Table of Contents

Introduction: From Imitation to Intertextuality

Neil Forsyth, University of Lausanne

The term 'Intertextuality' has been used in so many different ways since it was first introduced in the late sixties that it no longer retains any specific meaning, at least without further definition. How, then, are we to account for all the ways in which we move beyond what the authors of various texts (Milton, Blake, Joyce are some pertinent examples) may consciously intend in the way of allusion? What, indeed, has happened to the notion of the multiple discursive contexts of a 'text'?

Most of the essays in this book began life as contributions to a seminar at the ESSE conference in Aarhus in August 2008, the goal of which was to review the ways in which the meanings of the original idea have migrated and proliferated. Julia Kristeva (1967) invented the term, deriving it from her knowledge of Mikhail Bakhtin, and in particular his concept of what came to be called, in a classic translation of his work, 'the dialogic imagination'. The fundamental concept of intertextuality is that no text, much as it might like to appear so, is original; rather it is, because of the nature of language itself, a tissue of inevitable, and to an extent unwitting, references to and quotations from other texts (Allen 2005: 1). In a more recent formulation, however, and in spite of Kristeva's angry insistence that the word was already being used in 1974 in the banal sense of source-criticism, the respected critic Gérard Genette has returned to 'a relation of co-presence between two or several texts', in particular of the 'effective presence of one text in another' (8). Where does this leave us?

In the Early Modern period, this latter kind of 'intertextuality' was known as 'imitation'. Originality of the kind that came to be prized by the Romantics, and against which Modernism reacted, as in Eliot's concepts of 'Tradition' or of the 'impersonality' of the artist, was not highly valued. Instead, what you learned in school, and what you went on to practice, was the art of imitation—with variation. Whether the models, or what Genette calls the *hypotext*, were classical—Homer, Theocritus, Virgil, Ovid—or whether they were more recent—Dante, Bocaccio, Petrarch, Tasso, the goal was to work within one of the genres

established by those great originals, and go one better if you could. One curious instance of this method is that Milton's famous claim to be composing 'Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme' (*Paradise Lost* I.16) is actually a translation of Ariosto's line in the *Orlando Furioso* I.2, 'Cosa non detta in prosa mai, ni in rima'. Both in turn go back to Horace *Odes* III I 1-2. This is not plagiarism, nor even really allusion: it is simply quotation (to use the three terms that Genette identifies as examples of intertextuality). Milton is not hiding behind a theft, or even parading for a knowledgeable readership an adaptation of his source: he would simply expect his readers to enjoy recognizing the quotation, and perhaps even to feel a slight irony that a claim to originality can be such old hat. He is also announcing the world within which he is placing himself and by which he expects to be read and judged. But conscious quotation of this kind excludes other unconscious similarities, such as the Bastard's 'unattempted yet' in Shakespeare's *King John*. That resemblance is certainly 'happenstance', as Eric Griffith pointed out in a recent, sceptical essay.[1] It might come under someone's definition of 'intertextuality', but it would no doubt have surprised Milton if anyone had pointed it out—and it adds nothing to our appreciation of the relation between Milton and Ariosto.

That kind of quotation is quite different from what we find Eliot doing at, say, the famous conclusion of *The Waste Land* where almost every line is a quotation, but from as disparate a set of sources as one could imagine, from popular song or nursery rhyme ('London bridge is falling down') to Gérard de Nerval to Dante to Kyd to the Upanishads. In each of those cases Eliot famously added a footnote (what Genette calls the 'paratext') to announce what he was doing. Perhaps the display of learning is similar to Milton's, and that may, oddly enough, help to account for Eliot's need to attack Milton so thoroughly. But the

---

[1] The reference is to *King John*, II.i.601, where 'the Bastard torrentially reflects that the only reason he is railing against bribery is that nobody has so far troubled to try greasing his palm. We discount this as "static", interference from a shared, but insignificantly shared, atmosphere, unless we impute to Milton a desire to hint with inordinate faintness that we should think of him as a bastard, too' (Griffith).

quotations are just what he calls them: 'these fragments I have shored against my ruin' (l. 430). Their very disparity makes the point about what is left to modernism after the war—a wasteland of discarded bits and pieces, jostling each other without any obvious links or coherence. We, the readers, supply the coherence, and all will do so differently, in spite of those notorious footnotes.

Perhaps other forms of textual relationship are also at work in Eliot: appropriations, plagiarisms, parody, pastiche, homage, citation. In fact that list introduces virtually the whole panoply of rewriting strategies. In the era of post-modernism, many texts are rewritings, and are seen to be so, deliberately. Tom Stoppard is sometimes said to have launched this literary practice most thoroughly in 1966 with *Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, the same year in which Jean Rhys published *The Wide Sargasso Sea*, but since then many have stepped in. Angela Carter is a modern favourite for her rewritings of fairy-tales. She spoke of putting 'new wine in old bottles, especially if the pressure of the new wine makes the bottles explode' (69).

The similarities among these various ways of describing the relations among texts should not blind us to the differences. They are historically and philosophically distinct. The idea of an explosion of the old bottle shows up the peculiarity of the postmodern concept of rewriting: it is aggressive towards the source-text, but also depends upon it. Eliot, by contrast, spoke in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' of the 'existing order' of the monuments of tradition being 'ever so slightly altered' by the arrival of the new (5). Even that notion would be alien to the Renaissance doctrine of Imitation (Greene), which was simply a description of what always happens, necessarily, in the writing of good poetry, rather than an ideal to which the writer might aspire.

The Renaissance concept is not to be identified with that now debased term 'imitation'. In his most outrageous statement about this device, Eliot made up this famous and revealing aphorism (in the Massinger essay, 182): 'Immature poets imitate, mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different'. Eliot was reacting against the Romantic notion of originality, or more exactly, that poetry expresses the author's personality. He was trying to replace it with a world in which poets work within what he calls 'Tradition', in fact within that Renaissance world in which Imitation means not only what immature

poets do, but what all do, always. And in which they take pride. But what he succeeded in doing was leaving modernist poetics beached high and dry, broken driftwood that could never be refloated in the sea.

Curiously enough, what Eliot wanted, when he spoke of the simultaneous existence of the whole of western literature, was, one can now see, rather like what that French theory of the late 1960s spelled out: 'Any text is an intertext; other texts are present in it, at varying levels, in more or less recognizable forms: the texts of the previous and surrounding culture', as Barthes put it ('Theory' 39)[2]. The text is not an object but a field of activity, or an occasion for it. A challenge to the reader.

In spite of this apparent similarity between what Eliot aspired to and the concept of intertextuality that Kristeva and Barthes invented, the terminology, and indeed the theoretical underpinning, of the two notions are quite different. For one thing, Eliot, in spite of his reaction against the idea of 'personality', still thought in terms of authors, and great ones at that (Virgil, Dante), when he described the 'Tradition' that could be only 'ever so slightly altered'. Kristeva and Barthes, however, invented *signifiance*, a French neologism which proposes that 'texts' (another word for whose ubiquity their theory is largely responsible) are potentially infinite in their meaning since readers activate the intertextual meaning of what they read, and each one will be different. The reader, not the author, is the source of meaning (1968). The author's role in traditional literary criticism has been 'to resolve discontinuities of discourse into a harmonious whole' (Young 12) but he was now reduced by Barthes to a mere 'scriptor'. With the shift to 'textuality', and in the wake of Derrida, those discontinuities become the focus of interest.

Graham Allen insists on the distinction: intertextuality, at least as Kristeva and Barthes were using the concept, is not to be confused with

---

[2] Barthes, 'Theory of the Text', was actually an entry in the *Encyclopædia universalis*, entitled 'Texte (théorie du)'. It thus made the term official. Barthes writes that 'tout texte est un *intertexte*; d'autres textes sont présents en lui à des niveaux variables, sous des formes plus ou moins reconnaissables: les textes de la culture antérieure et ceux de la culture environnante; tout texte est un tissu nouveau de citations révolues.'

influence, allusion and all the other intentional ways in which one writer refers to or quotes from another. Influence remains within a vision of literary works that believes meaning to stem from the intention of an author. Intertextuality involves a recognition that meaning lies between texts in networks which are ultimately only partially recoverable, only partially readable (or traceable).

Barthes's textual analysis was particularly influenced by Julia Kristeva's work on the notion of text and intertextuality and by Jacques Derrida's deconstructive account of the sign. Kristeva had recently come to Paris to work with Barthes, and she brought with her a sophisticated understanding of Mikhail Bakhtin, until then virtually unknown in France. Bakhtin (1989 [1929] 131) had argued that

> No member of a verbal community can ever find words in the language that are neutral, exempt from the aspirations and evaluations of the other, uninhabited by the other's voice. On the contrary, he receives the word by the other's voice and it remains filled with that voice. He intervenes in his own context from another context, already penetrated by the other's intentions. His own intention finds a word already lived in.

The impact of these collective influences led Barthes to develop an approach to the reading of narrative texts that marked the decisive step in the shift from structuralism to post-structuralism. Instead of seeking to relate texts to a structuralist notion of the abstract system of narrative, he now developed a method that foregrounds the involvement of texts in the vast intertextual arena of cultural codes and meanings out of which they are woven. Textual analysis, based on this intertextual notion of meaning, replaces the apparently scientific and objective approach of structuralism with an emphasis on the openness of the text (its meaning can never be fully captured or resolved) and the productive role of the reader of the text (each individual reader brings with them a specific and distinct if in no way unique relation to the 'cultural text'). In 'Theory of the Text', Barthes argued that a text has meaning only when a reader activates the potential meanings intertextually 'present' within it. A text, viewed intertextually, only exists in the act of reading.

Since then other theorists have developed the concept, and the strict definition proposed by Graham Allen has not been adhered to, as he ruefully acknowledges. In particular, Gérard Genette has reined in the potential anarchy of Barthes's approach to reading by breaking up the

original idea into sub-categories. He proposed the term 'transtextuality' as a more inclusive term than 'intertextuality', and listed five subtypes:

1 *intertextuality*: quotation, plagiarism, allusion (as in the Milton instance above);

2 *paratextuality*: the relation between a text and its 'paratext'—that which surrounds the main body of the text—such as titles, headings, prefaces, epigraphs, dedications, acknowledgements, footnotes, illustrations, dust jackets, etc;

3 *architextuality*: designation of a text as belonging to a genre or genres;

4 *metatextuality*: explicit or implicit critical commentary of one text on another text (metatextuality can be hard to distinguish from the following category, but Nabokov's *Pale Fire* would be an obvious and parodic instance);

5 *hypotextuality* (Genette's term was *hypertextuality*): the relation between a text and a preceding 'hypotext' - a text on which it is based but which it transforms, modifies, elaborates or extends (including parody, spoof, sequel, translation). Genette uses Virgil's, and especially Joyce's, relation to Homer as a standard instance, but develops many elaborate sub-categories, of which Joyce himself uses quite a few.

To that list, computer-based hypertextuality (6) should be added: i.e., text which can take the reader directly to other texts (regardless of authorship or location). This kind of intertextuality disrupts the conventional 'linearity' of texts. I would add (7) intratextuality for the kind of repetition or echo within a text which also breaks up the linear reading and requires the reader to fold the text in a different way. For a long, complex text like Paradise Lost or Ulysses, it is indispensable to describe one of the ways in which the poem or prose text means.

Genette's books will seem to some the production of an obsession for categorisation gone mad. Yet, like F.K. Stanzel's *Theory of Fiction* for example, the classifications allow us to perceive similarities among works that might otherwise seem very distant from each other. And above all it may help us as we try to rethink the various concepts of intertextuality that have proved fruitful in the writing of the essays and conference papers collected here. In Barthes and Kristeva, intertextuality

is a feature of all literature when opened to the reader's imagination. But Genette teaches us to distinguish kinds, and thus to get closer to the particular literary relations we want to study. And unlike Kristeva he explicitly does not exclude the conscious imitation that had been so integral a part of how Early Modern literature demanded to be read.

References

Allen, Graham. 'Intertextuality'. *The Literary Encyclopedia* (2005) at http://www.litencyc.com/php/stopics.php?rec=true&UID=1229. Accessed 13 July 2009.

—. *Intertextuality*. Series *The New Critical Idiom*. London: Routledge. 2000.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays.* Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1981 [written during the 1930s].

—. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* [1929, 1973, 1984]. Ed and tr. Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Barthes, Roland. "Theory of the Text". Young, 1981: 31-47.

—. "The Death of the Author" (Fr. original 1968). *Image-Music-Text*. Ed. Stephen Heath. London: Fontana. 1977. 142-48.

Carter, Angela. "Notes From the Frontline". *On Gender and Writing.* Ed. Micheline Wandor London: Pandora Books. 1983. 68-79.

Eliot, Thomas Stearns. "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919). *The Sacred Wood.* London: Methuen. 1920. Reprinted in *Selected Essays.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World. 1964: 3-11.

—. "Philip Massinger" (1920) in *The Sacred Wood.* London: Methuen, 1920, and reprinted in *Selected Essays.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World. 1964: 181-95.

—. *The Waste Land.* New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922. Bartleby.com, 1998. Accessed July 15, 2009.

Genette, Gérard. *Palimpsests: la literature au deuxième degree*. Seuil: Paris. 1982. English tr. 1997.

Greene, Thomas. *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1982.

Griffith, Eric. "Dante, Primo Levi and the Intertextualists", *Times Literary Supplement,* May 7, 2008.

Kristeva, Julia. "Bakhtine, le mot, le dialogue et le roman". *Critique*, XXIII. 239. April 1967: 438-65, reprinted in *Sèméiotikè*: 143-73. Translated as "Word, Dialogue and Novel". Reprinted in Toril Moi, ed. *The Kristeva Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell. 1989: 34-61.

—. "La révolution du langage poétique". *Tel quel*. 56. Winter 1973: 36-59.

—. *Sèméiotikè. Recherches pour une sémanalyse*. Paris: Seuil. 1969.

Landow, George P. *Hyper/Text/Theory*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1994.

Stanzel, F. K. *Theory of Fiction*. Cambridge University Press. 1984.

Young, Robert, ed. *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1981: 31-47.

'No Story Comes from Nowhere', or, the Dentist from *Finding Nemo:* Ambivalent Originality in Four Contemporary Works

Jens Fredslund, University of Aarhus

Abstract
This paper offers a perspective on a range of contemporary developments and articulations of the phenomenon of intertextuality in fiction and film. Using as backdrop a brief discussion of different intertextual motifs in Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990), Paul Auster's *Travels in the Scriptorium* (2006) and Pixar's animated short film *Boundin'* (2004), it moves on to discuss the highly intertextual relation between the works of Swiss writer Robert Walser and the contemporary American experimentalist Alison Bundy. The paper thus problematizes and qualifies the line of demarcation supposedly existing between texts or works of art and aims to expand and exemplify the scope of reference, citation and paraphrase inherent in the overall concept of intertextuality.

This paper springs from a baffled encounter with four postmodern works which all revolve around the theme of ambivalent originality. The four works portray origin and the original as regurgitation and as a result or an end point. And they describe the site of origin as both primary and secondary, and as disturbingly identical to what appears to repeat it. This undermining of the stability and integrity of the point of origin is presented as a thoroughly relational event. Origin is seen to lose its originality in the interaction with its surroundings, echoing Graham Allen speaking of the 'relationality, interconnectedness and interdependence in modern cultural life' (5).

In this paper I discuss four different expressions of this 'interconnectedness'—expressions which each in their own way portray or testify to patterns of intertextuality. For the nodding, copying, alluding and parroting discussed below are all more or less explicit manifestations of the poststructuralist tenet of the inevitable intertextual dimension of language and text. Several of the key voices of critical thought of the last forty years—all of them representatives of J. Hillis Miller's so-called 'uncanny' or 'Dionysian' critics—have addressed this aspect of the deceptively margined and coherent unity of the entity of the Book. As J. Hillis Miller puts it, '[a] literary text is not a thing in itself, 'organically

unified,' but a relation to other texts which are relations in their turn'
(120). Or, in the words of Michel Foucault,

> [t]he frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines and the
> last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught
> up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node
> within a network [. . .] The book is not simply the object that one holds in one's
> hands [. . .] Its unity is variable and relative. (23)

Or, finally, in the words of the founding father of deconstructive thought,
Jacques Derrida, who in his work addresses precisely 'all those
boundaries that form the running border of what used to be called a text,
of what we once thought this word could identify, i.e., the supposed end
and beginning of a work, the unity of a corpus, the title, the margins, the
signatures, the referential realm outside the frame, and so forth' (256).
For both the book and its margins are continually, inevitably and
uncontrollably transgressed.

> What has happened, if it has happened, is a sort of overrun [. . .] that spoils all these
> boundaries and divisions and forces us to extend the accredited concept, the
> dominant notion of a 'text' [. . .]—a 'text' that is henceforth no longer a finished
> corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins, but a differential
> network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other
> differential traces. Thus the text overruns all the limits assigned to it so far (not
> submerging or drowning them in an undifferentiated homogeneity, but rather
> making them more complex, dividing and multiplying strokes and lines). (Derrida
> 257)

This paper seeks to address four cases of precisely these 'dividing and
multiplying strokes and lines'—in the form of two novels, an animated
short film and a striking tandem relation between two entire bodies of
work, which emerge as both obviously and traditionally distinct and yet
also strikingly, almost disturbingly, Same. The first three objects of
scrutiny in this paper I will deal with more briefly, as thematic
prologues—and then spend more time on the fourth and last, tracing in
more detail its instances of kinship and parrotry.

Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* from 1990 is a fairy-
tale about the importance of story-telling. But it also paints a thoroughly
postmodern picture of stories, language and text as inherently and
inevitably intertextual. On the Moon of stories Kahani, an 'Ocean of the

Streams of Story'—'the biggest library in the universe'—provides the world's story-tellers with story-water which strengthens and continues their gift of the gab (72). The main character of the novel, Haroun, has a father who is one of these subscribers of story-water—and who, consequently, loses his storyteller status when he discontinues his subscription and loses his ability to tell stories.

The story-water is gardened and peopled with creatures of differing forms of creativity—the most important ones being the so-called Plentimaw fishes, hunger artists, which swallow the old stories in the story-water and spawn new ones. 'In their innards miracles occur; a little bit of one story joins on to an idea from another, and hey presto, when they spew the stories out they are not old tales but new ones. Nothing comes from nothing' (86). With this creative setup, Rushdie very clearly presents both creativity and articulation as regurgitations of something already articulated. However, most significantly, he does so without lamentation. To both romantic and modernist ears, regurgitation smacks of stale and lifeless second-hand words. Of written has-beens. But Rushdie's novel celebrates the re-presented and the second-hand—and presents the two both as a given, inevitable fact, as well as a highly productive one. Any story worth its salt, as it says, needs story water. Again, nothing comes from nothing. The word itself is dialogue, with a past. In this, Rushdie is neo-classicist and postmodern all at once, presenting a story-teller giving voice to 'what oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed' (Pope 139). As Graham Allen puts it, 'in the Postmodern epoch, theorists often claim, it is not possible any longer to speak of originality or the uniqueness of the artistic object [. . .] since every artistic object is so clearly assembled from bits and pieces of already existent art' (5).

Significantly, the villain of Rushdie's novel—the terrible Khattam-Shud, which in Hindustani means 'completely finished' or 'over and done with'—stands for silence and negation. With their multiple and complicated margins and pasts, stories represent something uncontrollable and always already in deferral, and hence also a thorn in the side of one seeking stasis, identity and fossilization. So Khattam-Shud counters each story with an anti-story, aimed to silence and annul it. 'On those twilit shores, no bird sang. No wind blew. No voice spoke' (122). Here, we clearly see Bakhtin's dialogic and ambivalent world as described by Kristeva—dialogic in its relation between writer and reader

(or story-teller and listener), ambivalent between word and word (or story and story)—stifled and stabilized, in the most destructive way imaginable (Kristeva 37). 'A text is a relational event', Harold Bloom says—but seen in quiet isolation, it is *Khattam-Shud* (Allen 136).

The second case of allusive intertextuality which I am going to discuss is Paul Auster's recent novel *Travels in the Scriptorium* from 2006. Like Rushdie's text, Auster's novel also focuses on the motif of the source, and on problematized originality, in keeping with Allen's portrait of postmodernity. For if we go by the characterization of postmodernism as a mindset of impossible originality, Paul Auster emerges as a thoroughly postmodern writer. His are books haunted and troubled by deferral, repetition, circularity and inconclusion. Auster supplements the postmodern notion of no beginnings with a range of novels testifying to the absence or impossibility of endings, conclusions. Both Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* and Auster's *Travels in the Scriptorium* describe a source which is strangely double—serving as both originator and result. *Travels in the Scriptorium* opens in seemingly complete oblivion with an unidentified man sitting on a bed in a room. As the novel progresses, the space surrounding this man—both the physical and geographical, as well as the mental space of his conscience, memory and awareness—is gradually articulated into place, mapped and spread out. Other characters come to see him, with stories and questions and tasks. And it turns out that the man is a writer, an author, originator of characters and events—who are now returning to confront and plague their inventor, who seems to be on trial for crimes against characterhood. In other words, the originator is now at the receiving end. What most clearly, yet rather subtly, strikes the cord of intertextuality in this confusing setup, however, is the fact that the characters who come to visit are all characters from other Auster novels. In other words, *Travels in the Scriptorium* as a whole is a portrait of intertextuality, of language as inherently borrowed and assembled from other bits and pieces. The visitors are described as agents, and they can be argued to both embody and maneuver the realm of Bakhtin's 'ambivalence', embodying the intertextual dimension of the word-to-word negotiation. And this makes Auster's novel a thoroughly 'ambivalent' one.

    With its particular execution of this sort of excessive and explicit intertextuality, *Travels in the Scriptorium* also sets itself apart from most

of Auster's other novels. Throughout Auster's writing, there are recurring names, objects and motifs which, with varying degrees of elaboration, constitute cases of allusion and motific intertextuality. However, *Travels in the Scriptorium* does something different. With its many visits from what is presented as the margins and outskirts of Auster's production, the novel more directly seems to outline the contours of what one could read as a mother text, a source text, an Austeresque head office—from and to which all the other texts both seem to emanate and return. This phenomenon somehow recalls Gérard Genette's architext and also the hopes for order and stability inherent in this concept, as elaborated in Genette's *The Architext*. Genette uses this concept to outline the contours of an imagined mental construct which in genre theory, for example, contains all the possible traits that any member deemed to belong to a certain genre might possess. In other words, Genette's architext is the imagined sum of all details that are considered to belong to it; imagined, because no such super-text, or absolute mother text, exists in reality. All members of a genre are partial members of it, with some, and not all, of its identifying features.

However, Auster's head office is at the same time presented as strangely oblivious and in the dark, and its central and primary tenant—the supposed creator of everything we see—as emphatically marginal and powerless. In other words, again, origin is supplemented. The subject becomes the object. In this, Auster's novel (as well as many of his other novels) implicitly nods to Harold Bloom's concept of the anxiety of influence and his notion of the 'poetic father'—a 'scandalous figure, scandalous because he cannot die or be murdered' (Allen 134). For clearly, authority and the power of what came before is on trial in Auster's novel. And indeed, a potential, brutal and actual murder of the man in the room—the 'poetic father'—is even discussed, as Auster again literalizes and makes explicit a point of intertextuality and intertextual relations. Even Bloom's discussions of reading as rereading and misreading—as that belated event—are subtly thematized in Auster's novel, beyond its ongoing and confusing proliferation of narrative planes. For the novel begins twice, with a little more than a hundred pages apart. And it begins like it ends. Once more supplementing the notion of originality, Auster lets his main character uncover a manuscript on his desk, under a fittingly unfinished report about the enigmatic Mr Land. And both he and we—despite our carefully honed instincts of

anticipation when it comes to Austeresque convolution—shudder, as the first lines of the manuscript repeat, verbatim, the opening words of the novel itself.

The third incident of intertextuality I am going to detail in this paper is a strange one, and it is—all things considered—the odd one out of the three texts discussed. The animated short film *Boundin'*, made by Bud Luckey and Pixar in 2004, is the odd one out, first, of course, because it is piece of visual and musical art, but secondly also because it disturbs some of the definitions of reference and repetition which even ultra-intertextual, and intra-textual, as I have demonstrated, texts such as Paul Auster's *Travels in the Scriptorium*, leave undisturbed. The film's director Bud Luckey plays with the very distinctions between the primary and the secondary, as well as between the same and the different, in a very interesting way. Indeed, to continue the suggested tagline of Rushdie's novel—that nothing comes from nothing—one could go further and say that Auster's novel argues that nothing comes from nothing, and returns to it, too. And finally, one could conclude with the mind-boggling point about Pixar's *Boundin'* that here, nothing is indistinguishable from nothing, and neither comes nor returns, because it emerges, disturbingly, as the same.

Boundin' is a heavily allusive and intertextual text, which explores a range of familiar registers and territories, from the musical western to folklore and the fable. One might even argue that the film parodies and references the style of Pixar itself, with its special irony, gestures and aesthetics. However, what is interesting about the short film at this point is its indirect citation of two elements from other Pixar films—citations which emerge as paradoxically both indirect and very direct. Three-dimensional computer animation works on the basis of a created figure or object which is rendered in three dimensions and after that programmed to act or move in a certain way. In other words, the core programming somehow remains the same, even when the object behaves differently. So what consequences does it have, then, when one learns that the vintage Ford T in *Boundin'* is directly lifted from the Pixar animated feature film *Cars* (*Boundin'*, director commentary)? And that the human arm which pulls the fluffy main character sheep off screen actually belongs to the dentist in the Pixar film *Finding Nemo*? These are not just references, or passages which resemble passages in other works

of art. They are the *same* as them, and their programmed base is identical—in a way which far exceeds the identity between words and letters reused to describe objects, characters and events in different literary texts. Here, for a brief moment, gestures in two different works of art are somehow completely identical. An arm doing in one work what it does in another would be described in exactly the same way. One could argue that an arm in a Shakespeare tragedy is also a nod to the mention of an arm in the Bible. However, in *Boundin'*, the relation is dramatically more intimate and elaborate. The philosophical implications of this relation are manifold, fundamental and obscure and one of the only clear points that emerges in its wake is that it thoroughly questions and problematizes many of the assumptions involved in analysis of difference and similitude, origin and subsequence as well as reference and repetition.

When asked how her stories begin, contemporary American experimentalist writer Alison Bundy describes the triggering potential and effect of the linguistic fragment. Beyond immediate conventional semantics, words appeal to her. Sentences appeal to her. But they do so more thanks to their phonetic qualities, their visual properties, or their potential for contrast or paradox—than to their conventionally semantic properties. Her body of work, primarily comprising two collections and a short, episodic tale—*A Bad Business* (1985), *Tale of a Good Cook* (1992) and *DunceCap* (1998)—is peopled by chihuahuas, beefsteaks or names of Russian silent movie actors, such as Ivan Mosjoukine, for example. This is an indication of the nature of the narrative ambition in Bundy's stories—and has clear consequences for the semantic cohesion and homogeneity in and of them. Bundy's stories gravitate differently from those of other writers, somehow. Clearly, theirs is a different point; they look elsewhere, differently, and for different purposes. 'There are writers who want to communicate. I am probably not one of them', as Bundy says (Bundy, personal interview). Bundy's stories are stories of sounds, of tensions, of changes, and of articulation. Their conventional transparency is supplemented, and their signifieds distanced. On a general level they are narratives about the fragility of the construct of story. Structures and conventions are displaced and frustrated throughout. Narrative efforts are obstructed, stories forget themselves, and speaking voices are lost in alien logics and incoherence. No wonder

a large portion of Bundy's narrators are nervous characters, characters at a loss. Instead of being wielders of language, they are swamped and overwhelmed by it. And this helps explain the atmosphere of anxiety and tension in Bundy's stories, in the face of the project of articulation and narration. Alison Bundy is very deliberate in her cultivation of this particular atmosphere. Misunderstanding is far more interesting, fertile and generative (of articulation and narrative, for example) than understanding, she says (Bundy, personal interview). And solution is overrated. Or point. Bundy wants her readers intrigued, haunted, even stuck. So, too, with her narrative voices, who are continually kept in the dark, troubled by the secrecies and inscrutabilities of articulation itself. Several Bundy stories baffle their speaking voices with secret letters, signs and silences. Language in Bundy's narrative space is covert. And her stories are tales of signification, articulation and proliferation.

Bundy's literary space clearly thematizes narrative obstruction and textual impossibility. *A Bad Business*, *Tale of a Good Cook* and *DunceCap* tell tales of how difficult tale-telling really is. They are swamped by redirection, misdirection and the indirect. How interesting, therefore, to find in and between the lines of these odd, often dead-ended texts references which are clear, direct and surprisingly non-covert. For Bundy seems to be quoting. Not in the formal and direct sense, with marks and clearly definable containment, but in a thematic and tonal sense. Her space seems to build on, cite and continue that of a literary predecessor from across the Atlantic—one whose own biography in fact (in a way which adds even further to the sense of kinship and similarity in play here) resembles very much one of Bundy's own figments, nervous, tormented, outcast, strange.

In her translator's preface to the Swiss writer Robert Walser's collection *Masquerade and Other Stories*, Susan Bernofsky says that,

> many readers turned their backs rather than enter into complicity with an author who had unhooked the safety net of reference. Saying yes to risk, like his Chinese woman who says yes to hunger, Walser often allowed the direction of a text to be dictated by a chance rhyme or association, a word's plurality of meaning, and in so doing tapped into the infinitive rewards of unsuspected truths, of the 'quiddities' that 'never rest [but] ramble'. (Bernofsky xxi)

Like many of Alison Bundy's, Walser's texts constitute elusive textual experiments, often governed by alien logics and unconventional patterns of cohesion. Here, too, the notion of point is severely tested, on several

levels. The stories portray 'a life of observant idling, city strolling, mountain hikes, and woodland walks, a life lived on the edges of lakes, on the margins of meadows, on the verges of things, a life in slow but constant motion, at a gawker's pace: sad, removed, amused, ironic, obsessively reflexive' (Gass ix). Conventional semantic transparency in the tales—'unhooked from the safety net of reference'—seems obscured by the mirrored mirroring of this reflexion; 'to gaze on this gaze, to look into this look, examine this examination as nicely as he could' (Walser 1990: 194). These characterizing features, combined with the strange, frequent anonymity of Walser's stories, as well as their strange archaic tone, cast a certain shade of allegory over them—a peculiar, implicit italicization. The tales seem to resist conventional assignment of meaning to them, and thus both displace themselves and invoke ambiguity and uncertainty in their wake. The title of Walser's story 'Masquerade' is symptomatic that way, suggesting subversion, carnival, reversal and deception. 'A child, a boy, a girl, a woman, a youth, a man, and an old man and woman filed past the pagan stone, which was utterly unaffected by this procession' (1990: 191). Why this proliferating list of aging characters? Why so many of them? Why so anonymous? And how could a stone be affected? 'No one has the right to act as though he knew me', one Walser character says (Bernofsky xxiii). So, too, with Walser's stories in general. Gothicism—another topography very much in play in Bundy's work—also seems to haunt Walser's stories, which talk of horror, anger, fright, speechlessness, mystery and doubt. All these details, and the strange combination of immediate clarity in an otherwise obscure and seemingly random and elusive narrative space clearly link Walser's texts to those of Alison Bundy—in a way which exceeds mere nodding or reference. Bundy seems to be writing Walser, extending his stories and fates of incomprehensible allegory. His tales seem to function as the obscure—and of course itself at least secondary—point of origin of hers. However, this is neither parody nor pastiche. Bundy is no mere epigone. This is kindred, respectful and affectionate homage and co-authory—a continuation of a body of stories whose previous voice is no longer speaking.

For the purpose of emphasizing the further dismantling of the supposed autonomy of the motifs of origin and originality, my reading of the double-voiced tandem monologue of Robert Walser and Alison Bundy will have as its primary focus junctions and passages from

Walser's work, instead of those of their perpetuator. Bundy's stories are also Walser's, and the latter is where I now turn.

In his late forties, in 1920s Switzerland, Robert Walser was diagnosed with schizophrenia, and he spent the remainder of his life—almost thirty years—in various mental institutions. Whether or not Walser was in fact schizophrenic, his stories very much are—haunted by an atmosphere of ambiguity, tension and uncertainty. They are stories of confused narrators' confused encounters with a confusing world. His characters are nervous, tired, at a loss—and unable to construct cohesive stories. Walser's story 'The Green Spider' introduces a storyline very clearly coming into being in the course of its own articulation, thus thematizing the narrative process itself. Story is a construction—which, significantly, seems to lead to madness and disruption, however insincere. Convention is suffocating.

> Two in the afternoon it will have been, in a most sumptuously furnished apartment, whose décor may have consisted entirely of damask. There's no question of my knowing what damask really is, it's enough that I once ran across it while reading and flipping through some book or other. Isn't it splendid how I admit this, so frankly and freely, and how without delay I now place a green spider in the residence, for she's just occurred to my seven senses, of which, as always, I'm in perfect control, though now and then, just for the fun of it, I act the madman, wrapping myself, as it were, in the velvet of the most elegant insanity, for sometimes common sense bores me. (Walser 1990: 139)

Or, in the words of Bundy's tale "The Nervous Person", 'yet I do not wish to give the impression that he was in any way unhappy. Far from it, he was a happy man, only with a slightly nervous disposition' (*Business* 13). Not only does the gradual seeping into Walser's story of madness and illogic clearly anticipate several of Alison Bundy's stories. Walser's green spider—the first sign of gothic reversal in the story—is implicitly quoted in the title bug of Bundy's tale "The Baby and the Poison Beetle". In fact, Walser's passage seems to wrap itself in the maddening proliferation of storylines piling up in its wake, slowly drowning its supposed point of narrative origin of an isolated point in time, 'two in the afternoon'. Proliferation and unruly signification are also lurking behind the door of Bundy's strange surrogate text "The Man, the Storm". Here, one character's obsessive imaginings of storms and dangers are gradually overwhelming him, threatening to destroy his role in and relation to his immediate surroundings and his family behind the door he is desperate to

keep closed. In fact, this motif of proliferation and piling-up signification is one of the defining features of Bundy's literary space in its entirety. Walser's "The Boat" further elaborates the theme of narrative wrapping, and suggests that every story is a re-telling, something already wrapped, and thus potentially maddening—implicitly painting both himself and Bundy as successors, as much as originators. 'I think I've written this scene before, but I'll write once again' (1990: 29). Or, in the words of his story "Nothing at all", 'of course, many a woman has gone shopping and in so doing been just a little absentminded. So in no way is this story new' (1990: 112). Clearly, novelty in supposed, immediate message or point is of no particular concern in these texts. The assemblage of text, of elusive points (or, points of reference to other points), on the other hand, seems much more interesting. Bundy's *Tale of a Good Cook* describes a group of baffled dinner guests seeing their hostess first slim down to half size within days, and then split in two a moment later. Overwhelmed by this unsettling breach of logic and convention, the guests later leave the dinner, finding themselves unable to articulate it. They are muted by nonsense. And the story and explanation of this mysterious event is inadequately pieced together by the equally baffled narrator who has only descriptions from mute witnesses at his disposal. Fragmented and elusive points, indeed. In Walser's words, '[g]et hold of some masks, half a dozen noses, foreheads, tufts of hair, and eyebrows, and twenty voices' (1990: 3).

Another narrator seems to lose himself in swamping narratives of hypothetical consideration, and his initial thought flounders.

> If I were a painter, and my becoming one isn't out of the question, for no one knows his own destiny, I'd most passionately love to be a painter of autumn. My only fear is that my colors would prove inadequate. Perhaps I still know too little about it. And why worry at all about something that hasn't yet happened? After all, it's only the present moment to which I should and must devote myself. Where have I heard these words? (Walser 1990: 5)

Even the present—to which the narrator returns, from his apparently pointless journey to a future 'that hasn't yet happened'—is supplemented, displaced and heard before. Bundy's "Apostle Love" tells of a speaking voice who sees its living room space—its home—invaded by an obscure, offensive and unattractive stranger. Departures are easily contaminated. Alison Bundy's "Tale of the Times" contains another

excellent example of heavily detoured, textual deflection, as the sister-in-law or brother-in-law of the main character is described as one of the 'the parents of her deceased husband's nephew' (1985: 43). It is clear that it is not the chief aim of these tales to articulate themselves by the shortest and fastest route through language.

The motif of the supplemented present is also explicitly articulated both in the title and in the opening sentence of Walser's story "Response to a Request", with its 'you ask me if I have an idea for you, a sort of sketch that I might write, a spectacle, a dance, a pantomime, or anything else that you could use as an outline to follow' (1982: 3). In other words, the story opens with an open-ended dialogue, as a request to an unuttered response somehow preceding it. The speaking voice of the story "Dostoevsky's *Idiot*" [sic] even seems to long for this space beyond his own story. 'Why don't I suffer from convulsive seizures?', he exclaims—in a narrative gesture anticipating the frustration of one Bundy character, 'disgusted to find I write only of love' (Bundy 1985: 45; Walser 1982: 149). However, he realizes that he is unable to shoulder the story he longs for. 'I'm sorry I'm not the hero of a novel. I'm not up to playing such a part, I just read a lot sometimes' (Walser 1982: 149).

Walser seems particularly interested in this motif of the bruised and battered character, and his story "Nervous"—a clear thematic cousin of Bundy's 'The Nervous Person'—elaborates it rather dramatically. As the narrator says about himself, 'I am a little worn out, raddled, squashed, downtrodden, shot full of holes. Mortars have mortared me to bits. I am a little crumbly, decaying, yes, yes' (Walser 1982: 51). He is shot through and displaced by absences—and subtly trapped in the project of describing accurately the exact nature of his predicament. In this, 'Nervous' also very much anticipates Bundy's 'Onset of his Sickness' and its opening list of negations. Walser's narrator goes on, 'I am a bit scalded and scorched, yes, yes. [. . .] I am very tough, I can vouch for that. I am no longer young, but I am not old yet, definitely not. I am aging, fading a little, but that doesn't matter. I am not very nervous, to be sure, I just have a few grouches. Sometimes I am a bit weird and grouchy, but that doesn't mean I am altogether lost, I hope' (Walser 1982: 51). "The Chinese Woman, the Chinaman" also articulates a narrator trying to label and legitimate himself—to establish himself and his 'good word', as Bundy's detective has it (Bundy 1992: 7). 'Most people are monstrously good. I have taken a lesson from alle these

examples, and have become so myself. I go to bed early and am early to rise. I am, I believe, on my way to becoming useful to society. Don't you think me capable of this? The most respectable convictions reside in me' (Walser 1990: 153). But often, alas, convictions alone do not do the trick. 'The art of living [. . .] has something tightrope-walkerish about it' (Walser 1990: 183). However, many of Walser's narrators emerge as strange aliens in their own stories, knowing little or nothing of what is going in them. 'Is the man in the boat an abductor? Is the woman the happy, enchanted victim? This we don't know; we see only how they both kiss each other' (Walser 1982: 29). Narrators seem unable to look beyond the signs around them—incapable of seeing what they are signs *of*.

The only character of Alison Bundy's "The Trip" is desperately trying to keep out a world over which he seems to possess no significant control—but which seems to constitute a threat to his narrative autonomy. The windows of his car are hermetically shut, its doors are locked, and the man is convinced he will be able to make the trip 'and keep all his secrets hidden' (1985: 41). However, he seems implicitly aware of the futility of this project. His entire system of logic has been turned upside down, and his statements of almost pure nonsense reveal a character in dire straits. There is bizarre causality in the narrator's concession that 'although the car had not moved in an hour, night was coming.' So, too, with the reverse version of *A Bad Business*'s epigraphic Buster Keaton quote of the man being sure that 'the change of light was due to his closing in' on something. And his nonsensical talk of something spectacular emerging in the growing darkness (because, for anything to be spectacular, then by definition, there has to be light) also constitutes an example of a person at his wits' end. It is clear that the man is trying to narrate himself into safety and authority—but he is leaning in vain on Austin's rule of saying so, makes it so, as discussed in Austin's analyses of the category of illocutionary acts (120). 'Now we are getting somewhere,' 'I could tell you the meaning of this in a jiffy. Yes indeed,' the man says. But nothing happens. And he cannot. And despite what he thinks, he is not 'responsible for a group of passengers'—he is not in charge, and he is all alone (1985: 41).

In contrast to these failed authorities, who crowd the realms of both Walser and Bundy, the former's text "The Boy (II)" presents a boy who, indeed, longs for ignorance and grammatical object-hood. 'Among other

things, the woman called him by name, but did he know what his name was, did he know himself, didn't he find it, in a certain way, more interesting to be perfectly ignorant about this?' (1990: 194). The speaking voice of Walser's "Nervous" also concedes and yields his narrative powers.

> I am blithe in spirit, although I am aging a little, crumbling and fading, which is quite natural [. . .] Grouches, grouches, one must have them, and one must have the courage to live with them. That's the nicest way to live. Nobody should be afraid of this little bit of weirdness. Fear is altogether foolish. 'You are very nervous!' 'Yes, come by all means and calmly tell me so!' (1982: 52)

Robert Walser and Alison Bundy very much emerge as literary relatives in their particular focus on and fascination with the pointless and inadequate. Stories and characters change their mind and change course, they forget themselves, and fail to actually tell the story they seem to want to tell. One of Walser's narrators abandons ship over a sudden craving for a drink. 'And now it must be ended, this snake-entwisted tale, for I must confess a sudden longing for a glass of beer and intend to satisfy this with unrelenting inconsiderateness' (1990: 140). Another goes out of his way to make the stories he is telling odd and unusual—"Two Strange Stories", even (1982). Clearly, again, clarity is no primary concern. Reading through the narrative space of Alison Bundy, the reader continually gets the distinct feeling that something is out of joint. One continues to stop and think that one has indeed missed something, in the deceptively straight-forward universe of Bundy's pigs, steaks, chihuahuas and beetles saying 'tikka tikka tikka' (1985: 18). Many of Bundy's tales seem to be speaking from a confused and memory-less narrative perspective, absent-mindedly meandering through a strangely exploded and unconventional textual hierarchy of significance. For example, the governing cohesion in Bundy's "The Wheelbarrow Story" moves through dreams, gardening and worms—to a lake, a girl, and the closing image of the story of a wheelbarrow. Similarly, the narrator of Walser's "The Green Spider" tries to articulate something out of his reach. 'The gigantically tall windows shimmered at night with such splendor that my mouth and its modest tool, my inherited language, are incapable of describing it and stammering it out' (Walser 1990: 140). He finds his narrative focus flickered from object to object, relaying his story along—from an apartment, to a certain décor, to a

spider, to his own narrative efforts, to a peculiar anthropomorphization of the spider, to a mysterious, young noble etc. He seems unable to make up his mind as to what story to tell; or, indeed, refuses to make that decision. So, too, with the narrator of Walser's "Two Strange Stories" mentioned before, who somehow leaves his story both concluded and open, inconcluded, at the same time. Towards the end of it, the story seems to gravitate toward the point of its departure, as though getting ready to start again. This motif of potentially overlapping narratives is also in play in Bundy's "Early Childhood Development", whose child walks around the block to find the penny she herself placed on the ledge above her head. And as she does so, the story seems ready to begin again—written by both Walser and Bundy in the process.

Overlapping or confluence of narratives also constitutes a significant governing principle in Walser's ironic text "The Job Application", which seems to superpose conflicting genres, which—in superposition—seem to annul each other. And again, because of it, the text emerges as neither one nor the other. It emerges as a story beside the point—and its narrator seems trapped in the narrative framework of a job application he does not want to tell. 'Large and difficult tasks I cannot perform, and obligations of a far-ranging sort are too strenuous for my mind. I am not particularly clever, and first and foremost I do not like to strain my intelligence overmuch. I am a dreamer rather than a thinker, a zero rather than a force, dim rather than sharp' (1982: 27-28). Here, a speaker is very much directly trying to betray his 'good word'—a quality otherwise so bombastically craved by the detective narrator of Alison Bundy's *Tale of a Good Cook*. 'Although I am not a traveller,' as it says, 'I have been out and about in the world. I observed children playing with ropes at noon; witnessed the wild dogs running through brambles at dusk; just yesterday, sat watching the trees in an empty park in the heart of the night' (Bundy 1992: 7). This is clearly conscience speaking—but, alas, no trees grow into the sky.

> However, while I feel compelled to establish myself and my good word, I must add that I am not, in truth, the author of this tale: I must take care not to misrepresent myself. I believe I am, strictly speaking, a reporter, perhaps a detective—yes, certainly it would be neither inaccurate nor immodest to portray my role here as one of detection [. . .] I have attempted at all times to deal with the events in a straightforward manner, to regard the facts dispassionately, and to add them simply together as a child will add numbers; and, when the facts resist addition, to follow one line of reasoning until it proves false, to turn then and follow another, and yet

> another, so arriving eventually, like a man who has crossed a great uncharted forest, prompted by an obscure but urgent message, who wandered circuitously, using any means he could draw from the habit of muscle and intuition of mind to determine his path, so arriving, I say, at the open field which we know to be the good field of truth. (Bundy 1992: 7-8)

Great uncharted forest, indeed—however, any good field of truth? No such luck. Bundy's *Tale of a Good Cook* constitutes a mystery refusing to be told. It is a failed detective story—based on hear-say accounts from mute witnesses. Bundy and Walser write havoc and pandemonium. Walser's "Two Stories" describes a scene of children scolding parents, students drawing coaches, and 'an aristocratic lady' carrying 'a booted and spurred lackey upon her delicate shoulders. [. . .] All is chaos, shrieks, yodels, running, racing, stench' (1990: 13).

Tension and jarring contrast are also very much in play in Walser's "A Biedermeier Story", with its 'housemaid, of whom and in whose hearing, albeit she was in her way an excellent person perhaps, more young than old, and more nearly beautiful than fundamentally hideous, some were apt to say she was a beast' (1982: 184). Similarly, 'her lover became, with more success than was welcome to his fellows, a criminal, who did with wondrous precision things I shall not mention [. . .] while misdeed upon misdeed accrued to his credit, or, in slightly different language, good prose pieces galore seemed to drop from his pen' (1982: 185). The narrative seems jolted out of tune, and changes its course—like Bundy's criminal on his way to a robbery, distracted by the fragrant roses in *Tale of a Good Cook*, which is indeed also itself both generated and displaced by another deceitful writer, namely the poetry-writing woman. Again, poetry, language and literature emerge as gestures of violent and uncontrollable proliferation, diversion and misdirection.

The four works of always already intersecting textualities which I have discussed in this paper outline a development in and an exploration of what appears to be a most ambivalent originality. Both re- and paraphrasing Derrida, one can say that these works argue that the original really is not that original. Rushdie's novel portrays originality as always already reused and regurgitated—and, significantly, generatively and creatively so. His is no mourned paraphrase. Auster's multi-layered scriptorium in deferral presents a feeble and oblivious point of origin as a site of return—as an end point, rather than a beginning or source. Here,

origin is not the subject of the sentence, but the object of it. Bud Luckey's short film seems to further disturb the entire distinction between origin and subsequence. It presents a narrative space in which the repeated is quietly, unusually and both excessively and disturbingly identical to what it repeats. And Alison Bundy's literary universe—slim in scale, but huge in implication—seems to overtly nod to and explicitly elaborate other points of origin than what would traditionally be seen as its own. Bundy's texts celebrate and paraphrase a separate source, but at the same time contribute to it, continue and change it. In other words, the immediate origin of these tales emerges as oddly secondary—backstaged and supplemented by a point before it, which they add to and rearticulate. And, most significantly, they do all this in full view and without smoke-screens or embarrassment—that is, without shying away, instead articulating the paradoxically clear subtext and agenda that this gesture is not only unavoidable, but always already happening and taking place in any cluster of words and letters. Text is, unavoidably, intertext. Bundy's and Walser's tales thus join both Auster's scriptorium and Luckey's palimpsest visuals in reiterating the key point of Rushdie's tale of the story Moon Kahani—that nothing comes from nothing. These odd cousins all suggest that going back to where one came from might not be the best way to put it. One might as well go forward—to where one came from.

References

Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality*. London: Routledge. 2000.

Auster, Paul. *Travels in the Scriptorium*. London: Faber and Faber. 2006.

Austin, J.L. "How to Do Things with Words." *The Theory of Criticism*. Ed. Raman Selden. New York: Longman, 1988: 120-121.

Bernofsky, Susan. "Translator's Preface." *Masquerade and Other Stories*. By Robert Walser. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1990.

Boundin'. Dir. Bud Luckey. Pixar. 2003.

Bundy, Alison. *A Bad Business*. Providence. Lost Roads. 1985.

—. Personal interview. Providence. 17 September 2003. Transcript available.

—. *Tale of a Good Cook*. Providence, Paradigm. 1992.

Cars. Dir. John Lasseter. Pixar. 2006.

Derrida, Jacques. "Living On: Border Lines". *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*. Ed. Peggy Kamuf. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991: 254-268.

Finding Nemo. Dir. Andrew Stanton. Pixar. 2003.

Foucault, Michel. *The Archeology of Knowledge*. London: Tavistock. 1974.

Gass, William H. Foreword. *Masquerade and Other Stories*. By Robert Walser. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP. 1990.

Genette, Gérard. *The Architext*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1992.

Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue and Novel." *The Kristeva Reader.* Ed. Toril Moi. Word. Oxford: Blackwell. 1986. 34-62.

Miller, J. Hillis. "Stevens' Rock and Criticism as Cure, II." *Theory Now and Then*. Durham: Duke UP. 1991. 117-32.

Pope, Alexander. "An Essay on Criticism." *The Theory of Criticism— from Plato to the Present*. Ed. Raman Selden. London: Longman. 1994. 85-86.

Rushdie, Salman. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. London: Puffin Books-Penguin. 2003.

Walser, Robert. *"Masquerade" and other Stories*. Transl. Susan Bernofsky. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1990.

—. *Selected Stories*. Transl. Christopher Middleton and others. New York: Farrar. 1982.

The Colour of Intertextuality: Indigo

Pia Brînzeu, West University of Timişoara (Romania)

New novels are frequently old ones in disguise, especially when authors linger too much in the shadow of their predecessors. At the same time, the dialogue established between the most various texts implies a challenging process of rejuvenation, which conserves the monuments of the past by subtly and subversively interrogating them. It is not surprising then that postmodern writers have discovered and enjoyed the confrontation inherent in the paradoxical nature of intertextuality. On the one hand, they have explored its positive implications, the fact that it links all literary productions in a common network, annihilating the limits of the individual creations and including them within a larger transpersonal text; on the other hand, authors have been challenged to contradict the idea that, since everything has already been written, they can never be original and, accordingly, are always liable for plagiarism.

Marina Warner's novel *Indigo* (1992) and Peter Greenaway's film *Prospero's Books* (1991) are recent illustrations of a famous intertextual series, starting with Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and containing an impressive list of fictional and nonfictional works.[3] In both Warner's novel and Greenaway's film, colour and water symbolism favour a holistic interpretation of intertextuality. Instead of emphasizing the process of fragmentation, the boundary crossings between texts, and the contamination of texts by other texts, these works highlight the complementary process of intertextual reorganization, attempted with the help of new units offered to the reader.

---

[3] The list contains among other titles Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* (1960), Gonzalo Lamming's *The Pleasure of Exile* (1958) and *Water with Berries* (1972), Aimé Césaire's *A Tempest* (1969; tr. 1985), Roberto F. Retamar's *Caliban* (1980), Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow* (1984), Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day* (1989), Rachel Ingalls *Mrs Caliban* (1983), and Tad Williams' *Caliban's Hour* (1993).

In writing *Indigo*, Marina Warner started from some autobiographical details and from two major texts, one verbal (Shakespeare's *The Tempest*) and one visual (Turner's painting *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying. Typhoon Coming On*). The two sources establish a double form of intertextuality: verbal-verbal and verbal-nonverbal (pictorial). Literature, theatre, and painting are semiotically bridged to create a syncretic intertext of remarkable complexity. This represents a higher degree of intertextuality than the one discussed so far by critics, who noticed the verbal echoes, the parallel characters and situations, the quotations, the play-within-the play, and all the other elements which encourage us to include *Indigo* within the intertextual series of *The Tempest* (Williams-Wanquet 2005: 274).

Marina Warner's novel was inspired by her father's side of the family. The history of the Warners goes as far back as 1622, when Thomas Warner settled on St Kitts. Warner's great-grandfather is represented in the novel as Christopher Everard, the British conqueror who colonizes the island of Liamuiga and fights for supremacy with Sycorax, a healer, magician, and producer of indigo-dye. The latter, a profound character, of unexpected complexity, represents both the female voice and the voice of the colonized that are absent from Shakespeare's play. Unlike Shakespeare's character, Sycorax adopts Ariel, an Arawak girl, and saves Caliban, named Dulé, from the womb of his drowned mother, one of the slaves who in Turner's painting are thrown overboard to bring their owners the desired insurance money.

The story of *Indigo* has two distinct temporal layers. The 16th and 17th-century line of action is linked to the 20th-century one through Everard's descendants: Anthony Everard, his son Kit, his daughter Xanthe by a second wife, and his granddaughter Miranda. Anthony was born and brought up in the Carribean islands conquered by his ancestor, but moves to England after the death of his first wife, the creole mother of Kit. The connection between the natural wilderness of the Carribean islands and the social wilderness of London is established by the coloured nurse of Miranda and Xanthe, Serafine, who represents a modern replica of Sycorax.

The constant references to Shakespeare's play are meant to underline the major differences between *The Tempest* and *Indigo* while highlighting numerous intertextual connections. Such statements as

Miranda's that she is aware of not living inside one of Shakespeare's plays as well as a lot of ruptures and disconnections make it clear that Warner's novel wants to deal with the numerous things left unsaid in *The Tempest*. One of them is the absence of the female voices, noticed by Warner as a fault which has to be corrected. That is why she places the weight of her novel on two women, Sycorax and Miranda, the former standing for the colonized inhabitants of the island, the past, wilderness, magic, and craftsmanship, the latter for the present, the colonizers, civilization, and art. Warner's main target is to undertake a feminist critique of a play in which the female presence had been cancelled from what she calls 'the general music of the island' (Warner 1994: 5). Another intention is to approach the life and civilisation of the islanders in the Caribbean territories before the colonisation of the British, and depict the 'disappearance' evoked by Turner's painting, the 'swallowing' of peoples, with its huge 'historical as well as an emotional dimension' (6-7). Warner wants to 'reverse the viewpoint and see such an episode through the eyes of people on the receiving end, not through the eyes of slavers but through the eyes of the drowned and of the people whose lives are going to be irrevocably changed by the effects of the slave trade and the arrival of the people who run it'. Her intention is to 're-vision' familiar features, 'shaking them out and looking at them from another angle in order to recapture them in a different light', so that 'a new story can emerge which speaks more urgently to the needs of the present' (5). This intention must be correlated with the detail mentioned by Warner that John Ruskin, the art critic, bought Turner's painting because he was impressed by the purple and blue colours, shaping 'the lurid shadows of the hollow breakers' cast upon 'the mist of night, which gathers cold and low, advancing like the shadow of death upon the guilty ship as it labours amidst the lightning of the sea' (1).

In a similar way, Warner's Liamuiga is pictured in the novel as 'an island of emeralds and purples' (89), dominated by the colour indigo. That is the reason why the title of the novel and of its second part is *Indigo*. The other parts of the novel are associated with lilac/pink, orange/red, gold/white, green/khaki, and maroon/black. Gilbert feels that this combination of colours represents the main deviation from the source, the novel, in her opinion, echoing the play like a cave in which sounds get fractured into colours (Gilbert 1992: 191). In fact, *Indigo* turns out to be both a wonderfully intricate amalgam of colours as well

as a maze of narratives, arguments, and themes, where nothing is perfectly black or white. The natives are called 'musty, métis, quadroon, octaroon' according to the blood combination of their ancestors, and the slavers use 'charts like stockbreeders and tabulated blood degrees to the thirty-second drop' (68). Dulé/Caliban is 'mottled purplish' (85), and, when Sycorax, repudiated by her husband, returns with her son to her native place, the villagers believe that she mated with one of the animals she had tamed, blurring the distinction between man and beast, domestic and wild. Ariel's child by Kit is also a mongrel, reminding of Ariel's strangeness, while Kit himself is called 'Nigger Everard' (67) by his schoolmates.

The transgressive bodies and the hybridity of colours suggest a departure from the tradition of the stage, from what the canon has imposed as white or coloured in Renaissance civilization. Even noises are changed by Warner into colours, an uninterrupted source of delight for Serafine. Metamorphosis is not only the engine which drives history and nations forward, but also, as Warner herself confesses, the key to the practice of rewriting. It is within this context that water can be related to what Warner calls 'the body of stories that we have in some strange ways inherited', the 'ocean of stories' into which she longs to dive and to resurrect through transformation (Williams-Wanquet 2005: 281). This desire is echoed by Serafine, in whose stories everything changes shapes, so as to bring about the bettering of a world whose history is too often based on crimes, tortures, and sufferings. The change of noises into waters, colours, and stories forms the basic dynamism of life. It represents both the conclusion reached by Serafine and the end of the novel:

> There are many noises in her head these befuddled days of her old age; they whisper news to her of this island and that, of people scattered here and there, from the past and from the present. Some are on the run still; but some have settled, they have ceased wandering, their maroon state is changing sound and shape. She's often too tired nowdays to unscramble the noises, but she's happy hearing them, to change into stories another time. (402)

Colour and water symbolism are developed in Warner's novel under the more or less conscious influence of Turner's painting. *The Tempest* itself is rather colour poor. Black, brown, red, white, yellow, and golden are mentioned only once in the play. If we compare *The Tempest* to *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream, where black is mentioned 6 times, green 9 times, and yellow 4 times, we realize the coloristic poverty of a play in which sounds are more important than colours. The only colour that is mentioned repeatedly in *The Tempest* is green, four times with reference to grass and land (in II, 1 and IV, 1) and twice with reference to the sea (in V.1.). In Warner's novel, green is replaced by indigo. Indigo is a dye obtained by Sycorax from the plant *indigofera tinctoria*, after a complicated process of transformations, 'starting with the seething leaves of the plant and finishing with the moment when the dye turned blue in contact with the air' (147). In Warner's novel, indigo is also the colour of the water: the sweet water Sycorax uses for her dye, the rain water, the forest dew, and the sea. Although all waters are blue, there are differences in how they are perceived. For Sycorax, sweet water is a source of life, while the sea represents a constant menace she cannot quite decipher. She associates it with the dead bodies on the beach, obvious signs of chaos and disorder. When looking at the corpses, Sycorax foresees her own death, the death of her people as well as the end of their civilization. In his turn, Caliban/ Dulé associates water with life. Because he was delivered from the sea, he prefers to 'learn the streams', to 'develop skills on the water' (93), experimenting with fish traps, diving into the ocean, and travelling through the blue waterways in search of news, information, and other people's stories.

Indigo is also perceived as the colour of time, of a past rolling into the present as if it were an ocean 'swelling and falling back, then returning again' (95). Both Sycorax and Caliban/Dulé see time and space as 'a churn or a bowl, in which substances and essences were tumbled and mixed, always returning, now emerging into personal form, now submerged into the mass in the continuous present tense of existence, as one of the vats in which Sycorax brewed the indigo' (122). Reliving the past means to preserve continuity, to repeat one's life over and over in a continuous cycle. Contrariwise, the Europeans see themselves poised on 'a journey towards triumph, perhaps, or extinction' (121), a linear and rather simplistic journey, in which indigo is reduced to the mere colour of a plant. Therefore, when cultivating indigo for the first time, Kit Everard finds the plant 'tricky' and 'demanding' (163), failing to understand its alchemy and the profound symbolism of its colour. He needs Ariel's help. Thus the traditional Eurocentric perspective, which according to Geraldo De Sousa (2002: 182) turns the native cultures into

caricatures, is inverted in Warner's novel. The fight between the British and the natives finishes with the victory of Sycorax, Ariel, and Serafine.

After many years of dyeing, indigo stains Sycorax' skin. First her hands, then her whole body is coloured blue, the witch being transformed into an indigo creature, different from all the other inhabitants of the island. Sycorax' body is more than a material envelope for the soul, a primitive, inferior flesh of the devalued Other. It becomes the unusual physique of an angelic creature, totally opposed to what Shakespeare had in mind when referring to Sycorax as a 'foul', 'damn'd witch' (I.2.391: 397). Warner's Sycorax knows that 'some people have their eyes turned inward, others are always scanning the horizon' (95) and that she, undoubtedly, belongs to the first kind. Her spiritually elevated attitude as well as the fact that indigo comes from Asia, mainly from India, makes us arrive at what is so familiar in Eastern philosophy, the colour indigo of the Third Eye Chakra. Located between the eyes, this chakra deals with psychic powers, and, accordingly, its indigo colour comes to symbolize a mystical borderland of wisdom, self-mastery, and spiritual realization. For the Indians, indigo represents the color of dignity and high aspirations, of inner visions, intuition, clairvoyance, perception, imagination, concentration, peace of mind, and projection of will. Like indigo gemstones, it speeds the vibration of energy toward a spiritual realm, and has a transformative quality that stimulates an increase in communication skills, intuition, creativity, and inspiration.

A similarly powerful water and colour symbolism as the one developed by Warner in *Indigo* can be noticed in Greenaway's film, *Prospero's Books*. From the very first images, an interesting shift is suggested: water turns into a book. Greenaway may have taken for granted Stephano's invitation addressed to Trinculo: 'Here kiss the book!' (II. 2. 131). Stephano means the Bible, but shows Trinculo a bottle with liquor. For Greenaway, the book is like drinks, strong enough to give power, courage, and the necessary determination to rebel against canons. He himself has rebelled against American filmmakers, dissatisfied that 'they're extremely good at making straightforward, linear narrative movies, which entertain superbly. But they very rarely do anything else' (Pagan 1995: 43). He prefers, therefore, the postmodern techniques related to narrative intransitivity (gaps, interruptions, and digressions as contrasted to clear causal development of the story line) and Brechtian estrangement (an alienation effect rather than the

traditional viewer identification with characters). Water and its indigo colour, a perfect symbol of these postmodern narrative effects, changes into a magic book, the book which Prospero announces he is to drown at the end of Shakespeare's play.

This symbolic shift provokes a larger meditation on allegorical significances, on communication through books, stages and films, words and images, iconic and symbolic signs. *The Book of Water*, the first of the twenty-four books of the film, has been perceived by Tweedie (2000: 104) as 'a space of instability and heterogeneity', due to the larger intertextual approach, but also to the water metaphor, fundamental for the entire film. Water, fluidity, the dripping in the early images of the film, and the final drowning of the book (turning thus back to water) imply a deep conflict between Shakespeare's classic text and its filmic adaptation, the 'clash between the first Folio and the new technologies of representation' (105-106), between the logocentric period of the Gutenberg era and the imagocentric world of the 21st century. The book also stands for political power, for Prospero's force of keeping the native inhabitants in submission as well as for the 'visualization of the spoken and the written word' (107). The film is an allegory of the adaptation of canonical literature to cinema, with *The Tempest*'s colonial concerns refigured as a confrontation between a masterful original and an unfaithful follower. Moreover, the reading experience itself is for Greenaway a watery process, as is intertextuality too. Water creates an intensified, dense, and varied background, being constantly made visible and audible in the film, used for puns and frequently referred to by Prospero, when he mentions storms, waves, waterfalls, shells, brushes, sponges, and basins. Their destructive force is suggested by an indigo colour. 'Water is fantastically photogenic', Greenaway declares in an interview that 'the world is four-fifth water, we are all born in amniotic fluid, water is a big cleansing medium whether it's literal or metaphorical. On another, pragmatic level, water provides almost a legitimate opportunity for people to be seen nude /.../, but it literally is the oil of life, it is the blood of life, which splashes, dribbles, washes, roars – it's a great friend and a terrifying enemy, it has all those significances. And there is a way in which somehow water is the unguent, the balm, the cooling agent of a lot of the dramas of all the films' (Rodgers 1991-1992: 15).

Although it is water-proof, *The Book of Water* is finally destroyed by the indigo rains and waves. They are provoked by Prospero-the-creator, author of *The Tempest* and a divinity who writes. Prospero gradually turns into Shakespeare himself, as so many postmodern characters do when transcending fictional frames and becoming the author of the work in which they themselves play the main part. As a playwright, Prospero uses an indigo ink, the liquid of creation and power, the symbol of a benevolent tempest of the mind and hand. We see the words 'boatswain' and 'bestir' written over and over again, dripping like the intial drops of water, implying the idea of expansion – from a single drop to a whole ocean, from a simple word to a whole communicational system, from a mere text to an entire intertextual line, and, of course, from a plain image to an entire imagocentric civilization. The orthography of these words, spelt in various ways, shows that language is gradually deconstructed by those who use it. *The Book of Water* ultimately generates a text with immaterial signs, with words hardly able to communicate.

That liquids establish a deep semantic relationship with indigo can be explained by Greenaway's fascination for nuances and shades. He has acknowledged that he favours painterly considerations over dramatic ones and that he has tried 'to mark the site of the struggle of the emergence of something new' (Pagan 1995: 52) in the world-projecting potential of language and images. He has therefore resorted to a complex technology, including computer generated shapes and figures, animation of images, violation of boundaries, transgression of spaces and their transformation into indistinguishable surfaces of writing. *Prospero's Books* inaugurates a paradoxical correlation of superimposed images, witnessing the merging of different visual arts such as photography, film, video into what Yvonne Spielman called 'intermedia' (Spielman 2001: 57). But since the traditional syntax is avoided, it is the water isotopy that makes the text coherent.

In conclusion, we can say that the modern departures from the Shakespearean text create a form of intertextuality that has become larger and larger with every new item produced in literature or any other art. Its expansion cannot be stopped. Greenaway's rewriting of *The Tempest* as a film forces us to broaden what we normally consider an intertext: we have to add the filmic discourse, with its coloured images and all its specific techniques, rhythms, tones, and syntactic devices. It establishes a

rich dialogue between two distinct communicative systems, which would have otherwise remained separated.

The water and colour symbolism of both Greenaway's film and Warner's novel show how verbal intertextuality and intermedia can establish a lively conversation between arts, mixing into a larger intertextuality and including all texts related directly or indirectly to Shakespeare's play. It also convinces us that if such 'print-oriented bastards' (Barth 1975: 27) as Marina Warner relate to such image- and colour-oriented bastards as Turner and Greenaway, they undoubtedly can give new life to such canon-creating bastards as William Shakespeare himself.

References

Barth, J. "The Literature of Exhaustion." *Surfiction. Fiction Now... and Tomorrow*. Ed. R. Federman. Chicago: The Swallow Press. 1975. 19-34.
Brînzeu, P. *Corridors of Mirrors: The Spirit of Europe in Contemporary British and Romanian Fiction*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America. 2000.
Césaire, A. *A Tempest*. Paris: Seuil. 1969. Translated 1985.
Gilbert, H. "Sea Changes." *New Statesman & Society*. 1992, 5: 191.
Ingalls, R. *Mrs Caliban.* Boston: Harvard Common Press. 1983.
Lamming, G. *The Pleasure of Exile.* London: Michael Joseph. 1958.
Lamming, G. *Water with Berries.* New York*:* Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1972.
Marshall, P. *Praisesong for the Widow*. Plume: Penguin. 1984. Naylor, G. *Mama Day*. New York: Ticknor & Fields. 1989.
Pagan, N. O. "'The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, & Her Lover': Making Sense of Postmodernism." *South Atlantic Review*. 60.1. 1995: 43-55.
Tweedie, J. "Caliban's Books: The Hybrid Text in Peter Greenaway *Prospero's Books.*" *Cinema Journal*. 2000. 40. 1: 104-126.
Retamar, R. F. *Caliban.* La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubana. 1980.
Rodgers, M. "'Prospero's Books'. Word and Spectacle: An Interview with Peter Greenaway." *Film Quarterly*. 1991-1992. 45. 2: 11-16.
Shakespeare, W. *The Tempest, Complete Works of Shakespeare*. Ed. Peter Alexander. London and Glasgow: Collins. 1968.

de Sousa, G. *Shakespeare's Cross-Cultural Encounters*. London: Palgrave. 2002.

Spielman, Y. "Intermedia in Electronic Images." *Leonardo.* 2001. 34. 1: 57.

Wa Thiong'o, N. *A Grain of Wheat*. London: Heinemann. 1960.

Warner, M. *Indigo*. London: Vintage. 1992.

Warner, M. "*Indigo*: Mapping the Waters." *Études Britanniques Contemporaines.* Montpellier: Presses Universitaires de Montpellier. 1994. 5: 5-10.

Williams-Wanquet, E. "Marina Warner's *Indigo* as Ethical Deconstruction and Reconstruction." *Critique.* 2005. 46.3: 267-282.

Williams, T. *Caliban's Hour.* UK: Time Warner Books. 1993.

Intertextual Patterns in J.R.R.Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*

Thomas Kullmann, University of Osnabrück

Abstract
The thesis that every text is a 'mosaic of quotations' from other texts becomes particularly obvious when examining literary fantasy, which refers to the implied readers' previous reading rather than to real life. An analysis of Tolkien's work shows that differences of style and narrative technique can be described as due to the choice of different pre-texts. In *The Hobbit*, fairy-tale and epic discourses are juxtaposed with everyday speech pattern through irony and parody. In *The Lord of the Rings*, elements of the nineteenth-century novel like circumstantial realism and pathetic fallacy are supplemented by archaic rhetorical patterns. The concept of intertextuality also enables us to examine the relationship between text and reader.

The aim of my paper is to validate the concepts of discourse and intertextuality as tools of cultural and literary analysis. As Julia Kristeva noted, every text is a 'mosaic of quotations' (Kristeva 66) from other texts, and as Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault contended, themes and attitudes are bound up with linguistic and stylistic conventions to make up 'discourses', i.e. conventional ways of speaking which inform a given text (cf. Belsey 5f.). Unlike these theoreticians (who coined the terms 'intertextuality' and 'discourse' in the context of the ideological battles of the 1960s), however, I should like to argue that there may be various and conflicting 'discourses' (in the sense of sets of cultural, linguistic and literary practices) at work at the same time and in the same cultural environment, allowing educated speakers and writers to make conscious decisions as to which of them to use, combine and recombine to create 'new' texts. Compared to more traditional terms and approaches, the concepts in question have the advantage of providing a composite view of aspects of texts usually examined separately: *signifiants* and *signifiés*, linguistic and thematic aspects, argumentative structure as well as stylistic and rhetorical analyis. Looking for pre-texts and locating a text within a set of discourses allow us to examine thematic issues on the level of words and phrases. The process of 'quoting' pre-texts can, of course, be both conscious and unconscious, and it certainly depends on education, communicative experience and perhaps even academic

training to which degree producers and recipients of texts are aware of the pre-texts involved.

To study the processes of creating texts out of quotations, I propose to focus on texts whose pre-texts are particularly obvious. Literary fantasies certainly belong to this category. Fantastic fiction regularly draws upon other fantastic narratives, and appeals to the implied readers' previous reading experiences rather than real-life experiences. Michael Riffaterre's contention that literary texts are not referential and that 'the text refers not to objects outside of itself, but to an inter-text' (quoted from Allen 115) seems to be particularly applicable to fantasy fiction. Reading about dragons reminds the reader of other dragon stories heard or read, maybe of dragon pictures, but not of real-life experiences with dragons or even dragon-like creatures.

If fantasy stories are intertextual rather than referential, we may wonder if this means that they bear no connection to 'real life'. If so, their cultural function would just be that of a game which allows readers to escape from the real world while reading and dreaming about the texts read. In contrast to this widespread assumption I should like to suggest that fantastic stories are not further removed from the lives of the readers than 'realistic' ones.

As convenient examples, I propose to analyse and compare J.R.R. Tolkien's two bestselling fantasies, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings,* as to the pre-texts 'quoted'. My aim is twofold: first of all, I wish to suggest that differences of style and narrative technique can be described as due to the choice of different pre-texts, i.e., that intertextuality can serve as an analytical tool to describe the particularities of a given text. Secondly, I would like to show that intertextual analysis can be conducive to interpretation in the sense of establishing the meaning or message a text may contain for its readers.

Many readers, including most of those who belong to the huge Tolkien fan community, look at *The Lord of the Rings* as a narrative sequel to *The Hobbit*. *The Hobbit* tells a story of the hobbit Bilbo, who accompanies a group of dwarfs to recover treasure from a dragon hoard and in the course of this adventure comes by a ring which has the property of rendering him invisible. In *The Lord of the Rings*, this ring is found to have additional powers, including that of rendering its bearer all-powerful. Frodo, Bilbo's nephew and heir, is given the task to take

this ring to a fire inside a mountain, to destroy it and thereby remove the danger inherent in such a powerful instrument.

Unlike the Tolkien fans mentioned I should like to argue that the narrative modes used in the two works are distinctly different from one another. In *The Hobbit*, the narration focuses on the plot in a straightforward way: the story, as indicated by the subtitle "There and Back Again" is about a journey, or quest. The dragon slain, the treasure restored to its original owners, the party returns to its place of departure. The intertextual quality of the quest structure is immediately obvious. From Homer's *Odyssey* onwards, countless epics and romances have featured heroes who go on a difficult journey to achieve a certain goal, be it treasure, home, some magical or religious object or a reunion with friends.

The very first paragraph of the book, however, may remind us of a rather different set of pre-texts:

> In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.
>   It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. (29)

If we read *rabbit* rather than 'hobbit', the first sentence would be perfectly conventional. Holes in the ground certainly collocate with rabbits, and the phrase 'there lived' might make us expect a conventional tale, in this case an animal story. While this narrative convention is echoed or 'quoted', the narrator departs from it by exchanging the first two letters of *rabbit* (on the origin of the word 'hobbit' cf. Anderson, 9; for an ingenious account of the connection of *rabbit* and *hobbit*, see Shippey 1982: 53f.). This departure has a certain parodic quality: it renders us conscious of the conventional phrasing and thus implies a metalingual (or self-referential) comment.

The following lines may put us in mind of a specific pre-text: Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* begins with an animal in the process of spring-cleaning just such a comfortable dwelling underground: like Tolkien's hobbit, Grahame's Mole lives in a tidy bachelor's flat which is furnished according to old-fashioned English middle-class standards, simply but sufficiently. While Mole, however, ultimately remains an animal, we gather from the next paragraphs of *The*

Hobbit that hobbits have obviously more in common with humans than animals: the hobbit in question has a name, Bilbo Baggins, he is 'well-to-do' and 'respectable' (29f.), i.e. characterized by phrases which are common in everyday middle-class oral discourse.

Another set of pre-texts is furnished by Gandalf the wizard, whom Bilbo knows as 'the fellow who used to tell such wonderful tales at parties, about dragons and goblins and giants and the rescue of princesses and the unexpected luck of widow's sons' (33-35). Gandalf's appearance corresponds to the traditional shape of wizards in book illustrations: 'He had a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, a silver scarf over which his long white beard hung down below his waist, and immense black boots' (32). While he used to tell fairy tales to the hobbits before he now introduces Bilbo to the fairy tale world itself: it is through his agency that a party of fairy-tale dwarves gathers at Bilbo's place:

> 'I am sorry to keep you waiting!' he was going to say, when he saw that it was not Gandalf at all. It was a dwarf with a blue beard tucked into a golden belt, and very bright eyes under his dark-green hood. As soon as the door was opened, he pushed inside, just as if he had been expected.
>
> He hung his hooded cloak on the nearest peg, and 'Dwalin at your service!' he said with a low bow.
>
> 'Bilbo Baggins at yours!' said the hobbit, too surprised to ask any questions for the moment. (36f.)

Fairy-tale motifs (blue beard, green hood, golden belt) are set next to everyday discourse: 'he hung his hooded cloak at the nearest peg' as to an old-fashioned formula of politeness: 'Dwalin at your service'. This juxtaposition again creates a metalingual and metafictional awareness of language and motifs. Fairy-tale discourse is being parodied, as is old-fashioned politeness: as the reader will soon realize, Dwalin and his dwarf friends have no intention whatsoever of 'serving' Bilbo; they rather require his services.

When Gandalf and the dwarves discuss the various options for recovering the treasure, we encounter the same kind of parodic self-referentiality:

> '[. . .] But we none of us liked the idea of the Front Gate. The river runs right out of it through the great cliff at the South of the Mountain, and out of it comes the dragon too—far too often, unless he has changed his habits.'
>
> 'That would be no good,' said the wizard, 'not without a mighty Warrior, even a Hero. I tried to find one; but warriors are busy fighting one another in distant lands,

and in this neighbourhood heroes are scarce, or simply not to be found. Swords in these parts are mostly blunt, and axes are used for trees, and shields as cradles and dish-covers; and dragons are comfortably far-off (and therefore legendary). That is why I settled on *burglary* - especially when I remembered the existence of a Side-door. And here is our little Bilbo Baggins, *the* burglar, the chosen and selected burglar. So now let's get on and make some plans.' (53f.)

Warriors and heroes are added to the inventory of motifs from fairy-tales and legends. Gandalf's regrets at not being able to get hold of a warrior or hero implies an auctorial comment on a certain narrative tradition considered obsolete or inappropriate. When Bilbo turns out a hero in the end, his heroism will be manifested quite unexpectedly—as with many heroes in literary tradition, e.g. Perceval.

The technique of juxtaposing discourses or pre-text can perhaps best be illustrated by the letter left by Thorin on Bilbo's table:

'Thorin and Company to Burglar Bilbo greeting! For your hospitality our sincerest thanks, and for your offer of professional assistance our grateful acceptance. Terms: cash on delivery, up to and not exceeding one fourteenth of total profits (if any); all travelling expenses guaranteed in any event; funeral expenses to be defrayed by us or our representatives, if occasion arises and the matter is not otherwise arranged for.
  'Thinking it unnecessary to disturb your esteemed repose, we have proceeded in advance to make requisite preparations, and shall await your respected person at the Green Dragon Inn, Bywater, at 11 a.m. sharp. Trusting that you will be *punctual,*
   'We have the honour to remain
                                'Yours deeply
                                'Thorin & Co.' (61)

This letter combines formulas from antiquity and the Middle Ages ('Thorin [. . .] to Burglar Bilbo greeting!') with phrases used in twentieth-century business contracts ('cash on delivery', 'total profits (if any)' etc.). The greeting formula 'yours deeply' obviously replaces 'yours faithfully' as depth is one of the main preoccupations of the miner dwarfs.

As in the present example most of the 'quotations' from pre-texts transform them by juxtapositions apparently incongruous, with parody as a result (on the 'clash of styles' in *The Hobbit*, cf. Shippey 1982: 39-45). The narrator is playing around with elements of previous texts, and shares his fun with the reader. One of the characteristics of this use of pre-texts is that the reader is put in a position to recognize them and to analyse the process of recombination. Sometimes, however, the reader is

led onto the wrong track, as when Bilbo encounters the dragon. His endeavour to enter the dragon's lair and pass by the sleeping monster unnoticed is unsuccesful: 'He had forgotten or he had never heard about dragons' sense of smell' (278). The reader has probably not heard of it either: While the shape and character of the dragon obviously go back to a variety of sources or pre-texts, including the saints' legends of St. George and Michael the Archangel, *Beowulf* and medieval romance (cf. Evans), smelling does not belong to the inventory of motifs traditionally associated with dragons. Obviously, the motif rather derives from the fairy-tale of "Jack the Giant-Killer" where the giant cries out: 'Fee, fi, fo, fum!/ I smell the blood of an Englishman!' (Jacobs 49-60; 58). Other narrative traditions are broached when the dragon talks to Bilbo in a polite and witty way:

> 'Well, thief! I smell you and I feel your air. I hear your breath. Come along! Help yourself again, there is plenty and to spare!'
>
> But Bilbo was not quite so unlearned in dragon-lore as all that, and if Smaug hoped to get him to come nearer so easily he was disappointed. 'No thank you, O Smaug the Tremendous!' he replied. 'I did not come for presents. I only wished to have a look at you and see if you were truly as great as tales say. I did not believe them.' [. . .]
>
> 'You have nice manners for a thief and a liar,' said the dragon. 'You seem familiar with my name, but I don't seem to remember smelling you before. Who are you and where do you come from, may I ask?'
>
> '[. . .] I am the friend of bears and the guest of eagles. I am Ringwinner and Luckwearer; and I am Barrel-rider,' went on Bilbo beginning to be pleased with his riddling.
>
> 'That's better!' said Smaug. 'But don't let your imagination run away with you!'
>
> This of course is the way to talk to dragons, if you don't want to reveal your proper name (which is wise), and don't want to infuriate them by a flat refusal (which is also very wise). No dragon can resist the fascination of riddling talk and of wasting time trying to understand it. (278f.)

The motif of the hero concealing his name comes from Odysseus's adventure with the Cyclops (there are also some resemblances with the poem "Fáfnismál" in the elder Edda, see Shippey 1982: 63, 69-71)—as does the motif of 'barrel-riding' as a means of escape: in Odysseus' case it was the cyclops' sheep to whom the hero bound his companions to get out of the monster's cave, while Bilbo hid his dwarf friends in empty barrels to enable them to escape from the wood-elves. The series of riddling antonomasies or periphrases ('ringwinner', 'luckwearer', 'barrel-rider') makes jocular use of a figure of speech common to ancient

epical language (cf. e. g. Lausberg 71f.). The dragon's words, however, obviously parody polite language—again, various discourses are juxtaposed. According to Tom Shippey, the dragon speaks 'with the characteristic aggressive politeness of the British upper class, in which irritation and authority are in direct proportion to apparent deference or uncertainty' (1982: 70, cf. also Shippey 2001: 37-39).

The most characteristic feature of the use of pre-texts made in this passage is, however, the hero's knowledge of traditional motifs, a knowledge which helps him to survive. The use of motifs taken from legend and fairy-tale (and other discourses) is shown to be derivative. In this technique of imitating, adapting and parodying well-known motifs, *The Hobbit* follows a tradition of children's narratives which includes F. E. Paget, *The Hope of the Katzekopfs* (1844), W. M. Thackeray, *The Rose and the Ring* (1855), Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), J.M. Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* (1911) and many other children's classics (it may ultimately go back to early nineteenth-century pantomimes, cf. Mayer III). The way intertextuality appears (and is rendered conspicuous) in *The Hobbit* turns out to be just another intertextual element. Other formal or stylistic features characteristic of the children's literature tradition are the preponderance of dialogue and the virtual absence of description (cf. my introduction to English children's literature: Kullmann 53-55), and the structure of the adventurous quest: when Bilbo finds himself—more or less involuntarily—on his adventure he encounters a lot of outlandish creatures, like Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The way pre-texts are quoted and transformed in *The Hobbit* can itself be traced back to a textual basis: a certain Victorian tradition of children's books.

By contrast, irony and and parody are conspicuously absent from *The Lord of the Rings*. The trilogy rather abounds in descriptions of the characters' outward appearance, their habitations and cities and the landscapes the characters pass through during their quest. In spite of its fantasy plot, this work of fiction is heavily indebted to the nineteenth-century realist novel (cf. Rosebury 11-14). Other pre-texts comprise ethnographic, cartographic (see Shippey 2001: 73-79) and historiographic discourse, chronicles, medieval romances, the Gothic Novel and early twentieth-century nature mysticism.

The discourse of nineteenth century realism can be found in sentences like the first one of the entire narrative: 'When Mr. Bilbo Baggins of Bag End announced that he would shortly be celebrating his eleventy-first birthday with a party of special magnificence, there was much talk and excitement in Hobbiton' (21). The narrator introduces a character, his place of abode and the provincial environment where a birthday party can cause considerable excitement. The exception is, of course, the ordinal number 'eleventy-first'. Through one of the trilogy's very few language jokes, the unreal world of the hobbits is somehow smuggled into the discourse of the realist novel.

Other 'realist' features include 'circumstantial realism', i.e. the attention accorded to rooms and landscapes, as well as to clothes worn and objects carried by the protagonists. When Bilbo returns home from his birthday party in order to prepare for his final departure, his actions are described as follows:

> He walked briskly back to his hole, and stood for a moment listening with a smile to the din in the pavilion and to the sounds of merrymaking in other parts of the field. Then he went in. He took off his party clothes, folded up and wrapped in tissue-paper his embroidered silk waistcoat, and put it away. Then he put on quickly some old untidy garments, and fastened round his waist a worn leather belt. On it he hung a short sword in a battered black-leather scabbard. From a locked drawer, smelling of moth-balls, he took out an old cloak and hood. They had been locked up as if they were very precious, but they were so patched and weatherstained that their original colour could hardly be guessed: it might have been dark green. They were rather too large for him. (31)

Many of the details may remind the readers of their daily life: tissue-paper, locked drawer, moth-balls. Other objects, the sword and the hood, belong to the fantasy world with its purely textual, rather than real-life, basis. These objects, however, are integrated into the discourse of real-life experience by means of various details, such as the 'battered black-leather scabbard' and the 'patched and weatherstained' condition of the cloak and hood. In *The Hobbit*, by contrast, this kind of circumstantial realism is absent.

In *The Lord of the Rings,* as in realist novels, we always know what the environment of the heroes looks like. As has often been observed the landscape features of 'the Shire' resemble those of rural England or, more specifically, Warwickshire. Later on, the reader will encounter mountainous landscapes which are clearly 'invented' but may still

remind the readers of real mountains and mountain-trips; these descriptions might be compared to those of the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Apennines in English 'Gothic Novels' such as those of Ann Radcliffe. Tolkien also makes use of the well-known technique of making landscape and weather mirror the plot development on the characters' level and the feelings of the protagonists. This technique, which originated in the Gothic Novel and was elaborated by nineteenth-century 'realist' novelists such as the Brontë Sisters and Thomas Hardy, involves associating landscape and weather phenomena with human attributes, thereby producing what Ruskin called 'pathetic fallacy' (201ff). On their way to the Cracks of Doom Frodo and his companions repeatedly pass through landscapes which illustrate their mental condition. Sometimes, however, it is unclear if the pathetic fallacy is really fallacious, as when the 'Fellowship of the Ring' ascends the mountain of Caradhras:

> While they were halted, the wind died down, and the snow slackened until it almost ceased. They tramped on again. But they had not gone more than a furlong when the storm returned with fresh fury. The wind whistled and the snow became a blinding blizzard. Soon even Boromir found it hard to keep going. The hobbits, bent nearly double, toiled along behind the taller folk, but it was plain that they could not go much further, if the snow continued. Frodo's feet felt like lead. Pippin was dragging behind. Even Gimli, as stout as any dwarf could be, was grumbling as he trudged.
>
> The Company halted suddenly, as if they had come to an agreement without any words being spoken. They heard eerie noises in the darkness round them. It may have been only a trick of the wind in the cracks and gullies of the rocky wall, but the sounds were those of shrill cries, and the wild howls of laughter. Stones began to fall from the mountain-side, whistling over their heads, or crashing on the path beside them. Every now and again they heard a dull rumble, as a great boulder rolled down from hidden heights above.
>
> 'We cannot go further tonight,' said Boromir. 'Let those call it the wind who will; there are fell voices on the air; and these stones are aimed at us.'
>
> 'I do call it the wind,' said Aragorn. 'But that does not make what you say untrue. There are many evil and unfriendly things in the world that have little love for those that go on two legs, and yet are not in league with Sauron, but have purposes of their own. Some have been in this world longer than he.'
>
> 'Caradhras was called the Cruel, and had an ill name,' said Gimli, 'long years ago, when rumour of Sauron had not been heard in these lands.' (281f.)

The first paragraph contains pathetic fallacy as conventional to the nineteenth-century novel: the wind's fury depicts the travellers' toil on their arduous journey, with the physical inconveniences representing a

mental state. The second paragraph features 'eerie noises', 'shrill cries' and 'wild howls of laughter'. In a realist novel these phrases would denote imaginative personifications of natural phenomena. In the passage quoted, however, Boromir seriously asks the question if an individual is responsible for nature's fury, such as Sauron, the arch-villain. Aragorn's interpretation is more sophisticated: he connects a natural explanation with the concept of nature as endowed with a soul. Objects such as mountains can be friendly or unfriendly towards humans, hobbits, elves or dwarves. This corresponds to the memory of the mountain's 'cruelty' adduced by Gimli the dwarf, which certainly constitutes a magical and primitive concept of nature.

As in the previous examples there is a mingling of discourses. Typical motifs of discourses of legend and fantasy are attached to stylistic features of the nineteenth-century novel. As distinct from *The Hobbit*, however, this mingling does not seem to imply a parodistic intent. The novel's 'pathetic fallacy' discourse rather assumes a mediating function: fantasy motifs are made more palatable by embedding them into a discourse familiar to many of Tolkien's readers.

There are other 'discourses' or styles, though. The "Prologue" (1-15) obviously imitates the non-fictional prose of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ethnography:

> Hobbits are an unobtrusive but very ancient people, more numerous formerly than they are today; for they love peace and quiet and good tilled earth: a well-ordered and well-farmed countryside was their favourite haunt. They do not and did not understand or like machines more complicated than a forge-bellows, a water-mill, or a hand-loom, though they were skilful with tools. Even in ancient days they were, as a rule, shy of 'the Big Folk', as they call us, and now they avoid us with dismay and are becoming hard to find. (1)

Apart from the last sentence (which might remind us of folklore accounts of elves or fairies), this paragraph could refer to an area and people living in Eastern or Southern Europe, or possibly in Asia. Familiar phrases are applied to an unreal world which, however, closely resembles parts of the known world. Throughout the Prologue, a scholarly/scientific discourse is sustained: Hobbits are divided into 'three somewhat different breeds' (3), they are given a history based on a timeline and historic documents (4-6), and there is a section entitled "Notes on Shire Records" (13-15), a documentation of sources in a smaller type, imitating the documentation of sources in works of historiography. A similar sort

of pre-text is imitated in the various maps and appendices containing tables of historic data and linguistic notes (1009-1112).

One of the most conspicuous features of *The Lord of the Rings* is certainly the variety of styles and discourses it contains (cf. Shippey 1982: 160f., and Rosebury 65-76). It is in the characters' language that this variety is most apparent. Frodo's and Gandalf's register certainly corresponds to that of Tolkien's educated readers. The grammar follows the rules of Standard English; the sentence structure is complex without being idiosyncratic:

> 'Last night you began to tell me strange things about my ring, Gandalf,' he said. 'And then you stopped, because you said that such matters were best left until daylight. Don't you think you had better finish now? You say the ring is dangerous, far more dangerous than I guess. In what way?'
> 'In many ways,' answered the wizard. 'It is far more powerful than I ever dared to think at first, so powerful that in the end it would utterly overcome anyone of mortal race who possessed it. It would possess him. [. . .]' (45)

By contrast, the speech of Sam Gamgee, Frodo's companion, is more colloquial and indicates his lower-class origin. It also contains archaisms indicative of dialect, as given literary representation by Thomas Hardy, D.H. Lawrence and other 'regional' writers:

> 'There are some, even in these parts, as know the Fair Folk and get news of them,' he [Sam Gamgee] said. 'There's Mr. Baggins now, that I work for. He told me that they were sailing and he knows a bit about Elves. And old Mr. Bilbo knew more: many's the talk I had with him when I was a little lad.'
> 'Oh, they're both cracked,' said Ted. 'Leastways old Bilbo was cracked, and Frodo's cracking. If that's where you get your news from, you'll never want for moonshine. Well, friends, I'm off home. Your good health!' He drained his mug and went out noisily. (44)

When the ring is finally destroyed, Frodo's and Sam's discourses mirror two opposing assessments of what happened:

> '[. . .] But for him [Gollum], Sam, I could not have destroyed the Ring. The Quest would have been in vain, even at the bitter end. So let us forgive him! For the Quest is achieved, and now all is over. I am glad you are here with me. Here at the end of all things, Sam.' (926)

> 'Yes, I am with you, Master,' said Sam, laying Frodo's wounded hand gently to his breast. 'And you're with me. And the journey's finished. But after coming all that way I don't want to give up yet. It's not like me, somehow, you understand.'
>
> 'Maybe not, Sam,' said Frodo; 'but it's like things are in the world. Hopes fail. And end comes. We have only a little time to wait now. We are lost in ruin and downfall, and there is no escape.'
>
> 'Well, Master, we could at least go further from this dangerous place here, from this Crack of Doom, if that's its name. Now couldn't we? Come, Mr. Frodo, let's go down the path at any rate!' (929)

Compared to the first chapters of the book, Frodo's language has assumed a more literary quality, corresponding to his attitude of heroic fatalism. There is old-fashioned, literary grammar ('But for him [. . .]', 'For the Quest is achieved'), gnomic sentences ('Hopes fail. And end comes'). Sam, however, has retained his colloquial discourse, just as he has retained his humanity, which, on the level of the plot, will save him and Frodo.

Two characters marked out by their archaic and stilted language are Elrond and Aragorn. Both characters do not just take part in conversations and debates but make proper speeches when occasion arises, as when Elrond explains to Boromir why he is not prepared to take and use the ring himself:

> 'Alas, no,' said Elrond. 'We cannot use the Ruling Ring. That we now know too well. It belongs to Sauron and was made by him alone, and is altogether evil. Its strength, Boromir, is too great for anyone to wield at will, save only those who have already a great power of their own. But for them it holds an even deadlier peril. The very desire of it corrupts the heart. Consider Saruman. If any of the Wise should wield this Ring to overthrow the Lord of Mordor, using his own arts, he would set himself on Sauron's throne, and yet another Dark Lord would appear. And that is another reason why the Ring should be destroyed: as long as it is in the world it will be a danger even to the Wise. For nothing is evil in the beginning. Even Sauron was not so. I fear to take the Ring to hide it. I will not take the Ring to wield it.' (261)

Elrond's speech has the tripartite structure common in rhetoric: proposition, argumentation and conclusion. Its level is certainly *genus humile*: Elrond's sentences are simple and short, laying stress on each particular utterance. The usual order of noun and direct object is inverted in an archaic and literary manner ('That we now no too well'); Elrond uses literary conjunctions (like 'save' and 'for') and phrases ('to wield at will', 'the very desire') (on Elrond's way of speaking, cf. Shippey 2001: 68-70).

Like Elrond's, Aragorn's speeches appear stilted and literary; the register, i.e. the pre-texts, however, are quite different:

> Slowly Aragorn unbuckled his belt and himself set his sword upright against the wall. 'Here I set it,' he said; 'but I command you not to touch it, nor to permit any other to lay hand on it. In this elvish sheath dwells the Blade that was Broken and has been made again. Telchar first wrought it in the deeps of time. Death shall come to any man that draws Elendil's sword save Elendil's heir.'
>
> The guard stepped back and looked with amazement on Aragorn. 'It seems that you are come on the wings of song out of the forgotten days,' he said. 'It shall be, lord, as you command.' (500)

Aragorn's speech is characterized by features of old epic language, such as inversion ('in this elvish sheath dwells [. . .]) metaphor ('deeps of time') and personification ('dwells the Blade', 'Death shall come'). The reference to Telchar may remind us of mythological texts. Paronomasia ('Elendil's heir') is common to outstanding epic heroes, and obviously appropriate to the warrior who will be revealed as King of Gondor. The rhetorical register is certainly *genus sublime* (Lausberg 154). The guard's answer, however, rather contains the discourse of romanticism, when old myths were studied and quoted. The metaphors indicating the closeness or remoteness of the past also appear Romantic: 'deeps of time', 'wings of song'.

The analysis of the texts of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* reveals that these texts are indeed mosaics of quotations, and, moreover, that these mosaics have been assembled by the deliberate artistry of a writer, in Tolkien's case by a writer of exceptional scholarship. While there is certainly the phenomenon Kristeva called 'intertextuality', there is no way of accepting the concept of the death of the author or of discourses interacting without the agency of a human subject. Even the readers of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, I should like to argue, are invited to relate the respective text to previous reading (or listening) experiences. Referring to the dialogues found in *The Lord of the Rings*, Brian Rosebury remarks that 'highly characterised English dialogue styles will always risk seeming derivative from literary or historical models' (Rosebury 71f.). This 'risk', however, should rather be considered a chance to convey meaning through allowing readers to incorporate in their reading experience reminiscences of previous reading.

In addition to characterization, the juxtaposing of styles or discourses obviously has metalingual or metatextual functions, and certainly amounts to an invitation to the reader to reflect upon language and narrative conventions. It could be argued that Tolkien's works of fiction are not so much about elves, dwarfs and warriors as about using words and producing meaning by means of language conventions.

I would also like to contend, however, that the plots of the two books in one way or another relate to the readers' real lives. To examine the nature of this relationship I propose to make use of Roman Jakobson's dichotomy of metaphoric and metonymic text production. According to Jakobson a literary text is characterized by the polar opposites of similarity and contiguity, i.e. by processes of metaphor (as in Romantic poems) or metonymy (as in realist novels). I would like to go one step further and transfer this dichotomy to the relationship between text and reader: the world of realist novels is contiguous to that of their readers; this relationship could be called metonymical. In non-realists texts, such as fairy-tales, the relationship between text and reader can be quite as close, but it is of a different kind. We do not ask a mirror: 'Oh, mirror, mirror on the wall,/ Who is the fairest of us all?' (Grimm, 254), but we are quite familiar with the phenomena of vanity and jealousy. The situation of the queen in "Little Snow White" is not contiguous but may be similar to our own; the relationship is a metaphorical one. In other words: in both realist and non-realist texts, there is *mimesis* or imitation of real life; only it is different aspects of it which are imitated.

My thesis is that the question of whether the metaphorical or metonymical way of text-reader relationship predominates in a given text is intimately related to the choice of pre-texts. Much attention has been given to Tolkien's medieval sources (cf. Shippey 1982: 220-226, and Clark/Timmons), while his debt to more recent literary traditions has largely gone unacknowledged. Tentatively, I would like to group the major pre-texts of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* as follows

The Hobbit	*The Lord of the Rings*
metaphorical pre-texts	
fairy-tales	ancient epic poetry
folklore	medieval romance
Scandinavian heroic legend	pastoral prose fiction

Edda	Gothic Novel
Odyssey	Romantic reception of mythology
animal stories, e.g.	late 19th-century mythical writing
The Wind in the Willows	(Haggard, Morris)
Victorian children's books, e.g.	English nature mysticism (1920s,
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	1930s, e.g. Walter de la Mare, Eleanor Farjeon, Mary Webb) *The Hobbit*

metonymical pre-texts

discourses of politeness	ethnographic discourse
business letter	historian's discourse
	chronicles
	realist novels

Some pretexts, of course, partake of both categories, such as Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies,* which give voice to 'the theme of unchanging Englishness' and may have influenced the description of the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings* (cf. Shippey 1982: 225f.).

The pretexts listed inform the texts both on the level of the *signifiant* and that of the *signifié.* On the level of the *signifiant* they provide language register, rhetorical technique, words and phrases. On the level of the *signifié* they provide motifs, which relate to real life in a metaphorical or metonymic way. The major motifs in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* taken from pretexts could be grouped as follows:

The Hobbit	*The Lord of the Rings*
metaphorical motifs	
quest motif (treasure hunt)	*quest* motif
wizards, elves, dwarfs, dragons	nature humanized
talking animals	warlike heroism

| metalingual/metafictional commentary | dichotomy of good and evil |

metonymical motifs	
eating and drinking	ethnographic characterization
	landscapes
	rooms
	clothing
	objects of everyday life
	social class

The predominant relationship between text and reader in *The Hobbit* is certainly a metaphorical one: the situation of Bilbo the hobbit who suddenly finds himself on a quest to recover treasure can be similar to the reader's who may wonder about directions taken in his or her own life. On his quest Bilbo encounters quite a few peculiar creatures, e. g. the dwarfs, Elrond, Gollum, Beorn, the dragon, Bard. His success largely depends on his ability to enter into friendly exchanges of communication with each of them; in this he resembles Alice in wonderland and other heroes and heroines of nineteenth-century children's fiction. His stroke of genius is of course his rendering of the Arkenstone to Bard, who can then give it to Thorin in exchange for part of the treasure (331f.). The metaphorical relevance of the story as an exploration of the relationship of avarice, diplomacy and common sense is obvious.

The Lord of the Rings, on the other hand, subtly combines metaphor and metonymy. Frodo's and Gandalf's quest to get rid of the ring of power can well be understood as a metaphor for desperate undertakings of various kinds. The closeness of the world through which the questants travel to the world we know from real life certainly intensifies our sympathetic response to the questants' endeavour. The landscapes Frodo and the 'fellowship' pass through resemble real English and Alpine landscapes and may remind readers of landscape experiences of their own. The social interaction of the travellers may also resemble travelling experiences readers may have had in real life. Perhaps it is this combination of the metaphoric and metonymic mode which has brought about the enormous success of *The Lord of the Rings*.

The examination of the intertextual patterns of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* confirms the impression that the two books could be considered examples of two different kinds of fictional narrative, distinct from one another as to style, implied reader, narrative purpose. In *The Hobbit*, the narrator, who often addresses his readers directly, is playing around with motifs from ancient and modern texts which are known to the readers as texts rather than records from real life. The relationship between story and life is a metaphorical one, and the implied readers are obviously children. The hobbits are rather childlike (cf. Rehberg), and the plot in a way repeats that of nineteenth-century children's quest stories such as, e. g., George Macdonald's *Princess and Curdie* (1883): a child or young adult is unexpectedly given a task which, even more unexpectedly, he or she is able to carry out, thereby discovering exceptional qualities in himself or herself.

While the central element of the plot of *The Lord of the Rings*, the quest to destroy the ring, is obviously metaphorical, the many metonymical elements obviously serve the function to make the fantasy plot more palatable, to facilitate the 'willing suspension of disbelief for the moment,' which according to Coleridge 'constitutes poetic faith' (Coleridge, vol. 7.2: 6), or, as Tolkien himself prefers to call it, 'Secondary Belief' (1983: 132). The implied readers of *The Lord of the Rings* are obviously less tolerant of inconsistency and anachronism, and of supernatural phenomena like talking dragons. On the other hand, they are prepared to go through long and potentially boring descriptions and do not find a 1000-pages work beyond their capacities. They are interested in problems of ethics and character and take these issues highly seriously.

Many Tolkien fans who look at *The Hobbit* from the vantage point of *The Lord of the Rings* consider *The Hobbit* as a highly inconsistent and unsatisfactory piece of writing, failing to judge the book on its own terms (Brian Rosebury, e. g., comments on the book's 'inconsistencies of tone and conception' and calls it an 'uneasy, if likeable, patchwork of accomplishments, blunders, and tantalising promises of the Middle-earth to come', Rosebury 103; on the relationship of the two narratives cf. e. g. Petzold 45-47 and 90f.). This group of critics was to include Tolkien himself, who in 1967 told an interviewer: '*The Hobbit* was written in what I should now regard as bad style, as if one were talking to children' (2003: 76). In spite of the fact that *The Lord of the Rings* is based on the

characters and the plot of *The Hobbit,* the two narratives are indeed hardly compatible; and the quests of the two heroes are very different from one another. The ring which in *The Lord of the Rings* becomes a source and a symbol of ultimate evil, is a simple magical tool in *The Hobbit*. It is useful because it makes you invisible but does not influence its bearer in any other way (cf. Shippey 2001: 112f.). In the first edition of *The Hobbit*, Gollum after having lost the riddle game, is even prepared to part with the ring voluntarily. While Tolkien rewrote chapter 5 for the second edition of *The Hobbit* in 1951 and effected some minor alterations in the third edition of 1966 to harmonise the plot and language of *The Hobbit* with *The Lord of the Rings* (see Tolkien 2003: 128-135), he did not change the structure and message of Bilbo's quest story.

The Hobbit, like many other children's books, is about empowerment. Like the child heroes and heroines of, say, Charles Kingsley, *The Water-Babies* (1863), George Macdonald, *The Princess and Curdie* (1882) and L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz* (1900), Bilbo is introduced as a rather insignificant character who is, inadvertently and involuntarily, thrown into a position of significance and responsibility. The child reader is put into a position to imagine and vicariously experience the role of a saviour. Frodo also takes up this role, but he experiences it more as a burden and less as a chance of realising his potential than Bilbo. Neither the hero nor the reader are in a position to dream about their power to do good, since power itself is shown to be evil.

The Hobbit can certainly be considered a classic example of the Great Tradition of British children's fiction. *The Lord of the Rings,* by contrast, stands out as an entirely original literary departure (cf. Shippey 2001: 221-225). It is through the analysis of intertextual patterns and of the metaphoric or metonymic quality of themes and motifs that we are put in a position to state why this is so.

References

Anderson, Douglas, "Introduction". J.R.R.Tolkien, *The Annotated Hobbit*I 1-25.
Allen, Graham, *Intertextuality*. The New Critical Idiom Series. London: Routledge. 2000.

Belsey, Catherine, *Critical Practice.* London: Methuen. 1980.

Clark, George; Timmons, Daniel, eds. *J.R.R. Tolkien and His Literary Resonances: Views of Middle-earth.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood. 2000.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. "Biographia Literaria". *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Vols. 7.1-2. Ed. James Engell, W. Jackson Bate. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press. 1983.

Evans, Jonathan. "The Dragon-Lore of Middle-earth: Tolkien and Old English and Old Norse Traditions". Clark, Daniel Timmons, eds., *J.R.R. Tolkien and His Literary Resonances: Views of Middle-earth.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood. 2000: 39-51.

Grimm, The Brothers. *Fairy Tales*, ed. Margaret W. L. Jeffrey. London: Collins. 1954.

Jacobs, Joseph. *English Fairy Tales*, Puffin Classics. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1970 [[1]1890, 1894]

Jakobson, Roman. "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances" [1956]. *Selected Writings, Vol. 2: Word and Language*. The Hague, Paris: Mouton. 1971: 239-259.

Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" [1967]. *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1980: 64-91.

Kullmann, Thomas. *Englische Kinder- und Jugendliteratur: Eine Einführung*. Berlin: Erich Schmidt. 2008.

Lausberg, Heinrich. *Elemente der literarischen Rhetorik*. München: Hueber. [8]1984.

Mayer III, David. *Harlequin in His Element: The English Pantomime, 1806-1836*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 1969.

Petzold, Dieter. *J.R.R. Tolkien:* Fantasy Literature *als Wunscherfüllung und Weltdeutung*. Heidelberg: Winter. 1980.

Rehberg, Kerstin. "Hobbits and Children: Little Bilbo and other Childish Characters in Tolkien's *The Hobbit*". Christiane Bimberg, Thomas Kullmann, eds. *Children's Books and Child Readers: Constructions of Childhood in English Juvenile Fiction*. Aachen: Shaker. 2006: 101-114.

Rosebury, Brian. *Tolkien: A Critical Assessment*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2002 [[1]1992].

Ruskin, John. *Modern Painters.* Vol. 3, ch. 12. *Works*. Ed. E. T. Cook, Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols. London: George Allen, 1903-1912. Vol. 5. 201-219.

Shippey, Tom. *J.R R. Tolkien: Author of the Century*. London: HarperCollins. 2001 [[1]2000].

—. *The Road to Middle-earth*. London: George Allen & Unwin. 1982.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Annotated Hobbit*, ed. Douglas A. Anderson. London. HarperCollins. 2003.

—. *The Lord of the Rings*. London: Harper Collins. 2002 [[1]1954-55].

—. "On Fairy-Stories." *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*, ed. Christopher Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983: 109-161.

Interlingual Metempsychosis: Translating Intertextuality in James Joyce's *Ulysses*

Onno Kosters, Utrecht University

Abstract

Highlighting in its very title the unlimited dimensions of intertextuality, James Joyce's *Ulysses* selfconsciously establishes itself as a text that seems impossible to translate without losing essential elements. *Ulysses*, (in)famous for its multiple styles that in themselves seem to give shape and content to the various themes at hand, is a text for which the term 'intertextuality' seems to fall short. With a particular eye for the problems that occur when translating intertextual elements of *Ulysses* into Dutch and other languages and following Fritz Senn's coinage of the term 'interdynamism', this article sets out to investigate a handful of examples from *Ulysses* that pinpoint the problematic nature of the various echoes and allusions in it.

Every sign is at a crossroads of varying purpose, and situatedness is integral to our understanding of it. What an establishment advertising 'PAIN' has on offer depends (usually) on whether it is in France or in England. The sign 'PAIN' outside a shop constitutes an invitation to acquire a commodity; on the wall of a derelict building, it is more likely to be a prose poem or a cry for help. *The precise location matters*. (Griffiths par. 8; emphasis mine)

In his article "Intertextual Metempsychosis in *Ulysses*: Murphy, Sinbad, and the 'U.P.: up' Postcard", James Ramey argues that '[. . .] Bloom's observation that his "name was changed" [. . .] resonates with the *metatextual dynamics* of *Ulysses*, since it recalls the transmigration of characters from ancient to modern texts—a process I call *intertextual metempsychosis*—which is so intrinsic to Joyce's methodology. As the "Odysseus" of the novel, Bloom's "name was changed" in the sense that Joyce decided to call him "Bloom", rather than "Odysseus" or "Ulysses"' (97; emphases mine). Ramey's words help introduce the salient issue I shall be tackling here: how do translators of *Ulysses* deal with instances of textual 'transmigration' that make any solution they will come up with seem at best flawed; how come, by extension, that translators of *Ulysses* always seem to be 'almosting it' (*U* 3.366-67), rather than ever arrive at an Ithaca where critics will unanimously affirm

their efforts with a resounding 'Yes' (*U* 18.1609)?[4] It seems intertextuality is to blame.

tell a graphic lie

In the abstract of a seminar on "The Untranslatability of Modernism", Teresa Caneda-Cabrera suggests that '[w]hereas, generally speaking, translation presupposes that content can be dissociated from its linguistic form, the fiction of James Joyce tends to foreground the inextricable relationship between the two, thus making it *impossible* for translation(s) to reproduce the various effects that words have in their immediate contexts' (par. 1).[5] Indeed, as Samuel Beckett observed in "Dante…Bruno. Vico..Joyce" in 1929, 'Here [in "Work in Progress"], form *is* content, content *is* form. [. . .] [Joyce's] writing is not *about* something; *it is that something itself*' (27). Even if Beckett is discussing 'Work in Progress', later to be known as *Finnegans Wake*, what he is addressing here has remained one of the key issues in understanding Joyce's oeuvre as a whole. After all, it is a short distance from a pun made unwittingly by a character from an early work such as "The Sisters" ('rheumatic wheels', Joyce 1993: 10),[6] or by Molly in *Ulysses* ('met him pike hoses', *U* 8.112),[7] to seemingly more complicated ones

---

[4] In *Ulysses* (by James Augustine Aloysius Joyce: if ever a name was intertextually charged, it was Joyce's own), 'I am almosting it' (*U* 3.366-67) is part of Stephen Dedalus's spurring himself on to try and remember his dream the night before.

[5] See also Caneda-Cabrera 2007: *passim*.

[6] 'If we could only get one of them new-fangled carriages *that makes no noise* that Father O'Rourke told him about—them with the *rheumatic wheels*—for the day cheap, he said, at Johnny Rush's over the way there and drive out the three of us together of a Sunday evening' (Joyce 1993: 10; emphasis mine).

[7] Did Molly really say this, though, or is 'Met him pike hoses she called it till I told her about the transmigration. O rocks!' (*U* 8.112) Bloom's mind moulding Molly's to its own? If so, so much for listening to Molly (or to Bloom, for that matter) in the original. See also Kenner 1987: 82, and Ehrlich /demo/right1.htm.

such as in 'Walk while ye have the night for morn, lightbreakfastbringer, morroweth whereon every past shall full fost sleep. Amain' (*FW* 473.23-25) by voices of which it is much harder to recognise the origin.

In addition to the problem of this inextricable relationship between content and linguistic form, *Ulysses* in particular, I shall argue here, can be said to be in fact already a translation in its own right, thus making any translation of the book the *translation of a translation*.

As Fritz Senn, for one, has suggested, the different modes of the eighteen episodes function as translations, illustrating 'the idea of a conjugation of all languages' potential and all stylistic ranges' (Senn 1984: 52-53). Secondly, *Ulysses* is Joyce's 'trans-lation', his *Übersetzung*, his passage created from one stage of being to another,[8] by ways and means as various and cunning as Odysseus's own, of Homer's *Odyssey* (in itself disguised in many shapes and forms and, indeed, translations), Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and so on and so forth.[9] Translators of *Ulysses* have the difficult task not only to translate Joyce's sources, a job which *seems* straightforward enough, but also to translate precisely 'the ways and means as various and cunning as Odysseus's own' in which Joyce embedded them, indeed, translated them into his own work. In addition, one of the roads Joyce took in both complicating and enriching the reader's journey in following the many crossroads he encounters was not merely to use 'the *Odyssey* as a template' (Ramey 98), but to become in fact 'a Homerist' (*ibid.*):

> Professor Stanislaus Joyce has kindly informed me that his brother had studied the following writers on Ulysses: Virgil, Ovid, Dante, Shakespeare, Racine, Fénelon,

---

[8] 'translate I. 1. a. *trans.* To bear, convey, or remove from one person, place or condition to another; to transfer, transport', and also, significantly, 'to remove the dead body or remains of a saint, or, by extension, a hero or great man, from one place to another', '**b.** To carry or convey to heaven without death; also, in later use, said of the death of the righteous' (*OED*).

[9] Following on from this, it might even be argued that, rather than a translation, *Ulysses* is a 'pseudo-translation' of the *Odyssey* in the tradition of, e.g., Thomas Mallory's *Morte d'Arthur* (see Bassnett 1998, Toury 1985). Murphy's stories in "Eumaeus" certainly give the impression of a pseudo-translation of an *Odyssey* of sorts.

> Tennyson, Phillips, d'Annunzio and Hauptmann, as well as Samuel Butler's *The Authoress of the Odyssey* and Victor Bérard's *Les Phéniciens et L'Odyssée*, and the translations by Butler and Cowper. (Stanford 76, qtd. in Ramey 98)[10]

His brother's message that James did not only read the *Odyssey*, albeit not in the original,[11] *but that he also read those who read the Odyssey* (be it in the original or in translation), adds an extra dimension to his work, a dimension that makes it a phenomenon that exists in the realms *beyond* intertextuality.[12] In *Ulysses*, then, in a subtle gesture of disaffection Buck Mulligan is implicitly disqualified as a mere

---

[10] At the same time, Joyce's own rather disparaging remark addressed when pressed by Vladimir Nabokov that his use of Homer was 'a whim' and his collaboration with Stuart Gilbert on his guide to *Ulysses* that emphasised in particular the Homeric so-called parallels '[a] terrible mistake [. . .] an advertisement for the book. I regret it very much' (Ellmann 616n*) underscores the mere *relative* importance of Homer/Odysseus/the *Odyssey* for *Ulysses.*

[11] 'As we know, Joyce learned Latin but not Greek in his Jesuit university […]. Joyce's Homer would have been multiple Homers. In *Joyce's Voices* [Hugh Kenner] names them, the "fairly business-like translations" of Cowper and Butler, Parry and Lord's "'oral-formulaic' improviser," and "the stained-glass Homer of Butcher and Lang" [Kenner 1978: 65-66]' (Norris 2005: 483).

[12] 'If 'texts are part of a great intertextual tapestry' (Bassnett 1993: 42), a tapestry woven with old and new threads by many authors, generally speaking, the direct appeal, the clear and specific allusion to a previous text within a novel, can be taken as one of the various examples of 'markers' of intertextuality that we can identify when reading a literary and cultural text. Intertextuality as a postmodern concept, however, involves "self-consciously foregrounded intertextuality, an intertextuality theoretically conceptualized within the works themselves" (Pfister 217). In contemporary novels, intertextuality is not only a rhetorical device but the kernel of the plot; it implies a redefinition of literary elements, a continuous renewal of meaning in the utilisation of themes, motifs and linguistic modalities. The author, who is always referring to a tradition and to some *topoi* or historical models determined from a cultural, historical and aesthetic point of view, produces in his renewal of these elements a sort of recodification of them. He creates a continuous dialogue between his text and other literary and non-literary texts that exist outside of it' (Federicci 153). These observations make *Ulysses* a postmodern, even a 'contemporary' work.

intertextualist—and, therefore, a traditionalist, doomed to have to say farewell, eventually, to his far more progressive friend: 'Ah, Dedalus, the Greeks! I must teach you. You must read them in the original' (*U* 1.79-80). Not to read them in the original, but to read them in any shape or form you may come across them and incorporate them in your own work, as Joyce recognised, was one of the ways to keep the professors busy for centuries, *and so insure his own immortality* (a light-hearted qualification now often forgotten when referring to these words).[13] But Joyce's now familiar claim does injustice to how, at the same time, he reinvented the novel by reinventing the dynamics of intertextuality, and thus made the genre possible for centuries to come—not only in the English speaking world, but also, by the many translations of his work, all over the globe. After all, 'far from traducing the pure original, the translation injects new life blood into a text by bringing it to the attention of a new world of readers in a different language' (Bassnett 1996: 12). In addition, as Eleonora Federicci has pointed out,

> Not only, as the Polysystem theorists affirmed, are translations leading factors in the formation of new models for the target culture, bringing in techniques, literary themes or poetics, but also the continuity of the source text is guaranteed through an enriching negotiation with the target language/culture. Furthermore, translated texts are cultural archives. In fact, as Michael Cronin points out, translation remains a way 'to remember what has been done and thought in other languages and in our own. Without it we are condemned to the most disabling form of cultural amnesia' (Cronin 74). (Federicci 149)

However, the question remains how to go about translating this textual monster and lose as little of its intertextual nature as possible. Here, it makes sense to introduce a distinction between two contrasting, rather conflicting translation approaches. Michael Cronin, on the one hand,

---

[13] 'To translate *Penelope* exactly, [French translator] Benoîst-Méchin wished to see the scheme for [*Ulysses*]. Joyce gave him only bits of it, and protested humorously: "If I gave it all up immediately, I'd lose my immortality. I've put so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of insuring one's immortality"' (Ellmann 521).

identifies 'the "classics" of national literatures' (and *Ulysses* is, of course, one of those) as 'immutable mobiles that travelled through the space of the imagined community of the nation to remind present-day national audiences of the aesthetic pre-eminence of their forebears' (Federicci 149).[14] On the other hand, for Cronin 'the notion of the "mutable mobile" exemplifies the challenge implicit in translation, that is, to convey difference and similarity of meaning through a complex process of translation considered as a "transformative practice"' (*ibid*.). By contrast, Jeoffrey M. Green identifies the work of the translator as resembling that 'of an editor, who offers the reader further information in order to fully decipher the text. He also adds a subtle metaphor for translation—business. Actually, translators are professionals, adapters, writers for readers who must be attracted by a story they can easily understand' (*ibid*.). How this latter contention is to be played out in the case of 'mutable mobiles' remains unclear. Both approaches, however, suggest that to translate means to rewrite; to reshape a source text in terms of a target culture which, over time, may need more help identifying the intertextual quality of the source text.

— It's in the blood, Mr Bloom acceded at once

Traditionally, and obviously, Homer's *Odyssey* has always been recognized as the supreme intertext informing *Ulysses*, even if other sources (including, as we have seen, sources about or restaging the *Odyssey*) may have been of similar structural and thematic importance to Joyce's scaffolding of his work. I use the word scaffolding advisedly: most (but, in a clever move, not all) of the intertextual analogies Joyce used in preparing *Ulysses* were to be taken down after his cathedral of words had been erected. The Homeric titles, for example, by which we

---

[14] Bruno Latour's term describes 'scientific knowledge/objects as "immutable mobile" in his *Science in Action*. With mobility he refers to an easy transportation of knowledge/object in technoscientific networks; with immutability to the capacity to retain key features of the knowledge/object on its move' (Stöckelová n.p.).

conventionally refer to its eighteen episodes are, and were, never used in any proper edition of *Ulysses*—an irony foreseen by Joyce, who decided to omit them from his work and deliberately circulated them among a choice selection of friends and supporters. By extension, think of the various schemata he provided to offer insight in how he reworked the *Odyssey* (in which those Homeric titles were included)—and then, of course, there are instances in those schemata showing no relation at all to the *Odyssey*. For instance, 'the schema of Gorman-Gilbert and Linati provide nothing like a parallel between Homer's account of Odysseus's doings at the hut of Eumaeus and the doings of Bloom and Dedalus at the cabman's shelter [. . .] Joyce virtually dropped the parallel to the *Odyssey* at this point' (Raleigh 101-02). As this last quote (as well as all of the output of the Joyce industry) goes to show, part of the scaffolding will also be re-built by the busy professors.

A more appropriate term than 'intertextuality' when referring to how Joyce operated while composing *Ulysses* might be the one coined by one of those busy professors, Fritz Senn: 'interdynamism'.[15] In 'In Classical Idiom: *Anthologia Intertextualis*', Senn suggests that 'we have not done our conventional homework very thoroughly. Much of Greek and Roman literature that almost by educational reflex went into Joyce's works has not been researched, or even labelled' (1995: 197).

Senn goes on to say that

> [t]he 'intertextuality' invoked [in the title of his article] is not meant to be a bow to current phraseology, but rather to truisms that may be as old as literature. Perhaps the proper term would be 'interdynamisms'. One aim [of Senn's article] is to discern, provisionally, the diversified modulations in which older texts, techniques, or insights are transposed. (ibid.)

Senn's use of the term 'transposed' here comes close to my pinpointing *Ulysses* itself as a trans-lation, as a passage from one shore of languages and traditions to another. More importantly perhaps, Senn's

---

[15] Fritz Senn is not a professor in any non-honorary sense or function, of course. He sees himself as 'at heart a commentator, a scholiast, a provider of footnotes' (Senn 1995: xiv).

'interdynamisms' would seem to encompass all of Gérard Genette's subcategories of intertextuality (see, e.g., Allen 97-107). The term underscores the idea of intertextuality as an active, dynamic element in Joyce's *Ulysses*, suggesting, much like the hypothesis of *Ulysses* being a translation, that for every reader the text's intertexts, subtexts, backgrounds, sources, allusions may vary according to each reading—in effect, to each translation; after all, every reading is a translation of potential meanings into an always provisional, temporary meaning. Elsewhere, Senn writes that '[a]s commentators we show and analyze underlying patterns of the text. It is also part of our job to recognize that such patterns are limited, and that there are many of them, sometimes at variance with each other, and that none of them is wholly reliable or reliably whole' (1982: 48).

   Ulysses, then is a translation in its own right, and so the way in which signifiers and signifiants overlap, reinforce, cancel out one another plays a special role. After all, what is a translation? A translation is, like any other text, an inter-text; a text reciprocally between, among, amidst its source text and its target text; amidst its actual form and its potential other forms. Like any other text, a translation actively engages with its readers, questioning the translator's decisions while at the same time staging them; always failing to invoke what the source text invokes while at the same time always aiming to come close to the source text's invocations. 'Aiming to coming close' is the appropriate formula: there's always a difference. Like Stephen Dedalus quoted before, translators will always be 'almosting it.' Similarly, in translations of the translation known as *Ulysses*, the source text will always shine through, join the target text and at the same time, this shining through will almost always be obscured by the intervening language and all that it entails.

There he is himself, a Greek

As I suggested earlier, translators of *Ulysses* have the difficult task not only to translate Joyce's sources, but also to translate the ways and means as various and cunning as Odysseus's in which Joyce has embedded them—has translated them into his work. Starting from the assumption that *Ulysses* itself is already a translation and that any translation is a dynamic inter-text, this article will discuss a number of

examples from *Ulysses* that yield particular translation problems that are informed by their textual interdynamism. In my epigraph I quoted Eric Griffiths' article "Dante, Primo Levi and the Intertextualists", in which he emphasises the *locus* of the text as a signifier in itself. The location of most of my examples will be the bridge between *Ulysses* and its two existing Dutch translations, in 2012 to be usurped by a third, to be executed by Erik Bindervoet and Robbert-Jan Henkes, who also completed the much acclaimed Dutch translation of *Finnegans Wake* in 1996.

But where to begin? At the beginning, where Malachi ('Buck') Mulligan 'declares his [character's] penchant for blasphemy and [his] facetious approach to all that's serious' (Fulford par. 13):[16]

> Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather, on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed. (*U* 1.1-2)

It has long been recognized that the opening sentence of *Ulysses*, while introducing the mockery of the Roman-Catholic mass that is to be celebrated by Buck Mulligan (bowl equals chalice, etc.), incorporates two of the novel's most important themes, both interdynamically introduced her: bracketed at one end by 'Stately', invoking the British State, the colonial power dominating Ireland at the time, and at the other end by 'crossed', signifying the Roman-Catholic Church embodying the religious suffocation of Ireland's people, it would seem to be of the utmost importance for a translator to represent both echoes as fully, and in the same positions, as in the source text.[17] There is more, however, for

---

[16] Fulford in fact says that in the opening line 'Joyce declares his characters' penchant for blasphemy and their facetious approach to all that's serious', which is a sloppy generalisation: what the sentence says, by its Uncle Charles principle-like ('the narrative idiom need not be the narrator's', Kenner 16) invisible but, once you get to know Buck Mulligan, clearly audible undertones, is *this* particular character's penchant for the non-serious.

[17] Cf. also episode 10, "Wandering Rocks", which reverses the pattern, situating the Roman-Catholic Church first in dedicating the first section, or vignette, of the episode to the person of Reverend John Conmee, and the nineteenth to the Earl of Dudley, the viceroy representing the British King in Ireland.

the translator to take into account. With its six stresses the first clause of the opening sentence of *Ulysses* echoes the hexametrical opening line of Homer's *Odyssey*: 'Státely, plúmp Búck Múlligan cáme from the stáirhead'. And then there is an echo from *Hamlet*, a play Stephen Dedalus, as we shall find, has a specific theory about, and a character he models himself on:

> *Horatio*: Two nights together had these gentlemen,
> Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch
> In the dead waste and middle of the night
> Been thus encounter'd: a figure like your father
> Armed at point exactly, cap-à-pie,
> Appears before them, and with solemn march
> Goes slow and stately by them […]. (Shakespeare, I.2.196-202)

Buck Mulligan's appearance is silently compared to the dead King (who, other than a statesman of some aplomb, is it given to move *statelily*, after all?)[18] in *Hamlet*; an uncanny role to be assigned to Mulligan in such an early stage of the book: the usurper he will become (as Stephen makes abundantly clear in the last word directed to but unheard by Mulligan: 'Usurper', *U* 1.744), is himself (*will* himself, it is implied) be usurped (by fatherish Leopold Bloom—for a brief moment in time only, though: between say 11 at night on June 16 and 2 in the morning of June 17, 1904). The King is dead: we all know what that means.

There are, moreover, apart from more intertextual issues, such as the silent link between Buck Mulligan's physique and Oscar Wilde's, a number of strong intratextual relationships that can be established. First of all, for instance, there is the circularity started (or completed) here

---

[18] Another royal by proxy in *Ulysses* is William Brayden, owner of the *Weekly Freeman and National Press*—he, too, is described as a 'stately figure'; having been greeted obsequiously by a subject, he is reduced to a face and seen to move 'statelily': 'Mr Bloom turned and saw the liveried porter raise his lettered cap as a stately figure entered between the newsboards of the *Weekly Freeman and National Press* and the *Freeman's Journal and National Press*. Dullthudding Guinness's barrels. It passed statelily up the staircase, steered by an umbrella, a solemn beardframed face' (*U* 7.42-45).

when we see the S of 'Stately' as an echo (or a foreshadowing) of Molly Bloom's final 'Yes' (*U* 18.1614)'s s, a word in which we can also detect, in reverse, Buck Mulligan's '*Stately*'.[19] Then there is Buck Mulligan's likeness to Molly: both are 'plump', Buck in his Wildean physique, Molly in the 'mellow yellow smellow melons of her rump' (*U* 17.2241), where poor Bloom is, in a sense, unwittingly kissing Stephen's friend (with the likes of whom Stephen does not need any enemies). To put insult to injury, as the opening scenes of "Eumaeus" emphasise, there are many similarities between Bloom and Mulligan. Even the opening sentence, for instance, describes Bloom's actions in definite Mullinesque terms: 'Preparatory to anything else Mr Bloom brushed off the greater bulk of the *shavings* and handed Stephen the hat and ashplant and *bucked him up* generally in orthodox Samaritan fashion which he very badly needed' (*U* 16.1-3; emphasis mine). Furthermore, in "Eumaeus" Bloom echoes Mulligan's physical *Hamlet* echo by echoing, or so it can be inferred, a line from the best-known soliloquy from *Hamlet*, 'To sleep, perchance to dream—ay, there's the rub' (III.1.65): 'But how to get there was the rub' (*U* 16.11). Also, like Mulligan in "Telemachus", Bloom whistles in "Eumaeus"—not as eloquently as Mulligan, though, whose whistles seem to attract the attention of the morning mailboat, while Bloom's efforts remain unanswered:

> He peered sideways up and gave a long slow whistle of call, then paused awhile in rapt attention, his even white teeth glistening here and there with gold points. Chrysostomos. Two strong shrill whistles answered through the calm. (*U* 1.24-27)

> But as he confidently anticipated there was not a sign of a Jehu plying for hire anywhere to be seen except a fourwheeler, probably engaged by some fellows inside on the spree, outside the North Star hotel and there was no symptom of its budging a quarter of an inch when Mr Bloom, who was anything but a professional whistler, endeavoured to hail it by emitting a kind of a whistle, holding his arms arched over his head, twice. (*U* 16.27-30)

---

[19] And, as Fritz Senn has pointed out, 'Stately' links up, in retrospect, with *Portrait*'s final word 'stead' (1985: 348).

Finally, Stephen's Telemachia (like Hamlet's) starts on top of a tower, and Stephen himself is being conjured up ('Come *up*, Kinch! Come *up*, you fearful Jesuit!', *U* 1.8; emphasis mine) and subsequently bossed around by Mulligan:

> He came over to the gunrest and, thrusting a hand into Stephen's upper pocket, said:—Lend us a loan of your noserag to wipe my razor. Stephen *suffered him* to pull out and hold up on show by its corner a dirty crumpled handkerchief'. (*U* 1.67-71; emphasis mine).

Conversely, Bloom's Odyssey starts down in his basement kitchen, the only space in the Blooms' home Leopold seems to have any power to wield, while 'Mrs Marion Bloom' (*U* 4.244)[20] is enthroned in the marital, soon to be desecrated bed, that seems to be as one with the top floor it is located on as Penelope and Odysseus's never-to-be dishonoured one is with the olive tree it is made of,[21] and is bossing Bloom about ('Poldy! [. . .] Scald the teapot', *U* 4.270; 'What a time you were', *U* 4.302).

---

[20] This should be 'Mrs Leopold Bloom', of course: Boylan's letter to Marion is addressed in a '[b]old hand' (*U* 4.244), as it is indeed a bold thing to do to address a married woman by her first name.

[21] Penelope/Odysseus lovebirds' nest is made from the olive tree planted in the centre of their house. In the final recognition scene between the two it serves as the key to their reunion (cf., of course, the bed as the be-all and end-all in episode 18 of *Ulysses* in which the two spouses mutually recognize one another as their mutual be-all and end-all): 'Then Odysseus said to her, speaking in anger: 'How comes it that my bed can be moved to this place and that? Not a bed of that kind was the bed I built for myself. Knowest thou not how I built my bed? First, there grew up in the courtyard an olive tree. Round that olive tree I built a chamber, and I roofed it well and I set doors to it. Then I sheared off all the light wood on the growing olive tree, and I rough-hewed the trunk with the adze, and I made the tree into a bed post. Beginning with this bed post I wrought a bedstead, and when I finished it, I inlaid it with silver and ivory. Such was the bed I built for myself, and such a bed could not be moved to this place or that.' Then did Penelope know assuredly that the man who stood before her was indeed her husband, the steadfast Odysseus—none other knew of where the bed was placed, and how it had been built. Penelope fell a-weeping and she put her arms round his neck' (Colum 39.html).

Anyhow he was all in

The inter- and intratextual mesh, the fabric of fabrications comprising the opening sentence and scenes in *Ulysses* functions as the cradle of much of the dynamic of *Ulysses*; Senn's 'interdynamism' does, indeed, seem to be a most useful term to describe how that cradle is being rocked throughout the text.

It goes without saying that for a translator to be aware of the interdynamism of *Ulysses* is essential. At the same time, it must always be admitted that not all echoes will also be (or can allowed to be) heard in any translation of *Ulysses*. To focus only one of the elements mentioned above: it seems to be impossible for the grammatically perfectly acceptable English first sentence of *Ulysses* to be translated into grammatically perfectly decent Dutch and keep the translation of 'crossed' in the same position as the source text's. Neither of the two existing Dutch translations has managed to do so.[22] Hardly any recent translations from other languages I have investigated have seen the Stately-crossed implications or been able to put the respective equivalents in their relevant positions. One notable exception is the latest French translation, by Jacques Aubert, who, as a Joyce scholar, will have been aware of the significance of the Stately-crossed bracketing of the first sentence—but even then, apparently, is forced to have his translation of 'Stately' begin with 'En': 'En majesté, dodu, Buck Mulligan émergea de l'escalier, porteur d'un bol de mousse à raser sur lequel un miroir et un rasoir reposaient en croix' (Joyce 2004: 11). Auguste Morel's 1936 translation, 'revue par Valery Larbaud, Stuart Gilbert et l'auteur' (Joyce 1936: title page), no less, does not manage to follow Joyce's original plan: 'Majesteux et dodu, Buck Mulligan parut en haut des marches, porteur d'un bol mousseux sur lequel reposaiend en croix rasoir et glace à main' (*ibid*., 7). Could not a hybrid be possible and give full credit to

---

[22] To add insult to injury, the latest Dutch translation has split the smoothly flowing opening sentence into two.

Joyce's interdynamic intent? 'Majesteux et dodu, Buck Mulligan émergea de l'escalier, porteur d'un bol de mousse à raser sur lequel un miroir et un rasoir reposaient en croix'?

The interdynamic problems start earlier than the first sentence of Joyce's masterpiece. As we know, Joyce decided to cut all the Homeric episode titles from the final destination of his seven-year odyssey of writing *Ulysses*, but of course the one Homeric title to survive his pruning was the title of the book itself: *Ulysses*. But is it a 'Homeric' title? In *Ulysses*, Bloom, like the Odysseus he interdynamically is and is not similar to, however tenuously, however 'almostly', can join Stephen, who is and is not like Telemachus; there can be some kind of 'atonement' (*U* 17.2058)[23] between the two: an at-onement, achieved, and at the same time, never to be achieved: same difference. But of course not one of the characters in *Ulysses* is aware of having a Homeric counterpart and it is far from Bloom's mind that he might be a latter day Odysseus. So who is this *Ulysses* anyway? *Not* Homer's hero, that is for sure. Dynamically, Joyce's Ulysses is an Anglo-Irish hybrid translation of a Latin translation (Ulixes) of a Greek name (Odysseus) belonging to a character from Homer's epic, Joyce's favourite hero whose rumoured Phoenician, i.e., Semitic background ('though in reality [Bloom is] not [Semitic]', *U* 16.1085) Joyce found particularly interesting,[24] and whose name, according to popular etymology, suitably combines 'Outis', 'nobody' and 'Zeus', chief of the Greek gods, whose multiple impersonations and metamorphoses make him a precursor of Bloom's successor HCE in *Finnegans Wake*: Here Comes Everybody. The deliberate length and complexion of the previous sentence aims to show what it is trying to tell: Bloom's moniker has a long and complicated history. 'There he is himself, a Greek' (*U* 16.679): like the 'Antonio' that

---

[23] 'What past consecutive causes, before rising preapprehended, of accumulated fatigue did Bloom, before rising, silently recapitulate? [. . .] nocturnal perambulation to and from the cabman's shelter, Butt Bridge (atonement)' (*U* 17.2042-58).

[24] Joyce found the 19th-century French Hellenist Victor Bérard's 'discovery' of Ulysses—or rather, of Odysseus—as a Phoenician sailor roaming the Mediterranean—most appealing; see, for instance, Ellmann 408.

pseudo Odysseus Murphy wears on his chest in "Eumaeus", Bloom is *not* a Greek. And much like the character and most of the evidence to support stories, incidents, cups of coffee and buns in the same episode, it is unlikely that any of Joyce's interdynamic echoes are 'strictly accurate gospel' (*U* 16.829). Which is what makes them so endlessly flexible.

In short, Bloom is *not Ulysses,* let alone Odysseus. Significantly, the *OED*'s definition of Ulysses emphasises a type, rather than a name: 'Used as the type of a traveller or adventurer; occas. also, of a crafty and clever schemer.'

Ulysses, then, is as interdynamic a title as you can possibly think, and Joyce made full use of its potential. The significance of a title like *Ulysses* for a text that is primarily, as we have seen, a translation of interdynamic echoes in its own right, is enormous; come to think of it (and many translators *do not* come to think of it), to find the 'correct' translation of such a title is hideously difficult, as the Dutch translators of *Ulysses* have proven.

When the latest Dutch translators of *Ulysses*, whose in many ways admirable work was published in 1994, were publishing separate translations of a number of episodes in various literary journals and spreading publicity to promote their work, they suggested that the title of their translation would become *Odysseus*, not *Ulysses*. Their argument to do so ran as follows:

> Our choice to do so is most significant for how we approach our translation. Our predecessor John Vandenbergh, whose translation appeared in 1969, and the German translator Wollschläger copy, as it were, the original title. In doing so they overlook the significance of the fact that in the English language Ulysses is the usual name to refer to the Greek hero. (Claes 58; my translation)

'The Greek hero': quite apart from the fact that in *Ulysses* there is, of course, no true Greek hero to be spotted anywhere, E.V. Rieu's 1946 English translation of *The Odyssey* uses the name Odysseus, rather than *Ulysses*. The translators go on to argue that

> [i]n Dutch, this name sounds uncommonly solemn or has a Latin ring to it. This is why the French have opted for *Ulysse* and the Italians for *Ulisse*. 'Literal' translations often give rise to a wrongly alienating effect. Our option is to translate *idiomatically*. (Claes 58; my translation; emphasis mine)

But of course, as I hope to have made clear, part of the attraction of *Ulysses* over *Odysseus* is exactly that: its alienating effect, its Latin ring. Quite apart from this, the very title of Joyce's book had of course since long been part even of Dutch *idiom*. Perhaps the only true option for the translators would have been to opt for *Ulixes*, rather than for *Ulysses. Ulixes*, for one, is the name the Dutch translator of Dante's *Divine Comedy* chooses when the Greek hero appears in the Inferno section.

Give us a squint at that literature, grandfather

The arguments for translations of the title *Ulysses* to remain as close to its Latin ring in English as possible have perhaps been formulated best by Lenn Platt. In an analysis of the "Circe" episode of *Ulysses* and the Irish Literary Theatre, he argues that

> the first irony of *Ulysses* is that it is an authentic Irish epic, partly by virtue of its hopeless and inevitable cultural contamination. The title of the book, which is every bit as complex and ambiguous as 'Finnegans Wake', would suggest as much. Forget, for a moment, Joyce's admiration for Odysseus, and assume that the title refers not to Bloom, *but to the book as a book*. To call a book 'Ulysses' is to invite the status of the epic. But why call a book about Ireland *Ulysses*? [. . .] why use the Romanised form, rather than the authentic Greek form? This, it seems to me, is the point about the title. In the Romanised form, 'Ulysses' signifies cultural appropriation, or, if, you like, theft. [. . .] It signifies a cultural practice, and carries the realisation that the new Irish epic cannot be 'created', but must be stolen. (61-62; emphasis mine)

Stolen, or trans-lated, transposed from elsewhere: *Ulysses* is a purloined letter; any translation of *Ulysses* doubly so. Bloom, blissfully unaware of his Homeric, his Odyssean, his Ulyssean qualities throughout his 18 hours or so in the book entitled *Ulysses*, embodies, literally, that is to say, as a construct of letters, as the sum of the amount of ink spent on describing him as fully as any allroundman in literature, all the problems translators of *Ulysses* come up against. Bloom is a translation, an *Übersetzung*, a crossing actively engaged in by the translated, the *Übersetzte*, the crosser himself. Always in between texts, inter- and intradynamically embedded in the echoes of our minds, the case of Bloom should serve as an informant to translators of *Ulysses*. There is no such thing as one proper translation of *Ulysses*; or of any other text, for

that matter, and '[. . .] no two translations are going to be alike, as we all know, because fragments of our individualistic readings will drift through our reading and our translating. Difference is built into the translation process, both on the levels of the readerly and the writerly' (Bassnett 1997: 27). As I suggested at the outset of this foray into translating the interdynamics of *Ulysses*, in translating literary texts, there are only possibilities, almostings. In the case of the Dutch translation of *Ulysses*, so far the optimal translation of the title would seem be *Ulysses* which, in the end, the most recent translators had to acknowledge.[25] Here, interdynamically speaking, writing, reading and translating, in the case of *Ulysses*, sameness marks the difference Joyce looked for. By offering in a different language the same spirit—by providing a literary, interlingual metempsychosis of *Ulysses*, the interdynamism Joyce sought and found is best served.[26]

References

Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality.* London: Routledge. 2000.

Bassnett, Susan. *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction.* Oxford: Blackwell. 1993.

—. "The Meek or the Mighty: Reappraising the Role of the Translator". *Translation Power Subversion.* Ed. R. Alvarez & C. Africa Vidal. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. 1996.

---

[25] In recent publications the projected translators of the third Dutch version of *Ulysses* have suggested that their own title in Dutch is going to be *Odysseus*. Resistance is being rallied as we speak. Quite apart from its success or failure, it is very unlikely that the Dutch publisher will accept a commercially unattractive title such as *Odysseus*; after all, over the past 50 years or so, *Ulysses* has become, to all intents and purposes, James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

[26] 'metempsychosis 1. Transmigration of the soul, passage of the soul from one body to another; *esp.* (chiefly in Pythagoreanism and certain Eastern religions) the transmigration of the soul of a human being or animal at or after death into a new body of the same or a different species' (*ibid*.).

—. "When Is a Translation Not a Translation?". *Constructing Cultures: Essays in Literary Translation.* Ed. Susan Bassnett and André Lefevre. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. 1997: 25-40.

Beckett, Samuel. "Dante…Bruno. Vico..Joyce". *Disjecta: Miscellaneous Writings and a Dramatic Fragment.* Ed. with a foreword by Ruby Cohn. London: John Calder. 1983.

Caneda-Cabrera, M. Teresa. "The Untranslatability of Modernism". Eysteinsson and Liska 2007: 675-92.

—. "The Problematics of Translating Modernism: The Case of James Joyce". Seminar on Literature and/in Translation, 23/04/2008 and 24/04/2008.
http://www.kuleuven.be/cetra/events/Documents/20080423_seminar%20Teresa%20Caneda.pdf. Accessed 21 June 2009.

Claes, Paul, and Mon Nys. "Een lectuur van *Ulysses*". Interview with Paul Claes and Mon Nys by Frans Denissen and Chris van de Poel. *Yang*. Vol. 29. No. 4-5: 47-58.

Colum, Padraic. *The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy.* http://www.bartleby.com/75/. Accessed 21 June 2009.

Cronin, Michael. *Translation and Globalization.* London: Routledge. 2003.

Ehrlich, Heyward, JJTM: The James Joyce Text Machine. http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~ehrlich/jjtm/. Accessed 21 June 2009.

Ellmann, Richard. *James Joyce.* Rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1982.

Eppstein, E.L. *A Starchamber Quiry: A James Joyce Centennial Volume* 1882-1982. London: Methuen. 1982.

Eysteinsson, Astradur, and Vivian Liska, eds. *Modernism.* A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 2007.

Federici, Eleonora. "The Translator's Intertextual Baggage". *Forum for Modern Language Studies*. Vol. 43. No. 2. doi:10.1093/fmls/cqm005. Accessed 21 June 2009.

Green, J. M. *Thinking through Translation.* Athens GA: University of Georgia Press. 2001.

Griffiths, Eric. "Dante, Primo Levi and the Intertextualists". *Times Literary Supplement.* May 7 2008, http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/the_tls/article3886607.ece. Accessed 21 June 2009.

Joyce, James. *Ulysses.* Tr. Auguste Morel. Paris: Gallimard. 1936.

—. *Ulysses.* Tr. John Vandenbergh. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij. 1969.

—. *Ulysses.* The corrected text. Ed. H.W. Gabler. New York, Vintage Books, 1986. The convention in referencing Gabler's edition of *Ulysses* as established by the *James Joyce Quarterly* has been followed here (*U* episode number.line number).

—. *Finnegans Wake.* Ed. Seamus Deane. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992. The convention in referencing *Finnegans Wake* as established by the *James Joyce Quarterly* has been followed here (page number.line number).

—. *Dubliners.* New York: Vintage. 1993.

—. *Ulysses.* tr. Paul Claes and Mon Nys. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij. 1994.

—. *Ulysses.* tr. Jacques Aubert. Paris: Gallimard. 2004.

Kenner, Hugh. *Joyce's Voices.* Berkeley: University of California Press. 1978.

—. *Ulysses.* Johns Hopkins University Press. 1987.

Latour, Bruno. *Science in Action. How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press. 1987.

"metempsychosis, n." *The Oxford English Dictionary.* 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00307633. Accessed 2 June 2009

Norris, Margot. "Reading Modernism, after Hugh Kenner (1923-2003)". *Modernism/Modernity.* Vol. 12. No. 3 (2005): 483-86.

Pfister, Manfred. "How Postmodern is Intertextuality?" *Intertextuality*, ed. H. F. Plett. Berlin: De Gruyter. 1991: 207-224.

Platt, Lenn. "*Ulysses* 15 and the Irish Literary Theatre". *Reading Joyce's "Circe"*. Amsterdam: Rodopi. 1994: 33-62.

Raleigh, John Henry. "On the Way to Ithaca: The Functions of the 'Eumaeus' Section in *Ulysses*". *Irish Renaissance Annual.* Ed. Zack Bowen (Newark: University of Delaware Press.1981). 13-114.

Ramey, James. "Intertextual Metempsychosis in Ulysses: Murphy, Sinbad, and the 'U.P.: up' Postcard". *James Joyce Quarterly.* Vol. 45, No. 1 (Fall 2007): 97-114.

Senn, Fritz. "Weaving, Unweaving". *A Starchamber Quiry: A James Joyce Centennial Volume 1882-1982*. E.L. Epstein, ed.: 45-70.

—. *Joyce's Dislocutions: Essays on Reading As Translation.* Ed. John Paul Riquelme. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 1984.

—. "'Stately, plump', for Example: Allusive Overlays and Widening Circles of Irrelevance". *James Joyce Quarterly.* Vol. 22, No. 4 (Summer 1985): 347-54.

—. *Inductive Scrutinies. Focus on Joyce*. Ed. Christine O'Neill. Dublin: Lilliput Press. 1995.

—. "In Classical Idiom: *Anthologia Intertextualis*". Senn 1995: 197-215.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*, ed. Harold Jenkins. The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare. London: Methuen. 1984.

Stanford, W. B. *The "Ulysses" Theme.* Dallas: Springs Publications. 1968.

Stöckelová, Tereza. "Mutability and Mobility of Social Science Knowledge: The Case of Roma expertise". *socialtechnology.files.wordpress.com/2009/06/stockelova.doc. Accessed 17 July 2009.*

"translate, v." *The Oxford English Dictionary.* 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50256320. Accessed 2 June 2009.

"Ulysses". *The Oxford English Dictionary.* 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50261570. Accessed 2 June 2009.

Milton's Womb

Neil Forsyth, University of Lausanne

Abstract
Milton's Chaos is described at one point as 'the Womb of Nature and perhaps her grave'. Though this phrase translates some words of Lucretius, this essay argues that the link of Chaos with a womb is one of the most original ideas in *Paradise Lost*. The essay explores various ideas of Chaos and uses of the word 'womb' in the poem and in contemporary contexts.

One of the most original ideas in *Paradise Lost* is Chaos. Typically it is a blend of Milton's classical learning with his heterodox theology. It is a region of inchoate matter, constantly warring elements, out of which the Son, acting for God as usual, creates the universe. It is memorably described at one point as 'the Womb of Nature and perhaps her grave' (II: 911).[27] The phrase translates a line in Lucretius's Epicurean poem, *De Rerum Natura* (V: 259), a provocative allusion itself in a Christian context.[28] It implies a lurking and potentially hostile force, monstrous and untamed, not simply an abstract concept.[29] In Milton's theology the ability to control Chaos is a primary sign of God's power and a key political idea: Hobbes had invoked 'the first Chaos of Violence and

---

[27] *Paradise Lost* is quoted from *The Riverside Milton*, ed Roy Flannagan. A different version of this essay appeared in 2008 as chapter 21 of my *John Milton: A Biography.*

[28] Sedley shows that creation from matter, rather than from nothing, is mostly a classical rather than Christian concept. The challenging blend of classical and Christian is characteristic of Milton. In his theological treatise Milton calls original matter 'good', but he does not there call it Chaos: in the poem Chaos is linked to 'eternal' and 'unoriginal Night', II: 896, III: 19, X: 477, phrases with potentially heretical meanings. See Leonard at II: 890 and V: 472.

[29] Leonard *ad loc* points out that Milton's Chaos 'seems hostile partly because it continues to exist after the Creation', whereas in Ovid *Metamorphoses* I: 19-20 Chaos is 'all used up'.

Civill Warre' in *Leviathan* (1651), precisely to deplore the consequences of rebellion against the monarch. Milton in fact never refers to his contemporary Hobbes, whom he opposed politically, so there is no real question here of direct allusion, still less of imitation.[30] The looser notion of 'intertextuality', however, allows the scholarly footnote to enrich Milton's meaning: there is often a political subtext even when Milton is writing, as here, about primary matter.

Chaos also appears as an independent being, personified as a cosmic character whom Satan meets on his journey. In this aspect Chaos reactivates the mythical root latent in the biblical *tehom*, the abyss of Genesis and the Book of Revelation.[31] Milton does allude directly to the Chaos of Hesiod and Vergil: in the *Aeneid*, the narrator invokes, even prays to, Chaos and Phlegethon as Aeneas enters the underworld (VI: 265).

There is also a trace of the feminine[32] in that phrase just quoted: Chaos is 'the Womb of Nature', the source of all material being. The phrase and its implications may give the lie to Virginia Woolf's misguided notion that Milton was 'the first of the masculinists'. Chaos as womb is an idea that is worth following up. It is rich in intratextual meaning.[33] The phrase occurs at the moment in the poem when Satan begins his journey. He pauses on the brink of the abyss. Here Chaos is the hostile space he must cross in order to get from the gates of Hell to Earth. His journey is Milton's variant of the required odyssey in an epic, and very exciting and dangerous it is. Commentators since the eighteenth century have noticed a particular feature of Milton's style that is readily

---

[30] Milton's widow said that the two had never met, but scholars have found many connections. Nicholson argued that Milton the dissident Puritan constantly opposed Hobbes' philosophy. Her views have been tempered by Fallon, and see also Rosendale.

[31] I described the literary career of this figure, the opponent of the gods in Babylonian, biblical and classical myth in *The Old Enemy*.

[32] Rumrich thoroughly explores this concept.

[33] I offer this term to add to Genette's list. With a long work like *Paradise Lost*, or *Ulysses*, it is indispensable to describe this as one of the ways in which the poem means (see my Introduction to this issue).

accessible in this passage. 'The Poet Himself seems to be Doing what he Describes, for the Period begins at 910. Then he goes not on Directly, but Lingers; giving an Idea of *Chaos* before he Enters into it' (Richardson in 1734, quoted in Ricks 79). The unpredictability of rhythm and syntax takes us into Satan's energies and struggles. Here is the passage.

> Into this wilde Abyss,
> The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,
> Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
> But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt
> Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
> Unless th'Almighty Maker them ordain
> His dark materials to create more Worlds,
> Into this wild Abyss the warie fiend
> Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,
> Pondering his Voyage. (II: 910-19)

We share the experience of 'the wary fiend' in his anxious hesitation on the very brink of Hell. The syntax stalls for line after line while the nature of chaos is explored in subordinate clauses heaped together 'confusedly' (914), until at last the opening phrase returns, 'into this wild Abyss', as in a musical composition, and the narrative resumes. Even then there is a mild surprise since Satan still does not complete the movement implied by 'into'; rather he 'Stood' (as Bentley irascibly pointed out in 1732; Leonard *ad loc*). The next verb completes the syntax properly (he looked into the abyss) but still doesn't give us the jump we've been waiting for.

That jump doesn't actually come until line 929, where the long wait is stressed by the phrase that opens the sentence:

> At last his Sail-broad Vannes
> He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak
> Uplifted spurns the ground. (II: 927-29)

Even then we may blink momentarily before we see that 'spurns the ground' means 'jumped'. This whole passage exhibits that close relationship between form and meaning which readers have often felt to be one of the desirable, if not definitive, characteristics of poetic language. 'Milton can be said to be making the form *significant*' (Furniss and Bath 55). The particular significance it takes on here is that it brings the Satanic hesitation directly into the narrative, and makes it textual.

The reader cannot but experience it as Satan does. We too teeter on the edge of Chaos.

Just as pygmy devils, or Galileo's telescope, deliberately introduced early into the narrative, disturb our sense of perspective or proportion, so the noise of Chaos that Satan now hears performs the same function for the ear. Blasting noise immediately assaults Satan's ear like the seige of a city in time of war—repeating the recent trauma of civil war for the first readers of the poem.

> Nor was his eare less peal'd
> With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
> Great things with small) than when *Bellona* storms,
> With all her battering Engines bent to rase
> Som Capital City; or less than if this frame
> Of Heav'n were falling, and these Elements
> In mutinie had from her Axle torn
> The stedfast Earth. (II: 920-27)

It is with a sense of relief (and gratitude) that one reaches that fine phrase 'the stedfast Earth'. Such resting places stud the narrative of the Chaos-journey, but one must, like Satan, earn them. The noise of Chaos here is first compared to the war Milton's readers knew at firsthand (the Bellona reference) before it is magnified to become the disruption of the earth's 'Axle', the *axis mundi* of countless myths.

In the way that our other senses compensate when we lose one, Milton's susceptibility to loud noise had been enhanced since going blind (Davies 129): this is the converse of his delicate and highly wrought atunement to the harmonies of music and poetry. The materials of Chaos are not only 'dark' but 'loud'.[34] We are reminded of the 'barbarous dissonance' (VII: 32) or 'savage clamour' (36), of the Restoration court, like the lawless fury that impelled the Maenads to destroy Orpheus. Again, these inter- and intratextual links reinforce and complicate the meaning of Milton's Chaos. And the allusion to Orpheus, recurrent in

---

[34] Line 916 gives the title of Philip Pullman's remarkable trilogy of fantasy novels, *His Dark Materials*. Pullman should be read intertextually, with Milton (and Blake) in mind.

Milton's poetry, dramatizes the dangers that surround not only Satan on his journey but also the narrator on his. The four elements, God's 'dark materials', are doomed to fight each other continually, and yet are somehow, in keeping with the womb idea, 'pregnant in their causes'.

So Satan flies off and into the frightening 'womb of nature'. This is not the first time we have heard about a womb in the poem. In the opening part of the poem, the devils set out to build a new palace for themselves, to be called Pandemonium (the word means 'all the demons' and is Milton's invention). They go looking for materials and the text continues with the following passage:

> There stood a Hill not far whose grisly top
> Belch'd fire and rowling smoak; the rest entire
> Shon with a glossie scurff, undoubted sign
> That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,
> The work of Sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
> A numerous Brigad hasten'd. (I: 670-75).

What are we to make of that very odd phrase—'his womb'? For Christopher Ricks, the phrase emphasizes the 'perverted body-landscape of Hell'.[35] It looks as if the phrase is one among many references to the mixed genders of Hell.

But—and it is a big but—we should note that, by now (1667) in the development of the English language the pronoun *his* had largely been replaced by *its* for the neuter gender. Shakespeare regularly uses *his,* but *its* was a recent innovation; *his* did not reflect the human/nonhuman distinction found elsewhere in the pronoun system (as in *what/who*). An expert on the history of the language says '*its* obviously fitted the system ideally, as can be deduced from its rapid spread in the first half of the seventeenth century' (Görlach 86). So is Milton just lagging behind the times? Perhaps he is, since there are only two uses of *its* in *Paradise Lost*, and not many elsewhere. So 'his womb' may really be just the way Milton would say 'its womb'. That kind of intertextual extension,

---

[35] In his first edition, Alastair Fowler *ad loc* also writes about the confusion, though he dropped the reference for the second.

however, moving beyond the poem to the dictionary, in this case at least makes the phrase very disappointing. No gender confusion at all.

Nonetheless, we might well ask what a hill is doing with a *womb*. This could be just the looser use of 'womb' as stomach, current till the nineteenth century, and yet surely in this loaded context the phrase must bear more weight. Like most great writers, Milton can exploit, even without consciously realizing it, the state of the language in his time. In Milton's poetry words can retain their older meanings, often Latinate, while they also suggest their more modern sense. Milton's language reflects a period of rapidly changing usages (especially enhanced by the civil war and everything that went with it), so that we often find words in which an older and a more modern meaning are both available. From that point of view, 'his womb' may be more than simply an archaic usage. It may be a deliberate oddity.

Once we begin to think along those lines, we will want to connect this womb with 'the womb of Nature', the source of all creation, but also with that other very striking metaphor which soon follows, in which these mining angels

> Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth
> For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
> Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound
> And dig'd out ribs of Gold. Let none admire
> That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best
> Deserve the precious bane. (I: 687-92)

The hill is now seen as part of 'mother Earth'—and has a wound rather than a womb (Milton often plays with sound). There is a conventional example of this widespread idea in Fletcher's *Purple Island* of 1633, a poem Milton read and raided:

> O hungry metal, false deceitful ray,
> Well laidst thou dark, pressed in the earth's hidden womb,
> Yet through our mother's entrails cutting way,
> We drag thy buried corse from hellish tomb. (VIII: 27-30)

The physiology of Milton's passage may seem a little odd, since the miners find treasures in the earth's *bowels*. Perhaps this is an instance of the common psychoanalytic equation of money and faeces that goes under the wonderful generic title of 'Filthy Lucre' (Brown 292-304).

'Bowels', though, is commonly extended to mean all of one's internal organs, equivalent to Fletcher's 'entrails', and was frequently and famously so used by D. H. Lawrence, especially in more intense passages. But what is really interesting about this female earth, be it noted, is that it has *ribs*.

Now of course one wants to explain that the ribs are a metaphor for the veins of gold in the rocks. But if we start making connections, we soon realize that the image is carefully chosen, and not only because it extends the anatomical language of the whole passage. An eighteenth century critic, not Richardson this time but Pearce, commented that this phrase 'alludes to the formation of Eve' recounted later by Adam at VIII: 462-3: he there tells how God 'op'nd my left side, and took/ From thence a Rib, . . . wide was the wound'. A very great critic, William Empson, picked up this splendid perception ('I call this a profound piece of criticism', 176), and made the connection between Eve as universal mother and the concept 'mother Earth'. One editor, Fowler, agrees with the Pearce-Empson connection. He omits, however, the further connection between Eve's birth and that of Sin, born from 'the left side op'ning wide' (II: 755) of Satan's head. Thus in fact the passage brings together the poem's three main female figures—Eve, mother Earth, Sin—all implicated in the image of this strange birth. Strange indeed, and yet none of the commentators takes the next logical step and points out that, though the parallel with Eve's birth is indeed close in the language of these scenes, she is 'born', in the story Milton found in Genesis and elaborates, not from a woman but from Adam. His is the womb, or the wide wound, from which she is taken. The 'normal' function of the sexes, if the word *normal* can have any meaning in this context, is reversed. Surely this parallel, in which Mammon is seen to reproduce, roughly speaking, the creative movement of God in opening a wide wound in the hill's womb, argues for the deliberate placing of the phrase 'his womb' at this point.

Many cultures in fact have what anthropologists call 'male birth myths' like this, but Milton won't let us ignore (unless we are not attending) the half-submerged ideas. Here, as in Genesis, though sanitized and adapted to the idea of an all powerful God, a divine 'mid-husband' reaches in with his bare hands and brings out the material of life. What Milton does, if we take seriously the implication of 'his womb', is to align these various passages we have been accumulating

with the ambivalent sexuality that pervades the poem, beginning with the very recreation in the opening lines of the cosmogonic myth itself. There the spirit of God sits dove-like brooding on the vast abyss (the first appearance of what later becomes Chaos) and makes it pregnant, giving both male and female functions to this cosmic bird-god (I: 21-2)—but making the abyss, if we think about it, a cosmic egg and definitely female. So here in Hell it is mother earth who has productive ribs of gold within her, whereas in the parallel passage for the birth of Eve, the productive innards are Adam's.

The point will be even clearer by contrast. The poem does contain a few more or less proper wombs. Sin has her womb with its growing burden (II: 767), even though what is growing there is Death, the result of her impregnation by her father Satan. The whole scene is painful and perverse, self-love replacing mutual love, but the genders are not bent. A healthier variant occurs in the first words the angel Raphael addresses to Eve: 'Hail Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful Womb/ Shall fill the World' (V: 388-89). And a few lines before, mother earth has an unexceptionable womb in the midst of a remarkable passage of poetry. As the angel makes his approach to the garden, he passes through

> A Wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
> Wantond as in her prime, and plaid at will
> Her Virgin Fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
> Wilde above rule or art, enormous bliss. (V: 294-7)

The language gets even more erotic as Adam sees him coming at noon,

> While now the mounted Sun
> Shot down direct his fervid Raies to warme
> Earths inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs.

That 'inmost womb' is comfortably surrounded by two instances of 'warm': here Milton's love of play with sound is quite gratuitous, since there was no reason to add how much warmth Adam did not need. The implied sex here is quite 'normal', though the origins of these sexualized myths is not in Christian but in pagan tradition: a sun shoots its rays into the receiving womb of earth. We may perhaps wonder why, in the midst of all this fertility, Nature is oddly described as having 'Virgin Fancies'. But in any case, the erotic implications of 'wantond' enhance the

conventional gender equations. There is no blurring, of the kind we found in the Hellish passage, and that may be a reason for the contrast.

Gender confusion is not infrequent in Milton. Sometimes it can be explained on purely linguistic grounds, as with 'his womb'. Thus in *Areopagitica* (558) England is 'a noble and puissant Nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep and shaking her invincible locks'. In this case the Latin word behind 'Nation' is feminine, so when she rouses *herself*, we hear only Milton's (and his century's) familiarity with Latin. But the second time, the pronoun 'her' follows immediately that 'strong man', and 'his' would have been more appropriate. Such usages have been attributed to Milton's own confused sexuality, but they can be explained as we have seen on linguistic as well as literary grounds.

Just as 'his womb' might be understood as the vestige of older usages no longer current in modern English, but where a more modern meaning is equally valid, so, in the narrator's immediate warning about the riches of Hell (in the passage quoted earlier, 'Let none admire / That riches grow in Hell, I 690-1), the word 'admire' clearly retains its Latin sense (*admirari*) of 'wonder' (even if the word was often used in this sense in Early Modern English). This sense is what requires the conjunction *that* immediately afterwards: 'Let none admire / That riches grow in Hell' (I: 690-1). On the other hand, and just as clearly, the word is developing the modern sense in which one stands in admiration before something remarkable. It is this sense, even more than the older one, which leads to the warning not to do it: 'Let none admire'. The phrase comes at the end of the line, and by a characteristic use of double syntax, we first read it in its modern sense before, with the word 'That' at the beginning of the next line, we correct and supply the older meaning. First we hear a warning, appropriate enough here in Hell, not to admire the gold or the mining or the opening of the spacious wound, before we adjust to the meaning 'wonder'. And the warning extends to the famous oxymoron 'precious bane' in the next line. Once again we find Milton exploiting for his own purposes the state of the language in his time.

The angel who led this 'Brigad' to their mining activities was Mammon (appropriately enough, since his name is a generic term in biblical Aramaic for worldly riches). About him we have just heard the following extraordinary information, extraordinary at least if we imagine that the poem always distinguishes carefully between Heaven and Hell. Mammon is called

> the least erected Spirit that fell
> From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks and thoughts
> Were always downward bent, admiring more
> The riches of Heav'ns pavement, trod'n Gold,
> Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
> In vision beatific; by him first
> Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
> Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands
> Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth. (I: 679-87)

Not only was Mammon ripe for the fall, then, but he seems already to have been 'fallen' even in heaven! Jesus was right, no doubt, about the fallen world of the Roman empire, when he averred that 'Ye cannot serve both God and Mammon' (Matt 6.24, Luke 16.13), but Milton's bold decision to invent for his (equally invented) Mammon a prelapsarian existence leads to real difficulties. One is that Mammon here guides men to do roughly what the anthropomorphic God of Genesis and of Milton does: he reaches into the body and brings forth *living* riches. Another is that Mammon sees little difference between Heaven and Hell, as he tells us in his speech during the Parliament in Book II.

> As [God] our darkness, cannot we his Light
> Imitate when we please? This Desart soile
> Wants not her hidden lustre, Gemms and Gold;
> Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
> Magnificence; and what can Heav'n show more? (II: 262-70)

The answer to Mammon's splendidly perverse question should probably be 'Nothing', but then Heaven is not so exclusively concerned with *show* as Mammon. Mammon is another of several figures in Milton who look and cannot see.

Mammon is faulted, as Stanley Fish noted in a brilliant piece of criticism,

> not for admiring Heaven's riches but for admiring them in and for themselves and not as signs of the power ("divine or holy else") that made them. In his eyes they are riches that just happened to be in Heaven rather than *Heaven's* riches. It is their "lustre" (II 271) not their source that impresses him, and that is why he is so pleased to find that same lustre in the "gems and gold" of Hell's soil. "What can

> Heav'n show more?" (273), he asks, making it as plain as could be that "show" names the limit of his perception even as it names his desire. (XV-XVI)

At the same time, I suggest, Mammon has lost the older sense of the word *admire*—wonder. That is a sign of his problem: he simply admires riches, in a wholly modern way.

This brings me to my last example of Miltonic intertextuality in this fertile context, and like the references to Lucretius or Virgil a further example of Renaissance Imitation. The narrator of Book I, describing Mammon for the first time, while he was still in Heaven, is thinking of the Book of Revelation (21.21) where the City of God has streets of pure gold, but the result of Milton's reframing of the idea is that we see none of us know very well how to distinguish the riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold, from the gems and gold to be digged up from the Hell hill's womb. We need the warning not to admire. The paradox, then, in which these words issue, is entirely appropriate: 'that soyle may best/ Deserve the precious bane' (I: 691-2). Like another famously hellish oxymoron, 'darkness visible' (I: 63), and partly for the same reason (imitation of heaven), 'precious bane' describes the attractive ambivalence of hell.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* I: 125-42 is the *locus classicus* for the idea that digging for golden wealth hid underground among 'Stygian shades' initiates the corrupt iron age of modernity. The relevant part reads:

> *Nec tantum segetes alimentaque debita dives*
> *poscebatur humus, sed itum est in viscera terrae:*
> *quasque recondiderat Stygiisque admoverat umbris,*
> *effodiuntur opes, inritamenta malorum.*
> Nor was it only corn and their due nourishment that men demanded of the rich earth: they explored its very bowels, and dug out the wealth which it had hidden away, close to the Stygian shades; and this wealth was a further incitement to wickedness. (tr. Innes 32)

One of Ovid's many clever adaptations of Virgil's underworld realm of Hades, the idea was soon widespread, and reiterated often in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. But Milton's language bears closer attention, for it is not a tired reiteration of a commonplace. It is a deliberate allusion in which Milton expects, I imagine, that his readers will note the imitation, and the variation—exactly what Renaissance schoolboys were taught. Unlike Fletcher's imitation quoted above, with its conventional

rhyme of 'womb' and 'tomb', Milton's phrase makes a new metaphor. Riches *grow* in Hell. Hell thus imitates the natural world, though for many in the period this function of usury was still regarded as a perversion appropriate only for Jews. It is one of the contentious issues between Shylock and Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*. Milton, however, was the son of a money-lender. He lived on the proceeds, and had met his first wife while collecting a debt. He feels called upon to defend usury in his theological treatise, the *De Doctrina Christiana* (776). Thus not only does the word 'admire' point backward and forward at once, but the image of riches growing in Hell, in a male hill with a womb, both looks back to the Ovidian original and also suggests something about Milton's own life.

There is no more than a hint in Ovid's *viscera* for Milton's word *grow*. That word now reaches out both intra- and intertextually to all these other creative places, all the other images of fertility and invention, linked through the one word *womb*. The place of poetic 'making' thus shrinks to a 'spacious wound' or expands to be the equivalent of the whole of 'Chaos', the source of those 'dark materials'. Chaos was a rich intertextual concept in the Early Modern period, ripe for Imitation: but it is only Milton, through his *variatio*, who makes it a womb.

References

Brown, Norman O. "Studies in Anality". *Life Against Death*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press. 1959: 179-304.

Davies, Stevie. *Milton.* Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf. 1991.

Empson, William. *Some Versions of Pastoral*. London: Chatto and Windus. 1936.

Fallon, Steven. *Milton Among the Philosophers: Poetry and Materialism in Seventeenth-Century England*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2001.

Fish, Stanley. *Surprised By Sin.* London: Macmillan. [1967] 1997.

Flannagan, Roy, ed. *The Riverside Milton*. New York/Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1998.

Fletcher, Phineas. *The Purple Island.* London. 1635.

Forsyth, Neil. *John Milton: a Biography.* Oxford: Lion Hudson. 2008.

—. *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth*. Princeton UP. 1989.

Fowler, Alastair, ed. *Milton: Paradise Lost.* Harlow: Longman. 1968, 1998.

Furniss, Tom, and Michael Bath. *Reading Poetry: An Introduction.* Harlow: Prentice Hall. 1996.

Görlach, Manfred. *Introduction to Early Modern English.* Cambridge University Press. 1991.

Leonard, John, ed. *John Milton: Paradise Lost*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 2000.

Milton, John. *Areopagitica*. Vol. II of *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*. ed. Don Wolfe et al. 8 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1953-82.

—. *De Doctrina Christiana*. Vol. VI of idem.

Nicholson, Marjorie. "Milton and Hobbes". *Studies in Philology* XXII (1935): 553-579

Ovid. *Metamorphoses.* Tr. Mary Innes. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1955.

Pullman, Philip. *His Dark Materials.* Oxford: Scholastic/ New York: Knopf. 1995-2000.

Rosendale, Timothy. "Milton, Hobbes, and the Liturgical Subject". *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900.* XLIV (2004): 149-172.

Rumrich, John. *Milton Unbound.* Cambridge University Press. 1996.

Ricks, Christopher, ed. *John Milton: 'Paradise Lost' and 'Paradise Regained'.* New York: Signet Classics. 1968.

—. *Milton's Grand Style.* Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1963.

Sedley, David. *Creationism and its Critics in Antiquity.* Berkeley: University of California Press. 2007.

Pictures Worth a Thousand Words: Metaphorical Images of Textual Interdependence

Carmen Lara-Rallo, University of Málaga

Abstract
The forty-year history of the notion of intertextuality has witnessed the proliferation of an increasing number of divergent and even contradictory approaches to the unavoidably connective nature of texts. Many of such approaches, however, display a common tendency to portray textual interdependence in visual terms, resorting to metaphorical images in their conceptualisation of the intertextual phenomenon. This article aims at studying some of the most significant of those 'metaphorical images', or 'pictures' that, standing for theories of textual relationality, are in themselves 'worth a thousand words'. In the course of the study, special attention will be paid to two sets of images that relate to major trends in contemporary Anglo-American criticism: tropes of artistic creativity, and figures of presence-in-absence.

Kristeva's 1967 description of the text as 'a mosaic of quotations' stands not only as the foundational statement about the notion of intertextuality, but also as the earliest instance of a tendency to conceptualise the intertextual phenomenon through the use of a wide range of images. Mosaics, weavings, palimpsests, networks, or refractions, among others, have emerged at different points in the forty-year history of the concept in a sustained effort to provide a visual characterisation of the inescapably relational nature of texts. Whether long-standing like Genette's palimpsest, or more recent like Calinescu's invisible ink, such images figure prominently in the successive (and as yet failed) attempts to develop a unified and stable theory of intertextuality. They give metaphorical expression to the complexities of a theoretical domain in which the pivotal term is re-interpreted and given new meanings by almost every individual critic.

In the light of this, the aim of the present article is to trace the changing interpretations of the intertextual notion through the analysis of some of the most influential metaphorical pictures applied to the interdependence of texts. This exploration will pay special attention to the afterlives of two imagery fields that can be connected with prevailing trends in contemporary Anglo-American criticism. On the one hand, the

use of images of artistic creativity; on the other, the recurrence of images of presence-in-absence in the wake of the palimpsest.

The earliest use of the term 'intertextuality' goes back to the publication of "Word, Dialogue, and Novel", where Julia Kristeva began to introduce the writings and theories of the Russian thinker Mikhail Bakhtin to a French audience. In this essay, published for the first time in *Critique* in 1967, Kristeva pays special attention to the novel, which Bakhtin considered the most dialogical system, full of opposing and divergent voices. Together with the novel, Kristeva also shows interest in poetic language, in relation to which she coined the concept of intertextuality: 'Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations: any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double'* (Kristeva 1980 [1967]: 66).[36]

Following Bakhtin's ideas, Kristeva argues that every word is an intersection of textual surfaces, and so the concept of intertextuality is necessary because no text is self-sufficient, but depends on its relationships with other texts and discourses. Since each expression is pervaded by the traces of earlier uses, the text is not a finished or closed product, but a plural productivity in which multiple voices—textual, socio-historical and ideological—coexist and communicate. Significantly, Kristeva encapsulated her notion of textual interaction in the simile of the mosaic, an image of artistic creativity already used by Bakhtin himself in "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse". As he

---

[36] Apart from the use of the image of the 'mosaic of quotations' to evoke the intersectional quality of texts, another aspect of this statement deserves to be highlighted. Kristeva's association of the notion of intertextuality with the dual nature of poetic language can be linked to the centrality of the concept of doubleness in different approaches to the intertextual phenomenon. For instance, while Roland Barthes referred to the 'second-order memory' of words in "Writing Degree Zero" (Barthes 1970 [1953]: 16), Gérard Genette devoted his most influential study on textual relationality, *Palimpsests*, to what he described as 'literature in the second degree'. As will be discussed later, this doubleness makes it possible to discover a connection between intertextuality and the critical discourse of spectrality through the image of the palimpsest.

discussed the uses of the quotation in the Middle Ages, Bakhtin argued that at that time,

> [t]he role of the other's word was enourmous [. . .]: there were quotations that were openly and reverently emphasized as such, or that were half-hidden, completely hidden, half-conscious, unconscious, correct, intentionally distorted, unintentionally distorted, deliberately reinterpreted and so forth. The boundary lines between someone else's speech and one's own speech were flexible, ambiguous, often deliberately distorted and confused. Certain types of texts were constructed *like mosaics out of the texts of others*. (Bakhtin 69; my emphasis)

This image of the mosaic has recurred regularly in different theories of intertextuality. It has been employed by Matei Calinescu in his discussion of the complex transformative exercise underlying Joyce's *Ulysses* and Nabokov's *Pale Fire*. According to Calinescu, both works provide representative examples—in the modernist and postmodernist paradigm, respectively—of the intertextual process of transposition of a wide range of referents to a new literary context. As they transformatively transpose 'canonical texts' and 'minor classics', *Ulysses* and *Pale Fire* give expression to a revised version of Kristeva's 'mosaic of quotations', since they become '*mosaics of rewriting*' (Calinescu 247; my emphasis).

More recently, the currency of the metaphorical picture of the mosaic in approaches to intertextuality can be attested in the observations made by Eric Griffiths in his contribution to the *Times Literary Supplement*, "Dante, Primo Levi and the Intertextualists" (2008). In his review of *Dante and His Literary Precursors*, *Shakespeare's Cues and Prompts*, and *The Cambridge Companion to Primo Levi*, among other titles, Griffiths discusses the prevalence of the intertextual analytical framework, devoting a long passage to the metaphor of the mosaic:

> The simultaneously drab and lurid metaphor of 'mosaic' usually recurs in intertextual studies uninvigorated by such attention to how and why mosaics are various, [. . .]. For the mosaic-metaphor to have a point, it needs to be taken both less seriously than is usual among literary academics [. . .] and more seriously. Taking it more seriously requires admitting that mosaics are normally representations of something other than their tesserae. [. . .]
>   Mosaics, however, like all communicative processes, are asymmetrical. Those who look at a mosaic attentively spot its 'andamento', the expressive, technical term for how it moves, its 'gait', traditionally categorized as 'vermiculatum', 'masivum' and so on. Those categories generalize recurrences discerned in the body-language

> of many mosaics, but any such category needs to be returned with interest to the particular settings whence it arose. (Griffiths 4-5)

The allusion here to the structural constituents of the mosaic, the *tesserae*, is particularly significant because their image mediates the inscription of the mosaic metaphor by another leading scholar in the field of textual intersections, Harold Bloom. Though properly speaking a theory of influence, his *Anxiety of Influence* is often mentioned in studies on the interrelations of texts, which Bloom portrays in terms of an Oedipal struggle between young and old poets. In his outline of the six strategies of revision whereby the young poet (*ephebe*) copes with the anxiety of influence, Bloom gives the name of *tessera* to the process of completing or filling the gaps in the precursor's work: 'In this sense of a completing link, the *tessera* represents any later poet's attempt to persuade himself (and us) that the precursor's Word would be worn out if not redeemed by a new fulfilled and enlarged Word of the ephebe' (Bloom 67).[37]

As he resorts to the image of the ceramic, stone, or glass pieces making up mosaics, technically known as *tesserae*, Bloom illustrates two major trends in the metaphorical conceptualisation of the intertextual practice. First, as already explained, this image belongs to the fertile area of artistic creativity, whose productivity in the theoretical and critical study of intertextuality has found a parallel in the current prevalence of painting and music as intertextual referents for British fiction. There is a 'recent fascination [. . .] with aesthetics that resist or complicate reading' which has led writers to turn to literature's sister arts (Wormald 227).

At the same time, the growing appeal of different arts for writers of fiction is being accompanied by the careful attention devoted to the artistic 'relational nexus' (Carvalho Homem and Lambert 13). The centrality of studies on word and image in the field of comparative literature, like the renewed interest in the theoretical investigation of the

---

[37] Bloom illustrates his point with Wallace Stevens' poetical works, which he describes as a large *tessera* of Stevens' Romantic precursors. From this point of view, *The Owl in the Sarcophagus* represents an attempt to complete the imaginative universe of Walt Whitman's *The Sleepers*.

literature-music interface, is reflected in recent publications such as *Writing and Seeing. Essays on Word and Image*, or *Phrase and Subject. Studies in Literature and Music*—both of them published in 2006—where contemporary culture is described in terms of its interartistic and intermedial nature.

Secondly, Bloom's choice of the metaphor of the *tessera* stands as a clear example of the practice of characterising textual intersections through specialised terminology borrowed from other disciplines. In "The Bounded Text" and *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva discarded her most tangible image of the mosaic in favour of a description of the text and intertextuality, respectively, as 'a permutation of texts' (Kristeva 1980 [1968]: 36) and '[the] transposition of one sign system into another' (Kristeva 1984 [1974]: 59-60). If 'permutation' is a pivotal concept in the mathematical theories of combinatorial analysis and probability, 'transposition' originally comes from the discourse of algebra and logic, and from the vocabulary of cryptology.

Science and cryptology are precisely the fields invoked by Roland Barthes in his first depiction of phenomena of literary reminiscence. "Writing Degree Zero", anticipatory of Kristeva's formulation of intertextuality in more than ten years, states that '[a]ny written trace *precipitates*, as inside a *chemical* at first transparent, innocent and neutral, mere duration gradually reveals *in suspension* a whole past of increasing *density*, like a *cryptogram*' (Barthes 1970 [1953]: 17; my emphasis).[38] As he elaborated on an original and highly poetic model of

---

[38] In this essay, Barthes foreshadowed Kristeva's focus on the duality of poetic language—and of texts in general—, as he stated that 'writing still remains full of the recollection of previous usage, for language is never innocent: *words have a second-order memory which mysteriously persists in the midst of new meanings*' (Barthes 1970 [1953]: 16; my emphasis). Under the influence of this 'memory', the writer becomes a 'prisoner' of his own and someone else's words, and so he carries out his creative activity at an intertextual crossroads. Significantly, this 'second order memory'—which relates to Genette's 'literature in the second degree'—can be connected with my contention about the use of intertextuality to study the current prevalence of memory, history, and the past in contemporary fiction, as argued below.

textual connectivity, Barthes developed one of the most prolific and influential pictures of intertextuality: the textile metaphor.

In itself another trope of artistic creativity, the textile metaphor figures prominently in Barthes' essays, beginning with "The Death of the Author": 'The text is a *tissue* of quotations [. . .]. In the multiplicity of writing, everything is to be *disentangled*, [. . .]; the structure can be followed, "*run*" (like the *thread* of a *stocking*)' (Barthes 1988 [1968]: 170-71; my emphasis). Barthes expands this metaphor in other publications like *S/Z*, where the production of a text ('*fabric*' or '*braid*') is equated with the creation of Valenciennes lace (Barthes 1974 [1970]: 160; my emphasis). Similarly, the image of weaving recurs in "From Work to Text" and *The Pleasure of the Text*, which convey Barthes' intertextual view of the text as a criss-crossing of thread-like meanings, signifiers, references, and echoes. In doing so, both pieces—which share Kristeva's emphasis on the plural and open quality of texts—resort to etymology, equating 'text' with 'tissue', in order to evoke the multi-dimensional and progressive process of textual creation in the blending of a variety of previously existing writings:

> The Text is plural. [. . .] The plural of the Text depends [. . .] not on the ambiguity of its contents but on what might be called the *stereographic plurality* of its weave of signifiers (etymologically, the text is a tissue, a woven fabric) [. . .] the text [...] [is] woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages [. . .] antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony. (Barthes 1977 [1971]: 159-60)

> *Text* means *tissue*; but whereas hitherto we have always taken this tissue as a product, [. . .] we are now emphasizing, in the tissue, the generative idea that the text is made, is worked out in a perpetual interweaving; lost in this tissue—this texture—the subject unmakes himself, like a spider dissolving in the constructive secretions of its web. Were we fond of neologisms, we might define the theory of the text as an *hyphology* (*hyphos* is the tissue and the spider's web). (Barthes 1991 [1973]: 64)

This last passage connects, notably, with Barthes' concept of the 'death of the author', in its allusion to the 'unmaking' of the 'subject himself'. According to Barthes, the intertextual nature of the text implies that the power of the author over his work, and the power of the author over the reader, are abolished, and the figure of the author disappears. By proposing a textual theory under the name of '*hyphology*', Barthes transposes this idea about the eradication of the author to the field of the

textile metaphor of intertextuality. His coinage is noteworthy because it signals Barthes' partiality for the created object (the woven fabric or the spider's web), over the creating subject (the weaver or the spider), a state of affairs that has been revisited in Nancy K. Miller's approach to intertextuality, which reformulates Barthes' textile metaphor.

Miller bases her feminist articulation of intertextuality on a reappraisal of Barthes' use of the image of weaving. By vindicating the existence of a female subject behind the appropriated activity of weaving or spinning, Miller coins *arachnology* for an intertextual theory focused on the text as a creation of a gendered agent, and not as a final product interspersed with references and allusions. Her ultimate goal is to displace Barthes' *hyphology*, in which 'the mode of production is privileged over the subject whose supervising identity is dissolved in the work of the web' (Miller 273).

While so doing, Miller also pays attention to female characters from classical mythology associated with weaving, spinning, and threads; one of those figures, Ariadne—whom Miller portrays as that which allows the male creator 'to penetrate the space of the great artist [. . .] without the risk of getting stuck there' (Miller 285)—recurs in one of the latest pictures of the intertextual exercise. In his essay "Having a Clue… About Ovid", Valentine Cunningham has offered his own version of the textile metaphor in terms of the 'labyrinthine textual past' (Cunningham 106), and the clue, or ball of thread. Interestingly, Cunningham's contention designs a rich tapestry of the most salient images of the text as a tissue:

> Intertextuality: a textuality, a *tissu*, a tapestry, a weave, a combination of warp and woof, a woven thing, not simply of itself, isolated, alone, but inter-, between. [. . .] Between sundry filaments new and old, threads old and new [. . .] joined up, joining, connected, meeting. Filiations, affiliations. A new weaving, somehow a new weaving, entangled in the skeins of a precedent one. A knitting together of old a new strands, a complex transitivity, a braiding, a sewing and suturing across time and space. (Cunningham 102)

In the context of this intertextual imagery of weaving, one trope that has acquired tremendous relevance in current approaches to intertextuality is the web, that 'ever-enlarging web of words' where 'the tasks of writer and reader, inextricably joined and mutually dependent' coexist (Bassnett 146). The phenomenon is closely linked to the prevailing view of our times as 'an age of interconnectedness' with its associated icons of DNA models and the World Wide Web (Bassnett 134). In literary

studies, this interconnectedness has taken the form of an interdisciplinary drive that relates to the use of the imagery of artistic creativity in theories of the intertext. Moreover, the holistic and cross-boundary line implied in the intermedial focus has been reinforced in the last years by the incorporation of science and other fields of knowledge as potential referents for literary creativity and criticism.

The mutually enriching relationship of literature and science is given voice in studies like Wilson and Brown, *Science and Literature: Bridging the Two Cultures* (2001),[39] Barfoot and Tinkler, *Restoring the Mystery of the Rainbow: Literature Reflections of Science*, or the March 2005 issue of the prestigious scientific journal *Nature*, which devoted a long section to the existing bond between these disciplines under the headings 'artists on science' and 'scientists on art'. As Patricia Waugh has contended (240), today there is 'an intertextual play where science appropriates the discourses and narrative strategies of the aesthetic, and postmodernism the vocabularies and concepts of contemporary science'.

The quotation from Waugh belongs to her contribution to a special number of *Symbolism. An International Annual of Critical Aesthetics* focused on intertextuality (2005). The volume, which includes the essay by Cunningham mentioned above, integrates a ground-breaking article by J. Hillis-Miller where he rejects the textile metaphor in favour of the auditory one. Hillis-Miller's preference for the concepts of 'resonance' and 'echoing' (126) is particularly remarkable because it points to a set of images of intertextuality that has proliferated of late. Some recent conceptualisations of the intertextual practice resort to metaphors connected to sensory perception, mainly to the sense of hearing—as in the case of Hillis-Miller's imagery, which can be traced back to Barthes'

---

[39] The editors of this volume, David Wilson and Zack Bowen, borrow an image from neuroscience as they argue against the traditional division between arts and science: 'The linkages between humanities and science are as real as the synaptic connections between brain neurons. There may be no insurmountable barrier between the social and natural sciences, and ultimately there may be no such barrier between science, on the one hand, and arts and humanities on the other' (Wilson and Bowen 206).

depiction of writing as an 'echo chamber' in *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes* (74)—, and the sense of sight.

Visual representations of intertextuality lie behind the metaphorical pictures of invisible ink and refraction. Calinescu has conjured up the image of invisible ink to examine intricately intertextual and highly successful works like Eco's *The Name of the Rose* and Byatt's *Possession*; according to this critic, such demanding creations are so popular because their intertexts only become visible to the eyes of an expert audience, remaining unobtrusive to other kinds of readers (Calinescu 247). At the same time, the image of refraction enhances the reciprocal quality of the relationship of a text and its intertext, claiming that a text works as a mirror of its intertext, and 'each sheds light on the other, [. . .] obliterat[ing] any hierarchical or evaluative distinction between two related texts' (Gutleben and Onega 9).

Significantly, both the invisible ink and the refraction are images of presence-in-absence, and so they call forth the productive intertextual metaphor of the palimpsest. The palimpsest, or manuscript that reveals the layered traces of earlier texts, has emerged as one of the most fruitful and influential concepts in contemporary Anglo-American criticism, although its origins can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century. As Sarah Dillon has argued in her recent study *The Palimpsest. Literature, Criticism, Theory* (2007), before that time the term 'palimpsest' was applied only to those parchments in which old texts are overlaid with more recent ones; 'palimpsests' were just 'palaeographic oddities of concern only to those researching and publishing ancient manuscripts' (Dillon 1). It was in 1845 that Thomas De Quincey published an essay in *Blackwood's Magazine* entitled "The Palimpsest", which inaugurated the history of the palimpsest as an abstract concept.

In the course of this history, the palimpsest has been repeatedly invoked in theoretical examinations of intertextuality, beginning with Edmund Wilson's description of the compositional technique of *Finnegans Wake* in his essay collection *Axel's Castle. A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930* (1931). According to Douwe Fokkema, Wilson was the first critic to apply the 'palimpsest metaphor' (46) to a multi-dimensional text, since his characterisation of James Joyce's novel suggested that '[t]he style [. . .] works on the principle of a palimpsest: one meaning, one set of images, is written over another. Now

we can grasp a certain number of such suggestions simultaneously'
(Wilson 187-88).

   The visual image of the palimpsest vividly portrays the modern
experiences of writing and reading. Such portrayals are usually rendered
in the wake of Gérard Genette's seminal study *Palimpsests: Literature in
the Second Degree* (1982). Here, Genette associates the unavoidably
intertextual quality of literature—what he calls 'literature in the second
degree'—with the metaphor of the palimpsest.[40] As he charts the five
categories of textual interconnectivity, or 'transtextuality'[41], Genette
emphasises the doubleness of the literary text, associated with the
retrieval of hidden writings in 'palimpsestuous' structures:

> That duplicity of the object, in the sphere of textual relations, can be represented by
> the old analogy of the *palimpsest*: on the same parchment, one text can become
> superimposed upon another, which it does not conceal but allows to show through.
> The hypertext invites us to engage in a relational reading, the flavour of which [. . .]
> may well be condensed in [. . .] [the expression] *palimpsestuous* reading. To put it
> differently, [. . .] one who really loves texts must wish from time to time to love (at
> least) two together. (Genette 398-99)

This passage points to some of the most salient features of the palimpsest
as a critical concept. First, the idea that any reading activity is relational
connects with the versatility of the palimpsest, which since the mid-
nineteenth century has been applied to such diverse areas as architecture,
geography, geology, palaeontology, glaciology, astrophysics,

---

[40] It is relevant that the trope of the palimpsest presides over the title of the work
that has become Genette's most influential approach to textual interactions.
Palimpsests is mentioned in almost every single study of intertextuality.

[41] In *Palimpsests*, Genette offers a detailed and systematic classification of
transtextual relationships. He distinguishes five types of links between texts:
'intertextuality', 'paratextuality', 'metatextuality', 'hypertextuality', and
'architextuality'. They operate on different levels of abstraction, ranging from
the effective presence of one text in another (as in quotation, allusion, and
plagiarism), to the abstract connection of any text with the generic category to
which it belongs.

biochesmistry, genetics, neuroscience, neurobiology, neurocomputing and information technology, together with literary criticism (Dillon 1).

This tendency to resort to the image of the palimpsest in different fields and domains has been reinforced in the last years because, in the context of the 'age of interconnectedness' referred to above, the palimpsest has become an apt analytical tool to describe all kinds of interdisciplinary processes and phenomena. In literary criticism, the current import of such a metaphor could be assessed in the light of the relational and intermedial nature of literature nowadays, since the palimpsest operates through and across disciplines, becoming a 'figure for interdisciplinarity':

> The palimpsest cannot be the province of any one discipline, since it admits all those terrains that write upon it to its body; nor, indeed, does the palimpsest have a province of its own, [. . .]. *Disciplines encounter each other in and on the palimpsest*, and their relationality becomes defined by its logic. In this way, the palimpsest becomes a figure for interdisciplinarity—for [. . .] the productive violence of the involvement, entanglement, interruption and inhabitation of disciplines in and on each other. (Dillon 2; my emphasis)

Secondly, another of the key words in Genette's discussion on 'the duplicity of the object in the sphere of textual relations' is 'superimposed': 'on the same parchment, one text can become superimposed upon another, which it does not conceal but allows to show through' (Genette 398-99) . The metaphorical picture of the palimpsest implies a process of layering—a new text is written over the script of an earlier one—, and what is significant is that this writing-over results in a phenomenon of superimposition: there is not an erasure of the original text, but both old and new writings coexist in the new textual surface. This process of 'superimposition' condenses two defining traits of the palimpsest which account for the prevalence of this image of intertextuality in contemporary writing and criticism.

On the one hand, the palimpsest superimposes past and present in its layering of texts from different periods. This encounter of past and present, distinctive of any intertextual practice, has become a vital factor in contemporary Anglo-American literature, which since the last decades

of the twentieth century is paying renewed attention to history and memory.[42] As Frederick Holmes has argued in *The Historical Imagination: Postmodernism and the Treatment of the Past in Contemporary British Fiction* (1997), nowadays there is a 'return to history' (Holmes 12) that this critic associates with British novels such as Graham Swift's *Ever After* or Byatt's *Possession*. Interestingly, Byatt herself has analysed the new flowering of the historical novel in Britain:

> The renaissance of the historical novel has coincided with a complex self-consciousness about the writing of history itself. [. . .] It may be argued that we cannot understand the present if we do not understand the past [. . .] But there are other, less solid reasons, amongst them the aesthetic need [. . .] to keep past literatures alive and singing, connecting the pleasure of writing to the pleasure of reading. (Byatt 9-11)[43]

Likewise, Jay Prosser states that one of central themes of American fiction since the nineties is the narrativisation of history; as he asserts in his recent study significantly subtitled *Reflections of History and Culture* (2008), '[i]n spite of the imminence of the future and the end of history, a preoccupation with the past characterizes the period' (Prosser 6-7). This awareness of the current 'preoccupation with the past' pervades the essay collection *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship Between Past and Present* (2006), where Duncan Bell

---

[42] The confluence of the palimpsest, intertextuality, and memory resonates in the passage where Douwe Fokkema traces the use of the palimpsestic image back to Edmund Wilson: 'Edmund Wilson was the first to use the metaphor 'palimpsest' as a characterization of a Postmodernist text, [...]. Since then the term has become popular, not only in relation to Postmodernism but also with reference to *intertextuality in general and the workings of memory*' (Fokkema 46; my emphasis).

[43] As I have contended in "'Keeping the Past Alive'. The Dialogue with Medieval Literature in A.S. Byatt's Fiction" (Lara-Rallo 80), the dialogue with the past characteristic of recent British fiction is articulated as well in an intertextual dimension that gives new life to the literature of all times. Intertextuality emerges then as one of the most fruitful strategies for the treatment of history and memory in contemporary literature.

foregrounds the centrality of memory in the contemporary socio-political and cultural scene:

> Memory seems impossible to escape. During the closing decades of the twentieth century it emerged as 'a cultural obsession of monumental proportions across the globe' [. . .] Questions of historical memory [. . .] have been at the forefront of debates over transitional justice, post-conflict reconstruction, the legitimacy of political violence, the legacy of the Holocaust and a plethora of other processes and practices. These social and political trends have been mirrored in academia where the study of memory has swept a number of disciplines. (Bell 1)

On the other hand, the palimpsest involves a superimposition of presences and absences, heard and unheard voices, the living and the dead, that opens the way to establishing a connection between intertextuality and the critical discourse of spectrality. This link, hinted at in the title of Hillis-Miller's article—'The *Ghost Effect*. Intertextuality in Realist Fiction' (my emphasis)—, should be underlined in the light of the critical pre-eminence of the trope of the ghost. Spectrality, or hauntology, is a useful theoretical tool regarded today as the future for psychoanalysis and deconstruction, 'supplant[ing] [. . .] ontology, replacing the priority of being and presence with the figure of the ghost as that which is neither present nor absent, neither dead nor alive' (Davis 9).

This existence of ghosts on the blurred borderline between absence and presence—they are absent presences, or present absences—emerges as one of the points in common between spectrality and the palimpsest; like ghosts, palimpsests have 'spectral power' as the 'uncanny harbingers to the present of the murdered texts of former ages' (Dillon 13). In the light of this, any writing, or palimpsestic creation, is haunted by earlier text(s) which it superimposes: the old and the new merge in the palimpsestuous structure, where temporal boundaries cease to demarcate past, present, and future:

> The 'present' of the palimpsest is only constituted in and by the 'presence' of texts from the 'past', as well as remaining open to further inscriptions by texts of the 'future'. The presence of texts from the past, present (and possibly the future) in the palimpsest does not elide temporality but evidences the spectrality of any 'present' moment which always already contains within it 'past', 'present' and 'future' moments. (Dillon 37)

In their partaking of past, present, and future, palimpsests are ghostly images. According to Peter Buse and Andrew Stott, editors of the pioneering volume on spectrality *Ghosts. Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, History* (1999), the figure of the ghost hints at the impossibility of separating past and present, 'as any idea of the present is always constituted through the difference and deferral of the past, as well as anticipations of the future' (Buse and Stott 10-11). Therefore, the palimpsest fuses with the image of the *revenant*, the specter that returns whose uncertain status in-between the living and the dead, the present and the absent, the now and the then, has been vividly evoked by Derrida in his *Specters of Marx* (6-7) as 'the tangible intangibility', the 'non-present present', 'this being-there of an absent or departed one. This allusion to Derrida's *Specters of Marx* becomes particularly apt here because it makes it possible to suggest a link between spectrality and intertextuality. In 2002, one of the leading scholars in the field of spectrality, Julian Wolfreys, published an article in the wake of *Specters of Marx*; interestingly, the topic of the article is not spectrality *per se*, but the intertextual strategy of citation—quotation, which Wolfreys characterises as 'spectral', partaking of 'the *spectral* condition of literary writing' (Wolfreys 25; my emphasis). Similarly, the enriching relationship between spectrality and intertextuality can be conjured up as well when reading Wolfgang G. Müller's influential analysis of 'interfigurality', or the intertextual device based on 'the interdependence of literary figures'. In the course of his study, Müller categorises those literary figures that are inserted into a new fictional context as 'literary *revenants*' (Müller 107; my emphasis).'

The encounter of the image of the palimpsest and the figure of the ghost becomes very relevant in terms of their sharing of other features which interestingly relate to intertextuality. First, both the palimpsest and the ghost are characterised by a certain sense of secondariness or belatedness. If the palimpsest encapsulates Genette's model of the 'literature in the second degree', in spectrality the notions of doubleness, repetition, and return are paramount. In their coming from the past, ghosts are necessarily belated, and so 'like writing, ghosts are associated with a certain *secondariness or belatedness*' (Buse and Stott 8; my emphasis).

In this context, it should be noted here that the process of return pertaining to the secondariness of palimpsestuous structures, and to the

belatedness of the ghost's absent presence, was invoked by Bloom in his *Anxiety of Influence*, a work that has already been mentioned in the discussion of the intertextual image of the mosaic. As he analysed the revisionist strategies that allowed the young poet to overcome the anxiety of influence, Bloom described the sixth—and final—stage in the poet's vital detachment from his precursors as *apophrades* or 'the return of the dead'. Once he has become independent, the strong poet must face the reappearance of the precursor's voice in his greatest creations, meeting the challenge to accept that no poetic composition can be autonomous, since 'the meaning of a poem can only be a poem, but *another poem—a poem not itself*' (Bloom 70).

Bloom's *apophrades* so condenses the phenomenon of spectral return, and the unavoidably intertextual nature of writing, to the point that his idea about how any poem is '*another poem—a poem not itself*' shares the same assumption as Genette's reflection on how 'one who really loves texts must wish from time to time to love (at least) two together' (Genette 399). The two statements acknowledge the secondary quality of literature—echoed in the intertextual principle that 'in one artistic text there coexist, more or less visibly, several other texts' (Mai 47)—, signalling at the same time the other trait displayed by the image of the palimpsest and the figure of the ghost: openness. The fact that the reading of the palimpsest, and the listening to the revenant, depend on the coexistence of other texts and voices, leads to their interpretation being constantly rewritten and revisited. Like the ghost, the palimpsest is open to multiple inscriptions along the temporal and spatial axes, therefore being immersed in a process of indefinite deferral of meaning:

> Like 'revision', the concept of the palimpsest balances the idea of absence with presence, erasure with revelation. Literally, a manuscript that has been erased and written over again, the palimpsest bears textual traces of its history as visible evidence of change. In poststructuralist criticism, the palimpsest is a marker of skepticism about the notion of origin and suggests the endless deferral of final and fixed meaning that lies at the heart of language. (Watkins 248)

In other words, the multi-layered disposition of palimpsestuous structures, superimposing texts from the past, the present, and the future, entails a resistance to closed or final meanings. This openness plays a crucial role in spectrality, too, because Derrida has emphasised the centrality of the ghost's 'structural openness', which he depicts in terms

of an 'address directed towards the living by the voices of the past or the not-yet formulated possibilities of the future' (Davis 9). As a result of all this, the history of the palimpsest—like the history of intertextuality as a critical concept—is immersed in a process of perpetual rewriting and reinscription,[44] in the same way as the notion of the spectre 'enables us to concentrate on reading history as a series of the iterations and recontextualizations, traces and returns that constitutes our experience of it' (Buse and Stott 15).

Ghostly traces of earlier critics of intertextuality can be discovered everywhere in this palimpsestuous article, itself a mosaic of images applied to the unavoidably connective nature of texts. Woven with theories of textual interaction, and refracting multiple descriptions of the intricacy of writing, the present exploration of intertextual imagery has intended to approach some of the major studies of this process through their figurative conceptualisations. Implicitly acknowledging that a picture, or a metaphorical image, is worth 'a thousand words', theorists of intertextuality have consistently resorted to tropes that offer an immediate and vivid depiction of the interdependence of texts.

With the goal of tracing the most salient of those 'pictures' or 'metaphorical images', this article has portrayed how, like a picture being 'worth a thousand words', every single text stands for a myriad of texts that constitute its intertextual (con)figuration. While doing so, special attention has been paid to two sets of figures of intertextuality

---

[44] In the light of such a process, it is remarkable to consider that the palimpsest—and so my argument goes, intertextuality, too—has become a useful theoretical and critical tool for the exploration of practices of revision and reinterpretation of writing, history, and identity. The palimpsestic and intertextual notions can be applied to the study of the dialogue between past and present—historical and textual—,as well as to phenomena pertaining to hybridisation and cross-cultural interaction. Indeed, for postcolonial critics, the palimpsest provides 'a useful way of understanding the developing complexity of culture, as previous 'inscriptions' are erased and overwritten, yet remain as traces within present consciousness. This confirms the dynamic, contestatory and dialogic nature of linguistic, geographic, and cultural space as it emerges in post-colonial experience' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 176).

that have been associated with main tendencies in contemporary Anglo-American criticism: images of artistic creativity (including the mosaic, and the textile metaphor), and of presence-in-absence (invisible ink, refraction, and above all, the palimpsest). In fact, as shown here, these imagery fields relate in different degrees to the renewed interest in history, memory, and the past; to the interdisciplinary drive towards the crossing of traditional boundaries between arts and disciplines, and to the discourse of spectrality.

In their connection with intertextuality, the prevalence of these critical trends attests to the currency of the intertextual notion more than forty years after Kristeva's assertion about 'any text' being constructed 'as a mosaic of quotations'. This period has witnessed the proliferation of a considerable number of changing and opposing perspectives on intertextuality, which have contributed to a situation of uncertainty where the only principle shared by theorists of intertextuality is that each artistic text subsumes several other texts. In 1974, in the course of a radio interview with the critic Maurice Nadeau—later published in *Sur la literature* (1980)—Roland Barthes suggested that rather than attempting a definition of 'text', the only effective way to examine the textual notion was metaphorically. Now that the concept of intertextuality is forty years old, when so many different and even contradictory definitions of intertextuality have flourished, the imagistic or metaphorical analysis of the intertextual notion, implemented in the present article, emerges as a feasible method to approach the richness and complexity of the interdependence of texts.

References

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*. London: Routledge. 1998.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse". *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Michael Holquist (ed.), Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (trans.). Austin: University of Texas Press. 1981: 41-83.

Barfoot, Cedric and Valeria Tinkler (eds.). *Restoring the Mystery of the Rainbow. Literature Reflections of Science*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi. Forthcoming.

Barthes, Roland. "Writing Degree Zero". *Writing Degree Zero and Elements of Semiology*. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (trans.). Boston: Beacon Press, 1970 (1953). 1-88.

—. *S/Z. An Essay*. Richard Miller (trans.). New York: Hill and Wang. 1974 (1970).

—. 'From Work to Text'. *Image, Music, Text. Roland Barthes*. Stephen Heath (trans. and selection). London: Fontana, 1977 (1971): 155-164

—. *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*. Richard Howard (trans.). Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press. 1977 (1975).

—. *Sur la literature*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble. 1980.

—. "The Death of the Author". Stephen Heath (trans.). *Modern Criticism and Theory. A Reader*. David Lodge (ed.). London and New York: Longman. 1988 (1968): 167-72.

—. *The Pleasure of the Text*. Richard Miller (trans.). Oxford: Blackwell. 1990 (1973).

Bassnett, Susan. "Influence and Intertextuality: A Reappraisal". *Forum for Modern Languages Studies*.43.2 (2007): 134-46.

Bell, Duncan, "Introduction: Memory, Trauma, and World Politics". *Memory, Trauma and World Politics: Reflections on the Relationship Between Past and Present*. Duncan Bell (ed.). Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2006: 1-29.

Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence. A Theory of Poetry*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. 1975 (1973).

Buse, Peter, and Andrew Stott. "Introduction: A Future for Haunting". *Ghosts. Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, History*. Peter Buse and Andrew Stott (eds.). Basingstoke: Macmillan. 1999: 1-20.

Byatt, A.S. *On Histories and Stories. Selected Essays*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 2001 (2000).

Calinescu, Matei. 'Rewriting'. *International Postmodernism. Theory and Literary Practice*. Hans Bertens and Douwe Fokkema (eds.). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Johns Benjamins Publishing Company. 1997: 243-48.

Carvalho Homem. Rui, and Maria de Fátima Lambert, "Introduction". *Writing and Seeing. Essays on Word and Image*. Rui Carvalho Homem and Maria de Fátima Lambert (eds.). Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006: 11-22.

Cunningham, Valentine, "Having a Clue… About Ovid". *Symbolism. An International Annual of Critical Aesthetics* 5 (2005): 101-24.

Da Sousa Correa, Delia (ed.), *Phrase and Subject. Studies in Literature and Music*. London: Legenda, 2006.

Davis, Colin. *Haunted Subjects. Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, and the Return of the Dead*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2007.

Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*. Peggy Kamuf (trans.). New York and London: Routledge. 1994 (1993).

Dillon, Sarah. *The Palimpsest. Literature, Criticism, Theory*. London and New York: Continuum, 2007.

Fokkema, Douwe. *Literary History, Modernism, and Postmodernism*, John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam and Philadelphia. 1984.

Genette, Gérard. *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (trans.). Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press. 1997 (1982).

Griffiths, Eric. 'Dante, Primo Levi and the Intertextualists'. *Times Literary Supplement.* May 7 2008: 1-9.
http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/the_tls/article3886607.ece. Accession date: May 19 2008.

Gutleben, Christian and Susana Onega, 'Introduction'. *Refracting the Canon in Contemporary British Literature and Film*. Christian Gutleben and Susana Onega (eds.). Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi. 2004. 7-15.

Hillis-Miller, J. 'The Ghost Effect. Intertextuality in Realist Fiction'. *Symbolism. An International Annual of Critical Aesthetics* 5 (2005): 125-49.

Holmes, Frederick M. The Historical Imagination. Postmodernism and the Treatment of the Past in Contemporary British Fiction. Victoria: University of Victoria Press. 1997.

Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue and Novel". *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Leon S. Roudiez (ed.), Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudiez (trans.). New York: Columbia University Press. 1980 (1967): 64-91.

—. "The Bounded Text". *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Leon S. Roudiez (ed.), Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudiez (trans.). New York: Columbia University Press. 1980 (1968): 36-63.

—. *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Margaret Waller (trans.). New York: Columbia University Press. 1984 (1974).

Lara-Rallo, Carmen. "'Keeping the Past Alive". The Dialogue with Medieval Literature in A.S. Byatt's Fiction'. *Revista de Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense.* 15 (2007): 79-103.

Mai, Hans-Peter. "Bypassing Intertextuality. Hermeneutics, Textual Practice, Hypertext". *Intertextuality*. Heinrich F. Plett (ed.). Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter & Co. 1991: 30-59.

Miller, Nancy K. "Arachnologies: The Woman, The Text, and the Critic". *The Poetics of Gender*. Nancy K. Miller (ed.). New York: Columbia University Press. 1986: 270-95.

Müller, Wolfgang G. "Interfigurality. A Study of the Interdependence of Literary Figures". *Intertextuality*. Heinrich F. Plett (ed.). Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter & Co.. 1991: 101-21.

Prosser, Jay, "Introduction". *American Fiction of the 1990s. Reflections of History and Culture*. Jay Prosser (ed.). Abingdon: Routledge. 2008. 1-13.

Watkins, Susan. "'Grande Dame' or 'New Woman': Doris Lessing and the Palimpsest". *LIT: Literature, Interpretation, Theory.* 17 (2006): 243-62.

Waugh, Patricia. "Just so Stories? Science, Narrative, and Postmodern Intertextualities". *Symbolism. An International Annual of Critical Aesthetics.*5 (2005): 223-63.

Wilson, David L. and Zack Bowen. *Science and Literature. Bridging the Two Cultures*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida. 2001.

Wilson, Edmund. *Axel's Castle. A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930*. London and Glasgow: The Fontana Library. 1961 (1931).

Wolfreys, Julian. "Citation's Haunt: Specters of Derrida". *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature.* 35.1 (2002): 21-34.

Wormald, Mark. "Kazuo Ishiguro and the Work of Art". *Contemporary British Fiction*. Richard J. Lane *et. al.* (eds.). Cambridge: Polity Press. 2003: 226-38.

Contributors

NEIL FORSYTH, English Department, University of Lausanne

THOMAS KULLMANN, Department of English and American Studies, University of Osnabrück

ONNO KOSTERS, English Department, University of Utrecht

PIA BRÎNZEU, Department of English Language, West University of Timişoara

JENS FREDSLUND, Department of English, University of Aahrus

CARMEN LARA-RALLO, Department of English, University of Málaga