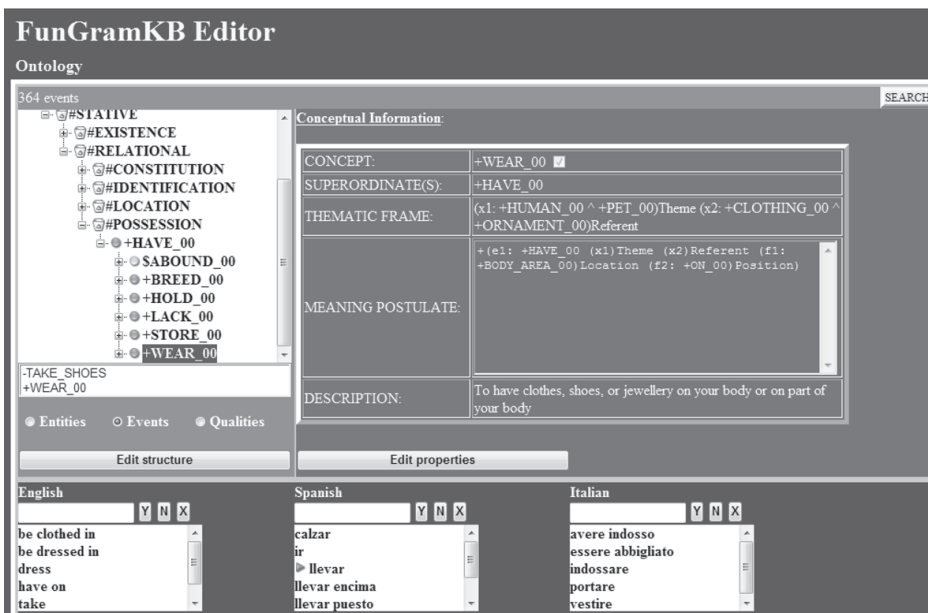
Fig. 3. Ontological information of +WEAR_00.

MP: +(e1: +HAVE_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1:
+BODY_AREA_00) Location (f2: +ON_00)Position)

The TF and MP above specify the number and type of participants involved in the prototypical cognitive situation of *wearing something*, as well as the generic features associated with the conceptual meaning of this concept, which are expressed in the MP in the form of one or more logically connected predications $(e_1, e_2... e_n)$ (cf. Periñán and Arcas, "Meaning" 39). Since every participant in the TF must be referenced through co-indexation to a participant in the MP of that concept, (1) has the following interpretation: a typically human entity or pet (x1 = Theme) has clothes or ornaments (x2 = Referent) located on his/her body (Location). The selectional preferences of +WEAR_00 are then the basic concepts +HUMAN_00, +PET_00, +CLOTHING_00, +ORNAMENT_00, +BODY_AREA_00 and +ON_00. They are situated in the TFs and MPs of the Ontology because it is there that they can exert constraints typically related to the cognitive situation displayed by the events. If we come to think about the event of wearing something, we all know that human beings and pets are the ones that can prototypically have ribbons, clothes, shoes, jewelry, and so forth. Therefore, through the selectional preferences +HUMAN_00, +PET_00, +CLOTHING_00, +ORNAMENT_00, we are going beyond linguistic knowledge to try and capture our world model. Figure 3 shows how this information is displayed in the Ontology:

Examples (2), (3) and (4) illustrate the selectional preferences for the basic concepts HAVE, HOLD and STORE:

(2)   +HAVE_00
        TF: (x1:+HUMAN_00^+ANIMAL_00)Theme
        (x2:+CORPUSCULAR_00^+HUMAN_00^+ANIMAL_00^+SUBSTAN-CE_00
        ^+ORGANIZATION_00)Referent

(3)   +HOLD_00
        TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00)Theme (x2: +CORPUSCULAR_00)Referent
        MP: +(e1: +HAVE_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1: +HAND_00 |
        +ARM _00)Location)

(4)   +STORE_00
        TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00 ^ +ANIMAL_00 ^ +ORGANIZATION_00) Theme (x2:
        +ARTEFACT_00 ^ +CORPUSCULAR_00 ^ +SUBSTANCE _00) Referent
        MP: +(e1: +HAVE_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1)Location (f2:
        +LONG _01)Duration)

As for the concept +HAVE_00, its representation of (2) only includes the TF. There is no MP because it is an undefinable or semantic primitive and no other concepts can be used to provide its conceptual meaning. Thus, its TF describes a prototypical cognitive scenario in which entity 1 (Theme), being typically human or animal (+HUMAN_00, +ANIMAL_00), has or possesses another entity 2 (Referent), which is typically a three dimensional countable object, or a human, or an animal, or a type of substance, or a company, which the basic concepts +CORPUS-CULAR_00, +HUMAN_00, +ANIMAL_00, +SUBSTANCE_00, and +ORGANI-ZATION_00 codify and the exclusion logical connector "^" links.

The concepts +HOLD_00 and +STORE_00, on the other hand, do have a TF and a MP. The basic concept +HOLD_00 has the following conceptual definition: a typically human entity (x1 = Theme) has another entity (x2 = Referent) located in his arms and/or hands (cf. the preferences +HAND_00 and +ARM_00, linked with the disjunction logical connector "|"), being this second entity proto-typically a three dimensional or corpuscular object (+CORPUSCULAR_00). The representation of +STORE_00 details that a human or an animal or an organiza-tion (x1 = Theme) can typically have man-made objects or corpuscular objects or substances (x2 = Referent) kept somewhere (f1 = Location) and for a long time (f2 = Duration).

3.2. SELECTIONAL PREFERENCES IN TERMINAL CONCEPTS

Selectional preferences are also valuable when creating terminal concepts in the FunGramKB Ontology. Since a terminal concept can only be encoded when

there is a conceptual constraint on the meaning of a basic concept (Mairal and Periñán, "Anatomy" 223-24), selectional preferences allow us to codify the distinguishing parameters that differentiate them. Let us have a look at the representation of the terminal concepts \$ABOUND_00, \$GRASP_00, \$SPORT_00 and \$REGISTER_00, which are a further specification of the basic concepts +HAVE_00, +HOLD_00, +WEAR_00, and +STORE_00, respectively:

(5) \$ABOUND_00
     TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00 ^ +ANIMAL_00)Theme (x2: +CORPUSCULAR_00 ^ +ANIMAL_00 ^ +SUBSTANCE_00 ^ +ORGANIZATION _00)Referent
     MP: +(e1: +HAVE_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1: +MUCH_00)Quantity)

(6) \$GRASP_00
     TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00)Theme (x2: +CORPUSCULAR_00)Referent
     MP: +(e1: +HOLD_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1: +TIGHT_00)Manner)

(7) \$SPORT_00
     TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00)Theme (x2: +CLOTHING_00 ^ +HAIR_01 ^ +ORNAMENT_00)Referent
     MP: +(e1: +WEAR_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1: (e2: +SHOW_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f2: +PROUD_00)Manner)) Purpose)

(8) \$REGISTER_00
     TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00)Theme (x2: +INFORMATION_OBJECT _00)Referent
     MP: +(e1: +STORE_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1: +ARTEFACT _00)Instrument (f2:(e2: fut +PERCEIVE_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent))Purpose)

     If compared with the representation of +HAVE_00 in (2), the terminal concept \$ABOUND_00 specifies that what is had (x2 = Referent) happens to occur in large numbers. This is accurately codified in the MP of \$ABOUND_00 by means of the inclusion of the selectional preference +MUCH_00, which exerts a conceptual constraint on the f1 or the QUANTITY adverbial/satellite. Notice that this concept is lexicalized in English and Spanish with verbs such as *abound*, *be rich in*, *abundar* and *rebosar*.

     \$GRASP_00, to which lexical units like English *carry*, *bear*, *grasp*, *clasp*, *clutch*, *grip*, *hold on* or *wield*, and Spanish *aferrar*, *agarrar*, *asir* or *empuñar* are linked, narrows down the content of +HOLD_00 – see representation (3) - in the sense that this event is now performed firmly, tightly. By employing the basic concept +TIGHT_00 as a selectional preference in the Manner satellite f1, we can easily record this.

     Furthermore, when one wears something very proudly so that everybody can see it, which in English is expressed by the verb *sport* and in Spanish by *lucir* and *ostentar*, the terminal concept \$SPORT_00 arises. This further elaboration of the

basic concept +WEAR_00 is accounted for firstly by restricting the first participant to only human beings (x1: +HUMAN_00) but expanding the second participant to also hairdos (x2: +HAIR_01),[5] and secondly, by including the parameter purpose (f1), which itself includes a manner parameter (f2) with the selectional preference +PROUD_00. Notice that the selectional preference in f1 is not a basic concept but another predication or "e2" with its own participants: +SHOW_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent.

$REGISTER_00 provides us with another instance of a predication functioning as a selectional preference: f2 = (e2: fut +PERCEIVE_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent))Purpose. This terminal, lexicalized as *record, register* (English), *grabar* and *registrar* (Spanish), is brought about when the first participant in the TF of +STORE_00 (cf. (4)) is limited to humans, whereas the second one makes reference to data, texts, and so forth, codified via the concept +INFORMATION_OBJECT _00. The MP, on the other hand, incorporates two satellites: the instrument employed (f1) and the purpose of the "registering" scenario (f2). In the former, the selectional preference +ARTEFACT_00 expresses that tape recorders, computers, and so forth, are typically used to register information, while the latter specifies that this is carried out so that the recorded information (x2 = Referent) can still be seen (+PERCEIVE_00) in the future (marked with the tense operator *fut*). Thus, selectional preferences can be expressed through predications or through one or more basic concepts, with the proviso that concepts must necessarily be entities or qualities.[6] Below is the representation of these four terminal concepts in the Ontology, preceded by a yellow bullet and the $ symbol:

3.3. SUBCONCEPTS

It is also worth mentioning that there are cases in which the conceptual narrowing or specification takes place exclusively inside the TF of a basic or terminal concept, without varying the MP. These are known as *subconcepts* in FunGramKB

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[5] In the syntax of COREL, whenever we have a concept displaying more than one meaning, and thus associated with different conceptual scenarios, numbers 00, 01, 02 are simply employed to differentiate them. In this particular case, +HAIR_00 is identified with the hair that grows on people's and animals' bodies, whereas +HAIR_01 is associated with hairdos and everything related to the hair that grows on the head.

[6] Although this paper deals only with events, the FunGramKB Ontology is actually split into three subontologies, since subsumption (IS-A) is the only taxonomic relation permitted. Therefore, each subontology arranges lexical units of a different part of speech: #ENTITIES for nouns (e.g. +BIRD_00, +SOUL_00, +FREEDOM_00...), #EVENTS for verbs (+WEAR_00, +TRANSLATE_00, etc.), and #QUALITIES for adjectives and some adverbs (i.e. +HAPPY_00, +ALONE_00...). In Periñán and Mairal ("Gramática" 20) it is made explicit that qualities can only function as selectional preferences of participants that have the thematic roles Attribute, Frequency, Position or Speed.
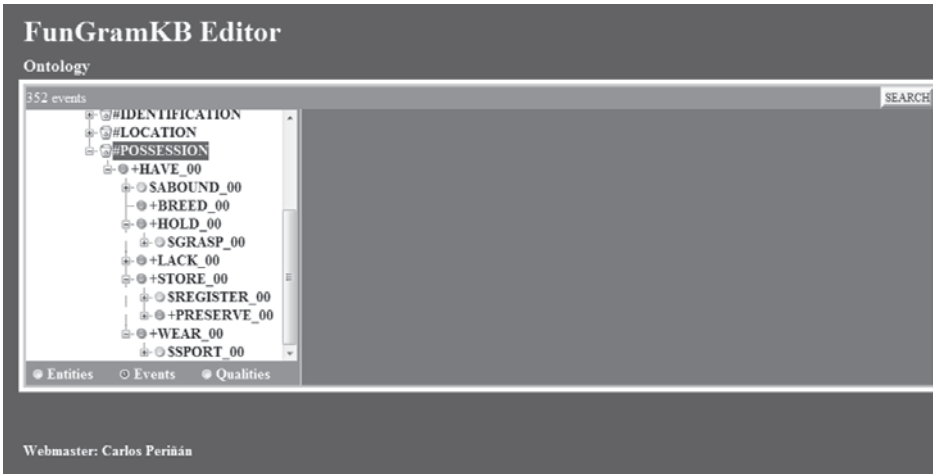
FunGramKB Editor

Ontology

Fig. 4. The terminal concepts abound, grasp, register, and sport in the Ontology.

and appear preceded by a minus symbol and in capital letters. Within the domain of POSSESSION, we have been able to identify the following ones:

(9)

       a. -WIELD: a conceptual specification of the terminal concept $GRASP_00 (cf. (6)) and lexicalized as *wield*, *carry*, *bear* and *empuñar*.
       b. -MISPLACE: linked to the basic concept +LOSE_00 and lexicalized in Spanish as *traspapelar* (lit. "misplace a paper").
       c. -SAVE: associated with the basic concept +STORE_00 (cf. (4)), which English and Spanish express as *save* and *ahorrar*.
       d. -TAKE_SHOES: a specification of the basic concept +WEAR_00 (check (1)) and expressed in Spanish with the verb *calzar* ("wear shoes or boots").

All the above subconcepts are not really visible in the Ontology, unlike basic concepts and terminal concepts —cf. Figures 3 and 4—. In other words, they do not *hang* in the hierarchical organization of concepts because they are conceptual specifications of one of the participants of an already existing concept. For instance, -WIELD arises because the selectional preferences for the second participant in the TF of $GRASP_00 are weapons only, unlike the corpuscular objects specified for $GRASP_00 in (6). Notice, however, that both share the same MP.

As illustrated in (10), in the case of —MISPLACE the first participant is exclusively restricted to humans and the second one to paper. This clearly narrows down the selectional preferences of the Theme and Referent entities in the TF of +LOSE_00, which could also include animals for the first participant and only corpuscular objects for the second one —cf. representation (11) below—. Both

share the same conceptual meaning or MP, namely, an entity does not have another entity because s/he put it somewhere s/he cannot remember.

(10)   –MISPLACE
        TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00)Theme (x2: +PAPER_00)Referent

(11)   +LOSE_00
        TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00^+ANIMAL_00)Theme (x2:
        +CORPUSCULAR _00)Referent
        MP: +(e1: +LACK_00 (x1)Theme (x2)Referent (f1: (e2: past +PUT_00
        (x1)Agent (x2)Theme (x3)Origin (x4)Goal))Reason (f2: (e3: n
        +REMEMBER_00 (x1)Agent (x1)Theme (x4)Referent))Reason)

As far as –SAVE is concerned, it is also the selectional preferences of the two participants of +STORE_00 that are specified. If compared to its TF in (4), the first participant of –SAVE does not include animals, whereas the second one is only money:

(12)   –SAVE
        TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00 ^ +ORGANIZATION_00)Theme (x2:
        +MONEY _00)Referent

Finally, when the selectional preferences of the Theme and Referent entities of the basic concept +WEAR_00 are restricted to people and shoes, boots, and so forth, respectively, we come up with the subconcept –TAKE_SHOES:

(13)   –TAKE_SHOES
        TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00)Theme (x2: +SHOE_00)Referent

3.4. The Elaboration of Selectional Preferences

But the immediate question now is: how have we been able to work through the selectional preferences commented above? For this purpose, we have greatly benefited from monolingual, bilingual, multilingual dictionaries, lexicons, thesauri and corpora available in the market. Among others, we can mention:

(14)   English data: *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, English Collins Dictionary* and *Thesaurus, Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Multiwordnet, WordReference, Woxicon,* BBI, LTP, OCD, The Corpus Concordance and Collocation Sampler from *The Collins Wordbanks Online English Corpus, British National Corpus* (BNC), *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA).

(15)   Spanish data: MARÍA MOLINER, CASARES, CLAVE, REDES, ADESSE: *Alternancias de Diátesis y Esquemas Sintáctico-Semánticos del Español,* CREA:

Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual, DRAE*: Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, *Corpus del Español* (Mark Davies).

One word is needed here for the exhaustive and precise work on selection restrictions carried out by Ignacio Bosque in *REDES*. It has been really useful for our purposes, since it is one of the first Spanish dictionaries exclusively devoted to these issues, which, unlike the English collocation dictionaries, takes as starting point the semantic relation between a predicate and its argument(s) and the notion of lexical class. However, as there are not yet dictionaries that provide us with conceptual definitions, preferences, TFs, and so forth, we have had to basically follow this step-by-step process:

(i)   look up every single word belonging in the scenario we are working on in the English and Spanish resources mentioned in (14) and (15). As a way of exemplification, let us employ the terminal concept $SPORT_00 in (7),[7] which, as commented above, is lexicalized in English and Spanish as *sport/lucir* and *ostentar*;

(ii)   note down meticulously all the lexical information given for their selection restrictions, collocations, words that typically occur as subjects or objects, examples, and so forth. Below is some of the information the resources consulted provide us for *sport/lucir* and *ostentar*:

(16) *sport*:
    a. *Longman*: be sporting something, to be wearing something or have something on your body and show it to people in a proud way: *Eric was sporting a new camel-hair coat.*
    b. *Cambridge*: to wear or be decorated with something: *He sported bell-bottom trousers.*
    c. *Merriam-Webster*: to display or wear usually ostentatiously: *sporting expensive new shoes.*
    d. *COCA*: list of the most frequent collocates:[8]

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[7] Jiménez and Luzondo detail the laborious process carried out by knowledge engineers to elaborate the different types of concepts that populate the FunGramKB Ontology, particularly, terminal concepts. That methodology has also been employed in this paper in the creation of the terminals and subconcepts associated with the metaconcept POSSESSION.

[8] Since the COCA list of collocates includes the four words that appear both to the left and to the right of the search, a process of discarding adjectives, adverbs, other senses of the search, and so forth, as well as sorting out which words were functioning as subject and which ones as object, has necessarily been applied manually.

TABLE 1. COLLOCATES OF *SPORT*	
SUBJECT	OBJECT
MODELS	TATTOOS
MEN	SEAMS
BUILDINGS	PADS
STORES	T-SHIRTS
BRANCHES	EYEBROWS
VEHICLES	BOOTS
SHARES	PAIR
ROOMS	NAMES
SHOP	UPPERS
WALLS	HEADDRESSES
LEAVES	BULGES
PLANTS	HAIRSTYLE
FLOWERS	BEARDS
	SKIRTS
	JACKETS
	HATS
	SHIRTS
	SCREENS
	JEWELRY
	SHAPES
	SUITS
	BAGS
	POCKET
	APPEARANCE
	UNITS
	COLORS

(17) *lucir/sport*:

    a. *Moliner*: tr. *Exhibir una ÷cosa de que se está satisfecho u orgulloso. ("to show something which you are proud of").

    b. *Clave*: Exhibir o mostrar presumiendo: *Va a las fiestas para lucir las joyas. Le gusta lucirse ante las personas que todavía no lo conocen.* ("to exhibit showing off: *She/He goes to parties to show off her/his jewellery. She/He likes showing off in front of people who do not know him/her yet*").

c. *DRAE*: Llevar a la vista, exhibir lo que alguien se ha puesto, normalmente como adorno. ("to wear, display something you are wearing, usu. as an ornament").

d. *ADESSE*: list of the most frequent collocates:

TABLE 2. COLLOCATES OF *LUCIR*	
SUBJECT	OBJECT
EXTRANJEROS/FOREIGNERS	PEINADO/HAIRDO
POBLACIÓN/POPULATION	VESTIDO/DRESS
JÓVENES/YOUNGSTERS	PELO/HAIR
JOVEN/YOUNGSTER	CABELLO/HAIR
CHICA/GIRL	PANCARTAS/BANNERS
VERÓNICA LAKE	CADENA/NECKLACE
AMBAS/BOTH	MARGARITAS/DAISIES
	TRAJE/SUIT
	ABRIGO/COAT
	COLMILLOS/CANINE TEETH
	ALHAJAS/JEWELRY
	EMBLEMAS/EMBLEM
	FRAC/TAIL COAT
	FLORES/FLOWERS
	ESTAMPA/DESIGN
	PELAMBRE/BODYHAIR
	SELLO/STAMP
	HABILIDADES/ABILITIES

(18) *ostentar/sport*

a. *Moliner*: tr. Hacer, con satisfacción, orgullo o jactancia, que cierta ÷cosa propia sea vista o conocida por los demás: "Ostenta su belleza [sus títulos, sus joyas, su amistad con el ministro." ("To display proudly so that it can be seen: she/he sports titles, beauty, jewels, her/his friendship with the minister").

b. *Clave*: **1** Exhibir con orgullo, vanidad o presunción: *El capitán del equipo ostentaba el trofeo delante de los periodistas.* ("to display proudly, ostentatiously or pretentiously: *The team captain sported the trophy in front of the journalists*").

2 Mostrar o llevar de forma visible: *Los jugadores ostentaban un brazalete negro en señal de duelo por su antiguo entrenador.* ("To show or wear in a visible way: *The players sported black armbands in mourning for their late coach*").

c. *DRAE*: **1.** tr. Mostrar o hacer patente algo. ("to show or make something visible")

d. *ADESSE*: list of the most frequent collocates:

TABLE 3. COLLOCATES OF *OSTENTAR*	
SUBJECT	OBJECT
MUCHACHA/GIRL	CONDICIÓN/POSITION
INDIVIDUOS/INDIVIDUALS	CARTERA/PORTFOLIO
BRUNETTINO	MANDO/COMMAND
ESPAÑOLAS/SPANISH WOMEN	APARIENCIA/APPEARANCE
CULTURA/CULTURE	RASGOS/FEATURES
ACUERDOS/AGREEMENTS	GUSTO/TASTE
	ESCUDOS/BADGES
	MEDALLA/MEDAL
	CHAPITA/BADGE

(iii)   look for general labels or "umbrella" patterns that could work for every word linked to a particular concept and in every language we are working with. One cannot forget that, although taking lexical information as point of departure, our purpose is to list selectional preferences, that is, conceptual narrowing. Therefore, we must really abstract away from specific words and come up with the participants our commonsense knowledge would identify as being prototypically part of cognitive scenarios such as "having something", "losing something", and so on. For example, in the typical scenario of "sporting something", the common collocates of the words that lexicalize this concept could be generalized as:

(19) first participant: people.[9]

_____

[9] Even though words such as *vehicles*, *rooms*, *stores*, *culture*, *leaves*, and so on can also occur as first participants of these verbal predicates, it is worth stressing that a nuclear Ontology like the one developed by FunGramKB aims to gather those concepts possessed by an average cultivated speaker, which excludes the metaphorical and metonymic uses speakers may freely employ.

Fig. 5. Conceptual route of *shoe*.

(20) second participant: clothes, shoes, hairdos, jewelry, bags, looks, badges, tattoos.

(iv)   find the appropriate basic concepts to codify the abstract labels among the 1,300 concepts available in the FunGramKB Ontology: +HUMAN_00, +GARMENT_00, and so on.[10] Such move is laboriously carried out by looking up in the Ontology each of the typical participants identified in (19) and (20) so that we are able to reach the basic concept to which these words are linked. As stated in Periñán and Arcas ("Ontological Commitments" 32-33), the FunGramKB Ontology allows multiple inheritance, that is to say, a conceptual unit can be subsumed by two or more concepts, creating complex hierarchies. This is shown in the first predication of the MP of concepts, which always includes all the superordinate concepts of the *definiendum*, together with one and only one logical relation (&, | or ^) between the multiple parents. In this way, this first predication of the MP explicitly states the conceptual route that determines the IS-A path to its root. Consequently, in order to identify the basic concepts that codify selectional preferences, we traced the conceptual route taken by a particular concept to which specific words may be linked. For instance, if we search the lexical unit *shoe* in the Ontology, we will find the following MP and conceptual route (fig 5).

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[10] As commented in Mairal and Periñán ("Anatomy" 224), the inventory of almost 1,300 basic concepts employed in FunGramKB stems from the defining vocabulary used in the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (Procter) and in the *Diccionario para la enseñanza de la lengua española* (Ezquerra).
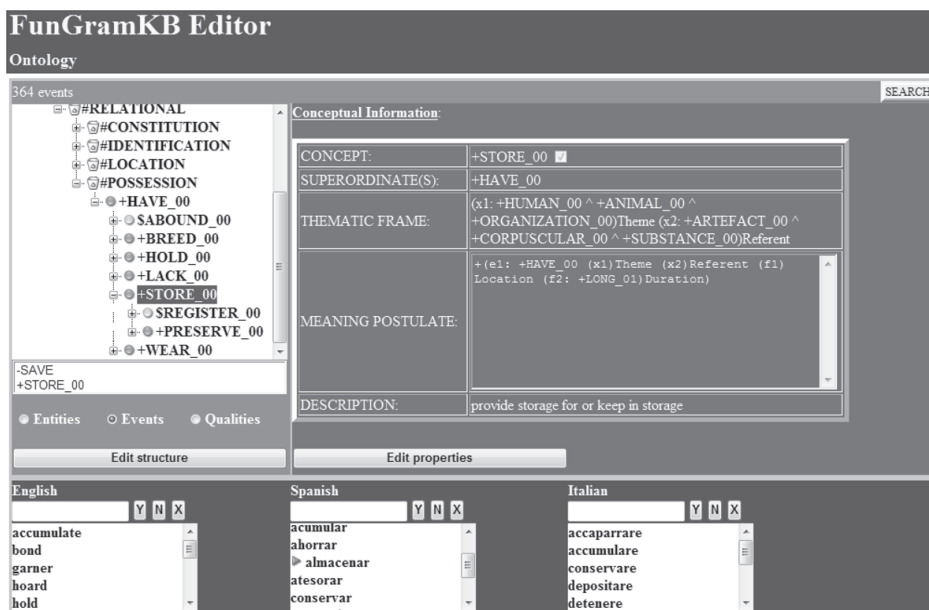
Fig. 6. English, Spanish and Italian lexical units linked to the concept +STORE_00.

Since the word *clothes* is also traced down and linked to the basic concept +CLOTHING_00, this is the concept chosen to express both of them as selectional preferences in the TF of +SPORT_00. Likewise, the rest of the lexical units of (20) have been conceptually tracked down, resulting in the following selectional preferences, repeated below for convenience as (21):

(21) $SPORT_00
        TF: (x1: +HUMAN_00)Theme (x2: +CLOTHING_00 ^ +HAIR_01 ^ +ORNAMENT_00)Referent

After this account of selectional preferences, there is yet a last issue that needs to be addressed, that is, the place of collocations in FunGramKB. As pointed out in section 2, collocations are word-oriented so they are stored in their appropriate lexica, depending on the language the word is associated with. For instance, let us take the Spanish word *atesorar/hoard* or *accumulate*, which is one of the words that lexicalizes the concept +STORE_00 in (4), as illustrated (Fig. 6).

According to *REDES*, *atesorar* frequently occurs with the following words: *victoria/victory*, *éxito/success*, *información/information*, *secreto/secret*, and *recuerdo/memories*. Therefore, FunGramKB inserts all these collocates in the Spanish lexicon as part of the morphosyntactic and pragmatic information linked to this word. To be more specific, these collocates appear in the LCM core grammar block of the Spanish lexicon, in the "collocations" slot for the second argument (y) of *atesorar*, as can be seen in Fig 7.

LCM CORE GRAMMAR:

AktionsArt:
- [ ] State
- [ ] Activity
- [ ] Accomplishment
- [ ] Achievement

You determine the canonical lexical class(es) of the verb.

Lexical Template:

Variables: ← no functions →

Idiosyncratic features:

[MR ← no value selected → ← no value selected →

Thematic frame mapping:

X = [no function] [no function] [no function]

A REMINDER OF FUNGRAMKB PARTICIPANTS:
THEME: Entity that owns another entity.
REFERENT: Entity that is owned.

Prepositions:

X = a Y N   Y = a Y N   Z = a Y N

Collocations:

X = Y N   Y = Y N   Z = Y N

éxito
información
recuerdo
secreto
victoria

Fig. 7. Collocations of *atesorar/hoard* in the FunGramKB Spanish lexicon.

On the other hand, its English equivalent *hoard*, according to the *Collins Corpus Concordance and Collocation Sampler* consulted, typically collocates with words such as *flaw*, *time*, *misery*, *nostalgia* and *information*. Accordingly, as displayed below, these collocations appear in the English lexicon, specifically in the "collocations" slot for the second argument (y) of *hoard* (Fig. 8).

The lexico-conceptual nature of FunGramKB accounted for in these pages, that is, the lexical, grammatical and conceptual levels of information, allows a direct linkage between the grammatically salient lexical information of the RRG logical structures included in the different lexica—*Aktionsart* class, macrorol, and so forth, in Figures 7 and 8—and the conceptual meaning of the TFs and MPs of the Ontology. As detailed in Periñán and Mairal ("Bringing" 269-70), such a gap is bridged through an abstract representational mechanism known as *conceptual logical structure* (hereafter CLS). In fact, there is available a CLS Constructor that can automatically build CLSs from the RRG representations stored in the LCM Core Grammar block. To illustrate, the Constructor, among other things, would match each

variable in the lexical template of the word under consideration (e.g. *hoard*) with one participant in the TF of the concept that lexical item is linked to, that is, +STORE_00 in Figure 6. We will leave for further research the inner workings of the CLS Constructor.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper has put forth how selection restrictions and collocations can be accounted for by the FunGramKB 's conceptualist view on language. Among others, here are some of the advantages of such approach for RRG:

(i)   by posing three information levels, that is, the Ontology, the Grammaticon, and the different Lexica, RRG semantic representations can be deeply enriched, including all types of information that go well beyond those aspects

of meaning with an impact on syntax (e.g. selection restrictions) by linking these RRG structures to the conceptual meaning structures of the Ontology;

(ii) this theoretical move is done at a very low cost, because the Ontology is based on a hierarchical inference system, which means that information can be placed in and retrieved from all the different ontological properties: TFs, MPs, subconcepts, and so forth. Thus, "redundancy is minimized while informativeness is maximized" (Periñán and Mairal, "Bringing" 269);

(iii) since ontological concepts are universal, in principle every single language could be implemented in FunGramKB.

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A BI-MODAL AND SYSTEMIC-FUNCTIONAL STUDY
OF *DEAR ZOO* WITHIN THE TEXTUAL METAFUNCTION

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ABSTRACT

Based mainly on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar and Kress and van Leeuwen's Social Semiotics, this contribution attempts to employ a multimodal, verbal and visual analysis of the picture book *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell within the textual metafunction. The early age of the children for whom the tale is intended (under-two) determines the verbal and visual choices made by Campbell to help the child identify the main characters in the story and follow the development of their actions. The animals from the zoo are given special prominence both in the verbiage, where they are omitted by the use of suspense points in rhematic position, and in the visual mode, where they and their crates come to prominence through color contrast and saturation. Words and images contribute differently to the overall organization of the tale, since they give complementary and, in turn, essential information to the understanding of the narrative plot.

KEY WORDS: Systemic-functional linguistics, social semiotics, multimodality, theme, composition.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este artículo es realizar un análisis multimodal del libro ilustrado *Dear Zoo* de Rod Campbell dentro de la metafunción textual. Las herramientas utilizadas para estudiar los modos semióticos, verbal y visual, del cuento son la Lingüística Sistémico-Funcional de Halliday y la Semiótica Visual de Kress y van Leeuwen. La edad de los niños para los que el libro ilustrado ha sido escrito (0-2 años) determina las estrategias visuales y verbales adoptadas por Campbell para facilitar la identificación de los personajes principales y la comprensión del desarrollo argumental de la historia. Los animales enviados por el zoológico reciben una prominencia especial tanto en el modo verbal, donde no se hace una referencia explícita a ellos, como en el visual, donde la saturación y el contrate de color utilizados ayudan a mantener la atención del joven receptor. Palabras e imágenes contribuyen de forma distinta a la organización textual y composicional del cuento, aportando informaciones complementarias y, a su vez, necesarias, para la comprensión del mensaje.

PALABRAS CLAVE: lingüística sistémico-funcional, semiótica social, multimodalidad, tema, composición.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to analyze how verbal and visual modes complement one another in the picture book, *Dear Zoo*, written and illustrated by Rod Campbell and first published in 1982 by Abelard-Schuman Ltd. The edition used for this analysis is the version that came out in Campbell Books, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Books, in 1998.[1] The tools used to carry out this study are Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) (2004) and Kress and van Leeuwen's Visual Social Semiotics (2006). By adopting the systemic-functional approach, I will attempt to determine how the information is organized so that the tale creates a coherent whole (textual metafunction). In addition, by applying Kress and van Leeuwen's Visual Social Semiotics, the compositional meaning of the picture book will be analyzed in the visual mode, and compared with the information that the analysis of the verbiage reveals.[2]

Dear Zoo is nowadays established as a classic picture book for very young children, specifically children under the age of two. The tale tells the story of a child who writes a letter to the zoo to request a pet. The child receives several unsuitable animals, the identities of which are revealed when the flaps of the packing cases or crates where they are kept are lifted up: a roaring lion, an elephant, a giraffe, etc. Finally, after several attempts, the zoo sends the perfect pet, a puppy. Then the child decides to keep him. The plot is simple and repetitive, two characteristics typically associated with picture books intended for toddlers.

This paper is structured in the following way: firstly, SFL and Visual Social Semiotics accounts are briefly described. Later, the textual/compositional metafunctions are studied in order to show how verbal and visual components complement each other to create a tale that is both easy to understand for young children and, in turn, attractive enough to keep their attention alive. Thus, aspects related to thematic progression, information value, framing and salience are examined in both the verbiage and the images. Finally, the conclusions are obtained from the comparison of the meanings transmitted by intersemiotic relations established between words and illustrations.

2. SFG AND VISUAL SOCIAL SEMIOTICS

The theoretical foundation for this analysis is mainly extrapolated from the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) approach of language as a social semiotic

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[1] My sincere thanks to María Jesús Pérez (Universidad de La Laguna) and Maria Baldarelli (Suffolk Universtiy) for their comments and suggestions on a previous draft of this paper.

[2] The term "verbiage" is used here to reference the verbal mode of a multimodal message. Thus, the verbiage is the part of the message that is expressed through words or verbal language. Images, sounds, gestures, etc. are other semiotic modes employed in multimodal messages to convey meaning.

process (Halliday 1978, 2004). SFL deals with the way texts are articulated to be appropriate for particular situations of use. Halliday develops a Systemic Functional approach in relation to verbal language and offers a set of grammatical systems which realize the three metafunctions of language. In them, the clause can be analyzed simultaneously on the basis of how it represents the world (experiential metafunction), how it enacts social relations (interpersonal), and finally, according to the way it contributes to the organization of the clause as message (textual). Halliday's Systemic Functional approach has been extended to other semiotic modes other than language, including images and sounds (Halliday, *Language*; Kress and van Leeuwen). In fact, multimodal SFL deals with visual texts that are presumed to make meaning in the three metafunctional domains referred to before. In this sense, Kress and van Leeuwen propose a framework in which the system of choices available is specified to create meaning in visual artefacts on the basis of the three metafunctions developed by Halliday.

Linguistic structures are realized by processes, participants and circumstances to convey ideational meaning. In turn, visual messages can also communicate experiential meaning through narrative processes and some kind of classification or analysis through conceptual processes[3] (Kress and van Leeuwen). Regarding interpersonal function, the visual grammar offers possibilities for evaluating the visual material depicted on the basis on inter-relationships established between the Represented Participants of a composition and the viewer.[4] Finally, within the textual metafunction, Kress and van Leeuwen develop meaning making principles of compositional organization. Three areas are considered in this sense: information value, framing and salience, which are further developed in the following sections.

2.1. THE TEXTUAL METAFUNCTION

Of the three metafunctions that make up multimodal SFL, the textual/compositional is the focus of this study as the aim of this paper is to identify the choices available to the writer/illustrator to organize *Dear Zoo* both textually and visually as a coherent communicative artefact. As previously stated, the textual

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[3] In narrative images, the represented participants are connected by vectors of motion (actional) or by eyelines (reactional) and they are represented as doing something to or for one another. These narrative patterns, realized by specific visual techniques, serve to present unfolding actions and events, processes of change and transitory spatial arrangements (Kress and van Leeuwen 79; Royce 70). In contrast, conceptual images do not involve action or reaction on the part of the Represented Participants (RPs), but represent participants in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, structure or meaning (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).

[4] Image act and gaze, social distance and intimacy, horizontal angle and involvement and, finally, vertical angle and power, with their respective classifications, are the interactive features that Kress and van Leeuwen distinguish in their Grammar of Visual Design. For more information about the features related to the interactive metafunction, see Kress and van Leeuwen and Moya.

metafunction makes reference to the resources language has for creating coherent texts with relevance to the contexts in which they are produced and understood. Within these, the thematic structure gives the clause its character as a message, as a communicative event, analyzed as a two-part structure with thematic and rhematic elements.

Within SFL, Theme is considered a predication-internal entity (Halliday, *Introduction*, rev.; Martin and Rose; Moya and Pinar; Moya and Ávila) and is defined on the basis of two criteria: "The Theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that which locates and orients the clause within its context" (Halliday, *Introduction*, rev. 64). The rest of the message is where the clause moves after the point of departure and is called the Rheme, which in English always follows the initial position.

Theme is considered to be a meaningful choice that specifies the angle from which the speaker/writer projects their message: "It is what sets the scene for the clause itself and positions it in relation to the unfolding text" (Halliday, *Introduction*, rev. 66). In fact, Halliday distinguishes between marked and unmarked themes in order to analyze the communicative intentions that lead the speaker/writer to move a clause constituent from its typical place to the initial position of the clause. A theme is unmarked when it coincides with the subject of a declarative clause, the finite form or the wh-element of an interrogative modal clause or the predicate of an imperative structure. However, the speaker/writer does not always use a prototypical pattern; on many occasions the realization of his/her message requires a marked option with some specific informative connotations. Marked themes either provide some kind of setting for the clause or express a feature of contrast or emphasis.

Eggins' query into, "how much of what comes first in a clause counts as Theme" (Eggins 275-276) is of interest to us here. Although in many cases the theme is simple and is realized by a sole constituent, there are also clauses that present a more complex initial structure. In fact, Halliday admits the possibility that within the thematic part of a clause complex, three different types of theme can be included: ideational, interpersonal and textual themes. Halliday affirms that the theme of a clause extends from its beginning up to the first element that fulfills a function in transitivity and that this thematic constituent, mainly if it is a participant, tends to be topical (Halliday, *Introduction*; *Introduction*, rev.).

The theme is primarily concerned with the organization of information within individual clauses. However, linguistic studies over the past decades have assessed the theme also as a function that transcends the limits of the clause in order to contribute decisively to the global articulation of a text, establishing its method of development (Fries). This is probably the greatest merit that Daneš has added to studies on Functional Sentence Perspective and textual organization. Through his Thematic Progression theory, he demonstrates the importance of the thematic clause structure, with its two elements, theme and rheme, in the organization and cohesion of the message. Daneš (118-120) distinguishes three basic thematic progression patterns: 1. Simple Linear Thematic Progression or TP with linear thematization of rhemes. In this progression, the rheme of a clause becomes the thematic constituent of the following clause, giving the text a dynamic character; 2. TP with a con-

tinuous or constant theme. In this progression the same theme, although not necessarily carried out by the same clausal element, is shared by a series of utterances, each of which adds new information about it; 3. TP with derived Theme. In this model, a broad spectrum Theme, which Daneš calls hypertheme, gives rise to the themes of the clauses which follow to form a chain of subthemes deriving from the general Theme.[5] Although often texts do not conform to these models strictly, Daneš' Thematic Progression theory was and continues to be a necessary point of reference for many posterior studies on textual organization. Therefore, I shall keep it in mind to analyze the structural organization of *Dear Zoo*.

2.2. THE MEANING OF COMPOSITION

Equivalent to textuality in verbal language is composition in images. Here the theme and rheme realizations of the textual metafunction are applied to pictures to find out how a visual composition is organized and structured. The analysis of compositional features of a multimodal text determines the extent to which some elements within an image are given more information value and relative salience than others. In addition to the analysis of the visual in relation to the verbal elements, the intersemiosis in compositional terms also involves the study of the visual components in relation to each other through the main principles of composition, that is, information value, visual salience and visual framing (see Table I, Kress and van Leeuwen; Royce; Unsworth).

TABLE I: COMPOSITIONAL MEANING. BASIC SYSTEMS (ADAPTED FROM KRESS AND VAN LEEUWEN)	
Information Value	Given/New (Left / Right)) Ideal / Real (Top / Bottom) Centre / Margin
Framing	Similarities and rhymes of color and form Vectors that connect elements Absence of frame lines or empty spaces between elements
Salience	Size Sharpness of focus Tonal contrast Color contrast Foreground / Background

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[5] The potential of thematic progression is not exhausted by these three patterns. Daneš himself proposes other more complex textual structures that comply with a combination of the three described models. Among the possible combinations, Daneš highlights the Split Rheme Pattern in which the rheme of a clause can be divided into two or more elements, generally coordinated, each of which is taken up as a theme in following clauses.

2.2.1. *Information Value*

Information value, the first feature of compositional meaning, varies according to the placement of elements within the page. They can be placed in the centre or margin. Another possibility is for them to be positioned on the right or left, which is called given/new structure. The final placement is on the top or lower half of the page, which is referred to as ideal/real. Visual Information makes significant use of the centre, placing one or more elements in the middle and others around it in the margin. In the structure centre/margin, the RPs in the centre provide the nucleus of information to which surrounding and marginal elements are subservient (Kress and van Leeuwen).

With regard to the given/new distinction, in written texts given is presented as something the receiver already knows, as a familiar and agreed-upon point of departure for the message to commence. New is presented as something not yet known (Halliday, *Introduction*, rev.). Following Halliday (*Introduction*; *Introduction*, rev.), Kress and van Leeuwen and Kress associate the right and left zones of an image with the new and given states of information respectively. Being on the left-hand side (verso) or on the right (recto) are locations that have significance. Participants and events on the left-hand side of a visual display are considered as something already known, as a familiar point of departure for reading the picture. However, this does not imply that those visual elements located on the left are necessarily known to the viewer; they are merely presented as such (Kress and van Leeuwen; Hoperabundo and Ventola; Ventola and Moya). Contrastingly, the right hand-side presents new information, something or somebody the viewer must pay special attention to (Kress and van Leeuwen).

Finally, another way of organizing the elements in an image is provided by the division between "ideal" and "real." The ideal is presented on the top of the picture and is normally emotive and imaginary. It is the idealized or generalized essence of the information. Real, however, is more specific information (details), and more practical, oriented information (consequences, directions for action). Kress and van Leeuwen consider the top and bottom of an image as the realms of the ideal and the real respectively.[6]

2.2.2. *Framing*

Framing is the second feature of compositional meaning and determines whether the elements of a composition are either given separate identities, or are represented as belonging together. While framing normally creates a sense of de-

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[6] *Dear Zoo* is not structured in such a way that a clear top and bottom can be located. However, the other two features of information value: given/new and centre/margin reveal interesting features concerning the visual composition of the picture book (see section 3.2).

tachment between the picture and the reader, and stresses the individuality and differentiation of an element, the absence of framing makes it part of a group. The fact that an illustration is unframed (that is, a picture that covers the whole area of a page or a double spread) constitutes an invitation to view the story from within. Elements can be grouped together by continuity of color and shape and by connecting vectors. The lack of frame lines and empty spaces between the RPs may also join elements together. These sets of choices stress group identity, involvement and absence of social distance between the RPs and the viewer (Moebius 141; Nodelman 51; Nikolajeva and Scott 62).

Color is also one of the key features of framing. Besides building up the basic image, color fulfils another two visual functions in multimodal texts such as: i. bringing a character into the focus of attention, and ii. connecting or separating important objects both within simple pictures and across whole sequences (Lewis 105).

2.2.3. *Salience*

Lastly, salience, the remaining feature of composition, refers to the ability of an RP to capture the viewer's attention. Salience establishes a hierarchy of importance among the elements in an image; the most important RP is that which normally gets the greater salience. Salience is determined by a variety of features such as: (i) size (the larger the RP, the greater its salience), (ii) sharpness of focus (RPs have less salience when they are out of focus), (iii) tonal contrast (areas of high tonal contrast have greater salience), (iv) color contrast (strongly saturated colors have greater salience than soft colors), and finally, (v) the placement of an object in the foreground and background of a composition (an RP in the foreground has greater salience than an RP in the background). However, none of these criteria alone is sufficient to measure visual relevance, which is always dependent on the complex interaction between all the elements referred to before (Kress and van Leeuwen).

3. ANALYSIS, METHODOLOGY AND EXEMPLIFICATION

So far, the tools available from SFL and Visual Social Semiotics to analyze the meanings transmitted by the verbal and non-verbal modes in *Dear Zoo* have been dealt with in section 2. SFL is a powerful tool to describe the textual and thematic patterns reflected in the verbiage. In turn, the Grammar of Visual Design proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen provides a descriptive framework for the interpretation of the components in the visual mode. This section starts with the textual analysis of *Dear Zoo* and then deals with its compositional features. The analysis of the interaction of both semiotic resources will shed light on the way verbal and visual components complement each other to convey meaning.

For the purposes of this paper it has been assumed that all major clauses have a thematic constituent located in initial position. In the case of compound

complexes, Halliday (*Introduction*, rev. 394) states that "...the point to bear in mind is that there will be two thematic domains—that of the clause nexus and that of the clause." However, the tale at hand has no compound or embedded clauses as all the structures used in it are independent. I have also considered that thematic progression depends on repeated reference and not only repeated word-form. Thus, all referring expressions, independently of their nominal or pronominal form, can play a fundamental part in the thematic development of a stretch of text.

Concerning the visual elements of the tale, 8 double spreads have been distinguished. In them, text and images are intertwined. All the double spreads contain one illustration on the right-hand side which is both preceded and followed by short clauses. Due to space restrictions, only two figures have been reproduced here. The quantitative data obtained are interpreted from a qualitative and functional perspective last.

3.1. TEXTUAL MEANING

In this section, I will deal with the textual analysis of *Dear Zoo*. The exploration of the verbal and visual choices made by Campbell to create textual meaning will enable us to identify the strategies used in this tale to ease the understanding of the plot and, in turn, tantalize and retain the young child's attention. Firstly, I will examine the typology of themes that most frequently predominate in the verbiage. Then the thematic progression of the picture book will be determined in order to establish its overall organization.

As is shown in Table II, both simple and multiple themes have been identified, but the simple type occurs more frequently (70.4%). Evidence of this fact is shown in excerpt 1 where the thematic slot of the clause is realized by a sole ideational element that makes reference either to the child who wrote to the zoo to request a pet, to his friends at the zoo, referred to by the pronoun, *they*, and to the animal itself, realized by the pronoun, *he*.

TABLE II. SIMPLE AND MULTIPLE THEMES		
	ABSOLUTE VALUES	VALUES IN PERCENTAGE
Simple Theme	19	70.4%
MultipleTheme	8	29.6%
TOTAL	27	100%

(1) I wrote to the zoo to send me a pet. They sent me an... [Illustration] He was too big! I sent him back

There are also eight instances of multiple themes, formed by textual (mainly, *so*, also *and*) and experiential components. As can be seen in excerpt 2, these textual themes function as markers of temporal continuity in the narrative structure. The

textual theme, *so*, recurrently starts the beginning of a new sequence in which a new animal is sent again until the child finds out that it is not appropriate enough. After the textual components, the ideational themes make reference to the main characters, the zoo, and the animals sent. No interpersonal elements have been found since there are neither vocatives nor modal adjuncts in the initial slot of the clause. In addition, as all clauses are declarative in mood, there are no finite operators or wh-elements located in thematic position.

(2) So they (theme) thought very hard, and (ellipsis, they) sent me a... [Illustration]
    He was perfect! I kept him.

Regarding the marked or unmarked typology of themes (see Table III), all themes (100%) are unmarked or prototypical realizations. Themes are realized by clause constituents that fulfill the syntactic function of subject in a declarative mood structure (see excerpts 1 and 2). In excerpt 2, the ideational theme is omitted, but it can be deduced from the previous clause, the people at the zoo. So it has been counted for the purpose of thematicity as an ideational theme preceded by a textual component, *and*.

TABLE III. UNMARKED AND MARKED THEMES		
	ABSOLUTE VALUES	VALUES IN PERCENTAGE
Unmarked Th.	27	100%
Marked Theme	0	0%
TOTAL	100	100%

Added to this is the notable coincidence throughout the text of the grammatical function of subject, the textual function of Theme, and the pragmatic-discourse function of topic carried out by the main characters (the zoo, the child that requests the pet, and the different animals depicted in the illustrations). In fact, theme and topic overlap in 100% of the cases counted (see Table IV). By following this strategy, the entities about which information is given are activated from the beginning of the clause, usually in subject position. Even the new topic that activates the main character in the first paragraph of the story (*I*) is placed in the initial slot of the clause: "I wrote to the zoo the send me a pet". In addition, the absolute correspondence of theme and topic favours the use of syntactic parallelism to mark the succession of the actions in time.[7] All this corresponds with the idea of facilitat-

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[7] Similar to our results, after establishing a comparison between newspaper sports commentaries and other genres, Ghadessy finds that the most frequent themes tend to be related to the major text participants in a specific text.

ing the young child's understanding of the plot. The book is intended for two-year-olds and under, and therefore the plot should be easy for them to decode.

TABLE IV. THEME AND TOPIC OVERLAPPING		
	Absolute Values	Values in Percentage
Theme and topic overlap	27	100%
Theme and topic do not overlap	0	0%
TOTAL	27	100%

The analysis of the thematic structure of the tale would be incomplete without the study of the thematic progression of its clauses and how these are thematically organized to achieve coherence. As shown in Table V, an overall view of the thematic progression of *Dear Zoo* confirms that part of it, (29.6%), follows a linear theme pattern (Daneš), realized by placement of the different animals sent from the zoo in either the rhematic and thematic slots of the clause. As evidence in excerpt 3, the ellipsis makes reference to the animal hidden in the crate. The illustration, then, plays a key role in its identification. By lifting up the flaps of the crates the child can find out what the zoo has dispatched. After the illustration, the animal depicted is placed in the thematic position of the next clause, favoring the linear progression pattern. In it, the theme of the second clause, *he*, comes from the omitted rheme of the preceding clause. These chains give the tale a sense of dynamism, as they allow Campbell to place the different animals in the two main positions of the clause, the beginning and the end.

(3) So they sent me a... [Illustration] He was too fierce! I sent him back.

The ellipsis in the rhematic slots of the clauses of the tale are a clue for the adult to read the syntactically incomplete verbal material with a rising intonation contour and increasing volume. Since few two-year-olds can read, the book is certainly intended to be read aloud by caregivers. The missing information in the verbal mode makes the child participate and interact with the adult reading the tale and in so doing he is socialized into the reading experience. He will learn to fold the right page over the left one, as opposed to Hebrew or Arabic speaking and reading children, who learn the reverse. The child-listener will probably be active in turning the pages, opening the flaps and identifying the animals when the pictures are uncovered, calling out their names at the appropriate time. In short, the suspense points in rheme position lead the child to find the missing information in the visual mode. This reinforces his apprenticeship into the dialogic nature of language, where the mutual completion of utterances plays an important role (Purver et al.). Thus, the pictures in this tale do not only serve to illustrate the story, but to involve the child-listener in a dialogic interaction with the adult who is reading the picture book aloud.

TABLE V: PATTERNS OF THEMATIC PROGRESSION		
THEMATIC PROGRESSION	ABSOLUTE VALUES	VALUES IN PERCENTAGE
Constant TP	1	3.7%
Linear TP	8	29.6%
Derived TP	1	3.7%
No TP	17	63%
TOTAL	27	100%

The linear TP, whose dynamic character might cause certain difficulties for the young child, turns out to be an appropriate structural tool in this picture book. It is used create interaction and to give dynamism to the story since the plot is basically centered on few characters: the zoo, the child that requests a pet and, mainly, the different animals drawn in the illustrations.

Although the linear thematic scheme is the most predominant pattern, this is not the only type. There is also one sequence of constant theme progression in the last double spread. In it, the entity, *they*, which makes reference to the zoo, is maintained in a sequence of two clauses, although the second time it is omitted: "So they thought very hard, and (ellipsis) sent me a..." When two clauses are linked by coordination —in a paratactic structure— the subject of the second clause (*they*) may be elided. In such a case the omitted subject counts as the topical theme within a constant theme progression. Constant theme is also a very appropriate pattern for children's narratives, for in this way, given information is reiterated so that the young child does not lose the thread of the plot (Moya and Ávila).

Only one example of derived TP has been identified in this tale, located specifically in the first double spread: "I (theme) wrote to the zoo to send me a pet. They (theme) sent me an..." The fact that the singular "the zoo" is referred to anaphorically as "they" makes it an instance of derived theme; the child must infer that it is "the people at the zoo" who are being referred to. The reason for the low presence of this thematic pattern in comparison to the favored linear TPs is that the latter organizes the text in a way that makes it easier for the young child to understand the thread of the story. The frequent utilization of derived thematic progressions might have required inferences and associations that would have gone beyond the cognitive ability of children at such an early age.

The linear thematic progression identified is continually altered throughout the tale by the recurrent reference made to the child protagonist (*I*). This way there is an alternation of elements placed in the thematic slot of the clause: *I*, *they* and *he*; the last represents the animal dispatched on eight different occasions. Therefore, as is shown in excerpt 4, although some fragments that follow a constant, derived or linear progression are found, in its totality the tale does not follow a defined thematic pattern due to the alternating nature of the elements that occupy the initial position of the clause. This alternation of thematic constituents lends

dynamism to the story without adding too much difficulty for the understanding of the plot:

(4) So they (theme, the zoo) sent me a... [Illustration] He (theme, the animal) was too naughty! I (theme, the child protagonist in the story) sent him back.


3.2. COMPOSITIONAL FEATURES

After analyzing the textual aspects of *Dear Zoo*, now I will focus the attention of the study on its compositional characteristics in order to find out how the illustrations contribute to the general organization of the tale and to facilitate the understanding of the message to the young reader. As previously stated, picture books are composite wholes. Thus, a complete understanding of the message they convey requires the exploration of both their visual and verbal constituents and their final effect on each other. Children under two are unable to decode written information but tend to be good readers of visual texts. For this reason in children's literature, both visual elements and verbal information are used simultaneously.

Compositional meaning is concerned with the organization of the RPs within an image and, as previously stated, it involves features such as the distribution of information, framing and salience. With regard to the distribution of given and new elements, in the eight double spreads of the tale, a clearly repetitive information sequence is followed through verbal and visual elements. In the first double spread, included here as Figure 1, both the verso and the recto introduce new information. The verso of the first page opens with unknown information: "I wrote to the zoo to send me a pet. They sent me an..." The right hand side of the double spread also offers new elements: (i) an illustration where the animal sent from the zoo can be seen, (ii) a written part that describes its negative characteristics: "He was too big!" (iii) and the final decision made by the child protagonist to send the animal back.

However, from the second to the eight double spreads the information pattern followed responds to the prototypical tendency adopted in the English language. The message in English tends to be started with given information and finished with unknown elements. In the aforementioned illustrations the verbiage on the left-hand side presents information that could be considered familiar to the reader (Kress and van Leeuwen) and is somehow demonstrated in the tale: "So they sent me a...". The illustrations on the right-hand side and the verbal elements placed beneath it, however, introduce new information: the different animal sent from the zoo, his unsuitable features and the decision to send him back again: "He was too grumpy! I sent him back" (see double spread four, inserted here as Figure 2). The textual ellipsis of the left-hand side is filled by the illustrations that recurrently reveal the identity of the new animals dispatched from the zoo. This way, the visual mode contextualizes the verbiage, adding newness and definitiveness to the story. Thus, the child will probably perceive the visual material in the way it is presented

I wrote to the zoo
to send me a pet.
They sent me an ...
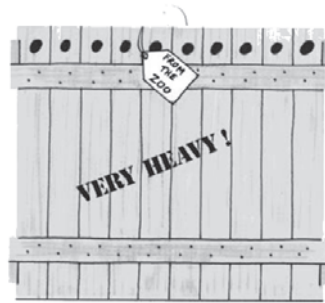
He was too big!
I sent him back.

Figure 1: They sent me an elephant.

So they sent me a ...

He was too grumpy!
I sent him back.

Figure 2: They sent me a camel.

by the artist, that is, from given-to-new progression, represented in western writing cultures as left-page to right-page sequencing.[8]

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[8] This does not imply, however, that the child will necessarily scan the visual material in the way proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen since she is being read to and is free to ignore anything but the identification of the flap.

From the first to the last double spread, the same pattern of structure and design is employed since in all them, the recto, the right-hand side, shows the young child a new animal whose identity has be to be revealed by lifting up the flaps of the crates where it is kept. On the verso, the left-hand side of the double spread, only written language is offered. This repetitive pattern is a constant throughout practically the whole story and guarantees its temporal sequence, facilitating the young reader's comprehension of the plot.

Framing is another aspect of the compositional metafunction. In *Dear Zoo*, the animals sent to the child protagonist are presented within frames, as they are kept in their different crates. However, the child-reader is given the chance to open the packing boxes by lifting up their different flaps or doors. This way the animals are usually presented unframed, suggesting certain proximity between them and the child-reader. Every animal that is rejected is kept back in its crate until a new parcel arrives. While the use of frames is an indication of social distance between the RPs and the young child, the absence of frames brings their worlds closer. When the animals arrive and are sent back, they are presented in their framed enclosures. However, once their identities are revealed, they are shown outside frames and close to the viewer.

Finally, with regards to salience, there are no visual elements in the background. Therefore, the animals and their packing boxes are the only visual participants that receive prominence. They are placed in the center of the right hand side and are also highlighted by use of colour contrast and saturation. The crates receive the greatest saturation and contrast of colours, essentially reds, browns, greens, yellows and oranges. The rest of the double spread is characterized by the presence of the white colour, which separates the verbiage from the visual components.

4. CONCLUSION

Following the theoretical frameworks of SFL and Visual Social Semiotics, my aim was to identify the verbal and visual choices made by Campbell to convey textual and compositional meanings in the picture book, *Dear Zoo*. In this way, I have determined how the verbiage and the visual components complement each other to create textual meaning and make the story coherent.

The textual analysis reveals that there is an association between the point of departure of the clause as message and the three main characters in the story, the child-protagonist (*I*), his friends at the zoo (*they*), and the animals dispatched from the zoo. The early age of the children for whom the tale is intended determines their thematic and topical patterning, mainly organized in simple and linear thematic structures. These textual patterns which prompt the utilization of syntactic parallelism and recurrent structures can only be achieved thanks to the intersemiosis of verbal and visual elements. The gaps of the rhematic slot of the sentences located on the verso of the double spreads (So they sent me a...) are filled in by the RPs depicted in the visual mode, which provide the missing information. So, words and images contribute differently to the overall organization of the tale, maintaining the

child's attention through the narrative plot. The shift of the narrative course from words (they sent me a/an…) to images (the animals themselves) takes places every time a new animal is sent from the zoo and makes a perfect symbiosis to facilitate the understanding of the plot to the very young child. Unable to recognize the written graphemes, he can find out the identity of the animals sent by the zoo from the illustrations. In addition, the missing information in verbal language and the necessity to find it in the visual mode encourage the child to establish a dialogic interaction with the adult. The role of the young child is to turn the multimodal text into a dialogic linguistic experience with two participants, the caregiver who reads the story and the child himself, who has to visualize and identify the different animals dispatched from the zoo.

Thus, the study of the images and their relationship with the text clearly reveals that both modes, the verbal and the visual, complement one another so that the tale is easy to understand, and in turn, attractive to the young child. The verbal and visual choices made by Campbell regarding textual and compositional meaning help the child to identify the main characters in the story and follow the development of their actions. The animals from the zoo are given special prominence both in the verbiage, where they are omitted by the use of suspense points in rhematic position, and in the visual mode, where they and their crates are given the greater prominence through colour contrast and saturation. Artists and writers must become aware of the potential of combining verbal and visual modes in picture books, so that they offer complementary meanings, without pushing the limits drawn by the cognitive and literary abilities of their young readers.

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TRANSPARENCY AND DEPTH:
AN INTERVIEW WITH KIRAN NAGARKAR

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Photo © Joel Kuortti.

Kiran Nagarkar, one of India most respected writers, was born in 1942. He is best known for having published in Marathi and English. In 1974 he published his first novel in Marathi, *Saat Sakkam Trechalis*, which was later translated into English as *Seven Sixes Are Forty Three*. The play *Bedtime Story*, written in 1978, took him into trouble with the Shiv Sena among other political organizations. Besides, the text was highly censored and the performance banned. His production as playwright continued with *Kabirache Kay Karayche* and *Strangers Amongst Us*. He has acknowledged his obsession with cinema and this has led him to write some scripts like *The Broken Circle*, *The Elephant on the Mouse*, or *The Widow and Her Friends*. His next novel was written in English and published in 1994, entitled *Ravan and Eddie*. He was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award in English in 2001 for his novel *Cuckold*, published in 1997. His latest novel, published in 2006, is *God's Little Soldier*. It has been translated so far into German, Spanish, Italian and French.

The voice recorder was on for a bit more than one hour, but this interview took longer than that. With the first question we, supposedly at work, were still unfocused, as Nagarkar joked here and there. The students, attending the interview, and I would burst out laughing. What made him so comical was that he was all the time making fun of himself as a supposedly important writer who must create artificial boasting around him.

The beginning of the interview soon led me and the students to discover hidden nuances in Nagarkar. Through his commentaries he revealed his very experienced and thought-out views on literature, the world and their close relationship. He openly talked about his problems with the censorship of the Maharastrian political authorities as well as the fierce rejection he suffered from the Marathi literary establishment, and overtly expressed his considerations on the Iraq war and other worldwide conflicts. When both engaged in conversation with him or at reading any of his novels, one appreciates the harsh reality which is brought to the fore thanks to his humor, a corrosive sense of irony and hilarity which almost reaches absurdity. But Nagarkar does not write to give messages, he has never done. Instead, he contents himself with confronting readers with that nonsensical reality we sometimes happen to live in.

However, the final version of the interview was later tempered by Nagarkar himself through a fluid email interchange.[1] His dedication to the interview was flawless, as he thoroughly reviewed the transcription despite being hospitalized. His amendments permeated the text with his natural wisdom, allowed him to remove too narrow and local references and to leave only the most significant ones. This interview made his writing more transparent to me in the sense that it permitted me to better appreciate the crystal clear depth of his aesthetics. It is the reader's decision now to ponder upon both, transparency and depth to his art.

CG: *What is the reason why you started writing? Did you feel that as a need? Or maybe you understood that your writing was necessary for society?*

KN: There are, as you know, two reasons why writers of fiction, plays or poetry write. Because they have a message or wish to improve society. Or they wish to entertain. I belong to the second category. Which is not to say that I have not occasionally written a play to give a message. But that is an exception.

CG: *What kind of writer do you see yourself as?*

KN: I am a story-teller. I trace my lineage to Homer and the people who wrote the great Indian epic called the *Mahabharata*. Homer was an oral story-teller. Nothing more than that. But look at the kind of stories that he told. Two and a half thousand years later, we're still re-telling stories. Because they are not mere stories. Embedded in them are eternal archetypes. That is why Freud makes such generous use of them. Because they tell us something fundamen-

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tal about human beings, their relationships and why they behave the way they do. It's the same with the *Mahabharata*, the longest epic in the world. The people who are responsible for these epics are such damn good story-tellers, what they do first of all, is to grab your attention and then in the telling itself various resonances arise. On the face of it what you are reading are engaging stories and nothing more. But underneath the surface they are dealing with the primal issues of life and obliquely offering invaluable insights. My aspiration and endeavour is to make the story the product, a compelling product and the insights and the deep questioning by-products.

CG: *But in the past these resonances have been causing you troubles... I remember that you were saying at your conference that if you have some time offered a message, immediately afterwards you thought that you shouldn't have done that. Maybe because of these troubles or...*

KN: Oh, no, no, no. Troubles have got nothing to do with that... No, as I have said very often... I'm a complete coward.

CG: *What do you mean? Is it that you feel guilty?*

KN: No. I really have no desire to go to jail. I have no desire to be beaten up. If some of my fellow-countrymen don't understand the nature of what is being said, and deliberately misinterpret it that's not my problem. But while I'm a coward, all I can say is that so far it has not prevented me from writing whatever I want to. The play which got me into so much trouble is called *Bedtime Story*. And even though it has a message, it is a very different kind of message. The message, as I've said again and again, is about responsibility. You and I can't sit here and say: "But we're in Spain, so we can't do a damn thing about the Israelis killing the Palestinians or the Americans killing the Iraqis." I genuinely believe that you and I are responsible for the deaths in Iraq. Just as, if something terrible happens in India, Americans and everybody else in the world...How many years is it that the Palestinians are not even sub-citizens? Israel is the only country in the world which has got no borders. Every other country, if it is to join the U.N., has to declare its borders. And the saddest part is that the Israelis themselves, the Jews have suffered so much. And to use a sentence from one of my novels: *The one thing that experience seems to teach us is to make the same mistakes again and again*. But like most people who have suffered so much the Israelis have not learnt a damned thing. You would think that their own holocaust-experience would have taught them never to treat anybody the way they were treated. But they're doing exactly the same thing. If you come to India, you will find that, for example, if I want to get married in the orthodox manner, then in the arranged-marriage sequence, my bride's mother and father have to pay me money, the dowry. Because the implication is that from now on I'll have to look after her. She may be my wife, I may be with her, and she will beget my children and she'll look after me when I'm ill and stand by my side through thick and thin but she's still a burden. But do you know that once she and I get married in India, sometimes though not always, I will start making demands. Her parents then will borrow money

and I will get a small car. Post-marriage I will start torturing her because my rapaciousness knows no end. I want more and more. The funny thing is when my wife becomes a mother-in-law herself, she will treat her daughter-in-law exactly as she was treated. I'm not making this up. When I wrote my *Bedtime Story*, the Vietnam war was going on and I was deeply upset about it. It was their country, what was America doing there? So I wrote a play about responsibility. Have you seen the Chinese play table-tennis? You can't see the ball because it flashes past. In my play, when it was performed finally in an underground fashion, the dialogue moves like that ping pong ball. The actors liked the play in my mother-tongue, Marathi, so much that they paid for all the production costs when it was done in Hindi.

When we tell children stories, Indians always want to give a message. They always ask: "What is the moral of the story?" I'm not interested in stuck-on morals. Stories are a basic human need. But package the story as a moral and you'll put off children and even adults for good. *Bedtime Story* is a very violent play. I think it's the only play in the world where the audience is killed at the end of the play for not taking the responsibility for what is happening in the play. In it, I use the *Mahabharata*. I take stories from the epic because most Indians know them intimately. Then I play changes on the stories, which come as huge surprises, sometimes very unpleasant surprises. The idiom and language of the play are contemporary. For instance in the game of dice that the two cousins play in the great epic, in my drama, they bet Microsoft, they bet Airbus. It's that kind of contemporaneity. So the play has an immediacy and reality that we can identify with.

CG: *Then, is this not a humorous story?*

KN: Oh, there is tremendous humour in the play, you should have seen the actors, they just had a ball... *Ravan and Eddie* is supposed to be my funniest book to date though *Cuckold* too has humour, but of a different and subtle order.

CG: What about the last book, *God's Little Soldier*? The scene with the Saint Kabir has humour but is it the kind that will get you into trouble for making fun of God.

KN: The book is humorous off and on but not on the same scale as *Ravan and Eddie*. The scene between God and Kabir which I read out at the seminar is a very funny scene. And there're some other funny scenes in it also, especially in the Kabir section.

CG: *Do you think you've been modifying your humour, then? The kind of humor you're using in your writings?*

KN: No, no. I think that's a very important point about my writing. I don't take external decisions generally. *God's Little Soldier* took eight years to write. I wrote and re-wrote it and re-wrote it because initially I thought I was going to make it a funny novel. I am known for writing ribald stuff. I like to be bawdy and sex plays a big part in some of my novels. And that's what happened in the beginning, in this *God's Little Soldier*. But then I realised that if I was going to write about an extremist character, he would not be open to humour.

In my earlier novels, even when my characters did dreadful things, they still came across as very human. For instance, the protagonist of *Cuckold*, the Maharaj Kumar, who is the heir apparent, is responsible for the death of ten thousand enemy soldiers but both male and female readers identify intensely with him. He's considered one of the most memorable characters in literature.

But when I started writing *God's Little Soldier* I knew that the protagonist, Zia Khan, was a character who was going to be very difficult, that people might even hate him. So I was afraid that I was going to lose my small constituency of readers. My initial impulse was to humanize him by introducing humour. And I did just that: he sleeps around and some of those episodes are very funny. But as I wrote and I finished my first draft of 840 pages, handwritten, I realized that something was wrong. By the time I wrote the third or fourth draft, almost all the sex had disappeared from *God's Little Soldier*. Because Zia is not that kind of character, humour is alien to his character. He's an extremist. He's a really good man to start out with but everything he does, he takes to extremes. In the final version, he doesn't fall in love too often, actually just once. There's something deeply ascetic and intolerant about him. His intentions are almost always honourable. He wants to make the world a better place and he is willing to lay his life on the line for it. But when he sets out to do good, he takes it to extremes. Idealists are so hard to come by today. Ironically, till the Muslim fundamentalists took centre-stage in the last decade and a half, we were ashamed to feel passionately about anything. We were afraid to use words like noble or virtuous. Compassion had already fallen on hard days in the twentieth century. But after the neocons in America began their talk of compassionate conservatism, it became synonymous with hypocrisy and everything that is fraudulent and self-serving.

Like all these fine qualities, idealism is something that we have lost. How many of us today want to do something for our country? And I do not mean patriotism or fighting wars. How many of us want to do something for the poor, for the elderly or whatever? But Zia is that kind of person, if he takes it into his head, he will do his utmost. The problem is he'll push so hard, that he'll subvert the good work he's doing. As his brother tells him... you're a good man gone terribly, terribly wrong. So then, by the time I finished my last draft, most of the humour was gone, though fortunately there are still some very humourous bits in the book.

CG: *Why then is it that your writing is so little known?*

KN: I have no answer to that. When my book *Cuckold* was written... my British agent thought it was going to be one of the biggest books of the decade. Nothing of the kind happened. There is a review of the book by Makarand Paranjape which says that this is a book which people, publishing houses and critics don't have the equipment or the capacity to understand what it is trying to do and its worth.

CG: *Do you think it is a question of time? That maybe in ten, fifty years' time...*

KN: I'm not interested in time. My close friend Arun Kolatkar, one of our most remarkable poets, is no more. What's the point of his being recognized as one of the Indian finest poets after he's dead? I don't know. But other people think there is one of the things that really make me furious beyond words. Think of Van Gogh, his paintings for sixty million dollars but when he was alive, he barely got sixty cents. It's obscene that anybody will pay a million for a painting. But what difference does it make to Van Gogh?

CG: *No, what I meant to say is that, is it not a question of time? What I wanted to say is people are not aware or not prepared to appreciate what you are trying to do. It's maybe that you're telling a story for a ten year-old child and we're still four year old child. That's why many critics may fail to appreciate the value of your work and communicate its worth to readers.*

KN: I don't know. But I don't think so. I've been saying again and again that chance plays an immeasurable role in writing or anything we do. We underestimate the power of chance and luck. *Cuckold* is located in the sixteenth century story. But I have written it in a language which is very contemporary. I mean just as you and I are talking, except that there's no slang. I had no idea about the beginning of my novel, and so I started with this Small Causes Court where the main character, the Maharaj Kumar himself is the judge. All the plaintiffs want justice. Somebody has grabbed a neighbour's plot of land; somebody's wife has run away with something... Authors make out that everything written in their work is so deeply thought out. Hardly. Some of it is happenstance and sheer luck. *Cuckold* came out at the same time as Arundhati Roy's stunning debut novel *God of Small Things*. The latter took off like a rocket. *Cuckold* was a slow starter but a fairly steady one.

CG: *Do you think that critics can do anything to help?*

KN: If you read the reviews of *God's Little Soldier* in Germany, many critics have said it's the best book of the year. Others have maintained that it is the most profound meditation on the spiritual roots of extremism. Let's hope that helps.

CG: *How is that it has done so well in Germany and not in England?*

KN: I have no idea.

CG: *But anyway, it's great it happened in Germany. For example, here in Spain, hardly anybody reads English. Are some of your books translated into Spanish?*

KN: *God's Little Soldier* will be the first one to be translated into Spanish. And then next year, God willing, *Ravan and Eddie* will get translated. France too will publish *God's Little Soldier* this year.

CG: *Have you written in any other language apart from English?*

KN: Yes, I wrote my first novel, *Saat Sakkam Trechalis* (Seven Sixes are Forty-three) in my mother tongue.

CG: *Marathi. And was it translated into English?*

KN: Yes. It sold much more in English than in my mother tongue. Much, much more. I think it's gone into the seventh or eighth edition now. In Marathi, it's considered an avant garde experiment and not necessarily in the happy

sense of the phrase. Many critics think it's difficult read. But if you are used to seeing movies, if you're used to flash-backs, then there's no problem at all. Except that the language is very different from normal Marathi. Some critics, who like the book very much, have said that *Seven Sixes* reinvented Marathi for the first time after eight hundred years. It's a very different jagged kind of language. And it moves very fast. You have to have the patience to go along with the book. Because there's no narrative thread in the conventional sense, a beginning, middle or end. The narrator is talking to a woman whom he has lost. He is not necessarily talking about their own lives. He just recalls simply different things from the past, some things, some ok things, some exuberant moments. That's why the book moves back and forth, back and forth. If you have a little patience (and don't want to know who the murderer is on the first page), then it works perfectly.

CG: *How is it that you decided to start writing in English after having written in Marathi?*

KN: No, the question has to be the other way around. Why did I write in Marathi when I had only four years of education in it? The rest of my studies were in English and for better or worse, English has been my lingua franca for most of my life. And I also come from a westernized family. So Marathi was the surprise. I really wish my father and mother were around to find that their son had actually written in his mother tongue. They would find that hard to imagine.

CG: *So it keeps being sold in Marathi, you said.*

KN: No, no, no. In Marathi the sales are horrendous. I told you I am in the Guinness book of records for the worst sales of a book ever... I am making this up. But it's that kind of situation really. *Seven Sixes* is supposed to be a milestone, it's a landmark in Marathi and in Indian literature. *Seven Sixes* is full of spirit and hi-jinks and terrific fun and terribly tragic at times. But even *Ravan and Eddie* which is a very funny book, still has a tragic undercurrent.

CG: *Is there something that a reader should know about your books before reading them?*

KN: No.

CG: *So, the point is to just enjoy them.*

KN: I don't go very often to seminars and academic discussions. I went to the Cambridge seminar and there were authors there, big authors, at that time I was a nobody and people asked me was John Fowles there or Rose Tremaine or Hillary Mantel, God, how much time did you spend with them? And I said not a minute, why should I want to spend time with the author, I want to read his books. How can you get to know anybody, let alone an author in one passing meeting? Books are so much better, they tell you something very revealing about the author. Sonia was asking me if I had written anything autobiographical, like the work of many authors. My first book is partly autobiographical. Now that I have written other books I find I expose myself, perhaps I always feel naked when I don't write about myself. It sounds

paradoxical but you know what gets exposed is your mind. I really feel vulnerable in front of people when they are reading *God's Little Soldier* or *Cuckold*. In the former Amanat says: "There is only one God, and her name is life. She is the only one worthy of worship. All else is irrelevant." He is telling this to his brother who becomes a terrorist. Amanat writes a fictional book about the poet-saint, Kabir and these words come are put in Kabir's mouth. For Amanat there is nothing as reverential as life, for him life is God. But certainly not the God who expects you to take life in his name.

CG: *Are you an eclectic reader? Who are the authors who have influenced you?*

KN: Spanish authors. French and English authors.

CG: *Which Spanish for example?*

KN: *Don Quixote*, I mean Cervantes and others. The Latin Americans.

CG: *In your conference you mentioned P*edro Páramo, *by Juan Rulfo*.

KN: He's completely unknown in India and I think he's fairly unknown in Europe also except in Spain. And Vargas Llosa, García Márquez and Fuentes, Cortázar, Borges but that was a long time ago. I was heavily into American authors at one time, Eugene O'Neill, Joseph Heller, Philip Roth, Toni Morrison. And of course Camus, Sartre, Louis Ferdinand Céline. I don't think that we realize what an incredible influence he has had on us. You cannot imagine twentieth century literature without Céline. I recall Coleridge saying that you have to be a stone not to be influenced by others. The question is whether the influences become so overwhelming that your work becomes and remains imitative. If you are worth your salt, you'll assimilate the influences and find both your own individual voice and yourself. I have little doubt that I too have been deeply influenced but I do not know who my influences are. My writing is so different from the people I have just mentioned. Many Indians were influenced by Rushdie but I started writing much before he did. I don't know in what way Céline, Graham Greene have affected my writing but I suspect these things work in a subtle and oblique fashion.

CG: *I get the impression that you read great stories, you've been reading great writers, who wrote great stories, like Dostoevsky, with amazingly long narratives. You were saying the other day that you considered yourself not a writer who sets out to be different. But a story-teller and… I'm not being clear, maybe. Let me…*

KN: No, I take the point. What you're trying to say is that I don't consider myself somebody who wants to be an original writer or playwright. Someone who has set his mind on doing something totally radical and different. I've no desire to theorize and reinvent the novel, for instance.

CG: *A post-modern writer… hiding yourself so that nobody can know who you are really or something like that.*

KN: Tolstoy is a great story-teller. Dostoevsky is superb but they do it so casually without being precious or self-conscious. And yet there he is, Dostoevsky telling you a story about a man who has committed a murder and yet what you get is a deep meditation on guilt, the need to confess and absolution.

CG: *Yeah, that's my point.*

KN: A great story-teller manages these wonderful things almost glancingly.

CG: *Yes, because you imply more than you say. You're not telling people what to think. You're telling people that story and leave it to them to extract the meaning.*

KN: That's why ambiguity plays a very big role in my writing. I like to be ambiguous...

CG: *Humour is ambiguous in a way.*

KN: Yes. When you think of Dostoevsky, I'm thinking "My god!" *Crime and Punishment* is something else. Jesus! Here is this man who murders a guy for the money. And then, the police commissioner says all we have got to do is wait and watch, he will come to us and he will tell us everything. That's an amazingly insightful story. It's of little importance to me whether what you write is postmodern or in the vein of Borges; whether you are orthodox or daring; whether you are the very first one to do it in a particular way or not. What matters is whether an author makes it worth the reader's time. Whether he can pull off a difficult task without making a fuss about how great he is.

CG: *Do you sometimes read poetry? Do you like poetry?*

KN: It's one of my major failings. Occasionally I've had to write poetry for my characters but I'm uneasy doing it. Every once in a while I'll respond to some poem or poet and then it's a wonderful feeling of being transported to some other world.

CG: *Okay. What style would you say is specifically yours?*

KN: I hope none. It's the content that should dictate the style instead of the style being detachable from the content and form. There have been always two schools and they come in cycles. People write more and more difficult language. Sometimes there is a need to write it because the concepts are so intricate and convoluted. It was not Derrida who mucked up the whole scene for most writers, critics and theorists but his disciples. They thought that the only way to write great philosophy is to make oneself completely incomprehensible. And they thought that was an indication of depth of thought.

When I was young I went to Kashmir (in those days you could go to Kashmir) and I felt very sick. So all my school mates and the priest who was shepherding us had to leave for the next town because I was so sick. It was a very, very lonely time. Because there were nobody there and I was alone in an attic. Every once in a while in the evening the doctor would come up. When I recovered, I travelled towards a much higher altitude. The bus stopped and there was a pond with a marble railing around it. And I looked and I asked in Hindi: *how deep is it?* It was just blue water, absolutely blue with lots of fish swimming there. *You can go down there forever and not come back. It's that deep.* That has stuck in my mind. That if I want to, if you are really any good, then the more transparently you write, the deeper you can go. You can't see the bottom at all.

As one of my Professors used to say if you don't know your subject, then you obfuscate it, you cloud it, in that sense transparency has a major role in my writing, because if you are any good then on a clear day you can see

forever because of the language you choose to use. We degrade language because we don't know the value of words. Take a book and you see the back cover. The blurbs will tell you it's a masterpiece, fantastic, great. The only language we know is hyperbole. Which is why we have forgotten that there is such a word as good any more. You no longer say it's a good book. It has to be brilliant, awesome and so on. You can't use the word because there's no punch. People don't seem to understand that there are various registers in language to describe and evaluate any work of art.

Only you know the Dostoevsky is up there. Márquez, Vargas Llosa and Louis Ferdinand Céline who is such an awful human being but a terrific writer are there, then, the rest of them can't fit in that category. They must find their own level and there is no shame in that. All of us can't be Shakespeares and Cervantes.

CG: *Thank you, Kiran. I hope that readers enjoy this interview as much as I have.*

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