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ORIGINAL
RESEARCH PAPERS

Igor Maver[1]

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MARGARET ATWOOD'S NON-FICTION ABOUT FICTION: *PAYBACK*

Abstract: *Margaret Atwood's provocative recent book of non-fiction contains many literary references, which help to effectively highlight her points about such a topical matter as debt, debt as a philosophical, politico-economic, religious, and historical issue over the centuries. In the central chapters of the book she looks at the Protestant Reformation and the introduction of interest on loans and in this light analyzes the novels by Dickens, Irving, Thackeray and G. Eliot. Her final statement in the book is, however, about the ecological debt we all have to pay to Earth in order to ensure our existence.*

Keywords: Margaret Atwood, Victorian literature, Charles Dickens, debt

Introduction

In her recent creative non-fiction work *Payback* the internationally renowned Canadian woman writer Margaret Atwood examines debt, balance and revenge in history, society and particularly in English literature, debt as a driving force in (Western) fiction. She wrote it for the 2008 Massey Lectures and each of the five chapters in the book was delivered as a one hour lecture in a different Canadian city, which were also broadcast on CBC Radio One in November 2008.

Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth (2008) is certainly a most provocative and thought-engaging book which addressed the topical matter of debt at the time of the world economic crisis. Debt is considered as a philosophical, historical, political, economic and religious issue over the centuries. In truth the author provides an intellectual history of debt. It is divided into five chapters titled »Ancient Balances«, »Debt and Sin«, »Debt as Plot«, »The Shadow Side« and »Payback«. In Chapter One she clearly defines he subject-matter of her book: »… it's about debt as a human construct – thus an imaginative construct – and how this construct mirrors and magnifies both voracious human desire and ferocious human fear« (*Payback* 2). The writer traces, from ancient history onwards, the feminine priciple of balance/scale in the concept of justice (Iustitia) which includes Ma'at, Themis, Nemesis, Sekhmet, Astrea, and significantly asks herself why is it that »with the exception of the Christian and the Muslim ones, the supernatural justice figures … are all female« (34). In relation to the ancient Egyptian goddess of Ma'at she writes that it meant truth, justice, balance, the governing principles of nature and the universe, the stately progression of time – days, months, seasons, years. …Its opposite was physical chaos, selfishness, falsehood, evil behaviour – any sort of upset in the divinely ordained pattern of things (27).

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She maintains that the female Justice figures have persisted until this day, because the period of the Great Goddessess was followed by several thousand years of rigorous mysogyny, during which goddesses were replaced by gods and women were downgraded. The ancient balance of the scales was thus broken.

In the second chapter Atwood dwells on debt and sin and says that the borrowing and lending process is something of a shadowland transaction, partly theft and partly trade, provided that a reasonable and not exaggerated interest is paid and the money eventually returned to the lender. She refers to Christianity in the Western world and claims that in this religious system Christ is called the redeemer, a term drawn directly from the language of debt and pawning or pledging, scapegoats, »sin-eaters« etc, because the Devil keeps his account books constantly in good order and payback time will surely arrive.

> … the whole of Christianity rests on the notion of spiritual debts and what must be done to repay them, and how you might get out of paying by having someone else pay instead. And it rests, too, on a long pre-Christian history of scapegoat figures - including human sacrifices - who take your sins away for you (67).

»…and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us…« (The Holy Father Prayer, The Bible) In the Slovenian translation of the Bible, the noun »trespasses« is rendered as »debts« and consequently refers to debtors, which have to be forgiven. Is there, perhaps, in this Christian attitude, Maragret Atwood's underlying principle of a payback, bailout (especially as regards spiritual debts, of course) or payoff with a primarily generous leveling out of balances on either side in the long run?

From the point of view of literary allusiveness Chapter Three »Debt as Plot« is particularly relevant, where she looks at the Protestant Reformation and the introduction of interest on loans: When Henry the Eighth ascended the throne, interest-charging was legalized for Christians in England, which gave rise the the expansion of the market and in the nineteenth century the explosion of capitalism in the West. In this light, Atwood alludes to the the work of Charles Dickens, Christopher Marlowe, Washington Irving, W. M. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and even the novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë. Atwood's debt-reading of the all-time classic *Wuthering Heights* (1847) is very much to the point here:

Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights* loves Cathy passionately and hates his rival, Linton, but the weapon with which he is able to act out his love and his hate is money, and the screw he twists is debt: he becomes the owner of the estate called Wuthering Heights by putting its owner in debt to him. (*Payback* 100)

The Victorian novel *Vanity Fair* (1847-48) is especially about goods, material and spiritual, and, as Atwood observes, we watch the grim business of Amelia Sedley's family bankrupcy, but we also follow the brilliant but socially inferior gold-digger, Becky Sharp, climb her way up the social ladder. Everything that can be bought and sold, rent or lent is *vanitas*, Thackeray teaches us. Flaubert's bored provincial wife Emma Bovary, too, is eventually punished for her »shopaholicism« rather than extramarital sex, because her overspending and consequent debt catches up with her and exposes her secret life. Lily Bart in Edith Wharton's novel *House of Mirth* (1905) is not versed in debt-managing which brigs her down and should have known better that »if a man lends you money and charges no interest, he's going to want payment of some other kind« (106).

Millers in folklore are often rendered as thieves and cheats who supposedly steal from peasants by shorting them on the weight and using flour to their own benefit, and if you are a miller's daughter like Maggie Tulliver from *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) you are likely to suffer the consequences of the miller's misdeeds. Mr. Tulliver, however, is an honest miller and finds himself in financial difficulties and, because of that, his adversary buys his mill, he loses his final lawsuit and he runs his family into debt. Margaret Atwood turns the established »proto-feminist« readings of the novel with Maggie as a clever independent but thwarted woman born before her time upside down and asks herself:

> But what if we read it as the story of Mr. Tulliver's debt? For it's this debt that's the engine of the novel: it shoves the plot along, changes the mental states of the characters, and determines their scope of action. (116)

Tom and Maggie suffer greatly the consequences of their father's deeds and eventually drown in a flood, reconciled at the very end. Tulliver's adversary Wakem is saved in the end, which Atwood rightly sees as the turning-point and proof of the emerging Victorian materialism constituted in Law: »Power has moved from those who process material goods to those who process the contracts that govern them. Hermes – god of commerce, thieves, lies, contrivances, tricks, and mechanisms – has switched allegiances« (119). And what is the situation like today? The question clearly remains rhetorical. The novels alluded to by Atwood are, thus, essentially about money, debt and payback, albeit not exclusively of course, with payback not always achieved in full. The allusions to 19th and early 20th century novels she draws upon lend a totally new dimension to the notion of debt Atwood deals with in *Payback*.

And then there is the question of gift-giving within the context of the »life games« people play. The constant give-and-take process, which is the essence of social life, cannot be aborted by either party: »/G/ifts are rendered, received and repaid (both obligatorily and in one's own interest), in magnanimity for repayment of services, or as challenges or pledges« (Mauss 27, qtd. in Zabus 123). In a post-colonial context, however, the concept of gift may just be the opposite of hospitality, help and generosity. It may have the meaning of »poison« (cf. the German *Gift*), for the debtor is expected to pay back with subordination.

The main literary work of Atwood's allusions in *Payback* is Charles Dickens's extremely popular book *A Christmas Carol* (1843), which, in the 19th century, openly criticised the emerging Victorian materialistic self-satisfaction and containment, which helped to establish the Western non-religious concept of Christmas and the need for the transformation of the loan-sharking lender Ebenezer Scrooge into a beneficent forgiving character, who is taken directly from the London Stock Exchange and whose main concern and value in life is business. During Christmas, he is visited by a ghost and the three spirits and he is utterly changed thereafter. The tale is generally seen as an indictment of nineteenth century industrial capitalism and Dickens got the idea from his own humiliating experience of debt from his childhood; when his father John Dickens was arrested for debt and put in prison, he had to leave school, sell all of his books and take up a job in a blacking factory. At the beginning of the tale Ebenezer (cf. Squeezer) Scrooge's nephew reminds him that Merry Christmas-time has come, Scrooge is very cross:

> 'What else can I be,' returned the uncle, 'when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What a Christmas–time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer, a time for balancing your books, and having every item in'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you?' (Dickens 19)

At the end of the book he is much changed, of course. He is not only ready to share money with others, especially on Christmas, but also to help people for a change. In Atwood's terms one could say that by writing off debts this only will make him happy and full of redemption. He shouts his newfound happiness from the rooftops:

> 'I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A Merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here!' (201)

Margeret Atwood claims that Dickens deliberately created a reverse Faustus from Christopher Marlowe's figure. Scrooge had symbolically made a pact with the devil, this malevolent creditor who tempts people with material benefits, in exchange for their spitirual health and moral integrity and Scrooge is a miser so extreme that he does not spend any money even on himself. When Scrooge, at the beginning, sees the ghost of his former business partner Marley, it warns him that his soul will be in fetters for eternity unless he changes his greedy behaviour and it announces that other ghosts shall visit him that very Christmas night. This symbolizes Scrooge's forced transformation that is ultimately seen, even today, as a blessing and more broadly the restoration of social harmony and Victorian order. Dickens's book both redefined and reintroduced the spirit of Christmas as a seasonal merriment after the Puritan authorities in the seventeenth century England and America suppressed the pre-Christian rituals associated with it. The religious and social implications of the book significantly helped to reinvent Christmas with an emphasis on family, goodwill, and compassion. In her book, Atwood traces the roots of Dickens's Scrooge in Goethe's and Marlowe's Dr Faustus, where Marlowe's character is a bonvivant, a big-spender, who shares his wealth around very much like the reformed Scrooge at the end of Dickens's book. Atwood likewise insightfully traces the Faustian figure who is prepared to do everything for money in Washington Irving's story »The Devil and Tom Walker«, where Walker represents utter stinginess, ruthlessly grinding the people in need to the ground. Scrooge in Dickens, however, after being visited by Marley's ghost and the three spirits of Christmas, is a changed man. He is set free from his own heavy chain of cash-boxes at the end of the book, when, instead of sitting on his pile of money, he begins to spend it. The post-ghost Scrooge, for instance, doesn't give up his business, though whether it remained in part a moneylending business we aren't told. No, it's what you do with your riches that really counts (98).

Atwood's latter-day literary character named Scrooge Nouveau appears in the fifth chapter of a modernized Dickens's book *A Christmas Carol* and, like humanity today, in a the time of global warming and ruthless depletion of natural resources, is faced with two options: an eco-friendly world or a typically Atwoodian dystopian future with all kinds of disasters befalling the natural environment. It is time for humanity to pay-up as a whole, Atwood warns us.

As always, the author knows just how to provide the right amount of humour on the most serious of issues such as debt, sin and payback, whether we see *Payback* as, »smart, funny and clever« (Liss) or »by no means the highlight of the book« (Ashenburg). John Gray in *The New York Review of Books*, who typically reads the book against the current US recession, writes that it »can be read as a defense of traditional beliefs about the hazards of debt« (Gray). He is right in surmising that in Atwood's book there is an implicit notion that we may now have to return to older and simpler practices of thrift and saving. However, Atwood is no economist and the solution to the problem of debt is not given, and, when it is, it seems somewhat naive. Her vast knowledge and erudition is, however, always formidable: she convincingly shows in the best cultural materialist fashion how debt as leitmotiv and literary figures concerned with money predominate in Western fiction, »no matter how much the virtues of love may be waved idealistically aloft« (100) and how, in her youth, she thought the nineteenth-century novel was driven by love, but now that she is older she sees that it was essentially driven by money. Margaret Atwood clearly shows the perils of debt and hints at the (im)possibility of a utopian future without greed, demonstrating how debt has indeed been a driving force in Western/Anglo-American fiction. She is perhaps a more successful writer of fiction rather than non-fiction, as some reviewers suggest, but she is certainly always very timely in her views and greatly captures the esprit of the period. Louis Bayard, among others, complains in his review article of the book that

Atwood never really distinguishes between »bad debt« (credit cards) and »good debt« (college loans, mortgages). The niceties of Keynesian economics, of microfinancing ventures, of the ways in which financial entities act as both borrowers and lenders … these are either beneath or beyond her« (Bayard, cf. also Massie).

Though the writer's conclusion is far from conclusive, she is nonetheless able to introduce the theme of eco-politics and global bailout, which can only ensure our physical survival on Earth, for, as Atwood declares, all wealth comes from Nature and the only »serious« debts are those that humanity owes to Mother Earth, i.e. ecological debts. Consequently, the planet Earth will reclaim the payback that humanity owes to it or else »Nature would be a lifeless desert… and the resulting debt to Nature would be infinite« (202). This urgent and most timely ecopolitical statement is Atwood's strongest *forte* in this creative non-fiction work, where especially the multiple and well-chosen literary allusions are most engaging.

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NEW PERSPECTIVES ON OLD IDEAS: FRIEDRICH DÜRRENMATT'S PARODIES OF MYTHS AND ARCHETYPES

Abstract: *Who dares to portray the demigod Hercules as an inadequate, impotent failure? Who dares to mock tragic heroines like Antigone? Who dares to mock the biblical Judith and her bravery? Who would portray an ideal emperor as one who betrays and sacrifices his empire? The Swiss author Friedrich Dürrenmatt, reconstitutes these famous ancient myths, motifs, symbols and archetypes in his works of art and literature in order to provoke reconsideration of modern-day values such as sacrifice, value of human life, patriotism and bravery. In doing so, he also touches upon issues such as globalization, nationalism and bureaucratization as everyday problems that the individual to rise to his/her heroic potential. The research focuses on Dürrenmatt's recurring motifs with special emphasis on mythic, historical and biblical figures in the plays Romulus the Great and Hercules and the Augean Stables.*

Keywords: myth, Dürrenmatt, comedy, (anti)hero, Hercules, parody, grotesque

Introduction

One of the distinguishing features of myths is their lasting presence in all forms of art even after several thousands of years. Now more than ever, in a period that is being described as the postmodern, has the polysemy, adaptability and inexhaustibility of myths made them the focus of interest, especially in literature. Mythic content and motifs are being used, varied, reinterpreted, and demythologized in (post)modern literature.

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Myths and the motifs of myths cannot become obsolete, especially in drama, as John White emphasizes in the following statement: "This approximate identification of myth with drama and hence plot, calling to mind that plot is the essence of drama, explains why myth so often appears on the stage rather than emerging as a motif to a modern plot of a novel" (1971: 26). The question is, who dares to distort the inherent values of some of the best-known myths as well as to incorporate them into contemporary comedies instead of tragedies? Who dares to portray the demigod Hercules as an inadequate, impotent failure? Who dares to mock tragic heroines like Antigone? Who dares to mock the biblical Judith and her bravery? Who would portray an ideal emperor as one who betrays and sacrifices his empire? The Swiss author Friedrich Dürrenmatt, reconstitutes these famous ancient myths, motifs, symbols and archetypes in his works of art and literature in order to provoke reconsideration of modern-day values such as sacrifice, value of human life, nationalism, patriotism and bravery. Furthermore, Dürrenmatt also addresses the issues of globalization, poverty, capitalism and materialism, decrease in moral standards and the lack of moral values. The research focuses on Dürrenmatt's recurring motifs with special emphasis on mythic, historical and biblical figures in the grotesque comedies and parodies *Romulus the Great* and *Hercules and the Augean Stables.*

Dürrenmatt's plays have greatly been influenced by Bertolt Brecht, Georg Büchner, August Strindberg, Thornton Wilder, and the movements of expressionism and absurdist drama, but the myths of those such as Prometheus, Atlas, Sisyphus and, quite especially, the Minotaur and his labyrinth, remained the framework for his creative work – be it painting or writing. His short stories like *The Trap* or *The Tunnel* contain elements of eschatological myths; his short story *The City* is a labyrinth in itself and his ballad *The Minotaur* gives rich insight into his fascination with mythology.

Dürrenmatt's oeuvre has already been the focus of various research studies, among which there are several studies into

Dürrenmatt's use of myths. These studies include Martina Steinberger's dissertation: *Das Antike-Bild Friedrich Dürrenmatts* (Salzburg, 1991) where she explores the complete image of the antique in the whole of Dürrenmatt's work as well as Véronique Brandner's *Der andere Dürrenmatt. Auf der Brücke zwischen zwei Welten* (Frankfurt/M., Berlin u.a.: Lang 1993), which is in its methodology similar to this research, as it investigates hidden mythic motifs, e.g. Brandner compares Traps from *The Breakdown* with Hephaestos.

A more recent research is one done by Kapcsandi Katalin in her 2005 dissertation *Metamorphosis Mythorum: Die (Ver)wandlung der Mythen. Mythologische Elemente bei Friedrich Dürrenmatt.* Her paper attempts to define Dürrenmatt's notion of myth and mythical elements, i.e. his *Stoff,* and she interprets his usage of myths such as those of Pythia and Oedipus.

Among the multitude of research papers on Dürrenmatt's labyrinth-motif, two papers must be mentioned: Martin Burkard's *Dürrenmatt und das Absurde. Gestalt und Wandlung des Labyrinthischen in seinem Werk*. (Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt u.a.: Lang, 1991) and Otto Keller's *Kritik des aberländischen Denkens in Stoffe I: Der Winterkrieg in Tibet. Das Labyrinth: Weltgleichnis oder Epos einer neuen Aufklärung*. (Bern u.a.: Lang, 1999).

This particular research focuses on Dürrenmatt's use of the mythic figure Penelope, tragic heroine Antigone, the biblical figure of Judith in *Romulus the Great* and the myth of Hercules in *Hercules and the Augean Stables.* The analysis will show that in Dürrenmatt's plays the ancient mythic heroes become victims of contemporary societies and are (post)modern antiheroes stuck in parodies.

Dürrenmatt and mythology

Dürrenmatt argues that myths are timeless and appear randomly before disappearing again. Meaning lies not in their believability or their mere existence, but, rather, with the fact of whether or not we can recognize ourselves in them (1992: 35).[2] He goes on to describe myths as constantly reoccurring archetypes and pre-constellations that mankind finds itself in at all times (1996: 31)[3]. He uses these omnipresent myths as grotesque topcoats for his base texts which enable him to show how confusing reality is and how, as a result of that, an individual is unable to take action in terms of opposing injustice, living by and reviving moral values.

The cult of myth is closely associated with the cult of heroes and tragedy. However, Dürrenmatt's mythic heroes act unusually antiheroic. He explains that myths are conflicting, therefore he provides a more logical variant, but also admits that logic does not always correspond to common sense, in fact, it does so very rarely (Dürrenmatt 1992: 7).[4] In his best-known essay *Theatre Problems* he argues that myths that have been destroyed and have become mummies can only become material (*Stoff*[5]) through parody (Dürrenmatt 2006: 159). In contemporary times it is impossible for individuals to express heroic values. It is a time when Creon's secretaries and clerks resolve the case of Antigone, and not Creon himself (1988: 56)[6]; a time when the individual is lost in a world where political power has become so bureaucratic and mechanical that no true tragic protagonists, let alone heroes, can arise. His protagonists seem to struggle fruitlessly against a bureaucratic, overwhelming and thus hardly visible and inconceivable power, which does not leave room for heroic actions.

---

[2] "Die Mythen sind zeitlos, sie vermögen immer wieder in unsere Zeit einzubrechen oder sich aus ihr zurückzuziehen. Ob sie etwas bedeuten, liegt außerhalb ihrer Glaubwürdigkeit oder gar ihrer Existenz, es liegt daran, ob wir uns noch in ihnen wiederfinden oder nicht."

[3] „ein Archetypus, eine Urerscheinung, eine Urkonstellation, in die der Mensch immer wieder gerät. Es ist das immer wiederholbare innerhalb des Menschlichen."

[4] „Da die Mythen sich widersprechen, gebe ich eine logischere Variante als die übliche, wobei ich aber freilich zugeben muß, daß das Logische mit dem Vernünftigen nicht immer übereinstimmt, eigentlich selten."

[5] According to Dürrenmatt and his explanation at the beginning of *Der Winterkrieg in Tibet*, *Stoff* is the term used to describe the results of his thoughts and the mirrors, in which his thoughts and his life reflect: „Die Geschichte meiner Schriftstellerei ist die Geschichte meiner Stoffe. [...] Aber die Stoffe sind die Resultate meines Denkens, die Spiegel, in denen, je nach ihrem Schliff, mein Denken und damit auch mein Leben reflektiert werden."

[6] "Kreons Sekretäre erledigen den Fall Antigone."

It is interesting how not only Dürrenmatt thinks that modern time is not an age for tragedy and heroism. George Steiner argues in his *Death of Tragedy* that rationalism and a god-less world have pushed the tragic art form aside. He emphasizes "tragedy is that form of art which requires the intolerable burden of God's presence. It is now dead because His shadow no longer falls upon us as it fell on Agamemnon or Macbeth or Athalie" (Steiner 1963:353). Similarly, Northrop Frye claims in *The Anatomy of Criticism* that the present-day hero is in his power and/or intelligence, weaker than we are, and we see him in a state of captivity, frustration or absurd. Literature of the last 100 years or so has, particularly according to Frye, a tendency towards the ironic mode (Frye 1979:45).

Dürrenmatt’s representations of mythic greatness no longer function as such. On the contrary, his protagonists instead of being depicted as larger-than-life heroes become mere mortals, or, more accurately, failures. In Dürrenmatt’s interpretation, the strongest demigod in antiquity fails at his tasks – his Hercules cannot clean the filthy Augean stables. His princess Rea, who is in actuality, a parodied version of tragic Antigone, mythic and archetypal Penelope and biblical Judith is nothing but a fleeing coward. For Dürrenmatt myths are the incentive to re-examine and challenge the accepted traditional opinions about mythic heroes who are usually explicitly associated with the notion of greatness. Instead of depicting them as great, he deliberately blurs the lines separating the heroic and antiheroic, the mythic and the historic to create a multifaceted subversive antihero with no nostalgia for heroic values whatsoever. Victor Brombert defines all modern heroes to behave such that they “do not conform to traditional models of heroic figures; they even stand in opposition to them” (1999: 2).

Dürrenmatt's mythic antiheroes

The emperor Romulus in Romulus the Great

Romulus the Great is a play Dürrenmatt worked a lot on over a period of about fifteen years, which goes to show that it was very important to him. The first version dates from 1949, but it was never published, only staged in Basel and Zürich. The second version, which will be cited in this paper, dates from 1957. There are two more versions which were published in 1961 and 1964, subtitled *Third Version (Dritte Fassung)* and *New Version* (*Neue Fassung),* respectively.

This parody of history and the hero-myth is subtitled "an un-historic historical comedy" (*ungeschichtliche historische Komödie*) because it depicts pseudo-historic events on the day of the fall the Western Roman Empire when the chicken-farming emperor Romulus awaits the arrival of German barbarians, whilst spending his day feeding his chickens and collecting eggs in a run-down, shabby palace, without a care in the world, even though his Minister of Finances has robbed the treasury and terrible news about the fall of the Empire awaits to be delivered to him.

The paradoxical subtitle itself is enough to confirm that this play is unusual. In dealing with history, historic figures and rules, playwrights tend to write dramas in the narrow sense or tragedies, not comedies. However, Dürrenmatt is decisive in going in a completely opposite direction and distancing himself from tradition and convention, both historical and literary. Instead of depicting, as one would expect, his protagonist Romulus Augustus true to his historical persona of a sixteen-year-old emperor of the Western Roman Empire, Dürrenmatt depicts him as a tired and disappointed old man who has retired to his summer villa and dedicated his time to his chickens. A strong, young emperor, eager to fight for his empire, standing bravely in the face of the enemy approaching the gate, willing to sacrifice his life and family for the greater good, is a dramatic impulse one would expect to find in a conventional historical drama. But this dramatic impulse is nowhere to be found in Dürrenmatt's comedy *Romulus the Great*. Instead of such a heroic character, Dürrenmatt creates a chicken-feeding and egg-collecting emperor who has no interest in defending his empire from the approaching barbarians. In doing so, Dürrenmatt creates a distance between the historical reality and the literary fiction. This distance is bridged with the fine fabric of the text of his play in which Dürrenmatt isolated single strands of historical reality and exchanged them with his own comical fiction. Dürrenmatt's notion of history can thus be considered relative and shifted; the history has been preserved only as base for the plot with some true facts remaining, such as the date of the fall of the Roman Empire and the name of the emperor. Obviously, what was more important for Dürrenmatt was the idea of creating an emperor who would not be a hero, but who would critically approach the idea of a homeland/state/empire or other type of political establishment: [7]

> Auch lockte es mich, einmal einen Helden nicht in der Zeit, sondern eine Zeit an einen Helden zugrunde gehen zu lassen. Ich rechtfertige einen Landesverräter. Nicht einen von denen, die wir an die Wand stellen mußten, aber einen von denen, die es nie gibt. Kaiser rebellieren nicht, wenn ihr Land unrecht hat. Sie überlassen dies den Laien und nennen es Landesverrat, denn der Staat fordert immer Gehorsam. Aber Romulus rebelliert. Auch wenn die Germanen kommen. Dies sei gelegentlich zur Nachahmung empfohlen. Ich will mich präzisieren. Ich klage nicht den Staat, der recht, sondern den Staat an, der unrecht hat. Das ist ein Unterschied. Ich bitte, den Staaten scharf auf die

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[7] An interesting discussion about whether or not Dürrenmatt's Romulus is a traitor of his or our time is done by Donald G. Daviau. Daviau concludes that despite all the faults of this play, which arise in its literary analysis like reverse logic, the unsolved problem of Romulus' guilt and other moral questions, as well as the failed aspirations of the text to become a political and social model, make this play excellent for the stage because it teaches us to accept the reality maturely and calmly, just like Romulus (Daviau 1979: 104f).

> Finger zu sehen und sehe ihnen scharf auf die Finger. Es ist nicht ein Stück gegen den Staat, aber vielleicht eins gegen den Großstaat. Man wird meine Worte sophistisch nennen. Das sind sie nicht. Dem Staat gegenüber soll man zwar klug wie eine Schlange, aber um Gottes Willen nicht sanft wie eine Taube sein (Dürrenmatt 1966: 177).

It is through the character of Romulus, who calls himself not only a traitor, but also a judge and executioner of his own empire, that Dürrenmatt expresses such strong criticism towards the institution of state when he says:

> Nicht ich habe mein Reich verraten, Rom hat sich selbst verraten. Es kannte die Wahrheit aber es wählte die Gewalt, es kannte die Menschlichkeit, aber es wählte die Tyrannei. Es hat sich doppelt erniedrigt: vor sich selbst und vor den anderen Völkern, die in seine Macht gegeben (Dürrenmatt n.d.: 65)

Through the allegory of the Western Roman Empire in the play, Romulus (i.e. Dürrenmatt) judges the brutality and tyranny of the past, but also announces the massacres that would happen in the future, e.g. the Second World War. Vlado Obad noticed that Romulus is the only one who realizes that the institution of an empire became a cover for killing, pillaging, enslaving nations and getting away with it legally, (Obad 1982: 96) when he exclaims: „Es wird niemand leichter zum Mörder als ein Vaterland." (Dürrenmatt n.d.: 53). In refusing to take part in the war with the approaching enemy, Romulus is considered to be a traitor among his subjects, but in actuality, this makes Romulus a different kind of hero, a type of protagonist Dürrenmatt calls "brave man" (*"der mutige Mensch")* who refuses to give in to pressure of waging wars and spreading bloodshed. This distances him from the traditional hero in that he considers the individual and the family more important than power or politics, of which he is a mere symbol. Such a pacifist depiction of an emperor is Dürrenmatt's clear expression of opposition to violence and war in the name of the state. The irony increases exponentially at the end of the play when it turns out that the feared barbarian Odoacer is just as much a peaceful ruler as Romulus.

Parody of Antigone, Penelope and biblical Judith in Romulus the Great[8]

At first glance, there is no evidence that Dürrenmatt incorporated the myth of Antigone into his play *Romulus the Great*, but there are some direct references to the myth, i.e. the Greek play. When Romulus hears that his daughter Rea is currently studying the play, he strongly advises against it. Here is where Dürrenmatt's own ideas on contemporary theatre arise. Namely, Romulus says that she should not study the old, tragic text, but learn the art of a comedy, which is more suitable for their time: "ROMULUS: Studiere nicht diesen alten, traurigen Text, übe dich in der Komödie, das steht uns viel besser." (Dürrenmatt n.d.: 31). We have already established that the situation Dürrenmatt is referring to through the words of Romulus is our own, the (post)modern.

Dürrenmatt's play is full of irony and mocks classical dramatic forms and elements such as *anagnorisis*. For instance, when Romulus' future son-in-law returns from German captivity in what should be a traditional recognition scene, the one person who should recognize him, his fiancé Rea, cannot. In fact, they reunite when Rea recites verses from Antigone under the guidance of a professional actor. Instead of the situation being festive and solemn, chickens flapping their wings and making a lot of noise interrupt the recital. As a result, Rea's instructor commands her to yell and shout, thus making an overkill of her performance. Sabine Schu describes Rea as a travesty of Antigone, claiming that this is the result of the influence of the literature that she was studying, namely Rea's misunderstanding of the Antigone myth (Schu 2007: 161).

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[8] A study into Dürrenmatt's character of Rea in *Romulus the Great* was previously published in *Treća,* a journal of the Croatian Centre for Feminist Studies, see: Novak, Sonja. "Tko se ruga Antigoni i Penelopi ili Dürrenmattove tragi(komi)čne antijunakinje." *Treća.* Zagreb: Centar za ženske studije*.* 14.1-2 (2012): 51-58. As opposed to this paper, the previously published study focuses on examining the genre of tragic comedy on the example of Dürrenmatt's play *Romulus the Great.* In addition to this, in this paper the research focuses only partially on the character of Rea and also greatly extends the previous study in examining Rea as a parody of the biblical figure of Judith.

At this point, the references to the Antigone myth or the Penelope archetype in the plot are still only superficial, but they deepen and become more obvious as soon as Rea is asked to marry the trouser manufacturer Caesar Rupf who would, in exchange, save the Empire. Her father Romulus advises her against it, but she feels she needs to do it. In this, she resembles Antigone when she felt that she needed to bury her brother Polynices against Creon's wishes. Antigone dies for burying her brother, but Rea wants to destroy her own life in vain, i.e. for the good of an already crumbling Empire, by leaving her fiancée Ämilian, whom she still loves, for the old and wealthy capitalist Rupf who would save the Empire by paying off the Barbarians and investing money into the Empire. When Rea accepts to marry in order to save the Empire, she puts the well-being of the state first, as opposed to Antigone, who put her family first and disobeyed the law of the state, i.e. Creon's will. According to Romulus' words, Rea's mistake lies in the fact that one should love their country less than another human being: "ROMULUS: Nein, man soll es [das Vaterland] weniger lieben als einen Menschen" (Dürrenmatt n.d.: 53). Then he advises her to go and marry Ämilian. Another parody of the Antigone myth is the way Dürrenmatt's anti-heroine dies. While Antigone chooses and accepts her own destiny and allows herself to be buried alive because of her beliefs, Rea drowns while cowardly fleeing from the invasion of German barbarians.

In this aspect, Rea can also be considered a parody of the biblical figure of Judith, a brave woman who lures the captain of the enemy army Holofernes into her tent and chops off his head in order to save her people. Judith has thus become an archetypal character of a strong woman willing to sacrifice herself for the salvation of her nation. In visual arts she is mostly represented as a beautiful woman holding a sword in one hand and the head of Holofernes in the other. The deuterocanonical Book of Judith has throughout the centuries served as inspiration to many playwrights such as Marko Marulićs *Judita* (1501), Friedrich Hebbel's *Judith* (1840) and Howard Barker's *Judith. A Parting from the Body* (1992). For example, Marulić's *Judita,* published during the war with the Turks in Dalmatia and, as the first epic poem published in the Croatian language, was utilized to emphasize the graveness of the political and social situation and the need for heroism when staring in the face of heathen enemies. On the other hand, Hebbel's *Judith* shows deeper psychological characterization of both Judith and Holofernes, both of which have been transformed from archaic religious characters to psychologically motivated individuals (Fricke et al. 1963: 770). According to Hebbel himself, his Judith does not act as an extended arm of God whose crime is justified, but as a woman who was raped and reacts out of fear and revenge (Stolte 1963: 418).

As opposed to both of these examples, Dürrenmatt's Judith incorporated in Rea[9] is incapable of acting bravely no matter what the case is – be it individual and personal reasons or for the greater good. She is a mere parody of the archetypal Judith, ready at first to sacrifice herself for the salvation of the empire, but talked out of it by Romulus, thus showing her susceptibility to the influence of others. In the biblical Book of Judith, she leaves the safety of her hometown Bethulia and visits Holofernes in his tent, thus surrendering herself willingly and consciously to the enemy, with her only weapon being her beauty, charms, wit, wisdom and bravery. Dürrenmatt's Judith does not face her enemy willingly and ready to chop off his head. Her sacrifice includes marrying a wealthy man who will save her empire with a substantial investment and pay-off of the German barbarians. In the end, she changes her mind about sacrificing her love for the empire and runs off with her fiancé Ämilian in pursuit of her personal happiness, but drowns in the sea, with the smallest ounce or hint of heroisms going down with her. She might have become a heroine in Dürrenmatt's terms and might have transcended beyond the tragic if she had only accepted her fate calmly like her father, because according to Dürrenmatt, accepting one's death means choosing a path towards freedom:

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[9] Dürrenmatt's fascination with the character of Judith is obvious when one considers that he incorporated the myth into three plays: *Romulus the Great, Die Widertäufer* and *Achterloo.* In addition to this, the Schweizerische Literaturarchivu stores an unpublished fragment of Dürrenmatt's play *Judith und Holofernes* that later became the starting point for the creation of *Achetrloo.* (Schu 2007: 149) In all of the plays, Dürrenmatt depicts Judith as an immature and well-protected young daughter, while the original archetype is based on a mature and experienced woman.

> [...] seinen Tod, der doch den äußersten Zwang darstellt, als den Schritt zur Freiheit, zur Befreiung hin begreift und sich damit als wahrhaft freier Mensch beweist. Die Freiheit hätte die Tragik überwunden (Dürrenmatt 1998: 210).

Furthermore, because of Rea's misconception of the most important values in life, she is also a parody of Penelope. According to Barbara Clayton, "as a mythic archetype, the figure of Penelope is passed down from Homer with two distinctive components. She is the idealized faithful wife, and she is a weaver who unweaves, creating a web that is never finished" (Clayton 2004: 83). She is best known for her faithfulness to Odysseus, for her patience, virtue and strength. She is an archetype of devotion, chastity and female wisdom here being parodied through a naive, inexperienced and weak girl unable to recognize her fiancé and willing to trade in her love in exchange for a worthless and crumbling empire. Dürrenmatt distorted the images and archetypes of three mythic heroines – Antigone, Penelope and Judith – and blended them into a parody of values to become Rea, an anti-heroine of epic proportions.

The parody of heroes does not end with Rea; all the glorious Roman soldiers turn out to be *milites gloriosi* who run away at first signs of trouble. The twist that ends the play – the fact that Romulus' adversary Odoacer also proves to be a pacifist and humanist, as well as a passionate fellow chicken farmer – is another parody of heroism. Additionally, Roger Alan Crocket describes the play as showing “exaggeratedly heroic deeds in an unheroic time“ (Crockett 1998: 29), which is most obvious in the character of Spurius Titus Mamma – a herald that had been riding for two days and two nights to inform the Emperor of the fall of Pavia. The role of the herald bringing news of great battles is a convention in classical drama, where the king immediately receives him, but not here. Dürrenmatt mocks this scene in that Romulus' servants do not allow Spurius Titus Mamma to bother Romulus – instead he is sent to sleep, like a child to its room. He refuses to go to sleep throughout the play, but ironically sleeps through the most dramatic moments.

Dürrenmatt himself explains the impossibility of existence of heroes in contemporary drama:

> The world today as it appears to us can hardly be encompassed in the form of the historical drama as Schiller wrote it, for the simple reason that we no longer have any tragic heroes, but only vast tragedies staged by world butchers and produced by slaughtering machines. Hitler and Stalin cannot be made into Wallensteins. Their power was so enormous that they themselves were no more than incidental, corporeal, and easily replaceable expressions of this power; and the misfortune associated with the former and to a considerable extent also with the latter too vast, too complex, too horrible, too mechanical, and usually simply too devoid of all sense. Wallenstein's power can still be envisioned; power as we know it today can only be seen in its smallest part for, like an iceberg, the largest part is submerged in anonymity and abstraction. [...] There are no true representatives, and the tragic heroes are nameless. Any small-time crook, petty government official, or policeman better represents our world than a senator or president. Today art can only embrace the victims, if it can reach men at all; it can no longer come close to mighty (Dürrenmatt 1982: 252f).

The Hercules myth in Hercules and the Augean Stables

This comedy focuses on one of Hercules' twelve tasks, where he is summoned to Elis in order to clean the Augean stables filled with faeces, as it is a country of farmers, with several times more animals than people. But Dürrenmatt's Hercules is a failure. He is a drunk, penniless brute and, paradoxically, an impotent philanderer who bullies his assistant and is unable to satisfy his lover Dejaneira.

The choice of base plot for the play is explained by Dürrenmatt himself through Polybios's words in the prologue of the comedy: "Bieten wir schon Mist, dann nur einen berühmten"(Dürrenmatt 1966: 361).[10] The difference between the mythic Hercules and Dürrenmatt's Hercules is that Dürrenmatt's Hercules does not perform the twelve labours because of glory, heroism, altruism or benevolence towards mankind. The reason is much simpler – he needs money, and he needs it badly. Furthermore, Polybios reveals that his deeds were not at all heroic and it turned out that he was just (un)lucky up to now in completing the tasks and that collecting the wages was more difficult than anticipated:

> POLYBIOS: Die drei ersten Arbeiten, die ich vermittelt habe, brachten wenig ein. Der nemeische Löwe, nach dessen Gewicht sich das Honorar richtete, erwies sich als ein Balkanzwergberglöwe, die Riesenschlange Hydra sackte in den lernäischen Sümpfen ab und die Keryneiische Hindin sauste auf Nimmerwiedersehen davon.
> [...]
> HERKULES: Der Erymanthische Eber stürzte vor meinen Augen in den bodenlosen Abgrund.

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[10] This can roughly be translated as follows: "Since we have to offer the audience some manure, we'll make sure to at least offer some famous and well-known manure."

> POLYBIOS: Und damit das Honorar. Fünfzehntausend Drachmen liegen da unten (Dürrenmatt 1966: 365f).

Hercules had to master all these tasks that actually proved to be rather degrading, e.g. the Nemean lion was indeed a small mountain lion in the Balkans and the Erymanthian boar leaped into the abyss right before his eyes, leaving Hercules helpless and unable to collect his fee for the task. The most degrading job was definitely performing for the national circus of Elis Nationalzirkus Tantalos where he was even promoted from weightlifting to wrestling an elephant and boxing a gorilla. But again, the circus went bankrupt, its manager vanished and our hero was unable to collect his fee yet again. Furthermore, he was forced to move on to the next Labour, although he had not started, much less completed the cleaning of the state of Elis, which remains hopelessly buried under growing mountains of manure.

Dürrenmatt has completely de-mythologized his character of Hercules; he only used the Hercules-myth as a cover to describe and criticise the different layers of society. Firstly, he extensively criticizes the bureaucracy. Namely, in order to perform his task and collect his fee, Hercules must obtain several different permits from different bureaucratic entities before he can start work: "PHYLEUS: Für alles braucht man in Elis eine Genehmigung" (Dürrenmatt 1966: 392). Before Hercules can even think of getting his hands dirty, he must receive a permit from The Ministry of Civil Engineering, the Employment Agency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Water, the Ministry of Faeces, etc.

Moreover, Dürrenmatt criticizes the political sphere by depicting the state of Elis as being run by ignorant money-and-power driven illiterates who can count only to three and cannot remember the words to their national anthem.

The choice of heroic task is also very carefully made in order to strip Hercules of his heroism: Gustav Schwab calls this task unworthy of a hero (Schwab 1909: 182). Dürrenmatt accordingly depicts Hercules' image as one of a national hero and opposes it to our traditional notion of a national hero. His Hercules is aging, sick and tired of women, but because of high expectations he must keep at least the image of a hero alive. But the reality is far from the expectations. Hercules is an impotent Don Juan, which becomes obvious when it is discovered that it is actually Augias' foreman Kambyses who sleeps in Hercules' tent and deals with all the women instead of him, while he only keeps the myth of the vital lover alive. Hercules acts completely different than a hero should: he rapes a prostitute in broad daylight in the middle of the city park, he vandalizes banks and he drinks and eats too much. He shows virtually no brain power or heroic values, just sheer muscle power and explains his behaviour as having to rage every once in a while: "Ich muß einfach hin und wieder rasen" (Dürrenmatt 1966: 384).

Finally, he confesses to Augias' 14-year-old daughter Iole who had sneaked into his tent with romantic ideas on her mind that he is not really a hero, but a man who coincidentally inherited a characteristic that other people lack – abundant strength – which actually makes him unfit for this world and time:

> HERKULES: Held ist nur ein Wort, das erhabene Vorstellungen erweckt, die begeistern. In Wirklichkeit bin ich aber nicht ein Wort, Iole, sondern ein Mann, der aus Zufall eine Eigenschaft bekommen hat, die andere nicht in dem Übermaß besitzen: Ich bin stärker als die andern Menschen und darum, weil ich niemand zu fürchten brauche, gehöre ich auch nicht zu den Menschen. Ich bin ein Ungeheuer wie jene Saurier, die ich in den Sümpfen ausrotte. Ihre Zeit ist um, und auch die meine. Ich gehöre einer blutigen Welt, Iole, und übe ein blutiges Handwerk. Der Tod ist mein Begleiter […] Ich bin ein Mörder, vom Ruhm der Menschen übertüncht (Dürrenmatt 1966: 410).

At the same time, the piling of the omnipresent faeces in ever increasing amounts in the state of Elis adds to the grotesque tone of an already hilarious parody connecting the mythic world with the present by questioning issues such as pollution and overwhelming bureaucratic machinery comprised of incompetent and illiterate peasants who instead of inspiring him to greatness, drive him towards indifference.

Dürrenmatt uses the Hercules myth to depict his protagonist in a confrontation with the real contemporary world – he is a character within which irreconcilable differences reside: a hero must become a mere employee of the state and, even more ironically, a circus. There is no way out of this absurdity for him.

Conclusion

Dürrenmatt is quite familiar with myths and mythology and quite fascinated by them. His re-interpretations of myths are based on elements from traditional and conventional patterns interwoven with elements that demythologise these heroes. His heroes are almost always condemned to failure and their characteristics are irreconcilable, contributing to the grotesque and absurdity of their world.

These comedies of his, as he himself labels them, represent worlds where different cultures, myths and heritages clash, leading to a greater level of irony, not only of events, but also of characters. Dürrenmatt's Rea is thus simultaneously a parody of Antigone, Judth and Penelope, his Romulus is a hero to his family, but a traitor to his empire and his Hercules is an impotent Don Juan and incompetent worker for hire.

In addition to completely humanizing mythic heroes, Dürrenmatt often combines mythic elements with real and present-day moments, thus achieving the effect of realistic representation of contemporary society, which he mocks. By redefining mythic figures as caricatures, he expresses criticism towards social concepts such as national heroism or bravery and sacrifice. For Dürrenmatt, the chaotic world of today cannot produce a tragic hero anymore and even if it could, the world has been rationalized, mechanized and dehumanized to such a degree that the hero would not survive or be successful for long.

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ENCYCLOPEDIC DEFINITIONS IN LANGUAGE DICTIONARIES – A TREASURY OF CULTURE

Abstract: *This paper discusses encyclopedic module of definitions in language dictionaries as a source of historical and cultural information. The main aim of the study is to reveal and compare the encyclopedic modules of definitions in early dictionaries of Australian and Indian English. The method applied consists in the analysis of the definitions and in the review of citation. The data was selected from two dictionaries on historical principles – Austral English (Morris, 1898) and Hobson-Jobson (Yule and Burnell, 1886). The corpus consists of 320 and 292 articles respectively. The study showed that in both dictionaries encyclopedic module of the definitions overshadows the linguistic one. At the same time, specificity of the nascent varieties of English and particularities of the linguistic situation in Australia and India determined the framework of these dictionaries, mainly the criteria of the entries' selection and, as a consequence, the lexical domains covered by encyclopedic modules of the definitions.*

Keywords: lexicography, definition, encyclopedia, language dictionary, culture, Austral English, Hobson-Jobson.

Introduction

Since the middle of the 20th century, after the publication of the first paper in modern theoretical lexicography, *Towards A General Theory of Lexicography* (Scherba, 1940), this branch of linguistics has been thriving (see Zgusta and Farina, 1988). There are two interrelated areas of research in this field – applied and historical. Within the first area, all aspects of the dictionary compilation process are discussed and methods of their improvement are suggested (e.g. Svensén, 2009; Zgusta, 1971). Within the second area, the evolution of lexicography is observed and the history of national lexicographic traditions is investigated (e.g. Béjoint 1994, 2010; Balabakki, 2014; Skybina, 1984; Starnes and Noyes, 1946; Vogel, 1979). Also, a critical analysis of several dictionaries is provided along with a portrayal of their compilers' life and activities (e.g. Green, 1996; Landau, 1984; Murray, 1977).

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Recent years have also seen much interest in the discussion of the role that dictionaries play in the history and culture of the language speaking community. Thus, socio-cultural validity of dictionaries has been noted and discussed in multiple studies (e.g. Benson, 2002; Bytko, 2013a, 2013b; Considine, 2008; Dawson, 2013; Pruvost, 2006; Karpova and Kartashkova, 2007; Kendall and Morey, 2011; Oguibénine, 1998; Skybina, 2010, 2011, 2013a, 2013b;Kachru and Kahane, 1995, to mention only the latest publications). It is emphasized that the user can obtain information on cultural issues in multiple ways: by studying the history of dictionary projects and compilers' biographies, by understanding the selection criteria of entries and dictionary typology, by observing dynamics of national lexicographic tradition. But most obviously, attentive reading of definitions enables the user to retrieve culturally relevant information in every detail and in pertaining context. Understandably, those are encyclopedic definitions that better serve this task.

The differentiation of language, dictionaries and encyclopedias is generally recognized. Definitions in the former are aimed at the description of words as linguistic units, in the latter – at the representation of the notions of extra-lingual reality – things, objects, and phenomena. In the English language, lexicography dictionaries that combine the two main types of definitions have been published and analyzed as a fairly new development. However, observations on the early dictionaries of native and non-native varieties of English support the belief that encyclopedic modules have been incorporated into language dictionaries for at least two centuries.

Lexicography of English is multidimensional: it reflects, in its specific way and form, the history of the language and its phenomenal variability. Every dictionary – most of all, the one compiled on historical principles – is an invaluable source of information, not only on lexis, but also on socio-cultural phenomena that are encoded in lexical units, illustrated in examples and unfolded in citation. This is most vivid in dictionaries compiled on the material of the varieties of English, both national and non-national. Moreover, there are situations when encyclopedic information becomes an indispensable component of (language) dictionaries.

The aim of this paper, which consists of four parts, is to evince the reasons behind the incorporation of encyclopedic modules into language dictionaries, to evaluate the volume of the encyclopedic module in definitions, and to demarcate the lexical domains covered by them. First, theoretical background is developed and data and methodology explained. Second, dictionaries, *Austral English* (Morris, 1898) *and Hobson-Jobson* (Yule and Burnell, 1886), are analyzed individually. Third, the comparison of the results obtained in part two is provided. Fourth, the conclusions are drawn.

Data and method

To this end, we analyzed two lexicographic “celebrities” - *Austral English: A Dictionary of Australasian Words, Phrases and Usages* (Morris, 1898) and *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive* (Yule and Burnell, 1886). The choice of the dictionaries was based on three criteria. First, they define two different types of the varieties of English – native (Australian) and non-native (Indian); second, they are dictionaries on historical principles; third, they cover the time of the varieties incipience – the period of the most active derivational and word-building processes.

320 articles from *Austral English* and 292 articles from *Hobson-Jobson* of the letter ‘S’ entries constitute the corpus.

The applied method consists of a semantic analysis of the entries' lexical meanings and a review of citation. The empirical analysis consists of three parts. First, *Austral English* definitions are scrutinized, second, the definitions from *Hobson-Jobson* are examined, and third, the results obtained are juxtaposed to evince the similarities and differences. A short historical overview for each dictionary precedes the empirical analysis.

Analysis and discussion

Austral English, the first comprehensive study of the origin of Australian English, was published at the end of the 19th century, only 100 years after the first settlers arrived in Australia. The new land was different from the home country in every possible detail and survival was a priority for the settlers. Notably, the majority of the settlers belonged to a marginal strata of the society. Understandably, first settlers had to explore the new land and acquire as much knowledge of it as possible in the shortest time. As such, it was the nature that got special attention from the settlers and hundreds of new terms for flora and fauna entered English. Edward Ellis Morris, a scholar and educator, must have recognized this fact and applied relevant selection criteria of the entries, resulting in the prevalence of flora and fauna terms in the word-list.

Consequently, those are encyclopedic definitions for the entries in the 'Natural objects' lexical domain that occupys most of the semantic space of the dictionary (see Table 1).

Lexical domain	Semantic space covered by encyclopedic component of definitions
Nature:	67.7 %
Flora	○ 18 %
Fauna	○ 47.5 %
Miscellaneous	○ 2.2 %

Table 1– Percentage of semantic space covered by encyclopedic component of definitions in the 'Natural objects' domain in *Austral English*

The encyclopedic component of definitions in the ‘Natural objects’ domain and the pertaining citation provide both general and country-specific encyclopedic information.

General encyclopedic information:

- Latin names for flora and fauna:
  Stump-tailed Lizard, n. an Australian lizard, *Trachydosaurusrugosus*, Gray.

Country-specific encyclopedic information:

- Reference to local lands, rivers, territories:
  Spider-Orchis, n. name given in Tasmania to the Orchid *CaladeniaPulcherrima*<...>
- Some characteristics of local flora and fauna objects:
  Sting-moth, *n*. an Australian Moth, *Doratiferavulnerans*. The larva has at each end of the body four tubercles bearing stinging hairs. ('Standard.')
- Details of the terrain:
  Scrub, n. a country overgrown with thick bushes. Henry Kingsley's explanation (1859), that the word means shrubbery, is singularly misleading, the English word conveying the idea of smallness and order compared with the size and confusion of the Australian use.
- Historical allusions:
  Sergeant Baker, *n*. name given to a fish of New South Wales, *AulopusPurpurissatus,* Richards., family *Scopelida.*
  1882. Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods, 'Fish of New South Wales,' p. 82:
  "The Sergeant Baker in all probability got its local appellation in the early history of the colony (New South Wales), as it was called after a sergeant of that name in one of the first detachments of a regiment; <...>"

To explore the new world and learn to live in it, the settlers developed a way of life that best suited their needs.

Austral English depicts the lexicon of the time relating to the settlers' life with the encyclopedic modules providing multiple details. The amount of semantic space covered by the lexical domain concerning people and the way of life accounts for around 24% of the dictionary space.

Our corpus represents the following sub-domains of the 'People & Way of life' domain (numbers in brackets indicate the meaning as registered in the dictionary):

- People: scrub-rider, scrubber (3), shagroon, scullbanker, slusher, sonny, squatter, squatterarchy, squatterdom, squattocracy, squattocratic, sticker-up, stock-agent, stock-holder, stock-keeper, stock-man, stock-rider, sundowner, super, swag, swagger, swaggie, swagman.
- Way of life: settlers' matches, shanghai-shot, shanty, settlers' twine, shed, shearer's joy, sheep-wash, she-oak nets, shepherd, v., n., shicer, shout, silver-tail, sool, spell, spotting, squat v., squatting, station-jack, steamer (food), stick-up, sticker-up, stingareeing, stock-up, stonewall, swag n., (2) swag v.
- Disease: sandy-blight.
- Land as an object of economic activity: sheep-sick, snow-line, soak, soakage, squattage, stock-route, surfacing.
- Cattle: scrub-cattle, snailey stock stock-horse, store, store-cattle, sheep-farming: skirting soak-hole.
- Lumbering: slab, spearwood.
- Dwelling: slip-panel, slip-rail, station, stock-hut, shantie.
- Equipment: shanghai, slush lamp, spade-press, sprag, stamper, stock-whip ,stump-jump, plough swamp-broom, swing-gate.

The encyclopedic component of the definitions for these lexicon's articles provides the following information:

- Methods of land exploration

Surfacing *verbal n.* (2) gold-digging on the surface of the ground

- Occupation:

  Shanty-Keeper, *n.* keeper of a sly-grog shop.
- Leisure activities:

  Stingagreeing, *n*. The sport of catching *stingrays, or Stingarees*
- Domestic animals specialization

  Stock-horse, *n*. horse accustomed to go after cattle in mastering and *cutting-out* (q.v.)
- Local legislation

  Stock-route, n. When land is first let in survey blocks to a *Squatter* (q.v.) and is, of course, unfenced, the lessee is required by law to leave passages through it from two or four chains wide, at certain intervals, as a right-of-way for traveling sheep and cattle <…>
- Parliamentary practices:

  Stonewall, n. (1) A Parliamentary term: to make use of the forms of the House so as to delay public business

  “Entrepreneurship” of some settlers:

  Sundowner, a tramp who takes care to arrive at a station at sundown, so that he shall be provided with *'tucker' (*q.v.) at the squatter's cost: one of those who goes about the country seeking work and devoutly hoping they may not find it.

  Shepherd, n. a miner who holds the claim but does not work it.
- Life in the bush:

  Swag, v. (2) A special Australian use: a tramp's bundle, wrapped up in a blanket, called a *Bluey*(q.v.). Used also for a passenger's luggage.

  Swagman, n. a man travelling through the bush carrying a *swag (q.v.),* and seeking employment.
- Common diseases:

  Sandy-blight, n. a kind of ophthalmia common in Australia, in which eye feels as if full of sand. Called also shortly, *Blight.*
- Way of life particulars:

Settlers' Matches, *n*. name occasionally applied to the long pendulous strips of bark which hang from the Eucalypts and other trees, during decorticating, and which, becoming exceedingly dry, are readily ignited and used and used as kindling wood.

- Settlers' nicknames

Shagroon, *n.* When the province of Canterbury, in New Zealand, was first settled, the men who came from England were called *Pilgrims*, all others *Shagroons*, probably a modification of the Irish word *Shaughraun*.

- Dwelling

Shanty, *n*. 1) a hastily erected wooden house; (2) a public house, especially unlicensed: a sly-grog shop. The word is by origin Keltic (Irish). In the first sense, it's use is Canadian or American; in the last Australian. <...>

- Changes in the way of life as reflected in the word meaning and illustrated in citation:

Squatter, *n*.(1) one who squats; that is settles on land without a title or licence. This is an English use.

1897. Australian Steam Navigation Company, 'Guide Book', p. 29:

"Nowaday squatters may be interested and possibly shocked on learning that in March, 1836, a petition was being largely signed for the prevention of 'squatting', through which so much crime was daily occurring', inasmuch as 'squatting' was but another term for sly grog selling, receiving stolen property, and harbouring bushrangers and assigned servants. The term 'squatters', as applied to the class it now designates - without which where would Australia now be? - was not in vogue till 1842."

(2) A pastoral tenant of the Crown, often renting from the Crown vast tracts of land for pasturage at an almost nominal sum. The term is still frequently, but incorrectly, used for a man rearing and running stock on a freehold land. *Pastoralist* is now the more favoured term.

Culturally relevant are also some words and geographic terms repeatedly used in the definitions: *Colonial, Aboriginal, Indigenous, Native, Bush, Bushmen, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania*, etc.

The second part of the research deals with *Hobson-Jobson.* Sir Henry Yule, a Scottish Orientalist and engineer, and Arthur Coke Burnell, an English scholar in Sanskrit, both amateur lexicographers, compiled the dictionary. The dictionary was published in 1886; three centuries after the colonization had taken off. It was the first sound lexicographic work compiled on historical principles with the objective to represent all classes of words that "recur constantly in the daily intercourse of the English in India" (Yule and Burnell, 1886). Apparently, the main objective of the dictionary was to facilitate communication of the British with their local counterparts. The academic goal was secondary.

In accord with the main goal, the word list primarily pertained to the concepts relevant to the activities of the British administration. Thus, entries related to material and spiritual culture constitute more than a half of the dictionary articles while only 20% of the articles relate to the natural world. Accordingly, semantic space covered by encyclopedic component of definitions for the 'People & way of life' domain greatly exceeds that of the 'Nature" domain (see Table 2) by almost a factor of four.

Lexical domain	Semantic space covered by encyclopedic component of definitions
People & way of life	53.6%
○ Material culture	○ 51.1%
○ Spiritual culture	○ 2.5%
Flora	13.5%
Fauna	4.9%
Geographical terms	21.5%

Table 2– Percentage of semantic space covered by encyclopedic component of definitions in *Hobson-Jobson*

In definitions and citations of the articles in the 'Natural objects' domain, encyclopedic component plays a significant role. Much like with *Austral English,* encyclopedic module in *Hobson-Jobson* provides both general and country-specific information.

General encyclopedic information:

- Latin or Greek names for flora and fauna:

  SEER-FISH, s. A name applied to several varieties of fish, species of the genus *Cybium.*<…>

Country-specific information:

- Flora and fauna objects as used in local cuisine or/and economic activities:

  SEER-FISH , s. <…> When of the right size, neither too small nor too big, these are reckoned among the most delicate of Indian sea-fish. Some kinds salt well, and are also good for preparing as **Tamarind-Fish.**

  SAGWIRE , s. A name applied often in books, and, formerly at least, in the colloquial use of European settlers and traders, to the **Gomuti** palm or *Arengasaccharifera*, Labill., which abounds in the Ind. Archipelago, and is of great importance in its rural economy. <…>Its most important product, however, is the sap, which is used as **toddy** (q.v.), and which in former days also afforded almost all the sugar used by natives in the islands. <…>. There is also found in a like position a fine cotton-like substance which makes excellent tinder, and strong stiff spines from which pens are made, as well as arrows for the blow-pipe, or Sumpitan (see **SARBATANE**).
- Reference to local lands, rivers, territories:

  SHOLA , s. In S. India, a wooded ravine; a thicket.
- Socio-historical references:

  SARNAU, SORNAU, n.p. A name often given to Siam in the early part of the 16th century; from *Shahr-inao*, Pers. 'New-city'; the name by which Yuthia or Ayodhya (see **JUDEA**), the capital founded on the Menam about 1350, seems to have become known to the traders of the Persian Gulf. Mr. Braddell

(*J. Ind. Arch.* v. 317) has suggested that the name (*Sheher-al-nawi*, as he calls it) refers to the distinction spoken of by La Loubère between the Thai-*Yai*, an older people of the race, and the Thai-*Noi*, the people known to us as Siamese. But this is less probable.<…>.

However, the main amount of encyclopaedic information is accumulated in definitions and citations of the articles constituting 'People & Way of life' domain. Our corpus represents the following sub-domains in 'People & Way of life' domain in *Hobson-Jobson:* 'People and their occupation', 'Associations', 'Organizations', 'Activities', 'Titles', 'Way of life objects' with further subdivision into 'Means of watercraft', 'Products and drinks', 'Cloth/es', 'Constructions', 'Weapons', 'Currency'.

Encyclopedic component of the definitions for the articles in these sub-domains provides the following information:

- Clothes (with some cultural and geographical remarks):
  SARONG , s. Malay. *sārung;* the body-cloth, or long kilt, tucked or girt at the waist, and generally of coloured silk or cotton, which forms the chief article of dress of the Malays and Javanese. The same article of dress, and the name (*saran*) are used in Ceylon. <…>
- Social attitudes:
  SOY, s. A kind of condiment once popular.<…>. It is made from the beans of a plant common in the Himālaya and E. Asia, and much cultivated, viz. *Glycine Soja*, Sieb. andZucc. (*Soya hispida*, Moench.), boiled down and fermented. [In India the bean is eaten in places where it is cultivated, as in ChutiaNāgpur (*Watt, Econ. Dict.* iii.510 *seq.*)]
- Local cuisine attributes:
  SOOJEE, SOOJY, s. <…> It is, in fact, the fine flour, made from the heart of the wheat, used in India to make bread for European tables. It is prepared by grinding between two millstones which are not in close contact. [*Sūjī* "is a granular meal obtained by moistening the grain overnight, then

grinding it. The fine flour passes through a coarse sieve, leaving the **Suji** and bran above. The latter is got rid of by winnowing, and the round, granular meal or **Suji**, composed of the harder pieces of the grain, remains" (*Watt. Econ.Dict.* VI.pt. iv. 167).] <…>. (See **ROLONG.**)

SHIRAZ, n.p. The wine of Shiraz was much imported and used by Europeans in India in the 17th century, and even later.

- Constructions:

  SHAMEEANA, SEMIANNA, s. <…> an awning or flat tent-roof, sometimes without sides, but often in the present day with **canauts**; sometimes pitched like a porch before a large tent; often used by civil officers, when on tour, to hold their court or office proceedings *corampopulo*, and in a manner generally accessible. [In the early records the word is used for a kind of striped calico.]

- Historical allusions:

  SHEIKH, s. Ar. *shaikh;* an old man, elder, chief, head of an Arab tribe. The word should properly mean one of the descendants of tribes of genuine Arab descent, but at the present day, in India, it is often applied to converts to Islam from the lower Hindu tribes. For the use of the word in the sense of a saint, see under PEER.

Notably, the history of the notions underlying the lexical items' meaning and their usage is related not only to the culture of the language that the lexemes were borrowed from, but also to the culture and social milieu of the British in India and the region.

As mentioned above, encyclopaedic information can be drawn not only from definitions but also from numerous quotations, up to 15 in some dictionary articles:

> **SCYMITAR** , s. This is an English word for an Asiatic sabre. The common Indian word is *talwār* (see **[TULWAUR]**). <…>. This word (*shamshīr*) was known to Greek writers. Thus:
> A.D. 93. -- " . . . *KAI\ KAQI/STHSI TO\N PRESBU/TATON PAI=DA *MORO/BAZON BASILE/A PERIQEI=SA TO\

DIA/DHMA KAI\ SOU=SA TO\N SHMANTH=RA TOU\ PATRO\S SAKTU/LION, TH/NTE SAMYHRA\N SNOMAZOME/NHN PAR' AU)TOI=S." -- *Joseph. Antiqq.* xx. ii. 3.

c. A.D. 114. -- "*DW=RA FE/REI *TRAIANY= U(FA/SMATA SHRIKA\ KAI\ SAMYH/RAS AI(SE/ EI)SI SPA/QAI BARBARIKAI/." -- Quoted in *Suidas Lexicon*, s.v.

1595.- ". . . By this **scimitar,** That slew the Sophy, and a Persian prince That won three fields of Sultan Soliman . . ."* *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 1.
* In a Greek translation of Shakspere, published some years ago at Constantinople, *this line is omitted!*

1610. -- ". . . Anon the Patron starting up, as if of a sodaine restored to life; like a mad man skips into the boate, and drawing a Turkise**Cymiter**, beginneth to lay about him (thinking that his vessell had been surprised by Pirats), when they all leapt into the sea; and diuingvnder water like so many Diue-dappers, ascended without the reach of his furie." -- *Sandys,Relation*, &c., 1615, p. 28.

1614. -- "Some days ago I visited the house of a goldsmith to see a **scimitar** (*scimitarra*) that Nasuhbashá the first vizir, whom I have mentioned above, had ordered as a present to the Grand Signor. Scabbard and hilt were all of gold; and all covered with diamonds, so that little or nothing of the gold was to be seen." -- *P. della Valle*, i. 43.

c. 1630. -- "They seldome go without their swords (**shamsheers** they call them) form'd like a cresent, of pure metall, broad, and sharper than any rasor; nor do they value them, unlesse at one blow they can cut in two an Asinego. . . ." -- *Sir T. Herbert*, ed. 1638, p. 228.

1675. -- "I kept my hand on the Cock of my Carabine; and my Comrade followed a foote pace, as well armed; and our Janizary better than either of us both: but our Armenian had only a **Scimeter.**" -- (Sir) *George Wheler, Journey into Greece*, London, 1682, p. 252.

> 1758. -- "The Captain of the troop . . . made a cut at his head with a **scymetar** which Mr. Lally parried with his stick, and a *Coffree* (**Caffer**) servant who attend him shot the Tanjerine dead with a pistol." -- *Orme*, i. 328.

Comparison of the results of the two dictionaries analysis demonstrates that encyclopaedic component of definitions is an integral part of early dictionaries of the varieties of English, both native and non-native. The encyclopaedic component significantly surpasses the linguistic one both in volume and in importance for the target user (see Table 3).

Lexical domain	Semantic space covered by encyclopedic component of definitions	
	Austral English	*Hobson-Jobson*
Nature	67.7%	18.4%
People &the way of life	24%	56.6%
Geographical terms	-	23%

Table 3 – Percentage of semantic space covered by encyclopedic component of definitions in *Austral English* and *Hobson-Jobson*

Both dictionaries' word-lists represent two main lexical domains, which are defined by means of utilizing encyclopaedic information – 'Nature' and 'People and the Way of life'. However, in *Austral English* the main accent is made on the 'Nature' domain while in *Hobson-Jobson* the accent is made on the 'People and the Way of life' domain. Moreover, the composition of the sub-domains of the 'People and the Way of life' domain in *Austral English* and *Hobson-Jobson* is different. Thus, in *Austral English* these sub-domains emphasize aspects of practical activities: 'Land as an object of economic activity', 'Cattle breeding', 'Lumbering'. In *Hobson-Jobson* these sub-domains accentuate aspects of social life: 'People and their occupation', 'Associations' 'Organizations, 'Activities', and 'Titles'.

Conclusion

Theory of lexicography states that language dictionaries, particularly monolingual ones, should provide information about lexemes, their functioning, and the rules of their use. However, when lexicographers face the task of compiling a dictionary of the language that is spreading beyond its initial territory and is adapting to new geographical, environmental and cultural situation, they cannot but alter the methodology. One of the main changes in methodology is conditioned by the necessity to equip the target user with the knowledge of the realities underlying the new and/or changed lexis defined in the dictionary. In practice, such a methodological change consists of adding encyclopaedic modules to definitions. And that is exactly the methodology applied by Edward Ellis Morris in *Austral English* and Henry Yule and Arthur Coke Burnell in *Hobson-Jobson*.

However, although the general approach to the compilation of these two dictionaries was identical, the encyclopedic modules in definitions of *Austral English* and in *Hobson-Jobs* have their specifics. The main reason for that seems to be the uniqueness of the linguistic situation in Australia and India at the time of the dictionaries' compilation. Consequently, the linguistic situation in each country predetermined the target audience which where representatives of the British administration and their allies in India for *Hobson-Jobson* and educated Australians as well as the national and international academic communities for *Austral English.*

The encyclopaedic data provided in the definitions of *Hobson-Jobson* presumably made the work of the British administration more effective; the encyclopaedic data in *Austral English* reflect the start of the history of the new nation in Australia and the nascence of Australian English.

The two primary semantic domains in which encyclopaedic modules of definitions prevail in both dictionaries are 'Nature' and 'People and the way of life'.

Nowadays, encyclopaedic information recorded in these dictionaries gives an insight not only into linguistic history but also into the cultural history of the English in India and Australia.

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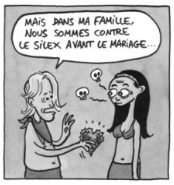
LES DEFIGEMENTS DANS LA BANDE-DESSINEE *SILEX AND THE CITY* : MODE D'EMPLOI

Résumé : *Alors que les études sur le langage verbal de la bande-dessinée ne sont pas légion, cet article se propose de prêter attention aux défigements dans les quatre premiers tomes d'une œuvre donnée, Silex and the City. Cette bande-dessinée est particulièrement intéressante à étudier sous cet angle en raison (i.) de la fréquence d'apparition des défigements et (ii.) de leur effet narratif. En effet, il semblerait que ces nombreux défigements participent grandement à la construction d'un univers fictionnel passé parallèle à l'actualité sociale contemporaine. Ce procédé, couplé à d'autres, permet à Jul, l'auteur, d'aborder certains enjeux actuels à travers cette fiction préhistorique humoristique.*

Mots-clés : *défigements, bande-dessinée, Silex and the City, narration, fiction*

[Web, recevant un silex taillé en forme de cœur de la part de Rahan (son amoureux), répond :]
Mais dans ma famille, nous sommes contre le silex avant le mariage…
Jul, Silex and the City (Tome 1 : 45[2])


MAIS DANS MA FAMILLE, NOUS SOMMES CONTRE LE SILEX AVANT LE MARIAGE...

Introduction

Comme on le sait, de par leur statut de *formules*[3], les figements sont des outils pertinents pour pénétrer et influencer les représentations des locuteurs. Mais tous les figements ne sont pas de bons candidats au défigement : en effet, seuls ceux qui sont largement *connus* pourront être *re-connus* dans leur forme modifiée. Ce souci de reconnaissance suppose en outre l'exigence de fidélité dans la forme du défigement au regard du figement dont celui-ci est issu. Lorsque le défigement est « réussi », celui-ci forme avec la séquence figée originelle un couple imprimant un fructueux dédoublement fonctionnel. C'est ce dédoublement, couplé avec un usage systématique intégré à la narration, qui permet dans *Silex and the City* de façonner un univers fictionnel peuplé de défigements, parallèle à l'univers réel dont proviennent les figements correspondants. En effet, écrite et dessinée par Jul, *Silex and the City* peut être considérée comme une œuvre fictionnelle humoristique dont la trame narrative se situe dans la préhistoire, plus précisément le paléolithique : les héros sont des humains (en non des hominidés) appartenant pour la plupart à la famille Dotcom et l'histoire familiale de ses membres constitue l'essentiel de l'intrigue de chaque tome, aussi alimentée par des faits de société qui sont autant de clins d'œil à l'actualité sociale contemporaine, essentiellement en France.

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[2] Dans cet article, nous adopterons la notation des références suivante : « *(tome : page)* ».

[3] Nous employons le terme dans le sens que lui attribue A. Krieg-Planque (2009 : 7) ; « un ensemble de formulations qui, du fait de leurs emplois à un moment donné et dans un espace public donné, cristallisent des enjeux politiques et sociaux que ces expressions contribuent dans le même temps à construire ». Cet article en fait aussi ressortir la dimension satirique, ou du moins ludique.

Dans un premier temps, nous voudrions insister sur la difficulté des travaux comme l'est cet article, tant le langage en tant que tel brille par son absence des études sur la bande-dessinée. Nous dresserons dans un second temps un inventaire commenté des défigements dans *Silex and the City*, avant de proposer une réflexion sur la portée narrative de l'accumulation de ces défigements.

1. Le langage dans les études sur la bande-dessinée et propriétés linguistiques du genre

On sera surpris de noter, dans les ouvrages académiques traitant de la bande-dessinée[4], qu'il soit fait si peu de cas de la question du langage à proprement parler, alors que, comme on l'a vu, il existe des procédés linguistiques dont l'usage est propre au genre. Par étude du *langage* de la bande-dessinée on entend généralement *analyse du texte littéraire* appliquée à la bande dessinée : mise au jour des structures narratives, analyse du développement temporel et spatial, étude des codes graphiques et liens entre image et texte, ou encore dimension communicationnelle. Cela explique l'absence de toute notion de linguistique dans les ouvrages de présentation des bandes dessinées comme *Système de la bande dessinée* de Thierry Groensteen. Récemment, cette absence n'a pas échappé à Hannah Miodrag (2013 : 11) :

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[4] Sans parler des ouvrages tout-public qui ne l'abordent pas du tout.

> It is common for critics to assert that there must necessarily be "a preponderance of image over text" (Kunzle 1973: 2), and to suggest that where words undertake too much of the narrative burden, the very classification of a work is compromised. So keen can critics be to champion the power, efficacy, and importance of the visual, that they display an "almost universal" fear that words might somehow take over or conquer comics' images, an anxiety Dylan Horrocks terms "logophobia" (2001: 5).

Si tel est le cas, c'est en raison d'une crainte à peine voilée selon laquelle les linguistes, s'ils s'emparaient de la question, risqueraient de se focaliser sur l'aspect verbal au détriment de ce qui fait la spécificité du genre, le mélange sensible du verbal et du visuel. Mais de nouvelles approches commencent à dissiper les peurs : certains tentent de relier les théories de la sémantique cognitive (notamment sur la métaphore) aux textes et images pour en mesurer la dynamique, d'autres évaluent le plurilinguisme, l'inscription des codes culturels locaux des bandes dessinées dans le vocabulaire utilisé, ou même recensent les tabous mis en jeu dans certaines œuvres pour en consigner les voies de contournement. Hannah Miodrag essaie de montrer pourquoi le langage, contextualisé (c'est pourquoi elle évoque alors la *parole* en référence à Saussure) et pris comme un tout avec le visuel, est injustement négligé : « … language is, in many cases, a crucial element in comics, and the common insistence that words are always of secondary importance in every hybrid text is a mistaken move » (2013 : 57). Pour notre part, en nous focalisant sur les défigements dans une bande dessinée donnée, nous souhaitons inscrire notre étude dans ce dernier groupe de recherche.

Une des difficultés que recèle une étude comme la nôtre est directement liée à ce constat : on ne dispose pas de données fiables, quantitatives, sur les propriétés linguistiques du genre. Or, puisque nous considérons, à la suite de François Rastier, que l'interprétation d'un texte est conditionnée par des paramètres allant du plus global au plus local, ces données font ici clairement défaut : par exemple, il est délicat d'affirmer que la fréquence des défigements dans *Silex and the City* est anormalement élevée, d'autant plus que celle-ci appartient au sous-groupe de la bande-dessinée satirique. Par prudence, nous ne nierons pas que d'autres auteurs de bande dessinée utilisent le *modus operandi* dont il est question ici, dans un même ordre de fréquence et ce dans le même but. Nous nous contenterons de dire ainsi que *Silex and the City* constitue une bonne illustration d'un procédé narratif peut-être plus répandu, notre intérêt se résumant à en montrer l'importance et le fonctionnement, à défaut de mieux, dans cette bandes-dessinée donnée.

2. Le défigement : un *silex* à tout faire

Comme nous l'avons laissé entendre, les défigements sont particulièrement fréquents dans la bande-dessinée qui nous occupe. Il faut dire que le titre même de la bande-dessinée donne le ton : « Silex and the City »[5] renvoie clairement à la série télévisée américaine « Sex and the City ». Le parallèle, s'il commence ici et place la ville de New York en miroir avec la Vallée, mais aussi avec le village d'Astérix (puisque cette vallée « résiste toujours et encore à l'évolution ») s'appuie sur divers jeux langagiers comme des références humoristiques régulières à des personnages contemporains d'une part, et à des évènements préhistoriques de l'autre. Parmi ces procédés de construction d'un échangeur entre monde réel, contemporain et univers fictionnel, préhistorique, les défigements se situent en bonne place.

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[5] Nous ne prenons pour corpus d'analyse que les quatre premiers tomes.

En première analyse, nous proposerons l'inventaire suivant. Commençons par les défigements qui se placent directement en résonance avec le titre de la bande-dessinée. Mais alors qu'on pouvait s'attendre à ce que *silex* soit mis de manière systématique en correspondance avec *sex*, ce qui est le cas de 'silex toys' dans « Allez, allez, les filles, on range les silex toys » (4 : 27) mais aussi de 'le sexe avant le mariage' donné dans l'exemple en exergue, l'auteur de la bande-dessinée a fait le choix de solliciter le lexème sur le critère de la rime, comme pour la montre 'silex en or' à l'aspect esthétique un peu fruste dans « c'est un cadeau de ma femme pour nos quinze ans de mariage … une "silex" en or 18 carats » (1 : 33). C'est le même procédé qui est à l'œuvre dans le défigement du nom de l'entreprise d'expédition *FedEx* devenue 'Federal Silex' (3 : 18).

L'usage qui est fait de *Darwin*, sans doute en raison de son statut de théoricien majeur de l'évolution des espèces, se rapprocherait plus de celui qui est fait de *schtroumpf* dans une bande-dessinée mieux connue : certes, pour des habitants d'une vallée qui a refusé l'évolution, il est assez naturel de parler, à la place de *groupe terroriste altermondialiste*, de 'groupe terroriste alterdarwiniste' (« votre fils s'est introduit dans le cratère du volcan avec son groupe terroriste alterdarwiniste », 3 : 43), d''enfant alterdarwiniste' (« ce n'est pas facile d'avoir un enfant alterdarwiniste ! », 3 : 4), mais la présence en concert dans le tome 4 de *Darwin Guetta* plutôt que de David, n'a manifestement aucun autre but, excepté un trait d'humour ponctuel, que celui d'ancrer la narration dans un cadre parallèle à la réalité, tout comme celle de *Raymond Darwin* (2 : 27), alias Raymond Domenech, l'ancien sélectionneur de l'équipe de France de football. De la même manière, on peut percevoir la *darwinitude* (« C'est elle qui a inventé le concept d'"évolution participative" »,

2. 19) comme le pendant de la *bravitude*, concept forgé sans ménagement par Ségolène Royal durant l'élection présidentielle de 2007.

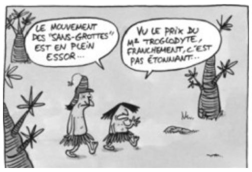
Dans *Silex and the City* dont l'histoire se déroule 40.000 ans avant Jésus-Christ, la pierre est omniprésente : par exemple, on n'y parle plus de *salle*, d'*abri* ou de *maison* mais plutôt de *grotte* comme dans les exemples suivants :

(1) Ça s'est bien passé, elle est en grotte de réveil. (4 : 42)

(2) Je me suis dit : « Olga, tu as laissé toutes tes affaires lorsque tu es partie en grotte de retraite ». (4 : 43)

(3) Tu pourrais lui en toucher deux mots dans la grotte des profs. (3 : 14)

(4) Le mouvement des « sans-grottes » est en plein essor ». (1 : 12)


LE MOUVEMENT DES "SANS-GROTTES" EST EN PLEIN ESSOR...
VU LE PRIX DU M² TROGLODYTE, FRANCHEMENT, C'EST PAS ÉTONNANT...

Il peut aussi être plutôt question de *caverne* que de *maison,* puisque la série à la mode est bien « La petite caverne dans la prairie » (2 : 34). La caverne est aussi convoquée pour des raisons phoniques dans « faire prendre des vessies pour des cavernes » (2 : 15). Dans le même ordre d'idée, on aura des cours d'*éducation lithique* et c'est la *lithothérapie* (« on n'aura jamais l'argent pour la lithothérapie », 4 : 39) qui permet de juguler le cancer. Les défigements de certains noms propres conduisent à une resémantisation opportune de 'roche' ou 'pierre', comme dans « Pierres Import » (3 : 18), « Roches Beaux-Bois » et « Pierres et Vacances » (1 : 16).

Le feu est loin d'être maîtrisé dans *Silex and the City* et de nombreuses intrigues prennent le volcan de la vallée pour appui, exploité par edf, c'est-à-dire « Énergie Du Feu » (3 : 8). Plutôt que mettre le feu, les supporters de football chantent « ce soir on découvre le feu » (2 : 25). I.V.G n'est plus l'acronyme d'*intervention volontaire de grossesse* mais d'*intervention volcanique de grossesse*, qui consiste à jeter le fœtus dans le volcan. En creux, il est bien clair que la présence du seul volcan dans la vallée est un dénonciation de la position énergétique française du *tout-nucléaire*, matérialisée par exemple dans :

> (5) On s'est laissé berner par les industriels et leur modèle énergétique du « tout-volcan ». (3 : 42)

Les publicités pour l'énergie volcanique constituent souvent autant de défigements. Ainsi,

> (6) La flamme est l'avenir de l'homme. (3 : 29)

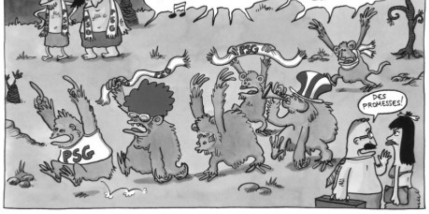
On pourrait citer ici « feu à volonté » qui désigne non plus le *feu* des balles mais des braises destinées à alimenter les foyers. Enfin, la série télévisée *Les feux de l'amour* devient *La Guerre du feu de l'amour* (3 : 26), mais l'intérêt du défigement est alors moins évident.

Comme c'est la coutume dans la bande-dessinée, les noms propres sont particulièrement sollicités pour bâtir l'univers fictif : le fait que les personnages principaux de *Silex dans the City* appartiennent à la famille Dotcom crée d'emblée un échangeur entre, d'une part, le monde réel et le monde faussement préhistorique de la bande-dessinée d'autre part. Les défigements, quant à eux, contribuent de manière importante à poser les bases d'un monde fictif répondant au premier : en effet, puisqu'ils conservent la mémoire du figement dont ils sont la déformation, l'accumulation de défigements aisément identifiables assure une continuité au parallélisme. Pour ce faire, quoi de mieux que de s'appuyer sur les noms propres ? F. Sullet-Nylander (2005 : 118) rappelait avec à propos l'utilité de ces figements *culturels* :

> Quant aux figements dits culturels, ce sont des énoncés mémorisés par les sujets d'une même communauté linguistique. Il s'agit de références culturelles: titres de livres, de films ou d'autres œuvres répertoriées, ainsi que des proverbes, des phrases entières extraites de chansons, de poèmes ou de divers textes connus d'un grand nombre de francophones.

Dans cette optique, couplée avec une visée clairement satirique, Jul renomme avec malice HEC en *Hautes Etudes Cannibales* [il faut entendre Hautes Etudes Commerciales) (4 : 34) ; les banques concernées se reconnaîtront peut-être dans les défigements *Société Cannibale* [soit la Société Générale] (4 : 22), le *Crédit Arboricole* [Crédit Agricole] (puisque l'agriculture n'existe pas encore), *Quadrumane Sachs* [Goldmann-Sachs] (4 : 34), la *Banque Nationale Paléolithique* [Banque Nationale Populaire] (4 : 34). Toutes contribuent, à leur manière, au *Jurassic Krach* (4 : 36).

Les équipes de football sont, par l'activité de défigement, ramenés à un statut peu glorieux. Jugeons plutôt dans le tome 4 : *Primates Saint-Germain* (au lieu de Paris Saint-Germain), *Olympic Mammouth* (au lieu de Olympique de Marseille), *Olympic Lémurien* (au lieu de Olympique Lyonnais), etc. La catégorie des défigements de noms propres, qui fournit sans doute le contingent le plus nombreux, est aussi la plus facile à identifier et à analyser, pour peu qu'on soit familier avec l'environnement onomastique français.



Pour finir, certains sujets de société manifestement chers à l'auteur sont mis à contribution à travers les défigements : nous avons déjà parlé du nucléaire, du cancer, de l'avidité du secteur bancaire. Il faudrait aussi évoquer les frictions entre classes sociales :

> (7) Ma fille, faire un enfant avec cet aristo-sapiens ? (4 : 5)

> (8) Encore un truc d'art et essai pour bobo-sapiens du genre « Troglodyte Duras » ? (4 : 26)

D'autres questions sociétales sont convoquées, comme le port du voile ou l'immigration illégale :

> (9) Moi, je dis qu'on a voté une loi contre le port du poil à l'école, il faut l'appliquer, point barre ! (1 : 11)

> (10) Mais en ce qui concerne l'évolution illégale, là, je trouve la politique d'expulsion du paléolithique totalement justifiée. (3 : 12)

Dans cette catégorie, nous trouvons des défigements un peu moins prévisibles, mais toujours basés sur le même modèle productif.

3. Valeur narrative des défigements en série

Nous l'avons dit, il est clair que les figements sont monnaie courante dans la bande dessinée, à tel point que certains proposent d'enseigner collocations et expressions figées à travers des extraits. Mais si les défigements sont très fréquents, cela ne signifie pas pour autant qu'ils jouent toujours un rôle narratif. Ainsi, dans *Silex and the City*, contrairement à d'autres, il ne s'agit pas d'utiliser les défigements de manière isolée, ponctuelle, mais bien de créer un monde préhistorique imaginaire en lien avec le monde réel actuel. Ainsi, l'usage régulier et méthodique qui est fait dans cette bande dessinée dépasse une simple visée humoristique locale. Un à un, les défigements ont un poids narratif négligeable mais leur accumulation permet à l'auteur d'évoquer par ce biais des enjeux sociétaux, ce qui est d'ailleurs souvent considéré comme l'une des fonctions essentielles du genre. C'est aussi une des particularités des défigements de permettre la dénonciation puisque, comme nous le verrons plus loin à propos de « obsolescence déprogrammée », rompre un figement revient souvent à attaquer la réalité qu'il renferme. On se souvient que Benoît Habert et Pierre Fiala (1989 : 95) s'étaient attachés à démontrer que les défigements permettaient notamment de contourner la langue de bois :

> La prolifération de cette parole joueuse et railleuse au sein même de l'information et du commentaire politiques ne correspond-elle pas précisément aux remises en cause actuelles du discours politique traditionnel et en particulier aux condamnations, survenues récemment des divers horizons politiques, d'une prétendue "langue de bois" qui affecterait avant tout les appareils institutionnels, politiques, administratifs ou syndicaux ?

On pourrait dire en ce sens que ce n'est pas un hasard si le genre qu'est la bande dessinée et le procédé de défigement se rencontrent si souvent.

Cette dimension contestatrice, dans le cas de *Silex and the City*, est donc amplifiée par la récurrence du procédé. D'ailleurs, par analogie, les défigements en série ont semble-t-il quelque chose à voir avec la *métaphore filée* qui elle aussi appelle un parallélisme référentiel, et rencontre la même difficulté de continuité : certains éléments de la *série métaphorique* y sont inclus avec plus ou moins de réussite, comme c'est le cas ici des défigements comportant « Darwin ». Plus généralement, métaphores et défigements, même pris individuellement, partagent certaines propriétés comme leur inscription dans l'opposition graduelle *vif* vs. *figé* : de ce point de vue, il est clair que dans la bande dessinée étudiée, tous les défigements peuvent légitimement être considérés comme originaux et non-figés. Mais ceux-ci ne sont pas amenés à s'inscrire dans la durée et la dénonciation de problèmes de société n'y fait rien : les défigements mis en jeu dans *Silex and the City* restent cantonnés à leur lieu d'apparition, cette bande dessinée donnée, puisqu'ils ne sont interprétables que dans ce contexte particulier.

4. Conclusion

En somme, il ne fait aucun doute que l'usage qui est fait des défigements dans *Silex and the City* dépasse la simple visée ludique du procédé et participe au contraire pleinement à la construction narrative. De la sorte, l'auteur pose des balises reconnaissables assurant le double parallélisme dont nous avons parlé : *réel/fictionnel* et *présent/passé*. Il est probable que l'on puisse faire des observations semblables sur d'autres bandes-dessinées comme *Astérix*. Il est tout aussi possible que la régularité du procédé soit alors moindre, mais il conviendrait d'appuyer cette intuition par une analyse quantitative détaillée. Dans tous les cas, cet article montre, malgré la portée modeste des remarques consignées, que le langage en soi peut être un angle d'approche pertinent dans les études sur le genre. Ainsi, nous participons à cet effort de conserver aux linguistes un accès vers la bande-dessinée.

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ENGLISH ADJECTIVAL COLOR SIMILES AND THEIR TRANSLATION INTO SERBIAN

Abstract: *This paper focuses on the semantic analysis of English conventionalized adjectival color similes as well as their translation into Serbian. The first half of the paper contains a brief discussion of some of the most important theoretical issues significant for our study, whereas the second half covers the research methods as well as the results. Briefly, the results showed that complete correspondence is the most frequent relation between English and Serbian color similes, followed by partial correspondence and equivalence.*

Keywords: *color, simile, English, Serbian, translation, correspondence, equivalence*

1 Introduction

For almost fifty years, the topic of color has received much investigation. Ever since the publication of *Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution* by Berlin and Kay in 1969, a vast number of papers that deal with color semantics largely rely on the findings present in this shared work. One of the points of reference is Berlin and Kay's identification of eleven focal colors that English speakers use: black, white, red, orange, yellow, brown, green, blue, purple, pink, and grey, of which black and white are the most basic color terms[2] (1969: 4). However, there are some languages in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Africa that do not even have the word for "color." This means that

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[2] Basic color terms were defined as those (a) which are monolexemic (unlike reddish-blue); (b) whose signification is not included in that of any other term (unlike crimson and vermilion, both of which are kinds of red); (c) whose application is not restricted to a narrow class of objects (unlike blond and roan); and (d) which are relatively salient as evidenced in frequent and general use (unlike puce and mauve) (Kay and McDaniel, 1978: 612).

"color" is not a universal concept as was previously claimed by Berlin and Kay (Wierzbicka, 2006: 2). Wierzbicka thus challenged Berlin and Kay's (1969) work calling it "attractive and influential" but "anglocentric and untenable," particularly because of the "basic color categories" and "color universals" (ibid.: 22). However, it is true that color has a very important role in English. Visual descriptors referring to human appearance (skin, hair and eyes) witness this importance. For example, white, black, yellow and red people are lexemes based on the skin colors of human races; blond refers to hair; hazel refers to eyes and so on. There are also lexemes in Serbian that we intuitively think are used to convey a message exactly through colors, e.g. *žutica* (Eng. *jaundice*), *zelembać* (Eng. *green lizard*), *belilo* (Eng. *bleach*), etc. But, not all speakers give attention to color in the same way, especially those that do not have the word for it.

Like color, similes have also attracted attention over time due to the attempts of many authors, such as Aristotle, to form a better view of similes through the use of different perspectives. This microlinguistic study deals with a number of English conventionalized adjectival color similes and their translation into Serbian. The paper is restricted only to the similes of the form *(as)* + ADJ + *as* + N, where adjective (ADJ) is the *ground* and noun (N) is the *vehicle*. In similes, the ground is a property shared by the vehicle and the *topic*, the element which is being compared and which can be excluded from a simile depending on the context. The ground also acts as the *tertium comparationis,*[3] which shall help us to explain why some colors are used in figurative expressions. The primary aim is to establish whether the same colors are used in English and Serbian to conceptualize certain characteristics, primarily those related to human physical appearance, or whether the two languages are different in this respect. The major assumption is that they are similar in the majority of cases.

2 Theoretical Background

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[3] Tertium comparationis is defined as "a perception of a similarity of some kind, in the first instance of form or sound, between language-A-speakers' use of their language and language-B-speakers' use of theirs" (Chesterman, 1998: 55). In other words, it is a conceptual reference or the sameness in meaning, a quality that the two things being compared share.

The term “simile” derives from Latin *simile* meaning “resemblance and likeness” (Fadaee, 2011: 22). As it is very often discussed simultaneously with metaphor, Pierini helps to make a difference between these two figures of speech more clearly:
1) “Simile compares two entities, but metaphor conceptually assimilates them to one another (Bredin, 1998).
2) Simile can be literal or non-literal, while metaphor is only non-literal.
3) Simile is signaled by a variety of comparison markers, while metaphor has no surface marker” (2007: 23).

In other words, similes contain the copulas “as” or “like,” which characterizes them as “explicit,” and at the same time different from metaphors, which are thus “implicit” (Evans and Green, 2006: 293; see also Israel et al., 2004: 129). Whereas metaphors have the form A is B (e.g. *Achilles is a lion*), similes have the form A is like B (e.g. *Achilles is like a lion*) (Evans and Green, 2006: ibid.). Leech claims that every metaphor has the form “X is like Y in respect of Z, where X is the tenor, Y the vehicle, and Z the ground,” and in similes such as *his face was as white as a sheet*, all the three elements are explicitly mentioned, that is, *his face* is the tenor, *sheet* is the vehicle and *white* is the ground (1969: 151; see also Lipka, 1992: 122).

Traditional theorists considered both metaphors and similes a mere decoration of speech, but modern theorists disagree. As a matter of fact, they treat them as the way we think. Metaphors and similes are a matter of thought, that is, reflections of our conceptual structure which allow us to perform a set of cross-domain mappings between two conceptual domains: the *source domain* and the *target domain*[4] (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). In the case of color similes, there is another cognitive mechanism involved besides the conceptual metaphor, and that is *conceptual metonymy*. What is meant by conceptual metonymy is “a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same conceptual domain,” and it is important to point out that in metonymy both the vehicle and the target are elements of the same conceptual domain (Kövecses, 2010: 324).

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[4] Source domains are more concrete aspects of conceptual structure, whereas target domains are less easily apprehended aspects of conceptual structure, and these abstract, complex target domains are expressed in terms of concrete, physical source domains.

When it comes to the topic of this particular paper, there are specific types of conceptual metonymies which correspond to physiological, behavioral, and expressive responses associated with particular emotions (ibid.: 109). For instance, as Omazić noticed, *as white as a sheet* can be based either on the conceptual metaphor HUMAN FACE IS SHEET, or the conceptual metonymy BLOOD LEAVES FACE FOR FEAR (2002: 103). The general metonymy is EFFECT OF EMOTION FOR THE EMOTION, whereas BLOOD LEAVES FACE FOR FEAR is a specific-level metonymy. The same can be applied to other colors, e.g. red. Red is very often used to indicate the color of someone's face or cheeks when he/she is angry or embarrassed, primarily because there is an association of red with heat, in this case followed by an increased blood circulation in the cheeks. Hence, the specific-level metonymy here is REDNESS OF FACE FOR ANGER/EMBARASSMENT. On the other hand, if we observe this from the point of view of metaphors, then we would have ANGER IS HEAT and EMBARASSMENT IS HEAT as conceptual metaphors. However, it is very important to emphasize that, without context, it is not always possible to determine whether a certain simile refers to a person's face or the entire body.

Color similes derive from our immediate surroundings and are created by means of associations or conceptual links between different entities. We use the color (*ground*) of objects or even abstractions (*vehicle*s) to describe some other entity (*tenor*). The cognitive process involved is called *categorization*, whereby *category* refers to a set of objects considered equivalent (Rosch, 1978: 4). Colors are used for categorizing objects, however, not whole categories are used in color similes, but the so-called *prototypes*, the best or most widespread members that represent a particular category (ibid.: 11). These are the cores of a category whereas other members are marginal since they bear less resemblance to the prototype. Rosch conducted experiments in which it was revealed that robins, for instance, are better representatives of the category of birds rather than hens, ostriches or penguins (according to Taylor, 2008: 43). In that sense, snow and sheet are obviously more typical and stable than, say, goose, pearl or cloud, which are all white but are marginal members of the category WHITE and therefore are not used in adjectival color similes.

Finally, as for translating similes, Pierini gives six potential strategies for translators to choose between:

> “S1: literal translation (retention of the same vehicle)
> S2: replacement of the vehicle with a different vehicle
> S3: reduction of the simile, if idiomatic, to its sense
> S4: retention of the same vehicle plus explication of similarity feature(s)
> S5: replacement of the vehicle with a gloss
> S6: omission of the simile” (2007: 31).

Similes such as “*as black as coal”* (Serb. *crn kao ugalj*), “*as red as a rose”* (Serb. *crven kao ruža*), “*as white as ivory”* (Serb. *beo kao slonovača*) and “*as yellow as a quince”* (Serb*. žut kao dunja*) are only some of the examples of the literal translation strategy. As for the second strategy, examples include “*as black as pitch”* (Serb. *crn kao katran*) and “*as red as a lobster”* (Serb. *crven kao rak*). The third strategy, the one which reduces an idiomatic simile to its sense, yields the following in the case of color similes: “*as black as your hat”* (Serb. *crn crncat*), “*as brown as a berry”* (Serb. *preplanuo*) and “*as green as grass”* (Serb. *još zelen*). Retention of the same vehicle plus explication of similarity feature(s) is one of the most rarely used strategies in general, and there are no conventionalized color similes that are translated this way. When it comes to the replacement of the vehicle with a gloss, this is a strategy used only in the case of similes which contain allusions – “literary quotations and references to people, places, events, songs and films,” that is, “culture-bound elements whose interpretation depends on world knowledge” (Leppihalme 1997, as cited in Pierini, 2007: 34). Lastly, the omission of the simile can be witnessed within a context, that is, a translation of any text from source to target language where there is a simile in the source text but not in the target text as well.

3 Methods

The corpus of our research consists of 26 English adjectival color similes and their Serbian counterparts, all obtained from Kovačević (1991; 1997; 2002). We sought for dictionary entries related to colors first, and then we identified similes under each example. The similes were then grouped according to their properties into three different groups, some of which contain subgroups. The three groups are made of similes which, when translated from English into Serbian, have: complete correspondents, partial correspondents and equivalents. Complete correspondents have the same ground and vehicle in both English and Serbian, partial correspondents are characterized by having the same ground but a different vehicle, and finally, equivalents have a different syntactic structure but are semantically the same[5]. All English similes from our corpus incorporate the following color names: black (10), red (8), white (5), yellow (1), green (1) and brown (1)[6].

4 Results

4.1 Complete correspondents

The first group, including its subgroups, contains 18 English adjectival color similes and their complete correspondents in Serbian (69% out of the total number). These similes do not involve any kind of symbolic motivation, but are solely based on the colors (grounds) of different entities (vehicles), and are the same in both English (L1) and Serbian (L2):

(1)	as black as *coal*	crn kao *ugalj*
(2)	as black as *the devil*	crn kao *đavo*
(3)	as black as *ebony*	crn kao *abonos*
(4)	as black as *ink*	crn kao *tuš*
(5)	as black as *a raven*	crn kao *gavran*
(6)	as black as *soot*	crn kao *gar*
(7)	as red as *a beetroot*	crven kao *cvekla*
(8)	as red as *blood*	crven kao *krv*
(9)	as red as *a peony*	crven kao *božur*
(10)	as red as *a rose*	crven kao *ruža*

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[5] For a more detailed classification of relations see Đorđević (2004: 57–63).

[6] The numbers in brackets indicate in how many similes each color term appears.

(11) as red as *a ruby* crven kao *rubin*

(12) as white as *a ghost* beo kao *sablast*

(13) as white as *ivory* beo kao *slonovača*

(14) as yellow as *a quince* žut kao *dunja*

The simile with *coal* (Serb. *ugalj*) in example (1) is first mentioned in a Saxon manuscript from A.D. 1000, according to *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms* by Christine Ammer (1997). Coal is a combustible rock obtained by carbonization, typically by heating or burning, or during fossilization, and as such is black in color, which explains the meaning of this simile, both English and its Serbian translation c*rn kao ugalj*. Also, this simile has a synonym[7] in the form of an adjective[8] obtained through clipping, and that is "coal-black." The simile (2) with *devil* (Serb. *đavo*) is used in these two languages to denote the blackness of something, which in and of itself implies predominantly negative characteristics of the entity being described, due to the fact that devils are supernatural beings associated with the concepts of evil, cruelty and hell. As the epitome of evil is Satan, that is, Prince of Darkness, and the word black is itself associated with darkness, it is evident why there is such a simile that includes the noun *devil*. The example (3) contains the noun *ebony* (Serb. *abonos*) which is used in similes due to the fact that this type of fine wood, obtained from the heartwood of the tree growing predominantly in India, Ceylon and Sri Lanka, is known for its density and intense black color. The similes under (4), (5) and (6) are self-explanatory as well, since *ink* (Serb. *tuš*), *raven* (Serb. *gavran*) and *soot* (Serb. *gar, čađ*) are all black.

As for the color red, the meaning of all six similes is transparent since these entities, namely, *beetroot* (Serb. *cvekla*), *blood* (Serb. *krv*), *peony* (Serb. *božur*), *rose* (Serb. *ruža*) and *ruby*

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[7] Other examples of synonymy based on the similes from our corpus are: soot-black, ink-black, jet-black, pitch-black, blood-red, rose-red, ruby-red, and snow-white (WordNet).

[8] According to Parizoska and Novoselec, these cognate adjectival forms occur with a different set of nouns and have different meanings in relation to similes in English (but also in Swedish and Croatian). Their results also showed that adjectival forms are used with a wider range of nouns and typically occur in prenominal positions (2014).

(Serb. *rubin*) are red and are strongly correlated with it. First of all, despite the fact that *beetroot*, in the example (7), is dark purple or reddish purple in color, it is still used both in English and Serbian to make a comparison between two entities that are red. Example (8) includes *blood*, which is also transparent in meaning as blood is red in color. However, in the example (9) with the noun *peony* not everything is so clear-cut. Even though it is used both in English and Serbian unambiguously, the blossom of this species of flower ranges from red to white, pink or even yellow. The most representative color in the case of peonies seems to be red, probably because it is most intense and eye-catching. The same is applied to *rose* used in the example (10). Despite the fact that this flower has a lot of beautiful and vibrant colors, each carrying certain symbolism, red is employed in similes together with the noun *rose* simply because red roses might be the most popular ones, as they are the symbol of love, romance, passion and beauty. The next simile (11) from this group employs the noun *ruby*, which is one of the most beautiful and most precious gemstones and which is, of course, red in color.

The two similes with the term white that have complete correspondents and that are also transparent in meaning, involve entities that are genuinely white. These are the examples (12) and (13), and they involve the nouns *ghost* (Serb. *sablast*) and *ivory* (Serb. *slonovača*). Whereas *ivory* does exist in the real world, *ghosts* can only be witnessed in tales, movies etc. They represent a soul of a dead person, and their shape may vary from a misty, wispy form to a full-blown, humanlike shape. With respect to human body, white is mostly associated with pale skin as a result of some kind of disease, or an emotional reaction, such as fear. However, sometimes it is not perfectly clear whether the target domain is someone’s face or his/her entire body, so the meaning most probably depends on the context in which it is used.

One last example from this group of similes is (14) *as yellow as a quince*, or *žut kao dunja* in Serbian, the simile whose meaning is transparent, since this type of fruit is bright yellow when ripe. Yellow, just as red and white, signalizes certain changes in our organism. This particular color stands for cowardice and illness, hence the use of the noun “žutica” in Serbian to denote the kind of disease characterized by a yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes caused by an accumulation of bile pigment (bilirubin) in the blood (WordNet).

In all the examples above, the similes are used literally, meaning that objects appear in that particular color in nature (*devil* and *ghost* being taken with reservation). The understanding of these two similes may be ascribed to encyclopedic rather than dictionary knowledge.

4.1.1 Subgroup with multiple vehicles in English (L1)

This first subgroup includes two similes, which have complete correspondents. While there is one ground in both English and Serbian, there are two different vehicles in English (L1) and one vehicle as their correspondent in Serbian (L2):

(15)	as black as *a crow/crake*	crn kao *vrana*
(16)	as white as *(the driven) snow*	beo kao *sneg*

The English example (15) contains the nouns *crow* (Serb. *vrana*) and *crake* (Serb. *prdavac*) but only the former one is present in the Serbian simile, namely *vrana*. It is worth noting that crake itself is not black, but the species called “black crake” is. One reason for not saying *(as) black as a black crake* in English is probably the attempt to avoid pleonasm. Thus, we are lead to believe that it is black crake that the simile refers to, instead of crake. As for Serbian speakers, they use *crows* as they are more familiar with this species of birds. On the other hand, the example (16) has a variation. The *driven snow* refers to clean, untrodden snow, but this subtype of simile is not literally translated into Serbian since there is no such a comparison as *beo kao neugažen sneg* but only *beo kao sneg*. As for its motivation, it is more than obvious why *snow* is used here. Not only is it white, but it is also a widespread entity that can be seen in many areas of the world.

4.1.2 Subgroup with multiple vehicles in Serbian (L2)

A second subgroup of complete correspondents consists of a simile, which in English (L1) has one vehicle, but in Serbian (L2) it has two:

(17) as red as *a poppy* crven kao *mak*; crven kao *bulka*

Both English and Serbian languages use the noun *poppy* in similes since this flower is bright red and very common. However, in Serbian there are two synonymous nouns used in this case – *mak* and *bulka*. They only differ in the sense that *mak* is a broader term that refers to the family of plants to which *bulka* itself belongs.

4.1.3 Subgroup with multiple vehicles and grounds in Serbian (L2)

This particular subgroup of complete correspondents is made of one simile, the simile that has one ground and one vehicle in English (L1), but two different grounds as well as two different vehicles in Serbian (L2):

(18) as white as *a sheet* bled kao *krpa*; beo kao *čaršav*

In this example (18) there is the noun *sheet* in English and the nouns *krpa* and *čaršav* in Serbian. Whereas *čaršav* is a Serbian word, meaning *sheet*, *krpa* (Eng. *cloth*) is not its synonym. Moreover, the grounds differ in Serbian simile. The adjectives used are *white* and *pale*, where the former one is a basic color term but the latter may refer to any other color which is very light and highly diluted with white.

4.2 Partial correspondents

A second group of similes includes all the similes which have the same ground, that is, the name of a color, but a different vehicle, and there are 5 of them in total (19%), one of which makes a subgroup with multiple vehicles:

(19) as black as *jet* crn kao *zift*

(20) as black as *pitch* crn kao *katran*

(21) as red as *a lobster* crven kao *rak*

(22) as red as a *turkey-cock* crven kao *petlova kresta*

The vehicle *jet* (Serb. *gagat*) is used in the English example (19) and it is a hard black form of lignite that takes a brilliant polish and is used in jewelry or ornamentation (WordNet). However, in Serbian, the noun *zift* (Eng. *tar*) is employed instead, and it is a solid substance that forms a residue in tobacco pipes and mouthpieces (Vujaklija, 1980: 314; Skok, 1971: 654). Also, *pitch* (Serb. *crna smola*) from the example (20) is a thick black sticky substance used on roofs and ships to stop water getting through (MacMillan, 2002). But, Serbian employs the noun *katran*[9] (Eng. *tar*), a thick black residue deriving from the distillation of paraffin oil used instead of asphalt (Vujaklija, 1980: 185).

As far as the simile (21) with *lobster* is concerned, it does not have a complete correspondent in Serbian, as the speakers of this language do not say *crven kao jastog*, but *crven kao rak* (Eng. *crab*). So, both English and Serbian similes are transparent in meaning, but they use different species of crustaceans. Next in a row of partial correspondents is the simile (22) that employs *turkey-cock* as the vehicle for a comparison probably because of the red loose flesh on this bird's neck. However, this simile in Serbian employs a fleshy growth on a male rooster's head – *petlova kresta*. In addition, this Serbian lexeme ambiguously refers to two different entities, one of which is already mentioned above, whereas the other one refers to a species of flower called *petlova kresta*, or *cockscomb* in English, whose shape and color truly resemble a comb on a rooster's head. Whichever of these two motivates the Serbian simile, the reason is obvious – both entities are red.

4.2.1 Subgroup with multiple vehicles in English (L1)

A subgroup of partial correspondents contains only one simile, the one that has two different lexemes acting as vehicles in English (L1), but only one in Serbian (L2):

(23)	as white as ashes/chalk	beo kao kreč

In the example (23), c*halk* (Serb. *kreda*) is used to describe something white since *chalk* itself is white, however with *ashes* (Serb. *pepeo*) one does not really get a clear picture of why it may be used. *Ashes* refer to the residue of something burned and they are rather grey or off-white, rather than pure white. This simile may derive from the idea that *ashes*, referring also to the remains of a cremated person, may associate these remains to ghosts, which are traditionally believed to be white. On the other hand, in Serbian there is no such a simile which uses *pepeo* in a combination with white, but there is one which includes *lime* (Serb. *kreč*), a white substance obtained by heating limestone and used for various purposes, mainly for painting walls.

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[9] Also *gudron* (Fr. goudron) (Vujaklija, 1980: 185).

4.3 Equivalents

A third group of similes is the one where there are no complete or partial correspondents in Serbian, but phrases which act as translation equivalents, the ones that have the same meaning but usually a different form than the English examples, and there are 3 such similes in our corpus (12%):

(24)	as black as *your hat*	*crn crncat*
(25)	as green as *grass*	*još zelen*
(26)	as brown as *a berry*	*preplanuo*

The adjective phrase *crn crncat*[10] (ADJ + ADJ) is used in Serbian as the most appropriate translational equivalent to the English simile (24) *as black as your hat*, in which *hat* most likely stands for a miner's hard hat with a candle stuck in a lump of clay at the front (Wilkinson, 2002: 361).

When it comes to the expression *još zelen*, it is a Serbian adjective phrase made of an adverb *još* (Eng. *still*) and an adjective *zelen* (Eng. *green*), which semantically corresponds to the simile (25) *as green as grass*, the simile which is transparent in meaning as *grass* is a type of vegetation of green color. However, it does not describe someone's physical appearance, but is rather used to describe a person who is young and inexperienced.

Finally, in the example (26), there is a different type of correspondence than in the two previous examples. Namely, here the equivalent for the English simile is a single word – *preplanuo*

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[10] Forms such as *crn crncat* are called "absolute superlatives" and are made by reduplication (Ivić, 1995: 319, according to Bulić, 2011: 29).

(Eng. *tanned*, *suntanned*). The origin of the simile *as brown as a berry*[11] goes back to the 14th century and Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," where he wrote "His palfrey was as broun as is a berye" which in Modern English would mean "His horse was as brown as a berry."[12] However, it is not known to which berry Chaucer referred in this case. One of the theories is that berry might be an obsolete word for some kind of seed or grain which is brown. One might also think of e.g. a coffee bean as a "brown berry." However, Venetian traders introduced coffee into Europe in 1615 (Ukers, 1922: 53), at the time when Chaucer was already dead, so this theory is instantly refuted. He simply could not have referred to coffee. Another theory is that he might have referred to any kind of berry which changed its color under certain circumstances, e.g. as a result of some kind of plant disease or as a result of dry spell. As we know, *as brown as a berry* refers to someone whose skin color has noticeably changed due to exposure to sunrays, therefore, the change in color does make sense. Yet another possible theory is that the motivation for this simile is alliteration, as in similes *as frisky as a ferret*, *as dead as a dodo* etc.

5 Conclusion

In this paper we analyzed 26 conventionalized English adjectival color similes and provided their Serbian counterparts with the aim of determining the semantic similarity between English and Serbian with regards to this specific semantic field. In other words, we investigated why certain objects or abstractions are posited as prototypes for the conceptualization of the colors in question. The results showed that the two languages exhibit many similarities, as 69% of English similes have complete correspondents in Serbian, 19% have partial correspondents and 12% of similes have equivalents. The results also provide evidence for the fact that color similes are culturally motivated to some extent. That is, they reflect the beliefs of a community in which they are used. At the same time, we provided possible theories for the motivation of each and every simile and pointed out that colors refer either to people's face or their entire body, but also to someone who might be in an early period of life, development or growth (as in the example *as green as grass*).

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[11] Interestingly enough, there is a surname "Beribroun" originating from this simile (Reaney, 1991: 476).

[12] See <http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/37600.html>.

Further study could encompass a broadened list of color similes, even those similes created ad hoc (for example, in poetry, prose, advertisements etc.), since this paper includes only the conventionalized similes found in dictionaries. Moreover, one could analyze color similes from a different aspect – collecting a number of Serbian color similes and then trying to provide their English counterparts. The results could be used both in translational studies as well as during the preparation of EFL classes with a specific topic, that is, similes, or more specifically, color similes.

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INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW WITH ROBIN TOLMACH LAKOFF

University of Berkeley, California 15/02/2005

Robin Tolmach Lakoff is Professor of Linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley. Widely regarded as the founder of language and gender studies, she writes extensively about gender and power and is the author and coauthor of seven books and nearly one hundred articles. Her most prominent works are: *The Language War* (2000), *Talking Power: The Politics of Language in our Lives* (1990*), Face Value: The Politics of Beauty* (1984), and *The Language and Woman's Place* (1975). She also wrote nearly one hundred articles.

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Slavica Perović: *I understand that your linguistics is your philosophy, the way you see and explain the world. Am I wrong?*

Robin Lakoff: No, you're absolutely right. Those of us who got into linguistics in the 60'sgot into it through Chomsky's transformational grammar and we were kind of lured into it by Chomsky's promise that language was a window into the mind. If you were interested in studying the human mind and you knew the problem of the black box – that you couldn't get into the mind – then language was what you wanted to study. Now, I also got into it because I had started out back in high school as a classicist and the language I studied was Latin. I got into college and I was a classics major and I kept being frustrated because there were questions you couldn't ask and they couldn't be answered, there were no native speakers left. The undergraduates were treated more or less like graduate students, which meant that they didn't get to read the actual works immediately but they studied a lot of things about manuscript tradition, antiquity, paleography which, now that I look back on it, seems very fascinating, but at the time I was impatient. I wanted to read Virgil. At that time, Chomsky was coming into great prominence and he was at MIT which was just down the street and I was then going out with someone who was an undergraduate at MIT and into Chomsky. He would hang out with Chomsky and I would go with him. We would go to Chomsky's classes and lectures. MIT was an incredibly exciting place at that point. It was almost a kind of religious cult of people. They absolutely believed and felt they were changing the world, changing the way you think about language and changing the way you think of language as related to everything else that you need to know about people.

S.P.: *Did you feel a sense of intimidation – Chomsky was a star linguist then, you were students, beginners in a way?*

R.L.: Remember that this was a cult and one of the things you expect in a cult is that the leader is the boss and you don't argue with the leader. Chomsky projected and still projects an incredible kind of authority, and not only intellectual authority but moral authority too. And, when you were in his ambiance, you just wanted to partake of it. You just tended to want to believe what he believed. So, at least at that point, and I'm talking about the early period, there really wasn't a feeling of intimidation. This is what you want to do; this is what's right; this is what we want to learn to do. And it was exciting and it was comforting. MIT at that point was really a place where you wanted to be. You felt you were just… people were just reinventing everything, just doing all kinds of work. Back then there weren't Xerox machines, so if you weren't at MIT you wouldn't get a copy of the papers that were coming out. So, you just had to be there in order to be a part of it. It really was the center of the world.

S.P.: *But you were not at MIT, you were at Harvard.*

R.L.: I was at Harvard, but you could just take the bus and go there.

S.P.: *When was the earliest point that you noticed your interest in linguistics and how did it show itself at that time? Was it in childhood or later on?*

R.L.: I think I always was. When I think back to my childhood I remember noticing things about language and not knowing what to do about them because I didn't know linguistics existed until late in high school. So those are just the sort of things you pick up on. My family sort of traded in secrets. I mean, they didn't talk about all kinds of things. And I think if you look at people who do the kind of linguistics I do, they will tell a similar kind of story. That in order to survive in their families or to figure out what was going on, they sort of needed to know how to get to that indirect level. They had to learn to do interpretation of a rather sophisticated kind early on, and so they developed it because that's what you have to do. And, only years later you say, "Oh, I can study this as a scholar!" But the seeds were sown early. When I talk about the Generative Semantics Revolution, this was kind of indicative of what happened... We saw ourselves, all of us, as member of a single group working together to solve all the problems of language. But when Chomsky said, "language is a window into the mind", we kind of took him at his word and we thought, okay, that means that if you really understand his notion of deep structure properly – this was the early 60's and he was talking about deep and surface structure – and if you really understand deep structure, there's a direct link between it and mental structures and social structures. And even though Chomsky was still working on a relatively superficial syntax, we would go deeper and started looking at things that aren't said explicitly but are a part of language and a link between language and mind. So we started to do that.

S.P.: *When you say 'we', who do you have in mind?*

R.L.: People started even in the mid 60's… practically no sooner was *Aspects [of the Theory of Syntax]* published that people were starting to say "How close do we have to stay to this?" and were developing alternate models. This was a group of people: George Lakoff, of course, John Robert Ross, Paul Postal and Jim McCawley are the names that are the trans-formationalists. Standard theory people later took to calling them the 'Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse'… But they each in their own way were taking ideas that were latent or they thought were latent in Chomsky's model as he articulated it, especially in *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax,* and were kind of developing it further, trying to nail them down. What if we really try to formalize the notion of deep structure? What if we make explicit this notion of language and mind? So it was they and several of the rest of us – over time it became a good sized group. As Jim McCawley started to teach at Chicago, he was one of the first to get his degree, he got a bunch of students in his circle and they became a part of the same group. So, by the early 70's, if you went to a meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society there would be a couple of hundred people. Most of all, women were slowly beginning to realize there was an alternate model. Now again, if you read some of the histories of this period like the stuff that is written by Fritz Newmeyer, they sort of suggest that these were the generative semanticists and the suggestion is sometimes made that these people were blindly ambitious and out to undo Chomsky for their own personal gain. But, really, what we were trying to do was develop Chomsky's ideas and carry them out as fully as we thought they should be, and it was only very late in the process really, that we were forced to realize that what we were doing was antithetical to Chomsky's view of language. In essence, we were kind of thrown out of Eden and told, if you are going to go around eating apples that I haven't told you that you can eat, you can't stay here.

S.P.: *So it's my way or the highway?*

R.L.: Exactly. That's Chomsky. We used to play a game half-seriously called ‘if Chomsky is Freud, then who am I in Freud’s circle?’ There were great similarities in the way the Freudian, early psychoanalytical circle, and Chomsky’s circle were organized and in particular this notion that there are certain ideas that you cannot controvert. There is the Oedipus complex, there is Chomsky’s deep structure and so on.

S.P.: *Yes, you made the comparison in* ***Father Knows Best*** *between Chomsky and Freud. So you decided to deconstruct that authority and go your own way?*

R.L.: Yes, in the 60’s one of the things that young people liked to do was experiment with overthrowing authority, especially the authority of the father. Now Chomsky, of course, is always represented as this great liberating figure, a political anarchist. He describes himself as an anarchist and certainly in politics Chomsky is an anarchist, but in linguistics he is an archist.

S.P.: *When did you decide to introduce social and psychological elements into language analysis?*

R.L.: That was a part of the same generative semantics logic – if we say that language is a window into the mind, what do we need to know in order to understand how language does this? We started to look at cases where things were implicit or inferred in some way. Maybe presuppositions, maybe later we talked about conversational implicature and illocutionary force but not quite at the beginning. Actually, here is how it went. Way back early on, Paul Postal was one of the originators of this counter-discipline. He wrote a paper that was published in the Harvard Educational Review in about 1964 called “Underlying and Superficial Linguistic Structure” and that’s really the only example until much later in the textbooks and it’s really the only example of an illustration of method, how you argue for something such as deep or underlying structure. Postal took imperatives in English and showed that imperatives had an underlying full sentence. So ‘go home’ was really a shortened form of ‘you will go home’, this was an economical formulation even though you had to do those deletions of ‘you will’, but it could account for many other things in other kinds of sentences. This was the basic tenet of transformational grammar – that you can posit things present in deep structure when that allows you a more parsimonious explanation of something that you find in surface structure. The notion of economy is very important... and generality is one case. So we started asking ‘how far does this go?’ Here is something that is new which isn’t present anywhere visible in surface structure and yet because it allows you to have a deeper understanding and save steps, ultimately, you’re allowed to postulate it. A number of papers were written which carried that idea even further – the things that you had to make a little more believable, more complex transformational relationship. So, what we were doing was deepening and extending the notion of transformation in order to get from deep structure to surface structure. There were more steps needed because you had to do more deletions and reorganization and whatnot. But, our argument was that even if it looks as if you are complicating the grammar, in the long view you’re simplifying because you are gaining a greater understanding of those different kinds of utterances. Somebody might suggest that a sentence such as ‘I cut the meat with a knife’ was derived from the same deep structure as ‘I use the knife to cut the meat’. Even though those are very different on the surface structurally, but that way you could account for the fact that the same kinds of things don’t occur in both sentences. So you can say, ‘I cut the meat with a knife’ but you can’t say, I cut the air with a knife’ or something like that. And similarly, you can’t say ‘I used the knife to cut the air’. If you start out from the same deep structure, your constraints on what nouns and verbs can occur in that deep structure are stated once and for all; then that same fact about co-occurrence constraints carries over to both kinds of sentences. So you’re economical in the long run, you save more and you also achieve understanding about the complexities of structure and you understand that there are often two ways to do approximately the same thing and you’re also exploring the notion of paraphrase and synonymy of, say, two utterances that are essentially similar. We started talking about abstract structure, underlying structure, and finally logical structure. Now, Chomsky said deep structure was universal but when he represented deep structure in his writing it often looked a whole lot like English. Like it would have articles, it would have tenses (of an English kind), it would have word order that looked a whole lot like English. We said this couldn’t really be very universal and we worked more and more to develop at a very base level what we ultimately called logical structure at a universal base. So that at their root, when it started out, all languages would be the same because all languages are developed by human cognitive systems and you recited Descartes, 'all people think the same'.

S.P.: *The concepts that caught your attention were language, gender, power, politics, and all that. Why didn't you go into conversational analysis or politeness phenomena?*

R.L.: I did eventually, but not immediately, in part because that was not what was being done in Cambridge in the late 60's. Conversational analysis came into linguistics with the publication by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson in *Language* in 1974 and that came from anthropology and sociology. But what we were doing or why I did what I did – well, we started to say that you needed to know things about the social and psychological context of the utterance in order to be able to represent its logical structure completely and accurately. And in fact, in order to account for what you could and couldn't say and for the forms that you chose, you really needed to build into this level of underlying structure a whole lot of information that was extra-linguistic or seemed to be what people wanted or what they desired out of the communication. Or maybe, what their relationship was to one another, were they intimate, was there a power difference, all kinds of things that played into the linguistic form that had a direct relation one way or another to what showed up grammatically on the surface, but not necessarily in a direct linguistic form. A linguistic underlying structure has to represent a great deal of the real world within which the utterance takes place. The Chomskyiates said, well, that is all very well, but if every sentence has to represent or build in everything about the world then your underlying structures are going to be infinite and you can't have that because you never get done and you don't have a system of structures and rules. We said, well, we don't mean that everything about the world needs to be encoded in the underlying structure, but only those things that have a direct linguistic reflex on the surface. You need to talk about titles of respect, just for instance. So you might want to encode relationships of power. On the other hand, the speaker's eye color per se doesn't figure as far as we know in any grammatical system directly affecting the output so we wouldn't have to encode that. You really have to look at each case and they say, that's fine but give some idea of which cases. So we started looking around. Now, at the same time that this was going on in linguistics the women's movement was happening in the larger world.

S.P.: *So, what happened next?*

R.L.: In the late sixties, when the women's movement was coming together, which was a very exciting period, it was politically a civil rights movement that happened... it was really a whole new world and a lot of people were looking at men's and women's behavior towards each other and asking the question: what is going on, why are things the way they are, why do some people seem to have all the goodies, how do you study it? Is it a kind of field that was just beginning to develop because nobody had ever really looked closely at this from a woman's point of view? At that time I was within linguistics, we were asking questions about the aspects of a person's identity and the context in which discourse takes place and what aspects of those things need to figure in the logical structure. We still thought about ourselves as basically good Chomskyites, maybe better Chomskyites than Chomsky. So the question I asked was what about gender?

S.P.: *Where does gender fit in?*

R.L.: Does it have to be represented at this deep level in order to account for something about the way language shows up on the surface? Everybody said, well maybe in Arawak, maybe in Japanese, but certainly not in English, and yet everyone knew that there was a separate woman's language and separate man's language in English.

S.P.: *Was there something in your own experience that kindled the interest in gender or was it the spirit of the time?*

R.L.: I think those of us who got involved in any way with the women's movement did so because we had the slogan 'personal is political'. What we meant by that was that your personal experience politicizes you. In fact, people get into feminism because they've noticed that there is some kind of inequity, there is some non-parallelism between what men do and what women do that can't be explained without bringing in the categories of status and power differential. How can we demonstrate this? A lot of the academic women's movement of the 70's really had to do with finding ways to make it clear that there really is a discrepancy between genders which needs to be addressed and has to be explained. The power differences between the genders was a logical way to explain a lot of it. You know, Radcliffe was the women's branch of Harvard and in those days we lived in dormitories that were about three-quarters of a mile from the campus and the guys had big houses that were much closer and we all paid the same tuition. The guys' living quarters were much nicer than ours, their food was better than ours, they lived closer, which in the nasty weather of Cambridge was an important thing. Also, they really didn't have much of a dress code, but we, no matter how nasty the weather was, could not wear pants outside of our rooms.

S.P.: *At that time it was forbidden?*

R.L.: Absolutely. My room-mate was a dangerous person. She actually broke the rule and wore pants in and during classes and nothing happened, but the rest of us were still too scared. We noticed these inequities, it's just sort of amazing that it was the early 60's…

S.P.: *What was the most hateful of those inequities?*

R.L.: Well, most things. We must have perceived the boys as more valuable than the girls because they got so much better stuff. There was an undergraduate library and a graduate main library, but the books that were on reserve for undergraduate classes were in the undergraduate library. Radcliffe also has a mini campus several blocks away and there was a library there and books on reserve were also kept there. Let's say you had an hour between classes and you wanted to nip into the library and get a little 'quick' reading done and if you were a man you would go to the male library on the Harvard campus. Reading the way the Harvard administration read the will of the guy who had given the money was that it was to be used only by Harvard undergraduates, that is, not by the Radcliffe undergraduates and therefore we were barred from using it, but they could use ours. Cold, snow, rain every day – the weather in Cambridge is worse, worse – than the weather in Leningrad, the worst weather in the world... just dreadful. We were in our little skirts and we wanted a place that we could read. The boys can use the undergraduate library but the girls can't. It was saying you are not really equal. You don't deserve it. You don't belong here. There was a lot of overt and non-overt sexism in classes and professors saying in so many words, "I expect the men to be serious scholars and to follow in my footsteps".

S.P.: *Were there women professors at that time?*

R.L.: Not one. I went through all my entire undergraduate and graduate career at Harvard without a single woman professor at all. Harvard had two tenured women professors at that time. One because it was anthropology and a chair given exclusively for a woman, so Harvard either had to give up the money or hire a woman in a tenured slot. They coughed and choked and it was terrible but Harvard did not get a zillion dollar endowment by turning down money, so they took it. The other was an astronomer, a very noted one, and the wife of an astronomer. They wanted to hire him and they couldn't make a case for it without hiring her too because she had done all the work. So they hired both of them and those were the two tenured women.

S.P.: *So it virtually started with your generation?*

R.L.: That was it. There were one or two women at Harvard when I came here in 1972. I think you could count the number of tenured women on the faculty on the fingers of maybe even one hand, but certainly no more than two. There was Sue Tripp, Lauren Nader, there was Louise Clubb in Comparative Literature, and probably a few others, maybe two or three around the whole campus. If there were ten in a faculty of a thousand, that was a lot and then I became one of the very few, of the ten.

S.P.: *Did you start with a full awareness of the situation, resolved to pursue your interest in linguistics and leave something valuable for posterity?*

R.L.: It is all part of the same thing, you know, and I think one of the things that makes for doing interesting work is that you are driven by some sense that things aren't the way they ought to be and that maybe you have been a victim of things not being the way they ought to be and you want to fix them, if not for yourself then for the next generation that's coming along.

S.P.: *So, you were fixing things...*

R.L.: We were going to change the world.

S.P.: *What was it that you were fixing in the first place? Your personal life, your professional life, your career, your social environment – what?*

R.L.: Well, in a sense you change everything at once. If you ask, 'How do men and women relate to each other' or 'What's the role of women and the role of men in this culture' and 'Is there a problem' you become involved It's very difficult not to become involved in fixing things or at least thinking about how you might fix them because if you simply try to be academic and objective and say, 'Well, there seems to be this discrepancy and I'm leaving it there,' that's more respectably academic, but how can you do that? How can you turn your back on something that is not the way it ought to be?

S.P.: *And you thought you might give an answer or at least your answer?*

R.L.: I thought that I could do so by using language as a diagnostic. And one of the things a linguist could do is show that in language, in English, let's say, there are non-parallelisms between the way language refers to men and the way it refers to women, just to take one sort of case. Then that non-parallelism has to be explained. Why is it that in English there is only one title of address for men – 'Mr' – and at that point a choice of two for women, 'Miss' and 'Mrs'? And you have to mention a woman's marital status, but you don't have to mention a man's? It's a very simple case and when you understand it you understand something about the role that men play versus the role that women play in the society and you have to explain it, because language is not supposed to have non-parallelisms for no reason.

S.P.: *How did those linguistic revelations reflect upon your private life?*

R.L.: Well, I guess one of the things that happened during this period was a new perspective on what women had always seen as their own individual personal battle to be fought. Once the word *sexism* was created, which was, I think, in1968, we were able to see when bad things happened to us. It wasn't because we had behaved badly or we were asking for it. Well, we couldn't have created the word *sexism* until we saw the situation as a political one rather than as an individual issue. And once you did understand that it's not you and you alone, but it's you and a whole bunch of people like you who have similar interests and similar rights and issue rights that comes into it which it hadn't before, then you can start thinking about getting angry, changing things and taking action. So all the stuff I was mentioning about the way women were treated at major universities, the kinds of things that professors would say to women: "Well, maybe we will let you into grad school, but you won't be supported the same way as men", "We won't give fellowship support to a married woman... that's her husband's job to support her". And they'd say, well of course we don't hire women because women will only quit to have babies so there's no point in doing so, besides women just aren't as smart, aren't as productive and everybody knows this. My first reaction was, well, of course they are professors, they must know this, they must be right and there is something very wrong with me for wanting to be one of them. And once you understood the notion of sexism, once you saw why it was and how it was and why women were relegated to certain roles, then you'd not longer feel that you were a bad, anomalous, immoral or weird person. You could take steps to question it and change it.

S.P.: So you were changing it in the *Language and Woman's Place* and later on, as you said, in *Face Value.*

R.L.: Really everything that I've done.

S.P.: *You questioned things pertinent to women constituting the women's world. We could say you were among those women 'who had it all' at that time: career, marriage, a child. How was this regarded?*

R.L.: Well, you know, the women's movement first said, 'Men have it all, why shouldn't women have it all'? That would be equal, that would be paralleled and so a lot of us said, sure, why not, you know, our husbands will do half the work of home and childcare, the laws will change to make it possible, and they did to a remarkable extent. Women were kicking and screaming so things changed and we thought there was no reason why we couldn't have it all. We understood that there would be sacrifices but that we could.

S.P.: *What kind of sacrifices were there in your case? What did you sacrifice at that time?*

R.L.: Sleep, I suppose. You have a baby and you have a career, you have a baby and you try to get tenure and... something's gotta give. You can't do everything and have twenty-four hour days in which you get eight hours of sleep, so for a number of years it was exhausting. Oh, and if you are married to someone who is an academic and is also in your same field. There are decisions to be made about which job, who's gonna get it and how you're gonna divide everything up and that makes it in some ways more difficult.

S.P.: *Well, everybody knew about Robin and George Lakoff, but I did not know how you two were related.*

R.L.: We were married.

S.P.: *Yes, later on I learned you were married.*

R. L.: We got married very early. I was twenty years old.

S.P.: *Twenty years old and you decided to get married?*

R.L.: Well, back then people did get married very young and it was not such a good idea.

S.P.: *Was there pressure from society to get married and to get settled?*

R.L.: See, first there was the assumption that the woman had to be married, then there was this certainty that I would never be able to have a real career because I was a woman. I thought perhaps I'd better get married. Then there was the fact that George came along and wanted to marry me and I said 'I had better do that because who knows, there may not be another opportunity and we do have all these good things in common, and so we did. But, there was a lot of... it wasn't all that subtle... the pressure. For instance, Radcliffe is an elite university, elite college within Harvard, and Radcliffe is even more elite because back then, it was smaller, so only a quarter as many women could get in as men could get into Harvard. It was very selective on an intellectual basis. So, it was sort of that there were all these messages being given out about getting married as being what you were here to do... something referred to as 'getting your Mrs'. Radcliffe had a tradition then, I hope they still don't, called Strawberry Breakfast and this was held during the spring and part of the deal was that there were strawberries and strawberry jam and I also remember scrambled eggs with chicken livers – the sort of fancy food that you never got as a rule. And at this breakfast, every married senior would receive a red rose and every engaged senior a pink rose bud. Now, you can imagine a university in which every senior who is a Fulbright would get a red rose and every senior who is accepted to the graduate school of choice would get a pink rose bud, which might make sense. Here's an instance of the kind of message that was all around and we didn't think it was particularly strange. It's only looking at it from later on that you say, 'What the hell did being married and being engaged have to do with being at Radcliffe?' Well, obviously somebody thought a whole lot.

S.P.: *So where were you living exactly?*

R.L.: Oh, I was living in one of the dorms.

S.P.: *That means you were not living together when you got married?*

R.L.: Let's see. . . George and I got married in June of '63 which was the end of my junior year and he was already in graduate school at Indiana. He was off at Indiana and I took more courses so that I could graduate or so that I could finish my course requirements a semester earlier in December of '63, although I officially graduated in June of '64. And for that one semester, they, the Radcliffe administration, gave me the special dispensation of being allowed to live in the dormitory even though I was a married woman, but they didn't usually. You weren't supposed to get married until you graduated anyhow.

S.P.: *What happened next after your graduation? It was your master's, your doctor's?*

R.L.: The usual.
S.P.: *And your first job?*

R.L.: Let's see... I got my post doc at MIT, but my real first job was at

Michigan in ‘69, Ann Arbor.

S.P.: *Let’s go back to the category of power. How did you see it?*

R.L.: Well, I think I saw it as everybody needing to have some kind of personal power, or at least the right to some kind of autonomy, the right to define yourself and the right not to be trampled on by other people. To the extent that you can pursue happiness – if you want to put it like that. If you don’t have those minimal things, you really can’t define yourself. You can’t experiment, you can’t play with the world, you’re confined. So power is really the ability to be autonomous where you can be autonomous to make important decisions for yourself.

S.P.: In ***Face Value*** *you wrote a lot about how you gain power and how power is tricky, especially power coming from beauty. Can you tell me something more about it?*

R.L.: This is one of the arguments sometimes men make when they say, ‘It’s not true that women have less power than men.’ They say, ‘Look at the sexual power that women have over men,’ which is certainly true. The reverse is also true. Certainly a woman who has beauty can, if she has any kind of brains at all, use it to get things she wants from people – and not only from men but also from women. So, beauty is what women have traditionally had as their economic goods. Half of the fiction in the world is about how a beautiful woman of no stature and no money transforms or parlays this beauty into stature and money, maybe even love. So beauty is something that a woman has at her disposal if she has it, and if she uses it properly she can use it as a medium of exchange to get other desirable things. But, the reason why it’s tricky, first of all, is that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It is not something that a woman does herself but she is given, she is granted certain attributes. Of course, this is less true now when you can fix everything in surgery and with other devices but it used to be so when you have what you were born with. It’s something that you have but you can’t control it, you’re not the one who is responsible for it. You can’t really take pride in it in the same way as you can if your source of power is something that you’ve achieved on your own. And secondly, it’s something that will certainly fade and in different societies it fades in time – by the time you were thirty it was over and if you hadn’t used your beauty to accomplish everything you needed and to buy whatever you needed to buy, it was over. And it might be over anyway because what you had bought would be traded in when you no longer had it for the new model that had it.

S.P.: *What was the reaction of the American public to that book?*

R.L.: None.

S.P.: *How do you mean none?*

R.L.: I don't think anybody read it. (*laughter*) As far as I know.

S.P.: And ***The Language and Woman's Place****?*

R.L.: That had a readership, but mostly among academics. Well, no – that's not so. Because a lot of people have told me they have read it and told me it made a difference. That is because it gave examples of what we were talking about. People would say, yes, I've heard that. Yes, I've said that. Yes, that's happened when I've done that. So, more than anything else, language has a kind of probative value. It served to radicalize people.

S.P.: *I certainly think the book was influential. What is the situation in today's women's lib – if indeed it is called women's lib, or feminism?*

R.L.: It's such a problem. We don't say 'women's lib' anymore. You know, I talk in *Language and Woman's Place* about euphemistic substitution, about 'black' going to 'colored', going to 'darkie', going to 'Negro' and so on, and this is why it is a problematic thing and similarly with 'woman' going to 'lady' or 'girl'. Feminism has the same problem. It's another of these concepts that people are always hoping to make respectable by changing the name, but you can't make it respectable that way because it just isn't respectable. So, first people talked about women's liberation, which was shortened by the media to women's lib. The fact that it was shortened made it trivialized; especially since some people referred to 'ladies lib' which trivialized it even more. So, people started talking about feminism. But, more recently a lot of younger women have been saying, I am not a feminist and when you question them, it turns out they have all or most of the beliefs that you would think a feminist would have. But, they disassociate themselves from feminism because somehow this has been represented, again by conservatives in the media, as a bunch of men-hating, lesbians, I don't know, not very feminine women. Young women of college age often say, well, I'm not a feminist because I don't have to be, because I get what I want, my needs are all met. And they don't realize that as they get older and particularly in the job world as opposed to the college world that's not going to be true. Their boyfriends say 'Oh yes, when we are married, I will do all the dishes and half the childcare'. It almost always turns out not being so at all. When they are young they believe these stories and they don't have to be a feminist. So, they disavow feminism. People have tried other words like 'womanism' and other kinds of things. But it's a kind of avoidance.

S.P.: *But the fight is ongoing*?

R.L.: Again, it isn't feminism, there are about a thousand feminisms. There is, I guess, some people call my era, the 70's, second-wave feminism and now you have third-wave feminism. We really had to change opinions on things that had been assumed to be true for thousands of years. Sometimes we did say things where we didn't always think carefully about the effects of what we were saying and sometimes we would say things that had negative consequences. You know, we talked about how wearing make-up and worrying about your clothing and wearing very high heels and that sort of thing wasn't a good use of a woman's soul… not a good use of her time and energy and so on. We talked about how it was important for a woman to have a career, to work outside the home, to find some of her identity there. Again, I think the conservative media had a lot to do with this, and the complaints fell on fertile ground. We tried to overturn things that had been true for millennia. Changing the whole notion of what it meant to be a man and meant to be a woman and sort of merging them – creating havoc with people's personal identities. I mean, it was scary. A great many people were never really happy with a lot of the things that emerged from the women's movement. So one of the things you get is what is sometimes called the third-wave feminism which is the younger generation.

S.P.: *Which means what?*

R.L.: For instance, there is... some people say, well I really want to wear lots of make-up and tight clothing and high heels. I want to look as sexy as possible. And that's okay. That's part of being what a woman could be and there are even anti- choice feminists, although I hardly think that's what they ought to do. But, you know, women who say that the women's movement derogated the importance of family. Really, the most important thing for a woman is her marriage and her children. A woman ought to stay home, and they say, this is feminism because it understands that women have a unique role, different than that of men. In a way, a lot of what we were saying was: we wanted to be as much like men as possible.

S.P.: *Okay, sort of egalitarian.*

R.L.: Yes, we wanted to fuzz up that line. We wanted to say that everything a man could do a woman could do, and *vice versa*. With a few biological exceptions. We wanted women to have the same range of opportunities in the public and private spheres that men had.

S.P.: *But that's mission accomplished in today's America, isn't it?*

R L.: We thought so, it seemed like we were coming awfully close. And what's
sort of depressing now is that there are signs of it being rolled back.

S.P.: *Is it Larry Summers' words, what he said?*

R.L.: If he had made them ten years ago in just the same context, not too much notice would have been taken. But then, of course, he was what, Secretary of the Treasury? Let's say he'd been President of Harvard (Radcliffe) ten years ago and made the same statement. I don't think it would have been paid as much attention to because back then women were more confident of what we had achieved. What's happened in the last five years has revealed that there is a threat in a lot of ways and people reacted very strongly. Not because Larry Summers himself said anything that was that terrible or that strange, but because of the fact that the President of Harvard made this kind of statement signified to people that the world was moving backwards. We were powerless to stop it, so it was frightening.

S.P.: *What is your stand on that?*

R.L.: We really don't have a clue in terms of gender what is innate and intrinsic and what is acquired by culture. People have all these theories but we really don't know. It is almost impossible to separate our genetics from social and psychological context. Summers made this kind of extraordinary statement in which he sort of put these two things together. He says, well, maybe there's this innate predisposition that women are not so good at science, and then in practically the same breath he says women don't want to spend eighty hours a week being scientists. The first is an attempt at a genetic explanation and the second has much more to do with context. Maybe the scientists feel that it's a macho thing and that it shows they are rough and tough and eighty hours a week becomes a way of keeping women out. But maybe if there were forty hours a week they'd get just as much done.

S.P.: *In my country we have to catch up with the feminism. What would you advise us to do?*

R.L.: It's so hard because every place is unique. We have our own history and you have yours and we used to think that America really was the best place for women. We are as close to being equal as anywhere and then you look at a place like France where it looks like women aren't equal at all and men really are in a much higher position. And then you notice the funny thing that politically women are much better represented, both in the president's or the prime minister's cabinets and the legislative body, in all kinds of other positions of power in the sciences, in France, than they are here. It's not that clear anymore exactly where equality is most located or how you represent it. So, act and *vive la difference!* Think of what are the really important things that you have to change in any particular culture. What are the things that are changeable? What are the things that you can't change and shouldn't even try. What should you do first? And, I guess, the only kind of advice to give is general advice of trying not to be too dogmatic and doctrinaire. Try to understand that slogans are great but you can't live by them. Try to go gradually. Try to get a sense of where the culture is and not to ride rough-shod over the most crucial things.

S.P.: *We started in our socialist society with the idea that genders were nominally equal, which meant we had equal salaries, we had nominally equal status, we could be represented in political and social bodies. Nominally.*

R.L.: That's nominally.

S.P.: *But in essence you could see the dominance pattern everywhere.*

R.L.: It was like in the Soviet Union where women were constitutionally guaranteed equality and those Americans who visited would come back with glowing reports about the Soviet Union: half the doctors are women, half the professors are women, but if you looked more closely, the doctors who were running the medical institution were men and the women were in more subordinate positions and had much less prestige. The problem is always the same. Can you legislate from above? Can government legislate equality if the people are not ready? No, you can't do it. You can go slowly, you can change words like *Ms.* or *chair person* or that kind of thing.

S.P.: ***Ms*** *is alive today in English.*

R.L.: It's alive but it didn't do what we wanted it to do. What we wanted was that if you had to have titles of address and you had to have one for men and women, have just one for men and one for women. So *Ms.* was designed to replace *Miss* and *Mrs.* But what it now is, is sort of a shadowy third place. If you look in the New York Times you will see that even Hillary Clinton is referred to as *Mrs* Clinton and she's a feminist. So some people in the Times are referred to *Mrs* and some as *Miss* and there may even be some referred to as *Ms*. So, it's all very confusing. What we wanted to do was eliminate the issue of marriage as part of the public identity of a woman. Men don't have to have *married* or *unmarried* as part of their public identity in terms of their title of address that you use in public, so, why not the same for women?

S.P.: *Yes, why not?*

R.L.: Americans have in the last generation or so gone through two great upheavals of American identity. The first being gender identity – they have been thrown into conflict and have compromised with the women's movement. The second has been the gay rights movement. It refers to the whole notion of what it is to be a man and a woman, how to have different gender roles where somebody is on top and somebody on the bottom, where it was always easy to tell who was which. To us as women, in particular women who have been active in the women's movement over the last thirty years, it has seemed that it's a done deal, we've won, look at all the changes we've accomplished, we've overcome that problem. I think what we are going through now is the retrenchment and it shows that we haven't. And one reason is 9/11, in which the notion of being an American, I think, was very much put in question. America is identified as the winner, the country in control, the economic, political and cultural superpower of the world. You know, we're number 1 – it was a little 'iffy' when the Soviet Union was around, but we always felt they were number 2 and we were still number 1. And then when the Soviet Union fell, for about a period of ten years, we were unquestionably number 1 in the world. And so the identity as Americans was as people who had nothing to fear from anyone, who were in control and in command and nobody messed with us and then suddenly 9/11 happened. Suddenly we were vulnerable and our identity as Americans, as members of this invulnerable group, was suddenly called into question, and still is. We still get frantic every time there seems to be some kind of threat. We don't know how to handle it, which most European countries, most countries in the world, I imagine, think of as kind of ridiculous because every other country always had to worry about its national boundaries. We have never had to worry about that really. Especially in the 20th century, we don't worry and suddenly there it is... we're like every other country in the world, we suddenly have to think about enemies and what can they do to us. Can they get us at home on our own turf? So we've had this two-pronged attack on our identity; one our individual gendered identity and the other our national American identity. And the two together, I think we just are not dealing with very well. And so when you have that kind of two-pronged thing getting smacked around your only recourse is to retreat, so we're kind of going back into earlier time, maybe back into the 1950's when men were men and women were women and Americans were secure.

S.P.: *But what about all these liberties that were gained in the meantime? Are you just leaving them behind?*

R.L.: Going back... I used to think that when you gained something there was this thing called progress which was a very American thing. Because many cultures look back to a 'golden age' – a time in the distant past when everything was good and it's been a sort of falling-off ever since. America… in our social mythos, we have always looked forward and it's sort of quintessentially American this notion that we are always getting better and we make progress, that things go from good to better to best. And I had believed that, particularly with the extension of freedom, civil rights, women's rights, gay rights and all the other rights that came into being in the 60's, 70's, and 80's. We really were moving forward. We were becoming a more humane society, a more egalitarian society and we had done it and couldn't move back. And now there are all these signs that, oh yes you can.

S.P.: *Fear is very much the major factor?*

R.L.: I think fear and insecurity. It's amazing how quickly that can happen.

S.P.: *You mentioned 9/11. The narratives have changed since 9/11. In what respect have they changed?*

R.L.: Just this kind of thing that I'm talking about. That if we had an internal narrative before that it was first this notion of progress, and things always getting better and things becoming more open as a society and as individuals. One of the things we learned in the 70's was to be open about ourselves and not have deep secrets. During the 60's and 70's we opened up our immigration. It had been essentially closed to everyone but northern and western Europeans since the 1920's, and we opened it again, kind of saying we don't have anything to fear. And then we suddenly closed back in, we became afraid, our narrative became 'watch out for yourself', 'loose lips sink ships', which was a World War II motto, and you actually started seeing that same motto out again: be careful who you talk to, be careful what you say, don't give anything away. We sort of withdrew into ourselves and became much more conscious of, you know, we're surrounded by enemies, rather than we're surrounded by friends. And so you show off your defenses.

S.P.: *Were such narratives inspiration for your book The Language of War?*

R.L.: Yes, I've been interested in them. The texts in the book seemed to me to form a group, again they were about people who didn't use to have access to language rights: women, African Americans, people like that. Getting access, getting to define themselves, define their language, maybe insist on how they were to be talked about by other people. So, what I was saying was, language is politics – getting interpretive rights, getting meaning, making rights by having access to language is the root of political freedom and power. So that was why I chose the particular cases I did.

S.P.: *You opened the text about Hillary Rodham Clinton with a couple of jokes. When did it occur to you to use jokes as a starting point?*

R.L.: A professor from the Anthropology Department has been a folklorist for many years. He collected jokes claiming that we can tell truths about ourselves in the jokes we make. And in the case of Hillary Clinton, what the jokes were really about was fear about a woman who wasn't playing by the accepted gender roles. In particular, a woman who with her husband was crossing over that line, and how frightening it was to a lot of people, and one of the things you do when something is frightening you is make up jokes about it to dispel the fear. So she was kind of a lightning rod and the jokes were a way of throwing off the power.

S.P.: *Recently in his State of the Union Address George W. Bush used the phrase 'friends and allies' ten times. Is that a new vocabulary? How much does it reflect reality?*

R.L.: In the case of Bush I would just take it as a linguistic exercise. It's in response to, well, first the fact that we've had to fight in Iraq all by ourselves because we have offended everyone, pretty much, who used to be our allies. So a lot of the countries that were supportive to begin with now don't want any part of it, partly because I think that they are right that we shouldn't have been doing it, but then we've mismanaged things further by offending just about everybody. Except maybe for England – there's nothing you can do to offend Tony Blair apparently (*laughter*) – because of Iraq or any other future adventures which we seem to be planning. We are going to need allies, we are going to need friends. We can't do it by ourselves. We can't invade Iran and Syria and whatever else we're planning to do next month and so on. We have to make nice to the Europeans whether we want to or not and I think that what was going on in the State of The Union Address was Bush throwing out crumbs and making nice saying we want to be your friends. Of course this is as long as you do what we want. You can be our friend as long as you bring the toys and try to play with my toys and play by the rules that I set up.

S.P.: *So, no real friendship?*

R.L.: It's all about power. We say whatever we want to whomever we want because we can.

S.P.: *It is awe-striking in a way.*

R.L.: Sure, every country except us practically has always had some level of fear and people adapt to it. And we seem to be having a great deal of difficulty adapting. I'm sure that countries in Europe say you're making a much bigger deal of it than any of us do. It's interesting because suddenly we understand why Israel does what it does. Suddenly we maybe understand why England does what it does (because of the IRA), but we haven't really taken the final step of understanding that this is the norm. That for certainly 50 years we were in a blessed and extraordinary position that allowed us to have an incredible self-confidence and develop in very promising and interesting ways. Then the question becomes when that promise, when that possibility is compromised, how do you live with it? What's the best way to deal with threats and at the same time not lose your soul?

S.P.: *Palestine, Iran, you mentioned Iraq and Syria. Is this series of* *countries going to stop somewhere?*

R.L.: I don’t know what’s with these guys. It’s hard to know what their theory is on what they are doing because they keep coming up with theories and then denying them. Oh, we’re going to Iraq because of weapons of mass destruction or because Saddam is such a bad, bad boy. A lot of people think we’re going into Iraq because we want to control the oil. So the latest theory I guess, from our administration, is that we want to see democracy over the Middle East.

S.P.: *That will be the dominant narrative?*

R.L.: That’s what they’re trying to impose. Unfortunately we have problems with it.

S.P.: *Spreading democracy, spreading freedom...*

R.L.: Sowing democracy.

S.P.: *Is it really possible?*

R.L.: These guys have never taken an Anthropology course. They couldn’t spell *anthropology.* And they don’t get that cultures are different and that what works here might not work in Saudi Arabia. It’s just too different and in fact it wouldn’t even work here. We didn’t suddenly have democracy. We had a revolution, we freed ourselves from a monarchy but for a very long time, really until the beginning of the 20th century, this country was not democratic in the sense of direct election – one man, one vote. Democracy was very slow in coming and we didn’t really achieve democracy until the 1960s with the Voting Rights Act. First you have the abolition of property rights in the 19th century, direct election of senators around 1912, Women’s Suffrage about 1920, black voting rights in the1960’s. Only after all that do you have anything that could be considered democracy and that’s a very tiny time and we still are not fully at ease. It isn’t as though blacks and women are fully represented in the political system, not to mention poor people etc. In a way you say, who are you Americans to sow democracy? How are you going to sow? Are you going to sow a system like yours? Well, I don’t know, that has a lot of problems.

S.P.: *Media manipulation in this is huge. Arthur Miller said in an interview that 90% of the American population did not detect manipulation. That it's only 10% of the enlightened ones that did not want to be manipulated. Was he exaggerating?*

R.L.: I don't know exactly if the figures are 90 and 10, but it's pretty close. Most people want to be comfortable. Most people don't want to be bothered. America is probably much less political than most other countries. I mean the American populus is less politically interested. Until this last election, voting even for the presidency was hovering maybe around 50 or 60% of eligible voters. Which says a lot of people really don't give a damn.

S.P.: *Sort of 'I'm fine, I don't need to be bothered'?*

R.L.: That's part of it. Another part of it is, my life is rotten or things are so bad I can't do anything about it, the country is so large, the system is so corrupt, Washington is so far away, there's no way that anything that I do could reach them or anything they do could have any impact on me so why do I bother? So it's despair, I think, in a lot of cases.

S.P.: *Is there a way for the media to be less manipulative?*

R.L.: There is less and less independence in the media. In recent years channels and newspapers and radio stations have all been bought up by the relatively few major corporations. So there is really less and less independence. The second thing is it's tremendously expensive to run a radio station, a TV station or a major newspaper. People aren't willing to run risks. They need to get as many viewers or readers as possible and they will do anything to get them. And if that means to homogenize what they say to try to make sure everybody is happy and everybody watches and nobody gets mad and turns it off. That's what they'll do. It's partly money and partly people don't want trouble. The media are manipulated partly by the government and there's been a lot of talk about how this administration in particular fools around with the media; they hardly ever hold news conferences and when they do, they misrepresent and lie. Those reports write and say the things readers and viewers want to hear. Money is very important. So all those things together mean the media is not free.

S.P.: *When people from this country or from Western Europe come to my country and say, your media are not free, you have to liberate your media, it turns out to be a little hypocritical.*

R.L.: Our media are not literally under the control of the government. It doesn't look as if the government says you can or can't put this on the air. It's economic censorship as opposed to political censorship. It has to do with sponsors and advertising rates, but it comes to the same thing.

S.P.: *I'm very interested in you as a person. What about the part that isn't in books, in classes, or in lectures? What are the biggest life battles you have had?*

R.L.: I guess the hardest thing that I had to do, and this was back in the 1960s, was convince myself that it was okay for me to have this career. When I started out there were no women teaching in major research universities in any tenured position. And one was always getting messages from faculty members that you shouldn't be here, you had no business here. You should be happy to be in a menial position and, basically, you should be home having children and supporting your husband emotionally and otherwise. And looking back on it I think it was really amazing that I didn't pay attention to that and I went on anyway. I think it's much easier now because they don't get those kinds of messages or at least not obviously. That was probably the hardest thing I had to do.

S.P.: *Your marriage?*

R.L.: Oh, that. [*laugh*ter]

S.P.: *Well, a woman scientist, a man scientist, in a marriage; was there competition*?

R.L.: It was hard because I think people who are in the same field shouldn't get married or live together or if they do they should be very mature individuals who come into it both with equal amounts of self-confidence. So, you really shouldn't do it until your forties or until you are accomplished. Now George and I were very young when we got married. I was twenty. I was an undergraduate.

S.P.: *Was he a bit older?*

R.L.: He was a year-and-a-half older. Neither of us had careers and we certainly had no idea of who we were or what we would ever become. We brought a lot of our insecurities coming from wherever into the marriage and it did become competitive. I think it's very hard for two people in the same field not to get competitive with each other when they are in very close proximity. Also I think when you get married, it's good for each member of the marriage each day to bring something from outside into the home so that you have something to talk about. Whereas we, always being in the same department, shared practically everything. It gets kind of incestuous in a way. There is no fresh air.

S.P.: *Andy was born in 1970. Did you know how to bring him up?*

R.L.: Not at all.

S.P.: *What does that mean?*

R.L.: You do the best you can. People always have theories about how to raise children before they have children and how you will never speak a work of anger and certainly you will never raise a hand in anger and everything will be sweetness and light and total reason. And then you have them and it turns out that they have annoying minds of their own. They will test your theories in every way and you have to abandon one theory after another. I will say he turned out alright, but not thanks to me.

S.P.: Whenever you mention him you always smile.

R.L.: Yeah, he's a great kid. He really is. He's thirty-four but he's still a good kid.

S.P.: *What was your major drive that brought you to be 'a national treasure' as Deborah Tannen said?*

R.L.: I think I was just nosey, curious what people were up to. I think in my family there were secrets of odd kinds or that I didn't know whether they were secrets or not so you couldn't ask about them and things were always communicated in indirect ways. So, one of the things I was always interested in was how people communicate in indirect ways and how do they understood when other people did that. I became interested in language very early because I had to learn how to deal with language, the kind of language that I encountered. And I was very glad that there was a field out there that enabled me to do this in a serious kind of way.

S.P.: *One more thing. What were your major fears in life?*

R.L.: I don't know. I'm not sure I have major fears. I just have lot of minor fears. You know, you worry about how your children are doing and if they'll be happy. As you get older you worry about mortality. One is not as young as one used to be.

S.P.: *So why these questions, is it philosophical or what?*

R.L.: You see you're approaching that age and you start reading obituaries of people who are the same age as you and you realize that you are not immortal. Your child is approaching middle age – where does that put you? I remember teasing my father years ago and saying, how does it feel to have a daughter who is a member of the AARP? You know, the American Association of Retired Persons? Which you sort of join when you are fifty. But I was teasing him and now I think he maybe didn't think it was all that funny. There's that and, you know, when you're younger you worry about questions like can I have the kind of career I want, the personal relationship that I would like, do I have enough money to survive, just all the usual things.

S.P.: *Do you live alone in your house?*

R.L.: No there's the cat.

S.P.: *Is he good company?*

R.L.: Well if you like that sort of... if you like somebody waking you up half an hour before you want to get up and being demanding.

S.P.: *Do you have people over?*

R.L.: Yeah, I have a bunch of friends and they come over. I like to cook. That's probably my major thing when I'm not working. And they seem to think I'm reasonably good at it. I sort of enjoy doing it so there is that. It's nice because you produce something real. The thing about linguistics is you never know… you think you've got it right and ten years later it turns out you were wrong.

S.P.: *And what do you do in your free time?*

R.L.: Watch garbage on television, read, meet friends, see movies.

S.P.: *And the one you've most recently seen?*

R.L.: 'Sideways'. It was good.

S.P.: *Dear Robin, thank you so very much for this interview. Thank you for your time, for your effort to answer all these questions and the good spirit that was behind every word. Thank you for your wisdom and especially for being my mentor during my Fulbright year at Berkeley.*

R.L.: Thank you. Thank you for doing this.

N. B. The above is the transcript of the recorded interview with Robin Tolmach Lakoff shortened and adapted to the written register. I cordially thank René Radević for the helping hand in this endeavour.

Slavica Perović

INTERVIEW WITH SUSAN M. RYAN

University of Louisville, Kentucky, July 2015

Susan Ryan received her PhD in English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1999), with concentrations in American literature and American studies. Her research interests include U.S. reform movements; the history of authorship and reception; affect studies/cultural history of emotion; literatures of the American Civil War; archival and digital research methods; and American periodicals. She is the author of The Grammar of Good Intentions: Race and the Antebellum Culture of Benevolence (2003) and is completing a book-length study titled “The Moral Economies of American Authorship,” under contract with Oxford University Press.

Vesna Bratić was born in Trebinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She graduated from the Nikšić Faculty of Philosophy (Montenegro) and received her MPhil and PhD degrees in American Literature from the Belgrade Faculty of Philology (Serbia). Her areas of interest include postmodern literature, intercultural studies, film and visual culture, gender studies, women’s writing, etc. She is teaching English Literature at the Translation and Interpretation Department of the Faculty of Philology at the Montenegrin state university.

Vesna Bratić: Prof Ryan, you have been a professor of American Literature at the UofL for quite some time now. As a SUSI sholar I have had the pleasure of meating you and some of your distinguished colleagues from the UofL but also from other American universities and discussing some challenging literary and cultural issues. One of the books that caught my attention particularly is Jennifer Egan's A Visit from the Goon Squad. The titular Goon is, as we will discover while reading the novel, Time. How do you think teaching literature has changed (or has had to be changed) over the past couple of decades? In her journey into what might be termed as near future, pictures millenials as, well, different from both Generation X and Generation Y. Generation X is, I suppose, the one that the two of us as well as most of our journal readers belong, your daugher is a millenial and our students are Generation Y. Egan says of Lulu, a millenial as "an embodiment of a new "handset employee": paperless, deskless, commutelss and theoretically omnipresent (...) she was "clean": no piercing, tatoos, or scarifications." Egan has her own explanation for the cleanness of the millenials: they had to put up with the unpleasant sights of "three generations of flaccid tatoos droop like moth-eaten upholstery over poorly stuffed biceps and saggy asses." Literary tastes, aesthetics, cultural patterns can be often likened to a pendulum...Physics has never been my forte but I know as much as that every extreme movement (literally and metaphorically) causes an equally strong reaction which the quotation above kind of confirms. Most of my students would rather see a movie than read a book. Most of people would, actually. And the books that are sold and read are those that have a cinematic quality of sorts. Being very western culture oriented our reading public is into vampire narratives, exotic Middle East women narratives, (quasi) historical novels on British royalty but also popular(ized) western authors, mystical Tolkien or Tolkienlike kingdoms and gory fairy-tales of J.J Martin, mysteries and chick-lit. Nobel winners and well-read magical realism Latin American authors are the only other authors deserving of book(stores) shelves. Right next to the umpteen shades of gray(ish) page turners...The question seems to be a couple of words too long. But it all boils down to these four :What do people like to read in the States? What do professors read? And what do their students read? How do you think literary preferences have changed if you compare your generation to the generations of students you have been teaching literature to?

Susan Ryan: These are hard questions for me to answer, for a number of reasons. First, I've long taught texts that students probably wouldn't choose to read on their own (with the exception of maybe Emily Dickinson, some Melville), so it's hard for me to say how my students' tastes have changed over the 20-plus years I've been teaching literature. I'm also somewhat insulated from popular culture in that I haven't watched much TV in a very long time. We now have Netflix, so my daughter has introduced me to a few shows that she likes, but most of the media products I hear people talking about (Breaking Bad, Mad Men, Girls, The Walking Dead, etc.) I've never actually seen. In terms of what I read: obviously 19th-century literature (!), literary criticism, and cultural history. I've also come to enjoy some popular nonfiction (long-form journalism, the lighter end of science writing). I read some contemporary fiction and poetry, but not as much as I should. My favorite beach/vacation options are mysteries. One big change—twenty years ago I gravitated toward highbrow and avant-garde film. Now I watch films more as escapist entertainment and leave the harder intellectual work for my encounters with prose texts.

In watching what my daughter reads, I've noticed some significant changes. Early teen literature now seems much more weighted toward science fiction and fantasy, with a lot more multi-book series. I remember reading more single, one-off volumes. I also remember, at thirteen, trying to get my hands on books that I was told I was too young for—either because they were perceived as too difficult or too "mature" in theme. My daughter doesn't seem as self-consciously precocious in her reading habits—unless she's hiding the books more successfully than I ever did....

V.B.: You have been teaching Early American Literature and the 19th century Am Lit. Taking into consideration all the rapid changes to society and people's lives in the previous century how challenging is it to teach these courses. How do you make them familiar with the context. As we know well different schools of critics had very different views on the issue of "historicity" of literary texts. Some of them "banished" history altogether from the study of literature. As with the very literary production (a term quite adequate for the consumer's era) so with literary criticism, I believe the "pendulum theory" applies. The evident topical interest in "history" could also mean that it has gained in importance when it comes to understanding literary texts as well. At the end of the day, there is nothing outside the text, as Derrida put it brilliantly. So, while authors have been re-writing history and fictionalizing it, what do you think the place of real history (if there is such a thing as real(istic) history) is in teaching literature? How important establishing historical background is for your paricular courses?

S.R.: I spend a lot of time in my classes on historical context, partly because I'm fascinated by cultural history and partly because a lot of the texts I teach are fairly inaccessible to 21st-century students without some kind of contextualizing. I often assign magazine and newspaper pieces from the era in which a literary text was produced, to convey a sense of the era's popular cultural discourses. Throughout, I try to emphasize the following: 1] I take it as an axiom that the past is not less complicated than the present and so encourage students to be suspicious of any broad generalizations they may encounter regarding, say, New England Puritans or antebellum southerners or late 19th-century city-dwellers. Consensus and cultural homogeneity were as rare then as now. 2] Historical inquiry is more engaging and more productive if we at least attempt to understand the perspectives and belief systems of those we're studying. We may then choose to distance ourselves from those positions or pass moral judgment on them, but an attempt at understanding has to come first. 3] Original contexts and scenes of reading are crucial, but they're not the only elements I want to explore. Historicity also means looking at the ways in which a text might register differently over time and across different readerships, in the wake of various historical and cultural events, and in conversation with works produced and read since that initial publication. I find that those questions get more interesting, though, if we start with a serious inquiry into a text's moment of first composition, publication, and reception.

V.B.: Some time ago at a seminar, a colleague of ours mentioned a Facebook post she had read that morning: "Good morning America, what are we offended by today?" Yours is a society of extreme political correctness. There are so many ways to NOT be politically correct that sometimes the best policy is to keep one's mouth shut. On the other hand, freedom of speech is nowhere else held in such high esteem. How does this general attitude reflect on teaching and particularly on teaching literature as an area where, inevitably, one needs to tackle sensitive issues? David Mamets 1992 play Oleanna comes to mind because it is set in a university professor's office, as well as the recent Mat Johnson's campus novel Pym. Correct me if I am wrong, but I have read recently that students at some US universities can claim that a certain course matter is disturbing or offensive to them in which case they do not have to take a test or do the required reading? I remember the seminar that our group of international scholars had with you on Toni Morrison's Beloved. It is a truly disturbing story and based on a true event to that. How can a scholar and a teacher be true to their profession and truth itself and whatever-it-is-that-might-be-deemed-offensive sensitive at the same time?

S.R.: Such an interesting question. I often find myself teaching texts that deal with slavery, sexual exploitation, and racism. Many of the works I teach are themselves quite racist, at least by contemporary standards. So this is something I think about often. The position I try to take is to acknowledge that these texts are troubling and in some cases downright offensive and to attempt, again, to put their tropes, rhetorical moves, and plot trajectories into some kind of meaningful historical context. But I also emphasize that an attempt to eliminate racist, sexist, imperialist, and heteronormative themes from the curriculum would probably mean not teaching American literature before 1900 at all—because there's little or nothing extant that meets the strictest current standards of tolerance and progressivism. Further, and perhaps more importantly, ignoring those texts in some sense lets Americans off the hook too easily—by which I mean that their erasure would allow us to cultivate an illusion of an egalitarian past, sensitive to difference and injustice, which is hardly the case. Finally, the 19th-century cultural field is rich enough that I'm very often able to find and teach counter-narratives—texts that quite self-consciously push back against the era's prejudices and blind spots. Those dissenting voices insist, again, that we recognize the complexity and multivocality of the past.

REVIEWS

Reviewed by: Georgios Alexandropoulos

ANTHONY KALDELLIS, *ETHNOGRAPHY AFTER ANTIQUITY: FOREIGN LANDS AND PEOPLES IN BYZANTINE LITERATURE. EMPIRE AND AFTER.* PHILADELPHIA: UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS, 2013

The main purpose of this book is to explain why the Greek byzantine literature has abandoned the classical genre of ethnography after the seventh century introducing this issue into the general frame of the ethnographical discourse evolution in Greek literature until the 1360s. I will comment on each chapter in turn and conclude with general comments about the book as a whole.

The book is organized in six chapters including the epilogue as follows. The first chapter offers a comprehensive introduction to the topic; Kaldellis is occupied with ethnographies contained in the works of late Roman authors, such as Priscus and Procopius. In the second chapter, the author focuses on the decline of the ethnographic genre after the seventh century, presenting the examples of Theophanes (9th century) and Zonaras (12th century) who decided to omit his ethnographic excursuses on Procopius' stories.

In the following third chapter Kaldellis makes an attempt to explain the reason for this neglect. He tries to explain this neglect presenting some elements that certify his syllogism. For the author there is 'no reason to expect any ethnography along classical lines' (45) in authors such as Theophanes, Genesius and Leo the Deacon. Kaldellis argues that ethnographies are also absent in the works of Attaliates, Choniates and Psellos; he states that Choniates and Psellos were not imitating Herodotus or Thucydides, and what their writings constituted some type of "internal ethnography," (52). Another factor, in Kaldellis' argumentative view, that led to the decline of the ancient ethnography was also the change of the social conditions, such as the empowerment of the Christianity[1] around the world, the rise of the Caliphate and the redefinition of power in the Mediterranean world.

Then, the author continues his study and attempts to define the ethnographic genres of the Middle Byzantine Period. For this reason, he deals with the *Taktika* of Leo VI and *De Administrando Imperio* of Constantine Porphyrogenitus. Kaldellis believes that *De Administrando Imperio* contains less ethnographic elements than what has been assumed by scholars and he states that it has a lot of common points with the Byzantine genre of *origo gentis (origines)*. In addition, the author describes the genre of narratives and briefings, whose traces have survived in Anna Comnena and John Scylitzes.

Chapter five provides us with information on the Palaiologan period. He focuses on travel literature, the Mongols, Gregory Palamas, and, finally, the Latins. As regards travel literature, he presents elements such as Nicephorus Gregoras' voyage to the Serbs and Andreas Libadenus' journey to Egypt.

In the epilogue, Kaldellis provides some information on Byzantine ethnography after the 1360s; he especially reports to the ethnography of the Ottomans by Laonikos Chalkokondyles.

In overall, the book is very accessible and I consider it a must-read. The book is certainly a useful source for students and scholars alike who are interested in the Byzantine literature and especially in the issues of identity and ethnicity[2]. I believe that this book will be useful in a wide range of courses. The general presentation of the book is satisfactory and the author did a very good job in harmonizing the presentation of the different elements for the justification of his view.

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[1] For more details about the foundations of Christianity see Cantor (1993), Johnson (1976). For the contradiction between Christianity and other religions see Lucas (1910), Momigliano (1963).

[2] For more details about the issue of identity and ethnicity in Byzantine literature, see Baldson (1979), Gruen (2010), Maas (2012), Walter (1997) and Parker (2008). For the issue of ethnicity in the Romans see de Lee (1993).

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