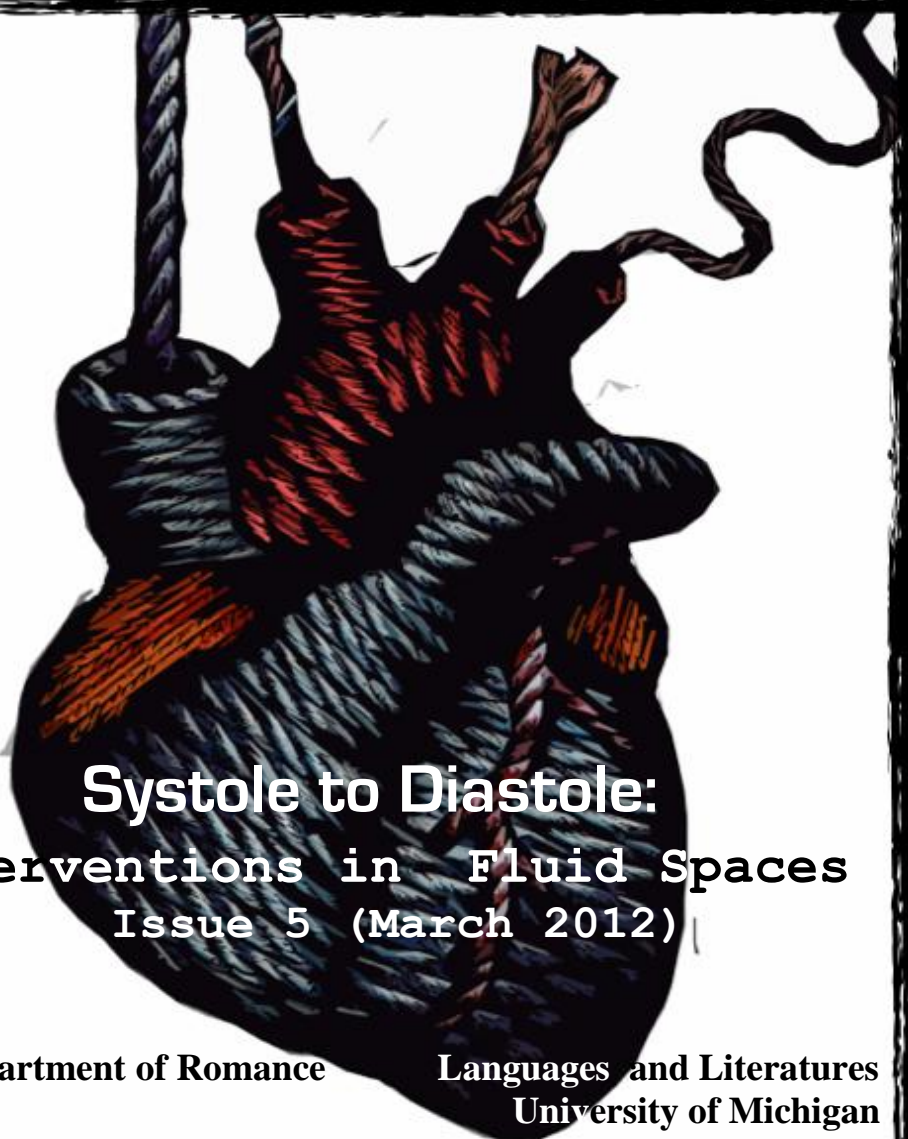


Tirezias

Culture, Politics and Critical Theory



Systole to Diastole:
Interventions in Fluid Spaces
Issue 5 (March 2012)

Department of Romance

Languages and Literatures
University of Michigan

Tiresias

Culture, Politics and Critical Theory

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Systeme to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces

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Editors' Introduction

The fifth issue of *Tiresias*, "Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces," emerged from a reflection on the spaces in between sides, between the systole and the diastole or in the areas in which we can observe the mediation of fluid tension. The topic surfaced from a brainstorming session about the relationships between the local and the global, the individual and the community, intellectual practices and political practices. The sides are not necessarily the split halves of a binary, but rather deal with the relationships, interruptions, redistributions, and miscommunications between constituted and sometimes inherently conflicting parties. The topic proved very timely, as the recent political interventions regarding the distribution of space emerged in upheaval in Tunisia and Egypt, the so-called *indignados* in Spain, and the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States. These interventions contest the extant relationships of the individual to the community, and leave us with the possibility of reflecting on the concrete ways in which this tension is constituted today.

The topic also reflects a change in generation, from the older to the younger generation of our own graduate student community. This issue marks a transition point for the review, since very few of the members of the editorial team that drafted the issue's Call for Papers remained for the edition and compilation. We are, however, pleased to continue the publication of *Tiresias* because of our

commitment to the forum for intellectual and artistic exchange that it seeks to create for graduate students, scholars, and artists from around the world.

We begin the issue with a special contribution from Professor Samuel Weber, who visited the University of Michigan in 2011. His essay "The Singularity of Literary Cognition" deals with the literary process: the ways in which literature works through, not just meaning, but also "ways of meaning." It reads the characters of *Tristram Shandy* as singularities, through a fragmented lens. His contribution calls us to consider the place of literature and its ways of constructing narrative, which pushes those of us in the field of literary studies to reexamine our approach to our object of study.

The responses we received to the Call for Papers reveal that the intellectual forum that Tiresias seeks to create is capable of challenging and stimulating reflection on the topic of "Interventions in Fluid Spaces." Because of the Call for Papers's focus on the tensions between sides, many of this issue's contributions deal with borders and disputed frontiers; one of these disputed frontiers is that between intellectual, artistic, and political practices. As a consequence, this issue mixes these practices together into a single section, placing poetry next to literary criticism, with the aim of setting our contributors into conversation with each other. One of the contributions that challenges these boundaries between the creative, academic, and political is Hugo García Manríquez's creative reading of the North American Free Trade Agreement, a reading which challenges the language through which this fluid North

American space has been created via a reflection on the meaning of community. Shifting to the disputed frontiers of Europe, David Spieser-Landes writes about the literary and linguistic negotiations of the Franco-German border, while Kyrstin Mallon Andrews reflects on the literary portrayal of borders as spaces that redefine cognitive practices while challenging exoticizing readings of magical realism. Lídice Alemán brings these reflections into a meditation on the language of the memory, selfhood, and disintegration amid disputed frontiers within a single voice. Shifting to fluid movements within geographical spaces already defined by their borders, Javier Ferrer Calle deals with media coverage of the Basque separatist group ETA in Spain, accentuating the language in which communication occurs. Similarly, Nick Phillips reads a novel's challenge to the constitution of urban space in Barcelona under the Franco regime. Stephen Cruikshank pushes these reflections toward the realm of poetry in a series of reflections on space and spatiality. Lucía Gómez Lvoff likewise incorporates space into her poetry, all the while playing with the sounds of places that bring them into contact with other non-spatial words. Kristy Nieto meanwhile deals with tensions in representation in Sor Juana's poetry, presenting them as a way of reading an epistemological confrontation with alterity at the end of Sor Juana's life. Mattia Beghelli, meanwhile, analyzes two literary portrayals of the constitution of the border between life and death and how meaning is forged in relation to this elusive yet crucial distinction, bringing us back to the vital, biological metaphor that links the issue's topic to the heartbeat.

We are very grateful to all of our contributors for their work on this topic, yet we realize that the topic is far from exhausted. We hope that these articles pose challenges and points of entry to our readers, so that in their varied approaches to the topic of "Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces," these critical works might lead us to deeper reflection on many types of fluid spaces.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, the Editorial Board would like to thank all of our contributors, in particular Professor Samuel Weber for providing us with this issue's outstanding guest contribution. For their invaluable administrative support, we would like to thank Carin Scott and April Caldwell of the Department of Romance Languages & Literatures along with the Graduate Committee. Special thanks go to Sarah Dowd for designing the cover image for this issue and to Brian Whitener for organizing the keynote speaker for this issue's presentation, Dr. Alberto Toscano. For keeping us going through our meetings, we would like to thank Francisco Boleaga. And for their work in the foundation of Tiresias in order to foster intellectual exchange, we would like to thank Marcelino Viera, Federico Pous, Christian Kroll, Ofelia Ros, and Maxime Foerster. Additional thanks go to our advisors Professor Javier Sanjinés and Professor Gustavo Verdesio.

Call for Contributions for the Present Issue

**Systole to Diastole:
Interventions in Fluid Spaces**

The rhythm we call heartbeat exists only as both systole and diastole, although necessarily between the two: the fluid contraction of the former...the quivering release of the latter.

This 5th issue of *Tiresias* is interested in examining the middle spaces, the distance between positions, the interstices: the tension that separates individuals from communities, friends from enemies, intellectual practices from political ones, to name only a few of the examples that interest us. But rather than focus on one position or the other, we ask that submissions address precisely or are related to the tension or double bind at the heart of each of these groupings (or others), particularly as they appear in texts related to Francophone, Hispanic, Lusophone or Italian cultures (literature, film, music, arts, performance, or other practices).

How does tension function there, tearing apart juxtapositions of culture, critical theory, and politics, while simultaneously binding them together? How do we address the middle spaces without becoming immured in new oppositions? How can we name and read these knots, lines, ties, attractions, and black holes? Can we speak of them otherwise? Submissions must address these or related questions and can take the form of academic papers or essays (15-20 pages), as well as narrative fiction, poetry, and non-textual forms (images, film, sound, etc).

Guest Contributions

The Singularity of Literary Cognition

Samuel Weber
Northwestern University

Looking back over the evolution of literary studies in the United States over the past few decades, two interrelated and in part contradictory tendencies can be distinguished. On the one hand, literary studies have extended their scope both territorially and methodologically: Post-structuralism, Deconstruction, New Historicism, Postcolonial, and gender, queer, ethnic trans-national studies are just some of the approaches that have participated in this development. On the other hand, at the same time that literary studies have extended their scope, there has been a significant shift in the conception of just what constitutes their specifically *literary* dimension. When I began graduate study, poetry was still widely considered to constitute the core if not the essence of what was called "literature". Much of the most influential criticism of the time dealt with poetical texts. Today, by contrast, when students of literature speak of their subject, they often equate "literature" with "narrative fiction". The third main "genre" of literature, drama or theater, has also moved ahead of poetry in terms of the interest generated among students, although it remains far behind narrative as the privileged object of study. While this shift in the conception of "literature" from poetry to narrative has facilitated the expansion of literary studies

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into previously inaccessible areas, it also requires a reconsideration of whatever it is that distinguishes "literature" from other forms of human activity —what distinguishes literature, say, not *from* but rather *within* the larger realms of "culture," "history," "geopolitics" to which it, literature, also no doubt belongs. Without such a reconsideration, the very extension of literary studies, which legitimately seeks to respond to a rapidly changing world, runs the risk of having nothing truly distinctive to offer to society in return for the acceptance it seeks and needs.

The social changes to which literary studies has sought to respond are many and complex. The development and spread of computer technology throughout all areas of life, despite the important changes it has wrought, has tended to reinforce the prestige of visual and acoustic experience at the expense of the graphic and linguistic medium that remains decisive for literature. The exponential spread of messaging and social networks over the past few decades seems in general not to have brought with it a new respect for practices of writing or reading, even though it involves both. All of this renders a comprehensive reflection on the distinctive resources and possibilities of literature and literary studies all the more urgent. The remarks that follow seek to provide an initial, tentative and partial response to this challenge.

I want to begin by suggesting that one of the things that sets literary studies apart from other disciplines, both in the humanities and in the sciences as well, is the *singular nature of the knowledge that it produces*. Knowledge in

literary studies has a different status and function than in most other academic disciplines. What is distinctive about the study of literature is the way in which the knowledge that it produces results from an *encounter* with *texts* that remains both *singular* and *situational*, whereas in most other disciplines the value of knowledge tends to be measured by its ability to transcend, through generalization, the limiting quality of the specific situations in which it is produced, transmitted and received. In other words, and at the risk of over generalizing, I want to suggest that in most disciplines texts are seen to be *means* serving an end that can be clearly separated from them — that end consisting in their *meaning*. In literary studies, by contrast, what counts is not meaning *per se*, but what Walter Benjamin, using a term borrowed from scholastic philosophy, called *ways of meaning*: not just the *what* of language but above all its *how*. There is a memorable formulation of Jacques Derrida that sums up this singular situation. It comes at the very end of his reading of Saussure in *Of Grammatology*. Referring to Saussure's distinction —again borrowed from medieval scholasticism— of "signifier" and "signified," Derrida sums his discussion of Saussure up in the following short sentence:

That the signified is originarily and essentially (...) trace, that it *is always already in the position of signifier*, is that apparently innocent proposition within which the metaphysics of the logos, of presence and consciousness, must reflect upon

writing as its death and its resource.¹ (my italics—
SW)

Although this proposition has probably become quite familiar to many of you, and the terminology may seem antiquated, I remain convinced that its implications are momentous and that they remain relevant to the pursuit of literary studies today. Two questions however must be elucidated: first, the relationship here asserted between signified and signifier, and second, that between writing as the death of “the metaphysics of presence” and writing at the same time as its “resource”. How can “death” be a “resource”? And how can the “signified can always already be in the position of signifier”?

One way of beginning to respond to these questions is by reflecting on a problem of translation. That the process of translation intervenes here may not be entirely accidental, since translation, as it turns out, can exemplify the process of signification that Saussure, and after him Derrida, is trying to interpret. The particular translation that I am referring to has become so familiar that it may be difficult for you to see it as a problem at all. I mean the translation of the French word, *signifiant*, by the English *signifier*. In French the word is a gerund, formed from the present participle of the verb, but used as a noun. The present participle, however, is a very peculiar —or as I would prefer to say: very singular grammatical form. It articulates a mode of presence that is very different from the “metaphysics of presence and of consciousness” to

¹ J. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore : Johns Hopkins, 1974), 73.

which Derrida refers —as different as the present participle is from the present indicative. The present indicative, as its name indicates, designates things that can be pointed to: and that for this very reason have to be considered as being relatively stable in their localization. The present participle, by contrast, as its name indicates, is partitioned —constituted by a split between *what* it signifies and the *process of signifying* itself. The presence of the present participle is often defined by its concomitance with its enunciation or articulation: I am speaking English to you here and now, but I speak English (in general). However this concomitance does not produce an undivided unity: rather, its simultaneity entails a certain *separation*. Its presence, then, is constituted by a split, and this split reproduces, but also anticipates, the relation between signifying and signified in general. The “signified” is a past participle that is also a past perfect: what it designates is something that has been completed. It is generally regarded as the product of a process of signifying, but also as one that is held to have terminated it. It produces *terms*. As something complete and terminated, it seems appropriate enough to attach the definite article to it. It is relatively easy therefore to forge and use the term, “*the signified*”.²

² It can be noted that the second English translator of Saussure, Roy Harris, chooses to translate *signifiant* and *signifié* by *signification* and *signal*. While it this translation brings out the dissymmetry between the two terms —“signification” designating a process, signal an entity— it also obscures lexically the complex interdependence of the two terms, which in French remain forms of a single verb: *signifier*, to signify. To “signal” is also something quite different from to “signify”. See: Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (Open Court: Chicago/Lasalle, IL, 1983), xi.

No signified without a signifier and vice-versa. But this interdependence can easily obscure the very different nature of the two operations. The difference emerges when we use the gerund in English: in contrast to "signified," the word "signifying" resists being defined by the definite article. It does so because it is iterative, ongoing, a discontinuous series of articulations that moves both *away* from its immediate appearance or location and *toward* something or somewhere else. It is thus split between enactment and articulation, and as such never complete. As an iterative movement that is situated by reference to its articulation, the present participle has no internal principle of closure. It therefore requires some sort of *intervention from without*, some sort of *interruption*, in order to achieve the status of a "signified". The move from signifying to signified is never purely internal. Put differently, what is intrinsic to it is that it is not intrinsic: it is heterogeneous. It can attain nominal status only through interruption, which over time may be sanctioned by routine, convention and thereby naturalized. It can then appear to be more or less self-evident, like a proper noun. But the fact that this process of naturalization is never entirely satisfactory can be indicated by the fact that the second English translator of Saussure, Roy Harris, chose to translate *signifiant* by "signal" and *signifié* by "significance". He thereby removed both terms —but particularly "*signifiant*"— from the verb from which they derive (*signifier*).

To understand how the proximity to the verb might prove shocking, especially in the context of academic discourse, it will suffice to recall that one of the most conspicuous recent uses of the gerund with the definite

article in English was probably made by Stephen King, whose novel, "The Shining" then became a celebrated film directed by Stanley Kubrick. The uncanny dimension of the title reflects the uncanniness of the present participle, and in particular the one that designates the condition of visibility. For what you see, both in the film and with the present participle, is not at all what you get. And what you get is not always what you see: for instance, a writer (in the film played by Jack Nicholson), whose only writing consists in the obsessively repeated typed sentence, itself the iteration of the well-worn phrase, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!" In the present participle, there is a bit too much "play" to be comfortable with it. This is also why the Strachey translation of the jokes retold by Freud in his book on *Wit and the Unconscious* scrupulously avoids using the present participle, substituting the past imperfect for it, thereby turning jokes into stories and depriving them of their "punch".

To treat "signifying" as though it were a noun designating a stable, identifiable object raises therefore the question of the process by which an intrinsically indefinable play of differential signification is arrested, interrupted and congealed so that it can assume a relatively stable status and thus furnish an identifiable object of cognition. With respect to the present participle, however, the status of such cognition remains as unstable as its object, and this in turn can call into question the identity of the cognitive subject as well. Nicholson's repeated typing of the same phrase, which designates both his character and his own name, Jack, suggests both the anxiety and the dilemma

that can be associated with the present participle, "The Shining," which produces no stable "shine".

The present participle or gerund, "le signifiant" — literally, "the signifying"— is thus the term that most accurately designated the process of signification that Saussure took to be the constitutive dynamic of language. This is also why he was so suspicious of traditional attempts to construct a theory of language using the "word" as its basic element. But it also suggests why he was unable to achieve the systematic theory of language that he so desired. For if the nominalization of the present participle, as in "the signifying" or "the shining," articulate the essential process of language as signifying, it also endows language with a spectral character (I once called it: the "apparition of language").³ In this context it may be recalled that Jack Nicolson's son in "The Shining," played by Danny Lloyd, has the supernatural power of seeing ghosts in the haunted house that Nicolson occupies with his family.

As signifying, however, the house of language is no less haunted. This ghostlike quality that makes language the medium of apparitions, but not simply of appearances, can also suggest how and why "writing" —insofar as it is the epitome of such signifying— can be both the "death" and the "resource" of a "metaphysics of presence" that precisely strives to separate, in principle, life from death, presence from absence. If the presence of language as "signified" consists in its being "always already in the

³ S. Weber, « Saussure and the Apparition of Language: The Critical Perspective», *MLN*, Vol. 91, No. 5, Centennial Issue: Responsibilities of the Critic (Oct., 1976), pp. 913-938.

position of signifying," then life and death can no longer be separated in this way —i.e. according to a logic of mutually exclusive opposition.

If we consider, then, the interplay between present participle and present indicative in Derrida's assertion — between "signifying" and "is"— we can say that language "is" always in advance of itself, but also always trailing behind —like the threads that trail behind Odradek as it rolls down the stairs in Kafka's story, "Cares of a Housefather" (*Sorge des Hausvaters*).⁴

As Saussure puts it, in the more sober discourse of the linguist: "The content of a word is determined in the final analysis not by what it contains but by what exists outside of it" (Course, 114). But how is this "outside" to be defined, limited, especially if it must be seen not just as spatial but also as temporal? For what "exists outside" of the word is not just the finite number of words included at any one time in what we call a language —assuming that such could itself ever be delimited, *concesso non dato*— but rather also entails the indefinite number of combinations and decompositions of word and word-parts to which any one word can *potentially* relate. Like the present participle, the "outside" of a word has no internal principle of closure. It is virtually unlimited and therefore unpredictable. Perhaps this was behind the famous remark of Karl Kraus,

⁴ "Am I to suppose, then, that he will always be rolling (*kollern*) down the stairs, with ends of thread trailing after him, right before the feet of my children, and my children's children?"

quoted by Walter Benjamin: "The more closely you look at a word, the more remotely it looks back."⁵

In struggling to find the most adequate or perhaps better put, the least inaccurate terms to articulate his thinking about language, Saussure invoked the word "value" in order to express the heterogeneous relationality of the *terms* that constitute language. He explained this choice as follows:

Even in non-linguistic cases values of any kind seem to be governed by a paradoxical principle. Values always involve: 1. something *dissimilar* that can be exchanged for the item whose value is under consideration, and 2. *similar* things that can be *compared* with the item whose value is under consideration. (*Course*, 115)

It is this process of comparison and exchange that constitutes the relative stability of any one word, its dimension of having-been-signified. But by depending upon what it has "always already" been *signifying* in order to arrive at its actual position as the present and presentable "signified," its presence —its "is"— is constituted as the outer shell of a movement that has been congealed but not consummated or definitively terminated.

This constitutive instability of meaning —qua signifies— does not merely affect the texts in which they are inscribed. It also affects the way those texts are

⁵ Karl Kraus, *Pro domo et mundo* (Munich, 1912), 164, cited in Walter Benjamin, *Über einige Motive bei Baudelaire*, » GS 1, 647 ; SW 4, 354.

experienced, which is to say, transmitted and read. Transmission —i.e. editing and publishing— is no less required to interpret the movement of signifying than is reading. I don't have the time here to dwell on the immensely important question of transmission, which is also changing before our eyes with the spread of electronic texts. But the problems are analogous to those of reading, which of course transmission both implies and conditions (for instance, as translation). Reading that responds to the way in which each signified *is always already in the position of signifier*, cannot be described, as Heidegger tries to do, merely as a process of "collection" —*lesen* in German meaning not just reading but also "harvesting". For reading, like transmission, with which it overlaps, must equally entail separation, dispersion, "dissemination" as Derrida might call it. This is also why there can be no simple "act of reading," to use a phrase that Wolfgang Iser popularized years ago. For the notions of *act*, *enactment*, and *actuality*, understood as self-identical presence or presentation, appears in the shining of signifying as after-effects of a heterogeneity that can never be fully actualized —which also means fully cognized, in and of itself. What is called into question here is ultimately perhaps the status of what we call the "self".

For to recognize the irreducible effects of signifying in the constitution of all meaning qua signified not only dislocates the object of investigation but also the subject, the principle investigator. A reader is subjected to a text — to a multifarious network of texts, if you will— but he or she is not the "subject" of that text, in either the grammatical or philosophical sense of that term. A reader is not the

author of a work or the initiator of an action. The reader reacts or better, responds to the text as pent-up signifying. The text is pent-up signifying insofar as it responds to other texts, written and non-written, congealed and virtual. Such congealing inevitably entails the selection of certain signifying possibilities to be treated as signifieds, and the rejection therefore of others. Such a process of inclusion and exclusion is inevitable. But the knowledge it produces remains partial, in the different sense of that word: not total, but also partisan. Literary knowledge is or should be more aware of this partiality than other disciplines, given its constitutive proximity to the process of reading (as distinct from observing, measuring and calculating).

This however creates a problem for literary studies, insofar as it is concerned with texts whose significance depends at least as much on *how* they are arranged linguistically, graphically, as on *what* they say, declare or propose (i.e. their propositional, thematic or representational content). The knowledge that the reading of such texts engenders cannot claim to have the same permanence or durability —or even predictive power— as that claimed by other disciplines. This is why it was fashionable for a while to speak of “strong” and “weak” readings. A paraphrase is a weak reading: it may resume the content of a text, but only by subordinating the signifying process by which that content is articulated —a process that at the same time relativizes the content, by demonstrating it “always already to have been in the position of signifying.” But just what that content *always already* was signifying is not a question that admits of a univocal or definitive answer, even though everyone will

agree that some answers are better than others (although not on which answers are better). But one can perhaps formulate a general principle on which to judge the value of those answers. A better, more productive response will bring out the singular directions that have been *excluded* from previous interpretations as well as the factors that have contributed to that exclusion. In so doing such a response opens the way to other readings.

The same holds, more or less, for the reading, interpretation and translation of non-literary texts. A significant instance, drawn not from poetry or literature, but which has to do with both, can be found in Kant's *Critique of the Power to Judge* —already an unusual and somewhat cumbersome retranslation of what was formerly known simply as the *Critique of Judgment*. But the cumbersome translation is necessary insofar as what Kant is concerned with is not judgment per se, but precisely the conditions under which judgment is possible —the power or possibility of judging. Judgment, according to Kant, traditionally seeks to bring the singular object under a general concept. But this presupposes that the singular is already known. The key question for him in this text is whether in cases where the singular does not fit in to existing concepts, it can be generalized in a way that follows universal a priori principles.

Without being able to further into detail here, I want to single out one aspect of his analysis. At a certain point in his text, Kant seeks to account for the singularity of art as produced by “genius.” Given this singularity, Kant must exclude the classical model of imitation of previous models

as an explanation. Instead, he attributes to genius a natural talent of bringing forth what is essentially novel and unprecedented: essentially singular. In §49 Kant derives the powers of Genius from what he calls *Geist*, which however he defines in a way very different from that which Hegel will give to the term. *Geist*, according to Kant, is

the enlivening (*belebendes*) principle in the mind (*Gemüte*) [...] which sets the mind's powers into purposive movement, i.e. into play that feeds on itself and itself strengthens its forces. Now I maintain that this principle is nothing other than the power to present aesthetic ideas, by which I mean that kind of imaginative idea that provides much to think about without any definite thought, i.e. concept, being adequate to it, and hence which no language can entirely attain or make understandable. (my translation – SW)

Kant explains the enlivening or animating (*belebende*) power of the aesthetic idea, by appealing to the decisive distinction between *knowing* and *thinking*. An aesthetic idea gives the mind much to think about, “opens up an unfathomable field of related ideas” but without reducing itself to any one of them or to any unified combination—in short, without reducing itself to any coherent *meaning*. Although Kant's language throughout this critique tends to privilege the visual in describing the beautiful and the sublime, in elaborating his notion of the “aesthetic idea” he has to turn to *language* as the decisive medium. The question for him then becomes that of explaining how

aesthetic ideas, which no language can ever fully “attain,” nevertheless function as a linguistic phenomenon:

In a word, the aesthetic idea is a presentation of the imagination (*Vorstellung*) associated with a given concept and is connected, when there is free use of the imagination, with such a multiplicity of partial presentations that no expression that designates a definite concept can be found, and that therefore *that makes us add to a concept the thoughts of much that is ineffable, but the feeling of which quickens our cognitive powers and connects language, as mere letter, to spirit.* (transl. Pluhar, p. 185)

I quote here from the translation by Werner Pluhar, which dates from 1987 and which follows the many previous translations of this text in translating one of the key words in this passage as “ineffable”. It is only in the most recent English translation, by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, published in 2000, that the English translators finally caught up with Kant’s text. For Kant does not and could hardly have asserted that the aesthetic idea is “ineffable” given that he chooses poetry, including a poem —by Friedrich the Great— in order to illustrate it. What Kant writes in German is not the equivalent of *ineffable*, which exists in (*unaussprechbar*), but rather the German word properly translated by Guyer and Matthews as “unnameable” (*unnennbar*). This is the word that Kant uses here and a page later, to designate the way in which the aesthetic idea both occurs in language and at the same time eludes it. Kant is addressing here a problem that will become one of

the mainstays of the New Criticism, the question of poetic *ambiguity*. In non-literary disciplines, ambiguity is generally understood as a defect, as a lack of meaning, and therefore of precision. But as William Empson demonstrated in his *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, ambiguity can be a decisive resource of poetry, and can be precisely analyzed. If it shatters the harmony and unity of meaning, it invigorates the play of signifying that may be the distinctive resource of poetry, and possibly of literature in general. In literary-critical discourse, however, ambiguity can be the key to a different type of experience, which is not essentially or primarily cognitive, in the usual sense of that term. Ambiguity, or what Derrida calls "undecidability," can mark the "death" of a discourse bent on producing univocal and self-identical propositions. But it can as such also be the "resource" of a thinking that can seek to draw out "curious conclusions," as Laurence Sterne puts it in *Tristram Shandy* —i.e. conclusions that do not simply conclude but that also open out new possibilities of signification.

But to do this, one must approach language not, as Saussure insists at the beginning of his published *Course on General Linguistics*, as a "nomenclature" but as a signifying process. If the name is understood as that which designates a singular being, the process of signifying excludes that any such being could be named properly. Precisely this becomes the resource of genius in the production of aesthetic ideas. If this results in a reduction of stable cognition, by the same token it can produce a quickening or enlivening of the imagination and the understanding, which now exercise them without following

a preordained rule or law. The “universality” of such aesthetic ideas means for Kant that they should be generally communicable or “impartable” (*mitteilbar*). What is to be communicated, however, is not —and this is the challenge of Kant’s Third Critique— the knowledge of a concept, but rather a *feeling*, involving pleasure or pain arising from one’s interaction with the world. What is shareable is the experience that commonly accepted names and words can mean more and other than what they are conventionally expected to mean. This “more and other” however does not produce conceptual understanding but rather a “feeling” that preserves the alterity of the process involved. It is a process of “de-naming” by means of naming, which can be felt as the “shining” of “signifying”.

In such spectral shining the “unnameable” in language —the unnameable *as* language— is felt. Such feeling reflects what I will call the *encounter* with a singularity that can be presented but never made present in its presentations. Encounter here suggests both the approach to the other of language, and at the same time the repulsion or distance that remains unbridgeable. As Derrida puts it in his untranslatable phrase, “tout autre est tout autre” —all and every other is other(wise), and therefore can be repeated and reflected, but never univocally named or identified. Language, in this sense, entails presenting without presence; or put somewhat differently, presentation without *self*-presence.

But the communication and communion of feeling as Kant describes it in the Third Critique does not a harmonious process. In preserving the singularity of what

is being communicated, which is the response to a singular encounter, the judgment of the beautiful or the sublime can only “demand” of others that they share it —it can neither compel such assent nor demonstrate its necessity. Even if such communication may never actually take place, this demand remains a constitutive element of Kant’s analysis. This means two things: first, that the encounter with the singular object or representation that defines the beautiful or the sublime, cannot remain the exclusive property of the individual subject: such encounters must be shared, imparted, communicated to others. However, such an encounter remains impossible to realize, to actualize, since by its very nature it is tied to a singular situation that cannot be identically reproduced.

The temporal implications of this situation are worth remarking. The judgment of the beautiful and the sublime belongs to those judgments that Kant classifies as “reflecting” rather than the more familiar “determining” judgments. In the latter, the object encountered is recognized and therefore cognized, which is to say, assimilated to a class of things already known, subordinated under a genus. This thing is a glass, a chair etc. But in the reflecting judgment, what is encountered is singular in the sense of not fitting in —not being assimilable to existing, available concepts. It must therefore be encountered on its own, as it were, but without being immediately classified or subsumed under a genus or species. This situation therefore presupposes a relation to the past, but a discontinuous one: what has been previously known and available as general concepts, laws and rules, no longer suffices to assimilate the thing encountered as a radical

singularity. And yet, Kant insists, the result is not simply that the subject withdraws into his or her own private, idiosyncratic sphere, but rather makes a judgment that like normal cognitive judgments claims universal validity, but lacks the concepts necessary to demonstrate that validity or compel the assent of others. It thus addresses the future, even if it is a future that it itself will never reach. Kant's aesthetic judgment, whether of the beautiful or the sublime, can *demand* —but it can never *command*.

What Kant's text demonstrates most of all, at least with respect to the questions that interest us here, is how the problem of singularity implies an experience of time that cannot be reduced to a self-identical instant or to a series of continuous moments. This results in a conflict of "feeling" that is extremely illuminating: an aesthetic judgment of taste responds to a perception or representation with a feeling of pleasure or pain depending on the harmony or disharmony of imagination and understanding. But that feeling of pleasure or of pain must necessarily be localized in time and space, and in such a way that it excludes any kind of continuous duration. For such duration could only lead to the homogenization of the encounter, its being "named" properly and thereby conceptualized —to its being repeated as the same. It is precisely such repetition that one desires, given the "quickening" of one's forces that the experience brings with it —"We would like to dwell" on the experience, Kant says, prolonging the pleasure. And the pleasure itself he defined as the sense of the duration of the self. But any such prolongation would also mean the loss of the singular surprise that produces the pleasure in the first place. The

result is the demand that others share the same pleasure — but also the “knowledge” that such can never be actually experienced.

This demand constitutes one possible response to the paradoxical and indeed conflictual dimension of the encounter with the singular, which Derrida has summed up in the following observation: “The experience of the singular is inseparable from its loss.”⁶ The singular is never accessible as such, directly, because it is never reproducible as such, identically. It therefore eludes our cognitive grasp. But not necessarily our touch. Or rather, our feeling. For in contrast to the cognitive grasp or to the touch, “feeling” is never simply ours, neither simply active nor simply passive. We usually think of feeling as something internal, subjective, private. But the word itself suggests something quite different: it suggests an encounter with the outside, in which inside and outside converge but never merge —and perhaps never even touch.

This is why the experience of the singularity of signification seems to entail *feeling* rather than *knowing*. But the fact that we cannot conceive the singular, nor even rest in touch with it, can add to the intensity of its effect. In referring to the pleasure produced by the aesthetic idea, Kant repeatedly describes it as a feeling that *enlivens* the cognitive powers even if it never provides any actual cognition (“die also zu einem Begriffe viel Unnennbares hinzu denken last, dessen Gefühl die Erkenntnisvermögen *belebt...*”). Feeling and thinking here are by no means incompatible, but the thinking involved must not insist on

⁶ J. Derrida, *Specters of Marx* (Routledge : London).

ending in cognition. It is a thinking that feels possibilities rather than cognizing actual objects.

A pure thinking, one could therefore say, that yields a heightened sense of being alive. But this heightened sense is fleeting, and as such contradicts the verse sense of pleasure as Kant conceives it, which is that of prolonging the sense of duration —of a self. The self, feeling this pleasure, is only alive in departing: in “shining.”

As with ghosts, the apparition of such an intense feeling must, as we have stressed, always be localized. Its locality however is unique: impenetrable and hence unknowable. One cannot help but be reminded in this context of a parallel use of the notion of “singularity” in the sciences: in mathematics, astrophysics and computational science. In his book, *The Singularity is Near*, Ray Kurzweil gives the following account of the development of the term:

To put the concept of Singularity into further perspective, let’s explore the history of the word itself. “Singularity” is an English word meaning a unique event with, well, singular implications. The word was adopted by mathematicians to denote a value that transcends any finite limitation, such as the explosion of magnitude that results when dividing a constant by a number that gets closer and closer to zero.⁷

⁷ Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* (London : Penguin, 2006), 22.

One of the key words in this description, which traces the migrations of the word from ordinary language to scientific discourse, is the word “transcends,” which also recurs as the subtitle of Kurzweil’s book: “When Humans Transcend Biology.” Singularity, in his use of it at least, marks two things: first, the advent of something absolutely new, which of course means something radically different from everything that has occurred previously. This is the sense that governs its initial formulation, which Kurzweil attributes to John von Neumann:

The ever-accelerating progress of technology [...] gives the appearance of approaching some essential singularity in the history of the race beyond which human affairs, as we know them, could not continue. (cited in Kurzweil, 10)

If we recall Kant’s discussion of the encounter with radical heterogeneity in which the mind is confronted by phenomena that are absolutely impossible to assimilate to existing knowledge, we recognize that what Kurzweil and von Neumann are describing corresponds closely to this situation, albeit in a far more formal sense. The mathematical notion of the singular seeks to circumscribe the limits of calculability: it is the effort to think what cannot be calculated, somewhat akin to what Kant analyzes in the Third Critique as the mathematical sublime, the “absolutely great”.⁸

In both mathematical physics and in philosophical and literary-critical discourse the notion of “singularity”

⁸ Quote from *Mathematical Sublime* §25.

designates a limit of the knowable, which in scientific discourse is often associated with the term "event-horizon". The discovery of "black holes" in astrophysics has become perhaps the most significant manifestation of the notion of "singularity":

How does our use of "singularity" in human history compare to its use in physics? The word was borrowed from mathematics by physics, which has always shown a penchant for anthropomorphic terms [...]. In physics, "singularity" theoretically refers to a point of zero size with infinite density of mass and therefore infinite gravity. But because of quantum uncertainty there is no actual point of infinite density, and indeed quantum mechanics disallows infinite values. (486)

Kurzweil's reference here to "quantum uncertainty" alludes to Heisenberg's famous "uncertainty principle," which introduced a strong element of situational indeterminacy into experimental knowledge of subatomic particles. Since, as Heisenberg argued in his famous paper of 1927, "the more precisely the position [of a subatomic particle—SW] is determined, the less precisely its momentum is known in this instant, and vice versa." Such "unsharp" determination of the path of such particles, according to Heisenberg should be understood to be the result not of an observational-experimental deficiency, but of the nature of the quantum object itself, which can be determined, and predicted, statistically either with respect to its position or with respect to its momentum, but not with respect to both at once. This leads him to yet another quite radical

statement: "If the sharp formulation of the law of causality [consists in the asserting that] if we know the present exactly, we can calculate the future —it is not the conclusion that is wrong but the premise."

In other words, the premise that Heisenberg wound up questioning was one that supposed that "the present" state of the subatomic particle could be known "exactly". If however the present could not be known exactly, then the same would apply to the future. The implications of his argument are significant: for the present could not be known exactly because one could not suppose that its spatial and temporal dimensions could be unified in a coherent, continuous or undivided present. Rather, as with the present participle, the "present" of the subatomic events split into temporal and spatial measurements. The non-coincidence of these two measurable "presents" produces the "uncertainty" of the result. It should be noted that Heisenberg's German word for "uncertainty-principle" was far more visually graphic than its English translation: he called the *Unschärfeprinzip* literally: "principle of unsharpness", thereby situating the opaque and unknowable at the center of the knowable qua measurable.

To be sure, Heisenberg's "uncertainty principle" does not simply introduce ambiguity into scientific measurement, as a recent interpretation of it confirms: "One should note that Heisenberg's uncertainty principle does not say 'everything is uncertain.' Rather, it tells us very exactly

where the limits of uncertainty lie when we make measurements of sub-atomic events.”⁹

If this remark is true, the significance of Heisenberg’s discovery is that by taking into accounts the limits of the knowable, the latter can be more precisely measured. Something similar can be argued for critical notions such as ambiguity or undecidability: in not feeling obliged to impose unity of meaning on a text, they can more precisely render its fault lines, and conflicts, and also the possibilities it holds open. Terminologically this can be formulated as the difference between signification and meaning. If the latter is understood as integral and self-contained, the former always involves a disjunction that can never be fully determined. In both cases however the “object” of inspection, or of reading, can no longer be conceived as existing independently of the process of inspection, whether as measurement or as reading. To be sure there remains a decisive difference. Scientific measurement assigns a place to calculability that has no correlative in the interpretation of linguistic signifiers, even if that interpretation can also formalize certain patterns. It is significant, however, that in scientific discourse a term has imposed itself as a result of such discussions that might well be appropriate in designating the singular kind of knowledge effective in literary-critical reading. That term is “event,” which, as you will have noticed from the passage just quoted, comes to replace the notion of “particle” as the object of quantum measurement, especially where singularity is concerned.

⁹ <http://www.aip.org/history/heisenberg/p08c.htm>.

I will have to leave it others more qualified to discuss whether the interpretation of scientific “events” can be further compared with the reading of a literary text. My suspicion is that the interplay of what Arkady Plotnitsky has called “the knowable and the unknowable” in literary studies has to reserve a privileged place for forms of misapprehension that may not hold for a science whose object is increasingly constructed through processes of measurement. With respect to literature, however, as in psychoanalysis, mis-communication can be interpreted as a symptom of a certain form of communication and transmission, rather than as their mutually exclusive other. Where literature is concerned, missing the target can be more significant than hitting it.

Since my time is up, let me close with a brief example —and of course as an example it indicates only one dimension or possibility of literary singularity, to be considered alongside its other possible manifestations. It is taken from Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, a novel that consists in a profound and prolonged *staging of* the situation of novel-writing and reading. One of the motifs around which this narrative revolves concerns the question, “Where did Uncle Toby get his wound?” Uncle Toby, one of the residents of Shandy Hall, was wounded in the Anglo-Dutch wars at the battle of Namur, in Belgium. He was hit by a fragment of the wall protecting the city. The wall of a trench in which Uncle Toby was located was struck by an artillery shell, which in turn dislodged part of the wall and that in turn hit poor Uncle Toby —in or near the groin. And that “in or near” is what provokes the question just cited. Having returned to Shandy Hall to convalesce and recover,

Uncle Toby has to respond repeatedly to persons seeking to find out about just “where” he received his wound. He responds by trying to describe the exact position he was in when he received the injury. To do this, he resorts to drawing maps with ever greater precision, and finally through a miniature reconstruction of the battle itself in the gardens of Shandy Hall. But for his prospective fiancée, the Widow Wadman, the question of just *where* Uncle Toby got his wound means something quite different: she is not interested in where he was standing when he received it, but where on his body it struck him —and with what consequences. When Uncle Toby is finally made to realize the meaning Widow Wadman attaches to this question, he breaks off his wooing of her and accepts to be a bachelor for the rest of his life.

But this question, in all of its ambiguous singularity, hangs over the whole narrative until its very end. The novel ends shortly before Sterne’s death, and indeed can be seen as ending with the death of its author. This means however that the status of its end remains equivocal: is it finished, or was it merely interrupted. Is *Tristram Shandy* a complete novel or is it a fragment? To read the end of the novel, however, is to discover that the text already anticipates this question, as it does so many others. It concludes with an anecdote —i.e. with a short segment of a story. The anecdote concerns an incident in which a bull, who belongs to Tristram’s father, Walter Shandy, and who is kept by Walter for the purpose of breeding, seems to have failed in the task that has been assigned to him. A cow of the Parish that is thought to have been impregnated by the bull does not “calf”. The cow’s failure to give birth

then becomes the subject of a heated argument between the men of Shandy Hall, as to whom or what is responsible:

Most of the townsmen ... quoth Obadiah, believe that 'tis all the Bull's fault ----

--- But may not a cow be barren? Replied my father, turning to Dr. Slop.

It never happens: said Dr. Slop ...

In the middle of the dispute, Tristram's mother makes one of rare appearances:

L---d! said my mother, what is all this story about?

-

A COCK and a BULL, said Yorick ---And one of the best of its kind, I ever heard. (IX.33)

Sterne's narrative, which is constantly "reflecting" on its own nature as narrative (in a way not unlike Kant's notion of "reflective judgment") is also a study in singularities: that of Walter Shandy, of Uncle Toby, and of all the other cast of characters, including the narrator himself, Tristram. But these figures are not characters in the sense of psychological realism: they are not individuals, but rather singularities. For they are all divided, not just from others but ultimately from themselves, by their obsessions, their "hobby horses," which take them in directions and along paths over which they have little control. And the narrative that follows them does not really end, in the sense of forming a completed whole, but rather stops short,

interrupted not just by the author's death, but by the punch-line of a joke, which is a joke on the novel but also on the reader's expectation that the novel could engender a meaning that could be identified, possessed and retained. But there is no meaning beyond the telling of the tale, which includes the various "horizons of expectation" of potential readers, but only by dislodging them. Everyone is always being interrupted, as is the reader's hope of a meaningful conclusion. Instead the conclusion is "curious". And thereby it fulfills what Walter Benjamin, in his essay on Storytelling, attributed not to the novel, but to the story: its ending as interruption always excites the curiosity of its listeners and readers to find out "what happened next?" The answer that concludes *Tristram Shandy* is clear and enigmatic in its simplicity: A "cock and bull story" but which will hopefully be one of "the best of its kind I ever heard."

Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces

A-H

**Anti-Humboldt:
Una Lectura del Tratado de Libre Comercio
de América del Norte, firmado por Canadá,
Estados Unidos y México**

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Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte

PREÁMBULO

Los gobiernos de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos (México), de Canadá y de los Estados Unidos de América (Estados Unidos), decididos a:

REAFIRMAR los lazos especiales de amistad y cooperación entre sus naciones;

CONTRIBUIR al desarrollo armónico, a la expansión del comercio mundial y a ampliar la cooperación internacional;

CREAR un mercado más extenso y seguro para los bienes y los servicios producidos en sus territorios;

REDUCIR las distorsiones en el comercio;

ESTABLECER reglas claras y de beneficio mutuo para su intercambio comercial;

ASEGURAR un marco comercial previsible para la planeación de las actividades productivas y de la inversión;

DESARROLLAR sus respectivos derechos y obligaciones derivados del Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio, así como de otros instrumentos bilaterales y multilaterales de cooperación ;

FORTALECER la competitividad de sus empresas en los mercados mundiales;

ALENTAR la innovación y la creatividad y fomentar el comercio de bienes y servicios que estén protegidos por derechos de propiedad intelectual;

CREAR nuevas oportunidades de empleo, mejorar las condiciones laborales y los niveles de vida en sus respectivos territorios;

EMPRENDER todo lo anterior de manera congruente con la protección y la conservación del ambiente;

PRESERVAR su capacidad para salvaguardar el bienestar público;

PROMOVER el desarrollo sostenible;

REFORZAR la elaboración y la aplicación de leyes y reglamentos en materia ambiental; y

PROTEGER fortalecer y hacer efectivos los derechos fundamentales de sus trabajadores;

HAN ACORDADO:

Tiresias 5 (March 2012)

Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/rl/tiresias/index.html>

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PRIMERA PARTE

ASPECTOS GENERALES

Capítulo I

Objetivos

Artículo 101. **Establecimiento** de la zona de libre comercio

Las Partes de este Tratado, de conformidad con lo dispuesto en el Artículo XXIV del Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio, establecen una zona de libre comercio.

Artículo 102. **Objetivos**

1. Los **objetivos del presente** Tratado, desarrollados de manera más específica a través de sus principios y reglas, incluidos los de trato nacional, trato de nación más favorecida y transparencia, son los siguientes:

- (a) eliminar obstáculos al comercio y facilitar la circulación transfronteriza de bienes y de servicios entre los territorios de las Partes;
- (b) promover condiciones de competencia leal **en la zona** de libre comercio;
- (c) aumentar sustancialmente las oportunidades de inversión en los territorios de las Partes;
- (d) proteger y hacer valer, de manera adecuada y efectiva, los derechos de propiedad intelectual en territorio de cada una de las Partes;
- (e) crear procedimientos eficaces para la aplicación y cumplimiento de este Tratado, para su administración conjunta y para la solución de controversias; y
- (f) establecer lineamientos para **la ulterior** cooperación trilateral, regional y multilateral encaminada a ampliar y mejorar los beneficios de este Tratado.

2. Las Partes interpretarán y aplicarán las disposiciones de este Tratado a la **luz de los objetivos** establecidos en el párrafo 1 y de conformidad con las normas aplicables del derecho internacional.

Artículo 103. **Relación** con otros tratados internacionales

1. Las Partes confirmarán los derechos y obligaciones existentes entre ellas conforme al Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio y otros acuerdos de los que sean parte.

2. En caso de incompatibilidad **entre tales acuerdos y el presente** Tratado, éste prevalecerá en la medida de la incompatibilidad, salvo que en el mismo se disponga otra cosa.

Artículo 104. **Relación con tratados en materia ambiental y de conservación**

1. En caso de incompatibilidad entre este Tratado y las obligaciones específicas en materia comercial contenidas en:

- (a) la Convención sobre el Comercio Internacional de Especies Amenazadas de Flora y Fauna Silvestres, celebrada en Washington el 3 de marzo de 1973, con sus enmiendas del 22 de junio de 1979;
- (b) el Protocolo de Montreal Relativo a **las Sustancias Agotadoras** de la Capa de Ozono, del 16 de septiembre de 1987, con sus enmiendas del 29 de junio de 1990;
- (c) el Convenio de Basilea sobre el Control de los Movimientos Transfronterizos de los Desechos Peligrosos y su Eliminación, del 22 de marzo de 1989 a su entrada **en vigor** para México, Canadá y Estados Unidos; o
- (d) los tratados señalados en el Anexo 104.1,

estas obligaciones prevalecerán en **la medida de la incompatibilidad siempre** que, cuando una Parte tenga la opción entre medios igualmente eficaces y razonablemente a su alcance para cumplir con tales obligaciones, elija la que presente menor grado de incompatibilidad con las demás disposiciones del Tratado.

2. Las Partes podrán acordar por escrito la modificación del Anexo 104.1, para incluir en él cualquier enmienda a uno de los acuerdos a que se refiere el párrafo 1, y cualquier otro acuerdo en materia ambiental o de conservación.

Artículo 105. **Extensión de las obligaciones**

Las Partes asegurarán la adopción de todas las medidas necesarias para dar eficacia a las disposiciones de este Tratado, en particular para su observancia por los gobiernos estatales y provinciales, **salvo que en este Tratado se**

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disponga otra cosa.

Anexo 104.1 Tratados bilaterales y otros tratados en materia ambiental y de conservación

1. El Acuerdo entre el Gobierno de Canadá y el Gobierno de Estados Unidos de América en lo Relativo al Movimiento Transfronterizo de **Desechos Peligrosos**, firmado en Ottawa el 28 de octubre de 1986.

2. El Convenio entre los Estados Unidos Mexicanos y los Estados Unidos de América sobre Cooperación para la Protección y Mejoramiento del Medio Ambiente en la Zona Fronteriza, firmado el 14 de agosto de 1983 en La Paz, Baja California Sur.

Capítulo II Definiciones generales

Artículo 201. Definiciones de aplicación general¹

1. Para los efectos de este Tratado, salvo que se especifique **otra cosa**:

- bienes de una Parte significa los productos nacionales como se entienden en el Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio, o aquellos bienes que las Partes convengan e incluye los bienes originarios de esa Parte;
- Código de Valoración Aduanera significa el Acuerdo relativo a la Aplicación del Artículo VII del Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio, **incluidas sus notas interpretativas**;
- Comisión significa la Comisión de Libre Comercio establecida de conformidad con el Artículo 2001(1), "La Comisión de Libre Comercio";
- días significa días naturales, incluidos el sábado, el domingo y los días festivos;
- empresa **significa cualquier entidad** constituida u organizada conforme al derecho aplicable, tenga o no fines de lucro y sea de propiedad privada o gubernamental, incluidas cualesquiera sociedades, fideicomisos, asociaciones ("partnerships"), empresas de propietario único, coinversiones u otras asociaciones;
- empresa de una Parte significa una empresa constituida u organizada conforme a la legislación de una Parte;
- empresa de Estado significa una empresa propiedad de una Parte o bajo el control de la misma, mediante derechos de dominio;
- existente significa en vigor a la fecha de entrada en vigor de este Tratado;
- medida incluye cualquier ley, reglamento, procedimiento, requisito o práctica;
- nacional significa una persona física que es ciudadana o residente permanente de una Parte y cualquier otra persona física a que se refiera el Anexo 201.1;
- originario significa que cumple con las reglas de origen establecidas en el Capítulo IV, "Reglas de origen";
- persona significa una persona física o una empresa;
- persona de una Parte significa un nacional o una empresa de una Parte;
- principios de contabilidad generalmente aceptados **significa** las normas generalmente reconocidas o a las que se reconozca obligatoriedad en territorio de una Parte en relación al registro de ingresos, gastos, costos, activos y pasivos, divulgación de información y preparación de estados financieros. Pueden incluir lineamientos amplios de aplicación general, así como criterios, prácticas y procedimientos detallados;
- Secretariado significa el Secretariado establecido de conformidad con el Artículo 2002(1), "El Secretariado";
- Sistema Armonizado (SA) significa el **Sistema Armonizado** de Designación y Codificación de Mercancías, y sus notas y reglas interpretativas, en la forma en que las Partes lo hayan adoptado y aplicado en sus respectivas leyes de impuestos al comercio exterior;
- territorio **significa** para cada Parte, el territorio de esa Parte según se define en el Anexo 201.1;

2. Para efectos de este Tratado, toda referencia a estados o provincias incluye a los gobiernos locales de esos estados o provincias, salvo que se especifique **otra cosa**.

Anexo 201.1

Definiciones específicas **por país**

Salvo que se disponga **otra cosa**, para efectos de este Tratado:

- nacional también incluye:

- (a) respecto a México, a los nacionales **o ciudadanos** conforme a los Artículos 30 y 34 de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, respectivamente; y
- (b) respecto a Estados Unidos, a los "nacionales de Estados Unidos", según se define en las disposiciones **existentes** de la Immigration and Nationality Act de Estados Unidos;

-**territorio significa:**

- (a) respecto a México:

Artículo 201 "Definiciones generales - bienes de una Parte": un bien de una Parte puede incluir materiales de otros países.

- (i) los estados de la Federación y el Distrito Federal;
- (ii) **las islas**, incluidos los arrecifes y cayos en los mares adyacentes;
- (iii) **las islas** de Guadalupe y las de Revillagigedo, situadas en el Océano Pacífico;
- (iv) la plataforma continental y **los zócalos submarinos** de las islas, cayos y arrecifes;
- (v) las aguas de los mares territoriales, en la extensión y términos que fije el derecho internacional, y las aguas marítimas interiores;
- (vi) **el espacio situado** sobre el territorio nacional, con la extensión y modalidades que establece el propio derecho internacional; y
- (vii) **toda zona más allá** de los mares territoriales de México dentro de la cual México pueda ejercer derechos sobre el fondo y el subsuelo marinos y sobre los recursos naturales que éstos contengan, de conformidad con el derecho internacional, incluida la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre Derecho del Mar, así como con su legislación interna;
- (b) respecto a Canadá, el territorio en que se aplique su legislación aduanera, incluida **toda zona más allá** de los mares territoriales de Canadá dentro de la cual, de conformidad con el derecho internacional y con su legislación interna, Canadá pueda ejercer **derechos sobre el fondo** y subsuelo marinos y sobre los recursos naturales que éstos contengan; y
- (c) respecto a Estados Unidos:
 - (i) el territorio aduanero de Estados Unidos **que incluye los cincuenta estados**, el Distrito de Columbia y Puerto Rico;
 - (ii) **las zonas libres** ubicadas en Estados Unidos y en Puerto Rico; y
 - (iii) **toda zona más allá de los mares** territoriales de Estados Unidos dentro de la cual, de conformidad con el derecho internacional y con su legislación interna, Estados Unidos pueda ejercer derechos sobre el fondo y subsuelo marinos y sobre los recursos naturales que éstos contengan.

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5. A petición escrita de cualquiera de las Partes, la Parte que aplique o se proponga aplicar medidas sobre las importaciones de acuerdo con el párrafo 4 realizará consultas para revisar la administración de dichas medidas.

Artículo 303. Restricciones a la devolución de aranceles aduaneros sobre productos exportados y a los programas de diferimiento de aranceles aduaneros⁴

1. Salvo que se disponga otra cosa en este artículo, ninguna de las Partes podrá reembolsar el monto de aranceles aduaneros pagados, ni eximir o reducir el monto de aranceles aduaneros adeudados, en relación con un bien importado a su territorio, a condición de **que el bien sea :**

(a) **posteriormente** exportado a territorio de otra Parte;
(b) utilizado como material en la producción de otro bien posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte; o
(c) sustituido por **un bien idéntico** o similar utilizado como material en la producción de otro bien posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte, en un monto que exceda al menor entre el monto total de aranceles aduaneros pagados o adeudados sobre la importación **del bien** a su territorio, y el monto total de aranceles aduaneros pagados a otra Parte en relación con el bien que se haya posteriormente exportado al territorio **de esa otra Parte.**

2. Ninguna de las Partes, a condición de exportar, podrá reembolsar, eximir, ni reducir:

(a) las cuotas antidumping o compensatorias que se apliquen de acuerdo **con las leyes internas** de una Parte y no sean incompatibles con las disposiciones del Capítulo XIX, "Revisión y solución de controversias en materia de cuotas antidumping y compensatorias";
(b) las primas que se ofrezcan o recauden sobre bienes importados, derivadas de cualquier sistema de licitación relativo a la aplicación de restricciones cuantitativas a la importación, de aranceles-cuota, o de cupos de preferencia arancelaria;
(c) los derechos aplicados de conformidad con la Sección 22 de la United States Agricultural Adjustment Act, sujeto a las disposiciones del Capítulo VII, "Sector agropecuario y medidas sanitarias y fitosanitarias"; o
(d) los aranceles aduaneros, pagados o adeudados, respecto de un bien importado a su territorio y sustituido por un bien idéntico o similar que sea subsecuentemente exportado a territorio de otra Parte.

3. Cuando un bien se importe a territorio de una Parte de conformidad con un programa de diferimiento de aranceles aduaneros y subsecuentemente se exporte a territorio de otra Parte o se utilice como material en la producción de un bien subsecuentemente exportado a territorio de otra Parte o se sustituya por un bien idéntico o similar utilizado como material en la producción de otro bien posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte, la Parte de cuyo territorio se exportó el bien:

(a) determinará el monto de los aranceles aduaneros como si **el bien** exportado se hubiera destinado al consumo interno; y
(b) podrá eximir o reducir dicho monto en la medida que lo permita **el párrafo 1.**

4. Para establecer el monto de los aranceles aduaneros susceptibles de reembolso, exención o reducción de conformidad con el párrafo 1 respecto de un bien importado a su territorio, cada una de las Partes exigirá la presentación de prueba suficiente del monto de aranceles aduaneros pagados a otra Parte en relación con el bien que subsecuentemente se ha exportado a territorio de esa otra Parte.

5. Si en un plazo de 60 días a partir de la fecha de la exportación, no se presenta prueba suficiente de los aranceles aduaneros pagados a la Parte a la cual el bien se exporta posteriormente conforme a un programa de diferimiento de aranceles aduaneros señalado en el párrafo 3, la Parte de cuyo territorio se exportó el bien:

(a) cobrará el monto de los aranceles aduaneros como si el bien exportado se hubiera destinado al consumo interno; y
(b) podrá reembolsar dicho monto en la medida que lo permita el párrafo 1, a **la presentación oportuna de dicha prueba** conforme a sus leyes y reglamentaciones.

6. Este artículo no se aplicará a:

(a) un bien que se importe bajo fianza para ser transportado y exportado a territorio de otra Parte;
(b) un bien que se exporte a territorio de otra Parte en la misma condición en que se haya importado a territorio de la Parte de la cual se exporta (no se considerarán como cambios en la **condición de un bien** procesos tales como pruebas, limpieza, reempaquetado, inspección o preservación del bien **en su misma condición**). Salvo lo dispuesto en el Anexo 703.2, Sección A, Párrafo 12, cuando tal bien haya sido mezclado con bienes fungibles y exportado en la misma condición, su origen, para efectos de este inciso, podrá determinarse sobre la base de los métodos de inventario previstos en las Reglamentaciones Uniformes establecidas de acuerdo al Artículo 511 "Reglamentaciones Uniformes";

Artículo 303 "Restricciones a la devolución y diferimento de aranceles": al aplicar la definición de "usado" del Artículo 415 a este artículo, la definición de "consumido" en el Artículo 318 no será aplicable.

(c) un bien importado a territorio de una Parte, que se considere exportado de su territorio o se utilice como material en la producción de otro bien que se considere exportado a territorio de otra Parte o se sustituya por un bien idéntico o similar utilizado como material en la producción de otro bien que se considere exportado a territorio de otra Parte, por motivo de:

(i) su envío a una tienda libre de aranceles aduaneros,

(ii) su envío a tiendas a bordo de embarcaciones o como suministros para embarcaciones o aeronaves, o

(iii) su envío para labores conjuntas de dos o más de las Partes y que posteriormente pasará a propiedad de la Parte a cuyo territorio se considere que se exportó el bien;

(d) el reembolso que haga una de las Partes de los aranceles aduaneros sobre un bien específico importado a su territorio y que posteriormente se exporte a territorio de otra Parte, cuando dicho reembolso se otorgue porque el bien no corresponde a las muestras o a las especificaciones del bien, o porque dicho bien se embarque sin el consentimiento del consignatario;

(e) un bien originario importado a territorio de una Parte que posteriormente se exporte a territorio de otra Parte, o se utilice como material en la producción de otro bien posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte, o se sustituya por un bien idéntico o similar utilizado como material en la producción de otro bien posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte; o

(f) un bien señalado en el Anexo 303.6.

7. Salvo para el párrafo 2(d), este artículo entrará en vigor a partir de la fecha señalada en la Sección de cada Parte del Anexo 303.7

8. No obstante cualquier otra disposición de este artículo y salvo lo específicamente dispuesto en el Anexo 303.8, ninguna de las Partes podrá reembolsar el monto de los aranceles aduaneros pagados, ni eximir o reducir el monto de los adeudados, sobre un bien no originario establecido en la fracción arancelaria 8540.11.aa (tubos de rayos catódicos para televisión a color, incluyendo tubos de rayos catódicos para monitores, con una diagonal mayor de 14 pulgadas) o 8540.11.cc (tubos de rayos catódicos para televisión a color de alta definición, con una diagonal mayor de 14 pulgadas) que sea importado a territorio de la Parte y posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte, o se utilice como material en la producción de otro bien posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte, o se sustituya por un bien idéntico o similar utilizado en la producción de otro bien posteriormente exportado a territorio de otra Parte.

9. Para efectos de este artículo:

- aranceles aduaneros son los aranceles aduaneros que serían aplicables a un bien que se importe para ser consumido en territorio aduanero de una de las Partes si el bien no fuese exportado a territorio de otra Parte;
- bienes idénticos o similares significa "bienes idénticos o similares", según la definición del Artículo 415, "Reglas de origen - Definiciones";
- material significa "material" según la definición del Artículo 415, "Reglas de origen"; y
- usado significa "usado" según la definición del Artículo 415, "Reglas de origen";

10. Para efectos de este artículo en los casos en que un bien esté referido mediante una fracción arancelaria en este artículo seguida de una descripción entre paréntesis la descripción es únicamente para efectos de referencia.

Artículo 304. Exención de aranceles aduaneros

1. Salvo lo dispuesto en el Anexo 304.1 ninguna Parte podrá adoptar una nueva exención de aranceles aduaneros, ni ampliar una exención existente respecto de los beneficiarios actuales, ni extenderla a nuevos beneficiarios, cuando la exención se condicione, de manera explícita o implícita, al cumplimiento de un requisito de desempeño.

2. Ninguna de las Partes podrá condicionar, de manera explícita o implícita, la continuación de cualquier exención de aranceles aduaneros existentes al cumplimiento de un requisito de desempeño, salvo por lo dispuesto en el Anexo 304.2.

3. Si una Parte puede demostrar que una exención o una combinación de exenciones de aranceles aduaneros que otra Parte haya otorgado a bienes destinados a uso comercial por una persona designada, tiene un efecto desfavorable sobre su economía, o sobre los intereses comerciales de una persona de esa Parte, o de una persona propiedad o bajo

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control de una persona de esa Parte, ubicada en territorio de la Parte que otorga la exención, la Parte que otorga la exención dejará de hacerlo o la pondrá a disposición de cualquier importador.

4. Este artículo no se aplicará a las medidas sujetas al Artículo 303.

Cada una de las Partes autorizará la importación libre de arancel aduanero a muestras comerciales de **valor insignificante** y a materiales de publicidad impresos, sea cual fuere su origen, si se importan de territorio de otra Parte, pero podrá requerir que:

(a) tales muestras comerciales se importen sólo para efectos de levantamiento de pedidos de bienes de otra Parte o de otro país que no sea Parte, o que los servicios suministrados: **desde territorio de otra Parte o desde un país que no sea Parte; o**

(b) tales materiales de publicidad impresos se importen en paquetes que no contengan más de un ejemplar de cada impreso, y que ni los materiales ni los paquetes formen parte de una remesa mayor.

Artículo 307. Bienes reimportados después de haber sido reparados o alterados⁶

1. Salvo por lo dispuesto en el Anexo 307.1, ninguna de las Partes podrá aplicar un arancel aduanero a un bien, independientemente de su origen, que sea reimportado a su territorio, después de haber sido exportado a territorio de otra Parte para ser reparado o alterado, sin importar **si dichas** reparaciones o alteraciones pudieron efectuarse en su territorio.

2. No obstante lo dispuesto en el Artículo 303, **ninguna** de las Partes podrá aplicar aranceles aduaneros a los bienes que, independientemente de su origen, sean importados temporalmente de territorio de otra Parte para ser reparados o alterados.

3. El Anexo 307.3 se aplicará a cada una de las Partes especificadas en dicho anexo, en lo relativo a la reparación y reconstrucción de embarcaciones.

Artículo 308. Tasas arancelarias de nación más favorecida para determinados bienes

1. El Anexo 308.1 se aplicará en lo relativo a determinados bienes para el procesamiento automático de datos y a sus partes.

2. El Anexo 308.2 se aplicará en lo relativo a determinados tubos de rayos catódicos para televisiones a color.

3. Cada una de las Partes otorgará trato libre de aranceles aduaneros de **nación más favorecida a los aparatos** de redes de área local importados a su territorio, y realizará consultas de acuerdo con el Anexo 308.3.

Sección C - Medidas: **no** arancelarias

Artículo 309. Restricciones a la importación y a la exportación

1. Salvo que se disponga otra cosa en **este Tratado**, **ninguna** de las Partes podrá adoptar o mantener ninguna prohibición ni restricción a la importación de cualquier bien de otra Parte o a la exportación o venta para exportación de cualquier bien destinado a territorio de otra Parte, excepto lo previsto en el Artículo XI del GATT, incluidas sus notas interpretativas. Para tal efecto, el Artículo XI del GATT y sus notas interpretativas o cualquier otra disposición equivalente de un acuerdo sucesor del cual formen parte todas las Partes, se incorporan en este Tratado y son parte integrante del mismo.

2. **Las Partes entienden que** los derechos y obligaciones del GATT incorporados en el párrafo 1 **prohíben**, en toda circunstancia en que lo este cualquier otro tipo de restricción, los requisitos de precios de exportación y, salvo lo permitido para la ejecución de resoluciones y compromisos en materia de cuotas antidumping y compensatorias, los requisitos de precios de importación.

3. En los casos en que una Parte adopte o mantenga una prohibición o restricción a la importación o exportación de bienes de o hacia un país que no sea Parte, ninguna disposición del presente Tratado se interpretará **en el sentido** de impedirle:

(a) limitar o prohibir la importación de los bienes del país que no sea Parte, desde territorio de otra Parte; o

(b) exigir como condición para la exportación de esos bienes de la Parte a territorio de otra Parte, que los mismos no sean reexportados al país que no sea Parte, directa o indirectamente, sin ser consumidos en territorio de la otra Parte.

4. En caso de que una Parte adopte o mantenga una prohibición o restricción a la importación de un bien de un país que no sea Parte, a petición de cualquiera de ellas las Partes **consultarán con el objeto** de evitar la interferencia o la distorsión indebidas en los mecanismos de precios, comercialización y distribución en otra Parte.

Artículo 307(1) " Bienes reintroducidos después de reparaciones o modificaciones": **este párrafo no cubre** bienes importados bajo fianza, a una zona de libre comercio o en condiciones similares, que sean exportados para reparación y no sean reintroducidos bajo fianza a una zona de libre comercio o en condiciones similares. Para efectos de este párrafo, alteración incluye el lavado de bienes textiles y del vestido usados y la **esterilización** de textiles y bienes del vestido previamente **esterilizados**

- **animal incluye** peces y fauna silvestre;
- contaminante incluye residuos de plaguicidas y de fármacos veterinarios y otras sustancias extrañas;
- evaluación de riesgo **significa** una evaluación de:
 - (a) la probabilidad de entrada, radicación y propagación de una plaga o una enfermedad y las posibles consecuencias biológicas y económicas relacionadas;
 - (b) la probabilidad de efectos adversos a la vida o a la salud humana o animal provenientes de la presencia de un aditivo, contaminante, toxina, o un organismo causante de enfermedades en un alimento, bebida o forraje;
- información científica **significa una razón** basada en datos o información derivados del uso de métodos científicos;
- medida sanitaria o fitosanitaria **significa** una medida que una Parte adopta, mantiene o aplica para:
 - (a) proteger la vida o la salud animal o vegetal en su territorio de los riesgos provenientes de la introducción, radicación o propagación de una plaga o una enfermedad;
 - (b) proteger la vida o la salud humana o animal en su territorio de riesgos provenientes de la presencia de un aditivo, contaminante, toxina o un organismos causante de la enfermedad en un alimento, bebida o forraje;
 - (c) proteger la vida o la salud humana en su territorio de los riesgos provenientes de un organismo causante de enfermedades o una plaga
- nivel apropiado de protección **significa** el nivel de protección a la vida o la salud humana, **animal o vegetal**, que una Parte considere apropiado;
- norma, directriz o recomendación internacional **significa** una norma, directriz o recomendación:
 - (a) en relación a la seguridad en alimentos, la establecida por la Comisión del Codex Alimentarius, incluyendo aquella relacionada con descomposición de los productos, elaborada por el Comité de Pescados y Productos Pesqueros del Codex Alimentarius, aditivos alimentarios, contaminantes, prácticas en materia de higiene y métodos de análisis y muestreo;
 - (b) en relación a salud animal y zoonosis, la elaborada bajo los auspicios de la Oficina Internacional de Epizootias; y
 - (c) en relación a sanidad vegetal, la elaborada bajo los auspicios del Secretariado de la Convención Internacional de Protección Fitosanitaria en colaboración con la Organización de Protección Fitosanitaria para América del Norte; o
 - (d) la establecida por, o desarrollada conforme a otras organizaciones internacionales acordadas por las Partes;
- **plaga incluye** maleza;
- procedimiento de aprobación **significa** cualquier procedimiento de registro, notificación o cualquier otro procedimiento administrativo obligatorio para:
 - (a) aprobar el uso de un aditivo para un fin definido o bajo condiciones definidas, o
 - (b) establecer una tolerancia, para un fin definido o con apego a condiciones definidas, para un contaminante, en un alimento, bebida o forraje previo a permitir el uso del aditivo o la comercialización de un alimento, bebida o forraje que contenga el aditivo o contaminante;
- procedimiento de control o inspección **significa** cualquier procedimiento utilizado, directa o indirectamente, para determinar si se cumple una medida sanitaria o fitosanitaria, incluidos muestreo, pruebas, inspección, evaluación, verificación, monitoreo, auditoría, evaluación de la conformidad, acreditación, registro, certificación, u otros procedimientos que involucran el examen físico de un bien, del empaquetado del bien, o del equipo o las instalaciones directamente relacionadas con la producción, comercialización o uso de un bien, **pero no significa** un procedimiento de aprobación;
- vegetal incluye flora silvestre;
- zona **significa** un país, parte de un país, partes de varios países o todas las partes de varios países;

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- zona de escasa prevalencia de plagas o enfermedades **significa** una zona en la cual una plaga o enfermedad específica ocurre en niveles escasos; y
- zona libre de plagas o enfermedades **significa** una zona en la cual una plaga o enfermedad específica está presente.

9. Para fines de mantener el registro, cada una de las Partes reconocerá el uso de una marca por una persona distinta al titular de la marca, cuando tal uso de la marca esté sujeto al control del titular.

10. Ninguna de las Partes podrá dificultar el uso en el comercio de una marca mediante requisitos especiales, tales como un uso que disminuya la función de la marca como indicación de procedencia, o un uso con otra marca.

11. Cada una de las Partes podrá establecer condiciones para el licenciamiento y la cesión de marcas, en el entendido que no se permitirán las licencias obligatorias de marcas y que el titular de una marca registrada tendrá derecho a cederla con o sin la transmisión de la empresa a que pertenezca la marca.

12. Cada una de las Partes podrá establecer excepciones limitadas a los derechos conferidos por una marca, tal como el uso correcto de **términos descriptivos** a condición de que las excepciones tomen en cuenta los intereses legítimos del titular de la marca y de otras personas.

13. Cada una de las Partes prohibirá el registro como **marca de palabras** al menos en español, francés o inglés, que designen genéricamente los bienes o servicios, o los tipos de bienes o de servicios, a los que la marca se aplique.

14. Cada una de las Partes negará el registro a las marcas que contengan o consistan en **elementos inmorales, escandalosos o que induzcan a error**, o elementos que puedan denigrar o sugerir falsamente **una relación con personas, vivas o muertas**, instituciones, creencias, símbolos nacionales de cualquiera de las Partes, o que las menosprecien o afecten en su reputación.

Artículo 1709. Patentes

1. Sujeto a lo dispuesto en los párrafos 2 y 3, las Partes dispondrán el otorgamiento de patentes para cualquier invención, ya se trate de productos o de procesos, en todos los campos de la tecnología, siempre que tales invenciones sean nuevas, resulten de una actividad inventiva y sean susceptibles de aplicación industrial. Para efectos del presente artículo cada una de las Partes podrá **considerar que las expresiones "actividad inventiva" y "susceptibles de aplicación industrial" sean respectivamente sinónimos de las expresiones "no evidentes" y "útiles"**.

2. Cada una de las Partes podrá excluir invenciones de la patentabilidad si es necesario impedir en su territorio la explotación comercial de las invenciones para proteger el orden público o la moral, inclusive para proteger **la vida o la salud humana, animal o vegetal**, o para evitar daño grave a la naturaleza o al ambiente, siempre que la exclusión no se funde únicamente en que la Parte prohíbe la explotación comercial, en su territorio, de la materia que sea objeto de la patente.

3. Asimismo, cada una de las Partes podrá excluir de la patentabilidad:

- (a) los métodos de diagnóstico, terapéuticos y quirúrgicos, para el tratamiento de **seres humanos o animales**;
- (b) **plantas y animales, excepto microorganismos**; y
- (c) procesos esencialmente biológicos para la producción de plantas o animales, distintos de los procesos no biológicos y microbiológicos para dicha producción.

No obstante lo señalado en el inciso (b), cada una de las Partes otorgará protección a las variedades de plantas mediante patentes, un esquema efectivo de protección **sui generis, o ambos**.

4. Si una Parte no ha dispuesto el otorgamiento de patentes para dar protección a los productos farmacéuticos y agroquímicos de conformidad con lo dispuesto en el párrafo 1:

(a) al 1º de enero de 1992, para **la materia relacionada** con sustancias que se generen de manera natural, las cuales sean preparadas o producidas por procesos microbiológicos o derivadas significativamente de los mismos y que se destinen a constituir alimento o medicina; y

(b) al 1º de julio de 1991, para cualquier otra materia,

esa Parte otorgará al inventor de cualquiera de esos productos, o a su causahabiente, los medios para obtener protección por patente para dicho producto, por el periodo en que siga vigente la patente concedida en otra Parte,

siempre que el producto no se haya comercializado en la Parte que otorga la protección de conformidad con este párrafo, y que la persona que solicite esa protección presente una solicitud oportunamente.

5. Cada una de las Partes dispondrá que:

- (a) cuando la materia objeto de la patente sea un producto, la patente confiera a su titular el derecho de impedir a otras personas que fabriquen, usen o vendan la materia objeto de la patente, sin el consentimiento del titular; y
- (b) **cuando la materia** objeto de la patente **sea un proceso**, la patente confiera a su titular el derecho de impedir a otras personas que utilicen ese proceso y que usen, vendan o importen, por lo menos, el producto obtenido directamente de ese proceso, sin el consentimiento del titular de la patente.

6. Cada una de las Partes podrá establecer excepciones limitadas a los derechos exclusivos conferidos por una patente, a condición de que tales excepciones no interfieran de manera injustificada con la explotación normal de la patente y no provoquen perjuicio, sin razón, a los legítimos intereses del titular de la patente, habida cuenta de los intereses legítimos de otras personas.

7. Sujeto a lo dispuesto en los párrafos 2 y 3, no habrá discriminación en el otorgamiento de patentes, ni en el goce de los derechos respectivos, en función del campo de la tecnología, del territorio de la Parte en que la **invención** fue realizada, o de si los productos son importados o producidos localmente.

8. Una Parte podrá revocar una patente solamente cuando:

- (a) existan motivos que habrían justificado la negativa de otorgarla; o
- (b) el otorgamiento de una licencia obligatoria no haya corregido la falta de explotación de la patente.

9. Cada una de las Partes permitirá a los titulares de las patentes cederlas o transmitir las por sucesión, así como celebrar contratos de licencia.

10. Cuando la legislación de una de las Partes permita el **uso** de la materia objeto de una patente, distinto al permitido conforme al párrafo 6, sin la autorización del titular del derecho, incluido el uso por el gobierno o por otras personas que el gobierno autorice, la Parte respetará las siguientes disposiciones:

- (a) la autorización de tal **uso** se considerará en función del fondo del asunto particular del que se trate;
- (b) sólo podrá permitirse tal uso si, con anterioridad al mismo, el usuario potencial hubiera hecho esfuerzos por obtener la autorización del titular del derecho en términos y condiciones comerciales sensatas y tales esfuerzos no hubiesen tenido éxito en un plazo razonable. Cada una de las Partes podrá soslayar este requisito en casos de emergencia nacional, en circunstancias de extrema urgencia o en casos de **uso público sin fines** comerciales. No obstante, en situaciones de emergencia nacional o en circunstancias de extrema urgencia, se notificará al titular del derecho tan pronto como sea razonable. En el caso de **uso público sin fines** comerciales, cuando el gobierno o el contratista, sin hacer una búsqueda de patentes, sepa o tenga bases comprobables para saber que una patente válida es o será utilizada por o para el gobierno, se informará con prontitud al titular del derecho;
- (c) el ámbito y duración de dicho **uso** se limitarán a los fines para el que haya sido autorizado;
- (d) dicho **uso** será no exclusivo;
- (e) dicho **uso** no podrá cederse, excepto junto con la parte de la empresa o del avión que goce ese **uso**;
- (f) **cualquier uso de esta naturaleza** se autorizará principalmente para abastecer el mercado interno de la Parte que lo autorice;
- (g) a reserva de la protección adecuada de los intereses legítimos de las personas así autorizadas, podrá revocarse la autorización de dicho **uso** siempre y cuando las circunstancias que lo motivaron dejen de existir y sea improbable que se susciten nuevamente. La autoridad competente estará facultada para revisar, previa solicitud motivada, si estas circunstancias siguen existiendo;
- (h) al titular del derecho se le pagará una remuneración adecuada según las circunstancias de cada caso, habida cuenta del valor económico de la autorización;
- (i) la validez jurídica de cualquier resolución relacionada con la autorización estará sujeta a revisión judicial o a una revisión independiente por una autoridad superior distinta;
- (j) cualquier resolución relativa a la remuneración otorgada para dicho **uso** estará sujeta a revisión judicial o a una revisión independiente por una autoridad superior distinta;
- (k) la Parte no estará obligada a aplicar las condiciones establecidas en los incisos (b) y (f) cuando dicho **uso** se permita para corregir una práctica que, en virtud de un procedimiento judicial o administrativo, se haya juzgado contraria a la competencia. La determinación del monto de la remuneración podrá tomar en cuenta, en tales casos, la necesidad de corregir las prácticas contrarias a la competencia. Las autoridades competentes estarán facultadas para

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rechazar la revocación de la autorización siempre y cuando resulte probable que las condiciones que la motivaron se susciten nuevamente; y

(l) la Parte no autorizará el **uso** de la materia objeto de una patente para permitir la explotación de otra, salvo para corregir una infracción que hubiere sido sancionada en un procedimiento relativo a las leyes internas sobre prácticas contrarias a la competencia.

b) **existe una probabilidad significativa de que el producto presuntamente infractor haya sido fabricado mediante el proceso** y el titular de la patente no haya logrado, mediante esfuerzos razonables, establecer el proceso efectivamente utilizado.

En la recopilación y valoración de las pruebas se tomará en cuenta el interés legítimo del demandado para la protección de sus secretos industriales y de negocios.

12. Cada una de las Partes establecerá un periodo de protección para las patentes de por lo menos veinte años, que se contarán a partir de la fecha de la presentación de la solicitud, o de diecisiete años a partir de la fecha del otorgamiento de la patente. En los casos en que proceda, cada una de las Partes podrá extender el periodo de protección con el fin de compensar retrasos originados en procedimientos administrativos de aprobación.

Artículo 1710. Esquemas de trazado de circuitos semiconductores integrados

1. Cada una de las Partes protegerá los esquemas de trazado (topografías) de circuitos integrados (esquemas de trazado) de conformidad con lo señalado en los Artículos 2 a 7, 12 y 16(3), excepto el Artículo 6(3), del Tratado sobre la Propiedad Intelectual Respecto de los Circuitos Integrados, abierto a la firma el 26 de mayo de 1989.

2. Sujeto al párrafo 3, cada Parte considerará como ilegal que cualquier persona que no cuente con el consentimiento del titular del derecho importe, venda o distribuya de otra manera con fines comerciales:

(a) un esquema de trazado protegido;

(b) un circuito integrado en el que se encuentre incorporado un esquema de trazado protegido; o

(c) un artículo que incorpore un circuito integrado de esa índole, solamente en la medida en que éste contenga un esquema de trazado reproducido ilegalmente.

3. Ninguna de las Partes podrá **considerar ilegal ninguno de los actos** a que se refiere el párrafo 2, respecto de un circuito integrado que incorpore un esquema de trazado reproducido ilegalmente o de cualquier artículo que incorpore dicho circuito integrado, cuando la persona que realice u ordene esos actos no supiera y no tuviera bases razonables para **saber**, cuando adquirió el circuito integrado o el artículo que lo contenía, que incorporaba un esquema de trazado **reproducido ilegalmente**.

4. Cada una de las Partes establecerá que, a partir del momento en que la persona a la que se hace mención en el párrafo 3 reciba aviso suficiente de que el esquema de trazado se ha reproducido ilegalmente, esa persona pueda llevar a cabo cualquiera de los actos respecto al inventario en existencia o pedido con anterioridad a la notificación, pero para ello se le podrá exigir que pague al titular del derecho una suma equivalente a la regalía razonable que correspondería bajo una licencia libremente negociada de tal esquema de trazado.

5. Ninguna Parte permitirá las licencias obligatorias de esquemas de trazado de circuitos integrados.

6. Cualquier Parte que exija el registro como condición para la protección de los esquemas de trazado, dispondrá que el término de protección no concluya antes de la expiración de un periodo de diez años a partir de la fecha:

(a) de presentación de la solicitud de registro; o

(b) de la primera explotación comercial del esquema de **trazado, en cualquier parte del mundo** en que tenga lugar.

7. Cuando una Parte no exija el registro como condición para la protección de un esquema de trazado, la Parte dispondrá un término de protección no inferior a diez años desde la fecha de la primera explotación comercial del esquema de trazado, en cualquier parte del mundo en que tenga lugar.

8. No obstante lo dispuesto en los párrafos 6 y 7, una Parte podrá establecer que la protección caducará quince años después de la creación del esquema de trazado.

9. El Anexo 1710.9 se aplica a las Partes señaladas en ese anexo.

Artículo 1711. Secretos industriales y de negocios

1. Cada una de las Partes proveerá a cualquier persona los medios legales para impedir que los secretos industriales y de negocios se revelen, adquieran o usen por otras personas sin el consentimiento de la persona que legalmente tenga bajo control la información, de manera contraria a las prácticas leales del comercio, en la medida en que:

- (a) la información sea secreta, en el sentido de que, como conjunto o en la configuración y composición precisas de sus elementos, no sea conocida en general ni fácilmente accesible a las personas que normalmente manejan el tipo de información de que se trate;
- (b) la información tenga un valor comercial efectivo o **potencial por ser secreta; y**
- (c) en las circunstancias dadas, la persona que legalmente la tenga bajo control haya adoptado medidas razonables para mantenerla secreta.

2. Para otorgar la protección, cada una de las Partes podrá exigir que un secreto industrial o de negocios conste en documentos, medios electrónicos o magnéticos, discos ópticos, microfílm, películas u otros instrumentos similares.

3. **Ninguna de las Partes podrá limitar la duración de la protección para los secretos** industriales o de negocios, en tanto existan las condiciones descritas en el párrafo 1.

4. Ninguna de las Partes desalentará ni impedirá el licenciamiento voluntario de secretos industriales o de negocios imponiendo condiciones excesivas o discriminatorias a tales licencias, ni condiciones que diluyan **el valor de los secretos** industriales o de negocios.

5. Si, como condición para aprobar la comercialización de productos farmoquímicos o de productos agroquímicos que utilicen nuevos componentes químicos, una de las Partes exige la presentación de datos sobre experimentos o de datos de otro tipo que no se hayan publicado y que sean necesarios para determinar la seguridad y eficacia del uso de dichos productos, esa Parte protegerá los datos que presenten las personas contra la divulgación cuando la generación de tales datos implique un esfuerzo considerable, excepto cuando la publicación sea necesaria para proteger al público o salvo que se adopten medidas para garantizar la protección de los datos contra todo uso comercial desleal.

6. Cada una de las Partes dispondrá que, respecto a los datos señalados en el párrafo 5 que sean presentados a la Parte después de la fecha de entrada en vigor de este Tratado, ninguna persona distinta a la que los haya presentado pueda, sin autorización de esta última, contar con tales datos en apoyo a una solicitud para aprobación de un producto durante un periodo razonable después de su presentación. Para este fin, por periodo razonable se entenderá normalmente un lapso no menor de cinco años a partir de la fecha en que la Parte haya concedido a la persona que produjo los datos la aprobación para poner en el mercado su producto, tomando en cuenta la naturaleza de los datos y los esfuerzos y gastos de la persona para generarlos. Sujeto a esta disposición, nada impedirá que una Parte lleve a cabo procedimientos sumarios de aprobación para tales productos sobre la base de estudios de **bioequivalencia o biodisponibilidad**.

7. Cuando una de las Partes se apoye en una aprobación de comercialización otorgada por otra de las Partes, el periodo razonable de uso exclusivo de la información proporcionada para obtener la aprobación se iniciará a partir de la fecha de la primera aprobación de comercialización.

Artículo 1712. Indicaciones geográficas

1. Cada una de las Partes proveerá, en relación con las indicaciones geográficas, los medios legales para que las personas interesadas puedan impedir:

- (a) el uso de cualquier medio que, en la designación o presentación del producto, indique o sugiera que el producto de que se trate proviene de un territorio, región o localidad distinta al verdadero lugar de origen, de modo que induzca al público a error en cuanto al origen geográfico del producto;
- (b) cualquier otro uso que constituya un acto de competencia desleal, en el sentido en que lo establece el Artículo 10 bis del Convenio de París.

2. Cada una de las Partes, de oficio, si su legislación lo permite, o a petición de una persona interesada, se negará a registrar o anulará el registro de una marca que contenga o consista en una indicación geográfica respecto de productos que no se originan en el territorio, región o localidad indicada, si el uso de tal indicación en la marca para esos productos es de naturaleza tal que induzca al público a error en cuanto al origen geográfico del producto.

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3. Cada una de las Partes aplicará también las disposiciones de los párrafos 1 y 2 a toda indicación geográfica que, aunque indique de manera correcta el territorio, región o localidad en que se originan los productos, proporcione al público una idea falsa de que éstos se originan en otro territorio, región o localidad.

4. Nada de lo dispuesto en este artículo se interpretará en el sentido de obligar a una Parte a impedir el uso continuo y similar de una determinada indicación geográfica de otra Parte en relación con bienes o servicios, a sus nacionales o a los domiciliados de esa Parte que hayan usado esa indicación geográfica en el territorio de esa Parte, de manera continua, en relación con los mismos bienes o servicios u otros relacionados, en cualquiera de los siguientes casos:

- (a) por lo menos durante diez años, o
 - (b) de buena fe,
- antes de la fecha de firma de este Tratado.

5. Cuando se haya solicitado o registrado una marca de buena fe, o cuando los derechos sobre una marca se hayan adquirido mediante su uso de buena fe, ya sea:

- (a) antes de la fecha en que se apliquen estas disposiciones en esa Parte, o

(b) antes de que la indicación geográfica estuviera protegida en la Parte de origen, n

Sector: Transporte
 Subsector: Transporte Terrestre
 Clasificación: CMAP 973103 Servicio de Estacionamiento y Pensión para Vehículos
 Industrial:

CMAP 973104 Servicio de Báscula con fines de Transporte
 CMAP 973105 Servicio de Grúa para Vehículos.
 CMAP 973106 Otros Servicios Relacionados con el Transporte Terrestre (no mencionados anteriormente en la CMAP 9731, 7112 y 7113)

Nivel de Gobierno: Federal
 Ley de Vías Generales de Comunicación Medidas:
 Se requiere de un permiso emitido por la Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes para Descripción:
 prestar servicios relacionados con el transporte terrestre.

Lista de Canadá

Sector: Comunicaciones
 Subsector: Servicios Postales
 Clasificación: SIC 4841 Industria de Servicios Postales
 Industrial:
 Nivel de Gobierno: Federal
 Medidas:

Comunicaciones
 Radiocomunicaciones
 CPC 752 Telecomunicaciones

Canada Post Corporation Act, R.S.C., c. C-10
 Letter Definition Regulations,
 SOR/83-481
 La Comoración de Correos de Canadá (Canada Post Corporation) tiene el privilegio exclusivo de coleccionar, transmitir y entregar "cartas", tal como son definidas en el Reglamento para la Definición de Carta (Letter Definition Regulations), dictado dentro de Canadá, necesitando su consentimiento para que otras personas vendan estampillas.

Federal
 Radiocommunication Act, R.S.C. 1985, R-2
 Una persona que se proponga operar un sistema privado de transmisión por radio requiere una licencia expedida por el Ministerio de Comunicaciones (Department of Communications). La expedición de esa licencia está sujeta a la disponibilidad del espectro y a las políticas respecto a su uso. En general, se dará prioridad al uso del espectro con el propósito de desarrollar redes no privadas.

Energía
 Transmisión de Electricidad

SIC 4911 Industria de Sistemas de Energía Eléctrica
 Federal
 National Energy Board Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. N-7
 La construcción y la operación de líneas de transmisión eléctrica internacionales requieren de aprobación del Consejo Nacional de Energía (National Energy Board).

Nota Sobre el Proyecto

I

Hace algunos años asistí a una plática del filósofo Jean-Luc Nancy. Durante su exposición Nancy comentó que aún hoy poco o nada sabemos de las implicaciones *totales* de “eso que fue” el fascismo. Sabemos, claro, pero comenzamos a saber. Y a articular una idea sobre aquello que la humanidad *ha venido significando* a través de esa ruptura que fue el fascismo. Aquello no fue un comentario a propósito de la “imposibilidad del saber”, al contrario, para mí representó un poderoso reconocimiento de lo que *todavía* no sabemos. De alguna manera, todo está abierto.

Los documentos yacen inertes, por lo general.

No busco forzar paralelos innecesarios pero conservo lo dicho por Jean-Luc Nancy como una medida de que la exploración del presente involucra varios frentes, uno es el lenguaje.

¿Cómo pulsar las implicaciones —uno diría “las reverberaciones”— de un hecho o de un documento *pasados*? ¿De qué manera *las especies* todas comprendidas en el Tratado *significamos a través* de él? ¿Cómo entender las resonancias, en los diferentes órdenes, de, por ejemplo, un *acto* de escritura, como lo es un Tratado?

Entonces esto es un acto de escucha al interior de un acto de escritura.

Lejos de lo político como tema —como cuando asumimos que la poesía, al “escribir sobre”, nos acerca a lo

político—, he buscado articular constelaciones, una imantación. Esta imantación, sin dentro ni fuera, eso es lo político.

El “oxígeno político”, como dice la expresión tan recurrida, sin fondo ni primer plano; esa es su ubicuidad.

Es ahí donde, cómodamente, se instala y manifiesta el lenguaje del poder. Ahí, la vida animal y la humana, y el espacio en el que ambas se intersectan, caen como pieles viejas. Y en eso ha sido más efectivo que la poesía.

Lo político en la poesía no sería sino una –otra— imantación, y no como tema sino como un *registro*. Aun aislándolo, uno percibe en torno a qué orbita.

Los documentos yacen inertes, por lo general.

Puede invertirse la relación transfiriendo hacia el “interior” del Tratado un equivalente de la inestabilidad que el documento ha generado afuera de él. Y tal vez repolitizarlo en otro nivel.

Inestabilidad es otra palabra para lectura.

¿Cómo invertir la relación entre Tratado y realidad? Una respuesta es posponer, o en el mejor de los casos *negar*, el propósito mismo del lenguaje de, por ejemplo, el documento del Tratado: *negar* su *capacidad* acrecentando su opacidad; que no “logre” nada. O que su trayectoria se modifique.

Pienso en *Anti-Humboldt* como un espacio de no-diferenciación. Las posibilidades para la Relación, están ahí,

revitalizadas. Quizá sea en ese espacio en el que puede prestarse oídos a lo que emerge, indiferenciado. ¿En qué condiciones aparece la vida de lo animal en el lenguaje del poder? ¿De qué forma, al explorar el lenguaje, la poesía vislumbra un “después” de la política, es decir: *lo* político? Son preguntas que no buscan una respuesta sino una *exposición*, un espacio.

Esto es, entonces, un acto de escucha al interior de un acto de escritura.

Aceptar que no sabemos, pero que buscamos, en la ininteligibilidad del presente, ahí donde el texto “original” busca investirse de su pretendida transparencia.

II

Contra el fondo “traslúcido”, algunas palabras como espectros.

Estas palabras, estos espectros, no recorren Europa, ciertamente. Pero el propósito es que “atormenten” al documento mismo del que son parte. Como si constituyeran su doble. O residuos. Una insistencia casi material.

Entre el documento en el fondo, y las palabras sobre la superficie se hace manifiesta una distancia, un imposible continuum. Una latencia, un lapso incuantificable, un espacio: un agujero histórico y textual.

“Anti-Humboldt”, porque a diferencia de la radical imaginación botánica, geológica, ecológica o poética que veo en la obra del naturalista Alexander Von Humboldt, o en Lucrecio, el deseo que mueve al lenguaje del Tratado no

busca, ni descubre nada. Opta mejor por separar, regular y establecer las condiciones de su propio deseo. La curiosa expresión "Sistema Armonizado", con mayúsculas, ocurre en el texto y puede ofrecer una idea de la alucinación que moviliza a este documento hemisférico.

Explorar el parentesco etimológico entre Dócil y Documento puede constituir un puerto de entrada a una *reimantación* y repolitización de lo inerte.

En lugar de escribir "como poeta", *leer* como uno: creando huecos, pausas, agujeros, limbos

("Limbo", sónicamente limítrofe con *limbs*, en inglés: "apéndices", "extremidades")

Desde los huecos mismos de la lectura emergen alternadamente la opacidad y la inteligibilidad. Esa opacidad no es carencia de significado sino su cumplimiento mismo. "Caer es caer", escribió Óscar del Barco. Ese es un inicio. Significar es caer.

Mi interés no es exhumar la "poesía" de este documento o "hacer poesía" con él, tampoco he buscado dar con la "verdadera narración" del Tratado; mi punto es otro: hacer manifiesto, en la medida de lo posible, el limbo del presente desde el interior del lenguaje que lo regula, desde el lenguaje de nadie de los acuerdos.

Como una imagen retiniana, un *afterimage*.

No está ahí, luego está ahí.

The Non-Uniformity of “In-Betweenness” in André Weckmann’s *La Roue du Paon*: A Literary Treatment of the Politico-Cultural Debate over France-Alsace Relationships

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In the 1990s-early 2000s, a violent dispute opposed André Weckmann and Robert Grossmann, two major Alsatian writers and politicians. Robert Grossmann, a national political figure presenting himself as De Gaulle’s spiritual heir, eminent member of the right-wing party (later known as UMP) and Mayor of Strasbourg/Strassburg (capital of the European Union), expressed very serious concern about the ideas expressed by André Weckmann in his work. According to Grossmann, Weckmann, behind the backdrop of his involvement in favor of the preservation of the Alsatian dialect, would be representative of some “pangermanic” movement calling for the reunion of the Alsace region with Germany, thus reviving old tensions, old nostalgias and ultimately threatening the unity of the French nation. Our objective in this paper is to scrutinize Grossmann’s claims and confront them to one specific book by André Weckmann, *La Roue du Paon*, published in 1988; I will also argue that the notion of “in-betweenness”, drawing upon theories of Homi Bhabha and Leslie Andelson, proves to be

Tiresias 5 (March 2012)

Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/rl/tiresias/index.html>

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a very useful theoretical tool in order to assess André Weckmann's alleged *dangerosité*.

La Roue du Paon, which I translate as "The Peacock's Costume"¹⁰, starts with a short preface that immediately points to one controversial aspect, by mentioning quite incidentally that the book has been written "*dans les deux langues littéraires d'Alsace*" (3) (in the two literary languages of the Alsace region), and that the German version has been published under the title "*Odile oder das magische Dreieck*" (Odile, or the magical triangle). This sentence, said as if just in passing, is in fact laden with meaning, insofar as to say that *German* is the literate form of the German-like Alsatian spoken dialect, which is a linguistic fact, amounts to saying, of course not that German is a French language, but that it is indeed *a language of France*, which can seem like a politically daring statement. Robert Grossmann at any rate would oppose this view very strongly and express the so-called traditional Republican perspective, that is, that "French is the only official language of the Republic", as the French constitution clearly puts it (Article 2)¹¹. It is however important for André Weckmann to include this into his preface because he and the Association he is part of (*Cercle René Schickelé*) need to legitimize the fact that the bilingual schools that were put in place to save the Alsatian dialect from dying out are *German-French* instead of *Alsatian-French*.

¹⁰ All subsequent translations mine.

¹¹ It is only recently, in 2008, that the French Constitution acknowledged regional dialects as part of France's national heritage, after much strife. However, the fact that the dialects are mentioned way below, namely in article 75, and *not* in article 2 at an equal footing to French, can be interpreted as metaphorically illustrating their persistent status as "sublanguages".

Therefore, beyond the most immediate and basic form of “in-betweenness” (the objective, historical one, with Alsace, due to its geographical position, having been physically, painfully “in-between the anvil and hammer” as it were¹², notably through World War I and World War 2), Grossmann’s contention is that Weckmann portrays the Alsace region still in a triangular relationship, with Alsace being between France and Germany and as a matter of fact leaning more towards Germany –Germany caught dreaming again of a “*Grande Allemagne*” and orchestrating from behind the push for more bilingual schools. As a reaction, he published in 1999 *Main-Basse sur Ma Langue, Mini Sproch heisst Freiheit* –My Language’s Name is Freedom–, in which he accuses Weckmann and others to be “Crusaders for the sake of German” (43) and “militants” in the Latin etymological sense of *miles*, “soldiers” (44). He also takes advantage of his book to defend France’s refusal to ratify the European Charter of Minority Languages. Unlike Weckmann, who sees this Charter as the last hope to save the Alsatian dialect, Grossmann argues that it would *oblige* the French state to open bilingual schools, *oblige* it to staff administrations with Alsatian-speaking civil servants, in a fundamentally multicultural and multiracial modern society in which this idea of obligation is necessarily out of place. For Grossmann, the place to *freely* learn the dialect (hence his title) is the family, the private sphere, *not* the school. To

¹² Or, as Weckmann dramatically puts in *La Roue du Paon*, referring to the extraordinary complexity of the fate of the young Alsatians who, in World War II, were forced into joining the German Army (“*les incorporés de force*”, also named “*les malgré-nous*”, literally the “in-spite-of-ourselves”): “*L’Alsace ne pouvait pas continuer à s’asseoir entre deux chaises, à n’être ni chair ni poisson*” (90) –“Alsace could not continue to be sitting like that between two chairs, to be neither fish nor bait”.

that Weckmann would respond that sociolinguist Jean Petit demonstrated, with his "*Dreigenerationenmodell*" (48), that it is too late to rely just on the family (parents, even if they wanted to, could not teach it to their children because they don't know it well enough) and, yes, if no substantial effort is undertaken, "*mer sen die letschta*", we are the last ones to speak Alsatian. The fear of a third party thus permeates *Mini Sproch heisst Freiheit*. For example, Grossmann brings forth the supposed role of the *Föderalistische Union Europäischer Volksgruppen*, based in Schleswig-Holstein, and that he suspects of having a hidden agenda (101) –an organization that world-renown sociolinguist Joshua Fishman, in *Reversing Language Shift*, deems nevertheless perfectly respectable (71).

A triangular model certainly reflects suitably Alsatian culture as a mix of French and German cultures. In *La Roue du Paon*, three elements, not two, are certainly part of onomastics, thus identity: the side character Yokela is Yokela in Alsatian, Jacob in German, and Jacques in French –or rather Schaak. "In-betweenness" is undeniably an integral part of Alsatians' identity. This being said, Grossmann's worry about an ominous third party (Germany), at work trying to supersede a binary relationship between just France and its Alsatian region, serves to underscore the necessity to pay close attention to Weckmann's various spatial models of cultural interaction. It leads us to ask ourselves this fundamental question: do we have in *La Roue du Paon* two or three entities, and how are their interactions represented by the author?

La Roue du Paon is a fantastic tale that tells the story of Odile, a modern Alsatian sorceress (and

seductress), who abducts the President of the French Republic and keeps him in her Alsatian home as a prisoner over a certain period of time in order to force him to really experience Alsatian reality, for once, with the hope, that, after his release, he will implement a cultural/language policy more in tune with this reality. Thus, with Odile and the President of the French Republic set as the main characters, the reader is made to understand that the topic is going to be between Alsace (Odile) and France (the President), so obviously a relationship between two entities.

Most of the time, the two entities, Alsace and France, stay well separate and distinct, and try to influence each other, very much according to Homi Bhabha's model of "hybridity" which he developed in *The Location of Culture* (1994). The contact of the two cultures is metaphorically sexualized from the very beginning: to kidnap the President who is hunting near the River Rhine, Odile like Diane in Greek mythology changes herself into a doe: "I had put on my most beautiful white-spotted *robe*" (23). In French, the noun "*robe*" is polysemic and refers both to an animal's coat and to a woman's dress –already a hint of the operation of seduction that is going to take place. In true accordance with love *topoi*, there is eye contact in the forest before there is any physical touch. Odile's glance is so powerful that the President lowers his rifle (a phallic symbol, but deflated), a significant element also if we relate it to Odile's stance in favor of pacifism that clearly sets the ideological framework once and for all: "We excluded violence from our tactics" (14). It is indeed important for Weckmann to distinguish himself from Basque terrorism, so as to make very clear the fact that France's fears of violent

separatism are not justified when it comes to the Alsace. The President's abduction is only a symbolic way of *representing* the two cultures moving toward the center of the bridge in order to finally dialogue and mingle, in a very bhabhaian manner.

Much as in Bhabha, however, this also means that, as in every cultural encounter, there will be some "tugging on the rope", or tensions to influence each other –a process which, for Bhabha, happens just naturally and each pole of the bridge is somehow transformed by the interaction that occurred in the middle of the bridge. This is illustrated in the early stages of the book through the insistence that the *abduction* is first and foremost *seduction*. Odile needs to further entice the President to come toward the middle: "One morning, he got out of his room without notice and surprised me [Odile] as I was naked. His eyes twinkled, but very quickly Monsieur regained his self-control, excused himself, and went back into his room" (5). This double game of getting out/going back, turning on/turning off (the light in the eyes), stands for the difficulty of artificially re-creating, in order to politically optimize it, the natural process described by Bhabha. Indeed, what Odile is striving for is "hybridity", but "hybridity" with a purpose: what must happen in the middle of the bridge is a better understanding of the Alsatian specificity on the part of the French government. Through a succession of subtle prolepses, e.g. the brushing against Odile's breast (76), the reader is made to keep wondering whether this sublime epiphany is going to occur when the two (Odile and the President, Alsace and France) are both sufficiently in the middle in order to make love.

Broadening the metaphor of seduction and sexual attraction, Weckmann also resorts to the theme of seduction and *mental* attraction. We already saw that Odile managed to lure the President thanks to her powers as a sorceress; now her task is to duly brainwash him. But very interestingly, the lexical field of “*parapsychologie*” (74), “*envoûtement*” (bewitchment, 76), “*charme*” (8), “[*hypnose*]” (48), “*conditionnement*” (conditioning, 10) is *not* limited to Odile; far from it, it turns out the President *resists* (another bhabhaian term) her magic and in the end, the one whose mind Odile is trying to conquer (sexually, mentally, culturally) even becomes the conquerer of Odile’s own mind! “*Scham di, Odile, de te laisser ainsi envoûter. Ou bien aurais-tu trouvé ton maître, le haxemaïschtr suprême?*” –“Shame on you, Odile, for you are letting *him* bewitch *you*. Or could it be that you found your master, the supreme head sorcerer?” (46, emphasis added). Beyond Odile and the President, Weckmann hints here at a much more general competition for Alsatian minds, competition in which the distribution of shame and pride plays precisely a crucial role: shame to Alsations and their thick German accent when speaking French, shame also concerning Alsatian itself –the dialect is called “a German patois, pasty and stinky like an old Munster cheese”, an expression which, in French, has a lot of poignancy thanks to the alliteration in [p]: “*un patois allemand pâteux et puant comme un Munster en bout de course*” (11), whereas pride is on the French side as the very title shows: *La Roue du Paon*. French being the language of high culture, the President *can be* as proud as a peacock –and French can

continue to magnetically draw to itself the young Alsatian generation¹³.

Weckmann is no doubt referring here to the sociolinguistic notion of prestige, which, insofar as regional dialects are concerned, the ratification of the European Union Charter of Minority Languages could heighten, but which post-World War II language policies, through slogans like "*c'est chic de parler français*" (and its implied corollary "*ce n'est pas chic de parler alsacien*"), have deliberately and continuously destroyed, with the result of having in 1990 less than 5% of young people in Alsace speaking Alsatian whereas that rate was still as high as 80% in 1970 (Petit, 59). Because minds have been "colonized" by such slogans, it is very significant that one of the stages of the President's brainwashing consists in the projection of a magical, virtual

¹³ The French school is another locus of this almost magical attraction: in one of the chapters of *La Roue du Paon*, the male narrator explains that he fell under the spell of the French language by falling in the love with the school mistress, "*Mademoiselle Geneviève*" (or "*madmassell Cheuneuvièèf*" [...]), at the time I was still pronouncing these sweet words like a barbarian" (85). "The first words I learnt were: '*mon chou*'" (85), the narrator continues –a very significant sentence given that "*mon chou*" is a nice word for boys (who are born in cabbages) in the French tradition, but the school is located in the heart of cabbage-producing Alsace, home of sauerkraut. There is then an outright competition happening between the French "*chou*" and the Alsatian "*krüt*" (*ibid*), reinforced by the competition in pronouns: the schoolmistress calls the boy hers ("*mon chou*" –my cabbage), whereas "*notre krüt*" (our cabbage) points to the community that the boy is eventually going to leave by choosing "*chou*" over "*krüt*", basing his decision on the sounds in "*chou*" being less harsh than the sounds in "*krüt*". We end up with an axiological value being attached to languages: French is described as "the language of angels [...] [in] celestial spheres" (*ibid*). Such a conclusion having no scientific linguistic ground, the schoolmistress becomes a sorceress on the side of the "supreme head sorcerer" (that is the President), allied against Odile, whose name, incidentally, is same as the patron saint of Alsace: the schoolmistress is indeed called "the first woman who *seducted* me" (85, emphasis mine).

–but extremely vivid– movie (inside the President’s mind, and Odile has the power to forward it, pause it, etc...) retracing all of the history of Alsace, movie in which the myth of high culture belonging to France only, and cruelty to Germany only, is debunked. Of course, all this is done in sheer contradiction with Ernest Renan’s principle of “forgetfulness” exposed in “What is a Nation?”... In fact, the President’s watching of the movie extends itself to be a therapy for all Alsatian readers: to take up famous Thiongo’s phrase (in *The Politics of Language in African Literature*), now is high time we “[decolonized those minds]”.

As we have seen so far, what we find in *La Roue du Paon* is rather a model involving two entities rather than three. The third party, so much feared by Grossmann, is not silenced, but de-dramatized, as is shown for example by the fact that in the incipit, Odile listening to the radio symbolically puts herself into a culturally stereophonic position, so to speak, when she chooses “Baden-Baden” for the weather forecast and then switches to “France-Inter” for the news (6); classical music, in the person of Vivaldi, seems however to immediately bring a degree of a-spatiality, or neutrality, into all this. It remains that most of the novel functions on a two-party logic. Now, as Leslie Adelson demonstrated, there is more than one way to look at how encounters between cultures actually happen. In her article “Against Between: A Manifesto”, Adelson denies that cultures can be distinct at all –for example, in the case that preoccupies her, that there would be a Turkish culture on the hand (first pole of the bridge) and a German culture on the other hand (second pole of the bridge) and the two

would meet on the bridge, "in-between" as it were. Adelson prefers the more fusing concept of a "Turco-German culture", "a house in which people gather and join forces" (6). Figuratively speaking, we do have this idea of a "common house" in Weckmann even just from a strictly linguistic point of view, through the use of code-switching and *mélange* of French and German/Alsatian. The absolute merge of the two cultures is exemplified in the coinage "*fressaille*" (181), of which the author gives the following definition: "*La fressaille: équivalent franco-alsacien de la bouffe pantagruélique*". We recognize here the German verb "*fressen*" and the French suffix "*-aille*", as in "*mangeaille*" – "Fressaille, the franco-alsatian equivalent of Pantagruel-like eating excesses". The hyphenated adjective "franco-alsatian", together with the inclusion of a masterpiece of French literature, Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, into our "fantastic Alsatian tale", highlights the transnational aspect of Weckmann's own writing.

What is more, transnationality is so much at the core of Weckmann's thought that it is essential to note that the already observed conceptual movement from three to two is accompanied in the text by another movement, from two to *one*, reinforcing even further the idea of a "common house", or, I would suggest, "a common earth" in which mental borders become porous just as linguistic borders proved to be. As Weckmann recounts in another book (*Les Nuits de Fastov*), the "*malgré-nous*" experience affected him tremendously since he himself was sent to fight Russia with the Germans. This nightmare perspires into *La Roue du Paon* through the prosopopeia of the statue of the war memorial in the village where Odile lives. The vocabulary

being used becomes utterly scatological, and therefore universal, to translate the most horrible: "*mes chairs bleuies et mon âme balafrée dans toutes les saletés de cette sale guerre* [my bruised body and my scarred soul in all the dirt of this dirty war], *verdammte Scheisse, proklatnaïa voïna* (bloody shit), and all my intellectual faculties focused on the primary functions of my intestine" (60); "nothing but the fear to die and the rage to survive" (64). The common denominator for all nations is "*merde*": shit. "*Les Allemands et les Russes*" (60), "*merde ma France*", "*merde à tous*" ("shit to all of you") –difficult to be more post-national and more cosmopolitan than that! In sum, there is only *one* people, the people who suffers from the decisions made by the powerful.

A metaphorical Marxist division of society into classes is thus made apparent (metaphorical in the sense that in the same way that the upper-class rules over the working-class, the region is dominated by the nation), so much so that the lexical field of economics gets to take over the purely social or political one: the President is referred to as the "CEO" of the "*Entreprise France*". Also, the very moment he is abducted, he is already replaced, showing that it is not about a person but about a class –the ruling class. At the end of the story, which looks at first sight pessimistic, when the President is finally released, a strange, fantastic, scene happens when he returns to his palace: he shakes hands with his successor (looking like a "twin brother"), and the two of them get reincorporated together to form just one body. The trivial question asked by his servant ("*Monsieur a bien dormi?*"- "Did Monsieur sleep well?") indicates that nothing seems to have

happened at all (185) –hence a sense of hopelessness of the literary act in regard to the urge of the political situation?

Perhaps not so –between the lines, for example through Weckmann's perceptible admiration for the federalist model of Switzerland (45), it is possible to read a passionate advocacy for a specific political project, that he developed elsewhere, notably in his *Plea for a Bilingual Franco-German Zone* (1991). If people form indeed *one* people, as has been established, if transnationality is also internationality in the political sense, now made possible by the realization of the European Union to boot, why not go further and really erase borders, and instead of nation-states like France and Germany, have the European Union be a Confederation of Euro-Regions? To Weckmann, such a Euro-Region, an administrative entity encompassing the Alsace and part of Germany could be *the* solution to save the dialect. Utopian as it may seem, it is worthwhile to note that Ernest Renan, whose essay "What is a Nation?" is often quoted in academia for sentences like "a nation's existence is [...] a daily plebiscite" (p.19), also said (prophesized?) that "human wills change. [...] The nations are not something eternal. [...] A European confederation will very probably replace them." (20)

It is interesting that this conceptual progression from three to one (from pangermanism to cosmopolitanism), which could have reassured Robert Grossmann, did not. Even after Grossmann later cleared Weckmann of his suspicions that he was surreptitiously working for the good of another *Reich*, to this day the two political writers have not yet been able to publicly reconcile. One reason to

account for this lasting clash is that the Marxist perspective, which we already alluded to, further entails the possibility of inscribing the process of nation formation into the realm of postcolonial studies and more specifically into the research field of "internal colonialism"¹⁴. For Grossmann looking at the Alsatian situation from the perspective of "*la-France-pays-fondateur-de-la-démocratie*" (so how on earth could it have ever "colonized" its regions?), this appears to be, in the end, what constitutes the utmost unacceptable.

¹⁴ On this question, please see Hechter and Gramsci, and the analysis thereof contained in my dissertation chapter tentatively entitled "*Idéologies Nationales, Idéologies 'Collantes': Figures de l'Empêchement et du Désempêchement dans les Nuits de Fastov d'André Weckmann et La République Minoritaire de Robert Grossmann, en Lien avec la Théorie Postcoloniale.*"

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The Magic of Perception: Literature in the Borderlands

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The border is not a line in a desolate landscape. The meandering fence cinching the continent is not the focal point of discussion. We confuse this fissure between nations with the border, but this differential symbol which we worship in modern politics cannot be seen in terms of a material presence or absence. The border that incites us, that divides us, that invites us, and the border that decides us is the convergence of two colossal waves. The first draws its force from the dew of the Chiapas jungles, from the ripples at the Caribbean coast of Veracruz, from the mountain mists of Michoacan, and from the dreams of rain in Durango. And the second, gathering vapor from the steamboats on the Mississippi, consolidating its waters on the shores of the Great Lakes, building its force behind the industrial dam of Black Canyon, and seeping out of Seattle's slews, this bursting flood of a wave crashes down from the north to collide with a forceful surge from the south in a clash which shatters, only to simultaneously create. Cross-cultures and tangible constructions unimaginable in isolation arise from this convergence. Whirlpools of *maquiladoras* are born from this collision. Barbed wire arises like police tape at the scene of a crime, in this case the crime of cross-pollination. Before we reinforced this

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meeting place, what is now an obstacle, but which was once a frontier, with the threats of gunpowder and the blindfolds of cement walls, the waters calmed. The Northern tide reached further south at times, and the Southern tide swelled up into the north. Purity was lost, shrouded, as if it had ever existed before. Independent of the physical locations of people from each side, fish from converging seas, ideas melted and soaked into these borderlands. Cultures merged and remarked about their unique situation. And in the midst of such a flood, literature reeked of reinvention. Objectivity had been drowned. Authors, readers, and characters got together to scope each other out. Writers gave up looking for reality, started to rebuild it with the myths of their experience, and then recognized it again in the soggy creature of their creation. Border literature circulated to teach a wider audience of this alternative reality, and we, the readers and the critics, found it, read it, and dubbed it magical, mystical, mythical reality, marvelous fiction, of great literary esteem and skill. And then we moved on. We continued in times and in trends, giving little afterthought to the literary categories to which we had condemned these works. We never asked ourselves which structures of our own lives determined our perspectives of these works and we never considered that the structures of their creators might be different and that in their difference they might retain the capacity to teach us not only lessons of the borderlands, but lessons about our own relationships to this historically hassled territory. With this paper I extend a hand to the intent of the literature of this period, people, and place, the time when echoes of gunshots from the Mexican revolution could be imagined, heard, and retold from the border. I invite it to the forefront

of borderland studies and I engage it in a conversation with the intent to redetermine its categorical fate but also to involve the constellation of identities of the reader and to offer him or her some credit in situating this written expression born of uncertainty.

For clarity's sake, we will not specify which boundary will receive the title of *the border*. We will call into analysis the border separating cultural and political identity, be it the fence dividing first from third world on the North American continent, or the trickle of water separating black from said white on the island of Hispaniola. Literature escaping from these regions, rogue literature and literature as refugee, captures time, place, and tragedy in the net of language. It recreates, represents, and sets loose tales which have marinated in the wake of an unimaginably violent existence. Realities circulate under the guise of literary labels. René Philoctète watches the lives and bodies he has lined up along Massacre River float into an ocean of magical realism. Carlos Fuentes sees his old gringo dissolve into myth, deflated of consequence. And Cormack McCarthy, in a valiant attempt to picture the lives of hybrid individuals, is denied clarity, and his images dissolve into the mystical.

Rebellion surges from the marginalized corners of life. And what could be more marginalized than a national margin itself? In creating borders, we pack entire regions and all their cultural luggage into a slim fence. We assume that the sun only rises and sets for people on either side of this fence. And it is then, from the voices balancing on this man-made obstacle, that we discover the rebellion in

literature. Theirs is a mutiny against conventional methods of storytelling, for their story is far from conventional. Their reality lies wounded far out of reach of the convention. The term, magical realism, has shrouded written expression rooted in the chaos of border regions. Latin America and the Caribbean in particular, throughout the violent trends of time, spouts countless works of this category and contains many of the renounced artists of this globally acknowledged style of expression. But this language of perceiving magic is ancient. It traces its roots back to the conquest when two worlds physically collided, and both of them, the conquerors and the conquered, faced with an unimaginable cultural disparity, recorded that which their own experience on this earth allowed them to see. Navigators and conquistadores bore witness to fantastic images, they wrote of the likes of "hogs with navels on their haunches, clawless birds whose hens laid eggs on the backs of their mates, and others still, resembling tongueless pelicans, with beaks like spoons" (García Márquez). And today, convinced of our progress, we refuse to consider that in light of our advances, we might be reliving the five century old encounter between the old and the new world. Among the many who record lives, who scratch words and who construct stories, there are only several who seek to shrug off the applause and realign the praise awarded to them by first world admirers of their agility in the craft of storytelling. Gabriel García Márquez defends the realities of millions which literary scholars have brushed aside as magical, calling this disparity a difference in lens, a symptom of standpoint theory, and a long-term memory malfunction of audiences who protect themselves by applauding the 'imagnations' of others. He calls his an "outsized reality... A reality not of paper, but one that lives

within us and determines each instant of our countless daily deaths, and that nourishes a source of insatiable creativity, full of sorrow and beauty" (García Márquez). For García Márquez the narrator, but simultaneously the character (for he too clings to the solidarity of Latin Americans), critics in the comfortable corners of the globe where miracles are called upon to enhance life rather than dispel death interpret the literature from elsewhere along the criteria of fiction and fact feasible within their immediate surroundings. What fantastic imaginations, how original, how unique, we proclaim. We see theirs as an unnaturally brilliant imagination, a unique vessel of conveying themes and stories, and we offer them praise. We never once consider that the imaginations of such *portavoces* as Gabriel García Márquez may not be so splendid, that it might be our own capacity to imagine which falters here. As scientific and factual first world citizens, anything beyond our capacity for explanation or reasoning falls forgotten into the category of artistic creation, to be celebrated and awarded when it should be staggering, appalling. Magical realism walks hand in hand with horror, and we the readers eat it up, we gorge ourselves with its sacrifices and its martyrs. García Márquez berates us with that which we have misplaced in translation: "we have had to ask but little of imagination, for our crucial problem has been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable" (García Márquez). So it would seem that magical realism was born in a border. It arose from the space between two worlds, the first and the third, where differences cannot be reconciled because they have skipped the identification phase. Or because we have waved them through this checkpoint because our own utopian comforts have taught

us that all men were created equal and therefore should equally experience the world.

Alejo Carpentier on the other hand, replaces the term "magical" entirely, calling that which it denotes "marvelous realism" instead. His is a celebration of the type of literature which captures events too extraordinary to fall into the category of realism, but which his label of "marvelous" retains within the realm of reality. The greater beauty is the recognition that strange and wonderful events can occur, and that these events deserve the allotment of a greater wealth of respect, one which champions them as miracle instead of dismissing them as magic. He proclaims:

Pero es que muchos se olvidan, con disfrazarse de magos a poco costo, que lo maravilloso comienza a serlo de manera inequívoca cuando surge de una alteración de la realidad (el milagro), de una revelación privilegiada de la realidad, de una iluminación inhabitual o singularmente favorecedora de las inadvertidas riquezas de la realidad, de una ampliación de las escalas y categorías de la realidad, percibidas con particular intensidad en virtud de una exaltación del espíritu que lo conduce a un modo de "estado límite" (Carpentier 3-4).

Carpentier insists that the celebration of magic when it has been stripped of its legitimacy, denied inclusion into reality, and marginalized as a technique of admittedly innovative artistic expression, is to cheat, devalue, and undermine the true value and power of life as it is experienced by people who attribute alterations of normalcy to forces within their understanding of reality. Miracles are more impressive than

magic. And the literature which represents them should wield the same authority and command the same respect, provoke the same awe as miracles. But that which we in the reality of luxuries have trouble grasping is that miracles do not always act as heroes. They can also play the role of villains, imitate disasters, and invoke nightmares. At a Caribbean literature panel I attended in 2008, the keynote speaker and Haitian novelist Jean-Claude Figolé voiced a similar explanation of the disparity between the realities of people in one place and the western reader's perception of these realities as doubtful. To a man in the audience he asked, "Do you believe in zombies?" The man paused, not considering the question so much as if the academy (to which he belonged) were surrounding him, and responded that he did. Figolé then asked, "Is this because you are Haitian?" More interesting than the answer to this second inquiry is how the exchange in its entirety asserts that certain realities belong to territories, and it is not the responsibility of the reader to insist in his or her own disbelief of magical, mystical, mythical, or marvelous accounts, but to acknowledge and respect these realities as the artifacts of inequality and solidarity in the distinct pockets of civilization throbbing on this earth.

The essays of García Márquez and Carpentier can be viewed as emerging in exasperation, attempting to force the rethinking of the space between character, narrator, and reader. The intent of this essay is to determine the significance of the advent of magical realism, myth, and mystic encounter in literature emanating from borders. It would seem in the very definition of these terms allotted to characteristics in literature that we unveil their suggestion

of a fundamental disparity, a distance conveyed through challenges to reality. The border denotes a place distant from each of its creators. Shared lands do not belong to a single nation, and because we respond to stories and histories of this region with explanations for the inexplicable, we prove to ourselves that we do not share their world. We only glance at it briefly for entertainment's sake through the telescope offered by narrators and authors. But upon actually looking through this telescope, we see shapes and images that we cannot decipher, comprehend, or translate into our immediate realities, so we mistake the telescope for a kaleidoscope and congratulate ourselves for having identified a new species of literary technique.

Massacre River: Magic

Borderlands swim in and out of focus in history. Conflict and violence make these territories of second-guessed identities objects of interest to large populations who hunger for a sense of drama unavailable to them. Literature packages this drama, ties it up in portable chapters, finishes it with a sleek cover, and hands it to the reader who aches for an experience of removed emotional violence. As is the case with much of the literature pending discussion in this essay, in Philoctète's work magic seems to arise as a means of defense against the imminence of mortality. His written account of the 1937 massacre of Haitians in the Dominican Republic, a decree announced by the dictator, Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, narrates the fate of Pedro and Adèle as they half-knowingly await the violence they are condemned to because of their loyalty to a mixture

of lands, the duality of the border between two nations. The closer death swoops, the further reality, or a recognizable reality in the least, recedes. As they cling to the border, the characters along the Massacre River step in and out of two worlds. In one they find safety, in the other, unimaginable violence. Perhaps it is this unimaginable violence which the author challenges, allowing the reader a means of imagining it through the lens of magical realism.

The novel begins with a premonition. A huge black bird hovers over the town of Elías Piña, a bird without blood, one who never emits a sound, both deaf and mute, and whose shadow seems to carve open the lives of the inhabitants. The bird, theorized by the characters to be everything and anything, from machine, to sorcerer, to shadow, to kite, hangs menacingly over their border town, promising ill will. Many of the citizens try in vain to dispel its shadow. The bullets of the hunter can't reach high enough, the sociology student, only a visitor to the town, "tries to appease the creature's anger, by playing the mandolin. But his fingers on the instrument's strings shrivel up to their roots" (Philoctète 22). As readers, we think we know that the bird is not actually there. We, grounded and comfortable in our realities, judge its presence as existing only in the imaginations of the characters, included in the text as a show of the creative finesse of the author. We, unabashed, therefore place its symbolic appearance under the category of magical realism. The imaginations of the literate masses cannot fathom a giant black bloodless bird with the powers that the inhabitants of Elías Piña claim it has, so we leave sanity and reality out of the question and instead usher the image into the harmless realm of magic.

The dictator's decree called for the counting of Haitian heads. True nationalists were called to take up their machetes, the tools of the harvest, and use them to purge the country of those with the incorrect skin color and accent. Heads rolled in Elías Piña. But that is not all they did. In the midst of massacre, "heads are wandering around on their own" (140). Adèle's head "capers about, bounding over the fence of candelabra cacti into the dust-white street... Feeling whimsical, Adèle's head sticks out its tongue at some children" (163). Laborers return from the fields and factories, expecting to rejoin their families in the comfort of their company, but instead are witness to "seven close-shaven black heads [passing] by, zigzagging, as if lost, bumping in to one another, each clenching between its teeth a twenty-peso bill" (184). Chaos greets them. The legitimacy given to the massacre by figures of authority and the clash of thrill killing and paralyzing fear shatters reality. Chaos shrouds perception. And chaos ignores reality just as easily as it agitates magic. Twenty pesos were gifted to the families who had suffered casualties, ample enough recompense, the government had concluded, for a Haitian head. Heads wander through the streets looking for people, causing mischief, playing with each other, and pretending to be what they are not. But the reader surely keeps his head. The audience, safe in a room, a library maybe, or on a lawn in the sunshine, reads into the description Philoctète gives of the actions of craniums departed from their shoulders. This of course is another literary tool, a metaphor for the immensity of murder, or magical realism meant to parallel the disbelief of the true witnesses of this bloodbath. A play on words maybe; people are losing their heads faced with the horrors of such a massacre, do their

skulls detach from their bodies or are they losing their sanity? This is an effective tactic; the reader feels he has a sense of the panic and confusion smothering this terrorized border town. Both the reader and the characters repeat to themselves from the safety of pretending: this cannot be happening.

But Philoctète does not leave magic to fester only at the physical border. He sweeps it across the two nations in a cause-and-effect condition. For all the Haitian blood spilled on Dominican soil, the drinks and condiments of the Haitian government at a celebration thrown in light of their superiority were ruined, soiled, contaminated. The massacre inconsiderately interrupted the festivities of the national heroes: "As a Haitian head went flying in Las Matas, the white wine in the glass of His Majesty Henri I of Haiti effervesced with bright red bubbles" (177). The description of the displacement of flesh reaches explicitly gruesome heights: "The fact is that every time a Haitian was hacked apart at the border, flesh turned up in a pastry at the military ball: roasted (at the correct temperature), fried (with very little fat), braised (for tougher items requiring slow cooking), poached (the ever-popular *pot-au-feu*)" (178). This instance, less likely to be a delusion of the characters, represents the revenge of the author for the injustices enacted upon the citizens of his novel, be they fictional or representative. Disenchanted with the hopelessness and brutality of the situation, Philoctète interferes with reality to enact a minimal revenge upon those who allowed his characters to suffer. This also serves as a tool of literature, an instance of magical realism belonging to the author rather than to the reader. The

instance draws attention to the power of creation inherent in the narrator, the director of the novel. To see or convey magic can be a reaction inspired by horror, but it can also constitute a threat, in this case to the Haitian officials who turn a blind eye to the murdering of their own masses. As García Márquez insists in reference to the violent reality which all too often wreaks havoc on the daily lives of the citizens of Latin America, little needs to be imagined to render the story of a massacre magical. Indeed it seems that Philoctète is not blessed with a fantastical capacity to imagine. Rather, he is cursed with the ability to tell of events where even those firsthand victims of the tragedy are left with no means to render their own realities believable.

Rising out of the man-made fissure in humanity, the borders between nations, instances such as the Haitian massacre of 1937 lend themselves well to tragically beautiful displays of magical realism. As readers, we are exposed to this creation shrouded in the unbelievable. So if we neglect to take for reality the excess of violence in such a narration, what instead serves as the purpose of its depiction? Are the instances fed to us just human delusions of those incapable of grasping the terrors of their own realities? But we are all human, character, author, and reader, so who then can claim to see things straight, the supposedly fictional individuals whose lives have become nightmares, the narrator who captures these nightmares, or the reader who condemns them to the realm of dreams, downgrading nightmares to fiction when they might possibly be realities too terrible to fathom. Massacre River offers one instance of the flexibility of truth and the

gymnastics of reality in narration. In this novel, instances of incredible violence send humanity to its deathbed, where mourners can only lament the passing of peace, and offer up only the magical in explanation for the bloodshed stemming from the implications of an imagined barrier between nations. Perhaps the magical reality of this example is only the political reality of borders.

The Old Gringo: Myth

The convergence of cultures seems also to be the place where myth foment and escapes to seep outward into two nations simultaneously. Carlos Fuentes, from the southern side of the border, got wind of such a myth, the mystery of the disappearance of Ambrose Bierce amid the turmoil of civil war in Mexico. From this suggestion of a story, Fuentes himself set the parameters of the legend in his novel, The Old Gringo. The book is not narrated, it is remembered, and the story unfolds as a series of recollections rather than a simple anthology of events. Memory, the architect of myth, creates and recreates the pasts of characters, each of whom flail in their uncertain identities and in their curiosity about each other. Against the backdrop of the Mexican Revolution, an old North American journalist attempts to cross into a foreign land where others are fighting for their right to belong there, and as these characters converge, the reader discovers that there are some frontiers that are impossible to breach, and it is this frontier that we always desire, yet never dare to cross.

Far removed from the hypersensitive desert barrier which draws a scar across the continent today, the border

between Mexico and the United States during the time of this story materialized not in location, but in the contact made between individuals of each side. No frontier was recognized until, face to face, people saw between them an obstacle, cultural or imagined, which proved the separation of two nations, histories, and identities. Fuentes believes this border to be profoundly social, stating that "each of us has a secret frontier within him, and that is the most difficult frontier to cross because each of us hopes to find himself alone there, but finds only that he is more than ever in the company of others" (161). This division cannot be proven until confirmed by another. Without each other, there would be no border, and translated into recent times, without "the other," we would have no walls or fences. It is our need as humans to define ourselves by alienating others that encourages militarized boundaries. So it is in this confrontation that we become self-conscious of our crossing, and in this novel, as a consequence of confrontation, myth blossoms.

Her illusions haunted her. His realities pained him. They both crossed south, but in the end, after memory had commandeered their story, they stood on opposite sides of the line separating myth from reality. In his body she found a way to prove her lies, and in her memory, he created the legend he desired for his death. The novel begins and ends with a single phrase: "Now she sits alone and remembers" (3), the introduction and conclusion to the telling of myth, and the book is littered with fragments of conversations, phrases which constitute the focal points of each character. Harriet Winslow, the myth keeper, who crossed the border with the weight of a false truth, her only compensation for a

painful reality, recalls a haunting excerpt from her father's past; "Captain Winslow, I am very lonely and you may have me at your pleasure" (120), a cold reminder that her father did not abandon her for the afterlife but for another life, a different life. The old gringo grapples with death, repeating to himself, "I want to be a good-looking corpse" (145), and "To be a gringo in Mexico...Ah, that is euthanasia" (9). The old gringo wants a mercy killing, he wants a painless death to end the suffering of the life he has contrived. Both Harriet and the gringo breach this frontier for the sake of escape, and they each discover personal reconciliation in the manipulation of truth and myth.

Myth and memory are intricately bound, for a myth can only be as powerful as the memory which sustains it. Fuentes pays due to this relationship, recognizing "dream [as] our personal myth" and life as an uninterrupted dream where "memory, or lack of memory, would restore as an elaborate plot peopled with details, structures, and incidents" the company of fellow dreamers (52). The old gringo, a man bound to reality by the papers and articles written in his hand, crosses south to free himself, to die off record, and therefore to disappear into the uncertainty of his crossing into Mexico, into death, and into myth. This novel, the myth imagined and remembered by Carlos Fuentes of the disappearance of the journalist Ambrose Bierce into the frothing war-zone of Pancho Villa's revolution, is a product of pure curiosity. As best said by a character aptly named Inocencio Mansalvo, "Do they want to know more about our lives? Well, they will have to make them up, because we're still nothing and nobody" (77). In the face of haunting curiosities, we all become authors.

Both Fuentes and the old gringo agree, "myth was better than fact" (69).

To cross the border, both the one which we see on a map and the one we keep hidden within us, is to make and remake our myths and our realities. It is to interact with others and it is therefore to define ourselves, to create and dismantle our identities. This novel does not read straight. It stumbles through time and company, unsure of its truths and doubting its realities, but these uncertainties only reinforce the power and memorability of its characters. When starved for information, an audience will cling to the details, seeking them out despite the fog of ambiguity. Fuentes has created in his character the need to be obscured but not consigned to oblivion, he has drawn out of the mouth of the old gringo the desire to be vaguely remembered, and in doing so, he has constructed the myth to match his infatuation with an allegedly real writer lost to the border, Bierce. So Fuentes has forced himself to remember, he has written to recreate that which was lost to memory but whose absence will not cease to inquire. And myths are meant to be written, because their livelihood and the livelihood of their heroes depend upon the retelling of legends.

The Crossing: Mystica

Another current of perception flows in the space between two countries. More subtle than magic and less sensational than myth, Cormack McCarthy taps into this source in his border trilogy, exploring and unveiling the mystical quality of the border before militarization and politics captured the

area under a magnifying glass of national interest. One of his three works which constitute the border-inspired trilogy, The Crossing, the work of interest for this essay, narrates the southbound migration of a character who finds himself misplaced in the north. In order to escape the echoing emptiness of his bleak future in the US, the illuminated and pursued character in this novel crosses the border in search of purpose, only to find that in Mexico he remains on the margin of a heavy fog shrouding the profundity found in life, death, and the perpetual struggle of people also in search of the greater purpose of pain.

Billy, the main character in The Crossing, traipses back and forth between Mexico and the United States without hesitation. McCarthy never mentions a line crossed in the landscape, and the names of places in the northern nation retain the language of their first conquest, so the reader is left to decipher the country of the plot from the nature of Billy's interactions with individuals along his way. Conversations in what the reader assumes to be Mexico unfold in untranslated Spanish. The strangers who converse with Billy engage him in very profound discussions of human nature and the very meaning of life and death. Conversations state-side of the adventure remain brief and factual, almost embarrassing in their simplicity, painful in their predictability. When Billy seeks advice from an ailing Mexican man about how to catch a wolf, the old man replies instead with a more valuable and more mystic wisdom, proclaiming, "*Escúchame, jóven... if you could breathe a breath so strong you could blow out the wolf. Like you blow out the *copo*. Like you blow out the fire from the *candela*. The wolf is made the way the world is made. You cannot*

touch the world. You cannot hold it in your hand for it is made of breath only" (46). In a similar lesson of the characteristic of the spirituality of the world, the caretaker of a destroyed church corrects his guest's perception of all that is physical, professing that "this world also which seems to us a thing of stone and flower and blood is not a thing at all but is a tale. And all in it is a tale and each tale the sum of all lesser tales and yet these are the selfsame tale and contain as well all else within them" (143). This character's profession echoes within the book, for each encounter exposes a wound healed through the art of storytelling. The border, "*una herida abierta*" (Anzaldúa), applies stories like ointment, both healing and defining itself in the act. Without told histories, places would dissolve into nothingness, forgotten from the collective memory of communities and stripped of significance, therefore nonexistent in importance. Besides simply exposing his main character to people who spew wisdom with a mystical aura, McCarthy communicates something essential to the reader: in his tale there exists a world. It is not that the author has written a story within the boundaries of a place, rather, he has created a place by creating for it a tale, and this place which owes its existence to the constellation of stories which bestow characteristic upon the region is the very land of the border, the place so recently contested not for its tale but for its physicality. Thus, if the identity of a world lies in narrative, then it is also that the traits of its narrative are shared with the land itself. The frontier created by McCarthy is one of profound mysticism and condemned wisdom.

Boyde, Billy's younger brother, the only other survivor of their family massacre and the source of Billy's responsibility, melts into the narrative engrained into the land when he is shot by bandits in his attempt to steal back their father's horses. Bleeding, balancing on the border of life and afterlife, Boyde passes from the hands of his escaping brother to a group of Mexican *obreros*. As he is passed into a truck, the vehicle which stumbles through the dust of daily struggles carrying those condemned to toil in exchange for subsistence, he is also passed from one narrative to another. The farmworkers "made a place for Boyde on the rough boards of the truckbed with shirts and sarapes" (272). In his physical condition he offered a similarity, a wound, the wound that befalls all those destined to survival in a zone of conflict. Theirs is a border, the clash of interests that we excuse for cultural dissimilarity, and upon perceiving this uniting wound, no words need be spoken, "blood was a condition of their lives and none asked what had befallen him or why" (272). They have already recognized allegiance in his bloodshed.

After evading the episode of violence, that which he finds abundant in border crossings, Billy goes in search of his brother. He finds him living, but already entombed in the beginnings of legend. Carefully guarded inside a Mexican home, Boyde lay among "gifts of food and gifts of flowers and holy images of wood or clay or cloth and little handmade wooden boxes that held *milagros* and *ollas* and baskets and glass bottles and figurines" (299). In a reality where justice is just as mortal as those it is supposed to protect, Boyde is fastened with a story, and therefore an identity, which incorporates him into the mystical and

magical realm of heroes of the popular classes. People drowning in daily violence and hardship reach for tangible miracles. The advent of magical realism owes its accreditation to desperation, not serene creativity. Boyde served their needs as a tangible casualty of desperation. All that was left was to give him over to legend.

Billy loses his brother in the end. As Boyde escapes from his brother's care he is cast into the collective cultural tale of the landscape. Billy, as he scours the county for word of his kin finds "only shadow and rumor" (331). He struggles to steal his brother back from the haunting words of the *corrido* which sings of a young *güero*, valiant and brave in defending the *pueblo* from injustice. His story is flung into the collection of tales of miracles, magic, myth, and legend, the bandages of the hopeless. And Billy battles this realm to reclaim his brother. His attempts to tell the truth of the legendary moments of conflict fall on ears equipped only to hear tales of mystical greatness, survival does not permit hopelessness, and Billy scrambles to grasp the fading ghost of what he thought he recognized as reality. The uncertainty which allows Boyde to slip into mysticism, to fall into the plot of communal myth, echoes the uncertainty of identity on the border. This uncertainty, the fear of the unknown, yields violence which in turn foments mystic and heroic silhouettes. Identities cast in the desperation of senseless bloodshed keep to the shadows. Mysticism occurs when events cannot decide whether to place their loyalty with reality or with magic. Like the controversy experienced by those of dual identities, not even narratives can escape the hybrid nature of border existence.

As with all foggy legends, Boyde must die, because the bodies of heroes cannot often sustain the appetite of myth. But still Billy grapples with losing his brother, if not in life, also in death, for he ceaselessly searches for the remains of Boyde with the intention of relocating them state-side and rescuing at least his body from the fable he has become in the foreign territory. In another surreal encounter, a Yaquí Indian warns Billy that “the dead have no nationality” (387), that an essence cannot be contained in a name, that those who strive to find their way according to titles and maps created by others have already admitted that they have lost themselves. But we can stretch this message through context and apply it to the proclaimed “problem” of the border. By drawing a line across the landscape, by giving each side a name, we have already admitted defeat. With each reinforcement of the border we lose ourselves in a web of political and cultural implications. With each intentional crossing we perpetuate a misunderstanding of the landscape. Land does not heed divisions, only people do. Boyde the person died long before his blood stopped flowing. As his brother’s reality drifted further and further from Billy’s control, the border took over. His story was told by the crossing, by the land, and as we have already figured, borders have a tendency to tell tales in an accent which seems to supersede reality.

But the question of more important fascination from a literary perspective is the way in which the novel directs its audience to receive and interpret the realm of the author’s creation. Indeed, language itself can be an agent of both clarity and the mystical. Used also in marking the differing territories of the novel, language is exclusive. It

denies full understanding to the monolingual reader, whether English or Spanish speaking. Conversations appear just out of grasp, the reader can see them physically on the page, can read them even, but their significance remains on the opposite end of a linguistic barrier, cruelly mimicking the cultural alienation of the characters by abandoning the reader to flail in the darkness of doubt. As the perfect trap, the book wins the attention and intrigue of the English speaking audience only to absolve their conception of understanding and strand them in the void of a one-sided conversation. In this we see a construction taking form. In the wake of doubt and uncertainty regarding reality and truth, the reader has both the option and the curse of filling in the blanks with their own imagination. An alternative which inherently fosters doubt about the durability of facts. But what of the bilingual reader? This type of audience is left to discover the spiritual alienation each encounter voices, a distance and disenchantment with God which leads the characters to place their faith somewhere else.

We dub the space between two nations the border, because in politics to share land is deemed failure, a direct assault to the *machismo* inherent in nationalism. But humanity flies under the radar of politics, and the border encompasses a greater territory than any map would concede. McCarthy draws a different kind of border in his works. He traces and reinforces the boundaries of a hybrid space, the space protected by the uncertainty of its exposure, and by the dualities of its inhabitants. Through literature, he places an emphasis on the perspective of his reader, allowing doubt to foment and stir in the audience a mystification which separates the understandings of the

characters from that of the reader. Through the creation of situations where reality cannot be grasped nor trusted, McCarthy draws a more important border. He brings to the surface the carefully guarded frontier between those who inhabit borderlands, and those who can only view them from afar or read of them in works such as this one.

Conclusions

To talk of the techniques of magic, myth, and mysticism in these novels without respect to the vessels of literature would be a gross oversimplification of the importance of perception. The centripetal force of these particular works is the border in all its forms, but there exist always three crucial figures in literature: the character, the narrator, and the reader. And while we all revolve around this border, we each carry the responsibilities assigned to us. The character acts as the vessel of an alternate world, the reader as the spectator of this world, and the narrator as the link between them, providing a necessary means through which the audience and the actor are introduced to each other and made to draw judgments from these interactions. That which we deem literary analysis stems from our own role as spectators in the conveyance of a story. We call magical realism that which we find unnatural in comparison with our personal realities; we title myth that which we find too void of fact for the realm of biography; and we name mystic that which we judge to belong more to the realm of the spiritual than the realm of the scientific. Novels allow us the breach of space and time; they challenge us to attempt to understand people and places generally unknown to our

tangible truths; and it is perhaps in the translation between two worlds where we find the magical, mythical, and mystical. Why bother Pulitzer Prize Boards and Swedish Academies with complaints and mislabeling? It is only art, to be viewed and analyzed by book clubs and classrooms and timelines of classification. You can never be “wrong” in interpreting art, they tell you. But judging by the scores of literary critics in our society, you can certainly be “more right” in interpreting it. And what harm could emerge from these “more right” criticisms when speaking of magic, myth, and mysticism, advents of the supposed imagination? But the consequence of reading magic into a situation is that we do not believe in its capacity to harm. Reading myth compromises our ability to relate to a narrative. And trying to see through the fog of the mystic invariably yields a paralyzing fear of the uncertain. Thus, with all the tools given to us by cultural and political distance, we naively swell the border. We stretch the frontier with the alienation of reality: magic. We reinforce the barbed wire by dividing biographies and fables. And we flood the border waters so that which is mystical cannot reach our banks.

Where is the border in this literature, in this accented storytelling? There is a frontier separating the literate from the illiterate. There is a barbed wire fence running between magic and reality. And there is a map showing literature and history on opposing banks of the Rio Grande. How does the story change when we switch these roles? Were it the literate who acted as characters, how would the illiterate interpret their strife? ‘Science fiction’ could be the inverse of ‘magical realism.’ If the reader and character were to change roles a misunderstanding would

still remain a barrier between the two. It is merely the title of this misunderstanding which changes when we reverse the direction of literary criticism. And somewhere in the middle of this misunderstanding remains reality, screaming for recognition but interpreted as song.

As participants of the first-world community, we start the morning, rising from the comforts of a bed, eating from an easily accessible supply of food, and embarking upon a staunchly planned and prepared schedule for the day. In the evening, we arrive at our homes, and placate ourselves with a mild (or extensive) dose of television. News channels flash images of disasters, times and places where anything that could have gone wrong has already gone wrong. Where individuals have adopted motives so twisted and so self-serving that humanity has simply surrendered, been killed anyway, and lies in a heap for scavengers to scoff at. And then the words slip out of our mouths: "That's unbelievable." An offering of condolences, a shot at empathy, but we never stop to taste the word. "That," be it a massacre, a war, or a human disaster, cannot be believed. It is out of reach of reality. It cannot be fathomed. The oddity of this symptom of comfort is that truth and falsity are never called to witness. We render events and histories "unbelievable" even with the ghosts of truth breathing down our necks. We simply do not care about the quality of information, it is the concept from which we shy away. "Unbelievable," a self-explanatory word, one so simple that we forget to define it in our daily usages, has worked its way not only into our vocabulary, but into the foundation of our style of living. That which separates those living in comfort and those who buy debt

with a currency of fear and suffering, is not the quantity of belongings or the quality of every inhalation. It is instead the capacity to distance oneself from reality by uttering, "that's unbelievable," "that's unreal." For the rest of the world, those whose lives have been discarded for fantasy, lack the ability to escape from the clutches of the surreal.

Yet the redemption, the beauty visible when the dust of violence settles, is that people keep living. They do not merely survive, they live and they celebrate life, as flawed as it is. They toast to each other, to the stories, to the music, to the art, and to the encounters which cannot be described in any human language, the epiphanies that are universally experienced and universally treasured. Adele and Pedro sustain the fiber of their love despite the bloodbath engulfing their lives. Fear, loathing, and violence have no power in breaking this bond. Even when their lives end, the qualities which make life a celebration rather than a monotonous march to a fixed end glow in the aftermath of massacre. The old Gringo, a self-made martyr, clings to the scrap of pride that he has left. Even in the tumultuous battle field the old man refuses to quake with the fear of a certain impending death. The gringo does not survive, but he holds tight to his self-respect, to his pride, both before and after death. Pride, a distinctly human show of respect, challenges the structures of violence, denying it complete control over an individual and attaching itself to a myth, rather than a corpse, to insure an immortality threatened by the chaos of war. And in The Crossing, perhaps most fittingly, the characters whose image rings ageless and invincible in the eyes of the reader emanate with the power of narration. Theirs is a redemption of wisdom and

profundity; the power to tell tales and convey knowledge. Because a voice can be silenced by an act of violence, but echoes cannot. Perhaps the persistence of humanity, the inability to accept hopelessness, perhaps the gift of seeking out the small pleasures that life can offer, even when the only readily available state is that of violence should be the cure for borders. Reader, character, narrator, together we make up humanity, a category so celebrated for its advances with technology, for its capacity to separate and define the world that the magic inherent in us, the magic which allows us to transpose life into art is overlooked and under credited. What is real in us is also magic, because reality does not heed the design of science. Survival is magical. It is marvelous, mythical, and mystical. And survival is real.

Despite the plea of novelists and authors who provide us with the a glance into the harsh and marvelous realities of places distant not only according to maps, but also as measured in cultural misalignment, we will probably continue to see magic and myth in these works. We will most likely assume the worlds we read about to be wonderful constructions of talented imaginations. And we will perpetuate the danger inherent in passing for fiction instances too terrible to believe. As Max Weber has already foretold, we believe in capitalism. We disown magic for technology, for we find it more easily controlled. We forget myth and we worship biography. We replace the mystical with commodities because they perpetuate us along the path of modern godliness, because our gods are the individuals for whom no object escapes their power to purchase. But the next wave of literature will enact its

revenge. It will narrate our lives, and its readers will also scoff at its reality. As much as we believe it today, those in the positions to categorize literature in the present will someday be replaced, and then ours will become the magical realities, the mythical tales, and the mystical which reinforce the distance between character and audience. We may intend it to be an awakening of injustice, but others will entertain themselves with the narratives of our lives and deem one people's realities the petty fictions of another. As Tom Robbins has already predicted: "Disbelief in magic can force a poor soul into believing in government and business."

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Últimos Apuntes

Lídice Alemán
Washington University in St. Louis

...para que el olvido no exista.

1

Despedirse con una palabra.
Clavar el filo de sus bordes
en mi costado
Sentir el rojo que asola,
el golpe de asfixia que sacude,
la carne abriéndose en dos pasos.
Nun-
ca.
Morder la rabia del verso que no fue,
la cólera del amor escupido.
No puedes caer -me digo-,
no puedes
y me cuelgo en jirones a un Dios
acabado de inventar.

2

He aquí la mano mendiga.
La que extendiendo y tintinea,

Tiresias 5 (March 2012)

Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/rl/tiresias/index.html>

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures
University of Michigan

segura del abismo.
La mano-escarcha destilando
un último extravío,
una humedad de puerta
que abría de par en par.

Hela aquí,
memoria descalza de un deseo,
habidad de fatuas intensiones,
escribiendo apuntes
que terminarás por romper.

3

Hoy
la palabra es incesto de mi lengua
y la lengua nostalgia de mi boca.
Hoy
el latido final se desvanece,
sólo queda del gesto la silueta
siendo lógico la flecha contra el arco,
la llave esperando por la cerradura
y correr
correr como demente
intuyendo cualquier oscuridad
que me ausente de la lluvia.

4

Ojos cerrados. Ojos abiertos. ¿No es acaso lo mismo?
Mirar sin ver. Zarpar y rescindir las velas.
Refugio silente de fines de semana,

amparo de sombras y aguaceros.

¿No es –pregunto– lo mismo?
¿Estepa sin la balada de un eco,
quejido sin un romance de luna?

Ojos cerrados imaginando hogueras.
Ojos abiertos para sofocarlas.

5

Como en otoño
el viento me arranca de mi y caigo afuera.
Voy, sin mí, en círculos hacia un centro,
y giro
 giro
 giro como arena, hasta disgregarme.

6

Soy.
Imagen difusa en la ventana.
Ventana de marzo que la lluvia azota.
Azote de vida dejada en suspenso.
Suspenso de adioses con lágrimas por bolsillos.

Estoy.
Mirando desde la distancia mi cuerpo obsceno.
En la obscenidad de la palabra supervivencia.
En la supervivencia del último instante.
En el instante vacío de saber que no estoy.

El Terror de las Palabras: el Comunicado de *ETA* del 20 de octubre de 2011 en la Prensa Española y Latinoamericana

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"*Los terroristas no tendrán la última palabra, sino la [democracia](#)*" (Amón). Esta frase fue pronunciada por el Jefe del Gobierno francés Nicolas Sarkozy en enero de 2008. La declaración se producía dentro de la cumbre franco-española con el presidente José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero en París. Una cumbre en la que se adoptaron medidas relacionadas con la prevención contra la banda terrorista ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasusa). Acorde con el sentido de esta cita el reconocido filósofo y escritor Fernando Savater escribió que: "lo más importante intelectualmente hoy no es tanto comprender los motivos de los terroristas, sino los nuestros para resistirles sin emplear sus propias armas" (Savater). Tal y cómo observamos ambas afirmaciones sostienen una idea en común. La idea de vencer a los terroristas valiéndose de unas "armas" que a priori desde una perspectiva democrática deben ser distintas a las utilizadas por ellos. Pero esto no siempre es así. En un sentido casi literal diríamos que estos emplean pistolas, bombas, amenazas, extorsiones, etc. Un "arsenal" que en determinadas ocasiones también puede ser utilizado por el

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propio Estado ante situaciones de "legítima defensa", o simplemente, en un contexto de carácter bélico. Sin embargo existe un elemento aún más importante. Un "arma" que tanto las entidades estatales como el terrorismo emplean por igual para justificarse: el lenguaje. *"Nunca hablan de asesinatos, crímenes o muertes, etc., sino que siempre se habla de 'ejecuciones. Los secuestrados o rehenes son prisioneros. Los atentados son acciones u operaciones. A las extorsiones se les denomina impuesto revolucionario"* (Veres).

Más allá de centrarse en ese "marketing terrorista" propio de este tipo de organizaciones el presente trabajo persigue otro objetivo. Con este artículo se estudiará como recogen las portadas de los diarios vascos, españoles y latinoamericanos las noticias relacionadas con ETA. Para ello se buscará comparar las distintas definiciones de la banda que hacen estos tres grupos. Qué personalidad le otorgan a esta organización en relación al espacio político español. Al mismo tiempo las diferentes versiones nos servirán para conocer qué papel representa ETA si atendemos a la prensa del País Vasco, España o América Latina. Una cuestión importante que va a precisar la naturaleza, inclinación o la capacidad o poder de la banda. De esta forma su definición interesará para saber hasta qué punto un mismo fenómeno terrorista es visto desde posiciones incluso antagónicas si el lector compra un diario en San Sebastián o por el contrario lo hace en Buenos Aires. Una tesis que pone énfasis en la importancia del lenguaje no exclusivamente como "arma" de ataque de los grupos terroristas sino como escudo defensor de los propios estados. De ahí surge la medula espinal de la siguiente

proposición que introduzco: el uso del léxico justifica o condena en mayor o menor medida las acciones derivadas del terrorismo. Por tanto, determinadas palabras o expresiones para referirse a ETA aumentarán o disminuirán su potestad ya no sólo en España sino también en el contexto internacional. Para ello y a fin de ajustar la investigación se ha partido de un acontecimiento muy concreto: el comunicado que ETA emitió el 20 de octubre de 2011 en el que anunciaba el "*cese definitivo de la actividad armada*". Así, a partir de este ejemplo observaremos cómo definen en este caso particular los distintos medios a ETA. ¿Quién cesa con su actividad armada? ¿Se trata de un agente agresor al Estado, defensor de una causa que choca con el Estado o simplemente un actor que interviene en él?

En primer lugar hablaré de la prensa vasca. Quizá la palabra que mejor defina los titulares que aparecen en los principales rotativos del País Vasco sea dramático. Y me refiero a dramático en el sentido de buscar conmovir intencionadamente al lector. El titular no cumple estrictamente una función enunciativa del lenguaje. No sigue la estructura habitual de sujeto y predicado. Su redacción está más próxima a la función conativa o incluso poética. En otras palabras, su objetivo es acercarse al ciudadano vasco, y por supuesto, a aquellas víctimas de la violencia terrorista.

Luego estos periódicos circunscriben su información a quienes padecieron de manera directa o indirecta el terror de la banda. Ubican el foco de su exposición sobre el componente emocional distanciándose del componente político. Es más, exponen un relato con tres segmentos

diferenciados: el recuerdo a las víctimas (pasado), la historicidad de la fecha (presente), y la apertura de una nueva etapa en *Euskadi* (futuro). Un relato que no huye por tanto del posicionamiento del medio ante el hecho en sí, todo lo contrario. Por ejemplo el diario *El Correo* acude al lenguaje coloquial para titular “*¡Por fin! ETA anuncia el final de la violencia*” (Kiosko.net). Una expresión que se aleja de ese paradigma enunciativo de la noticia para colocarse en la boca de cualquier ciudadano español, o especialmente euskera.

En el *Diario Vasco* por su parte encontramos un enunciado que conviene subrayar. En su titular el diario habla de “*cese definitivo de la violencia*” y no de “*cese definitivo de la actividad armada*”, según recoge el comunicado difundido por ETA el 20-O (El País). Por lo cual el periódico incluye un importante matiz: lo que finaliza no es la actividad armada, sino su consecuencia: la violencia. Como vemos ambos diarios se desprenden así del “camuflaje lingüístico” propio de las organizaciones terroristas. Una protección de la que se valen estos grupos para entibiar sus acciones pues como señala el propio McLuhan “*sin comunicación no habría terrorismo*” (Ibáñez 506).

Por otro lado hallamos el rotativo *Deia*. Este diario únicamente muestra una palabra que ocupa toda la portada: “*Bakena*” (“paz” en vasco). Además, refleja sobreimpreso el nombre de las 829 víctimas de ETA. De esta manera se puede interpretar que el protagonista indirecto de la información vuelve a ser la población. Es a quién se dirige *Deia* con un titular, que pese a considerar el

anuncio de la banda, pone el acento en el sujeto pasivo del terror: la víctima.

Como hemos comprobado hasta ahora la mayor cercanía de la prensa vasca al problema del terrorismo se descubre en sus titulares. Unos titulares que no pierden de vista el grado de implicación del ciudadano en el proceso. En definitiva, diremos que estos diarios emplean un marco conceptual distinto al de los etarras. Un marco que nos lleva al concepto de *framing* adoptado por el sociólogo Erving Goffman en el que establece que las situaciones se definen en relación a una serie de elementos organizativos, y sobre todo, a la implicación que tenemos en ellos. Goffman denomina a estos elementos con la palabra *frame*. (Goffman) A partir de aquí, podemos concluir que existe un cambio de *frame*. La prensa vasca ha sustituido el *frame terrorista* por el *frame de la víctima*.

En segundo lugar nos topamos con el caso de la prensa nacional. Antes que nada hay que reflexionar en este punto brevemente sobre el contexto en el que se desarrolla el comunicado de ETA. El anuncio se produce justo a un mes de las elecciones generales en España y a dos semanas del inicio oficial de la campaña electoral, el 3 de noviembre. Esta situación para los medios alberga el seguimiento de los dos principales partidos políticos españoles: Partido Popular (PP) y Partido Socialista (PSOE). Asimismo el comunicado acontece en un escenario preelectoral condicionado por una fuerte crisis económica. Este contexto va a provocar que afines a su línea editorial ciertos periódicos se posicionen a través de sus portadas a favor de un determinado partido político. Por ejemplo el

diario La Razón, La Gaceta, ABC y El Mundo en apoyo al Partido Popular; y los diarios Público y El País con el Partido Socialista. De este modo, ya conocemos la postura del medio en lo relativo a las dos principales formaciones políticas: PP y PSOE.

Un posicionamiento editorialista-partidista determinante a la hora de referirnos a la aparición de un nuevo frame al que denominaremos el *frame del jugador*. Este frame irrumpe a través del propio proceso electoral, y aún más importante, va a abordar a los protagonistas en términos puramente competitivos: el ganador (Gobierno) y el perdedor (oposición). Incluso va a considerar los sentimientos, el estado de ánimo del jugador consecuencia de la posible victoria o derrota. *El País (subtítulo): Zapatero: Una victoria de la democracia, la ley y la razón*". *ABC (subtítulo): "Euforia de Zapatero y cautela de Rajoy ante un paso insuficiente de los terroristas"* En síntesis, si bien la prensa nacional no margina a la víctima como sujeto de la información sí que desarrolla otros. La víctima "entra en el tablero" a través del propio juego político, a raíz de ese tándem Gobierno-oposición. De esta forma, en la medida que el diario confiera o no veracidad al anuncio de ETA la víctima formará parte del trofeo o del fracaso. Y todo ello proviene de ese cambio de marco conceptual, de la elección de otro enfoque en aras de orientar la noticia. Porque según explica Lakoff "*los marcos son estructuras mentales que conforman nuestro modo de ver el mundo. Como consecuencia de ello, conformas las metas que nos proponemos, los planes que hacemos, muestra manera de actuar y aquello que cuenta como el resultado bueno o malo de nuestras acciones.*" (Lakoff 4). Por ello, es tan

importante reconocer cuáles son esos marcos. Cuál es ese cuadro conceptual del que se sirve el medio, el periodista para escribir su discurso sobre temas relacionados con la organización terrorista *ETA*. Pues sólo a través de su comprensión seremos capaces de analizar y cotejar las posibles coherencias e incoherencias discursivas.

En suma, si percibimos que el *frame* esgrimido por el medio es el de la *víctima* tendrán cabida expresiones del tipo: dolor, sinrazón, injusticia, desgracia, sufrimiento, paz: "*El dolor y la sinrazón del terrorismo dejan paso a la esperanza, tras medio siglo de sangre y duelo, tras 858 asesinatos*" (Kiosko.net). Si por el contrario apreciamos que el *frame* tratado es el del jugador, aparecerán conceptos como: ganar la partida, estrategia contra, vencedores y vencidos, reglas del juego democrático, ceder al chantaje, ejemplo: "*ETA claudica*" (Kiosko.net).

Con todo y con eso el *frame del jugador* distingue claramente los dos posibles roles a tomar: el del ganador (Gobierno) y el del perdedor (oposición). Precisamente este último es apadrinado el 21-O por los diarios que de forma más o menos explícita apoyaron al Partido Popular durante la campaña. Eso sí conviene primero aclarar el concepto de perdedor (oposición) que aquí se maneja.

A priori la oposición por naturaleza política disfruta de una situación de desventaja, de inferioridad. Del mismo modo esta oposición persigue un escenario nuevo donde alcanzar el poder, donde vencer. Su propia personalidad le define como el jugador derrotado, el vencido, el que está herido "políticamente" por no disponer del Gobierno. Ante tal entorno desarrolla habitualmente un ejercicio de

resistencia, de confrontación. Practica una labor constante de exigencia ante quienes disfrutaban del Ejecutivo. Y esa actitud de reclamación, de protesta, se observa el día 21-O en algunos diarios españoles en correspondencia al comunicado de ETA.

A la luz de ese factor editorialista-partidista estos rotativos presentan una serie de puntos comunes. El primero de ellos es que las cabeceras coinciden en reclamar a ETA la entrega de las armas: *"ETA ni se disuelve ni entrega las armas"* (ABC); *"ETA cesa su actividad armada sin entregar las armas"* (La Razón) (Kiosko.net). O sea, están denunciando la "trampa" que a su juicio encierra el anuncio de la organización. Una actitud de denuncia propia del "jugador derrotado", o mejor dicho, de aquel que no se da por vencido y se siente "engañado" por las tretas de su enemigo. En algunos medios esta idea va incluso más allá mediante el empleo de un vocabulario de mayor crudeza; un léxico más propio del frame de la víctima. De ahí surgen titulares que recurren a la palabra asesinatos en lugar de víctimas, que hablan de una banda terrorista que se jacta de sus crímenes en el comunicado, o que redondean el número de víctimas a mil cuando los demás exponen 823: *"ETA alardea de sus asesinatos y emplaza al Gobierno a negociar"* (El Mundo); *"Mil asesinatos después, ETA ni se disuelve ni entrega las armas"* (La Gaceta) (Kiosko.net). Así de estos enunciados emana la imagen de una banda que mediante la artimaña ha conseguido la victoria y además presume de ello; y a la misma vez, de un partido en la oposición que no da la partida por finalizada.

Al otro margen, se ubican los rotativos más próximos al Ejecutivo socialista. *Público* al igual que *El País* a través de ese rol de Gobierno confieren mayor sobriedad y credibilidad al comunicado de ETA. Sus titulares así lo reflejan: "El fin del terror"; "20 de octubre de 2011. AGUR ETA" (Kiosko.net). Una realidad que no se producía en los rotativos más próximos al Partido Popular. Dicho de otro modo reflejan el comunicado de ETA como el fin de la competición. El punto que demuestra que ya no existe más espacio donde jugar. Esta sentencia además margina la posibilidad de que se produzcan acontecimientos a posteriori. La posibilidad por ejemplo de que el Gobierno tenga que "mover ficha" en asuntos tales como una futura negociación o una amnistía. Con ello se le otorga al Ejecutivo el papel de ganador en el proceso, de actor capaz de colocar el punto y final, de jugar la última ronda y ganarla.

Dos roles que dentro de un contexto de elecciones generales son muy significativos. Pues a un lado hallamos un conjunto de diarios que al restarle credibilidad al anuncio de ETA no le conceden al Gobierno socialista ninguna victoria, y menos aún, un premio. Y por otro, unos rotativos que al tener fe en el comunicado están distinguiendo el papel del Ejecutivo en el proceso, lo están recompensando electoralmente.

En tercer lugar atendemos a la prensa internacional, principalmente a los diarios latinoamericanos. Ni el *frame* de la víctima ni del jugador son los que configuran la percepción que los medios internacionales manejan sobre el comunicado de ETA. El marco conceptual queda dibujado

por el *frame del guerra*. Pero no un guerrero entendido exclusivamente en términos militares, sino también como aquella persona capaz de luchar, discutir o pelear por una causa concreta. Valga como muestra el uso de la palabra hostilidades, un vocablo que guarda relación con aquellas acciones armadas contra un enemigo o contrario.

Asimismo, “las hostilidades” según la definición de la RAE son empleadas por pueblos, ejércitos o tropas (RAE). En ningún momento la definición de hostilidad refleja que uno de los posibles sujetos de la acción sean grupos o bandas terroristas como lo es ETA. Por tanto el empleo de esta palabra supone una forma de reforzar indirectamente a la banda. Una afirmación que traspasa las fronteras de su propia naturaleza violenta y le aporta cierta legitimidad. Al definir sus acciones como “hostilidades” le estamos otorgando el estatus de pueblo, ejército o tropa.

En el caso del término “pueblo”, hay que destacar además que una de las acepciones de esta palabra hace referencia a todo país con gobierno independiente (RAE). De este modo su utilización en ocasiones por la banda terrorista no es fortuita, sino que encierra en parte alguna de las aspiraciones pregonadas por ETA: la declaración del Estado de *Euskal Herria*. De igual manera, al considerar sujeto de la acción a un ejército o tropa estamos atestiguando la validez de lo expresado arriba. El ejército en un sentido amplio de la palabra es la institución que se encarga de la defensa de un Estado. Por consiguiente, para su existencia, es necesario el reconocimiento de éste por algún organismo internacional, comúnmente la Organización de Naciones Unidas (ONU). Un hecho que no

ocurre con el País Vasco que según el ordenamiento territorial español se registra como una comunidad autónoma de España.

Otra de las expresiones que aparecen con mayor asiduidad en los periódicos latinoamericanos para referirse al comunicado de ETA es "*lucha armada*". Sin embargo hay que señalar que en la declaración que ETA difundió el 20 de octubre de 2011 no se incluye en ningún momento esta locución y sí "*actividad armada*". Pese a ello son numerosos los diarios que llevan a su portada este término que no es baladí. La palabra *lucha* a diferencia de *actividad* manifiesta entre sus sinónimos: *pelea*, *conflicto*, *guerra*, es decir, inserta en la acción a un actor que combate contra algo/alguien o como mínimo por algo/alguien. En el ejemplo que nos ocupa el actor activo sería ETA, el actor pasivo el Estado español y el motivo u objeto el reconocimiento de Euskal Herría. Por lo cual una denominación que en primera instancia puede pasar desapercibida a los ojos del lector encierra un fuerte contenido político. El empleo del término *lucha* en menoscabo de *actividad* ciñe la acción de ETA a un contexto de carácter bélico. Esto quiere decir, define su papel como sujeto que interviene de igual a igual en un teatro de guerra. Un hecho que se aleja sustancialmente de la realidad ya que no hablamos de la entrada en liza de dos bandos, pueblos, países o estados, sino de la agresión de un actor a) (ETA) contra un actor b) (El Estado español).

Precisamente es curioso cómo la cercanía o no al problema del terrorismo va afectar a su propia definición. Un buen ejemplo de ello lo encontramos en el diario colombiano *El Tiempo*. Este rotativo destaca el llamamiento

del presidente de Colombia Juan Manuel Santos aprovechando el anuncio de la ETA: "*En Colombia, el presidente Santos pidió a las Farc seguir el mismo camino*" (Kiosko.net). Por tanto esta apelación demuestra la supuesta analogía entre los dos grupos. La identificación del gobierno latinoamericano con el Estado español en relación a la cuestión terrorista. Asimismo aunque se habla de "lucha armada" es relevante exponer el matiz que se añade aquí con el siguiente titular: "*Tras 43 años, Eta anuncia el fin de su lucha armada*" (Kiosko.net). Por consiguiente estamos ante un cambio en el uso del determinante que acompaña al sustantivo lucha. Ya no se habla de "la lucha" sino de "su lucha". De esta manera estamos indicando quien posee, a quien pertenece esa acción de pelear, de combatir, y ese sujeto no es otro que ETA. Con ello ETA se convierte en el instigador, en el "defensor" de una causa personal.

Del mismo modo atendiendo a la codificación del texto según es interesante comparar la presencia o no de esta expresión ("lucha armada") fijándonos en las portadas de los diarios de los distintos países. Tan sólo las cabeceras latinoamericanas como: *Clarín* (Argentina), "*La Tercera*" (Chile) o *El Nacional* (Venezuela) entre otras importan esta locución a la hora de titular el 21 de octubre de 2011 (Kiosko.net). En cualquier caso, no hallamos ni un solo ejemplo en los ya mencionados diarios vascos ni tampoco en los diarios de tirada nacional. Únicamente el periódico portugués *Público* se convierte en la excepción que confirma la regla si examinamos la prensa europea (Kiosko.net). Por tanto, aquí tropezamos ya con un marco totalmente distinto a los anteriores. En este caso refiriéndonos a la utilización

de un *frame*, el del guerrero, que coloca a la banda terrorista en un espacio relativamente semejante al del Estado. Y será necesariamente la definición que hagamos de ese espacio en relación a *ETA* el que establezca en cada caso un discurso u otro. Discurso que según hemos examinado a través de los diferentes frames activa un modelo de lenguaje que llega a ser imitado por algunos medios. Un lenguaje que está ligado intrínsecamente al concepto de poder, de autoridad. Pues según escribió el escritor y diplomático italiano Carlo Dossi: "Se dice que la palabra distingue al hombre de las bestias, pero es la palabra precisamente la que revela muchas veces la bestialidad de algún hombre (Palés 373). Por eso es vital reconocer la procedencia de una determinada expresión u oración. Porque es un error por parte de los medios relativizar el uso del lenguaje en cuestiones terroristas. Es cierto que en la mayoría de las ocasiones el empleo de ciertas locuciones, adjetivos o sustantivos en este tipo de noticias no es intencionado. El profesional dirigido por la rutina periodística y las prisas carece de tiempo para la reflexión. El hecho de la propia "competición mediática" lleva al informador a guiarse por la línea editorial de su empresa de comunicación. Pese a todo no podemos marginar esas diferencias. Debemos atender a que el posicionamiento editorialista-partidista en el caso de la prensa española determina el planteamiento de un periodista que percibe a *ETA* como un "interventor" en el proceso electoral. Un actor que tiene además la capacidad de entrometerse y dividir a los propios medios en dos grupos. Una separación que "casualmente" coincide con el planteamiento y la posición política de los dos principales partidos: Partido Popular y Partido Socialista.

Sin embargo el periodista vasco que vive de cerca el fenómeno ya no ve a la banda como un mero "interventor". Ahora ETA se convierte en un agente "agresor": Un actor con la capacidad de causar daño, con la intencionalidad de herir, de buscar la provocación. Con ello en parte se deslegitima su personalidad, sus objetivos. Todo lo contrario que si nos referimos al ejemplo de los medios internacionales. Aquí se invierten las tornas. El léxico empleado concede a la organización el papel del "agredido", y por ende legitima su condición de "defensor". Esto es, de actor que se protege ante un Estado que la atosiga, que le persigue. En definitiva se está "justificando" su posicionamiento y en consecuencia su motivación. De ahí la necesidad de aclarar el lenguaje. De explorar los marcos que se emplean, y sobre todo, no olvidar la parcialidad que encierran ciertas versiones e interpretaciones. En este sentido son los propios estados, el gobierno español en el caso que nos ocupa, el que debe dar el primer paso. Pues el uso intencionado de ciertas palabras es el primer atentado que cometen este tipo de organizaciones y por tanto su estudio tendría que ser una prioridad en las estrategias contra cualquier clase de terrorismo.

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Cecília C and the Marginalized City: The Degradation of Urban Space and Everyday Life in Mercè Rodoreda's *El carrer de les camelies*

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After the Spanish Civil War, the Franco regime expressed its identity and its ideology by means of a process that involved cultural and political transformation. The Franco government chose to impose this methodology by focusing on spatial identity; as a result, it developed specific constructions of private, social, and exterior space, especially in Catalonia. Beginning with Henri Lefebvre's studies of everyday life and space, and following through with interpretations of these theories by spatial theorists such as Doreen Massey and Elizabeth Wilson, among others, we can begin to decipher the production of both physical and social space by the Franco regime. In this article, using the representation of Barcelona that Mercè Rodoreda depicts in *El carrer de les camèlies*, I analyze the spatial production of the Franco regime according to Lefebvre's theories of space and everyday life¹⁵.

¹⁵I will show that Lefebvre's spatial triad creates a dynamic spatial flow, which in turn gives any cultural text the powerful ability to represent and often times create unique spaces of a given society. The usefulness of

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Rodoreda's novel, situated in Barcelona from the time of the 2nd republic to the aftermath of the Civil War, introduces various portraits of the routines of everyday life, as well as domestic and social spaces. Cecília, the protagonist, guides us through a labyrinth of houses, apartments, shacks and cheap hotel rooms in order to show the repression and degradation of domestic space and also to highlight how the postwar political transformation is manifested in the city's exterior and social spaces. Cecília's narration of these spaces concurs with what Massey and Wilson posit; namely that urban spaces, from a feminist and marginalized perspective, become undefined and inaccessible, above all when constructed by a totalitarian and repressive regime. Despite the fact that the Franco government is not overtly represented in the novel, we can perceive its presence in the spaces that Cecília inhabits and explores. Rodoreda's novel actively depicts the degradation and corruption of these social, exterior and domestic spaces in the urban atmosphere of the postwar period in order to show their

Lefebvre's approach is therefore in the acknowledgement of a spatial production that is in constant motion within the text. Literature is adept at depicting this spatial movement, and therefore, the spatial production itself of a particular society.

²It is important to note Lefebvre's political and cultural perspective when writing *The Production of Space*. Following the May 1968 political upheaval in the western world, the very real possibility of revolution existed, and as a Marxist, Lefebvre interpreted this as a potential means of spatial change, from high-level implementations (government, society) to the everyday. I view Lefebvre's comments on revolution as equally apt for the Spanish political situation of moving from authoritarian dictatorship to democracy, and I argue that the revolutionary spirit of producing a new space has been adapted and implemented by democratic and capitalistic societies since May 1968.

transformation and their reconstruction under the imposition of the values and concepts of the postwar Franco dictatorship. As a result, *El carrer de les camèlies* serves as a model of the degeneration of space and everyday life in Catalonian society under Francoism —openly criticizing the imposition of a centralized social identity put in place by the dictatorship.

In *Critique of Everyday Life vol. 2*, Lefebvre stresses the importance of everyday life despite its superficially banal, repetitive, and dull status. Yet the conceptualizations of everyday life and the spaces that it inhabits are far more complex than the everyday reality that is often taken for granted. Lefebvre interprets everyday life dialectically; within a three-dimensionality that moves beyond even language (*Critique* 155). This conceptualization shows the complexities of what, in reality, is represented as a single, simple dimension. Furthermore, this three-dimensionality “points to a determined movement, encompassing internal conflicts and proceeding by a succession of supersessions” (*Critique* 155-156). As a result, everyday life moves to a new realm where finite possibilities are no longer the only means of representing this reality. Everyday life thus takes on a complexity that makes it much more profound than the simple repetitive banalities of the everyday.

In contrast, Lefebvre’s analysis in *The Production of Space* is centered on the possibility of revolutionizing the spaces we inhabit in the modern era. Just as he proposes a revolution of everyday life, Lefebvre is quick to highlight the importance of producing space:

A revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential; indeed it has failed in that it has not changed life itself, but has merely changed ideological superstructures, institutions or political apparatuses. A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space... (*Space* 54)

The objectives of any revolution, then, should be the production not only of space but also of the everyday life that will inhabit those spaces. Although Lefebvre approached this revolution from a Marxist political perspective, his insight is invaluable in determining the potential sites for ideological and social revolution within any type of political system. This revolution, be it fascist, socialist, or democratic, must therefore approach the dialectic of everyday life so that it encompasses the creation of the past as well as the moment of the present. In the same way, Lefebvre separates out space into a dialectical, conceptual triad: Spatial Practice, Representations of Space, and Representational Space (Lefebvre, *Space* 38-39). This dialectic is essential in breaking down the analytical, the conceptual, as well as the lived moments of space as they are encountered in everyday life. As we shall see in analyzing Rodoreda's novel, the movement between representations of space and representational space allows us to interpret those spaces as more than simply physical objects —they are encoded spaces, "...dominated space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate" (*Space* 39). As a result, space takes on a new dimension, much like everyday life, where

the superficial reality of the present gives way to a much more complex conceptualization of past and present, symbol and meaning.

Lefebvre also stresses the importance of producing these spaces, as opposed to simply inhabiting them (*Space* 34). As a result, the ideological imposition of any system must therefore produce space in order to inculcate its intended goals (*Space* 44). This makes the value of space extremely important in any moment where political or ideological change is present. In Francoist Spain, perhaps the space that received the most attention was urban space, which Lefebvre views as a representation of centrality and proof that space accumulates (*Space* 101). The importance of this space for the dictatorship is bound up in that centrality —it contains a means of ideological discourse that can unify from the center. Lefebvre also views the importance of dominated space as a symptom of modernity (*Space* 166). The “disappropriation” of dominated space is essential in analyzing Barcelona within the novel. Rodoreda represents this fragmentation as an indication of the domination of space, in an urban setting where the production of space has passed into the hands of a conquering ideology.

Taken together, the dialectical conceptualizations that Lefebvre forges offer a complex and profound analysis of everyday life and space. Everyday life becomes a potential source for revolution, as well as a site of conflict for ideological and cultural values. Also, producing space becomes fundamental for the imposition of these same values, as the dialectic between spatial practice,

representations of space and representational space opens up new possibilities for symbols and for living in space. Lefebvre's theoretical analysis opens up new possibilities in conceiving and understanding the space and everyday life that Rodoreda brings to bear on a repressed, degraded Barcelona.

El carrer de les camèlies is the story of Cecília, an orphan who is left on the doorstep of a middle-class home. Adopted by a somewhat cruel and authoritarian family, she never fully embraces her assumed identity and leaves home as a runaway, and later turns to prostitution to make a living. Her picaresque life story follows several male companions and various domestic living spaces as the Spanish Civil War and the post-Franco era unfold in the background. Her struggles to find and claim a domestic space of her own eventually earn her a quiet, withdrawn life of relative wealth and stability as her amorous relationships finally lead to positive material gain.

Because Rodoreda's novel is situated in the urban environment of Barcelona, mostly taking place during the post-civil war period, it deliberately shows a physical and social city space that is repressed and degraded. For example, the dilapidated image of shantytowns; the repressive surveillance of domestic, everyday life (as Cecília experiences with Marc); the transformation of spaces to take on multiple identities where conflict, sex, and the banal are played out; and city spaces that reflect the conquering ideology of the Franco regime. However, direct references to the civil war and the dictatorship are almost non-existent, and Cecília also lacks memories of the

conflict, suggesting that she barely remembers the war (Rodoreda 51). Nevertheless, social and political conflict is present in the spaces that she inhabits and uses during her narration. The spaces that Cecília interacts with during the novel can be divided into three groups: first, the domestic spaces where she resides, many times with a man; second, the exterior spaces of Barcelona where Cecília moves and works; and finally social spaces, such as the fountain in the shantytown or the Liceo theater, both examples of spaces where there is a cultural or social exchange. Everyday life permeates these spaces as narration often centers on work, domestic chores, and relationships, yet these moments are also degraded and corrupted. Cecília's identity as an abandoned orphan and a prostitute makes her the perfect tour guide with which to explore these degraded spaces of postwar Barcelona.

The politics of the Franco dictatorship implied a radical modification of the physical and social space of the country: a means of producing a new space that, in Lefebvre's terms, would fulfill the ideological and political goals of the regime. The politics of autarky achieved this goal during the 1940's, as Mike Richards shows:

The political economy of the "New State" was developed to maintain the basic features of existing social power while industrialization was taking place. In practice, the concept of autarky offered a potential way of achieving the essential aims of this brutal vision of modernity: repression, the concentration of economic power and industrialization. Indeed, in the 1940's, the

Francoist state was made through economic, political, and cultural autarky. (Richards 176)

As a result, autarky enacted direct control over the economy and insisted upon the importance of order shown by the militarization of the dictatorship. At the same time, many spaces, such as domestic spaces, suffered many changes with the loss of freedoms and the lack of economic resources. This newly produced city space was a means in and of itself of controlling and subjugating the urban masses. Helen Graham shows that, many times, the direct victims were urban women: "In this social milieu the work of daily survival was in women's hands. Even if there was a male breadwinner, women too were forced to work — 'officially' or otherwise— to supplement starvation wages" (Graham 188). Obviously, this "women's work" was mostly clandestine, another example of the chaotic, feminine side of the city. The corrupted identity of everyday life in Graham's analysis also signals the effects of producing a space that was designed to infiltrate itself ideologically and politically into everyday reality. Female urban space was manipulated by the regime in order to repress these urban classes. This manipulation, acting as a re-production of urban space, consisted of a degradation of the physical and social spaces of the city, but above all a degradation of the marginalized classes such as the urban woman. Rodoreda reflects this degradation in her novel as a means of highlighting the political and ideological effects of Francoism on Barcelona and Catalonia as a whole.

For Cecília, the domestic space is in conflict throughout the novel. The tension between her desires to

be independent and her victimization as a woman trapped in this domestic space are constantly invoked. As a result, Cecília is never able to fully achieve her individual freedom within the domestic spaces of the novel. The spaces themselves are corrupted; exterior and social spaces do not enter within the domestic space.

However, the first house that Cecília inhabits is very different from her other domestic spaces. Cecília, as an orphan, is abused and treated poorly in the house of a bourgeois and well-to-do family: "Vaig pensar que el grinyol les avisaria i que me les trobaria a sobre i em tancarien perquè no em pogués tornar a escapar, i que em moriria tancada encara que piqués amb els punys i amb els peus. I que morta i plana mai més no podria anar a buscar el meu pare" (Rodoreda 17). As in many of the domestic spaces that she inhabits, Cecília struggles against her fear of being shut in. Despite the presence of a garden, and the relaxing tone of the first sentences, Cecília introduces themes of death and violence in order to create a contrast between the well-to-do house and her own feelings of terror and abandonment. This tension between interior and exterior space changes her vision of the bourgeois house, which could have been a sanctuary, given her identity as an abandoned orphan. Her status is very clear to her stepmother: "...em deia que havia tingut sort de caure en tan bones mans, que segons on hagués anat a parar m'haurien fet pagar l'haver-me escapat de casa..." (Rodoreda 22). The stepmother does not treat her as her own daughter; Cecília is still a guest in this house. As a result, the division between the family and Cecília is evident—she cannot live in the bourgeois house without looking for

her own biological family and, by extension, her own identity. Her lack of identity comes from this bourgeois space that does not belong to her. For Cecília, her escape into the exterior space of the street —where perhaps she will find her father— is also a rejection of the domestic, bourgeois space of her adopted family. But Cecília is still a child and cannot have free access to the street, and in no time her limited freedom is cut off by violence, leaving her with a bloody nose and once again a shut-in in her own house. This violent encounter introduces the recurring theme of abuse, which will continue to be present throughout many of the domestic spaces in the novel. It also shows the decadence of the bourgeois house and Cecília's status within the family: she is a problem child who deserves to be punished with force. This first experience within a domestic space parallels Cecília's first attempts at being an independent woman in that she gains less freedom and more violence.

The transition from the bourgeois domestic space to a public, independent space signals a similar transition within the protagonist. Although it is a step forward between childhood and maturity, it is also a complete degradation of the domestic space. The shantytown was part of the urban landscape during the postwar period in Barcelona. Vázquez-Montalbán, in his book *Barcelonas*, portrays the problem of the shantytowns:

The biggest problem Barcelona confronted was simply where to put the population, both indigenous and immigrant, in view of a desperate housing shortage. Barcelona, after all, may have been in a

pitiful state at the end of the war, but the rest of Spain was even worse off, and throughout the 1940s, a hundred thousand immigrants arrived with nowhere to sleep. (Vázquez-Montalbán 154-155)

Cecília shows us with amazing detail the abandoned world of the lower classes. Her shanty reflects the shameful status of the city in general —a complete decadence of poverty and destruction. Her description includes the fact that her shanty lacks windows, that the walls are made of cans and wood, and that the construction is above all inadequate and desperate (Rodoreda 56). Despite the shoddy construction, the shanty, as her home, represents Cecília's domestic and amorous space. Linda McDowell expands on this idea when she says that "[i]n all societies, however, the home is much more than a physical structure. The house is the site of lived relationships, especially those of kinship and sexuality, and is a key link in the relationship between material culture and sociality: a concrete marker of social position and status" (McDowell 92). The shanty, as a symbol of her sexual life and her social status, serves as a confirmation of her marginalized identity. Her relation with Eusebi dissolves once Andrés arrives, and her status as an independent woman is again frustrated by men. Cecília, with her freedom constrained by a jealous Eusebi, finds herself yet again shut in within a completely unwanted domestic space (Rodoreda 64). Despite the physical differences between the shanty and the bourgeois house, they also contain several similarities for Cecília. Both domestic spaces represent Cecília's inability to achieve independence as well as her frustrated personal search in order to find her true family.

Once Cecília abandons her shanty in order to work as a prostitute, she begins to utilize various domestic spaces which are always tied to another man. The first, just after starting her new job, lasts three days and includes a seaman in a hotel (Rodoreda 79). This episode shows the multiple male characters' tendencies to want to shut Cecília in and keep her as if she were a precious object. The seaman talks of marriage, something that for Cecília implies the destruction of the little personal freedom that she has managed to obtain; therefore she escapes, but is still afraid that the seaman will somehow find her (Rodoreda 80-81). Although this episode lasts only a short time, it illustrates Cecília's status as a lower-class woman: other men always attempt to control her freedom and the domestic space she inhabits by restricting her to a shut-in within the home.

Cecília has a relationship that lasts more than two years with the hostel-owner, and puts up with her shut-in domestic status simply because she is hungry (Rodoreda 97). During this relationship, Cecília has more freedom and is able to leave the home and walk the streets, but conflict remains between the feminine domestic space and the outside world, above all when she finds herself with the cook: "Va ajuntar les mans i va dir que em demanava per caritat que em quedés a casa, que no voltés més pels carrers, que si m'avorria fes alguna cosa per distreure'm. ¿Per què no cus?" (Rodoreda 101). This confirmation of her status as a female enclosed within a domestic space is surprising to Cecília because she believed that the cook was in love with her. Instead of being a declaration of love, something which must have been very common in her

profession, it ends up being another element of masculine control that intends to take away her freedom and shut her in even more explicitly within the hostel-owner's domestic space. As a result, Cecília's domestic spaces show that the men in her life hold an implicit control over this same space. This also illustrates that Cecília cannot live within the domestic space without masculine consent. For Cecília, these domestic spaces are corrupted and degraded: she must attempt to escape to the street in order to avoid being dehumanized as a personal object possessed by the men in her life.

Perhaps the domestic space that is most degraded within the novel appears when Cecília meets Marc. At first it seems that she has finally found a man who really interests her. Being with Marc implies that she has ascended social categories, especially after living in a shanty and spending more than two years in a hostel. Marc's car and his good taste only confirm for Cecília his way of life (Rodoreda 106-107). And Cecília is almost unable to contain her happiness when she is with him (107). However, Marc intends to shut her in as soon as possible in an apartment where she will have to live almost exclusively alone. Cecília is suddenly aware of this change in her personal freedom after moving into the new apartment: "Mentre jo havia viscut a la casa dels liris sempre em duia a passejar amb el cotxe, però allò a penes havia durat dos mesos i d'ençà que em tenia en el pis s'havien acabat les sortides. De vegades estava tota una setmana sense venir..." (Rodoreda 111-112). The luxury of cruising in Marc's car or simply sharing an exterior space with a man is no longer present once Marc has shut her in.

Just as previous men have done, Cecília is dehumanized by her lover, reduced to a work of art that the men dare not take out of the house. The difference between her previous boyfriends and Marc is that Marc truly has the capacity to liberate her from the apartment and show her the outside world. He has money, a car, and as Cecília comments, at first he even showed interest in being with her in exterior spaces. In the end, Marc is in fact much more controlling than Cecília's previous lovers, above all within the domestic space. Cecília's hatred of being shut in leads her to complain: "...em vaig posar a cridar que no m'estaria pas tot el dia a casa fent mitja i demanant permís per anar a prendre l'aire. No em va tocar, però amb la mala mirada que va donar-me, en vaig tenir prou" (Rodoreda 121). Marc, with one look and with a threat of violence, forces her to shut her mouth. It is the first time that Marc shows his controlling side which he backs up with his capacity for physical violence. Little by little Cecília realizes that she is enclosed not only in an apartment but also in a network of spies (Rodoreda 123). The most diabolical symbol of this control system becomes the brown car (Rodoreda 144). This entire network —including the apartment, the neighbors who double as informants, even the mysterious car— is an example of how degraded the domestic space has become, along with a complete lack of personal liberty. Cecília is completely controlled and observed and therefore cannot even set foot outside without being discovered. Her domestic space becomes a virtual cage, leaving her terrified (Rodoreda 148). As a result, her perceived jump in social status of having her own apartment cannot compare to the nightmare that this domestic space has become, which includes no options for escape or freedom. Marc represents

absolute control over the domestic space, a control that parallels the political conditions within Barcelona during the postwar period.

As Cecília becomes engulfed in Marc's domestic prison, her own individual freedom is severely restricted through threats, surveillance, and both physical and mental abuse. Lefebvre posits that "sovereignty implies 'space', and what is more it implies a space against which violence, whether latent or overt, is directed—a space established and constituted by violence" (*Space* 280). Therefore, the production of sovereign space must include violence, a vision that Rodoreda's novel also shares. The imposition of violence in the novel calls into question the relation between the representational spaces and the individual sovereignty of Cecília, as well as the cultural and political sovereignty of Catalonia as a whole.

When Cecília moves on to Eladi's house, the control network remains in place. Her stay at his house is marked by violence, especially since physical, mental and sexual abuse becomes part of her daily life. The controlled space is therefore no longer indirect—represented by spies and cars— but rather a direct manipulation of her conscience that takes the form of alcohol: "L'Eladi no parava de fer-me beure, volia que dormís, deia que si no dormia em moriria" (Rodoreda 154). With the excuse of a health condition, Cecília is made to drink constantly, until she reaches the point where she no longer understands what is happening to her. This domestic space, although represented by a relatively luxurious house, is completely corrupted: it becomes a place for both physical and sexual torture.

Cecília is forced to have dinner naked for Eladi (Rodoreda 151) and later discovers that he has been raping her while she is unconscious from the high doses of alcohol (Rodoreda 154-155). As a result, the domestic space becomes a literal torture chamber, a prison with no possible way out. Cecília is unable to piece together why this is happening to her until she finally physically confronts Marc and Eladi (Rodoreda 160). Their control over her is so effective that she is reduced to a completely dehumanized object designed to meet the sexual and violent desires of her oppressors. This episode shows how the domestic space within Cecília's life underlines the presence of systematic control within postwar Spanish society. The spy network of informants and brown cars seems more like an undercover police operation than a game taken up by two men in order to take advantage of a woman. Violence and terror are introduced within the domestic space by men in order to effectively control Cecília, and they succeed in every way imaginable. Cecília is completely incapable of escaping from this domestic space. José Ortega outlines the conflict implicit in this episode:

Historia de la crisis en torno a la identidad psicosocial de un personaje que, como el país, no alcanza autonomía a causa de esas fuerzas represivas, típicas de una sociedad paternalista y autoritaria en que la mujer es una prolongación del hombre y siempre definida en función del carácter masculino. (Ortega 78)

I agree with Ortega that we can clearly see a connection between Cecília's repression and torture and the urban

classes who were similarly repressed by the Franco dictatorship, above all in Barcelona. This “paternalistic and authoritarian society” that Ortega highlights is represented by Marc and Eladi and their abuses of power. However, Ortega’s summary misses the key fact that above all it is domestic space that has become occupied and corrupted in order to control those who inhabit it—in other words, in order to control the marginalized classes. Their methods—drugs, sexual abuse, spies—are based on an authoritarian regime attempting to subjugate a group of people by force and fear. The key role that space plays in this subjugation is clearly linked to Lefebvre’s ideas on space and sovereignty, as mentioned earlier. Cecília’s struggle for individual sovereignty within the domestic sphere parallels the struggle for sovereignty and the denial of autonomy for Catalonia as a whole—both violently repressed by authoritarian regimes.

At the end of the novel, Cecília slowly begins to improve her relationship with domestic space through various lovers. Although she is able to obtain her own space, she is also isolated: “De vegades, sense saber per què, m’agafava el fàstic, me n’anava a casa, em tancava un parell d’hores en el bany i em rentava per dintre i per fora” (Rodoreda 188). Now she is the one who shuts herself in, creating her own domestic space. Therefore Cecília never is able to satisfy her personal conflicts between the domestic space and her desire for personal freedom. Now that she has her own space, she only has the option of shutting herself within that space. Kathleen Glenn comments on Cecília’s hard-won space: “One of the prices that she has paid for her ‘success’ is almost total alienation...her

perception of those around her as photographs point to her estrangement from herself and others” (Glenn 114). As a result, her domestic space, although self-controlled at the end of the novel, is constantly degraded and limited by her desire to shut herself in. Her increase in social status does not correspond to an increase in personal freedom, which underscores the fact that she remains marginalized and repressed by the overarching control imposed on space by the external political regime.

The domestic spaces that Cecília inhabits show the conflict between the need to live and the desire to obtain more individual freedom. However, these domestic spaces constantly frustrate Cecília’s desires and shut her in as she often becomes victim of physical, mental, and sexual abuse. As a result, corrupt domestic space becomes a means of control, much as domestic space produced by the Franco regime acted as a political and ideological means of control over Catalonia.

In contrast to domestic spaces, exterior spaces are not as present in the novel. However, these spaces are very important in the development of Cecília’s perspective. If the domestic spaces are the city’s feminine identity, the exterior spaces are the opposite. Elizabeth Wilson, in *The Sphinx and the City*, emphasizes the importance of urban space in the construction of social space. Above all, she divides the city into two parts:

The city is ‘masculine’ in its triumphal scale, its towers and vistas and arid industrial regions; it is ‘feminine’ in its enclosing embrace, in its indeterminacy and labyrinthine uncentredness. We

might even go so far as to claim that urban life is actually based on this perpetual struggle between rigid, routinised order and pleasurable anarchy, the male-female dichotomy. (Wilson 7-8)

As a result, the “masculine” side becomes associated with economic progress and social order. However, the “feminine” side adopts a much more chaotic identity, concentrated in the production of pleasure. For any city this duality is essential for its own conceptualization: like any other construction of social space, the city is defined by these multiple identities. But when a political or social revolution attempts to produce a new social space, the city’s own identity must change. These spaces, depicted as streets, buildings, and above all constant movement, are designed to limit women’s access. Similarly, Linda McDowell suggests that women are often denied access to exterior spaces due to the perceived need to protect them (McDowell 150). This duality between interior feminine space and exterior masculine space is similar to Cecília’s personal quest to find a domestic space where she is able to live with the possibility of access to exterior space at the same time.

For Cecília, urban exterior space has a personal connection. Her identity as an abandoned orphan begins in the streets, and her “discovery” is credited to a night watchman (Rodoreda 9). This personal story underscores her birth as very different from a normal child, who would probably enter the world via a hospital bed or at home with the mother. However, for Cecília, the streets are her birthplace, and therefore she first inhabits exterior space.

This exterior birth creates tension between the domestic space as the predestined space of women and the exterior space as birthplace.

As we have seen, in Cecília's life her domestic spaces attempt to restrict access to exterior spaces, but occasionally she is able to escape to the streets and inhabit the urban environment. In one moment of liberation, Cecília rejects her sewing machine in order to go work the streets as a prostitute: "I una nit, sense pensar-m'hi, la vaig arrossegar fora de la barraca, vaig agafar el portamonedes, i, prima com un espàrrec, me'n vaig anar a la Rambla a fer senyors" (Rodoreda 77). By rejecting the sewing machine she also rejects the domestic space as her workplace. Although women were able to work in their domestic spaces, Cecília's rejection suggests that the earnings from the domestic space are insufficient. Her lack of talent in sewing (despite her friend's help) reflects that her abilities are better suited to work in exterior spaces as opposed to the limited possibilities of the domestic space. Moreover, by taking action at a critical moment, we are able to witness a level of self-authority that Cecília rarely shows during her life. Her entrance into the exterior space, by taking up a more subversive and illegal profession, illustrates the differences between the urban, masculine space and the space of the home that she leaves behind. Helen Graham, in her article on women under the Franco regime, further develops the idea of the working woman:

Legally discriminated against...they worked in the most irregular and semi-clandestine sectors of the labour market. They represent the 'marginal', not

because they were few in number, but because of their position: first, in the urban world, the spatial location *par excellence* of Francoism's 'other': and second, because they found themselves, in relation to official Francoist discourse, on a kind of 'fault line' where a complex social reality diverged sharply from the regime's projected images of women and their role. (Graham 191)

Cecília's irregular opportunities for work are obvious: she can attempt to earn a living via the sewing machine that she hardly knows how to use, or she can sell herself on the Rambla. As Graham suggests, this marginalization is a function of the space in which she works: the streets as an officially prohibited place of work for women, but by necessity, the place where women had to earn their living. This contradiction of something as everyday as work forces marginalized classes to make the everyday a site of transgression and revolution. As a result, for Cecília, her passage into the exterior space is, on the surface, a desperate act of survival, but more profoundly it is an authoritative act that uses the everyday to break ideological impositions of space. In this light, Cecília contradicts the Franco regime's official image of women as stay-at-home, marginalized citizens by leaving the domestic space and appropriating the exterior space as her place of work.

However, Cecília is not able to inhabit this exterior space for long. She admits that she is not a very good "hunter" and she quickly discovers that she is falling in love with many of the men who solicit her (Rodoreda 78). Her status as an independent woman earning her own living

goes against her desires to fall in love with a man who will implicitly take her out of these exterior spaces in order to place her in a domestic space. In fact, as we have seen, Cecília is shut in by several men and does not mention La Rambla as a place of work again.

After being held prisoner by Marc and Eladi, Cecília returns to the exterior space, but this time by force. Marc's abuse reaches even the streets, where he pushes her around and leaves her for dead (Rodoreda 161). This exterior space is again in conflict with the domestic space, and Cecília notes that the streets fill with people and she doesn't know where she is (Rodoreda 162). This sensation of being lost as well as the shame of her domestic abuses being made public in the streets shows the dangerous side of the exterior space. Cecília, far from home, has nowhere to go and can only continue walking the unfamiliar streets. Marc's abuse reaches a new level of humiliation by incorporating the exterior space as a place of punishment, because now the whole world can see how Cecília's body is marked.

At the same time, the exterior space of Barcelona lacks details, names, or means of identification. Cecília constantly refers to the streets as unknown (Rodoreda 162) and suggests, as Carmè Arnau shows, a blurred vision of Barcelona: "La Barcelona vital i renouera...cedeix el pas a una ciutat quasi deserta...només hi trobem les grans avingudes impersonals que hi proliferen a la postguerra: La Diagonal, el passeig de Gràcia, el carrer d'Aragó. Barcelona, com tot, s'ha desenfocat..." (Arnau 175). This observation is essential in order to understand the exterior

space of the novel. Arnau observes that many of the streets lack names, yet their original Catalan names were not only translated into Spanish but also given new names celebrating influential people within the dictatorship and the Franco regime. As a result, the city that Cecília shows us lacks these names and these details; it becomes a blank space without focus. This lack of detail suggests that the exterior space of Barcelona has become controlled by the Franco regime and dominated by male space. Cecília, as a marginalized woman, cannot come to know this space well, and her lack of knowledge is also a means of refusing to recognize the political and social imposition of the Franco regime on exterior space.

The exterior space in the novel is always in conflict with the domestic space, as shown by Cecília's need to define her self-identity as an abandoned woman, and also by the promise of freedom and a way of earning a living via exterior space. However, Cecília is consistently dominated by domestic space and by the men in her life who imprison her there. This creates an unfocused projection of exterior space and the urban city; a space that lacks identity yet still maintains the masculine dominance of the Franco regime. Moreover, the exterior space is constantly restricted for women despite its promises of individual freedom. In fact, the exterior space presents us the conflict between the dictatorship's official ideology of women as custodians of the everyday life of domestic space yet the social reality of women working the streets in order to earn a living. As a result, these exterior spaces present in the novel are degraded, due to the omnipotence of the regime's control over urban life in the Spanish postwar city.

There are two moments in the novel when social space plays an important role: one moment is during Cecília's stay in the shantytown, and another occurs during Cecília's periodic visits to the Liceo Theater. Social space, marked by cultural interaction or personal exchange, is very much degraded in the novel, above all in the shantytown. Among the ramshackle shanties there is little personal space, and as a result human interactions become very public and generally problematic. Cecília, who is living with Eusebi in their shack, quickly falls in love with Andrés. They run into each other in the public bathroom, which underscores the lack of private space and the degradation of what traditionally had been very controlled space between men and women. At the same time, the bathroom represents an everyday space that has taken on new dimensions due to the decrepit nature of the shantytown, as seen in the displacement of bodily functions into the public domain. The social space is compromised when Eusebi sees the two of them sharing a restricted space: "...i el cantell del cassó, potser sense voler i només una vegada, em fa fregar la pell. Però aleshores se'm va acabar el riure, I el pit, que ja el tenia mig esgarrifat, se'm va acabar d'esgarrifar perquè vaig sentir l'Eusebi..." (Rodoreda 67). As a result, in the shantytown, social space extends even to the bathroom, where erotic interaction occurs in places that are not traditional. Andrés's act of touching Cecília within such a public space implies the degradation of social space and the frustration of living private lives within the shantytown.

Doreen Massey, in her book *Space, Place and Gender*, takes up the idea of space as a multiplicity of social

interactions, intending to balance “the ever-shifting geometry of social/power relations” (Massey 4). For Massey, this space is defined in opposition to a linear and depoliticized conception. Her interpretation takes into account Lefebvre’s dialectical approach to space, so that, for Massey, space is like a web of human interactions, but still under the influence of authoritarian or social power. These interactions underscore the multiple manifestations of social space that Cecília engages throughout the novel.

In addition, social space for Massey constructs the idea of place: “It implies that their ‘identities’ are constructed through the specificity of their interaction with other places rather than by counter position to them. It reinforces the idea...that those identities will be multiple...” (Massey 121). Place, with its multiple identities, is the physical manifestation of space, what for Lefebvre would be the representational space that each individual must negotiate. With space and place completely interconnected, the production of these elements becomes fundamental for the creation of social identity, as well as the symbolisms and ideologies that are transfused through these productions.

By viewing social spaces within the novel as made up of multiple identities, they take on new meanings due to the interpersonal exchanges that occur within these spaces. The fountain is another example of a fundamentally social space within the shantytown, mainly because it is the source of water, but also conflict. In contrast to the domestic space and private abuse that Cecília suffers later in the novel, at the fountain, conflict is open and public.

Here Eusebi attacks Andrés with a jug and wounds him (Rodoreda 64), in a symbolic act that shows he possesses Cecília. Later, when Eusebi almost kills Andrés at the fountain, Cecília is trapped in the shack and cannot intervene (Rodoreda 68). The social space is restricted by men, despite the fact that it is a public and open space. The conflict between Eusebi and Andrés has to take place within the social space, so that everyone can see the outcome. However, Cecília, as a prisoner within her own home, remains outside of this space due to her status as a marginalized woman and can only go see Andrés after the conflict has ended. This social space within the shantytown is therefore compromised and degraded, due to the fact that privacy and social reality are now in conflict with the need to for a place of personal exchange that includes not only commercial but also sexual activity.

Another example of a degraded social space within the novel is when Cecília goes to the Liceo. Here the idea of differences between social classes and sexism become heightened. As an adult Cecília goes twice to the theater; the first time she does not enter, but her identity as a marginalized and degraded woman remains visible:

La duia una noia molt jove, amb la cintura de vespa, i al seu costat hi havia l'Esteve i sortien agafats de les mans. [...] Plantat entre la gent que anava sortint, sense adonar-se que feia nosa, l'Esteve em mirava com si em mirés des de l'altre món. L'endemà, quan em va venir a veure, em van començar els vòmits violents que em mataven. (Rodoreda 177-178)

In this scene, she portrays herself as a woman from "another world", that is to say, a woman who doesn't belong within the world of the Liceo. She is very conscious of her own status and her own social identity as the "other"; an example of the type of woman who should not inhabit a social space such as the opera. This conflict between two social worlds, between two social classes that normally would not inhabit the same space, is also a reflection of urban society during the time period, as Vázquez-Montalbán suggests:

Few escaped the penury, not even the defeated national middle class. Only the haute bourgeoisie were spared: this was a new ruling class backed by the central power and an army of civil servants who had been transferred to Barcelona to dismantle the Republican and autonomous administrative institutions. The Catalans were politically 'disinfected'. (Vázquez-Montalbán 141-142)

The idea that the city must be disinfected in order to eliminate an entire culture gave social support to the upper class and the bourgeois who allied themselves with the Franco regime. As a result, social space as a cultural exchange was degraded and purged of Catalan cultural value, just as the novel portrays. The Liceo is a restricted place, another world to which Cecília lacks access. The losers of the Civil War, such as the working class, the Catalan middle class, and above all women and shantytown residents, do not pertain to the newly projected image of socio-cultural space as constructed by the Franco regime.

However, at the end of the novel Cecília is able to enter the Liceo. At this point in the novel the Civil War has become a distant memory and the cultural identity of the social space has transformed itself. Despite these changes, Cecília is still part of the "other world" even as she is able to enter the theater: "Una senyora que entrava sola, vestida de gris i plena de perles, em va mirar estranyada...Em vaig asseure on em van dir que m'havia d'asseure. No gosava aixecar els ulls i tenia ganes de veure-ho tot..." (Rodoreda 195). Cecília still receives strange looks and she is forced to sit apart from her lover. She is completely dominated by the experience of being inside this social space, so much so that she lacks agency: she goes to her assigned seat and hardly dares to raise her head up in order to look around. Once again she is conscious of her personal identity and social status, both of which are very different from the rest of the crowd inside the Liceo. She is seated alone, far from the few people she knows and purposefully far from her lover, who is seated in a much higher and dignified position, surrounded by his family. However, Cecília panics and cannot stay in the Liceo and she flees the social space, returning to the streets that lack names and immersing herself once again into the exterior space of the city. Her rejection of this social space shows the degradation of culture under the Franco regime as well as Cecília's inability to reconcile her personal identity with the social identity required of the Liceo.

Social space within the novel takes on different forms, from the public bathrooms and the fountain of the shantytown to the emblematic Liceo. However, social space is both problematic and conflicted for Cecília, and frequently

she is restricted or has limited access to the space. As a result, Cecília's experiences reflect the degradation of social space in Barcelona under the dictatorship, because of the sterilization of Catalan culture as well as the division of social classes. The differences between the fountain and the theater as social spaces clearly portray the line between the rich and the poor in Barcelona, as well as the social conditions and spaces that the Franco regime produced.

The degradation of domestic, exterior and social space in the novel *El carrer de les camèlies* serves as a criticism of the spatial corruption in postwar Spain and the production of this space into a centralized identity crafted by the Franco regime. The production of space and the representation of everyday life in *El carrer de les camèlies* offer a new perspective on Catalan identity and culture during the postwar period. This perspective, combined with previous feminist interpretations, allows us to view Rodoreda's work as a representation of the political and ideological attempt at cultural and spatial domination of Catalonia as a whole. The conceptualization of space and everyday life in Rodoreda's novel is therefore an attempt at showing these ideological processes at work in an environment where authoritarian productions of space dominated the cultural and social landscape of postwar Spain. This revelation of spatial production and everyday life serves as the locus for a powerful means of resistance: *El carrer de les camèlies* creates a space of confrontation between itself and the appropriated and corrupted spaces of postwar Barcelona. Rodoreda's novel therefore becomes a powerful weapon against the cultural and political whitewashing of totalitarianism and centralization. This

analysis creates the possibility of examining Catalan literature in light of its close relationship to everydayness and spatial production as a means of crafting and maintaining a marginalized, regional culture that continues to survive despite decades of authoritarianism and emerging trends of political and economic multiculturalism both in Spain and beyond.

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Space & Spatiality: A Poetic Endeavor of Space (Poems Represented in Both English & Spanish)

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Concerning multilingual space: The Space & El Espacio

Aquí atrapado en un espacio soy yo:
It is a space of nostalgic anxiety, un agujero en espera de la visión.
No hay claridad en Spanish nor a world of clarity in Inglés.
Existe una vacuidad, a space within language.
I am lost within it; no hay escapatoria.
Soy lo que soy y I am what I am.
Tiendo a sonar in English,
but sueños of life son
distinto, different
confuso, baffling,
exotico, alluring:
yo and I, I and yo,
you y tú tú y you,
me y mi, mi y me.
Yo duermo as a Gringo,
pero despierta my soul beats
con el corazón of a patriotic Cubano
quién puede articular the Canadian Rockies,
but finds his revolution allí en la Sierra Maestra:
Away from the home he knows, hacia el hogar que él necesita.
And there entrapped in that space am I.

Tiresias 5 (March 2012)

Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/rl/tiresias/index.html>

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures
University of Michigan

Concerning relational space:

The World and You

I see the world as the wind sees the air:
penetrating the dusk and dawn of the day,
enriched with a spectacle of light
that glimmers on the still waters,
which separate shores and seas.

I see you standing on the shore:
deafening the lights and glimmers,
extinguishing turmoil and clamour,
raising the dusk and setting the dawn,
lambent in the air, calm against the wind.

I see the world as you see me:
advancing towards you, enclosing the space
that lies between the shores and the seas.
Separated only by the air, I am poised:
the still waters inciting my every step.

***Concerning the space between self-abandonment and
revelation, between self-conflict and resolution.
(Structure: turmoil- question-epiphany):***

Cradled Questions

Forget me.

Why fear to forget?

The memory of a dead man
is to remember a dead memory.

Perceive me not.

Why cringe at this?

The perception of oneself is never at peace
when dependent upon the perceptions of others.

Let me die.

Why shiver at such?

Death falls upon the strongest of men
eluding only their naive ignorance, never their hearts.

Follow me not.

Why contemplate the pursuit of man?

For a man follows in the steps of those forgotten,
pacing behind the shivers of strong men who die.

I am merely a man.

And can man hold the weight of the skies?

Lest you not look beyond the frivolity of man
you shall find nothing other than death.

Surely I am to die.

Such cradles no question.

Concerning the space of time:

A Passing Feather

I often wonder where a feather goes
when the wind cradles it in the sky.
Does it follow where the wind blows
or settle in a distant place nearby?

My eyes drift with its effervescence,
my mind follows this feather like a gypsy
entranced by its harlatan essence
that lazily taunts me.

As it floats I can only stare.
Mesmerized, I watch time work with the wind.
Frailly and buoyantly upheld in the air
the feather passes like a temporal friend.

I lose sight of it for a moment
and that sight I never again recapture.
The feather, like so many moments
disappears into another chapter.

Concerning the space of loneliness:

En la Calma de la Muerte

Yo vago este camino riesgoso
para encontrar un momento
digno de mi presencia
en este estado oscuro.

Estoy tragado en el abismo

de mi conciencia
que no duerme
en tu ausencia.

En la penumbra estoy perdido.
Confío en la brújula de mi corazón
para guiarme en aguas turbulentas
a la deriva hacia mi confesión.

Y que me atrevo a pasar
las horas de esta noche,
con gran soledad
como mi compadre.

Que me atrevo a esperar
en la calma de la muerte;
esperando en la sombra,
esperando a nadie.

Las Ventanas de Niebla

Hay niebla en la mañana del verano
de dónde soy yo.
Pero sólo veo el aire denso a través de las ventanas,
y esto me hace pensar
que tal vez la niebla
es la ilusión del vidrio
hizo hincapié en la soledad de estas paredes.

Concerning regional space:

The Alberta Spring

Spacious and liberating is this sun
that sets on the cold thawed plains.
The heron haemorrhages the blue lake,
with long talons skimming the surface.
The Rockies melt away with the resorts,
Resorting back to the bush and the wild.
The jay flies to the crisp berry branches.
The squirrels awaken to knocking of wood
repetitiously hammering against the spruce.
The valleys open entrapping the rays vibrancy,
glistening clearly on the North Saskatchewan.
The bald eagle soars free over the native land.
At last, lay-off is off and the men gather again;
Machinery structures a thawed-out society.
Logging trucks lag far up western roads.
The sky opens revealing a golden land
lost in the heavy shadow of the snow.
Canadian geese return to gold crops,
encircling the misty red morning sky.
Smells of bonfires fill the air.
Skates and sticks disappear.
Long highways intensify
with boats and caravans.
Yet the clock winds down,
as new buds of leaves
shall wither and fall
upon the majestic
Albertan ground.

Concerning the space between alliteration and natural imagery (sounds & images):

Winters Conscience

Cold winds

Come within,

Counting winters

Corpses with:

Cautious words,

Candlewicks,

Candid wills,

Cognitive wits,

Causing worthy

Condolence which

Calms worried

Consciences.

Capicúas: sólo polos

Lucía Gómez Lvoff
México D.F.

Polos

Sol opone peso.
Luz azul la luna.
La red isolateral es.
Sol: emanar eso... déjela.
Sol, ciclos.
Alejé, dos eran, amélos.
Sé la reta sideral.
Anula la luz azul.
Osé, peno. Polos.

La alteridad

Ser es reconocer seres.

El origen

Somos Adán y Eva

Si se negara Génesis,
ave y nada somos.

Tiresias 5 (March 2012)

Systole to Diastole: Interventions in Fluid Spaces

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/rl/tiresias/index.html>

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures
University of Michigan

Mar abierto

Oí fragata

Sed.

Sane risa. Sala.

Oro caído, le marea.

Mar trae rama, marear trama.

Era melodía, coro.

Alas a sirenas.

Desata garfio.

La petenera

Ácido le marea

Lo sane risa, sirena, sol;

lo sane risa, sirenas, ola...

Era melódica.

La Musa y los Indios: la ética de la distancia en el "Romance 51" de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

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*Para alabar dignamente la
elocuente sabiduría y dorada
elocuencia de esta Doctora mujer
Juana Inés de la Cruz, otra Juana
Inés de la Cruz era necesario que
hubiese, que fuese ella misma*

Fray Pedro del Santísimo
Sacramento, *Obras de la Madre
Soror Juana Inés de la Cruz*,
Tomo II (1692)

El romance 51 fue, muy probablemente, el último poema que escribió Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Mejor conocido como el romance "a las inimitables plumas de Europa," el poema fue hallado en su celda, después de su muerte, inacabado.

Es difícil, por la misma intertextualidad del poema, que surgió como parte de un intercambio transatlántico, hacer una lectura que prescindiera del rico contexto histórico

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que lo rodea. Cuando la condesa de Paredes se fue de la Nueva España en 1688, llevó consigo las obras de la monja, y en 1692 publicó en Madrid el *Segundo Volumen (SV)* de las obras de Sor Juana. Según Margo Glantz, en *Sor Juana: la comparación y la hipérbole*, varios sacerdotes y hombres de letras, “[r]espondiendo al llamado de Don Juan de Orúe y Arbieto, y a instancias de la condesa de Paredes” escribieron los elogios a Sor Juana que precederían sus obras en el SV (157). Glantz concluye que esta sección de censuras y panegíricos

[d]aría la impresión de que los escritos de la monja van protegidos por un contingente de textos de sacerdotes y de cortesanos (“hombres de letras”) que pelean por ella una batalla y la defienden contra los reproches y críticas que se le habían hecho en México[...]Es muy probable, además, como lo sugieren varios comentaristas, que la estrategia de defensa fuera planeada por la propia monja, con la ayuda de la condesa de Paredes (161-2).

A pesar de la publicación y el éxito del SV y los elogios de sus censores y panegiristas, Sor Juana se vuelve más vulnerable ante los reproches de los eclesiásticos novohispanos. De ahí la monja escribe sus últimas obras, una de esas el romance “a las inimitables plumas,” y luego renuncia por completo la vocación literaria.

El romance “a las inimitables plumas” fue publicado en *Fama y obras póstumas* en 1700. Una nota del editor del libro, Juan Ignacio de Castorena y Ursúa, un conocido de Sor Juana, explica que “[e]ste Romance [...] se halló así,

después de su muerte, en borrador y sin mano última,” (Juana Inés de la Cruz 162). Añade Castorena que no le parece convenir que otra persona termine el poema para la publicación del libro, “porque se imprima mejor en nuestra lástima el concento último y finísimo del Cisne, que expiró.” Castorena, en el índice de *Fama*, describe el poema como un “romance gratulatorio a las Plumas de Europa, que elogiaron su Segundo Tomo” (180).

El mismo hecho que el poema está incompleto intensifica su encanto; las posibilidades de interpretación se multiplican. La literatura actual sobre el poema tiende a centrarse en los gestos diferenciadores en el poema que distinguen a la escritura americana de la europea. Se lo ha analizado dentro del marco de las teorías del mestizaje y de la identidad, los estudios minoritarios y los estudios transatlánticos, desarrollando lecturas enfocadas en la construcción del sujeto criollo femenino en el contexto colonial. Mi investigación toma en cuenta estas lecturas de la alteridad colonial, pero se centra, en cambio, en la ética de la representación. Propongo hacer una lectura ética del mismo, enfocándome en el concepto de la representación, tanto epistemológica como literaria y sociopolítica, que desarrolla Sor Juana. Esta lectura logra destacar los elementos más trascendentes del poema, que son los comentarios sobre la inhabilidad de la representación y el conocimiento de realmente *ser* lo que pretenden representar.

Recurro, en mi lectura, al concepto crítico de la subjetividad, para hablar de los varios niveles y posiciones dentro de los cuales tanto Sor Juana como su voz poética

funcionan en el romance. En *Discerning the Subject*, Paul Smith define el sujeto como "the series or the conglomeration of *positions*, subject-positions, provisional and not necessarily infeasible, into which a person is called momentarily by the discourses and the world that he/she inhabits" (Smith xxxv). La focalización es otro concepto que tiene que ver con el *locus* de enunciación que encuentro útil como herramienta para empezar a desentrañar los varios niveles de significación en el poema. Rolena Adorno, en su estudio titulado "El sujeto colonial y la construcción cultural de la alteridad" explica que la focalización es "la relación entre la visión presentada, el agente que ve, el que lo comunica, y lo que es visto. De esta manera, no permitimos que la visión, creada y comunicada por un agente determinado, se destaque con la ilusión de ser neutral, universal o inocente." Adorno muestra que "[e]ste sujeto colonial no se define según quien es sino cómo ve; se trata de la visión que se presenta" (56-7). Es mi opinión que Sor Juana, en el romance 51 emplea posiciones de sujeto y "visiones," o discursos, cambiantes para revelar la naturaleza mediada del conocimiento y los límites inevitables entre el yo y el Otro. De esta manera Sor Juana cuestiona a cualquier intento de sujetar o "arrinconar" al Otro, que siempre se escapa, resistiendo ser interpretado.

En este romance "a las inimitables plumas de Europa," Sor Juana reflexiona sobre la representación en términos epistemológicos y éticos. Bajo el pretexto de agradecerles por sus alabanzas, Sor Juana se dirige a los "númenes divinos" de Europa. Abre el poema con las siguientes estrofas:

¿Cuándo, Númenes divinos,
 dulcísimos Cisnes, cuándo
 merecieron mis descuidos
 ocupar vuestros cuidados?
 ¿De dónde a mí tanto elogio?
 ¿De dónde a mí encomio tanto?
 ¿Tanto pudo la distancia
 añadir a mi retrato? (1-8)

Vemos que Sor Juana establece desde el comienzo del poema una oposición entre un yo lírico auto-reflexivo y un vosotros deshumanizado o (irónicamente) idealizado. El "retrato" exagerado que se ha hecho de Sor Juana sirve de apertura; es el contraste con el cual la poeta procede a crear su propia imagen. Es por este retrato metafórico al que se refiere Sor Juana en la octava estrofa que Kathryn M. Mayers ha clasificado el romance como una *ekfrasis*, o la descripción poética de un objeto artístico. Mayers explica que "Sor Juana draws attention to her poetic persona by fashioning herself as the critical observer of a portrait of her own self as wrought by another artist" (10). Lo que realmente hace la poeta en vez de agradecerles a sus admiradores es emplear de forma irónica la retórica de la humildad y la falsa modestia para criticar y corregir el retrato literario-metafórico que hacen de ella, ofreciendo a la vez una crítica filosófica sobre la práctica de la representación.

Sor Juana señala el fallo epistemológico que surge de los textos de los admiradores como el resultado de la "perspectiva siniestra" (61), lo cual, a su vez, es un resultado de la lejanía. Emplea una retórica de la distancia

y, como lo ha notado Margarita Zamora en su estudio "América y el arte de la memoria," establece una oposición entre "allá" y "acá," o una oposición entre Europa y América que surge del diálogo entre los dos puntos de vista gramaticales, el yo y el vosotros. En las siguientes estrofas Sor Juana sugiere que la lejanía distorsiona el significado:

¿Qué proporción de distancia,
el sonido modulando
de mis hechos, hacer hizo
cónsono lo destemplado?
¿Qué siniestras perspectivas
dieron aparente ornato
al cuerpo compuesto sólo
de unos mal distintos trazos? (57-64)

En estas estrofas vemos que la distancia y la perspectiva han deformado el objeto original de las representaciones. Propongo que esta distancia se puede leer como la distancia transatlántica entre el Imperio y la Colonia, la distancia discursiva entre Otros culturales y, también, como la distancia psicológica que separa a cualquier sujeto del objeto del conocimiento. En otras palabras Sor Juana usa la distancia física y la perspectiva visual como ejemplos para elaborar un comentario filosófico sobre la representación epistemológica, lo cual es una función de la relación entre la posición del sujeto y la del objeto del conocimiento. Claire Colebrook, en su libro *Ethics and Representation*, explica que:

To be known or experienced a thing must be other than the knower; it must be *given* to the knower. As

known, things are only as they are re-presented to a subject [...] For knowledge's very possibility lies in perspective, point of view, position and finitude: the necessary consequence of the fact that if thought is to *know some thing* then it must be placed in a position in relation to that thing. Because knowledge relates to what is other than itself, it is situated in a relation, such that what it knows is not immediately present but must be re-presented (2).

Las ideas de la posición y la finitud como condiciones necesarias del conocimiento recuerdan a la retórica de la distancia y la perspectiva con la cual juega Sor Juana. En el romance 51 los sujetos europeos son distanciados del objeto de sus representaciones, tal y como el sujeto que piensa es distanciado de lo que conoce. En las siguientes estrofas del poema Sor Juana utiliza una retórica científica para explicar esta separación, esta barrera entre el sujeto y el objeto:

Cuando penetrar el Sol
intenta cuerpos opacos,
el que piensa beneficio
suele resultar agravio:
porque densos y groseros,
resistiendo en lo apretado
de sus tortüosos poros
la intermisión de los rayos,
y admitiendo solamente
el superficial contacto,
sólo de ocasionar sombras
les sirve lo iluminado (81-92).

Aquí los admiradores europeos son representados por el Sol, que quiere penetrar un cuerpo opaco que resiste, lo cual representa Sor Juana. Los sujetos del conocimiento, en este caso los admiradores, se equivocan en su suposición de que realmente pueden conocer al Otro, en este caso ella. Su intento sólo resulta en "superficial contacto," y a la luz de sus representaciones de ella, sólo se producen sombras. El "superficial contacto" al cual se refiere Sor Juana es un reconocimiento de la separación filosófica entre el conocimiento y el objeto del conocimiento. Las sombras que resultan del "superficial contacto" son las representaciones, siempre distorsionadas por la misma perspectiva.

En una de las estrofas más reveladoras del poema, vemos un comentario sobre la mediación ideológica involucrada en la representación:

y diversa de mí misma
entre vuestras plumas ando,
no como soy, sino como
quisisteis imaginarlo. (17-20)

Las imágenes representadas no reflejan el original sino reflejan los deseos, los caprichos, y el afecto de sus autores. La lejanía entre el yo y el vosotros que resulta en el mencionado fallo epistemológico no sólo se manifiesta en el romance en términos de la distancia geográfica, sino como la distancia temporal también. La visión del tiempo empleado por Sor Juana en este poema es un tema que merece más atención crítica de la que ha recibido. El mismo hecho de que el poema pertenece al género epistolar señala

desde luego el problema del tiempo. La epístola es un diálogo pospuesto; el género epistolar es necesariamente anacrónico porque durante el acto de la escritura el tú o el vosotros a quien se dirige la epístola no sólo es ausente sino que es un tú futuro. Durante el acto de la lectura la epístola representa la voz sucedánea del autor ausente. Si volvemos a la primera estrofa del poema, ya citada anteriormente, vemos que la primera pregunta que se hace, en un poema que se desenvuelve en una acumulación bastante larga de preguntas, es "¿Cuándo?." De hecho, es el interrogatorio "cuándo" la palabra que inaugura todo el poema, y así de alguna manera es la que establece para los lectores sus expectativas para el tono o el desenlace del poema. El interrogatorio inicial dirige nuestra atención al aspecto temporal del poema. Los tiempos verbales a lo largo del romance alternan entre presente y pasado. Cuando Sor Juana se refiere al acto de sus admiradores de producir los elogios, usa el tiempo pasado. Cuando se refiere a los elogios como objetos de literatura ya autónomos, usa el presente, especialmente del verbo "ser": "son vuestros encomios," "Regia superflua custodia son," "La imagen[...] es bien digna" (100,104,115, énfasis mío). Cuando Sor Juana se refiere a sus propios logros literarios, sin embargo, usa el tiempo pasado: "merecieron mis descuidos," "fueron ocios descuidados" (3, 28, énfasis mía). Luego para aumentar el sentido pasado de sus escritos, Sor Juana emplea el tópico de *vanitas vanitatum*, la idea de que todo se reduce a polvo, todo intenta ser más de lo que puede ser y todo está vacío de contenido:

Honoríficos sepulcros
de cadáveres helados,

a mis conceptos sin alma
son vuestros encomios altos:
elegantes Panteones,
en quienes el jaspe y mármol
Regia superflua custodia
son de polvo inanimado. (96-104)

Sor Juana describe a su propia producción literaria como muerta; es "sin alma," "cadáver" y "polvo inanimado," mientras las obras de sus admiradores son descritas en el presente, con imágenes de estructuras o materias duraderas, como "jaspe," "mármol," "panteones," y "sepulcros." Fredrick Luciani lee el poema como una especie de "cryptic announcement of Sor Juana's abdication of literary pursuits in her last years and her final silence" (25). ¿Estará anunciando ella aquí su muerte literaria? ¿Será que las (malas) interpretaciones de ella y su obra las han cambiado irrevocablemente, hasta el punto en que ya no existen sino cómo las imaginan los númenes divinos? Los panegíricos floridos de los númenes divinos son sólo ilusión, ornato. El concepto que contienen en sí es un concepto muerto. Otra vez la representación es incapaz de contener al objeto o concepto original; lo cambia, lo mata al apropiarse de él.

Creo preciso mencionar que, aunque las teorías de la representación y la subjetividad, tal y como se articulan en el presente trabajo, son conceptos modernos, no es nada improbable que una erudita como Sor Juana empezara a elaborar versiones tempranas de ellas en su producción literaria. Colebrook explica que "the seventeenth century gave birth to the notion of the idea—as a picture or

representation of the world—and that it is this invention of a mental or subjective entity that enables the modern problems of philosophy as theory of knowledge, mind or language” (14). Así es que el “Romance 51” puede, de alguna manera, considerarse como un tratado temprano sobre la noción moderna de la representación.

La crítica de la representación epistemológica que hace Sor Juana en el romance sirve de base para el desarrollo de una crítica ética de la representación literaria y el arte barroco. En *Viaje al silencio*, Mabel Maraña explica que el barroco de Indias fue a la vez una ideología asimiladora y diferenciadora:

La habilidad para hacer uso de los discursos metropolitanos se convirtió así en una especie de prueba que permitía definir las posibilidades de comprensión y participación de los grupos sociales periféricos en los universales del Imperio [...] En segundo lugar, es también en el contexto de la cultura barroca que aparecen las primeras evidencias de una conciencia social diferenciada en el seno de la sociedad criolla.” (27)

Mi propuesta es que Sor Juana se protege bajo la autoridad y la legitimidad de los modelos barrocos, mientras hace re-escrituras sutiles de los textos y los tópicos maestros de esta tradición europea, así posibilitando la diseminación de sus textos ideológicamente transgresivos. En el caso de este poema ella usa la distorsión para reprochar la distorsión misma. William Clamurro, en “Sor Juana Inés Reads her Portrait,” concuerda, explicando que “the irony of

belonging to a tradition of art and intellectual searching and yet being apart from it and critical of its institutional repressions—all acquire a special resonance in the full context of Sor Juana’s life and writings” (41).

En el romance 51 Sor Juana critica la negación de los escritores y artistas del barroco de la naturaleza mediada o re-presentada de las imágenes que ellos difunden. Bradley J. Nelson explica que en la tradición barroca, especialmente en las obras de los maestros Góngora y Quevedo,

[t]he poet [...] constructs a labyrinth through which the reader must pass in order to appropriate knowledge, which is presented as if it were substantial and prior to its assemblage of enunciation. His personal voice, along with its “political” desire, vanishes from the scene of knowledge and gives way to an illusion of disinterested mastery and ingenuity. (748-9)

Sor Juana, por otro lado, en el romance 51, escribe dentro de las convenciones de la poesía barroca pero llama nuestra atención a la naturaleza mediada de su escritura; declara su subjetividad. Problematiza las imágenes que crea y hace que el lectora note las interpretaciones, las representaciones y a la naturaleza política de la escritura.

Esta crítica al arte barroco que quiere esconder los motivos detrás del acto de la creación abarca también un reproche ético de la posición asimiladora que toman los poetas y artistas del barroco ante “los objetos” de sus representaciones, ante el papel pasivo que asignan a la

mujer o el Otro cultural y el papel de creador del universo que se asignan a ellos mismo. Su crítica primero es *filosófica*—señala los límites del conocimiento, es *estética*—expone una literatura que cuestiona a sí mismo, y es *ética*—reconoce la barrera infranqueable que existe entre el yo y lo otro y busca resistir “la penetración” por “los rayos” del conocimiento hegemónico patriarcal. En “Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Dreaming in a Double Voice,” Emilie Bergman comenta astutamente que la escritura de Sor Juana es

a direct confrontation with the cultural constitution of the female as the passive object of contemplation [...] The female object of desire, treated as passive statue in male poetic discourse, is revealed in Sor Juana’s poetry to have been listening all along, and to be capable of mimicking the same discourse in a disconcerting way (Bergmann, 168).

Esta imitación desconcertante del discurso masculino se manifiesta de forma muy patente en el romance 51. Mientras comenta el desmedido retrato que se ha hecho de ella, Sor Juana va creando un *auto-retrato*, declarándose participe activa en su propia representación metafórica. Los cambios de la primera persona a la tercera, y viceversa señalan el comienzo de su auto-retrato:

¿A una ignorante mujer,
cuyo estudio no ha pasado
de ratos, a la precisa
ocupación mal hurtados;
a un casi rústico aborto

de unos estériles campos,
 que el nacer en ellos yo,
 los hace más agostados; (158).

La imagen que desarrolla Sor Juana aquí es claramente hiperbólica e irónica; refleja inversamente los panegíricos. Para analizar la imagen desde la perspectiva ética, es útil tener en cuenta la observación de Bergman de que el auto-retrato literario "is a representation of the subject's consciousness—not how the writer appears to others, nor the events in her life, but what she knows and how she explains her knowing it" (163). El auto-retrato en este romance está "intentando" decirnos algo sobre el consciente, el conocimiento, la ética de la autora. Por ejemplo, si recordamos la definición de Smith del sujeto, observamos en estas dos estrofas que Sor Juana juega con múltiples posiciones de sujeto. Una Sor Juana describe a la otra; la una es una erudita de una fama casi mítica, la otra es "una ignorante mujer," "un casi rústico aborto." Y todavía hay *otra* Sor Juana, la persona histórica, la que tiene el motivo ético-ideológico. Por lo tanto, las varias Sor Juanas de las cuales podemos hablar son: la persona histórica, el sujeto de la escritura, y el yo-personaje creado por el sujeto de la escritura (Luciani 19). Este juego, este constante saltar de una posición de sujeto a otra recuerda al "límite" de Colebrook, el punto más allá del cual el conocimiento no puede ir, porque "knowledge relates to what is other than itself, it is situated in a relation" (2). Por eso uno nunca realmente alcanza al Otro, que siempre cambia y escapa como las posiciones de sujeto en el poema, porque existe un límite entre los dos demarcado por el punto de vista. El Otro resiste la interpretación,

resiste ser alcanzado o arrinconado. El juego de las posiciones de sujeto en el romance 51 es un *performance* del concepto de la alteridad que acabo de elaborar.

Es interesante pensar en estas posiciones discursivas por otro lado como un sistema de estrategias de supervivencia social que la autora cuidadosa y ingeniosamente manipula. El yo-personaje, la Sor Juana que es una ignorante mujer, cuyos pocos estudios le han quitado tiempo del trabajo que debe estar haciendo, es la imagen auto-mortificante de sí que crea Sor Juana para defenderse como monja. Esta imagen hace brillar aún más por el efecto del contraste la demostración espectacular del talento literario y conocimiento científico-filosófico de la figura literaria, la Musa, que tiene que destacarse para mantener su fama y favor entre sus admiradores y protectores.

Hay otra parte del auto-retrato literario que se arma en el romance que merece atención especial. Sor Juana, después de describirse como una ignorante mujer, pregunta:

¿Qué mágicas infusiones
de los Indios herbolarios
de mi Patria, entre mis letras
el hechizo derramaron? (53-56)

Estos versos se resaltan de forma muy clara sobre el fondo de alusiones a la tradición europea cristiana y a la mitología grecorromana que establece Sor Juana en el poema, de manera que parecen advertir un motivo clave de la ética

que se expone. Su insistencia en afirmarse mujer y mexicana representa lo que Zamora llama "una toma de conciencia ante su diferencia" (138). Los sorprendentes versos sobre los "Indios herbolarios" han sido el punto de partida de mucho debate fructífero en la crítica. Más notables son las tesis de Zamora y Martínez-San Miguel. Zamora, en su estudio citado anteriormente, argumenta que la referencia a los indios es hermética, que Sor Juana intencionalmente insertó en el romance una referencia que los lectores europeos no podrían interpretar, penetrar o "entender." Explica Zamora que "[e]s como si Sor Juana, al verse fragmentada y distorsionada en el 'falso simulacro' que de ella ha forjado la imaginación ajena, se refugiara de la 'siniestra perspectiva' de 'allá' en la memoria invocando una imagen fuertemente emotiva del terruño mexicano" (141). En el mismo estudio Zamora también aporta un análisis impresionante de la imagen de las "mágicas infusiones" que creo muy digno de mención aquí:

La metonimia "Mis letras" funciona no sólo como una figura bastante pedestre de la totalidad de su obra, sino que además es una referencia literal a las letras que forman cada palabra y las palabras que constituyen cada verso. La imagen tipográfica occidental del texto literario compuesto de signos alfabéticos es transformada por el derrame inesperado de la poción mágica indígena. La alusión al carácter indescifrable de esta escritura, resultante del contacto de líquido con tinta seca sobre hoja de papel, es patente. La diferencia radical y el hermetismo deliberado del cuarteto de los indios herbolarios se reducen al elemento indígena, tan exótico como impenetrable para sus

destinatarios europeos como íntimamente expresivo para la poeta mexicana (141).

En su análisis Zamora ha observado la agudeza de Sor Juana en vincular la inhabilidad de los lectores europeos de entender la referencia a los indios con la imagen de un líquido que se ha derramado sobre un papel así haciendo que la letra resulte ilegible. Los indios herbolarios han tenido un efecto en la escritura sorjuaniana que impide la lectura y el conocimiento desde la erudición de sus lectores españoles.

Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel, por otra parte, en "Otra vez Sor Juana: leer la heterogeneidad colonial en un contexto transatlántico," argumenta que el cuarteto de los indios no es una referencia hermética ligada a la memoria personal de la autora (o colectiva de los criollos mexicanos), sino "una exotización paródica de la otredad americana para recalcar las diferencias que intervienen en cualquier ejercicio de interpretación" (59). Martínez-San Miguel invierte el análisis de Zamora, contestando que es "el texto mismo el que hermetiza la referencia, el que le asigna una función enigmática" (65). Según Martínez-San Miguel, la referencia a los indios no extrañaría tanto a los lectores europeos, que ya estarían acostumbrados al casi tópico de los indios y los hechizos. Sería la forma en la que emplea Sor Juana la referencia, de una manera paródica-irónica, la que haría que esta referencia bastante "pedestre" se convertiría en algo más transgresivo, hasta hermético.

Sostengo que el cuarteto de indios existen en el mismo plano discursivo el yo-personaje de Sor Juana en el

romance, la ignorante mujer que retrata y los indios herbolarios de su Patria. Todos estos elementos son partes de la misma imagen irónica de sí que la poeta nos presenta como parte de su auto-retrato literario. De acuerdo con la definición del auto-retrato literario de Bergman, los detalles personales que incluye la autora –su falta de educación, sus ocios descuidados, los indios herbolarios de su Patria—son autobiográficos no en el sentido de que correlacionan directamente con eventos específicos en la memoria histórica de la escritora, sino en el sentido de que forman una imagen que constituye un elemento o lado del complejo intercambio o dialogo que Sor Juana arma sobre el conocimiento, o lo que sabe y cómo lo sabe.

Para aportar otro elemento a la discusión sobre los versos de los indios herbolarios, quisiera comentarlos con relación a la astrología, los númenes divinos y el mito de Faetón y el sol. Creo que se puede leer un juego implícito entre fuerzas divinas en el romance, en que los europeos son castigados al final por su auto-engaño y auto-amor. Es importante recordar que la estrofa de los indios herbolarios realmente viene vinculada a una estrofa sobre la astrología:

¿Cuál fue la ascendente Estrella
 que, dominando los Astros,
 a mí os ha inclinado, haciendo
 lo violento voluntario?
 ¿Qué mágicas infusiones
 de los Indios herbolarios
 de mi Patria, entre mis letras
 el hechizo derramaron? 49-56

En estos versos Sor Juana pregunta si los númenes no han sido afectados por las fuerzas de las estrellas o la hechicería. Esta pregunta podría considerarse bastante arriesgada, si se toma en cuenta la afirmación de Adorno de que las “[a]ctividades focalizadas e identificadas como “magia”, “brujería” y hechicería” se consideraban fuerzas peligrosas en las sociedades europeas de los siglos XVI y XVII” (62). Rafael Catalá explica que en el siglo XVII la astrología era vista del mismo modo:

las artes adivinatorias, fuera de quienes fueren, tendrían que acabar mal porque no aceptaban la suerte que el dios cristiano les daba, y por sus esfuerzos o ardidés de otras religiones y/o Satanás, trataban de discernir más allá de su muerte y su presente (114).

Sor Juana, sin embargo, no muestra este mismo prejuicio de la cultura dominante contra la astrología y la hechicería; por lo contrario, se alía con ellas de alguna manera, poniendo a los indios herbolarios en el mismo plano discursivo que su yo-personaje e indicando que las estrellas y los hechizos la favorecen. Los númenes sucumben a estas fuerzas ajenas, mientras a la vez intentan hacerle sucumbir a Sor Juana. En el romance 51 los númenes divinos de Europa tientan a Sor Juana, intentan engañarla con sus falsos elogios. Es interesante notar que la palabra *numen*, en latín, se asocia con la voluntad divina (Prendergast 35). Sor Juana los asocia también con el Sol, cuando escribe “Cuando pentrar el Sol/ quiere cuerpos opacos” (81). Ella no se deja engañar por estas fuerza divinas, salvándose del destino de un Faetón. El mito de Faetón, quién quiso

manejar el carro del Sol de su padre, Apolo, pero no pudo controlarlo, es empleado en la literatura barroca para describir “el atrevimiento de tratar de llegar con el entendimiento o el esfuerzo donde no está prescrito por la Iglesia y/o costumbre establecida” (Catalá 114). Muchas veces los historiadores europeos usan el mito de Faetón para describir la manera de que sucumben las civilizaciones americanas. Elabora Catalá: “El diablo les enseñó a adorar el sol y por esto al llegar la edad evangélica, el cristianismo, sus esfuerzos se vinieron al mar...no pudieron controlar las riendas del carro del sol” (116). Pero en el romance de Sor Juana, ella, y por extensión sus aliados, los indios herbolarios de su Patria, no sufren el destino de Faetón. Son los númenes divinos los que pierdan la batalla y sucumben a la voluntad de los astros y los indios. No afirmo que Sor Juana está desarrollando una defensa de las civilizaciones indígenas en su poema—después de todo los indios herbolarios son, en mi opinión, una parodia—pero sí parecería que la poeta le está asestando un golpe ético a la cultura imperial-inquisitorial y sus interpretaciones recelosas de las mujeres y de las Américas.

Es, entonces, la forma en que orchestra Sor Juana los varios discursos en su romance –el discurso de los panegiristas, el discurso irónico de la humildad, el discurso filosófico, científico, el de la boca de la Décima Musa—el verdadero auto-retrato, el sitio donde habita la ética del poema. Sor Juana, como muchos de sus contemporáneos barrocos, recurre a la contradicción y la paradoja como tropos retóricos que coinciden con lo que Stephanie Merrim describe como “la paradoja, la antítesis, y las incongruencias que permeaban el discurso y las realidades

socioeconómicas de la época" (4). El auto-retrato en el "Romance 51" sirve para propósitos estéticos y éticos. Este, en combinación con el retrato de los admiradores, arma una especie de doble espejo en el que las imágenes distorsionadas son reflejadas en otras imágenes distorsionadas creando un sentido vertiginoso de ilusión sin fin. Este doble espejo demuestra que el mismo acto de representar algo, aún nuestros propios seres, implica una distorsión, lo cual Sor Juana consiente, sagaz e irónicamente evidencia desmintiendo el retrato de sus admiradores mientras desarrolla una versión muy obviamente re-presentada de si misma.

Vemos al final que las imágenes que han creado de ella realmente son reflexiones de ellos mismos. Este reproche ético sobresale cuando Sor Juana escribe "La imagen de vuestra idea/ es la que habéis alabado;/ y siendo vuestra, es bien digna/ de vuestros mismos aplausos" (160). Al representar al Otro, a Sor Juana, los admiradores sólo se congratulan a sí mismos. El romance 51 entonces es un reproche ético-moral, es un comentario sobre las prácticas de la representación literaria de la época, y es, en un sentido más amplio, una crítica temprana de la representación epistemológica. La distancia en el romance a "las inimitables plumas" es, a la vez una distancia física-cultural que separa dos continentes, una distancia epistemológica-discursiva que separa el sujeto y el Otro y es la distancia que separa la imagen del original. Aunque no sea posible saber si Sor Juana tomó parte en la defensa lanzada por sus admiradores europeos, como sugiere Glantz, sí sabemos que su respuesta a la defensa es a la vez una estrategia social, un comentario filosófico y

una crítica ética. Las críticas que hace Sor Juana de la práctica de la representación de su época implicaban una crítica también, de las estructuras sociales imperiales-patriarcales que compartían la misma lógica en cuanto al Otro.

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Vita e Morte in Gesualdo Bufalino: Due Concetti Capovolti

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Gesualdo Bufalino, in *Le menzogne della notte* (1988) e *Diceria dell'untore* (1981), sembra concepire la vita come teatro e quindi come un gioco di finzioni¹⁶ a cui pone fine solamente la morte; la morte si caratterizza come unico elemento di verità nell'esistenza di un individuo. La consapevolezza della vita come gioco viene raggiunta dai personaggi di Bufalino proprio nel momento in cui essi vedono la morte come imminente. Nel caso de *Le menzogne* e *Diceria*, la minaccia della morte è parte integrante dei romanzi sin dalle prime battute e comporta un'inversione dei concetti di vita e morte.

I protagonisti dei due libri in questione si trovano a riflettere su questi temi e giungono alla conclusione che la vita è inautentica perché intrappola l'esistenza dell'individuo in un gioco delle parti; la morte, invece, è l'unico fattore in grado di porre fine a questa finzione e di dare dignità all'uomo. Tutto sembra quindi essere capovolto: la vita come morte e la morte come vita. Queste riflessioni vanno

¹⁶ Paino, p. 32.

lette come un messaggio diretto al lettore, il quale si interroga sulla validità e veridicità della propria vita.

In *Le menzogne della notte* il ribaltamento dei concetti di vita e morte permette ai quattro detenuti al centro del romanzo di raggiungere il loro obiettivo di sovversione politica. I quattro detenuti riescono ad ingannare il governatore, facendogli credere che il conte di Siracusa, erede al trono, sia il Padreterno, a capo della cospirazione antimonarchica. Attraverso questa rivelazione dell'identità del Padreterno ("Il Padreterno, chiedere udienza al conte di Siracusa!" e "Già, come potrebbe chiedere udienza a se stesso?¹⁷"), i carcerati non riescono a scampare alla morte; essi si sarebbero salvati attraverso una confessione volontaria, e non – come invece avviene – attraverso lo stratagemma del Governatore, che si traveste da Frate Cirillo per estorcere in incognito l'informazione. Tuttavia, i quattro non sono intenzionati a salvare la propria vita. La loro morte appare l'unica soluzione possibile per spodestare il sovrano.

I carcerati, morendo, diventano i martiri del popolo. Così si esprime al riguardo uno dei carcerati, il barone Ignafù: "morendo senza tradirla, noi renderemo santa la Causa agli occhi del popolo. Crocifissi dalle bocche cucite, apostoli tragici del suo verbo, ecco ciò che si dirà domani di noi o che già si dice nelle fiere dei paesi e nelle piazze della capitale. Non passerà l'anno che dalla suburra, col Padreterno alla guida, il popolo insorgerà¹⁸". Quest'affermazione riesce a nobilitare la morte del barone e

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 121-122.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

quella dei suoi compagni, a darle cioè un senso che vada al di là della semplice conclusione della vita terrena. La morte, in particolare, viene privata di quella componente di finzione teatrale che i quattro avevano passivamente accettato fino a quel giorno: "Prima d'oggi la morte non appariva che una peripezia per attori, da recitare fra breve, col tacito accordo che, dopo le ovazioni e gl'inchini, si sarebbe tornati tutti dietro le quinte a rivestirsi, a riessere sé".¹⁹ La morte, in quest'occasione, è vista come la conclusione di una vita intesa come un'opera teatrale, in cui si recita un ruolo - magari il ruolo dei sovversivi, come nel caso dei personaggi in questione. Al contrario, però, come testimoniato dalla citazione del barone Ignafù, i carcerati scoprono che la morte permette loro di raggiungere gli scopi prefissi. Di conseguenza, essa non va considerata solamente come epilogo di una "non-vita" trascorsa ad impersonare una parte, bensì come l'unico momento di autenticità dell'esistenza. Non sembra dunque trovare fondamento l'affermazione di Hainsworth, secondo cui "there are no real winners or losers, since all the main characters must die"²⁰. La morte, infatti, non deve essere giudicata come elemento negativo ma come fattore in grado di ribaltare una determinata situazione e di spingere alla rivolta popolare. In tale prospettiva vanno letti i sorrisi beffardi che i detenuti rivolgono al Governatore sui gradini del patibolo. Essi sperano che la loro morte possa fungere da scintilla che infiammi il popolo.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 30-31.

²⁰ Hainsworth, p. 33.

Per dimostrare quanto la vita sia in realtà una “non-vita” è necessario prendere in considerazione le storie raccontate dai quattro protagonisti. Essi sono spinti dal Governatore, travestito da Frate Cirillo, a “capire se alla vita che avete vissuto questa fine da stoici faccia da epilogo degno o se non stoni²¹”. Invitandoli a riflettere sulla loro vita, egli cerca di farsi confessare l’identità del Padreterno. I quattro raccolgono questo invito e, usando come modello il *Decamerone* di Boccaccio, decidono di narrare ciascuno una vicenda riguardante la loro vita. Il barone suggerisce che ognuno dica “quel che crede meglio per dare agli altri e a se stesso scienza o menzogna di sé. [...] Dunque, raccontiamola pure, o inventiamola, la nostra ora più memorabile²²”. In queste parole del barone compaiono termini come “menzogna” e “inventiamola”, che suggeriscono la possibile inattendibilità dei racconti dei quattro personaggi. I quattro protagonisti, decidendo di mentire sulla loro reale identità, *sono consapevoli di come la vita sia un gioco delle parti e vogliono sfruttare questo fattore a proprio vantaggio*. Nei loro racconti “come in un gioco di prestigio e di specchi la verità si ribalta continuamente in menzogna e viceversa²³”. Il Governatore, al termine dei racconti dei carcerati, è convinto di essere in controllo della situazione: “Poiché in due modi opposti vi ho usato: ora dirigendo vigile i vostri fili, ora sedendomi quietamente a godermi le vostre sceniche esibizioni; ora avversario, ora connivente; senza mai mostrare quel che ero veramente: il puparo di tutti voi²⁴”. Tuttavia, i

²¹ Bufalino, *Le menzogne della notte*, p. 34.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²⁴ Bufalino, *Le menzogne della notte*, p. 118.

condannati sono riusciti ad ingannarlo, perché la loro morte aiuta la causa sovversiva.

Le menzogne che i condannati raccontano pongono il problema della loro identità. Essi non ingannano solamente il Governatore ma anche se stessi. È possibile ipotizzare come i quattro mentano perché incapaci di rispondere delle azioni di cui si sono resi protagonisti durante la loro esistenza. In effetti, "the tales they tell should be an attempt to give sense to their troubled existence but, as we know from the governor's inquiries, the prisoners lie instead. They invent episodes, finally disappearing behind a wall of implausible details"²⁵. Per i quattro personaggi dire la verità – e quindi ammettere le proprie debolezze – significherebbe continuare a vivere in modo inautentico. Al contrario, la menzogna a cui ricorrono e che li indirizza verso la morte mantiene viva la loro memoria. Ancora una volta, i concetti di vita e morte sono ribaltati.

Nella prima storia, Narciso ricorda come la madre muoia nel darlo alla luce e per tale ragione si definisce come "negato originariamente all'amore"²⁶. In seguito egli racconta la sua fuga da casa, che tuttavia le indagini del Governatore rivelano non essere un allontanamento volontario. Infatti, egli fu "espulso per aver tentato più volte la sorella Olimpia al peccato"²⁷. Su questa vicenda lo studente preferisce mentire in modo da non dover dare spiegazioni a se stesso e ai suoi ascoltatori. Egli si limita solamente a raccontare di un rapporto che la sorella aveva

²⁵ Zampieri, p. 155.

²⁶ Bufalino, *Le menzogne della notte*, p. 37.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.128.

avuto con un servo e che lui aveva interrotto, forse per gelosia. Successivamente Narciso parla del suo amore per una ragazza di nome Eunice - da lui idealizzata al punto da farla assurgere a "idea di bellezza e di spirito, trionfo di fiamme e di carne, etereo volume calato nel senso, senso rapito oltre i sensi²⁸" - e di come un suo atto eroico abbia scatenato in Eunice l'amore per lui. L'amore romantico per Eunice è quindi l'opposto di quello incestuoso per la sorella, che Narciso tiene nascosto. La morte libera Narciso dall'annoso fardello delle sue colpe e gli permette di trovare l'eternità come martire.

Il racconto del barone Corrado Ignafù lascia a sua volta enormi falle sulla sua vera identità. Egli narra come si sia recato a Parigi per offrire al fratello gemello Secondino, "metà dei miei titoli e beni; e chiedergli in cambio metà delle sue generose illusioni". Lo scopo è quello di ricomporre "l'individuo unico ch'eravamo noi due²⁹". Corrado infatti non riesce a vivere, non ha passioni, desideri e pensa dunque che ricongiungendosi con il fratello "e copiandone ingenuamente la vita, avrei forse con quella riempito in qualche modo la mia³⁰". Tuttavia, come si scopre in seguito alle indagini del Governatore, Corrado è il secondogenito, e non il primogenito come lui ha lasciato intendere. Inoltre Secondino è morto suicida, e non in seguito ad un duello come racconta Corrado. Questa morte sarebbe avvenuta durante un duello in cui il fratello aveva deciso di morire, dando a Corrado la possibilità di vivere "gli anni che spettavano a lui, compiute e dette le gesta e

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

parole che lui avrebbe dovuto³¹". Tutto questo però non avviene tramite un atto di eroico sacrificio da parte di Secondino bensì, come detto, attraverso il suicidio. Solo in conseguenza di questo tragico evento, il barone ha potuto acquistare i diritti che in realtà sarebbero spettati al fratello. In sostanza, anche Corrado crea un'autobiografia fittizia che gli consente di portare a termine il proprio obiettivo politico. Anche nel suo caso, la morte garantisce un momento di autenticità perché libera l'uomo dal fardello della sua reale identità e gli dona l'eternità come martire.

Il racconto di Agesilao è anch'esso frutto della menzogna. Nato in seguito ad uno stupro, egli è rifiutato dalla sua stessa famiglia e cresce in un monastero dubitando "che le cose accadano veramente e io stesso di esistere³²". Nel monastero Agesilao si rende protagonista di diversi atti impuri e viene di conseguenza allontanato. A questo punto egli matura l'idea di essere un "peccatore insalvabile, escluso da tutti i giardini³³" e incolpa di tutto questo il padre-stupratore. Successivamente, Agesilao scopre che il padre era ufficiale nell'esercito, e per questo si arruola, deciso a scovarlo. Trovatosi infine faccia a faccia con lui, non esita ad ucciderlo. Con questo atto di morte, Agesilao si libera di un fantasma del passato e può dunque essere più tranquillo con se stesso. Tuttavia, tramite le indagini del Governatore, si scopre che Agesilao non ha ucciso suo padre, ma che ha ucciso un altro ufficiale per banali vicende amorose. Di conseguenza, Agesilao ha in realtà continuato ad essere quel "peccatore insalvabile" che

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

era stato sin da bambino a causa di sfrenati impulsi sessuali. Agesilao, al pari degli altri compagni, si è costruito un'identità fasulla per guadagnarsi un destino da martire.

La storia del poeta Saglimbeni, diversamente dalle altre, viene smascherata subito dopo la sua conclusione. Il poeta narra di come egli sia giunto in casa di una nobile vedova di nome Matilde e del suo giovane figlio durante il tentativo di "sobillare i nobili contro il tiranno³⁴". A casa della donna, il poeta s'invaghisce di lei e allo stesso tempo fa amicizia con il figlio, che lo considera un modello da seguire nella sua maturazione. Secondo il racconto di Saglimbeni, in sua assenza un bandito di nome Salibba stupra la donna. Tuttavia - sempre nella versione di Saglimbeni - in seguito Matilde invita il bandito a ricongiungersi con lei, mostrandosi dunque consenziente. Il figlio, nel tentativo di fermare Salibba, viene allontanato dalla donna con uno schiaffo e, in preda al rancore, si butta in un burrone. Questo racconto, come si diceva, non corrisponde a verità; frate Cirillo rivela che fu Saglimbeni stesso - e non Salibba, in realtà mai esistito - a congiungersi con la donna e che il figlioletto si è suicidato perché deluso dal poeta, suo modello di vita. In sostanza, Saglimbeni inventa la figura del bandito per non dover affrontare le colpe del proprio passato. La morte, quindi, ancora una volta rappresenta un mezzo per veicolare qualcosa di autentico, dato che libera Saglimbeni dal peso che grava su di lui e lo consegna alla storia come martire.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

L'inversione dei principi di vita e morte è riscontrabile anche in *Diceria dell'untore*. In quest'opera, il tempo della Storia sembra essere messo da parte per lasciare spazio alle storie private dei personaggi. L'impressione è quella di trovarsi all'interno di un tempo mitico, letterario dove gli avvenimenti storici - fatta eccezione per una rivolta dei contadini siciliani narrata nella parte finale del libro - sono pressoché assenti. L'intera vicenda è ambientata all'interno di un sanatorio, la Rocca. Il sanatorio si contraddistingue per essere un "non-mondo", in cui i pazienti si dividono tra la speranza di tornare a condurre una vita normale e la certezza della morte, derivante dalla loro condizione di malati. Ogni minimo segno della vita normale che a loro è preclusa li atterrisce: "bastava talvolta, tra sonno e veglia, un fischio di treno addolcito dalla distanza, oppure il cigolio dei carri di zolfo in fila per la collina, e si balzava col cuore in tumulto³⁵". Tuttavia, gli internati, immersi nella forzata clausura del loro "non-mondo", godono di qualche privilegio. Essi sono a conoscenza di come il loro destino sia già scritto e nei giorni che li separano dalla morte riflettono sulle loro vite e su quelle dell'umanità. In particolare Gesualdo, protagonista del romanzo, riesce a capire, durante la sua degenza nel sanatorio, come la vita sia "un cafarnao³⁶", "nuda, uno zero di giorni previsti, senza una brace né un grido³⁷". Il sanatorio non è solo dunque un luogo in cui si attende la morte, ma anche un luogo in cui si può capire che la vita umana, così come viene vissuta ogni giorno, è in realtà una

³⁵ Bufalino, *Diceria dell'untore*, p. 17.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

vita inautentica all'interno della quale l'uomo non fa altro che recitare le "battute di una comparsa"³⁸.

Il destino di Gesualdo è diverso da quello degli altri degenti. Questi ultimi soccomberanno tutti, uno dopo l'altro, a causa delle loro malattie, mentre lui sopravvivrà. Sin dalle prime battute del libro, Gesualdo pare aver inteso come il confine tra ciò che può essere considerato vita e ciò che, al contrario, è normalmente associato con la morte sia labile. Si pensi ad esempio a quando, narrando la storia di un ricoverato di nome Angelo - il quale era solito mandare delle lettere fittizie alla madre, in cui raccontava "il romanzo futuro di sé, vantava paternità, impieghi, successi"³⁹, allo scopo di rassicurarla e farla così vivere più a lungo -, Gesualdo afferma: "ma fra noi vivi che ci scriviamo, le parole servono forse di più? Ed è poi sicuro che sia suono la vita e silenzio la morte, e non invece il contrario?"⁴⁰. Quest'ultima frase potrebbe essere considerata la frase-simbolo di un libro in cui i concetti di vita e morte si capovolgono, spingendo il lettore a riflettere sulla propria esistenza e sull'eventuale vacuità che la contraddistingue.

A favorire questo tipo di riflessioni da parte di Gesualdo sembra essere lo stato di malattia che lo caratterizza. Essa gli conferisce un nuovo "modo di ritirarsi dal mondo"⁴¹ e di prendere le distanze dal mondo dei vivi. Tuttavia, alla fine del libro proprio al mondo dei vivi Gesualdo si sente condannato ("uno zero di giorni previsti,

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Bosco, p. 54.

senza una brace né un grido”).⁴² Inoltre, il protagonista pare convincersi di aver scelto lui stesso quel male che lo stava lentamente consumando e di averlo fatto “per pulire superbamente col mio sangue il sangue che sporcava le cose, e guarire, immolandomi in cambio di tutti, il disordine del mondo⁴³”. Nel caso di Gesualdo, dunque, come ricorda l’autore comisiano, “la malattia si avvia sempre più a coincidere con una pienezza e non con un vuoto di vita”.⁴⁴ Il protagonista del romanzo, infatti, si rende sempre più consapevole di come la sua situazione di malato sia in parte privilegiata, visto che gli permette di contemplare la vita. Di conseguenza, la malattia non è più considerata come semplice “stigma”, ossia “uno scandalo biologico e uno squilibrio dell’essere” il cui epilogo è la morte. Al contrario, la malattia assume una connotazione positiva, diventando “stemma” e quindi sancendo l’eccezionalità dello status del malato⁴⁵.

È proprio questa doppia valenza della malattia che permette a Gesualdo di cambiare la sua prospettiva verso la vita. In effetti, in un primo momento il mondo dei vivi sembra essere un’oasi di felicità persa per sempre, a causa del morbo che spinge i ricoverati della Rocca verso il baratro (“scoppiando a piangere all’improvviso nell’atto di accomodare attorno alle fosse del collo una cravatta d’altri tempi, una bianca sciarpa da ballo⁴⁶”). Alla fine però il mondo dei vivi, almeno per Gesualdo, appare come vuoto e

⁴² Bufalino, *Diceria dell’untore*, p. 133.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 11

⁴⁴ Bufalino, *Da stigma a stemma*, p. 7.

⁴⁵ Paino, p. 45-72.

⁴⁶ Bufalino, *Diceria dell’untore*, p. 23.

tutto uguale. La sua sopravvivenza diventa quindi una condanna a vivere in una "vita nuda, uno zero di giorni previsti, senza una brace né un grido" e anche una forma di tradimento di quel "silenzioso patto di non sopravviverci"⁴⁷ stretto tra gli internati nel sanatorio. Nonostante Gesualdo consideri la sua sopravvivenza un mezzo per testimoniare la sua esperienza, essa si delinea più come una beffa finale; egli stesso dichiara come "avrei preferito starmene zitto e portarmi lungo gli anni la mia diceria al sicuro sotto la lingua"⁴⁸. La morte era l'epilogo più naturale per un personaggio come Gesualdo ("era necessario morire, nella storia di ognuno"⁴⁹); egli aveva inteso la vita di tutti i giorni come "non-vita", una finzione che lo costringeva a recitare un ruolo predefinito. Perciò, attraverso la figura di Gesualdo si assiste nuovamente al capovolgimento dei concetti di vita e morte, in virtù del quale è la morte a veicolare qualcosa di autentico e a porre fine alla vacuità e alla teatralità della vita.

Un personaggio femminile del romanzo, Marta, rafforza significativamente l'idea di vita come finzione perpetua e di morte come conclusione di questa teatralità. Gesualdo è colpito dalla donna la prima volta che la vede danzare nel teatrino allestito dal Gran Magro per i ricoverati del sanatorio. In un primo momento, il protagonista la idealizza e la paragona alla figura di un "serafino, dalla vita sottile e dalle ali roventi, con occhi come ciottoli d'ebano nel fiero ovale ammansito da una corta chioma di luce!"⁵⁰. E poi

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

ancora, ripensando alla sua performance come ballerina la sera precedente, egli ricorda "un'aria di miracolo di cui mi era parso naturale circondarla nel corso della mia imbambolata serata⁵¹". Questi pensieri fanno a poco a poco passare in secondo piano la ricerca di Gesualdo "solo di un corpo da consumare subito⁵²", al fine di soddisfare i propri istinti naturali. Marta rappresenta, quindi, inizialmente, un barlume di vita a cui aggrapparsi per sentirsi vivi. Successivamente, però, questa idealizzazione svanisce, complice anche il silenzio della donna sul suo scomodo passato: lei era stata amante di un ufficiale tedesco delle SS e per questo motivo era riuscita a scampare ai campi di concentramento. Gesualdo è infastidito dalle reticenze e dalle bugie della donna: "non perdonandole dentro di me nessuna delle tante incongruenze di casi e stagioni⁵³". A questo punto, il protagonista inizia a guarire dalla sua malattia e a sentire per Marta "uno spogliamento e quasi un'ombra di fastidio⁵⁴", sia a causa dell'ombra di falsità che avvolge la donna sia a causa del suo stato di malata terminale. Quest'ultimo aspetto differenzia Marta da Gesualdo perché lui, guarito, è pronto a vivere di nuovo. D'altra parte, di fronte alla certezza di una guarigione, Gesualdo sente di non poter "rivisitare la vita, e le sue insolenze, il parapiglia preoccupante dei suoi commerci.[...] Il domani, perciò, tornava, sia pure in modo diverso, ad apparirmi irto di punte⁵⁵".

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103

Davanti alla prospettiva di tornare ad una vita che ormai ha assunto per lui i connotati di una "non-vita" - dopo la degenza alla Rocca e l'esperienza della malattia che gli ha permesso di guardare al mondo con occhi diversi -, Gesualdo decide di ripetersi nuovamente in Marta, dopo un breve periodo di lontananza. La sua decisione di riallacciare i rapporti con lei implica il rifiuto di voler affrontare una vita inautentica, quella che lo aspetta ora che è guarito. Come già detto, Gesualdo avrebbe preferito morire piuttosto che vivere con il pensiero di aver tradito il patto con i suoi compagni di degenza e con il pensiero di dover tornare a vivere nella vacuità del mondo che lo circondava. Perciò, decidendo di fuggire con Marta, è come se Gesualdo preferisse la morte alla vita inautentica, vista la situazione di malata terminale della donna. La stessa scelta di Gesualdo di non assistere ai funerali di Marta ma di essere presente al "bruciamento delle cose di lei nel forno crematorio della Rocca⁵⁶", si pone come un ulteriore rifiuto dei rituali della vita quotidiana. In realtà, il sanatorio e Marta, sebbene possano essere associati con l'idea di morte, rappresentano per Gesualdo un modo per rompere ulteriormente i suoi contatti con quella futile "non-vita" che, una volta abbracciata, lo avrebbe portato a tradire i propri compagni di sanatorio. Questo senso di tradimento continua infatti a perseguirlo per tutta la vita, come dimostra l'inizio del capitolo XVII. Il capitolo si apre situando la narrazione al 5 novembre 1971 e vede Gesualdo "ispezionare subito e da vicino ogni minima stilla"⁵⁷ della propria saliva per trovare delle tracce di sangue. In quel

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 126.

“macchè, niente⁵⁸” che conclude la ricerca di Gesualdo va intravisto il suo senso di colpa nell’essere costretto a vivere una vita inautentica.

In conclusione, *Le menzogne della notte* e *Diceria dell’untore* spingono il lettore a riflettere non solo sulla vita dei personaggi che popolano questi due romanzi, ma anche sulla propria esistenza. L’obiettivo di Bufalino pare proprio quello di fornire un’attenta disamina sui concetti di vita e morte in modo da non farli passare inosservati agli occhi del lettore. L’autore comisiano non vuole che a questi due concetti si guardi in modo approssimativo e scontato, affibbiando loro un’etichetta che renda impossibile una riflessione più approfondita. La comune dicitura di vita e morte diventa invertibile poiché ciò che viene normalmente considerato come appartenente alla sfera della prima in realtà appartiene alla seconda, e viceversa. I quattro personaggi di *Le menzogne della notte* scelgono la morte sperando che essa doni loro la vita eterna come martiri e sia fonte di ispirazione per una grande rivolta. Gesualdo, in *Diceria dell’untore*, è invece costretto a vivere in un mondo in cui tutto e tutti sono uguali con il rimorso di non aver tenuto fede al tacito patto che lo legava ai propri compagni di sanatorio; egli preferisce idealmente la morte, che avrebbe rappresentato un epilogo naturale e meno tribolato della propria esistenza. Queste vicende, sia pur molto diverse tra loro, pongono il lettore davanti all’urgenza di interrogarsi sul modo in cui egli conduce la propria esistenza allo scopo di verificare se essa non sia in realtà una vita vacua e fittizia.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

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