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On June 24-26, 2021, H.J. Manzari, Maribel Vázquez Manzari, and Amparo Alpañés from Washington & Jefferson College, Alba Graziano of the Università degli Studi della Tuscia and Daniele Niedda of UNINT, together with Mirko Menna from Centro Europeo di Studi Rossettiani, Michel Pharand (Independent Scholar) came together to organize the 5th Bridges Across Cultures: An International Conference on Arts and Humanities. The conference was held virtually from June 24-26th, 2021. I owe a debt of gratitude to Alba Graziano, Daniele Niedda, and especially Michel Pharand, for their hard work and dedication to helping with these papers. Most of all, I would like to thank my assistant Sydney Hirst, whose editorial skills and dedication to these acts go unmatched. The "Bridges" conference originated as a vision and an opportunity for academicians and professionals from various arts and humanities-related fields from all over the world to come together and learn from each other. Over the years, the conference has served as a meeting place for scholars and experts with interdisciplinary interests related to arts and humanities to interact with members within and outside of their own particular disciplines. It is my hope that the reader will be able to discover new and creative perspectives from which to study some traditional academic topics from a cross-disciplinary lens while reading the articles here presented. It is our wish to spark the reader's intellectual curiosity, and hopefully, to stimulate the reader to join in on the conversation.

HJ Manzari

Managing Editor Bridges Across Cultures 2022

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HOW JAPANESE TEXTBOOKS DO GENDER AND ETHNICITY

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Abstract

Critical Discourse Analysis studies examine talk within the context of institutional settings like that of the classroom and have shown how talk functions to maintain social order. Language can act to both reinforce as well as to challenge the status quo's perceptions and expectations of gender and ethnicity. Yet it is rare to find foreign language textbook analyses focusing on both gender and ethnicity as social, cultural and educational constructs. In Japan, a large proportion of Ministry of Education approved foreign language textbooks are written by middle-aged Japanese males so it is reasonable to examine how such textbooks "do gender" and explore the visibility of women in terms of the quantity of sex-linked references and the quality of appearances in illustrations (i.e. the way that males and females are depicted in occupational roles in both text and illustrations). Other aspects considered were firstness (particularly the participation of males and females in initial conversational turns), topic nomination, selection and maintenance and the positioning of gendered and ethnic images in textbooks (i.e., the way that individuals or groups of individuals are positioned by discourse as inherently inferior, or in control or weak or strong). This type of research is of interest because textbooks inadvertently contribute to cultural prejudices and personal biases that learners, unwittingly and unfortunately, absorb as a byproduct of study.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis, gender, ethnicity, textbook analysis, language learning

1. Introduction

This paper reports on analyses of three elementary level English language teaching textbooks in terms of gender and to some degree, ethnicity, as a category, as seen in its selected images. The study follows the three steps that Knudsen proposes in order to understand how gender and ethnicity are being done. According to Knudsen (2003) gender research should follow three stages: (a) Gender as Category, (b) Gender as Construction, and (c) Gender as Deconstruction. Gender is analyzed symbolically; meaning doing gender, not being a gender. “Gender is what you interpret and negotiate it to be. The way you cut your hair, for example, is a gender-sign on your body. Your hair is an interpretation of the sign 'woman' or 'man'” (Knudsen 2003, p. 5). For the most part, MEXT approved textbooks present and represent male and female genders with “conventional” gender-signs on the images of characters, although there may be some very small attempts to introduce non-binary gender images in some characters as well in more recently published materials.

The words people speak or write are not arbitrary. No matter whether the choices they make are conscious or unconscious, the words spoken or written are purposeful (Sheyholislami, 2001). A large proportion of Ministry of Education approved foreign language textbooks in Japan are written by committees predominated by middle-aged Japanese males, who despite their best efforts to be fair and neutral, will carry with them attitudes, beliefs and biases. As a result, female educators and those of nonnative ethnicity are largely absent from or are under-represented in the textbook creation process (Tatsuki 2010a). Besides the lack of access to and influence in the creative process, another reason this marginalization of female educator and authors is problematic is “that learners might get the impression that female authors do not produce interesting or useful texts as they are not represented to the same extent” (Holmqvist & Gjørupp, 2006, p. 15). Thus, this study is timely and important because textbooks written

under such conditions may inadvertently contribute to cultural prejudices and personal biases which learners, unwittingly and unfortunately, absorb as a byproduct of study.

2. Background to this research

Moi states that the “principal objective of feminist criticism has always been political: It seeks to expose, not to perpetuate, patriarchal practices” (2001, p. iii) and there is good reason for this concern. According to the most recent Global Gender Gap Report, Japan is at the rank of 120th on the list of 156 countries measured (World Economic Forum, 2021). The Global Gender Gap Index is a measurement based on three principles: a) gaps are measured rather than levels, b) gaps in outcomes variables are measured rather than gaps in means or income variables, and c) countries are ranked based on gender equality rather than women’s empowerment (WEF, 2008). Japan’s index value is 0.652 where gender parity or equality as measured through benchmarks and is expressed as 1.00 and inequality is 0.00 (zero). As a member of the G7 nations (index values by other G7 nations are: Canada 0.772, France 0.784, Germany 0.796, Italy 0.721, the United Kingdom 0.775, and the United States 0.763), this is truly astounding and unacceptable. The World Economic Forum detected numerous examples of inequities in 2021. For instance, the average Japanese woman’s income is 43.7% lower than the average Japanese man’s income, and Japan “ranks 166th in female representation in parliament, behind Pakistan, Libya and even Saudi Arabia” (Pesek, 2021, n.p.), just to name a few.

In education, female students are also blatantly discriminated against. An investigation by The Mainichi, a leading national newspaper, found that “80% of Tokyo metropolitan high schools have in recent years continued to require higher admission exam scores for girls than boys” (Okubo, 2021). This is in spite of “corrective action” taken since 1998 to reduce and

hopefully eradicate such discrepancies. In one case, 20 female candidates “failed despite scoring higher than the lowest scoring successful male applicant” (Okubo, 2021).

Nike, the sports giant, had a recent campaign featuring a commercial called “New Girl/Play New” which caused a bit of stir in Japan. The commercial opens with the announcement that a woman is expecting a baby girl and various members of the family weigh in with various expectations for the baby girl’s coming life. Predictably, the older brother expresses disappointment at not having a boy for a new playmate. The father describes scary images of her walking alone at night in peril. Negative images and the enumeration of gender-based restrictions keep accumulating until the mother-to-be finally tells everyone to stop. This turning point introduces the central concept of the ad “Growing up a girl in Japan used to mean one thing. Now it can mean everything... So what do you want to do?” From that point onward the scenes show Japanese sportswomen and activists who are challenging and breaking down the traditional stereotypes (McGee, 2021). Although the ad ends with a positive sense of hope for the future of women in Japan, it also highlights the problems they face.

Upon reading some of the comments under the video it appears the commenters do not seem to be concerned with the empowerment of women but rather are annoyed with Nike daring to show the shortcomings of Japanese culture to the world. Here is a sample of those comments:

“Currently Nike is hot on making hate speech against Japan.”

“This is a commercial that appeals for the elimination of discrimination against women, but it is a commercial that severely discriminates against Japanese people.”

“You should be aware that the real enemies are not men or women, but capitalists who incite discrimination.”

“Is this really made by Japanese people?”

“Sumo is a culture, and putting a woman in it is just a denial of culture, isn’t it?”

(comments section, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JI1zJ6-SYhU>)

Nike seems to be unconcerned about this backlash and they have even left the comment section open and unedited. After all, the comments, like those posted above, seem to prove their point.

It is within this context that the current study begins.

2.1 Researching gender and ethnicity

According to gender schema theory (Bem, 1994), children develop a conception of femaleness and maleness through stereotypes perpetuated in their culture that ultimately amplify male power and oppress females and minorities. School textbooks play a large role where,

“...females tend to be greatly underrepresented and both males and females depicted in such gender-stereotyped ways, that girls and boys’ visions of who they are and what they can become are constrained... so that girls are led away from mathematics and science and into gender-stereotyped courses of study” (Blumberg, 2007, p.4).

A report by Voice of America noted, “classroom materials that reinforce gender stereotypes can discourage students, weaken their motivation and limit their overall academic performance” (Dierking, 2017, p. 1). The VOA report offered examples from several UNESCO research studies, which found that women were underrepresented, stereotyped or disparaged offensively in textbook images, reading passages and language learning activities. One example (of many) showed images from an English language textbook portrayed four men and two women in different jobs: males were not only overrepresented (four to two) but they also were seen in higher-level, more economically powerful occupations. Based on the findings in such

studies, UNESCO has created a checklist for teachers to identify unequal gender representation—here are some examples:

- Is equal time and attention paid to males and females in illustrations and text mentions?
- Is equal respect and potential (regarding life paths, employment) shown to males and females?
- Are the needs and life experiences of males and females reflected in the curriculum that the text materials articulate?
- Is peace and equality for males and females

2.2 Research on gendered images

Many textbooks display a verb for vocabulary learning under a picture of a character performing the verb. Kawamichi (2007) looked at the gendered images associated with specific verbs in 18 MEXT approved textbooks to be used from 2006 to 2010. Although the overall distribution seemed equal (46% female; 54% male), when viewed from the vocabulary item level there were disturbing inequities. For example, while both males and females *chat*, *talk* and *visit* females were associated more with the verbs *chat*, *greet* and *write* whereas males were depicted with *email*, *hear*, *listen*, and *read*. Kawamichi concludes,

“Language is like a mirror that not only reflects the culture but also the social values of the time. Certainly equal rights and consideration for men and women have changed in Japan from that of a dominantly male-oriented society. However in some situations, men seem still to be more dominant than women. ...Although these results are a bit disturbing, I believe that they were largely unconscious on the part of the textbook creators. I think that language teachers should always be sensitive to the idea that the interior of the language and social biases unconsciously appear...” (p. 22).

2.3 Researching gender and ethnicity through linguistic analysis

It is a popular stereotype that females talk more than males. Yet, Porreca's (1984) study of 15 American ESL textbooks found that male speakers in dialogues outnumbered female characters nearly 2 to 1. However, it is also important to consider who starts the conversation. The speaker who initiates a conversation often controls the setting of the topic and possibly is in a stronger position to control the direction of the interaction. In Farooq's (1999) study of one EFL text used in Japan, despite an overall balance between males and females in terms of verbosity, male characters initiated 63% of all male female dialogs and provided 89% of the follow up moves. This finding was supported by Tatsuki (2010a) where males significantly outperformed females as the initiators of interactions.

2.4 Research questions

Knudsen (2003) states "The potential of analysis using gender as a category is that the invisible women, and invisible women's lives, can be made visible" (p. 3). Naming, identities, roles and verbosity will be the means of describing the nature of gender and ethnicity based visibility in MEXT textbooks in order to answer the following research question: How are gender and ethnicity portrayed verbally and visually in a selection of Japanese elementary level EFL textbooks?

3. Methodology

Three textbooks were selected for this analysis: (a) We Can! 1, (b) We Can! 2, and (c) New Horizon (Grade 5). Each textbook was examined page by page to detect images and texts relevant to the research question. The relevant properties of images were noted in a spreadsheet and dialogues were compiled on a spreadsheet for later text analysis.

4. Results

This section will begin with the analysis of images, noting the frequencies of appearances by gender in the textbooks We Can 1 & 2 and then in the vocabulary card supplementary material in the same series. This will be followed by a close up look at the visual distribution of occupations and then an examination of a specific section on famous people.

4.1 Analysis of Images

Overall in two textbooks (WC 1&2), identifiably female characters appear one third of the time and identifiably male characters more than half of the time. The gender is coded as “unknown” when a character’s traditional gender signs are not visible (e.g. wearing a space suit with a helmet obscures hair style or body shape) or when only a part of the body (e.g., hands holding an object) is shown. The gender is coded as “none” when there is no human agent depicted in the scene.

Table 1. Frequency of Appearance

	Male	Female	Unknown	None	Sub totals
total WC1	75 (50.34)	49 (32.89)	16 (10.74)	9 (6.04)	149
total WC2	111 (53.88)	73 (35.44)	15 (7.28)	7 (3.40)	206
	186 (53.24)	122 (34.37)	31 (8.73)	16 (4.51)	355

WC1 and WC2 share many of the same vocabulary cards so certain categories are identical over both textbooks. What is interesting is that when there are few items in a category (e.g. WC2 sounds and letters, jingle words, holiday activities) the proportions are closer to 50/50 but as soon as the number of items is larger, one third becomes the default. It may be possible that the writers found it hard to ignore a disproportionate number of males in small categories so the writers were careful there but they were less careful in larger category groups.

Table 2. Frequencies on vocabulary and practice cards WC1*

	Male	Female	Unknown	None	Totals
WC1 verbs	17 (47.22)	12 (33.33)	4 (11.11)	3 (8.33)	36
WC1 adjectives	19 (50.00)	10 (26.32)	5 (13.20)	4 (10.50)	38
WC1 jobs	14 (60.87)	9 (39.13)	0	0	23

WC1 holiday activities	10 (58.82)	7 (31.43)	0	0	17
WC1 vocabulary practice cards	15 (42.86)	11 (31.89)	7 (20.00)	2 (5.71)	35
Total	75 (50.34)	49 (32.89)	16 (10.74)	9 (6.04)	149

*Percentages in parentheses

Table 3. Frequencies on vocabulary and practice cards WC2*

	Male	Female	Unknown	None	Totals
WC2 sounds & letters	5 (41.67)	6 (50.00)	1 (8.33)		12
WC2 jingle words	2 (50.00)	2 (50.00)	0	0	4
WC2 verbs	17 (47.22)	12 (33.33)	4 (11.11)	3 (8.33)	36
WC2 adjectives	19 (50.00)	10 (26.32)	5 (13.20)	4 (10.50)	38
WC2 jobs	14 (60.87)	9 (39.13)	0	0	23
WC2 daily words, sports, people	16 (72.73)	6 (27.27)	0	0	22
WC2 holiday activities	9 (52.94)	8 (47.06)	0	0	17
WC2 vocabulary practice cards	29 (53.70)	20 (37.04)	5 (9.26)	0	54
Total	111 (53.88)	73 (35.44)	15 (7.28)	7 (3.39)	206

*Percentages in parentheses

Table 4 takes a look at one of the sub-categories, occupations. The occupations distributed to males and females in the textbooks are listed in the table to highlight the parallels. On a positive note, the textbook authors have avoided the traditional androcentric gendered language to describe certain jobs (i.e., policeman is now a gender neutral police officer and fireman is fire fighter).

Table 4. Distribution of occupation types by gender and category

Male (n=14)	Female (n=9)
Creative Arts	
Artist	Singer
Comedian	
Nurturing	
	Farmer Zookeeper
Sports	
Baseball player	Soccer player
Figure skater	
Merchants and Shopkeepers	
Baker	
Cook	Florist
Professions	
Dentist	Vet
Doctor	Flight attendant

Pilot	
Teacher	
Blue Collar Workers	
Fire fighter	
Police officer	Bus driver
Fantasy	
Hero	
King	Queen

However, the images tell another story, showing that men and women are shunted to gender-stereotyped jobs in two ways: (a) quantitatively and (b) qualitatively. First, male representation in occupations is almost double that of female representation, implying that there are fewer jobs suitable for women or that fewer women than men typically work. Second, the men are generally depicted as working in higher-level, more economically powerful jobs. For example, males are pilots whereas females are flight attendants and males are doctors while females are veterinarians. Although it may seem progressive that the figure skater was depicted as male, a progressive proactive stance was not applied to enhance female depictions of occupational opportunity. Males outnumber females two-to-one in every job category except for “nurturing” which is a description of a supposed female virtue. This mirrored the findings cited by Blumberg (2007) of research into gender bias in textbooks throughout the world:

“... both genders were shown in highly gender-stereotyped ways in the household as well as in the occupational division of labor, and in the actions, attitudes and traits portrayed. (To wit: women were accommodating, nurturant drudges; girls passive conformists, and boys and men did almost all the impressive, noble, exciting and fun things and almost none of the caring, or “feminine” acts or jobs” (p. 5).

Particularly egregious are the selections made in a section called “famous people” (see Table 5). Over all there are 10 males and only 2 females on the list. Half the males are Japanese, half non-Japanese. The 50/50 rule was the same for females—one Japanese, one non-Japanese. This

harkens back to the Sadker & Sadker (1994) study, which found that the tragic consequence of not including an equitable share of famous women in textbooks is the effective erasure of them in the minds of the public.

Table 5. Distribution of gender and area of expertise of “Famous People”

Female (n=2)	Area of Expertise	Male (n=10)
F. Nightingale (Founder of modern nursing)	Medicine	Yamanaka Shinya (Nobel prize for stem cell research) Noguchi Hideyo (Bacteriologist)
Ishikawa Kasumi (Silver medalist for table tennis)	Athletics	
	Music	Ludwig V. Beethoven (Composer)
	Literature	H. C. Andersen (Author, famous for fairy tales) Kawabata Yasunari (Nobel prize for literature)
	Military, Politics	Tokugawa Ieyasu Napoleon Bonaparte
	Science, Inventors	(Alexander) Graham Bell Alfred Nobel
	Educator	William S. Clark (Founder, Sapporo Agricultural College)

Although Florence Nightingale is rightly applauded as the founder of modern nursing, she is pitted against two male doctors, one of whom was awarded a Nobel Prize for stem cell research. Alternatively, what if the first licensed and practicing female physician of Japan, Ogino Ginko, was chosen? Or how about selecting from among the 57 women who have been awarded Nobel prizes?

The only other woman selected as a “famous person” was Ishikawa Kasumi, a silver medalist for table tennis. With all due respect to table tennis and silver medalists, this is an odd choice given the fact that this selection ignores the existence of female Japanese gold medalists. For instance, Ryoko Tani won a record seven world titles and five Olympic medals, including two golds at the Olympics in Sydney 2000 and in Athens 2004. After her retirement, the International Judo Federation named her "best female judoka ever". Also, Tae Satoya was the first Japanese woman to earn a gold medal in the Winter Olympics.

The invisibility of women is compounded when one considers the distribution over the remaining categories represented. Ludwig van Beethoven was selected to represent music, yet there certainly are famous Japanese composers such as Joe Hisaishi who composed the sound tracks for Studio Ghibli anime films or Nobuo Uematsu who in fact is known as “the Beethoven” of videogame music (Farrant, 2021). Furthermore, there are famous Japanese female composers such as Yoko Kanno who composed anime sound tracks such as Cowboy Bebop and Ghost in the Shell (Farrant, 2021) It should be noted that these are only contemporary composers. The invisibility continues. In Literature, Hans Christian Andersen was noted for his fairy tales and Kawabata Yasunari was a Nobel Laureate for his narrative skills. But what about the Japanese woman Murasaki Shikibu who is credited with writing one of the world’s first novels, The Tale of Genji? Tokugawa Ieyasu and Napoleon Bonaparte were military specialists who both unified their countries but what about Catherine the Great of Russia who expanded the Russian Empire and modernized her nation?

In terms of science and innovation, Alexander Graham Bell and Alfred Nobel are noted, but how about: Marie Curie? She coined the theory of radioactivity, created techniques for isolating radioactive isotopes, and discovered two elements, polonium and radium. She was the first person in history to win two Nobel Prizes and the only person to win twice in multiple sciences. Furthermore, one might consider Dr. Shirley Jackson, who conducted breakthrough scientific research with subatomic particles that enabled the invention of the portable fax, touch-tone telephone, solar cells, fiber optic cables, and the technology behind caller ID and call waiting. And finally, in the category of educator, the textbook authors selected William S. Clark who was the founder of the Sapporo Agricultural College. He was famous for his parting words, “BOYS, BE AMBITIOUS!” which became a nationally known motto in Japan, the implication being that girls have no need for ambition or such a motto. However, one small hope was on the horizon. As of April 2020, the Ministry of Education

began to permit private publishers to gain ministry approval and enter the elementary textbook market. Two women who helped write *Let's Try* and *We Can* took charge of *New Horizon*, which was recently released. A quick look at the textbook for grade five reveals a somewhat better effort to produce more parity in terms of visual images. However, it is as though the writers just cannot help themselves. For instance, in one illustration, when a boy is asked what he wants to study, it is science and what he wants to become is a scientist. But when the same questions are posed to a girl, she dutifully replies, "I want to study home economics" and "I want to be a baker."

4.2 Analysis of text

This section will summarize the text analysis of *New Horizon* (Grade 5) beginning with gender visibility through naming followed by positioning through initial turns.

4.2.1 Visibility through Naming

In past research of Japanese government approved junior-high school texts (Tatsuki, 2010b), females were the most frequently unnamed and thus, invisible, characters since they occupied the roles of clerks or other nameless workers. In the case of unnamed teachers, the most frequently unnamed were Japanese females. Foreign and Japanese mothers appeared in the textbooks but had no names but when foreign fathers appeared, they were named. Japanese fathers were completely absent and consequently also unnamed.

In the *New Horizon* (2020) grade five textbook, there are six named main characters: 2 Japanese students (boy and girl), 2 foreign students (boy and girl), and 2 teachers (1 Japanese male, 1 foreign female). When considering the unnamed characters (see 'Table 6'), there is gender parity among the unnamed Japanese (6 males, 6 females) but not among foreign characters (3 males, 5 females).

Table 6. Frequencies of unnamed characters by gender and ethnicity

	Unnamed Characters			
	J-M	J-F	NJ-M	NJ-F
Student/peers	4	4	1	2
Adults	2	2	2	3
totals	6	6	3	5

Among the unnamed non-Japanese characters are Lucas' mother, Emily's older brother Emily's mother and grandmother and Emily's grandfather. However, Emily's father is named (Mark Smith) and is also featured as a baker.

4.2.2 Positioning through Turn-initiation

As mentioned earlier, the speaker who initiates a conversation often controls the setting of the topic and possibly is in a stronger position to control the direction of the interaction. Turn management and power are far more important to examine than just verbosity (number of words spoken), which is a superficial measure of power. The initiator sets topic, sets tone, sets the pace and thus controls the interaction.

Table 7. Frequency and distribution of initial turns

	Student-student			Adult-student				Totals
	m/m	m/f	f/f	M/m	M/f	F/m	F/f	
Male initiating	2	37	0	0	2	0	0	41
Female initiating	0	18	9	0	0	6	3	36

Male characters initiate the most dialogues over all (see Table 7). What is most astounding is that among students, when the pair is mixed, males dominate; they initiate more than twice as many conversations as females. Adult females, teachers or mothers, account for a full 25% of female initiated interactions, overwhelmingly addressing younger males, whereas adult males accounted for only a scant 5% of male-initiated conversations, all addressing females. The overall effect, however, indicates that female students are less powerful, perhaps more passive participants in conversations. This kind of male dominance has been seen before. To wit, in a

textbook in the late 1970s, a male character initiated every one of the 15 dialogues in the textbook. Every dialogue included at least one male character, but seven included no female characters at all (Jones et al., 1997).

4.3 Other stereotypes and confusing images

There are four scenarios that depict a character being “late” or “lost” or “losing things”. Of those four scenarios, the person was non-Japanese every single time. This is a recurring theme in Japanese textbooks—the hapless foreigner who is confused or incompetent being the butt of a joke (Arudo, 2021; Tatsuki 2010a). One might equivocate that this is not open hostility, but it certainly serves to derogate and trivialize foreign characters. Another confusing image is connected to the propensity for artists in Japanese textbooks to almost always draw non-Japanese characters with caucasian features, regardless of their supposed ethnicity. This was the case in *New Horizon*: all the named foreign characters have caucasian features (light skin tones and blond or reddish hair) in the textbook depictions, despite two of the families hailing from Brazil and Singapore.

5. Discussion

An examination of three textbooks has revealed systematic bias and gender stereotyping in Japanese contemporary teaching materials aimed at elementary school children. Sadly, these findings are not much different from the results of studies done over the past two decades or more.

5.1 Recommendations for action

Any recommendations will necessarily involve the dedication and actions of many stakeholders to set the situation right. The stakeholders addressed here are researchers, teachers and the community in general. Researchers should not only continue describing gender and

ethnicity biases in text materials, they need to establish the effects of such biases on students, both female and male. Furthermore, the intensity of biases ought to be measured (Blumberg, 2007), in order to understand if or what magnitude of improvement is being made.

Teachers are also a vital resource but must be equipped to solve this problem. Without gender sensitization training, teachers might suffer from “gender blindness” even when exposed to biased texts and therefore fail to recognize problems right in front of them (Blumberg, 2007). Thus, teacher-training programs are an important starting place for change. If training programs include gender bias sensitivity training, teachers would be enabled to deal with biased materials. Teachers need training to be able to examine teaching materials to identify problems early. They need to make conscious efforts to become aware of inherent biases in textbook products by:

- examining images
- counting initial turns by gender and ethnicity to reveal systematic biases
- re-reading dialogues with antennae out for stereotyped comments

Once aware, teachers and schools can take steps to eradicate the biased/stereotyping materials. The first step is to supplement with images that counter the biases or stereotypes promoted in the textbook. It might be a simple move to rename speakers in some dialogues or use A and B to denote speakers in order to change the balance.

The entire school community should be encouraged to raise their voices and complain to publishers and to the ministry of education that approves such materials. The degree of gender and multiethnic equity that is ultimately possible in a society might well be dependent on its ability to ameliorate gender bias in its textbooks and school curricula. Adults owe it to their students to at least try

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BI-NATIONAL MIXED MARRIAGES AS A BRIDGE ACROSS CULTURES¹

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Abstract

The essay assesses ways in which bi-national mixed marriages by individuals of African and European heritage act as a bridge across their cultural divides in the contemporary globalised society. Consequent upon a review of published research of cultural and interracial mixed marriages, the essay observes that these marriages are inevitable and acceptable in Europe, Africa and indeed, worldwide. In particular, bi-national racially-mixed marriages act as a bridge between cultures; they integrate and bridge larger groups and cultures allowing family members and friends of the partners to collaborate with each other to create new group boundaries that transcend personal contacts and promote social cohesion of societies. Extant literature also presents children of bi-national mixed marriages as being in the rare position of bridging barriers of race, culture and ideology.

Keywords: bi-national marriages, intermarriages, interracial marriages, racially-mixed marriages, socio-economic integration, intercultural marriages, exogamous marriages

1. Introduction

In the prevailing age of sweeping globalization and transnational mobility, an increase in bi-national mixed marriages is not only inevitable but also acceptable in Europe and worldwide (Sowa-Behtane, 2017; Bean & Stevens 2003). This was not the case seventy years ago. As recent as 1948, the marriage between Ruth Williams, a white English woman, and Seretse Khama, an African from Botswana, presented a nightmare for the UK government and the colonial administrator of Botswana. The Anglican Bishop of London was forced to deny

1. Paper to celebrate the wedding between Anna Maschietto (Italian) and Solomon Ajekwe (British-Nigerian)

permission for a church wedding of the mixed marriage and the couple had to make do with a civil ceremony at Kensington Registry Office. The liaison might have been a contemporary variant of Desdemona in Shakespeare's play *Othello*², "who loved not wisely but too well". The marriage was described disapprovingly, among other descriptors as, "*Inconvenient*" (Dutfield, 1990) and "*Unfortunate*" (Rider, 2003).

However, a lot has changed since 1948. Global culture prevails now, and the different cultures of the world are as converging as they are integrating. Cosmopolitan Europe is no longer averse to a culturally mixed marriage and no longer does the sight of a black and white couple holding hands and walking down the street attracting stigmatic stares. Such stares have all but disappeared and perhaps relegated to small rural towns and groups at the fringes of European society. Similarly, it has not been known that any Bishop, other Christian or civil authority withheld permission to a white and black couple who intend to consummate marriage in the Church or the civil registry. Even members of European royalty, such as the UK monarchy, are known to marry black people.

This essay addresses bi-racial marriages in the current globalized environment, characterised by the narrowing of socio-economic borders between the races, an integrated and converged worldview and an ease of international travel and telecommunications. These conditions facilitate immigration and the forming of "equality" bi-racial marriages, across national boundaries (Bean & Stevens, 2003; Sowa - Behtane, 2017). In academic literature, bi-national mixed marriages have been posited as a marriage phenomenon that crosses physical and social borders, contributing to building a bridge between different classes of people, such

² Desdemona is derived from Greek δὺς + δαίμων which means "ill-fated, unfortunate". Desdemona, a virtuous Venetian lady of marvellous beauty, is a character in William Shakespeare's play *Othello* (c. 1601–1604). Desdemona enrages and disappoints her Senator father by eloping with Othello, a military prodigy of Arab-Muslim heritage. Giraldi Cinthio's (1504 – 1573) *Hecatommithi* (1565), assumed source for Shakespeare's play *Othello*, had depicted Desdemona as unwise women who married men whose nature and habitudes of life are foreign.

as black and white people, immigrants and the native populations (e.g., Alba, 1995; Alba & Golden, 1986; Alba & Nee, 1997; Giorgas & Jones, 2002).

The next section clarifies the main issues in bi-racial mixed marriage addressed in this paper. Theories of bi-national mixed marriages are addressed in section three. The ways in which a bi-cultural marriage constitutes a bridge across cultures is taken up in section four. Section five summarises and concludes the paper.

2. Conceptual Clarifications

(of the African) or tour of duty (of the European)

For the purpose of this paper, a bi-national mixed marriage is one that involves highly educated individuals who are socially and economically independent (Caballero & Aspinall 2018; Caballero, Edwards & Smith, 2008). In particular, this essay addresses a situation where one of the partners in a traditional marriage (i.e., male and female) is of African heritage and had originally travelled legitimately to study or work in Europe. On completion of his studies, the former international student, now armed with higher qualifications, takes up appointment (in Europe) in a professional role, in entertainment or as a consultant to, or representative of foreign government or business organisation or in any other legal capacity. Another hypothetical way the bi-national couple first met was when the European worked in Africa as a teacher, lecturer, missionary or a volunteer for one of the United Nations-related projects or in any other legally approved capacity. Both partners are from advantaged backgrounds, typically from lower to upper middle-class families with university or professional qualifications (Muttarak, 2009; Cottrell, 1990; Imamura, 1986). One or both partners have had some exposure to other cultures through travel, work, education, and technology before finding love among them (Muttarak & Heath, 2010; Cottrell, 1990; Imamura, 1986; Blau, 1977). The partners have had so much prior multi-cultural contact or had established friendship across

racial and cultural boundaries that a bi-national marriage is seen as being natural or a consolidation of an “international lifestyle”(Cottrell, 1990;OsanamiTorgren, 2011).

The mixed couple met at a social activity, at work or in university, or lived at the same residential address and became amorously intimate. Eventually, a mixed union is contemplated and formed despite the possibility that one or both of them had only a little or no first-hand experience of the other’s culture³ yet (Imamura, 1986, 1987; Kambhu, 1963).As suggested by the assortative mating theory, similar and dissimilar phenotype characteristics of a couple come to play in the mixed relationship. The obvious differences in cultural and racial backgrounds notwithstanding, the partners have other common individual characteristics. These can include religious beliefs and practices, personality traits. socio-economic status or interests, financial status, values, education and attitudes (O’Neil, 2006; Jacobson & Heaton, 2008).Apart from being comfortable with themselves, the partners are physically attracted to themselves and love each other. The similarity of their backgrounds persuades them to believe that they will spend their lives happily together, forever (Regan, Levin, Sprecher, Christopher, & Gate, 2000; Kalmijn, 1998; O’Neill, 2006).These common socio-economic characteristics facilitate trust and bonding as well as quality and intimate communication between them.The partners believe that their “cordiality” is indicative of future marital satisfaction and a successful union (Buss et al., 1990; Becker, 1973, 1974).By implication therefore, the parties downplay differences in their upbringings, heritage, race, and culture and are ready and willing to bridge their differences for a common future. But it may not always go smoothly.

Marriage is a family affair and not just a matter between two cordial and compatible male and female individuals.Social acceptance and consent of the immediate and extended family of both partners is important for the survival of any marriage, especially a culturally

³Hofstede (1980) defines culture as ‘the collective mental programming of the people in an environment [...] that is different from that of other groups, tribes, regions, minorities or majorities, or nations’ (1980: 43).

mixed marriage (Kalmijn, 1998; Kulu& González-Ferrer, 2014). Some families are more open and supportive towards bi-culturally mixed marriages while other families express rejection and resentment that may or may not resolve itself even with passage of time. As a consequence of such a “concern” from the family, coupled with differences in culture, a bi-national mixed marriage is open to more internal difficulties, social sanctions and conflicts with their surroundings than endogamous marriage (Thode-Arora 1999). Intensified social pressure and psychological stress of a mixed marriage may lead to one of two solutions: either the marriage ends in divorce or the partners deepen their understanding of the background and culture of their spouse (Thode-Arora 1999). In a successful culturally-mixed marriage, each partner tends to perform the role of a "gatekeeper" of a foreign cultural context with different values and different codes of conduct (Waldis 1998). In this case, a mixed marriage eventually functions as a "bridge between different cultures" (Vucinic-Nescovic 2002), working as a social status passage and functioning as a strong and effective mechanism for turning “strangers”, “foreigners” or “outsiders” into “our wife”, “our in - law” or “one of us”.

In spite of these concerns, a mixed marriage has several associated blessings as observed by Rosenblatt, Kari, and Powell (1995) and La Taillade (1999) including the following:

- **healing**, i.e., bridging the gap between the mixed couple through love and marriage,
- **enrichment**, i.e., learning about another culture through being married to a person of another race/culture,
- **withstanding racist opposition**, i.e., the overwhelming feeling of accomplishment as the interracial/intercultural couple feels when they withstand and thrive despite experiences of racial or cultural discrimination,
- **attainment of same level of marital satisfaction** as in an endogamous, culturally homogenous same-race couples, and

- **a never dull moment** as the couple never lacks what to talk about. They always have so many wonderful and diverse things to share with each other, such as talking about their childhood experiences, their culture, food, fashion, languages, *etc.*

3. Theories of bi-national mixed marriages

Various theories have been offered for a marriage by people of mixed cultures that constitute a bridge between previously disconnected cultural dispositions. These include but aren't limited to the following:

i. The **Stimulus, Value and Role (SVR) Courtship theory** posits that like any other marriage, whites and blacks marry in potentially marriageable situations (Murstein, 1973, Foeman & Nance, 1999). Potential couples are first drawn to themselves because of their attributes and physical attractiveness. This is the **stimulus** or awareness stage. In the next stage, the **value** stage, the potential couples interact verbally to ascertain their value compatibility. Finally, in the **role** stage, the partners assess their ability to meet their mutual expectations in a variety of circumstances. During this SVR courtship process, differences in nationality, culture or ethnicity are given less consideration than perceived similarities. The wife or husband views their potential foreign partner as they would from their culture.

ii. The **Structural theory** states that mixed marriages become ordinarily frequent events in cosmopolitan communities where the society structure supports multiculturalism. In other words, the society becomes desensitized to the stigma of a mixed culture marriage. In addition, with the increase in international migration, more people live and work in more integrated environments which have led to increased acceptance of heterogeneous exogamous relationships (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). This theory aspires to support the narratives in this paper the most.

iii. The **Social exchange theory**, supposes that when white women marry black men, who usually are of higher economic status; the white women exchange the prestige of their skin colour for the black husband's higher economic status (Davidson, 1992; Kalmijn, 1993; Lewis & Yancey, 1997). Empirical support of this theory is not always forthcoming; black and white women have been found to marry down in both interracial and same race unions, suggesting that mixed marriage is more complex than just an exchange of status (Foeman & Nance, 1999).

iv. **Racial motivation theory** states that many mixed marriages take place because of cultural and racial differences, not in spite of them. From this viewpoint, it is believed that curiosity about what is different increases rather than what is similar. This theory also says that those who intermarry between cultures/races may be acting in rebellion against social norms of racial endogamy and using the mixed marriage as a way of demonstrating their independence (Kouri & Lasswell, 1993).

4. Mixed Marriages as a Bridge Across Cultures

Mixed marriages not only link together two individuals, but also the larger groups to which these individuals belong. Bi-national mixed marriages integrate and bridge larger groups and cultures together, allowing family members and friends of the partners to collaborate with each other to create new group boundaries that transcend personal contacts and promote the social cohesion of societies.

In addition, an exogamous marriage between an immigrant and a native individual can be an indicator of a high level of social and economic convergence and integration of diverse cultures in the host society (Alba & Nee, 2003; Kulu & González-Ferrer, 2014). A high rate of intermarriage signals that the social distance between the partner groups is small and that individuals of putatively different cultural backgrounds have been bridged. It signals that social and cultural differences are no longer perceived as being significant enough to create a barrier

to a long-term union. Because intermarriage is said to signal a genuine social acceptance of a different race or culture as equals, as opposed to “lesser others,” it is usually regarded as a desirable outcome. In other words, interracial couples haven been successfully “integrated” and they would not constitute social or political problems for mainstream society (Rodríguez-García 2006; Song 2009).

Furthermore, when a bi-national family is formed, the mixture of cultural heritages is mutually enriched and the resulting mixture benefits the family as a whole (Cross & Gilly, 2012; Meng & Gregory, 2005). Immigrants who have married into the host culture are also less likely to segregate in immigrant enclaves. Their inclusion in the wider, dominant community no doubt has a positive influence on the public perception of immigrants.

Moreover, an exogamous marriage has the potential and capability of contributing to softening negative attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes against the out group (Kalmijn, 1998). This helps to solidify the cultural bridge between the cultures. In addition, while it is expected that the immigrant partners will return to their country of origin on completion of studies or tour of duty, a mixed cultural marriage makes such an expectation much unlikely (Oswald, 1999). More likely than not, if the immigrant husband or wife lives in their spouse’s country, they will bridge the cultural divide and establish deeper roots within their spouse’s culture. The partners have no other options than to develop strategies to cope with the dispersed family network and organize interaction with family members within and beyond the borders. For example, the European partner would have undergone some apprenticeship into the culture of their African partner and vice versa. They learn new sets of cultural practices such as idioms, etiquettes, foods or local customs and often, a new language. The partners would also take on the role of cultural pedagogue and mediator between them and their families (Wilson, 1982). In addition, the mixed bi-national family has both the necessity and opportunity of creating a common everyday family culture by successfully integrating and bridging their differing cultures and

not by eliminating the cultural differences. (Collet, 2012; Varro, 2000). In effect, a bi-national mixed marriage converges, integrates and connects groups of different national origins to a new social unit and creates affiliations and obligations across the different nation states.

Regarding the children of culturally mixed families, they extend racial and cultural boundaries, in addition to social divisions, acting as a bridge between them. The children are a cultural “hybrid”, bi-racial, and possibly bilingual (Luke, 1994). They are exposed to "richer options" by virtue of their "richer" double cultural heritage (Wardle, 1987). They tend to be more extroverted, sociable, and are seen by some to be endowed with several socially desirable characteristics (Johnson & Nagoshi, 1986).

This point has been validated in one of the largest studies into genetic diversity published in *Nature*. Joshi, Esko, Mattson *et al.* (2015) of Manchester University determined that **children** born into a bi-national racially-mixed marriage would inherit the best side of their parents’ genes. According to the study, the unique combination of two different races can be of great benefit when it comes to height, lung capacity, general cognitive ability and educational attainment of the bi-racial offspring. Other traits mentioned in the Joshi, Esko, Mattson *et al.* (2015) study as being beneficial to the children of bi-national racially-mixed families are their exotic (hybrid) physical appearance, emotional strength, high IQ and stronger immunity against several diseases. In political leadership too, biracial off springs such as Barack Obama of USA, late Jerry Rawlings of Ghana and Ian Khama of Botswana, have often been presented as being in the rare position of bridging barriers of race, culture and ideology (Cross & Gilly,2013).

5. Summary and Conclusion

Whether one considers the partners and families of bi-national racially-mixed marriages, their children or the bi-national family structure, the union functions as “a bridge between cultures,” allowing cultural exchange between the partners and their offspring, who are

themselves cultural bridges (Lauth Bacas 2002). This unconventional union of culturally dissimilar partners unifies the two cultures as well as the support structures of the partners in different countries. Prior existence of this link may have been non-existent, slim and unlikely given the geographical, cultural, and other boundaries between the partners. With the passage of time and the evolution of bi-racial partnership and families, the link not only persists but grows stronger, even if the bi-national house hold dissolves. This is a bridge that binds and is practically irrevocable, particularly where children have been made. Thus, the impact of the bi-national union is pervasive and inclusive as social and family networks become interwoven and interconnected.

And so, may it be for Anna and Solomon⁴ as they bridge their cultural differences and make a success of their marriage, deepening their understanding of each other's heritage and culture.

⁴ Please watch wedding photo here <https://youtu.be/qL67Sw8ZFso>

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“IF YOU GO IN [SIC] ITALY AND ASK FOR *PECORINA* ... YOU GONNA GET IT”: ANGLIO-ITALIAN LINGUISTIC AND CULINARY NON-HYBRIDIZATION.

THE STRANGE CASE OF GINO D’ACAMPO

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Abstract

Today, fusion cuisine is widespread, fashionable, and it certainly represents a unique example of a bridge across cultures. On the other hand, many chefs and tourists do not approve of it for the sake of certain values such as tradition and authenticity. This is particularly the case for Italian American food, for instance, with Italian haters claiming that such dishes as spaghetti with meatballs or fettuccine alfredo have nothing to do with Italian cuisine. This paper focuses on the strange and unique case of the Neapolitan chef Gino D’Acampo, an Italian chef in his mid-forties who opened his first restaurant in London when he was twenty-one. Today, Gino is a well-known TV star in Britain thanks to his strong and occasionally comical Italian accent and common Italian humour. However, he never misses a chance to demolish any attempts by his English guests or co-hosts to adapt traditional Italian dishes to English tastes. As he has stated in many interviews, his take is a declared ‘war’ on Italian cuisine hybridization. Nevertheless, this paper aims to illustrate that while Gino’s recipes shun hybridization, Gino’s funny idiolect and interlanguage, including Italian-English accent, code switching, and extensive use of loanwords are themselves intentional pragmatic strategies to bridge two cultures.

1. Bridging culinary cultures with Gino D’Acampo

“One thing I know for sure, next year the Eurovision song contest kicks up in Italy, so we’ll all be heading out to the land of pizza and sambuca”. When the now world-famous Italian

rock band Måneskin won the Eurovision Music Festival in Rotterdam on May 22nd, 2021, the Dutch TV presenter Jan Smit announced that the following edition of the most important European song contest would be held in Italy. He immediately associated this country with its best-known distinguishing feature, its cuisine, thus shifting the audience's attention, and the pragmatic focus of his utterance, from the victory of Italian music to the fame of Italian food.

In the UK, a country deeply committed to “[t]he encounter between different culinary traditions and their exchange” and eager “to learn about other traditions and integrate them into its own”, Italian cuisine is “by far the one that attracts most international interest [...] because of the quality of the foodstuffs and the relative ease to prepare the dishes” (Dore 2019, 23, 24). This interest in Italian culinary culture likely dates back to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. However, at the end of the World War II, British TV channels began broadcasting programs about Italian cuisine, thus turning such cooks as Antonio Carluccioⁱ and Gennaro Contaldoⁱⁱ into celebrity chefs and TV celebrities. Many studies have examined the appreciation of Italian food in the UK and the ‘contamination’ of Italian recipes by well-known British chefs, like Jamie Oliver, to adapt Italian cuisine to British tastes (Rossato 2015; Adami 2017), but very few scholars have focused on the positive or negative impact that combining Italian culinary culture with the hybrid English language used by some Italian chefs can have on British audiences in some contemporary TV shows in the UK.ⁱⁱⁱ This article uses the Italian celebrity chef Gennaro (Gino) D’Acampo to illustrate these issues.

In the entire British TV panorama, there is no Italian chef as famous as Gino D’Acampo. In fact, after Gordon Ramsay and Jamie Oliver, Gino is the most famous chef in the UK. Born in Torre del Greco, in the metropolitan area of Naples, on the slopes of Vesuvius, on July 17th, 1976. D’Acampo moved to England in 1995, at the age of nineteen, and opened his first traditional Italian restaurant in London when he was twenty-one. He currently lives in Elstree, Hertfordshire, with his wife Jessica Stellina Morrison, whom he married in 2002, and their

three children. He owns more than fifty restaurants in principal English cities. Gino made his ITV debut in 2004 as a judge in the cooking program *Too Many Cooks* and was such a hit that thus far that he co-directed more than ten TV shows on ITV, including his best-known program *This Morning* (2009—), where he is the regular chef. In January 2018, Gino also cooked for Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall in the ITV television studios after the royal couple had been invited to take part in the show's thirtieth anniversary celebrations. Gino prepared a main course of beef stew with onions and Taggiasca olives; His Highness asked for seconds. Additionally, Gino D'Acampo is definitely more famous in the UK than in his native country. In June 2020, in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, he debuted on Italian television with the program *Restaurant Swap*. This was immediately followed by three other shows: *Gordon, Gino & Fred: Amici miei* (known in England as *Gordon, Gino & Fred: Road Trip*) featuring Gordon Ramsey and Fred Sirieix, *Gino cerca chef* (Gino Looks for a Chef), also with Sirieix, and *Fuori Menu* (Off the Menu), with the Italo-American baker Damiano Carrara. As soon as his first TV show aired in Italy, Gino was interviewed by journalist Roberta Damiata for the Italian newspaper *Il Giornale*. When asked what British people like of about his dishes, Gino answered:

“La semplicità, perché prima ancora che io iniziassi a fare televisione, una ventina di anni fa, molti piatti italiani venivano proposti in maniera molto complicata, come d'altronde sta succedendo anche oggi. Io invece sono arrivato e ho ricordato cosa significa fare uno spaghetti con le vongole, una bella bruschetta con il pane tostato bene, l'aglio e il basilico fresco. Ho proposto una cosa semplice e buonissima come possono essere i calamari fritti. Sono andato lì per dire: ‘Voi conoscete tutte queste cose complicate che questi super chef vi propongono, ma non dimenticate che la cucina italiana di base è una cucina colorata, semplice e con tanto sapore’ e lì è stata secondo me la mia mossa vincente.”^{iv} (Damiata 2020, online)

It is the colourfulness, simplicity, and richness in flavour of Italian cuisine (Dore 2019) that, arguably, Gino also tries to reproduce this linguistically in his shows and what ultimately contributes to his personal success. A good dose of intentionally sticking to the stereotype of the Italian people unable to cope with English pronunciation, which Wall defines as D'Acampo's "tactical performance of authenticity" (2018, 3) carries undeniable humorous effects. In addition to his stereotypical linguistic attitudes, Gino's strong Italian accent, arguably appeals to code-switching practices and have been shaping his communication skills, also supported by the fact that, according to recent surveys, the Italian language is perceived as the most attractive among the European languages (I.a., Barr 2019; Manning 2020).

2. A matter of accent

Gino's Italian accent is typically Neapolitan, whose phonetic and phonological characteristics are sometimes transferred in his English 'performances'. Even for the loud pitch of its speakers' voices and peculiar prosodic features,^v the Neapolitan accent can be variously and stereotypically associated "with the world of criminality" (Valleriani 2020, 371) or with "comic function[s]" (Dore 2020a, online). It is exactly this "comic function" that Gino exploits the most when he hosts a TV show in the UK. Although, as noted above, some characteristics of his strong Neapolitan accent are perfectly distinguishable to an Italian ear, even when he speaks English,^{vi} the British generally consider Gino's foreign accent Italian intelligible.^{vii} Nevertheless, when recurring to the Neapolitan dialect and its characteristic lexical features, with humorous purposes most of the time, Gino sometimes translates his statements into English in order to make his co-hosts and audience laugh. One of the most difficult phonetic peculiarities of Standard British English that a foreign learner must cope with is its complex vowel system composed of twelve monophthongs and eight diphthongs (see Table 1 below). The Italian vowel system is formed by only seven sounds, to which three extra sounds are normally added in Neapolitan: the shwa sound /ə/ also typical of English and the two semi-

vowel sounds /j/ and /w/ are often used as full vowel sounds in Neapolitan Italian and Southern accents in general. A comparison between the English, Italian, and Neapolitan vowel systems is presented in Table 1 below:

Standard BrEng vowel system	Standard Italian vowel system^{viii}	Neapolitan vowel system^{ix}
Short monophthongs: /æ, ʌ, e, ə, ɪ, ʊ/ Long monophthongs: /i:, u:, ɔ:, ɜ:, ɑ:/ Diphthongs: /eɪ, aɪ, ɔɪ, aʊ, əʊ, ɪə, ʊə/	/a, e, ɛ, i, o, ɔ, u/	/a, e, ɛ, ə, i, o, ɔ, u, j, w/

Table 1. Comparison of Standard British English, Standard Italian, and Neapolitan vowel systems.

Unlike the Standard Italian pronunciation, the Neapolitan accent has a shwa sound when unstressed <e> and <o> are present, thus resembling the Standard British English vowel system to some extent. This, however, does not seem to help Gino with his English pronunciation. Although he has a bilingual wife and has lived in the UK for more than twenty-five years, Gino has never lost his strong Italian accented speech, at least when he works and performs on TV. This is likely because it is one of the main reasons for his success, that his cuisine and accent proceed at the same pace. It is as if losing his Italian accent would mean betraying his origins and would ultimately clash with his way of cooking traditional Italian dishes. As hinted above, Gino’s struggle with English phonetics and phonology results in comedic effects that, despite

lowering the intelligibility of his assertions, catch the audience's attention and provoke laughter. One of his most famous 'phonetic accidents' is with pairings such as 'beach/bitch' and 'sheet/shit', given that the phonemes /i:/ and /ɪ/ are not distinctive in Italian, where the close front monophthong /i/ represents the only possible pronunciation of the grapheme <i>. Thus, when asked to describe a pear recipe by his co-hosts Holly Willoughby and Philip Schofield on October 30th, 2017,^x Gino begins explaining the preparation of his dish by suggesting "prepare yourself a tray with a little bit of parchment *sheet*", this latter pronounced as [ʃɪt], instead of /ʃi:t/. Holly and Philip immediately start laughing and Gino kindly rebukes them, making them understand that he knows what he mispronounced: "Stay with me, okay, and this is gonna be shit all the way". From a pragmatic viewpoint, this utterance shows that the Italian chef knows, at least theoretically, that there is a phonetic difference between 'sheet' and 'shit', since this time he inserted the lexeme *shit* in an appropriate communicative context, even if he may not manage to pronounce it correctly in practice. The gag goes on with Gino asking his English co-hosts if there is another word he can use and Philip replies, "A sheet, just a sheet. Just say it correctly". Of course, Gino could have avoided this funny episode by calling the parchment sheet 'parchment paper', but perhaps decided to go on with the gag on purpose, as from that moment on he began to pronounce sheet with a very exaggerated elongation of the [i:]^{*} sound, as if to say "I get it now". A very similar comical misunderstanding occurred on November 17th, 2017^{xi}, when Philip commented on the fact that Gino "play(s) occasionally with the English language by accident". In that episode of *This Morning*, Holly and Philip show a video about the well-known Italian isle of Capri, with Gino's description as voiceover. During the description, in addition to other singular pronunciations, the Italian chef says, "this ragged costal region with narrow wild *beaches*", mispronouncing the word 'beaches' as [ˈbɪtʃɪz], instead of /ˈbi:tʃɪz/. Back in the studio, Gino rhetorically asks "Did I say that?", alluding to the fact that an English audience may think he was referring to "a spiteful, unpleasant, or disliked

woman” (*OED*, n. 2) instead of “a pebbly or sandy shore, especially by the sea between high- and low-water marks” (*OED*, n.). What is worth noting, moreover, is the fact that Philip asserts, probably ironically, that Gino plays with English accidentally, as if his English mispronunciations were unintentional. Gino replies that he hates doing voiceovers even in his native language and that he feels stressed when somebody asks him to do one, so it is absolutely normal that he commits mistakes in English. This answer actually prolongs the effects of Philip’s pun and yet produces intended ambiguity: did Gino mispronounce ‘beaches’ on purpose or because he balked in the face of an unfamiliar task?

Lastly, other minimal pairs that Gino confused, this time not concerning the contrast between the English and Italian vowel system, made his co-presenters laugh at ‘nibble/nipple’ and ‘third/turd’, again creating a funny misunderstanding surrounding the tabooed word of the pairs, in these cases ‘nipple’ and ‘turd’.^{xii} While showing some fanciful starters to match with a cocktail prior to a barbecue, the chef tells Holly, “You want to serve a little *nipple*, you know, before the drink ... that is fantastic!”. Of course, Holly and Philip burst out laughing about Gino’s confusing the voiceless and voiced bilabial plosive sounds /p/ and /b/. To Gino’s question “What you laughing at?”, Philip answers with “Just a little nibble, yeah?”, thus unconsciously adopting a Second Language Acquisition or in other words, a corrective feedback technique known as recast.^{xiii} It must be noted, however, that humor is conveyed and reinforced by the fact that Gino’s mistakes usually fit the sentence they are inserted in syntactically, albeit not semantically. This is the case with the sentence, “Usually what I do, I put a *turd* of the cannellini”, where the phonetic confusion between the alveolar plosive /t/ and the dental fricative /θ/ of ‘third’, absent in the Italian consonant sound system, provokes Philip’s and the audience’s guffaws. Generally, after the indefinite article ‘a’, a noun is expected. Both the vulgar word ‘turd’ and the substantivized ordinal number ‘third’

syntactically fit the sentence, although ‘turd’ betrays the semantic expectancy of the audience and generates unintended humour.

Gino is definitely aware of his accent and of the fact that it generates comedic effects in listeners. For this reason, he sometimes ‘corrects’ British people when they pronounce Italian words, as seen in the next section of this paper, or even English words. For instance, when Holly and Philip pronounce the cluster <sch> in the Italian word ‘bruschetta’, as the British do with the postalveolar fricative /ʃ/ instead of the cluster /sk/, Gino comments: “I don’t go to a, you know, a restaurant and say: ‘Can I have Fisk and Chips?’ You know, I pronounce it properly”.^{xiv} This is definitely an intentionally provocative statement by a man who often does not pronounce English words properly. Moreover, the Italian chef sometimes behaves like a defender of the ‘proper’ Southern pronunciation of English. For example, in 2020, Gino began to host the game show *Family Fortunes*, being the first non-native English speaker to do so. In one episode, a Northern family, the Fosters, competed against the Phillips, a family from the South. When Gino asked one of the contestants, Lewis Foster, to “Name something you hate being inside of when it breaks down”,^{xv} the man answered “The bus”, replacing the southern sound /ʌ/ with the close back vowel /ʊ/ in ‘bus’ that characterises the north/south divide. Gino then ironically asked, “Why do you say ‘a bus’ [bʊs] when it is ‘a bus’ [bʌs]? [...] It’s ‘a bus’ [bʊs]? Oh, up north, yeah...”. Gino’s comments are clearly all quite ironic because he knows his own pronunciation is far from native-like and he makes ironic comments that contribute to raising his popularity.

3. Code-switching and code-alternation

The effects of code-switching have been studied extensively in the field of Second Language Acquisition with reference to the consequences produced by the L1 positive or negative transfer (see , among others, Lee 2010; Kolocsa 2014, 139-170; Memory et al. 2018). Less attention, however, has been devoted to their implications in conveying humour in AV

products (Schmid 2005; Corrius and Zabalbeascoa 2019; Dore 2020b). It is worth considering that, in Fagan’s words, “the humour of code-switching works through the simultaneous experience of nonsense and sense... Most people are accustomed to language operating in particular patterns, systems, or codes. When this system is suddenly disrupted, there is a loss of order or sense” (Fagan 2010, 29). Unlike the examples analyzed above, where a certain degree of phonological and semantic predictability was required by Gino’s audience and co-presenters, in the case of code-switching, what is predictable is the linguistic code itself. The audience expects English to be there, but Gino inserts words, phrases or entire sentences in Italian, rarely providing an English equivalent later on. When the code is changed, even for the space of utterance of a single word, the audience perceives what Fagan calls a system disruption. As Stephen Schmid has highlighted, the history of English-Italian code-switching has always produced comic effects in literature (2005, 129), and this is true in the case of Gino’s outbursts. Although the British audience may not understand what Gino actually says when he switches to Italian, his exaggerated stereotypical gestures and his change in intonation and tone of voice clearly indicate whether he is actually angry or not. It must be noted, as the following examples demonstrate, that Gino’s code-switching often occurs when he is emotional^{xvi} or angry with some of his co-hosts who want to change his traditional Italian recipes by adding ingredients familiar to English cuisine. In this sense, his resorting to the Italian language is an attempt at a non-hybridization of the two culinary cultures.

One of the most iconic episodes of *This Morning* occurred during its 2018 season and concerned the preparation of a classic Bolognese. The presenter, singer and actress Rochelle Humes confesses that she always adds mushrooms and sour cream to the Italian Bolognese and adds “anything with mince” in general. Gino’s reaction leaves both Rochelle and Philip shocked at first, because they have no idea what he is saying^{xvii}, “Che schifo! Che schifo! Cioè, tu hai preso una ricetta che mia nonna ha fatto trent’anni fa e ci vai a mettere u’ cazzi ‘e sour

cream sopra”.^{xviii} Then he adds: “This is what is wrong with this country” and both Rochelle and Philip start laughing. The mixture between Italian and Neapolitan dialect, especially evident in the pronunciation of the cluster <sch> as [ʃk] instead of /sk/ and in the phrase “u’ cazzi ‘e”, instead of “il/la cazzo di”, creates the system disruption and for a few seconds, until Gino reverts to English, both Rochelle and Philip do not know what to do or say because they do not understand a single word except perhaps the English loanword ‘sour cream’ which is, however, decontextualised to their ears. The 356 YouTube users’ comments about this video show that both Italian and English people agree that extremely traditional recipes are untouchable, and that non-hybridization is recommendable in such contexts as cuisine. If, on the one hand, some Italian users commented with “Gino, every Italian cursed at your place, don’t worry” or “Thank you Gino, from the whole of Italy” (my translations)^{xix}, English people, on the other hand, supported Gino’s outburst the same way, with such comments as “It was pretty mean of her to try to cook the Bolognese in her sucky ways. It’s like I invite over a Japanese chef to teach me sushi and in a moment I stop him and I say ‘In my sushi I add HAM, IT’S GOOD’” or “He knows what he did!”, yet also complaining that it would have been even more fun if an English translation had been provided.

Although in most cases, Gino’s code-mixing seems to be aimed at making his audience laugh, but sometimes there is no humorous intent behind the chef’s resorting to code-mixing, as if to present traditional Italian recipes that must remain Italian, with no English translation or the main ingredients risk being altered.^{xx} This is the case of the well-known recipe for *boscaiola* pasta which is typically prepared with mushrooms and sausages. Gino prepared this recipe with porcini mushrooms and Italian sausages. When asked by Holly and Philip about the name of the recipe,^{xxi} he answered in Italian with “Tagliatelle con salsicce e porcini”, explaining that a fresh pasta such as tagliatelle and fettuccine must be pronounced correctly with a final /e/ sound, not with /i/ as the British do.^{xxii} He then went on to explain the difference

between Italian and English sausages in terms of ingredients, yet fell into a series of intended puns and double entendres that made the three presenters laugh. Again, code-switching signals, on a linguistic level, signify those moments when the Italian and English cultures must remain separate for Gino, while at the same time creating cultural bridges that unify both cultures and make the respective recipes mutually borrowed without alterations. In fact, each time one of his co-hosts suggests adapting an Italian recipe by adding ingredients very much loved by English people, Gino requires them to “stick to the plan”, commenting that he would never change British national recipes such as shepherd’s pie, bangers and mash or toad in the hole. In this sense, the most iconic episode, which however does not imply code-switching at all, occurred on May 18th, 2010,^{xxiii} when Holly, after tasting Gino’s version of mac and cheese, says, “Do you know? If you add, like, ham in it, it’s closer to a British carbonara”. Philip, embarrassed, immediately starts to mumble “Oh no”, and Gino, after carefully thinking about how to replicate the conditional structure Holly had just used, answers: “If my grandmother had wheels, she should’ve been a bike... It doesn’t make any sense what you say”. At that very moment, Holly and Philip drop their forks and collapse to the ground in a fit of laughter.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of some of Gino D’Acampo’s funniest moments on English TV illustrate how the chef exploits his Italian accent and code-switching as a kind of bridge across Italian and British cultures. His steadfast belief that traditional Italian recipes cannot be hybridized with English culinary habits offers fertile ground for the study of linguistic hybridization that occurs each time he tries to make his accent and lexical choices intelligible to an English audience. Such hybridization, arguably, occurs when the phonetics or phonological traits of the Italian language interfere with Gino’s macaronic pronunciation and when code-mixing techniques aim to catch his audience’s attention, especially in resorting to humour and deliberately building up his stereotyped Italian character to make his audience and co-hosts laugh.

Further research would be needed, especially regarding Gino's linguistic behaviour on the Italian TV shows he has been hosting these last few years. In fact, in such Italian TV programs as *Restaurant Swap*, *Gino cerca chef* and *Fuori menu*, hybridization occurs both on a culinary and a linguistic level, given the fact that not only does the chef feel superior to his guests from the standpoint of culinary knowledge, but also from a linguistic standpoint. As a matter of fact, on the Italian TV shows he introduces, his guests are Italian, speaking the same L1 he does, and generally have no basic knowledge of English. Within this framework, Gino even suggests they hybridize and adapt some Italian recipes to English tastes, such as overcooking pasta, if they want to win the competition and obtain a contract as a chef in one of his UK restaurants. In such a context, Gino D'Acampo confidently and constantly adds loanwords from English, as if to show off, in order to make his guests understand that hybridization must occur on multiple levels if they want to be successful Italian cooks in England.

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THE REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE IN PIRANDELLO AND ELIOT'S MYTH WRITINGS

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Abstract

The paper considers the representation of females in Luigi Pirandello's mythological trilogy and Thomas Stearn Eliot's *Waste Land*. The juxtaposition of such disparate personalities and works would not be justified if there were no deep-seated link between them. The validity of this comparative approach is based on analysing the affinities between Eliot and Pirandello, which helps to further illuminate both aspects of their work despite any mutual contact or influence. The comparative analysis shows that in both authors, female figures appear linked to the different ways the authors approach myth. Pirandello's women are the *mulier fortis*, the Earth Mother who gives life and presides over the process of rebirth. These female figures are profoundly different but have the generating force of life's rebirth and natural cycle in common. In Eliot's work, women are always figures linked to contemporary society, "historical" figures usually sterile and morally degraded. Worthy figures of the Waste Land, whose rebirth is possible only at the end of the journey.

Keywords: Pirandello, mythical trilogy, Eliot, The Waste Land, women, myth.

Introduction

Sanguineti's suggestion comparing Eliot's Madame Sosostriis to Pirandello's Madame Pace^{xxiv} inspired me to look for further correlations between the female figures in the two authors. Here, I will be focusing, in particular, on those females whose background is the mythical structure on which the works we take into account are based.

At his career end, Pirandello inscribes his writing in the sphere of myth for the recovery of archetypes, the world of nature as the supreme value, and primal innocence. The "myths" are born with this perspective: *La nuova colonia*, *Lazzaro*, and *I giganti della montagna* are three plays that Pirandello wrote to represent universal matters about nature, faith and art. Join them *La favola del figlio cambiato*, a one-act play that will serve as a representational metatext

within *I giganti della montagna*. In these works, Pirandello tends to compare contemporary life with the archetypes of human action; he identifies myth as a form of knowledge “other” than rational knowledge, in which a particular worldview is realised that tends toward the recovery of primal innocence. We find the same comparison between the absoluteness of myth and the decadence of Western civilisation in Eliot’s *Waste Land*. In his introductory note to the famous poem, the poet himself recalls the anthropological studies on ancient rites and myths from which he drew inspiration. Woven on a warp of mythic valences and legends, *The Waste Land* develops the eternal myth of life, death and rebirth to which contemporary society manages to oppose only sterility, death and desolation.

Despite the diversity of genres, these works are taken as an inter-literary typology that uses mythical language as a modernist feature. They are not compensatory myths but forms of tragic awareness of the problems posed by historical development in modern times^{xxv}. In the explicit programmatic intention of the standard definition, what assimilates them is the opening to the myth and the irruption of the archetypal figures in the collective psyche theatrical space.

In Pirandello’s mythical trilogy, female characters with strong personalities express the great energy possessed by women. Pirandello’s women have the ability to fight, which is lacking in men. Female figures are dynamic and energetic, and their powerful nature stands out the more in contrast to men, who are primarily cowardly, petty and patiently resigned to their defeat. Pirandello’s myths realise in the poetic transfiguration of an archetype of ethical values as opposed to the negative values of the present. La Spera, Sara and Ilse, the three main characters in the three different works, bear positive values linked to Mediterranean mythology and motherhood as a symbol of primordial vitalism. We find the recognition of the mother as a positive element: giver of life and initiator of the moral palingenesis of contemporary man, who demystifies the political ideals of the woman of that time^{xxvi}. La Spera, for example, places a glaring refusal to these disvalues, an expression of femininity brought back to its most

authentic inclination: to be a mother, since the “miracle” of milk episode which, in the prologue, started flowing again from her breast five months after childbirth.

1. Women and mothers.

The first Pirandello myth writing, *La Nuova Colonia* (1928), deals with a group of outcasts and a prostitute. They decide to rebuild a community on a nearby deserted island, once a prison, breaking away from the society which had marginalised them. In the piece, the drama of *La Spera* is intertwined with the social drama, a figure of a lost woman who becomes a figure of maternity. After social degeneration and prostitution, she rises above the shocks and contradictions, pointing the way to a more authentic world of values. She represents the only possible vehicle for the continuity of life and the mutation of the world. According to Tessari^{xxvii}, *La Spera* is a character built on the complexity of motifs that form a new personality. She expresses her freedom in maternal love and aspiration to antithetical laws to those who condemned her as a prostitute. She was a prostitute but is now a mother who breaks the social conditioning rules and attempts a liberating reversal and the foundation of a new world. Her maternity reveals that she has retained her maternal vocation, even in prostitution. On the island, *La Spera* is the only woman who unavoidably rekindles the desires and envy of other men. Her companion, Currao, is the head of the community and is unwilling to share his woman with the others. Thus, the community is undermined by the problem of the woman's ownership, who lives at the service of all in absolute purity. She is a positive figure, ready to sacrifice herself for others, but, being the only woman on the island, she is a different woman. The more desired, the sooner she was despised. A substantial disparity and dissatisfaction can start in the relationship between man and woman, favouring the woman who finds herself in a privileged position over the rest of the men, causing the involuntary push to revolt. As the only woman in the community, *La Spera* hasn't changed into a servant woman but a queen woman.

The situation in which she places herself in the new colony, refusing the condition of a prostitute, becomes the real reason for the failure of the utopia. The males on the island do not welcome her new role and point this out by mocking her and Currao with irony as the new “queen” and “king”:

“Quanterba: – è diventata per tutti la regina!

Trentuno: – La regina e la santa!

Papìa: Col suo bambino –

Crocco. – e il suo re!”^{xxviii}

She imposes a law reminiscent of matriarchy, in which the woman freely chooses her partner and regulates the community’s fate. Her denial of sexual servitude affirms women’s free participation in community work. She refuses, until the end, to retake the old role, into which men would like to reintroduce her. The new colonists do not accept the new rules; they view them as a degraded form of the domination of women over men and attempt to restore the laws of patriarchy and the vices of society. Society tends to eliminate those who place themselves outside the community in a position of negation and frontal opposition. La Spera, branded as a prostitute, has fled with the other outcasts of society and is excluded when the old social form is restored on the island. She refuses to recognise it and reintegrate herself into her previous role, but she returns to her former self with the arrival of the other women. The colonists no longer regard her as “a queen”, albeit mocked, but now they insult her with vulgar terms.

“La Spera, con l’arrivo delle altre donne, torna ad essere considerata quella di prima.

Osso-di-Seppia. Ne abbiamo tante ora di donne!

Papìa. E tu rideventi quella di prima!

Crocco. Sgualdrina! Sudiciona!

Osso-di-Seppia (*sputando*). Pùh! Lavati la faccia!

Filaccione. Pùh!”^{xxxix}

Like the other outcasts, La Spera is “branded” by society. The possession of women is indeed the foundation of authority. Still, beneath the conflict over the control of La Spera, there is an unspoken common purpose among all men: dominating women and making them pure instruments of pleasure and satisfaction of desire. La Spera is the woman who seeks self-redemption in her rejection of sexual servitude and motherhood. On the island, she takes on a new dimension. She no longer recalls the myth of the offended Medea who even kills her children, but the mother who rebels by unleashing the telluric force to destroy everything and save only herself with her son. It is the final epiphany: against men’s extreme attempt to denigrate women even in regenerating motherhood, La Spera invokes the violence of primordial chaos, and an earthquake destroys the island in the final passage. Only a rock, where La Spera took refuge with her child, remains. Alone, the mother’s figure, with the child in her arms, emerges from the waters where all the symbols of constituted society have sunk.

“La Spera. Trema la terra! La terra! La terra!

E la terra veramente, come se il tremore del frenetico disperato abbraccio della madre si propagasse a lei, si mette a tremare. Il grido di terrore della folla con l'esclamazione “La terra! La terra! è ingoiato spaventosamente dal mare in cui l'isola sprofonda. Solo il punto più alto della prominenza rocciosa, dove La Spera s'è rifugiata col bambino, emerge come uno scoglio.”^{xxx}

The Mediterranean mythology of the woman maintains that she is the bearer of positive values, the one who rebels against the failure of utopia and returns it in all its power. In this rejection, the feminine and maternal archetype acquire centrality, with it the protest and revolt

of La Spera against the wiles and seductions of power. The final scene of the myth records the complete triumph of the mother. The island suddenly sinks, reaffirming the futility of the attempt at social renewal and reaffirming the only possibility of rebirth in the myth itself. The island and La Spera establish an unsuspected relationship. There is nothing left but to have recourse to a metahistorical, absolute feeling such as the maternal one. La Spera thus reveals her identification with the mythical telluric force to defend her condition as a mother. The myth of the mother prevails as a nature force, generating a transfiguration from the individual to the cosmic level. In the final image, the woman identifies herself with the rock. She becomes the Earth Mother, understood as life with life and rebirth within herself from being a mother. Her earthquake is a rite of regeneration. Still, at the end, when she remains alone on the rock after a tidal wave has sunk the island, her cry is one of despair for the sad condition of humankind incapable of regeneration, and not of victory, “La Spera. Ah Dio, io qua, sola, con te figlio, sulle acque!”^{xxxix}

In the second myth of his trilogy, *Lazzaro* (1929), Pirandello deals with the theme of faith and the problem of immanence by merging the biblical tale with pagan mythical elements, drawing on universal psychic models of an archetypal matrix. The matter of faith in *Lazzaro* has been widely discussed elsewhere, so instead, it is worth concentrating on the figure of Sara, the wife of Diego Spina, an orthodox and bigoted believer. She abandons her position as a bourgeois wife to live on a farm with another man, exalting her connotation as a telluric priestess. Sara represents Mother Earth and life, but another face of faith too. The panic, a naturalistic instance of pantheistic religion, lived in conscious adherence to the life of nature and the moral law of conscience. Therefore, it is anything but the maternal model that is supported and imposed by the regime on Italian women. Sara is the adulterous mother, who did not choose the silent sacrifice of resignation to male power, but to have other children with another man^{xxxix}. Sara’s rebellion arises from an instinctive reaction to the laws of patriarchy

that took away the joy of raising her children, as we can see in the following passage, where she vindicates her choice to abandon the bourgeois life and become a peasant as denied her the opportunity to raise her children according to her feelings

Sara. ... volevo la gioja, io, la gioja e la salute per i miei figli![...]

Quando a una madre si nega di attendere ai suoi figli, a una madre che vuole la salute per i suoi figli le si dà torto – che vuoi? Ci si dannà! Buttai via tutto e mi feci contadina – contadina qua, sotto il sole, all’aperto!^{xxxiii}

She lives the matriarchal myth in all its components by living with Arcadipane. He respects her freedom as a woman and mother who brings up her children according to a maternal model, and they work together for the prosperity of the small farm where they live. In this way, she implements a model of freedom and autonomy that she hadn’t have in her first home, where she was relegated to the sterile role of a bourgeois wife. She manifests her rebellion in the motives of joy and health linked to the telluric feminine element. Sara thus appears as a character built on a bipolarity of hate and love, hate to destroy social roles and conventions, and love to take natural and divine laws back into herself. She is a force of nature that possesses fertile and irresistible energy to renew men and other things, including maternal and earthly power that links her to the earth and her new and powerful motherhood to the cultivation of the small farm. She is a tellurian priestess characterised by rhetorical connotations that resemble her to Demetra and indicate her symbiosis with nature in a relationship of reciprocal brightness, like in the following passage depicting a red sunset and Sara’s appearing on the scene dressed in black and red as a hell flame: “*Il cielo, a questo punto, col tramonto, è diventatotutto di fiamma. Deodata... E tutta vestita di rosso era, come una vampa dell’inferno!*”^{xxxiv} The character is marked by a bursting desire to live an authentic life,

the life of “flesh”, as the following quote shows: “Sara. Io so che ce l’ha pur data Dio, anche questa di carne, perché la vivessimo qua, in salute e letizia!”^{xxxv} “Fleshly” is an adjective that signifies one of her primary connotations throughout the piece. Moreover, it opens up another clash in *Lazzaro*: the difference between two civilisations, patriarchy and matriarchy, works alongside the contrast between Sara’s carnality and her ex-husband’s spirituality, making their erotic relationship disgusting and unbearable. Thus, Sara is a woman whose love as wife and mother has been offended, and she will regain the role society denied her in nature. At the same time, Arcadipane is the companion in the sign of a natural and solar virility that will direct her towards complete self-realisation. Strong women face the male world and come out on top thanks to their strong personalities.

There is another mother figure in *La favola del figlio cambiato*, a one-act play by Pirandello and used as a metatext for the third myth, *I giganti della montagna*, which is strictly connected to, existing even within it. *La favola del figlio cambiato* belongs to the tradition of popular fairy tales, emphasising the marvellous Sicilian folklore. It originates from ancient Sicilian fables and narrates about witches who fly through the night to change children in their cradles. They replace a mother’s healthy, chubby little son with a sickly, deformed one. The stolen child has been taken to a king’s palace and can be raised and educated in luxury and comfort if she lovingly cares for the deformed child. Despite royal treatment, the changed son feels unhappy and sick in his soul; therefore, he returns to the village where his mother lives. He finally feels the joy of life and stays with his newfound mother. Still, unlike the other women of the myths trilogy, she has a passive role. This passivity will disappear when the mother faces the Prince, her son, recognised thanks to that visceral relationship that ties mothers and sons. Against the rational insistence which asks her to leave her son to the reign, the mother leans on the other mothers, women of the people who believe in the supernatural: they are on her side in a brief moment of solidarity, but in the end, they go to take their place

in society, and the mother remains alone as La Spera, as Sara, as Ilse, the countess protagonist in *I giganti dellamontagna*: four women, one woman, heroines of justice, of the maternal love, of poetry, rejected by the world. In '*I giganti della montagna*', the women's attraction to men is no longer exercised through the mother's figure. Ilse has none of Sara's physical luxuriance, and she is described as a woman who was once beautiful but is now prostrated by decay and discouragement, "Ilse. ... Signore, mi par quasi un sogno o un'altra vita, dopo la morte... Questo mare che abbiamo attraversato... Mi chiamavo allora IlsePaulsen."^{xxxvi} Presented in this passage as a new Venus rising from the waters, Ilse gathers around her a web of symbolic meanings that gravitate around the motif of the womb. Profoundly different from the others, she rejected a poet's love because of her fidelity to her husband. At the same time, she gave the poet false hope to get him to finish the work he was writing for her, *La favola del figlio cambiato*. She had nourished the young man's hopes to make him finish his work and the poet's burning fever attached to her. After his death, his passion for art rekindled in her. She ultimately gives herself to the artist's work, haunted by the beauty of the fable and perhaps even remorse. Under the will of the dead poet living within her, she drags everyone to their ruin to perform the piece. Ilse misleads that men can still understand poetry and insists on proposing a model of universal poetry which sees in the feeling of motherhood its ideal configuration. The highest condition of a woman is what Ilse presents, and it is the central theme of the entire production of Pirandello's myths: maternity as the possibility and capacity to give life. A mad maenad, as Puppa defines her^{xxxvii}, Ilse is a disorganised aggregate of wife and lover, mother and actress, sinner and saint. As we'll see in Eliot's female characters, her personality is made up of fragments. She is and is not all these things simultaneously: mother only in the fable, denying herself as a lover, not giving herself as a wife, actress with no audience, and seems to collect all the characteristics of the previous ones. She is a suffering woman with a tragic and lost aura, a creature searching for herself. She enjoys or suffers in

contradictory moments when one aspect of her personality prevails over the other. She is presented on a cart as a Mediterranean mother and a lover tormented by the poet's visions:

“Tutti gli altri restano a guardar costernatila Contessa che giace sul verde di quel fieno, coi capelli sparsi, color di rame caldo, l'abito dismesso e doloroso, di velo violaceo, scollato, un po' logoro, dalle maniche ampie e lunghe, che facilmente ritraendosi le lasciano scoperte le braccia.”^{xxxviii}

Her entrance is presented as that of a *prima donna*, lying on green hay, with red scattered hair, her dress of purplish veil disused, low-cut, a little threadbare, with wide, long sleeves, which leave her arms uncovered. Still, her state and physique perfectly translate her condition as a nocturnal creature. A thespian, Ilse interprets her being an actress as total devotion to the work of art. She aims to communicate the poet's work to the world. The obsession fascinates the others, too, but it is dangerous and misleading. Possessed by the *Favola del figlio cambiato* Mother's character, she is also the mother of the work, which is the spiritually conceived fruit of her love for the poet. Because of this art fever, Ilse refuses the world and the husband himself:

“Ilse. Ho paura proprio di te, caro, sono di te, lo vuoi capire?”

Il Conte (restando). Di me? Perché?

Ilse. Perché ti conosco. E ti vedo. Mi segui come un mendicante.

Il Conte. Non dovrei starti accanto ?

Ilse. Ma non così! Guardandomi così! Mi sento tutta, non so, come appiccicata; sì, sì, da questa tua mollezza di timidità supplichevole. L'hai negli occhi, nelle mani.

Il Conte (mortificato).Perché ti amo...

Ilse. Grazie caro! Tu hai la specialità di pensarci, sempre nei luoghi dove non dovresti, o quando più mi sento morta. Il meno che posso fare è scapparmene. Mi metterei a gridare come una pazza. Oh! bada che è un'orribile usura la tua.”^{xxxix}

Pirandello uses the same terms used with Sara to indicate a similar situation.^{xi} Ilse is fundamentally a frigid woman who reacts to incomprehension and rejection dialogue by opposing a hypothesis of escape. In this passage, the woman's coldness is thus put in evidence, and it is one of the main traits we will also find in Eliot's descriptions of female (and not female) characters.

The only character Pirandello acknowledges the bliss of sexual satisfaction in *I Giganti della montagna* is Maria Maddalena, called La Dama Rossa, in Crotone's villa: “Cotrone... Ha sempre così, sulle labbra e negli occhi il sorriso del piacere che si prende e che dà.”^{li} As Crotone says in this passage, she takes and gives pure pleasure beyond sin and virtue, without guilt or merit and beyond repentance, in a world of bestial men. A joy that does not pertain to other women, minor figures in the trilogy of myths: for example, Diamante or Deodata are figures of women who have known neither love nor pleasure and have grown old waiting.

2. Lust and sterility: the modern obloquy

Apart from some traits in common with the specific characteristics of Ilse, *Waste Land's* female figures have nothing of the strength and joyful carnality of the Pirandellian woman. Eliot's women are almost always filthy, degraded, or violated, even whether they belong to the same social class or when they belong to the myth. Harlots or despoiled women in *The Waste Land* are always victims, trying to articulate their shattered subjectivity with their fragmented voices. The poet addresses his disgust and irony at women in addition to the meaninglessness and sterility of their relationships. All the women in Eliot's poem are fragmented voices of the

same voice, and the one with the least squalor is the Hyacinths girl, a symbol of innocence and the will to live. Indeed immersed in an erotic context, she represents pure love, unconsummated by the rejection of the man who stands before her, in silence, attracted by other visions than her beauty and by other odours than those of flowers and rain:

“You gave me hyacinths first a year ago;
“They called me the hyacinth girl.”
—Yet when we came back, late, from the Hyacinth garden,
Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not
Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither
Living nor dead, and I knew nothing,
Looking into the heart of light, the silence.^{xlii}

Another woman figure proposed in this first section of the poem is Madame Sosostris, from whom this research began. The clairvoyant is the unconscious bearer of an adequate prediction of the future: her instruments, the tarot, retain their function and have lost their sacredness. However, she is incapable of reading the signs that she discovers, a mind that cannot bring clarity of meaning to the scattered events that the cards present to her. Another figure of a woman degraded in her ability to guess, and this incapacity supports the irony of the passage:

“Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante,
Had a bad cold, nevertheless
She is known to be the wisest woman in Europe,
With a wicked pack of cards. Here, said she,
Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor,
(Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)

Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks,
The lady of situations.
Here is the man with three staves, and here the Wheel,
And here is the one-eyed merchant, and this card,
Which is blank, is something he carries on his back,
Which I am forbidden to see. I do not find
The Hanged Man. Fear death by water.
I see crowds of people, walking round in a ring.^{xliii}

Madame Sosostris is the modern fortune-teller who degrades divination rites to materialistic superstition. Her “wicked pack of cards” is, of course, that of the Marseilles Tarot of Italy in the 1300s. They have enjoyed considerable popularity, mainly since surrealism, because of their symbols. *The Waste Land* has symbols too, which can be traced back to Egyptian culture and ancient fertility rites. In Eliot’s text, it is significant that Madame Sosostris, among the rocky ruins of modern civilisation, does not find the “hanged man” map^{xliv}. Moreover, her tarot cards are one of the central points in the poem, linking all the references to the different themes, including the representation of femininity, the death by water, the walking crowds, the blindness, and the oblivion connoting modern sterility. All of them are connected based on the intertextual or mythical method that Eliot’s writing relies on^{xlv}.

Eliot speaks mainly about the condition of women in the second section of the poem, *A Game of Chess*. It sums up the existential boredom, common to all women, of female passivity in a representation only apparently divided into different scenic locations. The first part includes a neurotic woman who expresses her dissatisfaction in disconnected sentences. She is immersed in a luxurious and sensual scene with mythological references to the great lovers of the past, including Dido, Cleopatra, the great harlot of the Bible, Mary Magdalene, and other

elegant turbulent women. The second part includes Philomela's story, preparing the reader for the pub scene. It exemplifies Eliot's intention to give a compelling and indignant picture of the female condition expressed in the working class with vulgar language. Different women, therefore, have a common destiny of violence and vulgarity despite their distinct historical and social conditions. The poet suggests that brutality, rudeness and indecency are thus phenomena of women's experience beyond all times and social needs. *A Game of Chess* describes the problematic and neurotic eros of the upper-middle class and the banal lust, now becoming routine, of the proletariat. The women who appear are human wrecks, one with shattered nerves and the other with damaged teeth, who witness the character's unstable physical condition. Cultural references surround the first. Any literary splendour embraces the other, except for a vague reference to Ophelia. The initial reference to Cleopatra creates an atmosphere of sensuality. In her literary evolution, the great queen has become one of the prototypes of the aestheticising conception of love, but love in this scene does not exist. Eliot portrays a neurotic woman of the modern world, the heir, in a broken country, of the romantic and decadent woman to whom Cleopatra's heroic love serves as ironic counterpoints. Belladonna, who appeared in the first section's tarot cards, also known as The Lady of Intrigue, is shown in a rich and abundant setting described in great detail, saturated with solid scents and rich colours. The woman is aware of her failure, undone by the neurosis reflected in the equally false and neurotic environment. The richness of the setting is resolved into decorative futility, and the Lady's boudoir is described as mixing disgust and admiration. Everything seems beautiful and expensive, but everything is looked at with disenchanted eyes: the observer looks at and catalogues the numerous objects with indifferent clarity^{xlvi}. The description of the boudoir is all built on the paradigm of luxury, lust and sterility^{xlvii}. It is a still life, a sterile scene in which the woman's presence vanishes. In the beginning, she appears almost like a simple decorative element, an environmental element in the rich profusion of objects that characterises her room.

She is concealed in the shadows, and only her hair is “spread out in fiery points”^{xlviii}; for a while, the description hides her completely and only towards the end does she acquire human consistency. When the woman speaks, we become aware of her neurasthenia, her panic, her sterile attempt to induce her companion, husband-lover, disturbing silent presence, to speak. Even her speeches are just empty shells looking for a meaning that fills them:

“My nerves are bad tonight. Yes, bad. Stay with me....

Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak.

What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?

I never know what you are thinking. Think .”

I think we are in rats’ alley

Where the dead men lost their bones.^{xlix}

Each experience is closed in its solitude. The dialogue between the lady and her companion is not a dialogue but rather a monologue. It expresses the woman’s fears, a neurotic woman who cannot stay with her thoughts. She is spiritually dead. All communication with the world is over, not even her partner responds, and her neurotic words focus on this condition of spiritual death. The man’s thoughts are for her only noise, boredom, something strange and incomprehensible:

“What is that noise?”

The wind under the door.

“What is that noise now? What is the wind doing?”

Nothing again nothing.

“Do you know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember nothing?”

I remember

Those are pearls that were his eyes. ¹

This is why she continues to cling to her alienating way of being, based on mechanical thoughts, worrying only about getting on with daily life. She counts herself among those who survive in a crude, unprincipled and spiritually unelevated manner. From the monologue, one can deduce her sexual frustration and neurosis: not the full passion of Cleopatra or the fierce love of Philomela that will acquire the sweetness of the nightingale's song, but the terror born from rustling, suspicious noises, "footsteps shuffle on the stairs"^{li}, from nothingness, from the wind under the door. Also, from the obsession, the loneliness, and the silence of her surroundings. Her neurosis reflects her situation, the result of her expedients, and what life has become in a world where desire and lust grow without consideration for love and interpersonal relations. Love is considered nothing more than sexual, physical satisfaction and a sterile act of violence.

Eliot wanted to conceal an impression of artificiality and sterile futility in describing the environment and the profusion of objects scattered without a logical order. In this context, the introduction of Philomela appears to be a metaphor to describe a world where love and lust are about to become one. And love, in particular, is nothing but violence exerted on a woman who does not consent or, at best, is indifferent, a mere object for the satisfaction of ephemeral pleasure. Yet, there is still something alive in this woman, which is lost in the woman who is presented in the second part of *A Game of Chess*. Here, a picture of spiritual emptiness is outlined in a speech by some women in a London pub who belong to the last rung of the social ladder. They represent the tragedy hidden in sexual passion when love and any other value are absent. Lil is shown through the speeches of her friend Lou: she is a woman from a simple social background, upset by the desolation of the post-war world, more alienated than the lady in the boudoir. She hadn't been able to protect herself and her marriage, and she violently

suffocated, several times, the life she was carrying in her womb with all the consequences of the brutalisation that such a habit entails. She is a wife weakened by pregnancies and abortions, a body in decay even though it is still young, a woman withered before her time. She is surrounded by the incredible misery and squalor of the environment that is reflected in the women's talk of abortions, teeth and sexual rivalry:

You have them all out, Lil, and get a nice set,
He said, I swear, I can't bear to look at you.
And no more can't I, I said, and think of poor Albert,
He's been in the army four years, he wants a good time,
And if you don't give it him, there's others will, I said.
Oh is there, she said. Something o' that, I said.
Then I'll know who to thank, she said, and give me a straight look. ^{lii}

Lil's story is the story of a wife who looks so old at thirty-one that her husband hardly bears the sight of her. A woman who spent money on abortion pills when Albert had given her to get her teeth fixed. Lou tells Albert and Lil's story confidentially, but she is not believable. She is Lil's rival for the same man. Lil does not even have the nerves that characterise the lady in the previous part of the poem. She is exhausted by poverty and represents the common tragedy to an entire generation of women, prematurely aged wives and mothers who can do nothing but let their husbands take from others what they can no longer give. Lou's attitude as a selfless friend is not convincing. She could well be the one to provide Albert returning from the war "a good time"^{lii}.

The women in this section belong to an unenchanted love, the first, and to a disrupted marriage, the other. Through their characterisation, the two types of predators, Dido and

Cleopatra, and of despoiler, Ophelia and Philomela, are distinguished. Extending this second role to the women of the pub, the allusion to Ophelia would express the denouncement of women reduced as objects of pure sexual pleasure^{liv}, as it will be with the typist, who appears a little later. Pub's girl Lil and the typist are figural representations of urban squalor, deepened in being transported from the environment to the figure and realised in the women in the pub and their dirty talk of abortions and dentures, and in the tired, bored typist and her loveless relationship with the small, spotty employee. Again, two different women, two different types of relationships, the same squalor, but while Lil buys abortion pills, the typist symbolises barren lust, spiritually desolate above all. The typist's scene is set in a women-only flat, underwear strewn about the room, among breakfast remains. Everything suggests the uprooted, mechanical life of the young woman from the petty bourgeoisie:

The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.
Out of the window perilously spread
Her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays,
On the divan are piled (at night her bed)
Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays. ^{lv}

In the modern world, love is sterile, and the "incident" between the young typist and the pimply young man describes a love scene that love is not at all. She undergoes seduction by the clerk without reacting or participating, and the final comment evidences her feeling of indifference:

She turns and looks a moment in the glass,
Hardly aware of her departed lover;
Her brain allows one half-formed thought to pass:
"Well, now that's done: and I'm glad it's over."

When lovely woman stoops to folly and
Paces about her room again, alone,
She smooths her hair with automatic hand,
And puts a record on the gramophone. ^{lvi}

As sordid and mechanical as the typist and the clerk's relationship, the girl's comment does not convey despair but rather indifference, perhaps melancholy, underlined by the music she plays. The "victim" seems almost unaware of what has happened, and she only realises that the senseless episode is finally over. After the typist, other female figures appear in the third session of the poem. They are the legendary nymphs of the Thames, though degraded to modern prostitutes, and include scenes of ancient and contemporary seduction that are equally bleak. The daughters of the Thames know their decay; they are aware of their desperate situation and have trampled their hearts by losing respect for themselves. They sit among the reeds and expect nothing. The scene between the clerk and the typist was marked by routine and banality. Here, we find indifference and horror.

As seen, there are no traits in common between the women described by Eliot and those presented by Pirandello. Despite her feverish delirium, Ilse possesses a strength that is entirely absent from Eliot's page in terms of the character of the women. They are almost always devoted to an infertile love, degraded, undone in body and soul. These have nothing of La Spera's strong personality or Sara's sunshine and carnality. On the contrary, in Eliot, the flesh and sexual life are associated with the mouse's metaphorical sphere and provoke repulsion and disgust. The comparative analysis has shown that, in both authors, female figures appear linked to the different ways the authors approach myth. Pirandello's women are the *mulier fortis* or Earth Mother, who gives life and presides over the process of rebirth. Female figures who are profoundly different but have, in common, the generating force of the resurgence and natural

cycle of life. In Eliot's work, women are always figures linked to contemporary society, "historical" figures to which the great mythological women act as an ironic counterpoint. Usually sterile and morally degraded, they cannot prelude to any renewal, worthy figures of the *Waste Land* whose rebirth is possible only at the journey's end, under the onomatopoeic rain expresses in the poem last verses:

Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.

Shantih shantih shantih^{lvii}

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A PERMANENT CHRISTMAS OF PANDORA'S BOXES

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The social history of changing environments reflects new technologies. These technologies and media^{lviii} have always been focused on providing services and increasing our convenience. Because there is no natural physical response to media expanding the physical body and mental capabilities people have to make a special effort to enjoy the comfort of new media creating new environments. Adapting to new media changes both the person and the environment.

Digital technologies have no external, experiential reality. New technologies and their consequences are usually obscured in the actual environment. Nevertheless, it is possible to become aware of their effects. These effects have their natural progression, which McLuhan describes with his tetrads.^{lix} This text - after some initial theoretical remarks - examines whether it is possible to apply and update these tetrads 45 years after they were published.

New technological environments, when they eventually become retrospectively visible^{lx}, are easily linked to new media or new extensions of man. In the 20th century, for example, the effects on the new transportation medium, the automobile, had become visible through the change the environment by centralizing services, shopping malls, entertainment and educational facilities while dispersing accommodation to the suburbs; the automobile reduced the importance of distance.^{lxi}

Progress or degradation?

The recent medium, the digital technology of the Internet can be viewed either as a permanent Christmas or as a continuous gift of Pandora's boxes. 2,500 years ago, a refusal of a new technology (of the alphabet), was depicted in the Phaedrus, and recently the refusal of a

new technology (of the Internet) is echoed in the same words by contemporary teachers educated in the era of prevailing alphabet literacy.^{lxii} Both Socrates and contemporary teachers were refusing new technologies from the point of view of the previous ones, pre-literacy or literacy. “The new medium is never considered an art form, but only a degradation of the older form.”^{lxiii}

Comparing and dismissing pre-reading literacy and alphabet technology, or alphabet technology and the digital medium of the non-linear Internet, is like comparing the automobile and the horse-drawn carriage, but from the perspective of the carter, who must have seen the automobile as a degradation of the horse-drawn carriage. The general effects of alphabet literacy and the technology of printed texts are well known^{lxiv}. Specifically, a more recent effect of the home office and distance learning is the closure of high streets. Town centers are seriously considering changing to areas used for sport, leisure and recreation. Instead of going to the countryside at weekends, we will be making day trips to the leisure areas of town centers for physical activities and entertainment.

Digital environments have abolished the need for physical presence at company offices. Other implications of the digital environment are also far-reaching. Services provided by digital technologies, such as online shopping and instant delivery, are leading to shopping center closures. The ‘Deadmalls’ web app shows which malls have closed by state. The malls of the future will be less designed for retail shopping and more for lifestyle and entertainment with playgrounds, restaurants and cinemas. There is an obvious parallel of American shopping malls and high streets and town centers in Europe which perform the same functions and therefore have the same future. The changes in the man-made environment described above are physical and visible. However, digital technologies that have changed the functions of cities also affect behavior. The man walking alone and talking to himself 30 years ago was either

certifiable or praying. Today, the younger silent pedestrian without a smartphone is an exception.

At the moment of application of any new technology, its consequences are almost never obvious. Consider, for example, the social status of popular actresses, who are elevated by film technology to new royalty, only to be gradually replaced by Internet influencers who are the visual products and servomechanisms of digital technology. We refer to them as servomechanisms because they need to adapt their appearance, behavior and lifestyle to a specific medium. Historically, members of royal families have been forced to find a new slot as charity workers and with TV as unaccredited fashion models.

One only becomes aware of the technology and the environment it has created when new technology updates or replaces the previous one. For example, the chemical development of photographs seems cumbersome today, although it was considered a magical process until the 1950s. Polaroid photography also seemed fast and magical until about 1999. Today, we are impressed by a camera phone that wirelessly sends the resulting image anywhere in the world or to an instant-print kiosk making us aware of the complex and impractical photographic technologies of the past. Digital photography eliminates printing on photographic paper and moves the printing process into the realm of art. It is proof that printed photography was only a phase, an intermediate step forced by contemporary technology, for which paper was the basic material for communication. We don't yet recognize the camera phone as an obsolete technology, although for the recent smartphone, camera and phone services are now just two of many other applications.

Priming for perception

People who bought their first computer in their forties and who started using the Internet in their fifties will always have problems with the digital environment and new applications. They have to translate perceptually from the technology of the written word to the technology

of digital media, reading digital media as if they were texts with syntax, using skills acquired through a lifetime of training in lineal literacy. Their resulting confusion and embarrassing mistakes are merely a manifestation of their lack of the cognitive changes imposed on digital natives by new digital technologies, which are different from the cognitive skills imposed by lineal literacy.

The pre-digital generation of lineal literacy has not been trained or conditioned as the app generation has been^{lxv}. For the pre-digital generation, immersion in a non-lineal visually augmented digital world is difficult. When analyzing images in technologically enhanced e-sports environments of video games, we have noted that “The perception of (their) audience had previously been primed to appreciate esports by TV’s dramatic and highly involving dynamic visual translation of physical sports like basketball. Television had intensified the visual sense of its viewers, making the audience ready for new visual media.”^{lxvi} A contemporary environment is always a *ground*^{lxvii} developed by media, technology. Ground comprises all available figures (media) at once. From ground rise out areas of attention, figures, figures are new images or sensations. Ground provides context for media. We are not aware of the potential overall effect of the figure and the ground, such as intensifying the visual perception. This only becomes apparent when we are confronted with new media effects that presuppose, in order to produce the desired results, a new visual sensibility that the pre-digital generation lacks. Millennials have been primed for a different sensibility by the visual and tactile impulses of permanently present screens.

We had believed that the e-sports immersion is a result of an ongoing instantaneous comparison of the viewer’s physical world and its possibilities, as well as their translation into the fantasy world or the environment of the digital world. However, if the translation became too remote from the original physical environment it might appear incomprehensible for the audience. The “original physical environment”^{lxviii} used to be *ground* for utopians and science

fiction writers as well. However, it seems that contemporary visual sense is no longer based on the physical environment, but on a newly acquired and medium-determined visual sensibility that is constantly changing. To be accepted, new artifacts need a ready audience or user who is primed for them. The audience needs a specific sensitivity configuration to accept them, the acceptance will take the form of a thriving market.^{lxix}

Television, with its remote control and frequently changing images, repeatedly exciting our nervous system, has prepared us for the experience of scrolling through smartphone screens, a visual and tactile activity. The excitement and immersion in the action is not driven by content, but by the primitive repetition of optic nerve stimuli through changing screens. It is appealing because it offers unlimited freedom of choice. However, scrolling technology was invented to offer us the freedom to become servomechanisms of the screen. Scrolling is not linear, it has no syntax, it has no story.

Laws of Media

In a public lecture at York University in 1977, McLuhan proposed media laws to govern all new media or technology. As mentioned previously, the consequences of new technologies are almost never obvious at the time of their application, but there is an awareness of their cognitive effects resulting in dramatic physical changes to the man-made environment. People have pointed out the cognitive problems that become apparent when the digital environment is approached as if it were a linear technology based on the written word. McLuhan points out that:

“Any new service environment, such as that created by railways or motor cars or telegraph or radio, deeply modifies the very nature and image of the people who use them. Radical changes of identity happening in very sudden brief intervals of time have proved more deadly and destructive to human values than were wars fought with hardware weapons.”^{lxx}

This text is an attempt to apply McLuhan's laws of media in the current digital environment. His theory based on “tetrads” was developed in the 1980s, forty years ago. Claiming to be a new science, a systemic procedure, a heuristic device,^{lxxi} with no underlying theory based on four questions, tetrads can be applied to any technological object or process, referred to as media, that had or would appear. For McLuhan, a “medium” is any new technology that has changed our environment. People may not be aware of either the environment or the change itself, but they can certainly notice the effects of that change.

For example, with new transportation technologies, the one-room schoolhouse, the little house on the prairie was abolished and students could travel daily to central schools where specialized teachers taught various subjects. Owing it to the technology of the Internet, students can stay in their homes now and the traditional central school is in the same crisis as the little house on the prairie had been. Both, the small school and the central school, are just products of technology changing the environment. However, the educational implications of the changing environment are far-reaching.

McLuhan defines a new technology by asking four questions that are relevant for any medium, any human artifact, because all human artifacts are the product of technology:

1. What does the medium enhance or intensify?
2. What does it render obsolete or displace?
3. What does it retrieve that was previously obsolesced?
4. What does it produce or become when pressed to an extreme?

The important thing about the tetrad is that it makes us aware of the technology/medium and it can predict effects of any new technology before they actually appear in time and experience.^{lxxii}

As an example, McLuhan suggests the clock^{lxxiii}:

1. The clock amplifies work. Until the clock was invented, what we call work was almost impossible to organize.
2. The clock obsolesces leisure.
3. The clock retrieves history as art form by fixed chronology – immeasurable, sequential chronology capable of visual time as measured by the clock.
4. The clock reverses when pushed all the way into the eternal present, a nowness.

A “home – office” tetrad

McLuhan gives example of a break boundary at which the system suddenly changes into another or passes some point of no return in its dynamic processes. “Today the road beyond its break boundary turns cities into highways, and the city ceases to be the center of leisure. In fact, improved roads and transports have reversed the ancient pattern and made cities the center of work and the country the place of leisure and recreation,” wrote McLuhan in 1988.^{lxxiv}

Digital technology creating the home-office workplace is changing the model again by simply removing the need for travel and physical transport. As aforementioned, the recent effect of the new medium is closing high streets and town centers are seriously considering a change to areas used for sport, leisure and recreation. Downtown rental properties are getting cheaper and there is a growing demand for rentals in suburbs and smaller towns. The countryside is once again becoming a center for work and the city a center for leisure.

McLuhan, however, describes only the necessary physical consequences of the new digital medium and emphasizes that “goods are increasingly taking on the character of information”^{lxxv}. Workshops processing information anywhere can now eliminate the need for “better roads and transportation.” The home office industry and its highly visible physical, and potential social and economic impacts make it clear that the man-made environment is a consequence of the new media and any attempts to ignore the new prevailing media and return to the previous pattern will be disruptive and cause chaos.

Analyzing our examples of changes by tetrad, following data can be obtained for the “home office”:

1. The home office will obsolesce personal supervision, daily transport, the city as the center of work, loyalty to the company, dress code, visible hierarchical structure with its privileged office and parking spaces, role models of senior employees.
2. The home office will retrieve or bring back from a distant past the cottage industry, pre-industrial small businesses, innovative activities for the development of social skills within neighborhood, the ancient pattern of the village as center, the return of delivery services, it will retrieve home as a workplace, possibly with a small gym, and a center of family life.
3. A home office, when pushed to its limits, will flip over to a virtual environment with a virtual boss, virtual parties and virtual relationships - supported by food and service delivery.
4. A home office will enhance the importance of the individual, personal responsibility, doing and learning instead of just being somewhere, intimacy of communication.

A tetrad of “online (remote) learning”

Analyzing examples of environmental changes by tetrads in the case of “online learning”, there are the following conclusions:

1. Online learning will enhance learning through pictorials, enhance independence, the ability to apply one's own learning style, increase accessibility to learning and accelerate new applications such as 3D “classrooms”.
2. Online learning will obsolesce face-to-face supervision, centrally controlled classrooms, the concept of role modelling (teacher-student tradition), expensive and privileged education.

3. Online learning will retrieve small independent schools based on remote learning platforms with individual teachers and promote locally organized sports and social activities.
4. Online learning when pushed to its limits will flip over to a 3D environment, students will be disembodied intelligence with virtual teachers, graduates will go on to work in a “home office” perpetuating the virtual environment.

A tetrad of “communication”

Communication is defined very broadly as a remote contact but in this narrow tetrad, it is concerned with visuals versus the alphabet. 3D dashboards or Internet memes are examples of lineal technology of the alphabet being replaced by the digital technology of visuals. When submitted to a tetrad:

1. The digital technology of visuals enhances speed of communication, increases the amount of received information.
2. The communication with visuals obsolesces long words and long sentences, fast reading, books.
3. The communication with visuals retrieves the pictograms from a distant past and accents their emotional and aesthetical values.
4. When pushed to their limits the communication flips over to enhanced reality of symbols, (holographic) 3D objects, e.g. the VW dashboard.

Enhanced reality, with a wearable technology, will create a permanent interface between the physical world and the direct perception of it, effectively obsolescing space and physical distance. People will communicate and function within this service-based reality translated for their comfort. This enhanced reality will be operable, with functional intuitive “controls”. Instead of reading lines of text based on alphabet technology, people will act in storylines; instead of manipulating words, they will manipulate visuals.

Digital technologies that aim to reduce the problem of distance will have unexpected and possibly undesirable consequences. Currently, users compensate for the lack of tactile feedback with increased visual and cognitive activity, which is uncomfortable and challenging. There is a strong demand for technologies that provide tactile comfort^{lxxvi}. People prefer tactile feedback. Haptic interfaces add physical contact to visual and auditory information.

Remote tactile sensing systems are software that can manipulate the virtual reality perceived by most of our senses, a reality that can be touched and felt and therefore mistaken for the real. Virtual reality software will be able to enhance what is sensed, much like the visually enhanced reality of computer games. This software will be limited only by our visual, auditory and tactile imagination. For the current generation, the implications of remote tactile sensing systems are unexpected and perhaps undesirable, but for the next digital generation, who will be primed for a “tactile augmented environment”, they may become part of their “natural” world.

New, updated tetrads

We can now review McLuhan's tetrad and see how he predicted, for example, the effects of the new high-rise housing technology^{lxxvii}.

High-rise Apartment (1988):

1. The technology enhanced solitude and crowding.
2. It obsolesced community.
3. It retrieved catacombs.
4. It flipped over into slum.

Looking at a prefab high-rise apartment 44 years later, in a digital environment, one can update the original McLuhan tetrad from 1988. The differences reflect the effects of new digital media. In updating McLuhan's tetrad, it is clear that the digital communication aspect cannot

be ignored. Our analysis confirms McLuhan's claim that "The new (digital) technology permeates to every layer of our environment, culture and we can study only its effects. Once a new technology comes into a social milieu it cannot cease to permeate that milieu until every institution is saturated."^{xxviii}

High-rise apartment (2021):

1. The technology enhanced the lightness of physical isolation, mental fellowship and independence on the outer world.
2. It obsolesced community, neighbors and nature.
3. It retrieved a cave with fire as a center of community of Alexa, social media, home movies.
4. It reversed into slum, a cell in which are imprisoned by unlimited entertainment.

The difference between McLuhan's and the updated tetrad of high-rise apartments lies in the influence of the digital environment. Digital media and broadband have removed the walls of the prefab apartment and changed the definition of loneliness. "Disembodied intelligence" has become part of the infinite space of virtual, and tactilely augmented, environments of entertainment, education, work, and relationships.

A tetrad of the kitchen (2021)

If one analyzes, for example, the contemporary kitchen, they can obtain the following tetrad:

1. It enhances the speed of cooking with instant meals.
2. It obsolesces the role of a semi-professional family cook, mental fellowship, kitchen as a place of family bonding and a training center.
3. It retrieves the role of a food-gatherer.
4. It flips over into instant meals storage, or a showroom where exotic or elaborate meals are sometimes cooked.

A tetrad of washer and dryer (2021)

1. The technology enhances speed of washing, develops new synthetic materials and living space.
2. It obsolesces public laundrettes, clothes lines in the sun, ironing board. It flips over into obsession with clean clothes, different degrees of dirtiness, perfect visual image.
3. It retrieves the profession of dhobi (the Indian caste of washermen).
4. It flips over into more work - as every labor-saving device is a new and larger form of work in disguise - into obsession with clean clothes, different degrees of dirtiness and more perfect visual image.

More examples of the updated tetrads, “a recipe”

Historical comparison of tetrads of identical artefact helps us raise awareness of the contemporary effects of the digital environment:

A tetrad of a recipe in 1980s

1. The recipe enhanced awareness of ingredients, planning skill, understanding instructions, memory, personal archive.
2. It obsolesced fellowship, physical personal support.
3. It retrieved tradition, self-reliance, historical awareness.
4. It flipped over to a lack of creativity, lowered self-esteem (difficult recipes), chaotic or overconfident choice, loneliness.

The tetrad of a recipe in 2022

1. The recipe enhances memory, imitation skills, self-confidence and it can be physically seen.
2. It obsolesces reading, knowledge of foreign languages, understanding instructions, personal archive, historical continuity.
3. It retrieves the presence of an instructor, a personal guide or a virtual mother.

4. It flips over to a cook becoming a servomechanism, a mere instrument of YouTube, overconfident choice or the necessity of virtual companionship.

Simultaneous information *versus* simultaneous communication

The impact of the digital environment is evident in the conversion of dhobi, the historical Indian caste of washermen, into a digital washerman. We communicate with washers and dryers by giving them instructions on what to do and they respond with sound or text. Similarly, technology is changing the contemporary digital kitchen, where the chef has become a servomechanism delivering ingredients and translating recipes to the displays of food processors.

The updated tetrads seem to have a new common denominator, which is unlimited communication with the man-made environment. This communication, however, is always through software, a tool to which the user must constantly adapt in order to become the perfect instrument serving this digital interface. The more precise the instrument becomes, the more the user turns into an automaton, the more efficiently the man-made environment will function.

The electronic man lives in a world of simultaneous information, McLuhan wrote in the 1980s^{lxxix}, but today, the electronic people live in a world of simultaneous communication. They cook and wash with texts; the pre-digital environment proficient literacy based on longer lineal texts has been reduced to basic functional literacy, to pictorials and short messages imposed on them by the software of the digital environment and their own desire for convenience. New applications, building on previous applications, remove the existing technical language of the interface and replace it with visual elements that are supposed to be intuitive such as a 3D intuitive car dashboard or supposedly more intuitive holographic controls.

A tetrad of the “smart phone”

A tetrad of a smartphone is difficult to define as for the latest smartphone the camera and phone services are just two of many applications. The difficulty is that for the smartphone tetrad each application must be analyzed separately, each one being a different extension of its user. The smartphone as an extension of voice, ear and eye is many things to many people. The smartphone speaks and translates all languages, the smartphone is a universal language. It replaces secretary, mail, alphabet, library and blurs the distinction between written and spoken. It is inevitable that these applications, often in conjunction with social networks, will create unexpected effects that will significantly influence users’ behavior and cognitive functions, significantly contributing to the nature of the digital environment.

A tetrad of the “selfie”

An unexpected effect of the camera function is the selfie phenomenon. A selfie is not a portrait, it is an instant message, no one takes a selfie without immediately checking it out, and without the intention of further public sharing. The photographer taking the selfie becomes a servomechanism governed by specific rules^{lxxx}. A tetrad of selfies might, for example, include the following:

1. Selfie enhances the importance of the background of the photo. Selfie enhances satisfaction, it is an experience transferred into a new medium, and therefore repeatedly “bestows a delightful playback of earlier awareness.”^{lxxxix}

Today, the world is travelled in search of the best background for selfies. In the 19th century, the first portraits did not have a set background. The later sumptuous or romantic historical hand-painted backdrops were provided in photographic studios because the concept of the desired effect of a photograph had changed. The selfie effect of an international influencer cannot be achieved in a photographic studio.

2. The selfie obsolesces traditional amateur landscape and monument photographs, professional portrait photography and hand-written travel diaries.

One of the least profitable photographic genres today is portrait photography, where the sought-after effect of a photographic portrait is not the likeness, but the experience of the subject and the attempt to evoke an emotion in the viewer.

3. The selfie retrieves the permanence of the portrait, the fascination with the self as an aesthetic object, and the travel diary.

In order to bring the old artifact into relation to the new ground, a certain translation or metamorphosis is necessary. The old artifact is brought up to date with the new technology. For example, the digital image backdrops of today's videoconferencing systems flip back to hand-painted studio props.

4. Selfies will flip over into schizophrenic existence on social media platforms and will promote self-harm as proof of one's own existence.

The selfie will eventually apply all the new technologies of visual communication augmented by the above-mentioned three-dimensional relationality and haptic interfaces that blur the distinction between the virtual and the real. The hundreds of friends on social media who ask people to like them today will turn into hundreds of friends on social media who will be offering a tactile relationship.

A smart phone with remote touch control will take the user into a three-dimensional environment where the human body becomes the device. The smart phone will integrate us into an augmented virtual reality whose possibilities will be limited only by our imagination, but it will be a digitally augmented imagination.

From the perspective of the current digital environment, where the smartphone is still physically separated from its owner, its future users would be perceived as unintelligible,

mentally ill people because they would not be constrained by the physical reality of the current digital world. In a new 3D environment that can be entered through a haptic interface, the smartphone user would become omnipotent, except for the dependence on sustenance supplied from the outside world. The imagined would become reality.

Conclusion

The current digital environment is different from the earlier literacy environment, to which we cannot forcibly return. When it comes to visual perception, this education should start with contemporary visual sensitivity, the nature of which we can only infer from the visual effects of the latest memes, videos and films. The problem is that a system of remote tactile perception is likely to create an entirely new augmented tactile experience for which we are not going to be prepared and which may prove irresistible.

The most serious challenge today is therefore to train people to use future technologies that will ignore the limits of current reality. However, this training for the future is complicated by the fact that not only we do not have a standard for current reality, a benchmark against which to measure future 3D augmented environments, but as McLuhan notes that “while making rapid adjustments to changing technologies, (we) expect the educational and political establishments to remain rigidly fixed in the old patterns.”^{lxxxii}

Contemporary education offers qualifications for the historical pre-digital environment. The current digital environment is at the very best translated by educators in terms of pre-digital concepts. The current digital environment will be dealt with in the future and the future 3D augmented environment is largely ignored. McLuhan’s tetrads whose ability to interpret any current media is confirmed by our text could at least raise awareness of the effects of the current technologies that would otherwise remain invisible.

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LOVE AND HATE AMONG ITALIAN MIGRANTS.

THE EXAMPLE OF *THE WINE CELLAR* BY EDWARD BONETTI

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The Wine Cellar (1977) written by Edward Bonetti is a novella dealing with an ostensibly trivial situation: an Italian father and his sons making wine at home in the United States around the time of World War II. But at a metaphorical level the tale's deep social significance lies in the framework this commonplace activity provides for the difficult relationship between a first-generation immigrant and his second-generation sons and the migrant's culture shock that disrupts it. *The Wine Cellar* displays the relationships that Circo Bertocci, the father, develops with his two sons, Anthony and Robert, and how the familial practice of making wine encapsulates their mutual feelings as they fluctuate between "love and hate". Based upon an authority-submission pattern, their relationships show how Bertocci tries to impose his traditions upon his family, while his sons seek to escape his domination. *The Wine Cellar* testifies to how a family tradition such as winemaking can stand as a bridge – or a break – between Italianness and Americanness.

The novella reveals that winemaking is part of the ethnic heritage that the sons wish to break free from while their father clings to the practices that signify his homeland. Even more, Bertocci eventually takes to drinking after his eldest son, Anthony, is killed fighting for the Americans, a sacrifice derived from his allegiance to the United States in its war against Germany and Italy. So Anthony makes the ultimate sacrifice for his new country, the clearest evidence of his patriotism toward American society rather than the Italian-American community in which the father hopes to keep his family and perpetuate his Italianness.

This paper will first reveal how making wine is a traditional activity, a symbolic referent to the Italian heritage and part of the identity of first-generation migrants. As such it can be an expression of inter-generational love, a bridge between fathers and sons. But it can also be understood by the second generation as an infringement on their emancipation and assimilation into their foster society. This is why it may hold "the hate" that the youngsters feel for the maintenance of practices that they see as marginalizing them.

I Wine-making, an Italian tradition

Making wine is a traditional activity in Italy, and Italian migrants imported this practice to the United States when they settled there. *Ciro Bertocci*, the protagonist of *The Wine Cellar*, was no exception. It is part of the Italian and Italian-American daily lifestyle, which is why first-generation migrants cling to this habit. Food in general and wine, its making and drinking, contribute to the socialization system among Italians⁵. As *Simone Cinotto* maintains in *The Italian American Table* (2013) food and beverages are an element of Italianness, and the migrants imported not only the practices but also their *savoir-faire* to America, which explains, for example, the development of Italian vineyards in California, or the expansion of the consumption of wine during Prohibition. Once in the United States, some Italians transformed a domestic activity into a commercial business to meet demand and make money. In the private sphere, wine-making reinforced men's communion and symbolized the unity of the community. As a cultural referent, it helped individuals to socialize, find stability, and structure their relationships.

Wine was said to be healthy and was given to children. It opens the appetite and stands for the love of life, hospitality, friendship⁶. *John Fante* remembers that "Papa's routine with guests never changed. Every caller was invited down into the earthen cellar where four fifty-gallon barrels of wine were stored – a hundred gallons matured, and a hundred in the fermentation process"⁷. Thus, food and drinks are fundamental tools in the socialization system and in the maintenance of Italianness among migrants⁸. In *The Wine Cellar*, Bertocci perpetuates this tradition by offering meals and wine to any guest: "Bertocci had not seen the man [a distant relative] nor heard from him in twenty years. [...] The wine was put out, and along with it, a large flat plate of cheese, meat, oil-cured olives and a fresh loaf of bread..." (146)⁹.

It is even an expression of intimacy between men, as is the case of Bertocci and his sons. On the other hand, Bertocci's unwillingness to socialize with his neighbour is expressed through his failure to offer him wine when he visits (56). Bertocci, a Neapolitan, refuses to welcome his neighbour, a Sicilian, as Italian ruling social patterns of *campanilismo* remain

⁵ Francis Elmi et al, *The Italian Americans. A Multicultural View*, p. 33; Peppino Ortoleva, "Tradition and Abundance. Reflections on Italian-American Foodways", *Altreitalie*, Jan/june 1992, 7, p. 53-70.

⁶ See R De Capite, *The Coming of Fabrizio*, p. 86;

⁷ John Fante, *The Wine of Youth*, 1985, p. 191; see also by John Fante, *The Brotherhood of the Grape* (1977), and *Dago Red* (1940); see also Lucas Longo, *The Family on Vendetta Street*, p 140.

⁸ Karen Curtis, *I can never go empty-handed...*

⁹ The numbers are the pages taken from the Viking Press edition of 1977.

essential to the organization of American Little Italies¹⁰. So, it is clear that wine – and wine-making – have a social significance and role in Southern Italians' lives.

Food, meals and wine are tools in the organization of the family and in the sociability pattern within the community that help to preserve the sense of belonging. This role is also construed by Edward Maruggi in his memoirs, significantly entitled *Mushrooms, Sausage, and Wine. Life of an Immigrant Father*¹¹. Food and beverages are more than mere foodstuffs; their consumption conveys values and the frame within which interactions take place, which is even more valuable in the unknown environment that a foster society may represent to a migrant community. They may slow down the process of deculturation by maintaining family cohesion, providing stability and social references, as well as defining the role of each family member. It is a way to pass traditional rituals, and Italianness, on to the next generation. Women are generally excluded (as is the case in the novella). Even more, Bertocci's wife opposes the winemaking project as the money spent on grapes should be devoted to fixing the house. But Bertocci persists in his plan to make wine with his sons, as he used to do with his own father back in Naples (97). To him, the sacrifice derives its worth from the hope that it will consolidate solidarity among the male family members, though in the story his objective is ultimately frustrated. For Italians, such an activity contributes to expressing affection, friendship or love, among those who partake. In consequence, it is rather difficult for first generation migrants to give up this activity along with their culinary habits, and younger generations are moreover expected to perpetuate them.

In *The Wine Cellar*, Bertocci's anxiety about the political context of the war is at the root of his rediscovery of winemaking traditions. The activity is unmentioned before he learns that Anthony, 17, will join the US Navy, which appears to trigger his desire to revive the activity. "The decision to make wine, he told his son, was made after he had grown convinced of the futility of hoping the war would end" (95).

For Bertocci, winemaking offers a remedy for stress, despair and feelings of loss, an attempt to find peace again through the comfort of consolidating family ties. To him, the whole process, from acquiring the grapes, to the making of the wine and the final sharing of drinking the home-made beverage, is an expression of his blood ties with his sons. Through the experience, Bertocci is endowed with a paternal mission: he initiates his sons to an ancestral

¹⁰ Marie-Christine Michaud, "Entre enracinement et déterritorialisation de l'ethnicité : l'exemple des Italiens de Brooklyn", in Laurent Fournier, Claude Chastagner, Catherine Bernié-Boissard and Dominique Crozat (eds.), *Les cultures du déplacement*, Presses universitaires de Aix-Marseille, Aix-en-Provence, 2014, p. 27-38.

¹¹ Edward Maruggi, *Mushrooms, Sausage, and Wine. Life of an Immigrant Father*, Pittsford, NJ, Winston, 1997.

practice as they are becoming adults. Joining the army may also be perceived as an initiatory passage to adulthood in American society, but, for Bertocci who rejects war as a useless sacrifice, winemaking seems a more appropriate gateway. Each group – American or Italian-American – has its own social and cultural means for recognizing the status of its members. So Circo Bertocci's reaction also reveals the cultural differences between the two groups and the cultural disconnect that he is feeling. As a father, he is eager to show his sons how to proceed to be seen as full members of the community and assert their male status within the family through winemaking. At the same time, he hopes to tighten his own bonds with his sons.

As a first-generation migrant, Bertocci feels lost in an American society whose values are different from his own. As soon as the novella opens, the announcement of the war in 1941 intensifies his bewilderment. “[H]e had been a private in the infantry then, and [World War I], he felt, had made him less of a man” (53). Now his foster country is at war with, and his son will enroll and fight against, his country of birth, bringing disruption to the family. Out of fear and despair, and to spend as much time as possible with his sons, before the departure of Anthony, and maybe eventually younger Robert, who is 12, if the war lasts long enough, he resorts to a family tradition to express his feelings to them. This is why *The Wine Cellar* cannot be regarded only as an entertaining novella but also as a sociological provider of the representation of family ties and the importance of the attachment to traditions of first generations in the process of migration.

The winemaking begins with selecting and buying grapes, and Bertocci bestows much importance on their selection. He brings the sons in to this first step of the process -- “Anthony had to drive his father to the freight yards to buy the grapes” (99) -- but it is the father who chooses the grapes and negotiates the price. Twelve pages are devoted to the purchase of the grapes, indicating that nothing is done at random and evincing the ritual element of winemaking. The pithy description of the selection of the grapes and the transportation of the fruit to the house suggests their role in determining the quality of the forthcoming beverage. At the freight yard, the language for the negotiations is Italian, underlining the association between winemaking and Italian traditions. This passage encapsulates Bertocci's wish to struggle against his son's deculturation, that is to say the erosion of their Italian heritage through their contact with American society, a process that is transforming their identities. Edward Bonetti describes some sellers who are able to gibber in Italian, even though they are not Italian, when Bertocci manages to speak English with them (102-108). The use of the two languages reveals the adaptation of American business (and society) to the Italian heritage of

the migrants and vice-versa. But Bertocci resists this in order to mitigate his sons' detachment from their community, hence his toughness during the negotiations while the two sons remain silent (100-103). Bertocci is shown as an authoritative and determined man at home as well as in public, as if he were struggling to keep his social role within the family despite their settlement in America.

A large part of Bonetti's novella is devoted to the act of winemaking in the cellar: the task itself requires much time, effort, energy and the process is described in detail, from the cleaning of the grapes, the crushing and pressing of fermented grapes to create juice/*succo* and then *vino nuovo* (the use of Italian words underlines the significance of the process for Bertocci and Italians as a whole). Finally, there is the tasting by the father and sons who have shared in the work. As a traditional activity, the different steps of the undertaking must be respected. Thus, the narrative refers explicitly to the whole process. A second interpretation of this long description is to consider it as an expression of the tension between the characters. As they wait for the grapes to ferment and produce wine, they are also waiting for Anthony to go to war. Through the description of the details, the tension increases through the juxtaposition of the father's fear of losing his son and the sons' eagerness for the process to be over. Thus, Bonetti's narrative insists on the different meanings that the shared enterprise constitutes for the two generations of characters.

II Intergenerational "love"

Edward Bonetti succeeds in transforming a daily activity into a symbol of intergenerational bonds. Bertocci feels that he has to share something intimate with his son before he goes to war. The conflict makes him angry, forlorn and worried (91), and compels him to express his love to his son Anthony. He also invites his younger son, Robert, to join them in case the war would last and that Robert would have to leave too. For Bertocci, to make wine together, to labor and sweat together in the heat of the cellar (116, 121) tightens family bonds as a function of their physically being and creating together. In addition, they will give birth to a common product, wine.

Elder sons have a privileged status in Italian families, and are expected to follow their father's model, endowing them with much responsibility. Anthony enlisting in the navy is therefore perceived as a disrupting factor in the family. This is why, out of respect, he contemplates ensuring that his father agrees with his decision to enroll in the navy. And when Anthony realizes that his father will keep refusing to give him his permission, they quarrel,

which “enrages the father, who refused to listen to his son’s arguments”. Then Anthony threatens to leave school and take a job in the local arsenal until he is drafted (91-92), an open act of rebellion against his father’s authority. So, their mutual feelings start to quickly alter, from submission to disobedience, from attention to indifference, from love to menace.

After having two “daughters as necessary only because they contributed money to the household” (81), Bertocci was proud of his first, and favorite, son, Anthony. As the favored elder son, Anthony was the sole member of the family taken to the Italian market in the city when certain foods were unavailable in the neighborhood groceries. He was taken on walks through the park a few blocks from the house. By the time he was fifteen, his father had taught him to use the single-barrel shotgun that had been given to him by a distant relative [...]. (70).

Thus, when Bertocci understands that he risks losing Anthony, he feels compelled to maintain the family structure, keeping his son physically closer through the act of winemaking, and perhaps retaining a symbol of his presence after his departure.

But everyone’s motivations are different. The sons agree to help their father because his bad health means he is unable to do it by himself (97). They help him out of solidarity, compassion and perhaps pity. It can also be assumed that filial love plays a role. Indeed, when Bertocci is sick – he has a heart attack at the beginning of the novella – the two sons take care of him, moving him slowly, holding him gently, before rapidly calling the doctor and buying the necessary medicine (57-59). Their attachment also comes from duty, an integral part of traditional family bonds in Southern Italy where love, respect and obedience go together as part of “amoral familism”¹². For Edward Banfield, Southern Italian families are based on a specific moral code which defines its members’ socialization, status and relationships. This familism is amoral in the sense that it does not follow the moral code of wider society, but relies exclusively on the preservation of the family and its interests. Thus, children are expected to obey their parents, work for the family welfare, and meet the family’s needs, to the exclusion of others. Following the code is an expression of one’s family ties and love towards one’s siblings. Bertocci is attached to this system and wants to keep his sons within the family circle. Second-generation Anthony, on the other hand, is attracted by the world beyond and the American way of living – symbolized by his eagerness to play football and go to war on the American side – but he still agrees to make wine with his father, an indication of his attachment to his father and family customs. However, to the sons, their father’s commitment to this

¹² Edward Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, New York, Free Press, 1958.

apparently insignificant activity seems more like a chore, while for Bertocci, it has become an expression of his fatherly love. Their cultural referents are different, and their belonging to two different generations is revealed in their representation of what making wine means.

Bertocci expresses his feeling to his sons in an exclusive way. For example, he excludes his wife and two daughters from the cellar where the wine is made. Even if it is commonplace in the Italian way as wine-making is regarded a masculine activity, the fact that it is pinpointed in the novella indicates Bertocci's desire to keep his sons close to him, and his possessive character. When he addresses his sons, Bertocci uses their Italian names, Antonio and Roberto. A sign of their Italian ancestry, it can also be regarded as an act of intimacy as if American names were kept for the public sphere and Italian ones for the private and intimate sphere. It is frequently specified in the text that Bertocci speaks in Italian, with his wife and children (60, 78 for example), with his neighbor (111), with the grape sellers (102-103), to remind the reader that he is poor at English and above all attached to his Italianness. His sons, on the other hand, speak English, but they will be trapped in the cellar by their father. Italian is an expression of Bertocci's love for his sons as much as his heritage. The Italian traditions and language are the symbols of his Italian identity and, in the novella, he is the character that most embodies the ties with Italian ancestry. As such, he is the character from whom the young Italian-American boys contemplate escaping. But they are torn between their love for their family and their eagerness to integrate American society by adopting its practices.

An additional symbolic element that demonstrates how the sons and the father do not belong to the same generations is the fact that the boys do not want to drink the wine. When he eventually yields to his father's orders and tastes it, Anthony gets drunk and sick (127) – equivalent to a physical rejection of Bertocci's expectations. He then becomes angry and even beats Anthony, representing the height of their disagreement and a symbol of the misunderstanding between the two generations.

To express his love to his son, Bertocci resorts to another traditional means: in Southern Italy, to honor people and show that they are valued, a lamb's head is offered to them to eat. More than the head, the eyes are given to the most appreciated persons. Bertocci gives Anthony a lamb's head to share with him for dinner, then "he was happy" (148):

"Bertocci peeled the wax paper back and exposed the skinless head of a lamb. "It is for one who is honored," he said in Italian and with this he placed the head in one palm and held it up for all of them to see. [...] In English he said: 'It's for you, Antonio [...]' (145).

Anthony reluctantly tastes the head but refuses to taste the eye. Though it is a mark of honor and love from Bertocci, and even if he tries to please his father by eating a small piece of the head, Anthony cannot eat more. He cannot follow the rules, it is not part of his cultural habits, and he disappoints his father. On realizing that his son will not eat the lamb's eye, Bertocci understands that they do not share the same values anymore, which he interprets as a lack of love from his own offspring, even an insult. The gap between the generations is manifest.

“‘Before you will go then,’ he said calmly, ‘I have decided to make *vino*. For you.’ He placed his hands on top of the table. ‘Only,’ he continued, ‘if you will help me.’ The son was quiet. Finally, confused, he said, ‘I don’t understand.’ ‘It is all right that you do not understand,’ the father said. Anthony was silent again. After a while he got up out of his chair, walked around the table and stood above his father. ‘All right,’ he said. He looked away for a moment, then he added, ‘Yes, I will help you. Because you cannot do it alone.’” (96-97)

Bertocci's proposal is as an offering, a gift, but Anthony does not understand it as such. This lack of understanding can be interpreted in two different ways: a reflection of the gap between the cultural values of the two generations or it can indicate the difficulties Southern Italians have in expressing their feelings. In Southern Italy, people are not expected to explicitly express their feelings and restraint is required. For the father, what is essential is the fact that *he* knows why he wants to make wine for his son and why he offers him the eyes of a lamb to eat. Instead of expressing verbally his love, he falls back upon traditional practices. But Anthony, raised in America, is not familiar with these ways.

In Bertocci's representation of this shared activity, the home-made wine will be part of Anthony's blood and body because his labor went into making the drink (99) and throughout the novella, wine is often compared to blood. This view provides the beverage with a religious, even a sacred dimension¹³. So, because the wine possesses Anthony's labor, sweat, and “blood”, even when he is far away, a part of Anthony will remain close to Bertocci. It will guarantee a kind of continuity in the family circle. Wine is seen as an extension of Anthony's blood: “I will make wine. This is my right and it will have in it the blood of my son” (99). This is a way to underline his deep love for Anthony. This is also why Bertocci orders his wife to drink wine when Anthony is away.

¹³ Marie-Christine Michaud, “Father, Son and Wine: An Approach to *The Wine Cellar* by Edward Bonetti”, *Voices in Italian Americana*, 2011, vol 22, n° 2, p.41-56.

Generally speaking, the sons express their attachment to their parents by being attentive and obedient. They behave tenderly with their mother. Robert goes to church with her, and when he is away, Anthony addresses his letters to her (159-160). Yet, the two sons resent their father's possessive manner and authority. Nevertheless, in the first letter he sends, Anthony writes that he is sorry that he did not say good bye to his father though he could have taken the opportunity to do so on the morning of his departure. One wonders, is he missing him, or regretting the situation? In any case he expresses some attachment to his father. Likewise, Robert, who resents his father's domination, takes care of him when he has a second heart-attack after his elder brother has left. Their feelings for their father seem to fluctuate between love and resentment.

III Hate, or the feeling of cultural loss among migrants

Bertocci's authoritative behavior is dealt with as expected in the novella because of the Southern Italian system. The fact that the sons are ready to reject it reflects their desire to escape the traditional system they belong to. It is part of the process of emancipation that goes along with their integration in American society, and the wine-making process illustrates their opposite vision of their cultural heritage.

In the novella, the action takes place around the time of World War II, that is to say, after the period of the great migration of Italians to the United States, when the younger generation was anxious to prove their integration into the foster society. This is corroborated by the high number of Italian Americans fighting in the American armed forces¹⁴. In addition, because the story opens on the news of the attack in Pearl Harbor, the patriotism of the young Italian-American generation must be considered a watermark: Anthony is ready to disobey his father in order to join the American navy, generating a pervading conflict between the two characters. Anthony needs his father's permission to enlist as he is only 17, but Bertocci will wait until his 18th birthday to give it to him as he is longer able to avoid it. He is afraid his son may become part of the "carnage" (95) that the war represents for him. Hence he uses all possible means to postpone his departure, making Anthony angry.

"He said in Italian with a force that made his face redden: 'You cannot see the absurdity of the war! You cannot see the arrogance of men on both sides who have caused it! You cannot see how the feeling of patriotism is used as a tool upon the lives of everyone,

¹⁴ Jerre Mangione, *La Storia*. More than 500,000 Italian American belonging to the second generation served in the armed forces during the war. p. 341.

and upon the lives of all soldiers, and so because of it, a soldier's death is more absurd. Pray for peace,' he yelled. 'And you are fools.' [...] 'I will make wine,' he yelled. 'It is my right [...]' (99)

The two sons agree to help their father make wine out of compassion and duty. Without understanding the symbolic, even sacred value that the wine is endowed with by their father, they obey him. Though they resent devoting too much time to it and sharing the limited space of the cellar with him because they must stay at home and supervise the process. Bertocci keeps giving them orders and chores to do, while the sons remain silent.

They worked two hours more before the remainder of the grapes were crushed. [...] The grapes would start fermenting in about ten days, the father had said, after which they would rise each day to the top of the barrels, forming what was called a hat. It would be necessary then for Anthony and Robert to push the hat down in each barrel every morning and at the end of every day. [...] They would listen, as they were asked to do, for the first minute explosion of gas from within the mass of crushed grapes, signaling the fermentation had begun. (121)

So while they are making wine, the sons' anger at their father intensifies. They feel that this Italian activity is infringing their freedom. While wine-making represents family traditions for Bertocci, for the sons, it is a reminder of possible marginalization in the wider society. They are eager to show their integration into American society – Anthony joining the navy testifies to his civic assimilation¹⁵ – whereas their father tries to slow down their distancing from the community by perpetuating Italian traditions.

Before they get together in the cellar, this place already represents a locale of tension for the two generations. Anthony disobeys his father by joining a football team after Bertocci had ordered his son to leave the team because he considered football, an American game that he did not understand, to be dangerous. When he learns that Anthony has disobeyed him, he takes him to the cellar to burn his equipment in the furnace (71-75). Anthony's feeling of humiliation intensify; in addition, Robert is ordered by his father to prepare the furnace for the burning because he wants the punishment to serve as an example of his authority (72). Considering their father's reaction too excessive, Robert leaves home, another act of disobedience (72-73). Bertocci's possessiveness is more than the two young characters can bear.

¹⁵ Milton Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life. The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1964.

“During the previous night Anthony had felt a deep but temporary hatred toward Bertocci. Standing now in the doorway of the parlor and staring intently at him, he felt only an inexpressible curiosity. [...]

He is my father, he heard, and Bertocci stirred again and shifted in his chair. [...] My father, he heard again, and he saw his face as he had seen it in the light coming from the furnace door. My father, he heard once more, and it was his own voice talking inside him, telling him to reach, even against his fear that held him back and finally drew him out of the room” (73-74)

So, even before Bertocci decides to make wine with his sons in the cellar, there is a conflictual situation within the family circle. Growing older, the two sons are becoming more distant and prone to opposing their father’s orders because he represents not only authority and constraint but also the encumbrance of their Italian ancestry that prevents them from being fully regarded as American. Such resentment intensifies when Bertocci happens to beat his children – Anthony, when he gets drunk and spills wine on the floor (124), and one of his daughters (81-82). He appears like a hateful character.

But, when Bertocci decides to make wine and asks his two sons to follow him downstairs, the cellar is expected to transform into a place of sharing and intimacy, where family ties are reaffirmed. This situation echoes the dual feeling of the second generation torn between their community and their country of adoption. Anthony and Robert face dilemma: remain attached to the Italian-American community or integrate into American society. This is an individual choice, a question of personal feeling. Nicole Gallant who studied the process of feeling Canadian – or American – and thinking oneself as having such or such nationality¹⁶, maintained that in spite of the criteria of the place of birth, language, citizenship, etc., which would amount to civic assimilation, what was essential was the feeling of belonging to this or that group, the cultural attachment for, even the pride of belonging to, this or that nationality. According to her, dual loyalty is possible¹⁷, and there is no contradiction in feeling American (or Canadian) and at the same time attached to a specific ethnic community. This is what the two brothers experience as young members of an Italian-American family: they respect traditions, which is embodied in their making wine. Yet, they react as emancipated teenagers

¹⁶ Nicole Gallant, “Feeling Canadian, Feeling Other: Perceptions of Citizenship and Identity among Aboriginal People and Second-Generation Immigrants in Québec”, in Andrew Nurse and Raymond Blake, *Beyond national Dreams, Essays on Canadian Citizenship and Nationalism*, Mount Allison University, Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2009, p. 205-236.

¹⁷ See Jerre Mangione who defined himself as « an ethnic at large » to refer to this dual loyalty and dual identity.

who are eager to escape the restrictive authority of their father and the burden of traditions, which explains their growing tension throughout the novella, even their anger at their father.

Anthony's attitude can be qualified as "rebellious"¹⁸. In spite of the fear that his father inspires in him, he disobeys him, first by playing football and then by joining the American navy, and by standing up against Bertocci's orders, in other words by adopting an Americanized attitude.

The context of the war accentuates the distance between the father and his sons. While Anthony is eager to join the American navy, Bertocci believes that the United States is stealing his son. Their opinion concerning the war and their possible involvement in the conflict reveals a discrepancy in their patriotic feelings. Anthony feels more American than Italian. Bertocci wants to remain aloof from the conflict that he estimates none of his business. This is why the initiative of making wine holds two different meanings, a means to make time linger for Bertocci before his son leaves; a means to use tradition to get what he wants for Anthony as his father will be satisfied enough to sign the permission for him to leave. In a comparable way, their subsequent drunkenness encapsulates two distinctive attitudes towards family ties.

Bertocci takes to drinking after his son's departure for war and his death as an expression of his alienation, sorrow and grief; he drinks himself unconscious to escape the reality of the war. For his part, Anthony does not get drunk deliberately but because of his inexperience. To obey his father, he tastes the new wine, but he gets dizzy, bumps into a barrel of wine before falling down on the floor, spoiling a large part of the precious beverage, and provoking his father's anger (123-124): Bertocci insults his son in Italian and beats him. This situation encompasses the pervading tension that has arisen between the two men, their lack of mutual understanding, their temporary hate towards one another. Anthony does not seem to follow Italian traditions. When the wine is ready, he refuses to drink the cup that his father wants to share with him. So he symbolically breaks the family ties. Bertocci cannot understand his son's indifference toward Italian traditions.

Circo insists: "I want you to drink [...] It is your wine," he said forcefully.
Anthony looked down at the floor. "It is yours," he said [...] "It is what you have made for yourself."

¹⁸ Irving Child, *Italian or American? The Second Generation in Conflict*, New Haven, Yale University, Press, 1943. Child defines three attitudes among second generation migrants: the "in-group attitude": the individual remains attached to the community and its values, which prevents him or her from feeling alienated and isolated; the "apathetic attitude": the individual is really attached neither to the community of birth nor the foster society, which enables him or her to avoid conflictual situation; the "rebel attitude", which means that the individual rejects his or her community values to adopt the way of living of the foster society.

The father reached out and took him by the shoulder. "I have made this for you," he said.

"I don't want to drink it," Anthony said.

"You will taste it, Antonio."

"I will get drunk again."

The father's eyes narrowed. "You will not get drunk," he said, raising his voice. "Here. You drink." (131)

Anthony eventually shares a glass of wine with his father but only ten pages further on, in the following part of the novella. Bertocci has to wait. In other words he has to submit to his son's wishes. This is a sad, pyrrhic, victory for him. For Anthony, this is a way to express his refusal to follow the Italian traditions that his father wishes to impose upon him.

The tension undoubtedly and progressively becomes a kind of hate. Its growth can be felt through the description of the process of wine-making. After Anthony has got drunk (123-124), the following pages deal with the continuation of the process, the fermentation of the grapes – and let's remember that fermentation is a process of transformation, and as such it can be a metaphor for the transformation of the sons' feelings toward their father. In these pages (126-133), numerous verbs list the several actions required for the process and the rhythm of the sentences echo the movements of the chores. Such a narrative embraces the sons' and the father's eagerness for the wine to be ready:

"The father looked at the droplet and then continued to turn the press wheel, increasing his effort against the handle. Gradually he could feel the grapes give still further under the increased pressure as the cover squeezed and pulverized the mass of blue husks, pulp, seeds and stems into the complexity of new must. The flow began to increase too [...] the father turned the press wheel until the marc was completely squeezed. [...] he became enthused. He stooped down beside the pail and twirled his finger through the surface of the new wine. 'We will see now what la *vinaccia* has given.' He licked his fingers, looked up at his sons and smacked his lips. 'I must have the cup, Antonio,' he said, getting up. Anthony gave him the cup and he dipped it into the wine. He brought it up to his nose, sniffed it, and then lowered it to his lips. He sipped, smacked once and sipped again. Smiling. [...] He swallowed, sipped again and smacked, as he nodded his head quickly. '*Perfecto*,' he said, 'it is good.' He drank the rest of the wine eagerly and handed the cup to Anthony. 'You taste, Antonio,' he said excitedly. Anthony remained silent, his hands down at his side. 'Taste,' the father said again." (129-130)

Anthony resents his father's authority, remains silent most of the time but eventually submits and tastes the home-made wine. The sharing of the cup is symbolic of their sharing blood and Italianness. This is why Bertocci is happy, smiling and drinking empty his cup. For

his part, Anthony is reluctant to drink wine because he has previously been sick but above all because wine is not among his cultural referents.

When the process is over, Anthony's impatience to get away from his father reaches its limit and he leaves home without saying good bye to him (157), testimony to the distance he has created between himself and the family, and the deep grudge he harbors against his father which leaves him afflicted:

“Antony left without having said good bye to his father. When Bertocci woke up and learned that his son was gone, he swore aloud and yelled in Italian that his wife had deliberately let him sleep [...] He thought of the day they had unloaded the grapes and stacked the boxes in the shade of the tree [...] Presently he thought of a time before the grapes and the wine, before his time alone on Ellis Island among the faces he had never come to know. He thought of the town in Italy where he was born, of the first desire to leave that had welled up in him with promise, that welled up in him even now, like the passing of a dream”. (157-158)

Bertocci refuses to forgive him, deploring Anthony's decision to join the navy, his lack of respect for traditions, and his own progressive loss of authority. Thus, after his son's departure, he finds refuge in the cellar and takes to drinking, plunging into a “brooding mood and nostalgia”. He hardly eats, drinks too much and gets thinner and weaker (165). He remembers his past life in Italy, the decision to come to the United States to offer a better future to his family. Instead, he faces the indifference and lack of respect of his sons, even a hateful attitude, leading to the disruption of the family. Anthony's life was lost due to his allegiance to the United States, in other words desire to be more American than Italian, his new Italian-American identity. The narrative then concentrates on Bertocci drunkenness, stuck in the cellar to escape reality. He is feared by his daughters and Robert because he is losing self-control. In a revealing passage (151), Robert is climbing up the stairs while holding a bottle of the wine made with his brother. The dim light reinforces Robert's fear of dropping the bottle and spoiling the beverage and above all of disappointing his father who is standing in the dark. Fear has replaced compassion and filial love:

“The father moved through the doorway of his wine cellar. The boy, frightened, stepped to one side as he passed, looked up into his face and followed him as he stumbled across the floor to the stairs. [...] It was then that he realized that his fear was not the fear of spilling wine, or the fear of the dark; but he could still hear the beating of his heart [...] He knew with an acute sense of shame that it was the closeness to his father in the dark that made him feel afraid” (151)

Bertocci, his authoritative nature, his violence, but also his love for his son are part of his Italianness. By distancing himself from him, Anthony tries to rid of the whole set of cultural referents that constitute his ethnic character and marginalize him in American society. The process of making wine stands for a quest for stability and the maintenance of Italian traditions for Bertocci and it can be seen as the expression of his love for his offspring. For the second-generation sons, it is an incomprehensible practice that represents an obstacle to their integration into American society. It is a metaphor for the evolution of the mutual feelings of first and second generations related to their attachment to their ethnic heritage or their willingness to integrate into their foster country.

The strength of *The Wine Cellar* lies in Edward Bonetti's success in using a trivial activity – home-made wine – to illustrate the process through which first and second generations distance themselves from each other because of the integration and deculturation of youngsters and the attempt of older ones to perpetuate their Italianness and slow down their deculturation.

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**WASN'T ME: THE DEAD LESBIAN SYNDROME, LANGUAGE
INTENTIONALITY AND TELEVISION SERIES ACROSS CULTURES**

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1. From Shaggy to New TV series: about (un)intentional cheating on women

Wasn't me (2000) is the title of a popular song by artist Shaggy. “The song is about a guy who gets caught cheating on his girl but denies it even though he is clearly guilty. It was inspired by a comedy routine Eddie Murphy performed in his movie *Raw*. Murphy said that no matter what your girl accuses you of, never admit to anything, just say ‘it wasn't me.’”^{lxxxiii}

The title chosen for the song refers to an expression, usually used in the English language when somebody gets blamed for a mistake, an accident, or a crime they didn't think you would commit. It is also parodically linked to the practice I have come to define as the “spare me the word strategy” (Melchiorre 2021). In brief, it deals with the unintentional censoring behind the process of content creation in media productions, the activity of scriptwriting, in particular, intended as a collaborative process within the participation framework backing the production of TV shows.

Foregrounding the flummoxing phenomenon of the “Dead Lesbian Syndrome” (Guerrero-Pico, Establés, Ventura 2018) and adopting a gender-studies perspective, more specifically an LGBT+ stance, I will try to expose the heteronormative intent shadowing the production of such TV series (Parsemain 2019). In order to accomplish this latter task, I will resort to the data provided in the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation's (GLAAD) annual reports from 2016 to 2020, which “[f]or more than 20 years, [...] has tracked the presence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBT+) characters on television.”

^{lxxxiv} Through a transdisciplinary approach, I will then draw attention on both the decision-

making process involving the “collective sender” (Dynel 2011: 313), that is the creators and producers of TV series, and the position of the audience-viewers, no longer to be considered the passive recipient of mediated discourse.

2. The “bury your gays” trope

The “bury your gays” trope is a homophobic cliché. It is the representation of deaths of LGBT+ characters where these characters are nominally able to be viewed as more expendable than their heteronormative counterparts. In this way, the death is treated as exceptional in its circumstances.^{lxxxv}

The revival of mass usage of the “bury your gays” trope in 2015-16, particularly of female LGBT+ characters - the term “dead lesbian syndrome” has largely fallen out of use post-2015 - sparked a lot of outrage online and ending up in a pledge, “The Lexa Pledge”,^{lxxxvi} after a main lesbian character on the show *The 100* was offhandedly killed in the third season.^{lxxxvii}

The final goal of such a protest on the part of the virtual community of fans or fandom, mostly teenagers, was to encourage showrunners to reconsider the possible implementation of the trope stemming from the disappearance from the screen of another iconic fictional character. In brief, Lexa’s death was just the straw that broke the camel’s back.

It must be noted that, the TV season of 2015 and 2016 included an overwhelming number of dead lesbian and bisexual female characters. As any other characters in fictional plots, they could die. What was really unacceptable, was that these young spectators observed those deaths that were in service of other straight, cisgender characters’ plotlines, and this resulted in a toxic message to audiences. The point is, when there are so few lesbian and bisexual women on television, the decision to kill these characters sends a toxic message about the worth of queer female stories.^{lxxxviii} As clearly stated by the editors of the charts of characters deaths in the 2015 and 2016 TV season, when the “bury your gays” trope came to

the forefront, it shows that 10% of all deaths on TV are lesbians and bisexual women (Vox 2016).

3. Additional data

When compared to other statistics, the data evidence showing lesbians and bisexual women live on TV also shows that only 16% of them receive a happy ending. (Hogan 2016) This infographic by *Autostraddle* offers a comprehensive list of queer women deaths on television since the season *Executive Suite* in 1976 and 1977. For example, 31% of queer women have died in American television shows from 1976 to 2016.^{lxxxix} More than 150 lesbian and bisexual women have died since then and according to GLAAD, more than 25 queer female characters had died since the beginning of 2016 on scripted television and streaming series, during the so called “Spring Slaughter”, out of a total of 92 lesbian and bisexual women presented in the same season (GLAAD 2016). Most important, the document shows that out of a total of 383 lesbian and bisexual women on TV, 95 have died to make room for more “uncomplicated” storylines involving heteronormative characters.

Though queer representations on television is significantly more frequent than in film,^{xc} only 16 queer women couples have been given happy endings in the history of English-language television. Overall, 45% of queer women in the history of television have died (Deshler 2017: 33). In their final “Recommendations”, the GLAAD report identifies the deadliest platform for lesbian and bisexual women is broadcast TV (GLAAD 2016). The reasons behind this phenomenon will be illustrated later on, when dealing with the regulations and censorship in media production in the U.S.

4. Lexa’s death and the “virtual” riot of fans

Now, let’s have a closer look at the death of Lexa in the TV show *The 100*. The CW’s post-apocalyptic teen drama *The 100* premiered in 2014 and in the second season the show, introduced a lesbian character, Lexa. The character is unexpectedly killed by a stray bullet, in

the following season, an event that set off a firestorm of anger and shock from its fans. The CW is a well-known broadcast network for producing teen dramas such as *90210* (2008-2013) and *The Vampire Diaries* (2009-2017), as WB had also aired queer girl favorite *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003). According to Kira Deshler, “while many shows that aired on the CW are often seen as silly and frivolous [...] *The 100* branded itself as a more serious endeavor.” (Deshler 2017: 34).

In the episode “Thirteen” that premiered on March 3rd, 2016, when the show was at its best, Clarke and Lexa, the two main female characters fall for each other. They have sex and soon afterward Lexa gets killed by a stray bullet meant for Clarke.^{xci} Unfortunately for the showrunners, Lexa’s death represented a turning point. It was too much for a lot of young, queer fans who were fed up with seeing queer female characters, that they identified with, be killed on screen. Lexa’s death produced an “unprecedented outpouring of emotion from fans, resulting in tangible consequences”. (Deshler 2017: 18) The fans were deeply hurt, at a level the writers did not anticipate because as clearly shown by comments on social media and other platforms. LGBT+ people seem to never have happy endings, and this perpetuates the “bury your gays” trope, sending a toxic message. Television critic Heather Hogan observed in a message posted on Twitter on March 25th, 2016:

“In the eight years I’ve been a lesbian TV critic, I’ve never seen anything like the response to

Lexa’s death on *The 100*. As I noted in this week’s *Pop Culture Fix*, in a matter of three short

weeks, *The 100*’s queer fandom has raised an astronomical amount of money for the Trevor

Project and, through broad and relentless social media activism, forced mainstream media

outlets to acknowledge the larger cultural ramifications of the ubiquitous Bury Your Gays

trope for the first time ever. That pressure even coerced an apology out of *The 100*'s showrunner, Jason Rothenberg, yesterday afternoon.” (Hogan 2016)

On March 11th, 2016 on Twitter, fans contacted the creators posting comments such as “@JRothenbergTV while you were busy live tweeting and ignoring your mistake, #LGBTFansDeserveBetter was trending for an hour and a half.” (Pat Shafer, @GingerPat). A few days later on March 24th, Jason Rothenberg, the creator of the show, was pushed to apologize to fans. The passage is really worth reading, as it also anticipates some issues debated in the present discussion on content creation:

“Since an episode ‘Thirteen’ [*The 100* S03E07] aired three weeks ago, I’ve spent a great deal

of time reading letters, blogs, tweets and articles from passionate women and men of all ages

who were angered and saddened that the character Lexa was killed off immediately after a

love scene with one of our hero Clarke. I’m still processing this. I’m still learning. But I have

gained perspective and more than ever, I am profoundly grateful to you, our fans. [...]

The thinking behind the ultimate tragedy follows the ultimate joy was to heighten the drama and underscore the universal fragility of life. But the end result became something else entirely – the perpetuation of the disturbing ‘Bury Your Gays’ trope.

Our aggressive promotion of the episode and this relationship, only fueled a feeling of betrayal.” (Hogan 2016)

One tangible consequence of the protest was the so called “Lexa Pledge”, but additionally, another the most important follow up of the virtual riot was the creation of an international network, CLEXACON, an international convention bringing together content creators for media productions.

The founders, Holly Winebarger, Ashley Arnold, Danielle Jablonski met on Twitter and decided to form CLEXAXON. A “women-loving-women” convention, CLEXACON was founded in response to the many deaths of female LGBT+ characters that occurred in 2016, “the year of the Spring Slaughter”.^{xcii} It was originally thought of as a small gathering of around 100 people, but word of mouth and social media allowed the convention to grow larger than any of the organizers intended. CLEXACON has represented a serious attempt “to move the conversation forward in a positive way and provide space that would encourage more LGBT+ people to get involved in content creation”^{xciii} and is today the largest multi-fandom event for LGBT+ women and allies created to celebrate LGBT+ women and characters in TV, film, web series, comics, books and more.^{xciv}

5. Media And Identity

Kira Deshler, in her work *Not Another Dead Lesbian: the Bury Your Gays trope, Queer Grief, and The 100* (2017), discusses the main theories of reception to better understand how fandoms receive and relate to the media texts they consume. In her research study, she mentions two seminal works by Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers* (1992/2012), and Rebecca Williams’s most recent *Post-Object Fandom: Television, Identity and Self–narrative* (2015), both focusing on fan’s behavior. In response to TV productions, while Jenkins focuses on fan reception involving “the way fans draw texts close to the realm of their lived experience; the role played by rereading within fan culture; and the process by which program information gets inserted into ongoing social interactions” (Jenkins 2012: 53), Williams outlines the ways fans may interact with media texts once they are no longer being produced. This interaction with

television shows, the scholar maintains, may be understood as what Anthony Giddens termed “pure relationships”, that is, some emotional tie which “continue[s] as long as they provide two necessary rewards: the reflection of a desirable self-narrative and ontological security”. By consequence, “when a show ends, even without any heroes disappearing from the plot, this may result in a period of mourning that is characterized by destabilization and a subsequent ‘reiteration of discourse’” (Williams 2015: 24).

These audiences have long been seen as passive agents within systems of media articulation, simply taking in the texts that are directed at them. (Deshler 2017: 22) As maintained by Susan Drive in *Queer Girls and Popular Culture: Reading, Resisting, and Creating Media* (2007), such a perspective is further entrenched with regards to female viewers, “femininity has conventionally been associated with gullible and irrational receptions of mass media, which becomes a basis for stereotyping girls as passive consumers” (Driver 2007:13). Regardless of whether the consumption of media texts is more passive or active, it is clear that individual identities, especially isolated young people that rely on media the most, are shaped by the popular culture that weaves in and out of their lives. Queer television viewers and in particular, queer girls, have a distinctive relationship with the media texts they choose to consume. Popular media may allow these fans to make sense of their place in the world and articulate their relation to others, the two pillars in the process of identity formation (Driver 2007:21).

In television series, an umbrella term recently re-defined by Monika Bednarek as a “label [which] covers both scripted narrative series that are produced by television networks and those that are produced by companies such as Amazon and Netflix” (Bednarek 2018:7), characters represent “stable identities”, distinct from each other so that viewers can develop relationships with them. “The desire of stable character with consistent traits and personality is a major draw for serial storytelling, as we want to feel connected to such characters through

parasocial relationships and might be quite disappointed if they changed in ways that violate their initial connections and appeals (Mittel 2015: 141-2).

6. Narrowcasting and “pink dollar”

In the past 20 years, advertisers have begun catering to a consumer base that had previously been ignored, among the others, the LGBT+ community. One of the first instances of this shift was in the 1990s when Subaru directed ad campaigns specifically to lesbian women, even making sly references to lesbian icon *Xena: Warrior Princess* (1995-2001), a character strongly resembling Lexa in *The 100*, and being featured in showtime *The L Word* (2004-09) in 2009. Narrowcasting, the opposite of broadcast networking, “addresses niche audiences and offers more accurate representations of minority groups. Benefitting from a related regulation and diverse ownership, cable can offer innovative content that challenges the status quo and because it is less dependent on advertising revenue, it is less afraid to tackle controversial topics” (Parsemain 2019, Kamen 2014, Kelso 2009).

Since the 2010s, “diversity” has become an increasingly popular term used in political discourse to signify a commitment to equity and inclusion, while in entertainment it is often used as a congratulatory description of doing the bare minimum to include minorities. The recognition of queer audiences as a profitable consumer base has been interpreted by fans, at some point, as a form of “lip service” surrounding diversity and inclusion to the offensive practice of “queer baiting” in TV series. One good example is offered by the crime series *Rizzoli & Isles* (2010 –2016), where the relationship between the two protagonists, agent Jane Rizzoli (Angie Harmon) and medical examiner, Dr. Maura Isles (Sasha Alexander), and is consistently suggestive of sexual attraction but the characters never actually enter into a sexual relationship.

The so called “Pink Dollar” has become more appealing to advertisers as time passed, and we entered the digital era with ABC, CBS and NBC losing their dominance with cable

television catering to niche groups such as women (Lifetime), African-Americans (BET), young people (MTV), and LGBT+ people (Bravo, Logo, Showtime) (Aslinger 2009, Freitas 2007, Lotz 2007, Ng 2003, Parks 2004, Sender 2007).

7. Targeted content creation and censorship

Now let's have a look in more depth to content creation practices and language awareness. In this section, I will focus on the centrality of language in television productions. In particular, the relevance of language awareness in the process of scriptwriting. The creation of contents for television series is to be understood as a collaborative process happening within the framework of participation-based strategies, consisting of the engagement between TV producers and their staff of scriptwriters, on the one hand, and audiences of TV products, on the other.

Creation operates and takes place in “the writers’ room” where the process of “breaking” stories happens. The writing team, or the show runner, review the dialogues and ensures that the scripts “fit the standards” before finalizing the script. This means that the staff have the opportunity of rewriting every single line until the very last minute with the studio executives call to give their approval in observation of the standards of “decency” and “offensiveness”. This collaborative process may include all or some of the following steps. First of all, writers, sometimes collaboratively, map out the story arcs and the narrative structure of the whole season. Only afterward, together or individually, they reconsider the structure, plots and scenes for an episode through a process called “breaking stories”, usually taking place in the writers’ room, traditionally using a white board (Bednarek 2018). This represents the basis for an outline or list of scenes. If an individual writer is assigned to produce this, the writing team or showrunner reviews it, providing notes to the writers for revision. They eventually ensure that the scripts “fit the standards” of the style and arc of the series and may complete major rewrites before finalizing the script. Network and studio executives also

provide notes during the whole process, including the outline and script. The script may also be influenced by aspects of production, that is, budgetary constraints causing certain scenes to be much more expensive than usual. During post-production, changes can be made in the edit room with editing or cutting lines of dialogues to finalize the script so that it can “fit the standards”.

Before having a closer look at the meaning of such an expression, let me anticipate that it is my contention here that “the dead lesbian syndrome” and the characterization of LGBT+ women in scripted texts, both stem from the more or less explicit censorship practices adopted in TV series productions in the US, in particular, being the majority of TV series produced in this country. To introduce the issue of censorship, I have chosen to quote from a cinematic dialogue in *First Monday in October* (1981). Two lawyers, Dan Snow and Ruth Leonis, played by Walter Matthau and Jill Clayburgh respectively, discuss censorship on video productions. The woman is the upholder of the censorship cause while the man tries to explain why censorship is always wrong:

“Ruth: Are we doing our job if we permit anything?”

Dan: What are we permitting?

Ruth: Violence in the streets, kids on drugs, filth, pornography. [...]

Dan: Censorship is an outrage. [...]

Ruth: That’s what we’re here for.

Dan: Not me.

W: We’d better try. The people of this country just have one absolute protection against chaos. The Law. And you and I were appointed to this court for only one reason. To uphold and sustain the Law.

Dan: Watch out! You can’t turn the Law into a straight jacket. [...] It’s gotta fit easy,

be

comfortable. [...]”^{xv}

Until 1968, the Motion Picture Association of America, via the Hays Code, had a set of “morality guidelines” for the movies set in the 1930s which prohibited depictions of homosexuality on screen, categorizing it as a “perverse” topic. TV was also censored in such a way by the FCC (Federal Communications Commission), though the terms of censorship were significantly vaguer. With the elimination of the Hays Code, and the vague regulations of the FCC, censorship since the “Golden Age of Cinema” has decreased overall.

However, this doesn’t mean that internal regulations and censorship cease to exist as demonstrated in our discussion on the “bury your gays” trope and the “dead lesbian syndrome”. In the early 2000s, the WB told *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) creator Joss Whedon that he couldn’t show two female characters, Willow and Tara, kissing on screen. When Whedon finally showed their first on-screen kiss, it was a whole season after the couple had first been introduced. Whedon, apparently not satisfied with the result, continued to push boundaries and decided to depict the first lesbian sex scene on network TV a few seasons later in 2003. At the time, even such a “daredevil” like Whedon was forced to solve the plot in a more “decent” way. Willow’s girlfriend Tara was eventually killed off the show by a stray bullet, exactly like Lexa in *The 100*. In 2017, broadcasting networks got complaints from viewers about the over-abundance of “homosexual content” on their shows. One fan of the TV series *Supergirl* (2015) complained on Twitter, that the show was becoming ‘too mature’ for her children to watch. Despite detractors such as Twitter users and Christian organizations like ‘One Million Moms’, it appears that depictions of queer characters on screen are slowly becoming more common (Deshler 2017: 31).

Today, the FCC still regulates broadcasting television and radio, and film must be categorized with the current rating system. Though, the arrival of streaming services have suddenly and dramatically altered this picture. Such services, in fact, can release content online

and bypass any rating system of censorship entirely. Thus, any prescriptions against depictions of taboo topics such as race, sexuality, poverty, or disease are implicitly rather than explicitly defined.

8. Language awareness in scriptwriting

Here, we come to the linguistic perspective related to “dead lesbian syndrome”. As observed by Monika Bednarek, an insight into the degree of intentionality and awareness on the part of the producers that lay behind the artifacts of TV dialogues is important (Bednarek 2018: 9). Piazza *et al.* (2011) identifies telecinematic discourse as scripted, fictional (imaginative) narratives and television narrative is defined as multimodal and multisemiotic text. The scripted part of this, the way it is written and produced, represents the core of linguistic investigation in such productions.

Apparently, there seems to be a general agreement among scholars, such as Mandala (2007) and Quaglio (2009: 10-11), that linguistic information is neglected in scriptwriting pedagogy and advice on dialogue writing relies on intuition, while conscious awareness “clearly plays some part in writing dialogue that is both convincing and thematically effective [...] the bulk of process occurs below the level of conscious awareness” (Mandala 2007: 67). Kay Richardson’s *Television Dramatic Dialogue: A Sociolinguistic Study* (2010), is defined by Bednarek as “the most comprehensive outline in linguistics to date” (Bednarek 2018: 208) and has dedicated a whole chapter to scriptwriters’ understanding of TV dialogue in a UK television writers’ workshop. Richardson doesn’t discriminate between UK and US shows though the models of productions differ a lot from one another. The production process in US television series is well illustrated in a “cult” study by Jason Mittel, *Complex TV. The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling* (2015: 86-92). Business models differ a lot between platforms such as traditional networks, subscription services, cable or digital distributors and are subject to different regulations. As clarified by Monika Bednarek, there are also differences

between these outlets which have an impact on language use, especially in relation to the use of particular taboo words, for example, which are censored only in network or broadcast television (Bednarek 2018: 7). Moreover, TV series as both creative and commercial products represent “hot properties, which enable the extraction of maximum profits in minimum time through simultaneous distribution across multiple platforms and across the globe.” (Pearson 2007: 252). Basically, the overall managerial responsibility in the TV series lies with the producer or showrunner, who is also the head writer, rather than the director in films.

In brief, this information helps us better understand that the content creation process is a collaborative practice that is extended beyond the writers’ room and involves fans through websites, blogs and so on. As observed by Tim Adams in his article in *The Guardian* in 2017, they have become places to get a fix of favorite drama before the next series is uploaded. This practice was pioneered by two US American TV series, *The Good Wife* (2009-2016) and *Orange Is The New Black* (2013-2019), with the production providing “the backstory to the genesis and creation scenes in line Twitter feeds, with white boards and interview links and photos.” (Adams 2017).

9. The “spare me the word strategy”

I have recently come to define the “spare me the word strategy” as the language strategy, more or less, consciously adopted by scriptwriters who end up erasing LGBT+ identities from the scripts in television series in an attempt to tackle controversy (Melchiorre 2021). It is my contention that this represents an alternative practice in comparison with the more visible and impacting “dead lesbian syndrome”. In a recent linguistic analysis, I have proposed a comparison between the occurrences and the collocations of the words *lesbian* and *gay* in two US TV series: *The Good Wife* (2009-2016) and *Supergirl* (2015-2021)^{xvii}. The use of the word *gay* is much “preferred” to the word *lesbian* in prime-time TV shows aired on

broadcasting channels, when referring to homosexual women. Though the word itself is not a taboo word anymore, the term *lesbian* is still unfortunately perceived as such in many cultures.

This self-censoring practice, adopted by scriptwriters and often resulting in the “emotional segregation”^{xcvii} of queer viewers, certainly stems from the recommendations issued by *The Statement of Principles of Radio and Television Broadcasters* in force in the United States. The document clearly states that “[i]n selecting program subjects and themes of particular sensitivity, great care should be paid to treatment and presentation, so as to avoid presentations purely for the purpose of sensationalism or to appeal to prurient or morbid curiosity” (cit. Bednarek 2010: 219). In my most recent work on scriptwriting for TV series presenting LGBT+ female characters, I also consider how such recommendations have produced an unexpected collateral effect on scriptwriting. Such collateral damages prove useful for a media and communication class to illustrate how ideological perspectives impact language and produce distortions in relation to the correct representation and perception of LGBT+ identities in traditional and new media. Below, I present just one sample dialogue involving two characters, Supergirl’s mother (Eliza Danvers) and sister (Alex Danvers). It occurs in a laboratory where the two women, both scientists, are working on a case. In this scene, Alex is forced to come out to her mother, after she has started her relationship with Maggie^{xcviii}:

“Mother: So what is it?”

Alex: [misunderstanding] *Oh*. I’ve got the main frame breaking down [...]

Mother: *No. I mean I know* you’ve been trying to tell me something

Alex: [sounding casual] *Oh! No*. [she leaves the desk and stands up]

[She moves to another desk giving her back to mother] [Shaking her head] “How?”

Mother: Keeping a secret disagrees with you, sweetie. [Alex turns]

Alex: [arms crossed] This isn't like that mom. [with sadness]

Mother: Does it have anything to do with Maggie. You mention her a lot. [she moves towards Alex] *My beautiful Alexandra* why, why is it *so* hard for you to tell me?

Alex: I feel like *I'm ...I'm* letting you down? Somehow [nodding]

Mother: Why would *you're being gay* ever let me down?

Alex: You always wanted us to have a *regular* life

Mother: Alex...Look at the life our family has led. Look at me, look at your sister. I don't think you believe I ever expected you to have a *regular* life. You were always gonna be *different* Alex, because you were always *exceptional* and I love [stressed] you however you are [Alex about to cry nodding] Come here [mother hugs Alex. Alex exhales]"

10. Conclusion

In this contribution I have proposed a transdisciplinary approach with the objective to draw the attention on an, apparently, harmless phenomenon that has hit the headlines as “the dead lesbian syndrome” across the web. The data presented, mostly retrieved from official sources, such as GLAAD reports, clearly show evidence of the phenomenon. This phenomenon reached its apex in TV shows in the 2016 season and help explain the following virtual “riot” organized through social media by LGBT+ fandoms. Such a vehement reaction on the part of fans has produced interesting effects, such as the creation of an international network of LGBT+ content creators. Secondly, it has effectively impacted the revision of the representation of LGBT+ identities in media products. Such revision, though having affected the representation of LGBT+ characters, to the same extent at least, the language “designed” for them. In order to highlight this aspect, I have therefore hinted at my current research on what I have parodically termed “the spare me the word strategy”. That is, a language strategy adopted by contemporary scriptwriters to tackle controversy and bypass censorship.

This latter research aims to demonstrate that in the digital era, at a time of perpetual interaction, real connections with audiences are only possible when hate speech and toxic messages are kept at the door of such serious discussions and language awareness or the use of a more respectful language put the word at the core of any form of textual analysis.

GLOSSARY

“Bury your gays” trope- Bury Your Gays is a literary trope which originated in the late 19th century, gained traction in the early 20th century, and which persists in modern media. The pattern of this trope’s usage states that in a narrative work (novels especially), which features a same-gender romantic couple, one of the lovers must die or otherwise be destroyed by the end of the story. Many instances of this trope draw a direct correlation between the couple confessing their feelings for one another, kissing, having sex for the first time and the character’s death; they often die mere moments or pages after their relationship is confirmed for the audience.

[https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1579&context=mcnair#:~:text=Originally%20Bury%20Your%20Gays%20\(also,social%20backlash%20breaking%20laws%20regarding%20E2%80%9C](https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1579&context=mcnair#:~:text=Originally%20Bury%20Your%20Gays%20(also,social%20backlash%20breaking%20laws%20regarding%20E2%80%9C). Last access 01/04(2022)

Dead Lesbian Syndrome- See “Bury your gays” trope applied to female characters.

Cisgender- Often shortened to "cis," cisgender is a term used frequently in the intersectional, feminist, LGBT+, and [transgender](#) communities. It is an adjective used to describe someone whose gender identity matches their body and the gender assigned to them at birth-- in other words, someone who is not [transgender](#), [nonbinary](#), or intersex.

<http://queerdictionary.blogspot.com/2014/09/definition-of-cisgender.html>. Last access 01/04(2022)

Fandom- Use the word *fandom* to talk about the community of people who admire a particular celebrity, hero, sports team, or TV show. If you are president of the Boston Red Sox fan club, you're part of the team's *fandom*.

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/fandom>. Last access 01/04(2022)

Heteronormative- Heteronormativity is the belief or assumption that all people are heterosexual, or that heterosexuality is the default or "normal" state of human being.

<http://queerdictionary.blogspot.com/2014/09/definition-of-heteronormativity.html>. Last access 01/04(2022)

LGBT+- The language used to talk about LGBTIQ people is constantly evolving. New terms appear. Terms that were forgotten or unused, even terms that at some point were deemed derogatory, have been reclaimed and have entered into common parlance today. In a move towards inclusivity, the older, shorter, acronym - LGBT - has been expanded.

LGBTQIA- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and/or Questioning, and Asexual and/or Ally.

<https://outrightinternational.org/content/acronyms-explained>. Last access 01/04(2022)

Lip service- An avowal of advocacy, adherence, or allegiance expressed in words but not backed by deeds, usually used with "pay". <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lip%20service>. Last access 01/04(2022)

Narrowcasting- Narrowcasting is defined as an activity that spreads a specific message to a selected small group and over a small geographical area. Its objective is to deliver customized ads based on the past buying pattern and liking of potential recipients.

<https://www.marketing91.com/narrowcasting/>. Last access 01/04(2022)

Pink dollar- The [money spent](#) by [gay people](#) as a [group](#).

<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/us/dictionary/american/the-pink-dollar>. Last access 01/04(2022)

Prosumer- Refers to consumers involved in production activities. [...] Participation of customers in the production process of content of information. <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/sharing-economy-as-a-new-organization-model/23887>. Last access 01/04(2022)

Queerbaiting- The term *queerbaiting* refers to the practice of implying non-heterosexual relationships or attraction (in a TV show, for example) to engage or attract an **LGBTQ** audience or otherwise generate interest without ever actually depicting such relationships or sexual interactions.

<https://www.dictionary.com/e/slang/queerbaiting/>. Last access 01/04(2022)

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ⁱ Antonio Carluccio (1937–2017) moved to England from the Amalfi coast (Vietri sul mare) in 1975 when he became a wine merchant of Italian imported wines in London. He is the founder of the well-known British franchise Carluccio's. Together with Gennaro Contaldo, he starred in the BBC Two series *Two Greedy Italians*, about Italian traditions and cookery.

ⁱⁱ Widely known as the cook who taught the British chef Jamie Oliver everything he knows about Italian cuisine, Gennaro Contaldo (born 1949) moved to London in 1969 from the Amalfi coast (Minori), like Carluccio. Over the last few decades, he has written many books about Italian culinary culture and has co-starred in many TV shows, especially with his protégé, Oliver.

ⁱⁱⁱ Among others, see Wall 2018 for a psycholinguistic exploration of the prejudices and anxieties of modern British society when confronted with Gino D'Acampo's 'hybrid' Italianised English.

^{iv} "Simplicity, because even before I started making television, about twenty years ago, many Italian dishes were presented in a very complicated way, as is still the case today. Instead, I arrived and reminded them what it means to make spaghetti with clams, a nice bruschetta with toasted bread, garlic and fresh basil. I suggested something as simple and delicious as fried squid. I went there to say: 'You know all these complicated things that these super chefs are proposing, but don't forget that the basic Italian cuisine is a colourful, simple cuisine with lots of flavour' and that was my winning move, I suppose" (my translation).

^v Aside from historical reasons relating to people migrating from Naples to the US northeast coast between the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

^{vi} E.g., the raised volume of his voice and its peculiar intonation; Cangemi 2014.

^{vii} For further details about foreign accents, accented speech, and intelligibility, see Busà 1999, 57-59.

^{viii} From Rogers and d'Arcangeli 2004, 119.

^{ix} From De Blasi and Imperatore 2001.

^x Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQO_sMDN3YQ, accessed 04/04/2021.

^{xi} Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0D_IyB_39s, accessed 04/04/2021.

^{xii} I refer to a YouTube video collecting Gino's funniest moments, uploaded on 12 December 2018, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJ6N9hllYHQ>, accessed 04/04/2021.

^{xiii} According to recast techniques of corrective feedback, the teacher reformulates the student's sentence without the wrong, non-native-like sections. In this case, the wrong noun phrase "a little nipple" is corrected to "a little nibble".

^{xiv} Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJ6N9hllYHQ>, accessed 04/04/2021.

^{xv} Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-Ccf5WymoI>, from 03:10 to 03:35. Accessed 04/04/2021.

^{xvi} For the relationship between code-switching and anger, see Dewaele 2010, 189-214.

^{xvii} Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8Xii7Wwxdo>, 05/04/2021.

^{xviii} "Disgusting! Disgusting! I mean, you've taken a recipe that my grandmother made thirty years ago and you're gonna put the fucking sour cream on top" (my translation).

^{xix} "Gino ... ogni italiano ha bestemmiato al posto tuo non ti preoccupare" and "GRAZIE GINO. DA TUTTA L'ITALIA".

^{xx} For further details about Italian and English code-mixing in restaurant menus, see Graziano and Mocini 2015; Graziano 2017; 2019.

^{xxi} Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZpiBPX2tog, accessed 05/04/2021.

^{xxii} Gino is often keen to correct English people's non-native pronunciation of Italian dishes or ingredients, probably as a gentle personal vendetta, or in comic sketches to spice things up. In this sense, one of the climactic moments in Gino's Italian pronunciation lessons to his British co-hosts occurred during his explanation of the true and authentic recipe of the carbonara pasta. Complaining about the way the English pronounce the Italian word *pecorino* and their mistakes in pronouncing Italian word-ending vowels, Gino recommends they pronounce the final <o> properly as /ɔ/, just to avoid confusion between the pecorino cheese and *pecorina* (with a final neat /a/ sound), the sexual position known in English as 'doggy style', as Holly suggests. Video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RtzXEs27MME>, accessed 05/04/2021.

^{xxiii} Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-RfHC91Ewc>, accessed 05/04/2021.

^{xxiv} Cfr. J. S. Imbornone, *Incesto travestito. "Sei personaggi.com" di Edoardo Sanguineti*, in *Parole rubate / Purloined Letters*, pp. 53-74:63, *Rivista semestrale online / Biannual online journal*, Issue n. 6, December 2012,

<http://www.parolerubate.unipr.it>, last seen 27/01/2022. In his work *Sei personaggi.com*, a rewriting of Pirandello's *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, Sanguineti overwrites the character of the clairvoyant Madame Pace using connotations of Eliot's Madame Sosostris. These connotations are identified in the clairvoyant's advertising sign and in a dialogue between the characters of the Father and Daughter in which Madame Sosostris is named using *The Waste Land* verses themselves.

^{xxv} Cfr. G. Scianatico, *Il teatro dei miti. Pirandello*, Bari, Palomar, 2005, pp. 46–47.

^{xxvi} Cfr. *ivi*, p. 57.

^{xxvii} R. Tessari, “L’approdo del teatro pirandelliano al mito: rifiuto della civiltà industriale e recupero dell’archetipo materno”, in *Il mito della macchina. Letteratura e industria nel primo Novecento*, Milano, Mursia, 1973.

^{xxviii} L. Pirandello, *La nuova colonia*, Milano, Mondadori (Oscar), 1991, p. 38. (Quanterba: – she has become the queen for everyone! / Trentuno: – The queen and the saint! / Papia: – With her child – / Crocco. – and her king!). All the translations by Pirandello's myth trilogy has to be intended as mine.

^{xxix} *Ivi*, p. 64. (With the arrival of the other women, La Spera goes back to her former self. /Osso–di–Seppia. We have so many women now! / Papia. And you're the same as before! / Crocco. Slut! Filthy girl! / Osso–di–Seppia (spitting). Pooh! Wash your face! / Filaccione. Pooh!)

^{xxx} *Ivi*, p. 104 (And indeed, the Earth, as if the tremor of the mother's desperate embrace were spreading around, begins to shake. The crowd's cry of terror with the exclamation “The earth! The earth!” is swallowed up fearfully by the sea into which the island sinks. Only the highest point of the rocky prominence, where La Spera has taken refuge with her child, emerges as a rock

^{xxxi} *Ibidem* (Oh my God, I'm here, alone with you, son, and only water around!). In this final embrace, which reaffirms the strength of the union between mother and child, is underlined the archetype of the hero: the child abandoned by the waters (K. Kerényi, *Prolegomeniallo studio scientifico dellamitologia*, Torino, Boringhieri, 1966), the man mythically immersed in the natural rhythms and in the immutable cycle of life according to an arrangement of Frye that indicates precisely in the mother the archetypal character of this phase. Cfr. N. Frye, *Favole d'identità*, Torino, Einaudi, 1973, p. 17.

^{xxxii} G. Scianatico, *Il teatro dei miti. Pirandello*, Bari, Palomar, 2005, p. 69.

^{xxxiii} L. Pirandello, *Lazzaro*, Milano, Mondadori (Oscar), 1991, respectively p. 28 e 52 (Sara. ... I wanted joy, me, joy and health for my children! / When a mother is denied the right to care for her children, when a mother who wants health for her children is wronged – what do you want? You give yourself away! I threw it all away and became a peasant – a peasant here, in the sun, in the open air!).

^{xxxiv} *Ivi*, respectively p. 24 e 32 (The sky, at this point, with the sunset, became all about flame. /Deodata. And all clothed in red she was, like a blaze from hell!).

^{xxxv} *Ivi*, p. 28 (Sara. I know that God gave it to us, even this flesh one, so that we could live it here, in health and joy!)

^{xxxvi} L. Pirandello, *I giganti della montagna*, Milano, Mondadori (Oscar), 1991, p. 159 (Ilse. ... Lord, it seems to me almost like a dream or another life, after death... This sea that we crossed... I was then called Ilse Paulsen)

^{xxxvii} Cfr. P. Puppa, *Fantasmii contro giganti. Scena e immaginario in Pirandello*, Bologna, Patron, 1978, p. 207.

^{xxxviii} L. Pirandello, *I giganti della montagna*, cit., p. 150 (All the others stand looking in dismay at the Countess who is lying on the green hay, her hair scattered, the colour of hot copper, her dress disused and painful, made of a purple veil, low-cut, a little worn, with long, wide sleeves, which easily retracted, leaving her arms uncovered). *Italic in the text.*

^{xxxix} *Ibidem*, p. 180. (Ilse. I am afraid of you, dear, only of you, do you understand it? /The Count (remaining). Of me? Why? /Ilse. Because I know you. And I see you. You follow me like a beggar./The Count. Shouldn't I stay by your side? /Ilse. But not like this! Looking at me like this! I feel all, I don't know, as if clinging to you; yes, yes, by *this softness of supplicating timidity* of yours. It's in your eyes, in your hands. /The Count (mortified) Because I love you.../ Ilse. Thank you dear! You have a special way of thinking of us, always in places where you shouldn't, or when I feel mostly dead. The least I can do is to runaway. I'd screammy head off. Oh! Mind you, it's a horrible wear and tear on you), *italic is mine.*

^{xl} In *Lazzaro* (p. 51), Pirandello uses the same words to connote the same repulsion Sara had in front of her husband: (Sara. – ma poi, quello che m'inferociva più di lui, era quella *mollezza della sua timidità*... – / Sara. – but then, what infuriated me most about him was *that softness of his shyness*... –), *italic is mine.*

^{xli} L. Pirandello, *I giganti della montagna*, cit., p. 172 (She always has like this, on her lips and in her eyes the smile of the pleasure she takes and gives).

- xlii T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47311/the-waste-land>, ll. 35-41 All the quotations are taken from this website. Verses are indicated. 11/09/2022.
- xliii Ibidem, ll. 43-56.
- xliv Cfr. T. S. Eliot, *La terra desolata*, trad. it. di A. Serpieri, Milano, Rizzoli, 1985, p.82.
- xlv A. Serpieri, *Le strutture profonde*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1973.
- xlvi The piece hasn't been reported because of its length. T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, "II. A game of Chess" ll. 77-103.
- xlvii A. Serpieri, *Le strutture profonde*, cit., p. 27.
- xlviii T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, l. 109.
- xlix Ibidem, ll. 111-116.
- l Ibidem, ll. 117-125.
- li Ibidem, l. 107.
- lii Ibidem, ll. 145-151.
- liii Ibidem, l. 148.
- liv Cfr. M. Melchionda (ed.), Note a T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, Milano, Mursia, 1986, p. 58.
- lv T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, ll. 222-227.
- lvi Ibidem, ll. 249-256.
- lvii Ibidem, ll. 432-433.
- lviii The difference between the terms *medium* and *technology* is negligible in McLuhan's texts, cf. "the personal and social consequences of any medium—that is, of any extension of ourselves—result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology.", he writes in *Understanding Media* (p.1, 1974).
- lix McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.
- lx One of McLuhan's axioms is that we cannot be aware of the new media until it has reached full potential and flipped over to its new form, cf. "Just before an airplane breaks the sound barrier, sound waves become visible on the wings of the plane. The sudden visibility of sound just as sound ends is an apt instance of that great pattern of being that reveals new and opposite forms just as the earlier forms reach their peak performance," he writes in *Understanding Media* (p.4, 1974).
- lxi McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. London: Abacus, 1974, (p.14).
- lxii Řeřicha, Václav, and Libor Práger. "Lamenting the Transitional Moment of Literacy Environment," *Silesian Studies in English* (2018): 18–26, p. 18.
- lxiii McLuhan, M., Molinaro, M., McLuhan, C., & Toye, W. *Letters of Marshall McLuhan*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1987. p. 308.
- lxiv McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. London: Abacus, 1974, p. 6.
- lxv The term was used as early as 2013, cf. Gardner, Howard, and Katie Davis. *The app generation*. Yale University Press, 2013.
- lxvi Řeřicha Václav, and Libor Práger. "The Language of Images in Technologically Modified Environments," *American and British Studies Annual*, vol. 14, University of Pardubice, 2021, p. 112.
- lxvii The concept of ground is clearly defined: "All situations comprise an area of attention (figure) and a very much larger area of inattention (ground) ... Figures rise out of, and recede back into, ground, which is configurational and comprises all other available figures at once." McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, (p. 5).
- lxviii Řeřicha Václav, and Libor Práger. "The Language of Images in Technologically Modified Environments," *American and British Studies Annual*, vol. 14, University of Pardubice, 2021, p. 112.
- lxix McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p. 87.
- lxx Marshall McLuhan Speaks Special Collection: *Man and Media*, 1997, p. 2. Accessed May 18, 2021. https://www.marshallmcluhanspeaks.com/media/mcluhan_pdf_12_ZS6aMYZ.pdf
- lxxi McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p. 7.
- lxxii McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p.8.
- lxxiii Marshall McLuhan Speaks Special Collection: *Man and Media*, 1997, p. 3. Accessed May 18, 2021. https://www.marshallmcluhanspeaks.com/media/mcluhan_pdf_12_ZS6aMYZ.pdf

- ^{lxxiv} McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p.107.
- ^{lxxv} McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p.106.
- ^{lxxvi} Prattichizzo, D., Chinello, F., Pacchierotti, C., & Minamizawa, K. (2010, September). Remotouch: A system for remote touch experience. In *19th International Symposium in Robot and Human Interactive Communication* (pp. 676-679). IEEE.
- ^{lxxvii} McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p. 138.
- ^{lxxviii} McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. London: Abacus, 1974, p. 177.
- ^{lxxix} McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p. 102.
- ^{lxxx} Řeřicha Václav, and Libor Práger. “The Language of Images in Technologically Modified Environments,” *American and British Studies Annual*, vol. 14, University of Pardubice, 2021, p. 113.
- ^{lxxxi} Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. London: Abacus, 1974, p. 233.
- ^{lxxxii} McLuhan, M., Molinaro, M., McLuhan, C., & Toye, W. *Letters of Marshall McLuhan*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 357.
- ^{lxxxiii} <https://www.songfacts.com/facts/shaggy/it-wasnt-me>. Last access 12/30/2021.
- ^{lxxxiv} According to [GLAAD’s 2020 LGBTQ+ representation overview](#), 68% of inclusive films include gay men, while only 36% feature lesbians and 14% have bisexual representation. (GLAAD 2016-17, GLAAD 2020)
- ^{lxxxv} <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/BuryYourGays>.
- ^{lxxxvi} <https://www.indiewire.com/2016/04/the-lexa-pledge-gains-traction-urging-tv-writers-to-be-more-considerate-when-killing-lgbt-characters-291567/>. Last accessed 12/30/2021.
- ^{lxxxvii} https://the100.fandom.com/wiki/Season_Three.
- ^{lxxxviii} <https://outoftheclosetonyourt.v.wordpress.com/2016/11/30/queer-numbers-in-2016-2017-television-season/>. Last accessed 12/30/2021.
- ^{lxxxix} *Executive Suite*. is an American [drama](#) television series based on the [1954 film](#) of the same name. It aired from September 20, 1976, until February 11, 1977. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_Suite_\(TV_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_Suite_(TV_series)) and <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0073988/>.
- ^{xc} In a study conducted by the University of Southern California in which 700 films between 2007 and 2014 were examined, only 0,4% of leading characters were LGBT+, none were transgender. (Deshler 2017: 33)
- ^{xci} The same cause of death for *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, when Tara was killed by a stray bullet, caused protests against the TV production but not to this extent.
- ^{xcii} CLEXACON was held for the first time in 2017 in Las Vegas, March 3-7 with 2,200 participants, and later in 2018 Las Vegas, April 5-9, 2019 and London, April 11-15 with 4,100 participants.
- ^{xciii} <https://www.thefandomentals.com/our-stories-matter-interview-clexacon/>. Last access on 01/05/2021.
- ^{xciv} The inaugural CLEXACON was held at Bally’s Hotel and Casino, in Las Vegas, from March 3-5 of 2017.
- ^{xcv} *First Monday in October* (1981). <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0082382/> last accessed on 13 June 2022. My transcription of dialogue.
- ^{xcvi} As we have seen in this contribution, *Supergirl* became the target of the protest led by Christian groups when same-sex love story between Alex Danvers, Supergirl’s sister, and Maggie Sawyer, was introduced to the public. In this case too, fandoms have started to refer to the couple as Sanvers, which likewise Clexa, results from the crisis of the family names of the two female characters. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIld6hYGSnFrQ53YMYiOZ0Q/videos>.
- ^{xcvii} The topic of “emotional segregation” is almost exclusively discussed within the field of ethnic-racial studies though it is central in questioning the institutionalized process whereby some viewers, namely queer viewers, are unable to see themselves as emotional equals, or as capable of sharing the same human emotions and experiences of the rest of the audience. Bednarek (2018: 29)
- ^{xcviii} *Supergirl* “Medusa”, S02E08, 2016.

THE CONTEMPORARY STONE SCULPTURES OF OLADAPO AFOLAYAN IN THE TRAJECTORY OF STONE ART IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

The oldest Nigerian art is recorded to be as old as *c.* 1500 B.C. – *c.* 500A.D. That is the Nok art culture which is made up of terracotta sculptures of animals and stylized human forms (Plate 1), pottery, iron tools, stone tools such as stone axes, and stone ornaments. Hence the appearance of stone as a medium of expression and function in Nigerian art, is as old as its art history. Stone art cultures existed in several places in Nigeria, especially in the south, and many of them have been historically acclaimed worldwide. Examples of such include:

- (a) 430 -450 Stone Monoliths in Ikom, Cross-River state (also known as Akwanshi, Ekoi, Atal, Alaptal) (*c.* 500 A.D. - *c.*900 A.D.) (Plate 2).
- (b) Granite Monoliths at Eshure Ekiti in Ekiti state (*c.*700A.D. – *c.*900 A.D.) (Plate 3)
- (c) 800-1000 Seated Soapstone Figures at Esie, Kwara state (*c.*1100 A.D.-1500 A.D.) discovered in 1775 and publicized in 1933 (Plate 4)
- (d) 18 feet Opa Oranmiyan Staff at Ile- Ife in Osun state (*c.* 1300 A.D.) (Plate 5)

Some qualities of these stone arts that have captivated the world include their quantity, as in the cases of the about 450 phallic monoliths scattered around 17 communities in Ikom and the about 1000 naturalistic seated human figures at Esie; and their size, like the 18 feet Staff of Oranmiyan in Ile-Ife. Also important to art history, is the significance of the forms and surface ornamentation to African oral history and as a link to the cultural past. For example, the scarifications and decorative markings on the Akwanshi (Plate 2) and Opa Oranmiyan (Plate 5) are believed by scholars (examples are Fagg and Plass, 1964, p.121; Willett, 1971, p.65; Drewal, H.J., Pemberton III, J., Abiodun, R., 1987, pp. 45 - 48; Agim,1995), to be inscriptions of an ancient writing system, coded with information, yet to be deciphered. Despite the awe these works have created worldwide, many of these groups of carved stone monoliths are still lacking in holistic information on several aspects of their production, meanings and functions. For example, Allison (1968, p.61) in his investigations on Nigerian stone art could not access the knowledge of the techniques or methods used in executing the works and their human creators, due the secrecy shrouding the unusual art. Allison (1968, p. 131) also posited that

African stone sculptures have not been given a position of peculiar importance in the history of Africa and its arts. The reluctance by the locals to accept human origins for these stone sculptures have also significantly hampered research and findings on several histories of the art forms (for many years Esie Soapstone sculptures were hypothetically believed to be divinely created or a result of humans that mysteriously turned to stone). According to the ethnographic surveys of Fagg and Plass (1964, p.121), stone was not widely used either in architecture or in sculpture in the areas where these sculptures existed, hence they may have functioned as spiritual or religious but certainly sacred icons. Presently the works have remained as they were found with no link to their host communities as there are no continued practice of producing such sculptures by the local inhabitants nor the continuity in their uses for any known function. Nevertheless, contemporary uses have been found for these objects in tourism, cultural and museum studies, ancestral worship, and community development. Oladapo Afolayan's initial foray into the tedious task of stone carving, according to him (Afolayan, 2020, personal communication), was not just only from interest but he also sought to give contemporary answers to several historic questions on the ancient stone forms. For example, that his stone sculptures can match the quality and quantity of the earlier works (Afolayan has produced about 300 stone sculptures during his over 30 years of art practice), erases all doubts of human origin for the ancient sculptures. The deliberate social function and impact of Afolayan's works also reveal that the earlier anonymous artists were deliberate in creating those works for socio-cultural impact and for utilitarian purposes.

Oladapo Afolayan is not the only Nigerian contemporary sculptor who has ventured into stone carving successfully. Onwughalu and Onuoha (2004, p.23) mentioned one Chief Gbadamosi Olokuta, who was discovered in Osogbo in 1963 by the Osogbo Art Movement facilitated by Ulli Beier (b. 1922- d. 2011). Chief Olokuta had been carving stone since then in the style of Osogbo art, however his works have a restricted function because he belonged to Adunni Orisa's (Susan Wenger) Sacred Art Movement and carved only figures that represented Orisa deities. Another stone sculptor was Professor Krishnan, who was invited by Nigerian artist, Bruce Onobrakpeya, to revive stone carving in Nigeria. Through the 1990s, Professor Krishnan taught stone carving in Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo state, albeit the stone carving he taught was thematically, stylistically, formally and functionally contemporary. Even the tools, techniques, and technology were modern and had no remote relationship with Nigeria's past works. Paul Olorunfemi Abuade is also a contemporary stone sculptor who specializes in Marble as his medium. Trained at Yaba College of Technology and an Italian Marble Institute,

he works privately in his studio in Lagos, Nigeria. Abuade works only on commissions which limits his practice and has made it difficult for him to mount exhibitions and expose his works to the world. In his interview (Guardian, Sunday February 14, 1987), he claimed to be reacting to the immense pressure that came with carving stone. According to Afolayan, stone-carving art and practice had actually died in Nigeria prior to his taking it up in 1985. His efforts at facilitating stone-carving at the annual series of Harmattan Workshops organized by Bruce Onobrakpeya, contributed to the revival of the art and practice. Many new stone sculptors are being trained annually and some of them are already in practice. Noteworthy is the role of Bruce Onobrakpeya in providing the space, fora, tools and equipment, and personnel to promote contemporary stone-carving (Oladapo Afolayan Interview, 2020).



PLATE 1 Nok Terracotta Head
Photo Credit: Google Arts & Culture



PLATE 2: *Stone Monolith*, Ikom, Granite 3.5ft
Photo Credit: Google Arts & Culture



PLATE 3: Guardian Figure, 42in, Eshure-Ekiti. Photo Credit: Google Arts & Culture

Culture



PLATE 4: *Male Figure*, Soapstone, 3ft, Esie,
Photo Credit: Google Arts & Culture



PLATE 5: *Opa Oranmiyan*, Granite, 18ft, Ile-Ife
Photo Credit: Google Arts & Culture

Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The methodology used in this study is an art-historical survey based on a purposive selection of Oladapo Afolayan for field investigation. The purposive selection of Oladapo Afolayan for this study depended on the following:

- (i) After over three decades of practice, the artist is presently the most prolific stone sculptor on the Nigerian art scene, with total number works about 300 stone sculptures to his credit. These works are distributed in private collections, gardens and galleries, public spaces, and also in public institutions globally. Since the discovery of Esie's over 800 soapstone sculptures, first in 1775 and publicly announced in 1933 by H.G. Ramshaw, Afolayan has produced the largest number of stone sculptures that are stylistically related and originating from one source.
- (ii) Afolayan, from research and personal curiosity, has adapted forms and styles profusely from historically famous Esie, Ikom, Ife and other Nigerian stone cultures. This he condensed into contemporary sculptures that are ethno-culturally linked, thereby maintaining continuity of ancestral art.
- (iii) The artist's works are socio-culturally and economically functional which makes him a cultural ambassador, advocate, artist- historian, and entrepreneur. The fieldwork comprised of interviews, collection of photographs, analytical observation and review of related literature.

The art theory of formalism was used as the framework for this study. This theory was pioneered by Viktor Borisovich Shklovsky (1893 -1984), Roman Jakobson, and Boris Eichenbaum, and developed by Roger Fry and Clive Bell in 1914, and advanced by Clement Greenberg in mid-20th century. It uses the analytical comparisons of art forms and styles to review the very nature of an artwork. This study finds this theory appropriate because the nature of specific artworks in the study is the focus of the paper. Elements such as colour, shapes, textures, lines and sizes are emphasized beyond the meaning and context of the works.

Discussion

Oladapo Afolayan: Biography and Art Practice

Just like his stone sculpture work titled "June 12" (Plate 15) shows footprints in stone, Emmanuel Sunday Oladapo Afolayan popularly known as the "Stone Man" has literarily left footprints not only in the proverbial "sands of time" but also in the idiomatic "stones of life". The name "Stone Man" is a worthy description of a man who has not only lived a fulfilled life but has also achieved his lifelong dream of being an artist and a stone sculptor. Today the

“Stone Man” is an important Nigerian contemporary artist whose stone art cannot be left out in the contemporary history of Nigerian art and the trajectory of stone-carving in Nigeria. Afolayan turned 60 years in 2020 and celebrated because for him, six decades in existence on earth is quite a memorable long period for any human, especially if the years have been occupied by creative endeavors and impactful living. Oladapo Afolayan feels even more fulfilled because he achieved his dream of conquering such a formidable art medium as stone. Stone as a medium, presented its challenges but Afolayan conquered its resistance as he said “...through dialogue with each stone boulder”. Even though Afolayan stated stone-carving out of curiosity, Dasilva (2002, p.81) noted that when he had to make a choice for a career, he still chose to work in stone as his medium. The dream to be an artist and a carver started many years ago. As a young boy he watched, through his window, the famous traditional woodcarver George Bamidele Arowoogun, carve his *Epa* masks. Arowoogun’s art studio was directly behind the home of the young Afolayan, who always looked at the works of Arowoogun and how he worked them. He also noticed the European missionaries and other colonial professionals who trooped in and out of Arowoogun’s studio and suspected that the carvings he produced must be of great importance. This experience and other significant influences affected Afolayan in his decision to be an artist and particularly a sculptor. He also benefitted from both the traditional art forms which existed in his immediate environment and the modern art he was exposed to through formal education. Osi town in Kwara state where Afolayan originated from used to be famous for woodcarving and was even the field in the 1960s from which Professor John Picton published his research “The Sculptors of Opin” (Picton, 1994, pp. 46-55). Afolayan’s forebears were also skilled in one form of art or the other. His grandmother Abigail Ebe was a textile artist, who weaved and dyed cloth. His father Isreal Oni Afolayan was a skilled Blacksmith.

Oladapo Emmanuel Sunday Afolayan was born on the 5th of June, 1960 to the family of late Israel Oni Afolayan Akanro and Juliana Ebe Afolayan in Osi-Ekiti Local Government Area of Kwara state, Nigeria. From Afolayan’s recall, he started art early in his childhood because he was naturally gifted and talented. He said “arts for me is an inborn desire, it is a life-long passion that had stuck from childhood. I vividly remember when I was a child, I could see images in the moving clouds that most adults could not see then...I couldn’t have chosen a better career”(Afolayan Interview, 2020). He also remembered carving walking sticks as his craftwork when he was in primary school, at a time when his other classmates submitted brooms, baskets and other common craftworks. He attended his primary education in his

community at Local Education Authority (L.E.A.) primary school, Osi, Kwara state between the years of 1965 to 1973. In the school he was encouraged by his teachers and the town's people, being recognized as a brilliant pupil of the only primary school in his hometown. He started his secondary school immediately after he completed primary school at Osi Central Secondary School from 1973 to 1978. During his secondary school days he was given a scholarship by one Mr Philip Olanakanmi Tella who was then a member of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) serving in his school. This Youth Corps staff, on getting to know about Afolayan's artistic aspirations, bought him his first Chisel and really encouraged him to pursue his carving delights. He ventured into several productions of different art works such as mural illustrations on hotel walls, drawings and paintings which made him very popular in his hometown and earned him, his initial nickname "Afosco Art". His artistic journey was temporarily stalled after secondary school when he worked briefly with the Ministry of Aviation as an Air Transport Control Officer and during the period he studied for his A- Levels at the Kwara State Polytechnic. However his desire to study art materialized when he gained admission to the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (ABU) in 1980. He completed his undergraduate program there in 1984. At ABU Zaria, Afolayan specialized in Sculpture and started his destined journey as a stone carver. As an undergraduate, he was inspired by the woodcarvings of Gabriel Bamidele, Mike Bamidele and Daniel Bamidele of the Bamidele Woodcarving Dynasty. Professor Zuren Dee, Ben Ekanem and Gani Odutokun, according to Afolayan, laid the foundation for his sculptural compositions today. Others who were involved in the moulding of this great artist at this level included Professor Olorukooba in Art Education and Professor Kojo Fosu in Art History. Stone carving as a specialty for the artist however actually started when he returned to ABU Zaria for a post-graduate degree program in 1985 after his one year National Youth Service. At this post-graduate level, Afolayan decided to explore stone carving as his research focus. His choice of stone as a medium during this period was based on a personal curiosity to know why African ancestors who created the historically famous Esie, Ikom and other stone cultures, carved stones and yet in the 20th century with so much industrialization and machines, Africa lacked a vibrant contemporary stone art culture. He knew that his talent as an artist was not going to suffice if he would excel as a stone sculptor, therefore in addition to working relentlessly he took formal stone-related courses such as Petrology to understand the physical characteristics of varieties of stones. At this stage of his training Professor Fatuyi and Sculptor Ben Ekanem were his supervisors, who were very impressed with the outcome of his many stone experiments. He completed his Masters of Fine

Arts (MFA) program in 1987. Fully equipped in talent, skill and education, Afolayan launched himself into his career as a stone sculptor, lecturer, administrator and mentor. From January 1988 till date, he has been in the employ of Federal Polytechnic, Auchi in present Edo state. Starting as a Lecturer III, he is presently a Chief Lecturer. Administratively he has filled several positions in Auchi Polytechnic such as Head of Sculpture Section, Head of Department, Dean of School and Director of Servicom. He has made enormous impact on the school and the Department of Fine Arts and sculpture in particular. He has been transferring his skills and zeal for work to the students. It is obvious that Afolayan is not selfish with his gift of talent as he is able and willing to impact his knowledge of stone carving to the students and leaving a very strong legacy. Many students of Art in the Auchi Polytechnic have specialized in stone carving because of how he made it easy and attractive. Today, there is a formidable team under the name International Stone League (Nigeria) which is practically made up of his former students including popular sculptors such as Suleman Taiwo and Akano Afolayan, his younger brother. Presently Auchi Polytechnic boasts of having the only and most endowed Stone Sculpture Garden in any Nigerian School of Fine Arts. This is as a result of Afolayan's work.

One ironic and interesting fact is that as much as Afolayan is zealously teaching others stone carving, the artist revealed that nobody actually taught him stone carving. He explained that when he picked his research on stone carving during his MFA program, it was a trial and error situation. However through resilience and hard work he worked his way to success. His stone carving training came later when he was already a professional, when he attended the 22nd Annual Summer Marble and Art Workshop in Piertrasanta (Lucca) Italy in 2007 and recently Marble Art Workshop in Carusi Sculture Vie, Carrara, Italy in 2019. These Workshops exposed and trained him in the use of contemporary tools and equipment earlier unknown to him. Afolayan was the second African to have participated in the Piertrasanta workshop. "Omidan: My African Maid" (Plate 6) is one of the works he produced during the workshop.

Oladapo Afolayan has participated in many solo and group exhibitions starting as early as 1981 in Zaria with the exhibition titled "Reaching Out". Other exhibitions include: "Towards 21st Century Art" at Auchi Polytechnic in 1989 organized by the Society of Nigerian Artists (SNA), "Vision for Excellence" in Lagos in 1989, "Towards 21st Century Art" in Lagos in 1989, "Towards 21st Century Art" in 1990, "Images of Nigerian Nation" in 1991 in Lagos, "Crystal Forms" in 1994 in Lagos, "Royal Dialogue" in 1994 in Lagos, "Oasis" in 1998, "Promoters of Nigerian Arts 5" at the Goethe Institute in 1999, "Art and Environment" in 2000 and "Beyond Lockdown" an online art exhibition in 2020. Altogether he has participated in

over thirty exhibitions where he has displayed his stone sculptures. He also has very important commissioned sculpture works in several locations all over Nigeria. They include: “Alaikoro (Town Crier)” in 1989, a 10 feet high composition located at the Olosi of Osi Palace in Osi-Ekiti Local Government Area, Kwara state; “Federal Myth” (A landing Eagle) which is a 10 feet by 9 feet cast stone produced in 1987 and located at the Federal University of Technology Akure Main Gate; “Eyo” a 15 feet simulated marble stone cast located at the Lagos House, Garki, Abuja; “Ogbe Abiyamo” (Plate 14), and “Intimacy” both stone carvings which are located at the Yemisi Shyllon Garden, Maryland Lagos. Other commissions are “The Seed in the Work of God” (Sower), a 2006 cast stone work, 10 feet high, located at Peace House Camp, Bethany Resort, Gboko Benue state, Nigeria. There are other commissioned works produced by Afolayan in this same Bethany Resort such as “Vessels of Discipleship”, “The Samaritan/Sychar Woman by the Well” and “Preacher”. There were also so many of his works that were bought by patrons or were given out as gifts without documentation. This lack of records, the artist regrets because today he is not able to account totally for all his works which may be well over 300 stone sculptures. These works are distributed in private collections, homes and galleries and also in public institutions. His first collector was Chief Olizanbu who was an executive of United Bank for Africa.

Afolayan has had the opportunity of meeting many renowned artists both in Nigeria and internationally. In Nigeria, Bruce Onobrakpeya’s Annual Harmattan Art Workshop in Agbarha-Otor, Delta state by the Bruce Onobrakpeya Foundation opened the doors for Afolayan to explore all the possibilities of stone and also the opportunity to mentor like-minded artists. Afolayan attended and facilitated at all the Harmattan Workshops at Agbarha-Otor in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 up till date (2020) and this has been a great boost for his career. Other workshops such as “National Stone Carving Workshop” in Lagos in 2005, “K12 Teachers Summer Workshop” at the National Gallery of Art Lagos and the “Marble and Art Workshops” in Italy in 2007 and 2019 exposed him to artists outside Nigeria and also have been avenues for collaboration with art and sculpture specialists worldwide. This has been very profitable for the artist. He says: “Art has been highly profitable to me. Being an artist has afforded me the opportunity to come in contact with, and be influenced by several great minds in the art world and their artworks. I’ve also had the privilege of training and raising several artists in the past thirty years. My artworks have paid my bills and have also been my source of livelihood”. The contributions of this humble and great artist to Nigerian art, particularly the development of stone carving cannot be over-emphasized. His life and works are of great

influence to contemporary Nigerian arts. At this stage of his life he looks forward to further mentoring and working to build solid supports for the future of art in Nigeria. His founding of the International Stone League of Nigeria and founding executive membership of the Sculptors' Association of Nigeria (ScAN) are some of his efforts in that direction. He is also looking forward to hosting the first National Stone Sculpture Exhibition in Nigeria. The artist has published three articles namely: "The Harmattan Workshop and the Evolution of Contemporary Nigerian Stone Carving" (1999), "Art and Society: Visual Art and the Pentecostal Controversy" (2000), "Trends in Contemporary Nigerian Stone Carving: Classification based on Technical Orientation" (2000)

In his extra-curricular activities, Afolayan identifies himself as a disciple of Jesus Christ, and being a minister of the Gospel as another vocation he is deeply committed to. He says that the Bible is his daily companion and his spiritual mentors are Brother Gbile Akanni and Professor Olugbenga Mokuola of the Living Seed Team in Nigeria. Reading of great books that are inspiring have also contributed to the shaping of his great mind. Creatively he has been inspired by the works of Michelangelo Buonarroti, Korczak Ziolkowski and the artists in his family, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Gino Lombardi and Pa Lucio Carusi. His wife Dr Olubunmi Ola-Afolayan who is a textile art and fashion design expert with a Ph.D., has continuously provided a day-to-day motivation for him in the arts over the years. The artist is a devoted family man with a large household. Typically two of his children are graduates of Fine Art and practicing in Painting and Sculpture. His hobbies include dancing and karate.



PLATE 6: *Omidan*, Carrara Marble, 2007, 2ft. 1.6ft

Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 7: *Alaboyun* Steatite Stone, 1987,

Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020

Formal Analysis of the Stone Sculptures of Oladapo Afolayan

The forms, themes and styles of Afolayan's stone sculptures have always been affected by his aspirations at various times. The forms of his early carvings were bulky due to inexperience from the fact that he had been self-taught and also because his tools were not sophisticated enough to handle smaller and more intricate pieces. However as he advanced in his practice, he imported power tools and equipment and expanded the variety of works. His works were also not initially stained (coloured), they were left in the stones' natural colours. The artist discovered staining accidentally when he was working with oily hands. The surfaces of his earlier works were also not finished as he desired due to limitation of his tools. Most surfaces were finished smoothly, which he achieved from grinding and sandpapering. However with advancement in tools, he has been able to create surface texturing, patterning and designing with lines and shapes. The medium which he commonly used was Steatite stone. His choice for this stone is because it is soft and easier to work on. He also uses Limestone, Marble, Quartzite and Granite. His works titled "Northern Aristocrat" (1989) (Plate 13), and "Aiyelujara I" (1990) (Plate 16) are in Steatite stone while Limestone was used for "Intimacy" and "Ogbe Abiyamo" (Plate 14) produced in 2000. "Brotherhood" (1984) (Plate 20), a very early work, was created in Granite. The forms of the artist's works mostly depended on the sizes and shapes of the boulders. He did not split stones but worked around them. The works were mostly in-the-round, he hardly made relief sculptures. They were also mostly vertically standing, very few works were presented horizontally.

Thematically, the works of Oladapo Afolayan can be described as socio-cultural and span different strata of contemporary life in Nigeria. The sculptures are mostly based on Yoruba idioms and traditional beliefs, Christian ideology, local socio-political happenings and issues, and cultural symbolisms of African existence. "June 12" (1993) (Plate 15) and "Siddon Look" (1995) (Plate 18) are political. The first is a memorial to the famous Nigerian political crisis that started on June 12, 1993 till 1998 and the second, according to the artist, is a reference to the Nigerian President Abacha's government and the tragic murder of Chief Bola Ige, the Chief Justice of the federation then. Three works that are examples of sculptures that thematically uphold Nigerian cultural heritage are "Northern Aristocrat" (1989) (Plate 13), "Ogbuefi" (1998) (Plate 19) and "Tribute to Nok" (1998). Symbolic works such as "Ere Ibeji" (1997) (Plate 12) and "Twin Form" (1998) depict the African traditional sacredness of the concept of twin birth while "Bond" (2019) (Plate 11) shows the depth of bonding of the African

family system. These are some of the works that promote African identity and cultural ideology. Other works classified under traditional symbolism are “Arewa” (1997), “Idapo Mimo” (1997) and “Alaboyun” (1987) (Plate 7).

The style of Afolayan’s works range from semi-naturalism to cubism, stylization and complete abstraction. Many of his works are also biomorphic. His works, closest to naturalism are the sculptures he produced during his stay in Italy. The obvious reason for this being that there was the availability of variety of advanced and sophisticated tools and equipment that enabled his human effort. “Ogbuefi” (Plate 19) is one of the semi-naturalistic works. “Northern Aristocrat” is cubism and according to the artist, the cubical form of this sculpture was one of its attractive qualities that made it a desirable collection item by Guinness Nigeria. He has had other works also being bought and collected because of the peculiarity of their styles. His stylized sculptures include “Ogbe Abiyamo” (2000) (Plate 12) which was commissioned by Engineer Yemisi Shyllon, a very popular Nigerian art collector with the largest private art collection in Nigeria. “Hidden Agenda” (1994) (Plate 10), “Aiyelujara I” (1990) (Plate 16), “Idapo Mimo” (1997) are abstract in style and also break the stylistic myth that stone works must be rounded at the bottom to be able to have stability.



PLATE 8: *Oladapo Afolayan*
h.2ft
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 9: *Aje Apeka 'nu Ko*, Carrara Marble, 2019,
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020

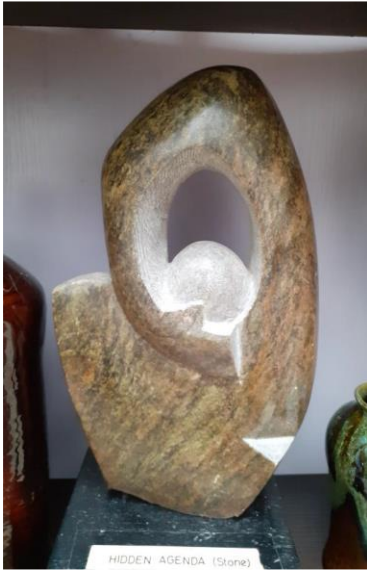


PLATE 10: *Hidden Agenda*, Steatite Stone, 1994, 1.4ft
2ft

Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 11: *Bond Bianco Carrara Marble*, 2019,

Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020

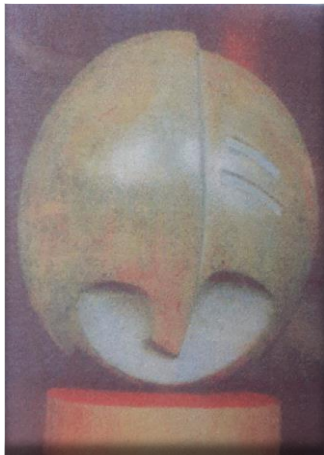


PLATE 12: *Ere Ibeji 2*, Steatite Stone, 1997, 1ft radius
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020

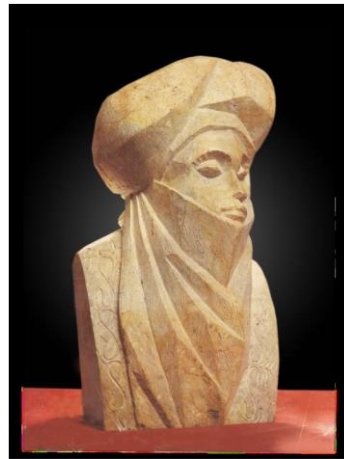


PLATE 13: *Northern Aristocrat*, Steatite Stone, 1989,
2.5ft. Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 14: *Ogbe Abiyamo*, Marble, 2000
2.5ft. 4.6ft. Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 15: *June 12*, Steatite, 1993, h.
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 16: *Aiyelujara*, Dolomite Marble, 1990, h.10ft
7in
Photo Credit: Ayodele O. 2020

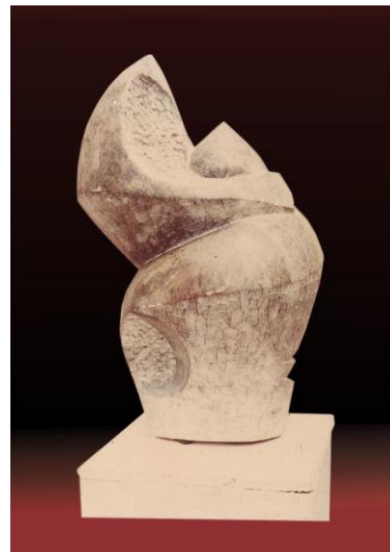


PLATE 17: *Abiyamo Steatite Stone*, 1987, h. 13ft
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020

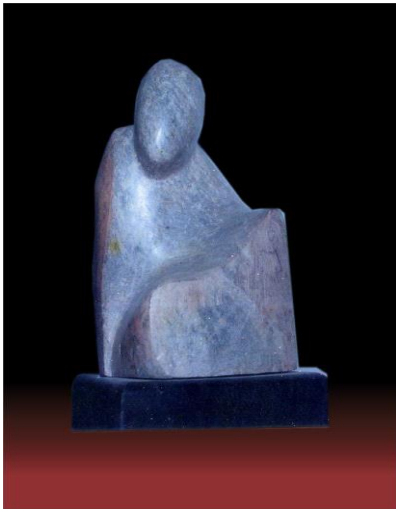


PLATE 18: *Sidon Look* Steatite Stone, 1995, 1.3ft
1.8ft
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 19: *Ogbuefi*, Steatite Stone, 1990,
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020

Conclusion: Continuity and Development

In the quest to revive the stone art and stone-carving in Nigeria, Afolayan has continued several aspects of the historical stone art and at the same time developed the art through the modernization of his practice. Formal similarities between the old and new such as in the case of *Stone Monolith*, Ikom (Plate 2) and *Aje Apeka 'nu Ko* (Plate 9) and *Eyin lo n d'Akuko* (Plate 21) are possible because Afolayan had adapted many of the conceptual elements of traditional African art such as phallicism, communality and fertility. The artist literally re-enacted the Nok art culture in his work "Tribute to Nok" (1998). The choice of Yoruba titles for many of his works is a way to further give African identity to his contemporary sculptures in global circles. Therefore titles such as *Alaboyun* (The Pregnant One), *Ewa* (Beauty), *Binu Nri Lobi Nyan* (A person's destiny is determined self), *Aiyelu Jara* (Life is Hollow), *Arewa* (The Beautiful), *Ogbe Abiyamo* (The Pain of Motherhood), *Idapo Mimo* (Holy Union), *Okun Omo Iya Yi* (The Connecting Birth Cord), *Omidan* (Maiden), *Eyin lo n d'Akuko* (The young shall grow), and *Iranse Birin* (Woman Messenger) are very few of the Yoruba names given to the hordes of stone works to situate them geographically and ideologically in Africa. Afolayan's works are exhibited and in collections worldwide therefore is an extension of the African cultural heritage.

Afolayan's advice for Nigerian artists is consistency in practice, convenient choice of medium, originality of style and hard work. Borrowing or adaptation from the past is one aspect

that he strongly believes will give longevity and identity to contemporary African art in globalization. Faith in God and resilience are also virtues he believes will go a long way to bring success. For the government his advice is that they should provide more adequate funding for arts and cultural agencies that will boost tourism, art entrepreneurship and national development. He believes that if art specialists head and manage art institutions such as museums, galleries and art councils, the promotion of art will escalate. Following the footprints marked by Afolayan in the sands of art practice in Nigeria will assure a survival of not only stone art but a future generation of vibrant and long lasting art practice.



PLATE 20: *Brotherhood* Concrete 1984 5ft
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020



PLATE 21: *Eyin lo n d'Akuko* Dolomite Marble 2020 h.
Photo Credit: Afolayan, O. 2020

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