THE EUROPEAN CONNECTION

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ESSAYS IN EUROPEAN LANGUAGE STUDIES
AT NEW ZEALAND UNIVERSITIES
# CONTENTS

Call for papers ........................................................................................................ iv

Editor’s Note
_Waleska Pino-Ojeda_ .............................................................................................. v

1. Globalisation and the Successful Professional Translator
_David Atkinson_ ....................................................................................................... 1

2. Public Policy and Propaganda: An Analysis of Documentaries on Venezuelan Social Change
_Joe Beaglehem_ ....................................................................................................... 9

3. _Esencia de mujer_: Exploring Women’s Socio-Political Boundaries in Post-Franco Spain
_Kevin Booth_ ......................................................................................................... 19

4. The Presence of War and the Ethos of Beauty in French Literature from 1935 to 1945
_Anne Haderbache_ ................................................................................................. 25

5. Hanno and Tony Buddenbrook: A Love Affair with Travemünde
_Louise McConachy_ .............................................................................................. 33

6. The Scientific Revolution, Enlightenment Ideas, and Darwin’s Theory of Evolution
_Brynny Muir_ ......................................................................................................... 45

7. Shared Encounters: Toward a Queer Comparative Literature
_Steven Ruszczycy_ ................................................................................................. 49

8. Music, Mirrors and “el gomero”: Feminine Subjectivity and Existentialism in María Luisa Bombal’s ‘El Árbol’
_Rachael Shaw_ ...................................................................................................... 57

9. Urban Structure and Space in Sebald’s _Austerlitz_ and the Fiction of Kafka: Memory and the Unearthing of Connections
_David Taine_ ......................................................................................................... 61

10. An “Unfinished” Struggle: Moscow and Budapest, 1956-2006
_Kate Verkerk_ ....................................................................................................... 67
CALL FOR PAPERS: Issue No. 13, 2008

Each year *The European Connection* publishes essays in European Language Studies by students at New Zealand universities. We invite all colleagues teaching in the area to send a copy of the best essays they receive (by both graduate and undergraduate students) to a member of the Editorial Committee (see below). From these, the reader for the appropriate section will send a selection to the Editor, who will then make the final decision. The Editor for 2008 is Dr Walescka Pino-Ojeda, from The University of Auckland.

Essays should follow the MLA style manual guidelines; the specific instructions on footnotes and parenthetical citation will be provided by the area editor, who should receive the articles by September 30th 2008. Essays should be accompanied by a short bio-bibliographical note on the author, including the name of the course for which the essay was presented or, alternatively, the name of the MA or PhD Thesis from which the article comes.

The journal offers students an excellent opportunity to gain experience in preparing work for publication, while providing staff and students with model essays as reference points in teaching. *The European Connection* seeks to maintain a high profile for European Language Studies in the New Zealand context.


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The current issue of our journal presents analysis of a variety of topics, regions, and eras. In the absence of predetermined subject matter, this issue may be characterised by two broad trends that connect most of the essays. The first deals with the intellectual demands of the profession in handling cross-disciplinary and pragmatic academic works. This problem is analysed by David Atkinson with respect to the role of the professional translator in the current globalised and market-oriented society. Another aspect of globalisation profoundly affecting us on a daily basis are issues of heterogeneity, hybridity and cross-culturality; as a result of these processes, interdisciplinary studies such as Queer theory and Comparative literature consolidate new alliances, as Steven Ruszczycky discovers in “Shared Encounters”.

The second trend connecting these articles suggests the impact of socio-political processes in establishing artistic priorities and responses to political contingencies. This thread of analysis becomes evident in the study of memory as it traces the past in order to understand the present, as in the approach taken to “The Presence of War and the Ethos of Beauty in French Literature from 1935 to 1945”. Here, Anne Haderbache focuses on the aesthetic dilemmas confronted by French existential writers during WWII. Coincidentally, existentialist ideas also inform the article by Rachel Shaw in her analysis of one of the most representative pieces of writing from early feminism in Latin America. Also in the area of gender studies, Kevin Booth focuses on the search for a feminine theatrical language in post-Franco Spain in order to recover a socio-communal memory. For their part, David Taine and Louise McConachy deal with memory in their meticulous and refined analysis of the works of Sebald, Kafka and Thomas Mann, respectively. While Taine draws parallels between memory and history as reflected in urban spaces, McConachy engages herself in an elaborate discourse analysis of episodes of Mann’s novel Buddenbrooks in order to outline processes of memory which mirror each other.

Moving to the present moment, Kate Verkerk takes us to Eastern Europe in order to witness the ongoing Hungarian struggle for historical and cultural memory in the persistence of the political hegemony of Russia. Another current struggle reflecting the impact of socio-political processes in the aesthetics of representation is introduced by Joe Beaglehole, who scrutinises two recent documentary films about Venezuela, where different agendas currently compete in presenting this country’s politics.
Taken as a whole, this issue reminds us of the necessary link between the arts and historical processes which inform not only the contexts of the artists and the subjects treated in their respective works, but also the role of the researcher as a translator and communicator of socio-aesthetic memories. We hope that our readers will enjoy the quality of these articles, and appreciate the relevance of these critical accounts for an understanding of our own current conflicting times.
1. GLOBALISATION AND THE SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATOR

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David is presently studying a Master of Professional Studies in Translation. This paper was written in 2006 while he was studying the Postgraduate Diploma in Translation Studies.

In the globalised, electronic-based translation profession of today, working as a translator takes on a new and different shape. Now the translator is expected to be a master, not just of translation itself, but also of the myriad other “background” skills that are necessary in the production of a document or text. What follows in this article is a short description of the globalised context within which the translator now works, and a résumé of the skills necessary to be successful in the modern market. The profile of the ideal freelance translator will be analysed from a psychological perspective, taking into account some of the theories of work and culture proposed by industrial and organisational psychology.1 Following this will be a discussion of how the globalised context interrelates with the local reality of the translator.

The Globalised Setting

Globalisation means different things to different analysts. While some are concerned with economic globalisation, others are preoccupied with the spread of influence from particular cultural sources. Others look at the movement of goods around the world between different markets. What all these approaches have in common is the idea that any location in the world can potentially be connected to any other through various forms of interaction.

Types of Globalisation

One broad definition of globalisation is the “increasing interdependence, integration, and interaction between people and companies in disparate locations.”2 This refers to the fact that modes of communication now make the creation of connections much easier, and the limitations imposed by time are reduced, in some cases almost to zero.

1 It is important to bear in mind that the common Western psycho-cultural viewpoint is very much a representation of the Western individualistic cultural paradigm, in which success is often regarded as professional and personal independence brought about by the individual’s own efforts and skills. Not all prevailing cultural viewpoints see success in this way, as some attribute individual success as much to the help of others, or to good fortune, as they do to the efforts of the individual. For further discussion, see D. R. Ilgen, J. A. LePine, & J. R. Hollenbeck, “Effective Decision Making in Multinational Teams,” In: P. C. Earley & M. Erez (eds.), New Perspectives on International Industrial/Organizational Psychology. (San Francisco, CA: New Lexington Press, 1997), 377-409.

One particular model of globalisation is the idea of a global knowledge network, in which a large number of spatial points are interconnected in a way that allows the flow of knowledge and information, thus creating a “virtual society” to which anyone can belong, and to which anyone, in theory, can contribute. The majority of these spatial points, according to Esperança Bielsa, are largely, but not always, concentrated within the “mega-cities.” This “virtual society” refers to the internet with its blogs, fora, chatrooms, interactive websites with feedback options, and the use of such instantaneous communication tools as MSN Messenger, which allows the user to communicate with anyone who happens to be online at the same time.

When one thinks of globalisation, however, other ideas often come to mind, such as globalised organisations like the multinational businesses, trade promotion groups like the World Trade Organisation, and financial market integration. Groups such as those concerned with trade tend to define globalisation as “[t]he movement toward markets or policies that transcend national borders.” One also thinks of the stock markets, and of the high level of electronic informational integration that makes such markets possible. Of course, globalisation has a darker side, such as marginalisation occurring on various levels, unsustainable development, resource extraction and environmental damage, linguistic hegemony, neo-colonialism, and gross economic inequality, which are issues of concern to many.

The Need for Translation

With all of this worldwide communication, translation must play a vital role. With increasing and more frequent contact comes the need for more frequent and rapid translation, as speakers of different languages from different cultural backgrounds are expected to interact with one another. For example, despite the fact that the United States, as the paragon of political, economic, and cultural globalisation, often has a moderately strong English-only preference, it still needs to deal with the non-English speaking world. Generally speaking, even though the North American mainstream has been somewhat reluctant to accept the importance of bilingualism, translation does form a vital part of American business dealings with other nations, as Schulte affirms: “The person who will have to play a major role in regulating the pendulum

3 Esperança Bielsa, Globalisation as Translation: An Approximation to the Key but Invisible Role of Translation in Globalisation, Working paper 163/05. (Coventry, UK: Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation, 2005), 5.
between global and local communication is the translator.Translator build bridges not only between languages but also between the differences of two cultures.”

Nevertheless, as has been mentioned by commentators such as Bielsa, the necessity of translation is so often overlooked, as if the world spoke and read only English. Even those texts explicitly dealing with international business sometimes skim over the language issue. An example of this is found in Kamel’s Managing Globally with Information Technology, where the explicit mention of language is only made in the context of character encoding in software. Presumably thinking in terms of the English language, Kamel notes that “in a global organization it is very difficult for the internal communications to take place without an agreed common language.”

Although he refers to the normal desire for pragmatic communication, with his notable lack of emphasis on the importance of language, the need for the translator is subtly negated, either through the task of translating internal communications being made implicitly too inefficient, or through their services being not required due to the use of just one language. However, fortunately for translators, and for the profession as a whole, plenty of demand for translation remains. What is more, the future of that demand also looks promising, as it has been projected to increase from eighteen to twenty-six percent in the period from 2004 to 2014.

The Modern Translator’s Tasks

What kind of tasks are translators expected to accomplish in the globalised environment of today? What kind of skills are they expected to use, and how does this environment affect them in psychological terms? To begin with, the role of the translator needs a brief description. Many translators are freelancers, working from home with their computers and internet connections, while agencies or clients (either individuals or businesses dealing directly with the freelancer) send work to them based upon demand, and often upon the reputation of the translator. They complete the jobs within the required time-frame (be it driver’s licences, software localisation projects, letters relating to immigration, insurance claims for travellers, investment portfolios, or many other documents), and then e-mail them back to the agency or to the client. This is often the full “window” of the translator’s responsibility, and what happens to the job afterwards is lost from view. They will know who the client is, and what the text is about, but will not necessarily be able to piece together the whole picture. Nevertheless, this depiction of the autonomous worker interacting by means of their computer is characteristic of the modern professional translator.

9 S. Kamel, Managing Globally with Information Technology. (Hershey, PA, etc.: IRM Press, 2003), 97.
The European Connection

The Translator's Technical Skills

Although the kinds of technical skills that the translator must possess have been widely documented, a brief summary of these is necessary. The translator must be proficient in most aspects of computer use, which includes operating the programmes that they use (word processors, translation memories, desktop publishing software, HTML editors), using the internet effectively and efficiently, as well as finding their way around the operating system. Competence with website and software localisation tools is very important given the increasingly high volume of work involving these media types. It is in this area that translation memories come into their own, helping to standardise terminology and reduce work redundancy throughout the many updates that these media types typically undergo.

In addition, translators must know how to print, send faxes, scan, and attach documents to emails, among various other skills. These may sound like basic skills to those who have been using computers for the majority of their working life, but for some, learning them can be a real challenge. In this case, not only is possessing the technical ability important, but equally important is the ability and desire to learn and to improve skill levels, which will be discussed in the following section. Overall, the necessary attributes needed to be a successful translator include “un conocimiento profundo de todas las herramientas informáticas del mercado, [...] el trabajo en grupo, [...] el uso inteligente de las nuevas tecnologías, la versatilidad, el autoaprendizaje y el conocimiento procedimental (know how)” [thorough knowledge of all the computing tools found in the [translation] market, [...] [ability to] work in groups, [...] intelligent use of new technology, versatility, self-directed learning and procedural knowledge (know-how)].

The Translator's Psychological Skills and Personality

What kind of psychological skills and attitudes will help the translator to be successful? From the above passage, it seems that a 'practical attitude' would appear to be the underlying common factor. In other words, the translator needs to be in charge of their learning and development, and they need to make the moves that make things happen. Of course, this is common for all those in self-employment, but especially so for translators. Unlike plumbers or bricklayers, translators have access to such a globalised market where word of mouth is not such an effective marketing tool, and where networking and reputation-making have to be invested with time and energy.


Globalisation and the Successful Professional Translator

Work Performance Theories

Two relevant psychological theories that describe high performance will be outlined here with a view to relating them to the profile of the ideal freelance translator. On the one hand, “need achievement theory” predicts that those with a high need for achievement will try to overcome obstacles and to perform difficult tasks as quickly as possible, and to the highest possible standard. On the other, Steers has suggested that making work more autonomous and challenging can be positive for those with a high need for achievement; just the kind of conditions within which freelance translators frequently find themselves. Thus, in terms of personality, a high need for achievement would seem to be an important prerequisite for the challenging and technical occupation that is freelance translation.

Another theory is Bandura’s “self-efficacy” or “personal efficacy theory,” which predicts that those with a high belief in their own abilities and skills will be more successful under pressure, generally setting higher and more complicated goals, and showing more persistence in pursing these aims. What is more, Taylor, Locke, and Lee demonstrated that people with high self-efficacy react more positively to criticism of their written work, and make more effort to subsequently improve it. These results would suggest that high self-efficacy would serve the successful freelancer very well.

Cultural Skills and Attitudes

Despite being alone for much of his or her working life, the freelancer does have professional relations with many other people, such as colleagues, clients, and agency project managers, and these relations are mostly mediated through electronic channels of communication. The issue of communication across culture will certainly arise, and the translator must be prepared for this in order to communicate successfully. To borrow some terms from Graen, Hui, Wakabayashi and Wang’s study of cross-cultural research, the successful intercultural communicator and actor must move through various stages to achieve a high level of “cross-cultural sophistication.” These stages begin with the “cultural adventurer,” who, while having an interest in other cultures, largely judges these by way of ethnocentric stereotypes. This initial stage can then progress to the “synthesizer,” who is a real judge of similarities and differences between cultures, and who is able to create a “third culture” that can be understood by the recipients in both.

Therefore, the professional translator should aspire to this highest level of intercultural development, and to understand both cultural settings equally well. Thus, the translator should at least start as a cultural adventurer by having an interest in other cultures and their people. However, most importantly, translators should be interested in learning more, and in progressing, as Snell-Hornby and many others have argued that simply knowing the languages is not sufficient.21, 22

Learning and the Translator
This attitude to learning is vitally important for the translator. Technology and the translation market are changing constantly with the release of new software, new demands being made, and new expectations being created. Thus, the translator has to take a progressive attitude to learning new skills and managing new technology, as Jacobsson states: “One cannot be prepared for tomorrow once and for all by acquiring skills and know-how. Instead the abilities to learn, to communicate, to co-operate and have social competence are required.”23 These abilities seem to sum up the personal qualities required by the modern translator: the desire to learn and to increase their skill levels, and to create good professional networks. With these abilities the translator has an opportunity to complement and to improve their technical strengths while increasing their chances of business success.

The Individual Translator and the Global Setting
Given that freelancers are usually alone, and often deal with business issues by themselves, what is the situation then at the interface between the individual translator and the global marketplace? Within such a space the demands can sometimes be very high; such as keeping a network of clients satisfied, organising work around time-zone differences, invoicing in different currencies, as well as managing tax issues, to name but a few of these challenges. Social support (the translator’s local network in action) can help to moderate the stressful effects of the demands made by agents in the global network. Social support does not, of course, remove the sources of stress. Rather, it increases the person’s general well-being, helping them to feel more positive about dealing with the pressures of their work.24

Globalisation and the Successful Professional Translator

The freelancer’s life can also be difficult, as there are often no colleagues on hand to provide additional support. This would explain the popularity of online fora where questions can be asked of other translation professionals. In this setting, feedback, support, and the desirability of a second opinion are balanced in the translator’s mind against the desire for professional autonomy and freedom.25 Also present here is the contrast of risk versus freedom. Freedom relates to self-reliance and to “taking care of oneself” in a professional sense.26 On the one hand, there is also the risk of being left behind, of losing out to other more competitive translators, or of simply not having enough work at any one time, which may lead to the necessity of having at least a second job with regular income. On the other, it is the sense of control that the freelancer often values most.27

However, exposure to the global market brings rewards as well as risks. The potential client base becomes much larger, and the opportunities for networking also increase. The stresses of competition though can be high, particularly in bidding wars for contracts, at which times those translators from locations where the cost of living is lower may have an advantage.28 Furthermore, local companies often resort to overseas translators for various reasons, including cost and time-zone advantages, meaning that physical proximity has less influence on whether work will be available for a particular translator. Essentially, this is commercial globalisation in action.

In summary, modern freelance translators, by the very nature of their work, are strongly influenced by globalisation, working as they do within an international informational system with all its commercial opportunities and risks. Working within this setting requires certain abilities and skills; the technical skills to do the job, and also the psychological skills to learn and grow as a professional, to communicate across cultures, and to be able to manage the psychological demands of the job by cultivating local support networks. An analysis of these skills and attitudes has shown how these qualities can help to increase the freelancer’s chances of success in the globalised commercial setting.


2. PUBLIC POLICY AND PROPAGANDA: AN ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARIES ON VENEZUELAN SOCIAL CHANGE

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This paper looks at the representation of the current Chávez-led government of Venezuela in two recent documentaries, Venezuela bolivariana: pueblo y lucha de la IV Guerra Mundial (2004, Marcelo Andrade) and Venezuela: una amenaza real (2006, director unknown). These documentaries depict the recent history of Venezuela as positive and negative respectively, using the medium to endorse or discredit the Chávez government. This paper focuses on how the two documentaries represent the relationship between the Chávez government and foreign governments. Both documentaries distort recent Venezuelan history and Chávez government policy by failing to include important events and by presenting events out of context. I argue that rather than serving as constructive critical voices, these documentaries, because they are politically motivated and rely on incomplete or distorted information, can only be considered propaganda. This is significant given the controversial nature of Chávez government policies in Venezuela and abroad. Propaganda, rather than enlightening this debate, serves only to perpetuate myths about Chávez and further entrench the already polarised political spectrum of Venezuela. This paper also draws attention to the respective importance of the documentaries in light of the representation of Chávez by international media. While Venezuela: una amenaza real, primarily constructed from media footage, reinforces the common portrayal of Chávez as anti-democratic and extremist, Venezuela bolivariana: pueblo y lucha de la IV Guerra Mundial, based on interviews with Chávez supporters, gives voice to an alternative, pro-people view of Chávez.

Venezuela: una amenaza real (versions of which have been produced in both Spanish and English) screened on the Venezuelan television station Venezolana de Televisión (VTV) on the 21st of April 2006. It is now widely circulated on the internet through the popular video search engine YouTube (www.youtube.com) and a number of internet sites aligned with the Venezuelan opposition.¹ This documentary presents a negative view of the Chávez government. It contains no credits and is circulated without information about its director or producers. Commentators on the pro-Chávez website www.aporrea.org speculate that the film was produced in the United States with collaboration from Venezuelan media; however, no evidence is given for this. Venezuela: una amenaza real is one of a number of similar anti-Chávez documentaries currently in circulation on the internet.²

² Others include Los Pecados de Chávez (Maria Cristina Uribe, 2005) and ¿Cuál Revolución? (Ciudadanía Activa, 2004).
The film is 33 minutes long and divided into eight short sections: El proyecto radical populista; ¿Qué nos espera?; La estrategia: Lobby internacional; Amenaza Nuclear; Guerrilla; La patria grande; El régimen y el narcotráfico; and Ya se acaba el tiempo. Each of these sections combines archival footage with the voice of a narrator to illustrate an aspect of the Chávez government. One of the central themes of Venezuela: una amenaza real is the relationship between the Chávez government and foreign governments. Two aspects of Chávez government foreign policy that are focused on by the documentary are its opposition to the United States government, and the claim that the Chávez government is supporting terrorism abroad. I now turn to an analysis of how these claims are represented in the film.

The opening sequence of the film shows a picture of soldiers wearing gas masks and the words “Venezuela: una amenaza real.” The film then introduces Chávez with footage cut from a speech in which he says “comenzarán a llegar los fusiles Kalashnikovs” [The K alashnikov rifles will begin to arrive] (30 secs.). This is followed by images of the Venezuelan army and the voice of a narrator that states “el proyecto radical populista hoy establecido en Venezuela constituye una amenaza para la paz suramericana y el resto del mundo” [The radical populist project established today in Venezuela constitutes a menace for the Americas and the rest of the world] (1min.) From the beginning of the film, the Chávez government is represented as a military regime and a threat to foreign governments.

The film immediately places Chávez in direct opposition to the United States government. A series of sound bites of Chávez criticising the Bush administration is interspersed with images of crowds of people supporting Chávez, violent protest including images of an American flag burning, and shots of the Venezuelan army. Speaking to a crowd of supporters Chávez states, “Cuando nosotros nos vayamos de aquí, ya, el imperialismo norteamericano, si no ha desaparecido, debemos dejarlo como un verdadero tigre de papel” [When we leave this place, if North American imperialism hasn’t already disappeared, we should leave it a mere paper tiger] (3 min.). This is followed by a second clip cut from a Chávez speech in which he states that “los pupilos de Bush en América Latina están cayendo uno a uno” [The pupils of Bush in Latin America are falling one by one] (4min.).

The way in which the documentary cuts quickly between scenes, pulls short sound bites from Chávez speeches, and relies on a voice-over for any factual information, allows the filmmakers to represent the Chávez government as a violent military regime. The opening sequence of the film is designed to convince the viewer of the danger of the Chávez government to the United States. This is done without reference to factual information, interviews with Chávez or members of his government, or objective opinions from outside observers. Rather, sound bites from Chávez speeches are removed from context and juxtaposed with images associated with war. These
same techniques are used to reinforce this image of Chávez as a threat to the United States throughout the film. A notorious moment from a Chávez speech in which he refers to President of the United States, George W. Bush, as “Mr Danger” and accuses him of being a “cobarde, assassin, alcoholic, drunk” [“Coward, assassin, alcoholic, drunk”] (3min. 47) is included in the film. Once again, this clip is included without context. The filmmakers fail to provide any information about when or where Chávez made these comments, or to what was responding. Notably, this clip is only included in the English version of the documentary. Later in the film Chávez states, “están matando el mundo, y el asesino se llama el gobierno de los Estados Unidos” [The world is being killed and the murderer is the government of the United States] (8min 25). The filmmakers include these comments without analysis and without informing the viewer of the details of the public address. Rather, these clips are followed by a narrator that makes further unjustified claims - Chávez is accused of using the oil wealth of Venezuela to maintain an illegitimate hold on power and using anti-United States rhetoric as a technique for building support in Venezuela and among the international left (8 min. 30) Venezuela: Una Amenaza Real repeatedly represents Chávez as a danger to the United States without providing a sound argument for this claim.

A second theme of this film is that the Chávez government supports terrorism. In the first section of the film, “El proyecto radical populista”, the narrator states that the Chávez government and international leftist allies are causing unrest in neighbouring countries by supporting leaders of “gobiernos comunistas” and “subversivos radicales” [“Communist governments,” “subversive radicals”] (5 min. 49). Cuban dictator Fidel Castro, Bolivian president Evo Morales, Peruvian political leader Ollanta Humala, Colombian guerrilla organisations the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) and the ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional), and radical Islamic groups are all listed as recipients of Chávez support (5 min. 49). During this section of the film, images of the above leaders are shown followed by a scene of violence in what appears to be somewhere in the Middle East. Once again, the filmmakers fail to provide evidence for their claims. The documentary does not specify any of the alleged support provided by the Chávez government for the above parties. Moreover, the way in which Evo Morales, the democratically elected leader of Bolivia, is associated with guerrilla organisations such as the FARC is misleading. If the government of Venezuela were offering financial support to the government of Bolivia (and no details of this support are given in the film), then this would be an entirely different situation to the alleged support of a guerrilla organisation such as the FARC.

The failure of Venezuela: una amenaza real to substantiate its claim that the Chávez government is supporting terrorism is best exemplified by the linking of Chávez with radical Islamic groups. The film does not provide any information about the nature of these Islamic groups. Further, the viewer is not told where or when the violence in the Middle East portrayed by images in the film took place, or how Chávez is linked to this particular instance of violence.
Although Venezuela: una amenaza real fails to provide a successful analytical argument for the representation of Chávez as a “threat,” the documentary does successfully draw upon the emotions of the viewer to create a menacing picture of Chávez. Sound effects, military imagery, military rhetoric, and quick cut editing are all used to this effect. This appeal to the emotions in place of a rational argument is characteristic of propaganda. In “Media Control” Noam Chomsky notes that successful propaganda is often devoid of rational discussion. He gives the example of the “support our troops” slogan promoted in the United States during the Gulf War. This slogan avoided the questioning of war policy by associating the war with a phrase that appealed to the emotions of the wider population. Chomsky notes that “support our troops” means as much as “support the people in Iowa.” It is an appeal to patriotism and to the good nature of people, rather than related to any discussion of the validity of the Gulf War. By representing war policy with slogans that appeal to the emotions, analytical discussion of policy is avoided and debate over the war is reduced to whether or not one “support(s) our troops.” The appeal to the emotions in Venezuela: una amenaza real is a similar, if less subtle, example of avoiding rational argument when appealing to public opinion.

Before turning to an analysis of the significance of the sensationalist nature of the claims made about Venezuelan history in this film, I outline an alternative account of the Chávez government presented in a second documentary film: Venezuela bolivariana: pueblo y lucha de la IV Guerra Mundial (in Spanish with English subtitles) was directed by Marcelo Andrade, a 22 year old Venezuelan film student based in Boston. It screened in a number of film festivals in the United States and Latin America, and is now circulated on the internet through pro-Chávez blogs and independent media websites. This film presents the Chávez-led government of Venezuela in a positive light as a response to neoliberal capitalism. In 76 minutes, the film traces the story of Chávez’s rise to power, highlights some of the key achievements of the Chávez government, and outlines the opposition response to these policies which resulted in the 2002 attempt to oust Chávez. The film puts Chávez in the context of a variety of aspects of globalisation including the degradation of the environment and the destruction of indigenous culture and values. It then outlines a number of policy initiatives of the Chávez government including “La ley de tierras,” Chávez’s program of agrarian reforms, and social programs called “Misiones.” The overarching theme of the film is that the “Bolivarian Revolution,” a term used to refer to the goals and reforms of the Chávez government, is providing a pro-people alternative to policies dominated by Neoliberalism. I now turn to an analysis of how one theme of the film, the role that the Chávez government plays as an international leader in the fight against Neoliberalism, is represented.


Venezuela bolivariana begins with an introduction to Neoliberalism which is described as a capitalist political agenda that is waging a war on peoples around the world. In the first section of the film Duglas Bravó, a Venezuelan ex-guerrilla comandante, Roland Denis, a Venezuelan activist, Noam Chomsky, an American left-wing intellectual, Robert Borges, a street artist, and Cecelia Areito, a Colombian activist, describe Neoliberalism and its discontents. The filmmakers cut sound bites together to produce a picture of the neoliberal “war.” They introduce several criticisms of Neoliberalism including the breakdown of national sovereignty, the priority given to the free market, the conglomeration of power within an undemocratic global elite, and the control of the global media. However, these issues remain completely undeveloped. For example, Robert Borges explains that the neoliberal elite use the media for their own ends, yet the filmmakers fail to give any details of media ownership, illustrations of media bias, or examples of the media being used as force for Neoliberalism. The failure of the film to provide evidence for its claims about neoliberalism requires the viewer to rely on the information given during the interviews. This raises a second important issue: the importance of the filmmaker’s selection of interview subjects. All five of the agents that speak in this section of the film are left-wing. This pattern continues for the vast majority of the film during which an alternative perspective on these issues is rarely presented. Moreover, in this section of the film, aside from Chomsky who has an established reputation as a political commentator, the credibility of the other people interviewed is never established. As they provide the film’s conceptual outline of neoliberalism, rather than personal testimony, the validity of the film’s illustration of neoliberalism depends on their qualification to speak about the subject.

Venezuela bolivariana places the rise of the Chávez-led government to power in the context of Neoliberalism by outlining the economic failings in Venezuela in the 1980s. The film then moves to its principle thesis, that this movement represents an alternative to, and force against Neoliberalism. Argument for this relies almost exclusively on the “voice of the people.” Comments are scattered throughout the film that suggest the “Bolivarian Revolution,” a name given to the reforms led by Chávez, is part of a world-wide anti-neoliberal struggle. For example, Roland Dennis states that “la revolución Bolivariana nos da una base de apoyo para poder pensar y visualizar la revolución Latinoamericana” [The Bolivarian Revolution gives us a basis so that we can visualise the Latin American Revolution] (8:08min.). The filmmakers then include footage of a crowd chanting “la espada de Bolivar sobre América Latina” [Bolivar’s sword is rising in Latin America] (7:21min.), and of a woman that states “Venezuela, de verdad, y a todos los países y a todos, esta pelea no es de Chávez, es del pueblo” [Venezuela, for real, and to all the countries and everyone, this struggle isn’t Chávez’s, it’s the peoples] (8 min.). Comments such as these are the primary evidence in the film for the role that the Chávez government plays as an international force against Neoliberalism. The filmmakers fail to expand on these comments by providing concrete examples of how Chávez may be acting to spread the Bolivarian revolution.

The film gives very little information about Chávez's international economic or trade policies or detail of financial or other support provided by the Chávez government to international movements against Neoliberalism. The turn to the left in Venezuela as a response to the failings of Neoliberalism was a precursor to similar political shifts across South America including Bolivia, Argentina and Ecuador. The film fails to reference this international context. This is particularly relevant given the influence Chávez has had on these countries as an alternative to international institutions and the United States as a source of trade and development funding. Without including these important details, the claims made in the documentary prove to be paying lip-service to the role that Chávez plays on an international level, rather than providing any real information.

This lack of in depth discussion about Chávez is hidden by the use of happy music, scenes of popular protest, and revolutionary "slogans." This is a direct appeal by the filmmakers to the sympathies of the anti-globalisation movement. Chávez is placed in opposition to a number of the diverse problems associated with globalisation. One example is environmental degradation. However, the filmmakers fail to outline environmental issues in Venezuela and projects undertaken by Chávez to resolve them. Instead, emotive imagery and the rhetoric of popular protest is used to inform the viewer that Chávez acts for the good of the environment. In this way, the filmmakers associate Chávez with the anti-globalisation movement and the international left without any informative or analytical argument.

When the film does refer to specific domestic policies such as "La ley de tierras," or "Misiones," which are an important swing away from neoliberal economic policies at a domestic level, it is again personal testimony that is relied upon for evidence. This is appropriate in this situation. The people that provide information in these sections of the film are well placed to comment on the impacts of these initiatives. They have lived through the changes effected by the Chávez government and give convincing accounts of the positive impacts of these policies. It is significant that the film gives a voice to people that have had positive experiences as a result of Chávez coming to power. These people are Chávez's primary support base and their support is rarely heard above in the anti-Chávez rhetoric in the international media. However, while personal evidence provides an important insight to events, it is hard to gage the effectiveness of these domestic initiatives without concrete statistical indicators. The film provides little detailed statistical evidence of, for example, literacy or indigence, in support of the personal testimony about "Misiones." Moreover, all the subjects interviewed in the film provide an entirely supportive account of Chávez and his initiatives. Without an alternative critical viewpoint, or statistical evidence, the viewer has no way of judging whether these policies have, in fact, been entirely successful, or whether the film has failed to outline their limitations. This lack of balance weakens the credibility of the film.

The extreme polarity of the accounts of Chávez provided by the documentaries Venezuela bolivariana and Venezuela: una amenaza real is highlighted by the fact that, in some respects, the films completely contradict one another. Whilst Venezuela: una amenaza real depicts the Chávez government as militaristic with comments such as a
sound bite of Chávez stating “socialismo o muerte” included at the beginning of the film, Venezuela bolivariana argues that the Bolivarian Revolution is pacifist. Footage of Chávez stating the following is included, “lo que queremos es paz, eso sí, paz con dignidad” [What we want is peace, but peace with dignity] (Part 2, 10.43 min.), and in response to the bombing of Afghanistan, “no se puede responder al terror con más terror” [You can’t fight terror with more terror] (Part 3, 8.50 min.).

The selective inclusion of events, and the representation of these events out of their historical context, allows the two documentaries to give completely different accounts of recent Venezuelan history. This is significant when we consider the potential audience of the films. Both films were screened in Venezuela and are accessible on the internet. Venezuela: una amenaza real is posted on a number of anti-Chávez blogs and opposition websites, and is likely to have its principle audience amongst the Chávez opposition. Venezuela Bolivariana is available on a number of pro-Chávez blogs and left-wing websites and is likely to have its primary audience amongst Chávez supporters. The fact that both films are either subtitled or available in English indicates that they are intended for viewers abroad as well as in Venezuela.

The respective documentaries, circulated primarily amongst audiences that support their political perspectives, serve the purpose of reinforcing entrenched views, rather than persuading viewers to change their opinions about Chávez. This is evident in the films themselves. The representation of the United States government in a positive light and Chávez as militaristic in Venezuela: una amenaza real is likely to only be accepted as a valid perspective by the Chávez opposition. It is likely that the clip of Chávez directly insulting George W. Bush was included in the English version of the documentary to discredit Chávez amongst an audience based in the United States. The goal of this film is to incite fear of Chávez amongst his opposition. Venezuela bolivariana with its radical left-wing view of global politics, is unlikely to be convincing for the right-wing Chávez opposition. It serves as publicity for pro-Chávez supporters in Venezuela and abroad and provides a counter-force to the largely negative portrayal of Chávez by mainstream media. The way in which this film associates Chávez with the international anti-globalisation movement should be seen as an attempt by the filmmaker to garner support for Chávez amongst the international political left. The documentaries, therefore, are not propaganda that is used to persuade or in Chomsky’s words “manufacture consent” amongst a population, but propaganda that serves to “rally the troops.”

In “Media Control,” Chomsky refers to propaganda primarily as a tool used by the state to influence the public. However, In Global Lies? Propaganda, the UN and World Order, Mark D. Alleyne argues that propaganda should be seen to exist within a much broader framework. Propaganda “should be seen as a phenomenon of all domestic and international societies in which a variety of communicative practices are employed (wittingly or not) to produce consequences that become obvious either
in the short term or after a much longer period of time” (9). A n immediate problem with applying Alleyne’s definition of propaganda (and this is a problem he attempts to resolve in his analysis of the United Nations public information campaign) is determining the “communicative practices” that are not propaganda. This issue is particularly prevalent in the context of documentary film. Documentary film represents reality in a way that inevitably communicates a message of the filmmaker. The line between propaganda and “information” in documentary films is blurred. Although propaganda proves difficult to define, the failings of the filmmakers to employ reasoned and evidenced argument for their representation of reality is certainly one of its important elements. Venezuela: una amenaza real relies heavily on this technique, and Venezuela bolivariana is certainly provides an unbalanced analysis of Chávez. The political spectrum in Venezuela is currently highly polarised into the extremes of fervent Chávez supporters and an opposition movement strongly opposed to Chávez. Rather than providing an external criticism of Venezuelan politics, the reliance of both documentaries on techniques characteristic of propaganda in their representation of Chávez indicates that these films must be seen both as a product of this current polarity in Venezuelan politics and as force that perpetuates it. They solidify the division between the pro-Chávez and anti-Chávez camps by perpetuating right-wing and left-wing myths about Chávez.

As an independent media, documentary has the potential to play an important role in providing an alternative account of history and a critical voice outside of the mainstream and government controlled media. In Independent Media in a Time of War, Amy Goodman, host of the American radio show Democracy Now! states that “independent media has a crucial responsibility to go to where the silence is” and “to represent the diverse voices of people engaged in dissent.” 10 This responsibility is heightened in times of political unrest in which the voices of state -and corporate-influenced media are intensified. There is no better example of this intensification than the current political situation in Venezuela. The role played by the corporate media in the 2002 coup attempt against Chávez has been clearly demonstrated in documentaries such as The Revolution Will Not Be Televised. 11 Corporate media was instrumental in engineering the circumstances that allowed for a coup attempt, recognising and promoting the formation of a new government by coup leaders, and failing to publicise the scenes of protest of pro-Chávez supporters.

Given the bias of mainstream media in Venezuela, the role of independent media in providing constructive criticism of the impact of Chávez policies is particularly important. Unfortunately, the documentaries assessed in this essay fail to step outside of the polarity of Venezuelan politics in which they were created. By reinforcing myths about Chávez with techniques of propaganda, the films serve as political instruments

that perpetuate the polarity of Venezuelan politics rather than media that offers informative critical analysis. However, the use of personal testimony as the primary information source in Venezuela bolivariana allows the film to serve an important purpose. It does represent the voices of people that have benefited as result of Chávez. It gives these people the opportunity to tell their own story, and it allows viewers the opportunity to hear firsthand experiences of the Chávez government. These voices are almost never heard in mainstream corporate media. The international power dynamic is therefore important when we consider these films. Unlike Venezuela: una amenaza real, Venezuela bolivariana provides information unavailable in the mainstream media. This makes the film an important document despite its lack of balanced argument and statistical evidence.
During the nineteen sixties and early seventies, avant-garde Spanish theatre was acutely concerned with criticising and destabilising the continually more precarious grip Franco held over political and cultural life. After the dictator’s long-drawn-out death in 1975, Spaniards experienced relative freedom combined with the frustration of relinquishing a long-held objective that was never achieved as such, in the sense that the regime was never conclusively overthrown. As a consequence, and in an attempt to deal with this vacuum, creative energies in the theatre were channelled away from direct political resistance against state-organised oppression towards exploring and striving for more personal freedoms of expression in many areas. John P. Gabriele notes how these included redefining women’s socio-political parameters.1 I will examine Sorpresa by María José Ragué Arias and Allá él, by Concha Romero Pineda for the ways in which this ground is explored.

Women playwrights in Franco’s Spain were few and far between for many reasons, including little formal education, the strong social censure against women participating in intellectual pursuits and, allied to this, an inability to break into male-dominated, professional (or even amateur) theatre production. When women such as Ana Diosdado, Mercedes Ballesteros or Dora Sedano did achieve professional or semi-professional status as playwrights, often through marriage to a man connected to the theatre industry, their subject matter tended to be light and conservative. As Patricia O’Connor states:

women dramatists writing before the eighties ... [r]eflect their more restricted education, ... [they] are more conservative ideologically, more puritanical linguistically, and less innovative technically. Their plays tend to stress religious fervour, focus on idealised romantic episodes, and reinforce traditional values (“Spain’s ‘Other’ Post-War Dramatists: The Women.” 99).2

She goes on to suggest that another reason for the dearth of women playwrights in the sixties and seventies, under the greatly relaxed censorship laws, was that women’s “cultural conditioning” urged them to step aside from the task of weaving a “more aggressive, materialist, and specifically sexual component” into their plays (99). However, those women who did persist committed themselves wholeheartedly to forging a new socio-political identity for the “new woman” who was emerging in the young democracy.

The Teatro realista [Realist theatre] of the forties and fifties, by writers such as Fernando Arrabal, Francisco Nieves or Josep Palau i Fabra, had been superseded by the like of Alberto Moraes and Jordi Teixidor, who were producing work much richer in symbolist imagery. This undoubtedly occurred in response to the pressure to discover a new theatrical language capable of subversively criticising the regime that could slip freely through censorship restrictions. As Maria Jose Ragué Arias has written: “Las obras, en su gran mayoría, no pueden contemplarse únicamente desde el punto de vista del drama literario. Los textos son propuestas escénicas en unas claves que hoy han perdido afortunadamente su sentido” [The majority of these plays cannot be viewed solely from the perspective of a literary drama. These texts are stage proposals written in codes that have fortunately lost their meaning today] (59). In the Nuevo teatro español [New Spanish theatre], as it was known, characters were often cast as animals, or the authority figure of Franco was represented by characters such as Power, Nero, or Creon. The classics freely lent themselves to such allegorical interpretation. In referring to a theatrical generation previous to her own, Paloma Pedrero has described it, “en una onda más de teatro condicionado por la censura... un teatro más paródico, más Brechtiano” [more part of a theatre tradition conditioned by censorship... a more parodic, more Brechtian theatre] (in Doll 150). A good example of this is Jordi Teixidor’s El retaula del flautista, premiered in 1968. In 1996, Dagoll Dagom staged a return season of the play at the Teatre Joventut in l’Hospitalet de Llobregat, with Ramon Teixidor playing the Franco-like Mayor and another younger actor in Teixidor’s original part of the Pied Piper. In spite of being a fine production, this new version of the Hamlyn fairytale was quietly criticised. Free from the backdrop of Franquismo that had once given the allegory meaning, one audience member felt justified to comment: “Els nostres fills ens han sentit parlar d’aquesta mítica obra durant anys; ara pensaran que som imbècils!” [“Our kids have heard us talk about this mythical production for years; now they’ll think we’re imbeciles.” (Personal recollection).

Although the Nuevo teatro español developed into the non-text-based, physical theatre of Els Joglars, Els Comediants and La Fura dels Baus, which is still a popular theatre genre in Catalonia, it lost power in the immediate post-Franco environment when creativity turned inwards to examine social and personal power relationships. Nevertheless, Lidia Falcón has suggested another reason for the collapse of creative production after Franco’s death, in the late seventies: “En la Transición ya éramos

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3 Ragué Arias, Maria Jose. El teatro de fin de milenio en España. (De 1975 hasta hoy (Barcelona: Editorial Arial, 1996).

During the Transition, we were happy, so happy, we didn’t have anything to write about, to criticise, to contemplate, to think] (in Doll 150).

While not a fertile period for women theatre writers, the sixties and seventies nevertheless stimulated fresh configurations in work and social structures, opening up more freedom for women in many spheres. As they became more active in the struggle against the crumbling regime, they began to question and stretch the boundaries of the gender roles they had been forced to accept for forty years, and to use the tools of activism they had developed in their own favour. Therefore, the early eighties saw a new generation of women writers emerge, who explored a more intimate area of gender relationships in their work, an area virtually unexplored by male or female Spanish playwrights.

María José Ragué Arias’s “Sorpresa” (García Verdugo 11-18) is a study of a woman dependent on the patriarchal structure around her. As a youngish actress, the protagonist, Gloria, constitutes an object of attraction for the male gaze, which is one of her sources of power. While she is a working woman, and therefore has a certain degree of independence, her profession is dependent on the choices the men around her make, especially those of her producer spouse, Alfredo. She earns her money by displaying herself in public and she tells us that up until the present she has always played “el papel de chica joven y sexy” [“the young, sexy girl” (García Verdugo 14). She has won some of her roles so far by being Alfredo’s sentimental partner – or is it rather that in order to succeed as an actress, she must accept his, or another male’s (producer, director, client, etc.) advances? Yet her desire to change, to play more intellectual, emotionally deeper roles, is the springboard of the play. Therefore, for a key interview with Alfredo’s Argentinean director friend, she chooses to dress soberly and un-sexily, but as she gets ready, Alfredo calls to tell her he has decided to present a younger actress to the Argentinean director. So even before she has articulated her decision to the outside world, she has had her power taken away. A retrospective viewer – someone aware of feminism’s development since the eighties – might anticipate that the play’s resolution would involve her rejecting male hegemony in order to resolve her dilemma through true independence, unsupported by any male power structures. Yet the unnamed Argentinean director decides, to Alfredo’s chagrin, to cast a more mature woman in the leading role. It is a slightly naïve resolution, almost a fairytale happy ending. It is difficult to see how Gloria’s situation is truly empowered here, even though she will be acting in a role more to her liking. Is there really much difference between playing Medea and a blond bimbo if it is yet another man who is pulling the strings behind the scenes? She may gain better lines yet find her Lady Macbeth reduced to a vacuously sexual or morbos image by the director’s myopic vision. Gloria moves from dependence on one male to dependence on another (or both), one who has different – albeit more intellectual – criteria. While all the economic cards are dealt into male hands, the author narrowly manages to suggest (ironically?) that Gloria regains her power because of the awareness she comes to.

In *Allá él* (García Verdugo 44-60), Concha Romero Pineda presents a superficially similar scenario: an actress, held from realising her full professional potential through a partner’s emotional coercion. Yet the resolution is profoundly different. Romero plays with the play-within-a-play structure. Pepa, a middle-aged woman, now a housewife, is left by her husband for—she conjectures—a younger woman. Initially she runs the gamut of emotions: anger because it was “las vacas flacas para mí y las gordas se las comerá con ella” [the lean years for me while he’ll eat the fatted ones with her] (in García Verdugo 46); self-accusation for having wasted her youth, beauty and relative success within small but explosive roles (“papeles de rompe y rasga”), on a man who took her away from the stage and her own independence; disillusionment at twenty years of relationship going down the drain just because he desires a younger woman; despair because she now feels too old to get back into the dating game, and again anger that the man she thought she knew is so dishonest and cowardly as to refuse to accept his own aging by fleeing into a younger woman’s arms.

Despair predominates; despair at having abandoned her career and at being abandoned. She goes through a sequence of “let me count the ways” to kill herself, and finally settles on sleeping pills, of which she has a good supply. It is at this point that the “naturalism” of the play begins to transmute into a kind of “Magic Realism”. A providential phone call from her sister stops her from taking the final step towards her death. This conversation takes her back to a previous unmarried existence and forces her to look in the mirror at her own identity. Switching on the television, Pepa is confronted by the monologue with which she herself opens the play. Her sister has urged her to call her old friend Gonzalo, which she does. Is this the same Gonzalo who is “Pepa’s” childhood sweetheart in the play? The scene in the prostíbulo (brothel) between Pepa and Gonzalo makes us as audience members question what is real and what is a fantasy. Is Gonzalo truly a childhood sweetheart, or is this another fantasy of hers? Or of his, a pre-arranged client scenario? In any case, the situation, whether illusory or real, of having someone believe in her, love her throughout all these years gives her the strength to reinitiate her quest to “tocar el mundo con [sus] manos” [touch the world with her hands] (ibid 58). Through her meeting with Gonzalo, Pepa achieves a sort of epiphany that sets her free. She wants to be unbound, to try a second time—although belatedly—to conquer life. The whole telephone-television-mirror sequence and even the sordid setting of the brothel scene can be doubly read as the crisis of self-evaluation facing post-Franco Spain. After forty years of self-imposed amnesia and blindness, democracy forces it to open its eyes to its own existence and reassess its identity. Spain must abandon the dirty dealings, the darkened rooms of the dictatorship and re-enter the world of light, of honest relationships.

*Allá él* can also be read as a continuous, more realistic story, in which the Pepa who opens the play is the same Pepa working in the prostíbulo. Therefore, the coincidence whereby she gains her role in Gonzalo’s play becomes a fantasy she creates in her own mind to justify the job she gets—working in a brothel. This is the much more logical story of a forty-year-old woman who must re-enter the workforce, and who needs the fantasy of acting in a play to make her unsavoury work more palatable—catering to the same male needs that drew her partner away from her. Even if we assume in this reality that she wins her degree of financial independence as an employee of the
brothel’s female madame, she is still inextricably locked into the patriarchal structure. The choice of brothel as workplace can be seen as a metaphor for the theatre, and for the place of women in patriarchal society. Yet it also functions as a metaphor for the power politics of work in its basest sense. The profession of actress has always been closely associated with that of prostitute, the oldest profession. Even if Pepa is not actually attending the clients, she is still dependent on a patriarchal system of values.

Settings are important in all the Esencia de mujer plays, and are generally domestic. In fact, the play-within-a-play scenario of Allá él, where the twin settings of home and brothel are overlaid, reflects the desire and demand of women throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to enter the exterior world, the supposedly masculine sphere. Yet it is in the private sphere that both Pepa and Gloria examine themselves and attempt a healing, before setting out to conquer the public sphere. However, if men control the public sphere, these domestic spaces are not necessarily women-controlled. The first lines of Sorpresa are: “¡Uy! Pero, ¿qué hace usted, aquí en mi casa?” [Oh! But what are you doing here, in my house?], and in choosing her own style of theatre, free of “moscas” [flies] and parasites such as Alfredo, she speaks of it as a house: “Eso, eso es lo que debo hacer, sacar a todas las moscas de mi teatro” [This, this is what I must do, shoo all the flies from my theatre; i.e. spring clean; start afresh] So it is natural that the house is an area of female power, and a place where she can take important decisions and undertake her own healing. Yet because her house is imbued with the presence of the man she lives with, her hardest challenge is to remake her life, reorganise her house for life without her husband. For Pepa, who has stopped working, the house she lives in is not her own. Even though she inhabits it, it is Juan’s wage that has paid for it and Juan’s presence that she evokes throughout the space, so going out to work represents an escape and an emancipation. Her final lines, from a song or poem – delivered to Juan, from whom she has emancipated herself – in one sense accept that she may have to leave her house. In fact, part of her freedom must consist of leaving her interior space and going out to explore the outside world. The lines also read as a metaphor for Franquismo:

Se me ha quedado estrecho mi casa,
el tiempo de silencio se acabó,
la voz se me quebraba en la garganta,
y el aire, de tanto encerramiento se me viciaba.

[M y house, now, is too narrow for me,The time of silence is over, M y voice was getting hoarse in my throat, A nd the air, so closed up, enclosing me].

The “house” of the Franco regime has become too small for Spain’s growing democratic freedom, and “the time of silence is over”, even if the “pacto de silencio” [pact of silence] will last long after the Transition and right up till the end of the century.

If the generation of the Nuevo teatro español was “la generación más premiada... y la menos presentada” [the most highly awarded... yet the least staged theatrical
women writers after the decade of the eighties could be described as having been the least staged and also the least subsidised. Furthermore, women writers began to distance themselves from the label of feminist, seeking a less militant image. In this vein Paloma Pedrero declared, “yo a través de mi teatro no quiero reivindicar nada” [Through my theatre, I don’t aim to demand anything] (in Charnon-Deutsch 56). This was partly due to the increasing institutionalisation of funding channels and the men who controlled them. According to Lidia Falcón, the enormous amounts of funding available as spin-offs in the lead up to the large-scale projects of 1992 – the Seville expo, the Barcelona Olympics and Madrid, City of Culture – meant that female authors and intimista works tended to be sidelined in favour of an increasing emphasis on big-money productions. As Pilar Pombo stated: “Pasamos de una dictadura ideológica con Franco, a una dictadura económica… A hora, cuando no les interesa algo, con no darte dinero y no programarte, lo tienen solucionado” [We went from an ideological dictatorship to an economic one… Now, when they aren’t interested in something, it’s enough not to fund you, not to programme you in theatres, and their problem’s solved] (in Doll 153). She adds that the actor became undervalued in favour of the director and escenógrafo, who became the new stars.

So while the eighties constituted a narrow window of freedom for feminist expression, the nineties saw these opportunities reduced as a new patriarchal institutionalism took over the reins of power in theatrical production, excluding women once again from writing and direction. Yet at the same time, as the transition normalised into democracy, many women stepped back from the extremism and even separatism of nineties feminism, opting for a new style of liberation in which they attempted to integrate gender equality into the prevailing system, choosing a strategy of education over conflict with their male counterparts. The challenge of the new democracy was to integrate plural opinions and expression into a single system.

4. THE PRESENCE OF WAR AND THE ETHOS OF BEAUTY IN FRENCH LITERATURE FROM 1935 TO 1945

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As a new century starts it is timely to look back on four French writers who stood up as literary pillars during the previous century: Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, André Malraux, and Jean-Paul Sartre. The metaphors of war in their writings form the focus of my research, as well as the human concern for Art expressed during an era of eschatology. This article thus reflects upon writers who expressed pain and suffering during the same epoch, as my inquiry focuses on the temporal genuineness of intellectuals and artists during a time of hostility. As Pascal wrote: “I sacrificed so much blood for you” (L. Goldmann 67).


2  Goldmann, Louis. Le Dieu caché (Paris. Bibliothèque des idées. Gallimard, 1959 [2005]). In the first part of his book published in 1955 this author gives the characteristics of the Hellenistic hero, which is defined as someone living in the world but in a constant state of schism with people, as he lives under the scrutiny of the Lord and Him only in order to transcend his immanence.
consequence of having to separate themselves from the mainstream in order to maintain the principles of democracy, those such as Pablo Picasso, Pablo Neruda, Max Ernst, Pablo Casals, and Wilhelm Furtwängler provided evidence of Jansenism, which is based on austere behaviorism. However, their militant spirits were not intimately tied to each artist's sense of nationalism. These men asserted their identities beyond their nation's borders, as free citizens in their artworks and in their military actions by safeguarding the ethos of beauty and of the sacred. This ethos stood up like a defensive sociological weapon, as these intellectuals appeared like living statues carved with illusions. Their involvement was pure idealism. They remained individuals with a common purpose within a phenomenon of collective osmosis that stood in opposition to the fascist view. On the first page of Carnets de la Drôle de Guerre, Sartre, who adopted the title from German philosopher Max Scheler, expressed it well with: "The Man of Resentment" (19). And the Carnets were followed by the publication of L'Être et le Néant, where he portrays the phenomenology of perception for men who have had to withstand attacks against their freedom. Moreover, he describes how rebuffing actions have their foundations in ideology, as was the case for a movement like the Resistance. The following passage exposes it with clarity:

\[
\text{Ma conscience ne se borne pas à envisager une négativité. Elle se constitue elle-même dans sa chair, comme néantisation d'une possibilité qu'une autre réalité -humaine projette comme sa possibilité. (L'Être et le Néant 81)}
\]

[My conscience doesn't limit itself to foresee a negativism. It incarnates the cancellation of a possibility, projected by another human reality as its own possibility.]

For the intellectuals violence was a barrier, stopping them from reaching a level of cultural development that was determined through the infinite world of the spirit. Expressions of hatred toward the intellectuals were therefore paramount for the fascists, who did not share with the intellectuals these same ideals in rejection of violence. Placing Art at the top of the list of weapons opened a path to intricate deliberations about a collective conscience on an international level, and was therefore of direct concern to humanity itself. Consequently, the artist and the intellectual could be seen

3 Jansenism: doctrine founded by Jansenius and followed mainly by lawyers, and military officers, according to which they had to follow a strict way of living.
4 Austere behaviorism is an expression used by Merleau Ponty. It qualifies a theory according to which behaviour alters itself in accordance to the consequences of the actions.
5 (fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Èthos). Èthos is a Greek word signifying the character and the soul. In Greece, the "arts" (μιμητικαί τέχναι mimētikai tēkhnai), like music, dance, and tragedy, imitate all the èthè. Aristotle explains it in La Poétique et dans la Politique, livre VIII.
as heroes of a tragedy oriented towards a Lord “ever present-ever absent.” What is more, this Lord was also seen to be mute, and therefore induced a surge of creativity in attitude and in Art by the authors, painters, sculptors and critics. The paradox lies in the visible schism existing between the man turned towards the absolute Presence, and his will to transcend his own humanity during a period of conflict. This could have been described as the tragedy of refusal to compromise with others, which in this case was the enemy. This is backed up by the following passage about the phenomenology of religion during the Spanish Civil War:

Plus de Colonel. Le regard le cherchait trop haut : agenouillé au milieu des décombres, il priait... Manuel savait Ximénes fervent catholique ; mais il n`en était pas moins troublé. Il sortit pour l`attendre. Ils marchèrent un instant en silence. (206)

[The Colonel couldn’t be found. Manuel was looking too high: kneeling in the middle of the rubble, he was praying... Manuel knew Ximénes was a fervent Catholic; however he was deeply touched. He waited for him outside. They walked in silence.]

The phenomenological territory thus enlarges itself to include the source of creation itself: the artist. As a consequence, I have narrowed my analysis to the nihilism of the reality towards artistic creativity against which the militants had to fight. In terms of socio-political life, a scission appears between views expressed in poetry, prose, or other artworks, and reality. Art, religious as well as pagan, became a cultural bridge, providing a sense of unity in a place of chaos and schisms. I allude to the protective role of the partisans towards the artworks, as well as the architecture, pagan or religious, during the conflict: “Sauf pour les oeuvres d`art, il faut les garder pour le peuple. La cathédrale ne brûle pas” [As for the artworks, keep them for the people. The cathedral doesn’t burn.] (Malraux 43).

The problematic analysis is intriguing, as the nature of conflict can be defined as a process of nothingness that takes place within humanity, and which includes the extinction of the intellectual world. However, books were considered artworks and were thus protected. In this way the writers’ revival was motivated by the pain of facing the breakdown of civilization and the possibility of their own disappearance. Their works became a mute call to the democratic values still alive in people as their fight was aimed at engulfing mental cecity resulting from fear. Originating from clandestine French Literature, as well as from works of the Resistance writers, their outcry was printed in pamphlets and posted on walls. The orthodoxy of their emotions cemented their stylistic scriptures in a battle against twentieth-century obscurantism: “Petite suite sans fil”: “Et la guerre pour eux la paix est ironique Et seul souffrir pour eux est eternal” [And war and peace for them is ironic And only suffering is eternal] (Aragon 7

7 “Le dieu caché est pour Pascal un dieu présent et absent [... ] Voir et entendre Dieu, c`est dépasser la tragédie” (L. Goldmann, Le Dieu caché), 46.

8 Malraux, André. L`Espoir (Paris: Gallimard, 1938 [2004]).
Le Crève-coeur 23). While this extreme expression of pain appeared as a form of dolorisme, or exaltation of moral and physical suffering, it actually served to create a new phenomenology of war, for, in man's own recognition of suffering, mankind was once again respected in its humanity. This meant a new path towards existentialism. What must be stressed is the fact that the works of these four writers focused on the dolorisme in its wholeness in order to describe the authenticity of events:

Les cris d’un homme ou d’une femme (à l’extrémité de la douleur, les timbres ne se distinguent plus), haletants, traversaient la salle de l’hôpital San Carlos et s’y perdaient. (Malraux 109)

[The screams of a man or a woman (at the vertex of suffering, the pitches cannot be distinguished anymore), gasping, shrilling through the room of the San Carlos hospital before decreasing.]

The process of destitution of humanity occurs when desacralization takes place. This negativism finds its climax in torturing and wounding. As expressed in Paul Eluard’s poem about a woman who fell in love with the enemy, those who suffer this pain and torture are incarnations of beauty more so than exclusively human subjects:

Comprenne qui voudra
Moi mon remords se fut la malheureuse qui resta là sur la pavé
La victime raisonnable à la robe déchirée
Au regard d’enfant perdue découronnée défigurée
Et qui ressemble aux morts qui sont morts pour être aimés. (Au Rendez-Vous Allemand. 38)

[Comprehend those who want but my remorse was for the sad girl
Abandoned on the cobbles. The thoughtful victim with a torn dress
With the sight of a lost child, crownless and scarred
Who resembles the people gone, who died to be loved.]

I propose that extermination in this manner can be seen as a form of jealousy of beauty and harmony. The outcome of this jealousy is a form of totalitarianism that is expressed through aesthetic nihilism, which results in the cultural and sociological chaos of mankind. One axiom I allude to here is the emotional void felt by a nation resulting from war and the disintegration of the socio-political image of a people. I

10 Exaltation of moral and physical suffering.
11 The definition is the indecent process of destroying the virgin values from a person, i.e. the foundations of his identity, inherited by birth and reinforced by education and culture.
12 Eluard, Paul. Au Rendez-Vous allemand (Lonrai: Ed. de Minuit. 1945 [2006]).
also accept the hypothesis that, rather than in human intellect, the political hidden conscience ("la conscience non-thétique") has its roots in emotions. Poetry is a unique art that allows the reunion of these values. What is more, its musical rhythm is an adequate tool for the expression of human feelings. These emotions can be harnessed to channel the power of a nation, and to thus embody expressions of its unity, for the citizen relied on his passionate relationship with his country, his wife and lover, family, tradition and religion, as Aragon states in his poem "Il n`y a pas d`A amour heureux":

Mon bel amour mon cher amour ma déchirure  
Je te porte en moi comme un oiseau blessé...  
Et pas plus que de toi l`amour de la patrie...  
(La Diane Française, 32)

[M y Beloved my dear Love my shattered one  
I carry you in me like a wounded bird...  
But no more than for you the love for my country.]

I now turn to consider the subtle intricacy between the emotional structure of a writer and the principles of democracy, which, for my purpose here, can be defined as freedom of opinion and respect for others. According to Sartre, who draws on the work of Heidegger, human wholeness is accomplished when an individual asserts his existence through his relationship with others (Das Mitsein) (Sartre, L`Etre et le Néant 83). This definition of human wholeness is also related to the principles of Art, for it too seeks to express harmony. This path leads to existentialism, including the act of lying, which played an important role in the phenomenology of war. In its ability to alter reality, lying makes what would otherwise appear to be unachievable into a distinct possibility, an idea that is supported by Merleau Ponty in his criticism of nature of the world.

L`évidence de la perception n`est pas la perception adéquate ou l`évidence apodictique. Le monde est non pas ce que je pense mais ce que je vis [... ] Cette facticité du monde est ce qui fait la Weltlichkeit der Welt.... La méthode eidétique est celle d`un positivisme phénoménologique qui fonde le possible sur le réel. (17)

[The obviousness of perception is neither the righteousness of perception nor the apodictic truth. The world isn`t what I think but what I live.... This facticity of the world is what makes the mundanity of the world.... The eidetic method is the one of a positive phenomenology which builds the possible on reality.]

13 Aragon. La Diane française (Saint-Amand: Seghers, 1944 [2006]).
14 Merleau Ponty, Maurice. Phénoménologie de la perception.
What must be emphasized is the way in which war can change the phenomenology of existence. This mutation of the sociological mind describes a new state where the roots of a positive behaviorism dig into the earth of a bad principle, as may be seen in the act of lying. “I lie therefore I am” was meant to be the immoral, but adequate, motto for the Resistance members. Aragon called this “le M entir-Vrai,” or “the genuine act of lying” (D. Bougnoux, 204). We can also read: “L’Aragon de la provocation, du délire, de l’insolence et de l’insulte. Celui du ‘Je mens toujours.’ [The Aragon of provocation, madness, insolence and insults. The one described as ‘I always lie’] (Desanti, 212). This goal could be achieved only through genuine motives. The acknowledgement of the objectivism of war also creates a dualism in humans. This idea is well supported by Bougnoux in his article “L’Amour, la Politique, Terrible Loi de vivre double” (“Love, Politics and Harsh Law of the Double Life”), in which he quotes Aragon: “Chaque bruit m’est comme un trouble qui vient de toi. Il n’est plus terrible loi qu’à vivre double. [Each sound is a disturbance due to you. There is no harsher law than the law of a double life] (205).

In tragedy, immanence is an important factor of the conspiracy, as Sartre describes it in L’Être et le Néant: “L’immanence est le plus petit recul qu’on puisse prendre de soi à soi.” [Immanence is the shortest path from the I back to myself] (32). This definition seems to fit the profile of Resistance members who, like others, could not foresee their existence in its true perspective. In Le Mur Sartre emphasizes the feelings of betrayal felt by a prisoner who has been sentenced to death. He enlarges the semantic field of sequestration, examining three types of this state: the physical, the moral, and the self-inflicted state of imprisonment, which characterize the attitude of the main character, Pablo Ibbieta. The underlying principle behind his thought process is a refusal to surrender to betrayal. Instead, he relies on his own ‘ipséité,’ which he defines as “c’est que l’homme est toujours séparé de lui-même par toute la largeur de l’être qu’il n’est pas.” [what always separates a man from himself is the margin between him and the being he isn’t yet] (52).

The condition sine qua none to immanence is freedom, including freedom of choice, which means that immanence leads to the “I.” What Sartre achieves in Le Mur is also to show that betrayal may be part of the separation of a person from himself, an attitude that Pablo refuses to embrace in order to keep his dignity and integrity. According to Sartre, bad faith is an inherent component of the human conscience:

La mauvaise foi a donc en apparence la structure du mensonge. Seulement ce qui change tout, c’est que dans la mauvaise foi, c’est à moi-même que je masque la vérité. Ainsi la dualité du trompeur et du trompé n’existe pas ici. (L’Être et le Néant. 83)

17 J. P. Sartre. Le Mur (Illzach: Livre de poche, 1939 [1969]).
18 J. P. Sartre. L’Être et le Néant.
Bad faith has the structure of lie. But what is different is that in bad faith I hide the truth to myself. Therefore the dualism between the person who lies and the victim of the lie doesn’t exist here.

In order to avoid betrayal, these people fighting for their values were forced onto bad faith. Pablo Ibbieta did not abdicate. His cynicism sustained him in his own dialectic. He based his argument on the fact that, by synergy between militiants, his life and that of the partisans were of equal worth, thus avoiding any emotion. It embodies osmosis and Sartre enlarges this view when he stresses the vital part it played in the relationship between the sequestrated man and nature. In fact, Pablo revived his strength from the sight of a patch of sky: “Par le trou du plafond je voyais déjà une étoile.” [Through the hole in the ceiling I could already see a star] (Le Mur 15).

This symbolizes the oculus, that is, the “eye,” in Latin, which was a round opening in the dome of the Pantheon in Ancient Greece. However, this could also reveal the new attitude of the prisoner’s soul, as even though he had been sequestrated he still had a view of the world. The ontological influence of the sky as an aesthetic shield is clearly stated in the stillness of the celestal vault that stands above a life on the verge of disappearing. This may be referred to as pantheism, but it is also about the alteration of perception.

A renewal of creativeness thus emerges from the state of war, which, in its ecceity implies the annihilation of the source of free artistic power. I present here the main paradox that this article embraces. In order to display his revulsion, his abhorrence of war, Sartre became an iconoclast of the human soul in the detailed prose of his book Carnets d’une drôle de guerre. In L’ Etre et le Néant he mentions “Die Weltanschauung” (103), as a vision that requires us to live with others in the world, or what Heidegger qualified as In- der -Welt-Sein. Patriotism, represented as a form of community within a nation, appeared to be an illusion during war. However, a new Wesen was emerging in some citizens. The principles described by Louis Goldmann are helpful tools here, as neither rationalism nor principles of empiricism can be used as an exact filter for the perception of a conflict. Instead, the vision of tragedy is the right tool of conceptualization and the personages of drama are to be found in the metaphors of war, as these human characters rejected defeatism. The vision of tragedy can be portrayed as a vision of a world lacking the concept of Mitsein, or “to be with” (L’ Etre et le Néant 83), as is emphasized by Lukacs: “La tragédie est un

19 ‘Deux choses remplissent le cœur d’une admiration et d’une vénération toujours nouvelles et toujours croissantes à mesure que la réflexion s’y attache et s’y applique : le ciel étoilé au-dessus de moi et la loi morale en moi.’ Critique de la raison pratique de Kant. (L. Goldmann. Le Dieu caché. 259)

20 Ego. What make that one person, one principle is itself and not something else.

21 The use of German words within his scripture printed during the war may have been Sartre’s own creativeness in his way of asserting his individual spirit of resistance.

22 The mit-sein or being with others in the world.(L’ Etre et Le Néant 283)

23 Being.
The European Connection

It is illuminating to conclude that the antagonism between an era of eschatology and the fight for freedom was the ideal womb for a new *Wesen*, or “being,” for the entire society. As a consequence of the battle, and of Art, these events impacted upon the population and produced the postwar existentialist movement. One metaphysical phenomenon based on the ethereal, but assertive recognition of Art as a means of defence, was the sense of fraternity that resulted between intellectuals. Respecting the values inherent to their civilization in their works was a way of transferring them from the pre-war years towards the post-fascism era. Art remained their concern in the middle of this period of eschatology, as it appears in this passage from *L`Espoir*:

> “Mon commandant, dit-il, rectifiant sa position, je tiens à vous dire que les belles statues sont en lieu sûr 'Espérons-le’, pensa Garcia, une main de saint dans la sienne.”

> [M y commandant, he said, changing his position, I want to tell you that the great statues are safe. “Let us hope”, thought Garcia, the hand of a saint in his] (Malraux 151).

The dramatic development can be observed in the parallelism of two movements as I have analyzed them: the liberation of Athena forces entwined with the resurgence of Mnemosyne’s daughters, the Muses (music, theatre, poetry, painting, sculpture...). The alteration of perception of men and women, empowering creativeness during the period of pandemonium, remains a philosophical mystery. Was a Socratic process of maïeutics generated, opening a dialogue within the nation and liberating the contradictions in the collective conscience, which were the roots of the phenomenon of hostility? Was beauty the answer to a despair resulting from a spirit of absurdity confronting chaos? This hypothesis is stated too in the sentence of “The Idiot” from Dostoyevsky, an artwork of Classic literature, when the atheist Ippolit asks Prince Myshkin:

> Is it true, Prince that you once said that the world will be saved by ‘beauty’ [...]? Gentlemen, he shouted in a loud voice to all the company, the prince says that the world will be saved by ‘beauty’ [...] What sort of beauty will save the world?’ (Cardinal M artini. Saving beauty 11)

24 Socrates, a Hellenistic philosopher used a method based on the central technique of a series of questions aiming at helping a person to become aware of their knowledge and its limits.

5. HANNO AND TONY BUDDENBROOK: A LOVE AFFAIR WITH TRA VEMÜNDE

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It was the American novelist and poet, William Faulkner (1897-1962), who once said that Thomas Mann’s Buddenbrooks: Verfall einer Familie was ‘the greatest novel of the century’. Considering the firm place that it now holds in classic German literature, few today would disagree with his claim. Written between 1897 and 1900, it was first published in October 1901 by the Samuel Fischer Publishing House in Berlin, when Mann was just 26 years old. Although initially the novel enjoyed moderate but steady sales, overnight success came when a smaller, more compact version was published some years later. Written in the tradition of a Scandinavian genealogical novel, it is often said that Buddenbrooks also has much in common with John Galsworthy’s Forsyte Saga. It depicts not only the lamentable decline of a wealthy mercantile family over four generations in a town recognized as Lübeck, Thomas Mann’s own native city, but also serves as a portrait of German bourgeoisie society as a whole in the 19th Century. Even the mundane aspects are incorporated, which gives the novel a unique sense of realism and credibility.

Though Buddenbrooks in its entirety is nothing short of a literary masterpiece, the Travemünde chapters are undoubtedly some of the richest, happiest, and most fulfilling of the novel. The small, Baltic resort town sets the scene for some of its most memorable moments, ones which impact and influence later events as the tale progresses. This essay will attempt to analyze and compare the visits of Hanno and Antonie (Tony) Buddenbrook, and show how the constant mirroring between the two scenes creates a sense of unity between the two characters.

Located on Northern Germany’s Baltic Coast, the area itself was one that Thomas Mann had often visited as a child, and felt a unique connection with. This is perhaps best summed up in Mann’s essay Lübeck als Geistiges Lebensform (1926), in which he writes:

An diesem Ort, in Travemünde, dem Ferienparadies, wo ich die unzweifelhaft glücklichsten Tage meines Lebens verbracht habe, Tage und Wochen, deren tiefe Befriedung und Wunschlosigkeit durch nichts Späteres in einem Leben, das ich heute nicht mehr arm nennen kann, zu überstreifen und in Vergessenheit zu bringen war,- an diesem Ort gingen das Meer und die Musik

in meinem Herzen eine ideelle, eine Gefühlssverbindung für immer ein, und es ist etwas geworden aus dieser Gefühlss- und Ideenverbindung, nämlich Erzählung, epische Prosa:- Epik, das war mir immer ein Begriff, der eng verbunden war mit dem des Meeres und der Musik, sich gewissermaßen aus ihnen zusammensetzte, und (...), so möchte ich meinen, daß das Meer, sein Rhythmus, seine musikalische Transcendenz auf irgendeine Weise überall in meinen Büchern gegenwärtig ist, auch dann, wenn nicht, was oft genug der Fall ausdrücklich davon die Rede ist.²

In Travemünde, the holiday paradise where I have undoubtedly spent the happiest days of my life, days and weeks, their deep satisfaction and wishlessness through nothing later in life, that today I can no longer call poor...In this place the sea and the music in my heart have an ideal, emotional connection forever, and something has become of these feelings and ideas that connect – namely stories, epic prose: Epic -it was always a term that was closely linked with that of the sea and music, to some of them together (...) I would like to think that the sea, its rhythm, its musical transcendence in some way is present everywhere in my books, even if not, which is the case often enough, it is expressed in the speech].

It is widely accepted that the majority of Mann’s novels are highly autobiographical, and Buddenbrooks is by no means an exception. From this citation alone, it is clear that not only did Mann incorporate elements of personal narrative into the characters of Hanno and Tony, but he also interwove his own personal experiences with theirs.

Hanno’s visit to Travemünde takes place during the summer of 1872, on the advice of the family physician, Dr. Langhals. Concerned by his ailing health and lack of vitality, he recommends that Hanno spends his summer holidays at the small seaside resort, in order to take in the rejuvenating fresh sea air and breathe some life back into him. Accompanied by his mother Gerda and minder Ida Jungmann, Hanno heads out to Travemünde for four, blissful summer weeks. For the artistic and musically inclined Buddenbrook, for whom school and everyday life is nothing short of torturous, this break is just what he needs. Somewhat similar to the character of Tonio, in Thomas Mann’s novella Tonio Kröger (1903), Hanno struggles to find a way to reconcile his artistic inclinations with what he knows his father expects and desires from him. Hanno finds peace at Travemünde and by the sea, which almost seems to have a hypnotic effect on him. During his stay, he discovers a soothing natural rhythm, and the ties he has with reality and with everyday life are loosened. As a character, Hanno is symbolic of the spiritual, economic and physical decline that plagues the Buddenbrook family.

Tony Buddenbrook’s own visit takes place almost 30 years earlier, in the summer of 1845. Prompted by her distress at Bendix Grünlich’s marriage proposal, the Senator and his wife decide to send Tony to stay with the Schwarzkopf family in Travemünde, so that she might have some peace and quiet, and time to think. Escorted by her brother

² Lübeck Als Geistige Lebensform, Essays of Thomas Mann (1926); S. Fischer Verlags (1993), 33-35.
Hanno and Tony Buddenbrook

Thomas, she makes the trip out to the coast on one of the last days in July. For Tony, after weeks of emotional blackmail at the hands of Grünlich, this is also just the break that she needs to gather herself, and she leaves her home in Mengstrasse feeling that a heavy burden has been temporarily lifted. It is during her stay on the coast that she becomes acquainted with Morten Schwarzkopf, a medical student from Göttingen who has come home to Travemünde for his summer holidays. From the very outset, she connects with him on a level like no other and soon they are inseparable. Despite the fact that he has not grown up within the same social sphere that she has, they seem to find a perfect balance with one another.

Her romance at Travemünde provides some of the most poignant and memorable scenes of the entire novel. A genuine ‘Sommerliebe’ in every sense of the word, the idyllic summer days she spends with Morten see her bloom into a beautiful, intelligent, and open-minded young woman. For the first and only time in her life, she not only falls in love but is also given the chance to develop intellectual and personal freedom. Exposed to a different way of life and love, she is confronted with a worldview that differs from the one held by her family, and she responds to this with an almost surprising level of maturity. To an extent, both Tony and Morten seek some form of freedom. For her, it is personal—the desire to be allowed a life away from her family and from the expectations they place on her. Morten’s is on a far greater scale, namely the desire for class equality and freedom from oppressive, and as he sees it, undeserving, nobility. Even before this point, both had demonstrated an ability to think freely; Tony by refusing to immediately bow to family pressure, and Morten by studying medicine rather than becoming a sea captain, as both his father and grandfather had done before him. Ironically, although it is Morten who wants freedom for a greater cause, it is Tony who eventually gives up her freedom for what she believes to be a greater cause.

Before long, Tony has decided that Morten is in fact the one she wishes to marry, and she communicates her intentions by means of a letter to her father. No sooner has this been conveyed, than Grünlich appears on the Schwarzkopfs’ doorstep to re-stake his claim on the young Demoiselle. Grünlich’s unexpected arrival is troublesome and displeasing, because it is the one thing that could spoil Tony’s stay, and in the end it does. With individuals from both sides determined that any flicker of romance be stamped out, Tony is promptly returned to the family home in Mengstrasse. Later as the novel progresses, her string of broken marriages only serves to highlight the true romance that she had, but in the end was denied. This is frustrating because she lets her chance at true love go so easily, and saddening because those who sacrifice their own personal happiness for the sake of the firm meet the same unfortunate ends as those who do not. Ironically, the journey that was supposed to help her ‘come to her senses’ does exactly that, only not in the way that her family had hoped or envisaged. In the end, we realize that this was her first—and only—step towards independence.

As one reads through the visits of both Hanno and Tony, the similarities between the two can seem almost overwhelming. Looking back, there are numerous instances where Hanno’s visit mirrors that of Tony, and vice versa. For example, as well as the joy of waking on their first morning in a new and exciting environment, both Tony and
Hanno seem to sleep peacefully and blissfully during their time spent at Travemünde. They also experience the same feelings of pleasure and delight that one does when starting anew: “erwachte Tony am nächsten Morgen mit dem angeregten und freudigen Gefühl, mit dem man in einer neuen Lebenslage die Augen öffnet” [Tony woke the next morning with the fresh, happy feeling which one has at the beginning of a new chapter] (93). Tony is also sleeping when Grünlich pays a visit to the Schwarzkopfs, perhaps alluding to the idea of blissful ignorance. The only time she does not is her last night there, where, for the first time since her arrival, she cannot sleep because of her nerves, her emotional exhaustion, and the anticipation of seeing her family again: “dann lehnte sie sich zurück und schloß die Augen, die müde und empfindlich waren. Sie hatte in der Nacht fast nicht geschlafen vor Erregung” [Then she leaned back and closed her tired and burning eyes. She had hardly slept for excitement... ] (116). Very similar to Tony, is the description of Hanno waking on his first morning there:

Ein unbestimmtes Glücksgefühl, das in seinem Körper emporsteig und sein Herz sich zusammenziehen ließ, schreckte ihn aufer öffnete die Augen und umfaßte mit einem gierigen und seligen Blick die altfränkischen Möbel des reinlichen kleinen Zimmers Eine Sekunde schlaftrunkene wonniger Verwirrung – und dann begriff er, daß er in Travemünde war, für vier unermessliche Wochen in Travemünde! (478)

[He would have a vague feeling of happiness that mounted in his brain and made his heart contract...he would open his eyes and look with eager pleasure at the old-fashioned furniture of the cleanly little room. A moment of dazed and sleepy bliss – then he would be conscious that he was in Travemünde, for four immeasurable weeks in Travemünde!]

The phrase ‘reinlichen kleinen Zimmers’ [clean little room] is particularly relevant, as almost these exact words are used in the depiction of Tony waking after her first night with the Schwarzkopfs. The fact that these two scenes are so synchronized means that a strong sense of unity and cohesion is created. His extraordinary attention to detail and his appreciation of seemingly banal aspects sets these passages apart as literary gems in an already impressive novel. Later, we read how Hanno sinks into a deep and contented sleep each evening, with Ida Jungmann to watch over him: “so senkte sich, kaum daß er wieder zwischen dem altersdünnen Linnen seines Bettes lag, zu den sanften und vollen Schlägen ebendieses befriedigten Herzens und den gedämpften Rhythmen des Abendkonzertes ganz ohne Schrecken und Fieber der Schlaf über ihn” [so he lay down in his little bed, between the soft old linen sheets, and almost at once sleep came over him, and he slept, to the subdued rhythm of the evening concert and the regular pulsations of his quiet heart] (481). This particular aspect is symbolic for a number of reasons. It not only shows that they are comfortable in their surroundings, but also that they are able to relax, away from pressure they experience in their everyday lives. Also, despite the fact that Tony stayed with the Schwarzkopfs and Hanno resided in the Kurhaus, the descriptions of the rooms and the views bear distinct resemblances. For Tony
blinzelte in den schmalen und blendenden Streifen vom Tageslicht, der zwischen den geschlossenen Läden hindurch ins Zimmer fiel... und damit sprang sie aus dem Bette und stieß die Fensterläden auf... Man sah über das Leuchtenfeld mit dem Turm weit über die krause See hinaus, die rechts im Bogen von der Mecklenburgischen Küste begrenzt war und sich in grünlichen und blauen Streifen erstreckte, bis sie mit dem dunstigen Horizon zusammenfloß. (93-4)

[blinked at the stream of light that poured through the closed shutters into the room...she jumped out of bed and opened the blinds...she looked out over the Leuchtenfeld with its tower, to the ruffled sea beyond. On the right it was bounded by the curve of the Mecklenburg coast, but before her it stretched on and on till its blue and green streaks mingled with the misty horizon.]

While for Hanno

das Zimmer lag in dem gelblichen Tageslicht, das schon durch das gestreifte Rouleau hereinfiel... Ein Anfall von Freude machte, daß er aus dem Bette sprang und nackten Füßen zum Fenster lief... Das Leuchtenfeld, das seinen Namen nach dem Leuchtturm trug, der irgendwo zur Rechten aufragte, dehnte sich unter dem weißlich bezogenen Himmel aus... Sie lag da, die See, in Frieden und Morgenlicht, in flaschengrünen und blauen, glatten und gekrausten Streifen. (478)

[the room lay in yellow daylight that came through the striped blind... an access of joy made him spring up and run barefoot to the window... the Leuchtenfeld, which took its name from the lighthouse that stood on it, somewhere off to the right, stretched its extent under the pale sky... it lay there, the sea, in peaceful morning light, striped blue and green... ]

Again, a distinct parallel is created. While reading one, we are instantly reminded of the other. The regular visits undertaken by the Consul each Sunday are also a common factor, though the way in which they are received varies. Tony happily welcomes these visitations, eager to show her father the ‘progress’ she has made: “Der Konsul betrachtete sie mit Wohlgefallen, wenn er sonntags mit Tom und Christian nach Travemünde kam” [The Consul looked at her with satisfaction when he came to Travemünde on Sundays with Tom and Christian] (101). Hanno, on the other hand, despises them and dreads the coming end of each week. Feeling that his father Thomas is there to watch his every move, he sees him as somewhat of an intruder and feels that his sphere of peaceful isolation is encroached upon. The pressure that he has come to Travemünde to get away from returns, and he views these weekend stays as nothing more than a reminder of what he left behind and desperately wants to avoid. Hanno looks forward to each Monday, when his father returns to town and he can resume his daily routine, which he carries out with a soothing rhythm: “Nein, er war froh, wenn am Montag alles wieder ins alltägliche Geleise kam...
seines Vaters, diese Augen, denen er sechs Tage lang fern gewesen war, und die, er hatte es wohl gefühlt, während des ganzen Sonntages wieder kritisch und forschend auf ihm geruht hatten, nicht mehr da waren” [No, he was glad when everything returned to its regular course on Monday, and he felt relieved to feel his father’s eyes no more upon him] (481). His wish to avoid his father, and the desperation that he feels, is comparable to Tony’s desire to avoid Grünlich and all that he represents. There are also the smaller, more understated details, such as the mentioning of eggs. When Hanno takes delight in being able to eat his eggs for breakfast with ordinary spoons instead of bone-handled ones, we are reminded of when Tony asks Morten “ist es wahr, daß ein Ei soviel wert ist wie ein Viertelpfund fleisch?” [Is it true that an egg is as good as a quarter of a pound of meat?] (95). Although subtle, this works extremely well, reminding us of her visit while we read of his, creating yet another link between the two.

Neither seems too concerned about spending much time with town society while they are there, though for slightly different reasons. For Tony, they are nothing but a reminder of her responsibilities and of Grünlich. This is one of the reasons why she is so pleased to be staying with the Schwarzkopfs, as they are somewhat detached from the town gossip, and she simply wants to enjoy the break from that particular social sphere. For Hanno, he sees them as nothing but an interruption to his peaceful and ordered routine. Although Tony is never permitted to marry her true love, perhaps even sadder is the way in which, like an obedient child, Tony accepts the path that her life takes. She would have undoubtedly led a happier and more fulfilling existence had she stayed with Morten but despite this, she holds no resentment towards her family and simply accepts that, for the greater good, it is her burden to bear. Throughout Buddenbrooks, she holds on to her childlike ability to accept everything that comes her way, even though it means that she is a broken and beaten down woman by the end of it. She does this because, for her, the family’s success and her own personal success are inextricably linked. It is unfortunate because she chooses to take on the responsibility she feels towards her family, at the same time that she falls in love with the one person who would be perfect for her. We see not only the family’s fortunes spiraling downward, but also how it could have been different, had the right choices been made.

Grünlich is subtly alluded to throughout Tony’s chapters, occurring as early on as the scene which describes her waking on her first morning with the Schwarzkopfs, and the view that she is confronted with: “Man sah über das Leuchtenfeld mit dem Turm weit über die K rause See hinaus, die rechts im Bogen von der mecklenburgischen Küste begrenzt war und sich in grünlichen und blauen Streifen erstreckte, bis sie mit dem dunstigen Horizont zusammenfloß” [She looked out over the Leuchtenfeld with its tower, to the ruffled sea beyond. On the right it was bounded by the curve of the Mecklenburg coast, but before her it stretched on and on till its blue and green streaks mingled with the misty horizon] (94). Also interesting is the “gelbgürnes, nasses Seegras” [yellow-green, wet seaweed] (102) that is mentioned, perhaps referring to the “grüngelben, wolligen und langschößigen Anzug” [fuzzy, greenish-yellow suit with a long-skirted coat] (70) that Grünlich was wearing the day he first met the Buddenbrook family, or perhaps to both Grünlich and his “goldgelbe Favoris” [golden-yellow whiskers] (107-8). Lastly, there are also references to the crashing waves that Tony
sees from the Travemünde shore: "Sie sahen die grünen, mit Seegras durchwachsenen Wände der Wellen an" [They looked at the green wall of wave, streaked with seaweed] (107). Therefore despite the fact that Grünlich is probably the last thing on Tony's mind, we are nevertheless subtly reminded not only of his existence, but also that we have not yet seen the back of him. The "grüne und blaue Unendlichkeit" [the green and blue infinity] (479) and "das hellgrüne kristallklare Wasser" [the light green, crystal clear water] (479) is also mentioned in Hanno's chapter, perhaps to create unity and cohesion between the two scenes more than anything else.

Another aspect worth considering is the weather, and the substantial role that it plays throughout the text. When the weather begins to take a turn for the worse, so do the events at Travemünde. It has a way of foreshadowing - this is certainly the case when Grünlich appears unannounced in the middle of a downpour, and when the weather turns grey and somewhat tempestuous as soon as Hanno's thoughts stray to his inevitable return home. Then there are also characters that are present in both scenes, such as Peter Döhlmann, who again serve as bonding elements. Hanno describes "Konsul Peter Döhlmann, der seine Tochter zu Hause gelassen hatte und mit schallender Stimme auf plattdeutsch so ungenierte Geschichten erzählte, daß die Hamburger Damen vor Lachen husteten und um einen Augenblick Pause baten" [Consul Peter Döhlmann, who had left his daughter at home, and told such extremely funny stories that the ladies from Hamburg laughed until their sides ached and they begged him for mercy] (489) as he sees him from a distance, while Tony meets the same Konsul Döhlmann on one of her walks along the beach: "Peter Döhlmann, mit einem breitkrempigen Strohhut und rundgeschnittenem Schifferbart, stand plaudernd bei den Damen, die auf Plaids im Sande lagen oder auf kleinen Sesseln aus Segeltuch saßen" [Peter Döhlmann, with a broad-brimmed straw hat and a beard with a nautical cut, stood chatting with the ladies perched on camp-stools or stretched out on rugs on the sand] (98-9). In spite of the fact that their visits occur almost three decades apart, Konsul Döhlmann seems to be playing a similar role, socializing with the ladies from town. Almost like Hanno's mother Gerda, he seems to have not aged and this only serves to strengthen the idea of Travemünde as being a place that defies time itself.

'Quallen' are also mentioned in both scenes. For Tony, they are particularly meaningful because they come to represent her time at Travemünde, and the story she tells Morten of them is something personal that she chooses to share with him: "Ich wollte die bunten Sterne aus den Quallen heraushaben. Ich trug eine ganze Menge Quallen im Taschentuche nach Hause und legte sie säuberlich auf den Balkon in die Sonne, damit sie verdunsteten... dann mußten die Sterne doch übrigbleiben! Ja, schön Als ich nachsah, war da ein ziemlich großer nasser Fleck. Es roch nur ein bißchen nach faulem Seetang" [I wanted the bright star out of the jelly-fish, so I brought a lot home in my pocket-handkerchief and put them on the balcony, to dry in the sunshine. When I looked at them again, of course there was just a big wet spot that smelled of seaweed] (102). It could be said that they symbolize her naivety, and the childlike nature that she holds on to throughout the novel, or perhaps, subconsciously, it also refers to Grünlich and the fact that he does not prove to be all that he made himself out to be. Then again, her unsuccessful attempt to get "die bunten Sterne aus den Quallen" [the bright stars out of the jelly-fish] (102) could possibly be a metaphor for
her failed attempt at true love. The fact that she says “Wollen Sie wissen, wie dumm ich früher war?” [I used to be frightfully stupid, you know] (102), also alludes to the notion that she has developed and matured during her stay, and that her experiences with Morten at Travemünde have expanded her outlook on life. Later, as she reminisces with Hanno, the story is retold and this not only heightens the parallel between the two scenes, but also illustrates the affinity that she has with Hanno – something she shared with Morten, she is also willing to share with him, and this is something that she has never done for anyone else. In Hanno’s scene, the ‘Quallen’ are only mentioned in passing but it works effectively to remind us of Tony’s visit: “Es gab Tage, an denen der Nordostwind die Bucht mit schwarzgrüner Flut überfüllte, welche den Strand mit Tang, Muscheln und Quallen bedeckte” [There were days on which the north-east wind filled the bay with dark green floods, covering the beach with seaweed, mussels and jelly-fish] (481).

The objects that they find strewn across the beach are also similar – weiße Muscheln, Seegras and Quallen [white mussel shells, seaweed and jelly-fish] are all mentioned in both scenes. The pastimes and activities that are mentioned also draw parallels between the two scenes. Weite Spaziergänge, rudern über die Trave and Bernstein finden [long walks, rowing across the Trave and looking for amber] are all spoken of, as well as the boats coming and going out in the harbour. In some ways, this acts as a gentle, constant - and again slightly rhythmic - reminder of time slowly passing. Furthermore, the walks that are taken are also significant. For Tony, it is on these weite Spaziergänge that she gets to know Morten intimately, shares her first kiss, and is finally given the opportunity to hold a conversation with someone who does not view her as a child, nor treats her like one. This is particularly the case on the walk that takes them along the beach to the Seetempel, a beautiful, old, round pavilion up on the hill that overlooks the sea. It is this setting that is perhaps one of the most charming and picturesque of all the Travemünde scenes - as the howling of the wind and the crashing of the waves is quelled to just a dull roar, the two sit together in the now quiet pavilion, and enjoy not only the pleasure of each other’s company, but also the beauty of their surroundings. At this point it becomes clear just how comfortable Tony feels with Morten and, for a moment, her troubles with Grünlich are truly forgotten.

For Hanno, the walks he takes along the beach not only provide his time spent there with a regular and relaxing routine, but he also uses this as his personal time out:

Ein Spaziergang zur Erwärmung, den Strand entlang, bis zum Möwenstein oder zum Seetempel Und doch war das klügste stets, zur See zurückzukehren und noch im Zwielicht, das Gesicht dem offenen Horizonte zugewandt, auf der Spitze des Bollwerks zu sitzen Welch ein beruhigtes befriedigtes und in wohltätiger Ordnung arbeitendes Herz er immer mitnahm vom Meere! (480-1)

[A walk followed, to warm oneself up, along the beach to Seagull Rock or Ocean Temple... and best of all was it to go back to the beach and sit in the twilight on the end of the breakwater... how calm his heart felt, how evenly it beat, after a visit to the sea!].
In some respects, the way Morten makes Tony feel is similar to the way that Travemünde makes Hanno feel.

Hanno is aware that the day will eventually come when he will have to return to his monotonous and tedious existence. Because of this, as soon as he reaches the halfway point he seems almost incapable of enjoying what is left, as he can only focus on what awaits him on his return back home. For Tony, on the other hand, her time at Travemünde ends somewhat abruptly, and the fact that she is denied the opportunity to properly farewell Morten only adds to the injustice of it all. Like Hanno, she also promises to treasure her time spent there, and to use it to console herself when life becomes hard to bear: “Sie rief alles alles ins Gedächtnis zurück, was sie in vielen Gesprächen von ihm gehört und erfahren hatte, und es bereitete ihr eine beglückende Genugtuung, sich feierlich zu versprechen, daß sie alles als etwas Heiliges und Unantastbares in sich bewahren wollte” [She recalled everything that she had heard and learned from him in many a talk, and it solaced her to promise herself that she would preserve all this as a secret holy and inviolate] (117). Although she cannot be with Morten, she can cherish the time that she had with him and know that, despite what comes her way, it is something that can never be taken away from her. This becomes even more symbolic, as it is something that she can keep close and personal to her while almost everything else in her life seems to be a relatively public affair, never far from the scrutinizing eyes of others. Amid his sorrow and heartache at having to leave Travemünde, Hanno promises himself the same thing:

Er wollte sich der See und des Kurgartens erinnern, wenn alles wieder auf ihn einstürmte, und ein ganz kurzer Gedanke an das Geräusch, mit dem abends in der Stille die kleinen Wellen, weither, aus der in geheimnisvollem Schlummer liegenden Ferne kommend, gegen das Bollwerk geplanscht hatten, sollte ihn so getrost, so unberührbar gegen alle Widrigkeiten machen. (483)

[When the waves of tribulation went over him once more he would think of the sea and of the Kur Garten, and of the sound made by the little waves, coming hither out of the mysterious slumbering distance. One single memory of the sound they made as they splashed against the breakwater could make him oppose an invincible front to all the pains and penalties of his life]

The routes to and from Travemünde also take on a routine, or pattern, and Hanno’s trip both there and back mirrors that of Tony’s. The journey gradually becomes familiar and personal, and the reader soon knows that: “Dann kam die Fähre, es kam die Israelsdorfer Allee, der Jerusalemberg, das Burgfeld” [then came the ferry, and Israelsdorfer Avenue Jerusalem Hill and the Castle Field] (118). The scenes of departure also provide some of the most memorable moments of the entire novel. The scene of Tony leaving Travemünde is nothing short of heartbreaking, and one that mirrors Hanno’s own departure. Both do not wish to leave, and are envious of those who can stay there and live the carefree, uncomplicated lives that they also wish for themselves: “Am Ausgang der Vorderreihe saßen die Leute vor ihren Haustüren und
flickten Netze; barfüßige Kinder kamen herbeigelaufen und betrachteten neugierig
den Wagen. Die blieben hier” [At the end of the front people sat in the doors of their
cottages and mended nets; barefoot children came running to look curiously at the
carriage. They did not have to go away] (116). Just as Thomas comforted Tony, Ida
Jungmann comforts Hanno, with the soothing way she calls him Hannochen (483),
reminiscent of how she also spoke to Tony as a young girl. As the novel progresses,
it becomes apparent that both Thomas, and to an extent Ida, have both had more
experience of loss than either Tony or Hanno give them credit for.

For the young Buddenbrooks, the happiness and pleasure that they experience
is emphasized and highlighted even further by the lives that they know they must
eventually return to, out of duty to the family. Travemünde for them has meant freedom
– not only from family expectations, rough classmates and town gossip, but also the
freedom to pursue their own goals and develop intellectual independence.

Eventually, everything is drawn together when Hanno returns home and he and
Tony discuss their respective visits: “Das bereitwilligste Verständnis noch für seinen
Schmerz um die See, diese Wunde, die so langsam vernarbte und, von der geringsten
Härte des Alltages berührt, wieder zu brennen und zu bluten begann, fand Hanno bei
Tante Antonie, die ihn mit ersichtlichem Vergnügen vom Travemünder Leben erzählen
hörte und auf seine sehnsüchtigen Lobpreisungen lebhaften Herzens einging” [It was
Aunt Antonie who best understood his yearning for the sea, and the wound in his heart
that healed so slowly and was so likely to bleed afresh after the strain of everyday
life. Aunt Antonie loved to hear him talk about Travemünde, and entered freely into
his longings and enthusiasm] (485). What Tony confides in Hanno simply confirms
what we have known all along – that she has never forgotten Morten or her time there,
and regards it as the period that shaped her beliefs and outlook on life for the better.
At Travemünde, although she was confronted with a life that she was not destined
to pursue, it nevertheless became a sacred place for her. She thinks back fondly on
her days in there, not only because they were wonderful but also because of how her
life was in comparison afterwards. When she describes to Hanno the warm and kind-
hearted people living there, although they are not mentioned by name we know she is
speaking of the Schwarzkopfs, and of Morten in particular: “Es waren brave Leute,
will ich dir sagen, bieder, gutherzig und gradsinnig und außerdem so gescheut, gelehrt
und begeistert, wie ich später im Leben überhaupt keine mehr gefunden habe” [They
were splendid people, I can tell you, respectable and kind-hearted and straight-thinking,
and they were cleverer and better-educated too, than any I’ve known since] (485). This
is easily recognizable due to the word gelehrt – one that Tony had previously used
to describe Morten after her first blushing encounter with him. Even though Hanno
does not say much himself, he appreciates how much his Aunt Tony understands, and
is thankful that he has an ‘ally’ in this way. This becomes even more clear when Dr.
Langhals pays a visit to check up on his health after he has returned from the coast
– when his mother Gerda explains to Dr. Langhals that he still has “Heimweh nach
der See” [homesickness for the sea] (484) she does not seem to entirely realize the
weight that this carries, and this is significant because it is she who Hanno is usually
closest to. Upon his arrival back home, it is obvious that his time away has only
made him dreamier and more sensitive, and even less capable of performing the role he knows is expected of him. Hanno’s health seems to worsen more rapidly after he returns from his summer sojourn, so in some ways, what was initially intended as a break to revive and strengthen him, has actually sealed his fate.

In terms of personality, Hanno and Tony are complete opposites, which is why this bond they have is so exceptional, and so unique. Unlike his Aunt, Hanno is totally removed from the family business ethos. He does not feel the same compulsion to uphold the Buddenbrook name and position in society that she does. In fact, the greatest hopes and plans for the future have been pinned on the person least able and least suited to carry them out. However, despite their many differences, what unites them is the fact that they both spent the happiest days of their childhood – in fact their lives – at Travemünde. It is something they can share, that no other member of the family can be a part of, and this brings them closer together. It is only when Tony speaks to Hanno about his time in Travemünde that she seems to feel a real connection with her nephew, and sees him in another light, not just as the heir of the Buddenbrook family business.

The visits of both Hanno and Tony become even more significant in the way that they create avenues of potential, windows of possibilities, glimpses of ‘what may have been’: If Hanno had remained at Travemünde, would his health have been better? Would he have lived longer? If Tony had married Morten, would the Buddenbrook family have avoided ruin? Would she have become more independent and relied less on the success of her family as an indication of her own personal success? Interestingly, they were both sent to the coast for a purpose, by their family who had certain objectives and intentions in mind. However this does not happen, in fact it proves to have the opposite effect.

During these blissful summer weeks that they spend at the shore, they seem to have the freedom to show a side of themselves that they never could within the confines of the rigid family ethos, or within town society. It is a place of retreat, a sanctuary away from the everyday routine that seems to gradually wear them down. It is also one of the only counter-forces against the dissolution of the Buddenbrook family. For the first, and perhaps only time, Tony is able to put thoughts of the family and business out of her head. For Hanno it is a sanctuary, a place away from the trials of everyday life and the expectations of his father, expectations he has no desire to fulfill. Apart from music and his companion Kaj, it is the only other thing that he loves.

Hanno and Tony share an almost intoxicating love of Travemünde, and the memories that they treasure and from their time spent there are never forgotten, or even kept in the past. This is especially the case for Tony, who seems to retain every moment, every word spoken, fresh in her memory. Mann’s remarkable ability to use mirroring between the two scenes also seems to create a disregard for any awareness of time, and this goes even further to enhance the unity between two characters who would have otherwise had little in common. For both Tony and Hanno, it was in every sense a ‘love affair with Travemünde’.
6. THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION, ENLIGHTENMENT IDEAS, AND DARWIN’S THEORY OF EVOLUTION

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Published in 1543, Copernicus’ De Revolutionibus and the resulting dethronement of the earth and humanity “dealt a blow to human pride” (92).¹ In the wake of Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, and their contemporaries, science and religion came into conflict and the confined, neatly ordered medieval world view formulated from Christian and Aristotelian beliefs was permanently shattered. The vistas of knowledge opened up by the rejection of the stagnant Aristotelian conception of nature and the cosmos gave rise to a new form of empiricism pioneered during the Scientific Revolution. The initial split from the medieval world view and its religious autonomy during this period paved the way for the rational, deist ideas of the Enlightenment. In many ways Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution completed the permanent division of religion and science, as his followers, most notably T. H. Huxley, would triumphantly assert (8).² Jill Cook notes that, under Darwin, people in the nineteenth century “had to adjust from belief in a magnificent genesis to bacterial origins in a primordial soup” (92). As the ideas of the Enlightenment fostered Darwin’s theory, this increased the separation of faith from science, as the most basic tenets of Darwinian evolution were seemingly at odds with those of Christianity (79).³

In the eighteenth century, the Marquis de Condorcet glorified Copernicus as having redesigned the cosmos with “extreme simplicity... in contrast to the almost fatuous complexity of Ptolemy” (115).⁴ Condorcet added that, to Galileo, mankind owed “the first mathematical theory of motion that was not at once uniform and rectilinear” (115). Copernicus and Galileo can therefore be seen as founding European scientific thought in the sixteenth century, which would eventually have a profound impact on Enlightenment ideas. Copernicus replaced the complicated Aristotelian and Ptolemaic geocentric system of the cosmos with the heliocentric model, although epicycles would not be entirely removed from calculations until Kepler discovered that planets moved

in ellipses. Not only did Copernicus' theory have no substantial proof, it directly contradicted Psalms 93 and 103, which stated that the earth was fixed. As Perry Marvin affirms, it took Galileo to "shatter the medieval conception of the cosmos and shape the modern scientific outlook" (72). Galileo denounced blind reliance on written authority. With the aid of a telescope he was able to ascertain that the conception of the earth, as the sole center of the universe around which all planets revolve, was false. He also found imperfections in the surface of the moon and the existence of sunspots, which disproved the Aristotelian belief that the universe beyond the moon was perfect and imperishable (55-6). Furthermore, he established laws of motion that would counter the stock arguments against the idea of the revolving earth. In the wake of the Reformation, this theory was stamped out by the Inquisition. His work was prohibited and he was forced to abjure his statements, as the heliocentric system "undermined the entire system of a hierarchically ordered universe—a cosmology deemed central to the Christian view of life, death, and the individual's relationship to God" (Marvin 69-70).

A devout Christian like Copernicus, Galileo did not set out to enter into conflict. His letter to the Duchess Christiana in 1616 attempted to reconcile his theories with Christian doctrine by stating that the pronouncements in the Psalms were to simplify concepts for the ignorant, whereas the learned could understand the deeper truth (2-7). However, Cardinal Bellarmine pointed out that patristic writings, then considered to be equally canonical, also stated that the earth was at the center of the universe and did not move. This unyielding stand by the Catholic Church, and indeed by Luther, who disapproved of Copernicans, created the division between religion and science that would eventually foster the Enlightenment ideas and provide the imaginative space for Darwin to hypothesize his theory of evolution (Westfall 8).

Newton's *Principia Mathematica*, published in 1687, was "the climax of the Scientific Revolution" (Marvin 68). He provided the mathematical and physical proof to verify the heliocentric system. Later Enlightenment *philosophes*, most notably Voltaire, seized upon his voluntarist model of the universe, in which everything could be explained by mechanical theory and the existence of God (134). Newton himself believed in an interventionist god and in his letters to Robert Bentley spoke at length about this belief with particular concern for the function of comets (330-339). Crucially, however, the Scientific Revolution bequeathed to the Enlightenment, and then to Victorian biologists, the concept of empiricism, which had been evident in Galileo's rejection of Aristotelian authority but later refined into two separate models.

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The Scientific Revolution, Enlightenment ideas, and Darwin’s Theory of Evolution

by Descartes and Bacon. Newton disapproved of Descartes’ deductive, *a posteriori* method. However, Bacon’s *a priori* method of logical inductive reasoning was adopted by Newton, and then embraced by the Enlightenment thinkers as a central tenet of their beliefs. In the fourth rule set out in the *Principia* Newton states:

[I]n experimental philosophy we are to look upon propositions collected by general induction from phenomena as accurately or as very nearly true, notwithstanding any contrary hypotheses that may be imagined, till such time as other phenomena occur, by which they may either be made more accurate, or liable to exceptions. (qtd. in Hyland 39)

Marvin declares that Newton’s mechanical universe and belief in empirical observation formed the “foundation blocks of the Age of Enlightenment” (82). In the conclusion to the second edition of the *Opticks*, Newton claimed that his empirical method, utilized within, would, if followed, perfect natural philosophy “in all its parts” (qtd. in Feingold 157).

In their courtship of reason, the Enlightenment philosophes took Newton and Bacon’s theories for their own models. According to Feingold, Newton was seen as the man who “ushered in a brave new age of reason and light that went well beyond the natural sciences to include the totality of human knowledge” (102). Voltaire said of Newton and his generation of natural philosophers that they “found out a new universe,” as Voltaire and the Marquise du Chatelet proselytised and popularised Newtonian physics (Feingold 153). Voltaire went so far as to translate them into comprehensible French in the *Elémens de la philosophie de Newton*. While Voltaire was not an atheist, he was a confirmed opponent of organized religion and took Newton’s voluntarist theory and used it for his own “evangelical mission,” which almost had the air of a “secular religion” (104). So too did deist materialists, who claimed that “if matter were active ... the natural world did not need to be directed by a divine being” (Hyland 37). From the divorce of science and religion, initiated under Copernicus and Galileo, deist thinkers of the eighteenth century, such as Locke and Hume, extrapolated the theories from the *Opticks* and the *Principia* and used them for their own agendas, which were frequently anti-religion. Although the new science did not generate deism, it proved a useful tool. According to Marvin, among the philosophes there was a new perception of scientific “formulation of a new method of inquiry into nature,” and by the end of the eighteenth century “it became less necessary to think of nature and justify scientific enquiries in religious terms” (80, 250).

The secularisation of science by the Enlightenment thinkers called into question basic religious beliefs such as the creation of the earth, which, according to canon, took place five to six thousand years ago. Erasmus Darwin, an English physician and natural philosopher, proposed that the earth was many millions of years older, as did


Charles Lyell and the Comte de Buffoon, whose *Histoire Naturelle* (1749) postulated the study of an a priori history of the earth rather than an assumption of the Flood. Similarly, the young Charles Darwin’s journey to South America on the *HMS Beagle* provided him with a wealth of fossil samples, many from species no longer extant. Darwin eventually formed the theory of natural selection driven by the Malthusian notion of a struggle for resources. Marvin states that Charles Darwin did for biology what Newton did for physics, namely, that he opened it up to empiricism, and that where the Scientific Revolution “had produced a new conception of space, Darwin radically altered our conception of time” (249). Marvin adds that, like Newton, Darwin’s theory seriously undermined Christian doctrine, as the literal truth of the scriptures became dubious, and concepts like the Fall, Original Sin, and redemption were called into question, as the Bible itself was stripped of all scientific authority (251). However, many of Darwin’s supporters, such as Wallace, were themselves devout Christians. Others, like T. H. Huxley, dubbed “Darwin’s Bulldog,” deliberately used the new theories to undermine Victorian society and to argue for a society whose “chief point of reference... was new Nature, rather than god, heaven, or human nature” (Turner 8).

It has been shown that the theories and events of the Scientific Revolution directly paved the way for the thinkers of the Enlightenment in the following century. Despite the intentions of their Christian formulators, the theories of Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton called into sufficient doubt the tenets of Christianity so as to provide a base for later attacks on organised religion during the Enlightenment. Similarly, the manner in which Copernicus and Galileo questioned unthinking reliance on entrenched religious authority in favor of empirical observation was echoed by Newton and the Enlightenment thinkers, finally extending to Darwin’s biological studies in the nineteenth century. Lustig notes that in the Victorian era it “seemed obvious that there had been a war between science and religion and that the materialist scientists had won” (55). According to Marvin, Copernicus had begun the process with the publication of *De Revolutionibus* and Galileo and Newton’s proof of Copernicus’ hypothesis “deprived people of the comforting belief that the earth had been placed in the center of the universe just for them.” In a similar fashion, Darwin “deprived people of the privilege of being God’s special creation” (252-3). On the Scientific Revolution, Condorcet notes “it is then that the critical spirit was born which alone can make learning truly useful,” a reflection that was carried through into European scientific discoveries during the next two centuries (117).
7. SHARED ENCOUNTERS: TOWARD A QUEER COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

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There is something queer about comparative literature, and this queerness resonates in Ed Ahearn and Arnold Weinstein's description of the motivating impulse behind the discipline of Comparative Literature:

Pluralist is doubtless not the best term for our composite venture, because it suggests inert groupings, whereas the deepest energies of our work—along grounds that are conceptual, moral, and political—have to do with encounter, with parallels and contrasts and juxtapositions that are motivated, critical, and eye-opening. (78)1

Emphasis on the word “encounter” is enhanced by the last adjective of the sentence, “eye-opening,” as Ahearn and Weinstein’s discipline desires the shock of unsettlement, a shock that retracts eye-lids, causes pupils to dilate, and emanates in waves from the recognition of sameness and difference in others. Queer theory too concerns itself with encounter, both between bodies and fantasies but also between contexts which may engender new ways of being and desiring. As Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner write, queer theory has always attempted to “bring a world into being” (344), a site where encounters may occur in previously unthinkable, inexpressible ways.2

Yet despite motivations drawn from the same churn of energies, queer theory and comparative literature have remained chaste with respect to one another, as their current status is best described as a missed encounter. Problematically confined to a mainly US context, queer theory has yet to make significant movements across cultural borders, a lack often cited as a failing of queer theory (Goldie 21).3 Meanwhile, comparative

The European Connection

literature has yet to enter noticeably into one of queer theory's main national territories (Ahearn and Weinstein 77), or to broach fully the theoretical issues raised by queer literary analysis. As a result, queer theory requires some introduction in order to sketch out the possible fruitful futures for these two critical modes that seem to have so much to offer one another.

While not an excuse, the limited cross-cultural movement of queer theory may at least be explained by the fact that it emerged as a theoretical terrain largely in response to a set of factors specific to a late-twentieth century US context. During Gay and Lesbian Liberation movements of the later 1970s, large populations of queerly-desiring individuals began to feel silenced and otherwise excluded by these movements' reliance on ethnic minority models in order to assert an identifiable (and therefore representable) gay and lesbian population (Jagose 61). At the same time, recent critical theories derived from the work of scholars like Saussure, Althusser, Freud, Lacan, and Michel Foucault provided a means to revisit the problematic politics of the previous decades (79). These theorists offered critiques that radically challenged the notions of a natural or essential basis for gender and sex (3). As activists and the academy began to explore the possibilities opened up by post-structuralist theories, the HIV/AIDS epidemic struck, and the late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a reintegration of homophobia and radical activism (93-94). Out of these conditions arose the critical notion of the queer that, according to David Halperin, demarcates

not a positivity but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative— a positionality that is not restricted to lesbians and gay men but is in fact available to anyone who is or who feels marginalized because of her or his sexual practices: it could include married couples without children, for example, or even (who knows?) some married couples with children— with, perhaps very naughty children. “Queer”, in any case, does not designate a class of already objectified pathologies or perversions; rather, it describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogeneous scope cannot in principle be delimited in advance. (62)

Queer theory, with its “definitional indeterminacy” (Jagose 1), then attends to the perpetual shifting of the queer and the continual resistance to the norm that occasions these shifts. From these resistances, queer relations become both expressible and liveable. In this way, queer theory sought to address the questions of, and problems with, gender and sexual desire emerging from the last half of the twentieth century.

Yet almost immediately after queer theory's formulation, scholars lodged numerous criticisms against it. Frequently, postcolonial and Marxist literary theorists led the charge against queer theory, citing ethnocentrism and a bourgeois mentality as queer theory's two chief failings, for, as Rob Cover writes:

The assumption that world-wide sexual subjects transgressing heteronormativity operate in the same way is a chief failing of much queer theory; it ignores the different inflections class and postcolonial ethnicity perform on the sexual subject.... The vast majority of queer theoretical analysis has concentrated not on broad notions of sexual constructionism but on close examination of the bourgeois constructs of lesbian and gay in the West. (31)6

Dennis Altman echoes Cover’s argument, exposing queer theory’s problematic national inflection: “American ‘queer theory’ remains as relentlessly Atlantic-centric in its view of the world as the mainstream culture it critiques” (3).7Underscoring the critical arrogance that Altman implicitly cautions against, Terry Goldie decries how queer analysis operates “as if the Americaness of gay and lesbian studies is a given that requires no justification, no explanation and no apology” (15). As a result, Goldie sternly warns that this brashness only instates a “universal sexual orientation which not surprisingly looks very American” (21).

In an attempt to rectify these perceived failings, numerous academics sought to trace connections between queer theory and cross-cultural criticism with a 1994 issue of Diacritics entitled “Cross-Identifications,” marking one of the earliest of these attempts.8Four years later, the editors and contributors of a special issue of ARIEL: An International Review of Literature sought to reconcile specifically the queer with postcolonial frameworks. In 2001, John C. Hawley edited and released two collections of essays, which also sought to establish connections between postcolonial and queer theories.9Most recently, a special issue of Social Text, and works like Queer Migrations edited by Eithne Luibhéid and Lionel Cantú Jr., have continued the slow exploration of queer theory’s cross-cultural applications.

With the possible exception of these more recent works, each of these sites of theoretical and methodological encounter have largely concerned themselves with the specific reconciliation of queer theory with postcolonial theories only. While this reconciliation explores the relevance and adaptability of queer theory beyond the US, and while a few pieces contained in those volumes do undertake literary analyses, critics have yet to launch a thorough investigation of queer theory and comparative literature’s potential relevance for each other. The general absence of theoretical explorations, and the small number of concrete examples of a queer comparative literature, demands at least a tentative sketching of the potentially important work

8 See: Diacritics 24.2/3 (1994).
such a merger might enable, framed, for the sake of this discussion, in terms of what George Steiner lists as the three primary aims of comparative literature: translation, reception and thematics (Comparative Literature 14).10

The most obvious starting point for the discussion of a queer comparative literature is in the realm of thematics, which takes as its subject the “remarkable economy of motifs” that “prevail in mythologies, folk-tales, and the telling of stories in literature the world over” (Steiner, Comparative Literature 13). At the simplest level, a queer thematic analysis would attend to themes and representations of sexual desire. However, such an analysis would seek to do more than simply establish a new genre – a “sex and gender” theme - for critical investigation. A queer thematic analysis would, instead, aim at something more fundamental. Steiner writes that “[i]n the West twentieth-century art, music, film, literature has returned incessantly to classical mythology; to Oedipus, to Elektra, to Medea, to Odysseus, to Narcissus, to Hercules, or Helen of Troy” (13). In the majority of these stories, sexual desire charges a significant portion of the narrative, from Medea’s desire for Jason to the incest of Oedipus; and from Narcissus’s deadly self-love to the sexual heroics of Hercules. In many ways, these stories provide the basis for how we have come to conceive of ourselves as sexual subjects over the past century. A queer thematic analysis would then explore the centrality of desire as it winds its way through the foundational narratives of the West in order to better understand how desire operates within contemporary fictions.

A queer comparative thematics, then, would lay these narratives alongside those from other cultures in order to unsettle and reformulate historical and cultural notions of how we read and write about desire. Wendy Doniger anticipates these critical insights in her discussion of Vatsayana’s third-century erotic manual and, in the process, challenges the West’s self-centred teleology of sexual liberation (Altman 14): “There is nothing remotely like [the Kamasutra] even now, and for its time it was astonishingly sophisticated. It was already well known in India at a time when Europeans were still swinging in trees, culturally (and sexually) speaking” (Doniger 18).11 Doniger’s discussion of the Kamasutra’s surprisingly modern themes of “finding a partner, maintaining power in a marriage, committing adultery, living as or with a courtesan, using drugs— and also... positions in sexual intercourse” (20), at once traces the theme of sexual desire in another culture while also exploring how this theme traces through the social relations of that culture, both in the third century as well as in the modern day. In comparison with western texts, such as a “Chick-Lit” novel by Lisa Jewel or a short story by John Updike, a work like the Kamasutra would alert us as western readers to the threads of desire in our own narratives as well as provide a point of comparison for the production and transmission of sexual knowledge in the West.

A queer thematic analysis would also trans-historically attend to how the West conceives of, and relates to, the sexual desire of other cultures. For example, Joseph Boone explores how orientalist discourse authorised the previously illicit homosexual desires of authors journeying to colonial North Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a geographic and cultural region seen by Europe as a bastion for male homosexual activity (45). Yet Boone also demonstrates the complexity of desire's operations across cultures through his analysis of a 1967 novel by Mohammed Mrabet, which represents trade with European sex tourists as an acceptable, if not favourable, means for teenage boys and young men to establish the wealth to marry (68).

As the awareness of other ways of desiring grows so too will the ability to recognise the power accorded to these themes of sex and gender. Jarrod Hayes, in the opening to his essay “Queer Resistance to (Neo-)colonialism in Algeria,” uses a poem by Jean Sénac to suggest that the poetic expression of homosexual desire marked a direct challenge to French colonial rule (80). Both Hayes and Boone's discussions display the importance of sexual themes in other cultures. What is more, through their investigation of other “homosexualities,” they provide a direct challenge to the homo/hetero binary central to the definition of western sexualities.

The ability to gauge the impact of these themes as they cross cultural boundaries depends on what Steiner locates as Comparative Literature’s second concern: the reception of literary texts: “[T]he careful investigation of the history of publication... of the sale and transport of books and periodicals, of library facilities or the absence thereof in any given period and locale, are vitally illuminating. Who read, who could read what and when?” (11-2). If thematics focuses on what gets represented, reception attends to the production and distribution as well as to the impact and use of those representations in different contexts across cultures and time. Altman provides an example of what a reception-based approach might do for queer theory with his discussion of the complex and uneven impact of gay and lesbian texts throughout South East Asia. Altman notes that, while gay male presses have grown and multiplied throughout various Asian countries, a general dearth of lesbian-themed publications and presses remains: “[L]esbians remain almost invisible when their conditions are compared to those in western countries and except for Thailand there is little public information about lesbian worlds” (5).

Comparative queer analysis thus becomes a means of addressing this disparity of production; an inequality bound up as much in issues of sexual and gender difference as in differences of culture and class, for, as Cover writes: “There is freedom to express sexuality, but only as long as queer groups are a market, only as long as they are sold to corporate enterprise by lesbian/gay media publications as affluent consumers


with ready cash” (36). A queer comparative study of reception would then attempt to understand the production and reception of representations of sex and gender in terms of the cultural and material conditions that permit these representations to be received in various locations around the world.

Yet the analysis of a literary text’s reception also involves the impact of that representation on the culture that receives it. Altman, for example, notes that the influx of western gay fiction into various Asian countries, combined with a reliance of various queer Asian presses on western publications for images and text, produces a complex muddle of sexual identification (2). According to Altman, Asian men, on the one hand, aspire to a universal “gayness” based on western representations while at the same time undermine that identification through an assertion of a uniquely “Asian identity” (2). Such conflict complicates the simplistic notion of an unchallenged, oppressively imposed, universal homosexual identity. Instead, this tension of identification demonstrates a queer dynamic at work between “universalising rhetorics and styles,” and “the continued existence of cultural and social traditions” (4).

Altman’s work, in essence, demonstrates that the movement of representations across cultural boundaries has a dramatic impact on the receiving audience and on the representations themselves. Placing the reception of these narratives alongside those of other cultures may reveal the various contextual factors that contribute to the particular reception of each culture and, because cultures are far from homogenous, the specific groups within these cultures as well. In turn, comparative analysis may also reveal how each cultural community’s reading either aligns itself with, or greatly queers the reading of, another culture, thus demonstrating the importance of context in how we express sex and gender, as well as providing new insights into the composition of the sexual narrative itself.

A discussion of the nature of the text returns this discussion to what Steiner locates as the primary concern of comparative literature: literary translation (Comparative Literature 11), which ostensibly has little to do with the study of sexual desire and gender. For Steiner,

Comparative literature listens and reads after Babel. It posits the intuition, the hypothesis that, far from being a disaster, the multiplicity of human tongues, some twenty thousand of which we have, at various times, been spoken on this small planet, has been the enabling condition of men and women’s freedom to perceive, to articulate, to ‘re-draft’ the existential world in manifold freedom. (9)

However, I would argue that hints of an erotic nature glisten on the tips of Steiner’s multiplicity of tongues. This nature speaks itself more explicitly in Steiner’s description of the successful translator’s petit mort, “the Augustinian tristitia which follows on the cognate acts of erotic and of intellectual possession” (Babel 314).14 Susan Holbrook seizes this description and underscores the aggressive and violent tones of Steiner’s

“possession,” drawing linkages with hegemonic masculinity and the oppressiveness of translations guided by imperialist ideologies (235). In place of Steiner’s formulation, Holbrook posits an erotics of translation based on a notion of fluidity. This notion is characterised by shifts “in phrasing, in stress, in mood, gentle and slick, in concert with moments when the translation leans in close to the source, [to] produce a dynamic of fluid exchange” (236). Holbrook contextualises this erotic in terms of Canadian poets Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt’s mutual translation of each other’s work: “Lost letters, faux pas, indiscreet syllables ensure that the [erotic] arrows in the Marlatt-Brossard exchange are not so straight” (237). In championing “fluidity” over “fluency” (236), Holbrook produces a self-reflexive mode of translation that embraces textual play, the intentional use of error and the blending of tongues. The devices result in a text whose otherness also marks a queerness, where meaning erupts, congeals and dissolves perpetually in the act of reading. If, for Steiner, “comparative literature is jubilant at the intractable diversity of Babel” (Comparative Literature 10), then a queer comparative literature rejoices too in the Fall.

As Holbrook’s essay exemplifies, a bringing to bear of queer theory on comparative literary study may very well reveal similar energies driving translation and queer theory. In lamenting the death of languages, Steiner claims such a loss “closes that which Kierkegaard bade us keep open if our humanity was to evolve: ‘the wounds of possibility’” (10). Kierkegaard’s wounds resonate with Halperin’s “horizon’s of possibility,” the similarity between the other’s language and the other’s desire may then permit us to see the yet-to-be translated text as an essentially queer thing. In Holbrook’s terms, the fluent translation normalises the text in the language of the reader, containing and reducing the otherness of another language as much as possible. The fluid translation, with its puns and intentional errors, seeks to keep palpable the queerness that marks the untranslated text in the language and structure of the translation. Queer translation at once aspires to, while simultaneously acknowledging the impossibility of, conveying the mass of ideas, fantasies, and affects that lay beyond the text. Such a mode of translation then is entirely in step with Steiner’s characterisation of comparative literature as “an art of understanding centred in the eventuality and defeats of translation” (10).

As discussed, the coupling of queer theory and comparative literature results in valuable modes of cultural and textual analysis. Yet such a union provides the means for a more theoretical project as well. Samir Dayal, in his afterward to Postcolonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections, suggests that the linkage of postcolonial and queer theories permits a re-thinking of desire itself:

The project for queer theory and cultural intervention can be an ongoing reeducation and interminable retheorization of desire in response to found conditions, to actual material conditions, recognizing that they are indeed traversed by global cultural flows of desire, just as desire itself is mass-mediated in the global circulation of images…. a queer project could

potentially set its sights ambitiously on the interminable reeducation of heterosexual desire as well—a kind of erotic Bildung. (317)\(^{16}\)

Dayal’s suggested project seeks to utilise queer theory’s analytical power by incorporating in it, via postcolonial theory, answers to those frequently voiced failings; namely ethnocentrism and a lack of attention to material conditions. Dayal affirms that “[q]ueer theory... must maintain a critical tension with postcolonial theory” (318). Nevertheless, such an ambitious project should not rely solely on postcolonial frameworks for its “cultural interventions,” as it may actually find itself limited and committing problematic homogenisations. The privileging of homosexual desire over heterosexual desire implied in Dayal’s comment, overlooks the complex interconnectedness of sexual desires and identifications. To address homosexuality is to also address heterosexuality, and any queer retheorisation of desire needs to recognise that critical work on one side of the binary always affects the opposite side in important, if not necessarily equivalent, ways. A cross-cultural inflection would demand a rethinking of the hetero/homo binary altogether, as various cultures reconfigure western representations of sexual identity and desire.

In the rough sketches provided, the attempt to demonstrate the possibilities of a queer comparative literature emerge, as the aims of each (inter)discipline combine intimately with one another. The borders between nations and cultures, like the boundaries of the body, are soft and permeable. Transgressions of those boundaries produce pain and pleasure, and potentially alter the crossed subject in fundamental ways. It is at this point that queer theory and comparative literature may present their greatest critical force. Comparative analysis, queered, may be the best positioned critical mode for the anticipation and articulation of the radical forms and impacts of language and desire that occur as a result of literary encounters between the cultural and the sexual.

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In the short story “El árbol” by María Luisa Bombal, the development of a female subjectivity is portrayed through the recollections of Brígida on her failed marriage to Luis. Bombal’s writing is not strictly feminist in that it “does not seek to subvert and change traditional (patriarchal) narrative” (Fishburn 31), it is instead a feminine writing, which serves to “depict the deep dissatisfaction of middle- and upper-class Latin American women” (Jehenson 33). This essay will explore how three different pieces of music lead Brígida through memories of her childhood and failed marriage, tracing her position in society, her construction as the Other by the symbols of patriarchy around her and her development as a female subject. In terms of feminist and existentialist theory, the different pieces of music mirror different stages in her dominance by patriarchy and her coming to terms with her own existence. Her emancipation only comes as the last vestiges of patriarchal dominance, symbolised by “el gomero” [the rubber tree], are abruptly removed from her life, forcing her to take responsibility for her own actions and to live authentically.

As highlighted by Seymour Menton in his commentary of the short story, three pieces of music lead Brígida through the recollections of three distinct phases in her life. Brígida is introduced to the reader as she watches a concert and as the concert begins it is the music of Mozart which first escorts Brígida through memories of her childhood. These recollections demonstrate how her father was the first patriarchal element to define her as the Other. Her father refuses to educate her and instead declares her retarded, thus eliminating her potential for agency within a patriarchal society where knowledge gives power: “cuando el padre llegaba por fin a su sexta hija, llegaba tan perplejo y agotado por las cinco primeras que prefería simplificarse el día declarándola retardada” [when her father finally came to his sixth daughter,

he was so perplexed and exhausted by the first five that he chose to simplify matters by declaring her retarded] (343). Hypocritically, the very same patriarchal system which denied her an educative means by which to gain some agency spurns her for her lack of knowledge, deeming her to be “tan tonta como linda” [as silly as she is pretty] (344). Brígida, seemingly unaware of these injustices is led by and passively follows the music, personified as Mozart himself, through these memories. However, as she begins to feel abandoned by those who defined her early existence, rather than use this as an opportunity to gain the agency she has thus far been denied in the patriarchal world, she actively seeks another symbol of patriarchy under which to shelter in the form of Luis, her fathers “amigo íntimo” [close friend] (344): “cuando todos la abandonaban, corría hacia Luis” [whenever everyone else had abandoned her, she would run to Luis] (344).

If “pain and anxiety represent the first instances of consciousness” (Castro-Klarén 17), then it is as the music of Mozart “la toma nerviosamente de la mano (...) arrastrándola en un ritmo segundo por segundo más apremiante” [he takes her nervously by the hand... leading her on in a rhythm each second more hurried] (344), that Brígida psychologically revisits the first moments when she had a fleeting comprehension of the responsibility she ought to take for her own existence. This pang of consciousness comes as Brígida reflects on the consequences of her decision to marry Luis: a failed, loveless marriage “no se había casado con Luis por amor” [she had not married Luis for love] (344). This change in her psychological demeanour also marks the moment in which Brígida recalls her passage from the first oppressive symbol of patriarchy, the father, to the second, the husband. In terms of the theory put forward by Simone de Beauvoir concerning woman’s transformation from the Other to a subject, as summarised by Fredrika Scarth, passing from the dominance of one representative of the dominant patriarchy to another inhibits the ability for women to express a subjectivity by confining them to the “domestic sphere” (5). Symbolically, as Brígida moves from her the domestic sphere of her father to that of Luis, the garments of her carefree youth are stripped from her, “despojado del quitasol y de la falda transparente” [stripped of her parasol and transparent overskirt] (344). However, this initial anxiety and consciousness, spurred by her recollections of the transition, are mollified by the music of Beethoven. Beethoven accompanies the second phase in Brígida’s life, in which she adapts passively to her existence as it is defined by the next symbol of patriarchy, her husband Luis. Rather than take any responsibility for her own subjectivity she instead uses her marriage to Luis as a means to continue a passive existence allowing the dominant patriarchy to define her as the Other: “al lado de aquel hombre solemne y taciturno no se sentía culpable de ser tal cual era: tonta, juguetona y perezosa” [next to that serious and taciturn man


she did not feel guilty for being what she was: silly, infantile and lazy] (344). This is symbolised by the effect of the music on Brígida's mental state, she allows it to control her, passively drifting through memories as if in an ocean: “con suaves olas la va empujando, empujando por la espalda hasta hacerle recostar la mejilla sobre el cuerpo de un hombre... sobre el pecho de Luis” [with gentle waves it is pushing her, pushing her by the shoulders until she is stranded with her cheek resting against the body of a man... against the chest of Luis] (345).

Nevertheless, it is in this phase of Brígida's life that she begins to come to terms with her own existence. For the first time Brígida vocally questions how she has come to occupy her position, asking Luis: “¿Porqué te has casado conmigo?” [Why did you marry me] (345). In this quote, although it is evident that Brígida has begun to question the forces shaping her own existence, she has yet to take any real responsibility for it by directing such soul-searching questions to herself. Instead by asking Luis she is giving the responsibility of providing meaning to her life “to an external authority” (Shand, 189)6, and is thereby living “inauthentically” (189) in existentialist terms. Moreover, her dependence on patriarchal definitions to give meaning to her existence causes her to constantly seek reassurance from Luis, even unconsciously as both sleep in the marital bed: "perseguía el hombro de su marido, trataba de vivir bajo su aliento" [she would pursue the shoulder of her husband, trying to live in the shelter of his breath] (345).

The third and final phase of Brígida's development toward a feminine subjectivity is accompanied by Chopin's Études. It is in this phase that Brígida begins to gradually replace Luis with a metaphorical symbol of patriarchy, "el gomero", the tree outside her dressing room. As she realises that Luis will not provide her the love she craves from him, Brígida retreats into the solace provided by this final protective symbol of patriarchy: “cuando la asediaba un deseo demasiado imperioso de despertar a Luis para pegarle o acariciarlo, se escurría de puntillas hacia el cuarto de vestir y abría la ventana” [when she was overcome by an irrepressible desire to wake up Luis to hit him or caress him, she would hurriedly tiptoe to the dressing room and open the window] (351-2). It is evident that as she seeks shelter in the tree, she has internalised the patriarchal system; despite being rejected by every symbol of patriarchy in her life she is not capable of defining herself as an entity separate from the system which has made her the Other. The reason for this is recognised by both Brígida and Luis, as for a woman “to decline to be the Other... would be... to renounce all the advantages conferred upon them by their alliance with the superior caste” (de Beauvoir 21).7 This viewpoint is succinctly summarised by Luis as he states “no creo que nos convenga separarnos” [I do not believe it would be convenient for us to separate] (350). Shielded from taking responsibility for her own existence in the calm and shade provided by this third symbol of patriarchy and experiencing the alienation which, according existentialist theory, is common to all human existence, Brígida contents herself with a melancholy and isolated life which is echoed in the “melancolía de Chopin” [melancholy of Chopin] (352).


It is the removal of the tree acts as a catalyst for change both in terms of her position as the Other in patriarchal society and her existence in existentialist terms. As the music ends, in her memories Brígida is jolted back to the moment when she was left without her last vestige of patriarchal protection as the tree was cut: “¿Es el entreacto? No. Es el gomero, ella lo sabe. Lo habían abatido de un solo hachazo” [Is it the interlude? No. It is the tree and she knows it. They had felled it with a single blow] (352). It is at this precise moment when she is left exposed in her dressing room that she must acknowledge all the facets of her existence she had shielded from herself by passively allowing symbols of patriarchy to define her, rather than taking responsibility for her own existence. This is represented symbolically by the mirrors in the changing room, which once reflected the shelter of the tree, but now magnify instead the “toda aquella fealdad” (all that ugliness, 53) of the world outside, of Brígida’s marriage to Luis, and her position in society. The realisation is terrifying, as is the “luz blanca, aterradora” [white, terrifying light] (353), which invades her dressing room. Brígida is forced to take responsibility for her own existence and she begins to do so by directing the soul-searching questions at herself, for example questioning “cómo hasta entonces no había deseado tener hijos” [how, until that moment, she had not wanted to have children] (353). The focus on children at this turning point is significant. The desire for children can be considered part of the processes of becoming that characterises human existence, as children are a means of creating human existence capable of “pointing beyond itself to future projects” (Shand 188).

Rather than again avoiding the opportunity of gaining agency when patriarchal authority is removed, Brígida is able to mentally articulate her desires and act according to them. This is the moment when, in existentialist terms, Brígida begins to live authentically. Her attempt to explain why she is leaving: “¡el árbol, Luis, el árbol! Han derribado el gomero” [The tree Luis, the tree! They have cut down the rubber tree] (354), although incomprehensible to Luis, is clear to the reader. She cannot tolerate to continue her inauthentic existence now that the dominant patriarchy which kept her shielded from this fact has been removed.

In “El Árbol”, through the use of music as a mirror for the Brígida’s experiences and through symbolic representation of the dominant patriarchy, Bombal presents the reader with a feminine subjectivity who not only comes to terms with her own existence, but in a certain measure manages to free herself from the influence of a dominant patriarchy. This essay demonstrates the division of Brígida’s life into three phases, each dominated by a different symbol of patriarchal authority. It is through music that Brígida is able to psychologically revisit each phase, and her reactions to the piece of music mirror her existential state at that time in her life. In each phase Brígida can be seen to be living “inauthentically” and it is only the unexpected removal of the third symbol, “el gomero” which acts as a catalyst for Brígida to take responsibility for her own existence and ultimately free herself from the patriarchal authority defining her as the Other.

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The modern city, as a fundamental product of the industrial and cultural developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, cannot be ignored when considering the artistic responses of writers to the modern condition. Impacting upon both the individual psyche and the collective psyche of society, the nature of urban space and its effects on the human condition was a preoccupation of writers well before than the twentieth century. If writing can be viewed as a projection of the human psyche, then the spheres of literature and urban space become inherently linked.

In this article I will investigate the role of modern urban structure and space in the fiction of two writers with very different contexts, but who converge in the urban space of Prague. Firstly, I consider Austerlitz by W.G. Sebald, a late twentieth century German-born writer concerned with the Holocaust. Secondly, I draw from works of fiction by Franz Kafka, an early twentieth-century Jewish writer who wrote and spoke in German. The linking of physical structure and space with layers of meaning parallels the layers of history that are present in a city’s buildings and urban space. For Sebald, these elements assume a vital place in his systems of imagery, as he provides evidence of their ability to speak both of various histories and matters of the human psyche. Kafka’s fiction explores the inner spaces and processes of the human psyche, but in a universal fashion. Physical space and structure are thus used as representations for inner abstractions.

The transformation of urban structure and space, which charts their conversion from mere physical object to a strange form of animate being, is a familiar modernist technique and could be seen to have its roots in descriptions as varied as those of the malevolent buildings of the Gothic and the monstrous industrial cities of Charles Dickens. In Kafka’s The Bridge this process is made literal, as the bridge takes human form (or the human takes bridge form). Such a transformation speaks in terms of the limitations involved in assigning certain objects with a specified function, and the consequences of breaching those limits: “Without falling no bridge, once spanned, can cease to be a bridge” (116). It is the desire to know what is happening that sends the

bridge to the rocks below. The condition of not knowing the agendas of those that cross
the bridge is untenable and apparent in such diverse examples as “[a] child? A dream?
A wayfarer? A suicide?” (117). Kafka’s imagination also produces animate objects
that transcend any apparent function. In The Householder’s Concern the animate
and mischievous Odradek (a spool-like object with the power of speech) has a name
that defies definition and leads an existence that resists any definitive explanation.
The following reflection on this spool-like object illustrates how such objects can be
imbued with emotional significance beyond their apparent form or meaning: “[Y]et
the idea of his outliving me... is one I find almost painful to contemplate”.2

A similar description is echoed in Sebald’s Austerlitz, where meditation on the
objects in the window of the Antique Bazaar of Terezín evokes a comparable image
of these objects’ longevity whereby they have “outlived their former owners and
survived the process of destruction” (277).3 The random arrangements of objects
are transformed in Austerlitz’s mind into symbols with hidden meaning, “as if one
of them or their relationship with each other must provide an unequivocal answer
to the many questions I found it impossible to ask in my mind” (275). In the face of
the incomprehensible, the laws of reality are questioned, become blurred, and find
expression in such fantastic concepts as talking spools.

Urban structures on a grander scale become permeated with meaning, particularly
as a meeting point between the human psyche and history. In Austerlitz buildings
are repositories for memories and, as such, are a medium for reconnection with the
past. It is through a reconnection with the spaces and architecture of his childhood
that Austerlitz begins to recover memories of his origins. The geometric pattern of
the metal and glass roof over the platform of the Wilsonnova Railway Station is
symbolic of the details that seemingly exist outside of time and allow transcendance
of the boundary between past and present. It also echoes its own interlocking form
through association with other layers of Sebald’s imagery system. Railway stations
are repeatedly associated with the idea of an incomprehensible network that exists
below the surface of reality and links the past and present, the living and the dead.
This association finds expression in the Ladies’ Waiting Room of Liverpool Street
Station. Austerlitz encounters a seemingly hidden inner space that expands in his mind
to encompass vaults, arches, and endless trails of light following “curious trajectories
which violated the laws of physics” (190).

Rather than showing the opposition between past and present, time is replaced
by an eternal space where the living and the dead intermingle like the layers of
history upon which the station is built. It is at once a ruin and a building in the
process of construction. This spider-web of memory and history is described as a
vast rail network that links back to the railway station as a place of connection. For
the individual and his personal web of memory, buildings can thus function as places
that complicate conceptions of time, and as embodiments of the builders’ society and

2 Franz Kafka. “The Householder’s Concern.” EURO302 Course Readings. University of
Otago, 2006.
their psychological landscape. This spider-web of connection between past and present finds metaphorical expression in the forms of buildings and the complex networks that shape the modern urban space.

The difficulty of unearthing these connections, and the ultimate impossibility of comprehending them in their entirety, are central concerns in *Austerlitz* and Kafka's fiction. In its complexity the urban space provides an opportunity for connection and the prospect of confusion. Kafka conveys a sense of a necessary initiation prior to an understanding of the complex associations of meaning within a city space. What is more, he also alludes to the notion that, to the uninitiated, disorientation, displacement, and alienation are common symptoms. The lost protagonist in *Give it Up!* is discouraged from the pursuit of success by both the town clock and the unwillingness of the policeman to show him the way, as Kafka's world is described as a

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[m]urky... airless labyrinth of offices, waiting room, with an endless hierarchy of junior, senior, very senior, and quite unapproachable officials and subofficials, lawyers, clerks, and messenger boys who look outwardly like a parody of a ludicrous and senseless bureaucracy (12).
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A similar world is imagined in Kafka's *The Trial*, a world in which Joseph K. confronts, and is ultimately trapped by, his quest for comprehension. In Sebald, understanding the past is complicated by the process of forgetting, a process whereby past history is built over. In Kafka, understanding the laws governing reality is also blocked from within the human mind and is symbolized by the infinite recession of an incomprehensible authority. In both cases, language plays a central role. For Sebald it is a "makeshift expedient" that can have a tenuous relation to reality, whereas for Kafka, there is a tension in his efforts to convey the inadequacy of words, as he attempts to evoke their meanings and suppress them at the same time (Thorlby 15). The ability of language to distort and disorient is conveyed by *Austerlitz* in relation to his complete isolation:

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If language may be regarded as an old city full of streets and squares, nooks and crannies, with some quarters dating back from far back in time while others have been torn down, cleaned up and rebuilt, and with suburbs reaching further and further into the surrounding country, then I was like a man who has been abroad a long time and cannot find his way through this urban sprawl any more. (Sebald 174)
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It is tempting to interpret this description of the old city as history-laden Prague and the alienated narrator as an expression of Kafka's marginal cultural identity there in the early twentieth century. This metaphor is also valuable in interpreting the use of urban space in his fiction. For Kafka, this labyrinthine city often involves corridors that turn back on themselves and stairs that lead endlessly upwards, as in the story

Advocates. Spatial relationships are often incomprehensible or illogical. There is a striking parallel between the Palace of Justice described in Austerlitz, with its “corridors and stairways leading nowhere” (Sebald 39), and the Law Courts (which incorporate their own Palace of Justice) of The Trial, which are reached through multitudes of corridors and stairs and whose stifling and haphazard offices occupy a constrictive attic space, all of which are hidden from the uninitiated. Thus the confined and murky space here seems representative of inner psychological space that must be navigated in Joseph K.’s quest to understand the laws governing his reality.

Questions of guilt and complicity are addressed in both Sebald’s Austerlitz and Kafka’s fiction. In Austerlitz, guilt is associated with particular spaces through the ability of place to provide a pathway to webs of memory and history. One memory Austerlitz could recall from his earliest days in Wales was his effort to “conjure up the faces of those whom I had left, I feared through my own fault” (Sebald 62). The feelings of shame associated with the loss of origins and obliteration of familial memories may have contributed to the unconscious continuation of the suppression of memory. There is also a sense that Austerlitz, by allowing what happened to his family to remain buried, is complicit in the “building over” of uncomfortable aspects of history that seem to occur. It is through exhaustive research, and the desire to recover his mother’s experience in its entirety, that Austerlitz attempts to detach himself from feelings of complicity.

If knowledge and remembrance is the key to a sort of psychological acquittal from past events, then the narrator of Austerlitz indirectly enters into this process of remembrance by playing the role of the recorder/archivist for Austerlitz’s narrative. An indication of the narrator’s sense of guilt surfaces as he contemplates the former concentration camp and fortress of Breendonk. Although he was unable to envisage the torture to which Jewish prisoners were subjected there, he could well imagine the Secret Service guards playing cards in the mess while off duty (Sebald 29). He suggests that the recollection of this illustration of the horrific agenda of his countrymen becomes clouded “because I did not want to see what it had to show” (30). Thus, in terms of memory and recovery of the past in the novel, fortifications are tied up with notions of psychological defence. Fortress building betrays a fear of the foreign and the uncontrollable, as “our mightiest projects... most obviously betray the degree of our insecurity” (16). The narrator’s complicity and subsequent edification through Austerlitz’s narrative ends in his return to Breendonk at the close of the novel. This process frames Austerlitz’s quest to comprehend the space of another fortress, Terezín, and through it the memory of his mother. However, this pursuit of comprehension is presented as an infinite process:

Everything is constantly lapsing into oblivion with every extinguished life, how the world is... draining itself, in that the history of countless places and objects which themselves have no power of memory is never heard, never described or passed on. (30)
The complete comprehension of the past and the complex web of associations it embodies is presented as impossible, whether for a person's entire life or even for a single day, such as in the Battle of Austerlitz. One initial association leads to an infinite recession through time and space.

The continuation of the search for meaning and understanding, even when faced with ultimate failure, is an element evident in both Sebald and Kafka. The parable related to Joseph K. in the final section of Kafka's *The Trial* (elsewhere known as *Before the Law*) concerns a man's attempt to gain admission to an inner space, or the "Law," which is guarded by a doorman. Though presented with an infinite recession of guarded spaces, the man perseveres only to descend into darkness and die (*The Trial* 225). As a parable of Joseph K.'s quest to understand the laws governing the Court and his "guilt," it suggests that the barriers to understanding might be self-imposed. Joseph K. has found himself implicated in a system where the nature of his guilt is concealed. The claim "that an attraction existed between the Law and guilt, from which it should really follow that the Interrogation Chamber must lie in that particular flight of stairs which K. happened to choose" (*The Trial* 34), suggests that K. implicates himself as guilty by his willingness to participate in the processes of the Court. The necessity to pursue an understanding of the laws of reality, despite the inherent impossibility of such a pursuit, is at the root of Kafka's fiction. Disorientation and imprisonment within interminable processes often result.

A fitting parallel is found in the impenetrable spaces of the Palace of Justice in Austerlitz, which contain "empty spaces surrounded by walls and representing the innermost secret of all sanctioned authority" (Sebald 39). Physical space, and particularly urban space and architecture, is created and expressed in terms of psychological space. An individual can instil space with memories or emotions such as guilt, as well as with the interplay of history, human progress and human process. However, while the nature of time leads to the potential for infinite interpretations, it ultimately leads to incomprehension.
The legacy of Russian hegemony in Hungary continues to be a politically charged topic. At the centre of recent debates is the Hungarian Revolution of 1956; its meaning, significance, and implications for both remembering the past and progressing into the future. Popular accounts of the modern history of Hungary pivot on the notion of an “unfinished” struggle with mounting accusations from the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) that the state is locked in its past. The Hungarian Revolution witnessed an outpouring of popular discontent, manifesting itself in widespread violence on both sides of the dispute. Fifty years later, the streets of Budapest were once again the site of huge protest movements, as a result of deep dissatisfaction with the direction of the Hungarian government. Many argue that the events of 1956 continue to resonate in the tone and structure of Hungary’s political culture in the twenty-first century. By comparing and contrasting the events of 1956 and 2006 it is possible to analyse critically this conceptualisation of the history of Hungary in the post-World War Two era, and address the question of the extent to which the labours of 1956 are indeed “unfinished.”

The Hungarian Revolution was a watershed event in the recent history of Eastern Europe. It fundamentally altered the course of the USSR’s hegemony in the region. Widespread discontent with the puppet government of Ernő Gerő came to a head in 1956. The historically iconic events took place in the national capital of Budapest. Beginning 23 October, mass demonstrations at the Bem Statue, Parliament Building, and Radio Budapest, were carried out by a sweeping cross-section of urban society, including democratic student organisations, industrial workers, ad hoc militia groups, and the young intellectuals of the Petőfi Circles. These incidents often culminated in fierce violence between protesters, the Soviet Army, and the Hungarian State Police (Államvédelmi Hatóság).

However, it is important to note that Budapest was not the sole centre of revolutionary activity. The Hungarian Revolution was a national movement that involved rural and provincial society. The social, cultural, and economic landscape of Hungary was transformed during the postwar period, leading to a marked politicisation of previously peripheral groups. The peasantry harboured deep resentment towards


the central Communist government. Exorbitant taxes, collectivisation of land, and
social repression of dissidence endorsed by the General Secretary of the Hungarian
Communist Party, Mátáys Rákosi, have been described as an “undisguised war
against the peasantry,” which exacted grinding poverty on the rural population,
leading the peasantry to align themselves with the urban activists. While there is
little evidence of direct clashes between the peasantry, Soviet forces, and the ÁVH,
the rural population installed an extensive aid network, providing urban centres
with resources. For example, the town of Szeged supplied protestors in Budapest
with food, which was distributed among the urban population without charge.6
Furthermore, not only did provincial revolutionaries in areas such as Győr and Pécs
engage in sporadic fighting with Soviet forces, they were also heavily involved in
the movement at an organisational level. The National Council for Transdanubia was
established in the south-western provinces and organised ongoing strikes in industrial
and mining centres.7 With military support in Győr, Pápa, and Zalaegerszeg, provincial
revolutionaries brought additional pressure to bear on the Communist government.8
Through these support systems, the population outside Budapest was able to participate
in the urban revolutionaries’ efforts to expel the Soviet forces.

The relentless violence and widespread tension eventually toppled the government,
and saw anti-Soviet socialist reformer, Imre Nagy, installed as interim Prime Minister
on 28 October. It also saw the emergence of an extensive network of officially
recognised local government bodies.9 In the wake of this initial victory, Hungary withdrew
from the Warsaw Pact, which bound Budapest to Moscow and negotiated the
removal of Soviet troops from newly-independent Hungarian territory. However,
the Soviet Army returned on 4 November, violently dismantling the new government
and devastating the country. By November 10, the vast majority of revolutionary action
had been quashed and Soviet hegemony was reinstated under the government of János
Kádár, who was to retain power until the fall of the USSR in 1989.10

On the fiftieth anniversary of this failed uprising the collective consciousness
of Hungary revisited many of these events. A formally recognised national holiday,
23 October 2006 was marked by the government with official celebrations, and the
anniversary was acknowledged by a number of foreign leaders, including Russian
President Vladimir Putin.11 The anniversary also prompted an outpouring of

4 Ibid., 541.
6 Coulter (footnote 3).
7 Váli, Ferenc A. Rift and Revolt in Hungary: Nationalism versus Communism. London:
8 Ibid.
10 Gyani, Gabor. “Memory and Discourse on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.” Europe-Asia
Studies, 58.8 (December 2006): 1199-1208. This issue was devoted entirely to discussions of
the events of 1956 in recognition of the fiftieth anniversary of the uprisings.
Liberty, 28 February 2006.
scholarship and general discussion regarding the meaning and relevance of 1956 to present-day Hungarian identity and culture. However, 2006 also witnessed a rising tide of social unrest in response to wider issues of political legitimacy, bringing the heritage of 1956 into dispute. The April elections brought to power socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, who was widely perceived as the ideological heir of the Kádárite regime. In addition, a recording in which Gyurcsány reveals that he “lied morning, evening and night” to win the election was leaked to the Hungarian media in September, sparking widespread calls for his resignation. These demonstrations provided a stark contrast to the amicable official commemorations, highlighting the ongoing significance of 1956 as a reference point for political discontent.

Therefore, a historical link between 1956 and 2006 must be established. There are a number of comparative observations that suggest a connection between the two movements, such as the symbols invoked by protestors. Central to both uprisings was the Hungarian national flag. In 1956, protestors removed the symbol of Soviet oppression: the red hammer and sickle, leaving a gaping hole in the centre of the flag, which has since become an icon of Hungarian independence. In 2006, protestors once again cut holes in the centre of the flag, a symbolic challenge to the legitimacy of the Gyurcsány government and a clear allusion to the events of 1956. In both instances, the flag was used to affirm the national rights of the people, and confront the incumbent government. However, while in 1956 this challenge was directed at the entire structure of Soviet rule, the 2006 riots were representative of discontent with the individual leadership of the country, not the system of government.

Violence was a characteristic of the two movements. In both instances, thousands took to the streets of Budapest, participating in peaceful demonstrations and violent clashes with the state police. The response of the incumbent government provided fuel for rioters. In 1956, the iconic clash between the ÁVH and protestors at Radio Budapest was sparked by rumours that the state police had executed a number of demonstrators. Again in 2006, allegations of police brutality provided ammunition for thousands of protestors. These superficial similarities are further enhanced by the scenes of the violence, as Bem Statue and Parliament Building witnessed mass demonstrations in both 1956 and 2006, consolidating the symbolic continuity between the movements.

15 Condon (footnote 12).
17 Hoensch (footnote 9).
However, the deeper differences in the scope of the violence must be noted and explained. While upwards of 10,000 people participated in the 2006 riots,20 the Hungarian Revolution comprised an estimated 200,000 protestors.21 Although both movements were quashed, in 2006 this silencing was achieved by the national police armed with tear gas, rubber bullets, and water guns, leading to hundreds of injuries.22 In contrast, the Hungarian Revolution was suppressed by an uninvited, and largely Soviet force of over 150,000 soldiers, who devastated the city and exacted violent repression on the population. Unable to differentiate between friend and foe, the Soviet Army often fired indiscriminately into crowds, killing thousands.23

The concept of an “unfinished” struggle can be interpreted and understood through the prism of the objectives of the movement. The key question is whether the aims of 1956 have been fulfilled, requiring a discussion of the causes and achievements of both movements. The Hungarian Revolution sought to install freedom, multi-party democracy, and representative government in Soviet-occupied Hungary.24 The extent to which this struggle is “unfinished” can be gauged by measuring the original objectives of the movement against the current state of affairs in Hungary. After declaring its independence from the USSR in 1989, Hungary has acted on the world stage as an autonomous political entity and is currently an active member state of the EU and NATO.25 Although Gyurcsány is an unpopular leader, accused of drawing out the dormant divisions carved out by the 1956 uprising, he was nevertheless elected by the people.26 Further, he heads a coalition government with a diverse range of political ideas and parties within Hungary today.27 The state now operates as an independent, multi-party democracy, indicating that the fundamental goals of 1956 have been realised. In this sense, the Hungarian Revolution is not an “unfinished” struggle.

The motif of economic tension adds an important dimension to this discussion. Historians have argued that the 1956 uprisings were a result of the economic hardship of the era, an interpretation that has resurfaced in a number of explanations of the events of 2006.28 The beginning of the post-war era was characterised by severe economic decline. In addition to the enormous wartime reparations imposed on Hungary by

21 Hoensch (footnote 9).
22 Condon (footnote 12).
23 Hoensch (footnote 9).
26 Condon (footnote 12).
28 Condon (footnote 12).
the West, Stalin’s successive Five-Year Plans focused almost exclusively on heavy industrial development, stifling both the countryside and the production of important consumer goods. This theme recurred in 2006 with Gyurcsány’s introduction of a heavily criticised fiscal austerity programme. In an effort to modernise the economy and address the budget deficit, Gyurcsány planned to dismantle the pillars of the welfare state. However, a difference in degree between the two movements must be noted. This disparity can be illustrated by comparing wage statistics from both periods. In 2007, the average Hungarian wage is expected to fall by three to five percent. In contrast, from 1949 to 1952 wages plummeted by eighteen percent. While the context of 2006 was clearly coloured by an element of disgruntlement with the government’s fiscal policies, the latter of these statistics cannot be said to have provoked the nation into protest. Nevertheless, the decline of the early 1950s is remembered as a period for having the “worst inflation in financial history.” This decline was characterised by extreme exploitation, abysmal working conditions, and widespread starvation, exacerbating the growing tensions of Soviet occupation and political repression. Although economic tension cannot wholly explain either movement, it played an important role in both. Hungary was not confronted with the same economic issues in 2006 as it had faced in 1956, but it dealt with them in much the same way.

The immediate cause of conflict in both instances offers a telling contrast between 1956 and 2006. In spite of an absence of formalised leadership and objectives in 1956, emboldening developments such as the Polish revolts are often invoked by historians as evidence of compelling short-term causes of revolutionary action. Gyurcsány’s “lies speech” fundamentally shook public confidence in the government, providing a clear flashpoint for the 2006 riots. It is important to recognise that, although there is an historical connection between the Hungarian Revolution and the recent riots, the immediate cause of the 2006 movement was not the heritage of 1956. Both were motivated by a lack of faith in the incumbent government. This discontent is inextricably linked to its historical context. Thus, there is a disparity between the immediate causes of unrest in 1956 and 2006, which undermined efforts to cast the Hungarian Revolution as “unfinished.”

The long term causes of tension must also be considered. Central to this question is the role of the USSR, and later Russia, in Hungarian politics. The events of 1956 took place within the context of the Cold War, which polarised world politics and

29 Seton-Watson (footnote 2).
30 Boyes, Roger and LeBor, Adam. ‘Gyurcsány Interview in Full’, Times Online, 22 September 2006.
33 Seton-Watson (footnote 2).
34 Hoensch (footnote 9).
35 Condon (footnote 14).
heightened tensions between East and West. While President Vladimir Putin recently pointed out that modern Russia is a vastly different political entity from the USSR, he also acknowledged that Moscow must shoulder a “moral responsibility” for the events of 1956.36 In the wake of World War II, international divisions between the USSR and the US were cemented through a series of proxy wars. Both powers engaged in expansionist foreign policies that necessitated the retention of at least the visage of solidarity within their respective territories.37 This international context created an imperative for Moscow to quash the Hungarian uprising, thus explaining the intensity of the violence in 1956. By contrast, the 2006 riots took place within the context of open world politics, where Moscow did not intervene in Hungary’s internal affairs. Rather than attempting to expel a foreign force, such as the Red Army in 1956, the Budapest riots were therefore an internally focused exercise of the democratic right to political protest against an elected government.38 The absence of Moscow in 2006 indicates that the objective of national independence had been achieved, both in practical terms, and in the collective consciousness of the nation.

This view can be challenged by adopting an alternative interpretation of the concept of an “unfinished” struggle. The events of 1956 continue to divide Hungarian society, leading political institutions such as the EU and NATO to formulate an understanding of the uprising as “unfinished” in its effects. The crux of this view is the accusation that Hungary has failed to address its “historic baggage,” thereby seriously compromising the progress of the state.39 This reasoning is supported by the recurrence of violent protest movements fifty years after the fact, but requires a deeper analysis to assess its strengths and weaknesses. Generational issues are key to understanding why the divisions within Hungary have persisted. After only fifty years, many of the participants in the 1956 uprising, which shaped the consciousness of a generation, are still alive and active within their communities at home and abroad.40 One Hungarian who participated in both the 1956 and 2006 protests commented that the only difference between the movements is that “there is no bloody Soviet Army [now].”41 What this statement highlights is the political power of first-hand recollections as a reference point for contemporary debates. Commentators have speculated that the significance of 1956 will be eroded by future generations, further underlining the importance of a living memory of the events.42

The political neglect of the memory of 1956 in recent years must also be noted in exploring its relationship with the events of 2006. Although the Hungarian Revolution was widely publicised by the foreign media in its immediate aftermath, discussion within Hungary of the events of 1956 was almost entirely censored until the fall of the Soviet régime.43 Details concerning the events were also suppressed by Moscow,

36 See footnote 11.
37 ‘Communism’s First Check’, Times Online, 23 October 2006.
38 LeBor, Adam. ‘Streets Erupt in Echo of Uprising’. Times Online, 24 October 2006.
39 LeBor (footnote 13).
40 Gyani (footnote 10).
42 Gyani (footnote 10).
43 Cox, Terry. “1956: Discoveries, Legacies and Memory” xiv-xvi; Rainer (footnote 24).
whose extensive archives on the Soviet invasion only became accessible after the fall
of the USSR.\textsuperscript{44} The lifting of censorship, and the wide availability of primary sources,
encouraged an explosion of scholarship that led to a variety of fresh interpretations
of the era. Despite Russia’s acceptance of responsibility for the injustices of the past,
there is still a sense that the betrayal of the Hungarian people has not been properly
addressed.\textsuperscript{45} In contrast to the violent repression of protestors, which included alleged
show trials and executions, individual responsibility and punishment has never
been assigned to the Soviet forces.\textsuperscript{46} In this sense, the struggle for justice remains
unfinished.

These short term policy factors must be weighed against the wider issues that
underpin the ongoing significance of the events of 1956. The legacy of the Hungarian
Revolution is an unsettled question inextricably linked to the identity of the nation.
Historians have suggested that the disparate array of interpretations that inform the
master narratives of the period are fundamentally irreconcilable. Naturally, they lead
to ongoing tensions in a politically charged context.\textsuperscript{47} While Moscow, the EU, and
NATO have called for the stabilisation of domestic affairs, the heritage of 1956 has
been invoked by many political parties to promote their own agendas. Throughout the
1950s and early 1960s Soviet politicians interpreted the movement as an unpopular
counter-revolution that sought to reinstall an oppressive capitalist system. This view
has since been widely discredited as “ridiculous”\textsuperscript{48} and “pathetically inadequate”\textsuperscript{49} as
an attempt to explain the events of 1956. More recently, the Fidesz party has promoted
the Hungarian Revolution as an essentially bourgeois movement, foreshadowing the
party’s rise to power.\textsuperscript{50} Alternative approaches conclude that the uprising was a popular
movement from below, consisting largely of workers, farmers, and students, seeking
freedom from oppression.\textsuperscript{51} Each of these interpretations served contemporary political
objectives, rather than the task of settling the heritage of 1956. The persistent use of
these events as a rallying point by the government has politicised memories of the
period and cemented opposing views, leaving the effects of 1956 “unfinished” in the
political culture of modern Hungary.\textsuperscript{52}

The legacy of 1956 is a contentious issue that still colours Hungary’s cultural
self-perception and foreign relationships. As a polarising turning point in the recent
history of the state, the events of 1956 are a touchstone of popular discontent and
political pluralism in the twenty-first century. The 2006 riots are a clear example of

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{45} ‘Russia Takes ‘M oral Responsibility’ For Hungarian Uprising’; B oy es, ‘Goulash Revolution
Stirs E choes of a far more Ghoulish Uprising’; Cox “R econsidering the Hungarian Revolution
of 1956.”
\textsuperscript{46} Condon (footnote 16).
\textsuperscript{47} Gyani (footnote 10).
\textsuperscript{48} Seton-Watson (footnote 2), 23.
\textsuperscript{49} Smith, Denis. “Hungary: Russia’s Pyrrhic Victory”, Canadian Journal of Economics and
Political Science, XXIV, no. 1 (February 1958), 113.
\textsuperscript{50} Gyani (footnote 10), 1204-1207; LeB or (footnote 19).
\textsuperscript{51} Rainer (footnote 24).
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
this phenomenon, overlapping with 1956 in many of its motivations and approaches. However, the notion that Hungary is locked in its “unfinished” past is overly simplistic, diffusing an otherwise complex movement. The key irony of the Hungarian Revolution is that, while the vast majority of its central goals have been achieved, its legacy continues to divide the nation. The politicisation of the events of 1956 has led both the government and the public to interpret current events through the prism of the past, stifling progress and producing the persistent tensions of 2006. In many ways, this retrospective approach to modern politics is a direct result of the repressive and neglectful approach taken towards the 1956 revolution in recent history. However, there is also a clear element of forward-thinking, as protestors attempt to graft the grievances of the past onto modern politics, as a reference point for on-going debates. Although Hungarians are no longer aggrieved by the specific issues that confronted the nation in 1956, the living memory of political betrayal has continued to shape the country’s perception and approach to both its domestic and foreign affairs.