The Birmingham Journal of Literature and Language wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance of several individuals who contributed to the assembling, advertising and publication of this issue. Michelle Cullen provided valuable assistance as did Catherine Hargrave and Sue Bowen in the Arts and Humanities finance office. Will Cooper of Central Print, the principal stationers of the University of Birmingham, helped us with every stage of the printing process. Joshua McEvilla kindly donated his time and experience to formatting and preparing the issue for print, as did Deborah Kerr in maintaining the BJLL website. Our particular gratitude goes to the Roberts Skills Training Fund for its excellent financial assistance and, finally, to Laura Hilton and Joshua McEvilla, the founding editors of the BJLL, for their continued guidance and for trusting us to live up to their editorial abilities.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SECTION I: ARTICLES

“THERE WAS SOMETHING SCREWY GOING ON . . . ”: THE UNCANNY IN CHARLES BURNS’S GRAPHIC NOVEL *BLACK HOLE*  
LAURA PERNYA 7

THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER (TRANSGRESSION) IN *THE WINTER’S TALE*  
STEPHANIE M. SCHNABEL 17

TRANSLATION STRATEGIES FOR CONTEMPORARY POST-COLONIAL FICTION: EXCERPT FROM *SMALL ISLAND* BY ANDREA LEVY  
LOUISE DENYER 29

A BALANCE BETWEEN RICHARD’S “TONGUE” AND BOLINGBROKE’S “TEETH”: THE FEMININE AND THE MASCULINE IN *RICHARD II*  
SANNER GAROFALO 45

ESCAPING THE NEED FOR A VISUAL RECORD: THE RESTORATION OF NARRATIVE KNOWLEDGES IN PAT BARKER’S *DOUBLE VISION* AND JON MCGREGOR’S *IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF REMARKABLE THINGS*  
HOLLY PRESCOTT 56

## SECTION II: REVIEWS

GABY THOMSON-WOHLGEMUTH, *TRANSLATION UNDER STATE CONTROL: BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC*  
Reviewed by ALEXIS A. HEIT 67

LAURIE MAGUIRE, *HELEN OF TROY*: FROM HOMER TO HOLLYWOOD  
Reviewed by DEBORAH KERR 69
SECTION III: NOTES

DRIED INK AND DRAWING PAPER: ‘BACK ON THE ROAD’ AT THE BARBER INSTITUTE
Discussed by NATALIE HARRIGAN 73

A META-THEATRICAL STAGING IN NEW YORK CITY: SHAKESPEARE’S VIRGIN MARY ALLEGORIES
Discussed by JOHN HUDSON 75

THE VERNON MANUSCRIPT SYMPOSIUM
Discussed by ANNA GOTTSCALL 78

THE GRADUATE CENTRE FOR EUROPE ANNUAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE 2009
Discussed by TARA WINDSOR 80

THE FIFTH CORPUS LINGUISTICS CONFERENCE 2009
Discussed by WANG FANG 82

A BRITISH THEATRE CONFERENCE: ALL TOGETHER NOW? BRITISH THEATRE AFTER MULTICULTURALISM
Discussed by HEATHER JEFFREY 84

THE INTERNATIONAL POETICS AND LINGUISTIC ASSOCIATION 2009
Discussed by XIAOCONG HUANG 86

ARTWORK AND POETRY

SALTHOUSE, POEM
By EMILIE VINCE 5

SALTHOUSE, IMAGES
By EMILIE VINCE 16, 28, 44

MIKLAGARD
By MICHAEL RUSH 55
FOREWORD

The School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies has one of the largest communities of doctoral researchers in the University, and it is appropriate that these researchers have seized the opportunity to develop this ground-breaking journal. *The Birmingham Journal of Literature and Language* is an exciting venture that brings together writers who address a common theme from a number of disciplinary perspectives. The theme of this issue – narrative – lends itself to a multi-faceted approach, from technical analysis to interpretative readings and beyond.

Increasingly, university-based researchers are required to look past the boundaries of their own research practices in order to address questions of broader interest and relevance. Such a journal facilitates the kind of engagement that encourages this interaction and the broader vision that comes with it.

In addition, the journal allows doctoral researchers to take part in all aspects of journal production, including peer reviewing, editorial decision, and negotiations over deadlines, as well as writing articles, reviews and shorter ‘work in progress’ pieces. A key feature of this journal is the inclusion of reviews of conferences, exhibitions and performances, where contributors share their experiences with a wider audience. This ‘participant’s eye view’ of significant events in the life of the research community is both informative and entertaining.

Doctoral researchers are key to the research activity in the university as a whole. This excellent journal is a fitting showcase for their work.

Professor Susan Hunston
School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies
University of Birmingham
INTRODUCTION

This issue of The Birmingham Journal of Literature and Language takes narrative as its theme. The five articles question and explore narration, narrators, narrative constructions, narrative expectations and symbolism. The volume aims to build upon the foundations of earlier issues. It unites and promotes dialogue between postgraduate students across departments of the University of Birmingham and includes external submissions, emphasising the importance of multidisciplinarity and postgraduate networking.

Laura Perna discusses the function of the uncanny in readers’ experience in Charles Burns’s Black Hole. Narratives of gender, gender construction, and transgression form the basis for Stephanie Schnabel’s examination of The Winter’s Tale. Louise Denyer examines the concepts of “domesticating” and “foreignising” texts as a product of translation. Sanner Garofalo addresses the power of narrative both to define and to undercut Shakespearean gender constructs and their characteristic language. Holly Prescott reflects upon the ways in which knowledge itself is shaped by narrative in two prominent novels of the twenty-first century: Pat Barker’s Double Vision and Jon McGregor’s If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things. The articles presented in this issue are complemented by Emilie Vince’s “Salthouse” collection, a meditation on the nature of narrative experience through art and poetry.

Accompanying these articles and artwork are seven reviews of conferences, exhibitions, and performances. Natalie Harrigan discusses The Barber Institute’s exhibition of Jack Kerouac’s epic journey, On the Road. Continuing the theme of gender and Shakespeare, John Hudson reviews The Dark Lady Players’ innovative production of Shakespeare’s Virgin Mary allegories. Heather Jeffrey addresses theatre in multicultural Britain. Tara Windsor’s work, on the other hand, celebrates this year’s Graduate Centre for Europe conference; whereas, Anna Gottschall details the events of a Symposium on the Vernon Manuscript project, and Wang Fang and Xiaocong Huang report on two internationally renowned linguistics conferences.

These diverse contributions are complemented by an introduction to current debate in the field of narrative studies provided by Professor Dick Ellis, Head of the Department of American & Canadian Studies and co-organiser of the 2009 International Society for the Study of Narrative conference. Finally, a Foreword by Professor Susan Hunston, Head of the School of English, Drama and American & Canadian Studies, is testament to her ongoing support for postgraduate initiatives within the School.

Cristina Ivanovici and Sarah Macmillan
For some time now, anti-essentialism has been gaining ground in the arts and humanities, perhaps buoyed up by such key theorists as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Richard Rorty and Judith Butler. Advocating a mistrust of essential or foundational constructions, such as those that propose that men and women’s gender or ethnic (‘racial’) differences have any fixed definitional status, anti-essentialism has necessarily impacted also upon our understanding of universal theories of narrative. In addition, in Lyotard’s phrase, the postmodern condition demands an incredulity towards the narrative, by both asserting and questioning metanarratives. ‘All of the above’ are instead considered as historically-constructed ideological and social processes and practices. In the place of any such essentialism, more context-bound analyses have come to the fore, recognising the contingency and interpretability of theoretical concepts. Think here only of the classic, quite early formulations advanced by Foucault: in *Discipline and Punish*, *The History of Sexuality*, and in *The Order of Things*, where he advocates the erasing of modernity’s anthropomorphic ‘invention’ of the subject. Instead, Foucault urged that the humanists’ ‘man’ should be recognised as “a face drawn in the sand at the edge of the sea” (385), vulnerable to incoming tides.

Narrative theories of the cast offered by Aristotle, Propp or Labov have necessarily had to respond to this, as have the foci of any procedurally-based narrative theorisations. Let us call this subsequent shift an adventuring around the funhouse of narrative. This revolution is well evidenced by the broadly-formulated aspirations of the *Journal of Narrative Theory* (*JNT*), for example, which adopted a ‘new focus,’ calling for the submission of “theoretically sophisticated essays that examine narrative in a host of critical, interdisciplinary, or cross-cultural contexts.” The list of interests that results is also breathtakingly broad: “Of particular interest are history and narrative; cultural studies and popular culture; discourses of class, gender, sexuality, race, nationality, subalternity, and ethnicity; film theory, queer theory, and media studies; new historical, poststructural, or global approaches to narrative forms (literary or otherwise); along with essays that span or subvert epistemic and disciplinary boundaries. *JNT* is multi-genre, multi-period, multi-national.”

When the University of Birmingham’s Department of American and Canadian Studies, in conjunction with the Department of English, hosted the 2009 International
Society for the Study of Narrative annual conference, I found out just what this meant. The ISSN was already just as inclusive. A kaleidoscopic roller-coaster of papers was unveiled, lurching somewhat unsteadily at times between foundationalist, ‘strategic essentialist’ and anti-essentialist chemin de fer, but more usually proving to be a joyful riot. It was an exhilarating ride, and this issue of *The Birmingham Journal of Literature and Language* further provides some idea of narrative’s rackety bends and curves.

**Works Cited**


“SALTHOUSE”

There’s no one in this poem.
There’s no consciousness in this poem,
Just the waves against the shingle, the overpowering air.
Just air and water and stone – three elements.
Sterile place.

Empty beach. Enmeshed.

The beach is empty, there’s no one there but I’m there.
Empty footprints.
Wind.
Breeze.
Overpowering air.

Consciousness unrolls,
Mind wide open skies
Sliding skies
Sliding scale of blues.

The roof of the sky a big mind
Cogitating in blue a secret smile.

Sunclenched teeth
The beach smiles its miles of sand
To wander.
What wakes here?
Just swell.

Emilie Vince
“THERE WAS SOMETHING SCREWY GOING ON . . . ”: 
THE UNCANNY IN CHARLES BURNS’S 
GRAPHIC NOVEL BLACK HOLE

LAURA PERNAN

The science of fear is not an exact one, and experts in disciplines from neurochemistry to theatrical lighting design have attempted to determine exactly what it makes us afraid. In the area of psychology, Ernst Jentsch posited an answer in his 1906 essay “The Psychology of the Uncanny,” in which he sought to identify the process by which an unsettled feeling arises in the sane mind. Jentsch began from the assumption that “it is only when one deliberately removes such a problem [as a mundane or regular occurrence] from the usual way of looking at it . . . that a particular feeling of uncertainty quite often presents itself” (219). He concluded that the uncanny arises when an inanimate object seems alive or a person appears to be an automaton (221). It was this aspect of intellectual uncertainty in his colleague’s work to which Sigmund Freud would later object. In his 1919 response, “The Uncanny,” Freud re-identified the sensation as “that class of frightening which leads back to what is known of old and familiar” (sect. I, par. 5). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Freud connected the unsettling feeling “to the anxiety belonging to the castration complex of childhood” (sect. II, par. 12), and he supported his theory with self-sustaining arguments concerning pieces of literature, fairy tales, and ancient myth.

While the two psychologists ultimately disagreed about the root cause of the uncanny, marked similarities appear in their work. Most importantly, both note that the uncanny operates on a dynamic of uncertainty: the feeling arising from an oscillation between the familiar and the unfamiliar. Also, both studies differentiate between the occurrences of the feeling in real life and in art, namely, literature and theatre (Jentsch 222-5; Freud sect. II par. 1-13 and sect. III, par. 11-17). From these two common points, one could surmise that a piece of art might be considered to be uncanny as a result of the artist’s talent for manipulating his audience’s sense of certainty. Additionally, one might consider the artistic medium’s flexibility to facilitate this talent. The medium of the comic received no treatment in Jentsch’s and Freud’s work, and while this hardly comes as a shock, the form of the graphic narrative deserves some attention with regard to what it might offer an artist seeking to give his/her audience the proverbial creeps.
It will be appropriate, then, to examine the work of artist Charles Burns, hailed by fans and critics alike as “the master of indie horror comics” (Heater 1) and “master of the grotesque and macabre, the unsettling and weird” (Pettus). Many regard his twelve-issue series *Black Hole* (1995-2004), later collected into a graphic novel published in 2005, as his magnum opus, and it is to this work that the present analysis turns. The story follows a group of high school students in the Seattle area in the mid-seventies. In some respects, the plot of *Black Hole* resembles a stereotypical teen romance. Keith must abandon his unrequited feelings for Chris, his classmate, in order to pursue a relationship of mutual affection with Eliza; Chris falls madly in love with Rob after a few encounters; and Dave is unable to handle his own unreturned affection for Chris. In addition, drugs, alcohol, and the formation of peer groups permeate the foreground of the characters’ attentions. The torrent of emotion and social pressures is complicated by the unexplained presence of a sexually transmitted disease, “the teen plague” or “the bug,” which increasingly becomes prominent in the characters’ lives as the story progresses. The bug causes seemingly random physical mutations; for example, Chris periodically sheds her skin and Eliza grows a tail. The central characters, Chris and Keith, and their love interests, Rob and Eliza, respectively, are able to conceal their mutations, thus allowing them to masquerade as uninfected. However, the bug manifests in other teens in ways that are not so easily concealable. Dave grows thick hair all over his face, while Rick becomes unrecognisable from the boils and changes in skeletal structure on his face. Those characters which cannot pass as ‘normal’ come to form a settlement in the woods on the outskirts of town where they live in tents and subsist on whatever food they can find or buy. When everyone in school discovers that Chris is among the infected, she and Rob move to the settlement in the woods, where Rob is subsequently murdered. As Chris’s emotional and physical health deteriorate, Keith’s relationship with Eliza develops. The storylines converge with the establishment of friendship between Chris and Keith and the subsequent murder of more teens from the woods. After Burns reveals the identity of the killer, he ends the storylines of Chris, Keith and Eliza, although he leaves their ultimate fates uncertain.

In analyses and reviews, critics tend to focus on Burns’s trademark visual style and the themes of physical mutation and body horror to explain its hair-raising mood. While
these aspects undoubtedly contribute to the book’s overall unsettling effect, I would argue that they do not account for it entirely. Here, I will propose that Jentsch’s and Freud’s essays on the topic of the uncanny may offer insights into how Burns’s narrative and visual choices allow him to disquiet his readers. Thus, I will consider how the uncanny operates at both the level of the characters and plot and at the level of the extra-diegetic, as a part of the reading experience. To begin, I will demonstrate briefly that Burns’s characters undergo several uncanny experiences, which facilitate the possibility of vicarious unease on the part of the reader. In fact, as Jentsch makes a point of mentioning, “not the least pleasure of a literary work . . . lies in the empathy of the reader . . . with all the emotional excitements to which the characters of the play or novel . . . are subject” (223). Next, turning to the narrative structure of the book, I will discuss how *Black Hole* operates through a logic of the uncanny, suspending the reader between familiarity and unfamiliarity, primarily via visual means. I will examine how Burns creates doublings of his characters, events, and images by alternating points of view, shuffling time sequence, and portraying characters’ visions. This allows him to maintain a sense of temporal disorientation in the reader as well as to evoke a sense of déjà vu. Furthermore, he creates the possibility that the reader experiences similar visions to the character, blurring the position of the reader in relation to the story. An examination of Burns’s narrative and visual techniques will reveal not only the means by which he achieves a sense of the uncanny, but also how the comic book form may operate as uncanny literature.

Some of the uncanny situations that the characters of *Black Hole* both witness and experience seem to come directly from Jentsch’s and Freud’s essays. For example, in “Windowpane,” Keith experiences an acid-induced hallucination where the inanimate seems alive. As he walks to the woods, he perceives that his surroundings are alive and pursuing him:
The dirt road that wound down to Ravenna park . . . was different now . . . It was alive, moving under my feet. A thick membrane . . . a skin. I was on the back of something terrible living thing . . . I looked up into its eye . . . a flat hole staring down at me . . . It was after me, trying to find a way in . . . it wanted to show me horrible things. (“Windowpane” 17-20)

Keith tries to convince himself that the force pursuing him comes from his own enhanced imagination, but has no success against the drug’s influence. Jentsch specifies that “for people who are delirious, intoxicated, ecstatic, or superstitious [objects] come alive by means of hallucination: they address it, carry on a conversation with it, or mock it” (224, my italics). As Keith tumbles along the path to the park and reaches the woods, Burns introduces another classic uncanny feature (Freud, sect. II, par. 31): Keith stumbles across a detached human arm (“Windowpane” 21, 22). In this episode, the reader may experience an eerie feeling through character empathy with Keith.

In other cases, Burns creates a possibility for an uncanny feeling by the reader’s observation of characters’ experience. When Freud considers the whole of E.T.A. Hoffman’s opus, he asserts that:

Themes [of uncanniness] are all concerned with the phenomenon of the double, which appears in every shape and in every degree of development. Thus we have characters who are considered identical because they look alike. This relation is accentuated by mental processes leaping from one of these characters to another – by what we should call telepathy – so that the one possesses knowledge, feelings and experience in common with the other. (sect. II, par. 13)

Burns scatters visual doubles of characters throughout Black Hole. One character may resemble another in appearance. For example, Chris looks very much like Eliza both when her hair is wet and when she floats in water. Recalling a split screen from television or cinema, Burns presents another set of visual doubles with the image of two characters’ faces in one. Burns also incorporates doubles by way of mental processes that leap between characters. For instance, in Chris’s dream at the beginning of the novel, she pulls a scroll out of the wound in her foot that reveals an image referring to her future (“Ssssss” 4). In the last section of the book, Keith has a dream in which he encounters Chris and extracts a similarly predictive scroll from her foot (“The End” 7-8). It is possible that Chris might have told Keith about her dream by this point in the novel, and thus provided a logical explanation for their common vision. Burns does not refer to such an exchange here, but he does introduce the theme of shared consciousness, which I will elaborate on in the following.

In the above selections, Burns incorporates into the plot components of uncanniness as defined by Jentsch and Freud, allowing the reader to experience an uncanny sensation vicariously either through the characters or by observing similarities
among them. However, the events at the level of the plot alone do not give *Black Hole* its unnerving quality; the reader’s experience precisely as a reader entails its own level of uncanniness, specifically, through the visual instances of déjà vu. Neither Jentsch nor Freud mentions the phenomenon of déjà vu by name, but the tension between familiar and unfamiliar lies at the heart of both of their discussions. For example, Freud suggests that the repetition of an event, image, or idea can evoke the uncanny in one’s daily life and in literature. He explains that the fact of repetition itself is not responsible for conjuring a feeling of fear; the “uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression” (sect. II, par. 26). While this article will not address the process of repression, the notion that the repeated image may cull an uncanny effect will be the central focus for the remainder of this essay.

Burns intricately weaves recurring images through his novel by way of multiple narrators, the incorporation of characters’ visions, and icons on the initial pages of each section, thus creating a visual environment where, for the reader, eerily familiar images constantly circuit into each other. In a simple example, returning to the selection cited above, Burns punctuates Keith’s discovery of the severed arm with a moment of déjà vu targeted not toward Keith himself but toward the reader, who has encountered the image of the severed arm before. The arm’s palm-up position, the slight bend in elbow and wrist, and the torn flesh below the elbow recall the title page image to a previous section, “Planet Xeno.”

Additionally, Burns constructs an environment where déjà vu occurs easily via his system of narration: multiple first-person narrators. This choice is not necessarily unusual in a comic book, but merits mention because it allows him to forego the degree of objectivity that an omniscient narrator would provide. The book’s nineteen sections mostly alternate between the perspectives of Keith and Chris. Three sections of the book seem to come from Rob’s or Dave’s perspectives: “Who’s Chris?,” “I’m Sorry,” and “Rick the Dick.” The reader sees Rob’s dream in “Who’s Chris?” and Dave talks to himself in “Rick the Dick,” showing the
reader his thoughts. However, neither of them carries out the act of narration in the same way that Keith and Chris do. The experiences, background, and internal states of both Keith and Chris are not mediated through an authorial voice, but are presented directly to the reader from the characters’ perspective. By establishing a narrative that originates from multiple sources, without the author himself among them, Burns creates a textual environment where doubling and ambiguity occur inherently. In the case of the former, the same event may come to be narrated from both points of view; “Race Toward Something” and “Cut,” for example, recount the goings-on of a party, first as it unfolds for Chris, then for Keith. For the latter character, the motion of alternation between narrators and different points in time gives Burns the freedom to leave out details and events that would otherwise be gaping holes had he told his story in chronological order or from a single point of view. Indeed, Burns takes full advantage of his position of unseen narrator, “keep[ing] us in the dark for a long time about the precise nature of the presuppositions on which the world he writes about is based, or . . . cunningly and ingeniously avoid[ing] definite information on the point to the last” (Freud, sect. III, par. 14). Within this textual environment, the suspension of reader certainty operates without interrupting the flow of the story.

Into this narrative structure, Burns incorporates visions, memories, fantasies, and dreams, allowing him a further means to invoke déjà vu in the reader seamlessly as he tells his story. In an essay on Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell’s graphic novel From Hell, Lisa Coppin emphasises how “the uncanny [is] created . . . via visual effects” (3): in particular, dreams, visions, and instances where a character’s gaze corresponds to a reality distinct from what is front of his eyes. Burns often shifts the reader’s focus between Chris’s or Keith’s mind’s eye and their external experience, multiplying the possibilities for recurring images and déjà vu. For example, the novel begins with a vision: Keith faints just before dissecting a frog in biology class. As he makes the initial incision and looks at the frog’s intestines, a strange feeling overtakes him, partially brought on by the rush of formaldehyde from the preserved frog: “I froze. I can’t explain what happened. It was like a déjà vu trip or something . . . A premonition. I felt like I was looking into the future . . . and the future looked really messed up” (“Biology 101” 2). As Keith begins to lose consciousness, Burns presents the reader with four images in equally-sized panels that constitute the character’s vision: the frog he has sliced open, the bottom of a foot with a wound in the centre, a figure’s back whose skin is tearing open, and a hand covering indiscernible genitals (“Biology 101” 3; see fig. 1). His vision progresses, and the reader encounters both natural objects, including snake and worm bodies, tadpoles, bones, and torn flesh, and human artifacts, including joints,
guns, broken glass, and a can (“Biology 101” 4; see fig. 2). The reader will revisit these images throughout the novel, both approximately and exactly. The original occurrence of each of the initial four images is revealed as the story progresses, and variations of the images reappear in characters’ dreams and fantasies as well as on section title pages. The image of the sliced-open frog, for instance, has morphed into a horrific amphibious, infantile figure in the last of Keith’s dreams (“The End” 2), and tadpoles recur both visually and thematically throughout the graphic novel. For example, Keith’s own mutation, a cluster of bumps on his ribs that wither into tail-like protrusions, resembles tadpoles and the reader’s first encounter with his mutation precedes a series of tadpole images. Additionally, Keith flashes back to a childhood memory of trying unsuccessfully to keep tadpoles as pets. The vision includes a generic image of swimming tadpoles as well as his memory of a clump of dead tadpoles on a patch of grass (“A Dream Girl” 16-17; see fig. 3). Finally, frogs and tadpoles appear in Eliza’s drawings (“Bag Action” 18; see fig. 4), Keith’s dreams (“A Dream Girl” 3), and within the swirling images of the section title pages to “The End.”

Keith’s initial vision exemplifies how Burns integrates internal visions, the scrambling of the narrative sequence, and the repetition and distortion of specific images to destabilise the reader’s certainty about the sequence of events and to create a sense of déjà vu. Because Burns presents Keith’s vision early on, the reader returns to the images in it as they appear over the course of the story, despite the fact that they have occurred only once in the chronological sequence of the narrative, which follows Keith’s vision. This return to the familiar which should not be familiar comprises the core of Freud’s analysis of the uncanny.

Burns takes advantage of the visual aspect of the comics medium in order to evoke the uncanny from within the panels of the story itself, but he goes beyond the diegetic space to intensify the eeriness of Black Hole. Each of the novel’s nineteen sections begins with a title page, on which he presents the reader with isolated images of an object that occurs in the story, like a broken glass bottle or bones tied together with string. Only the reader views these images in this context as icons and he/she sees them again within the story. Jentsch begins his essay with the assumption that an uncanny feeling arises when a familiar object is viewed from an unfamiliar
perspective (218-19). I would argue that this re-viewing of objects as icons, whether before or after their appearance on section title pages provides an example of this re-contextualisation. Burns shifts these icons between the readers’ and characters’ worlds, and the issue of familiarity versus unfamiliarity roots itself in the crossing of these contexts. The black pages at the beginning of each section represent a middle space between the reader and the characters, recalling objects from the story, but also reinserting them into a context outside the story. When the broken bottle which appeared in Keith’s initial vision (“Biology 101” 3, panel 4) returns on a black page isolated from the narrative (title page to “Sssss”), it gains a degree of unfamiliarity, even though the reader may very well remember where he/she had seen it before. Furthermore, with these images presented reliably at the beginning of each section, Burns creates the suggestion that the reader is having his /her own vision experience which resembles the characters’. This connection between character and reader is supported by the title pages of the final section, “The End.” Here, the swirling collage of debris and images which Burns includes in Chris’s and Keith’s visions reappears in a space that is specific to the reader’s gaze. Unlike the characters’ visions, however, the crossing of contexts on section title pages happens not between conscious and unconscious, but between the characters’ reality and the reader’s experience. The shared consciousness, which Burns hinted at between Chris and Keith via the dream of the scroll in the foot, seeps out of the novel and into the mind of the reader himself/herself.

Whether in a classic or innovative sense, Burns inserts the uncanny into Black Hole on multiple levels. His characters experience situations that are uncanny as Jentsch or Freud would define it, as in the case of Keith’s trip through the woods, and therefore Burns establishes doubles within the narrative which only the reader is intended to perceive. More importantly, he goes beyond the diegetic level to incur an unsettled feeling in his audience. By employing a complex narrative structure and integrating character and reader experience, he creates an environment where uncertainty easily proliferates. Lisa Coppin credits the comics medium with immense flexibility in garnering an uncanny sense in readers by way of visual procedures (13), and Burns’s work serves as a case in point. He exploits the visual field both from within and outside the plot itself to instill in his readership the simultaneous uncertainty and familiarity that the classic analysts of the uncanny sought to dissect.
Works Cited


Images


Notes

1 References here will be made to section number, then paragraph number.

2 As the pages of *Black Hole* are unnumbered, references will be made to section name, then page number, then, if necessary, panel number. The single issues include blurbs made by anonymous narrators from the story, but as these do not appear in the graphic novel they will not be discussed in the present analysis.

3 For further discussion of this point, please see Raney.
“SALTHOUSE 1”

EMILIE VINCE

MIXED MEDIA, 63 CM x 76 CM
Critics are turning to Shakespeare’s Romances, and in particular The Winter’s Tale, with increasing frequency. Both the play and its individual characters are gaining unprecedented popularity within the academic community. Topics of recent publications range from Kirstie Rosenfield’s simple assertion that “the specter of witchcraft haunts the text as easily as it does in Macbeth” (95) to those questions which Theodora Jankowski raises in her article about a possible lesbian relationship between Hermione and Paulina: “where was Hermione kept so secretly for sixteen years . . . ? And, for sixteen years, did Leontes, dense though we know him to be, never have any suspicions that his wife was living at Paulina’s?” (300). These points, however interesting, are not the key issues which I would like to discuss. Instead, I propose a re-reading of the play in terms of gender (transgression), drawing on characters’ behaviour and interaction and analysing how the transgression of gender divisions helps to lead the play to a slightly lighter ending than its beginning might suggest. The marriages of the protagonists, Leontes and Hermione, and Antigonus and Paulina, are destroyed in the course of the play by a third character: Polixenes, King of Bohemia and their trusted friend. Polixenes’s presence is the crux for Leontes’s jealousy and leads to the destruction of both Leontes and his family. As a result of Leontes’s mad accusations, his little son dies, his baby daughter seems to be lost forever and Hermione is declared dead. In addition, Polixenes wreaks havoc on Antigonus, Paulina and their children, because they have the courage to defy Leontes’s unjust madness. Antigonus accepts the fact that as a man he cannot heal Leontes, but rather Paulina is better suited to this task. In the end, neither Leontes, nor Antigonus can trust their wives, the latter sacrificing his life and being replaced by Camillo.

As with Othello, the other principal Shakespearean character famously overcome by jealousy, Leontes descends into madness early in the play. In contrast to the famous Moor, however, the Sicilian king’s mental decline swiftly takes up only a short fraction of Act 1 Scene 2. The Winter’s Tale clearly focuses rather on his healing process than the development of his jealousy throughout the whole play. To illustrate my argument, I will briefly reiterate the underlying plot of Acts 1-3 and Act 5, and then analyse these scenes.
The beginning of the play sees Leontes, King of Sicily, and his heavily pregnant wife, Hermione, almost at the end of a nine-month long visit by Polixenes. While Leontes cannot persuade his friend to stay longer, Hermione convinces him to do so. Suddenly overtaken with jealousy, Leontes unjustly accuses his wife of having committed adultery with Polixenes. Hermione herself and the Sicilian courtiers, Camillo, Antigonus and other lords, attempt to prove her innocence, but to no avail. Camillo warns Polixenes of Leontes and flees with him to Bohemia while Hermione is imprisoned and then gives birth to a daughter. Paulina, Antigonus’s wife, subsequently takes it upon herself to convince Leontes that Hermione’s daughter is his legitimate child, but her endeavours also fail. As a consequence, Antigonus takes the newborn baby to a foreign shore and Hermione faces her husband in court. Leontes will take advice from no one, not even from the oracle of Delphi, until Mamilius, their firstborn son, dies of grief over the loss of his mother. Upon hearing of Mamilius’s death this, Hermione faints. She is then carried outside and also reported dead. Suddenly, Leontes repents and even asks for Paulina’s scolding. Sixteen years later, the audience still witnesses him grieving for his wife, son and daughter, believing that he was solely responsible for their deaths. Leontes learns that Florizel, Polixenes’s son, has arrived in Sicily with his fiancée, in fact, Leontes’s daughter disguised as a shepherdess who strangely reminds him of Hermione. On their visit, Paulina engineers a reunion of father, mother and daughter.

The present essay will address the motivations behind Leontes’s jealousy and rage against his wife Hermione. By exploring the ways in which the courtiers and Paulina defend Hermione against false accusations and how Leontes overcomes his destructive feelings, the essay examines how relationships between characters are severed and reformed. Instead of considering Leontes’s healing process in terms of Christian allegory (England 1991) or Marian mythology (Vanita 2000), this article analyses both the impact of gender relations between characters and also the contrasting representations of marriage in the play as exemplified by Leontes’s dual role of king and husband. Through a gender studies perspective, Eugene England argues that “The Winter’s Tale profoundly parallels King Lear, so directly it can serve as a kind of gloss on Lear” (69). However, Stephen Orgel only considers the characters’ biological sex and not their social gender when he states that “[Leontes’s disastrous jealousy] is the consequence of women entering the world of male friendship” (17). Yet, none of the critics links the process which Leontes has to endure in order to be reunited with both his wife and daughter at the end of the play to the gender of the characters around him. Before Leontes can be healed properly, he needs the opportunity to purge himself of bad humours by taking out his rage on a just cause. To this end, he chooses to vent his anger on someone who
willingly oversteps the boundaries set by gender and social conventions after all other ‘normal’ engendered attempts have failed. In the midst of this anger, only one female character, who actively steps in the king’s way, can make him see reason. By adopting a typically masculine strength and technique of arguing with Leontes, yet never donning a male (dis)guise like Rosaline in As You Like It or Portia in The Merchant of Venice, Paulina purges him of his mad jealousy. Paulina’s role in The Winter’s Tale provides an alternative and challenging construction of gender roles in the play.

In Act 1, King Leontes and Queen Hermione enter with Polixenes for the first time. To convince Polixenes to stay, Hermione only speaks in response to the question “[t]ongue-tied, our queen?” (1.2.28). Having been silent thus far because she “had thought, sir, to have held my peace until / You had drawn oaths from him not to stay” (1.2.28-9), she now skillfully masters the challenge presented to her by her husband. It is this brilliance which serves to fuel Leontes’s jealousy, as she, a woman, succeeds where he, a man, could not. Hermione states that she has “spoke to th’ purpose twice [now]. / The one for ever earned a royal husband, / Th’other, for some while a friend” (1.2.105-7) and gives her hand to Polixenes, words and actions which echo her response to Leontes when he wooed her (1.2.101-4). This could be considered the catalyst for the Sicilian king’s descent into fanatical jealousy and ultimately insanity. Hermione’s mastery of words encouraged their marriage, so how should Leontes now interpret the significance of this ‘craft’ being enacted upon another male, namely, Polixenes? One might also argue that Hermione’s skillful eloquence has previously seduced Polixenes and established a relationship too close for Leontes’s comfort (1.2.107-17, 181-3, and 281-93). The Sicilian king even starts to suspect that the unborn child might not be his own.

Marriage for a royal couple raises the inevitable question of heirs and succession. Polixenes has been with his friends for nine months, a period of time long enough to father a child, the precise crime which Leontes suspects him of. Indeed, this “entertainment / [Leontes's] bosom likes not, nor [his] brows” (1.2.117-18). Leontes’s accusation not only signifies the erosion of his usually rational thought as a king, but also to the love he feels for his wife as a husband. Thus, he turns to their firstborn male child, Mamilius, for affirmation of his fatherhood. Hermione cannot provide him with such ‘gender ascribed’ reassurance since Leontes recognises that her feminine words can no longer be trusted. This craft with words has now been tainted by Hermione because she was successful where her husband was not. However, Leontes’s troubled mind clearly misinterprets this, a fact which he does not willingly acknowledge. He also starts to mistrust the attempts of others to prove that Mamilius is his son and, therefore, heir
to his throne (1.2.121, 128-30, 206). Neither can he quell his doubts about his wife, despite her show of love “in our brother’s welcome” (1.2.172). Moreover, he observes both Hermione and Polixenes from afar (1.2.175-6, 184-204). Later, seeking to expose Hermione’s supposed adultery, Leontes questions the courtier Camillo about the cause of Polixenes’s changed decision (1.2.210-13, 216-18). Leontes suspects that other members of the royal court are already aware of his cuckoldry, but Camillo cannot understand such folly and consequently tries to reassure the king that a trusted friend’s extended visit is simply what it appears to be (1.2.213-30). Yet, Leontes does not believe him and responds by insulting Camillo (1.2.230-64) before he imparts his supposed ‘knowledge’ and ‘proofs’ of Hermione’s infidelity (1.2.264-75, 281-93). Camillo is enraged by such an accusation and tries to reason with Leontes (1.2.276-81, 293-5). While Camilo ultimately recognises that he cannot sway the king, and thus seemingly accords with his mad fantasies (1.2.303-46) in order to save his own life (1.2.344-5), it is the very fact of the male courtier’s natural decision to side with his queen that fuels the king’s suspicions further still (1.2.322-30). This scene exemplifies how Leontes responds negatively to a male attempt to defend Hermione’s honour. As a man, as opposed to a king, he is thrown into emotional insecurity and self-doubt as to whether his wife loved someone else, however fleetingly. The audience’s sympathy for Hermione grows as they witness not only Leontes’s increasingly blind jealousy, but also his mistrust of the men who dare to defend her.

In 2.1, Leontes enters together with Antigonus and other courtiers at about 2.1.33, but only at 2.1.62 does the king finally inform his wife of what she is accused. Once more, Leontes implicates Camillo in his wife’s adulterous crime: “that false villain” (2.1.48) was the adulterer’s “help in this, his pander” (2.1.46, also 2.1.90). After Hermione is brought to the prison, Antigonus, similarly to Camillo in 1.2, tries to talk some sense into Leontes and predicts the latter’s sufferings:

Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice
Prove violence, in the which three great ones suffer,
Yourself, your Queen, your son. (2.1.126-9)

He even consents that he would “keep my stables where / I lodge my wife [Paulina]; . . . / For every inch of woman in the world / Ay, every dram of woman’s flesh, is false / If she [Hermione] be.” (2.1.134-5, 137-8). Antigonus is a courtier and advisor to the king and can very likely afford horses of high value, which would be stabled in excellent conditions. If Hermione were proved guilty of adultery, Antigonus would simply rank his horses higher than Paulina, in that he would even keep them in the house, effectively displacing his wife due to her untrustworthiness. In the overall social class distinctions
depicted in the play, horses certainly signify wealth, since low characters such as Autolycus, who is nothing more than a rogue when he first enters, must be content with walking. In addition, horses are commonly linked with male activities such as hunting and warfare. Thus, the argument which Antigonus employs immediately raises issues of gender and social status. Antigonus tries in vain to exercise his male influence over his wife, thus failing to make the king see reason. When Leontes attempts to silence both him and the other lords present in this scene, Antigonus swears that he would even kill his daughters if Hermione proved to be unchaste, so that they cannot repeat the queen’s crime (2.1.144-9). In so doing, he renounces all the female members of his family. Although enraged by the outburst and by Antigonus’s belief in Hermione, Leontes takes no action against him. After Hermione is imprisoned and has given birth to their daughter, he responds with unnecessary force. He calls Antigonus a “traitor” (2.3.81), threatens him with hanging (2.3.108-9), and urges him to either burn or abandon the newborn baby, Perdita (2.3.130-41; 2.3.173-82), lest Leontes execute both him and his wife Paulina (2.3.169-72). Thus, his fanatical jealousy threatens to rip Paulina and Antigonus’s family apart as it has divided Leontes’s own.

In 2.1., the king longs for the lords’ approval, but merely receives contempt. Only when Leontes tells them of the messengers, whom he has sent to the oracle of Apollo, do the lords seem to approve his actions (2.1.150-200). Leontes also insults his wife and thus makes her supposed transgression public. He claims that the lords should “mark her well” (2.1.65), since “she’s not honest” (2.1.68) and has a “without-door form” (2.1.69), and, worst of all, “she’s an adulteress” (2.1.78, 2.1.88) and “a bed-swerver” (2.1.93). Yet, Hermione chooses not to plead her innocence, nor does she weep for her own cause, but, instead, consoles her ladies with the words “[d]o not weep, good fools, / There is no cause.” (2.1.118-19). Thus, Hermione does not resort to using perceived feminine weakness in her defence: “I am not prone to weeping, as our sex / Commonly are” (2.1.108-9), but in this instance acknowledges that transgressing her gender role “. . . Is for [her] better grace” (2.1.121-2). Leontes’s wife purposefully adopts the typical male characteristics of strength and endurance when she realises that her husband no longer trusts her usual female behaviour or her words. Hermione’s transgression of gender boundaries thus allows Leontes to perceive, albeit not to believe, the strength of her honesty but not the weakness of his male advisors.

Paulina, the last of these defenders, enters the scene in 2.2. As Antigonus’s wife and Hermione’s trusted friend and confidant, she understands the nature of certain issues which can arise in marriage. However, unlike Hermione, she firmly relies on her husband to trust her. Thus, Antigonus and Paulina occupy an equal standing. In
contrast, the royal marriage is problematised by the fact that Hermione is simultaneously Leontes’s wife and his subject.

Previously, Paulina has displayed masculine characteristics when she visited Hermione in prison. She is able to persuade the jailor to allow her to see Hermione, to fetch Emilia, the queen’s lady-in-waiting, and finally takes the newborn baby away with her after having convinced the jailor by saying “Do not you fear; upon mine honour, I / Will stand betwixt you and danger” (2.2.64-5). In this scene, she manages to convince the jailor of Hermione’s innocence and acts independently. Having been enraged by Leontes’s unjust behaviour, she is now acting rationally and courageously. Paulina’s readiness to cross gender divides becomes apparent not only in her battle of words with the jailor and later on with Leontes, but also in her use of the masculine-engendered terms of wit (2.2.51) and honour (2.2.64), which further emphasise the chivalric discourse which she employs throughout the play.

In 2.3, Paulina confronts Leontes with his newborn daughter. Here, Paulina’s behaviour is clearly shaped by her relationships with Antigonus and Leontes, and thus works in conjunction with the perceived role of the Renaissance woman. Yet, the outcome does not favour her and Leontes voices his horror and utter disgust when he calls her a “mankind witch,” a “most intelligencing bawd,” a “callot of boundless tongue,” a “gross hag,” and refers to her as Antigonus’s “lewd-tongued wife” (2.3.42, 67-8, 75-6, 81, 90-91, 94, 107, 159, 171) before Paulina begins her verbal fencing with him and brilliantly masters this challenge. When the king becomes aware of Paulina’s presence, he calls her “that audacious lady” (2.3.42) and directs his rage towards her husband, Antigonus. Known for his sense of justice, Antigonus is forced to shield himself from the king’s accusations, but Paulina is quick to defend him. In his support of his wife, Antigonus compares her with a horse, a noble, gracious animal (2.3.51-2). In her two subsequent speeches (2.3.52-8 and 2.3.59-61) Paulina defines herself in terms of typical male professions such as “servant,” “physician” and “counsellor” and, furthermore, challenges Leontes to trial by combat in defence of Hermione’s honour, as if she were a man. Thus, Paulina is cross-talking, echoing the actor’s necessary cross-dressing, and is consequently severely rebuked by Leontes. Since women were performed by men on stage, the humour in this dramatic staging of gender roles would be immediately obvious to a Renaissance audience. Leontes goes on to call Paulina “Dame Partlett” (2.3.75), a “crone” (2.3.76), “a callot of boundless tongue” (2.3.90-91), a “dam” (2.3.94), “Lady Margery” (2.3.159) and a “lewd-tongued wife” (2.3.171). He thus alludes to a Renaissance perception of women and their verbal aggressiveness in which the tongue was regarded as a woman’s natural weapon, later exemplified in texts such as
George Webbe’s *The Araignment of an Unruly Tongue* (1619). His remarks also evoke another literary tradition: that of gossiping women who rage against their husbands and against men in general, for instance, the contempt of marriage portrayed in Rowland’s *Tis Merrie when Gossips meete* (1620). If we consider both of these examples in relation to the events of *The Winter’s Tale*, it becomes apparent that Leontes dismisses Paulina’s womanly scolding simply because her tongue is “too sharp,” whereas he finds his own “bitter” dismissal of her to be entirely justified. The fact that Paulina and Hermione appear to stick together (as gossiping women were perceived to do) fuels Leontes’s belief that Paulina’s rage towards men remains unfounded.

This re-enforces Leontes’s denial of gender boundaries as he perceives Paulina’s reaction to his behaviour not for what it is meant to be (something intended to cure his jealousy and to prevent the break-up of his family), but rather for what it is (something condemnable which subordinates him to a woman). He takes his accusations further still by addressing Paulina as “a most intelligencing bawd” (2.3.68), “a callet” (2.3.90) and a “midwife” (2.3.159). With these terms the king expresses again his willingness to implicate her in the unjust charges against his wife. He believes her to be guilty of helping Hermione and Polixenes to commit adultery both by acting as a go-between and by aiding them to hide their relationship from Leontes. In his eyes, Paulina is as guilty as Hermione of turning him into a cuckold since she convinces him that the queen’s newborn child is his own. Knowing that these accusations are mere mad fantasies, Paulina defends both herself and the queen against Leontes, thereby creating a pair of female figures who stand together against male tyranny and Leontes’s insanity. Paralleling other female characters in Shakespeare’s own plays, for example, Desdemona and Emilia, or Beatrice and Hero in *Othello* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, Paulina and Hermione fight against unjust male behaviour driven by unfounded jealousy.

In addition, Paulina progressively assumes masculine qualities, whereas her husband Antigonus adopts supposedly characteristically feminine weaknesses (Dash 146). During the Renaissance, the effeminate man was condemned alongside the mannish woman. In the contemporary, anonymous pamphlets *Hic Mulier* (1620) and *Haec Vir* (1620) gender transgressions were denounced along with women who wear masculine clothes and male fops, respectively. Remarkably, the anonymous author of *Haec-Vir* partly defends the “mankind” woman, as Linda Woodbridge explains, by “characterising her behaviour as a response to male effeminacy: somebody has to wear the breeches” (147). This assumption of masculine authority is echoed in *The Winter’s Tale* when Paulina realises that she must face the king alone as the lords prove too docile to stand up to him. As a result, she is referred to as “a mankind witch,” an insult which
effectively unsexes her. Leontes sees her as neither woman nor man, but rather as a potentially dangerous threat to his authority as the King of Sicily.

A contemporary discussion of gender roles in witchcraft can be found in the *Daemonologie*. Written by King James I under his pseudonym Epistemon, the *Daemonologie* considers magic and necromancy to be separated from sorcery and witchcraft according to gender divides. Whereas magic is practised out of curiosity solely by men, witchcraft, performed only by women, serves either to gain fortune or to exact revenge. From Epistemon’s point of view, witches are evil and “their whole practises are either to hurte men and their gudes . . . for satisfying of their cruell mindes in the former, or else . . . to satisfie their greedie desire in the last poyn” (35). Leontes echoes these beliefs when he claims that Antigonus’s wife must be the worst and most evil being of which he can conceive: a “mankind witch” to be punished and burned.

In 3.2, during Hermione’s trial Paulina confronts Leontes a second time, informing him that his son, Mamilius, and his wife, Hermione, have died (3.2.170). This scene foregrounds the change in the relationship between Paulina and Leontes. In her un-gendered state Paulina asserts herself courageously for almost forty lines (3.2.173-99 and 201-12). Only in this capacity can she triumph over Leontes who ultimately collapses and admits her moral superiority when he says “Go on, go on. / Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved / All tongues to talk their bitt’rest.” (3.2.212-15). Thus, through her transcendence of gender, Paulina finally assumes her true feminine role. Now she can display the typical female characteristics which she has suppressed throughout the play. She even goes so far as to call herself “a foolish woman” (3.2.225). Furthermore, Paulina now appears unable to rein her passion, and thus seemingly embodies the exact stereotypical role of the Renaissance woman which she had previously subverted. However, as it comes to light in Act 5.3, Paulina only acts this role. While her half-spoken sentence “The love I bore your Queen – lo, fool again!” (3.2.226) may betray the fact that she has an ulterior motive, faced with a repentant Leontes, it is by apparently succumbing to stereotypically feminine emotional outbursts that Paulina conceals from him her skilful ploy. Their power roles are indeed reversed by the end of this scene. Whereas Paulina rejects her identification as a “mankind witch,” as Leontes denounced her in Act 2, she is now permitted by him to go on and scold him even more when he utters “Go on, go on. / Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved / All tongues to talk their bitt’rest” (3.2.212-40). At this point, Leontes is in no doubt of Hermione’s death. Yet, as the last scene in the play reveals, Hermione has been in hiding for sixteen years while her death was in fact a strategic ploy to enable Leontes to recognise that he has been the only unfaithful character in the play.
The restoration of the marital status quo in Act 5 is further reinforced by the return of Perdita, whom the audience learnt in Act 4 had been found and raised by a shepherd after Antigonus left her on the shore of Bohemia. Paulina’s use of magic in the reconciliation of Hermione with both her husband and her daughter culminates in the return of Perdita and Florizel, Polixenes’s son. Her double role in restoring familial and gender roles effectively brings the play to its happy ending. In 5.1, she appears as Leontes’s conscience, whereas in 5.3 she partly fulfils the role of a witch. In this earlier scene, all the other courtiers want Leontes to marry again despite Paulina’s objection (5.1.1-84). The ultimate evidence of Leontes’s renewed trust lies in the fact that he allows her to choose him a second wife (5.1.49-53).

In the last scene of the play, when Paulina makes Hermione’s statue come to life she, with Leontes’s permission, freely adopts the role of a witch (5.3.80-91, 94-6) and her supposed power becomes in his eyes “an art as lawful as eating” (5.3.109-11). Significantly, Paulina is now declared a widow (5.2.58-77, 5.3.132-5), but in opposition to the Renaissance perception of a widow’s status, portrayed, for example, in George Chapman’s The Widow’s Tears (1612) and Lording Barry’s Ram-Alley (1611), she exhibits its stereotypical freedom but does not turn into a woman with a lascivious eye for men. Woodbridge explains that this stereotype often included “many an incontinent widow marr[ying] away her late husband’s fortune, neglect[ing] his children, and by her lewd behaviour bring[ing] his name posthumously into ridicule” (178). Paulina has spent sixteen years on her own in many varied roles: she cared for Leontes, Hermione and for her three daughters without a husband. Once it is finally established that Antigonus has died, something which Paulina had only suspected, she desires to mourn for him until her own death. Yet, Leontes destroys this hope by marrying her to Camillo (5.3.143-6). In this exceptional scene, he is able to use his power over her, not only as a king, but also as a man. This indicates why Paulina’s voice is no longer heard after these lines and also the rather abrupt end of the play. As mentioned above, the marital balance is certainly restored at this point, but it comes at a price.

In conclusion, it can be stated that gender transgression constitutes the catalyst for the play’s ‘happy’ ending. The male courtiers, especially Camillo and Antigonus, cannot prevent Leontes from succumbing to jealousy, but rather incite it further by arguing against the falsity of the king’s assumptions. As men themselves, they cannot cross those boundaries which Leontes has set for his court in terms of established gendered behaviour, and, therefore, they are bound to fail in the process of purging the king’s madness. Since their masculine attempts prove a real threat to Leontes, the two male courtiers are removed from the Sicilian court. Furthermore, their masculinity
prevents Leontes from taking the same action against them as he would in the case of a woman overstepping the boundaries of femininity. This can be seen in his reaction to Paulina’s transgression of her ‘natural’ role and her adoption of male rationalism when Leontes rages against her, calls her names and even threatens to have her burned. The Sicilian king needs a ‘just cause’ upon which to vent his anger, which none of the male courtiers can provide. Hermione cannot fulfil this role either, since she is the reason, however fantastical, why Leontes’s roles as both husband and king are called into doubt. Leontes and Hermione’s relationship requires a different gender balance to that of Leontes and Paulina, an outsider. In addition to being a real mother to her own daughters, Paulina acts as a mother-figure to the king (in a scolding way in Hermione’s presence and in a caring way during her sixteen-year-long absence). Thus, Paulina overpasses Hermione in bringing Leontes to his senses again. The play never calls into question these ‘true’ feminine roles; rather, it is what Leontes perceives as ‘correct female’ behaviour that is called into doubt, destroyed and reconstructed. This becomes apparent in a poignant way at the end of the play when he offers Paulina in marriage to Camillo. Leontes rejects Paulina’s newly-found independence and forces her to accept subordinance to a man through marriage, thus subjecting her both to a king and to a husband. In contrast to England, for example, and his reading of The Winter’s Tale as a gloss on King Lear (69), I advocate for a re-consideration of the play on its own terms before drawing any parallels with other plays. Natural and assumed genders are of vital importance to the construction of character relations in The Winter’s Tale.

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Notes

1 For example, see Dash (1981: 133-52); Erickson (1982); Woodbridge (1984); Rose (1991); Wolf (1994); Orgel (1996); Snyder (1999); Hackett (2000); Vanita (2000); Jankowski in Callaghan (2001: 299-319); Lim (2001); Rosenfield (2002); Alfar (2003); Foakes (2003: 191-95).

2 Author’s emphasis.

3 This article is based on a previously-published student essay entitled “Paulina - witch, shrew or obedient wife?” by Grin Verlag in Munich, Germany (2006).

4 See also Foakes (2003) who compares the function of Paulina to that of Prospero from The Tempest.


6 All references to lines and acts are according to the edition by Stephen Orgel in the Oxford Shakespeare Series.

7 I concede that this line can be read in either a negative or positive meaning. However, in combination with Leontes’s following speech about Sir Smile and men’s gates, bags and baggage, I understand it in a negative way. He accuses his wife of adultery and reproaches her that her heartfelt welcome of Polixenes (so heartfelt that they conceive a child) lessens the love she feels for her husband. The more she turns to Polixenes and spends time with him, the less she loves Leontes.

8 Author’s emphasis.
“SALTHOUSE 2”

EMILIE VINCE

MIXED MEDIA, 63 CM x 76 CM
TRANSLATION STRATEGIES FOR CONTEMPORARY
POSTCOLONIAL FICTION: EXCERPT FROM
SMALL ISLAND BY ANDREA LEVY

LOUISE DENYER

1. Introduction

In her fourth novel, Small Island (1994), British-Caribbean author Andrea Levy explores both her own roots and, more broadly, considers the effects of Caribbean migration on British identity. Small Island won the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2004, was adapted for television in 2009, and has been translated into many different languages. Fatema Ahmed considers that Levy’s “greatest achievement in Small Island is to convey how English racism was all the more heartbreaking for its colonial victims because it involved the crushing of their ideals” (1). This conflict provides the focal point of my article, which analyses an excerpt from Levy’s novel recording a conversation between the two principal female characters, one Jamaican, one English (Levy 227-8, see the Appendix). The conversation explores significant post-colonial issues and also highlights the conflict between the coloniser and the colonised. I analyse specific strategies used by two different translators in their translations of the Source Text (ST) into Spanish. I also examine how the colonial use of Spanish parallels that of English in that the former was the language used by the coloniser and imposed upon the colonised people of Spain’s Central and South-American colonies.

There are two main translation strategies available which faithfully render the political conflict which shapes post-colonial writing. By accurately transferring it to a Target Text (TT), translators might decide to “domesticate” the foreign text by assimilating it to target-cultural and target-linguistic values (Robinson 116), so that it is easily understood by TT readers. A second option would be for translators to acknowledge the foreignness of the ST and maintain Source-Language cultural codes in the translated text by “foreignising” it, thus requiring a greater effort on the part of the TT reader in order to understand the translated text. The latter is most powerfully argued by both Antoine Berman and Lawrence Venuti who suggest that a “good translation always retains some significant trace of the original ‘foreign’ text” (Robinson 117).

I will focus on particular words and expressions that highlight the sensitive issues which contemporary post-colonial fiction raise, and analyse translation strategies in use, in order to effectively render this colonial conflict as reflected in the translated TT. I
will also examine the issue of transferring terms between the ‘hegemonic’ British English and the ‘minoritised’ Jamaican English. By understanding the term ‘hegemonic,’ defined as “the unconscious rule of ideology in a society, the dominant values and norms as channeled through language” (Robinson 118), I examine the principal translation strategies available to translators, namely, “domestication” or “foreignisation,” and other cultural-specific aspects regarding colonialism such as gender, identity, status and colonial assumptions. I will further analyse strategies which the translator in question employed in rendering an accurate TT. Drawing upon Homi Bhabha’s postcolonial concepts of “third space” and “unhomeliness” (1994) alongside non-linguistic, economic approaches, including Venuti’s comments on translating best-sellers, my examination of these issues will focus on the above-mentioned extract.

I will then proceed to compare two translations of the excerpt: the only official Spanish translation completed by Daniel Najimias Bentolila in 1996 and published by Anagrama Editorial; and a 2006 translation carried out by Marisol Tolliday, who translated the excerpt without referring to Najimias’s translation. Interestingly, the two translations differ due to both the gender and cultural differences between the two translators. The first is a male Spanish (Catalan) translator, whereas the second is a female South-American (Peruvian) translator. Furthermore, cultural differences between the two translators almost mirror the coloniser-colonised relationship; the first translator representing the coloniser from mainland Spain, while the second translator symbolises the colonised from Peru, a former Spanish colony. In the excerpt, this coloniser-colonised relationship reflects the relationship between Britain and Jamaica. These differences which affect the employed translation strategies may, to a certain extent, provide the Spanish reader with the same experience and insight which the English reader gained from the original text. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that this depends on whether one is addressing mainland Spanish or South-American readers, since their expectations differ.

Throughout this article I analyse specific words, idioms and expressions present in the extract which emphasise the pervasive postcolonial conflict, in order to examine the translation strategies used by both translators which accurately render this conflict from the ST into the TT.

2. An Analysis of the Translation Strategies

Both the above-mentioned translation strategies have provoked fierce debate among certain translation scholars who uphold that domesticated translation “will dull the mind of the Target Language (TL) reader and enforce a hegemonic, mindless blandness that
will be increasingly blocked to cultural difference, whereas a foreignising translation will rouse the TL reader to critical thought and a new appreciation for cultural-difference” (Robinson 110). This is further demonstrated by Venuti’s passionate opposition to domestication on the basis that:

[A] fluent strategy performs a labor of acculturation which domesticates the foreign text, making it intelligible and even familiar to the Target Language reader, providing him or her with the narcissistic experience of recognising his or her own culture in a cultural order, enacting an imperialism that extends the dominion of transparency with other ideological discourse over a different culture. (Ramière 153)

Venuti emphasises that “translation yields enormous power in constructing representations of foreign cultures” (67), thus turning “domestication” into a dangerous process, since “bad translation shapes towards a foreign culture domestic attitude that is ethnocentric,” whereas “foreignisation” constitutes a “good translation [. . . as it] forces the domestic language and culture to register the foreignness of the foreign text” (81). Venuti believes that domestication remains the dominant translation mode nowadays, at least in Anglophone cultures. There is also a point of contention as to whether or not the “domestication”/“foreignisation” of the binary opposition remains viable in actual translation practice. Perhaps, some form of “cultural” mediation might be more appropriate. For example, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason regard translators as mediators between two cultures and further define mediation as “the extent to which translators intervene in the transfer process, feeding their own knowledge and beliefs into their processing of a text” (147). The two scholars uphold three categories which they describe as minimal, maximum and partial mediation, and they consider the latter as involving “significant discoursal shifts . . . between ST and TT throughout the work” (159).

Likewise, the Spanish translation scholar Dora Sales Salvador advocates that “in the contradictory, yet complementary dialectic between exoticising (foreignising) and familiarising (domesticating), the ideal solution would be to find a medium term, an in-between space, respecting otherness but able to transmit and communicate to the target culture” (Rollasen 4). Inevitably, in practice, any translation will consist of either one or both strategies to improve readability and intelligibility, to appeal to its readers, or to play a role in the translation process, so that a “fluent translation may enable a foreign text to engage a mass readership” (Venuti 12). Furthermore, the translator has to deal with such non-linguistic, economic aspects as selling the TT and satisfying a publisher whose approach to the foreign text is most likely “primarily commercial, even imperialistic” (12). Thus, “a best-selling translation tends to reveal much more about the domestic
culture for which it was produced, than the foreign culture which it is taken to represent” (Venuti 125-6). Turned into an immediately comprehensible text for the TT reader, and also into best-selling fiction, a translated bestseller “depends for its success on the readers’ sympathetic identification with characters who confront contemporary social problems” (125-6), and this can be argued to be the focus for Najimias. The translators’ decision to use whichever strategy they feel to be most appropriate also forms part of the initial “operational norms.” As Gideon Toury suggests, these norms affect the decisions translators which make while performing the translation task, and they further “affect the matrix of the text, i.e. the modes of distributing linguistic material in it, as well as the textual make up and verbal formulation as such” (202).

3. The Source Text

*Small Island* is set in 1948, at the time when post-war England was witnessing its first wave of immigrants from Jamaica. The extract which I have chosen to discuss records a conversation between the two main female characters, Queenie, the landlady, and Hortense, her tenant. From the point when Hortense takes the opportunity to ask Queenie, “would you perchance have a basin that I might get a use of?,” there follow various cultural-linguistic misunderstandings which I further analyse in section 4.1. Although both characters are women, their statuses are markedly different. Queenie represents the English, white coloniser, while Hortense symbolises the black Jamaican immigrant, the colonised. On another level, the relation between the two characters mirrors inter-racial relations during post-war England when many white English people still had to come to terms with black immigrants and to overcome their racial prejudices. These fundamentally postcolonial differences, namely, race, gender and identity (coloniser/colonised), play essential roles in *Small Island* and, subsequently, they should be properly rendered in translation.

This extract highlights a constant overlapping of boundaries and an ironic reversal of roles during the conversation between Queenie and Hortense. The latter is an educated, black immigrant teacher, whereas the former is an uneducated, white sweet shop assistant. Their conversation demonstrates not only this reversal of roles, but also the coloniser/colonised conflict, through constant linguistic and cultural misunderstandings. Queenie assumes the role of the English language teacher, whereas Hortense becomes the foreign language student, much to her own annoyance as she indignantly claims that “[she] can speak and understand very well the English language, thank you.” The dialogue abounds in ironies as Hortense tries to assert herself via
language, but each time she inevitably surrenders to her pre-ordained condition of the colonised as brought about by her social, linguistic and cultural environment.

The co-existence or linguistic continuum between Standard Jamaican English and Jamaican Creole (Patois) highlights “a clear social class marker” and also that there is “strong prejudice” between such speakers (Wardhaugh 84-5). According to Martin Montgomery, “the main difference between the Jamaican Creole and Standard English – apart from matters of pronunciation – lies in the way in which distinctions of time, duration, number and person are indicated” (83) and also in that the use of the standard dialect indicates a “sign of deference and respect” (86). In its insistence upon cultural and linguistic differences, the extract demonstrates how issues of pronunciation, including stress and intonation patterns, mark the difference from Standard English by highlighting significant linguistic misunderstandings between the two women. Indeed, from the beginning of their conversation, the colonial anxieties of the colonised, coupled with the prejudices and assumptions of the coloniser, are perfectly illustrated through the simple misunderstanding of the word “basin” (section 4).

Richard Wardhough quotes David DeCamp who argues that “the Creole is inseparably associated with poverty, ignorance and lack of moral character. There is a strong social prejudice against the Creole, a prejudice which inhibits even the middle class, many of whom, like Hortense, speak the superior Standard Jamaican English, “lead lives of desperate linguistic anxiety, loudly proclaiming the superiority of their own ‘standard’ English while nursing inward doubts about whether their English is really sufficiently standard” (85). I would argue that Queenie and Hortense’s conversation clearly illustrates this series of prejudices. Furthermore, Hortense, who has always been so proud of her excellent standard English, remains frustrated by the fact that this ordinary English woman rarely understands her spoken English.

4. Translation Strategies and the Postcolonial
Several aspects of this extract immediately highlight the coloniser-colonised conflict and, more broadly, how the writer and the translators effectively problematise or translate certain postcolonial issues. I have placed these under the following titles, identity, status and colonial assumptions. In particular, regarding the word “basin,” from which the linguistic confusion of the extract arises, two idioms, the level of formality between the characters, and the words “bucket” and “potty” each shed significant light on issues of translation, pronunciation and interpretation. Furthermore, the chosen examples, which relate to the domestic space, illustrate how this colonial conflict affects not only the
public life of the individuals concerned, but also the private sphere, hence the emphasis on the above-mentioned trivial household items.

4.1 Hortense’s opening question regarding the word “basin” immediately illuminates this colonial conflict and, despite the term being repeated four times in the conversation, Queenie fails to understand it. Although both translators use the same word “palangana,” denoting “a recipient used especially for washing the hands and face,” unlike “barreño,” which is the standard equivalent used in mainland Spain, defined as “a washing-up basin for domestic uses.” Tollday used “palangana” as it is commonly employed in South America, whereas Najimias adopted the initial term and thereby “foreignised” it.

The main reason Queenie misunderstands the term “basin” lies in Hortense’s Jamaican English pronunciation, which Hortense does not grasp. Further, the ST highlights the cultural challenge when Queenie asks, “A bee . . .,” without realising that the vowel sounds differently in the Source Language (SL), namely, “bee” rather than “ba.” In his choice of the term, Najimias fails to address this issue and thus uses domesticating strategies by simply repeating the word, although in the opening question he partially attempts to clarify the type of basin required by his addition of “for wash . . . [washing].” Strangely enough, later in the novel, Najimias changes this term and translates “basin” to “barreño,” without providing any explanation for the change of word choice.

However, Tollday directly confronts this issue and provides the additional comment: “[she] did not understand my pronunciation thus [I] repeated it,” which effectively clarifies the actual socio-linguistic issue to the Spanish reader. However, Najimias clearly renders both the “translator’s visibility” (Venuti 1995) and deliberate intervention as he “foreignises” the Spanish translation. Additionally, Tollday comments that such a misunderstanding would not occur in the Target Language (TL), because Spanish is a phonetical language, but, like Najimias, she acknowledges that here it is necessary to interfere in order to clarify linguistic issues.

4.2 The idiom “it’s perishing today” is translated by both translators by using its direct TL equivalent, “hace un frío que pela” (i.e. “it is a cold that peels”). Both the Spanish and English expressions are colloquial as “prose abounds in images . . . which derive in part from the vernacular. Most convey a meaning or experience that readily finds a parallel image [or] expression . . . in other languages” (Berman 295). Although Berman upholds that it “is evident even if the meaning is identical, replacing an idiom by its equivalent is an ethnocentrism,” he maintains that “to play with equivalence is to attack the discourse of the foreign work [and] to translate is not to search for equivalence”
Both translators have no qualms about using the phrase’s direct equivalent, thus “domesticating” it. This effectively renders its informal and colloquial tone and accurately corresponds to Queenie’s ‘low-class’ speech as a more literal translation, such as in the case of “it’s bitterly cold” which does not capture these undertones and characteristics. It is not surprising that Hortense fails to understand this idiom, supposedly due to the tropical climate in Jamaica where she would never have experienced an English winter or, indeed, “coldness” at all. Furthermore, the “right level of idiomaticity greatly enhances readability of translation” (Baker 78), hence the domestication strategy employed here.

4.3 The idiom “cat got your tongue” is a restricted “collocation which cannot normally be understood from the literal meaning of the words which make [it] up” (Carter 65). This requires careful handling by translators as “the ability to recognise and interpret . . . correctly . . . is much more pronounced in the case of idioms” (Baker 65). Mona Baker warns that SL idioms “may have a very close counterpart in the Target Language” and that they are “similar on the surface but have totally or partially different meaning(s)” (66). She provides the example of this idiomatic question “has the cat got your tongue” which “is used in English to urge someone to answer a question or contribute to a conversation, particularly when their failure to do so becomes annoying” (67). Baker notes that “a similar expression is used in French with a totally different meaning . . . to give up . . . when asked a riddle” (67). However, this idiom is effectively translated into Spanish by its direct equivalent, “has the cat eaten your tongue?,” thus domesticating it and rendering the same meaning to the TT reader.

Although both translators use the same TL expression and effectively domesticate it, Tolliday comments that this “presented [her] with a difficulty, as this particular version was not familiar to [her] in Spanish and [she] could not find it whilst researching it, but she still used it as it was the only way to continue translation.” Although the motivations behind choosing the use of this TL expression remains unclear, the idiom seems to be currently used informally, but not frequently. Tolliday believes that she has “foreignised” the phrase, making it appear strange to her but acceptable both to Najimias and to other Spanish speakers who may argue that this idiom is effectively domesticated.

4.4 Hortense’s English is formal, almost archaic, which typically reflects colonised English. This is wonderfully illustrated in her opening question, “would you perchance have a basin that I might get a use of?” Both translators faithfully render this archaic structure, Najimias by “por ventura” (i.e. “by chance”) and Tolliday by “por acaso” (i.e. “by chance”), although Najimias’s sounds definitely more archaic and more formal; both
domesticate this expression which effectively transmits this difference. This sets the tone for the conversation and accordingly establishes the complex relationship of the power imbalance between the coloniser and the colonised.

Tolliday comments that some of Hortense’s misunderstandings arise from her scholarly and old-fashioned English speech which she effectively translates by favouring South-American words. Furthermore, she reiterates that since Spanish is a phonetical language, unlike English, the misunderstandings caused by pronunciation revealed in the excerpt in English would not necessarily cause similar misunderstandings between a South American (ex-colonised) and a mainland Spaniard (coloniser). However, the way in which South Americans generally employ archaic words and expressions in everyday speech emphasises their similarity to the colonised Hortense and highlights their differences with the speech of mainland Spaniards and Queenie.

Also, both translators use “usted/tu” as a form for “you.” Notably, Hortense employs the term “usted,” which is considered to be more formal and respectful, as opposed to Queenie’s “tu,” which seems to be more familiar and personal. This highlights the class difference between the two characters. In turn, the use of “usted” indicates Hortense’s colonial assumption more clearly than the SL use of the simple “you” structure, as the ST has to rely more heavily on intonation, stress and pronunciation. Since these linguistic features are often impossible to render in Spanish translation, by using the “usted/tu” structure in the TL, the translator effectively deals with issues of difference, identity and (post)colonial discourse.

4.5 Both translators have used similar words for “bucket” and “potty” (small chamber-pot/chamber-pot), namely “palangana,” which Tolliday upholds as commonly used in South America, whereas the words “cubo” and “orinal,” respectively, commonly occur in mainland Spain.

This implies that both translators have employed “foreignising” strategies. They have used South-American words (colonised) which emphasise the colonial relationship and the direct analogy between South America and Spain on the one hand, and Britain and Jamaica, on the other hand. The parallel effectively reflects postcolonial relationships and acts as a sensible and appropriate textual strategy which attempts to provide the TT reader with an experience similar to that of the Source Language reader. This highlights feelings of strangeness and “unhomeliness” (Bhabha 1994).

5. Identity
There are various examples of issues relating to colonial identity which I will discuss in this section. As stated above, the characters seem to linguistically reverse their roles and
this is why, when they are brought together, constant misunderstandings ensue. Queenie takes on the role of an English language teacher and underlines her coloniser identity by using expressions such as “we say its perishing cold . . . in English . . . it means you'll soon get used to our language.” She duly asserts her colonial superiority which effectively reverses her true status and further reinforces Hortense’s perceived inferior and foreign colonised status.

5.1 Hortense ironically refers to Queenie as “this Englishwoman . . . this woman’s eyes . . . this woman . . .” This lexical repetition of the demonstrative pronoun and impersonal noun linguistically dehumanises Queenie. Conversely, Hortense never refers to Queenie by her forename despite the fact that Queenie insists that she does so, which demonstrates how Hortense disassociates herself from her coloniser. Although Hortense desperately clings to her identity, she inevitably surrenders to the coloniser culture and its linguistic norms, thus unconsciously acknowledging Queenie’s status as “coloniser” and her own status as “colonised.” This is evidenced by Hortense’s pitiful claim concerning her English linguistic ability, “I can speak and understand the English language very well.” This phrase only serves to emphasise her linguistic fragility. Unlike previous instances when she had been terribly proud of her ability to speak perfect English and had won English-speaking prizes in Jamaica as a child, now her self-doubt becomes overtly apparent.

The two versions of the text also differ in their translation of ‘language.’ For instance, Najimias uses “lengua,” which refers to isolated words and expressions, thus rendering the term in a more “domesticated” version. Conversely, Tolliday uses “idioma,” which refers to language as a social entity and is typically used in South American Spanish. Indeed, Tolliday’s choice of translation actually foreignises the term for the mainland Spanish speaker.

5.2 Several idioms, phrases and terms in use illustrate Hortense’s inner-questioning and indignation, including “[a]n educated woman such as I,” “the impression I received that she was talking to me as if I was an imbecile,” and “as if I might have lost my hearing.” Each of these phrases reinforces her self-justification and increasing bewilderment as she begins to question her identity within a colonial context as a colonised subject. Hortense struggles to fit into her new home as she feels that she does not belong to this environment. As a result, she is caught between two cultures and she occupies what Bhabha terms “the in-between” or “third space” (1994). Instead, she painfully experiences an immense feeling of “unhomeliness” which constitutes “the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations” (9). As her unhomeliness is both physical and psychological, she starts to feel rejected, insecure and disappointed with the
coloniser’s culture and language. This contrasts with Bhabha’s statement that the “third space” is an opportunity to reconcile the opposed culture and to focus not on the conflict but on the culture’s “hybridity” through the “diversity of cultures” (1994). In this new context, Hortense feels insecure, homeless and oppressed, not only due to her ‘race,’ class and gender, but also given the linguistic difficulties which she faces. Despite being Queenie’s tenant, Hortense remains indignant and almost outraged when Queenie invites her to sit down, as she stubbornly clings to her fading identity, saying “but this was my home.” This is because suddenly “this room” which has become her whole world has now been invaded by Queenie, the coloniser, who invites Hortense, the colonised, to sit down with her in her own room.

Interestingly, the translators use different verbs for “to be” in the Spanish text. Najimias uses “estar” or “estaba en mi casa” which normally implies a temporal state or condition. Perhaps his reasoning behind this choice was that Hortense is only temporarily renting a room in Queenie’s house, whereas Tolliday uses “ser” or “era en mi casa,” implying permanence, as perhaps she feels that Hortense is trying to fit into this “third space.” Also, this highlights the cultural differences between Spaniards and South Americans. It may further indicate that for a South American, the concept of being at home, irrespective of whether it is rented or owned, represents a much more fixed space, whereas a Spaniard would argue that a tenant’s status is never permanent.

5.3 Hortense’s final question, “maybe this is how the English do things when they are in England?,” appears to confirm her gradual acceptance of the fact that she will have to change and accept English culture. While it could be argued that she is actively reconciling opposing contexts, Hortense is ultimately surrendering to the coloniser culture and its norms.

While Najimias domesticates the final question, “how the English behave in England,” Tolliday foreignises it to the more literal “how they do things in England,” which she justifies on the basis of conveying all ST information. In turn, this literal translation upholds the illusion of “strangeness” to the Spanish reader and also enhances the foreignness of the ST.

6. Colonial Assumptions
Both linguistic markers and configurations of space emphasise colonial assumptions of national and cultural identity and show how the text parodies specific colonial discourse, such as in oral and gestural communication.
6.1 One assumption of the colonial discourse is expressed when Queenie remarks, “I bet you wished you never left somewhere nice and hot.” She knows that Hortense comes from Jamaica, but the fact that she fails to use the word Jamaica may seek to devalue Hortense’s home country. Both adjectives – “nice and hot” – are condescending as Najimias translates this context as “a place so pretty and warm” (domestication), while Tolliday translates it as “a place pretty and hot,” which results in a more literal version (foreignisation). This gives rise to different connotations for both English and Spanish readers. For ST readers such a description of place could evoke the positive reaction of ‘exoticism’ or the negative implication of ‘uncivilised, undeveloped colonies.’ The latter strategy is more in keeping with the ‘strangeness’ and ‘otherness’ of the ST and provides further evidence of Hortense losing her country and cultural roots, and becoming, as Bhabha would term it, “unhomed” (13-14).

6.2 There are several examples of Queenie manifesting herself as imperialistic through her patronising attitudes towards Hortense. This is achieved through linguistic and visual means, such as when she keeps repeating “cold today” which makes Hortense think that she is being treated like a deaf person. She is made to feel like “an imbecile” – which Najimias also translates as “imbecile” – which carries harsher connotations than merely demonstrating stupidity. Tolliday uses “simpleton or silly” which have softer, more affectionate and almost childlike connotations, probably in keeping with Queenie’s true attitude. Although she is presented as domineering and racist, Queenie, in her own misguided manner, thinks she is being kind and helpful to Hortense. Unlike Najimias’s domestication, by using words which are more acceptable in South America, Tolliday has foreignised this concept. These examples indicate that Hortense’s self-worthiness is progressively being eradicated as she starts to feel inferior and powerless before Queenie. Furthermore, Queenie repeats the misunderstood word to which Najimias adds the word “slowly” in order to emphasise what a TT reader would do. This word choice opposes Tolliday’s translation and thus reveals how Najimias seeks to domesticate the language, so that it corresponds to the norms and expectations of Spanish readers.

6.3 The “cat got your tongue” idiom also reflects Queenie’s attitude as a coloniser. It is often used for shy children and, due to its repetition throughout the extract, it illustrates how Queenie constantly treats Hortense as a child. This is another indication of the characters’ role reversal and the teacher-student relationship re-emerges, this time with the former as the primary school teacher and the latter as her pupil. Although the inner-questioning of Hortense regarding the “cat” is humorous to both English and Spanish readers, this total miscomprehension accurately reflects her inner self-confusion.
Hortense starts to experience such profound feelings of self-doubt that she realises that she is not the “master” of her language or culture. Through this self-recognition, she comprehends that she is socially inferior to Queenie, the white English coloniser.

6.4 The adjectival addition of “good manners” used by Tolliday further reinforces Queenie’s scorn, sarcasm and self-righteousness directed towards the supposedly ‘uncivilised’ non-English. According to Queenie, non-English subjects are perceived as savages from that “place nice and hot” and need to be re-educated in order to comply with colonial culture and its norms. In this version of the translation, Queenie’s view also reinforces the Spanish perception of the exaggerated politeness of the English and demonstrates how South-American Spanish is often more formal and deferential than mainland Spanish, thus foreignising this expression.

6.5 When Queenie says “you are not saying much,” Najimias uses the word “laconic” thus domesticating it. Conversely, Tolliday foreignises it with a more literal translation by preferring “you do not want to speak much.” This corresponds to Queenie’s low-class English and re-iterates the assumption that Hortense would not know what “laconic” meant.

6.6 Finally, Hortense’s sentence containing the modal verb “surely I could teach this woman something was my thought” represents her final act of opposition as she makes another bid for self-assertion. Strangely, Najimias has completely omitted this sentence. Perhaps, he considered it unnecessary to include this phrase as, by this stage, Hortense has practically accepted her role as the suppressed and colonised. In agreement to Tolliday, I consider that its inclusion stresses the tension of this increasing conflict and faithfully renders the emotions experienced by the ST reader to the TT reader.

7. Conclusion
Although “the bulk of translation traffic today goes from English into other languages” (Simon 153), translation scholars of European and non-European languages, such as Gayatri Spivak, who translates Bengali texts and “indeed gives voice and body to the figure of the postcolonial (feminist) translator” (155), are now advocating the translation of English texts into their mother-tongue languages such as Bengali or Hindi. Likewise, they advance the debate over postcolonialism by highlighting those sensibilities which problematise postcolonial writing in translation.

All the words, idioms and expressions analysed in the above sections highlight the problematic coloniser/colonised relationship. Both Najimias and Tolliday employ a mixture of “domestication” and “foreignisation” strategies for this particular excerpt, which convey and translate the coloniser-colonised conflict. Furthermore, Venuti’s
claim of “pure foreignisation” can only be adhered to as a matter of principle. In reality, a middle-way is needed such as Basil Hatim and Ian Mason’s partial mediation or Dora Sales’s “in-between space” whereby it “respect[s] otherness [in a manner suitable] to transmit and communicate to the target culture” (4). Irrespective of ideological stances, in practice, translation has to combine both strategies in order to faithfully render the issues and conflicts set out in the ST to the TT reader without stripping the original text of its “foreignness.”

Tolliday maintains that she used “foreignising” strategies which relied both on her knowledge of South-American language and culture, in order to re-create the feeling of strangeness towards one’s own language and the “unhomely” “third space.” However, the translator resorted to a mixture of strategies as translation “demand[s] maximum reflection from the translator [when] translating novels” (Berman 296). This may include the domestication of the translated terms. Thus, compared to Tolliday’s translation, Najimia’s version relies on the process of domestication and primarily addresses a mainland Spanish TL readership. However, it should be stressed that Najimia, unlike Tolliday, considered external and commercial factors, such as satisfying publishers’ demands, in order to sell the book and meet Spanish readers’ cultural expectations. Such marketing strategies seek to emphasise that non-linguistic aspects often interfere with the translation process in postcolonial contexts.

Even Venuti appears to be moving towards appropriating hybridised translation strategies as he concedes that “since the domestic in developing countries tends to be a hybrid of global and local trends, translation can revise hegemonic values even when it seems to employ the most conservatively domesticating strategies” (Venuti 189). Accordingly, Venuti states that “colonial and postcolonial situations show that translating is best done with a critical resourcefulness attuned to the linguistic and cultural differences that comprise the local scene. Only these differences offer the means of registering the foreignness of foreign cultures in translation” (189). Therefore, the translator has a social duty to balance and respect the interests and perspectives of both the ST author and of the TT reader. Unlike Najimia, Tolliday is able to be more “foreignising” and to more successfully render the concept of “unhomeliness,” trace the gradual identity shifts and to convey Queenie’s colonial and suppressing attitudes towards the colonised. Thus, Tolliday fully exploits the South-American vocabulary and language, which parallels Hortense’s use of Standard Jamaican English. However, both translation strategies allow the coloniser/colonised binary to be rendered in the TT, since the two translators focus on the feelings of “strangeness” and “unhomeliness” which the two main characters experience.
Notwithstanding the above, and despite the linguistic and commercial restrictions placed upon translators, there is room for further research into the translation of postcolonial fiction from English into other languages and vice versa. Such research would not only enhance the quality of postcolonial translation, but also make both translators and their TT readers aware of the harsh inequities which the postcolonial conflict created.

Appendix

Source Text Extract from Small Island by Andrea Levy
(Chapter 22, Hortense, pp. 227-8)

“Excuse me,” I said, “but would you perchance have a basin that I might get a use of?”
“A what?”
“A basin,” I repeated.
“Sorry.”
“A basin to put at the sink."
“A bee – to put what?”
“A basin.”
“I’m sorry but I don’t understand what you’re saying.”
I thought to say it again but then remembered an alternative that would work as well.
“A bucket,” I said.
“A what?” she started again.
It was useless. Was I not speaking English? I had nothing but the potty to point at instead. But she would surely misunderstand that. And who knows where that confusion could take us? So I hushed my mouth.

“It’s perishing today. I bet you wished you never left somewhere nice and hot?,” when I made no reply she looked to me and mouthed the words, “cold today” as if I might have lost my hearing. “When it’s cold,” she went on, “we say it’s “perishing.” Perishing cold.
It’s a saying, “like the cat got your tongue.”

“What cat was she talking of?” Don’t tell me there was a cat that must also live with us in this room . . . The impression I received was that she was talking to me as if I was an imbecile. An educated woman such as I. So I replied, “Have you lost your cat?” And this woman’s eyes rolled as if this was a question I had asked of her several times before. “No” she told me too forcefully. “In English it means that you’re not saying very much.
She turned back to the hand-warming while telling me, “you’ll soon get used to our language.” I told this Englishwoman, “I can speak and understand the English language very well, thank you.”
And she said, “No need to thank me.” “But I had not meant it to sound grateful . . . She sat down on a chair and invited me to come and sit with her. But this was my home, it was for me to tell her when to sit, when to come, when to warm her hands. I could surely teach this woman something, was my thought. Manners! But then I questioned, maybe this is how the English do things when they are in England? So I sat.
Works Cited


Notes

1. The Source Text refers to the original novel written in English and the Target Text refers to the Spanish translated versions.

2. Daniel Najimias Bentollila is a Barcelona-based translator who won the Translation Prize of Spain’s Goethe Foundation 2002 (Premio de Traducción, Fundación Goethe España).

3. Marisol Tolliday is based in the UK and is affiliated with the Institute of Linguists.

4. Original: “. . . en la contradictoria y al tiempo complementaria dialéctica entre exotizar (extranjizar) y familiarizar (domesticar), lo ideal sería hallar el término medio, un espacio a medio camino, respetuoso con las alteridades pero capaz de transmitir y comunicar a la cultura receptora” (Sales Salvador 246).

5. In Spanish, the term is defined as “recipiente ancho y poco profundo usado en especial para lavarse las manos y la cara” (Larousse. *Gran Diccionario Usual de la Lengua Española.* Barcelona: Larousse, 1998).

6. In Spanish it is defined as “recipiente, más ancho en la boca que en la base, para usos domésticos” (Larousse. *Gran Diccionario Usual de la Lengua Española.* Barcelona: Larousse, 1998).

7. My emphasis.


9. Furthermore, this idiom reflects colonial assumptions discussed later in subsection 6.4.


11. My emphasis.

12. My emphasis.
“SALTHOUSE 3”

EMILIE VINCE

MIXED MEDIA, 63 CM x 76 CM
Feminist readings of Richard II continually try to redeem the feminine in this work and, accordingly, Richard himself, who is associated with the feminine. Critics often look to Isabel, Richard’s queen, to re-legitimize her husband and, consequently, validate the importance of the feminine. For instance, Helen Ostrovich sees Isabel as a metaphorical reminder of Richard’s divine right to rule: “a reading of the play that looks at Richard through Isabel establishes Richard as God’s vicar on earth, the true king anointed in God’s name” (24). And, similarly, Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin interpret Isabel as “the mystical warrant for Richard’s legitimacy” (157). However, these attempts to elevate the female must, to a degree, overlook the marginalisation and negation of the feminine in the play. There are only five female characters, two of whom are Isabel’s ladies who collectively speak a total of six lines. Furthermore, Isabel herself only appears in three scenes and speaks a mere one hundred and twenty-eight lines. Thus, the female gender clearly occupies a marginal position in the play. Additionally, the value of the feminine, as a characteristic, is also negated within the text. Shakespeare’s twinning of Richard II with the feminine directly parallels the king’s fall from power. However, while certainly not valourising the feminine, the tone of the play shifts at the end, thus questioning the superiority of the male and the masculine. In this article, I will trace the trajectory of both the masculine and the feminine in Richard II. First, the text hints at Richard’s femininity and foreshadows his downfall; then, it directly connects Richard with the feminine as he falls from power; and, lastly, it interrogates the apparent dominance of the masculine in order to enable, at least partially, the elevation of the female.

As the play opens, Richard is depicted as contrary to the typically male impulse to act, a characterisation which not only separates him from the male but also provides the catalyst for his fall. The scene is “an ‘appeal for treason,’ a kind of trial already archaic in Shakespeare’s time, in which plaintiff and defendant present their cases in . . . person before the King, who instantly dispenses justice” (Maus 943). Bolingbroke accuses Mowbray of treasonous behaviour and, as Mowbray throws down his gage, challenging Bolingbroke to a duel, Richard intervenes to prompt reconciliation through discussion rather than through battle: “Let’s purge this choler without letting blood. / This we
prescribe, though no physician: / Deep malice makes too deep incision; / Forget, forgive, conclude, and be agreed” (1.1.153-6). However, this preference for speech over action stands in direct opposition to the more masculine impulses of Bolingbroke:

O God defend my soul from such deep sin!
Shall I seem crest-fallen in my father’s sight?
Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height
Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue
Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,
Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear
The slavish motive of recanting fear,
And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace
Where shame doth harbor, even in Mowbray’s face. (1.1.187-95)

In this hyperbolic statement, Bolingbroke juxtaposes speech, which Richard both uses and urges, with action, while associating the former with feebleness and dishonor. Bolingbroke’s metonymy creates a visual image of the inferiority of the tongue, speech, when matched with the violent and powerful efforts of the teeth, action. In fact, he depicts the teeth as actually conquering the dishonorable impulses of the tongue, an image which foreshadows Bolingbroke’s own victory over Richard. During the battle between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, this symbolic use of teeth and tongue imagery becomes central when Richard prevents Bolingbroke’s masculine drive for action by drawing upon the power of words to banish the two men (1.3), a decision which leads to Bolingbroke’s eventual retaliation and consequent victory. Thus, from the start, Richard and Bolingbroke emerge as representing opposing impulses. While Richard is associated with the feminine and inferior speech, Bolingbroke represents masculine and dominant action.

Furthermore, as Shakespeare’s male characters, specifically Bolingbroke, increasingly align themselves with fellow males, Richard, in contrast, moves closer to his own feminisation by separating himself from his masculine ties. In John of Gaunt’s attack upon Richard, he specifically highlights Richard’s division from the legitimising line of male succession: “O, had thy grandsire with a prophet’s eye / Seen how his son’s son should destroy his sons, / From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame, / Deposing thee before thou wert possessed” (2.1.104-7). In contrast, after John of Gaunt’s death, Bolingbroke fulfills this process of succession, becoming a double for his father in the process: “Well, lord the Duke of Lancaster is dead. / And living too, for now his son is Duke” (2.1.225-6). Thus, Richard moves further away from an association with the masculine, a shift which mirrors his decreasing right to the throne, while Bolingbroke’s masculinity and legitimacy continue to rise. As Howard and Rackin elucidate, “the binary opposition personalised in the conflict between [Bolingbroke] and
Richard is implicated in an early-modern ideology of ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ (142). Hence, the play stages not only a battle for dominance between two men, but also between the masculine and the feminine. Moreover, the decreasing power of the feminised king reveals the emerging superiority of masculine principles.

In the early stages of the play Richard is paired with a man, Bolingbroke. However, it is notably Isabel who makes this connection, and the pairing proves to be weakening rather than empowering to Richard. Jeanie Grant Moore writes about Isabel’s speech in Act 2 Scene 2:

> if Isabel’s child of sorrow is Bolingbroke, it follows that Richard’s must be his father – a fitting image since Bolingbroke will become Richard’s “heir” when he replaces Richard as king. Richard as the progenitor of Bolingbroke also suggests that from the nothingness of his imagined fears, Richard has created his own destruction in the form of Bolingbroke. The queen’s childbirth metaphor, from nothingness to the sorrow of Bolingbroke, replicates the concept of Richard as the author of his own fall from power. (23)

Moore sees Isabel as a reflection of Richard, providing “a visual medium through which we gain a new view of Richard’s experience,” a view which legitimises Richard (19). This reading concurs with the assertions of Helen Ostrovich, and of Howard and Rackin. However, I would argue that the imagery which Isabel uses in fact undermines her husband’s legitimacy. To begin with, Isabel, as a woman, does not take part in legitimising the male realm of the play. Her role in the line of succession can only be as a mother to one of these male heirs, which she takes on in her speech: “I, a gasping new-delivered mother” (2.2.65). However, fitting her restrictive gender role, the comparison she makes does not legitimise Richard; Bolingbroke becomes her “sorrow’s dismal heir” (2.2.63). Thus, as Moore points out, Bolingbroke emerges as the victor over Richard, usurping his throne. Isabel’s metaphorical connection of Richard and Bolingbroke does not have an empowering effect on Richard, but rather further foreshadows his impending feminisation and downfall.

As Moore illuminates, Richard becomes increasingly like the Queen; however, instead of proving a means of legitimising Richard, this feminisation instead mirrors and, in part, explains his downfall. Act 3 Scene 2 marks Richard’s first appearance after the power within the play has significantly shifted in favour of Bolingbroke. And, notably, it is in this scene that Richard completes the association of himself with the feminine: “As a long-parted mother with her child / Plays fondly with her tears, and smiles in meeting, / So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee my earth” (3.2.8-10). Richard views himself in the distinctly feminine role of mother. Thus, he becomes more like the Queen, who is by nature afforded this role. However, both Isabel’s and Richard’s metaphors prove
disempowering for the King. It is clearly Richard’s feminisation which provides the ultimate reason for his downfall. His complete personal association with the female in this scene marks the point at which he relinquishes his power as king.

The association between Richard and his Queen is furthered over the course of the play and, accordingly, mirrors his unfitness to rule. Richard’s tears and weeping in his ‘mother speech’ reoccur as he verbally resigns his right to rule to Bolingbroke:

We’ll make foul weather with despised tears,  
Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn,  
And make a dearth in this revolting land  
Or shall we play the wantons with our woes,  
And make some pretty match with shedding tears;  
As thus to drop them still upon one place  
Till they have fretted us a pair of graves  
Within the art, and therein laid? (3.3.160-8)

Richard still tries to imagine that he retains some form of power, personifying his tears and imbuing them with the ability to create famine, games, and graves. However, the latter proves the only function of these womanly tears. Lisa Jardine writes about the connection between heroism, tears, and gender: “What is disturbing about the recumbent, weeping woman as female hero is not her qualities as such, but the fact that precisely those qualities negate the possibility for heroism in the male . . . In the male hero, weeping and swooning are the signs of vulnerability, of being ‘all too human’ . . . The female hero, on the other hand, is defined by that weakness, by her being other than manly” (author’s emphasis, 193). Thus, Richard’s weeping prevents the possibility of his ever regaining the power which he imagines he might still retain. The only function his tears serve is to reflect his fall from power. Feminised, he becomes like his “weeping queen,” powerless in the political world of the play.

Richard’s feminisation and the political redundancy in which it results are also reflected in his speech. The language which he employs both at his verbal surrender to Bolingbroke and at the official deposition feature heavily repetitive lists of renunciation, thus revealing his increasingly feminine role in the play. In his verbal surrender, he states:

I’ll give my jewels for a set of beads,  
My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,  
My gay apparel for an almsman’s gown,  
My figured goblets for a dish of wood,  
My scepter for a palmer’s walking staff,  
My subjects for a pair of carved saints,  
And my large kingdom for a little grave. (3.3.146-52)

And, at his deposition, he tearfully admits defeat:
With mine own tears I wash away my balm,  
With mine own hands I give away my crown,  
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,  
With mine own breath release all duteous oaths. (4.1.197-200)

Richard is always verbose; in fact, his control of language is his most admirable quality in the play. But, this characteristic also reflects his weakening inclination toward speech instead of action. And, as they do earlier in the play, his words here serve to further feminise and disempower him. While perhaps signifying an attempt to retain some agency, the unnecessary repetition of his resignation in these speeches highlights Richard’s feminine qualities and his downfall. The repetition emphasises the fact that he is abdicating, again turning to speech instead of action, and giving up his crown instead of fighting Bolingbroke. Furthermore, these lists are redundant, detailing his resignation in far more words than necessary, thus mirroring Richard’s own political redundancy. He no longer holds the fundamental political role of king. This sense of resignation is compounded by his continual use of the singular, “my” and “mine.” The use of anaphora emphatically signals Richard’s now ‘singular’ status. Richard is no longer king and, therefore, loses the plural, ‘we’ and ‘our,’ which signifies the king’s two bodies. Thus, Richard’s words and the structure of his speech reveal the same meaning: he has completely lost power; he is reduced to the singular.

At this point, Bolingbroke has officially become King Henry IV; however, this power shift also parallels a further change in the play’s portrayal of the masculine and feminine. The ways in which characters are paired with their male and female counterparts proves integral to their positions of power and legitimacy within the world of the play. Richard continually turns away from masculine alliances, mirroring his fall from power and his feminisation. Thus, unsurprisingly, he concedes the only masculine pairing made for him in the text, that which Isabel made between himself and Bolingbroke, as he verbally renounces his kingship: “Cousin, I am too young to be your father, / Though you are old enough to be my heir” (3.4.202-3). However, whilst Bolingbroke characteristically aligns himself with masculine forces, in this instance, as heir to the throne, he is paired with Richard. York, Richard’s uncle, fosters the alliance between the old and new king, “Richard, who with willing soul / Adopts thee heir, and his high sceptre yields / To the possession of thy royal hand. / Ascend his throne, descending now from him, / And long live Henry, of that name the fourth!” (4.1.99-103), a pairing which Bolingbroke unhesitatingly accepts, “In God’s name I’ll ascend the regal throne” (4.1.104). However, for the first time in the text, Bolingbroke is rebuked for the masculine impulses which both reflect his pursuit of the throne and this pairing
with Richard. Bishop Carlisle immediately chastises the new King Henry, painting his masculine impulses as divisive and delegitimising:

My lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford’s king;
And, if you crown him let me prophesy
The blood of English shall manure the ground,
And future ages groan for this foul act.
Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound.
Disorder, horror, fear, and mutiny
Shall here inhabit. (4.1.125-34)

The masculine impulse to act which has been portrayed as both positive and legitimising over the course of the play here becomes as detrimental to male succession and power as Richard’s feminine qualities have continually been shown to be. The repetition and alliteration of the parallel between Bishop’s kin and kind emphasises the divisive effects of King Henry’s masculine impulses. While Richard’s feminisation weakens him, it also highlights his appreciation for family and community, through his association with the mother-figure, and his religious humility in both 3.3 and 4.1. King Henry’s masculine impulses markedly contrast these characteristics. Thus, for the first time, the superiority of the male is called into question.

Furthermore, as King Henry is first rebuked for his masculine impulses and denied legitimacy through masculine pairings, Richard receives his first positive, legitimising male connection, albeit distinct from previous pairings between males of the English royalty which have occurred in the play. Richard, instead, becomes a double for Christ: “So Judas did to Christ. But He in twelve / Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none” (4.1.161-2). The Bishop Carlisle’s reminder of Richard’s divine right to rule destabilises the superiority of King Henry’s masculine impulses which use action to assert dominance. Richard readily takes up this stance, drawing a parallel between himself and Christ which finally legitimises his right to the throne.

This parallel between Richard and Christ also serves to remove the stigma associated with his feminine impulses, which constitute the main barrier between himself and the Crown. Richard again draws a connection between himself and Jesus, asserting his right to rule and reproaching his disloyal subjects, “Though some of you, with Pilate, wash your hands, / Showing outward pity, yet you Pilates / Have here delivered me to my sour cross, / And water cannot wash away your sin” (4.1.229-32). He continues this reprimand and insists upon his legitimacy whilst simultaneously displaying the very feminine impulses which led to his fall, “Mine eyes are full of tears; I cannot see. / And
yet salt water blinds them not so much / But they can see a sort of traitors here” (4.1.234-6). His feminine crying no longer seems to inhibit Richard’s right to rule. Instead, the Christ parallel allows for this to happen. For, as Richard wept over his deposition, so, in great sorrow for Lazarus’s death, “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). Thus, ironically, King Henry’s masculine overthrow of Richard is what finally legitimates Richard as king, making his feminine impulses acceptable.

Richard’s downfall completes the process of his feminisation, the two being intricately linked. However, in the end, instead of his feminine impulses validating his overthrow, his feminisation and deposition work together to render his story a tragedy. In his final meeting with Isabel, the parallels between Richard and his Queen come to completion: “So two together weeping make one woe” (5.1.86). In the feminine action of weeping, Richard and Isabel essentially become one person. Notably then, Isabel represents the person through whom Richard will be remembered as a legitimate king:

Tell thou the lamentable fall of me,  
And send the hearers weeping to their beds;  
For why the senseless brands will sympathize  
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue,  
And in compassion weep the fire out;  
And some will mourn in ashes, some coal black,  
For the deposing of a rightful king. (5.1.44-50)

His deposition cements Richard in the feminine position, “I must nothing be” (4.1.191). His tears and full identification with Isabel lament the tragedy of a king unrightfully deposed. Weeping becomes an integral part in the remembrance of Richard’s story. Richard weeps, Isabel weeps, and the hearers of his story too will be sent “weeping to their beds” (5.1.45). Thus, while the feminine and royal legitimacy prove opposing forces during his rule, in his downfall, the feminine emerges as his saving quality, rescuing his reputation.

In the end, it is not so much the feminine which is valorised, but the superiority of the masculine which is questioned, thus implying the vital need to balance the two. Richard’s predominately feminine rule proves unsatisfactory, as his impulses both instigate and signify his downfall. Yet, though his feminisation is paired with his fall from power, his feminine qualities, to an extent, redeem him in the end. The abuse of power associated with the masculine impulses of Henry IV triggers this partial redemption. Though incapable of successfully ruling because of the predominance of his feminine qualities, Richard is portrayed as a Christ-like tragic figure because of the active masculine world’s disregard for both feminine characteristics and religious concerns. Thus, Henry IV’s predominately masculine approach to kingship ultimately
proves to be a flaw. From this questioning of Henry IV’s masculine rule and the partial redemption of Richard’s feminine impulses, a third option emerges. Henry IV calls his son a “young wanton and effeminate boy” (5.3.10). The key word in this description is “effeminate.” For Henry V, who becomes a great king whose reign is marked by his military prowess and masculine drive to action, the irony of being termed “effeminate” implies that the ideal leader should possess both masculine and feminine qualities.

This implication assumes further significance given the play’s historical situation in the reign of Elizabeth I. Both positive and negative associations can be made between Shakespeare’s own monarch and her predecessor, Richard. In exploring the possible link between Shakespeare’s Richard II and the Essex Conspiracy, which undoubtedly staged a version of the play on the eve of its plot, Evelyn May Albright emphasises the link between Elizabeth and Richard: “was the general analogy between Richard II and Elizabeth sufficiently obvious to justify its use in a play? Apparently it was. Elizabeth recognised herself in Richard II, and so did several of her counselors and statesmen” (690). And, clearly, because of the use of Richard II in the Essex Conspiracy, the comparison was not seen as beneficial for Elizabeth:

the schematic oppositions between an idealized masculine past and a degraded effeminate present give way to expose the cultural contradictions that lay at the heart of Elizabethan nostalgia for the medieval past. In Richard’s characterization – as in the case of Elizabeth herself – the polluting forces of effeminate modernity are embodied in the same person who represents the patrilineal royal authority they threaten to subvert. (Howard and Rackin, 147)

However, I would argue that Shakespeare’s telling of the story does prove beneficial for the Queen. Jardine argues that Elizabethan portrayals of women were detrimental to feminist purposes:

It led to their reaching back into the literary past in search of representation which could redeem and enhance the majesty of the sovereign, in spite of her femaleness. And when I refer to ‘the Elizabethans’, I include Elizabeth herself amongst them. In playing extremely adeptly the game of statecraft she did so according to the patriarchal rules. And that meant contriving, and conniving in the ‘double bind’ evaluations of her own actions. (169)

Yet, it is this combination of the feminine and the masculine, the undeniable presence of femaleness in a person who successfully functions within these patriarchal rules, that presents a positive feminist message.

In a way, Richard and Elizabeth can be seen as the final pairing in the play. Juliet Dusinberre posits that “Shakespeare’s plays, all of them and not just the comedies, reveal to audiences multiple instances of power structures under pressure, which can be
paralleled in Elizabethan and Jacobean society, politics and culture” (xlv). This suggestion particularly resonates with Richard II, as Howard and Rackin highlight:

the gendered opposition between Richard and Bolingbroke takes much of its force from the predicament of the English aristocracy at the time the play was produced . . . The anxiety was heightened during Elizabeth’s reign by the presence of the female monarch and by the queen’s transformation of the medieval culture of aristocratic honor from martial service to courtly display. (143)

Thus, the changing status of women and particularly Elizabeth’s presence on the throne effects the representation of the masculine and the feminine in Shakespeare’s plays:

revision of traditional thinking about women, together with the actual activities of women in society, not least those of Elizabeth herself in the manipulation of gender roles, created a ferment of new questions which animated the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, and deserves the name feminist. (Dusinberre, xliv)

Ultimately, both a completely feminine reign, presented by Richard, and a completely masculine reign, presented by Henry IV, prove unsatisfactory in Richard II. The text thus suggests a combination of the masculine and the feminine as a solution, a pattern which Marilyn French finds throughout Shakespeare’s canon: “his work represents a lifelong effort to harmonize moral qualities he did associate with the two genders, and to synthesize opposing or seemingly opposed states and qualities” (16-17). And, which can perhaps best be embodied by the queen herself: “[Elizabeth’s] strength as an icon comes from an extraordinary marriage of her sense of special appointment – of being married to England and anointed by God – with her equal awareness of her relation to ordinary womanhood: her smock, her pastoral imagery, her weak body with the mind and heart of a man” (Dusinberre, xxiv). Jardine notes how portrayals of Elizabeth reflected this combination of the male and the female in one figure:

In the later years of Queen Elizabeth’s reign the phoenix became her emblem. It allowed England to celebrate her perpetual virginity, and thus her refusal to reproduce, whilst affirming in compliment to the old queen a confidence that at her death a suitable heir would miraculously emerge from the flames of her funeral pyre . . . Sex and gender attributes have been transposed. Because the phoenix, with all its affirmative connotations, has become female, by Royal Command, the turtle, with all its disturbing passive dependency has become male. (195)

Thus, Elizabeth represents the type of ruler propounded within Richard II, one which combines the gentleness of femininity, embodied by a kind of motherhood and religious humility, and the active impulses of masculinity.
Works Cited


“MIKLAGARD”

MICHAEL RUSH

DIGITAL, 55 CM x 35.32 CM
ESCAPING THE NEED FOR A VISUAL RECORD:  
THE RESTORATION OF NARRATIVE IN PAT BARKER’S DOUBLE VISION AND JON McGREGOR’S IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF REMARKABLE THINGS  

HOLLY PRESCOTT

This article takes issue with Jean-François Lyotard’s now-canonical postmodern thesis that refutable and verifiable ‘scientific’ knowledge structures have come to dominate and force into subordination more multiplicitous narrative forms of knowledge (8). By closely reading Pat Barker’s Double Vision (2002) and Jon McGregor’s If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things (2002) in the context of Lyotard’s conceptualisation, this article investigates some of the ways in which both authors structure their fictions around a tension between scientific and narrative knowledge structures. More specifically, the essay examines the crucial role given to the figure of the photographer in negotiating and setting up such a tension. Ultimately, the article argues that fundamental to these novels by Barker and McGregor is an attempt to restore knowledge – both within the time-space of the text and beyond – to the social, narrative realm for which Lyotard, and his postmodern sensibility, mourns.

Narrative has a recent history of fraught relationships with literary, cultural and philosophical theory. Postmodern sensibility has been characterised as a scepticism towards “master or meta-narratives” (Hutcheon 6), while feminist and queer-theory scholarships have questioned the degree to which existing cultural narratives might serve as epistemological frameworks in constructing and understanding culturally intelligible human subjects. As Judith Butler argues, human lives appear to emerge through narrative structures which are increasingly “reducible to one story,” leaving those who fail to fit into such legitimised structures as both “unthinkable” and “unrepresentable” (18). Notions of narrative have therefore come to sit uncomfortably with those of truth, inclusiveness and the power of explanation.

However, close readings of Pat Barker’s novel Double Vision and Jon McGregor’s debut If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things reveal that a reaffirmation of the need for narrative is integral to the dynamic of both novels. Through a close engagement with the postmodern tension between narrative and scientific forms of knowledge, identified by Jean-François Lyotard in his work The Postmodern Condition (1979), this discussion seeks to investigate how, by taking narratives as both their structure and their subject matter, Barker and McGregor advocate the value of narrative as a cultural means of both
constructing and transmitting knowledge. Furthermore, the discussion will explore the ways in which both writers resort to extreme narrative measures – even to death – in order to restore the eminence of story-telling in the human construction and communication of knowledge.

To clarify therefore, Lyotard essentially characterises the postmodern logic as one increasingly concerned with the question of what should and what should not be allowed to constitute knowledge. According to Lyotard, his ‘working hypothesis’ in *The Postmodern Condition* is “that the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the postindustrial age and cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age” (4). Lyotard goes on to portray this postmodern alteration in knowledge structures as one in which narrative knowledge and the transmission of knowledge through gaining competency in story-telling have become subordinate to what he describes as “scientific knowledge” (8). This essentially means that due to the predominance of cybernetics and computer studies, approved “knowledge” has become increasingly synonymous with “truth,” to the point that our conceptualisation of knowledge risks being reduced to a “set of statements which, to the exclusion of all other statements, denote or describe objects and may be declared true or false” (18). In other words, knowledge statements and empirical truths become increasingly conflated. Consequently, the danger arises of neglecting the fact that knowledge “is not only a set of denotative statements, far from it,” but rather “goes beyond the simple determination and application of the criterion of truth,” to encompass far more qualitative notions such as “the beauty of a sound or color” which only narrative transmission can capture (18). According to scientific structures of knowledge, however, the only “truths” are those deemed “to be worth discussion in a sequence of argumentation and refutation” (24). As a result, postmodern, scientific logic demonstrates a scepticism towards the ability of narrative statements to enter the realm of endorsed “knowledge,” since narratives are “never subject to argumentation or proof” (27), and thus fail to fulfill science’s constructed criteria of “speak[ing] the truth about the referent” (23). Consequently, Lyotard explains, we are left “mourning the fact that knowledge is no longer principally narrative” (26).

The debate as to whether the relevance of Lyotard’s thought to *Double Vision* and *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* allows these works to be considered as postmodern is outside the scope of this article. Instead, this essay aims to emphasise the fact that, like Lyotard, both Barker and McGregor write back from worlds in which narrative accounts and empirical attempts to capture or fix meaning and truth are constantly
brought into tension. In the case of the two novels, this tension crucially surrounds the figure of the photographer.

In the development of his argument, Lyotard outlines that for a knowledge statement to be considered a “truth” and therefore viewed as legitimate by scientific logic, the objects to which the knowledge statement refers “must be available for repeated access” (18). In other words, knowledge can only be formulated and transmitted if the known-about object is freely available for observation and re-observation. This is crucial since both Barker’s and McGregor’s novels work through a tension which attempts to create and circulate knowledge about events and situations for which there exists a visual record and which, therefore, are not so freely open to such repeated empirical access and re-observation. Within this dynamic, photography becomes a vital body of evidence that can be consulted repeatedly, thus allowing the object or event captured in a photograph to be observed, re-observed and finally known through assimilation into the scientific knowledge structures which Lyotard describes. However, both *Double Vision* and *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* dedicate a large part of their narrative to unfortunate events – respectively, a violent robbery and a road traffic accident – of which, most pertinently, there exists no visual record. No concrete, pictorial evidence is available for the repeated access which Lyotard defines as crucial to the formation of a scientifically verifiable ‘truth’ about an object, place or event. Subsequently, both Barker and McGregor’s texts explore the ways in which the lack of concrete, photographic evidence of events can actually encourage knowledge of these events to be restored to a “principally narrative” form identified by Lyotard (26). The rest of this discussion will therefore analyse how such a lack of visual evidence allows for the resurrection of narrative knowledge, thus encouraging the local communities of each novel to construct narrative accounts of what ‘might’ have happened during the robbery or in the accident, respectively. However, in both novels, a sacrifice is made so that such narrative knowledge may retain its place above a ‘scientific’ fixing of meanings through images: namely, the death of the photographer.

Jean Baudrillard draws attention to the “symbolic murder” of the photographer as a crucial “part of the photographic act” (143). For Baudrillard, the poignancy of photography – that which Barthes describes as its *punctum* (25) – works on the fact that the object photographed “once was,” but “no longer is” (143). For this poignancy to take effect, however, the photographer himself must also be made to “disappear;” he was once there to capture the object, but now he is gone, making the moment of the photo “irreversible” (140). However, Baudrillard’s analysis only describes the “symbolic” necessity of the death of the photographer within the images produced. What
both Barker and McGregor pay attention to is the way in which the literal, physical death of the photographer might also be seen as a symbolic act: a metaphor for the loss of the “accompanying image,” without which “no experience is valid” (Barker 293). Subsequently, as both novels show, an event without a visual record to be observed and re-observed is incompatible with the verifiable knowledge structures which Lyotard defines as scientific, and lends itself instead to the more multiplicitous forms of storytelling and narrative knowledge.

Throughout Double Vision are scattered instances in which past events are focalised through the novel’s principal protagonist, ex-war reporter Stephen Sharkey. During Stephen’s postings in a variety of war-torn destinations, the reader learns that his photographer friend Ben has been on hand to provide lasting, verifiable evidence of the often harrowing events which the pair have experienced together. “We can’t escape from the need for a visual record” Ben confirms (101), and be it the conflicts in Bosnia and Afghanistan, or the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Ben is there to establish this record. However, Ben’s death in Afghanistan means that when a more local crime occurs in which Stephen’s brother’s home is burgled and babysitter Justine is violently attacked, there is no photographer to capture evidence of the scene. Running to Justine’s aid, Stephen sees “flashbulbs exploding in his head” (250), but Ben is no longer there to capture Justine’s assault on film, as he had been to fix the figures and events that Stephen re-experiences through Ben’s photographic archive, including the body of a young rape victim on a Sarajevo stairwell (52) or the execution of a man on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border (123). As a result, local knowledge of Justine’s attack becomes principally formulated through everyday narrative accounts. As Richard Johnson et al. argue, knowledge of the past and present is, to some degree, produced by the public in their quotidian lives. “Such knowledge,” they argue, “may circulate, usually without amplification, in everyday talk and in personal comparisons and narratives” (210), and it is in this manner that Justine’s attack becomes constructed as part of a body of narrative knowledge within the community.

“Did you hear about the burglary? . . . Everybody keeps asking if she was raped,” says Kate Frobisher to fellow villager Angela, a rumour which Angela suggests is untrue, continuing: “That’s what Alec thought. When they got to the hospital, they’d taken all her clothes away, but apparently they were just looking for hairs on her sweater – things like that” (283). According to Lyotard, the postmodern, scientific logic which has led to the demise of narrative as the principle structure of knowledge maintains that in order for a statement to be granted status as accepted knowledge, the speaker should both “be able to provide proof of what he says,” and “refute any opposing or contradictory
statements concerning the same referent” (23). In the absence of photographic evidence, Angela cannot do this so easily in the case of the attack upon Justine, and so scientific knowledge proves an insufficient structure for the assimilation of the assault. Instead, Angela combines information gathered from Justine’s own words, her father Alec’s musings and explanations offered by medical staff in order to offer Kate a highly dialogic, narrative formulation of Justine’s attack. As John Kirk states, and as it is evident here, Barker’s narratives tend to strongly “refuse the pitfalls of monologism” (613). Hence, only by conversing with the voices of others and working through that which people have heard, do members of the community reach an understanding of what happened to Justine. The death of the photographer therefore offers Barker the opportunity to restore narrative as the principal medium through which the body of knowledge belonging to the community is created and transmitted. Lacking a visual record of events which can be repeatedly referred to in order to refute certain stories or explanations (as Lyotard stresses, is crucial in the formulation of scientific knowledge statements), Justine’s neighbours are therefore left with a need to talk about and listen to stories of her assault. Thus, this process of configuring knowledge restores part of the ‘social bond’ of “knowing how to listen” and “knowing how to speak,” a process Lyotard views as integral to narrative knowledge (21). According to Lyotard, it is through the transmission of such narrative knowledge statements that “the community’s relationship to itself and its environment is played out” (21).

Similarly, just as the living Ben acts as a crucial supplier of “visual records” in Double Vision, so the nervous “young man at number eighteen” (27) from McGregor’s novel is persistently caught photographing his neighbours in an attempt to construct and fix some verifiable knowledge of these people about whom he knows so little, despite wanting to “know them all” (216). Significantly, however, one of the few times we see the young man without his camera is during his failed attempt to intervene as an oncoming car hits little Shahid Nawaz, a young twin who lives on the anonymous urban street where the narrative unfolds (253). The shy young man drops his camera and runs to try to save Shahid, only to die mysteriously moments after trying to help the young boy. Consequently, this leaves no opportunity for him to add Shahid’s accident to his urban archive. As a result, the novel’s omniscient narrator declares: “There’s no pause or rewind, there is no image enhancement, no recording of the moment beyond a thick streak of black rubber . . . which itself will soon fade . . . the moment will never be again, the moment is gone” (270).

Just as Ben was unable to capture pictorial evidence of Justine’s attack, and thus cannot leave behind that re-observable evidence of the event which, for Lyotard, marks
the formation of scientific knowledge statements, neither can the man from number eighteen re-observe Shahid’s collision. As in Barker’s text, McGregor uses this undocumented event as an opportunity to restore knowledge to its traditional, narrative mode. Once again, absence of a visual record encourages local residents to regain participation in the cycles of speaking, listening and recounting through which narrative knowledge legitimises itself (Lyotard 21). The omniscient narrator speculates over “the narratives people will tell of this day,” describing how they will use the noise of car brakes to open their accounts, which they will subsequently pass on “to friends, in letters, in diaries, to people in pubs if the conversation drifts that way” (McGregor 255). McGregor’s omniscient narrator illustrates that for the news correspondent and the police however, unlike the residents of the street, the formulation of knowledge surrounding the accident relies upon confirmation or concrete evidence from the crash site. “On CNN,” says the narrator, “the correspondent is saying no Christina . . . I can confirm the vehicle is still moving and I will keep you posted.” Here, the language of “confirmation” emphasises precisely the notions of quantitative, verifiable and observable evidence which, for Lyotard, shapes the formulation of scientific knowledge statements (McGregor 254). Furthermore, the narrator painstakingly describes the braking process as the driver of the car attempts to stop, all the while with “the child looking at him and everyone looking at him and everyone frozen in the endlessness of Stopping Time” (254). As the narrator points out, however, the police’s exclusive processes of sorting and quantifying information mean that “these things will not be remarked upon in weighty investigative reports” (254). Accounts of the accident given by the mainstream media and the police therefore run precisely the same risk that scientific knowledge does in Lyotard’s thesis: namely, the conflation of knowledge statements with observable and quantifiable scientific “truths” (Lyotard 24).

The residents’ narratives on the other hand are rather characterised by deviation and difference. They will “disagree” as to why Shahid failed to move from in front of the car (251) and will describe the noise of the collision through a rich variety of expressions. For some, their knowledge and narrative of the event will begin with their looking “out of the window,” whilst for others it might start as they “looked up from my newspaper or stopped walking and turned around” (255). All three perspectives emphasise both a literal and narrative diversity of viewpoint. The residents will talk so much and pass on their narratives of the accident so often that they will “run out of ways to express the sound, when they’ve tried talking about nails on backboards and screaming fireworks” (255). Just as Vincent B. Leitch describes of Lyotard, so McGregor “preaches an appreciation and respect for diversity, for local differences”
(Leitch 1610), and for the way in which narrative knowledge, like an “oral history . . .
gives] back to the people in their own words” the power and authority to create their
own knowledge of the world around them (Johnson et al. 223). Rather than
concentrating on the unreliability or questionable validity of their words, McGregor
instead suggests that the residents have just as much right to construct their own
knowledge of the event as do journalists and police officers, because, in terms of
narrative knowledge, “the narrator’s only claim to competence for telling the story is the
fact that he has heard it himself” (Lyotard 20). Furthermore, by constructing their
alternative knowledges of the accident, the residents might help to heal their fractured
social bonds and restore the values of speaking and listening to the heart of their
community.

To this extent, the death of the photographer figures as a crucial narrative device
for both writers. The consequent lack of visual evidence encourages the residents of
Barker’s north-east village and McGregor’s anonymous city street back into networks of
communication, restoring narrative knowledge above that of science, proof and the
refutation of contradictory statements. Yet, it is not only the fictional characters of each
novel that are coaxed back into the production and transmission of narrative knowledge.
Indeed, an indeterminacy builds up into the conclusions of both novels which also
encourages readers to construct and share their own narrative accounts as to ‘what
happened’ to both Justine and the man at number eighteen.

In *Double Vision*, the emergency services conclude that Justine was not in fact
raped during the burglary. Right through to the end of the novel however, sharing a bed
with her continues to prompt Stephen Sharkey into flashbacks of the raped and
murdered Bosnian girl photographed by Ben during their tour of Sarajevo. But a few
pages from the end, “lying side by side” with Justine, “he saw the girl in the stairwell in
Sarajevo” (302). Even with Stephen’s attempt to convince himself that his intimacy with
Justine might help “banish” such flashbacks, the fact that the penultimate chapter
culminates in a juxtaposition of the two girls reignites some of the equivocation as to
whether or not Justine suffered a sexual assault. As a result, the end of *Double Vision*
stimulates readers to construct their own narrative accounts of what they believed
‘happened’ to Justine. Furthermore, they might share and discuss these formulated
accounts with other readers, thus creating a body of narrative knowledge about the novel
through the dynamic of “‘knowing how to hear’” and “‘knowing how to speak’”
(Lyotard 21).

The conclusion of *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* creates a similar effect
through the ambiguous portrayal of the young man from number eighteen’s death. His
experience of a “scorching pain through his left arm” (272) might suggest a heart-attack provoked either by the exertion of his attempt to save Shahid, or perhaps a previously undetected heart condition exaggerated by the stress of the situation. On the other hand, the elusive description of his death as “an interruption in the way of things” (273) seems more akin with magic realism than medical explanation, suggesting that in death, the young man metaphysically takes the place of the injured child. As in Double Vision then, the reader is encouraged to go on producing narrative knowledge of what might have happened even after the novel’s narrative ends. Readers are thus left to construct and share their versions of ‘what happened.’ Since neither text offers a firm conclusion for what exactly was done to Justine or how the man at number eighteen’s death came about, there is no fixed body of evidence to which the reader can return and re-read in order to produce the kind of incontrovertible knowledge statements which scientific knowledge structures require (see Lyotard 18). Consequently, these ambiguous fictional conclusions once more demonstrate both writers’ championing of narrative over scientific knowledge, emphasising that readers’ knowledge of an event should not solely lie in “[refuting] any opposing or contradictory” accounts (Lyotard 23), but must also be constructed by their role as both listeners and as narrators in their own right, transforming “the ‘I have heard’” into “the ‘you will hear’” (22).

As a result, Lyotard’s distinction between a prioritised, scientific mode of knowledge and neglected narrative knowledge prove useful critical tools in examining McGregor and Barker’s texts. Applying Lyotard’s framework reveals the ways in which both authors envision the nurturing of narrative knowledge as a possible remedy for the reticence which members of contemporary British societies often display in conversing with neighbours and other community peers. Both novels also challenge such societies’ excessive investment in the image of the word. In using Lyotard’s theoretical apparatus, however, this discussion regards both Double Vision and If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things as celebrating narrative as a multiplicitous mode of knowledge which transmits qualitative as well as quantitative aspects of experience. In other words, narrative appears to be multitudinous and inclusive in opposition to the rigidity and exclusivity of scientific knowledge. To conclude therefore, one must return to the sceptics of narrative mentioned at the outset of this discussion, in order to deflect a possible counter-argument which might be raised against such a portrayal.

Discussing Lyotard’s later work Discourse, Figure (1985), Andrew Gibson notes Lyotard’s implication that narrative, this time in the sense of literary form, might actually be exclusive rather than inclusive in its structure. By shepherding events into “a coherent or complete system” (188), narrative accounts leave no room for “the
unrepresentable, indiscernible, inarticulable” (187). Judith Butler makes a similar claim by arguing that those who fail to occupy the legitimate subject positions offered by narrative formulations are left in “nonplaces,” outside the realm of the “intelligible and speakable” (18). However, the exploration of Barker's and McGregor's texts presented here tends towards a very different conclusion, combating such scepticism from the perspective of postmodern narrative and queer theories. Both novels encourage the reader to continue constructing narrative knowledge about ‘what exactly happened’ to certain characters long after the texts themselves reach their conclusion. Nonetheless, what remains to be emphasised is the way in which these extra-diegetic narratives weaved by readers are intensely shaped by exactly that which Gibson and Butler describe as the apparently “inarticulable” or the “unspeakable.” In *Double Vision*, the concluding ambiguity is created by insistent evocations of rape, a violation which does not fit the conventional, heterosexual romance narrative, and which, for Justine’s father, Alec, remains “unspeakable:” “He couldn’t say the word,” discloses Angela (283). Similarly, the auspicious death of the urban archivist in *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*, which leaves the reader to complete their own narrative body of knowledge as to ‘what happened’ in the novel, also steps into the realm of the inarticulable. With strong suggestions of a swapping of places between the young man and the dying twin, such an uncanny, “remarkable” death (273) might appear to defy containment by the narrative structures through which fellow residents will come to relate the more culturally intelligible mishap of little Shahid Nawaz.

However, almost in defiance of such counter-arguments as to the exclusivity of narrative structures, Justine’s maybe-rape and the indeterminate death of the man at number eighteen remain, I would argue, the principal ‘talking points’ which endure long after the close of the two novels. Both Barker and McGregor therefore, like Lyotard, demonstrate that narrative knowledge is not to be equated with narrative as a heuristic for understanding which, as Gibson and Butler suggest, can be restrictive and exclusive. In outlining the contrasts which Lyotard draws between scientific and narrative knowledge, Robert C. Holub explains that, “[w]hereas narrative knowledge presupposed a shared social bond linking narrator and audience, scientific knowledge presumes no such bond,” as well as the fact that “[i]n scientific knowledge, competence is restricted to the sender of the message alone; in narrative knowledge, sender, receiver and referent all have competence” (93). In light of these criteria therefore, the endings of both *Double Vision* and *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things* further point to the central tenet of this article: namely, that it is specifically the value of narrative knowledge, as defined in opposition to scientific knowledge, which both authors advocate. With their suggestive
endings inevitably provoking questioning and discussion amongst readers, both texts thus overtly emphasise the “shared bond” between speaker and “audience” which Holub identifies as characteristic of narrative knowledge. Furthermore, the fact that the conclusions to both texts provoke the reader to construct their own extra-diegetic narratives after the last pages are closed also shows a championing of narrative knowledge in the sense which Holub’s second point suggests. By stimulating such extra-diegetic discussion about their texts, both Barker and McGregor indeed highlight the fact that an understanding of the narrative is richest when authors and their narrators (“senders”), their readers (“receivers”) and their texts (“referents”) are all granted an equal role in creating the body of knowledge which is the novel itself. As a result, Barker and McGregor champion narrative knowledge as a far more inclusive and communicative mode than that required by science, showing that, exactly as Lyotard claims, “knowledge [savoir] in general cannot be reduced to science” (18).

Works Cited

THE BIRMINGHAM JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

SECTION II

REVIEWS
In this study of children’s literature, Gaby Thomson-Wohlgemuth analyses how the socialist rule of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) shaped translations of English children’s literature into German between 1961 and 1989, when institutionalised censorship marked a new phase in the state’s control of the arts. The argument it presents is that children’s literature was revised in order to guide readers’ interpretation of literary texts in translation according to the politically-correct ideology. Thomson-Wohlgemuth demonstrates that children’s literature in the GDR was not considered to be a ‘lower’ form of literature with lesser value. Instead, as compared to the ideologically-approved literary genres such as social realism, historical fiction or adventure literature, it operated as a recognised and ultimately important form of cultural production. However, children’s literature in translation had to instill socialist ideas into young minds and thus to continue to build an anti-capitalist future. In this sense, Thomson-Wohlgemuth’s study examines how socialism not only acknowledged the importance of what children read, but also attempted to lift children’s literature to the same level as adult literature. Consequently, children’s literature became a means of education employed to explain existing social conditions and to teach the politically dominant socialist ideology. Within literary communities of readers, emphasis was placed on communicating the ‘correct’ truths to the next generation of socialist party members who, one day, would become its leaders. This new dimension to children’s literature in the GDR involved authors, publishers, readers, and, formally, the Party and its ideology. Thus, this informed study provides an analysis of cultural policies in the GDR and examines how the state imposed censorship upon publishers via government control.

Scholars, such as Zohar Shavit, argue that children’s literature occupies a lower status within the social system. However, Thomson-Wohlgemuth delves into the subject matter of children’s literature from a separate political view, by dealing with the publication expectations of GDR readers, translators, editors and publishers (1). The chapters range from the historical context of children’s literature to East German publishers’ accountability for producing reading material for young readers according to socialist imperatives, through the influence of political files performed by government officials to case studies of censored authors. Re-editing ‘capitalist’ literature in translation and how the reader was to accept the written material usually depended on
the East German publishers’ cultural power which enabled publishing houses not only to make the books acceptable for publication inside the GDR, but also to abide by government standards. With regard to translations, Thomson-Wohlgemuth remarks upon the importance of paratexts in making these particular works available on the literary market. She writes, “referring particularly to classics (which in those days represented the main source of translated literature, in particular for children’s literature), it was contended that, under the new social conditions, classic works required a new interpretation and that they, therefore, needed to be lifted above their traditional interpretations” (198). The study evidences this claim by outlining archived records which show that the use of prefaces and afterwords were ‘updated’ by the government in order to ideologically convert the meaning of the books into socialist forms which mainly addressed a youth audience. The message to the child reader had to be clear and informative, arguing for the ideals of the GDR.

Gaby Thomson-Wohlgemuth shows that the SED ideology was influential in the GDR publishing industry via government authority. The idea was to instill the basic form of socialist thought into youth readers so that children’s literature in East German translation inspired party-line thought and behaviour. Thus, English-based literature brought into the socialist republic had to be explained by translators, publishers and editors, so that it supported the governmental ideology. The aim of children’s literature in translation was not to entertain, but to educate the beliefs of both children and youths in line with those of the socialist state. Thomson-Wohlgemuth focuses on how East German publishers collaborated with the government in order to inspire the ideas of the socialist culture in youth literature. More broadly, the book gives readers an edge in understanding the socialist movement in pre-1990 East Germany and underlines the importance placed on children’s literature by GDR political bodies. Advocating the significance of youth literature within an ideologically-shaped cultural context, Thomson-Wohlgemuth’s informed study advocates a deeper understanding of translation under state control, and thus will be of interest to both historians and children’s literature scholars.
Laurie Maguire, *Helen of Troy: From Homer to Hollywood*  
Reviewed by DEBORAH KERR  
Ph.D. candidate in Classics, University of Birmingham

A reviewer of Bettany Hughes’ 2005 book *Helen of Troy: Goddess, Princess, Whore* wrote that “[t]here won’t be another book on Helen in a long, long time, because [Hughes] has . . . exhaustively covered [Helen] from [many] angles – romantic, historical, archaeological, mythological, psychological.” Yet here we have, less than five years later, another book on Helen of Troy. But Maguire seeks not to analyse Helen from the angles mentioned above. Instead, *Helen of Troy: From Homer to Hollywood* is a *literary* biography, “not a historical life of a Bronze Age princess or a study of mythology . . . [The] subject is the literary afterlife of the woman we know as Helen of Troy” (ix).

This is not a biography in the traditional sense; readers do not move through the order of the events in Helen’s ‘life,’ nor do they follow a chronological order of source material, as in the case of Mihoko Suzuki’s 1989 *Metamorphoses of Helen*, and as indeed the subtitle “From Homer to Hollywood” might imply. Instead, Maguire structures the book in six chapters around key themes, from beauty to blame, from abducting Helen to parodying her, in an attempt to avoid any repetition in a chronological account since “[t]he same issues recur in each period” (x).

However, this thematic approach leads to its own problems. There is no chronological analysis within each theme, and the discussion can jump back and forth between different eras, which can make judging the development of Helen’s character through the ages difficult. This book is not just about Helen of Troy, it also encompasses ‘Helen characters’ such as Cressida or Yeats’ Maud Gonne. The mixing of the different sorts of Helen has the potential to be confusing, but it is mostly fascinating, drawing in new aspects to add a deeper analysis to Helen.

Maguire states that her biography, being “literary, specifically narratological” (x), will avoid pitfalls common to “most studies of Helen to date, which tend to mix archaeology, history, literature, and mythology without any sense that they are separate disciplines” (x). Yet, Maguire seems to have no problem in mixing Classics, Medieval Studies, English, German, and Media Studies, without any real sense that they, too, are different disciplines. As a Classicist, this was particularly apparent to me in the statement, “I generally exclude Helen material in foreign languages” (143, explaining the special inclusion of the German *Faust*) – since many of the texts under consideration in this book were originally written in ancient Greek or Latin.

Maguire has used English translations of foreign texts “since most readers first encounter [them] in English versions” (xi), and she does state that she has been careful
to note instances of ‘poetic license’ taken by any translators (although I wish she had consistently followed the Classical method of citing Classical texts by the line numbers equivalent to the original language text – easily accessible online or in a Loeb edition – rather than by year and page number of translation).

The “Introduction,” which is not the introduction to the book (that is the function of the “Preface”) but an introduction to Helen, presents a particularly confusing account for a non-specialist of Helen’s ‘life story’ as given in ancient accounts. As for any mythological character, there is no one, straightforward version of the story, but Maguire’s “Introduction” implies that it is a summary of all the variations in the myth. Yet, it misses some variants out, emphasises others which provide lesser-known events, and often prioritises fragmentary or rare sources at the expense of more popular texts. There are other instances throughout the book that could trip up a non-Classicist. For example, no consideration is given to the fact that breast-baring as part of supplication is a trope within Classical works (52 ff.), and Helen’s breast-baring is discussed in isolation to imply solely that she is an exhibitionist.

But just because Helen of Troy is a Classical character, should she remain the purview of Classicists, especially when the topic under consideration is essentially her reception in later works of literature? Maguire really gets into her stride with a fascinating cross-cultural, cross-temporal analysis of Helen in the Faust tradition. I also enjoyed the discussion of the rare works of Victorian Jane Stanley, and while the subtitle implied that there would be more Hollywood under discussion than actually appears, there is a detailed analysis of the remaining fragments of the 1927 silent film *The Private Life of Helen of Troy*.

A welcome addition to this book would have been a list of sources used, preferably in chronological order, since Maguire zips backwards and forwards between texts in pursuit of thematic links, and the date of a work is not always clear from the references (Maguire cites the date of the translation in most cases: first-century BC Virgil is cited as being from 1981; sixth-century AD Johannis Malalas is cited as 1831; this potentially explains the rather odd phrasing implying that Virgil was the later writer on page 47). This would also assist with the lesser-known creative works – is Mark Haddon’s *A Thousand Ships*, for instance, a novel or a film? On trawling through the bibliography, I discover it is a radio play.

In the “Preface,” Maguire stated that “[t]he topics of the subdivisions . . . are designed to translate into seminar topics for anyone who wishes to use this book in university teaching” (xi), although I am unsure as to whether the intended students would be Classicists looking forwards at the reception of Helen, or more modern literature scholars looking back at her heritage. Either way, this book would certainly be a useful supplement to a course focusing on the original Helen texts.
Notes

1 Dr Steven Pressfield, quoted at <http://www.bettanyhughes.co.uk/helen_book_review.htm>.
2 “In Johannis Malalas’ Chronographia Helen has curly hair . . . as she does later in Virgil” (47, my emphasis). It is possible that this was just a slip: there are a surprising number of typographical errors for a paperback edition.
THE BIRMINGHAM JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

SECTION III

NOTES
It caught my eye as I wandered amongst the dusky swollen shelves, a seventeen-year-old student looking for something real to read on my Saturday shift at the local library. I felt instantly charmed by the cover photographs of lurid blue skies, empty horizons and solitary vintage road signs. This was the American road as I thought I knew it, my imagination flooded with media images from road trip movies and my own idle rainy-day fantasies. Feeling hopeful and somewhat impulsive, I freed the novel from the top shelf and expectantly opened the first page.

This book, Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road*, has fascinated and inspired me since that very first day and throughout the years of study that have followed. Thanks to this novel, I have developed a deep affinity with the way that Kerouac writes, his ideas and beliefs, and his attitude toward the society in which he lived.

As clichéd as it may seem, *On the Road* really did change my relationship with literature. Every expectation I had held about the book was immediately obliterated when I opened that poor, misleading cover and entered the frantic, honest world of Beat subculture. At the centre of Kerouac’s autobiographical narrative, I found a frantic fascination with women, sexuality, jazz, alcohol, drugs and the American landscape. Rather than a tourist fantasy, those drug-fuelled, law-breaking and thrill-seeking adventures seemed to disguise a deeper spiritual quest for truth, knowledge and meaningful experience.

It appeared that I had accidentally stumbled upon the foundations of a cultural and philosophical revolution; a powerful record of post-war dissatisfaction and dissent. And now, every time I pick up the novel and start reading it again, I am reminded of this radical influence, and I begin to wonder about the world and the richness of the myriad cultures that can co-exist within it. *On the Road* has created countless examples of thought-provoking empathy just like mine and this, I feel, is the main reason why the novel has endured into the twenty-first century and remained such a powerful cultural icon.

“Jack Kerouac: Back *On the Road*,” held at The Barber Institute from 3 December 2008 to 28 January 2009, constituted a tribute to this endurance. An astounding success, the exhibition was held in honour of the fiftieth anniversary of the novel’s publication in
Britain and celebrated the event by proudly displaying the original scroll manuscript of the text. The exhibition brought this remarkable literary document to Europe for the very first time and, thanks to Curator Professor Richard Ellis of the Department of American and Canadian Studies and the University’s Research and Cultural Collections, I was able to witness an extraordinary and unique piece of American cultural history within my own city.

When I entered the exhibition, which included photographs, records, maps and other rare memorabilia, I rushed toward the long glass case which could be glimpsed rolling imposingly through its centre. The room bustled with crowds of people trying to get a glimpse of this 127 foot long scroll of drawing paper on which Kerouac had written his story of the American road. I stood amongst them in awe. Like a child in a museum gawping at the skeleton of some tremendous wide-jawed relic, I gazed at the scroll as it lay basking in its original, unmediated glory, “a magnificent single paragraph several blocks long, rolling,” as fellow beat author Allen Ginsberg once stated, “like the road itself” (1958). No editing, no name changes, no want of explicit language or sexual detail; nothing but one long spontaneous bop prosody. More commonly known as spontaneous prose, this revolutionary literary form is based on Kerouac’s “first thought is best thought” theory of fast, unstructured writing. It discards traditional punctuation, grammar and perspective and instead attempts to reproduce, as faithfully as possible, the emotions, thoughts and passions of the writer at the time of composition. “The only ones for me,” he writes in this fashion, “are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow candles exploding like spiders across the stars” (Kerouac 7).

The value of the scroll, I believe, lies in the power of this medium. More than just a first draft, the scroll emphasises Keroauc’s belief that spontaneous prose, more than any other literary form, is the closest that literature can ever come to achieving a true representation of real life experience. The scroll, unlike any published edition of the novel, shows us On the Road exactly as Kerouac wrote it, and viewing it in this original state offers a unique access to his dynamic experience.

Spontaneous prose is an intensely personal method of writing and, as I contemplated the novel’s manuscript, I felt as though I were looking beyond the dried ink and drawing paper and peering into the author’s very soul. As I began to read, I could feel the burden of those memories, those life-changing experiences which were so strong and overwhelming that in his struggle to share them with the world, Kerouac inadvertently revolutionised his literary technique. I could see where the long pieces of
paper had been cut and taped together, so that he could feed the continuous scroll through his typewriter without disturbing his ‘creative flow,’ as he did in a three-week typing frenzy in April 1951. Where the paper had not been aligned properly, I was even able to follow the text as it slanted and drooped down the side of the page. As I stood there, taking it all in, I could almost smell the burning frustration, taste the breathless ecstasy and feel the relentless passion that fuelled Kerouac’s extraordinary art. This experience alone was worth my whole journey.

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A META-THEATRICAL STAGING IN NEW YORK CITY: SHAKESPEARE’S VIRGIN MARY ALLEGORIES
JOHN HUDSON

I wrote my M.A. thesis at the Shakespeare Institute on an allegorical staging of A Midsummer Night’s Dream which built on the work of Professor Patricia Parker and aimed to reveal the underlying allegorical characters and plot of the play. This note reports on another attempt to create an allegorical dramaturgy,
which treats the actors as human ‘puppets,’ as Robert Greene famously called them, in the “author’s theatre” (Helgerson) or “theological theatre” (Shershow) that existed in the 1590s, when the first Shakespearean plays were written.

Performed by the Dark Lady Players and directed by Jenny Greeman, this demonstration at ManhattanTheaterSource in Greenwich Village takes the scholarly research that had identified some Shakespearean characters as allegories for the Virgin Mary, and puts it on-stage as “Shakespeare’s Three Virgin Marys.” In her book, Hamlet’s Choice (1988), Linda Hoff had shown that Ophelia could be interpreted as an allegory for Virgin Mary, which supplemented Chris Hassel’s article “Annunciation Motifs in Hamlet” (1998). This production costumed Ophelia in blue and white cloth, and had the meanings of the address in Hamlet’s letter – actually a large FedEx envelope so it was visible on-stage – articulated so that, for instance, “celestial” indicates heavenly, while Ophelia is the Greek for Mary’s property of “succour” and “soul’s idol” refers to idolatry. Ophelia was also shown to generate maggots under Hamlet’s gaze when he walked out of the room still looking at her and his eyes “to the last bended their light on me” (2.1.100). This was staged in dumbshow, echoing the later reference to maggots being conceived in carrion (2.1.181-2), thus further alluding to the Renaissance doctrine of how the Virgin Mary conceived through sunshine. Since Hamlet refers to his father as Hyperion, his own allegorical identity as Helios (the sun-god) is signified by his wearing a hat of red and yellow sun-rays. This supports the view that Ophelia has become pregnant through Hamlet’s gaze/sun-rays, paralleling the Mystery Plays that brought sun rays on stage to show the conception of Mary. This pregnancy is dealt with later in the play by the explanation of Ophelia’s flowers – almost all of which are used in abortion recipes, as noted by Newman (1979) and Hunt (2005), for instance. The combination of the Virgin Mary allegory, coupled with the presence of the abortive flowers in depicting Ophelia, points to a covert anti-Christian parody.

One of the most innovative features of this production was director Jenny Greeman’s decision to create a double staging – so that three of the actors performed Shakespeare’s roles, while three other actors performed the equivalent parallel episodes
from a selection of the Towneley and York Mystery Plays. As the triads of actors mirrored each other, the allegorical identity of the Shakespearean characters became very obvious.

The allegories in Hamlet were poignantly followed by the Virgin Mary allegories in Othello, as identified in part by Steve Sohmer in an article published in English Literary Renaissance in 2002. The character of Othello is partly composed from the anxious, jealous Joseph from the Mystery Plays, while Desdemona is initially addressed as an allegorical Mary and then as an allegorical Jesus. Appropriately, the change takes place on the day on which the gospel reading recounts Joseph’s discovery that Mary is with child – and not by him. Again, this reading suggests that the depiction of Desdemona’s death is an anti-Christian satire derived from the Mystery Plays. In Othello, however, Joseph’s jealousy is so extreme that he suffocates his wife in the last hours of Easter Saturday when Jesus lay in the tomb with his soudarion (handkerchief) spread over his face. This production echoes this parallel by having Desdemona suffocated with the Handkerchief which indeed is “dyed in mummy” (3.4.76).

The final example is the Nurse’s scene in Romeo and Juliet, which, as Steve Sohmer suggested in a 2005 article, was partly based on the presentation of Mary at the Temple in the apocryphal gospels. This production shows that the Nurse, whose name we are told elsewhere in the play is Angelica (4.4.5), represents the angel of the Annunciation. This is why the Nurse refers twice to “Susan” (1.3.18-19), since the word comes from Susannah, meaning lily, the standard symbol of the Annunciation. In this production the Nurse, who wears little wings, gives Juliet a large paper lily, while the allegorical cast perform a parallel narrative that reveals the meanings of “Susan” and being “with God” (1.3.19) as a reference to Emmanuel and to the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14 that a virgin shall conceive a child. Finally, in using a consistent elongated pronunciation, the cast makes clear the well-known Elizabethan pun on ‘Mary’ and ‘marry,’ thus indicating very clearly that the Nurse and Lady Capulet are trying to get Juliet mary-ed (i.e. turned into a Mary), which she refuses.

Allegorical and meta-theatrical theater is enjoying something of a revival in shows in the New York Fringe Festival and elsewhere. The Dark Lady Players are planning presentations at several universities in the United States and hope to interest English
Literature and Drama departments in their allegorical approach to Shakespeare’s plays. They would welcome an invitation to the UK.

**Photos**

_Dice; Ophelia’s conception under the gaze of Hamlet as the allegorical Helios; Confrontation; Wall_ © (2009) Jonathan Slaff

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**THE VERNON MANUSCRIPT SYMPOSIUM**

**ANNA GOTTSCALL**

The Vernon Manuscript Symposium, which was held at the Rothmere American Institute, Oxford, on Friday 19 June 2009, registered a great success and celebrated the forthcoming publication of an electronic edition of the Vernon Manuscript (Bodleian Library, MS Eng. Poet. a.1). The event was convened by Professor Wendy Scase in response to the culmination of an AHRC-funded project which had been based in the Department of English at the University of Birmingham and run in conjunction with two project partners: The Bodleian Library and Evellum. The project adds to our knowledge and understanding of the Vernon Manuscript through extensive consideration of its contents, textual and codicological relations, production and reception; gives greater access to the manuscript for researchers whilst addressing conservation concerns; and it also provides a model for the production of electronic facsimiles of large manuscripts.

This venture consisted of the transcription and proofing of each folio of the manuscript using xml files by a team of transcription assistants based at the University of Birmingham. Following a rigorous checking procedure under Dr Rebecca Farnham’s and Dr Gavin Cole’s supervision, the folios have been united with high resolution images and detailed page descriptions. These have now been transformed into a new digital edition which, for the first time, contains full-colour images, parallel facsimile and transcription of the texts. Further, the digital edition includes descriptions of every page and specialist essays on contents, production, decoration and language. It is expected to be released by Bodleian Digital Texts by the end of 2010.

The day-long Symposium included a preview of the papers to be published in _The Making of the Vernon Manuscript_, which is edited by Professor Scase and forthcoming in 2011, published by Brepols. The Symposium presented three sessions consisting of a
total of nine papers. Professor Scase gave an introduction to the project, describing its aims and the problems encountered in undertaking a team effort which sought to create an accurate and consistent transcription whilst refraining from personal interpretation. Subsequent sessions highlighted the interdisciplinary nature of this project with papers delivered by academics from Birmingham and from further afield on topics broadly categorised as codicology and palaeography, decoration and illustration, and language to an audience forty strong. Elisabeth Kempf and Victoria Gibbons discussed the corrections and titling practices used throughout the manuscript, whilst Dr Ryan Perry presented an in-depth analysis of the Phantom Miracle contained within the manuscript. Dr Rebecca Farnham, the post-doctoral research fellow on the project, gave a detailed description of the border artists alongside Dr Lynda Dennison who discussed the artistic origins of the manuscript and Dr Alison Stone who presented her research on the illustrations within the manuscript and possible French parallels. Finally, Professor Jeremy Smith and Dr Simon Horobin discussed issues related to the dialectal mapping of the manuscript and to the scribes involved in its production.

The event was drawn to a close by Dr Samuel Fanous, co-ordinator at the Bodleian Library. He expressed his delight in creating a corpus of data that would constitute a teaching and research tool which would enable the public to simulate the experience of reading a manuscript through the digitised images and texts. The Symposium provided a great opportunity for students and academics to meet and share ideas on this fascinating manuscript and innovative project.

The highlight of the event was the opportunity to view the original manuscript in the New Bodleian Library, in small groups throughout the day, under the supervision of Senior Assistant Librarian Dr Bruce Barker-Benfield.

The website for the Vernon Manuscript Project can be found at: http://www.medievalenglish.bham.ac.uk/vernon/.
The 2009 Graduate Centre for Europe (GCfE) Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Conference took place between 16 and 18 April under the title “Europe: A Continent of Paradoxes.” The GCfE was launched in 2005 as a major postgraduate-led and cross-disciplinary initiative which provides an academic and social forum for graduate students with an interest in Europe and in contemporary and historical European matters. The 2009 conference was the third of its kind and built on the success and popularity of the preceding conferences of 2007 and 2008. This year’s full programme included an afternoon of skills sessions for Postgraduate Researchers, a day and a half of plenary panel sessions, as well as two keynote speeches.

The conference attracted more than forty participants from twelve universities, seven of which were outside the UK. Fifteen different nationalities were represented, including three from outside the European Union (the USA, India and Georgia). The international character of the conference was therefore reflected not only in the content of the papers presented, but also in the diverse backgrounds of the participants and the represented institutions. Seventeen papers of extremely high quality were included in five panels under the following headings: “History and Theology,” “Culture and Representation,” “European Identity and Law,” “Politics” and “Culture and Memory.”

As one might expect of a conference which examined the paradoxical nature of the European continent, all of the papers presented provoked stimulating questions and rigorous discussion, engaging and challenging paper-givers and audience members alike. Several participants commented on the thought-provoking and academically-productive nature of such an interdisciplinary conference, since it highlighted a number of ways in which research from across several fields and disciplines (e.g. history, art history, theology, literary studies, political science, cultural studies, law etc.) can be enriched by varied and seemingly unconnected topics and approaches. Four of the five panels were chaired by members of the GCfE’s Postgraduate Steering Committee, making the conference an all-round postgraduate experience which equipped all chairs and presenters with invaluable skills for future conferences.
The skills sessions for Postgraduate Researchers, which took place on the first afternoon, were a particularly popular aspect of the conference. Two initial sessions were offered on “Giving Conference Papers and Preparing to Publish” and “Viva Tips,” and the afternoon was rounded off with a session by the BJLL’s own founding General Editors, Laura Hilton and Joshua McEvilla, on “Setting up and Running an E-Journal.” These sessions not only introduced a variety of skills vital to academic life today in an informative and inspiring way, but also gave participants the chance to get to know each other in a friendly and productive environment before presenting their own work on the following two days.

This year the GCfE was fortunate enough to have two keynote speeches which helped raise the conference profile and added official political and diplomatic dimensions to the debate on Europe and European matters. On the Thursday evening, the Swedish Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Staffan Carlsson, gave a speech entitled “Sweden’s EU Presidency: A Green Mission?” which provided an illuminating outline of the challenges and opportunities facing Sweden during its Presidency of the EU which began on 1 July 2009. Birmingham Edgbaston’s local MP, Gisela Stuart, entertained delegates for the third consecutive year on the Friday evening, giving a characteristically provocative, but also extremely sobering, analysis of European politics today.

The academic pursuits of the three days were, of course, supplemented by social activities essential to the conference experience, in the form of a European quiz on the first evening, and of the conference dinner at Staff House on the second. These elements ensured the free-flowing exchange of opinions and experiences that had started in daytime could continue to flow freely ‘after hours,’ and, it is hoped, gave participants the opportunity to turn academic acquaintances into lasting friendships.

The final verdict on the conference was that it was an overwhelming success, and academically and socially rewarding for all involved. The success of the conference was the result of the hard work and outstanding teamwork displayed by all members of the Postgraduate Steering Committee (Tara Windsor, Nicola Corkin, Clare Watters, Matthew Frear, Rachel Slater, Agnieszka Bidzinska, Olga Okan and Alex Standen). The Committee is grateful for support from the GCfE’s academic Director, Dr Nicholas Martin, and members of the Academic Advisory Group, as well as the GCfE’s
administrators. The Committee is currently working towards publishing the proceedings of this year’s conference in an online journal (*The Birmingham Journal for Europe*). Meanwhile, preparations have already begun for the next conference which will take place in March 2010.

More information on the Graduate Centre for Europe and its forthcoming events can be found at [www.gcfe.bham.ac.uk](http://www.gcfe.bham.ac.uk)

**THE FIFTH CORPUS LINGUISTICS CONFERENCE 2009**
**WANG FANG**

Following successful Corpus Linguistics Conferences at Lancaster and Birmingham, the jointly-organised Corpus Linguistics Conference 2009 was hosted by the English Department at the University of Liverpool from 20 July to 23 July. Around 380 participants from over forty countries presented their research results in corpus linguistics, greatly appreciating the opportunity to engage with papers, posters and work-in-progress reports, as well as with workshops and colloquia covering various aspects in the field.

The conference began with a workshop and colloquium day on Monday 20 July. Five workshops and seven colloquia addressed current research topics, including the construction and application of parallel and spoken corpora, the use of corpus tools such as Concgram and SketchEngine, and the use of corpora in the fields of literature, and of figurative language, for instance.

The main conference ran from Tuesday 21 to Thursday 23 July. Dr Michaela Mahlberg chaired the opening ceremony in which the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Liverpool, Professor John Belchem, warmly welcomed delegates. Usually ten parallel sessions took place on each day of the three-day main conference. These were complemented by five plenary sessions. Of the plenary speakers, Professor Douglas Biber addressed delegates with a speech entitled “A Corpus-Driven Approach to Formulaic Language in English: Multi-Word Patterns in Speech and Writing.” In this study, Douglas utilised a corpus-driven approach to identify and analyse the most frequent multi-word patterns in two different linguistic spheres: daily conversation and academic writing. He also investigated the ways in which those identified patterns, such as ‘it should be noted,’ or ‘in the case of,’ etc. are different in these registers. In his speech about “English in South Asia: corpus-based perspectives on the lexis-grammar interface,” Professor Joybrato Mukherjee outlined the current research achievements which various projects at the University of Giessen, Germany, and other collaborating
institutions registered. He also focused on the lexicogrammar of Indian English and Sri Lankan English as two particularly relevant South-Asian varieties and presented various findings from corpus analyses, such as the use of the prototypical ditransitive verb ‘give.’ He further argued that one must go beyond corpus data for various questions related to speaker attitudes, exonormative and endonormative orientations. Professor Svenja Adolphs gave a very entertaining speech entitled “Corpus, Context and Ubiquitous Computing,” representing the different ways in which one may relate measurements of context gathered from multiple sensors to people’s use of language. She further discussed some of the issues that arise from the design, representation and analysis of spoken corpora that contain additional measurements of several aspects of text and context. Dr Mike Scott’s presentation focused on “Key Cluster and Conigram Patterns in Shakespeare,” arguing for a methodological move away from single-word Key Words to multiple-word ones which are shown to occur distinctively in individual plays or in the speeches of individual characters. The last plenary was given by Professor Tony McEnery who provided a corpus-based critical discourse analysis of Muslims in the UK, thus highlighting the strength of corpus linguistics in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis.

The conference also included ten parallel sessions of individual paper presentations, namely: corpus compilation; dictionaries and terminology; corpus tools and software; applications; grammar; syntax and morphology; contrastive corpus linguistics; learning and teaching; specialised corpora; and metaphor and discourse analysis. Participants from Europe, North America and Asia presented their corpus research achievements and further engaged in fruitful discussions with the audience and international experts. Furthermore, the posters at the conference demonstrated a series of corpus linguistic research findings ranging from EFL teaching to discourse analysis, while conference participants and poster organisers discussed their research findings.

As a biennial event in corpus linguistics, the 2009 Liverpool conference successfully demonstrated the strength of corpus linguistics in many newly applied domains. At the same time, many international corpus researchers presented their research projects and findings on non-English corpora analyses, thus drawing attention to the advantages of corpus research in wider contexts. Participants from all over the world greatly appreciated and benefited from this event, which promises to advance corpus research in the future.
Recent theatre writing addressing some of the issues raised by this conference brought about strong public reaction. These included: Nicholas Kent’s commission of playwrights for a series of plays, *The Great Game*, which sought to engage with the history and current situation in Afghanistan, Richard Bean’s play *England People Very Nice* and Caryl Churchill’s ten-minute play *Seven Jewish Children*, written in response to recent events in Gaza.

It was not surprising, therefore, that debate concerning the subject of multiculturalism commenced as soon as the delegates began to arrive for The British Theatre Conference, held at Warwick University’s Arts Centre from 13 to 14 June 2009. Many voiced concerns about the conference title. At one end of the scale, some were disputing whether multiculturalism had happened at all, and claimed that the title implied that a unified Britain already existed. At the other end of the scale, some people considered that the term *interculturalism* would have conveyed the idea of integrated communities much more aptly than multiculturalism which implied many separate self-contained cultures. Others focused on the scope of the different cultures which would be discussed, interrogating whether they included disabled communities, gay rights or women’s rights. Where would the boundaries lie?

A whole host of speakers with impressive credentials proceeded to address these and many other issues to an audience largely consisting of theatre professionals and academics. The keynote address, *A National Narrative*, gave the RSC’s Artistic Director, Michael Boyd, the opportunity to talk about Shakespeare’s relevance to the contemporary world. His driving point was that Shakespeare also lived through a time of change. Boyd began by reminding delegates of British theatrical history’s origins in the tradition of the medieval Mystery Plays and of the fundamentally important place of religion in society. He particularly highlighted England’s Catholic past and the culture shock brought about by Henry VIII’s decision to become the Supreme Head of the Church of England and the subsequent threat of Spanish invasion (alternatively perceived as the potential saviour of the Catholic population). The submergence and incorporation of England’s Catholic past into its Protestant future provides a mirror for our own time. We are supposed to feel a connection with England’s emerging multiculturalism, and if some audience members failed to be moved by this at all, it did
give several participants the opportunity to discuss the lack of roles and opportunities for Black and Asian actors.

This particular concern was raised at several points during the conference and sometimes threatened to dominate the discussions held at the end of each panel. Boyd explained that in some cases a cast of actors with mixed racial origins would be a travesty, for example, in the case of *Othello*, where to have more than one black man would make nonsense of the play. It did not seem to have occurred to him that Othello could be played by a white man and all the other actors could be Black or Asian.

Other panellists focused their debates in various directions including funding for the arts; the question of identity; whether the theatre serves local communities; the question of offending the audience and whether audiences have the right to be offended; and, lastly, the question of whether it is possible to have a national theatre. The panellists often held opposing views.

Asked whether the theatre serves the community, Lisa O'Neill-Rogan of the Bolton Octagon said that mistakes had been made, whereas Stuart Rogers of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre asserted that his company had been successfully serving the very diverse community by actively looking for innovative theatrical events to meet local needs. Asked the question of whether a national theatre is possible, Vicky Featherstone, Artistic Director of the National Theatre of Scotland, said that it was not possible to have a national identity because British society is too multifarious, whereas theatre and film director Richard Eyre said that they were intentionally outward looking.

The panel’s discussion on *Offending the Audience* had one of the liveliest debates with Stewart Lee, who helped write and direct *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, insisting that he did not deliberately set out to offend; and playwright Richard Bean explained that people in fact want to take offence, because this gives them an opportunity to define themselves more clearly. The most eloquent speaker of the conference was writer Kenan Malik who spoke about the need to keep clashes out in the open and not suppress them merely in an effort to encourage tolerance. He talked about offence acting as a dialogue of debate with different strands of opinion which should not represent entire cultures. It was a beautifully profound response displaying a belief in the individual, and offered an encouragement to theatre professionals to bravely represent different cultures. In many ways, this summed up the overarching principal of the entire conference.
The International Poetics and Linguistics Association annual conference (PALA 2009) on The Art of Stylistics registered a great success. It was sponsored by the John Benjamins Publishing Company and took place at the Roosevelt Academy in Middelburg, the Netherlands, from 28 July to 1 August 2009. The conference covered a wide range of topics in stylistics, poetics, and associated fields of language and linguistics: narratology, literary linguistics, stylistics and pedagogy, critical discourse analysis, gender and writing, literary translation studies, linguistics and philosophy, metaphor, cognition, pragmatics, text linguistics, and corpus linguistics.

As part of the conference, several presentations were given by plenary speakers. Professor Peter Verdonk (University of Amsterdam) examined ‘the art of rhetoric’ and the relationship between rhetorical patterning and cognitive psychology. He argued that the readers of Ted Hughes’s “Hawk Roosting” fall under the spell of the rich variety of rhetorical patterns around which the text is structured. Professor Keith Oatley (University of Toronto) presented a theory of fiction as a simulation of the self in the social world. His research showed that people reading a short story by Chekhov apparently changed their personalities in individual ways. Dr Charles Forceville (University of Amsterdam) focused on the multimodal art of ‘pictorial runes’ in comics and cartoons. He claimed that the pictorial runes conveying information about events and experiences, such as movement and emotion, have systemic language-like properties. Dr Michaela Mahlberg (University of Liverpool) argued for a corpus stylistics approach in which computer methodology and textual interpretation complement one another, and claimed that new computer tools needed to be developed to investigate the questions suggested by features of a text. With examples mainly drawn from the works of Dickens, she looked at linguistic elements presented in textual worlds, especially the ‘clusters’ – repeated sequences of words – and claimed that Dickens uses language in a way that seems meant to be read aloud. Professor Rob Pope (Oxford Brookes University) focused on the application of stylistics to creative writing. Professor Gerard Steen (VU University Amsterdam) proposed a comprehensive network for studying M-
words – words related to metaphor – in cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, systemic-functional grammar and relevance theory.

Over 120 presentations from other international scholars addressed issues involved in ‘the art of stylistics,’ which is not only restricted to aesthetic aspects of style per se, but also includes collateral areas such as corpus linguistics and translation studies. With the development of corpus linguistics, corpus methodologies have sufficiently supported the identification of repeated linguistic patterns and the retrieval of quantitative information on linguistic phenomena. The quantitative findings, with interpretations and literary criticism, supply a polyglossic approach to research literary works. Professor Michael Toolan’s “Immersion and Emotion in Students Reading Poems and Stories: Can Reader Responses and Corpus Methods Converge?” and Dr Dan McIntyre and Brain Walker’s “Discourse Presentation in Early Modern English Writing: A Corpus-based Approach” clearly illustrated this approach. Literary Translation Studies is another new but thriving branch in PALA, which aims to maintain the style of the source text by undertaking stylistic analysis rather than by taking style for granted and dealing with it intuitively. Leading Literary Translation scholar, Professor Jean Boase-Beier, gave a presentation on “The Art of Reading and The Art of Translating Poetry,” claiming that stylistic analysis can explain how a text encourages the creative engagement of its readers. She also suggested that translators should perform creative translation in order to offer the same cognitive effects to their readers.

The conference was held in a large fifteenth-century Flemish gothic building, one of the most beautiful buildings in the Netherlands. In this respect, it wonderfully matched the theme of the conference: The Art of Stylistics. I am sure that the next year’s 30th PALA in Genoa, Italy, will be equally interesting.

Further details on PALA 2009 are online at http://www.roac.nl/roac/pala.shtml. For further information on PALA, see http://www.pala.ac.uk/.
CONTRIBUTORS
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She has published several articles to date in postgraduate journals and her forthcoming publications include: “Women and the Literary Voice of the Pilgrim,” BRILL’s Encyclopedia of Pilgrimage; “Pilgrim Access and Activity within Medieval Monastic Cathedrals,” BRILL’s Encyclopedia of Pilgrimage; and “Imagery and Iconography in

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**John Hudson** has a B.A. in Sociology, an M.Sc. in Management, and an M.A. in Shakespeare and Theatre. He is interested in Shakespeare’s thought processes, especially the use of visual metaphor and intertextuality. He is working on the applications of Shakespeare for improving creativity, self-reflection and critical thinking in management teams, with special reference to the dramaturgy of framing. His previous publications include a review of a women-only production of *The Taming of the Shrew* in *Shakespeare* 2.2 (December 2006), and an article “Amelia Bassano Lanier: A New Paradigm” in *The Oxfordian* (October 2009). He can be reached at JohnHudson9@aol.com.

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**Heather Jeffery** has recently completed her thesis play, *A Dance for Leningrad*, for the degree of M.Phil. (B) in Playwriting. The play combines the forms of Epic Theatre and Naturalism and uses dance movement as part of the lingua franca. Heather trained as a ballet dancer at Bush Davies School and the Royal Academy of Ballet. She was a ballet teacher and choreographer for twenty two years. After completing a B.A. (Hons) in English Literature at Warwick University Heather wrote and directed two dance dramas with dialogue which were produced at The Bridge House Theatre in Warwick.
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LAURA PERNA was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, and she received her B.A. with honours from the University of Texas at Austin in 2005. After a summer in Rome, she decided to pursue her M.A. in Italian studies at New York University. The programme allowed her to spend a year at NYU’s campus in Florence, where she began her thesis on contemporary Italian comics. Laura has published her work in Scan, an online journal of media, arts, and culture, and is working on several upcoming projects on comics.

HOLLY PRESCOTT is a second-year Ph.D. candidate at the University of Birmingham. Her thesis examines narrative, affective and memorial roles of abandoned and subterranean spaces in contemporary British writing. She has presented work at national postgraduate and international conferences on industrial ruins, spatial agency in the fiction of Cheshire-born author Nicholas Royle, birth narratives, and the photography of abandoned maternity wards, a topic on which her short article, “Birth-Place,” is forthcoming in Feminist Review Journal in Autumn 2009. She holds a B.A. (Hons) in English and an M.A. in Literary and Cultural Studies from Lancaster University, where she was awarded the Princess Alexandra Chancellor's medal.

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TARA WINDSOR completed a B.A. in German Studies and History in 2006 and an M.Phil. in Modern European Cultures in 2008, at the University of Birmingham. She is currently a second-year Ph.D. student in German Studies at the University of Birmingham, working on a research project entitled “Re-presenting Germany after the First World War: German Writers and Cultural Diplomacy, 1919-1932.” In the academic year 2008-09 she was Chair of the Postgraduate Steering Committee of the Graduate Centre for Europe and currently serves as Vice-Chair.
ARTISTS

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VOLUME II, 2009

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