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Literature and Culture

Betrayal of/by Women in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes*

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Abstract

*Both Shakespeare and Pinter expose and condemn the betrayal of/by women in their plays by revealing its causes and tragic consequences. The possibilities for resisting the betrayal of the female in these authors' plays are explored in this paper through a comparative analysis of *The Winter's Tale* and *Ashes to Ashes*. While Shakespeare describes alternatives to wars, destructive powers, and chaos – such as the love, happiness, and cosmic order which are restored at the end of *The Winter's Tale* – Pinter leaves it up to the audience to imagine the alternatives for themselves. *Ashes to Ashes* thus reminds us only of the first half of *The Winter's Tale* – the prevailing feeling is that of jealousy, betrayal and loss; the prevailing imagery is that of mothers losing their children; and the prevailing season is winter. The happy resolution that happens in *The Winter's Tale* is not offered to Pinter's audience; however, there is a possibility to imagine it and hope for it. The theoretical framework of the paper relies on the critical insights of Hughes, Bogoeva-Sedlar, Bloom, Baldwin, Collington, Yenigul, and others.*

Keywords: misrepresentation, patriarchy, the female, private/public, the Holocaust.

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Introduction

In his study *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (1992), Hughes recognizes that the psychological crisis of Shakespeare's male heroes happens when their "rational

ego's skeptical, independent, autocratic intelligence – the ultimate form of the Goddess-destroyer”, rejects the Goddess and suppresses “the feminine component of his own biological make-up” (Hughes 513). The fact that Shakespeare's romances, such as *The Winter's Tale* (1610/11), end (after a tragic beginning) with a comic resolution accompanied by the revival of the feminine character, as well as the fact that Shakespeare's oeuvre ends with romances (after a series of tragedies), implies that Shakespeare asserts that the female can never be stifled and suppressed. According to Hughes, a tragic hero's crime against the Goddess or the Female, i.e. her rejection, is also a crime against himself and humanity, which has to be “exposed, condemned, punished, corrected, and eventually redeemed” (Sagar 3).

The patriarchal suspicion of women's fidelity – which leads to misrepresentations, mistreatment and betrayal of women, revealed and criticized by Shakespeare in *The Winter's Tale* – is also the subject matter of Pinter's *Ashes to Ashes* (1996). In this play, the struggle between a husband and wife, seemingly a domestic and private event, becomes a public event that the whole of society is responsible for. To be more precise, Pinter compares Devlin's treatment of Rebecca with the treatment of women during the Holocaust.

Both Shakespeare and Pinter expose and condemn the betrayal of/by women in their plays by revealing its causes and tragic consequences. The possibilities for resisting the betrayal of the female in these authors' plays are explored in this paper through a comparative analysis of *The Winter's Tale* and *Ashes to Ashes*.

The Winter's Tale

Before concentrating on a close reading of *The Winter's Tale*, we will first present Shakespeare's perspective, as well as the historical background of the problem of the betrayal of the female. It is interesting to note that Sagar alludes to Shakespeare possessing a gift to detect and successfully reveal “the persistent polarization of the male psyche” (Sagar 2). In Shakespeare's time, this polarization was encouraged by Christianity and Protestantism – and his Protestant male heroes are examples of “the perennial male rejection and desacralization of Nature in the name of some perfection or abstraction assumed to be accessible only to the detached male intellect” (Sagar 2). In the same vein, Hughes claims that Shakespeare is primarily an English poet of the Reformation, whose main hero's tragic flaw is his rejection of the Goddess or “the feminine component of his own biological make-up”:

At one pole is the rational ego, controlling the man's behaviour according to the needs and demands of a self-controlled society. At the other is the totality of this individual's natural, biological and instinctual life. ... From the point of view of the rational ego this totality appears to be female, and since it incorporates not only the divine source of his being, the feminine component of his own biological make-up, as well as the paranormal faculties and mysteries outside his rational ego, and seems to him in many respects continuous with external nature, he calls it the Goddess. Obviously, this is only a manner of speaking, or of thinking, but it is one that has imposed itself on man throughout his history. (Hughes 513)

For Hughes, all Shakespeare's plays are variations on the basic tragic myth (Hughes calls it Shakespeare's Mythic or Tragic Equation), which is actually a "conflict between Goddess religion and Goddess destroyer in all its ramifications" – a conflict which Shakespeare translated "back into psychological terms, or rather back into the psycho-biological human mystery from which the religion and myth spring in the first place" (Hughes 212–213). Hughes notices the psychological crisis of Shakespeare's male heroes not only in his plays but also in two poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* (513). The above-mentioned poems are metaphors of two parallel mythic events which are in turn aspects of each other.

In *Venus and Adonis*, Adonis frequently rejects the goddess Venus, who woos him, because he is disgusted by her lust, which he thinks she feels for him instead of love; to him, "Love to Heaven is fled/ since sweating Lust on earth usurp'd his name" (Shakespeare, *Venus* 1202). He ultimately runs away from Venus, goes hunting and is killed by a boar. Venus goes in search of him and finds his dead body, which is then transformed into a purple flower. Upon seeing Adonis dead, Venus prophesies that love will from then on be attended by jealousy and betrayal.

Sagar rightly notices that for Hughes, Adonis represents "the Protestant attempt to degrade the Queen of Heaven to the Great Whore" (Sagar 8). According to Hughes, he "splits the Goddess into the part that supports and confirms his rational existence, and the part that would disrupt it" (Hughes 513):

He apprehends the truth about the nature of the Goddess, which is that she is herself half (or, strictly speaking, one-third) enigmatic, daemonic animal, but intellectually he rejects the implication that his soul is the same. His intellectual rejection of that unwanted half of the Goddess, and thereby that unwanted half of himself (and of life), is the tragic error from which his (and her) tragic fate explodes. (Hughes 214)

Sagar further points out that Adonis' words "I know not love, [...] nor will not know it, / Unless it be a boar, and then I'll chase it" imply that he treats love as a boar, "a foul and dangerous thing to be fought and killed" (Sagar 6). This actually means that by rejecting what he calls 'lust' in Venus he also rejects her love: "he strikes out at all forms of love, including sympathy, the ability to suffer with those that suffer; he strikes at the feminine in all its forms – woman, Nature, his own anima" (Sagar 7).

Adonis and other versions of him in pre-historic myths "appeared everywhere as the son and consort of the Great Goddess" whose "most typical representative", according to Hughes, is Tiamat – "the monstrous Mother of First Created Things in the Babylonian creation myth", who "in her later forms [...] takes on a double existence as Inanna (Ishtar, Astarte, Arthar, etc.), who is Goddess of Love and Reproduction, and as Ershkigal (Allatu, etc.) who is Goddess of the Underworld" (Hughes 6). The Greek version of this myth (which appeared around 900-700 B.C. in Paphos, Cyprus) has Adonis as the Goddess' son and consort and Aphrodite as the Great Goddess, whose double is Persephone. According to Hughes, this myth "begins where Aphrodite hides the Divine Child [Adonis] in a chest and gives him into the care of Persephone, Goddess of the Underworld. As he grows Persephone falls in love with him and refuses to give him back to Aphrodite [...] Aphrodite

appeals to Zeus for justice, and it is finally arranged that she shall have Adonis for one part of the year, and Persephone shall have him for another part” (Hughes 7). However, when Aphrodite refuses to give Adonis to Persephone, she “emerges in her animal form as a wild boar, and reclaims him by killing him” (Hughes 7).

For Hughes, “the values of the relationship between Venus and Adonis were shifted into the context of Reformation England” (Hughes 14); this is also the case with another of Shakespeare’s poems, *The Rape of Lucrece*, and the second part of his Tragic Equation, where Shakespeare’s male hero is “an uncontrollably enraged Jehovan God, who annihilates, or attempts somehow to annihilate, the Goddess; and his motive, in every case, far from being lust to rape the female, is exactly the opposite: it is abhorrence of what he imagines to be the Goddess’s whorishness, or at least her treachery in love” (Hughes 15). *The Rape of Lucrece* is a story about Tarquin, a Roman prince, who rapes Lucrece, the chaste wife of Collatinus, a Roman commander. After committing the crime, Tarquin flees and Lucrece kills herself after having the Roman nobility hear her account of the crime. It seems that the annihilation of the Goddess in this poem arises from the rejection of the Goddess in the first one: Adonis, who rejects the female, becomes Tarquin, who assaults the Goddess and tries to destroy her.

According to Hughes, most of Shakespeare’s heroes are reincarnations of Adonis and Tarquin, and what Shakespeare goes on to reveal in his plays is that by destroying the Goddess, which is actually the hero’s beloved, he destroys himself. Hughes explains that “when the Puritan eye is opened in Adonis, either by the Female’s real action (Cressida, Hamlet’s mother) or more usually by Adonis becoming deluded (Othello, Macbeth, Lear, Posthumus, Leontes), he splits his beloved into the Sacred Bride/ Divine Mother, on the one hand, and the Queen of Hell, on the other, and rejects the Queen of Hell, absolutely and with loathing (in fear)” (Hughes 215). However, the loved and the loathed woman cannot be separated, because the Queen of Hell is “a part of the ‘divine, complete being’, which is Divine Love” (Hughes 223); hence, her rejection implies the rejection and loss of Divine Love. This rejection and the loss of Divine Love further leads to a tragic hero’s ‘madness’, which is “always directed against the Female, and results directly or indirectly in her death” (Hughes 217).

This is also the case with Leontes, the hero of *The Winter’s Tale*, who becomes suspicious of his wife Hermione’s fidelity and rejects her. A number of critics have noticed that Leontes represents the example of the patriarchal suspicion of women, especially their chastity, and of the fear of becoming a cuckolded husband which was widespread among Renaissance men. It is also worth pointing out that the tragic beginning of *The Winter’s Tale* is caused by jealousy, as Venus from the poem *Venus and Adonis* prophesied after Adonis’s death: “Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend./ It shall be waited on with jealousy./ find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end” (Shakespeare, *Venus* 1205). Furthermore, the transformation that happens to Adonis in the poem – a purple flower springing from his blood – can be linked with the transformation that occurs in Leontes and with the redemption that occurs in *The Winter’s Tale* and other Shakespeare romances. According to Frye, the purple flower symbolizes “Nature as a cycle of birth and death” (Grande, Sherbert 126) or the renewal of life after death, which is the main idea of *The Winter’s Tale*.

The action of *The Winter’s Tale* takes place in two kingdoms, Sicilia and Bohemia,

ruled by Leontes and Polixenes respectively. The two kings have been very good friends since childhood and at the beginning of the play, their conversation about their boyhood familiarizes us with their friendship. During this conversation, we find out that Polixenes has been Leontes' guest for nine months and is about to depart. After failing to persuade him to stay longer, Leontes demands his wife to ask Polixenes to extend his visit. After Hermione succeeds, Leontes momentarily starts thinking that they have cheated on him and finds in their gestures, like "paddling palms and pinching fingers", and "making practiced smiles", signs of adultery (1.2.1103).

Although everybody around him tells him that she is chaste, Leontes refuses to believe that Hermione is faithful. When Camillo tries to defend Hermione, Leontes lists the reasons why he believes Hermione and Polixenes are adulterers:

Is whispering nothing?
Is leaning cheek to cheek? is meeting noses?
Kissing with inside lip? stopping the career
Of laughter with a sigh (a note infallible
Of breaking honesty)? horsing foot on foot?
Skulking in corners? wishing clocks more swift?
Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes
Blind with the pin and web but theirs, theirs only,
That would unseen be wicked? Is this nothing?
Why then the world and all that's in't is nothing,
The covering sky is nothing, Bohemia nothing,
My wife is nothing, nor nothing have these nothings,
If this be nothing. (1.2.1105)

Cohen gives an explanation that according to Terry Eagleton, "'nothing' is an Elizabethan euphemism for the vagina. With some overstatement, he perceptively notes that the "woman's nothing is of a peculiarly convoluted kind, a yawning abyss within which man can lose his virile identity... Leontes, obsessively thinking of Hermione as a sexual entity, is himself as caught by the euphemism as those who hear him. Nothing is not merely an absence of matter; it is the material evidence of femaleness, and it is this aspect of femaleness that has come to dominate his vision of the world" (Cohen 219–220). However, Bloom asserts that if "nothing" is a euphemism for the vagina, then it should actually be seen as Shakespeare saw it: "as breeding, a cipher multiplying, being fruitful, the Shakespearean nothing – as noting, as cipher, as naughtiness, as origin – from which everything comes" (Bloom 140)

Leontes is "the justice", as Collington describes him, "concerned with his personal appearance and his position in the community as a representative of authority and order" (65). Collington further notes that Leontes' sore point is his honor, and that after he wrongly perceives that Hermione and Polixenes have ruined his reputation, "he will couch personal revenge in the language of public justice" (242). His "sexual paranoia leads to political paranoia" (253).

As opposed to Polixenes, who manages to escape, Hermione is imprisoned even though she is in the ninth month of pregnancy. Leontes does not believe that the child she is

carrying is his. When Hermione gives birth to their daughter in prison, Leontes orders Antigonus to kill the child, but he leaves her in Bohemia where a shepherd finds and adopts her. Later on, Leontes also loses his son, since after separating him from his mother, Mamillius dies. Clearly, Mamillius' name "stresses a connection to the maternal" and represents the importance of the relationship between mother and son. His death results from "the attendant loss of maternal presence, without which – his death tells us – we cannot live" (Tallon 86).

The betrayal of women in the play starts with the condemnation of female sexuality, seen in a conversation between Leontes and Polixenes describing their friendship; the conversation "focuses on the loss of their innocent childhood bond when they enter the adult world, corrupted by female sexuality" (Tallon 79). Polixenes says that his future wife tempted him and then innocence was lost. Schavrien furthermore adds that Polixenes and Leontes "seem to concede that their own sexual appetite (the "dagger" they were admonished as boys to keep "muzzled" [1.2.156]) might have led them astray as well" (28). With his mistrust of women and his belief that "femaleness is a moral concept" (Cohen 217) and that women betray men, Leontes is a true representative of the patriarchal view of women. He attacks women's honesty and chastity and says that women in general betray men:

...Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now;
...Physic for't there is none;
It is a bawdy planet, ...
be it concluded,
No barricado for a belly... (1.2.1104)

Because of their sexuality, women in Shakespeare's plays are paradoxically idealized to the highest level of chastity and at the same time suspected of infidelity by their husbands. This is the case with Hermione, whose husband is a possessive patriarch with high social standing, immensely concerned with his honor and property. Leontes and Polixenes married into secure lineage, and thus Leontes and Hermione are "less passionate than business-like in their relations" and "Polixenes never even mentions his wife, except perhaps to express concern that she is at home unsupervised: 'I am question'd by my fears, of what may chance/ Or breed upon our absence' (1.2.1 1–12)" (Collington 246). Collington further states that "patriarchal marriage predicates a husband's external reputation and his psychological well-being upon his wife's behavior", and cites Gohke who notes that "Shakespearean heroes invest women with the capacity either to organize or to disorganize their psychic universe" (Collington 247). Or, in Hughes' terms, the hero's rejection of the "Female" or the loss of his "soul" brings chaos to his "psychic universe" (Hughes 214). Leontes betrays Hermione and brings about chaos not only to himself, but also to his family and his realm.

Leontes regards his wife as property; he uses degrading imagery when talking about female sexuality, and for him having an unfaithful wife is like having a "pond fish'd by his next neighbour' or a gate 'open'd, against [his] will" (1.2.1104). In addition, when Polixenes notices that Leontes is worried, but he does not know that the cause is Hermione's

presumed infidelity; he (unawares) compares the loss of a wife with a loss of property, because to him Leontes looks like he has lost some “province” or a “region” (1.2.1106). Moreover, in an attempt to comfort himself, Leontes says that “the tenth of mankind” has “revolted”, or unfaithful wives lack “barricado for a belly” thus providing us with a perfect example of “cuckoldry solidarity” (Tallon 83).

Leontes does not believe in his queen’s chastity until the Oracle proclaims that his accusations were false. The Oracle declares that “Hermione is chaste;/Polixenes blameless; Camillo a true subject; Leontes/a jealous tyrant; his innocent babe truly begotten” and that “the king shall live without an heir, if that/ which is lost be not found” (3.2.1114). “That which is lost” is clearly a reference to the infant Perdita (in Latin Perdita means “the lost one”). The tragic consequences of betraying the Female are manifested immediately – Leontes is unable to sleep, loses an heir, abandons his daughter and loses his wife, but he is given sixteen years of repentance during which Paulina is his advisor, and their relation promises the “redemptive rebalancing of Masculine with Feminine” (Schavrien 34).

Leontes destroys himself through his misunderstanding and rejection of Divine Love; thus the first half of *The Winter's Tale* is Mother a classic Tragic Equation. Hermione is a Sacred and Divine Love who, in Leontes’ eyes, turns into the Goddess from Hell, whom Leontes wants to destroy as did all the other distant, Protestant and legalistic Adonises before him. The Feminine, which Leontes expelled from his kingdom, comes back with the return of Perdita and Hermione (who later returns in a resurrecting miracle), according to Schavrien, who concludes that “Shakespeare appears to have advocated the modifying of a hard-core rationalist/rationalizing and authoritarian viewpoint [...] through the virtues of the Feminine” (30).

At the beginning of Act IV of the play, a chorus speaks in the person of Time, announcing that sixteen years have passed and the scene now shifts to Bohemia. Now, the most important action takes place at the sheep-shearing festival during the engagement of Leontes’ daughter Perdita, who has grown up as a shepherd’s daughter, and Polixenes’ son Florizel. Polixenes comes to the festival in disguise, since he was not invited, and only then does he find out about the engagement. When Florizel is asked if his father knows about his engagement and he replies that he does not and will not find out for a good reason, Polixenes reveals his identity and forbids Perdita and Florizel from seeing each other again. Here it becomes clear that Sicilia and Bohemia are governed by equally suspicious and possessive patriarchs who want to keep everything under their control.

Luckily, not all men in Bohemia are like Polixenes. In contrast to him and Leontes Perdita’s foster-father, the old shepherd and Polixenes’ son Florizel are depicted as displaying compassion, love and understanding for women. The difference between Leontes and the shepherd is seen in their treatment both of Perdita and of their respective wives’ hospitality. While Leontes abandons his baby girl whom he proclaims a bastard, the shepherd adopts the same bastard baby. Furthermore, while Leontes becomes jealous after his wife shows kindness to her guest Polixenes, the shepherd praises the kindness his deceased wife showed to their guests and teaches Perdita to follow her example.

Florizel also stands in contrast to Leontes. While Leontes becomes estranged from his wife after Polixenes’ visit, Florizel does not distance himself from Perdita after Polixenes’ disapproval of their marriage. Florizel recognizes that if he rejects the Divine love, he

will lose himself or his “soul”, in Hughes’ terms (513): “For I cannot be / Mine own, nor anything to any, if / I be not thine” (4.3.1119). Furthermore, when Polixenes forbids Florizel from marrying Perdita, Florizel stays true to his love and chooses his relationship with Perdita over inheritance, saying, “From my succession wipe me, father! I / Am heir to my affection” (4.3.1124).

After having disinherited himself, Florizel flees with Perdita to Sicilia, because Camillo promises him that Leontes will warmly welcome them – which he indeed does, and even agrees to be Florizel and Perdita’s advocate before Polixenes, who has come after his son to Sicilia. Immediately the true identity of Perdita is revealed, and her return brings reconciliations and reunions to Leontes’ court, as the Oracle foretold. Florizel reconciles with his father and Leontes reconciles with Polixenes and Camillo. Leontes reunites with his daughter and they both reunite with Hermione. Paulina reveals the statue of Hermione, seemingly dead but hidden and protected by Paulina for sixteen years.

The Winter’s Tale is a diptych (Grande, Sherbert 115), i.e. it consists of two parts differing in their plot and characters as well as their imagery. The first part is the winter’s tale proper, the story of betraying the Female, i.e. the story of a jealous tyrant who slanders his wife and abandons his daughter. The second part, the last two acts, is the story of Florizel’s love, Perdita’s recognition and the revival of Hermione, i.e. the revival of the Female. The imagery of the two parts is also different, perfectly matching the two different stories: the winter, chaos and storm of the first part are contrasted with the spring, revival and fertility of the second part. The triumph of life over the wasteland and death is here embodied in the female figure Hermione. Therefore the first part of *The Winter’s Tale* is “a tragedy of the isolation of consciousness caused by Leontes’ jealousy which, like Lear’s abdication, creates a wasteland that extends from Sicilia into Bohemia and dissolves in the chaos of storm and death and devouring monsters”. In the second part, “the memory of Hermione is cherished so intensely that it becomes a new existence” (Grande and Sherbert 326).

Schavrien insightfully notes that Shakespeare wrote “in the period of great social changes: an age of discovery, when a new cosmology and empirical method were in ascendancy, when the Renaissance had taken hold” (26). What started to penetrate the Western world in the Renaissance (and has continued to the present time) is a rational, mechanistic and fragmented world view. In his plays, Shakespeare “surveyed prospects for a New World” which would be based on the partnership of the Masculine and the Feminine. In *The Winter’s Tale*, Shakespeare shows that the revaluing of the Feminine “brings renewal on multiple levels - psychological, political, natural, and cosmic” (Schavrien 35).

Ashes to Ashes

All Pinter’s plays are political, because he perceives personal relationships as “symbolic microcosms of world politics” (Baldwin 40) – as is shown in *Ashes to Ashes*. More precisely, personal relationships, especially those between husbands and wives, are “symbolic microcosms” of the patriarchal social system, which, in the domestic sphere, is perpetuated by husbands to whom wives show resistance. Their resistance, especially Rebecca’s in *Ashes to Ashes*, is significant because it represents the resistance to all

kinds of oppression, misrepresentation and mistreatment of all subservient people in the patriarchy, not only women. Pinter wrote *Ashes to Ashes* “out of the images and horror of man’s inhumanity to man which have haunted him since the end of the Second World War” (Raby 247). However, the play is not only about Nazism, but also about the contemporary audience and their sense of responsibility towards their actions and the understanding of history as being the result of human actions, as Pinter himself pointed out: “It’s about the images of Nazi Germany; I don’t think anyone can ever get that out of their mind. The Holocaust is probably the worst thing that ever happened, because it was so calculated, deliberate and precise, and so fully documented by the people who actually did it. But it’s not simply the Nazis that I am talking about in *Ashes to Ashes*, because it would be a dereliction on my part to simply concentrate on the Nazis and leave it at that. The word democracy begins to stink. These things, as you can see, are on my mind. So in *Ashes to Ashes*, I’m not simply talking about the Nazis; I’m talking about us and our conception of our past and our history, and what it does to us in the present” (Yenigul, 46).

Through Rebecca, whose distant experience (of the Holocaust) formed by cultural memory emphasizes society’s responsibility for human suffering in the past, Pinter addresses the consciences of his audience “in order to create the same sense of responsibility” in them (Yenigul 2). Thus, “*Ashes to Ashes* points out a social reality – that of brutality, violence, torture and oppression - present throughout the world history, which haunts the conscience of humanity reflected in the character of Rebecca” (Yenigul 1).

Rebecca and Devlin, her husband, are the only characters in the play. Their attitudes towards the images of the Holocaust Rebecca evokes are very different and are primarily gendered; Pinter obviously sides with Rebecca’s compassion and criticizes Devlin’s tendency “to view history as external to himself, occupying a blinkered, empirical, male mind-set” (Baldwin 36). In other words, Rebecca’s compassion for the victims of the Holocaust is juxtaposed with Devlin’s “reliance on order, authority and rationality” (Yenigul 63), which is the cause of their mutual misunderstanding and which lies behind their dysfunctional relationship. During the play a parallel is drawn between Devlin and Rebecca’s ‘ex-lover’, who actually turns out to have been a lover of a woman who witnessed the Holocaust and whose identity Rebecca assumes. We learn that the ‘ex-lover’ was one of Nazi officials or officers who worked in a concentration camp during the Second World War, and the prevailing image of him is that he “used to go to the local railway station and walk down the platform and tear all the babies from the arms of their screaming mothers” (407) and that he made the woman he was dating kiss his fist. Throughout the play, Devlin starts to resemble this lover in some aspects until he finally enacts his behavior described in Rebecca’s story and asks Rebecca to kiss his fist. Both Devlin and the lover are men “with a rigid sense of duty”, cold and authoritative: “Devlin’s desire for authority, order and control over Rebecca in the private sphere parallels with that of the authoritarian states, which impose violence, torture, and suffering on its people. Thus, Pinter, combining the personal with the political, does not distinguish political violence from personal violence” (Yenigul 62-63).

In addition, Pinter’s merging of political and personal, or of world politics and gender politics in this play, and especially his focus on the victimization of women in both spheres, is what makes him Shakespeare’s successor in exposing the betrayal of women or the

“crime” (Hughes 221) against the Female. In *Ashes to Ashes*, women become two-fold victims of the patriarchy, since they are both victimized by men and made their accomplices in separating mothers from their children – which is the case of the woman whose identity Rebecca assumes in the play. However, Rebecca is aware of this woman’s misdeed, and in addition to assuming her identity she also assumes her guilt and the responsibility for her actions – which is in fact the point of the play. Thus, “the drama shows *Rebecca’s* growing awareness and better perception of the true nature of the acts she was led to perform in a patriarchal civilization. At the same time, she feels guilty because of her participation in the destructive system and the loss of a child” (Bogoeva-Sedlar 282).

Devlin cannot understand Rebecca because he “personifies a willed ignorance... His behavior reveals the collusion between an autonomous, bourgeois self and a cultural preference for denying history” (Kane 203). For him, “a man who doesn’t give a shit” is at the same time “a man with a rigid sense of duty” (415), and he is this man who “embodies mental habits that culminate in a ‘plausible deniability’ of moral responsibility to others” (Kane 56). Therefore, he does not understand Rebecca’s compassion for the victims of the Holocaust and her assumption of the responsibility for their suffering, and he wants to make her talk about “something more personal”, “something within *her* own experience” (413). He suggests this after making her agree that she has neither the authority nor the right to “discuss such an atrocity” (413) because it “never happened” (413) to her. And after having used every argument and strategy – appeals to logic, to God, to family, even to Rebecca’s unworthiness because she herself has never suffered – and having failed to restore her to “the ordinary and acceptable”, he falls back on force.

Clearly, there is a mental and emotional gap between Rebecca and Devlin that sets them apart. This is particularly visible in their different attitudes towards the police siren which is heard during the play. When Rebecca hears the siren she feels upset. For her, the police siren is a sign of suffering because it resonates with the Holocaust experience. Obviously, the siren stands for repressive state apparatuses and state oppression. On the other hand, for Devlin it represents security and order. He praises the police for “*taking* care of” everything and “*keeping* their eye on” everything (409). He assures Rebecca that she will “never be without a police siren” (409), i.e. state repression which is very alarming. “Surveillance, discipline, and punishment” were present in concentration camps, and as Pinter warns us in his plays, they are also present in modern states.

It is important to stress the fact that Rebecca was not a witness or a victim of the Holocaust, since at the time the play was written, around 1996, she is forty years old. More importantly, it was not she who gave the child to the Nazi, and who dated a Nazi official/officer, but the woman whose identity she assumes. What is also important is that Rebecca’s exposure of this woman’s wrong decisions actually serves to reveal Rebecca’s and Devlin’s different personalities, and especially Devlin’s coldness, detachment and authoritativeness, which destroys their relationship. In this way Rebecca raises the awareness of the importance of taking responsibility for the Holocaust. On the other hand, Devlin’s identification with the male lover from her story deserves only criticism, since that makes him an authoritative and violent husband who destroys their marriage, as Leontes did before him.

By assuming not only the identity of this woman but also the guilt for her wrong-doings,

Rebecca makes it clear that she herself finds her actions repulsive. The first description of the woman that makes her repulsive is the fact that she may “have achieved sexual fulfillment from a masochistic ritual she played with a lover” (Baldwin 30) and the fact that she interpreted her lover asking her to kiss his fist and gripping her neck as a sign that he “adored” (396) her. Furthermore, she also seems to praise his job although she cannot state clearly what he is doing: “I think it had something to do with a travel agency”; “he was some kind of courier”; “he was quite high up”; “he had a lot of responsibilities”; “he was a guide” (403). When she retells their visit to a factory, she focuses solely on the respect the workers show towards him: “They respected his... purity, his... conviction. They would follow him over a cliff and into the sea, if he asked them” (405). The fact that these people worked in appalling conditions, characterized by dampness, inadequate clothing and the lack of a bathroom (406), is easily dismissed by her as unimportant, as is the fact that her lover used to tear babies away from their mothers (407).

Although there is no mention of the Holocaust in the play, the images of the factory, the railway stations and the separation of children from their mothers clearly point to this historical event. In addition, it is rather easy to notice the connection between the word ‘guide’, used in the play to describe the lover’s occupation, and the German word ‘Führer’; one translation of the German ‘Führer’, besides ‘leader’, is guide, which ironically may refer to his role in deportations. Also, the words “purity” and “conviction” represent euphemisms that call to mind the justification for Nazi genocide – which further stresses the connection between the events described in the play and the Holocaust. Furthermore, according to Baldwin, “it is ‘purity’ and ‘conviction’ that have proved ideologically indispensable to the political rhetoric’ of Fascist governments; regimes who simultaneously don’t ‘give a shit’ yet have a ‘rigid sense of duty’” (Baldwin 30).

“The ‘sense of duty’ that Nazism, Communism, empire, ethnic purity and even democracy have invoked has allowed for countless acts of brutal repression throughout history. It is this powerfully hypnotic language that has enabled us to ignore their consequences” (Baldwin 31). Devlin embodies mental habits that culminate in a “plausible deniability” of moral responsibility to others. The sexual authoritarianism of the male lover, described in the opening anecdote, “appears to be an extension of his public role” (Baldwin 30), which Rebecca exposes and does not admire as Devlin thinks she does – and because of that feels jealous of him. He even emulates the lover’s behavior at the end of the play because he does not know what Rebecca wants; he cannot understand what she is trying to tell him. This, and the analogy already drawn between Devlin and Leontes, prove that he will not be able to save his marriage. This becomes clear at the point in the play when he asks Rebecca to “start again”, to which she replies negatively: “I don’t think we can start again. We started...a long time ago. We started. We can’t start again. We can end again” (425). Then she starts singing a song which illustrates a moment of the final misunderstanding:

REBECCA: (*singing softly*) ‘Ashes to ashes’—

DEVLIN: ‘And dust to dust’—

REBECCA: ‘If the women don’t get you’—

DEVLIN: ‘The liquor must.’ *Pause.* I always knew you loved me.

REBECCA: Why?

DEVLIN: Because we like the same tunes. (69)

Rebecca's understanding of "ashes to ashes" has nothing to do with Devlin's. To Rebecca, obsessed by genocidal imagery, these ashes are the ashes of the Jews. To Devlin they are simply the cue for a popular (and also misogynist) song, worthy of no more thought than one gives to any cliché.

What Devlin does not realize is that the more authority he asserts, the more he compels Rebecca to resist his aggression, and she does that by identifying with and empathizing with oppressed people. Thus their relationship becomes "an allegory of global violence and world politics as Rebecca denies the attempted tyranny and masochism of Devlin in favour of empathetic suffering with the victims of such tyranny" (Baldwin 57). Rebecca declines to kiss Devlin's fist at the end of the play, and while some critics see this as her triumph, the fact that the play ends in silence has led others to say that she loses the battle against authority and becomes "a dissident voice ultimately stilled" (Kane 58). Pinter described Rebecca as "a drowning woman... a lost figure in a drowning landscape, a woman unable to escape the doom that seemed to belong only to others. But as they died, she must die too" (Yenigul 67). It is not clear what happens to her at the end of the play, whether she dies or not, since the play ends with a "long silence". However, before the silence, Rebecca once again reminds us of a lost child, the separation of mothers from their children during the Holocaust, and she warns that if the responsibility for what happened in the past is denied, then what has already happened may be repeated in the future.

Although Rebecca has not experienced any atrocities herself, her story about "mental elephantiasis" suggests that she takes responsibility for them. Through this story she "tries to explain how the acceptance of little bits of evil in the community can metastasize into something virulent and engulfing – 'mental elephantiasis'" (Yenigul 66): "...when you spill an ounce of gravy it immediately expands and becomes a vast sea of gravy which surrounds you on all sides and you suffocate in a voluminous sea of gravy...it's all your own fault. You brought it upon yourself. You are not the victim of it, you are the cause of it. Because it was you who spilt the gravy in the first place, it was you who handed over the bundle" (417). Rebecca's acknowledgement that "it's all your own fault" if you "spill an ounce of gravy" or literally "accept a little bit of evil" suggests that she recognizes that history is a result of human agency, and that turning a blind eye to evil acts such as separating mothers from their children can lead to a repetition of a catastrophe such as the Holocaust.

Obviously, Rebecca cannot distance herself from the victims of the Holocaust, and although she is temporally and spatially separated from them, she can empathize and be close to them thanks to her imagination. Rebecca "tells her stories as a way to test her own moral-imaginative capacity to apprehend history in the present" (Kane 51). Pinter himself said that "intellectual understanding exists alongside emotive or intuitive knowledge" (Kane 51), and Rebecca is capable of both, while Devlin is not. "Pinter uses the character of Devlin, who is apparently a scholar or professor, to introduce one perspective on the theme of knowledge: 'You understand why I'm asking you these questions. Don't you? Put yourself in my place. I'm compelled to ask you questions. There are so many things I don't know. I know nothing...about any of this. Nothing. I'm in the dark. I need light. Or do you think my questions are illegitimate?'" (11). Here the clear knowledge Devlin hopes for, enlightenment in the traditional sense, equates to light and ignorance to darkness"

(Kane 51). Therefore, Devlin is “voicing rational curiosity about Rebecca’s stories” (Kane 51) and cannot relate to them or to their characters in the same way that Rebecca can – emotionally and intuitively. In addition, Devlin cannot connect with Rebecca in any other way except by becoming her “torturer, apparently attempting to suffocate her”. Thus, his “dogmatism and his pursuit of ‘facts’ and ‘truth’ are linked to his psychological and physical brutality” (Raby 290).

While Devlin identifies with the lover because he is jealous of him, and admires his authoritativeness, Rebecca identifies with the woman to reveal her shame. Moreover, Rebecca herself feels shame and shows empathy towards this woman as well as towards all the women who lost their children during the Holocaust. Although she never says that she is ashamed and grieved, this can be easily concluded from the overall tone of her stories and the play as a whole – especially the ending, which is “a poetic refrain of maternal loss and grief” (Baldwin 38). Rebecca has recognized that both the woman she identifies with and she herself are being betrayed by their lovers/husbands – in their relationships they both lack love, compassion and understanding – and that they are doomed to either personal betrayal (which happens to the former when she denies abandoning the baby) or death (which probably happens to the latter). Thus, in Pinter’s plays, women are threatened, especially by their authoritarian and jealous husbands, with the loss of their children and with suffocation (of their voices) – as was also the case with Shakespeare’s Hermione.

Although Pinter’s female characters are often deemed ambiguous, especially Rebecca from *Ashes to Ashes*, the comparisons of these women with their male counterparts show that the women are the ones Pinter sides with. Baldwin adds that “this view of the ‘feminine’ as being carers and nurturers is certainly a stereotypical one, but it may explain why Pinter chooses to have a woman as the centre to this play’s action, as a bodily carrier of world history, atoning for the man’s sins” (37). Rebecca recognizes that the Holocaust and the atrocities which happened during it are rooted in the authoritarian personalities of which the Nazi lover and her husband are perfect examples. They represent the power and tyranny of which many people were (and still are) victims, as is shown by Rebecca’s example; not only by empathetically identifying with the Holocaust victims, but also by being tyrannized by Devlin, she also becomes an innocent victim. In addition, she is also a guilty survivor, since she assumes the guilt of a woman who gives a baby to the Nazis and then denies doing it. Moreover, she feels guilty and responsible not only for what this woman did, but also for what the above-mentioned men (who simultaneously have “a rigid sense of duty” and “don’t give a shit”) did, and still do, i.e. avoid taking responsibility for their actions.

Baldwin recognizes that “the guilt Rebecca feels is the kind of ethical response Pinter suggests is lacking in citizens of democracy” (35). Pinter claims that *Ashes to Ashes* is a play about “us”, and “our conception of our past and our history, and what it does to us in the present” (Pinter 66). He “implies in *Ashes to Ashes* that failing to articulate any ethical response to events in history must force us to ‘acknowledge’ our part in these events; we are implicated in all the crimes against humanity committed in the past since they are still being committed today” (Baldwin 28–29). Pinter also recognizes that the reasons for these “crimes against humanity” today lie in the indifference of the citizens of democratic countries towards the atrocities happening in the world. Rebecca possesses “the ability

to identify with the victims of atrocity”, which “redeems her as a guilty perpetrator” (Baldwin 38). Her refusal to “evade responsibility embodies Pinter’s suggestion that it is only by taking on the implications of a shared, social sense of subjectivity, that any kind of effective resistance may be envisaged” (Baldwin 36).

Conclusion

In *The Winter’s Tale*, Shakespeare shows that love is betrayed by a jealous and insecure man, whose ‘madness’ or jealousy and revenge directed against his beloved woman brings about tragic events. The male protagonist loses trust in his wife because he is an over-protective patriarch, led by cold intellect and concern for honor; when he starts suspecting his wife’s chastity, he splits her into a chaste woman, on the one hand, and a whore, on the other, and he rejects and kills her. Leontes is concerned about his public image; this is the reason why he is very much susceptible to believing that his wife is capable of deceiving and dishonoring him. The fact that Leontes first unfairly and wrongfully accuses his wife, and treats her brutally, but in the end repents for his actions, means that he is a hero with a tragic error or *hamartia* and is also capable of *anagnorisis*. Leontes is given the opportunity to be redeemed. The miraculous return of Leontes’ wife Hermione and the return of his lost daughter Perdita to Leontes’ court bring happiness and life, as opposed to the misery and death which was caused by their expulsion from the court.

The betrayal, misrepresentation and mistreatment of women also represent a common practice of men in Harold Pinter’s *Ashes to Ashes*. When Rebecca assumes the identity of a woman who survived the Holocaust, Pinter has her do that not only to reveal this woman’s mistake and her betrayal of the ‘female’, but also to reveal her own growing awareness of the society she lives in, the society of husbands and lovers who at the same time have a “rigid sense of duty” and “do not give a shit”, who are at the same time dutiful to God, Hitler, etc., and yet who do not take responsibility for their actions – such as, in the worst case, the killings in the name of that same God or Hitler. The play references a follower of Hitler, a Nazi officer/official who both on a private and public level shows a lack of human kindness: in private he grips his lover’s neck and makes her kiss his fist, and in public he tears babies from the arms of screaming mothers. His lover, the woman who admires him and is dependent on him, is unable to save her dignity in his presence: at the beginning of the play she kisses his fist, and at the end she gives him a baby she was supposed to save. Another person who admires this Nazi soldier’s authority is Rebecca’s husband Devlin, who even becomes jealous of him when he misunderstands Rebecca and thinks that the soldier was or is her lover. During the play, he feels that he is losing authority over what Rebecca is saying, and that his own words do not have any authority and significance for Rebecca, so he tries to regain some kind of authority by gripping Rebecca’s neck and asking her to kiss his fist. Therefore, with every attempt to contradict Rebecca, and even display some power over her, he betrays what she represents, or her purpose in the play; this is a criticism of the misuse of power and the betrayal of the female.

Both Shakespeare and Pinter recognize that the cause of wars and dire events, both in the Renaissance and in the modern world, is the betrayal of love and life. However, while Shakespeare includes and describes in his plays (especially romances) alternatives to wars,

destructive powers, and chaos – such as the love, happiness, and cosmic order which are restored at the end of *The Winter's Tale*, Pinter leaves it up to the audience to imagine the alternatives for themselves. *Ashes to Ashes* thus reminds us only of the first half of *The Winter's Tale* – the prevailing feeling is that of jealousy, betrayal and loss; the prevailing imagery is that of mothers losing their children; and the prevailing season is winter. The happy resolution that happens in *The Winter's Tale* is not offered to Pinter's audience; however, there is a possibility to imagine it and hope for it.

Finally, both Shakespeare and Pinter show that the private and the public are connected, that “whether human beings treat one another as equals on the private level may be equally important for survival on all levels” (Prentice 305). In *The Winter's Tale* and *Ashes to Ashes*, men are equally destructive both in private and public: their public image, the image created by the role they have in the patriarchal society, dictates how they will behave towards their wives, and their behavior is destructive. In *Ashes to Ashes*, Pinter clearly points out that “to attempt to dominate another person [e.g. a man's attempt to dominate a woman] is not perhaps, finally, so different from trying to dominate another nation [or race], the results are similarly destructive” (Prentice 305). Baldwin claims that in Pinter's plays the battle between men and women is not just personal, but that “it is symptomatic of the broader power struggle between men (as representatives of the patriarchy) and women represented as ‘Other’ than Man” (Baldwin 2). Both Pinter and Shakespeare seem to notice that as long as men, as the representatives of the patriarchy, refuse to acknowledge the ‘female’ as something not ‘other’ than themselves, but as a very important part of their psycho-biological make-up, there will be betrayal of the values the female is generally associated with: the totality of one's being, peace, creativity, love, life.

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“Learn Now the Lore of the Living Creatures”: On J. R. R. Tolkien’s Alliterative Poetry

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Abstract

This paper explores the use of the ancient Germanic alliterative metre and literary devices in the 20th-century poems composed by the author John Ronald Reuel Tolkien. The first part briefly explains the Old English and Old Norse metrical rules as well as other poetical techniques (such as semantic linking) used by poets and singers of the second half of the first millennium, and presents analyzed examples of original works of art. The second part then focuses on and analyzes six extracts from Tolkien’s alliterative body of work, comments upon their accuracy as far as the Germanic metre is concerned, and discusses Tolkien’s contribution to alliterative poetry and literature in general. One of the article’s aims is to prove that the ways of the ancestors of English and American literature are not a matter of a long-forgotten past, and that in the 20th and the 21st century, among the plethora of diverse subject matters and genres, the original English way of storytelling is still relevant.

Keywords: Tolkien, alliterative verse, Old English, Old Norse, Anglo-Saxons, poetry, metre, Edda.

1. Introduction

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892 – 1973), the well-known author of the high-fantasy novels *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, has received much praise over the eight decades since his first work of fiction was published. In the eyes of the general public, he is obviously mostly famous for his contributions to the “corpus” of secondary world¹ fantasy stories, and to a slightly lesser degree for being an Oxford don and an accomplished linguist who lectured and wrote on Germanic languages, their history, and the literatures that were written in them. However, what could still be considered a relatively unknown

fact about Tolkien is his ability to combine all the above-mentioned, add in his knowledge of European legends and mythologies, and meld it into something new – which, nevertheless, has an ancient feeling. Furthermore, for all the success of the prose works he wrote, his skills and experiences as a poet and an expert on metre tend to be overlooked, and it was only with the publications of such works as *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrun* and *The Fall of Arthur* that this particular skill of Tolkien's started to reach the attention and knowledge of the common reader.

Tolkien's passion for studying, teaching, and ultimately inventing languages required something which is also crucial when one wants to be a skilled poet or a musician, and that is a sensitive ear. That is especially true when one is interested in the oldest English poetry (c. 7th – 11th century), composed by Anglo-Saxon poets, also known as *scopas*, and later written down by ancient English scribes in scriptoria. This kind of poetry was completely different from what was composed in Britain during Tolkien's life, and had very different and more complicated sets of rules. Luckily for Tolkien, he did have a sensitive ear, and he understood the rules, which he then applied in his own poems, and by translating older texts² and writing new ones he became one of the writers who started what could potentially be called the "20th-century alliterative revival", spreading the ancient metre among a wide audience – and at a time when modernism was popular, he contributed at least partially to the survival of the heroic and romantic metre. But did he contribute to the revival and resurrection of the original Germanic metre? Did he help the "true" ancient poetical form re-enter the minds of readers and listeners? And, ultimately, was he in any way one of the minstrels who long ago kept the memory of heroes and gods alive? In this article I explore examples of Tolkien's alliterative poems and, comparing their metre (and to a certain extent the general atmosphere) with those of Old English and Old Icelandic poems, I hope to arrive at a positive conclusion. For today, more than ever before, it is crucial to remember where English and American literature came from, and in the midst of all that is being studied (which is often classed as "English" literature simply because it was written in the English language) it is important not to forget the literature's original European roots. Before looking more closely at Tolkien's poems, however, it would be fitting to briefly explain the above-mentioned rules, accompanied by examples and extracts from original works of art.

2. Alliterative Verse

2.1 Old English Metre

The poetry I analyze in this article is oftentimes called "alliterative", and that is because one of the two most prominent aspects of it was the use of alliteration, or "head-rhyme", which is when two or more words within a verse begin with the same sound. Indeed, the important word here is "sound", for alliterative poetry was first disseminated orally; thus, it is meant to be read aloud, and it is sounds that alliterate, not necessarily letters.³ The rules were that each consonant alliterated with itself, except the paired consonants *sc*, *sp* and *st*, which could only alliterate with themselves (which means that, for instance, "*Scyld*" can alliterate with "*Scefing*",⁴ but not with "*stan*") and any vowel could alliterate with any oth-

er vowel.⁵ An Old English verse was furthermore divided into two half-lines, or “hemistichs” (also called “a-verse” and “b-verse”), and it was alliteration that connected the pair syntactically and to a certain extent semantically, for usually three important words in a full verse alliterated (occasionally four). Here the word-stress, the other important aspect of alliterative poetry, should be mentioned. The metrical rules of Old English poetry were based on varying positions of stressed and unstressed syllables in individual hemistichs, rather than on a fixed pattern as is the case with romance-based poems.⁶ Stressed syllables are called “lifts” and unstressed syllables are called “dips”, and it is the former that alliterates – mostly being important, strong words such as nouns, adjectives, or verbs.⁷ Usually, a half-line contained two main stresses, whereas the number of unstressed syllables could be relatively unlimited. In one hemistich, therefore, there were at least two important words carrying the main stress, and most often the first lift of the second half-line alliterated with one or both lifts in the first half-line. The addition of head-rhyme was furthermore made easier by the nature of Germanic languages themselves, because they have always tended to put the main stress on the first syllables of words (except, of course, in the cases of prefixed words). The majority of Old English half-lines then falls into one of the six basic types, described for the first time by the German philologist Eduard Sievers:

A) Lift – dip, Lift – dip	<i>knights in armour</i>
B) dip – Lift, dip – Lift	<i>the roaring sea</i>
C) dip – Lift, Lift – dip	<i>on high mountains</i>
D) a) Lift, Lift – subordinate stress – dip ⁸	<i>bright archangels</i>
b) Lift, Lift – dip – subordinate stress	<i>bold brazenfaced</i>
E) Lift – subordinate stress – dip, Lift	<i>highcrested helms</i>
	(Tolkien, <i>Monsters</i> 62)

It could be said, then, that stress is an inseparable part of Old English poetry, whereas alliteration itself, although important and most certainly prominent, is not fundamental for it and its metre (Tolkien, *Monsters* 66). If a poem was written “blank”, i.e. without using alliteration, the metrical character itself would remain unaltered. C. S. Lewis said that Old English verse had a structure that could stand alone, and that alliteration was no more the secret here than rhyme is the secret of syllabic verse (15). The main metrical function of alliteration was then to link the two hemistichs together.

It needs to be said here that there were exceptions to the metre, although they only appeared sporadically and almost always served a purpose, such as balancing the half-line, substituting unstressed syllables, etc. The most common variation is called *anacrusis*, and it chiefly concerns the A-type, where it was possible for the poet to add one or two unstressed syllables before the first lift of the a-verse. In b-verses, however, it was seldom used, and C. S. Lewis in his essay on Old English metre states that any modern poet trying to write in this metre should avoid it. He further provides an example in Modern English of what anacrusis looks like in practice. The line “Merry were the minstrels” is a representative of an unaltered A-type, which could be varied thus: “And so merry were the minstrels” (18).

The fact that a half-line could contain a relatively unlimited number of unstressed syl-

lables – a factor that could also count as a variation of any of the patterns – has already been mentioned. Concerning lifts, if there was an apparent difficulty in finding two that would fit into one of the first three patterns, a subordinate stress could act as a major lift. Furthermore, a single lift could be separated into two syllables – the first short and stressed, and the following one unstressed. An advantage here was that many compound words in Old English bore a secondary stress. The range of words which the poets could use was therefore wide, and even more so if we take into consideration the fact that many a personal name contained a subordinate stress in its second “foot”, such as *Byrhtnoþ*, the Anglo-Saxon leader from *The Battle of Maldon*.

Now that the metrical “rules” of Old English alliterative verse have been explained, it will be fitting to demonstrate them graphically. The following example has been taken from the poem *The Battle of Brunanburh*⁹ in its original Old English form (followed by a Modern English translation), and markers of individual metrical features have been added (alliterating sounds are in bold and the primary stresses are marked by the sign “x”):

	x		x		x		x				
1	Her	Æþelstan	cyning,	eorla	dryhten		Here	Æþelstan	king,	earls'	leader,
		x	x			x		x			
2	beorna	beahgifa,	and his	broþor	eac		bracelet-giver,	and his	brother	too,	
	x		x		x		x		x		
3	Eadmund	æþeling,	ealdorlangne	tir		Eadmund	prince,	honour	won	forever	
	x		x		x		x		x		
4	geslogon	æt	sæcce	sweorda	ecgum	slaying	in	battle	with	swords'	edges
		x		x							
5	ymbe	Brunanburh;				around	Brunanburh;	¹⁰			

(*A Choice of Anglo-Saxon Verse* 40)

Another prominent feature of the oldest Germanic literature worth mentioning (and once again demonstrating the inventiveness and skills of the poets) is its specific vocabulary and a literary device called variation. As far as the former is concerned, there are expressions in the poems that were used specifically in poetry, and do not appear in any other historical texts. They might simply be Old English words like *mece* (sword) or *guð* (battle), which were merely synonyms of the words *sweord* or *beadu*, and do not hinder understanding of the meaning. There were, however, also words of metaphoric or metonymic nature, and with them the reader comes closer to the riddle-like character of Old English poetry. These words used an aspect or a part of the object, fact, or person in question to express the full meaning. Thus *ceol* “keel” could mean a particular part of a ship, but also the ship itself; or by saying *lind* “linden” a poet might very well mean “shield”.

The most prominent group of poetic words are called *kennings*, which were metaphorical compound words or phrases, or their combinations, composed of nouns and genitives, used to describe a person, object or fact, instead of using a more literal expression.¹¹ Here again, attributes were used instead of the whole, and for an unlearned reader they could be true riddles, making it quite difficult for him/her to read a text not accompanied by an explanation.

There were kennings for almost every sphere of life, so one can read about *handgemot* “hand-meeting” or “battle”, *swanrad* “swan’s road” or “sea” (the same would apply for *hranrad* “whale-road”, for the sea is as much a road for whales as land is for humans), or *beaduleoma*, “battle-light” or “sword”.¹² Often even names were composed of kennings, whether one talks about the clearer ones, such as *Ælfwine* “elf-friend”, or those that are riddle-like, such as *Beowulf*, the hero himself. *Beowulf* means “bee-wolf”, which is a kenning for “bear”. In his name there is thus expressed his superhuman strength and possibly even the significance of wild animals, like bears, for Anglo-Saxons.

The other literary device – variation – is then closely linked with kennings and formulaic expressions. It is a restatement of the same idea within a sentence or a group of verses, expressing general or specific qualities of a person, object, or a phenomenon. By using variation, poets were able to acquire more time when composing “on the spot”, while at the same time being able to express different features of one fact. When properly constructed, the result made a passage highly poetic, and emphasised that which the poet considered important or interesting. A description of king Hrothgar from *Beowulf* will serve as a fitting example:

“*Mære þeoden,*
æþeling ærgod unbliðe sæt
þolode ðryðswyð, þegnsorge dreah.” (Beowulf 49)

[Here, in five half-lines, Hrothgar’s qualities as a good ruler are stated three times: *Mære þeoden*, *æþeling ærgod*, and *þolode ðryðswyð*. Translation of these attributes would then go as “famous lord”, “prince good-of-old”, and “the very powerful one”, respectively] (Greenfield 128).

With the five hemistichs talking about the Danish King the description of Old English metre comes to its conclusion, and it only remains to mention some of the most prominent irregularities in the poetic form – for although the rules outlined above apply for the majority of the corpus, still there were poems and passages that differed. Old English verses, for example, were usually not divided into stanzas, but in the case of some of the Exeter Book riddles and poems like *Wulf and Eadwacer* or *Deor* we can see at least an indication of a stanzaic form.

And finally, putting aside the few instances of hypermetric structures (*Judith* and some riddles, for example), there are two poems that exhibit a feature that was not common in English literature until after the arrival of the Normans, and that is end-rhyme. It occasionally appears in *Judith*, but more distinctively it appears in *The Riming Poem* (transparently

named after this phenomenon), where the first half-line both alliterates with the second and rhymes with it.

2.2 Old Norse Metres

Old Norse (or Old Icelandic¹³) literature will be merely touched upon briefly, for the rules of the alliterative verse originating in this region are so complex they would take up an entire monograph. They are, nevertheless, fundamental for the purposes of this article, because Tolkien composed in both versions of the metre.

The poems of the old Scandinavians and Icelanders can be divided into two groups – Eddic (or Eddaic) and skaldic poetry. The former are poems of mostly legendary and mythological nature, for Christianity did not come to Iceland until the 11th century (because the colonization of the island began in the 9th century, the settlers were able to sing songs of praise of their gods for much longer than their continental brethren). The songs and stories were later written down in a manuscript known as *Sæmundar Edda*,¹⁴ also called *Codex Regius*,¹⁵ today commonly known as *Edda*, *The Poetic Edda*, or *The Elder Edda*.¹⁶ This is the most important collection of mythological and heroic poetry of the Old Norse corpus. Containing 9 mythological poems and 18 heroic poems, it provides the reader with the core and essence of Nordic myths and legends, telling of Germanic heroes such as Sigurd Fafnisbani and Helgi Hundingsbani, or of the gods Odin, Thor, Heimdall, Freyr, etc.

Skaldic poetry, in contrast to the anonymous lines in the *Eddas*, is Old Norse court poetry, composed and sung by *skalds* (poets and minstrels), most of whose names are known to the modern reader (Nordby 4). The court poetry was composed in honour of kings, jarls, and other aristocracy, in return for the benefactor's favour, financial and material gifts, and, last but not least, fame and renown. It is quite different from Eddaic poems, which were metrically simpler, as the skalds became famous for their ability to compose complex poetry according to highly strict rules, which were documented in Snorri's *Edda*.

Already at the time of the recording of the poems, four metres used in the *Poetic Edda* were distinguished by ancient theorists (*Eddica Minora* 38), and this distinction is still used nowadays. The four metres are called *fornyrðislag*, *ljóðahátt*, *málahátt* and *galdralag*. They (unlike the skaldic metres) are in many aspects similar to the Old English alliterative verse, but there are, nevertheless, differences, which make Old Norse poetry distinct from Anglo-Saxon poetry. For instance, Eddic poems were divided into stanzas (which occurred only scarcely in English manuscripts) and they show tendencies towards fixing not only the number of lifts and dips in a line, but also the number of syllables in general. Of the four types, *fornyrðislag* (old-lore metre) is the closest to the Old English, and, ultimately, to the common Germanic metre (Larrington xxviii), and was used chiefly for narrative in heroic poetry. The stanzas of *fornyrðislag* consisted of four lines divided into hemistichs, and each long-line contained four lifts and up to three alliterating stressed syllables, following the rules of alliteration already discussed (*Eddica Minora* 39). Four lines of the “old-lore metre” (which was used, for instance, in the poems *Völuspá* and *Rígsþula*) will suffice as a representative of Eddic verse. Alliteration is once again in bold, and stresses are marked by the sign “x”:

x x x x
 „Hér má Höðbroddr Helga kenna
 x x x x
 flóta trauðan, í flóta miðiom;
 x x x x
 hann heft eðli ættar þinnar
 x x x x
 arf Fiörsunga, und sic þrungit.”

[“Here Hodbrodd may recognise Helgi, | the fighter who does not flee, in the midst of the fleet; | the homeland of your kin, | the inheritance of Fiorsungs, he has conquered.”] (*Poetic Edda* xxviii)

Skaldic verse, on the other hand, was composed in a large variety of metres, documented already in the 13th century by Snorri Sturluson, who dedicated an entire chapter of his *Edda*, *Háttatal*, to metre, and another one, *Skáldskaparmál*, to the composition and interpretation of kennings¹⁷ and heiti. The two most prominent kinds of verse, however, are called *dróttkvæð* (the “court-metre”) and *kviðuátt* (the “ballad-metre”). *Dróttkvæð* is the more complex of the two, following standards in many ways quite different from the Anglo-Saxon metre, although the “basic” rules, such as how many lifts should alliterate, remain the same. Skaldic poems, like Eddic poems, were divided into stanzas, which in this case consisted of eight lines, divided into half-stanzas, or *hellingar*. Verses of *dróttkvæð* formed pairs, and are therefore called “odd lines” and “even lines” (instead of being divided by a caesura and called “a-verses” and “b-verses”); they are connected by alliteration in the same way as hemistichs were connected in English poems. Each line of the court-metre had a fixed number of syllables: three stressed and three unstressed. Furthermore, the first lift of the even line alliterated with two lifts of the odd line, and besides alliteration there was also a poetic device called “hendings” (ON *hendingar*), which are internal rhymes, similar to alliteration, but not necessarily bound to stand on an initial consonantal sound of a word, but rather on a non-initial vowel and its following consonants. It was a rule that every line of *dróttkvæð* contained a pair of these internal rhymes. *Kviðuátt*, or “ballad-metre”, was also divided into odd and even lines, forming pairs connected by alliteration. The odd lines had three syllables and the even lines had four. An excerpt from two poems, representing *dróttkvæð* and *kviðuátt* respectively, will conclude this brief venture into the theory of alliterative metre.¹⁸

“Títt erum verð at vátta
 vætti ber ek at ek hættu

þung til þessar gongu,
 þinn, kinnalá minni.
 Margr velr gestr þar er gistir,
 gjöld, finnumsk vér sjaldan,
 Ármóði liggr, æðri,
 Qlðra dregg í skeggi.”

[“Eager am I the meal to acknowledge | witness I bear that I dared | heavy make this journey | your, cheek-surge my. | Many pays a guest, there stays, | payment, we meet seldom, | in Ármóðr lies, dearer, | of ale dregs in beard.”] (Potts 6).

“Þar **h**augsegl
 í **h**rimis vindi
hranda byrr
hlása knátti...”

[“There shield-ring-sails | in the sword’s wind | sword’s breeze | blow could,...”] (Potts 7).

2.3 “The Hope of the Heathens” – Semantic Linking

Besides using alliteration because of the very nature of Germanic languages, for better memorization or simply for the sound of it, there was one more significant function of this literary device, and that is the possibility of using it to link the two hemistichs not only metrically and syntactically, but also semantically. Anglo-Saxon scribes often used alliteration to put two or more words or facts in the opposing half-lines in contrast, to support variation and repetition, or to emphasise that which they deemed important to emphasise (Greenfield 127–129). A fitting example could be taken from *Beowulf* itself, where there is a passage in which the poet describes Danes:

Swylc wæs þeaw hyra,
hæpenra hyht: helle gemundon
in modsefan, Metod hie ne cupon... (ll. 178b–80)

[“Such was their custom, | the hope of heathens: it was hell that | governed in their thoughts, not knowing God...”] (Greenfield 127).

In the example above, the words “hope of the heathens” (*hæpenra hyht*) alliterate with “hell” (*helle*), putting in contrast non-Christians and the Christian version of the under-

world realm of suffering, while at the same time contrasting the positive word “hope” with “hell”, which in a Christian context has negative connotations. The negative “hell” is here the only “hope” of the “heathens”, the three words being both semantically connected and put in contrast (*Béowulf* 49).

One more example, this time from the “Swan” riddle, will show how alliteration and word-stress were used to support variation:

...Frætwe mine

swogað hlude ond swinsiað,

torhte singað, þonne ic getenge ne beom

flode ond foldan, ferende gæst.

[“My adornments | sound loudly and make melody, | brightly sing when I am not touching | water and land, [am] a wide-faring spirit.”] (Greenfield 129).

The second hemistich of the second verse could be considered a restatement of the first half-line, and it is therefore a typical case of variation. Here, additionally, it is emphasized by the alliterating words *swogað* (“sound”) and *swinsiað* (“make melody”).

3. The Oxford *Scop*

As has been mentioned above, Tolkien managed to combine a passion for languages, ancient stories, and a sense and understanding of metrical structure to such an extent that he was able to compose and write down a number of alliterative poems, many of which have been published by his son Christopher. Whether they are dealing with the lore of his secondary world or matters of the primary world’s history and legend, the analyzed examples below give evidence of Tolkien’s skills in the formal, technical, narrative, and metaphysical aspects of composing poetry.

Seven excerpts in total shall be presented, with lifts and alliteration marked in bold, followed by an analysis according to Sievers’ rules, and concluded by a brief commentary upon the metrical structure – and, if such a case occurs, upon the use of the semantic linking (marked by underlined words). In the light of the facts in the paragraph above, it will be appropriate to begin with the long narrative poem *The Fall of Arthur*, whose story deals with the last days of the legendary British king, his war against the Anglo-Saxons, as well as with Mordred’s betrayal. Furthermore, the poem is composed in what is called “the Beowulf metre”, formally nearly identical to the longest Old English epic poem. This combination of Celtic and Teutonic elements – i.e. a modern rendition of the Arthurian legend written in a proper Germanic alliterative verse – results in a work of art connecting more than a thousand years of the history of the British Isles.

The first passage describes sir Gawain, a knight of the Round Table, encouraging Arthur to hasten and go into battle against his treacherous and rebellious bastard son Mordred:

x x x x
“...Here **free unfaded** is the **flower** of time
 x x x x
that **men** shall **remember** through the **mist** of years
 x x x x
as a **golden** summer in the **grey** winter.
 x x x x
And **Gawain** has thou. May **God** keep us
 x x x x
in **hope** allied, **heart** united
 x x x x
as the **kindred blood** in our **bodies courseth**,
 x x x x
Arthur and **Gawain!** **Evil** greater
 x x x x
hath fled **aforetime** that we **faced** together.
 x x x x
Now **haste** is **hope!** While **hate** lingers,
 x x x x
and **uncertain counsel** **secret** ponders,
 x x x x
as wroth as **wind** let us ride **westward**,
 x x x x
and **sail** over sea with sudden **vengeance!**” (Tolkien, *The Fall of Arthur* 25)

1. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (A, B)
2. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (A, B)
3. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (A, C)
4. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (B, C)
5. dip – Lift, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (C, A)
6. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (B, A)
7. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
8. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
9. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (B, C)
10. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
11. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (B, C)
12. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (B, A)

The extract above gives evidence of the precision with which the poem was composed. As far as its metrical structure is concerned, it is divided into series of hemistichs, each containing two main lifts and two dips consisting of variable numbers of unaccented syllables. Furthermore, all the half-lines fall into one of the patterns described by Eduard Sievers, in this case namely A, B, and C, out of which twelve are the A-type, seven are the B-type, and five follow the outline of type B. Tolkien also made use of anacrusis, the above-discussed device which places unstressed syllables before the first lift. It is interesting to notice that in five cases out of eight the anacrusis appears in the a-verse, which was a common practice in Old English poems. The remaining three, however, should not be considered a deformity, even though they are present in b-verses. Such cases did occur in ancient English poetry, albeit sporadically.

In terms of alliteration, the poem follows the series of ancient rules correctly as well, for two to three stressed syllables in each line alliterate in such a way that each consonant alliterates with itself, and vowels alliterate variably. The only two exceptions are represented by lines 6 and 7, where instances of crossed alliteration occur.

Besides its metrical composition, the passage above also honours its ancient ancestors by incorporating alliteration and word-stress as means of semantic linking. Like the *Beowulf* poet and his heathens above, in the third line Tolkien contrasted two opposing phenomena by alliterating the adjectives “golden” and “grey”, describing the seasons summer and winter, respectively. Moreover, taking into consideration the context of the utterance, which by itself talks about something unseen, the final result gives Gawain’s words strength and offers evidence of the knight’s rhetorical skills.

In the fifth line, on the other hand, one will notice variation achieved by restating the words “hope allied” in the form “heart united”, where “**h**ope” alliterates with “**h**ear**t**”. Four lines below, Tolkien then uses the word “**h**ope” again, this time to put it in opposition to “**h**ate”, an emotion at the other end of the scale.

Finally, via the instance of crossed alliteration in the sixth line, Tolkien creates both linguistic and semantic word-play. The full line reads “as the **k**indred **b**lood in our **b**odies courseth”, referring to the fact that Arthur is Gawain’s uncle, and therefore they are of the same blood line. Blood then, naturally, courses in bodies, and is often referred to when talking about family relations. It is only after a brief moment of reflection and pondering that one realizes how complex and deep the verse truly is, and how far from mere “ornamental elements” stress and alliteration are here.

Only a couple of lines previously in the poem, Cradoc came to his king with evil tidings, warning him against Mordred:

x x x x

“...**H**ither have I **h**ardly **h**unted riding

x x x x

on the **s**ea pursued to your **s**ide hastened,

x x x x

treason to tell you. **Trust not Mordred!**

x x x x

He is **false to fai**th**, your **foes** harbours,**

x x x x

with **lords of Lochlan **lea**g**ue** he maketh,**

x x x x

out of **Almain and Angel **allies** hireth,**

x x x x

coveting the kingdom, to the **crown reaching**

x x x x

hands unh**oly. **H**aste now westward!”**

(Tolkien, *The Fall of Arthur* 23)

1. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
2. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (B, C)
3. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
4. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (B, C)
5. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
6. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
7. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (A, C)
8. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)

In terms of the metre, very little new can be said about this extract, for the lines are composed as properly as in the previous example. One interesting fact is, however, worth mentioning, and it is connected with the remark made above concerning the oral nature of alliterative poetry. An unlearned person might think that the words in the a-verse of the seventh line cannot alliterate, since “coveting” and “kingdom” begin with different letters. The pronunciation of the words, however, clearly allows a proper head-rhyme.

As far as the semantic linking is concerned, there is more to be commented upon. In the third line, “treason” and “trust” are put into juxtaposition, once again empowered by the alliterating consonants, while in the fourth line the villain’s “false faith” is emphasized by the word “foes” in the second hemistich. In the remaining three cases of the use of stress and alliteration to support semantic linking, Tolkien linked nouns and verbs, describing how Mordred is making preparations for striking his final blow.

In the same way that Tolkien was shifting his attention between the primary and the secondary world when he was teaching at Oxford during the day and writing high-fantasy stories at night, he was also switching between those realms in his poems. Evidence of this can be seen below, in verses from the epic poem *The Lay of the Children of Húrin*, in which Tolkien combined his own mythology, concerning the history of Arda,¹⁹ with the primary world’s poetical and linguistic rules.

x	x	x	x
“Then T halion was th rurst to T hangorodrim,			
x	x	x	x
that m ountain that m eets the m isty skies			
x	x	x	x
on h igh o’er the h ills that H ithlum sees			

x x x x
blackly brooding on the borders of the north.
 x x x x
To a stool of stone on its steepest peak
 x x x x
they bound him in bonds, an unbreakable chain,
 x x x x
and the Lord of Woe there laughing stood,
 x x x x
then cursed him for ever and his kin and seed
 x x x x
with a doom of dread, of death and horror.
 x x x x
There the mighty man unmoved sat;
 x x x x
but unveiled was his vision, that he viewed afar
 x x x x
all earthly things with eyes enchanted
 x x x x
that fell on his folk - a fiend's torment." (Tolkien, *The Lays of Beleriand* 8)

1. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
2. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
3. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
4. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (A, B)

5. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
6. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
7. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
8. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
9. dip – Lift , dip – Lift / anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (B, A)
10. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B, B)
11. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (A, B)
12. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (B, A)
13. dip – Lift, dip – Lift/ dip – Lift, Lift – dip (B, C)

Once again, the poem is composed carefully according to the rules of the Old English alliterative metre, containing four lifts per line, each hemistich corresponding with one of Sievers’ types. From the 26 half-lines analyzed, 21 are of the B-type, while the rest is an example of the A-type. Furthermore, there are two to three lifts alliterating in each long-line, most of them being consonantal sounds, and the reader will notice that in the fifth line the author was keeping in mind the rules concerning the paired consonants *st*, *sp*, and *sc*, for the three words that alliterate there are “**stool**”, “**stone**”, and “**steepest**”. This phenomenon, however, does not necessarily have to be followed in Modern English alliterative poetry, because the language in question has, after all, changed (for instance the pronunciation of the “*sc*” sound, as has already been mentioned).

Putting the metrical aspect aside, Tolkien also made use of variation, the aforementioned “re-stating” literary device used in Old English poetry. In the sixth line, “they bound him in bonds” is followed by “an unbreakable chain”, the latter being a restatement of the “bonds”. Furthermore, taking the broader context into consideration, multiple names and kenning-like expressions are used for some of the protagonists. For instance, Húrin is thus called Thalion²⁰ or “the mighty man”, and the dark lord Morgoth²¹ is called “the Lord of Woe” in the seventh line, or “a fiend” in the thirteenth line.

Stressed words in the line “...they **bound** him in **bonds**, an **unbreakable** chain...” are furthermore semantically connected and emphasized by alliteration, the same being the case with e.g. the third, the fourth and the ninth line, where the author thus created pairs of words such as “**high**” and “**hills**”, “**blackly**” and “**brooding**”, and “**doom**” and “**dread**” (in this case also with “**death**”, yet another word with rather negative “connotation”).

Tolkien’s mind travelled not only from the primary world to the secondary world and back again, but also within the very worlds themselves. The scope of the sources that provided him with linguistic and literary material was wide indeed, for one of his chief inspirations came from the northern brothers of the Anglo-Saxons, that is, from Scandinavians and Icelanders. Not only did he teach Old Norse at Oxford, but many a name or an element originating in Norse mythology found its way into Tolkien’s fiction.²² Moreover, he went as far as writing his own “version” of the lay about the hero Sigurd, from whose “original” Old Norse version a considerable part is missing because pages were torn out

from the manuscript it had been written in. Tolkien then, instead of guessing what might have been written on these pages, went on and composed the verses “again”, in the stanzas of *fornyrðislag*, as can be seen above.²³ However, the already-provided excerpt in the “old-lore metre” demonstrates four lines divided into hemistichs, whereas Tolkien’s poem is divided into eight paired lines, the pairs acting as a-verses and b-verses. This variation was common, and additionally, Tolkien believed that *fornyrðislag* was actually a developed *kviðuhátt* (Tolkien, *Legend* 45), which was composed of eight paired lines – four odd, and four even. The metrical structure, however, follows the same rules as a standard OE line. Therefore the analysis of the part of the *Völsungakviða en nýja*²⁴, as Tolkien himself named it in ON, looks identical to the previous two analyses.

10

x x

“A seer long silent

x x

her song upraised –

x x

the **halls** hearkened –

x x

on **high** she stood.

x x

Of doom and death

x // x

dark words she spake

x x

of the last battle

x x

of the leaguered Gods.

11

x x

‘The **h**orn of **H**eimdal

x x

I **h**ear ringing;

x x

the **B**lazing **B**ridge

x x

bends neath horsemen;

x x

the **A**sh is groaning,

x x

his **a**rms trembling,

x x

the **W**olf waking,

x x

warriors riding.

12

x x

The sword of **S**urt

x x

smoketh redly;

x x

the slumbering **S**erpent

x x

in the sea moveth;

x x

a **shadowy ship**

x x

from **shores** of Hell

x x

legions **bringeth**

x x

to the last **battle**.

13

x x

The **wolf Fenrir**

x x

waits for Ódin,

x x

for **Frey the fair**

x x

the **flames** of Surt;

x x

the **deep Dragon**

x x

shall be **doom** of Thór –

x x

shall **all** be ended,

X X

shall Earth perish?” (Tolkien, *Legend* 62–63)

10

1. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)
dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)

2. dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)
dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)

3. dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)
Lift – SS – dip – Lift (E)

4. dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)
dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)

11

1. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)
dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)

2. dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)
Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)

3. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)
dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)

4. dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)
Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)

12

1. dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)
Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)

2. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)
dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)

3. dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)
dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)

4. Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)
dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)

13

1. dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)
Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)
2. dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)
dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)
3. dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)
dip – Lift, dip – Lift (B)
4. anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A)
dip – Lift, Lift – dip (C)

As in the previous examples given, here too all 32 lines correspond with those presented by Eduard Sievers. In this case, furthermore, it is interesting to notice the occurrence of the E-type (stanza 10, line 6/the even line of the third long-line), where there is only one dip; it therefore had to be substituted by a different element, i.e. the secondary stress. As far as alliteration is concerned, very little needs to be said about it at this point of the commentary; perhaps only that two phenomena worth special attention are the crossed alliteration in stanza 12 (“...legions **bringeth** to the **last battle**...”) and once again the poet’s awareness of the importance of sounds over letters, as can be read, or rather heard, in the lines “...a **shadowy ship** from **shores** of Hell...”. The words here do not alliterate because of the first letter “s”, but because of the /ʃ/ sound, represented by the initial letters “sh-”. The reader will notice that the odd lines are connected with the even lines precisely according to the rules of Old English and Old Norse alliterative verse.

Furthermore, the semantic linking and emphasis is here performed by alliterating words like “**doom**”, “**death**”, and “**dark**” (which are connected by their “negativity”, similarly to the previous extract) and “**horn**”, “**Heimdal**”, and “**hear**”. The latter emphasizes the act of hearing the very loud sound, which, according to myths, the god Heimdall’s horn *Gjallarhorn* will make to announce the coming of Rangarök.

Finally, when discussing J. R. R. Tolkien and alliterative poetry, one must not forget that verse also found its way into his most popular fiction. There are a number of old Germanic-style lines in *The Lord of the Rings*, most often uttered by the people of Rohan, who were modelled upon the primary world’s Anglo-Saxons. Here I shall analyze three brief examples, starting with a poem recited by Fangorn, or Treebeard the Ent,²⁵ followed by an exclamation of the King of the Rohirrim,²⁶ and in the end by a short speech of Éomer over his uncle’s body. The three short texts do not need to be commented upon in great detail, for they follow the same rules as *The Lay of the Children of Húrin* and *The Fall of Arthur*. Two remarks, however, need to be made. Firstly, being presented in the books as direct speech, the “poems” are not graphically divided by a caesura, but they still fulfil the metrical rules (after all, in their manuscripts, OE poems were not divided in this fashion, either). Secondly, as far as the last example is concerned, its third line’s a-verse begins with a lift of two short syllables – which was also acceptable, as has been mentioned above.

x // x x x

“Learn now the lore of the Living Creatures!

x x x x

First name the four, the free peoples:

x // x x x

Eldest of all, the elf-children;

x x x x

Dwarf the delver, dark are his houses;

x x x x

Ent the earthborn, old as mountains;

x x x x

Man the mortal, master of horses:...” (Tolkien, *The Two Towers* 604)

1. Lift – SS – dip – Lift / anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip (E, A)
2. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (B, C)
3. Lift – SS – dip – Lift / dip – Lift, Lift – dip (E, C)
4. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
5. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
6. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)

x x x x

“Arise now, arise Riders of Théoden!”²⁷

x x x x

Dire deeds awake, dark is it eastward.

x x x x

Let horse be bridled, horn be sounded!

x x //

Forth Eorlingas!” (Tolkien, *The Two Towers* 675)

1. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (B, A)
2. dip – Lift, dip – Lift / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (B, A)
3. Anacrusis – Lift – dip, Lift – dip / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (A, A)
4. Lift, Lift – dip – SS (Db)

x // x x x

“Mourn not overmuch! Mighty has fallen,

x x x x

meet was his ending. When his mound is raised,

x // x x x

women then shall weep. War now calls us!” (Tolkien, *The Return of the King* 1104)

1. Lift – SS – dip – Lift / Lift – dip – Lift – dip (E, A)
2. Lift – dip, Lift – dip / dip – Lift, dip – Lift (A, B)
3. Lift – SS – dip – Lift / Lift – dip, Lift – dip (E, A)

This exploration of Tolkien’s alliterative poems will conclude by commenting upon the first of the three poetical utterances, in which alliteration links the individual races of Middle-Earth with their typical and most significant qualities. There are the “elf-children” connected with the word “Eldest”, since they really are the most ancient race to dwell in Arda. The second-mentioned are the dwarves in the line “Dwarf the delver” who lives in “dark” houses. That is because dwarves indeed live under mountains where they mine for precious metals and build their vast underground cities. Ents are the third on the list, and their kind alliterates with “earthborn” and “old”, for it is true that the shepherds of Arda’s forests are a very old race and many people confuse them with trees. Finally, “Man” is linked with the word signifying his ultimate destiny, the end we are all heading towards. Men are, after all, “mortal”.

In conclusion then, having analyzed both old Germanic texts and his own writings, it is safe to say that John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, as a scholar and a professor at Oxford University, was very well learned in the intricacies of the ancient Germanic alliterative metre,

and was able to compose modern poems in the heroic spirit (and form) of his ancestors, closely and carefully following the original metrical rules. As a man of many passions and interests he was able to enrich not only the corpus of English fantasy literature and literature in general, but along with other authors of the “20th-century alliterative revival”²⁸ he made sure that at times when modernism was popular among both the general public and academics, the metre and heritage of the Venerable Bede and Snorri Sturluson has survived into the present day. The modern English tongue and contemporary English literature are, after all, first and foremost the descendants of the dialects and stories the Germanic tribes brought to the British Isles more than a millennium and a half ago. It is vital and fundamental to remember this fact – especially in the 21st century, when the studies of English and American literature are greatly (and in the true sense of the word) diverse, and oftentimes reach into areas which do not necessarily have anything in common with the Germanic peoples. Tolkien (and others) then did the best thing he could do to honour the fathers of the half-forgotten past, and that is to write poems and songs about them and their achievements, and make people remember them, so they could live in the readers’ and listeners’ hearts forever.

Notes

¹ Tolkien used the expression “secondary world” for his fictional fantasy realm. The “real” world we live in he then called the “primary world”.

² Some of the more notable of Tolkien’s translations are the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*, the religious *Exodus*, the Middle English *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Pearl*, etc.

³ It needs to be said here that Anglo-Saxons were not the only composers of alliterative poetry. Its metrical specifics are common to the oldest extant poetry of most Germanic peoples – it was written in Old English, Old Norse, as well as in Old High German and Middle High German, each of the above-mentioned versions sharing the same features but at the same time having many of its own. This article, however, focuses chiefly on the Old English version of alliterative poems. Furthermore, in the Middle English Period (c. 11th – 15th century), there occurred the so-called “Middle English Alliterative Revival” – several alliterative poems were written (with much looser rules and already influenced by romance-based poetry), of which *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Pearl*, *Cleanness*, *Piers Plowman*, and *Alliterative Morte Arthure* are the most prominent and well-known ones.

⁴ In Old English, “sc-“ was pronounced as /ʃ/, as in Modern English “ship”. Therefore, it is logical that it would not alliterate with /st/ or /sp/. Furthermore, the alliteration of this sound would be quite different in Modern English poems, because of the change in pronunciation. The sound has, under the influence of Nordic languages, developed into different forms, such as /sk/.

⁵ Once again it is fundamental to keep in mind the oral nature of the rules. “Any vowel alliterating with any other vowel” would then mean that the word “enemy” could alliterate with words like “apple” or “earth”, but not with “unicorn”, “yellow”, etc.

⁶ Tolkien himself stressed that a listener should not be listening for any “same metre” and that the one who recites should not be trying to strain the poem to fit any familiar modern verse-rhythm. OE verse should be read in the rhythm of natural speech, for, if composed and recited properly, a shape and balance of the halves distinctive to Germanic poetry will be heard (*Monsters* 63).

⁷ Prepositions, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, etc. tended not to alliterate. Therefore, because the strongest lift usually alliterated and ideally it was the first of the two, the word at the same time belonging to one of the word classes mentioned above, one must come to the conclusion that the Old English line tended to end with semantically inferior words, thus making the end of lines weak in significance. Moreover, the end of a full-line was not a natural stop, as is the case with some modern poems, but the end of the a-verse was. Usually, a “sentence” stopped there, and another one began with the beginning of the b-verse.

⁸ D and E types only have one dip. It must therefore be compensated for by a syllable nearly (but not quite) as strong as the Lift (19), i.e. by adding a subordinate stress.

⁹ *The Battle of Brunanburh* is a poem preserved in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. It describes a historical battle, which took place in 937, and where the combined armies of Irish Norsemen (the overlord of Dublin was the Norse Anlaf at the time), Scotland and Strathclyde fought against the Mercian and West Saxon armies led by king Æþelstan and his brother Edmund.

¹⁰ Translated by Sebastian Komárek.

¹¹ The metaphorical compounds can in fact be further divided into two groups, although they are mostly both called kennings. Firstly, there are the so-called *kent heiti* (pl. *kend heiti*), which identify a person or an object with something it “literally” is, like *hæðstapa* “heath-stepper”, or simply “stag”. Secondly, there are proper kennings, and these identify the referent with something it is only metaphorically, like *garbeam* “spear-tree” or “warrior” (Greenfield 125).

¹² There were, of course, much more complex kennings, such as *æscplega* “spear-play”, which ultimately means “battle”. When deciphering kennings, one must often know more than Old English vocabulary. Otherwise one would not know that the word *æsc*, which means “ash-tree”, could also stand for “spear”, because spear shafts were most often made of ash-wood. Furthermore, battle was more than mere slaughter for the Germanic peoples. It was a way towards eternal glory, or, in the case of the pagan Norsemen, a potential gateway to Valhalla, an enormous mead-hall in the afterlife. They were brave warriors, and for them a battle could be, exaggeratedly or not, also a play. If one does not take context (which is often a helper) into consideration, one has to go through a process like this to come to the conclusion that *æscplega* simply means “battle”.

¹³ Old Norse and Old Icelandic are terms oftentimes used interchangeably when talking about the ancient literature coming from the North. The reason is that the majority of texts written in the ancestral language of Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish were in actuality written down in Iceland.

¹⁴ The manuscript was probably written in the 13th century, and was discovered by the bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson in the 17th century. He attributed its authorship to Sæmundr, an Icelandic priest; hence the name *Sæmundar Edda* (*The Poetic Edda* xi).

¹⁵ After having discovered the manuscript, Brynjólfur sent it to the Danish king, who added it to his royal collection, giving it one of its names, *Codex Regius* (*Eddica Minora* 14).

¹⁶ The name *Elder Edda*, however, is incorrect, for *The Edda* is in fact a 13th-century manuscript written by the Icelandic historian, politician and poet Snorri Sturluson (Krause 36), who (mostly in prose) wrote about the matters included in *Codex Regius*; in addition to this, he added a detailed survey and explanation of the metrical rules of ON poetry, as well as *Heimskringla* and *Ynglinga Saga*, one of the best-known sagas. Therefore, *Codex Regius* and *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar*, or the *Prose Edda* (also incorrectly called *The Younger Edda*), share one common source (a manuscript which has not survived), as well as their content and mood, and they were written down at about the same time (Krause 36).

¹⁷ An unlearned person might face serious difficulties when trying to understand some of the Old Norse kennings, even if they were translated into his mother tongue. These poetic expressions tended to be much more complex and riddle-like than those invented by Anglo-Saxons. A short passage from *Skáldskaparmál* will suffice as an example. There is a kenning that says: “... the son of the father of mankind was determined soon to test his strength against the water-soaked earth-band”

(Sturluson 69). Only the translator’s notes will reveal the meaning of the riddles in the sentence. “The son of the father of mankind”, in fact, means Thor (because he is the son of Odin), and “the water-soaked earth-band” is the Midgard Serpent, or Jörmungandr (Sturluson 69), for it is a giant snake that surrounds the world of men under the sea, biting itself in its own tail.

¹⁸ One could also discuss German alliterative poems, but for the purposes of this article they are not relevant.

¹⁹ The story of Húrin and his son, Túrin Turambar, inhabitants of Arda (the Elvish word for “world”) was written in several versions. There were two poetical versions of the story (one being a revision of the other, and both being longer than two thousand lines) composed in Germanic alliterative verse (Tolkien, *The Lays of Beleriand* 1–4), and a number of constantly revised notes in prose. The author’s son, Christopher Tolkien, later managed to edit most of his father’s notes, and John Ronald’s works of art were finally published posthumously as two poems in *The Lays of Beleriand*, and the prose *The Children of Húrin*. Furthermore, there is a shorter version of the tale in *The Silmarillion*.

²⁰ *Thalion*, “the steadfast” or “the strong” (Tolkien, *The Silmarillion* 404).

²¹ The first dark lord to terrorize Middle-Earth, and the original master of Sauron, the villain from *The Lord of the Rings*. Morgoth, originally called Melkor, was one of the Valar, angelic-like characters who shaped the world.

²² Fitting examples could be Eddaic names in *The Hobbit* (such as Dwalin, Kili, Fili, or even Gandalf) or Smaug the Dragon, whose witty conversation with Bilbo resembles very much the encounter of Sigurd and Fafnir (not mentioning the fact that Smaug was guarding a glorious treasure, more than similarly to Fafnir and the dragon from *Beowulf*). Examples like these, however, could provide one with enough material to write several monographs.

²³ The part of the poem chosen for analysis, however, describes the mythological *Ragnarök*, or “the twilight of the gods”, which is the last battle during which the Norse gods will meet their enemies and fight them to death. The god Thor, for instance, will fight Midgardsörmr, the Midgard-Serpent, Odin will be killed by the giant wolf Fenrir, and Heimdall, the guardian of the Rainbow Bridge, will battle against Loki, who is often depicted as the trickster-god.

²⁴ Tolkien wrote two poems about the legend of the House of the Völsungs. They bear the titles *Völsungakviða en nýja*, or *The New Lay of the Völsungs*, and *Guðrúnarkviða en nýja*, or *The New Lay of Guðrún*. Both of them were published posthumously by Tolkien’s son under the title *The Legend of Sigurd and Guðrún*.

²⁵ In *The Lord of the Rings*, Ents were an ancient race of peoples who lived in forests and acted as the shepherds of trees. Their bodies were enormous and sometimes they looked like trees themselves. In OE, the word *ent* means “giant”.

²⁶ Rohirrim – the people of Rohan.

²⁷ Once again, one can see here how much of the primary world’s Germanic history and philology entered Tolkien’s fiction. The name of the king of Rohan, Théoden, is in fact the OE word *peoden*, meaning “lord” or “ruler”.

²⁸ In the 20th century, there were several poets and academics who wrote their own poems following more or less closely the rules of Old English and Old Icelandic alliterative poetry. Some of the more prominent names are: C. S. Lewis, W. H. Auden, John Myers Myers, Earle Birney, Henry Beard, and even the modernist author Ezra Pound.

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Genre and Gender Identity in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

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Abstract

This study focuses on the novel and feature film The French Lieutenant's Woman. It analyzes the source of the novel's originality and discusses the main cinematic adaptation strategy at work. I argue that the source text is an extended metaphor of the reading and writing process, and that behind the revision of the Victorian literary tradition, Fowles dramatizes the shift in fictional representation and in the interpretation of a literary work from an author-centered perspective to a reader-oriented point of view. Finally, I contend that the ultimate message and merit of both the novel and the film is to have promoted an interpretative liberty of choice which subsumes a blurring of the borderlines between fiction and reality.

Keywords: film adaptation, neo-Victorian fiction, reader-oriented criticism, John Fowles, metanarrative, revisionism

I interpret the myth of the temptation of Adam in this way. Adam is hatred of change and futile nostalgia for the innocence of animals. The Serpent is imagination, the power to compare and self-consciousness. Eve is the assumption of human responsibility, of the need for progress and the need to control progress. The Garden of Eden is an impossible dream. The fall is the essential process of evolution. The God of Genesis is a personification of Adam's resentment. Adam is stasis, conservatism. Eve is kinesis, or progress. Adam societies are ones in which the man and the father, male gods, exact strict obedience to established institutions and norms of behaviour, as during the majority of periods of history in our era. The Victorian is a typical such period. Eve societies are those in which the woman and the mother, female gods, encourage innovation and experiment, and fresh definitions, aims and modes of feeling. The Renaissance and our own are typical such ages. (Fowles, *Aristos* 165–166)

Nothing would encapsulate the essential message of Fowles' masterpiece better than this adage taken from the author's collection of aphorisms published five years prior to the release of the much-celebrated novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969). Ironically and self-ironically, the all-encompassing biblical metaphor casts the main characters in three archetypal roles – Adam, Eve and the Serpent – only to reinterpret them from the point of view of modern-day anthropology and science and to morally upset the traditional balance and distribution of 'sin' and 'guilt'.

A classic example of metafiction, John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* became the source of Karel Reisz's film adaptation (1981), which has been recognized as a masterpiece in its own right. Building on the novel's multiple endings, Harold Pinter's script weaves two narrative strands, a Victorian and a contemporary love story. The self-reflexive dimension of Fowles' novel is thus echoed and reinforced by the film's structure, with the period drama at the core of and reflected upon by the contemporary on-set affair. The actors Anna and Mike, embodied by Meryl Streep and Jeremy Irons, prolong their respective impersonation of Sarah Woodruff and Charles Smithson behind the scenes in what becomes a short-lived romance, a reflection on gender relations – on the page, on the screen and in real life – and an open-ended debate on the nature of film adaptation. What better way to perpetuate cinematically the nature of this Ur-neo-Victorian novel than to have a second, ontologically superior narrative foil the source text? Anna and Mike adapt to the parts they have been assigned to the point of near identification, crossing fictional boundaries – or, rather, bending them creatively and, ultimately, humanly. Sarah's choices reflect Fowles' artistic creed, while Anna's final decision nuances the characters' identity crisis and adds a complementary touch to the 1980's cinematic depiction of femininity.

This paper explores *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969) to interrogate the source of its originality, which I believe resides in genre revision and, subliminally, gender portrayal; it also touches upon the film adaptation of the novel to argue for its clever development of the novel's essential message. The feature film adopts the novel's liberating spirit and adapts it to the cinematic medium. The result is a meta-adaptation or a meditation on the process of adaptation. As it is the case with all neo-Victorian novels, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, the second such example after the publication of Jean Rhys' 1966 *Wide Sargasso Sea*, appropriates the Victorian paradigm, this time with a focus on the literary tradition. A twist is added to the narrative strategy, in the sense that the vehicle for argumentation is a woman whose artistic nature and eventual salvation and affirmation through art and the working of her own imagination advance a highly innovative message regarding life's literariness. The Victorian key principle of representation is thus radically upset to the point where the (rhetorical) question is no longer about how much fiction refracts reality but how much reality itself refracts fiction. Building on this interrogative conclusion, the film dramatizes precisely this dilemma shared both by the two protagonists, at the diegetic level, and by an enlightened third-person narrator and an emancipated reader, at the extradiegetic level.

The film director and screenwriter made a further leap of artistic faith similar to the original authorial stance and used a contemporary (1980's) framework. By using the cross-cutting strategy, they challenge genre expectations and expectations of cinematic gender portrayal and deliver the ultimate argument for film adaptation as an art form and not as

something that is qualitatively inferior to the source text, as per the traditional view. The critical discourse is therefore purged of issues related to fidelity and qualitative comparisons between the novel and its cinematic counterpart, and it begins to gravitate around the concept of intertextuality. In Imelda Whelehan's words, "for many people the comparison of a novel and its film version results in an almost unconscious prioritizing of the fictional origin over the resulting film, and so the main purpose of comparison becomes the measurement of the success of the film in its capacity to realize what are held to be the core meanings and values of the originary text" (Whelehan qtd. in Allen 205-206).

The film is more than an echo of the novel; it is a statement in its own right: not a reflection of, nor even an elaboration on, but a valuable companion to the source text. The film goes beyond issues of faithfulness or betrayal in relation to the original species (pun intended), and instead of building on simplistic binary oppositions, it explores the grey space in between. It is tangential to the novel and asymptotically close to it, which is why it does manage to capture the novel's major theme: the obsession with originality and, by extension, with authorship and authority.

Fowles' novel belongs to the category of postmodernist fiction which Linda Hutcheon has aptly termed "historiographic metafiction". On the one hand, it is concerned with the mid-Victorian past, historical and literary, and with the way it has come down to us. On the other hand, it feeds on itself; it is simultaneously world-reflecting and self-reflexive (Hutcheon 41). The Victorian author's omniscience is just a mask that the postmodernist author ironically puts on in order to create an illusion of a thorough account, takes off from time to time, when he chooses to behave according to the modernist code, or wears at a rakish angle when he draws attention to the fact that he is writing "in the age of Roland Barthes and Alain Robbe-Grillet" (Fowles, *French* 95).

The two dimensions are cleverly interwoven, and the result is a novel that spins a conventional story about married life in Victorian England within the boundaries of the Victorian literary tradition even as it calls into question those same boundaries. It does not challenge them qualitatively, but draws attention to the epistemological bias of this (and, by extension, any) artistic code, and to the necessity to both abide by it and flaunt it, as a form of survival and thus adaptation. The Darwinian principle is ironically referred to at both the diegetic level, with the male protagonist Charles' enthusiasm for Darwin's evolutionary theory, and the extra-diegetic level, with the reader's ongoing awareness of their role as "just a reader" of "just a story". The difference between the realistic rhetorical device of appealing to the audience's judgment and feelings and its ironic postmodernist counterpart is that the former fosters the suspension of disbelief, whereas the latter exposes it. The attitude required of the reader is no longer to trust the author so as to be able to enjoy the illusion that he is creating, but instead to accept the dialogue the author is proposing over a given subject-matter and over the means available for its enactment.

In this case, the subject-matter involves a love triangle: Charles Smithson, a thirty-two year-old eligible bachelor of means and noble extraction, is engaged to be married to the much younger Ernestina Freeman, the only daughter of a prosperous merchant. Enter Sarah Woodruff, a young governess of superior education and feeling, who has recently lost her job and the respect of the community of Lyme Regis because of an immoral liaison she is said to have had with a married French lieutenant. Charles meets and falls in love

with Sarah, an unconventional, remarkable woman who welcomes his affection. Much of Sarah's appeal to Charles lies not in her being meek and mild, as might have been expected in the given situation, but in the fact that she stands up for herself and assumes "some sort of equality with him" (Fowles, *French* 42). She confirms for him the rumours people have been circulating about her and the French officer and trusts him with the reason why she gave herself to a man she knew did not share her feelings or have honorable intentions. The explanation Sarah offers strikes Charles as an extreme gesture: she knew she was hopelessly different, too educated to marry a social equal and too low on the social ladder to marry up, and that her relationship with her contemporaries was past mending. All she needed was the means and motives to make people publicly acknowledge her as an out-cast. Morality, together with Duty, was probably the most highly esteemed Victorian value, and it is no wonder that Sarah chose to deflate exactly this social construct:

I did it so that I should never be the same again. I did it so that people should point at me, should say, there walks the French Lieutenant's Whore – oh, yes, let the word be said. So that they should know I have suffered, and suffer, as other suffer in every town and village of this land. I could not marry that man, so I married shame. I do not mean that I knew what I did, that it was in cold blood that I let Varguennes have his will of me. It seemed to me then as if I threw myself off a precipice or plunged a knife into my heart. It was a kind of suicide. An act of despair. Sometimes I almost pity them. I think I have a freedom they cannot understand. No insult, no blame, can touch me. Because I have set myself beyond the pale. I am nothing, I am hardly human any more. I am the French Lieutenant's Whore. (Fowles, *French* 175)

Sarah's confession throws Charles into a split state of mind: he empathized with the officer Varguennes and enjoyed her vicariously, and he sympathized with Sarah and wanted to protect her. He only recognized in her a woman capable of passionate gestures, but failed, for the time being, to appreciate her imaginative mind.

This episode anticipates their brief but passionate affair, which reveals Sarah to be a virgin and a liar, and adds to her aura of mystery. Charles is too fascinated with a woman who is so unlike anyone else (man or woman) he has ever met, and who validates and illuminates his own existential doubts, to care to really understand her reasoning for her behaviour. He breaks off his engagement to enable him to marry Sarah and is willing to bear all the social repercussions of his breach of trust, but Sarah chooses to leave him without a word. Years later, she decides to re-enter Charles' now ruined life. She has become an accomplished painter and an independent woman. But before he makes the most radical decision of his life, Charles is allowed to exercise his imagination and to picture for himself and the reader the kind of future he would share with Ernestina, which is virtuously and righteously happy/Victorian. This is the first ending the novel supports; it is ontologically inferior to the other two because it is the figment of a character's imagination. What the implied author suggests is that some of us are better storytellers than others. Such is the case of Sarah, who not only makes up a far more gripping narrative than Charles's, but does it in such a way as to lend it so strong a touch of the real that it can compete with life itself. She leads Charles into believing that everything she has told him is the naked truth, she staged their meeting at the hotel in Exeter to the last detail, playing the appealing

fallen woman/innocent victim, only to let him discover that she has never been the French lieutenant's woman, and, what is even more confusing, only to disappear as quickly and mysteriously as she has stepped into his life. Charles's drama is not so much that he has lost Sarah and his social status, but that he cannot understand Sarah's final gesture. Nevertheless, even in his self-imposed isolation and lonely travels, he is closer to Sarah than ever, because he too has assumed the role of an outcast:

When he had had the great vision of himself freed from his age, his ancestry, and age, and country, he had not realized how much the freedom was embodied in Sarah; in the assumption of a shared exile. He no longer much believed in that freedom, he felt he had merely changed traps or prisons. But yet there was something in his isolation that he could cling to; he was the outcast, the not like the other men, the result of a decision few could have taken, no matter whether it was ultimately foolish or wise. (Fowles, *French* 428)

The second and the third endings occur toward the end of the story and belong equally to the implied author and to the reader. In the second ending, Charles finds Sarah in Dante Gabriel Rossetti's house and the two are happily reunited through their daughter Lalage, much to the gratification of a sentimental audience. In the third ending, Charles rejects Sarah's suggestion that they be just friends and chooses to give her up for good instead of surrendering once again to a woman who appears not to understand that the essence of love lies in sharing one's best self with the loved one. This ending shows Charles as a man of his own, who "has at last found an atom of faith in himself, a true uniqueness on which to build... has already begun to realize that life, however advantageously Sarah may in some ways seem to fit the role of Sphinx, is not a symbol, is not one riddle and one failure to guess it, is not to inhabit one face alone or to be given up after one losing throw of the dice, but is to be, however inadequately, emptily, hopelessly into the city's iron heart, endured" (Fowles, *French* 467).

It is up to the reader to decide which ending to prefer – although, from a purely hermeneutic point of view, they are not mutually exclusive. Their common denominator lies in the idea of self-discovery and accomplishment as the premise of happiness. Sarah and Charles would not have made a happy couple before either of them has undergone a rite of passage, admittedly initiated and led by Sarah. By the same token, both Sarah and Charles have a better chance to find happiness or at least peace of mind separately. Their freedom-of-choice anxiety invades the extra-diegetic space and faces readers with a similar existential dilemma: is an audience more likely to be gratified by a traditional happy ending than by an aesthetically motivated resolution, and is the possibility to choose cause for an anxiety of interpretation? Fowles suggests that this does not necessarily have to be the case. For him "the best existentialism tries to reestablish in the individual a sense of his own uniqueness, a knowledge of the value of anxiety as an antidote to intellectual complacency and the realization of the need he has to learn to choose and control his own life" (Fowles, *Aristos* 122).

Sarah illustrates this principle in that she defies the dead dogma of her age and builds for herself the kind of life she would like to lead, even if that has involved a detour that

denied her immediate relief. Her uniqueness lies in the fact that she realizes that she is different and exhibits her non-conformity even though that makes her a social outcast. Charles, too, experiences the “anxiety of freedom”, a process out of which he emerges as a self-conscious man, able to stand up for his choices even if that results in social disgrace. The reason why in the third ending Sarah and Charles fail to form a couple is because they have both grown to cherish their independence to the extent that compromising their individuality is not a choice. After all, a relationship is an organization in miniature, and an “existentialist never belongs, as every organization wants its members to belong” (Fowles, *Aristos* 123).

However, the protagonists’ behaviour is gendered only at the story level, where Sarah’s defiance may very well be in line with an incipient form of feminism and Charles’ non-conformism is the mark of an enlightened modern scientist – and it would be no surprise if in their next fictional life she would be a suffragette and he a supporter of the movement. Sarah is the agent of her and Charles’ process of evolution, adaptation and survival. As the implied author notices in one of the very few insights into her personality, Sarah reveals herself as a blending of “passion and imagination”. Indeed she is the character who turns to the best possible account her potential for speculation and imagination, which leads the critic Kerry McSweeney to argue that “the power to create deceptions and illusions makes Sarah something of a John Fowles-type of novelist”, for Fowles has described the novelist as “a dealer in possible hypotheses, a confidence trickster”, and the novel as “a hypothesis more or less ingeniously presented” (111). There is a clear parallel between the way in which Sarah and the author treat Charles and the reader respectively: Sarah lies to Charles and indirectly admits to her deceit, in the same way as John Fowles builds his narrative on the metafictional practices of both “sounding true” and “coming clean”. From an extradiegetic perspective, Sarah may be considered the representative of the neo-Victorian author in the text as well as the text itself – in Barthes’ jargon a “writerly” text, i.e. self- and audience-generated, whose meaning is constantly being made and *meant* either by revision or by review (Barthes 4).

Transposing the novel’s self-reflexivity, especially manifest in its multiple endings, was the greatest challenge the film adaptation faced. Without this defining dimension, the film would merely have been yet another period drama, and it would have greatly departed from the book’s innovative message. The solution that the director Karel Reisz – and especially the screenwriter Harold Pinter – found not only captures Fowles’ and the text’s creative duplicity but matches it with its own doubleness by juxtaposing the Victorian story and the story of making a movie based on that story. Due to the medium’s specificity, however, the novel’s most distinctive feature was represented in the form of crosscutting. The film alternates a 1980’s reality involving the making of a movie with the Victorian, dated, reality of the film being made (Palmer 188). The apparent minimal ontological hierarchy at work in Pinter’s project is contradicted at a deeper level by several instances in which the framing contemporary story is contaminated by the Victorian drama and the Victorian story is invaded by the foil narrative, which suggests the interconnectedness of art and life and the ultimate futility of methodological distinctions between them. The fictional couple of Charles and Sarah is replicated by the less fictional actors Mike and Anna and their own affair. Furthermore, as Imelda Staunton argues, Reisz’s and Pinter’s answer

to the adapting dilemma posed by Fowles' novel consisted in having the actors Mike and Anna go to the source story and "become Victorian" to the extent that in the end Mike feels nostalgic about a time and an aesthetic world he has helped recreate (Whelan 276). When, in the final scene, Charles realizes that Anna has left the party and him without even saying good-bye, he calls out Sarah's name, not Anna's.

Ultimately, the novel and the film adaptation elude the binary male/female opposition, transcend even a tolerant gender juxtaposition, and move toward a celebration of individuality and individual agency as the key to personal fulfillment and toward an erasure of the real/ fictional antinomy.

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The Theme of Migration in the Paddington Bear Book Series and its Intersemiotic Translation

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Abstract

No literary work is ever finished, and its interpretation largely depends on the time and place of its reception. The goal of this paper is to demonstrate how the theme of migration was transformed from the original Paddington book series to its intersemiotic translation in the form of a film. This phenomenon is connected to the importance of interpretation parallels in the process of literary adaptation and actualisation as well as in translation

Keywords: intersemiotic translation, interpretation parallel, migration, Paddington Bear, adaptation

1. Introduction

Writing about translation, Koška states that each generation has its own *generation interpretāns*, because translators do not live in an isolated vacuum – they are influenced by recent history, the contemporary social situation, and texts written after the text they are translating. That is the reason why translators' interpretation always differs and changes throughout time. Each literary work has its own potential future content, which is difficult to anticipate. The content of any literary work can be understood as “emptiness providing possibilities” (106). Every era creates its own interpretation parallels, by which translators compare the situation in the original text with similar situations in the contemporary world, and form their own interpretation and translation (or adaptation) strategies.

In relation to the adaptation of literary works, it is also more adequate to speak about

the interpretation potential of a work. Whenever a cinematic adaptation of a literary work written in the past¹ is being filmed, its current author has to compare it with a similar contemporary situation; otherwise, the readers will find it difficult to interpret – especially when speaking about a child reader/viewer.

The goal of this paper is to briefly examine and analyse the themes of migration in the original book series *A Bear Called Paddington* by Michael Bond, and then to compare how the film adaptation by Paul King (2014) dealt with this topic. Further, the paper analyses the intersemiotic translation with regard to the characters, and describes how and why certain characters had to be changed in order to be better understood by the contemporary audience. Migration is a widely-discussed topic nowadays, and therefore it is expected that the theme of migration and the depiction of a migrant in the books will be different from in the film adaptation.

2. The Theme of Migration in the Paddington Book Series

Michael Bond, the author of the Paddington Bear series, fought in WWII. The inspiration for the story of a bear coming to London from Darkest Peru is quite poetic. Bond wanted to buy his wife a Christmas present and visited the Selfridges store. On one of the shelves he saw a lonely bear puppet which he decided to buy. One year later, in 1958, this puppet became a children's literary hero. From the beginning, the idea of a refugee in need coming to London was part and parcel of the story. As Bond comments, "Refugees are the saddest sight – I still think that" (Byrne). However, it is quite interesting that Paddington is never referred to as a migrant, but rather as a "stowaway", although in one instance, he comments "I'm glad I emigrated" (Bond 14).

A small talking Peruvian bear was found with just a suitcase at Paddington station, and later was named after the station. This image of a single bear waiting at a railway station was not coincidental. Bond came up with the idea while watching children and adults waiting at the stations in London prior to WWII. These predominantly Jewish child refugees were part of the famous Kindertransports; children were sent from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Poland to Britain and placed in foster homes where Londoners would look after them (Ellis-Petersen). Bond recalled that "A lot of the children had luggage labels round their necks with their names and addresses on them" (Preston); this had an impact on the first appearance of Paddington, who also wore a note that read: "Please look after this bear, thank you". Similarly to the refugees, Paddington only had a small brown suitcase with the inscription "Wanted on voyage" (Bond, 8). Such suitcases were quite common in the pre-WWII period and they embodied refugees' poverty caused by the situation in their countries of origin.

Children's books usually have an educational function, and Bond's Paddington series is no exception. The first book in the series was published 13 years after WWII, in 1958. Soon it became hugely popular, and new editions were published. The books were republished several times. In the 1960s, readers began to associate Paddington Bear with Commonwealth immigration (Smith 38) rather than with the pre-WWII situation. Commonwealth immigration began with the Immigration Act of 1962. This Act gave citizens of Commonwealth nations the right of migration into the United Kingdom. Like the immigrants in the

1960s, Paddington Bear immigrated into “civilized” London from a “barbaric” country; originally, Paddington’s roots were supposed to be in “Darkest Africa”. The term “Darkest Africa” is defined in the Longman dictionary as “the parts of Africa etc. about which we know very little; this use is now frequently considered offensive”, though originally it was supposed to depict Paddington’s mysterious origins. However, Bond’s editor told him that there are no indigenous bears in Africa, and so Bond chose instead to situate Paddington’s childhood in “Darkest Peru”. The attribute remained the same, providing an image of a mysterious country.

In the book, Paddington comes to London because his aunt Lucy has been moved into the Home for Retired Bears. London is depicted as a safe haven for everyone who needs help. According to Hunt & Sands, Bond’s depiction of London partly corresponds to the image of pre-war imperial Britain as a nation of unshakeable and undisputed values (40). These values are difficult to define, although they are probably best embodied in Kipling’s “The White Man’s Burden”. It is a belief that the white man has a moral obligation to help the uncivilized man; the uncivilized man “is first amicable, only later to become duplicitous and require the correcting hand of the ‘cultivated’ man” (“Post-Colonial Literature” 808). With regard to Britain, there was an undisputable belief that the British way of life, Britain’s way of managing society and politics was the one everyone else should aspire to.

Hunt & Sands also state that a typical trait of post-imperial children’s books is the depiction of a foreigner (Paddington) as someone who is subject to the benevolent supremacy of the dominant culture; the character tries to conform to the norms of the supremacist country, and this is how the positive stereotypical image of imperial Britain was emphasized (41). However, in the case of Paddington, Smith to some extent disagrees, because Paddington’s otherness is sometimes used to question the dominant culture. His otherness is explicitly emphasized throughout the story. However, it is not used to ridicule the main character or for solely comical purposes. In fact, the very opposite is the case; Paddington is never depicted as a fool or an uncivilized barbarian (48). But as a foreigner, he is forced to give up his former identity and culture and to integrate himself into the dominant culture. The dominant culture is generally presented uncritically. Nevertheless, it would be too simplistic to state that Paddington is willing to give up all of his identity. For example, one chapter sees Paddington reject a new hat, justifying it by his connection to his original hat, which he has worn since childhood. In this simple act, his connection with his culture of origin is retained. There are several similar elements in the story, but as mentioned above, the dominant culture expects Paddington to have a rather positive attitude towards its norms.

In general, Paddington is presented as a “role-model” migrant. He speaks fluent English, he is extremely polite, and this politeness could be perceived even as stereotypically British.² He always addresses people as “Mr”, “Mrs” and “Miss”, and only very rarely by their first names. He is also kind-hearted, but not to the point of being a simpleton – he is not afraid to express his disapproval to those who are dishonest. His more comical characteristic consists of innocently getting into trouble, but he does everything he can to put things right. He is prepared to give up everything to become a British citizen (Hunt & Sands 48). Even his name, Paddington, originated from Paddington station, where he was found by his new foster parents, the Browns. Castles & Miller find a resemblance between

Paddington's journey and the story of immigrants sailing to Britain or the USA in the 19th and 20th centuries, who were also given English names by migration officers, neglecting their former identity (85).

In the first book – although Paddington's otherness is emphasized – he is not asked by his new family and friends about his roots. As noted by Fanon, the dominant culture of the colonizers is always trying to transform the past of the oppressed people to conform with their own image (154). Here, Paddington does not enrich the target culture with his own culture, and he almost completely disregards his former identity. This is demonstrated e.g. when Paddington mentions that in his home there is no such concept as “birthday”. He is then immediately given a birth date by the Browns. Such a ritual could be considered as a manifestation of a completely new identity.

As mentioned before, the dominant culture in the Paddington books is generally presented uncritically. London is a welcoming city, and the Browns immediately want to take care of Paddington (they even have the first line in the book).³ However, the books also contain very subtle anti-racist themes, which – compared to other children's books dealing with these topics – are presented rather implicitly (Smith 48). After the aforementioned Immigration Act, there were many racist riots,⁴ and Michael Bond explicitly situated the majority of the story in Notting Hill, where many of these riots took place. Pinsent thinks that Bond uses the theme of “a foreigner in a foreign country” in order to present anti-racist arguments (106). In general, children's books that explicitly promote positive anti-racist attitudes are often counter-productive. On the other hand, if the themes are too implicit, children tend to only confirm their previous opinions – whether they are racist or not (Hollindale 36). Bond managed to balance these tendencies, and therefore is successful in his goals. This is achieved by being neither too covert nor too overt in the depiction of anti-racist themes – they are hidden in the depiction of everyday situations encountered by a newcomer in an alien culture. Although this newcomer is slightly alienated, he is presented as a positive character who is morally sound and acts ethically, as someone with whom the readers can sympathize. In a way, the theme is implicit and presented as an entertaining children's story without being too moralizing.

Bond's goal was to educate children in anti-racist themes and to teach them to be polite; however, Paddington's positive image is juxtaposed with an implicit narrative of Paddington being dominated by the dominant culture and the dominant culture claiming the right to control him (Smith 38). Britain is presented as a safe haven which helps those in need, but it is also presented as a supremacist country possessing the only genuinely civilized values. Although criticism of dominant values is more present in the later books in the series, there are very few criticisms towards the original culture. Such criticism is more strongly present in its intersemiotic translation.

3. Intersemiotic Translation and Contemporary Interpretation Parallels

Jakobson distinguishes three types of translation. One of them is intersemiotic translation, i.e. translation between different sign systems (233). A film adaptation of a book series falls within this category.⁵ The film *Paddington* is directed by Paul King, famous for his work in the British dada comedy series *Mighty Boosh*. The specifics of his artistic

vision can be seen mainly in the use of vibrant colours and props which react to the mood of the main characters as well as in the use of playful humour and irony. Paul King situated the film in contemporary London, which meant that several changes had to be made (discussed further below). It was screened in the pre-Brexit era, in 2014. The film has a star cast – Paddington is voiced by Ben Whishaw, the Browns are portrayed by Hugh Bonneville and Sally Hawkins, Nicole Kidman plays the main villain, and the character of Mr Curry is played by Peter Capaldi. It was received very well, both critically and by the audience. *The Guardian* (Bradshaw), *The Telegraph* (Collin) or the web portal *Rotten Tomatoes* gave positive reviews praising *Paddington* as an ideal family film.

Taking into account the rather long time span between the original and the intersemiotic translation, the target audience (predominantly consisting of children and their parents) needed new interpretation parallels which would enable them to form an attachment with the characters. One of the aims of children's literature is to educate its readers, and this is certainly true of children's films as well. A film such as this can give children new information, it can improve their critical thinking or educate them in terms of ethics. Ethics are constantly changing, so literal adaptations are problematic as norms have often changed. Contemporary European children and young people are unable to imagine the pre-WWII period, and their interpretation parallel concerning Paddington's arrival in London is not associated with the pre-WWII period or the Commonwealth migration. They are more likely to connect Paddington's migration with the omnipresent video footage of refugees from the current migration crisis; this was one of the changes that Paul King had to make. Therefore, the arrival of Paddington was no longer associated with WWII or the Commonwealth migration. This time, Paddington was forced to come to London after a natural disaster. He was placed on a small boat by his aunt; this creates an immediate link with the present-day migration crisis and migrants from the Middle East fleeing their homes in rubber boats – images which children can see on their screens on a daily basis. In the film, Paddington's aunt and uncle were invited to London by a British geographer visiting Darkest Peru, who promised them that they would be welcomed by the Londoners.

Unlike the book series, the film begins in Darkest Peru, introducing the character of Paddington and his idyllic life which he is soon forced to abandon. Paddington, together with his aunt and uncle, dream of London; they want to visit the city as tourists. Paddington is then forced to flee Darkest Peru and find a new home in London, because his uncle dies during an earthquake and – similarly to the book – his aunt is sent to the Home for Retired Bears. However, as soon as Paddington arrives at Paddington station, his illusions about a welcoming city and polite Londoners are destroyed. This is one of the themes that Paul King explicitly emphasized: the shattering of the positive myths resulting from the stereotypical images of Britain, consequently emphasizing the importance of sympathy for those in need. While in the book everyone is very welcoming, the film strikes a different image. The colours of London are very grim and grey; passers-by are depicted as indifferent, hidden under identical black umbrellas, and nobody even notices Paddington.⁶

This strikingly different image compared to the book is highlighted even more by the first utterances of Mr Brown concerning Paddington. Mr Brown warns the rest of the family by saying "stranger danger" and "Keep your eyes down. There's some sort of bear over there. Probably selling something" – once again linking Paddington to immigrants illegal-

ly selling various products on the streets, in another example of an interpretation parallel. Compared to the original book, in which the Browns immediately take care of Paddington, there is initially a much more cynical (and, one would say, realistic) approach. In the film, Mr Brown represents the Britain of reason, while Mrs Brown reminds the viewers of the more generous and hospitable Britain, the lost (though idealised) values of pre-WWII Britain – the Britain who helped those in need, e.g. during the Kindertransports.

The Britain of the pre-war period and its unshakeable values are ridiculed in the film on several occasions. For example, there is a flashback set in the Geographers' Guild, in which the explorer who met Paddington's aunt and uncle tries to persuade his colleagues that Peruvian Bears are an intelligent kind of bear. His colleagues are angry that he did not bring any specimen – specifically, a stuffed specimen – and decide to ban him from the Guild. He is trying to persuade them the Peruvian Bears are intelligent and that is why he did not bring any specimen, and they answer as follows: "They didn't even speak English. Did they play cricket? Drink tea? Do the crossword? Pretty rum idea of civilisation you've got, Clyde". This example of irony reveals a rather critical view of the values of colonial Britain.

The traits of the Paddington character in the film are quite similar to those described in the book. He is still extremely polite, addressing everyone as Mr and Mrs – which is not as common as in the past – and expecting the best from other people. In the film, Paddington is also depicted as an "ideal" migrant, but as opposed to the book, he is more proud of his origins, and other characters are actually interested in his roots. Migration is no longer defined as an unconditional surrender to the dominant culture, but as a combination of one's own identity with new elements of the target culture which are critically accepted.⁷

In the end, Paddington is basically used as a plot device as he helps the Browns to overcome their personal crises and to improve their lives. All of the Browns feel some sort of frustration as a result of the social superego and its constraints. Mr Brown is very reserved ("But what's the point of them being happy if they're not safe?"). He works as a City of London risk analyst – this fact is comically juxtaposed with his role as a father and a husband – and he is a hapless, good-hearted character. He initially perceives Paddington as a danger to his family, but later warms to him. In the film, Mrs Brown depicts the generous Britain; she is very caring and works as a children's book illustrator, which explains her friendlier attitude. She cares a lot about Paddington, and in the first encounter with him she exhibits the values of kindness and sympathy towards him – after all, she is the one who persuades Mr Brown to help the bear. However, she lacks inspiration, which she later overcomes thanks to Paddington. The daughter Judy is described by Paddington as "suffering from a serious condition called 'embarrassment'". She embodies a typical teenager who finds her family embarrassing. The son, Jonathan, suffers from his father's primness. He wants to be an astronaut, and he has a talent for inventing new devices; however, he is forbidden to do so as Mr Brown – after some unfortunate accidents – decides it poses a health risk. It can be stated that both elements – the dominant culture as well as the alien component – mutually enrich each other and depict an ideal positive impact of assimilation. However, the fundamental condition is that Paddington wants to assimilate and to adapt.

In the film, Paddington believes he will find a place described as welcoming and warm.

Aunt Lucy promises Paddington that London is welcoming, because the Londoners had to survive a war and many foreigners helped them and therefore they would know how to behave towards foreigners. However, Paddington encounters a cold and harsh city, in which everyone is dressed in drab clothes. He soon finds out that these values were just the idealised view of a kind geographer who lived in a fool's paradise. With this distorted idealised vision, paradoxically, Paddington tries to revive these values which are no longer present among Londoners. Although such a comparison may seem far-fetched, this belief in the welcoming "West" can be compared to current migrants' view of Western Europe, which tends to be similarly distorted. Paul King appeals to the audience to be polite to foreigners and to remember that Britain also needed help in the past, and he emphasizes the role of immigrants in the process of forming Britain. This message is present in how Paul King depicts London. For example, there are a variety of different accents in the film, which is an important feature of King's vision. The accents emphasize the image of multi-cultural London, open to anyone who needs help. Furthermore, the music for the film was composed by the *D Lime band*, representatives of Calypso music – a genre which originated in Trinidad, a country which experienced rather high emigration to the UK during the Commonwealth migration. At the end of the film, London is finally shown as a magical city which can, if its citizens want to, help those in need. Compared to the original book series, the film more comprehensively analyses the identity of migrants and shows the importance of how other unique identities can enrich the target culture. The film's depiction of migrants corresponds to the idea of micro-cosmopolitanism. The concept of micro-cosmopolitanism was defined by Cronin (14–16), one of the leading figures of American Translation Studies, and its goal is to emphasize rather than suppress "otherness".⁸

4. Adaptation of Characters

There are several characters that should be discussed in order to more precisely analyse the adaptation of the book's theme of migration into the film as well as the use of actualization. Three characters form the focus of the discussion that follows.

The first is the character of another migrant in London, Mr Gruber. In the original series, Mr Gruber was an owner of an antique shop. According to Bond, his character was based on his literary agent, Harvey Unna, a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, although the character of Mr Gruber was of Hungarian descent (Byrne). In the book, he is a very kind man and a good friend of Paddington's. As they are both migrants, they tend to stick together and usually enjoy shared "elevenses" and drink cocoa rather than the more typically British tea. This can also be perceived as a typical trait of migrants who tend to build their own communities. In the book, there is no mention of why Mr Gruber came to Britain. However, in the film, his story is elaborated on. As the movie is set in contemporary London, Mr Gruber's migration is explicitly associated with the Kindertransport. There is an immediate association with Bond's image of child refugees of the pre-WWII period. There is a flashback of Mr Gruber coming to London as a child. At a train station he is greeted by his foster mother, who is depicted as a very strict and harsh woman. In one of the dialogues, Mr Gruber explains to Paddington that home is "more than a roof over your head", and sums up his experience with his new family as "my body had travelled very fast

but my heart... she took a little longer to arrive". This can be viewed as implicit criticism of people's stance towards migrants. Migrants need more time to accommodate in their new homes, and it is unjustified to strip them of their identity and expect of them to adapt immediately.

Nevertheless, Mr Gruber's character was the subject of the main complaint made by Bond towards the film. He stated that he wanted someone foreign to play the character, and argued that "because he was based on my first agent, a lovely man, a German Jew, who was in line to be the youngest judge in Germany when he was warned his name was on a list, so he got out and came to England with just a suitcase and £25 to his name" (Byrne). King decided to preserve the original reason why Bond made his main character a refugee, but gave this "legacy" to one of the secondary characters. In the film, Mr Gruber was played by the well-known British actor Jim Broadbent, who depicted the character with a rather solid (if intentionally comical) Hungarian accent.

Mr Curry is one of the few negative characters in the book. He is described as having a reputation "for meanness and for poking his nose into other people's business. He was also very bad-tempered, and was always complaining about the least little thing which met with his disapproval" (Bond 119). Although in the books he is just a mean-spirited neighbour, in the film he is an anti-hero and is abused by the main villain, Millicent Clyde (Nicole Kidman). After he falls in love with her, she uses him to get to Paddington, as she wants him stuffed in the Natural History Museum. In one scene they discuss Paddington's arrival and Mr Curry says he is afraid he will have to withstand "loud jungle music", but he also says he is happy that there is only one bear. Millicent raises his fears saying that it always begins with one, and "soon the whole street will be crawling with them", and there will be "Drains clogged with fur. Buns thrown at old ladies. Raucous all-night picnics". This scaremongering can remind us of similar arguments used on various internet forums to stimulate fear of immigrants in Europe. King pokes fun at it in a very clever and implicit way. However, in contrast to the books, Mr Curry eventually turns good, and helps the Browns to save Paddington from the hands of Millicent.

The last character that will be briefly discussed is Mrs Bird. In the books, Mrs Bird is the Browns' housekeeper. Housekeepers were quite common back in the day, and therefore there used to be no problems concerning the interpretation of her character. Nowadays, however, such a character would be difficult to explain to children, and therefore in King's vision, Mrs Bird (played by another well-known English actress, Julie Walters) is introduced as an "old relative" whose husband was in the navy, and who therefore likes to keep everything "shipshape". This introduction results from the film-makers' effort to keep the character in the film, but not to present her as a housekeeper. Nevertheless, the introduction is rather disorganized, and it is quite difficult to understand the relationship and the placing of the character within the story. There is no further elaboration of how she is related to the Browns, and therefore she seems quite out of place. The need to keep her in the story probably resulted from the fact that she is a very interesting and amusing character; however, her adaptation should have been made more unambiguous. Except for this minor issue, the adaptation by Paul King successfully implements and adapts the themes and characters of Michael Bond's story for contemporary viewers.

5. Conclusion

This paper has briefly analysed the theme of migration in the Paddington book series and its consequent re-interpretation and adaptation in the form of intersemiotic translation. It can be stated that interpretation parallels result from the evolving sociocultural context, and that any literary work can be seen as an “emptiness” providing new possibilities for interpretations. This has to be taken into account by translators translating literature from older periods, as they have to try and connect the themes of the translated work with current interpretation parallels. Migration in the film is no longer seen as an unconditional surrender to a dominant culture, but instead as a combination of one’s own identity with new values – which are accepted, albeit critically. The film successfully adapted the themes and topics of the book series and managed to give contemporary interpretation parallels for the current audience. The film differs from the books as follows:

- 1) Migration is not defined as a total surrender to the dominant culture.
- 2) Paddington’s identity and other characters’ interest in his roots are more strongly emphasized.
- 3) London is presented as a multicultural and multi-ethnic city shaped by migrants.
- 4) The film is much more critical towards the predominant (although mainly imperial) British values, and Paddington is used to question these values.

All the changes the director made were necessary to improve the interpretation for the contemporary audience; at the same time, he managed to preserve Michael Bond’s original elements in terms of the pre-WWII Kindertransport and the Commonwealth migration. Similarly to Michael Bond, Paul King combines the topics of anti-racism and politeness and presents them to the audience neither too explicitly nor too implicitly.

Notes

¹ It is not possible to state an exact span of years, as this varies.

² Later, Michael Bond revealed that the politeness of Paddington was based on his father’s politeness (Preston).

³ “A bear? On Paddington station?” Mrs Brown looked at her husband in amazement. “Don’t be silly, Henry. There can’t be!” (Bond 2)

⁴ Specifically, the infamous 1958 Notting Hill race riots. White working-class “Teddy Boys” were hostile towards the growing numbers of black families in the area (Olden).

⁵ It should be mentioned that this is not the first intersemiotic translation of Paddington. There was an animated TV show which began in 1976 and lasted to 1980 called *Paddington Bear*, and also a successful TV show called *The Adventures of Paddington Bear* (1997–2013).

⁶ The image of London also changes according to the characters’ emotional state. Happiness is depicted by radiant bright colours and sadness by drab, grey colours.

⁷ Here, Paddington also mentions his name in the Bear language.

⁸ American Translation Studies have emphasized the notion of otherness since the rise of post-colonial Translation Studies.

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Linguistics and Translation Studies

Multimodal Analysis of European Theatres' Websites: Polyphony of Modes

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to analyse the mutual interplay of multimodal features on the websites of European opera houses. Grounded in the methodology developed by John Bateman for layout structure, and in Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's Grammar of Visual Design, the paper explores the interconnections between visual and verbal units on webpages and the application of Martinec and Salway's model for image-text relations. Aiming to identify specific relations among multimodal elements and their role in meaning-making, the paper discusses the results of both qualitative and quantitative research focusing on seven acclaimed European institutions which offer highly visual websites with limited textual (purely verbal) features; the presentation of comparable neoclassical ballet productions is a unifying element of the corpus.

Keywords: genre, layout, multimodality, systemic functional linguistics, transitivity, visual design, website

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1. Introduction

The world of institutional presentations has undergone a profound transformation over the past few decades, reflecting changing communication practices in various social contexts.

New communication technologies and the spread of promotional features to the vibrant and dynamic world of ballet have given rise to a novel genre – opera houses’ online presentations. Although dance performances may not be considered typically tradable products, the gradual promotionalization of institutional discourse has shaped communication practices in a field which once heavily relied on traditional ways of attracting potential spectators, such as leaflets and brochures, newspapers, and TV or radio advertising. Moreover, the affordances of new technologies enhance the inherently multimodal character of theatres’ promotional presentations, which effectively combine verbal and visual elements and provide a global and easily accessible platform which may offer new, stimulating forms of presentation to a much wider audience than ever before.

The reshaping of institutional discourse and the change in its rhetoric – accompanied by a steady decline in the use of the verbal mode as well as the new emerging literacies enhanced by the World Wide Web – have inspired extensive research into multimodal features (both visual and verbal) and their role in meaning-making (Kress 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen 2006) as well as analytical methods for the description of multimodal elements (Bateman 2008, extended by Hiippala 2013; Thibault & Baldry 2006) and their interplay in both promotional and institutional discourse (Francesconi 2014; Tomášková 2015, 2017). The research aim of the present article is therefore to expand the multimodal analysis into the novel genre of theatre websites and to explore the opportunities and constraints of applying models which were originally created for static printed documents.

2. Methodological framework and corpus

The multimodal analysis of theatres’ websites is anchored in Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics and social semiotics, whose broad concepts satisfy the needs of analysis addressing a variety of semiotic resources and provide a solid framework for the methodologies applied in the present article. The multiplicity of modes – which, in line with Kress (2010, p. 79), are seen as “socially shaped and culturally given resource[s] for making meaning” – as well as the technological affordances resulting from the rise of new media require flexible analytical tools capable of responding to new literacies.

The potential of the medium itself and new technologies is also stressed by Bateman, whose GeM (Genre and Multimodality) model serves in this analysis to describe the structure of a multimodal document. Bateman’s model is based on four main layers which enable a webpage to be described from different perspectives by cross-referencing across all four layers: base, layout, rhetorical and navigational (Bateman, 2008, p. 108). The layout layer proves particularly useful for studying the organisation of verbal and visual units (defined as Recognized Base Units by Bateman) on a webpage without assigning any particular function to their position. Both verbal and visual elements have the tendency to form larger structures (similarly to Thibault and Baldry’s spatially proximate *clusters*) and are supported by an underlying grid to unify viewers’ visual field and contribute to the regularity and rhythm of the webpage design (Bateman, 2008, p. 83). The exact position of each verbal and visual element is presented in the area model, which serves as a basis for the present analysis to identify the adjacency of multimodal content that should be interpreted together. The websites in the corpus generally seem to prefer simple rectangular area models, often with only one main central column for multimodal material and

vacant margin sides (see Figure 1 for the area model of the “Behind the scenes” section of the Dutch National Ballet company’s homepage) supporting the uncluttered design of webpages and drawing viewers’ attention to predominantly visual content.

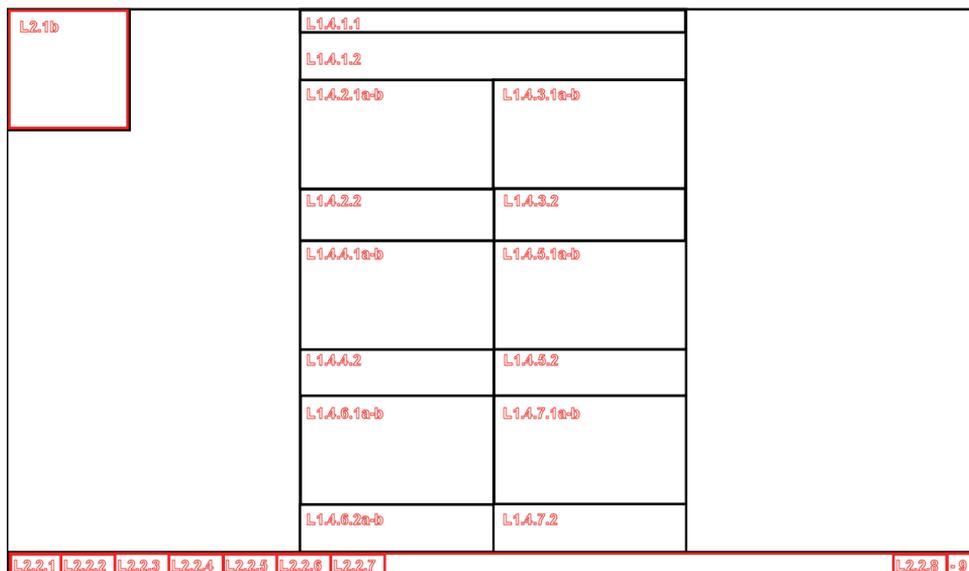


Fig. 1: Area model of the “Behind the scenes” section (with the identifiers of individual layout/rhetorical units)

The interpretation of visual elements on the websites is based on Kress and van Leeuwen’s Grammar of Visual Design, which is anchored in Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics and expands the theory to non-verbal communication. In accordance with Halliday’s approach, Kress and van Leeuwen’s system draws on three metafunctions in human communication (ideational, interpersonal and textual) and presents its own taxonomy, referring to representational, interactive and compositional meanings respectively.

With regards to the present analysis, the most relevant of the above-mentioned metafunctions is arguably the representational meaning, which refers to how a semiotic system represents objects, including relations among them “in a world outside the representational system or in the semiotic system of a culture”. The representational meaning distinguishes between narrative processes, where participants in the visual material are represented as doing something and are connected by a real or imaginary vector, and conceptual processes – which, on the other hand, represent participants in terms of their class, structure and meaning (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 45–47).

2.1 Martinec and Salway’s model

Although the analysis of visual material was not the central focus of the present article, it may be considered a stepping stone and an integral part of Martinec and Salway’s system,

which draws on the above-mentioned distinction between narrative and conceptual processes in images and photos. The analysis of processes in verbal elements, on the other hand, is anchored in Halliday's transitivity system (for more on this system see Halliday 2004), which enables the original model to be applied for both paratactic and hypotactic clause relationships also within their multimodal equivalents. Martinec and Salway's taxonomy may thus focus on image-text relations where both modes are intertwined in semantics and form but not fully fused (Martinec and Salway 2005, p. 338).

Their classification is based on two major subsystems, status and logico-semantic relations, which may combine independently and which draw on Barthes' study of image-text relations as well as expanding on Halliday's system of logico-semantic relations. In his work, Barthes recognizes three different image-text relations that elements may enter, namely *anchorage* where text supports image, *illustration* where image explains text, and *relay* in which text advances the action by creating new meanings (Barthes, 1977, p. 41).

Within the status relation, images and texts are seen as *unequal* if one of them modifies the other, and therefore the modifying element is regarded as dependent on the modified one. Image-text status is considered *equal* if a whole image is related to a whole text and they either both provide the information in parallel (equal-independent status relation) or combine to form a larger whole (equal-complementary) (Martinec and Salway, 2005, pp. 343–346).

The logico-semantic relations are anchored in Halliday's distinction between *projection* (for events which have been represented and transferred in another mode) and *expansion*, which is realized through *elaboration*, *extension* and *enhancement*. The *elaboration* relation distinguishes between *exposition* (image and text are on the same level of generality) and *exemplification* (the levels of generality are different, with either text or image being more general). In *extension* images or texts might add new, related information, and *enhancement* provides circumstantial classification (Martinec and Salway, 2005, pp. 349–351). An overview of status and logico-semantic relations can be seen in Figure 2:

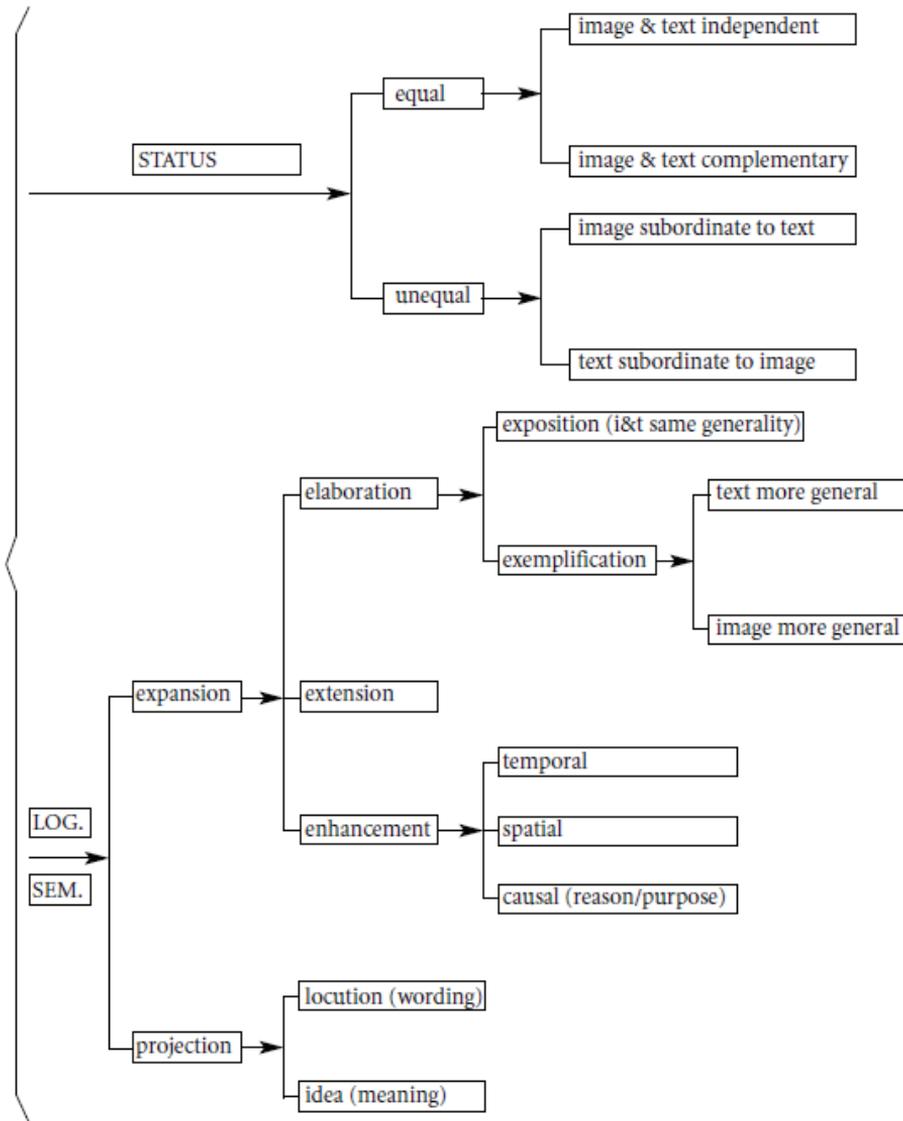


Fig. 2: Martinec and Salway's model for status and logico-semantic relations

2.2 Corpus

This article analyses the interplay between verbal and visual features of a new emerging genre: opera houses' websites. The material involves a total seven institutions (Dutch National Opera and Ballet, Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa, Opéra National de Paris, Teatro alla Scala, Vienna State Opera, Mariinsky Theatre, Estonian National Opera) which

meet the requirements of providing a functional English version of the theatre's website including an incorporated (not independent) ballet company's webpage. The analysis of the websites is limited to the "gateway" pages, i.e. the ballet company's homepages, and the selected production webpages. The corpus thus makes it possible to carry out a detailed qualitative analysis of webpages with a high occurrence of both verbal and visual elements but a contrastive communicative purpose. While "gateway" pages serve primarily as graphic and textual "appetizers" attracting readers to enter the website, a production webpage offers more detailed informative texts accompanied by a selection of visual and audio-visual features which enter into mutual relations. The corpus aims to maintain a degree of geographical diversity (including opera houses from both Eastern and Western Europe) while using three selected neoclassical ballet productions as a unifying element: *Onegin* choreographed by John Cranko, *The Lady of the Camellias* by John Neumeier and *Marguerite et Armand* by Sir Frederick Ashton.

Only the websites' content in English was included in the analysis; any material in the original language accidentally included in the websites was omitted. The small-scale corpus comprises 75 images and a total of approximately 6500 words from 14 different webpages (6 ballet companies' homepages and 8 production webpages), and it consists of data retrieved between August 2017 and March 2018.

The analysis presented here focuses strictly on the interplay of purely verbal elements (regardless of their syntactic structure) and static images (both staged and candid), excluding thumbnail gallery photos, webpage framing and material identified as navigational units by Bateman's GeM model. i.e. units that do not primarily perform rhetorical functions but rather link units across a webpage or website. The analysis follows Martinec and Salway's classification of elements entering into the relations and identifies a paragraph as the largest unit of the text that can be related to images. It also applies the notion of a "whole text" that enters into status and logico-semantic relations with images. If a text is a paragraph, the units related to images need to be either independent clauses or hypotactic clause complexes with all their processes, participants and circumstances; for clause complex/clause-size texts, the link between an image and a participant or circumstance of a text is sufficient.

3. Research results:

The application of Martinec and Salway's above-mentioned taxonomy resulted in a quantitative survey of status and logico-semantic relations as well as a qualitative analysis of the major tendencies in the modes' interplay and the roles that both verbal and visual elements might play. The resulting interconnection of the texts and images is presented separately for status and logico-semantic relations in the following tables and commentaries:

Status of the text and the image (Ballet homepage/production webpage)	
Number of images	50/25
Number of text-image relations	57/31
Equal status – Independent	16/2
Equal status – Complementary	25/22
Unequal status Image subordinate	16/7
Unequal status Text subordinate	-/-

Table 1: Status of the text and the image – analytical results

3.1. Status relations

The unequal distribution of status relations (the clear dominance of *equal-complementary* status with only several instances of *unequal-image subordinate*) in Table 1 is determined by two major factors. Firstly, the unequal status relation is more likely to be used for top-page and background photos which are accompanied by information-loaded introductory texts only through reference to the title of the production. While such a text-image combination was prevalent on the production webpages (where the links for interpretation may be seen as clear for the majority of viewers), the similar relation presented on the Teatr Wielki ballet company's homepage to introduce the 2017/2018 season (compare Figures 3 and 4: *The Lady of the Camelias* on the production webpage and on the ballet company's homepage with the text excerpts) offers two possible interpretations. Firstly, the photo is likely to be decoded as an example of one of the season's ballet productions mentioned in the text, and thus it enters the *unequal-image subordinate* relation in which the image might be interpreted only through the related text. It may, however, be argued that such a relation is only recognizable for readers with an extensive knowledge of dance, primarily due to the relative distance between the top-page image and the related text excerpt. Alternatively, the photo may serve exclusively as an illustrative image unrelated to the adjacent text; its meaning-making potential is therefore altered and the role of the photo changes from a specific visual element promoting a particular performance to a generic image representing dance/ballet or possibly love and passion.



Fig. 3: Multiple status relations – equal-complementary status between image and title; Unequal status – image subordinate: image and accompanying text (Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa)



In the spring, we will show one of the greatest masterpieces of 20th-century choreography – John Neumeier’s *Lady of the Camellias* set to music by the great Polish romantic composer, Fryderyk Chopin, which perfectly matches the atmosphere and character of Alexandre Dumas’s novel about the love of Marguerite Gautier and Armand Duval.

Fig. 4: Unequal status – Image dependent on text for interpretation (Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa) – position of the adjacent text adjusted

The discrepancy between the number of images and the relations with the text that they accompany reflects the tendency of visual and verbal elements to enter into multiple relations. The nature of these relations may vary: although the concurrent use of *equal-complementary* and *unequal-image subordinate* relations formed a regular structure on the majority of the theatres’ production webpages, as shown above (see Figure 3), a more profound interplay of status relations linking images simultaneously to the main text and captions was limited to the Dutch National Ballet company’s homepage.

BEHIND THE SCENES

In these videos, you can take a look behind the scenes at Dutch National Ballet.



Take a look at the making of Mata Hari

Fig. 5: Multiple status relations – use of deictic expressions (Dutch National Opera and Ballet)



Tours

Here you find information about our upcoming tours.

» more

Fig. 6: Use of deictic expressions not referring to status relations (Vienna State Opera)

The “Behind the scenes” section of this webpage is introduced with the caption “In these videos, you can take a look...” (see Figure 1 for the area model of the section and Figure 5 for an example of individual video-captions), where the deictic expression “these” refers to the four adjacent videos in an *unequal-text subordinate* relation. Simultaneously, each video enters into an *equal-independent* relation with its own short caption and functions as a semiotic transition directing readers straight from the caption text to the photo and subsequently to the video via the play button icon. The mutual interplay of heterogeneous verbal and audio-visual material within one layout unit reinforces the multimodal nature of the webpage as well as enabling the gradual unfolding of the website’s content through a network of interlinked hypertexts.

The salience of multimodal integration is also prominent on the Vienna State Ballet’s homepage as it opts for a regular layout supported by a modular grid which presents visual and verbal content in rectangular cells (see Figure 6 for an example of a cell). The clear uniform pattern (image + topic caption + introductory text) echoes the dominance of the *equal-independent* status relation on the webpage as well as the use of similar image composition: centre-oriented, very long shots with a whole body presented, taken from the eye-level perspective which is visually highly appealing and is likely intended to emulate the view from the best seats in the opera house – a vantage point which otherwise remains unattainable for the majority of spectators. The Vienna State Ballet’s homepage also revealed a tendency towards rather loose status and logico-semantic relations between images and introductory texts; this tendency appears very sporadic on other websites. The candid and staged images seemingly serve to present the extensive repertory of the company, with only little specific reference to accompanying texts, and thus they create a very weak semantic bond with some of the sections the texts introduce (such as e.g. News, Press or Institution).

The interconnection of individual verbal units, on the other hand, is further reinforced by inserted links which facilitate quick navigation across different levels of websites. The use of hyperlinks as a cohesive element enables readers to actively create their reading paths and explore the websites at their own pace and depending on their own interests. However, contrary to the Dutch ballet company’s homepage, the deictic expression “here” introducing the texts on the Vienna State Ballet’s homepage (see Figure 6) does not refer to any other multimodal material but directly to the hyperlink “more”, which functions purely as a navigational unit and thus does not enter into any kind of status (or logico-semantic) relation.

3.2. Logico-semantic relations

Similarly to the status relations, the selected corpus shows a strong inclination to a rather limited range of logico-semantic relations modelling image-text interaction (namely *exemplification-text more general* and *extension*), as indicated in the table below:

Status of the text and the image (Ballet homepage/production webpage)	
Number of text-image relations	57/31
Exposition	17/14
Exemplification Text more general	17/2
Exemplification Image more general	2/1
Extension	20/10
Enhancement	1/4

Table 2: Logico-semantic relations – analytical results

It may be argued that the clear dominance of the *exemplification-text more general* and *exposition* relations on the websites in the corpus results from the corresponding image-text combinations and the repetitive organisation of the material on the webpages. Moreover, the dominance of certain types of logico-semantic relations reflects the webpages’ composition (particularly prominent on the Teatr Wielki-Opera Narodowa and Vienna State Opera ballet companies’ homepages), using either illustrated forms of links accompanied by a short title or profile photos of dancers to help readers associate their appearance with the name, role or job position of a particular artist. The repeated use of certain types of relations further echoes the parallel structuring of the layout units and thus supports the visual unification of the websites’ layout.

The logico-semantic relations may then be analysed as *exemplification-text more general* for links where both symbolic and narrative images (see Figure 7) and their accompanied texts are independent, with the images functioning as *Carriers* (a photograph of the

company's director) and the texts as *Attributes* representing the class to which the content of the visual material belongs (i.e. a member of the ballet company's directorial team).



Fig. 7: Exemplification-text more general (Opéra National de Paris)



BALLET DIRECTOR

Fig. 8: Exposition – same level of generality (Teatro alla Scala)

The links for the “Management” sections on the ballet companies’ homepages may also be presented through the exposition relation (compare Figure 7 with Figure 8), where the image and the text in the form of a nominal group play the role of Identifiers (a photo of a particular person) and Identified (the description of the person’s job position within the company, i.e. ballet director). The frequent repetition of the exposition relation for cast profiles (see Figure 9) moreover reflects the distinct communicative purpose of the production webpage. While the “gateway” pages primarily function to capture the attention of viewers and are rich in audio-visual elements (staged photos, videos, graphics) accompanied by only little textual material, production webpages aim to familiarise readers with a detailed description related to the “product” of the companies – which is expressed predominantly verbally, making it possible to develop and strengthen a bond with potential spectators.



Fig. 9: Exposition – same level of generality (Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa)



MATA HARI

The woman, the diva, the mystery

Fig. 10: Illustrated link on a production webpage (Dutch National Opera and Ballet)

An analogous tendency was revealed on the Dutch National Opera and Ballet’s website, which – although offering a much wider variety of logico-semantic relations due to the more profound interplay of images and texts that enter into multiple relations – also presents a relatively high number of extension and exemplification-text more general

logico-semantic relations. The repetition of certain types of relations results from the regular combination of images and independent clauses/nominal groups which combine to present a particular performance and which function as visual and verbal appetizers that interweave the multimodal content. At the same time, they may be used as links to navigate readers across the website, thus creating a hypertextual network that the readers may explore independently (see an image-text link for a related ballet piece on a production webpage in Figure 9).

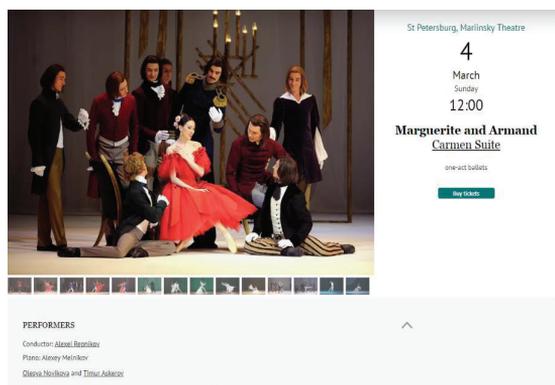


Fig. 11: Multiple logico-semantic relations – enhancement and extension (Mariinsky Theatre)

Firstly, both images represent narrative processes as they depict the participants in a very similar scene at the ball as doing something, i.e. performing an action (greeting and admiring Marguerite, the main character of the ballet). Moreover, they include both the bidirectional process between Marguerite and a main suitor (where the participants in the process react and influence each other) as well as secondary embedded processes among the characters in the background. Regarding the photos' composition, both images are centre-oriented, long (or very long) shots with the most salient elements placed in the middle of the image, which is seen from the eye-level perspective. In terms of logico-semantic relations, however, they serve two contrasting purposes.

The selected corpus of licensed productions also makes it possible to observe how identical ballet pieces may be presented on different opera houses' websites and the variety of relations into which an image from the very same production may enter.

Both central top-page candid photos used to promote the Marguerite and Armand production at the Mariinsky Theatre and Vienna State Opera websites share very similar traits (compare Figures 11 and 12).



This evening is dedicated to "British choreography": MacMillan, McGregor and Ashton are three choreographers who represent the same dance tradition. "Concerto" opens in the neo-classical style, offering a great opportunity for demonstrating the dancers' virtuosity. "EDEN|EDEN" explores the charged relationship between man and technology. **The final ballet "Marguerite and Armand" was created for Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev and is now a classic example of the English art of dance [emphasis added].**

Fig. 12: Logico-semantic relations – extension of image with accompanying text (Vienna State Opera)

Although the enhancement logico-semantic relation proves rare on ballet companies' homepages in the corpus, it serves aptly to qualify the images on production webpages in terms of their circumstantial meanings. The dates, times and places where productions are to be performed form a fundamental part of the information that is provided for future spectators also on the Marguerite and Armand production webpage (see Figure 11). The circumstantial expansion is also often accompanied by another type of logico-semantic relation – such as extension, where a new related piece of information is added to the content of the image especially regarding the cast or the choreographic and historical background of the production (compare Figures 11 and 12), and may thus contribute to even more elaborate and detailed interconnections of multimodal material.

4. Conclusion

The emerging genre of theatre websites provides challenging material for multimodal analysis. Straddling both institutional and promotional discourse, the opera houses' websites take full advantage of the technological affordances that the medium offers and employ a complete spectrum of multimodal features, ranging from staged and candid photos to GIFs, videos, podcasts, or even live streaming.

Applying Martinec and Salway's taxonomy to study the interplay between texts and images provided another step for the analysis of image-text integration on the webpages. Martinec and Salway's model proved a suitable analytical tool, entirely compatible with the inherently multimodal character of the theatres' websites and conveniently adaptable to identify the nature of the links between verbal and visual elements.

Occasional semantically weak and limited links were observed mainly between the introductory texts and images as well as illustrated links on the companies' homepages which may be interpreted differently depending on the readers' level of expertise in the field of dance. The material therefore offers a considerable variety of interpretations, ranging from spectators decoding the mutual dependence of an image and its title in adjacent texts to instances where the photo may be regarded as illustrating the theatre's repertory. In both cases the verbal and visual elements are mutually modified, contribute to the overall meaning, and further enable all intended groups of potential spectators to be targeted.

The adjacency of image and texts not only facilitates the interpretation of their mutual relations; it also proves to have a profound influence on the structure of the websites. The rhythm and recurrence of the webpages' layout affects the pages' internal organization; the pages regularly employ similar status and logico-semantic relations, e.g. typically using illustrated forms of links where captions and images enter into an *equal-complementary* relation and perform the role of *Identifier/Identified* or *Attribute/Carrier*. While the links allow viewers to create their individual reading path and intertwine the verbal and visual material into a hypertextual network across websites, the interconnection of the photos and texts (contrary to expectations) does not extend across the individual webpage, thus being restricted to the adjacent units defined by Bateman's area model.

The tendency of multimodal material to enter into similar types of relations was likewise observed for nominal-phrase-length verbal elements. In accordance with Martinec and Salway's taxonomy, a paragraph is seen as the largest unit participating in status and

logico-semantic relations, yet nearly half of the texts on the ballet companies' homepages (23 out of 57) comprised maximum 5-word nominal phrases – usually referring to the names/roles of dancers – or illustrated links without any connection to larger grammatical structures. The nature of the above-mentioned relations may become a source of potential ambiguity in their classification and will very likely require necessary adjustments in further research.

The small-scale analysis presented here confirms the potential for the application of Martinec and Salway's model to a specifically selected corpus of European theatres' websites. However, due to the highly limited verbal content entering into relations with images and the very diverse visual realisation of the individual websites, it also emphasizes the need for further research of various categories of webpages as well as a more adaptable tool for the analysis of current audio-visual features such as GIFs.

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Book Reviews

Christoph Haase, Natalia Orlova, and Joel Head, eds.
The Foundations and Versatility of English Language Teaching (ELT)
Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018

The research papers collected in this volume reflect the current trend of ELT diversification and the increasing sophistication of this field, which is expanding in two dimensions: while horizontally the field includes more and more approaches and methods, it is also expanding vertically, employing the latest technological advances. As the editors mention in the preface, the possibilities brought about by the boom in digitalization, social media or online learning have enabled linguists to deepen their analyses of corpora in the quantitative as well as qualitative sense, which is apparent in all studies presented by this monograph.

The collection is divided into three sections: *Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching*, *Approaches in English Language Teaching Methodology*, and *ELT Perspectives on Cultural and Literary Studies*. Being a split-personality linguist and didactician myself, I commend any attempts to interweave systematic linguistic research with applied approaches, thus facilitating the encounter of theoretical work with the practical utilization of new research findings. Due to the spatial constraints of this review, the focus here will be on one particular sphere of interest, namely applied phonetics and phonology studies, represented by three contributions: two corpus linguistics studies conducted by Kateřina Šteklová and Christoph Haase, and a study on the differences in the phonemic realization of monophthongs in Czech and English, by Dušan Melen and Monika Hřebačková.

In her study *The Corpus of Czech Adult English: Design, Analysis and Future Expectations*, Kateřina Šteklová presents the process of compiling a large-scale but narrowly-focused spoken corpus consisting of a number of audio recordings which form a database of Czech adult English speakers. This corpus – which has been necessary for a long time – enables broader comparative research to be carried out from both the diachronic and synchronic viewpoints. On one hand, the focus might be placed specifically on the sound of ‘Czenglish’ and its evolution over time, as the data capture is conceived as a longitudinal project of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education in Ústí nad Labem. On the other hand, as the compilation of the corpus was inspired by similar corpora compiled abroad, e.g. the corpus of *Polish Adult English* and the *Eastern European English learner corpus* (gathering Russian, Ukrainian and Slovak spoken English), opportunities for comparative studies of EFL have been created. The fact that “the character of the sound of *Czenglish* might change considerably within the course of a decade” or even “actually slowly disappear”, as Šteklová proposes, can only be ascertained through a longitudinal linguistic analysis – which may now be finally possible. Whether or not such a venture will prove to be a fruitful one may be a matter of sociolinguistic trends; recent developments in the concept of *pronunciation mistakes* seem to favour ELF approaches and respect for linguistic identity over pronunciation modelled on native-spoken or even BBC English

(Jenkins, 2000 and 2007; Walker, 2010).

Kateřina Šteklová and her colleague Christoph Haase offer another corpus-based study focusing deliberately on the *mistakes* produced by non-native students of English in a controlled setting. This second corpus was initiated in cooperation with primary schools in Leeds, forming the basis of the paper *The Leeds Corpus of Czech Learner English: Design Features and Data Collection*. The impetus for the creation of the LCCE was provided by the *Longman Learner Corpus* and the *International Corpus of Learner English*, which includes Englishes from 14 European countries. Apart from an insight into the lexicogrammatical study of learner behaviour in English, the authors again focus on a phonetic analysis of the corpus – in this case promising to focus not only on segmental features, but also on prosody. Nevertheless, the examples provided by section 3.2 of the paper (*Phonological results and future expectations*) include only the different inventory of Czech and English vowels and difficult dental fricatives causing “obvious pronunciation errors”. The terminological problem caused by the interchangeable use of the terms *pronunciation mistake*, *pronunciation error* and *pronunciation problem* poses a question of functionality. Would these *mistakes* be considered problematic in real life communication where context is provided? Could not such segmental *errors* as “producing e or ʌ where æ should be pronounced” be considered as non-native or even non-RP accent features? Specifically, the vowel sound example provided for words like *bag*, *cat* or *man* varies in different parts of Britain, with many northerners pronouncing it as [ʌ]. What about the General American standard pronunciation, which might serve as a model to many of the investigated speakers and thus confuse the pronunciation of [æ] vs. [ɑ:], e.g. in words like *aunt* or *can*? Should not the strict dependency on archaic RP or formal BBC English as model pronunciations in ELT classrooms be contested?

Dušan Melen and Monika Hřebačková from the Masaryk Institute of Advanced Studies in Prague certainly think otherwise, as their contribution *Teaching Vowel Sounds: Differences between English and Czech* continues the criticism of Czech learners of English who “tend to use the Czech vocalic system in their target language”. In accordance with the previously mentioned study, they attribute importance to just two reasons: the lack of early childhood exposure to English and the negligence of instructors; however, the problem of imitating model pronunciation in TL acquisition is much more complex. The authors nevertheless present an erudite theoretical account explaining the differences between BBC English and Czech monophthongs, accompanied by an extensive list of minimal English-Czech pairs for practicing these nuances: e.g. words like *sheet* vs. *šít*, *dull* vs. *dal*, or *doom* vs. *dům*. This practical exemplification of the vowel sounds in question will need the mouth of a skilled instructor and the ear of a trained researcher, but it is definitely worth contemplating for further linguistic as well as pedagogical inquiry.

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News, Announcements

Cena Nadace Dagmar a Václava Havlových VIZE 97 prof. Jařabovi

Blahopřejeme profesoru Josefu Jařabovi k získání Ceny Nadace Dagmar a Václava Havlových VIZE 97.

Josef Jařab se narodil 26. 7. 1937 v Kravařích ve Slezsku. Je profesorem anglické a americké literatury na Univerzitě Palackého v Olomouci, kde působil také jako první svobodně zvolený rektor v zemi od roku 1989 do 1997. V letech 1997-1999 byl rektorem Středoevropské univerzity v Budapešti a ve Varšavě. Po roce 1990 byl zakladatelem České a slovenské asociace amerikanistů a v období 2000-2004 byl prezidentem Evropské asociace amerikanistů. Jako nestraník byl zvolen dvakrát do Senátu PČR. Jako senátor byl též předsedou Výboru pro zahraniční věci, obranu a bezpečnost a členem Parlamentního shromáždění Rady Evropy. Je členem českého PEN-klubu, Obce spisovatelů a zakládajícím členem Učené společnosti ČR. Je autorem, spoluautorem nebo redaktorem či asi čtyřiceti knih s tematikou literární a problematikou vysokoškolského vzdělávání. Přednášel nejméně ve třiceti zemích světa, badatelsky a pedagogicky působil na New York University, Brandeis University, Harvard University a Linfield College v USA. Je nositelem čestných doktorátů ze dvou amerických a jedné anglické univerzity. Je předsedou sdružení profesorů Filozofické fakulty UP Societas cognitorum.



