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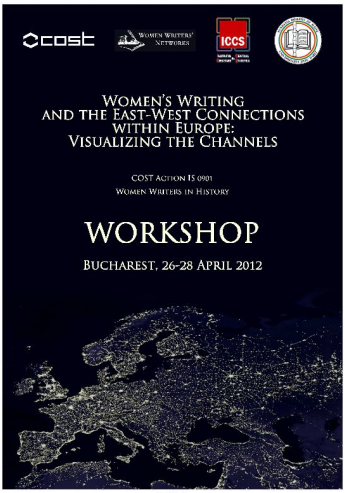
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Samira Bellil, *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* Récit testimonial et écriture du trauma

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ABSTRACT. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the emergence of women's narratives that tell the personal and collective trauma explodes. In the literary field, great attention is given to the word of the survivors and the trauma of writing that evokes not only the experience of the past through the transcript of the story, but also the psychological re-integration of the subject who has suffered trauma. Writing about trauma can break the silence, to put an early end to his traumatic experience. The story of Samira testimonial reveals the sexual violence that has established and commonplace in cities and suburbs in France where everything is reduced to the balance of power and domination. In such an environment, the torture suffered by women is not only physical but also moral: reputation shattered, shame and humiliation are complete the remaining ruins. Punch or hit iron, *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* [*In the Hell of Rotating*], hard-hitting testimony of the murders Samira Bellil psychic girls of cities in France, raise awareness and contribute to the development of feminist discourse.

Keywords: testimonial narrative, trauma, trauma writing, suburbs, cities, sexuality

Au tournant du XXIe siècle, l'apparition de récits des femmes qui racontent le trauma personnel et collectif explose. Dans le champ littéraire, une grande attention est donnée à la parole des survivants et à l'écriture du trauma qui évoque non seulement l'expérience du passé à travers la transcription du récit, mais aussi la *ré*intégration psychologique du sujet qui a subi le trauma. Plusieurs études ont été par ailleurs consacrées aux sujets traumatiques et à la textualisation du trauma. À travers différentes disciplines, sociologiques, psychologiques, psychanalytiques, ces études cherchent à analyser comment une expérience qui semble de prime abord ne pas être un récit, peut être donné avec des mots. Ce n'est pas mon but ici d'analyser les procédés employés pour narrer le fait traumatique. Ce qui m'importe avant tout, c'est la parole des femmes. Car il s'agit, principalement, de trauma des femmes. Des femmes à l'épreuve des supplices. Des femmes victimes des viols et de

mort ; des séquestrations, des humiliations, des agressions, des sévices, de bestialité. Peu de femmes survivent pour parler. Peu de femmes ont le courage de témoigner.

À la fin du XXe et encore plus au XXIe siècle, les femmes prennent la parole. Elles témoignent. Elles brisent le silence et dénoncent des mentalités dangereuses, obscurantistes et archaïques qui se pratiquent encore de nos jours non seulement au Moyen et Proche Orient, mais en Occident, en Europe, dans la France les banlieues.

Les années 2002 et 2003 ont vu la parution en France de deux témoignages de femmes. Celui de Samira Bellil, *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* (coll. « Impact » aux Éditions Denoël, 2002[1] et Éditions Denoël, Folio Documents, 2003) et celui de Souad, *Brûlée vive*, Document, (Oh! Éditions, 2003). Ressemblants, choquants, bouleversants tous deux. L'histoire personnelle de deux femmes, deux jeunes filles en l'occurrence, victime de sauvagerie sexuelle la première, victime de « crime d'honneur » la deuxième. Des victimes de la honte. Des rescapées qui témoignent.

Il est significatif de souligner que les deux livres se revendiquent dès la couverture comme des documents, ce qui dénie toute supposition ou soupçon de fiction. Le livre de Bellil a paru dans la collection « Folio Documents », et le livre de Souad, sous-titré : Document, est publié chez Oh! Éditions, maison qui a comme politique éditoriale la publication des témoignages, « des livres qui ont une forte résonance sur notre époque. Des livres qui dénoncent et dévoilent des réalités terribles, tragiques […] de notre société ».[1]

En apparence très différents, les deux livres ont un point commun majeur. Testimoniaux et autobiographiques, ils veulent laisser une empreinte, révéler, stigmatiser, dénoncer des pratiques et des faits dévastateurs pour des individus qui restent enfouis et rongent le sujet qui a subi le fait traumatique.

1. La honte de la vérité — la prise de parole

L'interruption brutale d'un moment de bonheur est une "catastrophe", une rupture dans la continuité. D'habitude, quand la peine est grande, la souffrance est indicible et la douleur vive. La mémoire est amnésie et la parole silence. Le sujet traumatique, paralysé par l'expérience de la honte, souvent répétée, s'enferme en lui, s'interdisant toute joie ou bonheur, devient individu exclu, marginal, souffrant. Mais la mémoire reste toujours vive et le fait traumatique se transforme en cauchemar à vie, ronge l'esprit et le corps.

Seule l'écriture, après une longue absence, permet au sujet écrivant de briser le silence, de mettre un début de fin à son vécu traumatique. Le trauma individuel devient collectif, Souad et Samira prennent la parole et racontent au nom de toutes les jeunes filles abusées et désabusées, exploitées, violées,

brûlées. Elles écrivent l'indicible et l'horreur pour éviter d'autres catastrophes sociales.

L'histoire de Samira est celle d'une fille de banlieue parisienne, des ghettos des cités de Saint-Denis et de Garges-lès-Gonesse. Samira a été victime de deux viols collectifs à quatorze ans, et d'un troisième à dix-sept ans. Elle a vécu une adolescence « ravagée, tenaillée par la honte, la culpabilité et le dégoût, le rejet de tous et la peur d'autres agressions. Écrasée de souffrance, d'incompréhension et de solitude, elle n'a pu réagir que par la violence et les délits, les galères et les fugues » (Stoquart, 2003 : 11). Dévastée, Samira se détruit petit à petit, dans l'abandon et l'incompréhension, l'ignorance aussi, elle fait des tentatives de suicide, se réfugie dans la drogue et l'alcool.

Son témoignage « coup de poing » (Stoquart, 11), dévoile la violence sexuelle qui s'est instituée et banalisée dans des cités et des banlieues en France où tout se réduit à « des rapports de forces et de domination » (*ibid.*). Dans un tel environnement, la torture que subissent les filles est non seulement physique mais aussi morale : réputation brisée, honte et humiliation viennent achever le reste de ruines.

Le livre de Samira qui intervient au terme d'une longue thérapie, est pour elle le moyen de laisser une trace de son histoire pour elle-même mais pour venir aussi en aide à ses « frangines », victimes, comme elle, des bandes des quartiers et de leur sauvagerie sexuelle.

Dans son parcours douloureux et périlleux, dans les larmes de sa douleur, et avec une spontanéité verbale, Samira raconte l'aire de mort que personne ne veut voir. La mémoire traumatisante devient parole réparatrice et libératrice, le corps devient verbe, et l'écriture du trauma métamorphose et synonyme de vie.

2. *Dans l'enfer des tournantes.* Les filles des cités. La réalité des banlieues

Dans l'enfer des tournantes[2] est le récit personnel de Samira Bellil et le long processus de réappropriation de sa vie et de son combat quotidien pendant des années entières à la suite des viols collectifs qu'elle a subis. Le récit n'intervient que treize ans après les faits, comme un acte de libération. « J'avais quatorze ans quand les faits sont arrivés, j'en ai vingt-sept aujourd'hui » (Bellil, 2003 : 288). De 1990 à 2003, le temps de guérison, de ré-construction aussi sera infiniment long. « Savez-vous qu'après cette affaire, moi qui suis la victime, j'ai pris quatorze ans dans la tronche, quatorze ans à essayer de comprendre et de m'en sortir, quatorze ans pour me reconstruire ? J'ai bataillé quatorze ans sans répit » (195), s'écrie Bellil à la suite de son procès au Tribunal.

Le récit de Samira Bellil se veut un exemple de discours de survivant et un acte politique contre la violence. En revendiquant le *Je* de la première personne, et avec une emphase explicite aux événements rapportés, le texte autobiographique de Bellil tient place de discours d'opposition contre le gang bandes dans les banlieues parisiennes et la pratique des viols collectifs, devenue dominante culturelle régnante dans certains quartiers des banlieues qu'on appelle désormais "tournantes". On ne parle pas encore des « tournantes dans les médias à ce moment-là », précise l'auteure (Bellil, 2003 : 280). Bellil est la première à dénoncer cette pratique occultée dans les banlieues.

Il faut dire en effet que dans les quartiers sensibles proches de grandes villes en France, la femme n'a pas de place. Entre rigorisme culturel du pays d'origine et cadre fortement érotisé, la tournante est un jeu et les filles un objet.

Fadela Amara, militante depuis les années 1980 contre le racisme et pour la reconnaissance du droit des femmes, Présidente depuis 2003 du Mouvement « Ni Putes Ni Soumises » tente de briser l'omerta et de poursuivre les débats engagés sur les filles de banlieues et les violences masculines. Dans son livre *Ni Putes Ni Soumises* (2003), face au constat amer de la décomposition du lien social et de la dégradation des rapports entre hommes et femmes, elle « délivre un message de colère, de lutte et d'espoir, [c]elui de voir les filles des cités gagner leur liberté, dans un rapport pacifié avec l'autre sexe » (Amara, 2003 : quatrième de couverture).

Dans les cités en France, « les garçons jouent les durs et se vantent de « "consommer la meuf" » (Amara, 2003 : 54). « Les plus durs des durs considèrent les filles comme des objets qu'ils peuvent se passer les uns aux autres. Certains vont même jusqu'à "partager" leur copine et mettre en place de véritables pièges pour être bien vus du groupe. Ce sont les phénomènes de "tournantes", nouveau terme pour désigner les viols collectifs, accompagnés parfois d'actes de barbarie » (Amara, 54).

Sur le sujet des viols collectifs dans les banlieues, il est significatif de signaler le film de Fabrice Génestal *La squale* (2000), conçu comme un film anti-viol dans le but de briser le silence autour du sujet de viols de bandes. Génestal montre dans son film tous les stéréotypes dominants dans les banlieues, drogues, violence, délinquance, les black-blanc-beur bandes, les graffitis sur les murs des cités et le dysfonctionnement dans les familles d'immigrés pointant ainsi les banlieues en France comme lieux sordides de mal-être inguérissable.

Dans les banlieues, les filles et les garçons sont en manque d'amour, de considération et de respect. C'est un phénomène perceptible dans la culture rap. Cette musique et cette danse, « avec leur phraséologie et leur gestuelle "machos", peuvent paraître très dures » (Amara, 55). La présence féminine est peu tolérée, si ce n'est que dans des séquences douteuses – ce qui est en

train de changer avec une génération d'artistes beures de talent et de persévérance comme Lââm ou Diam's.

Le processus de ghettoïsation propre aux États-Unis est synonyme du processus de dégradation dans les banlieues françaises nourries des mêmes ingrédients, signale Fadela Amara (67). On retrouve la même misère sociale, les mêmes trafics, la sexualité cachée et subie, l'obscurantisme, « l'islam des caves »[3] et la régression du statut des filles.

« Malaise dans la civilisation » (Freud, 1971) ou « Malaise des banlieues » en France (Amara, 2003: 88-89) depuis notamment les années 1980,[4] le drame de Samira, comme celui de Sohane, « belle et insoumise » (Amara, 6), brûlée vive dans un local à poubelles de la cité Balzac, à Vitry-sur-Seine, en novembre 2002, entrent dans le cadre de violence dans les cités en France.[5]

Après le drame de Sohane, l'histoire vécue et racontée par Samira « a opéré une sorte de déclic » (Amara, 101). Plus que drame social l'enjeu était politique. Les femmes s'organisent et sous la houlette de Fadela Amara organisent une Marche à travers la France, le 1er février 2003.

Samira Bellil participe à cette marche, dans plusieurs étapes-villes en France, aux côtés de Fadela Amara, qui a demandé à Samira d'être la marraine de la marche, et de Loubna Méliane, auteur de *Vivre libre* (2003).[6]

3. L'écriture du trauma

Le drame de Samira devient celui du traumatisme, il n'est plus seulement un drame de transgression. Une vie arrêtée et non plus seulement débauchée,[7] le trauma se traduit par une série de sentiments de culpabilité et de peur, d'échec scolaire ou social, des séjours en hôpital psychiatrique, des longues thérapies, le sentiment de culpabilité, parfois même du suicide, tellement la blessure psychique et la douleur morale sont profondes pour ces morts vivants.

Le comportement négateur, voire humiliant de la famille, accentue l'impact du trauma sur la victime. La souffrance personnelle, le saccage caché, la brisure, la torture, le "meurtre psychique", affectent non seulement le corps mais atteignent surtout la partie la plus incorporelle de la personne s'inscrivant dans un interminable parcours dans l'espace mental. Écrire le trauma ce n'est pas un acte facile. C'est douloureux, éprouvant, déchirant. La personne qui a subi le trauma doit chercher dans sa mémoire enfouie des choses et des événements qu'elle a honte ou peur de révéler.

Reconnu à sa juste valeur depuis relativement peu de temps, le phénomène des études de trauma articule une des questions centrales qui hante la critique littéraire comme le souligne Cathy Caruth, une des figures importantes dans ce domaine de recherche : « [o]ne of the central concerns in literary criticism and theory is the relation between literature and reality, or language

and experience » (Caruth, 1995[1]).[8] C'est toute la difficulté de comprendre et d'interpréter l'événement.

Pour Caruth, la nature énigmatique du trauma repose essentiellement sur deux aspects. D'une part, les réactions engendrées par une existence catastrophique manifestés à retardement, de façon répétitive et incontrôlée (Caruth, 1996 : 11).[9] D'autre part, le retour insistant des symptômes ou manifestations traumatiques entrave la cognition (Caruth, 1995[2] : 5).[10]

Au début de son texte, Bellil révèle le lien entre sa décision à ré-ouvrir le trauma subi dans un but d'édification collective. Bellil a le besoin de témoigner pour aider les autres. « Réveiller ces souvenirs est une souffrance que j'accepte pour le témoignage » (Bellil, 35).

La dédicace en début du livre « À mes frangines de galère pour qu'elles sachent qu'on peut s'en sortir (Bellil, 7), tout comme les références de l'auteur qui marquent son désir de « susciter une prise de conscience » (305) afin que son histoire puisse « servir à d'autres filles » (264), donne au récit une dimension socio-politique et confirme l'intention de son auteure d'entrer en dialogue avec d'autres histoires de viols.

> […] je voudrais faire un livre pour que tout cela ne me soit pas arrivé pour rien. Je voudrais dire à celles qui ont subi ce que j'ai subi qu'il y a toujours un espoir de s'en sortir (264). Je veux laver, nettoyer, vider tout ce qu'il y a en moi (265).

Pour Bellil l'écriture est *cathartique*, une praxis purificatrice tant physique que mentale. Plus que les marqueurs physiques, les marqueurs psychiques seront plus profonds. « Ce corps disloqué, éclaté qu'il était urgent de soulager. Je ne parvenais plus à me tenir droite tant le poids de la vie sur mon dos était insupportable » (265-266). « C'est trop grave, je ne dois pas me taire. […] que la terre entière soit au courant de ce que j'ai vécu » (280).

Dans une étrange modification de la flèche du temps dont le cours semble parfois aller à rebours, Bellil entreprend son récit autobiographique comme une destruction totale, biologique et neurologique. La dimension du temps est cassé, pétrifié dans une "catastrophe" qui quoi qu'elle soit advenue dans le passée, demeure "présente" dans l'esprit de la victime.

> Cette introspection douloureuse est une découverte […] Je remonte dans le temps. Je fouille dans ma mémoire pour rechercher les images et les sensations de ma petite enfance, enregistrées, puis refoulées dans des coins retirés de mon inconscient (267). J'étais une ruine avant […] je suis un désert apocalyptique maintenant (193).

Si l'écriture du trauma signe le moment et la dynamique du passage où le sujet tente d'exister en essayant d'inscrire un fait réel vécu non trans-

missible, le livre de Bellil s'inscrit dans une dynamique du récit conduisant à l'inscription de l'indicible et de l'inavouable. D'autre part, la genèse du sujet reconnu par ses pairs inscrit Bellil dans le domaine du Symbolique.

En revendiquant son récit, Bellil donne au livre la forme du témoignage par opposition. *Dans l'enfer des tournantes* devient ainsi un récit culturel significatif dans la contribution de la représentation de l'image de la femme violée. Bellil est la première femme beure à écrire son expérience des viols collectifs et son livre a immédiatement attiré les médias d'autant plus qu'il a été publié au même moment que s'est passé le drame de Sohiane Benziane, brûlée vive dans un local à poubelles à Vitry-sur-Seine, dans la banlieue parisienne, parce qu'elle a résisté aux demandes sexuelles de son petit ami.

Bellil évoque au début du livre comment est perçue l'histoire du viol par des membres de sa communauté ethnique qui ont leur propre vision des choses, accuser la victime et justifier le viol.

> L'histoire des jugements et des procédures montre plus profondément combien l'histoire du viol ne saurait se limiter à celle de la violence. C'est un entremêlant complexe entre le corps, le regard, la morale que cette histoire vient rappeler. La honte [...] invinciblement éprouvée par la victime, tient à l'intimité subie, à l'image qui en est donnée, à sa publicité possible. Elle mobilise le thème opaque de la souillure, l'avilissement par le contact : le mal traversant la victime pour la transformer aux yeux des autres (Vigarello, 1998 : 8).

Dans le cas de Bellil c'est pire. Fille de banlieue, fille des cités, Maghrébine de surcroît, Bellil se veut victime à fonction tripartite : victime physique, victime morale et victime sociale. L'atteinte intime des victimes transforme en irrémédiable traumatisme ce qui auparavant était honte morale et offense sociale. Tout change lorsque le versant psychologique s'ajoute aux deux précédents plus visibles mais plus superficiels. « Il rend les conséquences plus définitives, il met en jeu ce » que vit la personne, ce qu'est son identité » (Vigarello, 1998 : 9-10).

Ce que Bellil rapporte comme « la loi de la cité » (Bellil, 54) est étroitement associé avec la culture des bandes et le contexte familial traditionnel, « le machisme traditionnel de la maison est descendu dans la rue. C'est devenu la loi de la cité » (54). L'emploi par Bellill du terme « tournantes » chargé de connotation socio-culturelle, s'oppose à l'expression plus neutre – mais aussi plus agressive – « viols collectifs » reflétant l'attitude comportementaliste des violeurs. Au même titre, la présentation de la pratique comme « tournante » par Bellil est connotée de l'aspect courant de la violence établie, tournante – courante. « L'habitude était de "serrer les meufs" ou de les "faire tourner" comme un joint » (Bellil, 53-54).

Cette narration “masculinisée” pose l’existence de deux types de filles dans les quartiers des banlieues, « les filles “bien” et les “taspés” » (54) comme deux rôles possibles pour les femmes. Par conséquent, celles qui « bravent les interdits » (50) se trouvent étiquetées comme « fille facile » pire, « fille à cave » « petite salope » (55) ce qui désigne une victime potentielle de viol. Toute fille déviée du rôle de « fille bien » devient désormais blâmée, passe de l’autre côté du mur. « Ça vous suit partout. Ça vous colle à la peau » (55).

Cependant, bien que dès le début Bellil affirme que c’est « la loi de la cité » qui fait loi dans les ghettos où vivent les Maghrébins, elle se montre comme une jeune femme rebelle, de celles qui « bravent les interdits » (50) et qui, à l’âge seulement de quatorze ans sort avec un garçon de dix-neuf ans, le chef, ou sous-chef de bande de surcroît, donc amour propre de la force dominatrice, elle tombe dans le piège de l’amour la prédestinant à devenir « fille à cave » (55). Elle sera battue et torturée par le groupe de bande avec l’acquiescement de son ami qui, quant à lui ne participe pas au viol collectif de la bande. On est devant la dynamique de « la loi de la cité ».

Dans la “machine infernale” à rebours, Samira Bellil met en parole le fait traumatique qui n’avait pas jusqu’à là droit de cité. Si ce transfert est significatif de la persistance du trauma qui reste aussi fort qu’à ses débuts, il est aussi significatif des pratiques d’inscription et de symbolisation.

Si au début de son récit testimonial Bellil éprouve une profonde angoisse liée au fait traumatique faisant réagir son corps tel un phénomène électrique et lui donnant des épilepsies aigües, l’écriture devient refuge de son corps et de sa pensée qui au bout de longues épreuves et souffrances. Dans un bouleversement émotionnel, l’auteure raconte son trauma dans ses symptômes les plus extravagants et les plus laids, faisant en toute conscience la radiographie de sa pensée et de son corps qui deviennent un pour valider la parole qui devient à son tour validité symbolique du témoignage. « Utiliser des mots comme des choses, les montrer concrètement avec l’insondable effort psychotique, ne constitue pas un déficit de la pensée, mais le seul outil possible pour amorcer la dimension de la parole là où toute fiabilité s’est écroulée. Dans ces conditions, le doute destructeur de tout garant de la parole est un point de passage obligé pour établir dans le transfert un lieu garanti de la vérité. Alors, seulement les mots, les pensées peuvent cesser d’être des choses et finissent par trouver le chemin de la métaphore », soulignent Françoise Davoine et Françoise, Jean-Max Gaudillière (Davoine, Gaudillière, 2006 : 158).

Dire pour Bellil c’est taire le contraire. Après tant d’années d’enfer, la manifestation impressionnante d’épilepsies, d’insomnies, tout comme les dépressions, étaient liées à un choc horrible, un traumatisme à l’origine des désordres post-traumatiques et à une névrose à retardement.

Équivalent à un stigma, le trauma enfonce Samira Bellil tour à tour dans le marasme, la déprime, l'alcoolisme, l'épilepsie, la thérapie, en créant de toutes pièces une intériorité psychique désastreuse, sinistrée par l'absence de la vie, des rêves, de désir.

« Le trauma réduit l'individu […] à une intériorité envahie par l'angoisse de néantisation, à l'éprouvante. Devenu chose parmi les choses, il est voué à la solitude, à une absolue déréliction, à une rupture avec tous les liens communautaires et culturel » (Davoine, Gaudillière, 2006 : 217).

Après la parution du livre de Bellil *Dans l'enfer des tournantes*, un autre livre, celui de Laurent Muchielli *Le scandale des "tournantes"* (2005) pointe l'insécurité qui règne en France depuis les années 90. Les « tournantes » deviennent un lieu de démarcation dans le désordre social dans lequel les adolescents d'origine maghrébine sont devenus tout un symbole d' « insécurité » et les « tournantes » est un phénomène qui émerge d'une série d'images de sans loi associées aux banlieues, « la figure du jeune Arabe des quartiers, individu incivil, incivilisé, génétiquement voué à demeurer en deçà de la civilisation » (Guénif-Souilamas et Macé, 2004 : 60). En même temps il représente une image de la bande en conflit permanent entre homme tyrannique et femme faible « d'un côté les garçons tout-puissants, de l'autre les filles dominées et apeurées » (Muchielli, 2005 : 26).

En déroute permanente, sans repères et sans domicile, rejetée par tous, y compris sa famille, « mes parents ont fait une croix sur moi » (Bellil, 149), « On me laisse me décomposer comme une merde » (167), Samira s'enferme en elle-même vivant mal son aliénation. Elle se culpabilise longtemps, et jusqu'à sa thérapie, d'avoir été la seule raison de son drame. Elle n'avait pas à courir les rues. Dans la rue se cache le danger.

Samira témoigne de la mentalité régnante des familles maghrébines et mixtes dans les cités où la réputation des filles est primordiale. « Une réputation, c'est très important dans une cité (55). « Les filles "bien" sont à la maison, font le ménage, s'occupent de leurs frères et sœurs et ne sortent que pour aller à l'école » (54-55). Et puis, il y a les autres, « celles qui traînent dehors comme les garçons, les p'tites cailleras […] [celles qui] se maquillent, vont en boîte et fument » (54-55). Dans la société occidentale où vit Samira, il n'y a pas défaut. Pourtant l'écart est grand et grave pour sa communauté ethnique où les « tabous [sont] envahissants » (67). « Chez les musulmans, ne plus être vierge pour une jeune fille est un sacrilège et je sais que mon père pourrait me tuer pour cela » (69).

Dans la micro-société où vit Samira les rôles victime-agresseurs sont inversés. « Tu l'as bien cherché à traîner dans les rues ! » (68). Samira finit par se culpabiliser elle-même, elle n'est pas peut-être victime, elle mérite tout cela, elle est la responsable unique de son malheur. « Une fille qui "traîne", c'est une pute, donc qu'elle ne se plaigne pas s'il lui arrive des embrouilles » (43).

> [J]e me sens mal, honteuse et vide. J'ai l'impression d'être un tas de merde, d'être crade, dégueulasse. […] Comme je me déteste ! Comme je me hais ! (150).
> Je bascule d'état en état. Fille à cave, fille violente, fille souriante, fille épileptique, fille gentille, fille galère […] Je suis dans une spirale qui m'aspire (150).

Dans la dernière partie de son récit, Bellil raconte comment Fanny, sa psychothérapeute, lui suggère d'écrire son histoire. Écrire le trauma est un acte libérateur. Quand le trauma est transcrit, il devient enfin passé.

Bellil reconnaît l'importance de raconter son histoire comme un besoin essentiel d'exister, de réclamer son corps, sa vie, sa dignité. « Ma délivrance sera un livre » (296). « Je veux laisser une trace » (280). « […] le procès ne m'a pas rendu ma dignité. Mon mal-être est toujours là. Ma boule de chagrin aussi. Elle a rétréci, certes, mais elle est toujours là *à grouiller dans mon ventre*.[11] Elle résiste au milieu de mon bonheur » (296).

En écrivant son histoire, Bellil prend conscience qu'elle n'est pas responsable de son drame et rejette le point de vue élaboré jusqu'alors par les autres : « Je prends lentement conscience que je ne suis pas responsable » (267). « J'avais longtemps cru que mes bêtises, mon comportement agressif et mon calvaire en étaient les principales causes. Je m'aperçois qu'ils ne sont qu'une réponse aux violences qui déjà m'avaient été faites. Je me souviens des coups, des crachats, des insultes, du mépris, qui furent les seuls modes de relation que mon père a eu avec moi. Des souvenirs insupportables de mon père, j'en ai la pelle. Je le revois, par exemple, me poursuivant soûl avec un couteau de boucher. Cela ne s'oublie pas » (267-268). « J'ai toujours été bouffée de cris et de coups » (51).

« Un livre où je pourrais retracer mon histoire, expliquer à tous mes proches par quoi je suis passée et fermer leur gueule à tous ceux qui n'ont pas cru en moi », s'écrie l'auteure (Bellil, 280).

En dénonçant son père, c'est toute la société arabe machiste et patriarcale que dénonce Bellil. Les filles ne sont rien, moins que rien pire que merde. Elles reçoivent des coups et des insultes sans raison. Une attitude patriarcale rétrograde et laxiste qui est reine même pour les Arabes d'Occident. Aucune place n'est réservée à la femme que pour le ménage et les enfants. Elle doit rester enfermée à la maison se consacrer aux tâches ménagères et elle n'a pas de mot à dire. Victimes de culture et victimes de religion. Samira admet que sa mère a été aussi victime sans que l'ait compris. Sans avoir fait sa révolution culturelle. « Je comprends aussi que ma mère a été une victime qui s'ignorait. Qu'elle a été dans l'incapacité totale de dire « stop » aux excès de mon père. Elle en pouvait que subir ou fuir. Subir, elle avait été préparée depuis son plus jeune âge. Fuir était déjà un choix qu'elle a réalisé

en faisant ses saisons en Grèce » (268). « Elle s'est émancipée depuis qu'elle a travaillé dans une boutique à Saint-Germain-des-Prés. […] Elle est beaucoup plus classe et elle n'a plus le même regard sur la vie » (184). « Elle a réussi à protéger mes sœurs de la violence de mon père : "Tu ne feras pas avec les deux dernières ce que tu as fait à Samira !" » (184).

Les effets du crime, le traumatisme et la douleur intérieure seront toujours actifs. L'issue du crime ne sera plus toutefois l'immoralité, mais la mort physique. L'enjeu n'est plus la débauche, mais la brisure d'identité, blessure irrémédiable à laquelle la victime est condamnée.

La violence sexuelle s'impose comme violence première, d'autant plus atroce qu'il atteint un être projeté en idéal de pureté.

Samira se livre à des aveux inavouables et écrit son récit, aussi affreux que monstrueux, avec ses batailles et ses douleurs, sa mémoire et sa peur. Au lieu de fuir son passé, paradoxalement elle veut confirmer son expérience. L'enjeu cognitif est de taille, prélude à l'ouverture du champ de logos. Dans la cas de Samira, le silence renverrait le sujet à la non-existence.

Bellil avoue qu'écrire le trauma n'a pas été facile. Elle avait à remuer tous les mauvais souvenirs défoulés ou latents dans sa mémoire, elle devait revivre son meurtre psychique.

« Comme toujours, mon corps a parlé. J'ai senti une grosse bulle d'air sortir de mon ventre, puis de ma bouche. Ma voix était sourde et ma mâchoire douloureuse. Puis les larmes sont sorties » (298).

« Tout ce que j'avais subi de violence et de déni remontait à la surface » (269). Si elle écrit le livre, c'est dans le seul but de témoigner. « Chaque fois, je vois resurgir les images et les souvenirs que je m'efforce d'oublier » (43), « Réveiller ces souvenirs est une souffrance que j'accepte pour le témoignage » (35).

Si c'est dans le silence que naît la parole, support de notre pensée et de notre vie, *a contrario*, il est un silence qui est une véritable prison de la parole.

> […] je n'avais pas la prétention d'arrêter les viols collectifs. […] Je voulais juste briser la loi du silence et susciter une prise de conscience chez nos mamans, nos papas, nos frères, nos sœurs, nos voisins, nos voisines, nos cousins, nos cousines, de Paris comme de province. […] j'ai voulu attendre la société dans son ensemble, briser cette loi du silence qui nous fait tant souffrir et avec laquelle nous avons accepté de vivre depuis longtemps (305).

« L'être est emmuré, la parole lui a été ôtée. Les murailles sont d'autant plus épaisses qu'elles sont indicibles. La pensée est prisonnière, seuls les mots pourraient la libérer. Les mots pris en otages, l'échange est tronqué, infirme. La relation à l'autre ne peut être que parasitée. Dès lors, l'être vit en circuit dénaturé, ne s'alimentant que partiellement de la richesse de ses

semblables. Privé de sa parole, il n'a accès qu'à une partie de lui-même. Nous nommons ce silence privatif « silence de mort » (Solaire, 2002 : 15-16).

> Grâce au livre, je pense avoir trouvé une forme de dignité. Auparavant, il ne s'est pas passé un jour sans que je pense à mes humiliations. […] Je ne me définissais jamais autrement que par mon malheur. Je n'ai plus à utiliser ma carte d'identité de victime, j'existe maintenant autrement. Je suis Samira, j'ai vingt-neuf ans. Je crois en la vie et j'aspire au bonheur. J'ai fait ce que j'avais à faire pour en être capable (Bellil, 304).

Samira a écrit son livre, a gagné son procès au Tribunal, quatorze ans après, elle peut enfin se remettre. Elle a pleins de projets, elle réussit ses diplômes, la vie lui appartient, à vingt-huit ans.

> Ce livre laissera la trace ineffaçable de mon vécu, et je pourrai enfin ranger mon histoire sur l'étagère d'une bibliothèque » (Bellil, 285). « Il fallait toutes ces années de reconstruction pour que je puisse supporter de livrer le récit de ma vie sans me démolir (298).
>
> […] tout est fini, tout est dit, tout est enterré », conclut l'auteure (298).

4. Témoignage et combat féminin. Pour une émancipation des femmes des banlieues

« Tous ceux qui ont lu ce récit ont été scandalisés, horrifiés, et se sont demandé comment il était possible qu'en France, à côté de chez nous, dans notre société moderne, une fille puisse vivre cet acte de torture, cet acte barbare. Les viols collectifs n'étaient pas quelque chose de nouveau mais pour la première fois une victime avait le courage de les dénoncer haut et fort », souligne Fadela Amara (2003 : 101-102).

Coup de poing ou coup de fer, le témoignage-choc de Samira Bellil sur les meurtres psychiques des filles des cités en France, éveille les consciences et contribue au développement du discours féministe.

L'émotion collective change à l'heure moderne à l'égard du crime sexuel. L'égalité nouvelle entre l'homme et la femme transforment de part et d'autre l'attitude des victimes.

Le combat féminin se fait dans la sphère transnationale, pas avec le corps mais avec les mots. Le discours devient parole et la parole écriture et acte de dénonciation. Voici l'action des femmes : répondre à la violence et au répugnant avec l'esprit et des livres. Un acte libérateur au malheur qui menace et chosifie le sujet-femme. Une nouvelle forme d'activisme social et un nouveau type d'humanisme et de revendication.

NOTES

1. On peut lire par ailleurs sur le Site des Oh! éditions : « Nous publions de nombreux témoignages de femmes dénonçant les violences dont elles sont victimes, d'incroyables récits et romans ou encore des textes dans lesquels des personnalités se livrent. […] Les livres que nous publions rencontrent un large public. Entre 2002 et 2006, nous avons publié 31 livres : 24 ont été présents sur la liste des best-sellers et 18 ont été largement vendus à l'international. « Brûlée vive », par exemple, a été traduit en 32 langues. Voir URL : <http://www.oheditions.com/spip.php?breve1>. Consulté le 14 août 2010.

2. Toutes les références au texte de Bellil sont tirées de l'édition de 2003 : Samira Bellil, *Dans l'enfer des tournantes*, avec le soutien et la collaboration de Josée Stoquart, Postface inédite de l'auteur, édition révisée par Guy Birenbaum, Paris, Éditions Denoël, Folio Documents.

3. L'expression est donnée par Fadela Amara. « Il faut bien comprendre que cette expression, qui aujourd'hui désigne l'islam de l'ombre, de l'obscurantisme, désignait au départ l'islam de l'indifférence, de l'oubli ». Fadela Amara, avec la collaboration de Sylvie Zappi (2003), *Ni Putes Ni Soumises*. Paris, Éditions la Découverte, 71.

4. Avec les événements survenus aux Minguettes, un quartier dans la banlieue de Lyon, qui avaient abouti à la marche des Beurs en hiver 1983.

5. Le 4 octobre 2002, Sohane Benziane, 17 ans, meurt brulée vive dans un local à poubelle de la cité Balzac de Vitry-sur-Seine. Son ex petit ami n'a pas toléré que Sohane résiste à ses tentatives de reconquêtes, il organise une sorte d'expédition punitive avec complice et témoins. Une marche est alors organisée « La marche des femmes des quartiers contre les ghettos et pour l'égalité », autour d'un slogan provocateur : « Ni Putes Ni Soumises ». Cette marche, partie de Vitry-sur-Seine en hommage à Sohane, qui s'achève à Paris le 8 mars 2003 dans une manifestation de milliers de personnes, exigeait la fin de la loi du silence et la liberté de parole de toutes les femmes et filles de la République. Voir URL :
<http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ni_putes_ni_soumises>. Consulté le 14 août 2010.

6. Méliane, Loubna (2003), *Vivre libre*. Paris, Oh! Éditions.

7. On n'a qu'à faire ici allusion aux 11 fillettes agressées à Cergy en 1995, dans la même région et période à peu près que Bellil. Elles ont accumulé malaises et « échecs scolaires, cauchemars, peurs que leur bourreau ne revienne ». Voir « Retour à la maison des horreurs », in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 13-19 février 1997.

8. « [L'un] des thèmes central dans la critique littéraire et la théorie est la relation entre la littérature et la réalité, ou la langue et l'expérience ». Ma traduction. Caruth, Cathy (1995), *Encounters*: *Reference and Responsibility in Deconstructive Writing*. New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press.

9. « The overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena ». Caruth, Cathy (1996), *Unclaimed Experience*: *Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 11.

10. « The delay of incompletion in knowing, or even in seeing, an overwhelming occurrence that then remains, in its insistent return, absolutely true to the event ».

Cathy Caruth ed. (1995), *Trauma*: *Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 5.

11. C'est moi qui souligne. Samira Bellil a souffert plusieurs années durant d'un mal qui lui rongeait le ventre. Elle avoue elle-même que la grosse bulle sort d'abord de son ventre avant de sortir de sa bouche (Bellil, 2003 : 298). Son livre voit le jour en 2002. Samira Bellil meurt le 4 septembre 2004 à l'âge de 31 ans d'un cancer de l'estomac.

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<http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samira_Bellil>

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Envisioning the Future of the American Feminist Literary (Counter)Canon

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ABSTRACT. Starting from an inquiry into the formation of the American feminist literary (counter)canon, the paper raises several questions about its future. It does so by focusing on three challenges currently posed by the new approaches to literature and the new direction of feminist ideology which threaten to destabilize this canon: the cultural-studies approach to literature as "cultural text," the transnational view of literature under the impact of globalization, and the subversiveness of postfeminist ideology. The future of the feminist literary (counter)canon is discussed in relation with the much wider process of decanonization of American literature.

Keywords: feminist literary canon, cultural studies, postfeminism, de-/re-territorialization of American literature, decanonization, multiculturalism, trans-nationalism, globalization.

The feminist challenge to the literary canon, which critiqued the neglect of many women writers and the distortion and misreading of the few recognized women writers became strikingly visible in the late 60s and all through the 70s, accompanying not only the mounting influence of the feminist movement, but also the rise of a whole constellation of women writers and poets, many of them belonging to formerly marginalized racial and ethnic groups. Among the most notable examples are: Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Toni Cade Bambara, Louise Erdrich, Leslie Marmon Silko, Sandra Cisneros, Gloria Anzaldua, Maxine Hong Kingston, Janice Mirikitani, to mention only a few. In a genuine avant-garde spirit they created new discursive practices and new technologies of subjectivization, opened new fields of alternative signification, invented a new poetics, which, in a book on contemporary American women poets, I have tentatively called "poetics of empowerment" (Mihaila 1995: 6), and they proclaimed a new reader-response aesthetic highlighting the extra-literary component of the hermeneutic act and the intentionality of the creative enterprise.

Starting with the late 1970s, feminist critical discourse has been oriented toward identification of strategies of empowerment and debates over the sensitive issues of canon formation. Such strategies as self-modeling, self-definition and identity formation, the rethinking of women's experience, the retrieval from oblivion of women's past through revisionary mythmaking, the creation of a new symbolic, and the rewriting of women's experience by opening up its forbidden, silenced and suppressed zones have been presented as dependent on the redefinition of gender, of the body and of sexuality as historical, cultural and political constructs, as subversive of the patriarchal discourse and the binary oppositions it engenders.

Feminist criticism forced the gates of the canon by either emphasizing alternative readings that reinterpret women's character and actions, and thus challenge sexist ideology, or by focusing on expanding the canon to include more women writers. The first stage of this process, "the discovery, republication, and reappraisal of lost or undervalued writers and their work – from Rebecca Harding Davis and Kate Chopin through Zora Neale Hurston and Mina Loy to Meridel LeSueur and Rebeca West," as Lillian Robinson was among the first to remark (Robinson 1983: 87), was followed by the compulsion to determine if the recovered works met existing aesthetic quality criteria or if the criteria intrinsically excluded women and thus needed to be revised. In addition to the creation of a "feminist (counter)canon," feminist critics have sought to establish a female literary tradition, which they successfully documented in the literary histories published since the mid-1980's, such as *Columbia Literary History of the United States* (1988), edited by Emory Elliott or *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, edited by Sacvan Bercovich and, more especially, in *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*: *The Tradition in English* (1985), edited by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar.

For reasons of space I will give only one example of the feminist intervention into the canon: the canon of modernism, since modernism has been one of the most authoritatively canonized literary period. The male chauvinistic canon of American modernist literature, just like modernist literary canons everywhere else, included very few female authors, and even when included, women's canonical status was either that of "minor major writers" as in the case of Gertrude Stein, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather and Katherine Ann Porter or minor writers such as H. D., Amy Lowell, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Marianne Moore and Elizabeth Bishop.

The feminist and the multicultural countercanon reconfigured modernism by recuperating female authors together with the voices of gendered racial, ethnic and sexual "Others." Critics and theorists have questioned the gender politics of modernism (Marianne DeKoven's study *Rich and Strange*: *Gender, History, Modernism*, Rita Felski's *The Gender of Modernity*, Bonnie Kime Scott's anthology *Gender in Modernism*), investigated the construction of

femininity (Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, *No Man's Land. The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century*), explored sexuality and the repression of various sexualities (Hugh Stevens and Caroline Howlett (eds.). *Modernist Sexualities*), mapped out the female literary tradition (Elaine Showalter, *Sister's Choice*: *Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing*; Marjorie Perloff, *Poetic License*: *Studies in the Modernist and Post-modernist Lyric*) and pointed out women's contribution to the making of American "ethnic modernism" (Werner Sollors, *Ethnic Modernism.*) – to mention only a few of the many attempts to re-read modernism with an eye to the female presence. My short list of modernist women writers the scholarship has brought to critical attention in the last four decades includes Djuna Barnes, Lola Ridge, Anita Loos, Mina Loy, Anzia Yezierska, Mary Antim, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Susan Glaspell, Janet Flanner, Nella Larsen, Tillie Lerner Olsen, Muriel Rukeyser, Kay Boyle, Genevieve Taggard, Jessie Fauset, Ellen Glasgow and Zora Neal Hurston – to name only a few.

The revisionary multicultural canon of American literature forged in the 1980s so as to include differences of race, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation was soon turned into a pedagogical canon by such literary histories as already mentioned and by such influential, widely circulated anthologies as *The Heath Anthology of American Literature* (1989), edited by Paul Lauter, now at its fifth edition. It totally absorbed and therefore implicitly institutionalized the feminist (counter)canon. Quite often, women writers, from Harriet Jacobs and Charlotte Perkins Gilman to Toni Morrison, would be given more attention and allotted more pages than, for instance, the writers of the American Renaissance or those of the Lost Generation. To give an example, in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*, the chapter "Women Writers between the Wars" runs on 21 pages (Elliott 1988: 822-843) while Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald receive 5 pages (Elliott 1988: 881-886).

A closer look at the American literary canon as it appears in the latest editions of standard anthologies and literary histories, discloses important changes pointing out to a rapid process of de- and re-territorialization (Deleuze and Guattari 1972) of American literature in the globalizing world.

These changes raise legitimate questions over the future of the feminist (counter)canon, which, in the last fifty years or so, has reflected some of the most notable reconfigurations of the American literary scene. I will therefore attempt to address several such questions from the standpoint of the challenges posed to the American literary canon in general, and to the feminist canon in particular, by three recent destabilizing developments in the approach to literature and in the ideology of feminism: 1) the cultural-studies approach to literature, which reduces literature to the status of one more cultural text among many others that give an approximation of the shifting, fluid boundaries of American culture (see *A New Literary History of America* edited by Marcus and Sollors); 2) the opening of the boundaries of national literatures and the

placing of American literature in a transnational, global context (the de- and re-territorialization of American literature, which is now read as world literature – See Wai Chee Dimock and Lawrence Buell), and 3) the anti-feminist undertones of the ideology of postfeminism.

The future of the feminist (counter)canon is uncertain as the future of the literary canon is itself uncertain. Starting with the late 1980s, the rise of cultural studies has threatened the general status of literature among the humanities. It has triggered out a slow process of decanonization of literature. Cultural studies reduced literature to the sum of its component texts, treated as cultural rather than literary texts and valued for the set of social practices they mediate. Viewed through the lens of cultural studies, the value of literature, like the value of all other cultural texts, is indicated by the significance of the cultural work performed by the respective text. Instead of literary canons, cultural studies promote provisional, individual "reading lists (of texts)" compiled in accordance with the particular aspect of culture we want to address or with the cultural agenda we embrace. In this respect, the feminist canon will share the fate of all literature, whatever that may be.

The most recent attempt to rewrite the literary history of America from a cultural-studies perspective is *A New Literary History of America* (2009), edited by Greil Marcus and Werner Sollors. This path-breaking literary history aims to destabilize the very concept of literature and to give the measure of the shifting, fluid boundaries of American culture by subverting the very notion of national history.[1] Intertextuality, dialogue, inter-acting, a network of interconnections are challenges and fun for the reader. To quote Priscilla Wald in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, the final result "...resembles something more like a Bakhtinian carnival"—"a range of voices expressed in a variety of media and forms." (Wald and Bauerline, 2009: web)

"A literary history of America?" wonder the editors in the opening sentence of their 'Introduction.' Indeed the 400 topics arranged in chronological order orchestrate the nation's many voices over a span of five century in a way never attempted before by any other literary history, for the reader will find among them entries on canonical writers from Poe, Hawthorne, Melville and Whitman, to Bellow, Pynchon, Norman Mailer, Philip Roth and Toni Morrison, but also on Joseph Smith and the *Book of Mormon* (1826), the Winchester rifle (1875), *Steamboat Willie* (1928, November 18), Superman (1932), Alcoholics Anonymous (1935, June 10), *Porgy and Bess* (1935, October 10), the first issue of *Life* magazine (1936, November 23)–the other two entries illustrating the year 1936 being an essay on "*Gone with the Wind* and *Absalom*! *Absalom*!" (1936) and "Two days in Harlem" (1936, July 5) – on "the atom bomb" (1945, August 6, 10: 45 a.m.), Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960), Bob Dylan (1962), Ronald Reagan's 1964 campaign speech for Barry Goldwater, *Deep Throat* porn star Linda Lovelace's autobiography (1970; 1972), Maya Lyn's Vietnam Memorial (1982) and New Orleans and

Hurricane Katrina (2005, August 29). The last entry, on Barack Obama (2008, November 4), is not an essay but a series of nine collages created by African-American artist Kara Walker, whose famous black cut-paper silhouettes are always suggestive of complex issues of identity, race, gender, sexuality and violence. Four of them include scraps of text, the last one is framed by a few sentences from President Obama's autobiography *Dreams from My Father* and the other four are just images, without words. It is a strange, yet not surprising, wordless ending to a literary history based on an all-inclusive and non-normative notion of "literature," which applies the concept of the "literary" to a wide range of cultural texts, the significance of which is given not by their aesthetic or imaginative qualities, but by the cultural work they perform. The idea of a literary text as cultural text includes not only written language, but all the meaningful artifacts of culture – in this particular case, "all those things that have been created in America, or for it, or because of it…. 'Made in America' – America, made" (Marcus and Sollors, 2009: xxiv).

In fact, aside from entries that refer to a variety of written texts, such as "poems, novels, plays and essays…histories and travel diaries, sermons and religious tracts, public speeches and private letters, political polemics, addresses, and debates, Supreme Court decisions, literary histories and criticism" (Marcus and Sollors, 2009: xxiv), the topics include a lot of other cultural texts, meaningful artifacts of culture, such as "folk songs, magazines, dramatic performances, the blues, philosophy, paintings and monuments, jazz, war memorials, museums, book clubs, photographs, comic strips and comic books, country music, films, radio, rock and roll, cartoons, musicals, and hip-hop: 'Made in America'" (Marcus and Sollors 2009: xxiv). Thus the literary history of America is "a reexamination of the American experience as seen through a literary glass, where what is at issue is speech, in many forms" (Marcus and Sollors, 2009: xxiv).

In more than 400 topics under scrutiny, the cultural texts are authored by men and women alike. What is important is not their gender but the cultural texts they produce so as to generate a new sense of America. Consequently, there is no discernable canon – standard, feminist, multicultural or of any other kind. *A New Literary History of America* indicates a direct relation between the cultural-studies approach to and the decanonization of American literature.

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The endurance of an alternative feminist canon of American literature in the future seems even more unlikely, as the current attempts to reconceptualize America have shifted from the multicultural to a transnational and global perspective, getting farther and farther away from the ghettoization of American

society generated by radical multiculturalism's identity politics emphasizing difference and political correctness.

Since the concept of literature has developed in close relation with the rise of the nation-state, globalization, which gradually erodes the boundaries of the nation, calls for a redrawing of the boundaries of national literatures. Among the most recent attempts at redrawing the boundaries of American literature is a project initiated by Wai Chee Dimock's path-breaking study *Through Other Continents. American Literature across Deep Time* (2006) followed by *Shades of the Planet. American Literature as World Literature* (2007), a collection of essays edited by Dimock and Lawrence Buell. The contributors to this project discuss "the de-territorialization of American literature" (the title of an essay by Paul Giles), question "the adequacy of the nation-based paradigm" (Dimock and Buell 2007: 2), the "nation-centered mapping" (Dimock and Buell 2007:3) of American literature and suggest instead, a remapping of the territory – "alternate geographies" (Dimock and Buell 2007: 8) that project the field's contours on a planetary scale and foreground its fluid borders in a global context. As the subtitle of the collection indicates, shifting the critical eye from the US-center to the planetary circumferences, shifting the perspective of the critical eye could also result in a re-territorialization of American literature so as to encompass the world. In the long run, this is an oblique way of re-enforcing America's exceptionalism, for how many countries in the world are in America's privileged position of having absorbed the whole world while being omnipresent in it.

The gradual shift from the multicultural to the transnational canon, with its de- and re-territorialization of American literature, does not call for an alternative, feminist (counter)canon, since women have already secured a place for themselves in the multicultural canon and they more than secured one in the transnational canon as well. In the last twenty years or so, many of the new women authors who have entered the canon or knocked on its gates are first or second generation immigrants. Elaine Showalter's list of remarkable novelists in this category includes Julia Alvarez, Fae Myenne Ng, Edwidge Danticat, Sandra Cisneros, Jhumpa Lahiri, Dara Horn and Gish Jen, whom she also includes among the female key figures of contemporary American literature alongside Toni Morrison, Anne Tyler, Joyce Carol Oates, Jayne Anne Phillips and Marilynne Robinson. (Showalter 2009)

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When it comes to predicting the future of the feminist canon, American literature's slow shift to decanonization that the globalization process and the ascendancy of the cultural studies entail is made even more visible by the critique of feminism coming from younger advocates of postfeminism such as Naomi Wolf, Katie Roiphe and Natasha Walter.

I do not wish to go into a discussion about postfeminism, which as most post-s is quite a proteic term, but a sort of working definition is necessary. A departure from and a backlash against second wave feminism, the feminism of the 60s and the 70s, postfeminism rejects the political stance of earlier feminism, and supports instead "an individualistic and liberal agenda that relies on a mantra of choice and assumes that the political demands of first and second wave feminism have now been met (enfranchisement, equal pay, sexual liberation etc.)" (Genz and Brabon 2009: 13-14). As Rene Denfeld argues in her book *The New Victorians* (1995), by the early 1990s second wave feminism has already come to an end, it could no longer speak to her generation, for it looked increasingly like a new repressive Victorianism: "[it] has come to duplicate Victorianism in all its repressive glory: the woman revered on the pedestal, charged with keeping society's moral order yet politically powerless—and perpetually martyred" (Denfeld 1995: 16-17).

In her postfeminist manifesto-like book *Fire with Fire*: *The New Female Power and How It Will Change the 21st Century* (1993), Naomi Wolf calls the first and second wave feminism "victim feminism" and defines post-feminism as "power feminism" that urges women to rely on their personal (individual) resistance and agency in order to make the social changes they choose to make, to be proud of their sexuality and to force their way into the media.

For obvious reasons, the postfeminists' (depoliticized discourse) denial of the need for political action, their assumption that the political agenda of earlier feminism is irrelevant to younger generations, is not likely to support the ideology in which the feminist literary canon has been grounded. The existence of postfeminism as a cultural media phenomenon is undisputed; the existence of postfeminism as a stance of literary criticism may not be far away and this type of criticism will most likely advocate the de-canonization of American literature.

Beyond the threat posed by the ideology of postfeminism, which remains debatable as long as postfeminism itself , like most post-s, is a loose term pointing to various directions, the real threat to the future of a feminist canon comes from the de- and re-territorialization of American literature which follows closely the reconceptionalizations of America and implies a redrawing of the boundaries of literature and a process of de-canonization as the United States is more and more present in the world and the world is omnipresent in it.

NOTE

1. Some of my comments on the redrawing of the boundaries of American literature and on *A New Literary History of America* (2009) appeared in my article "Where Is Literature Now in the Field of American Studies?" in *Romanian Journal of English Studies* 8 (2011), 330-339.

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Nina Bouraoui : construction sexuelle et transgression identitaire

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ABSTRACT. There is among French and Maghrebian writers a category of authors of an antithetical statute. Those who have chosen French language as a citizenship are feeling themselves torn between two identities, for they belong simultaneously to two different spaces of civilization. In their writing we feel the contradictory poles that shape the duality of culture and identity. Nina Bouraoui, whose research is resolutely of gender studies, appears to us as a paradigmatic case. In her need to divide races, cultures and especially sexes, she drags from one sea to another her identity of a generic fracture and seeks through scriptural transgression, a space where in-between becomes peaceful, where her duality, or rather her multiplicity, can coexist. *Garçon manqué*, *Poupée Bella*, *Mes mauvaises pensées*, allow us to apprehend her subjectivity and discover a deep desire to get to know herself and to accept herself.

Keywords: identity quest, transgression, sexuality, gender

Dans le monde littéraire dit francophone, très souvent l'utilisation de la langue française ne cache pas le déchirement identitaire de bon nombre d'auteurs. Des auteurs qui, tout en choisissant cette langue comme patrie d'élection, se sentent écartelés entre l'espace de départ et l'espace d'arrivée. Leur écriture est une sorte de champ de bataille où le lecteur avisé peut ressentir les pôles antinomiques qui forgent cette dualité culturelle et identitaire.

Nina Bouraoui, dont l'analyse entre de plain pied dans les études de genre,[1] nous semble un cas particulièrement intéressant. Il n'est pas dans nos propos d'entrer dans une discussion sur les implications de tout ordre du concept genre, mais plutôt de circonscrire notre étude à la lecture des textes choisis. Dans la nécessité de trouver l'équilibre des cultures, des races et des sexes, Bouraoui exprime par la transgression scripturale sa dualité générique, et la fracture profonde d'une identité tiraillée entre les deux rives. *Garçon manqué*, *Poupée Bella*, *Mes mauvaises pensées*, nous permettent d'appréhender sa subjectivité, et de découvrir un désir profond de se reconnaître et de s'accepter.

Dans l'œuvre de Bouraoui, et notamment dans les livres choisis, on peut observer les liens qui se tissent entre la sexualité, le problème identitaire – dérivé de l'appartenance à deux cultures, les deux rives de la Méditerranée –, et l'écriture elle-même.[2] C'est au sein même de cette intersection que se révèle la construction identitaire de l'auteure, au moyen de deux éléments tout à fait dissemblables au niveau sémantique, mais que les procédés discursifs font confluer sur le plan représentatif : la formulation langagière de l'homosexualité, et l'évocation de la bipolarité spatiale: l'Algérie, la France. Cette dualité physique, faite de mer, de ciel, de paysages, à côté de sa dualité sexuelle, est le tremplin scriptural à partir duquel Bouraoui poursuit sa quête du moi. En se dévoilant à travers son écriture, elle lève tous les interdits pour parvenir à l'acceptation de soi.

Si *Garçon manqué* semble être le récit dans lequel son exploration identitaire s'étale au grand jour, cette recherche se poursuit dans *Poupée Bella*, récit de l'acceptation et du dire du moi homosexuel. *Mes mauvaises pensées*, rejoignant les débuts de son enfance algérienne, à travers le retour de souvenirs qui semblent se répéter, devient en quelque sorte la plage tranquille où finalement l'écrivaine trouve le calme et l'apaisement définitif que lui offrent et l'amour accompli et les retrouvailles avec l'écriture. Le tout, à travers la litanie d'un moi qui se dit dans un cabinet psychiatrique, pour pouvoir se reposséder.

Scripturalement, les lignes de force varient d'un livre à l'autre. À la forme de récit autobiographique-autofictionnel de *Garçon manqué*, lui succède le journal décousu de *Poupée Bella*, dont les phrases courtes et coupantes tranchent avec le récit interminable – tel une ritournelle sans fin – de *Mes mauvaises pensées*. Dans les trois cas, Bouraoui se complaît dans l'ambiguïté formelle : récit, roman, autobiographie, fiction ? Les couvertures ne donnent pas de pistes : sans frontières, donc instables, ces récits poussent le lecteur à des interprétations diverses, dans lesquelles seule l'écriture devient une attache ferme. Car d'un livre à l'autre, les pistes biographiques ou supposées telles reviennent, se reflètent, se renvoient, l'édifice littéraire se bâtissant grâce à ce labeur de réintégration du passé. L'exploration de son identité hybride qui semble lui échapper est ainsi parsemée de points de repère – onomastique, chronologie, données familiales – qui l'affirment en tant que sujet dans une vie et un espace hors de l'écriture. D'un récit à l'autre, son identité de fracture, plurielle, fait surface dans une impossibilité : celle de l'entente de deux cultures, de deux espaces. Une dualité exprimée clairement dans *Garçon manqué* :

> J'ai deux passeports. Je n'ai qu'un seul visage apparent.
> Les Algériens ne me voient pas. Les Français ne comprennent pas. Je construis un mur contre les autres. Les autres. Leurs lèvres. Leurs yeux qui cherchent sur mon corps une trace de ma

> mère, un signe de mon père. « Elle a le sourire de Maryvonne.» « Elle a les gestes de Rachid. » Être séparée toujours de l'un et de l'autre. Porter une identité de fracture. Se penser en deux parties. À qui je ressemble le plus ? Qui a gagné sur moi ? Sur ma voix ? Sur mon visage ? Sur mon corps qui avance ? La France ou l'Algérie ? (GM 19)

Dans l'économie textuelle du récit, l'onomastique et la chronologie mènent le lecteur à une identification autobiographique entre la protagoniste et l'écrivaine. Et ce qui ressort de la construction narrative de la diégèse est une quête identitaire basée sur la dualité, celle-ci se déroulant sur trois plans : spatial, sexuel, nominatif. Les choix scripturaux sont classiques : narration « autobiographique » au déroulement linéaire, narrateur homodiégétique racontant à la première personne. Mais *Garçon manqué* reste un récit novateur par l'écriture saccadée aux phrases très courtes, par l'emploi du présent évoquant des souvenirs quasi photographiques, qui créent un horizon de lecture fragmentaire.

Les espaces géographiques antithétiques dans lesquels évolue la protagoniste du récit, Alger et Rennes, sont ressentis comme étrangers l'un à l'autre. Deux compartiments étanches dans lesquels même les noyaux familiaux changent : la famille-clan, chaleureuse et large, de la rive française, face à la famille nucléaire (père-mère-filles) d'Alger. En même temps, nous retrouvons dès l'incipit les éléments sur lesquels Bouraoui s'appuie pour réaliser sa recherche : la mer, l'hybridité, l'écriture. Car s'il existe dans *Garçon Manqué* un temps privilégié, c'est celui passé sur la plage, au bord de la mer – « La mer tient entre les deux continents. Je reste entre les deux pays. Je reste entre deux identités » (GM 26). S'il y a un port d'attache pour cette identité en train de se faire, c'est l'écriture, véhicule de toutes ses pulsions et de toutes ses divisions internes – « Oui, je me prends pour un homme. Mais un homme qui voit. Un homme qui sait. […] Ce rêve fera écrire. Mon secret. Écrire. Me sauver du monde. De ton regard. Perdre Alger. Perdre l'Algérie. » (GM 86-87). Et s'il est un élément qui dit la douloureuse division interne de la protagoniste, celui-ci est la multiplicité de noms, qui agit comme un dissolvant empêchant la cristallisation du récit. En effet, la volonté de se reconstruire en laissant de côté son hybridité, tient dans la pluralité de noms. Yasmina devient Nina, celle que son père appelle Brio (GM 24-25), mais elle s'invente à travers Amine, son double utopique (GM 18), et se forge un moi masculin, Ahmed (GM 15) : c'est sa manière d'estomper ses peurs car « être un homme en Algérie c'est perdre la peur » (GM 37-38), et de se retrouver dans la globalité de l'espèce, en intégrant le monde des hommes. Passé et présent se rejoignent dans les identités qui s'échappent :

> Je passe de Yasmina à Nina. De Nina à Ahmed. D'Ahmed à Brio. C'est un assassinat. C'est un infanticide. C'est un suicide. Je ne sais pas qui je suis. Une et multiple. Menteuse et vraie. Forte et fragile. Fille et garçon. Mon corps me trahira un jour. Il sera formé. Il sera féminin. Il sera contre moi. Il fera résistance. Je retiendrai Nina, de force, comme un animal sauvage. (GM 60)

La reconstruction identitaire tient d'abord dans la reconstruction de l'histoire de ses parents. Les retours en arrière, focalisés sur les personnages qui forment le cadre familial primordial – « Quatre contre tous. Quatre seulement. La famille Bouraoui. Quatre contre l'adversité du monde. Quatre contre les autres. » (GM 176) –, s'arrête fragmentairement sur ces deux figures fondatrices, leur vécu remontant à la surface de la mémoire et se disant au passé. Les discours rapportés des autres membres de la famille française – grand-père, grand-mère, arrière-grand-mère –, les fixe dans un passé révolu, mais rend cependant visible leur importance dans ce bloc temporel qu'est la succession d'étés français, et qui font aussi partie de l'identité de la narratrice.

De fait, les pages dédiées aux étés rennois, face à la plage de Zeralda à Alger et à la violence algérienne, ne font qu'affirmer une quête identitaire qui semble interminable. Le support familial ne cicatrise pas les blessures, ni efface le racisme subi (GM 127-128 ; 131). Ainsi, la deuxième partie du récit, « Rennes », ne dément pas le désir de la première, dédiée à Alger : celui de l'affirmation du moi. La mer et la plage, traits d'union entre les deux espaces, restent des points de repère privilégiés, lieux que la funambule Nina investit avec aisance. Le bonheur de la mer française, inséparable d'une réalité sécurisante, fait disparaître la peur :

> C'est un bain heureux. L'eau est chaude. [...] Puis je remonte l'escalier de pierre, un peu effrayée. Mais je ne dis rien. Ma grand-mère m'enroule dans une serviette-éponge. Elle frotte de toutes ses forces. Contre la mer qui se retire déjà. Contre ses courants. Contre la nuit qui tombe sur la plage engloutie. Et je m'enfuis de ses bras. Et je recommence. Je plonge dans les grandes vagues de la marée d'équinoxe. Je désobéis. Je n'ai plus peur. Je suis aimée. (GM 168)

Ce cadre spatial double – « Alger », « Rennes » – correspond en gros à deux pans du passé qui s'alternent chronologiquement et s'équilibrent du point de vue de l'écriture, jusqu'aux brèves clôtures finales, les épigones de deux et trois pages intitulées « Tivoli » et « Amine ». La chronologie linéaire, avec des événements racontés au présent, n'arrive pas à dissimuler le flou de la mémoire qui déteint sur le récit. Les moments se répètent, le présent devient durée et permanence. Des bornes chronologiques impriment une cadence toute particulière à ce « dire », la cadence du passé : la date de son arrivée

en Algérie – « Je renais à Alger appartement du Golf, septembre 1967. » (GM 22) –, les années algériennes perdues, ressenties comme un vide profond – « Et il te manquera toujours quelque chose de l'Algérie, de 1967 à 1981. » (GM 76), – les départs d'été qui annoncent l'éloignement définitif de l'Algérie. Les instants révolus du je-narrant se superposent dans le bercement itératif des étés qui se succèdent : « Je suis habillée pour partir. Un grand voyage. Habillée pour quitter Alger. Pour me quitter. Habillée pour quitter ma vraie vie. » (GM 92).

Face à l'instabilité du moi algérien, en France elle étouffera ses identités algériennes. Divisée entre ses deux rives – « J'aurai toujours une grande valise. Comme tous les algériens. [...] Une identité à soulever. » (GM 100), – sur le sol français elle refuse son prénom arabe – « Je refuse de montrer la photographie de mon passeport. Ma véritable identité. » (GM 174), – et cache le moi inventé, Ahmed : « Dans cet été français je cache profondément Ahmed. » (GM 179). Cependant sa volonté de se trouver, de se découvrir enfin autre, reste visible dans son ambiguïté physique :

> C'est votre petit-fils ? Dans ces cas-là je ne regarde pas ma grand-mère. Je sais qu'elle n'aime pas cette ambiguïté-là. Mes vêtements. Ma façon de marcher. Ma coupe de cheveux. Mais le plus grave n'est pas là. Tous les enfants se ressemblent. Et se confondent. L'important c'est cette volonté de cacher. De dissimuler. De se transformer. De se fuir. D'être hors la loi. Et hors de soi. (GM 179-180)

Et partant de la certitude de son « identité de fracture » (GM 19), Nina rejoint le présent de l'écriture par la fusion du Je-qui-se-dit et le Je-raconté, exprimant son malaise et la certitude d'une non-appartenance territoriale et sexuelle[3] : « Tous les matins je vérifie mon identité. J'ai quatre problèmes. Française ? Algérienne ? Fille ? Garçon ? » (GM 163). Étrangère dans ses deux pays (GM 155-156), elle ressent nonobstant l'Algérie au plus profond de soi :

> L'Algérie n'est pas dans ma langue. Elle est dans mon corps. L'Algérie n'est pas dans mes mots. Elle est à l'intérieur de moi. L'Algérie n'est pas dans ce qui sort. Elle est dans ce qui dévore. Elle est physique. Dans ce que je ne contrôle pas. Dans mes excès. Dans mes exigences. Dans ma volonté. Dans ma force. L'Algérie est dans mon désir fou d'être aimée (GM 167).

Ce sentiment mène tout droit à la place que l'écriture occupe dans *Garçon manqué* comme dans les deux autres récits : celle à qui la langue arabe s'est refusée – « Cette langue qui s'échappe comme du sable est une douleur. Elle laisse ses marques, des mots, et s'efface. Elle ne prend pas sur moi.

Elle me rejette. » (GM 11-12) – sait qu'elle n'écrira qu'en français, et que c'est en français qu'elle se dira, malgré la mélodie cachée au plus profond de soi :

> Qui suis-je vraiment ? […] Je parle en français. Uniquement. Je rêve en français. Uniquement. J'écrirai en français. Uniquement. La langue arabe est un son, un chant, une voix. Que je retiens. Que je sens. Mais que je ne sais pas. La langue arabe est une émotion (GM 167).

Le français, langue-patrie, deviendra par l'écriture, conçue comme finalité vitale, l'espace dans lequel elle pourra s'inscrire personnellement de manière définitive : port d'attache et espace de liberté qui lui permettra de se construire et de se dire : Écrire pour se sauver du monde, écrire pour dire la perte mais aussi pour dire sa différence, et surtout, pour se protéger, car « Seule l'écriture protégera du monde » (GM 20).

Dans *Poupée Bella* Nina Bouraoui dévoile ses deux amours, l'écriture et les femmes, sous la forme d'un journal intime[4] au langage dépouillé, à l'écriture saccadée. Des pages qui mettent à nu ce qu'un journal comporte de secret et d'intime ; le dévoilement de son moi profond souligne sans l'ombre d'un doute la fusion du littéraire et du personnel. Nous sommes face à un récit qui retrace les explorations nocturnes, les appétits secrets, la vie cachée de ses nuits. Car *Poupée Bella* se construit à la lisière de la nuit. Une nuit qui tangue entre deux pouvoirs : l'écriture et l'amour homosexuel, et dans laquelle le moi vacille entre le dit et le non-dit. Mais l'écriture se révèle être le désir fondamental et la seule fixation efficace de la narratrice avec son moi.

Construction identitaire de nouveau, quête permanente bouraouienne qui devient un troisième composant dans la structure romanesque de *Poupée Bella* : la présence du double. Car, si dans *Garçon Manqué* nous retrouvions un Amine aux limites de la réalité et de la fiction, ici l'*alter ego* de la narratrice s'appelle Julien. De fait, la narratrice de *Poupée Bella* remarque comment « Nous cherchons un sosie, toujours. Nous cherchons le double de nous-mêmes » (PB 52). Amine et Julien représentent donc une unité identitaire qu'elle ne peut pas atteindre :[5]

> *7 mai*
> Julien a toujours aimé les garçons, j'ai toujours aimé les filles. C'est dans notre enfance. C'est dans notre jeunesse. C'est dans notre vie adulte qui vient. Ainsi il est mon frère. Ainsi je suis sa sœur, par la seule voix qui raconte. (PB 22)

Poupée Bella, là où l'homosexualité se déploie sans entraves, se construit sur la tension constante d'une double spatialité: le Paris nocturne, espace

physique et louche de la nuit des filles, et le lieu de l'écriture. Bella, la poupée nocturne, toujours en mal de soi-même, partage avec le lecteur la vision intime de son homosexualité, et croit pouvoir se reconnaître dans le Milieu des Filles, dans lequel elle libère ses pulsions les plus profondes :

> Je ne sais pas si l'homosexualité a pris sur moi, sur mes gestes, sur mes vêtements, sur ma voix, je ne sais pas si cela se voit, avant je me sentais en excès de nudité, je me sentais vulgaire, je n'avais que mon corps, que mon sang, je me sentais indécente à l'intérieur de moi. Avant je ne pleurais pas. Mon histoire se défait ici. Mon histoire se fait ici ; c'est la grande vie. Ma nuit est infinie. Ma nuit est douce. Ma nuit est violente. Je sais danser. J'ai un prénom. J'ai un visage. J'existe. Je traverse la forêt des femmes. Je marche sur la mer. Je fais des miracles. Je change. Je quitte mon corps-fantôme. J'entre dans le frottement des chairs. (PB 13)

Et, comme dans *Garçon Manqué*, l'ambiguïté du moi transperce la multiplicité nominative : « Il m'arrive de changer de prénom dans la nuit. Il m'arrive d'avoir honte de moi » (PB 39). C'est dans le balancement continuel entre le choix identitaire impossible (PB 38), dans l'identification de l'amour et de l'écriture (PB 83) et dans la prévalence de l'écriture avec son pouvoir incantatoire (PB 83), qu'elle parvient à une identification corporelle : « Chaque fois, je retrouve la main qui écrit, chaque fois elle est chaude et concentrée sur son travail, c'est-à-dire sur les mouvements de mon corps, sur son absence» (PB 56). La prééminence du monde des femmes face à celui des hommes – « Les filles ont un cœur, les garçons emprisonnent le cœur » (PB 82), – le besoin de trouver son double (PB 82), ne peut pas effacer le pouvoir absolu de l'écriture : « Je sais la beauté de la force d'un garçon. C'est ce que j'aimerais avoir pour séduire une femme. On ne possède aucun sujet. Seule l'écriture enferme vraiment » (PB 82).

Poussant plus loin dans la démarche nocturne du désir, elle avoue, de sentences en maximes,[6] son angoisse la plus profonde : la peur de perdre le pouvoir de l'écriture, car celle-ci semble s'éloigner à mesure qu'elle s'enfonce dans la nuit, et cette perte la rapproche de la mort :

> *12 janvier*
> (…)
> Après la nuit, je deviens, de plus en plus, sans écriture.
> Il y a toujours un livre mort, le livre qu'on n'ose pas écrire.
> *14 janvier*
> (…)
> Loin, carrefour de Clichy, le cimetière de Montmartre, encore plus loin, ma main qui écrivait. Je suis sans livre. Je suis sans avenir. J'ai envie de pleurer parce que je ne sais plus écrire. (PB 90-91)

L'écriture se révèle donc dans *Poupée Bella* le destin et le but fondamental de la narratrice-auteure, une fois qu'elle vit enfin librement son homosexualité. Celle qui dit « Je ne suis pas amoureuse. Je suis amoureuse de l'écriture » (PB 64), a trouvé dans la création littéraire sa raison d'être et qui plus est, une identité propre et unique. Et l'écriture sous-tend le désir de s'exposer dans ce qu'elle appelle dans le péritexte « le livre » : en choisissant la forme d'un journal intime,[7] qui est en réalité destiné à un public potentiel, elle révèle son moi profond : celui qui devrait rester gardé dans le secret du journal dans sa conception première. C'est avec préméditation qu'elle nous offre une approche intime de ses désirs d'amour et d'écriture, et qu'elle énonce la réalité qui se cache dans ses nuits de vagabondage homosexuel.

L'écriture hachée et saccadée de Bouraoui, si souvent présente dans son œuvre, devient encore plus évidente dans ce livre qui épouse la forme fragmentaire et immédiate du journal intime. C'est par le morcellement qu'elle échappe à toute contrainte compositive.[8]

La structure discontinue procure un effet d'effritement que les quelques fragments numérotés n'annulent pas, malgré leur ancrage dans le calendrier. La fluctuation entre le présent de l'énonciation que suppose l'écriture d'un journal et les strates du passé, proche ou lointain, renvoie à un phénomène d'écriture en écho, d'intertextualité, non seulement à l'intérieur de *Poupée Bella*, mais aussi entre les autres ouvrages de Bouraoui. Des phrases, des séquences syntagmatiques, des souvenirs qui de chapitre en chapitre, de livre en livre, reviennent, se réclament avec leur pouvoir d'évocation continue.

Dans cette narration, les pulsions les plus secrètes, les explorations noctambules, percent la voie de la conscience bouleversante grâce au dire de l'écriture. La découverte du Milieu des Filles, l'épiphanie donc et la pleine acceptation de son homosexualité, transforme la nuit en agent du désir, mais aussi en frontière : une frontière multiple dans laquelle se retrouvent et s'entrechoquent son moi, le monde diurne, la passion et le pouvoir de l'écriture. Celle-ci se manifeste en fait comme l'ancrage le plus profond et démarcatif de la narratrice-auteure avec son moi. La plongée sans réserve dans ces nuits de désirs accomplis, de soif étanchée, cachent cependant un danger, que la narratrice perçoit vite : l'éloignement de l'écriture.

Roman/récit nocturne, dont le partage spatial très irrégulier est savamment dosé des «diversions » au plein jour. Ces touches diurnes, de par cette caractéristique, acquièrent un relief particulier. Les échappées diurnes de Bella chez ses maîtresses sont soulignées en leur accordant un espace textuel considérable: la liaison avec Mikie a droit à une page et demie pour le feuillet du 5 janvier en entier, alors qu'habituellement quelques lignes – parfois une seule ligne – suffisent à consigner dans le journal les faits retenus pour chaque date inscrite. L'espace physique que celle-ci occupe, Créteil, la lie au désir de voyage et de dépaysement : « Quand je pense à elle, je pense

à Créteil, comme une ville étrangère, comme un premier voyage » (PB 81). Leur liaison, indiquant un arrêt dans la fugacité des rencontres, se prolonge après le contact nocturne dans le milieu trouble des Filles : « Elle m'a offert un petit déjeuner au Wepler. Elle m'a acheté des cigarettes. Elle m'a donné son numéro de téléphone. » (PB 80). L'inscription physique de Mikie hors du milieu nocturne éloigne ainsi Bella du Milieu des Filles :

> Je suis écrasée par les tours, j'ai le vertige du ciel quand je renverse la tête.
> Nous sommes loin du Milieu des Filles.
> Les façades grises des tours, toutes les vies se tiennent là, bien au-dessus de la terre, bien loin de Paris.
> […]
> De Créteil au Milieu des Filles, il y a une éternité. (PB 88-89)

Avec Françoise, une autre maîtresse, le procédé se répète. Bella se déplace le jour chez elle : l'espace intérieur de la maison et de son jardin[9], lieux de l'attente amoureuse – « J'ai le droit de rester au studio, de l'attendre ou d'attendre le soleil dans le jardin, l'après-midi. » (PB 112) – efface les souvenirs sulfureux de ses nuits – « Je ne me souviens pas de mes nuits. » (PB 104).

Mais les deux figures associées directement au monde diurne sont Julien et Marion. Marion est, en tant que son premier amour, l'image lumineuse du passé, rivée à un monde ensoleillé et positif : celui de son enfance et de sa jeunesse au bord de la mer en été, son paradis perdu :

> C'est chaque fois une séparation, c'est chaque fois Marion. Elle aimait le soleil de son jardin, elle aimait les vagues blanches, elle aimait ma voix au téléphone, elle aimait s'endormir dans mes bras. Je ne suis plus de cette terre-là. Je ne suis plus de cette mémoire. (PB 72)

Son souvenir, dans lequel se fondent le présent et le passé, reste pour toujours associé à sa jeunesse, et recouvre de sa lumière mythique[10] le ressac de ses nuits en perdition : « Quand je m'endors, c'est toujours l'image de Marion qui vient sur les autres, qui emporte ma nuit. Je la serre dans mes bras. Je deviens mon propre amour » (PB 55). Marion, une présence fantomatique qui devient de plus en plus présente au fil des pages, symbolise le désir inassouvi, qui se superpose toujours à ses amours de passage : « Dans chaque fille, je veux retrouver Marion. Chaque fois, c'est une immense déception » (PB 41). De sorte que tous les noms, tous les corps nocturnes, ne sont que des substitutifs. Mikie, K., S., F., Françoise,…

> *1er octobre*
> Je retrouvais Marion, tous les étés. Dans la nuit je pense à elle.

> Marion est comme une maladie. Je la cherche dans les corps et dans la voix des autres. Il y a un relais amoureux. Il y a une brume amoureuse aussi. Je sais et je fais semblant de ne pas savoir. (PB 44)
> *3 octobre*
> J'ai encore le numéro de téléphone de Marion. J'appelle, parfois, dans la nuit. Je ne reconnais jamais sa voix. (PB 45)

Quant à Julien, sa figure ambivalente entre le jour et la nuit, l'« autre » fantomatique qui apparaît dans tant de ses ouvrages, nous permet de nous arrêter dans un constat incontournable de l'écriture bouraouienne : la recherche identitaire par la présence du double.[11] La mise en paroles de cette quête perpétuelle dans *Poupée Bella* – « Nous cherchons un sosie, toujours. Nous cherchons le double de nous-mêmes. » (PB 52) –, renvoie directement à l'Amine de *Garçon* Manqué.[12]

À mesure que les feuillets du journal se multiplient, l'écriture des jours et des mois se corse et le dire devient plus facile. Le mois de janvier 1989 a une longueur assez considérable, car Bella lui consacre 18 jours. C'est pendant cette période qu'elle et Julien s'éloignent, et que se produit la rupture avec Françoise ; l'effet est celui du retour dans la nuit des Filles, dans laquelle elle exprime à nouveau son désir sexuel et poursuit sa recherche sentimentale. En ce sens, le mois d'avril 1989 est significatif. Les jours se réduisent à des phrases hachées, l'énoncé devient « minimaliste », le dit et le non-dit s'entrechoquent dans le tourbillon des nuits qui s'écoulent :

> *15 avril*
> Elle m'embrasse dans la lumière bleue du Rex.
> *18 avril*
> Je viens de l'écriture.
> *20 avril*
> Connaissez-vous Françoise ?
> *22 avril*
> Elle dit : J'ai dansé toute la nuit.
> *24 avril*
> Immense peur de retomber dans le Milieu des Filles, d'attendre et de chercher un visage.
> Il y a une tentation du refus d'aimer, comme du refus d'écrire.
> Je veux être à la fin de ma nuit.
> Julien disait qu'il n'avait pas peur de la mort.
> Au Kat, les filles se battaient parfois avec des tessons de bouteille. (PB 120)

La narratrice dit sans entraves ses doutes, ses démarches ambiguës ; elle est enfin, comme elle dit, « dans le temps de [son] homosexualité » (PB 15). Cependant, son « devenir homosexuel » n'efface pas les hésitations, et le

plaisir de sa « nuit amoureuse » est inséparable d'un profond malaise, le danger que ses errances supposent pour l'accomplissement de sa volonté fondamentale : l'écriture. C'est ainsi que le désir probable de la chair – « pourrais » – se manifeste avec la même exigence que celui de l'écriture: « J'ai envie d'écrire comme je pourrais avoir envie d'un corps. » (PB 30-31). Le récit se structure, en conséquence, à partir de trois lignes de force en interaction constante : l'entrée dans le Milieu des Filles, l'impératif de l'écriture, et la quête générique, dont l'accomplissement s'avère impossible sans les deux premiers éléments, inséparables, qui s'entrelacent au rythme des souvenirs et des rencontres.

On peut découvrir ainsi la construction-déconstruction de la réalité, car à la base de l'approche du monde nocturne se trouve le désir d'affirmation d'une identité partiellement refoulée – son homosexualité. Or, cette approche oblige la narratrice à affronter son passé, fondement de son présent ; et en même temps elle parvient à se posséder par cette donation de soi à l'univers nocturne. Son identité éclatée, multiforme, devient indivisible, et c'est dans l'entre-deux amoureux – le passé du premier amour, idéal lumineux, face à la nuit de son présent – que l'écriture s'affirme comme le socle de sa personnalité :

> Je rêve d'un livre parfait, je rêve d'un amour parfait ; l'un ne va pas sans l'autre.
> Toute la vie à écrire, toute la vie à se souvenir de l'amour.
> Marion est revenue, dès le Milieu des Filles. Souvent je crois l'avoir trahie. Je ne pensais pas à cette vie-là, avant. Je ne pensais pas à cette chute. J'ai le vertige à l'intérieur de moi-même. L'écriture est un pardon (PB 60).

Poupée Bella est donc le récit où la binarité sexuelle de Bouraoui, greffée dans la vie française, se faufile entre les mots brûlants de la nuit. Son rythme saccagé témoigne de l'aboutissement de sa quête. Et celle-ci trouve son apparent épigone dans *Mes Mauvaises pensées*. En effet, l'hybridité multiple de Bouraoui, écrivaine de frontière, est un dévoilement continuel d'interdits lui permettant de parvenir à une acceptation de soi qui semble enfin s'accomplir dans ce récit. Des mauvaises pensées qui, d'après la narratrice – disons l'écrivaine, à tout hasard – sont des pulsions négatives envers elle comme envers les autres, mais formalisées dans l'expression esthétique d'un langage débordant et essentiel:

> Avant j'écrivais dans ma tête, puis j'ai eu les mots, des spirales de mots, je m'en étouffais, je m'en nourrissais ; ma personnalité s'est formée à partir de ce langage, à partir du langage qui possède. Je n'ose plus me regarder dans le miroir, je ferme les chambres de notre appartement à clé, je cache les couteaux, je dors seule, j'ai si peur de faire du mal à l'Amie » (MMP 10).

Ces mots révèlent toutes les caractéristiques qui se trouvaient à la base de *Garçon Manqué* et de *Poupée Bella* : l'écriture possessive, l'identité fragmentée, l'autre/le double. Un autre qui ne porte plus un nom masculin : maintenant c'est l'Amie, en majuscules, et l'évidence est claire que l'auteure a enfin trouvé ce qu'elle cherchait dans son univers sentimental. L'identité de fracture, qu'elle traîne dans les autres livres, ne fait pas défaut ici : les mêmes souvenirs, enrichis d'autres éléments du passé, la relation familiale privilégiée, ce cocon algérien de quatre personnes, père-mère-filles, la hantise de l'Algérie perdue, avec ses souvenirs frais comme aux premiers jours. La perte est toujours là, qui dit son déracinement et souligne de cette manière sa fêlure identitaire primigène :

> La nuit, le vent ressemble à des voix prises dans les arbres, je vais sur la petite terrasse rouge et je regarde, après la forêt, il y a la baie, ce miracle d'Algérie, et il y a la mer qui semble avancer vers moi ; je ne sais pas si je viens de là, je ne sais pas si je suis constituée de cela, il n'y a que des terres humaines je crois, Alger existe parce que j'y ai vécu, parce que je m'y suis laissée ; c'est moi qui fais Alger et non l'inverse. Je ne suis pas une exilée, je suis une déracinée (MMP 17).

La thématique bouraouienne, toujours présente, exprime la fragilité individuelle première, mais aussi la volonté de marcher en avant. Volonté triomphante enfin dans *Mes Mauvaises Pensées*, où elle arrive au dé-nouement de son moi. Suivant le sillon des deux récits précédents, ici l'écriture est cependant déliée de toute entrave. Cependant, et à la différence des deux récits antérieurs, l'écrivaine met bien ici en évidence dans le péritexte que, cette fois-ci, elle écrit un roman, puisque comme tel elle le qualifie.[13]

Comme une coulée de mots, elle se laisse aller au « dire », prenant comme récepteur de son discours, ou de sa confession – « Quand je viens vous voir, je garde l'idée d'une confession » (MMP 286) – une psychiatre. Discours qui n'en est pas un, puisqu'il n'y a pas de dialogue thérapeute-patient. D'autre part, le choix d'une psychiatre comme récepteur de sa parole pourrait au premier abord signaler une faille dans cette construction de soi. De fait, la description de ses « mauvaises pensées » permet de le croire ainsi :

> Dans mes mauvaises pensées, il y a la vision de cette peau que j'ouvre au couteau et de ces viscères que je déchire comme du tissu fin, il y a des mots aussi, que j'ai peur d'entendre : entailler, dépecer, saigner. Dans mes mauvaises pensées, il y a l'obsession de l'intérieur, qui est peut-être le symbole du secret à porter, mais un secret si grand que personne n'en connaît la vraie teneur, c'est un secret-fantasme, qui grossit de génération en génération,

> c'est le secret de toutes les petites peurs, c'est aussi pour ce secret que je viens vous voir, que je vous supplie, dans ma tête, puisque je contrôle encore mes larmes ; (MMP 124)

Le fait de confesser son malaise, ses craintes, ses secrets, renvoyant toujours sous différentes formes aux mêmes éléments, pourrait faire croire à un déséquilibre primordial qui se maintient : « Je ne sais pas si je vais bien, je suis triste, mais je ne suis pas triste à cause de ma famille, je suis triste à cause de l'Algérie, je suis le cœur de l'Algérie » (MMP 25). La peur de son enfance, évoquée dans *Garçon Manqué* subsiste – « c'est comme si je portais le sang de cette peur » (MMP 26), – la hantise du double persiste – « J'ai longtemps cette relation avec les garçons, l'image-miroir » (MMP 38), – l'amour de la famille, l'amour de l'Algérie aussi : « il y a l'odeur de la terre, celle-là même qui me rattache à mon pays, au pays de ma première vie » (MMP 41). Et le sentiment d'être écartelée entre deux rives est toujours présent : « C'est toujours cette histoire, au fond de moi, de venir de deux familles que tout oppose, les Français et les Algériens. Il y a ces deux flux en moi que je ne pourrai jamais diviser, je crois n'être d'aucun camp » (MMP 53). De même, elle ressasse sa peur la plus profonde peut-être, celle de la perte de l'écriture, qui se rattache ici à sa liaison avec celle qu'elle appelle la Chanteuse, ainsi qu'à toutes ses liaisons amoureuses passées. Cependant, sa stabilité générique profonde fait surface sur deux plans nouveaux qui s'avèrent essentiels. D'un côté, l'acceptation de son homosexualité :

> […] je m'apprête à vous parler des femmes, de mon rapport aux femmes, de ce lien, de cette adoration, je n'ai pas honte ou je n'ai plus honte, vous me regardez et je soutiens votre regard, je ne sais pas si je suis en train de vous séduire, si Provincetown n'est pas un moyen de vous dire combien je me sens en paix avec les femmes (MMP 183).

De l'autre, la rencontre du double parfait, l'Amie : « je suis le reflet de l'Amie et […] l'Amie est mon reflet » (MMP).[14] L'Amie, en symétrie parfaite avec la « diseuse », permet la liaison féconde entre écriture et amour, le double retrouvé étant le miroir exemplaire qui lui renvoie l'image parfaite d'un être libéré fait d'esthétique structurale et de bien-être émotionnel :

> Nous refaisons le monde, oui, des nuits entières, nous avons le langage pour nous ; nous avons les mots, toutes les deux, le langage vient, libre, […] nous parlons d'amour, nous parlons de chansons, nous parlons de mes livres, de mon écriture qui fait pleurer parfois l'Amie, il y a cette phrase d'elle : « Tu écris en mineur », il y a ce mot de mon éditeur : « Elle est votre meilleure lectrice » (MMP 145-146).

On pourrait donc affirmer que la quête s'est enfin accomplie. L'acceptation de sa fêlure identitaire originaire rejoint l'assouvissement de son désir amour eux, ainsi que l'affirmation définitive de son homosexualité longtemps refoulée. *Mes mauvaises pensées* est, somme toute, le récit de la vie en partage et l'accomplissement identitaire, générique et scriptural, par la rencontre de l'âme sœur. C'est finalement par l'écriture que Bouraoui, après un long parcours, parvient à dévoiler et à braver tous les interdits. L'intuition de l'espace de l'écriture comme havre de paix et de fondation, mais aussi de lutte, sourd à chaque instant dans un débordement de mots provenant d'une source intarissable, lovée jusqu'alors dans la greffe douloureuse d'une identité fracturée, aussi bien géographique que psychologique. L'entre-deux douloureux et instable de *Garçon Manqué* et de *Poupée Bella* trouve son aboutissement dans la réalité solaire qui s'exprime à travers la présence de l'Amie dans *Mes Mauvaises Pensées*. Et le flux verbal dévalé devant son médecin lui permet de dompter, sinon d'estomper, ses peurs, devenant ainsi le remède salutaire qui l'inscrit – finalement en paix- dans le monde par l'intermédiaire de l'écriture.

NOTES

1. Les applications du terme genre dans les analyses littéraires ont ouvert l'horizon de la recherche et redynamisé les relations entre littérature, linguistique, philosophie, psychanalyse et féminisme. De l'essai de Robert Stoller *Sex and Gender* aux réflexions de Drucilla Cornel et Geneviève Fraisse dans *Masculin-féminin: pour un dialogue entre les cultures*, en passant par *Gender Trouble* de Judith Butler ou *Éthique de la différence sexuelle* de Luce Irigaray, on a parcouru un long chemin en s'intéressant aux aspects les plus divers tels que la construction culturelle de la dichotomie, l'altérité, la logique identitaire, l'ordre des rapports sociaux de sexe, le système de représentation etc.

2. Le moment de retour à l'histoire littéraire et à l'analyse textuelle s'est produit après une longue phase théorique. Si la réflexion en termes de genre a beaucoup apporté aux études littéraires il n'en est pas moins vrai que la poétique a singulièrement contribué à redéfinir l'altérité et l'identitaire.

3. En ce qui concerne la distance temporelle entre le Je-narrant et le Je-narré, il faut souligner l'appréciation de Cordesse (1988 : 494): « Cette distinction essentielle entre héros et narrateur, ou Je-narré et Je-narrant, réintroduit bien un certain jeu entre ces deux positions : le Je-narrant est séparé du Je-narré par le temps (de quelques heures dans un « journal intime » à plusieurs années dans les « mémoires »), il est supérieur au Je-narré grâce à la connaissance des événements ultérieurs, et peut-être à l'expérience acquise ou à la sagesse rétrospective ».

4. Il faudrait penser à une intimité feinte, du moins partiellement, puisque comme le signale D. Cohn (1982: 236), « la fiction de l'intimité s'effondre à partir du moment où le narrateur se met à exposer sa situation à sa propre intention, à la manière d'un autobiographe s'adressant à des lecteurs éventuels, ou d'un locuteur parlant à quelqu'un qui l'écoute ».

5. « Chacun cherche Amine. Toute sa vie. Par tension. Chacun cherche ce visage. Ce paradis. Chacun cherche ce regard. Cette folie. De se reconnaître. De se contempler. De se doubler. Amine est le rêve du lien perdu. De l'innocence. Du bonheur. Algérien. Amine est la part manquante. Amine est la tristesse qui finit l'été. Amine est le prénom de ma vraie vie » (GM 166).

6. Les exemples sont très nombreux et souvent d'une grande et délicate beauté : « L'écriture et les filles viennent du même brasier » (PB 62) ; « Mes nuits sont mes livres à venir » (PB 65) ; « maîtriser son écriture c'est se maîtriser soi » (PB 69) ; « La main qui écrit n'est jamais innocente » (PB 84).

7. Par sa forme, *Poupée Bella*, peut-être le livre le plus dérangeant de Bouraoui, s'enracine dans l'immédiateté : « Le journal épouse le fil de l'existence ; il ne recompose pas le cours d'une vie ; il n'est pas une anamnèse […] mais le patient et méticuleux recensement d'une vie au jour le jour » (Miraux 1996 :13).

8. Nous sommes face à une forme particulière du récit qui, comme le dit G. Rannaud à propos du journal intime, fournit à la littérature en difficulté une forme qui est très exactement celle de la rupture, du discontinu, de la fragmentation du discours et donne un exemple, à côté d'autres, de ce que pourrait être le passage d'une littérature de l'énoncé à une littérature de l'énonciation, une littérature du « hic et nunc », du « maintenant je » (1978 : 286).

9. Enceinte sécurisante et féminine, le jardin est ainsi abordé par Durand (1969 : 283-284): « L'espace circulaire est plutôt celui du jardin, du fruit, de l'œuf ou du ventre, et déplace l'accent symbolique sur les voluptés secrètes de l'intimité. »

10. « Le bruit des graviers sous nos pas, le vent dans les arbres de son jardin, la douceur de l'été, le temps lent, l'éternité de notre jeunesse : Marion est un mythe » (PB 50).

11. B. Didier (1981 : 27-28) rend compte de l'originalité et de l'importance des « œuvres de lesbiennes » ; elle signale comment les femmes verseraient dans leurs œuvres leurs pulsions homosexuelles, à travers la présence de « une sœur, une confidente, une amie proche ou lointaine qui lui sert de miroir, certes, mais dont elle est prête aussi à devenir miroir ». Dans le cas de Nina Bouraoui, le double – qu'il s'appelle Amine dans *Garçon Manqué* o Julien dans *Poupée Bella* – est une figure récurrente, un jeune garçon homosexuel : le parfait miroir. Seulement la rencontre du double parfait féminisera cette image : l'Amie dans *Mes Mauvaises Pensées*.

12. « Chacun cherche Amine. Toute sa vie. Par tension. Chacun cherche ce visage. Ce paradis. Chacun cherche ce regard. Cette folie. De se reconnaître. De se contempler. De se doubler. Amine est le rêve du lien perdu. De l'innocence. Du bonheur. Algérien. Amine est la part manquante. Amine est la tristesse qui finit l'été. Amine est le prénom de ma vraie vie » (GM 166).

13. Cependant, le lecteur peut se poser la question des limites du romanesque et de l'autobiographique, car bien des passages renvoient à des souvenirs personnels, définis comme tels dans les deux autres récits. On pourrait, peut-être, penser que sous le titre de roman Bouraoui cache plutôt une autofiction. Il s'agirait ainsi d'une sorte de troisième voie, une troisième forme d'écriture qui se trouverait à la confluence des deux autres – autobiographie, roman – et que le lecteur peut déceler dans l'intertextualité bouraouienne. Il revient donc au récepteur, en tant que destinataire, de découvrir les points d'intersection des modes génériques considérés classiques, et de reconnaître la nature réelle d'une écriture qui n'est pas conventionnelle, mais

autobiographique dans son essence, formellement fictionnelle, profondément auto-fictionnelle.

14. « Nous nous ressemblons tant sur les films super-8, elle porte mon maillot en Mouse bleue, elle a ma peau, elle a mes yeux, elle est sur la plage de Pasable au Cap-Ferrat, je suis au club des Pins à Alger, il y a cette chose dans nos yeux, je ne sais pas si c'est de la tristesse, je ne sais pas si c'est de la joie, c'est de ce regard que prennent nos vies, et c'est ce regard qui garde notre jeunesse, nous contemplons le monde avec les mêmes yeux » (MMP 145).

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Race, Class, Gender?
Intersectionality Troubles

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ABSTRACT. Intersectionality is a key concept in recent Gender Studies. There is a lot research on the question of how to "intersect" different dimensions of identities – such as 'race, class, and gender.' This triad of identity (model of "triple oppression") became a buzzword and has been strongly criticized in the last years. At the same time new approaches can hardly solve the problem of what is denominated, what is not, and what the consequences of this politics of names actually are. The pluralisation of identities makes logocentric thinking visible and at the same time continues it. In this article I will discuss recent intersectionality theory in the context of queer theory and queer politics.

Keywords: intersectionality, identity, language, metaphor

1. Introduction: Celebrating Intersectionality?

When mainly white female academics "celebrate[d] intersectionality" at the homonymous conference in Frankfurt (Germany) it becomes obvious that the "intersectionality" of various identity dimensions such as "race, class, and gender" is not only about theoretical concepts but also or even more about specific acts and political responsibilities. Jennifer Petzen, a Berlin based theorist, criticizes strongly those intersectionality debates that maintain racist hierarchies and do not question the academic and non-academic political practices. In her talk in Vienna she referred to the "trouble" that Judith Butler caused when she refused to accept a prize for "civil courage" on Christopher Street Day in Berlin in June 2010. But what is the problem?

"Intersectionality" is a concept that has a history of more than 30 years. Its founding can be seen in the women's movement of the 1970s in the United States when black women started to fight an idea of feminism that was based solely on a white female subject. Black women were in fact excluded and they demanded a discourse that reflects on the heterogeneity of women. There were and there are women of different race, class, age, sexuality,

social background, religious or political believes. Some of them are mothers, others are not. Some of them are academics, others are workers. Feminist theorists as Angela Davis made this very clear in her book *Women, Race, and Class* from 1981: "All women were not white and all women did not enjoy the material comfort of the middle classes and the bourgeoisie." (Davis, 63).

Not so much a different narration but a different aspect of this founding history is the involvement of radical lesbians as Jill Johnston or Adrienne Rich who criticized the heterosexual dominance in women's movement, or a little later the engagement of feminists who focused on the intersectionality of gender and disabilities (e.g. Morris 1989).

The discussion gained more "drive" in the new established Queer Studies in the early 1990s. But the fact that very soon many groups of activists who called themselves "queers of colour" were established shows that the intersectionality issue is still on the agenda.

In many European countries migration became an important topic with the development of the European Union and its enlargement. So called migrant workers from EU member states have now full rights to move and work in all EU countries without any restrictions. But more threatening for politicians and many citizens seems to be the migration of people from non EU countries, currently especially from Arab and African countries. The construction of the "other," especially the Islamic "other" includes a long history and a wide range of racist stereotypes and serves to sustain the idea of a superior white western subject.

Because of this social, political, and economic development in these countries gender and queer theorists are even more forced to modify their theoretical and political concepts in order to grasp the complexity of discrimination. Even though postcolonial theory is strongly received in academic discourse, racism still tends to be a "hidden" subject in gender and queer studies. Especially in the context of queer theory and queer activism highly ethical standards cause a special attention on these issues which does not mean at the same time that certain problems do not exist anymore. The chance of ongoing conflicts in queer contexts between dominant groups and their opponents lies in their sincerity and persistence. Queer theorists and activists are expected to be aware of sexism and racism as well as of other forms of discrimination and to avoid attitudes or behaviour that would neglect certain standards. Very obviously the complexity of identities makes this a challenging task: To be gay does not automatically mean not to be racist. This is a trivial but very important insight. Even those who are part of a minoritized group can be privileged in a different context. The white lesbian professor at a university might be an example for such a complex intertwinement of subject positions.

Judith Butler refused the award that was offered to her in Berlin because she observed a striking contrast between a majority of white gay and lesbian activists and an excluded minority of queers of colour and migrants:

> We all recognized that queer people can be used by those who want to wage war that means cultural wars against immigrants by forced islamophobia and military wars against Iraq and Afghanistan. During this time and by these means we become recruited for nationalism and militarism. European governments claim to guarantee safety and freedom for women and homosexual persons and make us believe that this new hatred against immigrants would be necessary in order to protect us.[1]

This strategy by representatives of a dominant social majority has also been discussed by Lisa Duggan[2] who identified a certain tendency amongst middle class feminist or gay groups to arrange with dominant norms and values they usually would not agree with in order to save certain privileges. Now we have to realize that islamophobia is not only rampant amongst conservatives or right-winged people but also amongst those who generally plea for tolerance. While Angela Davis expressed her appreciation for Butler's refusal she also emphasized the necessity of "more discussion about the impact of racism even within groups that are considered to be progressive."[3]

2. Intersectionality – In Theory

One of the most influential theorists who contributed to the debate on intersectionality is Kimberlé Crenshaw. She teaches Civil Rights and other courses in critical race studies and constitutional law at UCLA. She was a founder and has been a leader in the intellectual movement called 'Critical Race Theory.' A central question in her work is what the consequences of certain legal texts and practices are for women of color. To understand for instance violence against women as a social and systematic process is important and it is a result of political solidarity amongst women. Identity politics were and often still are a "source of strength, community, and intellectual development"[4] for minoritized groups. However, the concept of identity politics based on a single common ground as gender or race or sexuality implies the problem "that it frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences."[5] But looking at women who need help in women's shelters the differences within the "class" of women: racism, sexism, class oppression intersect in their everyday lives but they "seldom do in feminist and antiracist practices" as Crenshaw points it. And unfortunately this is very often still the fact. Intersectionality theory offers a way to understand the multiple grounds of identity "when considering how the social world is constructed." [6]

The necessity of such an approach is widely accepted in gender studies: "We cannot study gender in isolation from other inequalities, nor can we

only study inequalities' intersection and ignore the historical and contextual specificity that distinguishes the mechanisms that produce inequality by different categorical divisions."[7] The question is, however, how "intersectionality" can be theorized. The term itself is a metaphor and is criticized for its implication of a single crossing point that is limited in space and in time while the reality of multiple discriminations is constantly burdening persons even though different social contexts may invoke different 'qualities' of discrimination. An alternative term is *interdependency*;[8] other concepts are *diversity* or *plurality*. The key problem of all these names and concepts is the question of what kind of difference is acknowledged and re/constructed as a category and which differences keep being unnamed. It is also unclear in what ways categories should be defined and how many of them should be found. As Cornelia Klinger puts it: "It does not make sense to refer to superposing or intersecting aspects of class, race, and gender in the individual experiences of world without being able to tell how and by what class, race, and gender are constituted as social categories." [9]

Does the triad of "race, class, and gender" sufficiently describe what happens to a marginalized person in a certain situation or context or does it help to meet her/his needs in society? Some theorists support this concept of "three axes of difference" arguing that these categories would be historically and culturally dominant and therefore the most important ones.[10] Some theorists doubt if it is possible to link more than three categories in a socio-structural analysis.[11] Others plead for considering at least the sexuality as fourth category because of the heterosexist structure of most societies all over the world.[12] Beverly Skeggs argues that social divisions have different organizing logics. 'Race', thus, cannot be treated in the same way as social class.[13] In a similar way Nira Yuval-Davis argues: "Social divisions are about macro axes of social power but also involve actual, concrete people. Social divisions have organizational, intersubjective, experiential and representational forms, and this affects the ways we theorize them as well as the ways in which we theorize the connections between the different levels."[14]

Mieke Verloo points out that "different inequalities are dissimilar because they are differently framed." It would therefore be important, she argues, to "ground policy strategies not only in the similarity, but also in the distinctiveness of inequalities."[15]

Not less complex is the question of how to deal with different approaches and levels of analysis. In order to meet this problem Nina Degele and Gabriele Winkler suggest a multi-level approach that differs between a macro level of social structures and institutions, a micro level of processes of identity formation and the level of representation on which cultural symbols are discussed. This concept seems to be very plausible, however, the problem of how to "handle" all these aspects, categories, disciplines and levels in one survey or article has not been solved yet. At the same time one has to ask if

even the "perfect" method would achieve useful results. From my point of view theory needs to consider another and maybe more important aspect that was already addressed by Gayatri Spivak in her book *Can the Subaltern Speak*? from 1988. The question she raises concerns the position of the speaker in society. How and under which conditions would it be possible for a marginalized or suppressed person to speak and to subvert oppressive structures?

Spivak and Bell Hooks, another important theorist, also questioned the academic engagement with the so called *Other*: To truly engage with the subaltern an academic would need to decenter himself or herself as the expert. Traditionally academics would want to know about the subaltern's experiences but not their own explanations of those experiences. Hooks argues that according to the received view in Western knowledge a true explanation can only come from the expertise of the academic. The subordinated subject gives up his or her knowledge for the use of the Western academic:

> No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Re-writing you I write myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still colonizer the speaking subject and you are now at the center of my talk.[16]

3. Conclusions and Consequences?

I cannot avoid the impression that the very ambitious attempts of socially and economically privileged theorists are ethically ambivalent: on the one hand it is high time to think about the fact of multiple discrimination and to find ways of changing perspectives as well as changing the law, and of course social structures; on the other hand – as the example of the conference in Frankfurt suggests – white feminist and gender theorists claim a certain academic space for themselves that reproduces hierarchies and processes of domination and subordination. The most important questions are: Who is speaking? Where? From which perspective? About whom and what? To what end? And finally: Who gets heard?

Jennifer Petzen observes a "silence around positioning" and maintaining of racial hierarchies in academic contexts as well as in political "emancipatory" activism. In her view the discourse on intersectionality is mostly nothing else than a "more sophisticated method of denying racism."[17] "Black feminism" as well as feminism of women from the "south," she says, is often made invisible. I would like to add that this is also often true for feminism from women of the so called "east." At the same time a strong self-concept of being "antiracist" is of eminent importance for gender and queer theorists as

well as activists. Petzen's disturbing conclusion is: that feminist and "queer politics is merely white politics." Petzen demands that antiracist politics that deserves the name has to be based on sharing power and on privileged individuals who are willing to take a risk in standing up against racism.

The question is what exactly it is that needs to be changed at our universities and in our academic discourse in order to "do" intersectionality in a way that makes all people listen to? The answer will not be simple. To step aside and to share power is a great idea in theory but it takes specific (political) strategies to change power relations and social structures. We do of course not start at zero-point because there is a lot of experience in terms of struggles for participation and emancipation. A new accent in this debate seems to be that now feminist and queer scholars finally reached the point where it is no longer possible to write about intersectionality and not to offer answers of how to change at least the conditions of academic debate. "Diversity management" might be a useful and modest tool for companies and institutions to initiate such a change even if it does not guarantee fair arrangements and certainly does not answer methodological questions raised above.

When organizations are conceptualized as sites of identity work (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003), diversity management practices play an important role in reproducing social hierarchies and representations of identities based on binaries. In order to avoid the reproduction of fixed dimensions, Lorbiecki and Jack (2000, 23) suggest the following question for critical analyses of diversity management discourse: "Who is being constructed as different? For what purpose and with what consequences?"[18]

It seems to be essential to ask the right questions. For academic contexts, e.g. in Austria, the striking inequalities in the educational system are a major obstacle for changes in academia but at the same time there can be observed a lasting refusal for a diversity of social backgrounds, methods, languages, or even opinions at universities themselves. Interests of power are barely hidden. To discuss and change personnel policy is therefore still and again *one* important task on the agenda. Everyone's personal responsibility of course will not be annihilated by institutional measures.

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Updating Home and Self in Finnish Home Makeovers[1]

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ABSTRACT. The home makeover shows on television construct the idea that by redecorating one's home and reflecting on it, one engages in the construction of the ideal self. This article focuses on the Finnish home makeover shows *Inno* and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* and their representations of gendered selves. In the programs examined, a reflexive stance to gender attributes of home decoration is often explicit, while the relationship between class and taste is a more elusive question. The shows are explored as a part of contemporary television culture, which is characterized by a greater prevalence of global television formats and reality television. The article illustrates that despite the increasing globalization of television, the national contexts and differences between national program contents are also important to explore.

Keywords: home makeover show, self, representation, gender, class, taste.

1. Background and Context

Lifestyle television has been very popular on American, Australian, and European television since the 1990s. Its popularity has been understood as a televisual phenomenon that has made prime time television more feminine or 'softer' because it has taken time from documentaries and current affair programs (Moseley 2000). However, discussing the increased feminization of prime time television is problematic because through the gendered description people easily assume that the television programs concentrating on home and consumption address primarily women viewers (Ruoho 2006). In Finland the trend of lifestyle television and makeover shows started at the beginning of the 21st century. Compared to the earlier educational magazine and hobbyist programs, contemporary lifestyle television is associated more with consumption and self-fulfillment and with being up-to-date. The information in lifestyle television is represented in an entertaining and playful way. Makeover shows concerning home interiors have been understood as an arena in which notions of gender and meanings of private and public spheres are

renegotiated (Attwood 2005; Gorman-Murray 2006). As a whole, makeover shows are complicated and mediated texts that express cultural desires and fears through representations of selfhood (Weber 2009). In my analysis, I focus on the intersections of gender, class and Finnishness in the self-representations.

The rise of lifestyle and makeover television is a part of the reality television phenomenon. The broader context of reality television is strongly related to the global mobility of television formats. According to Albert Moran, the systematic international exchange of television formats is one of the mainstays of the current global television system. A television format is a kind of recipe that can be remade and adapted as a program in another territory. The aim is to export the successful commercial knowledge and know-how bound up in a program, which will facilitate its adaptation in another territory. Developing global television formats and localizing them is based on the idea that national audiences like on-screen figures who act and sound like them, situations and places that feel familiar, and stories that relate to their world (Moran 2009, 21–25). Many makeover programs represent a successful example of format mobility.

Regardless of the worldwide success of reality television and its formats, national television still plays an important role in constructing and redefining cultural identities. The need for national belonging remains in the age of global television (Aslama & Pantti 2007). For instance, home makeover shows produce notions of the national or local through recognizable places, objects, and people or by highlighting the towns and cities in which the makeovers are done (McElroy 2008). In any case, current television producers are highly aware of the global success stories of television and foreign formats of the same genre, and in this sense national productions can be seen as a part of global televisual trends.

Reality television is used as an umbrella term that refers to the diversity of programs in which so-called ordinary people are on the air without a detailed, pre-written script. Reality television is also often related to the questioning of good taste. Many researchers of lifestyle television have understood lifestyle television and makeover shows as a sub-genre of reality television, while others categorize them as separate. Typically home makeover shows differ from reality shows in which the participants are placed in socially or physically extreme situations. The challenges they face are mainly related to the shopping decisions. Shows such as *Kodin kääntöpiiri* and *Inno* do not actually question the boundaries of good taste or correct behavior. Although the shows highlight pleasure-seeking and fun, in the end the experts' task is to teach the participants and viewers about good taste, but in subtle and playful ways.

Mikko Hautakangas states that reality television creates an intimate relationship with its viewers because it is often easier to imagine oneself in the position of an ordinary participant than in the position of a celebrity or well-known actor. In this sense, reality television involves a 'peer effect' (Hautakangas 2006, 27−28). Intimacy is also an important aspect of home makeover shows that use close-ups to show participants talk about their desires relating to home decoration and coziness. The viewers may position themselves as peers to the shows' participants, but the peer effect forms only one aspect of the reception. It is also possible for viewers to refuse to identify with the lay decorators. The relationship between the viewers and 'ordinary' participants is a multifaceted one and includes a variety of often contradictory attitudes and affects.

2. The Data and Methodology

My analysis focuses on the two Finnish home makeover shows, *Inno* (2004−) and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* (2001−2005), and the episodes broadcast in the spring of 2004. The data also includes the web pages of the shows. *Inno* is produced by Metronome Film and Television, and it is aired on the commercial channel Nelonen, while *Kodin kääntöpiiri* was produced by the national public broadcasting company Yleisradio and was aired on TV2, one of its channels.[2] In its first season, the producer of *Inno* stated that the show was modeled after some British home makeover programs. Similarities, for example, to *Changing Rooms* (1996–2004, BBC) can be seen in the use of energetic incidental music, quick narrative pacing, and canted and expressive camera angles (see Everett 2004, 174).

The participants of the Finnish home makeover shows are represented as ordinary lay decorators. Because of this, they cannot be professionals of any area of visual design. In addition, the participants often stress the fact that this is the first time they are using the services of an interior decorator. The experts of Finnish home makeover shows are represented as relaxed, casual, and humorous people who know more than the average person, yet still listen to the client-participant. They avoid formality and present themselves as chatty. The processes of transformation are represented in an atmosphere of intimacy in which the focus is on solutions that are 'right' for the person or family in question.

I analyze the episodes by using a method of cultural analysis based on close reading. Mieke Bal defines it as detailed analysis where the texts are scrutinized in depth and in detail, with a suspension of certainties (Bal 2002, 45). My broader methodological context is based on the idea of inter-sectionality and especially on the idea that gender should not be analyzed separately

from other differences (Davis 2008). When assuming intersectionality as a methodological context, it is important that the categories to be analyzed, such as sexuality, race, gender, or class, are not strictly defined beforehand. For instance, in my analysis of home makeover shows I prefer Bal's (ibid.) idea that the objects are given a possibility to 'speak back.' The focus of my analysis is on the televisual text itself and especially on the conversations between the interior decorator and the participant.

From the Western historical perspective, home decoration has, since the bourgeois cult of domesticity, been understood especially as the domain of middle-class women (Sparke 1995, 15-26). Contemporary home makeover shows renegotiate and redefine the meanings of this gendered and class-based association. Their target audiences are often defined as young adults, as opposed to women. Some shows, such as *Kodin kääntöpiiri*, deliberately aim to increase the number of male viewers by including the theme of renovation in the episodes and by offering a "male perspective" to the home makeover via the male studio host (from an interview with the producer).

Researchers of home makeover shows have focused on male interior designers and representations of camp and gay domesticity. According to Feona Attwood, the images of male designers work out notions of male expertise and masculine consumption and the barrier between the privacy of home and the publicity of stores. Typically home makeover shows bring home decoration to the areas of fashion and style, blotting out the aspects of homemaking and renovation (Attwood 2005). The figures of gay men as participants and designers have been understood as resignifying the meanings of domesticity and its heteronormativity. With the increased representation of gay couples in Australian home makeover shows, Andrew Gorman-Murray argues that the shows question the conventional understandings of home as a heteronormative place (Gorman-Murray 2006). In the episodes of *Inno* and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* broadcast in the spring of 2004, there are no same-sex couples, and in this sense their representations reproduce the idea of heteronormative domesticity. Although at the same time visibility of gay and lesbian figures increased in Finnish television drama, Kodin kääntöpiiri and Inno did not involve overtly homosexual participants.

Kodin kääntöpiiri uses four middle-aged female designers. One of them devises the transformation of one home in each episode. The makeovers are done around southern, eastern and central Finland, and the choice of designer is mainly based on the geographical location of her office. The aim is that the whole family participates in the program, and in this sense the idea of home decoration as 'women's activity' is partly questioned. The designers of *Kodin kääntöpiiri* are represented as approachable customer-oriented experts whose careers as interior decorators are not discussed at all. Marko Paananen has

studied and worked in Los Angeles before his television career, and this point is brought out in many of his interviews. In *Inno* he is a cheerful and lively television personality who frequently gestures and laughs, and in this sense differs from conventional Finnish male hosts, who are described as stable and factual (Nikunen 2005, 301). In contrast, *Kodin kääntöpiiri*'s studio host Heimo Holopainen resembles the description of the conventional male host. However, part of his television personality is based on his background on the one hand as a comic television and radio personality and rock musician, and on the other, as a radio journalist. His image as the host is a mix of an entertainer and a matter-of-fact journalist.

3. Home Makeovers as Producing Notions of Gender

Brenda Weber argues that on makeover television, the body stands as the gateway to the self. Makeover television focuses on the reasons one must be made over, and on the glory of becoming a refined, beautiful, and confident individual, what Weber calls an After-body. She argues that the makeover shows as social practice do not teach individuals how to cultivate the self, but how to locate it. It is not just the physical body altered through plastic surgery, weight loss, or style, but the symbolic body represented by rooms, cars, or kids that functions as the key that will unlock the self. According to Weber, makeovers do not create selfhood, but rather they locate and salvage that which is already present, although weak. She states that makeover television offers a distinct story compared to the ideas that identity and gender are fluid, fragmented, contingent, and diverse. The shows repeat the notion of coherent and stable subject positions, located in and expressed through the made-over body. Makeovers promote an idea of self that is stable, coherent, and locatable, where gender unambiguously correlates to sexed identity (Weber 2009, 5-7).

On the grounds of my analysis, it is somewhat challenging to make generalizations about the whole of makeover television because there are many differences in representations of the ideal self among its subgenres, national productions, and singular shows. For example, on Finnish home makeover shows the participants are not usually taught how to position themselves. The impression is that they know their self-location well but want advice on how to perform and refine their personal style through the home interior more accurately and clearly. The expert cultivates the design just for the participant, and it is constructed piece by piece. Finnish home makeover shows prefer narratives in which transformations are depicted as deliberate and as sharpening the participants' self-representation.

In any case, the participants often react just as Weber describes: they recognize their personality in the styles and combinations that the interior decorator has designed for them. The expert is needed to create a stylish and updated interior that the participants can feel reflects their personalities. The idea is that only an expert can properly interpret taste and actualize it in practice. On the other hand, *Inno* and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* emphasize how the "better you" is constructed exactly and as the result of taste negotiations. It is pieced together from different products, colors, materials, and the ability to chat about them easily. The experts do not just refine the aspects that are already present in the participant's self, but their designs involve features that are novel and surprising from the participant's point of view. The participant's taste is represented as flexible and able to assimilate new ideas and styles.

Inno and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* and home makeover shows in general demonstrate how a desired image of oneself is constructed by choosing and combining objects and colors and displaying them deliberately. In that process there is no room for chance. At the end of the episodes the participants often mention that the transformation will continue in another room. In that sense, *Kodin kääntöpiiri* and *Inno* do not suggest that the makeover shown is the end of the story. Constructing the ideal notion of oneself is represented as a continuing and playful process that proceeds room by room. Moreover, dubious and erratic aspects of the transformations are present during the transformation when the participants have difficulties making decisions between the products or when their partners have divergent opinions. Although the participants after the transformation express their satisfaction with their homes as some kind of extensions of their personalities, the home as a symbolic body is not represented as the key to unlocking the self.

Home decoration items are used to produce a coziness in which the gendered selves of the participants are visible or can be interpreted. In home makeover shows performing and producing gender through decoration requires reflection and work, and it benefits from the knowledge and skills of the expert. While body and style makeovers foreground the production of a gendered self by privileging the features of dress, hair, and makeup (Moseley 2000), home makeover shows produce the idea of the gendered self by focusing on the materials, colors and details of furniture and textiles. The ideal participant assumes or learns to assume a self-conscious, flexible and strategic stance to gender. It resembles the idea that Lisa Adkins designates as aesthetic reflexivity to gender and gender attributes. However, expressing aesthetic reflexivity often involves the inscription of differences and the making of hierarchies (Adkins 2008, 81-84). Taste negotiations between the participants and interior decorators on home makeover shows produce hier-

archies in which the participants develop their ability to be more reflexive and flexible in their stance to gender codes of home decoration.

Home makeover shows can also be read from the perspective of performing notions of class. Individuals use and appropriate the available cultural resources in order to produce performances of class. This happens by assuming different moral positions or forms of authority. Like gender, class is performed and produced by categorizing and evaluating (Skeggs, Thumim & Woods 2008). At the moment, a perception of class as a shared and collective identity is not a highly popular notion. The boundaries of class are perceived as obscure and younger people in particular identify with hybrid positions that enable them to move between different classes. I agree with Wendy Bottero, who states that nowadays it is preferable to approach class as an individualized and classed identification. An idea of class is often implicit in expressions of taste and cultural knowledge, and these expressions can produce hierarchies or inequality (Bottero 2004, 989-990). For example, a self-confident way to talk about cultural forms, such as decoration elements or culturally remote sources of inspiration, can be interpreted as a means to construct oneself as an educated middle-class consumer.

4. A Home-Spun Feel or a Globally Oriented Consumer Attitude

For the first five years *Inno* had a 'thirty-something' male designer, Marko Paananen. His first presenter partner was the clothing designer, Minna Cheung. Her role can be interpreted an intermediary who presented the designer's ideas to the participants and their feedback to the designer softening them where necessary. As a television personality *Inno*'s interior decorator resembles Attwood's (2005) depiction of the stylish and dandyish designer. He is represented as a maestro who is part of the cosmopolitan creative class (see Florida 2002). When reading the web discussion forum on the Nelonen website, it seems that the comments more often concern the image of the designer than his designs.[3] Roughly generalizing, the comments are divided into those that praise his cheerfulness and innovativeness and those that criticize him for laughing too much or not taking the desires of the participants sufficiently into account.

The viewers of *Kodin kääntöpiiri* are addressed both as citizens to be activated and as consumers looking for suitable products who might benefit from expert assistance. The program offers a home-spun feel and DIY tips. The participants are represented not as decoration enthusiasts but as people who just want to update their furnishings and finish the transformation on schedule. In both series inefficiency is represented as a feature that distinguishes the interior decorators from the ordinary participants. Participating in a

makeover show is depicted as a pleasurable and efficient way to complete a makeover project and in this sense to rise 'above' all those ordinary home-owners whose makeover projects last too long.

At the beginning of *Kodin kääntöpiiri*'s episodes, the host tells the viewers in which town or municipality the makeover home is situated. As a result, viewers can have a glimpse of the lifestyle in a different corner of Finland in each episode. The program shows footage not only of the home interior but also of the courtyard and the facade. The shopping is typically done in local shops. The impression of regionality is also produced by the dialects the participants speak. In *Inno* the result is often a trendy look with a dash of luxury. The focus is not as much on the phases of transformation but in the ideation of the new décor and the participant's reactions to her new home in the moment it is revealed. The participants' home town and district are stated at the beginning of the episode by the host. The chosen homes are always situated in Helsinki metropolitan area. The program produces notions of urban living and especially of habitation in a capital city area. Both shows construct the notion of Finnishness by sharing the domiciles of the participants. However, the regional aspect is much stronger in *Kodin kääntöpiiri*, and this feature also supports the channel profile of YLE TV2 that has conventionally emphasized regionality in its programming.

Global or transnational aspects in the Finnish series are fairly difficult to analyze. *Kodin kääntöpiiri* in particular reproduces a home-spun approach to home decoration in which family relations, amateurism, and a focus on the local environment nearly obscure the fact that these current television productions are not separate from the global television trends. In the interview, the producer of *Kodin kääntöpiiri* explained that the program concept was created by devising a program that would suit Finnish viewers after first examining European and American home makeover shows. In *Kodin kääntöpiiri* ideal participants are the families and persons who can renovate their home with the help of experts. An international aspect to home decoration is explicitly present only when the participants desire a style or theme that is culturally remote, for example, an 'African style.' In contrast, in *Inno* the participants or the interior decorator are often prone to diverge from typical Finnish design items or archetypal Finnish materials such as birch. This becomes clear when the interior decorator criticizes Finnish home interiors for their constraint and hopes that the participants are open to new design ideas. His self-representation is based on the idea of the cosmopolitan designer who follows contemporary trends, is thoroughly familiar with new products and absorbs international influences. Moreover, the participants in *Inno* often state that they admire certain culturally remote objects or styles. They desire unique and personal decoration elements that they could not envision

themselves. This often refers to items that are somehow untypical of Finnish home environments.

5. Negotiations and Interpretations of Taste

The homes shown in *Inno* and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* do not represent poverty or extreme wealth. They can be interpreted as average homes although inside this category the occupations of the participants and the sizes of the apartments and houses vary a great deal. In any case, most of the participants are working homeowners aged from 25 to 50. In *Inno* their occupations can be interpreted as middle class, while in *Kodin kääntöpiiri* there are also a handful of working-class titles. In one episode a participant can be, for example, a Master of Economic Sciences, while in another, an electrician. However, home decoration as an activity is mainly separated from occupation, class, and working life. Although in both series there are a few housewives, their work in their own home is not discussed. Instead, the home decoration is related to personal taste, life situations, hobbies, and pets. In *Kodin kääntöpiiri* the emphasis is also on the couple's history and family ties. In this sense, a familist ethos is strongly present in the show.

In addition to single occupants, both shows focus on heterosexual partners and families. The mothers of the families are depicted as the main participants, being present in all phases of the makeover. Very often they seem to be the 'interpreters' of the tastes of other family members. In *Inno* the husbands and boyfriends are mainly depicted as commentators giving their opinions on the result or on their wives and girlfriends as decorators. In contrast, in *Kodin kääntöpiiri* both the men and women participate in devising a new look for their home, but in the shopping scenes the men are not often present with their wives. The series represent DIY activities as an arena in which both partners of a heterosexual couple are involved, but the tasks are often depicted as gendered. For example, shopping for draperies and sewing them is represented as the domain of women, while men are mostly filmed painting walls or using a drill. To some extent the representation of DIY renovation in *Kodin kääntöpiiri* resembles the earlier DIY magazines and books in which making of home was depicted as a form of coupledom. DIY was described as a way to construct and reformulate the notions of the heterosexual relationship and its gendered tasks, not just as a form of masculine activity (see McElroy 2006, 93-94).

Stereotypical representations of masculine men and feminine women happen most explicitly in episodes in which the participants are single males or little children. In single men's homes, the aim is a masculine feel, which means that overtly feminine elements such as rose-patterned cushions are

eliminated. Masculinity is also produced by calling certain materials and items masculine, such as cowhide, black leather or white lamella curtains. In an episode of *Kodin kääntöpiiri*, the masculinity of a single man's home is produced in the end, in which the satisfied homeowner sits at his dining table smoking a cigar. This scene produces a hedonistic impression in which the man enjoys his new stylish home. In the case of a female flight attendant's one-bedroom apartment, *Inno*'s designer criticizes the interior of the home as being 'prettyish.' He refers to the knickknacks in the room and uses the word as a negative evaluation. Prettyish is typically associated with smallness, fastidiousness, the petty bourgeois, small-mindedness, and confined rooms. These understanding come from the 18th century, when beauty was understood as small and elevated as grand (Seddiki 2010, 197). The evaluation of prettyish decoration as negative can be interpreted against the idea of professional home decoration as an art and art avoiding being defined as pretty.

Weber argues that women and men of color on the makeover shows are thankful and obsequious. They do not scrutinize the advice; neither do they express any reservations or judgment. On the contrary, the white men on makeover shows are often represented as resisting those experts who are aligned with subordinated positions, typically women or men who are marked as "ethnic" or gay, or both. By depicting white men as resistant to the experts, who in themselves are represented as occupying positions coded as subaltern, the shows offer the men being transformed a position of power by putting them on a higher rung of the social hierarchy than their discredited makeover gurus. The made-over man must learn a complicated practice: how to enhance the way he looks without seeming to have done so (Weber 2009, 184-185).

The episodes of *Inno* and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* consist mainly of white women and men; only two women of color are involved. Men of color are not represented at all. However, there are both women and men who resist certain suggestions by the interior decorator, and in the end all of them are represented as satisfied with the result, regardless of their original opinion. Indeed a participant who greatly resists the design of the interior decorator is a welder whose kitchen is renovated in *Kodin kääntöpiiri*. He buys patterned rose floor tiles although the interior decorator has suggested plain white tiles. His resistance is related at least as much to his working-class position as to his maleness. One way to perform a working-class masculinity in this case is related to DIY activities and the ability to defy the authority of the female interior decorator. The participant says that he changed his mind in the store after talking with a salesperson. The aim was to avoid "the

feel of a slaughterhouse" and to use the tiles to achieve a more homey and rustic feel.

6. A Middle-Class Orientation

The idea of class is an elusive and ambiguous issue in Finnish home decoration shows. For example, it is not self-evident which decoration items or objects reflect working-class or middle-class taste. Since the 1960s when home decoration began to be understood as a mass culture phenomenon in Finland, it has not been considered very sensible to speak about class-based furnishings. On average, the basic furniture of Finnish living rooms is fairly similar, including a sofa, table, one or two arm chairs and shelving. However, highly educated people seem to have more layers of decoration in their homes (Sarantola-Weiss 2003, 370-373). Today, the desire to differentiate oneself can be seen in purchases of extravagant materials or exclusive brands that have become more common also among consumers earning average wages. Similarly, the interior decorators of Finnish home makeover shows aim to incorporate different layers and individual luxurious materials in their designs. They prefer combining old and new furniture, hand-made objects and mass-produced articles, or kitsch and classic items.

Lifestyle television has been understood as promoting middle-class or upper middle-class taste as a norm (Palmer 2008; Biressi & Nunn 2008). This claim is also valid for Finnish home makeover shows. Representing fairly similar made-over home interiors, they reproduce the cultural understanding that "more or less we are all middle class." However, class as a theme is not discussed at all. The class issue is often understood almost as a taboo in Finnish society (Järvinen & Kolbe 2008; Hiidenheimo et al. 2009). This relates to the idea of the Nordic welfare state in which no one should present themselves as richer than another. In public performances such as a television show, avoiding class question becomes perhaps more evident. Because of this, class identification is quite difficult to discern. Performing middle-class-ness does not mean that the participants indicate that they despise the decoration associated with the working class or 'under class.' If anything, middle-class-ness is produced by assuming an attitude of being a cultural omnivore. This refers to an ethos in which one prefers culturally remote objects and styles, and consumes both popular and high culture. An omnivorous orientation is contrasted with 'fixed' or 'static' tastes, which can be interpreted as narrow and restricted (Bennett et al. 2009, 254-255). On the grounds of Finnish statistical research the orientation of a cultural omnivore increases with higher education. However, the choices of highly educated

people are not so congruent with each other that it would be possible to speak about a class-based taste (Alasuutari 2009).

The participants of *Kodin kääntöpiiri* who have working-class occupations do not name cultural impressions or themes that should be reflected in their home decoration. Some of them highlight the comfort of the whole family or emotional ties to objects connected to their grown-up children, but it is difficult to name some distinctive features based on style or taste. Generally speaking, the Finnish participants desire home interiors with clean lines and up-to-date and cozy decoration. These wishes are repeated episode after episode both among middle-class and working-class participants. Both types of participants are prone to express that they avoid fussy items. For instance, a working-class male participant notes being amused that the home decorations he has seen in Swedish homes gave him the impression of being in a field of flowers. Regardless of the participants' class status, the foundation for their wishes rests on modernism's ideals of clarity, functionality, and simplicity which have been dominant in Finland since the 1930s. However, the participants want to enliven this baseline with ornaments, luxurious textiles or accent colors. They prefer some kind of mix of clear lines and an opulent feel. Among *Inno*'s participants, the orientation of a cultural omnivore is stronger than among *Kodin kääntöpiiri*'s participants. *Inno*'s participants' ideas are often more detailed, and they are prone to wish for elements that are 'non-Finnish.' An individualistic, culturally omnivorous ethos dominates in *Inno* while, a home-spun, family-centered ethos dominates in *Kodin kääntöpiiri*.

The attitudes and hopes of single participants are not very strongly divided by gender but there are a few differences. The single women emphasize the importance of certain objects in their home. The relationship between the single women and their possessions is depicted as more intimate than in other episodes. Additionally, the single men want their possessions to be easy to take care of more often than in other episodes. They are represented as mobile and socially active people who prefer materials of good quality and objects that do not gather dust and do not require careful treatment. Although masculine aspects of home decoration are emphasized in the make-overs for single men, feminine aspects of decoration are not mentioned as ideal features in single women's homes. It seems to be a part of the notion of 'Finnish good taste' that adult women should avoid giving a strongly feminine and decorative impression of themselves.

On the whole, the attitude of the cultural omnivore is most evident in the representations of the interior decorators. They are depicted as people who talk plausibly about style and genre differences and features of new products. The interior decorator of *Inno* is eager to explain his ideas and express

grounds for his design choices. In *Kodin kääntöpiiri* the design process is based more on the interaction between the interior decorator and the participant, but the interior decorator is depicted as an expert who is able to suggest fresh and non-conventional solutions. *Inno*'s designer evaluates the interior decoration at the beginning of the episodes when he is shown a video clip from the home to be made over. However, he does not repeat his evaluative statements when face-to-face with the participants. In this sense the taste evaluations are targeted only to the viewers, who are invited to see the interiors from the expert's view. Instead, in *Kodin kääntöpiiri* the interior decorator's evaluations of the "before" décor are not revealed to the viewers. The interior decorators just list the items that are going to be removed during the makeover. In this sense, *Kodin kääntöpiiri* aims to refrain from overtly positioning the expert above the participant. Although the makeover in *Inno* is in the hands of the interior decorator, in both shows the important point is that the participants are not overtly humiliated or shamed. The culture of correctness is important in Finnish home makeover shows.

7. Conclusion

Although the financial inequality and income differentials between socio-economic groups have grown in Finland in the 2000s (Statistics Finland 2007), the representations of home makeover shows in the main obscure the fact that there are many families, couples and singles who could not use 1000 euro, which is the minimum budget, to the furnishing of one or two rooms of their home. Upward mobility is implicit in the shows, but the experts and participants very carefully eschew talking explicitly about the status aspects of the furnishings. The idea of class is present, e.g. in the titles of the participants, in their hobbies or sizes of the apartments, but in general the relationship between taste and class remains an elusive one. Instead of class, the most important divide is attached to positions of the expert and lay decorator.

The Finnish home makeover shows illustrate how gender is performed through gendered home decoration activities or by giving gendered meanings to items chosen for decoration. In the case of heterosexual couples and families, women are represented as the main participants and interpreters of their family members' tastes. Almost every participant desires contemporary and cozy decoration with clean lines. Coziness in *Inno* and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* refers to an abundance of soft textiles and light earthy colors. In some episodes a cozy atmosphere is created by using natural materials such as wood, silk and linen. When cozy refers to a soft and inviting interior, it is used as a euphemism for feminine. Naming decoration items or styles as feminine is

not overtly done, but expressions such as prettyish, bric-a-brac, puffy curtains or fussy ornaments are used to describe features perceived as feminine and unwanted. In the makeovers for single men, the masculinity of the home décor and enjoying one's 'easy to maintain' home are emphasized.

Some of the differences between *Inno* and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* are based on the differing channel profiles between the commercial television channel Nelonen and the national public broadcasting company's channel YLE TV2. For example, addressing viewers as citizens is more explicit in *Kodin kääntöpiiri*, while in *Inno* they are addressed primarily as consumers. Although they negotiate and produce notions of national identities differently, both of them offer the representations that are recognizable as familiar and customary in the Finnish context of habitation. *Inno* focuses on urban living and the capital area and *Kodin kääntöpiiri* on the countryside and different regions of Finland. Furthermore, in *Kodin kääntöpiiri* the participants often speak in a dialect that produces a notion of a regional identity.

Home makeover shows as media texts enable the analysis of the cultural notions, desires and fears related to home decoration as one way to perform and produce both notions of class and gender. A focal point in Finnish home makeover shows is the idea of an average home that has to be transformed in order to achieve a more comfortable and stylish lifestyle. In *Inno* a comfortable lifestyle is associated with a felicitous home décor involving few luxurious details. In *Kodin kääntöpiiri* a comfortable lifestyle is related to DIY home decoration and the togetherness of a heterosexual couple or family. The Finnish shows make visible the idea that home decoration can be interpreted as an idealized representation of self or family in which ways of performing gender are more easily recognizable than ways of performing class.

NOTES

1. A slightly changed version of this article is to appear under the title "Updating Ordinary Coziness: Finnish Home Makeovers as Representations of Self and Family" in Mihăilă, Ramona, Efstratia Oktapoda, and Nancy Honicker (eds.) (2012), *Gender Studies in the Age of Globalization.* New York: Addleton Academic Publishers.

2. The image of the Yleisradio's channel two (TV2) is the "channel of the whole nation." In this sense it is meaningful that the chosen homes in *Kodin kääntöpiiri* are situated in different regions and also in rural areas, and not exclusively in city centers. The commercial channel Nelonen was founded in 1997 and was promoted as a novel and fresh television channel. Its target audience was mentioned to be urban young adults.

3. See *Inno*'s website: http://www.nelonen.fi/ohjelmat/inno/etusivu.

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A Gentleman's Agreement: Female Illegitimacy in Nineteenth-Century Male-Authored Fiction

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ABSTRACT. The structures of desire in male-authored Western novels from Fielding's *Tom Jones* to James Joyce's *Ulysses* and beyond share many aspects of the fantasy of illustrious paternity set forth by Freud and elaborated by his protégé, Otto Rank, as The Hero's Journey, a paradigm recurring in many classic epics and fairy tales. This identity journey, which ends with the hero's return to the father and with reintegration into his world, illuminates the figure of female bastard in male-authored Western fiction and figures in a number of nineteenth-century novels, including Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Hawthorne's *The Scarlett Letter*, and Dickens' *Bleak House*. Rediscovery of the father means confirmation of a paternal order, but a bastard, by definition, lives outside of paternal orders. Without claim to a father's name or inheritance, furthermore, the bastard poses a threat to patriarchy. Thus, in the identity journey, which is a confirmation of a social order, the bastard's symbolic function is to be transformed and legitimized. The following study explores how, in spite of the complexity and sympathy with which they draw both mother and illegitimate child, these nineteenth-century authors eventually impose upon their transgressive female characters the same classic paradigm, endowing the bastard with an illustrious father and reintegrating her into a patriarchal order.

Keywords: illegitimacy, nineteenth-century fiction, hero's journey, transgression, patriarchy

"After all, who knows who his father is?"
(Telemachus, *The Odyssey*, Book I)

1. The Bastard Fantasy

In his 1909 essay, "Family Romances," Freud explores the idea of bastardy as he saw it appearing in the fantasy lives of non-bastard children. In order to lay claim to more illustrious paternity than nature has provided for it, Freud writes, the child "imagines itself a foundling or a bastard." He traces the genesis of this fantasy to that stage of growing maturity at which a child,

perceiving the father's human limitations, contrasts this reality to the idealized father of earlier years. "A child's parents are, at first, the source of all authority and belief, and the child's strongest wish is to be like his parents (that is, the parent of his own sex)," Freud writes. The fact that he uses "the young child" interchangeably with "the young boy" and "parents" interchangeably with "father" in this essay suggests that Freud is interested primarily in the male-male bond. Freud continues:

> But as intellectual growth increases, the child cannot help discover ing by degrees the category to which his parents belong and begins to feel slighted. Daydreams serve as the fulfillment of wishes and as a correction of actual life. The child's imagination becomes engaged in the task of getting free from the parents of whom he now has a low opinion and of replacing them by others, who, as a rule, are of higher social standing. (Vol. IX, 237-238)

Myths of illustrious paternity give disempowered people a way to fantasize about more glamorous and powerful lives in whatever form--aristocracy, celebrity, money--that power might take for the dreamer and the culture s/he inhabits.

Extrapolating from his observations of cases in turn-of-the-century Europe to the wider context of childhood in general, Freud was interested in illustrious paternity as a fantasy that marks a stage of childhood's disempowerment. He cites as its basis a pair of biological facts that come to light as the young child comprehends the mysteries of procreation: The father is uncertain ("pater semper incertus est"), whereas the mother is certain ("mater sed certissima") (Vol. IX, 239). Drawing away from the parents and moving into adulthood, the child seizes on this loophole in genetic fate and dreams of illegitimacy in order to express a sense of alienation and independence, according to Freud, but also to repossess the idealized father of the past.

In his 1952 work, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, Otto Rank re-reads this bastard fantasy. He extends Freud's psychological reading to all myths, from the legends of ancient Babylon to the tales of the Brothers Grimm, citing a recurring plot line in the stories of Moses, Oedipus, Romulus, Hercules and Jesus Christ. Rank argues that these stories all express the myth of illustrious paternity as it appears in the cultural legends of "the prominent civilized nations." He concludes with Freud that myths are created by adults, by means of retrograde childhood fantasies, "the hero being credited with the myth-maker's personal infantile history" (82). Whereas, I am not accepting Rank's idea that this pattern has explanatory value across the myths of all Western cultures, both Freud and Rank are helpful in capturing the human desire by disempowered people for some kind of compensatory power and legitimacy.

Rank's reading of myth is an outline of what has been called "The hero's journey":

> The hero is the child of most distinguished parents; usually the son of a king. His origin is preceded by difficulties, such as continence, or prolonged barrenness, or secret intercourse of the parents, due to external prohibition or obstacles. During the pregnancy or antedating the same, there is a prophecy, in form of a dream or oracle, cautioning against his birth, and usually threatening danger to the father, or his representative. As a rule, he is surrendered to the water, in a box. He is then saved by animals, or by lowly people (shepherds) and is suckled by a female animal, or by a humble woman. After he has grown up, he finds his distinguished parents, in a highly versatile fashion; takes his revenge on his father, on the one hand, is acknowledged on the other, and finally achieves rank and honors. (61)

In its countless versions, the hero's symbolic journey from bastardy to legitimacy both records and inspires a young boy's movement into adulthood, according to Rank. A child's early exposure to stories of such miraculous transformations reinforce the fantasy, Rank argues, noting that growing up in mainstream Western cultures, a child can hardly avoid such exposure. Rank points to the story's recurrence in the classical Greek and Roman myths, including the legend of Hercules, bastard offspring of Zeus and the mortal Alcemene. Through this ancient genetic experiment, Zeus hoped to produce the perfect son, a variant on the myth of illustrious paternity. Hercules has been cited as the prototype for Jesus Christ, another miraculous bastard.

While I do not accept Rank's extension of Freud's observations to archetypal patterns of how the mind works, the structures of desire in classic Western novels from Fielding's *Tom Jones* to James Joyce's *Ulysses* and beyond share many aspects of the fantasy of illustrious paternity set forth by Rank and Freud. As an elaboration of this fantasy, the hero's journey is not only a declaration of independence. It is also a return to the father and a reintegration into his world. This identity journey, with its climax of reaffirmation and reintegration, and the psychoanalytic paradigm from which it derives, illuminate the figure of female bastard in male-authored Western fiction and, thus, figure in the nineteenth-century novels that I'll turn to later in this study.

Rediscovery of the father means confirmation of a paternal order, for Rank's "prominent civilized nations" are, of course, all patriarchies. A bastard, by definition, lives outside of paternal orders. Without claim to a father's name or inheritance, furthermore, the bastard poses a threat to patriarchy. Thus, in the identity journey, which is a confirmation of a social order, the bastard's symbolic function is to be transformed and legitimized.

2. The Bastard as Emblem of Transgression

A second persistently linked narrative is also at work in many classics of male-authored Western fiction--the tale of crime and punishment. Whereas the hero, once a fatherless wanderer, is reintegrated into the father's house by discovery or transformation in the first plot, the bastard character is also (often simultaneously) deployed to explore and condemn transgressive behavior and, once again, to confirm the status quo. In this tale of crime and punishment, the bastard is made to suffer in order to provide reassurance of the power of the controlling institutions. "Because outsiders hold groups together by being object lessons," Jenny Teichman writes in her philosophical study, *Illegitimacy*, "it is ideologically necessary that they should be, or at least appear to be, unhappy, and this is part of the reason why outsiders have to be persecuted" (12).

Only a handful of studies have considered illegitimacy in literary history and these studies are overwhelmingly concerned with males. This should not be surprising since most fictional bastards are males. Because bastardy has historically been a legal condition affecting one's rights to inheritance, succession, and power, and since women in Western patriarchal cultures have often been excluded from all three of these privileges, bastardy has been treated in Western fiction primarily as a male plight surrounding the persistence of the patriarchal bloodline. Noting that ninety per cent of the bastards in Renaissance plays are men, Allison Findlay focuses her study, *Illegitimate Power*, exclusively on male bastards. In females, she explains, "bastardy merely reinforced their already marginal status. For men it had a much more radical effect. It is therefore not surprising that dramatists thought of it primarily as a male condition; in discussing the type generally, I shall use the masculine form" (5).

Similarly, Margaret Goscilo explains her reasoning in excluding female bastards from her study, *The Bastard Hero in the Novel*:

> [This] rests on the assumption that almost invariably, in both life and literature, the identity of women has been considered of secondary importance. Consequently, women characters tend to be far less the active challengers, philosophizers and quest-undertakers than their male counterparts, bastard or not. Since they have so often been subsumed in their fathers' and husbands' identities, women have not had the same urgency or social impetus for seeking self-definition as men, onto whom devolves the social duty and role of continuing or establishing family lines and of creating places for themselves in the world. Thus men in novels are likely to be more striking examples of unconventional, outsider figures than women, who are a déclassé group to begin with. (viii)

In both Goscillo's study of illegitimacy in the novel and Findlay's study of illegitimacy in English Renaissance drama, male bastard characters are not only reduced to the status of women, they are also identified with women in many ways. The male bastard usually comes from an exclusively female world and shares its marginal status. In Renaissance England, Findlay points out:

> The [male] bastard, with no father, represented something 'other,' something outside this divinely ordered paternal pattern. Born of a female sexuality unsanctioned by patriarchal authority, its birth created an extraneous social unity... This non-family created and headed by a woman was outside fatherly authority and cut off, ultimately, from God. The presence of illegitimacy deconstructs a social and political structure based on paternal authority. (2)

Findlay is speaking, of course, of a context and era in which the bastard figure had a particular affective charge--the ability to generate panic in a landed gentry society.

Although the threat that illegitimate conception poses to a patriarchal order is more obvious in societies obsessed with land succession and primogeniture, as was the case in Renaissance England, bastardy threatens patriarchal control even in contemporary America, where a woman may sometimes control the bloodline by unilaterally terminating a pregnancy or by bearing an illegitimate child. (I am, of course, speaking here of male anxieties and not of the complex realities of abortion or of unwed motherhood). An inability of patriarchies to exert absolute control over women's sexuality is their potentially tragic flaw. If a man (in the pre-genetic testing world) cannot be sure of his progeny, male dominance is utterly vulnerable and must rely on women's acceptance of the prevailing ideology.

Whereas I do not mean to imply that the patterns of bastardy are independent of history or culture, bastards do, by definition, imply this vulnerability or flaw in patriarchy. It is not surprising, therefore, that bastard characters, both male and female, have often been presented in fiction as flawed beings. They are physically deformed like Shakespeare's Caliban, diseased like Dostoyevsky's epileptic Smerdyakov, or marked with emblematic disabilities as in Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*, in which the bastard child's impending blindness forms a link to her secret father. As Jenny Teichman points out, many fictional bastards are also marred by criminality. The bastard as usurper and murderer is a recurring type appearing throughout Western literature in such characters as Plato's Archelaus (*Gorgias*), Shakespeare's Faulconbridge (*King John*), Edmund, the bastard brother of the legitimate Edgar (*King Lear*), Cosmo Maneuche's Gaspar (*The Bastard*), Zamacois's Manolo (*Their Son)*, Thomas Hardy's Aeneas Manson (*Desperate Remedies*), and Dostoyevsky's Smerdyakov (*The Brothers Karamazov*). Unnatural beings, fictional bastards are also self-destructive. Teichman notes that Smerdyakov, Manson, and Ibsen's Hedwig are all suicides, as is the bastard hero of Pirandello's story

In Silence. Bastards are given to hysteria and addictions like Dostoyevsky's raging lunatic Smerdyakov, or like Caliban, Shakespeare's "savage and deformed slave." In the Finnish author Aho's story "Outlawed," the bastard character suffers from blind rages and, like many other fictional illegitimates, ends up in prison.

In these bastard fictions, the uncontrolled behavior of the child symbolizes the sexual uncontrol of the parents (more specifically, of the mother in most cases). From Shakespeare's Caliban, begotten upon the "lewd dam" Sycorax, to Dorothy Allison's title character Bone in *Bastard out of Carolina*, begotten perhaps in the back seat of a rusty Chevrolet, the bastards of literature are out of control. Rage, addiction and criminality are integral to their characters. "The lawless act generates a lawless being," Teichman writes. "Bastards, because they are not members of proper families, are not proper members of the human family. They are tainted, monstrous, incomplete, betwixt-and-between mongrels--a different kind of animal from *us*" (128).

As emblems of transgressive social behavior, fictional bastards must suffer. They must be imprisoned or outcast, like Little Pearl and her mother Hester, confined by the Puritan fathers to a hut on the outskirts of Boston in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Or they must die, like the unborn child of Joan of Arc, killed in Shakespeare's *Henry VI* (Part I) as Warwick cries: "We'll have no bastards live!" There are many bastard victims of infanticide, which occurs, for example, in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, in Marguerite's murder of her child in Goethe's *Faust*, and in the nineteenth-century opera *Jenufa* by Leos Janacek. This last is a tragic opera based on a play by the Czechoslovakian playwright Gabriella Preissova in which an illegitimate baby is murdered so that its mother can resume a respectable life in her Moravian village. Through such tragic fates, the bastards of fiction serve as object lessons of the controlling discourse.

There is also the sense throughout the Renaissance plays that Allison Findlay examines, and to a lesser extent in the nineteenth-century novel as explored by Margaret Goscilo, that bastardy *is* character--a genetic fact that blots out all others. "I am bastard begot, bastard instructed, bastard in mind, bastard in valor, in everything illegitimate," cries Thersites, a character in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (5.7.16).

3. The Bastard Fantasy in *Madame Bovary* and *Anna Karenina*

As we have seen, bastardy has been viewed historically as a disruption of the male bloodline and, thus, women form a small minority among fictional illegitimates. When they do appear in the classics of Western fiction, female bastards are overwhelmingly the creations of male authors; like Freud and

Rank, these male authors were writing within patriarchal societies where men's experience is considered the norm.

The fictional bastard's journey, with its emphasis on order, unity and control, is not necessarily the paradigm of a woman's journey from childhood to adulthood; the lives of women in patriarchal Western cultures have often been characterized by social frustration and alienation. As discussed in my earlier study, "Bastard Logic and the Epics of Female Illegitimacy," most bastard quests, as recorded in memoirs and autobiographical fiction by illegitimate women, end not with integration but with radical isolation (Kraus, 2004). However, the classic bastard journey of identity, with its ideal of integration, forms a powerful influence on women as well as on men. Thus, these male-authored texts impose a paradigm that is not only male-constructed, but may also be a fair reflection of many women's aspirations in cultures where male experience is the norm. Because these male visions of female bastards reflect the mainstream attitudes toward female bastardy, and because they are widely read and translated classics, they also influence those attitudes. Since most fictional female bastards emerge from the same discourse of patriarchy as do their male counterparts, any discussion of female bastardy in these classic tales is really a discussion of male perceptions, both of women and of bastardy. Female illegitimacy, like other concepts in a male-dominated literary tradition, is largely imprisoned in a male voice.

Thus, the Freudian models, though flawed as descriptions of real female bastardy, are nevertheless illuminating. The Freudian myth of illustrious paternity and its elaboration in the hero's journey toward patriarchal order and control, as well as the second bastard theme of crime and punishment, are useful indexes in understanding, not bastardy per se either male or female, but the fears and desires that operate in fictional portrayals of bastardy.

Female illegitimacy is a significant theme in a number of classic nineteenth-century European and American novels that are concerned with female transgression. Probably the best-known female bastards in this literature appear in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, and Dickens' *Bleak House*, the novels to be considered in this study. Since bastardy is in many ways analogous to the condition of females in patriarchal societies, female bastards in male-authored literature are, in a sense, doubly female. Emerging from paternally organized societies haunted not only by the fact that "fatherhood is uncertain" but also by its corollary--that female fertility cannot be absolutely controlled, female bastards are complex reminders of patriarchy's vulnerability. They are not merely failed sons. As daughters, they represent something still more deeply flawed in a patriarchal discourse: They are both replications of the transgressive mother and embodiments of her sin.

In *The Adulteress's Child*, a study of female transgression in nineteenth-century novels, Naomi Segal contends that when a bastard child is born in

the course of a novel of adultery, the child is nearly always a girl. "In male-authored texts, bad women have daughters," Segal writes. "Unfit for either icon, they are outlawed from either Mary's or Venus's story, left instead to grapple with the distasteful mystery (to patriarchy, the absurdity) of a female self-reproduction" (115). In the nineteenth-century male-authored novel, the daughter is by definition a disappointment. "Thus [the adulteress] must repeatedly be punished, not least in the birth of a daughter whom she . . . can never love" (117).

Flaubert's Madame Bovary contains a well-known illustration of this disappointment. Emma Bovary, whose child is legitimate but whose progress toward adultery has already begun, dreamed of giving birth to a son:

> He would be strong and dark and she would call him Georges; and the idea of having a male child was like an anticipated revenge for all her past impotencies. A man, at least, is free; he has the run of loves and lands, crosses obstacles, bites into the most distant delights. A woman is continually held back. At once inert and pliable, she is confronted by the frailties of the flesh and the dependencies of the law. Her will, like the veil of her bonnet held on by a thread, flutters in every wind; at every moment some desire pulls and some propriety restrains.
>
> She gave birth on a Sunday, towards six o'clock, as the sun was rising.
>
> "It's a girl!" said Charles.
>
> She turned her head and fainted. (91)

"The very fact of self-reproduction in a mother seems a scandal that can only be read as punishment," Segal writes. "Women in male-authored fiction do not have daughters unless they are already transgressive" (6).

In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Anna's daughter is not only a self-reproduction but also illegitimate; the child is both a replication of the mother and an emblem of her sin. Though passionately devoted to her legitimate son Seriozha, Anna Karenina cannot love her namesake and mirror-image, Annie: "The sight of the child made it plainer than ever that the feeling she had for her could not even be called love in comparison with what she felt for Seriozha" (567). Like Emma Bovary, Anna loses interest in her daughter and leaves the little girl's upbringing to servants. Through her adultery Anna also removes herself from her innocent place among women in what Naomi Segal calls the "stark patrilinear division between desire and maternity which Anna has now chosen" (144).

Identification of the bastard child with the mother's transgression appears in a number of nineteenth-century works of fiction. Hawthorne's Little Pearl, a living embodiment of the scarlet letter and of her mother Hester's shame, torments her mother with painful questions and seemingly irrational behavior that evokes Pearl's transgressive conception. In *Bleak House* Dickens' ille-

gitimate character, Esther Summerson, is taught as a child to view herself as complicit in an unspeakable transgression. "Your mother, Esther, is your disgrace, and you were hers," are the godmother's words that echo in the mind of the illegitimate daughter (13). By giving birth to a girl, these texts declare, the mother reproduces herself, and the child lives on to grapple with the sin of having been born. Regardless of the sympathies the author may inspire in the reader for both mother and bastard child, the two of them, in their isolation and guilt, become an instrument of social justice. A conclusion seems inescapable: In these works of male-authored fiction, giving birth to a daughter is the appropriate punishment for female transgression against the bloodline.

4. Sympathy for the Devil: The Male Author's Stance

As I have argued, two shadow plots surround the idea of bastardy in many works of male-authored Western fiction. One is Freud's description of the way in which the imagined journey from bastardy to legitimacy includes the discovery of an illustrious father. Freud saw this paradigm as reflecting the psychological experience of a child growing up and both separating from and internalizing its parents. The other bastard plot consistently appearing in Western fiction surrounds the crime and punishment of bastardy. Both motifs emerge from male fantasies and both treat bastardy as an evil to be punished or eradicated in confirmation of the patriarchal order.

At the same time, most of these male authors exhibit deep personal sympathy toward the dilemma of illegitimacy, and draw on the fictional trope of the bastard as Rousseau-like natural man, allied with innocence, beauty and nature. To cite a well-known example, Shakespeare's portrayal of Edmund in *King Lear* is multifaceted and not unsympathetic. Though, finally, death is Edmund's deserved punishment for his bastard machinations in the world of the play, Gloucester's illegitimate son makes his own solid case for the gods to "stand up for bastards," and Edmund's argument is clearly intended to arouse audience sympathy:

> Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
> My services are bound. Wherefore should I
> Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
> The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
> For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
> Lag of a brother? Why bastard? Wherefore base?
> When my dimensions are as well compact,
> My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
> As honest madam's issue? (*King Lear*, Act I, Scene 2)

Male authors' attitudes towards both bastards and their transgressive mothers in nineteenth-century literature are also generally empathic. Critics claimed that Tolstoy was in love with Anna Karenina. And Flaubert famously declared of his adulteress heroine: "Madame Bovary, c'est moi." Hawthorne and Dickens not only empathize with their bastard characters but also use the illegitimate child as a vehicle to question the morality of patriarchal institutions—perhaps because those same social forces tended to marginalize the artist along with the bastard.

Without implying a timeless or universal description of bastardy, we can see that a number of European and American authors have also used the bastard character to question a social order. Like Hawthorne and Dickens, Shakespeare, Defoe, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Turgenev, Gide and Stendhal all used bastard characters to highlight a dominant culture's corruption, its rigidity, its inhumanity and its sexual repression. Oscar Wilde chose a bastard hero for his comic drama, *The Importance of Being Ernest*, to dramatize the idiocies of proper English behavior. From Shakespeare's Edmund to Defoe's Moll Flanders, to Dickens' Esther Summerson, lost in the fog-bound male bastion of Chancery, each of these authors, within the context of an historical moment, makes a case for the gods to "Stand up for bastards."

But nearly all of these same writers return to a familiar male fantasy of patriarchy; ultimately, the bastard character serves primarily not to question but to confirm the social order. The illegitimate child is transformed from an emblem of transgression into something more firmly under patriarchal control.

In *Anna Karenina*, the patrician husband Karenin adopts Anna's bastard daughter after her mother's suicide, providing the child with an illustrious father. Naomi Segal underlines that these arrangements for Annie are made between two men, with the transgressive mother now safely out of the picture. As we shall see, male characters also make the arrangements for Esther's legitimization through marriage at the end of *Bleak House*. Less obviously, two "fathers" are responsible for Pearl's redemption in *The Scarlet Letter*. Near the end of *Anna Karenina*, Anna's lover Vronsky regrets his agreement to give up his illegitimate daughter to Karenin, but honor binds him to his promise. In Tolstoy, Hawthorne, and Dickens it is the pledge between two gentlemen that finally legitimates the bastard child and restores the patriarchy.

5. The Bastard Fantasy in *The Scarlet Letter*

The most famous use of the female bastard as an emblem of transgression in American fiction is Pearl, the elfin child of Hester Prynne in Nathanial Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Pearl and her mother form a focal point for Hawthorne's exploration of social, legal, moral and spiritual illegitimacy.

Through their saga the author questions the patriarchal laws and customs of Puritan Boston. By implication, he also explores the culture's moral rigidity.

The other bastard plot--the journey from illegitimacy to illustrious paternity--is also at work in *The Scarlet Letter*. Pearl's odyssey is a search for her father that ends in discovery and a sort of acknowledgment. Ultimately, in spite of Hawthorne's empathy for the social victimhood of his characters, the narrative settles into a familiar confirmation of patriarchy. The bastard child returns to England, the fatherland, where her mother once lived in a "decayed house of gray stone, with a poverty-stricken aspect, but retaining a half-obliterated shield of arms over the portal in token of antique gentility" (65).

From the beginning of the novel, Pearl is an emblem of her mother's illicit love affair. Perpetually dressed in blood-red costumes that mirror the scarlet letter her mother must wear on her breast, Pearl is always identified with the taboo act that has disrupted the patriarchal bloodline and created an all-female family of mother and daughter.

The first object that caught the baby Pearl's attention was the scarlet letter:

> One day, as her mother stooped over the cradle, the infant's eyes had been caught by the glimmering of the gold embroidery about the letter; and, putting up her little hand, she grasped at it, smiling not doubtfully, but with a decided gleam, that gave her face the look of a much older child. (98)

Young Pearl's passionate nature is a constant reminder of her mother's transgression.

> Hester could only account for the child's character--and even then most vaguely and imperfectly--by recalling what she herself had been, during that momentous period while Pearl was imbibing her soul from the spiritual world, and her bodily frame from its material of earth. The mother's impassioned state had been the medium through which were transmitted to the unborn infant the rays of its moral life; and however white and clear originally, they had taken the deep stains of crimson and gold, the fiery lustre, the black shadow, and the untempered light of the intervening substance. Above all, the warfare of Hester's spirit, at that epoch, was perpetuated in Pearl. (93)

The child embodies Hester's legal transgression as well as her moral one. We first see Pearl as a baby, emerging with her mother from the prison door; then later with the outlaw couple on the scaffold; and then confined with her mother to a cottage on the outskirts of town. Pearl's nature respects no law. The "elements" of the child's character are "all in disorder" (93).

"The child could not be made amenable to rules," Hawthorne writes. "In giving her existence, a great law had been broken, and the result was a being whose elements were perhaps beautiful and brilliant, but all in dis-

order; or with an order peculiar to themselves" (93). Later, he describes the child as living with "the freedom of the broken law," which is, of course, the law of the father. The child embodies that rupture, and can only act in character. Unlike her mother, Pearl actively mocks the law. She dances on the grave of a dead official, and forms an "A" with burrs below the gravestone, as Hester's legal husband, Roger Chillingworth, observes: "There is no law, nor reverence for authority, no regard for human ordinances or opinions, right or wrong, mixed up with that child's composition" (131).

As embodiments of the flaw in patriarchy that bastardy represents, fictional male bastards are often ugly or deformed, as we have seen, but Pearl is physically beautiful. Her bastard flaw is something more mysterious; lacking the legitimizing male connection, she is depicted as demonic. Hester, especially, "could not help questioning. . . whether Pearl was a human child. She seemed rather an airy sprite, which, after playing its fantastic sports for a little while upon the cottage floor, would flit away with a mocking smile" (94).

As the emblem of Hester's sin, Pearl, the lawless free spirit, draws on the literary tradition of the bastard as Rousseau-like natural being, innocent and unspoiled by civilization. At the same time, she is a seductress whose uncontrollable passion reflects the passion that led to her birth. Watching her daughter grow, Hester guiltily imagines Pearl as something almost fiendish: "an "imp," a "witch baby," or a "demon offspring." Earlier in the narrative, Hester's guilt has deployed what seems to have become a self-fulfilling prophecy: "She knew that her deed had been evil," Hawthorne writes. "She had no faith, therefore, that its result would be good" (94). Like Anna Karenina's daughter Annie, Pearl is that most punishing emblem in the male-authored literature of transgression: a self-reproduction. "The child, drawing its sustenance from the maternal bosom seemed to have drunk in with it all the turmoil, the anguish and despair, which pervaded the mother's system" (75).

But Pearl is more than a self-reproduction and an embodiment of Hester's guilt. Unlike Emma Bovary's daughter Berthe and Anna Karenina's daughter Annie, Pearl plays an active role in Hester's punishment. As she grows older, Pearl's actions and her questions torment Hester. As an agent of Hester's punishment, the child is, Hawthorne notes, "the scarlet letter in another form; the scarlet letter endowed with life" (103). Pearl demands to know where she came from and rejects Hester's reply that she was sent by her Heavenly Father. When the two visit the Governor's mansion, Hester's reflection on an armor breastplate distorts the scarlet letter into something enormous and horrible, and Pearl torments her mother by pointing to this monstrosity, "smiling at her mother with. . . elfish intelligence" (106). Later, Pearl notices during a forest walk that the sun does not shine on Hester, declaring, "It is afraid of something on your bosom" (175).

Perhaps most painful for Hester is the episode in the forest where Pearl refuses to accept her mother's attempt to escape from her emblem of shame. When Hester and Dimmesdale meet in the woods and agree to leave Boston and start life anew, Hester flings the letter to the ground and allows her hair to escape from its cap and fall over her shoulders. Seeing her mother in this new, sexualized form, Pearl cowers and refuses to approach, screaming until Hester restores the emblem to her breast and tucks her luxurious hair primly under her cap.

At such moments, Pearl is not merely a reflection of the scarlet letter. She is an agent of the Puritan fathers who forced her mother to wear it, labeling and confining her sexuality. When she flings off the letter in the forest, Hester regains that ungovernable female sexuality that must be controlled. Hence, Hester's punishment is that she must cease to be a sexual being. As a general rule in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novel, Tony Tanner argues in *Adultery in the Novel* (1979), a transgressing woman may not be both a good mother and a sexual being. Unlike Anna Karenina and Emma Bovary, who become increasingly profligate lovers and negligent mothers in the course of their stories, Hester Prynne's passions have been redirected toward motherhood. After the city fathers' attempt to take Pearl from her mother and make her a public ward, Hester reveals the extent of her devotion to Pearl, declaring to Mistress Hibbins, a witch who wants Hester to join up with the devil: "Had they taken her from me, I would willingly have gone with thee into the forest, and signed my name in the Black Man's book too, and that with mine own blood!" (116). Because Hester has embraced motherhood, she does not meet the fate of other transgressive mothers. Dickens' Lady Dedlock, Tolstoy's Anna Karenina, and Flaubert's Emma Bovary all turn away from their children and all are suicides.

In the male-authored novel of adultery, both Segal and Tanner point out, the character divisions are strict: devoted motherhood or flagrant and self-destructive sexuality. The two categories are mutually exclusive. When Hester meets her former lover in the forest, when she casts off her scarlet letter and lets down her hair, Hawthorne writes: "Her sex, her youth, and the whole richness of her beauty, came back from what men call the irrevocable past" (202). In refusing to approach until her mother restores the letter and embraces motherhood once more, Pearl serves as a reminder of the patriarchal law, but also as the agent of her mother's redemption. Through motherhood, Hester will earn salvation, not only in terms of the narrow Puritan morality that Hawthorne disdains, but also in the story's larger moral narrative. Self-less, chaste motherhood is Hester's road to redemption. On her return to Boston without her daughter, Hester becomes a mother to the entire Boston community--an angel of mercy and a saint. Permanently de-sexualized, Hester exculpates her sin and returns to the fold.

6. The Father as Restorative Link

A central problem posed by *The Scarlet Letter* is the absence of a male to link the alliance of mother and unfathered child to the world of men. Hester and Pearl live deep in the forest, as if they comprise "some object which would fain have been, or at least ought to be, concealed" (57). Property-less and powerless, they illustrate the consequences of transgression. They are an object lesson to the town, the subject of sermons in the church, the focus of jeering in the streets. Hester is a "dreary woman, gliding silently through the town, with never any companion but only one child." The child, Pearl, is alien too. She "never created a friend" (97).

Although the mother and daughter are linked, through blood, through gender, and through isolation from the community, they are also isolated from each other through the mystery of Pearl's paternity. As Pearl grows, she asks questions about her father, but Hester cannot bring herself to answer them. Instead, the novel progresses with the slow revelation of paternity and the consequent restoration of order.

The world outside the mother-daughter pair is peopled by men: the secret father, the secret husband, the male officials, and male anxiety pervades the Puritan world: Paternity is the mystery that can never be certain: "pater semper incertus est." All of Hawthorne's significant female characters are pariahs--an adulteress, a bastard and Mistress Hibbins, a witch. Hawthorne is sympathetic toward these women but ultimately, according to many critics, his book's central struggle takes place between males, specifically, between the two "fathers"--Chillingworth and Dimmesdale. As in *Anna Karenina*, the resolution of a conflict between two men is what enables the bastard child to complete her journey to legitimacy. Dimmesdale, Pearl's natural father, transforms her into "a human child" by his dying acknowledgment, and Chillingworth, Hester's legal husband, makes her an heiress, which leads to marriage, family, and a bloodline.

Details of Hawthorne's life and ancestry, revealed both by his biographers and by the author himself in the Customs House section of *The Scarlet Letter*, offer insight into the author's personal motives in telling a story which focuses on female illegitimacy and on the absence of the male link. Hawthorne grew up with the sense of himself as an outsider, particularly to family life. His sea captain father was absent during his infancy: "The Hathorne home," (the earlier spelling of Hawthorne) writes biographer Arlin Turner, was "only rarely and temporarily invaded by the father" (11). His father was a near-stranger who died of yellow fever during a voyage when his son was only three. The body was never returned. Biographers speculate that the father must have become a mysterious and problematic figure in the boy's life.

Hawthorne's mother relinquished much of her son's parenting to her brother, whom the boy resented, and the author's early life was mired in

issues of difficult parenting. In *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne places a high value on the parental pair as opposed to the husbandless mother, the model for his own parenting. It is only when Dimmesdale acknowledges his daughter and stands with mother and child on the scaffold, forming the family trinity, that Hawthorne proclaims Pearl fully human:

> Pearl kissed his (Dimmesdale's) lips. A spell was broken. The great scene of grief, in which the wild infant bore a part, had developed all her sympathies; and as her tears fell upon her father's cheek, they were the pledge that she would grow up amid human joy and sorrow, nor forever do battle with the world, but be a woman in it. Towards her mother, too, Pearl's errand as a messenger of anguish was all fulfilled. (238)

By journey's end Pearl has acquired not one but two fathers--albeit dead ones. Through Dimmesdale's acknowledgment of his sin as he stands on the scaffold, the two men reach a resolution of their conflict, so that Pearl's change of fortune resembles the gentleman's agreement that legitimizes Anna Karenina's daughter in Tolstoy's tale of adultery. One father has acknowledged Pearl and given her a name; the other has willed her property and made her an heiress. Hawthorne's epilogue includes the strong implication that Pearl later married, produced children and established a bloodline.

7. The Bastard Fantasy in *Bleak House*

Most critics have considered Esther Summerson, one of the narrators in Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*, to be a static and unrealistic character. Dutiful, generous, self-effacing--she seems too good to be true. Judith Wilt cites Esther's "mock-modesty" (59). Continually protesting her unworthiness while recording her good deeds, Esther seems to be fishing for compliments. The controversy over this character's "reality" is, according to Wilt, "perhaps the oldest unresolved quarrel about *Bleak House*" (58). However, from the perspective of her traumatic illegitimate Victorian childhood, Alex Zwerdling argues in a 1973 essay, Esther emerges as a true-to-life character. Dickens has drawn the parentless child with uncanny psychological realism, although, as Zwerdling concedes, he abandons this realism near the end of the book (438).

Besides its unheralded value as a psychological exploration of female illegitimacy in the context of Dickens' Victorian England and through the eyes of male authorship, Esther's character follows predictable patterns. *Bleak House* addresses the two bastard themes discussed above in relation to *Madame Bovary*, *Anna Karenina* and *The Scarlet Letter*. (*The Scarlet Letter*, incidentally, was published in 1850, only two years before *Bleak House* began serialization in America in 1852, and the similarity in Ether's and Hester's names also suggests a connection.) First, there is the theme of crime

and punishment. The lifelong penance of Esther and of her secret mother, Lady Dedlock, reflects nineteenth-century attitudes toward bastardy as an emblem of female transgression, attitudes questioned by Dickens' narrative just as American Puritan attitudes are questioned by Hawthorne's tale. Second, Esther's story, again like Pearl's, roughly follows the course of the mythical journey of identity from bastardy to the discovery of illustrious paternity that Freud described and that Rank attempted to universalize. True to hero's journey that Rank describes, the bastard's transformation and reintegration into British society dominates the end of *Bleak House*. There, Dickens abandons the psychological realism of Esther's tortured character and steers her safely into the realm of the traditional male fantasy. Like Pearl, Esther discovers not father but fathers (as well as mother) at journey's end. Esther's guardian John Jarndyce, with his wealth, generosity, and paternalism, gives up his claim to her hand and assumes the role of Esther's illustrious patriarch. Through Jarndyce's magical intervention, the outcast Esther is finally integrated into legitimate society, with all the blessings of Victorian womanhood: marriage, family, and the establishment of a bloodline.

8. Esther's Realism

Noting Esther's unfailing goodness, her obsessive protests of personal unworthiness, critics have pronounced Dickens' character "dissembling," "maudlin," "coy," and "unrealistic." But Alex Zwerdling argues that, in the context of her traumatic, illegitimate childhood, Esther is convincingly drawn. "She has an insatiable hunger for [compliments]," Zwerdling notes, "yet they are never the right food, for the damage to her sense of self-esteem has been permanent" (430). Esther seems "unreal" because she allows herself no personal indulgences. She is a being who lives to serve others. "Duty, my dear," is her motto. But to Esther, duty is penance owed.

Her experience as an illegitimate child has convinced Esther that she is undeserving not only of praise, but also of the ordinary pleasures and preoccupations of social existence. When her godmother dies, Esther buries her precious old doll; she feels undeserving of such an indulgence. To Zwerdling, her involvement as a go-between in the love affair of the Jarndyce wards Ada and Richard, her cheerful acceptance of old maidish nicknames like "Cobweb" and "Dame Durden" although she is a pretty and intelligent young woman--are hints that Esther lives outside the borders of normal human expectations. When faced with the possibility of romantic love in the figure of Allen Woodcourt, Esther falls into utter confusion and, at first, accepts instead, the fatherly Jarndyce and a continued life of duty.

"Duty, my dear!" is Esther's motto (80). By aping this traditional Victorian virtue, Esther strives to survive unnoticed in her world, although she

has believed since early childhood that she is an impostor. Esther sees her birth as a theft--a criminal usurpation of her mother's life. "What did I do to her? Why is it my fault?" she begs her godmother. With only this one tenuous connection to the world, she believes herself to be a bogus member, even, of the human family.

To feel oneself genuinely unworthy of love is something that perhaps only an unloved child can understand, argues. Dickens himself was intimate with the psychology of the orphaned, neglected, or badly-parented child, a character that pervades his novels and finds its extreme development in Esther. The second of eight children in a chaotic household, Dickens himself had been badly parented. Famously, he was sent away to work at a shoe-blacking factory at the age of twelve to help support the family. Meanwhile, his father went to debtor's prison, where the rest of his large family was obliged to join him. Without thought, apparently, for the damage to their children, the parents continued their improvident behavior, and Dickens' was obliged to contribute to their support throughout their lives. Even as an adult, Dickens viewed his mother as unloving and self-centered and both parents as childish and irresponsible (Hardy, Ch. 1). It was the kind of parent-child role reversal that Dickens often depicts in his fiction. Perhaps as a child, Dickens dreamed of what Freud called "a more illustrious paternity than nature had provided," the kind of generous, mature and wealthy parent that Esther finds in John Jarndyce of *Bleak House*.

The un-parented child is a recurring theme in Dickens. In *Oliver Twist* (1837), another bastard tale, the child's suffering was mainly physical, but by the time he began *Bleak House* in 1850, Dickens had become more interested in psychological deprivations, like Esther's, that dictate the course of later life. One of Dickens' most ominous bad parent figures appears in *Bleak House* as Esther's godmother, Miss Barbary, a mouthpiece for the worst of Victorian fears and repressions. On Esther's birthday, Miss Barbary tells her:

> It would have been far better, little Esther, that you had no birthday; that you had never been born!
>
> O, dear godmother, Esther responds, tell me pray do tell me, did mama die on my birthday?
>
> No, she returned. Ask me no more child! (17)

Unlike "real" children whose births are celebrated, Esther's birthday has been erased from the calendar. Instead, that date commemorates a mysterious "disgrace" attached to her mother that no one will explain. When, on another of these dreaded anniversaries, Esther begs Miss Barbary to tell her something about her mother, the child hears the words that will mold her psyche:

> Your mother, Esther, is your disgrace, and you were hers. The time will come--and soon enough--when you will understand this better, and will feel it too, as no one save a woman can. I have

> forgiven her … For yourself, unfortunate girl, orphaned and degraded from the first of these evil anniversaries, pray daily that the sins of others be not visited upon your head, according to what is written. Forget your mother and leave all other people to forget her who will do her unhappy child that greatest kindness. Now go! (17)

But Esther knows that her mother's undefined sin has already been visited on her, and she obsessively recreates this guilt in all of her human interactions:

> I was brought up, from my earliest remembrance--like some of the princesses in the fairy stories, only I was not charming--by my godmother… She was handsome; and if she had ever smiled, would have been (I used to think) like an angel--but she never smile… I felt so different from her, even making every allowance for the differences between a child and a woman; I felt so poor, so trifling, and so far off; that I never could be unrestrained with her--no, could never even love her as I wished. It made me very sorry to consider how good she was, and how unworthy of her I was; and I used ardently to hope that I might have a better heart; and I talked it over very often with the dear old doll; but I never loved my godmother as I ought to have loved her, and as I felt I must have loved her if I had been a better girl. (16)

Reading Esther's speech, one understands why critics have been so irritated by Dickens' heroine. Is she protesting too much? We hear such self-negating phrases over and over. Esther expresses the same sentiment after the death of Miss Barbary when she says good-bye to the housekeeper, Mrs. Rachel, the only person who was ever kind to her:

> Mrs. Rachael was too good to feel any emotion at parting, but I was not so good, and wept bitterly. I thought that I ought to have known her better after so many years… I felt so miserable and self-reproachful, that I clung to her and told her it was my fault, I knew, that she could say good-bye so easily! (22)

This speech, too, appears as sentimentality, but it's easy to overlook the authenticity of such exaggerated humility in an un-parented child. Adrift from father and mother, Esther has only a few negative clues on which to build an identity. She really does see herself not only as unloved and unwanted but also (and more terrifying still) as cold, destructive, and incapable of love. The child has chosen a belief in her own evil agency over total ignorance and chaos. The unanswered questions of her childhood and the cruelties of her godmother have convinced Esther that she is a monster. The bastard tale of crime and punishment, unfolding on the stage of Victorian morality, is also told from the inside, based on convictions deeply engrained in the child's developing psyche.

Later, as a young adult, Esther listens to the echoes of her own footsteps on the "ghost walk" of the Dedlock's home, and this feeling returns. Lady Dedlock has just revealed to her that she is Esther's mother. Now Esther revives her childhood conviction that she is a poisonous being. Her fate must be to bring "calamity upon the stately house" of Dedlock (515). The belief that she is culpable in her mother's death was Esther's most devastating childhood terror. Now that she has discovered her mother alive, Esther feels that announcing her existence will kill her mother again. Seized with the familiar childhood "terror of myself," Esther runs "from myself and everything" (515).

9. The Bastard Flaw

As we have seen, bastards appearing in the literature of Western patriarchies are often marked with physical flaws. They are deformed or diseased correlatives of the mother's sin. In Hawthorne's Little Pearl, illegitimacy is made visible through the scarlet letter that is mirrored in the child's gaudy costumes. Esther Summerson's bastardy turns visible, too, after Lady Dedlock identifies her, the daughter whom she had long believed dead. Now, precisely when the truth of Esther's illegitimacy becomes known, Esther falls ill with smallpox. Her face is scarred, and she temporarily goes blind. The physical flaws and the shame of Esther's illegitimacy converge to advance the theme of bastard crime and punishment. Her disfigurement embodies the judgment of Victorian London against transgressive womanhood.

But Esther, like little Pearl, is also marked psychologically and invisibly by what she believes is her failure to create a total human identity. The bastard's flaw in patriarchy, as Jenny Teichman has written, is that she is "not a member of the human family." In Hawthorne's book the association of Pearl with sprites and demons comes from others, whereas Esther's more psychologically realistic sense of defective humanity comes from within.

This invisible "flaw" is, of course, more disfiguring than Esther's emblem atic disease. It leads back to the critics' charges that Dickens' heroine is not a life-like character and that she is a dissembler. I have argued against this charge, but in a sense she is both, for the very qualities that make her "unconvincing" as a realistic character make Esther a credible bastard. Whereas her sense of personal unworthiness is genuine, it is simultaneously a pose concealing the fear that her real dilemma is still worse. She fears that she does not exist.

In childhood Esther had one companion: a doll who "used to sit propped up in a great arm-chair, with her beautiful complexion and rosy lips, staring at me--or not so much at me, I think, as at nothing--while I busily stitched away, and told her every one of my secrets" (15). Esther searches for herself

in the mirror but can find no reflection, only blank, dead stares, like the doll's. Miss Barbary never reveals to Esther that she is her aunt--the blood connection she longs for. When Esther begs her dying aunt for "the least sign that she knew or heard me," the child is asking for some acknowledgement of her existence (19).

When, some years later, Esther unknowingly meets her mother, Lady Dedlock's face is "like a broken glass" in which the girl sees "scraps of old remembrances." After many twists of the plot, the daughter finds her mother lying on a grave in the pauper's burying ground. She "lifted the heavy head, put the long dank hair aside and turned the face. And it was my mother, cold and dead" (812). Once again, Esther finds herself reflected in an unseeing eye.

Zwerdling has written that "Dickens' interest in Esther is fundamentally clinical, to observe and describe a certain kind of psychic debility" (432). He pinpoints Esther's childhood trauma as a reaction to Miss Barbary's birthday speech proclaiming that "Your mother, Esther, is your disgrace, and you were hers" (17). Years later, Zwerdling points out, Esther recalls these terrible words on two occasions. They "become the most powerful determinant of her adult personality and life choices," he concludes (430). Zwerdling cites Erik Erikson's description of trauma:

> an experience characterized by impressions so sudden, or so powerful, or strange that they cannot be assimilated at the time and therefore, persist from stage to stage as a foreign body seeking outlet or absorption and imposing on all development a certain irritation causing stereotypy and repetitiveness (*Gandhi's Truth*: *On the Origin of Militant Nonviolence*, cited in Zwerdling 430).

I am not arguing that Esther is a product of the kind of specific traumatic experience that Erickson describes, but of something more diffuse--a character based on the complexity of guilts and fears that arise from her bastard state--an elaboration on the theme of parental abandonment that concerned Dickens personally. Esther's character emerges as well from a child's disastrous efforts to control and explain her abandonment to herself in the absence of clues. The situation is exacerbated by her aunt's cruel pronouncements, a reflection of distorted Victorian morality. We must pay for the traumas of our childhood. Which is why Esther's final happiness is unconvincing.

10. Resolution of Bastard Themes in *Bleak House*

Esther's illness makes her more dependent on her kind and elderly guardian, Mr. Jarndyce, and her obligation to him increases. Overwhelmed by her sense of duty and penance, she says: "I thanked him with my whole heart. What

could I ever do but thank him?" (608). When Jarndyce proposes that she become the mistress of Bleak House, Esther tells herself that she is happy.

> Still I cried very much; not only in the fullness of my heart after reading the [proposal] letter, not only in the strangeness of the prospect--for it was strange though I had expected the contents--but as if something for which there was no name or distinct idea were indefinitely lost to me. I was very happy, very thankful, very hopeful; but I cried very much. (611)

As Zwerdling writes, "[Esther] is terrified not of hurting Jarndyce but of pleasing herself" (437). Esther has denied herself every indulgence since childhood. Her "dear old doll," "the only friend with whom I felt at ease," she buries in the garden before leaving her aunt's home for London. It was selfish to have the doll. Selfish, too, is her romantic attraction for the young suitor Allen Woodcourt. She burns Woodcourt's flowers and accepts her guardian's proposal, "Duty my dear!" echoing in her head.

Perhaps, as critics have suggested, Dickens was unable to bear such suffering in his heroine. Perhaps in Esther he sought the kind of magical transformation that he himself must have dreamt of as a child. Near the end of *Bleak House*, Dickens abandons the realism of Esther's bastard character and turns to a familiar fantasy: Jarndyce himself, perceiving that Esther and Woodcourt are in love, transforms himself into an illustrious father. Magically, he surrenders Esther to Woodcourt and arranges their marriage, providing the couple with a house and Esther with a father. "I am your guardian and your father now," Jarndyce tells her (857). Arrangements are made through that sacred patriarchal institution: a gentleman's agreement. Esther is never consulted. Like Tolstoy's Annie and Hawthorne's Little Pearl, Esther, the prodigal bastard heroine, completes the symbolic journey. Having endured many trials, she achieves her grail: acknowledgment by a symbolic father and the opportunity to produce a legitimate bloodline. Esther takes her place within the patriarchal order.

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"Reason Held Passion by the Throat"

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ABSTRACT. My paper will compare Charlotte Bronte's treatment of female identity in *Jane Eyre* – a work often credited with being the first to externalize the female schizophrenic split so pervasive in the Victorian era – with Darren Aronofsky's portrayal of the identity drawn in the *Black Swan*. The latter, while a contemporary work, is grounded in Tchaikovsky's nineteenth-century ballet. The film proposes a rewriting of the ballet's underlying story which turns upon the interaction of a white swan and a black one. In a new visceral version, Aronofsky brings the two roles together in a young dancer who searches to reach artistic perfection.

Keywords: female madness, female identity, film, 19c literature

"Reason Held Passion by the Throat" is inspired by a phrase penned by Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre in her attempt to metaphorically describe a climactic moment in her life story ('Chapter 27') recorded in her eponymous novel. Bronte's nineteenth-century feminist classic has been adapted for the screen numerous times.[1] Most recently, the film has been remade by Cary Fukunaga (2011, starring Mia Wasikowska and Michael Fassbender); however, the adaptations which present this phrase most clearly and which will be discussed here are the BBC adaptation directed by Julian Amyes (with Zelah Clarke and Timothy Dalton) and the classic Orson Wells and Joan Fontaine version by Robert Stevenson. A visual literalization of this phrase also occurs in a crucial scene in the life of Nina Sayers, the main character of Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan*, another contemporary film which revises a nineteenth-century classic, Tchaikovsky's ballet *Swan Lake*.

The films under consideration tell female coming-of-age stories which take the form of family romances. In each, the protagonist, having been brought up by a single (step)mother who encourages the repression of emotion, is awakened to passion as the result of contact with a male superior. Both Jane Eyre and Nina Sayers experience passion's ascendancy as traumatic, building to a climactic moment marked by the battle between split selves of

control and passion. While the above title uses "reason" in an attempt to characterize the common ground covered by these two coming-of-age stories, the precise form "reason" takes in each work is noteworthy. The exact phrase in *Jane Eyre* is "conscience, turned tyrant, held passion by the throat." In Aronofsky's work passion is held in check by a control mechanism that is more akin to devotion to an aesthetic ideal. The substitution of an aesthetic code in the second for the moral or ethical one in *Jane Eyre* is a transformation which the Victorians themselves underwent in transitioning from a nineteenth to a twentieth-century economy.

In Bronte's work, the phrase "conscience, turned tyrant, held passion by the throat" occurs at the point at which Jane Eyre, a governess, having just experienced her own aborted wedding to her former employer Edward Rochester, Lord of Thornfield Hall, is brought to the attic of his country mansion. There she meets the impediment to her union, Rochester's legal wife Bertha Mason. Bertha has been brought from her lush birthplace in Jamaica to the cold damp halls of Rochester's English estate where she is sequestered in the attic, unbeknownst to Jane. Having introduced the other Mrs. Rochester, whom Edward claims is the mad daughter of a mad mother; he presents his side of the story attempting to justify his actions and to persuade Jane of its merits. Jane, who deeply loves Rochester, the man who has brought affection and passion into her heretofore dismal life as an orphan, wants to stay at Thornfield. However in the turbulent internal battle which ensues, reason/conscience metaphorically seizes passion by the throat, forcing Jane to flee.

In Aronofsky's film our title phrase occurs just as Nina Sayers is about to perform the role of Swan Queen in Tchaikovsky's ballet for the first time. She has been chosen by Thomas LeRoy, the artistic director of her New York ballet company, due to her artistic dedication and skill. Her professionalism and perfectionism has been instilled and nurtured by her ever-watchful mother who was herself a once aspiring ballerina. Thwarted by a premature passion which resulted in an illegitimate pregnancy, her mother now acts as a conscience of sorts, keeping her daughter focused on the right path. It is clear though that Nina has already internalized this control. While Nina embodies all of the qualities of the White Swan role, Thomas's version requires her to play the part of the Black Swan as well.

The qualities associated with this second role are alien to Nina; they represent a new paradigm of perfection. Maternal and paternal codes are not easily accommodated. The qualities of the Black Swan are more naturally embodied by Nina's understudy or alternate, Lily, a girl of spontaneity and liberal sexual values. In spite of the fact that the traits of the Black Swan are elusive to Nina, she is successful in liberating her passionate nature to a point at which the two battle for control. This is paralleled with an external battle between Nina and Lily.

The awakening of passion in Jane and Nina come as a result of their relationship with Rochester and Thomas, respectively. These relationships also trigger a mirroring between the protagonist and a passionate Other. In *Jane Eyre* this parallel is apparent in Bertha's outbreaks at Rochester's Thornfield Estate which is tied to Jane's restlessness, her pacing on the ramparts and her nightmares or dreams. *Black Swan* seems to split the passionate Other in two, represented by Beth, the former Swan Queen, and Lily, Nina's alternate. Thomas's mentoring encourages Nina's growing intimacy with both. In replacing Beth, Nina walks in her predecessor's shoes; her role as understudy links her with both Beth and Lily. Nina's relationship with Thomas is the catalyst for her defiance of her mother's insistent "lockdown." Nina's first act of rebellion occurs when she goes with Lily to a nightclub. There Nina dons the Lily's duplicate black tanktop, as if embodying a second skin. As the girls and two boys, attracted by Lily, dance, strobe lighting fractures and sutures Nina and Lily in new ways: their faces overlap for a flash second at various points and Nina momentarily assumes the face of the Black Swan for the first time. Nina later fantasizes about becoming one with Lily through a sexual encounter. Yet another scene in which Nina and Lily's face and body intertwine is in the sexual act between Lily and Thomas that Nina is witness to – or Nina thinks she is witness to – backstage after practice.

The lives of both Jane and Nina reach a critical point in which a climactic encounter occurs between the controlled and passionate doubles within and without, sending each protagonist into a tailspin. While both the filmic *Jane Eyre* and *Black Swan* speak of the stranglehold of control, the two works express opposite attitudes toward the value of the latter. Control /conscience seems to prevail in Jane Eyre's decision to leave Thornfield, although the protagonist feels torn and desperate, given that everything inside her pleads for her to take the opposite action. Bronte's work privileges control, even though it is termed "a tyrant." Jane sees it as the only means to prevent the dangerous takeover of passion, a central danger. Passion must be put securely in its place by ultimately killing off Bertha and maiming and blinding Rochester. The death of Bertha takes the form of a suicide in which the first Mrs. Rochester destroys herself by setting fire to Thornfield and subsequently jumps from its roof, all the while fantasizing that she is reuniting with the fiery warmth of her sunny Jamaican homeland.

As in *Jane Eyre*, *Black Swan* tries to eliminate one member of the dueling twosome, through self-infliction and delusion. By contrast, however, Aronofsky, in a much more visceral showdown, makes control heel. The White Swan, the best expression of Nina's control, is fatally wounded. Nina stabs herself, imagining she is taking control and eliminating her rival, Lily. While Bertha's vision is one of unification, Nina's strives for separation, but in vain. The delusional quality of Nina's victory is only indicated when Lily later appears apparently, unharmed. However, the resultant wound neverthe-

less "bleeds" into the reality of Nina's self-destruction. In effect, in performing the dastardly act, Nina becomes the dark other. Nina, appropriately, uses a broken *mirror* (Clover 7) as her weapon of choice.[2]

The passionate competition and the usurpation of one's predecessor, which seems rampant, almost "natural" in Nina's world, is impeded in Jane's. Jane cannot usurp/replace her predecessor, firstly, because of legal constraints, which she abides by, but beyond these, Jane herself sympathetically defends Bertha – though she rejects her wild pattern of behavior – arguing Mrs. Rochester is not to blame for what has occurred. In spite of the fact that Jane desires to take Bertha's place and stay at Thornfield, she is guided by a core feeling of self, an internal law which argues for a certain balance.[3] Conscience prevails in *Jane Eyre* on several levels. By contrast, Nina not only assumes the role of the dark double. Upon her imaginary killing of Lily, Nina becomes the passionate Other which mirrors her increasing perception of becoming the Black Swan in terms of her relationship with Beth (formerly Nina was not aware her takeover could be conceived in this light.)

The substitution of one woman for another seems fundamental to Aronof sky's modern world view. Competition and usurpation are undertaken often unwittingly. Unification, as is apparent in the lesbian fantasy, exists in the imaginary landscape of the mind. As Thomas says to Nina when she begs him not to exacerbate the rivalry by appointing Lily as backup "there is always an alternate" and "everyone in the world wants your place." Competition is also sanctioned by Aronofsky's audiences who crave "new blood." Thomas's predatory sexual and professional tendencies – the need for constantly new incarnations of his "little" princess-seem in line with this as well.

The fear of aging, which is tied in to this female recycling is a recurrent theme throughout the *Black Swan*. It is an obsession that has traumatized Nina's mother and threatens now to traumatize her daughter. This world is one of "accelerated decrepitude."[4] Beth, too, experiences it and thus her sarcastic advice to Nina is "enjoy the moment." Beth has no delusions. Her "I'm nothing" speaks volumes of female identity in such a world.

Thomas, unlike Rochester, is never directly sanctioned for his hand in this recycling process. While Nina may criticize his sexually aggressive "come on," unquestionably she admires him, as is made clear in her praise of him in a disagreement with Lily. Nina, and to some extent the viewer, sees the necessity for encompassing the passionate self as a good thing in order to become a consummate artist and a more balanced person. The privileged position Thomas enjoys is highlighted by the attention he commands from the corps: upon his entry into the practice room at the beginning of the film, his female professional assistant passes the signal, and a hush spreads, as the warm-up pants drop (almost amusingly).

Yet, as Lily says, and readers perceive, he is also "a prick" and a cad. Thomas does, however, unknowingly condemn himself when he pronounces

the dying Nina his "little princess," a term he used to refer to Beth as well, a term heard upon the occasion when he publicly replaces her with Nina, the new Swan Queen. When Lily previously conjectured that Nina would inherit the title, Nina wished it to be true, but refused to believe it would ever come to pass. To Nina, it signifies perfection; in her innocence she fails to see the possible horror of it.

While Nina's death, coming so close on the heels of Beth's, should raise red flags, if not a scandal, with the public at large, more likely it would be trumped by the announcement of a new Swan Queen. And even if the deaths were foregrounded, the self-inflicted wounds would point to mental instability of a personal nature, rather than a social or institutional one. But while such news is unlikely to raise concerns for audiences of the enclosed fictional world Aronofsky creates, it does so for external audiences.

Both the film adaptations of Jane *Eyre* and *Black Swan* argue for women's continuing need to grapple with the split between control and passion in spite of a changing landscape. However, comparing these works places differences in relief. *Black Swan*'s coming-of-age story, like the genre which frames it, is a horrific tale. While Nina is freed from the spiritual and ethical moorings of Bronte's world, the aesthetic ones which replace them prove insufficient for the harsh realities with which twentieth and twenty-first century females must deal. Aronofsky's film to some extent is a specialized world, a narrow competitive world of ballet, but it also speaks to a wider sphere of capitalism of which non-profit is a part. As Beth so insightfully knows, women, even icons, are reduced to "nothingness" in the flash of an eye. Yet, "accelerated decrepitude" and replication does not affect both genders equally, in *Black Swan* young women are twice cursed.[5] Unlike Jane Eyre, females in Aronofsky's film lack a core identity, even as they become "little princesses."

NOTES

1. A different version of this paper is presented in *Cinemagraphic Art*.

2. Ironically, Beth's transition from Swan Queen to Black Swan, represented by the unleashing of her dark side of unbridled passion, takes the form of self-mutilation but there is no delusion here. This once icon sees herself as "nothing."

3. Jane explains the justification of her choice of conscience over passion by saying "she cares for herself when all else seems to abandon her." However, the reckless abandon of all thought of self, roaming the Moors without adequate preparation, being buffeted within an inch of her life, by the elements, casts an ambiguous shadow upon her statement. The choice propels her into "madness," a madness to which she herself references. Yet to have given into passion would have been akin to becoming like passionate Bertha.

4. This is an oddly appropriate phrase from *Blade Runner* – a film made in 1982 but set in 2012 – used to characterize "replicants" (created beings who are prematurely "retired," a euhemerism for killed).

5. Nina's world proves every bit as brutal as the world of *Blade Runner*'s "replicants" where corporate enterprise and world of the father are also indicted. However, in that film the fate falls equally on men and women and Fathers are brought to justice.

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Émancipation sexuelle et obstacles paratextuels : Le cas d'André Gide

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ABSTRACT. In his 1987 book devoted to the paratext in literature, Gérard Genette referred many times to Gide's texts. Gide's work presents indeed a rich and fascinating reservoir for paratext studies. Curiously, Genette ignores Gide's early texts in favor of those published later in Gide's career. However it is in the texts of the first ten years of his literary career, from 1892 to 1902, that Gide used a particularly abundant and complex paratextual system. Indeed the paratext tends to proliferate in texts preceding Gide's public acceptance of his homosexuality in books such as *Si le grain ne meurt* and *Corydon*. This paper demonstrates that there is a connection between the paratext seen as a proliferating discourse located within the edges of the text and the fact that the books in which it appears all precede the author's public acceptance of his homosexuality and conceal a 'secret' waiting to be revealed. In other words, in Gide's work the paratext plays an ambivalent role, consisting sometimes in delaying, reducing or contradicting, sometimes in anticipating, exaggerating and confirming what the narrative reveals or attempts to reveal.

Keywords: Gide, homosexuality, paratext, coming-out, Symbolism

Dans l'ouvrage qu'il a consacré à l'étude du paratexte en 1987, le narratologue Gérard Genette revient à de très nombreuses reprises sur des textes de Gide. Des *Cahiers d'André Walter* à *Thésée*, l'œuvre gidienne présente en effet un riche et fascinant réservoir pour l'étude du paratexte en littérature. Curieusement cependant, à quelques allusions près, Genette ignore les tous premiers textes de Gide au profit de ceux de la maturité. Or, c'est bien dans les textes des dix premières années, de 1892 à 1902 (date de parution de *L'Immoraliste*), que Gide a eu le plus souvent recours à un appareil paratextuel particulièrement abondant et complexe. L'autre inconvénient de l'étude de Genette réside dans le fait qu'à aucun moment le critique ne songe à mettre en relation les divers éléments du paratexte gidien, et leur évolution dans le temps, aux

sujets que Gide aborde justement dans les livres en question. Le critique s'en explique dans la préface de *Seuils* :

> [i]l s'agit ici d'une étude synchronique et non diachronique : un essai de tableau général, et non d'histoire du paratexte. Ce propos n'est pas inspiré par un quelconque dédain pour la dimension historique, mais une fois de plus par le sentiment qu'il convient de définir les objets avant d'en étudier l'évolution […] Ce qui suit n'est donc bien qu'une exploration toute inchoative, au service très provisoire de ce qui, grâce à d'autres, le suivra peut-être.[1]

Il me semble donc opportun d'aborder dans les pages qui suivent la question du paratexte gidien en la replaçant dans son contexte historique et dans le cours de la trajectoire littéraire de Gide, situant ainsi notre lecture dans le cadre des études sur le genre de manière à réduire aussi le fossé qui sépare l'analyse textuelle (plus précisément dans ce cas, la narratologie) de l'analyse genrée de la littérature.

Un premier coup d'œil permet de distinguer une évolution particulièrement significative du paratexte dans la période qui s'ouvre avec *Le Voyage d'Urien*. En effet, ce dernier a tendance à proliférer dans les textes qui précèdent l'aveu public par Gide de son homosexualité dans *Si le grain ne meurt* et *Corydon*. De manière intéressante, la panoplie paratextuelle de ces deux textes se présente sous sa forme la plus élémentaire : un titre et une préface pour *Corydon*, un titre et rien de plus pour *Si le grain ne meurt*. Où sont donc passé les préludes, les épigraphes, les dédicaces, les envois, les avant-dire et autres « alternatives » et « tables des phrases les plus remarquables » qui, du *Voyage d'Urien* à *L'Immoraliste*, encerclaient les récits comme pour les protéger et retarder l'entrée du lecteur dans le texte ? Comme si ce texte avait quelque chose à cacher. Et s'il existait, justement, un rapport entre cette forme de discours proliférant, situé dans les marges du *Voyage d'Urien*, de *Paludes* et de *L'Immoraliste*, et le fait que ces textes qui précèdent l'aveu public de l'homosexualité dissimulent tous un lourd secret qui ne demande qu'à être exposé au grand jour mais qui a un mal fou à s'articuler dans les récits ? Autrement dit, le paratexte ne jouerait-il pas dans l'œuvre gidienne, comme peut-être dans celle d'autres auteurs pour qui l'écriture est un moyen d'appréhender l'innommable, un rôle ambivalent consistant tantôt à retarder, à atténuer, voire même à contredire, tantôt à anticiper, à exagérer et à confirmer, ce que le récit révèle ou tente de révéler ? C'est à ces questions que cet essai tentera d'apporter des réponses.

Les personnages principaux des récits auxquels je viens de faire allusion dans mon introduction sont tous à des degrés divers des homosexuels plus ou moins refoulés. C'est le cas du narrateur dans *Le Voyage d'Urien*, de celui de *Paludes* et de Michel, le protagoniste de *L'Immoraliste*. Cette particularité sexuelle les place dans la marginalité, et nombreuses sont les références dans

ces trois textes à ce statut ambigu, que ce soit au travers de descriptions ou de propos qui révèlent une position en marge de la société ou des normes sociales, ou bien plus généralement au travers d'évocations de lieux ou de paysages qui isolent métaphoriquement les personnages ou les maintiennent dans des espaces clos ou des zones liminales. Or, de par sa position unique dans le texte, entre le public et le privé, entre l'extérieur et l'intérieur, le connu et l'inconnu, le général et le particulier, l'espace paratextuel du livre, que l'on désigne justement par l'adjectif « liminaire » (on parlera, par exemple, de « note liminaire » ou de « feuillet liminaire »), représente à mon sens un lieu privilégié pour un auteur comme le Gide des années 1890, un lieu au sein duquel trouve à s'articuler la dialectique de l'enfermement et de la libération qui est celle des récits de Gide à cette époque. Ainsi, il semble tout à fait légitime qu'un auteur, dont les personnages principaux occupent des rôles de marginaux, se sente tout naturellement attiré par cette partie du texte, par cet espace liminaire situé à ses confins, qu'il en perçoive le potentiel narratif stratégique et qu'il l'investisse de ses préoccupations pour en tirer le plus de profit possible. La définition que donne Gérard Genette du paratexte ressemble d'ailleurs étrangement à la situation des personnages gidiens :

> Plus que d'une limite ou d'une frontière étanche, note Genette, il s'agit ici d'un seuil, ou – mot de Borges à propos d'une préface – d'un « vestibule » qui offre à tout un chacun la possibilité d'entrer, ou de rebrousser chemin. « Zone indécise » entre le dedans et le dehors, elle-même sans limite rigoureuse, ni vers l'intérieur (le texte) ni vers l'extérieur (le discours du monde sur le texte), lisière, ou, comme disait Philippe Lejeune, « frange du texte imprimé qui, en réalité, commande toute la lecture ». Cette frange en effet, poursuit Genette, toujours porteuse d'un commentaire auctorial, ou plus ou moins légitimé par l'auteur, constitue, entre texte et hors-texte, une zone non seulement de transition, mais de transaction : lieu privilégié d'une pragmatique et d'une stratégie, d'une action sur le public au service, bien ou mal compris et accompli d'un meilleur accueil du texte et d'une lecture plus pertinente.[2]

L'analyse détaillée du paratexte du *Voyage d'Urien*, de *Paludes* et de *L'Immoraliste*, « zone indécise » où se conjugue justement l'indécision de personnages en proie à des hésitations constantes et face à des choix douloureux, peut nous permettre d'accueillir ces textes mieux qu'ils ne l'ont été jusqu'à présent afin d'aboutir, comme le préconise Gérard Genette, à « une lecture plus pertinente ».

Publié en 1893, *Le Voyage d'Urien* est, comme son nom l'indique, un récit de voyage empreint d'éléments symbolistes qui en font peut-être un texte démodé aujourd'hui, mais qui a le mérite de porter en germe les principales questions que Gide développera par la suite de *Paludes* à *L'Immoraliste*.

L'édition originale est illustrée de trente lithographies réalisées pour l'occasion par le peintre nabi Maurice Denis qui constituent l'un des éléments les plus riches du paratexte du récit de 1893 et sur lesquelles je reviendrai dans ma conclusion. Je mettrai de côté ces illustrations pour le moment pour me consacrer à deux autres éléments paratextuels du *Voyage d'Urien* : le prélude et l'envoi qui encadrent le récit de part et d'autre et qui forment ce « vestibule », dont parlait Borges, que tout lecteur doit emprunter pour pénétrer dans le texte puis en sortir. Ce prélude et cet envoi se distinguent l'un de l'autre tout en cultivant des points communs. Le premier, long de quatre pages, est rédigé en prose, comme le récit qu'il annonce, et à la première personne du singulier et du pluriel, personnes qui reviennent également dans le reste du texte ainsi que dans l'envoi qui succède immédiatement à ce dernier. Cet envoi, qui ne compte que deux pages, est formé de quarante-deux octosyllabes entrecoupés, huit vers avant la fin, d'un alexandrin, et nous ramène deux ans plus tôt en arrière, jusqu'aux poèmes des *Poésies d'André Walter*, ce double duquel Gide tente désespérément de s'affranchir, signifiant par là-même le fait que l'expérience du *Voyage d'Urien* n'a pas conduit l'auteur à dépasser l'obstacle obstruant sa route mais l'oblige au contraire à piétiner sur place, voire même à rebrousser chemin puisqu'il achève d'écrire en vers le récit en prose qui était sensé le libérer de l'esthétisme et de la poésie symbolistes. Le prélude oscille entre le passé simple de narration (il s'agit des préparatifs du voyage) et l'imparfait de description (qui évoque un paysage de bord de mer et les activités d'un port où s'activent des matelots). Cependant plusieurs verbes au futur et au conditionnel présent laissent présager une issue favorable quant au périple qui s'engage :

> nous tournerons nos yeux vers l'avenir[3]

même si la forme interrogative adoptée dans plusieurs de ces phrases laisse planer l'incertitude :

> voguerons-nous, mer éternelle, vers nos destinées inconnues ? nos âmes excessivement jeunes chercheront-elles leur vaillance ?[4]

Il n'en demeure pas moins que c'est sur le ton confiant et plein d'espoir de son prélude que s'ouvre *Le Voyage d'Urien*, comme si les voyageurs, et en particulier Urien, le narrateur, étaient sur le point d'accomplir un fait exceptionnel, une action longtemps attendue. Ces quatre pages portent d'ailleurs bien leur nom de prélude puisqu'elles semblent annoncer l'avènement d'une démarche longtemps différée. Le texte multiplie les signes positifs :

> devant l'aube s'est ouverte ma croisée
>
> une mer azurée s'est montrée ! [5]
>
> promesses de toutes les futures histoires[6]

au nombre desquels la répétition à six reprises des noms « aube » et « aurore » n'est pas la moins éloquente : Urien serait-il au seuil d'une vie nouvelle ? Le narrateur de Gide serait-il sur le point de raconter ce qu'il avait dû renoncer à dire deux ans plus tôt dans *Les Cahiers* puis dans *Les Poésies d'André Walter* ? Le lecteur entame-t-il une histoire différente des précédentes ? Le récit qui suit le prélude donne bien souvent à ce dernier des occasions de penser qu'Urien est sur le point de s'affranchir. Certes, ses hésitations, les « subtilités dogmatiques » et les « scrupules » moraux et religieux, ne manquent pas d'apparaître ici et là dans le récit, ne serait-ce que pour signaler combien cette tentative d'émancipation est longue et douloureuse. On constate cependant à de nombreuses reprises la présence de fantasmes qui permettent à Urien d'articuler sa différence sexuelle : qu'il s'agisse, par exemple, de l'épisode mettant en scène un enfant tripotant son sexe, ou encore de celui des matelots et des mousses « tordus de désirs » la nuit venue et se livrant à des « saloperies », épisodes qui débouchent sur le constat suivant :

> sentant très vivement ce que nous ne voulions pas être, nous commençâmes de savoir ce que nous étions.[7]

À l'issue du récit, le lecteur est donc en droit de penser qu'Urien a réussi, partiellement au moins, sinon à concrétiser ses fantasmes au moins à les visualiser et à les exprimer, son rôle se limitant le plus souvent à celui d'un voyeur : pour paraphraser le texte on peut dire que le protagoniste du *Voyage d'Urien* commence à savoir ce qu'il est.

L'envoi placé immédiatement après le récit a tôt fait de remettre les pendules à l'heure. Il s'ouvre en effet sur l'incipit suivant :

> Madame ! je vous ai trompée : nous n'avons pas fait ce voyage[8]

complété un peu plus loin par les vers :

> J'ai menti. Ce voyage n'est que mon rêve, nous ne sommes jamais sortis de la chambre de nos pensées[9]

> […] je n'ai pas osé dire [les choses] ; je m'en suis détourné […] j'ai préféré dire un mensonge.[10]

En somme, l'envoi en vers vient contredire ce que le récit en prose suggérait et que le prélude annonçait. Rédigé au passé composé et au passé simple, il ne s'ouvre pas sur l'avenir, comme le faisait le prélude, mais se replie sur un passé accompli que rien ne pourra modifier. Contrairement à ce que nous attentions, le narrateur ne sortira pas de son placard. Force est de constater qu'à l'issue du récit la libération n'a pas eu lieu. Ainsi, le paratexte du *Voyage d'Urien* brouille-t-il les pistes et complique-t-il la tâche du lecteur puisque l'une de ses parties (le prélude qui précède le texte) laisse présager

une issue prochaine alors que l'autre (l'envoi qui clôt le texte) conclut sur l'impossibilité de s'en sortir. Toutes les hésitations du narrateur maintes fois illustrées à l'intérieur du texte se retrouvent donc à l'échelle du paratexte qui s'apparente dans son fonctionnement à un jeu de va-et-vient propre au processus qui, selon les psychologues, définit le « coming-out », c'est-à-dire le passage de l'homosexualité refoulée à une homosexualité déclarée et assumée ouvertement. « Zone indécise entre le dedans et le dehors »,[11] pour reprendre l'expression de Gérard Genette, le paratexte du *Voyage d'Urien* met en scène la valse des hésitations et des tergiversations, comme l'illustre la danse des derviches tourneurs montrant la partie « monstrueuse » de leur anatomie dans une des séquences les plus évocatrices du récit. Il reprend d'une main ce qu'il donnait de l'autre, réussissant ainsi à dévoiler, de façon détournée, ce qu'il finit par cacher, jeu subtil que le Roland Barthes du *Plaisir du texte* aurait sans doute qualifié, pour reprendre ses mots, de « mise en scène d'une apparition-disparition ».[12]

La dynamique que nous venons de décrire à propos du paratexte du *Voyage d'Urien* se retrouve telle quelle dans *Paludes*, récit qualifié de sotie que Gide publie deux années plus tard. Avant d'analyser l'ambiguïté du paratexte de la sotie de 1895, il convient d'insister sur le caractère exubérant de ce paratexte. Le texte de *Paludes* ne s'offre en effet aux regards de ses lecteurs qu'abrité de ce que Françoise Calin a très justement désigné sous le nom de « coquille verbale », sorte de carapace secrétée par le texte et qui finit par préserver ses secret.[13] Ici, l'entrée dans le récit ne se fait pas en franchissant un « vestibule », pour reprendre le mot de Borges, mais c'est au travers d'un véritable labyrinthe, digne justement des récits de l'auteur argentin, qu'est contraint de s'acheminer tant bien que mal le lecteur. Au titre et à l'épigraphe succèdent en effet, dans la partie du paratexte qui précède le récit, une dédicace suivie d'un avant-dire et d'une table des matières auxquels font rigoureusement écho, dans la partie du paratexte qui prolonge le récit, un envoi (en vers, comme celui du *Voyage d'Urien*), une alternative de quelques lignes et une autre table, intitulée « Table des phrases les plus remarquables de *Paludes* ». Ainsi, de manière rigoureusement symétrique, l'envoi répond-il à la dédicace, l'alternative à l'avant-dire et la table des phrases de la fin du livre à celle des matières du début : structure d'encerclement du récit qui préfigure encore une fois les difficultés du narrateur à briser ses chaînes et à sortir du cercle vicieux de ses confessions. Difficultés croissantes semble-t-il si l'on tient compte du fait que le paratexte s'est enrichi, du *Voyage d'Urien* à *Paludes*, de deux « couches » textuelles supplémentaires qui éloignent encore davantage le lecteur du récit et l'empêchent d'entrer dans le texte de plain pied et d'en sortir tout aussi facilement. Paratexte qui maintient plus que jamais le narrateur aux confins du texte, dans cet espace marginal – véritable cage ou prison textuelle – qu'il ne parvient pas à dépasser et qu'il arpente comme les damnés du Dante auxquels il est fait

allusion, condamnés à tourner en rond éternellement. Il annonce également le sort de Tityre, le personnage du récit en abyme que le narrateur de *Paludes* rédige, et les marécages où ce personnage vit confiné, « marais-cage » que le narrateur entrevoit dans les images de son cauchemar et qu'il retranscrit à son réveil. C'est donc dans cet espace que le narrateur semble évoluer malgré tout à l'image des mots qui y prolifèrent, véritable discours marginal, où le marginal qu'il est trouve à s'exprimer au travers d'un langage ambigu certes – reflet direct de son identité – mais qui en dit plus qu'il n'en paraît. De ce point de vue, il est possible de reprendre à propos du paratexte de *Paludes*, cette phrase de Gide dans l'avant-dire de la sotie : « si nous savons ce que nous voulions dire, nous ne savons pas si nous ne disions que cela. – On dit toujours plus que CELA. »[14]

Le paratexte de *Paludes*, à l'instar de son auteur, dit bien « plus que CELA », à commencer par le titre de la sotie, latinisme issu du substantif féminin « palus, -dis » signifiant « marais », dont l'homonyme masculin « palus, -i » désigne, quant à lui, un pieu ainsi que le membre viril : aveu déguisé de la fascination du narrateur pour les personnes de son sexe, ce même narrateur qui avoue dans le récit n'être pas de « ceux-là par qui naissent les fils des hommes » se retranchant ainsi derrière une périphrase pour se décrire tout en se cachant.[15] Les autres éléments du paratexte précédant le récit ne peuvent que confirmer cette lecture, que ce soit la référence, dans la dédicace, à Eugène Rouart, celui que Claude Martin appelle à juste titre l'ami préféré du moment, en compagnie de qui Gide découvrira l'homosexualité en Afrique, ou que ce soit l'épigraphe latine « Dic cur hic », empruntée librement au Virgile des *Eglogues* qui lui fournira également quelques années plus tard le personnage éponyme de son discours en faveur de l'homosexualité : Corydon. Arrivé à la table des matières, et ce avant même d'aborder les six chapitres de la sotie, le lecteur a de fortes chances d'être convaincu de l'issue vers laquelle il se dirige, d'autant que certains des épisodes énumérés, tels que « Le Banquet » (qui fait surgir le souvenir de Socrate et d'Alcibiade), « Hubert ou la chasse au canard » (métaphore de la conquête sexuelle) et « Angèle où le petit voyage » (qui succède au voyage malheureux du *Voyage d'Urien*), laissent entrevoir une fin similaire à celle du récit précédent dans la plus pure veine mallarméenne dont l'ironie de la sotie était sensée nous libérer :

> – Ou d'aller encore une fois, ô forêt pleine de mystère, jusqu'à ce lieu que je connais, où, dans une eau morte et brunie, trempent et s'amollissent encore les feuilles des ans passés, les feuilles des printemps adorables.[16]

Echec donc, et retour à la case départ.

En conclusion, je souhaiterais revenir un instant sur *Le Voyage d'Urien* dont j'ai dit que l'édition originale était décorée de trente lithographies gravées

sur bois par le peintre nabi Maurice Denis, ce qui ajoute un élément non négligeable au paratexte du livre. Le récit de Gide suit le modèle des récits d'explorateurs tels qu'on en rencontre dans la littérature de la fin du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance. Le peintre a d'ailleurs choisi le style des premiers livres illustrés du XVIe siècle pour décorer le texte : « Tout cet ensemble serait d'aspect sévère, mystérieux, et plutôt renaissance que moyen-âge, écrit-il dans une de ses lettres à Gide.[17] Se tenant à l'écart du livre enluminé médiéval, Maurice Denis semble s'être plutôt inspiré dans ses illustrations pour *Le Voyage d'Urien* des ouvrages de la Renaissance relatifs à la nef des fous, et notamment de la *Stultifera navis* de Sebastian Brant. Œuvre satirique publiée en allemand à Strasbourg en 1494, *Das Narrenschiff* décrit les aberrations des sens dont la folie et le péché. La nef qui vogue vers l'île de Narragonie transporte tous les types de fous : ceux qui transgressent les commandements de Dieu ou s'opposent à la raison, les grands pécheurs mais aussi ceux qui sont atteints de plus légers travers. Cette œuvre fut souvent rééditée, traduite, continuée, contrefaite. Elle inspira entre autres le peintre Hieronymus Bosch et Erasme dans son *Eloge de la Folie*. L'édition de 1494 est remarquable pour ses 118 figures gravées sur bois comme celles de Denis pour *Le Voyage d'Urien*. Dans son *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, Michel Foucault précise que cette navigation du fou « ne fait, en un sens, que développer, tout au long d'une géographie mi-réelle, mi imaginaire, la situation liminaire du fou ».[18] Le propos s'applique on ne peut mieux au récit de Gide dont l'espace géographique tel qu'il apparaît dans les descriptions du narrateur est toujours à mi-chemin entre le réel et l'imaginaire, créant un espace liminaire qui reflète la situation trouble des personnages, l'identité oscillante du narrateur et le jeu de va-et-vient entre le désir de s'affirmer et la nécessité de continuer à se cacher. N'oublions pas que *Le Voyage d'Urien* est un récit symboliste où, pour reprendre la formule bien connue d'Amiel, le paysage reflète avant tout un état d'âme.

On peut dire encore que la figure masculine telle qu'on l'observe dans les trente illustrations que Maurice Denis a composées pour *Le Voyage d'Urien* est à la fois marginale et marginalisée. Marginalisée car consciemment ou inconsciemment la figure du matelot si présente dans le récit de Gide s'efface quasi-systématiquement dans les illustrations de Denis pour laisser la place à celle de jeunes filles pures et innocentes que le texte mentionne à peine. Il y a donc dans l'illustration un processus de marginalisation du personnage masculin au profit de personnages féminins en complète contradiction avec l'esprit du texte de Gide. La figure masculine y est aussi marginale à tous les sens du terme. Marginale car Denis a réduit ces personnages tantôt à des formes abstraites, à des fantômes, voire à des figures monstrueuses. Marginale enfin au sens propre du terme puisque en plusieurs endroits, Denis a littéralement repoussé le texte de Gide dans les marges du livre au profit de ses dessins qui occupent la majeure partie de l'espace des pages au

détriment du texte imprimé qui se réduit à deux ou trois lignes subsistant au-dessus ou au-dessous des lithographies. Dans cette stratégie de la part de Denis de marginalisation et d'éviction du personnage masculin de l'espace du livre, on peut voir une volonté (sans doute inconsciente de la part du peintre) de lui refuser toute légitimité voire même tout droit de cité. Le personnage masculin gidien, aux allures pour le moins ambiguës, serait ici assimilé au fou ou au lépreux rejeté hors des murs de la cité comme l'a illustré Sebastian Brant dans sa *Stultifera navis* et comme l'a démontré Foucault dans son *Histoire de la folie* :

> […] enfermé aux portes de la cité : son exclusion doit l'enclore, écrit Foucault ; s'il ne peut et ne doit avoir d'autre prison que le seuil lui-même, on le retient sur le lieu du passage. Il est mis à l'intérieur de l'extérieur, et inversement.[19]

On sait combien la réflexion de Gide sur l'homosexualité s'articule autour de la place de ce dernier dans la vie de la cité. La question s'impose dès *L'Immoraliste* en 1902 dans les toutes premières pages du récit qui forment une partie du paratexte du récit : « En quoi Michel peut-il servir l'état ? » se demande le narrateur ajoutant immédiatement : « J'avoue que je l'ignore… Il lui faut une occupation ».[20] « Saura-t-on inventer l'emploi de tant d'intelligence et de force – ou refuser à tout cela droit de cité ? » Contrairement à Proust, son contemporain, ou à des écrivains comme Jean Cocteau ou Jean Genet, c'est à l'intérieur de la cité et non pas dans ses marges que l'homosexuel peut et doit s'émanciper selon Gide. Pour l'auteur de *L'Immoraliste*, « [i]l lui faut une occupation », il doit servir l'état et ainsi avoir droit de cité. C'est ce combat que Gide entreprendra au travers de son œuvre littéraire et d'une intense activité à la fois politique et éditoriale et qui explique que le paratexte disparaisse progressivement de ses livres au fur et à mesure qu'on se rapproche du moment où l'identité a été révélée, ou il n'y a plus rien à cacher. Si l'on en juge par la dernière page d'un des derniers livres de Gide, je veux parler de *Thésée*, on peut supposer que l'auteur de *L'Immoraliste* et de *Corydon* aura réussi au moins en partie son pari.

> Si je compare à celui d'Œdipe mon destin, je suis content : je l'ai rempli. Derrière moi, je laisse la cité d'Athènes. J'ai fait ma ville. Pour le bien de l'humanité future, j'ai fait mon œuvre. J'ai vécu.[21]

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16. Gide, André (1958), *Romans, récits*, op. cit., 148.
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Hide and Seek: On Trail of Women Writers

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ABSTRACT. The Turkish literature canon routinely excludes the work of the many women writers who have contributed vivid insights into the evolving Turkish society, within the Ottoman Empire and as a republic. The Women Writers of Turkey Project has addressed this, cataloguing the works and lives of these authors, and highlighting the history of women's experience in Turkey. Following the footsteps of three women writers, Fatma Aliye, Halide Edip Adivar and Adalet Agaoglu, the paper presents the challenges of transgressing the accepted limits of valuable knowledge, and demonstrates how the lives of Turkish women have been documented in Turkish literature.

Keywords: Canon, Women Writers, Fatma Aliye, Halide Edip Adıvar, Adalet Ağaoğlu

'Woman Writers of Turkey' is a project aiming to explore the history of women's literature in Turkey from 16th to 21st century.[1] While defining the project, we prefer to use the word "explore," rather than "analyze" or "revise," since what we do is exploring in the literal sense of the word, searching for the forgotten and hidden women writers of Turkish literature. In an archaeological manner, we are digging the sands of the so called canons which have excluded most of the women writers through the years. Such an analysis and research has never been done before. The Turkish literature canon routinely excludes the work of the many women writers who have contributed vivid insights into the evolving Turkish society, within the Ottoman Empire and as a republic. While there are countless canons in Turkish literature, women writers rarely appear on the lists, apart from the four or five most popular women writers. What else is there? The small collection of publicised women writers give us powerful clues about women's experiences, suggesting that the knowledge and insights in the works of other women writers would be highly valuable.

In order to make biographical and bibliographical information about women writers in Turkey visible, the project aims to build a digitalized database that will provide academic papers about Turkish women writers in three languages, Turkish, English and French, and present the profile of women writers in Turkey, focusing on the analytical examination of the idea of canon. But why do we see this project vital? Why women writers? Why not other women studies issues but literature? The answer is hidden in the definition of the novel. As *Merriam Webster Dictionary* puts it:

> Novel: An invented prose narrative that is usually long and complex and deals especially with human experience through a usually connected sequence of events.

In this definition, I would like to highlight the words: "human experience."

In 1997, when German writer Bernhard Schlink's well known book *The Reader* was published in English, readers were confused about the subject of the book: A complicated love story between a woman who has a Nazi-past, and a young boy who judges this Nazi-past of hers. By creating an unexpected plot and making us, the readers, sympathise with a Nazi character, Hannah, he was going against the accepted conventions of history, creating a work of pure "human experience." In 1997, he explained this in an interview:

> It's been one of the big subjects for my generation. For many families it's a personal issue, because it pits fathers against their children. One of my favourite teachers, the one who taught me English, taught me to love the English language, also taught us gymnastics and we could see his SS tattoo. One way or the other, we all had to confront it not as a theoretical abstract, but as a very real and personal problem.[2]

If we generalize Schlink's experience, it would be possible to say that no matter what the big narrations of history tell us, human experience has always something more to say about it. Literature as a fictive form of human experience shows the shift from macro history narrations to micro history narrations. A shift, that is necessary for us to be able to see the whole picture of the history.

If literature is a powerful device to re-shape the narration of history, consequently literature canons also become the device of the central powers to decide whose experience should be known and whose should not.[3] In terms of Turkish literature, women's experiences have either been found too dangerous to be known, or not worthy enough to be learnt.

The main question the project is built on is: Can we talk about a women's literature 'canon' in Turkey? And if it is possible to talk about a new canon

that will include the women writers and focus on their individual experiences, it is equally important for us to see "how" and "why" these women writers were targeted and hidden in the first place. To understand the reasons for such exclusion, I will follow the footsteps of the history whose narration has changed over time due to the political views and the best interest of the ruling powers of different eras.

In terms of Turkish literature, "nationalism" has been one of the most effective political movements that has shaped the narration of Turkish history.[4] The effects of the French Revolution showed themselves in the Ottoman Empire a century later, when different nations under the rule of a central power started to claim their independence. To survive this wave of nationalism and protect its borders, in the 19th century the concept of Ottomanism was developed. To gather together all nations under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, it promoted equality among the nations, stating that all subjects were equal before the law.[5] Yet the attempt came too late to preserve the borders of the empire. After the idea of Ottomanism lost its popularity, another concept was developed, Turkism, which aimed to unite Turkish people from around the world. [6] To spread nationalist feeling among people living in different parts of the world, a mutual and long-established history was needed. These concepts were focussed on showing people who they really were. As a result, literature has come to the stage as an important device to educate people about their own history.[7]

> While creating these centrally decided canons, the first rule was to decide whom to take into the canon and whom to eliminate according to the interests of the ruling powers. To clarify the relation between the literary canon and the central powers, we can find the clues in the Althusser's texts, and in New Historicism which provides an alternative way, reading history as a narration. Althusser, in his *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, sees the state as a "machine" that is used by the dominant powers.

The State is a 'machine' of repression, which enables the ruling classes (in the nineteenth century the bourgeois class and the 'class' of big landowners) to ensure their domination over the working class, thus enabling the former to subject the latter to the process of surplus-value extortion (i.e. to capitalist exploitation).[8]

Althusser continues by seeing the institutions like church and school as the devices of the ideology.

In other words, the school (but also other State institutions like the Church, or other apparatuses like the Army) teaches 'know-how,' but in forms which ensure *subjection to the ruling ideology* or the mastery of its 'practice.'[9]

Literature could very well find itself a place as an apparatus of the dominant powers. In his well known *The Revival of Narrative*, Lawrence

Stone suggests that all histories are narrative.[10] Therefore, accepting the New Historicism perspective, literary canons are very important in terms of creating history and the history of literature. Deciding whom to take into the canon and whom to eliminate, therefore, was not only a demonstration of literary canons as somewhat arbitrary collections of subjectively selected works, but also that history itself is an "invented" fictive narration. Or as Annette Kolodny puts it, reading and shaping the canon could not be more distant from being innocent, for "readers and texts are both made and they are continually being remade."[11]

Still, whose history are we talking about? If we accept the idea that history is an invented narration, then the narrators of this story have always been men. While in the macro history narrations women are rarely more than shadows, in the micro history narrations women are always the ones talked about. As Soshana Felman puts it, they are always the objects of the texts, not the subjects. In other words, they are the Other, the one who is always written about.[12]

In early days of Turkish literature, educating women was one of the biggest aims. To achieve this educational goal, almost all of the male writers used the same formula, creating similar types of characters. The ideal woman stereotype had the same schematic characteristics: she was a good wife and a good Muslim, Westernized but not degenerated in the process.[13] While this formula was applied by male writers, women who wanted to write were seen dangerous. They had to concentrate on being good mothers, good wives and Muslims during the Ottoman years.[14] With the foundation of the new republic a new characteristic was added to their duties list: being educated and intellectual enough to help men develop the country and raise it to the level of Western countries.[15] They had to leave the serious work to the men, or as an old Turkish phrase puts it: "They should not meddle in the men's work as they belong in the kitchen." Still some women were able to write and publish their texts in this era, the well known daughters of the powerful men in the empire. Yet it was almost a must for them to hide their real names, disguised beneath pen names.

Fatma Aliye is the first example of these women writers. As the daughter of a famous politician of the Ottoman Empire, Fatma Aliye was the first Turkish woman novelist, giving us the first clues of the women's experience of that time in her fiction.[16] The institution of marriage is the main concern of her novels. Even though she is not a feminist in the modern sense of the word, with her approval of the patriarchal order, she still reversed the male point of view. While she follows the formula of the ideal woman by writing about well educated women with good manners, she also presents the disappointments of these women in their married lives.

The disappointment coming from marriage is a reflection of her own experience. The support of her father allowed Aliye to receive an education,

unusual for a woman at that time. She learned French and translated George Ornet's Volonte in a time when most of the women did not know how to read or write. When she got married to a soldier she was highly disappointed to find out that not only did her husband not like literature, but also that he was a firm believer that reading was detrimental for women, threatening to destroy their morality.[17] Looking at her own experiences, it is not surprising for us to see that the disappointment of women in marriage was the main issue of her novels.

In her novel *Udi* (*The Lute Player*, 1899), her female protagonist learns how to play the lute with the support of her father and excels, but when she gets married she sadly realises that her husband is not interested in this most important pleasure of her life.[18] Similarly, in her *Muhazarat* novel (*Beneficial Stories*, 1892), not only does the female protagonist's husband not like reading, but she also realizes that they have nothing in common.[19]

Infidelity is another common aspect of her novels. Both in *Udi* and *Muhazarat*, she draws the portrait of a woman who sits in front of the window with wet eyes, waiting for her husband. In *Udi*, Fatma Aliye reflects her own thoughts about the marriage institution: girls who are not well informed about marriage are likely to make poor decisions. In her *Muhazarat* novel, she goes further into the matter and gives the readers a whole panorama of her ideas about married life.

Muhazarat tells the unfortunate story of Fazıla who is tortured and victimized by her stepmother, cheated on by her husband and never unites with her childhood sweetheart.

Fazıla's father, even though he ignores the torture Fazıla goes through, is never reflected as one of the villains of the book. Accordingly, in her fiction, while husbands are always portrayed negatively, the fathers of the female protagonists are always exceptions. Her characters are often raised without a mother due to the deaths of their mothers and they always take their fathers as their role models. We can find almost the same case in Fatma Aliye's own life. Taking her father as her own role model, Fatma Aliye always showed her respect to her father in her texts, especially in her *Ahmet Cevdet Paşa ve Zamanı* (*Ahmet Cevdet Pasha and His Time*) in which she documents her father's ideas.

> Dear reader can rest assured that I am quoting directly from what Cevdet Pasha has taught me. However, I cannot guarantee that he/she will find in this work all that he has told and taught me.[20, 21]

Accordingly, in Fatma Aliye's fiction, the obedience to the father is an unquestionable rule: a father can never be disrespected or opposed. Fatma Aliye confirms her support for father's rule by believing that choosing a husband for her daughter is also a father's duty.[22] Obeying the father's rule

is where Fatma Aliye's questionable feminism comes into being: in order to make their fathers proud, Fatma Aliye's characters are always strong women who have professions and take care of themselves financially in times of need.

Having such unusual thoughts for her time, her conservatism shows itself in her *Muhazarat* novel when Fazıla's husband decides to sleep with odalisques, female slaves in an Ottoman seraglio, assisting or apprenticing to the concubines and wives. Fazıla accepts his decision on one condition: choosing the odalisque herself. Here, by not criticizing the odalisque institution, Fatma Aliye becomes even more conservative than the male writers of her time.[23] The story continues as Bedia runs away to Beirut after her husband's decision to have a second wife and in Beirut she always rejects the romantic offers of the men in her life.

In her texts, happiness can only be pursued through morality. Even though personal happiness often overlaps with custom and usage, her characters always behave according to moral rules. Therefore, she reflects morality as the main element that is affecting women's daily life in the Ottoman times. As Nazan Aksoy puts it, Fatma Aliye does not question the patriarchal system, on the contrary she affirms it and shows the father's rule as the only way to go.[24]

While Fatma Aliye was reporting her experiences and thoughts by means of her novels in the last years of Ottoman Empire, Halide Edip Adivar, the best-known and most productive woman writer of Turkish literature, who wrote her first novel almost 20 years after Fatma Aliye, reflected a new issue in women's daily lives: Westernization.

In the search of the Meşrutiyet regime for a new type of human being, "for a new woman," it was advocated that women needed to be fashioned with a conscious morality and not with the external appearance of Europeanized 'luxurious' women. She had to remain among the civilized nations' women as mothers who are consciously aware of their responsibilities to the nation by raising children…[25, 26]

All through her career, Halide Edip Adıvar's texts were affected by her own personal life and her evolving thoughts. In the beginning of the 20th century, due to being harshly criticized because of her early essays, she found reflecting her own ideas as a woman impossible. As a result, she used her novels as a way to reflect her personal ideas on politics, marriage and the woman experience.[27] During the times of the Turkish war of independence she presented her nationalist thoughts in her novel, *Yeni Turan* (*The New Order*, 1912). After she actually joined the war as a soldier she wrote *Ateşten Gömlek* (translated into English as *The Daughter of Smyrna* or *The Shirt of Flame*, 1922). But her texts reflecting her emotional life were written after she divorced from her first husband.

She was born in 1882 and was sent to Üsküdar American College. Due to the Western education she received, she started to recognise the gap

between her education and the conservative culture of her time. In her memoirs (published in English in 1926), she tells how ashamed she was of her clothes as a child which were revealing her arms and legs unlike her friends' clothes.[28]

Her first thoughts on the institution of marriage and relationship between men and women were formed during her childhood years after her mother's death when her father decided to marry two women. Witnessing her father's wife's depressions, she always accepted polygamy as her biggest enemy, defining it as insulting and tiresome for women.[29]

In 1901, she got married to her mathematics teacher Salih Zeki Bey and started writing political articles for the newspapers and journals. After the 31st March Incident, she first fled to Egypt and then to England. There she met Bertrand Russell and Isabel Frye. In 1909, following her return to Istanbul, her husband stated that he wanted to have a second wife. This was her biggest taboo; she divorced her husband right away.[30]

In her memoirs, she defines this period of her life as the darkest one. Spending days in bed, doing nothing but just sleeping and staring, she almost came back to life by expressing her emotions in her books, *Raik'in Annesi* (*Raik's Mother*, 1909), *Seviye Talip* (1910) and *Handan* (1912).

By having mutual characteristics with her own life, her *Handan* novel is an important example to give us the clues of her own experiences. *Handan* tells the story of a woman who receives a Western education, and who gets married with a man older than her and is then cheated on by her husband countless times.[31]

In the novel we see three male figures in Handan's life. The first man is Nazım, her teacher. Nazım, a boy who has socialist political views, falls in love with her and proposes to her by saying "In order to achieve my political dreams, I need a companion like you."[32] Yet Handan rejects this offer and gets married to a man who is older than her, Hüsnü Pasha. Hüsnü Pasha is a modern and sophisticated man, takes Handan to Paris to live, but cheats on her various times with many different women. When in the end he decides to live with his mistress and leaves Handan, our third man Refik Cemal gains importance in Handan's life. After Hüsnü Pasha leaves her, Handan falls into a depression, spends her days sick in bed and gets worse as Hüsnü Pasha continues to reject her letters. Refik Cemal, on the other hand, her cousin's husband, while disliking her in the beginning, thinking her too arrogant and in some ways too Western, begins to like and in the end love her when she becomes sick enough to need his help. Due to the doctor's suggestion, Refik Cemal takes Handan to a peaceful English village and takes care of her there so much that he even combs her hair or feeds her like a child. Although nothing happens physically and neither character says anything to the other, when Handan realises that she is in love with her

cousin's husband, her depression turns into madness. And in the end, she dies with the guilt of falling in love with her cousin's husband.

Halide Edip creates Handan in her own image.[33] As a woman who has been educated in a Western way, Handan feels the gap between modernization and the conservative traditions. The westernization idea only demands women to be educated to be good mothers and to support their husbands. Additionally, the so-called westernization is only possible when there is a powerful man around women who let them to be more educated and modernized. The three male figures of the book are always more powerful than Handan either with their status, or age, or position. Handan can actualize herself only around the presence of a powerful man. Just like in a letter Handan writes to Hüsnü Pasha when he leaves her, she accuses him of leaving and taking her individuality with him.

Handan is not described as beautiful. Men find her attractive because of her wits. Still, her wits make her suffer the most. Halide Edip punishes Handan with madness and death for being not a womanly woman, or for not behaving as Virgina Woolf's angel suggests in her *Professions for Women*:

> My dear, you are a young woman… Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our sex. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own.[34]

Halide Edip punishes Handan for she has a mind of her own. It may not be wrong to say that Halide Edip punishes herself in the image of Handan for having a mind of her own.

In order to give one more important example about the importance of women's texts to reflect their own experiences, I will present Adalet Ağaoğlu in whose fiction we witness the effects of the foundation of the modern Turkish republic in people's lives, the dilemma between the countryside and the city life and the position of women in the modernization of the republic. Her most famous work, *Ölmeye Yatmak* (*Lying Down To Die*, 1973) tells the story of Aysel who decides to commit suicide in a hotel room.[35] The novel takes us back and we witness the growth of the first generation of children after the foundation of the republic. Aysel is one of the exemplary women raised with the ideals of the project to modernize women, receiving a good education and becoming an associate professor. But at the same time she experiences the crisis of her generation, feeling helpless in the dilemma between her own character and the feeling of having a mission in life, a mission that has been shared by all of her generation: being an intellectual to improve the country. As a woman, she experiences the hypocrisy of this mission, realising that society only expects her to be educated in order to support men to improve the country, not to improve it herself.

Adalet Ağaoğlu differentiates from the other women writers of her time in terms of sexual freedom. In her *Ölmeye Yatmak*, she twists the faiths of the women who are being cheated on by their husbands in Turkish literature and make Aysel cheat on her husband this time. As can be seen in her *Üç Beş Kişi* (*Curfew*, 1984), in which she tells the story of people from different classes who experience the heaviness of the approaching 1980 Turkish coup d'état, the modernization project has made women give up on their sexualities by making them dedicate themselves to their intellectual selves.[36] In *Ölmeye Yatmak* when Aysel cheats on her husband Ömer, a well educated modern man who received his education abroad and who believes in the equality between men and women, with Engin, her dominant student, Aysel feels like she has lost her virginity for the first time with Engin. As a woman who works to be independent and intellectual throughout her life, when she finds satisfaction in the authority of a man, she experiences a crisis in her character in the extreme. The broad line from Fatma Aliye to Adalet Ağaoğlu reaches its top. While in Fatma Aliye's works women experience a crisis in terms of their marriages, with Halide Edip Adıvar, the fragile shells of married life shutters and with Adalet Ağaoğlu the crisis is not about marriage or morality anymore, the crisis is purely about women and their top down freedom.

Accepting women's freedom as a step to reach their ideals, modernization of the women was a project created by men. Therefore, it was only influential in the public sphere. In the private sphere, it was leading women to crises of character or depression. Women were trying to be free individuals, free from their fathers, mothers and most importantly their husbands. But at the same time women were trying to be free for men and for the country. This was the two faced aspect of the project which can be summarised as: "for men, in spite of men."

Three women, three different views, three different types of womanly experiences. If three women writers can give us this much insight into the experiences of women and the reflections of the evolving historical events on women's daily lives, the amount of information we can gain by exploring the hidden, forgotten and targeted women writers is potentially huge.

Recent research has begun to give us information about Armenian women writers, writing in Ottoman times in Armenian who were excluded from every canon as if they never existed. Canons also exclude women writers who are living in Germany, writing in German, but writing about their Turkish pasts. For example, Emine Sevgi Özdamar who has received the Ingeborg Bachmann prize in 1991 exists in none of the literature traditions or canons. The Woman Writers of Turkey Project does not only aim to explore Turkish writers or writers who wrote in Turkish. By focusing on the questions: "What makes a canon a canon, what are the lines of a literature tradition?" it aims to explore a whole tradition, a whole ocean of women writers whose expe-

riences evolve in this geography, in these historical stages, in this changing culture.

In his *Istanbul*: *Memories and The City*, while taking a journey through his memories, Orhan Pamuk wanders the city with a question in his head: Who am I?[37] But his wandering is more textual and mental than physical. What he searches for is his own past and his own roots as a writer. He searches for his own writerly identity in the history of literature. Yet, disappointingly, he cannot go further beyond 19th century literature. Lacking a novel tradition, he struggles to find his own voice, missing past examples to approach and transcend. He cannot find a tradition to fight against. In other words, he lacks a father to kill in order to create his own writerly identity. So what if the writer who is looking for the past tradition is a woman?

According to the given canons, women writers of modern Turkey have no early examples of woman experience in literature to compare themselves with. They have no past, no one to fight against, no way to see where they are in the history of literature, or in other words no mothers to fight against, to approach, to transcend.

What if with this Woman Writers of Turkey project and the others that hopefully will come after this, we re-write the history of Turkish literature including the women writers this time? Or maybe I should change my question to "what if we don't"? If we do not change the history of literature including women this time, the history of the experiences of individuals will always be missing. Like a puzzle with missing pieces, it is not possible for us to imagine a historical narration without the experience of women.

If we re-write history including its missing pieces this time, not only we will see the hidden side of literature, but we will also see "why" these writers were chosen to be hidden from us. This will also give us a clearer picture of the macro history, leading the way for further research on women in cultural studies of literature and hopefully Turkish literature back its mothers.

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Challenging the Literary Scene: Late Nineteenth-Century Romanian Women Writers

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ABSTRACT. The tradition of the feminine writing in the Romanian Principalities was born in circumstances determined by the social changes that took place during the century, which exerted a lot of influence on a woman's daily life. Influenced by the women's emancipation trend, which had a large resonance in France, England and America, they fought for the ideals of the feminist revolution: the promotion of women's rights, liberty, equality, the assertion of the woman's right to decide on herself, her body, her feelings, her destiny.

Keywords: feminine writing, cultural impact on women's changing social status

The latter half of the nineteenth century in Romania was a time of unprecedented change and emancipation for Romanian women in regard to political engagement, legal status, access to higher education, and their entrance into professional and public life. In addition, their visibility in the professional world of literature and arts enabled them to start forging a tradition of their own.

The present article focuses not only on the writings of canonical women writers (Sofia Nadejde, Veronica Micle, Elena Farago) but also on a number of writers who were neglected by critics (but mentioned in the most recent *Dicționarul personalităților feminine din România* (*Dictionary of Romanian Feminine Personalities*) compiled by George Marcu and Rodica Ilinca), like Eugenia Ianculescu de Reuss, Constanța Hodoș, Bucura Dumbravă, Emilia Lungu, Adela Xenopol, Constanța Marino-Moscu, Smaranda Gheorghiu; or who wrote their work in foreign languages: Iulia Hasdeu, Martha Bibescu, Elena Văcărescu, Dora d'Istria, Bucura Dumbravă; or the queens Elisabeta (Elisabeta de Neuwied, Queen of Romania) and Marie of Romania (Marie Alexandra Victoria, previously Princess Marie of Edinburgh). The article assesses their achievement by examining their late 19th century cultural impact on women's changing social status and diversification and the reshaping of their lives.

A comparative research of the woman's situation in different European societies as well as in the American society is based on the observation that the political and historical events which took place in the 19th century – the French Revolution (at the end of the 18th century), the Great Union of Moldavia and Wallachia (1859), the War of Independence (1877–1879), the Civil War in America (1861–1865) – opened a new way for important social, economic and cultural changes which created Realism in literature. Therefore, the representations that defined the emancipated woman changed. Women writers explored the changes of the traditional women roles, especially those of lover, mother, as well as the qualities that women must prove in order to be considered "successful," (Barbara Welter) such as purity, kindness, domestic abilities and obedience. It is important to observe that, starting with 1880, the *New Woman* changed – in theory and in reality – the canons of the French, English, American and even the Romanian literature, influencing the lives of the writers and strengthening the literature with feminine characters, as well as with new forms and themes.

In the Romanian Principalities, the first women writers were initially known as journalists. After a while, some of them started to write poems and novels. The entry of women into the profession of writing in the Romanian society was a slow process that became clearer at the end of the 19th century. The first novel written by a woman was published under the pseudonym Doamna L (Maria Boucher Movila) – *Omul muntelui* (*The Man of the Mountains*)[1] (1858). Other women writers also used pen names: Dora d'Istria (Princess Elena Ghica), Smara (Smaranda Gheorghiu) or Carmen Sylva (Elisabeta de Neuwied, Queen of Romania). When Queen Elisabeta wrote together with Mite Kremnitz, they both used the pseudonyms Dito and Item for novels such as *From Two Worlds* (1884) and *Astra* (1887), as well as for the volume *Revenge and other Novels* (1888).

Concomitantly there could also be mentioned some examples of first Romanian women translators: Catica Faca (Jeanne Louise Henriette Campan, *Thoughts on Education*, 1834), Catinca Sambotencu (Lesage, *Le diable boiteux*, 1835), Ermiona Asachi (Silvio Pelico, *Dei doveri degli uomini*, 1843), Sofia Cocea or Elena Bacaloglu (Carmen Sylva, *Robia Peleşului*, 1897).

The first literary criticism attempt belongs to Iulia Aricescu, with the monographic work *Opera şi viaţa Doamnei Sophia Chrisoscoleu, născută Cocea* (*The Work and Life of Mrs. Sophia Chrisoscoleu, born Cocea*) (1862). *Impresii literare* (*Literary Impressions*) (1908), written by Izabela Sadoveanu-Evan is another notable work of literary criticism.

There were also folklore 'searchers' such as: Dora d'Istria, *La Poésie populaire des Magyars* (1870), Margarita Miller Verghi, *Izvoade stramosesti* (*Old Romanian Folk Patterns*) (1927), Elena Sevastos, *Nunta la români: studiu istorico-etnografic comparativ* (*Wedding Customs in Romania: A Historic-Ethnographic Study*) (1889) or *Călătorii prin Ţara Românească*

(*Voyages in Wallachia*) and *Cântece moldoveneşti* (*Moldavian Songs*), both of them published in 1888. Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Studii în folclor* (*Studies on Folklore*) (1903).

The number of women journalists began to rise toward the end of the nineteenth century, but as Deborah Chambers and Linda Steiner observe,

> Male editors assumed that women could only write *as* women *for* and *about* women. Women entered a gendered public sphere, defined largely on men's terms. Despite claims to objectivity, 'news' conformed to a masculine discourse: the concerns and experiences of men were privileged over those of women. Journalists' attention to competition, war, and conflict essentially marginalized issues pertaining to the home, family and children's welfare. A sub-category labeled 'women's news' evolved out of the need, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, to attract women readers. This prompted the creation of 'women's columns' and 'women's pages.' 'Women's news' was characterized by a restricted understanding of women's interests: domestic and family life, including society news, child-rearing and household duties. Women wishing to enter journalism therefore faced many challenges to overcome the ghettoisation of their work in 'women's news' and human interest stories. (Chambers and Steiner, 2010: 50)

At the beginning of their career, most of the Romanian women writers were journalists: Sofia Nadejde, Maria Flechtenmacher, Eugenia Ianculescu de Reuss like their counterparts in America, Margaret Fuller, Fanny Fern.

While in the United States women began taking part in journalism during the colonial period, in the Romanian Principalities, the first women journalists appeared on the public stage using pen names: Ariel (Mărgărita Miller-Verghi), Elena A. Tănăsescu (Elenea Codreanu), Fatma (Elena Farago), D. Şerban (Claudia Millian), Laura Vampa (Libertatea Bruteanu), Maura Prigor (Coralia Costescu), others chose more than one pseudonym: Fulmen, Laura, Lorica (Ecaterina Raicoviceanu). Their entry into the profession was due to husbands (Sofia Nădejde, Constanța Hodoș) or fathers (Emilia Lungu Puhallo). In the context of identifying the nineteenth century as one of the golden ages of the pseudonym, as Jenny Coleman remarks

> a more rebellious strategy was for literary women to present themselves as men, although this, too, proved problematic. […] Another liberating rhetorical mechanism that allowed literary women in the nineteenth century to deal with their socially prescribed subordination was to write under an instrumental pseudonym that simultaneously embraced their identities as women while challenging the socially constructed and prescribed nature of what it meant to be a woman. In other words, there were women who chose to highlight their femaleness through their choice of a *nom de plume* while employing that *nom de plume* to

> enter into debates around the essential nature and role of women and to put pen to their views on contemporary prescriptions associated with the female gender and the relations between the sexes. (Coleman, 2011: 1)

Throughout the nineteenth century many British magazines addressed to women assumed as Margaret Beetham notes

> the co-incidence of adult femininity with motherhood. This was evident in the very earliest nineteenth-century magazines for women, like *The Lady's Museum* (1798–1832), and persisted into the 1890s, when magazines like *Hearth and Home* (1891–1914) and the *Lady's Realm* (1896–1915) ran articles called "What Shall We Do with Our Daughters?" Similarly, magazines addressed to "girls" often assumed that mothers were part of their readership as, for example, did the *Girls' Own Paper* (1880–1927) whose sub-title was "A Magazine for Young Women and their Mothers." (Beetham 131–141)

In the Romanian Principalities, the how-to manuals for women, *Căminul* (*The Home*), were very much in demand and urged women to seek fulfillment in marriage and maternity. Maria Rosetti was the editor of the journal *Mama şi copilul* (*Mother and Child*): Bucharest, 1865–1866 while Constanța de Dunca-Schiau ran the feminist newspaper *Amicul familiei* (*The Friend of the Family*), Bucharest, 1863–1865.

Adela Xenopol set up the journal *Dochia*, Bucharest, 1896–1898, and she wrote most of the articles for it. Later she ran other three journals: *Românca* (*The Romanian Woman*), Bucharest, 1905–1906, *Viitorul româncelor* (*The Future of Romanian Women*), Bucharest, 1912–1916, and *Revista scriitoarei* (*The Woman Writer's Journal*), Bucharest, 1926–1928.

Eliza V. Cornea edited the journal *Rolul femeii* (*The Woman's Role*), Bucharest, 1883. Emilia Tailler was the director of *Jurnalul femeii* (*The Woman's Journal*), a journal with articles focused on education and fashion. Together with her husband, Constanța Hodoș, published between 1905–1907, and then, 1914–1916, in Bucharest, *Revista noastră* (*Our Journal*), a literary, artistic and social journal.

These publications, individual periodicals and the production of "women's space," suggests as Susan Hamilton and Janice Schroeder agree

> the need for more investigations into the gendered culture of nineteenth-century print journalism. The articles in this special issue address the relations between nineteenth-century feminisms (broadly defined) and the press, including the public culture of speaking, clubbing and organizing which often turned to the press as a critical tool. (Hamilton, and Schroeder, 2010: 2)

Thus, towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century an increasing number of educated women involved in the writing

business and contributed to periodicals and newspapers by writing articles, stories, translating women's writing, because as Lorna Shelley remarks

> the female journalist was frequently upheld as a positive role model in journals aimed at young educated middle-class girls who may have been contemplating a writing or journalistic career. Persuasive periodical accounts of women journalists emphasized both the rigors and attractions of the profession, often casting the female journalist as a heroic New Woman figure adaptable to modern and challenging work environments (Shelley, 2009: 4)

The Romanian society at the end of the 19th century, depicted in the novels and in the short stories written by women writers, is controlled by the power of money. A woman who lives in this society could reach the standards of a good material situation only by associating with a man – a father, a lover, a husband. In other words, a woman does not have a direct power and she would always depend on a male protector. As a consequence, her dependence means the assurance of the material security and the society's goodwill, as well as an extreme limited life. Therefore, the woman is caught in a trap of societal rules. It is also a trap generated by the material situation that makes her a simple adornment in the man's life.

The 19th century society requires a woman to not breach the rules and to not ask herself too many questions. There are many women who obey these rules. The analysis and representation of the feminine condition must notice the opposition between the woman's position in society, on one hand, and the desire to distinguish herself, on the other hand. She lives in an inflexible society full of rules, which does not want to free women but rather oppresses them, regardless of their social condition. Sometimes, women's refusal to live (the suicide theme is a certain trend in the numerous romance and mystery novels), their withdrawal and loneliness (monasticism) and their revolt (by leaving their family) are consequences of these contradictory situations.

The restrictions imposed on women from all social categories influenced the themes that were debated in women's writings as well as the literary genres chosen by women to express themselves. Due to the fact that most of the women from the middle or high class spent almost all their time indoors, their fiction tended to concentrate on the private sphere and the topics the women writers chose seemed to be limited to this aspect.

Women writers depict their heroines as being frozen in the trap of social roles, caught in their marriages and moral obligations or in unhappy circumstances. Escaping is the only option for some female protagonists, even if sometimes this takes only a few hours. For other protagonists, escaping means suicide or suicide attempts, or the death of their souls because they can no longer have any feelings. In many novels and short stories that explore the theme of women in the private space, the women writers bring up many topics considered taboo in the 19th century: divorce, abusive behavior of the

adoptive mother, abortion, feminism, prostitution, domestic violence, incest, deficiencies in girls' education, interethnic marriages.

My taxonomy of women's roles in women's fiction is based on six of the eight role-generating areas (Slavery and the 'West" being the exceptions) suggested by Tiffany K. Wayne in her book *Women's Roles in Nineteenth-century America* (2007) and in some cases I will approach the categories of roles from the Romanian perspective. The advantage of these role-generating categories is that they apply, with several significant differences, to Romanian women's writing of the same period:

1) "Marriage and family life" (women as mothers, daughters, wives, sisters), divorce: Constanța Marino-Moscu's *Ada Lazu*, abortion: Sofia Nadejde's *Patimi* (*Passions*), prostitution: Elena Vacarescu's *Vraja* (*The Spell*) or Smara's *Fata tatii* (*Daddy's Girl*), domestic violence: Constanța Hodoș's *Trei surori* (*Three Sisters*), incest (Constanța Hodoș, *Din acelasi sange* (*From the Same Blood*) and Smara, (*The Ice Floe*), interethnic marriages, Constanța Hodoș, *Evreica* (*The Jewish Girl*), abusive behavior of the adoptive mother: Sofia Nadejde, *Puterea banilor* (*The Power of Money*), the widow, Constanța Hodoș, *In doliu* (*The Mourning*);

2) "Work" (women in the paid workforce and women's unpaid work in the household economy), financially independent woman: Sofia Nădejde's *Robia banului* (*The Slave of Money*);

3) "Religion" (women as churchgoers, reformers, missionaries, and preachers);

4) "Education" (from women with almost no access to formal education to women in leading roles as teachers and college administrators, and women in professions such as medicine, the law and the ministry) or the deficiencies of girls' education (Constanța Hodoș, *The Little Hand*), lack of sexual education (Constanța Hodoș, *The Bracelet*);

In the short story *Brățara* (*The Bracelet*), Constanța Hodoș draws attention to the deficient educational system performed by nuns in monasteries and the lack of sexual education. The author writes about Felicia, a young woman who has been educated by nuns. She gets married but she refuses to have sexual relations with her husband:

> His wife… his woman… Didn't they clearly agree? She swore to him pure and holly love, such as that offered by the angels in heaven. She gave in, and promised to accept him close to her. Why did he want to lure her in a horrible trap, where, once caught, there would be no escape for her body or her soul? She would be lost forever, dirty, tired; with penitence she would live her life, mutilated and miserable… She would rather be dead! It would be better for her body to be set on fire than to submit to the disgusting sin. (Hodos, Constanta (1921), "Bratara (The Bracelet)," *Lilica iubeste* (*Lilica is in Love*). Sibiu: Dacia Traiana Institute of Graphic Arts, 81).

The short story *Brățara* (*The Bracelet*) can be compared with *A Nun from New England* (1891), in which the American writer Mary E. Wilkins Freeman imagines "a nun" in Louisa Ellis, a parabola for her ascetic way of life. She is frightened of life's challenges, society, love, and masculine sexuality. For fourteen years she has been waiting for her lover who left in search for good fortune. When he returns, he wants to marry her just out of obligation because he loves another woman. Louisa chooses to set him free and to live lonely the rest of her life, especially because she wants to protect her virginity.

In her writings, Constanta Marino-Moscu talks about liberal issues like woman's emancipation, social injustice, religion and education, marriages based on moral obligations not on legal contracts. Such an example is depicted in the short story *Ada Lazu*, in a dialogue between a father and his daughter, when the father tells her that she is going to marry a man she has never seen before. Ada refuses: "But I don't know him, I don't even know his name." Her father's answer comes promptly, and without any possibility for a reply:

> A girl like you, without education, without profession, without money and without any great expectations must be happy when an opportunity like this appears. The name, the surname, the shape of his face, his behavior and culture are less important. […] When you admit your right of being so pretentious, then you must have had a very high esteem about yourself… You are a girl like any others, a very small part of the women's mass that were born in order to expect their whole life to be supported by their parents, husbands, and children without producing anything… (Marino-Moscu, Constanta (1911), *Ada Lazu.* Bucharest: Minerva, 39)

Later, when Ada talks to her husband and begs him to divorce, confessing that she never loved him and that she married him against her will, she is defeated again:

> Do you want us to get separated like Americans do? No, nooo…! I didn't get married in order to get separated. If you had maggots in the brain why did you get married? […] Who are you? A woman like all the others. […] What do I care? I took a wife; I want a wife, and that's the end of it…

The divorced women from the American society did not have a better image either. The proof lies in many of Edith Wharton's characters from her novels inspired by the life of New York's society at the end of 19th century. Carry Fisher (*The House of Mirth*), Ellen Olenska (*The Age of Innocence*), and Halo Tarrant (*The Gods Arrive*) are divorced women, ostracized by the society, and when they were invited (a thing which happened very seldom) in aristocratic places, the hostess of the house had to be very careful not to invite very conventional persons at the same time.

5) “Politics and Reform” (women’s active roles in politics and reform)

The expansion of women’s political culture after the War of Independence (1877–1878) laid the foundation for the greatest political mobilization of women in Romanian history – through the creation of many committees for women. Between the time of its founding in Iassy, in 1877 and the height of its influence even two years later, *Comitetul Central al femeilor în frunte cu Maria Rosetti Roznovanu* (*The Central Committee Led by Maria Rosetti Roznovanu*) became an umbrella organization for a multitude of social undertakings, including woman’s suffrage, in many other towns as Fălticeni, Piatra Neamț, Roman, Tecuci, and Bârlad.

Women founded many feminist societies, the first one *Reuniunea femeilor române* (*The Reunion of the Romanian Women*) in 1886, in Iassy, when Cornelia Emilian also initiated the feminist movement. Later, in 1895, she founded *Liga femeilor române* (*The League of the Romanian Women*), the first Romanian society with statutes and a printed bulletin *Buletinul Ligii femeilor* (*The Bulletin of the Women’s League*), that urged women to fight for their political rights and showed how women reformers and gender-specific issues they championed helped advance class-specific issues during a time of fundamental social, economic, and political transition.

The writer and journalist Elena Bacaloglu, an ardent admirer of fascism, set up the National Italo-Romanian Cultural and Economic Movement in 1921 and wrote a book *Movimento nazionale fascista italo-rumeno* in 1923. In 1910, Alexandrina Cantacuzino set up the Societatea Națională a Femeilor Ortodoxe (National Orthodox Society for Women) while in 1921, together with Calypso C. Botez, Elena M. Meissner, Cornelia Emilian and other feminists she initiated Consiliul Național al Femeilor Române (National Council of Romanian Women), and later, in 1929, she founded the first feminine political party Gruparea Națională a Femeilor Române (The National Group of Romanian Women). In 1912, Maria Baiulescu set up up Uniunea Femeilor Române (The Committee of Romanian Women), an organization intended to represent the women from the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

In her journal *Femeia română* (*The Romanian Woman*), “a social, literary and domestic” journal (1879–1881), Maria Flehtenmacher wrote many reports on international conferences concerning women’s emancipation and translated into Romanian the keynote speeches delivered by important feminists from France, England, and United States. Maria DiCenzo is interested in how feminist periodicals operated in relation to the so-called “Public Press,” because she argues that

> the press was quite simply the route to that other vaguely defined entity, “the Public.” Much has been made of the proliferation of the periodical press in the period, namely the growing numbers of publications assumed to be serving the interests of increasingly specialized and narrow readerships. But diversification did not

> imply disengagement from public discourse; new publications situated themselves in relation to the wider press and public in deliberate and reflexive ways. While the feminist or campaign-based publications often defined their relationship to the established press in antagonistic terms, they nevertheless seized on favorable coverage as a measure of the efficacy of their work. […] What I would like to highlight is how analyses of the Press – as implied or directly stated in nineteenth-century women's newspapers – offer valuable and generally ignored interventions and insights into the larger debates about the influence and changing face of the press at the time. By exposing distortions and omissions in press coverage and practices, feminist journals encouraged a critical perspective on current sources of news and information and, in doing so, they were also redefining who constituted the public and what it needed to know. (DiCenzo, 2010: 2)

6) "Literature and the Arts" (an increasing numbers of women writers and artists who laid the foundations for the women's tradition in literature and the arts).

The feminist attitude of some women writers is also reflected in the construction of their female characters. In the novel *Spre emancipare* (*Toward Emancipation*), Eugenia Ianculescu de Reuss proposes a unique identity model for that time: the main character is a feminist writer, called Corina. Being very poor, she marries with a man much older than her, who loves her very much and supports her in getting educated.

While she is giving lectures in public all around the country, she often stops in villages in order to make the countrywomen aware of the fact they need to be educated. Corina goes around the country in order to set up asylums for women lacking moral and financial support, as well as to deliver speeches in which she focused on social activity guidance and achieving the feminine ideal. She explains her perception of Romanian women:

> In my opinion, and mostly in our country, women are divided into four categories: 1. Countrywomen, some of them barely knowing to read and write, and therefore, totally lacking of knowledge; they believe that the man is almighty, and hence, he is the source of all the happiness as well as the sorrows, arising from beatings…or too much hard labor; 2. Women who due to the little education achieved in the boarding houses have no other purpose than becoming more refined in dressing up, in gestures, and glances …in order to be able to have as many suitors as possible. Therefore, the goal of their life is to make themselves pleasant to men, to perpetually feel the joy of love, forgetting the disappointment of being abandoned or cheated. […] 3. This type, in a smaller number, is the faithful woman, whose goal is to take care of her husband, her home and children. She is simple and holy…but she is ridiculed and despised in most of the cases. This kind of

> woman suffers more than she lives her life. Her ideals and life conceptions are limited, and she cannot match the needs and the disillusions of the domestic life with her interest in science or in art. 4. Another type of woman is the erudite one, who wants to behave like a man, to take part in the changing pace of humanity, to talk about the most important things, to become a minister, a deputy, an associate, a judge…Acquiring masculine valences, these women "kill with their will the power of love and the gentleness of the soul, which are inerrant to their body destined to giving birth. They become barren with soul and body, or they love and give birth to children, like the uneducated women, but due to their intelligence they suffer more from the unavoidable selfishness of men that do not want to admit that women could become a support in the life's purposes. (Ianculescu de Reuss, Eugenia (1903), *Spre dezrobire* (*Toward Emancipation*). Bucharest: Eminescu Institute of Graphic Arts, 8–9)

The novel *Spre emancipare* (*Towards Emancipation*) is a manifest for women education in all the social and family fields. The author underlines that women see their role only as love seekers. At the same time, she explains what women should do in order to give a meaning to their lives.

> The contemporary woman is, before anything else, a woman in love. All her qualities and actions result from this role. This love is nothing but her servitude, which has such a big intensity that blinds her, so the rest of her life has no color and interest. A woman is set free when, before anything, she loves her children, when she becomes active, and considers love no more than a deed of duty for a life's act, thus she has time and love for other things: science, good deeds, beauty (Ianculescu de Reuss, 80).

The non-literary examples refer to newspapers articles (most of the Romanian women writers wrote for journals, too), speeches: Constanța de Dunca Schiau, *Feminismul în România* (*Feminism in Romania*) (1904), memoirs: Lucia Hossu Longin *Amintiri 1880-1930* (*Diary of 1880–1930*) (1932), letters and critical work (Sofia Nadejde, Adela Xenopol) and they are juxtaposed with literary texts dealing with the same role-generating area. In the case of the "Literature and Arts" role-generating area, for instance, besides women who worked in the field of arts (the actress Agata Bârsescu, the pianist Ana Voileanu-Nicoară), or theatre reviewers (Maria Flehtenmacher), the literary texts will include short stories and novels in which the main characters are women artists Eugenia Ianculescu de Reuss, *Spre dezrobire* (*Toward Emancipation*).

As a mere conclusion we may share Joe Saltzman's opinion concerning the fact that the female journalist (or a woman writer, I may add) faces an ongoing dilemma:

> How to incorporate the masculine traits of journalism (or of writing, I may add) essential for success – being aggressive, self-reliant, curious, tough, ambitious, cynical, cocky, unsympathetic – while still being the woman society would like her to be – compassionate, caring, loving, maternal, sympathetic. Female reporters and editors in fiction have fought to overcome this central contradiction throughout the 20th century and are still fighting the battle today. (Saltzman, 2003:1)

NOTES

All the references to the Romanian books or publications are in my translation.

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Human Rights Education for Women's Rights Protection: What Role for the Nigerian University?

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ABSTRACT. Popular commentary on, and policy response to, sexual harassment in Nigerian universities is largely shaped and framed by the so-called 'natural/biological' theory which adopts a uni-directional interpretation of the phenomenon, portraying the male lecturers as the aggressive predators and female students as helpless victims. This paper examines the multi-dimensional character of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities and suggests we seek explanations for sexual harassment, not in gender but within the broader context of a crisis of human rights. Mainstreaming human rights education in the curriculum of Nigerian universities will bring about the internalization of the values of human rights, conscientize women and bring about a culture of non-silence in confronting sexual harassment.

Keywords: human rights education, human rights, women's rights, sexual harassment, human rights protection

1. Introduction

In mid-2010, a final year engineering female student of Ambrose Ali University (AAU) in Nigeria tricked her alleged harasser, a university professor in his 50s, into her one-room private hostel apartment and in collaboration with other male students, stripped him almost naked, video-taped him and had it posted on the internet. Two versions of the story emerged. One account was that the lecturer allegedly failed the student after his repeated sexual advances were turned down by her. Another was that the lecturer actually harassed the student into unwanted sex but still awarded her a fail grade. In her pain and desperation, she decided to get back at him by subjecting him to the worst treatment imaginable in student-lecturer relationship in the history of Nigerian university. Though reports of sexual harassment in Nigerian schools

and workplaces have been alarming (Idowu and Yahaya, 1993; Ladebo, 2003; Houreld, 2007 and Johnson, 2010), this widely reported case brought the issue of sexual harassment once again on the front burner of national discourse. While the nation was still grappling with this incident, another video footage of a Nigerian girl, gang-raped by five boys at the Abia State University (ABSU) also found its way on the internet in August 2011. This incident has generated a lot of outcry, locally and internationally, particularly among women's rights groups; and arrest of three of the five boys has been made. Recent media reports, however, had it that due largely to stigma associated with rape in Nigeria; the victim has failed to come out to identify the perpetrators which would logically create problems of successful prosecution of the alleged gang rapists. Few weeks after the ABSU gang rape, in what appears as though the rapists were on rampage, it was reported that female students in private hostels at the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) have had to flee their hostels as a result of assaults by gang rapists (Vanguard, 1 August 2011).

To be sure, these high profile cases indicated above are few and far between, as the bulk of cases of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities largely go unreported. A review of relevant literature and observation reveal that sexual harassment is a regular feature of life in tertiary institutions in Nigeria and one of the major problems plaguing education in the country (Ladebo, 2003, Chiahemeen, 2004 and Ezekiel-Hart, 2006). But as Aaron (2004) observes, in spite of its menacing pervasiveness and harmful consequences, victims rarely speak out and perpetrators of sexual harassment hardly get punished in Nigeria. This is due in large part to the fact that the problem is denied, ignored and tolerated by the Nigerian society. In addition, there are no explicit national laws and policies in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria that call the problem by its very name: violence against women and thus a violation of the human rights of women.

Popular commentary on the phenomenon of sexual harassment and attempts by some Nigerian universities to respond to the menace would appear to have been shaped and framed by the so-called 'natural/biological' theory of sexual harassment and undue blaming of the victim. The natural/biological model casts the male *homo sapiens* in the light of a predator with stronger sex drive aggressively going after the female. This logic would appear to have informed the thinking, inherent in feeble policy response by some university authorities in Nigeria that a panacea to sexual harassment lies more in attempts at making the female less sexually attractive to the male lecturers by imposition of a strict dress code for female students. For instance, Omede (2011, citing Olori, 2003) reports that 'at the University of Abuja, rules were made that any dress won must cover intimate parts of the body, must not expose the breast, stomach, and bare chest.' At the Obafemi Awolowo University, the provisions of the dress codes are strikingly similar: a

female student is forbidden from wearing a 'sexually provocative' dress and which 'exposes vital parts of the body which are supposed to be hidden (such as the chest, navel and ties)' (Oba, 2009: 57). Such strictures were similarly imposed at the University of Port Harcourt, though observed more in the breach by female students.

Beyond a focus on the 'provocative' dressing by female students, a review of the extant literature on the prevalence of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities, as shown below, would tend to give undue emphasis on the harassment of female students by male lecturers on university campuses without a corresponding reporting of harassment of male lecturers by female students or other dimensions of sexual harassment for that matter, thus re-enforcing the natural/biological model which suggests that 'sexual harassment is the outcome of the men's stronger sex drive and men's role as the sexual aggressor' (Studd and Gattiker 1991, cited in Pina et al., 2009). This paper examines the phenomenon of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities from a broader perspective. While recognizing that the negative consequences associated with sexual harassment are, for the most part, borne by women, it nonetheless points out the multi-dimensional character of sexual harassment in the university system in Nigeria and situates it within the broader context of a crisis of human rights. Sexual harassment thrives in the Nigerian university system mainly because of a scant regard for the rights of others by perpetrators and the inability of victims to reclaim their rights as a result of a combination of ignorance of their rights and structural constraints that fail to give meaning to the very expression of human rights. Thus, a key argument advanced in this paper is that human rights education is critical to the realization and protection of the human rights of women in Nigerian universities. Mainstreaming human rights education in the university system either through anti-sexual harassment training for faculty, students and staff or inclusion of human rights courses in the general studies curriculum of Nigerian universities will conscientize women and engender a culture of non-silence against sexual harassment.

The rest of the paper is in four parts. Following this introduction is a theoretical exploration. Here, we review the extant literature and explore some theoretical explanations on the phenomenon of sexual harassment and take, as our point of departure, the natural/biological model of sexual harassment. The various dimensions of sexual harassment in the Nigerian university system are also discussed. Beyond that, we examine the philosophical underpinnings of human rights education, especially as articulated in various international instruments in the struggle for the realization of human rights. Thereafter, specific attention is paid to how human rights education may be mainstreamed in the Nigerian university system. In the final section, we reflect on, and draw our conclusions.

2. Beyond the Predatory Male: Theoretical Statement

Pina and colleagues (2009) trace the emergence of sexual harassment as a concept to North American scholars in the mid-70s who brought the phenomenon to light. In spite of the long and sustained period of scholarship which has generated a burgeoning body of literature on the subject, scholars, commentators, writers, activists and lawyers are hardly agreed on the exact meaning of what constitutes sexual harassment, a fact that is attributable to a disagreement among academics of the "specific behaviors that constitute sexual harassment" (Pina et al 2009: 127). What is incontrovertible in the literature is that though attitude and policy response to the menace may vary from society to society, it is nonetheless a global phenomenon (Ladebo, 2003 and 'Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations,' 2006); and as Pina et al (2009: 128) reporting Rargh, Raymond, Pryor and Strack (1995) suggest, "affects a wide spectrum of people, probably the greatest proportion of the population than any other form of discrimination." It is in this same vein that Pina et al (2009: 136) conclude that sexual harassment claims "more victims than any other sexual crime."

In spite of the lack of agreement on the exact meaning of the concept, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) has offered a useful interpretation of what constitutes sexual harassment. As defined by the EEOC (2008, cited in Pina et al, 2009), sexual harassment connotes "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature." More than that, sexual harassing conduct is seen as that which "explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment." Among a multitude of sexually harassing conduct are: repeatedly demanding a date, crude sexual jokes, flirting, engaging in verbal, non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature, staring, grabbing, stroking, hugging, touching etc.

Attempts at explaining sexual harassment has led to the development and growth of theories and models. These theories are anchored on a variety of assumptions by the scholars on what is responsible for the phenomenon of sexual harassment. Sandy Welsh (1999), Harriet Samuels (2003) and Pina et al (2009) have identified a number of theoretical explanations on the phenomenon of sexual harassment. These explanations correspond to five best known theories of sexual harassment, namely: the 'socio-cultural'; the 'organizational;' 'sex-role spillover;' 'the natural/biological' and the 'four factor theory.' The fundamental assumptions of these theories, including their strengths and weaknesses have been elaborated in Welsh (1999), Samuels (2003) and Pina, Gannon and Saunders (2009). We will however briefly discuss the key assumptions of the natural/biological theory as it provides the point of departure for our argument. Pioneered by Studd and Gatikker (1991), the natural/bio-

logical theory of sexual harassment has had important scholarly contributions by Barak et al (1995) and Browne (1997) among others. Rooted in evolutionary theory, the natural/biological model conceives of sexual harassment as "the outcome of the men's stronger sex drive and men's role as the sexual aggressor" (Welsh, 1999: 176). This perspective which sees the male as the aggressive predator dominated earlier research focus and media reportage of sexual harassment. This perspective has been criticized; for if it is the inherent nature of men to harass, then sexual harassment would be a normative behavior of all males, a fact that cannot be supported by any evidence. Besides, Pina and colleagues (2009, citing USMSPB, 1995; and the European Commission, 1998) have shown that sexual harassment is not a unidirectional phenomenon, perpetrated by males against females but can also be the other way round.

Yet, this perception of sexual harassment as a unidirectional phenomenon which casts the male and female as perpetrator and victim respectively continues to dominate popular commentary on the phenomenon in Nigerian universities. Two of Nigeria's recent presidents, Olusegun Obasanjo and Umaru Yar'Adua, at different times accused Nigerian lecturers of sexual harassment and illicit conduct. Obasanjo, in a highly dismissive manner once described Nigerian male lecturers as mere pleasure seekers in the midst of a labor dispute between Nigerian academics and the government (Ladebo, 2003); while Yar'Adua, speaking at a convocation ceremony of the Obafemi Awolowo University in 2008 decried the level of corruption and sexual harassment of female students by male lecturers (Odesola, 2008). It is also within this context of the predatory male lecturers that Katherine Houreld's (2007) highly suggestive title 'Lecturers Prey on Nigerian Women, Girls' is to be situated. This view is reinforced by a ban on 'provocative dressing' by some university authorities in Nigeria, a policy response that would appear to be directed at preventing the female students from making themselves attractive to the predatory males.

To be sure, sexual harassment of female students in Nigerian universities is a serious problem as some studies have shown (Idowu and Yahaya, 1993; Ladebo, 2003; Houreld, 2007; Okeke, 2011). Beyond these published sources, as university lecturers, we are aware of several informal reports of the problem in the two universities to which we are affiliated, which are certainly no isolated cases. Indeed, one of the authors of this paper, a male, is aware of one extreme case where a final year student, who was repeatedly harassed by a male lecturer, had to abandon her program and began afresh in another university. But in spite of the menacing pervasiveness of harassment of female students by male lecturers which we can ill-afford to dismiss as unfounded, we argue that a skewed focus on the predatory male is of limited utility value in promoting comprehensive understanding of the nature of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities. In the Nigerian university today, sexual harassment

may find manifestation in the following seven dimensions: male lecturer-female student, female student-male lecturer, male student–female student, male lecturer-female lecturer, male staff-female student, female lecturer-male student and in the era of globalization of lesbian and gay movement, female student-female student. While an eight type, namely male student–male student may exist, the authors are unaware of even a single case of informal reporting of the incident. Though hard facts are rare, anecdotal evidence suggests that in terms of severity, the next most prevalent type of sexual harassment after male lecturer-female student is the female-student to male lecturer.

In suggesting that the prevalence rate of sexual harassment of female student by male lecturer type is high, we should not be misconstrued as apologists of sexual harassment of female students by male lecturers. Our intention is to draw attention to broader ramifications of a social problem plaguing the university system which is largely under-reported, under-articulated and under-conceptualized. While we are unaware of even a single case of formal reporting of sexual harassment by a male lecturer against a female student to the university authorities, our observation as university lecturers as well as informal reporting would seem to suggest that female student-male lecturer type of sexual harassment is a huge problem in the Nigerian university system. Put differently, sex is increasingly seen as an instrument for procuring undeserving grades by female students in Nigerian universities and as Ladebo (2003: 124)), quoting a respondent in her study, suggests, this is done with some high level of enthusiasm by the girls: "… the trend now is such that female students are becoming more aggressive and making the overtures to the male faculty." What this suggests, in our view, is that it may no longer be analytically useful to continue to cast the Nigerian male lecturer in the light of the aggressive predator in search of sexual gratification in the hands of the helpless female student as female students are increasingly driving the process as well. Thus, it may be appropriate not only to speak of the *powerlessness of sex*, that is, the subjection of female students to sexual exploitation by male lecturers but also the *power of sex*, that is the voluntary deployment of sex by female students as an instrument for procuring undeserving grades in the Nigerian university system.

It is against the realization of the simultaneous power and powerlessness of sex in the Nigerian university system that we suggest a strong need to go beyond gender as an explanatory variable for sexual harassment and instead, situate it within the broader context of a crisis of human rights. For, in our view, it is the lack of respect for the rights of others that would lead one to indulge in sexual harassing conduct. It is a lack of awareness that one has a right not to be violated that would put one in a position to suffer in silence in the face of sexual harassment. These crises of human rights in the Nigerian university system, we argue, may be addressed through human rights education.

3. The Philosophical Underpinnings of Human Rights Education

Dieter Misgeld (1994, cited in Okafor and Agbakwa, 2001: 565) defines human rights education (HRE) as that "form of educational activity which is needed in order to maintain and develop conditions conducive to the acceptance and respect for human rights." By Resolution 49/184, the United Nations declared 1995-2004 as the *Decade for Human Rights Education*, during which period member-nations of the UN were expected to promote the cause of human rights by "sharing knowledge, imparting skills and moulding of attitudes which, taken together, should contribute to strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (Matsura, 2004). The declaration of the Decade for Human Rights Education was borne out of a growing consensus among scholars and world leaders that a wide gulf exists between human rights theory and practice and that education with its capacity for changing the hearts and minds of humankind is a potent means of "assuring, in the long term, the observance of the norms of human rights" (Okafor and Agbakwa 2001: 564). This recognition of the power of education in the prevention of human rights abuses is not new; and as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2010: 4) observes, has been incorporated into many important rights-focused international instruments and documents. Specific provisions in international instruments and documents for human rights education are to be found in:

> …the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 (art. 26); the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965 (art. 7); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966 (art. 13); the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984 (art. 10); the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1979 (art. 10); the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (art. 29); the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 1990 (art. 33); the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006 (art. 4 and 8); the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action (part 1, paras. 33-34 and part 11, paras. 78-82); the Declaration and Program of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, 2001 (Declaration, paras. 95-97 and Program of Action, paras. 129-139); Outcome Document of the Durban Review Conference, 2009 (paras. 22 and 107) and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (para. 131).

Apart from the incorporation of relevant sections into the various international instruments and documents as indicated above, the UN Human Rights Council

put in place a two-phased *World Program on Human Rights Education*. The first phase (2005-2009) entailed the 'integration of human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems' (UNHCHR, 2010:7). The second phase of the *World Program for Human Rights Education* (2010-2014) focuses on human rights education for higher education, civil servants, law enforcement officials and the military.

According to the UNCHR (2010: 8), the specific objectives of the program are:

> To promote the inclusion of human rights education in higher education and in training programs for civil servants, law enforcement officials and the military;
> (a) To support the development, adoption and implementation of relevant sustainable national strategies;
> (b) To provide guidelines on key components of human rights education in higher education and in training programs for civil servants, law enforcement officials and the military;
> (c) To facilitate the provision of support to higher education institutions and member states by international, regional, national and local organizations;
> (d) To support networking and cooperation among local, national, regional and international governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations.

The objectives of human rights education may be achieved through formal and informal ways. According to the UNHCR (2010: 4):

> human rights education encompasses
> (a) knowledge and skills – learning about human rights and mechanisms, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in a practical way in life;
> (b) values, attitudes and behavior-developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behavior which uphold human rights
> (c) action – taking action to defend and protect human rights.

As pointed out earlier, the first phase of the *World Program on Human Rights Education* has come and gone. It is doubtful if human rights education was integrated in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. In other climes such as Europe, Central Asia and North America, this has been integrated in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools (Council of Europe, OSCE/ODIHR, UNESCO, OHCHR, 2009). Not accidentally, at the Durban Review conference, nations that have mainstreamed human rights education in their curricular reported gains from the inculcation of human rights values in young people that have brought greater respect for human rights (OHCHR, 2009).

As university teachers in Nigeria, we are unaware of any formal or informal human rights education program in the university system either for faculty, staff or students. Yet as centers of learning and character-molding, the university is not only a potent institution for raising responsible citizens but also has the capacity for expanding the frontiers of knowledge that may well serve the cause of human rights. Against a background of flagrant abuse of human rights, particularly the rights of women in the university, there can be no better time to mainstream human rights education in the university system. In what follows, we demonstrate how the cause of women's rights and indeed human rights generally for that matter, may be served by mainstreaming human rights training in the Nigerian university system.

4. Human Rights Education for Women's Rights Protection

While the case has been made above for the need to go beyond a unidirectional interpretation of sexual harassment by drawing attention to the multi-dimensional character of sexual harassment in the Nigerian university system, we by no means seek to advance the argument that women and men in the Nigerian universities suffer from the malaise in the same degree. Our intention was to go beyond the conventional wisdom by drawing attention to the dynamics in the phenomenon of sexual harassment in the Nigerian university system. In this regard, we pointed out that while the powerlessness of women has rendered them victims of sexual harassment, a need exists to focus attention on the growing power of sex, that is, the instrumentalist deployment of sex to procure undeserving grades by women in the university.

To be sure, beyond the psychological trauma that victims of sexual harassment go through in Nigerian universities, there is also the economic perspective that women who are victims of sexual harassment also suffer. For instance, when a student is made not to graduate for turning down unwanted sexual demands from a male lecturer, not only would she be made to pay school fees for the extra year but also her chances of being productively engaged in the labor market for economic gain would be delayed. In societies where education is seen as a meal ticket, not only for the graduate but also for the larger family, sexual harassment entails far-reaching pain, for the immediate victim as well as the family. Beyond that, there is also the health consequences of sexual harassment that is least explored and articulated. Central to the idea of being a victim of sexual harassment is the notion of powerlessness. If a female student is powerless enough to be a victim of harassment in the hands of a male lecturer, it is logically consistent to assume that she would not be able to negotiate the terms of the sexual engagement. More to the point, a woman who was powerless enough to be subjected to unwanted sex would certainly not be in a position to negotiate safe sex. What

this suggests is that beyond the psychological and economic pain, there is a sense in which the reproductive health rights of female victims of sexual harassment may be compromised. It is difficult to sustain an argument that male victims of sexual harassment in the Nigerian universities face similar challenges. As university teachers, beyond the discussion of the matter in hushed tones, we are not aware of a single case of sexual harassment of male lecturers by a female student ever reported in the two universities we are affiliated with nor are we aware of any published report where male lecturers cry aloud over this insidious phenomenon. But as we have pointed out earlier, the fact of silence around sexual harassment does not mean that the problem is not serious. It only suggests that a combination of factors has consigned an otherwise public problem into the private domain. This is where the empowering potential of human rights education comes in.

Our idea of human rights education in the university is one which is in line with the broader focus of HRE as articulated in OHCHR (2010) which we hinted earlier, that is, knowledge and skills development, a focus on values, attitude and behavior and learning that prepares one to take action against rights-threatening circumstances.

We argued earlier that sexual harassment thrive in the Nigerian university system because of a crisis of human rights, that is perpetrators of the act have scant regard for the rights of others in much the same way that victims suffer in silence because of a failure to reclaim their right not to be violated, a failure made possible by long established attitudes and structural constraints that stand the way of the very expression of human rights. The first task therefore is to expose the university community to human rights teaching and learning, one that would "make people aware of their basic rights, the dignity of being human and the responsibilities we have to one another" (Rights Radio Tape Series, cited in Claude, undated). This calls for integrating into the general studies curriculum, foundational human rights instruments, such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (*UDHR*) and the regional rights document like the *African Charter on Human and People's Rights* (*ACHPR*), which has been domesticated in the Nigerian legal system.

A valid concern here could be: who would be the teachers? Could it be the same sexual harassing lecturers? How would it be taught? To be sure, the teachers would not have to come from heaven; they only need to be subjected to anti-sexual harassment training by the universities. Regarding how the human rights courses would be taught, extreme care must be taken to ensure that the process "fosters dialogue" and "cross-fertilization (or even cross-contamination) of ideas" (Okafor and Agbakwa, 2001: 582) and not the traditional "banking model" of education (Paulo Freire, cited in Okafor and Agbakwa, 2001) which presupposes an all-knowing teacher and an all-ignorant student. It is important for the teaching-learning process to be dialogic and democratic as giving ear to the voices of the suffering may produce

valuable lessons that may well serve the cause of human rights. The above would be preceded by anti-sexual harassment training during the orientation program for fresh students. But while the students are subjected to take courses on human rights, faculty and staff may only need to be subjected to non-formal training such as anti-sexual harassment training. Through these rights awareness training, attitudes regarding sexual harassment may be transformed and people whose rights are violated may learn to take action. As generations of young people internalize human rights values through formal training in the university, the battle for the respect for the rights of others may be well said to have been half won.

Beyond that, the universities would need to formulate explicit anti-sexual harassment policies. More than that, the university community has a right to know the specific provisions of the policy, including a grievance procedure. A page or two in the university newsletter or bulletin could be permanently devoted to publishing the anti-sexual harassment policy. This form of informal education is useful as the impression would be created in the minds of students, faculty and staff that the university takes the issue of sexual harassment quite seriously.

5. Conclusions

Though popular commentary suggests that the phenomenon of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities is a unidirectional one, involving the harassment of female students by predatory male lecturers, we find that the phenomenon is largely multi-dimensional, manifesting in about seven forms in the Nigerian university system. Although largely under-reported and under-conceptualized, our findings, based on observation and anecdotal evidence, suggest that in terms of severity, the next most prevalent form of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities after male lecturer–female student type is that perpetrated by female students against male lecturers. An aggressive deployment of sex as an instrument for procuring unmerited grades by female students is now a regular feature of life in Nigerian universities. Thus, it is analytically useful not only to speak of the powerlessness of sex but the power of sex as well in the Nigerian university system. Such a simultaneous focus on the power and powerlessness of sex gives us a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of sexual harassment, suggesting perhaps the need to go beyond gender as an explanatory variable for sexual harassment in Nigerian universities. Instead, we suggest the need for attention to be focused on a broader context of the crisis of human rights in Nigerian universities – perpetrators of sexual harassment do so because of a scant regard for the rights of others in much the same way that victims suffer in silence because of a failure to reclaim their right not to be violated, a failure made possible by long estab-

lished attitudes and structural constraints that stand the way of the very expression of human rights. It is important to note that in spite of our conclusion that sexual harassment is increasingly perpetrated by female students against their male lecturers, we are not unmindful of the fact that the usual psychological pain associated with sexual harassment are largely borne by women. Mainstreaming human rights education in the curriculum of Nigerian universities will bring about the internalization of the values of human rights, conscientize women and bring about a culture of non-silence in confronting this social malaise that strikes at the heart of liberty of the Nigerian woman.

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Study on Gender Friendliness of Tutorial Sessions of the Open School Programs of the Bangladesh Open University

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ABSTRACT. The Open School of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) develops its courses of studies keeping in policy in line to gender friendliness in the curriculum and syllabuses, self-learning materials (SLMs) and tutorial support services. The programs are run through open and distance learning, which, in Bangladesh, stands half-way towards the girls-friendly or gender-friendly approach recommended. At BOU, learners mainly use SLMs to complete their leanings; in addition, they attend tutorial sessions twice in a month or maximum of 20 in a year. It seems very little with compared to the learners' need. To attend tutorial sessions is not compulsory; but very important as the Tutorial Centre (TC) provides learners with institutional attachment, opportunities for making peer group, academic supports from the tutors, and administrative supports for admission and examination. As mentioned, the ODL programs in Bangladesh itself are gender friendly; in spite of that gender-responsive of the tutorial sessions of the BOU Open School programs needs to study for taking policy level steps for further development. This study addresses overall situation of gender friendliness of tutorial sessions of the Open School Programs of the Bangladesh Open University.

Keywords: Gender, BOU, ODL, SLM, TC

1. Introduction

Gender-friendliness of the education refers to whether girls are treating equally in schools, curriculum, extracurricular and governance as well. In Bangladesh, government put emphasis on bringing the gender parity and gender equity in secondary education through taking various steps such as stipend for female students. Establishment of the Open University was also for providing opportunity of increasing the female education. Bangladesh Open University, the only distance education institute in the country, established in 1992, runs educational programs ranging certificate to degree level targeting

the learners who are dropped out from the formal system of education for various socio-economic and socio-cultural reasons. As of today, the University successfully implemented 23 programs in different levels and disciplines. In addition, it also has 19 non-formal education (NFE) programs for motivating general people on some social issues. The University uses only electronic media for the delivery of NFE. But; for formal programs, it extensively uses the three types of medias: such as – print (self-learning materials, SLMs), electronic media (radio-TV broadcasts) and finally the human media (face-to-face tutorial support services). Therefore, it is to say that BOU's programs are true open and distance learning (ODL) programs. Under this system, BOU depends 80% on print, 10% on radio-TV and 10% on f2f tutorial sessions. Learners attend f2f sessions twice in a month maximum of 20 in a year at the tutorial center (TC) for three reasons: firstly, TC provides them with the feelings of institutional attachment; secondly, TC provides them with learning supports on the difficult portion of the SLMs and finally, also TC gives them with the opportunity for making peer group. Tutorial sessions are desired to be gender-friendly; otherwise there will be much more drop-outs female learners in particular. This paper discusses overall situation of gender friendliness of tutorial sessions of the Open School Programs of the Bangladesh Open University.

2. Objectives

This paper aims at assessing the gender-friendliness of the tutorial sessions of the BOU-Open School programs. In addition, it also achieves the following specific objectives:

- to analyze the attitude and preferences of the existing tutors towards the gender-friendliness of the tutorial session;
- to promote the key concepts and principles of improving gender-responsive of the tutorial sessions of the open school programs;
- to raise awareness of the different dimensions of tutorial sessions that need to be considered when establishing gender equity;
- to take advantage of state gender policy for the School's tutorials.

3. Methodology

Case study method has been deployed for this piece of research. It is reported that learners from different corners of the county comes to collect their testimonial from the School Dean after completion of their both Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) programs. Researchers mainly talked to some them personally and selected case studies have been described to draw the conclusion. In addition, content analysis also been deployed for the current study. A qualitative model of social research

was followed in order to assess the gender dynamics in the tutorials using the following methodological tools:

• observations – to establish whether tutors were questioning boys more than girls;
• covert recordings of small learners group interactions – to analyze peer interaction;
• field notes looking at tutors use of praise and body language – to test the theory that talk not only concerns what is said but how it is said;
• semi-structured interviews – to analyze learners' own assessments of gender dynamics.

4. The Researchers' Role

This article has two writers. The first writer works as Assistant Professor of Home Economics at the BOU Open School who attended various tutorial centers while visiting examination centers of the school programs and watching TCs for data collection for her PhD research and discussed to the learners and tutors. Discussions pertained only to the research unless the participants seek to do otherwise. In any case, the researcher relented to listen to 'their other stories.' The researcher was aware of the importance of further discussion related to the research questions. The second writer is the PhD supervisor of the first writer who provided guidance in every pace and his authority on open and distance learning has been reflected in the research.

5. Discussions

Akhter (2008) describes about the overall classroom situation in relation to the gender-responsive and gender-sensitive atmosphere that sometimes the teachers behave discriminated attitude towards the students, what makes a student disinterested for teaching and attending the classroom. She identifies following types of behavior in the classroom by the teacher of the formal school system:

• Sometimes, the teachers prefer the boy to be the class captain who takes the leadership role as he or she believes that only boys have the leadership quality. When the teacher teaches in the class they only concentrate on the boy students and ask them question and ask them to write in the blackboard. This is also gender discriminated attitude.
• Sometimes when the female students could not prepare their task for burden in the household activities, teacher even female teachers do not handle the class sensitively and softly.
• Separate sitting arrangement, sometimes, very embarrassing for the female learners.

Open School programs are very attractive for the female learners as it is found that both HSC and SSC (chart 1 and 2) enrolments are almost equally represented by the female.

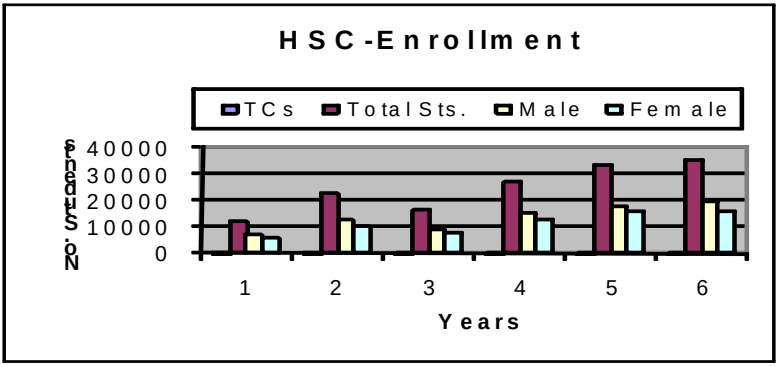


Chart 1: HSC Enrolment (Source: Open School at a glance)

Some researches proved that in the formal education at the school level gender discrimination prevails in Bangladesh. As if the present education system is just for enhancing existing disparity between male and female in the present stereotype thinking, at least to extend it. The essays, poems, different write ups and examples which are written and printed in the texts tell us these experiences. The teaching methods in the class room are not far beyond from these experiences. At the same times teachers are not sensitive in their conduction towards students and during the delivery of lessons. Sometimes all of these are very derogatory towards girls and female; hinder to create any opportunity to change towards to the expected society where a congenial environment will be prevailed for everybody of the society regardless sex, color, creed and ethnicity (Miraz, 2009).

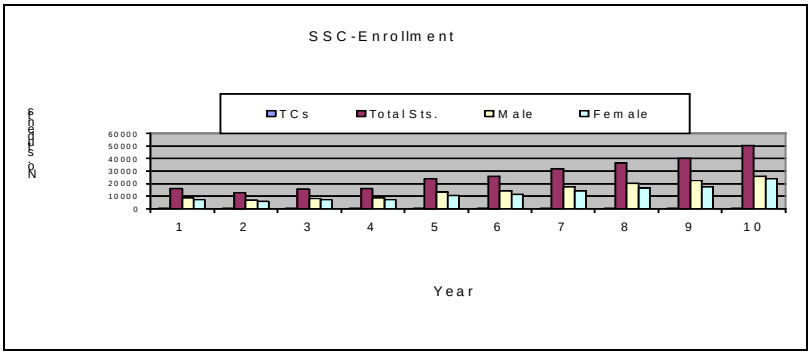


Chart 2-SSC: Enrolment of the Open School

Barbara (2010) identifies following ways of conducting class that can discourage female students:

• ignoring female learners while recognizing male students, even when female volunteer to participate in discussion;
• calling directly on male but not on female;
• calling male by name more often than female;
• addressing the class as if no male were present, e.g. –"When you were a male...;"
• "Coaching" men but not female in developing a fuller answer by probing for additional elaboration or explanation;
• waiting longer for male than for female to answer a question before going on to another student;
• interrupting female students (or allowing them to be disproportionately interrupted by peers);
• asking female students questions that require factual answers (lower order questions) while asking male questions that demand personal evaluation and critical thinking (higher order questions);
• responding more extensively to male's questions or comments than to those of female;
• crediting male's comments to their author (e. g. "as Bill said...") but not crediting female's comments (or only hearing female's comments when they are repeated by a male);
• making seemingly helpful comments that imply female are not as competent as male;
• stereotyping character, roles, abilities, etc.;
• using the generic "he" or "male" to represent both male and female.

Keeping the above in mind, the researchers observed 4 tutorial sessions and found the boys were likely to be asked questions than girls. The observation also identified that speakers in group discussion were boys; all pupils preferred working in groups with their own gender, boys were more confident of their tutorial speaking ability; girls were least scope.

5.1 Teaching and Learning Processes

Quality improvement in Open School programs gained supreme importance with various demands being made on tutorial sessions to transform, refresh, restructure and reform. Organizing trainings to tutors on various aspects are afoot on improving both the quality and efficiency of open schooling with the specific intention of implementing reforms so that desirable changes are visible within tutorial sessions particularly in remote areas of the country. Tutors are first convinced in trying out different SLMs and instructive processes that encourage participatory teaching and learning for making the entire open schooling ethos gender sensitive with harmonious relations between both gender. Open School assumes that tutor will be of manager of the gender friendly tutorial environment and the following interventions by the School could be organized by them in the sessions for academic activities and outside session for social and administrative activities:

• as a facilitator the tutor can try and ensure that physical and social environment in tutorial sessions promotes healthy relationship between both genders;
• ensure equal participation of both gender in teaching and learning process;
• adopt role play, problem solving, project method, quiz, innovative games etc., in tutorial supports for ensuring greater participation of girls;
• organizing of cleaning the blackboard, putting up charts, newspaper clippings, poems, short stories etc. on bulleting boards can be assigned to both boys and girls;
• responsibility of organizing multiple activities such as experiments, formation of science club, fields visits to education places can be assigned to both the genders;
• responsibility of organizing the extra-curricular activities to both genders;
• reading can be jointly assigned to male and female learners with correct pronunciation and expressions, for developing communicative communications skills;
• identifying slow learners and organizing remedial tutorials for them to ensure learning development center (LDC);
• in the tutorial processes, the tutor can substitute his/her teaching by giving examples of female achievers from different fields of education;
• tutor can use visual aids like pictures, audio-video, puppets, depicting female and men performing scientific and use of technology jointly;
• questioning attitude should be developed between both genders for undoing myths, stereotypes, and misconceptions in education;
• activities like drawing, painting, music and dance can ensure equal participation of boys and girls;
• as a facilitator tutor should promote gender building relation between both genders for achieving harmony so that drop-out rate become low;
• developing supportive and co-operative attitudes to the tutor with girls.

Attitudes of Open School to build the gender-friendly tutorials have impacted positively. Selected case studies show following scenario.

5.2 Case Study 1

Safia Khatun – HSC
TC – Shahid Sohrawardi College
Safia attended most of the tutorial classes in the above-mentioned TC and obtained her HSC certificate. She was interviews as per parameter cited in the Barbara's research. As per the discussion with her, TC seems appropriately gender sensitive because:

• most of the SLMs the tutor uses in the tutorial are culturally sensitive and gender-responsive'
• tutors allow equal opportunity in the session interaction for both genders of learners;
• Safia noticed that she did not find any group discussion in the session; but they had peer group built in their personal communication which were consisting of both gender;
• she also noticed that there was no teasing on the way to the TC;
• tutors allowed learners for building a learning club consisting of both gender; which enabled them to exchange both academic and administrative information.

5.3 Case Study 2

Roksana Akter – HSC
TC – Tongi Govt College, Gazipur
Roksana passed her opinion as under:

> I attended my TC which is connected with good communication; but bit far from my home. On the way I found some problem in getting over crowded bus where there was no allocation of seats for the female which has been changed recently that is 9 seats are fixed for female, children and disables. I did not found any discrimination between boys and girls in relation to class interactions, feedback, sitting plan, group work etc. I found, sometimes, tutors made fun with girls; but that was only fun – not teasing. I must admit our tutorial sessions were very gender-friendly.

5.4 Case Study 3

Zimsharoom Kaniz – HSC
TC – Police Line School & College Rangpur
Zimsharoom Kaniz expressed her opinion as under:

> I was dropped out from the formal school as family forced me to get married and could not continue my studies. Open School has given me the opportunity to achieve the HSC. My husband allowed me to attend Friday classes; first of all, he was always accompanied with me and after couple of weeks he did not continue as our class was represented 50% female students. He talked to both male and female tutors regarding gender-sensitiveness of the tutorial sessions. He encourages me now to undertake higher courses at the BOU.

5.5 Case Study 4

Sonia Aktar Shrabani – HSC
TC – Naohata Degree College, Paba, Rajshahi
Sonia expressed about the tutorial sessions of the Open School program:

> I did both SSC and HSC from the Open School because these two programs are very environmentally friendly. Maintaining household works, it was difficult for me to attend the formal schools; then I found the alternative scope to be the learners of the Open School. I found tutors are very friendly in providing academic as well as some information related to admission, examination and collection of certificate and testimonial. The Open School created a different world of learning in the weekend where the learners can attend tutorials without facing any trouble on

the way. In the weekend, normally the availability of the transport is much more that in the weekdays. I can be very candid to say that I haven't faced any awkward situation in relation to the gender discrimination. Good luck to Open School.

6. Conclusions

Tutorial sessions of the BOU Open School has been very gender friendly as most of the tutorial centers are connected with good communication facility. While approving the new centers the School scrutinizes the infrastructure, ratio of male-female teachers, and the formal schooling achievements. Selection of tutors is also based on appropriate representation from both genders. The case studies and also researcher's observations on the tutorial sessions reveals that tutorial session of the Open School are very gender-friendly.

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Proforma letters from the Open School and consultancy reports also consulted.

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Using the Internet for Learning: Fact or Fiction

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ABSTRACT. With the emergence of Web 2.0, women had the opportunity to communicate, share information, publish their work and become more active on the Internet as being protected by the anonymity it provides. Statistics have revealed that the use of computers and the Internet has increased in Romania in the last decade and so has the number of women using them. In this article I will discuss the use of Internet by women worldwide and I will analyze whether Romanian women consider it a source of information and learning or just one of entertainment.

Keywords: Web 2.0, the Internet, learning, women studies

1. Introduction

With the advancement in science and computing, society has rapidly changed in the last decade; therefore, the way in which women participate in this phenomenon has also changed. If ten years ago, just a small percentage of women was surfing the Internet for information or even had a computer at home, later surveys documented the fact that women's involvement in the Internet increased as well. A study conducted by the US Department of Commerce in 2005 showed that the number of households with computers increased from just 8% in 1984 to 62% in 2003, with over half (54%) having Internet access.[1] This also marked an increase in the percentage of women using the Internet not only as a recreational environment, but also as an educational one. Thus, the Internet began to assist women in being better informed about their future studies or careers. The emergence of Web 2.0 has offered women the possibility to socialize using social media, on the one hand, and on the other, to cooperate with other users, create content and publish it on blogs. Therefore, women became more active participants in the virtual social life as they found the proper medium where anonymity broke the gender barrier and enabled them to express themselves more freely. They also seemed to depart from the gender stereotypes and involve in activities that otherwise would have been prohibited or difficult to pursue. What Ade-

boye stated in 2004: "I think a key problem is the attitude of women towards men, we value men more highly than ourselves and think we can't do the job,"[2] has changed to some extent in the last years as women become more confident in their powers.

2. Pros and Cons Regarding the Internet

The use of Internet has thus some advantages especially connected to the fact that women have the possibility to access it anonymously; therefore, they are less bound by the conventions of their society and less afraid of getting in contact with others as the connection functions as a physical and protective barrier.

Still, a lot of research has been conducted regarding the way women use the Internet. One of the surveys revealed that female college students used it both for recreational and educational activities, even if only 37% of them dedicated their time to studying while being in the computer lab, and 63% were involved in non-academic activities, a percentage smaller than of male's 80%.[3] The survey also highlighted that a greater number of males were emailing and chatting with females, and that a high percentage were gaming. Still, the percentage was higher for both genders involved in other activities than learning (63% – females, 80% – males).

A documented problem related to the use of Internet is that people develop dependency and as many surveys have shown, the dependency is greater for males (71%) than for females (29%).[4] However, 5–10% of people tent to develop problem behavior and become addicted to gambling, drinking etc, not only the Internet, so from those who are on-line, those bored, introverted, lacking self-esteem are more likely to become addicted.[5]

Even if the Internet provides data for all those who are interested and young researchers are able to find the information they are looking for, still women from certain areas participate less in activities abroad. They display more "localism" and tend to participate more in activities that do not require them to leave their home towns or homes.[6] So, even if they use the Internet, the information they gather is more used on a local basis.

In addition, women create their personal learning environments using the Internet. Women began writing blogs and expressing their ideas and later surveys show that the number of women writing and publishing on the Internet has increased even if still lags behind men's involvement. In Romania, there are fewer popular blogs written by women and the subjects are limited to fashion, news entertainment and less to scientific issues. However, the PLE is probably more developed than it has been recorded as the percentage of women getting to certain areas of the Internet has not been accounted for.

Anyway, women have lately begun to access the Internet via more devices than the computers (mobile phones, netbooks, tablets etc.), even if they just use them to get involved in social media such as chatting on Facebook etc. Blogs are becoming increasingly popular among women as they are easy to use, give the opportunity to publish information, get feedback, and connect with others from the Blogosphere. As not much technical expertise is needed to create and maintain blogs, they have become available for larger groups of people. A survey from 2003 showed that 66% of blogs were females' to 44% males.' The figures have varied over years, but the number of women involved in blogs is still high.

3. Internet for Learning in Romania

In 2010 and at the beginning of 2011, Romania had the fastest broadband connection in Europe, and also held the 4th place in the world. According to *Eurostat Yearbook 2010*[7] most Romanians aged 16 to 74 used the Internet at home (77%) in 2008, only 31% at work and 20% at their place of education. The number of women (17%) using the Internet to obtain and share content is smaller than the one of men's (22%), while women aged 20 to 24 have a higher percentage of completing at least upper secondary education (78.8%) in 2010, compared to men (77.7%).[8] Similarly, the figures are highly related to life long education where the percentage of women attending other forms of education is 1.4%, while the one of men – 1.2% both among the lowest in Europe according to Eurostat statistics.[9] Moreover, the number of Romanian users looking for information with the purpose of learning is also low, 17%.

	Country/Region	Q1'11 Avg. Mbps	QoQ Change	YoY Change
--	Global	2.1	9.7%	23%
1	South Korea	14.4	5.0%	20%
2	Hong Kong	9.2	-1.7%	2.1%
3	Japan	8.1	-2.7%	2.7%
4	Netherlands	7.5	7.6%	25%
5	Romania	6.6	-4.9%	4.9%
6	Czech Republic	6.5	14%	19%
7	Latvia	6.3	6.7%	0.4%
8	Switzerland	6.2	10%	17%
9	Belgium	6.1	11%	29%
10	Ireland	5.6	16%	14%
...				
14	United States	5.3	4.7%	14%

Figure 7: Average Measured Connection Speed by Country/Region



Fig. 1 Romania's connection speed in 2011[10]

Still, statistics provided by Eurostat reveal that the share of women with tertiary studies was 52.1% in 2009, one of the highest in Europe, but still decreasing from the 60.8% in 1998.[11] The number of women enrolled in studies from the engineering, manufacturing and construction fields was 53.4%, also more than of the male students. The unemployment rate for women in 2009 was 6.1%, while the one of men 8.2%.

Statistics also reveal that few Romanian women and men use internet banking (2%), but women use the Internet less than men for:

• Sending and receiving emails – 27% (men – 30%)
• Reading online magazines/newspapers – 20% (men – 23%)
• Looking for a job – 4% (men – 5%).[12]

The conclusion drown is that even if Romanian women attend tertiary education, get and retain their jobs more than men, and are also interested in life-long learning, still do not consider the Internet as a means of searching for information, and are not extremely familiar with the information technology.

Blogging is an important part of the Personal Learning Environment as it fosters not only the production of content, but it also gives the possibility to publish content, get feedback and communicate with others with similar interests. The figures provided by www.trafic.ro reveal that most popular Romanian blogs are not connected to science, but to cooking, entertainment, fashion, and IT. Among top ten blogs, those hosted by women are half, while those published by men only 30%.

Top 10 Blogs

12 December 2011

Gender	Number	Percentage
Women	5	50%
Men	3	30%
Mixed Team	2	20%

However, the percentage of women bloggers drops dramatically to 10% after the 11th position with the semi-professional blogs gradually taking the leading position.

Blogs Positions 11–20

	Number	Percentage
Women	1	10%
Men	5	50%
Mixed Team	4	40%

Blogs Positions 21–30

	Number	Percentage
Women	1	10%
Men	2	20%
Mixed Team	7	70%

Blogs Positions 31–40

	Number	Percentage
Women	1	10%
Men	5	50%
Mixed Team	4	40%

Blogs Positions 41–50

	Number	Percentage
Women	1	10%
Men	3	30%
Mixed Team	6	60%

Top 50 Blogs

	Number	Percentage
Women	9	18%
Men	18	36%
Mixed Team	23	46%

The scarcity of blogs on science is more than evident; therefore, it is difficult to state whether the Personal Learning Environment can be considered an important part of lifelong education in Romania. Still, women use the Internet as a means to keep abreast to the latest news in different fields even if they resort to foreign websites or blogs to this purpose. In Romania, blogs are more designed as a means to improve the financial status of a family that is why they are more entertainment oriented, and created to attract larger audiences. Their use for learning is therefore inexistent. Still, blogs and websites centered on learning and data-sharing exist even if they do not attract large numbers of users so women are more likely to use the Internet for both learning and entertainment.

4. Conclusion

The use of computers and the Internet has offered new perspectives in the way in which women can access information and look for better jobs or just manage their business. The emergence of Web 2.0 marked a period in which women were able to communicate in a freer way with others, exchange information, publish their work, and cooperate while being protected by the anonymity provided by the Internet. Romanian women thus benefit from the information and the tools provided by the Internet, but they prefer to be less active on the Blogosphere, being more silent observers than participants. Still, the increasing number of women using the Internet in Romania shows that they are interested in the opportunities offered by it, even if it is difficult to state whether their involvement is driven by the desire to learn and be informed or only by the need to socialize and look for entertainment.

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The Story So Far: Towards A (Frin)Gender Perspective Within the NEWW COST Action[1]

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ABSTRACT. During a Training School[2] in The Hague in May 2011, one key issue during the debates was that the NEWW COST Action is not meant to be a project, but rather a "collection" of research projects encouraging collaborative research between different individuals/institutions/geographical areas. Based on the evidence that in the South-Eastern European area we share a common historical past, the present paper explores the perspective of a "FrinGender" collaborative research proposal: to include the countries that roughly cover the notion of S-E Europe (the so-called "Balkan" area, even though, strictly speaking from a geographical point of view, the term is far from accurate. More specifically, the paper will examine to which extent the scope of the COST Action framework may (or may not) be applied to HERstory (literary or otherwise) simply because of the historical breach between the East and the West.

Keywords: women's writing, women's reception, thematic network, southeast European area, (Frin)Gender

Following the example of Catherine's Belsey and Jane Moore's introductory article in their *Feminist Reader*,[3] the aim of the present paper is, I believe, relevant to the European-wide NEWW framework which has reached at this point a moment where it develops towards a more qualitative and research-based approach, as stated in the Action Memorandum of Understanding: "The main objective of the Action is to create a strong collaborative international Research Network and to produce a Road Map outlining future systematic collaborative research in European women's literary history."[4] In other words, the NEWW COST Action is not meant to be a project, per say, but a "collection" of research projects encouraging collaborative research between different individuals/institutions/geographical areas. Consequently, the paper will examine to which extent the scope of the COST Action framework may (or may not) be applied to HERstory (literary or otherwise) in the south-

eastern area simply because of the historical breach between the East and the West, on one hand, but also because of the still very rigid academic establishment in what feminist literary studies are concerned, on the other hand. Moreover, based on the evidence that in the South-Eastern European area we share both a common historical past, the present paper explores the perspective of a *FrinGender*[5] feminist literary collaborative research proposal to include the countries that roughly cover the notion of S-E Europe (the so-called "Balkan" area, even though, strictly speaking form a geographical point of view the term is far from accurate: Romania, for instance, is not a Balkan country, per say).

Yet, there's a long ride ahead of us. As this research is scattered at this moment and very much in progress, I will further illustrate my own reflections on the matter, in view of the research I have so far conducted on Romanian women's reception in the 19th century, as well as after the 1st Madrid Milestone and the Hague Training School which I attended within the NEWW project.

Feminist research in Romanian culture is today only hosted by social and political sciences, whereas in literature studies this is still considered trivial. Recently, doctoral research has generated a new wave of interest among young researchers who have started examining the Romanian literary phenomenon from the more generous perspective of cultural studies. This does not, however make for the resistance of the Romanian academia against women's and gender studies. There is, of course a set of reasons to explain this situation, ranging from the lack of expertize and theoretical resources in the field, to the very fear of approaching themes which are subject to prejudice. Last, but not least, we should take into account the fact that gender studies methodology itself is today the terminus point of a long line of theories in feminist literary study, many of which have proven contradictory.[6]

At this point one must ask oneself, even rhetorically: *is gender a valid category of analysis for Romanian literature*? One may ask why should Romanian literature be a specific case, differing from all other literatures? There are at least two valid reasons for these questions, both residing in our historical past. The more recent history has proven that ideology was the main tool which made totalitarian censorship possible; and feminism/ gender studies/ women's studies, are overtly ideological approaches to literature, being concerned with:

> […] woman as the consumer of male produced literature, and with the way in which the hypothesis of a female reader changes our apprehension of a given text, awakening us to the significance of its sexual codes…Its subjects include images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omissions of and misconceptions about women in criticism, and the fissures in male-constructed literary history.[7]

Based on the grounds of such social memory, gender discourse in Romanian literature may not easily find sympathy in the Romanian academia; not to mention the fact that gender studies subversively militate for the deconstruction of existing canons, which is not easily digested by the academic establishment. However, things are not as grim as they may seem: Virgil Nemoianu, Adrian Marino and other reputed Romanian scholars have signaled the necessity of introducing gender in the Romanian literary theory and criticism as a valid and, by all means, necessary category of analysis. Their arguments are synthetized below:

1. intrinsic value is relative, being determined by the historical moment in which a literary work occurs; in fact, this is precisely what is interesting to the NEWW COST Action – not "eternal value," but the role played by women authors during their own time;
2. traditional hierarchies must be reconsidered periodically, this process being not only legitimate, but also necessary;
3. popular literature, second-hand texts must be reconsidered;
4. *literary canon also needs reconsidering from a gender perspective*;
5. world literature must include literary productions of non-white writers, given the increasing tendency of cultural globalization;
6. cultural globalization triggers different means of literary reception, which involves the deconstruction of existing traditional canon.

The above principles may, therefore, constitute the grounds for legitimizing the gender approach to early modern Romanian literature. The period I have been initially focused on regarded the very beginning of the penetration of modernity in the Romanian culture, which overlaps the heavy traditional thinking the former Ottoman ruling had left behind. However I was soon to find out that a major hindrance of researching this period was that up to 1860 it was women did not have any access to the act of writing at all! Writing was a male business, altogether. What was very much missing is female authorship – which is the central point in the NEWW Action. Of course it is quite possible to take women's roles as readers as a starting point, but it is a bit problematic to exclude women's reception, if not authorship from the debate. That is why, under the impulse of the NEWW Action, I moved forward from my initial research – to the renegotiation of the relation between women and the text from the act of reading, to the act of reception (women as translators).

Consequently, I started focusing on women's reception role as translators in relation to the mid-19th century novel in particular (1848-1870). Within this perspective, only form the novel's point of view, based on previous research in the field, I came to the conclusion that the ratio between men and women translators is inclined towards men. Starting from the existing research in the field and restraining the scope of my research to the 1840-

1865 period, I have managed to reveal the following statistical data: 92 translated novels; 14 women translators; 26 foreign novels written by female authors translated into Romanian; 5 novels written by foreign women authors translated by Romanian women. The fact that our own statistics reveals that out of the impressive body of translators (92) active between 1840 and 1865, only 14 were women, can be explained when viewing men as the defenders of morality.

Moving further to the second part of my paper, due to the *Gender in the Age of Globalization* Conference (Bucharest, June 2-3, 2011, Spiru Haret University), the proposal for a collaborative research project on women's authorship to include the countries that roughly cover the notion of S-E Europe took shape. Consequently, we initially organized a NEWW panel; however, having taken into consideration the number of papers to be delivered, as well as the fact that there was need for time to discuss the collaborative research proposal, we decided that there should be 3 panels altogether. The first 2 were meant for paper presentations and feedback, and the 3rd was dedicated to provide room for further discussion on the NEWW project (to disseminate information for the new Turkish members, share the experience we had during the Hague Training School, and pinpoint some of the theoretical issues we've been discussing recently) as well as propose the collaborative research to our colleagues.

Alexandriolu, **Sirmoula**. *The Personality of Dora Istria Through one of Women's Magazines* (*Euridiki*, *1870-1873*)
Alexandrova, **Nadezdha**. *Gendered Danube Shores*: *Bulgarian Women's Activism in Braila and Tulcea in the 70's of the 19th Century*
Alkan, **Burcu**. *Revising the Historical Revision of Women's Literature in 20th Century Europe*
Botezat, **Onorina**. (*Re*)*Constructing Identity Roots in Martha Bibesco's Writings*
Dutu, **Carmen**. *19th Century Romanian Women's Translations as an Instance of Cultural Reception of Modernity*
Gunay, **Cimen and Timuroglu**, **Senem**. *Dreams Beyond Control*: *Women and Writing in the Ottoman Empire since Asiye Hatun's Diary*
Imsir, **Begum Sima**. *Hide and Seek*: *On Trail of Women Writers*
Mihaila, **Ileana**. *Littérature féminine et statut des femmes dans la second moitié du XIXe siècle en Roumanie*
Mihaila, **Ramona**. *Gender and Power in 19th Century Romanian Women's Writing*
Mitea, **Ioana**. *Women as Part of the Theatre Audience in the 19th Century*

The 2 days of NEWW COST meetings generated intense debate from the beginning, blending paper presentations with the NEWW dissemination of information. Having raised awareness that we share a common past that cannot and should not be researched individually (i.e. at a national level) – here I should mention especially Sirmoula Alexandriolu's (Greece) and Nadia Alexandrova's (Bulgaria) papers, which came as the perfect "case study"

examples of a transnational approach of our shared past – having them also as part of the larger European perspective. Consequently, the COST panel(s) in the *Gender in the Age of Globalization* Bucharest Conference were the set-up point of a new Thematic Network (TN) of researchers studying women's authorship/readership/reception in the S-E European area, whose proposed name is Frin(gender).

As a short-time objective, the first activity of the TN is a future workshop on the issues identified during the Gender conference, both theoretical and practical. I am referring here especially to the conceptual framework of the research: concepts such as "modernity" and "modernism" may not be applied to HERstory (literary or otherwise) in the S-E European area in the same scope as it has been operating in the West, simply because of the historical breach between the East and the West. In this respect, Burcu Alkan's (Turkey) primary criticism to the scope of the NEWW project was towards the limitations of the discussions on women's writing with the end of 19th century which does not enable a better understanding of the issues at stake when applied to the SE area, whereby the consequences of modernity have been late to transpire, and more importantly, are still highly valid. Burcu Alkan's point is the encouragement of an emphasis on modernity, its definitions and its various historical and geographical manifestations, whilst looking at women's writing.

On the very same issue Nadia Alexandrova (Bulgaria) and Viola Capkova (Finland) pinpointed that the issue of modernity is, indeed, a most tricky one when comparing the various perspectives of the different parts of Europe, the interwar period being really important for the constitution of women authorship in our literature, as in the various fringes of Europe, much of what has been discussed under the umbrella of "modernity," let alone "modernism," took place later than 1914. However, for the COST project scope during the discussions in WG1[9] in Belgrade[10] it was decided that the database should include reference of authors until 1914. It is true that it limits the list of the names and texts from our "infant" women's literature, but it also represents the idea of the longevity of a European 19th century, and implies the tendencies that are going to happen later on. This brings us to a possible approach to a new TN such as FrinGender, in the sense that it can agree on several new scopes and limits, adequate for a future common research within the NEWW COST (and possibly beyond):

• Prolonging the research period, which can start in 19th century, but will end with the interwar period;
• Including not only women's activism but also the influence of male authors who assisted women's writing activities (like the Serbian colleagues did when creating their online database).

Touching upon the common territories and the possibility of multilingual as well as European women's identity – Bulgarian writers writing in Romanian, Romanian writing in French, Greek writers, publishing in Turkey, authors writing in Turkish, etc… In this respect, putting Fringe countries together given many parallels also reveals them as part of the larger European perspective. Regarding the members the FrinGender network can either imply a common history, or common geography, or common "peripheral" status regarding the great metropolises of the time. In this view, a very attractive opportunity would be to include members of the Black sea region and deal much with the concept of the coasts of big rivers or seas, where cultural life was much more intensive (for instance, Nadia Alexandrova's paper dealt with the river Danube). In terms of funding opportunities expanding the network to countries such as Ukraine, Armenia, or Georgia, would meet the current EU enlargement and common European heritage policies.

Consequently, the aim of the FrinGender Thematic Network initiative is going to lay the foundations for a research project on women's authorship in the SE Europe, to be integrated in the NEWW Research Program as announced in the *Memorandum of Understanding*, and we invite all interested parties to join in as active members.

NOTES

1. NEWW COST action is an acronym of a European wide project on European women writers, Cost Action IS 0901, *Women Writers in History: Toward a New Understanding of European Literary Culture. Memorandum of Understanding.* For more information see: http://www.costwwih.net/

2. For information, see: http://www.womenwriters.nl/index.php/Second_Training_School

3. Belsey, Catherine, and Jane Moore (eds.) (1997), *The Feminist Reader. Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*. Second edition, London: Macmillan, 1-15.

4. Cf. NEWW Cost Action IS 0901, *Memorandum of Understanding*, 2, http://www.costwwih.net/.

5. Whereby *FrinGender* is the mix-up of two relevant terms for the investigation of women's literary field: the fringes of Europe and Gender.

6. For a comprehensive bibliography of feminist literary history, see: Gilbert, Sandra, and Susan Gubar, (eds.) (2007), *Feminist Literary Theory and Criticism. A Norton Reader*. New York & London.

7. Showalter, Elaine (1997), "Towards a Feminist Criticism," in Belsey, Catherine, and Jane Moore (eds.), *op. cit*., 238.

8. I am referring here to Adrian Marino's ideas from: *Biografia ideii de literatură* (*The Biography of <the Idea of Literature>*), 4th vol. 20th Century (2nd part), Cluj–Napoca, Dacia, 1997, and Virgil Nemoianu's ideas from: "Bătălia canonică – de la critica americană la cultura română" ("The Canonical 'querelle' – from the

American Critique to the Romanian Culture"), *România Literară*, XXXIII, 41, 11th Oct. 1990.

9. Acronym for 'working group' 1, dealing with theoretical issues in the project.
10. For reference, see the Belgrade meeting minutes, NEWW COST Action site.

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Susan Mooney, *The Artistic Censoring of Sexuality. Fantasy and Judgment in the Twentieth-Century Novel*

The Ohio State University Press, 2008, 321 p. ISBN 978-0-8142-1082-6, et CD-ROM ISBN 978-0-8142-9161-0 Dimensions: 23x15 (Hardcover)

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L'excellent ouvrage de Susan Mooney, *The Artistic Censoring of Sexuality. Fantasy and Judgment in the Twentieth-Century Novel* [*La Censure artistique de la sexualité. Fantaisie et jugement dans le roman du XXe siècle*] est une contribution importante à la critique contemporaine sur l'éthique de la littérature. Sa recherche est exhaustive et l'analyse profonde. Un livre bien conçu dans le fond et dans la forme, superbement documenté, soutenu de façon convaincante, et richement évocateur. Un minutieux travail savant, retentissant et éclairant sur la manière dont on appréhende la lecture de la fiction du XX^{e} siècle.

Mooney part du constat qu'au XX^{e} siècle, la société est devenue confessionnelle. Dès lors, on peut supposer que la sexualité divulguée dans la littérature peut s'offrir aussi bien pour le plaisir potentiel, tout comme à l'analyse et au jugement.

S'il y a censure dans l'art, c'est qu'il y a dans la société. Susan Mooney se propose alors d'investir ce terrain inexploré dans la recherche, sexualité et censure, qu'elle étudie dans une perspective sociologique, historique et littéraire. Si la censure est le cible de sa recherche, Mooney privilégiera la lecture de l'œuvre littéraire, miroir de la société et des sociétés de tout temps. Pour ce faire, deux paradigmes nécessaires seront adoptés, fantasme et jugement, un binôme révélateur de sens, de tendances, de positions et de mentalités.

Ouvrage moderne et postmoderne, dans *The Artistic Censoring of Sexuality. Fantasy and Judgment in the Twentieth-Century Novel*, Mooney couvre la littérature du XX^{e} siècle, de l'Irlande coloniale aux États-Unis, et de l'Espagne de Franco jusqu'à la Russie soviétique, avec un roman marqué du progressisme social, de l'innovation artistique et de la transgression.

Quatre romanciers et autant de romans sont passés au crible afin de dégager tous les tropes, sujets, discours, thèmes, modes, motifs et stratagèmes de la sexualité et de sa critique. Des écrivains monuments de la censure de la sexualité comme James Joyce, Vladimir Nabokov, Luis Martín-Santos, et Victor Erofeev. Des écrivains qui s'inscrivent aussi dans un large processus spatio-temporel afin de montrer la complexité du discours de la sexualité et de comparer des paradigmes culturels, littéraires et linguistiques très différents. En choisissant un corpus universel très significatif, l'ouvrage de Susan Mooney a l'ambition non seulement d'étudier la sexualité du point de vue critique, mais de considérer la problématique de la sexualité dans sa globalité – géographique, artistique et critique, en s'intéressant à des romans de contenu radical qui incorporent des situations et des pensées sexuelles, qui dépeignent des fantasmes et des zones refoulées de la vie sociale, culturelle, politique et mentale.

Le corpus est composé de quatre romans difficiles et durs en raison de leur contenu sexuel qui a provoqué la censure au moment de leur parution : *Ulysse* (1922), *Lolita* (1955), *Temps de silence* (1961) et *Beauté russe* (1990). Si Mooney a choisi ces quatre romans, c'est que le traitement de la sexualité dans ces romans est révélateur : ils suggèrent au lecteur, que si l'on veut, on peut atteindre à une certaine vérité ou libération à travers la connaissance sexuelle.

Le livre est l'issue d'une thèse de doctorat en littérature française que Susan Mooney a soutenu à l'Université de Toronto et dont plusieurs aspects ont été déjà présenté à des Colloques, depuis 1999, que Mooney a repris et revalorisé dans les chapitres de son livre.

L'ouvrage est constitué de cinq chapitres, précédés d'une Préface, et d'une Introduction où elle expose la théorie et sa problématique. Appuyée sur les théories sociologiques et socio-critiques existantes : Foucault, Barthes, Bourdieu par rapport à la littérature et à la sexualité dans nos sociétés, Susan Mooney s'intéresse au pouvoir potentiel dans une dynamique sociale qui se cache derrière la censure des œuvres marquées par la sexualité. La critique de la censure d'une œuvre sexuelle porte aussi sur la prostitution, la pornographie, le mariage en tant que phénomènes sociaux, tout comme sur des valeurs communes : fantasmes, beauté, sublimité, maladie, mort, séduction, création qui entourent la femme.

Le but de censurer ou de contrôler la sexualité dans la littérature a des motivations similaires à travers les décennies et les systèmes politiques et juridiques. Susan Mooney va au-delà de la contestation sociale et sociétale et pointe les individus et certains groupes.

Mooney entend la sexualité de communication comme un mode qui implique des relations de pouvoir. Car les romans qui explorent la sexualité ne posent surtout pas des Éden idylliques et innocents, mais explorent un

domaine complexe de plaisir, ce qui concerne surtout les hommes, qui peuvent être très dangereux, voire mortels, pour les autres, en particulier les femmes.

Elle est profonde l'étude de Mooney, profonde et critique. Après avoir abordé les problèmes étymologiques et les pratiques historiques de la censure et de l'obscénité dans l'écriture, elle examine dans le premier chapitre les structures politiques et théoriques de la censure, ce qu'elle appelle la censure "libéral-démocratique" et la volonté d'un jugement de la part des écrivains. Puis elle étudie un autre problème, celui de la censure de "prépublication" des romans qui parlent de sexualité et de contrat du sujet, le protagoniste du roman ou le sujet-écrivant, qui transgresse la loi et qui est déjà coupable avec l'idéologie d'État.

Le deuxième chapitre est consacré à la censure principalement de *Circé* de Joyce que Mooney explore du point de vue du discours dramatique. Puis, en opérant une étude comparative entre *Circé* et *Ulysse*, elle étudie les fonctions narratives et la mimésis de deux œuvres. Ensuite, elle focalise sur les fantaisies de la loi qui occupe une part importante dans l'ouvrage entier de Mooney, puisque la censure cache en effet un conflit. Les deux œuvres, *Circé* et *Ulysse* sont décortiquées, tous les cadres et fonctions sont révélés, offrant une illumination des zones de plus secrètes.

Le troisième chapitre fait la lumière sur *Lolita*, le mimétique fantastique américain, la lecture de l'éthique et le récit de censure. Mooney traite la fonction du jugement dans la narration qu'elle étudie à partir du narrateur, "narrateur-voyou", du dialogisme, et de la confession.

Le chapitre quatre est consacré à la troisième œuvre du corpus : *Tiempo de silencio* [*Temps de silence*] de Luis Martin-Santos que Mooney analyse de la perspective du plaisir masochiste et de modes de censure de la fantaisie. Pour ce faire, elle étudie les thématiques de l'aliénation, du cancer, et du jugement de la sexualité qu'elle n'hésite pas d'examiner au 'bistouri' (165) avant d'approfondir sur les stratégies du masochisme espagnol, point de vue très intéressant avec des exemples démonstratifs.

Le cinquième et dernier chapitre fait la lumière sur la quatrième œuvre du corpus : *Russkaia krasavitsa* [*Beauté russe*] de Victor Erofeev, écrivain de la Russie soviétique. L'approche adoptée est celle de la beauté apocalyptique – terme révélateur – et de la sublimité russe. La littérature russe est en soi une crise de la cohérence, une scission schizophrénique et une négation de valeurs et attitudes. L'œuvre d'Erofeefv fait partie de ce qu'on a appelé la prose alternative en Russie, c'est-à-dire la nouvelle prose après les années 80. En ceci, *Russkaia krasavitsa* met l'accent sur la subjectivité et l'intertextualité parodique et ironique qui s'aligne avec littérature mondiale et postmoderne. De ce fait, elle est une œuvre importante dans la littérature mondiale, ce qui justifie le choix de Susan Mooney pour cette œuvre. Le terme 'apocalyptique' revient puisque Mooney traite de la beauté et de l'amour apocalyptiques du point de vue de la censure et de la parodie. Après avoir examiné la voix et

l'image porno-graphique de Irina, l'héroïne dont la beauté russe ne procure pas de plaisir mais dont la beauté est extraordinaire et va appréciée. "Son amour n'est pas de l'amour mais du sexe, et le sexe c'est son art" (242).

Une Conclusion finale apporte des réflexions comparatives sur les quatre œuvres et aussi sur la façon première d'avoir choisi ces œuvres peut-être de façon arbitraire. Mais leur analyse a montré que ces œuvres sont représentatives de la sexualité et de l'acte d'écrire qui apparaissent comme des transgressions possibles et comme des médiations entre l'individu et la société.

La pornographie et l'écriture de la prostitution ne sont pas de simples instances narratives dans ces textes, et les thèmes sont exploités de façon critique. La censure artistique fait apparaître des romans critiques sur la censure sexuelle, et fait de la sexualité un domaine éthique des relations humaines qui doit être exploré et mis en question. Juger est déjà important. Le jugement des protagonistes d'abord dans les romans, des auteurs aussi, met le poids sur les fonctions propres de la sexualité comme une forme de la censure, au sens moral et au sens de l'héritage social. Les romans explorés par Mooney appréhendent la sexualité comme une donne significative pour leurs sociétés et comme thème d'une importance vitale dans l'art, pas pour être célébré ou déploré, mais pour être interrogé et jugé. Voici les termes clés conceptuels de l'investigation de Susan Mooney qui scrute la société, ses réflexions et ses réactions sur un sujet tabou qu'est la sexualité.

« Le monde personnel du désir sexuel et la censure artistique du fantasme sont intégrés dans ces récits, de sorte que les distinctions entre la société et l'individu sont remis en question, montrant plus que jamais que le dialogue interpersonnel est une priorité » (276), conclut Mooney.

L'étude de Susan Mooney est profonde et intense. Elle montre comment les motifs de censure, avec toutes ses restrictions, les pressions, les règles, les jugements et les formes de négation, sont artistiquement intégrés dans les parties des romans, les personnages, les réglages, les tropes et les thèmes. Les romans étudiés contestent le *statu quo* de la censure et explorent de façon critique ses processus et son pouvoir.

Ouvrage fondamental, l'ouvrage de Susan Mooney révèle l'impact de la censure sur la création littéraire, et l'intérêt croissant du XX^{e} siècle en matière de sexualité et de son discours. Un ouvrage critique important et une importante contribution pour la recherche.

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Four Questions or More for Marianne Hirsch

by Marie-Louise Paulesc

Marianne Hirsch is William Peterfield Trent Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University and Professor in the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. She is the Second Vice-President of the Modern Language Association of America. She was born in Timisoara, Romania, and educated at Brown University where she received her BA/MA and Ph.D. degrees. Before moving to Columbia, she taught at Dartmouth College for many years, most recently as the Ted and Helen Geisel Third Century Professor in the Humanities.

Hirsch's co-authored book with Leo Spitzer *Ghosts of Home*: *The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory and History* was published at University of California Press in 2010. Her co-edited book with Nancy K. Miller *Rites of Return*: *Diaspora, Poetics and the Politics of Memory* is forthcoming in Fall 2011. Other publications include *Family Frames*: *Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (1997), *The Familial Gaze* (ed. 1999), *Time and the Literary* (co-ed. 2002), a special issue of *Signs* on "Gender and Cultural Memory" (co-ed. 2002), *Teaching the Representation of the Holocaust* (co-ed. 2004), and *Grace Paley Writing the World* (co-ed. 2009). Her book *The Generation of Postmemory*: *Visual Culture after the Holocaust* is forthcoming in Spring 2012. Marianne Hirsch is the former editor of *PMLA* and the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the ACLS, the Mary Ingraham Bunting Institute, the National Humanities Center, and the Bellagio and Bogliasco Foundations. She has served on the MLA Executive Council, the ACLA Advisory Board, the Board of Supervisors of The English Institute, and the Executive Board of the Society for the Study of Narrative Literature, and is on the advisory boards of *Memory Studies* and *Contemporary Women's Writing*.

Marie-Louise Paulesc: In 2002, you have co-hosted with Valerie Smith a special issue of *Signs* on gender and cultural memory. In the introduction co-written with Valerie Smith you note that "to date there have been very few sustained efforts to theorize in… general and comparative terms about memory from the perspective of feminism." How would you appreciate the developments in the field since then? Are scholars doing work in cultural and collective memory more engaged with issues of gender?

Marianne Hirsch: You know, we were hoping to help spark such interest but I think that the relationship of cultural memory and gender has still not been fully theorized even now, almost ten years later. Certainly, there has been a lot of work done to understand women's experiences in the past in addition to men's, and to analyze the stories women tell about their lives,

and how they tell them. The field of women's history has developed its own significant methodologies. And there has been an effort, in many cultural and political contexts, to collect testimonies of women. Some traumatic experiences – rape and sexual abuse, for example apply particularly to women. But a more developed theoretical account of the intersection of gender and cultural memory would have to go beyond gender difference and certainly beyond treating women and men as unified essential categories.

Marie-Louise Paulesc: What are, in your own current work, the arguments that you develop for intersecting gender with cultural memory? What does it mean, for you, to theorize cultural memory through a feminist lens?

Marianne Hirsch: I am more interested in exploring the rhetoric and the politics of memory and transmission from a feminist perspective. First, I argue that gender, as sexual difference, can fulfill a number of functions in the work of memory. It can serve as a figure that can mediate the ways in which certain images and certain narratives have been able to circulate in the culture of the subsequent generations. In traumatic histories, gender can be invisible or hypervisible; it can make trauma unbearable or it can serve as a fetish that can help shield us from its effects. It can offer a position through which memory can be transmitted within the family and beyond it, distinguishing mother-daughter transmission, from that of fathers and daughters, or fathers and sons, for example. It can offer a lens through which to read the domestic and the public scenes of memorial acts. Feminist and queer readings can thus illuminate not just what stories are told or forgotten, or what images are seen or suppressed, but how those stories are told and how those images are constructed. They highlight the links between private experience and national and global crises, and the role of generational histories and genealogies in acts of memory and fantasies. This accent on the personal, the familial, the affective, and the intimate has been a constitutive structure of thinking in feminist theory and needs to be brought to bear on an analysis of cultural memory.

Secondly, and certainly related, I am interested in an analysis of the archive, understood not only as a repository of objects or texts, but also as the process of selecting, ordering, and preserving the past. Because all archives and archival processes are embedded in power relations and have political consequences, we need to study the particular ways in which the archives of official history and cultural memory privilege and make visible some objects, texts, and stories, while consigning others to oblivion. How can we shift the logic of intelligibility to make possible the creation of new archives, new forms of knowledge, new opportunities for the unspoken and the unthought to come into public awareness? How can we open the archive to invisible social subjects and new systems of making sense of the past and the present? This is a profoundly feminist project.

Marie-Louise Paulesc: The recent book you have written together with Leo Spitzer, *Ghosts of Home*: *The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory*, is appreciated for its significant contributions to memory studies and to the literature of return. I would add that it also enriches and further nuances your concept of postmemory. What are some personal difficulties you have encountered while researching, but also while writing the book?

Marianne Hirsch: In spite of the similarity of our backgrounds and early experiences as immigrant children (Leo was born in Bolivia to parents who were refugees from the Nazis, and I in Romania to survivors from Cernăuți), we have different disciplinary backgrounds, history and literary studies, and we each have a different relationship to the city of Czernowitz and to its history. Each of us was drawn into the project by a different pull. For me the relationship is personal and familial. Born in Romania after my parents left their native Cernăuți under cover of night with false papers in 1945, following the Soviet takeover of the region, I grew up in a community of displaced "Czernowitzers" who maintained a strong nostalgic relationship to the city of their birth and who communicated to me, as well, the many traumatic events that they endured there as well. Leo's knowledge of Czernowitz was more academic, historical, more firmly situated in the present of research and writing, than in his own personal past. He brought to the project broad cultural understanding and historical skills that complement mine.

What is perhaps the most basic element of *Ghosts of Home* also posed its greatest writing challenge – the fact that is was co-authored. What voice would do justice to the project, to the history we wanted to tell and to our own investment in that history? The two of us were writing collaboratively, but at no time did we think we could write the book in the "we" first person plural voice – a voice that is rhetorically weak and ineffective, as you can tell from the very sentence in which we are conveying this observation.

We agreed that both our individual voices and perspectives had to be present within the book, singly and in dialogue. And yet, we needed a *writing* voice that would hold the narrative together and that could be followed by our readers. After a great deal of discussion, experimentation, and agony, we made the decision to write the book in the first person singular, in the "I" voice. But we also had to contest the assumption that our distinct disciplinary training, or our biographical relationships to the story, was necessarily reflected in different sections of this book – that the "I" we used in different chapters was in any way stable. On the contrary, what happened was that in the process of writing and rewriting, our voices began to merge and cross. Sometimes we identified the "I" clearly, but at other points it was no more than a narrative voice, a device, perhaps even a "character" in its own right, embodied but not directly corresponding to either of us in strict biographical sense. Sometimes we wrote our own "I" sections, at others we wrote each other's.

Marie-Louise Paulesc: Many scholars are discussing the notion of a unified European memory. Others are pointing out to a certain division of the memory between Western and Eastern Europe. Many of them point out to the fact that while the Holocaust has become central to Western European memory, Eastern Europeans have difficulties in addressing their involvement in the Holocaust, while focusing, in various ways, on the memory of communism. What is your insight in regard to the terms and the implications of this discussion? Even though it might not specifically address this particular issue, how would you place your *Ghosts of Home* in this larger discussion? (If you even would want to…)

Marianne Hirsch: Well, I think this is a story of uneven developments. That became so obvious when Claude Lanzmann released *Shoah* in 1986 and exposed the testimonies of Poles who lived in the vicinity of the concentration and extermination camps. Their words were not yet embedded in the official discourses about this past that shaped thinking and recall in Western Europe, they were fresh, unprocessed and some statements seemed outrageous. People just had not had the chance to speak about this under communism.

When Leo Spitzer and I began working on the memory of the Jewish culture of Czernowitz, now Chernivtsi in Ukraine, in the late nineties, that memory had been all but erased from the urban landscape. Yes, buildings Jews had built and lived in were intact, but their connection to the history of the lively Jewish community there had been severed. The main Jewish temple was now a movie theater and billiard hall, the largest synagogue was a factory for Christian tombstones. The Jewish ghetto formed in 1941 prior to deportations to Transnistria was marked only by a small plaque at the top of a building. In Transnistria itself, the local population was totally ignorant of the history of Romanian and Nazi persecution of Jews and of the deadly camps and ghettos that had been installed there. So, yes, our going there to do the research is in itself an act of exposing a history that is virtually absent. And now, with more international attention, and with the return of survivors, memory is more visible in the place itself. There is, for example, a plaque on the house of Traian Popovici, the mayor of Cernăuți in 1941, who saved ca. 20,000 Jews but who was totally unknown in the Ukrainian city. And there is a small museum of the history of Bukowinian Jews. It's a beginning, but of course it cannot be compared to the much more sophisticated memorial landscapes of Western European cities. So no, there is not unified European memory—memory is contested, divided, competitive. Different histories collide. Take the horrible Museum of Terror in Budapest! It will be a long time before this is sorted out, if ever.

EUROPEAN GEOGRAPHIES OF SEXUALITIES CONFERENCE

8TH–10TH SEPTEMBER 2011
HOGESCHOOL-UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL

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Conference Report

European Geographies of Sexualities
Brussel, September 8–10, 2011

The conference *European Geographies of Sexualities* took place on September 8–10, 2011, in Brussel, at Hogeschool University.

The conference was organized by an international and interdisciplinary team of researchers: Gavin Brown (University of Leicester, UK); Kath Browne (University of Brighton, UK); Konstantinos Eleftheriadis (European University Institute); Eduarda Ferreira (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal); Simon Hutta (researcher, Berlin/The Open University, UK); Robert Kulpa (Birkbeck, University of London, UK); Jenny Künkel (Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, Germany); Maarten Loopmans (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium); Xosé Santos Solla (University of Santiago Compostela, Spain); Paulo Jorge Vieira (Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, Portugal); Eleanor Wilkinson (University of Leeds, UK) and sponsored by the Space, Sexualities and Queer Research Group (www.SSQRG.NET/PEGS) of the Royal Geographical Society (with Institute of British Geographers).

This scientific event included papers, panel discussions and workshops by 100 researchers from across Europe and around the world and five keynote presentations by leading academics.

While two of the keynote speeches focused on geography of queer studies in Singapore and Aotearoa, New Zealand the rest of them analyzed the "racialized bodies," "lesbian and gay politics," and sexuality in Leiden, Brazil and transatlantic spaces:

- "The queer time of creative urbanism: Family, futurity and global city Singapore" (Natalie Oswin, McGill University, Canada);
- "American sexualized and racialized bodies on European screens and stages: Josephine Baker and Anna May Wong's transatlantic stories" (Jean-Francois Staszack, Université de Genève, Switzerland);
- "Queer views from postcolonial Aotearoa, New Zealand" (Lynda Johnston, University of Waikato, Aotearoa/New Zealand);
- "Geography and sexuality in Brazil: spatial and *subverting* epistemological orders" (Joseli Maria Silva, Universidade Estadual Ponta Grossa, Brazil);

■ "Learning from Leiden: City-Twinning and the Production of Transnatio-Binnienal Solidarity in Lesbian and Gay Politics" (Jon Binnie, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK).

The organized **panel discussions** questioned the hegemonic knowledge in geographies of sexualtities and the queer discourse in academia and real life:

■ *Challenging hegemonic knowledge in geographies of sexualities*
Inputs by Jan Simon Hutta, Paulo Jorge Vieira, Marianne Blidon & Robert Kulpa;

■ *Queering the discourses: connecting potentia(l) between academia and real life*: Adinda Veltrop (POTENTIA Magazine).

The papers registered for the conference focused on topics that had as a starting point the observation underlined in the 'Call for Papers' that "the sub-disciplines of sexual and queer geography largely emerged out of the study of predominantly white gay male (and later, lesbian) spaces in the major urban centers of North America and north-western Europe. The range of work undertaken by geographers of sexualities has proliferated and diversified in the last two decades – it now addresses the lived experiences of trans-people, queers of color and working class LGBT people; and has expanded its geographical scope to study suburban and rural spaces, as well as countries beyond the West. And yet, perhaps because of its origins, there is still a tendency (held by many geographers who do not position themselves as working in the field of 'sexual geography') to conflate the field of geographies of sexualities with research on homosexuality and to assume such work has not addressed lives lived in other geographical contexts."

The papers delivered during the conference were from a wide range of areas including the humanities – literature, law, history, philosophy, religion, and visual and performing arts (including music and theatre), anthropology, area studies, communication studies, cultural studies, queer studies and social sciences, behavioral sciences, science and technology, medicine and public health, politics and democracy studies. Thus, the parallel sessions aimed at discussing different aspects of sexuality like:

■ *Queer, trans and feminist approaches to gender politics in Europe*: institutional discourses and regulatory imaginations for queer youth (Julia de Montigny), peripheral and queer in pre-modern Finnish countryside (Sandra Hagman), rural sex educators' treatment of queer issues (Jennifer M. de Coste), queer and feminist theorising of embodiment in the 'society of control' (Alex Fanghanel, Jason Lim), virtual cruising: queering spaces of desire (Kaciano Barbosa Gadelha), plumbing gender: sex and bio-politics in the water-closet (Sheila L. Cavanagh), queer geography of Czechia (Michal Pitoňák), rewriting rural-urban conceptualizations of queer migration (Marianne Blidon).

■ *Sexuality and gender activism, and radical sexual politics in Europe*: knowledge and activism, between Central-Eastern European and Western sexualities (Robert Kulpa, Joanna Mizielinska), queeriser l'expérience identitaire européenne (Gianfranco Rebucini, Marco Dell'Omodarme), the status of equal rights of men and women in Poland and Belgium (Aleksandra Rataj, Dagna Skrzypińska, Stephane Rutten), gender critiques within December 2008 Athens riots (Konstantinos Eleftheriadis), sexuality and gendered activism in Tel Aviv-Jaffa (Chen Misgav).

■ *Gay Sociosexual visibility across Europe and transatlantic spaces*: public spaces of Black Gay sociosexual visibility in Brussels, (Koessan Gabiam), l'espace à l'occupation de l'identité « gay » à – Casablanca (Marien Gouyon), negotiation among gay men in Istanbul (Doğu Durgun), gay village in Montreal: the construction of a heterotopias (Charlotte Prieur), provincial gay life in the English Midlands (Gavin Brown), Male homosexuality in liberal Italy (Maya De Leo), rural gay masculine identity in France and the United States (Alexis Annes), Palermo's Gay Pride (Giulia de Spuches).

■ *Lesbian private and public spaces*: Lesbiennes latino-américaines et des Caraïbes (Jules Falquet), lesbian social spaces, community and tolerance in Amsterdam (Katherine Fobea), lesbian and gay spatialities and everyday life in Lisbon (Paulo Jorge Vieira).

■ *Homonationalism, racism and prejudice within European LGBT communities*: citizenship in Brazilian LGBT parades (Jan Simon Hutta), LGBT activism beyond oppositional politics (Kath Browne and Leila Bakshi), LGBT Pride Politics in Croatia and Serbia (Dragana Todorovic, Mima Simic), gender differences in hostile attitudes towards FTM and MTF Trans Individuals (Dilara Çalışkan), discourses on LGBT asylum in the UK (Thibaut Raboin), new European containments of Islam through sexuality (Shannon Wookcock), LGBTQ interpelano il lato oscuro della democrazia (Titti Castiello).

■ *Questioning the location of sexualities towards West/East attitude, communism and socialism*: East and West in the Discourses on Sexuality in Bulgaria, 1944–1989 (Rumyana Taneva Georgieva, Zdravko Asenov Kamenov), moral geography of postsocialist homophobia (Hadley Z. Renkin), queer China's challenge to Western sexuality paradigms and queer similitude in contemporary urban China (William Schroeder), queer difference in the Chinese public (Elisabeth L. Engebretsen), androgynous masculinities, queer sexualities and the remasculinization of China (Derek Hird), mechanisms of depersonalization and obliteration of the homosexuals in Bulgaria during socialistic regime (Gergana Popova), the erotics and politics of gay and lesbian art in East/Central Europe (Pawel Leszkowicz).

■ *Economic geographies of pornography, sex work and the sex industry in* (*and beyond*) *Europe*: porno-tropics and the construction of masculinities (Thomas Hendriks), sex/love/money exchanges in Urban Morocco (Mériam

Cheikh), cruising-for-sex in the Grand Travers Dunes (Christelle Audouit, Laurent Gaissad), le tourisme gay sur la Côte d'Azur (Didier M. Martini), (fe)male Thai migrant sex workers in Denmark (Marlene Spanger), the breach of implicit contracts in commercial sexual exchanges (Stef Adriaenssens, Jef Hendrick), sex work in the City of Lagos (Femi Agholor), sex worker's struggles against displacement through gentrification (Jenny Künkel), sexuality and resistance among Scandinavian sex workers (Ida Kock), gendered discourses of sex work and the Olympic Games (Rebecca Finkel, Catherine M. Matheson), exploitation of victims of human trafficking in Flanders (Sam Geuens), sex trafficking flows in Europe: the role of Ukraine (Ganna Gerasymenko), la vittimizzazione criminalizzante della prostituzione in Italia (Cesare Di Feliciantonio), the making of the "*East*-European Porn Star" (Ana Mago-Maghiar).

■ *The political geography of sexuality and sexual orientation in Europe and the US*: the territorial networking of sex (Emmanuel Jaurand, Laurent Gaissad), trans-national research program with sexually marginalized communities (Amy Ritterbusch & Serena Cruz), queerness, bodies and affects: shattering political spaces and foundations (Slavco Dimitrov), heteronormativity: rural youth, sexuality and nightlife in Belgium (Maarten Loopmans), Dutch sexual nationalism (Paul Mepschen), sexuality, Islam and the War of Terror (Shaireen Rasheed).

■ *Globalization, Sexual citizenship and dynamics of inclusion/exclusion in diverse European contexts*: the scope and limits to sexual citizens (Paul Reynolds), the ethics & politics of globalising sexualities (Tom Claes, Paul Reynolds), globalization & the future of 'sexual ethics' (Tom Claes), (Ghent University, Belgium), Globalisation and sexual diversity (Rudi Bleys), sexual citizenship at street-level (Phil Hubbard), the mononormativity of sexual citizenship (Eleanor Wilkinson), perceptions of lap dance clubs and licensing laws (Joanne Mitchinson), new European containments of Islam through sexuality (Shannon Wookcock).

■ *Geo-temporalities*; *geographical locations and temporal narratives of* '*progress*' *and* '*backwardness*': discourses on diversity in the city (Nina Schuster), sexual Khôra (Stanimir Panayotov), forbidden issues in 19th century Romanian women's writings (Ramona Mihaila), bodies out of place (Rachel Wood), l'activisme sexuel dans la 'périphérie' européenne: le cas de Thessalonique (Konstantinos Eleftheriadis), identifying the 'action order' of women's public toilets and its role in dangerous performances of heteronormative femininity (Dara Blumenthal).

The conference *European Geographies of Sexualities* provided an overview of the range of studies that have theorized the spatiality of sexualities, gender, sexual identities and sexual practices in (and beyond) European contexts.

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