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UNIVERSITÉ DE GENÈVE

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Editors' Group Chat

Aicha Bouchelagham, Emily Smith, and Nora Zufferey

Emily
Hi both! So could I ask you to text in this group chat what correspondence means to you?

Aicha
Correspondence is a match, sustained or incidental - or something in between, between ideas, movements, signals.

Corresponding entails a sense of being in the right place at the right time, which, while contemporary media has made us believe it was easy, is not always as straightforward as we may hope.

But if you are reading this, we have somewhat succeeded!

Nora
What a luck! No possible option other than the surprise of witnessing two things collide in unexpected ways.

Making two birds seem alike when they're not.

Making the impossible likeness striking.

Creatively proposing a close-reading and feeling the connection crumble as you formulate it. Hey.

Or just waving hi, and they wave hi back.

...But correspondence should always be doubted...especially when published willingly.

Full disclosure: the idea of "correspondence" as a theme was not hatched by us, but rather by David- or was it perhaps Sofiia, or Miranda, or Anne-Myriam, or Holly? - in any case, it was hatched at our first editorial meeting of the semester. (I told you correspondence should be doubted.)

(*The first message, in fact, finishes thus:*

"I'll then, with your permission, screenshot it as the first half of the editor's letter (wrote the second half at 3am this morning, like a rational person)".

Half of this is true.)

Emily looked up the etymology of the word immediately, of course (anyone would think that she'd completed BA1). It stems from the medieval Latin *correspondentia*, you may be unsurprised to learn, and that the present participle of *correspondere*: *to correspond, to harmonize, to reciprocate*. *Com-*, as in togetherness (think *community*); *-respondere,* self-explanatory, especially in a Francophone environment.

We can go further down this rabbit hole. *Respond* goes back to *sponsor*, anglicized to mean a godparent, but previously simply someone who would speak for you. Previous to that, *spondere*: a promise or assurance. Before that? Joyfully, at its earliest roots, the Greek *spondē,* a wine offering. We can all drink to that. But back to serious business.

Correspondence, however, did not originally mean communication by letter. It would have to wait for this sense until about the mid-seventeenth century, if etymology.org is to be believed (spoiler alert, it's not: Emily found a 1602 definition of "correspondence" as "communication by letters" in about five seconds of searching). It tended instead to mean an "answering" in a less direct, or at least intentional sense: the way in which things in the world mirror, echo, or otherwise sympathise with other things, like a rainbow to a storm, mountains to valleys, or Emily to Welsh cakes. Perhaps not this last one.

It is perhaps in this original sense that the contributions to this edition correspond, or "talk to" one another: not intentionally, but with no less truth to their connection.

What does truly unite them all, of course, is our very own
English department. And we hope you, dear members, readers, and contributors, enjoy finding these correspondences, and enter into your own...

Academia

"On Keeping a Notebook" by Joan Didion

Victoria Brunner

It is the discovery of a note in her notebook that initiates Joan Didion's Essay "On Keeping a Notebook". While the speaker recognises the handwriting as being her own, she cannot fully remember its signification. She concludes: "since the note is in my notebook, it presumably has some meaning to me" (131). At first glance, this problem could seem trivial but it highlights a complex consequence of writing; it leaves traces of a plurality of selves. One's psyche is, by nature, predisposed to changes and writing is a form of inscribing those differences throughout times. Therefore the notebook, just as the essays of Montaigne, becomes a space where different temporal layers of one's plurality of selves are united in a single text. In fact, in the essay "Of Vanity", Montaigne states: "my book is always the same… I now, and I anon, are two several persons". The recognition of this plurality leads Montaigne to avoid corrections on his previous writings as he declares in "Of Vanity": "I add, but I correct not". For the speaker in "On Keeping a Notebook", the same recognition constitutes the underlying motive for keeping a notebook. Her intentions are not to build "an accurate record of what [she has] been doing or thinking" (133) but rather "to keep in touch" (140) because she cannot lose the feeling of having "already lost touch with a couple of people [she] used to be" (139).

The essay displays the fragmentation of what Freud calls "the ego" into a plurality of entities, which are part of different temporal layers, and the attempt of the speaker to join them together by the act of writing. This idea of a plurality of selves which are being disjointed by time is illustrated by the multiple pronouns which are used in this passage. In fact, three different pronouns are used: "I" (2, 8), "we" (3, 4, 6, 7, 8) and "they" (3, 5). The transition from "I" (2) to the pronoun "we" (3) can be accounted for as a way for the speaker to broaden the reflection to a more general statement. But the use of "they" seems to refer to this plurality of the "ego". The beginning of the poem accounts for this use of the plural pronoun: "we are well advised to keep on nodding terms with the people we used to be, whether we find them attractive company or not." (3-4). This sentence opposes the pronoun "we" and the pronoun "they", which in this case depends on the antecedent "the people we used to be". Paradoxically, "we" and "they" refer to the same individual, but throughout time, one's self gets fragmented into clearly distinct entities. The essay also suggests that the differences between these plural identities can

become, over time, extremely wide. The use of the idiom "keeping nodding terms" (2) suggests that the relationship between these fragmented parts are only acquaintances. The repetitions of the past form "used to" (3,8) also illustrate this distance since this tense is employed in order to refer to things in the past which are no longer true. This is emphasised in the last sentence of the passage by the use of the expression "to lose touch" (8) which can be considered as a catachresis. This term is described by Henri Morier in the dictionary of poetic and rhetorical figures as a metaphor which has become so ordinary that its metaphorical status is often forgotten. In this sense, "losing touch" means to decrease the frequency of communication with one over time, by referring metaphorically to the actual loss of physical contact. Later in the essay, the speaker concludes: "I suppose that keeping in touch is what notebooks are about" (140). Writing, especially by hand in a notebook, leads to a form of physical contact with our past selves which allows us to "keep touch" with this plurality of the "ego". In this sense, the speaker describes how the "forgotten" entities from the past can reappear in the present:

> "They turn up unannounced and surprise us, come hammering on the mind's door at 4 a.m. of a bad night and demand to know who deserted them, who betrayed them, who is going to make amends"(5-7).

The metaphor of the "mind's door" can be related to the expression of "the mind's eyes" found in *Hamlet* (1.2). Both "the door" and "the eyes" represent a passage between the external world and the internal one which allows us to perceive reality, but it is also a barrier between them. In this sense, the "hammering" (5) of the past selves on the "mind's door" (5) is perceived as an intrusion of the past selves into the present's psyche. The enumeration which follows it uses verbs such as "to desert" (7) "to betray" (7) and the expression "make amends" (7) which all refer to the consequences of past actions in the present. In fact, "an amend" is a compensation given in the present for a past loss, "to desert" is to abandon a past service or duty, and "to betray" is to act unfaithfully to a past promise. Thus, keeping a notebook is a way of "not losing touch with the people [we] used to be" but also to avoid being haunted by the demons from the past. Thus, memory is also presented as a crucial element of this essay. We can account for the use of the chiasmus form: "We forget all too soon the things we thought we could never forget" (7-8). It is not a strict chiasmus because the two central' words "things" and "thought" (7) are not related semantically but rather phonetically. This form, by its parallelism, mimics the never-ending process of forgetting and remembering which is inevitable when keeping a notebook. Just like the speaker at the beginning of the essay, one often forgets what a past self has written: "we forget the loves and betrayals alike, forget what we whispered

and what we screamed, forget who we were" (7-9). In this sentence, the repetition of the verb "forget" illustrates this fear of oblivion. Moreover, the oppositions between "loves and betrayals" and "whispered" and "screamed" create a gradation which finishes with the oblivion of the entire self as "we forget who we were" (8).

Thus, this passage illustrates how the psyche of an individual can be fragmented into several entities. This plurality of one self's is due to the process of change that an individual inevitably goes through in life. Therefore, those different entities are disjointed by the temporal layers of one's lifetime. The speaker suggests that it is only through writing that one can join this plurality in a unified whole. Keeping a notebook becomes a way of joining oneself back together. In this sense, just like in Gray's *Elegy*, in which writing is presented as a way of remembering the deaths, keeping a notebook is a way for the speaker to remember the —yet vanished—past selves.

Wollstonecraft versus Burke, A Vindication or a Political Individual Answer?

David Jaques-Olivier Bovet

In a sermon delivered in 1789, Richard Price sparked what would be known later as "The Revolution Controversy", which took place between 1789 and 1795.[1] A year later, Edmund Burke released a criticism of Price's text, as well as a critique of the French Revolution, which in turn raised many other literary responses. Amongst those answers is Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication for the Rights of Men* released only a month later, in which she directly attacks Burke's claims by imitating him both in style and structure, whilst also using the same metaphors and twisting them to her advantage.[2] Scholars and biographers concurred to outline "the impressive speed with which she wrote the pamphlet", although the *Vindication* is "usually read as [a] minor and not very competent shot" at political writing (Sapiro, 186), critics have essentially focused on the text on its own, instead of in relation to Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. This essay argues that to do so is an error. The extract that this essay will focus on is situated on page 206 of the extract in the *Norton Anthology,* and answers directly – as does most of her work – to Burke's claims made a few months prior.[3] I will outline how Wollstonecraft critiques Burke's response to the French Revolution through the close analysis of language and figures of speech, tone and the subtle use of tense as well as the composition of her arguments.

1 Tom Furniss, 'Mary Wollstonecraft's French Revolution', in The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft, ed. by Claudia L. Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 59-81 (p. 59)

2 Virginia Sapiro, 'Language Politics and Representation', in A Vindication of Political Virtue. The Political Theory of Mary Wollstonecraft, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 186-222 (p. 197)

3 Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Men, in The Norton Anthology of English Literature, ed. by Stephen Greenblatt, tenth edition, vol D, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2018), pp. 204-209,), All subsequent references to Wollstonecraft's work are to this edition and will be given in parentheses in the text.

Let us first focus on language and figures of speech. Mary Wollstonecraft almost immediately outlines the paradoxes and oppositions that Burke makes in his text, by introducing an antithetical statement herself. Indeed, when she claims that "[he] affirm[s] in one page what [he] den[ies] in another" (l. 3), she uses an antithetical structure, with the words "affirm" and "deny" being oxymorons. In doing so, she cleverly proves her point, and even goes a step further, as she links these to his lack of method. She claims that her approach is "methodical" (l. 1) and that he uses "slavish paradoxes in which [she] can find no fixed first principle to refute". (l. 1-2) This perfectly outlines the opposition between the two authors, especially in their approach: where Wollstonecraft is seeking method and regularity, Burke is giving inconsistency and paradoxes. The female writer even goes on to critique his "antipathy to reason" (l. 8-9), which furthers her point of inconsistency, and therefore invalidates Burke's claims. Finally, she also outlines "how frequently [he] draw[s] conclusions without any previous premises", clearly outlining the lack of grounding for the man's arguments. (l. 3-4)

If we now focus on the use of tone, it is easily noticeable that Wollstonecraft uses a lot of words that evoke *pathos*, which outlines the emotional and personal character of her work. By stating that she "glow[s] with indignation" (l. 1), she is already setting the tone for the rest of the extract which is as personal as this opening statement, which seems to show not only her implication in but also her passion for the topic. It also conveys her thoughts on Burke's work: she is "indignat[e]"; the quality of his work angers her. Furthermore, calling the *Reflections* a "wild declamation" (l. 9-10) outlines again how she sees the quality of the male writer's work. Another point to focus on is the extensive use of the first person singular pronoun "I". Instead of the extensive generalisation (with occasional returns to the personal "I") that Edmund Burke presents in his text, Wollstonecraft uses the opposite structure, that is the extensive use of the personal, with occasional generalisations. However, there is a change around the middle of the extract, when she switches from a first-person singular to a first-person plural. Wollstsonecraftdoes so to outline Burke's claims, whilst also changing back to the singular when she refutes his claims, calling them "sound reasoning […] in the mouth of the rich and the short-sighted." (l. 19) This critiques the *Reflections* directly, calling them – and by extension their author – classist and blind. It is nevertheless important to remember that whilst Wollstonecraft wrote in direct answer to Burke, the latter answered indirectly to Price's sermon too, which might contribute to the particular tone used in both texts.

Let us now turn to the use of tense in the *Vindication*, and specifically the use of conditional. By using this specific tense, Wollstonecraft acknowledges Burke's arguments,

and restates them in her own terms, without fully supporting them. Whilst she does acknowledge their existence, the fact that she introduces them with the preposition "if" (l. 9, 12) defines them as hypotheticals, and therefore makes the reader doubt their grounds in reality. Especially if we look at the first occurrence of the "if", where she states that "if there is anything like argument, or first principles, in your wild declamation, behold the result" (l. 9-10), it is worth mentioning that the process that Wollstonecraft is using is one of concession: she hypothetically accepts Burke's arguments as valid – whilst also outlining they are not through the use of conditional – and offers a counter-argument to his claims anyway. Focusing now on the second conditional, where she states that "if we do discover some errors, our *feelings* should lead us to excuse" (l. 12-13), it is noticeable that the same pattern is used, that is to acknowledge the fact that Burke might be right, and thus answering him, whilst refuting his claims through the use of conditional. However, where this quotation differs is in the composition: this time, Wollstonecraft is not focusing on Burke but takes on a wider notion, that is, what she frames as a universal truth. Instead of stating her points without any room for other argumentation, she instead moderated her words, acknowledging that there is a possibility that she might be wrong.

Finally, let us focus on the content of arguments, and in particular, the opposition Wollstonecraft makes between antiquity and modernity. Indeed, through the use of specific words with pejorative connotations, the author of the *Vindication* enables an association of antiquity with the word "rust" (l. 10). Rust is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as "Moral decline or decay; corruption" (OED, A2a) and has negative connotations. Thus, Wollstonecraft implicitly links Burke and "antiquity", as most of his argumentation relies on the respect of traditions and praise of older systems, especially those of antique civilisations. Furthermore, the fact that she links antiquity to "unnatural customs which ignorance and mistaken self-interest have consolidated" (l. 11) contributes to the grounding of antiquity in a pejorative motif, especially by using the words "unnatural" and "ignorance and mistaken self interest". If we replace these statements in the context in which the Vindication was written it is easily understood that "gothic notions" (l. 14) and "antiquity" (l. 10) are references to the system in place in England, and by opposition, the notion of modernity that Wollstonecraft implicitly defends is the system post-revolution in France. Another evidence of this is the metaphor of thawing, which clearly references the troubled times in France as "a temporary inundation" (l. 17), and that it will "nourish[…] the soil […] and give "the most estimable advantages" (l. 17-19), referencing the beneficial times that will come after the revolution.

In conclusion, Wollstonecraft critiques Burke on many points, ranging from his lack of method to his outdated grounding in antiquity, whilst also making concessions on his arguments, but still refuting them. Not only does the author of the *Vindication* successfully implement a figure of speech (antithetical structure) to outline the negative parts of the *Reflections*, but she also is able to rhetorically outweigh her male counterpart through the use of conditional sentences. The Vincidation's critics have not sufficiently recognised the degree to which Wollstonecraft is engaged in a chain of correspondence, responding not only to Burke but to Price. Her rhetorical mastery, moreover, allows her to dominate this conversation – transforming the tradition of correspondence, with all the genteel associations it conjures, into a form not of agreement but discord.

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From Early Modern Texts to Contemporary Performance

Ludivine Moret

Margaret Farrand Thorp, in her article "Shakespeare and the Movies," states that "Sir Laurence Olivier's brilliant filming of *The Tragedy of Richard III* has startled to life an ancient cliché: if Shakespeare were alive today, he would be writing not for the stage but for the screen" (357). Indeed, the relationship that develops between Shakespeare's early modern texts, such as *King Richard III* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, and its contemporary interpretation on stage or screen demonstrates the power that Shakespeare's words can have on the implied reader's imagination and interpretation. The early modern text of the plays uses a range of tools to tell a story and highlight the genre to which it belongs, just as directors and actors do for their audiences. Genre becomes the foundation of Shakespeare's plays, just as it becomes the question around which my essay is built. This essay focuses on two of Shakespeare's plays that are completely different in genre. *King Richard III*, in the First Folio, is classified in the genre called histories, under the name "*The Life and Death of Richard the Third*." Indeed, in view of the name, originally taken from the First Folio, this play seems to belong to the historical genre. However, in the First Quarto, published in 1597, well before the First Folio, the name of the play is different, *The Tragedy of Richard III*, demonstrating the probable emergence of another genre. It is important to note that the genre assignment of Shakespeare's plays in the First Quarto may have been inconsistent. This confusion extended across many plays, and only in the 1623 First Folio were the categories of comedy, history and tragedy formally assigned. This classification suggests that although Shakespeare may not have intentionally written with these fixed genres in mind, there was a strong enough contemporary understanding of the distinctions that they were solidified soon after his death.

Richard III is tragic, demonstrating through its text certain literary tools showing this, such as stichomythia. As for *The Taming of the Shrew* - and to return to the idea of unfixed genre in Shakespeare's time, and the interest of his contemporaries in defining a precise genre for plays - *The Taming of the Shrew* was called a "historie" in its First Quarto but later classified as a comedy in the First Folio, suggesting an evolution and a deep interest in the question of genre in Shakespeare's plays. Despite this later classification, it is clear from close reading Shakespeare's literary techniques, such as the comic repartee and dramatic stichomythia, that his works drew on a deep tradition of genre, rooted in ancient Greek and Roman theatre. Starting with these two genres, the

implied reader can imagine how they might be interpreted in a different contemporary version, whether in the form of a film or a stage play. Therefore, this essay takes Shakespeare's texts of *The Taming of the Shrew* and *King Richard III*, as printed in their modern *Arden Three* editions, as a starting point to explore how generic expectations, often influenced by the genre of a play, affect contemporary interpretative techniques. To shed light on this question, it is important to start by looking at the modern text to see literary tools that can help audiences to perceive the genre of the play and imagine an interpretation of it. I will start by analysing two dialogues between two characters in each of the plays: one in *King Richard III* between Lady Anne and Richard and one in *The Taming of the Shrew* between Petruchio and Katherina. After studying the early modern text, I will then look at how the contemporary interpretation of *The Taming of the Shrew* (2012), with Samantha Spiro as Katherina and Simon Paisley Day as Petruchio, and the 1995 film *Richard III*, with Kristin Scott Thomas as Lady Anne and Ian McKellen as Richard III, demonstrates the genre of each play through stichomythia. Then, I will use the same approach but show a parallel between two drama devices: the induction of *The Taming of the Shrew* and the soliloquy of Richard III in *King Richard III*.

The two dialogues of Lady Anne and Richard III and Katherina and Petruchio demonstrate their genre through the use of stichomythia, and the contemporary interpretations of the 1995 film version of *Richard III* and 2012 theatre version of *The Taming of the Shrew* reinforce the genres of comedy and tragedy. However, in *King Richard III*, the stichomythia demonstrates genre more explicitly than in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Indeed, stichomythia, in the original Greek definition, is a line-speech that "[r]efers to a highly formalized kind of dialogue in Gr. and Lat. drama in which each speech is confined to a single metrical line … in which one of the two speakers gets the beginning of a line and the other gets the end. Every one of the 33 extant Gr. tragedies makes use of stichomythia" *(The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 1359). This definition becomes especially interesting when it mentions Shakespeare: "Seneca's use of stichomythia and antilabé for repartee influenced William Shakespeare (e.g., *Richard III*)" (1359). The definition first mentions that this dramatic technique is used in Greek tragedies but later claims that Shakespeare was inspired by it by mentioning *Richard III*.

Susan Snyder also states that Shakespeare was influenced by classical literature in his tragedy: "[o]f the three Folio genres, two – comedy and tragedy – were part of traditions stretching back to classical times, traditions which in England encompassed native element as well" (83). This play is thus explicitly linked to the genre of tragedy by the use of stichomythia especially in the dialogue between Lady Anne and Richard III in 2.1. This scene is indeed referenced in the defini-

tion from the encyclopaedia *An A-Z Guide to Shakespeare:* stichomythia is "[d]ialogue in which two characters respond to each other in alternate lines of verse, e.g.

> Lady Anne
> Would it were mortal poison for thy sake.
> Richard III
> Never came poison from so sweet a place. (Richard III, 1.2. 145-6)."

This definition offers a more accurate definition of the technique ued in play, but there is no mention of the Greek definition where in dialogue, one character starts a sentence and the other finishes it, which is a central element in the dialogue between Lady Anne and Richard III:

> Anne
> I would I knew thy heart.
> Richard
> 'Tis figured in my tongue.
> Anne
> I fear me both are false.
> Richard
> Then never man was true. (1.2.195-198)

Here, the stichomythia acts like the definition above, i.e. there is a single metrical line for each of the characters and each finishes the sentence of the other. In the first two lines, Anne begins by saying that she would like to know what is in his heart, and Richard responds by taking the possessive pronoun *thy*, that Anne used in her line, and changing it to *my*. Here, the presence of stichomythia already highlights the genre of tragedy, but the emotional tension of this dialogue also reflects this genre. In her first line, Anne demonstrates an emotional desire for honesty, which highlights her vulnerability despite her grievance. What makes this dialogue tragic is the emotional clash between the two characters. Richard is the opposite. His response is cunning, and he manipulates Anne. The implied reader knows that he is deceitful and that these words are the same that he uses for his manipulation and tricks. This emotional clash highlights the tragic aspect of the dialogue. Goran Stanivukovic likewise suggests that stichomythia emphasizes the tragedy genre: "[i]t is a remarkable sign of early Shakespeare's dramaturgy and of the expressive energy of his language to employ a dramatic and stylistic convention characteristic of a classical model and an earlier form of English tragedy" (90). This observation underscores how Shakespeare's use of stichomythia not only pays homage to classical traditions but also showcases his mastery in enhancing the dramatic tension and tragic depth of the scene. This effective use of language aligns also with

another of Stanivukovic's ideas that Shakespeare is not only "a writer of bombastic blank verse, but also someone … who employs bombast better than his contemporaries" (76). In this scene, because of his grandiose mastery of language, the emotional impact of the language is deepened, and the tragic aspect of the dialogue resonates. This mastery of Shakespeare's language also aids contemporary interpretations. In fact, the use of stichomythia makes for more powerful sentences and gives the scriptwriter and director a more accessible artistic vision of the representation of the tragedy genre.

After analysing this dialogue, I thought it would be interesting to watch the whole scene in the 1995 adaptation starring Kristin Scott Thomas and Ian McKellen. Having read the early modern text, and given that the adaptation is a film, I see her emotions reflecting the genre of tragedy, but in a real and not overplayed way. I see Scott Thomas demonstrating the double emotional distress she is facing, that of her husband's death and that of Richard (whom she suspects of having killed him). This scene should therefore be intense in terms of Anne's feelings when confronted with a manipulative man. I can also imagine that, as this is a film, the camera is also used to fill in the characters' emotions, and I can see still shots of the faces of the two characters to show them up close. In addition, short dialogues keep a rhythm in order to not lose the audience. Having imagined the scene first with only the early modern text, I was able to contrast this impression with the scene in the film and see how the director, Richard Loncraine, interprets the text and its genre. What is interesting is the very appearance of stichomythia in the dialogue between Lady Anne and Richard. Indeed, having the early modern text in front of me and watching the scene, I could see many changes that the director made compared to the early modern text. The director uses stichomythia, perhaps without realizing it, which is even more relevant given that he could have done so unintentionally with the idea of representing the genre of the tragedy with short sentences in mind. First, the director decided to remove lines from the modern text, which highlights a tragic effect: "Richard: Lady, you know no rules of charity / Which renders food for bad, blessings for curses. Anne: Villain, thou knowst nor law of God nor man" (1.2.68-70). Here, the director decided to remove Richard's second line (69), creating a stichomythia. Indeed, the two sentences are answered directly by the deletion of the second line. Lady Anne uses the same sentence structure, but first replaces *Lady* with *Villain*. This gives a tragic effect to the situation with the contrast of the two terms that are opposed by their connotations. *Lady* has a neutral and perhaps even positive connotation, while *Villain* has a very obviously negative connotation. The choice to remove the line between the two highlights the intensity of this tragic scene and brings a striking aspect to the audience.

In addition, these two sentences are not only similar, which allows for alternating one-

line responses, but the two words *rules* and *law* also mark this effect of repetition and both of clear distinction. While the rules are an agreement between people, the law is rather governmental, but both demonstrate a great distinction between the characters. Then, the director adds a line, and this creates a stichomythia: "Gentle lady" (17:10). This line is added between two lines in Anne's speech: "Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed / Richard: Gentle lady. O, he was gentle, mild and virtuous" (1.2.105-106). Here the director adds the word gentle before Lady Anne repeats it right after, and this creates a stichomythia. Furthermore, it also adds a tragic effect, because by calling her gentle lady he brings a positive connotation, and she, by repeating that her husband was gentle, while thinking that Richard killed him, gives a shocking aspect, making her utterance ironic and therefore very negative. Finally, in the first example stated at the beginning on stichomythia, the director removes Richard's line between Anne's two lines:

> Anne
> I would I knew thy heart.
> Richard
> 'Tis figured in my tongue.
> Anne:
> I fear me both are false (1.2.195-197).

Removing Richard's line, there is still an aspect of stichomythia, but in a different way. The effect produced by this removed line gives the implied reader of the early modern text the impression that Anne answers herself. However, when we look at the scene in the film, the way Scott Thomas pronounces the text shows that she knows who he really is. This highlights the fact that Richard is a cunning man. Indeed, she wants to know what is in his heart, but she already knows the answer, and she expresses that his words and heart are not authentic. Anne's speech sheds light on his manipulative behaviour. To come back to what I imagined would be the interpretation of this dialogue on camera, I realized that the artistic choice to use close-up shots of faces was not the director's main choice. At times, I can see their faces up close, but the camera does not stay there for long. What I did notice as an artistic choice was the movement of the actors' bodies. At one point in the dialogue, Anne is facing Richard, then turns her back to him and Richard is behind her shoulder, which reminded me of the expression "the little devil on the shoulder," urging us to do something wrong: "[t]hese eyes could not endure that beauty's wrack / You should not blemish it, if I stood by / As all the world is cheered by the sun / So I by that. It is my day, my life" (1.2.130-133). Richard is the devil over her shoulder by being positioned this way. He is making advances on her beauty as if he wants her to forget that he is a murderer and accept his love. What is more, with this movement, one line of Richard's speech is removed by the scriptwriter: the second

line. There may be several reasons for removing this line, but one is to reinforce his manipulative side and the tragic nature of the scene. Richard says that it is her beauty that has made him commit such a crime, and Anne replies that if that is the case then she will ruin her beauty herself. However, the line that the scriptwriter removes says that if she tries, he would stop her. Removing this line again shows that his speech is full of lies and he does not care about her: all he cares about is power and winning.

As noted above, the presence of stichomythia in the dialogue between Petruchio and Katherina in *The Taming of the Shrew* highlights the comedy genre. As can be seen in the Greek definition, this dramatic technique is only used in tragedies. In the contemporary world, the quick exchange of wit that reflects stichomythia, such as in the 2012 version of the play, is considered comical, but in early modern times, it was more a reference to tragedy. In this dialogue, stichomythia is present and reinforces the comedy of the scene:

> Petruchio
> Come, come, you wasp, i'faith you are too angry.
> Katherina
> If I be waspish, best beware my sting.
> Petruchio
> My remedy is then to pluck it out.
> Katherina
> Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies. (2.1.210-214)

The rapid exchange of single lines between the two characters can be used to give an intense form of language to convey the effect of verbal combat between the two. Petruchio's goal is to tame Katherina. However, Katherina has a strong personality, and this is also evident in her repartee. She responds quickly and directly to Petruchio. This dialogue demonstrates stichomythia through the rapid back-and-forth lines between the characters, each building on the other's words. Petruchio compares her to a wasp in view of her strong temperament. The fact that he adds the adjective little takes the seriousness out of the comparison and makes it comical. It also makes Katherina appear not as a woman with a strong personality, but as one who plays on it. Katherina's response to Petruchio's first line highlights the stichomythia: "[i]f I be waspish, best beware my sting" (2.1.211). By taking the term *wasp* and adding that he should be wary illustrates his repartee, which in turn becomes comical because, in Petruchio's first line, he undermines her personality. The stichomythia continues in the last two lines, emphasizing the comic effect. He states that he wants to pull out her sting, but Katherina, moving away from Petruchio's metaphor, finishes his sentence by expressing that he is a fool for trying to

touch her sting. This stichomythia makes the dialogue comic because she picks up his line but does so on purpose, making him look like a fool. Finally, Katherina's use of some of the terms Petruchio uses also creates a stichomythic effect and is therefore comical:

> PETRUCHIO
> Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.
> KATHERINA
> 'Moved'. In good time, let him that moved you hither
> Re-move you hence. I knew you at the first
> You were a movable.
> PETRUCHIO
> Why, what's a movable?
> KATHERINA
> A joint-stool.
> PETRUCHIO
> Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me. (2.1.193-199)

In this dialogue, each takes something from the other, but in a way that undermines their line. First, Petruchio says that he had been led to court her. Katherina uses stichomythia and repeats the term moved but uses it explicitly to make him less credible. This makes the scene comical because she makes him show that he is pretending to be a joint-stool. Moreover, the addition of quotation marks emphasizes the fact that she is taking the term at face value. Petruchio also uses repartee and takes up her comparison, discrediting her in turn by asking her to sit on him. These repetitions of words, such as moved, display the power of Shakespeare's language to persuade his readers of the genre and its related emotions.

Having explored this dialogue, I think that Samantha Spiro and Simon Paisley Day in the 2012 version give a strong performance of their respective character's personalities. It is through the play of personality, with the help of repartee, that the comedy genre can be brought to the fore. In fact, showing a strong personality and then being undermined by the other character's repartee demonstrates an ironic and comic aspect. And indeed, Spiro and Paisley Day's diction overplays their features. The way Spiro articulates the words shows her strong, authoritative personality. It also shows a form of superiority of language, compared to Paisley Day, in her repartee and in the fact that she is showing stichomythia by taking up the terms used by Petruchio and discrediting them. When she uses his term moved, she says it as a question, as if she was questioning his choice of words. This highlights the foolishness of Petruchio's character, especially since the audience knows that he is trying to tame her but sees that he fails at first, making Petruchio's character witless and the scene comic. I thought this

dynamic would continue the stichomythia that I analysed above, but in this contemporary interpretation, Petruchio says his first line in a calm way: "[c]ome, come, you wasp, i'faith you are too angry" (2.1.210). This change in dynamic demonstrates the different interpretations that readers of the early modern play may have. I thought that on the word wasp there would be a strong accentuation of Petruchio's diction, but Toby Frow shows a different interpretation. The audience and the reader are included by the acting, as they react to the humour that the actors put forward, and they know information about both characters that they themselves ignore, such as Petruchio's goal to tame Katherina. Shakespeare is the early modern genius who writes the play, and Toby Frow is the contemporary artist who interprets his pen. To conclude, the stichomythia in the dialogues of *Richard III* and *The Taming of the Shrew* demonstrates their respective genres of tragedy and comedy. The contemporary interpretations of the 1995 film version of *Richard III* and the 2012 theatre version of *The Taming of the Shrew* further reinforce these genres. In *Richard III*, the stichomythia explicitly highlights the tragic nature of the scene, reflecting the emotional tension and manipulation between Lady Anne and Richard. Conversely, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, the rapid exchange of witty lines between Petruchio and Katherina underscores the comedic aspect of their verbal sparring. The evolving perceptions of these elements over time emphasize Shakespeare's mastery in using stichomythia to enhance the tragic and comedic effects of his plays.

The soliloquy and induction emphasize the genres of *Richard III* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Moreover, contemporary interpretations use the characters to highlight the genre even more. Richard's soliloquy is tragic and is addressed to himself but also the implied readers of the early modern text or the audiences of a contemporary interpretations on stage. The fact that the soliloquy is addressed to the audience, or the implied reader, demonstrates the importance of making it clear that the genre of tragedy is central to *Richard III*. Indeed, in his soliloquy he reveals his thirst for power and for making everyone around him miserable, just as he does with his deformation. This soliloquy demonstrates the tragic genre from several angles, but one of the most striking is the fact that it is divided into two distinct parts, and the transition between them is abrupt. Richard begins by describing his family's joy at the ascension of his brother, Edward IV. He speaks of this victory and of the joy of no longer fighting enemies. However, he abruptly changes tone by expressing his dismay at his brother's ascension to the throne:

> And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds
> To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
> He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
> To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.

> But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
> Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;
> … Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
> … Have no delight to pass away the time,
> Unless to see my shadow in the sun
> … And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover
> To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
> I am determined to prove a villain (1.1.10-30).

This abrupt change takes place between lines thirteen and fourteen. First, he expresses the fact that they no longer must fight, but must live their joy. Then, he begins his second line by introducing a strong opposition to this joy with the help of the conjunction but. This conjunction is used to contrast with a phrase that has already been mentioned. The change is abrupt for the implied reader because this conjunction is often used in the middle of a sentence, and readers who are used to this will notice a sudden change in tone. What's more, this is the first time in the play that the pronoun I appears, which shows that the plot is going to revolve around him and that he is the one who introduces and establishes the genre, which is tragic. He introduces the genre through his soliloquy, which is used to introduce the play and its secrets. In fact, he is also the one who takes away the joy of the beginning by changing the aspect of his first part to tragic. Moreover, the implied reader and the audience are caught up in the genre because of the soliloquy that is addressed directly to them. This literary device evokes Richard's plan to make people miserable: "I am determined to prove a villain / And hate the idle pleasures of these days / Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous" (1.130-32). The fact that the implied reader and the audience are directly exposed to the tragedy that the play is about to take on, without being able to do anything to prevent it, adds an even more tragic aspect to the play, and this is the purpose of the soliloquy in *Richard III*. Snyder also expresses this inability to change things reflected in the genre of tragedy: "[i]n tragedy, on the other hand, the causal chain unwinds inexorably towards destruction, cutting off alternative possibilities of escape or potential new beginnings" (85). What struck me about the soliloquy in *Richard III* performed by Laurence Olivier is the change to the early modern text in the second part of this soliloquy. Up until line 23, Olivier follows *Richard III*'s early modern text well, while adding an acting style where, as the audience, I felt that joy was not going to last. Indeed, in this first part, he remains calm, but in his gaze as he utters certain words, I can tell that he already knows that his soliloquy is going to take a tragic turn like the play as a whole. The way he plays with this gaze too, raising an eyebrow at times, really gives the impression that I do not know what is coming next. Then, the second part arrives, and the diction starts to build to a crescendo from line 23 where he adds part of the early modern text from

Henry VI, Part 3 instead of from *Richard III*. The crescendo reaches its peak through Olivier's voice when he quotes *Henry VI, Part 3:* "[a]nd set the murderous Machiavel to school. / Can I do this and cannot get a crown?" (3.2.195-196). In this quote, Olivier reaches the maximum volume of his voice; he is yelling. His performance, incorporated with part of the early modern text of *Henry VI, Part 3*, emphasizes the tragedy genre, not only in the way he builds to a crescendo in the second part of his soliloquy but also in the way he implies that he is better than Niccolò Machiavelli himself. I also wonder whether Shakespeare, to further emphasize the cunning side of Richard's character, might not have been inspired by the character of Machiavelli for the role of Richard III. Indeed, Hugh Grady claims that Shakespeare uses Machiavellian themes:

> In some ways, of course, Shakespeare's first historical tetralogy – and above all its climax, *Richard III* – is the logical place to look for Shakespeare's earliest treatment of Machiavellian themes, themes that he probably became acquainted with by a study of Christopher Marlowe's audacious Machiavellian characters in plays like *Dr. Faustus* … Shakespeare's only explicit reference to Machiavelli, after all, is a line by Richard of Gloucester in *3 Henry VI:*
>
> > I can add colors to the chameleon,
> > Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,
> > And set the murtherous Machevil to shool. (3.2. 191-193)
>
> If by Machiavellian we mean something like E.E. Stoll's treatment of the dramatic figure of the Machiavel, a doctrine which promulgates a false façade of virtue covering over an interiority of malevolent power-seeking, then La Pucelle and Richard III are certainly Machiavellian characters. (123-124)

This quotation shows that Machiavelli is an inspiration and that Shakespeare further emphasizes the tragedy genre through this inspiration.

Finally, *The Taming of the Shrew's* induction is also an important point because it introduces us to the character who foregrounds the comedic elements of the play. The character of Sly is comic on his own. He is a drunk man who has not paid for his drinks and whose hostess objects and goes to get help. What makes the situation comical is that Sly himself disputes the fact that he is not going to pay for his drinks, putting his heart and soul into it, but ends up falling asleep: "[t]hird, or fourth, or fifth borough, I'll answer him by law. I'll not budge an inch, boy. Let him come, and kingly. *Falls asleep"* (1.12-14). Here, situational comedy helps highlight and introduce the genre of the play

to the audience or implied reader. Indeed, it is the didascaly that makes this scene comic. After the hostess says that she is going to call the constable, Sly exaggerates the situation by saying that she can call them all and that he is going to welcome the constable, but immediately afterward, he falls asleep, which makes his character even more comical. Shakespeare reinforces the comic genre by using the induction, which generally presents the important elements of the play. However, Sly is important because he starts the play but does not stay long, apart from some apparitions. This shows that Shakespeare uses this character to introduce the genre of his play, and his line of didascaly also shows this. In addition to this induction and the character of Sly, Shakespeare also introduces another comic element: the play within the play. With all these elements that form the induction, the audience and implied reader can then already discern the play's genre is comedy. Having seen the 2012 performance of the play, I was surprised by the way Toby Frow chose to interpret the induction. Indeed, Sly arrives directly in the audience. By playing with the audience, he brings a comic effect while the public wonder who this drunk man is. This choice to dress Sly as a football supporter helps the audience relate with him. He is part of the public at the beginning, and this creates a break between the stage and the audience. This break reinforces the comedy of the play while the public wonder who this man is: that is the starting point of the induction. Ultimately, *Richard III's* soliloquy and *The Taming of the Shrew's* induction crucially establish their plays' genres, which are the tragedy and the comedy, respectively. Richard's address reveals his malevolence and sets a tragic tone, further emphasized by contemporary performances like Olivier's. Conversely, Sly's humorous induction introduces the comedic element, which is enhanced in modern adaptations, such as Frow's 2012 interpretation.

In conclusion, the exploration of Shakespeare's *Richard III* and *The Taming of the Shrew* reveals how their genres are deeply rooted in the early modern texts and further emphasized through contemporary interpretations. By examining the dialogues between Lady Anne and Richard III, as well as Katherina and Petruchio, the use of stichomythia is highlighted as a critical technique that delineates the tragedy and comedy genres, respectively. The tragic nature of *Richard III* is made evident through the emotional tension and manipulation in the dialogue, reinforced in the 1995 film adaptation. Conversely, the comedic essence of *The Taming of the Shrew* is brought to life through the witty repartee, as seen in the 2012 theatrical performance. Additionally, Richard's soliloquy and the induction in *The Taming of the Shrew* serve to further solidify the respective genres, with contemporary interpretations enhancing these elements. This detailed analysis underscores Shakespeare's mastery in utilizing literary techniques to create powerful and enduring works that continue to captivate contemporary audiences. Shakespeare was clearly aware of the classical distinction between comedy and tragedy, even if his plays were not initially classified in strict genres. Stichomythia, which originated in Greek

tragedy, or the witty repartee which came from Roman comedies, demonstrates that Shakespeare was building on these established genres, reinforcing this idea that although the First Folio imposed strict divisions, Shakespeare's writing reflects an intentional engagement with these traditions, and the plays ultimately demonstrate particular generic affiliations. It is wonderful to see the many interpretations of the same plays, to see that some directors see certain aspects of Shakespeare plays differently, such as their genre. Indeed, it was interesting to see that for *Richard III*, the 1995 and 1955 films are different in their acting, even in the same scene. The dialogue between Scott Thomas and McKellen shows that body movements reflect intense emotions, while Olivier's facial expressions and gaze convey a dark and tragic aspect. However, their respective scenarios cut or added lines, perhaps to reinforce the tragic aspect of their interpretations and perhaps to get closer to audiences that have not read Shakespeare's original texts. Paying attention to Shakespeare's use of dramatic techniques - here, stichomythia and introductory scenes - demonstrates not only his generic variation, but also provides insight into the way these generic conventions have influenced their theatrical reception.

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Women Readers: A Phenomenological Reading of the Bookish Scenes in Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre *and Leo Tolstoy's* Anna Karenina

Noémie Gallay

In *Jane Eyre* (1847), Charlotte Brontë introduces a protagonist captivated by books, finding solace in her imagination since the early years of her life. As an adult, Jane Eyre comes back eight years later to her childhood home, Gateshead, and is disconcerted to realize that in the once familiar bookshelf, "[t]he inanimate objects were not changed, but the living things had altered past recognition" (272). This interpretation places *Jane Eyre* in line with the phenomenological idea that "[b]ooks are objects... wait[ing to be] deliver[ed] from their materiality" (Poulet 53-54). Only when actively taken from the bookshelf and read can they exist as living entities. In *Anna Karenina* (1878), Leo Tolstoy narrates a similar reading experience: the protagonist's much celebrated reading scene on the train back to Saint-Petersburg delves into Anna's internalization of the book that gives it "not only existence, but awareness of existence" (Poulet 59). As a result, this passage is less about the book than about a crucial turning point of self-realization and introspection. Both Jane and Anna's experiences with reading observe a *mise en abîme*, that is, a literary technique staging the novel within the novel and, in this case, the reading experience within the reading experience. Although Anna and Jane are fictional characters, Brontë and Tolstoy explore and question through them what it means to be a reader and what it means to engage with a text.

Through the distinct reading experiences of *Jane Eyre* and *Anna Karenina*, Charlotte Brontë and Leo Tolstoy explore the phenomenology of reading novels to illustrate its varying influence on the inner self in terms of subjectivity, identification, introspection and alienation. While Jane's imaginative engagement with the text fosters an active self-reflection, Anna's emotional identification with her English novel resonates with her hidden desires and leads to a conflicted inner self. In this essay, I will proceed with two sections. In the first, I will explore the first stage of a reading experience, characterized

by an entry into the inner life while maintaining a rapport with the external environment. For the second section, I will analyze the extremes of the reading experience: a retreat into the inner self where the reader's consciousness, in close contact with the book, fosters at the same time an imaginative self-exploration and a detachment from reality. To explore this intimate interaction between reader and text, I will compare two phenomenological approaches on reading: Georges Poulet's "Phenomenology of Reading" (1969) and Marcel Proust *Sur la lecture* (1906). As a subcategory to the theorization of experiences as defined primarily by Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, Georges Poulet's adaptation of the field to the experience of reading explores the engagement of the reader with the text at the level of consciousness, subjective identity and alienation.

According to the Pouletian view, the act of reading turns the material book into an "interior object" (55), a living consciousness within the reader's mind. The internalization of this external object, as "a series of words, of images, of ideas" is, in turn, converted into "mental entities" (54). However, the presence of "the consciousness of another" within the "innermost self" (54), leads the reader "to think…and feel" the "thoughts of another" (54, 55). This creates an uncanny gap – or internal split – as reading bestows a subject that differs from the reader's: "Whenever I read, I mentally pronounce an *I*, and yet the *I* which I pronounce is not myself" (56). Nevertheless, even if the subject *I* is "on loan to another", it retains its position as subject, as Poulet insists that, "[i]t is *I* who think, who contemplate, who am engaged in speaking. In short, it is never a *HE* but an *I*" (56). These thoughts, even if they originate from another, are still part of the reader's "mental world" (56). The "mental world" as a conceptual space is in part created in the reader's consciousness through the act of reading and in part a space where the reader interacts with that *other*. Moreover, the identification with another subject leads to an alienation of the self, albeit on a deeper level, that replaces the very core of the subjective self (56-57). Alienation refers to "the process of separating or distancing oneself from one's own nature," a meaning transposed in the 13th century in Anglo-Norman to define mental instability (*OED*). The act of reading can then be described as such: a mental instability, a "take-over of [the reader's] innermost subjective being" (57), placing in its stead, "a host of alien words, images, ideas, but also…the very alien principle which utters them and shelters them" (57). Fundamentally, reading alters – etymologically, renders *other* – the reader's subjective identity, replacing it with another consciousness, a second self, that acts in a way not as a passive medium through which the reader experiences the text; instead, it actively mediates the semantic and epistemological implications of a narrative.

Then, what is this other "thinking subject" and whose other consciousness is this (57)? Poulet first argues that this consciousness is that of the author's (58), whose "cogitations" "impregnat[e]...every word of literature" (55, 58), "awaken[ing] *in* [the readers] the analogue of what he thought or felt" (58, emphasis added). Thus, the author, as a figure of *auctoritas*, regulates the thoughts and ideas present in a narrative to convey a particular meaning, rendering his emotions alive in the reader as well. Following the Husserlian definition of cogito as a conscious experience that a subject (*ego*) undertakes, either actively or passively (Bowker), I conclude that a book needs a reader to be given the status of consciousness while a reader requires the conscience of the author to become a host to new *cogitationes*.

Alternatively, Poulet argues that the subject exposed to the reader through the act of reading is not merely the author but the literary work, "liv[ing] its own life within [the reader]" (58-9). Poulet adds that, the work "takes hold of [the reader's consciousness], appropriates it, and makes of it that *I* which, from one end of [the] reading to the other, presides over the unfolding of the work" (59). The consciousness created during reading exists independently from the author, as a unique entity within the narrative and as an autonomous subjectivity. Through the act of reading, the literary work, in turn, leads to an act of creation of "a network of words," of meaning within the reader's inner self (59). Yet, the existence of this living entity does not mean a complete replacement of the reader's consciousness. Poulet defines this phenomenon as a "common consciousness" (59). In this shared consciousness, there are different roles: "the consciousness inherent in the work" is "active and potent…it is clearly related to its *own* world, to objects which are *its* objects" (59), while the reader's consciousness holds the more passive role of an observer, experiencing the narrative as it is shaped for them by the literary work.

Conversely, Marcel Proust in *Sur la lecture* places the act of reading as "l'impulsion d'un autre esprit" which incites in the reader an "activité créatrice" (46-7). For Proust, the *cogito* of the author only serves as the catalyst for an active self-reflection that seeks to go further than the text. Reading acts as the "seuil de la vie spirituelle ; elle peut nous y introduire : elle ne la constitue pas" (43). Thus, the act of reading is an entry point, an access to the depths of the inner thoughts that it does not attain and to spiritual life, that is, to the activity of the mind that it does not replace. In that regard, *Jane Eyre* adheres to the Proustian reflections on reading. The famous opening of *Jane Eyre* introduces a young Jane as the opposite of a passive reader. Indeed, she actively brings her own interpretation of the book she reads:

> [T]he letterpress [of Bewick's *History of British Birds*] I cared little for, generally speaking; and yet there were certain introductory pages that, child as I was, I could not pass quite as a blank. They were those which treat of the haunts of sea-fowl; of 'the solitary rocks and promontories' by them only inhabited; of the coast of Norway, studded with isles from its southern extremity, the Lindeness, or Naze, to the North Cape…Of these death-white realms I formed an idea of my own: shadowy, like all the half-comprehended notions that float dim through children's brains, but strangely impressive. (2)

Hardly registering the text in front of her, Jane undertakes two successive movements within her inner self: a process of introjection and one of projection. Introjection incorporates – etymologically, to embody, to form into the body – the words and images of the text and reappropriates them within the self in the internalization process that transforms them into the "mental entities" described by Poulet (54). Thus, "the solitary rocks and promontories" and "the coast of Norway" are internalized within Jane as "death-white realms" (2). This designation suggests a vast, expansive territory, elevating these places from mere physical locations to mysterious and fantastical domains. This action frames them as spaces that exist partly in reality and partly in the mind of Jane as a (fictional) reader. The second active process, the projection, characterizes the attribution of the reader's own thoughts and feelings to the fictional text. Indeed, for Jane, these "death-white realms" also denote a projection of Jane's internal state onto the fictional environment (2). At the beginning of the novel, Jane experiences loneliness and alienation within her social environment, the Reed household. Brontë's description of Bewick's landscapes as desolate echoes Jane's own feelings of isolation. This resonance with her inner self leads to an active process and a formative creative reading response. Indeed, she "form[s] an idea of [her] own," that is, she actively molds it, she creates it (2).

While the result of this interpretive creation, described as "strangely impressive" (2), suggests the presence of strange, alien *cogitationes* belonging to the consciousnesses of the author and of the literary work, it also highlights the active roles of both reader and work in a "common consciousness" (Poulet 58-9). Indeed, an exchange and commingling of thoughts are necessary to connect "the words in these introductory pages...with the succeeding vignettes" and to give them meaning (Brontë 3). This echoes Poulet's argument that the work "forces on [the reader] a series of mental objects and creates... a network of words" (58). Poulet's concept of a "network of words" requiring the forceful influence of the literary work involves, in *Jane Eyre*, a shared consciousness with two active agents – the literary work whose words are "impregnated with the mind" of the author and the reader (58).

Thus, the act of interpretation as a back and forth between the textual words and Jane's inner self explores the existence of a space that disrupts the dichotomy between inner experience and outer world. As psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott argues, the "intermediate area of *experiencing*, to which inner reality and external life both contribute... exist[s] as a resting-place for the individual engaged in the perpetual human task of keeping inner and outer reality separate yet interrelated" (Winnicott). Instead of viewing the act of reading as an experience constrained to the inner self, Jane's act of interpretation induces a back and forth between her inner engagement with the text and the external environment. This aligns with the Proustian view of reading as an awakening to the world, recounting in *Sur la lecture* many childhood memories and explaining this tangent as the fact that books speak not of themselves but of the time and places they were read in (30). Brontë points to "the drear November day" and to Jane's frequent coming back to the external, natural world: "At intervals, while turning over the leaves of my book, I studied the aspect of that winter afternoon" (2). These subsequent observations lead to a parallel, since the "cold winter wind" and the "clouds so sombre" of Gateshead resurface in Bewick's "accumulation of centuries of winters" (1, 2). The literary work does not replace inner life; it is only an entry, a catalyst for the creation of a profound internal experience that transcends the literal words on the page but also the binary of external and internal world. Therefore, for Jane, placing reading in the context of the external world does not abstract it from reality but rather emphasizes and highlights it. The external environment and the internal reading experience become intertwined, enriching the reader's engagement with the text and the surroundings.

Going further into the exploration of that intermediate space composed of both external and internal world, *Anna Karenina* presents the act of reading as the slow breakdown of internal and external world, preparing the inner self to a further alienating association of the inner self in contact with the consciousness of the literary work. As the protagonist Anna Karenina rides the train from Moscow to Saint-Petersburg, she finds herself in a mixed state of mind: she is relieved, thinking that she successfully escaped Vronsky's advances and that she will be able to "go on in the old way," but she also exhibits an "anxious frame of mind" (225). Reading, in this already quite emotional state, is first welcomed as a distraction but eventually leads to the uncovering of the turmoil within her inner self.

This reading scene ironically opens on Anna's failure to read her English novel. Similar to Proust's argument that the environment of the reading experience is as important – if not, at times, more so – than the act of reading itself (25-28), Tolstoy describes in detail

two subsequent elements of distraction. The first distraction materializes as a sensorially chaotic external environment, composed of kinetic elements – the train's "fuss and bustle," then of auditory disturbances – in the sounds of "the snow beating on the left window," and of "the conversations about the terrible snowstorm" – and of the visual aspect in "the sight of the muffled guard passing by" (226). This constant movement and agitation deeply unsettle Anna, at the same time resonating with her inner emotional agitation. Yet, these chaotic noises and movements slowly blend into a rhythmic pattern – "the same," "the same," "the same," "the same," repeatedly marking the assimilation of the noises as one into Anna's consciousness (226). Only through achieving a state of lowered awareness of external factors to soothe her agitated mind can Anna finally "read and underst[an]d" (226). Tolstoy here suggests two stages to novel reading: to read words and then to incorporate them, to extract meaning from them.

The second form of distraction surfaces upon entry into the fictional world of the book, shifting Anna's focus to a state of self-reflection and introspection. Because the Proustian view on reading in communication with the author stipulates that reading incites in the reader "desires" to reach an understanding of the world, real and fictional (Proust 40, my translation), for Anna, this engagement with the novel triggers a desire to replace the fictional characters and to perform as them, as she "follow[s] the reflection of other people's lives" (226). Not satisfied with a passive role in her reading, Anna "had too great a desire to live herself," suggesting a yearning for action and personal agency. Yet, the Russian verb **хотелось** (to want) is an impersonal form, which places the pronoun **Ей** ("to her") referring to Anna not as the subject of this sentiment (**Анна Каренина** 116, **Promt**). This impersonal desire to exist echoes the Pouletian notion of the emergence of a second *other* self through reading, one that "thinks, feels, suffers, and acts within me" (58). The "take-over" of the subjective self reflects Anna's hidden desire to be a novelized heroine at the center of the action (57). Akin to the Pouletian idea of a critic, Anna actively identifies herself with the life of the characters, "apprehend[ing] as [her] own what is happening in the consciousness of another being" (60). Despite this association to another's actions and emotions, Tolstoy hints that Anna, like the critic, is "aware of a certain gap, disclosing a feeling of identity, but of identity within difference" (Poulet 60) as stated in the phrase "[b]ut there was no chance of doing anything" (Tolstoy 227). The contrasting conjunction "but" signals an attempt to break free from the imaginative possibilities and introspection the fictional world affords. In addition, Tolstoy insists on the presence of the paper-knife that Anna "twist[s]...in her little hands" as a grounding external object that endeavors to maintain a barrier between that fictional world and the realities of her life. Thus, the first stage of reading in *Anna Karenina* presents the integration of both external and internal distractions and, instead of Winnicott's transitional in-

terrelated space, presents an intermittent merging and blending of external and internal worlds within her inner self, leading to the emerging presence of hidden desires.

As the previous section explored the act of reading as an active process, either as an act of interpretation that nevertheless maintains a connection with the external objects or as the desire to perform similar actions as the fictional characters, this section will provide an insight into the extremes of the reading experience – detachment from external constraints and alienation within the self. As stated above, reading causes "the physical objects…to disappear, including the…book" itself (Poulet 55). Now, what if the book goes beyond this figurative disappearance and is simply nonexistent? While previously, in *Jane Eyre*, the protagonist actively fosters her imagination in the Winnicottian transitional space between external and internal worlds, in the following passage she calls to her mind alone the "mental objects" she had once internalized through reading (Poulet 55). In a state of agitation, she decides

> to walk along the corridor of the third story, backwards and forwards, safe in the silence and solitude of the spot, and allow my mind's eye to dwell on whatever bright visions rose before it - and certainly they were many and glowing; to let my heart be heaved by the exultant movement, which, while it swelled it in trouble, expanded it with life; and, best of all, to open my inward ear to a tale that was never ended-a tale my imagination created and narrated continuously; quickened with all of incident, life, fire, feeling, that I desired and had not in my actual existence. (127)

This moment of retreat within the self evokes a state akin to the one described by Marcel Proust in *Sur la lecture*. Like Jane, Proust decides to walk along his bedside to calm an inner turmoil, caused by the sudden ending of a book (26). Resorting to a soothing, repetitive movement alludes to Anna's turning of external distractions into "the same" lulling rhythm (226). Beyond these striking similarities, Brontë and Proust explore the internalization, not simply of the words, of these "mental entities" (54), but of the sensorial faculties of the self diverted and pointed to the inner world. Thus, Jane's "mind's eye" and "inward ear," along with Proust's eyes fixated on a point "situé qu'à une distance d'âme – "located at a soul's distance" – indicate a focal point that transcends the physical environment and exists solely within the internal realm, effectively turning the mind onto itself (Brontë 127, Proust 26). The evocative power of imagination allows for the creation of "bright visions" that "rose before [the mind's eye]" (127). The dynamic verb "to rise before" places the "visions" as the result of an action undertaken by an agent *other* within the reader's mind, relegating the "inward eye" to the role of a specta-

tor that in turn actively engages with these mental objects (127). These joint actions hint at the workings of the "common consciousness" described by Poulet (59), that is, the presence of the consciousnesses of the literary work and of the author that are internalized along with the reader's consciousness. In this case, the effects of this internalization linger within the mind after the act of reading itself. These luminous imaginative creations constitute a continuous, self-generated narrative, demonstrating how reading can initiate and fuel an endless, internal narrative. Consequently, while this retreat into one's own mind provides a sense of freedom and escape, it also highlights the characters' detachment from reality, that is, their existence as tied to the external world. Jane's longing for the "incident, life, fire, feeling" that she lacks in her actual existence and Proust's frustrated realization – "ce livre, ce n'était que cela?" – that the book's world is ultimately insubstantial, underscore the state of yearning where both characters are left in, trying to hold on to the fictional world they have internalized to deal with these absences (Brontë 127, Proust, 26).

In contrast to Jane Eyre's self-retreat that nevertheless fosters an active engagement and awareness of her inner self, Anna Karenina experiences self-alienation, that is a detachment from her inner self. As Anna attempts to refocus on her novel to distance herself from further introspection, she then transitions into a state of active imaginative engagement and begins to vividly foster an imaginative desire to merge wit the narrated world: "Anna was feeling a desire to go with [the hero of the novel] to the estate" (227). Following the Pouletian notion of a subjective "take-over" by the consciousness of the book, Anna undergoes a process of introjection, integrating the fictional world that "thinks, feels, suffers, and acts" within her inner self (57-8). However, instead of placing Anna as a passive observer of the book's actions, Tolstoy explores the introspective possibilities offered by novel reading. As Proust states, reading affords an exploration of spiritual life and incites a "travail fécond de l'esprit sur lui-même" (43, 35). While Anna unknowingly and subconsciously explores the inner emotions buried deep within herself, this fruitful work on the inner self results in the projection of her hidden emotions onto the character of the novel she is reading: "she suddenly felt that HE ought to feel ashamed, and that she was ashamed of the same thing" (227). The adverb "suddenly" indicates a shift in Anna's reading experience and perspective, proceeding from a state of active involvement with the narrative to one of imaginative self-reflection (227). The attribution of Anna's emotion to the fictional character in turn causes the alienation of the latter – the forced assimilation of her emotion – thus, reversing the alienating effects of reading caused by the internalization of thoughts that are *other*. Following Poulet's statement that, "in the perfect identification of two consciousnesses, each sees itself reflected in the other" (60), Anna's resonance with the text leads to an empathic identification with it. This emotional connection echoes the Proustian concept of an active working on the inner self, that is, of a work that is not alienating but self-reflective. Via this self-recognition in the English novel, she undergoes a reappropriation of her self and of her emotional inner world. Reading reflects her inner turmoil and uncovers her inner emotions that were buried deeply within her unconscious, bringing them to her conscious awareness.

Afraid to actively acknowledge her inner passion, Anna enters in a dialogue with and within herself, wondering: "[w]hat have I to be ashamed of?" (227). Here, she adopts the position of a critic, of a second and more rational consciousness, in relation to her own life to distance herself from an imminent surfacing of her troubled consciousness. In doing so, Tolstoy introduces a dialogue of inner voices, emphasizing the inner conflict Anna is under. First deciding that "[t]here was nothing [to be ashamed of]," she then recounts her Moscow memories, especially dwelling on "Vronsky and his face of slavish adoration" (227). While she concludes once more that "there was nothing shameful" (227), Tolstoy conveys a gradual sense of splitting within her inner self highlighted by the "intensifi[cation of] the feeling of shame…as though some inner voice…were saying to her, 'Warm, very warm, hot'" (228). The strengthening of Anna's passionate suppressed consciousness is given a voice that Tolstoy describes in the Cyrillic as "какой-то внутренний голос," "some inner voice" (Анна Каренина 117). The use of the indefinite pronoun "some" combined with будто, "as if" or "as though," stresses a lack of specificity, as if of a desire to remain in the generalization, in the fear of naming this inner voice and of acknowledging even its existence (*Promt*). Anna suffers, then, a kind of alienation in the sense explored by Rahel Jäggi's definition of self-alienation as an internal division where "one experiences one's own desires and impulses as alien" and other (99).

Longing for a rational reflection, Anna carries on with her interior monologue: "'[c]an it be that between me and this officer boy there exist, or can exist, any other relations than such as are common with every acquaintance?'" (228). Like a reader criticizing a book, she explores the possibilities of a narrative – a narrative that happens to be her own life. In establishing this possibility as a kind of tentative answer, she distances herself from asking the ultimate question – whether she herself desires this kind of relation with Vronsky. Instead of a verbal answer, Tolstoy precipitates Anna's physical and mental unraveling, beginning with her failure to read and subsequent abandonment of her novel. Like Jane, Anna's reading experience reaches a point where the book itself is set aside. Once internalized within the inner self in close connection with the reader's active consciousness, the reader can explore the mental world thus created in contact with the

narrative and in a complete detachment from the external world.

The conflict within her inner world culminates in the expression of her once repressed consciousness and is illustrated by the ubiquitous presence and passing of the paper-knife first on the window, then on her face (228). The imagery of the paper-knife as cutting and destructive conveys at the same time the splitting of Anna's self and the ruinous consequences of pursuing her illegitimate passion – the dismemberment of her family life and social position. Along with a "feeling of delight," her inner turmoil is expressed in an embodied and metaphoric manner: "[s]he felt as though her nerves were strings being strained tighter and tighter on some sort of screwing peg" (228). As Elaine Auyoung asserts in her chapter "Tolstoy's Embodied Reader" of *When Fiction Feels Real* (2018), Tolstoy "cues [readers] to draw on their own motor memory...[and] invites [them] to retrieve a piece of embodied knowledge that can be acquired from everyday habitual action" (61). Directing readers of *Anna Karenina* to imagine the movement of tightening strings draws on their kinesic knowledge to evoke in them a visual representation of the intensity of the tension within Anna's inner self.

This tension, in part due to Anna's internal division, also occurs with the growing presence of "something within oppressing her breathing" (228) – in Russian, "что внутри что-то давит дыханье," "that something inside presses her breath" (Анна Каренина 117, *Promt*). The term "something within" echoes the pressing words of "some inner voice" – a still unnamed presence representing Anna's concealed feelings (228). The embodied knowledge of the feeling of obstructed breathing emphasizes the impossibility of containing such a pressing emotional consciousness. With these bodily, embodied descriptions, Tolstoy challenges the dichotomy of mind and body to mirror Anna's mental state falling apart, resulting in "moments of doubts…continually coming upon her" and utter kinetic loss – "uncertain whether the train were going forwards or backwards" (228-9). The absence of perceptual points of references in her surroundings is challenged to the point of non-recognition: "What's that on the arm of the chair, a fur cloak or some beast? And what am I myself? Myself or some other woman?" (229). The question "Я сама или другая?" ("Am I myself or another?") at the center of Anna's unraveling and subjective alienation gives rise to the fear of falling to "this delirium" – in Russian, забытью conveys rather a sense of being forgotten (Анна Каренина 117, *Promt*). It indicates the fear of losing touch with the inner and outer worlds but also the fear of forgetting her social position as a married woman.

This echoes Proust's notion of the inability to explore the depths of one's inner self, resulting in a life in a "perpétuel oubli d'eux-mêmes" (46). This state of complete loss

of identity in her internal division is mirrored in the fragmentation of her surroundings. The perceptual disembodiment of her external environment materializes as her attempt at "self-possession" fails and Anna is precipitated in a dream-like state, as indicated by the phrase "then everything grew blurred again..." (229). The ellipses are crucial as they denote utter collapse: at the lexical level and at the perceptual and imaginative level. Anna, completely removed from the external world, experiences a vision in the form of "a black cloud…, a fearful shrieking and banging, as though someone were being torn to pieces; then there was a blinding dazzle of red fire" (229). This episode clearly functions as a recollection of the deadly accident at the railroad station on the day she first met Vronsky. The resurfacing of this memory in Anna's inner self echoes the similar dismemberment she experienced while reading – the splitting of her inner self into an Anna-critic and a passionate Anna-reader. Here too, Tolstoy explores the turmoil of the mind in an embodied manner.

Yet, the question remains, who (in the world of *Anna Karenina*) is inciting such a morbid memory? Anna the reader as her English novel uncovered memories within her inner self? Anna the critic as the creation of a parallel between two events? Or is it an authorial warning against the engagement in the passions animated by the act of reading? It is probably a blending of all three perspectives, as this trance-like state provokes the (con)fusion of "everything" (229). Ending the vision and pulling herself together, that is, internalizing her inner splitting as part of her inner self, Anna decides to step out of the train. In this state of self-divide, the contact with the cold wind – a harsh external sensation – acts as a re-entrance into the external environment. Even though her readerly experience has ended, what it has uncovered within her inner self – her conflictual self-alienation, that is, a divide between an impulse to pursue her passion and the desire to flee them, as well as awareness thereof – will not disappear. As the whirlwind outside reflects her agitated inner self, Anna "enjoy[s] the struggle," for now at peace in realizing the possibility of a passionate existence (229).

By exploring the complexities of the phenomenology of reading via a mise en abîme in *Jane Eyre* and *Anna Karenina,* Charlotte Brontë and Leo Tolstoy reveal the capacity of literature to transform the reader's sense of self and engagement with the world. Poulet's concept of the "mental entities" that books create within the reader's consciousness, along with Proust's view of reading as a catalyst for active imaginative self-reflection, highlight the varying engagements Jane and Anna experience with the text (Poulet 55, Proust 43). While Jane's active engagement with the text reflects an evolving self-awareness and imaginative agency, Anna's identification with her novel leads to an intermittent merging of external and internal worlds within her inner self, ultimately revealing

hidden desires that unsettle her perception of reality.

On examining the extremes of the reading experience, I noted that both Jane and Anna retreat into their minds. As a process that sets aside the book itself, this self-exploration results in both a freedom from external constraints and a detachment from external and objective reality. Jane's creation of an internal narrative that she can explore at will strengthens an engagement with her imaginative inner self, whereas Anna's reading leads to an internally divided self, split between the voices of a rational Anna-critic and a passionate Anna-reader. Because reading resonates with the hidden inclinations of her inner self, it reflects her inner turmoil and leads to a chaotic emergence of these tormenting desires as they are brought to an embodied and conscious awareness. In their unique portrayals of the readerly mind, *Jane Eyre* and *Anna Karenina* suggest that literature is more than mere escapism; in contact with the reader's consciousness, it offers a plethora of experiences within the self that can both soothe and unsettle, foster imagination as well as internal divide.

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Research Sneak Peek with Professor Puskas

David Jaques-Olivier Bovet

You worked a lot on the interface between syntax and semantics, syntax and pragmatics, as well as the left periphery and the expression of negation in Hungarian, before moving on to consider subjunctive mood, as well as modality and clausal case marking cross linguistically. What induced that change?

Oooof, that's a tough question… somehow, the research goes, you start with something and in my case, I started with my PhD, which was on Hungarian, which led me to get interested in left peripheral phenomena because that is something very salient in Hungarian. In those days, it was not something that was much discussed, so it was a kind of topic that emerged.

Related to that, and something that I could not develop in my dissertation was this idea that negation, but also quantification seemed to somehow also resort to left periphery. Quantification somehow naturally related to modality, so whilst you explore the nominal domain [quantification] you go onto the clausal domain [modality] and it somehow all follows that subjunctive is very much in the topic.

The reason why subjunctive was interesting was that it is a clausal phenomenon that has been studied a lot but, paradoxically, we don't know a lot about. There were also several questions that came from students. Putting all of this together, we set up a research project which ended up being a development into the work on subjunctive.

Case marking is – or actually, looked – at first sight very, very different. I was actually contacted by a colleague at the Masaryk University in Brno who is a specialist in case, and who started to think about the fact that case is in the nominal domain, so why isn't it in the clausal domain – so that's what we do. While working on it, we realised that it is not so far away from the rest.

The fact that clauses are marked with cases leads to questions of complementizers, which then goes back to what we've done with subjunctive. Ultimately, I think that all topics ended up tying together.

Do you plan on publishing anything soon?

Yes! We are in the process of publishing a volume that is one of the major outputs for the research project on case in which there is a collection of papers resulting from the workshop we organised last week [week of the 14th of October] on cased clauses.

When can we expect it to be released?

That will depend first of all on the diligence of the authors, hahaha, and then on the process of publishing, which is not always so easy, but probably sometime next year.

What is the aspect of academic life that you enjoy the most?

I'd be tempted to say both teaching and research, but to be honest, research is something that you can do outside of academia as well, although an academic life is an extremely well organised and encouraging environment for research. I think that teaching is something that I really like, at least as much as research, and this [teaching] outside of academic life is way more difficult to do, so I think that's a good thing about academia.

Why did you choose to continue your academic career in Geneva, especially when your research interests would allow you to travel?

There are several reasons. First of all, simply because I got into academic life relatively late, and almost by accident. I just had a small "chargée d'enseignement" position, which is a part-time position, which then developed into a full-fetched position later, and I was not really planning at the beginning to have this kind of complete 100% academic life. Also, the research environment in Geneva when I started was extremely stimulating. I don't mean it as it isn't now, but it was, and so, in some sense, there was no point in going somewhere else because everything was here. Geneva was, in the early 2000s, a European hub for generative grammar and a certain number of things. Not the only one, but I think it was a very important area where lots of things happened so that also did not encourage me to go elsewhere.

Of course, the third factor is family questions. You do not move around with small kids, especially with a partner who has a job in Geneva. It is kind of difficult, and I think it is a question that rises for probably all people in academia.

Linked to the last question, you have been a visiting scholar at UC Santa Cruz, McGill University, as well as the University of New Mexico. What would you say is one prominent aspect for each of these experiences that you will keep close to your heart?

Well, I guess for UCSC, it was my first experience abroad, so that was absolutely new; the environment was extremely encouraging and dynamic; there was a group of PhD students who'd organise potlucks every week and so it was a very lively and very welcoming environment which really helped me a lot at that point in my research.
McGill University was a very different experience because, first of all, McGill is cold hahaha. You know, you experience the Québécois winter. Jokes aside, it was very different in the sense that I got to meet very interesting people, and also in domains that I hadn't been so familiar with. The environment was slightly different: there were specialists in acquisition and in other domains, so I got to discover some aspects of the field that I hadn't really had a chance to explore before.

For Albuquerque, the University of New Mexico, I think my dearest memory – not just memory but experience – is my encounter with Professor Mary Willie, who's a professor of linguistics at the University of New Mexico, who's a native American, and who welcomed me as well as worked with me without counting her hours, and we became very good friends.

How do you feel about retirement? Is there anything you are going to miss from the academic world?

Mixed feelings, no surprise, but mixed feelings. You know, when people tell you "oh! your new life"… well, I like this one. I honestly like what I do, so I am lucky to be among the people who are not just longing for retirement; on the contrary, I think it [my career] is nice.

On the other hand, let's be realistic, there's a certain number of people, there's a "relève", and if we just cling on to our positions forever, other people cannot have them. And of course, as I said in the beginning, you can do research anywhere else, and I intend to go on doing research. The thing I will definitely miss is teaching.

Do you think it would be possible for you to come back as an invited speaker or an invited lecturer?

Oh yeah! I would definitely love to, and I think it is an option that is available in some circumstances, so I will try to use that as much as I can.

Is there anything we can do to make you stay?

Hahahaha. Well actually not really because, you know, that's life. I think it is also good for students to have new experiences, to have other people coming in. Well, obviously you know my successor, so it is not that much of a surprise, but I think it is a good thing. I am not for people staying forever.

Do we know who your successor is?

Yes! It's Tabea Ihsane. She will be taking over my position as it is next year.

Art

lunes

S.

I keep writing you letters you'll never read
and if you'll ever ask
then, my heart is the bid.
how to make it bearable, am I still able to breathe?
all I know is your scent which is lying beneath
my skin and my skull and my memory's wounds
you're like flowers, like cake, like the moon, like cartoons
your critique is my trophy, your feigned naivety is my gift
I'll make you a coffee and you'll give me a lift
this equation is simple, but I'm bad at math
you're a priest, though I know, I will never confess
you're Kilimanjaro and I — amateur
and I wish I could tell you how bitter, how sore
it is
to see you twice every week,
and as the wind in october, to kiss you
on cheek

Modern Love Letter

River Orsini

Can I have
the last apple?
Yes,
yes you can
it was
waiting for you

I open
the window
so you can
smoke
and while
you do,
I take
the coke
out of
the fridge

Can I borrow-
… my sweatpants?
… my t-shirt?
… my oxygen?
My darling,
you can
keep it
if it means
you exist
for one more
second

I wander
in every shop
and I
look for
a piece
of you
a plushie,
or
something spiky,
maybe
or
pencils
and markers
and highlighters

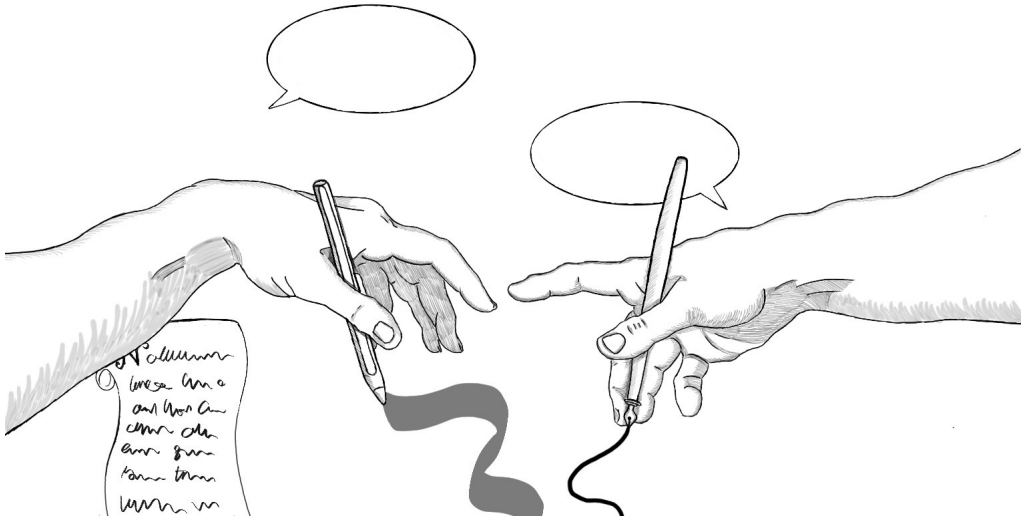
Can I stay
the night?
Oh love,
please stay
for the rest
of my life
(But if
you have
to leave
I hope
the wind
kisses your cheeks
and
the sun
never sleeps
so each step
you take
will be
in the light)

I play
Queen,
Mother Mother,
and even
that song
you despise,
just to
make you laugh
make you sing
make you dance
with me, clumsily

My robin,
so small
and soft
and fierce
blooming red,
your heart
You painted
the winter away
from my soul

Untitled

River Orsini



Wait four days or a week:

FFJJ

letters getting lost in the post
and a sense of expectation
reaching over oceans to lay love in your brain,
mum said they used to write
"vite, facteur! l'amour n'attend pas"
on the back of their missives
and my heart fluttered
at the thought because ...
of course, anxieties
and lately they have been humming quietly
at the back of my mind
instead of screaming
at eardrum splitting volume,
... impatience grows
at the speed of a heart
and yet, love
you are patient
they are 27 bones in my hand,
and i know the name of none,
yet yours caresses my teeth
and bypasses my tongue,
playing with how best to spill my heart on paper
without unspooling all of my organs,
thank you for letting me fall for you,
this paper is full of stains,
colour red, colour love, colour desire,
colour blood, colour pounding in the back of my mind,
until you are near
you are loved like the eye of a hurricane,
all my bones miss all of yours,
grab my hand like a letter,

the oldest subject of poetry
and letter writing
grips at my throat
how many ways
can i tell you i love you?
rip me open and read me slowly,
impatiently, all at once
the way people fall in love,
mine, like the letters you receive,
in my grasp a moment
and free for however long you wish
and return at your time, at their time,
but please return,
the phone is always near,
but i hold our letters dear

Inhaling Interconnection

Miranda Stirnimann

"There is a side of friendship that develops better and stronger by correspondence than contact.... The absence of the flesh in writing perhaps brings souls nearer"

-Emily Carr

How frequently is the word 'correspondence' used? Is it considered antiquated to use it nowadays? It's interesting to consider the fact that as a society we don't reflect on correspondence that much even though it is such a pivotal tool we use daily. When we stop to think about it, 90% of our life is handled through correspondence and all our actions are results of it. How is something so significant so overlooked? Our disregard is one of the results of correspondence itself, it is one of its effects. Maybe the reason it is not reflected upon so much is its intricate and complex quality. It is such an abstract idea nowadays with everything so connected, but how did it get connected? That is the key. In asking ourselves that question we get to the foundation of what we've been overlooking. Correspondence connected us all, it closed the gap that existed between cultures, it made the geographical distance between countries insignificant, and now in an age that this connection has become so mundane, thinking and reflecting about how it came to be like that has become irrelevant. Let's take practical examples, so many people everyday relocate to neighborhoods, cities, countries, continents without having to let their family and friends go. In the olden days, a move was goodbye, nowadays it is a mere see you soon. With all the various forms of communication one has to make an effort to become unreachable, because in this day and age information is all we know.

"Beatrice we're late! What is possibly so urgent that you have to do it now?!" Carrie said bursting into the room, visibly frustrated.
"Could you be any more dramatic? I'm just finishing something up." Beatrice said, closing her computer and standing up to get her jacket and leave.
"You have the worst timing." Carrie said running for stairs while Beatrice followed her.
"What do you have to finish up right when we need to leave to meet them?"
"It was just my article on types of communication."
"Oh that project you were excited about? Showing the different facets of correspondence."
"Close enough. Anyway, why are you in such a hurry anyway?" Beatrice said, closing her

passenger door and turning on the radio.
"I don't know, maybe the fact that we haven't seen them in 6 months?!" Carrie retorted incredulously.
"Yeah I know. I miss them too, but it's not like we don't talk. I mean we keep in contact all the time!"
"Extraordinary job counselor, I'm convinced." Carrie said laughing sarcastically and Beatrice just rolled her eyes and focused on the radio.

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And just like that, there they all were reunited once again. Beatrice fidgeting with her fingers while trying to recognize the song that was playing on the party's speakers, Carrie shaking her hair and arms while dancing next to her sister's purple beanbag. Odessa smoking her cigarette as if it was giving her extra life years instead of taking them away, and Winnie, as usual, just observing them and taking a picture, trying to keep that moment captured in her mind like it was the last one they were going to have.

"Oh wow I'm beat!" Carrie said, throwing herself in one of the beanbags and sitting down in her friends' circle.
"Is it weird that I cannot stop thinking about Devon?" Winnie asked, putting her camera away and pouting.
"Oh this again?! Before you guys arrived she was talking non-stop about how her heart is exploding or something" Odessa said, putting her cigarette out.
"What I said was, that even though our hearts are so far apart, his and mine are like one and the same" Winnie corrected, hugging Beatrice for comfort.
"Now you're just quoting Wuthering Heights." Beatrice said laughing and the others joined. " I mean, you haven't even met him!"
"That's just a ridiculous argument. I haven't met Luca and he's totally my best friend." Odessa said, lighting another cigarette.
"Can you please stop with that shit? You're going to end up killing yourself. I'm serious!" Beatrice said, taking the cigarette out of her hand.
"Just live a little." Carrie said, smirking, and taking the cigarette out of Beatrice's hand and having a puff.
"Dessa, with all due respect, your example is completely out of place. You guys don't even talk. Me and Devon, we know each other inside and out." Winnie said, calmly so as not to offend.
" Please! He lives in Korea! Just because you guys use stupid letters and not Insta, doesn't mean that you guys' relationship is any more meaningful than mine!"

" So what he lives in Korea?! Your fake best friend is from New Zealand. Completely across the world. And please do not compare our heartfelt letters, with you guys' random memes! I mean, memes?" Winnie asked very loudly and frustratedly, while both Beatrice and Carrie laughed and took turns smoking Odessa's cigarette.
"I mean don't underestimate the power of a sense of humor in getting to know each other. Before I found out that Beatrice's dad was my dad and met him, we used to chat through email sending random jokes. We even do it now through postcards. It's a powerful tool to create intimacy."
"Who are you and what have you done with my sister?!" Beatrice said shocked with the sudden deep founded speech coming from Carrie. "Either way the point remains, that you both don't know them, not really." she said, getting in return annoyed expressions from her friends.
" I love you Bea, but you're such a snob. We've been corresponding back and forth through iMessage for months, you talk about your article, and how excited you are to dive into the subject and get all perspectives, you even wanted to interview me, and now you're here being judgemental and totally closed-off to any experience that isn't your own. I mean our main form of communication is WhatsApp, how can you throw shade on others?" Odessa said, slightly outraged.
" It's not the same. We knew each other before." Bea said, trying to express her intricate reservations.
"We knew each other in middle school. Granted that's 4 years together, but we're completely different people now. Doing our masters in completely different countries and leading completely different lives." Winnie said, smiling to comfort Bea.
"Exactly and we still know each other because of our correspondence. It's as if we continued to get to know each other throughout our development as individuals." Carrie said, putting out the cigarette.

Beatrice just kept quiet, contemplating all their arguments. She was astounded at her own lack of perspective and quickness to judge. She felt like a fraud, like her entire article was based on one closed-off perspective that didn't even deserve to be shared.

"How lucky are we really? To have each other I mean. I can't imagine anyone else making me realize my snobbish judgmental behavior this fast." Bea said, having a sip of her drink.
"Well, you're welcome." Odessa said, lighting another cigarette.
"We just know you too well. We know your weaknesses." Winnie said with a smirk. "But I really am glad that we live in an age where we don't need to choose between us and others. We get to live the life we want, with those we love, who are also doing the same.

And we all get to be different and share our differences."
"It's funny actually, if we stop to think about all our such distinct perspectives, and the fact that we're still able to come together, share them and accept our divergences." Carrie said, standing up.
"In another life I would've definitely given up by now. But enough of this serious talk, we should dance."

The song "Unwritten" by Natasha Bedingfield started playing, it was their song together, which is not surprising given the fact that Odessa had control over the speaker. They all just let go and started dancing together, remembering all the memories they had together and imagining all the new ones they'd create.

Beatrice later on realized that she didn't need to write an article on correspondence, all she needed to do was be grateful to the connections she was able to have with all the people in her life. To keep open to new experiences and new ways of living, because the immensity of the world and our population makes it impossible to keep uniform. The reason why correspondence is not an usual reflection is because it's something alive, changing constantly. Things that forever transform make difficult objects of study, but they are no less worthy of being studied, especially not something that permits us all to know different perspectives, cultures, people, information, and serves as a tool for every individual's personal growth.

Culture

"Peer-Reviewing Creative Writing in Correspondence: Ramatu Musa"

Aïcha Bouchelaghem, Ramatu Musa

In December 2023, Rama Musa entered into correspondence with Aïcha Bouchelaghem, who is part of the editorial team of *Noted*. Over the following six months, they exchanged via email about Rama's gothic horror novella *Portrait of Lysbeth*, for which Aïcha was an early reader. This dialogue instigated and informed the review of *Portrait of Lysbeth*, which follows.

Rama Musa is based in Houston, Texas, and has worked as a writer for fifteen years. She writes fiction under the pen name Rama Santa Mansa. Her first published piece of creative writing, "Manor Junction: 1917," appeared in *Timeworn* journal, a now defunct literary journal, which was published out of Buffalo, New York. Born in Sierra Leone, Rama grew up in New Jersey and has lived in several places since, including Jerusalem where she was a Fulbright Fellow for one year (2009-2010), Basel, where she earned her Master's degree in African Studies, and France, where she spent 11 months. Rama also worked as a writing instructor at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. Rama is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in American Literature at the University of Lausanne. She explores the notion of *Kairos* or opportune time in contemporary African American women's autobiography.

The creative process that led to the publication of *Portrait of Lysbeth* unfolded over several years and required thorough historical research. The seventeenth century struck Rama as a compelling period in which to set the novella. In this colonial context, racial concepts such as "white" and "black" were still in the process of coalescing into fixed categories, allowing for slippages and complex social status, as Rama's protagonist, who has African parents but is born free, orphaned, indentured to service, and again free at last. The story, Rama says, underwent multiple drafts. In its first version, the work was a short story that Rama submitted to a 2020 short fiction competition organized by *The Root*, an African American digital news platform. In this initial version, Lysbeth is an unemployed teacher who travels to the Upper Hudson Valley village of Sleepy Hollow to seek work. Lysbeth unfortunately agrees to pose for a demonic artist, for money, and meets her end. Rama makes clear that her use of the name Sleepy Hollow is anachronistic since the village did not exist by that name in the seventh century. It was Washington

Irving who gave us the name in 1820, with the publication of his short story, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. In 1996, the city changed its official name from North Tarrytown to Sleepy Hollow, perhaps to capitalize on the popular success of Irving's story.

When Rama re-read Irving's work in 2023, as part of her research for her novella, she noticed three mentions of African folk in his short story. Having read him as early as the 6th grade, Rama assumes that she had forgotten about it. Irving places African folk in *Sleepy Hollow* alongside the Dutch folk of Old New York. However, the 1999 Tim Burton film, *Sleepy Hollow*, which is loosely based on the Sleepy Hollow mythos, airbrushes African folk out of the storyline; nor are Indigenous folk featured. Rama felt righteous indignation about this erasure: "after I re-read Irving's short story, for years, I had innocently believed that the Tim Burton film, which is a favorite, as I love Gothic horror, was written that way because African folk were not a factor in the storyline. Tim Burton's film is set in 1799 and takes a lot of creative liberties. But it would have cost nothing to include BIPOC actors, even as background figures…but they didn't."

In addition to Irving's location of African folk in Sleepy Hollow, the historical archives of Anglo-Dutch New York give Rama license to center Lysbeth, other Africans, and Indigenous folk in her novella. "It felt like kismet," Rama says.

Rama first discovered the name "Lysbeth" in an online article about Africans in Dutch New York. Lysbeth was a woman listed as part of the household of a Dutch settler. However, this Lysbeth was not meant to serve as the template for Rama's fictional eponym. As her research progressed, Rama met a host of further inspiring historical figures, especially in an essay by the historian Susanah Shaw Romney, "Intimate Networks and Children's Survival in New Netherland in the Seventeenth Century" (2009). As Rama reports, Romney discusses the lives of orphaned children in the Dutch colony of New Netherland (which fell to British power in 1664). Among the children was Lysbeth Anthonijsen, to whom *Portrait of Lysbeth* is dedicated. Anthonijsen was born free but was enslaved following a minor theft charge. Rama confessed to feeling sad for her, a girl was free yet had no one on whom she could rely. The novella's reimagination of Lysbeth's life revises this sense of alienation. Certainly Lysbeth Luanda, Rama's protagonist, is often alone yet far from abandoned.

A text set in seventeenth-century New York from the perspective of a poor Black orphan was always going to be difficult to write. Rama reports just this; not only the abuse experienced by Lysbeth, but also the genocide of the Lenape, the Indigenous inhabitants of the island of Manhattan, were demanding writing material. Yet this subject matter, like Lysbeth's fictional life, is important and deserves writing.

In the future, Rama may explore racialized historical figures from a different methodological standpoint, such as satire. An engaging candidate for her next protagonist is an African American travel guide living in Venice but born to formerly enslaved parents from South Carolina. This character appears in Mark Twain's best-selling first travel memoir *The Innocents Abroad* (1869). As he was brought to Venice as an infant by his formerly enslaved parents, the guide grew up in the city and was not conditioned under antebellum culture and racist ideologies. This is an important detail, and Rama is sure that it will factor greatly into a future novella. Unlike the "European guides" Twain generally meets throughout his journey and who he deems "necessary nuisances" (n. pag.), Twain depicts his acquaintance with the African American guide in Venice as a humbling experience. The guide repeatedly "crushe[s]" Twain's "enthusiasm" by displaying cultural knowledge alien to Twain and his travel companions, such as the concept of the European Renaissance. While Twain writes that he finds the guide "exasperating," he confesses to feeling ignorant in the face of his expertise. Critical as it is that Twain should describe Black erudition as surprising, Rama is interested in imagining the perspective of the guide himself rather than the amazement of his Euro-American client.

For the time being, however, readers will have to make do with Lysbeth, whose fictional narrative already triggers much reflection.

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"Painting Lysbeth: A Gothic Horror Romance"

Aïcha Bouchelaghem

Review of *Portrait of Lysbeth*, by Rama Santa Mansa. Linger Press, 2024. Google Play Books.

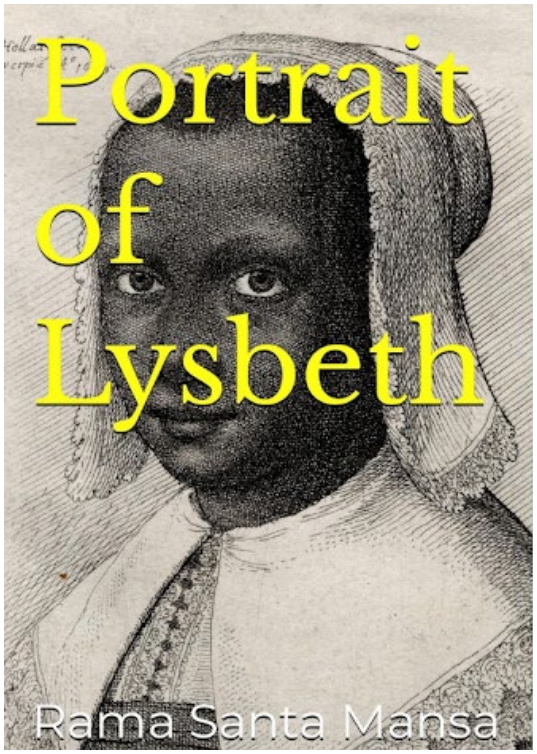

Figure 1: Book cover of *Portrait of Lysbeth*. From: Head of a Black woman with a lace kerchief hat, Wenceslaus Hollar, 1645. Folger Shakespeare Library Digital Image Collection. http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/s/0jr2d6.

Mansa issued a content warning for the book: "this work of fiction contains distressing descriptions of violence, murder, body horror, misogyny, ableism, racism, child abuse, injustice, sexual violence, genocide, and hateful language. Due to the catalogue of historical injustices presented in this work, readers should be aged 16 and up" (4).

Rama Santa Mansa's riveting gothic horror novella is as densely packed as its second sentence: "Feeling too old to travel upcountry, Doctor Avraham Henriques has come to pressure New York's High Sheriff to give his African protégé the coroner's assignment" (5). The first words uttered by the narrator thus introduce three characters, along with the complex racialized power relations represented in the novella. Dr. Henriques is a Jewish coroner, whose ancestors were exiled from Spain during the Inquisition. Yet he is not the protagonist of this story: that is his still unnamed protégé. The novella opens with the experience of a racially transitional figure: Dr. Henriques suffers the antisemitic racism of British colonial officials like the High Sheriff, Lord Knatchbull, but he is nonetheless allowed to serve the British Crown in its colony of New York and extends his social mobility to his second-generation African trainee and the novella's protagonist and focalizer, Lysbeth Luanda – a move Lord Knatchbull immediately tries to block. Dr. Henriques does not leave him a choice, however. He makes no attempt to convince Knatchbull to overcome his racial prejudice against "Africans" but forces him to face the fact: "at my age, this assignment is impossible. Take my protégé" (7).

Portrait of Lysbeth is, ultimately, a sketch of a free Black woman in a slaveholding and misogynistic society. However, central to the novella's program is not only Lysbeth herself but also a negotiation between the power of human systems – such as colonialism, chattel slavery, and patriarchy – and that of forces of the netherworld. *Portrait of Lysbeth* traces Lysbeth's gradual understanding of how the neither-folk, to use the novella's term, simultaneously disrupt, sustain, and inhere in human folk's lives.

Henriques is one of many entities that protect Lysbeth (in his case, from systemic oppression). Another is the narrator, who mostly aligns with Lysbeth's knowledge of the story-world save for a few omniscient digressions. *Portrait of Lysbeth* values its eponymous protagonist as a hero, perhaps candidly at times, for what it depicts as her moral values and for her actions. However, the novella is not naïve. As a Black feminist tale, the text not only represents the at once racial and gendered violence that Lysbeth faces but also requires Lysbeth to question ideals of individual success achieved via self-reliance, empirical observation, and logical reasoning. Indeed, the text depicts Lysbeth as having internalized these ideals through her valuable but nevertheless colonial schooling in the colony of New Netherland, later renamed as New York. In brief, the novella op-

poses exceptionalism with holism, cynicism with hope, and isolation with community and romance.

Lysbeth is an early-orphaned freedwoman born to a Kongo father and a Senegambian mother and living in mid- to late seventeenth-century New York. As the European colony grapples with its transition from Dutch to British rule, the isolated Hudson Valley village of Sleepy Hollow experiences a wave of killings. "Three women were violently murdered by an unknown assailant" who "left behind… a hollowed-out bag of human skin with the women's long, flowing hair still attached to their scalps," we learn early on (5).

The narrative moves back and forth in the diegetic setting of seventeenth-century New York. This recurrence of analepsis reveals a complex layering of experience, resulting, on the one hand, from waves of colonization by European crowns like the Dutch, Swedish, and English, and on the other hand from New York's status as a port city, which makes it a point of entry to characters of many origins. The African diaspora represented in the narrative is more heterogeneous than our mainstream awareness of co-existing free-born versus yet-enslaved individuals. Beyond Lysbeth's bi-cultural African background, her community includes Old Souleymane, "a Wolof man whom Dutch privateers snatched off a Spanish slave ship coming from Senegambia" (13); Mamie Serra Leoa, a Kissi cook and "Lysbeth's neighbor in New York"; and Pedro António, Lysbeth's enslaved childhood friend who shares her Kongolese heritage but not her bitter awareness that slavery is fundamentally unacceptable.

Likewise, the text is steeped in Lysbeth's multi-faceted reading of European cultures. The "Anglo-Saxon" villain Lysbeth meets in Part One "does not have the pompous air of a Frenchman, the business-minded joviality of a Dutchman, not the cunning cosmopolitism of a Venetian" (14). Lysbeth crosses paths with a plethora of European men, yet she rather makes kin with women characters. (One exception is Terry, a young queer man from Sleepy Hollow. The narrative suggests that he and Lysbeth are alike vulnerable to the "throng of rat-like" (66) glares of the village elite). In the absence of her long-gone mother and recently deceased father, Lysbeth receives the loving care of Geertruydt Roelofs, her godmother and a poor Dutch woman. Their relationship necessarily ceases when Geertruydt returns to Holland to die. The text reiterates a trust in the resilience and beneficial role of marginalized European women when it introduces Marianne de Geer, a tavern owner for whom Lysbeth works as an indentured servant in New Sweden[1]. Madame de Geer is complicit with the racist bureaucratic system that

1 New Sweden was a Swedish colony located in the intersection of the U.S. states of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The colony was founded in 1638 by the New Sweden

constrains Lysbeth to forced labor. Yet she is not a straightforward villain and, as Mansa insightfully confessed, it would have been improper for the narrative to ridicule this character. Indeed, de Geer is a widow in a European colony, a space in which the lack of a husband creates precarity. De Geer nonetheless thrives as a successful businesswoman. She is not exactly "nice," as that would be too easy (35). Yet, without justifying her use of forced labor, the narrative imagines a kind of circumstantial symbiosis between de Geer and Lysbeth:

> Marianne de Geer needed a hard worker, for free. She would have preferred a Dutch waif sent to the New World to unburden the Fatherland of their upkeep. But the soft underside of her iron heart knew a left-behind girlchild [Lysbeth] is safer under a woman's roof. In watching Madame de Geer, Lysbeth sees female authority and ambition at its most unapologetic. Madame de Geer is a tough broad from Breuckelen who is quick with her backhand to the loafers in her tavern. Marianne de Geer in turn appreciates Lysbeth's self-direction and quick mind. (37)

In the hostile patriarchal environment of the colony, the oppressive labor relationship that ties Lysbeth to Madame de Geer relies on common interests (not ideals but immediate, pragmatic interests) and produces proximity. Their "strange bond" is forced and temporary, but it is nevertheless a relationship: Lysbeth and De Geer are "unblooded strangers who know the cadence of each other's screams after a nightmare" (37). Towards the end of the plot Lysbeth meets another "unblooded" but impactful single woman: Marta Sobieski, a Polish-born healer living in Sleepy Hollow, and who is instrumental in solving the crimes Lysbeth investigates. The autonomy and bravery that Lysbeth is forced to develop to make place in a slaveholding colony alongside other woman characters with complex backgrounds ultimately fulfills a purpose which is not only anti-racist, but also feminist.

If misogyny turns out to be a rhetorical concern in the later stages of *Portrait of Lysbeth*, anti-racism is a stated priority from the onset of the plot. The text effectively reverses the objectification that informs racist discourses, though at times the narratorial cards feel somewhat redundantly stacked against British and Dutch male settler characters. An example is the narratorial focus on facial features to ridicule the character of Knatchbull, the British officer: "He struggles to uncurl the sneer from his lovely lady lips, but the contrived indifference fails him" (6). Of course, it is difficult not to be struck by Mansa's delightfully specific prose. Yet the recurrence of the "lovely lady lips" on a later occasion overshadows Lysbeth's striking act of resistance against Knatchbull's racism: after making an anti-Black statement relying on craniology, "Lord Knatchbull motions to tap at Lysbeth's forehead, but she quickly steps aside, balancing his pointed finger, which is left in mid-air. He recoils in embarrassment and his milk cream face blushes red. He hardens

Company (itself formed in 1637) and, in 1655, after years of military struggle against the Dutch over the Delaware River, its last fort was captured by Governor Stuyvesant (Covart n. pag.).

his lovely lady lips to regain his composure" (53).[2] The alliterative irony devised to describe Knatchbull's lips seems unwarranted because Knatchbull is already humiliated at the diegetic level of gesture. Perhaps a reader versed in the processes of racial formation might resist the choice to signify a villain's ridicule through mocking his bodily features, rather than only his ideology. Yet it is also possible to think, as Mansa suggested to me, that the Knatchbull character feminizes and queers the stereotype of Anglo-Saxon ubermasculinity on which much settler-colonial discourse relies. At any rate, this rhetorical choice activates a frequent dilemma: to find words suited to the critique of blatant injustice without reproducing discursive violence. Either way, this reflection is in no way intended to police the discourse of individuals (fictional or not) talking back to routine sexist and racist violence.

Such complexities in rhetoric could never spoil Mansa's compelling literary talent. Similes used for character formation, for example, are of arresting precision: James Mosely, the novella's arch villain, "has the dangerous air of a man who would box another man for self-amusement, rather than prize money" (14). The comparison not only evokes Lysbeth's empirical approach to the world, which she seems to read through the lens of her experience and knowledge, but also her wit. The novella's prose is not only highly meticulous and figurative but also acerb and amusing in its refusal, for instance, to dance around Lysbeth's cultural truths, such as that autumn is "the ugly season" (11).

Lysbeth's analytical gaze and close attention to physical detail make sense in light of her training as a forensic scientist. After all, in her profession and as a gendered and racialized person, careful observation of her immediate environment is an ingrained operative mode. It is unsurprising that a character like Lysbeth is depicted as greatly skilled

2 Craniology is a pseudo-scientific discipline that studies the size and shape of skulls and interprets cranial anatomy as a system that signifies inherent, behavioral, i.e., moral and intellectual features. A popular North American craniological study is Samuel Morton's *Crania Americana* (1839). In fact, though Portrait of *Lysbeth* is set in the mid-seventeenth century, craniology can be traced back to Dutch anthropologist and physiologist Petrus Camper's aesthetic lectures on what he names the "facial angle", through which he associates facial features with specific phenotypes. Miriam Claude Meijer asserts that Camper was really "a proponent of racial equality" (5) and was thus racialist rather than *racist*. Nevertheless, craniological theories were readily instrumentalized by pro-slavery advocates who justified chattel slavery based on the erroneous claim that people stemming from the pseudo "Negro family" were inferior to other human "families" (see, for example, Blumenbach 441). Pseudo-scientists were not necessarily vocal pro-slavery advocates; yet it is important to note that pseudo-scientific fields such as craniology feed racist discourse insofar as they posit bodily features as inherent carriers of extracorporeal meanings – and they are racist because they conceive these features as a value hierarchy. Craniologists and racial scientists more broadly dehumanized people racialized as Black by locating them on the lowest (which signified least desirable) rank of humans in their hierarchical classification of beings from least to most perfect.

at scanning her surroundings. At times the presence of a third-person narrator appears biased regarding Lysbeth's ability to process what she sees. The credibility inherent to third-person narration slightly lessens when the narrator notes that, "[w]ith supreme subtlety, Lysbeth glides her eyes around the room in so quick a manner, that you would have missed it, had you blinked" (15). The narrator's hyperbolic register contrasts with the reality that the text appears to depict: Lysbeth must continually peruse her surroundings, and her only advantage in navigating her world is that she does not have any cognitive impairments. Throughout the text, the narrator frequently tells that Lysbeth "casts a sweeping gaze" at the setting at hand (85, 89, 109); such recurrence sketches the type of reflexes Lysbeth has had to develop through her unstable, itinerant life. While her father, Cento Barbosa, raises her in New York, after Cento's passing, when Lysbeth is thirteen, Pieter Stuyvesant, the governor of the then Dutch-ruled colony of New Netherland indentures her to service to Mme de Geer. In her thirties at the time of the narration, Lysbeth's work as a forensic doctor and coroner requires her to apply her crucial observation skills once again.

Despite making a point of Lysbeth's resilience, the novella's project ultimately reaches beyond a celebration of autonomy and mastery through empirical observation. The novella challenges the classic Enlightenment European education Lysbeth receives throughout her childhood, during which her father secures her a place at a Latin School run by the dominie (or schoolmaster) Evarardus Bogardus. It is fitting that Bogardus, as Mansa informs us in her notes, "was struck deaf and mute by a mysterious illness" when a child, "from which he later recovered" (133). The figure of Bogardus thus epitomizes Lysbeth's indebtedness to empirical learning based on visual perception. Lysbeth is in fact aware of her own epistemological bias: "Dominie Bogardus' best student needs proof," she declares to her neighbor Mamie Serra's offer of a red brick powder and of a witch-gun, an Mbundu artifact (which, according to "the ancient sages who lived by the Kwanza River" (14), counteracts the power of daemons), for protection during Lysbeth's mission in Sleepy Hollow.[3] Mamie Serra frustrates Lysbeth's need for immediate intellectual control over the functioning of these gifts: "For once, do not question my reasons and dig for explanations" (57). Lysbeth's journey throughout the novella is not only geographical and professional, but also epistemological: her eventual success requires trusting others' knowledge and other ways of knowing.

3 "It is a slingshot with a wood handle carved from the African baobab tree. The projectile is a marble of pure Shona gold, believed to be 1000-years-old" (Mansa 13-14).

Figure 2: View of New Amsterdam, Johannes Vingboons, 1664. Wikimedia Commons.

The novella humbles its protagonist in various ways, which creates the sense that she experiences growth and disillusionment as the story unfolds. For one, the text uses dramatic irony to highlight geographical and historical knowledge of Europe not covered by Bogardus while Lysbeth was at Latin School, such as the existence of Poland and of the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy (90, 94). Modern-day readers therefore have access to aspects of Lysbeth's vulnerability of which she is unaware herself. The novella also displays Lysbeth's blind spots by more subtly embedded means. The structure of the plot emphasizes the precarity experienced by free Black people in the story's seventeenth-century New York setting, a reality that Lysbeth only grapples with after her second parent passes away and she is forced into indentured service in New Sweden. Before leaving, Lysbeth candidly teaches her enslaved childhood friend, Pedro António, that, contrary to his belief, his owner is not a good man and has no business owning him – and she is right. Yet while Lysbeth hopes to be able to return and redeem her friend from bondage after her five years of forced labor, she goes on to lead a life of constant exposure to racist and sexist aggression, going so far as to "wonder[] if life has been kinder to [Pedro António], than it has been to her" (45).

For all she learns through her adventures, Lysbeth is not taught any lessons by characters who stand in for and uphold structural racism. Before sending her off to Sweden, Stuyvesant reassures Lysbeth that she need only "[w]ork hard" and "work *honestly*" to

"be looked after" (original emphasis 26). Yet Lysbeth's thoughts, represented in free direct discourse, challenge Stuyvesant's insinuation that she is not inherently honest. Overall, Lysbeth's anti-racist resistance hinges on her refusal to receive the "lessons" white racists routinely and often violently force on her. A Scottish man who attempts to rape her frames his attack by way of the idiom "learn your lesson" (46) because she earlier defended herself against his insults and his attempt to seize her arm. Lysbeth also fights racist European settlers' literal attempts to lecture her: when Knatchbull sets out to intimidate and terrify her with the report of a failed enslaved people's rebellion in Barbados, Lysbeth responds by teaching him about the 1670 Battle of Kitombo, during which forces of the two local colonized kingdoms "wiped out" the Portuguese forces dispatched to contain the rebellion (51). Lysbeth does, however, learn from a wide array of characters – not only from her New York community but also from the Weckquaesgeek Chief Rechewac, who hosts her on her way to Sleepy Hollow – who provide what turns out to be crucial knowledge for Lysbeth's investigation of the serial misogynistic murderer.

To be sure, Lysbeth's vulnerability to racial and sexual violence, which are accrued by but not limited to her experience as a tavern waitress, makes her no victim. Despite being herself the only person on whom she can rely, she survives in a world that, as evidenced by the meticulously researched and carefully depicted diegetic world, makes it extraordinarily challenging to do so. As a member of New York's "unslaved African community" (26) she has no other socioeconomic advantage than the documents that certify her freedom. While colonial officials cannot technically sell her, Lysbeth can lay no other claim on the political system. The novella's main strategy against the misogynoir Lysbeth routinely faces is language – both the sharp wit of the narratorial voice and Lysbeth's direct speech.[4] For example, when Stuyvesant expresses racialized suspicions regarding Lysbeth's virginity – asking whether, and implicitly suspecting that, she has "been privy to fleshly conversation" (28) – Lysbeth mocks his euphemism by answering the question literally: "Do you mean to ask if I have heard Butcher Van Buren talk up his veal and pork?" (29). More amusing is the narrator's description of Stuyvesant's hand as "sausage-fingered" (28), which draws the attention away from Lysbeth and onto his own fleshliness.

4 The term misogynoir was coined by queer Black feminist scholar Moya Bailey. Bailey defines misogynoir as follows: "the anti-Black, racist misogyny that Black women — and people perceived as Black women — experience. It is a portmanteau of misogyny and noir — referring both to the French word for the color black as well as the film genre noir, because one of the ways that I see misogynoir showing up is often in media" (*Northestern Magazine* n. pag.). The abuse Lysbeth experiences qualifies as misogynoir because it is misogyny inflected by racist beliefs about Black women, including, as this case shows, the possession of a hypersexuality (Bailey).

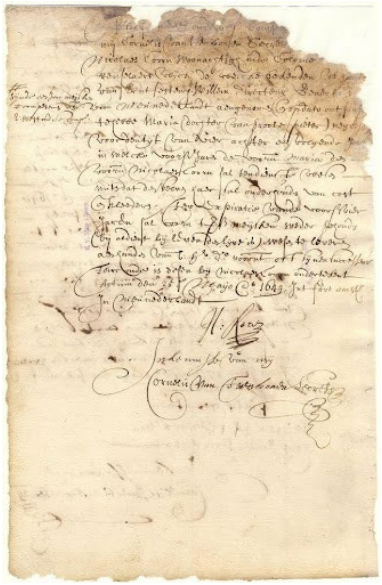

Figure 3: Indenture of service of Maria, a young [Black] girl, to Nicolaes Coorn, 1644. Courtesy of the New Netherland Institute.

Lysbeth acquires medical training and becomes financially independent even while Stuyvesant discontinues her academic education in her pre-teen years. By the time she takes on the murder case in Sleepy Hollow, she has accumulated a quantity of valuable property – though the text is careful to point out the precarity of her wealth: "Any robber would be sick with joy to come upon Lysbeth Luanda and her moveable property" (58). The text highlights Lysbeth's resilience and frugal self-sufficiency. While her father leaves her a pecuniary inheritance substantial enough to purchase a home – "a modest one-storey cottage" (98) – she must still build her own furniture: "a straw bed, one walnut chair, and three-legged table" (ibid.). Yet Lysbeth's independence is not the sovereignty of her rational mind. Lysbeth's very nervous system is characterized by something alien to Western medicine, a specific "bio-magical phenomenon," Mansa explains (133): the imprint of a fire Mansa calls the Fireburn, which becomes ignited when Lysbeth experiences strong emotion. Mansa borrows the term Fireburn from discourse about an 1878 protest by African-descended laborers in the Danish West Indies who set European plantations on fire (ibid.).[5] In her notes, Mansa explains how she re-signifies the

5 Even while slavery had been abolished in 1848 in St-Croix, one of the three Caribbean islands colonized by Denmark, thirty years later "there had been no meaningful change in the lives of" plantation laborers (Witcombe n. pag.). Protesters set fire to over fifty plantations and to the town of Frederiksted, "over half of which was burned down" (ibid.).

word "Fireburn" as "African agency in the New World" (ibid.). The Fireburn recalls that Lysbeth is less isolated than her status as an orphaned Black woman might suggest. On a night during Lysbeth's journey to Sleepy Hollow, Lysbeth experiences parental presence. As she "stares straight into the bonfire," the sound made by the flames resembles "a soft voice," or rather "both the voice of a man and a woman, each alternating their soothing whisper in a pleasing duet" (56). Prior to this moment, the narrative has established that Lysbeth's parents comprised a man and a woman, so the evocation of a reassuring duo draws attention to her late mother and father. Lysbeth's bio-magical sensitivity to fire enables her to experience moments of solace even in unfamiliar circumstances.

The Fireburn may be powerful, but its function seems to be restricted to character formation. As such, it provides an indication of Lysbeth's internal state, especially insofar as it is understood by Lysbeth's love interest. Yet manifestations of the Fireburn's assuaging power tend to suspend rather than propel the novella's plot. Bio-magical and other phenomena that challenge Western logic recall that Lysbeth continues to be fueled both by the colonial violence that she witnesses and by the memory of her parents (or by the material and intellectual means they afforded her while they lived). Other ephemeral moments of suspension – of meaning rather than action – take the form of animal visions. In the "silen[ce]" and "peace[]" Lysbeth experiences after being sexually assaulted, she gazes at the night sky and sees the stars outline a galloping and dancing horse, which soon vanishes (49). The horse reminds Lysbeth of her father, who worked as a horse keeper. In a similar vein, as Lysbeth bids her friend Pedro António good-bye by a pond on his enslaver's estate, the narration occasionally digresses to describe the "skip[s]" and "acrobatics" of a couple frogs (34, 37) who implicitly parallel the two young humans, and perhaps prefigure their hoped-for future reunion (34, 37). The frogs however also emphasize the unlikelihood that Lysbeth and Pedro António will meet again: "For a brief second, Lysbeth sees the frogs grow shimmering butterfly wings… She blinks in disbelief—and the frogs return to their frog bodies" (37). Other-than-human and other-than-present apparitions offer reminders that Lysbeth can live moments of reassuring grace in her loneliness, even while her hostile world may not change.

Lysbeth does receive the help that the plot requires to advance, from both human and inanimate sources. Importantly, human help is occasional and conditioned by chance. For instance, Lysbeth escapes rape by the Scotsman because Axel, a humble green-eyed Norwegian prince she meets a few hours prior, happens to be nearby and stops the assailant at the last second. Lysbeth continues to "wish[] he was there" even when he no longer is (16). More reliable protection is available to Lysbeth in the form of the objects that shield her from "spiritual attack[s]" by the novella's European villains and ma-

leficent neither-folk, including but not limited to Mamie Serra Leoa's witch-gun, which Lysbeth is "happy to have" on hand once she arrives in Sleepy Hollow (14).

The novella's commitment to reliable epistemologies beyond European settler cultures is also visible in its depictions of other-than-human animals. Lysbeth has a horse, Tam-Tam, who serves her for transportation. The text invests Tam-Tam with individual personality and narrative agency. *Portrait of Lysbeth* echoes the writings of formerly enslaved African Americans like Frederick Douglass and Jermain Wesley Loguen insofar as it emphasizes that Lysbeth's mobility – and thus her ability to accomplish the action around which the plot (r)evolves – depends on Tam-Tam's will and welfare.[6] When Lysbeth needs to conduct an interview with a witness, Lysbeth does not (or cannot – the text remains ambiguous) restrain Tam-Tam but rather "whispers into [his] ears, begging him to stay still until she returns. Tam-Tam does not like the idea. He neighs loudly and shakes his head in a frenzy" (12-13). The narrator relativizes: "But Tam-Tam will stay. He is her only mode of transportation in this alone place" (13); still, it is not clear whose thoughts are represented – Tam-Tam's, Lysbeth's, or those of an omniscient narrative entity. Either way, Tam-Tam has his own sentience which allows him to advance the plot. In a compelling use of dramatic irony, Tam-Tam is revealed to know more than Lysbeth – or rather to perceive presences that she cannot simply by casting a sweeping gaze across her visible surroundings. The novella devises a more anthropocentric meaning-making practice when the narrator explains that Tam-Tam, per his excitability and "ferocious personality" at strategic moments, "is more sidekick than animal" (13). The statement reads as though the notion of "animal" precluded narrative individuality. However, this opposition of animality to the narrative function of "sidekick" may be an oversight, as elsewhere the text remains interested in reconfiguring other-than-human animals as agents.

The text is careful to re-signify traditional vehicles of evil and violence in many Western cultural discourses. An important example is the novella's refutation of Christian color symbolism at the expense of other meanings. In some African onto-epistemologies or "[b]ack in the land of the ancestors, white animals are the creatures whom the people fear. Their absent color connotes an emptiness that makes them easy vessels for malevolent spirits. The Africans believe that black, by virtue of its potency, is a stronger shield

6 African American formerly enslaved activist, lecturer, and writer Frederick Douglass's novella "The Heroic Slave" (1852) values the way its Anglo-American anti-slavery Abolitionist protagonist cares for his horse while using it to travel across Virginia. Few years later, Douglass's fellow Abolitionist contemporary, Jermain Wesley Loguen, publishes his autobiography, in which the success of his escape from bondage consistently relies on his horse's physical well-being, which is thus as critical as his own. Works like these thus argue that, more than a source of service, horses used for transportation are relevant to both ethical character formation and narrative action.

of protection against evil" (12). In a similar vein, the text reconfigures the semiotic import of wolves in Western narratives that epitomize wolves as savagery and destruction (for one, per their threat to the integrity of agricultural settlements). As Lysbeth lingers between the villain's manor and the adjoining forest, she locks eyes with a black wolf yet does not take fright; instead, their eye contact is akin to "a mutual recognition of kindred souls" (ibid.). For Lysbeth finds stories of wolf attacks to be "wild tales" (12), to which she prefers the account of a Lenape girl Lysbeth knew while she was living in New Sweden as an indentured waitress: "Nellie Tish-Co-Han… taught Lysbeth about the role of animals in Lenape spirituality… the Great Spirit would sometimes assign animals, as guardians, to a human in need" (ibid.). The narrative structure confirms Lysbeth's allegiance to this principle at a later stage in the plot, in the aftermath of a traumatic assault. Reversing the familiar motif of the human character who pities cruelty against animals, this time it is nearby wolves who are represented as empathetic with Lysbeth: "a wolf pack begins to howl at the moon. It is as if they too are crying in sympathy with Lysbeth. The wolves are howling in harmony to a song of sorrow. Then one by one, each wolf cease[s] its mournful supplications to the Great Spirit" (49). The figure of the wolf signifies the ongoing protection afforded to Lysbeth despite the vulnerable position in which gendered and racial constructions force her. The novella engages in noteworthy play with the boundary between wolf and human. It is not only actual wolves who support Lysbeth along the way; key women characters bear wolf-like features. Marta has eyes that are "upturned at the corners, like that of a wolf" (90) and Mamie Serra's teeth are "sharpened" and "point at the edges, like wolf fangs," after a Kissi beauty ritual (57). In *Portrait of Lysbeth*, wolf is a symbolic vocabulary for the various sources of care from which Lysbeth benefits in the absence of direct kin.

The novella is invested in Lysbeth's best interests and creates an impression that its (implied) author wants the best for her. *Portrait of Lysbeth* indeed paints a touchingly ambivalent picture of its eponym as concurrently gingerly and vulnerable, regarding her beliefs and her material conditions alike. The text does not solve Lysbeth's problems because most stem from forces that are structurally embedded, down to what the novella calls the neither-world. What it believes in is the chance of finding kinship and love amid permanent threat.

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Noted Autumn 2024

Varia

A Gentle Grilling...

Erzsi Kukorelly

Dr. Erzsi Kukorelly is *chargée d'enseignement* for the English Department, where she also pursued her doctoral degree and worked as a *maître assistante*. She specializes in eighteenth-century cultural and literary studies, the early English novel, and interdisciplinary approaches to literary studies. For example, she is interested in the interactions of literary and non-literary texts and in discourse analysis, especially through the frameworks of Michel Foucault and Mikhail Bakhtin. Erzsi has taken part in academic research projects and in public outreach initiatives alike, especially in relation to eighteenth-century discourses of conduct as well as gender studies.

Erzsi has also been an active teacher in the Department for a long time, hence we are quite excited that she has agreed to be grilled, ever so gently, by the Noted team.

When did you choose your academic specialty, and why?

When I was studying for my second degree (a licence ès lettres from Geneva University, obtained in 2001; my first degree was a BSc in international relations from the London School of Economics, which I completed ten years earlier), I took history classes with Professor Michel Porret—a slightly scary but very inspiring teacher, who was an eighteenth-century specialist. I enjoyed studying the period and transferred my love for it to English literature. I feel that the eighteenth century is both sufficiently distant to be weird and fascinating, but also sufficiently close to get a good feel for how it leads up to today. Also, eighteenth-century English is quite easy to understand, which makes its literature pretty accessible.

You've been teaching in the English Department since 2002. How has your approach to teaching literature evolved over time? After your years of experience, what still amazes you about teaching literature at the University of Geneva?

Everything! I absolutely love teaching. This does not change. Just yesterday I was speaking to my mum on the phone after teaching the Fascism and the Novel seminar, and I was telling her how lucky I am to do something that brings me so much energy and joy.

What amazes me are the students. Teaching is a constant renewal because students are so diverse, each with his or her own trajectory, affinities, hopes and fears, sense of humour, affections and aversions; each brings his or her own engagement with the texts to class. Teaching is a life-force. Not to sound too vampiric, but being constantly exposed to young people and hopefully contributing to their intellectual development is a drug I can't get enough of!

My approach to teaching literature has evolved over time because I am quite a political person. I am aware of the need to evolve with the times in order to offer students a renewed take on old texts. Also, I have tried to find little-studied texts to complement more canonical ones. In my teaching, I strive to design seminars that are relevant to the world today, by focusing on decolonial and gender issues. Lately, I have begun to teach contemporary seminars, which gives a lot of scope for engaging with political topics.

Your involvement with doctoral school programs highlights your commitment to mentoring young scholars. What advice do you offer students working specifically on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature?

I don't supervise doctoral students—I don't consider myself qualified to do so. However, I do supervise MA dissertations, and I am always delighted when students want to work on the eighteenth century. I don't have any specific advice for young scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but I think that my general advice, whether at the MA or PhD level, would be to make sure that you find a topic that really interests you, as you will be spending a lot of time with it.

You have carried out several outreach initiatives, such as public performances and high school lectures. What is your best memory from transposing scholarly work from the University to public spaces in this way?

My favourite outreach activity was Une Soirée avec Jane Austen, which I developed with Michele Millner and Naïma Arlaud from Théâtre Spirale. I gave a pretty upbeat lecture on Austen, and Michele and Naïma read a few chapters from *Pride and Prejudice*. I really enjoyed preparing the powerpoint—there is an art to that, for sure. I like making people laugh.
Doing workshops for high-school students is very different, but also stimulating—it is challenging to come into a classroom with sometimes rather mystified or recalcitrant students and get them to engage with difficult ideas or hard-to-understand texts. We are privileged to have jobs at the University: I really feel that it is important to share our enthusiasm and knowledge with the wider world.

If you could make people read one work of English literature, which one would you choose, and why?

Clarissa by Samuel Richardson, because despite my jovial exterior I am a bit of a sadist at heart… Joking aside, this would definitely be my desert-island book. It is 1500 pages long. It makes you laugh, it makes you cry, and if you let it, it will change your life.

Who is your favorite author?

That changes. At the moment I am obsessively reading Mick Herron's *Slow Horses* novels, a very British spy series. I usually read about two novels a week—I am a voracious reader. I would say that my favourite author is Margaret Atwood. And Jane Austen. And Eliza Haywood. What kind of question is this??? Torture!! Leave me alone!!!

If you weren't teaching, what career path do you think you would have pursued?

A different teaching job? This is a difficult question. Before I did my second degree, I worked in banks (yuck!). When I was a teenager, I fancied myself an actor. I do like getting up in front of people and blathering on. I could see myself as an ageing soap opera star, perhaps the evil mother-in-law, or the nasty CEO. The sort of role where I could ham it up and wear fabulous but strangely tasteless clothes.

What is your favorite English word or expression? And French?

- The personal is political: an old chestnut, but I believe that it is still relevant. Structural oppressions that take effect in private lives need to be fought in public arenas.

- La lune est menteuse (quand elle est croissante ça fait un « D » et quand elle est décroissante ça fait un « C »)

Describe Geneva in three words.

Alpine, international, underground. (These are today's words. Tomorrow they might be different.)

Connections

Aïcha Bouchelaghem

othello	pudding	outpost	factory
mill	crumble	macbeth	bourg
workshop	cymbeline	jubilee	townlet
fudge	plant	vill	hamlet

mini	endo	ditty	boom
ballad	jingle	bark	anti
toy	lullaby	hyper	puny
pop	micro	meta	bagatelle

Match the Synonyms

Aïcha Bouchelaghem

ejaculate	pity
eke	female soothsayer
crapulous	parrot
beef-witted	itinerant merchant
ruth	distracted person
piepowder	food
mooncalf	addition
pythoness	head
crumpet	suffering from the effects of excessive eating and drinking
meat	giraffe
dumb	stupid
gibbous	convex, protuberant
camelopard	mute
popinjay	exclaim

Solutions

CONNECTIONS

1)
otello, macbeth, hamlet, cymbeline -- [**Shakespeare tragedies**]
townlet, bourg, vill, outpost -- [**hamlet**]
mill, plant, workshop, factory -- [**place of production**]
crumble, pudding, jubilee, fudge -- [**British dessert**]

2)
mini, micro, toy, puny -- [**modifiers meaning small**]
anti, hyper, meta, endo -- [**Greek prefixes**]
boom, pop, bark, jingle -- [**onomatopoiec verbs**]
ballad, ditty, lullaby, bagatelle -- [**short musical compositions**]

MATCH THE SYNONYMS

ejaculate - exclaim; dumb - mute; gibbous - convex, protuberant; beef-witted - stupid; camelopard - giraffe; crapulous - suffering from the effects of excessive eating and drinking; crumpet - head; eke - addition; meat - food; mooncalf - distracted person; pie-powder - itinerant merchant; popinjay - parrot; pythoness - female soothsayer; ruth - pity

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Contributions, comments, and suggestions are very welcome, and can be sent to noted-lettres@unige.ch

Thank you for reading *Noted!*