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Editorial Offices:

“C. Peter Magrath” Research Center for Cross-Cultural Studies
Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu
Bulevardul Victoriei 5-7, 550 024 Sibiu
Tel: +40 (0) 269 21 55 56 (Ext. 201)
Fax: +40 (0) 269 21 27 07

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Foreword

The 2010 issue brings together engaging articles that explore contemporary cultural encounters from interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives in both geographic and discursive spaces, offering stimulating avenues of research and interpretation. The spectrum of themes examined in this issue ranges from theoretical and text-based perspectives on American Studies, new interpretations of various aspects of the field of applied linguistics and ESP (medical), cultural comparisons of medical facilities and their significance, and insightful interpretations of contemporary film, media issues, photography, and cultural values.

The wide vista and deep foundations of American Studies East and West are examined in articles by Sămi Ludwig, Camelia Anghel, Ana-Blanca Ciocoi-Pop and Sorin Ștefănescu. Ludwig's article interrogates the influence and effects of formalism on American Studies from a pragmatist vantage point. By looking at a number of American texts, Ludwig illustrates the way in which various writers have examined "the relationship of concepts and reality in their work." Anghel's text-based article explores the multi-layered perceptions of "America" in D. H. Lawrence's work, analyzing various concepts such as identity, emancipation, and mobility, among others, with a view to rendering the complexity of "the otherness of 'America'" from a modernist perspective. Ciocoi-Pop examines the role of the metropolis in J.M.G. Le Clezio's short story collection *Fever*, exploring the psychological effects of physical spaces on the protagonists. As Ciocoi-Pop suggests, this state of "temporary insanity" becomes "the only possibility of revelation" as the characters develop a deeper understanding of human suffering. On the other hand, Ștefănescu's article offers a comprehensive account, from a historical angle, of the impact of English sports and pastimes on American culture and society from early colonial times until the nineteenth century.

Furthermore, Matthew Ciscel, and Jonathan Stillo engage in comparative approaches to linguistic and/or interdisciplinary cultural aspects. In his study, Ciscel examines the effects of the

(American) English language in countries such as Romania and the Republic of Moldova, pointing out that in spite of the social and economic opportunities provided by English in the world today, it often tends to displace local minority languages.

Stillo's article discusses medical issues from a comparative Romanian-American angle, maintaining that in spite of the criticism brought to Romanian TB sanatoria as inefficient health institutions, they still seem to fulfill an appropriate function as a viable alternative for patients who need extensive care.

Finally, several articles in this issue engage in interdisciplinary cultural dialogues about film, media and cultural values, as reflected in Eastern and Western contexts. Thus, Corina Selejan performs a comparative-contrastive investigation of recent American and British film adaptations of Jane Austen's novel *Emma* with a view to exploring the extent to which "the original historical context was retained." Addressing the same field of film studies, Ogaga Okuyade analyzes the ways in which gender is represented in contemporary Nigerian productions, alleging that representations of women's identities in film are meant to reinforce their exclusion from important national issues and are often conditioned by the patriarchal control of the Nigerian cinematography. Related to culture and the media is also Eric Gilder and Mervyn Hagger's essay, which focuses on the complex story of a broadcasting ship, whose cultural identity is interrogated in multi-national legal contexts. Furthermore, Scott Eastman's article, accompanied by a breath-taking collage of photos of the American West, offers readers a unique perspective on the intricate connections between nature and the human spirit. Finally, Mingle Gao's article analyzes various aspects of traditional Chinese values from Confucian and Taoist perspectives. Besides informing the works of noteworthy Chinese scholars, the author maintains, the values upheld by Confucianism and Taoism have become "a state of mind and a part of the national cultural atmosphere."

The Editors

Currencies and Realities:
Capitalism, Formalism, American Studies

SÄMI LUDWIG
UHA Mulhouse (France)

“The map is not the territory.”
(Alfred Korzybski)

ABSTRACT

This article argues that American Studies has suffered from an exaggerated influence of formalism manifesting itself in a detached kind of ‘universal theory’ that favors abstract non-referentiality and hence irrelevance. Its concepts often originate in contexts that do not apply to the fields in which they are then applied. In an effort to unpack the history of this issue, this article outlines the genealogy of a philosophical ‘long modernism,’ originating in idealism and dialectics, traversing logical positivism, existentialism, and ending in deconstruction and several post-movements that merely ‘critique’ their ancestry rather than opt for paradigmatic change. An important common denominator of these related approaches is their phenomenological ‘perceptualist’ fallacy of trying to look at concepts directly, which fuses (and confuses) the two levels of perception and conceptualization into one, and hence ignores the psychological negotiations of cognitive construction. A hermeneutic and supposedly objectivist ‘textualist’ approach should be replaced by a pragmatist credo of contextualization and attitudes influenced by certain views of the life sciences. Conclusive examples from American literature show that the canonized writers have always commented on this issue and questioned the relationship of concepts and reality in their work.

KEYWORDS: exchange value, long modernism, perceptualism,

universal “theory,” interdisciplinarity, theory transfer, feedback vs. hermeneutics, dialectics, idealism, phenomenology, referentiality, negativity, logical positivism, poststructuralism, postmodernism, pragmatism, constructivism, Jonathan Culler, William James, Rudolf Steiner, Mikhail Bakhtin, Martin Jay, G.W.F. Hegel, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, Friedrich Nietzsche, Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Faulkner, Thomas Pynchon

The basic points of this essay are mere hypotheses: they are claims based on certain assumptions, and they should be contradicted. I see my contribution to the 2010 East/West Cultural Passage conference as dialogic, as hopefully a thought-provoking effort to renegotiate some established scientific assumptions. I will first pick up the notion of ‘exchange value’ from Marxism in order to prepare the ground for my criticism of ‘universal theory’ and certain kinds of what I consider ‘thin’ interdisciplinarity. The main part of this article discusses formalism as the main culprit in a genealogy of what I call ‘the long modernism.’ Let it be understood, from the beginning, that my aim is *not* to criticize Modernist art, but to question the premises of modernist philosophy, of the serious discipline—often overly serious and without the dada humor, the experiment, the craziness—from its origins to its late-late, post-post manifestations. This will then lead me on to issues of the grounding of knowledge and, hopefully, to an alternative theoretical framework and a few observations on American Studies proper.

Let me suggest an analogy between a Marxian observation about Capitalism and my own views about any currency of ‘universal theory.’ Marx observed in Capitalism a tendency of reducing the value of everything to ‘capital’ as a currency of money, the nature of which he expressed very well in his notion of two kinds of value: a primary value or ‘use value’ (*Sachwert*) and a secondary value or ‘exchange value’ (*Tauschwert*). Thus a pencil has a certain value as a pencil: you can *use* it to write with. But it also has an exchange value when you *trade it* for another item, say

for shoes or for meat, etc. Marx's point was that it lies in the nature of Capitalism that it favors the secondary kind of value over the primary kind—an emphasis that manifests itself in the prioritizing of 'capital' or money as a measurement of precisely such exchange value. In Capitalism the value of things is reduced to their function of being bought and sold. Capitalism thus can be seen as a kind of universal theory of economics that applies to everything, which it puts into a single category of compatibility. At the same time it is made clear by Marx that this reduces all things to their function within that system, i.e., use value is downgraded as secondary and this reversal of original functions creates alienation.

However, even the notion of real money as a universal currency of exchange is questionable. Think of the disappearance of certain currencies, say, the East-German mark or the Confederate dollar in the American South at the end of the Civil War. These former 'currencies' are without reference; they are valueless nowadays. Thus the grounding of capital in reality is not absolute—it depends on power, banks, markets, etc. We may want to compare such shifts to what is considered a paradigm change in the scientific world. This teaches us also that money is a mere *representation* of value. Thus, we can conclude that capitalism is not really materialistic but rather a form of 'anti-materialism,' a kind of one-dimensional comparative projection. It is actually opposed to the real nature of 'things' and their use. There is something thin, abstract, unreal about it.

This is why I also worry about alienation in universal theory, about the belief in a methodological filter that should frame *all* knowledge. This smacks of philosophy as *Königsdisziplin*, as the queen of all the sciences that must necessarily precede all others for epistemological reasons. In our domain, American Studies, this role has been taken over by poststructuralism as a metatheory, or what Jonathan Culler calls 'theory' *tout court*. Note the close association of it with 'text' or 'language' in the following illustrative excerpts:

It might be called 'textual theory,' if *text* is understood as 'whatever

is articulated by language,' but the most convenient designation is simply the nickname 'theory.'

... what distinguishes the members of this genre is their ability to function not as demonstrations within the parameters of a discipline but as redescriptions that challenge disciplinary boundaries.

... sometimes called 'critical theory,' or even 'literary theory,' rather than 'philosophy.'

... it is literary theorists who have done most to constitute the genre of 'theory.' (Culler 8-10)

We have here a theory that simply applies to... everything that is relevant!

Culler's last statement is very telling as he emphasizes that literary theorists have been the main force behind this paradigm. And it is this setup that has determined our very approach towards interdisciplinary issues—one that has been pre-screened by a literary sensibility that, moreover, has often been formalist. For the influence of linguistics, see structuralism; of philosophy, see deconstruction; of psychology, see the narratives of Freud and Lacan; of history, see the tropes of Hayden White; of anthropology, see the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss and the 'thick descriptions' of Clifford Geertz. These are merely some of the most obvious examples. The embarrassing limitation of these particular 'outside' connections is that they do not *really* come from the outside and that all of these reference scientists from other disciplines have actually been interested in the application of literary structures to their own disciplines in the first place. Thus mostly we are copying from them what they have first copied from us: structure, form, contrast, hermeneutics, negativity, alterity, rhetoric, subtexts, close reading, etc. And as cognitive scientists would object: these methodologies stay limited to the humanities in the sense of *Geisteswissenschaften* and basically hermeneuticist approaches. Such approaches know a lot about signs and how they relate to other signs, but they fundamentally operate within the playpen of

the ‘map’ only, and then claim that nothing else exists.

This raises the question of what kind of interdisciplinary turn we want. Should we really try to create a methodology *for all* sciences? Or does ‘interdisciplinary’ in the real sense rather mean that we should *borrow* methodology *from* other sciences? That we should *try out* other practices? Put ourselves in their shoes? Subject ourselves to their perspective? There is an element of empathy, a certain risk, involved in this venturing outside one’s own system—but a truly interdisciplinary approach, I want to claim here, is when ‘we’ try out another discipline’s attitudes, the perspectives that ‘they’ take for granted, their ethos, or *Weltbild*. There is an element of metaphor, of real disciplinary transfer involved, a creative agency that should connect a field of origin to a field of application.

In order to integrate this pragmatic dimension, let me invoke Piagetian notions of reality ‘adaptation’ that are not merely based on hermeneutic subtexts or hermeneutic circularities, but on ‘feedback loops,’ on the real interaction of an organism in an environment. This involves on the one hand bottom-up knowledge gained from experience. Jean Piaget calls this ‘accommodation.’ And it is at the same time complemented by top-down appropriation of experience, called ‘assimilation’ by Piaget. Remember that the map is not the territory, but the two things are constantly readjusted in our learning experience. The origin of this alternative model is in a psychology of human behavior that contextualizes the function of signs in interaction.

A very specific kind of such top-down and bottom-up readjusting can also be found in Michael Bakhtin’s ‘dialogic’ notion of language, where “[t]he word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes one’s own only when the speaker populates it with his own intention” (1981: 293). Bakhtin, a Soviet citizen who grew up surrounded by the ideology of dialectics, rejects all formalist mechanical logic. He contends that all language originates in human beings. Even the half that belongs to “someone” other than the user has its origins in human experience. There is no such thing as abstract language without origin: the ‘maker’ of language always comes first, as Bakhtin insists: “...certain kinds of internally

persuasive discourse can be fundamentally and organically fused with the image of a speaking person: ethical (discourse fused with the image of, let us say, a preacher), philosophical (discourse fused with the image of a wise man), sociopolitical (discourse fused with an image of a Leader)” (347). One doesn’t have to agree with each specific category here, but Bakhtin’s point about language referentiality is clear.

An example from American Studies will illustrate my concern with representational origins. Many years ago, in New Jersey, I heard Carol Gilligan talk about her new book *In a Different Voice*. It is a feminist *critique* of her teacher, the famous Harvard psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, whose seminal research on the moral development of boys is well known.¹ Gilligan rightly argues that her mentor’s model only applies to boys and that the situation looks very different if we do similar experiments with girls. She became a heroine of gender studies with her theory that the moral decisions of boys are more based on justice, whereas girls foreground relationships. Boys believe in individualism and abstract truth; girls are social and try to negotiate. Gilligan’s book was of course cited internationally and her differentiation was used to map many other territories beyond the kindergarten scene in Cambridge, Mass.

I remember that when I heard Carol Gilligan speak about the values of men and the values of women, I thought: isn’t this basically a liberal credo vs. a social-democratic credo? I could see that kind of gender division in the United States, given its history—but would the situation be the same in, say, Scandinavia? In countries where gender roles are not the same as in America? Thus rather than a gender issue, I saw, and still see, a cultural issue that

¹ Kohlberg did experiments on decision-taking predicaments and came up with a theory of different stages of moral development, moving from ‘pre-conventional’ on to ‘conventional’ and finally ‘post-conventional’ behavior, i.e., first you simply obey because you fear punishment, then you internalize the values of your environment (your values become ‘conventional’), and finally, you are able to overcome this kind of brainwashing and you can—hopefully—develop your own value system.

applies to a particular society. Knowledge comes out of a particular reality configuration and it reflects back on it. It maps it and applies to it. Hence once we do transfer knowledge from one territory to another, we have to be extremely careful and think hard about the scope of its applicability.

In the case of Gilligan, the internationally leading position of U.S. American research, manifested in the hegemonic role of University Presses is noticeable—not only on the U.S. market but internationally. This leads to all kinds of theoretical pressures that can create questionable applications of theory. Let me in this context also make a short comment on the often-praised project of the so-called ‘Internationalization of American Studies.’ Much depends on the function of the word ‘of’ within the name of the project: is this a partitive or a possessive genitive? Does the international scene become a *part of* American Studies or does it take *possession of* it? Will American Studies *subject itself* to internationalization (in a passive gesture) or will American Studies rather *make itself* International Studies (in an active gesture of appropriation)? I have no easy answer to this, but the hegemonic position of the Anglo-American scientific discourse may in some situations make the agency of well-intended ‘internationalization’ backfire.

A good example is my experience at the former ‘Salzburg Seminar,’ a powerhouse of American Studies in Europe which has provided me with an amazing number of professional connections. Recently, it has internationalized, and it is now called the ‘Salzburg Global Seminar.’ This is a good, logical development I think I can approve of. Nevertheless, we should stay aware that this wonderful foundation in Austria is basically in U.S. American hands: funding, program organization, the common language, cultural assumptions, etc. We should hence expect that this outlook on things ‘global’ is in many ways American. An interesting legal example in terms of such international cultural unilateralism is a book written by my Swiss *compatriote* Gret Haller on the U.S. American diplomatic involvement in Bosnia. As a United Nations *ombudsperson* for human rights, she makes many interesting observations about the

imposition of an unquestioned and highly problematic American legal culture on this new nation—which is, significantly, still dysfunctional without international supervision.

As a Swiss who is teaching in France I am slowly learning that there is a certain virtue in doing American Studies outside of *American* American Studies—possibly even in a foreign language, and with a strong awareness of its outside perspective: a discourse big enough and strong enough to function as an alternative. I have recently quite often found myself say: “It’s not that I don’t understand the dominant American perspective, but I think it is based on certain hegemonic fashions and therefore not very exciting.” Sometimes I simply want to go beyond the loud discourse of American loudspeakers and ask different questions. I think this attitude can best be expressed with the example of one of my heroes, William James, and his refusal to officially join the newly founded *American Medical Association*. James’s refusal to join the AMA was quite a scandal. Here was America’s most famous physician, celebrated Harvard professor with an international reputation, and he did not support this new professional organization that was trying to elevate doctors from the reputation of quacks. James’s argument, according to his biographer Ralph Perry, was that medical knowledge “is highly imperfect and rapidly changing, and experience should be welcomed from any source” (243). A famous example is James’s lecture series “Abnormal Mental States,” on “Dreams and Hypnotism,” “Hysteria,” “Automatisms,” “Multiple Personality,” “Demoniacal Possession,” “Witchcraft,” “Degeneration,” or “Genius” (Perry 207).

My basic orientation is that of a pragmatist who believes in empirical feedback and the knowledge we can gain from experience—which has nothing to do with positivism or the positivist caricatures of science we sometimes get from poststructuralists. It merely implies that knowledge comes out of a certain experience and that it reflects back on that experience—which is why we have to be very careful when we do theory transfers: we may be forcing things into inappropriate frameworks.

And if a hegemonic context is given, we may not even notice it. This is why my next topic is the ‘long modernism.’ I argue that we should forget about many of the recent ‘post-’ movements (and maybe even about some of the ‘new-’ movements) as being all that different from their predecessors and instead lump them together as (often) mere varieties of formalism. Again, this does not at all mean that I in any way intend to demean modernist art or postmodernist art, or any other post- or neo- art. Artists are creative. They are allowed to do whatever they want. And there are always fantastic artists around. What I am concerned with is the critical discourse that evaluates all of this art and that has recently to some extent tried to outgrow it and turn itself into ‘theory’ as some kind of ontological philosophy that sees itself at the origin of any kind of insight.

So my point is to show that the 20th century was the century of formalism and to explain why I am in a way glad it’s over. There is something conceptually limited about this paradigm that needs to be criticized. Formalism has not been overcome but has merely evolved; it was renamed, deconstructed, ‘critiqued’—but never really criticized. New Critical ambiguity turned into poststructuralist undecidability; logical positivism into grammatology. There are all kinds of proto-formalist elements that connect 19th-century idealism with early 20th-century modernism and even with the deconstructed late 20th-century concepts still taught at and sometimes even dominating the most prestigious graduate schools around the globe. Of course such a sweeping claim is hard to prove and this is why I can only try to make a dent, point at some issues that I consider crucial and illustrative of my point.

To prepare you, let me present you with the concept of ‘perceptualism,’ by which I mean a reductionist assimilation of the rules of human thinking or conceptualization to the rules of perception. Instead of having two steps, a first one of sensory perception and a second one of conceptualization or cognitive processing, the understanding of reality is flattened out into a single dimension that tries to access concepts directly, as if they were

percepts themselves that you can see directly. The postmodern simulacrum is a good example of this WYSIWYG strategy: “what you see is what you get.” Seeing is believing. Knowledge is reduced to what you can see. Notice that learning in time, through experience, does not exist in such a model. Knowledge is *in* the percept, not in the perceiver or a sense of understanding he or she might possibly have.

Modernism’s strong awareness of this can be found in the notion of non-representational art, the aesthetic courting of mere color and form, an impressionism (or expressionism, for that matter) without referent. Such pure aesthetics can still be connected to ideas, however: here is a fascinating example that suggests possible connections between Modernist masters and old-fashioned romantic idealism. In 1987, the UC Berkeley Art Museum featured a fantastic exhibition on the connections between Rudolf Steiner, the famous founder of theosophy, and the young painters Mondrian, Jawlensky, Kandinsky, who had attended his lectures. The exhibit showed Steiner’s chalk drawings full of colorful arrows moving in all directions making his metaphysical points. At the origins of his drawings are highly complex (and often confused) idealistic conceptualizations. The exhibit suggested that modernist painters may have been influenced by this, although they shed Steiner’s conceptualistic origins and treated the form as primary, not as the result of knowledge but as something to perceive directly. This is possibly why the artists’ pictures are of course much better than Steiner’s.

I see similarly idealistic origins in what is generally called the phenomenological approach to knowledge at the origin of the sin of ‘perceptualism.’ Consider first the early use of the word by Georg Friedrich Hegel in his *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. It is clear that his original dialectic is one of spiritual forces (“ghost-spirit”) and ultimate top-down agency. The fact that Marx later on stood Hegel on his head and claimed that the base was the agent, not the superstructure, does unfortunately not really change much in the nature of this conceptualistic formalization because Marx kept the reciprocal notion of dialectics, of a mechanical kind of

interaction as a force of History. Again, the issue is well described by Bakhtin, who draws a cogent distinction between dialectics and dialogue: “Dialogue and dialectics. Take a dialogue and remove the voices (the partition of voices), remove the intonations (emotional and individualizing ones), carve out abstract concepts and judgments from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness—and that’s how you get dialectics” (1986: 147). Dialogue stands for voices; dialectics only for dead words and lack of real interaction.

Serious phenomenology starts with Edmund Husserl and his notion of *Wesensschau*, of looking at essences. As Martin Jay writes: “That Husserl chose to call the eidetic intuition a *Wesensschau* (literally a look into essences) suggests the persistence of ocularcentric premises in his thought” (267). Note the glaring conceptualist shortcut: instead of using one’s sensory organs to perceive our environment and then construct knowledge on the basis of perception, conceptualizations are prioritized and supposedly perceived directly in order to give “intuitive insights into essences.” In a simplified version: phenomenology looks at ideas instead of things. This is what I mean by the mistake of perceptualism. Significantly, Jay’s book is titled *Downcast Eyes* and it interrogates the denigration of sight—but only in the perceptual sense, not when it comes to conceptualizing:

When ‘the’ story of the eye is understood as polyphonic—or rather, polyscopic—narrative, we are in less danger of being trapped in an evil empire of the gaze, fixated in a single mirror stage of development, or frozen by the medusan, ontologizing look of the other. Permanently ‘downcast eyes’ are no solution to these and other dangers in visual experience. (592)

It is precisely this theoretical confusion of “polyphonic” and “polyscopic” that is at the origin of perceptualist conceptualization.

I think there is also a connection from Husserl to his student Heidegger and Heidegger’s ‘intuitive’ connection of subject and object in a hermeneutic circle—a purely conceptualist activity that bypasses sensory perception. Heidegger looked for meaning in

etymology, often punning and turning nouns into verbs in examples like “Die Zeit zeitigt!,” or turning processes into nouns when talking about “das Seiende.” In his existentialist vision, words can do things without any precondition of pragmatic felicity. We are operating within the map itself; conceptualist interiorization is caught in a hermeneutic circularity of signs.

This kind of meaning that literally comes out of words is in line with an understanding of reality that we also find in Derrida, who has the innocuous colonial credentials that enabled him to salvage certain kinds of Modernist German thought from their tainted origins. In France Derrida could continue certain lines of thought and go down paths where young Germans did not want to tread. Note the common denominator of conceptualist grounding: there is nothing to perceive except words, or, as Derrida has it: “*Il n’y pas de hors-texte.*” To my knowledge, he has never recanted his opinion that there is no rapport outside language and that language is ruled neither by dialogue nor by dialectics, but by ‘grammatology,’ where the perception of difference is not merely sensory but in itself also conceptual. The only entities of perception accepted are conceptual structures and all we can do is deconstruct them in order to arrive at new meanings. This brings to mind the technical term ‘deconstruction’ in the construction business, where it stands for ‘recycling’: old materials are reintegrated into new buildings.

My next point is on negativity as a typical result of perceptualism, of looking at concepts as if they were objects of perception. A great many strategies, of negativity, alterity, difference, and many similar concepts, are based on this: in order to arrive outside a given conceptual framework, negativity merely inverts the given set of concepts—but they remain locked within the same *gestalt*, i.e., the ‘ground’ is determined by the ‘figure’! I argue that this only creates pseudo-pluralism because it is merely looking at the backside of the given paradigm. Norman Mailer’s *The White Negro*, for example, is not really ‘black.’ As I have written in an article on Toni Morrison: if you attend a ‘negro ball’ at the carnival in Switzerland, you will not learn much about real

black people. Or, to put this in a negative chiasm: “Your own ignorance does not correspond to the knowledge of the other!”²

Again, James proves relevant when he discusses negation in Hegel: “The word ‘negation’ taken *simpliciter* is treated as if it covered an indefinite number of *secundums*, culminating in the very peculiar one of self-negation. Whence finally the conclusion is drawn that assertions are universally self-contradictory” (1956: 287, original italics). Here he basically describes what poststructuralists hail as “undecidability.” And on “negative judgment,” James writes:

Every negation must be an intellectual act. ... A negation says something *about an affirmation*,—namely, that it is false. There are no negative predicates or falsities in nature. Being makes no false hypotheses that have to be contradicted. The only denials she can be in any way constructed to perform are denials of our errors. This shows plainly enough that denial must be of something mental, since the thing denied is always a fiction. (290-291, original italics)

Negation thus is conceptually grounded and therefore always secondary to a primary concept; its very origin is what James calls “intellectual.” It is at least two steps removed from empirical experience. Notice that ‘being’ for James is not just the outcome of the word ‘to be’ but a pre-lingual phenomenon.

This cluster of formalist ideas also connects with so-called analytical philosophy and logical positivism. These philosophers, whose careers roughly coincide with the rise of Modernism, looked for absolute knowledge in mathematical formulas. Again the reality they were concerned with was one of signs and abstractions. William James, the old pragmatist philosopher who had opposed the neo-Hegelians in his youth, also rejected the “vicious intellectualism” of these young guns, arguing that “Reality, life, experience, concreteness, immediacy, use what word you will, exceeds our logic, overflows and surrounds it” (1971: 222).

² Chiasm, by the way, is the master trope of poststructuralist argumentation.

Concepts go beyond hermeneutics; they must be part of a feedback circularity: “Only insofar as they lead us, successfully or unsuccessfully, back into sensible experience again, are our abstracts and universals true or false at all” (1971: 53). And therefore: “Logic being the lesser thing, the static incomplete abstraction, must succumb to reality, not reality to logic” (1971: 220). Hence James writes in a letter about the new formalist philosophy of his time: “I am *a*-logical, if not illogical, and glad to be so when I find Bertie Russell trying to excogitate what true knowledge means in the absence of any concrete universe surrounding the knower and the known. Ass!” (qtd. in Perry 368).³

Even if we can connect formalist theory with idealism because of its *eidetic* conceptualist nature or its textualist top-down qualities, at some point the similarities stop, due to formalism’s seriously anti-ethical stance. The severed referentiality breeds moral irresponsibility. This is especially noticeable in its postmodern aspect, which likes to go back to Friedrich Nietzsche and his much quoted 1873 essay “Über Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne,” translated as “On Truth and Lies in an Extra-Moral Sense” and required reading for every American graduate student in our field. Because there is no direct grounding of concepts, there is no moral way to differentiate between truth and lie: there is no pragmatic connection between concepts and behavior, no *sensus moralis* that tells you what you are expected to do. Thus, there is a fundamental anti-foundationalism at the heart of postmodern philosophy and its *conceptualist kind of constructivism*. This kind of constructivism denies reality categorically and is therefore in crucial ways very different from the radical empiricist type of constructivism in Jamesian pragmatism, which also sees a constructed map, but presupposes an empirical reality behind it—a territory beyond signs. The main problem with the anti-foundationalist postmodern kind of constructivism is that its absolutist negation of reality ultimately fosters a denial of

³ On this issue also see my discussion of Jamesian “vicious intellectualism” (2002: 44-47).

responsibility, which sometimes manifests itself in highly irresponsible calls to violence by some of its radical proponents such as Jean Baudrillard and Guy Debord.⁴ (Or Malcolm McLaren's *Sex Pistols*, for that matter: McLaren was an admirer of Baudrillard.) Postmodernism's autistic stance is in my opinion also at the origin of claims about conceptualist enclosure, manifested, for example, in Frederic Jameson's notion of the 'prison-house of language.' What Jameson presents as a conclusion is merely the consequence of his textualist premises.

All of this being said, let me make it clear that I love postmodern literature. I have no objection to an art that is trying to get out of any prison-house I ever heard of. My contention is only with the humorless theorists and their reductionist conclusions. My notion of a 'long modernism' puts the formalist elements of much 20th-century theory under a single heading, one that is opposed to empirical, pragmatist, or cognitive insights because in its flat and timeless structures it muddles up issues of momentary perception and temporal understanding in logical engines what will never do justice to life. I have elaborated on formalism as possibly evolving

⁴ Baudrillard sees things as follows:

It is necessary to transform this rotting into a violent process, into violent death, through mockery and defiance, through a multiplied simulation that would offer the ritual of the death of the university as the model of decomposition to the whole of society, a contagious model of the disaffection of the whole social structure, where death would finally make its ravages... (150)

He shares this wish for destruction with his postmodern colleague Guy Debord, who expects

a new spontaneous struggle emerging under the sign of *criminality*...a second proletarian onslaught on class society. When the *enfants perdus* of this as yet immobile horde enter once again upon the battlefield, which has changed yet stayed the same, a new General Ludd will be at their head—leading them this time in an onslaught on the *machinery of permitted consumption*. (86)

from idealism, as concept-based and thus top-down-, or sign-oriented. I have mentioned its logical nature, its atemporality, its projective appropriation of alterity, its non-referentiality, and its, to say the least, problematic extra-moral stance. I have not touched upon the fact that in the middle of this formalist development we have the phenomenon of Fascism in which some important Modernist figureheads were involved. That is a can of worms I am not yet ready to open, but it is obvious that Fascist thought (beyond primitive brutality) cannot really be dissociated from the formalist paradigm and that there may be some intrinsic systemic reasons why formalist theory behaves the way it does.

The radicalism of these theoretical configurations has in many ways made American Studies vulnerable. As a discipline it is no longer taken seriously outside of its own domain. The fact that George W. Bush was reelected in 2004 is a telling fact: some of my American colleagues who have been teaching the college-educated constituency of American voters did not prepare their students for the real issues. I see formalist or late-structuralist theory nowadays as much like the extinct capitalist currencies of yore. Like the capital of Marx, these supposedly universally applicable theories have alienated us from reality, limiting understanding to their own grammatology. Rather than opposing post-Fordian culture, the radical theorists have in certain ways imitated its capitalist thinness in their abstractions.

So, where is the alternative? I contend that William James may provide a more rewarding understanding of the modern world. I believe that our knowledge should be grounded in experience and that this experience is monitored through our sensory organs. I believe in a paradigm of understanding that is not conceptualist or textualist, not hermeneuticist and merely negotiating signs, but based on the processing of information by living beings. Our knowledge of things should not be reduced to knowledge about signs and hence to a grammar of language. Rather than differentiating between 'hard' and 'soft' sciences, I would like the humanities to share certain assumptions of the life sciences. Such an orientation may clash with the formalists and much of modernist

and late-modernist theory, but it is absolutely compatible with notions such as Bakhtin's dialogism, old-style pragmatism, or linguistics of a cognitive kind. I seek to propagate a constructivist model, but one that is based on *cognitive* construction. I see the crucial signifier in the signifying monkey himself, i.e., in the interacting person who uses language as a tool in order to operate within his or her environment. To be sure, sometimes the tail wags the dog and language makes us say—and even do—things that we never intended to, but that's not the rule. Often we *can* navigate reality successfully.

To return to our basic question: what does this mean for American Studies? Basically, not much. We may have to give up the hope of getting a grip on our subject through some magic wand of abstract theory that will provide the meaning before we've read the books. But the richness of the material and the creativity of discussion will remain. We can still look at the whole reality of American culture and discuss races, genders, classes, regions, specific topics, live styles, genres, etc. Some new issues should be added. We may also start discussing 'nation'—an often neglected issue in post-national studies—and maybe connect its relevance with a better understanding of the 'law' and legal issues of social interaction. After all, certain nations attract refugees, and others provide them. The field is rich and it is still there for us to explore.

Let me add that we can find a lot of theorizing within the literature itself as it strives to make sense of life. We can learn from these arguments. I conclude with three examples that deal with the 'upstairs' and thus critique the very complexities of concept-based reality. My first case, the first floor of Hawthorne's "Custom-House," is still fairly ambivalent, a place that inspires the author in his definition of 'romance,' "where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet" in a mixture of "magic moonshine" and a "somewhat dim coal-fire." "This warmer light mingles itself with the cold spirituality of the moonbeams" in the "looking-glass" (29). Hawthorne the trickster wants representation to go both ways. Still, in the course of the tale, we find him often on the experiential side and in search of more humane ways of understanding, particularly

in his criticism of the Puritans.

A true satire of the ‘upstairs’ can be found in Faulkner’s *Absalom, Absalom!*, in his episode about the escape of the French architect, who tried to elude the dogs by moving across the landscape from tree to tree:

...because the dogs had faulted. That is, they had treed—a tree from which he (the architect) could not have escaped yet which he had undoubtedly mounted...and it was three hours before they comprehended that the architect had used architecture, physics, to elude them as a man always falls back upon what he knows best in a crisis—...he had chosen that tree and hauled that pole up after him and calculated stress and distance and trajectory and had crossed a gap to the next nearest tree that a flying squirrel could not have crossed and traveled from there on from tree to tree for almost half a mile before he put foot on the ground again. It was three hours before one of the wild niggers (the dogs wouldn’t leave the tree; they said he was in it) found where he had come down. (196)

This Frenchman who built such a magnificent mansion can create a shell for Sutpen’s crazy scheme of becoming a God-like slave master, but we know that this house will ultimately be haunted and collapse. Similarly, the architect tries to escape by climbing from tree to tree and staying upstairs, but at some point he has to come down, and this is when he gets caught.⁵

I find the same basic message in Thomas Pynchon’s *Gravity’s Rainbow* and its famous opening, “A screaming comes across the sky. It has happened before, but there is nothing to compare it to now.” Pynchon’s book is clearly postmodern, concerned with atemporality, the causal complexities of the laws of thermodynamics, the negativity of the ‘Schwarzkommando,’ etc., and all of this in the context of Nazi Germany. Pynchon’s

⁵ An interesting topic to discuss here might also be the ‘upstairs’ of Sutpen’s mansion, where Bon’s body is hidden and Henry Sutpen dies—an upstairs thematized in two important staircase scenes with Rosa Coldfield.

preoccupation with the V2 rockets—like Faulkner’s with the French architect—implies that *what goes up must come down*. We may play with all of these ideas, but the rainbow always comes at the cost of gravity.

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The Impact of Global English on Linguistic Minorities in
Romania and Moldova:
Global Integration or American Cultural Imperialism?

MATTHEW CISCEL
Central Connecticut State University

ABSTRACT

The role of English as an international and European lingua franca has increased significantly in Romania and the Republic of Moldova since the end of Communist authoritarianism two decades ago. In many ways, increased knowledge and use of English for various functions in these two countries, as elsewhere, has facilitated their gradual integration into global institutions and economics. However, along with such benefits, the adoption of a global language presents certain risks. Crystal (1996:13) identifies the primary danger that, “such a language would make other languages unnecessary,” initially displacing other foreign and minority languages. This paper will draw on data about language attitudes collected in Moldova (in 2003) and Romania (in 2010) to argue that regardless of whether it is used for global integration or cultural imperialism (Phillipson 1992, 2008), the (American) English language appeals to young people in these two countries to such a degree that other minority and foreign languages are often seen as unnecessary or at least less motivating to learn. In sum, the global dominance of (American) English provides opportunities for social integration and economic growth, but it also advantages a distant foreign tongue and displaces local minority and neighboring foreign tongues.

KEYWORDS: Global English, Romania, Moldova, imperialism, linguistic minorities, language education

Over the past half century, the English language has increased its global presence at an ever increasing pace. Many new technologies in communication and transportation have globalized the economies and societies of many regions that were previously untouched by or otherwise insulated from dominant cultures and languages, like English. In the Romanian-speaking corner of the European continent, a modest influence of the English language throughout most of the twentieth century was rapidly intensified after the end of Communist authoritarianism, as local language choices and international connections were freed up. This paper seeks to take a critical approach to the role of English, and American English in particular, in contemporary Romania and the Republic of Moldova (from here, Moldova). In the process, the paper will address issues related to the use and status of minority languages, foreign languages, and English in particular within these societies. However, this introduction will first address some key terminology and concepts in the study of English as a global language.

First, the term “language” itself is one that can be used in a variety of ways and can be misunderstood. This article does not address language as the general human capacity to speak and understand. Instead, it is focused on individual languages as specific normative systems of communication in a particular community. A language like English or Romanian in this sense is often understood popularly as a pure system of communication that is a crucial component of national identity. However, the average non-linguist often misunderstands this ideological role of languages as being tied to their structural features. Under this misunderstanding, non-standard dialects and mixed varieties of language are often perceived as broken versions of a pure ideal. Linguists who study languages scientifically and objectively, however, recognize that idealized standard varieties of a language like Romanian or English are not structurally superior or more pure or better at fulfilling the communicative function of human language than non-standard varieties. In other words, all varieties of language, whether standard, non-standard, or mixed, are internally

structurally systematic and capable of communicating any idea or information. Indeed, the linguist thinks of a language like English or Romanian as a bundle of related dialects that are ideologically bound together, represented by an ideal standard that is itself rarely actually used in its pure, idealized form, even in the educational and governmental institutions that support the ideology of that standard. As such, a language is a bundle of relatively more or less standard-like dialects rather than existing outside of actual usage, as in the popular imagination.

What makes the standard more prestigious is its social and ideological status compared to markedly non-standard varieties. This hierarchical status of various dialects is part of what language is and how it communicates the status and authority of particular speakers in specific contexts. In sum, dialects (or varieties) of a language may be structurally equal in their potential to communicate ideas, but they are not equal in the ideological force they bring to representing the position of speakers within society. An aphorism often attributed to the Yiddish linguist Max Weinreich asserts that a language is merely a dialect with an army and a navy. Indeed, the label used to identify the majority and official language in the Republic of Moldova illustrates this principle quite clearly. In the constitution of that country, the language is called Moldovan, reflecting the considerable political and even military power still exerted over the region by political players in Moldova and Russia who prefer the Russian-dominated approach to language issues from the Soviet era to that of the reformists who have moved toward a Romanian identity and label for the majority language. Scientifically, it is clear that the majority language is a very close dialect of Romanian, but the identity and label used for the language is also a political and ideological issue. The same could be said for any language, including standard American English. Why not just call it American instead of clinging to this ideology of Englishness? The answer is more political and ideological than structural, although the structural similarities between British and American standards help to reinforce the ideological tendency toward a unified concept of Englishness. In the remainder of this

paper, the term “language” will be used to refer to standard varieties of the treated languages, but the linguistic understanding of these concepts as both structural and ideological is intended and could at times be a crucial element of the addressed issues.

Related to the ideological unity (or disunity) of a language is the way that the spread of English around the world is defined. The title of this article refers to “global English,” but this term can also be understood as ideologically loaded. Some linguists study English in the world as a cohesive, unitary language, often studying or emphasizing international standard usage or common features across wide-ranging locales and dialects (Crystal 2003; Quirk 1990). They often prefer the term “global English” because it is singular and represents this unitary ideology. But other researchers and scholars (such as Kachru 1983) have focused on the divergence of usage and the role of local creativity in English as it spreads. For example, Kachru’s three concentric circles model of what he calls “World Englishes” (with the emphasis on the plural form) argues that new standard varieties continue to emerge in different national and regional contexts around the English-speaking world (1983:36). By this model, there are Inner Circle varieties of English, such as the British, Irish, American, and Australian varieties, which have arisen in largely monolingual and English dominant countries and regions. In addition, there are Outer Circle varieties of English emerging as localized standards in places like India, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Nigeria, where a post-colonial experience mixes English features with features of other dominant local languages. Finally, the model suggests an Expanding Circle of English where English is an increasing dominant foreign language used by elites or in specialized fields. This circle comprises the rest of the world, including Romania, Moldova, the E.U., Russia, and many other places such as China and Latin America. Those who prefer this centrifugal approach to the spread of English often use the term “world Englishes,” while those who espouse a centripetal approach choose the term “global English.”

It is not the purpose of this article to argue for one or another of these positions, but rather to look at the details of English's growing position in the Romanian-speaking corner of Europe. As such, terms will be used interchangeably, but with greater use of the term "global English," in order to emphasize the economic and cultural dominance of American English in many public functions of English in the Expanding Circle rather than in an attempt to support an explicitly centripetal ideology of English in the world today.

Another term that warrants some discussion is "lingua franca." This term normally refers to a language that is used across a broad and diverse region as the language of inter-group communication. This language is usually also the dominant language across the groups. Global English has been called the first truly global lingua franca. Certainly, within Europe, where the term first arose to indicate the dominance of the Frankish or early French language, English has increased its reach and prestige since the end of Communist authoritarianism. At the end of World War II, American and British influence led to a rapid spread of English dominance in Western Europe. However, there was greater ambivalence toward this language in Soviet dominated Central and Eastern Europe. English was taught, primarily to social and educational elites, through rote learning of a nineteenth-century British standard, but curiosity about contemporary varieties or Western culture was suppressed or at least viewed with suspicion by Communist authorities. English was, in essence, forced to take a backseat to Russian as the preferred lingua franca of Communist Eastern Europe. In Romania, this trend was less evident than under regimes with closer ties to Moscow like Moldova or East Germany, but in any case, English was functionally and politically restricted under authoritarian Communism.

After 1989, the Western lingua franca experienced rapid expansion in most countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Romania and Moldova. Russian teachers in some countries were retrained to teach English instead (Prendergast 2008). New methods were employed, and new schools opened

across the region (Mihai 2004). Schoolchildren and parents flocked to schools with English language courses and reshaped the landscape of foreign language education in their respective countries. As the European Union (EU) has expanded eastward, the policies and realities of Western European countries have been gradually implemented. Officially, the EU is multilingual, promoting both national and minority languages in each member country. However, English has increased its role as the *de facto* language of communication within EU institutions and non-governmental organizations (Lasagabaster 2005). As an example of this, proficiency in English has been widely recognized within Eastern European societies as one of the litmus tests of Westernization, employability, and even Europeanization as the EU zone moves eastward (Prendergast 2008). In this sense, English is not only a globalizing language, but also a *lingua franca*, in the traditional sense, within the economic, social, and governmental institutions of European nations, driven partially by integration into or aspirations for European Union membership.

After the initially euphoric embrace of English as a *lingua franca* in Eastern Europe that accompanied the end of Communism and the loosening of the official ambivalence toward English, a different sort of popular ambivalence has accompanied the continued transition to Western norms, including English dominance, for many in the region. This second type of ambivalence is well illustrated by Prendergast (2008) in her study of “buying into English” in post-Communist Slovakia. This ethnographic study followed a handful of Slovaks through the 1990s and toward European integration. One of them was a young artist named Maria. In the early 1990s, she was optimistic about democratization, reform, and the role of English in opening the world up to her. She eventually went to the United States to study and work as an artist. But she found that her accent in English and her status as a Central European marked her in her new life. Ultimately, she became disillusioned and returned to Slovakia. In most of the cases in the book, a similar initial optimism is tempered by the real limits of English as a language of opportunity for such

speakers. The irony is that as English has become more of a practical necessity, the stakes for learners have become higher and the tendency to be marked as a second-class speaker of English or as a “new” European or both has increased. This popular ambivalence is quite different from the official ambivalence of the Communist era in that it has a broader social effect and shifts the types of motivators that drive acquisition of English as a foreign language.

Along similar lines, while many have continued to view the role of English in Europe as mostly positive and constructive, even as liberating to some in the East, other voices have begun to criticize its status and function. For instance, the works of Robert Phillipson, a professor in Denmark, have promoted a critical approach to the global and European dominance of English. He characterizes this dominance as a form of linguistic imperialism, which he defines as, “the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (1992:47). Using arguments that echo traditional Marxist theory, he argues that the dominance of the English language supports American (and to a lesser degree British) economic hegemony, demonstrating that the institutions that promote English globally employ tactics similar to those used in the past by various branches of the British Empire and by the corporate, diplomatic, and military programs of current American global dominance. In a more recent article, Phillipson (2008) argues that English in the EU is a “lingua frankensteinia” rather than a lingua franca, because of the role of U.S. hegemony in its promotion and spread. He also notes that this dominance undermines the legal status of national languages and the linguistic rights of majority and minority language speakers in Europe. Although many criticize Phillipson for presenting an image of global English that is overly skewed toward the negative, he is also widely cited as providing a justified balance to the overly rosy picture of English’s role in the world that many other authors and researchers have portrayed.

Before entering into the discussion about the changing role of various foreign languages in the educational institutions of Romania and Moldova, a definition of foreignness and brief overviews of the two countries are needed. A foreign language is usually understood as one that is spoken neither broadly nor natively within a particular community or nation-state. Because most large countries have at least some linguistic minorities, the distinction between a minority and foreign language can be difficult to locate in some instances, requiring an approach that allows for some overlap in the use of the terms. For this study, foreign languages are those not used as the primary language of instruction in the schools, hence they are institutionally defined rather than by nativeness, which is a slippery term at best. The term “minority language” will be used to refer to an officially recognized language spoken natively by either an established (often localized) or immigrant (often dispersed) ethno-linguistic minority group in the country. For example, in Romania, Hungarian plays the role of a typical minority language, while French traditionally plays the role of the dominant foreign language.

In fact, as a country, Romania is notably homogenous in language and ethnicity. The majority language, Romanian, is spoken by almost ninety percent of the population. Standard Romanian is also very well established and dominant in the country, following successful standardization in the nineteenth century. Sizable linguistic minorities include the localized Hungarian speakers (6.5%), the dispersed Rromani speakers (3%), and the historically localized German minority, which was once almost as large as the Hungarian minority, but has dwindled to below one percent since 1989. Linguistic rights in Romania have been heavily politicized and contested, particularly by localized minorities, throughout its national history. As a member of the European Union, Romania complies today with norms for linguistic minority rights that include access to education in the minority language and rights to some local autonomy in language use. However, struggles continue for greater autonomy and recognition, particularly among the Hungarian speakers in certain regions.

Language issues and politics in the Republic of Moldova, in contrast, are much more diverse and complicated. The majority language (also Romanian) is spoken by three-fourths of the people under the central government and about a third of the people under the breakaway regime in Transnistria, totaling a more than two-thirds majority for the entire country (based on censuses in the two territories carried out in 2004; www.statistica.md). As already discussed above, the majority and official language is suffering from an identity crisis in Moldova, because some prefer to call it Moldovan, while others prefer the Romanian label. This crisis has its roots in the Soviet-era policy of Moldovan separateness. Aside from the weakness implied by this dual label problem, the majority language still shares considerable function and prestige in Moldovan society with the Russian language, which was dominant in urban areas during the Soviet period and continues to be maintained by a large and powerful minority, particularly in breakaway Transnistria. Aside from minority Russian, which is claimed as native by about fifteen percent of the population and as the preferred language by twice as many, there are localized minorities of Ukrainian, Gagauz, and Bulgarian speakers in the rural areas of Moldova. Linguistic rights are very highly politicized. Over the two decades since independence, disputes over the identity of the majority language or the status of Russian (which has been unofficial, but still *de facto* dominant in many functions) have led to many street demonstrations and political clashes. Many citizens and politicians prefer to avoid these topics altogether. The dispute over Transnistria that led to a brief civil war in 1992 was at least partly centered on issues of language politics and identities. The dominance of Russian in the region reflects the importance of Soviet-era industrial development and military presence there despite the fact that the population is evenly split among Romanian, Ukrainian, and Russian speakers. In sum, the Soviet imposition of dominant Russian and separate Moldovan continues to exert a notable impact on current language policy and practice despite some attempts to re-balance the situation toward the majority language.

The situation with foreign languages in the educational institutions of these two countries is in many ways simpler than the majority and minority language issues. French has long been the preferred language of study in Romania, having established this role in the nineteenth century, during Romanian nation-building, when French was not only the dominant *lingua franca* in Europe but also a crucially symbolic cultural bridge for the Romanians into closer contacts with the West European powers. The Latin roots of Romanian were emphasized to distance the new Romanian nation from its Slavic and Turkic neighbors. Proficiency in French sealed this connection. However, as English has become more dominant in the world and in Europe, it has displaced French in many of its old roles. This has happened in Romania in particular force since the end of Communism. When Romania joined the European Union in 2007, 51% of Romanian schoolchildren were learning English as the first foreign language, while 42% were learning French and 5% German. The statistical shift from French to English dominance in foreign language education in Romania had occurred in 2003. This process was partially facilitated by the introduction of two foreign languages in many institutions, including some elementary and many professional and trade schools, that had had only one before. Indeed, the shift happened in primary schools a few years earlier and in secondary and trade schools a few years later (see www.insse.ro for complete statistics).

In Moldova (excluding Transnistria, for which data is not available), 58.6% of schoolchildren were learning French in 2007 compared to only 46.6% learning English and 3.8% German. This data excludes the schoolchildren who were learning majority Romanian/Moldova in Russian medium schools as a mandatory subject and some who are still learning minority Russian in Romanian or other minority language medium schools, even though it has not been mandatory since the early 1990s. One other notable aspect of this foreign language data is that there is a considerable urban/rural split. The urban schoolchildren show patterns of language learning similar to that in Romania, with a shift to English as the preferred choice happening over the last ten years. However,

Moldova is still only about 40% urbanized, so the large number of rural schoolchildren still learning French helps to maintain this foreign language's dominance across the country. Poverty and lack of access to dominant languages are likely drivers of the continued dominance of French in the rural areas. In sum, the same shift toward English as a foreign language that has been recorded in Romania is underway in Moldova.

The role of English in Moldova is both limited and growing. Ciscel (2002) argued that English in places like Moldova is more opportunistic than imperialistic, because of its very limited accessibility and function in such places. It finds its way into elite, economic, and cultural discourses in small ways, but does not functionally displace dominant local languages in the Expanding Circle as it does in Outer Circle contexts like India or Nigeria (see Kachru 1983). On the other hand, as English draws the language learning motivation and interests of young people away from other foreign and local languages, it does begin to displace local minority and traditional foreign languages in institutions and in society at large. For instance, there is evidence in Moldova that the attraction to English among the youth has served as a wedge between linguistic majority (Romanian speaking) and minority (mostly Russian speaking) groups of youth, since they no longer put as much energy and attention into each other's languages and focus on English as the common global language instead (Ciscel 2010).

This pattern is probably also evident in the practices within the smaller minority communities in Romania. However, the paper will turn now instead to some data collected in early 2010 as part of a survey of foreign language motivations and attitudes in Sibiu, Romania. The goal of this survey was to better understand the causes and consequences of the shift toward English as the dominant foreign language in Romanian educational institutions. The study of language attitudes dates back to the mid-twentieth century, but little was done to investigate foreign language attitudes and motivations until just the last two decades (Dewaele 2005). Since then, a core of researches has applied language attitude and motivation methodologies to foreign as well as minority and

majority languages in a number of contexts. The survey data presented here partially replicates a study by Dornyei and Clement (2001) in Hungary and another by Humphreys and Spratt (2008) in Hong Kong. These studies explore a range of motivational dimensions to clarify the reasons for choosing one foreign language over another. In addition, the current study collected data on the level of proficiency attained in the foreign language and followed the survey up with semi-structured interviews with a subset of the subjects. Because data is still be coded and processed at this writing, only a preliminary glimpse of the motivational data will be presented here.

The survey data includes responses from 300 subjects, who were students at Lucian Blaga University or in one of three surveyed secondary schools in Sibiu. They came from a wide range of faculties and study areas. Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher in classes that were composed of no more than thirty-five students each. Five motivational dimensions were explored: affective (how they feel about different languages), instrumental (how useful they think each language is), integrative (the degree to which they wish to become more like native speakers of each language), micro (the degree to which peers and family encourage the acquisition of each language), and macro (the degree to which Romanian society encourages acquisition). Four foreign languages were included in the main part of the survey: English, French, German (which has a special role in Sibiu and in Transylvania overall as an historically dominant and recently diminished minority language), and Russian (as a foreign language of some considerable prestige under Communism). The table below shows the relative score (with 5 being highly motivating and 1 highly unmotivating) for each language by each motivational dimension.

Motivator	English	French	German	Russian
<i>Affective</i>	4.64	3.25	3.31	2.45
<i>Instrumental</i>	4.74	3.4	3.72	2.24

<i>Integrative</i>	3.96	3.02	3.24	2.26
<i>Micro</i>	4.25	3.06	3.52	1.93
<i>Macro</i>	3.79	3.32	3.36	2.32
TOTAL	4.28	3.21	3.43	2.24

Table: Mean scores for motivators by foreign language (N=300)

The overall results show that English is highly motivating, French and German are moderately motivating, and Russian is moderately unmotivating. For all three Western European languages, the instrumental motivator is the highest, indicating that youth recognize the importance of these languages in their future careers and economic opportunities. For English, the affective and micro-societal motivators are higher than the integrative or macro-societal level motivators reflecting the interpersonal and youth-cultural inroads that global English often travels when entering a new linguistic market. For French, in contrast, the macro-societal and affective motivators are higher, indicating the established role of this language in Romania's national identity and history. Given German's historical role in and around Sibiu, the equivalently high scores on micro- and macro-societal motivators is to be expected. Subjects from other parts of Romania would almost certainly have rated German lower.

Finally, Russian stands out from the other treated languages in that it is disfavored by the subjects surveyed here, particularly in the instrumental dimension. Russian is not viewed as being particularly useful in one's career or economic future or in one's interpersonal, micro-societal interactions. The highest scoring motivational dimension for Russian is actually the affective one, but this is likely a reflection of the fact that subjects did not want to come right out and say that they did not like one language or another. It should also be noted that a couple dozen students in the survey had come to Sibiu from the Republic of Moldova. These students generally had a much higher evaluation of and proficiency in Russian than the other subjects. While this trend parallels in

some ways the elevated scores for German among those from Sibiu, the presence of Russian speakers and dominance of this language in the Republic of Moldova are still much greater than German's presence and dominance today in Transylvania and Banat. This preliminary data suggests that the dominance of English as a foreign language in Romania (and Moldova) is well established and founded on a wide range of motivators, chief among them the instrumental and affective dimensions. While the affective dimension could illustrate a drive among Romanians to learn English as a form of integration into the globalizing world, the greater role of the instrumental dimension suggests that hierarchy in the form of some sort of Anglophone economic imperialism a la Phillipson could also be at play.

In conclusion, the shift toward English as a foreign language in Romanian and Moldovan schools shows both the integration of these societies into global economic and cultural systems, signaling new opportunities, and the danger posed by English as a global language, in that, "such a language would make other languages unnecessary," (Crystal 2003:13) or at least less necessary. English would appear to provide opportunities, but not as seamlessly and consistently as often believed by its promoters and learners. The ambivalence outlined by Prendergast (2008) and the potential for economic and cultural dominance asserted by Phillipson (2008) are also evident in English's role in Romanian-speaking communities. Of even greater potential concern is the evidence that English as a foreign language, although currently limited in its functions, continues to grow and could increasingly displace minority languages just as it has displaced other foreign languages, as traditions and local connections are supplanted by the global.

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Towards the Invocation of Pre-existing Stasis:
Maidens, Mothers and *Murderessing*
in the Emergent Video Film in Nigeria

OGAGA OKUYADE
College of Education, Warri
Delta State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The Nigerian video film class which is now regarded as “Nollywood” continues to grow with the passage of time because it provides its local audience with a visual delight of narratives which captures their prodigal desires and pains. An enterprise which began strictly for the purpose of entertainment has mushroomed into something close to a casino. Although, the enterprise continues to defy definition because its production localized, it has become so popular amongst the people considering the fact that Nigeria is now more of a “watching” society to a “reading” one. The subject of this essay is not to specifically define this filmic enterprise, but rather intends to examine an aspect of the film which borders on the asymmetric gender relations in the screening of the films. My argument is premised on the socio-cultural role of women in the Nigerian society and how their identity is distorted and contracted in films in order to justify their exclusion from crucial national issues. The films celebrate popular gender stereotypes identifiable in first- and second-generation Nigerian literature. Thus the paper maintains that this biased filmic gender practice is only an invocation of pre-existing stasis which is facilitated by the patriarchal control of the entire filmic enterprise in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: “Nollywood,” Patriarchy, Women, Gender, Cinema, Nigeria, Film Producers.

Without any initial doubt, the video film in Nigeria has become the most popular medium of entertainment and (like literature) it plays an important role in articulating cultural and national consciousness in the nation. With the adjustments upward of the minimum wage in Nigeria and regular review of allowances of workers which is informed by the pressure of the different organized labor groups in the country on the government, people can now afford electronic gadgets, most especially television sets and video machines in their homes. This has in turn transformed Nigeria from a “reading” into a “watching” society. Cinema halls and video parlors are no longer popular sites in Nigeria, for people now sit in their homes and watch films purchased or rented from video clubs. With the burgeoning of the film culture, such video clubs in Nigeria are as many as churches, strictly because most of the operators lack knowledge of copyright laws as the films are rented out to customers at will even when the films are not rental copies. Invariably, owners of video clubs prosper from the film enterprise at the expense of the filmmakers. Nigerians seem to be fascinated by this visual tidal wave which has invaded their viewing consciousness and continues to capture the socio-cultural dynamics of the nation. The audience see their plight and their existential angst “screen to face” (Okuyade: 2). Thus, besides being a potent agency for cultural expression, “Nollywood” has rescued and redeemed its enthusiastic publics from the visual charm of other *woods*, especially Hollywood. This remains a moot point though, when considering the ideological weakness of most of the films. Although, there are still numerous indications that Western triumphalism continues to be celebrated unconsciously, especially in the genre of the religious film, the phenomenon remains a mirror for its audience. Be that as it may, an enterprise began strictly to

create wealth for local filmmakers has become a postcolonial vehicle for containing the dispersion of Western civilization. Chukwuma Okoye argues that, “the Nigerian video phenomenon is one of the truly successful strategies in the postcolonial agenda of constructing a sovereign framework in spite of cultural and economic imposition of the West.”(20). This is perhaps the most fascinating trait of this video enterprise, its overwhelming presence in the midst of the other and the uncompromising frankness of the narratives remain undoubtedly the prime feature of the film.

Moradewun Adejunmobi contends that, “in some segments of Urban West African population today, fictional narratives created locally are more likely to be watched on video film rather than read in a book or listened to on radio” (51). Tunde Kelani, regarded as one of the best film directors in Nigeria, has adapted the works of numerous Yoruba language authors to video films. In proclaiming his awareness of this visual media transition or shift, he remarks that, “We found that our people are no more interested in reading, and by so doing, we are missing the values and virtues embedded in the works of great writers ...” (in Abiola 2002 :14). The shift from the scribal medium to video film has also been accompanied by the growing incidence of certain narrative styles, including, in particular, serial narratives. Robert Allen opines that serialized narratives emerge to “exploit new technologies of narrative production and distribution” (1). Video film proffers these possibilities in Nigeria, by enabling the production of a particular type of narrative, which serves the commercial interests of producers and directors, and whose appeal for the audience lies in the fact that it offers scenes of almost instant retribution for victims of injustice. The film most often explores the prodigal desire of the audience, those things that seem unrealizable becomes realistic in the films and this in turn cements the waning faith of the viewers in the belief of overcoming their problems, especially poverty.

Within a brief time-span, the Nigerian video film has become a site where Nigeria's socio-cultural life can be appraised. This visual "real estate" is about the most reliable pie chart available, where the socio-economic conditions of Nigeria are captured and relayed or better still a tool for calibrating the growth and development of Nigeria and the fortunes of the people. The Nigerian filmic enterprise, which continues to be operated locally at virtually every level, provides its teeming enthusiasts with the visual topography of localized dramas of every day life and creates local narratives which Karin Barber describes as narratives about things that matter to people (...) things that people want to hear (2).

Film-making in Nigeria is a nebulous phenomenon, most especially as production was initially, and to some extent, presently localized. The enterprise is so protean, so that no aspect of the industry can be subjected to easy description. Little wonder Hygineus Ekwuazi contends that, to "make a film in Nigeria is to walk an uncharted path" (71). Regardless of the hazy nature of the enterprise, scholars have associated or identified the emergence of video film in Nigeria to local antecedents, especially the itinerant theatre and the soap operas (Lasode, 1994: 180, Adesanya, 1997:14, Ogundele, 1997, Haynes and Okome 1998) Barber observes that films, "were seen by the theatre companies as far preferable to television drama in every way, above all because the theatre company retained central control of the product" (259).

The Nigerian video film reached a turning point with the establishment of Kenneth Nnebue's video film production outfit, NEK Video Links that produced the trail-blazing film, *Living in Bondage I and II* (1992). (Femi Shaka 2003:8, Haynes and Okome, 1997: 29, Okome, 1997:83). The production of *Living in Bondage I and II* is not just the cardinal defining moment for the Nigerian video film, but the beginning of a new epoch in the video film tradition. Although, film scholars have sometimes erroneously appraised Nnebue's film as inaugural, Okome sets the record

straight when he contends that *Living in Bondage 1 and 2* are important land mark in the history of video film in Nigeria as they “were the first to achieve box-office magic”(7). The film, which was shot in Igbo, one of Nigeria’s major languages, became a hit among Igbo speaking people and non-Igbo speaking Nigerians. Non-Igbo viewers were attracted to the film not because it was sub titled in English, but because its contemporarity and its moralizing temper are gripping and compelling. The unprecedented commercial success of the film attracted the interest of quite a number of people, both professionals and non-professionals into the enterprise. After *Living in Bondage 1 and II*, producers and directors have continued to churn out similar films in a striking proportion.

Within the Nigerian visual practice Okome identifies three genres. They are the Epics, Urban/City films, and Evangelical/Hallelujah films. Yet, there seems to be a fourth genre which film scholars continue to undermine, the Comedy, which is very popular with the people. Unlike Hollywood and Bollywood, Nollywood has not produced a modern war film until 2007, when *Across the Niger*, hit the Box office. The film came a little late considering the fact that Nigeria has experienced a Civil War, which Funso Aiyejina describes as the “major land mark in our contemporary history and psyche” (112). The absence of a war film in the Nigerian filmic enterprise until recently is worrisome, putting into consideration, that violence is one of the cardinal indices by which films in Nigeria are appraised. Invariably a film may not be economically viable and assessable if it is not characterized by violence and contoured with ritualistic scenes. Eddy Ugbomah, one of Nigeria’s first generation of filmmakers laments this trend and the attitude of the distributors who have continued to exploit the situation. He remarks that, "the one I did recently is called *Aba Women Riot*, but I couldn’t get that one to sell like *America or Die* because the marketers who are now controlling he industry say that

there was no violence and that it was not Fetish” (in Hussein: 36-37).

The Nigerian video film is not far from Haring Lee’s observation of the African oral performance tales. The Nigerian video film is geared towards “solving the social and psychological problems for people” (177). This video practice bridges the yearning gap in satisfying the domestic *cum* socio-cultural needs of its audiences. They are canonical texts of the postcolonial landscape which aptly capture the anxiety of living in a postcolonial space. The Nigerian filmic practice continues to survive without a formidable film industry. Jonathan Haynes observes that the cinematic practice is alive and kicking, while it mirrors the paradoxical image of the country, expressing its ethnic divisions, its relative industrialization, its huge market, and its current poverty, which does not however prevent busy, inventive informal activity (22-23). Some scholars have asserted that nothing formidable and reliable can emanate from within the commercial drive of an industry concerned more with profit than with art. For example, Chukwuma Ayanwu queries the financial drive of the enterprise and erroneously asserts that the entire business of filmmaking in Nigeria is inconsequential. Perhaps his resolution is informed by undue attention paid to the exigencies of narration at the expense of the rich narrative it offers to the audience. He doubts if “any video produced *here in Nigeria* has anything good for the family” (59: emphasis mine). What then is the importance and function of the entire filmic enterprise? This film-scape is the site where problems and prospects of the post-colony are dramatized. It is the contextual space or border between reality and representation. This is what De Lauretis describes as a social technology, a textual machine of representation (185). If the mimetic qualities of films are fully explored, it therefore means that the Nigerian video film becomes a “shadow” of the Nigerian nation. Though initially a colonial instrument for evangelism, the video film in Nigeria today now

assumes a very pragmatic stance than when it first surfaced on the shores of Africa as a colonialist instrumentation in proselytizing. No matter what the thrusts of these films are, they remain a transcript of contemporary African life. Diagne and Ossebi see African films as key participant in the project of articulating African perspective, a permanent evaluation and re-evaluation, or a continuing negotiation between, on the one hand, socio-cultural realities, which are themselves undergoing changes at least with demography and what we shall call urban intensification, and, on the other hand requirements of development (35).

The subject of this essay borders on the location of women in Nollywood. The role of women in Nigeria is a hot topic amongst commentators on the state of contemporary Nigeria. While it is important to consider quantitative analyses drawn from statistics and surveys, it is also important to look at how the video film qualitatively defines modern African women. Consequently, Nollywood, as a form of popular culture, can be used as a calibrating tool for assessing the role of women in Nigerian society. In interrogating how women are portrayed in a broad sweep of Nigerian video film over the last ten years or so one is likely to gain insight into the image of the woman in Nigeria constructed by the producers of Nollywood.

The images presented by mass media, which include Nollywood, among others have arguably helped shape the identity of modern Nigerian woman. Nollywood is useful when studying the role of women in society for a number of reasons. Firstly, as popular culture it serves to both reflect and inspire the changes in Nigerian society, these trends are identifiable through observing the changes and themes in the video film. Secondly, it helps one to understand the dynamics of Nigerian society and culture. While there may not necessarily be obvious patterns of behavior often identified as distinctly Nigerian, such as conformity, loyalty and difference, there are subtle undertones that identify themes and

characters as Nigerian. Consequently, it is possible to gain insights into the role of women in society as both sexes' views are represented. These two points in combination with the above argument that by analyzing popular culture one can gain insights into Nigerian society, forms a legitimate foundation for observing how the role of women in Nigerian society can be analyzed through the appraisal of their roles in the video film.

Women in African societies continue to be captured in media controlled by men as playing "second fiddle" not because they love to remain at the bottom or circumscribed within specific spaces, but because African societies continue to be patriarchal thereby sustaining the myth of the superiority of man over woman. This belief in the inferiority of the woman is deeply entrenched in the psyche of both genders and it pervades every facet of the society. Janet Chafetz observes that:

The words used to describe the masculine role are quite positive: 'practical' 'logical' 'experienced' 'brave' ... 'trust worthy' ... the tone of the words used to describe femininity is considerably different. Such terms as 'petty' 'fickle' ... 'frivolous' 'shallow' and 'vain' are very negatively charged in the society (41)

Since video film mirrors and recreates social, historical and economic realities, it becomes one of the channels through which negative attitudes and stereotypes of women are created and perpetuated. Female characters in most films present a certain homogeneity of character, which can be attributed to a basic similarity in man's view of the women. Women are present scantily behind the camera for this reason. The discourse on women in Nigerian video film remains wrapped in the fabricated world of men discussing women. Within the video film texts, women are discussed and prized as items or as commodities with little or no intrinsic value. As objects of desire they lack critical position in

video narratives. And as objects of decoration or ornamentation they parallel the significance of the beautiful flower vase in the home, performing a monolithic function. Since the production of *Living in Bondage I and II*, female characters in the Nigerian home video seem to remain the constant factor. Women remain circumscribed within the borders of domestic sites and live as exiles in that space.

Critical evaluations of female portrayal in the films reveal no significant departure from existing stereotypes. In fact, a feminist reading of the films in Nollywood reveals numerous female stereotypes, which suggest a definite sexual bias against women. Interestingly, a critical appraisal of the imaging of women in *Nollywood* produces the distinct impression that the producers of these films continue to conjure up a negative image of women over and over again. The entire filmic enterprise is governed by the phallogocentric dictates of male video producers. The films sometimes elaborately capture the burden of womanhood, but when this happens women become patronized objects, pitied and depicted as weaklings.

In traditional African societies women are perceived as creators and destroyers. It becomes undeniably clear that the myths woven by men about women are more expressive of men's anxiety relating to women than any deep convictions about male superiority. The films cast women as treacherous, capricious, vindictive, and yet mindlessly feeble. The films exhibit the woman's capacity for treachery and susceptible to flattery. These narrative types are woven around this "betrayal" motif, as evidenced in films that portray women as *temptress* and as cunning-unfaithful lovers. These kinds of narratives are woven around the motif of women as the archetypal *temptress*. This motif is popular with evangelical films. Morolake Omonubi-McDonnell opines that the status of women is a very compelling issue, essentially because

women are yet to attain their full potential (1). This assertion captures the plight of women in the Nigeria video film.

Kenneth Nnebue's *Living in Bondage I and II*, a narrative of vague traditionalism and awkward modernity dealing with senseless ritual murders done in the hope of men attaining social mobility, is a prime example of what men do with their women in desperate circumstances. In the film the image of the ideal women is aptly enunciated. The "protagonist" Merit's character displays personal integrity and classical simplicity that inspire admiration and distinguish her from stereotypes of either the bourgeois housewife or the aristocratic seductress. "Antagonist" Andy Okeke (Kenneth Okonkwo), Merit's husband, struggles with his existence in order to become wealthy, but all his efforts yield nothing. His efforts and endeavors at business fail to yield the desired results needed for his social advancement. Having worked in four companies without success he decides to establish his own business. In no time he consumes his capital, and once again he is out of business. His wife, Merit, is from a wealthy family. She is portrayed as an ideal woman. In the midst of these financial problems, she stays by her husband and encourages him. Sometimes she goes home to her parents to raise money to sustain her husband's business. For his part, Andy bumps into an old friend of his who promises to mobilize him socially and economically. Andy in his quest for unbridled wealth is taken to a cult and the initiation rites begin almost immediately. He has to sacrifice something precious to somersault into galloping wealth; his lovely and caring wife is marked as the sacrificial item. Andy thus swindles Merit out of their home and she ends up at the congregation of the cultists where she is drugged. Her blood is drained and the cultists have sips of it. All through the rituals, she maintains a supine position. She eventually dies and Andy becomes stupendously rich. Who then should be seen as the model of morality here?

In *Onome*, another Urban/City film, Onome the eponymous character is at the center of the narrative as the narrative is woven around her life. Onome, like many women in the video films, represent the voiceless and marginalized in a society, where the masculine voice always triumphs. Onome is not in control of her life, with her very existence being regulated by the established patriarchal system. The narrative makes this obvious, as Onome remains the helpless victim of a male-dominated social configuration. The portrayal of the rich women in *Onome* is no more dignified than that of the poor woman. Efe, Dafe Fregene's wife, is no more than mere ornamentation in the life of her husband. All through the film Efe sustains herself within the domestic *cum* culinary sphere, and is never associated with any taxing activity. Big and beautiful, yet feeble and lambish, she struts about her opulent house, performing only her domestic duties. She is portrayed as a half-wit: beefy and dull in appearance; her rich garbs become assets for what she lacks in carriage. She gets angry once in a while but her anger is that of a weak lamb, feebly protesting only because she wants to be noticed by her rich husband. She negotiates her existence around the familial space, because she does not want to lose this space which is all-encompassing for her. For instance, when Efe discovers that her husband has been burning time and resources on another woman (Onome), she weakly protests to her aristocratic husband who effortlessly persuades her that her place is un-negotiable. Women, like Efe, surrounded by wealth over which they have little control, are often submerged in the wealth itself, never acknowledging their own personality. Women are not only subservient in the films; they are supinely positioned within them. Carole Boyce Davies gives a graphic representation of the plight of these women when she contends that they are "objects of quest rather than as subjects in there own right" (89).

Women according to Okome float at the fringe of the plot of this drama (88). This means that both the poor and the rich women passively “live” their lives around the active expression of men so that while there is a monstrous psychological and physical hiatus between the rich and poor, there is also a social gulf between rich women and their husbands, so that even the rich women lack actual power. Conversely, Dafe’s careless, clavier character eloquently dramatizes the traditional male empowerment in Nigerian society.

Women actors are obviously offered numerous roles in this video bonanza, but the roles are dictated by men. *Onome* portrays the role of women as subservient/secondary at their very core. The film is very male-centric, emphasizing strength; discipline and hard work as the key to being successful in the world of this film, hence male characters are on the whole traditionally empowered. Onome is a powerless and almost a witless character, she is rendered inactive by poverty, and her family is so impoverished that they hardly eat. Although, she saves Dafe, the wealthy man, from the hands of assassins, she remains a character who negotiates her existence around the fringes of the film. However, her dismal conditions make her fall conveniently into the ‘damsel in distress’ stereotype. This invariably makes her an object in the hands of Dafe. Though Dafe tries to rescue her from her deplorable conditions, his efforts are not channeled towards genuine critical concern for her person. The film thus captures the asymmetric gender relations in the African society, where women are second to men in a world dominated by patriarchy.

Glamour Girls a film heavily populated with women is rendered in two parts. *Glamour Girls 1* deals with the lives of high-class ladies who see themselves as *glamorous girls* in cosmopolitan cities, especially Lagos. The film details how they play out their deceptive and blasphemous life in the city by engaging in sexual merchandising with rich businessmen and politicians. It is essentially a story of how this group of women attempts to

negotiate their lives around men who appreciate and use them only as playthings or toys. As social actors, city women think that the rich men of the city are their instruments and agency for the sustenance of their position as powerful women. But as the narrative sequence makes clear, these women exist in the lives of these men as mere recreational objects. They are carefully situated around the fringes. No matter how they struggle they never get to the center of things. While the misguided “other women” think that the men who patronize them are the ones being used and fooled into spending money on their desires, these men feel otherwise, i.e., that the money spent on these women outside matrimony amounts to little or nothing. These women are thereby treated with little or no respect, and the women only tragically realize how powerless they are when they are eventually abandoned. The film reminds one of popular fiction especially the Macmillan Pacesetter series, the city novels of Cyprian Ekwensi, especially *Jagua Nana* and *Jagua Nana’s Daughter*. Like the city novels, *Glamour Girls* eloquently captures the city and women in a way that is at once exciting, fascinating and ambivalent.

The portrayal of women in “Christian” evangelical films is even more bizarre and biting. These films foreground the relationship between evil and women, on the one hand, and signpost women as instrument of destruction, on the other. In no other genre of film are women so imbued with evil. The narratives of this genre are woven around the popular episteme or motif of women “Jezebels”; as *temptress*. Women are either witches or marine spirits who torment the world. These films celebrate the time-worn patriarchal practice of laying the blame for the downfall of the male gender at the doorstep of the woman. In *Out of Bounds*, Pastor Voke (Mofe Damijo) loses grip of his theological calling because of two women, who are members of his congregation. They tempt him and he falls instantly for their baits. The two ladies ultimately become his temptresses as they are responsible for

rendering the power of God inconsequential, as their subject of attack is not the Pastor but God. The Pastor's weakness is not dialectically appraised. What is brought to the foreground here is the schemes the women employ in destroying the man of God.

High Way to the Grave articulately dramatizes the spiritual warfare between good and evil, and enunciates the place of women as *temptress*. In the film, men regard women as commodities that must be used, drained and then discarded. Sonia, the main character, is possessed by the aquatic world, and is sent by the water goddess to unleash terror on men. She callously sends a stream of lovers to their graves. It is here that the image of the *femme fatal* is set. She is the high-class courtesan, the sexually forward or liberated woman, who engages in her job with amazing frequency. She is a mysterious quasi-mythical courtesan. She is a maiden living and moving in the real world but imbued with peculiarities of the river goddess. She is excessively beautiful; however there is an attribute of danger and hypnotism in this beauty. She never strikes for fun, only upon the instructions of the goddess. Her targets are usually individuals who are threats to the force of the underworld. But by this gesture, Sonia is not only a mere instrument of pleasure for men, but equally a tool for the Mammywater, a feminine goddess driven by the traditional phallocentricism of the human world. Sonia is saddled with the responsibility of ruining quite a number of men. Among those marked for disgrace and death is Pastor Nicolas, a powerful man of God, who exorcises the evil spirit in possessed women with the resources of the Holy Spirit. Sonia refuses to approach this mission casually like her other assignments; she employs an advance seductive mechanism with which she breaks into Pastor Nicolas' psychic networking. The Pastor falls for her bait and she destroys him. She succeeds in disgracing the man of God and by extension stifling the power of God. In *End of the Wicked*, the role of the mother as a witch is eloquently espoused. The film privileges

different sets of stereotypes, Mother/Wife as witch, the dependent woman whose fulfillment is predicated on the social position of the husband, the idea of the complete woman, beautiful, yet submissive.

In *Women of Substance*, *August Meeting* and *Abuja Connection*, power is placed in the laps of women. Most of the women in the films are portrayed as shallow, self-centered and preoccupied with maintaining the hierarchy of their narrow social worlds. The films project the contradictions of being a powerful public women thereby calling into play alternative cultural stereotypes. Women are characterized as bossy headmistresses or housekeepers or nannies -an extra powerful surrogate mother. Women in these films are not allowed to step outside the cultural stereotypes of 'normal' women. Complex symbols come into play to legitimize apparent contradictions and reaffirm the prescription that women and men have different roles and that the public work of politics is for men. In *Women of Substance*, Florence, out of her unbridled thirst for power, murders her husband. Although she secures power, it is not for long, in that she begins to exhibit traits of psychopathic obsessive behavior indicative of psychosis. The films seem to create the perception that women are never good with power or politics and as such power should be a stripped item from women's agendas.

The reasons for the negative portrayal of women in the Nigeria video film are easy to spot. The placement of women in these films is not far from the construction of women in Nigerian society, most especially the culture, which is patriarchal in virtually all spheres. By representation, I mean how women are symbolized, categorized and classified. This symbolization, categorization and classification cut across and are complicated by other divisions, like class and ethnicity. Many examples of gender representation are obvious part of the taken-for-granted aspect of culture the society internalizes as way of life. Society needs not subscribe to the values

represented by these symbols, for everybody in the society understands them. They have psychological importance and in this sense are shared. The importance of women as mothers is emphasized throughout the Nigerian culture. Motherliness indicates an ideal woman and it is a positive categorization, implying caring qualities and a physical presence unconnected with sexual attractiveness. When women are described as mothers as well as medical doctors, lawyers, bureaucrats, bankers, or whatever else they may be, being mother is paramount, and her social placement remains inconsequential. Thus, old men in Africa are associated with wisdom hence they are described as sages and patriarchs; an old (especially widowed) woman on the other hand is a subject of attack. She symbolizes evil, and she is branded a witch especially if she is unkempt. For example in *End of the Wicked*, Amadi is sandwiched between two women he loves. When he dies, his untimely death is attributed to the two women in his life, his mother and his wife; women here become symbols of evil. The other reason for the negative and feeble representations of women in the Nigeria video film premised on the fact that the social dictates governing the content of video films do not come from the enlightened views of educated members of society, but from popular opinion governed by the imperatives of traditional phallocentrism. The market determines the content and style of presentation in video films (Shaka, 2002:19 and Okome 2000:45). The producers/marketers govern the market and they have total control of the entire enterprise. The producers delineate what scriptwriters must write about and the perspective of the stories to be celebrated. Since the marketer usually remunerates the scriptwriter handsomely, the scriptwriter's responsibility is simply one of scripting the prescribed narrative. Chukwuma Anyanwu laments the negative portrayal of women in Nigerian video films, he contends that this "leaves a poor reflection of society in general and our women in particular" (Towards: 88). Although, these films

have the social function of serving as an indirect comment on human conduct and the comment is meant to either commend or condemn with a view to making the individual conform to societal norms, they remain an eloquent testimony of the asymmetric gender configuration in Nigeria. The films are elaboration of life. The patriarchy will do everything to sustain the status quo, explore cultural paraphernalia, which are usually under patriarchal control to sustain women at the margins.

Sociologically and psychologically, it has become obvious that the myths woven by men about women are more expressive of man's anxieties relating to women than any deep conviction about male superiority. The films cast women as treacherous, capricious, and vindictive, feeble-minded and frequently witless. Some writers insist that the ritualized antagonism often expressed against women indicate an underlying deep fear of woman's sexuality (Hey, 1986 and Whitehead, 1976).

Women continue to remain as objects of discrimination judging from their placement in these films. From close observation in the production of the Nigeria video film, society deliberately builds up a body of dispositions and attitudes to justify this discrimination. Furthermore since these discriminations have always been encapsulated in culture, they lead society to develop certain attitudes and dispositions about its women. Since these attitudes and dispositions are deeply entrenched in the psyche of society their accentuation becomes relatively easy. However, the gender stereotyping shown in the films are psychologically dangerous, for the films provide symbolic messages of comparative gender worth and such messages affect behavior (Dohrman, 1975). (Moreover, if the stereotype is reversed there might be significant adjustments in gender relations.)

In one hand, the films discussed "privilege" women because they populate this filmic space and sometimes their problems and pains are captured. Yet, on the other hand, the male producers only

end up taking advantage of their revealed weakness by patronizing them. Women continue to play very crucial roles to ensure the message of the films are made bare, yet their portrayal presents a certain homogeneity of character which can be attributed to a basic similarity in man's notion of women since the entire filmic space is controlled by a guild that sustains the phallogocentric dictates of the society. Under this structure, the producers privilege women, giving them enough frames within the filmic space. Even so, this is just a guile, because the women protagonists never aspire to a monumental stature, as they live a complete life of marginality, domesticity and alienation. It is important to note that female characters in Nigerian films are rife with agency and power. These assets should affect a balance towards positiveness in their portrayal. For example in *High Way to the Grave*, Sonia's quality of danger could be tailored towards a positivistic end, because there is an enormous capacity of energy in Sonia's character. Although her character is imbued with a mythical drive, she never endangers the man she loves, but the deserving agents of oppression and exploitation. Women are not discussed in the film in any serious or dialectical manner. Their characters are flat, and this flatness is vigorously acted out.

Regardless of the circumscription of women within Nigerian filmic space, female directors/filmmakers have refused to be lethargic. They are well informed of the gender stereotype of women in films. Their knowledge of this phallic filmic matrix has made them circumvent dogged tactics to get out of their doldrums. A woman film maker like Amaka Igwe continues to localize her films within the domestic domain. She is strongly of the opinion that if women are to rupture the cultural yoke placed on them, the battle must begin from the familial base; the seat of the family. This conviction has always contained her films within the latitude of the domestic sphere.

For Helen Okpabio, another female filmmaker in Nigeria, film-making must be utilitarian, in order for her audience to recognize the importance of sustaining themselves within the centre of morality. Her films have moral thrust with evangelic permutations, which anchor upon the theological teachings of Jesus Christ. She weaves her narratives around local epistemic construct, which locates women within the fringes of society. Her films do not in any way interrogate dialectically the contraction of the character of women, or challenge the trivialization, distortion, and marginalization of women's roles, concerns and orientations in her films. She is a preacher with her own congregation. Her immediate audience is usually her congregation, who purchase the films before the outside world have access to them. She tries to eloquently create the notion that her films function beyond entertainment. The video film is a new medium for "window-shop" placement for and "selling" God. To articulate this intension, she employs tactics by which she recasts herself as a pastor in the films in which she features. She is a pastor in the physical social space, and she remains a pastor within the video site. This technique of maintaining her role as shepherdess both in the filmic space and the social terrain becomes a filmic cum theological strategy of emphasizing that evangelical films are not just for entertainment but a vibrant means of selling God. As a film maker, her personality as a woman is geared towards a narcissistic end. Her feminine character or identity surely de-masculinizes the pulpit, but she also obstructs any critical questioning of the role of women and social change.

Emen Isong, another female film maker, laments that women are portrayed in contemporary video films "as fickle-minded creature[s] who have little or no say in matters of social importance" (53). To check this contraction of women in films, some of these film makers invoke the prominent female stereotype for the purpose of re-appropriating and reinterpreting the female

body and her sexuality. Women are portrayed in films as witches not because of the popular notion that they are evil but because these film makers believe that witches are imbued with extraordinary powers and desirable qualities to counter what the dominant group try to make women believe of themselves. However, filmmakers who employ this technique do not indicate a shared recognition in the potential of the figure of the witch for the feminist cause.

The other strategy employed in films to resist patriarchy is found in female prostitution, which functions as metaphor for survival and assertion of feminine power and control of their sexuality. Nawal EL Saadawi's novel becomes a graphic representation of the vibrancy of this metaphor in the Nigerian video film: "All women are prostitutes of one kind or another. Because I was intelligent I preferred to be a free prostitute, rather than an enslaved wife ..." (91). The harsh socio-economic realities in post colonial Africa, has made people of different social and cultural cadres to devise various means to survive the quagmire. Most of them have refused to be mired by the economic mire of their nations. Iniobong Uko opines that the strategy is, "the process deployed by the marginalized to transcend the peripheral positions and roles, and actually occupy the centre to be relevant in the scheme of things and take control of crucial events" (92). Through this strategy of the commercialization of the woman's body in film, women seem to be coasting towards freedom. But, paradoxically man remains the major determinant or denominator in this sexual merchandise market. No matter how the women attempt to regulate the practice of their ancient trade, men remain in total control of their sexuality as "buyers" of their wares (or not). Invariably, women in Nollywood remain the denizens of the margins. Even these "liberating" films re-emphasize women's stereotypical duties as mothers, wives and prostitutes. Invariably, the roles of women in

Nollywood are determined by gender considerations and not market circumstances.

However, there are numerous indications that public opinion is changing. There are clear indications among both men and women that the role of women in Nigeria is no longer the traditional housewife/mother. The role and success of women who have served in different capacities in the present political dispensation in Nigeria is a vibrant testimony to this change.

The Nigerian video film as an established form of popular culture and this most vibrant mode of cultural expression should thus be deregulated to ensure it does not only privilege traditional male empowerment to the lamentable exclusion of some fecund but silenced other. It is widespread and consumed by both sexes and cuts across all age groups, and offers a series of representations of women. While the capacity of a single essay like this leaves little room for widespread appraisal of numerous sources, what has become apparent through observing trends in the Nigerian video film and contemporary Nigerian society is that an apparent shift in opinion is underway, albeit slowly. However, it is important to identify that the traditional role of women, will probably always manifest itself in popular culture, especially in the video film.

In sum, the major strategies of capturing womanhood by filmmakers is through the invocation of pre-existing stasis or the invocation of the prominent female stereotypes of the prostitute, the whore, the temptress, the domestic angel and the witch. These strategies are all geared towards enunciating the fact that women are marginal. However, these strategies could equally become potent statement of resistance and scheme towards wresting power from men in order to liberate women from patriarchal clasp if female characters are portrayed without bias. Film makers in Nigeria continue to deconstruct and recreate popular and contentious stereotype of the voluptuous and sexual African woman. The films hardly confute the notion of the fickleness of

women, but rather, it eloquently justifies the reasons for their exclusion in serious matters and credible endeavors. Invariably the portrayal of women in *Nollywood* has automatically altered the popular cliché—b behind every successful man there is a woman, the film gives an alternative—b behind every successful woman there is a fallen man. Yet, the difficulties female filmmakers in Nigeria face are colossal. They are outnumbered by male filmmakers. They lack the appropriate financial resources and they suffer discrimination in the hands of the powerful video marketers who are both financiers and directors of what is screened. The video film is understandably the most accessible and most potent medium of reversing gender stereotypes. But the problems militating against the female filmmaker remains almost insurmountable. She lacks the basic criteria of narrating her own story on the screen. When she writes her story, her ink flows from the masculine pen. She cannot be in control of her story without appropriate economic base. Women continue to populate the Nigerian filmic space as actresses, but it is the sparse stentorian masculine voices that triumph in the midst of numerous resonating voices of women, strictly because the men remain the base of the enterprise.

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Transatlantic Perspectives in Fiction:
D. H. Lawrence's "America"

CAMELIA ANGHEL
Romanian-American University of Bucharest

ABSTRACT

Basically relying on D. H. Lawrence's novels and short stories, the paper offers a cursory survey of the author's multi-faceted interpretations of 'America.' Pointing out the difficulty in applying a strict (positive/negative) valuation criterion when reading this mental space, we discuss the otherness of 'America' in modernist perspective, that is in terms of mobility, emancipation, psychological mutations, regained freedom, reconstructed identities. Special emphasis is placed on the author's construction of gender in his symbolic reading of a male/female 'America.'

KEYWORDS: Identity, sameness/otherness, gender, modernism

In their *Introduction to American Studies*, Malcolm Bradbury and Howard Temperley explained that "American Studies" can mean "the study of America by its own citizens," but also "the study given to America by those who observe it from outside with exterior standpoints and ideologies" (14). Mainly crystallized as a discipline after World War II, this discipline is a relatively new domain in the intellectual history of humanity, but the writing about America occurred much earlier, with the first 15th century travel accounts of Christopher Columbus' or Amerigo Vespucci's newly discovered continent. Moreover, when the study of the new territory has intersected fiction - let us think only of Jean de Crèvecoeur's famous *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782) - spectacular literary insights have often been offered to the reader, and the examples approach our contemporaneity with such names as Henry James, D. H. Lawrence or Aldous Huxley.

A famous outsider in the world of literature, D. H. Lawrence imposes a life-time experience as a traveller - covering a variety of geographical spaces: Australia, Italy, Ceylon, the United States, Mexico and France - thus confirming Paul Fussell's description of diaspora as "one of the signals of literary modernism" (qtd. in Kaplan 51). However, Lawrence's travels do not entirely describe a diasporic case; the author is an exile, but also a self-exiled writer and, above all, a willingly constructed wanderer.

Except for a short intermezzo of about three months, Lawrence spent the period between 11 September 1922 and 22 September 1925 on the American continent at the invitation of Mabel Dodge Sterne, a local female Maecenas "who felt that Lawrence was particularly destined to "express" New Mexico" (Moore 191-192). The American experience was to significantly infuse Lawrence's subsequent works - novels, stories, essays, travel writing - with an enriched literary vision on themes, motifs, style or even personal convictions.

Returning to factual, historical data is common practice in Lawrencian criticism, but the writer's relationship to America appears to be more complex than a biographer can hope to determine, and could be more credibly subsumed to the writer's generally unsettled nature. Avoiding the limitative trap of an exclusively biographical reading and starting from an axiological criterion, our paper is meant to emphasize Lawrence's inconsistent treatment of "America" in relation to what the writer himself outlines as an ethical attitude. Derived, to a great extent, from "close reading" approaches, the article pinpoints the relevance of the *positive/negative* duality as to a literarily-rendered geography and a unique construction of identities.

Lawrence's travelling motivation has been differently defined by critics as "his wartime experience in Britain, including the difficulty in having his major works published" (Bell 133), as his rejection of "mechanistic ideologies of industrial capitalism" (Eagleton 32), as "exploration of possible forms of deity" (Cowan 43), or as the quest for "the presence in the world of a new primitive soul, natural and animal" (Bradbury 166). Whether

retrievable from the writer's dream of a Utopian society, or from a fortunate touch of destiny impersonated by the American arts patron named Mabel Luhan, whether having "as much to do with his physical state as it did with his financial one" (Maddox 295), Lawrence's going to America and writing on/about the new continent should be thought of against an extended background, as a particular artistic destiny often divorced from real-life experience, as a literary biography permeating the author's whole work in an atemporal manner.

If in *Studies in Classic American Literature* the interest in studying America is openly posed and, at least intently, theoretical, Lawrence's fiction betrays a consistent, often hidden obsession with "America." We are trying here to provide textual evidence regarding the Lawrencian use of the "America" motif by roughly reviewing Lawrencian novels, short novels, short stories, and, of course, the essays and the travel books which, with Lawrence, often verge on genuine fiction.

The "America" we are dealing with is, as one can easily deduce, a fictional America: not America, but an "America." In this sense, it is not necessarily referred to as a real-life political, social, economic or cultural entity as one should rather focus on its book-made quality, on its literarily constructed nature.

Even though the history of philosophy provides complex understandings of the concept of "value", in a Lawrencian piece of criticism a back-to-the-basics, more flexible interpretation is more convenient given the writer's own changes of authorial mood or of thought direction, his not being a professional philosopher, but a multivalent writer. Thus our interpretation of "value," of the *positive/negative* criterion, is in keeping with "traditional axiology" manifested as rough interest in "what stuffs are good: what is of value" (Schroeder).

Still, before proceeding to a *positive/negative* classification, one should pinpoint instances of "America" occurrences in their *tangential* form, our proposed concept of "tangential" being enlightening as to the slightness or the neutrality of its semantic force: "America" as a mere name rather than a concept, an

“America” as an almost insignificant, yet present element in an enumeration, an “America” simply evoking a geographical territory, a habit, a custom, a fact. Such references to “America” do not have the force of a symbol or of a literary motif proper, this is a dummy-“America”, an ideological skeleton that is not developed, as revealed in some of the below examples, into themes and motifs. Additionally, this type of “America” could be interpreted as doubly-oriented latency, as an existential aspect of Lawrence’s personal growth and understanding and as a theme to exploit, as a source of authorial productivity.

The image of a cliché-America is often integrated by Lawrence into literary-political discourse, and its basic usage is merely instrumental as it happens, for instance, in the following fragment from the 1931 essay entitled “Apocalypse”:

The community is inhuman, and less than human. It becomes at last the most dangerous because bloodless and insentient tyrant. For a long time, even a democracy like the American or the Swiss will answer to the call of a hero, who is somewhat of a true aristocrat: like Lincoln: so strong in the aristocratic instinct is man. But the willingness to give the response to the heroic, the true aristocratic call, gets weaker and weaker in every democracy, as time goes on. All history proves it. Then men turn against the heroic appeal, with a sort of venom. They will only listen to the call of mediocrity wielding the insentient bullying power of mediocrity: which is evil. Hence the success of painfully inferior and even base politicians.” (21)

Like in many other cases, the “America” in the above passage is subject to an equalizing process - it does not hold the attention centre being placed at the same level as another concept, “the Swiss.” Also, in a different sense, the author proves to be a master of the emblematic, the “Lincoln” figure here being illustrative in this sense and shedding light on Lawrence’s propensity for metonymic usages in relation to definite geographical areas (suffice it to remember the well-known Kangaroo symbol employed in the homonymous novel).

As suggested by this paragraph of “Apocalypse,” “America” is often used as an undeveloped, almost neutral motif, but one should remember that such occurrences are yet another proof of the author’s impressive general information and of an undisclosed existential option. They are basically suggestive of Lawrence’s spatially (also mentally) assumed non-Britishness understood as universal citizenship and cultural detachment. Moreover, American references like those appearing, for instance, in the post-America travel book entitled *Etruscan Places* indirectly mirror the author’s biographical background: “When I say ravine, don’t expect a sort of Grand Canyon” (23); “This was evidently the grand avenue of the necropolis, like the million-dollar cemetery in New Orleans” (22); “a town like Bologna must have bristled like a porcupine in a rage, or like Pittsburg with chimney-stacks – but square ones” (137). Thus “America” represents a reliable reference point in appropriating the newness of new territories.

If in *Sea and Sardinia* “America” is, at some point, almost neutrally signalled as part of a banal supply-and-demand economic process – “So many lemons! [...] Think of America drinking them up next summer” (14) –, and if it is allotted a negligible semantic weight (as a partial synonym for ‘remoteness’) when occurring *tangentially* in *Women in Love* – “they [the people on a boat] streamed ashore, clamouring as if they had come from America” (154), it acquires a more consistent significance in, for instance, a political chat in *The Ladybird* – “What about America and Japan? They don’t count. They only helped us commit suicide. ...” (*Collected Stories* 635).

Unlike *The Princess*, a short novel in which “America” as the space of the heroine’s (erotic) initiation could be ambiguously read as either negative or positive (at the end of her mountains adventure she “was slightly crazy” (963) though she “seemed pleased” (964) with her subsequent marriage, *St Mawr* puts forward Lou Witt who becomes certain that “America” is the element that “saves me from cheapness”(925), the milieu that provides her with the mythical instrument of self-fulfillment, with the counterpart of her British experience of the exhausted societal. Moreover, at the

end of *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate Leslie enthusiastically asserts her conviction that “You [Cipriano and the “America” in him] won’t let me go!” (482), and in spite of the heroine’s repeatedly expressed doubts as to the viability of revived old Mexican religions, she is never depicted leaving the American continent.

In an early Lawrencian novel, *The Trespasser* (1912), Sigmund’s image of America is interestingly redolent of a form of anti-paradise: “Everything he suggested to himself made him sicken with weariness or distaste: the seaside, a foreign land, a fresh life [...], *farming in Canada*” (184, emphasis mine). A few years later, Halliday in *Women in Love* (1920) evokes a desired pre-Adamic state located in the indigenous South America: “Oh, but how perfectly splendid! It’s one of the things I want most to do – to live from day to day without ever putting on any sort of clothing whatever” (72). The image of “America” as a “paradise regained” perfectly inscribes itself in the positive/negative dichotomy reinforcing Romanticist reminiscences with a modernist Lawrence uniquely praising nature and variegated forms of primitivism. It is, nevertheless, the same Lawrence who, in 1921, declared that “[t]he Indian, the Aztec, old Mexico – all that fascinates me and has fascinated me for years.” (The Selected Letters 228), and who, a year later, was contrapuntally philosophizing that “Taormina, Ceylon, Africa, America [...], they are only the negation of what we ourselves stand for and are: and we’re rather like Jonahs running away from the place we belong.” (237)

Through our *positive/negative* dichotomy we are trying to pinpoint here the occasionally “black-and-white” aspect of Lawrence’s fictional America, a kind of Manichean “America” that is common, to a certain extent, with the majority of exile writers compelled to deal with the “outsider” condition of a given type of territoriality. Yet Lawrence’s reading of “America” often acquires supplementary nuances and its complexity no longer fits in classical value-oriented criteria.

In this sense, instead of the *positive* element in the *positive/negative* criterion, we can use, for instance, *utopian* as a most suitable means of describing the specificity of Lawrence’s

idealization practices applied to his “America.” Utopianism as a way of intensifying the positive vision is, often with Lawrence, implied by the passion of the quest or the occasional unilateralism of the perspective. More easily identifiable in novels like *Kangaroo* and *The Plumed Serpent* - as, to use Eugene Goodheart’s phrase, “the appeal to spontaneity” (10) -, utopian concerns are less discussed when it comes to Lawrence’s stories.

Interestingly, in *Things*, the two “true idealists” prefer Europe to America as they have to fulfill their hedonist principle of a full life. Reading the two geographical spaces in the light of the *old/young* paradigm the two come to the conclusion that “true beauty takes a long time to mature” (*Collected Stories* 1273), and that in New England the fullness of life they aspire to can only be achieved “at forfeiture of a certain amount of ‘beauty’” (1273). Paradoxically, the characters finally come to search for American existential ideals, “the New England conception of beauty: something pure, and full of sympathy, without the materialism and the cynicism of the French” (1274). Their utopianism is doubly directed towards Europe and America, the couple oscillating between the two conceptual poles that finally turn out to be dissatisfactory. The short story is a relevant illustration of Winfried Siemerling’s conclusion, in *The New North American Studies*, that “this search [the emergence of the New World] produced often multiple “returns” and forms of cognition” (4). Spatial geography is re-read according to a mental geography, the valuation criterion inevitably revealing a subjective consideration of the character’s “outside.”

A comparably fluctuant attitude towards America, one combining discreet irony and admiration, is expressed, for example, in the first chapter of *Sea and Sardinia* with the surprise-character unexpectedly introduced as “this young American woman” (27), and inviting to the discovery of a female mysterious space – a female “America.” It is suggestive of an almost unconscious desire for American explorations in the pre-American perspective of Lawrence’s 1921 real-life experience:

to sit in the room of this young American woman, with its blue hangings, and talk and drink tea till midnight! All these naïve Americans – they are a good deal older and shrewder than we once it nears the point. And they all seem to feel as if the world were coming to an end. And they are so truly generous of their hospitality in this cold world.”(27)

We should remember that, in Lawrence’s construction of “America,” the stress in the first place falls on the location - in the good tradition of the “spirit of place” inspiringly instituted in the seminal *Studies in Classic American Literature*. Yet, the “America” here is worth noticing thanks to the human element included in the representational process, thanks to the delicacy and familiarity contained by this particular image which is atypically Lawrencian in the sense that the writer’s attitude is rarely so simply confessional with regard to “America.”

Somehow contrarily, a short story like “Sun” deals with a negative connotation attributed to the American space. The movement described by the female protagonist is also the reversal of that performed by Lou Witt in “St Mawr.” Here “America” is the place where the heroine experiences “anger and frustration inside her” and “the incapacity to feel anything real” (*Collected Stories* 980). For “that nervous New York woman” (993) “in the New York flat” (995), “America” acts as the mechanism able to activate her neuroses, to amortize her perception of life authenticity. Moreover, the image of the city as a generator of estrangement and dehumanization renders a typically modernist Lawrence.

In positive/negative terms, Lawrence’s poetics of space frequently relies on opposition relations between geographical spaces: in “Sun,” for example, “Americanness” is opposed to “Italianness.” The heroine’s husband, a businessman and man of the city, is an indirect representative of a sterile, sophisticated “America” and the opposite of Italian sensitiveness, of the natural responsiveness impersonated by his wife’s prospective lover. According to Anne Odenbring Ehlert’s pertinent explanation, we should see Sicily as “a fresh start, an Eden, where Juliet may begin

her recovery from the wounds inflicted on her by the civilized world” (145).

Along similar lines, in *Kangaroo* the counterpart of “America,” “a country that did not attract him at all” (381), is provided by “Australia.” The obsessive image of a regained paradise – “still so clear and clean” - traverses Somers’s thoughts during one of his last Australian contemplation tours: “No wonder Australians love Australia. It is the land that as yet made no great mistake, humanly. The horrible human mistakes of Europe. And, probably, the even worse human mistakes of America” (381). In the traveller’s mind the status of “America” is, as it often happens in Lawrence, equated with that of Europe, the two continents becoming symbolic of perversion and decrepitude.

Additionally, one should notice that, to a considerable extent in the manner of his authorial egos, Lawrence appropriates the new continents in the light of an authoritative element: law, money, conventions of all sorts. The perspective can often be minimizing and clichéizing, in Australia being “Business going on full speed: but only because it is the other end of *English and American business*” (33, emphasis mine). The much deplored mercantilism is openly posed in terms of concrete, touchable entities: “Even money is a European invention – *European and American*. It has no real magic in Australia” (33, emphasis mine).

In accordance with the paradoxical Lawrence, though initially desired, Australia is nevertheless seen as a “mistake” (381), one of the last pulsations of Somers-the-individual’s individualizing drives that lead him to launch an imperative of the necessity of experience – “Draw your ring round the world, the ring of your consciousness. Draw it round until it is complete” (381), and to finally leave for the American continent. In a way similar to the “Australia” experience, “America” is likely to become a stage in a planetary process of becoming, a sample of a globally articulated evolution. It is the kind of movement that Del Ivan Janik, inspired by Lawrence’s own suggestions in *Mornings in Mexico* and *Studies in Classic American Literature*, describes as “a swerve or curve of return toward primitive modes of perception but ultimately onward

into the future” (22). It is, more than that, the essentialized concept of “travel” that, beyond any mythical, religious, or social-political yearnings, celebrates experience *per se* – travel for travel’s sake.

In considering the writer’s treatment of geography, one can easily notice the centrality of the character, the *sine qua non* connection between space and the creator of a map - the traveller, the movement initiator for whom, in Lawrencian perspective, the *positive/negative* criterion is equally relevant. One of the immediately perceivable effects that conquering a new territory involves is the emergence of new, America-determined identities, an issue that is worth considering in the next paragraphs of our paper.

By its very definition, travel offers the character the opportunity of being confronted with “the other.” The otherness transformed into permanency performs an impression effect upon the travellers’ identities: it impresses itself upon the encountered identities, and acts as an activator for creating new ones. Through the actual “America”- represented by settings, people, objects, habits, language - or through the imagined “America” represented by the characters’ expectations, the foreigners’ identity is, first of all, presented as the other, but it is also de – othered in an attempt to make it adequate, to re-contextualize it.

In the short story “The Thorn in the Flesh,” for instance, Bachmann’s failure in the army and his fear of heights are samples of the impossibility to keep the body-mind complex in control. They represent a reaction to the people’s regularizing and disciplining tendencies, an exposure of the impossibility to look “really into the man” (*Collected Stories* 219), to foresee and comprehend what the Baron comes to see as the “naked soul exposed” (219).”America” is positively posed as the symbol of personal freedom, as a coming to terms with one’s individuality and personal oddities and also a de-othering of the character’s maculated identity:

This one day, and he *would escape then into freedom*. What an agony of need he had for absolute, imperious freedom. He had

won to his own being, in himself and Emilie, he had drawn the stigma from his shame, *he was beginning to be himself*. And now he wanted madly to be free to go on. A home, his work, and absolute freedom to move and to be, in her, with her, this was his passionate desire. (218, emphases mine)

Here the hero's positive vision blends a static domestic ideal with a dynamic perspective of personal evolution. Interestingly, he constructs a presumptive, individualized self formed in relation to an anticipated, already discovered "America."

If positive America can be significant by discovery, it can be even more meaningful thanks to re-discovery. The American ascendancy reunites a significant number of characters, especially female ones. In spite of her origin, the Marchesa del Torre in *Aaron's Rod*, for example, displays a feeble connection with America as "I have Italy. I am an Italian now..." (266), and she feels at home in Europe. But we do not witness, with Lawrence, consistent dramas of estrangement, or prolonged yearnings for the land of the ancients. Leaving for America often occurs quite accidentally as it happens, for instance, in the case of The Princess to whom "her Boston relatives were for many years just a nominal reality" (*Collected Stories* 928), and who goes to America "to take their money" (932). The problematics of such estranged Americans sheds light on the function fulfilled by the travel to America which, whether virtual or real, acts as the element developing the characters' identities. Thus, in Lawrencian discourse, the positive revaluation of travel can mainly be achieved by considering - in intertextual perspective, with critical detachment - its aesthetic contribution to the making of a piece of narrative.

Though "America" often seems to indulge in a condition of latency, it is sometimes described as a call of the blood, an element worshipped by Lawrence and offering, in an all-encompassing perspective, the key to the majority of motivational aspects in Lawrence. Thus Josephine, the constructed European in *Aaron's Rod*, looked at the tenor in Chapter 5 "with the fixed gravity of a Red Indian" and at the end of the event she refrains from 'the

exclamation Merde!” because “she was mortally afraid of society, and its fixed institutions” (61). One can read Lawrence’s positive “America” as the element facilitating the annulment of conventionalized structures, as the realm propitious to the releasing of the characters’ inner (and, to a great extent, unconscious) energies.

With Lawrence, constructing “America” could be seen as a characterization device, as a way of dispensing with “the old stable ego of the character” (*The Selected Letters* 78) in previous literary ages. The early “America” in *The White Peacock*, a projected “America,” is understood as successful only conquered collectively, never individually. “It would need Cyril or Lettie to keep me alive in Canada” (211). George Saxton confesses and opposes his life with Meg to a “Canada” seen as celebration of experience and life variety. Though the reason for George’s preferring Lettie may seem pecuniary, the motivation lies at the more profound level of aspiration, that of completing a mode of living. Lettie’s presence satisfies the performing aspect of life; Meg’s fulfills the expectations of traditional static life: “I like her all right - I shan’t go out to Canada with her though. I shall stay at the Ram - for the sake of the life”(210). George’s projected American identity is thus a case of split identity, its actual existence being conditioned by another character’s presence.

In *Daughters of the Vicar*, leaving for America similarly solves a family and social crisis – “If you were moving quite away, it would be simpler”(266), but at a deeper level, the identity mutations imply a regained sense of adventure. The story is worth mentioning for Alfred’s seeing “travel,” in the vein of modernism, as a celebration of movement and experience:

... ‘I’m very likely going to Canada.’ [...]

‘What for?’ she asked. [...]

‘Well’ – he said slowly – ‘to try the life.’”(*Collected Stories* 261)

The syntagm “to try the life” inserts the character into a generous span of experience, and may epitomize what Billy Tracy calls -

referring to the travel books - "the search of a modern sensibility for unspoiled being"(2).

We can go on with the list of concrete textual examples to discover that Lawrence's American travels should be read in the light of the writer's own *pro/con* vacillations tuned to the modernist escapist strategies of the age, and also through the lenses of the author's more extensive agenda of creating spatially articulated identities. Significantly, from the critic's point of view, "America" could be viewed as instrumentally positive: it gives shape to a specific mental space, and offers new efficient insights into character construction and evolution.

Of all Lawrence's travels, the American one seems to be the quintessence of Lawrence's imagery, the most powerful metaphor for the wasteland/promised land of the writer's contemporaneity. Furthermore, the specificity of "America" succeeds in providing a literary expression to the modernist writer's basic conceptual coordinates: adventure, regained sense of wholeness, primitivism revisited, de/re-constructed identities, confirmation of mobility as permanency. Considering the heterogeneity and occasional ambiguity of the "America" illustrations above, one can conclude, with Peter Childs, that "[f]or Lawrence, the freedom of the new, of change and renewal, could only come through an awareness of the individual's multiplicity and versatility"(141).

Lawrence's "America" can stand for a negative or positive response to a personal degraded and degrading complex of negations (based on the sense of losing life authenticity in a post-Victorian world invaded by mechanization, mercantilism, fragmentation, alienation or violence) but, looked at more closely, the Lawrence's universe is not that much polarized. As suggested above, even a cursory survey of Lawrence's works can lead one to detect disconcerting changes of point of view or complex, overlapping images of "America." Reading "America" can actually be about expressing one's thought inconsistencies and about contemplating the perspective of becoming a universal traveller.

In order to understand Lawrence's "America" in the light of the author's own view on travel, one should keep in mind the concept of *Love* in the homonymous 1917 essay: "Because love is strictly travelling. "It is better to travel than to arrive", somebody has said. This is *the essence of unbelief*. It is a belief in absolute love, when love is by nature relative. *It is a belief in the means, but not in the end*. It is strictly a belief in force, for love is a unifying force" (*Phoenix* 24, emphases mine). Through the basic triptych outlined here (love – travel – loss of certainties), the quote reunites the essential elements of Lawrence's poetics of travel: the eroticism of the man-space relation and of discovery seen as the basis for enriched knowledge, but also, in an intertextual perspective, as a narrative device functioning as a story/identity generator.

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The Metropolis as a Source of Insanity and Revelation in
J.M.G. Le Clezio's *Fever*

ANA-BLANCA CIOCOI-POP
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

ABSTRACT

A writer of avant-garde, cross-cultural, plotless, difficult to pin down novels, Le Clezio is commonly labeled a writer of exile literature. This restrictive categorization is not primarily related to Le Clezio's multi-cultural background, but rather to a certain impossibility of communication and understanding of otherness and even of the self prevalent in his novels. In the style of Forster or Melville, with Le Clezio genuine understanding (which is always of the epiphany/revelation type) can only come about under extreme circumstances, like war or insanity. Destruction and annihilation are the only gates open towards self-knowledge. Usually the resulting "revelation" is so powerful that it does not allow for a continuation of life as it was before the epiphanic moment. Genuine understanding can only accompany death, as truth is irreconcilable with the triviality of everyday life. Just as in *Le process-verbal* confinement is paradoxically the only possibility of freedom, in *Fever* insanity is the only possibility of revelation. In order to illustrate this, we have chosen three of the nine stories in *Fever* for discussion and analysis: "Fever", "The Day that Beaumont Became Acquainted with His Pain" and "Martin".

KEYWORDS: Le Clezio, *Fever*, metropolis, insanity, revelation, death, epiphany, self, otherness.

A writer of avant-garde, cross-cultural, plotless, difficult to pin down novels, Le Clezio is commonly labeled a writer of exile literature [2]. This restrictive categorization is not primarily related to Le Clezio's multi-cultural background (Le Clézio's father, born in Mauritius, was a doctor, who moved from England to British

Guyana, and then to Nigeria. Before the family was reunited, he lived years in Africa. Le Clézio himself was raised in France.), but rather to a certain impossibility of communication and understanding of otherness and even of the self prevalent in his novels. Coincidence or not, in an interview he lists two exile writers – Joyce and Stevenson – among his literary favorites. In the style of Forster or Melville, with Le Clezio genuine understanding (which is always of the epiphany/revelation type) can only come about under extreme circumstances, like war or insanity [10]. Destruction and annihilation are the only gates open towards self-knowledge. Usually the resulting “revelation” is so powerful that it does not allow for a continuation of life as it was before the epiphanic moment. Genuine understanding can only accompany death, as truth is irreconcilable with the triviality of everyday life.

First published in 1965 as “La Fievre”, the nine stories which make up *Fever* are a series of impressionistic accounts of Le Clezio’s fundamental belief that the physical sensations we experience every day can be just as strong as feelings of love or hate, with a frightening potential to bring chaos and destruction into our lives. As a matter of fact, “Fever” takes up the subject matter of Le Clezio’s first novel *Le proces-verbal* (1963). Adam Pollo, the novel’s protagonist, eventually ends up in a mental hospital after roaming the streets and making an agitated speech to an apathetic crowd. His confinement, nevertheless, is not viewed as destructive, but rather as a mental and social escape in the style of Freud’s zero stimulus. Just as in *Le proces-verbal* confinement is paradoxically the only possibility of freedom, in *Fever* insanity is the only possibility of revelation. For reasons of time, we have chosen only three of these nine stories for discussion and analysis: “Fever”, “The Day that Beaumont Became Acquainted with his Pain” and “Martin”.

One of the central issues addressed in *Fever* is the reliability of mental constructs such as sanity and insanity. Considering that all the protagonists of the nine stories reach a deeper understanding of the world and of their own self in the aftermath of their temporary insanity, an understanding that places them beyond the boundaries

of traditional human spirituality and its inevitable limitations, insanity becomes a desirable state of mind. Moreover, in the light of these “epiphanies”, the previous state of unconsciousness and mental and moral blindness seems to be the real insanity. As David Rosenhan states, labeling someone sane or insane is merely dependent on the context we base our assumptions on [8]. A controversial experiment Rosenhan himself took part in made use of eight sane people (three psychologists, a pediatrician, a psychiatrist, a painter, and a housewife) who gained secret admission to twelve different hospitals located in five different states on the East and West coasts. Beyond alleging the symptoms and falsifying name, vocation, and employment, no further alterations of person, history, or circumstances were made. The significant events of the pseudopatient’s life history were presented as they had actually occurred. Relationships with parents and siblings, with spouse and children, with people at work and in school, consistent with the aforementioned exceptions, were described as they were or had been. Frustrations and upsets were described along with joys and satisfactions. None of their histories or current behaviors were seriously pathological in any way. Despite their public “show” of sanity, the pseudopatients were never detected. The diagnosis was of schizophrenia “in remission.” At no time during any hospitalization had any question been raised about any pseudopatient’s simulation. Nor are there any indications in the hospital records that the pseudopatient’s status was suspect. Rather, the evidence is strong that, once labeled schizophrenic, the pseudopatient was stuck with that label [9]. Similarly, Mark Twain asserts in the end of his “Fable” that you can find in a text whatever you bring into it if you stand between it and the mirror of your imagination. We are trained, as Andrei Plesu puts it in “Despre ingeri”, to distinguish between good or bad, existent or non-existent, sane and insane. If we were to shun these categorizations, Le Clezio’s protagonists would be visionaries rather than madmen.

This brings us to another twofold mind-model of vital importance, the one of insanity and revelation. Temporary insanity

is in Le Clezio's works the pathway towards the only genuine understanding open to man. It is, undoubtedly, a type of understanding not based on reason, logic or any other mental construct reminiscent of the European Enlightenment. Just as the Biblical Revelation, these epiphanies are incomprehensible to the one witnessing them from the outside. They are "sane" and "logical" only to the one who acts as a medium for the manifestation of truth. (see also Joseph Breuer's ground-breaking account of Anna O.'s psychosis). Therefore, just as the mythical Cassandra, the protagonists of "Fever" are cursed with the disbelief and mistrust of their fellow beings. Beaumont, one of the characters in "Fever" decides to call up his girlfriend in the middle of the night and to tell her that his toothache has made him realize the agony and inescapability of human loneliness. She dismisses him as rude, childish and egocentric, placing his defiance of social norms above the unquestionable pain that caused his emotional outburst:

"I'm frightened, Paule, d'you understand, I'm frightened. I don't know what it means, this is the first time it's happened to me, but I'm frightened. I don't know what of, or rather yes, I have an idea, but I can't understand it. It's here, everywhere, all round me, I feel as though there were people. They're going to kill me. They've got in, and they're prowling all round the place. They're hiding behind the curtains, under the beds, in the passage, in the kitchen, and if I look round too suddenly, trying to catch sight of them, they'll kill me. Or perhaps they're waiting till I'm in bed again. If I get into bed they'll come with knives and stab me in the back. Paule, I swear to you they'll come. That's all they're waiting for." "Now look here, stop being so childish. Calm down. You know quite well it isn't true. You must be feverish. It's probably an abscess. You must go back to bed and try to rest. Take some sleeping pills. And above all, relax, make your mind a blank". [5]

The background for the temporary insanity and subsequent revelation experienced by Le Clezio's characters is in all of the nine stories the metropolis, a giant octopus of sensations, sounds, crowded bodies, heat, indifference and alienation which acts as a

catalyst for extreme sensorial, mental and emotional experiences. In “Fever”, Roche, who is tormented by sunstroke, experiences the corpse-like dissolution of the city before he himself is “dissolved” into the water that covers up his agony. In “The Day that Beaumont Became Acquainted with his Pain”, the protagonist’s physical ordeal transports him into the same state of pseudo-substantiality as the city streets indifferent to his suffering. And in “Martin”, the child prodigy’s final realization of the futility of intellect in the face of the tenebrous abysses of the human psyche is projected against the steel and concrete jungle of a suburban nowhere.

“Fever”, the story that gives the title of the entire collection, depicts the mental and moral struggling of Roche, a middle class employee, affected by the summer heat. Roaming the streets in agony, he throws a stone into the window of the travel agency he works for, gets into a fight with a pair of lovers, and, unable to bring about the ultimate destruction he desires, returns home and while lying in bed hallucinates about melting into and dissolving in his wife’s body, just as the city dissolves into the all-encompassing heat. Feverish fantasies make Roche imagine an apocalyptic metropolis of slaughter, annihilation and terror:

Violence was breaking out everywhere, fists were clenching and striking flesh at sensitive points. From broken noses, teeth knocked out, cut heads, blood was beginning to trickle gently, gently. Skin was being bruised by bludgeons, hair was matted by the sweat of fear, and the hearts in some breasts were beating wildly, thumping crazily. The legs tremble, the arms have no strength any more, and inside the skull, where the blows reverberate, all ideas are dead, the machine for producing them is rotating fanatically, running on no load; the stories of crimes are terrible, for everything becomes meaningless. With teeth clenched and eyes extremely mobile, groups of men are going about the streets, carrying banners. Everything has become a maze, everything has become suffering and bruises. The bodies, the millions of bodies lying in the mud, emaciated, in bloodstained puddles. [5]

The dissolution of the metropolis is doubled here by a dissolution of moral values and ethical distinctions: “everything

becomes meaningless”. In fact, it is not the world that becomes meaningless, but Roche realizes (in the vein of Hamlet’s memorable talk with Rosencrantz) that all ethical labels we attach to things are merely mental constructs, narratives.

In “The Day that Beaumont Became Acquainted with his Pain”, the “victim” wakes up in the middle of the night tortured by a toothache of unusual intensity. Desperately trying to disown his throbbing jaw, Beaumont does not manage to get absorbed into the whirlpool of global dissolution, but experiences his room and the time- and spaceless city it is placed in as a dry, arid wasteland indifferent towards human suffering:

It seemed as though this half of his jaw had suddenly become larger, in the darkness, pushing away everything around it. A fantastical structure of concrete and iron bars now formed an extension to Beaumont’s cheek. It was a real weight, which oscillated in the atmosphere of the room with every movement of his head, and threatened to carry away all the rest of his body in an endless fall, down through the mattress, the floors, the storeys of the house, the drain-pipes, the crust of the earth, etc. In spite of the darkness and the pain the room was as distinct as ever, its smallest detail clearly outlined. But now every object, every piece of furniture, every plastic or wooden surface somehow looked new; the corners were sharper, the whites and shadows in stronger contrast; yes, that was it, everything stood out more clearly. [5]

While Roche has to confront dissolution, the gradual liquefaction of the entire universe, Beaumont must overcome the tyranny of matter, of the concrete-like dominance of objective reality. He does not witness apocalypse, but the terrifying eternity of an indestructible world.

As compared to the previous stories, where the universe is melted down to nothingness or reduced to the status of an indifferent mental desert, in “Martin” we do not witness the metamorphosis of the outer world, but of the self. The protagonist is a child prodigy which spends his time between public lectures on the nature of divinity and interviews for famous scientific

magazines. An odd mixture of intellectual arrogance and conventional religious morality, Martin is one day confronted with the irrational cataclysm of human cruelty in the persons of a couple of neighbor's children who steal his glasses and beat him up in a sand-pit. From the acclaimed lecturer and scientist, he is reduced to the status of a helpless bug trying to creep out of the sand and reach safety. In the end of the story and his kafkaesque dissolution, Martin's self is dissolved into the all-encompassing mercy of a deus absconditus:

Five minutes later, Martin looked up from the sand-heap. He stared around, dazed, feeling the little streams of sand running softly down inside his clothes, against his skin. He shuffled on his knees, just as he was, further into the sand-pit. Then he touched the wire frame of his spectacles and put them back on his nose, mechanically. The world suddenly became clear again, naked, hard, and shining with all its strength, full of square objects, of straight, sharp lines, of colours as sticky as sheets of jam. The sky too was very beautiful, very white and very firm, like a window opened abruptly right in front of your retina. It was all so calm and so brilliant that it must surely be unchanging, eternal, filled for ever and ever with an incomparable old age. Martin's eyes, behind his spectacles, suddenly dimmed again. Tears, but were they really tears? For they came from his innermost depths, they flowed easily and without shame, like a natural liquid, they were veritably water, the source of his being, his own life, gently overflowing and pouring out. 'God, oh God!' said Martin, 'I have blasphemed too much! If You are there, if that is what You want, take my life! Carry me away! Carry me away! [5]

His personal revelation ends in the annihilation of the self and the consequent submersion into a selfless divinity.

To conclude, we might state that Le Clezio creates prophetic characters which populate apocalyptic metropolises, and which at the end of their tormented journey experience revelation in the form of submersion into the all-encompassing dissolution of all reality external to the one of the self.

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American Folk Pastimes (1607-1850):
On Route to Sport Games in the American Colonies

SORIN ȘTEFĂNESCU
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

ABSTRACT

Part of a wider endeavor meant to typify American sporting activity the present paper is an attempt to isolate the preliminary manifestations of pastimes and revelry on the North American continent, starting with 1607, the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia. This is a period when many customs brought over from English village life are still very much present and alongside them some stern Puritanical attitudes have been preserved, which inhibited the growth of American sports. Nevertheless, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw countless occasions for games and festivities, such as election days, lectures, commencements or public punishments. These activities ranged from foot racing, jumping, and shooting at the mark to horse racing, cudgeling matches, fiddling contests, or wrestling matches at harvest festivals. The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of *Victorianism*, which stemmed from the erosion of older social restraints, a revolution in material aspirations, and a reinigorated Protestantism. The Victorian subculture offered substitutes for the traditional folk games, which had disappeared, in the form of the saloon, the theatre, gambling halls, and commercial sports (largely in the form of “blood” sports, professional pedestrianism or footracing, prize fighting, billiards, boat racing and the like). In fact, England continued to exercise a profound influence over the sporting life of the new nation.

KEYWORDS: American colonies, “moral athlete,” colonial gentry, *Victorianism*, voluntary associations, sporting fraternity, *the fancy*.

In their early days, the American colonies reproduced, from the viewpoint of their games and pastimes, the atmosphere of the English villages that the colonists had left. These colonists did not only bring with them the actual leisure activities and customs, but also the prejudices that undermined their development. They found out that William Bradford, the governor of the Plymouth Colony, was as harsh and dedicated to discontinuing these customs, as were the Puritans back in England. The Protestant temperament, in both its Puritan and evangelical forms, inhibited the growth of colonial sports. By the eighteenth century a wealthy gentry class with a religious temperament far more sympathetic to sport than that of the evangelicals or the Puritans had emerged in the American colonies. This class established many of the traditions that would profoundly influence the future of American sport.

The key to Puritan antipathy toward the ancient customs of the villages was their belief that God had extended a calling to every man. Every Puritan should strive to become, in Ralph Barton Perry's apt metaphor, a "moral athlete." While play was essentially frivolous and unproductive, close attention to one's calling furthered divine purposes. The Protestant temperament, whether evangelical or Puritanical, left a profound imprint on the history of American sport as well. To men like Dr. Benjamin Rush and Thomas Jefferson, a republic of virtue could not be founded on the idle amusements of the decadent monarchies of Europe.

In spite of these ideas, occasions presented themselves for games and revelry, and election days, lectures, commencements, public punishments and the like were opportunities for the communities to gather in a single place. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, training days, the days in which colonial militia units assembled, became the first holidays to resemble closely those of the old English parishes. On these days the troops were permitted to play such less violent folk games as foot racing, jumping, and shooting at the mark. But the common people did not

abandon the village pastimes entirely. There were always the harvest festivals, like the Hanover County Fair, for instance, established in 1737, which sponsored a wide variety of contests including horse racing, cudgeling matches, fiddling contests, or wrestling matches. Prior to 1664 when the English acquired the city, the Dutch in New York had bowled, held boat races, and played *kolven*, which some scholars translate as “golf.” And according to a 1766 advertisement for sport implements, while a few New Yorkers were engaging in quasi-athletic activities the vast majority preferred such recreations as ice skating, sleigh riding, cock fighting, and horse racing. A Virginia clergyman complained in 1751 that taverns hosted such illegal pastimes as cards, dice, horse racing, and cock fighting. Nevertheless, the Great Awakening (a religious revival) of the 1730s and 1740s inhibited the potential growth of the old pastimes in all the colonies.

In the eighteenth century a separate world of leisure developed among the emerging colonial gentry. Because no legal aristocracy existed, wealth was the primary requirement for those claiming to be gentlemen. As a result, two groups possessed the requisite wealth for gentry status: the prosperous merchants in the larger cities and the large planters of the South. These supported their claims for the highest social status by patterning their lives after their counterparts in England. The gentleman ideally learned to dance, fence, ride, and converse in a pleasing manner. Colonial merchants usually preferred formal dinners, dancing, and card playing to physical contests. But Southern planters not only entertained each other extravagantly, they enjoyed horse racing, cock fighting, gambling, and hunting. William Byrd II, a prominent Virginia planter, liked to play billiards and loved to try his hand at bowls. On rare occasions he played ninepins (a bowling game in which nine wooden pins are the target, not ten) or skittles (a British form of ninepins). However, skittles was usually played only by the

lower classes in alleyways or taverns. Before bowling, Byrd often played cricket.

Above all, the great planters had a passion for wagering on horse races. This served social functions similar to the sports of the nineteenth-century elites. Participation in gambling and horse racing visibly identified one as a member of the gentry. Perhaps the provincial gentry cultivated these activities in hopes of establishing a genuine landed or legal aristocracy in the colonies. At any rate, gaming relationships furnished the gentry with a means of solidifying their dominance over Southern society. They served the gentry as a “safety valve” that allowed the planters to compete with each other without seriously endangering the cohesion of the group. One gained honor and respect only by victories over one’s peers, never by competing against inferiors. For the onlookers, who included the common white people and the slaves, horse racing among the gentry was a form of high social drama. By promoting these great public displays, the planters helped convince subordinate groups that the gentry culture was something to be esteemed. And by conceding the superiority of gentry culture, the common people were more likely to comply with the gentry’s control of the political and economic life of the colonies.

In a larger cultural sense the American colonies were simply a provincial outpost of the British Empire. The colonist’s pastimes were the result of the interaction between the customs the people brought with them and New World circumstances. The English colonists, unlike the Spanish and the French in the New World, assimilated little of the Native American culture. The severe shock of the forced dislocation and slavery insured that the black influence on the recreation of the English colonists would also be minimal.

Post-Revolutionary Pastimes

The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed the beginnings of a new pattern of culture in the United States. American *Victorianism* (in which the growing upper class mimicked the high society of Britain in dress, morality, and mannerisms) stemmed from the erosion of older social restraints, a revolution in material aspirations, and a reinvigorated Protestantism. The Victorians, who came mostly from the middle-income ranks, praised the values of hard work, religious duty, sexual control, sobriety, and punctuality. They frequently mounted crusades against drink, gambling, sexual promiscuity, and “idle” amusements. They associated these vices with the “dissolute aristocracy” from above and the “unproductive rabble” from below.

The “unproductive rabble” and the “dissolute aristocracy” formed the core of support for an *emerging Victorian subculture* or underworld. The members of the subculture wanted to retain pre-industrial, pre-urban patterns of life. Their typical activities were saloon management, gambling, crime, prostitution, speculative ventures, entertainment, and sport. The subculture offered substitutes for the traditional folk games, which had disappeared, in the form of the saloon, the theatre, gambling halls, and commercial sports (largely represented by “blood” sports, professional pedestrianism or foot-racing, prize fighting, billiards, boat racing and the like).

In those parts of the nation that were untouched by urbanization, principally in the rural areas along the advancing frontier, the playing of folk games continued as much as it had in the past. Especially popular were such contests as shooting-at-the-mark, throwing, running, jumping, rail-splitting (splitting logs into rails), and wrestling. But yet another world of sport emerged within the middle- and upper-income ranks. In the Revolutionary era, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush, and Benjamin Franklin, among others, had advocated regular physical exercise, for better health

and mental acuity. The introduction of formal gymnastics and regularized calisthenics (usually by German immigrants) created a brief flurry of excitement, but the permanent results were meager.

By 1850 members of the upper- and middle-income ranks in the larger cities began to form numerous voluntary associations or clubs for boating, quoits (flat rings of iron or rope are pitched at a stake), racquets, cricket, and baseball. Gradually the Victorians came to approve of these sports while continuing to condemn sports associated with the underworld featuring violence, gambling, professionalism, and spectatorship. Nevertheless, until the opening years of the twentieth century, Victorianism continued to act as a powerful brake upon the overall growth of commercial sport.

The early Victorian culture opposed the appearance of the sporting fraternity, which was localized in the saloons and billiard rooms. Apart from the sensual gratification found in smoking, drinking, playing billiards, and wagering, the social functions of the fraternity also presented the billiard hall as a refuge from femininity, domesticity, and the demanding routines of the new economy. In earlier times public drinking had been confined largely to taverns, which served food and drink, offered temporary lodging to travelers, and functioned as social centers for people of all ranks. While the tavern had enjoyed widespread support, the nineteenth century saloon, which typically featured drinking as its chief activity, incurred the wrath of “respectable” people everywhere.

The saloon was an ideal retreat for the metropolitan sporting fraternity. There, the two extremes of society—young “dissolute” men of some means and the workingmen—could meet to review the latest sport gossip, schedule sporting events, and take bets. The saloons often served as pool rooms; the managers posted the odds on horse races and, later in the century, on baseball matches. In the latter part of the century, saloons often had telegraph hookups so they could post the latest sporting results

instantly. Pugilists and their backers almost invariably worked out of local saloons.

The social composition of the sporting fraternity cannot be determined with precision. Its majority came from the ranks of the ordinary workmen. Because of variable periods of unemployment and underemployment, a surprisingly large portion of the labor force had ample amounts of spare time to engage in sporting activities. Bachelors, who might also be members of the working class, constituted an especially important contingent of the sporting fraternity. From both the countryside and Europe more men than women swarmed into the growing cities. Without ties to wives or traditional homes, many of them sought friendship and excitement at the brothels, gambling halls, billiard rooms, cockpits, boxing rings, or the race tracks. While most of the sporting fraternity came from the rank and file, a small number of wealthy men sometimes played conspicuous roles in the world of commercial pastimes. A hedonistic fringe of the upper-income ranks might promote and furnish the stakes for sporting spectacles. Thomas Jefferson, for instance, blamed the English for the tendency of young American “gentlemen” to gamble, drink excessively, patronize prostitutes, and frequent the sporting activities of the underworld. For England continued to exercise a profound influence over the sporting life of the new nation. Achievement of political independence had not resulted in cultural independence as well.

The members of the sporting fraternity were often called by their contemporaries *the fancy*, from the elegant, perhaps ostentatiously dressed, English “gentlemen” who patronized sporting events, especially prize fights. The commercialized diversions of the fancy ranged in respectability from the blood sports and prize fighting at the bottom to pedestrianism at the top, though none of them, of course, won the full approval of proper Victorians. Prize fighting was obviously imported from England and had little following in the eighteenth century. There are

accounts of men who engaged in “rough and tumble” in the South and along the frontier, a form of fighting which might involve every kind of procedure meant to inflict pain and wound the opponent. There are also legends of planters who pitted their best fighting slaves against those of neighboring plantations. But eventually, prize fighting, perhaps more than any other commercial sporting endeavor, aroused the indignation of Victorians. Respectable people especially condemned pugilism for its brutality. They also resented prize fighting for the assorted, disorderly crowds which it attracted.

The fancy also patronized commercialized billiards, which was a game played both by the riffraff in billiard halls and by the well-to-do in private residences and exclusive men’s clubs. Horse racing was another pursuit that regained its traditional popularity after the American Revolution had temporarily halted it. Professional foot-racing culminated with the Great Race of 1835, which even promoted nationalistic rivalries, since the contenders were Englishmen, Prussians, Irishmen, and even a Native American. But in the 1880s, professional foot-racing declined rapidly, to be replaced in popularity by the amateur track and field contests of the great metropolitan athletic clubs. Last but not least, rowing began to receive attention in the newspapers in the early nineteenth century. But unlike pedestrianism, rowing featured both professional and amateur oarsmen. After the Civil War (1861-1865), nevertheless, amateur rowing, rooted this time in both private clubs and the nation’s colleges, began to supplant professional rowing in popularity.

By 1850 the preconditions for a sport “take-off” were present in America. The nation ranked next to England in terms of per capita wealth, a transportation and communication revolution was underway, the increased application of machinery to production promised more leisure time, and large cities dotted the landscape. The society was exceptionally fluid and impersonal.

And already present was a thriving sporting fraternity that offered an alternate life style to the strictures of Victorianism. The Victorians themselves had begun to reconsider their animosity toward sport. After about 1840, ironically, sport became an agency for reinforcing traditional Victorian values.

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The Changing Role of TB Sanatoria: From Sarnac New York to Romania's Magic Mountains

JONATHAN J. STILLO

The City University of New York Graduate Center/SNSPA

ABSTRACT

Romania is the site of Europe's worst tuberculosis (TB) epidemic. The present rate of 109 cases per 100,000 people - compared to an EU and U.S. rates of 17 and 4, respectively, means that not only is TB a significant health risk in Romania, but also a danger for the entire region [1, 2]. Even neighboring Bulgaria has a TB rate three times lower than Romania (2). Romania is also the site of some of the world's last TB sanatoria. Nearly 20% of Romania's TB patients are chronic, having failed TB treatment (or being failed by it) at least twice. They represent a real public health danger as they may serve as "reservoirs" of dangerous strains of drug-resistant TB [3].

This paper will examine past and present roles of TB sanatoria, focusing on the U.S. and Romania, while paying special attention to the treatment of chronic and difficult patients, who often are poor, mentally ill and chemically dependent. Sanatoria in Romania are often criticized for being obsolete and inefficient, but they may also be an alternative for patients needing more comprehensive care in a country lacking adequate social welfare and case management resources.

KEYWORDS: Tuberculosis (TB), Romania, sanatoria, chronic, MDR-TB, DOTS, poverty, post socialist healthcare, medical anthropology, treatment compliance, social cases.

Unshaven men with ashen faces shuffle through the dim halls in blue bathrobes and pajamas, others lie in bed, wide eyes set in sunken cheeks. They ask "Are you a new patient?" An old man with wild, gray hair tells me "no one leaves this place, except the

dead.” He is exaggerating; however, two patients died this week. Another tells me that patients do leave, but they are never fully cured, and many come back sick again. Others simply arrive far too late.

TB is an ancient, and deadly, airborne, bacterial disease that has seen a resurgence following the increases in poverty, failures in public health planning and the general upheaval that followed the breakup of the Soviet Union and revolutions in the formerly socialist states. Romania has the highest rate of TB in Europe and one of the highest among the Central Asian states as well. TB is a curable disease that is well-controlled in most developed countries. It is widely recognized as a “social disease,” with poverty greatly increasing one’s odds of catching it and exacerbating the already difficult and lengthy (six months to two years) treatment. In Romania, the disease is a major health problem, affecting all economic and social classes, rather than being limited to homeless, incarcerated and immigrant populations as it is in the U.S. and the rest of the European Union. Worse still, TB is a “shameful” disease to have. This makes sufferers reluctant to seek treatment for fear of ostracism by their friends and families as well as the danger of losing one’s employment.

In Romania, it is still common to receive treatment in a TB sanatorium, especially for poor patients. In fact, some of the world’s last TB sanatoria are located there. They bear little resemblance to the one famously described by Thomas Mann in the *Magic Mountain*, where wealthy patients live a peaceful and surreal existence, discussing philosophy while resting in the clean mountain air [4]. This classic work of fiction seems utterly removed from the modern era of antibiotics and the Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS). DOTS involves supervised multi-drug therapy and is the global standard developed by the World Health Organization.

Hermann Brehmer opened the world’s first TB sanatorium in 1863, in what is now Poland. The idea was quickly adopted in other parts of Europe, and in 1885, Edward Trudeau opened the first TB sanatorium in the United States in Sarnac Lake, NY, the

Adirondack Cottage Sanatorium. At this time, the cause of TB was still a mystery and there was no known cure. In the beginning, the goal in European and American sanatoria was not to segregate the patients for public health reasons; rather it was to remove them from unhealthy conditions such as toxic home or work environments. For Alonzo Clark, Trudeau's mentor, 150 years ago the most important element of curing TB was improving the patient's overall health. Clark's general cure was a combination of rest and nutritious food [5]. Today, it is well accepted that improvements in living conditions, nutrition and stress level can strengthen the immune system allowing the body to better fight and contain the TB infection. Sadly, despite this knowledge, rest and proper nutrition remain out of reach for the vast majority of those infected worldwide.

Treatment standards varied widely in U.S. sanatoria. Trudeau's patients at Sarnac were a mixture of social classes; he even sought out some poorer patients from New York City. They dined on rich foods, rested in the Adirondack mountain air for 8 to 10 hours per day, while sunning themselves on balconies or strolling through gardens. Some sanatoria, like Cragmor in Colorado Springs, catered exclusively to the wealthy and, under the management of Alexius Forster, promoted "physical comfort and mental buoyancy above everything else" [6]. Other locations were much stricter and regulated every aspect of patients' lives. Patients in some locations were even instructed not to read or write and to try not to think—to "lead the life of a log", according to one patient's diary [7].

Many poor New York City patients experienced harsher conditions. They were sent to Otisville Sanatorium, which was also located in the Adirondack Mountains. It offered limited food and a "work cure." Patients would begin with a little walking and soon began doing hard labor. The maximum stay was only three months, but most left earlier because of the unpleasant conditions (8). Little is known about the lives of patients who stayed at places like Otisville, because many were illiterate and they left behind few letters and journals [8].

By 1925, there were 536 TB sanatoria in the US alone with 673,338 beds [9]. They were built in the mountains, the deserts, in forests and on the coasts. There were sanatoria constructed for rich and poor, and they varied dramatically in quality. Eventually, there were even sanatoria constructed for Jews, African Americans and Native Americans, who were barred from many facilities [10]. However, with the discovery of streptomycin, in 1943, the age of sanatoria started to end in much of the world. By the 1960s most locations in the U.S. and Western Europe were closed. Trudeau's Sarnac was turned into a conference center; the location Thomas Mann famously described in Davos, Switzerland, became a sport hotel [8]. In the U.S., many were converted for other medical uses or simply abandoned like Waverly Hills in Kentucky, which is popularly believed to be haunted. In the years before it closed in 1960, the exclusive Cragmor Sanatorium, in Colorado, would ironically serve Navajo Indian TB sufferers, some of the poorest and most disenfranchised people in the country [6].

TB Sanatoria in Romania: Before and During Socialism

Moroeni is one of the largest still functioning sanatoria in Romania. It was built in 1938 and is located a few hours outside of Bucharest. It was designed after a Swiss sanatorium and formerly housed 600 patients. Bisericani is one of the oldest, founded in 1905 and located in Piatra Neamț in the northern part of the country; it now houses one of Romania's two specialized Drug-Resistant (M/XDR) TB wards. Both of these institutions employed the highest technology available at the time and were specially constructed to maximize exposure to the sun and to facilitate the movement of air. In fact, many of the old sanatoria are equipped with natural passive ventilation systems. These systems suck air through patient rooms and out the windows ensuring that clean air flows through the hallways. Despite their age, the designs of these buildings, with their wrap-around balconies, which allow patients to socialize and rest outside in the sunlight (which kills TB), and their natural ventilation systems provide extra protection from TB for the doctors and staff working in them.

Following the Second World War, Romania's TB sanatoria, as well as the rest of its limited health infrastructure, was taken over by the communist government. This meant that the TB sanatoria, previously reserved for the richest residents, were opened to patients from all backgrounds. They became part of the system of compulsory screening and treatment that has been described as brutal and invasive, similar to the Russian Sanitation and Epidemiology Service. However, TB incidence sharply dropped during socialism, reaching an all-time low in 1985 [11]. Screenings were conducted at schools and places of work. If one was discovered to have TB, they could be sent to a sanatorium and their children sent to a preventorium, by force if necessary. While these methods paid no attention to matters of human rights and freedom, they proved effective in containing infection by quickly diagnosing, removing and treating infected people. It should be noted that while present day Romania lacks the public health quarantine laws necessary to detain and forcibly treat non-compliant TB patients, the U.S. does have these laws and a small percentage of patients (oftentimes poor, alcoholic and/or mentally ill) are detained in hospitals, prisons and even guarded motel rooms, as dangers to public health, every year [12]. The lack of public health quarantine laws is a major concern for some Romanian doctors; but, in the absence of the supportive services and even medications (even in 2010, Romania faces chronic shortages of some necessary anti-TB drugs), making treatment compulsory would only produce a greater number of patients needing medicines, beds and food, all of which are in short supply.

TB Sanatoria in Romania: After Socialism

Unlike in North American and Western Europe, TB sanatoria in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union remained a major part of TB treatment much longer. This may be attributable to many factors, including a preference for longer hospital stays, regardless of the ailment. During socialism, the best doctors tended to work in hospitals; therefore inpatient care at these institutions was sought after. There are still functioning TB sanatoria in many

of these countries including Russia, Hungary and Uzbekistan, though their numbers have been greatly reduced.

Romania's TB sanatoria continue to operate as they have for decades, but now they offer the same treatment and medications (barring shortages) as other TB hospitals. There are approximately twenty sanatoria operating in Romania right now. It is difficult to know for sure, due to irregularities in classification (a TB sanatorium might officially be named a hospital, and sanatoria, as classified by the Ministry of Health, also include hydrotherapy facilities). While the treatment is the same, the locations tend to be more isolated and idyllic such as in forests or on mountaintops. The beauty of the mountains does not necessarily guarantee quality in the treatment; conditions vary greatly between these institutions and even within them over time. TB sanatoria are frequently the subject of media investigations focusing on corruption, the poor quality of food, the facilities, and shortages of supplies and medications [13, 14, 15, 16]. However, these same allegations are also frequently directed towards a variety of other medical facilities; while oftentimes these accusations are based in fact, they serve mainly to feed the public's appetite for scandal.

In 2005, the World Health Organization recommended that Romania reduce the number of its sanatoria [17]. The former Romanian Minister of Health, Ovidiu Branzan, stated that by 2006 all of these institutions would be closed [18]. According to many experts, the closure of all Romania's sanatoria is now a very remote possibility. Patients want them open and so do the employees of the facilities, as well as local political interests. There are myriad reasons for this, which are beyond the scope of this article. However, recent years have seen substantial reductions in the numbers of patients they are funded to treat. The larger sanatoria which have bed capacities in excess of 500 may only receive funding for 180 or 200 patients, despite the fact that some of these same locations are filled to capacity. There are two general arguments for closing sanatoria. The most common is economic - that they are inefficient and too expensive to operate. Secondly, many consider them to be obsolete. Research conducted during the

1960s in India and Canada found that patients are cured equally well using modern outpatient methods [19, 20, 21]. However, others argue that the patients being treated at the sanatoria now are different, more difficult to treat and are frequently “social cases”; these patients do need additional services and care in order to be cured. For example, a doctor saw me speaking to a newly arrived patient and described him to me as follows: “that is Mr. Antonescu (All proper names are pseudonyms unless the statement is part of the public record), he is a social case. He is a chronic patient, an alcoholic, suffers from depression and has no family to take care of him. What would become of him if we were to release him again?” Good intentioned Romanian doctors triaging social cases, in the medical sector is common in Romania and is, to some degree, present in all inpatient facilities. It has also been documented in mental illness hospitals where doctors will sometimes give patients a more serious diagnosis to allow them to stay interned longer [22]. This practice increases the cost of health in Romania, but absent solutions to address the social welfare needs of these patients, is considered by some to be the only humane alternative.

Special Difficulties

TB is a complicated and often misunderstood disease. In Romania, there is a general lack of knowledge about the disease and misinformation abounds. Even certain medical personnel exhibit low levels of TB knowledge, which makes diagnosis more difficult in rural areas [23]. Less than 14% of patients, at one large Romanian sanatorium, correctly reported having contracted their illness from another person who was infected with TB; rather, explanations were an improperly treated flu or cold, exposure to the elements, or too much drinking or smoking (n = 154). One patient surveyed on how they contracted their illness explained that, “I got drunk, fell asleep in a field and was rained on during the night. That is how I got TB.” While this explanation might seem unlikely, the response actually combines multiple, common explanations for TB infection (drinking, exposure to cold and rain); and, to the average Romanian-TB patient, offers a much better explanation than

airborne bacteria - even though many can even name the “Koch” bacteria (named after Robert Koch who discovered *mycobacterium tuberculosis*) that they are infected with.

With a chronic rate approaching 20%, Romania is not reaching the patients most in need. These patients, according to former National TB Program Manager, Constantin Marica, are ‘reservoirs’ of M/XDR-TB with a rate of approximately 30% [3]. Beyond the risk these patients pose in terms of increasing rates of M/XDR-TB, they are also exposing countless others to the disease. At the present time, Romania is doing little to address the needs of ‘problem’ patients who are lacking material and social resources. Doctors stress that patients without these resources fail to complete the outpatient continuation phase of treatment when they must return home to the same poor conditions that oftentimes have led them to become ill in the first place. During this phase of treatment, they must travel back and forth to the doctor or hospital to be observed taking the antibiotics. Some patients must travel long distances and the side-effects of the anti-TB drugs often make it impossible to return to work or care for one’s family. During recovery TB patients need rest, good food and social support to get better, but over 60% of patients I surveyed at one Romanian sanatorium in 2010, had never had a visitor of any kind, and the majority of those who had received visitors only did so rarely (n = 154). Economically depressed patients with little social support face serious difficulties when they return to their homes.

Sanatoria as Cutting-Edge?

While most of the world’s sanatoria have long since closed their doors, some remain and have shifted focus to better address the needs of TB patients today. For example, in Hungary, Koranyi Hospital and Sanatorium operates a special ward for homeless, alcohol dependent TB patients. This ward provides specialized services such as addiction counseling and treatment, psychological counseling and even job training to prepare patients for new occupations [24]. In the United States, A.G. Holley TB hospital in Florida is one of the last of the original American sanatoria: it

presently has 50 beds where patients who have failed to get better with community treatment are provided with more comprehensive care. This comprehensive care also includes addiction counseling and management of side-effects involving complicating conditions such as HIV/AIDS and/or diabetes; this treatment is conducted by doctors specializing in these matters (TB is rare in the US so most doctors have never diagnosed or treated a TB patient). The sanatorium, now called a hospital, treats some of the most difficult and resistant forms of M/XDR-TB and boasts a 93% success rate; this percentage is about twice as high as treatment by standard means, according to the Florida State Department of Health (FLDOH ND). Given recent increases in the rate and resistance of M/XDR-TB, some have called for the reopening of sanatoria to contain and treat these particularly virulent strains [25]. Beyond their present role in caring for “difficult to treat” patients such as social cases, the homeless, mentally ill and chemically dependent, TB sanatoria may be able to stop the advance of highly resistant TB by isolating those patients until they are no longer contagious.

The Future: What do Romanian Sanatoria want to be and what *could* they be?

Many Romanian sanatoria want to shed the label “sanatorium” because of the negative connotations it carries. Especially in recent years, some sanatoria have become infamous for their poor conditions and are seen as part of an embarrassing past. In fact, when I presented my research to an older, well-respected TB doctor in Bucharest, he exclaimed, “Why do you want to go and dig up dead bodies?” This doctor insinuated heavily that I should concern myself with the future and not the past. Since I began this research, some locations have renamed themselves, officially or unofficially. A facility that was previously known as a sanatorium might begin to be called a hospital while still conducting the same treatment. At the sanatorium where I have conducted the most research, I have been told by multiple doctors, “We are not a sanatorium; we are a hospital.” This informal name change is more of a reflection of the desires of the management to

become something different than an actual difference in treatment or mission. When doctors tell me that ‘we are not a sanatorium’ I believe they are telling me: we treat TB following modern protocols (DOTS), not simply with clean air, rich food and lots of rest. However, there are still substantial differences in these locations compared to other hospitals, mostly relating to the patients’ longer lengths of stay and their more precarious economic and social supports. I have met some patients who have stayed for years at sanatoria, and others who have dozens of admittances and discharges to sanatoria, in their pasts, spending perhaps as much time hospitalized as they do at their homes. The danger with this practice is that these patients, who never complete treatment, become contagious again and place everyone around them at risk in between their hospitalizations.

Romania needs greater investment in health care, especially TB control. The current approach, while making small improvements in the total number of cases, is failing a large number of patients; this is leading to two-tiered system where some people are able to be cured and others are not. I have met entire households infected with TB, where grandparent and grandchild will both die of the same treatable disease. It is important to note that poorly treated TB becomes drug resistant and the drugs needed to treat M/XDR-TB cost between 50 and 200 times more than those for regular TB [26]. Furthermore, treating patients multiple times costs more than treating them one time successfully. The infections in other people, caused by uncured TB patients, are also a heavy burden, both in dollars and also in human life. However, the most important reason to address this problem is that TB causes needless suffering in Romania. Helping these patients is the right thing to do.

Romania cannot afford to fight the TB epidemic alone, especially during the present economic crisis. It is one of the poorest countries with some of the worst health outcomes in the entire region [2]. However, a well planned investment in improving TB treatment adherence through the expansion of casework, counseling and psychological services (which all barely exist) and especially through support in the form of food and transportation

vouchers could help cure patients who are stuck in a cycle of failed treatments. Within this constellation of necessary supportive services, sanatoria can offer some hope for the chronic patients, social cases and the “difficult to treat.” Indeed, even in an article lauding the success of outpatient treatment in Canada, Kincade warns: “There will always be need of tuberculosis beds for the aged, alcoholics, and treatment failures, homeless drifters and unreliable and uncooperative patients. In recent years the sanatoria population has included a higher percentage of these, the hard core of the problem” [19]. This warning was given nearly fifty years ago, yet the problem remains the same. The European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) has suggested that mobile units, residential programs, inpatient treatment at sanatoria and other “creative solutions” might be beneficial in treating difficult cases who fail to improve under standard treatment [27]. These recommendations are specifically for treating homeless patients, but there is a great deal of overlap between the problems of the homeless and those of impoverished Romanians, who in addition to frequently having alcohol dependency issues and mental health problems, tend to be unstably housed at best. There are many ways to treat TB and I am not arguing that every Romanian TB patient should receive longer sanatorium treatment. However, there should be a system of needs assessment in place to determine which patients would benefit from this option, as well as possible outpatient benefits such as food, transportation vouchers and counseling services, especially for those with alcohol, tobacco and other drug dependency problems.

Years ago, A TB doctor in Moldavia told me that she did not see the sanatoria as obsolete, but rather, dreams about them becoming beautiful places where the poor could rest, eat, and be cured, spared from the stress of daily life, as she describes it, “a Magic Mountain in Romania [...] for the poor instead of the rich,” a uniquely Romanian response to a global epidemic. Romania’s TB sanatoria are an important existing infrastructural resource and, if managed in an efficient and humane way, these formerly obsolete institutions might become a viable part of the future of TB

treatment and even provide a model for how to treat patients whose social and economic problems prevent them from being cured.

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Jane Austen's *Emma* Seen
through the Cinematic Lens

CORINA SELEJAN
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

ABSTRACT

Given the fact that more than twenty Austen-related cinematic adaptations have been released over the past fifteen years alone, the analysis of this cultural phenomenon emerges as a necessity for gaining a complex understanding of Austen's work and the way we perceive it today. Two centuries of interpretive history necessarily come to bear on any reading, be it critical or filmic, of Austen's novel *Emma*. Critical material relating to *Emma*'s being a difficult read due to its hermeneutic versatility and ambiguity has been insisted upon, as opposed to criticism with political and other than aesthetic agendas. As five cinematic adaptations of *Emma* are analysed in terms of their relationship to the novel they are based on, to literary criticism and interpretation, and to each other, adaptation emerges as steering increasingly away from mere intersemiotic 'translation' towards more and more creative interpretation, involving, at times, the displacement of the literary work from its original socio-historical and cultural context. This development is shown to have a crucial relevance to contemporary culture.

KEYWORDS: Austen's interpretive history, *Emma*'s hermeneutic difficulty, cinematic adaptation, fidelity, intertextuality, 'high' and 'low' culture, recent trends in filmic adaptation.

The past fifteen years have witnessed a boom of film and television adaptations based on Jane Austen's novels, her life and various cultural phenomena in some way connected to her. As Martin Amis expressed in his 1996 *New Yorker* article entitled "Jane's World",

“currently, it seems, Jane Austen is hotter than Quentin Tarrantino”[1] and that hasn’t changed since. If anything, Austen’s screen attractiveness has increased. In 2007 alone, five Austen-related cinematic productions were released: *Northanger Abbey*, *Mansfield Park*, *Persuasion*, *Becoming Jane* and *The Jane Austen Book Club*. Due, in part, to her works’ recent popularity, among other things, this paper engages with recent adaptations of *Emma*, arguably, Austen’s “most perfect and fully representative work.”[2] *Emma* emerges from its prolific interpretive history, which spans two centuries, as a somewhat controversial novel and consequently maintains a wide critical appeal. According to Lionel Trilling’s “*Emma* and the Legend of Jane Austen”, the source of this appeal lies in the fact that “the difficulty of *Emma* is never overcome,” as re-readings of it do not allow us “to flatter ourselves that we fully understand what the novel is doing.”[3] Critics Reginald Farrer, Wayne C. Booth and Adena Rosmarin agree with Trilling – to name but a few – and try to unveil the origins of that difficulty through a variety of approaches. They also counteract the widely-held view of Austen as a novelist with a narrow, limited scope. Henry James, for example, is included among the many who have belittled her merit as an artist, (mis)describing her as an “unconscious” author and her work as amounting to “*little* touches of human truth, *little* glimpses of steady vision, *little* master-strokes of imagination.”[4]

Throughout its interpretive history, *Emma* has been made to fit the approach of almost every school of thought, from Victorian criticism to Stanley Fish’s ‘affective stylistics,’ a fact which bears witness to its remarkable hermeneutic versatility, its literary value and continued relevance across centuries. These factors play an important part in filmic adaptation. The object of this paper is a comparative/contrastive analysis of five adaptations of *Emma* in relation to their literary source as well as to each other. As every screen adaptation implies (and indeed is itself) an interpretation, *Emma*’s interpretive history bears on these adaptations. The analysis results in the identification of relevant trends in

contemporary cinematic adaptation and their significance in contemporary culture.

Of the film and television versions of *Emma* to be discussed, the first is *Clueless*, a 1995 Paramount Pictures production written and directed by Amy Heckerling and featuring Alicia Silverstone in the female and Paul Rudd in the male lead. The next release took place in July 1996. Produced by Miramax Films and written and directed by Douglas McGrath, *Emma*'s leading actors are Gwyneth Paltrow and Jeremy Northam. It was followed in November 1996 by *Jane Austen's "Emma,"* an ITV production directed by Lawrence Diarmuid, written by Andrew Davies and starring Kate Beckinsale and Mark Strong. More recently, in 2007, Mockingbird Pictures released *The Jane Austen Book Club*, in which plot elements of all of Austen's six major novels are intertwined. The recognisable Emma Woodhouse – Mr. Knightley pair is played by Maria Bello and Hugh Dancy. The film was directed and written by Robin Swicord, based on a novel of the same title by Karen Joy Fowler. Finally, the BBC *Emma* was released in 2009, a TV miniseries directed by Jim O'Hanlon and written by Sandy Welch. It consists of four episodes. The leading actors are Romola Garai and Johnny Lee Miller. In the following, the different screen versions of *Emma* will be identified by the screenplay writer's surname[5].

Two criteria of distinction among these films need to be mentioned toward initial analysis: the national culture of origin and the extent to which the original historical context was retained. Thus, Heckerling's, McGrath's and Swicord's versions are American (and Hollywood) productions, whereas Davies' and Welch's versions are British productions. While McGrath, Davies and Welch retain Austen's original Regency setting, Heckerling and Swicord do not. They appropriate elements of plot and character and adapt them to a contemporary American context.

The multitude of factors that come to bear on a literary work's adaptation for the screen can hardly be identified, let alone covered exhaustively. A crucial distinction to be made is that, unlike literary works, films are "collaborative"[6] media, as Gina

and Andrew F. MacDonald note in their “Introduction” to *Jane Austen on Screen*. The result is that “the many specialists involved in adapting a literary work to the screen have widely divergent agendas, not all of them aesthetic, literary, or intellectual.”[7] Box-office success (exchange-value ethics in general) inevitably influences the adaptations, to variable extents. So does ideology. The personal styles and interpretations of the director and the screenplay writer are also decisive. In the following, the adaptations will be analysed in terms of these criteria and considerations of ‘fidelity’ to their literary original. However, the issue of fidelity has been and continues to be a vexed question. While literary ‘purist’ Roger Gard contends that faithful intersemiotic translation is virtually impossible, since “pictures can tell only the surface of things,”[8], Jocelyn Harris claims in her essay “‘Such a Transformation!’: Translation, Imitation, and Intertextuality in Jane Austen” that “demands for fidelity are inappropriate because the shift from one medium to another, from a verbal sign-system to a visual one, inevitably creates difference.”[9] She advocates ‘imitation’ as opposed to ‘faithful translation,’ as the former “stresses its difference from the original in order to showcase the inventiveness of the author” and thereby creates “metatextual” commentary, allusion and intertextuality.[10] From Harris’ post-structuralist vantage point, “the most satisfying Jane Austen movies are not just ‘translations’ but ‘imitations’ rejoicing in their difference.”[11] John Mosier goes one step further and claims that adaptations provide “an interpretation that deserves a hearing,”[12] a claim which transforms them into a more creative version of literary criticism. Both Harris and Mosier ultimately flout the ‘fidelity’ requirement as an irrelevant mimetic principle by demanding that adaptations constitute works of art in their own right, independent of their literary source.

The critical perspective that most influenced McGrath’s *Emma* is obvious from the film’s very first scenes, which support a quaint, idealised and belittled image of Jane Austen as an author with a narrow scope. The film begins with the image of a fast-revolving Planet Earth against the background of the Milky Way.

The camera very convincingly moves as an astronaut would in a gravitation-free environment. The camera then closes in on the earth, which, also very realistically, revolves more slowly the closer the camera moves in. Before ceasing and zooming in, the film's title, *Emma*, appears in a Jane Austen handwriting-like font. The British Isles are then focused on and two scroll-like labels locate London and nearby Highbury on the map of England. Against the same sea-blue background, painted medallions appear containing miniature portraits of the characters with their names written beneath and framed by flourish, and the slow movement from one to the next is made from the west towards the east, as the earth revolves. The portraits are linked by garlands of oak leaves. Each little portrait is accompanied by an even smaller image of the respective character's residence, in a separate medallion and likewise framed by a flourish of oak leaves and again bearing a scroll-like label. The order in which the characters are presented is not the one in which they are introduced either in the novel or in the film itself, but in an order that corresponds to social hierarchy, first with Mrs. and Miss Bates, and ending with Emma, in a sort of grand finale (as her portrait is set slightly apart from the rest and bears four white doves above it). The gradual constriction of the perspective from the Milky Way to Emma Woodhouse suggests increasing narrowness and littleness. The impression is intensified by the fact that this revolving Earth turns out to be a globe in Emma's hand (her wedding present to the Westons).

The voice-over, in Greta Scacchi's (i.e. Mrs. Weston's) voice, is even more telling: "In a time when one's town was one's world and the actions at a dance excited greater interest than the movement of armies, there lived a young woman who knew how this world should be run." [13] The large body of critical interpretations which have quarrelled with Austen's limited subject-matter (i.e. the exclusion of important historic events such as the French Revolution or the Napoleonic Wars from her subject matter) are summarised by this sentence. There is a hint at triviality when "dances" are compared to "wars." Whether this is meant ironically and self-reflectively remains uncertain, however. Emma's own

limited horizon in Highbury is also alluded to. The phrasing of the sentence (“In a time when...there once lived”) suggests a fairy tale and thereby breaks the illusion of realism, as does Mrs. Elton’s direct comment at the film’s end, which asserts the “shocking lack of satin”[14] at Emma’s wedding.

Far from grasping the nature of the novel’s difficulty, the film practically makes no use of the Churchill-Fairfax ‘mystery,’ the viewer would hardly guess that an attachment supposedly exists between Emma and Frank Churchill. Furthermore, s/he is left with a very indistinct remembrance of Frank Churchill, whose only ‘interesting’ scene is the one in which he rescues Emma after treating her to a few of his witticisms. Neither is the audience surprised by Emma’s recognition of her love for Mr. Knightley. Along the same line of thought, the viewer does not suffer apprehension as to the outcome of the relationship between the two. In her essay “Mass Marketing Jane Austen,” Deborah Kaplan identifies several factors that contribute to the lack of suspense in McGrath’s *Emma*. One includes the fact that Mr. Knightley’s affection for Emma is dramatized as it is not in the novel: the viewer perceives his “distinctly unfatherly ardour for the heroine”[15] all too soon. Jeremy Northam’s quivering voice when he asks Emma with whom she is going to dance gives his interest in her away. Even before the ball, he is unable to maintain a serious tone of voice to the last when he scolds Emma on her interference in Harriet Smith’s relationship with Robert Martin. Instead, he jokes about her archery skills: “Try not to kill my dogs.”[16] The abrupt manner in which he ends their discussion (“No more, please, no more!” [17]) is both unconvincing and rude. Kaplan argues that “their disputes are undercut by their choice to spend so much time alone together.”[18] This is, in part, a result of *this* Mr. Knightley’s not having preoccupations elsewhere as Austen’s Mr. Knightley does, which leaves him with much time on his hands to devote to Emma: “No road improving or cattle-buying for this Mr. Knightley.”[19] Another problem area is Mr. Knightley’s age: Jeremy Northam certainly does not look sixteen years Emma’s senior. In the novel, this age difference had explained Mr.

Knightley's paternalistic authority over Emma, and thereby also the unlikeliness of a romantic attachment. All these changes bearing on Mr. Knightley's character make it all the more natural that the proposal scene's entire context is changed. Mr. Knightley is not the disinterested friend who rides through the rain out of apprehension for Emma's disappointed feelings and with no further object in mind. In the novel, Mr. Knightley is not consciously aware of his interest, whereas in the film he even voices it to Emma. The same holds for his aversion to Frank Churchill: Austen's Mr. Knightley never realises that he behaves unjustly toward Frank Churchill, nor why, whereas McGrath's Mr. Knightley voices both to Emma herself, as proof of his attachment: "Did you never wonder why I never befriended Frank Churchill?"[20] His deliberate act of not befriending Frank Churchill is no proof of his maturity. Also childish is his puppyish (to use Mrs. Elton's phrase) self-praise: "I rode through the rain." [21]

This version of *Emma* is riddled with simplification. Austen set herself a challenge in writing *Emma*: "I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like." [22] In his 1961 essay, Wayne C. Booth shows how brilliantly Austen solves her self-imposed dilemma of making her unlikeable heroine likeable by carefully balancing sympathy for and judgement of Emma Woodhouse on the reader's part. This balance of effects is achieved through a "deliberate manipulation of inside views," [23] as the reader is mostly offered internal views of Emma's mind, which ensure his/her sympathy. A balanced mystery-irony dichotomy is also at work: the "mystery" [24] relates to the secret engagement between Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill, whereas the irony is generated by Emma's knowing less than the reader and acting accordingly. The reader is not aware of the mystery from the start either. The sooner the secret engagement is disclosed in the novel for the reader's benefit, the stronger the irony. Mystery, therefore, is purchased at the expense of irony and vice versa. In McGrath's version of *Emma*, the lack of mystery and suspense is not compensated for with an addition in irony. Furthermore, all difficulty relating to Emma as a likeable character is eschewed: the

one who initiates the piece of gossip about Mr. Dixon is Frank, not Emma. Emma makes Mrs. Weston her confidante in everything, even the most intimate matters of her heart, such as her love for Mr. Knightley and Harriet's infatuation with the same. Not only is this lack of discretion untrue to the spirit of *Emma*, but it also too easily circumvents narrative difficulties. Mrs. Weston is made to substitute the narrator, which is why she is omniscient in all of Emma's concerns. The occasional voice-overs in Emma's head, delivered as direct addresses to her diary ("Dear Diary..."[25]) or prayers at church are further means of circumventing narrative difficulties and are also further breaches of privacy and decorum. When Mr. Knightley scolds Emma on Box Hill, he abruptly, almost violently pulls her by the elbow, which is an unlikely gesture for the world of Austen's *Emma*. Miss Bates refuses to see Emma on her first visit after the Box Hill incident, which shows Miss Bates' character to have been reduced to mere silliness.

Deborah Kaplan argues that McGrath's version of *Emma* is a typical instance of "harlequinization"[26] of Austen's novels, a reduction of the novel to a mass-market romance pattern, in which the focus is on the romantically involved couple and everything else serves as background to their love story. Physical appearance is also very important in harlequinizations and the choice of Jeremy Northam as Mr. Knightley and of Gwyneth Paltrow (an American actress in the midst of a British cast) as Emma supports this. Kaplan is critical of alterations made for "broad commercial appeal,"[27] in this case "informed by American tastes." [28] Another disturbing aspect of the reduction of Austen's "interpretive richness"[29] typical to harlequinization is the fact that the depth of relationships among women is lost. In Austen's novels, these relationships provide a balance to the courtship plot. In McGrath's *Emma*, Harriet and Emma "are 'girlfriends' in a modern, trivialized sense, talking about boys or playing with puppies." [30]

By contrast, Davies' version of *Emma* is far less light. Its general atmosphere is more sedate and austere and the film poses more serious questions of social class. In this, Davies' reading of *Emma* seems to be informed by Arnold Kettle's Marxist criticism

of Austen's "unquestioning acceptance of class society," which "no sensitive reader can fail" to perceive as an "inadequacy." [31] Davies' film deliberately and consistently brings the working classes into view. At the film's start, villagers are shown removing their hats when Mr. Woodhouse's carriage passes. Mr. Knightley's first words are addressed to a servant: "How are you, Thomas? And your family?" [32] The servants' plight is often foregrounded, most notably in the Box Hill picnic scenes. They are shown carrying incredible loads of furniture and food uphill and dropping heavy tables and chairs as they do so. Several tables are laid, yet their masters are sitting on blankets laid upon the grass, in the shade of big parasols, and wiggled liveried servants bring the plates to their location. A parallel image intersects with the one described above and depicts a sort of servants' picnic at the bottom of the hill, with the servants lying in the grass, near the horses, in a relaxed and cheerful mood (as opposed to the tense atmosphere uphill). The ending of Davies' *Emma* rings utopian: Mr. Knightley organises a medieval banquet to celebrate the harvest and invites the gentry and yeomanry alike, a fact that greatly astonishes Mrs. Elton and prompts Mr. Elton to label Mr. Knightley "eccentric." [33] However, as the Eltons are not likeable characters, whereas Mr. Knightley is a moral authority, this mixing of the different social classes is perceived as being a highly positive circumstance. Furthermore, Robert Martin is not only introduced to Emma Woodhouse, but is invited to shake her hand and dances down the same set as Mr. Knightley, something that would never have happened in Austen's socio-historical context.

These scenes obviously carry a political message and thereby turn this adaptation into a political reading of *Emma*, a critical attempt sternly censured by Harold Bloom: "Those who now read Austen 'politically' are not reading her at all." [34] In her essay "Robbing the Roost: Reinventing Socialism in Diarmuid Lawrence's *Emma*," Sally Palmer contends that the film "seeks to congratulate 20th-century viewers on their own century's superior political and social environment by foregrounding the inequities and unrest Austen passes over in her own century." [35] She also

argues that, by doing so, the film confuses the audience “by presenting contradictory messages that obscure Austen’s main thrust in the novel. *Emma*’s plot underscores the need for proper conduct and *noblesse oblige*, not abolition of the ruling class or widespread social reform.”[36] Palmer concludes her essay by qualifying Davies’ endeavour to transform an adaptation of *Emma* into a Labour manifesto “as not quite the elegant thing to do...a form of lower-class thievery: robbing the literary roost, so to speak.”[37]

In contrast to McGrath’s *Emma*, Davies’ version does not eschew the difficulties of narrative voice, plot and character that Austen’s *Emma* poses. No facile voice-overs are deployed here (except for rendering Mr. Knightley’s invitation to the Donwell Abbey strawberry party). Instead, what occurs in *Emma*’s imagination is innovatively presented as vivid scenes which are then exposed to be day-dreams. *Emma*’s choice of Harriet as her new close friend is ironically underwritten: Harriet is bathed in sunlight during the mass and therefore *Emma*’s choice is nothing less than providentially approved. *Emma*’s unrealistic hopes for Harriet’s genteel (maybe even aristocratic) parentage (and a good match) are ridiculed in a humorous scene showing Mr. Elton and Harriet as newly-weds, approaching their wedding carriage in slow motion and then turning around to talk to *Emma*: Mr. Elton thanking her in his usual pompous style for “showing [him] where true joy was to be found”[38] and expressing his and Mrs. Elton’s sense of eternal gratitude, and Harriet saying “And to think that I should turn out to be the daughter of a baronet!”[39] Austen’s implicit judgement on the characters’ ability to communicate as an indicator of their good sense and intelligence is showcased in the film, though the participants have changed: whereas in the novel Mrs. Elton and Mr. Weston are conversing but not really communicating, as the former has to bring Maple Grove into every discussion and the latter similarly reduces it to his favourite topic (i.e. his son Frank), in the film Miss Bates and Mr. Woodhouse are the new protagonists of non-communication. Whereas Mr. Woodhouse talks about his well-boiled eggs, Miss Bates is

engrossed in the issue of the apples she had received as a present from Mr. Knightley.

Both Emma's and Mr. Knightley's characters are far better delineated here than in McGrath's version. Emma is not merely a spoiled young woman, but truly a likeable heroine whom the audience can trust to finally make the right decisions. Mr. Knightley shows his age in comparison to Emma and is indeed a strong character. His sternness and obviously important civic role in Highbury confer the necessary moral authority similarly applied in his relationship to Emma and the other characters. He is also not physically attractive enough to make a match between him and the young Emma a probability until late in the film. The Frank Churchill – Jane Fairfax mystery is also very well handled and the apparent attachment of Emma and Frank is convincing. The moment when most readers' suspicions about Jane and Frank's secret understanding are aroused in the novel occurs during Emma's visit to see Jane's new pianoforte, when she finds Frank there, occupied with mending Mrs. Bates' glasses. In the film, the same moment in time is chosen, but a stronger impression is imparted, as Jane and Frank are seen to stand close for a second before they rapidly remove themselves. Whereas the reader perceives this, Emma does not, which perfectly keeps with the novel's design to sustain and intensify irony. Mr. Knightley's proposal to Emma shows the viewer a straightforward, intelligible Mr. Knightley and an articulate Emma, more so than in any of the other film versions.

Emma's as yet unacknowledged love for Mr. Knightley is brilliantly dramatised for the benefit of the viewer: she has a nightmare in which she is present at Mr. Knightley's wedding with Miss Fairfax, standing in the aisle and holding her little nephew's hand, crying: "But what about little Henry?"[40] The perceptive viewer will not fail to recognise her feelings. Later in the film, the scenario is repeated, but as a bad day-dream, with Harriet as Mr. Knightley's bride and no little Henry present, as she brings out a desperate "No!" Several other fantasy scenarios are employed to showcase Emma's being an "imaginist"[41]: Frank Churchill riding

into Mrs. Goddard's garden like a knight in shining armour and riding away with Harriet, Jane Fairfax' being rescued by Mr. Dixon, etc. In addition to these dramatisations, Diarmuid's filming techniques, albeit rather conventional, are very good at suggesting whose character's point of view is being presented.

Davies' humour also redeems the film from its political colouring. During a dinner party at Hartfield, Mrs. Bates is offered a "very small egg"[42] by Mr. Woodhouse, but the poor lady is detained from enjoying it: first by her daughter's chatter, then by Mr. Woodhouse's unnecessary explanations, and finally by Mr. Elton's offer to peel the egg, a slow peeling with stolen glances at Emma, to see whether his good deed is noticed by her. Other delightfully comic and ironic scenes are provided by Mrs. Elton's inconsistency. While picking strawberries, she exclaims: "So simple and natural!"[43] but at the same time motions a servant to move the cushion she kneels on to pick them. To Miss Bates, she boasts of her alleged love of nature ("I fancy myself as a sort of shepherdess, you know"[44]). Miss Bates, not quite gathering her implied meaning, innocently replies: "Are you fond of sheep, then, Mrs. Elton?"[45]

Both Davies' and Welch's versions claim a strong connection to Jane Austen's *Emma* in the opening credits: Davies' film is presented as "Jane Austen's *Emma*," whereas Welch's version is entitled "*Emma*, by Jane Austen." These differences constitute powerful marketing devices, as "the officially sanctioned characteristics most commonly associated with Austen's name relate to a high culture aesthetic that values literature." [46] Other values associated with Jane Austen are "an appreciation of irony and satire at the expense of class hierarchies; anglophilia, or at least a tolerance thereof, with a latent and implicit nostalgia attached to it; dialogue-driven narratives delivered in an elevated language; and the repression of foul language and overt sexuality." [47] The educational value of the BBC adaptations of Jane Austen has long been a common-place. This value explains the fact that BBC adaptations have been unadventurous, rather literal interpretations of Austen's texts.

The 2009 BBC *Emma* written by Sandy Welch departs from the literal reading and conservative filming techniques. It starts by reorganising the order in which important information is provided in Austen's novel. Thus, the viewer is initially provided with the history of Jane, Frank and Emma's childhood. These scenes distress the viewer, as they address separation, death and grief in early childhood. By adding a voice-over in Jonny Lee Miller's (i.e. Mr. Knightley's) sympathetic voice, the emotional intensity further increases. By this preamble, several ends are achieved: Emma is established as a privileged child who had the good fortune to remain at home, thus enhancing Austen's (self)challenge; Mr. Woodhouse's character is redeemed (in comparison to the novel); a number of Jane and Frank's faults as adults are accounted for (or rather 'excused'). The sentence that the exposition ends with, "...while Emma stayed comfortably at home with very little to distress or vex her for many years to come,"[48] largely performs the function of Austen's own allusive introductory paragraphs. The motif of Emma's 'seclusion' in Highbury is also dramatised from the outset and serves as leitmotif. Mr. Woodhouse silences Miss Bates when she reads about the seaside: "Sh! Emma doesn't know anything about the seaside, it's best the children don't." [49] The series ends with Mr. Knightley taking Emma on her first trip to the seaside as part of their honeymoon. The rest of the scenes from Emma's childhood introduce the metaphorical device of the dolls, whom Emma marries under the table, while Miss Bates reads Jane's seemingly endless letters. Emma's aversion to Jane as an adult is thereby explained.

Mr. Knightley emerges as a rather fraternal figure initially and is placed somewhere between McGrath's and Davies' Mr. Knightley. After Emma confronts Mr. Knightley with the suspicion of his attachment to Jane Fairfax, he is shown in a very suggestive scene, reminiscing about his dance with Emma at the ball, while the camera circles around him. From this point on, his feelings for Emma are dramatised, though not as obviously as in McGrath's version. The plot is well-organised within the four episodes: each of the endings of the first three episodes revolves around a

disagreement or some kind of tension between Emma and Mr. Knightley. In the first and the third episodes, he even leaves Hartfield with no very genial feelings. The first episode ends with the end of their disagreement concerning Emma's interference in Harriet's refusal of Robert Martin. The end of the second episode leaves Emma pondering Mr. Knightley's alleged attachment to Jane Fairfax, while the third sees Mr. Knightley off to London, after his clash with Emma on Box Hill. These endings create suspense and keep the viewer guessing at the outcome of their relationship.

Emma's alleged attachment to Frank Churchill is also very well dramatised, as the reader is well informed by her voiced-over interior monologues. Their flirtation is, however, rendered in too broad strokes: during the Box Hill picnic, Frank's head rests in Emma's lap, a breach of decorum that is in tune with the rather loose, contemporary body language of the series, but decidedly out of tune with Austen's novel. Mr. Knightley's jealousy is also dramatised by his rather cutting remarks (he even calls him "the prodigal son"[50] at one time). Several flashbacks are presented at different points in time, for the benefit of the viewer, who, unlike the reader, cannot go back in the book to search for overlooked clues. When Frank Churchill's secret engagement is revealed, Emma has a flashback of ambiguous statements made by him. The same holds for Harriet's disclosure about her feelings for Mr. Knightley.

Intertextuality is very much at work in this version of *Emma*. In McGrath's *Emma*, the archery scene reminded the viewer of the 1940 version of *Pride and Prejudice*. Welch's *Emma* alludes to Davies' version by borrowing Emma's dramatised fantasies: Jane Fairfax' being rescued by Mr. Dixon, Jane's being married to Mr. Knightley and the latter forbearing Miss Bates' long speeches of thanks for his marrying Jane, Jane playing the pianoforte at Donwell Abbey etc. Emma's throwing away Milton's *Paradise Lost* after only two pages reminds one of Miss Bingley's doing the same in the 2005 BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice*. In the novel, Isabella's sons Henry and John are mentioned. In the series, John Knightley calls out to two of his sons "Henry! James!,"[51]

whereby the novelist is alluded to, as is Rudyard Kipling's *The Janeites*.

Other kinds of intertextualities are employed here as well. Many of the film's actors have been featured in other films and the viewer cannot help but bring related associations into this film. Both Mr. Elton and Mr. Knightley (i.e. Blake Ritson and Jonny Lee Miller) have played Edmund Bertram in the 2007 and 1999 versions of *Mansfield Park*, respectively. Mrs. Elton (i.e. Christina Cole) is a former Caroline Bingley, in the 2008 mini-series *Lost in Austen*. A blue dress worn by Jane Fairfax in this version of *Emma* was worn by Jane Fairfax in McGrath's *Emma*. Emma's dance with Mr. Knightley at the ball is accompanied by a modified version of the music in the opening credits, triggering the viewer's instant recognition. This scene at the ball is a scene of rare beauty and intensity. Whereas the viewer understands the meaning of dancing down a set, the focus remains on the Emma-Mr. Knightley couple, who engage in frequent eye-contact and share ecstatic smiles.

Emma's remorse after the Box Hill incident is brilliantly and strongly sustained, both visually and musically: the sun rises upon a pale, dishevelled Emma staring at the wall on which the sunlight falls. The violin music accompanying the scene suggests intensity and is similar to Vivaldi's Summer Storm (3rd movement). The uncommonly modest, almost drab attire she wears as she travels to Miss Bates' house strengthens the impression of remorse. Her thoughts are dramatised by the apparent hostility shown by the people she encounters in the Highbury square. The viewer reads this feeling as a slightly paranoid manifestation of her own bad conscience.

The language of this version is not particularly close to Austen's (the closest version in this respect is Davies'). A modernised English is used, which, though very articulate and often brilliant (e.g. during Emma's rather combative arguments with Mr. Knightley), does not resemble Austen's economy. Some scene's argumentative language displays traces of feminism and other contemporary discourses: "Men don't like girls who argue!"[52] When Mr. Knightley brings Harriet's illegitimacy into the

discussion, Emma replies: “But we live here, in Highbury, where we treat people with the respect and courtesy they deserve!”[53] Ironically, she will be the one to mistreat Miss Bates, contradicting her own assertions. A running joke between Emma and Mr. Knightley is the issue of his use (or rather neglect) of a carriage, as would suit a gentleman, in Emma’s opinion. However, Austen’s word “carriage” is substituted for “coach.”

Given the re-organisation of the narrative material and the use of a modernised language, this version of *Emma* is, in the stricter sense of fidelity, farther away from Austen’s novel than Davies’ *Emma*, which has proven to be the most faithful version yet made. In terms of artistic value, however, this version is superior to Davies’, not only due to the latter’s adaptation’s political nuance, but also due to the former’s originality in using medium-specific means to enhance meaning.

Heckerling’s *Clueless* is considered by many critics the most successful and creative version of *Emma* yet made and the one truest to the ‘spirit’ of Austen’s novel:

The charm of *Clueless* lies in its cheek, its transformation of high culture into low, its gleefully transgressive disestablishmentarianism, its cast of young and culturally hybrid actors reflecting the ethnic makeup of Los Angeles, its thoroughgoing relocation and dislocation of Jane Austen to the New World and the end of the twentieth century. References to Mr. Woodhouse’s work-induced stress, Mrs. Woodhouse’s liposuction and Knightley’s Granola all anchor it both in our time and in the universal dreamscape of California. *Clueless*, though located the furthest distance from Jane Austen’s text, is the closest to Dryden’s idea of imitation.[54]

The female protagonist is Cher Horowitz, a spoilt but lovable teenage girl who chooses her outfits on a computer, but defines her life as “way normal.”[55] Her “main thrill in life”[56] is a “makeover,”[57] as it gives her a sense of “control in a world of chaos.”[58] She therefore attempts to reform Tai, the latter-day equivalent of Harriet Smith, and make her “way popular.”[59]

However, this transformation is not a task entirely bent on fashion and “bare midriffs,”[60] as it also involves improving the latter’s vocabulary and accent. Like Emma, Cher cannot refrain from making matches: like the Westons, her two teachers actually end up married, but Tai’s heart is broken, as Elton prefers Cher herself. The names in this postmodern, playful and allusive adaptation are not arbitrary: the only one betraying a connection to Austen is Elton’s name, but Cher and Dionne are named after famous pop singers. Mr. Knightley is impersonated by Cher’s stepbrother Josh, thus alluding to the remarks on being or not being too much like brother and sister in Austen’s novel. In typically postmodern fashion, other literary works of high culture are alluded to, but always via their manifestations in low culture (quotations from Cliff’s Notes, *Hamlet’s* adaptation starring Mel Gibson etc.). This intertextuality generates what Lodge calls “an intoxicating excess of signification.” [61] Diversity and difference are (post-structurally) highlighted throughout the film, whether ethnic or pertaining to personal style, social class or sexual orientation. Christian, Frank Churchill’s equivalent, is gay, but as Cher is strangely blind to his homosexuality, the function of the Fairfax-Churchill mystery is successfully performed.

Like *Clueless*, *The Jane Austen Book Club* also dislocates Austen from high culture into low, and from Regency England to contemporary America, but in an even looser manner. The *Emma* plot is reduced to a few protagonists: Jocelyn exists as the latter-day Emma, Grigg Harris is Mr. Knightley. Sylvia Avila acts as a version of Mrs. Weston, but also of Fanny Price. Daniel Avila becomes a version of Mr. Weston, and also of Edmund Bertram. Jocelyn seems as lonely as Emma, as she lives alone, with only her dogs for company. Her attachment to her dogs is ridiculed: she organises a pompous funeral for one of them. Grigg also ‘scolds’ her for her manipulative behaviour and informs her that her behaviour is the reason why she only becomes attached to obedient dogs. Bernadette even labels Jocelyn “such an Emma.”[62] Like Mr. Knightley, Grigg attempts to expand Jocelyn’s cultural

horizons by urging her to read genres she is not familiar with, such as science fiction books.

As the release in August 2010 of yet another ‘irreverent’ adaptation of *Emma* (the Bollywood production *Aisha*) shows, filmic adaptations are undergoing a trend towards increasing creativity and the dislocation of Austen’s work into a contemporary (multi)cultural context. Kathryn Sutherland views these “hybrid product[s]” as potentially “Jane Austen’s most effective ambassador in the twenty-first century.”[63] Whether purporting to be ‘faithful’ or ‘creative,’ cinematic adaptations enrich the meaning of the original literary work they are based on. They establish complex intertextual and cultural relationships to other works of art and to the cultural context in general. Adaptations inevitably point out aspects overlooked by readers as they add new meanings via new interpretations. They also prompt readers to reconsider the literary works. Additionally, they bring new readers to literary works such as Austen’s novels. These phenomena inevitably generate a perpetually changing perception of Austen’s work on the readers’ part: while books shape films, the reverse certainly applies.

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Of Drugs, Documents and Pseudo States:
The Odd Story of the Missing Broadcasting Ship

ERIC GILDER

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

MERVYN HAGGER

John Lilburne Research Institute
(for Constitutional Studies) USA

ABSTRACT

A Japanese ship was purchased by a company in Panama and impounded off the coast of the USA with an illicit cargo of drugs on board. The ship was sold by the U.S. Government for US\$100 over a public holiday under dubious circumstances. This vessel became home to a U.S. 'pirate radio' station twice, after its name, ownership and registration had been laundered more than once, and it then became the center stage prop for the climax of a major Hollywood motion picture where it was blown up. U.S. Government paperwork never explained what happened to the drugs, or the vessel, or why after destruction, the government of Panama maintained its original ship registration.¹

¹ *Authors' caveat:* This specific work, an adaptation of a presentation made at the "East-West Cultural Passage Conference: American Studies Reconsidered" (23 April, 2010) in Sibiu, relies upon court proceedings; government documents; maritime records, first-hand interviews, correspondence and diaries of events originally constructed as part of an investigation. Over time, biased sources intentionally obfuscated facts in order to cloud both the political and legal ramifications which could have arisen from this particular episode of offshore radio broadcasting. The resulting conclusions are therefore somewhat contradictory; are certainly unsatisfactory, and prevent the full application of reason leading to complete resolution within this article alone. The reader is thus pointed to other writings by the authors that together fill out related aspects of the story, such as: "Puppets on Strings: How American Mass Media Manipulated British Commercial Radio Broadcasting" *Romanian Journal*

KEYWORDS: marijuana; illicit drugs; Lichfield I; Panama; General Noriega; U.S. Coast Guard; U.S. Customs; Frank Ganter; U.S. Federal Communications Commission; Alan Weiner; Yonkers, New York; Radio Newyork International (RNI); “Sarah”; Boston (Maine); Radio Caroline; shortwave; North Sea; Principality of Sealand; James Murphy, Roy Bates; Michael Bates; MGM; “Blown Away” (movie).

WHAT’S IN A NAME? THE BIRTH AND BELATED DEATH OF A SHIP

According to the massive three-volume work known as *Lloyd’s Registry of Shipping*,² on page 1021 it is recorded that during 1959, the Nippon Kokan-K.K. (company in Japan) built an ocean going, diesel powered, Side Fishing ship of 409 tonnages at the Shimizu shipyard. The vessel was given identification number 5153058 and named *Hoko Maru No. 35*. In 1970 it³ was renamed *Lopezno No. 3*, and in 1982 it was again renamed *Lichfield I* by Lichfield Shipping and Trading, S.A., of Panama City, who registered the ship in the Republic of Panama.

of English Studies 6 (2009): 60-69 (Romanian Society of English and American Studies, Timisoara [RO]: Editura Universitatii de Vest); “The Pedigree of America’s Constitution: An Alternative Explanation,” *British and American Studies* (University of the West, Timisoara) 14 (2008): 217-26; “Citizen or Subject? An Overlooked Reconsideration of a Fundamental Question in U.S. Constitutional Law,” *British and American Studies* (University of the West, Timisoara) 13 (2007): 163-74; “Prophecies of Dystopic ‘Old World, New World’ Transitions Told: ‘The World Tomorrow’ Radio Broadcasts to the United Kingdom, 1965-1967,” *New/Old Worlds: Spaces of Transition* Rodica Mihăilă and Irina Grigorescu Pană (Eds.). Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic, 2007 (pp. 205-23); and, “London: My Hometown” *Proceedings of the International Meta-Conference, “Representations of London in Literature and the Arts, 19-21 October, 2001.”* (Sibiu: Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu/Anglophone Society of Romania/British Council, Romania): 234-277.

² 1984-1985.

³ This article uses gender neutrality with regards to ship descriptions.

Parallel to this latter listing, from 1987 until 1993, the vessel also carried the name *Sarah* which had been crudely painted on its bow and it was referred to as such in various documents and media reports due to an apparent, but ambiguous change of status. On September 24, 1993, *Lichfield I* was blown up with the name *Dolphin* painted on its stern in Boston Harbor. However, according to official records maintained by the Republic of Panama: on December 17, 1993, the *Lichfield I* was still registered with their Merchant Marine,⁴ and as of that date the ship still owed US\$66,994.95 in unpaid Panamanian taxes, and it carried an unpaid fine of US\$10,000 which had been imposed by that government for participation in “illegal drugs traffic.”⁵

“SOS”: DISTRESS ON THE HIGH SEAS AND IN PORT

It was possibly⁶ on July 24, 1984 that the engines of the *Lichfield I* seized up and the vessel began to billow black smoke in international waters somewhere off the coast of Boston, Massachusetts, due to a thrown piston in her diesel engine. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) went out to assist and then towed the stricken vessel into the Portsmouth Navy Yard in Maine,⁷ but what happened after that is somewhat of a mystery.

⁴ According to correspondence to the authors from the Directorate of Consular and Maritime Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, Panama City, Republic of Panama, as of that date *Lichfield I* still had official Panamanian Navigation License number 6685-PEXT-2; and call-sign of *HO-9666*, and according to both the Panamanian Merchant Marine and Lloyd’s of London it was still owned by Lichfield Shipping and Trading, S.A.

⁵ Panamanian Resolution 614-200-ALCN dated July 24, 1984.

⁶ The date that the incident was recorded.

⁷ The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard located in Kittery within the southern border of Maine and close to Portsmouth, New Hampshire; it is the home port for several US Coast Guard Cutters.

What we⁸ do know is that at some point during this interaction on July 24 with the USCG, officers of the United States Customs Service (USCS) became involved when it was discovered that the ship was conveying an illicit cargo of marijuana and possibly other drugs as well. It is important to note that on this date the vessel was fined under Panamanian Resolution 614-200-ALCN, and not by the USCS. What happened to that cargo of contraband drugs remains a mystery to this day.

USCS ordered a tow of the *Lichfield I* from Maine to the Port of Boston, Massachusetts, where it was tied up at their dock facilities located at 427 Commercial Street. According to Frank Ganter of Boston,⁹ who later claimed to have bought this vessel from USCS, their employees began to dismantle the decking of the wheelhouse and other locations where more contraband was discovered. He claimed that he bought the ship after it had been moved from the USCS dock to a berth at 3600 New Street, which is directly across Boston Harbor.

According to Ganter and supported by a USCS cash receipt, on July 15, 1985, USCS conducted an auction that was held on a Massachusetts public holiday called “Patriot Day” when all of the banks were closed. (Since USCS is a federal agency and because this was not a federal holiday, USCS conducted its business as usual and auctioned off the *Lichfield I*.) Ganter claims that because the banks were closed,¹⁰ he was the lone bidder with US\$100 cash in his pocket. Ganter was provided with a page from a tear-off pad headed ‘Cash Receipt.’ (Hagger has only seen photocopies of this

⁸ The authors and associates had a direct involvement with the events detailed here, as principals in the “Four Freedoms Federation,” which was attempting to re-establish the broadcasting legacy of Don Pierson of “Wonderful Radio London” fame. See “London: My Hometown” article noted in fn 1 above.

⁹ Information gathered in various conversations with associates of the authors.

¹⁰ Although limited ATM systems had been in use for some time, the VISA Plus and MasterCard Cirrus interbank systems were not created until 1986, the year following this incident.

document and they are somewhat difficult to read.) Aside from standard printed text, all information is handwritten. It is addressed to 'Frank Ganter, 11 Valley Road, Dover, Massachusetts,' and the transaction is stated as 'payment for auction on *S/S Litchfield* (Forfeiture Vessel),' and the amount listed is US\$100.

The name of the ship on the cash receipt as with other details was handwritten, and it was at variance with the ship's actual name of *Lichfield I*. While the names 'Lichfield' and 'Litchfield' may seem to be similar, the addition of the letter 't' changes the name, and the omission of the Roman numeral 'I' also changes the identification. Since the *Lichfield I* was a motor vessel (M/V) and not a steam ship (S/S), the identification of the method of propulsion was further obfuscated. This change of identity raises many questions that to this day have not been answered, because *Lichfield I* was at that time a true reflection of the name of the company that legally owned the ship. It is also peculiar because Ganter was very familiar with ships, and USCS have never disputed the authenticity of the photocopy cash receipt. Although Ganter had a larger vessel,¹¹ he asked his friend Peter Bang to tow the ship with his boat *Togus* to the Bang Towing and Transportation dock at 480 Meridian Street, over the Meridian Bridge adjoining Boston Harbor, and directly across the street from another dock where Ganter moored his own vessel.

At this stage of the recital the authors now have a choice: We can either traipse through the same fog of nonsense that the authors and their associates originally encountered in real time while becoming a part of this story post-USCS, or we can cut to the chase and explain, to the best of our knowledge what happened next, and how we discovered this information. Therefore, in the interests of sanity and brevity we choose the latter route. Therefore we now leap ahead from the initial interception of the *Lichfield I* which took place on July 24, 1984, to October 4, 1989 when we received a response from USCS to an enquiry about the *S/S Litchfield*.

¹¹ M/V *Munzer*.

FROM SHIP TO STATES: DISTRESS WITHIN GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACIES

As of October 4, 1989 we only knew the MV *Litchfield I* as *S/S Litchfield* because we had been introduced to this ship under that name, and again, because we knew that the vessel had come into the possession of USCS due to allegations of drug running, we assumed that USCS would have a documented legal file showing the final disposition of the case filed by the USA against the vessel and its owners. On that date a response was received from John V. Linde, District Director of USCS, and signed by Stephen P. Leonard, Fines, Penalties and Forfeitures Officer:

“Re: Sale of Vessel *S/S Litchfield*. We have reviewed the files of this office [Boston] and are not able to find information on the vessel named above.”

We were instructed to make further requests about this ship under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), and as a result of this matter dragging on without resolution; we finally made such a request on December 31, 1992. It was submitted to the office of the Regional Counsel for USCS in Boston.¹² By this time we had been made aware of the Roman numeral following the ship name, but not the true spelling of the name; consequently they were asked for copies of all official records documenting the history of the *Litchfield I* after July 24, 1984, while it was still in the custody of USCS. On January 26, 1993, a reply was received from USCS Regional Commissioner Philip W. Spayd. The highlights of his letter are as follows:

USCS conducted a search for all files in the Northeast Region which produced “only two handwritten logs relating to

¹² This request was made in the name of Genie Baskir who was a founding member of the now defunct Four Freedoms Federation (1983-1999), in which the authors were also associated at that time. See [Online] at: <http://www.geocities.ws/freebornjohn.geo/> [Accessed November 13, 2010].

the seizure” which indicated that “the case was closed in February, 1985. We were advised that the entire case files have been destroyed pursuant to Customs record keeping procedures. These logs make reference to the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Concord, New Hampshire; however, we were informed that they have no record of having processed any action with respect to this vessel. It is possible that the vessel was administratively forfeited by publication in a newspaper ... if no one filed a claim. Thus no formal document vesting title in the United States by reason of the forfeiture would have been prepared.”

Years later (in 1997), from out of the clear-blue sky, the phone rang and Hagger entered into what would become a lengthy dialog with Mark Conrad, Special Agent in Charge of Internal Affairs for USCS at their office in Houston, Texas. Agent Conrad told Hagger that he was concerned that we had not received an adequate answer from USCS concerning our request for information about the ship.

Not believing for a moment that an enquiry of this type could have weighed so heavily upon USCS that they just had to make us happy by making the phone call, Conrad was finally goaded into admitting that he was hunting down rogue USCS agents. He wanted to know what we knew that might help him in his investigation. Conrad went so far as to fax directives of the new policy that he was administering, and while phone calls and faxes went back and forth between Hagger and Conrad, he was still following police procedure by asking more questions than he was providing answers. At the end of an amiable relationship, Conrad told Hagger that he was personally sympathetic for our loss of investment in the ship, but “Uncle Sam loathes admitting mistakes to the public, and there will be no apologies this time.” While we were concerned about the ship, Conrad was concerned about its cargo and why it had vanished.

A BUZZING, BOOMING LEGAL CONFUSION RESULTS

The reason for our own interest in this vessel was related to the fact that the ship had undergone a conversion after it left the custody of USCS. A fully equipped radio station, complete with

tower, generator, transmitters and studio had been built on board, and it had been demonstrated as being capable of reaching a wide area with broadcast programming.¹³ However, although thousands of US Dollars had changed hands under contract in order for associates of the authors to purchase this radio broadcasting ship, repeated demands for authenticated paperwork that showed a legal chain of custody from the original owners in Panama to the claimed owner in the USA, were unobtainable from the seller who had renamed the ship *Sarah*. The seller was Allan Weiner and he bought the vessel in a complicated series of maneuvers from Frank Ganter who acted as Weiner's towing service.

We wanted to know how the *Lichfield I* became the *Sarah*, but Spayd was confusing matters by referring to the vessel as the 'S/S Litchfield', which was also the name that the seller was using on his paperwork to refer to the ship before it came into his possession. If this Panamanian vessel had not been seized according to court procedure, then what did USCS do with it once it came into their possession? According to Spayd it *could* have been "administratively forfeited by publication in a newspaper pursuant to provision of the 19 USC s.1607 and s.1609", except that neither of those sections apply to foreign vessels, and there was no record of an *In Rem*¹⁴ court action being taken against the *Lichfield I.*, or it seems, a *S/S Litchfield*.

At some time during December 1993 the authors acquired the three-volume bound set of *Lloyd's Registry of Shipping* for the

¹³ One of the projects that the authors were associated with at that time, was a Four Freedoms Federation station project called "Radio Tiananmen." Its purpose was to broadcast in support of the Chinese students in the United States, following in the wake of the bloodbath which had taken place in Tiananmen Square, China. Another venture that was also related to the Four Freedoms Federation, involved Worldwide Community Radio (London), Ltd., a company registered in the United Kingdom. This was to have been a broadcasting service utilizing both the ship and relay facilities of licensed shortwave transmitters in the USA.

¹⁴ Where 'a thing' becomes the defendant in a legal proceeding, instead of a human person.

years 1984-1985, in which there was no listing for a ship called *S/S Litchfield*, while the *Lichfield I* was correctly identified. In 1993 Hagger also checked the current edition of *Lloyd's*, but there was no change listed in the status of the *Lichfield I*: it was still identified as being owned by the original Panamanian company. Contact was made with *Lloyd's* in Connecticut who checked the Casualty Records on their *SEADATA* service files, but there was no record of this vessel being lost at sea, or damaged by collision. However, the Republic of Panama did produce records to show that they, and not the USA, had fined the ship's owners for transporting illegal drugs, and yet Panama did not confiscate the ship. But if the reason for the fine was the evidence held by USCS agents in Boston, what did the USCS agents in Boston do with the evidence?

To understand how a cargo of drugs could disappear under these circumstances one only has to recall that in 1981, Panamanian President Omar Torrijos died in a suspicious plane crash. (Speculation ran rife that he had been assassinated by the CIA due to his resistance to renegotiate the Panama Canal Treaty with the USA.) Into that Panamanian political void stepped General Manuel Noriega, head of the Panama Defense Forces who funded his own regime with a drug and money laundering economy. Consequently Panama showed that it had lost a cargo of illicit drugs and fined the ship, while the actual cargo of illicit drugs that may have had ties to Noriega, simply disappeared. At that time the USA was supporting Noriega who in turn was aiding the rogue U.S. "Enterprise" of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North in his Iran/Conra/Libya operations (see [1] online).

Ironically, it was on Tuesday, July 28, 1987, that Peter Jennings concluded his newscast for ABC-TV *World News Tonight* with a two-part story about North buying a ship to start pirate radio broadcasts from off the coast of Libya, which was followed by the arrest of Allan Weiner for pirate radio broadcasts from the *Lichfield I* (which he called *Sarah*), while off the coast of New York State (see [2] online).

THE FAUX DISTRESS OF AN OFFSHORE BROADCASTER

The paper trail began and ended when we asked Allan Weiner for documentation which proved that he had legally obtained the ship. Weiner whose home was in Yonkers, New York, also inherited a small landholding in the State of Maine. Weiner was then (and still is today a skilled radio technician and broadcaster),¹⁵ but his interest in broadcasting technology had brought him into conflict with the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on more than one occasion.

He had previously converted his licensed relay station in Yonkers that was tied to his licensed radio station in Maine, into an originating broadcasting station. According to the FCC this was in violation of the terms of his licenses because the relay station had been turned into a ‘pirate radio’ operation. As a result of this and similar brushes with the FCC, he lost his licenses. His next move was to outfit a broadcasting station on board the *Lichfield I*, which he had renamed *Sarah*. By operating in international waters from off the coast of New York State, Weiner reasoned that he no longer required a license from the FCC, but the FCC interpreted his actions differently.

*RNI*¹⁶ suddenly shot to broadcasting infamy on July 7, 1987 when the three major US television broadcasting networks featured his station on their news programs and showed Weiner, an associate, and a hapless journalist covering the event, all in handcuffs after being arrested on board the *Sarah* off Jones Beach, New York. *RNI* had been transmitting a mixture of music, and off-the-cuff anarchistic commentary, simultaneously over several

¹⁵ He now operates a legal shortwave station in Maine, WBCQ “The Planet.” Selected achieves of Radionewyork International are available on the station’s website for download. See <http://www.radionewyorkinternational.com/>, accessed 17 November, 2010.

¹⁶ Weiner preferred to use the initials RNI (instead of the more logical RNYI) to match the acronym of Radio Nordsee International, a famous European offshore station of the heyday of “pirate” broadcasting in the late 1960s.

frequencies that were heard over a wide area of the Eastern seaboard of the USA. The broadcasts could not be ignored and now the *Sarah (Lichfield I)* was the focus of national, if not international attention in media coverage. The USCG had ferried out persons wearing multiple hats representing the interests of the USCS, FBI, FCC and U.S. Marshals in order to silence Weiner who had already ignored commands to cease broadcasting.

Weiner and his supporters were brought into court in New York where some time later on appeal against the original verdict,¹⁷ argument was made by their defense attorney that involved the British 'pirate station' *Radio Caroline*.¹⁸ This station could, under certain conditions, be heard on the US broadcasting band. But its shortwave service was operated by a California religious organization, and its signal was intended for international coverage. By applying the FCC determination against *RNI* to *Radio Caroline*, it brought the question of those North Sea signals within the purview of the FCC. Now that the question of *Radio Caroline* had been raised in this case, it caused an international embarrassment

¹⁷ United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. *USA vs. Allan H. Weiner, Joseph Paul Ferraro, Randall Ripley a/k/a Randi Steele, Hank Hayes, Richard Hertz, John Hungerford and John Doe, all d/b/a Radio Newyork International ("RNI")*. Case Number 89-1211. Appellant Brief, page 21:

Appellants respectfully submit that this ruling creates a dangerous precedent in that it allows the government potentially to reach out and control broadcasters anywhere in the world as long as their broadcasts are able to be picked up somewhere within the borders of the United States. Does the FCC thus have power to shut down all broadcasts from the *Caroline*, a broadcast vessel moored in the North Sea, based upon a claim that signals from that vessel's radio broadcasts were picked up, however briefly and even if creating no interference, somewhere in this country?

¹⁸ This third manifestation of the offshore broadcasting station began in 1983. For the origins of the original between 1964-1967, see: "Puppets on Strings: How American Mass Media Manipulated British Commercial Radio Broadcasting," by the authors in the *Romanian Journal of English Studies* 6/2009.

for the FCC that required an international remedy. Subsequently, on August 19, 1989, *Radio Caroline* was knocked off the air following a raid by Dutch and British governmental agents following consultation with the FCC, and the person leading the British team had earlier offered evidence in a case against Weiner in which he was attempting to get another broadcasting license from the FCC.

Weiner had gained his knowledge of offshore broadcasting from *Radio Caroline* after he made a visit to its ship anchored in the North Sea, and while there, he met a DJ and fellow American named John Hungerford.¹⁹ After Weiner returned to the USA, he was later joined by Hungerford who became Weiner's primary fundraiser in the *RNI* project.

MAKING THE LEGAL HOLE IN THE HULL EVEN WIDER

Weiner agreed to a Restraining Order without time limitations, and he agreed that he would not broadcast again until the question of broadcasting from international waters was resolved by the USA. Rather than abide by the spirit of the agreement, however, he attempted to go only by the words on paper. Weiner thus flew to England and met Michael Bates, whose eccentric father Roy had commandeered a former British WWII fort built upon a barge that had been towed into place over a sandbar and then sunk in place. (Originally the structure was outside of British territorial waters, but it was later brought under the laws of the United Kingdom when its territorial waters were extended to twelve miles offshore.) Bates claimed that the UK had abandoned its sovereignty over HM Fort Rough, and that he had inherited that same sovereignty, and then declared his wife the 'Princess of Sealand.' Originally, this idea had been concocted in a pub as a form of mimicry because Prince Charles had been invested by his mother Queen Elizabeth as the Prince of Wales, and therefore Bates later came to call that sunken barge with its hollow legs and platform the *Principality of Sealand*.

¹⁹ John Ford on *Radio Caroline*.

Weiner secured an agreement with Michael Bates in which he entered into a sham contract pretending to sell *RNI*, in exchange for publicizing Sealand in the USA over his airwaves and operating the ship under the flag of 'Sealand.' Roy Bates did not approve of this action and he hinted that his son had committed 'treason.' Although Weiner never had access to a 'Sealand' flag, he instructed another friend to resume transmissions off the coast of New York. The USA reacted as before and ordered *RNI* to cease transmissions, and the lone caretaker/captain/crewmate/broadcaster at first made the statement that it was a vessel registered in the 'Principality of Sealand.' But when U.S. officials on board the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter that was standing by implied that they would board the ship if necessary, Weiner, who was on a radio phone onshore, instructed his friend to comply and close down the station. When this issue eventually came before an FCC Administrative Court in 1991, the USA turned for testimony to the person who led the British raid to close down *Radio Caroline*.

On January 13, 1989, James Murphy, a UK special investigator on behalf of the ancient temporal office of Official Solicitor, and on loan from the Department of Trade and Industry, Radio Investigation Unit, submitted to the FCC a sworn statement. Murphy reported that he had personally undertaken surveillance by air and sea of "the old wartime Flak Fort which is situated off the Port of Harwich in the United Kingdom." He concluded that 'Sealand' "is not in the eyes of the United Kingdom a Sovereign Nation and has no powers to register a ship." A FCC Board Member²⁰ took note of Murphy's report and the duplicity of Weiner while reviewing the case, and concluded:

On the evidence before us, and the tedious pathology it irradiates, it looks that Weiner cannot decide whether he is Hook

²⁰ FCC Administrative Court; File No. BPIB-840904MZ - Decision by Review Board Member Norman B. Blumenthal, January 29, 1992, p.3.

or Peter Pan, but we have absorbed from Mr. Barrie's *fabliau* to 'never smile at a crocodile.'²¹

FINIS: BLOWN UP, "BLOWN AWAY" AND "BLOWN OFF"

Weiner seemed to create a trail of destruction by blowing up the dreams of others. By claiming *Radio Caroline* as a legal defense in the *RNI* case, it resulted in the same James Murphy leading an Anglo-Dutch raid on *Radio Caroline* vessel just a few months later on August 19, 1989. Then, when Weiner created a legal ruling by a federal Administrative Court on January 29, 1992 that *Sealand* was not a nation, it undermined Bates' financial support. In July 2000 another American created an international media stir when he announced that he was establishing a 'data haven' on Rough Tower. But when it came to his attention that the FCC court ruling had exposed Bates' claim to sovereignty as a sham,²² he pulled the plug.

While we became bogged down trying to get to the bottom of the mystery surrounding this ship and its true ownership, Weiner decided to sell it again. This time the buyer was a film company under contract to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) who bought the

²¹ This reference should have been further attributed to Jack Lawrence who wrote these words for the 1953 Walt Disney film of 'Peter Pan': "Never smile at a crocodile; no, you can't get friendly with a crocodile; don't be taken in by his welcome grin; he's imagining how well you'd fit within his skin."

²² The authors, through their colleague Paul Byford living in the Chelmsford area of Essex, England, obtained numerous statements from the Home Office, Crown Estate, Ministry of Defence, Department of Trade and Industry, as well as the Cabinet 1st Meeting Minutes Misc. 163(68), taken from copy No.12, which demonstrated that as early as 1968, Roy Bates was considered to be an illegal squatter with "a local reputation as a colorful adventurer persecuted by authority." Therefore, since the Ministry of Defence no longer wanted the old fort, they decided to leave him where he was, make him conform to the laws of the land, and merely extended their territorial waters to bring decommissioned HM Fort Rough back within the jurisdiction of the existing laws of the United Kingdom.

vessel stripped of its broadcasting equipment.²³ It then had a plywood contraption built over its superstructure to give the ship a different look, and the name *Dolphin* was painted on the stern. Its end came when *Lichfield I* was blown up for the finale of the movie “Blown Away,”²⁴ and we were finally ‘blown off’ from ever obtaining a resolution and restitution of our own part in this complicated saga of misfeasance, malfeasance and nonfeasance by government officials, who in the end were sick and tired of anything to do with the *Lichfield I*.

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²³ Weiner had removed the equipment and reinstalled it aboard another ship named *Fury*. Our associate Genie Baskir caused that vessel to be boarded and the equipment was removed by the FCC and destroyed by an *In Rem* court proceeding.

²⁴ Released in 1994 as the story of a rogue IRA terrorist movie set in Boston and starring Jeff Bridges and Tommy Lee Jones.

Frontier and Vast Empty Space: the Affect on the American West Psyche

SCOTT EASTMAN

Freelance

ABSTRACT

A visual journey through photos of the Salton Sea region of California serves as point of departure for a discussion about the effects of vast un- and under-inhabited places in the United States on defining the psyche of a people. This contrast and the ability to escape and also feel minute in the landscape while having the genuine need to address one's basic need for survival has helped to create an independence of thought and soul and a people that are not easily defined. California's Imperial Valley possesses a minimalism and vastness, as well as fragmentary remains of human attempts at living in and controlling the land. Vast expanses of monotonous tones and textures are punctuated by vestiges of dreams to create a utopian inland Riviera around the Salton Sea. The people who live here are rugged in the truest sense – weathered by the sun and committed to a fierce individualism.

KEYWORDS: Frontier (American), California, America, Salton Sea, Imperial Valley, photography, American West



Abandoned Development Salton Sea

A visual journey through photos of the Salton Sea region of California, serves as point of departure for a discussion about the affects of vast un and under-inhabited places in the United States on defining the psyche of a people. Even while living in Seattle and San Francisco, metropolitan areas whose populations numbered into the millions, the ability to drive one or two hours and reach a land of infinity and nothingness, creates a feeling of freedom and lightness. This contrast and ability to escape and also feel minute in the landscape while having the genuine need to address one's basic need for survival, has helped to create an independence of thought and soul, and a people that are not easily defined. After four years of living in Sibiu, I have come to see the proximity and interconnectedness of people such as the Saxons of Transylvania as having necessarily a different sense of self and community based on their comparatively compressed space.

From a strictly visual perspective, the area explored through photos of the American West is sublime and distressed. California's Imperial Valley possesses a minimalism and vastness as well as fragmentary remains of human attempts at living in and controlling the land. Vast expanses of monotonous tones and

textures are punctuated by vestiges of dreams to create a utopian inland Riviera around the Salton Sea. The people who live here are rugged in the truest sense -- weathered by the sun and committed to a fierce individualism.

A frontier exists for people seeking freedom from inherent rules of structured Government, and the pressures and tempos of modern society. The primary reason that there is little outside interference is that it is a place so inhospitable to most that it essentially has no property value -- yet those seeking a place outside of the mainstream, who might be considered to be unable to cope, are able to survive in this landscape.

The mythologies related to the “taming of the West” in the nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century suggested that we were in reasonable control of our environment. However, while science and technology helped usher in dreams of taming previously uninhabitable places, the complexity of the Imperial Valley in Southern California has stubbornly resisted. Over the past century many utopian dreams were displaced by dystopian realities. My images portray this harsh and vast region -- from the realities of ecological decline to signs of planned paradise.

The ‘human spirit’ born from popular ideas about the American West, its people and terrain of the region are often seen in a negative light, but there is another side that often goes unnoticed – where the desire to head to the frontier and form one’s own destiny is still worth striving for – which is, after all what made the West what it is. Following are a series of photos and brief essays from my travels in Imperial Valley, California with Matt Gainer. It is a region several hours east of Los Angeles and San Diego that borders Mexico. It is in the Sonoran Desert, one of the hottest and most inhospitable regions on earth.



Leonard Knight

1. Freedom and a Vision. Leonard Knight, now in his late seventies, has spent the last several decades creating “Salvation Mountain” near the abandoned military base of Camp Dunlap. He had tried for several years to sew a hot air balloon with verses from the bible, but after numerous unsuccessful attempts to get it to fly, he finally gave up and decided to build and paint a mountain out of a hill in the desert. With items that he found while roaming the desert, he made a grotto complete with windows from abandoned cars. The entire hillside is painted with scriptures from the Bible as well as yellow path up to the top where there is a cross and a message “God is Love”. People from all over the United States pay him a visit when they are in the area and often bring old paint for him to continue his creation. Over the years, the colors change depending on what people have been bringing recently. His enthusiasm is unwavering even as he is approaching his eighties. The frontier has given him the possibility to pursue his dreams unfettered by large economic or regulatory needs. He is so far from any organized community that no city ordinances or community covenants have stymied his vision. Even though his life is eccentric

and not emulated by many, it inspires an optimism and creativity to be able to visit this unique man and creation.



Salvation Mountain

2. The Second Amendment. Part of the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution from 1791 states that “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.” Prof. Samuel Ludwig of Université de Haute-Alsace raised the question during the presentation at the “East-West Cultural Passage” conference, about the role that the idea of frontier and rugged individualism plays in even city people’s desire to have a gun. In the frontier there is often a practical need for a gun for hunting, protecting livestock, and in the past for protecting one’s land when there was almost no law enforcement and vast distances between homes. This also feeds off of the cowboys and Indians history. Now, even though you are much more likely to cause accidental injury (or death) to yourself or your family by owning a gun in the city, and you are very unlikely to use it to defend yourself, and certainly not to go hunting or be in a militia, the fervor with which a large segment of the country feels entitled to have a gun is profound. There is still a psychological desire to be hearty, self-

sufficient and take matters into your own hands, like a frontiersman.



Algodones Dunes

3. Environmentalism and Libertarianism. Libertarianism, the political idea of trying to live with little or no formal government structures and to “live and let live,” is not necessarily antithetical to the environmental movement as long as everyone agrees with how to protect the environment. It confronts a problem when one person’s idea of their freedoms and rights, overstep someone else’s idea of being a good steward of the Earth. Driving east on State highway 78, we bisected the Algodones Dunes (sometimes called “Imperial” or “Glamis”) in Imperial Valley California. On the right side was a vast panorama of sand and people in dune buggies and motorcycles out for some weekend fun. On the left was a wilderness preserve where no motorized vehicles are allowed. The Algodones Dunes stretch for more than 60 kilometers. For thousands of dune-buggy enthusiasts, this is a vast playground. It is also one where the need to take enough water and know your way around is critical. With temperatures reaching over 50 degrees (Celsius) in the summer, a mechanical breakdown without help nearby could be fatal. The State government does regulate the area in the respect that a permit is needed to enter the dunes with a

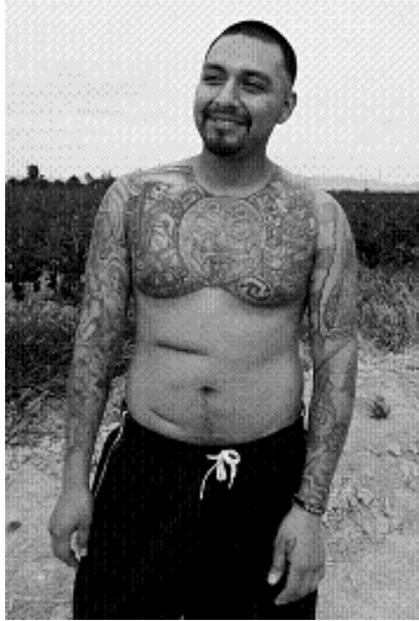
motorized vehicle, but once that is taken care of, just an immense space to play, explore, and seek an adrenaline rush, lies before you. The north side of the highway is a nearly uninhabited wilderness area where the goal is to let nature continue without intervention.



Tony the Vet

4. Testing One's Limits. Driving down the highway in Imperial Valley, California, we passed an old man walking very fast, with purpose, carrying a large American flag on a pole. What is he doing? It was over forty degrees Celsius and he was wearing black pants in the desert. We turned the car around at the first chance, and drove back to meet him. He goes by the name "Tony the Vet," is almost seventy, and is in the process of walking from San Diego, California on the west coast of America, to New York City on the east coast. His goal is to raise awareness and support for military veterans. He carries a small backpack with water, an i-phone to stay connected, and some energy bars. He will need a lot of energy to reach his goal, which is five thousand kilometers from the start of his journey. Physically pushing his limits is a way for Tony to get the attention he wants for his cause. He has made himself dependent on the kindness of strangers for help throughout his journey and is happy for a conversation, press coverage, or some water, but won't accept a ride. With a master's degree in theater

and art, as well as doctoral studies, this is a man who is “off of the main path,” but working with a clear vision to reach a defined purpose. He is using the legislative process to help veterans, beyond those that he meets along the way, however he can. Last time I checked in with him, he was in Maricopa Arizona, still walking.



Tony by an okra field

5. A New Start. “Tony” the ex-convict. Anonymity. Escape from the problems of the past.

While photographing a worker in an okra field, a new, deep-blue sports car pulled up, and a man got and asked what I was doing. “Are you from *National Geographic* or something?” After explaining our project, Matt asked him if it was possible to make a photograph of him with the three girls in his car. Following Matt’s formal group portrait at the shoulder of the road, in front of the okra field, I asked Tony if I could make a portrait of just him. He agreed

and I started to take a few photos. His girlfriend asked him to take his shirt off. He was covered in tattoos that are typical for Mexican gangs. He said that he was living in New York, had done some years in prison there, and had come out to the desert to get away from the problems of his past. That was two years ago and he has since worked in the okra fields and started a new chapter in his life. (Ironically the fields are within site of a prison that was put there because it is so remote.) Placing the prison in a remote place serves both to make escape more difficult and to have fewer problems with a neighborhood not wanting a prison nearby. This is because there are so few people around, and because the economy is slow enough that the jobs the prison provides are welcome.



Bombay Beach Home



Bombay Beach

6. Bombay Beach. We turned off the highway to Bombay Beach, a collection of mostly abandoned trailer homes. Passing through a cut in a berm, a moonscape lay before us of trailers and houses being absorbed back into the salty earth. What had happened? Why did people live here and why had they left? I spent an hour photographing the houses as they morphed back into the earth. The setting sun beckoned me to the sea. Just thirty meters from the houses was what seemed a beautiful black sand beach, until I looked closely and saw the skeletons of too many dead Tilapia fish. Seagulls flew low in lines over the water. The Salton Sea is sixty-nine kilometers long and twenty-five percent saltier than the ocean. It is a man-made catastrophe *cum* paradise. At the turn of the twentieth century, some developers tried to bring water from the Colorado River to Imperial Valley through a canal. They succeeded but didn't know how to stop the flow when they had a great flood. The bottom of the Sea is about seventy-two meters below sea-level, so a great lake or sea now called the Salton Sea soon formed. In the 1950s there were ambitious plans for making an inland American Riviera. Land was sold, infrastructure for cities was installed and the area began to thrive, but soon, with no outlet, the lake became ever-more saline as well as a sump for agricultural and industrial run-off and polluted water flowing from the New River of Mexico. Fish die-offs from algae blooms sometimes result in over a million

fish dying in just a few weeks. The water first increased, flooding the homes of Bombay Beach, then declined through evaporation. It is now desolate, though beautiful and a great place for solitude.



Farm Worker

7. Migration, No Olvidados. Before sunrise we drove to the border fence just west of Calexico. As the sky transformed from black to a deep blue and finally a magnificent sunrise reflected in the irrigation canal, we could see the fence, tall, dark and resolute, running as far as the eye could see to the east and terminating into Signal Mountain to the west. The dirt road that we drove in on was smooth from the old tires that are dragged behind trucks. This low-tech method allows the US Border Patrol to easily spot the footprints of illegal immigrants as they make their way into California. We drove a few kilometers down the road and north until we came upon an immense field where about 30 migrant workers were weeding with hoes. Through a combination of my rudimentary Spanish and the foreman's attempts at English, along with the international language of hand gestures, he gave me permission to photograph the workers. Even at 7:30 in the morning it was already hot. Frontier can be an area with few people, or a border area. Here it was both. As tough as the conditions are, it is

still a dream for many Mexicans, as it once was for early pioneers, to cross into this land for the hope of a better life. Some make it and prosper, and some die on the way. We left the field and continued about a half-hour north to the Holtville cemetery. It was a small cemetery with typical headstones and grass. Behind the hedge was a salt-encrusted dirt field with simple single brick-markers saying “John Doe” or “Jane Doe” (this is the American expression for a person without an identity). Most of these people were found dead trying to cross the desert into the US. Some died from dehydration and some were attacked by the people they paid (highly) to guide them into the United States. Small, black, hand-made crosses with bright writing stated “No Olvidados” or “not forgotten.”



No Olvidados

* * * * *

The American West remains not only an actual region, but a mythology, defining the culture and spirit of the people, even if they live in areas that have long ceased to be a frontier. The freedom to live, think, take risks and dream without many limits is part of the allure of the frontier. Though there is a need for co-existing with your neighbor even when they may be miles away, very few formalized rules inhibit the soul. The ethos of this land, characterized by self-sufficiency and self-determination, permeates

the West, even into the cities. Many of us grew up first with the stories of the Wild West and Cowboys and Indians, and later had our own adventures in the mountains and rivers. Flying across the American West, whether by day or by night, with almost an absence of lights on the ground for vast sections, one becomes aware of the immensity and un-developed state of this land. It serves as a place to go for solitude, anonymity or solace. For others it is still a place to go try their luck at bettering their lives. It is now easily accessible as a vast recreational playground, whether with all terrain vehicles or long hiking adventures. There are inherent dangers to its scale, as well as reward. It fosters the same yearning that people have had throughout humanity, to go to the sea, to explore and push beyond their known world and limitations. For those who survive the frontier, there is a knowledge in this accomplishment that adds to the strength and courage to take risks and live beyond normal expectations when they return to their daily life.

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To Enter Society or Return to Nature: Confucian and Taoist Perspectives on Traditional Chinese Values

MINGLE GAO

Beijing Language and Culture University

ABSTRACT

The essay analyzes Confucian and Taoist perspectives on traditional Chinese values, investigating the impact that both Taoism and Confucianism has had on the minds and values of Chinese people, as they exerted a conspicuously noticeable and an enduring influence on most of the ancient and modern Chinese scholars. They even became, to some extent, a state of mind, a part of the national cultural atmosphere, rather than a set of tenets.

KEYWORDS: Confucian thought, Taoist thought, Chinese values (traditional vs. modern), Philosophy and Society, Culture and Society (China), Chinese poems and prose

1. Introduction

Taoism and Confucianism both originated from the end of the 5th century BC during the Warring States Period of China which boasted an era of the great flowering of Chinese culture. It came of age as an expression of a national spirit. There emerged from that time a great host of schools of thought, among which the better-known were Taoism, Confucianism, Legalism, Yin/Yang, Ming Chia, Mo Tzu, Military Strategists, Political Strategists, Eclectics and Agriculturists. Two of the most profound influences in the period were those of the Taoism and Confucianism which contributed to the founding of a true national culture. Taoism and Confucianism can thus be said to be the philosophic doctrines which have had the highest influence in Chinese culture and traditions.

As two of China's oldest and most pervasive philosophies, Taoism and Confucianism arose during roughly the same period in Chinese history, a time often marred by restless strife and wars between feudal kingdoms. Confronted with such chaotic reality, both philosophies set their overarching goals the seeking of order and harmony in one's life, structuring man's relationship both with society, and nature. Taoism believes that one is able to achieve inner peace and satisfaction by following Tao-the paths-proposed in Taoist doctrines. On the other hand, Confucianism has its roots based on the search for a social regulation and for proper personal behaviors. Taoism has developed in a parallel way with Confucianism in terms of its pursuit and motivation.

2. Taoism

The philosophy of Taoism is mainly based on the classical text *Tao Te Ching* which is believed to be written by Lao-tzu. What Taoism seeks is a feasible approach to set up harmonious relations between man and nature, following from the word 'Tao' which means path or way. Taoists thus insist that the ultimate peace and happiness of a person can only be reached by each person following Tao, rather than by regulating personal manners or social systems.

The meaning of Tao is rather elusive and mysterious. So far, there are dozens of definitions available for the word. Its literal meaning is "path" or "way" with an implication of "truth" that is in accordance with the rules of nature. Therefore, to remain a harmonious relationship between man and nature is one of the most favorite subject matters in the Taoist philosophy. Listening to the voice of nature and removing any greediness for fame and fortune is the unique path to a peaceful state of mind and longevity. Social institutions and system, which encourage people to have competing and enterprising ambitions, are believed to be the source of personal worries and social disorder. Taoists, therefore, are advocates of simplicity of living, innocence of thoughts and lack of

pressure which only exist in the remote rural areas where nature is better preserved. In terms of human relations, Taoists uphold the ethics of being sympathetic with the weak, being moderate and taking a low and humble profile.

There are 4 themes of Lao-tzu's thought that form the fundamentals of Taoism. Besides Tao, Te, Wuwei and Fanpu also make up the core of Taoist philosophy.

Tao: The term is originated by Lao-tze which is literally translated into "the path" or "the truth". The derived meaning is the rule or system the universe and human abide by.

Te: It roughly means virtue or integrity but with more connotations. It is an inner quality a man is supposed to possess if he wants to get access to Tao. In turn, Te is an outer manifestation of the power of Tao. Te paves road to Tao, and Tao in turn nurtures Te.

Wuwei: It literally means non-action or inaction. Taoism stresses that man should not impose his own will upon the initial state of nature or the world. Things are taking care of themselves and just let it be. Any action involved by man is only to destroy his harmonious relationship with nature. Wuwei is often denounced for its indifference to the social responsibility.

Fanpu: It means to return to a living of simplicity and plainness. It is also a reasonable outcome of Wuwei. Man's endeavor to change the world is motivated by his restless greediness for fame and wealth. His efforts might be rewarded with material wealth and vain fame, but the cost is much heavier—worn-out health and mental trauma caused by rapid pace of life.

3. Confucianism

Confucianism is a philosophy from the same period and can be considered the other side of the Taoist coin. It is mainly concerned with the harmonious order of *society* rather than the individual's mindset. Confucius' teachings and lectures are compiled in *The*

Analects. They stress the importance not of rules *per se*, but of ethics, that guide man's behavior. During the Han Dynasty, his teachings started to be practiced in the official political system of China.

The moral cultivation of individuals was highly advocated by Confucius. The state would not have to use its coercive powers to regulate its people if they were morally well-educated. Confucianism thus created a complicated system of social, moral, political and philosophical thought. There are 6 themes which form the base of Confucianism. They are Ritual, Relationships, Filial Piety, Loyalty, Humanity, and the Gentleman.

Ritual: In Confucianism, a person's daily chores or activities should accord with ritual, a set of principles which regulate a person's manners and behaviors. Being moderate is highly spoken of as a basic content of the social ritual. The Doctrine of Golden Mean is also derived from ritual. It is believed by Confucius that a healthy society can be only achieved through practicing ritual.

Relationship: Confucianism insists that an individual should fulfill his commitment in relation to others. For example, great importance is attached to the sense of strict social and familial hierarchy in that it is believed to be the premise of social harmony that Confucians endeavor to obtain. From this premise, it follows that the emperor is the inviolable supreme power of the state and the father is the only authentic housemaster of the family. Social harmony is believed to be automatically attained when everyone performs his duty well in accordance with his social status or familial positions.

Filial Piety: It is part of social ritual particularly confined within the family. Filial piety specially refers to one's respectful submission to the elderly members of his family. According to the doctrine of filial piety, children should take it as their duty and responsibility to support their parents both financially and

physically when they are helplessly old. It thereby aims at strengthening the family tie.

Loyalty: It also falls into the category of ritual. All the subjects of the state should be loyal to their highest governor, the emperor. Any rebellious actions or words against the emperor are morally denounced.

Humanity: As rulers of the state, the emperor and other officials should, in return for their loyalty, govern their subjects humanely. In ruling the state, humane policy is thus encouraged. The concept of Humanity assumes that all men are born in a similar state, with the environment and education that bring up a man's nature. Humanity is also reflected in one's human relations, filial piety and ritual.

Gentleman: A gentleman is a man of integrity with high moral values which can be achieved by following the five doctrines listed above. There are more specific tips in Confucius' teachings about how to behave like a gentleman. It is an ideal for people to become a gentleman by cultivating his sense of filial piety and loyalty and nurturing his humanity and kindness. If a person does not fit in with what makes a gentleman, he is called a petty man who is frequently belittled by Confucius.

4. A Comparison between Two Philosophies

Despite their common origin, there are a few differences between the two ideologies. While Taoism is more oriented upon the spiritual or abstract plane, Confucianism seems to be more practical and concrete for an individual to understand and practice. Both the ideologies are unique in their own way. Roughly, it's like the difference between an "authoritative" government and a "laissez-faire" one. Lao-tzu is thus held to be Confucius' real adversary. But it would be more accurate to say that the essential difference is the difference between Lao-zu's direct way to the Tao and Confucius' detour by way of the social order.

Taoists have idealized the rural life. The simplicity and plainness of the country life is the subject matter greatly highlighted by them. The Taoist believers scold civilization while sponsor natural state of living; they rebut knowledge while promote childlike innocence. The picture of an ideal life is “self-reliant people live in a small country...They produce all the necessities not for sale but for their own use. They content with what they eat and wear, satisfied with the shelters where they live, and enjoy their custom. People can hear dog’s barks and rooster’s crows from their neighbor countries, but they never take the trouble to a visit them.”(*Tao Te Ching*: Chapter 80). It is an ode to the pastoral life of the farmers.

China as an agricultural country, its people live on the blessings of Mother Nature. The farmers’ inclination to nature is stressed by the Taoism which classifies the world into natural and artificial categories. The Taoism believes the naturalness brings us pleasure and happiness whilst the artificialness brings us trouble and bitterness. Human beings are petty in face of nature. So it suggests humans should be respectable and submissive to nature and not go against it.

Different from Taoism, Confucianism brings under its focus the institution of the moral and law that can maintain the healthy running of the state. Being a major part of the society, man should behave properly to fit into the social setting. What makes a gentleman or petty man is a frequent topic in Confucius’ *Analects*. Confucianism is a philosophy of personal life as well. A man should have strong sense of responsibility for his country and family as well. It believes the innate integrity of the human being is the cornerstone of harmony and prosperity of the state.

In the category of society, the two are distinguishingly different. Taoism represents the romantic and idealistic, while Confucianism the practical and realistic; Taoism praises spontaneity and naturalness, while Confucianism stresses education

and social responsibility; Taoism focuses on nature and what transcends the human, while Confucianism on the social harmony; Taoism wanders beyond society and stands aloof from it, while Confucianism roams within the bound of society and shows great concern about the society.

5. Balanced Values of the Chinese

As culture heritages, both Taoism and Confucianism did have a profound influence on the mind and values of Chinese people. They also had a conspicuously noticeable and an enduring influence on most of ancient and modern Chinese scholars. They even had become, to some extent, so much ‘a state of mind’, so much a part of the national cultural atmosphere, rather than a set of stated tenets. Indeed, Feng You-lan, a famous Chinese historian, pointed out that the trait of Chinese values is a mixture of Taoism and Confucianism. He said: “If we understand it aright, they cannot be said to be wholly society oriented, just as, of course, they cannot be said to be wholly nature oriented. They are a combination of the realistic society and idealistic nature.” As Zhuang-zi said that the Confucians roam *within* the bounds of society, while the Taoists roam *beyond* it. These two trends of thought rivaled each other, but also complemented each other.

Lin Yu-tang, another Chinese scholar, made an interesting remark in his “The Importance of Living” on the balanced values from the two philosophies, which he ironically named as “the Doctrine of the Half-and-Half.” It is to the effect that the most ideal state is arriving at a perfect balance between action and inaction. Since a clear-cut personality often runs the man at a risk of being attacked, people are inclined to keep ambiguously half-clear and half-obscure. The Half-and-Half doctrine is also applied to their living philosophy. As for wealth, one should not be so poor that he cannot afford his meals and shelter, and not so rich that he needs not work for a living; as for knowledge, one should learn but he

needs not to educate himself to be a specialist...Lin also said: "It is the sanest way of life ever discovered by the Chinese. The Chinese are all born half-Taoist and half-Confucian."

6. The Resulting Change of Values among Ancient Chinese Literates

Worthy of mention is the literary and cultural life of the country during this period of change. With a strong sense of tiredness of mundane affairs, a spectacular outburst of hermetic feeling was brought about among many literates and scholars. Taoist philosophy proved to be a rich source of material for the Tang poets to draw upon. They celebrated China's landscape with its mysterious forests, majestic mountains and spectacular rivers. The wilderness came to function almost as a dramatic character that symbolized moral law. The desire for an escape from society and a return to nature then became a permanent convention of the Tang and Song poetry and lyrics. Such a desire is particularly evident in Li Bo, Tao Yuanming and Su Dongpo's poems. They put emphasis upon the imaginative and emotional qualities of poems, which included a liking for the picturesque, the exotic, the sensuous, the sensational, and the natural. They also placed an increasing emphasis on the free expression of emotions and displayed a keen interest in external nature in their respective works.

Another reason for the literates and scholars to retreat into nature, which I believe the most likely one, is that they had suffered setbacks in official circles. Frustrated by their clumsiness in coping with the subtlety of human relations and disappointed with the darkness of the official circle, some literates and scholars in ancient China shifted from their social responsibility to rural hermitage. Taoism as a widely accepted philosophy, therefore, became a sound excuse to spare their guilty and humiliating sense of fleeing to nature.

Ironically, the shift was by no means a single way to nature, in that some scholars who were demoted from office still coveted the fame and achievement which only a government official was entitled to. We should never forget the fact that Confucianism has influenced the basis of society, family structure, and the government for thousands of years. It had been an orthodox philosophy through out the feudalist dynasties of China. Most of Confucian ideas are actually manifestations of the social reality and practice. So their secular ambition of contributing to society fostered by the orthodox Confucian tenets could not be removed easily. Besides, the literates and scholars could hardly get rid of the motivation of establishing their social identity and pursuing self actualization. They had to work very hard when they were young so as to pass the civil service examinations. The academic title attained by passing the examinations was a prerequisite for high government office. The owners of the title were the pride of their extended families. If they were expelled from the office, their families would be impoverished and suffer humiliation. Therefore, they had to come to grip with the temptation of returning to the social position. They would be more than happy to come back to their social position if they were appointed by the emperor. This mixed feeling tortured them.

7. Two Chinese Poets Who Changed Their Values by Engaging the New Streams of Thought

The poet Tao Yuan-ming (365-427) was believed to be a true Taoist believer and practitioner. Around the age of 30, Tao served in local government but resigned his post not long afterwards. Other postings followed, but these too were of short duration. He abandoned his post and returned to the country life because he was not satisfied with the social realities of his day. He spent some 22 years in retirement, supporting his family by farming. Talented in various genres of prose and poetry, he described in his writings the

natural beauty and his rustic life, permeated with his antipathy for the privileged and his aloofness in the status quo. He had detached himself both spiritually and physically from the civilized world. From this detachment comes high-mindedness which enables him to go through life with tolerant irony and escape the temptations of fame and wealth and achievement, and eventually makes him take what comes.

Over 120 pieces of Tao's writing have survived, many of them written in a philosophical vein. All his poems are full of emotion and everlasting pleasure, whether they dealt with the dreariness of official duties, the disgust for an official career, the beauty of country life, the fun of a leisurely life, the pleasure of farming, the inflictions of poverty, the meditation on human existence, the lessons drawn from nature, the nostalgia for ancient simplicity, or the eulogy of hermits and recluses. His nature poems are especially praise-worthy. He was a precursor of a type of pastoral landscape poetry. Since the Song Dynasty, "plainness" and "naturalness" have become the fixed attributes to Tao Yuan-ming's poems, and Tao Yuan-ming has occupied an important place in the history of Chinese literature.

Su Shi (1037–1101) was a writer, poet, artist, calligrapher, and statesman of the Song Dynasty, and one of the major poets of the Song era. Su's early education was conducted under a Taoist priest at a local village school in Sichuan Province. In 1057, when Su was 19, he passed the highest-level civil service examinations to attain the degree of *jinshi*. Beginning in 1060 and throughout the following twenty years, Su held a variety of government positions throughout China; most notably in Hangzhou, where he was responsible for constructing a pedestrian causeway across the West Lake that still bears his name: *sudi*; his official career was also marked by a series of political setbacks which included appointments to remote minor posts, including to the then barbarous Hainan Island from the years 1097-1100.

8. Examples of Chinese Thought as Reflected in Selected Poems and Prose

(1) Li Bo

Invitation To Wine

Do you not see the Yellow River come from the sky,
Rushing into the sea and ne'er come back?
Do you not see the mirror bright in chamber high
Grieve o'er your snow-white hair that once was silken back?
When hopes are won, oh, drink your fill in high delight
And never leave your wine cup empty in moonlight!
Heaven has made us talents; we're not made in vain.
A thousand gold coins spent, more will turn up again.
Kill a cow, cook a sheep and let us merry be,
And drink three hundred cupfuls of wine in high glee!
Dear friends of mine,
Cheer up, cheer up!
I invite you to wine.
Do not put down your cup!
I will sing you a song, please hear,
O hear! Lend me a willing ear!
What difference will rare and costly dishes make?
I want only to get drunk and ne'er to wake.
How many great men were forgotten through the ages?
Great drinkers are better known than sober sages.
The Prince of Poets feasted in his palace at will,
Drank wine at ten thousand coins a cask and laughed his fill.
A host should not complain of money he is short;
To drink together we'd sell things of any sort.
The fur coat worth a thousand coins of gold,
And flower-dappled horse may both be sold,
To buy good wine that we may drown the woes age-old.

(2) Tao Yun-ming

a) Return to Nature

I sow my beans 'neath southern hill;
Bean shoots are lost where weeds o'ergrow
I weed at dawn though early still;
I plod home with my moonlit hoe.
The path is narrow, grasses tall,
With evening dew my clothes wet,
To which I pay no heed at all,
If my desire can but be met.

b) Back to the Garden and Fields

From my youth I have loved the hills and mountains,
Never was my nature suited for the world of men,
By mistake have I been entangled in the dusty web,
Lost in its snare for thirteen long years.
The fettered bird longs for its old wood,
The fish in the pond craves for its early pool.
Back to my land I cling to solitude,
To till the soil in the open south country.
My plot of ground is only a few acres square,
The thatched roof covers eight or nine rooms,
The back eaves are shaded by elms and willows,
Rows of peach-and plum-trees stand in my front court.
The hamlets spread out in the hazy distance,
Where chimney smokes seem to waft in mid-air;
And the dog barks in the deep lane,
And the cock crows on the mulberry top.
In the vacant rooms there is ease and quiet.
Long have I lain within the prison of men,
Now I am to return to nature and its ways.
(Translated by Roland C. Fang)

(3) Su Dong-po

First Visit to the Red Cliff

...

Cao Cao was the hero of his times. But where is he now?

Have you considered the water and the moon? Water flows away but is never lost; the moon waxes and wanes, but neither increases nor diminishes. If you look at its changing aspect, the universe passes in the twinkling of an eye; but if you look at its changeless aspect, all creatures including ourselves are imperishable. Everything in this universe has its owner; and if it does not belong to me not a tiny speck can I take. The sole exceptions are the cool breeze on the river, the bright moon over the hills. These serve as music to our ears, as color to our eyes; these we can take freely and enjoy forever; these are inexhaustible treasures supplied by the Creator, and things in which we can delight together.

...

Notes on Contributors

Camelia ANGHEL is a teaching assistant at the Romanian-American University of Bucharest. Her various research interests include British and American drama and novel, modernism and postmodernism, discourse, English for specific purposes. These areas are partially reflected in her published articles, out of which “Marcel Proust, David Malouf – Exploring Sacredness / Secretness through a Child’s Eye” (2004) and “Intertextuality in D.H. Lawrence’s Travel Books” (2009) are worth mentioning. She is currently doing research work for a PH. D. thesis on D.H. Lawrence under the guidance of Professor Rodica Mihăilă.

Ana-Blanca CIOCOI-POP has been a teaching assistant with the Department of British and American Studies at Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu, since 2005. Her area of interest ranges from 19th century, modern and postmodern British and American Literature, to Comparative and Global Politics.

Ms. Ciocoi-Pop was awarded a Ph.D. in literature after defending her thesis *Constructive Scepticism as Evincend in the Works of Franz Kafka, William Golding and Jeffrey Eugenides*. She is also the author of three volumes published at LBUS Press: *Zwischen Weltschmerz und Lebensbejahung: Elemente der judischen Mentalitat in Franz Kafkas Kurzprosa* (2005), *Identity as Obsession and the Legacy of the Past in Jeffrey Eugenides’ Major Novels* (2005), and *Notes on 19th Century American Literature* (2007), and is currently at work on a volume of lecture notes on Victorian Poetry.

Matthew H. CISCEL is an Associate Professor of sociolinguistics at Central Connecticut State University, USA. He holds a Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of South Carolina, Columbia, and a Master’s in German language and literature from the University of Iowa. His research focuses on language politics and language

education in Southeastern Europe, particularly in the ex-Soviet Republic of Moldova and in post-Communist Romania. In spring 2010, he was a Fulbright Scholar at Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu, Romania. His publications include numerous journal articles and a book entitled “The Language of the Moldovans” (Lexington Books, 2007).

Scott EASTMAN is an American freelance photographer living in Sibiu, Romania, with a Master’s degree in fine art photography and bachelor’s degrees in literature and fine art. He taught photography at Washington University in Saint Louis. His photo projects have included documenting daily life in Romania for exhibitions in Luxembourg, Sweden and the USA. He was the official photographer for Sibiu 2007 European Capital of Culture as well as the Sibiu International Theater Festival for the last five years.

Eric GILDER is a University Professor and Fellow of the “C. Peter Magrath” Center at Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu. His research interests include, among other topics, international broadcasting and the legal systems, going back to the late 1960s.

Mervyn HAGGER is an independent researcher, former broadcaster and marketing executive, hailing from the UK and now resident in Scotland and Texas. Along with Professor Gilder, he has published works in selected books and journals on topics of radio broadcasting and relevant law.

Sämi LUDWIG is a *professeur des universités* at the UHA Mulhouse in the Alsace (France). He received his education at the University of Berne (Switzerland) and has published in *REAL*, *AmerikaStudien*, *Mosaic*, the *Cambridge Companion to Toni Morrison*, *The African American Review*, and *The Journal for Asian American Studies*. In his Ph.D. thesis on intercultural communication in Maxine Hong Kingston and Ishmael Reed, called *CONCRETE LANGUAGE* (published by Peter Lang in 1996), he outlines a theory of the metaphorical tracing of the intention

constructions of the other. His second book is on the convergences of American Realism and pragmatist theory: *Cognitive Realism: The Pragmatist Paradigm in American Literary Realism* was published by Wisconsin UP (2002). Together with Rocío Davis (City University of Hong Kong) he edits *Contributions to Asian American Literary Studies*, the only European book series on Asian American cultural studies (LIT Verlag, Germany). In addition to intercultural issues and questions of cognitive and pragmatist approaches to literature, he is also interested in the big picture of literary history, in colonial American culture, and occasionally even writes on poetry.

Gao MINGLE is Dean of the Educational Centre at BLCU-Beijing Language and Culture University, People's Republic of China and a professor there. His main research interests are theoretical and applied linguistics, with major works including "Frame of HPSG and Structure of Lexical Semantics", "Cartesian Linguistics and Chomsky's Theory", "Theory of English Connection", "The Meaning of Chinese Character 'Du'", "Grammar of English Consistent Relation", "Theory of Consistent Relation" among other works.

Ogaga OKUYADE teaches English language, African Literature and Culture and Afro-American Literature at the College of Education in Warri, Nigeria. He is interested in modernist Literature and post-colonial studies, especially narratives of growth and diasporic Literatures. He has published extensively in both local and international journals.

Corina SELEJAN holds an MA degree in British Cultural Studies from Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, a BA in English and German Literature and Language from Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu and a BSc in Business Administration from the Academy of

Economics, Bucharest. Her areas of interest include postmodern fiction and postcolonial studies.

Jonathan STILLO is a doctoral candidate in anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center. He is presently conducting sixteen months of research in Romania on the TB epidemic and the sanatoria system funded by grants from the U.S. Fulbright-Hays Foundation, the U.S. National Science Foundation, and the Social Science Research Council. While in Romania, Mr. Stillo is affiliated with the National School of Political Studies and Administration. He first traveled to Romania on a Fulbright-Hays Group Study Abroad grant in the summer of 2001 and began researching TB in Romania in 2005. Before moving to Romania, Mr. Stillo was Anthropology Program Manager in The American Museum of Natural History's High School Science Research Program. He has previously conducted fieldwork on homelessness, HIV/AIDS and crack and heroin use in the United States.

Sorin ȘTEFĂNESCU is a 1978 University of Sibiu graduate who became a tenured member of the Department of British and American Studies in 1996. He developed and taught new courses, among the most important being *Literary Theory*, *Elements of Narratology*, *Introduction to Hermeneutics*, as well as various undergraduate and postgraduate courses of *British and American Civilization*. He was awarded a Ph.D. in American literature by Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu after defending his thesis *John Steinbeck's Narrative Technique* under the supervision of Prof. Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop. His research interests are mostly focused on the wider field of Literary Theory as well as on Modernist American Literature and British and American Civilization, having published three books and several articles on these topics.

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