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EDITORIAL

It is our hope that, after nine years, *Groundings* has proven its worth. It has offered a rare opportunity to generations of undergraduates and has shown itself to be a forum in which debates are had, misconceptions are challenged, and knowledge is enhanced. The theme is always contemporary, and the theme of volume nine is no different: 'Perspective, Origins and Conflict.'

The three concepts within the theme directly relate to identity. As a whole, it attempts to address some of the key notions which underpin, or emerge from, politics, philosophy, culture and identity in such a way that emphasises both distinctiveness and interdependence. The articles we have selected for publication concern politics, literature, classics, linguistics, philosophy, social history, music and film. What they each have in common is that they address *what* origins can be identified; *how* perspectives are forged and represented; or the *ways* in which conflicts of all kinds are exposed, expressed, represented or resolved. There are a diverse range of articles in this volume, each of which, to a greater or lesser extent, offers a complex critical re-evaluation of *why* something *is*, or *is not*, the case, with a view to challenging or reasserting existing theories or understandings in their respective fields.

Each of the articles owes its place in this volume to its originality. There has been an effort to avoid simply regurgitating existing material. In some cases, the author has done something new with old material; in others the author has devised an original understanding of the subject matter. In both cases, the journal owes a lot to the intellectual calibre of the authors. If nothing else, this volume should be an enjoyable read by virtue of the fact the authors and editors have worked hard to ensure that the material is accessible yet intellectually stimulating. It is a testament to their abilities that this is the case.

Groundings, as part of the Glasgow University Dialectic Society, aims to promote debate on campus and further afield. It is our hope that you will read this volume with a critical eye and reach your own view about the case each author makes. That is our core objective, which we have done our best to achieve in this volume.

GROUNDINGS EDITORIAL BOARD

Lockean Matter and its Discontents

Konstantinos Chatzigeorgiou

Materialism/physicalism purports to be a significant metaphysical doctrine about the nature of reality, being the standard position in many contemporary philosophical debates. It is my view that this doctrine is misguided, a remnant of the categories of the 17th century. To argue for my position, I examine Locke's commitment to corpuscularianism – a prevalent view about the nature of matter in the early scientific period – and the erroneous conclusions he draws from it. This historical reflection serves me to make a broader point: we do not anymore hold a strict conception of the material or the physical for good reasons, while these terms have no place in our technical subjects of inquiry. I conclude that materialism and any ontological position which depends on it are of no consequence.

INTRODUCTION

A common pronouncement among contemporary philosophers is that the nature of the world is fundamentally material, or physical. More often than not, this metaphysical claim is taken to be substantial and informative. Thus, in the introduction of his critical full-length treatise on the foundations of physicalism, Jeffrey Poland notes that '[t]he physicalist programme, [promises] to deepen our understanding of ourselves and the world in which we live.' [1] In this paper, I would like to discuss John Locke's understanding of matter with the purpose of deflating, and even motivating the abandonment of such convictions. I hope to persuade the reader that Locke's perspective on the nature of the material was flawed, independently of the constraints of his epistemological theory. My main argument risks being misunderstood, since it will be suggested that any 17th century understanding of matter has long been superseded by advances in the natural sciences. This is indeed true, though the point I wish to make is more subtle: Locke's insistence on equating matter with the corpuscles and their properties bears striking similarities to some of our own attempts to define the material,

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[1] J. Poland, *Physicalism, The Philosophical Foundations* (Oxford, 1994), 1.

and, consequently, can help demonstrate certain overwhelming implications for any materialist/physicalist (as well as dualist) ontology. Thus, I follow Chomsky[2] and Van Fraassen[3] in their own critical discussions of materialism, concluding that there is little reason to take such doctrine – as it is conventionally understood – seriously.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The 17th century was a period of uncertainty in natural philosophy where the correct scientific methodology, as well as the theoretical assumptions that accompanied it were contested. In fact, this was an era of polemics between different scientific conceptions, the most prominent of which were Aristotelianism, Cartesianism, and corpuscularianism. Providing a comprehensive overview of the differences and similarities of these conceptions would be an interesting task in its own right, though it would divert me from my main argument. However, I believe some general remarks on the period to be of specific importance.

It would be helpful to view the rise of Cartesian and corpuscularian physics as two reactions to Aristotelianism. The Aristotelian scholastics favoured a teleological and qualitative approach to natural philosophy, according to which the world was a highly ordered, hierarchical and finite system where ends, values and purposes played a role in theoretical explanations. Indeed, the scholastics offered a physics that did not drastically depart from many of our everyday experiences and whose prevalent status relied on Aristotle's authority. Yet, despite being commonsensical, dogmatic or otherwise, scholastic physics formed the basis of a theoretical understanding of the world for many centuries.

In contrast to Aristotelianism, the Cartesians, inspired by Galileo's breakthroughs in the study of motion and Copernicus' advances in astronomy, emphasised the importance of mathematical methods to the study of nature. Descartes' discovery of analytic geometry was an event of immense importance in the subsequent development of mechanics, and, arguably, one of the single greatest achievements of the human mind. Ultimately, the identification of the physical world with our geometrical models questioned the world of sense perception, our world of common sense.

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[2] N. Chomsky, 'Language and Problems of Knowledge', *The Managua Lectures* (The MIT Press, 1988).

[3] B. Van Fraassen, *The Empirical Stance* (Yale University Press, 2002).

Despite this radical departure from Aristotelianism, Cartesianism left much to be desired in the experimental aspect of physical inquiry. Although Cartesian physics were not entirely a priori, it is true that Descartes sought a deductive inquiry based on indubitable first principles. This approach was evident throughout his physics: the impossibility of vacuum, the infinitely divisible matter and the postulation of vortices in planetary motion followed from Descartes' understanding of body as Euclidean extension.

The corpuscularian conception of matter – a conception advocated by Locke himself – on the other hand, sought to remedy this imbalance between theory and experiment. While the corpuscularians followed the ancient atomists by postulating indivisible particles as the basic constituents of matter, they differed from their ancient predecessors by assuming that the primary/essential properties of these particles were apt to both mathematical formalisms, and experimental investigation.[4] Moreover, this new atomistic hypothesis sought to understand the world in mechanical terms, where corpuscles and their immediate interactions – adequately described in the language of mathematics – would form the basis of an explanation of macroscopic phenomena. Corpuscularianism was a view of the world adequately suited for some of our perceptual content. After all, measurements were vital for empirical confirmation and a radical disconnect between the microscopic and the macroscopic would be unwelcome. Under corpuscularian-mechanical assumptions ontological reductions – such as the reduction of colours and sounds to the intrinsic properties of corpuscles – were sensible, and indeed pursued.[5]

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[4] My account of the character of corpuscularian science is undoubtedly simplified. While it is true that many corpuscularians were undertaking experimental work, it is also true that their doctrine was influenced by the French philosopher and astronomer Pierre Gassendi who argued against the Cartesian conception of matter (and space) on conceptual grounds. The influence of Gassendi shows, as the historian of science Alexandre Koyré acutely describes, '[that] in the history of scientific thought, especially in its creative and critical periods such as the seventeenth century … it is impossible to separate philosophical thought from scientific thought. The one influences the other; to isolate them is to condemn oneself to understanding nothing of historical reality.' - A. Koyré, *Metaphysics and Measurement* (Gordon and Breach Science Publishers), 119.

[5] Once more, this is a simplified version of what occurred since Robert Boyle, one of the most influential atomists of the time and a close friend of Locke, considered chemistry to be distinct from physics, allowing for the possibility of fundamental chemical substances by means of emerging chemical properties. Interestingly, Boyle's treatment of chemistry as a semi-autonomous science entailed the limits of a strictly mechanical interpretation of nature, even before Newton's

Yet, scepticism was not absent: the philosophical foundations of corpuscular science were not based on indubitable axioms in the spirit of the Cartesians, but allowed for 'a large degree of uncertainty'[6], primarily due to the hypothetical nature of corpuscularian mechanism. The underlying metaphysical assumption of the doctrine was that some, or all of the essential/primary qualities of the corpuscles (their motion, figure, shape etc.) were manifested in macroscopic objects (though the primary qualities do not exhaust the observable properties of these objects) so that some form of experimental inquiry could enjoy a degree of empirical confirmation. In turn, the epistemic foundations of the doctrine, largely provided by John Locke himself, rested on the assumption that some of our ideas (the atomic-like objects of thought in Locke's psychological theory) truthfully represent the primary qualities of corpuscles. In the end, corpuscularianism offered a compromise between a foundationalist Cartesian science and a counter-productive scepticism, allowing for modest and important positive work to be undertaken by natural philosophers.

LOCKEAN MATERIALISM?

The polemical nature of the debate arising from these aforementioned early-scientific conceptions is reflected on John Locke's 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding' released in 1689, just two years after Isaac Newton's release of the Principia. I have already noted that Locke seems to be generally committed to a corpuscularian conception of matter, though this interpretation can be contested for Locke is also quite explicit on the limits of corpuscularian mechanism:

> I have … instanced in the corpuscularian hypothesis, as that which is thought to go furthest in an intelligible explication of those qualities of bodies; and I fear the weakness of human understanding is scarce able to substitute another which will afford us a fuller and clearer

discovery of gravitational attraction – see A. Clericuzio, *Elements, Principles and Corpuscles, A Study of Atomism and Chemistry in the Seventeenth Century* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000).

[6] L. Laudan, *Science and Hypothesis, Historical Essays on Scientific Methodology* (D. Reidel Publishing, 1981), 66.

> discovery of the necessary connexion and coexistence of the powers which are to be observed united in several sorts of them.[7]

It would appear that Locke's adherence to corpuscularianism is idiosyncratic, ultimately resting on his doctrine of ideational empiricism which is supposed to set the limits of 'human understanding'. Ideational empiricism should be understood as a thesis about human cognition, suggesting that experience is the main source of any substantial knowledge. In order to vindicate his doctrine, Locke postulated ideas as the mental counterparts of atoms and these objects were to play a pivotal role in his accounts of experience, action, language and thought. In perception, for example, when an apple is observed the mind would, according to Locke, acquire the simple ideas of a red colour, a round shape, and a particular smell and then associate them in a way that would allow us to form the complex idea of the substance we call apple.
Beside their positive role, ideas also framed the limits of our cognitive faculties since anything that stood beyond them remained hard, if not impossible, to discern. Thankfully, the resemblance of some of our ideas (such as our idea of shape) to the primary properties of corpuscles rendered corpuscularianism well suited for our mental faculties. The crucial point here is that while Locke potentially modelled his theory of mind on the demands of corpuscularian science, it is his psychology that comes first; our ideas form the foundations of knowledge. Therefore, while the corpuscularian hypothesis is our best theory of matter, its epistemic foundations entail that the hypothesis is fundamentally incomplete. Our cognitive limitations will not permit us to penetrate deeper into the nature of the world.

Despite its plausibility, I believe that the above picture is largely mistaken.[8] Locke's acknowledgment of the imperfectness of our concept of matter should be contrasted

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[7] J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2014), 539.

[8] Therefore, I do not agree with Downing that 'the *Essay* is a work of epistemology which presupposes and is grounded upon a certain amount of metaphysics' and I also question the intelligibility of her overall discussion which seems to presuppose a demarcation between epistemology, metaphysics, and experimental science. Such a demarcation is extremely doubtful in the context of 17th century science. Locke could have easily adopted a different conception of matter, which would probably create implications for his psychological (hence, epistemological) theory, and yet, he did not. Therefore, a deference to the corpuscularian hypothesis was assumed which was in turn based on complicated metaphysical premises and on certain epistemic assumptions about the character of the scientific method, some of which are mentioned in this paper; Lisa Downing 'The Status of Mechanism in Locke's Essay' (1998) 107:3 *The Philosophical Review* 414.

with some of his more assertive and confident remarks, where corpuscles and their properties dominate the discussion. Reflecting on Locke's overall scepticism, his theory of language, the nature of gravitational attraction and, finally, his views on the relation between matter and mind will help me illustrate the strict nature of Locke's account.
Firstly, I wish to begin by responding to the suggestion that Locke, motivated by his acknowledgment of the limits of the human mind, avoids providing a comprehensive account of the concept of the material. Let us call this view 'the agnostic view.' Strictly speaking, the agnostic view is correct since Locke does not examine our idea of matter in any significant detail. Yet, to believe that Locke did not understand matter in certain terms is also highly implausible since (a) as we have seen, he already accepts an, at best, incomplete corpuscularian hypothesis, and (b) the concept of the material seems relevant to many of his assertions. For example, in an illuminating passage in the fourth book of the Essay, Locke mentions that,

> […] it is repugnant to the idea of senseless matter that it should put into itself sense, perception, and knowledge, as it is repugnant to the idea of a triangle that it should put into itself greater angles than two right ones.[9]

Here Locke seems to suggest that 'senseless' matter cannot, by itself, generate, or is incompatible with mental processes. Thus, Locke offers a partially negative definition of the material in terms of what it is not, and what it cannot cause. One can already observe a quite dogmatic conception, scarcely resembling Locke's earlier sceptical remarks and plausibly restricting the material to the mechanical properties of corpuscles.

A second suggestion, motivated by Locke's theory of language, might concede that the nature of the material is essentially unknowable since we are only acquainted with the nominal essences of corporeal substances, i.e. their observable qualities, and not their real, natural constitutions. For instance, when we are perceiving the substance of water we are acquainted with its observable qualities such as its lack of odour and its diaphanous nature, not its corpuscular composition.

This response has some initial plausibility but it faces a similar objection to the agnostic view. Corpuscles are hypothetical, unobservable entities and yet Locke confidently assumes knowledge of their essential properties. In fact, Locke's epistemological theory of perception assumes a resemblance-thesis between some of our ideas and the primary

[9] Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 610.

qualities of corpuscles. The worry is that there seems to be an asymmetry between our knowledge of the nominal essences of macroscopic objects, and the real essences of the microscopic corpuscles. I believe that Locke could avoid this objection by assuming a taxonomy of corpuscles, and by suggesting that while we do possess a complete general knowledge of the properties of corpuscles, knowledge of their real essences requires explicit knowledge of their distinct geometrical magnitudes. Whether this rejoinder is satisfactory remains unimportant, however. The point I wish to emphasise is that Locke supposes possession of a complete knowledge of the general properties of corpuscles.

So far, I have only touched upon the potential epistemological limitations for a Lockean understanding of matter. However, a third and major source of conflict stems from Newtonian advances in mechanics where the postulation of gravitational attraction greatly disturbs the mechanical worldview by suggesting interaction of bodies through the void.[10] Consequently, an interpretative issue arises: how are we to make sense of gravitational attraction within the Lockean framework? Locke's discussion in his 1693 treatise titled 'Some Thoughts Concerning Education' is revealing:

> [I]t is evident, that by mere matter and motion, none of the great phaenomena of nature can be resolved: to instance but in that common one of gravity, which I think impossible to be explained by any natural operation of matter, or any other law of motion, but the positive will of a superior Being so ordering.[11]

Indeed, Locke does not take gravitation to be a natural, let alone an inherent property of material bodies. Moreover, its propagation requires the intervention of a superior Being. Unsurprisingly, Locke never includes gravitational attraction in his list of the primary qualities of bodies, despite the fact that it is the unifying element of Newtonian physics. Locke's definition of matter remains strict, excluding qualities from its ontological category.

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[10] 'Action at a distance' may indeed have been the sole possible interpretation of gravitational attraction under Newtonian assumptions. A. R. Hall suggests that while Newton thought that such a conclusion was absurd, speculating that the existence of the aether whose role was to propagate the gravitational force could be the cause of the phenomenon, he could not have considered the aether-hypothesis 'as a profounder theory underlying the force-version, for it takes a totally different view of the ultimate properties of material particles.' - A. R. Hall & M. B. Hall 'Newton's Theory of Matter' (1960) 51:2 Isis 135.

[11] J. Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes* 8 (Stirling and Slade, 1824), 184.

Finally, let us turn to Locke's views on mentality:

> We have the ideas of matter and thinking, but probably shall never be able to know whether any mere material being thinks or no; it being possible for us, by the contemplation of our own ideas, without revelation, to discover whether Omnipotency has not given to some systems of matter, fitly disposed, a power to perceive and think; … God can, if he pleases, superadd to matter a faculty of thinking.[12]

Predictably, Locke's attitude remains the same since his conception of mentality renders it incompatible with, and ontologically distinct from the material world. In order to explain the relation between the body and the mind, Locke appeals to supernatural intervention by evoking a relation of superaddition which suggests that God intervened by infusing minds to insensible corpuscular structures. A charitable reading which emphasises sceptical interpretations of Locke's quote seems to me erroneous, since the 'mere' materiality that Locke refers to has definite content: the corpuscles and their primary qualities.

In a stimulating discussion on the nature of superaddition and the 'limits' of corpuscularian mechanism (hence, material explanation), Margaret Wilson concludes that Locke 'is in effect indicating … that most of what goes on in the world is incomprehensible from the point of view of [corpuscularian] mechanism.'[13] Indeed, neither gravitational attraction nor mentality fit Locke's concept of the material. Remarkably, Locke advocates that most of our world is immaterial, non-physical, and that adequate explanations may have to invoke a supernatural entity. After all, gravitational attraction has universal status, affecting objects of all sizes from the miniscule corpuscles to the entirety of our planetary system, while mentality remains another undeniable fact of nature. Consequently, given our concepts, intelligible explanations have to appeal to the unintelligibility of the Divine; in essence, our world has to be cut in half. Locke's conclusions are incredible, though they should not surprise given his fundamental assumptions. After all, the corpuscularian conception of matter does not only manage to be a general and complete description of the material/physical aspects of the world, but is also capable of determining the world's ontological borders:

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[12] Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 532.

[13] M. Wilson, 'Superadded Properties: The Limits of Mechanism in Locke' (1979) 16:2 *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 149.

whatever does not conform to the Lockean properties of corpuscles, is immaterial and non-physical by definition.

MATERIALISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

What I take to be a reasonable reaction to Locke's treatment of matter is to conclude that it is erroneous. The reasons are numerous: in the case of gravitational attraction, for example, we do not consider gravitational forces to violate locality, though this is achieved by acknowledging that masses (and even massless objects like photons) cause the curvature of spacetime whose geometry could not even be entertained in Locke's Euclidean universe.

But, perhaps, such direct comparisons are unfair. After all, since the 17th century many conceptual revolutions have taken place, gradually altering the way we appreciate the concepts of natural inquiry. It can, therefore, be argued that even if Locke's concept of matter is inadequate, it does not follow that the concept fails to pick out something concrete. Unfortunately, this is also a mistake. Careful examination of our contemporary notion of matter reveals, as the physicist and philosopher of physics Eftichios Bitsakis points out, that '[m]atter is not a scientific concept' but rather a term that 'in a general sense … denotes the object of scientific research.'[14] We have correctly abandoned the restrictive Lockean (as well as the Cartesian, and the Aristotelian) conception(s) because, nowadays, whatever we come to discover is shortly after understood as material, or physical. Still, our ongoing pursuit for wider and more complete explanations entails our acknowledgment that we do not yet fully comprehend our world. Subsequently, contrary to Locke, we abstain from categorising counterintuitive possibilities or undiscovered facts as non-physical. Instead, as Chomsky observes, 'any intelligible theory that offers genuine explanations and that can be assimilated to the core notions of physics becomes part of the theory of the material world.'[15] Simply put, domains of inquiry where progress has been slow, unfruitful, or even hopeless highlight our inability to penetrate nature rather than any robust ontological categories.

At this point, I think it is proper to revisit some of this paper's themes. A recurring theme of materialist metaphysics is a scepticism towards (and quite often, a downright denial of) mentality. The reaction is understandable, stemming from our peculiar commitment

[14] E. Bitsakis 'Mass, Matter, and Energy, A Relativistic Approach' (1992) 2:1 *Foundations of Physics,* 74.
[15] Chomsky, Language and Problems of Knowledge, 144.

to the categories of the dominant physical theories of the 17th century. As I have previously noted, the Aristotelian pluralist conception of the universe was replaced by a mathematical, ontologically austere, and highly reductionist picture. The Cartesians and the corpuscularians, guided by the ideals of the mechanical philosophy, sought to explain phenomena by reference to the motions and collisions of the minute constituents of matter. The subsequent revolutions of natural inquiry greatly challenged this picture, but the allure of the mechanical worldview has been hard to shake off.

However, an asymmetry is evident since despite our inability to move beyond certain aspects of the 17th century, our initially restraining concept of matter matured and underwent revision, ending up being replaced by a more general concept, that of 'the physical'. This new concept was more open, allowing for a wider interpretation which included some of the special sciences (chemistry and biology), and, moreover, incorporating bizarre entities like fields, spacetime, and, astonishingly, an inherently probabilistic quantum world. Even so, an (allegedly) unbridgeable gap between this 'physical' world and the world of introspection and qualitative experience remained. In the end, one of these two worlds either has to be eliminated, be explained by reference to the other, or be separated from the other on Lockean, ontological grounds. But Locke's mistaken conclusions render these solutions presently unwarranted, if comprehensible at all. There is no dualism of the physical and the gravitational, as there is no dualism of the physical and the probabilistic. A dualism of the physical and the mental remains equally dubious.

Given what we have said so far, it is odd why materialism is a live option. The doctrine's popularity is indeed paradoxical primarily because, as Van Fraassen emphasises, '[m]aterialism is a hardy philosophical tradition that appears differently substantiated in each philosophical era.' [16] Locke's conception of the properties of matter was, on reflection, more robust and coherent than ours, since we often avoid providing definite content to a materialistic ontology. Quite plausibly, a contemporary materialist does not strictly adopt a metaphysical position at all, but simply defers to the ever-growing (or ever-changing) ontology of science. Thus, the materialist position is, at best, an epistemic one, appealing to the success of particular methods of inquiry. Nonetheless, the sciences are far from complete, and speculation on future, unknown unifying theories is premature, and, more importantly, anti-naturalist.

[16] Van Fraassen, *The Empirical Stance*, 58.

Here, it may be argued that as far as physical theory is concerned, we may recognise a continuity in its mathematical formalism and conceptual structure which will allow us to exclude mentality (or our common sense conception of it) from a materialistic picture of the world. Advocates of this view often appeal to a completeness of physics[17] that is supposed to guide our ontological distinctions. Putting the groundless assertions about the impossibility of further conceptual revolutions in the sciences aside, we still lack compelling reasons to take this position seriously. Locke assumed the completeness of material explanations in the nature of corpuscularian mechanism. If our counterpart is a, yet unknown, physical mechanism which aspires to unify all the 'physical' phenomena then the only thing we are actually stating is a belief that the physical sciences may, at some point, establish that the physical world is unified; trivialities rarely provide any understanding.

In the end, Locke has still things to teach us, despite his shortcomings. As a representative of the emerging sciences, Locke quickly realised their explanatory potential. He, therefore, aspired to provide a model of mentality, while also articulating the relation of his own science to the doctrine of corpuscularianism. His commitment to theoretical explanations and unification remain important and should be further explored. On the other hand, Locke's reflection on the metaphysics of his own system led him to absurdities. This is the error we need not repeat. Leaving Locke's 17th century behind requires an acceptance of the vacuous nature of materialism: we do not know the world's ultimate contents and lack any serious insight on what these might be. Hence, unlike Locke, we lack a robust conception of the material, and cannot find a place for it in any of our serious theoretical explanations. This conclusion may seem obvious, even mundane, but, apparently, it is not. Hopefully, my analysis of Locke's story will have helped establish it.

[17] See T. Nagel, *Mortal Questions* (Cambridge University Press, 1979) & J. Wilson, 'On Characterizing the Physical' (2006) 131:1 *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition*, 61-99.

CONCLUSIONS

Ultimately, Locke's case remains interesting both for its failings as well as for its successes. Locke aspired to provide a complete psychological theory that postulated objects and properties on potentially equal ontological grounds with his favourite, material corpuscles. He sought an explanatory theory for mentality. The boundaries of Locke's ontological categories, undoubtedly influenced by the prevailing physical theories of his era, have now shifted though keeping them around, especially in a world that is immensely more complex than Locke's, may not be wise after all. Ontological doctrines which presume the nature of the world without explicitly detailing its contents seem more apt to confusions rather than explanations. Even when some content is provided, the provisional nature of our explanations renders our ontological doctrines impotent. Consequently, materialism is beside the point for any serious inquiry on the nature of the world. Appreciating Locke's insightful and thought-provoking discussions remains important; borrowing his ontological distinctions is futile. Future discussions are going to have to reflect this fact.

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A Theory of Origin - A Revision of the Auteur Theory in Film Studies

Rachelle Gallagher

This article reviews the traditional auteur theory within film and television studies, looking at how notions of the author and authorship are constructed. It moves through an overview of traditional auteur theory, highlighting its successes and failures as an academic theory. In reviewing the theory this article presents an alternative and hopefully more productive way in which to analyse and decipher notions of authorship. The new theory is tested by application to three distinct case studies involving the film director Tim Burton, singer Lady Gaga and the video-on-demand service provider Netflix.

Auteur theory is inadequate and misleading for the study of film and television. Nevertheless, it has been, and continues to be, a useful and productive mode of thinking. In this article I will review the drastic failures and the partial successes of the traditional auteur theory within film studies whilst offering an alternative model of critical theory. The adapted theory will centre on discourses of authorship that are constructed via various factors around a film text. I propose that this approach should be called a theory of origin. By evaluating and examining three different forms of authorship – one director, one music artist and one production company – I will show how the auteur theory can be manipulated and developed from its primitive source in the pages of the French film criticism journal *Cahiers du Cinema* to keep up with the multi-faceted and complex landscape of film and television culture that exists today.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AUTEUR THEORY

The traditional auteur theory works by assigning the director as the central author of a film text. As a result, he or she is designated as the source and creator of all inherent meaning produced by the film text. This mode of thinking echoes theories of authorship in other humanitarian disciplines such as literature, art and music which are believed to

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have developed from the Romantic ideal of the author in the nineteenth century. The Romantic ideal is based on the notion that the artist, as an individual, should be recognised as the source of all meaning produced by their text. Understand the artist, understand the work: the key was in the creator. This model of authorship elevated the author to the bearer of meaning in a work, rather than any meaning being determined through the interpretation of the audience, be it a novel, work of art, or a film text.

However, when this model of authorship was applied to the study of film it encouraged the elevation and glorification of film directors. This had a detrimental effect on the multi-faceted and complex analysis of films and film authorship. In 1962 Sarris claimed that 'it requires cultural audacity to establish a pantheon of film directors. Without such audacity, I see little point in being a film critic'.[1] Yet with this 'audacity' came an inadequate and misleading concentration on the personas and personalities of the directors themselves. Critics would assign any and all interior meaning in a film text exclusively to the director, [2] since directors were conceived as being absolutely emblematic of the film texts they created. Bordwell summarises and articulates this approach stating that a 'unified personal vision should be expressed' and 'evaluation of the entire oeuvre is justified on the basis of the quality of coherence to the expression of that vision'.[3] Therefore the entire body of work from a particular director is reviewed by critics to evaluate how well the texts successfully represent the director's personality and opinions. A clear issue with this approach is that it depends on the perception and understanding of the director's personality by the film critic, which, according to the Auteur theory, can only be interpreted through the film texts.

The Auteur theory has been criticised many times previously (most notably by Pauline Kael[4]) yet it remains prudent to revisit the aims and omissions of the auteur theory that Sarris and others[5] negotiated around and often ignored. In so doing a better developed

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[1] A. Sarris, *The American cinema: Directors and Directions 1929-1968* (New York: Dutton, 1968),37.

[2] Regardless of any other circumstances or knowledge that may have surrounded the film, i.e. more than one director, a change of directors mid-filming or factual circumstances that may have proven another individual to be the main creative force behind the text, i.e. the screenwriter.

[3] D. Bordwell, *Making Meaning: Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema* (New York: Harvard Univeristy Press, 1989), 44.

[4] P. Kael, 'Circles and Squares', (1963) 16:3 *Film Quarterly* (1963), 26.

[5] Many film critics have adhered to this theory throughout the history of film criticism. Staiger includes a brief but fairly comprehensive evaluation of critics who have subscribed to the

and more refined theory can be sought.

Firstly, assigning a director's personality as a 'criterion of value'[6] is a ridiculous element of any critical theory. To try and understand a single person through their creative expression, especially within such a diverse, complex and multi-faceted media such as film, is arbitrary and virtually unverifiable. As Catherine Grant has articulated there has always been 'queasiness' around auteur theory due to the fear of developing essentialist and prescriptive tendencies.[7] If the purpose of critical theory is to expand our understanding of the world and our relation to it, then surely to narrow the focus to one individual's personality is reductive and borders on the obsessive. Despite the potential for productive and useful formulations of styles, genres, or motifs that can be generated around the relentless pursuit of psychoanalytical theories (created to understand the minds of individual directors in line with traditional auteur theory), it is still constrictive to try and assign the interior meaning and value of a film to the character of one person. As Wimsatt and Beardsley have attested 'the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging a work of art'.[8] A theory of authorship that only offers space for the personality of one individual as the source of meaning is fundamentally limited and limiting.

Nevertheless, one productive element that has emerged from auteur theory is the primary method of analysing film texts: critical analysis of a film's *mise-en-scène.* Analysis of *mise-en-scene* became the fundamental critical device on which the reputation of film studies as an academic pursuit was built.[9] What critical reading is to literature the analysis of *mise-en-scène* is to film. The technique is based on the combination of an extensive knowledge of a large body of films with a suitable method that is used to decipher and elicit meaning from the film texts. The method created harbours a close visual-textual analysis of all the on-screen content in order to thoroughly understand the intention of the author. At this point authorship would be assigned solely to the director-auteur. However this approach breeds prescriptivism: the

'authorship as-personality' approach in 'Authorship Approaches' in *Authorship and Film*. (eds.) David A. Gerstner and Janet Staiger. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 27–57.

[6] Sarris (1968), 43.

[7] Grant, Catherine. www.auteur.com (2002) 41:1 *Screen,* 101-108. 101.

[8] W.K. Wimsatt, "Genesis: A Fallacy Revisited," in *The Disciplines of Criticism*. (eds.) Peter Demeu, Thomas Greene, and Lowry Nelson, Jr. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), 468.

[9] Caughie, John. *Theories of Authorship: A Reader* (London: Routledge and Kegan and Paul with the BFI: 2007), 414.

theory looks for a very specific answer *before* evaluating any data. In scientific terms this would be called speculation, and would not be considered a proper basis for an academic theory.

Instead what may be proposed is wider application of the method normally used to decipher a film text's *mise-en-scène*. This method has been defined as 'the methods of decipherment or decoding through an investigation of the language and signification'.[10] It is possible for this technique to be applied to both the content on-screen and the wider discourses (i.e. spoken and written communication as well as *visual* forms of communication) that surround discussions of a text's authorship. I believe this would lead to a more productive, adequate and useful theory for answering questions about authorship in relation to film and television. To demonstrate, I will apply and extend the technique that underlines *mise-en-scène* to critically analyse, decipher and understand the construction of authorship in three distinct case studies: one director (Tim Burton), one music artist (Lady Gaga), and one production company (Netflix). This is where the theory of origin begins.

TIM BURTON AS FILM AUTEUR

The discourse that surrounds Burton and his films (and his consequential status as the driving creative force behind films directed by him) will be discussed by reviewing theoretical criticism, marketing materials and audience reception.

Academic criticism that positions Tim Burton as the driving creative source behind all of the films he has directed include *The Works of Tim Burton; From Margins to Mainstream*, *The Films of Tim Burton: Animating live action in contemporary Hollywood* and *Tim Burton: The Life and Films of a Visionary Director*. Throughout this criticism character motivations are consistently attributed to and compared with Tim Burton personally. Mark Salisbury shows this when he draws parallels between Burton's characters and Burton's own personality, going so far as to say that Burton literally 'embodies' some of the idiosyncrasies that his characters also exhibit.[11] Here academics position the individual as the source of meaning and point of origin of filmic texts, through their consistent and strict adherence to traditional auteurist theories of understanding.

[10] Ibid, 414.
[11] M. Salisbury (ed.), *Burton on Burton*. Revised edition (London: Faber and Faber: 2008), xiv.

Another way in which Burton, as an individual, is positioned as the authorial subject for the films he has directed is the semantic shift operated and worked upon his name. The repeated focus and inclusion of Burton's name functions as both a naming device for the private individual and as a comprehensive way in which to investigate the meaning of all films directed by Burton, above any other categorisation. This specifically promotes and perpetuates the idea that Burton is the central source of authority in the films he has directed, both in terms of professional on-set presence and as a dictator of meaning above any possible audience interpretations. The latter conception of the director encourages fans and academics alike to further their understanding of the man himself in order to further their understanding of 'his' films. The name 'Burton' is therefore expanded to refer to the private individual, as well as the specific aesthetic style, character tropes, and particular nuances of tone exhibited throughout films directed by Tim Burton.

Furthermore, the discourse surrounding Burton's personality strengthens his identification as a source of meaning and champions him as the authorial subject. Burton is characterised as an 'outsider'[12] in Hollywood, known for his eccentric image and quirky mannerisms. However this is precisely part of his appeal to devoted fans, academic critics and general audiences alike since the non-conformist characterisation of both Burton and his films promote an undeniably appealing narrative to contemporary audiences. To be specific, his unconventional personality does not appears to be stifled or oppressed within the Hollywood film industry.[13] The alignment of Burton's films with perceived aspects of his personality can also be identified as a selling point to market and brand his films, resulting in a unified vision through filmic text and the authorial subject. The articulation of loneliness and isolation in the contemporary world is effectively and uniquely expressed through the combination conceptualisations of Burton and his films. One could argue that a deliberate characterisation of Burton is used to proliferate, distribute and sell his films since the characterisation of Burton fulfils a tangible and distinctive feeling. Put simply, the purpose is to fill a gap in the market in order to sell products.

[12] 'Outsider' is put in quotations to mark the notion of this as a constructed image, rather than a factual one, as will be elaborated.

[13] As articulated by Johnny Depp "In not just film but drawings, photographs, thought, insight, and ideas...I have never seen someone so obviously out of place fit right in. His way." [original emphasis]. Taken from M. Salisbury (ed.), *Burton on Burton*, 3.

What it is essential to articulate here is that it is not Burton's actual personal life that provokes my interest, nor am I attempting to examine. Rather what I am suggesting is that it may be more critically productive to examine *how*, *why*, *by whom* and *for what purpose* does the specific discourse that surrounds Burton life and work operate and function, *regardless of how true or not it may be.* It is on these terms that the theory of origin operates.

LADY GAGA AS BODY AUTEUR

By applying this method of critically analysing discourses surrounding authorship another type of creative source can be investigated through music artist Lady Gaga. Whilst not immediately relevant to the world of film and television, it is prudent to include an example of authorship that includes control and creative vision using the body and physical performance as a type of text that produces meaning. From 2008 Stefani Germanotta rebranded herself as Lady Gaga, penning the title as an artificial and constructed alter ego through which she is able use her body, voice and musical ability as a text. The themes most commonly associated with Lady Gaga which distinguish and underline her characterisation and realisation as a cultural icon are her strong feminist attitudes, her relentless advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights and her determination to undermine detrimental dominant ideologies. In essence, the intention is to break down barriers for the marginalised and oppressed within society. Essentially what Burton appears to do for other self-titled 'quirky' film enthusiasts, Gaga purports to do for people who identify as gay, lesbian or transgender.

Many of Lady Gaga's songs are understood to support LGBTQ+ communities and this is most obviously demonstrated by the title track of her second album *Born This Way.*[14] Her nominal single specifically promotes the idea of self-love for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered individuals. She has also spoken and attended many events concerning gay pride and equality including the National Equality March Rally (Washington, 2009) and the Gay Pride Rally (New York, 2013). In addition to which Lady Gaga promoted political and social reform when she spoke out against the US 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' legislation which encourages the discrimination of gay soldiers within the American army.

[14] Gaga, Lady (2011) 'Born This Way', Track 2 from the album *Born This Way*. Written by Stefani Germanotta and Jeppe Laursen. Produced by Stefani Germanotta, Jeppe Laursen, Fernando Garibay and Paul Blair. (California: Interscope Records).

Furthermore, a critique of the lyrics and imagery in Lady Gaga's music videos may elicit and echo feminist film theory elaborated in a study by Adam Sorice. Sorice identifies Lady Gaga's use of a radical feminine darkness with a need to reclaim the space for freedom and creativity, free from patriarchal rule.[15] Sorice specifically identifies this through the signification of Gaga's lyrics in her song 'Dance in the Dark' where she draws on other female icons, such as Marilyn Monroe and Diana, Princess of Wales, whose identities have been shaped and oppressed through patriarchal rule. Gaga expresses a desire for solidarity and freedom of expression, as Sorice elaborates 'Together, radical darkness and cultural female identity can join forces, as it were, to further empower women, both culturally and sexually and further oppose patriarchy's attempts to limit female cultural agency.'[16]

The way in which Lady Gaga functions as an authorial subject can now be reviewed. By consistently using lyrics, identifications, images and ideas around the oppression of gender and sexuality in modern culture, Lady Gaga opens up a space through popular music in which to discuss and deconstruct these issues. A prime example can be identified in Halberstam's *Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender and the End of Normal.*[17] Halberstam's choice of title, and consequent theorising of concepts such as gender politics, challenges to heteronormativity, and the continual questioning of how traditional power relations operate, are repeatedly and consistently associated and aligned with Lady Gaga herself. Halberstam specifically and deliberately represents the singer as the embodiment of a specific and contemporary brand of feminism, therefore significantly *attributing to her as the author* of a multi-faceted discourse. As an individual constructed through music and performance, Lady Gaga is reworked, elevated and expanded to combine and reference an entire branch of ideology. It is here that the theory of origin searches for reasons as to why Lady Gaga has been positioned as the author of a branch of discourse that, at first sight, looks to be beyond the power and influence of popular music.

To play devil's advocate for a moment, the categorisation and elevation Halberstam attributes to Lady Gaga could be considered inappropriate, inaccurate and misleading. One critic to voice his concern is Derrit Mason, who finds three important faults with

[15] A. Sorice, *'The girl who lives behind the aura': A Dissertation on Lady Gaga* (2014) published in series of blogposts at https://adamsorice.wordpress.com/2014/01/14/gaga-dissertation/

[16] Ibid.

[17] J. J. Halberstam, *Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender and the End of Normal* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012).

Halberstam's *Gaga Feminism.* Firstly, there is not enough analysis of Lady Gaga herself, either through her lyrics, performances or music videos. Secondly, there is not a precise definition and understanding of what 'Gaga feminism' is. Thirdly, Mason finds the novelty and distinct differentiation Halberstam attributes to Gaga feminism as 'curious' because of the historical lineage that this branch of feminism in clearly indebted to from previous studies of queer theory, including Halberstam herself.[18]

In direct opposition to Mason's position, where fault is found in the Halberstam's discourse, I find areas of investigation. Instead of questioning Gaga's appropriateness as a vehicle for these cultural debates (therefore questioning her as a valid source and author of the texts) which fall into the prescriptive tendencies of auteurism, attention should instead be paid to *why* Halberstam (as a highly respected queer theorist) may have felt the need to characterise and use Lady Gaga in this way. This is where the theory of origin operates and investigates in order to generate answers, or at least more productive questions. Is it therefore possible to assume that within the conceptualisation of the musician as an authorial subject, critics and fans alike *do* find an appropriate, flexible and thoroughly adequate vehicle to discuss these cultural issues. Proof of their very existence and popularity indicates a thorough consensus between fans and activists alike. Indeed Halberstam him/herself addresses this issue when s/he writes 'To be clear, what I am calling 'gaga' here certainly derives from Lady Gaga but it is not limited to Lady Gaga.'[19] Therefore whilst Gaga-feminism is perhaps produced from and embodied within the music artist, it also may be emblematic of a wider and more complex discourse. In Lady Gaga this discourse finds a home, a mother-creator-figure, who is able to voice these matters in a way that is relatable and identifiable to others who feel the same.

NETFLIX AS DISTRIBUTOR AUTEUR?

The last case study will look at the production ability of the video-on-demand streaming service Netflix. A major issue that Netflix faces is the high cost of acquiring content for its services since copyright costs for film and television programmes are high. One way in which Netflix has overcome this issue is through co-financing the production of television shows in exchange for exclusive streaming rights. Consequently the term 'Netflix Originals' is used to denote content commissioned exclusively by the company.

[18] D. Mason, 'The Trouble with Going Gaga' (2013) 4:1 *Reviews in Cultural Theory,* 19-24, 21.
[19] Halberstam (2012), xii.

The semantic choice of 'original' emphasises Netflix as the driving creative force behind both texts, even though (in complete opposition and contrast to the traditional auteur theory) Netflix, neither collectively as a company nor through individual members of staff, had any influence over the creative origins of the texts in either scripting or production. The only causal effect Netflix have is through pure finance. For example popular 'Netflix Originals' shows such as *House of Cards* (2013-present) and *Orange is the New Black* (2013-present) are both adaptations from other previous texts. Therefore Netflix, as a brand with major capital and cultural currency, is able to overpower any factual authorial brand, by assigning, attributing and titling the programmes to themselves, where the only right to authorship has come through finance alone. Whilst they may legally claim originality in terms of expression and style, the semantic choice of 'original' is quite misleading and arguably, false.

Another profound and startling example of Netflix's manipulation and power over branding concerns the detective drama series *The Fall* (2013-present). Originally produced and broadcast by the BBC in 2013, Netflix bought exclusive rights to broadcast the series in the US and Latin America a year later. In this instance, Netflix bought the rights to a pre-existing programme from an equally significant organisation -the BBC- with its own distinctive and globally recognised branding. Indeed the BBC had already perpetuated its own authorial branding of the television crime drama. Claiming the text as its own, the BBC choose to categorise the show as 'BBC Original British Drama' due to the production being set primarily in Belfast with a predominately British cast. However, in a revealing overturn and controversial stance, Netflix also choose to brand the programme as a 'Netflix Original'. In this case Netflix only paid for *distribution* rights and plays absolutely no part in the cost of production.

From this comparison the differences between authority, ownership and the constructed point of origin over a televisual text can be critically analysed and understood from the visual forms of communication and discourse surrounding the television series. Although referring to Hulu's similar acquisition and claim over the Israeli text *Prisoners of War* the critic Karen Petruska perfectly illuminates this point of contention:

> In most instances, the program in question has enjoyed its world première on the network that claims it—the distributor has given the producers a means to reach an audience, and in exchange, they claim a sort of *ownership* stake in that series. But when Hulu promotes an international series as an original, that program has generally enjoyed

> a successful run in at least one other nation prior to its online première in the U.S. *'Original,' therefore, seems a misnomer.*[20] [own emphasis]

Whilst this may seem pedantic to argue over semantics, the fact remains that *The Fall* was not originally sourced by Netflix in any way, shape, or form – therefore the term 'Netflix Originals' is a seriously questionable use of branding.

CONCLUSION

When considering the notion of authorship the closest identification found is the critic Janet Staiger who conceptualises it as a 'reading strategy'[21] and a 'site of discourse'[22] and yet she is quick to dismiss it, stating that looking at constructed ideas of authors and authorship is essentially futile, naming them as entirely 'fictional'.[23] However, when Staiger identifies the author as no more than a fictional construction of the reader, is it not then significant and illuminating to look at how these modes of thinking came into operation, why they operate and what their perceived functions may be? In favour of this method is the inherently flexible, open and malleable form of this theory, as it can be applied to different modes of authorship, and most significantly, does not prescribe a model answer in the same way the traditional theories of authorship leaned towards, allowing the information gathered and sources analysed to formulate a conclusion instead. By using the method that underlines *mise-en-scène* analysis, this can in fact be based on empirical evidence, as I have shown, by looking critically at the ways in which authorship around text has been constructed through various academic, commercial or spectoral sources.

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[20] K. *Petruska,* 'Content That Travels: International Content and Original Programming on U.S. Streaming Sites' *in Flow Online Journal Austin: University of Texas, 2015).*

[21] 21 J. Staiger, 'Authorship Approaches' in *Authorship and Film.* (eds.) David A. Gerstner and Janet Staiger. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 27–57, 45.

[22] Ibid, 46

[23] Ibid, 46

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Divided to the Vein: Defining a West Indian Self

Tess Hokin

This article explores the development of West Indian cultural identity through its expression in poetry from and about the West Indies. Early forms of cultural expression from the Anglophone Caribbean were frequently realised through mimicry of British poetic forms, themes, and language. Later post-Independence poetry frequently denounced such reverence and aimed to identify the West Indian poetic voice with a conception of 'Africa' as an alternative parent culture. Ultimately however, neither Africa nor Britain provides a suitable comparison for the fragmented and diverse West Indies. Rather, the most apt expressions of West Indian cultural identity are found in poetry which focuses on racial hybridity, West Indian landscapes, and local dialects.

> I who am poisoned with the blood of both,
> Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?
> I who have cursed
> The drunken officer of British rule, how choose
> Between this Africa and the English tongue I love?
>
> Derek Walcott, 'A Far Cry From Africa'.[1]

What makes a poem distinctly 'West Indian'? Furthermore, what makes a *person* West Indian? These questions of identity, of a unique 'voice', are a pervasive concern of contemporary West Indian verse.[2] No one race, language, tradition, or location fully encapsulates the fluid diversity of the Caribbean archipelago, and its colonial past isolates its citizens from the history of their ancestors. Poetry from the West Indies thus frequently concerns itself with the articulation of an 'authentic' West Indian cultural identity, yet disparate cultural origins and a tumultuous history have made defining

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[1] D. Walcott, 'A Far Cry From Africa', *Selected Poems,* (London: Faber: 2007), 6, lines 26-30.
[2] L. A. Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), x.

what constitutes 'authenticity' an arduous task. This piece explores the development of West Indian poetic identity from its earliest origins in mimicry of European forms through to contemporary assertions of hybridity and creolisation. I examine some of the techniques employed by West Indian authors to solidify a unique poetic voice, which include re-imaginings of colonial historical narratives, identification with parent cultures, the use of dialect verse, and an emphasis on what Kamau Brathwaite terms the 'Little Tradition', or the everyday lives of working people.[3]

Laurence Breiner highlights in his *Introduction to West Indian Poetry* that while the 'West Indies' and the 'Antilles' are often used as synonyms for the polyglot Caribbean Archipelago, 'Antilles' is often 'defined politically, so that its precise meaning depends on the nationality of the speaker'.[4] By contrast, the 'West Indies' is now widely used to refer to the English-speaking islands of the Caribbean.[5] As such, I define West Indian poetry as poetry from authors in or from the Anglophone Caribbean.

While individual islands are steadily gaining endemic poetic identities it is useful for this discussion to speak of a broader West Indian literary tradition.[6] This is not least due to Bruce King's claim that 'no one country has yet had a sufficient number of major authors to be able to speak of a literature of its own'.[7] As such, in this context it is currently more fruitful to recognise the similarities between authors from different islands than the differences. Furthermore, trans-nationalism is a common thread among contemporary West Indian poets; Christian Campbell is of the Bahamas and Trinidad and Tobago, while Lasana Sekou was born in Guyana and raised on St. Maarten, to cite just two of many examples. Attempting to sketch out island-specific literatures thus becomes a muddled and ineffective process if any conclusions about poetic expression of cultural identity are to be reached.

As Breiner identifies, 'the territories of the Anglophone Caribbean share with the rest of the region approximately the same historical circumstances and experience the same intellectual trajectory'.[8] This in turn produces shared aspects of a cultural identity.

[3] K. Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1971), 309.
[4] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* xv.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid., 102.
[7] Bruce King, 'Introduction', *West Indian Literature,* ed. Bruce King, (London: Macmillan, 1979), 1-8.
[8] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 59.

Correspondingly, I identify significant overlaps in the expressions of that identity in poetry between the English speaking islands. While other Caribbean islands such as Haiti and Cuba enjoyed long-standing traditions of local literary activity and readership, no such activity existed in the West Indies until the twentieth century.[9]

King claims that for the early West Indian writer, 'local society offered few opportunities for artists and emigration usually followed'.[10] A lack in both printing facilities and local demand for poetry meant that West Indian poets who could afford to do so frequently moved abroad or travelled to and from the islands. While poets such as Claude McKay found platforms for their poetry through the Harlem Renaissance movement in New York, a more significant number of West Indian poets converged around the BBC's *Caribbean Voices* radio program in London.

Anne Spry Rush highlights the crucial role that *Caribbean Voices* played in both promoting West Indian Literature to British and Caribbean audiences (thus increasing writers' economic prospects) and in articulating the 'the complicated mixture of loyalties and identity' present in the West Indian literary community.[11] Although the program was recorded in London, 'it presented poetry and prose exclusively written by West Indians about their homes, their experiences, and their ideas'.[12] West Indian poetry is thus essentially diasporic in nature, and in speaking of West Indian poets, I refer to both poets writing in the West Indies and poets from the West Indies writing abroad. The fact that West Indian poetic voice first found a large and loyal audience abroad is illustrative and symptomatic of the complex relations between the colonising country and the colonised.

THE FILTER OF ENGLISH EYES

Colonialism has had a profound influence on the formation of West Indian poetic identity. As Paula Burnett notes, the physical displacement, trauma, deculturation, and lack of black political or economic agency brought on by slavery has had resounding impacts on West Indians long after its abolition, and for a long time resulted in a

[9] Ibid.
[10] King, 'Introduction', *West Indian Literature,* 2
[11] A. S. Rush, *Bonds of Empire: West Indians and Britishness from Victoria to Decolonization* (Oxford : Oxford, 2011), 196.
[12] Ibid., 199

'common assumption that… Caribbean people 'lived inarticulate and destitute in a political, social, and cultural void'.[13] That the cultural heritage of Africa had survived and transformed through expressions in slave song and folklore was of little consequence to early West Indian writers, for whom 'culture' and 'literature' were organised on strictly European terms. The Martinician Franz Fanon articulates the issue thus:

> Every colonized people- in other words every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created- finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards.[14]

The mimicry of European form and language seen in much early West Indian poetry can thus be seen as a direct product of colonialism. To assert a literary identity for a largely black population who, in the eyes of the coloniser, would 'never surpass the most limited intellectual circle',[15] meant that West Indians had first to prove their ability to match the most prestigious European writers. Such was the endeavour of Cambridge-educated free black Francis Williams, who composed a masterful Latin ode in honour of every new governor in Jamaica in the mid-eighteenth century.[16] Laurence Breiner writes of his only surviving text, 'in that his poem is imitative, and problematic as to both language and audience, Williams is emblematic of any pioneer West Indian poet'.[17] As a political and social gesture in the dawn of West Indian literary history, Williams' poem is not a representation of any particular aspect of West Indian cultural identity, but an assertion to the coloniser that such an identity is *possible*.

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[13] P. Burnett, Introduction, *The Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse in English* ed. Paula Burnett, (London: Penguin, 1986), xxix.
[14] F. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks,* trans. Charles Lam Markmann, (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1967), 18.
[15] "La varieté melanienne… ne sortira jamais du cercle intellectuel le plus restraint." My translation. From A. compte de Gobineau, 'Essai Sur l'Inegalité des Races Humaines' (Paris : Firmin Didot Frères, 1853-1855), 339
[16] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 105.
[17] Ibid, 106.

Mimicry of European form and language remained the expressive mechanism of the Empire Poetry League of Jamaica founded in 1923.[18] Unlike Williams, however, the League's poets were neither political nor masterful. Derek Walcott denounced their output as a 'mausoleum' filled with 'the mummies of the Miltonic, Wordsworthian, Keatsian, and the Robert Bridges-ian'.[19] H. Gillies Clerk's 'Ode to the Jamaican Mocking Bird' exhibits the imitative and patriotic pitfalls of the League's poetry.

> Hail Seraph of Jamaica! Hail, sweet bird!
> Sweet when throughout the day,
> The joyful roundelay,
> Pouring through all the lattice-leaved trees is heard;
> Or when pimento branches glist'ning play
> Fragrant accompaniments to thy wondrous song:
> Perched on thy dry twig rostrum,
> Throne of thy wide-spread kingdom,
> Whence thou dost rule the world with thy melodious song[20]

As Breiner notes of this poem, 'a pseudo-Keatsian ode is not entirely appropriate for this subject, if only because so serious a form seems at odds with the connotations of "mocking"'.[21] Moreover, later lines abandon the description of Jamaican landscape touched upon by the 'pimento branches' in favour of distinctly English 'leas, glens, dells, and wildwood' and references to Greek mythology.[22] Here the subject matter of West Indian nature seems incompatible with the English poetic form, a discord since immortalised in Kamau Brathwaite's famous phrase, 'the hurricane does not roar in pentameters'.[23] Clerk's evocation of a 'throne' and 'wide-spread kingdom' (as well as the League's own eponym) indicates a misplaced reverie for an Empire responsible for slavery in Jamaica. If such devotion to Britain could be tenuously attributed to the spirit of English Romanticism, Clerk's poem is again misguided, as Wordsworth expresses his aim in 'Preface to the Lyrical Ballads' as 'fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of

[18] Ibid, 107.
[19] D. Walcott, 'Some Jamaican Poets', (03 Aug. 1957) *Public Opinion,* 7.
[20] H. Gillies Clerk, 'Ode to the Jamaican Mocking Bird', in *Voices from Summerland,* ed. J. E. C. McFarlane (London: Fowler Wright, 1929), 62-67 (62), lines 1-9.
[21] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 110.
[22] Ibid.
[23] K. Brathwaite, *History of the Voice: The Development of Nation Language in Anglophone Caribbean Poetry* (London: New Beacon, 1984), 10.

the real language of men'.[24] [25] Rather than achieving this aim, Clerk engages in a ventriloquism of a tradition, landscape and language that bears little connection to his reality. A West Indian poetic identity is represented here, if at all, as an awkward and distant subsidiary of an already expired English poetic identity, distinguishable only by infrequent references to local nature.

As Burnett notes, however, poems like Clerk's 'had a symbolic importance that transcended their weaknesses'.[26] The incongruity between European form and West Indian reality exhibited in poems like Clerk's gave rise in the literary community to an awareness of what Trinidadian poet Wayne Brown terms 'the filter of English eyes'.[27] In other words, a realisation grew among West Indian poets that their perception of their surroundings was mediated by the gaze of the mother-country.[28]

Such awareness, argues Breiner, was fostered in a 'context of increasing personal and national self-consciousness'.[29] Economic difficulties imposed by England during the 1930's and the Second World War led to widespread movements for Independence, resulting in the formation of the Federation of the West Indies in 1958.[30] While the Federation collapsed shortly afterwards, 'a will for nationhood among British West Indians' remained,[31] and a host of politically charged literary journals like *Kyk-Over-Al, Bim,* and *Caribbean Quarterly* emerged,[32] solidifying the relationship between political independence, a unified national identity, and Literature in the West Indies.

Poets began to assert West Indian *difference* in their work, expressed through the metaphor of Caribbean nature. Daniel Williams' 'We who do not know the snow'

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[24] W. Wordsworth, 'Preface to the Lyrical Ballads' in *Wordsworth's Preface to Lyrical Ballads* ed. W. J. B Owen, (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1957), 112-133.

[25] As an interesting sidenote, Saeko Yoshikawa has written a book crediting the legacy of Wordsworth's work with the invention of tourism in the Lake District in the nineteenth century, suggesting links between a poetic romanticisation of landscape and tourism discourse. (S. Yoshikawa, *William Wordsworth and the Invention of Tourism, 1820-1900,* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014).

[26] Burnett, 'Introduction', *Caribbean Verse in English,* liv.

[27] W. Brown, 'The Poetry of the Forties, Part II', *Trinidad Guardian*, Sept. 20, 1970), 11

[28] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 110.

[29] Ibid, 112.

[30] Ibid, 120.

[31] E. Wallace, 'The West Indies Federation: Decline and Fall', (1962) 17:2 *International Journal*, 269-288.

[32] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 95.

contests that West Indians 'still know the light bright cotton cushioning the breeze; / Not cold but warm in the drowsy pillow',[33] while H. D. Carberry's 'Nature' begins

> We have neither Summer nor Winter,
> …We have instead the days
> When gold sun shines on the lush green canefields[34]

Here, the persistent use of words like 'but' and 'instead' upholds British nature as the norm from which Caribbean nature diverges, even as the poems herald the value of their deviations from that norm. This kind of 'defensive rhetoric' is a common feature of early West Indian nature poetry.[35] It represents the struggle to remove the 'filter of English eyes' and assert cultural difference from the Empire. This struggle is complicated however, by the spectre of colonial rule which exists in European names for West Indian locales, flora, and fauna.

> The empire of naming colonised even the trees,
> referred our leaves to their originals;
> This was the blight on our minds, a speckled disease[36]

Walcott's lines from *Tiepolo's Hound* bring to mind fruits like the 'star apple' and 'sea grape', or Jamaica's counties of 'Surrey' and 'Cornwall', each defined by their relation to a universalised European norm. For the West Indian poet, nature becomes 'profoundly historicised and politicised…landscape often registers histories that have been occluded by the official record'.[37] Post-independence West Indian nature poetry thus uses local landscape as a site through which places can be renamed, territories remapped, and dominant historical narratives re-written in assertion of an indigenous cultural identity. Nature is never neutral for the West Indian poet.

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[33] D. Williams, 'We who do not know the snow' in *Caribbean Voices*, ed. John Figueroa (London: Evans Brothers, 1971), 29, lines 1-8.
[34] H.D. Carberry, 'Nature' in *Caribbean Voices*, ed. John Figueroa (London: Evans Brothers, 1971), 25, lines 1-5.
[35] Breiner, p. *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 123.
[36] D. Walcott, *Tiepolo's Hound* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000), 92.
[37] S. P. Casteel, 'The Language of Landscape' in *The Routledge Companion to Anglophone Caribbean Literature,* ed. M. A. Bucknor and A. Donnell (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 480-489; 483.

BACK TO AFRICA, MISS MATTIE?

So far we have seen the development of a West Indian poetic tradition as distinct from the English tradition, its direct links to the cultivation of a national and cultural identity, and the use of Caribbean nature as a politicised metaphor for history. As desire grew for a national identity defined independently of Europe, many West Indians aligned themselves with Trinidadian essayist C.L.R. James' view that 'the road to West Indian national identity lay through Africa'.[38] Factors such as African independence and global Black Power movements contributed to a wider awareness of African culture, 'transforming the middle passage from a degraded point of origin to a traumatic but finite episode'.[39] Symbolically, 'Africa' as a concept in the West Indian imagination (as opposed a geographical location) allowed for a shift in racial attitudes and situated Afro-Caribbeans within a larger cultural diaspora with a rich and sophisticated history. With specific regards to poetry, however, Breiner determines that most writers viewed African literary heritage as 'a polished body of lore passed on by a neutral process of transmission that discourages modification'.[40] With the notable exception of Kamau Brathwaite, use of African poetic forms is rare, and African culture is frequently oversimplified and idealised. Basil Smith's 'Tom Tom' is one illustrative example.

> …make my blood boil
> to the temperature of the Sahara!
> Teach me to dance
> the way my grandmother
> has forgotten
> …
> Then,
> and only then,
> shall I be a *man.*[41]

It is clear that Smith's poem has little to do with geographical Africa, which includes such culturally diverse countries as Morocco and Botswana. Rather, Smith engages with

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[38] C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (New York: Vintage, 1963), 402.
[39] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 141.
[40] Ibid., 142.
[41] B. Smith, 'Tom Tom' in *Breaklight*, ed. Andrew Salkey (New York: Anchor Books, 1973), 73, lines 8-18.

tropes of dance, drum, and African deities common to the idea of 'Negro Africa…a sort of emotional ancestral home'[42] through which the poet (and on a larger scale, society) can fully realise his black diasporic identity.

'Africa' in Rastafarian chants and reggae songs (which, as we will see, constitute viable branches of the West Indian poetic tradition) appears as 'a world of peace, polygamy, and handsome elephants at a safe distance…as transcendent heaven or as earth-bound utopia'.[43]

West Indian notions of 'Africa' have been most important to poetry, however, for what they legitimize, asserts Laurence Breiner.[44] Firstly, if oratory expression constituted poetry in a now idealised 'Africa', then West Indian slave songs, Rastafarian chants, and performed monologues could reasonably be viewed in the same light. This opens up an immense reservoir of material for use for the West Indian poet which had hitherto been disregarded as 'popular' or 'folk' culture. Moreover, the discovery of the links between African languages and West Indian dialect gave rise to Brathwaite's notion of 'nation language', a term which allowed for valorisation of local speech because unlike 'dialect', 'it does not have any connotations of debasement or inferiority or colonialism'.[45] Finally, and most crucially for this discussion, the focus on 'Africa' made possible Braithwaite's theory of the 'Little Tradition', in which West Indian poets could articulate the experiences of the everyday lives of working people, and thus express an authentic West Indian identity.

ROOTS IN ROOTLESSNESS: TOWARDS CREOLISATION

Louise Bennett's 'Back to Africa' provides a synthesis of the points brought about by the influence of 'Africa' and the movement towards creolisation in the development of West Indian poetic identity.

> Back to Africa, Miss Mattie?
> You no know wha you da seh?

[42] Anonymous article, '"Africa" in West Indian Poetry', (1955) 4:1 *Caribbean Quarterly,* 5-13.
[43] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 159.
[44] Ibid., 143.
[45] K. Brathwaite, 'Caribbean Writing Today', (1978) 2:3 *NAM Speaks*, 32.

You haf fe come from somewhe fus
Before you go back deh!

Me know say dat you great great great
Granma was African
But Mattie, doan you great great great
Granpa was Englishman?

Den you great granmader fader
By your fader side was Jew?
....

Go a foreign, seek you fortune,
But no tell nobody say
You dah go fe seek you homelan,
For a right deh so you deh![46]

Bennett provides a humorous yet astute social commentary, exposing the flaws in an idealisation of 'Africa' as a 'homelan' in the creole West Indian society. Instead, Bennett urges 'Miss Mattie' to see her home and identity as culturally and geographically rooted in the West Indies, 'for a right deh so you deh!'.[47]

Mervyn Morris' 1967 essay, 'On Reading Louise Bennett, Seriously' transformed Bennett from 'local joke'[48] to internationally acclaimed poet.[49] Quoting Robert Verity, Morris asserts 'Louise Bennett, by the *authenticity* of her *dialect* verse, has given sensitive and penetrating *artistic expression* to our *National Character*…' (my emphasis).[50] Bennett, according to Morris, should be considered a poet because her work expresses an authentic cultural identity, achieved through oral verse that focuses on the 'popular':[51]

[46] L. Bennett, 'Back to Africa' in *Caribbean Verse* ed. Paula Burnett, (London: Penguin, 1986), 31-32, lines 1-36.
[47] I have not provided a 'translation' of poems written in 'nation language' as, in my view, to do so detracts from the original work. For the unfamiliar reader however, Bennett's final phrase conveys the notion that Miss Mattie's homeland has been under her nose all along.
[48] M. Morris, 'On Reading Louise Bennett, Seriously', (1967) *Jamaica Journal,* 69-74.
[49] Burnett, 'Introduction', *Caribbean Verse,* xxxix.
[50] R. Verity, quoted in Morris, 'On Reading Louise Bennett, Seriously', 70.
[51] Ibid.

the dialect language and everyday lives of working people. It is important to note that Standard English 'has come to be recognised as a component of nation language…habitual code-switching along the creole continuum has become a feature characteristic of West Indian speech'.[52] Authentic West Indian cultural identity need not be expressed exclusively in 'nation language', Standard English, or even, for that matter, English; its credibility is marked by its plurality. Having thus defined the mode of expression for authentic West Indian identity, a definition of its 'popular' subject matter is necessary through a summary of Kamau Brathwaite's concepts of the 'Great Tradition' and the 'Little Tradition'.

Brathwaite identifies the 'Great Tradition', the powerful minority that control a society, in contrast to the 'Little Tradition', the working population or the 'folk'. These are cultural rather than literary categorisations. For the West Indies, the 'Great Tradition' is located in Europe with the white coloniser, while the 'Little Tradition' originates in the African-Caribbean slave culture of the plantation.[53] The artist or writer acts as a mediator between the two traditions, with Brathwaite and others moving to re-value the 'Little Tradition'. Barbadian novelist George Lamming's *The Pleasures of Exile* laid important groundwork for this theory. Lamming writes,

> For the first time the West Indian peasant became other than a cheap source of labour. He became, through the novelist's eye, a living existence…it is the West Indian novel that has restored the West Indian peasant to his true and original personality[54]

Lamming's claim creates a powerful and essentially causal link between West Indian Literature and the cultural identity of the peasant, wherein the full subjectivity of the peasant or slave is restored exclusively through literature. It thus confers a kind of *duty* on to the writer to articulate the everyday experience of the 'folk', with the expression of that experience becoming the ultimate assertion of authentic West Indian identity. Rather than exclusively ascribing the 'Little Tradition' to the experience of the 'peasant' or 'slave', however, I take Breiner's view that in a contemporary context, Brathwaite's

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[52] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 180.

[53] C. Campbell, 'Folking Up the Criticism' in *The Routledge Companion* ed. M. A. Bucknor and A. Donnell (Oxford: Routledge, 2011), 384.

[54] G. Lamming, *The Pleasures of Exile,* (1960; Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 39.

'folk' refers simply to the everyday lives of working people, as exhibited in Bennet's poem.[55]

'Africa' played an integral role in aiding the removal of the 'filter of English eyes', and remains a fundamental cultural and symbolic resource for West Indian poets. Ultimately, however, like 'Europe', 'Africa' comprises just one element of the hybrid, creolised West Indian cultural identity. Shabine from Walcott's 'The Schooner *Flight*' personifies such West Indian creolisation forty years after 'A Far Cry from Africa', seeming to answer the author's earlier question of 'where shall I turn, divided to the vein?'

> I'm just a red nigger who love the sea
> I had a sound colonial education
> I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,
> and either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation.[56]

Walcott facilitates an emotional connection between his black body and the West Indian landscape via the sea in the first line. Spoken in creole grammar, this line gives way to an acknowledgement of his colonial education, expressed in Standard English. Summarising both his linguistic and racial hybridity, Walcott allows Shabine to speak for an empowered West Indian nation. Through a rather meandering and agonised trajectory, we have seen that authentic West Indian cultural identity has come to be expressed in poetry via perhaps the most obvious markers: its people, language, and place.

[55] Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry,* 1.
[56] D. Walcott, 'The Schooner *Flight*' in *Selected Poems* (London: Faber: 2007), 114, lines. 40-44.

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Conflict and Alienation in Mahler's First: A Critical Analysis

Emma Loughlin

This article focuses on critically reviewing the current state of analysis of Gustav Mahler's First Symphony, with reference to score analysis of the work. This article presents the argument that the most coherent interpretation of the symphony can be drawn through analysing it specifically in relation to Adorno's theories on alienation, conflict, disintegration and truth in Mahler's symphonies. Many music historians have claimed that this symphony is most coherently interpreted as conveying the narrative of an heroic protagonist triumphing over adversity – this article argues, however, that the opposite of such a narrative is portrayed by the music of this symphony.

Mahler's symphonies have been extensively analysed in terms of their profound psychological impact, specifically, in relation to expressions of violent or disturbing ideas such as child death, decay, isolation and alienation. However, for all the existing analyses of Mahler's symphonies, there is surprisingly little analysis of violence, despair and psychological prompting in his First Symphony. Historical and contemporary analysis of the First does not, across various academic texts, reach consistent conclusions. Often analyses suggest this is an uncharacteristic work for Mahler. Sometimes, it is suggested that the key interest of analysis for this symphony lies in viewing it as a template for later works.[1] This study will examine some of the potential reasons why various analyses reach inconsistent conclusions, and have ascribed traits to the First that seem uncharacteristic in relation to Mahler's other symphonies. More importantly, this article concludes that the First instead exemplifies some of the musical characteristics which have been considered definitive of Mahler's symphonic writing since Theodor Adorno wrote *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* ('*AMP*' henceforth): musical expressions of violence and alienation.

For the purposes of this article, the idea of violence being expressed through music refers

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[1] N. Cardus, *Gustav Mahler: His Mind and his Music* (London, 1965), 53-54.

to Adorno's ideas on the capacity Mahler's music has to 'enrage those who have made their peace with the world by reminding them of what they must exorcise.'[2] In other words, Mahler can remind an audience of what is wrong in the world, whether they expect to be reminded or not. His music regularly subverts classical expectations, often expressing powerfully distressing ideas, such as child death and alienation. This article explores the means by which he does this in the First. Central to this analysis has been Adorno's *AMP*, a book described as crucially shaping the critical understanding of Mahler's music since it was published.[3] Adorno's writing on Mahler expresses central ideas in this analysis of the music: the idea of 'terror' in the Finale of the First[4], and the use of irony in his musical storytelling[5]. This article utilises many of Adorno's ideas on Mahler's use of motifs, tone and the orchestra, and applies them specifically to analysis of the First.

'THROUGH ADVERTSITY TO THE STARS'

Beethoven has been credited with defining the form of the modern symphony.[6] Beethoven's 'personal motto' was, reportedly, '*per aspera ad astra*' ('through adversity to the stars').[7] This has become a recurring idea in score analysis: the description of the symphony in terms of a '*per aspera ad astra* narrative. Essentially, through the use of dominant and subsidiary themes, sonata forms within the movements, and return to the tonic key by the final movement, the music supposedly represents triumph over adversity. Constantin Floros asserts that this 'motto' is fundamental to analysis of the First, describing the 'idea of transcendence and overcoming suffering' as the 'basis' for the symphony.[8] Due to a determination to fit the '*per aspera ad astra*' narrative onto analysis of almost any symphony since Beethoven, there has been a common bias amongst music historians to interpret some kind of message about triumph over

[2] T. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago, 1992), 5.
[3] J. Johnson, 'The Breaking of the Voice' (2011) 8 *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 179.
[4] T. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago, 1992), 118.
[5] Ibid, p.96.
[6] C. Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music (California: 1989), 265, and A. David, Beethoven's Influence on *Modern Musical Thought* (2007), http://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1010&context=ugrs, 4.
[7] J. Holly, *A Presentation on the Life and Music of Ludwig van Beethoven* (2013), http://www.slideshare.net/jpholly/beethoven-27224139, 9.
[8] C. Floros, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies* (Cambridge, 1993), 141.

adversity in whatever symphony is in question, if remotely possible. Arguably, this bias is partly responsible for the inconsistent conclusions repeatedly drawn about Mahler's First.

This article presents an interpretation of Mahler's First as shaped and dominated by ideas of violence, conflict and fear: contrary to regular descriptions of the ending as 'triumphant'[9], it ends on an ironic and aggressive note.

DEVELOPMENT OF MOTIFS

A central point in the argument for an interpretation of the First as a violent and ironic piece is to focus on Mahler's use of motifs within the symphony. They have already been analysed by writers including Mitchell, Floros, Barford and Lea, but this article offers an alternate analysis that casts the overall 'meaning' of the symphony in a different light to their various conclusions.[10]

Fig.1 – First movement, cellos (bars 62-66).

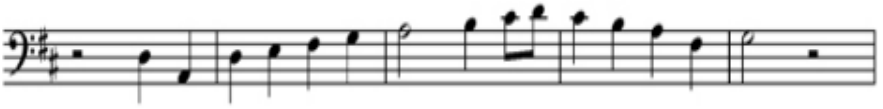

Fig.1 is typically characterised as one of the principal 'Nature' themes in the first movement, presented as a significant piece of evidence supporting interpretations of this symphony as telling the story of a youthful, heroic protagonist triumphing over adversity.[11] Apart from it simply being a lyrical melody in a major key, the reason most frequently presented in favour of this motif characterising the first movement to set a scene of 'spring, happy dreams'[12] is that the melody line is taken directly from *Ging heut' heut' Morgen übers Feld* ('I walked across the fields this morning'), the second in Mahler's earlier song cycle, *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen* ('Songs of a Wayfarer'). The song this melody originates from concerns a protagonist walking through various

[9] P. Barford, *Mahler Symphonies and Songs* (London, 1970), 19.
[10] D. Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years* (London, 1975), 152.
[11] P. Barford, *Mahler Symphonies and Songs* (London, 1970), 19.
[12] http://www.good-music-guide.com/reviews/111-mahler-1-intro.htm (2012).

pleasant pastoral settings, admiring the world around him. The first verse is:

Ging heut morgen übers Feld,	*I walked across the fields this morning;*
Tau noch auf den Gräsern hing;	*dew still hung on every blade of grass.*
Sprach zu mir der lust'ge Fink:	*The merry finch spoke to me,*
"Ei du! Gelt? Guten Morgen! Ei gelt?	*"Hey! Isn't it? Good morning! Isn't it?*
Du! Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?	*You! Isn't it becoming a fine world?*
Zink! Zink! Schön und flink!	*Chirp! Chirp! Fair and sharp!*
Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!"	*How the world delights me!"*[13]

Lyrics such as this from the original song might initially support the interpretation of the first movement as conveying a pleasant, pastoral setting as the opening for a hero-based symphonic narrative. However, this interpretation overlooks both the original context of *Ging heut' Morgen übers Feld* within the song cycle, and its re-placing within the context of the symphony. The song itself is originally from a context in which the exploration and enjoyment of nature is being sought as an escape and distraction from torment (of unrequited love). After exploring the beauty and happiness nature has to offer, the song ends with the protagonist declaring, 'Now will my happiness also begin? No, no – the happiness I mean can never bloom!' Raymond Knapp interprets the beautiful, happy imagery present in this song in relation to the singer's detachment and misery, describing how, 'the cuckoo's call [in the music accompanying the singer] has become a taunt, representing the merriment of others from which the singer is estranged...'[14] Placing the song Mahler has chosen to quote in its original context supports the idea that there is something lacking in the interpretation of the first movement as straightforwardly presenting a 'true spring atmosphere' and 'poetically perceived forest idyll.'[15]

Furthermore, this interpretation ignores analysis of Mahler's placing of this melody in

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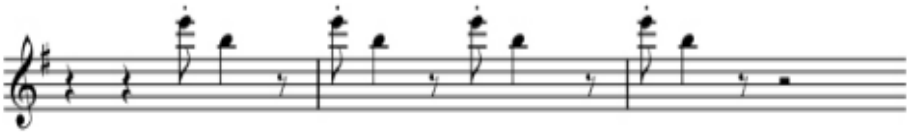
[14] R. Knapp, *Symphonic Metamorphoses: Subjectivity and Alienation in Mahler's Re-Cycled Songs* (Connecticut 2003), 155.

[15] Quotation from a review by August Beer, referenced in C. Floros *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies* (Cambridge, 1993), 31.

the context of the symphony as a whole. Knapp makes the point that, 'The exposition of the first movement consists entirely of material either taken directly or obviously derived from *Ging heut' Morgen*, elaborated, however, within a somewhat different narrative arc and standing in a somewhat different relationship to its surroundings...'[16] The theme is first heard emerging in the cellos from the shimmering harmonic As and cuckoo-calls of the opening. It is the first decidedly major theme to appear in the symphony, but it does so against a backdrop of dissonance, distorted cuckoo-calls and a 'crawling chromatic theme' (see Fig.5). It also recurs at bars 188-196 of the first movement, beneath the opening 'descending fourths motif' (Fig.3), which adds an unsettling, dissonant element, undermining its major tone. The first movement does appear to depict 'the awakening of nature.'[17] However, to conclude this is an expression of something wholly positive seems questionable, given the ironic detachment from nature described in the original song, and the context of its symphonic re-positioning. It is worth noting that Mahler is well known for exploring the decidedly negative aspects of nature – in *Kindertotenlieder* ('Songs for the death of children'), frequent references and analogies are made using features of the natural environment, such as storms and sunny hillsides, in conveying the grief, horror and denial of the narrator. 'Nature' is not a term which carries entirely positive, 'idyllic' connotations, and there is no evidence to suggest this was the case for Mahler. This leads onto analysis of one of the most frequently analysed motifs in the First, the 'Cuckoo-call.'

Fig.2 – 'Cuckoo-call' Motif (at bar 25 in the oboe).



Neville Cardus describes how, 'Mahler sinned… against the classical habit by adapting the poetically descending fourth to a cuckoo call… in its context it sounds unmistakably

[16] R. Knapp, *Symphonic Metamorphoses: Subjectivity and Alienation in Mahler's Re-Cycled Songs* (Connecticut 2003), 155.
[17] Ibid, 156.

like a cuckoo-call; yet from time immemorial the call had been musically represented by the interval of a third… The interval of the fourth is the main germ-cell from which the entire work evolves.'[18] Reiterated throughout the entire symphony, the opening 'cuckoo-call' is one of the crucial moments in setting the tone for the symphony. It marks Mahler's unique approach to a 'classical' idea (the cuckoo-call as part of a pastoral music setting), and its recurrence, with relatively little development or alteration over the course of the symphony, marks a striking continuity of ideas. The only movement not to contain this motif in the original score was the 'Blumine' – Mitchell and Floros present various suggestions relating to negative reviews as Mahler's reasons for dropping this movement from the symphony after the first three performances, but perhaps he also felt it lacked a unity with the rest of the symphony, as the only movement not built on the 'germ-cell' of the fourth.

Cardus is amongst the only writers not to share the view that the 'cuckoo call' motif represents solely pleasant nature sounds: rather it can be interpreted as a sinister theme which pursues the listener throughout the music through to the final movement. Cardus refers to the motif as a 'villain,' describing how, 'Not until we come to a flash-back in the Finale do we hear again the cuckoo's fourth… The chromatic motif takes charge in the next movement as the villain of the piece: a smiling villain, sometimes.'[19] Score analysis supports this idea, as on multiple occasions when the fourth occurs, a disturbing or aggressive twist is added to the music. For example, as it opens the first movement, it creates a repeated dissonance against the backdrop of harmonic As, undermining the stillness of the opening, whilst its opening of the third movement is the beginning of a funeral march from the timpani. Cardus comments that the symphony 'might well be called the 'apotheosis of the fourth',[20] as the interval is so crucial in the development of nearly every recurring theme and motif throughout. For example, it is used in creating a strong and definite link between the beginning of the first movement with the latter section of the final movement:

[18] N. Cardus, *Gustav Mahler: His Mind and his Music* (London, 1965), 39.
[19] Ibid, 45.
[20] Ibid, 39.

Fig.3 – Opening descending fourths, bars 18-21 (descending fourths first heard in bar 3).

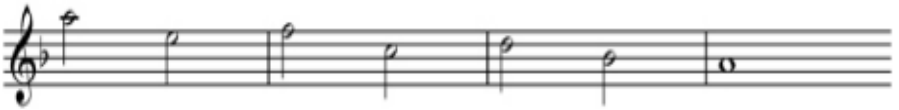
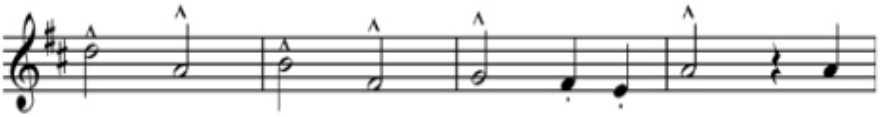


Fig.4 – 'Chorale' theme, fourth movement, bars 388-391.

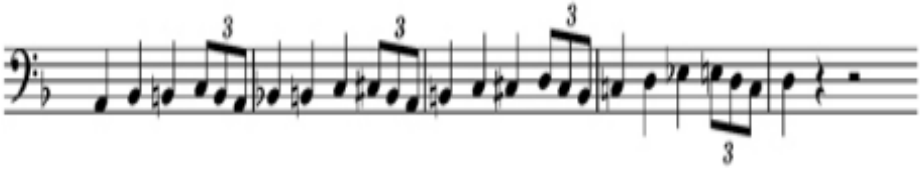


Philip Barford describes how, 'The Finale is thematically related to the first movement, and after preliminary shrieks of despair soon settles down to develop a figure developed from it… Also important is the triumphant chorale theme, finally blasted out on trombones. This obviously derives from the descending fourths of the first movement, and reveals the underlying unity of invention linking the beginning and ending of the Symphony.'[21] Whilst Barford's general analysis of the First seems inconsistent, the 'underlying unity' he attributes to the symphony appears particularly apparent in a study of the development of the melodies based on fourths. In the above examples, Mahler takes the first melodic idea we hear in the musical work (a series of descending fourths which first appears in bar 3 of the symphony, above a static background of harmonic As), and reiterates the pattern right at the end of the final movement, only altering the relation slightly between the final three notes, so that there is a moment of resolution as the phrase ends by rising a fourth. The manner in which he has adapted the theme for this point in the fourth movement certainly gives the phrase a more positive, major ending, which Barford and Mitchell interpret as evidence for the overall 'triumph' of the Finale. However, whilst it is fair to acknowledge that the twist given to the recurrence of this musical phrase in the Finale gives it a more triumphant tone, the impulse to subscribe to the '*per aspera ad astra*' narrative seems reductive and damaging

[21] P. Barford, *Mahler Symphonies and Songs* (London, 1970), 20.

to more rigorous interpretative possibilities of the symphony. A more plausible argument is that the most blatant and frequently reiterated expressions of 'triumph' in the Finale may be analysed as some of the strongest evidence in support of the interpretation of the First as making an ironic and bitter expression of joy. Analysis of the ideas as potentially being represented by the recurring fourth themes leads to the conclusion that, if there is genuine triumph in the Finale, then it is not that of an heroic protagonist, but rather of what has been pursuing him throughout the music.

Fig.5 – 'Crawling' chromatic figure, first movement, bars 47-51.



Whilst there are inconsistencies with the interpretative conclusions drawn by Cardus, his evocative description of the 'crawling' chromatic motif is useful. His analysis of its role in the first movement (and the symphony as a whole) is convincing: 'While the bugles and cuckoos are echoing in the prelude, a chromatic figure crawls up from the depths of the cellos and basses... The triplet, here surreptitious and hidden, becomes a snarling protagonist in the Finale.'[22] He highlights links between the first and fourth movements, and though this study finds this a particularly important moment in the development and recurrence of motifs within the symphony, Cardus, having drawn specific attention to it, goes on to treat it as an apparently irrelevant feature to the overall tone of the final movement. He describes at length the various ways in which violence and disintegration are conveyed in the music, in particular with a description of the fourth movement:

> Pandemonium, a dissonant chord (C, F, A flat, B, D flat) screaming in the wind; and an up-and-down rush of strings, with a signal… and a chromatic snarl… The triplet, born of the passive but potentially chromatic visitant to the symphony's introduction, has become a

[22] N. Cardus, *Gustav Mahler: His Mind and his Music* (London, 1965), 40.

violent and actual protagonist.[23]

He even notes how features that he described as 'mournful' and 'menacing' in the first movement[24] recur in the fourth: 'the nature tune in D minor, cuckoo calls, the rising chromatic intrusion, bugle calls'. After these descriptions, however, his analysis seems to simply ignore any overall relevance these aspects could have to an interpretation of a musical narrative, and postulates:

> …at its crisis in a fanfare of intensely energetic jubilation the symphony clinchingly sounds the triumphant apotheosis... in which the fairly fruitful interval of the fourth has the last word or chime, which goes on rather too long. Mahler... never could make an end without emphasis.[25]

This conclusion of the Finale as triumphant and jubilant seems in contradiction to almost all of Cardus's musical analysis that has preceded it, in particular his assertion that the interval of a fourth is now heard as a positive final moment. This ignores the fact that at most of the other moments he has observed its appearance, it has undermined major melodies or has been directly tied in with unambiguously minor themes, such as in the timpani part of the opening funeral march of the third movement. His conclusion that the 'emphasis' and 'rather too long' nature of the ending is simply an odd character trait in Mahler ignores the possibility of the emphasised length of the Finale as a deliberate gesture. In later works such as *Um Mitternacht*, Mahler has frequently been interpreted as making use of musical irony[26], in particular through use of repeating an ending so emphatically that it gives the impression of it as undermining itself through sheer insistence. Johnson describes Mahlerian endings as often being as parodies of a triumphant finish.[27] Barford suggests that the insistent repetition of the Finale can be interpreted as conveying 'a rather desperate and simple-minded heroism.'[28]

Adorno suggests that 'the idea of disintegration' is prevalent in Mahler's writing, including the First, although *AMP* does not focus on any particular symphony at length.

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[23] Ibid.
[24] N. Cardus, *Gustav Mahler: His Mind and his Music*, 41.
[25] Ibid, 53.
[26] S. Downes, *After Mahler: Britten, Weill, Henze and Romantic Redemption* (Cambridge 2013), 43-44.
[27] J. Johnson, *Mahler's Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies* (Oxford 2009), 285.
[28] P. Barford, *Mahler Symphonies and Songs* (London, 1970), 19.

Taking this idea of disintegration in the music and applying it to an analysis of motifs in the First draws conclusions which are more consistent both with broader interpretations of a narrative within the symphony, and with viewing the work as entirely characteristic of Mahler's writing. Adorno says this on disintegration within the First:

> The idea of disintegration is announced oddly in the third movement of the First Symphony. In its sections in canon it is, in its simple way, more intricately woven than most of Mahler's earlier works. By parodying the canon's dogmatic aspect, it negates it; that is why it allows remote colors like the solo double bass and the tuba that carries the melody to become prominent in a way that must have sounded scurrilous at the time. The disintegrating tendency then overtakes the movement in shock moments such as the sudden acceleration. At the same time the movement... becomes static, superimposing strata on each other; its striking originality is produced by the unity of the disorganized and the significant.[29]

Here, he closely relates the idea of disintegration to techniques in instrumentation and structure, but it may be argued that the recurrence and development of the various fourth motifs throughout the symphony should be viewed as also being integral to the expressions of disintegration. Initially serving to subvert classical expectations for the 'cuckoo-call' figure in a nature setting, the interval is repeatedly heard undermining major themes and dominant melodies throughout every movement of the symphony, causing a disintegrating effect on its surroundings. Descending fourths open the first movement, repeatedly creating a dissonance against a backdrop of harmonic As, thus suggesting from the offset that the 'nature' scene-setting is not an unambiguously idyllic environment. The *Ländler* melody from the second movement is built on intervals of a fourth between E and B, sabotaging the attempted moments of resolution from the melody's major third intervals. The entire funeral march from the third movement is built on a slow, recurring fourth brought in by the timpani, creating tonal uncertainty beneath both the distorted nursery rhyme and the 'fast and grotesque dance'[30] of the movement. The fourth movement, as discussed, constantly sees its 'triumphant' themes undermined and interrupted by recurrences of dissonant motifs from the first movement.

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[29] T. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago, 1992), 124.

[30] N. Lebrecht, *Why Mahler? How one man and ten symphonies changed the world* (London, 2010), 57.

Contrary to terming the First unusually positive and 'uncharacteristic' of Mahler, Adorno identifies it as containing some of the earliest examples of a compositional strategy and structural technique to become a defining trait in Mahler's writing: 'So early does the disintegrating tendency thus enter the procedure of composition.'[31]

Part of the recurring problem in much of the analysis of the First is the pervading idea that to acknowledge the negativity in Mahler's First would mean rejecting any elements of the positive. In agreement with Adorno, this study argues that accepting the negative, the expressions of horror and decay in his music, is essential to understanding the positive and affirming in Mahler. Adorno denies that Mahler's symphonies 'exist in a simple positive sense, as something granted to the participants as a reward,' arguing that, 'on the contrary, whole complexes want to be taken negatively – one should listen, as it were against them.'[32] He quotes Erwin Ratz as saying of Mahler's symphonies, 'We see an alternation of positive and negative situations.'[33] These are particularly relevant points in relation to the First. It seems undeniable that there are positive themes throughout the symphony (such as much of the 'nature' setting of the first movement and the moments of resolution in the 'chorale' theme of the fourth), but the tendency to assume that these positive aspects must either triumph over or be devoid of any negativity seems to fundamentally misunderstand Mahler's work. It is unsurprising that various theorists have put the label of 'uncharacteristic'[34] on this symphony when analysing it with such a view. The positive aspects in the music only seem uncharacteristic of Mahler when viewed through the lens of a '*per aspera ad astra*' narrative, as 'simple-minded heroism' winning out over adversity. This interpretation requires that analysis either ignores the prevalence and positioning in the music of the 'disintegrating' fourth motifs, as that of Floros and Mitchell, or that it comes to inconsistent conclusions, as that of Barford and Cardus. A more consistent interpretation, which takes into account the development of the motifs in relation to Adorno's ideas on disintegration, can be found in interpreting the symphony as conveying an overall message in almost direct contradiction to the '*per aspera ad astra*' narrative: that of a character, not a straightforward hero, struggling against and ultimately being defeated by his surroundings. Adorno comments on Mahlerian

[31] T. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago, 1992), 124.
[32] Ibid, 125.
[33] T. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy,* 125.
[34] L. M. Smoley, *Gustav Mahler's Symphonies: Critical Commentary on Recordings Since 1986* (Westport 1996), 7.

narratives:

> How much Mahler's intrinsic musical negativity runs counter to the enthusiastic program of Berlioz or Liszt is shown by the fact that Mahlerian novels have no heroes and honor none... one will look in vain for the figure who is supposed to be smitten by fate.[35]

The most plausible interpretation of the overall narrative of the First is that it is an ironic inversion of the '*per aspera ad astra*' concept. One of the most important elements of the standard '*per aspera ad astra*' narrative is that of Fate as an ultimately positive driving force, and that triumphing over adversity is the natural, glorious fate of the heroic protagonist. Mahler, through his compositional techniques of collapse and disintegration, conveys an ironic twist on this narrative in the First. Fate is depicted as negative and inescapable in the pursuing and ultimately triumphant fourth intervals and chromatic motifs; the triumph of the Finale is in the defeat of the outsider protagonist by his violent and hostile world.

[35] T. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago, 1992), 126.

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His Father's Son? Examining inheritance through the figure of Neoptolemus in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and Vergil's *Aeneid*

Sarah Macdonald

The play *Philoctetes*, by Sophocles, and the *Aeneid*, Vergil's epic, are parts of the same homeric tradition; responses to ancient poetry afforded practically divine status. This paper is primarily interested in how these authors explore their reception of this tradition through Neoptolemus' acceptance or rejection of his inheritance; what he may choose to emulate from the person of Achilles, and what they in turn wish to take from the work of Homer. This exploration is particularly concerned with the anxieties of their own times, and a uniting desire to consider conflict and its effect on culture and populace through literary forms. This paper was originally written for the honours course Homer and his readers, taught by Dr Hau and Dr Chadha of the Classics department, and seeks to engage with the same issues of historiography, intent and intertext.

Neoptolemus, child of Achilles and Deidamia, is mentioned only once in the *Iliad*, when Achilles cries that not even the death of 'my own son, godlike Neoptolemus' (*Il.*19.326-7), could grieve him more than the loss of Patroclus. Given the epic's emphasis on familial relations – the incipit for the Trojan war being the 'theft' of Helen, wife of Menelaos – and the repeated call throughout the conflict to the fathers of dead sons or vice-versa, one might expect this sentiment to be reversed: that the only thing able to grieve him more than the death of his boon companion would be the passing of his son. Regardless, Achilles is unaware of whether his own son is even still alive after ten years of absence; the conflict has divorced him from his homeland and the natural order of things. Our only understanding of Neoptolemus within the *Iliad* is through this deviation from what one might expect. Despite the brevity of this introduction, Neoptolemus has an enduring narrative in his own right. His later arrival at Troy, his storming of the city, and his notorious impiety at Priam's altar[1] were part of the larger

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[1] This impiety consists of murdering Polites, Priam's youngest living son, in front of him, and then gutting the Trojan King against the altar of Zeus at the heart of the palace.

Epic Cycle which encompassed the entirety of the Troy-stories that Homer would have drawn the events of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from. Considering the presence of his story in the canon and the enduring appeal of Homer, Neoptolemus' sparse introduction in the most famous work in the ancient world did nothing to limit his presence in later sequels and adaptations of Homer. *Philoctetes* by Sophocles and *The Aeneid*[2] of Vergil are just two such texts. Their treatment of Neoptolemus is interesting, and reflects an interrogation of their own contexts and of the revered tradition of Homer. In particular, it will be argued, they investigate the work of Homer with reference to the character of Achilles, reflected 'through a glass, darkly' in the figure of Neoptolemus. This is explored in modern scholarship by academics such as Gotschall, whose deconstruction of Homeric context is vital to the discussion, as is Schein's dialogue of artistic response to Neoptolemus' set fate in the mythic cycle and Knox's scholarship on the 'rebirth' of Neptolemus in new contexts. These discussions of inheritance, of both the unchangeable and the adaptable, can be extended outwards from the characters themselves, and used to examine broader questions of cultural inheritance, of fear and fascination. In order to understand this, one must consider context, character and intertextuality.

Context is key when considering intertext - it seems impossible to understand the whys of adaption if we do not discuss the culture a text was written for. In order to understand Achilles as presented through Neoptolemus in later works, we must first understand the Achilles of Homer. Attempting to clarify the context of the Homer figure is almost impossible, but Gottschall's theory that they took form after the Mycenaean civilisation collapse is appealing. The great bronze age society rapidly declined at some point around 1200 BC, leaving only the fragmentary remains of 'cities', sophisticated stonework and treasure. People continued to live about the ruins, and this is the life Gottschall posits for the Homeric poet, that of a relatively poor bard looking at a palace. If the poets of this era lived in the ruins of a great civilisation, it would clarify why the Homeric princesses take part in laundering the clothes of the court, why Odysseus' great hall had a midden at its door, and why even the 'king' of Ithaca is also a farmer. In Gotschall's words, 'Homer looks back from his relatively degraded age and imagines a lost world of great prosperity'.[3] Whilst still a violent world, with raids and retributive attacks, the Greece of Homer was smaller, and lacked the context of total war that haunts the work

[2] Inline references to the *Aeneid* follow the line numbers of Fagles' translation throughout. See *The Aeneid,* (trans.) R. Fagles, (New York, 2006).

[3] J. Gotschall, *The Rape of Troy: evolution, violence, and the world of Homer* (Cambridge, 2008), 31.

of Sophocles and Vergil, writing in the final years of the Peloponnesian war[4] and the aftermath of Italy's civil wars[5] respectively. Achilles in Homer is a cultural memory of a a hero; the unbridled violence he unleashes is the same exaggeration that sees every king with a stash of golden treasures to give away, and every meal a feast of roasted meat.[6] Everything he does he does to excess; he is so fast he is like a god (*Il.*22.21), when he fights, his violence is so excessive that he is no longer human (*Il.*22.262), and when he chooses to pity he pities the family of his greatest enemy (*Il.*24.510). The poet of the *Iliad* uses the figure of Achilles to examine the force that could have levelled a civilisation. This takes the fascination of the Mycenaean collapse and Greek life continuing amongst the ruins to a natural conclusion in the desire to know *why* and *how*. The most vital part of this lies in the fact that Homer was not present for this event; did not live when those walls fell. The tension between these texts, then, lies in the fact that the *Iliad* is a means of understanding through memory the demise of a society; the *Aeneid* and *Philoctetes* present analysis of their author's respective fear of the same.

In order to consider the present, you must move forwards; Achilles' story has already been told by Homer, and the reverence his work was (and is) held in[7] surely would have have made direct rewritings a daunting prospect. 'Achilles is dramatised both as a model and as a problem, not only through his presence but ... also through his absence.'[8] In taking his son, an author is able to grasp at these binary interpretations and consider the impact of both aspects in one figure. Neoptolemus is *tabula rasa* to investigate the idea of a destructive force and the tension between *phusis* (inherited characteristics) and learned behaviour. Both texts name Neoptolemus as son of Achilles; Michelakis says this "imposes on the spectator an angle from which to look at and to think about the character of Neoptolemus.'[9] He cannot be divorced from his heritage.

As we have established that Neoptolemus serves as a malleable extension of the Achilles figure, we must examine what the different ideologies of place and time alter about him, and how this reflects contemporary attitudes to the text of the *Iliad.* Sophocles' Athens

[4] S.L. Schein, 'The Iliad and Odyssey in Sophocles' Philoctetes: generic complexity and ethical ambiguity' (2006) 49 *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, Special Issue: Institute of Classical Studies, Bulletin Supplement No. S87: Greek Drama III: Essays in Honour of Kevin Lee,*133.
[5] B.M.W. Knox, 'Introduction' in *The Aeneid,* (trans.) R. Fagles, (New York, 2006), 25.
[6] Gotschall, *The rape of Troy,* 31.
[7] Strabo, *Geography,* (trans.) H. L. Jones (Harvard, 1917-1932), 1;1;2.
[8] P. Michelakis, *Achilles in Greek Tragedy*, (Cambridge, 2002), 1.
[9] P. Michelakis, *Achilles*, 163.

was on the surface entirely divorced from the life of 'Homeric era Greeks' who resided in 'semi-isolation from each other - separated by ... mountains and ... waves.'[10] This bears little resemblance to the strong Attic city culture, where the interconnectedness of the Athenian people was the lifeblood of the *polis*. It would be easy to suggest that these two worlds were radically different. The raids that characterise Homer's fragmented Greece had by this point developed into the Peloponnesian war, and the semi-isolated townships into aggressive city states such as Sparta and Athens. The Greece of Sophocles had the same problems at that of Homer on a much larger scale, and Athens was at the epicentre. Whilst a democratic city, the elite of Athens were those largely in control of said political system, free to expend their time and energy in the assembly. But by their very nature, the elite were a minority, and in some ways were held accountable by the masses, the middling to poor citizens who rowed the triremes and made up the foot soldiers. Cultural tensions in Athens stemmed from the perceived inclination of the masses to follow demagogues, as laid out in texts such as pseudo-Xenophon's *Old Oligarch* which claims that 'in every land the best element is opposed to democracy' (*O.O.*1.5), and that 'it is...the worst elements in each city who are well-disposed to the common people' (*O.O.*3.9). Sophocles transfers these anxieties onto the text of his play *Philoctetes.* Here Neoptolemus, having arrived in Troy to take his father's place, is told that he will be unable to take the city without the bow of Hercules. This weapon never reached Troy, and is currently in the possession of the titular character, Philoctetes: he, however, was disabled by an injury and abandoned en route to Troy. This situation understandably leads to a loathing of the remaining commanders - Agamemnon, Menelaus and Odysseus - so Neoptolemus is dispatched with Odysseus to reclaim the bow through trickery and deceit. What results forms the body of the play, as Neoptolemus is torn between pragmatism and *phusis.*

The Neoptolemus Sophocles presents in *Philoctetes* is the model of an exemplary Athenian youth, eager to fight and serve but also caught between the legacy of his heroic father and the wily demagogue figure of Odysseus. Knox alleges that 'The democratic viewpoint (typically that of a seafaring and commercial community) is Odyssean - an ideal of versatility, adaptability, diplomatic skill and intellectual curiosity, insisting on success combined with glory rather than sacrificed for it.'[11] Despite this, Sophocles indicates throughout the text that Odysseus is a figure not to be trusted. He is associated, rather, with undesirable attributes, as at 1.86-89; Neoptolemus expresses distress at 'telling lies' on his behalf, and at 3.1051-2 he remarks that even his piety comes second

[10] J. Gotschall, *The Rape of Troy,* 27.
[11] B.M.W. Knox, 'Philoctetes', (1964) 3.1 *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics,* 45.

to his desire to 'win'. If Odysseus is emblematic of the democratic ideal, this negative portrayal certainly creates a tension between the writer and the dominant ideology of the time. The democratic ideal, as represented in the mutability of Odysseus, has not saved Athens from the past two decades of war; and Sophocles casts doubt on it throughout the play when Neoptolemus chastises 'cunning' Odysseus for his lack of honour (*Phil.*3.842). Some scholars suggest Odysseus has been written as a villain, 'a Sophoclean symbol of late fifth-century corruption', 'intellectually corrupt' to 'balance the physically corrupt'[12] figure of the disabled Philoctetes.

Doubting Odysseus, however, is not the same as damning him for his actions; the reader is shown when Neoptolemus gains the bow that his plan would have worked. It is a struggle, rather, between ideals, and how the inhabitants of the city-state can navigate their political system whilst still upholding traditional values as received from their forebears. These values present themselves in Achilles, invoked by name early on (*Phil.*1.3), represents another ideal, that of 'essential nobility,'[13] his brute strength combined with sympathy for the pathetic. Neoptolemus must struggle throughout with these two natures, from his initial impulse to listen to the older man he is beholden to, and force 'Philoctetes against his will to participate in the war for the sake of the Greek army and Neoptolemus' own prospective glory'[14] through to the restoration of his Achillean nature with his refusal to take the bow from Philoctetes. His redemption is prompted by his 'moral education' at the hands of Philoctetes, who in remembering the virtue of Achilles' generation (*Phil.*2.410-435) reminds him of his *phusis.*

In Athens, thick with sophists and teachers, the issue of education was a major public concern; one only has to consider the frenzy of Socrates' trial on a charge of corrupting the youth of Athens and his ensuing death (a few years after *Philoctetes* was first performed) to corroborate the point. If Odysseus is the epitome of democratic thought, then Sophocles utilises the figure of Neoptolemus to represent the dilemma the next generation of elites will face between nature and inheritance; they are only potentials and require the right education and environment to flourish.[15] The youth of the city then have to 'flourish' correctly, as the problem lies in the fact that this is no thought

[12] C.R. Beye, 'Sophocles' Philoctetes and the Homeric Embassy' (1970) 101 *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 67-8.
[13] B.M.W. Knox, 'Philoctetes', 46.
[14] S.L. Schein, 'The Iliad and Odyssey', 136.
[15] M.W. Blundell, 'The '*phusis*' of Neoptolemus in Sophocles' 'Philoctetes'', (1988) 35:2 *Greece & Rome* 147.

exercise; if they make the wrong choice in the future the city will fall. As such, we are returned to Homer's life amongst the Mycenaean ruins - the fascination of what, of *who* can level a city. For the Athenians, the ongoing threat of the Peloponnesian war has made this a brutal and possible reality on a larger scale.

Achilles haunts this text as the choice Neoptolemus can make; indeed, though addressed throughout as 'son of', Philoctetes fails to recognise him without introduction, meaning that it is his own choice 'to decide whether to become like Achilles or not.'[16] In following following his father's straightforward footsteps post-inspiration by Philoctetes it is implied Neoptolemus does the right thing; that he has successfully received a moral education and has achieved the promise of his inherited nobility. Despite this, Heracles' warning at the end of the play (*Phil.*1439-1443) that reminds Neoptolemus 'that nothing ranks so high' as piety has an ominous ring to it. Schein writes that it indicates to the audience 'the knowledge that something in his character and destiny is warped and cannot be straightened, undercuts this identification and with it the values for which he seems to stand'.[17] The problem here lies in the issue of working from a pre-established canon of events such as the Epic Cycle; while it may have only existed in myth and in the oral tradition, the stories and their endings were widely known. In drawing from the work of Homer (and in turn the greater tradition of events at Troy) no writer could manipulate Neoptolemus into a pious future and correct moral behaviour. He is doomed to be a lesser reflection of his father because his impious slaughter of Priam is a fixed point. Unlike Achilles, he is unable to reject impiety, as when the corpse of Hector is returned to Priam. Sophocles' decision to write not of the straightforward victory of Achilles, but rather of his problematic descendant who is fated to make the wrong choice - particularly at a time when the threat of destruction hangs over Athens - is an interesting one. It implies certain things about the nature of decision making in the city-state, and of the forces that controlled its politics. Perhaps this is at heart a validation of democracy, that the right choice can only be made when one is surrounded by peers and forced to examine one's actions; after all, the tradition follows that Neoptolemus is alone and thus free to act rashly when he kills Priam.

Vergil's *Aeneid*, however, was not written in a Greek context but a Roman one. Rome at this point was a culture in flux, adjusting to Augustus' reign as *princeps* and the aftermath of the civil wars. Neoptolemus' inevitable slaughter of Priam raises few problems for Vergil, who renders it vividly (2:668-690); he is not seeking to further

[16] P. Michelakis, *Achilles*, 168.
[17] S.L. Schein, 'The Iliad and Odyssey', 138.

lionise a Greek inheritance. Rather, he is creating a background against which Rome can struggle and then emerge in a new, hopefully stable, imperial context. After all, the threat of destruction that hung over Athens at the time of *Philoctetes* writing had already come true for Roman Italy, and whilst the modern reader is aware of the continued stability of Augustus' reign, there is no reason that a contemporary of Vergil's would not fixate on such violence, or fear future proscriptions whilst hoping desperately for stability. Neoptolemus' appearance in the *Aeneid* forms the central part of a similar destruction; his slaughter of the royal family is one of the last things Aeneas witnesses before he is forced to flee Troy.

Neoptolemus - renamed Pyrrhus - is introduced as the towers of Ilium burn. 'the ubiquitous presence of the imagery of fire...with its introduction, the Trojans have to fight not only against mortal enemies but also the power of the elements, against which all resistance is in vain.'[18] Pyrrhus, already identified with the flames through his name, is also a force of nature, 'no river so wild, frothing with spite' (*Aen.*2.615) and unstoppable in his rush through the palace. This cannot help but recall his father's last wild chase after Hector, his relentless run that his son has inherited that enables him to catch Polites before he can reach Priam. The image of him as inhuman continues; at *Aen.*2.589 he is compared to a snake that has shed its skin. This casting off of the old self raises ideas of intertext between Vergil's work and Sophocles', as if Neoptolemus has cast off not just the earlier 'moral' education Philoctetes and the spirit of Hercules granted him but also his acceptance of his father's *phusis,* which is made plain when he sneers at Priam's invocation of him (*Aen.*2:668).

Emerging from the civil war, Vergil's Italy saw death and proscription to establish it as a 'reformed' state under Augustus; while not technically imperial in nature, it was no longer a republic. This transformation was a violent one. Pyrrhus, too, had a transformation; from soldier to snake, his old skin sloughed off (*Aen.*2.585-590). Knox reminds us his real name is Neoptolemus; 'new war, new warrior. He is the rebirth of the old war'.[19] It seems plausible that Pyrrhus is the war given form by Vergil, the renewal of the violence the state saw under Julius Caesar's seizing of power. He slays young (Polites) and old (Priam) alike; the proscriptions under the second triumvirate did much the same. Priam stands for tradition, continuity - his fifty sons could probably

[18] A. Rossi, *Contexts of War: Manipulation of Genre in Virgilian Battle Narrative* (Ann Arbour, 2004), 27.
[19] B.M.W. Knox, 'The Serpent and the Flame: The Imagery of the Second Book of the Aeneid' (1950) 71:4 *The American Journal of Philology*, 394.

have made a reasonable senate themselves - but Pyrrhus ends this when he renders Priam 'a corpse without a name (*Aen.*2.692)'. Some of the family survive, such as his son Helenus and a handful of his daughters. Continuity has not, therefore, been destroyed, but it lacks its previous heft without the surrounding culture to validate its power, much as the senate and systems of the republic survived under Augustus in neutered form. Instead elite power reshapes itself in the figure of a new king, Aeneas (who nonetheless stemmed from an old tradition, just as Augustus claimed legitimacy from the patrician Julian line of his adopted father, Caesar). As Budick says

> […] the foundation of every state is violent ... one responsibility ... must be to question foundation itself and to promote an internal re-foundation that would exclude violence on all sides. This re-foundation must entail, pre-eminently, the questioning and revision of the terms self, place, and state themselves.[20]

Vergil founds and re-founds his epic with questions regarding the place of violence. Pyrrhus kills Priam at the beginning of the poem and Aeneas kills Turnus at the end. These are the first and last 'big' deaths one encounters, remarkable in their violence, and Vergil arguably utilises a Homeric ring composition in order to parallel them. In a poem so laden with symbolism as the Aeneid it seems likely this was intentional; but let us again consider Vergil in context and think about this death cycle in reference to his own time. Both include a call to the killer's father (*Aen.* 2.668, *Aen.*12.1086) and both invoke the name of a dead loved one in response. Priam's murder at the hands of Phyrrus ends a civilisation, however, while Aeneas' slaughter of Turnus promotes an exclusion of violence in the future through the use of violence *now* against the 'dangerous' element of society. This may have enabled the contemporary reader to directly parallel Aeneas' need to kill Turnus with the deaths Augustus is forced to enact in order to secure his state; Vergil's task is the re-examination Budick prioritises. This situation is the inverse of the *Iliad*, where at the end of the poem the force of violence personified in Achilles (who even says he is a lion, and not a man *Il.*22.262), kills the stabilising figure of crown-prince Hector. If the final death in the Aeneid is established in contrast to the death of Priam and intertext implies it is also in opposition to the death of Hector, Vergil's intent appears to be to remind the reader of the similarity between Achilles and his son, no matter what Priam says in the second book ('You say you're Achilles son? You lie!' *Aen.*2.668).

[20] S. Budick, 'The Prospect of Tradition: Elements of Futurity in a Topos of Homer and Virgil' (1991) 22:1 *New Literary History*, 23.

Waiting until the very end of the poem to re-establish this intertext allows Vergil space to clarify his epic as separate from Homer throughout; Fowler in particular notes the pathetic imagery of death in Vergil, and states that the 'change of mood from Homer has often been observed.'[21] Having conceived and completed an epic that is able to use Homer, but avoids slavish devotion to his tradition, ensures that the audience is aware of the intertext of inheritance that informs the character of Pyrrhus and the text itself. This frames not only an examination of the destruction and foundation of states, but also allows Vergil to position himself as an heir to Homer, just as Sophocles does.

The approach of Vergil could not be more distant from that of Sophocles. Sophocles' adaptation must seek to indicate continuity between the Greece of Homer and his own time, because the association is prized and thought of as noble. Vergil, though, is not constrained by regard for the Greeks as a whole because it is not his history to preserve. Rather, he is able to utilise and extend the characteristics of Achilles for his own ends, adapting the metaphors of Homer to create a relentless force in his Pyrrhus. Both, however, are driven by their contexts, fascinated by the same issue at the heart of Homer's work; what forces can destroy a city, a way of life? Achilles is the manifestation of what can shake the foundations of a civilisation in Homer, and Neoptolemus in these texts is an ongoing interrogation of that character. Just as the youth of Athens had to choose between their noble *phusis* and the demands of their culture, so Vergil witnesses Rome suffer through wars driven by similar forces of inheritance and ideology. *Philoctetes* and the *Aenied* may approach their interpretations of the *Iliad* in a way unique to their place and time in order to examine the preoccupations of their writers, but the fascination of conflict and its consequences unite both in their inheritance of the Homeric tradition.

[21] Don Fowler, 'Vergil on Killing Virgins', in Whitby, Whitby, & Hardie (eds.), *Homo viator : classical essays for John Bramble* (Bristol, 1987), 189.

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S. L. Schein, 'The Iliad and Odyssey in Sophocles' Philoctetes: generic complexity and ethical ambiguity' (2006) 49 *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, Special Issue: Institute of Classical Studies, Bulletin Supplement No. S87:Greek Drama III: Essays in Honour of Kevin Lee, 129–140.

War, Crime and Disease: An Evaluation of the Double Threat of Terrorism

David Pannocchia

Since 9/11 and the declaration of the War on Terror, terrorism has featured prominently in the 21st century security agenda. As a result, a wide range of counterterrorist measures have been developed in order to provide security in states across the globe. Yet their intensification, while ostensibly diminishing one threat, has arguably increased the threat to another: civil liberties. By adopting Sederberg's typology of counterterrorist measures into war, crime and disease approaches, the following analysis seeks to determine the degree to which they alter the balance between security and liberty. Drawing upon evidence from counterterrorist strategies in the US, UK, EU, France and Norway, this article demonstrates that liberal democracies should refrain from securitising or de-politicising terrorism, as either approach would come at a cost to liberty and security, respectively. Rather, the politicisation of counterterrorism, found particularly within the crime approach, offers the most practicable balancing solution to the 'double threat' of terrorism.

INTRODUCTION

Across the fields of political science and philosophy, there has been longstanding debate on the relationship between security and civil liberties. Traditionally, this debate has been anchored to discourses of war through assertions of *inter arma enim silent leges* (in times of war, the law falls silent), particularly the suspension of civil liberties under the auspices of 'supreme emergency' when under existential threat[1]. However, since 9/11 and the declaration of the 'War on Terror', this debate has been refocused within the context of counterterrorism. Although counterterrorist approaches tend to overlap and complement each other, Sederberg conceptualises such measures as fitting into three

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[1] M. Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* (Harmondsworth, 1980), 4, 125.

analogical categories: 'war', 'crime' and 'disease'[2]. Each of these has a fundamental impact upon the relationship between state and citizen in terms of the balance between security and civil liberties. As such, Buzan argues that terrorism presents liberal democracies with a 'double threat': the axiomatic threat of violence and destruction and the 'insidious erosion [of civil liberties] as a consequence of the countermeasures taken'[3]. The intensification of counterterrorism in the years since 9/11 has made the question of how to balance security with civil liberties increasingly pertinent for liberal democracies. The methods employed to resolve the double threat posed by terrorism has fundamental consequences for shaping the nature of the 21st century polity.

This article will evaluate the impacts of counterterrorist strategies within Sederberg's framework on the double threat of terrorism identified by Buzan in order to assess the extent to which they alter the balance between civil liberties and security. This will be achieved through use of primary and secondary sources in conjunction with the relevant theoretical approaches. As this work is concerned with counterterrorism in liberal democracies that possess long-established civil liberties, the broad range of responses to terrorism in the U.S., U.K., E.U. France and Norway will provide the evidential basis for discussion. First, key terms and theoretical approaches will be defined and conceptualised in order to establish a framework for analysis. Thereafter, the double threat will be analysed in terms of the extent to which the war, criminal and disease approaches respectively mitigate or exacerbate the threat to human life or civil liberties. Ultimately, it will be argued that imbalance to either side will lead to the increase of threat to the other and that politicised counterterrorist strategies offer the most attractive balancing solution to the double threat.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to assess the double threat posed by terrorism in terms of the impact of countermeasures on security vis-à-vis civil liberties, definitions terrorism and civil liberties are necessary. Terrorism is a notoriously ill-defined concept. However, multiple definitions find their points of agreement in defining terrorism as the use of violence to

[2] P. Sederberg, 'Global Terrorism: Problems of Challenge and Response' in C.W. Kegley ed., *The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, (Prentice Hall, 2003).

[3] B. Buzan, 'Will the 'Global War on Terrorism' be the new Cold War?', (2006) 82 *International Affairs*, 1117.

provoke fear and gain the attention of the public and governments with the aim of achieving political goals[4]. This definition clearly identifies it as a tactic that may be used by both state and non-state actors. Grob-Fitzgibbon divides non-state terrorism, which is the type examined hereto, into national, revolutionary, reactionary and religious[5] in order to distinguish the aims for which terrorism is used.

The second key concept to address is civil liberties. While variant across states, civil liberties are ubiquitous in liberal democracies and may be defined as 'those freedoms which are [...] guaranteed to persons to protect an area of non-interference from others, particularly power holders and legal authorities'[6]. As they provide legal protection to citizens from intrusion by the state, it is arguable that such protections impede counterterrorist measures. This argument places civil liberties in direct tension with security by restraining the coercive arms of the state in dealing with threats such as terrorism. However, the liberal character of democratic states and the individual rights guaranteed by civil liberties may come under threat if the state is granted extraordinary powers over its citizens.

Another vital task is to establish an understanding of security. Wolfers states that 'security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked'[7]. Thus, the innately value-laden and open-ended nature of security makes it an essentially contested concept with little agreement over what is to be protected or how to achieve it. Theoretical approaches to security may be broadly divided into two: state-centric, which view the state as being the 'referent object' – that which is deemed to be under existential threat[8] – and human security, which views individuals as being the referent object of security. Extrapolation of realism's propositions provides the basis for positioning the state as the referent object. Hobbesian assertions that humans form states

[4] P. Rogers, 'Global Terrorism', in M. Cox, and D. Stokes (eds). *US Foreign Policy*, (Oxford, 2012), 336.
[5] B. Grob-Fitzgibbon, 'What is Terrorism? Redefining a Phenomenon in Time of War', 2005 *Peace & Change*, 3, 236.
[6] A. Reeves 'Civil Liberties' in I. McLean and A. McMillan (eds), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics*, (Oxford, 2009).
[7] A. Wolfers, '"National Security" as an Ambiguous Symbol', (1962) 67 *Political Science Quarterly*, 149.
[8] C. Peoples and N. Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies: an Introduction* (Oxon, 2015) .93.

to escape the State of Nature, places the state as the referent object of security[9]. By this logic, national security equates the safety of its citizens. Alternatively, proponents of human security have demonstrated that the state itself can be a source of insecurity to individuals[10]. Thus, human security scholars place the individual as the referent object. However, as demonstrated by the provided definition of security, it is evident that there is no objective measure of what constitutes a security threat, whether to the state or individual. Therefore, the identification of an issue as a security threat is largely the result of the issue being framed as such.

One of the most prominent fields to emerge in security studies on how issues become framed in security terms is securitisation. Securitisation, a concept closely associated with the Copenhagen School, may be defined as the process of 'shifting an issue out of the realm of 'normal' political debate into the realm of emergency politics by presenting it as an existential threat'[11]. Thus, securitisation is distinct from non-politicisation, wherein an issue is not conceived as a threat or addressed by government, and politicisation, where an issue is addressed through conventional public policy[12]. Buzan *et al.*[13] outline the process of a 'securitising move' as follows. An issue is presented by a securitising actor to the public as an existential threat through a 'speech act'[14]. As the securitising move requires the acceptance of the speech act by the audience, securitisation is an 'intersubjective' process[15]. The acceptance of the speech act and following securitisation can only occur under the correct 'felicity conditions'[16], such as after a terrorist attack. However, most securitisation scholars are highly sceptical of the benefits of such extreme measures, arguing that securitisation should be seen 'as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics', and the desecuritisation of issues 'out of this

[9] K. Krause and M.C. Williams, 'From Strategy to Security: Foundations of Critical Security Studies' in K. Krause and M.C. Williams (eds.) *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*, (London, 1997), 40.

[10] P. Kerr, 'Human Security' in A.Colins (ed) *Contemporary Security Studies,* (Oxford, 2013), 107.

[11] Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies: an Introduction,* 94.

[12] B. Buzan, O. Waever, and J. Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, (London, 1998), 23.

[13] Ibid.

[14] B. Buzan, O. Waever, and J. Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, 25.

[15] Ibid, 31.

[16] O. Waever, 'The EU as a Security Actor: Reflections from a Pessimistic Constructivist on Post-Sovereign Security Orders' in M. Kelstrup and M.C. Williams (eds.), *International Relations Theory and the Politics of European Integration*, (London, 2000), 252.

threat-defence sequence and into the ordinary public sphere' is seen as the optimal course of action[17].

WAR

The war perspective holds that terrorism may be countered and defeated by the use of military methods[18]. These methods are often associated with international actions, but also have implications for the domestic front, which will be considered here. The securitisation of terrorism in the US and France after a major act of terrorism followed the war approach. President George W. Bush declaration of the War on Terror pledged to use 'every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war – to the destruction and to the defeat of the global terror network'[19]. Thus, the immediate post-9/11 period was framed through speech acts as one of supreme emergency with international religious terrorism posing imminent danger to national security. Similarly, the 2015 Paris Attacks produced a permissive environment for President François Hollande to make securitising moves through declaring the attacks an 'act of war' by Daesh and promising a 'merciless' response[20]. The scale and scope of the attacks of 9/11 and Paris created adequate felicity conditions for such securitising moves to be accepted amongst the general public. For example, an IFOP poll by *Le Figaro* and RTL Radio published four days after the Paris Attacks 'found 84% of French people were prepared to accept more controls and a certain limitation of their liberties to guarantee their security'[21]. Yet, the implications of the war framing of such attacks and the resultant securitised measures meant that the 'home front became a battlefront'[22].

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[17] Buzan, Waever and Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, 29.

[18] B. Lutz, and J. Lutz, 'Terrorism' in A. Colins (ed), *Contemporary Security Studies*, (Oxford, 2013), 274.

[19] CNN, *Transcript of President Bush's Address*, 21 September 2001. Available at: http://edition.cnn.com/ [Accessed: 18 March, 2015].

[20] L. Dearden, 'Paris terror attack: Francois Hollande vows merciless response to Isis "barbarity"' *Independent*, 14 November 2015. Available at: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/ [Accessed: 12 January: 2016].

[21] A. Chrisafis and J. Borger, 'French MPs vote to extend state of emergency after Paris attacks' *The Guardian*, 19 November 2015. Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/ [Accessed: 6 January, 2016].

[22] N. Baker, 'National Security Versus Civil Liberties', *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 33 (2003): 549.

While two wars were fought abroad, the domestic countermeasures in the US also followed the 'logic of war'[23]. The 2001 PATRIOT Act expediently granted a broad range of powers to the executive and agencies that were directly accountable to it[24]. Imbedded in the Act was the suspension of numerous civil liberties. Arguably, the purpose for this was to remove barriers to counterterrorist measures. Attorney General John Ashcroft argued that civil liberties were not only impediments to security, but also sources of insecurity by stating that 'terrorists are told how to use America's freedom as a weapon against us' [25]. In France, the National Assembly voted on 8 February, 2016, to constitutionally enshrine the executive's emergency powers for 'as long as the threat is there'[26]. The instatement of emergency powers in France has given authorities the ability to place suspects under house arrest and allow police to conduct searches without warrants amongst other prerogatives[27]. Therefore, the war approach to counterterrorism inherently favours security over civil liberties.

Examples of the countermeasures that are reflective of those used in wartime are manifold in the cases of the US and France. In the US, 1,200 people were detained soon after 9/11[28]. At the time of writing, official reports have confirmed 2,700 police raids have been conducted, 1,000 individuals have been arrested and 360 persons have been placed under house arrest since the Paris Attacks[29]. The severity of such measures does not preclude the war logic from having a human security focus with the individual as the referent object. Such recourses may be morally justifiable by consequentialist assertions of the 'ends justifying the means', the ultimate end being human 'freedom from threat, danger or harm'[30]. David Blunkett's parliamentary discussion paper, for

[23] P. Roe, 'Is Securitization a "Negative" Concept? Revisiting the normative debate over normal versus extraordinary politics', (2012) 43 *Security Dialogue*, 43, 250.

[24] Ibid, 251.

[25] Baker, 'National Security Versus Civil Liberties', 549.

[26] L. Jancinto , 'Paris Is on Wartime Footing', *Foreign Policy*, 9 February 2016, Available from: http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/09/paris-is-on-wartime-footing [Accessed: 12 February 2016].

[27] A. Chrisafis, and J. Borger, 'French MPs vote to extend state of emergency after Paris attacks' *The Guardian* 19 November 2015. Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/ [Accessed: 6 January 2016].

[28] Baker, 551.

[29] B. Wazir, 'From Charlie Hebdo attacks to a state of emergency' *Aljazeera*, 6 January 2016, Accessed: 8 January, 2016, Available at: http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/.

[30] P. Pham, 'Law, Human Rights, Realism and the 'War on Terror', (20040 4 *Human Rights & Human Welfare*, 93.

instance, took the view that powers of the ACTS Act IV had a 'disruptive effect' on terrorist activity within the UK and that terrorists viewed the UK as 'a far more hostile place in which to operate'[31]. Consequently, Pham argues that 'a liberal democracy's principle of self-defence compels it to take a course of action that strays from its own foundational commitments'[32]. Thus, it is arguable that, if effective, the emphasis of security over liberty is necessary when combatting terrorism.

Although these measures may be excused as the necessities of wartime, it is questionable if securitized countermeasures are lawful or indeed effective. The 2001 PATRIOT Act has been notorious in terms of its inconsistency with the US constitution. For example, the detention of individuals, whether foreign nationals or citizens, is a violation of their First and Sixth Amendment rights[33]. In addition, the increase of executive power in the UK, US and France, with minimal judicial or legislative oversight, threatens the integrity of democratic checks-and-balances. Furthermore, as Paul cautions, war informed countermeasures may create new enemies faster than the state can apprehend them[34]. Indeed, many who join terrorist organisations in Europe are from diaspora communities that are marginalised and alienated from wider society[35]. The targeting of minority groups has been seen to increase alienation, leading to radicalisation. The contention that the 7/7 bombings were the result of frustration by the British attackers at UK conduct in the war on terror[36] should cause Western states to reflect on whether the infringement of human and civil rights is turning counterterrorism into a cyclical, self-perpetuating exercise by providing terrorist organisations with recruitment capital.

Overall, it is questionable whether the broad definition of terrorism applied to an equally ill-defined war on terror is a strategically sound method of providing either state or individual security. Arguably, the war framing of the post-9/11 countermeasures was the least desirable outcome for both state and human security. It places democratic

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[31] D. Blunket, 'Counter-Terrorism Powers: Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society: A Discussion Paper', (2004) *Home Department*, 2.

[32] P. Pham, 'Law, Human Rights, Realism and the 'War on Terror', 93.

[33] Baker, 551.

[34] R. Paul, 'Trading Freedom for Security: Drifting toward a Police State', (2003) 14 *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 7.

[35] M. Abrahms, 'What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy', (2008) 32 *International Security*, 97.

[36] B. Hayes, 'There is no Balance between Security and Civil Liberties - Just Less of Each', (2005) 12 *ECLN,* 2.

regimes at risk of becoming purveyors of state violence and suppression and its efficiency in countering the terrorist threat is of dubious merit. As Buzan states, 'war is seldom good for liberal values even when fought in defence of them'[37].

CRIME

Alternative to the war approach, the crime perspective argues that terrorism is a form of crime which cannot be defeated but can be contained[38]. This approach addresses terrorism like other crimes, where arrest is followed by trial and, if proven guilty, punishment[39]. However, since 9/11, it is deemed insufficient to capture terrorists after the fact. Rather, terrorist activities are to be pre-empted[40]. This emphasis on prevention has profound implications for both security and civil liberties. In order to contain and pre-empt terrorism, security agencies have increasingly turned to technology based measures, notably surveillance[41]. Under Title II of the PATRIOT Act, US security services were given legal authority to conduct counterterrorist surveillance[42]. However, the Snowden leaks of 2013 revealed a far more extensive surveillance programme conducted by the US National Security Agency (NSA) and the UK's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), involving the collection and storage of personal data *en masse*. While such measures threaten civil liberties like the right to privacy, it is arguable that greater security over under-legislated areas, such as the internet, is necessary to provide both individual and state security[43]. Especially since 'new terrorist' organisations, such as Al-Qaeda and Daesh have been known to use these technologies for their activities. Moreover, threats to civil liberties from data collection and location tracking has been mitigated to some extent by judicial review of police access to such information within the US and EU[44]. Therefore, if maintained within the remit of democratic checks-and-balances, the crime approach offers a plausible solution

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[37] Buzan, 117.

[38] Lutz and Lutz, 'Terrorism', 284.

[39] Ibid, 283.

[40] Baker, 555.

[41] D.Bigo, 'To Reassure and Protect, After September 11', *Social Science Research Council*, (2002). Available at: http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/bigo.htm [Accessed: 15 March, 2015].

[42] *USA PATRIOT Act,* Pub. L. No. 107-56, 115 Stat. 272 (2001).

[43] P. Heymann, 'Dealing with Terrorism: An Overview', (2001) 26 *International Security*, 31.

[44] D.J. Phillips, 'Locational Surveillance: embracing the patterns of our lives' in A. Chadwick and P.N. Howard, *Handbook of Internet Politics*, (London, 2008), 343.

to the dilemma of maintaining security against terrorism while being less invasive to civil liberties.

While the crime analogy offers countermeasures that are more conducive to civil liberties, its application in the post-9/11 context has a number of flaws. Firstly, it is questionable whether the 'ends justify the means' with regard to the invasion of privacy by the state. Blair's admission that 'all the surveillance in the world' would not have foreseen the 7/7 attacks[45] and the assertion by the former Norwegian head of intelligence services, Janne Kristiansen, after the Anders Breivik attacks that pre-emption would have required 'a chip inside the head of every single Norwegian'[46], raises questions as to the effectiveness of these measures. However, the lack of transparency regarding the effectiveness of counterterrorist measures precludes a quantitative assessment. Thus, the following evaluation will focus on the qualitative effects of the post-9/11 criminal approach.

Critics have argued that bureaucratic competition between various agencies has resulted in the merging military, police and intelligence services functions[47]. The danger therein is that ordinary crimes will be treated on par and with the same measures as those against terrorism. For example, stop-and-search measures have become applicable to crimes ranging from drug trafficking to credit card fraud. Additionally, due to the focus of states like the US and UK on Jihadist terrorism, racial profiling has become prolific. Mike Chenoff, the former head of the Criminal Division in the Justice Department, despite denying the use of racial profiling, stated that the US targets persons from 'where Al Queda [sic] support is thought to exist', which are predominantly Muslim, Middle Eastern countries[48]. Moreover, the Framework Decision adopted by the EU has appropriated nebulous definitions of terrorism and support for terrorism. As a result, legitimate forms of political dissent, such as peaceful protests, have fallen under counterterrorist prerogatives[49]. Such developments are the adverse effects of securitising

[45] Hayes, 'There is no Balance between Security and Civil Liberties - Just Less of Each', 5.

[46] R. Orange, '"Answer hatred with love": how Norway tried to cope with the horror of Anders Breivik', *The Guardian*, 15 April 2012. Available from: http://www.theguardian.com/world/ [Accessed: 21 March 2015].

[47] Bigo, 'To Reassure and Protect, After September 11'.

[48] D.D. Cole, 'Security and Freedom - Are the Government's Efforts to Deal with Terrorism Violative of Our Freedoms?', (2003) 29 *Canada-United States Law Journal*, 334.

[49] T. Bunyan, 'The War on Freedom and Democracy: an Analysis of the Effects on Civil Liberties and Democratic Culture in the EU', (2002) 13 *Statewatch analysis*, 13.3.

areas which are held to be the province of traditional law enforcement or even healthy democratic practice. Ergo, the criminal approach, while offering states a course of action which balances civil liberties and security, may generate undemocratic practices if countermeasures move from a politicised to a securitised method of response.

DISEASE

The disease perspective sees terrorism as the symptom of broader, underlying causes and advocates the use of long-term remedies[50]. Its ultimate aim is the reduction of threat through addressing the root causes of terrorism[51]. This approach is least invasive on civil liberties and is largely conducive to human security. In the UK, the PREVENT aspect of the 2003 CONTEST strategy has focused on preventing radicalisation since the 7/7 bombings[52]. Alternatively, in the aftermath of the 2011 'lone-wolf' terrorist attacks committed by Breivik, the Norwegian response was not securitisation, but rather politicisation, verging on non-politicisation. Aside from assuring the physical security of some government buildings and a relatively minimal increase in policing[53], Prime Minister Stoltenberg articulated the Norwegian response as being 'more openness, more democracy'[54]. Surveys showed that Norway was less supportive of stronger security measures after the terrorist attacks than before, which may be attributable to the differing nature of the attacks and the differences in the framing of the crisis through their speech acts[55]. Ergo, the disease analogy's focus on prevention and politicisation of terrorist threats is less intrusive on civil liberties than the war or crime perceptions of terrorism.

However, the diminished threat to civil liberties does not entail its absence. The measures taken by PREVENT against radicalisation have been criticised as the securitisation of Islam[56], arguably impinging upon freedom of religion. Additionally, Abrahms has contended that the assimilation of Muslim communities could require

[50] Lutz and Lutz, 274.
[51] Ibid, 283.
[52] Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 146.
[53] Orange, '"Answer hatred with love": how Norway tried to cope with the horror of Anders Breivik'.
[54] J. Stoltenberg, *Norway Mission to the UN* (2011). Available at: http://www.norway-un.org/NorwayandUN/Norwegian_Politics/ [Accessed: 20 March, 2015].
[55] A.L. Fimreite *et al.*, 'After Oslo and Utøya: A Shift in the Balance Between Security and Liberty in Norway?' (2013) 36 *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 846-847.
[56] Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 146.

democratic societies 'cracking down on bigotry'[57]. Yet, measures such as blasphemy laws to prevent instances such as the 2014 Charlie Hebdo attacks would in turn contradict freedom of speech. Furthermore, the fact that there has been a long history of terrorism pre-9/11 implies that there will be a long future hence. As such, a condition of non-politicisation through the disease approach is unlikely to be realised on this issue. If terrorism is to be a permanent feature of the security agenda, we may question if the measures taken by Norway to counterterrorism through 'more openness, more democracy' will be sufficient to protect against the physical threat of terrorism. This raises the dilemma that even the least intrusive countermeasures will produce contradictions between civil liberties while possibly leaving the threat posed to human life unaddressed.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the double threat of terrorism through the prism of Sederberg's typology provided above makes it possible to argue the following. On the one hand, it has been demonstrated that the war approach and the securitisation of terrorism might be a popular recourse of action, for policymakers and public alike, in the wake of a devastating terrorist attack. However, examination of the securitisation of terrorism casts doubt on the benefits of such measures, not only in terms of its negative impacts on civil liberties, but also in terms of its effectiveness in combatting terrorism.

On the other hand, the disease approach offers a sustainable, long-term method of addressing terrorism at its roots. Moreover, it is the least invasive to civil liberties. Yet, the treatment of terrorism as a disease is not without problem or paradox. Firstly, this approach possesses internal contradictions, as attempts to address issues such as radicalisation or impetuses for terrorism may still lead to the repression of some civil liberties. Second, the disease approach offers no short-term provision for the physical security of citizens in isolation.

In the middle of this spectrum, addressing terrorism as a form of crime has been argued to provide the most practicable balancing solution. If a politicised approach is undertaken wherein the legal authorities remain within the remits of the rule of law and democratic checks-and-balances, the criminal approach may provide effective countermeasures to terrorism while respecting civil liberties. However, the securitisation of criminal countermeasures since 9/11 poses a number of challenges to

[57] Abrahms 'What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy', 105.

the integrity of civil liberties. Issues such as extensive surveillance, racial and religious profiling and the merging of security service functions under broad definitions of terrorism with limited accountability to the public give rise to undemocratic practices. Ultimately, terrorism poses a complex threat that makes the achievement of a perfect balance between security and civil liberties in countermeasures to it improbable. However, by adhering to the strengths found within democratic systems, rather than scorning their constraints, it is possible to provide security, not only for the nation or individual, but also for the liberties they embody.

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Conflicts of Capitalism: Condoms as a mass-produced commodity in the US, 1920s-1930s

Rasmus Randig·

The emergence of mass-produced condoms in the US during the 1920s and 1930s is considered a prime example of modern industry and big business. By retelling the history of condoms in the US during this period from production to circulation and impact, this article highlights the social and cultural conflicts that shaped the trajectory from brothel necessity to modern commodity. This history corresponds to Arjun Appadurai's assertion that capitalism is more than a 'techno-economic design' and manifests the cultural and social dimensions of modernity. Such a narrative also illuminates the concept of the 'medicalisation' of society and highlights its corporeal and material dimensions.

A social and cultural history of the large-scale production, circulation, and consumption of condoms illustrates Arjun Appadurai's assertion that 'capitalism represents not simply techno-economic design, but a complex cultural system with a very special history in the modern West'.[1] The commodification of condoms in the US during the 1920s and 1930s is commonly imagined now, as it was then, as a prime example of modern industry and big business. In 'American dream' narratives, entrepreneurs like Julius Schmid and Merle Youngs are portrayed as rags-to-riches individual geniuses who overcome technological obstacles in the production of rubber contraceptives. Once technologically possible, condoms become a mass commodity and are met with huge demand; the inventors soon dominate the market with large business corporations.[2] What escapes narratives like this are the socio-cultural contexts and struggles that conditioned and combined to transform a previously disdained brothel item into a modern mass-commodity. The first section of this article will illustrate how production

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[1] A. Appadurai, 'Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value' in A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge, 1986), 48-49.

[2] R. Ginzburg, 'State's Condom Makers Enjoy a Sales Boom' *The New York Times*, 23 August 1987; 'Julius Schmid' Who Made America? Available at :http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/theymadeamerica/whomade/schmid_hi.html [Accessed 4.12.14]; see also A. Tone, Devices and Desires: A History of Contraceptives in America (New York, 2001), 187-188.

processes and technological innovations pertaining to condom manufacture were embedded in historically-shaped global and national social structures. The next section will discuss how changes in the meaning of condoms, and shifting cultural attitudes, were necessary for the industry to gain access to an emerging mass market. This social history of condoms confirms that culture is more than an artificially created illusion, a 'fetish' or a 'spectacle'[3] whose only purpose is to make people buy 'stuff'. Instead, and as outlined by Appadurai, culture is fully embedded within wider socio-economic developments. The third section will explore the extent to which the impact of mass-produced male contraception, often represented as a history of progress, was more than the mere eventual success of humanity to control its own fate, but also a shift in the regulation of individuals and populations. A concluding section will discuss the implications of a social and cultural history of condoms as a mass commodity for the historiography and study of capitalism more generally.

PRODUCING CONDOMS: EMBEDDED TECNOLOGICAL INNVOATION AND GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Complex forms of technological diffusion and supply chains spanning the globe are commonly considered only a phenomenon of the 20th century's closing decades. Correspondingly, early 20th century industrialisation is imagined as a mostly national affair. Yet narratives focussing on national inventor-heroes eschew the contingency and embeddedness of wider technological changes that shaped early production processes of mass-produced condoms. Further, rubber being the central raw material, the supply chain of condoms reached over the Pacific along historically-shaped trade routes and transatlantic relations.

The inception of mass-produced condoms can be considered paradigmatic for the onset of modern production processes and big business during the 1920s and 1930s. Norman E. Himes, a contemporary observer, described the production process; his description is confirmed by Andrea Tone in a more recent study. [4] Basically, cylindrical glass moulds are dipped into liquid latex and are left to dry. Rotating brushes then roll the condoms from the moulds before a lubricator is added and they are individually packaged.

[3] G. Ritzer, *Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption* (Thousand Oaks, 1999), 104.

[4] N. E. Himes, *Medical History of Contraception* (New York City, 1936), 202-206; Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 184.

Tellingly, this basic process has changed little in the intervening century.[5] By the mid-1930s, when technological innovation favoured capital-intensive, automated mass-production, only a few companies could follow the market leaders Schmid and Youngs.[6] Such increased productivity is commonly seen as a key characteristic of the 1920s, epitomized by the 'Ford Miracle' based on 'mechanization and innovative management'.[7] This echoes general notions of the US interwar years as a period not only of innovation in production methods but also, by association, the domination of national mass markets by big business.[8]

National perspectives of technological innovation often focus on a single creative inventor, which masks contingency and the integration of the condom industry in wider technological developments on a national level.[9] The pioneer of automated condom production was Fred Killian who, in 1926, registered a patent for a machine that rolled condoms. This made the (mostly female) work of manually rolling the condoms redundant. Court documents suggest that he had been advised by his wife, who had done this work. The same documents also disclose that the death of a family member in a fire at a condom factory in 1930 had given him the incentive to invent a fully-automated assembly line using latex instead of the highly inflammable cement rubber. But Killian was not the only person considering the use of latex. During the 1920s and 1930s, the company U.S. Rubber took up the challenge of substituting latex for rubber in all such industries, not just the manufacture of condoms.[10]

Moreover, thanks to the seminal 1934 study by Himes,[11] the origin of rubber condoms is still commonly linked to Charles Goodyear's invention of the vulcanization process in the mid-19th century. This national perspective historically locates the genesis of an

[5] Trojan, *Unrolled: A Tour of Trojan Brand Condoms Manufacturing Facility*. Available at: http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid1425961417001?bckey=AQ~~,AAABTGqp0-k~,q_Z_5liv0gJvlx7LJEfkFi7ErnO-N9lO&bctid=1615869173001 [Accessed 4.12.14].

[6] Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 194; J. Gamson, 'Rubber Wars: Struggles over the Condom in the United States' (1990) 1:2 *Journal of the History of Sexuality,* 265.

[7] L. Dumenil, *The Modern Temper: American Culture and Society in the 1920s* (New York City, 1995), 6; see also D. J. Goldberg, 'Rethinking the 1920s: Historians and Changing Perspective' (2007) 21:3 *Magazines of History,* 8.

[8] Dumenil, *The Modern Temper,* 3-4, 7; Goldberg, 'Rethinking the 1920s', 8.

[9] 'Julius Schmid'; Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 187-188.

[10] Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 193-194; V. L. Bullough, 'A Brief Note on Rubber Technology and Contraception: The Diaphragm and the Condom' (1981) 22:1 *Technology and Culture,* 104.

[11] Himes, *Medical History*, 186; Bullough, 'A Brief Note', 106.

American product in the US, concealing the wider social and historical context. Instead, the aforementioned innovations were shaped by both the historical colonial relationship between the late British Empire and its North Atlantic colonies and the contemporary personal and economic relationships between the U.S. and its former metropolis. By the early 20th century, the rubber trade had moved from Brazil to the British Pacific colonies from which Britain was supplying its former colony, the US, with the material.[12] Thus the origin, and subsequent production, of a modern 'American' product like the condom was closely linked to historically-shaped relations encompassing almost the whole globe. These examples demonstrate why the mass-production of condoms cannot be understood simply in terms of single inventors. Creative individuals were key to transposing technologies from other industries to condom-production, but they did not work in isolation. Instead they were steeped in manufacturing coincidences and failures as well as wider social structures which connected and shaped a range of industries around the world.

These changes in production methods were central to the transformation of condoms from brothel accessories to a mass commodity. Appadurai holds that 'the decisive factor[s] in technological innovation … are often social and political rather than simply technological'.[13] As the following section will demonstrate, societal structures needed to change to enable the large-scale distribution necessary for condoms to be mass-produced. Such socio-cultural changes were implicit in amendments to the regulation of contraceptives and, therefore, closely connected to a transformation of what condoms signified in a new, emerging context.

DISTRIBUTING CONDOMS: DEMAND, MEDICALISATION AND ORIENTALISM

Mass production requires a market with a corresponding demand. To be deemed appropriate for circulation in the US market, and thus transformed into a commodity, the meaning of condoms had to be modified. Hitherto condoms had been considered brothel necessities; they were a means to, and therefore symbols of, illegitimate sex that

[12] Z. Frank & A. Musacchio, 'Brazil in the International Rubber Trade, 1870-1930' in S. Topik, *et al.*, (eds.), *From Silver to Cocaine* (London, 2006), 271-299; Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 183, referring to Himes.

[13] Appadurai, 'Introduction', 34.

was condemned by Victorian moral discourses. Interstate trade in, and the promotion of, means by which to prevent conception had been prohibited since the Comstock Act 1873. [14] Thus, in Appadurai's words, [15] the criteria of condoms for 'commodity candidacy'—the conditions a product must fulfil to qualify for circulation in public markets—had to change. After World War I, wide-ranging social changes threatened the existing Victorian moral order. One example is a public health discourse which enabled new notions of sexuality to develop and thereby created opportunities for the circulation of condoms. A refined understanding of condoms was integrated into shifting discourses of medicine and society at the same time as permission was sought to distribute condoms commercially. Then, when condoms were advertised, they were associated in subtle ways with new notions of sexuality and gender norms. By linking condoms symbolically to these wider discourses, producers suggested that their use was increasingly socially accepted in the context of wider social change. Thus, demand was shaped and fostered not through the creation of 'artificial' needs but by inserting the meaning of condoms into wider socio-cultural changes in understanding the body and sexuality.[16] Growing condom sales further established a mass market, which continually fed-back into promoting wider social and cultural changes; and so the cycle continued. This confirms Appadurai's assertion that '[d]emand is … neither a mechanical response to the structure and level of production nor a bottomless natural appetite. It is a complex social mechanism that mediates between short- and long-term patterns of commodity circulation.'[17]

Initially, new medical discourses were a necessary condition for policy makers to permit the US-wide circulation of condoms, thus undermining the Comstock Act. Professional organizations of physicians changed the nature of the State in the area of social policy by aligning more and smaller parts of the body with their remit. Then, rather than acting as a moral arbitrator, the State began receiving demands to 'manage' society in general and people's health in particular. Sexuality and reproduction were key to both the health of individuals in the context of broad concerns for congenital disease and the regulation of populations and classes. This process of 'medicalisation' is illustrated at one extreme

[14] Anthony Comstock was a Victorian moralist and, from his perspective, all types of contraception (except personal restraint) constituted a means to sin. J. M. Riddle, *Eve's Herbs: A History of Contraception and Abortion in the West* (London, 1997), 425-427.

[15] Appadurai, 'Introduction', 13-14.

[16] Ritzer, *Enchanting*, 95-116.

[17] Appadurai, 'Introduction', 40-41.

by the eugenic movement.[18] These changes had become increasingly pronounced even before the 1920s, so that 'by 1918, the Victorian ethos of self-control had yielded to new ideas and institutions that took male sexual activity for granted and strove to subdue, even eliminate, its undesired consequences'. [19] In this context, condom producers highlighted the benefit of condoms in the fight against venereal diseases, carefully avoiding implications for sexual behaviour, thereby making their products acceptable and palatable to the State and its emerging task of managing public health. Highlighting the prophylactic attributes of condoms, the industry prevailed in the New York Supreme Court's 1928 Crane ruling. This allowed the nation-wide distribution of condoms for contraceptive use and established a precedent for future rulings.[20] Thus, the dominant and officially-sanctioned meaning of condoms shifted from a symbol of illicit sex to a legitimate prophylaxis against disease. Nevertheless, the court rulings sat alongside the Comstock Act, meaning that condoms could only be advertised, if at all, in medical or neutral terms. This further privileged the big manufacturers like Schmid and Youngs, who were exclusively supplying drugstores and had already established their condoms as quality brands.[21]

While the medical dimension of condoms was highlighted in the public arena, the demand of mass circulation had to be approached differently. Strategies for marketing condoms were intricately linked to wider efforts to replace Victorian morals with more progressive notions of gender and sexuality. The 1920s witnessed the beginnings of systematic and ubiquitous advertisement.[22] However, the history of condoms shows that the expansion of advertising was not isolated from wider social change. As condoms were still a sensitive topic linked to new notions of sexuality and gender norms, they were not advertised as 'spectacularly' as other products, e.g. on large billboards spread across cities. Nevertheless, condom producers were able to suggest a subtler link with social change.[23] Denied huge marketing campaigns, they created brands by establishing their products within symbolic systems, thereby not just promising a new lifestyle as an

[18] Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 138-49; M. Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1965-76*, (ed.) M. Bertani, *et al.*, (trans.) D. Macey (London, 2003), 239-264.
[19] Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 106.
[20] Ibid., 183-184; Gamson, 'Rubber Wars', 68-69.
[21] Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 188-189.
[22] Goldberg, 'Rethinking the 1920s', 8-9; Dumenil, *The Modern Temper*, 12.
[23] Ritzer, *Enchanting*, 95-116.

end in itself but also establishing socially-acceptable alternatives to Victorian morals.[24] One particular example is Schmid's brands of Sheik, Sphinx and Ramses (Fig. 1). The Oriental names are complemented by corresponding imagery of Oriental dress, Egyptian iconography and desert landscapes. These symbols attempt to connect condoms with figures and themes found in popular culture, such as films and literature. Thus, the horseman on the Sheik box linked the product with the protagonist in a series of contemporary Orientalist films.[25]

Fig. 1 Four condom tins from the 1930s. Hunter Oatman-Standford, 'Getting It On: The Covert History of the American Condom', *Collectors Weekly*, 16 August 2012.

[24] Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 189; G. D. McCracken, *Culture and Consumption II: Markets, Meaning and Brand Management* (Indianapolis, 2005), 97-115.

[25] J. Campanelli, 'The Full Cleveland: Tour of Contraceptive Museum', *Cleveland.com: The Plain Dealer Videos*, 23 September 2010, 3:55-4:15min. Available: http://videos.cleveland.com/plain-dealer/index.html?tag=birth%20control [Accessed 4.12.14].

Available: http://www.collectorsweekly.com/articles/getting-it-on-the-covert-history-of-the-american-condom/ [Accessed 4.12.14].

In the context of hegemonic Victorian prudery, the cultural discourse of Orientalism projected the fulfilment of erotic desire and freedom from strict moral restraint onto the idea of an imaginary Middle-Eastern culture that became even more visible through the dissemination of film and visual advertisements. This emerging cultural theme interacted with the transition from Victorian ideals to the more modern social politics described above. Hence, it was increasingly possible to see Oriental tropes in the American cultural landscape of the time, heralding social, cultural and sexual change.[26] It was within this cultural revolution that the Sheik, Ramses and Sphinx brands were embedded, both contributing to and benefiting from it: men and women could well imagine what was permitted under the eyes of the sphinx but strictly prohibited under the gaze of a Victorian lady. Thus, the Orientalist advertisements created a 'spectacle', a 'dramatic public display',[27] by subtly transgressing established symbolic boundaries of what was acceptable.[28] These 'micro-scandals', however, were not an illusion that had been created out of nothing; they were the loci of cultural change that formed part of the social struggle between the old Victorian order and its newer competitors. Moreover, this Oriental discourse demonstrates the link between consumer culture, social relations, and global politics. The fictional Oriental desire was something to be either cherished or resented within a moral discourse, primarily because it was exotic and alien to Western culture. When politicised, this 'otherness' could potentially act as an imperative to 'civilise' the real people of the Middle East.[29]

For condoms to need modern production regimes, large-scale demand and distribution was required. This necessitated changes in State regulations and the symbolic meaning of condoms. This was precipitated not simply by the removal of moral imperatives but by diverse social demands and negotiations. All this encompassed a medical concern for the health of society plus advocacy for more permissive and liberal attitudes to sexuality; with such demands, an attentive industry happily aligned itself. This link with sexuality, and by extension corporeality, will be explored further in the next section.

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[26] N. Bowman, 'Questionable Beauty: The Dangers and Delights of the Cigarette in American Society, 1880-1930' in P. Scranton (ed.), *Beauty and Business: Commerce, Gender and Culture in Modern America* (Hobohen, 2014), 74.

[27] Ritzer, *Enchanting*, 104.

[28] Ibid., 104-107.

[29] E. W. Said, *Orientalism* (London,1978), 1-28.

CONSUMING CONDOMS; MEDICAL DISCOURSES IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERE

It is particularly clear that social struggles over the meaning of condoms are related to meanings of the body and sexual intercourse. Bryan S. Turner argues that the dimension of corporeality in human interaction has to be acknowledged in the analysis of social interaction and social order. According to Turner, bodily functions, such as hunger, the need for sleep, and sexual drive, must not be considered universal human needs but conceptualised as subject to cultural interpretation in the context of attempts at social control. They are, therefore, historically- and culturally-specific.[30] This dimension will be examined by exploring the general impact of the wider circulation and use of condoms. In the context of a greater medicalisation of society, the expanding presence of contraceptives in public retail outlets further established the medical approach to society in the public sphere. Additionally, with its practical and material implications, condoms influenced the discourse of medicalisation in the private sphere of sexual intercourse.

The process of society's medicalisation can be considered another form of social control and regulation that succeeded Victorian morals after World War I. Until recently, the history of contraceptives, and of condoms in particular, was a progress-fuelled narrative celebrating increased human domination over nature.[31] This history focussed on effectiveness and efficiency in technological terms, asserting that, 'for a contraceptive to be effective it has to be inexpensive, reliable and available'.[32] This reveals an assumption that condoms were a tool that had been much desired and, once invented, merely needed to be made accessible in sufficient quality and quantity. Yet, as demonstrated in the previous section, demand and desire for condoms was intricately linked to wider socio-cultural changes not adequately captured by a teleological narrative of modernity. Michel Foucault provided a seminal narrative of the process of medicalisation in Western culture, critiquing teleological notions of progress. He asserts that, rather than repressing desires, modern culture has created and shaped them through classificatory systems, with the consequence of disciplining and regulating individuals and

[30] B. S. Turner, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory*, 3rd edn. (London, 2008), 34.
[31] K. Fisher, *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage in Britain, 1918-1960* (Oxford, 2006), 2; A. McLaren, *A History of Contraception: From Antiquity to the Present Day* (Oxford, 1990), 1.
[32] Bullough, 'A Brief Note', 104.

populations. This requires greater regulation of sexuality and reproduction by increasingly defining social problems and aspects of human interaction in medical terms, which thereby requires the intervention of medical experts.[33] As such, Turner draws on Foucault when maintaining that 'it is possible to trace a secularization of the body in which the body ceases to be the object of a sacred discourse of flesh and becomes an object within a medical discourse, where the body is a machine to be controlled by appropriate scientific regimens.'[34] This suggests that the Victorian system of moral control was succeeded by yet another control regime: medicalisation.

This new concern for public health not only made a mass market for condoms possible but was also, in turn, broadened by it. Through greater visibility in retail outlets, condoms contributed to a growing perception of the body and social interaction in medical terms. When condoms were purchased and entered the private sphere, they signified a new sexuality but not one that was isolated from a medical context. It emphasised pleasure but connected it with the imperative to remain healthy; condoms symbolically aligned this new sexuality with health. It also confirmed the increasing authority of medical experts. More importantly, condoms illustrate persisting gender differences, despite social change and the rhetoric of equality in the context of modernity. Both female and male contraceptives were connected to medical discourses of society; however, whilst condoms became freely available in retail outlets, the female equivalent (the diaphragm) was available only by consulting a physician. This was a manifestation and extension of the control of (male) society over the female body.[35]

Moreover, the impact on private sexual intercourse was not restricted to symbolical links with social discourses; there was also a practical and material dimension. The material attributes of condoms and the circumstances of their application influence sexual intercourse and thus the actual enactment of gender relations. The use of a condom as a contraceptive requires the cooperation of both partners. It requires direct attention and obliges those involved to sequence their interaction around the condom.[36] As a consequence, even when the condom is bought exclusively for enjoying a new sexuality of pleasure and the users are completely ignorant of what doctors say on the matter, its

[33] Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 239-264; Toner, *Devices and Desires*, 47.

[34] Turner, *The Body and Society*, 38.

[35] Tome, *Devices and Desires*., 7; R. A. Soloway, '"The Perfect Contraceptive": Eugenics and Birth Control Research in Britain and America in the Interwar Years' 1995 30(4) *Journal of Contemporary History* 630; Fisher, *Birth Control*, 9-12.

[36] McLaren, *A History of Contraception*, 9.

use requires partners to modify their behaviour in a way that is, to some degree, consistent with the health imperatives of a medicalised society beyond the mere prevention of conception.

Without doubt, the emergence of condoms has allowed individuals to enjoy sex, families to plan their size and societies to stay healthy. However, all of this was not achieved independent of wider social changes and controversies. Thus, pleasure in sex, family planning and the containment of disease were also linked to an increasing authority of the medical profession. So, too, was State expansion into ever-greater spheres of individual and group life, with particularly dire consequences for anyone not deemed 'normal', such as homosexuals.[37] In this context, the history of contraception can be seen seen as part of a changing pattern of social control, in which a more liberal sexuality plays a part. What the history of condoms in particular adds to this account is a business dimension, whereby the interests of professionals such as doctors became aligned with the interests of manufacturers.

CONCLUSION: CONFLICTS OF CAPITALISM

The emergence of mass-produced condoms illustrates that capitalism had cross-border implications as early as the 1920s. Thus, focus should shift from when 'globalisation' began towards when and why it expanded, becoming more visible and politicised, as well as the historical trajectory along which it developed.

However, technological capability and access to resources far beyond North America alone were insufficient to explain the emergence of condom mass-production and commodification. Without access to a growing US market, the large-scale manufacture of male contraceptives would have been unthinkable. Condoms, as an example, undermine the popular perspective that capitalism expands uninhibited once mass-production is technologically possible, creating the required markets and demand through advertisement and 'artificial' illusions of need and want.[38] They demonstrate that such expansion of capitalist production and distribution is shaped by conflicts between different actors who negotiate interests irreducible to mere financial gain. Developing ideas around the role of the State and social policy, gender norms, and sexuality negotiated the transformation of condoms from brothel items into a publicly

[37] M. Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Oxford, 2009), 1-6.

[38] Ritzer, *Enchanting*, 95-116.

circulated product. This transformation then fed-back into social change. Thus the expansion of a commodity like the condom is not predetermined but contingent; it must interact with wider social and cultural changes. It is important, therefore, not just to examine how capitalism shapes social relations and public culture but also how society and culture drive capitalism.

Through their cultural meaning, condoms shaped social discourses around medicalisation and public health. They symbolised what was socially acceptable, indicating and interacting with social developments, thereby distorting the stubbornly persistant analytical distinction between culture and capitalism. Furthermore, when consumed, many commodities literally transport public discourses into the private sphere, where ideas and even practices are shaped and reshaped by them. Thus, there is scope to examine not just how intimate practices are shaped by public rhetoric but also how they, in turn, influence developments in the public sphere.

Ultimately, the social and cultural history of condoms as a commodity confirms Appadurai's assertion 'that those commodities whose consumption is most intricately tied up with critical social messages are likely to be *least* responsive to crude shifts in supply or price, but most responsive to political manipulation at the social level'.[39] This highlights the need to complement existing histories and notions of capitalism with a consideration of the cultural dimension. This more-nuanced approach will demonstrate that the rapid expansion of capitalism throughout modernity is contingent upon, and shaped by, a variety of conflicts at every level of society.

[39] Appadurai, 'Introduction', 33 [emphasis original].

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Turning a Man's World into a Woman's World: Male/Male Erotic Fiction as a Tool for Female Readers and Writers to Create Quasi-Egalitarian Experiences within a Gendered Society

Emmi de Vries*

Why do females who identify as heterosexual write and/or read male/male erotic fiction? The goal of this paper shall be to highlight one explanation of the appeal this genre holds as a form of entertainment for some, while certainly not all, of its female readers and writers. It will be argued that the key to understanding the genre's appeal for these women is not the homosexual content of the narratives. Rather, male/male erotic fiction, with its challenge to binary and hierarchical gender roles, is used by them to dabble in privileges traditionally reserved for men and thus as a tool to create quasi-egalitarian experiences for them within a gendered society.

The central question of this paper – or some variation thereof – has been asked many times and continues to be asked by researchers and non-academics alike. While there seems to be agreement among the authors of the research consulted for this paper that a large percentage of the readership of male/male (m/m) erotic fiction is female and identifies as heterosexual, a literature review by Bruner shows how it is very challenging to gain accurate demographic data on the readership of m/m erotic fiction.[1] The most recent quantitative data used for this paper was collected by Bruner during a study of slash fanfiction communities on Facebook.[2] 36 out of 40 survey respondents in her study identified as female and 27 out of 40 as heterosexual.[3] An earlier study among readers

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[1] J. Bruner, 'I "like" slash: the demographics of Facebook slash communities', *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*, Paper 170 (2013) 14-17, Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.18297/etd/170 [Accessed: 10 February 2016].

[2] Bruner, 39.

[3] Ibid., 43.

and writers of English-language Boys' Love manga found that 89% of the survey participants were female, 47% identified as heterosexual, and 25% as bisexual.[4]

However, even with the focus limited to this specific reading population, no single reason has emerged which captures the motivations of the entire female, heterosexual readership of male/male erotic fiction. Indeed, there seems to be more than one purpose for the genre as gay romance author Ally Blue illustrates in her assessment that 'if you asked ten different women, you'd get ten different answers'.[5] Thus trying to find any reason applicable to all women who enjoy m/m erotic fiction is not the purpose of this paper. The present argument shall merely highlight one explanation for the interest of part of this specific demographic in the male/male erotic fiction genre. In addition, it should also be noted at this point that any allusion to women's interest in m/m erotic fiction refers to the genre as a whole rather than to specific kinds of stories. Sexual fantasy is highly subjective[6] and different women might choose to read and write very different stories for their entertainment. However, it is the common theme of a (sexual) relationship between two men that is of interest in this essay.

There are also several technical terms employed in this paper that need defining before any arguments can be put forward. While the term male/male erotic fiction will denote any fictional narrative whose central focus is an erotic and/or romantic relationship between two male protagonists, there will also be references made to more specific sub-genres throughout the paper. These genres, which one can consider as falling into the broader category of m/m erotic fiction, are Japanese Boys' Love manga and 'Western' slash fanfiction.

Boys' Love manga (BL) is an overarching label derived from the Japanese term *shōnen'ai* (boys' love) and is commonly employed for comics with male homosexual story lines targeted at a female audience.[7] BL, as understood in this essay, shall also include works

[4] D. Pagliassotti, 'Reading Boys' Love in the West', (2008) 5:2 *Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies*.

[5] G. Knight, *Why Straight Women Love Gay Romance* I (LR Press, 2012), loc. 2093, Accessed via Kindle. Available at: http://www.amazon.co.uk/kindle-ebooks [Accessed: 7 January 2016].

[6] J. Russ, *Magic Mommas, Trembling Sisters, Puritans and Perverts: Feminist Essays* (The Crossing Press, 1985), 89.

[7] K. Saito 'Desire in Subtext: Gender, Fandom, and Women's Male-Male Homoerotic Parodies in Contemporary Japan', (2011) 6:1 *Mechademia*, 171-191, 172-73.

sometimes denoted separately as *yaoi* (= no climax, no point, no meaning)[8] which emphasize sex, usually at the expense of a carefully developed plot.[9] There has been, and continues to be, much discussion about the terminology used and what to include under each of the various Japanese terms.[10] Moreover, there has been significant change within the different genres over the years.[11] However, the term Boys' Love seems to best encompass the kind of fiction this essay is focused on.

Slash fanfiction (slash) is a sub-genre of fanfiction where perceived homosocial undercurrents in popular media inspire the creation of prose stories about romantic and/or sexual relationships between two (originally heterosexual) characters.[12] These 'pairings' are usually identified by a virgule (or slash), which denotes the homosexual content to the reader.[13] Just as with BL, there are many different types of slash with an infinite amount of settings and varying levels of eroticism,[14] including the category of PWP ('Plot what plot?' or 'Porn without Plot'), which is roughly equivalent to the Japanese *yaoi*.[15]

Although there are some stylistic differences between the two genres, slash and BL are nevertheless comparable phenomena[16] and will thus be used to find common themes applicable to m/m erotic fiction more broadly. However, it should be mentioned that research on 'Western' writing has mostly focused on fanfiction while research on Japanese works has included both original works and *dōjinshi* (fanfiction).[17] Therefore, while the findings might also be applicable to women who read and write commercial works in the genre of gay romance, there is a definite need for future research in this area.

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[8] C. Camper, 'Yaoi 101: Girls Love "Boys' Love', (2006) 23:3 *The Women's Review of Books*, 1.
[9] M. J. McLelland, 'No Climax, No Point, No Meaning? Japanese Women's Boy Love Sites on the Internet', (2000) 24:3 *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 274-291, 277.
[10] Saito, 172-73.
[11] Camper, 1.
[12] B. Hansen, 'The darker side of slash fanfiction on the internet', in A. Mousoutzanis and D. Riha (eds.) *New media and the politics of online communities*, (Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2010), 52.
[13] Hansen, 52.
[14] Bruner, 10-11.
[15] McLelland, 277.
[16] Saito, 173.
[17] Ibid.

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE GAY!

Since the homosexual aspect of these narratives is a defining characteristic of m/m erotic fiction, it appears logical, at least on the face of it, to look for the reason why women enjoy the genre in its portrayal of homosexuality. Indeed, an overwhelming majority of participants seemed to be in support of gay rights among both the Facebook slash community surveyed by Bruner[18] and the BL community surveyed by Pagliassotti[19]. However, there were still participants among both groups of readers and writers who fantasize about male/male sex and love for enjoyment but disapproved of gay marriage (in the case of the BL community)[20] and gay men serving openly in the military or adopting children (in the case of the slash community).[21]

A similar, seemingly paradoxically, observation can be made with regards to the content of both slash and BL stories. In slash stories, the authors often insist that their protagonists are not gay but simply could not help to fall in love with one particular person of the same sex,[22] while many BL authors have their characters actively and vocally insist that they are not gay and gay politics are often avoided.[23] Moreover, gay clubs and gay men are sometimes even portrayed as perverted in BL.[24] This denial of homosexuality has been considered a sign of homophobia by both, other fans and academics.[25] However, past studies demonstrate how this may not do the role of homosexuality in BL and slash justice. Akatsuka argues in his essay on BL that the disavowal of homosexuality is meant to create ambiguity with regards to the sexual and gender identity of the character – and thus to allow for multiple interpretations by the readership – rather than an expression of homophobia.[26] However, he also points out

[18] Bruner, 52-53.
[19] Pagliassotti, 2008.
[20] Bruner, 52-35.
[21] Pagliassotti, 2008.
[22] S. Green, C. Jenkins & H. Jenkins, 'Normal female interest in men bonking: Selections from The Terra Nostra Underground and Strange Bedfellows' in C. Harris & A. Alexander (eds.) *Theorizing fandom: Fans, subculture and identity* (Hampton, 1998), 9, 22-24.
[23] Camper, 2
[24] Ibid.
[25] Green *et al.*, 22–24.
[26] N. K. Akatsuka 'Uttering the Absurd, Revaluing the Abject: Femininity and the Disavowal of Homosexuality in Transnational Boys' Love Manga' in A. Levi, M. McHarry & D. Pagliassotti

that while this use of homosexuality is neither pro-gay nor homophobic, the real issue is that BL fails to represent homosexuality as a real-world social identity with serious limitations, anxieties, and dangers attached, and thus marginalizes these issues.[27] He therefore expresses disapproval with regards to fictional works where readers or writers consume and produce cultural products which portray homosexuality but are not necessarily anti-homophobic.[28] More research would be needed to determine the extent of the adverse consequences of this portrayal of homosexuality but also to investigate potential positive effects of BL, and m/m erotic fiction more broadly, on attitudes towards homosexuality.

Jung, an academic and slash writer herself, stresses how slash is a diverse and ever-changing genre and how there has been a push to portray 'real' gay men, gay culture, and 'realistic' gay sex.[29] Curiously, this has not met the approval of all fans, some of which fear a more realistic portrayal might take away from their enjoyment of the genre.[30] This observation from Jung corresponds to Bruner's survey results where only 19% of her participants said they engaged in slash activities to express their political views about homosexuality.[31] Another interesting finding linked to this was reported by Pagliassotti. 93% of the BL readers and writers who participated in her survey reported reading *yaoi* and *shōnen-ai* but only 24% reported reading *yuri* and *shōjo-ai* (the female/female equivalent of the BL categories).[32] All of this leads the careful observer to conclude that for the women who read and write the genre, m/m erotic fiction is not primarily about homosexuality.

(eds.) *Boys' Love Manga: Essays on the Sexual Ambiguity and Cross-cultural Fandom of the Genre*, (McFarland & Company, 2010) 159-176.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] S. Jung, 'Queering Popular Culture: Female Spectators and the Appeal of Writing Slash Fan Fiction', (2004) 8 *Gender Forum Gender Queeries*, 11-12. Available at: http://genderforum.org/fileadmin/archiv/genderforum/queer/jung.html [Accessed: 10 February 2016].

[30] Ibid.

[31] Bruner, 50.

[32] D. Pagliassotti 'Better than romance? Japanese BL manga and the subgenre of male/male romantic fiction' in A. Levi, M. McHarry & D. Pagliassotti (eds.) *Boys' Love Manga: Essays on the Sexual Ambiguity and Cross-cultural Fandom of the Genre* (McFarland & Company, 2010), 59-83.

IT'S JUST FOR FUN!

But if it is not about homosexuality, what is the use of m/m erotic fiction as entertainment about? There has been a lot of research into this and different theories have been advanced on why females read and write m/m erotic fiction but many of them fail to give adequate attention to the statements of the female readers and writers in question as to why they enjoy the genre.[33] The top three reasons given by slash fans in Bruner's Facebook survey were that they do it for fun (97%), because they find the characters in their favorite pairing attractive (89%), and to relax (72%).[34] Blair reports on a survey where the most received comment from BL readers was that they simply found BL hot.[35] While these reasons certainly cannot be ignored,[36] what the majority of them have in common, is that they do not go beyond the surface of what it is that causes slash or BL to be fun or relaxing or even hot (to heterosexually identified readers).

Therefore, the question remains why these women would choose this particular genre as opposed to, or perhaps simply in addition to, other forms of fictional entertainment. From a review of the research already conducted in this area, it is proposed here that there is an underlying cause for female readers and writers to enjoy m/m erotic fiction. It will be argued that female readers and writers derive enjoyment from the opportunity to dabble in privileges traditionally reserved for men in gendered societies by creating quasi-egalitarian experiences through the reading and writing of m/m erotic fiction.

CREATING EGALITARIAN EXPERIENCES

Male/male erotic fiction is attractive to women because it provides them with the opportunity to imagine, and thus vicariously experience, relationships based on mutual

[33] Bruner, 28.
[34] Ibid, 50.
[35] M. M. Blair "'She Should Just Die in a Ditch": Fan Reactions to Female Characters in Boys' Love Manga' in A. Levi, M. McHarry & D. Pagliassotti (eds.) *Boys' Love Manga: Essays on the Sexual Ambiguity and Cross-cultural Fandom of the Genre* Jefferson (McFarland & Company, 2010),110-125.
[36] Ibid.

trust and egalitarian values.[37] The nature of the relationship is what matters more to the female readers or writers of the genre than the gender/sex of the protagonists.[38]

Firstly, there is a notion of comradery and equal ability within (fictional) m/m relationships. In slash, the protagonists usually share an adventure and maintain a non-hierarchical partnership.[39] Authors take great care to create egalitarian relationship dynamics in the different aspects of their stories from decision making to dress style, physical attractiveness, financial security, and, of course, sex.[40] In BL, too, the idea of male friendship based on comparable natures and levels of ability is translated into an ideal romantic relationship that is mutually caring.[41] Underscoring this is the concept of androgyny. Characters with mixed gender attributes are used to override the dichotomy between male and female to present human beings outside these strict binary, and usually hierarchical, gender roles.[42] Androgyny here is not meant as a loss of masculinity or simply a feminization of the male protagonists but rather a psychological androgyny with regards to gender, which calls into question the rigid boundaries between masculinity and femininity.[43] This fluid gender identity is not only represented by characters with mixed feminine and masculine attributes but also by the reader's or writer's ability to adopt different gender roles by, for example, identifying with both the *uke* and *seme*[44] in BL. When asked in a survey by Pagliassotti whether they identified

[37] A. Kustritz, 'Slashing the Romance Narrative', (2003) 26:3 *The Journal of American Culture*, 371-384.

[38] P. F. Lamb and D. Veith 'Romantic Myth, Transcendence, and Star Trek Zines' in D. Palumbo (ed.) *Erotic Universe: Sexuality and Fantastic Literature* (Greenwood Press, 1986), 236, 242.

[39] C. Salmon and D. Symons, 'Slash fiction and human mating psychology', (2004) 41:1 *The Journal of Sex Research,* 94, 99.

[40] Kustritz, 277.

[41] Saito, 180, 183.

[42] Pagliassotti (2010), loc. 1209.

[43] H. Jenkins *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, (Routledge, 1992), 218.

[44] The *seme* (from the Japanese term *semeru* = 'to attack') is the active partner during anal sex while the term *uke* (from the Japanese ukeru = 'to receive') refers to the passive partner. These terms often also reflect the status of the individuals within the relationship more broadly and give an indication of the gender attributes often ascribed to them, where the *seme* is more masculine and the *uke* more feminine, See Tan, Bee Kee 'Rewriting Gender and Sexuality in English-Language Yaoi Fanfiction' in A. Levi, M. McHarry & D. Pagliassotti (eds.) *Boys' Love Manga: Essays on the Sexual Ambiguity and Cross-cultural Fandom of the Genre*, (McFarland & Company, 2010), 126-156.

more with the *seme*, *uke*, or neither, the responses were roughly evenly distributed among the three options.[45]

Secondly, there is a notion that both partners have equal value within (fictional) m/m relationships. Saito suggests a shift in BL relationships from the traditional relationship model between a (male) subject and a (female) object of love to one with a subject of love and a subject of being loved.[46] This is often symbolized in the depiction of anal sex. Anal penetration is usually framed as a gift and expression of love and trust from the submissive partner to the dominant one and, therefore, increases rather than diminishes the value attached to the individual being penetrated.[47] Akatsuka sees in this a revaluation of femininity.[48] It also appears representative of the kind of relationship women desire, where one is loved for 'strength' but also for, and in spite of, 'weakness', or in other words, valued whether one is passive or active during sex or in a relationship.[49]

It is commonly assumed that women prefer romance to smut but witty and sexy slash stories break with this stereotype.[50] Indeed, m/m erotic fiction does not seem to be entirely about romantic and egalitarian relationships at all. In fact, although less acknowledged by research, there is a sub-genre of slash fanfiction, commonly called darkfic, where the relationships of the protagonists are decidedly unequal, complicated, hierarchical, or even violent. Themes for stories in this category might include bondage, erotic asphyxiation, mutilation, non-consent, and torture among others.[51] In a study on the slash fanfiction site 'Area 52', Hansen found that 94% of stories were rated using the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) system, with only 5% of those stories rated G but 61% rated R or NC-17.[52] When asked about their story preferences, 46% of slash fans reported a preference for G-rating on the MPAA system, while 81 % replied that they read R-rated fiction and 92% expressed an interest in works rated NC-17.[53] A similar trend can be noticed in BL as well, where such darkfic themes are very common.

[45] Pagliassotti (2010), loc. 1231.
[46] Saito, 85.
[47] Kustritz, 277.
[48] Akatsuka, loc. 3002-2009.
[49] Lamb and Veith, 254.
[50] Camper, 2.
[51] Hansen, 51.
[52] Ibid, 54.
[53] Bruner, 49.

In a survey by Pagliassotti, 50% of the 391 respondents found rape, physical torture, and cruel heroes acceptable in BL, while only 12% opposed the inclusion of rape and 8% that of physical torture.[54]

One explanation for the violent themes might be that they are part of so-called hurt/comfort scenarios, where injuries or other misfortunes are used to necessitate and facilitate emotional and physical closeness between the protagonists. Hurt/comfort is commonly used in both slash and BL.[55] Pagliassotti even goes as far as saying that non-consensual sex scenes are an extreme extension of the hurt/comfort theme.[56] However, there may be other explanations for this phenomenon, which could be described as an erotization of violence.[57]

An alternative reason for the prevalence of darkfic and expressive sex might be that (fan) fiction provides a safe way to explore taboo topics and thus a way for women to take control of their sexual desires.[58] In traditional manga for heterosexual male readers, for example, sex is rarely presented as an equal exchange for mutual pleasure but rather shown as something men either take from women or that is bestowed on them by women. In both cases, women are submissive and passive with sex being something that is done to them.[59] Removing female characters is a way to circumvent misogyny and other common stereotypes, and it leaves female artists, authors, and readers free to explore sexual desire and imagination.[60]

But not only can the female readers and writers control the sexual scenarios taking place and recast sex as a mutually enjoyable experience, they can also use slash and BL to manipulate male bodies in ways similar to those male authors and artists have traditionally taken the liberty to manipulate female bodies in. They can display and

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[54] Pagliassotti 2010, loc. 1130.

[55] Russ, 82; and Pagliassotti (2010), loc. 1166.

[56] Pagliassotti (2010), loc. 1137.

[57] Unfortunately, there will not be space here to analyse this aspect of darkfic in more detail and explore the very engaging topic of violence in BL and slash more generally. Nevertheless, it surely is a worthwhile avenue for further research and a good starting point would be the short literature review on the topic of rape in BL in an essay by Pagliassotti (Ibid., loc. 1145).

[58] Tan, loc. 2571.

[59] M. J. McLelland, 'The Love Between Beautiful Boys in Japanese Women's Comics', (2002) 13 *Journal of Gender Studies* , 15-16.

[60] Camper, 1.

penetrate male bodies to fulfill their personal sexual desires and act out various sexual fantasies.[61] One of the survey respondents in Pagliassotti's article suggests that she likes how BL presents men as the primary objects of sexual interest for a change. Similarly, another respondent stresses how most pornographic images are created by men for men and that heterosexual women do not necessarily want to watch another woman having sex but rather focus on attractive males instead.[62]

QUASI-EGALITARIAN RATHER THAN EGALITARIAN EXPERIENCES

As Blair points out, there is a notable absence of female characters in BL manga.[63] If there are female characters, they are often demonized rather than valorized.[64] This poses a problem with the aforementioned theory that m/m erotic fiction is a tool for women to create egalitarian experiences. Blair has made the effort to try and explain the negative reactions of female fans to female characters in BL as a result of the efforts of the *mangaka* (artist of a manga) to depict them as unsympathetic and a barrier to the main couple.[65] She thus sees the dislike many female fans hold towards certain female BL characters neither as a sign of an innate dislike of all female BL characters nor an expression of misogynistic views.[66] However, as this observation does generally not apply to male rivals,[67] there might be more going on here than meets the eye. Scodari investigates this issues in her article on slash and poses two alternative suggestions for the absence of female characters: firstly, it might simply be akin to what happens in lesbian porn targeted at a male audience where competition from the same sex is removed and both attractive characters are there solely to fulfill the fantasies of the female reader or writer; and secondly, the lack of female heroes, the refusal to valorize female characters, and the not uncommon insistence that there are no suitable female role models to use for the creation of likable female characters may be an expression of

[61] M. Stanley, '101 Uses for Boys: Communing with the Reader in Yaoi and Slash' in A. Levi, M. McHarry & D. Pagliassotti (eds.) *Boys' Love Manga: Essays on the Sexual Ambiguity and Cross-cultural Fandom of the Genre* (McFarland & Company, 2010), 99-109.
[62] Pagliassotti (2010), loc. 1272.
[63] Blair, loc. 2009.
[64] Pagliassotti (2010), loc. 1029.
[65] Blair, loc. 2111+2190.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., loc. 2136.

an underlying assumption of female inadequacy.[68] While this topic is certainly very important and the extent of the negative consequences would need to be investigated further, for the purpose of this paper it shall suffice to conclude that m/m erotic fiction does allow women to create a space where they can unleash their creativity and explore their romantic and sexual desires. Nevertheless, they might be paying a price for it by devaluating women or even completely erasing them as positive presences in the narratives themselves.[69]

In his article, Akatsuka brings up a second point of potential conflict with the argument presented in this paper by outlining how there is clearly a homosexual pretext in BL stories but also a heteronormative subtext.[70] The latter one he locates in the prevalence of *seme*/*uke* relationships and the depiction of sex as involving (anal) intercourse among other things.[71] Similarly, Jenkins proposes that slash is a negotiation rather than a radical break with what is presented in the original material.[72] While further research is certainly necessary to give a comprehensive analysis of this, especially with regards to newer slash and BL works, one response to arguments such as those presented by Akatsuka and Jenkins would be to concede that it is very difficult to transcend a culture's givens, as Russ notes,[73] and that consequently m/m erotic fiction is not used by female fans to overturn gender norms but rather to negotiate their desires within the existing gender discourse of their society.[74]

Ultimately, it seems that despite the shortcomings outlined above, m/m erotic fiction holds the potential for women to utilize it for, at the very least, the creation of quasi-egalitarian experiences. Stanley holds that playing with gender and sexuality in fiction and thus transgressing the rules of a gendered society is empowering for the female readers and writers rather than simply a way of compensating them for some lack.[75] It might, however, be argued that it is both. Male/male erotic fiction enables female readers and writers to dabble briefly, and fictionally, in privileges which they lack in

[68] C. Scodari,'Resistance Re-Examined: Gender, Fan Practices, and Science Fiction Television' (2003) 1:2 *Popular Communication*, 111, 114-16.
[69] Pagliassotti (2010), loc. 1324.
[70] Akatsuka, loc. 2917.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Jenkins, 219-20.
[73] Russ, 85.
[74] Saito, 183-87.
[75] Stanley, loc. 1772.

real life. In this way, m/m erotic fiction does some compensatory work but this does not necessarily take away from its empowering potential. Indeed, as Kustritz suggests, m/m erotic fiction may not have the potential to change the world and bring the egalitarian fantasies discussed above into the real world by challenging the binary and hierarchical notions of gender on such a large scale, but it has 'the potential to change women's lives, one individual, one story and one day at a time'.[76]

CONCLUSION

It was argued in this essay that some female readers and writers enjoy male/male erotic fiction because it provides them with the chance to enjoy, at least in fantasy, the privileges traditionally reserved for men in gendered societies. The use of this genre enables these women to create quasi-egalitarian experiences by exploring the workings and consequences of an egalitarian relationship as well as giving them a medium to explore sexual desires and fantasies. As was stressed at the outset, this is surely not the only – and perhaps not even the most prevalent – reason for female interest in this specific genre. However, it certainly seems to be a useful way to think about this phenomenon and explain at least a part of the appeal that male/male erotic fiction holds for an overwhelmingly heterosexual and female audience.

[76] Kustritz, 283.

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A Modernist Desire: Oriental Signification in *Salomé* and *Death in Venice*

Sara Wengström

This article considers two emblematic texts in the modernist canon, *Salomé* by Oscar Wilde and *Death in Venice* by Thomas Mann, and the implications of their modernist aesthetics when writing queerness in the context of Edward Said's Orientalism. As play and novella, the texts contrast the self-sufficiency of the realist narrative that Said argues is crucial for the establishment of the Orient in Western imagination. The signification of queer desire, through a language of Oriental tropes, introduces competing discourses in the texts that work to undermine the meaning and values of the imperial and Oriental framework in which they are written

This article will consider how the Oriental framework of two emblematic texts of the modernist canon, Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* and Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*, relate to the signification of desire. It will insist on reading these texts as distinctly modernist and, as such, opposed to the parameters of realist narrative, and will trace the implications of their modernist aesthetics when writing queerness in the context of Orientalism. The article will take its starting point in Edward Said's brief but informative section on modernism in *Culture and Imperialism*,[1] and will argue that modernist texts achieve a de-familiarisation that allows for a questioning of Oriental premise and perspective. This becomes an instrumental strategy in their critique of the imperial society in which they originate.

In *Orientalism*, Said establishes the Orient as 'an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West,'[2] defining the Orient as a Western idea maintained by a relationship of power and domination. He situates this relationship in the Marxist tradition of hegemony, thus accounting for Orientalism's pervasiveness. It follows that in this hegemonic circulation

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[1] E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994).
[2] E. Said *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 5.

and reproduction of cultural values, 'both learned and imaginative writing are never free, but are limited in their imagery, assumptions and intentions.'[3] As Western ideas of the Orient distilled into an 'unchallenged coherence'[4] over the course of the nineteenth century, it enabled a vast body of cultural associations for writers to draw on. This process and these associations are what Said calls the idea of latent Orientalism, and they are at work in both *Salomé* and *Death in Venice*.

Oscar Wilde's fin-de-siècle play is premised on the trope of the Jewish princess Salomé, who typifies the veiled woman, a trope that, according to Elaine Showalter, was 'associated with the mysteries of the Orient.'[5] Showalter argues that 'the Oriental woman behind the veil of purdah stood as a figure of sexual secrecy and inaccessibility for Victorian men in the 1880s and 1890s,'[6] thus pointing to one of the immediate associations of the Oriental in the Western mind: the sensual and erotic.[7]

Said assigns a special place to Germany in *Orientalism*, arguing that, due to Germany's relatively small colonial presence, it had less of an Oriental cultural inheritance than Britain and France. However, Deborah Prager, in recent research into German Orientalism, argues that the cultural development of latent Orientalism had also taken place in Germany by the early twentieth century: 'the Orient evolves into a signifier so highly charged with multiple associations of fear, passion, mystery, violence, and pleasure that it can function metonymously.'[8] She emphasises the mobility of the Oriental signifier, a notion also stressed by Todd Kontje, who writes that Mann's Orientalism 'is linked less to a particular place than to a wide range of locations defined by their opposition to Northern Germany.'[9] The polarity of North and South is readily traced in Mann's novella as the German aristocrat Gustav von Aschenbach travels from

[3] Ibid, 202
[4] Ibid.
[5] E. Showalter, *The Veiled Woman' in Gender and Culture at the "Fin de Siècle* (London: Bloomsbury, 1991), 145.
[6] E. Showalter, 146.
[7] E. Said, *Orientalism*, 203.
[8] D.N. Prager, *Orienting the Self: the German Literary Encounter With the Eastern Other*, (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2014), 4.
[9] T. Kontje, 'Germany's Local Orientalisms' in J. Hodkinson and J. Walker (eds.), *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History: from Germany to Central and Eastern Europe* (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2013), 65.

Munich to the 'southern vivacity'[10] of Venice. The North is signified by a 'sober trustworthiness' that is noted as 'so alien to and unusual in the roguish South.'[11]

However, although both texts rely on Oriental signification, it is imperative to realise how they differ from the texts Said considers in much of his work. Said argues that 'the colonial territories are realms of possibility, and they have always been associated with the realistic novel.'[12] Wilde and Mann's texts are not only modernist, but as play and novella they structurally diverge from the novel's 'incorporative, quasi-encyclopaedic cultural form.'[13] In *Culture and Imperialism* Said dedicates a short but insightful chapter to modernism, which he tellingly begins with the notion that a resistance 'however ineffective'[14] did exist. As such, he opens for considering modernist texts as inherently displacing the Orientalist mechanisms of the realist narrative. Whilst the realist novel is 'self-validating in the course of the narrative'[15], suggesting a transcendent truth authorised within its own parameters, the aesthetics of these two texts display the modernists' response to the imperial experience: 'self-consciousness, discontinuity, self-referentiality, and corrosive irony.'[16] In *Orientalism* Said emphasises representation over 'truth', making clear that, since there is no original to which the Western idea of the Orient relates, 'the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices.'[17] *Salomé* and *Death in Venice* make this explicit by exaggerating the staging and aestheticization of the Oriental, thus pushing 'figures of speech' and codes beyond their familiar and conventional semantic function.

Salomé as a play is, by definition, far from the realist novel's sense of self-sufficient reality. Wilde's aestheticism works to de-familiarize rather than reiterate conventional Oriental narratives. Nicholas Mirzoeff introduces the idea of 'disorientalism', a conscious strategy of misidentification with the 'Orient' that allowed the queer minority in London to refuse emancipation on the terms of the dominant majority. He explains it as a gesture of incoherence, or 'a strategy of excess, in which symbol, paradox, and pun pushed the indexical language of taxonomy to the visualised point of failure, which was

[10] T. Mann, *Death in Venice* (1912; trans. Michael Heim, New York: Ecco, 2004), 110.
[11] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*, 119.
[12] E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 75.
[13] Ibid.
[14] E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 75.
[15] Ibid, 91.
[16] Ibid, 227.
[17] E. Said, *Orientalism.*

precisely the place of connection.'[18] This 'indexical language' is undoubtedly the realist language of pathology. This language is forcefully disrupted in Wilde's play, in which the points of failure become the exact points that reveal the performativity and construed nature of the Oriental image.

The dislocation of Oriental signifier can be traced in *Salomé* through Wilde's use of metaphor, which displays a symbolist tendency of self-referentiality where by the two components of the metaphor create an unfamiliar relationship. The metaphors deployed to describe the beauty of the veiled and sensual woman are strange: 'She is like a dove that has strayed … She is like a narcissus trembling in the wind … She is like a silver flower.'[19] Not immediately recognised in the conventional framework of beauty, these metaphors unsettle the premise of familiar desire for the oriental Salomé. Salomé's metaphors for expressing her desire for the prophet Iokanaan are equally strange: 'Thy hair is like the cedars of Lebanon,'[20] and exaggerate the Oriental to the point of absurdity. The metaphors are, furthermore, repeated in a way that equally wears them out and marks them as 'worn' in the sense of aesthetic performativity. As such the references become obsessive and textually disruptive: 'The roses in the garden of the Queen of Arabia (…) Neither the roses of the garden of the Queen of Arabia, the garden of spices of the Queen of Arabia.'[21]

In the imperial mind, the Oriental served its purpose for Western domination as a stereotype that could be reduced to a fixed characteristic. In Wilde's play, however, the Oriental character of the Jew is a volatile signifier, constantly deferred. The court is Jewish, but Salomé consistently refers to the Jew as Other: 'Within there are Jews from Jerusalem who are tearing each other in pieces over their foolish ceremonies.'[22] The Second Soldier scorns the Jews: 'They are always like that.'[23] But 'that' is difficult to pinpoint in the text, and 'they' even more so. Herodias asks Herod why he has not given Iokanaan over to 'the Jews who for these six months past have been clamouring for him.'[24] As such, Salomé's position becomes unstable, moving at the will and pleasure of

[18] N. Mirzoeff 'Disorientalism Minority and Visuality in Imperial London' (2006) 50:2 *TDR: The Drama Review*, 54.
[19] O. Wilde, *Salomé* (1893; Paris: Flammarion, 1993), 60.
[20] Ibid, 82.
[21] O. Wilde, *Salomé*, 82.
[22] Ibid, 60.
[23] Ibid, 46.
[24] Ibid.,104.

the writer, resisting the fixed parameters of 'Oriental' identity. This is underlined by an accumulation of various 'Oriental types'; at the court there are 'barbarians who drink and drink', 'Greeks from Smyrna with painted eyes', 'Egyptians silent and subtle' and 'Romans brutal and coarse.'[25] Described as such by Salomé herself, this signification notes a lack of Western superior presence against which the Oriental signifier can work. The absence of such a binary structure contrasts with realist narrative and undermines the relational structure in which Orient and Occident function.

Death in Venice proves an interesting comparison as it maintains the relationship of audience and stage found in the play. The man that causes Aschenbach to leave Munich in search for the exoticism of 'faraway places,'[26] and who represents the first indication of the Oriental in the text, appears literally framed, as on a stage or as a painting, by a Byzantine structure of 'brightly painted hieratic motifs,' 'symmetrically arranged texts in gilt lettering' and 'mysticism.'[27] In this staged encounter, where the point of perception is emphasised, Aschenbach is established as audience: 'the raised point of vantage on which he stood'[28] contributes to the overall appearance of the man and makes Aschenbach uncertain about his features. Nor is Aschenbach allowed undisturbed observation, but instead his own position is revealed: 'he suddenly became aware that his gazed was returned: the man was in fact staring at him.'[29] The premise of the undetected but defining gaze of the Occident is interrupted, exposing the existence of the Orient as wholly depending on Western perception and perspective.

The staging of the Oriental is especially evident in the object of Aschenbach's desire, the young Polish boy Tadzio. Their dynamic maintains the relationship of actor and audience set up by the first Oriental encounter. Aschenbach is unable to understand the foreign language of the boy and instead 'the boy's speech transformed it into music, the exuberant sun poured its copious rays over him, and the sea and its sublime depths provided a constant *foil* and *backdrop* for his presence.'[30] The vocabulary suggests the dramatized nature of Tadzio's character. He often appears through language evoking stage directions: 'the horizontal shoreline was suddenly intersected by a human form

[25] O. Wilde, *Salomé*, 62.
[26] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*, 5.
[27] Ibid, 3
[28] Ibid.
[29] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*, 3.
[30] Ibid, 80 (My italics).

(…) the beautiful boy coming from the left.'[31] Towards the end of the narrative, the character of Aschenbach himself becomes a mere symbol, his name replaced by 'the lone traveller' or 'adventurer'[32], with a stylistic repetition similar to that in *Salomé*. Considering Said's insistence that the realist narrative permits the heroes 'adventures in which their experiences reveal to them the limits of (…) what they can become,'[33] Aschenbach's regression appears decidedly ironic, de-familiarising the story's main protagonist.

Both texts make subversive use of the trope of the sensual and eroticized Orient, consequently challenging its very premise. Yeeyon Im argues that, due to the lack of Western self in *Salomé* noted above, 'far from remaining objective, *Salomé's* playwright seems to identify with the Orient.'[34] Considering Wilde as a queer writer thus acquires relevance for Oriental signification in the text. The strategy of 'disorientalism,' as theorised by Mirzoeff, works through Wilde's queerness to refute imperial values. Mirzoeff sees how, in Wilde's aesthetics, 'theatricality, deviance and same-sex desire,'[35] become linked. In other words, the Oriental image is complicated, as Wilde does not attribute deviance and decadence to the Orient in order to maintain imperial ideology. Since he himself could not identify within that ideological framework, his use of its tropes undermines it. Im further argues that 'Wilde's case demonstrates how one's identity is symbolically determined rather than biologically inherited.'[36] This can be traced in the way Wilde's use of language does not only establish the Oriental as theatre, but also desire. Desire in the play is always presented as an aesthetic concern rather than an emotional one, and is as such controlled by language. The mobility of the Oriental signifier is transferred to the signification of desire.

This is perhaps most notable in the use of the moon, which acts as the marker for desire in the text. It is from the very beginning linked to the beauty of Salomé and the Young Syrian's desire for her. The gaze of the Syrian and the Page of Herodias alternate between Salomé and the moon, with the moon taking on the features of the princess, 'She is like a little princess', and Salomé the white light of the moon, 'How pale the

[31] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*, 55.
[32] Ibid, 104.
[33] E. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 80.
[34] Y. Im, 'Oscar Wilde's Salomé: Disorienting Orientalism' (2011) 45:4 *Comparative Drama*, 368.
[35] N. Mirzoeff, 'Disorientalism Minority and Visuality in Imperial London', 53.
[36] Y. Im, 'Oscar Wilde's Salomé', 368.

princess is!"[37] However, the white light of the moon equally signifies Iokanaan and Salomé's desire for him: 'He is like a thin ivory statue. He is like an image of silver. I am sure he is chaste, as the moon is. He is like a moon-beam.'[38] Furthermore, Salomé looks at the moon herself, saying 'She is (…) a little silver flower. She is cold and chaste.'[39] As she herself notes its beauty it further unsettles the solidity of its symbolism, inducing a sense of narcissism, echoed in the Syrian's 'joy to gaze at himself in the river.'[40]

The confusion of the symbol indicates the ambiguity of the relationships in the play. The uncertainty is further reinforced by the initial description of the moon: 'She is like a woman rising from the tomb. She is like a dead woman.'[41] This description is subverted as it is Iokanaan rising from the cistern that most closely resembles a rising from the tomb, and the dead woman is replaced by the dead Young Syrian: 'I knew the moon was seeking a dead thing, but I knew not that it was he whom he sought. Ah! Why did I not hide him from the moon?'[42]

The word 'hide' notes an anxiety of visibility and position within the text, directly linked to desire by the moonlight. The play is self-conscious about the space of its own stage and the gazes it allows. There is a central tension created between inside and outside; one space that allows the moonlight and one to which it does not reach. The moonlight marks objects of desire and establishes relationships between characters. But as the moonlight moves and shifts, the uncertainty of signification extends to the inability to control patterns of desire. The Young Syrian's desire for Salomé expressed at the very beginning, framed by moonlight and fear, is revealed to be equally about the desire of the Page for the Syrian, concluded by the Syrian's death as the Page has not managed to 'hide' him from the moon-beams.

In *Orientalism*, Said notably argues that 'latent Orientalism also encouraged a peculiarly (…) male conception of the world.'[43] According to Said this male perspective denotes the description of the Orient in terms of 'a male power-fantasy' in which Oriental

[37] O. Wilde, *Salomé*, 50.
[38] Ibid, 76.
[39] Ibid, 62.
[40] Ibid, 90.
[41] Ibid, 44.
[42] Ibid, 86.
[43] E. Said, *Orientalism*, 207.

women 'express unlimited sensuality.'[44] The prominence of such discourse is hardly surprising, but becomes especially pertinent in the readings of Wilde and Mann. In Wilde's case, 'disorientalism' defers the idea of the imperial man exploiting the 'feminine penetrability of the Orient.'[45] Wilde's status as the minor anti-hero, outlined by Mirzoeff, negates the masculine ideals of the imperial projects, casting the supposedly dominant figure of the 'white man' as an effeminate dandy.

The destabilising of dominant masculinity resonates also with Aschenbach. James Wilper draws a direct parallel between Wilde's decadent aesthetics and Mann's work. He argues that Wilde's public trials for indecency helped to create an 'effeminate homosexual image'[46] to which Mann responded. Wilper further argues that 'the defining struggle of Aschenbach's life'[47] is between his maternal, foreign and Bohemian heritage and his paternal bourgeois intellectual and artistic tradition. Wilper notes that part of this struggle is the 'effort to transform the production of art into a manly, proactive, and civic minded undertaking by conquering its effeminate, egocentric, and asocial aspects.'[48] Indeed, Aschenbach anxiously frames his writing in terms of imperial conquest: 'their creator had held out for years under the strain of a single work with a fortitude and tenacity analogous to those Frederick had used to conquer his native province.'[49] However, the narrative itself undercuts Aschenbach efforts and comes to allow for Bohemian passion, thus critiquing the 'civic' and 'manly' ideals of the imperial West.

The imperial expectation of male power-fantasy is most forcefully subverted as Aschenbach's desire is centred on Tadzio. In other words, the desire for the exotic is a hallmark of Orientalist narrative, but the displacement of that desire onto a boy complicates its signification; there is a disparity between the Orientalist discourse and its homoeroticism. Esther K. Bauer writes that, in early twentieth century German literature, 'erotic subjects had become increasingly important as a means of questioning

[44] Ibid.
[45] E. Said, *Orientalism*, 206.
[46] J. Wilper (2013) 'Wilde and the Model of Homosexuality in Mann's Tod in Venedig' (2013) 15:4 *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.2305 [Accessed 24.10.2015], 2.
[47] Ibid, 6.
[48] Ibid.
[49] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*.

bourgeois structures, particularly gender roles and sexual politics.'[50] In Mann's novella, Aschenbach's desire for Tadzio becomes indivisibly linked with a sense of liberation from the bourgeois expectations of his ancestry. As such, it denotes self-expression rather than moral demise. The 'sudden temptation' and erotic promise of his wanderlust is noted as a 'yearning for freedom, release, oblivion.'[51] Furthermore, the impulse to travel is 'restrained and redressed.'[52] The vocabulary contrasts the impending journey to the life of self-discipline he has led thus far. In the midst of infatuation, Aschenbach reminds himself of his ancestors and his artistic tradition, contemplating that 'the joy of a belated and profound exhilaration prompted him, persuaded him to indulge without shame or remorse in the most distasteful behaviour.'[53] The desire is justified, and the word 'belated' suggests its relation to the conventions of his previous life. His 'exotic extravagances of emotion' is directly opposed to his ancestors' 'upstanding manliness of character.'[54]

Kontje points out that 'Aschenbach (…) has been ennobled for his contributions to the national culture'[55] and that he is 'torn between (…) national dignity and oriental decadence.'[56] In other words, his aesthetic tradition becomes directly aligned with the colonial project and national identity. The nation and his own desire are at odds, a conflict framed by his artistic endeavours: 'as much as the *nation* might honour it, it gave *him* no pleasure.'[57] His psyche stands in for the imperial psyche, paralleled to a self-inflicted discipline repressing forbidden desires. His desire, not only homoerotic but also with Oriental pretexts, thus decidedly extends the critique of bourgeois conventions to an imperial critique.

In conclusion, both *Salomé* and *Death in Venice* contain competing discourses that work to unsettle the meaning of the Oriental framework in which they are written. The texts' modernist challenge of realist aesthetic conventions extends to a critique of imperial assumptions, decentring and destabilizing the originating point of Western imperial

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[50] E.K. Bauer 'Penetrating Desire: Gender in the Field of Vision in Thomas Mann's Der Zauberberg and Christian Schad's Graf St. Genois Anneaucourt' (2009 101 *Monatshefte*, 484.
[51] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*, 8.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid, 104.
[54] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*, 105.
[55] T. Kontje, 'Germany's Local Orientalisms', 65.
[56] Ibid, 66.
[57] T. Mann, *Death in Venice*, 9.

perspective. As the form and language of the texts exaggerate the theatrical relationship of Orient and Occident, they displace the values upholding the Oriental image in Western imagination. They accomplish this not only through aestheticizing the Orient to the breaking point of credibility, but also through the signification of desire. In *Salomé,* desire is signified by moonlight, and its mobility establishes ambiguous relationships and reveals hidden desires. In *Death in Venice* the artistic figure of Aschenbach's exotic desire opposes both bourgeois artistic tradition and imperial values. That the semantic functioning of Oriental discourse is disrupted by the texts is not to say that their use of the Orient is unproblematic, but rather highlights the force of collective cultural assumptions of their contemporary society, pointing to the Orient as a trope at the Western writer's disposal.

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Y. Im, 'Oscar Wilde's Salomé: Disorienting Orientalism' (2011) 45 *Comparative Drama* 361-380.

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Sound Symbolism: Challenging Saussure's View on the Arbitrary Nature of the Sign

Freya Young

Over 100 years ago Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure proposed that, aside from onomatopoeia, there is no logical relationship between words and their meanings. This article aims to gather and analyse the mounting evidence that has emerged over the last century that overrules this assertion. From the books we escape to, to the inescapable marketing language surrounding us; from the names we call our children, to how children learn language: sound symbolism pervades everyday life in more ways than is probably realised. It becomes apparent that the mind's perception of meaning may be influenced by the sounds of words themselves. By consequence, it seems that some of the roots of language may not be as illogical as Saussure thought; this article considers the possibility of there being a neurological explanation behind 'sound symbolism'.

The relationship between sound and meaning is arbitrary, proposed Ferdinand de Saussure at the turn of the twentieth century. However, in recent decades it has been advantageous to consider from a cognitive linguistic perspective, rather than philosophically, how language mimes the world.[1] Sound symbolism is the term 'widely used and recognized by linguists to represent the non-arbitrary quality of language'.[2] Contrary to what Saussure declared, there are many instances where sound does seem to equate with sense. Accordingly, 'sound symbolism plays a considerably larger role in language than scholarship has hitherto recognised'[3], and there is now considerable cross-cross-linguistic data to prove this. An examination of this evidence will establish the role that sound symbolism plays in language in order to discuss how far Saussure's views on the arbitrariness of the sign are challenged.

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[1] F. Ungerer & H-J. Schmid. *An introduction to cognitive linguistics* (Harlow; New York: Longman, 2006).

[2] I. E. Reay. 'Sound symbolism' in Keith Brown (ed.). *Encyclopaedia of Language and Linguistics, 14 vols.* 11 (Oxford: Elsevier, 2006), 531–9 (531).

[3] L. Hinton, J. Nichols & J.J. Ohala (eds.) *Sound Symbolism.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1.

Saussure proposed that a fundamental feature of human language is the arbitrary connection between referents and their labels, the signifier and the signified. An appropriate argument for this is that if referents were systematically labelled then phonological differences across languages would be rare. Plainly, concepts are labelled with very different phonologies: bird, oiseau, Vogel, pájaro, lintu – there is no inherent 'birdness' in the sound of these words that all refer to the same creature. For this reason Saussure could be justified in saying that speakers of languages agree on labels without creating any systematic relationship between them and their referents. If words stood for pre-existing universal concepts they would have exact equivalents in meaning from one language to the next, yet this is not so. The shared experience of the world is reflected very differently depending on a speaker's language, which creates, or is due to, very different outlooks on the world.

Yet, Ungerer and Schmid state that the arbitrariness between signifier and signified is a 'rigid view' that recent advances in semiotics have attacked with criticism.[4] Allott asks, 'If any word can mean any thing, how are the established phenomena of cross-linguistic sound symbolism to be explained?'[5] So many instances of sound symbolism across languages cannot be attributed to coincidence. Nygaard et al. prove that speakers of one language can systematically judge the meaning of words in another language they are not familiar with during spoken language processing.[6] Non-arbitrary correspondences between sound and meaning had an implicit effect on the accuracy and efficiency that English speakers had in learning the equivalent of Japanese words. It is apparent that underlying cognitive semantic principles affect perceptions of words, so let us look more closely at how the phenomenon of sound symbolism contributes to this.

Speakers may have a preference for some words and not for others, but for what reason? Is the word 'bulbous' unpopular due to its sound or its meaning? It is often hard to separate the two. However, poet Philip Wells demonstrates that sound symbolism plays an important role in the creation of good or bad connotations with his opinion on the word 'pulchritude': 'it violates all the magical impulses of balanced onomatopoeic

[4] Ungerer & Schmid. *An introduction to cognitive linguistics*, 300.

[5] R. Allot. *The Natural Origin Of Language: The Structural Inter-relation of Language, Visual Perception and Action.* 1st ed. (Xlibris. 2012) [electronic resource].

[6] L.C Nygaard, E.A. Cook & L.L Namy, 'Sound to meaning correspondences facilitate word learning'. (2009) 112 *Cognition*, 181-186.

language - it of course means 'beautiful', but its meaning is nothing of the sort, being stuffed to the brim with a brutally latinate cudgel of barbaric consonants.'[7] Despite meaning 'beauty', he dislikes the word because of the connotations the sounds create mentally. Claiming words have an arbitrary connection to their meaning is therefore problematic. Humans naturally attach feelings to sounds, so the division of signifier and signified is not quite as simple as Saussure suggested; every speaker has a personal relationship with their language.

The argument is reduced to naturalism – sounds and concepts 'linked automatically in the minds of speakers' – versus conventionalism, which is Saussure's assertion of arbitrariness.[8] Saussure determined that all words in a language are agreed by the speech community to represent their signified, but bear no connection to it (example: the concept of a feathered winged creature referred to as 'bird'), aside from the exceptions of onomatopoeia (sound symbolism determined by its nature, such as 'tweet tweet') and interjections. However, this dualistic distinction between 'exceptions' and 'everything else' is too condensed. It is not the case that onomatopoeia and interjections are the only cases of words imitating concepts. Reay states 'sound symbolism is said to be present when a speech sound seems to correlate with an object in the real world.'[9] We shall see that just as sound symbolism can make a word unpopular amongst speakers, so too can the role of sound symbolism within language influence what we call our children, how we interpret branding, and even how we acquire language.

Saussure and Reay's differing definitions highlight that the topic of 'sound symbolism' is broad. So to clarify, it would be useful at this point to consider the four branches of sound symbolism outlined by Hinton et al.[10]
Corporeal is when sound and meaning are completely linked for example a cry of pain expressing the speaker's internal state. A reaction is automatic, but is filtered through language before it is even finished, so we even cry out in our own language: 'Aïe!' (French) 'Āiyā!' (Mandarin) Oi! (Russian) Ouch! (English).[11] Imitative represents sound

[7] D. Crystal, 'The Week in Books' *The Guardian* (2009) [Online] Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/jul/18/ugliest-words-michael-jackson-biographies [Accessed: 19-04-15].
[8] Hinton, Nichols, & Ohala (eds.) *Sound Symbolism*, 5.
[9] Reay, 'Sound symbolism', 531–9.
[10] Hinton, Nichols, & Ohala (eds.) *Sound Symbolism,* 5.
[11] J. Harbeck, 'Why pain is expressed differently in different language' *The Week* (2013) [Online] Available at: http://theweek.com/articles/456736/why-pain-expressed-differently-different-languages [Accessed: 19th April 2015].

patterns outside of conventional speech, such as 'bow-wow' for a dog's bark. Despite differing cross-linguistic representations, the signifier attempts to imitate the signified. Saussure's idea of onomatopoeia seems most similar to these two categories of corporeal and imitative sound symbolism.

On the other hand, Saussure fails to broach the subject of 'phonaesthesia', that is when certain phonetic elements seem to bear a semantic meaning. Hinton et al. recognise this as synthetic and conventional sound symbolism, which are 'further along the scale toward arbitrariness than the previous two types' as shown by the number of exceptions.[12] Nevertheless, in 90% of language, high front vowels symbolized the diminutive, conveying small size, unimportance or a term of affection.[13] Jesperson also observed that the high, front vowel /i/ has a diminuitive force as in 'wee, teeny' whereas the low back vowel /ɑ/ has an augmentive force as in 'vast, large'.[14] In synthetic sound symbolism the sound of a word agrees with the concept's size, while conventional sound symbolism defines when certain sound clusters become analogically associated with meaning. Bloomfield proposes that a word can have a union of a sound and its meaning, based on 'hap-hazard favouritism'.[15] Accordingly, this correlation may be prompted 'by a vague feeling of 'aptness' within a given speech community. For example, words with an initial tw- may be felt to express the concept of plucking or tweaking in English as in tweak, twang, twinge, twist, twiddle.'[16] Towards this end of the 'scale' of sound symbolism, away from onomatopoeia, it is evident that phonaesthesia involves an element of the human mind creating links between sound and meaning 'where such links might not be intrinsic or universal.'[17] This alludes again to the idea of speakers having a personal relationship with language. It is therefore not farfetched to claim that speakers create cognitive links between the meaning of words and the phonetic sounds within them.

Because some sounds can be directly linked to meaning, sound symbolism is very common in poetry, for sound effects in comic strips and in literature for the names of

[12] Hinton, Nichols & Ohala. (eds.) *Sound Symbolism*, 4.
[13] R. Ultan, 'Size-Sound Symbolism' in Joseph Greenberg, (ed.) *Universals of Human Languag*e, Volume 2: Phonology, (Stanford: University Press, 1978).
[14] Reay, 'Sound symbolism', 534.
[15] L. Bloomfield 'On assimilation and adaptation in congeneric classes of words', (1895) 16 *American Journal of Philology*, 409.
[16] Reay. 'Sound symbolism', 531.
[17] Hinton, Nichols & Ohala. (eds) *Sound Symbolism*, 6.

invented characters or items. For example, the 'balls' in J.K. Rowling's Quidditch (snitch, quaffle, bludger) each sound like their role: the small 'snitch' features the diminutive phoneme /i/, the 'quaffle' sounds big and round with its open mid-back rounded vowel and, lastly, the clash of voiced consonants in 'bludger' sounds violent. Lupyan and Casasanto state that 'Meaningless words promote meaningful categorization'.[18] In their experiment, 'fooves' and 'crelches' were systematically matched to sound-appropriate descriptions: 'fooves' as large and fat and 'crelches' as pointy and narrow, which seemingly reflects sound-to-shape correspondences. With this in mind, for poetry to be effective, the sound must echo the sense. Lewis Carroll manipulates sound symbolism in 'Jabberwocky' by exploiting the arbitrary nature of the signifier-signified relationship. His signifiers, such as 'brillig', 'slithy', and 'whiffling', are empty but naturally the reader tries to assign signifiers to them based on the sound of the word. 'Slithy' is supposed to be a blend of phonological neighbours, 'lithe and slimy', and becomes associated with the negative connotations that many sl- prefixed words possess. Also, it is framed as an adjective, in other words, where the reader would expect a real adjective to be. Consequently the word's meaning becomes restricted to being descriptive, rather than having the naming purpose of a noun for instance. Thus the syntax also aids reader interpretation. Words and their meaning do not require a conventional pairing, but rather the 'meaning' can be how a word form affects a user's cognitive processes.

'Of course it must,' Humpty Dumpty said with a short laugh: 'My name means the shape I am - and a good handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost.'[19]

Lewis Carroll further demonstrates his awareness of sound symbolism, implying that the sound of Humpty Dumpty's name matches him as a referent. The *ump* sound is commonly associated with roundedness (lump, hump, stump) whereas Alice, the egg says, could almost be any shape. With 'almost', is he referring to the fact that, despite not knowing exactly what she looks like, we know Alice must be a girl? Sound symbolism seems to be a factor in determining whether a name is masculine or feminine.

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[18] G. Lupyan & D. Casasanto 'Meaningless words promote meaningful categorization', (2014) *Language and Cognition*, 2.

[19] L. Carroll, Transcribed from: Carroll, Lewis, 1832-1898, 'Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There' in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There: The Centenary Edition*: Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Hugh Haughton] (London: Penguin, 1998) [electronic resource].

Pitcher and McElligott, using a ten year dataset of the most popular British, American, and Australian names, suggest that naming preferences are based on synthetic sound symbolism, whereby male names ('John') sound larger and female names smaller ('Emily') because phonemes are related to size.[20] Even cross-linguistically in a prosodic language such as French, it is noticeable that four of the top ten girls names of 2015 (Louise, Lilou, Camille, and Juliette) popularise small phonemes like /i/ too. Feminine names are also noticeably longer; Jade is the only of the ten to have less than two syllables. Further, all ten names end in a vowel, /a/ being the popular ending (Emma, Léa, Chloé, Lola).[21] Similarly, in English /a/ is also the sound at the end of the top 6 female baby names of 2015. [22] There is no denying that fronted vowel sounds /i/ and /a/ have strong connotations with femininity. Contrarily, six of the top ten UK boys names of 2015 end in the nasal sound /n/ or /m/. Noah and Elijah are exceptions, ending in feminine vowel sounds. However, arguably, with Noah this is counter-balanced by the nasal sound featuring at the beginning. Cutler, McQueen & Robinson suggest the differences are systematic.[23] Female names contain /i/ more than male names possibly because, just as in 'snitch', this vowel is associated with concepts 'small, sharp and bright', which are 'desirable attributes of females'. [24] This can be linked to Ohala's proposal of the Frequency Code, which deems that pitch influences perception.[25] Having a small vocal tract gives a higher pitched sound, which is characteristic of smaller, less threatening and more feminine beings. The fact that Cutler et al.'s study is 25 years old but the findings still remain accurate seemingly stands to prove that, despite the trends of names that change every year, their general sound symbolism is sustained because of the gender representations.

If common first names can be sound symbolic, then this of course radiates to the universal language of branding. In modern times of globalisation, brands must not only

[20] B. Pitcher, A. Mesoudi & A. McElligott, 'Sex-Biased Sound Symbolism in English-Language First Names'. (2013) 8:6 *PLoS ONE*.
[21] Signification Prénom, Prénoms bébé [Online] Available at: http://www.signification-prenom.com/prenom-bebe.html [Accessed 19-04015].
[22] Baby Center, Popular Baby Names for 2015. [Online] Available at: http://www.babycenter.com/popularBabyNames.htm?year=2015 (2015) [Accessed 19-04-15].
[23] A. Cutler, J. McQueen & K. Robinson, 'Elizabeth and John: sound patterns of men's and women's names' (1990) 26 *Journal of Linguistics*, 471-82.
[24] Ibid, 480.
[25] J.J.Ohala 'An ethological perspective on common cross-language utilization of F0 of voice' (1984) 4 *Phonetica*, 1-16.

ensure their brand name is not wrongfully a meaningful word in another language but also ensure the product or brand name *sounds* true to its attributes. Klink proved that sound symbolism can cause a brand name to sound masculine or feminine, which he proves to be of extreme importance.[26] In accordance with the Frequency Code, preferences for pitch in brand names are gender dependent. Toiletry brands with high pitched vowels such as 'L'Oreal Elvive' are therefore favoured by women, while men preferred low pitched vowels and voiced consonants such as in 'Rightguard'. Thus, perceptions of phonetic segments are influencing people's judgments of preference towards the brand. The match between the brand's sound and the product's attributes (such as Dettol or Clorox for a hard working products) therefore is very much influenced by sound symbolism and this is 'remarkably stable across languages' (English, French, Spanish, and Chinese) demonstrated Shrum et al.[27] This adds to the growing evidence that sound symbolism affects marketing. When the concepts that come to mind with the sound of the brand name match the attributes of that product, it is proven that the preference for the product is increased. Because this is possible, this denies Saussure's theory that the signified bears no natural connection to the signifier.

Furthermore, Jurafsky investigated 'why ice-cream sounds fat and crackers sound skinny', noting that ice cream names such as 'Rocky Road', 'Jamoca Almond Fudge', 'Chocolate', 'Caramel', 'Cookie Dough' or 'Coconut' contain back vowels, while cracker names favour fronted vowels: 'Cheese Nips', 'Cheez-It', 'Wheat Thins', 'Pretzel thins', 'Ritz', 'Krispy', 'Triscuit' and 'Ritz bits'.[28] Just as in feminine names, the /i/ vowel sound continues to be a consistent feature of lighter items. Correspondingly, Yorkston & Menon judged that 'Frosh' would be a more popular ice-cream name than 'Frish', which proved true amongst participants.[29] It has been shown that back vowel sounds are associated with concepts that are heavier, thicker and richer in comparison to brand names with front vowel sounds. Ohala's Frequency Code is not conclusive – 'vanilla' is without a back vowel and yet is the most popular ice cream – nevertheless it successfully

[26] R.R. Klink 'Creating brand names with meaning: The use of sound symbolism' (2000) 11:1 *Marketing Lett,* 5–20.

[27] L.J. Shrum, T.M. Lowrey, D. Luna, D.B Lerman, L. Min 'Sound symbolism effects across languages: Implications for global brand names '(2012) 29:3 *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 275, 278.

[28] D. Jurafsky, 'Why Ice Cream Sounds Fat and Crackers Sound Skinny' (20130 [Online]. Available at: http:// http://alumni.stanford.edu/get/page/magazine/article/?article_id=63151 [Accessed 19-04-15].

[29] E. Yorkston & G. Menon 'A sound idea: phonetic effects of brand names on consumer judgments', *Journal of Consumer Research* (2004) 31, 43–51.

displays the trend of synthetic sound symbolism habitually appearing in everyday life, being used to identify product information or make gender judgements. Letter combinations are being consistently associated with concepts such as size, weight, speed and rigidity more frequently than chance could allow, states French.[30]

Köhler's classic experiment from 1929 could contribute towards an explanation. Conducted in Spanish, but proven to be appropriate to many languages, it was shown that there is a non-arbitrary inclination to associate certain sounds with certain shapes. The consonants in a non-meaningful word like 'takete' are obstruents obstructing airflow, so the tendency is to perceive this word as harder and sharper. Contrarily, the consonants in 'baluba' (later 'maluma' in his 1947 experiment) are sonarants, so are visalised as softer and smoother. Hence when asked to give these two labels to a spiky shape and a curved edged shape, the overwhelming majority named the spiky shape 'takete' and the curved shaped 'baluba'.[31]

Then again, could it be that the shapes of the letters in the words are just as influential as the sound? Ks and Ts are spiky, while Bs and Us are round. In fact, those who are not yet able to read have been shown to be sensitive to Köhler-type shape-sound symbolism too, so is language acquisition also influenced by sound symbolism? Infants aged 14 months learning Japanese were taught two word labels then tested whether they 'encoded these labels in a preferential looking procedure'. [32] Half of the infants learnt sound symbolic labels (as rated by adults), while the other half learnt labels that were mismatching in sound and form. The latter was predicted to be harder to learn. As a result, when the word and object symbolically matched the child would look at the correct signified more often, suggesting that sound symbolism improves attainment of mappings between signifier and signified. Peña, Mehler, & Nespor how further evidence of sound symbolism: 4-month-olds assigned the lower pitch of /o/ or /a/ to the large shapes and high-pitched sounds of /i/ or /e/ to the smaller shapes.[33] Thus, systematic mapping of sound to shape and size can be observed even during early childhood.

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[30] P.L French 'Toward an Explanation of Phonetic Symbolism' (1977) 28 *Word*, 305-22.
[31] W. Köhler, *Gestalt psychology: An introduction to new concepts in modern psychology* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1929/1947).
[32] M. Imai, M. Miyazaki, H.H. Yeung, S. Hidaka, K. Kantartzis, H. Okada, 'Sound Symbolism Facilitates Word Learning in 14-Month Olds' (2015) 10:2 *PLoS ONE*, 3.
[33] M. *Peña*, J. *Mehler*, & M. *Nespor* 'The Role of Audiovisual Processing in Early Conceptual Development' (2011) 22:11 *Psychological Science,* 1419-1421.

Additionally, the words that children often learn very early are onomatopoeic sounds animals make such as 'moo'.[34] Sometimes they mistakenly attribute these onomatopoeic noises to the animal's name, for example referring to a sheep as 'baba'. How language is learnt is often discussed in terms of linking referents to forms based on external events. Associating words and referents at this age takes effort because they have little experience, so it is proposed that they rely on sound symbolism between speech and visual input when word mapping.

But this mapping can be applied in adulthood when sound symbolism can provide adult learners with 'a clue to understand the meaning of an unknown word', state Parault & Schwanenflugel.[35] As evidence has shown, because sound symbolism carries meaning, it it is more than just phonology. Yet, nor can it be said to be morphology because the relationship between sound and meaning 'is not as strong or as stable.'[36] The meaning of of sound-symbolic words is accurately judged faster than for arbitrary words.[37] Just as humans benefit from this close relationship of phonetics to meaning, so too do nonhuman primates such as chimpanzees, state Ludwig, Adachi, & Matsuzawa, remarking a consistent mapping of high pitched sounds to light, small and spiky features.[38] So rather than a linguistic or cultural phenomenon, sound symbolism seems an innate primate sensory feature. Accordingly, Westbury posits that the relation between obstruents and sonarants being visualised differently has a 'psychological reality' so should be discussed from a brain-based point of view.[39] And since sound-shape shape mappings are problematic for those with brain injuries or cognitive disorders, the reasons behind sound symbolism do seem to be neurological. Thus, the extensive amount of scientific evidence now available supports that sound symbolism is more than likely a process going on in the brains of all primates, explaining why it is apparent in cross-linguistic studies.

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[34] L. Jeffries, *Meaning in English: An Introduction to Language Study* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1988).
[35] S. Parault & P. Schwanenflugel 'Sound-symbolism: a piece in the puzzle of word learning', *Journal of* (2006) 35 *Psycholinguistic Research,* 329–51.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Hinton, Nichols & Ohala. (eds.) *Sound Symbolism*, 11.
[38] VU. Ludwig, I. Adachi, T. Matsuzawa, 'Visuoauditory mappings between high luminance and high pitch are shared by chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) and humans' (December 2011) *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA.*
[39] C. Westbury 'Implicit sound symbolism in lexical access: evidence from an interference task' (2005) 93 *Brain and Language*, 10–19.

With names and brands a routine feature of our life, sound symbolism is more pervasive than we may realise. The mass of proof demonstrates scientifically the cognitive reasons behind what was before just a feeling for speakers, or dismissed altogether. But, if sound symbolism is so helpful for language acquisition as is suggested, then why is it that more symbolic instances are not present within language? Monaghan et al. propose that sound symbolism gives an advantage for learning categories of sound-shape mappings but does not assist in learning *individual* word meanings.[40] These results are consistent with the limited presence of sound symbolism in natural language. While clusters can be identified, sound symbolic words do not make up a large proportion of our authentic day-to-day vocabulary.

It has been shown, however, that sound symbolism does play more of a role in language than 'exceptions' of onomatopoeia and interjections as Saussure believed. Monaghan et al. agree with the point made earlier that initially learnt language is more sound symbolic, but on the other hand point out that later language incorporates arbitrariness 'to facilitate communicative expressivity and efficiency.' [41] They claim that the forced-choice based sound symbolism tests are restrictive as the shapes and phonology may be unnaturally emphasised. This relates to how Saussure would most likely defend his position. He would disagree that it is due to an innate neurological basis that we attribute two differing shapes with sound symbolic names, arguing that 'kiki' and 'bouba' are signs limited in value. A sign, according to Saussure, is determined not by itself, but by what surrounds it. Signification is independent, but value is interdependent. Thus 'takete' and 'baluba' only have value because they are in direct opposition, and their forms conflict. If 'baluba' was taken out of the experiment and participants were asked to name the spiky shape, it is very unlikely they would name it 'takete' or even another name packed with obstruents. Similarly, if the experiment included more shapes and more names to choose from, it is unlikely that these two shapes would still be labelled 'takete' and 'baluba'. The mind can only grasp an idea by distinguishing it from something it is not: 'in language there are only differences', stated Saussure.[42]

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[40] P. Monaghan, K. Mattock, P. Walker 'The role of sound symbolism in language learning' (2005) 38:5 *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning Memory, and Cognition*, 1152-1164.

[41] P. Monaghan, R.C. Shillcock. M.H. Christiansen, S. Kirby, 'How arbitrary is language?' (2014) 369 (1651) *Philosophical Transactions B: Biological Sciences*, 1.

[42] F. De Saussure, (translated and annotated by Wade Baskin from 1916 edition), Course in general linguistics (edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye; with the collaboration of Albert Riedlinger), (London: Fontana, 1974).

The problem is that 'value' cannot ever be disregarded entirely. Together signs limit each other; the intertwining of our language and our culture causes us to make associations that we cannot ever truly abandon. Saussure's notion of value is not just meaning, it is the sign as a whole. His theory that the whole sign is like a sheet of paper with thought and sound as the front and back, distinguishable but not separable, is seriously challenged by sound symbolism because, at least in some cases, meaning lies *within* the sound itself: 'Of course the drive to make sound match sense or sense match sound may only be an illusion, but it is an illusion that is real enough for the users of language and a dynamic force.'[43]

This essay has aimed to demonstrate the recent cognitive evidence showing that sound symbolism does act as a force present in language with a neurological explanation that challenges Saussure's arbitrariness of the sign but does not entirely threaten it. Sound symbolism is apparent in some but definitely not all signifier/signified relationships. Many sound symbolism experiments are not entirely conclusive because of the forced-choice factors. Saussure's argument of 'value' also provides explanation for some of the experimental processes. Yet the mass of evidence in favour of sound symbolism does cast doubt on Saussure' notion of arbitrariness, making onomatopoeia and interjections dated terms for a much broader topic.

Ultimately, sound symbolism pervades everyday life, so is more significant than exception to language. It is possible to break it down into a typology with four branches each with a differing degree of arbitrariness. To acquire language our brains apparently notice sound symbolism innately and as adults it can subconsciously influence us. But also it remains true, as Saussure stated, that in language there are only differences; a parallelism is needed between signifier and signified. Perhaps both sides of the argument are necessary. In our early years we notice sound symbolism to acquire language, allowing us later to pick up advanced, more arbitrary language. That inherent awareness from childhood must still remain, which could be applied to some words and used to our advantage when adults, as discussed, for literary effect, gender distinctions and causing influential marketing.

[43] K. Wales. 'Phonotactics and phonæsthesia: the power of folk lexicology' in Susan Ramsaran (ed.) *Studies in the Pronunciation of English: A Commemorative Volume in Honour of A. C. Gimson* (London: Routledge, 1990), 339, 349.

If innate then 'sound symbolic words may thus be 'fossils' from earlier stages of language evolution, when sound symbolic links facilitated the rapid development of a common lexicon in human protolanguages'.[44] With language ever evolving, sound symbolism thus provides a vital link to the past. Moreover, its importance cross-linguistically in language acquisition might also make sound symbolism applicable to neologisms, due to the ease of learning sound-meaning mappings. Future scientific experiments and understandings of the brain shall thus improve knowledge of how neologisms form, and continue to gain insights on the connections signifiers can bear with their signified, which proves today a lot less arbitrary and unmotivated than Saussure expressed one hundred years ago.

[44] M. Imai, M. Miyazaki, HH. Yeung, S. Hidaka, K. Kantartzis, H. Okada. 'Sound Symbolism Facilitates Word Learning in 14-Month Olds', 2.

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