

# Annali di Ca' Foscari

Serie occidentale

Vol. 51  
Settembre 2017

[online] ISSN 2499-1562  
[print] ISSN 2499-2232



**Edizioni**  
Ca' Foscari



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## Serie occidentale

[online] ISSN 2499-1562  
[print] ISSN 2499-2232

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**Edizioni Ca' Foscari** - Digital Publishing

Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

Dorsoduro 3246, 30123 Venezia

URL <http://edizionicafoscari.unive.it/it/edizioni/riviste/annali-di-ca-foscari-serie-occidentale/>

# Annali di Ca' Foscari. Serie occidentale

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**Editore** Edizioni Ca' Foscari - Digital Publishing | Dorsoduro 3246, 30123 Venezia, Italia | [ecf@unive.it](mailto:ecf@unive.it)

**Stampa** Logo srl, via Marco Polo 8, 35010 Bogorico (PD)

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Il codice **ISSN 1125-3762** identifica *Annali di Ca' Foscari* dal 1985 al 2009 (sino al vol. 48, in edizione cartacea).

Il codice **ISSN 2499-2232** identifica *Annali di Ca' Foscari* con specificazione di *Serie occidentale*, a partire dal 2015 (vol. 49, in edizione cartacea). A questo si aggiunge il codice **ISSN 2499-1562** che identifica l'edizione digitale online.

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## Les dialogues dans *Zazie dans le métro* de Raymond Queneau Effets de modernité

Fulvia Ardenghi  
(Università degli Studi di Trieste, Italia)

**Abstract** Raymond Queneau's *Zazie dans le métro* (1959) can be considered a behaviourist novel. Characters are barely outlined and look like puppets who spend their lives in a frantic rhapsody. However, the construction of the dialogic exchanges among characters is very refined ; this seems mostly aimed at a realistic effect, giving priority to the expressiveness of oral language. We have the impression that sometimes the primary narrator's discourse is tainted by the characters' speech ; the narrator does not only seem to describe events as they happen, but he also participates empathically in the narrative. At times, he seems to experience the same irrepressible urge for verbal communication of his characters. This paper explores the results of the encounter between the narrator and the characters' discourses, particularly the stylistic devices creating an effect of increased realism. From time to time, this contamination generates an effect of ambiguity in the enunciative reference. Queneau was undoubtedly aware of this ambiguity, given his inclination to the structured shapes of literature, the so-called 'framework', which is an essential condition of his art making.

**Sommaire** 1 Modes d'expression des personnages. Un choix délibéré et préalable ? – 2 Le 'rappel' célinien du « que », l'anticipation exclamative et la reprise anaphorique. – 3 Les temps de la narration : raisons et conséquences d'une alternance. – 4 Du glissement temporel : le « dit » bifront. – 5 *Zazie* comme un texte théâtral. – 6 Conclusions.

**Keywords** Queneau. Zazie. Discourse. Oral Speech. Direct speech.

### 1 Modes d'expression des personnages. Un choix délibéré et préalable ?

L'une des caractéristiques de *Zazie dans le métro* est l'abondance de discours direct, si bien que, si l'on extrayait du roman les passages dialogués (qui constituent parfois, à eux seuls, des chapitres entiers), on aurait l'impression d'être en présence non pas d'un texte narratif, mais d'une pièce théâtrale. Nous pouvons même affirmer que dans *Zazie* le discours direct

et sa variante, le discours direct libre, constituent au moins 80% du texte.<sup>1</sup>

En revanche, on ne trouve dans *Zazie* que de rares occurrences de discours indirect classique, à savoir, de discours indirect qui s'auto-signe sans équivoques grâce aux marques linguistiques, telles que la présence de verbes déclaratifs à l'intérieur de la narration et la transposition des temps verbaux et des pronoms personnels.<sup>2</sup>

Nous chercherons alors à comprendre quel sens peut prendre cette distribution des modalités du discours médiat dans *Zazie* et, en particulier, quelles conséquences engendre la prééminence accordée aux séquences dialoguées, c'est-à-dire aux discours directs.

Il convient de dire qu'il n'existe aucune indication précise de l'auteur en ce sens, au moins dans ses ouvrages 'méthodologiques' où Queneau a réuni ses réflexions sur la poétique et la littérature, comme *Bâtons, chiffres et lettres* ou *Le voyage en Grèce*.

Pourtant, il nous semble improbable qu'un écrivain qui a toujours démontré avoir le plus grand souci de l'architecture de ses œuvres (en termes de distribution des chapitres et/ou des personnages) n'ait pas songé aux potentialités expressives de la distribution du discours rapporté.<sup>3</sup> Car l'organisation intégrale de son œuvre est pour lui une condition préalable et indispensable, comme il l'affirme au cours d'un de ses célèbres entretiens radiophoniques avec Georges Charbonnier :

*J'ai toujours pensé qu'une œuvre littéraire devait avoir une structure et une forme, et dans le premier roman que j'ai écrit, je me suis appliqué à ce que cette structure soit extrêmement stricte, et de plus qu'elle soit multiple, qu'il n'y ait pas une seule structure, mais plusieurs. Comme à ce moment-là j'étais, disons, un peu arithmomane, j'ai bâti cette construction sur des combinaisons de chiffres, les uns plus ou*

1 On peut essayer de classer les différentes typologies de discours médiat par l'application de deux couples antinomiques : d'un côté celui de « oblique » vs « non-oblique » qui fonde la distinction entre discours indirect et direct ; de l'autre celui de « régi » vs « non-régi », où le caractère de « non-régi » suffirait à rendre « libre » tantôt le discours direct, tantôt l'indirect. Sur ce sujet, voir le schéma divisé en quatre parties proposé par Strauch 1974.

2 Les occurrences de discours indirect que nous avons repérées dans le roman se trouvent aux pages suivantes : 572 ; 578 ; 584 ; 588 ; 597 ; 639-40 ; 670-1. Il y a aussi des occurrences de discours direct de deuxième degré, lorsqu'un des personnages – à l'intérieur de son discours direct – rapporte de manière indirecte les mots d'autrui : aux pages 582, 594 et 618. Le fait de pouvoir les énumérer toutes nous confirme leur caractère exceptionnel.

3 Dans cette étude, nous allons utiliser les termes « médiat » et « rapporté » comme des synonymes. En effet, nous ne renvoyons pas ici à l'acception de « discours rapporté » que donne Genette (1972, 190), où il est synonyme de discours « imité », c'est-à-dire de discours direct. Nous pensons plutôt à Bakhtine (1977, 162) : « le discours rapporté est conçu par le locuteur comme l'énonciation d'un autre sujet » : en ce sens, le terme « rapporté » comprend alors également le discours direct et l'indirect, avec toutes leurs variantes.

moins arbitraires, les autres parce qu'ils m'étaient inspirés par des goûts personnels. Et *toute cette construction, en principe, ne doit pas être apparente*. C'était pour moi une sorte de guide, et *non pas une chose qui devait être manifeste pour le lecteur*. (Charbonnier 1962, 47-8 ; italique ajouté)

Ici, Queneau nous révèle d'abord que, dès la rédaction de *Chiendent*, son premier roman, il ressentait l'exigence de faire reposer l'organisation des matériaux de son œuvre sur une 'structure-fondement'. Le but n'était nullement celui de rendre évidente cette armature souterraine. En effet, il ajoute en conclusion : « d'ailleurs personne à l'époque ne s'en est aperçu » (48) ; et, un peu plus loin dans le texte, il explique :

quand j'ai publié ce premier roman, c'est-à-dire en 1933, si personne ne s'en est aperçu non plus, c'est que personne n'avait l'esprit tourné dans cette direction, tandis que, comme on commence à être prévenu que le roman doit et, en tout cas, peut avoir une structure, alors on le remarque beaucoup plus maintenant. (48)

Car, pour lui, il ne s'agit que d'assouvir une profonde exigence de contrôle de l'écriture, comme il l'explique au cours d'un entretien avec Pierre Berger :

Je me considère comme très classique, très classique déjà comme idées... comme idée de l'activité littéraire... j'ai utilisé alors des ultra-structures, des ultra-constructions... je me suis servi de choses archi-construites, enfin tous mes personnages obéissent à des plans, mes personnages apparaissent d'une façon rythmée, chaque chapitre est composé d'un nombre déterminé de sous-chapitres, et d'autres choses comme ça. (Berger 1952, 17)

Ce profond besoin de méthode et de contrôle de la forme semble trouver son origine dans la configuration psychologique de l'auteur, comme l'explique amplement Alessandra Ferraro dans son étude *Raymond Queneau. L'autobiografia impossibile*, dont il nous semble utile de citer, à titre d'exemple, les lignes suivantes :

Cette écriture a une valeur thérapeutique parce qu'elle remplit le vide angoissant de l'homme qui est seul avec lui-même. [...] Pascal Herlem,<sup>4</sup> qui semble partager cette hypothèse, soutient que le goût de Queneau répond à son besoin de remplir un *manque* originaire et fondateur, le

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Herlem, Pascal (1990). « Raymond Queneau ellipsopédiste ». Billot, Mary-Lise ; Bruinaud, Marc (éds.), *Raymond Queneau encyclopédiste ? Actes du 2ème colloque Raymond Queneau* (Université de Limoges, décembre 1987). Paris : Éditions du Limon, 181-93.

même qui selon Freud est à l'origine de la 'névrose obsessionnelle' de l'homme aux rats. [Nous avons affaire à une] nécessité irrépessible de contrôle du vide existentiel et de fuite de l'angoisse. (Ferraro 2001, 133 ; traduction de l'Auteur)<sup>5</sup>

En somme, nous pouvons affirmer qu'avec Queneau, nous sommes toujours en présence d'une exigence de structuration du matériel narratif. Cette nécessité reposerait sur une volonté de contrôle de l'écriture, volonté qui serait à son tour directement dépendante de la psychologie de l'auteur. Par conséquent, il ne s'agit pas d'un processus du faire narratif que l'auteur emploie de façon à ce qu'il soit perceptible du public. En fait, il faut parler justement du faire narratif et non pas du récit, qui en est le résultat. Il peut donc arriver que les lecteurs s'aperçoivent de l'existence de cette construction souterraine du texte. Cependant, Queneau considère alors plutôt que cela est dû aux indications qu'il avait déjà fournies en ce sens.

Par conséquent, sur le plan théorique rien ne nous empêche de croire que, chez Queneau, il existe aussi une volonté de contrôle du système du discours médiat, même si, apparemment, il ne l'a jamais affirmé. Les affirmations de l'auteur à propos de l'élaboration de *Chiendent* nous apparaissent dès lors évocatrices :

J'ai donné une forme, un rythme à ce que j'étais en train d'écrire. Je me suis fixé des règles aussi strictes que celles du sonnet. Les personnages n'apparaissent pas et ne disparaissent pas au hasard, de même les lieux, *les différents modes d'expression*. (Queneau [1950] 1965, 41-2 ; italique ajouté)

Dans la présente étude, nous nous proposons d'analyser, parmi ces modes d'expression, comment Queneau a su innover de l'intérieur par le recours, souvent massif, au discours direct et quels sont les retentissements de ce choix sur le plan expressif.

5 Nous rapportons ici la citation en langue originale : « Tale scrittura ha valore terapeutico perché riempie il vuoto angosciante dell'uomo solo con se stesso. [...] Pascal Herlem, che sembra condividere tale ipotesi, sostiene che il gusto di Queneau corrisponde al bisogno di riempire un *manque* originario e fondatore, individuato da Freud quale origine della 'nevrosi ossessiva' nel caso dell'uomo dei topi. [Siamo di fronte ad una] necessità irrinunciabile di controllare un vuoto esistenziale e di sfuggire all'angoscia » (Ferraro 2001, 133).

## 2 Le 'rappel' célinien du « que », l'anticipation exclamative et la reprise anaphorique

Le premier phénomène qui nous paraît intéressant pour sa valeur expressive est la fréquence de l'emploi pléonastique de la conjonction « que ». Elle intervient pour introduire le verbe déclaratif en position d'incise ou en conclusion du discours direct : « – Tonton, *qu'elle* crie, on prend le métro ? » (Queneau [1959] 2006, 563) ;<sup>6</sup> « – T'as tout de même pas fait ça, *qu'il* s'écrie » (618) ; « – Eh, petite, *qu'il* insiste et *qu'il* continue à crier » (578).

L'emploi de cette tournure expressive ne peut que suggérer un parallèle avec un autre écrivain contemporain qui a mis le langage au centre de son expérimentation poétique. Louis-Ferdinand Céline se présente comme l'audacieux rénovateur de la prose romanesque de l'entre-deux-guerres. Il se flattait d'être le seul 'inventeur' du siècle, à cause justement de son style inédit, mélange de syntaxe populaire, de verve railleuse et de lexique éclectique, ponctué de quelques mots d'argot.

Nous proposons de comparer les exemples tirés de *Zazie* à quelques occurrences de discours direct extraites du *Voyage au bout de la nuit* :

- Bardamu, *qu'il* me fait alors gravement et un peu triste, nos pères nous valaient bien, n'en dis pas de mal !... [...]
- Arthur, l'amour c'est l'infini mis à la portée des caniches et j'ai ma dignité moi ! *que* je lui réponds. (Céline [1932] 1952, 8 ; italique ajouté)

Céline, tout comme Queneau, recourt à l'emploi superfétatoire de la conjonction « que » comme clause introductive du verbe déclaratif du discours direct en position d'incise ou à la conclusion de la proposition.

Le *Voyage* ayant paru en 1932 et le premier roman de Queneau, le *Chiendent*, en 1933, on suppose que Céline aurait influencé Queneau. Il suffit, du reste, de lire *Bâtons, chiffres et lettres* pour savoir que l'auteur de *Zazie* revendique expressément son appartenance à la lignée d'expérimentateurs du langage en littérature dont, à son avis, le dernier représentant est justement Céline. Dans les mêmes pages, Queneau soutient que l'on doit aux écrivains bourgeois l'admission de la langue parlée en littérature. C'est également à un bourgeois, tel que l'a été Céline,<sup>7</sup> que l'on

6 Dans la présente citation, tout comme dans les suivantes du même paragraphe, nous avons choisi de mettre en évidence la présence de la conjonction « que » par l'utilisation de l'italique (qui n'est pas présent dans le texte original).

7 Cf. Queneau (1950) 1965, aux paragraphes intitulés « Écrit en 1937 » (13-26) ; « On cause » (51-3) et « Lectures pour un front » (149-202). De ce dernier nous pouvons citer l'extrait suivant : « Le style parlé n'est apparu dans la littérature française (comme dans la littérature anglaise) qu'aux environs de la première guerre mondiale. Et le premier qui a

devrait une innovation ultérieure fondamentale : la fin de la relégation de la langue parlée dans le dialogue. Ce ne serait qu'à partir du *Voyage au bout de la nuit* que la langue parlée peut enfin empiéter sur le domaine du discours rapportant, celui du narrateur. C'est en ce sens, alors, qu'il faut comprendre l'affirmation quenienne « moi aussi, je suis un bourgeois » (Queneau [1950] 1965, 53). Notre auteur se propose de conférer une dignité littéraire à la langue parlée, comme l'a fait Céline. Mais il tient, tout de même, à préciser que ce projet ne concernerait pas le lexique (argot et mots populaires ne l'intéressent que relativement)<sup>8</sup> autant que la syntaxe et l'orthographe.

D'ailleurs, la question de la syntaxe française revient très souvent dans les écrits théoriques de Queneau. En particulier, dans *Bâtons, chiffres et lettres*, il l'aborde dans les paragraphes suivants : « Écrit en 1937 » (13-26) ; « On cause » (51-3) ; « Connaissez-vous le chinook ? » (55-7) ; « Il pourrait sembler qu'en France... » (59-61) ; « Écrit en 1955 » (63-89). Face à cette multitude d'exemples, nous avons choisi de ne citer qu'un seul passage qui nous semble représentatif :

Qui pourra jamais, même 'inspiré', énoncer la phrase suivante : « En vue qu'une attirance supérieure comme d'un vide, nous avons droit, le tirant de nous par de l'ennui à l'égard des choses si elles s'établissaient solides et prépondérantes – éperdument les détache jusqu'à s'en remplir et aussi », etc. *Il s'agit ici d'une syntaxe entièrement écrite et que jamais parole de Français ne put prononcer.* On parle de Verbe – mais justement ici il n'y a plus de Verbe. On parle de Mot ou de Mots – de choix rares, de significations – mais il n'y a plus de mot, il n'y a plus que des graphies (et en effet, cf. *Un coup de dés*). [...] *Ces phrases ne sont plus en rien rattachées à la vie de la langue, ce sont des feuilles mortes.* (Queneau 1973, 184 ; italique ajouté)

Rendre vivante la langue écrite, voilà le pari défini par Queneau, et dont Céline est désigné gagnant. Parce que, comme l'affirme Danièle Racelle-Latin, dans la langue de Céline :

alors que les différents registres lexicaux semblaient être utilisés à des fins de contraste subversif, la pratique de la syntaxe suggère un travail plus subtil d'osmose entre langue parlée et langue littéraire. (Racelle-Latin 1976, 64)

écrit une œuvre antiacadémique dans un langage volontairement populaire (mais stylisé) a été Céline, qui, d'ailleurs, n'était pas un homme du peuple mais un médecin » (177).

8 On lit plus loin : « Il ne s'agit pas de truffer le français d'argot, encore une fois. Non, il s'agit de donner une existence littéraire au français tel qu'il se parle maintenant » (Queneau [1950] 1965, 68).

« Dislocation syntaxique » (64) est le nom que Racelle-Latin donne au procédé stylistique que Céline affectionne pour rendre à l'écrit la construction syntaxique (et, par conséquent, rythmique) de la langue parlée.

Le facteur dominant de cette dislocation consiste dans la tournure complexe définie par Léo Spitzer sous le nom de 'rappel', et qui entraîne de proche en proche dans le discours célinien une rythmique suspendue aux principes alternatifs de *l'anticipation exclamative et de la reprise anaphorique*. (64)

Prenons quelques exemples, dans lesquels nous avons mis en évidence, grâce à l'italique, les mots concernés par les relations anaphoriques :

Heureusement qu'*il* passait dans le quartier, à Toulouse, *Robinson*, pour tout à fait aveugle encore. (Céline [1932] 1952, 433 ; italique ajouté)

*Ils* poussaient la vie et la mort et le jour devant *eux les hommes*. (209 ; italique ajouté)

Dans *Zazie* nous rencontrons le même procédé, à différents niveaux. Le cas le plus fréquent est celui de la reprise anaphorique du complément direct du verbe :

– On disait que les chauffeurs de taxi *izan* [= ils en] voyaient sous tous les aspects et dans tous les genres, *de la sensualité*. (Queneau [1959] 2006, 618 ; italique ajouté)

La reprise anaphorique d'un complément indirect étant moins fréquente :

Bien sûr qu'il aurait pu *lui* foutre une tarte qui lui aurait fait sauter deux ou trois dents, *à la mouflette*, mais qu'auraient dit ses admirateurs ? (625 ; italique ajouté)

Parfois on assiste également à une sorte de réorganisation de la phrase que l'on pourrait considérer comme un procédé de mise en relief similaire à celui des présentatifs (c'est/ce sont/...) :

– J'insinue que *la gosse, qu'elle soit ici, ça* me plaît pas. (574 ; italique ajouté)

Si le personnage qui énonce cette affirmation avait suivi l'ordre syntaxique classique, il aurait été obligé de placer « la gosse » presque en fin de phrase. Cependant, son intention est surtout de signifier que « la gosse »

pose problème, non qu'il n'aime pas la situation qui s'est créée. Il ressent donc le besoin de placer « la gosse » en tête de phrase pour faire perdre toute valeur subjective à sa récrimination.

En fait, ce n'est pas un hasard si la plupart des exemples de « dislocation syntaxique » que nous avons repérés sont constitués d'extraits de discours des personnages. Le procédé, dont parle Spitzer, ne concerne le discours du narrateur que dans de rares cas. C'est probablement parce que le style du discours du narrateur est toujours conçu comme plus soutenu par rapport à celui du discours des personnages.

Il n'empêche que, dans *Zazie*, de temps à autre, même le discours du narrateur s'apparente à celui des personnages. Voici un exemple de mise en relief typiquement orale : « *Gabriel lui son boulot commençait pas avant les onze heures* » (571 ; italique ajouté). Proposition que l'on peut 'résoudre' de la manière suivante : « [Le boulot de Gabriel ne] commençait pas avant les onze heures ». Ce procédé de mise en relief se double parfois d'une occurrence de verbe déclaratif introduit par le « que » pléonastique à la Céline, produisant un effet expressif intéressant. Car, si la mise en relief ci-dessus est, somme toute, peu fréquente, nous avons vu qu'en revanche le roman est constitué par le 80% de dialogues, dont la plupart sont 'traditionnellement' régis par des verbes déclaratifs. Ainsi, le choix d'introduire de temps à autres ces verbes déclaratifs par une tournure empruntée à la langue orale (le « que » célien) produit un effet d'oralité considérable sur le discours du narrateur.

De plus, les conséquences engendrées par ce procédé stylistique sur le plan de l'expressivité du texte nous semblent tout aussi intéressantes. Voyons-en quelques exemples :

Gabriel [...] saisit la valoché à Zazie [...] et il fonce, projetant à droite et à gauche tout ce qui se trouve sur sa trajectoire Zazie galope derrière.  
– Tonton, *qu'elle crie*, on prend le métro ? (563 ; italique ajouté)

En apercevant Charles sans la nièce, [Gabriel...] bondit et sa face prend la teinte vert-anxieux.  
– T'as tout de même pas fait ça, *qu'il s'écrie*. (618 ; italique ajouté)

– Eh petite, où vas-tu comme ça ?

Zazie ne lui répond pas, elle se contente d'allonger le pas. Turandot gravit les marches de son escalier.

– Eh, petite, *qu'il insiste et qu'il continue à crier*. (578 ; italique ajouté)

Ces trois extraits semblent témoigner que la jonction « que » avec fonction d'introducteur du verbe déclaratif est employée lorsqu'on a une accélération du rythme narratif : Gabriel fonce dans la foule, Zazie lui galope derrière, Gabriel bondit, Zazie cherche à fuir en allongeant son



pas. Il n'est d'ailleurs pas fortuit qu'il s'agisse de trois séquences où la narration est au présent : de cette manière le lecteur a l'impression de participer en direct aux événements racontés. De plus, lorsque le discours direct se double de l'emploi de la jonction « que », on a davantage l'illusion que le narrateur raconte les événements au fur et à mesure qu'ils se produisent, car l'« anticipation exclamative et la reprise anaphorique » sont propres à la langue orale.

On peut donc en conclure que cet emploi particulier de la jonction « que », emprunté à la langue du *Voyage au bout de la nuit* de Céline, représente peut-être pour Queneau une ressource stylistique qu'il s'approprie afin d'apporter un supplément de réalisme non seulement au discours des personnages, mais aussi à celui du narrateur.

### 3 Les temps de la narration : raisons et conséquences d'une alternance

Essayons maintenant d'exposer brièvement la question du temps narratif dans un récit 'objectif'<sup>9</sup> qui, comme *Zazie*, présente des occurrences de discours direct.

Le problème relève de la rencontre entre le dialogue et la narration entendue comme « histoire ».<sup>10</sup> En effet, si, comme nous l'explique Harald Weinrich,

le dialogue, en lui-même, ne pose aucun problème temporel particulier [puisque] locuteur et auditeur, dont les rôles alternent au cours de l'échange verbal, utilisent en général les mêmes temps, [en fait] tout change lorsque le dialogue se trouve inséré dans un récit (*discours direct*). (Weinrich 1973, 205)

9 Voir Genette 1969 : « est 'subjectif' le discours où se marque, explicitement ou non, la présence de (ou la référence à) je, mais ce je ne se définit pas autrement que comme la personne qui tient ce discours, [...] inversement, l'objectivité du récit se définit par l'absence de toute référence au narrateur [...] ; les événements semblent se raconter eux-mêmes » (63) ; « le discours peut 'raconter' sans cesser d'être discours, le récit ne peut 'discourir' sans sortir de lui-même [...] : c'est pourquoi le récit n'existe pour ainsi dire nulle part dans sa forme rigoureuse » (66-7).

10 Voir Benveniste 1966 : « Les temps d'un verbe français ne s'emploient pas comme les membres d'un système unique, ils se distribuent en deux systèmes distincts et complémentaires. [...] Ces deux systèmes manifestent deux plans de l'énonciation différents, que nous distinguerons comme celui de l'histoire et celui du discours » (238) ; « le temps fondamental [de l'énonciation historique] est l'aoriste [= passé simple], qui est le temps de l'événement hors de la personne d'un narrateur » (241), tandis que « les trois temps fondamentaux du discours [sont] : présent, futur et parfait » (243).

Dans ce dernier cas, on doit recourir à toute une série de « signaux syntaxiques » (207) pour rendre perceptible au destinataire le passage du récit au dialogue. En général, les marques les plus importantes de cette transition sont : 1. le passage de la troisième à la première personne ; 2. la présence (facultative) d'un verbe déclaratif ; 3. le passage d'un temps de l'« histoire » à l'un du « discours ».

Or, dans *Zazie* ce dernier point résulte, pour ainsi dire, comme 'estompé', à l'aide essentiellement de deux procédés stylistiques.

Nous proposons de définir le premier comme 'la propriété d'adaptation caméléonienne du discours rapportant'. En effet, dans *Zazie*, même si la narration est généralement au passé simple, il arrive très souvent qu'après les dialogues, où sont naturellement employés les temps du discours, l'on passe à une narration au présent, comme par effet de mimétisme. Voici un exemple :<sup>11</sup>

[Zazie] *ajouta* :

– On y va ?

Le type paie et ils s'immergent dans la foule. Zazie se faufile [...]. Le type est sur ses talons, il est aussi subtil que Zazie. Pour le moment, elle a pas envie de le semer [...].

Elle s'arrêta pile devant un achalandage de surplus. [...]. Le type freine sec, juste derrière elle. Le commerçant engage la conversation. (Queneau [1959] 2006, 588 ; italique et soulignage ajoutés)<sup>12</sup>

Dans cet extrait nous rencontrons tout d'abord un discours direct (« - On y va ? ») qui est introduit par un verbe déclaratif au passé simple (« *ajouta* ») antéposé. En revanche, les verbes d'action qui suivent sont tous conjugués au présent, jusqu'à « *s'arrêta* ». On pourrait supposer, alors, que ce deuxième changement temporel est dû à une tentative de mimer les événements racontés sur le plan temporel. Si nous analysons le plan de l'action, nous voyons qu'il y a une opposition entre un moment de déplacement des personnages (« s'immergent », « se faufile », « est sur ses talons », etc.) et un moment de pause soudain (« elle s'arrêta »). Or, étant donné que le mouvement est rendu ici à l'aide d'une suite presque ininterrompue de verbes d'action au présent, il est d'autant plus compréhensible que l'arrêt de l'action soit représenté, en retour, par l'emploi subit d'un verbe

<sup>11</sup> Nous avons choisi de signaler les verbes au présent par le soulignement et ceux au passé simple par l'italique.

<sup>12</sup> Lorsque nous avons employé les crochets carrés, cela signifie que - au seul but de ne pas alourdir notre écrit d'exemples trop longs - nous avons omis des parties de texte où, en tout cas, il n'y avait aucun changement temporel ni aucune autre occurrence n'était présente.

au passé simple. Nous croyons plutôt que l'énonciateur de *Zazie*, tout en ayant choisi de raconter l'histoire de manière 'objective', c'est-à-dire à la troisième personne et au passé, ressent le besoin de donner au lecteur la sensation que l'histoire se développe sous ses yeux. Parce que, comme nous l'explique Genette :

*un récit au présent de type 'behaviouriste' et purement événementiel peut apparaître comme le comble de l'objectivité, puisque la dernière trace de l'énonciation qui subsistait dans le récit de style Hemingway – la marque de distance temporelle entre histoire et narration que comporte inévitablement l'emploi du prétérit – disparaît dans une transparence totale du récit, qui achève de s'effacer au profit de l'histoire. (Genette 1972, 231 ; italique ajouté)*

Cela ne signifie pas toutefois que l'on passe de l'« histoire » au « discours » sans le signaler, car, comme l'affirme Jenny Simonin-Grumbach dans son article intitulé « Pour une typologie du discours », il faut se rappeler que :

*c'est la corrélation présent-je qui détermine [l'équivalence entre le temps de l'énoncé et le temps de l'énonciation] présente dans un texte écrit. (Simonin-Grumbach 1975, 95)*

Essayons d'éclaircir cette affirmation. Depuis les travaux de Benveniste, l'on sait que le « discours » peut être défini comme un texte dont le sens doit être repéré par rapport à la situation d'énonciation ; l'« histoire » serait, en revanche, le texte dont le sens est inhérent, c'est-à-dire où le repérage du sens ne se fait pas à partir de la situation d'énonciation, mais se donne toujours à l'intérieur de la situation d'énoncé, en fonction du texte même. Il en résulte que le temps de base du « discours » sera repéré par rapport à la situation d'énonciation, tandis que celui de l'« histoire » devra être repéré d'après les événements énoncés.

Toujours est-il que le temps base du « discours » est le présent, puisque :

*la temporalité [...] est produite dans et par l'énonciation. De l'énonciation procède l'instauration de la catégorie du présent, et de la catégorie du présent naît la catégorie du temps. Le présent est proprement la source du temps. [...] Le présent formel ne fait qu'explicitier le présent inhérent à l'énonciation. (Benveniste 1966, 83 ; italique ajouté)*

Et pourtant, comme l'article de Simonin-Grumbach tend à le démontrer, le présent formel ne suffit pas pour que le texte qui le contient soit défini du « discours ». Il faut, par contre, que le récit soit à la fois au présent et à la première personne : voilà la signification de l'expression « corrélation présent-je » que nous avons vue auparavant.

D'autre part et en retour :

le passé simple [...] ne repère pas les événements énoncés par rapport à [la situation d'énonciation], même lorsqu'il est associé à la première personne. (Simonin-Grumbach 1975, 100)

Autant dire que la présence d'un passé simple signale sans équivoque que l'on est dans le domaine de l'« histoire ».

En conclusion, *Zazie* est à tous les effets une narration qui relève du type de l'« histoire » : s'il est vrai qu'elle contient des passages au présent, on n'y rencontre pourtant jamais (à l'exception du discours rapporté) la corrélation présent-*je*, tandis que, dès l'incipit du roman, fait son apparition le passé simple.<sup>13</sup>

Il en résulte que, même si parfois la narration passe quasiment *ex abrupto* du passé simple au présent (et vice versa), nous sommes toujours en présence d'une narration « historique » qui, pour des raisons stylistiques, se métamorphose dans plusieurs passages en une narration au présent. De plus, le passage d'un temps à l'autre est toujours entremêlé de quelques occurrences de discours direct. Par conséquent, le changement temporel n'est pas immédiatement repéré du lecteur, puisqu'il est médiatisé justement par les occurrences de discours direct, évidemment au présent. Il serait peut-être plus correct de parler de « glissement temporel », vu que, selon le dictionnaire, le « glissement » est, au sens figuré, l'« action de tendre progressivement et *insensiblement* vers quelque chose ». <sup>14</sup> Il reste à comprendre jusqu'à quel point nous avons affaire ici à un glissement involontaire, ou bien s'il ne faudrait pas, au contraire, y entrevoir une trace d'intentionnalité. Le fait que la narration au passé simple devienne narration au présent après les séquences dialoguées pourrait être la conséquence d'une sorte de phénomène d'assimilation passive : le narrateur, après avoir rapporté tant de discours direct, pourrait oublier la distance narrative, et relater les événements au présent sans s'apercevoir du changement temporel. Ou bien s'agit-il d'une ruse narrative d'un énonciateur avisé ?

<sup>13</sup> Voir l'incipit de *Zazie* : « Doukipudonktan, se demanda Gabriel excédé » (Queneau [1959] 2006, 561).

<sup>14</sup> Voir la définition de « glissement » dans le *Grand Robert de la langue française*, nouvelle édition millésime 2016. Paris : Dictionnaires Le Robert. Italique ajouté.

#### 4 Du glissement temporel : 'le « dit » bifront'

Le deuxième procédé qui crée l'effet d'« estomper » le passage des modalités stylistiques de l'« histoire » à celles du « discours », et vice versa, est un phénomène que nous appellerons 'le « dit » bifront'.

Il s'agit du fait que, dans *Zazie*, le passage d'un verbe déclaratif au passé simple à un qui est au présent est très souvent médiatisé par la présence du verbe « dire » conjugué à la troisième personne du singulier.

Il est alors nécessaire d'interpréter correctement ces occurrences de « il dit » dont le texte est littéralement parsemé. En effet, il pourrait s'agir tantôt d'un passé simple, tantôt d'un présent, le contexte n'aidant pas à faire la différence.

Voyons-en quelques exemples :

- Vous allez pas recommencer à m'emmerder ? demande Gabriel en prenant un air douloureux. Il vient pourtant de chez Fior, ce parfum.
- Faut comprendre les gens, lui **dit** Charles. Y a des croquants qui n'aiment pas squi est raffiné.
- Raffiné, vous me faites rire, **dit** le type, on a raffiné ça dans une raffinerie de caca, oui.
- Vous croyez pas si bien dire, *s'esclama* Gabriel [...].
- Même dans l'eau de cologne ? demande Turandot qui s'approche timidement de ce groupe choisi.
- Ce que tu peux être lourd, toi alors, **dit** Charles. Tu vois donc pas que Gabriel répète n'importe quelle connerie sans la comprendre [...].
- Faut bien les entendre pour les répéter, *rétorqua* Gabriel [...].
- Faut pas egzagérer, **dit** le type.
- Egzagérer quoi ? demande Charles. (Queneau [1959] 2006, 605-6 ; italique, soulignage et caractère gras ajoutés)

Notre '« dit » bifront' est presque aussi fréquent, dans le roman, que les occurrences de discours direct. Il est légitime alors de supposer que ce ne sont pas les changements de temps des autres verbes qui rendent ambiguës les occurrences de « dit », mais le contraire.

Cette interprétation aurait l'avantage d'éclaircir le phénomène de l'alternance temporelle. L'emploi du passé simple donne toujours l'idée d'un certain décalage entre le moment de la narration et le moment où les événements sont censés avoir eu lieu. Cette situation découle du fait que le passé simple masque moins que le présent la réelle distance narrative entre le temps de l'énonciation et le temps de l'énoncé. Cette distance existera toujours dans le texte écrit, puisque la coïncidence avec la situation d'énonciation n'est présente que dans les textes oraux (et d'ailleurs pas dans tous). Sur le plan fictif du récit, cette coïncidence peut cependant

être construite, reproduite par la narration. Les occurrences de « il dit » atténuent ce décalage, parce que, dès leur apparition, il n'est pas aisé de comprendre s'il s'agit d'occurrences de passé simple ou de présent ; la présence d'autres verbes conjugués tantôt au passé simple tantôt au présent autorisant à la fois deux interprétations contradictoires. Le « dit » bifront serait alors le ressort parfait pour déclencher la métamorphose du temps narratif, voire, une alliance inouïe entre l'« histoire » et le « discours ».

## 5 Zazie comme un texte théâtral

Il nous faut encore expliquer pourquoi dans *Zazie* les nombreux dialogues n'arrivent pas à se défaire de l'assistance du discours rapportant et continuent à être introduits par les verbes déclaratifs. Il est vrai que les interventions fréquentes de clausules comme « il dit », « il demanda » ou « il répondit » sont typiques de celui qui rapporte à l'oral un échange verbal auquel il a assisté. En effet, à l'oral, on ne serait pas capable de citer fidèlement un dialogue sans l'entrecouper d'expressions rendant plus intelligible la situation du discours rapporté. Essayons alors d'envisager le phénomène comme une tentative de mieux éclairer la situation énonciative, afin de voir si cette clé interprétative est conséquente.

- J'aime pas qu'on plaisante avec moi, *dit le taximane* [Charles].
- J'en prends note, *dit l'amiral*.
- Tu causes, tu causes, *dit Laverdure...*
- Vous en faites un sainfoin, *dit Gabriel* apparu [...].
- Pourquoi que spécialement tu nous as dit de venir ce soir ? *demanda Turandot*.
- Vous qui, *continua Gridoux*, jetez le voile pudique de l'ostracisme sur la circonscription de vos activités.
- Et qui, *ajoute Madeleine*, n'avez jamais voulu que nous vous admirassions<sup>15</sup> dans l'exercice de votre art. (660 ; italique ajouté)

Le passage ci-dessus est tiré du quinzième chapitre du roman, où il est question du spectacle de Gabriel au Mont-de-Piété, célèbre boîte de nuit parisienne fréquentée habituellement par une clientèle homosexuelle.

15 Il ne s'agit pas d'une coquille : Madeleine s'exprime ainsi dans le texte. L'énonciateur en effet ne manque jamais l'occasion de mettre en relief les problèmes que pose l'emploi du français 'officiel'. Dans ce cas, il a choisi de signifier, à travers cet « admirassions », le conflit qui se crée dans le personnage lorsqu'il se trouve contraint entre une nécessité syntaxique (qui imposerait l'emploi du subjonctif) et le caractère désuet de l'emploi du subjonctif imparfait.

Pour fêter les fiançailles de Charles et Madeleine, Gabriel invite tout le monde à l'admirer danser *La mort du cygne* en tutu. C'est pourquoi dans ce chapitre on trouve un nombre considérable d'occurrences de discours direct (ainsi que quelques-unes de discours direct libre) : il ne s'agit pas d'une conversation du tac au tac entre deux ou trois interlocuteurs, mais plutôt du fait que plusieurs personnages 'se trouvent sur la scène' et qu'ils parlent en même temps. Peut-être que chacun d'entre eux ne s'exprime pas d'une manière continue, mais dans l'ensemble il y a toujours quelqu'un qui parle. Or, il n'est pas inutile de remarquer cette situation à l'apparence bien banale et dénuée de tout intérêt, parce que c'est à cela qu'il faut faire référence dans l'intention de comprendre les occurrences de discours rapportant contenues dans ce passage.

En effet, si nous supprimons les verbes déclaratifs, nous n'arrivons à comprendre que partiellement les répliques de DD, précisément parce qu'il y a trop d'interlocuteurs. Le discours rapportant est nécessaire, parce que nous avons besoin qu'il nous soit spécifié de l'extérieur qui dit quoi (et parfois aussi, à qui il le dit). Dans cet exemple, le discours rapportant ne nous fournit aucune autre information au-delà du changement d'interlocuteur. S'il apparaît comme dans son degré zéro, il n'en va pas de même dans de nombreuses autres occurrences présentes au fil du texte.

Car, en relisant l'ensemble des dialogues de *Zazie* dans le but de saisir la raison de la fréquence d'emploi des verbes déclaratifs, nous découvrons un détail auquel nous n'avions pas prêté attention auparavant. Voyons, par exemple, la réplique suivante :

- C'est pas toi qui vas m'apprendre à comprendre ce qu'il raconte, *dit Turandot avec hauteur*. (681 ; italique et caractère gras ajoutés)

Nous avons employé le caractère gras pour mettre en évidence les mots qui ont suscité notre curiosité : « avec hauteur ». Il s'agit d'un commentaire de la voix narrative qui rentre parfaitement dans le cadre des didascalies d'un texte théâtral. Très souvent au cours du roman, ces insertions minimales de discours rapportant se doublent, non pas d'un commentaire tel celui que nous venons de rapporter (« avec hauteur »), mais du mot « geste » écrit entre parenthèses, telle une indication de régie. Il s'agit d'une véritable innovation sur le plan narratif. Voyons-en quelques exemples (italiques ajoutés) :

- Hautes comme ça (*geste*) (572)
- Et le métro ? Alors, je le trouverai par là ? (*geste*) (614)
- [...] la police les a là (*geste*) (678)

- [...] de véhiculer aussi ces deux personnes (*geste*) (634)
- [...] On dirait que toi (*geste*) et toi (*geste*) (680)

Dans les exemples ci-dessus, ce « geste » a sans aucun doute la valeur d'un déictique, à savoir, d'un de ces éléments qui dépendent de l'instance énonciative et qui signalent la connexion entre l'énoncé et sa situation d'énonciation. On peut donc associer ce « geste » à la catégorie des « embrayeurs » (Jakobson 1963, 176).<sup>16</sup> Ce procédé nous paraît alors une sorte de subterfuge du discours du narrateur, qui l'emploie dans le but de donner des informations extralinguistiques importantes sous forme d'indications mimiques et gestuelles, évitant de cette manière de devoir recourir à une digression descriptive. En effet, dans la plupart des cas, les indications extralinguistiques auxquelles ce « geste » renvoie sont très précises : le mot « geste » du texte nous signifie que le personnage fait le geste précis d'indiquer quelque chose. Les informations contenues dans les répliques de discours direct suffisent, du reste, à nous faire comprendre l'objet des indications gestuelles du personnage. Par exemple, dans le cas de : « - Et le métro ? Alors, je le trouverai par là ? (*geste*) » (614), le « geste » du texte renvoie à l'idée du personnage en train d'indiquer par un geste, justement, la direction qu'il faut prendre pour trouver le métro.

Les occurrences de « geste » de ce type sont assez nombreuses au cours du roman.<sup>17</sup> Parfois elles se trouvent comme agencées à l'intérieur d'un dialogue, ce qui nous fait comprendre qu'elles ne sont pas de simples commentaires, mais des informations non-verbales dont le narrateur ne veut pas faire l'économie. Considérons l'exemple suivant :

- Dis-y qu'il s'amène au bout du fil [dit Gabriel au téléphone].
- Charles, cria Mado (*geste*).
- Charles ne dit rien (*geste*).
- Mado s'impatiente (*geste*).
- Alors ça vient ? demande le téléphone.
- Oui, dit Mado (*geste*).
- Finalement Charles [...] s'approche. (652)

Ce passage nous confirme que le « geste » est partie intégrante du message du dialogue, parce que sans cela, ce n'est pas que les répliques n'auraient pas

<sup>16</sup> Au concept des « embrayeurs » Jakobson dédie un chapitre entier de son *Essais de linguistique générale* : « Les embrayeurs, les catégories verbales et le verbe russe » (176-196).

<sup>17</sup> Vous trouverez ci-après les références (comme numéro de page du roman) de toutes les occurrences de ce type que nous avons repérées : 567, 568, 574, 592, 595, 649, 672, 675, 679, 680, 681.



de sens, mais on ne comprendrait pas bien pourquoi Madeleine s'impatiente : à tel point que l'épisode n'aurait pas raison d'être raconté, à moins d'y ajouter une partie descriptive de 'ce qui se passe sur la scène'. Nous relevons donc une sorte de volonté, de la part du narrateur, de ne pas renoncer à exprimer ce qui, d'autre part, est difficilement traduisible dans un texte verbal, sous peine de la perte de l'instantanéité significative du non-verbal.

En effet, quelques années après la rédaction de *Zazie*, c'est Queneau lui-même qui affronte la question à la radio, au cours d'un de ses entretiens avec Charbonnier :

R.Q. Quand on note phonétiquement un langage parlé, il y a quand même une stylisation, et puis, on ne note pas tout ce qui fait l'oral...

G.C. On ne note pas l'intonation, le timbre...

R.Q. ... l'accent, les gestes, les regards, enfin tout l'entourage.

G.C. On ne peut rien noter de ce que l'homme va apporter par sa présence, quand il va lire un texte ou le dire ou le parler.

R.Q. J'ai toujours eu l'intention, justement, d'essayer d'aller plus loin que cette notation, avec des petits signes qui indiqueraient la gesticulation du personnage. C'est ce que j'ai fait, de temps à autre, d'une façon rudimentaire, par exemple, dans *Zazie dans le métro*, en mettant « geste » entre parenthèses, modeste innovation qui fut d'ailleurs reçue avec indifférence. On pourrait faire des espèces de petits hiéroglyphes indiquant le comportement. On pourrait aussi noter les accents. La notation du langage oral pourrait être un peu plus complexe, mais enfin, à ce moment-là, on va peut-être du côté de la musique.

G.C. Oui. Du côté de la musique et de l'art dramatique.

(Charbonnier 1962, 96-7)

En lisant ces lignes, on est convaincus que si Queneau avait écrit *Zazie dans le métro* au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle, il aurait sans doute eu recours aux émoticônes. Or, ce que l'écrivain ne dit pas, et qui pourtant se donne dans *Zazie*, relève de l'importance communicative de ce « geste ». Nous aussi, nous l'avons défini quelques lignes ci-dessus comme un 'commentaire' du discours rapportant. En fait, il ne s'agit pas (ou pas toujours) d'une partie aléatoire du message. Parfois, il constitue à lui tout seul les répliques du dialogue, comme on le voit dans les exemples suivants :

– Et vous, vous dites toujours ce que vous avez à dire [...] ?

– (geste).

– On est tout de même pas forcé [...].

– (geste) (617)

– Bin vrai ?

– (geste). (653)<sup>18</sup>

Tout est fait comme si dans le discours médiat ce « geste » pouvait exploiter à plein sa valeur de *shifter* et devenir, de cette manière, aussi important que le message verbal. C'est du moins ce que nous montre l'exemple suivant, où le « geste » est donné comme se produisant en même temps que le flux de la verbalisation du message, au point que, sur le plan iconique, il apparaît interrompre le discours direct : « [...] que c' (*geste*) est dégueulasse » (648).

Peu importe, alors, si le message indiqué par le « geste » du texte est immédiatement recevable du lecteur, comme c'est le cas des cinq premiers exemples que nous avons vus au début de ce paragraphe, ou bien s'il n'a pas une signification mimique bien définie. Nous voyons, en effet, que parfois le « geste » du texte nous signifie que le personnage a fait un geste, mais il n'est pas si simple de comprendre exactement de quel type de geste il s'agit : « Gabriel se sent impuissant (geste) » (565) et « Le type appela (geste) » (606).

Il est d'autant plus intéressant de remarquer que dans ce cas, l'indication « geste » ne fait plus partie du discours rapporté, mais du discours rapportant. Comme si, une fois extrapolé de son contexte original, il perdait déjà sa valeur de renvoi 'embrayant'. Raison de plus pour le considérer moins comme une ruse stylistique du discours du narrateur, que comme un phénomène ayant en lui-même la capacité de sortir de son milieu (le discours des personnages) et de s'adapter à la narration proprement dite. C'est précisément en vertu de sa condition amphibie, qu'il peut devenir partie intégrante du discours du narrateur :

(geste noble en direction de feu la veuve Mouaque) [...] (Nouveau geste non moins noble, mais englobant cette fois-ci l'ensemble de la situation). (687)

En fait, la direction du procédé stylistique (déferlement de la langue orale sur celle du narrateur ou bien ruse du narrateur) nous intéresse moins que sa nature certaine : il doit être tenu pour un phénomène important en vertu de son aptitude à pouvoir s'insérer à l'intérieur non seulement du discours des personnages, mais aussi de la narration proprement dite.

18 Les autres occurrences de ce genre se trouvent aux pages suivantes : 597, 599, 608-9, 617.

## 6 Conclusions

Au cours des paragraphes précédents nous avons analysé les occurrences de discours direct introduites par les verbes déclaratifs présentes dans *Zazie* : nous en avons repéré les différents types et nous avons essayé de comprendre quels étaient les effets de sens liés à l'emploi des variantes les plus fréquentes dans le texte.

Pour ce qui est du « que » célinien, nous avons vu qu'il s'agit d'une tournure que l'énonciateur utilise dans le but d'apporter plus de réalisme aux dialogues, en donnant l'idée au lecteur d'une participation affective du narrateur aux événements qu'il raconte. Celui-ci commence ainsi à les relater comme ses personnages le feraient : avec dislocation syntaxique et emploi redondant de la conjonction « que ». Le souci de réalisme serait d'ailleurs le pivot du roman, car selon plusieurs essais critiques c'est à la même exigence qu'il faudrait apparenter la recherche orthographique et phonétique que l'écrivain pousse au dernier degré dans *Zazie*.<sup>19</sup>

En ce qui concerne l'instabilité du temps de la narration, s'il est bien vrai que les dialogues représentent un moment du récit où la durée narrative des événements racontés semble coïncider parfaitement avec leur durée réelle ou, du moins, avec la durée hypothétique et potentielle qu'ils auraient dans la réalité, il n'en reste pas moins que le fait d'introduire ces dialogues par un discours rapportant au présent ne fait que « prolonger » cette coïncidence fictive jusqu'à comprendre le plan de l'énonciation. Le lecteur aura donc l'impression, non seulement que les événements se déroulent au fur et à mesure qu'il les lit mais, en plus, qu'ils lui sont relatés en direct.

En revanche, pour ce qui est du « geste », nous ne sommes pas en mesure d'interpréter la direction de ce phénomène - pourvu qu'il y en ait une. En effet, nous ne pouvons pas déterminer s'il s'agit d'un fragment de langue parlée détaché de son contexte d'oralité et aspiré par le discours rapporté, voir par celui du narrateur, ou s'il faut le considérer comme un crochet linguistique, à l'aide duquel la narration peut s'approprier certains aspects de la langue parlée qui échappent à la citation textuelle du verbal. De plus, comme ces aspects ne relèvent pas tous de la mimique ou de la gestualité, on trouve dans *Zazie* bien d'autres indications qui ont été forgées dans le même moule du « geste ». Nous renvoyons à ce sujet à l'article d'Irene Zanut, ayant le mérite non seulement d'élargir l'analyse à l'intérieur de *Zazie dans le métro*, où elle repère aussi des occurrences

19 Voir, par exemple, Léon (1971), 162 : « Malgré leur manque de cohérence, les notations phonétiques de Queneau ne sont pas purement gratuites. L'auteur a voulu transcrire, à sa manière, les traits essentiels du phonétisme populaire français [...]. Ce souci de réalisme va très loin ».

de « silence », <sup>20</sup> mais de l'étendre à l'œuvre entière de Queneau.

Encore une fois, il ne nous est pas accordé de trancher sur le phénomène de la contamination de la langue du récit par la langue des personnages dans *Zazie*. Ce qui est le plus difficile à saisir, c'est s'il y a justement une direction du phénomène : est-ce en vertu de la force de la langue orale que le texte en résulte imprégné jusque dans la narration pure, ou bien est-ce là la conséquence d'un dessein de l'énonciateur ?

D'ailleurs, l'incertitude est l'un de nombreux traits du roman, par lesquels l'auteur parvient à démolir de l'intérieur le « roman *bien fait* », comme l'affirme Roland Barthes (1964, 125).<sup>21</sup>

D'un autre côté, il est tout aussi bien vrai que la fidélité au discours rapporté est une marque de la volonté de construction du texte par l'auteur, d'une construction qui vise la tentative de dire, en le suggérant, ce qui ne peut pas être englobé tout entier dans le texte :

Les séquences de discours rapporté ne citant qu'une partie du discours « réel », la sélection devient significative ; l'élément cité devient *signe* au même titre que l'événement ou l'objet introduit [...]. Le dialogue dit que quelque chose est tu. Narrateur et lecteur tentent de reconstituer cette part manquante. [...] C'est souvent dans ce rapport entre le dit et le non-dit [...] que réside le sens du texte. (Heuvel 1978, 33)

Sans doute, comme toujours, la réponse se situe dans un juste milieu : il faut un écrivain qui veuille rendre la langue de la narration vivante et réaliste comme celle que l'on parle tous les jours, pour que la langue parlée puisse sortir du discours des personnages et animer le reste du récit, en suggérant tout un (autre) monde.

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20 Voir Queneau [1959] 2006, 623 : « Les voyageurs [...] grimpés à contresens sur les sièges, ils contemplaient avec émotion l'archiguide Gabriel. Il leur sourit. Alors, ils espèrent. – Sainte Chapelle, qu'ils essayent de dire. Sainte-Chapelle... – Oui, oui, dit-il aimablement. La Sainte-Chapelle (silence) (geste) un joyau de l'art gothique (geste) (silence) ».

21 Voir Barthes (1964), 126 : « Toute la positivité du roman mise en place [...] Queneau, sans la détruire directement, la double d'un néant insidieux. Chaque élément de l'univers traditionnel une fois *pris*, [...] Queneau le déprend, il soumet la sécurité du roman à une déception [...]. Les points de déception sont ceux-là même qui faisaient la gloire de la rhétorique traditionnelle. D'abord les figures de pensée : l'antiphrase [...], l'incertitude [...], [etc.] ».

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## A Context-Based Investigation of the 'Jewel' Crux in *The Comedy of Errors*

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**Abstract** This paper addresses a frustrating crux found in a passage of the *textus receptus* (the 1623 First Folio, the only substantive text for *Errors*). Editors have tried to make sense of the conundrum of this passage by applying emendations. Attention to the rhetorical strategies employed by the Author and to the surrounding context of discourse can throw some light on the intended meaning: equivocation is one of the most effective rhetorical devices available for comedy and rhetorical figures pertaining to the field of *aequivocatio* are at the grass-roots of this drama. Punning offers a solution to the hermeneutical puzzle of the passage by helping to unravel the crux: it participates in a compositional strategy that encompasses the entire play. Quibbling and double *entendre*, far from being superficial expedients to elicit humour, here must be understood as constituting a fundamental productive means to develop the play's rationale and to flesh-out the personality of its characters.

**Keywords** Shakespeare. Errors. Crux. Punning.

### 1

The unyielding crux that has baffled generations of editors and critics occurs in act two of this play, in the course of Adriana's *doléances* over the presumed philandering of her husband. The difficulties of interpretation extend to a wider section of the text than the one that is normally considered to be corrupt (382-91 instead of 385-89), therefore my intent is to provide a broader explanation in what ensues. In the First Folio we read these lines as reported below (for convenience of reference in what follows I will number consecutively each line in the margin according to Henning's *New Variorum Edition of "The Comedy of Errors"*):

382 Sister, you know he promis'd me a chain,  
383 Would that alone, a love he would detain,  
384 So he would keepe faire quarter with his bed:  
385 I see the Iewel best enameled  
386 Will loose his beauty: yet the gold bides still  
387 That others touch, and often touching will,

388 Where gold and no man that hath a name,  
 389 By falsehood and corruption doth it shame:  
 390 Since that my beautie cannot please his eie,  
 391 Ile weep (what's left away) and weeping die.

In the Second Folio (1632) the couplet of lines 388-9 was dropped by the compositor and it was also left out in subsequent editions down to the XVIII century. Lewis Theobald was the first 'scholarly' editor to address the problem of emendation in 1733 and ever since scores of critics have tackled the editorial problem of making sense of this passage.

The principle emendations have focused on the words *where*, *yet*, *and* and *by* and on the punctuation of the paragraph. Theobald changed *where* to *wear*, *a love* to *alone* and modified some connectives and generally the punctuation, as follows:

382 Sister, you know, he promis'd me a Chain,  
 383 Would that alone, **alone** he would detain,  
 384 So he would keep faire quarter with his bed.  
 385 I see the jewel, best enameled,  
 386 Will lose his beauty; **and** the gold bides still  
 387 That others touch, **yet** often touching will  
 388 **Wear** gold: and **so** no Man, that hath a Name,  
 389 **But** Falsehood, and Corruption, doth it shame.  
 [Emphasis added]

The change of *where* to *wear* has been followed by most editors (though scarcely finding this emendation satisfactory).<sup>1</sup> However most subsequent editors have preferred to disregard the emendation in line 383, maintaining *a love* as object of the verb *detain*.

## 1.1

It must be taken into account that the conversation between Adriana and her sister is all in resonant rhyming couplets rather than in blank verse - as instead is the case when the person addressed is the servant,

<sup>1</sup> See Charles Whitworth 2002, 16: "Despite the enormous progress made in the eighteenth century in the study of the Shakespeare text, by brilliant and inspired editors from Pope and Theobald to Johnson, Capell, Steevens and Malone their texts were usually based on, and departed from, those of their predecessors. Thus their successive editions of the *Comedy of Errors* moved ever further from the earliest surviving text, that of the 1623 Folio, which while it may have been printed from Shakespeare's own thirty-year-old manuscript, was itself, as we have seen, processed by several anonymous typesetters each of whom brought to his work his own habits and quirks".



Dromio – and, of course, rhyming puts an additional constraint on the inventiveness of the playwright, limiting his choice of words. It is likely for this reason that the idea of ‘keeping in custody’ (or ‘cherishing’) both love and marital fidelity gets expressed by two partly synonymous verbs, ‘keep’ and ‘detain’: the latter chosen to rhyme with ‘chain’, which ends the previous line. It is important to recognise the equation between the taking care of one’s love-relationship and the taking care of one’s marital vows in these lines, 383-4. The simile that follows elaborates on this idea, establishing a rhetorical comparison that looks at constancy in love from two opposite view-points: that of deep affection and that of superficial caring.

## 1.2

Therefore, here I give the following conjectural reading that differs from that of extant interpretations.<sup>2</sup> Adriana is hysterically anxious about her husband’s (mis)behaviour when out of her sight, as she suspects him of philandering. Her sister – presented as a sceptical spinster, one of many ‘unfeeling fools’ it seems – instead of reassuring her about her husband’s loyalty, tries to persuade her to leave him alone and overlook any presumed escapades, thus putting up with his hypothetical double standard. Adriana’s reaction to this advice is to protest that she cannot be unaffected by his extramarital dalliances because her love for him is true, like solid gold. If it were superficial like a gold-plate on a cheap ornament, it might wear off, being so misused (i.e. threatened by other women’s interfering in his affections). No matter how much he may deceive her and misbehave, she will notwithstanding continue to love him, though she feels she is losing all her allure for him. And, therefore, she is ready to die of a broken heart, as she does mournfully declare.

Three key words in the First Folio passage above and their position should be noted (love, enameled, name):

383 Would that alone a **love** he would detain  
 384 So he would keep fair quarter with his bed.  
 385 I see the Jewell best **enameled**  
 386 Will lose his beauty. Yet the gold bides still  
 387 That others touch, and often touching will,  
 388 Where gold || and no man that hath a **name**,  
 389 By falsehood and corruption doth it shame.  
 [Emphasis and caesura added]

<sup>2</sup> It is to be noted that the exchange between Adriana and Luciana first has to be construed in relation to its psychological context and then analysed in its structure.

Starting with line 388, one observes that there is a syllable missing (an up-beat, since otherwise the rhythm falters):

/ whěre góld / x / ánd nǒ mán thăt háth ă náme /

This gap has repeatedly provoked editorial corrective interventions, as seen.<sup>3</sup> Various expressions need clarification:<sup>4</sup>

- *would... detain* = he would keep in custody/care for/cherish their bond of love;
- *keep fair quarter... bed* = be true to his marital obligations;
- *enameled* = plated, gilded, embellished (possibly pronounced / Iné:məld /);
- *[a]bides* = remains unscathed, intact;
- *his* = its;
- *will... [a]bide* = remain unscathed, intact;
- *touching* = mishandling, perverting, seducing (bawdy innuendo);
- *where gold* = provided it be gold;
- *man that hath a name* = distinguished by his name (was pronounced / né:m /; see Kökeritz 1953, 165);
- *shame* = blight, deface, efface.

The phonemic sequence present in the word *name* is encapsulated in the preceding verb *enameled* (a portmanteau word), with an instance of strong *paronomasia*. The name of a person or of a family can be construed as a kind of outward varnish, a superficial coating of personal identity, which is one of the principle concerns of the play: the essence of one's individuality and the reputation that reveals/conceals it.

The ambiguous phrase “and often touching will, where gold” may be deciphered in this way: “and, by the frequent touching, will remain unscathed, provided it be real gold”, that is, “despite often being touched,

3 Baldwin 1965, 171: “A modern reader needs only suitable punctuation between ‘gold’ and ‘and’ ([388]) to set off the two halves of the simile”.

4 See D. Crystal and B. Crystal 2002, 123, for ‘to detain’ (keep back, withhold, retain), *Richard II*, I, 1, 90, Bolingbroke to King Richard, of money given to Mowbray: “The which he hath detained for lewd employments”. And for ‘enamelled’ (brightly coloured, multi-coloured, kaleidoscopic), *Two Noble Kinsmen*, III, 1, 7, [Arcite alone of Emilia]: “sweeter than...Th’enamelled knacks o’ th’mead or garden”; *Comedy of Errors*, II, 1, 109; *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, II, 1, 255; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II, 7, 28. See also the OED [1933] (1978): “‘enamel’ + to adorn magnificently; to impart an additional splendour to what is already beautiful; to embellish superficially: 1593 Thomas Nashe, *Christ’s Tears* 63 ‘You [preachers] count it prophane to art-enamel your speech’. Th. Nashe, 1599, *Lenten Stuff* 35: ‘I might enamel and hatch over this device more artificially’”.

the gold (which now becomes the grammatical subject) will abide, if it is genuine". The simile at the core of the conceit expressed by Adriana hinges on the likeness between love (383) and gold (386, 388): two jewels are compared, one fake and gold plated, and the other solid gold; the latter is able to withstand wear and tear.

The interpretative difficulty of the passage does not lie in the simile itself (usually well explicated by commentators) but in the application of the images (the metaphoric vehicles) to the situation of the speaker. Editors have referred the jewel/gold image in turn: to the reputation of the husband (Theobald 1733; Wells 1972; Greenblatt 1997; Whitworth 2002; Cartwright 2016), to the speaker herself or her beauty (Foakes 1962; Wright, LaMar 1963; Bevington 1988), to women in general (Taylor 1988), to marital fidelity (Baldwin 1962).

## 2

It is worth noting that one finds in this passage an instance of *comparatio amplificans*,<sup>5</sup> a rhetorical figure of amplification, as listed by Lausberg (1949, 37). The two terms of the comparison are separated by the modifying connective 'yet'. There is a referential shift after the first disjoined foot of the quotation, in line 388, from the vehicle of the metaphor to the tenor, namely Adriana's state of mind, in correspondence with the emotional climax attained by her impassioned speech. The attention to the manner of delivery required of an actor helps to make sense of the gap left by the missing syllable in the metre of this line: it is the pause required to catch one's breath or perhaps the space to let out a sob in the midst of irrepressible tears (the weeping referred to in the end line).

A further hypothesis may be advanced concerning the typesetter's possible intervention in the arrangement of the text on the page. If in need of space to fit the words into the frame (or simply by mistake), he may have brought together two segments, two hemistichs, one line apart on the printer's manuscript. That would not have involved any addition or subtraction of elements, only an economy of space – notoriously a frequent concern in EM printing.

### Paraphrase

383 If only he would cherish the **Love** that we shared  
and remain truly faithful to me.

5 Another instance of Shakespeare's use of this figure, by which Juliet intensifies her declaration of love, is to be found in *Romeo and Juliet*, II, 6, 32-4.

I know that any superbly gilded ornament  
 can become ugly. However the gold of a solid-gold jewel,  
 even if it gets frequently touched and (mis)handled by  
strangers,  
 will always remain unscathed,  
and no man whatever [or 'man of distinction'],  
 though deceitful and debauched, would be able to sully my  
sentiment [of **love**]  
 by his disgraceful behaviour.  
 But if my beauty is no longer capable of capturing his eyes,  
 391 my tears will efface the little that still I have, and I will die [for  
**love**] weeping.

Therefore, the love invoked in line 383 is the grammatical object and theme of the following discourse, to its very end. Adriana embodies the stereotype figure of the anxious, fretful woman in love. Appropriate acting can make her agitation mirth-provoking and moving at the same time. In addition, dramatic irony lies within the fact that the audience guess that Adriana will be unable to distinguish her husband from his twin, by using his (identical) name.

## 2.1

It seems unlikely that Shakespeare should have chosen the verb 'to enamel' in the place of 'to gild', or 'to plate in gold', without a purpose beyond its rhyme. The *paronomasia* upon 'name' would explain this significant choice, in view of its importance as a motif throughout. Furthermore, the ambiguous expression "no man that hath a name" may assume three referential meanings: 'no man whatever', 'no man distinguished by an important family name', 'no man identifiable by his name': the latter is the ironical case of the double pair of twins in the play.

This amphibology, however, leaves an opening for several destabilizing interpretations: the audience alone would be aware of the latter two, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive; a major theme in the play, as a matter of fact, concerns reputation associated with one's name. Shakespeare implicitly raises the question of whether we can find our bearings in a world that does not recognise us for who we are and mistakes us for somebody else. In the play the effective use of a distinguishing name, for the twins, ceases to obtain. The calculated ambiguity of the statement about name foretells to the audience the dramatic irony of the ensuing situation through a veiled proleptic clue: Adriana will use the name of her husband to unwittingly address her brother-in-law when he is brought to her house; and both sisters will be shocked at the latter's apparently

disgraceful courting of his sister-in-law, Luciana - a shameful behaviour in a married man heedful of his name and reputation.

In this passage what Adriana is referring to is her own genuine love untainted by her husband's unfaithfulness (dreaded, though actually unproven); this interpretation of the crux seems to afford the missing piece in the puzzle of Adriana's emotional state of mind. It links back to the opening lines of her complaint where she expresses all her frustration at feeling overlooked by her husband's dwindling attention (363-377) and 'roving eye' (380). And prepares us for the anguished self-denial of her conclusion.

Failure to take notice of the paronomasia on 'name', in my opinion, reduces significantly the efficacy of the passage by curtailing its resonance in the economy of the comedy. Unwittingly Adriana raises the question of the link between reputation and expected behaviour. The errant brother from Siracusa is granted not only the reputation, but also the name of his brother, thus experiencing complete estrangement. Ephesian Antipholus, in turn, finds that his name and reputation are no longer a warrant for trust and respect among his people, and ends up by being taken for a madman, in a condition of total mystification.

### 3

The question of what a name entails is a recurrent theme in Shakespeare's speculation about social issues and ethics; in this self-same play the word gets repeatedly punned upon. As a matter of fact it is by far the most significant among the key words in the comedy. The confusion between the twins arises equally from likeness of appearance and likeness of name, and therefore the question of identifying a person by the name - a necessity for the law, as the fellows of the Inns of Court well knew - is of primary importance. The play demonstrates the devastating effects of both mistaken identities and loss of personal identity.<sup>6</sup>

An instance of the investigation of the value of 'name' can be found in Egeon's recounting at vv. 54-6 and 131:

... two goodly sons;  
And which was strange, the one so like the other,  
As could not be distinguish'd but by names.

Reft of his brother, but retain'd his name.

<sup>6</sup> An in-depth discussion of identity and reputation in the play is to be found in the Introduction to *The Comedy of Errors*, edited by Kent Cartwright (2016, 14-23). See also Cartwright 2007, 332.

In the sense of reputation 'name' appears in 529-30:

ADRIANA Wouldst thou not spit at me and spurn at me  
And hurl the name of husband in my face.

And again in 671-8, (an extended instance of quibbling):

S. DROMIO The porter for this time, sir, and my name is Dromio  
E. DROMIO O villain! Thou hast stolen both mine office and my name.  
The one ne'er got me credit, the other mickle blame.  
If thou hadst been Dromio to-day in my place,  
Thou wouldst have changed thy face for a name or thy name for an ass.

There is also the joking on a name, that of Nell, the kitchen maid, "an ell and three quarters... from hip to hip". Furthermore, in the acceptance of 'by the authority of': "*Officer*, I do, and charge you in the duke's name to obey me".

We may also recall a passage where Shakespeare famously meditates on the significance of a name through the words of *Juliet* in the so called 'balcony scene'; this topic may have become a popular set-piece, an actual *topos*, by the time he had Cassius reflect on the weight of Brutus's name next to that of Julius Caesar, in the eponymous tragedy.

It appears, then, that the cryptic punning on the key-word 'name' in the crux (centred on the portmanteau word 'enameled') is not simply an isolated case of *paronomasia*, but rather part of a wide-ranging strategy underlying the thematic conception of the entire play: its concern with the question of mistaken identity, the primary comic error, involved.

#### 4

The noun in the title of the play, *Errors*, patently constitutes the other basic key-word of the drama: in choosing this title for his adaptation of the source material Shakespeare must have speculated at length on the semantic pregnancy of the term (which finds no equivalent in Plautus' play-title). The fundamental initial 'error' that drives the action of the play and provides that undercurrent of pathos – which is a foil to the prevailing comical ethos – is the unlawful entrance of Egeon into Ephesian territories (those of Epidamnus in Plautus' model text). The opening scene, by revealing that the duke of Ephesus is moved to compassion by the pitiful account of this traveller's plight, poses the fundamental ethical-juridical

question of the choice between Mercy and what the Law prescribes.<sup>7</sup> The exchange between Egeon and the Duke is staged as a veritable case in Court, with all the trappings of forensic rhetoric, in which the offender pleads his case (though half-heartedly) and the judge (equally half-heartedly) passes sentence (Skinner 2014, 204-5):

DUKE Hapless Egeon, whom the fates have marked  
To bear the extremity of dire mishap:  
Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,  
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,  
Which princes, would they, may not disannul  
My soul should sue as advocate for thee. (143-8)

The accused had declared having broken the law by accident, not intentionally - i.e. committed an innocent mistake. The judge nevertheless has to abide by the letter of the law even if it is made clear that the error stems from ignorance, not malice:

EGEON Yet, that the world may witness that my end  
Was wrought by nature, not by vile offence,  
I'll utter what my sorrow gives me leave. (37-9)

#### 4.1

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1978, 3: 277) the entry for 'error' gives the following set of meanings, mostly current in Early Modern England:

1. The action of roaming or wandering; hence a devious or winding course - poetic use (this is attested in Samuel Daniel, *Complaint of Rosemond*, 1594).
2. The condition of erring in opinion; the holding of mistaken notions or beliefs. Cf. Book of Common Prayer, 1548/9: "We are brought out of darkness and error"; Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, 1596, (3.2.77-9): "In Religion, what damned error but some sober brow Will bless it".
3. Something incorrectly done through ignorance or inadvertence; a mistake, e.g. in calculation, judgement, speech, writing, action, etc.

<sup>7</sup> This was going to be the guiding theme of the later comedy of *The Merchant of Venice*, endowed with still stronger overtones of tragedy.

Cf. Shakespeare, *A midsummer Night's Dream*, 1590 (5.1.250): "This is the greatest error of all the rest".

4. A mistake in the making of a thing, a miscarriage, mishap; a flaw, malformation. Cf. Lydgate, 1413; Dryden, 1657: "He looked like Nature's errour, as the mind And body were not of a piece design'd".
5. A mistake in matter of law appearing on the proceedings of a court of record, as also reflected in the locution 'writ of error' – a writ brought to procure the reversal of a judgement on the ground of error: *Act II Henry VII*, 1495, 'The seid utlagaries... were reversed by meane of errour'; *Termes de la Ley* 142, 1641, 'Error is a fault in a judgement, or in process, or proceeding to judgement, or in the execution upon the same in Court of Record'.
6. In mathematics, the difference between an approximate result and the true determination.
7. A departure from moral rectitude; a transgression, wrong-doing. [In modern use conveying the notion either of something not wholly voluntary, and so excusable, or something imprudent as well as blameable. Cf. Coverdale, *Wisd.* 1.12, 1535: "O seke not youre owne death in the erreure of youre life"; Bible, *Hebr.* 9.7, 1611: "Blood which He offered for Himself and for the errors of the people".

Indications of the extensive consideration Shakespeare was to give to the term 'error' can also be found in some of his sonnets, produced over a lifetime and eventually published in Quarto in 1609, by Thomas Thorpe.

The scope of contextual meanings assumed is considerable:<sup>8</sup>

- a. in the sense of transgressions, faults and flaws (see above, items 4,7). E.g. sonnet 96, vv. 5-8:

As on the finger of a throned queen  
The basest jewel will be well esteem'd  
So are those errors that in thee are seen  
To truths translated and for true things deem'd.

Interestingly, here high reputation is capable of concealing error; and so in sonnet 141, vv. 1-4:

<sup>8</sup> Excerpts from *Sonnets* quoted from Helen Vendler (1997).



In faith I do not love thee with mine eyes,  
 For they in thee a thousand errors note;  
 But 'tis my heart that loves what they despise,  
 Who, in despite of view, is pleased to dote.

- b. in the sense of innocent mistakes out of self-deception (item 3). E.g. sonnet 119, vv. 5-6:

What wretched errors hath my heart committed  
 While it hath thought itself so blessed never!

- c. in the sense of mistaken opinion and/or belief (item 2). E.g. sonnet 116, vv. 13-4.

If this be error and upon me prov'd  
 I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

Widely diverging interpretations can be given to this crucial word, suggestively capable of either indicting or justifying, as the case may be.

## 4.2

Interconnectedness is pervasive across the text. The disparate strains that run through this play intersect in the widely encompassing concept of error, as seen. This element functions as a catalyst for the provisional merging of heterogeneous perspectives, and several polysemic key words cluster around the term 'error': its range of meanings allows for a mingling of viewpoints.<sup>9</sup> All the main issues highlighted in the comedy are thus brought evocatively together: the question of mis-identification, mystification and loss of one's bearings, delusion of the senses and hallucination, loss of reason, misjudgement of people and their behaviour, suspicion of trickery and fraud, groundless jealousy, disregard for laws and for decorum. The play in its strains addresses some very serious ethical concerns familiar to the legal profession largely present in Shakespeare's audience.

On the whole, the message that is jovially put across is one of attention to the pursuit of truth (the major issue of the Age), as Francis Bacon was to recommend in a chapter of his *Essays* ("On Truth"): "no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth: (a hill not

<sup>9</sup> Etymologically this term derives from the Latin *errare*, which means to wander and can be taken both in a literal sense and in a figurative one

to be commanded, and where the Ayre is always cleare and serene); And to see the Errours, and Wandrings, and Mists, and Tempests, in the vale below" (Bacon 1625).

### 4.3

Other polysemic words that have also to do with a legal register of language, and are involved in punning are 'cause' (as in 32-4, an *antanaclasis*) and 'bond' (which together with its cognates, 'bound' and 'bondman', occurs no less than 15 times). Together with the key words 'name' and 'error' seen above, they all partake of the same semantic dynamic, generally involving concerns of the Law Courts, and so raise questions of demystification and dilemma-solving.

Needless to recall that the type of analysis applied to certain words and cognate expressions stems from the rhetorical training received in those days at Grammar school. The 'dialectical reading' taught there was a widespread method of interpreting texts; it led both readers and writers to address and exploit ambivalence in written communication.<sup>10</sup>

## 5

Ambivalence is sewn into the very fabric of this comedy. It is present in the evocative key words of the text, with their destabilizing polysemy, it is found in the wide-ranging equivocation, amphibologies, and misunderstandings; it is found in the duplication of the twins, and in the contamination of ethos, partly pertaining to Roman comedy, partly pertaining to Romance. And, above all, it is present in the cognitive scenarios that overlap: the one, empiric, based on fortuitous incidents and factual happenings; the other, imaginative, based on mental projections, supposed perceptual delusions and suspicions of magic.

But what counts most for the spectator is the ambivalence of the play's intent: on the one hand, *Errors* is meant to be a jocular entertainment that wishes to delight with its farcical action and slap-stick fun, but on the other, the comedy conveys a serious, at times poignant and destabilizing, ethical message: it problematizes issues such as intra-marital relationships of duty and respect, women's role in society, loss of identity and misplace-

<sup>10</sup> Dialectical reading is an off-shoot of *copia*, or 'the amplitude of discourse' recommended by Erasmus. *Copia* can be obtained not only by addition and variation on a theme, but also, as Erasmus shows, by the application of place logic - in an analytic sense - which encourages readers and writers to consider matters or concepts from multiple perspectives, investigating and expanding their ambivalence; for dialectical reading see Mack 2002, 73-5.

ment, familial love between couples and their children, the place of mercy in the framework of the law, the need for reconciliation, the (miss)identification of madness, the dubious practice of quack medicine and, finally and foremost, the hazards of putting trust in appearances.

The exploitation of ambivalence, through oblique allusions and disputable statements, in this early comedy, foreshadows a conceptual method that is to be found in the entire work of the Dramatist, which Germaine Greer synthesises as follows: “[Shakespeare] developed a theatre of dialectical conflict, in which idea is pitted against idea and from their friction a deeper understanding of the issues emerges” (Greer 1986, 23).

## 5.1

The passage of the crux we have examined acquires a core significance if seen against the ambivalent background of the comedy's governing motifs. It obliquely winks at the audience – possibly those more knowledgeable about the law – to elicit reflection and consideration. It hints at a prominent issue addressed by this destabilizing comedy: those errors in judgement affected by assumptions based on renown and on the attributes of identity. The passage also cautions against exploiting an untarnished repute to cover up marital unfaithfulness. Here Adriana, carried away by her jealousy, has drawn precipitous, faulty conclusions about the lack of punctuality of her unruly husband, an error that could lead to pernicious consequences. Her unbridled suspicions are potentially infectious and apt to spawn slander and damage reputation. If any admonition to the audience was intended, through this incident, that was against the mistake of hasty judgement – whether in Court or elsewhere – based on hearsay and unverified erroneous impression.

Once you accept such a reading of the passage – based on the First Folio version – no emendations or any other editorial intervention are required, save for the distancing on the page of the two independent segments of line 388, the real stumbling block at the origin of the crux.

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## Riappropriazione della 'blackness' in «The Song of the Smoke» di W.E.B. Du Bois

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**Abstract** W.E.B. Du Bois's poem "The Song of the Smoke" (1907) is a vehicle for a political statement of affirmation of racial pride. As Du Bois writes: "I will be black as blackness can- | The blacker the mantle, the mightier the man! | For blackness was ancient ere whiteness began". In only three lines Du Bois manages to condense effectively his ideas on the problem of the "color line": a new, positive connotation of the term 'black' encouraging a growing racial awareness and a historical (re)vision(ism) that, on the grounds of Herodotus's speculations revealing that the ancient Egyptians were black, denied the routine commonplace of Africa as a synonym of primitivism and backwardness. Strangely enough for someone who had been accused of not being black enough, like a poet/prophet Du Bois insists on the idea of blackness as an element of distinction through a figurative language characterized by evocative metaphors and repetitions. "The Song of the Smoke" is therefore a groundbreaking poem if one considers the spreading of the ideas of 'Black power' and 'Black is beautiful' in the 1960s and the later cultural reevaluation and reappropriation of the slang term 'nigga'.

**Keywords** W.E.B. Du Bois. The Song of the Smoke. The Color Line. Blackness.

Chissà cosa avrebbe pensato W.E.B. Du Bois se avesse notato che oggi sono presenti in rete diversi video che documentano la recitazione della sua poesia «The Song of the Smoke» (1907). Interpretazioni variegata, che oscillano tra esercizi mnemonici, *reading* dinamici in stile *hip hop*, fino ad arrivare paradossalmente all'appassionata declamazione di questa poesia, un inno al riscatto della 'negritudine', da parte di un giovane bianco. Una sorta di annullamento della linea del colore, ancor più singolare se si considerano le ultime vicende politiche americane che hanno confermato, aggiornandola, la profezia di Du Bois secondo cui il problema del ventesimo (e, aggiungiamo, del ventunesimo) secolo è il problema della linea del colore.

Pubblicata sulla rivista militante significativamente denominata *The Horizon: A Journal of the Color Line*, una delle prime a dare spazio a contributi creativi di scrittori neri, «The Song of the Smoke» si configura come una dichiarazione politica di affermazione di orgoglio razziale. Organo del *Niagara Movement*, organizzazione antisegregazionista fondata nel 1905 da Du Bois e da William Monroe Trotter, *The Horizon* era divisa in tre sezioni, indipendenti ma intimamente interconnesse: 'The Over-Look', che presentava saggi e opere letterarie; 'The In-Look', un notiziario basato su

fonti di stampa afroamericane e 'The Out-Look', un compendio di articoli tratti da vari periodici.<sup>1</sup>

Altrove (Elia 2015, 2016a, 2016b) abbiamo cercato di dimostrare come i contributi creativi di Du Bois (soprattutto i racconti e i romanzi) possano rappresentare un'estensione e uno sviluppo della saggistica. In effetti, le opere narrative mettono letteralmente in scena le questioni socio-politiche discusse e argomentate lucidamente nei saggi, affidando alle trame e ai personaggi una serie di scenari che consentono al lettore di 'sentire' quasi fisicamente gli effetti delle problematiche ivi descritte. Per riattribuire il giusto rilievo a situazioni storiche distorte o non considerate in maniera adeguata dalle narrazioni tradizionali, paradossalmente Du Bois fece ricorso all'immaginazione come valido strumento di interpretazione e di analisi sociale.

Utilizziamo deliberatamente il termine 'sentire' facendo riferimento alle analoghe strategie narrative di Octavia E. Butler, che descrisse minuziosamente le atrocità del periodo schiavista (e le conseguenze fisiche e psicologiche su coloro che le subivano) proprio per farne percepire concretamente al lettore la violenza. Ad esempio, ricordiamo l'amputazione di un braccio subita da Dana, protagonista in *Kindred* (1979), romanzo che oscilla su due *setting* paralleli (Los Angeles/1976 e Maryland/1815) in cui Dana inesplicabilmente si muove. Nel corso del viaggio spazio/temporale dal Maryland schiavista a Los Angeles, Dana subisce questo trauma fisico proprio perché, sostiene Butler, un suo ritorno nel presente da incolume non avrebbe avuto senso. Tale esperienza dolorosa consente al lettore di 'sentire' la schiavitù, di vivere sulla propria pelle la ferita subita dalla protagonista (e da un intero popolo).<sup>2</sup>

Come sarebbe stato per Butler, ci sembra che la *raison d'être* della narrativa di Du Bois risieda principalmente nell'esigenza di far percepire ai suoi lettori la storia delle drammatiche ingiustizie subite degli afroamericani. Ricare in forma narrativa delle situazioni reali gli consentiva di attuare un dialogismo tra narrativa e saggistica finalizzato a un ulteriore rafforzamento delle sue argomentazioni. Un discorso simile può essere avanzato anche per quanto concerne la produzione poetica, componente importante, ma non ancora sufficientemente esplorata nella galassia delle opere di Du Bois, decine di migliaia di pagine tra saggistica, narrativa, articoli, corrispondenza e quant'altro da lui pubblicato fino alla morte nel 1963, quasi

1 Su *The Horizon* cf. Ashton 2001.

2 Cf. Snider [2004] (2010), 214: «I was trying to get people to *feel* slavery. I was trying to get across the kind of emotional and psychological stones that slavery threw at people» (corsivo di Butler); e Kenan 1991, 497-8: «*Kenan*: Violence also seems to be a part of the fabric of your *oeuvre*, in a sense. The fact that Dana loses her arm, in *Kindred*, which is inexplicable on one level... *Butler*: [...] I couldn't let her come back whole and that, I think, really symbolizes her not coming back whole. Antebellum slavery didn't leave people quite whole».

centenario.<sup>3</sup> In realtà, alcune di queste poesie si distinguono proprio per la stessa peculiarità, esercitando un grande impatto sul lettore e facendo 'sentire' i problemi in maniera estremamente incisiva. «A Litany of Atlanta» (1906), ad esempio, presenta un'appassionata denuncia del linciaggio di decine di neri ad Atlanta nel 1906. In versi liberi, la poesia utilizza un linguaggio poetico che fa ricorso a termini arcaici ('Thou', 'Thy', 'Thee' e così via) che generano una curiosa difformità tra la ricercatezza formale e la brutalità degli eventi rievocati. Pur caratterizzata da significative differenze di natura stilistica e tematica, «The Song of the Smoke» coinvolge in modo analogo il lettore nella rivendicazione dei diritti del popolo afroamericano. Tuttavia, laddove «A Litany of Atlanta» rivela una certa rassegnazione e una sfiducia perfino in un Dio che permette che accadano tali atrocità, «The Song of the Smoke» ci mostra uno spirito molto più battagliero che, come vedremo, si manifesta in un riscatto della 'blackness'.

Entriamo nel merito. Dal punto di vista formale, si tratta di una ballata narrata in prima persona le cui quattro strofe, di undici versi ognuna, si articolano su una struttura ben delineata (*abccdddeeb*), contraddistinta da un utilizzo insistente sia di rime baciata che di rime interne. Per tale motivo la poesia si presta a essere declamata (e ciò probabilmente ne giustifica la diffusione in rete, pur trattandosi di una poesia apparentemente minore). In effetti, «The Song of the Smoke» si avvale del consueto arsenale di figure retoriche (metafore, similitudini, personificazioni, iperboli, allitterazioni e così via) che ne amplificano l'evocatività e la musicalità. Nella versione originale, la poesia si segnala inoltre per la struttura circolare, dal momento che si apre e si chiude con lo stesso distico («I am the Smoke King | I am black»), che oggi funzionerebbe benissimo come energico *refrain* di un brano *hip hop*. Anche dal punto di vista della disposizione grafica la poesia è originale e avanguardistica: il *layout*, i rientri e la lunghezza dei versi e delle stanze riproducono una nube di fumo - forma e contenuto vanno quindi a sovrapporsi, rafforzandosi reciprocamente. Tale componente 'pittorica' ha radici molto profonde: basti pensare ai tre carmi figurati «Le ali», «La scure» e «L'uovo» di Simmia di Rodi (IV secolo a.C.), la poesia «Easter Wings» (1633) di George Herbert e il *pun* «tail-tale» presente in *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) di Lewis Carroll. Duplicando dal punto di vista formale quanto espresso dal contenuto, Du Bois si colloca in questa tradizione, come peraltro avrebbe fatto di lì a poco Apollinaire

3 Du Bois prese sul serio la sua attività di poeta: in una lettera del 1938 dichiarò che le sue poesie erano tra le cose migliori da lui scritte perché «affrontano il problema della razza in modo insolito». Cf. Aptheker 1985, ix e 1973-78, 2, 361-2. Negli sterminati archivi delle sue opere, siti ad Amherst (Massachusetts), sono state schedate circa 130 pagine di poesie (pubblicate principalmente sulle riviste *The Horizon*, *The Crisis* e *Masses and Mainstream*) e 200 pagine di poesie non ancora pubblicate. Cf. <http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/series/mums312-s15> (2016-11-10).

## The Song of the Smoke (1907)

I am the Smoke King  
 I am black!  
 I am swinging in the sky,  
 I am wringing worlds awry;  
 I am the thought of the throbbing mills,  
 I am the soul of the soul-toil kills,  
 Wraith of the ripple of trading rills;  
 Up I'm curling from the sod,  
 I am whirling home to God;  
 I am the Smoke King  
 I am black.

I am the Smoke King,  
 I am black!  
 I am wreathing broken hearts,  
 I am sheathing love's light darts;  
 Inspiration of iron times  
 Wedding the toil of toiling climes,  
 Shedding the blood of bloodless crimes—  
 Lurid lowering 'mid the blue,  
 Torrid towering toward the true,  
 I am the Smoke King,  
 I am black.

I am the Smoke King,  
 I am black!  
 I am darkening with song,  
 I am hearkening to wrong!  
 I will be black as blackness can—  
 The blacker the mantle, the mightier the man!  
 For blackness was ancient ere whiteness began.  
 I am daubing God in night,  
 I am swabbing Hell in white:  
 I am the Smoke King  
 I am black.

I am the Smoke King  
 I am black!  
 I am cursing ruddy morn,  
 I am hearsing hearts unborn;  
 Souls unto me are as stars in a night,  
 I whiten my black men—I blacken my white!  
 What's the hue of a hide to a man in his might?  
 Hail! great, gritty, grimy hands—  
 Sweet Christ, pity toiling lands!  
 I am the Smoke King  
 I am black.

## The Song of the Smoke (1914)

I am the smoke king,  
 I am black.  
 I am swinging in the sky,  
 I am ringing worlds on high;  
 I am the thought of the throbbing mills,  
 I am the soul of the Soul toil kills,  
 I am the ripple of trading rills.  
 Up I'm curling from the sod,  
 I am whirling home to God.  
 I am the smoke king,  
 I am black.

I am the smoke king,  
 I am black.  
 I am wreathing broken hearts,  
 I am sheathing devils' darts;  
 Dark inspiration of iron times,  
 Wedding the toil of toiling climes,  
 Shedding the blood of bloodless crimes,  
 Down I lower in the blue,  
 Up I tower toward the true.  
 I am the smoke king,  
 I am black.

I am the smoke king,  
 I am black.  
 I am darkening with song,  
 I am hearkening to wrong;  
 I will be black as blackness can,  
 The blacker the mantle the mightier the man,  
 My purpl'ing midnights no day dawn may ban.  
 I am carving God in night,  
 I am painting Hell in white.  
 I am the smoke king,  
 I am black.

I am the smoke king,  
 I am black.  
 I am cursing ruddy morn,  
 I am hearsing hearts unborn;  
 Souls unto me are as mists in the night,  
 I whiten my black men, I blacken my white,  
 What's the hue of a hide to a man in his might!  
 Hail, then, gritty, grimy hands,  
 Sweet Christ, pity toiling lands!  
 Hail to the smoke king,  
 Hail to the black!



nei *Calligrammes* (1918). Riportiamo qui accanto il testo in una duplice versione che illustra chiaramente anche questa interessante prerogativa.<sup>4</sup>

Sebbene il messaggio finale veicolato da Du Bois sia chiaro, il linguaggio della poesia è piuttosto complesso, ricco di metafore oscure che richiedono uno sforzo ermeneutico da parte del lettore e che si prestano a varie interpretazioni. Consideriamo, ad esempio, il protagonista della poesia. Il Re Fumo rappresenta ovviamente una personificazione dell'oscurità e, per estensione, del popolo afroamericano e delle sue afflizioni. Tuttavia, l'utilizzo del fumo come metafora, un elemento dalle connotazioni oscure e non necessariamente positive, potrebbe anche indicare i pregiudizi dei bianchi nei confronti dei neri, visti come un'entità negativa. Inoltre, come confermato dall'occorrenza del termine *mills* e dalle tematiche analizzate nel racconto «The Princess Steel», scritto nello stesso periodo, Du Bois aveva preconizzato la portata e le conseguenze dell'industrializzazione (in particolare la produzione dell'acciaio): si può quindi ipotizzare che il fumo possa alludere al futuro sviluppo del capitalismo che avrebbe generato una sorta di nuovo schiavismo industriale.<sup>5</sup>

Quella che però ci sembra l'interpretazione più interessante è l'utilizzo del fumo come metafora della rivendicazione dell'orgoglio della *blackness*: per Du Bois essere nero non era più motivo di inferiorità, ma anzi esprimeva in pieno il potenziale del popolo afroamericano. Un tono assertivo permea infatti tutto il componimento: con fierezza, il Re Fumo si dichiara nero e, «oscillando nel cielo», «distorcendo i mondi», fuoriesce dalle ciminiere delle «fabbriche pulsanti» e ne diventa il pensiero, come la nuvoletta dei fumetti che riporta ciò che un personaggio sta pensando. Questo pensiero rappresenta la memoria collettiva dello sfruttamento in questa nuova forma di schiavitù, non più inflitta all'aria aperta ma tra i muri delle fabbriche. La poesia individua pertanto questo snodo importante nelle dinamiche dello sfruttamento e prefigura la diffusione e la degenerazione del capitalismo nel mondo contemporaneo.

Successivamente Du Bois rende esplicita un'allusione a *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot | Coming for to carry me home*, celeberrimo *spiritual* scritto intorno al 1865 da Wallace Willis, un nativo della tribù dei Choctaw che,

4 Cf. Elia 2002, 52-4, 67-9. A sinistra la versione originale di «The Song of the Smoke» pubblicata su *The Horizon*, 1, 1907, 4-6, ripresa da Aptheker 1985, 10-1; a destra la versione ripubblicata su *The Crisis*, 7(3), 1914, che presenta alcune varianti testuali e nella disposizione dei rientri.

5 Cf. Kelly 2001 e Smith 2001 per un'analisi testuale della poesia. Tale interpretazione sembra essere confermata dai versi «Inspiration of iron times | Wedding the toil of toiling climes» (con la variante «Dark inspiration» nella versione del 1914), in verità abbastanza oscuri e probabilmente traducibili come «Ispirazione dei tempi del ferro | Che si uniscono alla dura fatica dei campi», oppure «Lavoro duro come quello nei campi», versi che sembrano suggerire un parallelismo tra la schiavitù nei campi del Sud e la nuova schiavitù imposta dall'industrializzazione. Cf. Elia 2016a per un'analisi del racconto «The Princess Steel».

ispirandosi all'episodio biblico del rapimento in Cielo del profeta Elia con un carro di fuoco, paragonò il Mississippi al fiume Giordano. Il Re Fumo si identifica infatti con l'anima di coloro che sono morti, sfiancati dal durissimo lavoro, e vengono ricondotti dal carro evocato dallo *spiritual* a casa, ovvero verso il Cielo, per trovare finalmente riposo e consolazione: «Mi avvolgo a spirale dalla terra verso l'alto, | Vorticando verso il mio Dio».

A questo punto, la poesia raggiunge il suo *climax* espressivo assumendo un tono profetico:

I will be black as blackness can-  
The blacker the mantle, the mightier the man!  
For blackness was ancient ere whiteness began.

In soli tre versi, Du Bois riesce a sintetizzare due fenomeni socio-politici, distinti ma interconnessi, che si sarebbero verificati nel ventesimo secolo: da un lato la progressiva presa di coscienza della forza della *blackness*, e dall'altro un'interpretazione alternativa della storia dell'Africa che ne avrebbe restituito la giusta importanza e rettificato il ruolo, fino ad allora considerato quasi unanimemente marginale, nella storia dell'umanità. In realtà, le idee essenzialiste di 'Black is beautiful' e di 'Black Power', sviluppatasi negli anni Sessanta del secolo scorso, si possono già rintracciare sorprendentemente in questa poesia del lontano 1907: «Sarò nero, il più nero possibile- | Più nero è il mantello, più potente sarà l'uomo!».<sup>6</sup> Richard Wright fu tra i primi a raccogliere e a elaborare questo messaggio di Du Bois, pubblicando nel 1954 un volume intitolato *Black Power: A Record of Reactions in a Land of Pathos*, in cui descrive appassionatamente il suo viaggio in Africa, nella Costa d'Oro (che di lì a poco sarebbe diventato il Ghana, altrettanto caro a Du Bois che vi si trasferì poco prima di morire). Come è noto, la nuova connotazione positiva del termine 'black' incoraggiò una crescente consapevolezza razziale e si diffuse pienamente negli anni Sessanta grazie all'attivismo di vari gruppi politici che, in versioni più o meno estremiste, lottavano per raggiungere lo stesso obiettivo, seppur lacerati talvolta da dissidi interni – basti pensare all'uccisione di Malcolm X nel 1965 da parte di membri della *Nation of Islam*, organizzazione da lui abbandonata per divergenze con il leader Elijah Muhammad. La fondazione a Oakland del *Black Panther Party* nell'ottobre 1966 da parte di Bobby Seale e Huey P. Newton e l'attività di militanti come, tra gli altri, Stokely Carmichael ed Eldridge Cleaver, furono elementi decisivi nell'opposizione al persistente razzismo istituzionale nei confronti degli afroamericani. Queste parole di Carmichael ci fanno inoltre comprendere come la diffusione di questo fenomeno sia la conseguenza di una lunga storia transnazionale di discriminazioni:

6 Cf. Aptheker 1985, xi.

the concept of "black power" is not a recent or isolated phenomenon: it has grown out of the ferment of agitation and activity by different peoples and organizations in many black communities over the years. (Carmichael [1966] 1968, 6)

What we gonna start sayin' now is Black Power! [...] It is a call for black people in this country to unite, to recognize their heritage, to build a sense of community. It is a call for black people to define their own goals, to lead their own organizations. (Carmichael, Thelwell 2003, 507)<sup>7</sup>

In effetti, la necessità di riconoscere l'importanza della propria eredità culturale e di rivalutare il proprio passato divenne altrettanto cruciale. Tale proposito fu perfettamente distillato da Du Bois nel verso «For blackness was ancient ere whiteness began»: la civiltà nera antica ha preceduto quella dei bianchi. A riprova della corrispondenza biunivoca tra le opere letterarie e la saggistica, questo verso anticipa ciò che Du Bois avrebbe argomentato nel seminale saggio *The Negro* (1915) che, sulla scorta delle speculazioni di Erodoto che avevano rivelato che gli antichi Egizi erano di razza nera, propose un revisionismo storico che restituisse alla storia dell'Africa un ruolo da protagonista e negasse il consueto stereotipo di Africa come sinonimo di primitivismo e arretratezza. Un caso celebre è quello di Hegel che, nelle *Lezioni sulla filosofia della storia*, pubblicate postume nel 1840, aveva liquidato in poche pagine l'intera storia dell'Africa. Ispirato dall'antropologo Franz Boas, uno tra i primi a demolire l'idea dell'inferiorità della razza nera, Du Bois sostenne invece sia nei saggi, ma ancor prima in questa poesia, la rivendicazione di un ruolo diverso per l'Africa nella storia mondiale. *The Negro* e *The Gift of Black Folk* (1924) sono testi basilari che influenzarono profondamente lo sviluppo della cosiddetta 'Black historiography' che, sempre a partire dagli anni Sessanta, propose una nuova visione storica che non si limitasse semplicemente a correggere gli errori e a rimediare alle omissioni relative al fondamentale contributo del popolo nero nella storiografia tradizionale, ma che ne approfondisse la conoscenza e riattribuisse la giusta importanza alla storia dell'Africa e della cultura africana.<sup>8</sup>

7 La prima citazione è tratta da Carmichael [1966] 1968, 64; la seconda dal discorso tenuto da Carmichael il 16 giugno 1966 in cui presumibilmente utilizzò per la prima volta lo slogan 'Black Power' in occasione di una manifestazione a favore di James Meredith, vittima di un attentato durante una marcia solitaria contro il razzismo («March Against Fear» da Memphis, Tennessee a Jackson, Mississippi), cf. Carmichael 2003, 507. Il 28 agosto 1963, durante la Marcia su Washington in cui Martin Luther King pronunciò il celeberrimo discorso «I have a dream», significativo fu il tributo a Du Bois alla notizia della sua morte avvenuta il giorno precedente.

8 Tra le altre opere che fin dal diciannovesimo secolo hanno ispirato tale revisionismo storico, influenzando di fatto lo sviluppo della 'Black historiography', ricordiamo *The Origin*

«The Song of the Smoke» anticipa inoltre alcune tematiche che sarebbero state sviluppate dagli esponenti dell'«Harlem Renaissance», in particolare da colui che probabilmente ne rappresentò la massima espressione poetica, ovvero Langston Hughes. Almeno inizialmente Du Bois appoggiò questo movimento, pubblicando tra l'altro le prime poesie di Hughes, di Jean Toomer e Countee Cullen, tra gli altri, sulla rivista da lui diretta *The Crisis*, organo ufficiale della NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), organizzazione che contribuì a fondare nel 1909. Come è noto, nel saggio «Criteria of Negro Art» (1926) Du Bois sottolineò la necessità di proporre un tipo di arte e di letteratura che potessero attuare un cambiamento sociale attraverso la propaganda politica. Più che a fini estetici, per Du Bois l'arte avrebbe dovuto essere concepita e utilizzata in chiave politica per rivendicare i propri diritti. Per questo motivo, quando, intorno al 1926, il movimento perse ogni connotazione politica per indulgere talvolta in tematiche languide ed estetizzanti - pensiamo ad esempio alla poesia «Red Silk Stockings» (1927) dello stesso Hughes oppure al romanzo *Home to Harlem* (1928) di Claude McKay - Du Bois se ne allontanò per affrontare il problema razziale da un punto di vista economico, rivolgendo quindi un crescente interesse a socialismo e marxismo. In realtà, è davvero singolare il percorso politico di Du Bois che, contrariamente a quanto avviene di solito, col passare degli anni divenne sempre più radicale ed estremista.

Possiamo segnalare, ad esempio, due poesie che riecheggiano alcuni elementi formali e contenutistici che caratterizzano «The Song of the Smoke»: «The Negro» (1922) di Hughes e «I Have Seen Black Hands» (1934) di Richard Wright. È interessante confrontare queste poesie con «The Song of the Smoke» per segnalarne affinità e divergenze. Partiamo da un estratto da «The Negro»:<sup>9</sup>

I am a Negro:  
 Black as the night is black,  
 Black like the depths of my Africa.  
 I've been a slave:  
 [...]  
 I've been a singer:

*and History of the Colored People* (1841) di James W.C. Pennington, *Light and Truth* (1844) di R.B. Lewis, *The Future of Africa* (1862) di Alexander Crummell e *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* (1887) di Edward W. Blyden. Cf. Du Bois [1915] 1970, 17-8; Shepperson in Du Bois [1915] (1970), xiii-iv; Harris, Jr. 1982 e Appiah 2014, 101, 120, 122. Si veda anche l'importante volume *The African Origin of Civilization* (1974) dello storico senegalese Cheikh Anta Diop.

<sup>9</sup> Pubblicata nel gennaio 1922 sulla rivista diretta da Du Bois *The Crisis*, «The Negro» fu riproposta come «Proem» alla raccolta *The Weary Blues* (1926). Hughes dedicò inoltre a Du Bois la poesia «The Negro Speaks of Rivers» (1921). Si veda Rampersad 2001, 22, 36.

All the way from Africa to Georgia  
 I carried my sorrow songs.  
 I made ragtime.  
 I've been a victim:  
 The Belgians cut off my hands in the Congo.  
 They lynch me now in Texas.  
 I am a Negro:  
 Black as the night is black,  
 Black like the depths of my Africa.

Evidenti sono le analogie stilistiche e tematiche. «The Negro» condivide con la poesia di Du Bois la struttura circolare (ambedue ripropongono in chiusura gli stessi versi con cui si aprono), l'incessante ripetizione del soggetto 'I' e la sua riconnessione con le origini africane. Entrambe le poesie insistono sul ruolo della *blackness* come motivo di distinzione e sull'importanza degli *spirituals* come strumento di espressione. Tuttavia, a differenza di Du Bois, Hughes rievoca un passato oscurantista che persiste nel suo presente: i linciaggi che ancora avvenivano negli anni Venti e oltre in Texas e altrove rappresentano una nuova versione della violenza inflitta sui loro antenati dai Belgi in Congo. Laddove Hughes descrive la storia del nero in cui è stato 'schiavo', 'lavoratore', 'cantore', 'vittima', Du Bois assume un tono più risoluto, guardando al presente e immaginando un futuro in cui finalmente possa verificarsi un riscatto.

Consideriamo ora alcuni versi della poesia «I Have Seen Black Hands» (1934) di Richard Wright:

I am black and I have seen black hands  
 Raised in fists of revolt, side by side with the white fists  
 Of white workers,  
 And some day — and it is only this which sustains me—  
 Some day there shall be millions and millions of them,  
 On some red day in a burst of fists on a new horizon!

Anche in questo caso gli echi di «The Song of the Smoke» sono percepibili e la condivisa rivendicazione della *blackness* è fondamentale per creare un senso di identità e appartenenza. Tuttavia, considerato il coinvolgimento politico di Wright con il partito comunista, in questo caso è la linea della classe sociale più che quella del colore a essere decisiva, dal momento che il poeta auspica una lotta fianco a fianco tra operai bianchi e neri. Questa poesia militante si configura quindi come *trait d'union* tra radicalismo rivoluzionario e rivendicazione dei diritti dei neri: un giorno, si augura Wright, milioni di diseredati bianchi e neri, uniti nella lotta di classe, po-

tranno finalmente guardare verso un nuovo orizzonte.<sup>10</sup>

Come abbiamo visto, in «The Song of the Smoke» Du Bois teorizzò in tempi non sospetti l'*empowerment* della comunità afroamericana, ovvero quel processo di crescita individuale e di gruppo perseguibile tramite un'amplificazione dell'autostima che faccia riemergere risorse inesplorate precedentemente per condurre il gruppo a realizzare coscientemente il proprio potenziale, un nuovo sentire che sarebbe culminato in quel riscatto della *blackness* che avrebbe trovato massima espressione politica nell'attivismo del movimento *Black Power* negli anni Sessanta. Ciò rappresenta l'ultimo stadio di una progressiva presa di coscienza che ha avuto come momenti decisivi da un lato il movimento del Panafricanismo (pur con declinazioni estremamente divergenti, come dimostrano i contributi di Marcus Garvey e dello stesso Du Bois) e dall'altro il movimento della *Négritude*, diffusosi a Parigi negli anni Trenta del secolo scorso grazie all'opera di alcuni intellettuali di diversa provenienza come Aimé Césaire, Léopold Senghor e Léon Damas. Altra figura decisiva è stata quella di Frantz Fanon, il primo ad analizzare la dimensione psicologica della discriminazione razziale e lo sviluppo di complessi di inferiorità, e il *Black Panther Party* operò appunto in tale direzione, cercando di far scrollare di dosso alla comunità afroamericana quel senso di inadeguatezza e di sfiducia nei propri mezzi.

I semi di questo nuovo pensiero erano stati sparsi proprio da Du Bois, non soltanto nei suoi saggi, come tutti concordano, ma anche nelle opere narrative e poetiche, che per questo motivo meriterebbero un'attenzione maggiore da parte di critica e pubblico. Curiosamente per uno che era stato accusato da Garvey di non essere abbastanza nero, come un poeta/profeta Du Bois insistette sulla rivalutazione dell'idea di *blackness* come elemento cruciale e distintivo per la rivendicazione dei propri diritti: «The Song of the Smoke» rappresenta quindi una poesia innovativa e profetica se consideriamo la diffusione del movimento *Black Power* negli anni Sessanta e la successiva riappropriazione del termine slang *nigga* con significato positivo da parte degli esponenti del *rap* e dell'*hip hop* a partire dagli anni Ottanta.

Per concludere, forse la ricetta suggerita da Du Bois per cercare di superare le discriminazioni è bene espressa dai seguenti versi:

I am daubing God in night,  
I am swabbing Hell in white:  
[...]  
I whiten my black men-I blacken my white!<sup>11</sup>

10 Dopo aver letto e apprezzato «I Have Seen Black Hands», Hughes manifestò grande interesse a incontrare Wright, il che avvenne durante una sua visita a Chicago nell'inverno 1935-36. Si veda Rowley 2001, 111.

11 La versione del 1914 presenta la variante «I am carving God in night, | I am painting Hell in white».

Dipingendo Dio di nero, pitturando l'inferno di bianco, imbiancando i neri e annerendo i bianchi, il Re Fumo aspira al superamento delle differenze e delle discriminazioni a prescindere dalla polarizzazione bianco/nero, come anche Wright aveva sostenuto. Occorre però che i neri prima prendano coscienza delle proprie potenzialità. Tale percorso obbligato deve passare attraverso la riappropriazione della *blackness* e successivamente dirigersi alla ricerca di un sincretismo in cui si possa essere contemporaneamente neri e americani, come auspicato da Du Bois nel fondamentale *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Grazie a questo messaggio, tuttora attuale, l'obiettivo è quello di anelare, per parafrasare le celebri 'preghiera finale' che chiude *Peau noire, masques blancs* di Fanon, all'idea di individuo, di essere umano privo di pregiudizi che vuole continuare a porsi domande: «Ô mon corps, fais de moi toujours un homme qui interroge!».<sup>12</sup>

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12 Fanon [1952] (1971), 188.

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## **The Prophetess and the Vampire** The Duet Between Past and Future in Dana Gioia's Opera Libretto *Nosferatu*

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**Abstract** In 2001 the renowned American poet Dana Gioia brought to life a work in which the centuries-old myth of the vampire, the richness of the operatic phrase, and the vague echoes of the poet's Italian heritage dialogued with the modern taste of the American public. The aim of this paper is to investigate the dialogue between past and future, which is innovatively expressed in both the content and form of *Nosferatu*. Inspired by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922), Gioia's work merges the Gothic with Opera, thus renovating and giving new strength to the art of the Opera libretto. Moreover, Gioia's vampire eludes Hollywood's unforgettable stereotypes and is endowed with an emotional and psychological insight that the German movie lacked. Line after line, the poet develops the drama of the undead creature, whose humanity is enhanced by the controversial confrontation with the libretto's female protagonist. No longer a victim, Gioia's heroine recalls the omniscient figure of the prophetess, dear to both classical and Christian heritages. Further, in the play between the immortal past of the vampire and the visionary future of the prophetess, lies the dramatic present of the first Italian immigrants, the nightmare of misery, the hope for a better life, and the ever-present traces left by Catholicism.


**Keywords** Dana Gioia. *Nosferatu*. Libretto. Sibyl.

Published in 2001 and set to music by composer Alvar Henderson, Dana Gioia's *Nosferatu. An Opera Libretto* is a compelling work that describes the dramatic struggle between individuals and time by means of a symbolical *tenzone* (a conflict in verse) involving a gruesome vampire and the prophetic figure of the heroine. The questions raised by Gioia's libretto do not only address the meaning of the past and the future, but also evoke the role his Italian heritage still plays in his own work, while proposing, at the same time, an innovative dialogue between two different genres: the opera and the Gothic. Why do we crave to know the future and, at the same time, why does our personal or collective past represent such a weighty burden? Can opera live a new epoch of fertility through the influence of other contemporary media and genres? *Nosferatu* insightfully investigates these complex and intertwined issues by offering the reader an analysis of the dual inflection that characterises the past (as both heritage and/or eternal return) and the future (as both fate and/or innovation). Therefore, both *Nosferatu's* form and contents will be considered and analysed on the basis of, on the one hand, the dialectic relationship between the opera and the Gothic and, on the other, the intriguing development of *Nosferatu's* plot and characters.

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**DOI 10.14277/2499-1562/AnnOc-51-17-4**

Submission 2017-03-07 | Acceptance 2017-04-24

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Since the very beginning of its success in the XVII century, opera has been associated with Italy as the expression *par excellence* of its culture (Coletti 2012, 17). The cultural impact of the Italian *bel canto* has been of incomparable importance and has induced some of the greatest European composers to take advantage of the mastery of Italian librettists (Paldi 1985, 89). The virtuosity of Italian opera was not only acknowledged within the European (and later also the American) musical scenario, but was highly praised by intellectuals and philosophers too, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau overtly expressed in his "Letter on French Music":

Italian Music has no enemies, even among us, except those who know nothing about it; and all the Frenchmen who have tried to study it with the sole design of criticizing it with knowledge have soon become its most zealous admirers. (1998, 164)

However, Italian opera has gradually become the symbol of Italianness not only within the boundaries of the newborn Italian nation, but also among the densely populated communities of immigrants founded in the New World between the end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX century. On the one hand, the operatic words and *mise-en-scène* – as the worldwide famous work of Giuseppe Verdi, the *Nabucco*, suggests – embodied the desire for national unity, thus turning opera into one of the most vibrant expressions of the Italian national 'spirit' (Brera 2012). On the other hand, opera became the symbol of a newborn identity, rising within the Italian communities in the United States, and gradually overcoming the *campanilismo* that had characterised the culture and the life of the small villages of the peninsula for centuries.<sup>1</sup> In this sense, opera represented an essential factor in the process of construction of a more cohesive collective Italian identity even in the New World.

After the successful inauguration of the Academy of Music of New York in 1854, the popularity of Italian opera incessantly grew among the members of the American upper class (D'Acerno 1999, 392). At the end of the XIX century, however, the general opinion of the American audience and press was gradually changing, moulded by the worrisome declarations of pseudo-scientific studies, concerned with and by the seemingly terrible consequences of mass migration. As both Lawrence Levine and Joseph Cosco suggest, opera in Italian came to trigger some very differ-

1 In his famous book *Blood of my Blood*, the Italian American academic and writer Richard Gambino explains the Italian word *campanilismo* by emphasising its connection to the word *campana* (bell) – or, I would suggest, *campanile* (bell tower). In this sense, *campanilismo* means that "whatever 'national' affinity the people feel is limited to those who live within hearing range of their village's church bell" (71). A possible English translation of term could be 'parochialism'.

ent feelings among Americans, who saw it as the representation of the “Old World pretensions and effete snobberies” and, at the same time, as a further example of Italian, almost infantile, sentimentalism (Levine 1988, 94; Cosco 2003, 184).

The relationship Italian immigrants had with opera, however, was totally different. Opera reached their homes thanks to the radio and the gramophone, it was sung in the crowded streets of the American Little Italies and, fostered by the incessant work of Italian American associations and political groups, was often performed during the celebrations of the community (Bencivenni 2014). A great number of Italian American authors, from Helen Barolini to Pascal D’Angelo and Robert Viscusi, recall in their works the constant presence of Italian opera in their life, underscoring its value as a tool of cultural and psychological integration (see Barolini 1999; D’Angelo 2003; Viscusi 2006).

How has opera developed since then and, in particular, how has it been received in the United States? As Theodor Adorno already pointed out during the Seventies, opera seems to have lost the wide cultural impact that characterised it in the previous centuries, so much so that “Benjamin’s word about the decay of the aura suits opera more exactly than any other form [of art]” (Adorno 1976, 77). In his caustic criticism against opera, the philosopher underlined the sterility and the pretentiousness of opera, along with the immense distance separating it from its audience:

The dawning insight, rather, was that in style, in substance, and in attitude the opera had nothing to do anymore with the people it had to appeal to if its outwardly pretentious form was to justify the prodigal extravagance required. (70-1)

Since it is impossible in this article to analyse the controversial debate over an alleged “death of the opera” in all its ramifications, I am going to consider the state of this form of art only from the point of view of contemporary America, by making reference to the analysis of opera that Dana Gioia himself provides in “Sottovoce. The Libretto as Literary Form”. Here, the poet briefly points out that, despite having been very popular for almost two centuries, opera in the United States “remains a foreign art form”, as confirmed by the fact that even today “there are still no American operas established in the international repertory” (2001, 78). Likewise, continues Gioia, “for the general reader the libretto remains synonymous with bad poetry and stilted drama” (67). The author addresses the problematic condition of the opera libretto by stating that, notwithstanding the undeniable importance of a fruitful collaboration between music, word and recitative, “the best operatic music depends on being called into existence by the right words”, since it is only through the ambitiousness of text that music can reach innovative forms and always new ways of expressing human emotions (68).

As already outlined, *Nosferatu's* most innovative element is the dialogue that Gioia successfully builds between opera and the Gothic. This special connection is made possible by the emotional power that characterises both genres. Thus, it is worth considering Anne Williams' foreword to the libretto, in which, while discussing *Nosferatu* and its influences, she offers two main reasons why the Gothic genre has almost never inspired operatic works. First, according to the author, Gothic works themselves are characterised by such an emotional force that opera could hardly succeed in intensifying its pathos. Second, despite the "plethora of operas based on Sir Walter Scott's novels", the fact that the Gothic flourished more vividly in the Anglo-American world, where opera did not have much success, could have interfered with the creation of a fruitful collaboration between the two genres (2001, xviii). However, if Williams claims that Gioia succeeded in mixing the two genres 'despite' these two reasons, I would suggest that he did it specifically 'because' of the sentiments and the emotions that both of them express.

The connection of opera and emotional pathos is unequivocal. The difficulty found in writing a successful opera libretto, Gioia explains, lies not only in the complex dialogue between word and music, in the "immense narrative compression" required by the genre, or in the construction of the story itself, but also (and, I would add, more significantly) in the presentation of "peak moments of human emotions" and in the lyric pathos of the narration and the dialogues (2001, 72-3). The words must erupt with all their power during the performance, so as to create indelible characters and situations. Merged with such words, the dramatic force of music provides the audience with an unforgettable experience, allowing them to feel the words "not intellectually but physically, emotionally, and indeed unconsciously" (82).

The emotional tension of the opera has been emphasised more than once in novels and movies by Italian immigrants and their descendants. One of the most significant examples is represented by Pascal D'Angelo's autobiography *Son of Italy* (1921), in which the author narrates the story of his migration to the United States and the myriad of obstacles he had to face in order to find his own freer identity. The epiphanic discovery of the self occurs precisely during his first operatic experience, when he has the chance to see a performance of Giuseppe Verdi's *Aida*. Moved by the words, the music and the god-like characters, the author recalls the emotional impact the Italian opera had on him:

And all at once I felt myself being driven toward a goal. For there was revealed to me beauty, which I had been instinctively following [...] There were parts of such overwhelming loveliness that they tore my soul apart. ([1921] 2003, 137)

Opera intensely conveys the emotional grandeur of human feelings, expressed by “voices of such size and power they could only belong to superhuman beings” (Viscusi 2006, 16).

While the best adjective describing opera is ‘grandiose’, Gothic’s essence is undoubtedly enshrined in the word ‘sublime’, to be intended not as *sub-limine* – namely something that reaches the upper jamb of a door, as some etymological dictionaries assert – but as coming from the Latin word *limus*, oblique, thus indicating something that goes up, ascends (Alessio, Battisti 1957). Noticeably, the concept of ‘sublime’ blends together two opposite spiritual extremes, namely the High and the Low, the ‘elevated’ and the abyss (*Vocabolario etimologico della lingua italiana* [online]). In this sense, by mediating between these two polarities, the sublime conveys the ambiguousness of Gothic’s pleasurable horror, i.e. the fear that is spiritually elevating. To better understand this point, it is worth considering Friedrich Schiller’s discussion on the sublime. The feeling of sublimity, the philosopher suggests, is “mingled”:

It is a composition of *wofulness*, which in its highest degree appears as horror, and of *joyfulness*, which can amount to transport. (1845, 246)

Human greatness lies within the individual’s capacity to understand that s/he is not a mere sensible being nor is s/he doomed to a limited existence; rather, thanks to the experience of the sublime, s/he recognises his/her own will and s/he is thus elevated, sublimated (248). In this sense, continues Schiller, what looks terribly great and overwhelming in the external world can reflect the “internal, absolute greatness” of human beings (253). The Gothic, with its supernatural forces and immortal creatures, is the perfect embodiment of the sublime, for it enables us to sense the boundaries of our mortal, weak existence, while at the same time allowing us to break that boundary. In other words, human beings are given the chance to rationally acknowledge their superiority and independence from Nature, since facing Nature and its perils contributes to the elevation of the individual’s innermost will. According to Schiller, however, there are two forms of sublime, the contemplative and the pathetic. While in the former the feeling of fear is totally in our power, for it is triggered by fantasy and imagination, Gothic works evoke more specifically the latter form. The pathetic sublime is based, on the one hand, on an “animated conceptualization of suffering”, namely a pain that does not affect us in the first person, but that is born from a sympathetic sentiment aroused by seeing the affliction of another; on the other hand, to experience the pathetic sublime it is necessary to “differentiate ourselves from the self-suffering subject”, so as to recognise our free will and spirit (Schiller 1986). Gothic inspires the great emotions of the sublime, its terror, its fear and suffering but, at the same time, enables the reader to experience the high pathos of these feelings from the reas-

asuring distance of self-consciousness. In this very point the Gothic meets the opera, namely in their shared exaltation of emotions, as well as in that detachment that enables the individual not to succumb to the power of those feelings and, rather, helps him/her to be spiritually elevated by them.

But what do Gothic themes and symbols add to Gioia's opera libretto? According to the English writer Patrick McGrath, the Gothic

is capable of infinite renewal, as its diverse themes and rich stock of symbols are gathered up and reinvested with meaning by successive generations of artists. (1997, 153)

Indeed, from its first appearance in the XVIII century, this genre has been undergoing a process of continuous transformation that has allowed its monsters to change together with the changing of the human condition and its always diverse fears. Thanks to its mercurial nature, the Gothic has been able to reach the XXI century with no diminished aesthetical and emotional force. While opera seems to have lost its grip on the shimmering nature of society, the Gothic has been able to successfully adapt itself to any new technological, social or cultural development, as well as to any newborn media, be they literature, figurative art, theatre or cinema. Therefore, the Gothic's contribution to opera is crucial, since it does not only introduce new themes and images, but also enables it to preserve its grandiose emotions, while at the same time dragging its arias towards the present. In doing so, the Gothic helps the words and music of opera to adapt to the incessant transformation of society. What the Gothic does, in other words, is to grab, blend, and attune the great past of the opera in order to re-introduce it into our present and, maybe, into our future.

Because of its mercurial nature, the Gothic has been able to bring to life new monsters, while at the same time keeping alive the founding creatures of the genre, among which vampires are without any doubt the most popular. Even though the vampire's first appearance in literature is conventionally found in John William Polidori's *The Vampyre* (1819) or in Lord Byron's narrative poem *The Giour* (1813), it is Bram Stoker's 1897 novel *Dracula* that has become "the reference point to which the characteristics of other vampires are judged to have adhered, or to have departed from" (Hughes 2000, 143). The fascination with *Dracula* lies, according to McGrath, in his supernatural ability to transgress any boundary imposed by nature (1997, 157). The vampire has no temporal, spatial or bodily limits: he can change himself into multiple forms and blend among human beings and, most of all, he has vanquished death. However, what has most dramatically shaped *Dracula*'s figure and its collective imaginary is Hollywood cinema. As Fabio Giovannini underlines, movies have not simply turned monstrosity into something credible and watchable, enabling the audience to identify with the creature; rather, after Tod Browning's version of *Dracula*, and,

in particular, thanks to the impressive interpretation of Bela Lugosi, a new set of symbols, signs and features has been attached to Stoker's Dracula, adding charm and seduction to his monstrous figure. In doing so, the terrible vampire has been transformed into something (or someone) we all would like to be: immortal, powerful, seductive (1999, 7, 20-1).

Dana Gioia's work, however, is not based on Stoker's novel, nor on its Hollywood's adaptation. On the contrary, the poet has brought on the stage Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's *Nosferatu. Eine Symphonie des Grauens*. First shown in 1922, the movie represents, along with other German masterpieces like Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of the Dr. Caligari*, the origin of the horror genre in cinema (Rosenheim 1997, 64). The differences between the German and the American vampire are evident. Not only are *Nosferatu's* rat-like features deformed, but there is no sexual meaning hiding in his bites. Instead of transforming his victims into vampires, his 'kisses' represent plain death (Perez 1998, 126). *Nosferatu* is, as a matter of fact, nothing more than a monster. Moreover, there are two main elements distinguishing Murnau's movie from the cinema versions that came after. Firstly, neither science nor religion play such an important role as they did in Stoker's novel or in many American movies. Secondly, the female protagonist facing *Nosferatu* is no longer an object of sexual attention, passive in front of the peril, but she is both an "existentially authentic human being" and the vampire's nemesis (147). Gioia's choice, thus, treasures Murnau's ability to simplify "the story in ways that made it dramatically stronger and more resonantly symbolic", thus providing the audience not only with a convincing plot, but also with "strong characters, and vivid, indeed often unforgettable, images" (Gioia 2001, 84).

Apart from its contents and form, Murnau's *Nosferatu* evokes some vivid childhood memories, linked to Gioia's working-class and Catholic early years, as the poet himself argues in "Sotto Voce":

I had never written about any of these early experiences before. But the new form invited new subjects, and I could disguise my life as part of someone else's story since the underlying myth was big enough to hold it all. (2001, 84)

As I will discuss, despite not having a major impact on the plot and on the development of the libretto, Gioia's childhood memories, along with some elements of his Italian heritage, often surface throughout his work in the form of resounding symbols and intriguing literary choices. Past, present, and future, heritage and innovation, intermingle again within the text, but this time from an autobiographical point of view.

Probably because of the influence of these personal memories, there are some differences between Gioia's and Murnau's plot development. Apart from the importance given to Christian symbols throughout the work - a

direct consequence of the Italian Catholic education received by the author during his youth – *Nosferatu* has lost the dreadful appearance of the German creature and is described as “a tall, thin man in his late sixties” (Gioia 2001, 26). The monster is thus ‘humanized’ in both his body and his personality. Likewise, the mystic aura of the female protagonist of the libretto is stronger and more evident than in the movie: the heroine does not simply choose her own destiny but, in the struggle against darkness and death, she represents the redeeming guardian of light and life.

However, the core element of the libretto does not lie – or, at least, not primarily – in this. Rather, what every aspect of *Nosferatu* seems to evoke is the previously outlined relationship between past, present and future. In particular, while Count Orlok (*Nosferatu*) represents, following the typical patterns of the Gothic genre, all that is past, the female protagonist, Ellen, embodies the mystic figure of the ancient prophetess, whose voice takes the form of dreams and premonitions. In other words, she is the being through whom the future speaks. Between these two supernatural forces Ellen’s husband (Eric) is caged by the oppressing presence of his past poverty and the anxiety for the uncertainties of his and his wife’s future. In doing so, Gioia represents time as “tension”, intended here not as tension of the unconscious, as Augustine had stressed in his *Confessions* (*Confessions*, 11, 36; Boulding 1997, 356). Augustine’s conception of time is completely subjective and is grounded on the idea that time is not ‘a thing’, but a relationship between things that are passing and the mind:

The mind expects, and attends, and remembers, so that what it expects passes by way of what it attends to into what it remembers. (361)

Consequently, time is perceived subjectively and its three tenses can be assimilated into one: the present. Indeed,

it is inaccurate to say, “There are three tenses or times: past, present, and future”, though it might properly be said “There are three tenses or times: the present of past things, the present of present things, and the present of future things”. (*Confessions*, 11, 26; Boulding 1997, 350)

Unlike the time analysed by Augustine, Gioia’s time is not perceived, but endured. Despite being connected to his past and future, Eric’s anxieties are not due to an internalisation of the temporal tension, as described by the philosopher; rather, those feelings of inadequacy and confusion are caused by outside factors, for both past and future seem to have been incarnated into two concrete, external forces. While he remembers that “my life has been a struggle from the first”, he confesses that he is still burning with the desire to change his own life, “to wake at night | And never feel | The future pressing» (Gioia 2001, 9). It is only by considering



the complementary elements of necessity and desire that Eric's tragic story and the whole plot can be understood.

The old Heinrich Skuller is offering the young man an allegedly miraculous job, one that will solve all of his problems. A rich Hungarian nobleman, Count Orlock, wants to buy a house in town and has asked for someone to go to his castle in Hungary with a contract ready to be signed. This, confesses Skuller, will certainly be the greatest opportunity of Eric's life. The following dialogue is built on a constant repetition of bright and auspicious words: chance, happiness, dreams, future. Skuller's proposition becomes the offer America made to immigrants at the turn of the XIX century, while Eric's drama becomes inevitably the drama of the immigrant. In fact, Gioia's words choices, along with the particular emphasis put on certain expressions and images, have turned what on the screen was thought to be the misadventure of a young man into the misadventure of a young immigrant. Like the Italian immigrants of the Great Migration, Eric is ready to face a difficult journey to provide for his family and start to build a better future. If he joined his firm and faced that journey, the old man explains, he could help Eric to follow his path towards success, for "no dream's too grand" (Gioia 2001, 9). Skuller, however, is not offering a dream, but concrete opportunities, grounded on "the safety and freedom that money buys" (12). Thanks to this journey, the old man seems to imply, the American story of the self-made man could be accomplished:

But what will you do when the times turn mean,  
Your wife wears rags and your children grow lean?  
Provide for your love or your love will be lost.  
A man must be strong whatever the cost. (11)

The choices Gioia made to represent the troublesome past and future of the young man are directly connected to the autobiographical memories that the poet confessed had influenced part of his work. "Working on the libretto touched other childhood memories of religion, family and poverty", memories that are associated with his first viewing of Murnau's *Nosferatu* (2001, 84). The images of the constant financial problems of his family "intermingled naturally with my first sighting of Max Schreck's shadow climbing the stairways toward his shuddering victim" (84). As a consequence, in the libretto all of these memories are elaborated and embodied in the terrible figure of Count Orlock. Therefore, in the character of *Nosferatu* the autobiographical meets the literary. In particular, the symbolism of the past heritage associated with Count Orlock reflects not only Gioia's memory, but also some of the main elements characterising the Gothic as a genre. As McGrath explains, ruined castles, haunted houses, and forgotten cemeteries connote the power of ancestry, the influence of traditions, and the constant presence in one's life of the deeds of one's

forefathers (1997). In other words, the Gothic “evokes the weight of the past”, a past that, however, is buried in darkness and triggers only feelings of fear (127). Similarly, Nosferatu is constantly referring to his own connection with the past. Actually, as he himself declares, he *is* the past:

I am the past that feeds upon the present.  
I am the sins you must inherit -  
The final truth in a world full of lies.  
(Gioia 2001, 35)

Metaphorically, Gioia’s vampire sucks life out of the present. He represents a whole repertoire of traditions, customs, myths and folkloric elements that, using Roland Barthes’ words, “stifles the man in the manner of a huge internal parasite and assigns to his activity the narrow limits within which he is allowed to suffer without upsetting the world”, thus turning into “a prohibition for man against inventing himself” (1991, 156).

After signing the contract and seeing Ellen’s portrait kept in Eric’s locket, Nosferatu embarks on his sea journey towards Eric’s German town along with a plague of rats and the deadly disease they bring with them. Unlike Murnau, however, Gioia offers the audience a more psychological - and, thus, a more human - reason for his decision to leave his own country. As the vampire himself states, he is a “traveler” whose purpose is not only to create “a mandate worthy of my ancestors”, but to finally escape his own burdening past: “here is the future - not the barren past” (Gioia 2001, 42-3). Just like Eric and Ellen, the vampire is trapped by his own - even though noble - past:

You cannot understand how heavily the past  
Weights down on me. [...]  
How ancient deeds imprison us forever.  
(29)

From Nosferatu’s point of view this journey represents a chance to be re-born, to build a future far from the ghostly “ancient deeds” and completely projected towards the future. The vampire is leaving his Gothic land, where “the towns are empty and the roads| untravelled and overgrown”, behind (29). The journey of the vampire is thus grounded on necessity and desire: “I rule a kingdom of the dead | I perish or move on” (29-30).

The humanisation of Nosferatu gives the creature a double nature. On the one hand, the god-like characteristics of the Count cannot be denied and, indeed, they emerge throughout the text, thus following the patterns of traditional Gothic literature and cinema. On the other hand, due to the affliction affecting his existence and, most of all, due to the overtly romantic relationship tying him and his eternal bride Ellen, Nosferatu loses

some of his numinous aura to become more human. To better understand his complexity, however, it is of the uttermost importance to analyse in the first place the impressive, operatic figure of Ellen, without whom Nosferatu's character could not be understood in all its facets.

Gioia introduces Ellen to the audience (or the reader) indirectly, through the worried dialogue between Dr. Harding and Ellen's sister, Marthe, at the very beginning of act 1, scene 2. The simple opening questions the doctor asks Marthe provide the first clues necessary to understand Ellen's character: "how often does your sister have these spells - / the vivid dreams, the sleepwalking, the fevers?" (Gioia 2001, 13). What the noun 'spell' indicates is not only an 'indeterminate period of time'; rather, it evokes the mystic field of sorcery and witchcraft. Thus, the choice to immediately describe Ellen's symptoms (the dreams, the sleepwalking, the feverishness) suggests that the condition of the woman is somehow connected to the supernatural. Despite the fact that Marthe herself is convinced of her sister's ability to predict the future, Dr. Harding (in this story taking the place of the more famous Dr. Van Helsing from Stoker's novel) tries to explain Ellen's disturbance with the aid of psychology, in order to "push aside the superstition" (15).<sup>2</sup> According to the doctor, her dreams are due to her difficult financial situation, to the anxiety caused by the uncertainties of her future. Nonetheless, he cannot deny that Ellen is «unnaturally lucid», that she can hear, see, feel "more vividly than any other people do", and that "she can relive a moment merely by | Recalling it" (14). Along with somnambulism, "a halfway state between a dream and trance", Ellen gathers all the features typically associated with ancient Classic prophetesses: the Pythia, priestess of the Oracle of Delphi, and the Sibyl, whose cult is thought to have its roots in ancient Oriental rituals, which started to spread throughout the Mediterranean area in the following centuries (Gioia 2001, 15; Iannoni 1996, 13).

Like the vampire, the prophetess is a figure of the frontier, a mediator between the divine and the human, dream and reality, between present and future and, lately, between Christian and pagan. In their ambiguity, however, their relationship with the divine always represented the essence of their being. Not only were these women believed to receive the vital breath of their god, usually Apollo, but it was also thought that they were possessed by him and led to a state of painful mania, induced by the water of certain wells or by the fumes exhaled inside certain caves (Iannoni 1996, 17). As a matter of fact, the idea of ecstasy was not linked to beatitude until the advent of Christianity. Rather, it evoked a state of *furor*, of mad frenzy taking hold of

2 Dr. Harding here, like Professor Bulwer in Murnau's movie, loses the distinctive knowledge of the occult that, instead, Dr. Van Helsing has in both Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and in many American horror movies. Actually, Dr. Harding almost completely disappears in the libretto and never even faces the vampire, unlike Dr. Van Helsing, who plays the role of vampire slayer in both Stoker's novel and, generally, in films.

both the body and the mind (18). One of the most emblematic prophetesses of Western culture is Cassandra, priestess of Apollo and daughter of Priam, king of Troy. In Euripides's *The Trojan Women*, the prophetess is described as a mad maid, "by the breath of God made wild" (*The Trojan Women*, 6; Murray 2009, 39). In the aftermath of the Trojan war, Cassandra, after being raped by Ajax the Lesser, is about to be given as a concubine to Agamemnon. Mad with desperation and vengeance, the woman enters the scene

white-robed and wreathed like a Priestess, a great torch in her hand. She is singing softly to herself and does not see the Herlad or the scene before her. (39)

Her disordered, bewildered traits, as well as her loose hair and wild eyes, have become distinguishing features of the Dionysian figure of Cassandra and traits that are not only associated with the mystic world of magic, but also with a state of bacchanalian madness (De Paco Serrano 2010, 8). Gioia's Ellen absorbs these elements, thus becoming not only a prophetess, but the unheard priestess Cassandra. Ellen's appearance on the stage surprisingly recalls the entrance of Priam's daughter on the scene:

her hair is loose and disordered. She is dressed in an open white robe that does not hide her long, white nightgown. She has the intense but disoriented appearance of someone startled from sleep who does not yet entirely comprehend her surroundings. She seems oblivious to Marthe and Dr. Harding. (17)

The feverish predictions, the white robe, the disordered appearance and the incapacity to see and understand what is happening around her turn Ellen into a virgin Cassandra of the Gothic genre. The heroine speaks for the first time during the aria "Ellen's Dream", in which the woman foretells her husband's terrible fate through the ambiguous symbols of her dream, thus anticipating, with a sort of *mise-en-abyme*, the plot of *Nosferatu*. During the aria, Ellen sings of a "bolted door", whose lock she can open just by touching it and, beyond the door, a candle-lit chapel, with a cross broken in two and a priest holding "a chalice of blood in his hands"; on the altar, as a sacrificial victim, lies Eric (Gioia 2001, 18). Thanks to her supernatural powers, Ellen is the only one who can open the door leading to *Nosferatu*, the high priest, the anti-god. The dream of the woman, thus, introduces an aspect essential to the analysis of the libretto, namely the relationship between Christian and Pagan symbolism.

The figure of the prophetess, like the vampire, is one that has successfully maintained its vividness and mercurial adaptability over the centuries. Her narrative immortality has been strongly fostered by the influence of Christian tradition that reinterpreted her image in order to adapt it to the

new faith. In fact, the prophetess was no longer represented as a woman wildly possessed by a god, but as a purified virgin, who was said to have predicted the advent of Christ (Iannoni 1996). Likewise significant is the connection of the prophetess to the world of the dead. In particular, the cult of the Italian Cumaean Sibyl was linked to the afterlife, not only because the cave where she used to give her prophecies was thought to be near the entrance to the Underworld, but also because it was Virgil himself who, in the *Aeneid*, chose the Cumaean Sibyl as Aeneas's guide during his descent to Hades (Iannoni 1996, 41). In this sense, the prophetess is turned into a psychopomp, a mediator between the living and the dead, a guide for the lost souls of the deceased. This syncretism between Christian and pagan, between death and prophecy, is strongly emphasised in the construction of Ellen's character, in particular after she is discovered to be telepathically in contact with Count Orlock. The woman, says Nosferatu, is the promised one, his bride, "one of us":

Because you know the darkness in yourself.  
 Because you see the future in your dreams.  
 (Gioia 2001, 36)

In doing so, the vampire confirms what Dr. Harding had denied at the beginning of the opera, namely that Ellen possesses supernatural powers. After this first, long-distance confrontation, Ellen becomes aware of the sacrificial role she must accept to save her husband and the whole world. Desperate, she draws comfort from religion. It is in her very relationship with the divine, represented by both Venus and the Virgin Mary, that the conjunction of the pagan and the Christian becomes evident. While in the aria "Ellen's Serenade" the woman turns to the evening star, "planet of love" and, hence, to Venus "goddess bright", in the final scene, aware of her fate, the woman prays the *Salve Regina* in a mixture of Latin and English, personally re-elaborating its words (39; 55). Lost in a state of "trance, as if she were in communion with some unseen and disturbing presence", Ellen starts "mistranslating" the words of the prayer "in a way that reflects her state of mind" (55-6).

*Salve, Regina,*  
 Queen of the heavens -  
 Star of the evening,  
 Star of the sea.  
 (56)

In the opera, the overlapping of Venus and Mary represents the overlapping of the pagan and the Christian and is thus directly connected to the religious and cultural legacy of the poet. Likewise, the star of the evening (another name for the planet Venus or morning star) and the star of

the sea (*stella maris*, representing both the pole star and the Mother of Christ) are made to coincide to become a single bright light, guiding the woman through darkness. Furthermore, the connection to the myth of the falling angel is quite appealing, since Lucifer represents the second name of the star of the evening, from the Latin 'light bringer'. In this sense, Venus (the morning star) coincides with the star of Lucifer. Consequently, Ellen and Nosferatu, love/light and death/darkness, future and past are not to be seen only as opposing forces, but as complementary elements constituting the universe as a whole. Likewise, while being the symbol of love against death, Ellen herself conceals something mysterious, magical and supernatural: she is, to use Nosferatu's words again, "one of us" (36). Gioia does not conceive life as a Manichean struggle between good and evil, past and future; rather, he accepts an existence made of contrasting but interdependent forces, since, as Count Orlock underlines, "only the darkness | Makes the moon bright" (60).

Ambiguity characterises both Ellen and Nosferatu, her nemesis. As previously outlined, Gioia portrays a more humanised version of the classic Gothic vampire and he does this by using Ellen's influence to identify his vulnerability. In fact, his relationship to the Gothic prophetess is enriched with the passionate spirit of Romanticism. In the last duet, in which the two are finally facing each other, Ellen accuses the vampire of being godless and loveless. At this point, the creature opens his heart to his promised bride, showing for the first time all his fragility:

Do you not understand, my love,  
That I, too, am afraid?  
I have imagined you for centuries  
And yet tonight the hand  
I offer you is trembling.  
There's nothing in the world  
That can destroy me - except you.  
(59)

Nosferatu's love is not merely erotic, but involves both the sexual and the romantic spheres. "How long I've ached to touch | your arms, your lips, your hair", he confesses, rejoicing for the eternity they will have to "taste each other's flesh | To know each other's soul" (61). Unlike Murnau's vampire, Gioia's Nosferatu is sketched as a complete and complex creature, no longer limited by the boundaries of monstrosity and evilness, but projected beyond them, towards human emotions, needs and frailties. In this sense, Gioia's vampire recalls less Bram Stoker's Dracula than Mary Shelley's Frankenstein's monster.

In the last scene, the iconic shadow of Nosferatu has already entered the room, the two have faced each other in a dialectic duel, and the vampire

finally tries to seduce his lover. However, Ellen knows the only way to defeat Nosferatu is to make him stay until day breaks, when the sun rays will “transfix” him to death (63). By deceiving him and making him believe that “I am yours – | yours forever”, the victim becomes the hero of the narrative, and the feminine escapes her condition of passivity absorbing the active role generally linked to masculinity (63). In this sense, *Nosferatu* follows the path of the long history of women’s empowerment perpetrated by the Gothic genre. Indeed, as Patrick McGrath observes, this genre tends to replace the ‘I’ of the narrator, which is supposed to be male, with a female one, thus allowing the reader to assume a female point of view and to “see hero and villain alike as relative to *her*” (1997, 122-4). For Gioia, however, it is not just a simple shift in the narrative point of view, but the female acquiring authority and agency: Ellen acts, chooses and sacrifices herself voluntarily. Likewise, in Euripides’s *The Trojan Women*, Cassandra is no longer a victim, but the real executioner. After being told she was to become Agamemnon’s concubine, she comforts her mother, wildly anticipating her revenge:

A bloodier wife than ever Helen was  
 Go I to Agamemnon, Lord most high  
 Of Hellas!... I shall kill him, mother; I  
 Shall kill him, and lay waste his house with fire  
 As he laid ours.  
 (*The Trojan Women*, 7; Murray 2009, 43)

Unlike Cassandra, however, Ellen is not becoming mad; on the contrary, she reaches the highest peak of self-consciousness in that struggle towards the sublime that Schiller had piercingly described:

Calmly, and with a pleasing fear, he now approaches these bugbears of his imagination, and purposely summons the whole strength of this faculty, to set forth the sensuo-infinite, in order that, even if it succumbs in the attempt, he may feel more vividly the superiority of his ideas over the highest that sensuous can afford. (Schiller 1845, 253)

Schiller’s words perfectly define Ellen’s final act, the difference being that the ‘he’ used by the philosopher is now replaced by a ‘she’. Her marriage to Nosferatu represents the ultimate sacrifice determining the powerful wilfulness of the female hero over her masculine counterpart. Therefore, it is Ellen and not the male vampire that stands as the true protagonist of the drama. While the woman drops dead after Nosferatu’s kiss, the vampire is mortally transfixed by the sun-light. However, instead of trying to save himself, he “deliberately turns back to face the window and is slowly destroyed” (63). Faithful to the Romantic sentiment emphasised throughout the libretto, the monster makes the ultimate and most complete statement

of humanity: he willingly chooses death over his burdening immortality and finally finds relief in suicide.

In Dana Gioia's libretto the old and the new, past and future are attuned in a complex, multi-faceted dialogue, which, thanks to the influence of the Gothic genre, merges together a fresh representation of the grandiosity of opera, vivid autobiographical memories, and newly elaborated iconic images. Moreover, past and future face each other in a titanic, mythic struggle, in which these two instances of time are presented as two wilful and powerful forces, whose confrontation has enabled not only an innovative emotional representation of the vampire's figure, but has also allowed the construction of a more authentic and heroic feminine character.

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## «Dormivo e sognavo che non ero al mondo» Risonanze shakespeariane nell'opera di Alda Merini

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**Abstract** The paper investigates the Shakespearean resonances in Alda Merini's works. Shakespeare was one of Merini's favourite 'fellow travellers' in her literary journey, seemingly because he exploited the enormous dramatic potential of madness. His plays can be read as a projection and an amplification of the poet's emotions, while providing them with names, bodies and voices. In her turn Merini perceived significant affinities with several Shakespearean characters, and tended to identify with some of them, superimposing her life onto theirs: during her stay in the mental hospital, peopled by horrible figures reminding her of *Macbeth's* witches, Merini identified with Juliet, who embodied her love fancies and her romantic dreams. I will also discuss in detail the texts which refer to two famous couples, namely Othello and Desdemona, Hamlet and Ophelia, who are the most recurrent Shakespearean figures in Merini's corpus. These are not only universal symbols but also mirror and give voice to the poet's emotions. Indeed, as I will show, Merini read and appropriated their stories through the filter of her painful personal experience.

**Sommario** 1 Introduzione: Alda Merini e l'altra verità. – 2 La follia è un capitale enorme. – 3 Otello e la bianca Desdemona. – 4 Ofelia che amava e rifiutava Amleto. – 5 Conclusioni.

**Keywords** Merini. Madness. Hamlet. Poetry. Asylum.

### 1 Introduzione: Alda Merini e l'altra verità

Con poche parole Alda Merini, la poetessa dei Navigli, manifesta la sua familiarità con il Bardo dell'Avon e, al tempo stesso, sottolinea le analogie fra loro:

Forse Shakespeare si sarebbe seduto come me in un giorno qualsiasi, con una faccia che nessuno ha mai identificato, per dettare ad un ragazzo qualsiasi delle gesta qualsiasi d'amore e di passione, che non erano della sua terra. (Merini 2007a, 38)

Merini amava dettare i suoi versi di notte e di giorno, anche al telefono, ogniqualvolta ne sentisse il bisogno. Per questo immagina che il drammaturgo elisabettiano possa aver fatto lo stesso: egli è colto mentre detta una delle sue opere ambientate fuori dai confini dell'Inghilterra, per esempio

una tragedia intrisa d'amore e morte come *Romeo e Giulietta*, tanto cara alla poetessa. Le parole del Bardo e i personaggi che più l'hanno affascinata si riverberano nelle sue opere; il suo aforisma, che dà il titolo al saggio, è difatti solo una delle numerose risonanze shakespeariane nell'opera di Alda Merini.<sup>1</sup> Le vicende di personaggi come Giulietta, Otello e Ofelia sembrano averle fornito gli strumenti per amplificare le sue emozioni, offrendo nomi, corpi e voci alla sua immaginazione. La stessa Merini si identificò in alcuni di essi, sia uomini che donne, al punto di sovrapporre e confondere esperienze della sua vita con le loro. Nel corpus meriniano, che è in sé fortemente autobiografico,

la vita si confonde nell'arte e viceversa: ciò che viene cantato in verità è la vita stessa, con gli amori e le sofferenze che questi le hanno provocato. (Redivo 2009, 17)

L'opera poetica di Merini risulta quindi difficile da classificare e da ascrivere con certezza a una determinata corrente letteraria. Come sostenne Raboni

la Merini ha sempre un po' stentato a trovare una collocazione adeguata nell'ambito degli studi del secondo Novecento; le luci della storiografia e del fervore esegetico le sono scivolte sopra, accanto, l'hanno sfiorata, senza mai inquadrala compiutamente. (Raboni 2002, 9)

Merini rappresenta un *unicum* nel panorama letterario sotto molti aspetti. Il suo talento poetico fu precoce e folgorante: già da adolescente ella destò l'attenzione di Giacinto Spagnoletti, scrittore e critico letterario e, frequentandone la casa, entrò in contatto con i più affermati poeti, letterati e critici dell'epoca, fra cui Pier Paolo Pasolini, Maria Corti, Giovanni Raboni, Eugenio Montale, David Maria Turoldo, Salvatore Quasimodo e Giorgio Manganelli. Fu precoce anche nel manifestare i primi segni di instabilità. Nel 1947, a sedici anni, trascorse un breve periodo nella clinica psichiatrica privata Villa Turro a Milano; la sua malattia, il disturbo bipolare, esplose però in tutta la sua violenza solo anni dopo e portò al lungo internamento all'ospedale psichiatrico Paolo Pini ad Affori (Milano) fra il 1961 e il 1972 (seppur con periodici rientri a casa),<sup>2</sup> un'esperienza che segnò umanamente Merini e forgiò la sua poetica. Gli anni trascorsi reclusa le fecero guadagnare l'appellativo poco lusinghiero di 'poetessa della pazzia' (Merini 1999, 16).

Dopo un lungo silenzio, Merini tornò a dedicarsi alla scrittura alla fine degli anni Settanta, ma divenne nota al grande pubblico solo a partire dai

1 L'aforisma è tratto da Alda Merini 1998, 229.

2 Merini subì anche un secondo internamento a Taranto fra il 1983 e il 1986.

primi anni Novanta a seguito del conferimento di numerosi premi letterari, due candidature al Premio Nobel, nel 1996 e nel 2000, e numerose apparizioni televisive. Da poetessa milanese fu proiettata nel mondo letterario e culturale nazionale assurgendo a «fenomeno mass-mediatico» (Redivo 2009, 44), mentre all'estero rimase relativamente poco conosciuta. Per esempio, agli inizi degli anni Ottanta, la critica anglosassone cominciò a manifestare un discreto interesse nei confronti di scrittrici italiane come Merini, dando il via alla pubblicazione di selezioni antologiche in traduzione dei loro testi poetici.<sup>3</sup> Ottenne così attenzione e alcune delle sue opere furono tradotte integralmente nel decennio successivo. Finora l'interesse della critica è stato rivolto alla sua esperienza manicomiale e a quella che Stewart definisce la «leggenda di Merini, la poetessa folle» (2009, 13). Ampio spazio è stato dedicato altresì alla sua svolta mistica, alla dimensione carnale<sup>4</sup> nei suoi testi, ai legami intertestuali e tematici con l'opera poetica di Walt Whitman, Stefan George, Gerald Manley Hopkins e Rainer Maria Rilke, il suo poeta prediletto,<sup>5</sup> e, più recentemente, la poetessa Saffo.<sup>6</sup>

La frequentazione del circolo culturale di Spagnoletti espose Merini a linguaggi e letterature differenti che furono assimilati fino a diventare parte del tessuto poetico di tutti i suoi scritti, in cui parole, pensieri e immagini si intrecciano con molteplici esperienze culturali filtrate dalla sua sensibilità e dal suo sguardo acuto. All'interno del gruppo l'influenza più determinante fu esercitata da Quasimodo e Manganelli, con i quali intrecciò anche una relazione sentimentale. Entrambi rappresentarono un punto di riferimento umano e poetico; come mentori, contribuirono a forgiarne il promettente talento e a orientarne la ricerca poetica introducendola, con ogni probabilità, alle opere di Shakespeare, di cui erano entrambi cultori. Quasimodo tradusse numerose opere e Manganelli le lesse più e più volte, come testimonia la sua biblioteca oggi conservata a Pavia. Fino ad ora la critica non ha rilevato la presenza di riferimenti alle opere di Shakespeare, che sono stati per lo più trascurati. Tuttavia non si può fare a meno di osservare che il corpus delle opere di Merini risuona di echi shakespeariani, fra cui spicca *Amleto* per il numero di citazioni e per la loro profondità concettuale. Valutare questo aspetto può far meglio comprendere la complessità della scrittura meriniana e restituire un'immagine più intensa e precisa della poetessa dei Navigli.

Non è sempre possibile identificare la presenza di uno spunto shakespeariano in una raccolta, una poesia o un verso. La notte, il cielo, i fiori

3 Si vedano, per esempio, Allen, Kittel, Jewell 1987; O'Brien 1996; Sartini Blum, Trubowitz 2001.

4 Si vedano Pellegrini 2006, Dipace 2008, Alunni 2008, Redivo 2009.

5 Cf. Stewart 2009, XXIII; Dipace 2008, 10.

6 Angela Villani, Longo 2013.

e l'amore hanno spesso ascendenze shakespeariane; in quest'ottica mi limiterò a prendere in considerazione principalmente alcune opere di Merini, posteriori all'esperienza manicomiale, in cui sono menzionati nomi inequivocabilmente legati al Bardo. Il contributo prende in esame due aspetti: da un lato l'associazione fra persone che hanno fatto parte della vita di Merini, lei compresa, e alcuni personaggi shakespeariani; dall'altro, l'appropriazione della vicende tragiche di Shakespeare, che sono state rilette da Merini attraverso il filtro della sua dolorosa esperienza personale in manicomio. La poetessa sembra aver proiettato le proprie relazioni amorose su coppie come Romeo e Giulietta, Otello e Desdemona, Ofelia e Amleto. Ciò ha contribuito a una trasfigurazione in termini più universali, ma non per questo meno personali, dei ricordi più cari e di quelli più dolorosi della sua vita. Il paragone le ha permesso di mettere a fuoco i diversi aspetti delle sue relazioni sentimentali come la passione, il dolore di essere rifiutata e abbandonata, il tradimento (reale o metaforico) e la gelosia. In alcuni casi ella ha esplicitato il contesto, rendendo immediato il riconoscimento della componente autobiografica e individuabili le persone evocate nei suoi scritti; in altri il riferimento, pur rimanendo associato alla sfera privata, è riuscito ad acquisire un respiro più universale.

## 2 La follia è un capitale enorme

In Shakespeare Merini può aver trovato l'incarnazione di una delle sue massime più celebri:

La follia è un capitale enorme, estremamente prolifico, però lo può amministrare soltanto un poeta. (Merini 1995, 143)

Il drammaturgo elisabettiano diede prova di conoscere le diverse sfumature della malattia mentale, portando in scena molteplici situazioni e livelli di disturbo, e scandagliando i meandri della psiche maschile e femminile. Secondo Sanders, le scrittrici del ventesimo secolo hanno mostrato maggiore interesse per opere shakespeariane come *Re Lear* e *La tempesta* «for their obvious themes of fathers and daughters and patriarchal rules» (2001, 5), insieme alle commedie romantiche. Merini, al contrario, mostrò di essere in netta controtendenza: non prese quasi in considerazione questi temi, ma si concentrò piuttosto sulle opere nelle quali una coppia di amanti ha un ruolo preminente e il tema della follia è sviluppato. La poetessa sembra considerare l'amore una forma di pazzia, come Rosalind in *Come vi piace*:

Love is merely a madness; and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do. (3.2.331)

Il binomio amore-pazzia, sviscerato in tutta la produzione meriniana, trovò la sua massima espressione in *L'altra verità. Diario di una diversa*, un'opera in prosa in cui ella ripercorse la sua esperienza manicomiale a vent'anni di distanza dalla sua reclusione, offrendo un'altra verità, diversa ma non per questo meno autentica. Secondo Manganelli

non è un documento, né una testimonianza sui dieci anni trascorsi dalla scrittrice in manicomio. È una ricognizione, per epifanie, deliri, nenie, canzoni, disvelamenti e apparizioni, di uno spazio – non un luogo – in cui venendo meno ogni consuetudine e accortezza quotidiana, irrompe il naturale numinoso dell'essere umano. (Merini 1986, 9)

*L'altra verità* è un diario intimo e struggente in cui la poetessa si mise a nudo, dipingendo un quadro in cui vita e letteratura vengono a mescolarsi e sovrapporsi al punto che le figure che la circondavano assumono le sembianze di personaggi shakespeariani. Mentre il principe Amleto paragona la Danimarca a una prigioniera (2.2.240), Merini sperimentò la vera reclusione. Al suo arrivo in manicomio le pazienti sembravano essere così prive della loro umanità da ricordarle le 'weird sisters' della tragedia scozzese:

Le facce delle degenti erano a dir poco mostruose. Avevano perso ogni tratto femminile e guardandole (a poco a poco mi ci avvezzai) mi venivano in mente le streghe di Macbeth. [...] Un ghigno feroce tra le labbra che ti faceva accapponare la pelle. Ma lì di trauma non ce n'era, e a me che ero così spaurita non facevano che venire in mente le storielle macabre di Banco. Parevano tutte uscite da un raduno infernale. (Merini 1986, 32)

Sono le streghe e le loro predizioni a guidare Macbeth e sua moglie sulla strada della rovina e della follia.

La diabolica coppia impazzisce sotto il peso della colpa che riemerge in maniera sempre più lacerante sotto forma di allucinazioni: le mani sporche di sangue, un pugnale o il fantasma dell'amico Banco assassinato. Allo stesso modo le «storielle macabre di Banco» che tornano alla mente di Merini sono la trasposizione poetica delle ombre che offuscavano la sua mente così come quella di Macbeth.

Nonostante l'ambiente infernale, l'indole di Merini non viene annientata ma esaltata attraverso la lettura di *Romeo e Giulietta* insieme al pittore Pierre, con cui intrecciò una relazione sentimentale. Essi dedicavano ogni momento libero a questa lettura come due novelli Paolo e Francesca:

In manicomio incontrai Pierre; era un uomo buono, un malato muto. Si innamorò di me e lo capii dai suoi sguardi dolci, dalle margheritine che mi regalava ogni giorno. Un giorno mi portò *Giulietta e Romeo*, e lo indicava col dito sottolineando la parola Romeo. (Merini 1986, 21)

Mentre Pierre si sentiva il suo Romeo, Merini si immedesimò nella parte di Giulietta, che incarnava le sue fantasie erotiche e i suoi sogni romantici fra le mura del manicomio. Abbracciare questo ruolo aiutò Merini a sopravvivere: la mescolanza fra vita e arte le restituì parte della sua identità di donna e diede un senso alla sua vita in un universo di dolore, silenzio e solitudine.

Purtuttavia, in mezzo a quel disordine morale e reale, la storia mia e di Pierre continuava. Io l'amavo intensamente, portavo su di me i segni del suo corpo, dei suoi baci ardenti, delle parole sussurrate, tratte da *Giulietta e Romeo* di Shakespeare. E così, rammentandole di notte, mi rinfrescavo un po' la fantasia. (Merini 1986, 33)

Le battute della tragedia risuonavano allora nella mente di Merini che le ripiasmò più volte, riproponendole in maniera suggestiva in opere successive come *L'anima innamorata*.

Estremo saluto è l'amore, come una mano che prende l'ultima foglia e la divora come fosse anima.

Estremo saluto è il tuo bacio. Io volevo finire in te come un secondo respiro. Ti ho scelto per la mia morte; avevo capito in un attimo che il tuo bacio mi avrebbe uccisa. (Merini 2000, 85)

Come nota anche Dipace, non è «difficile scorgere ascendenze shakespeariane» (2008, 77) in questo passo che rievoca le parole pronunciate da Romeo in punto di morte, «Thus with a kiss I die» (5.3.120).

Romeo e Giulietta sono le prime 'maschere' di cui Merini si servì per riaffermare il suo essere donna e amante. La sua identificazione con la protagonista si concluse con la fine della sua esperienza manicomiale, quando Merini fu pronta a mostrare nuovi volti e ad assumere nuovi ruoli.

### 3 Otello e la bianca Desdemona

Un personaggio ricorrente nelle poesie scritte dopo l'internamento è Otello, la 'maschera' della gelosia che Merini indossò in prima persona e attribuì anche ad altri. Tuttavia l'associazione fra Otello e Merini non è totale, dato che l'identità della poetessa sembra oscillare fra l'indole gelosa del Moro e la fragilità di Desdemona, tradita negli affetti più cari. Nel primo componimento che prenderò in esame, Otello sembra avere i tratti di Giorgio Manganelli. Egli era stato autore di una rielaborazione personale della tragedia, *Cassio governa a Cipro*, una riscrittura destinata ad essere utilizzata come copione per uno spettacolo. Non casualmente quindi questa poesia di Merini fa parte de *La palude di Manganelli o il*



*monarca del re* (1992), «la raccolta più intensamente drammatica», come l'ha definita Maria Corti (Merini 1998, XV), composta in seguito alla morte dell'amato Manganelli.

Otello

Otello, Otello dalla voce rossa,  
 Quaggiù non è più tempo di riscossa;  
 Dalle verdi vallate della morte  
 Alla tua sposa tu hai cambiato sorte.  
 Cerco l'ombra degli inferi profonda  
 E la palude mi diventa bionda;  
 Altra donna ti è accanto,  
 Altra natura  
 E tu mi hai rinchiuso nelle scaltre mura.  
 (Merini 1998, 173)

I riferimenti a Manganelli sono evidenti: le «verdi vallate della morte» appena raggiunte dal defunto e la palude bionda. *La palude definitiva* è infatti il titolo dell'ultimo romanzo dello scrittore pubblicato prima della morte nel 1990, mentre il biondo si rifà al colore dei suoi capelli,<sup>7</sup> che ritorna spesso nelle liriche di Merini.

Otello ritornò nei pensieri della poetessa quando descrisse la fine della sua relazione d'amore con Salvatore Quasimodo:

Sono stata sempre molto gelosa dei miei amori, non ne ho più parlato e ho avuto un grande rimorso di non aver capito quest'uomo che mi amava in silenzio come una figlia. [...] Me ne andavo per sempre dal mondo della letteratura. Mi stavo preparando per il manicomio, senza saperlo e guarda caso andai a sposare un uomo che assomiglia molto a Quasimodo, al quale, visti i precedenti, commisi quella gelosia di Otello di cui dovevo farne le spese. (Merini 2007b, 6-7)

In questo caso è lei a vestire i panni di Otello e a finir vittima della sua stessa gelosia. Il dramma del Moro aiutò Merini a dare una forma letteraria compiuta ai suoi sentimenti dell'epoca e a rendere ancora più tangibile la tragicità della situazione.

Ella sembra passare con apparente facilità dal ruolo di Otello a quello di Desdemona. Nel passo seguente è difficile associare con certezza un uomo a Otello, mentre è evidente che Merini è Desdemona. È suggestivo

7 «Manganelli era biondo, un biondo sottile, un biondo fanciullo. Aveva la pelle di un certo colore di pesca, come se fosse stato estremamente giovane» (Merini 1995, 163).

ipotizzare che l'Otello menzionato nel testo possa essere il primo marito, Ettore Carniti. Come Desdemona, Merini si è sentita uccisa da lui, anche se metaforicamente; egli è stato infatti il principale fautore del suo internamento in un luogo in cui lei si sentiva morta agli occhi del mondo e in cui era stata privata di tutto, della libertà, degli affetti, della sua identità di poetessa, di donna e madre:

Chi ha oltraggiato il mio pudore di donna, chi ha oltraggiato la creatura migliore che avevo nel grembo che era la poesia?

Invano gli uomini cercano di raggiungere il cielo; ebbene io con te l'avevo raggiunto e mai una bianca Desdemona era caduta sotto i colpi d'ascia di un Otello furibondo che pensava solo alle sue conquiste e alle sue donne. (Merini 2003, 11)

La poesia traspone in termini poetici i rimorsi e i rimpianti di Merini per non aver potuto crescere le proprie figlie. La sua progenie migliore, quella di cui ha potuto prendersi cura, è stata la poesia. Il titolo, «Il vagito», suggerisce l'associazione fra parto letterario e nascita e sottende il dolore di aver partorito ma di non essere stata una madre. La violenza della sofferenza e il dolore per la separazione forzata dalle figlie porta Merini ad allontanarsi dall'originale shakespeariano, in cui Desdemona muore soffocata, e a dare al personaggio, suo *alter ego*, una morte particolarmente violenta a colpi d'ascia.

L'ultimo riferimento alla vicenda ritorna quando Merini rievoca la sua passione per Padre Richard, un giovane sacerdote che non ricambiò il suo sentimento:

Se sapessi, Silvano, che ti adopero per trovare una giustificazione, per aggiustare un amore perduto. [...] Ma lui, il Richard cuor di leone, con la sua bella tavola rotonda, cercava la sua dama preferita. Re Artù il vecchio, che non lo voleva, mi mandò a dire che me ne andassi per non chiudere più quel monastero aperto alla deriva. Forse era Otello, che mi domandava. Mi strangolò sul letto dove Cassio aveva posto il suo nocimento, nocimento di dubbio. Questo Iago maledetto dimora ancora in casa. (Merini 1995, 18)

Merini amplia il campo di indagine inserendo anche il personaggio di Cassio e creando una triplice prospettiva maschile di fronte alla quale Desdemona soccombe. Qui sembra compiersi la trasformazione definitiva di Merini, che passa dal ruolo di Otello-carnefice nel primo passo a quello della dolce Desdemona. Mentre ne «Il vagito» Merini mantiene un certo distacco, descrivendo i personaggi in terza persona, ne *La pazza della porta accanto* Desdemona è assimilata all'io lirico che vive la vicenda in prima persona. È poco significativo disquisire sull'identità di Otello in que-

sto passo, se sia una maschera usata per indicare Padre Richard o meno, dal momento che quest'ultimo «sembra rappresentare la sintesi di tutti i suoi amori passati, Manganelli, Ettore Carniti, Michele Pierri» (Pellegrini 2006, 47), ma anche l'artista Charles, il pittore Pierre e il clochard Titano.

#### 4 Ofelia che amava e rifiutava Amleto

Il personaggio femminile a cui Merini si sentì più legata è senza dubbio Ofelia, il prototipo della donna folle nelle arti e nella letteratura, «a potent and obsessive figure in our cultural mythology» (Showalter 1985, 77). La poetessa fa risalire la sua trasformazione nel personaggio all'inizio della sua esperienza in manicomio, che viene descritta nel diario *L'altra verità*:

In quel luogo ognuno di noi poteva battezzarsi con un nome diverso: ep-  
pure si chiama Grazia, o forse no, si chiamava Ofelia. (Merini 1986, 113)

Il manicomio annientò l'identità della poetessa e delle altre pazienti; per sopravvivere alcune se ne costruirono una nuova e diversa, ugualmente autentica, potendo scegliere chi essere: una Giulietta appassionata, una Desdemona ferita oppure una folle Ofelia.

Ricordo il primo giorno che entrai in manicomio. Fin lì non ne avevo mai sentito parlare. [...] Perché, se avessi saputo una cosa simile, mi sarei certamente uccisa. Ma è incredibile i segni che si avvertono su quelle facce di recluse, lo schifo che fanno. E poi tu diventi una di loro e fuori nessuno ti riconosce più. [...] Così la mia bellezza si era inghirlandata di follia, ed ora ero Ofelia, perennemente innamorata del vuoto e del silenzio, Ofelia bella che amava e rifiutava Amleto. (Merini 1986, 107)

Merini sentì di essere diventata Ofelia, il suo *alter ego* ideale, a cui la follia ha rubato la bellezza e la passione. L'espressione «inghirlandata di follia» la lega ancor di più al personaggio: la scelta di un'immagine floreale è molto significativa se consideriamo l'uso che Shakespeare fa dei fiori per tratteggiare il suo personaggio; essi accompagnano Ofelia dall'inizio della tragedia fino alla fine, quando trovò la morte cadendo in un ruscello mentre ne raccoglieva alcuni per farne ghirlande. Mentre nella prima parte della tragedia i riferimenti a fiori e piante sono meno frequenti e caratterizzati da una connotazione positiva legata alla vita e alla fertilità, dopo l'omicidio di Polonio nel quarto atto, le immagini floreali prendono il sopravvento diventando la forma espressiva attraverso la quale Ofelia manifesta la sua follia. Nel seguente dialogo con suo fratello Laerte, la sua mente veicola emozioni e pensieri attraverso il linguaggio dei fiori:

OPHELIA There's rosemary: that's for remembrance.  
 Pray you, love, remember. And there is pansies. That's for thoughts.  
 LAERTES A document in madness - thoughts and remembrance fitted!  
 OPHELIA There's fennel for you, and columbines.  
 There's rue for you, and here's some for me. We may call it herb-grace  
 o'Sundays. You must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy.  
 I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father  
 died. They say 'a made a good end. (4.5. 169-178)

Nel XVI secolo, ricorda Anderson (2005, 118), alcuni dei fiori citati da Ofelia erano usati per ridurre la fertilità; la ruta in particolare era considerata un potente abortivo. In questo caso i fiori nascondono pensieri latenti e doppi sensi a sfondo erotico che rinforzano il legame fra malattia e desideri sessuali nel subconscio del personaggio. «Her flowers suggest the discordant double images of female sexuality as both innocent blossoming and whorish contamination» (Showalter 1985, 80). Un concetto analogo viene espresso da Merini in una poesia che porta il suo nome:

Alda Merini

In me l'anima c'era della meretrice,  
 della santa della sanguinaria e dell'ipocrita.  
 Molti diedero al mio modo di vivere un nome  
 e fui soltanto un'isterica.  
 (Merini 1998, 147)

I fiori, le rose in particolare, diventano nel corpus meriniano simbolo della sessualità vissuta pienamente. Esse ebbero un ruolo cruciale durante l'internamento: piantate al di là del cancello del manicomio, rappresentavano per lei la vita, la passione e la libertà tanto anelata. Nel suo diario Merini raccontò di quando, all'apertura dei cancelli, rubò insieme a Pierre delle rose, con cui formarono un fascio:

Così, io e Pierre, adagiati sulle rose e sulle spine godemmo del primo amplesso del nostro amore. E fu amplesso che durò millenni, il tempo della nostra esecrazione. E da quell'amplesso senza peccato nacque una bambina. (Merini 1986, 110)

Ofelia ricorre anche in un'importante raccolta poetica di Merini, *Io dormo sola*, il cui titolo è reminiscente di un frammento di Saffo (16 Voigt) sulla solitudine d'amore. Merini coglie Ofelia un attimo prima del suicidio, mentre si specchia nelle acque del ruscello in cui troverà la morte:

## Lotta

Io mi son battuta  
con Atena scura di capelli  
e ho graffiato lo scudo di ferro  
della sapienza immortale,  
io, una stanca donna  
che pregava il Padre suo,  
una povera poetessa  
che non chiama più nessuno.  
È la delusione di Ofelia  
davanti al ruscello che scorre,  
la passione si è spenta  
di quella possente chiamata  
e l'acqua s'intorbida  
e la mia anima ancora non si vede.  
(Merini 2005a, 6)

Nella poesia Merini evoca un agone con Atena, dea della sapienza, un combattimento che rappresenta la lotta della poetessa per recuperare almeno uno sprazzo di sanità mentale; nonostante gli sforzi, però, ella non riesce a sconfiggere il suo demone interiore. Il suo stato d'animo la porta ad associare la sua situazione all'angoscia di Ofelia di fronte al ruscello che scorre. L'acqua torbida in cui si specchia la giovane è l'animo spento di Merini che fatica a vedere la luce. Diversamente dal suo *alter ego*, tuttavia, la poetessa non volle essere Ofelia fino in fondo, decidendo di non superare mai il limite estremo a cui la pazzia può spingere, togliersi la vita.

La stessa raccolta contiene due poesie in cui Amleto riveste il ruolo di protagonista: «Lo specchio» e «Amleto». Secondo Bloom l'effetto di Amleto sulla cultura mondiale è enorme, «after Jesus, Hamlet is the most cited figure in western consciousness» (1998, XIX). Il principe danese è un simbolo proteiforme e poliedrico che ha mostrato molteplici facce a coloro che lo hanno letto, interpretato e tentato di riplasmarlo; egli è il punto focale dell'azione verso cui tutti gli sguardi sono rivolti, «a reflecting pool, a spacious mirror» (Bloom 1998, 401), ma anche un fine osservatore della natura umana. È proprio il principe a far allestire l'assassinio di Gonzago, un momento metateatrale il cui fine è mostrare alla regina sua madre la vera natura del re. Insieme al *dumb show* che lo precede, esso costituisce un doppio specchio che riflette gli eventi precedenti al gesto criminale che ha messo in moto l'intera azione drammatica (Grabes 1982, 217). Nella versione filmica di Kenneth Branagh (1996) il protagonista pronuncia il celebre soliloquio del terzo atto di fronte a uno specchio:

The result of a court where their vanity is reflected, the main set was a huge royal assembly hall, completely lined with two stories of mirrors. (Bergeron 1997)

L'immagine ripresa da Merini è dunque carica di suggestioni che arricchiscono il suo testo e creano molteplici stratificazioni di significato:

Lo specchio

Ho provato una volta a fare il fantasma di me stessa,  
 il mio amico Amleto delirò:  
 gli spettri reggono poco la grande poesia.  
 Ma il tempo ha un ritmo assurdo  
 che ha come ultima battuta  
 in una fossa al cimitero.  
 Io di solito mimo una musica  
 da camera ardente  
 che non piace a tutti:  
 in un ritmo da quattro soldi  
 che fa sempre ridere però  
 il fantasma pazzo che si affaccia spesso  
 al mio specchio rotto  
 e che sono io stessa.  
 (Merini 2005a, 63)

Merini apre il componimento con una riflessione sui limiti che la follia pose alla sua capacità di comporre. Il fluire incalzante del tempo le ricorda il destino comune a tutti, la morte: ella cerca di esorcizzarla creando un'atmosfera tragicomica che rievoca la scena della tragedia in cui un becchino canta mentre è intento a scavare una tomba. Il testo riprende anche un altro episodio della tragedia, quando il principe cerca di dimostrare la sua sanità mentale alla madre:

my pulse as yours doth temperately keep time | And makes a healthful  
 music. It is not madness | That I have uttered. (3.4.138-140)

Merini ribalta questi versi trasformando il battito sano del polso di Amleto in un ritmo funebre appena mimato che le viene ispirato dalla follia. Nel componimento ella si trova ad assumere due ruoli: dapprima il becchino, poi il fantasma, simbolo della comparsa dei sintomi della follia, che si affaccia a uno specchio rotto, metafora della sua interiorità in frantumi.

Nel secondo testo Merini pone al centro Amleto come epitome della follia che colpisce le donne:

## Amleto

Quest'uomo è un danese folle  
 che abita una landa desolata  
 in un grumo di castelli  
 dove alberga la disgrazia.  
 Là, come la bufera di Amleto  
 cresce il cardo della potenza  
 e punge le gambe delle donne  
 e accarezza le loro fronti  
 con una piuma ribelle  
 fin quando ridono  
 come fontane.  
 E andando via dalle loro case  
 si mettono a girovagare  
 nell'isola comune  
 del loro spavento.  
 (Merini 2005a, 55)

La landa desolata in cui abita il principe sembra il manicomio di Merini in cui albergavano davvero la disgrazia e la strazio. Quando si scatena la bufera di Amleto, un impeto di delirio, tutto viene stravolto; resta solo la paura di fronte a una malattia incontrollabile e imprevedibile.

Amleto non è solo un danese folle; è anche l'uomo della mancanza di volontà, del dubbio, dello scetticismo di fronte alla realtà, in *L'anima innamorata*:

Prendi queste mie gambe che hanno camminato tanto fino alla scoperta  
 del mondo, fino alla rosa dell'Occidente, fino a capire che tenera rugiada  
 è il mito dell'amore. Tu ti sfalderai dopo le pietre, diventerai quell'anima  
 di Amleto che ha dubbi sul costato del mio Cristo. (Merini 2000, 77)

Amleto è per Merini anche una lente con la quale osservare dilemmi di natura religiosa, soprattutto nella fase più mistica e spirituale della sua produzione poetica.

Infine il terzo componimento dedicato al principe, quello più esteso, offre una prospettiva molto più personale. Merini si rivolge a un interlocutore che definisce affettuosamente il suo 'Amleto di carta'. Il principe cessa di essere un mero simbolo universale della follia, del dubbio e dello scetticismo, ma viene a rappresentare un uomo contemporaneo passionale e tormentato. Si può ipotizzare che Amleto sia l'indimenticato Manganelli, primo amore di Merini. La carta nel titolo può suggerire la sua professione di fine e poliedrico letterato dalla vastissima cultura, traduttore, giornalista e critico. Amleto, invece, può essere interpretato come un richiamo ad *Agli*

*dei ulteriori* (1972), una riscrittura della tragedia shakespeariana ad opera di Manganelli. In essa lo scrittore non offre una lettura testuale, ma la rilegge alla luce delle sue riflessioni personali e attraverso la lente della sua ironia. L'influenza di Amleto su Manganelli è stata di gran lunga superiore a quella della maggior parte dei personaggi del Bardo, e così pervasiva che persino lo scettico e introspettivo Iago del suo *Cassio governa Cipro* sembra un parente lontano del principe di Danimarca (Mussnug 2010, 203).

#### Amleto di carta

Tu Amleto di carta sei una perla che ha visto la morte.  
Un giorno tanti anni fa quando hai visto una donna hai pensato  
che fosse la tua fede in Dio.  
Era bella ma era amara come tutte le sorti dell'uomo.  
Come amante eri un saggio  
bevendo lei hai bevuto la sua cicuta.  
Come era amara e come era dolce.  
Possedendo lei hai sentito nel suo grembo la polvere di tante strade  
hai visto rose e cancelli, cancelli e rose.  
Possedendo lei hai capito che la vita era uno sbaglio  
e che solo l'amore è la vera tragedia dell'uomo.  
Non eri mai stato un uomo e lei non era mai stata una donna.  
Il fatto è che uniti dalle vostre mani  
avevate scoperto che eravate grandi come l'universo.  
Il vostro errore è stato quello di scoprire la verità.  
Tu oggi sei morto  
ma non è che sei morto perché hai una sepoltura  
ma perché hai mangiato, digerito e amato il suo cuore  
come si mangia la luna e il sole.  
Tu sei diventato il re dell'universo, tu sei impazzito d'amore.  
Ti piace sentirla lontana dal tuo martirio  
dalla tua veloce bocca che è sempre un figlio  
un condottiero segreto che naviga il dolore come un gaudio.  
Ma poi un giorno avete scoperto una terra  
dove non abitava nessuno e lì avete messo la tenda dell'amore.  
Avete mangiato i vostri pensieri come una cacciagione.  
Come sono belli i pensieri d'amore  
sono colombe alte di cui si mangiano anche le piume.  
Eppure il cuore del vostro cuore non è una statua solitaria  
ma un occhio in cui tanti guardano  
per concepire il paradiso della pace.  
Tu e lei siete morti in questo silenzio  
ma la vostra sepoltura non è mai esistita.  
(Merini 2005b)



La poesia sembra ripercorrere la loro storia d'amore tormentata ma di rara intensità («tu sei impazzito d'amore»). Quando si conobbero, Manganelli aveva 27 anni ed era sposato, mentre Merini era appena sedicenne. Oltre allo straordinario talento della giovane, egli intravide subito anche i primi segni di follia che portarono alla lunga reclusione in manicomio, prefigurata nella poesia dalla struttura chiasmica «rose e cancelli, cancelli e rose». In questo, come in altri componimenti, sono molto marcati la fisicità e la sessualità delle figure descritte. Quello che Serpieri scrisse su *Amleto* è di certo adatto anche alla poesia di Merini: «il linguaggio [...] è fortemente fisico, nel senso che traspone i complessi strati del senso, i rapporti fra i protagonisti, [...] in termini non astratti ma concreti, corposi, tangibili» (Serpieri 1995, 23). La fisicità di cui parla Serpieri si ritrova nella presenza insistita di riferimenti a parti del corpo: grembo, mani, cuore, bocca, occhio. Il corpo emerge dunque come «a place of suffering and joy, a shelter for the reason and the emotion at once» (Stewart 1999, 9), un concetto che richiama le molteplici dicotomie che caratterizzano il corpus poetico di Merini: follia e lucida razionalità, erotismo e misticismo, anima e corpo. L'interesse nella corporeità può essere concepito come un antidoto alle illusioni della follia, l'ultimo estremo tentativo di discernere cosa è reale da ciò che è creazione della mente.

La profondità del rapporto fra i due amanti, che non si esaurisce nella mera sfera sessuale nonostante il suo valore centrale, è anche proficuo scambio intellettuale («come amante eri un saggio», «avete mangiato i vostri pensieri come una cacciagione»), emerge con forza nella poesia così come il suo carattere dicotomico: la donna «era bella ma era amara», affascinante ma pericolosa come un veleno, «un demone, un demone ispiratore», riprendendo le parole usate da Merini in un'intervista televisiva per descrivere se stessa nel rapporto con Manganelli. Nonostante la fine della storia d'amore, che si è estinta nel silenzio per l'improvviso abbandono dell'uomo, il sentimento ha continuato a vivere; è stato eternato in versi che hanno reso immortale la loro passione, come quelli della poesia di Manganelli dedicata alla sua amata «Ti paragonerò dunque», un chiaro richiamo e omaggio al *Sonetto 18* di Shakespeare che esalta il valore eternante della arte poetica.

## 5 Conclusioni

La mia poesia mi è cara come la mia stessa vita, è la mia parola interiore, la mia vita. (Merini 1987, 7)

Per Merini vita e poesia coincisero. La poesia è stata la sua vita, la sua essenza; le persone, le esperienze e le situazioni che rievoca nei suoi testi, alternati a personaggi mitologici e letterari, riflettono come in un caleidoscopio la sua «truth of sorrow» (O'Brien 1996, 185).

Dopo un periodo di silenzio di vent'anni, Merini mise nero su bianco la sua verità, quello che l'esperienza di reclusione nell'ospedale psichiatrico significò per lei. I personaggi shakespeariani sono stati un veicolo per sublimare la sua vita in termini poetici e rappresentare le luci e le ombre della sua mente turbata: una maschera da indossare, un'identità temporanea da assumere e sovrapporre alla sua, spezzata dalla malattia. I nomi delle coppie evocate, Romeo e Giulietta, Otello e Desdemona, Ofelia e Amleto, diventano chiavi di lettura per penetrare la psiche di Merini e cogliere il significato di parole, versi e componimenti il cui senso risulta sfuggente al limite dell'incomprensibile.

Iniziando con *L'altra verità*, in cui nasce l'affinità con Giulietta e matura l'identificazione con Ofelia, Merini compie un viaggio spirituale e letterario il cui arrivo è «Amleto di carta», l'apoteosi del processo di appropriazione dell'opera shakespeariana: il suo può essere letto come un tentativo di riscrivere a suo modo un capolavoro del Bardo, come aveva già fatto prima di lei Manganelli, di scrivere il suo Amleto, epitome della sua vita 'fuor di sesto' ma con un metodo.

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## “Scraps, orts, and fragments” Shakespearean Echoes in Virginia Woolf

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**Abstract** Shakespeare is ubiquitous in Virginia Woolf's works and there is hardly a piece of writing in which the playwright's name is not mentioned. Along with other authors of the past, Shakespeare always represented an ideal benchmark for Woolf's literary output, providing her with the necessary drive to keep on “searching”. This meant experimenting with new forms of writing that, in her personal experience, meant finding new reasons to keep on living. A lifelong search, this usually became more intense before and after the repeated periods of crisis that Woolf had to face: not only on a personal level, but also on a more general one, because of the historical crises her generation had to live through. It was in those moments that Woolf mostly turned to her deep knowledge of Shakespeare's work. I will try to show how Shakespeare's ‘presence’ is particularly crucial in *Between the Acts*, the novel she wrote at the outbreak of World War II. Woolf tried to reply to the general crisis provoked by the new conflict with a work that consciously evoked the historical-literary past of Great Britain and into which multiple references to the Bard's oeuvre are weaved. Shakespearean echoes are “scraps, orts”, testifying to Woolf's extreme attempt to contain the desegregating violence of the war. They represented, in other words, what kept – and still keeps – a community together: its history and culture.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 Woolf's Shakespeare and Her Novels. – 3 *Between the Acts*, or Woolf's Shakespearean Novel. – 4 Conclusion.

**Keywords** Virginia Woolf. Shakespeare. World War II. Between the Acts.

### 1 Introduction

William Shakespeare is ubiquitous in Virginia Woolf's written output.<sup>1</sup> From her letters to her diaries, from her critical essays to her novels, there is hardly a page in which the playwright's works are not mentioned, be it as direct quotations or as oblique allusions, or Shakespeare himself referred to in terms of comparison or as the main object of Woolf's literary criticism.

1 Woolf's relationship with Shakespeare has been variously analysed in studies that dealt mainly with her *A Room of One's Own* and *Orlando*. For the latest one in this sense, see Stanford Friedman 2016, 189-202. To this date the only comprehensive study on the subject is Fox (1990), where the attention dedicated to *Between the Acts* is however limited. In this regard, cf. also Schwartz 1991, 721-46 and Briggs 2006, 8-24.

The reason, after all, is not difficult to find. It is undoubtedly related to the aura of greatness that had been surrounding the Bard for centuries, and that had been rekindled by the unprecedented critical work carried out by Victorian scholars (Poole 2014). In “Notes on an Elizabethan Play”, one of the essays of her *The Common Reader* (1925), Woolf herself wrote:

There are, it must be admitted, some highly formidable tracts in English literature, and chief among them that jungle, forest and wilderness which is the Elizabethan drama. For many reasons not here to be examined, Shakespeare stands out, Shakespeare who has had the light on him from his day to ours, Shakespeare who towers highest when looked at from the level of his own contemporaries. (Woolf 1925, 57)

Exceptional as he was, Shakespeare was both loved and feared by Woolf. First of all, confronting Shakespeare meant confronting the English literary tradition from which she had always felt excluded. The primary reason for this feeling was that she was a woman and, as a consequence, she feared that she would have never mastered a literature written essentially by men.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, she found herself lacking in the academic education that had been granted only to her brothers and male friends of the Bloomsbury Group: coming all from the middle class, they “were educated at public schools and universities” and the refined education they got, she argued, allowed for their fine books (Woolf 2015, 142). Perfectly aware of what she perceived as an unforgivable inadequacy, however, Woolf had put herself on a tight schedule of reading since the early age of fifteen. Despite the considerable knowledge she had acquired over the years, her *Diaries* and essays testify to her perpetual dissatisfaction with her education, which had not been forged in prestigious institutions. In this regard, in “The Leaning Tower”, she famously acknowledged:

A boy brought up alone in a library turns into a bookworm; brought up alone in the fields he turns into an earthworm. To breed the kind of butterfly a writer is you must let him sun himself for three or four years at Oxford or Cambridge [...]. He has to be taught his art. [...] Taught it by about eleven years of education – at private schools, public schools, and universities. (L. Woolf 1948, 137)

Confronting Shakespeare, moreover, always required a huge effort on Woolf’s part, so much so that she repeatedly gave voice to this feeling in her writings. “I find them [Shakespeare’s plays] beyond me”, she con-

<sup>2</sup> The bibliography on the subject is extensive. See, among others, Marcus 1987, Coleman 2012, 79-91 and the latest Caughie 2016, 305-18, as well as the references quoted by these scholars.

fessed, for instance, to her brother Thoby in 1901, “[i]s this my feminine weakness in the upper region?” (Woolf 1975, 45). On the same line, in November 1937 she wrote in her *Diary*: “Leonard in his stall. I in mine, reading [...]; but no poetry I observe – No Shakespeare, [...] I want prose to quiet my brain. Or am I lazy?” (Woolf 1985a, 120). This ambivalent relationship with the Bard, which can be extended to all the ‘male’ literary tradition that preceded her, could be said to mirror the one Woolf had with her own father, Sir Leslie Stephen – one of Victorian Britain’s preeminent scholars. In this regard, it is not incorrect to argue, as many critics did, that Shakespeare might have represented for Woolf a sort of father-figure, who acted as an inspiration and a guide, while at the same time provoking in her the inadequacy she had felt towards her own father, brothers and friends (Bodkin 1963, 301-2; Schlack 1983, 61-81).

Woolf, however, was neither mentally weak nor lazy. On the contrary, Shakespeare’s mentioned ubiquity in her writings proves the high challenge that she had posed to herself. Reducing Shakespeare to what Maud Bodkin called “a Beatrice-figure” (1963, 302) would therefore mean limiting Woolf’s complex intellectual relationship with the playwright, which actually involved alert “feminist rewriting” (Novy 1998, 145). Reading, studying and musing on the Bard’s works throughout her entire life, Woolf would eventually emancipate Shakespeare from the gendered and patriarchal vision of the literary tradition, and identify him as her own ideal of the anonymous and androgynous artist that she sketched in her final essays, “Anon” and “The Reader” (Fox 1990, 166-7; Schwartz 1991, 721-46). Particularly, in the first, Woolf outlined what can be defined as her philosophy of the artist’s anonymity and she praised Shakespeare for embodying it (Woolf 2011, 597-9; Silver 1979, 356-441). To prove her year-long and engaging confrontation with him, moreover, it must be noted that already in *A Room of One’s Own* (1928) she had unmistakably written as follows: “the androgynous mind is resonant and porous; [...] it transmits emotion without impediment; [...] it is naturally creative, incandescent and undivided. In fact one goes back to Shakespeare’s mind the type of the androgynous, of the man-womanly mind” (Woolf 2015, 74). In this regard, Woolf had also given shape to such an androgynous mind in her novel *Orlando* (1928), an explicit homage both to Vita Sackville West and to Shakespeare’s comedies (Briggs 2006, 16). Furthermore, Woolf’s repeated association of Shakespeare with the maternal fluid element that constituted creative potential for her had another implication. “[R]ather than figuring [him merely] as a fatherly source of inspiration or anxiety”, Schwartz widely demonstrated, “Shakespeare seems to play the part of a maternal muse in Woolf’s creative process, as well as to help shape her feminist vision and agenda” (Schwarz 1991, 722).

Having come to embody her own ideal of artist and writer, it is no surprise that Woolf constantly expressed the urgency to find a new Shake-

speare among the intellectuals of her own generation. As it emerges from one of her essays, Woolf thought it necessary to find a 'Shakespearean' individual during a period of continuous crises, as the first half of the 20th century was. She sought someone who would be able to talk to her, as well as future generations, and contrast the widespread violence by reminding everyone of the positive values that keep a society united:

From these new books our children will select the one or two by which we shall be known forever. Here, if we could recognize it, lies some poem, or novel, or history which will stand up and speak with other ages about our age when we lie prone and silent as the crowd of Shakespeare's day is silent and lives for us only in the pages of his poetry. (Woolf 1986, 59)

Significantly, in this passage Woolf did not write about 'authors', but rather about influential 'works'. Here it is possible to read Woolf's subtle hinting at an unconfessed desire of hers: it might not be necessarily another Shakespeare to write those works, but one of his 'sisters'. In other words, it might be a female writer, just like herself, the one who would be able to speak against the threatening escalation of violence that characterised her generation. In claiming the role of present-day Shakespeare for herself, Woolf could also be the one who would redeem the obscure destinies of the many 'sisters' who had not been given the opportunity to study and express their potentials; such as the unfortunate Judith Shakespeare, whose ultimately tragic life was imagined in Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*.

This should not be seen in contradiction with Woolf's aforementioned life-long anxiety when it came to dealing with Shakespeare. Even though she never really threw off the insecurity that she felt about the Bard, the writer's confidence in her own skills and knowledge had actually increased over the years. Differently from what she had first written in "The Leaning Tower", Woolf eventually came to re-evaluate the independent education she had had. She decided that it had allowed for her critical independence in approaching literature, in spite of what eminent scholars might have written. In this regard, especially in her critical writings, Woolf repeatedly "advised people to read a work on their own, and to mull over their reactions; then to make comparisons with other works; then to try to ascertain the book's 'absolute value'; and only then to the critics" (Fox 1990, 17). In doing so, she was evidently thinking about her own life-long confrontation with Shakespeare. The proof that the times were mature for women to claim their legitimate role as writers of literature was the very fact that, despite the fear and reverence, she too - a woman and a writer - had been engaging in a never-ending confrontation with anybody less than Shakespeare, the undisputed peak of an all-male literary tradition. By the 1930s, as Juliet Dusinberre underscored in her analysis of



Woolf's speech to the female students in Cambridge that lies at the origins of *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf came to realise that "[women] didn't need Shakespeare's sister. Shakespeare himself would do" (Dusinberre 2007, 64). For all her life as a writer, Woolf had been shaping her own peculiar relationship with the playwright, and so confident did she grow to be, that she actually acknowledged that Shakespeare too could write "poorly", as *Timon of Athens* or *Pericles* clearly showed (Fox 1990, 140). This constant confrontation between Woolf and the Bard, as the following section will show, played a constantly stimulating and utterly crucial role in her written output as a whole, and particularly in her novels.

## 2 Woolf's Shakespeare and Her Novels

Virginia Woolf's tenacious confrontation with Shakespeare did not merely resolve through looking at his works to draw inspiration from what she perceived as his proto-impressionistic writing style (Sawyer 2009, 2). It also testifies to her continuous effort to penetrate the mysterious power that she felt emanating from the great authors of the past that he embodied for her. In Woolf's view, such power consisted in their being able to constantly provide their contemporaries with the right push to keep on 'discovering'. This meant, for her, always experimenting with new forms of writing, so as to better express oneself and eventually find a reason to go on living. It is not the aim of this essay to go through the much-studied identity between life and writing in Virginia Woolf's experience, but to show how the continuous confrontation with Shakespeare, and Elizabethan literature in general, proved to be of crucial importance for Woolf. Despite her repeated depression crises and her own suicide, Woolf would indeed be an indefatigable 'discoverer' for all her life, as her experimental last novel, *Between the Acts*, completed only a few months before her death, testifies. As Fox usefully summarised:

[An ongoing sense of discovery] is what the literature of the English Renaissance provoked in Woolf. There was not a genre that she failed to touch upon, not a major figure she omitted over the years. Poetry, prose, and drama she read with some thoroughness, nor was she afraid of less-known figures and works. Even the occasional experience of frustration in the face of an uncongenial or obscure work could not diminish her natural taste for the great works of the past, reinforced as it was by her conviction that in the appreciation of such literature one's intellect and nobility were measured. (Fox 1990, 19)

Significantly, Woolf's need for discovery - i.e. for finding new ways to make her life meaningful - intensified before and after the most severe

episodes of crisis. These were not only the ones she experienced on a personal level, but also the historical crises that repeatedly struck her era, and that her generation had to face and somehow overcome (Briggs 2010, 70-88; Cole 2016, 333-46). It was during these moments that Woolf seemed to appeal most to her deep knowledge of Shakespeare's plays. As a committed pacifist and passionate lover of life, Woolf unsurprisingly saw the two devastating world wars as the worst critical moments of the 20th century, and her reactions against them profoundly influenced the style of her fiction. Symbolically, the two wars came to represent the tear in the thread that she had been trying to weave with her writing, so as to prove her intellectual commitment and her role as a writer within society (Whittier-Fergusson 2011, 230-53).

What should therefore come as no surprise is that, whenever war is mentioned in her novels, readers are almost invariably presented with a more or less subtle reference to Shakespeare.<sup>3</sup> In most cases, it is as if Woolf counterbalanced the deathly reality of war with the lively energy of a Shakespearean quotation. This is for instance what she did in *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), when the sounds of the war emerged in all their dreadfulness in the hallucinated and hallucinating visions of shell-shocked Septimus Warren Smith, dark *doppelgänger* of luminous Clarissa. It is indeed a line from *Cymbeline* – “Fear no more the heath of the Sun” – that is used as *leitmotiv* throughout the novel and which Clarissa continuously repeats to herself. As Woolf knew well, even if war had ended, fear lingered on and could cause disruptive effects in everybody's apparently quiet lives. As the Shakespearean quotation testifies to Woolf and her *alter ego* Clarissa, however, humanity could not give in to fear and they could not give up on their lives. On the contrary, by means of Shakespeare's line, Woolf forcefully shows through Clarissa's story how life goes on in spite of everything, and living precisely means looking after what is inexorably fleeting – life itself and the other human beings.

At other times, Shakespearean echoes would surface in Woolf's novels as oblique comments on the much-despised war. This is the case in her allusions to *Troilus and Cressida* and *Coriolanus* throughout the writings she produced during the 1930s and 1940s. While witnessing Hitler's seize of power in Germany and the preparations for a new war in Europe, Woolf, aghast, had begun rereading these two plays. As a result, in some notes dating back to this period, she wrote about how struck she was by Shakespeare's ability to “coin full blooded image[s]” of “cormorant war” (quoted in Fox 1990, 140). Here, Woolf drew inevitable comparisons with her own time when she wrote of how, even for Shakespeare, war evidently broke

3 For a detailed analysis of all the Shakespearean echoes and quotations in Woolf's novels, cf. Fox 1990, 95-158.

out in periods where “we have only the ghosts of ideas”, as testified for instance by Ulysses’s speech in *Troilus and Cressida* (140). In another passage, she acknowledged instead how Coriolanus’s “ragged, turbid: broken: violent” language perfectly reflected “the physical effect of fighting” in the classical past, and how it aptly mirrored the war-like slogans of her own present (142).

For her entire life, as written above, Woolf had confronted Shakespeare – as well as other great authors of the past – because she acknowledged their importance in passing on crucial messages to humanity, but also to somehow prove her own credentials as an intellectual. In the 1940s, after the success of her novels and her critical essays, Woolf even felt confident enough to criticise Shakespeare’s ‘weaker’ plays. Should it be surprising, therefore, that when she started working on her last novel, under the threats of the impending outbreak of World War II, she opted for a highly theatrical work, both in terms of textual nature and plot? The answer is no and the following section will provide evidence for it. While Fox contended that *The Waves*, with its “concentration on the dramatic soliloquy” is Woolf’s ‘most Elizabethan book’ (136), I will build on David McWhirter’s claim about the novel being the closest thing to a Shakespearean play that she managed to write (McWhirter 1993, 787-810). In addition, I will underscore how in *Between the Acts*, which may be rightly defined as a kind of echo chamber of all the themes that had always been dearest to the writer, Woolf tried to face the (personal and collective) anxieties for the impending war with a novel that purposely evoked the historical and literary past of the United Kingdom. I will focus, in particular, on the multiple echoes of and (mis)quotations from Shakespeare, which emerge intermittently but steadily on the surface of Woolf’s novel. Even though they are ‘scraps, orts and fragments’, they will be shown to testify to her extreme attempt to stem the overflowing violence of a war-like historical context, by holding on fast to what keeps a community together: its history and culture.

### 3 *Between the Acts*, or Woolf’s Shakespearean Novel

Virginia Woolf set *Between the Acts* during a 1938 midsummer night, the last glimpse of normal life before the black hole of World War II would start to swallow up her entire world.<sup>4</sup> The immediate reference to Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* is easy to catch, and it would have been even more explicit had she kept one of the novel’s first working titles: “Last

4 For an outline of the significance of *Between the Acts* against the background of Woolf’s last written production, cf. Snaith 2015.

night I began making up again: Summers Night: a complete whole; that's my idea" (Woolf 1985a, 133).<sup>5</sup> The story centres around the staging of a traditional summer pageant organised for the local community at Pointz Hall, the country manor of the Oliver family. Written by the elusive Miss La Trobe – Woolf's last *alter ego* – the pageant is a kind of epitome of British history, from the first Celtic peoples to the 20th century, with several references to the most important writers of the different epochs. The events are all condensed in a single day and the passing of time is significantly pressing, just like in Shakespeare's own last play, *The Tempest*, which is notably one of the main subtexts and sources of quotations for the novel.

Apart from what has been written about Woolf's life-long confrontation with the playwright, her need to have Shakespeare ingrained in her mind is testified by a project she had undertaken for many years and which can now be reconstructed by the reading of her final notes and diary entries. "Towards the end of her life", Alice Fox explained, "Woolf was writing a history of English literature, for which she read a large number of primary and secondary sources on medieval and Elizabethan life; and she was drafting an essay on the Elizabethans at the time of her death" (Fox 1990, 1-2). In addition, the outbreak of another war had become more and more imminent and, as shown above, periods of impending crisis had always inspired Woolf to return to Shakespeare. Acutely aware of the looming devastations, Woolf wrote to her friend Ethyl Smith on 1 February 1941, "By the time I've reached [reading] Shakespeare bombs will be falling" (Woolf 1980, 466). Even though her diaries and notes testify to her feeling of the ultimately helplessness of the intellectuals in situations of conflict, it is significant to acknowledge that Woolf still replied to these war echoes in her own way. After having listened to one of Benito Mussolini's speeches, in which the *Duce* had clearly shown his expansionistic intentions towards Abyssinia, she started writing a novel imbued with culture and literature.

The impulse to get back to writing meant looking for a new experimentation in terms of form and structure, which resulted in the fusion of drama and prose that characterises *Between the Acts*. As usual, it also meant trying to find a meaning for an existence that was threatened by war once again. This looming threat, after all, is immediately presented by Woolf in the first sentence of the novel: "it was a Summer's night and they were talking, in the big room with the windows open to the garden, about the cesspool" (Woolf 2012, 307). From the very opening, Woolf fractures the apparent tranquillity of the community of people who live at Pointz Hall, inserting a disturbing element such as the "cesspool" in their conversation. This patently hints at a dimension of decay and disgust, the same

5 The title of the novel was subsequently changed by Woolf herself into *Pointz Hall* – the name of the Oliver family manor –, and eventually into *Between the Acts* by Leonard Woolf, when he published it after his wife's death.

dimension where Woolf not too covertly placed war. This disgust of hers, mixed with fear, emerges soon afterwards, absorbed in the words of the unpleasant and rather chauvinist character of Giles:

Giles nicked his chair into position with a jerk. Thus only could he show his irritation, his rage with old fogies who sat and looked at views over coffee with cream when the whole Europe - over there - was bristling like... He had no command of metaphor. Only the ineffective word 'hedgehog' illustrated his vision of Europe, bristling with guns, poised with planes. At any moment guns would rake that land into furrows; planes splinter Bolney Minster into smithereens and blast the Folly. (331)

Woolf's anger against those "old fogies" who had allowed Europe to be turned into once again a war-like "hedgehog" can be clearly perceived in this passage. After all, it was precisely to make the difference in the patriarchal and war-like society of her times that Woolf had chosen to become who she was - an intellectual and a writer. To this point she went so far as to write "my thinking is my fighting" in her *Diary*, as an irritated reply to Vita Sackville West's younger son, who had blamed her and the other member of the Bloomsbury Group for not engaging enough to prevent the war (Woolf 1985a, 285; Froula 2005; Allen 2010, 85-112).

Choosing to write a novel such as *Between the Acts*, moreover, is very relevant in the light of Woolf's creative experience, also because it marked a significant change. In her previous novels, she had always proven to be particularly fascinated by her characters' individualities. Woolf was the one who had dug well-known "caves" behind her characters, as she wrote in her *Diary*, so as to bring on the page their most intimate thoughts, their most hidden self (Woolf 1978, 263). This time, on the contrary, she realised that a 'we' was most needed (Benziman 2006, 53-71). In the 1940s, Woolf eventually understood that she had to do the exact opposite of what she had written in her *The Common Reader* a few years before, when she had praised the comforting solitude of her own readings:

What is it that we are coming to want so persistently, that unless we get it instantly we must seek elsewhere? It is solitude. There is no privacy here. Always the door opens and someone comes in. All is shared, made visible, audible, dramatic. Meanwhile, as if tired with company, the mind steals off to muse in solitude; to think, not to act; to comment, not to share; to explore its own darkness, not the bright-lit-up surfaces of others. It turns to Donne, Montaigne, to Sir Thomas Browne, to the keepers of solitude. (Woolf 1925, 66)

The writing of *Between the Acts* represented Woolf's realisation that, with the impending war, doors had to be kept open and her ideas actually "shared,

made visible, audible, dramatic". Woolf's last novel was, in other words, her personal contribution to the creation of a peculiar sense of community, of a patriotism that she realised her country desperately needed. Obviously, her peculiar patriotism had nothing to do with the boorish propagandistic slogans that the rising totalitarian regimes were evoking everywhere; nor with the abhorred idea of the German *Volk*, around which Hitler had been rallying his most war-like generals and converts. As Julia Briggs put it:

In earlier novels, she had explored the experience of an individual in relation to a group, and the movement towards and away from a centre ('What we need is a centre. Something to bring us together...'). In 'Pointz Hall' [*Between the Acts*], these contrasting impulses are at once more conspicuous, yet also more closely linked. [...] Yet unity is not without its dangers, disastrously evident in totalitarianism, where mass demonstrations deter individuals from thinking morally for themselves, and encourage crowds to set up upon outsiders. (Briggs 2005, 374-5)

Woolf had always been perfectly aware of the dangerous connections between the kind of 'unionism' fostered by social institutions and what she called Hitlerism; which she had witnessed to be rampantly spreading through her beloved England (Miller 1998, 135). Building on a genre - the pageant - that had always been bent to serve opposing ideologies, Woolf's unusual patriotism in *Between the Acts* found its own shape in a peculiar epitome of English literature and culture in which her acquaintance with Shakespeare's *oeuvre* played a crucial role. "[S]he recognized and loathed the threat of nationalism", Briggs acknowledged, "yet she loved England - the St Ives of her childhood (Eden before the fall), London (her only patriotism, she told Ethel Smyth). [...] [In particular,] she loved the medium she worked in, the language and its literature, for literature, she insisted, was 'no one's private ground; [it] is common ground. It is not cut up into nations; there are no wars there'" (Briggs 2005, 370).

It is undoubtedly true that, through her use of the ambiguous genre of the pageant, Woolf aimed to establish subtle connections between that genre and the "contemporary fascist spectacle" that was spreading in Europe (Miller 1998, 135). With respect to the nationalistic slogans of the rising fascism, however, Woolf's patriotism emphasised the luminous living examples of England's diverse cultural and literary past, and thus undermined the nationalistic logic that underlay such slogans. Woolf clearly perceived that an appeal to that culture and literature was most needed in her present, which was becoming more and more sombre, and which threatened to shed an even more sombre light on the future. "Culture and literature", as Marina MacKay put it, "are mobilized, then, in the fight against what Woolf considers the inorganic forms of group consciousness that fascism brings into existence by force" (MacKay 2016, 155). What

better way, therefore, than presenting her readership with a novel that attempted to emulate the plays of the nation's most famous son and that was utterly weaved in his quotations, so as to remind everyone of the elements that kept them together? Here lies the meaning of the Shakespearean echoes that make up the fragmented thread of *Between the Acts*: they represent the culture and civilisation that was common to all British people. With his history plays, Shakespeare had indeed managed to create the myth of a proto-British national unity, whose fragile reality his contemporaries had somehow enjoyed, thanks to Elizabeth I's deft rule. In a likely attempt to evoke the much-loved Elizabethan Age, Woolf managed to fuse the Queen and the Bard into the character of her last *alter ego*, Miss La Trobe, and thus bring both their luminous examples into the 20th century - into her own present of lurking war. In *Between the Acts*, however, it is as if Woolf took Elizabeth I's and Shakespeare's persuasive rhetoric away from the war-like speeches of the much despised politicians and gave them back to her readership in their authenticity, thus highlighting their cultural significance. At least momentarily united by the no-matter-how-fragmented theatrical representation taking place at Pointz Hall, both characters and readers eventually came to embody a peculiar community that was seen by Woolf as the only hope to mend the tear produced by war (Briggs 2006, 12-3).

The community of people gathered at Pointz Hall in *Between the Acts* was actually peculiar, because it was not only composed of British citizens. Along with the descendants of the ancient local families, many newcomers were to be found among the audience of Miss La Trobe's pageant: "a scatter of odds and ends", as Woolf wrote (Woolf 2012, 341). This is significant because, once again, the writer distanced herself from the resounding slogans of the nationalists and rather evoked a culturally diverse melting pot, a "pot pourri" as it is called in the novel (Woolf 2012, 380). That was, after all, what she loved about her London, on which, as she had foretold, bombs had indeed started to be dropped: "[t]he passion of my life, that is the City of London - to see London all blasted, that too raked my heart" she wrote one of her friends on 11 September 1940 (quoted in McIntire 2007, 192). However, it was not easy to keep together such a culturally diverse community. Significantly though, the character who managed to do it, at least for a little time, was the artist herself, the anxious Miss La Trobe - whose name actually means "finder" or "inventor" (Briggs 2006, 20). She is the one who put together the pageant that everybody came to see, and represents Virginia Woolf's last, and possibly most explicit, *alter ego*, as well as the female counterpart of Shakespeare's Prospero. Just as the latter hastily played his magical tricks on the others characters of *The Tempest* to bring about his subtly political reform, Miss La Trobe knew well that also her masked appeal to culture, reason and peace had to be passed on quickly, before her audience would disperse.

[During the first intermission] Miss La Trobe stepped from her hiding. Flowing, and streaming on the grass, on the gravel, still for one moment she held them together – the dispersing company. Hadn't she, for twenty-five minutes, made them see? A vision imparted was relief from agony... for one moment... one moment. (Woolf 2012, 353)

Was it not for the already patent connection between the Shakespearean Prospero and Miss La Trobe, it could also be argued that Woolf established an even subtler connection between her *alter ego* and Shakespeare himself. Just as the Bard made a culturally diverse audience rush to the Globe to see his own plays, in Pointz Hall this same aim is accomplished by Miss La Trobe.

In weaving the multiple Shakespearean echoes in the linguistic thread of her novel, Woolf opposed the words pronounced by the actors of her pageant to the lurking threats of impending war, which constantly emerge to disrupt the pageant's dramatic illusion and testify to Woolf's own fears and uncertainties. Despite these difficulties, however, the repetition of these echoes would actually prove effective. They touched the "invisible strings" of each single member of the audience, as an elderly lady acknowledged, and, most of all, managed to awaken the very spirit of community that Woolf had understood to be necessary at the time. As Miss La Trobe herself admitted: "she was not merely a twitcher of individual strings; she was one who seethes wandering bodies and floating voices into a cauldron, and makes rise up from its amorphous mass a recreated world" (378).

Here is, then, the true meaning of the Shakespearean "scraps, orts, and fragments" that constitute the thread of *Between the Acts* – as Miss La Trobe defines them, by quoting Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (397). These "fragments" somehow resolve the aphasia produced by the historical events in the characters of the novel, as well as in Woolf herself: "[w]e haven't the words", Mrs. Swithin protests at a certain point (332). The literary scoriae that Woolf weaves in the text, therefore, make her story, as well as history, go on; and this was what Woolf subtly wanted her readership to understand. It did not matter that they were misquotations, distorted and imprecise most of the time: what really mattered was their repetition. Thanks to this repetition, Woolf wrote, life was revived, unity was created, and war contrasted: "[i]t didn't matter what the words were; or who sang what", Miss La Trobe admitted, "Round and round they whirled, intoxicated by the music" (351). Thanks to these literary redundancies, despite the difficulties and the recurring interruptions that hint at the impending war, the pageant and life itself can go on – even if imperfectly. Unsurprisingly, Miss La Trobe's anxiety for the repeated threats to her pageant ("[i]llusion had failed. 'This is death'" [372]) is opposed by Woolf's multiplication of the Shakespearean echoes. *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *The Tempest*, the *Sonnets*: virtually every line of the last part of the novel shows a more or less direct reference to the Bard's works, which look so



much like that “heap of broken images” that T.S. Eliot had used to keep his own *The Waste Land* together.

Similarly to Eliot’s final appeal to silence and peace, after such an accumulation of resounding Shakespearean echoes, Miss La Trobe’s own pageant ends in silence, and she brings on stage Woolf’s present moment of a Europe on the verge of World War II. During those ten minutes of silence, as Miller argued, “the spectacle is not the drama, but [the audience’s] lives which, by implication, they watch with dumb abandon. They are unable to think critically, unable to look at the program and notice the grand repetition they are facing as the spectacle of tyranny and war unfolds in Europe” (Miller 1998, 157). Setting aside the music and symbols that characterised nationalistic pageantry, Woolf proves once again her subtle critique of the aforementioned dialectic of such art. Her pageant is indeed something else. Differently from the depersonalising message that this genre usually imposed on the audience, the ten-minute silence at the end of Miss La Trobe’s pageant aims precisely to make the audience think over what they have just seen and especially over the threats looming on their own present days. In fact, this is not the real end of the pageant, nor of the novel. Woolf’s explicitly hopeful message has yet to come.

After this ten-minute break, all the actors of the show are brought on stage for the last time. From the first Britons to those living in the present days of the audience, they start reciting their own lines all together, so as to create a peculiar harmony out of an apparent disharmony: “[d]ispersed are we; who have come together”, a voice from the gramophone shouts tirelessly, “[b]ut [...] let us remain, whatever made that harmony” (Woolf 2012, 399). Needless to say, Woolf is quoting Shakespeare, once again. She chooses a famous line from *The Tempest*, which reiterates her hope to go back to those vital elements that could bring a community together and which Shakespeare embodied for her. “The collective vision played out in *Between the Acts*”, Catherine Wiley summarised, “asks both audience and reader to imagine the radical possibility of how we can stop history from repeating itself as war” (Wiley 1995, 5). This is exactly the question that another off-screen voice asks, as the people in the audience are getting ready to go back to their own lives – possibly, it is Woolf’s own voice, who is trying to make them pause and think for yet a few more minutes:

Before we part [...] let’s talk in words of one syllable, without larding, stuffing or cant. Let’s break the rhythm and forget the rime. And calmly consider ourselves. Ourselves. Some bony. Some fat. [...] Liars most of us. Thieves too. [...] The poor are as bad as the rich are. Perhaps worse. Don’t hide among rags. [...] Oh we are all the same! [...] Look at ourselves, ladies and gentlemen! Then at the wall; and ask how’s this wall, the great wall, which we call, perhaps miscall, civilization, to be built by [...] orts, scraps and fragments like ourselves? (Woolf 2012, 394)

As her novel shows, Woolf had clearly found the answer to this fundamental question. In the notes she had scribbled down in those months, she had notably written that “there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself” (Woolf 1985b, 72). If, then, we are everything that exists – fragments, orts, and scraps ourselves –, is it not evident, she wrote in *Between the Acts*, that “we should unite?” (Woolf 2012, 397). Surely, it was evident to her. Again, it is not surprising that, in the novel that testifies the most to her effort to contrast the tearing brutality of the war, Woolf condensed so many references to Shakespeare. As she would argue in *Anon*, which dates back to the weeks before her own death, her contemporaries – herself included – used to refer to the Elizabethans so as to demonstrate their noble intents (Silver 1979, 386).

Significantly, however, while forcefully claiming the need to strengthen a communal unity, Woolf rediscovered the importance of everyone’s individuality, which she seemed to have set aside in this novel. If acknowledging that we too are fragments, orts, and scraps means acknowledging our ineradicable differences, still the harmony produced by the fore-mentioned choral scene testifies to “some genuine attainment of a collective selfhood” (Benziman 2006, 68-9). “Only if the masses delude themselves into seeing culture as an all-powerful unit over which they have no control” Wiley had argued in this regard, “can Fascism triumph” (Wiley 1995, 16). Therefore, only if we can manage to make our differences coexist within the shared set of values that culture represents, Woolf seems to claim, we can actually prevent the devastation of new dictatorships and wars. In other words, only if we realise that we can always question and (re)shape our own culture – just as Woolf had been doing in her life-long confrontation with Shakespeare.

#### 4 Conclusion

In *Between the Acts*, Woolf celebrated the imperfect community that had created the history and culture that she deeply relished, and on top of which Shakespeare shone as the best outcome. That history and that culture, Woolf unmistakably wrote, could and had to be opposed to the barren and destructive reality of war and violence that tended to dominate in the world. Partially setting aside her faith in the individuality of each person, it was in the community and in the union among different people, created by their shared culture that Woolf eventually seemed to find the meaning of life and the only possibility to contrast violence and hate. She loved life so much that she continued to look into it until the end of her own existence, in order to give it a meaning and turn it into a useful example for other people. Despite the imperfections and shortcomings, Woolf repeatedly demonstrated, life had to be always celebrated and protected. This is

actually the meaning of the aforementioned Shakespearean quotation from *Cymbeline* - "Fear no more the heath of the Sun" - that Clarissa Dalloway repeats to herself until the end of her own story. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Woolf came back to this play even in *Between the Acts*, during the play-within-the-play moment of the comedy represented in honour of the fictional Queen Elizabeth. By modifying the explicit quotation of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, Woolf significantly turned the imperative "Fear no more" into a kind of dialogue that ended with the characters' - thus Woolf's - message of hope being eventually understood and passed onto the readers: "[t]was a winter's night [...] I mind me that, I to whom all's one now, summer or winter. | You say the sun shines? I believe you, sir..." (Woolf 2012, 348).

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## **Itinerari e fonti del *Corallium rubrum***

### **I commerci tra Mediterraneo, India, Cina e Giappone dall'antichità alla prima età moderna**

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**Abstract** Since ancient times, red coral has been one of the most appreciated original items exported from the Mediterranean to India and East Asia, along the circuits of the silk and spice trade routes. Nevertheless, due to its rarity, as well as to a paucity or a lack of records, studies seem often to neglect this product on the move from the West to the East. Focusing mostly on some accounts from antiquity to early modern times, this paper gathers information and mentions from several sort of archival, artistic, and literary sources, in order to explain why coral was appreciated, how it was acknowledged, traded and employed by different civilizations, especially in East Asia.

**Keywords** Red coral. Mediterranean Sea. Eurasian trade. China. Japan.

E in questa provincia [Tibet] si spende lo corallo, ed èvvi molto caro, peroch'egliano lo pongono a collo di loro femmine e di loro idoli, e hannolo per grande gioia.

(M. Polo, *Il Milione*, cap. C)

Il Daqin è il paese a occidente dove si riuniscono gli uomini d'affari [...] Questa terra produce corallo, oro, broccati, damaschi, perle.


(Wang Qi 王圻, *Sancai tuhui* 三才圖會 'Enciclopedia illustrata dei tre regni', 1607, *juan* 14, 18)

La storia del corallo rosso (*Corallium rubrum*) è lunga quanto quella della civiltà mediterranea dal momento della sua scoperta, raccolta, lavorazione e commercializzazione.<sup>1</sup> Occorre notare in primo luogo che il corallo rosso

**1** Raccolto in particolare nell'area centro-occidentale del Mediterraneo, che risulta essere luogo di riproduzione naturale della specie, dalle coste del Maghreb alla Spagna, Baleari, Provenza, Corsica sino a tutte le coste liguri e tirreniche della Penisola italiana, soprattutto Sicilia, Sardegna e Campania, il corallo rosso ha il suo habitat ideale in tale bacino in ragione della temperatura mite delle acque, dell'ampiezza moderata delle maree, della peculiare composizione salina e della relativa penombra dei fondali. Formazioni di corallo rosso si trovano in misura minore anche nell'area adriatica, dalla Dalmazia alla Grecia sino ai litorali del Vicino Oriente, mentre popolazioni di questa specie nascono in parte anche lungo le coste atlantiche dell'Africa nord-occidentale (Bowen 2015; Iwasaki 2008, 3-93).

**DOI 10.14277/2499-1562/AnnOc-51-17-8**

Submission 2017-03-06 | Acceptance 2017-03-29

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era annoverato a pieno titolo tra i prodotti più redditizi degli scambi commerciali tra Europa e Asia attraverso gli itinerari terrestri e marittimi delle vie della seta e delle spezie, prodotti che includevano articoli di lusso come le gemme preziose – quali ambra, giada, avorio, diamanti, perle – oltre a varietà di coralli neri, verdi o bianchi (*Anthipataria*, *C. album*), più diffusi in aree di pesca extra-mediterranee. In tale contesto, pur rappresentando uno tra i più originali, rari e ricercati prodotti di provenienza occidentale, richiesto a fronte delle merci est-asiatiche sin da tempi remoti, appaiono meno evidenti, nelle fonti come negli studi, l'entità e le dinamiche del commercio del *C. rubrum* tra Mediterraneo e Asia orientale, rispetto ad esempio ai più frequenti e voluminosi traffici in argento, oro, tessuti, derivate alimentari, allume, armi in cambio di spezie, pepe, seta, porcellane, lacche, tè, legni pregiati.

La diffusione intracontinentale del corallo mediterraneo non sorprende, se si pensa che il prezioso articolo era noto dall'antichità, tanto nella tradizione classica occidentale quanto in quella orientale, dalla Grecia e Roma al Maghreb e al Levante, dall'Asia centrale sino al Giappone. Considerato una pietra o una pianta marina che induriva al contatto con l'aria, il corallo era ritenuto tutt'altro che una specie animale quale è in realtà, ovvero una ramificazione calcarea di colonie di polipi (Bowen 2015, 3-20). La mitologia occidentale faceva risalire la nascita del corallo all'uccisione di Medusa per mano di Perseo: secondo Ovidio (*Metam.* 4, vv. 740-52), la pietrificazione del corallo derivava dalle alghe fresche che lambivano la testa recisa della Gorgone, le quali, assorbendone la forza, indurivano i loro rami e le loro foglie all'aria:

nunc quoque curaliis eadem natura remansit | duritiam tacto capiant  
ut ab aere quodque | vimen in aequore erat, fiat super aequora saxum  
(*Metam.* 4, vv. 750-2)

Ancor oggi i coralli conservano immutata la proprietà d'indurirsi a contatto dell'aria, per cui ciò che nell'acqua era vimine, spuntandone fuori si pietrifica (Ramous 1995, 314-6)

mentre le ninfe marine, divertendosi a ripetere il prodigio, ne lanciavano in mare innumerevoli ramoscelli al fine di moltiplicarli (*Metam.* 4, vv. 744-9).

Tra le testimonianze più antiche e attendibili – non sempre l'oggetto che si trova descritto nelle fonti corrisponde al *C. rubrum*, poiché le notizie sono talora imprecise o ascrivibili ad altre specie di coralli – se ne ha menzione in Teofrasto nel trattato *Περὶ τῶν λίθων* (*Peri tōn lithōn*, *Sulle pietre*, ca. 315 a.C.), il quale accenna a un generico Κοράλλιον (*korállion*) 'corallo' come a una pietra in forma di radice ubicata in mare (nella versione latina Theophr. *De lapidus* VII 39, Hill 1746, 97-9). E ancora, il trattato *Περὶ ὕλης ἰατρικῆς* (*Peri hýles iatrichês*, *De materia medica*, I secolo d.C.)



del botanico greco Dioscoride ne parla invece in termini di pianta marina, che indurisce una volta estratta dall'acqua, distinguendo chiaramente il *korállion* rosso dalla varietà nera (Anthipataria o *C. niger*), e tessendone le lodi per essere quello di qualità più pregiata, in base a colore, brillantezza e duttilità, mentre se ne elencano le proprietà curative, in quanto restringe e rinfresca, riempie e guarisce le piaghe, è efficace contro le emorragie, nella diuresi e per la milza (Dioscoride Anazarbeo 1547, 271).

Per quanto riguarda la circolazione e gli itinerari marittimi del corallo mediterraneo, la fonte classica occidentale probabilmente più completa sui commerci durante il periodo antico resta il *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (I-III secolo d.C.) per la parte relativa ai traffici dell'Egitto romano con l'India. Vi si trova citato sia il corallo rosso, noto per essere il più prezioso, sia quello nero del Mar Rosso. Dal *Periplus* apprendiamo anche che gli scambi prevedevano il trasporto dall'Egitto via Cana (Yemen meridionale) sino ai porti di Muziris (nel Kerala), Nelkynda (nei pressi di Kochi) (*Periplus* LVI 18.19), Baryza (Bharuch nel Gujarat) e Barbarikon (nei pressi dell'attuale Karachi) (*Periplus* XLIX 16.21), dove attraverso mercanti cinesi giungevano costosi pellami e preziose sete (Casson 1989, 21-2, 24, 75, 163, 191).

Risalendo al periodo medievale, varie notizie sul corallo rosso e sulle vie commerciali attraverso le quali esso era diffuso sono fornite da numerose fonti occidentali e medio-orientali. Autori e fonti arabe e persiane, tra i quali Moḥammad b. Manṣūr (attivo nel XV secolo) o i *Jawāher-nāma* - le raccolte e i trattati sui minerali, le gemme e le pietre preziose - danno conferma delle esportazioni di *C. rubrum* verso Yemen, India e Cina, dove esso era molto stimato e utilizzato per impreziosire figure di idoli e statuette, mentre era noto che nel Catai (Cina settentrionale) esso era addirittura preferito ai gioielli (*Encyclopaedia Iranica* 2011, 2012). Tra le fonti europee, *Il Milione* a proposito del Tibet fa sapere che «in questa provincia si spende lo corallo, ed èvvi molto caro» (Ciccuto 2010, 323) in quanto oggetto di commercio. Per quanto concerne i dati merceologici, la stima e la valuta del corallo, Balducci Pegolotti (m. 1347 ca.) annotava nella sua *Pratica della mercatura* che:

il corallo pulito quanto è più vermiglio, e più pulito, e più grandi branche, tanto è migliore e tanto vale meglio. Corallo non pulito quanto è più rosso, e più grossetto, e non troppo minuto, e che sia netto di terra, tanto vale meglio (Evans 1970, 378)

e ne forniva le valutazioni a seconda delle piazze e mercati nei quali esso era reperibile, da Genova alla Sicilia, da Costantinopoli alla Persia.

Dall'analisi di vari tipi di testimonianze relative alla sua storia è possibile rintracciare i circuiti, la diffusione e l'uso antico del corallo mediterraneo, tanto più se si mettono a confronto le fonti occidentali con quelle orientali. A partire dai secoli XV-XVI, quando la raccolta e lavorazione del corallo

conobbe una crescita ragguardevole nel Mediterraneo, alcuni documenti registrano distintamente che i beni più preziosi provenienti dall'Europa e diretti alle Indie orientali erano:

panni reali de Spagna (da otto l'uno), coralli lustri et tondi, con diverse altre minuterie<sup>2</sup>

in altre parole *reales de a ocho* d'argento - in quanto moneta accettata nelle transazioni internazionali - il corallo e articoli minori. Anche le relazioni di viaggiatori e pellegrini, i carteggi di agenti di commercio e ambasciatori, gli annali dinastici, le cronache di storici e osservatori del tempo e ovviamente la letteratura botanica riportano diversi rimandi e accenni ai traffici di *C. rubrum*.

Notizie in tempi antecedenti all'età moderna sono altrettanto numerose e consentono a loro volta di risalire ai primi rudimenti sul corallo e ai circuiti commerciali che lo esportavano sino in Asia orientale. Considerato un prodotto raro e prezioso già nell'antichità, il corallo rosso è stato da sempre apprezzato in ambito artigianale nelle lavorazioni di gioielleria, essendo abbastanza duttile ed estremamente liscio e lucente quando lavorato, oltre che attraente per le sue ampie varietà cromatiche. Tanto in Europa quanto in Asia era stimato per vari usi, da quelli religiosi e rituali a quelli curativi e soprattutto artistici, decorativi e finanche cosmetici. D'uso frequente nella farmacopea antica occidentale come in quella orientale - in specie come eccipiente in farmaci e paste dentifricie - il *C. rubrum* era adoperato soprattutto quale pietra d'ornamento e montatura in oggetti d'uso religioso o quotidiano. In oreficeria era ricercato per produrne *cabochon* o perline tonde, cannette e botticelle da infilare in collane, bracciali o grani di rosari e paternostri; si ritrova in intarsi e bassorilievi su monili di vario genere (anelli, orecchini, cammei, armille, medaglioni), per quanto molto apprezzato, soprattutto in Asia, anche grezzo, in rami o frange (Tescione 1972; Grassi, Pepe, Sestieri 1992, 335-7; Nishie 2008). L'impiego nella lavorazione artigianale di gioielli o per l'incastonatura in fibule ed else era molto richiesto dalle clientele più esigenti in India e in Cina, dove era sovente utilizzato come amuleto,<sup>3</sup> al quale si attribuivano proprietà apotropache e terapeutiche, credenze popolari peraltro comuni a tutte le culture della regione eurasiatica (Zoroastro, Avicenna, Metrodoro di Bisanzio) (Errico, Montanelli 2008, 3). In questo senso, il corallo è a pieno titolo un oggetto emblematico, un prodotto di scambio che oggi definirem-

2 ASF. Miscellanea Medicea, b. 97, fasc. 89, c. 1v.

3 Il 'crepitaculum corallo ornatum' (ciondolo di corallo) era ritenuto un portafortuna da far indossare soprattutto ai bambini. *Thesaurus linguae latinae*. s.v. «Corallium» [online] URL <https://archive.org/stream/thesauruslinguae00ains#page/91/mode/1up/search/corallium> (2016-11-05).

mo 'globale' per il valore d'uso, simbolico e commerciale al tempo stesso, condiviso e rintracciabile in tutte le civiltà dell'area. Inoltre, la pesca, la lavorazione e il commercio hanno creato da sempre un considerevole indotto, tra pescatori, artigiani specializzati (come intagliatori, pulitori, lustratori, assortitori, incisori, infilatori), bottegai, orefici, mercanti, contribuendo alla fortuna di centri noti per la sua pesca e manifattura, tra i quali si ricordano Trapani, Alghero, Torre del Greco, Livorno, Marsiglia, El Kala, Tabarca (Errico, Montanelli 2008, 41-3).

A livello commerciale il *C. rubrum* era scambiato generalmente con perle, diamanti, ambra e altre gemme oppure era utilizzato come mezzo di pagamento. I paesi dell'Asia minore, l'India, i regni indonesiani e indocinesi e l'impero Han 漢 (206 a.C.-220 d.C.) erano le mete orientali di destinazione del corallo grezzo proveniente dal Mediterraneo. A consacrarne l'alto valore commerciale era già stato Plinio il Vecchio, il quale aveva descritto il corallo come oggetto prezioso, stimato almeno quanto le richiestissime perle dell'India; per la sua raccolta, egli scriveva, gli uomini rischiavano la vita, pur di assecondare il vezzo femminile di indossare orecchini e altri monili impreziositi con questo materiale (Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 9, 110; 32, 20-4). Mercanti greci, romani, maghrebini e levantini, seguiti da veneziani, genovesi, marsigliesi, castigliani e intere comunità sefardite e armene - senza contare i corsari, soprattutto turchi e barbareschi, dediti al saccheggio di bottini di vario genere, in specie di merci preziose - trafficavano da sempre in *C. rubrum* nel Mare Interno; da qui, il corallo proseguiva il suo tragitto marittimo attraverso arabi e indiani lungo le rotte delle spezie che, passando per il Sud-est asiatico, terminavano in Asia orientale. In Cina e in Giappone, prima dell'arrivo dei mercanti iberici e nord-europei, il corallo giungeva soprattutto dal Kerala e dai mercati sud-orientali, facendo tappa a Guangzhou (Canton) e nei porti del Kyūshū meridionale, veicolato dai mercanti arabi di stanza nel grande scalo cinese sin dall'epoca Tang 唐 (618-907), quando non era reperito direttamente da acquirenti sino-giapponesi nei porti del subcontinente indiano. Più tardi, nel Sei-Settecento, saranno le marine mercantili dei paesi atlantici, come il Portogallo, l'Olanda, l'Inghilterra, la Francia a trasportare tra gli altri prodotti anche casse di corallo, da rivendere a potenti re di qualche paese delle Indie orientali o a ricchi mercanti e agenti di commercio locali (Pearson 2015, 39 ss.).

In ambito estremo-orientale, una delle prime citazioni del termine 珊瑚 cinese *shanhu*<sup>4</sup> (Kalgren 1974, 59, 251), giapponese *sango*, 'corallo', risale al periodo della dinastia Han anteriore (206 a.C.-9 d.C.). La voce appare

4 Un sinonimo per 'corallo' in cinese è inoltre il carattere *láng* 琅 o 瑯, che sta a indicare una pietra simile alla giada (Kalgren 1974, 170 s.v. e 176 s.v.). Secondo quanto segnalato da Ptak (1990, 65, 74, n. 1) sulla base delle ricerche condotte da Chmielewski (1986), la parola cinese *shanhu* deriverebbe dall'iraniano antico *sanga*, che indicava sia 'pietra' sia 'corallo'. Diversamente, altri autori affermano che nel persiano classico per indicare genericamente

in un passo di un poema di Sima Xiangru 司馬相如 (179-117 a.C.) riportato nello *Shiji* 史記 (Memorie storiche, *juan* 117, 3026; Ptak 1990, 65, 74, n. 2). Varie menzioni sono fatte al corallo rosso del Mediterraneo da fonti d'epoca Han, Tang e Ming 明 (1368-1644), anche se talora l'attribuzione al *C. rubrum* o ad altre specie e aree di provenienza resta questione abbastanza complessa (Ptak 1990, 66-7). Le fonti del periodo Han riportavano che il corallo (più verosimilmente *C. album*) era, ad esempio, uno dei tributi tipici delle popolazioni del Vietnam all'impero cinese, insieme ad avorio, madreperla, legno di sandalo e gusci di tartarughe, e affermavano che esso fosse spesso importato e utilizzato in Cina (come nel resto dell'Asia) quale materiale da costruzione (Sterling et al. 2006, 28). Secondo quanto affermava lo studioso Huan Kuan 桓寬 (attivo I secolo a.C.) nello *Yantielun* 鹽鐵論 (Discorsi sul sale e sul ferro; Gale 1967, 15; Lacey 2016, 84) – opera in forma di dialogo sui monopoli del primo impero Han relativi al commercio e alle manifatture – in Cina il *C. rubrum* entrava ufficialmente a far parte delle gemme preziose incluse nel Tesoro imperiale, insieme a giada e cristalli, intorno al I secolo a.C. Durante la dinastia Han posteriore (al potere sino al 220 d.C.), il corallo rosso era accreditato come prodotto prezioso tipico del *Daqin* 大秦 (Grande Qin),<sup>5</sup> nome con cui i cinesi designavano il lontano impero romano e le sue province in Levante e Medio Oriente, che essi dicevano essere delimitate a sud da un tal 'Mar dei Coralli', intendendo il Mar Rosso (Hirth 1885, 131, 163 n., 195, 246). Il corallo era considerato addirittura un emblema con cui i cinesi avrebbero più tardi identificato l'Occidente stesso: nel *Sancai tuhui* 三才圖會 (Enciclopedia illustrata dei tre regni, 1607), Wang Qi 王圻 (1530-1615) rappresentava i popoli del *Daqin* attraverso l'immagine di un re (o comunque un notevole o un sacerdote) nell'atto di esibire un grosso ramo di corallo (fig. 1). L'iscrizione a margine – richiamata in epigrafe – sottolineava che il *Daqin* era il paese a occidente dove si producevano corallo, oro, broccati e damaschi, panni di seta e perle (*Sancai tuhui* 三才圖會, *juan* 14, 18; Bertuccioli, Masini 1996, 6-8).

In seguito, numerose altre fonti cinesi, soprattutto annali dinastici o resoconti di viaggio e opere geografiche, accennano al corallo, sia al tipo pregiato mediterraneo, sia al corallo bianco diffuso nel Sud-est asiatico (Ptak 1990, 67 ss.). Così ne parlano alcune storie dinastiche, come l'*Hou*

il corallo si usavano i termini *bossad* e *marjān* (quest'ultima è forma corrente nel persiano moderno), da cui vari sinonimi per designare perle o pietre levigate in forma arrotondata. In persiano si trova anche il sinonimo obsoleto *korūhak* ('corallo'), derivato dal persiano medio *xrōhak*, riferito più specificamente a un corallo rosso a forma di cresta di gallo (*Encyclopaedia Iranica* 2011).

5 Le prime fonti cinesi a parlare dell'impero romano risalivano ai trattati geografici di epoca Han anteriore e agli annali dinastici Qin (III-V secolo d.C.) e Tang (618-907 secolo d.C.) (Yule, Cordier 1913-16, 41; Bertuccioli, Masini 1996, 6-10. Tra le varie informazioni sul *Daqin*, i cinesi riportavano notizie circa la pesca del corallo nel Mediterraneo (Pauthier 1857, 34-40).



Figura 1. Wang Qi 王圻, *Sancai tuhui* 三才圖會 (Enciclopedia illustrata dei tre regni), 1607. Ritratto di personaggio del *Daqin* [da una copia del *Sancai tuhui* dell'Asian Library, The University of British Columbia]. © Pubblico dominio. Fonte: URL [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ADaqin\\_in\\_Sancai\\_Tuhui.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ADaqin_in_Sancai_Tuhui.jpg) (2016-10-09)

*Hanshu* 後漢書 (Annali degli Han posteriori, III-V secolo d.C.), nel quale si legge che *Daqin* «ha molto oro, argento e pietre preziose rare [...] coralli, ambra, vetro» (*juan* 88; Ptak 1990, 41); si diceva inoltre che il corallo bianco fosse adoperato per costruire abitazioni. Nel *Liangshu* 梁書 (Annali dei Liang, ca. 630 d.C.) si narra dei traffici marittimi di merci tra l'Impero romano e l'India, in particolare per prodotti preziosi come corallo, ambra, giada dorata e perle (*juan* 54; Ptak 1990, 44).

Per il periodo Tang (secolo VII-inizi X) si hanno numerose altre testimonianze. Negli annali dinastici *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (Storia antica dei Tang, 940-45 ca.), Liu Xu 劉煦 (887-946) segnalava l'importazione di rami di corallo tra le merci scambiate dai mercanti arabi e persiani a Guangzhou (*juan* 198, 5312; Schottenhammer 2010, 121, n. 24) e altrettanto riportavano i testi buddhisti cinesi relativamente a traffici di corallo, perle e vetri da parte di navi bizantine e persiane nel sub-continente indiano (Deeg 2010, 154). Anche nei testi cinesi, come in altre fonti, era tramandata la credenza che il corallo bianco divenisse rosso dopo essere stato pescato: nello *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (Nuova storia dei Tang, *juan* 221, 6261) e nel *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 (Indagine generale sulle istituzioni e critica delle fonti, *juan* 330, 2585) si leggono descrizioni circa la pesca del corallo con le reti di ferro in Occidente: secondo questi testi, i coralli appena pescati sarebbero stati «bianchi come funghi», ma dopo un anno sarebbero divenuti gialli e dopo tre anni rossi; quindi i rami avrebbero iniziato a intrecciarsi, per divenire poi molto lunghi (Hirth 1885, 59; Ptak 1990, 65, 69, 74, n. 3).

Ulteriori testimonianze giungono poi dall'archeologia del periodo Tang, che ha restituito dagli scavi del villaggio di Hejia, nei pressi dell'antica capitale Chang'an (odierna Xi'an) nella regione dello Shaanxi, quattro pezzi di corallo all'interno di un tesoro nascosto in grossi orci interrati, oltre a varie monete, oggetti e pietre preziose in giada, ambra, oro, cristallo, vetro (Hansen 2003, 14-9). D'altro canto, anche dalle liste patrimoniali dei monasteri di Dunhuang – il noto crocevia all'ingresso del deserto del Taklamakan, che i viaggiatori attraversavano prima di lasciare la Cina, diretti in Asia centrale e in Occidente – ascrivibili all'epoca Tang si evince che nelle quattro categorie di beni mobili di valore, quali tessuti, metalli preziosi, incensi e fragranze, pietre preziose, queste ultime erano di sicura provenienza estera e annoveravano in particolare tra le gemme più stimate in Cina il lapislazzuli dall'Afghanistan; l'agata dall'India; l'ambra dall'Europa nord-orientale; le perle soprattutto da Ceylon (Sri Lanka); infine, il 'corallo dall'oceano', che con tutta probabilità giungeva via Tibet nella Cina centrale (Hansen 2012, 154, 194).

Autori di resoconti di viaggio e narrazioni di paesi esteri successivi al periodo Tang, come Zhao Rugua 趙汝适 (1170-1231) nel *Zhufan zhi* 諸蕃志 (Descrizione dei paesi stranieri, 1242-58) e Wang Dayuan 汪大淵 (1311-50) nel *Daoyi zhilüe* 島夷誌略 (Breve resoconto annotato sui paesi stranieri, 1350), citano il corallo tra i prodotti tipici dei paesi arabi e della Persia (Park 2012, 51, 116; Rossabi 2013, 51, 81, 84, 153). Confrontando il *Periplus* con una fonte cinese analoga, ma ben più tarda, lo *Yingya shenglan* 瀛涯勝覽 (Resoconto sulle coste oceaniche, 1416-51),<sup>6</sup> si ha conferma del commercio del corallo con mercanti cinesi, ma secondo questa fonte erano i cinesi che si procuravano direttamente il corallo rosso e nero negli scali del Golfo di Aden e del Mar Rosso, in particolare ad Aden e nello Stretto di Hormuz. Anche questa fonte conferma quindi che il *C. rubrum* era reperito dai cinesi in India, soprattutto nel Kerala, a Kuli (nota anche come Calicut, odierna Kozhikode) e a Cochin (oggi Kochi), dove era lavorato da abili artigiani; il corallo bianco e nero era invece indicato come tipico per lo più dell'area indonesiana e indocinese, e commerciato sulla piazza di Aceh nell'isola di Sumatra (*Yingya Shenglan* 1962; Mills 1970, 47, 48, 123-4, 141, 143, 155, 157 n. 9, 170; Ptak 1996, 68, 75, 77).

La Cina Ming e il coevo Giappone utilizzavano il corallo per vari usi in diversi campi, dalla farmacopea all'oreficeria (Ptak 1990, 68, 76). La credenza popolare cinese voleva che il corallo fosse un albero, chiamato *Tieshu* 鐵樹 ('albero di ferro'), che si trovava nelle profondità del mare e

6 Un'ampia raccolta di notizie sui principali scali commerciali dell'Oceano Indiano composta da Ma Huan 馬歡 (ca. 1380-ca. 1460), l'interprete cinese islamizzato che seguì le imprese marittime di Zheng He 鄭和 (1371-1433 ca.) nel primo quarto del XV secolo.

fioriva una volta ogni cento anni.<sup>7</sup> Simbolo della longevità, era utilizzato per identificare la carriera ufficiale dei mandarini, tanto da essere parte del loro guardaroba: ai primi due gradi della gerarchia, infatti, era apposto un bottone in corallo rosso sui tipici berretti. Intagliato in figurine o intarsiato in bottiglie per tabacco da fiuto, che divennero diffuse soprattutto durante il regno di Kangxi (r. 1661-1722), era particolarmente apprezzato da gioiellieri e artigiani. All'epoca il corallo rosso in Cina era più spesso proveniente dal Giappone per il tramite dei mercanti cinesi attivi a Nagasaki, dal momento che gli scali cinesi meridionali erano impraticabili ai traffici esteri per divieto imperiale (Williams 1974, 87).

Altre testimonianze si hanno poi in fonti di vario genere, tra richiami artistici e iconografici, che si ritrovano numerosi in Asia orientale. Tra i miti e le leggende popolari di derivazione buddhista nell'arte giapponese, ad esempio, il Sutra del loto – già diffuso in Cina in traduzione intorno al III-IV secolo d.C. – narrava degli otto re draghi, che si diceva vivessero al largo delle isole Ryūkyū, nel palazzo del Re Drago, costruito interamente in corallo rosso e bianco; il corallo era inoltre citato tra le sette sostanze preziose degli stupa, insieme a oro, argento, berillo, smeraldo, perle e quarzo, oltre ad essere presente tra le offerte votive tipiche, come monete, perle, conchiglie, schiavi, cavalli e pecore (Sferra 2001; Krenner, Jeremiah 2015, 116). Nell'iconografia buddhista cinese e giapponese una raffigurazione del corallo portato da mercanti arabi in Cina si ritrova nei ritratti degli *arhat*, in particolare in un dipinto su seta dell'ottavo monaco buddhista ad opera di Lu Lengjia 膚楞伽 (attivo nell'VIII secolo d.C.), nel quale due uomini dai costumi arabeggianti (a prima vista un arabo e un persiano) offrono in dono dei grossi rami di corallo all'*arhat* (Mesnil 1999, 68-9, 71). E ancora, in ambito di storia naturale e di farmacopea, il testo cinese classico di *materia medica*, il 本草綱目 *Bencao gangmu* (Compendio di farmacopea, 1602) ad opera di Li Shizhen 李時珍 (1518-93), menzionava il corallo per le sue virtù coagulanti e per la peculiare virtù di 'eliminare le ombre dagli occhi' (Zhang, Unschuld 2015, 475).

Ma da dove proveniva e chi trasportava e vendeva il corallo rosso in Asia orientale nei primi secoli dell'età moderna? In area occidentale, dal Medioevo il commercio del corallo era conteso tra le marine iberiche, provenzali, italiane, magrebine, levantine. Cadice, Baleari, Tabarca, El Kala, Marsiglia, Genova, Venezia e, dall'ultimo quarto del Cinquecento, Livorno se ne contesero i traffici in tutto il bacino del Mare Interno. Nel XVI secolo furono Genova e Livorno a entrare in competizione per i traffici di corallo, soprattutto dopo che le livornine concessero a un gran numero di mercanti stranieri e di cristiani nuovi, in fuga dalla penisola iberica, di trasferirsi

7 In cinese l'espressione 鐵樹開花 *tieshu kaihua* 'fioritura di un albero di ferro' indica qualcosa d'impossibile o che avviene molto raramente (*Far East Chinese-English Dictionary* 遠東漢英大辭典 1995).

nella città labronica e di usufruire delle facilitazioni all'insediamento e al commercio in quello che i Medici decretarono essere il primo porto franco cosmopolita del Granducato toscano (Tescione 1968; Piccinno 2008; Filocamo 2011; Trivellato 2000, 2009).

In area asiatica, prima dell'avvento della navigazione oceanica, la circolazione del corallo rosso e di quello raccolto nell'area del Golfo Persico e del Mar Rosso – per lo più corallo nero (*Antipatharia*), anche nelle varianti giallo o blu (quest'ultimo proveniente dal Camerun), più rare ma meno pregiate di quello rosso – era mediata nell'Oceano Indiano occidentale da mercanti arabi e persiani, i quali trasportavano casse di corallo grezzo e lavorato nell'area del subcontinente indiano, nelle cosiddette Isole delle Spezie e lungo le coste indocinesi. La rete dei traffici di corallo si estendeva quindi alla Cina costiera attraverso i mercanti del Sud-est asiatico o sino-giapponesi presenti nell'area e terminava quindi nei porti del Mar Cinese meridionale, arrivando sino in Giappone. Dalla fine del XV secolo il crescere degli scambi intercontinentali e il contestuale aumento nella pesca, lavorazione e commercio del corallo rosso mediterraneo saranno di stimolo ulteriore alla circolazione del prodotto. Una fitta rete di uomini, porti, empori consentiva al corallo pescato e commerciato lungo le coste mediterranee di prendere la via dell'India e dell'Asia orientale attraverso le rotte che costeggiavano la Penisola arabica e che si diramavano poi nell'Oceano Indiano. Nel Cinquecento l'entità dei traffici via mare tra Europa e Asia prese ad aumentare considerevolmente con l'inizio dei viaggi transoceanici, implicando uno sviluppo notevole delle reti commerciali a livello mondiale e consentendo l'apertura di nuove direttrici del corallo mediterraneo che partiranno da Lisbona, Amsterdam, Londra, Lorient. Ad esclusione di stagno, rame, allume, mercurio, lana, generi alimentari e argento americano, l'Europa delle prime navigazioni transoceaniche dirette verso Oriente aveva ben poche merci rare e preziose da esportare in India e Asia orientale, come gemme, cristalli, perle, vetri e per l'appunto il pregiato corallo rosso.<sup>8</sup>

Le fonti dell'epoca ci danno qualche spunto per capire quale fosse l'uso commerciale del corallo rosso. Nel diario del suo primo viaggio nelle Indie in cerca di spezie nel 1497, Vasco da Gama annotava l'uso di regalare fili di perle di corallo come omaggio ai re dei luoghi visitati, tra i quali Mombasa, Malindi, Calicut (Ravenstein 1898, 36, 40, 60; Subrahmanyam 1997, 142). Stando a una testimonianza indiretta, quella del mercante fiorentino Girolamo Sernigi residente a Lisbona, da dove scrisse alcune lettere a conoscenti e al fratello in Firenze, raccogliendo informazioni al ritorno delle flotte del Da Gama, apprendiamo che i mercanti di Calicut

8 Si rimanda per una panoramica sugli scambi nel Mediterraneo in questo periodo a Mafri 2004.



non vogliono in pagamento se non è oro e ariento; choralli e altre merchantie di qua stimano pocho, salvo panni lini. (Firenze, BR, Riccardiano 1910, c. 63r, Lisbona 10 luglio 1499)

In una missiva successiva, indirizzata sempre al fratello a Firenze, dà invece conferma dell'apprezzamento del corallo quale mezzo di pagamento, al pari dell'oro e dell'argento, da parte dei mercanti indiani (Firenze, BR, Riccardiano 1910, c. 65r).<sup>9</sup>

A partire dal Cinquecento la raccolta nel Mediterraneo e la conseguente manifattura e diffusione del corallo andò crescendo a ritmo sostenuto, in concomitanza con lo sviluppo soprattutto di Genova, Livorno e Marsiglia quali punti di raccolta, lavorazione e smercio del corallo rosso. Le diaspore religiose e commerciali, in primo luogo di ebrei nuovi e mercanti armeni, che tradizionalmente trafficavano in diamanti, oro, corallo e perle, e il ritorno degli inglesi in area mediterranea dall'ultimo quarto del secolo, incrementarono ulteriormente la circolazione del prodotto nel Mare Interno e nei traffici transoceanici.<sup>10</sup> Dalla fine del XVI secolo, Livorno prese a essere il maggior centro mediterraneo di commercializzazione del corallo: porto particolarmente adatto all'imbarco e allo scarico delle merci, garantiva accoglienza e facilitazioni doganali ai mercanti stranieri, oltre a essere città cosmopolita per vocazione, dove fu data accoglienza a numerose comunità di ebrei sefarditi e armeni, specializzati nei traffici di corallo, diamanti e perle tra Mediterraneo e India (Yogev 1978, Trivellato 2009). Una fonte italiana anonima, citata in apertura, testimonia che

a Livorno [...] si farebbe comprar tutto il corallo tondo lustro che se trovasse per mandar in dette Indie, che qui se bende con grandissimo vantaggio et essita.<sup>11</sup>

Così esordiva la lunga relazione presentata a Ferdinando I de' Medici per «introdurre al negotio dell'Indie orientali» ai primi del Seicento. In quegli anni Livorno era il porto franco per eccellenza e la città forse più cosmopolita della penisola italiana. La relazione esponeva le ragioni dell'opportunità di lanciare il Granducato toscano sui mari orientali al pari delle altre emergenti marine europee, come quelle portoghesi, olandesi e inglesi, sottolineando la convenienza a far divenire la città labronica il centro di

9 Sul codice Riccardiano 1910 si veda l'edizione critica di Formisano 2006.

10 Rimandiamo sull'argomento ai lavori di Yogev 1978; Trivellato 2000, 2009; Calafat 2012; Errico, Montanelli 2008; Lacey 2016; Iannello (c.d.s.). Sulla presenza inglese nel Mediterraneo per il periodo preso in esame, in particolare a Livorno, si vedano Braudel, Romano 1951; Davis 1962; Diaz 1798; Pagano de Divitiis 1990; D'Angelo 2004.

11 ASF. Miscellanea Medicea, b. 97, fasc. 89, c. 1v.

raccolta di un prodotto prezioso, richiesto e lucroso come il corallo mediterraneo. I rami recisi di corallo e i piccoli pezzi venivano commerciati nelle Indie, come attesta una lettera patente datata Whitehall, 28 gennaio 1625 di mano di James Ley, conte di Marlborough (1550-1629), il quale concedeva un «warranty for the East India Company for coral», una licenza all'importazione a Londra di

coral of mean condition and no way useful here, but brought either purposely to be sent for the Indies and therefore you think it reasonable that so long as the Honourable Company shall being their coral thus sorts for to be transported that they pay custom not according to the book of rates, but to the value the said coral did cost in Italy, which all charged by way of poundage. (London, BL, Eur D 935, c. 1v)

Per quanto esigue o lacunose fossero le fonti sul commercio del corallo per il primo periodo moderno sino al XVI secolo, è possibile comunque ricostruire a più livelli la storia dei suoi itinerari tra Europa e Asia orientale attraverso svariate tipologie di documenti d'archivio, come libri di dogana, carichi e liste di portate di navi che commerciavano per lo più a Genova, Livorno e Marsiglia e trasportavano il corallo nel Levante e nel Maghreb, o lo spedivano a Lisbona per inviarlo successivamente nei porti del subcontinente indiano e oltre; memoriali, diari di bordo, lettere di ambasciatori, capitani, agenti, marinai, viaggiatori; archivi di mercanti privati, così come fonti a stampa di diverso genere, tra cui manuali di mercatura, raccolte odepatiche, cronache, storie di popoli lontani e trattati geografici. Il confronto tra fonti varie per tipologia e genesi, occidentali e orientali, permette di risalire a una geografia delle reti, delle rotte, degli scambi e degli attori che hanno trafficato nei porti e negli empori in corallo grezzo e lavorato, il quale era spesso commissionato direttamente dai mercanti nei laboratori artigianali specializzati, quindi trasportato e poi rivenduto alle corti di re e imperatori in Asia (Yogev 1978; Graziani, Vergé-Franceschi 2004). In questo periodo i principali centri per i quali è documentato il commercio del corallo sono Genova, la Corsica, la Sardegna, Livorno e l'arcipelago toscano, Marsiglia, Lisbona, Zante, Alessandria d'Egitto, gli empori di Persia, Mar Rosso e Deccan, Mocha, Surat, le coste del Coromandel, Aceh, Bantam, Macao, Guangzhou, Taiwan, Hirado nel Kyūshū.

Numerosi richiami al *C. rubrum* si ritrovano ancora in diverse cinquecentine, in autori quali Ramusio, Jacques De Coutre, Samuel Purchas, Jan Huygen van Linschoten e altri autori o viaggiatori che s'interessarono in particolare all'Asia orientale e ai paesi extraeuropei in genere, o vi si recarono. Ci limitiamo in questa sede ad accennare al cosmografo e grammatologo Fracanzio da Montalboddo (fine XV-XVI secolo), il quale nei *Paesi novamente ritrovati* (Vicenza 1507), oltre a parlare estesamente dell'India e a riportare testimonianze di coloro i quali avevano seguito Vasco da Ga-

ma nelle sue imprese orientali, pubblicava per primo le lettere del citato Girolamo Sernigi - per quanto l'Autore non le attribuisca a costui nella sua opera - trasmettendo diverse notizie su Calicut, dove

le principal merchantie che sono bone per quelli paesi me pare siano coralli e rame lavorati (Montalboddo 1507, 2, 61, 51)

e ancora che «in questa città ne praticano infinitissimi mercadanti Mori, quali conducono corali» (6, 139, 116).

Un ampio quadro sulla geografia italiana del corallo è offerto invece da Giovanni Lorenzo D'Anania (1545-1609) nella sua *Universal Fabrica del mondo* (Venezia 1576), dalla quale si apprende che, relativamente alla pesca del *C. rubrum*, il Golfo di Sant'Eufemia è «molto copioso di coralli, et di ottimi tunni»; Alghero è luogo dove «si pesca gran copia di corallo, seguita da Drepano [Trapani] città fortissima, un ottimo porto ... [dove] si pesca una infinità di corallo», e ancora che a Tabarca

i Genovesi fanno gran pesca di coralli, li quali nascono da sassi sotto l'onde, e rossi, bianchi, et neri, per il che ne pagano il tributo in nome del gran Turco al Bascià d'Algi, sì come anco fanno i Francesi verso Bona. (98, 111, 114, 266)

Altri accenni si trovano in Francesco Carletti (1573-1636), nel suo quarto *Ragionamento*, relativamente ai mercanti portoghesi a Goa, i quali

portano nell'Indie [...] vino, olio, coralli, vetri, occhi di gatta, balasci, smeraldi, perle grosse e altro, nelle quali cose hanno fatto guadagni incredibili. (Carletti 1701, 236)

A questo proposito, i mercanti portoghesi che per primi si erano spinti al largo delle coste cinesi, ove giunsero nel 1513 ca., gettando l'ancora al largo di Guangzhou, dopo aver intrapreso traffici nei porti indiani e negli empori del Sud-est asiatico, fanno spesso accenno al commercio del corallo quale merce molto apprezzata dai sovrani locali in quelle aree. Lo storico Fernão Lopez de Castanheda (1500-99) nella sua *Historia* (1551-61, 1833), oltre a citare in modo ricorrente il corallo a proposito dell'India e a Calicut in specie (*Historia*, 2, 248, 353; 3, 258), fa sapere che i mercanti del Cairo, di Alessandria e La Mecca inviavano le loro merci agli agenti in India (Calicut), dove per l'acquisto delle merci orientali si importavano metalli preziosi, tessuti e corallo grezzo e lavorato (2, 75); nel Gujarat, Bengala e a Sumatra i portoghesi esportavano il corallo, il mercurio e il cinabro, oltre a oro e argento (2, 111-2); inoltre, tra i doni presentati al re del Siam nel gennaio 1512 vi erano «quatro ramais de coral muyto fino e grosso» (3, 75).

Infine, numerose notizie sul commercio del corallo sono reperibili in fondi archivistici dedicati ai commerci nelle Indie orientali, ad esempio registri di carichi di navi, atti di dogane, contratti assicurativi, minute di lettere e corrispondenza di comandanti, mercanti e agenti recatisi in Oriente per conto dell'Estado da Índia o, a partire dal Seicento, delle Compagnie delle Indie di Londra e Amsterdam. A tale proposito, ci limitiamo ad accennare in questa sede ad alcune fonti inglesi che riportano notizie sui traffici di corallo, grezzo o lavorato, in perle, pezzi o rami, nelle liste di merci che imbarcavano il prezioso prodotto a Livorno e a Genova per l'esportazione in Levante o nei porti dell'Oceano Indiano e in Asia orientale. Tra queste, a titolo di esempio, citiamo una licenza del 1619 accordata al mercante Gyles Martin, dove si legge di un «allowance of 400 l. or 500 l. per annum [...] for procuring coral from Marseilles, Leghorn & co. if he employs 30,000 l. for the Company» (*Calendar of Court Minutes* 1909-12, 256), a conferma dell'interesse per il prodotto e della crescita del suo commercio in India e Asia orientale. L'ambasciatore britannico presso il Gran Moghul, Sir Thomas Roe, in una lettera datata Surat 21 ottobre 1617 informava l'agente Thomas Keridge a Surat del fatto che «great quantities of coral having arrived, requests some to be sent up for trial; suggestions for te speedy sale of it» (*Calendar of State Papers* 1870, 68), vendita che i documenti successivi attestavano essere andata a buon fine.

Sebbene ai primi del Seicento i traffici europei in Cina fossero ancora vietati, con l'esclusione di Macao, portoghesi, inglesi e olandesi iniziarono a estendere la rete dei loro commerci nel Sud-est asiatico e in Giappone, e il corallo restava una delle voci più preziose dei carichi da esportare nell'area e auspicabilmente in Cina. Come ebbe a scrivere Richard Cocks di stanza a Hirado - dove l'*East India Company* inglese aveva aperto una base commerciale, operativa dal 1613 al 1623, di cui il Cocks era a capo - in una lettera datata Surat 1 gennaio 1617 indirizzata alla Compagnia a Londra, tra i beni esportati dai mercanti inglesi in Giappone erano citati doni «fit for the Emperour of China [among which] a white or red coral tree, he would esteem a most precious jewel» (*Calendar of State Papers* 1870, 2). Il testo della lettera chiariva l'importanza attribuita al corallo tra le merci da esportare in Asia orientale:

The China captens which labour to get us entrance into China doe tell me that your Wors. canot send a more pretiouser thing to present the Emperour of China withall then a tree of currall, ether white or red. They say the Portingales of Macau gave a white corral tree to the Emperour of China many yeares past, which he doth esteem one of the inchest Jewells he hath [...] The biger the peces or branches are, and of a red culler well polished, are most in esteem; for they make buttens or knots of them to hange their purces at. (*Letters* 1968, 3, 342; *Diary of Richard Cocks* [1615-22] 2010, 2, 287-8)

Il corallo, benché fosse una voce minore dei traffici occidentali in Asia orientale, avrebbe continuato a essere esportato in India e nel resto dell'Asia, a fronte di diamanti e perle, per tutto il periodo seguente, divenendo un prodotto sempre molto richiesto e gradito ai più esigenti clienti asiatici. Nel Settecento, con lo sviluppo dei centri di raccolta e lavorazione del corallo nel Mediterraneo, si accrebbero anche le manifatture, le reti di commercio e le ditte specializzate nel traffico di preziosi verso India e Asia orientale, dove presto però la scoperta e commercializzazione del corallo rosso giapponese avrebbe iniziato a far concorrenza al raffinato prodotto mediterraneo.

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# Atkinson Grimshaw, *Reflections on the Thames* (1880)

## Explorations in the Cultural History of Light and Illumination

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**Abstract** The periods in which each new or refined form of artificial lighting have become dominant have presented their illumination as characteristic of the highest state of progress, as a significant stage of development that has lifted humanity out of a state of nature. Meanwhile, the everyday use of lighting has been complex, driven by practicality, expediency and materiality, not linear 'progress'. This paper explores these uses, the reception and meanings attaching to artificial illumination during the nineteenth century, through the lens of Atkinson Grimshaw's *Reflections on the Thames* (1880). In this painting, situated within a long history of nocturnes and landscapes, we also see an heterogeneous interplay of reflected artificial (gas, oil, electric arc) light, each consumed simultaneously within metropolitan culture, itself seen as the apogee of civilisation for the time, all cut through by the tidal river Thames and (natural) moon light. In this painting, we see how a Victorian genre artist, reflecting on the Thames, created a narrative of London as an unsleeping, working Capital, framed by nature, dependent on its forces, illuminated, yet shady, multifaceted, effortful.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. 2 Histories of Light and Civilisation. – 3 Reflections on the Thames: Moon-, Oil-, Gas- and Electric-Light. – 4 Concluding Remarks: Languages of Water and of Light.

**Keywords** Grimshaw. Light. Illumination. Thames. Empire.

The degree of culture attained by a people is indicated by, among other things, their need for illumination.

(Richard 1908, 106)

## 1 Introduction

In 1878 in the *Times*, Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-92), respected as a speaker in Britain far beyond the Baptist denomination he represented, was reported to have once said that "a man who couldn't preach for 12 months about a tallow candle was not worth his salt" (*The Times*, 14 September 1878, 5). The presumed value of artificial light, its production and its effects, as aid to communication, was a commonplace among nineteenth-century lecturers, authors, critics, artists as well as preachers.

George Eliot (1819-1888) used a description in *Middlemarch* (1872) of the unifying effect of candlelight generating concentric circles on a scratched surface as a scientific “parable” of the way unrelated “events” could be made to appear coherent (Eliot 1872, 70). In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) used images of piercing linear light from oil and paraffin lamps to move Tess Durbeyfield's story forward and draw the reader's focus to the narrative's intense tragedy (Hardy 1891, 211-2). In 1890, General Booth (1829-1912), Methodist and founder of the Salvation Army, used the image of a lighthouse in his social polemic *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, (1890) to represent salvation for the struggling “victims of vice and poverty” that he sought to rescue (Booth 1890, frontispiece). Throughout the nineteenth century, light and illumination lent themselves to social, political and religious allegory. In part the cultural deployment of light was a response to material changes in the production of artificial light and the sources of energy that powered illumination and had started in the preceding period.

From the mid eighteenth century, artificial light replaced the earlier dependence of cities on moonlight during winter evenings, because, as Brian Bowers has shown, until the 1820s when the streets were better lit, most people did not venture out at night unless there was a full/nearly full moon to light their way (Bowers 1998, 2, 9). Within the world of work, the farming day began at half past four or 5 o'clock in the morning, and finished with supper at six, or whenever convenient. Those who worked with horses in Northern Europe, therefore, had to get up before dawn to be ready to go out at daybreak, while winter milking was often done in the dark. As G.E. and K.R. Fussell put it in their classic account of British agriculture, it had always been the practice in rural areas that “the day-long work went on till dark and later” (G.E. Fussell, K.R. Fussell 1955, 151; Armstrong 1989, 751). Those practices continued, but there was also a change. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the output of wax candles in Britain grew fivefold, while the excise returns on tallow candles doubled (using the Excise Returns, 1822). Per capita, this works out at an increase in sales of tallow candles of about a quarter between 1750 and 1800 (Falkus 1982, 218). The increased sales and taxation continued and the cost of candles was still an issue forty years later: in 1839 the *Times* included a tip about saving tallow candles by using salt. The new availability of paraffin wax from the mid-1850s, therefore, impacted on the production of beeswax and tallow: an old technology could be changed by a new source of energy, be adapted and continue. For oil lamps - Davis, Gallman and Hutchins note - alternatives such as rapeseed oil competed with whale oil (Falkus 1982, 217-9; *The Times*, 4 October 1839, 3; Davis, Gallman, Hutchins 1987, 740-1, 754, 756). In Britain, at least, as E.P. Thompson argued in his seminal account of industrialisation and time, the length of the working day was changing and seasons being evened out by capital,

and that process depended on illumination (Thompson 1967, 56-97), but the economy of illumination relied in turn on competing sources of energy.

In Fredrick Accum's *A Practical Treatise on Gas-Light* (1815) – one of the earliest expositions on the benefits of gaslight and one of the first to retell the tale of the discovery of coal gas – we see a close association between economic progress and the changing technologies of illumination (Accum 1815, 1-2). For Accum – an adherent of Adam Smith, to whom he referenced (2-3), and a researcher for the 1807 Parliamentary committee established to look into gas, who had real authority (Falkus 1982, 233 and fn. 75) – technological developments such as these were an addition to the progress of humanity, of being lifted out of a state of nature. As a matter of fact, he directly attacked Jean-Jacques Rousseau for suggesting that humanity was happier when living like the beasts “than with all the expanding knowledge of civilized life”; and “that the cultivation of their understanding had tended to degenerate their virtues” (3). Accum's was a mainstream account of the importance of technical innovation and was typical in linking that innovation to the progress of civilisation.

At the end of the nineteenth century (around 1890), an advertisement for Woodhouse & Rawson United Ltd's electric light made a related point: the new technologies of artificial electric light worked in it as a carrier of what was perceived to be ‘civilisation’ and ‘Culture’ as against ‘savage’ Nature’. On the top left of the image, we see the explorer Stanley – “on Stanley, on” – and next to him an image of a steam boat, its searchlight penetrating the homogenised African darkness. The Egyptian Sphinx has been ‘improved’, so that light can shine across the pyramids – much like the electrical displays at the World's Fairs, which often included crowd-pleasing towers and beacons of arc-light. Meanwhile, in the centre of the advert, in the heart of what was depicted as “Darkest Africa”, men used the power of electric light to help them find their way through the jungle (Snell 1880-1910, print) – it is not clear how this light shines, but it is the fact that it appears the principle that counts. The light cast not only civilised, driving out savage Nature, but within the context of colonialism it also created a sense of awe. As we see in the epigraph, taken from *The Illuminating Engineer* (1908), during the nineteenth century the use of artificial light regardless of its energy source became associated not simply with modernity, but synonymous with Western ‘civilisation’ wherever light came to be sold.

Belonging to an imperial, colonising cultural context in which light was woven into parables of progress, of the advancement of humanity and civilisation, traditional histories of artificial illumination were therefore dominated in the West by linear and heroic tales of discovery. In these accounts, named characters (e.g. Francois Pierre Ami Argand 1750-1803, William Murdock 1754-1839, Humphry Davy 1778-1829, etc.) played leading roles of scientific and technological innovation, or commercial development

and application. Teleological, linear narratives – that is, narratives of the formation of Western ‘modernity’, of the ‘progress’ of individual Western nations and emergence of Western ‘civilisation’ – overdetermined histories of illumination, because illumination so often stood in for progress/modernity/civilisation. By the mid-twentieth century there were therefore any number of progressive local histories written about the ‘coming of’ gas or electricity to various cities, and the successes or failures of the local businesses involved in their production and promotion. Each told a familiar tale of evolution, transformation and impact, and of a movement from darkness into light. But, as has been observed within the history of technology and science since the 1970s, such an approach, because it misconstrues the complexity of the day-to-day use of any technology, is fundamentally flawed (e.g. Rosenberg 1976). It is the contention of this article that pursuing such a teleological narrative not only does a disservice to the period, which was more aware of the heterogeneity of this experience than select sources such as those captured in the epigraph might suggest, but that such a narrative wilfully forgets the power and effect of imperial rhetoric for the period and the structural legacies of colonialism in the built environment.

## 2 Histories of Light and Civilisation

The history of the development of artificial light is well known and has been retold by, among others, William O’Dea in *The Social History of Lighting* (1958), Wolfgang Schivelbusch in *Disenchanted Night* (1988), Brian Bowers in *Lengthening the Day* (1998), Lynda Nead within *Victorian Babylon* (2000), Charles Bazerman in *The Languages of Edison’s Light* (2002), and Chris Otter in *The Victorian Eye* (2008). Economists and business historians have addressed the private and public production of gas and electricity. Geographers have been concerned with changes in lighting in the context of urban planning, while architects have discussed it regarding design (O’Dea 1958; Schivelbusch 1988; Nye 1994; Nye 1995; Hinchliffe 1996; Bowers 1998; Bazerman 2002; Otter 2008; Cordulack 2005). However, as Graeme Gooday has observed in *Domesticating Electricity* (2008), while it might be convenient to tell a teleological story by splitting the history into small chronological moments of dramatic technological change, in specific times and places, it is better to understand it as belonging to a much more complex and heterogenous history of overlapping processes and experiences, and global exchanges of energy, technology and ideas (14-9).

As social historian Asa Briggs observed in *Victorian Things* (1988), existing forms of artificial lighting continued to be used, improved upon and updated alongside all the new technologies and energies that became available throughout the nineteenth century (Briggs 1988, 402). Beyond the consumption of light, the work it permitted and the work involved in

its creation, the use of artificial light altered the material world on the large and the small scale across the nation (e.g. *The Times*, 13 October 1876, 4). The production of goods – some of them very decorative – was needed to hold the sources of light. In the domestic environment, this included candlesticks, oil lamps and their paraphernalia, cockspur and Argand gas burners, and chandeliers, made variously of wood, glass, china, papier-mâché, brass. Matches – in large part made of animal bone – for instance, were “an important new ‘Victorian thing’”, according to Briggs, “which the Victorians themselves were fascinated by; immortalised in Robert Browning’s poem ‘Meeting at Night’” (1845), and they were still very new in 1851. “Matches”, Briggs observed, “created images. Matches were associated with the need for and power of fire” (Briggs 1988, 45, 50, 69, 179, 181). There were also the more functional built spaces of light’s generation: spaces for rendering and refining fat and oil, tanks to transport kerosene oil, the structures of gas works and power plants, underground pipes, cast-iron lamp standards. This was material heterogeneity. However, because illumination and lighting paraphernalia have lent themselves to parables and narratives of modernity and progress, their more heroic, progressive histories of the emergence of new forms of lighting technology, dependent on new energies, have proven particularly seductive. This is especially the case when it comes to the shift from organic (rush and reed, wood, tallow, wax, vegetable, sperm oil) to mineral (kerosene/paraffin, coal) fuels, or visible to invisible energy (oil to electric). Both Schivelbusch and Lynda Nead, for example, remark on Bachelard’s writing about the lamp. Nead quotes him as follows:

‘the lamp is the spirit that watches over every room. It is the centre of the house. A house without a lamp is as unthinkable as a lamp without a house.’ (Nead 2000, 103)

“For Bachelard”, Nead writes that

the lamp is humanised and the experience of lamplight is an intense, psychological relationship. Time illuminated by the lamp is solemn and observes a slower tempo than the temporality of daylight or electric light. It is a period of dream, contemplation and reverie. It is what Bachelard calls: ‘igneous time’, that is ‘time that passes by burning’. (103)

The lamp and the individual are in a relationship, since for Bachelard the lamp waits, watches and guards. However, Nead and Schivelbusch interpret Bachelard differently about the transition between lamp-light and gas-light (which Bachelard does not mention). For Schivelbusch, there is a sharp transition between them, where the shift to gas-lighting, produced industrially, is likened to the shift from coach to railway. And, he

suggests that people were made uneasy by the infiltration of their homes by industry and the loss of freedom that attached to this. People could no longer become lost in the contemplation of the “‘individual’ flame of an oil-lamp or candle”, no one stared into a gas flame. For Nead, however, the move is subtler, and she extends Bachelard’s work so that “gaslight can be understood to occupy a place somewhere between the archaic form of the lamp flame and the crude modernity of the electric light” (Bachelard 1961, 8; Schivelbusch 1988, 28-9; Nead 2000, 103). In part the difference in interpretation is down to Schivelbusch’s focus on domestic lighting, and Nead’s focus on street light. But, this raises important wider questions about not only the perception of night and day, but also about the effects of different qualities and types of light.

Candle-light (like other forms of illumination), for example, created contested spaces. In fact, though churches were some of the first buildings to adopt gas light, candle-light was still ordinarily used in many of them alongside gas in the nineteenth century. Hence, one of the “weaker sex” excused herself for writing to the *Times* in 1844 about the use of “*Lucifer!*” matches to light the candles in St Paul’s Cathedral. Apparently a rather portly verger was having trouble striking his matches alight mid service, so that the congregation’s attentions were drawn to his activities: several attempts at getting a light using a loud Lucifer box and then a tendency to drop the lighted matches, which were too short to reach the wicks. The correspondent felt that this was inappropriately risible in church, aside from her apparent discomfort with the use of ‘Lucifer’ matches in that environment. The Church candles themselves carried their own contested connotations: in 1847 a more pointed letter was sent by one ‘Anti-Humbug’ castigating the Bishop for allowing candles to be lit on the altar in a Protestant country in broad daylight – near Belgrave Square. The issue resurfaced in the *Times* when it reported the Bishop of Manchester’s response to one of his clergymen lighting candles on the altar during daylight. This practice, he observed, was illegal. Indeed, a charge of brawling that had been brought against two churchwardens, who had repeatedly tried to stop a vicar from lighting candles on the altar for the 8 o’clock morning communion in 1887, was dismissed, because they were apparently not only stopping “this house from becoming a house of Baal” as one declared, but also because of the larger matter of the illegality of lighting candles in this way. The ritual meanings of light and its uses were codified in law: discourses intersected and generated their own effects (*The Times*, 4 January 1844, 3; *The Times*, 2 July 1847, 8; *The Times*, 14 September 1878, 9; *The Times*, 1 Mar 1887, 10). The history of the everyday use of lighting is therefore complex, driven by practicality, expediency, ritual, legality and materiality, not ‘modernity’ or ‘progress’. Tracing the history of light also requires us to trace subjectivity and perception – the discursive situations, the sensory and ideational qualities of different forms of illumination – not just technical accomplishment.



Nor were technical developments in artificial illumination universally applauded: far from it. In 1845 Ruskin wrote of his distress at discovering caste-iron gas lamps and gaslight within the narrow canals of Venice and under the Bridge of Sighs. He said that travelling on the Grand Canal by moonlight felt timeless. By moonlight “neither decay... nor repairs” were visible. Travelling through this vivid and revealing gas-lit Venetian landscape was not the same as travelling through the Venice he had visited ten years before. For Ruskin, gaslight (along with the railway and renovation of its monumental buildings) had wounded Venice and made it too like Liverpool and Birmingham. Ruskin wanted Venice “uninjured” (Bowers 1998, 49; Schapiro 1972, 198-9, 205). He sought a nostalgic return to what he felt was a more authentic experience that he believed was being denied him through the adoption of artificial illumination. The Venetians were clearly happy to adopt the latest form of lighting, but Ruskin’s was an uncongenial response to their ‘modernity’.

Throughout the next section, it will be argued that the depiction of multiple forms of illumination (moon-, oil-, gas-, electric-light), can be found in Victorian primary sources, even those that celebrated progress and modernity as the height of civilisation, and in them we see the heterogeneity of energy use, illumination and Victorian social life into which the technology was woven. Artists, fascinated by light, offer us sources that capture a complex set of experiences and responses to illumination, and to what was termed civilisation. Intrinsically associated with the heart of the British Empire, we turn to a representative image of Parliament and London, the River Thames, at the height of New Imperialism, as depicted by Atkinson Grimshaw (1836-1893) in *Reflections on the Thames (Westminster)* (1880). In Atkinson Grimshaw’s work, we see a hidden yet, unusually, static interpretation of both the urban and of modernity through his interest in and use of natural alongside multiple forms of artificial light. Here is a moment in time when the moon penetrates the Victorian city, and illuminates passing human life, just at the point when old and new combine in the turning of the tide, a moment of neither ebb nor flow. This is a moment of imperial, colonising power captured, a moment of arrival rather than of movement, no matter if it is heterogeneous, it exists permanently, timelessly as the apogee of Civilisation.

### 3 Reflections on the Thames: Moon-, Oil-, Gas- and Electric-Light

Atkinson Grimshaw, his biographer Alexander Robertson suggests, was a self-taught artist who, despite having a studio in Chelsea, London, during the mid-1880s, spent most of his life in Leeds. He exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1874, 1880, 1885 and 1886, was a popular artist in the period, painted prodigiously and was represented in London and the provinces

by the agents Thomas Agnew and Sons, Bond street, London 1871-1880. Grimshaw's work was originally bought by manufacturers and other commercially successful individuals in Leeds, but he had an eye to the interests of potential buyers and with the help of his agents his work began to be bought by a cultured London audience from the 1870s. Initially interested in and influenced by Ruskin and the Romantics (Sellars 2011; Robertson 2011, 11), by "the late 1860s" Robertson observes, "Grimshaw had turned to the depiction of moonlight, which was to become his trademark" (Robertson 2004; Robertson 2011, 5, 11-2). The quality of natural and artificial light was something that fine artists had to consider in practical terms, because of its direct impact on their work, then and now, which makes fine art a valuable primary source here, and in the nineteenth century, this focused on the act of representing light using oils or watercolours. But, the effect of moonlight was a particularly powerful element in Grimshaw's work by the time that he came to paint *Reflections on the Thames (Westminster)*, which is one of his best-known pieces.

The location of *Reflections* is unexceptional for the period. The old Westminster Bridge had been painted since the late eighteenth century and was an established vantage point for meditations upon London in other genres. For instance, Grimshaw's contemplative approach to London echoes William Wordsworth's much earlier sonnet *Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802*, which focused on the breaking light of the sun over the city at dawn. Moreover, though he was particularly fascinated by moonlight, Grimshaw was not alone in depictions of either the Thames or Westminster at night. He was preceded for example by Henry Pether (1800-1880)'s *Westminster Bridge by Moonlight* (c. 1862) and *The Thames and Greenwich Hospital by Moonlight* (c. 1854-1865); by Sarah Louise Kilpack (1840-1909) with *Moonlight over the Thames at Westminster* (1866); and famously by J.A.M. Whistler (1843-1904) in *Nocturne: Grey and Gold, Westminster Bridge* (c. 1871-1872). Indeed, it is rumoured that Grimshaw knew Whistler while he resided in London, and Whistler painted many studies of the Thames and nocturnes through the 1870s. Robertson reports that "Whistler is reputed to have said, 'I thought I had invented the Nocturne, until I saw Grimmy's moonlights'", though Robertson describes Grimshaw's work at the time as "perfunctory". Driven, it appears, by economic necessity to paint rapidly, Robertson says, Grimshaw's was somewhat mechanical and not always his best (Robertson 1988, 73). During this period, he painted many other locations on the Thames by moonlight, such as *Nightfall Down the Thames* (1880) and *The Thames by Moonlight with Southwark Bridge* (1884) so that you could almost piece together a visual journey along the river into and out of the Port of London. Even the word 'reflections' in the title had a precedent, as *Reflections on the Thames* was preceded by a nocturne focused on his native Leeds, Yorkshire, entitled *Reflections on the Aire: On Strike* (1879).

*Reflections on the Thames* in many senses may therefore seem unremarkable. However, it is the commonplace nature of this work, along with the popularity of the artist among the industrial bourgeoisie at the time, that are of value. *Reflections on the Thames* allows us to understand a little more about the cultural and social significance of different artificial and natural forms of light for the industrial and colonial élite. It captures both the experience of what could be seen in a specific place at the time, at the heart of Empire, and of a way of seeing at a moment in time when progress in illumination came to be equated with the highest state of civilisation.

In *Reflection on the Thames* there are at least four heterogeneous sources of light. The full moon; gaslight on Westminster Bridge and lighting the face of the clock that came to be called 'Big Ben'; electric arc light on the Victoria Embankment; small oil lights on moored and moving Thames barges and other vessels; and small oil (or candle) lights on a carriage. Each light is reflected on the river and the lights interpenetrate each other. In Grimshaw's painting, situated within a long history of nocturnes and landscapes, we therefore see an interplay of artificial (gas, oil, electric) light, each consumed within metropolitan culture, each generating intricate pools of bodily experience and identity. At the same time, via the Thames, Westminster Bridge and its Embankment, we see how London is cut through by the tidal river as a natural yet tightly-controlled axis of national and imperial connection. As his audience would have known, and signalled by the barges in the painting, London was a key port at the time, belonging to a profitable but risky web of transport and commerce that connected country to city, and Britain, as a maritime nation, to the world, day and night (Freeman 1983, 13-4; Armstrong, Bagwell 1983, 167; Owen 2013). As noted in a paper for the Royal Statistical Society, "in one storm in 1881 90 vessels and 343 lives were lost on our coasts" (Scrutton 1886, 1-27) but, none of this put off British investors (Doe 2010, 85-106). In *Reflections on the Thames* we therefore see how a mainstream Victorian artist, painting the River Thames at night, created a vision of London as an unsleeping, working, modern capital, with a harnessing nature, illuminated, yet shady, multifaceted, effortful and connected by flows of water and light to the nation, and of nation as connected by river and tide to (a very profitable) Empire.

*Reflections on the Thames* is typical of Grimshaw's work. Like his other London nocturnes such as *Nightfall Down the Thames*, it is filled with moonlight. However, whereas *Nightfall Down the Thames* is dark, dominated by the river and framed by the masts of ships in the fore and mid-ground, Grimshaw's *Reflections on the Thames* is light and framed by the sweeping structure of the Embankment. The Embankment offers the viewer a safe vantage point to look across the river and the eye is caught by the strong vertical lines of the Houses of Parliament. *Reflections*, therefore, seems to be much more about built space than *Nightfall*. Indeed,

*Reflections* appears to be a celebration of the highest state of civilisation as expressed through architecture and infrastructure, whereas *Nightfall*, unlit except by the moon and paused in the ebb or flow of the tide, feels much more distanced from the city, much more about the natural river and almost dislocated from the built environment. Like much of his work at the time, such as *Liverpool from Wapping* (c. 1875), *Reflections* is also bustling with people. Akin to his *Scarborough from Seats near the Grand Hotel* (1878) and *Rouen at Night* (1878), we enter *Reflections* via the isolated figure of a woman. In *Reflections*, this figure looks out from the right-hand side of the canvas, over the Embankment and up towards the moon, in a diagonal gaze that links the upper and lower, and the left and right, frames of the painting. She provides a potential narrative, genre-like play on the word 'reflections'. Unlike the two small, darkened figures of captain and mate working on a barge and dwarfed by the river in *Nightfall*, the woman of *Reflections* is surrounded by the light and life of the city, and the piece seems to thus become much more human. This is like *Reflections on the Aire: On Strike*. Each piece has a woman looking out over water within the context of an urban backdrop, a bridge, embankment or parade. Grimshaw's placing of people along the Embankment – the gazing woman, a woman with a bonnet on, another carrying a basket of oranges, and a policeman who seems to be in dialogue at a distance with the orange seller – means that *Reflections* at first glance looks as if it is about individual human experience. Just as with a genre piece, stories can be told about the possible motives of the figures.

For this reason, commentaries on *Reflections* frequently focus on the woman looking over the river to the moon and the figures near her (Robertson 1988, 82; Sellars 2011, 59). It has for instance been said that in *Reflections* Grimshaw passes social comment by including in it "a normal feature of such a location, the nightly rendezvous between street-walkers and their clients" (Robertson 1988, 82). Women casting themselves off bridges in (moral) despair was certainly a commonplace in Victorian artistic and a literary trope (Nead 1990). But, unlike a stereotypical Victorian 'prostitute', the woman in the foreground wears respectable clothing (not 'finery') and has a dog close by her side. This companion animal is a protector pointing away from river towards bustling busy Embankment life. The dog in and of itself signifies, for this point in time, that this is a respectable woman because, as Hilda Kean has observed, by this point dogs were seen as "loving members of the family" who "could confer a form of respectability on their owners" (Kean 1998, 88). The dog thus anchors the woman and is the woman's guide away from deathful water, the river Styx. The fact that the moon is perfectly clear is also significant in this respect, as the beauty of life is not marred, quite unlike the moon in G. Cruickshank's *The Drunkard's Children* (1848) discussed by Nead (Nead 1990). However, each figure is insignificant, because they belong

more to the type of stock-figure vignette commonly seen in British landscape painting from the eighteenth century than the narrative tropes of Victorian genre art. As Jane Sellars noted, the woman with a basket and the policeman both appear to have been found in an engraving by Frank Holl published in *The Graphic* in April 1873, as if they were “cut-and-pasted” (Sellars 2011, 59) – and perhaps the latter was an homage to his father who was once a policeman. This approach and their scale suggest that the figures were less important to the work than the light and reflections of light on water generated by gas-, oil- and electric-light, which are all so much more laboriously executed.

This reading is supported by the reception of the work in 1880, which focused on Grimshaw’s depiction of illumination. Unsurprisingly, Grimshaw’s reviewer for the *Leeds Mercury* adhered to the dominant narrative of progress in illumination and therefore saw in the piece gaslight dimmed in the face of electricity: “the more faint and yellow glow of the gas lamps along each side of the river and across the bridge”, as contrasting with “the electric lighting of the Embankment”. But, what caught the eye in 1880 was not this direct light, but rather “the reflection of these varied lights [moon-, gas- and electric-] upon the surface of the river” (*Leeds Mercury*, 17 April 1880). And, this is what Grimshaw captures, as indicated by the title: the light reflecting on the river water running through the city. *Reflections* is focused on the Thames, a river made safe by engineering. This is a river that Grimshaw knew, we see in his other work, to be a working river that was part of the Port of London, linked to Britain’s other coastal towns and ports, and thence the Empire (Robertson 2011, 16-7). A river that turned on the tide: on the moon.

The Victoria Embankment, built in 1870, was still relatively new when Grimshaw painted it. Its construction, along with that of the Albert Embankment (1868) and the Chelsea Embankment (1874), were watched and celebrated widely in those publications such as the *Illustrated London News* that were read by the literate, cultured Metropolitan élite who formed Grimshaw’s audience (*Illustrated London News*, 4 February 1865, 112). The structures involved reclaiming fifty-two acres of land, hid both the underground railway system being built at the time and also Joseph Bazalgette’s sewers, designed to clean up the River Thames after ‘The Great Stink’ in 1858. Though far from perfect, these sewers eradicated cholera in London and reduced the incidence of typhus and other waterborne diseases throughout the city. The product of this act of engineering – the Victoria Embankment – is presented almost as a character in *Reflections*. The orderly, modern Embankment secures not only the moral respectability, but also the bodily health of those whose passage it smooths. This is the well-lit, new safe space of Victorian social and physical order and polite pleasures: an emerging safe public space at the heart of the City. Through the figures, we see that the light creates intersecting social

spaces: the policeman uses the light to regulate those who use the light to walk or to trade. And, the electric light of the Embankment, its edges and its reflections, not the figures on whom he spent so little time, is what interested Grimshaw and his reviewers.

Along the sweeping arm of the Embankment we see some of the sixty Jablochhoff candles (arc lamps) that lit up the 1 ¼ miles from the Thames Embankment to Waterloo Bridge from 1878 to 1884 (O'Dea 1958, 99; Otter 2008, 181). Bazalgette had chosen them and directed their installation. In London in the 1870-80s, by the time Grimshaw was working, Londoners were used to artificial light. When the London gas workers went on strike in 1872 and the lamplighters - who cleaned as well as lit the lamps - did the same in 1875, the public response settled on the uncanny effects created by darkness, but more particularly on the uncanny blackness caused by the absence of light where it normally shone. The same was true of earlier strikes (*The Times*, 14 October 1793, 3; *The Times*, 23 September 1853, 8; *The Times*, 21 October 1875, 8). But, electricity, it was said by its supporters, was safer, cleaner, more stable, more adaptable, and gave a more brilliant/whiter light than gas (Nye 1994, 2, 5-6, 17, 31, 243).

Schivelbusch suggests that, by the time that electricity had been developed, gas had therefore come to be seen as "dirty" and was on its way out (Schivelbusch 1988, 22). But, in *Reflections*, in the distance on Westminster Bridge (re-built in 1856), we see gaslight still hard at work: Grimshaw, though fascinated by the effects of the new type of light, also captured the heterogeneity of Victorian lighting within the Metropole. And, his awareness of the situation was typical. At the time, the public gave the Jablochhoff candles mixed reviews. Some thought the light too harsh. Even Bazalgette himself was unhappy with the Jablochhoff candles. They tended to cast their light upwards, and to go out (their operation was complex, both in terms of each individual lamp and the infrastructure) and, by the mid-1880s, the experiment with the electric arc lights had failed (Otter 2008, 181). The satirical Metropolitan *Punch* similarly treated the debate about gas and electric light as a familiar old chestnut throughout the period of the experiment (Burnard 1879, 279; Taylor, Sketchley 1878, 287). Each new system of illumination had its supporters and detractors, and once adopted co-existed with previous forms.

The *Times*, for example, had been full of articles and notices recording the steady adoption of gaslight from 1809, when it was first introduced in Pall Mall. In 1814, it was installed in the city of Westminster, and by 1823 there were 215 miles of London's streets lit by gas (Bowers 1998, 49; O'Dea 1958, 98). Accum cited users who described gaslight "the brilliancy of which, when contrasted with our former lights, bears the same comparison to them as a bright summer sunshine does to a murky November day." There is, he went on "no other kind of light so well calculated for being made the subject of splendid illuminations" (Accum 1815,

72, 103-4). By 1820 there was gaslight in 20 major towns in the UK; by 1840 it was present in 200, and by 1849 there were few towns without gas in Britain (Bowers 1998, 49; Millward, Ward 1991, 125-6). And, once proven, gas had staying power. When it was built, the clock designed by Pugin for the Houses of Parliament was gas-lit in 1860 and remained so until 1906, though the House of Lords was lit by electricity in 1883; the House of Commons was only lit by electricity in 1912. Hence, we still see gaslight in *Reflections* not just dimly on Westminster Bridge, but also on the Embankment, in a circle of light embedded within Big Ben, balanced against the circle of a Jablochhoff Candle and the circle of the full moon.

Gas was dangerous: many accidents were reported in the *Times* throughout the nineteenth century, despite improvements in the technology; for example, there were many explosions, one of which resulted in Briton Ferry, Glamorganshire, resorting to candlelight in 1890 (*The Times*, 2 January 1890, 3) – candles persisted too, not just in church. Yet, Accum had equally forcefully given repeated assurances in his day that the new source of artificial light would be safer than the existing forms of artificial illumination and, like the supporters of electric light who came after him, cited lower insurance premiums as his proof (Accum 1815; Falkus 1982, 220). Regardless of the energy source, what were considered improvements in the technology of illumination among apologists, and the attempt to persuade a reluctant public of their advantages, therefore, gave rise to a very particular language of comparison between new and old, which stressed the utility, safety and value of the nascent form illumination. The enthusiasts in their enthusiasm echoed the expected, anticipated concerns of potential consumers, and the language captured the hegemonic influence of positivism at the time. Detractors worked to the same script, as we see in Ruskin's response to gaslight in Venice: a script centred on modernisation. So commonplace was the association of artificial light with the idea of progress that writers for the periodical press, whenever they did not have a stake in the success of any particular form of illumination, played on the certain knowledge that their readers were familiar with the form of the debate. Therefore, in 1871, *Punch* asked, "will Gas Lamps be as Oil Lamps, and Electric Lamps as Gas Lamps?" (Sketchley 1879, 301) in the full expectation that *Punch's* audience would recognise and laugh at the vast array of arguments for and against each type of light.

Artificial illumination, therefore, became part of the established language of 'civilisation', Western 'achievement' and 'modernity'. But, materially, emerging forms of illumination, as they developed, were also continuously absorbed into the built environment of the Victorian city, the (new) Westminster Bridge, the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben (1858), the underground system, and the Embankment. It is this normality, the everyday, however messy embeddedness of all forms of artificial light within the whole built spaces of Victorian life that is captured in the work of typical

Victorian artists like Grimshaw, not just its newest form and this is important to anyone studying the nineteenth century. Moreover, Grimshaw also asks us to make use of it to pause and to reflect on the river, the natural time of the tide, on the moon that directs the tide and on moonlight. These reflections on the river bring the audience's attention to the grander narratives of water's ebb and flow that penetrated the port and city of London and cut across small human time into the global flows of the wider world. Heterogeneity was part of the lifeblood of the Metropole.

The experience captured by Grimshaw of heterogeneous continuity rather than of linear change, including continuity with nature, must be taken seriously as a part of the Victorian representation of the highest state of Civilisation. Empire was about stability as well as change and that stability could be cluttered with old forms of steady and persistent progress, as well as new, and with natural resources too. Here is stillness and peace allowing reflection amid modernity; by the river, human time and natural time are caught together, and it is natural time, tide and moon that dominate the canvas. In this way, the city is depicted as part of and connected to Nature, and to the wider world. In *Reflections* as the reviewer in the *Leeds Mercury* saw, light causes us to pause rather than to progress. Moonlight (natural light) outweighs even the new Jablochhoff arc lamps on the Embankment. On the river, while the Embankment in the foreground celebrates regulation and control, on water each light intermingles and ripples away on the tide. Through reflection of light on water, a state of Nature returns to the City, and through it the city of London connects back to a worldwide system of trade and colonial endeavour, as a result universalised, naturalised by moonlight.

#### 4 Concluding Remarks: Languages of Water and of Light

This paper explores the uses, the meanings of artificial illumination in the West as they relate to progress, modernity and therefore civilisation and by extension to colonialism during the nineteenth century. This is discussed through the lens of narratives of the progress of illumination in Victorian Britain and Atkinson Grimshaw's *Reflections on the Thames* as a typical work of the period. It thereby places the painting by a British artist, who was popular among the cultured élite of the period, into the context of Western parables and narratives of light and lighting during the nineteenth century. This enriches and extends recent work by historians of science and technology that have problematized teleological histories of illumination, and enables us to re-read the cultural history of illumination in such a way so as to step away from positivist accounts of illumination as a form of progress or of modernity (be that modernity liked or disliked) to see the heterogeneity of illumination in practice. Through this study, we have also



seen that we may recognise that heterogeneity within the Metropolitan heart of Empire can be captured as a stable point or moment in time as equally representative of Civilisation.

We have seen that, rather than being a work of art that focused on individual stories, such as that of the woman who gazes across the Thames to the moon, Grimshaw's *Reflections* is a piece that captures Victorian perceptions of and questions about modernity through the established language of illumination. As a work of its period, it celebrates the achievements of the Victorians as representing the highest state of civilisation. A new and essential structure at the heart of London, the Embankment controlled flows of water, disease and health, incorporated illumination as a necessary part of a progressive built environment, and offered new spaces of civilisation, transport, commerce and conversation by the River Thames, which were all essential to the smooth functioning of the Houses of Parliament that had been shut down by 'The Great Stink'. But, the painting also directs the audience's gaze back to the natural world in which they are situated and on which they depend: the moon and the tidal river Thames connecting Britain as a maritime nation, by night and day, to the wider world, an Empire that never slept.

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# Linguistica





# A Comparison of Northern Romance and Occitan 'Subject' Clitic Systems

## The Null Subject Parameter and the Residues of V2 as V-to-C

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**Abstract** Romance languages have complement clitic pronouns that replace the arguments of a verb. Only a sub-area of Romance, extending from France to Northern Italy, also has subject clitics connected to the syntactic subject of an inflected verb. Even though the subject clitic grammar of Northern Romance is extremely varied, a series of absolute and implicational generalizations tells us that the variation is within a single complex system. Inside this sub-area of Romance, the Occitan varieties of Western Piedmont and Southern France at first sight seem to represent another variation of the same system. The aim of this paper is to show that they are radically different from Northern Italian or Northern Romance varieties. The main pieces of evidence are the following: their forms cannot be traced back to corresponding Latin pronouns; the 1st sg. enclitic will be shown to be derived from the grammaticalisation of the complementiser /ke/ 'that'; these elements are optional, violating the solid implicational generalisations on subject clitics of Northern Romance. Their optionality is consistent with the fact that they appear perform pragmatic functions, connected with [speaker] features. I will propose that Occitan dialects are in fact *pro*-drop languages with residues of V2 syntax in the form of pragmatic features to check in the left periphery. To meet these V2 requirements, Occitan languages have developed particles; due to the influence of Northern Romance varieties with which they have always been in contact, these particles have been disguised as subject clitics.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 A Synthesis of NID Subject Clitic Properties. – 3 A Synthesis of POccit Properties. – 3.1 2nd Person Singular: Asymmetry Main / Dependent Clauses. – 3.2 1st Person Singular Enclitic Pronoun. – 4 The Complementiser *que* in Southern France Occitan. – 4.1 Some Properties of *que* in FrOccit. – 4.2 Possible Interpretations of the Properties of *que*. – 5 A First Summary. – 5.1 Occitan Languages Between Northern and Southern Romance. – 5.2 The Position of Particles and Clitics in the Functional Structure. – 6 Romance V2, or V-to-C, and its Residual Traces in Modern Romance. The Tobler-Mussafia Law. – 6.1 V-Subj. Inversion: Dolomitic Ladin. – 6.2 The Tobler-Mussafia Law: Portuguese Galician, Asturian. – 6.3 The Tobler-Mussafia Law Ruled by Pragmatics: San Valentino. – 7 Concluding Speculations: Clitics, Particles, and *Pro*-Drop.

**Keywords** Clitics. Particles. *Pro*-drop. Residual Verb second. Occitan languages.

## 1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Nearly all Romance languages<sup>2</sup> have complement clitics, expressing the direct and indirect object of a verb; some also have locative and partitive clitics (see Benincà, Poletto 2005). A geographically continuous area of Romance languages, including France and Northern Italy, also have subject clitics, whose function varies in a way that is only apparently chaotic (see Poletto 2000).

The characteristics of this area, together with the fact that it has been studied since the 19th century in a highly sophisticated way – in particular from the point of view of diachronic phonology and morphology – make it an exceptionally interesting area. The syntax of Northern Italian Dialects (NIDs) has been the object of very detailed analyses and comparisons, following inspiring works such as Haiman (1974), on Romance dialects, and Kayne (1975), on French, which started a programme of comparative syntax. Dialectal systems of France have generally not been studied as much, due primarily to the differing status of the local dialects in the two countries.

The study I shall present aims to take a small step into the vast territory of a long-awaited syntactic comparison of NIDs with the dialects of France.<sup>3</sup>

As often happens in scientific research, a systematic study is triggered by certain findings that turn out to be useful, sometimes just by chance, or for reasons not directly connected to their scientific relevance.

I took the opportunity to compare a variety from France with NIDs while I was studying the Occitan of Piedmont, which, at first sight, seems consistent with NID systems, but on closer examination appears in fact to be substantially different. To understand its basic characteristics, it seemed to me necessary and useful to compare the Piedmont Occitan (POccit) area with a variety that again apparently belongs to the French dialectal

1 I am grateful first of all to Matteo Rivoira, dialectologist and native speaker of the Piedmontese Occitan variety of Rorà, and to Jean Sibille, expert of both Piedmontese and French Occitan grammars; their works and their suggestions have been invaluable sources of insights on the varieties I have been dealing with. Thanks to Massimo Cerruti, Riccardo Regis, Massimo Vai, for helping me to understand more about these varieties. Thanks to Mair Parry, Laura Vanelli, Jan Casalicchio, Mariachiara Berizzi, Guglielmo Cinque, Nicola Munaro, Christoph Schwarze, Nicol(ett)a Swinburne, and two very helpful reviewers, who posed relevant questions and provided insightful and encouraging comments.

In this article, I develop and modify the analysis outlined in Benincà 2014, which the reader is referred to for more detailed data.

2 A very few exceptions are found in limited areas in the Dolomites: see Paoli 2009, 2014 for a detailed description and an interesting synchronic and diachronic analysis.

3 From this perspective, the SYMILA project, developed at the University of Toulouse and coordinated by Patrick Sauzet, is very exciting and promising (URL <http://www.agence-nationale-recherche.fr/?Project=ANR-12-CORP-0014,2017-09-02>).

systems (but in fact does not) namely the Occitan of Southern France (FrOccit). The comparison of these varieties showed that they are both eccentric and particular with respect to the general 'system of systems' of their respective areas, namely French and Northern Italian, and yet they are surprisingly consistent with each other.

In fact, this is not surprising if we remember that linguistic analyses of the 19th and 20th century have demonstrated that, from the point of view of diachronic phonology and morphology, these two areas, Occitan of Piedmont and Occitan of Southern France, are linked by parallel diachronic phonological rules. It is interesting that their morphology and syntax too are more strictly linked to one another than to the Northern Romance system of their respective countries. In Benincà (2014) I proposed a first account of some grammatical characteristics of the languages of this area, and here I will try to push the analysis and refine some hypotheses.

I will begin by resuming some relevant properties of subject clitic pronouns of NIDs, in order to define aspects that highlight the differences from the POccit and the similarities with colloquial French.

## 2 A Synthesis of NID Subject Clitic Properties

On the basis of diachronic and synchronic data and analyses (cf. Renzi, Vanelli 1983; Rizzi 1986; Poletto 2000<sup>4</sup>), the apparently chaotic variation of subject clitic morphology and syntax permits us to recognize a simpler, unitary system, which includes also colloquial French (as will appear from the glosses, in French and English). This system presently survives only in some dialects; in other dialects, the same system has evolved rapidly from the 16th-17th century. Most dialects show a strong tendency towards a generalised requirement for an inflected verb to be accompanied by the subject clitic. In this situation, the clitic has been generally considered the realisation of different portions of verbal subject agreement (since Rizzi 1986 to, for example, Ciarlo 2010). More recently, many dialects have also lost subject clitic inversion in interrogatives. The most conservative area is central Veneto (Padua, Vicenza, Rovigo). I will use Paduan, my mother tongue, as the representative of the system ideally shared by the whole area, as it is attested in all of them at distinct diachronic stages.

4 For Piedmontese dialects, which are particularly relevant for our topic, see the synchronic and diachronic analyses of Piedmontese subject clitics in Parry 1994, 1998. Parry 2005, ch. 4 is an excellent description of the syntax of the dialect of Cairo Montenotte, a variety spoken on the Piedmontese-Ligurian border, compared with mainstream Piedmontese and Ligurian dialects.

The characteristics that I will list were shared by all NIDs, as clearly appears from historical data.<sup>5</sup>

- i) Subject clitics have an evident etymological relation with Latin subject pronouns, and have different properties depending on the person:

Table A. Proclitic and enclitic subjects of modern Paduan

	1	2	3
Singular			
procl.	∅	<i>te</i>	m. (e)l, f. <i>la</i>
encl.	<i>-i</i>	<i>-to</i>	m. <i>-lo</i> , f. <i>-la</i>
Plural			
procl.	1 ∅	∅	m. <i>i</i> , f. <i>le</i>
encl.	1 <i>-i</i>	<i>-u</i>	m. <i>-li</i> , f. <i>-le</i>
Impersonal			
procl.			∅
encl.			∅

Leaving aside the phonological details involving case-loss and grammaticalisation processes, it appears that the 1st sg. enclitic *-i* is one of the possible outcomes of Lat. *ĒGO* > *ieo*, as is 2nd sg. *tu*, *te* from Lat. *TU*, and 3rd sg. forms, which all derive from Lat. *ĪLL-* with number and gender distinctions. The 2nd pl. *-u* is from Lat. *UOS*. Interestingly, the 1st pl. enclitic is an extension of the 1st sg. enclitic; the same extension can be observed in French varieties for the proclitic 1st sg. *je*, which extends to the 1st pl. proclitic form.

- ii) 3rd sg. and pl. subject clitics form a subsystem of non-deictic subject clitics, with nominal Agreement (Benincà, Poletto 2006). They are obligatory if the inflected verb has no subject, either lexical (a DP, a strong pronoun) or virtual (a subject *wh*-trace); the same clitics are optional (with pragmatic differences) if a lexical subject is present (see (1)), but are ungrammatical if the subject is an interrogative or a relative pronoun, an operator, or a postposed subject (as in (2)) (capital letters indicate that the item is focalized):

- (1) a. \*canta / el canta  
 \*chante / il chante 'sings / he sings'
- b. Toni (el) canta  
 Antoine (il) chante 'A. (he) sings'
- c. ela (la) canta  
 elle (elle) chante 'she (she) sings'
- d. lori (i) canta  
 eux (ils) chantent 'they (they) sings'

<sup>5</sup> I am providing a very simplified scheme, giving just what is relevant for the argumentation. See a very accurate and insightful reconstruction in Vanelli 1987, 1996.

- (2) a. nissuni (\*el) canta  
 personne (\*il) chante 'nobody (he) sings'
- b. MARIO / LU (\*el) canta, (no so fradèò)!  
 MARIO /LUI (il) chante, (pas son frère)! 'M. / HE (he) sings, (not his brother)!'
- c. chi canta (\*lo)? / Chi canta?  
 qui chante-t>(\*il)? /qui chante? who sings? 'who is singing?'
- d. el tozo che (\*el) canta doman...  
 le garçon qui (\*il) chante demain... 'the boy who (he) sings tomorrow...'
- e. (\*i) vien tre tozi  
 (\*ils) vient trois garçons 'there come three boys'

In the subsystem of 3rd persons, the 3rd sg. expletive-impersonal clitic is the most likely to be missing in a paradigm. If a dialect has a 3rd sg. impersonal clitic, it also has the other 3rd person clitics (sg. and pl.).

This system is substantially different from standard French (as first shown by Rizzi 1986), but appears parallel with colloquial French (*français avancé*, see Renzi 1992). In the corpus of spontaneous conversation collected by Freddi (1997), it appears that a lexical subject is very naturally accompanied by a clitic copy:

- (3) a. les gamins de dix ans **ils** sont super contents (Freddi 1997, 237)  
 10-year-old kids **they** are very happy
- b. ta petite sœur **elle** va morfler (Freddi 1997, 228)  
 your little sister **she** will suffer
- c. que l'autre personne **elle** est à côté de toi (Freddi 1997, 228)  
 that the other person **she** is near you
- d. eux **ils** ont douze ans (Freddi 1997, 228)  
 them **they** have twelve years
- e. moi **je** fume un paquet (Freddi 1997, 156)  
 me I smoke a packet

In colloquial French, as in standard French, a subject clitic is not admitted if the subject is an operator (indefinite pronoun, *wh*-trace, etc.; see (2a)).

Conversely, the first clitic to be omitted in this subsystem is the 3rd sg. impersonal, primarily of *falloir* (*il faut* 'it is necessary') and *y avoir* (*il y a* 'there is'). In the corpus collected by Lucia Freddi, these verbs never have a subject clitic:

- (4) a. où j'étais, y avait un clan (Freddi 1997, 234)  
 where I was, there.had (was) a clan
- b. faut vraiment le vouloir (Freddi 1997, 156)  
 is-necessary really it.to-want 'it is necessary to really want it'
- c. y a autant de français que d'Arabes (Freddi 1997, 171)  
 there.has (is) as-much of French-people as of Arabs

Apparently, in colloquial French – but also in very formal, literary style – it is also possible to omit the subject clitic of 1st and 2nd pl., the persons that in many NIDs don't have a clitic form (see Sandfeld 1970, Renzi 1992):

- (5) Nous, Osmanlis, sommes d'un avis différent  
We Osmanlis are of a different opinion

The strong subject pronoun *nous* in (5) is left dislocated, as such in standard French it should have a clitic copy: *nous, Osmanlis, nous sommes...*

The aspects of subject clitic syntax of NIDs, shown in (1-2) with Paduan examples, are, then, parallel to colloquial French (as also appears from the glosses in French).

- iii) In most varieties, 1st sg., 1st pl. (and sometimes also 2nd pl.) proclitic forms have either  $\emptyset$  or a vowel (very often the same vowel), but the enclitic forms, which appear in main interrogatives and in other constructions, always have a richer, often a complete, paradigm (as shown in Table A and exemplified in (6)):

- (6) a.  $\emptyset$  canto ben / canto-*i* ben? 'I sing well / do I sing well?'  
chante bien / chante-*i* bien?  
b.  $\emptyset$  cantemo ben / cantemo-*i* ben? 'we sing well / do we sing well?'  
chantons bien / chantons-*i* bien?  
c.  $\emptyset$  cantè ben / cantè-*u* ben?  
chantez bien / chantez-*u* bien?

Some dialects (Friulian being a particularly clear example) have subject clitics that seem to be a cluster formed from the proper subject clitic and a preceding vowel *a*. However, when a preverbal negation is inserted, *a* appears between the vowel and the proper clitic, as in (7b). In some varieties of Friulian, in main interrogatives, the vowel *a* appears twice: in enclisis with the subject clitic and in proclisis alone (7c):

- (7) a. **a**l ven / **a**l cjante 'he comes / he sings'  
il vient / il chante  
b. **a** no l ven / **a** no l cjante 'he does not come / he does not sing'  
*a* ne il vient / *a* ne il chante pas  
c. **a** venj-**a**l? / **a** cjantj-**a**l? 'does he come? / does he sing?'  
*a* vient-*a*-il? *a* chante-*a*-il?

Paduan has a clitic vowel *a*, whose insertion is determined by pragmatics (mainly with exclamative, or 'mirative', force); it always appears first in a sequence of clitics and is incompatible with a Focus or a *wh*:

- (8) a. el riva doman  
‘he arrives tomorrow’  
b. **a** l riva doman!  
‘(unexpectedly) *a* he arrives tomorrow!’  
c. el ghe lo gà dà-indrìo  
‘he gave it back to him’  
d. **a** l ghe lo gà dà indrìo!  
*a* he.to.him has given back ‘(unexpectedly) gave it back to him!’  
e. \**a* chi ze vignù? / \**a* ze vignu?  
*a* who has come? / who *a* has come?  
f. \*MARIO *a* ze vignù! / \**a* MARIO ze vignù!

The location of clitic *a*, in Paduan and some other NIDs, is in CP, as shown by various tests (see Benincà 1983; Poletto 2000, ch. 3). The function of this vocalic clitic in the other NIDs is extremely varied, ranging from syntactic to morphological to phonological; Poletto (2000), Cardinaletti and Repetti (2010) illustrate the different functions that the clitic/particle can assume, in IP, AgrP, and CP, or in the phonological component. In the dialects where the clitic *a* is optional, as in Paduan, this means that the function it performs is of a pragmatic nature. Syntactically, this means that in CP some pragmatic features are inserted that trigger the merging of the particle to check these features. As appears from data in (6) (see in particular (6d)) when the particle *a* is present, the argumental clitics appear in the same area; I will return to this later below).

iv) As modern colloquial French, most of NIDs have lost subject clitic inversion in main interrogatives; a systematic comparison for these forms is then only possible if we include old data. The following generalizations seem quite solid: The 2nd sg. clitic is always obligatory, both in proclisis and in enclisis, even when a strong subject pronoun is present (see (9b)). On the other hand, we have seen above that many dialects lack a subject clitic form for impersonal or meteorological verb, whether in enclisis or in proclisis (see (10)):

- (9) a. \*(te) canti ben / canti\*(-to) ben?  
tu chantes bien / chantes-tu bien?  
You.sing well / sing you well? ‘do you sing well?’  
b. tì, \*(te) canti ben / TI, \*(te) canti ben  
toi, tu chantes bien / TOI, tu chantes bien  
you, you.sing well / YOU, you.sing well
- (10) a. (\*El) ze tardi /ze(-\*lo) tardi?  
il est tard / est-il tard?  
It is late / is it late?  
b. (\*El) piove / piove(-\*lo)?

Il pleut / pleut-il?

It rains / rains it?

'it is raining / is it raining?'

I anticipate an apparently contrasting datum concerning 2nd sg., which has to be taken into account when dealing with POccit. It has been observed that the 2nd sg. clitic, generally the 'most obligatory' of all subject clitics, in some scattered dialects (Milanese, Alpine Lombard, Dolomitic Ladin) disappears when locally governed by the verb, typically in main questions (see more below, fn. 9).

In the following section I will compare the characteristics (i-iv), that we have illustrated with respect to NIDs and marginally to French, with an Occitan dialect of Piedmont, to show the discrepancies with the system we have just seen.

### 3 A Synthesis of POccit Properties

To illustrate the POccit I have chosen the dialect of Rorà, in the Pellice Valley (province of Turin), which has been investigated for the ASIt,<sup>6</sup> the Italian Dialect Syntax Database, and checked in detail with the help of native-speaker linguists, in particular Dr Matteo Rivoira, University of Turin. I have compared my generalizations with excellent descriptions and analyses by Genre (1997), Genre, Rivoira (2007), Regis (2006), Ceruti, Regis (2007), Sibille (2012), Zörner (2008), Amaro-Peguy (2014), dedicated to other varieties of the area. I have chosen Rorà because its system is consistent with those of the varieties described in these works, yet also has significant differences (as I have shown in part in Benincà 2014), but most of all because I could have precious judgments about Rorà from Dr Rivoira.

Table B. Proclitic and enclitic subjects in the dialect of Rorà

Singular	1	2	3
procl. encl.	∅ -ke	t -ty	<i>m. a(l), f. i</i> <i>m. -lu, f. -li</i>
Plural procl. encl.	∅ -ke	u(z) -u	<i>m. f. i(*l)</i> <i>m. f. -li / -(ke)</i>
Impersonal procl. encl.			la -la

6 *Atlante Sintattico d'Italia* [online]. URL <http://asit.maldura.unipd.it/> (2017-09-02).



The 3rd sg. m. clitic *a* is variably followed by *-l*, the only trace of a possible development from the Latin demonstrative *ILL-*. The other 3rd persons (f. sg., m. and f. pl.) have a clitic *i*, never followed by *-l* (the same pattern found with Friulian clitics, and in German strong subject pronouns); the relation with Latin is unclear. However, the clitic *la*, which most resembles a f. sg., is instead the non-argumental clitic.<sup>7</sup> The 2nd pl. *u(z)* is a continuation of Latin *vos*.<sup>8</sup>

- (11) a. **la** 'pares k 'pjero ariva're du'maŋ  
il semble que P. arrivera demain 'it seems that P. will arrive tomorrow'
- b. **la** pjøu  
il pleut 'it rains'

1st sg. and pl. lack a subject clitic; 2nd pl. has a clitic *u* (*uz* in *liaison* contexts):

- (12) a. mindzu lu pum  
mange la pomme 'I eat the apple'
- b. ŋkœj 'mindzɛn a l 'ostu  
aujourd'hui mangeons au restaurant 'today we-eat at the restaurant'
- c. parké **u** vu'le 'parte?  
porquoi vous voulez partir? 'why you want to-leave?'
- d. (**uz**) a've dry'mi  
vous avez dormi 'you have slept'

In unaccusative structures we have the non-argumental clitic *la*, followed by a locative if the verb has the appropriate semantic content. In main interrogatives, the non-argumental clitic is optionally repeated in enclisis (13c):

- (13) a. **la i** 'riva əŋ fi'jet  
il y arrive un garçon
- b. də 'dʒɛnt pa'rei **la i** n'e 'gro  
de gens comme-ça il y en est beaucoup
- c. ki **la i** veŋ (**la**) a tua ləa?  
qui il y vient-il à ta place?

<sup>7</sup> The feminine pronoun used as expletive characterises Celtic languages, and even regional English of Great Britain and United States, presumably as a substratum phenomenon. It is possible that also It. *la* in verbal forms such as *smetter-la* 'to stop something', *smetti-la!* 'stop it!', and in Northern Italian Romance *la ze vera* 'she (=it) is true' are the reflex of a similar property, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer. Others, though, have proposed that the feminine agreement depends on a silent *storia* 'story'.

<sup>8</sup> I have maintained the transcription used by the collector(s) of the data.

In main clauses, and, with one exception (see below § 3.1), also in dependent clauses, the proclitics in table B are optional, except the non-argumental *la*. This aspect decidedly contrasts with the NIDs where the subject clitics, in particular and more clearly 3rd person clitics, represent the realisation of arguments of the verb. As mentioned above, many NIDs don't even have a morpheme for the impersonal subject, and we have seen that in colloquial French the non-argumental subject clitic is normally omitted. In POccit the impersonal subject clitic is instead the only one which is obligatory. All NIDs, as well as French, have subject clitics that share with complement clitics a clear relation to thematic arguments, but in POccit only a clitic without a thematic role is obligatory. This makes us think that subject clitics have a completely different function here.

### 3.1 2nd Person Singular: Asymmetry Main / Dependent Clauses

I mentioned that the optionality of 'subject clitics' has an exception. In fact, this exception apparently distinguishes the POccit area from the rest of NIDs (see Renzi, Vanelli 1983). It concerns the 2nd sg. clitic, which in NIDs is always obligatory, while here it is completely optional in main clauses, as in (14), but obligatory in some dependent clauses (see (15) and (16)):

- (14) a. (t) lu 'leze e l ar'leze 'tut lu 'tamp  
(tu) le lis et le relis continuellement  
b. (t) 'kate pa 'mai d 'pum  
(tu) achètes jamais de pommes

The clitic is obligatory in dependent clauses (completives, as (15), interrogatives (16a-b), relative clauses (16c)):

- (15) i m aŋ dit kə \*(t) 'stydje 'sampe.  
ils m'on dit que tu étudies toujours  
(16) a. i m aŋ tʃa'ma sə \*(t) 'kate lu paŋ.  
ils m'ont demandé si tu achète le pain  
b. i m aŋ tʃamà ke libre \*(t) vøle leze  
ils m'ont demandé quel livre (tu) veux acheter  
c. lu fij k \*(t) vu'lis nna-li lu libbre al e par'ti  
le garçon que tu voulais donner.lui le livre il est parti

Younger speakers, or more generally innovative speakers, can also omit the clitic in dependent *wh*-interrogatives.

A main / dependent clause asymmetry is usually taken as evidence that the phenomenon involves movement of the verb to the left periphery in main clauses. In dependent clauses, the left periphery hosts complemen-

tisers and features that limit the movement of the inflected verb (as is clearly visible in German and in Medieval Romance). The *wh*- 'why' is located very high in the structure, so it does not necessarily block the movement of the verb (Rizzi 1997, 2001; Benincà 2006; Munaro 2010). See below in (17) for a simplified map of the left periphery.<sup>9</sup>

This type of asymmetry is consistent with that found in Medieval Romance languages, which are *pro*-drop in main clauses and non-*pro*-drop in dependent clauses. It has been proposed that a *pro* subject is licensed by a governing inflected verb that has moved to C; this configuration is either impossible or very limited in dependent clauses. In medieval Romance V movement to C was obligatory in main clauses, and limited or blocked in dependent clauses. In this framework we should conclude that Occitan also has V movement to C in main clauses, optionally triggered to check pragmatic features in CP. When the inflected Verb moves upward, the clitic is omitted.

With a detailed theory of functional heads, we see that a *pro* subject can be licensed in dependent clauses that engage projections located high in the functional map of CP (such as the completive and relative *que*, but not Focus or *wh*- projections, which are plausibly lower).

(17) A simplified map of the Left periphery (Rizzi 1997; Benincà 2001, 2006)

[Subrd. *che* | Relat. *che*, ***why* Interr°** | [<sub>Topic</sub> HTopic | LD Top **Top°** | [<sub>Focus</sub> Focus/**Wh°** | IP/AgRS I°

9 The *pro*-drop asymmetry between main / dependent clauses can also be the origin of a few exceptions to the general obligatoriness of 2nd sg. clitic in NIDs. In a few scattered varieties of Trentino and Lombardy the proclitic 2nd sg. pronoun is not obligatory, or does not exist at all (Jan Casalicchio, personal communication; see Adami 2008; Cerruti 2009, 81 the first cases reported). Looking, for example, at Map 821 of AIS *Dove vai?* (Where do you go?) (<http://www3.pd.istc.cnr.it/navigais-web/?map=1401>) we can see, distributed in the geographical space, the various possibilities and diachronic steps of the evolution. For example, in Milan and related varieties nearby, we have: 285 *ndoua ve te* 'where go you?', 263 *ndo ta vet?* 'where you go-t', 254 *ndo et* 'where go-t'. The varieties where the proclitic is missing all have the agglutinate pronoun of 2nd sg. *t*. Where the interrogative is formed with the insertion of the complementiser, the proclitic pronoun is always present. The clitic disappears when the verb locally governs the subject position in main interrogatives, a condition that is impossible if the verb is blocked by the lexical complementiser, as in dependent clauses. The morphologisation of the pronoun has presumably stabilized in the passage from V2 to SVO stage. It appears that the pronominal value of the enclitic has been preserved until recently. For ex, in Milanese we (used to) have:

- (i) a. \*(te) magnet un pom 'you eat-t an apple'  
b. sa magnet? 'what (you) eat-t?'

Varieties of the Val di Non such as the one studied by Adami have maintained the pronominal value of the morphology derived from the grammaticalisation of the enclitic probably also thanks to a phonological rule that cancelled (only superficially) the old 2nd sg. inflection -s, maintaining -t with pronominal value. This is suggested by Adami herself, and the same

Other features find their location in the Left Periphery, such as those 'making reference to the Speaker' (to which we will refer briefly below), those marking 'exclamative' (or 'mirative', i.e. 'surprise') force, or other presuppositions; I will not identify a more precise position for these elements, since the evidence for this is necessarily still vague and currently inconclusive.

The different behaviour of *wh*-interrogatives with respect to other interrogatives is consistent with the map of syntactic positions in the left periphery. While the other *wh*-pronouns have a very low position at the right boundary of the left periphery and therefore block access to the area, it has been independently shown that *why* (Rizzi 2001) is very high, leaving the access to the periphery open for other elements to move in. Therefore, this kind of dependent clause behaves in certain respects like a main clause.

The asymmetry pointed out above suggests that V movement is involved in the optionality of 2nd sg. clitic in the dialect of Rorà. The V movement that allows optionality of subject clitics is not limited to questions, but is possible in all main clauses in connection with pragmatic markedness. In main clauses, then, the clitic is omitted when the verb moves to a pragmatic head in the left periphery, so that it governs locally the position in which the pronoun would emerge in the surface.

We have again a special behaviour of the 2nd sg. clitic, even if apparently the opposite of what has been observed for the other NIDs: in NID it is the 'most obligatory', in POccit it is completely optional (in main clauses). I would hold that the obligatory / optional nature of *tu* does not concern this element as a subject pronoun, but as a particle.

A possible line of reasoning is the hypothesis that the particle - in this case as in others - has a function that cannot be performed by the verb, unless it moves up to enable itself the pragmatic head; if the verb cannot move, the particle is inserted to perform the same function.

The comparison I have tried to sketch so far should show clearly enough that POccit does not belong to the NIDs system, nor to the colloquial French one; in fact, colloquial French and NIDs both appear much nearer to each other than to POccit.

phonological phenomenon in Lombard varieties and an analogous context is described by Rührlinger (2008).

### 3.2 1st Person Singular Enclitic Pronoun

The piece of data that built the narrow bridge that took me from Piedmont to France was the 1st sg. enclitic of Rorà, illustrated by the following pairs of sentences:

- |         |  |                       |
|---------|--|-----------------------|
| (18) a. | 'mindʒu<br>mange                       | 'I eat'               |
| b.      | 'ko(za) 'mindʒu-ke?<br>quoi mange-ke?  | 'what do/can I eat?'  |
| (19) a. | 'katu lu pan<br>achète le pain         | 'I buy the bread'     |
| b.      | 'katu-ke lu pan?<br>achète-ke le pain? | 'do I buy the bread?' |

The enclitic *ke* is homophonous with the complementiser 'that' (in many dialects also with the *wh*-pronoun and determiner 'what').<sup>10</sup>

Various hypotheses have been proposed about the origin of *ke*, to avoid considering it as a complementiser; the functions of the homophonous elements do not seem to provide a viable hypothesis, and a complementiser that becomes enclitic on a verb would be unique – at least in the domain of Romance – as a strategy for question formation.

Phonological hypotheses:

- 1) *-ke* is the output of the 'hardening' of final *-j* (*Verschärfung*); *j* itself the result of enclisis of the subject pronoun  $\text{E(G)O} > *eo > jo > j$ . This process is attested in Swiss Rhaeto-Romance (Gartner 1883, 48; Kamprath 1986), but has never been described in this area, nor in Piedmont. An apparently similar hardening in dialects of Piedmont affects only nasals (ex.  $> /paŋ/ > /pak/$  'bread').
- 2) *-ke* derives from the 1st sg. Latin pronoun *EGO*, which evolved in enclitic position with the loss of the final vowel and consequent devoic-

<sup>10</sup> Miola (2013) presents an apparently related phenomenon, namely the use of the morpheme *kje* as a 1st sg. subject pronoun in varieties of southern Piedmont. Widmer (1959) also deals with subject pronouns with a *k*-initial. Thanks to Mair Parry and Massimo Vai for calling my attention to the interesting affinities of the systems described in these contributions with the phenomenon I am dealing with. I would say, though, that, despite appearances, the two cases are not directly comparable with POccit *-k*: at this stage, in both cases the subject pronouns are not clitics but full pronouns, derived from a demonstrative and not a personal pronoun. The dialect studied by Miola more interestingly shows an extension from 3rd pers. to 1st sg, a process that recalls phenomena attested in some slang or jargon. Notice that this extension is the opposite of that observed in POccit, where the extension starts from 1st sg, and is motivated by the special status of 1st sg. questions. In order to take position a specific study would be necessary.

ing of the word-final consonant; subsequently, in order to syllabify the consonant, an epenthetic vowel was added. The mechanism is quite complex: *kanto-eg* > *kantu-(e)k* > *kantu-k* > *kantu-ke*, with all the steps resorting to very specific, ad hoc processes. However, what seems to me a serious, more general, objection concerns the first step: Latin EGO passed in all the Romance area through a common stage where the voiced intervocalic consonant dropped, namely EGO > *eo* (Rohlf's 1968, § 434).

A morphological hypothesis:

- 3) A third proposal based on analogy posits a process starting with athematic verbs (*dire* 'say', *dare* 'give', *stare* 'stay', *andare* 'go') which would have extended the final *-k* of *dik* (< DICO), interpreted as 1st sg. inflection, first to all athematic verbs, then to all verbs. The conclusive objection against this hypothesis has been made by Lotte Zörner (2008, 128), with a simple and crucial fact: the dialects of the Po Valley, where interrogative 1 sg. *-ke* exists in various forms, never developed the analogical extension of 1st sg. *-k* to athematic verbs, which is the first and necessary step that could have initiated the analogical process.

A fundamental objection to the etymologies listed above is that an explanation of the form should account not only for the etymological origin of *ke* but also for the fact that the supposed evolutionary pathways happened precisely with verbs appearing in the interrogative context. Anyway, none of these and other alternatives proposed appears straightforward or convincing.<sup>11</sup>

I have chosen to pursue what seems the more natural interpretation: *-ke* is the result of a grammaticalisation of the complementiser, which has maintained its relation with the left periphery but has lost its function of subordinator and has become a feature checker of a functional head in the left periphery. We can suppose that *ke* 'that', originally and still a complementiser, has also evolved into a grammaticalised particle, which has assumed other functions, but maintained its location in CP. Its new functions must have to do with this functional area.

This solution is consistent with the fact that questions involve movement of the verb into CP, the area where complementisers are primarily realised. It is also consistent with the fact that it originates in 1st sg., interrogatives, a special type of question.

11 See also Sibille 2003 for other arguments in favour of a pronominal or analogical origin of this element.

### 3.2.1 Specificity of 1st sg. Questions

Let us consider the procedure of question formation. Basing ourselves on Rizzi (1997, 2001), Munaro (2010, 126-31), we can say that subject-verb inversion (in questions as in other structures) first of all includes the insertion of a specific feature in a head in CP. In the case of interrogatives, as the cartography of CP shows, the relevant head is very low (perhaps, the lowest one). The verb moves to the relevant C head to check the feature, and on its way it collects and incorporates the subject clitic and produces subject clitic inversion. In the dialects we are considering, the process involves merging of *-ke* in the interrogative *wh*-head in C and incorporation of *ke* by the verb moved to CP. *Ke*, originally a complementiser, is then a particle that checks the *wh*-interrogative head in CP. An obvious question to pose is why this happens only with 1st sg. interrogative form, or, more precisely, the use of this form starts from 1st sg. person. In fact, many dialects of the POccit area – including Rorà – extend the enclitic particle first of all to 1st pl., then only in younger speakers, also to 3rd pl. (see Benincà 2014 for more details). This pattern of extension is presumably based on the fact that 1st sg. and pl., both lacking a subject clitic, include a feature that refers to the speaker (see Benincà, Poletto 2006).<sup>12</sup> Moreover, 1st sg. interrogative forms appear in questions posed to oneself, typical non-standard questions (in the sense illustrated by Hans Obenauer 1994, 2004), whose illocutionary force is not that of asking for information but of communicating or expressing a judgment, an evaluation, and the like. A question posed to oneself is obviously a typical non-standard question. Questions of this kind very often display an ‘alternative checker’, a particle devoid of semantic content (in many cases deriving from the grammaticalisation of the interrogative pronoun *what*: Munaro, Obenauer 1999), which is located very high in the left periphery. Independently of this theory, Giorgi (2010) has identified a function of heads in the left periphery having to do with the ‘speaker’s attitude’. These two approaches are not, as it may seem, redundant, but are just different points of view, capturing complementary aspects of the relationship of the speaker with respect to the hearer, the propositional content of the assertion, etc., in these as in other constructions.

A more general possible remark concerns the fact that in Romance languages, as far as is currently known, there are no other cases of a complementiser incorporated into a Verb<sup>13</sup> and I am unable to provide a

12 Notice that 2nd sg. and pl. are never included in this extension pattern. We will see that a similar pattern appears in FrOccit as well.

13 There are many cases of a sort of complementary phenomenon, namely the verbal inflection incorporating into a complementiser, in particular in dialects spoken in Southern Germany: see Bayer 1984, 2012 for Bavarian, Cognola 2013 for Mòcheno cases and further references. On the other hand, Damonte (2010) has analysed the behaviour of complementisers in

simple explanation of this fact. To support my analyses, I can only recall other cases of exceptional incorporation of grammaticalised words, such as that of the Lombard dialect of Sonogno (Ticino, Switzerland), where the adverb *bene* 'well' became a particle *ba* and incorporated in enclisis in all verbs in the *irrealis* mood (Benincà 1999). Another case is presented by a dialect of a neighbouring area of Lombardy, province of Biella, where a particle with presumably the same origin marks the interrogative 1st sg. of any tense (thanks once again to Ed Tuttle, who sent this piece of information to me many years ago):

- |      |    |                            |                        |
|------|----|----------------------------|------------------------|
| (20) | a. | qui fach-be?               |                        |
|      |    | what do <i>be</i> ?        | 'what do I do?'        |
|      | b. | qui faru-bbe?              |                        |
|      |    | what will-do <i>be</i>     | 'what will I do?'      |
|      | c. | ant i vach-be?             |                        |
|      |    | where there.go <i>be</i> ? | 'where do I go?', etc. |

In the light of what we are seeing, this particular phenomenon becomes clear: we have a construction that involves again the enclisis of a grammaticalised particle that happens only in 1st sg. main questions, and cliticises to the verb in CP, as the enclitic *ke* of Rorà.

We are hypothesizing that a complementiser in Occitan has progressively weakened its function of subordinator (or pro-sentence, as Kayne 2010 has more recently proposed) to become a particle and check features in the same area, the left periphery. We can try to find support for the hypothesis by looking for other cases in which a complementiser has an analogous evolution. We can reasonably hope to find something relevant in a strictly related language, namely the Occitan of Southern France.

Sicilian and Calabrese, apparently derived from a cluster of object clitics. This can be again a residue of the Romance V2 stage, with clitics appearing in the CP area and interacting with Focus in main clauses. In the cases studied by Damonte, object clitics in main clauses revealed their precise location in CP immediately above Focus (as in Medieval Romance: see Benincà 2006). To assume the functions of a complementiser, they must become particles.

Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) have shown that pronouns have to be subdivided into three classes: strong, weak, and clitic, with different properties. This classification is probably to be further refined, considering the behaviour and the varied syntactic characteristics of 'subject' clitic pronouns, as Cardinaletti and Repetti do in Cardinaletti, Repetti 2010 and other recent works.



#### 4 The Complementiser *que* in Southern France Occitan

Given that we are dealing with an enclitic *-ke* in 1st sg. in a given area, we may hope to find in related varieties a corresponding proclitic *ke* with comparable functions. If we find it, this can be used as further evidence against the etymological hypotheses, which all concern processes in word final position. Following the dialectological classification, based on the geographic distribution of morpho-phonological rules, we can now turn to the Occitan of Southern France, systematically documented in the *Atlas Linguistique de la France* (ALF<sup>14</sup>), and in excellent grammatical descriptions.<sup>15</sup>

Looking at map 465 of ALF, entitled “j’entends” ‘I hear’, we find a large area in SW France occupied by the form *k entendi* with neighboring varieties having either *je* or  $\emptyset$ . Here *ke* is exclusively preverbal, it appears in assertive and relative clauses, in the left periphery, in some varieties apparently as a 1st sg. subject pronoun; we can safely locate it in the left periphery. It corresponds to what we were looking for: an apparent 1st sg. pronoun which is not enclitic but only proclitic (or perhaps weak). The grammaticalisation process appears at an earlier stage: the complementiser has assumed a function of feature checker in CP but does not have the status of an enclitic.

In the area of *k entendi* (Landes and Basses Pyrénées, part of Gers and Hautes Pyrénées), we can observe other relevant data. In particular, map 83A of ALF presents three syntactic contexts together (listed in (21)), which appear to have been specifically chosen to determine the real nature of *ke* by inserting it in a syntactic context that can reveal its nature, whether pronominal or functional:

- |      |    |                                  |                              |
|------|----|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (21) | a. | les deux <b>que j’ai</b> achetés | ‘the two that I have bought’ |
|      | b. | <b>j’en ai</b> plein la tête     | ‘I.of-it have full the head’ |
|      | c. | <b>je l’ai</b> déjà entendu      | ‘I.it have already heard’    |

The first sentence (see (21a)) proposes *ke “je”* in a relative clause, which puts it directly adjacent to the relative complementiser; the second (21b)

14 Gilliéron, Jules; Edmont, Edmond (éds.) (1902-12). *Atlas Linguistique de la France*. Paris: Champion. URL <http://cartodialect.imag.fr/cartodialect/> (2017-09-02).

15 Among many other outstanding documents, I only quote Ronjat 1937, one of the best grammatical description of a Romance variety; Bec 1963, 1973; Lafont 1967, 1991; Rohlf 1970; very interesting texts appeared in the *Revue des Patois Gallo-Romans* (1887-1892). The generalisations that I draw on clitics and particles in FrOccit are consistent with data and analyses presented in more recent, extremely interesting works. I have consulted in particular Sibille 2015, Marcus 2010, Olivieri et al. 2015, Floricic 2014. My analysis is largely compatible with the hypothesis presented by Morin (2005, 2006) for some particles in Gascon, Innu and Québec French. A very clear and detailed analysis, framed in the cartography of the left periphery, is developed in Lahne 2005.

has *ke* accompanied by the partitive clitic, the third by an object clitic. The strategy produces an interesting result: we see that we never find two *ke*, even if they would have two distinct functions, a complementiser and a subject pronoun. This could be reduced to the aim of avoiding homophonous words, but responses from Point 664 Luxei (Sore, Landes) reported in (22) show us that the reason is more abstract: the complementiser in this variety is not *ke* but *dun* (< *dont* 'whose'); nevertheless 'subject' *ke* is not inserted; in other words, both complementisers – *ke* in Artix (see (23)) and *dun* in Luxei (see (22)) – are incompatible with 'subject' *ke* because they would perform the same function as 'subject' *ke*, and not because they are homophonous with it:

Table D. Particle *ke* and clitics

Map 83A, P. 664: Luxei (Landes)			Map 83A, P. 685: Artix (Arthez, B Pyrénées)		
(22) a.	dun ey	"... <b>que j'ai</b> " (rel. cl.)	(23) a.	kè	"... <b>que j'ai</b> " (rel. cl.)
b.	ke n ey	"... <b>j'en ai</b> "	b.	ke n'ey	"... <b>j'en ai</b> "
c.	ke ley	"... <b>je l'ai</b> "	c.	ke lè	"... <b>je l'ai</b> "

In the POccit area, the enclitic *ke* extends from the 1st sg. to other persons, and precisely first to 1st pl., then 3rd sg. and pl. Looking at the ALF data, it is possible to postulate the same kind of extensions in Gascon: some varieties (Landes) extend *ke* from the 1st sg. to all the other persons.

Leaving aside other very interesting (and puzzling) properties (dealt with in more details in Benincà 2014), we can see FrOccit *que* as a particle, inserted in CP for purposes that have only indirect relations with the agreement of the inflected verb.

#### 4.1 Some Properties of *que* in FrOccit

The particular usage of *que* in Occitan of Southern France has been the object of attention since the early studies on Romance grammar. Meyer-Lübke (1900, § 564) underlines the wide usage of *ke* in sentence initial position – or more precisely, after a Topic – in main clauses. Very frequently, it follows a lexical subject and precedes the verb. It is never found with an imperative or in a negative sentence. Meyer-Lübke reports a passage of a contemporary version of the *Parable of the Prodigal Son* and a 1387 text:

- (24) U òmi *qu'*abè dus hilhs; lou mei youen *que* disou au son pai...  
a man *que* had two sons; the younger *que* said to his father...

Ronjat's (1937, § 774) comments are more subtle. He compares three

possible variants of a main assertive clause, showing the optionality of the particle:

- (25) a. que t parli  
       *que* te parle   'I talk to you'
- b. jou que t parli  
       moi *que* te parle.
- c. jou t parli  
       moi te parle

Ronjat explicitly says that no subject pronoun is obligatory in FrOccit; subject pronouns are used only when there is ambiguity or contrast.

In our view, in (25b) the lexical subject *jou* is a topic and *que* then marks a head in the left periphery, namely, on the basis of data like this, the head of Topic. In (25a) *que* licences a 'null topic', a topic to be recovered from the context (the form *parli* is then presumably *pro*-drop); the subject can optionally be realised as Topic (as (25b)) or a Focus (25c). Notice that in French a strong subject *moi* would in any case be copied by a clitic subject (*moi \*(je) parle*), independently of its pragmatic status. In (25c) *que* does not appear. If we suppose that *que* is the head of Topic, and we use the map of the left periphery to localise the functional projections (see a simplified version in (17) above), we would expect that a Focus cannot be followed by *que*, because the Topic projection, or the Topic Field, is located upper on its left.

Ronjat's comment on the following two forms of questions is also very interesting:

- (26) a. bos biene?  
       tu-veux venir?   'do you want to come?'
- b. que bos biene?  
       *que* tu-veux venir??   'so you want to come?'

He says that only the first is a true question, while the second conveys the presupposition of a positive answer and is then a non-standard question. The presupposition is activated by a feature in CP, such as the "alternative checker" hypothesised by Obenauer (2004) mentioned above (see also Floricic 2014 for a comparable analysis). The particle *que* can then activate features with different interpretations in CP, presumably connected to different positions in the structure, which it may be possible to determine in the future, with more fine-grained data analysed by native speakers-linguists. We can assert, though, that in the case of POccit interrogative, the form does not have to do with non-standard questions in the generic sense, but specifically with a sub-category of them, that of questions posed to oneself (see above, § 3.2.1, other comparable cases).

## 4.2 Possible Interpretations of the Properties of *que*

In previous analyses (Benincà 2014), I was inclined to interpret the function of *que* as similar to that of a subject clitic, also interpreting in this sense a descriptive note by Ronjat (1937, 536) about *que*: he says that “il se place entre le sujet et le verbe, et ne peut être séparé du verbe que par un pronom régime”. This is literally the way clitics have been defined for many decades, but in fact this is not the only possible description. In a *pro*-drop language it could also mean that *que* marks a position in CP, where it is followed by any clitic and by the V, moved to C. This hypothesis entails the possibility that FrOccit preserves residues of V2 grammar, which this variety shared with the other Romance languages in the Middle Ages (see Vanelli, Renzi, Benincà 1996 and the recent important article by Bryan Donaldson 2016 on Old Occitan syntax). It seems to me now that the picture becomes more consistent if we interpret *que* as a particle that performs more than one function in CP and consequently occupies different ‘micro-positions’ in this layer. Its frequent appearance with 1st sg. verbs follows from the fact that sentences in the 1st sg. person are very likely to convey pragmatic contents (presuppositions, performative functions, and the like). As hinted at above, Giorgi (2010) presents clear evidence of ‘speaker’ features encoded at the left border of the left periphery and illustrates their syntactic and semantic properties. In a certain sense, the Speaker / Hearer pair integrates with Topic / Focus forming two articulated super-fields.

## 5 A First Summary

To resume the thread of a somewhat rambling discussion, let us point out some basic concepts regarding the syntax of clitics, in particular pronominal clitics of 3rd sg. and pl.<sup>16</sup> All Romance languages – with the few exceptions mentioned above – have pronominal clitics expressing direct and indirect objects. They also share some long-standing constellations of phenomena concerning the argument functions of these elements: if a direct object is not in its basic position but in the left periphery with the function of Topic, it *must* have a clitic copy; if it is an operator, it *cannot* have a clitic copy because an operator cannot be a Topic. These properties are valid for all Romance languages since their earliest documentation.<sup>17</sup> A sub-part of Romance, forming a contiguous area from France to Northern

<sup>16</sup> As I briefly pointed out above, the necessity of keeping 3rd person sg. and pl. pronouns separate from 1st and 2nd person ones (the deictic persons) emerges from various pieces of evidence.

<sup>17</sup> As pointed out to me by Jan Casalicchio, in Gardnese and Badiotto (Dolomitic Ladin) apparently a preposed object can be a Topic even without a clitic copy. One can observe that

Italy, also has subject clitics, whose argument status is the same as direct object clitics at a certain point of their diachronic evolution in that the subject clitic and the lexical subject are in complementary distribution unless the lexical subject is left-dislocated. A few varieties have preserved this state of affairs till modern times, but most varieties have evolved so that a subject clitic is no longer in complementary distribution with a lexical subject. The path of evolution tends towards a generalized obligatoriness of subject clitics, which, for example in Friulian, accompany an inflected verb as a sort of complement of inflection, even though the Friulian verb is morphologically very rich in distinctions. A subject clitic in Friulian is then obligatory even when the lexical subject is an operator.

### 5.1 Occitan Languages Between Northern and Southern Romance

We have seen above the profile of an Occitan variety of Piedmont representative of its area, the dialect of Rorà, which shows phenomena that point in the opposite direction. Elements that appear to be subject clitics (due to their position with respect to the inflected verb, and a few phonological traces that connect them to the subject clitics of NIDs and French), are completely optional, with two exceptions: 1) the 2nd sg. clitic, that is obligatory in dependent clauses; 2) the expletive 3rd sg. clitic, obligatory with impersonal and meteorological verbs, and in unaccusative structures with a postposed subject (see (13)). This requirement has an interesting and puzzling exception: the expletive clitic *la* is totally impossible with the verb *nta* 'it is necessary', which expresses (like *bisogna* in Italian, perhaps also *faut* in colloquial French) the 'pure necessity' root modal.

These properties not only contrast sharply with what has been described and generalized for NIDs, as we have pointed out above, but are also internally inconsistent: if the obligatoriness of the expletive depended on the semantic/thematic poverty of the impersonal verbs, why is it impossible with the poorest verb, namely *nta*? We have to separate *la* from the other clitics, assuming that all apparently personal clitics are in fact particles, and these perform the function of checking pragmatic features optionally inserted in the left periphery. The 2nd sg. clitic is obligatory in dependent clauses, with the exception of *wh*-interrogatives, and completely optional in main clauses. In main clauses the checking of features can be done either by the verb moving to C, or by the particle *tu* itself; in dependent clauses only by the particle *tu*. The asymmetry main / dependent clauses is well known

the same happens in Old Italian and in German: an argument moved in CP can be a so-called 'informational Focus', not necessarily a contrastive Focus; as such, it is not clearly distinct from a topic. This aspect, which appears to me typically associated with V2 languages, must be deepened with a specific detailed description and analysis.

in V2 languages, German and old Romance. In German the V2 structure, produced by V movement to C, is blocked in dependent clauses except with complements of verbs of thinking, which permit the omission of the complementiser and consequently the movement of the verb to the left periphery producing the V2 configuration. Something similar can be posited for Rorà dependent clauses: the checking of the features in CP cannot be done by the verb, as in main clauses, but only by the particle, except in the case of *wh*-interrogatives, which does not block the verb from accessing CP.<sup>18</sup>

## 5.2 The Position of Particles and Clitics in the Functional Structure

It is tempting to try to establish the precise positions of particles in CP. I have mentioned above (e.g. in (8)) the characteristics of *a* in Paduan, a particle that corresponds to a subject pronoun in other Northern Italian dialects (and in Old Paduan). If we look at this element concentrating on Paduan, modern and old, the parallelism and the differences with POccit are even more interesting.

In modern Paduan, *a* is clearly not a subject clitic. Paduan has a typical Northern Italian series of subject clitics, with three pronouns that appear either enclitic or proclitic depending on the position of the verb and the content of CP (Munaro 2010), and three pronouns that appear only in enclitic positions. The element *a* appears to be clearly a particle because, not only it is optional, but it co-exists with a subject clitic, and does not interfere with its syntactic conditions. Moreover, *a* is sensitive to the content of CP and incompatible with syntactic Focus and *wh* operators, but is compatible with total questions and V movement to C. Pragmatically, it marks a 'surprise' force by licensing an empty Topic (more probably a Theme) which is recoverable from the context and taken for given and known to the hearer. The particle *a* is obligatorily before all the other clitics – subject, negation, direct and indirect object, and partitive –, strictly in this order. All these elements, minutes but very clear, tell us that *a* is a particle in C, and the features it checks are in CP and have a pragmatic nature.<sup>19</sup>

**18** The fact that this happens with 2nd sg. only is not clear, but must have to do with the role of 2nd sg. in pragmatics and its features endowment (see Benincà, Poletto 2006). In a certain sense, this behaviour must derive from the same property that obliges the 2nd sg. subject clitic to be always present in all the languages of the Romania Continua (Renzi, Vanelli's 1983 generalisation). I will briefly resume this issue in the conclusive section.

**19** Chinellato (2002, 2003) has performed a very interesting research on aphasic subjects from Venetan areas where the particle *a* is present; in these speakers, all the area of clitics pronouns appears to be damaged and impaired, while the particle *a* is generally preserved with its correct function. This means at least that this apparent clitic involves a specific area of functional structure, distinct from that of proper subject clitic pronouns.

Paduan has a rich historical documentation. Texts from the 13th to the 16th century show that the modern particle *a* was a subject of 1st sing. and pl, and 2nd pl. and used to behave as other subject clitics. Around the 16th, however, things were changing: Luca D'Onghia (2010), in an excellent contribution which combines philology and linguistic analysis, describes this diachronic process, with a rich documentation centered in particular on the plays by Ruzante. Moreover, D'Onghia shows that in Renaissance Paduan we already find the first attestations of the modern behaviour of *a*, and this confirms the diachronic evolution of this element from subject pronoun to particle, as we have hypothesised.

Even when we concentrate on a single well-documented dialect, such as Paduan, a hypothesis about the exact location in CP of the particle is not straightforward. The particle *a* appears clearly to be in CP, since it is incompatible with *wh*-elements and Focus (see above ex. (8)), and has a pragmatic effect. As shown by the examples in (27), when *a* is present, it precedes the other clitics, which must be strictly adjacent to it, including negation. With a restructuring verb, the clitics that represents the arguments of the lexical verb can either appear in the sequence with *a* or enclitic to the lexical verb:

- (27) a. a no l me lo g`a mai dito  
*a* not.he to-me it has never told                      '(surprisingly) he has never told it to me'
- b. a no l g`a mai vossudo dirmelo  
*a* not.he has ever wanted to tell.to-me.it
- c. a no l me lo g`a mai vossudo dire  
*a* not.he.to-me.it has ever wanted to tell      'he never wanted to tell it to me'

The particle *a* and the other clitics form a rigidly ordered string. We are led to conclude that these elements, which form a rigid sequence that cannot be interrupted, are all in CP.

The idea that the clause contains three different domains for complement clitic placement is supported by numerous recent research (see references in Beninc`a, Tortora 2009). An area for clitic placement in CP corresponds to the location of clitics in main clauses in Old Romance; it accounts for the details of the Tobler-Mussafia Law (revisited), which rules the position of complement clitics in main clauses (Beninc`a 2006; see also below). As for modern Paduan, possibly the merging of *a* to activate the Topic field and license an empty recoverable Topic, also activates a domain for clitics in CP.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The sequence of clitics in CP, representing the arguments (overt or covert) of the clause and the negation, can be seen as a sort of miniature that synthetises the content of the sentence in the left periphery. This characteristic is particularly clear with Hittite particles and pronouns (see Carruba 1985; Luraghi 1990, 13-5): the left periphery of any sentence in

While the particle *a* in the left periphery co-exists with a negation (possibly itself a particle, in this case), FrOccit *que* cannot appear in a negative sentence, nor with an imperative verb.

FrOccit *que* can possibly correspond to the so-called 'quotative *que*' of Northern Spain hinted at below (fn. 23). This *que* is in CP and occupies a high position in the functional structure, preceding operators and *wh*- in main and dependent interrogatives.

Paduan *a* and FrOccit *que* never appear in enclitic position, while in POcc the particle *ke* only appears enclitic to the verb; this can be related to the fact that Paduan and FrOccit are merged where they are required, namely in the head of Topic. In POccit, instead, the verb has to move quite high to reach the position dedicated to non-standard questions; *ke* is merged in CP and attracts the verb, which takes it on as an enclitic to the projection of non-standard questions.

The above observations, even though largely inconclusive in certain respects, have led me to suppose that 'subject clitics' in Occitan, both of western Piedmont and Southern France, are particles that perform functions having to do with residual V2 phenomena, a subset of the contexts that in medieval Romance used to cause the obligatory movement of the V to the left periphery in main clause.

In the first studies on Old Romance syntax the evidence of V-second syntax came from the 'asymmetric *pro*-drop': the subject can be omitted only when the verb has moved to a head in the left periphery, higher than the subject position. The asymmetries observed in Occitan varieties concern Topic-drop: the Topic is obligatory; it can be silent, and recovered from the context, only if a particle checks the corresponding features in CP. These languages have been always *pro*-drop languages, but - in a certain sense - have still an asymmetric Topic-drop.

It would be interesting to collect and review other particular phenomena of Romance relating to pragmatics and the left periphery, which would become clearer if viewed as a residue of V2 syntax. I present some cases in the following section.

this language contains clitics and particles, enclitic of the first word; they resume elements of the contexts or introduce the arguments present in the sentence. Particles and pronouns are strictly ordered and articulated in two sequences: on the left the ones 'looking outside', on the right those 'looking inside'.



## 6 Romance V2, or V-to-C, and its Residual Traces in Modern Romance. The Tobler-Mussafia Law

The syntactic contexts that account for the enclitic or proclitic position of object clitics in Medieval Romance, known as the ‘Tobler and Mussafia law’, when interpreted in the light of the ‘fine structure’ theory, appears to be strictly dependent on the details of the left periphery in a frame of V-second syntax. The relevant aspects can be summarized as follows:

- 1) in main clauses, the inflected verb has to move to the left periphery;
- 2) in this context, complement clitics are obligatorily enclitic if the Spec of Focus is empty, and obligatorily proclitic if the Spec of Focus contains overt or abstract elements (Benincà 2006).

The simplified structure of the left periphery given above in (17), and repeated here, can be sufficient to have an idea of the phenomenon:

(17) [Sub. *che* | Relat. *che*, ***why*** **Interr°**. | [HTopic | LD Top **Top°** [<sub>Focus</sub> Focus/**Wh°** | IP/AgrS I°

The relevant heads are in bold. In main clauses the verb moves upward to I, where it acquires inflections, then to Focus/Wh: if this position contains an operator, *wh* pronoun or trace, the verb stops in Foc°; if the position is empty, the verb moves to the upper head, Top°. This hypothesis is sufficient to properly describe the position of clitic pronouns: the clitics appear obligatorily proclitic if the verb stops in Foc°, and they appear enclitic if the verb moves to Top°. The hypothesis that there exists a dedicated area in CP for clitics can explain this variation: the area for clitics in CP is between the projections Focus and Topic; if the Spec of Focus contains material, the Verbs stops in the head of the projection with the clitics on the left; if the Spec of Focus is empty, the verb moves further up to Top° and the clitics in enclisis on its right. This movement of V to the CP, in the left periphery is the origin of the V2 phenomena. In subordinate clauses, V2 phenomena are more or less reduced because of the presence of subordinators and other elements that occupy heads in CP; the variation is due to the relevance of the position of these blocking heads in the single languages. As we have seen above, the interrogatives with the *wh*- “*why*” can behave as a main clause because *why* involve a head in a very high position in CP; in other languages, even a very high head can block the access to CP.

Accurate observations of modern Romance languages show that, in various Romance varieties, residues of medieval syntax still survive.

## 6.1 V-Subj. Inversion: Dolomitic Ladin

Rhaeto-Romance varieties, limitedly to the Dolomitic section (Benincà 1988), show very clear characteristics of V2 syntax. Given the proximity to German speaking areas, these have been taken as due to an influx of Germanic V2. In Benincà (1988) I proposed they be considered residues of medieval syntax, possibly maintained because of the support of nearby populations speaking Germanic V2 varieties. More recently, in Poletto (2000), Benincà, Poletto (2004) the description has been refined, in the framework of the Cartographic programme.

Rhaeto-Romance is a non-null subject language and it has clitic subject pronouns. In the dialect of San Leonardo, in the Badia Valley the subject clitic pronoun precedes the inflected verb, but if a constituent precedes the verb the subject pronoun has to be postverbal, as in the following examples:

- (28) a. t vas gonoot a ciasa sua S. Leonardo, Badia  
 you go often at his home  
 b. gonoot vas-t a ciasa sua  
 often go you at his home  
 c. \*Gonoot t vas a ciasa sua  
 d. \*Giani, duman l vaiges-t  
 Gianni, domani lo vedi-tu

Notice that, differently from most Medieval Romance, more than one constituent before the Verb is generally not admitted (see (28c-d)). It is possible only in very restricted contexts, for example, in main questions, where we can have a left-dislocated argument followed by a *wh*-pronoun and then V3 (see Benincà, Poletto 2004, § 2.1 fn. 7). More contexts that permit V3 or even V4 in Dolomitic Ladin are analysed in Casalicchio, Cognola (forthcoming).

Subject inversion is possible in some dependent clauses too, but only if the complementiser engages a high position in the left periphery, thus leaving open access to V-to-C movement to the left periphery.

In San Leonardo, subject-verb inversion is only possible if the subject is a clitic pronoun, while in other dialects inversion is possible (obligatory, in the relevant contexts) with a lexical subject too. In the data collected for Benincà (1994) in San Leonardo dialect, we find, for example, structures such as the following:

- (29) l liber a Tone cumpré inžer.  
 'the book has Anthony bought yesterday.'

If we conceive of the left periphery as a very detailed functional structure, this variation is not surprising; since we expect to find subtle differences

for what concerns the possibility of multiple access to this section of the structure in V2 languages.

## 6.2 The Tobler-Mussafia Law: Portuguese Galician, Asturian

In the western Iberian peninsula – in Portuguese, Galician, Asturian, an area with null subjects and without subject clitics – we find another phenomenon that can be taken as a residue of medieval syntax, namely the Tobler-Mussafia Law, which determines the position of clitics with respect to the verb on the basis of V movement to C and the content of the left periphery (see Benincà 2006, 2013; Anòè 2014; Fernández Rubiera 2009, 2010).<sup>21</sup>

In Old Portuguese we have, for example, contrasts such as the following, both with a preposed direct object, the first one followed by proclitic pronoun, the second one by the verb with an enclitic pronoun:

- (30) a. [tal service] lhe pode fazer hûn homem pequeno  
 ‘such service to-him can do a man small’  
 b. O trigo que eu como, guanço-o per meu trabalho  
 ‘the wheat that I eat I-gain.it by my work’

The crucial difference between the two sentences is that in the first sentence the preposed direct object has no clitic copy, and so must be localised in the Focus projection, while the second one has a clitic copy and is then in the Topic projection, followed by an empty Focus.<sup>22</sup> As shown in Benincà (2006), this is a strong piece of evidence in favour of the V2 structure of medieval Romance; Donaldson (2016) successfully tests this theory for Old Occitan showing, on the basis of the Tobler-Mussafia Law, that it shared the same structure. I am proposing that it preserves – as other Romance languages that I will briefly point out below – some residual V2 characteristics in terms of the activation of features in CP that are checked by particles that result from the grammaticalisation of subject clitics or complementisers.

<sup>21</sup> Data of the same kind, in a different framework, are provided by González López (2008, ch. 7).

<sup>22</sup> This conclusion is obtained first of all on a syntactic basis, but is also supported by semantic features and comparative generalisations. In (30a) the preposed direct object has an anaphoric determiner, which provides the object with an operator status. This is to be compared with modern Italian, in which the preposed syntactic Focus is always marked with contrastive intonation, unless it is a lexical operator; an anaphoric determiner such as ‘the same, similar’ and the like gives the direct object the status of operator (this means

Modern Portuguese at first sight has lost the relationship of enclisis/proclisis grammar with V2 properties, since enclisis is obligatory after a preverbal subject:

- (31) a. O João disse-nos 'Giovanni disse-ci' (old and modern Portuguese)  
 b. (\*) O João nos disse 'Giovanni ci disse' (ungrammatical only in modern Portuguese)

But a more accurate description permits us to conclude that in this language very little has been modified with respect to old Portuguese; namely, in modern Portuguese the unmarked position for a lexical subject is Topic. This conclusion is based on the fact that not all kinds of lexical subjects are followed by the enclisis of the pronoun. As the theoretical analysis of the T&M Law hypothesis predicts, if the lexical subject is obliged to occupy an Operator (Focus) position, it is obligatorily followed by proclisis of object clitics, as in the following examples:

- (32) a. Quem me chamou?  
 who me called? 'who did call me?'  
 b. \*Quem chamou-me?  
 who called me?  
 c. Ninguém nos viu  
 nobody us saw 'nobody saw us'  
 d. \*Ninguém viu-nos  
 nobody saw us

The same happens in other cases where the preverbal constituent, because of its nature, has to be in Focus/Operator positions.

The Galician varieties show the same behaviour, with interesting peculiarities in the case of dependent clauses. In main clauses, a lexical subject immediately followed by the verb, requires enclisis of an object pronoun:

- (33) a. Eu tráio**che** / \*che tráio da casa un saco cheo de galiñas  
 I-take.to-you / to-you take from home a sack full of hens  
 b. Os mozos achegáron**se** / \*se achegaron ó home  
 the boys approached themselves / themselves approached

that it refuses a clitic copy, which is otherwise obligatory; see Benincà 2001). In (30b) the preposed object contains a relative clause; this kind of preposed DP very naturally and frequently qualifies as a Topic in Old Italian and in general in medieval Romance (this means that it requires a clitic copy; see Vanelli 1986).

Again, if the subject is an operator, the proclisis of the object clitic to the following verb is obligatory:<sup>23</sup>

- (34) a. Todos **o** felicitaron / \* felicitaron-o  
all him congratulated /congratulated him
- b. Nada **nos** va a separar  
Nothing us will part
- c. ¿Quen **o** denunciou?  
who him denounced? 'Who denounced him'

We expect that in subordinate clauses, as the left periphery is engaged with complementisers or other elements, V-movement to C is inhibited, and enclisis of clitics impossible; moreover, we also expect that things can change depending on the position of the functional elements present in the CP of the subordinate clause. In fact, dependent clauses that engage a high position of the complementiser, admit V movement to lower heads

**23** As clearly shown by Anòè (2014), the same happens with adverbs intrinsically conveying quantification: they trigger proclisis, since they occupy the Focus projection:

- (i) a. Sempre **me** fascinou a mecànica  
always me fascinated mechanics
- b. Xa **me** dixen que non  
already to.me say that not

This analysis of adverbs and operators in the left periphery is consistent with Cinque's (1999) theory: when adverbs do not appear in the dedicated functional projection they are moved, principally through focalisation. This conclusion has to be taken into account when looking at Spanish, or at some southern Italian dialects. Spanish, at first sight, presents orders of adverbs that remind us of English, with the adverb preceding the inflected verb:

- (ii) El niño siempre/ya habla  
The boy always/already speaks

One could think that Spanish (or the Southern Italian dialects that have similar orders) has the same kind of short verb movement as English; but a first difference is that these adverbs appear also before auxiliaries:

- (iii) El niño siempre/ya había comido  
'The boy always/already had eaten'      The boy had always/already eaten

It is more convenient to take into consideration the characteristics of the adverbs that appear in pre-verbal position and suppose that, due to their operator-like nature, they move to a very low Operator position in the structure of the Left Periphery, like operators. In the light of these considerations, the order of adverb and verb in Spanish, and in some Southern Italian dialects too, can be seen again as a minimal residue of V2 structure, with the Focus position still active and automatically attracting elements that have Focus value.

From this perspective, the phenomenon of so-called quotative *que* (see the excellent descriptions and analyses of Etxepare 2010, 2011 and Demonte, Soriano-Fernandez 2013, among others) can be framed within a more general hypothesis.

in CP, and the enclisis is permitted (as in (35a)), while complementisers that occupy low positions in CP, as *par excellence* dependent interrogatives, block the access to CP and consequently enclisis is impossible (35b).

- (35) a. O João disse que a Maria deu-**lhe** um beijo  
The J. said that the M. gave.him a kiss
- b. Non sei cando **nos** veremos  
not I-know when us we-will-see                      'I don't know when we will see each other'

A careful examination of the behaviour of clitics in different kinds of subordinate clauses with subordinators located in different functional heads of the left periphery, will contribute to a detailed description of the fine structure of CP in a comparative perspective.

### 6.3 The Tobler-Mussafia Law Ruled by Pragmatics: San Valentino

The last case of V2 residues I wish to mention is found in San Valentino (Southern Abruzzo). This dialect displays a surprising variety of apparently optional collocations of complement clitics; the various possibilities can in fact be connected to precise syntactic and pragmatic factors.

In main clauses, with simple tenses clitics may occur as either proclitics or enclitics on the inflected verb:<sup>24</sup>

- (36) a. **me lu** màgne nghe le mène.  
To-myself.it.I-eat with the hands
- b. màgne.**me.lu** nghe le mène.  
I-eat.to-myself.it with the hands                      'I eat it with my hands'
- c. (Maria) nen **se lu** màgne mi  
(M.) not herself.it eats never
- d. (Maria) nen màgne **se lu** mi  
(M.) Not eat herself.it never                      'M. never eats it'

The orders shown above seem not to produce perceptible semantic or pragmatic effects.

<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, with a compound tense, clitics stand either proclitic/enclitic to the auxiliary, as in (3), or proclitic/enclitic to the past participle. I will not deal here with this and other detailed aspects, which are described and analysed in Benincà, Pescarini 2014.

However, optionality is not always available. It appears that enclisis is not possible when the Left Periphery contains a LD Topic:

- (37) a. lu 'penə, l 'ajə 'detə a m'marəjə  
the bread, it.I-have given to Mario  
b. \*lu 'penə, 'ajə **lu** detə a m'marəjə  
the bread, I-have.it given to Mario

Enclisis is also impossible if the Left Periphery contains an operator, such as an indefinite pronoun, a contrastive Focus, or a *wh*-interrogative pronoun:

- (38) a. a ki l 'ajə 'detə?  
To whom it.I-have given  
b. \*a ki 'ajə **lu** 'detə?  
To whom I-have.it given 'Whom have I given it to?'  
Who have I given it to?
- (39) a. 'sulə nu 'le'bbərə **m** i kum'pretə!  
Only one book to-me.you-have bought 'You bought only one book for me'  
b. nə'few nə 'maŋnə **sə** li  
nobody eats to-him/herself.them 'Nobody eats them'

The analysis proposed in Benincà, Pescarini (2014) concludes that enclisis – in this dialect too – is the effect of Verb movement to a position above the location of clitics. In the case of San Valentino, Verb movement heads to a position of Topic to licence an empty Topic (or Subject of Predication), which has to be recovered from the context. This analysis accounts both for the optionality of enclisis, which derives from the intention of the speaker to specifically mark a Topic to be recovered, and for its impossibility when a Topic is already present.

The power of these markers to attract the verb and so produce enclisis seems to be a residue of the more systematic and effective activation of the left periphery in fully V2 medieval varieties.

These residual phenomena have been presented here to support the interpretation of elements that have so far been deemed Occitan subject clitics. Our study has shown that they have now lost their proper pronominal characteristics and have evolved to mark functional heads in the left periphery, whose activity is largely ruled by pragmatics.

## 7 Concluding Speculations: Clitics, Particles, and *Pro-Drop*

The behaviour of Occitan 'subject' clitics is then part of the general picture of Romance syntax outlined in the previous sections. 'Subject clitic pronouns', even if they appear instead to be particles cannot be directly compared with subject clitics from other Northern Romance varieties, which are considered to be either arguments or agreement markers.

A more general consequence of the assumption that subject clitics of Rorà and the other strictly related varieties are in fact particles, is that this language is a full-fledged *pro-drop* (or null-subject) language. This status has been proposed for NIDs, holding that pronominal clitics complete the pronominal endowment of verbal inflection for the licensing of a *pro* subject. More radically, in Occitan these elements, apparently subject pronouns, have in fact no pronominal features.

The most interesting and revealing case is that of the element *la* that accompanies impersonal verbs. It is not a particle with a pragmatic function, because it is obligatory. It cannot have any relation to the semantic content of the subject because by definition impersonals do not have a thematic subject. Clitic *la* of POccit cannot be an expletive pronoun either, on the basis of a well-supported implicative generalisation that the first subject clitic to be absent is the 3rd person impersonal, and if a Romance language has a 3rd person impersonal subject clitic it also has the other 3rd person clitics. The function of *la* could be a special pragmatic one, not dependent on the context and speakers intention. I am proposing that it responds to a general requirement of the language to check features in CP that license a Topic of the sentence.

On the other hand, *nta*, 'it is necessary', cannot have a 'subject' *la* and we must conclude, as has been concluded for the corresponding Italian verb *bisogna*, that this verb expresses 'pure necessity' and it is thematically too poor even to support *la*. More radically, we can say that *nta* '(is) necessary' is not a verb at all, but a functional head inserted in the Root ModalityP *Necessity*, without any thematic grid (see Benincà, Poletto 1994). As such, it has not even a verbal morphology – even a reduced morphology – that can support and license the particle *la* and consequently the obligatory topic.

One could object to this by arguing that *pro-drop* languages by definition have no need of expletives.<sup>25</sup> This is not completely true. To be more precise, they do not have expletive subject clitics, but some have expletive pronouns (strong or weak). In a clearly *pro-drop* language like Neapolitan, an optional expletive 'subject of predication' has been identified and described (Sornicola 1996, Ledgeway 2010). The distal demonstrative *chelle/*

<sup>25</sup> Recent, insightful syntheses of the many facets of *pro-drop* theory can be found in D'Alessandro 2015 and in Cognola, Casalicchio (forthcoming), who also present important descriptive generalisations on phenomena connected to the *pro-drop* property of a language.



*chille* 'that', located in the left periphery, refers cataphorically to an argument of the sentence or of the context as a Theme. Very similar to this is Sicilian, again a clearly *pro*-drop variety where the demonstrative *iddu*, 'that', appears optionally to realize a sort of 'subject' of meteorological verbs (as in *s (iddu) chiovi*, 'if it rains': S.C. Sgroi, personal communication), or mark a null Topic which resumes the preceding discourse as in (*iddu*) *av assài*, 'it is a long time' (*Vocabolario Siciliano*, s.v. "iddu").

The marking of a Topic to recover material in the discourse is optional in Neapolitan and Sicilian and is ruled by pragmatics. In Occitan of both Western Piedmont and Southern France the particle is introduced when a Topic has to be licensed and interpreted. In POccit data are more detailed and intriguing: the particle *la* is obligatory if the verb is impersonal or unaccusative with a postposed subject; on the other hand, it is impossible with *ntà* 'it-is-necessary'. This state of affairs is not clear, even though it seems to me to indicate a relationship between the licensing of a Topic and the thematic endowment of the main verb.

In the framework of the assumptions I have outlined here, these languages are *pro*-drop but they are not Topic-drop; features of a pragmatic nature are obligatorily inserted in CP and checked by the Verb or particles. It seems reasonable to see this requirement as a residue of V2 syntax, which characterised medieval Romance including Old Provençal too. In a very informal way, a V2 language has a grammar requiring the inflected verb to move to C due to features that are automatically inserted in CP and have to be checked. V-movement concerns first of all main clauses while in dependent clauses it is limited to a greater or lesser extent and depends on the complementiser's position in the Left Periphery according to the type of subordinate clause, as I have shown above.<sup>26</sup>

This hypothesis, which involves V2 syntax, is indirectly supported by the presence of other scattered Romance phenomena, exemplified above, which can be understood as residues of V2.

The observation of very detailed phenomena is possible if we take the V2 character of a language as a complex of behaviours, all having to do with the left periphery and the features that have to be checked there, and not, as is the case in non-V2 languages, in lower parts of the structure. Indirectly, the facts that we are pointing out confirm, indirectly, an interpretation of the V2 character of a language as a set of phenomena; German V2 is an extreme, very rigid type of this 'parameter', which, in

<sup>26</sup> Munaro (2010) applies this type of research to the left periphery to determine the position and properties of subject clitics and complementisers in relation to their clause-typing function. Munaro suggests that subject clitics as particles (in particular inverted particles in main interrogatives) are directly inserted into CP. This specific issue is more widely dealt with in Munaro 2002.

the light of a theory that assumes a 'fine grained' structure of the left periphery, poses interesting problems that should be addressed.

I have tried to demonstrate that the presence of 'subject clitics' in Occitan is ruled by features that are of a pragmatic nature; this is consistent with the apparently irreducible variability of their presence. The interpretation of a subject as Topic, as well as the presence of a silent Topic to be licensed, are options open to the Speaker, except in the case of impersonal verbs. Obviously, it would be highly desirable to be able to be more precise about the specific pragmatic interpretation attributed to the various options and consequently the precise structural positions where the markers are located, but so far this has not been possible; I hope that native speaker linguists will deepen the exploration of this aspect.<sup>27</sup>

It is also interesting to note that these particles, even though more distant from their Latin origins than in other Romance varieties, still preserve traces of the Latin pronouns. There are two kind of factors that combine to produce this effect. Firstly, diachrony is characterised by change but also by stasis. Vincent (2013, 21) underlined this aspect of diachronic morphosyntax, quoting the stability of causative constructions in Romance, and the stable structure of kind-defining relative clauses in the history of Italian. Other numerous examples come from morphology, such as the millennial persistence, with minimal simplifications, of verbal conjugations or nominal classes in Indo-European languages, which presumably used to have a semantic rationale but have now largely lost it, while maintaining many morphological differences. In the same way, Occitan subject pronouns can have changed their original functions, despite maintaining traces of the original form. Nevertheless, this can be synchronically motivated by the fact that their new functions have to do with the pragmatic features inserted in the left periphery, in projections linked to Speaker and Hearer attitudes, i.e. first of all to 1st and 2nd person.

For the analysis that I have presented here, more research based on specifically collected data is necessary. In particular Old Occitan/Provençal appears aligned with other Medieval Romance languages of the Romania

27 I must note, though, that as a native speaker of Paduan, I am not able to characterise the semantic or pragmatic difference between sentences containing a lexical subject with and without an argumental subject clitic copy:

- (i) a. Marieto ga magnà tuta la minestra  
M. has eaten all the soup.
- b. Marieto el ga magnà tuta la minestra  
    M. he has eaten all the soup.

It is very natural to consider (11b) as an instance of Left dislocation of the subject, which becomes a Topic. Possibly because the Topic status is a natural option for a subject, the difference between (i.a-b) is not perceptible.

continua (as shown in Vanelli, Renzi, Benincà 1995, and recently confirmed by Donaldson 2016). Old Occitan/Provençal, though, is also distinct from the other languages of the group, in particular regarding asymmetric *pro*-drop. As mentioned above, in Northern Romance languages a lexical subject was not obligatory in main clauses, but obligatory in dependent clauses). The system of medieval Occitan (Provençal), is not clear, as there appears to be many more cases of subordinate clauses without a lexical subject, i.e. null subject cases with respect to the other Romance languages. Old Occitan/Provençal undoubtedly offers a fascinating source of more evidence to support the hypothesis of a special *pro*-drop status for Occitan languages, and possibly enrich our theory of *pro*-drop.

In the light of the evidence given above, it appears that the *pro*-drop (or null-subject) parameter has very little to do with subject agreement and explicit distinctions of personal endings on the verb. The entire system of subject clitics and persons of the verb is in fact made of two sub-systems: the system of deictic pronouns and the system of distal pronouns. Deictic persons are positively marked either with [+speaker] or [+hearer] or [+ speaker, + hearer], while a distal pronoun is not positively marked by any deictic features. This fact predisposes the deictic pronouns to become particles that perform pragmatic functions.

We must now return to our point of departure and sum up the nature of Occitan /*ke*/, both enclitic POccit /*ke*/ and proclitic FrOccit /*ke*/. I have proposed that it derives from the grammaticalisation of the complementiser, by definition a head in the left periphery with various sentential functions (on which see Munaro 2010). The complementiser, in Romance as in Germanic languages, is itself the result of grammaticalisation of a pronoun, as is well known. This element appears enclitic to the 1st sg. verb in main questions. I proposed that it marks the head of a non-standard question, such as a question posed by the speaker about her/himself. In the formation of this kind of question, the verb normally moves to a high position in the periphery. In POccit it collects the particle, adjoining to it as happens for proper subject clitics in non-null subject languages (Munaro 2010). However we would expect that all questions activate an interrogative feature in a low head in CP, while the enclisis of the particle appears primarily in non-standard questions. We must therefore conclude that there is a specific projection dedicated to speaker-addressed questions, with features, when active, that have to be checked by *ke* and attract the verb. The position of this projection is consistent with that localized by Giorgi (2010) for the encoding of 'speaker's attitude'. The process is parallel to the case exemplified above in (20) from the dialect in the province of Biella.<sup>28</sup>

28 Notice that the *wh*-pronoun itself moves to a high Spec, as its interpretation differs from that of a *wh*-pronoun in a standard question.

The particle *a* of Paduan, mentioned above, is also a relevant case: it used to be a subject clitic, again a 1st sg, and became a particle, inserted in CP to check a 'mirative' feature. The particle *a*, though, is never enclitic in Paduan, as is the case for FrOccit.

In FrOccit, instead, *que* marks the head of Topic, which can be empty and recoverable from the context. In both cases we get particles in the left periphery, deriving from a grammaticalisation of the complementiser, a functional element belonging by definition to the left periphery, itself the product of a grammaticalisation process that changed an inflected *wh*- pronoun into an element introducing (or possibly, as Kayne suggests, resuming) a whole dependent clause.

A further, more general, reflection is the following: the *pro*-drop nature of both Occitan dialectal areas must be very strong and abstract, considering the evolution of syntax outlined above. The Occitan areas were, and are, surrounded by varieties that, through a stage of asymmetric *pro*-drop, reached a stage in which subject clitics had a referential and argumental content, and were obligatory in precise syntactic contexts. In Occitan areas, subject pronouns reached clitic status without assuming or maintaining a referential or argumental status. This mixed grammar can be the result of the interaction of two competing factors: the influence of other Romance languages with clitic subjects that are obligatory to express the subject, and the strength of the original *pro*-drop property. Occitan of both areas kept the subject pronouns and used them for another function, that of expressing the topic of the sentence. This function is in some cases realised by a null topic, licensed by the verb moving to C, or by a particle inserted in C. When the Verb is in the 1st or 2nd sg. person, Speaker or Hearer features have to be checked in the left periphery, either by the verb in main clauses, or by a particle in other cases, namely in 1st sg. interrogatives and in subordinate clauses when the subject is the 2nd singular person. This produces some clear asymmetries, but all these aspects can be viewed as a consequence of V2 phenomenology, as the effect of the ECP principle, which can be active at the IP level (a predication has to have a Nominative subject), or the CP level (a predication has to have a Topic/Focus).

If the hypothesis I have outlined here is correct, it leads us to the conclusion that *pro*-drop, as well as the non-null subject property, is a highly abstract and strong characteristic, deeply rooted in the grammar. The languages that we have observed mimic some non-null-subject characteristics, using functional elements apparently corresponding to the Romance subject clitics of the languages with which they have been in strict contact, but giving them a function coherent with their status of null-subject languages.

Finally, I would like to highlight again the important fact that the Occitan area, which was first identified by 19th century dialectological re-

search on the basis of diachronic phonological and morphological phenomena, is also consistently characterised by specific morpho-syntactic phenomena.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> In his final remarks, Sibille (2012) also stresses this fact; furthermore, he emphasises the relevance of the contact between Occitan varieties and French and Northern Italian dialects, languages with subject clitics. Occitan has preserved the morphemes that were subject pronouns, but used them with new functions.

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# **Representing Venice's Local Culture to International Tourists**

## The Use of the 'Languaging' Technique in Websites in English

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**Abstract** Venice (Italy) is a popular destination for tourists of any kind; therefore, the goal of the material promoting the city is to present the city itself and its local culture. The present study conducts a qualitative analysis of websites that promote Venice to tourists using English as the preferred language of communication. The paper focuses on the so-called technique of 'languaging' (in studies on the language of tourism, defined as a term in a local language or dialect which is provided along with a translation or paraphrase in English). The analysis reveals that the authors of websites frequently use terms in the Venetian dialect but the translations or explanations provided fail, to a certain extent, to convey the most interesting cultural connotations contained in the terms themselves. The authors of the websites, thus, do not help fill the cultural gap between Venice and the tourists who, in turn, miss the opportunity to establish a real connection with the local culture.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 Tourism in Venice. – 3 A Definition of Languaging. – 3.1 Languaging in the Promotion of Italian Destinations: Some State of the Art. – 4 Corpus and Methodology. – 5 A Classification of Italian and Venetian Words in the Corpus. – 6 Languaging and Local Food. – 7 Languaging to Explain Local Culture and Traditions. – 8 General Considerations on the Use of Languaging in the Individual Websites. – 8.1 The USA Website. – 8.2 The UK Website. – 8.3 Australia. – 8.4 Canada. – 8.5 Lonely Planet. – 8.6 TimeOut Venice. – 8.7 InVenice. – 9 Conclusions.

**Keywords** English for Tourism. Languaging. Discourse analysis. Venice. Computer-mediated communication.

## **1 Introduction**

Nearly 10 million people visit Venice (Italy) every year, with nationalities from all around the world (Miraglia 2015, 12). For this reason, the tourism promotion of the city employs many languages but, above all, it uses English both as the language of native speakers and as a *lingua franca*, regardless of the visitors' mother tongue.

One of the most difficult aspects in tourism promotion is not the actual language in which the communication between tourism operators and prospective visitors happens; it is, rather, the techniques used to success-

fully convey the cultural heritage that makes the destination unique and worth visiting. The effective promotion of the local culture is, indeed, one of the most interesting elements that leads tourists to decide whether a specific package or service provider is worth choosing among myriads of competitors. This is particularly true if we consider promotion through websites, which are so many and provide a plethora of possibilities about the booking of travel, services, tours and accommodation.

This article starts from these preliminary reflections to investigate the ways in which websites promoting Venice manage to effectively convey the most typical aspects of the Venetian culture. The use of the technique of “languaging” (Dann 1996, i.e. the use of foreign words in a text) will be investigated in websites in English aimed at customers from specific Anglophone countries as well as customers who use English merely as a *lingua franca*.<sup>1</sup>

## 2 Tourism in Venice

As already mentioned, it has been calculated that nearly 10 million tourists visited Venice in 2014; of these, more than 1.5 million are Italian tourists (15% of the total number) and more than 8.4 million are from outside Italy, constituting 85% of the total number of tourists visiting Venice. Visitors from outside the country, thus speakers of different languages, clearly outnumber Italian tourists who might be more likely to possess an at least minimum knowledge of the local (Venetian) dialect and culture.

Miraglia (2015) illustrates the figures from the Annual Survey conducted by the City of Venice’s Tourist Board; in describing the typologies of tourists visiting the city, it also specifies the first nationalities of foreign visitors, who come from the USA, France, the UK, Germany, China, Japan, Australia, Spain, Brazil, South Korea, Canada and Russia (in fig. 1, with percentages).

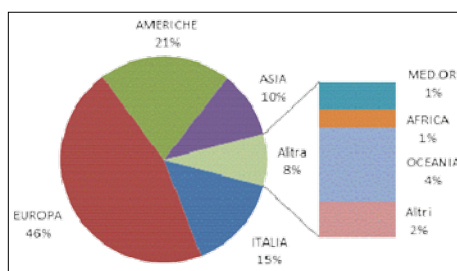


Figure 1. Tourists in Venice in 2014 (Miraglia 2015, 31)

<sup>1</sup> The perspective used in the present study has purposely not considered the websites’ transmission of the local culture from a multimodal perspective as the main aim here was, for the time being, to investigate ‘languaging’ as a solely verbal technique.

It appears evident, then, that English plays an essential role in the language of tourism promotion, considering also that tourists who are native speakers of English are outnumbered by those who use English merely to access information when travelling outside their own country. In this respect, if managed with full awareness, the use of the languaging technique might be particularly effective in reducing the cultural distance between visitors and the local population, thus bringing more clients to the company that commissioned the website; however, if the authors of the websites fail in the promotion, for instance with a mismanaged use of local terms or inaccurate descriptions, this might have the opposite effect of representing the local culture as something too distant, uninviting, discouraging the prospective visitors from booking the experience promoted and, thus, losing clients.

### 3 A Definition of Languaging

Dann defines languaging as “the impressive use of foreign words, but also a manipulation of the vernacular, a special choice of vocabulary, and not just for its own sake” (1996, 184). The use of these foreign words might be chosen by authors of tourism texts to induce feelings of inferiority in the reader, transforming the writer into a trustful authority. This happens when the reader is supposed to have little knowledge of the concepts conveyed by the ‘foreign’ terms.

Languaging is a technique that Jaworski et al. also call “language crossing”, whose function is presented as that of “creating a linguascape of the travel destination” (2003, 17). The foreign words used in this kind of tourism language usually pertain to the field of eno-gastronomy, or they are used to represent very specific natural, architectural or cultural elements of the host community and refer to less-known aspects of the destination and its culture. Languaging can also include a specific selection of the vocabulary to meet the writer’s intentions of promoting the destination. In addition, alliteration and onomatopoeia might be used to enhance the use of humour to make the promotional message more effective. Another device is the use of expressions allegedly familiar to the tourists but inserted in an unusual context, making the message more exotic and, thus, more inviting.

The way words in Italian or in the Venetian dialect are embedded in the promotional text follows also specific typographical patterns that have also become typical of the languaging technique: foreign words might be reported in their original form and a definition, a paraphrase and/or a literal translation in the language of the text (in our case, English) is provided in brackets immediately before or after the actual term. Other devices to emphasise these terms are the use of typographical symbols such as single or double quotation marks (e.g., ‘...’ and “...”), double angled quotation marks (e.g., «...»), bold type, italics.

This technique is useful and particularly productive in the language of tourism promotion because it reduces the sense of strangeness (“strangerhood” in Dann’s 1996 terms) that a foreign tourist might feel towards the host culture; it also anticipates what the tourist will hear and find when s/he will visit the actual place. In fact, the concept of ‘strangerhood’ conveys the sense of distance that a destination might have from the tourists’ usual Centre (*sic* in Dann 1996), i.e. what is most familiar in their everyday life and culture; it is this distance that the use of languaging seeks to cross, at the same time putting the authors of tourism texts in the role of ‘experts’ that help the ‘non-expert’, potential tourists fill the cultural gap.

Considering the ways in which the authors of the texts in the websites approach tourists through the languaging technique, we might hypothesize that promotion focuses on the elements typical of the ‘authenticity perspective’ (e.g., see Dann 1996; MacCannell 1977-89; Schudson 1979). Scholars aim at a tourism that should be less environmentally disruptive, useful to host communities and that should contribute to a greater understanding between visitors and local people. In this perspective, according to the kind of contact that visitors seek to establish with the host community, the former can be assigned to four categories, as schematically represented in figure 2 (by the present author).

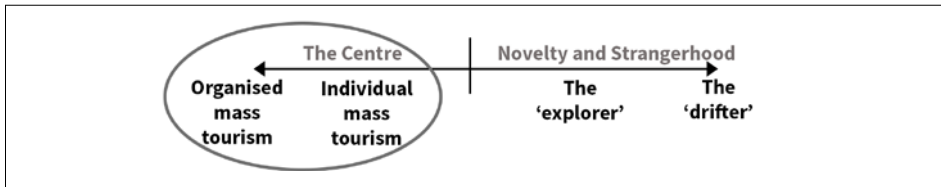


Figure 2. The circle individuates the category of tourists targeted by the websites

Organised and Individual mass tourism include those tourists who want to experience travel destinations with all the safety and comforts provided by tourism operators. They are in search of novelty but in a “protected and normalised environment” (Judd 1999, 37), establishing contacts with the local populations that are authentic but mediated by professional figures who ensure that nothing is left to chance. The categories of the ‘explorer’ and the ‘drifter’ are described as more adventurous, preferring to organise the travel experience without intermediaries and to come into direct contact with the truest and most genuine aspects of local populations.

Following this categorization, the tourists targeted by the websites are more likely to belong to the Organized Mass Tourism and to the Individual Mass Tourism categories (circled, in fig. 2), i.e. those who wish to remain



as close as possible to their own Centre, to what is most familiar to them, in opposition to those who seek novelty and adventure, positioning themselves on the other side of the continuum shown in figure 2. In this regard, the languaging technique is particularly productive as it makes the unfamiliar host culture familiar to the tourists especially upon their arrival, having already experienced from a distance, through the websites, what they will find and hear at the destination.

### 3.1 Languaging in the Promotion of Italian Destinations: Some State of the Art

The technique of languaging has attracted the linguists' and sociolinguists' attention in that it provides interesting insights into how distinct cultures 'collide' in the language of tourism promotion, and how authors of tourism promotional texts wilfully play with that collision to attract the readers' attention, obtaining booking for the promoted destination or experience. As regards linguistic studies and the investigation of languaging to promote, or represent, Italian destinations, the literature is not so vast, as it has encountered a relatively recent interest thanks to the digital medias that enhance a wider and more global sharing of promotional texts, also from a distance.

In this regard, we might mention Cappelli's (2013) study on the use of languaging in guidebooks, expatriates' travel blogs and travel articles/travelogues. The qualitative analysis conducted in the paper confirms that the use of words in the language of the host community has the main function of reducing the linguistic and cultural distance between tourists and the destination. Cappelli (2013) also mentions some background studies that investigate the use of languaging to promote Italian destinations, namely: Cortese, Hymes (2001), in which languaging is presented in its function of "positioning" (Cappelli 2013, 353) the individual within a specific social culture; it is also represented as a kind of "language rooted in memory" (Cortese, Hymes 2001, 199) that links the individual to the local culture. Finally, in their analysis of guidebooks, Fodde and Denti (2005) come to the conclusion that languaging serves to anticipate the real experience that tourists will live upon their arrival.

In the present article, the term languaging refers to the technique of using foreign words in the English texts used in the websites. Thus, the foreign words taken into consideration are not only those in standard Italian but also, and most importantly, in the local Venetian dialect, along with the corresponding translation or paraphrase that the authors of the texts provide.

## 4 Corpus and Methodology

The main research question leading this study is ascertaining whether the websites in English here investigated use the traditional patterns typical of the languaging technique or they experiment new ones, and whether they successfully perform the function that is typical of languaging, i.e. reducing the cultural distance between host and visitor culture, making the former attractive to the latter. Instances of languaging will be investigated in two kinds of websites; one group of websites explicitly addresses visitors from English-speaking countries, namely they are:

- <http://travel.usnews.com/>, addressing tourists from the USA (henceforth, USA website);
- <http://www.bbc.com/travel> (henceforth, UK website), explicitly referring to prospective tourists from the UK as their target public, even though it might be argued that the world-renowned BBC company is consulted as reliable source of information by people from all over the world using English as a *lingua franca*;
- <http://www.flightcentre.com.au> (Australia website), for Australians;
- <http://vacations.aircanada.com/> (Canada website), for visitors travelling from Canada.

The other group of websites is aimed at meeting a wider, generally international demand from customers using English as a vehicular language; the websites collected to this purpose are:

- <http://www.lonelyplanet.com> (henceforth, Lonely Planet);
- <http://www.timeout.com/venice/> (henceforth, TimeOut Venice);
- <http://www.in-venice.it/> (InVenice), a website based in Italy but providing information in English in a dedicated version.

The websites included in the corpus are organised into individual sections and sub-sections sections, accessible from the homepage, that present the several aspects of the travelling experience to/in Venice. The texts in the websites were collected in a corpus and, then, a manual search was conducted to detect all the possible instances of languaging.

The words or expressions, in Italian and in Venetian, thus retrieved were analysed, qualitatively, with an important differentiation; toponyms (here intended as words referring to monuments, place names, buildings, and so forth) were considered only if they are used in Italian or in Venetian even though a corresponding term in English is commonly attested in English (e.g. *piazza* instead of 'square').

## 5 A Classification of Italian and Venetian Words in the Corpus

Unsurprisingly, words in Italian or in Venetian are used less frequently than the corresponding terms in English; however, they have a strategic role in the description of places, buildings and cultural aspects of the city. As already mentioned, two types of Italian/Venetian words were distinguished: toponyms and general words that refer to specific names of buildings and places (e.g., *Piazza San Marco*, *Piazzale Roma*, etc.) but also words in Italian of more general use (e.g., *palazzi*, *gelato*, etc.).

These cases are not used in the same way in the several websites or in the same website, because they alternate between the original term in Italian and its version in English. For instance, in the USA website, *Palazzo Ducale* first appears indicated as “Doge’s Palace” with its name in round brackets. Then, in the following sub-sections, it is indicated either as *Palazzo Ducale* or as Doge’s Palace. The alternation, however, appears to be used randomly, not for stylistic reasons. The same happens for *Piazza San Marco*, alternatively indicated as *Piazza San Marco*, St Mark’s Square or *San Marco Square*, not only in the same website (and this happens in all the websites composing the corpus) but also within the same paragraph. A closer look at the contexts and/or sections in which the different versions of the terms appear does not indicate any particular pattern, strategy or preference by the authors, nor it is typical of one specific website more than the others.

Other typical, but renowned, elements of Venice and of the Italian lifestyle are used without any paraphrase or translation, as it is the case of *gondola*, *palazzo*, *gelato*; the plurals of these words are used randomly: they might appear as *gondolas* or *gondole*, *palazzos* or *palazzi*, *gelatos* or *gelati* in the section or paragraph without any preference for either form, perhaps *gondolas* being the most popular. As for *gelato/gelati*, this is the term used in every website to indicate ice-creams, probably preferred because it indicates the traditional Italian ice-cream made with natural and seasonal ingredients, opposed to the processed ice-creams sold in supermarkets or in fast-food chains.

As regards ‘proper’ instances of languaging, table 1 illustrates the ways in which each website describes to prospective tourists terms that they will find upon their arrival in Venice, and that aim at filling a gap in their knowledge of the local culture and language/dialect. The schematic representation in table 1 is useful in that it shows a differentiation in the way the websites mediate the ‘strangerhood’ element inherent to the terms themselves.

Table 1. Instances of paraphrases/translations of local terms in the corpus

Vaporetto	ferry/ferries, public waterbus, water bus/buses, water shuttle, waterbus, <i>vaporetto</i> , steamboat
Doge	leader, <i>Doge</i> , duke
Sestiere/i	district, neighbourhood(s), division, Venice area(s), <i>sestiere/i</i>
Acqua Alta	high water, high tide
La Serenissima	the most serene, la <i>Serenissima</i> , the most serene Republic of Venice, the <i>Serenissima</i> Republic
Cicheti	Tapas, Venetian tapas, bar snacks, local version of tapas, small tapas, small plates, snacks, finger food, small portions of food, Venetian snacks
Calle/i	street, backstreets, sidestreets, narrow medieval laneways, lanes, alleyways, the alleys of the city
Bacari	hole-in-the-wall pubs, wine bars, tiny neighbourhood bars, wine bar bars, Venetian traditional haunt, a middle ground between a tavern and a pub
Osterie	small local restaurant, taverns, trattorias, pub-restaurants, <i>osterie</i>

The explanations or the translations that are used in the corpus fall within the function of languaging that Jaworski et al. call “naming and translating (e.g. providing labels for local concepts, artefacts or dishes, translating local place names)” (2003, 9). The techniques accompanying this function are those shown in table 1, namely “apart using ‘strange’ words, the same local concepts are also labelled with two, more easily recognizable terms [...] and these acts of naming also render the exotic more familiar” (16).

## 6 Linguaging and Local Food

Terms for typical local food and eno-gastronomic traditions are used more frequently than the ‘toponyms’ in table 1. In this case, the “naming and translating” (Jaworski et al. 2003, 9) function of the languaging technique employs more creative expressions that should make the local items more familiar to the foreign visitor, since it is not just a means of transportation or some historical landmark that is being described but the rituals of a century-old tradition.

The terms in Italian or in the local dialect are usually reported with the actual term in italics and its translation or description in English, or vice versa, not always strictly respecting the original spelling or exact meaning, as it is illustrated in the following examples:

1. “tap water, *acqua di rubinetto*; flat water, *acqua naturale*; or sparkling water, *acqua frizzante* or *acqua con gas* ... Cuttlefish (*sepia*), clams (*vongole*), and sea brass (*branzino*).” (Travel US News Venice);
2. “crudi (Venetian-style sushi) ... folpetti (baby octopus) salad ... *seppie* (cuttlefish), *bottarga* (cured tuna roe), *folpeti consi* (baby octopus in vinaigrette), *sardelle in saor* (fried sardines marinated in vinegar and

- onions), *polpette* (Venetian meatballs) and *baccalà mantecato*, a local favourite consisting of codfish beaten into a creamy paste with olive oil, often served on a square of grilled polenta.” (BBC Travel);
3. “moscardini (baby octopus), moeche (soft-shell crabs), and inky sepie (squid) ... Locally caught seafood is tagged ‘Nostrano’, as are seasonal vegetables like Sant’Erasmus castraure (baby artichokes) and radicchio trevisano (bitter red chicory).” (Lonely Planet Venice);
  4. “Going with the flow of *la cucina veneta* requires a certain spirit of open-minded experimentation. Not everybody has eaten *granseola* (spider crab) before, or *garusoli* (sea snails) or *canoce* (mantis shrimps), but Venice is definitely the place to try these marine curios.” (TimeOut Venice);
  5. “**fritole**, or rather frittelle (similar to pancakes)... **moeche** (crabs just after molting)... eel (*anguilla* in Italian, *bisato* in Venetian), shellfishes (*canestrei* in Venetian), shrimps (*canoce*), clams (*caparossoi*), octopus (*folpo*) and mussels (*peoci*).” (InVenice).

In example 1, the spelling for cuttlefish, *sepia*, is adapted to the English term referring to the colour (originally extracted from the animal) rather than to the Cephalopod itself, whose name in general language is ‘squid’ (see example 3). In the other examples the literal translation is provided along with some other information on the kind of food or dish that can help tourists understand the nature of the recipe, especially in those cases (as in example 4) where the speciality uses kinds of food that are different from the usual culinary habits of the prospective visitor.

In other cases, as in example 5, approximation to the presumed culture of the visitor is provided: the comparison of the *fritole* to pancakes is a great approximation since the former are deep-fried spherical sweets covered in sugar, quite different from pancakes. Another example is the Venetian term *folpo* (correct in its variant *folpeto*, as in example 2), which is also used in the sense of ‘foolish, stupid person’ (S. Bassi, personal conversation). This culture-bound connotation is not even mentioned in the website, which explicitly presents itself as written from the perspective of a resident. A similar kind of approximation is contained in the same example 2 where *crudi* are defined as “Venetian-style sushi”, whereas they are just a selection of raw fish served with a variety of sauces, lemon and kinds of salt, without any use of rice, as in the original Japanese recipe. In these examples, the culture-specific element is lost in favour of an approximation that explains just the basic food or ingredient; the original meaning and connotation could have been preserved with a very concise explanation or paraphrase, as it is provided – with greater success – in some other instances of local food in examples 2 (“*sardelle in saor* (fried sardines marinated in vinegar and onions)”) and 3 (“moeche (soft-shell crabs)”), and in example 4, analysed above.

## 7 Linguaging to Explain Local Culture and Traditions

In the websites, the authors use the technique of languaging also to describe and explain complex elements of the local culture and traditions connected to festivals, celebrations and events, but also of the Venetian everyday social life. As already shown in the preceding section, the cultural importance or the socialising dimension of the element described is lost; its ancient rituals are, thus, transmitted to the tourists with approximate explanations and superficial descriptions.

This is the case of the cocktail called *spritz*, very popular in the North-Eastern Italian regions, but now becoming increasingly popular also in the rest of the country and abroad. Around the cocktail, served with appetizers of various kinds and complexity, the younger and older generations have created a socialising ritual that is used not only with family and friends but also with new acquaintances to favour group integration and bonding. In the corpus, as illustrated in examples 6 to 8, the mildly alcoholic drink is defined merely as:

6. “spritz (the local aperitivo of wine, soda and Campari)” (BBC Travel);
7. “an aperitivo of white wine, Campari and a shot of seltzer or sparkling water; a sweeter version is made with low-alcohol Aperol” (TimeOut Venice Venice);
8. “a Venetian aperitif that has been exported all around the world, which is made with prosecco, soda and *Aperol*, *Select*, or *Bitter*” (InVenice).

Hints are given only to the nature and function of the drink (*aperitivo*/aperitif) and the recipe is given without any reference to the socio-cultural importance that the ritual around it has in the local culture, not even when this kind of information is explained in sections labelled “Drink like a Venetian”, as in the case of the TimeOut Venice website.

It is worth mentioning that some websites are particularly concerned about the manners of the tourists and in the transmission of the rules for ‘correct, polite behaviour’ towards the local population, performing the function that Jaworski et al. name “phatic communion – exchanges of ‘mere sociabilities’ and apparently ‘purposeless expressions’ [...] a type of interaction that tourists might typically be expected to engage with hosts” (2003, 12). In this case, the authors of the texts are anticipating the tourist’s experience by instructing them what to say and when, mostly using Italian, not the local dialect. The USA website, for instance, insists on explaining how first impressions count to Italians, and to Venetians in particular; thus, they instruct tourists on how to make a good impression, defined as

*bella figura* [...] Dressing well will sometimes even be rewarded by better and more prompt service. *Bella figura* does not stop with physical

presentation as it extends into a person's manners and conduct. Avoid being obnoxiously loud or ostentatious, as this is greatly looked down on as *brutta figura*. Learning some Italian and attempting to use it will win you points with Italians, who are generally patient and happy to help you learn more. In any kind of store or restaurant, it's appropriate to greet and say goodbye to employees – even if you do not buy anything – with a *salve* and *arrivederci*, respectively. *Ciao* is less formal but equally appreciated. Wherever you go, remember your manners and don't forget your pleases, *per favore*, and thank yous, *grazie*.

This concern is found only in the USA website and only to a certain extent expressed also in the InVenice website, which makes a list of 'don'ts' more related to the respect of civil regulations, such as how to behave and dress in churches, respect the buildings and the city in general, not to feed pigeons, not to swim in the canals, how to dress properly around the city despite it being on the water ("but it is not a seaside resort", InVenice website), what to do with a backpack when on a crowded *vaporetto*, and so forth, but this is all expressed in English without any use of specific terms in Italian, like in the USA website.

## 8 General Considerations on the Use of Language in the Individual Websites

The analysis conducted so far has considered individual instances of languaging found in the corpus in general. The present section differentiates the instances of languaging used in the individual websites and provides some general considerations on the approach to the local language and culture showed as regards the nationality, specified or presumed, of the perspective tourists.

The function of the languaging technique in the corpus is to make foreign tourists accustomed to the 'terminology' and culture they will find as well as to underline the strong local identity still kept in Venice, despite depopulation and the city's role of mass tourism destination. In addition, it was also stressed in the previous sections that the use of languaging is limited to specific semantic fields. In fact, except for the USA website, that adds also expressions in the function of "phatic communion" (Jaworski et al. 2003, 12), the terms in Italian or in Venetian pertain to the semantic categories of toponyms, streets or alleys, landmarks, popular traditions referring to the local culture and, especially, to its eno-gastronomic heritage.

If we have to make a distinction in the relative frequency of usage of the languaging technique in the several websites consulted, we can certainly affirm that, among the websites addressing specific nationalities, the USA and the UK ones make a greater use of languaging. As for the websites

addressing visitors with an unspecified nationality, the Lonely Planet and the InVenice websites are the ones that use languaging with a greater frequency than the others.

### 8.1 The USA Website

In the USA website, the instances of languaging are explicitly signalled and separated from the text in English with italics for words in Italian or in Venetian and the translation or the paraphrase in English reported in round brackets (e.g., “Water taxis bob along, drifting underneath the *Ponte degli Scalzi* (Bridge of the Barefoot)”), or separated by commas, as in the passage on «*bella figura*» («and don't forget your pleases, *per favore*, and thank yous, *grazie*»). In some, although rare, cases they are also highlighted from the rest of the text through the use of double curved quotation marks, especially when the words are employed to explain local words of practical usage during the stay, as in the following quotation from the USA website:

Residents generally speak Italian with a Venetian dialect, which can be unrecognizable – even to native Italian speakers. *Ca*, a shortened form of the word “*casa*”, is used to describe many private residences and palaces. A street or *calle* in Venice, (pronounced ka-lay), is different from the “*via*” or “*strada*” streets elsewhere in Italy.

This example contains an interesting reference to the correct pronunciation of the term *calle*, an indication which is unique to the rest of the corpus as this is the only case in which it appears. Italics as a typographical convention is particularly productive, and the USA website employs it specifically to indicate names related to eno-gastronomic traditions, as the following extract clearly illustrates:

#### Venice Dining

With such close ties to the water, it should come as no surprise that fish is the main component of Venetian cuisine. Cuttlefish (*sepia*), clams (*vongole*), and sea bass (*branzino*) are popular ingredients, which can be found in many of the area's most well-known dishes, including *frutti di mare*. *Tra-mezzini* is another Venetian specialty: These triangular sandwiches, with a range of fillings from cheese to meats, can be found at cafes throughout the city. Wash it all down with *prosecco*, a sparkling (and local) white wine.

For the best bang for your buck, try to avoid the San Marco area or any establishment that solicits tourists off the street. Instead, try one of the smaller establishments – such as traveler-recommended Ristorante La Caravella – tucked away on one of the many hidden side streets.



You could also dine at a *bacaro*, a smaller wine bar with lower prices, authentic cuisine and more character.

In this passage, all the terms in Italian or in Venetian are indicated in italics, except for the name of the restaurant. The explanation of non-English terms is given in plain English either in brackets or before the local name. In other cases, local terms are just inserted in the description. If, visually speaking, the resulting effect might seem confusing in its lack of a homogeneous writing style, in the conveyance of the promotional message this patchy style is effective since it gives the text the 'aroma' of exoticism typical of the "naming and translating" function (cf. Jaworski et al. 2003).

## 8.2 The UK Website

In the case of the UK website, words in Italian and in Venetian are followed by an explanatory paraphrase together with the textual strategies already seen in the USA website, namely: italics, round brackets containing the translation, double curved quotation marks and explanation between commas. Another similarity is the use of local words to indicate architectural or topographic elements and for eno-gastronomic traditions.

Venice is one of those places that everyone has seen before they visit. The green canals and famous bridges; the warmly coloured *palazzo* (grand residences) and narrow alleyways; the breathtaking openness of Piazza San Marco, the arched prow of a gondola and the gentle wake behind a *vaporetto* (waterbus) – all have been immortalised in mediums as classic as Canaletto's paintings and as mainstream as Facebook photos. And for every traveller who has been disappointed in a destination upon arrival, there is a happy visitor in Venice, where the city looks exactly as it is supposed to. Venice is both a well-preserved monument and a living, breathing, sinking city, full of contemporary art, traditional crafts and high culture.

In this extract, two words are highlighted in italics, the first one *palazzo* is followed by a definition in English, even though it can be presumed that the word itself might be very familiar to prospective tourists coming from the UK, a country where the architectural Italian tradition is historically well rooted. However, the paraphrase serves also the educational purpose of indicating the meaning of the Italian term, probably to the benefit of tourists with a lower-level education, or to the youngsters. The second term (*vaporetto*) indicates a typical local means of transportation and is rendered with the closest term in English, defining its nature of public

transport using waterways instead of streets. The second extract below illustrates the use of textual strategies to highlight instances of languaging pertaining the field of food and eno-gastronomic traditions.

Visitors have long been enthralled by Venice's floating palaces and fabulous art. But its seafood-rich lagoon and garden islands also provide a taste of Venetian life – from cicheti (tapas) and fish dishes to rich, creamy gelati.

Best for seafood

Alongside the Rialto fish market, deli-diner Pronto Pesce specialises in crudi (Venetian-style sushi) and seafood salads. Grab a stool and a glass of wine with folpetti (baby octopus) salad, or enjoy yours dockside along the Grand Canal. Saturday lunchtimes are all about the much-lauded fish risotto (Rialto Pescheria, San Polo 319; closed Sun & Mon; fish salads from £7).

Neighbourhood restaurant Ristorante Ai Do Farai in Dorsoduro was once one of the oldest wine bars in Venice; now a small restaurant, regulars pack into the wood-panelled room hung with football scarves. Try the tris di saor sarde, scampi e sogliole (sardines, prawns and sole in a tangy marinade) or the tasty pasta with clams, mussels and prawns (00 39 041 277 03 69; Calle del Cappeller, Dorsoduro 3278; closed Sun; mains from £15).

In the original text in the website, the names of the two restaurants ('Pronto Pesce' and 'Ai do Farai') are highlighted through a hyperlink, leading to the restaurants' websites, while names of traditional dishes and food are not signalled with italics but just followed by a paraphrase or a translation in brackets.

### 8.3 Australia

The Australian website contains a very limited use of languaging. The occasional reference to monuments and landmarks is provided using Italian or local words, which are either not highlighted at all or highlighted with bold type, as in the example below:

The Arsenale, Chiesa di San Giorgio Maggiore and I Frari are other Venetian monuments you shouldn't miss out on. For a touch of art, the city's **Gallerie dell'Accademia** traces the development of Venetian art from the 14th to the 18th century and showcases the work of some true Italian greats. Lastly, a **gondola ride** on one of the city's beautiful waterways is all but a rite of passage for any visitor to Venice.

A specific section, "Like a local", contains instances of languaging referring to food and local traditions.

If you want to save some money at lunch, do as the locals do and eat standing up. Most eateries are at lunchtime stocked with cicchetti, which is the Venetian form of tapas. Popular dishes include tramezzini (triangular sandwiches), polpette (minced fish or meatballs) and a whole range of antipasto. Simply select a few items by pointing at what you want and you've got yourself a meal. Just remember though that if you decide to sit at a table and be waited on the price will be more expensive than if you order and consume your food at the bar.

In this extract, the Italian terms are not singled out from the rest of the text but are followed by a paraphrase in English, except for the word *antipasto*, probably because it is now a familiar word to the average Australian tourist. In addition, this passage contains the approximation of some socio-cultural implications that was already noticed in the other websites. The typical 'tradition' of eating a quick lunch standing up is certainly due to the reduced size of public places and shops in Venice, a peculiar aspect of the city that is not pointed out by the website, in this as in any other section, thus reducing the impact that the information could have on the future visitors and their 'cultural training' before travelling to Venice.

An important omission regards the sentence "simply select a few items by pointing at what you want and you've got yourself a meal". If the USA website abounds in advice on how to sound polite to the locals, in this quotation the instructions might lead to some cultural misunderstanding between the Australian visitors and Venetians since there is no indication on how to order even a quick snack as *cicheti* without using a polite language but merely by pointing at the desired food, which might be considered as a rude practice by the locals.

#### 8.4 Canada

In the website addressing Canadian tourists, the use of languaging is reduced to a minimum, as in the Australian case. Local words are used to indicate very famous aspects, buildings or landmarks but with minimal paraphrases, as it is shown in the following extract, in which names of landmarks are reported partially in Italian, partially in English but without any clear textual distinction for the former.

Along the small inner canals, you'll arrive to Fondamente Nuove, a long series of ancient foundations that represents the northern boundary of the city of Venice, where you will be able to view the northern side of

the Lagoon, San Michele's island, Murano and Burano on the landscape.

The extract shows also that names in Italian for typical elements of the city are given in italics with a paraphrase in English but without many other details: "gaze at the thoroughfare of passing gondolas, *vaporetto* (water buses) and water taxis - all jostling for space on the water".

## 8.5 Lonely Planet

The Lonely Planet website, along with the InVenice website, addresses tourists with an unspecified nationality; they both make a consistent use of languaging. The elements that are indicated using Italian or Venetian words pertain to the usual semantic fields of the city landmarks and buildings, eno-gastronomic traditions and cultural rituals in general. The sections of the website are presented as mini-guides written by (almost) residential authors that present themselves as authoritative persons, experts in describing Venice and its culture to the future visitors. Also in these cases, however, the authors do not refer to the inmost cultural significance of the elements described, thus failing to convey exactly the real nature of local traditions. On the other hand, the translations given to elements of the city landscape are quite correct and precise, as in the case of the following extract:

Yet Venice isn't a one-stage venue. The dazzling pageantry continues at I Frari, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Scuola Grande di San Rocco and, of course, Teatro La Fenice. And if you think your walk-on part at these attractions is exhilarating, wait until you step backstage - which is never more than a *sotoportego* (passageway) away. In narrow *calli* (streets) off the thoroughfares to San Marco, you'll glimpse the behind-the-scenes creativity that keeps the whole production afloat: artisans at work in their studios, cooks whipping up four-star *cicheti* (Venetian tapas) on single-burner hotplates, musicians lugging 18th-century cellos to chamber-music practice. Here the volume is turned down, and you can hear the muffled sounds of intermission - neighbours kissing hello and Veronese spaniels trotting over footbridges.

This passage shows suggestive images of everyday life in Venice, providing correct translations of the local terms *sotoportego* (in this case also spelled correctly) and *calli*, but it fails to convey the more local aspect of *cicheti*, generally defined (as in many other cases in the websites) as 'tapas'. These are defined as "small Spanish savoury dishes, typically served with drinks at a bar" (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*), which might apparently have the same function as the Venetian preparations but the

latter have an older tradition and a socialising function for people of all ages (not necessarily implicit in the Spanish term) that the 'residential' author misses to explain.

Another passage contains the same alternation between exact rendering of a local word and imprecise explanation of a local phenomenon:

You may have heard that Venice is an engineering marvel, with marble cathedrals built atop ancient posts driven deep into the *barene* (mud banks) – but the truth is that this city is built on sheer nerve. Reasonable people might blanch at water approaching their doorsteps and flee at the first sign of *acqua alta* (high tide). But reason can't compare to Venetian resolve.

In this case, the first element in italics (*barene*) is translated and explained correctly, while the second one only partially covers the phenomenon of *acqua alta*, which is more accurately indicated in the other websites. The translation, obviously, does not prevent tourists from understanding the phenomenon but it does not fully convey its real nature, thus keeping the explanation at a very superficial level, where it needed greater details especially as regards how to deal with high water during the flooding period.

As for languaging used to refer to eno-gastronomic elements and traditions, the Lonely Planet follows the same path trodden by the other websites, providing the Venetian words in italics, followed by a translation or paraphrase in English, but without going beyond the description of the ingredients or a literal translation.

Those visitors may never get to see Venice in its precious downtime, when gondoliers warm up their vocal chords with scorching espresso on their way to words, and mosaic artisans converge at the bar for tesseræ shoptalk over a *spritz* (*prosecco-based* drink).

Neither rain nor high tides can dampen high spirits at Venice's twice daily happy hours, when even the most orthodox fashionistas will gamely pull on *stivali di gomma* (rubber boots) over their stylish artisan-made shoes, and slosh out to the bar to get first dibs on *cicheti* (traditional bar snacks). How come 'happy hour' lasts five hours a day, and why not so close at the first high tide signal? 'There's only one Venice', explains one host as he pours another glass of fizzy Veneto *prosecco* well past the mark for *un ombra* (half-glass) [*sic*]. 'We might as well enjoy it.'

In this passage, the description given by the author seems to be one of a fictional Venice rather than a real one, omitting that rubber boots are now made of every colour and print and that not all Venetians wear artisan-made shoes; the impression given by the author is, therefore, of a tale meeting the now outdated stereotypes on Venice rather than the account

of a residential author. The reference to *spritz* and to *un'ombra* (in the original text, also very inaccurately written without the apostrophe) is given only to their composition rather than to links with the history of the city (as in the case of the *ombra* of wine), keeping again the description at a very superficial level.

## 8.6 TimeOut Venice

The TimeOut Venice website makes a slightly less consistent use of languaging, if compared to the other two websites, LonelyPlanet and In-Venice. In the case of TimeOut Venice languaging is used once more for monuments and typical experiences, as in the sentence “most Venetians agree that some of the city’s best gelato is served in Boutique del Gelato, a tiny outlet on busy salizzata San Lio”. However, in cases such as this the Italian or Venetian words are not highlighted from the rest of the text.

Languaging is also used, as in all the other websites, to indicate landmarks, as in the following passage:

But it’s St Mark’s basilica (Basilica di San Marco), often seen as the living testimony of Venice’s links with Byzantium; Doge’s Palace, once Venice’s political and judicial hub; and Torre dell’Orologio, a clock tower built between 1496 and 1506, that are, not just the square’s, but some of the city’s main attractions.

The usual technique of using italics to highlight the local term is here substituted by hyperlinks to the websites of the institutions mentioned. Only in one case, “Basilica di San Marco”, the translation in English is provided in round brackets. “Doge’s Palace” is not translated but a description of its function is given, while “Torre dell’Orologio” is indirectly translated after the comma and only some hints to its history are given, even though these elements occur in the paragraph for the first time in the text.

Finally, the usual semantic field of food and drink are expressed through languaging along with some advice on how to behave like a local:

### 4. Drink like a Venetian – and go on a secret wine tour

To the usual Italian breakfast, light snacks, pastries and alcoholic beverages routine, Venice contributes its own specialities: the *ombra* and the *spritz*. The former is a tiny glass of wine – bianco or rosso – which is knocked back in no time and is often the whole point of a *giro di ombre* – an *ombra*-crawl around selected *bacari* (the accent is on the first ‘a’). A *spritz* is an aperitivo of white wine, Campari and a shot of seltzer or sparkling water; a sweeter version is made with low-alcohol Aperol. Also flowing freely into Venetian glasses are prosecco, the bubbly white

made in the hills of the Veneto region, and spento, a bubble-free version of the same wine.

And for true Venetian oenophile immersion, discover the wine cellars that only the locals know about – together with a healthy dose of *chicchetti* (Venice's version of tapas) – on a covert wine tour of Venice with worldwide city-tour specialists Urban Adventures.

In this extract, more information than in other websites are provided on some background facts on specific traditions or pronunciation advice on the local terms that was found only in the USA website.

## 8.7 InVenice

In the case of InVenice, it is worth mentioning that this is a website in Italian with a dedicated version in English. The use of Italian and Venetian words in the latter version pertains to the same semantic fields as in all the other websites, giving greater details in the paraphrases or explanation of the terms, with some exception in the successful conveyance of the real meaning of the terms (see, e.g., example 5, § 6). In the InVenice website, languaging is again limited to monuments, topographic elements and food-related terminology. However, it describes more numerous and different traditions, as in the following passage, in which the experience of a *gondola* ride is described in far greater detail than in the other websites:

Today there are two main reasons for taking a gondola: there is the “**gondola da parada**”, a sort of ferry boat that Venetians use mainly to cross the Grand Canal, and the gondola “**da nolo**”, for hire, that offers the classic gondola tour.

In this website, words in Italian or in Venetian are highlighted using bold type and in double quotation marks but it also employs italics and bold type to indicate specific terms, with a particular history, as in the case of the following extract (bulleted list as in the original):

- The ***baicoli*** are typical biscuits which were once sold in a tin box but they can now easily be found in cardboard boxes. They are dry biscuits, cut into very thin layers, which were once eaten during long journeys by ship. They are cooked with a few simple ingredients such as flour, yeast, sugar, butter and eggs. They're fantastic when dipped in creamy eggnog, hot chocolate, coffee or a sweet wine.
- Next in line are the ***bussolai buranelli*** which are either circular or “S” shaped. They are a specialty from Burano and are made with eggs

and butter. Perfect for completing a meal, especially when served with a sweet wine.

- **Zaleti** too are Venetian biscuits that are cooked with polenta flour and raisins. The name comes from the flour's yellowish color. They are served with sweet wine usually at the end of a meal in the historical center taverns.
- A Venice Carnival is not complete without the **fritole**, or rather *fritelle* (similar to pancakes<sup>2</sup>), a dessert whose origins date back to the Renaissance and in 1700 it became the national cake of the Venetian State! You can find them made the Venetian way, which is simple and made only with raisins, or they come filled with cream or zabaglione.
- [...] The **baci in gondola** which are strongly tied to tradition, and tremendously romantic, are made with two soft white pastry layers held together by dark chocolate.
- And if you're in the mood for overdoing it you should try the gigantic colored **spumiglias** which dominate the bakery windows. It's like eating a cloud of sugar!

In this list, reported as it appears in the original website, italics and bold type are used only for the names of the sweets indicated in their original Venetian spelling, without any form of Italianization. In the last bullet point, however, an Anglicization is present with the final 's' used for the plural, instead of the plural in Italian '*spumiglie*'.

## 9 Conclusions

The present article investigated how websites in English use the languaging technique to transmit the meaning and connotations of the local culture of the city of Venice. As it was already ascertained by Fodde and Denti (2005) for guidebooks, the websites here analysed showed that the use of languaging is used by the authors of the texts to anticipate what visitors will actually experience once arrived at the destination. One of the variables taken into consideration to account for variation in the use of languaging technique was the presumed nationality of the perspective tourists, since four websites purposely address specific nationalities from Anglophone countries while three address a general, international public

<sup>2</sup> See example 5, § 6.



who uses English purely as a *lingua franca*. In this regard, the qualitative analysis showed that all websites use Italian and Venetian words to refer to names of buildings and landmarks, elements of the city landscape, terms for food and drink, local festivals and traditions with a strong cultural connotation. The distance from Venice (i.e., the nationality) of the prospective visitors does not influence the use of languaging with the only exceptions of the InVenice and the USA websites. They both pay particular attention to instruct tourists on the use of 'good manners' probably in the attempt at preventing contrasts between tourists and the host culture.

The preferred techniques to explain terms and expressions in Italian or in Venetian are literal translations and/or paraphrases. Reporting local words, providing a description and an explanatory paraphrase help authors reach the familiar element that could, in turn, help tourists reduce the distance between their own national culture and the most unusual aspects of the host destination. In this regard, the websites occasionally fail to describe, in an effective way, the cultural significance of the traditions described. By doing this, they also fail to convey important details on the host culture that could facilitate the contacts with the local population. Thus, the websites seem to miss the main goal of the languaging technique, which Dann (19996) indicates as the reduction of the cultural distance between visitors and host community.

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# Scrambling as *verum focus* German ‘Scrambling’ meets Romance ‘Anaphoric Anteposition’

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**Abstract** In this paper I demonstrate that in Mòcheno, a German dialect spoken in Northern Italy, scrambling, i.e. the movement of any constituent above sentential adverbs and below the finite verb, is permitted like in Continental Germanic languages. Unlike in these languages, however, leftward movement is not triggered by specificity or scope-fixing (A-scrambling) or by the need to check any topic or contrastive/new-information focus discourse-features (A'-scrambling). By relying on information structure, the syntax of modal particles and the distribution of scrambling in sentences with fronted operators, I provide evidence that scrambling in Mòcheno triggers a *verum focus* reading on the truth value of the sentence and involves a type of focus movement to a FocusP in CP. That scrambling can be associated with *verum focus* is a *unicum* among Continental Germanic languages, which I show follows from a reanalysis of the properties of Germanic focus scrambling under the influence of Romance anaphoric anteposition.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 Scrambling in Mòcheno. – 2.1 Specificity and Scope-Fixing Effects. – 2.2 The Informational Status of Scrambled XPs. – 2.3 Scrambling and *verum focus*. – 2.4 Partial Conclusions. – 3 Proposed Analysis. – 3.1 On the Realization of *verum focus*. – 3.2 On the Presence of a TP Periphery. – 3.3 Mòcheno Scrambling and Romance Anaphoric Anteposition. – 4 Conclusions.

**Keywords** Emphatic focus. Modal particles. Verb Second. Information structure.

## 1 Introduction

In this paper,<sup>1</sup> I examine the syntactic and semantic properties of scrambling in the German dialect Mòcheno, a minority language spoken by about

<sup>1</sup> Parts of this paper were presented at the workshop “Word Order Variation and Typology: the German middle field in a comparative and diachronic perspective” at the 2011 DGFS Tagung in Göttingen, at at CIDS M 2013 in Cambridge. I thank the audiences of these conferences, two anonymous reviewers and Theresa Biberauer, Walter Breu, Eva Maria Remberger and Roland Hinterhölzl for useful feedback. I would also like to thank my main informant from Palù del Fersina, L.T., for his patience during the data collection, Rachel Murphy for editing the English and Alessandra Giorgi for her editorial forbearance. All errors are obviously my own.

580 people in three villages in the Fersina valley (Eastern Trentino, Italy).<sup>2</sup>

With the term 'scrambling',<sup>3</sup> I refer here to the possibility that constituents be moved above aspectual adverbs, a typical property of Continental Germanic languages, as exemplified in (1) using German data.<sup>4</sup>

- (1) a. *Hans hat diese/eine Zeitung immer gelesen*  
 Hans has this/ a newspaper always PTCP-read
- b. *Hans hat immer diese /eine Zeitung gelesen*  
 Hans has always this/ a newspaper PTCP-read  
 'Hans always read this/a newspaper read.'

As shown in (2), scrambling is possible in Mòcheno: a constituent (direct or indirect object, henceforth: DO and IO or an adverbial PP) can scramble over aspectual adverbs.<sup>5</sup>

- (2) a. *En de boteig hòt=er de/a zaitung òllbe kaft*  
 in the shop has=SUBJ.CL.3.SG.M the/a newspaper always bought  
 'In the shop he always bought a/the newspaper.'
- b. *De zaitung hòt=er en de Maria òllbe kaft*  
 the newspaper has=SUBJ CL.3.SG.M to the Mary always bought  
 'The newspaper he always bought for Mary.'

2 The syntax of Mòcheno, which strongly differs from that of standard German, has been traditionally analysed as the result of direct borrowing from the contact Romance varieties (Heller 1979, Zamboni 1979, Togni 1990, Rowley 2003). For evidence against this view, see Cognola 2013a, 2013b).

3 In the literature, this construction is also called *long scrambling* to distinguish it from *short scrambling*, i.e. movement of verb arguments out of VP. In German, several permutations of the word orders of scrambled constituents are permitted, whereas in other languages with scrambling, like Dutch, permutations are ruled out. For this, I refer the reader to Zwart 1993; Hinterhölzl 2006; Neeleman, van de Koot 2008; Haider 2010 and references cited there.

4 The examples are glossed according to the Leipziger Glossing Rules (available at <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php>) to which I added some specific glosses for Mòcheno, listed below:

IND.OBJ.CL.3.SG: Indirect object clitic pronoun, third person singular  
 OBJ.CL.3.SG.F: Direct object clitic pronoun, third person singular, feminine  
 OBJ-CL.3SG.N: Direct object clitic pronoun, third person singular, neuter  
 PRT: Particle  
 SEP-PREF: Separable prefix  
 SUBJ-CL.2.SG: Subject clitic pronoun, second person singular  
 SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M: Subject clitic pronoun, third person singular, masculine  
 SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M: Subject strong pronoun, third person singular, masculine  
 SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.F: Subject strong pronoun, third person singular, feminine

5 The fact that scrambling is possible in Mòcheno is remarkable, since this construction is fully ruled out in similar Germanic dialects spoken in the area like Cimbrian.

- |    |   |                    |                     |             |             |
|----|---|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|
| c. | <i>Spuach</i>                                 | <i>hòt=er</i>      | <i>en de boteig</i> | <i>òlbe</i> | <i>kaft</i> |
|    | the book                                      | has=SUBJ CL.3.SG.M | in the shop         | always      | bought      |
|    | 'The newspaper he always bought in the shop.' |                    |                     |             |             |

This paper analyses the properties of scrambling in Mòcheno and compares them with those of scrambling in standard German and with Romance anaphoric anteposition. This comparison is extremely interesting from the perspective of comparative syntax, since it allows us to extend our knowledge of the syntax of German dialects by studying a hitherto neglected variety. It allows us, furthermore, to empirically test a strong generalization on scrambling put forward by Haider and Rosengren (1998), who have proposed that scrambling is a property of OV languages – a position restated in Haider (2010).<sup>6</sup>

The hypothesis that scrambling is a property of OV languages can be empirically tested in Mòcheno – a relaxed V2 language with mixed OV/VO syntax (Cognola 2013b), as shown in (3).<sup>7</sup>

- |     |    |                                   |                                 |                  |                  |
|-----|----|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| (3) | a. | <i>Gester</i>                     | <i>hòt=er</i>                   | <i>s/a puach</i> | <i>kaft</i>      |
|     |    | yesterday                         | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M              | the/a book       | bought           |
|     | b. | <i>Gester</i>                     | <i>hòt=er</i>                   | <i>kaft</i>      | <i>s/a puach</i> |
|     |    | yesterday                         | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M              | bought           | the/a book       |
|     |    | 'Yesterday he bought the/a book.' |                                 |                  |                  |
|     | c. | <i>Er</i>                         | <i>hòt</i>                      | <i>mer</i>       | <i>pfrok,</i>    |
|     |    | SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M                | has                             | me-DAT           | asked            |
|     |    | <i>benn</i> as                    | <i>der Mario</i> <i>s puach</i> | <i>kaft</i>      | <i>hòt</i>       |
|     |    | when that                         | the Mario the book              | bought           | has              |
|     | d. | <i>Er</i>                         | <i>hòt</i>                      | <i>mer</i>       | <i>pfrok,</i>    |
|     |    | SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M                | has                             | me-DAT           | asked            |
|     |    | <i>benn</i> as                    | <i>der Mario</i> <i>hòt</i>     | <i>s puach</i>   | <i>kaft</i>      |
|     |    | when that                         | the Mario has                   | the book         | bought           |

6 As correctly pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, scrambling is known to also exist in Old Romance languages, which were VO languages (Poletto 2014). This is another counterargument to Haider and Rosengren's generalisation.

7 Differently from German (den Besten 1983, Tomaselli 1990, Haider 2010 among others), in Old Romance V2 languages the movement of the finite verb to the left periphery (assumed to be the core property of the V2 rule) co-exists with multiple access to CP, which gives rise to V3 and V4 word orders (see Benincà 2006; Poletto 2002; Ledgeway 2007; Bidese, Cognola, Padovan 2012; Cognola 2013a; Wolfe 2015 among others). As shown in Cognola 2013a, Mòcheno is also a partial (in the sense of Roberts, Holmberg 2010) and asymmetric (in the sense of Benincà 1994) *pro*-drop language, although it displays subject clitics similar to those of Northern Italian dialects (Brandi, Cordin 1989; Poletto 2000 among others).

e.	<i>Er</i>	<i>hòt</i>		<i>mer</i>	<i>pfrok,</i>
	SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M	has		me-DAT	asked
	<i>benn</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>der Mario</i>	<i>hòt</i>	<i>kaft</i>
	when	that	the Mario	has	bought
					the book
					'He asked me when Mario bought the book.'

Unlike other Germanic languages with mixed OV/VO syntax (i.e. Yiddish, in which, according to Diesing 1997, 381 ff, the syntactic position of DOs is determined by specificity), in Mòcheno the distribution of OV/VO word orders is governed by the interaction between syntax and information structure. More specifically, OV is obligatory if the fronted constituent is a simple-preposed topic and the XP preceding the non-finite verb is a new-information focus (4a-b). VO is the only possible word order when an operator (interrogative *wh*-element or contrastive focus) is fronted and the XP following the past participle is a topic (4c-d).

- (4)
- |    |                |                    |                    |                     |                             |
|----|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. | <i>Spuach</i>  | <i>hòt=er</i>      | <i>ver de mama</i> | <i>kaft</i>         | OV                          |
|    | the book       | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M | for the mum        | bought              |                             |
| b. | <i>#Spuach</i> | <i>hòt=er</i>      | <i>kaft</i>        | <i>ver de mama</i>  | VO                          |
|    | the book       | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M | bought             | for the mum         |                             |
|    |                |                    |                    |                     | 'He bought it for the mum.' |
| c. | <i>Bos</i>     | <i>hòt=er</i>      | <i>kaft</i>        | <i>ver de mama?</i> | VO                          |
|    | what           | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M | bought             | for the mum         |                             |
| d. | <i>#Bos</i>    | <i>hòt er</i>      | <i>ver de mama</i> | <i>kaft?</i>        | OV                          |
|    | what           | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M | for the mum        | bought              |                             |
|    |                |                    |                    |                     | 'What did he buy for mum?.' |

Haider and Rosengren's (1998) analysis predicts that scrambling can only occur in sentences with OV word order in Mòcheno, i.e. only in main declarative clauses with a simple-preposed topic. As this paper shows, their prediction is borne out. However, this result adds further evidence to what seems to be a descriptive generalization rather than a formal account, because it does not explain why scrambling is ruled out in VO sentences (which are an option in the language).

In order to provide a formal account of the distribution of scrambling in Mòcheno, this paper first investigates the triggers for object movement within the language. I will show that Mòcheno scrambling is an instance of A'-movement and is never triggered by specificity and scope-fixing, unlike German A-scrambling. Unlike in German, where A'-scrambling involves constituents with a topic or (typically contrastive) focus discourse function (Bayer, Kornfilt 1994; Frey 2001; Grewendorf 2005; Hinterhölzl 2006 among others), in Mòcheno scrambling is associated with *verum focus* in Höhle's (1992) sense. Following Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal's (2009)

work suggesting that Spanish anaphoric anteposition is an instance of focus fronting that leads to a truth reading of the whole proposition (*verum focus*), I discuss the hypothesis that Mòcheno scrambling targets the same FP of the high left periphery involved in anaphoric anteposition in Spanish (and possibly in Romance languages), showing that these two leftward movements can be given a common analysis. The syntactic differences between the two languages will be shown to depend on the fact that Mòcheno is a V2 language, whereas Spanish is not: this means that the finite verb can move higher in CP in the former language but not in the latter. According to this theory, the syntactic position of the finite verb within the high left periphery, i.e. V2 not OV, is a necessary condition for scrambling.

The structure of the paper is the following. In section 2, I discuss the empirical properties of scrambling in Mòcheno and compare them with those of German scrambling, showing that the two languages differ in this regard. In section 3, starting from the resemblance between the properties of Mòcheno scrambling and those of Spanish anaphoric anteposition, I propose an analysis of Mòcheno scrambling as the movement of a focus to the left periphery leading to a *verum focus* reading of the whole sentence. In section 4, I summarise the results reached in the paper.

## 2 Scrambling in Mòcheno

### 2.1 Specificity and Scope-Fixing Effects

It is well-known that scrambling in German can be triggered by specificity and by the need to fix scope relations in syntax. In this case, scrambling is an instance of A-movement, since it is clause-bounded, it does not give rise to weak cross-over effects or scope reconstruction (Hinterhölzl 2006; Neeleman, van de Koot 2008 among others).

The role of specificity in the scrambling phenomenon is detectable in the distribution of definite and indefinite DOs in German (see Kratzer 1995, Diesing 1997, Hinterhölzl 2006 among others). In the examples in (5), I show that the unmarked position of definite verb arguments (inherently specific) is before aspectual adverbs (5a), whereas the unmarked position of indefinite arguments (non specific) is after aspectual adverbs (5b).

- (5) a. *Mario hat die Zeitung immer gekauft*  
 Mario has the newspaper always PTCP-bought
- b. *Mario hat immer eine Zeitung gekauft*  
 Mario has always a newspaper PTCP-bought
- ‘Mario has always bought the/a newspaper.’

Indefinite DOs can scramble above aspectual adverbs and then they get a specific reading. In (6a), the DO has a non-specific reading, whereas in (6b) a specific book (always the same) is being referred to.

- (6) Talking about what John typically loves to do on holiday:
- a. *Am Meer hat er immer ein Buch gelesen*  
 at-the sea has he always a book PTCP-read  
 'At the seaside he always reads books.'  
 John is particularly fond of Harry Potter's books. He received the last book of the series before going on holiday. John's mother says:
- b. *Am Meer hat er ein Buch immer gelesen*  
 at-the sea has he a book always PTCP-read  
 'At the seaside he always reads a (particular) book.'

Although definite DOs scramble in unmarked clauses, they can also appear after aspectual adverbs. In this case, they receive a contrastive focus reading, as shown in (7a). This reading is also possible for indefinite DOs when they appear in the lower portion of the clause below aspectual adverbs (7b).

- (7) a. *Er hat immer die Zeitung gekauft, (nicht ein Buch)*  
 he has always the newspaper PTCP-bought (NEG a book)  
 'He has always bought the newspaper, not a book.'
- b. *Er hat nicht eine Zeitung gekauft, (sondern ein Buch)*  
 he has neg a newspaper bought (but a book)  
 'He did not buy a newspaper, but a book.'

Let us consider now the distribution of definite and indefinite DOs with respect to aspectual adverbs in Mòcheno. As shown in (8a), the unmarked position of both definite and indefinite DOs is below aspectual adverbs. Scrambling is possible (8b) but leads to a marked reading, in which, all will be demonstrated below, the truth of the whole proposition is emphasised (*verum-focus* reading, Höhle 1992).

- (8) a. *Der Mario hòt òllbe/schua/efter s/a puach kaft*  
 the Mario has always/already/oft the/a book bought  
 'Mario has always/already/oft bought the/a book.'
- b. *Der Mario hòt s/a puach òllbe/schua/efter kaft*  
 the Mario has the/a book always/already/oft bought  
 'Mario did always/already/oft buy the/a book.'

The distribution of scrambled constituents does not seem to be ruled by specificity in Mòcheno. This hypothesis is further confirmed by the data in (9), where I replicate the German examples in (6). As shown in (9a),



an indefinite DO following a aspectual adverb can have both +/-specific readings in Mòcheno. The version with scrambling of the direct object (9b) is only grammatical in the *verum-focus* reading, where the indefinite DO can either be specific or non specific.

- (9) a. *Kan meir*      *hòt=er*                      *òllbe*      *a puach*      *galesn*  
 at-the see      has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M      always      a book      PTCP-read  
 'At the seaside he always reads books.'
- b. *Kan meir*      *hòt=er*                      *a puach*      *òllbe*      *galesn*  
 at-the see      has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M      a book      always      PTCP-read  
 'At the seaside he did always reads books.'

Another effect of specificity in the scrambling phenomenon manifests itself in bridging constructions (Hinterhölzl, van Kemenade 2012). In German, an NP in a coordinated sentence cannot refer back to another NP of a higher sentence when it appears below aspectual adverbs (10a); co-reference is possible, however, when the NP in the lower sentence scrambles over aspectual adverbs (10b).

- (10) a. *Mario hat [sein altes Haus]<sub>j</sub> verlassen.*  
 Mario has his old house left  
*Er hat letzte Woche [die Hütte]<sub>k/j</sub> abreißen lassen*  
 he has last week the hut demolish let
- b. *Mario hat [sein altes Haus]<sub>j</sub> verlassen.*  
 Mario has his old house ways left  
*Er hat [die Hütte]<sub>k/j</sub> letzte Woche abreißen lassen*  
 he has the hut last week demolish let  
 'Mario left his old house. Last week he demolished the hut.'

In (11), I examine whether the effects of scrambling in bridging exemplified in (10) can also be detected in Mòcheno. As shown in (11), a DO appearing below a aspectual adverb in a coordinated clause can, but does not have to, refer back to the NP in the higher clause.

It is ungrammatical to scramble the DO appearing in the lowest sentence (11b). These data indicate that in Mòcheno the coreference between two NPs in bridging is not parasitic on scrambling, as in German, but is available whether or not the XPs have moved over aspectual adverbs.

- (11) a. *Der Mario*                      *hòt*      *[s haus]<sub>j</sub>*      *sei*      *galok*  
 the Mario                      has      the house      to be      PTCP-left  
*Dora*      *hot=er*                      *gester*      *[de baraca]<sub>j/k</sub>*      *zomschlong*  
 then      has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M      yesterday      the hut      demolished

b.	<i>*Der Mario</i>	<i>hòt</i>	<i>[s haus]<sub>j</sub></i>	<i>sei</i>	<i>galok</i>
	the Mario	has	the house	to be	PTCP-left
	<i>Dora</i>	<i>hòt=er</i>	<i>[de baraca]<sub>j/k</sub></i>	<i>gester</i>	<i>zomschlong</i>
	then	has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M	the hut	yesterday	demolished
	'Mario left his house. Then he demolished the hut.'				

The data in this section have shown that scrambling in Mòcheno is not triggered by specificity and scope fixing, unlike in German. In Mòcheno both +/-specific readings are available in the lowest portion of the clause below aspectual adverbs. I take this to indicate that the positions of German and Mòcheno scrambling are not the same.

In the next subsection, I investigate whether or not scrambling in Mòcheno involves A'-movement through an analysis of the informational status of the scrambled XP.

## 2.2 The Informational Status of Scrambled XPs

### 2.2.1 Topics

Let us consider if scrambled constituents can be analysed as topics, i.e. presuppositional (D-linked, Pesetsky 1987) constituents realising old/given information that can either be accessible or nonaccessible in the discourse (see López 2009; Cruschina 2010; Frascarelli, Hinterhölzl 2007; Frascarelli 2000; Benincà, Poletto 2004). Following the cartographic approach adopted in this paper, I assume that all the discourse-features connected to topicality are encoded in dedicated functional projections and are checked through movement in overt syntax (Rizzi 1997; Cinque 1999; Cinque, Rizzi 2008 among others).

In (12b), I show that a constituent ("the flour") appearing before a aspectual adverb cannot be a D-linked, discourse accessible constituent, introduced by the *wh*-interrogative in (12a). This topic must appear in the left periphery, see (12c).<sup>8</sup>

- (12) a. *Ber hòt òllbe kaft s mel en de boteig?*  
 who has always bought the flour in the shop  
 'Who has always bought the flour in the shop?'  
 b. *\*En de boteig hòt (òllbe) s mel (òllbe) der Mario kaft*  
 in the shop has always the flour always the Mario bought

<sup>8</sup> The distribution of topics in (11) is independent of the syntax of the DP subject, which has to appear in a FocusP of the vP periphery when it is a new-information focus in Mòcheno, like in these examples (see Cognola 2013a on this). The same distribution of topics is also attested with pronominal subjects.

- c. *S mel*      *en de boteig*      *hòt*      *òllbe*      *der Mario*      *kaft*  
 the flour      in the shop      has      always      the flour      bought  
 'Mario has always bought the flour in the shop.'

As pointed out by Roland Hinterhölzl (personal communication), in German the D-linked, discourse accessible constituent realised by the definite DO can be scrambled and appear before the NP subject (which is the new-information focus). In Mòcheno this is ruled out and the topic must appear in the high periphery, irrespectively of the presence of the adverb 'always' (13).<sup>9</sup>

- (13) a. *Wer*                      *hat*                      *das Mehl*                      *im Geschäft*                      *gekauft?*  
 who                      has                      the flour                      in-the shop                      PTCP-bought  
 'Who bought the flour in the shop?'  
 b. *Im Geschäft*                      *hat*                      *das Mehl*                      *Hans*                      *gekauft*  
 in-the                      has                      the flour                      Hans                      PTCP-bought  
 'It was Mario who bought the flour in the shop.'

As shown in (14), a scrambled XP cannot be a D-linked, non-given constituent in Mòcheno. As in the examples above, these constituents must appear in the sentence-initial position.

- (14) (Context: my friend was supposed to buy a book, but was always finding an excuse for not buying it. Finally he buys the book and I can say to another friend who knows the facts)  
 a. *#Er*                                      *hòt*                      *spuach*                      *schua*                      *kaft*  
 SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M                      has                      the book                      already                      bought  
 b. *Spuach*                      *hòt=er*                                      *schua*                      *kaft*  
 the book                      has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M                      already                      bought  
 'He has already bought the book.'

Neither can the scrambled XP be a contrastive topic (Cruschina 2010, 47; Vallduví 1992; Benincà, Poletto 2004; Frascarelli, Hinterhölzl 2007). This is shown in (14).

- (15) a. A: Has Mario already delivered the stuff?  
 b. B: *#Er*                                      *hòt*                      *spuach*                      *schua*                      *en de*                      *Maria*  
 SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M                      has                      the book                      already                      to the                      Mary  
*gem,*                      *ont*                      *de priaf<sub>i</sub>*                      *birt=er*                                      *en Luca*  
 give                      and                      the letter                      AUX-FUT=SUBJ=CL.3.SG.M                      to Luca  
*morm*                                      *gem*  
 tomorrow                      give

9 The fact that the DP subject could be in Spec,TP in the German examples in (13) is irrelevant here, since the aim of this section is to simply show that German and Mòcheno differ as far as the syntactic and discourse properties of scrambling are concerned.



- no, the bread      has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M      always      bought      in the shop  
*(net de zaitung)*  
 NEG the newspaper
- d. *Na, en de boteig      hòt-er      òllbe      sproat      kaft*  
 no, in the shop      has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M      always      the bread      bought  
*(net de zaitung)*  
 NEG the newspaper  
 'No, it was not the newspaper that Mario always bought in the shop, but the bread.'

The above data indicate that new-information and contrastive foci involve overt movement in syntax in Mòcheno, but they do not involve the area associated with scrambling.

The discussion so far has demonstrated that scrambling in Mòcheno is not triggered by specificity or scope fixing and is not compatible with a topic or a new-information or contrastive focus reading of the scrambled XP. In order to establish the exact contribution of scrambling, I examine more closely the contexts in which scrambling is felicitous in this language.

### 2.3 Scrambling and *verum focus*

In this subsection I provide evidence that scrambling in Mòcheno is associated with *verum focus*, i.e. with a focus on the truth value of the whole sentence, rather than on a specific constituent (Höhle 1992, Féry 2007, Krifka 2007 among others).

In order to demonstrate that scrambling in Mòcheno is associated with *verum focus*, I start by giving a clear context in which a sentence with scrambling is felicitous (18). Speaker A claims that Mario is a penny-pincher because he has never bought anything in the small village shop (*boteig*) known to be very expensive (18a). Speaker B answers that this is not true, since Mario has always bought the newspaper in the expensive village shop: as shown in (18b), the NP "the newspaper" is scrambled.

- (18) a. *A: Der Mario      ist      an sporer.      Er*  
 the Mario      is      a penny-pincher      SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M  
*hòt      nia      eppaz      en de boteig      kaft*  
 has      never      something      In the shop      bought  
 'Mario is a penny-pincher: he has never bought anything in the shop.'
- b. *B: Ma,      der Mario      hòt      de zaitung      òllbe      kaft      en de boteig*  
 but      the Mario      has      the newspaper      always      bought      in the shop  
 'But, Mario did always buy the newspaper in the shop!'

The example in (18) shows that scrambling is only possible in Mòcheno in a very restricted context, not in all main declarative clauses (differently from German). I suggest that this context involves a *verum focus*, i.e. a focus on the truth of the whole proposition rather than on a single constituent. Scrambling of a constituent is therefore a way of emphasising the truth of the whole sentence, as evidenced by the paraphrase in (19).

- (19)      *Der Mario    hòt    de zaitung      òllbe      kaft      en de boteig*  
             the Mario    has    the newspaper    always      bought      in the shop  
             ‘It is true that Mario has always bought the newspaper in the shop’

As regards information structure, a sentence that involves scrambling is structured as in (19). The scrambled XP realises new information, whereas all the rest is background information. Following Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal (2009), I assume that the scrambled XP realising new information is a narrow focus on sentence polarity (see also Breibarth, De Clercq, Haegeman 2013).

- (20)      background - V - new - background

In will now examine two arguments that support the hypothesis that Mòcheno scrambling involves the leftward movement of an operator (focus) triggering the *verum focus* reading of the whole sentence: the distribution of modal particles and the syntactic restrictions of scrambled XPs.

### 2.3.1 Discourse Particles

The first piece of evidence for the hypothesis that scrambling in Mòcheno triggers the *verum focus* reading of a sentence regards the distribution of discourse (or modal) particles.

As is well-known, discourse particles can express the *verum focus* reading in different languages (see Hernanz 2010; Leonetti, Escandell-Vidal 2009 for Spanish; Zimmermann 2011 for German; Cardinaletti 2011; Coniglio 2008; Cognola, Schifano forthcoming a, b for Italian).

In Mòcheno, the particle expressing the *verum focus* reading of a sentence is *bol*, which is formally related to German *wohl* but semantically (and syntactically) different. Mòcheno *bol* has the same semantics and the same behaviour as the Italian discourse particle *sì* (see Coniglio 2008), since it *bol* asserts the truth of the proposition (21a) and it can license ellipsis with the same value (21b).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Unlike in English, in Mòcheno the auxiliary verb corresponding to *do* cannot license ellipsis. For an overview of the properties of the *tun+inf* periphrasis in German dialects, which are shared by Mòcheno, see Angster 2005.

- (21) a. *De mama hòt bol zok, as=se kimp*  
 the mum has PRT said that=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.F comes  
 'Mum did say she would come'
- b. *Der Mario kimp net, ma der Luca bol <kimp>*  
 the Mario comes NEG but the Luca PRT comes  
 'Mario does not come, but Luca does'

The idea that *bol* is a discourse particle connected with *verum focus* is further confirmed by the data in (22), where I show that the same effect of emphasizing the truth of a proposition achieved by scrambling is reached by inserting the modal particle *bol*.

- (22) a. *A: Der Mario ist an sporer. Er*  
 the Mario is a penny-pincher SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M  
*hòt nia eppaz en de boteig kaft*  
 has never something in the shop bought  
 'Mario is a penny-pincher: he has never bought anything in the shop.'
- b. *B. Ma, der Mario hòt bol òlbe de zaitung kaft*  
 But the Mario has PRT always the newspaper bought  
*en de boteig*  
 in the shop  
 'But, Mario did always buy the newspaper in the shop!'

The insertion of *bol* and the possibility of XP scrambling are in complementary distribution: when *bol* appears in the sentence, the movement of a constituent above the aspectual adverb is ruled out (23).<sup>11</sup> This further confirms the connection between the discourse particle *bol*, scrambling and *verum focus*.

- (23) a. *A: Der Mario ist an sporer. Er*  
 the Mario is a penny-pincher SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M  
*hòt nia eppaz en de boteig kaft*  
 has never something in the shop bought  
 'Mario is a penny-pincher: he has never bought anything in the shop.'
- b. *B.\*Ma, der Mario hòt (bol) de zaitung (bol)*  
 but the Mario has PRT the newspaper PRT  
*òllbe (bol) kaft (bol) en de boteig*  
 always PRT bought PRT in the shop

<sup>11</sup> It would only be possible to insert *bol* in the higher portion of the clause where it would only scope over *der Mario* and not on the whole sentence.

This subsection has provided evidence for the hypothesis that scrambling in Mòcheno triggers a *verum focus* interpretation of the whole sentence. In the following subsection, I further develop this hypothesis and consider the interactions between scrambling and focus movement. The predictions of the proposed account are that i) scrambling is ruled out in all sentences with a fronted operator, since one sentence cannot have two foci in Mòcheno (Cognola 2013b, Calabrese 1982) and ii) only one constituent can be scrambled.

### 2.3.2 Syntactic Restrictions

The hypothesis that Mòcheno scrambling is a type of A'-movement to a FocusP which triggers a *verum-focus* reading of the whole sentence leads to the prediction that scrambling should interfere with fronted operators.

As exemplified in (24), this prediction is borne out for wh-main interrogative clauses: scrambling is impossible in these sentences.<sup>12</sup>

- (24) a. \*Ber hòt de zaitung òllbe kaft?  
 who has the newspaper always bought
- b. Ber hòt òllbe kaft de zaitung?  
 who has always bought the newspaper  
 'Who did always buy the newspaper?'
- c. \*Bo hòt=er s puach schua/òllbe kaft?  
 where has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M the book already/always bought
- d. Bo hòt=er schua/òllbe kaft s puach?  
 where has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M already/always bought the book  
 'Where has he already/always bought the book?'

The same restriction on scrambling is found in sentences with a fronted contrastive focus (25).

- (25) a. \*EN DE BOTEIG hòt=er de zaitung òllbe kaft  
 in the shop has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M the newspaper always bought  
 (net en de libreria)  
 NEG in the bookshop
- b. EN DE BOTEIG hòt=er òllbe kaft de zaitung,  
 in the shop has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M always bought the newspaper  
 (net en de libreria)  
 NEG in the bookshop  
 'It was in the bookshop where he has always bought the newspaper, not in the bookshop'

<sup>12</sup> In Mòcheno, OV word order is also ruled out in sentences with a fronted operator in the absence of scrambling because OV always involves a focus reading of the constituent preceding the past participle (see Cognola 2013b).



Scrambling is impossible in sentences in which an operator is fronted: this follows directly from the hypothesis that scrambling involves focus movement and two foci cannot appear simultaneously in the same sentence.<sup>13</sup>

The second prediction to be tested is that two scrambled XPs cannot co-occur, in the same way that two moved operators are ruled out in the left periphery in Mòcheno (Cognola 2013a). As exemplified in (26), this prediction is also borne out: only one XP can precede aspectual adverbs.<sup>14</sup>

- (26) a. A: *Der Mario ist an sporer. Er*  
           the Mario is a penny-pincher SUBJ-STRONG.3.SG.M  
           *hòt nia eppaz en uanz kaft*  
           has never something to someone bought  
           ‘Mario is a penny-pincher: he has never bought anything for anyone.’
- b. B: \**Ma, der Mario hòt de zaitung en de Maria*  
           but der Mario has the newspaper to the Mary  
           *òllbe kaft*  
           always bought
- c. B: \**Ma, der Mario hòt en de Maria de zaitung*  
           but der Mario has to the Mary the newspaper  
           *òllbe kaft*  
           always bought

## 2.4 Partial Conclusions

In this section, I have investigated the properties of scrambling in Mòcheno from a comparative perspective. I first showed that Mòcheno scrambling does not pattern with German A-scrambling, since scrambled XPs do not display any special properties connected with specificity and scope fixing, as they do in German. I then explored the hypothesis that scrambling in Mòcheno is an instance of A'-movement and showed that scrambled constituents are not compatible with topic, contrastive or new-information focus interpretations. By considering the distribution of the discourse particle *bol*, the distribution of scrambling in sentences with a fronted operator, and the possibility of having two scrambled constituents in the same sentence, I demonstrated that scrambling in Mòcheno involves A'-movement of one XP and is associated with a *verum focus* interpretation of the truth value of the whole sentence.

<sup>13</sup> In sentences with a fronted operator, *bol* is also excluded in Mòcheno, i.e. the *verum focus* reading of the sentence is fully ruled out, as expected.

<sup>14</sup> NP subjects pattern with other XPs as far as scrambling is concerned, i.e. they can be scrambled, but cannot co-occur with other constituents preceding aspectual adverbs. This follows from Cognola's (2013a) analysis of Mòcheno as a pro-drop language in which Spec,TP (or AgrSP) can only host *pro*.

### 3 Proposed Analysis

The aim of this section is to provide an analysis of scrambling in Mòcheno, and to contribute to explaining why in this language scrambling is associated with *verum focus* (a *unicum* among Continental Germanic languages). I show that the realisation of *verum focus* through XP movement is ruled out in German (which has focus scrambling, but no *verum-focus* scrambling), but has been reported for Romance (Leonetti, Escandell-Vidal 2009). By comparing Mòcheno scrambling and Romance anaphoric anteposition, I show that in both Mòcheno and Romance moved XPs target a FocusP in CP.

#### 3.1 On the Realization of *verum focus*

In the literature it has been shown that languages differ in their strategies of realising *verum focus*. In German, the truth of a proposition can be either emphasised through the insertion of a discourse particle or by a pitch accent on the finite verb (Höhle 1992, Krifka 2007, Féry 2007). As shown in (27), in *verum focus* sentences, scrambling is ruled out (Roland Hinterhölzl, personal communication).

- (27) a. *Mario HAT (doch) seinem Bruder das Haus geschenkt*  
 Mario has PRT his-dat brother the house given  
 b. *\*Er hat (doch) das Haus seinem Bruder geschenkt*  
 he has PRT the house his-DAT brother given  
 ‘Mario/he did give his brother the house.’

In English, the truth of the whole proposition is emphasised by the insertion of a do-support.

- (28) *She does come*  
 ‘It is true that she comes.’

Spanish, beside the insertion of a discourse particle, can realise *verum focus* syntactically by fronting a constituent expressing new information to a FocusP of the left periphery, as shown in (29) (from Leonetti, Escandell-Vidal 2009, 179).

- (29) a. *Algo tiene que saber*  
 something has to known  
 ‘She does know something.’  
 b. *Lo mismo digo yo*  
 the same say-PRS.1SG I  
 ‘I do say the same.’

The fronting construction triggering the *verum focus* reading of the whole proposition in Spanish is called “anaphoric anteposition” (Benincà 1988, Cinque 1990). In the Romance languages, this construction is characterised by the fact that the fronted phrase must either directly resume an identical phrase in the immediately preceding discourse or be inferentially linked to such a phrase (Cinque 1990), the property that Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal (2009) call “emphatic value”. In Spanish, this construction is analysed as involving the fronting of an operator, whereas in Italian it is assumed to involve a kind of topicalization (Benincà 1988, Cinque 1990). As shown in the previous section, Mòcheno patterns with Spanish, since in both languages *verum focus* involves operator movement.

The fact that in Spanish anaphoric anteposition targets the Spec of a FocusP of the high left periphery is clear. Whether the same analysis can be applied to Mòcheno scrambling is more uncertain, since it is not clear whether the scrambled XP appears in the high left periphery or in a lower peripheral area. I discuss below some data that contradict the claim that scrambling can involve the vP or the TP periphery.

### 3.2 On the Presence of a TP Periphery

Anderssen and Bentzen (2012) propose that Norwegian object shift (Holmberg 1986) is as an instance of topicalization to a clause-medial (IP-internal) position. The Norwegian data are given in (30): in this language, a pronoun can move across the negation and aspectual adverbs.

- |      |    |            |           |             |             |
|------|----|------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| (30) | a. | <i>Jon</i> | <i>så</i> | <i>den</i>  | <i>ikke</i> |
|      |    | Jon        | saw-PST   | it          | NEG         |
|      | b. | <i>Jon</i> | <i>så</i> | <i>ikke</i> | <i>den</i>  |
|      |    | Jon        | saw-PST   | NEG         | it          |
- ‘Jon did not see it.’

Anderssen and Bentzen (2012) provide evidence for the hypothesis that weak pronouns only move when they are familiar topics as defined by Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007) and they target an IP-internal TopicP. This hypothesis implies that there must be a TopicP (and presumably a FocusP) above TP and below the left periphery and that this TP periphery is different from the vP periphery found immediately above vP (Belletti 2004). As discussed by Cognola (2008, 2013b), the vP periphery is found below aspectual adverbs and above low adverbs (Cinque 1999): therefore, the TopicP assumed to be involved in object shift must be located in a different area from that identified as the vP periphery, since pronouns move past aspectual adverbs.

In the light of this proposal, it might be tempting to account for the Mòcheno data by assuming that in this language scrambling involves the movement of a constituent to the Spec of an IP-internal FocusP, as illustrated in the structure in (31).

(31)  $[_{TopicP} \text{Der Mario}_k [_{FocusP} [_{FinP} t_k \text{hòt}_j [_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} \text{de zaitung} [_{TP} \text{pro } t_j [_{FP} \text{òllbe} [_{VP} \text{kaft } t_k ]]]]]]]]]]]]$

I believe that an analysis of Mòcheno scrambling as IP-internal topicalization must be rejected, for two reasons. Recall that in Mòcheno scrambling is ruled out in all sentences with a fronted operator (32).

- |         |                             |                    |                   |                    |              |
|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| (32) a. | <i>*Ber</i>                 | <i>hòt</i>         | <i>de zaitung</i> | <i>òllbe</i>       | <i>kaft?</i> |
|         | who                         | has                | the newspaper     | always             | bought       |
| b.      | <i>*Bo</i>                  | <i>hòt=er</i>      | <i>s puach</i>    | <i>schua/òllbe</i> | <i>kaft?</i> |
|         | where                       | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M | the book          | already/always     | bought       |
| c.      | <i>*ENDE BOTEIG</i>         | <i>hòt=er</i>      | <i>de zaitung</i> | <i>òllbe</i>       | <i>kaft</i>  |
|         | in the shop                 | has=SUBJ-CL.3.SG.M | the newspaper     | always             | bought       |
|         | <i>(net en de libreria)</i> |                    |                   |                    |              |
|         | NEG in the bookshop         |                    |                   |                    |              |

The fact that scrambling cannot occur in wh-main interrogative clauses is unexpected if we analyse scrambling as movement to an IP-internal position, since this hypothesis predicts the movement of a constituent to a hypothetical IP-internal TopicP, as illustrated in (33).

(33)  $[_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} \text{Ber}_k [_{FinP} t_k \text{hòt}_j [_{TopicP} \text{de zaitung}_m [_{FocusP} [_{TP} \text{pro } t_j [_{FP} \text{òllbe} [_{VP} \text{kaft } t_m ]]]]]]]]]]]]$

A possible hypothesis might be that in Mòcheno only one FocusP is present in the IP periphery, whereas in other Germanic languages a TopicP is also available, but I find no convincing evidence for this theory. It could also be assumed that scrambled constituents move to the Spec of a FocusP in the vP periphery. However, this hypothesis does not hold given what we know about the syntactic position of the vP periphery in Mòcheno, which, as discussed in Cognola (2008, 2013b), follows aspectual adverbs and precedes low adverbs.

The evidence discussed in this subsection leads me to conclude that scrambling in Mòcheno is a type of A'-movement which does not target the Spec of an FP in the vP periphery or in the TP periphery (the existence of which in Mòcheno is uncertain), and must be analysed differently. I suggest that Mòcheno scrambling can be directly compared with Romance anaphoric anteposition – a construction which targets the high left periphery of the clause and favors a *verum focus* reading of a sentence.

### 3.3 Mòcheno Scrambling and Romance Anaphoric Anteposition

Given the evidence discussed above contradicting an analysis of Mòcheno scrambling as a construction targeting a TP or vP periphery and the strong resemblances between Mòcheno scrambling and Spanish anaphoric anteposition, I claim that both types of movement can be analysed in the same way: as the movement of one XP to the Spec of a FocusP of the high left periphery, as shown in (34).

- (34) a.  $[_{TopicP} \text{Der Mario hòt}] [_{FocusP} \text{de zaitung}] [_{FinP} \text{t}_k] [_{TP} \text{pro t}_j] [_{FP} \text{òllbe}] [_{VP} \text{kaf t}_k]$   
 b.  $[_{TopicP} \text{lo mismo}] [_{FocusP} \text{pro digo}] [_{VP} \text{t}_k]$

Note that, as in Spanish, in Mòcheno it is possible to front an “emphatic” constituent without any resumption in IP, leading to a *verum focus* interpretation of the sentence (demonstrated by the compatibility of *bol*).<sup>15</sup>

- (35) a. *Du* *pist* *do* *gaben.*  
 SUBJ-STRONG.2.SG be-PRS.2.SG there PTCP-been  
*Eppas muas=o (bol) zechen hom*  
 something must=SUBJ-CL.2.SG PRT seen have  
 ‘You were there. You did see something.’  
 b. *Du birst net alua sai.*  
 SUBJ-STRONG.2.SG AUX-FUT-PRS.2.SG NEG alone be  
*De Sabrina birst=o (bol) vinnen.*  
 the Sabrina AUX-FUT=SUBJ-CL.2.SG PRT see  
 ‘You will not be alone. You do see Sabrina.’

This type of fronting construction is incompatible with fronted operators (36) and is limited to a single constituent.

- (36) a. *\*Du birst net alua sai.*  
 SUBJ-STRONG.2.SG AUX-FUT-PRS.2.SG NEG alone be  
*Bo de Sabrina birst=o (bol) vinnen?*  
 where the Sabrina aux-fut=subj-cl.2.sg PRT see  
 b. *\*Du birst net alua sai.*  
 SUBJ-STRONG.2.SG AUX-FUT-PRS.2.SG NEG alone be  
*De Sabrina morm birst=o (bol) vinnen*  
 the Sabrina tomorrow AUX-FUT=SUBJ-CL.2.SG PRT see

<sup>15</sup> This type of fronting (anaphoric anteposition) must be added to the constructions targeting the high left periphery in Mòcheno, since it was not dealt with in Cognola 2012b.

The fronted XP cannot have a contrastive-focus reading, as shown in (37).

(37)	<i>*Du</i>	<i>birst</i>	<i>net</i>	<i>alua</i>	<i>sai.</i>
	subj-strong.2.sg	AUX-FUT-PRS.2.SG	NEG	alone	be
	<i>De Sabrina</i>	<i>birst=0</i>	<i>(bol)</i>	<i>vinnen,</i>	<i>net</i>
	the Sabrina	AUX-FUT=SUBJ-CL.2.SG	PRT	see	NEG
				<i>net</i>	<i>de Maria.</i>
				NEG	the Maria

On the basis of these facts, I propose that this type of fronting involves the structure in (38).

(38)	$[_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} de Sabrina_k birst=0_j [_{FinP} t_k t_j [_{TP} pro t_j [_{FP} bol [_{VP} vinnen t_k ]]]]]]]]$
------	--

Now, my hypothesis is that Mòcheno scrambling and Spanish anaphoric anteposition are the same phenomenon: a particular type of focus movement to the high left periphery. This obviously does not account for the asymmetries in the position of the finite verb between the two languages. I suggest that these asymmetries are due to the fact that Mòcheno is still a V2 language (Cognola 2012b), whereas Spanish is not. This means that in Spanish the finite verb only moves to the left periphery in a limited number of constructions (see Rizzi [1991] 2004), whereas in Mòcheno the finite verb must move to CP in all main clauses. Following Poletto (2002), Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl (2007), Roberts (1997), Biberauer and Roberts (2015), Wolfe (2015), I suggest that the finite verb can appear in different heads of CP in different V2 languages. For Mòcheno, the idea is that the finite verb moves to the lowest head of the left periphery when the lowest constituent is a contrastive focus (see Cognola 2013b).

(39)	$[_{TopicP} [_{FocusP} A PUACH_k [_{FinP} t_k hòt=se_j [_{TP} pro t_j [_{FP} òllbe [_{VP} kaft t_k ]]]]]]]]$
------	--

When the lowest XP is a *verum focus* I suggest that the finite verb can raise higher to the head of TopicP.

(40)	$[_{TopicP} Der Mario hòt_j [_{FocusP} de zaitung_k [_{FinP} t_k t_j [_{TP} pro t_j [_{FP} òllbe [_{VP} kaft t_k ]]]]]]]]$
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The structures in (39) and (40) imply that there is an asymmetry in the position of the finite verb between sentences involving a contrastive focus and sentences involving a *verum focus*.

I am still unable to find an explanation for this asymmetry, and I tentatively suggest that it might be connected to the intonational contour of the *verum focus* construction. In Mòcheno, as in Spanish, the *verum focus* lacks emphatic stress (unlike contrastive and informational foci), but, unlike topic constructions, it is not doubled by a clitic nor is a pause possible between the *verum focus* and the rest of the clause. Therefore, *verum-focus* constituents exhibit mixed intonational properties of foci and

topics, and this might reflect itself in the syntax of the finite verb. More specifically, the idea is that the finite verb has to raise to the head of the FP hosting the constituent bearing emphatic stress (39); if this is lacking, the finite verb can raise to a head in the Topic area.

## 4 Conclusions

In this paper, I have discussed the distribution of scrambling in the German dialect Mòcheno. I showed that, despite appearances, Mòcheno and German scrambling are different phenomena, since the former is not triggered by specificity, scope-fixing or contrast.

Giving examples of both information structural and syntactic properties, I showed that Mòcheno scrambling triggers a *verum focus* interpretation of the whole sentence. As regards information structure, scrambled constituents are not compatible with any topic reading and cannot be new-information or contrastive foci. Scrambling is only possible when the moved XP is a narrow focus in a sentence without informational partition in its explicit content (i.e. only the scrambled XP is new information and all the rest is background) and it is inferentially linked to the context ("emphatic value" in Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal's 2009 terms). Following Leonetti and Escandell-Vidal (2009), I proposed that the *verum focus* reading is triggered by the movement of the constituent expressing new information to the Spec of a FocusP, which is backed up by the syntactic restrictions displayed by the moved constituents (it cannot co-occur with fronted operators; multiple scrambling, i.e. multiple foci, are ruled out) and by the distribution of modal particles expressing *verum focus* in sentences with scrambling.

In the second part of the article, I proposed a formal account of Mòcheno scrambling centered on the idea that this construction involves the movement of one constituent to the same FocusP of the high left periphery as Spanish anaphoric anteposition. Evidence for this analysis comes from the distribution of scrambled XPs, which cannot be accounted for by assuming that the TP or vP periphery are involved, and from the syntax of the finite verb, which can move to the left periphery in main declarative clauses in the V2 language Mòcheno, but not in Spanish – a non-V2 language.

The mixed OV/VO language Mòcheno provides interesting data in support of Haider and Rosengren's (1998) generalization that scrambling is a property of OV languages. In Mòcheno, scrambling is ruled out in sentences in which OV word order is not permitted.<sup>16</sup> However, the Mòcheno

16 This result indirectly confirms Cognola's (2012a) analysis of OV word orders in Mòcheno, which are shown to involve XP movement out of vP to a FocusP of the vP periphery found below aspectual adverbs (short scrambling). The fact that both types of scrambling, i.e. short

data, unlike those discussed by Haider and Rosengren (1998) and Haider (2010), cannot be accounted for by head directionality, since this would not explain why i) scrambling and all other OV word orders (i.e. those in which the constituents appear below aspectual adverbs) are impossible in all sentences with a fronted operator; ii) scrambling is restricted to sentences with *verum focus* reading; iii) scrambling resembles Spanish anaphoric anteposition.

My analysis accounts for all three facts by assuming that scrambling is possible due to type of V2 rule displayed by Mòcheno and the interactions between verb movement within the high left periphery and type of fronted constituent. These data from a non-standard language like Mòcheno indicate that the V2 rule is a much more pervasive property than previously thought, since it affects scrambling (and is involved in the distribution of OV/VO word orders, see Cognola 2012a). Whether or not the analysis proposed for Mòcheno is applicable to other languages needs to be further investigated.

The Mòcheno data in this article contribute to our understanding of the relationship between Romance constructions involving the high left periphery and German scrambling, a connection that has already pointed at by Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1997), who compare scrambling and clitic left dislocation constructions. The Mòcheno data indicate that not only is there a connection between Germanic scrambling and constructions expressing topicality in other languages, but the relation may also involve anaphoric anteposition and scrambling. If Leonetti and Escandell-Vidall's (2009) analysis and the analysis proposed here are correct, both anaphoric anteposition and scrambling involve the movement of a constituent to a FocusP of the high left periphery, then what makes scrambling differ from other focus constructions is its 'emphatic' value, its referentiality, which is encoded in the lower area of the high periphery. How this referentiality can be connected to specificity, which is crucial in German scrambling, is a question that awaits further research.

and long scrambling, leading to OV word order are i) triggered by the need to check focus features and ii) are ruled out in all sentences with a fronted operator, is fully predicted by the analysis given in Cognola.



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# Verbal Mood in Early Old High German Relative Clauses

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**Abstract** In contrast to Modern German, which has almost completely lost the use of the subjunctive in relative clauses, Old High German exhibits indicative/subjunctive mood alternations. In this paper, I will present a pilot study on the interaction of mood in early relative clauses with morpho-syntactic and information/discourse-structural factors which are discussed in the cited literature and are assumed to influence the use of the subjunctive in relative clauses. The survey is based on a corpus of Old High German texts from the 8th and 9th centuries. Furthermore, a syntactic analysis will be sketched in order to explain the licensing of the subjunctive in Old High German relative clauses and the loss of mood alternation in the later stages of the language.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 Properties of OHG Relative Clauses. – 3 Verbal Mood in Subordinate Clauses. – 4 Mood Alternation in Relative Clauses Cross-Linguistically and Its Counterpart in German. – 4.1 Mood Alternation in Romance Languages. – 4.2 Word Order Alternations in German Relative Clauses. – 5 Mood in OHG Relative Clauses. A Corpus Study. – 5.1 The Corpus. – 5.2 Interaction of Mood and Specificity. – 5.3 Further Possible Interactions. – 6 Syntactic Analysis. – 7 Conclusions.

**Keywords** Indicative. Mood. Old High German. Relative clauses. Subjunctive.

## 1 Introduction

In Old High German (OHG), alternations between the indicative and the subjunctive mood are quite frequent in relative clauses (RCs), as exemplified in (1) and (2):<sup>1</sup>


I would like to thank the audience of the workshop “From Sentence Grammar to Discourse Grammar: new ways of syntactic analysis and From Discourse Grammar to Sentence Grammar: the Path of Grammaticalisation” (Venice, October 20th-21st, 2016) as well as Andreas Blümel, Roland Hinterhölzl, Guido Mensching, Svetlana Petrova, Tom Ruetter, Hedde Zeijlstra, and two anonymous reviewers, for their feedback and comments on several aspects discussed in this paper. Special thanks go to Gohar Schnelle and Marten Santjer for helping me to collect the data.

1 If not otherwise stated, all examples cited were taken from the Old German Reference Corpus. See § 5.1.

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**DOI 10.14277/2499-1562/AnnOc-51-17-13**

Submission 2017-03-13 | Acceptance 2017-03-21

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- (1) [...] so ih fona dhemu nam, dher ær fora dhir **uuas**. (I IX, 2)  
 as I from that took who before before you was.IND  
 '[...] as I took it from him that was before you.'
- (2) Huuer ist dher dhiz al ni **chisehe** [...] ? (I VIII, 3)  
 who is who this all NEG sees.SUBJ  
 'Who is the one that does not see all this [...]?'

In contrast, Modern German (MG) RCs do not typically exhibit such alternations, apart from in reported speech (for which *Konjunktiv I* 'subjunctive I' is available) and counterfactual cases or some other specific contexts (in which *Konjunktiv II* 'subjunctive II' is possible). The following example illustrates the impossible licensing of subjunctive in the modern version of (3):

- (3) Wer ist es, der das alles nicht **sieht** / **\*sehe** ?  
 who is it that this all NEG sees.IND / sees.SUBJ  
 'Who is the one that does not see all this [...]?'

This paper addresses the ensuing question as to how one can explain the OHG data when set against the same facts in MG. After a general introduction on the typology of OHG RCs (§ 2), the cross-linguistic properties and triggering factors of mood alternation are discussed. In section 3, we evaluate the previous literature with respect to subordinate clauses in general, and then with respect to RCs specifically in section 4. Section 5 discusses mood alternation in early OHG RCs based on the result of a corpus study investigating the interaction of mood with other variables potentially triggering the alternation. A syntactic interpretation of the results is sketched in section 6.

## 2 Properties of OHG Relative Clauses

Based on the typology in Schrodtt (2004, 170 ff.), three or four different types of RCs may be distinguished in OHG (also cf. Tomanetz 1879; Delbrück 1909; Johansen 1935; Fleischmann 1973, 114 ff.; Baldauf 1983; Lehmann 1984; Ebert et al. 1993; etc.). In the first instance, RCs may be introduced by a morphologically inflected relative pronoun or what is traditionally considered a demonstrative of the *d*-type (*d*-pronoun):

- (4) Iudas Scarioth, [ **ther** inan uuas selenti ] (T 138, 2, in Schrodtt 2004, 176)  
 Judas Iscariot who him was betraying  
 Lat. 'Iudas Scariothis, qui erat traditurus eum'  
 'Judas Iscariot, who should betray him'



Secondly, RCs may be introduced by an uninflected relative particle (*the, de, thi*, etc.). Particle-like elements like *ther*, *dir*, sometimes analyzed as locative adverbs meaning 'there', will also be considered on a par with relative particles in this paper. Notice that the relative particle may occur alone or may directly follow a *d*-pronoun:

- (5)       thero               manno,     [ **thi** ih hera nu bat ]  
 th(os)e.GEN     men.GEN       PART I here now asked  
(O 4, 6, 25, in Schrodt 2004, 175)

'[none] of the men I asked to come now'

- (6)       [ **therde** mih gisihit ] gisihit then [ **therde** mih santa ]  
 who-PART me sees sees the.one who-PART me sent  
(T 143, 2, in Schrodt 2004, 175)

Lat. 'Et qui videt me videt eum qui misit me'

'The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me'

A third rare type of RC is represented by asyndetic constructions, which exhibit neither a *d*-pronoun nor a relative particle:

- (7)       enti quad zu dem [ **∅** dar uuarun ]  
 and said to those there were  
(MF 26, 71, in Schrodt 2004, 174)

Lat. 'et ait his, qui erant ibi'

'and [he] said to those that stood there'

A fourth type of construction is introduced by *sô* (*h*)*uuer sô* (and variants thereof), which is traditionally considered a comparative construction made up of two particles *sô* 'so, as' and an indefinite pronoun (*h*)*uuer* 'someone, anyone', homophonous with the interrogative pronoun meaning 'who' (cf. Lühr 1998; Harm 2001; Schrodt 2004, 170 ff.):

- (8)       [ **so wer so** in lante ist furisto, ] thes ist er herosto  
 who(ever) in land is first thereof is he ruler  
(O 1, 27, 56, in Schrodt 2004, 172)

'whoever is the most noble in the country, he rules it'

Given the relative-like function of this construction, I will consider it on a par with RCs in the present study.

A property that is orthogonal to the four types considered is that either the subjunctive or the indicative mood may be used in such constructions. For the sake of brevity, only an example for the first type of RC is provided below, however all of the types of RCs considered above display mood alternation.

- (9) [...] thio brústi, **thio** Kríst io **gikústi** (O|11,39)  
 the breasts that Christ ever kissed.SUBJ  
 'the breasts that Christ ever kissed'

### 3 Verbal Mood in Subordinate Clauses

Before taking account of the subjunctive mood in RCs, we will consider mood alternation in subordinate clauses. According to Schrodts (1983; 2004, 184 ff.) view on mood selection in OHG complement clauses, mood distinctions depend on the truth value of the embedded proposition and on certain semantic properties of the selecting verb, such as, *inter alia*, negation and modalization. A similar view is shared by Petrova (2013), who discusses Schrodts view and other recent theoretical proposals. For example, she points out that Giannakidou's (2009) approach based on (non-)veridicality yields accurate results for the description of mood alternation in OHG.

Based on the work of Giannakidou (2009), who elaborates on traditional distinctions of the type *realis/irrealis*, and on works by Farkas (1992) and Quer (1998) among others, one could argue that it is possible to distinguish between indicative or veridical predicates in (10), which express a commitment by the speaker (or subject of the main verb) to the truth of the complement clause, and subjunctive or non-veridical predicates in (11), for which such truth inference is not available.

- (10) *Veridical verbs* (adapted from Giannakidou 2009, 1887-8 and Petrova 2013)
- a. assertives (Greek equivalents of the verbs *say, read, claim*)
  - b. fiction verbs (*dream, imagine*)
  - c. epistemics (*believe, think*)
  - d. factive verbs (*be glad, know, regret*)
  - e. semifactives (*discover, remember*)
- (11) *Non-veridical predicates* (adapted from Giannakidou 2009, 1887-8 and Petrova 2013)
- a. volitionals (*want, hope, plan*)
  - b. directives (*order, advise, suggest*)
  - c. modals (*must, may*)
  - d. permissives (*allow, forbid*)
  - e. negative (*avoid, refuse*)

Crucially, Giannakidou (2009, 2013) predicts that Greek veridical predicates are associated with an indicative complement clause, marked by the special indicative complementizer *oti* (and *pu*).<sup>2</sup> In contrast, non-veridical

<sup>2</sup> There appear to be language-specific exceptions, though (cf. Giorgi, Pianesi 1997; Petrova 2013; among others).

predicates select a subjunctive complement, as testified by the Greek subjunctive marker *na*.<sup>3</sup>

- (12) O Pavlos nomizi **oti** / **\*na** efije i Roxani.  
 the Paul think.3sg that.IND that.SUBJ left.3sg the Roxani  
 (Giannakidou 2013, 23)  
 'Paul thinks that Roxanne left.'
- (13) Thelo **\*oti** / **na** erthi o Pavlos.  
 want.1sg that.IND that.SUBJ come.PNP.3sg the Paul  
 (Giannakidou 2013, 23)  
 'I want Paul to come.'

Thus, the subjunctive mood in the following OHG example cited in Petrova (2013) may be easily explained by the presence of the non-veridical predicate *gibót*.

- (14) **gibót** thaz sie **fuorin** / ubar then giozon  
 ordered that they travel.SUBJ over the current  
 (T 85, 20f, in Petrova 2013, 45)  
 Lat. 'iussit ire / trans fr&um'  
 'he ordered that they travel over the current.'

## 4 Mood Alternation in Relative Clauses Cross-Linguistically and Its Counterpart in German

### 4.1 Mood Alternation in Romance Languages

Mood alternations in RCs have also been observed in, for example, the Romance languages (cf. Cinque 1988, Farkas 1992, Quer 1998, Zwart 2005, among others) and can be illustrated by the following Italian example, in which a RC (with its referent) is embedded in a complement clause:

- (15) Gianni vuole che una persona che **ha** / **abbia**  
 Gianni wants that a person that has.IND / has.SUBJ  
 il libro lo chiama  
 the book him calls.SUBJ  
 'Gianni wants that a person that has the book calls him.'

3 PNP = perfective nonpast.

It is noticeable, however, that Giannakidou's (2009, 2013) analysis, which is based on (non-)veridicality, cannot be directly applied to RCs. In the example above, the complement clause depends on the non-veridical predicate *vuole* 'wants'. That explains why the predicate of the complement clause *chiami* 'calls' is in the subjunctive form as expected. However, considering the embedded RC, both the indicative and the subjunctive are available in this example despite the selecting (non-veridical) predicate. If the subjunctive is used, the speaker is referring to a potential person, who does not necessarily exist. If, instead, the indicative is used, the speaker is referring to a specific (existing) person. Hence, we must conclude that, in RCs, veridicality seems to be a property of the referent and is independent of the properties of the matrix verb (cf. von Heusinger 2002). As Giannakidou (2013, 34) puts it,

the function of the subjunctive in the relative clause is to bring in the speaker's subjective point of view, in particular, her uncertainty about the existence of a value for the NP. I will call this epistemic weakening of the subjunctive.

While the view can be shared that the notion of "epistemic weakening" seems to be central for the licensing of the subjunctive in RCs, it must be observed here that such a notion is difficult to define and operationalize when collecting, annotating, and assessing empirical data.

In a similar vein, and based on a number of works on mood alternation in Romance RCs (cf. Quer 1998, among others), mood alternations in Italian are explained in terms of *de re / de dicto* interpretation by Catasso and Hinterhölzl (2016) (below, I will adopt this analysis since such alternation is easier to operationalize in a corpus-based investigation). The following examples illustrate the point:

- (16) a. Gianni cerca una donna che **ha** gli occhi blu. *de re*  
 Gianni looks.for a woman that has.IND the eyes blue  
 b. Gianni cerca una donna che **abbia** gli occhi blu. *de dicto*  
 Gianni looks.for a woman that has.SUBJ the eyes blue  
 'Gianni is looking for a woman that has blue eyes.'

(Catasso, Hinterhölzl 2016, 109)

In (16a), the use of the indicative in Standard Italian forces a specific interpretation of the woman Gianni is looking for. Thus, the referent *donna* 'woman' receives a *de re* interpretation. In contrast, the subjunctive in (16b) is associated with a *de dicto* (or non-specific) interpretation of the referent. In Standard Italian, the use of the subjunctive is obligatory in this case. However, it should be noticed that, given a general tendency for the subjunctive to be replaced by the indicative, at least in Colloquial Italian, one can also observe a drift towards the use of the indicative in such contexts.

## 4.2 Word Order Alternations in German Relative Clauses

The situation in MG RCs is different. Apart from special contexts (such as reported speech, counterfactuality, etc.), MG has lost the use of the subjunctive in RCs. Nonetheless, specificity or *de re / de dicto* interpretation plays an important role in this language as well. For example, it has been noticed that this variable is relevant in determining the position of the verb in RCs (cf. Gärtner 2001, 138; 2002, 35). Catasso and Hinterhölzl (2016) discuss this distinction in (Early) New High German, based on the following examples:

- (17) a. Hans sucht eine Frau, die blaue Augen **hat**. *de re / de dicto*  
       Hans looks.for a woman who blue eyes has  
       b. Hans sucht eine Frau, die **hat** blaue Augen. *de re / \*de dicto*  
       Hans looks.for a woman who has blue eyes  
       ‘Hans is looking for a woman that has blue eyes.’

(Catasso, Hinterhölzl 2016, 109)

The typical order in MG subordinate clauses is V-final. Thus, the pattern in (17a) is unmarked. In this case, the interpretation of the referent is open, since both the specific and the non-specific (or *de re / de dicto*) interpretations of the referent are available. The V2 order exemplified in (17b) is a marked word order in RCs instead. Crucially, this word order was shown to be only associated with a specific (or *de re*) interpretation of the referent. In the example, Hans is looking for a specific woman that he already knows.

This particular construction is extensively discussed in recent papers (cf. Gärtner 2001, 2002; Ebert, Endriss, Gärtner 2007; etc.) and is briefly presented below, as it is relevant for the following sections.

To start with, one should note that the V2 order is a typical main clause phenomenon in most Germanic languages. Cross-linguistically, it was shown to be restricted to root clauses, as well as special classes of dependent clauses exhibiting root properties, which display a certain degree of syntactic independence (Hooper, Thompson 1973; Reis 1997; Meinunger 2004; Julien 2007, 2010; Antomo, Steinbach 2010; etc.). Thus, for example, while the V-final order is the unmarked one in subordinate clauses (18b), the V2 order is possible in limited contexts (18a) as exemplified by the following colloquial MG examples taken from Antomo and Steinbach (2010, 2):

- (18) a. Ich sag so was nicht, weil man **darf** das nicht sagen.  
       I say such thing not because one may that not say  
       b. Ich sag so was nicht, weil man das nicht sagen **darf**.  
       I say such thing not because one that not say may  
       ‘I don’t say such things because it is not allowed.’

However, the case of RCs in MG is more problematic. This becomes clear when one considers the peculiar properties of V2 RCs like the one in (19a). V2 RCs are restrictive subordinate clauses which typically lack independent illocutionary force. These peculiar constructions, which in contrast to other RCs must be obligatorily extraposed, share with restrictive V-final RCs (19b) the presence of a continuation rise, which is illustrated by the symbol “(/)” in the following example (Gärtner 1998, 2001; Endriss, Gärtner 2005; Ebert, Endriss, Gärtner 2007):

- (19) a. Das Blatt hat eine Seite, (/) [ die **ist** ganz schwarz ].  
           the sheet has a side that is completely black
- b. Das Blatt hat eine Seite, (/) [ die ganz schwarz **ist** ].  
           the sheet has a side that completely black is

(Gärtner 2001, 112)

Gärtner (2001, 138; 2002, 35) points out that the position of the verb in the RC also depends on the interpretation of the referent in the matrix clause. The following contrasts illustrate the point:

- (20) a. Ich kenne **eine Frau**, die besitzt ein Pferd.  
       b. \* Ich kenne **keine Frau**, die besitzt ein Pferd.  
       c. \* Ich kenne **jede Frau**, die besitzt ein Pferd.  
       'I know a/\*no/\*each woman who owns a horse'

(Endriss, Gärtner 2005, 198)

The examples show that only specific indefinite antecedents ('wide scope indefinites') allow for V2-RCs in MG (cf. Gärtner 1998; Ebert, Endriss, Gärtner 2007).

From the properties considered above, Gärtner (1998, 2001) and Endriss and Gärtner (2005) conclude that V2 RCs are semantically integrated structures, but that their syntactic behavior seems to indicate that they are unembedded structures.

With respect to OHG, and as pointed out above, this language exhibits mood alternations which have not yet been thoroughly investigated (Schrodt 2004, 195-6). In contrast, alternations between V2 and V-final orders in historical RCs are investigated in a recent work by Axel-Tober (2012). She claims that alternations as those described by Gärtner (1998, 2001) and colleagues are already attested in historical German. Therefore, she extends Gärtner's analysis to certain V2 RCs in OHG (and MHG) and argues that they exhibit the same properties as MG constructions. Among others, she provides the following example:

- (21) Ein ander tier ist, daz **heizzent** die Chrieche Hinam.  
 an other animal is that call.IND the Greeks hyena  
 'There is another animal which the Greeks call a hyena.'

(WPh VI, 1, in Axel-Tober 2012, 246)

Now, given that OHG displays both types of alternations observed for modern languages (word order and mood alternation), the obvious questions that arise are how such alternations should be interpreted and how they are related to each other. In order to answer these questions, a corpus study was conducted to assess possible interactions between the variables considered.

## 5 Mood in OHG Relative Clauses. A Corpus Study

### 5.1 The Corpus

For the present corpus study, a sample of RCs from the following (major) OHG texts was selected:

- a. *Isidor*
- b. *Benediktinerregel*
- c. *Monseer Fragmente*
- d. *Tatian*
- e. *Otfrids Evangelienbuch*

The reason for examining early texts from the eighth and ninth century is that they are heterogeneous enough if compared to later OHG texts (which mainly consist of Notker's work). Furthermore, they were already linguistically annotated and available in the Old German Reference Corpus<sup>4</sup> when the research was conducted. Later texts were published later.

For this pilot study, the first 50 tokens of each subcorpus were selected, with a total of 250 tokens (227 indicative verbs and 23 subjunctive cases). The dataset was enriched with further syntactic, semantic and information-structural annotation (for instance, specificity, verb position, etc.). Below, the results of this pilot study are presented.

4 URL <http://www.deutschdiachrondigital.de/>. Searchable with ANNIS (cf. Krause, Zeldes 2016).

## 5.2 Interaction of Mood and Specificity

Let us consider possible interactions between specificity and mood. Given that, in contrast to MG, OHG displays mood alternations, one would expect an interaction of mood with specificity as is the case with the Romance languages. This expectation is borne out. The following examples illustrate the case of a specific referent with the indicative mood in the RC and a non-specific referent associated with the subjunctive mood in the dependent clause respectively:

- (22) [...] drúhtin got [...], ther únsih **irlósta** (O|10, 3-4)  
 Lord god who us redeemed.IND  
 'God, our Lord, [...] who redeemed us'
- (23) [...] er [...] then lésan iz **gilústi** (O|11, 10)  
 he whom read it pleased.SUBJ  
 'he who felt like reading.'

By comparing the distribution of the indicative and the subjunctive moods with specific and non-specific referents, we are able to ascertain the findings displayed in table 1.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1. Specificity and mood  
 Fisher Exact p=.0012;  $\phi$ : 0.23

	indicative	subjunctive	na
specific	105	4	2
non-specific	84	18	0
na	33	2	2

The very significant distribution in table 1 shows that, despite the low frequent realization of the subjunctive in RCs, this mood correlates more often with non-specific referents than with specific referents. There are only four cases of the subjunctive used with a specific referent, such as the one in (24):

- (24) [...] thio brústi, thio Kríst io **gikústi** (O|11,39)  
 the breasts that Christ ever kissed.SUBJ  
 'the breasts that Christ ever kissed'

<sup>5</sup> Cases for which no clear value of the variable could be determined are listed in tab. 1 as "na" (not applicable).



Notice that, in this case, one could argue that the subjunctive is used with a specific antecedent due to the necessity for the verb to rhyme with *brústi* and/or as the effect of the presence of the adverbial element *io* contributing to “epistemic weakening”.

### 5.3 Further Possible Interactions

The interactions of other variables were tested as well. For example, verb position was investigated *vis-à-vis* specificity. We have seen that the verb position in a RC also depends on the interpretation of the referent in the matrix clause (Gärtner 2001, 138; 2002, 35). If it is true that OHG and MHG V2-RCs are the same constructions as in MG (cf. Axel-Tober 2012, 192 ff.), then we would expect some interaction between specificity of the referent and verb position in earlier stages as well. In fact, we find some examples pointing to the expected distribution in the corpus. In (25), the referent is specific and indefinite, with the verb in the RC occupying the second position. In contrast, the non-specific indefinite referent patterns with a V-final order in (26):

- (25) [...] chuninge · der **frumita** bruthlauft sinemo sune [...] (MF XV, 5f.)  
 king.DAT that made wedding.feast his.DAT son.DAT  
 ‘[...] to a king that prepared a wedding feast for his son [...]’
- (26) neouueht [...], daz fer **sii**, (Ben.Reg. 2)  
 nothing that far is.SUBJ  
 ‘nothing [...] that is far away/abstracted’

Unfortunately, the number of specific indefinite referents in the selected corpus is very small, namely only five. There are three V2 and two V-late/final cases.

Table 2. Specificity and verb position  
 Fisher Exact p=.10;  $\phi$ : 0.15

	V2	V-late/final	na
<b>specific indef.</b>	3	2	0
<b>other</b>	33	104	5
<b>na</b>	20	73	10

Table 2 shows that the distribution of other referents is much clearer, with only a fourth of V2 order. V-late/final orders are predominant in contrast to what we would expect to conclude observing the distribution of the five examples for specific indefinite antecedents. Even though we should be

careful in interpreting these little data, there is a weak indication ( $p=.10$ ) that we can reject the hypothesis that verb order is unrelated to the question of whether a referent is a specific indefinite or not. It seems that specific indefinite referents have no clear preference for a V2 or V-late/final order whereas other types of referents tend to prefer a V-late order.

Interestingly, Catasso and Hinterhölzl (2016) observe a parallelism between Romance languages and (E)NHG (also cf. Meinunger 2004, 2006). While Romance languages exhibit a correlation between mood and specificity (cf. Quer 1998, Zwart 2005, among others), (E)NHG shows a correlation between verb position and specificity (cf. Gärtner 2001, among others). Contrary to expectations, our corpus indicates that only the first correlation clearly holds for OHG. We will come back to this aspect later.

At this point, one could argue that there is the possibility of a direct correlation between verb position and mood in OHG (cf. examples (25) and (26)). Table 3 summarizes the distribution of indicative and subjunctive forms in V2 and V-late/final clauses.

Table 3. Verb position and mood  
Fisher Exact  $p = 1$ ;  $\phi: 0.01$

	indicative	subjunctive	na
V2	51	5	0
V-late/final	162	17	1
na	9	2	3

Despite expectations, the distribution in the corpus shows that V2 RCs do not exhibit the indicative more frequently than other types of RCs. Mood alternations are almost identical in V2 and V-late/final RCs.

To sum up, the facts revealed by this pilot study may be represented as in figure 1.

The small OHG corpus shows a correlation between specificity and mood, as pointed out for the Romance languages, but no significant interaction may be observed between verb position and specificity or mood. In contrast, the situation in MG – which is known from synchronic (theoretical) studies – is very different and looks like in figure 2.

In MG there is an interaction between specificity and verb position, but no interaction with mood at all given its absence. At this point, we could argue for a complex semantic and morphosyntactic change taking place from OHG to MG. This line of reasoning suggests that a pattern in which specificity correlates with mood is substituted by a pattern in which specificity correlates with verb position.

While it is true that there is hardly any empirical evidence in OHG for a correlation between specificity or mood on the one hand, and verb position on the other, the correlations become clearer if we resort to more complex

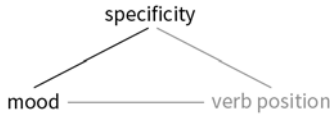


Figure 1. Correlations in OHG

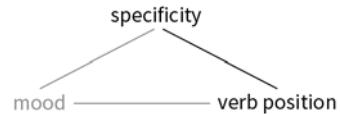


Figure 2. Correlations in MG

theoretical explanations. In many cases, the V2 pattern could be interpreted as being only an apparent one. Consider the following example:

- (27) Daz ist daz hêreste guot, daz der uore  
 that is the greatest wealth that PART.REL before  
 gegariwet **ist** gotes trûtfriunden (HiH 153, 36)  
 afforded is god's intimate.friends.DAT  
 'This is the greatest wealth which is provided to God's intimate friends before'

The sentence above shows very clearly that OHG still exhibit VO orders, i.e. OHG RCs allow for a VO order even if the verb does not occur in second position. Syntactically, such VO orders have been explained in different ways in the literature. There are a number of traditional works on apparent embedded VO phenomena in verbal complexes in Germanic languages (e.g. Haegeman, van Riemsdijk 1986; den Besten, Edmondson 1983; Kroch, Santorini 1991; Pintzuk 1991; etc.). Focusing on the position of objects with respect to the (full) verb, more recent works assume that, in such cases, the object is “extraposed” to the right of the verb (Axel 2007, 80) or, alternatively, that the verb is base-generated in, or moved to a position preceding the object (Hinterhölzl 2004, 2009; Petrova, Hinterhölzl 2010; Schlachter 2004, 2012; Tomaselli 1995; Weiß forthcoming):

- (28) a. [<sub>VP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> V] O<sub>i</sub> VO as a result of the “extraposition” of the object  
 b. [<sub>VP</sub> V O] VO as a base-generated order  
 c. V<sub>i</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> O t<sub>i</sub>] VO as a result of verb movement

The reason for the special configuration should be looked for in information structure. In particular, Hinterhölzl (2004, 2009) points out important OHG word order restrictions arguing that, while background (and contrastively focused) information is realized preverbally, presentational focus typically follows the verb, as illustrated in (29) and exemplified in (30):

- (29) C background contrastive focus V presentational focus (Hinterhölzl 2009, 52)
- (30) *liohtfaz thes lihhamen ist ouga / oba thin ouga*  
*light of.the body is eye if your eye*  
*uuirdit luttar thanne ist al thin lihhamo liohter*  
*uuirdit light/simple, then is all your body bright*  
(OHG, T 69, 21ff)

'The light of the body is the eye. If your eye becomes light/simple, then all your body is bright.'

Lat. *Lucerna corporis. est oculus. / si fuerit oculus tuus simplex. / totum corpus tuum lucidum erit.*

(adapted from Hinterhölzl 2009, 48)

In (30), the predicative element *ouga* 'eye' is in focus and is realized after the copula *ist* 'is' in the first sentence. In the following subordinate clause, *thin ouga* 'your eye' is background information and is therefore realized in a position preceding the finite verb *uuirdit* 'becomes'.

Testing these recent theories on a corpus of OHG RCs, Coniglio, Linde and Ruetter (forthcoming) show that the OV/VO order in RCs is determined by similar information-structural and discourse-structural properties. In particular, it is shown that narrow focus of the object in a RC is typically associated with a VO order, whilst contrastive focus or broad focus actually triggers an OV order. As expected, this is in line – but not always coinciding – with the observations made in Hinterhölzl (2004, 2009), as well as with the results found in Petrova and Hinterhölzl (2010), Schlachter (2004), among others.

Furthermore, Coniglio, Linde and Ruetter (forthcoming) point out a correlation between restrictivity and word order in RCs. Non-restrictive and restrictive RCs differ at a highly significant level in the linearization of verb and object, with a slight preference for VO orders in non-restrictive contexts and a clear preference for OV orders in restrictive RCs. This is interpreted as having to do with the different illocutionary and information-structural potential of the two types of RCs (cf. Holler 2005, 58 ff.).

Other factors sometimes discussed in the literature (weight of the object, definiteness, specificity of the referent, presence of a particle, etc.) did not yield any statistically significant results with respect to the linearization of verb and object.

If we interpret the data in our corpus in the light of such theories, many cases of VO orders are only apparent cases of V2. They are 'superficially' V2 orders, but are rather to be analyzed as V-late or V-final orders. Consider another example for a RC with a surface V2 order:

- (31) [...] dhiu chrumba nadra [...] dhea **chisaughida** gotes uuordes [...] (I IX,10)  
 the crooked viper that suckled God.GEN word.GEN  
 '[...] the crooked viper [...] that suckled God's word [...]'  
 [<sub>CP</sub> dhea ... [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>V</sub> chisaughida ] [<sub>DP</sub> gotes uuordes ] ] ]

If we accept these recent theoretical approaches to OHG syntax, the verb *chisaughida* could be interpreted as being *in situ* or at least in a low position. That means that it has not moved to C. In turn, the object *gotes uuordes* is either *in situ* or has moved to a position following the verb, assumedly for focus reasons.

In the present investigation, we refrain from presenting a possible data distribution in the light of these recent syntactic investigations, since the attempt of determining “covert” sentence-final VO orders would be highly aleatory. Nonetheless, under a certain interpretation of the data in our corpus, the exclusion of apparent V2 cases would yield neater correlations between specificity, mood and verb position, as illustrated in figure 3.

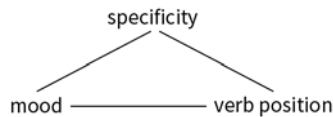


Figure 3. Correlations in OHG (interpreted according recent theoretical proposals)

This amounts to saying that while, on the one hand, the data in our corpus clearly show only a correlation between specificity and mood, their interpretation according to recent syntactic theories could lead to a different scenario in which the three variables perfectly interact with each other. This aspect is left for further investigation, possibly one based on more data.

Before presenting the syntactic analysis, we should consider the possible effects of another variable, namely restrictivity. The latter was argued to play a fundamental role for the linearization of verb and object in Coniglio, Linde and Ruetter (forthcoming). The following examples illustrate the case of a restrictive RC with the subjunctive and of a non-restrictive RC with the indicative mood respectively:

- (32) neouueht [...], daz fer **sii**, (Ben.Reg. 2)  
 nothing that far is.SUBJ  
 ‘nothing [...] that is far away/abstracted’
- (33) [...] osee propheta, dher **quhad** heilegu gheistu: (I VIII, 3)  
 Hosea prophet who said Holy.INSTR Ghost.INSTR  
 ‘[...] Prophet Hosea, who said inspired by the Holy Spirit.’

The distribution of verbal mood *vis-à-vis* restrictivity is represented in table 4.

Table 4. Restrictivity and mood  
Fisher Exact p =.0122;  $\phi$ : -0.19

	indicative	subjunctive	na
restrictive	100	15	0
non-restrictive	59	1	2
free	38	5	1
na	25	3	1

Free RCs were excluded from calculation, since they are a special class of RCs (probably similar to restrictive RCs with a null antecedent). If we compare only restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, we observe that, whereas the indicative is always the preferred mood for both restrictive and non-restrictive RCs, restrictive RCs are more prone to exhibiting subjunctive verb forms than non-restrictive RCs. This is probably connected to the fact that the subjunctive is a mood typically marking subordination. It is unlikely to find the subjunctive in a non-restrictive RC, given its higher illocutionary potential.

For this survey, other factors that possibly influence mood alternation were also tested (position of the RC with respect to the main clause, presence of a relative particle, grammatical function of the relativizer, etc.), but none of these proved to be statistically significant.

## 6 Syntactic Analysis

Let us now briefly consider the syntactic licensing of the subjunctive. There are several approaches as to where mood is encoded. Different works indicate that its licensing must affect (part of) the C-domain or the I-domain (or both). As to the encoding of mood in the C-layer, some works discuss evidence indicating that Rizzi's (1997) *Fin*<sup>o</sup> (or another projection in the C-domain) could be responsible for the licensing of indicative/subjunctive alternations. Just to cite some of them, Giorgi (2009) and Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) link Complementizer Deletion and mood alternation in Italian to the presence or absence of a projection (or a feature) in the C-layer (cf. Poletto 1995, 2000), where the speaker's coordinates are represented (also cf. Costantini 2009). Furthermore, and with respect to Southern Italian dialects, Ledgeway (2012) argues for the existence of realis and irrealis complementizers merged in different positions and links them to verb movement (also cf. Mensching 2012 on Southern Sardinian). Roberts and Roussou (2003, 88) also assume the realization of the

Southern Italian modal complementizer *mu* in the C-domain, analogously to the Greek particle *na*.

As an alternative, the encoding of indicative/subjunctive mood could be assumed to involve a projection in the I-domain, such as Cinque's (1999) Mood<sub>irrealis</sub> projection. However, some authors assume that such a Mood projection should be located in C. Interestingly, based on evidence from Salentino and Southern Calabrian, Damonte (2010) combines the two approaches and proposes that the subjunctive is licensed via mood concord between the CP and the IP (cf. Rivero 1988, Calabrese 1993). For ease of representation, I will make use of a projection Mood below without specifying whether it is located in the C-domain or in the I-domain (or in both). In fact, this point is not crucial and has no particular consequences for the present analysis.

With respect to a possible syntactical encoding of specificity, instead, two main proposals have so far been put forward in the literature. A first group of authors have argued for the existence of a projection for specificity (SP) above the DP (cf. Enç 1991, Guillemin 2007, Zamparelli 2000). Alternatively, one could assume that a feature is realized in D (or a specificity operator in SpecD), which determines whether a referent is specific or not (Campbell 1996; Sio 2008; cf. Cardinaletti, Giusti 1992, 2002). Though the present analysis does not hinge on a feature-based approach, I will use this approach in the following discussion.

Before putting all the ingredients together, I would like to observe that, for the analysis below, I will adopt a notion of Agree as defined in Zeijlstra (2012), in which the goal *c*-commands the probe (so called *upward Agree*):

(34) *Agree*:

$\alpha$  can Agree with  $\beta$  iff:

- a.  $\alpha$  carries at least one uninterpretable feature and  $\beta$  carries a matching interpretable feature.
- b.  $\beta$  *c*-commands  $\alpha$ .
- c.  $\beta$  is the closest goal to  $\alpha$ .

(Zeijlstra 2012, 514)

This definition does not reflect the standard view on Agree (cf. Chomsky 2000, 2001; and successive modifications such as Pesetsky and Torrego 2007; Bošković 2007, etc.), but – besides accounting for various phenomena – Zeijlstra's (2012) proposal can explain the phenomena discussed above in a more straightforward and elegant way.

Let us assume now that a projection Mood is responsible for the licensing of the indicative or the subjunctive mood. The RC, in turn, is assumed to be base-generated in the spine of the matrix DP (cf. Cinque 2008a, 2008b, 2013).

In the case of the indicative, the verb in the RC is the carrier of morphological specifications and exhibits an uninterpretable feature [uInd].

This feature is interpretable on the head Mood. As represented in (35), the uninterpretable feature probes for its interpretable counterpart in Mood and gets checked via Agree. In turn, Mood is assumed to display an uninterpretable specificity feature [uSpec], which probes for its interpretable counterpart, which is necessarily encoded on the D head of the antecedent of the RC:<sup>6</sup>

- (35)  $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{DP} \\ \text{D} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{iSpec}] \\ [\text{uSpec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{CP-Rel} \\ \text{Mood} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{iInd}] [\text{uSpec}] \\ [\text{iInd}] [\text{uSpec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{V} \\ \text{uInd} \end{array} \right] \dots \text{NP} \right]$  *Agree*  
 $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{DP} \\ \text{D} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{iSpec}] \\ [\text{uSpec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{CP-Rel} \\ \text{Mood} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{iInd}] [\text{uSpec}] \\ [\text{iInd}] [\text{uSpec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{V} \\ \text{uInd} \end{array} \right] \dots \text{NP} \right]$  → indicative

Hence, the indicative is licensed in the presence of a specific referent.<sup>7</sup>

Conversely, and as illustrated in (36), the presence of a non-specific referent in an irrealis context will be associated with the simultaneous presence 1) of an interpretable subjunctive feature [iSubj] on Mood, which will be probed by its uninterpretable counterpart [uSubj] on the verb carrying subjunctive morphology and 2) of a feature [u→Spec] on the same head Mood. The latter will act as a probe looking upward for its interpretable counterpart of the same feature [i→Spec] in D. If Agree is successful, the subjunctive will be licensed in such (non-specific) cases:

- (36)  $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{DP} \\ \text{D} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{i→Spec}] \\ [\text{u→Spec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{CP-Rel} \\ \text{Mood} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{iSubj}] [\text{u→Spec}] \\ [\text{iSubj}] [\text{u→Spec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{V} \\ \text{uSubj} \end{array} \right] \dots \text{NP} \right]$  *Agree*  
 $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{DP} \\ \text{D} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{i→Spec}] \\ [\text{u→Spec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{CP-Rel} \\ \text{Mood} \end{array} \begin{array}{l} [\text{iSubj}] [\text{u→Spec}] \\ [\text{iSubj}] [\text{u→Spec}] \end{array} \dots \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{V} \\ \text{uSubj} \end{array} \right] \dots \text{NP} \right]$  → subjunctive

This approach can straightforwardly explain why, in an appositive RC, the referent is typically specific (and, thus, why the subjunctive cannot be licensed). Given their semantic properties, appositives are interpreted as being merged above the DP, thus being outside the scope of the specificity feature in D, as shown in (37a). They are assumed to exhibit an interpretable feature [iSpec]/[i→Spec], given that – because of their appositive character – their (non-)specificity must be independently interpretable. Notice that, as (37b) shows, a feature [u→Spec] could not probe downward

6 One could wonder how this syntactic licensing mechanism can work under Chomsky's (2001) phase theory. How can Agree take place across phase boundaries? A similar issue is discussed in Zeijlstra 2012, in which the author proposes that Agree is only possible if an equivalent feature is also present at the phase edge. In the case at hand, this means that a feature related to specificity must necessarily be encoded in the C-domain (or in the C and I-domain at the same time, cf. Damonte 2010).

7 At this point, it should be noted that, in such case, an (uninterpretable) feature [uV] is optionally realized in the C head of the RC requiring the movement of the verb to the C-domain in V2 RCs. As an alternative, the optional movement of the verb to C could be explained by the necessity for the event argument of the verb in the RC to be anchored with respect to the utterance situation (Catasso, Hinterhölzl 2016, 117).



to agree with a possible interpretable counterpart in D, given that under Zeijlstra's (2012) approach the goal must c-command the probe:

- (37) a. [CP-Rel ... Mood<sub>[iInd] [iSpec]</sub> ... V<sub>[uInd]</sub>] ... [DP D<sub>[iSpec]</sub> ... ]  
 b. [CP-Rel ... Mood<sub>[iSubj] [u-Spec]</sub> ... V<sub>[uSubj]</sub>] ... [DP D<sub>[i-Spec]</sub> ... ]
- 

Before concluding, a short remark is necessary at this point. As pointed out above, the indicative mood is also very frequently attested in non-specific or *de dicto* contexts in OHG. This might indicate that a drift towards the indicative is already taking place during this period (probably a drift similar to the one taking place in Colloquial Italian). This will ultimately lead to the complete loss of the subjunctive in RCs, as we have seen for MG. If we espouse the syntactic modelling above, we must conclude that, while the specificity feature still plays a role in MG (in determining verb position, for example), the possibility for the realization of a subjunctive feature both on the verb and on the head Mood has become obsolete in the course of time. Something was probably already going on during the OHG period, given that the indicative was realized in the majority of cases even when the subjunctive would have been expected. This change is probably linked to notorious significant morphological changes occurring in the early stages of German, such as the emergence of periphrastic forms realizing mood alternations and, more importantly, the weakening and levelling of verbal endings with the consequent loss of mood distinctions in many cases. This amounts to saying that, syntactically, the ambiguous verb morphology has led to the reinterpretation of the feature on the verb and on Mood as a default [Ind] feature. However, since more data (also from the following periods) would be needed to support the analysis, this point should be left for further research.

## 7 Conclusions

Let us summarize the results of the present investigation. For OHG, a correlation was shown to hold between the (non-)specificity of the referent and the realization of the indicative/subjunctive mood in RCs, which is very similar to a correlation observed in RCs of the Romance languages. A link between specificity and verb position, as observed for MG, could not be proven based on corpus data. Nonetheless, a theoretical interpretation of the data collected would lead to perfect correlations between specificity, mood and verb position.

In the course of time, German has lost the use of the subjunctive in RCs with a non-specific referent, a process that has probably already started

in OHG (presumably in a way similar to present-day Colloquial Italian). However, specificity still plays a role in determining the position of the verb thereby allowing V2 orders in specific contexts.

The licensing of the subjunctive was modelled according to an upward Agree mechanism involving mood specifications on the head Mood and on the verb, as well as a feature checking mechanism linking Mood to D allowing for the (non-)specificity of the referent to display its syntactic effects in the RC.

The syntactic change was interpreted in such a way that, in MG, the possibility to realize a subjunctive feature has been lost, probably due to the loss of unambiguous morphological mood specifications on the verb.

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## Le espressioni assiali in russo

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**Abstract** In this paper I discuss Russian prepositional phrases introduced by axial part lexical prepositions (i.e. AxParts). Russian AxPart items are morphologically complex: they are formed by a functional preposition and a nominal element with different case markers, depending on the interpretation (stative or directional) of the locative expression. I analyze the internal structure of Russian AxPart items following the universal structure of locative expressions proposed by Cinque, focusing in particular on the impossibility of expressing an additional complement in directional AxPart PPs. I discuss, in addition, the nominal nature of the axial elements in relation to the hypothesis of the presence of a silent nominal element (PLACE) embedded in the syntactic structure of locative PPs.

**Sommario** 1 Introduzione. – 1.2 Preposizioni funzionali e lessicali in russo. – 2 La struttura complessa dei sintagmi preposizionali. – 3 Le parti assiali in russo. – 4 Discussione. – 5 Note conclusive.

**Keywords** Russian. PP. Lexical prepositions. Axial parts.

### 1 Introduzione

I sintagmi preposizionali sono tra gli elementi più frequentemente utilizzati dalle lingue per esprimere le relazioni di tipo spaziale. In anni recenti sono apparsi numerosi studi che hanno esaminato questi costituenti in ottica comparativa, sia in un quadro teorico di carattere generativo sia di carattere tipologico.<sup>1</sup> Tra le proprietà più interessanti a livello comparativo che sono state prese in esame da questa letteratura c'è il fatto che praticamente in tutte le famiglie linguistiche esistono due tipi diversi di preposizioni di tipo locativo: le preposizioni definite in genere 'semplici' o 'funzionali' e le preposizioni definite 'complesse' o 'lessicali'. Anche se le definizioni che separano i due gruppi non sono sempre univoche, in ogni lingua si può vedere come la distribuzione sintattica dei due tipi sia diversa, e che dal punto di vista semantico il contributo interpretativo delle preposizioni funzionali sia sempre meno complesso rispetto a quello introdotto dalle preposizioni lessicali. A titolo di esempio, riporto due casi esaminati da

1 Si veda tra molti altri Bloom et al. 1996; Haumann, Schierholz 1997; Šarič, Reindl 2001; Feigenbaum, Kurzon 2002; Cuyckens, Radden 2002; Levinson, Wilkins 2006; Saint-Dizier 2006; Svenonius, Pantcheva 2006; Asbury et al. 2008; Cinque, Rizzi 2010.

Cinque (2010, 4). In una lingua come l'italiano, la preposizione funzionale ablativa *da* richiede obbligatoriamente un complemento (1a) e non può subire un processo di *preposition stranding* (2a), mentre la preposizione lessicale *sopra* non presenta restrizioni di questo tipo (1b-2b). Parallelamente, in Kĩtharaka, una lingua Bantu parlata in Kenya, le preposizioni puramente stative e direzionali non possono comparire in isolamento (3a) e non permettono la focalizzazione (4a), mentre quelle lessicali ammettono entrambe le possibilità (3b-4b).

- (1) a. Vengo proprio adesso da \*(Roma)  
 b. L'hanno messo sopra (la sedia)
- (2) a. \*Quale paese viene da?  
 b. A chi eri seduto sopra?
- (3) a. Maria a-mami \*(ĩ-kurungu-)ni. (Muriungi 2006, 30)  
 1Maria SM1-dormire (5-grotta-)LOC  
 'Maria sta dormendo (nella grotta).'
- b. Maria a-kari ru-ngu (rw-a ndagaca). (Muriungi 2006, 30)  
 1Maria SM1-sedere 11-sotto (11-Ass 9ponte)  
 'Maria è seduta sotto (il ponte).'
- (4) a. \*N-ĩ-kurungu Maria a-mami-ni. (Muriungi 2006, 31)  
 Focus-5-grotta 1Maria SM1-dormire-LOC  
 'È nella grotta che dorme Maria.'
- b. I-ka-raĩ Maria a-burabur-ir-e nkona. (Muriungi 2006, 33)  
 Focus-12-padella 1Maria SM1-pulire-PERF-FV 9fondo  
 'Maria ha pulito proprio in fondo alla padella.'

Dal punto di vista interpretativo, di norma le preposizioni funzionali esprimono i concetti base legati alla statività e alla direzionalità, mentre quelle lessicali codificano relazioni spaziali più complesse.

### 1.1 Preposizioni funzionali e lessicali in russo

In questo contributo intendo esaminare alcune caratteristiche sintattiche delle preposizioni lessicali in russo, concentrandomi su quelle che a partire da Svenonius (2006) sono definite «parti assiali» (o semplicemente «assiali»): espressioni di relazioni locative che fanno riferimento ai vettori proiettati nello spazio secondo i diversi piani assiali che partono dal luogo o oggetto di riferimento. Alcuni significati assiali prototipici sono quelli espressi, per esempio, dalle preposizioni lessicali dell'italiano come *sopra*, *sotto*, *dentro*, *fuori*, *davanti*, *dietro*, *accanto*, etc.

Ai fini di questo lavoro, considero le parti assiali che corrispondono a *sopra*, *sotto*, *(d)avanti*, *dietro*, *a destra* e *a sinistra*. Un primo aspetto da sottolineare è che i sintagmi preposizionali costruiti attorno a questi ele-

menti sono morfologicamente e strutturalmente complessi. Per esempio, nello stativo *pozadi doma* 'dietro alla casa', l'elemento *pozadi* è formato dalla preposizione funzionale *po* e dall'elemento nominale *zad* 'dietro' con una marca di caso locativo (Bubenik 2006, 191 ss.), mentre il complemento della preposizione è al genitivo. A questo, va aggiunto che alcune di queste preposizioni lessicali assiali hanno una controparte funzionale, derivata in diacronia dall'erosione fonologica della forma piena (in questo caso, per es., *za* < *zad*) e caratterizzata da una semantica non necessariamente locativa in senso stretto (per es. *za domom* 'dietro, oltre la casa', ma anche *golosovat' za nego* 'votare per lui').

Il contributo è organizzato nel seguente modo: nella sezione 2 presento in maniera sintetica i punti principali dell'analisi macro-comparativa proposta da Svenonius (2006) e Cinque (2010) e nella sezione 3 applico tale analisi alla struttura dei sintagmi preposizionali del russo che contengono una preposizione assiale; nella sezione 4 discuto alcuni aspetti problematici dell'analisi ed esamino alcuni casi specifici. La sezione 5 conclude il contributo.

## 2 La struttura complessa dei sintagmi preposizionali

I sintagmi preposizionali che esprimono relazioni di tipo locativo sono in genere più articolati dei sintagmi preposizionali che rappresentano argomenti di tipo diverso. Molto spesso, inoltre, il comportamento sintattico di questi costituenti non è uniforme anche all'interno della stessa lingua. Nonostante l'ampia variazione che i sintagmi preposizionali mostrano interlinguisticamente, ci sono alcuni aspetti comuni o molto diffusi, che possono essere spiegati assumendo alcune caratteristiche universali, probabilmente collegate alla rappresentazione cognitiva dello spazio. In questa sezione evidenzio alcuni di questi aspetti, analizzandoli nel quadro della struttura universale complessa del sintagma preposizionale proposta da Cinque (2010).

Le nozioni di 'statività/stato' e 'direzionalità/moto' sono, anche intuitivamente, distinte, tanto che normalmente sono codificate o da preposizioni diverse o da casi morfologici diversi in compresenza della stessa preposizione. Tuttavia, si può vedere, anche in famiglie linguistiche molto distanti, che questi due elementi possono essere compresenti, e che la marca di direzionalità implica quella di statività.

- (5) a. Ion vine **de la** magazin. (romeno; Zegrean 2007)  
 Ion viene da presso negozio  
 'Ion viene dal negozio.'
- b. Ta'wá-ci kani-**vee-tuk'** paǵáy'wa-y. (ute; Givón 1980)  
 uomo casa-presso-verso cammina  
 'L'uomo cammina verso la casa.'

Nell'esempio romeno (5a), la preposizione direzionale ablativa *de* è accompagnata dalla preposizione normalmente usata per lo stato in luogo *la*; analogamente, nell'esempio Ute (lingua uto-azteca parlata in Colorado) in (5b) compaiono entrambe le marche morfologiche di stato e moto a luogo. Sulla base di questa distribuzione, Cinque (2010) ipotizza che entrambi i significati di Direzionalità e Statività siano presenti nella struttura di un'espressione locativa; nel quadro dell'analisi cartografica della struttura sintattica questa nozione viene formalizzata assumendo che nella parta strutturale più alta ci siano due posizioni funzionali (in (6) etichettate come costituenti preposizionali, PP, ovvero *prepositional phrase*) che codificano questi significati; le lingue variano in base alla lessicalizzazione o meno del significato di Statività in presenza della realizzazione di quello di Direzionalità:

(6) [PPDirectional *de* [PPStative *la* [*magazin*]]]

Per quanto riguarda la porzione interna dei sintagmi preposizionali, ci sono molti indizi a livello comparativo sul fatto che il complemento nominale non sia selezionato direttamente dalla preposizione locativa, ma che la relazione spaziale sia codificata attraverso la mediazione di un classificatore o uno specifico elemento nominale. Per esempio, ci sono lingue in cui i sintagmi preposizionali contengono un elemento nominale che significa 'posto, luogo', oltre all'effettivo oggetto della preposizione:

- (7) a. cise or ta ahun. (ainu; Tamura 2000, 27)  
 casa luogo a entrò  
 'Entrò nella casa'
- b. naabu-qi-ra bai-ro. (tairora; Vincent 1973, 540)  
 casa-in-luogo è-lui  
 'Si trova in casa.'

Questi dati possono essere confrontati con i numerosi casi, attestati in diverse lingue, in cui il complemento di una preposizione presenta una marca di genitivo (o dativo), che codifica la relazione di possesso o inclusione ( $\subseteq$ ) di un elemento nominale nullo PLACE (una categoria introdotta da Terzi 2008). Questo avviene, per esempio, anche in italiano con moltissime preposizioni lessicali (*davanti alla casa, sopra di me*; cf. Garzonio, Rossi 2016). Nella teoria del sintagma preposizionale di Cinque (2010) si assume, dunque, che il complemento della preposizione sia un modificatore di un sintagma nominale [DPPlace], la cui testa è questo nome PLACE, che in alcune lingue è lessicalmente realizzato (la rappresentazione in (8a) non tiene conto della salita del complemento preposizionale in ainu):

- (8) a. [PPDirectional *ta* [PPStative [DPPlace [⊆P *cise* [ *or* ]]]]]  
 b. [PPDirectional [PPStative *sopra* [DPPlace [⊆P [*di me*] [PLACE ]]]]]

Infine, il DPPlace può avere diversi tipi di modificatori, tra i quali Cinque (2010) inserisce anche le parti assiali, ovvero degli elementi che codificano in maniera più precisa la relazione spaziale tra il predicato, le preposizioni direzionali o stative, e il complemento della preposizione. Va detto che in molti casi questi elementi derivano da (o sono anche in sincronia) dei nomi, per cui si possono avere due analisi divergenti: o sono veri e propri modificatori del PLACE nullo (come suggerisce Cinque 2010), o sono invece delle specifiche realizzazioni del nome PLACE (si veda l'analisi di Svenonius 2006). Nella sezione 4 considererò le parti assiali in russo in relazione a questo problema.

### 3 Le parti assiali in russo

Come anticipato nell'introduzione, in questo contributo mi limito alle espressioni assiali che corrispondono alla semantica di *sopra*, *sotto*, (*d*) *avanti*, *dietro*, *a destra* e *a sinistra*. Tradizionalmente queste preposizioni sono considerate un gruppo a parte rispetto a quelle primarie e a quelle di origine nominale o aggettivale. Timberlake (2004, 176 ss.) le identifica come preposizioni «prefissali». Un'analisi di tipo formale di questi elementi è stata proposta da Mitrofanova e Minor (2013), che hanno esaminato l'interfaccia sintassi/semantica delle preposizioni assiali in russo nel quadro della teoria di Svenonius (2006). Per quanto riguarda il gruppo di preposizioni assiali che prendo in considerazione, Mitrofanova e Minor hanno notato come la struttura dei sintagmi preposizionali che esse introducono sia parallela a quella proposta da Svenonius (2006) per espressioni inglesi come *in front of the church* 'davanti alla chiesa', con una sequenza di: preposizione funzionale, elemento assiale di natura o origine nominale marcato morfologicamente con casi diversi a seconda della preposizione funzionale, eventuale complemento della preposizione marcato al genitivo. In (9) riporto a titolo esemplificativo alcuni casi tra quelli considerati da Mitrofanova e Minor (2013).

	Stativo	Direttivo	Ablativo
(9)	a. na-verkh-u su-sopra-LOC v-verkh-u in-sopra-LOC s-verkh-u da-sopra-GEN	na-verkh su-sopra.ACC v-verkh in-sopra.ACC	s-verkh-u da-sopra-GEN
	b. po-zad-i a-dietro-LOC s-zad-i da-dietro-GEN	na-zad su-detro.ACC	s-zad-i da-dietro-GEN
	c. s-prav-a da-destra-GEN	v-prav-o in-destra-ACC na-prav-o su-destra-ACC	s-prav-a da-destra-GEN

Le parti assiali considerate possono essere suddivise in tre gruppi generali: stativi, direttivi e ablativi. Gli ultimi due costituiscono insieme la classe più ampia delle espressioni direzionali o di moto. Come si vede, in tutti i casi questi elementi sono complessi, articolandosi in preposizione funzionale (*na* 'su', *v* 'in', *s* 'da', *po* 'a, su'), elemento assiale vero e proprio, di natura nominale (*verkh* 'sopra', *zad* 'dietro', *prav-* 'destra'), e marca morfologica di caso, selezionata in base al gruppo (gli stativi presentano il locativo o il genitivo, i direttivi l'accusativo, gli ablativi il genitivo). Oltre ai casi esemplificati in (9), si può osservare come gli elementi corrispondenti alla semantica di 'sotto', 'davanti' e 'dietro' siano costruiti in maniera analoga: *v-niz-u* e *s-niz-u* sono le forme stative corrispondenti a 'sotto', *v-niz* è il direttivo, *s-niz-u* l'ablativo; *v-pered-i* e *s-pered-i* sono le forme stative per 'davanti', *v-pered* e *s-pered-i* sono rispettivamente direttivo e ablativo; analogamente ai casi in (9c), *s-lev-a* è lo stativo per 'a sinistra', *v-lev-o* e *na-lev-o* sono direttivi e *s-lev-a* è ablativo.

Le differenze tra le diverse costruzioni all'interno dello stesso gruppo sono prevalentemente stilistiche (si veda in merito Maier 1995). Inoltre, questi elementi sono in genere considerati sia come preposizioni che come avverbi, dato che possono essere usati senza un complemento (come del resto le parti assiali in italiano: è *caduto di sotto* rispetto a è *caduto sotto al/il tavolo*). Mitrofanova e Minor (2013) notano però che l'uso avverbale è generalmente obbligatorio con le varianti direttive e ablative, mentre gli stativi possono opzionalmente avere un complemento, di norma marcato al genitivo (o al dativo, ma non per quanto riguarda le parti assiali qui considerate; cf. Timberlake 2004, 176). Questa distribuzione è esemplificata in (10) e (11).

Direzionale					
(10)	a.	Mjač palla	poletel è.volata	v-verkh. in-sopra.ACC	(Mitrofanova, Minor 2013, 178)
		'La palla è volata in su/verso l'alto.'			
	b.	*Mjač palla	poletel è.volata	v-verkh in-sopra.ACC	dom-a. casa-GEN
		inteso come 'La palla è volata sopra la casa.'			
Stativo					
(11)	a.	Oni loro	stojali stavano	v-pered-i in-davanti-LOC	(mašin-y). macchina-GEN
		'Stavano davanti (alla macchina).'			
	b.	S-verkh-u da-sopra-GEN	(kryš-i) tetto-GEN	dymila fumava	truba. comignolo
		'Un comignolo fumava sopra (al tetto).'			

Applicando l'analisi di Mitrofanova e Minor (2013) al sistema cartografico proposto da Cinque (2010), la struttura interna di questi elementi è comparabile con la struttura universale delle espressioni preposizionali. In particolare, prendendo come esempio i casi di *pozadi*, *vverkh* e *sprava*, la morfosintassi del russo lessicalizza i diversi tratti della struttura funzionale delle espressioni assiali come mostrato in (12).

- (12) a. [PPStative *po-* [DPPlace [AxPart *-zad-i* [⊆P [*doma*] [ PLACE ]]]]]  
 b. [PPDirectional *v-* [PPStative [DPPlace [AxPart *-verkh* [⊆P [ PLACE ]]]]]]  
 c. [PPDirectional *s-* [PPStative [DPPlace [AxPart *-prav-a* [⊆P [ PLACE ]]]]]]

In (12a) la preposizione funzionale *po* codifica la statività, *zad-i* codifica la parte assiale dell'espressione locativa ('dietro'), con morfologia locativa collegata alla statività, e l'eventuale sintagma nominale complemento *doma* 'della casa' compare al genitivo perché interpretato come possessore di PLACE; in maniera parallela, *v* in (12b) e *s* in (12c) codificano la direzionalità (direttiva e ablativa rispettivamente), mentre *verkh* e *prava* lessicalizzano le parti assiali ('sopra' e 'destra'), con marche di caso collegate al tipo di direzionalità: accusativo per il direttivo e genitivo per l'ablativo. Ci sono però alcuni aspetti che meritano un approfondimento: la marca di caso sulla parte assiale, e l'impossibilità di avere un complemento (ovvero l'uso avverbale obbligatorio) con le espressioni direzionali. Nella sezione seguente discuto questi problemi.

## 4 Discussione

Come si è visto, diversamente da altre lingue dove le preposizioni assiali sono compatibili con la presenza di un complemento nelle espressioni direzionali (per es. in italiano *andare sopra alla montagna, nuotare sotto allo scoglio, cadere dietro alla casa*, etc.), in russo questi elementi normalmente ammettono un complemento solo nella loro variante stativa, per cui la semantica direttiva con la presenza di un complemento può essere espressa solo attraverso le preposizioni funzionali (alcune delle quali sono effettivamente la versione morfo-fonologicamente ridotta degli elementi assiali). In questo caso la preposizione realizza il tratto direzionale, mentre il significato assiale può essere spiegato assumendo che la preposizione sia generata all'interno del DPPlace e venga mosso nella porzione funzionale alta della struttura del sintagma preposizionale, come mostrato in (13b); un movimento di questo tipo è alla base del processo diacronico di progressiva erosione fonologica e semantica di questi elementi:

- (13) a. Mjač                    uletel                    za                    dom.  
           palla                   è.volata                dietro/oltre        casa.ACC  
           ‘La palla è volata dietro/oltre alla casa.’  
       b. [PPDirectional **za** [PPStative [DPPlace [AxPart **za**            [⊆P [dom][ PLACE ]...]

L'impossibilità di avere casi come (10b) è spiegata da Mitrofanova e Minor (2013) proponendo che in russo il tratto direzionale (quello codificato nella proiezione PPDirectional nella struttura qui utilizzata) sia collegato a un tratto di orientamento, che viene interpretato in relazione a un punto spaziale dato contestualmente. In altri termini, nel caso di una frase come (14a), la traiettoria della palla (concetto introdotto dalla presenza della preposizione direzionale *v*) viene descritta assumendo un punto di partenza con un riferimento preciso (per es. la persona che ha lanciato la palla), per cui l'elemento assiale (in questo caso *verkh* 'sopra') può essere interpretato solo in relazione a questo punto di partenza (quindi 'sopra a partire dalla persona che ha lanciato la palla'), che costituisce dunque il 'possessore' del PLACE nullo.

- (14) a. Mjač                    poletel                    v-verkh.  
           palla                   è.volata                in-sopra.ACC  
           ‘La palla è volata in su/verso l'alto.’  
       b. [TP **Mjač**            [T **poletel**            [PPDirectional **v-** [AxPart **-verkh** [ PLACE]]]...VP]]

Il problema non si verifica con le varianti stative perché solo la proiezione direzionale è dotata di questo particolare tratto di orientamento. Dal punto di vista della derivazione sintattica, Mitrofanova e Minor (2013) propongono che la configurazione strutturale per ottenere la semantica



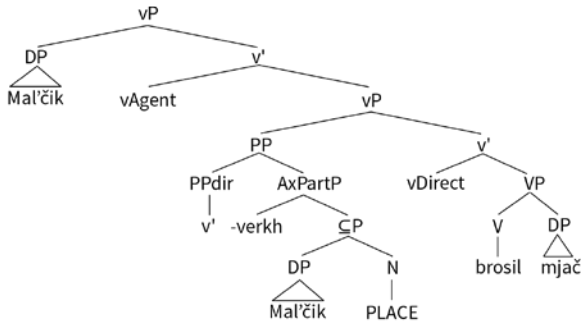
delle espressioni assiali direzionali preveda il movimento di un operatore nullo dalla posizione di AxPart a una posizione immediatamente dominata dalla preposizione direzionale. Io propongo qui un'analisi alternativa, basata analogamente sull'idea di movimento strutturale, ma che tenga conto dell'intero predicato piuttosto che del solo sintagma preposizionale. Infatti le espressioni assiali direzionali sono argomenti di predicati che richiedono o ammettono una componente direzionale (verbi che indicano movimento, che indicano spostamento, che indicano attività potenzialmente in movimento, etc.). Questo vuol dire che in questi casi la direzionalità non è attribuibile unicamente all'avverbio/preposizione di tipo assiale. In particolare, il punto di riferimento della traiettoria coincide con la posizione iniziale di uno degli argomenti che partecipano all'evento: di norma quello che si realizza come soggetto per i verbi monoargomentali, e quello che si realizza come oggetto diretto per i verbi biargomentali. Prendendo in considerazione due esempi come i seguenti, la traiettoria codificata dall'espressione locativa è computata in relazione al luogo occupato dall'agente in (15a) e al luogo occupato dall'oggetto in (15b).

- |      |    |  |             |              |              |        |
|------|----|--|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------|
| (15) | a. | Mal'čik                                  | brošil      | mjač         | v-verkh.     |        |
|      |    | bambino.NOM                              | ha.lanciato | palla.ACC    | in-sopra.ACC |        |
|      |    | 'Il bambino ha lanciato la palla in su.' |             |              |              |        |
|      | b. | Mjač                                     | poletel     | v-verkh.     |              | (=14b) |
|      |    | palla                                    | è.volata    | in-sopra.ACC |              |        |
|      |    | 'La palla è volata in su/verso l'alto.'  |             |              |              |        |

Partendo dalle considerazioni presentate nella sezione 2 sulla struttura profonda delle espressioni locative proposta da Cinque (2010), si può assumere che in questi casi il possessore del nome PLACE nullo sia anche un argomento del predicato. Formalizzando questa intuizione, l'analisi che propongo assume che in questi casi la posizione sintattica che ospita l'elemento interpretato come possessore di PLACE sia occupata da un pronome nullo coreferente con un argomento del verbo. Più precisamente, prendendo per esempio in considerazione il caso del verbo biargomentale in (15a), la derivazione all'interno della struttura del predicato procede come segue: la preposizione è generata come argomento del verbo; l'agente è generato all'interno della struttura del sintagma preposizionale, come possessore di PLACE; da qui viene mosso alla posizione che codifica l'agente, lasciando una copia cancellata a livello di forma fonologica nella posizione originaria. L'analisi è rappresentata in (16) (la porzione alta della struttura frasale è omessa per ragioni di spazio):<sup>2</sup>

2 Un revisore evidenzia in questo tipo di analisi il problema della doppia assegnazione di Caso all'agente/possessore, per cui si potrebbe pensare alla presenza nella posizione di possessore di PLACE di un *pro* coincicizzato con il DP agente. Va notato che l'assegnazione

(16)



Una prova a favore di questa analisi consiste nel fatto che è marginalmente possibile esprimere il punto di riferimento della traiettoria, ma solo attraverso un sintagma preposizionale introdotto da *ot* 'da' (quindi con un'interpretazione di ablativo, anche se il predicato è direttivo), che regge un pronome riflessivo. Questa configurazione enfatizza il punto di partenza del movimento, per cui è da considerare un particolare tipo di focus; per questa ragione si può assumere che un costituente come *ot sebja* in (17) non occupi la posizione interna all'espressione assiale *v-pered*, ma piuttosto una posizione di focus (per il rapporto tra focus e pronomi riflessivi in russo e, in generale, i riflessivi come copie realizzate di argomenti mossi, si veda Garzonio 2016, e la bibliografia lì citata):

- (17) malaec [...]grebet dvumja veslami tolkaja ikh **v-pered** **ot** sebja.<sup>1</sup>  
 malese.NOM rema due.STR remi.STR spingendo essi in-avanti.ACC da sé  
 'Un malese voga con due remi, spingendoli in avanti da sé.'

<sup>1</sup> Il passo completo, trovato attraverso il *Nacional'nyj korpus russkogo jazyka* è «А вот малаец, цвета красной меди, гребет двумя вместе связанными веслами, толкая их вперед от себя» [И.А. Гончаров. Фрегат «Паллада» (1855)].

Dal punto di vista della comparazione interlinguistica è interessante notare che anche in lingue come l'italiano o l'inglese, che ammettono normalmente un complemento con le preposizioni assiali nei contesti direzionali, ci sono alcune preposizioni assiali che hanno un uso esclusivamente avverbiale: per esempio in inglese alcune delle espressioni locative formate

di caso morfologico al possessore di PLACE può variare anche nella stessa lingua (come in italiano, dove si può avere genitivo, dativo o caso diretto: *sopra di noi*, *sopra a noi*, *sopra il tavolo*; cf. Garzonio, Rossi 2016). Adottando un approccio minimalista al Caso, in cui non c'è assegnazione ma verifica di Caso (per cui un DP deve riprodurre morfologicamente un caso in base alla posizione in cui è realizzato fonologicamente), si può assumere che tale verifica avvenga a livello di Forma Fonologica, per cui la copia silente all'interno del PP non ha una marca di Caso (che però è obbligatoria una volta che questa copia venga per es. focalizzata, come in (17)).

con *-ward(s)* sono solo utilizzabili come avverbi, senza un complemento; in italiano, si noti la differenza citata in precedenza tra *cadere di sotto* e *finire sotto al tavolo*, dove la variante avverbiale presenta una preposizione funzionale davanti alla parte assiale. Queste differenze dipendono dai parametri che determinano la struttura interna delle espressioni assiali. Si tratta in ogni caso di parametri lessicali, in quanto all'interno di ogni singola lingua si può osservare un certo grado di variazione. Per quanto riguarda il russo, si può dire che alcune preposizioni assiali ammettono effettivamente un complemento anche in contesti direzionali. Mitrofanova e Minor (2013) stessi discutono brevemente il caso degli elementi che corrispondono alla semantica di 'dentro'. Con questi elementi è possibile avere un complemento sia nei casi direttivi che in quelli ablativi:

- (18) a. Mjač      zaletel      v-nutr'      tank-a.      (Mitrofanova, Minor 2013, 188)  
 palla      è.volata      in-dentro.ACC      carrarmato.GEN  
 'La palla è volata dentro al carrarmato.'
- b. Golos      donosilsja      iz-nutr-i      tank-a.      (Mitrofanova, Minor 2013, 188)  
 voce      giungeva      da-dentro-GEN      carrarmato.GEN  
 'La voce giungeva da dentro il carrarmato.'

Questa differenza rispetto alle preposizioni assiali considerate in precedenza può essere spiegata dal punto di vista della semantica locativa di 'dentro', come fanno Mitrofanova e Minor (2013), che discutono le differenze tra la traiettoria espressa da *-nutr'* e quella espressa dagli altri elementi assiali: nel caso di 'dentro' il punto iniziale della traiettoria è semplicemente interpretato come esterno al possessore di PLACE, senza essere definito con più precisione. Dal punto di vista strutturale, si può notare come nel caso di 'dentro', l'elemento assiale, *nutr'*, non sia utilizzabile come sostantivo indipendente (contrariamente a *zad*, *pered*, *verkh*, *niz*, etc.); si trova solo il neutro *nutro* 'la parte interna, l'interno', derivato dal femminile antico russo *nutr'* (cf. Vasmer 1964-1973, s.v. «nutr'»). Per questa ragione, si può assumere che l'elemento assiale non sia più un nome indipendente come negli altri casi esaminati, ma lessicalizzi il tratto di direzionalità o quello di statività. In altre parole, si trova più in alto nella struttura, univverbandosi con la preposizione funzionale nella proiezione PPDirectional (19a) oppure PPStative (19b) e formando con essa una testa complessa:

- (19) a. [PPDirectional *v-nutr'*] [PPStative      [DPPlace [AxPart *-nutr'*      [⊆P [ PLACE ]]]]]  
 b. [PPStative *v-nutr-i*      [DPPlace [AxPart *-nutr-i*      [⊆P [ PLACE ]]]]]

Infine, per quanto riguarda la marca di caso sull'elemento assiale, si è già visto come questa dipenda dal significato stativo, direttivo o ablativo dell'espressione locativa nel suo complesso. La struttura delle espressioni assiali in russo può essere analizzata sia nei termini di Svenonius (2006),

assumendo quindi che l'elemento assiale sia in effetti il vero complemento della preposizione funzionale, sia nei termini di Cinque (2010), con una categoria nulla PLACE di cui l'elemento assiale è un modificatore. In particolare, il fatto che l'elemento assiale presenti una marca di caso 'selezionata' dalla preposizione funzionale, può essere interpretato come un fattore a favore della soluzione di Svenonius (2006). In realtà le due analisi non sono in vera opposizione, in quanto la categoria nulla PLACE è uno strumento della teoria formale per indicare che il sintagma nominale complemento di una preposizione funzionale locativa si riferisce necessariamente a un luogo. Considerando questo aspetto in termini tipologici, si può assumere che le proiezioni PPDirectional e PPStative abbiano la proprietà di selezionare un sintagma nominale che contiene un classificatore locativo. In alcune lingue questo elemento è effettivamente realizzato (per esempio in lingua chewa, dove non c'è una differenza sintattica tra sintagmi nominali e sintagmi preposizionali; cf. Bresnan 1994). In altre, il classificatore è nullo ma viene interpretato contestualmente. In russo questa interpretazione scaturisce dalla combinazione di preposizione funzionale e marca di caso realizzata sugli elementi nominali all'interno del sintagma preposizionale (quindi, nei casi considerati, sull'elemento assiale). Si tratta, dunque, di un particolare tipo di accordo morfosintattico. In termini formali, per analizzare questa configurazione, si può assumere che il nome PLACE nullo ricopra il ruolo di classificatore locativo e formi con l'elemento assiale una testa complessa muovendosi in struttura, come mostrato in (20):

(20) [PPStative *po-* [DPPlace [AxPart PLACE -*zad-i* [ $\subseteq$ P [*doma*] [PLACE ]]]] [locative]

Con questa struttura, si rende conto sia dell'interpretazione locativa dell'espressione assiale, sia della presenza di un altro nome al genitivo (*doma*) interpretato in maniera relazionale rispetto alla parte assiale (il 'dietro' della casa).

## 5 Note conclusive

In questo contributo ho preso in esame alcuni casi di avverbi e sintagmi preposizionali del russo che ricadono nella definizione di 'espressioni assiali', ovvero espressioni locative che esprimono non solo statività e direzionalità, ma anche la posizione relativa degli argomenti rispetto a determinati punti nello spazio e determinate direzioni. Dal punto di vista categoriale, la definizione degli elementi assiali è difficilmente collocabile nelle categorie grammaticali classiche, in quanto questi elementi hanno una distribuzione sia di tipo avverbiale, sia analoga a quella delle preposizioni lessicali. In

particolare, si è visto come nei casi delle varianti direzionali degli elementi presi in esame, l'uso avverbiale è l'unico ammesso. Partendo dall'analisi della struttura semantica di questi elementi proposta da Mitrofanova e Minor (2013), ho discusso la possibilità che la struttura interna di questi elementi interagisca con quella dei predicati in cui sono inseriti; in particolare, ho proposto che l'impossibilità di avere un complemento nei casi direzionali dipenda dal fatto che la posizione normalmente dedicata ai complementi delle preposizioni sia occupata da una copia non realizzata di uno degli argomenti del predicato. Inoltre ho esaminato alcune caratteristiche collegate alla natura originariamente nominale dell'elemento lessicale che determina la semantica assiale delle espressioni, in particolare il fatto che tale elemento abbia un caso morfologico determinato dal significato della preposizione funzionale che introduce tutta l'espressione assiale. Questo aspetto conferma la presenza di un elemento nominale all'interno delle espressioni assiali (per cui ho mantenuto l'etichetta proposta da Cinque (2010) di DPPlace, ovvero di un sintagma nominale locativo) diverso dal nome normalmente considerato come complemento della preposizione (in quale è invece invariabilmente al genitivo).

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# Interruzione dell'ordine lineare vs discontinuità sintattica

## Osservazioni da un *corpus* di dati da Petronio, Aulo Gellio e Gregorio di Tours

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**Abstract** This paper deals with Latin discontinuous nominal expressions (hyperbatons) both by a diachronic perspective internal to Latin (I-VI cent. A.D.) and compared to Romance languages. A nominal expression can be considered discontinuous when its word order is interrupted by one or more elements. In these cases a violation of the principle of the 'domain integrity' takes place. Discontinuity is typical of Latin and sets it apart from Romance languages, in which hyperbatons are not allowed. It is well attested in all phases of Latin so that it is considered one of the most distinctive features of Latin word order. In this paper, we explore the hypothesis that not all linearly discontinuous orders are real hyperbatons. In fact, cases in which the order Modif.-N or N-Modif. is interrupted by the complement of one of the two categories are frequent; in this perspective the domain of hyperbatons results consistently restricted. As regards real hyperbatons, we will propose the following three syntactic configurations: Type 1 due to the extraction of an element within the phrase; Type 2 due to the insertion of a weak element in second position; Type 3 due to the insertion of a verb. A final observation will concern the fact that we find in Latin kinds of hyperbatons that can be considered a clear sign of those that will develop later in Romance because they involve clitics which are absent in Latin.

**Sommario** 1 Introduzione e obiettivi. – 2 Note sul trattamento della discontinuità nella tradizione e nella linguistica moderna. – 3 Per una tipologia della discontinuità in latino. – 3.1 Discontinuità non-discontinuità. – 3.2 Discontinuità dovuta a estrazione. – 3.3 Discontinuità dovuta all'inserimento di elementi in seconda posizione. – 3.4 Discontinuità dovuta all' 'inserimento' di un verbo. – 4 Conclusioni.


**Keywords** Latin. Nominal syntax. Discontinuity. Word order.

## 1 Introduzione e obiettivi

Questo lavoro considera diversi tipi di espressioni nominali (d'ora in avanti EN) in cui l'ordine delle parole appare alterato dalla presenza di elementi di diverso tipo; alcune di queste EN presentano il fenomeno noto tradizionalmente come iperbato (o inversione) e definito nella linguistica formale *scrambling* (Ross 1986). Nel totale di queste EN saranno individuati quattro tipi di alterazioni dell'ordine e si argomenterà a favore del fatto che uno di essi non comporta un vero e proprio *scrambling* e, dunque, a

DOI 10.14277/2499-1562/AnnOc-51-17-15

Submission 2017-03-13 | Acceptance 2017-04-10

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differenza degli altri tre casi, non può essere considerato un esempio di discontinuità sintattica.

Nella letteratura linguistica recente sul latino, un costituente viene considerato discontinuo quando il suo ordine lineare viene interrotto da uno o più elementi appartenenti allo stesso dominio sintattico oppure a uno differente (Oniga 2007, 205; Spevak 2010, 274ss.; Ledgeway 2012, 53ss.). In questo senso, il fenomeno dell'iperbato coinciderebbe con una violazione del principio del *domain integrity* (Dik 1997, Bolkestein 1998, Rijkhoff 2002).

La discontinuità rappresenta un fenomeno tipico del latino, che lo distingue nettamente rispetto alle lingue romanze (Väänänen 1963, 163; Herman 1967, 83-8), in cui è invece estremamente limitato (cf. Giusti, Iovino 2014, 2016 per l'italiano). La discontinuità è ampiamente diffusa in tutte le fasi del latino (Pinkster 2005; Devine, Stephens 2006, cap. 6; Bauer 2009), tanto che è stata definita «the most distinctively alien feature of Latin word order» (Devine, Stephens 2006, 524).<sup>1</sup>

Tradizionalmente (Hale 1983, Jelinek 1984), la libertà dell'ordine delle parole e soprattutto la possibilità di avere ordini discontinui sono considerate prove fondamentali per sostenere la non-configurazionalità di alcune lingue. I dati discussi in questo lavoro intendono fornire un contributo empirico all'ipotesi sostenuta nel più ampio quadro dell'approccio sintattico allo studio dell'ordine delle parole in latino, che si propone non solo di descrivere l'ordine lineare, ma di comprenderlo in termini gerarchici e di ridurre la sua complessità a un sistema coerente di regole generali e, possibilmente, predittive (Devine, Stephens 2006; Giusti, Oniga 2006, 2007; Gianollo 2007; Iovino 2012; Ledgeway 2012). In questo senso, come osservato da Devine e Stephens (2006, 524), piuttosto che tentare di ricostituire l'ordine normale riavvicinando i *diseicta membra* dell'iperbato e ignorando l'ordine delle parole attestato, è più proficuo «to interpret the discontinuous elements of hyperbaton in the positions into which the syntax has put them on the basis of their pragmatic values».

In questo contributo saranno considerate tutte le EN caratterizzate da una alterazione dell'ordine degli elementi trovate in un *corpus* costituito dalla *Cena Trimalchionis* di Petronio (I d.C.), dal V libro delle *Noctes Atticae* di Gellio (II d.C.) e dal III libro della *Historia Francorum* di Gregorio di Tours (VI d.C.), allo scopo di proporre, a partire dall'osservazione dei dati, una tipologia delle alterazioni ammesse, distinguendo tra interruzioni a livello dell'ordine lineare (§ 3.1) e vere e proprie discontinuità sintattiche

1 Sulla base di Marouzeau (1922, 232), che osserva che «procédé de style expressif, mais facultatif, la disjonction est l'autant plus fréquente que l'écrivain est plus avide d'effets. On n'en trouve pas d'exemple dans les plus anciennes inscriptions [...] sauf dans celles qui ont un caractère littéraire et artificiel», lo studio di Spigariol (1990) precisa che la discontinuità è una caratteristica tipica dei testi letterari ed è quasi del tutto assente nel latino volgare.



(§§ 3.2-3.4). L'obiettivo è di individuare dei *pattern* strutturali, che, proprio perché ricorrenti in testi eterogenei dal punto di vista contenutistico, linguistico e cronologico, sono ascrivibili alla struttura della lingua.

Per quanto riguarda l'interruzione dell'ordine lineare, si vedrà che si tratta di ordini non discontinui sintatticamente, in quanto l'elemento che crea l'interruzione è il complemento di un elemento interno al sintagma (§ 3.1); si tratta quindi di un caso che condivide con la discontinuità sintattica soltanto l'alterazione dell'ordine delle parole e che limitatamente a questo può essere definito discontinuità di tipo zero. Rispetto ai casi di discontinuità sintattica, è possibile riconoscere i seguenti tre tipi: tipo uno, in cui un elemento interno a un sintagma viene estratto dalla sua posizione di base e dislocato in una posizione periferica a sinistra (cf. «left-edge fronting» Ledgeway 2010, 2012; Devine, Stephens 2006, cap. 6; Powell 2010) (§ 3.2); tipo due, in cui l'ordine è interrotto a livello di frase da un elemento debole che occupa la seconda posizione (posizione Wackernagel) (§ 3.3); tipo tre, in cui l'ordine lineare è interrotto a livello di frase dalla presenza di un verbo o, più raramente, da più elementi (§ 3.4).

L'analisi dei dati metterà in evidenza come la classificazione a livello empirico dei diversi *pattern* strutturali non sia esente da problemi sia perché, ad esempio, tipi distinti sembrano potersi talvolta sovrapporre, sia perché lo *status* categoriale degli elementi presenti, come nel caso degli elementi in seconda posizione, oppure la natura delle posizioni sintattiche coinvolte, possono essere incerti.

## 2 Note sul trattamento della discontinuità nella tradizione e nella linguistica moderna

Quello dell'iperbato è un fenomeno ben noto sin dall'antichità.<sup>2</sup> Per limitarsi all'ambito latino, Cicerone (*Rhet. Her.* 4, 44) ne parla come di una *transgressio [...] quae verborum perturbat ordinem*, e sulla stessa linea si colloca Quintiliano (*inst.* 8,6,62-66),<sup>3</sup> che definisce l'*hyperbaton* come un fenomeno di *verbi transgressio*, in base a quanto la *ratio compositionis* e il *decor* del periodo richiedono.

Nel *Corpus Grammaticorum Latinorum* (CGL), si trovano 32 occorrenze del termine *hyperbaton*. Ad esempio, Carisio fa riferimento al fatto che l'iperbato coincide con un'*oratio diducta uerbis non suo loco positis* (*Ars*, K. Barwick 1964<sup>2</sup>, 362, 15), mentre Donato afferma che l'*hyperbaton*

2 Per un ampio *excursus* sull'*hyperbaton* nella retorica antica (sia greca sia latina) con accenni a quella moderna, cf. Torzi 2000, cap. 4; 2007, 95-102 e bibliografia ivi citata. Cf. anche Hofmann, Szantyr [1965] 2002, 11-9; 280-1.

3 Sulla teoria generale dell'*ordo verborum* in Quintiliano, cf. Calcante 1993.

*est transcensio quaedam uerborum ordinem turbans* (*Ars maior*, L. Holtz 1981, 670, 6). Dunque, in entrambi i casi l'iperbato viene considerato come una 'deviazione', che si può comprendere solo se si ipotizza che avvenga a partire da un ordine sentito come *naturalis*, cioè 'normale', secondo la definizione di Quintiliano (*Inst.* 9,4,23).

La letteratura moderna di ambito linguistico<sup>4</sup> propone per il latino una distinzione generale tra un tipo di discontinuità dovuta a un elemento interno al sintagma,<sup>5</sup> e un tipo in cui un sintagma viene interrotto da elementi appartenenti a un costituente diverso.<sup>6</sup>

Nell'esempio (1), l'ordine A-N è interrotto dal complemento del nome in genitivo, mentre in (2) il medesimo ordine è interrotto dalla preposizione *cum*: entrambi questi elementi sono interni al sintagma. In (3) e in (4) si trovano, invece, degli esempi in cui la linearità del costituente è interrotta da un elemento esterno al sintagma, come un verbo (3), un sintagma preposizionale (4a), un pronome e un verbo (4b), una congiunzione e un pronome (4c). Nella prospettiva adottata in questo lavoro, soltanto gli esempi (2)-(4) possono essere definiti sintatticamente discontinui:

- |        |   |                     |
|--------|---|---------------------|
| (1)    | <i>infestam rei publicae pestem</i> (Cic. <i>Cat.</i> 1,11)               | (Ledgeway 2012, 43) |
|        | (lett. rovinoso per la repubblica flagello)                               |                     |
| (2)    | <i>magno cum dolore</i> (Cic. <i>Quint.</i> 2,3)                          | (Ledgeway 2012, 43) |
|        | (lett. grande con dolore)   |                     |
| (3)    | <i>nostram [...] ridebant invidiam</i> (Petron. 14,7)                     | (Ledgeway 2012, 44) |
|        | (lett. la nostra deridevano indignazione)                                 |                     |
| (4) a. | <i>magnae ex finitimis civitatibus copiae</i> (Caes. <i>Gall.</i> 7,57,2) | (Spevak 2010, 276)  |
|        | (lett. grandi dalle città confinanti truppe)                              |                     |
| b.     | <i>multa mihi dant solacia</i> (Cic. <i>Att.</i> 4,18,2)                  | (Spevak 2010, 277)  |
|        | (lett. molti mi danno aiuti)  |                     |
| c.     | <i>orationes autem me duas postulas</i> (Cic. <i>Att.</i> 2,7,1)          | (Spevak 2010, 277)  |
|        | (lett. orazioni ma a me due richiedi)                                     |                     |

Sebbene le possibilità combinatorie offerte dal latino siano molteplici e creino un effetto che si potrebbe definire 'caleidoscopico', il contributo di Bolkestein (2001) mette tuttavia in evidenza che non tutti gli ordini pos-

4 Cf., tra gli altri, Adams 1971; Kessler 1995; Spevak 2010, ch. 6; Ledgeway 2012, 53-5.

5 Cf. Powell (2010, 169), secondo cui le parole all'interno di un sintagma nominale possono essere «separated, but [...] the noun phrase is not discontinuous, as everything inside it clearly belongs to it»; Spevak 2010, 272: «hyperbaton within the domain of the noun phrase»; e Ledgeway 2012, 43: «local disjunction».

6 Cf. Powell 2010, 163: «words that are or seem to be syntactically connected [...] occur some distance apart, separated by other words that are in grammatical terms less closely connected»; Spevak 2010, 274: «hyperbaton produced by alien elements»; e Ledgeway 2012, 44: iperbati «within the verbal domain».

sibili sono attestati con la stessa frequenza e che si possono individuare restrizioni che limitano la realizzazione di strutture discontinue. Questa osservazione viene condivisa anche da Devine e Stephens (2006), a cui si deve una classificazione formale delle strutture discontinue del latino, che prende come punto di riferimento il tipo di elemento coinvolto. In questo senso, gli autori distinguono tra: *genitive hyperbaton*, in cui il genitivo è discontinuo rispetto alla testa nominale nelle due configurazioni possibili: genitivo-testa (es. *ut avaritiae pellatur etiam minima suspicio*, in modo che anche il minimo sospetto di egoismo possa essere eliminato, Cic. *off.* 2,75) oppure testa-genitivo (es. *sive oblectatio quaeritur animi*, se si desidera il piacere dell'animo, Cic. *off.* 2,6); *postmodifier hyperbaton*, in cui un modificatore è distante dal nome perché quest'ultimo occupa una posizione più alta (es. *legiones conscripsit novas*, reclutò nuove legioni, Cic. *Phil.* 11,27); *premodifier hyperbaton*, in cui, al contrario del caso precedente, è il modificatore a occupare una posizione più alta (es. *hoc facto proelio*, fatta questa guerra, Caes. *Gall.* 4,13). Questa classificazione non tiene tuttavia conto di un fattore invece considerato da Powell (2010), relativo al numero di elementi che è possibile trovare tra i due *disiecta membra* della struttura che egli definisce «genuinously discontinuous». A questo proposito, Powell (2010) distingue tra «long-range hyperbaton» in cui un numero indefinito di elementi può intervenire a separare un nesso sintattico; e «short-range hyperbaton» in cui interviene un solo elemento che serve a enfatizzare l'elemento dislocato e a qualificarlo come focus (cf. *mise en relief* di Marouzeau 1922, 215ss.). Aggiunge a questi un terzo tipo, più raro, definito *double-focus hyperbaton*, in cui tanto il nesso sintattico quanto gli elementi che intervengono a interromperlo sono focalizzati. Rispetto a queste due classificazioni, di cui si terrà conto in quanto segue, in questo lavoro, dopo aver individuato le EN sintatticamente discontinue, si tenterà di classificarle anche in base al tipo di configurazione sintattica che realizzano e al livello di dominio sintattico coinvolto.

### 3 Per una tipologia della discontinuità in latino

In questa sezione saranno individuati e classificati i diversi tipi di EN trovate nel *corpus* caratterizzate da una alterazione dell'ordine degli elementi. Prima di passare all'analisi dei dati, è opportuno dare qualche indicazione quantitativa, riassunta nella tabella 1:

Tabella 1. Analisi quantitativa dei dati

Petronio (I sec. d.C.)		Aulo Gellio (II sec. d.C.)		Gregorio di Tours (VI sec. d.C.)	
Modif.-N	N-Modif.	Modif.-N	N-Modif.	Modif.-N	N-Modif.
A-N	N-A	A-N	N-A	A-N	N-A
20	11	9	11	22	4
Dim-N	N-Dim	Dim-N	N-Dim	Dim-N	N-Dim
5	0	0	0	3	1
Tot. 25	Tot. 11	Tot. 9	Tot. 11	Tot. 25	Tot. 5
Tot. 36		Tot. 20		Tot. 30	
Totale EN del tipo Modif.-N: $25 + 9 + 25 = 59$					
- A-N: $20 + 9 + 22 = 51$					
- Dim.-N: $5 + 0 + 3 = 8$					
Totale EN del tipo N-Modif.: $11 + 11 + 4 + 1 = 27$					
- N-A: $11 + 11 + 4 = 26$					
- N-Dim: 1					
Totale 86					

Nel *corpus* sono state calcolate un totale di 86 EN così ripartite nei tre autori: 36 in Petronio, 20 in Aulo Gellio e 30 in Gregorio di Tours.

In generale, le EN oggetto di analisi sono state suddivise in due gruppi principali. Il primo comprende quelle inizianti con un Modificatore (Modif-N), che riguardano oltre la metà del totale (59/86); il secondo quelle inizianti con un nome (N-Modif.), che costituiscono la parte restante dei dati (27/86).

Il modificatore in posizione iniziale può essere un aggettivo<sup>7</sup> o un dimostrativo. Per quanto riguarda la distinzione tra aggettivi e dimostrativi, come è stato notato da molti autori (Giusti 1993 e lavori successivi; Brugè 2002 in prospettiva interlinguistica; Giusti, Oniga 2006, 2007 e Iovino 2012 per il latino), sebbene lo *status* categoriale del dimostrativo sia sostanzialmente analogo a quello degli altri modificatori nominali, è opportuno sottolineare che il dimostrativo presenta la peculiarità di occupare la posizione di SpecDP, che, a differenza delle posizioni massimali che ospitano gli altri modificatori aggettivali (Cinque 1994, 2010), coincide con lo

<sup>7</sup> In questo lavoro il quantificatore *omnis* è stato incluso nel gruppo degli aggettivi in virtù della sua morfologia aggettivale; saranno trascurate le proprietà sintattiche che lo distinguono dagli aggettivi e lo qualificano come quantificatore per cui cf. Giusti, Iovino, Oniga 2015.

strato più alto della struttura sintattica, al confine con la periferia sinistra, nel quale viene assegnato il caso e viene verificata la referenzialità dell'EN (Giusti 2015, cap. 4). Per questo motivo si è scelto di distinguere i casi (più frequenti) in cui il Modif. è un aggettivo da quelli (meno frequenti) in cui il Modif. è un dimostrativo. È infatti proprio il diverso *status* categoriale dei due elementi alla base del dato empirico per cui sono pochi i casi in cui il modificatore coinvolto è un dimostrativo (9/86 nell'ordine Dim.-N e 1/86 nell'ordine N-Dim.) e soprattutto sono molto rari i casi in cui il dimostrativo è postnominale (si trova un solo esempio in Gregorio).

Per quanto riguarda gli elementi che interrompono l'ordine lineare, anch'essi sono di natura diversa, come si vedrà nelle sezioni seguenti: possono essere sia singole parole (nomi, verbi, congiunzioni, avverbi, aggettivi, pronomi) sia interi sintagmi (nominali e preposizionali).

### 3.1 Discontinuità non-discontinuità

Un primo tipo di alterazione dell'ordine delle parole riguarda i casi appartenenti al tipo qui definito zero, in cui un nesso Modif.-N oppure N-Modif. viene interrotto dal complemento di una delle due categorie.<sup>8</sup> Nella prospettiva adottata in questo lavoro di distinguere i casi di alterazione dell'ordine lineare da quelli di strutture realmente discontinue a livello della struttura sintattica, gli esempi discussi in questo paragrafo appartengono al primo caso e possono essere utili per distinguere gli ordini sintatticamente discontinui da quelli che non lo sono. Oltre a ciò, questi dati si collocano nella direzione di Ledgeway (2010, 2012), il quale propone anche per il latino l'esistenza di una struttura sintattica di tipo configurazionale. In questo senso, le deviazioni rispetto ad essa possono essere ascritte a due fenomeni: da un lato a un ordine delle parole grammaticalmente libero, dall'altro lato a un ordine delle parole pragmaticamente orientato. Per quanto concerne il primo, come è noto (cf. Ledgeway 2010, 2012 e bibliografia ivi citata), in latino un complemento può sia precedere sia seguire la propria testa; si tratta di un dato a favore dell'ipotesi che il latino occupi uno stadio intermedio nel passaggio da una configurazione a testa finale, che può essere ricostruita anche per l'indoeuropeo, a una a testa iniziale, tipica delle lingue romanze. Ciò significa, dunque, che in latino i casi in cui il complemento viene a trovarsi tra i due membri di un sintagma del tipo Modif.-N non solo non realizzano un ordine sintatti-

<sup>8</sup> Appartengono, dunque, a questo tipo le EN definite da Powell (2010) «not genuinely discontinuous» come [*via [multo longior]*], in cui l'avverbio *multo* modifica l'aggettivo *longior* ed entrambi modificano la testa nominale *via*, come mostrato dalle parentesi. Che non siano strutture sintatticamente discontinue è mostrato anche dal fatto che sono possibili in italiano in espressioni del tipo [*un piatto di lasagne [davvero buono]*], come notato da un revisore.

camente discontinuo, ma non danno luogo necessariamente a un ordine marcato degli elementi. Nel secondo, invece, è possibile includere tutti i casi di discontinuità sintattica in senso stretto, ottenuti, come si vedrà di seguito, mediante movimenti di elementi verso posizioni periferiche poste alla sinistra delle proiezioni funzionali.

In Petronio si trovano 5 casi di alterazione dell'ordine lineare dovuta alla presenza di un elemento interno al sintagma, che può essere tanto il complemento della testa nominale quanto del suo modificatore, come si evince dalle parentesi. In (5) sono riportati due esempi, in cui un complemento, rispettivamente all'ablativo (5a) e al genitivo partitivo (5b), interrompe l'ordine lineare tra la testa nominale e il suo modificatore:<sup>9</sup>

- (5) a. *Composita ergo in gremio Scintillae* [[indecentissimam **rubore**] faciem] *sudario abscondit* (Petron. 67,13)  
«Riaggiustatasi allora tra le braccia di Scintilla, nascose nel fazzoletto la faccia tanto più involgarita dal rossore»<sup>1</sup>
- b. *Sequebatur puer cum tabula terebinthina et crystallinis tesseris, notavique* [rem [omnium delicatissimam]] (Petron. 33,2)  
«Lo seguiva un valletto con una scacchiera di terebinto e dadi di cristallo, e notai in proposito un particolare estremamente raffinato»

<sup>1</sup> Le traduzioni dei passi di Petronio sono tratte da Ciaffi 1951.

In Aulo Gellio si trovano 11 casi di questo tipo, in cui il genitivo, come mostra il dato in (6a), è l'elemento responsabile dell'interruzione nella maggior parte dei casi (9/11). Inoltre, si può trovare anche un sintagma preposizionale (6b) o un complemento realizzato con un sintagma nominale all'ablativo (6c):

- (6) a. *Sed, opinor*, [assidua [veterum scriptorum tractatione]] *inoleverat linguae illius vox, quam in libris saepe offenderat* (Gell. 5,21,3)  
«Tuttavia, credo di poter dire che con la frequentazione assidua degli scrittori antichi, si era radicata nella sua lingua quella forma tante volte incontrata nei libri»<sup>1</sup>
- b. *Protagoram*, [virum [in studiis doctrinarum egregium]] *cuius nomen Plato libro suo illi incluto inscripsit, adolescentem aiunt victus quaerendi gratia in mercedem missum vecturasque onerum corpore suo factitavisse*. (Gell. 5,3,1)  
«Protagora fu un'eccezionale tempra di studioso, e al nome di lui Platone intitolò un suo celebre libro. Dicono che da giovane, per guadagnarsi da vivere, si mise a salario e si diede a trasportare carichi sulle spalle»

<sup>9</sup> Oltre all'ablativo e al genitivo partitivo, si trova anche un complemento al genitivo possessivo, al dativo, e all'ablativo modificato da un aggettivo.

- c. *Ostendebat ei Antiochus in campo copias ingentis quas bellum facturus comparaverat, convertebatque* [exercitum [insignibus argenteis et aureis florentem]] (Gell. 5,5,2)  
 «Antiocho gli andava mostrando, schierate sul campo, le ingenti forze che aveva ammassato per fare guerra al popolo romano, e faceva volteggiare l'esercito, tutto lustro con le sue insegne d'argento e d'oro»

<sup>1</sup> Le traduzioni dei passi di Aulo Gellio sono tratte da Bernardi Perini 1992.

A proposito dell'esempio di Aulo Gellio in (6a), è interessante osservare che la posizione prenominali del genitivo soggettivo non è casuale, bensì è attesa sulla base delle osservazioni in Giusti e Oniga (2006, 79-87; 2007, 85-92), i quali notano che il genitivo soggettivo è per lo più prenominali e precede, quindi, strutturalmente il genitivo oggettivo, indipendentemente dal fatto che siano realizzati entrambi. Ciò costituisce, pertanto, un argomento a favore del fatto che tutte le posizioni strutturali sono sempre disponibili, indipendentemente dal fatto che esse siano realizzate oppure no (cf. Ledgeway 2012).

Infine, in Gregorio di Tours si trovano 9 casi di questo tipo di discontinuità. Anche in questo autore il genitivo è responsabile dell'interruzione nella maggior parte dei casi (8/9), come si vede in (7a), ma si trova anche un caso di interruzioni dovuta a un sintagma preposizionale (7b). Si noti che l'esempio in (7c) riguarda un'EN complessa perché modificata da due aggettivi.<sup>10</sup>

- (7) a. *Quod cum Theudorico nuntiatum fuisset, quod scilicet regio eius fuerit ab extraneis devastata, Theudobertum, filium suum, in illis partibus cum valido exercitu ac* [magno [armorum apparatu]] *direxit* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,3)  
 «Quando la cosa fu raccontata a Teodorico, cioè che una sua regione era stata devastata da alcuni stranieri, egli mandò suo figlio Teodoberto in quel territorio con un nutrito esercito e grande apparato d'armi»<sup>1</sup>
- b. *Presbiter enim* [[amicitiam **cum beato Gregorio**] antiquam] *habebat* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,15)  
 «Questo perché il presbitero aveva con il beato Gregorio un'antica amicizia»
- c. *Tamen* [adquisitam [maximam [**Hispaniae** partem]]], *cum magnis spoliis in Galliis redierunt* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,29)  
 «Poi, conquistata grandissima parte della Spagna, tornarono nelle Gallie con ricchi bottini»

<sup>1</sup> Le traduzioni dei passi di Gregorio di Tours sono tratte da Oldoni 1981.

Visti gli esiti nelle lingue romanze, in cui la possibilità di realizzare questo tipo di EN è pressoché nulla, perché i complementi devono obbligatoriamente seguire la testa, ci si aspetterebbe che in Gregorio, autore più tardo dei tre, questo tipo di discontinuità sia meno frequente. Questa aspettativa viene tuttavia disattesa, dal momento che i casi di discontinuità di questo

<sup>10</sup> *Adquisitam* è un participio in *-tus* con valore aggettivale. Sulle proprietà verbali e nominali del participio cf. Pompei (2004), per alcuni dettagli sul participio latino cf. Iovino 2008 e bibliografia ivi citata.

tipo trovati in Gregorio di Tours sono più numerosi di quelli che si trovano in un autore più antico come Petronio (9 vs 5). Con ogni probabilità ciò può essere attribuito allo stile di Gregorio di Tours che, come osservato in Bonnet ([1890] 1968, 716-24), opta per un ordine delle parole studiato e molto costruito. Gregorio tende a porre in evidenza una parola in ogni frase, collocandola in una posizione inattesa, per lo più alla fine della frase. Gregorio predilige anche l'uso dell'iperbato, a cui spesso fa ricorso «mal à propos ou maladroitement» (720), costringendo il lettore a un difficile lavoro di ricostruzione dell'ordine.<sup>11</sup>

### 3.2 Discontinuità dovuta a estrazione

Il primo tipo dei tre tipi di discontinuità a livello sintattico si realizza all'interno di un sintagma quando un sottocostituente viene estratto dalla sua posizione di base per ragioni pragmatiche, e dislocato in una posizione periferica dove riceve un'interpretazione marcata (cf. «left-edge fronting» Ledgeway 2010, 2012). Nonostante si tratti di strutture sintattiche eterogenee dal punto di vista del tipo di sintagma coinvolto (NP, PP, QP), l'estrazione è l'elemento comune a tutti questi dati, indipendentemente dal fatto che l'elemento estratto sia il modificatore o il nome - rientrano, dunque, in questo gruppo tanto i *pre-* quanto i «postmodifier hyperbaton» di Devine e Stephens (2006) - e che l'elemento estratto superi uno più elementi - sono quindi inclusi anche sia «long-range hyperbaton» che gli «short-range hyperbaton» di Powell (2010).

Per quanto concerne il valore pragmatico di questi esempi, non si può procedere per generalizzazioni troppo ampie, in quanto non sembra si possa attribuire all'elemento dislocato un valore prestabilito di topic o focus. A questo proposito, sembrano del tutto valide le osservazioni di Marouzeau (1922), che nota come l'iperbato (*disjonction*) sia una valida possibilità per porre *en relief* un elemento in una posizione preminente.

In Petronio si trovano 5 casi di questo tipo. L'estrazione da una presumibile posizione di base, indicata con il carattere barrato, avviene, come si è detto, da sintagmi di tipo diverso, e in 4 casi su 5 riguarda un modificatore. Più in dettaglio, è possibile trovare l'estrazione di un modificatore al di sopra dell'elemento sintatticamente più alto, come si vede negli esempi (8), (9) e (10), in cui sono estratti dalla loro posizione di base, rispettivamente, il quantificatore *omnis*, un dimostrativo e un aggettivo dalla semantica oggettiva (la cui posizione di base è con ogni probabilità quella postnominale).

11 Per quanto riguarda la storia linguistica del latino, oltre che da una prospettiva diacronica, questa osservazione può essere rilevante anche dal punto di vista diamesico, e può sostenere l'ipotesi di Spigariol (1990), secondo cui la discontinuità è un artificio retorico limitato alla lingua letteraria.



nale cf. Marouzeau 1922, Iovino 2012); inoltre, anche un nome può essere estratto al di sopra di un sintagma preposizionale (11):

- (8) *Nam cum positus esset, ut nos putabamus, anser altilis circaque pisces et* [<sub>LP</sub> omnium [<sub>NP</sub> genera [<sub>QP</sub> omnium avium]]], *inquit Trimalchio* (Petron. 69,8)  
«Che, come servirono in tavola, così almeno ci parve, un'oca di allevamento con intorno pesci e uccelli di ogni genere, disse Trimalchione»
- (9) [<sub>LP</sub> His [<sub>VP</sub> repleti [<sub>NP</sub> his voluptatibus]]] *cum conaremur in triclinium intrare, exclamavit unus ex pueris, qui super hoc officium erat positus, «Dextro pede!»* (Petron. 30, 5)  
«Pieni di tali meraviglie, ci disponiamo a entrare nel triclinio, quando uno dei valletti, che era preposto a questo ufficio, “col piede destro!” esclama»
- (10) *Venit ergo* [<sub>LP</sub> galbino [<sub>VP</sub> succincta [<sub>NP</sub> cingillo galbino]]] (Petron. 67,4)  
«Così ella giunse con la veste tenuta su da una cintura giallina»
- (11) *Tandem ergo discubimus pueris Alexandrinis* [<sub>LP</sub> aquam [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> in manus] [<sub>NP</sub> aquam nivatam] infudentibus]] (Petron. 31,3)  
«Così finalmente ci mettemmo a tavola, con valletti di Alessandria che versavano acqua ghiaccia sulle mani»

In Aulo Gellio si trovano 4 casi di strutture discontinue a estrazione. In 3/4 l'elemento estratto è un nome (12), mentre nel caso restante si ha l'estrazione di un modificatore da un sintagma preposizionale (13):

- (12) *Ac se quidem dubitare super ea re dicit, posse autem videri putat nonnihil esse rationis in ea opinione, quod historia Graece significet* [<sub>LP</sub> rerum [<sub>NP</sub> cognitionem [<sub>NP</sub> rerum praesentium]]] (Gell. 5,18,2)  
«Egli dice di nutrire qualche dubbio in proposito ma ritiene che in questa opinione si possa scorgere una giustificazione etimologica: la parola greca *historia* significa “cognizione diretta dei fatti”»
- (13) *Nam et augendae rei et minuendae valet, sicuti aliae particulae plurimae; propter quod accidit ut quaedam vocabula quibus particula ista praepositur ambigua sint et utroqueversum dicantur, veluti «vescum», «vehemens» et «vegrandis», de quibus* [<sub>LP</sub> alio [<sub>PP</sub> in alio loco]] *uberiore tractatu facto admonuimus* (Gell. 5,12,10)  
«[La particella *ve*] funziona infatti sia da accrescitivo sia da diminutivo, come capita per moltissime altre particelle: e per questo avviene che talune parole a cui tale particella viene prefissata siano ambigue e si usino sia nell'uno che nell'altro senso: per esempio *vescum vehemens* e *vegrandis*, di cui altrove ci occupiamo con una più ampia trattazione»

In Gregorio di Tours si trovano 3 casi in cui viene estratto un modificatore da un sintagma verbale; un esempio viene presentato in (14), in cui il modificatore estratto è il dimostrativo:

- (14) *Tunc ille* [<sub>LP</sub> his [<sub>VP</sub> mollitus [<sub>NP</sub> his sermonibus]]], *ait: «Si egredior, conpraehensus a regi interficior et ego et filii mei vel omnes amici, qui mecum sunt adgregati»* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,14)

«Allora l'altro, come addolcito da queste frasi (lett. da queste addolcito frasi) rispose:  
 “Se esco, verrò preso e ucciso dal re e così sarà di me e dei miei figli e di tutti quelli che,  
 da amici, si sono messi dalla mia parte”»

Ipotizzare l'esistenza di una struttura sintattica soggiacente fa sì che negli esempi discussi in questa sezione sia possibile individuare sia la presumibile posizione di partenza dell'elemento estratto sia quella di arrivo alla sinistra (LP *left periphery* parallela alla *left periphery* della frase di Rizzi 1997, cf. Giusti, Iovino 2016 per una analisi dettagliata della periferia nominale in latino). Questa posizione non è ammessa in italiano (e più in generale nelle lingue romanze), lingue in cui le teste funzionali (T/D) sono occupate, rispettivamente, dagli ausiliari (o dai verbi) e dagli articoli, mentre restano vuote in latino, come si vede nelle strutture generali riportate di seguito e riadattate da Ledgeway (2012, 182), inerenti sia al dominio nominale sia a quello frasale:

- (15) a.  $[_{LP} \emptyset \quad [_{TP/DP} \quad [_{T/D'} \quad X_{aux/det} \quad [_{VP/NP} \quad V/N \text{ SX}]]]]$  lingue romanze  
 b.  $[_{LP} \text{SX}_{topic/focus} \quad [_{TP/DP} \quad [_{T/D'} \quad \quad [_{VP/NP} \quad V/N \text{ SX}]]]]$  latino

In generale, la mancata realizzazione delle teste funzionali in latino (ma non nelle lingue romanze) può favorire il movimento e l'estrazione di elementi in posizioni sintattiche più alte in cui si realizzano ordini sintatticamente discontinui (cf. Giusti, Iovino 2014). Ledgeway (2012) osserva che questo dato correla con il fatto che il latino opta per movimenti che prevedono l'attivazione di posizioni massimali, mentre le lingue romanze per movimenti che prevedono l'attivazione delle teste. In ogni caso, sembra possibile confermare l'ipotesi per cui anche in latino sia disponibile una struttura configurazionale completa: sebbene alcune proiezioni restino «dormant or inactive» (cf. Ledgeway 2012, 185), la loro esistenza è suggerita proprio dalla loro capacità di ospitare elementi dislocati.

### 3.3 Discontinuità dovuta all'inserimento di elementi in seconda posizione

Un secondo tipo di discontinuità può essere individuato dall'inserimento di un elemento in seconda posizione. In tutti questi casi l'elemento dislocato è il modificatore e il nesso è interrotto da un solo elemento. Si tratta, quindi, di esempi di *premodifier hyperbaton* e di *short-rage hyperbaton*.

Come è noto, soprattutto nella lingua letteraria, la posizione dopo la prima parola o il primo costituente (posizione Wackernagel) all'interno della frase oppure nella porzione di frase (il «colon», cf. Fraenkel 1932, Adams 1994) ospita i clitici, nelle lingue in cui questi sono presenti, o, più in generale, gli elementi deboli nel senso di accessori dal punto di vista sintattico oppure privi di contenuto lessicale (cf. Salvi 2004, cap. 4; Devine,

Stephens 2006, 282-7) e che dal punto di vista pragmatico possono essere considerati elementi tematici (cf. Pahnus 1982, 80-3). Rispetto all'indoeuropeo, in latino la gamma di elementi che può occupare la seconda posizione è ridotta e si limita ad alcuni avverbi, congiunzioni e pronomi, la cui collocazione nella frase non è vincolata alla seconda posizione, mostrando come, negli effetti, la legge di Wackernagel non fosse più attiva in latino. È altrettanto noto che il problema dello *status* degli elementi per cui si assume la natura di elemento debole è estremamente complesso (cf. Bauer 2009) non da ultimo perché in parte gli elementi deboli si sovrappongono alle particelle focalizzatrici (cf. Kroon 1995), che possono occupare la medesima posizione, come mostra anche l'analisi dei dati proposta di seguito. Nonostante ciò, allo scopo di proporre una organizzazione coerente dei dati, sembra comunque opportuno accomunare sotto la stessa etichetta, differenziandole da altre in cui la seconda posizione non è invece coinvolta, tutte le strutture discontinue ottenute dall'inserimento di un elemento in seconda posizione. L'attivazione della posizione Wackernagel rappresenta una delle cause della rottura della linearità del sintagma e mostra una stretta connessione con il fenomeno oggetto di studio anche in prospettiva interlinguistica (cf. Benacchio, Renzi 1987).

In Petronio si trovano 12 occorrenze di questo tipo di discontinuità. Gli elementi che occupano la seconda posizione possono essere di vario tipo; si trovano particelle focalizzatrici come gli avverbi *veluti*, *denique*, *ubique*, *quidem* o le congiunzioni *autem*, *enim*, nonché elementi deboli come i pronomi personali e indefiniti o i dimostrativi, tutti spesso monosillabici. Alcuni esempi sono riportati in (16):

- (16) a. *Flebat et Fortunata, flebat et Habinnas, tota denique familia, tanquam in funus rogata, lamentatione triclinium implevit* (Petron. 72,1)  
«Piangeva anche Fortunata, piangeva anche Abinna, tutta la servitù finalmente, come invitata al funerale, riempì di lamenti il triclinio»
- b. *Reliquos autem collibertos eius cave contemnna* (Petron. 38,6)  
«E attento a non prendere di sotto gamba i colleghi che ha intorno»
- c. *«Poteram quidem – inquit – hoc fericulo esse contentus; secundas enim mensas habetis. Sed si quid belli habes, affer»* (Petron. 68,1)  
«Certo – disse – avrei potuto accontentarmi di questo servizio, ché i piatti nuovi li avete. Ma, se qualcosa di buono c'è, lo si porti»
- d. *Sed, ut coeperam dicere, ad hanc me fortunam frugalitas mea perduxit* (Petron. 75,10)  
«Ma, come dicevo, a tanta fortuna mi ci ha condotto la mia disciplina»
- e. *Delectatus hac Trimalchio hilaritate et ipse capaciorem poposcit scyphum, quaesivitque quomodo acceptus esset* (Petron. 65,8)  
«Compiaciuto che ci fosse allegria, Trimalcione ordinò anche lui un calice più grande e volle sapere dall'altro che accoglienza aveva avuto»

L'esempio in (16e) è particolarmente interessante in quanto è il dimostrativo *hac* l'elemento debole che si trova in seconda posizione. Dall'osserva-

zione dell'ordine degli elementi emerge come la linearità potrebbe essere alterata tanto dalla presenza del nome *Trimalchio* a interrompere l'ordine *hac hilaritate* quanto da quella del dimostrativo in seconda posizione in quanto elemento debole; essendo difficile scegliere tra le due opzioni, non potendo stabilire con certezza quale sia l'ordine di base, ci si può limitare a notare la presenza di *hac* in seconda posizione.

Aulo Gellio restituisce 2 esempi di discontinuità legata alla seconda posizione. Gli elementi coinvolti sono in questo caso *tamen* e *autem*. Si noti anche la presenza del *quidem* a interrompere il sintagma *insincerus philosophus*:

- (17) a. Is **tamen** Protagoras insincerus **quidem** philosophus *sed acerrimus sophistarum fuit* (Gell. 5,3,7)  
«In effetti però, come filosofo, Protagora lascia a desiderare; ma dei sofisti egli fu il più acuto»
- b. *Cum Graecum **autem** vocabulum sit «soloecismus», an Attici homines qui elegantius locuti sunt uti eo sint quaeri solet* (Gell. 5,20,3)  
«Poiché “solecismo” è una parola greca, si dà il problema se sia stata usata dagli autori attici di miglior stile»

In Gregorio di Tours gli esempi sono 9 e gli elementi in seconda posizione sono l'avverbio *rursum*, le congiunzioni *ergo* ed *enim*, un pronome personale, una forma di *is*. Si noti anche l'interruzione di *in suam potestatem* dovuta alla presenza del verbo *redigunt* in (18b):

- (18) a. *A meridie habet Oscarum fluvium piscibus valde praedivitem, ab aquilone vero alius fluvius venit, qui per portam ingrediens ac sub pontem decurrens, per aliam **rursum** portam egreditur, totum monitionis locum placida unda circumfluens, ante portam **autem** molinas mira velocitate divertit* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,19)  
«Dalla parte di mezzogiorno c'è il fiume Ouche, ricchissimo di pesci, a nord scorre un altro fiumicello che, entrando attraverso la porta della piazzaforte, passa sotto un ponte ed esce dall'altra porta della città; tutto il luogo è circondato dal corso calmo di queste onde che, davanti alle porte, fanno ruotare con buona velocità i mulini»
- b. *Patratam **ergo** victuriam, regionem illam capessunt et in suam **redigunt** potestatem* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,7)  
«Conseguita quindi la vittoria, i Franchi occuparono la regione e la misero sotto il loro potere»
- c. *In talibus **enim** dolis Theudoricus multum callidus erat* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,7)  
«Certo Teodorico era molto astuto in questi inganni»
- d. *Quod videns Theudobertus ex ea reversus est, multa **secum** expolia ipse vel sui deferentes* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,32)  
«Teodeberto, vedendo ciò, se ne tornò indietro da quelle (regioni), portando lui stesso o i suoi molto bottino»
- e. *Cum **autem** haec Theudorico nuntiatum fuisse, iussi inibi sanctum Quintianum constitui et omnem **ei** potestatem tradi ecclesiae, dicens:* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,2)  
«Quando allora fu annunciato il fatto a Teodorico, il re ordinò che fosse reintegrato il santo Quinziano e gli venisse affidato ogni potere sulla Chiesa, dicendo:»

Per rendere conto di questi esempi, si può ipotizzare (cf. Salvi 2004, cap. 4) che la struttura della frase principale preveda una posizione che può ospitare un elemento dopo il primo costituente, che può essere di qualsiasi natura, ma non marcato pragmaticamente. Salvi (1994, 120) osserva infatti che il dominio di collocazione delle forme deboli non comprende la periferia, ma si limita alla frase centrale:

$$(19) \quad [_{XP} [P_{deb} \dots [_{VP} ]]]$$

L'analisi dei dati proposta in questo lavoro, in cui si è visto che, oltre agli elementi deboli, anche le particelle focalizzatrici possono occupare la seconda posizione, consente di aggiungere a questa proposta di analisi la possibilità che, almeno in quest'ultimo caso, possa essere coinvolto il dominio del CP (cf. Rizzi 1997), che sarà considerato nella sezione seguente; questa ipotesi richiede tuttavia ulteriore ricerca.

### 3.4 Discontinuità dovuta all'“inserimento” di un verbo

L'ultimo tipo di discontinuità si realizza anch'esso a livello di frase, coinvolgendo il dominio del CP, ed è dovuto a un verbo che interviene a rompere l'ordine lineare di un costituente. Questo ‘effetto’ può essere dovuto al movimento di una parte del sintagma nominale intorno al verbo e può, dunque, essere anch'esso ascrivibile a una estrazione.

Se i dati discussi in questa sezione condividono con parte di quelli discussi nella sezione precedente il coinvolgimento del CP, mostrando l'estrema complessità delle questioni implicate e le difficoltà di analisi, si differenziano tuttavia da essi per il fatto che un verbo è l'elemento che interviene a interrompere l'ordine lineare e non è coinvolta la seconda posizione. In questi casi, l'elemento che si trova a occupare la posizione periferica può essere tanto il modificatore (*premodifier hyperbaton*) quanto il nome (*postmodifier hyperbaton*).

In Petronio si trovano 14 casi di questo tipo, alcuni dei quali sono riportati in (20):

- (20) a. *Interim ego, qui* [<sub>CP</sub> *privatum* [<sub>TP</sub> *habebam* ~~*privatum*~~ *secessum*]], *in multas cogitationes diductus sum, quare aper pilleatus intrasset* (Petron. 41,1)  
«Io, frattanto, ritirato in me stesso, mi stillavo il cervello, perché mai il cinghiale fosse entrato col berretto»
- b. *Nec melior Scintilla, quae de cervice sua* [<sub>CP</sub> *capsellam* [<sub>TP</sub> ***detraxit*** *capsellam aureolam*]], *quam Felicionem appellabat* (Petron. 67,9)  
«Né più riservata fu Scintilla, che si sciolse dal collo un medaglioncino d'oro, che lei chiamava Contentone»

- c. *Nec non ego quoque ebrius, qui etiam* [<sub>CP</sub> *pictum* [<sub>TP</sub> **timueram** *canem pictum*]], *dum natanti opem fero, in eundem gurgitem tractus sum* (Petron. 72,7)  
«Ebbro del pari io pure, che del resto anche di un cane variopinto avevo avuto paura, mentre cercavo di aiutare il naufrago, finii trascinato nel medesimo gorgo»
- d. *Et ne* [<sub>CP</sub> *has* [<sub>TP</sub> **tantum ostenderet** *has divitias*]], [<sub>CP</sub> *dextrum* [<sub>TP</sub> **nudavit** *lacertum dextrum*]] *armilla aurea cultum et eboreo circulo lamina splendente conexo* (Petron. 32,4)  
«E, per non far mostra di quei preziosi soltanto, mise a nudo il braccio destro, che era adorno di un'armilla d'oro e di un cerchio d'avorio con una lamina luccicante all'intorno»
- e. *Ita* [<sub>CP</sub> [*tutelam huius loci*] [<sub>TP</sub> **habeam** *tutelam huius loci propitiam*]], *ut ego si secundum illum discumberem, iam illi balatum cluissem* (Petron. 57,2)  
«Fossi seduto lì vicino, dio mi protegga, ma a quel pecorone gli avrei già chiuso la bocca!»
- f. *Nunc* [<sub>CP</sub> [*oculum bublum*] [<sub>TP</sub> **vidi** *maiozem oeculum bublum*]] (Petron. 44,12)  
«Oggi un occhio di bue, se lo guardo, è più grosso»

È interessante osservare che in (20d), sebbene da un punto di vista lineare siano due le parole che interrompono l'ordine di *has divitias*, sul piano della struttura sintattica si tratta di un solo elemento, cioè di un verbo modificato da un avverbio (*tantum ostenderet*). Qualcosa di analogo si verifica nel caso di (18e): le parole che separano il nesso *tutelam propitiam* sono tre, ma da un punto di vista sintattico si tratta di soli due elementi, cioè un sintagma nominale di tipo Dim-N (*huius loci*), complemento del nome *tutelam*, e di un verbo (*habeam*).

In Aulo Gellio si trovano 2 esempi di discontinuità di questo tipo, entrambi riportati in (21):

- (21) a. *Sed et quispiam Samius athleta (nomen illi fuit Echeclous) cum antea non loquens fuisset* [<sub>CP</sub> [*ob similem*] [<sub>TP</sub> **dicitur ob similem** *causam*]] *loqui coepisse* (Gell. 5,9,5)  
«Ma anche un atleta di Samo, il cui nome era Echecleo, e che prima non era capace di parlare, si dice che acquistò la parola per un motivo analogo»
- b. «*Pluria*» *forte* [<sub>CP</sub> *quis* [<sub>TP</sub> **dixit quis** *sermocinans vir adprime doctus*]], *meus amicus, non hercle studio se ferens ostentandi neque quo «plura» non dicendum putaret* (Gell. 5,21,1)  
«Un amico mio, persona di notevole cultura, ebbe a dire una volta, conversando, *pluria*; ma davvero non per fervore di ostentazione, e nemmeno perché ritenesse sbagliata la forma *plura*»

Si noti che in (21b) si trova un lungo sintagma nominale formato da un indefinito (*quis*), un participio in *-nt-* prenominalmente con valore aggettivale (*sermocinans*) che modifica il nome (*vir*) a sua volta modificato da un participio postnominale in *-tus* con valore aggettivale (*doctus*) modificato da un avverbio (*adprime*).

In Gregorio di Tours i casi di questo tipo sono invece 7. In 6/7 casi, un verbo interrompe il nesso Modif.-N, mentre in un solo caso interrompe il nesso inverso. Un esempio per ciascun tipo si trova in (22):

- (22) a. *qui, perditam priorem coniugem, filiam Theudorici regis Italici, de qua filium habebat nomen Sigiricum, [<sub>CP</sub> aliam [<sub>TP</sub> duxit ~~aliam~~ uxorem]], quae valide contra filium eius, sicut novercarum mos est, malignari ac scandalizare coepit* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,5)  
 «[Sigemondo] egli, dopo aver perduto la prima moglie, figlia di Teodorico re d'Italia, dalla quale aveva avuto un figlio di nome Sigerico, sposò un'altra donna che, com'è costume delle matrigne, cominciò ad agire malvagiamente e a creare scandali nei confronti del figliastro»
- b. *Alaricus hanc [Trinitate] denegans, a regno et populo atque ab ipsa, quod magis est, [<sub>CP</sub> vita [<sub>TP</sub> multatur vita aeterna]]* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3, incipit)  
 «Alarico, che l'aveva negata (la Trinità), fu privato del regno, del popolo e, cosa più importante, della vita eterna»

Tutti gli esempi visti finora appartengono al tipo degli *short-rage hyperbaton*, in quanto un solo elemento (parola o sintagma) interviene a interrompere il nesso N-Modif. o Modif.-N. Appartenenti alla medesima tipologia, ma distinti dagli esempi discussi finora per il fatto di costituire esempi di *long-rage hyperbaton*, sono gli esempi in (23)-(25):

- (23) [<sub>CP</sub> pecuniam [<sub>TP</sub> quippe ingentem cum a discipulis acciperet pecuniam annuam]], pollicebatur se id docere, quam verborum industria causa infirmior fieret fortior (Gell. 5,3,7)  
 «Dai suoi discepoli riceveva una somma annuale veramente cospicua, per la quale prometteva d'insegnare come si fa, manovrando le parole, a rendere forte una causa debole»
- (24) *Indignamini, quaeso, tam meam iniuriam quam interitum parentum vestrorum, ac recolite, Thoringus quondam super parentes nostros violenter advenisse ac [<sub>CP</sub> multa [<sub>VP</sub> illis intulisse multa mala]]* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3, 7)  
 «Vi prego sdegnatevi per l'offesa che ho subito e per l'uccisione dei vostri familiari. Ricordate che un tempo i Turingi hanno aggredito con violenza i nostri cari ed hanno provocato loro molti mali»
- (25) *Erat ibi tunc temporis quidam Lytigius ex minoribus, qui [<sub>CP</sub> magnas [<sub>TP</sub> sancto Quintiano parabat magnas insidias]]; et cum se sanctos episcopus pedibus eius prosterneret, numquam, ut se ei subderet, movebatur, ita ut quadam vice uxori quae sanctos ficerat, pro ridiculo indicaret* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 3,13)  
 «A quel tempo viveva un certo Litigio, uomo di mediocre condizione, che procurava molte insidie al santo Quintiano. E mentre il santo vescovo si prosternava ai suoi piedi, l'altro giammai si degnava d'inchinarsi davanti a lui, così che una volta Litigio spiegò a sua moglie, per derisione, cosa faceva il santo»

Questi esempi sono caratterizzati dal fatto che solo una parte del costituente nominale (rispettivamente, l'aggettivo *annuam* e i nomi *mala* e *insidias*) viene lasciato a destra, separato dal nome o dal modificatore che occupa una posizione esterna al dominio della frase pragmaticamente marcata. Sarebbero necessarie ulteriori ricerche e un maggior numero di esempi per capire innanzitutto se questi esempi possano essere utili a documentare già in latino l'unico tipo di discontinuità ammesso in italiano moderno (quello dovuto a dislocazione a destra o a sinistra) e se ci possa essere

qualche collegamento tra questa ipotesi e il fatto che si tratti di *long-range hyperbaton*. Ai fini di questo lavoro va notato infatti che, indipendentemente dal fatto che si segua l'ipotesi di Herman (1967), per cui la perdita delle strutture discontinue dal latino alle lingue romanze procede di pari passo con il più generale irrigidimento dell'ordine delle parole, o che si propenda per quella di Spigariol (1990), per cui la discontinuità era un fenomeno marginale già in latino in quanto limitato alla sola lingua letteraria, il dato di fatto risulta incontrovertibile. A questo proposito, Giusti e Iovino (2014) osservano che nel passaggio dal latino all'italiano antico e moderno si osserva una progressiva riduzione degli ordini delle parole possibili nel sintagma nominale, oltre che la scomparsa delle strutture discontinue, quest'ultima connessa alle trasformazioni della struttura del DP in seguito allo sviluppo dell'articolo. In italiano antico (Benincà, Poletto 2010) e moderno (Benincà 1988, Benincà, Frison, Salvi 1988) si riscontrano soltanto le dislocazioni: quelle a destra esprimono qualcosa di dato che viene richiamato alla fine della frase; essendo l'ordine delle parole dell'italiano SVO, la struttura con dislocazione a destra risulta problematica in quanto non sempre è ben chiaro cosa sia effettivamente dislocato (Berruto 1986, 56), anche se in questi casi la punteggiatura può aiutare:

(26) Comprò domani<sub>i</sub> il giornale

Che si tratti senza dubbio di un ordine pragmaticamente marcato risulta più evidente nei casi in cui si ha una sorta di doppia presenza del costituente, rappresentato da un clitico cataforico di un costituente o di un'intera frase:

- (27) a. La mangio domani, la pizza  
 b. Lo sai che Gianni e Maria si sono lasciati?

Il dato interessante ai fini di questo lavoro è che, oltre alla dislocazione di interi costituenti, in italiano è anche possibile, sebbene marginale, estrarre solo una parte del costituente nominale (per lo più nei sintagmi nominali quantificati, ma non solo). Proprio questa struttura sembra essere la continuazione di quella che si trova in latino:

- (28) a. <sup>?</sup>Una somma di denaro ~~annua~~ veramente ingente dai suoi discepoli, \*(la) riceveva annua  
 b. Molti ~~mali~~ a quelli \*(ne) sono stati fatti, di mali  
 c. Grandi ~~insidie~~ \*(ne) preparava al santo Quintiano, di insidie

In (28) sono riportate le traduzioni degli esempi latini. Sebbene l'accettabilità di (28a) possa essere controversa, (28b-c) mostrano più chiaramente che nei casi di estrazione del nome da un sintagma nominale modificato da un aggettivo lessicale (anche di quantità), è obbligatoria la ripresa clitica (*la*) oppure pronominale (*ne*) dell'oggetto.



## 4 Conclusioni

In questo contributo si è visto che in un'ottica sintattica basata sul concetto di costituente e, dunque, fondata sull'ipotesi che anche in latino sia individuabile una struttura sintattica soggiacente, non tutti gli ordini che prevedono una alterazione dell'ordine delle parole possono essere considerati sintatticamente discontinui. Questa distinzione riduce in maniera consistente il dominio degli iperbati e consente di proporre alcune osservazioni di ordine generale. In primo luogo, i dati offrono evidenze a sostegno dell'ipotesi relativa alla presenza in latino di una struttura sintattica, che non solo caratterizza il latino come una lingua configurazionale, ma è anche in grado di rendere conto delle variazioni di ordine dovute a meccanismi sintattici diversi (ordine delle parole libero dovuto alla libertà del parametro della testa vs ordine libero inatteso per ragioni pragmatiche). In secondo luogo, nonostante ciascuno dei tre tipi di discontinuità sintattica in cui sono stati organizzati i dati del *corpus* sia contraddistinto da caratteristiche sue proprie, si è visto come spesso i dati si prestino ad analisi in parti sovrapponibili, in quanto coinvolgono domini sintattici comuni (il CP, comune al tipo due e al tipo tre) oppure meccanismi sintattici analoghi (l'estrazione da sintagma). Infine, si può notare la difficoltà di avanzare proposte relative alla diacronia interna al latino quando si lavora su *corpora* letterari.

Per quanto concerne le discontinuità sintattiche vere e proprie, è stata proposta una tipologia tripartita costituita da un tipo dovuto all'estrazione di un elemento all'interno di un sintagma; un altro dovuto all'inserimento di un elemento in seconda posizione di frase (o di *colon*), e infine l'ultimo dovuto al movimento di una parte del sintagma intorno al verbo.

Nella tabella seguente vengono riassunti i tipi proposti (incluso il tipo zero) e viene fornito un esempio per ciascun tipo in ciascun autore, indicando anche il numero di occorrenze:

Tabella 2. Sintesi delle discontinuità ammesse

	<b>Petronio</b>	<b>Tot.</b>	<b>Gellio</b>	<b>Tot.</b>	<b>Gregorio</b>	<b>Tot.</b>
Tipo 0	<i>indecentissmam rubore faciem</i>	5	<i>assidua veterum scriptorium tractatione</i>	11	<i>magno armorum apparatu</i>	9
Tipo 1	<i>omnium genera avium</i>	5	<i>rerum cognitionem praesentium</i>	4	<i>his mollitus sermonibus</i>	3
Tipo 2	<i>tota denique familia</i>	12	<i>insincerus quidem philosophus</i>	2	<i>per aliam rursum portam</i>	9
Tipo 3	<i>privatum habebam secessum</i>	14	<i>ob similem dicitur causam</i>	3	<i>aliam duxit uxorem</i>	9
		<b>36</b>		<b>20</b>		<b>30</b>

Nella tabella sono stati inclusi anche i casi che sembrano essere alla base delle strutture romanze con dislocazione a destra di un elemento del sintagma nominale, che con ogni probabilità si sviluppano solo più tardi e prevedono l'utilizzo di clitici, assenti in latino.

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# Epistemic Predicative Clauses and the IL/SL Distinction

## A View from Romance

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**Abstract** In this article I explore the internal structure of predicative clauses selected by an epistemic main verb exploiting the notion of 'predicate inversion' and the distinction between *Individual Level* and *Stage Level* predicates. On the basis of evidence from Romance, I argue that epistemic predicative clauses are made up by at least three different layers of structure: the predicative link between subject and predicate can be expressed either in lowest head  $P^\circ$ , which can be lexicalized as a prepositional element, or in the higher heads  $V^\circ$  and  $T^\circ$ , which can be lexicalized as infinitival copulas. The attested restrictions on the relative order of subject, copular verb and predicate inside the copular clause complement in Italian are accounted for by postulating with SL predicates the need for the copula to raise to the head  $T^\circ$  in order to license an abstract spatio-temporal topic which contextualizes the property denoted by the predicate.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 On the Notion of 'Predicate Inversion'. – 3 The Relation Between the Lexicalized Copula and SL Predicates. – 4 On the Relevance of the IL/SL Distinction for Predicate Inversion. – 5 The Role of Information Structure. – 6 The Internal Layering of the Copular Clause Complement of Epistemic Verbs. – 6.1 On the Categorical Status of the Copular Clause. – 6.2 Lexicalizing the Different Heads. – 7 Summary.

**Keywords** Epistemic verb. Copular clause. Predicate inversion. Individual level predicate. Stage level predicate.

## 1 Introduction

The aim of this work is to provide some insights on the internal structure of predicative clauses selected by epistemic predicates, adding a new contribution to a long standing debate (cf. for example the essays collected in Cardinaletti, Guasti 1995).<sup>1</sup>

1 Previous versions of this work have been presented at the 26th *Going Romance* (Leuven, December 2012), at the Universities of Padua and Venice (January 2013) and at the 23rd *Colòquio de Gramàtica Generativa* (Madrid, May 2013). I am thankful to these audiences as well as to two anonymous reviewers for insightful remarks and constructive criticism. The usual disclaimers apply.

In my analysis I will make crucial reference to the by now standard distinction between Individual Level (IL) and Stage Level (SL) predicates (cf. Kratzer 1995) and to the notion of 'predicate inversion' as defined in den Dikken (2006). Mainly on the basis of data from Romance, I will argue, following previous proposals on this topic, for a layered internal structure of epistemic predicative clauses including – at least – one functional head which encodes the predicative link between subject and predicate and two further layers of structure; I will highlight the relevance of the IL/SL nature of the predicate in determining the relative order of the two constituents inside the copular clause as well as the overt realization of the functional heads linking them.

The article is organized as follows: in section 2 I present a detailed summary of the derivation of predicate inversion as formulated by den Dikken (2006); in section 3 I discuss the importance of the IL/SL predicate distinction for the lexicalization of the copula in epistemic small clauses in Italian, sketching a first structural proposal; in section 4 I briefly describe a verbless predicative structure attested in Romance, providing additional evidence for the relevance of the IL/SL predicate divide for the application of predicate inversion; in section 5 I turn to the relevance of information structural factors, presenting the lexicalization patterns of the infinitival copula in Italian with respect to the informational role of the subject; in section 6 I propose a more detailed structural layout of copular clauses selected by a main epistemic verb, providing crosslinguistic evidence for the lexicalization of the lowest prepositional head and of the higher heads and a possible formal account of the attested word order restrictions; section 7 concludes the paper.

## 2 On the Notion of 'Predicate Inversion'

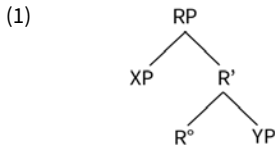
In this article I will adopt, as a working hypothesis, an approach to predicative structures defended by various scholars over the last two decades (cf. Bowers 1993; Adger, Ramchand 2003; Baker 2003; den Dikken 2006; among others), according to which every predicational relation is mediated by an intervening functional element working as a connective between the subject and the predicate.<sup>2</sup> Under this view, the basic template for predica-

2 A first possible approach to the internal structure of predicative structures is based on the analysis according to which predicational relations can be structurally represented as bare small clauses like in (i), along the lines of the seminal work by Williams (1975) and Stowell (1981):

(i) [<sub>sc</sub> NP XP]



tion relationships is syntactically represented by the following structural configuration:



For example, den Dikken (2006) – building on Moro (1997)’s seminal intuition that the copular verb can take as a complement a small clause – proposes that a sentence like (2a) is derived as represented in (2b), that is, by raising the subject XP to Spec,TP to satisfy the EPP feature (in minimalist terms, this would be the most economical solution towards a converging derivation, as the subject XP is closer to T than the predicate YP):

- (2) a. Brian is the best candidate.  
 b.  $[_{TP} [_{XP} \text{Brian}]_i [_{T'} \text{is}] [_{RP} t_i [_{R'}]] [_{YP} \text{the best candidate}]]]$

Raising of the predicate YP to Spec,TP across the subject – that is, predicate inversion as provisionally sketched in (3b) – is characterized as movement to subject position triggered by the need to license an empty predicate head:

- (3) a. The best candidate is Brian.  
 b.  $[_{TP} [_{YP} \text{The best candidate}]_i [_{T'} \text{is}] [_{RP} [_{XP} \text{Brian}]] [_{R'}] t_i]]]$

This kind of analysis has been adopted by Moro (1997) for copular constructions; he proposes that the structure in (i) can be embedded under a copular predicate and that the surface linear order of canonical and inverse copular constructions is derived by raising either the subject or the predicate to a small clause external position:

- (ii) a.  $[\text{These pictures}]_i \text{are} [_{SC} t_i [\text{the cause of the riot}]]$   
 b.  $[\text{The cause of the riot}]_i \text{is} [_{SC} [\text{these pictures}] t_i]]]$

Moro (2000) develops further the analysis of copular constructions in terms of dynamic antisymmetry; building on Kayne’s (1994) antisymmetric approach to syntactic structure, he claims that the trigger for the raising of the subject or the predicate lies in the necessity to break the structural symmetry between the two constituents inside the small clause and to produce an asymmetric structure exactly by raising either noun phrase to the precopular position. For a reinterpretation of Moro’s dynamic antisymmetry approach to copular structures in terms of labelling, the reader is referred to Chomsky 2013. I will not adopt this view here as it is clearly incompatible with the hypothesis that, as will be discussed below, the predicational relation existing between subject and predicate can be lexicalized – in small clauses selected by an epistemic verb – by the overt realization of a connective element or of a copular verb, which entails the existence of a functional head linking the two constituents within the nuclear small clause.

On the assumption that small clauses such as the RP in (1) qualify as phases, an obvious question arises as to how the predicate YP in (1) can be accessible to an external probe.<sup>3</sup> Den Dikken (2006) treats predicate inversion in terms of A-movement of the predicate facilitated by *phase extension*, defined as follows:

- (4) Movement of the head of a phase to a higher head F extends the phase to FP.

He assumes that movement of the head R° up to an external functional head F extends the RP phase up to FP. Merging a functional head outside the small clause RP in (1) provides a landing site both for the R° head and for either phrasal constituent of the small clause (in the corresponding specifier position Spec,FP). According to den Dikken, movement of the predicate YP to Spec,FP will not illegitimately cross a phase boundary, as movement of R° up to F° shifts the phase up to FP, which dominates the first available landing site of the raised predicate.<sup>4</sup>

Applying this derivational path to small clauses selected by epistemic main predicates, den Dikken (2006) proposes that the linear order in (5b) is derived from the basic order in (5a) by predicate inversion, that is, by raising of the small clause predicate – across the subject – to the specifier of a higher functional projection as a consequence of *phase extension*, produced by adjunction of the small clause internal Relator R° to a higher functional head F°, which provides a possible escape hatch for the predicate, as represented in (6b):<sup>5</sup>

- (5) a. I consider Brian (to be) the best candidate.  
 b. I consider the best candidate \*(to be) Brian.
- (6) a. [<sub>TP</sub> I consider [<sub>RP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> Brian] [<sub>R°</sub> to be] [<sub>YP</sub> the best candidate]]]  
 b. [<sub>TP</sub> I consider [<sub>FP</sub> [<sub>YP</sub> the best candidate]<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>F°</sub> [to be]<sub>j</sub>] [<sub>RP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> Brian] [<sub>R°</sub> t<sub>j</sub>] t<sub>i</sub>]]]

3 Given the *Phase Impenetrability Condition* as defined in Chomsky 2001:

- (i) In a phase  $\alpha$  with a head H, the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside  $\alpha$ , but only H and its edge.

4 On the other hand, A-movement of the predicate across the subject does not incur a minimality violation because there is some minimal domain such that it contains both the small-clause subject and the first available landing site for the moved small-clause predicate; being members of the same minimal domain, those two positions would then be *equidistant*, so that movement of the predicate around its subject complies with the Minimal Link Condition.

5 From Spec,FP, subject and predicate are attractable from external probes, among which T°, producing respectively (ia) and (ib), where the lexicalization pattern of the copula is the same as in (5), as originally observed by Heycock (1994):

- (i) a. Brian is considered (to be) the best candidate.  
 b. The best candidate is considered \*(to be) Brian.

Under his view, the obligatoriness of the copula in (5b) – as opposed to its optionality in (5a) – is a straightforward consequence of the application of predicate inversion; in other words, the copula is obligatorily lexicalized whenever predicate inversion applies.<sup>6</sup>

### 3 The Relation Between the Lexicalized Copula and SL Predicates

Standard Italian provides clear evidence that, at least at a relatively high stylistic level, under an epistemic verb like *ritenere* ‘consider’ SL predicates, as opposed to IL predicates, require the overt realization of the copula.<sup>7</sup>

In a rather high stylistic register, the infinitival copula can optionally appear before the subject of a small clause containing an IL predicate:

- (7) a. Ritengo (essere) Gianni un amico affidabile.  
I consider (to be) John a reliable person.  
b. Ritengo (essere) Roberto una persona intelligente  
I consider (to be) Robert an intelligent person.  
c. Ritengo (essere) Carlo un collega competente.  
I consider (to be) Charles a valuable colleague.

6 The functional head  $F^\circ$  to which the *relator*  $R^\circ$  raises is referred to as the *linker*, the head that provides the *link* between the raised predicate and the small clause it comes from. Raising the *relator* to the *linker* creates a minimal domain that includes Spec,FP and Spec,RP, thereby enabling the predicate to raise to Spec,FP in conformity with the minimalist locality theory.

7 The situation is much more controversial in English; in small clauses selected by the epistemic predicate *consider* and containing SL predicates the copula is preferably realized, while with IL predicates the lexicalization of the copula is optional:

- (i) a. I consider John to be sad/tired/worried.  
b. I consider John (to be) intelligent/foolish/reliable.

If we take into account predicative constructions with *seem* or *look* the situation changes, because in this case the overt realization of the copula tends to become optional even with SL predicates:

- (ii) He seems/looks (to be) sad/tired/worried.

Moreover, nominal predicates, which are generally IL predicates, in many varieties of English require the use of the copula under *seem*; the example (iiia) is grammatical in British varieties but generally disliked by American speakers, who prefer to insert the infinitival copula, like in (iiib):

- (iii) a. He seems a nice guy.  
b. He seems to be a nice guy.

On the other hand, SL predicates, to the extent that they are compatible with an epistemic matrix verb, require the overt realization of the infinitival copula:

- (8) a. Ritengo \*(essere) Gianni intenzionato a partire.  
I consider (to be) John willing to leave.  
b. Ritengo \*(essere) Roberto preoccupato per il loro arrivo.  
I consider (to be) Robert worried about their arrival.  
c. Ritengo \*(essere) Carlo stanco di questa situazione.  
I consider (to be) Charles tired of this situation.

Interestingly, the copula must appear even when IL predicates are turned into SL predicates by the addition of some contextual restriction on the validity of the property expressed:

- (9) a. Ritengo \*(essere) Gianni un amico affidabile solo in alcune situazioni.  
I consider (to be) John a reliable friend only in some situations.  
b. Ritengo \*(essere) Roberto un prezioso alleato in questa circostanza.  
I consider (to be) Robert a precious ally in this circumstance.

On the basis of the contrast between (7) and (8)-(9), we can conclude that in high style standard Italian the presence of the copular verb in infinitival complements of epistemic verbs may be regulated by other intervening factors beside the application of predicate inversion, such as the IL/SL nature of the predicate involved. In particular, the crucial factor in this respect seems to be the transitory vs permanent character of the property denoted by the predicate, to the effect that non-permanent properties need to be anchored to a spatio-temporal situation in a way that will be formalized more precisely below.<sup>8</sup>

**8** One might in principle object that the relevant distinction, at least for English, should be between evaluative/gradable predicates and other predicates on the basis of Lasnik (2009)'s observation that *consider* has a property that distinguishes it from other small-clause taking verbs, namely that the predicate must be either evaluative (judge-dependent) or gradable; if this requirement is satisfied, even SL predicates can appear in epistemic small clauses (possibly without the lexicalization of the copula), like in the following examples:

- (i) a. John considers Bill (to be) ready for the competition.  
b. Most people considered the clown sad.  
c. The police didn't consider John in any trouble.

While the above mentioned distinction may well be adequate for English, it does not appear to be appropriate for the Italian examples discussed in the text: both the predicates in (7) and the ones in (9) are evaluative, but only in (9) is the copula required; moreover, while the

In the spirit of den Dikken (2006), it is extremely tempting to analyze the infinitival copula *essere* as the lexicalization of the functional head  $R^\circ$  raised to  $F^\circ$ , as represented below in (11b).<sup>9</sup>

Let me consider however a potential alternative analysis for examples like (10a), namely the standard Aux-to-Comp analysis proposed by Rizzi (1982), according to which the infinitival auxiliary verb raises to the head  $C^\circ$  around the subject and assigns case to it under government from this higher position, as represented in (10b):

- (10) a. Ritengo essere Gianni un amico affidabile.  
I consider to be John a reliable friend.  
b. [<sub>TP</sub> Ritengo [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>C'</sub> essere]<sub>j</sub>] [<sub>IP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> Gianni] [<sub>I'</sub> t<sub>j</sub>] [<sub>VP</sub> un amico affidabile]]]

predicates in (8) are not gradable, the ones in (9) are gradable, but the copula is obligatorily lexicalized in both cases. In fact, the choice of the verb *ritenere* in (7)-(9) is due precisely to the peculiar selectional requirements of this verb, which, unlike *credere* or *considerare*, can select both for a small clause and for a clausal complement:

- (ii) a. Ritengo Gianni un amico affidabile.  
I consider John a reliable friend  
b. Ritengo che Gianni sia un amico affidabile.  
I consider that John is a reliable friend

On the other hand, *consider* selects for a small clause complement, while *credere* selects for a clausal complement:

- (iii) a. Considero/\*Credo Gianni un amico affidabile.  
I consider/\*believe John a reliable friend  
b. Credo/\*Considero che Gianni sia un amico affidabile.  
I believe/\*consider that John is a reliable friend

9 In (8) predicate inversion has not applied, which suggests that the obligatoriness of the copula is not necessarily tied to the application of predicate inversion. Notice that the occurrence of the copula between the subject and the predicate is grammatical at least for some speakers:

- (i) Ritengo Gianni essere un amico affidabile / intenzionato a partire.

I consider John to be a reliable friend / willing to leave

Under the present approach, the sequence in (i) can be interpreted as resulting from the raising of the subject to Spec,FP. Being base generated at the edge of the RP phase, the subject, unlike the predicate, can freely raise to a small clause external position. As will be discussed in the main text, the subject can indeed be easily extracted to an external position by A'-movement:

- (ii) a. Gianni, che ritengo essere intenzionato a partire, va avvisato al più presto.  
John, that I consider to be willing to leave, should be informed as soon as possible.  
b. Gianni, che ritengo (essere) una persona affidabile, stavolta ha sbagliato.  
John, that I consider (to be) a reliable person, this time has failed.

There are some theory-internal considerations which suggest that this analysis should be updated in order to make it compatible with standard current assumptions: first, if Bošković (1997) is correct in claiming that all infinitival complements that are not introduced by an overt complementizer have IP status, there is in fact in the structure under analysis no CP layer (hence no C° head) to which the infinitival verb can raise (cf. also Castillo 2001 on ECM constructions in Spanish for a similar proposal); secondly, the notion of government, which is crucial in Rizzi's original account, has been shown to be problematic over the years and should preferably be eliminated from the theory of grammar (cf. Bošković 1997, among others).<sup>10</sup>

Hence, on the basis of theory-internal conceptual grounds, I will not adopt an Aux-to-Comp analysis for structures like (11a), and will rather propose the structural representation in (11b) – in line with den Dikken (2006)'s approach – where the infinitival copula lexicalizes the functional head F° and the subject remains in its basic, small clause internal position:

- (11) a. Ritengo essere Gianni un amico affidabile / intenzionato a partire.  
I consider to be John a reliable friend / willing to leave.
- b. [<sub>TP</sub> Ritengo [<sub>FP</sub> [<sub>F°</sub> essere]<sub>j</sub>] [<sub>RP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> Gianni] [<sub>R°</sub> t<sub>j</sub>] [<sub>VP</sub> un amico affidabile / intenzionato a partire]]]]

This analysis also offers a possible explanation for the contrast pointed out by Rizzi (1982) for Italian between (12a) and (12b), namely the fact that in Romance – cf. Kayne (1981) for French and Castillo (2001) for Spanish – under an epistemic verb the nominal subject cannot generally precede the infinitival copula (although, as we have seen, some speakers accept this sequence), while the sentence is perfectly grammatical if the subject is A'-extracted:

- (12) a. \*Ritengo poche persone essere in grado di pagare il riscatto.  
I believe few people to be able to pay the ransom.
- b. Quante persone ritieni essere in grado di pagare il riscatto?  
How many people do you believe to be able to pay the ransom?

<sup>10</sup> Moreover, there are at least some speakers of standard Italian who accept the word order in which the lexical subject precedes the infinitival auxiliary, which shows that case assignment to the subject must be independent of verb raising, although the case assigned to the subject is presumably different in the two positions, as witnessed by the following examples containing a pronominal subject:

- (i) a. Ritengo essere tu/\*te una persona affidabile.  
b. Ritengo te/\*tu essere una persona affidabile.

As can be seen from the contrast between (ia) and (ib), in postcopular position we find the nominative form of the pronoun, while in precopular position (for the speakers who accept this sequence) the accusative form is attested.

Under the present approach, this contrast could be made to follow from the hypothesis that only raising of  $R^\circ$  to  $F^\circ$  extends the phase RP, providing a possible landing site for (either the subject or) the predicate, namely Spec,FP. If  $R^\circ$  does not raise to  $F^\circ$ , only the subject, located at the edge of the RP phase, can be extracted. If on the other hand  $R^\circ$  raises to  $F^\circ$ , the subject will either stay in Spec,RP, like in (11a), or will undergo A'-extraction to the main Spec,CP position, like in (12b); crucially, subject extraction must proceed through Spec,FP, which qualifies as an intermediate landing site provided only by raising of  $R^\circ$  to  $F^\circ$ , with the associated lexicalization of  $F^\circ$  as the infinitival copula *essere*.<sup>11</sup>

#### 4 On the Relevance of the IL/SL Distinction for Predicate Inversion

This section contains a short digression on a verbless predicative structure attested throughout Romance: in this type of reduced clause the predicate linearly precedes the subject and is separated from it by a clear intonational break, while the missing verb is interpreted as a silent copula; crucially, the preposed predicate must belong to the IL class.

Vinet (1991) underlines that in French only predicates expressing permanent or inherent properties can occur in a verbless predicative clause, and not predicates referring to a transitory situation; the two types reflect the distinction between IL and SL predicates. The predicate can acquire a character of permanence – thereby making the sentence acceptable – through the insertion of a lexical element which triggers a generic interpretation:

- (13) a. \*Disponible, ce papa!  
Available, this dad!  
b. Jamais disponible, ce papa!  
Never available, this dad!
- (14) a. \*Les memes, ces mecs!  
The same, these guys!  
b. Tous les memes, ces mecs!  
All the same, these guys!

Similarly, Hernanz and Suñer (1999) point out for Spanish that the preposed predicate must express properties not undergoing change or evolution, so that no SL predicates are admitted; still, the insertion of elements

<sup>11</sup> Incidentally, this analysis overcomes a problematic aspect of Boskovic (1997)'s account, namely the necessity to postulate, for these cases of A'-extraction, a null complementizer through whose specifier the subject would raise to the Spec,CP of the main clause.

which can modify or limit the transitory character of the predicate can make the sequence grammatical:

- (15) a. \*¡Cansado, tu jefe!  
Tired, your boss!  
b. ¡Eternamente cansado, tu jefe!  
Eternally tired, your boss!
- (16) a. \*¡Averiado, el maldito ascensor!  
Out of order, the damned lift!  
b. ¡Siempre averiado, el maldito ascensor!  
Always out of order, the damned lift!

The same restriction seems to hold for Italian, where non-evaluative predicates can appear provided that an adequate lexical item is added that turns the SL predicate into a permanent property:

- (17) a. \*Di corsa, i giovani di oggi!  
In a hurry, nowadays young people!  
b. Tutti di corsa, i giovani di oggi!  
All in a hurry, nowadays young people!
- (18) a. \*Spento, questo computer!  
Turned off, this computer!  
b. Sempre spento, questo computer!  
Always turned off, this computer!

Munaro (2016) argues that the structure under analysis should be viewed as the result of two movement steps: the first step is to be identified with predicate inversion, that is, extraction of the predicate from the complement position of the predicative small clause to a higher specifier position thanks to phase extension (produced by raising of the small clause internal relator  $R^\circ$  to the higher functional head  $F^\circ$ ); subsequently, we have further raising of the predicate to the specifier of the left-peripheral projection FocusP in order to check a focus feature. This analysis, which captures the basic properties of the relevant structure, is based on the crucial, and independently motivated assumption, that the process of phase extension can obtain without the lexicalization of the copula only in small clauses associated with IL predicates, thereby accounting for the fact that verbless predicative structures are crosslinguistically attested only with this kind of predicates.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> If Munaro (2016)'s analysis is on the right track, the examples reported in this section provide robust evidence for the availability of predicate inversion with adjectival predicates in Romance. In particular, Munaro suggests that in the structure under analysis the



Interestingly, as we have seen in the previous section, the possibility for IL predicates to occur without an overtly lexicalized copula is attested also in predicative clauses embedded under epistemic verbs, which reinforces the hypothesis that the IL/SL predicate distinction is relevant for the application of predicate inversion and the lexicalization of the copula.

## 5 The Role of Information Structure

Raposo and Uriagereka (1995), studying the apparent differences between small clauses with an individual and a stage level interpretation, argue that these are best expressed by way of purely syntactic devices; in particular, they are reduced to differences in information structure to the extent that IL predicates involve categorical constructions, while SL predicates are *thetic*;<sup>13</sup> according to them, subjects of IL predicates must be forced out of the predicate projection in the course of the derivation. A similar proposal has been put forward by Jiménez-Fernández (2012), who claims that subjects of IL predicates are topics, while subjects of SL predicates may not be.

As a preliminary generalization, we can observe that in standard Italian the unmarked word order in epistemic small clauses is the one exemplified in (7), with the subject preceding the predicate, regardless of the IL/SL nature of the predicate. In an out of the blue statement, if the predicate precedes the subject like in (19a), the sequence sounds odd, independently of the presence of an overt copula; the only possibility is for the subject to be contrastively focalized, like in (19b):<sup>14</sup>

predicative linker discussed by Park (1997) should be assimilated to the head  $R^\circ$  in den Dikken 2006, as they both function as mediators between the predicate and its associated subject. This amounts to saying that whenever, in main predicative clauses,  $R^\circ$  selects an IL predicate,  $R^\circ$  is bound to raise to a higher functional head, thereby extending the phase RP up to (at least) FP and providing a possible landing site for the predicate YP, which becomes then eligible by an external probe; alternatively, if the subject raises to Spec,FP, we get the standard copular structure. If, on the other hand,  $R^\circ$  selects a SL predicate, no raising of  $R^\circ$  will obtain, hence no phase extension will take place, and no possible landing site for the predicate will be provided; the only possible derivation will entail raising of the subject.

As discussed in detail in the next sections, the situation seems to be only partially similar in predicative small clauses embedded under an epistemic verb: in this case the predicative relator  $R^\circ$  is invariably represented by an abstract (or lexically realized) prepositional element which raises and incorporates onto the next higher head  $F^\circ$ , thereby making predicate inversion to Spec,FP possible with IL predicates; exactly as in main contexts, SL predicates require instead the overt realization of the copula (which must raise to the embedded  $T^\circ$  head in order to provide the appropriate spatio-temporal anchoring of the SL predicate).

**13** For relevant discussion concerning the relation between the dichotomy *thetic*/categorical and the stage/individual distinction the reader is referred to Ladusaw 1994.

**14** The fact that the same position can be easily occupied by quantifiers, which in general cannot be topicalized, like in (i), suggests that the relevant position is indeed associated with a slight focalization of the constituent:

- (19) a. # Ritengo affidabile Gianni.  
I consider reliable John.  
b. Ritengo affidabile GIANNI, (non Roberto).  
I consider reliable John, (not Robert).

Given that in this case we have a contrastive focalization of the subject, I will propose that (19b) is derived through raising of the small clause subject to the left-peripheral specifier of FocP, with subsequent raising of the remnant material to a higher position.

However, the subject of an epistemic small clause may also have the informational function of a new information focus, when it provides the answer to a *wh*-question, like in (20b) and (20c), for which I would like to put forth an alternative analysis, namely raising of the predicate to Spec,FP with the default stress falling on the most embedded constituent, the small clause subject, along the lines of Cinque (1993):

- (20) a. Chi ritieni (essere) una persona affidabile?  
Whom do you consider (to be) a reliable person?  
b. Ritengo una persona affidabile (?essere) Gianni, ad esempio.  
I consider a reliable person (to be) John, for example.  
c. Ritengo (essere) una persona affidabile Gianni, ad esempio.  
I consider (to be) a reliable person John, for example.

Notice that with an IL predicate like *una persona affidabile*, the copula can appear on either side of the predicate.<sup>15</sup> In both (20b) and (20c) predicate inversion has applied, with the predicate occupying Spec,FP; but while in (20b) the copula occupies the head F°, in (20c) the infinitival copula can be overtly realized at the left of the predicate, arguably lexicalizing a functional head higher than F° (sticking to den Dikken's terminology).<sup>16</sup>

- (i) Non ritengo affidabile nessuno.  
I consider reliable noone.

15 As pointed out to me by some native speakers, another possible answer to (20a) is the following, with the focalized subject *Gianni* appearing in its unmarked position, immediately preceding the predicate:

- (i) Ritengo (essere) Gianni una persona affidabile, ad esempio.  
I consider (to be) John a reliable person, for example.

In this case subject and predicate of the small clause are taken to occupy their base generation position, while the copula lexicalizes the functional head F°.

16 There is an alternative structural analysis for (20c), namely one in which the subject has undergone heavy NP shift. In my view such an analysis is not tenable on both conceptual and

Again, the presence of a SL predicate imposes the overt realization of the infinitival copula, as witnessed by the examples in (21):

- (21) a. Chi ritieni essere preoccupato per la situazione?  
Whom do you consider to be worried about the situation?
- b. \*<sub>[TP Ritengo [<sub>FP</sub> [preoccupato per la situazione]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>F'</sub> essere]<sub>j</sub> [<sub>RP</sub> Gianni [<sub>R'</sub>] t<sub>i</sub> ]]]], ad esempio.  
I consider worried about the situation to be John, for example.</sub>
- c. <sub>[TP Ritengo [<sub>XP</sub> [<sub>X'</sub> essere] [<sub>FP</sub> [preoccupato per la situazione]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>F'</sub>] [<sub>RP</sub> Gianni [<sub>R'</sub>] t<sub>i</sub> ]]]], ad esempio.  
I consider to be worried about the situation John, for example.</sub>

Interestingly, in this case the copula must precede the preposed predicate, like in (21c), and cannot intervene between the predicate and the subject, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (21b), a contrast to which I will return below.

## 6 The Internal Layering of the Copular Clause Complement of Epistemic Verbs

### 6.1 On the Categorical Status of the Copular Clause

If the predicate has raised to Spec,FP in (20c) and (21c), the copular verb preceding it must lexicalize the head of a higher functional projection, a third layer of structure above RP and FP. As a consequence, I will analyze *essere* in these examples as the spelling out of a higher functional head,

empirical grounds; adopting Kayne (1994)'s antisymmetry approach to phrase structure, I will exclude the possibility of rightward movement in general; moreover, even if we admitted rightward movement, the subject *Gianni* in (20c) cannot be considered heavy in any sense.

Consider the following Italian example taken from Massam (1985):

- (i) ?Ritengo poter risolvere il problema tutti gli studenti di questa classe.  
I believe to be able to solve the problem all the students in this class.

The example is reported as slightly deviant, but to the extent that it is acceptable, its grammaticality status does not differ from the following, where the subject is not as heavy, showing that the crucial factor is not the heaviness of the subject:

- (ii) ?Ritengo poter risolvere il problema tutti gli studenti.  
I consider to be able to solve the problem all the students.

Notice furthermore that in this example, unlike in (20c), the predicate is not represented by an auxiliary verb; in fact, as stated explicitly by Massam (1985), (i) is judged as less acceptable than the corresponding example containing an infinitival copula, like the following:

- (iii) Ritengo essere in grado di risolvere il problema tutti gli studenti di questa classe.  
I consider to be able to solve the problem all the students in this class.

unrelated with the nuclear predicational structure *stricto sensu*.

At this point it becomes crucial to investigate in greater detail the internal structure of the infinitival complement of epistemic verbs and to determine more precisely its categorial status.

Capitalizing on Zanuttini (1996)'s proposal according to which the presence of a NegP is parasitic on the presence of a TP projection, I will use the test of sentential negation to ascertain whether the complement of an epistemic verb is indeed a small clause or should rather be analyzed as an infinitival TP (as suggested for example by Castillo 2001). As witnessed by the following examples (example (22b) is taken from Rizzi 1982), the sentential negation *non* can appear in these structures, suggesting that the complement of the epistemic verb is in fact a TP (independently of the type of predicate it contains):

- (22) a. Ritengo non essere Gianni una persona affidabile / intenzionato a partire.  
I consider not to be John a reliable person / willing to leave.
- b. Suppongo non essere la situazione suscettibile di ulteriori miglioramenti.  
I suppose not to be the situation susceptible of further improvements.

This conclusion leads me to suggest that the internal structure of infinitival complements of epistemic verbs can be expanded to include at least three different layers of structure:<sup>17</sup> we can distinguish a nuclear projection PP headed by a low head P° linking subject and predicate, an intermediate projection VP headed by the head V° and activated by the application of predicate inversion, and a third projection TP headed by the highest head T° which is lexicalized whenever the copular verb precedes the inverted predicate.

## 6.2 Lexicalizing the Different Heads

### 6.2.1 On the Lexicalization of the Prepositional Head

The data discussed up to now clearly indicate that in predicative clauses selected by an epistemic main verb SL predicates – as opposed to IL predicates – require the overt realization of the copula, independently of the application of predicate inversion.

Adopting a decompositional approach, Gallego and Uriagereka (2009) develop an analysis of IL/SL predicates as involving the incorporation of

<sup>17</sup> In the rest of the paper I will replace den Dikken's labels R°/RP and F°/FP with more familiar ones, such as P°/PP and V°/VP respectively; in fact, as will become clear below, the use of these labels will turn out to be more transparent also with respect to the elements which happen to lexicalize the two heads P° and V°.

different types of prepositions. The basic idea is that in Spanish the structure of *estar* is more complex than that of *ser*, and in particular that the copula *estar*, associated with SL predicates, results from the incorporation of the copula *ser* with a terminal-coincidence preposition:

- (23) a. Obama es/\*está americano.  
Obama is American  
b. Obama \*es/está preocupado.  
Obama is worried

The function of the preposition is to contextualize the property denoted by the SL predicate in (23b), anchoring it to a spatio-temporal situation; under this view, the type and number of prepositions present in their lexical syntax is crucial to determine the choice between *ser* and *estar*.<sup>18</sup> What is relevant here is that Gallego and Uriagereka's analysis suggests that the copular verb occurring with SL predicates is intrinsically endowed with a prepositional component.

Jiménez-Fernández (2012) adopts their approach applying it to small clause complements and suggests explicitly that small clause predicates have a prepositional component. He discusses examples such as the following, pointing out that argument small clauses differ with respect to the type of predicate selecting the subordinate clause:

- (24) a. Considero a Jimena inteligente.  
I consider Jimena intelligent  
b. \*Considero a Jimena triste.  
I consider Jimena sad  
(25) a. Espero el coche reparado para esta tarde.  
I expect the car fixed by this afternoon  
b. \*Espero el coche veloz pare esta tarde.  
I expect the car fast by this afternoon

Following an original idea of Kitagawa (1985), he observes that verbs like *considerar* are more easily combined with a small clause whose predicate denotes a permanent property (an IL predicate), whereas verbs like *esperar* require rather a small clause containing a predicate which denotes

<sup>18</sup> In particular, Gallego and Uriagereka (2009) refer to Hale and Keyser's (2002) ontological distinction between *central-coincidence* (prepositions) expressing *stativity* (and therefore associated with IL predicates) and *terminal-coincidence* (prepositions) expressing *perfectivity* (and therefore associated with SL predicates). An important consequence of their decompositional analysis is that Kratzer's (1995) IL/SL distinction cannot be considered as an inherent lexical property of predicates, but in fact a semantic consequence of a specific syntactic derivational path, in line with recent exoskeletal approaches to lexical items.

a transient property (an SL predicate); he assumes that in (24a) the adjectival small clause combines with a central-coincidence preposition, giving rise to the IL interpretation that the main verb *considerar* requires, while in (25a) the adjectival small clause merges with a terminal-coincidence preposition, producing an SL reading compatible with the selectional properties of the matrix verb *esperar*.

According to him, the central-coincidence prepositional element spelling out the lowest functional head which connects subject and IL predicate is lexicalized in examples like the following:

- (26) a. Tildò a Juan *de* inexperto en esos asuntos.  
He branded Juan as unskilled in those affairs.  
b. Juan tomò a ese político *por* tonto.  
Juan took this politician for a fool.

On the other hand, in the following example the relevant functional head is lexicalized by a terminal-coincidence preposition which triggers an SL interpretation of the predicate:

- (27) Convirtió a Juan *en* un gran artista.  
He turned Juan into a big artist.

Also in Italian, in small clauses containing IL predicates the lowest head P° can be overtly lexicalized as a prepositional element:<sup>19</sup>

19 As for English, den Dikken (2006, 63-4) explicitly admits the possibility for the Relator R° (in our terms P°) of the tenseless small-clause complement of a verb to be overtly lexicalized as a (pseudo-)prepositional element connecting subject and predicate, like in the examples in (ia), to which I assign the structural representation in (ib):

- (i) a. Imogen treats/takes/regards him \*(like/for/as) a fool.  
b. [<sub>TP</sub> Imogen treats/takes/regards [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> him [<sub>P'</sub> like/for/as] a fool]]]]

The overt realization of the Relator can in some cases be optional, like in the following example:

- (ii) Imogen considers him (as) a fool.

As pointed out by den Dikken, the choice between the connectives *as*, *for* and *like* as a lexicalization of the lowest head R°/P° and its obligatoriness/optionality are entirely dependent on the lexical specifications of the selecting verb.

The existence of a functional element linking subject and predicate in predicative constructions is challenged by Marelj and Matushansky (2015), who investigate the validity of the theory of mediated predication by examining one of the proposed overt realizations of the alleged functional head; on the basis of evidence from English, Russian and Serbo-Croatian they argue that the element *for* that looks like the predicative head Pred° is in fact a real preposition, claiming that cases of apparently predicative interpretation result from

- (28) a. Considero Gianni *come* una persona affidabile.  
I consider John as a reliable person.  
b. Mia sorella ha preso Gianni *per* un pazzo.  
My sister took John for a fool

The data discussed in this section suggest that while the prepositional elements can lexicalize the lowest head  $P^\circ$ , the copula is always a lexicalization of the intermediate head  $V^\circ$  (or of the highest head  $T^\circ$ ).<sup>20</sup>

### 6.2.2 On the Lexicalization of the Higher Heads

Independently of the application of predicate inversion, I take the infinitival copula to lexicalize the intermediate head  $V^\circ$ , while (abstract or) overt prepositional relators are invariably generated within the lowest head  $P^\circ$ .<sup>21</sup> In particular, as proposed in the previous section, I will assume that SL predicates always entail the base generation of a (terminal-coincidence) prepositional element in the head  $P^\circ$ , which raises and incorporates into the intermediate head  $V^\circ$  and is spelled out in this higher position as a copular verb.<sup>22</sup>

Jiménez-Fernández (2012) analyses in detail the information structure of small clauses and the *ser/estar* alternation and argues that there is

the interplay between the meaning of that preposition and the metaphorical reinterpretation of motion and locative verbs that *for*-PPs combine with.

**20** If the view that the copular verb invariably lexicalizes the intermediate head  $V^\circ$  (or the highest head  $T^\circ$ ) is on the right track, then the structural representation of the English examples in (i) should be the one reported under (ii):

- (i) a. I consider Brian as the best candidate.  
b. I consider Brian to be the best candidate.  
(ii) a. [<sub>TP</sub> I consider [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>V'</sub>] [<sub>PP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> Brian]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>P'</sub> as]<sub>j</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> the best candidate]]]]  
b. [<sub>TP</sub> I consider [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> Brian]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>V'</sub> to be]<sub>j</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> <sub>t<sub>i</sub></sub> [<sub>P'</sub> <sub>t<sub>j</sub></sub> ]]<sub>k</sub> [<sub>DP</sub> the best candidate]]]]

**21** At this point an important question arises as to whether, and, if so, how the copular verb and the prepositional element could cooccur; in other words, one could a priori expect the copula to take a complement headed by *as/for* followed by a non-verbal predicate, like in the following example:

- (i) a. \*I consider Brian to be as/for the best candidate.  
b. [<sub>TP</sub> I consider [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> Brian]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>V'</sub> to be]<sub>j</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> <sub>t<sub>i</sub></sub> [<sub>P'</sub> as/for]<sub>k</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> the best candidate]]]]].

I speculate that the ungrammaticality of (i) is due to the fact that the lexicalization of the copular verb is produced precisely by the raising and the incorporation of the abstract preposition onto the intermediate head, so that the lowest head will be occupied by its trace, which will prevent the overt realization of the prepositional element in that position.

**22** For the relation between the two auxiliary verbs *be* and *have* and the idea that auxiliary verbs can result from the incorporation of prepositions to some functional head the reader is referred to Benveniste 1966 and Kayne 1993 respectively.

a crucial correlation between IL/SL constructions and their information structure: more precisely, as anticipated above, he claims that subjects of IL predicates are always topics (and enter into a categorical construction), while subjects of SL predicates may not be topics (their construction beingthetic); capitalizing on the idea that *estar*-constructions contain a spatio-temporal event, he proposes that with SL predicates the topic may be represented by this spatio-temporal argument, in the sense that the content ofthetic constructions is predicated about a spatio-temporal situation, while this is not the case with *ser*-constructions, as in categorical IL constructions a property is predicated of a subject.<sup>23</sup>

Building on this analysis, I will adopt here the view that with SL predicates the copular verb (lexicalized in  $V^\circ$ ) must raise to  $T^\circ$  in order to license a silent spatio-temporal topic in the corresponding specifier in a spec-head agreement configuration; the presence of the silent topic in Spec,TP will prevent the raising of the SL adjectival predicate to that position (under the additional assumption that there are no multiple specifiers, cf. Kayne 1994); hence the ungrammaticality of (21b) - repeated here as (29) for convenience - as an answer to (21a):

- (29) \* $[_{TP}$  Ritengo  $[_{AP}$  preoccupato per la situazione] $_i$   $[_{T^{\circ}}$  essere] $_j$   $[_{VP}$  t $_i$   $[_{V^{\circ}}$  t $_j$ ] $[_{PP}$  Gianni  $[_{P^{\circ}}$  t $_i$  ]] $]$ , ad esempio.  
I consider worried about the situation to be John, for example.

But if the lexicalized copula raises obligatorily from the intermediate head  $V^\circ$  to the highest head  $T^\circ$ , licensing the silent topic in the corresponding specifier position Spec,TP, the specifier of VP will remain a free landing site for the inverted SL predicate, with the subject sitting in its basic position, as represented in (30):

- (30)  $[_{TP}$  Ritengo  $[_{TP}$  top  $[_{T^{\circ}}$  essere] $_j$   $[_{VP}$   $[_{AP}$  preoccupato per la situazione] $_i$   $[_{V^{\circ}}$  t $_j$ ] $[_{PP}$   $[_{NP}$  Gianni] $[_{P^{\circ}}$  t $_i$  ]] $]$ , ad esempio.  
I consider to be worried for the situation John, for example.

**23** This proposal endorses and updates the traditional analysis of Kratzer (1995), according to which SL predicates contain a bindable variable for the appropriate spatio-temporal restriction of the property denoted by the predicate to the relevant situation. An anonymous reviewer points out that it is rather strange to insert a null topic into a Spec,TP position, the typical surface subject position, but the proposal becomes more plausible if one considers that the null topic under discussion should be regarded in fact as an empty spatio-temporal argument of the SL predicate. For a detailed analysis of the relation between the topic-comment structure and the SL/IL predicate contrast the reader is referred to Jäger (2001), who argues against a uniform SL/IL distinction, suggesting that a unified explanation of the linguistic phenomena that are considered to be sensitive for this distinction is neither possible nor desirable.



On the other hand, with IL predicates the silent prepositional element generated within the lowest head  $P^\circ$  is taken to raise by head movement up to  $V^\circ$  (and to  $T^\circ$ ), but does not necessarily lexicalize as a copular verb (arguably because of the central-coincidence nature of the preposition involved). Consequently, as an answer to (20a), we can have a structure like (31a) without any copular verb and the predicate crossing over the subject; alternatively, if the copula is overtly realized and remains in  $V^\circ$  we get (31b), which sounds slightly marginal to native speakers, while if the copular verb raises further up to  $T^\circ$  we get (31c), a fully grammatical sequence:

- (31) a. Ritengo una persona affidabile Gianni, ad esempio.  
I consider a reliable person John, for example.
- b.  $?_{[TP} \text{Ritengo } [_{VP} [_{DP} \text{una persona affidabile}]_i [_{V'} \text{essere}] ] [_{PP} [_{NP} \text{Gianni}] ] [_{P'} \text{t}_i \text{t}_i ] ] ] ]$ , ad esempio.  
I consider a reliable person to be John, for example.
- c.  $[_{TP} \text{Ritengo } [_{TP} [_{T'} \text{essere}] ] [_{VP} [_{DP} \text{una persona affidabile}]_i [_{V'} \text{t}_j] ] ] [_{PP} [_{NP} \text{Gianni}] ] [_{P'} \text{t}_j \text{t}_i ] ] ] ]$ , ad esempio.  
I consider to be a reliable person John, for example.

The grammaticality status of (31b) – as opposed to the ungrammaticality of (29) – can be attributed to the fact that with IL predicates the infinitival copula does not (need to) license any spatio-temporal topic in Spec,TP and can therefore be merged and stop in the intermediate head  $V^\circ$ ; on the other hand, if the copula raises to the highest head  $T^\circ$ , we get the grammatical sequence in (31c), with the inverted predicate sitting in Spec,VP.<sup>24</sup>

24 Moro (1995) observes that neither the subject nor the predicate DP can be realized by a *pro* in a nominal small clause in Italian. However, he notes that there seems to be no intrinsic prohibition against the subject or the predicate of a nominal small clause being *pro*; hence, he concludes, it must be the local environment within the small clause that blocks the licensing of *pro*. According to Rizzi (1986), a case of V-licensed *pro* not involving an *arbitrary* interpretation is precisely the null expletive subject of small clauses. Cases of subject inversion, as exemplified in (i), are analyzed by Rizzi (1986) postulating rightward movement of the nominal subject and an expletive *pro* preceding the predicate:

- (i) Ritengo [*pro* più intelligente suo fratello]  
I consider *pro* more intelligent his brother

Updating his analysis and making it compatible with the present approach, there is no need to postulate a *pro* in these cases, assuming that in (i) the relative order of the two constituents has been affected by the application of predicate inversion, to the effect that the adjectival predicate has crossed over the subject, which remains in its base position (and, being the most embedded constituent, receives the default stress, cf. Cinque 1993):

- (ii)  $[_{TP} \text{Ritengo } [_{VP} [_{AP} \text{più intelligente}]_i ] [_{V'} ] ] [_{PP} [_{NP} \text{suo fratello}] ] [_{P'} \text{t}_i ] ] ] ]$

Notice that in (i) no copula is present between the inverted predicate and its subject, as expected with an IL predicate like *intelligente*; in fact, the copular verb, if present, can appear only before the adjectival predicate (that is, under the present analysis, as the lexicalization of the highest head  $T^\circ$ ). In English, unlike in Italian, AP predicates do not generally invert

## 7 Summary

Building on some recent proposals, in this article I have argued, on the basis of evidence from Romance, for the idea that epistemic predicative clauses are made up by at least three different layers of structure. The lowest projection, PP, hosts the basic generation position of subject and predicate, and its head P° can lexicalize as a prepositional element functioning as relator between them. The intermediate projection VP can host in its specifier the raised predicate, while its head V° can lexicalize as a copular verb, which results from the raising and the incorporation of an abstract prepositional element generated in the lower head position. The highest projection TP can equally host the copular verb in its head T°, which, with SL predicates, can license by spec-head agreement an abstract spatio-temporal topic in the corresponding specifier.

with their subjects via predicate inversion within the complement of verbs like *consider*; the cases under discussion in the present paper mostly involve AP predicates, which raises the question as to why in Italian AP predicates can apparently invert with their subjects under epistemic verbs. I will leave this question open for future research. Another case in which Rizzi postulates the presence of a *pro* is the one of clausal subjects, as exemplified in (iiia):

- (iii) a. Ritengo [*pro* improbabile [che Gianni parta]]  
 I consider *pro* unlikely that John leaves  
 b. Ritengo che Gianni parta estremamente improbabile  
 I consider that John leaves extremely unlikely

For these cases, given the grammaticality of (iiib), the presence of *pro* is probably justifiable and an alternative structural representation of (iiia), according to the theory developed here, would be the following, where the adjectival predicate optionally crosses over the clausal subject which is coindexed with the *pro* located in Spec,TP:

- (iv) [<sub>TP</sub> Ritengo [<sub>TP</sub> *pro*<sub>j</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>AP</sub> improbabile]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>V°</sub> ] [<sub>PP</sub> [<sub>CP</sub> che Gianni parta]<sub>j</sub> [<sub>P°</sub> ] t<sub>i</sub> ]]]]]

Finally, I have hypothesized above that with SL predicates the raising of P° to V° has as a consequence the obligatory lexicalization of the copula. The minimal pair in (v), that is, the different position of the subject in English and Italian with respect to the copula in the unmarked word order, could be easily traced back to (some version of) the null subject parameter, under the hypothesis (cf. Rizzi 1986) that only in Italian can the epistemic verb license an expletive *pro* within the copular clause, as represented in (vib):

- (v) a. I consider John/him *to be* willing to leave.  
 b. Ritengo *essere* Gianni/tu intenzionato a partire.  
 (vi) a. [<sub>TP</sub> I consider [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> John/him]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>V°</sub> to be]<sub>j</sub> [<sub>PP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> [<sub>P°</sub> t<sub>j</sub> ] [<sub>AP</sub> willing to leave]]]]]]  
 b. [<sub>TP</sub> Ritengo [<sub>TP</sub> *pro*<sub>i</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>V°</sub> essere]<sub>j</sub> ] [<sub>NP</sub> Gianni/tu]<sub>i</sub> [<sub>P°</sub> t<sub>j</sub> ] [<sub>AP</sub> intenzionato a partire]]]]]]

Notice that the structural representation reported in (via) might be valid also for the Italian example, grammatical for some speakers, where the copular verb intervenes between the subject and the predicate.

The attested word order restrictions follow straightforwardly from the assumption that SL predicates, unlike IL predicates, require the overt realization of an infinitival copula which must raise to the head T° in order to be able to restrict the validity of the property denoted by the predicate, anchoring it to a specific spatio-temporal situation.

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# La codifica delle relazioni spaziali in ungherese e in italiano: analisi tipologica

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**Abstract** This cross-linguistic survey of spatial reference is about the way Hungarian and Italian languages structure the spatial domain. My chief concern is theoretical and methodological: how and to what extent the traditionally structure-centeredness of linguistic typology (LT) can be broadened? Pursuing new ways of investigation taking into account an interdisciplinary approach LT may complement and learn from linguistics of other persuasions which in turn may enhance theoretical well groundedness of LT and expand its research scope. Opening up to cognitive linguistics, which has experienced a shift towards more empirically-based inquiry recently, may provide a potential for methodological cross-fertilization in the framework of semantic typology, a new kind of work in linguistics. Semantic typology is the comparative study of linguistic categorization. Its central issue is how linguistic representations structure a given cognitive domain across languages unraveling the functioning of the syntax – semantics interface. It studies variation and universals in the constraints languages impose on semantic representations in specific conceptual domains, in our case that of spatial relations.

**Sommario** 1 Introduzione. – 2 Quadro teorico di riferimento. – 2.1 Relativismo linguistico versus universalismo. – 2.2 La tipologia semantica. – 3 Le relazioni spaziali nella letteratura di riferimento. – 4 L'espressione dello spazio: ungherese versus italiano. – 4.1 Strutturazione concettuale del dominio spaziale. – 4.2 Strutturazione linguistica del dominio spaziale. – 5 Conclusione.

**Keywords** Linguistic typology. Semantics. Cognitive domain of spatial relations.

## 1 Introduzione

Nel presente lavoro viene studiata la strutturazione del dominio spaziale in due lingue tra loro lontanissime estendendo gli ambiti tradizionalmente riconosciuti della linguistica contrastiva su basi tipologiche verso il cognitivismo nell'ambito di una disciplina scientifica che ha cominciato a svilupparsi all'incirca vent'anni fa: la tipologia semantica (*semantic typology*).

Cognitivo fa riferimento al fatto che la nostra interazione con il mondo è mediata dai processi mentali. Si tratta di un cambiamento di prospettiva rispetto alle tradizioni millenarie nel pensiero occidentale sulla lingua che arriva ad abolire la distinzione categorica fra l'esperienza fisica e la sua rappresentazione mentale e linguistica. Con visione olistica di tutte le capacità cognitive umane il linguaggio viene considerato uno strumento per organizzare e veicolare le informazioni provenienti dall'esperienza

fisica percettiva e motoria del corpo umano. L'uso linguistico, invece che la sua forma, indissolubilmente legato al soggetto umano, diventa il banco di prova più importante per la nuova teoria nell'ambito della quale la concettualizzazione acquisisce un ruolo cruciale.

Il nostro studio ha dunque carattere interdisciplinare: in esso la linguistica cognitiva – che a sua volta si trova a rapportarsi oltre che con la linguistica, anche con la filosofia, la psicologia, le neuroscienze, l'antropologia, l'intelligenza artificiale e la glottodidattica –, la tipologia linguistica e la linguistica contrastiva insieme costituiscono quella prospettiva integrata da cui vengono osservati e analizzati i fenomeni linguistici in questione.

Nella prima parte di questo studio delineremo il quadro teorico di riferimento mettendo a confronto i filoni di pensiero costituenti la tipologia semantica. Data la giovane età della disciplina e la mancanza tutt'ora di una sua collocazione ben definita nel contesto più ampio delle scienze linguistiche, ci pare importante illustrare i punti di contatto e le differenze esistenti tra le varie correnti teoriche che vi sono rappresentate per arrivare a una riflessione che concerne l'attuabilità del loro possibile sintonizzarsi e l'applicabilità della nuova concezione nelle indagini linguistiche. La seconda parte del lavoro sarà dedicata all'analisi della codifica delle relazioni spaziali adottando il contesto della tipologia semantica.

## 2 Quadro teorico di riferimento

### 2.1 Relativismo linguistico versus universalismo

Gli studi sulla lingua da sempre si sono sviluppati attorno a due posizioni opposte: l'universalismo e il relativismo. La teoria della relatività linguistica enfatizza la variazione interlinguistica e, al contrario, l'idea universalista mette in evidenza l'esistenza di principi generali ricorrenti in ogni lingua.

Nella linguistica contemporanea i due punti di vista sono riflessi in due filoni teorici fondamentali: 1. i modelli di impronta strutturalista che rappresentano oggi il concetto dell'universalismo; 2. le scuole di pensiero che si definiscono funzionaliste e che si schierano a favore dell'idea del relativismo. Tra i primi occupa un posto privilegiato la grammatica generativo-trasformativa sviluppata da Noam Chomsky negli anni Cinquanta e Sessanta del Novecento. Gli studi più autorevoli in quest'ambito sono quelli di Chomsky stesso (per es. 2007), il quale tenta di costruire una grammatica universale che manifesti l'esistenza di una facoltà del linguaggio innata comune a tutti gli esseri umani il cui nucleo sia costituito da un contenuto grammaticale essenzialmente sintattico. Quest'impostazione, che reputa la conoscenza linguistica parte della cognizione umana, come una proprietà essenziale che ci definisce in quanto esseri umani, e considera il compito della linguistica la mappatura di tale conoscenza,



segna nell'ambito delle scienze linguistiche la svolta cognitiva. Nonostante ciò, il termine di linguistica cognitiva sarà destinato all'antagonista per eccellenza di questa corrente di pensiero che è andata affermandosi dagli anni Ottanta del Novecento come paradigma alternativo ad approcci alla lingua di tipo più formale. Da questi si distingue per la convinzione che il linguaggio non sia autonomo, ma piuttosto intimamente correlato alle altre facoltà cognitive umane (Kövecses, Benczes 2010; Ladányi, Tolcsvai Nagy 2008; Tolcsvai Nagy 2013). Essa condivide con la grammatica generativa l'assunto di base che non ci possa essere conoscenza senza l'esistenza di una rappresentazione mentale che funga da intermediario nella relazione epistemologica tra soggetto e oggetto. Ma la linguistica cognitiva è interessata alla nostra conoscenza del mondo ed al modo in cui il linguaggio contribuisce ad essa, il paradigma generativista invece è legato a una concezione computazionale. Ambedue fungono da punto di partenza per diversi indirizzi di pensiero che in parte possono discostarsi dalle loro matrici ma nella sostanza ne sono qualificati.

L'analisi contrastiva gioca un ruolo cruciale sia nella corrente di pensiero dell'universalismo sia in quella del relativismo in quanto in ambedue i casi il confronto interlinguistico costituisce la base dell'indagine. Tutto ciò logicamente porta alla tipologia linguistica che può fungere da ponte di collegamento tra due orientamenti scientifici i quali nelle questioni teoriche fondamentali hanno posizioni così discostanti che sarebbe un'impresa impossibile metterle d'accordo direttamente. La tipologia linguistica condivide con l'universalismo la finalità, ossia la ricerca di principi comuni caratteristici di ogni lingua umana, mentre con il relativismo ha in comune l'impostazione empirica della ricerca fondata sull'elaborazione linguistica del soggetto di esperienze concrete provenienti dal mondo esterno e l'osservazione della vasta variazione strutturale delle lingue umane.

L'approccio universalistico ha dato vita a due tradizioni nel campo dell'investigazione degli universali linguistici (sintattici): una generativa e l'altra tipologica. Sia la tipologia sia la corrente generativista privilegiano il livello (morfo)sintattico di analisi. L'indagine delle caratteristiche generali concernenti la natura del linguaggio umano come tale le accomuna e le differenzia tutt'e due dalla linguistica contrastiva; le divide però il fatto che, mentre la scuola generativa offre interpretazioni deduttive basate su assiomi, il metodo della tipologia è al contrario induttivo.

La cognizione, il linguaggio e la cultura possono essere connesse nel modo più evidente attraverso i significati: essi vengono costruiti con processi mentali, li si comunica con l'aiuto del linguaggio e la cultura può essere intesa come un insieme di significati adottati da una comunità linguistica (Kövecses, Benczes 2010, 220). Non a caso l'analisi semantica risulta essere un campo privilegiato per la linguistica cognitiva, che cerca di svelare attraverso le espressioni linguistiche gli schemi mentali e la strutturazione concettuale dettati da una determinata visione del mondo.

La tipologia linguistica fornisce per tutto ciò uno sfondo teorico teso ad individuare i principi generali sottostanti alla variazione interlinguistica che non è frutto del caso ma obbedisce a parametri tendenzialmente universali. In tale ottica le diverse strutture delle lingue del mondo vengono viste come variazioni sul tema, uniformi nella loro diversità. La tipologia e la linguistica cognitiva sono accomunate da una base empirica che serve per la comparazione interlinguistica mediante la quale si verificano le proprietà caratteristiche delle lingue umane.

I parlanti di lingue diverse hanno a disposizione gli stessi processi cognitivi innati per costruire la visione dell'ambiente circostante, ma poiché il modo in cui se ne avvalgono è diverso, il risultato della rappresentazione (linguistica) sarà inevitabilmente diverso. In seguito dunque alle differenze che si verificano nei processi di categorizzazione e di strutturazione, ogni lingua pone il sistema cognitivo in una prospettiva particolare (Kövecses, Benczes 2010, 95-100) e nella formulazione linguistica ogni idioma sceglie degli strumenti di espressione a seconda del proprio tipo. Ci si chiede se la lingua, a sua volta, non finisca di influenzare essa stessa la visione del mondo, ovvero il pensiero (cf. Boroditsky, Schmidt, Phillips 2003; Boroditsky 2003, 2011; Cubelli et al. 2011).

Ma come possiamo indagare con metodo sperimentale scientifico il nesso fra pensiero e lingua? La svolta in quest'ambito è rappresentata dalle ricerche del linguista americano Dan Isaac Slobin che negli anni Novanta del Novecento propose un approccio nuovo al problema perenne del rapporto tra pensiero e lingua (*thought and language*): passare dall'impostazione tradizionale, più filosofica e operante con concetti difficilmente definibili con rigore scientifico, agli studi dei processi del pensare e del parlare (*thinking and speaking*) e quindi all'analisi di situazioni reali di produzione scritta e orale della lingua (Slobin 1996, 71; 2003; Slobin, van der Velde 2005). Da qui la sua teoria prende il nome di *thinking for speaking* (pensare per parlare): quando eseguiamo compiti cognitivi i quali coinvolgono l'uso della lingua, vengono attivate strategie linguistiche che portano lingue diverse a incidere in modo diverso sulla rappresentazione della realtà e sul modo in cui i parlanti la descrivono. Le caratteristiche di una certa lingua influenzano dunque il pensiero, modificandolo. La motivazione psicologica di tale condizionamento è data dal fatto che la quantità degli stimoli provenienti dalla realtà esterna è tale da rendere necessaria un'elaborazione linguistica selettiva delle informazioni. Per fare ciò si mette in atto una particolare forma del pensare, lo *thinking for speaking* appunto, che viene mobilitata al momento della comunicazione per preparare la forma linguospecifica dell'esecuzione della risposta agli stimoli. Si noti che tale prospettiva non esclude il fatto che alcune delle strategie possano essere universali, in particolare a livello concettuale, e anzi, una certa stabilità è perfino necessaria per rendere conto della comprensione reciproca tra parlanti di diversi idiomi.

Le ultime ricerche ci indirizzano verso una posizione intermedia nella

dialettica tra universalisti e relativisti e ci inducono a contemplare un'idea dell'«universalismo relativo» (espressione di Kövecses, Benczes 2010, 217). Le indagini svolte proprio nel campo della codifica delle relazioni spaziali sembrano confermare la validità di tale supposizione: se è vero che alcuni principi cognitivi universali governano l'organizzazione linguistica, è altrettanto vero che principi culturali e linguistici possano condizionare la cognizione (Lucy 1997, 2000; Levinson et al. 2002; Levinson, Meria, Language and Cognition Group 2003).

I questa nuova ottica la linguistica viene considerata lo studio dell'interazione sociale degli esseri umani (cf. per esempio Regier, Kay 2009; Everett 2012).

## 2.2 La tipologia semantica

Nell'ambito della tipologia semantica le indagini contrastive su basi tipologiche vengono reinterpretate, ampliate e acquisiscono un approccio metodologico diverso con l'obiettivo di studiare i parametri adottati da lingue diverse nella strutturazione di un determinato campo semantico.

Tale orientamento scientifico si discosta sostanzialmente dalle indagini contrastive su basi tipologiche della tradizione incentrate sui componenti morfologico e sintattico della lingua. Il suo campo di elezione è rappreentato infatti dallo studio del significato considerato l'unica matrice della comunicazione e quindi del significante. Questa prospettiva ha conseguenze notevolissime sul rapporto tra forma e sostanza nel linguaggio. Sono i parametri semantici che vengono proiettati sulle strutture grammaticali e lessicali che si rendono disponibili a un'analisi volta a scoprire la concettualizzazione di un determinato campo semantico, nel nostro caso quello dello spazio.

Espandendo in questo modo gli orizzonti della linguistica tipologica si ottiene un inquadramento più preciso dei limiti posti alla variazione interlinguistica. Inoltre, l'integrazione nell'analisi di tutti i livelli linguistici senza esclusioni e il riconoscimento del fatto che sintassi e lessico non rappresentano due moduli a se stanti bensì costituiscono un *continuum* all'interno del sistema lingua, possono rivelarsi molto fruttuosi per la valutazione dei fenomeni sotto esame.

Evidenziando correlazioni pertinenti, la tipologia semantica mette in luce i principi fondamentali del funzionamento della lingua e mostra che le strutturazioni linguistiche basate su schemi culturali e di categorizzazione delle lingue diverse non sono altro che variazioni sul tema.

L'alleanza fruttuosa tra l'orientamento tipologico e la linguistica cognitiva è testimoniata da alcune ricerche recenti all'interno delle quali la prospettiva della linguistica contrastiva ben si adatta al quadro del cognitivismo (Croft 1999; Evans, Levinson 2009; Levinson, Meria, Language and Cognition Group 2003; Levinson, Wilkins 2006).

Per quanto riguarda la rappresentazione spaziale sono da menzionare gli studi del Language and Cognition Group al Max Plank Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen con a capo Stephen Levinson, i quali mostrano una variabilità nei sistemi concettuali di riferimento spaziale inattesa (cf. Levinson, Meria, Language and Cognition Group 2003; Levinson, Wilkins 2006) rispetto alle posizioni prese finora a favore di una congruenza sostanziale. È stato evidenziato il fatto che il linguaggio e la cognizione spaziali sono condizionati dalle convenzioni culturali delle singole comunità linguistiche. In seguito al nuovo tipo di impostazione dato alle indagini in questo campo, gli universali precedentemente assunti devono essere abbandonati e nuovi limiti devono essere posti alla variazione empirica cercando dei *pattern* comuni sottostanti a un livello più astratto.

### 3 Le relazioni spaziali nella letteratura di riferimento

Lo spazio fisico rappresenta uno dei concetti primari e più concreti della vita di un essere umano. Le esperienze riguardanti il corpo e l'orientamento nello spazio precedono ogni forma di cognizione, compresa la capacità linguistica, e nello stesso tempo hanno un ruolo determinante nel creare i nostri schemi di pensiero. Per questo motivo si tratta di un argomento ricorrente negli studi prevalentemente di stampo filosofico proposti sul rapporto esistente tra pensiero e lingua, oltre che in psicologia e psicolinguistica, ma in linguistica solo negli ultimi anni è stato dedicato interesse al linguaggio spaziale e soprattutto nell'ambito della teoria cognitiva sulla scia dei lavori di studiosi come Lyons (1977); Lakoff, Johnson (1980); Jackendoff (1983, 1987, 1992), Talmy (1985).

La creazione e l'organizzazione di un sistema di concetti riguardanti lo spazio sono inevitabili per qualsiasi essere avente una base fissa e capace di muoversi. Inoltre, non vi è alcun dubbio che nella cognitività umana le rappresentazioni spaziali siano alla base di diversi impieghi specifici del linguaggio. La trasposizione di significati concreti a livello astratto per riuscire a comprendere e veicolare concetti poco tangibili ha un'importanza fondamentale nell'ottica cognitiva. In questa prospettiva la metafora acquisisce un ruolo centrale. Non è più intesa come una semplice figura retorica propria del linguaggio poetico bensì rappresenta l'espressione linguistica più importante nella comunicazione in quanto più di tutte le altre è in grado di attivare un processo di comprensione nel destinatario di qualcosa di nuovo in base a qualcosa di noto attraverso il riconoscimento del rapporto di somiglianza esistente tra due entità diverse. Il meccanismo delle metafore non è arbitrario; si creano delle reti semantiche organizzate seguendo una categorizzazione operata sulla base della teoria del prototipo, elaborata negli anni Settanta del Novecento dalla psicologa Eleanor Rosch, e seguendo il principio di somiglianze di famiglia proposto

negli anni Quaranta del Novecento dal filosofo Ludwig Wittgenstein. Il prototipo, inteso come miglior rappresentante della categoria, raffigura il significato base su cui si fondano quelli metaforici (cf. Tolcsvai Nagy 2013, 232-55). Tramite l'utilizzo delle metafore cognitive le diverse comunità linguistiche possono mettere in evidenza aspetti differenti della stessa realtà (cf. Bańczerowski 2002, 2008; Kövecses 2005, 2009; Kövecses, Benczes 2010; Langacker 2009, 2010; Tolcsvai Nagy 2013).

Vi è dunque un'esigenza in tutte le lingue di codificare il sistema spazio. Troviamo nello stesso tempo delle variazioni interessanti e non casuali tra i vari idiomi che possono riguardare sia le scelte su quali aspetti della realtà debbano essere espresse nelle forme linguistiche, sia le modalità della resa linguistica. Si presume che oltre ai fattori biologici (in primo luogo la percezione) debbano essere presi in considerazione aspetti comunicativi e più prettamente linguistici che indirizzano la scelta di che cosa effettivamente vada codificato (cf. Tversky, Clark 1993).

La problematicità e la complessità della codifica delle relazioni spaziali derivano dal fatto che l'elaborazione linguistica dell'informazione spaziale non si sviluppa tramite una forma grammaticale isolata e nemmeno da una classe morfologica specifica, ma piuttosto si distribuisce in sintagmi di varia provenienza all'interno di tutta la frase. Le grammatiche nello stesso tempo non forniscono un quadro adeguato della questione. Vi si trovano dei riferimenti in diversi punti della trattazione ma l'argomento non viene illustrato nella sua interezza e in tutta la sua complessità, le indicazioni spesso peccano di incompletezza. Prima di tutto abbiamo dovuto procedere alla raccolta e alla classificazione di tutti gli elementi linguistici che possono occorrere nelle espressioni spaziali in italiano e in ungherese in modo da disporre del repertorio determinato genealogicamente e tipologicamente al quale le due lingue in questione attingono nel momento della codifica delle relazioni spaziali. Per fare ciò ci siamo confrontati con le grammatiche dell'ungherese e dell'italiano redatte negli ultimi anni oltre che con i dati pertinenti della letteratura specialistica più recente; tutto il materiale rappresenta le due lingue standard.

#### 4 L'espressione dello spazio: ungherese versus italiano

Trattare il linguaggio spaziale come categoria unica e indivisibile è giustificato dal punto di vista funzionale e perfino auspicabile in quanto rende possibile illustrare nel suo insieme la strutturazione complessa di un dominio semantico organizzato in sottodomini.

Se accettiamo che le categorie linguistiche attraverso le quali il contenuto mentale è accessibile mettono in evidenza prospettive diverse dell'esperienza umana, il primo compito sarà quello di comprendere in base a quali categorie viene suddiviso il dominio spazio. Il meccanismo cognitivo del *thinking*

for speaking (cf. § 2.1), quello cioè che precede il momento stesso in cui si parla e si organizza il flusso delle parole, non coincide necessariamente nelle varie lingue e la differenza tra due idiomi può essere anche significativa.

Le ricerche più recenti hanno rilevato una correlazione tra la variazione che si trova nella strutturazione linguistica da una parte e l'interpretazione dello spazio dall'altra (Levinson, Wilkins 2006). Quindi le (eventuali) generalizzazioni vanno operate a un livello più profondo e astratto della concettualizzazione.

Si parte sempre da schemi concettuali del tipo parte/tutto, contenitore/superficie, figura/sfondo, percorso ecc. per arrivare a un significato. Il contenuto lessicale va allora integrato con l'informazione riguardante la modalità della concettualizzazione. La semantica fa da ponte tra facoltà cognitiva e capacità linguistica e rende possibile la reinterpretazione della grammatica in chiave cognitiva. È il significato a consentire la generazione linguistica in categorie primitive e in regole sintattiche. Le strutture grammaticali sono considerate schemi di costruzione che si realizzano tenendo conto sia del significato sia della forma (Langacker 2010).

In mancanza di spazio non abbiamo la possibilità qui di riportare dettagliatamente l'intero lavoro di raccolta e di classificazione di tutti gli elementi linguistici che rappresentano il repertorio dell'ungherese e dell'italiano per realizzare la descrizione di eventi di localizzazione e di dislocazione spaziali. Illustriamo di seguito i risultati delle nostre indagini in termini di possibili generalizzazioni tipologiche rivolte a sondare se due lingue diverse, quali l'ungherese e l'italiano, suggeriscano ai parlanti un grado diverso di attenzione verso gli aspetti relativi alla rappresentazione spaziale della realtà. È stata svolta un'analisi che in parte recuperasse le premesse e i risultati delle ultime ricerche in quest'ambito, e dall'altra proponesse nuovi dati da elaborare.

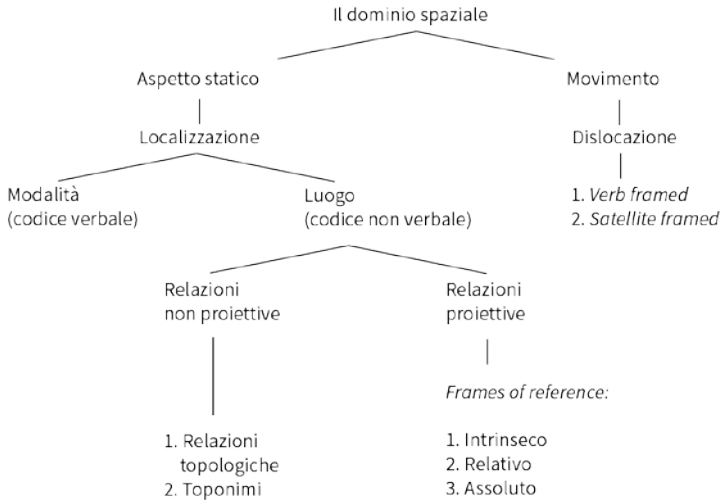
Partiremo dalla concettualizzazione e dalla categorizzazione del dominio spaziale che hanno riflessi linguistici significativi. Le lingue marcano grammaticalmente (ad esempio attraverso l'uso di un morfema dedicato oppure di una costruzione sintattica) alcuni aspetti delle relazioni spaziali, mentre altri rimangono sottintesi. Studiare le strategie linguistiche di marcatura delle categorie ci rivela aspetti importanti dell'attività di classificazione umana e ci aiuta a comprendere meglio i meccanismi implicati nel processo della categorizzazione stessa e gli aspetti *language-specific* e *culture-specific* del ragionamento categoriale.

#### 4.1 Strutturazione concettuale del dominio spaziale

È noto che lo spazio non viene interpretato come un dominio semantico unico ma viene suddiviso in sottodomini (cf. grafico 1). Sembra opportuno, anche dal punto di vista metodologico, partire nell'indagine dai singoli

sottodomini anche se i vari segmenti possono sovrapporsi (per esempio i *frames of reference* possono avere un ruolo importante nella descrizione sia della localizzazione sia della dislocazione spaziali).

Grafico 1. La suddivisione concettuale del dominio spaziale (elaborazione nostra in base a Levinson, Wilkins 2006 e Tolcsvai Nagy 1999)



Si noti che le distinzioni concettuali di primo livello, quelle più grossolane, sono le stesse in tutte le lingue; individuiamo così una base comune da cui partire per analizzare gli ulteriori livelli gerarchicamente organizzati. Più in basso andiamo nella scala gerarchica del grafico 1, prendendo in considerazione aspetti sempre più dettagliati e di strutturazione sempre più specifica, e più facilmente troveremo delle differenze tra lingue diverse.

I due sottodomini principali dello spazio inteso come sistema di riferimento sono costituiti dall'opposizione della disposizione statica, da una parte, e dell'essere in movimento, dall'altra. In riferimento alla localizzazione vale per tutte le lingue il fatto che la sua modalità viene resa da espressioni verbali, mentre la designazione del luogo avviene tramite unità linguistiche appartenenti a classi morfologiche non verbali. Un altro aspetto generalizzato a livello interlinguistico riguarda la distinzione concettuale tra le relazioni spaziali che coinvolgono due entità in contatto fisico tra loro (quindi si tratta sostanzialmente di un rapporto di contenimento o di collocazione su una superficie), da una parte, e quelle in cui le due entità non hanno contatto, dall'altra. In quest'ultimo caso ci si deve servire di qualche sistema di coordinate (*frames of reference*) con l'aiuto del quale si individua la localizzazione di un oggetto rispetto ad un altro.

Tratto universale dell'organizzazione del linguaggio spaziale è rappresentato dal fatto che la spazialità è un concetto relazionale nelle lingue umane: viene sempre resa, che si tratti di localizzazione o di dislocazione, tramite un rapporto esistente tra due oggetti. La figura è l'entità prominente (rispetto allo sfondo) attorno alla quale viene organizzata tutta la situazione, mentre l'entità che funge da punto di riferimento nel momento del posizionamento della figura viene indicata col termine sfondo.<sup>1</sup>

Le divergenze si notano nell'ambito dei sottodomini più specifici nella parte inferiore del grafico 1. Esse interessano sia la concettualizzazione sia la sua resa linguistica. Per quanto concerne la concettualizzazione, si possono trovare delle differenze interessanti in riferimento a quali situazioni rientrino in una lingua o nell'altra nell'ambito di un preciso settore spaziale. Per esempio nel caso di una relazione del tipo contenimento dobbiamo scoprire a quali altre aree periferiche (oltre alle scene prototipiche) viene estesa questa etichetta, ovvero dove si trova il confine tra quello che è ancora considerato contenimento e quello che non lo è più. In quest'ambito troviamo delle differenze anche notevoli tra varie lingue.

## 4.2 Strutturazione linguistica del dominio spaziale

Prendendo a riferimento l'intera proposizione, dal punto di vista morfologico si individuano due tipi di elementi linguistici che concorrono nella codifica delle relazioni spaziali: uno di natura verbale e uno di carattere non verbale. Quest'ultimo gruppo può essere ulteriormente diviso in morfemi legati strutturalmente al verbo (preverbi ungheresi, prefissi verbali italiani e particelle locative nelle costruzioni verbo + locativo dell'italiano) o al nome (suffissi, posposizioni, preposizioni), infine vanno contemplate unità lessicali indipendenti (avverbi).

### 4.2.1 Elementi di natura verbale

Nell'ambito degli elementi verbali sono pertinenti due categorie di verbi per il nostro argomento: 1. il verbo essere e i suoi sinonimi; 2. i verbi di movimento.

I primi sono obbligatori in ambedue le lingue come indicatori di posizione nella descrizione di una situazione statica. Spesso si tratta di verbi di postura o loro derivati dove le rappresentazioni riguardanti la posizione umana vengono trasferite metaforicamente anche alla descrizione della

1 Nella letteratura di riferimento si trovano le seguenti denominazioni parallele: *figure - ground*, *theme - relatum*, *trajector(y) - landmark*.



localizzazione di entità inanimate con variazioni interlinguistiche. Essi possono indirizzare l'attenzione su aspetti particolari della figura e dello sfondo, come per esempio lo sviluppo orizzontale o verticale della figura:

- |     |    |   |    |        |                         |                |
|-----|----|---|----|--------|-------------------------|----------------|
| (1) | A  | torony                                      | a  | tér    | közep-é-n               | áll.           |
|     | la | torre                                       | la | piazza | centro-suo-Superessivus | sta (in piedi) |
|     |    | 'La torre erge in mezzo alla piazza.'       |    |        |                         |                |
| (2) | A  | falu  | a  | folyó  | part-já-n               | fekszik.       |
|     | il | paese                                       | il | fiume  | riva-sua-Superessivus   | si estende     |
|     |    | 'Il paese si estende sulla riva del fiume.' |    |        |                         |                |

Alla nostra analisi dell'espressione degli eventi di dislocazione spaziale con verbi di movimento abbiamo applicato il modello tipologico proposto da Leonard Talmy (1985, 2005, 2009). Lo studioso americano individua in un evento basilico di dislocazione quattro componenti concettuali distinte: il moto stesso, la figura che rappresenta l'entità dislocata nello spazio, lo sfondo che definisce la regione di spazio rispetto alla quale la figura viene dislocata e infine il percorso che determina la traiettoria seguita dalla figura durante la dislocazione. In base ai mezzi di espressione che le varie lingue adoperano nella rappresentazione dei componenti concettuali appena elencati Talmy divide le lingue in due gruppi: quelle cosiddette *verb-framed* che lessicalizzano il percorso all'interno del verbo – come nel caso delle lingue romanze – e quelle *satellite-framed* che lessicalizzano il percorso all'interno di un satellite (di natura non verbale) – come nel caso delle lingue germaniche e dell'ungherese.

Si è visto che utilizzando il metodo dell'analisi tipologica applicato a poche lingue per volta si arriva a una classificazione più precisa che riflette in modo più fedele la reale strutturazione linguistica. Ciò si verifica nel caso dell'italiano. Dopo aver esaminato i verbi sintagmatici (d'ora in poi VS<sup>2</sup>), ovvero costruzioni verbali formate da un verbo, normalmente di moto, seguito da una particella con significato locativo-direzionale in italiano (*andare fuori, correre via ecc.*), e classificando le particelle locative di queste espressioni come satelliti, siamo giunti alla conclusione che questa lingua romanza non può rientrare in modo categorico né nel tipo *verb-framed* né in quello *satellite-framed*, bensì si trova a metà strada tra i due poli. La necessità di dover ammettere la possibilità di classificare le lingue non tanto riconducendole in maniera discreta ad un solo tipo quanto piuttosto collocandole lungo un *continuum* ideale caratterizzato da una maggiore o minore prossimità a uno dei due poli possibili viene ribadita anche nella letteratura specialistica (cf. Slobin 2004; Talmy 2009; Beavers, Levin, Tham 2010).

2 Nelle letteratura di riferimento non c'è ancora una terminologia fissa per indicare queste costruzioni. Vengono usati i seguenti termini: V + avverbio o V + locativo (Cordin 2011),

## 4.2.2 Elementi di natura non verbale

In riferimento agli elementi di natura non verbale delle espressioni locative, seguendo la più recente concezione della linguistica contemporanea abbiamo postulato un'unica categoria delle adposizioni, la categoria P<sup>3</sup> (cf. tab. 1) che raccoglie tutte le unità linguistiche che sono/possono essere coinvolte nella codifica di un evento di localizzazione/dislocazione spaziale indipendentemente da come si realizzino morfologicamente nelle varie lingue ma anche all'interno della stessa. Impostando l'analisi su un punto di vista funzionale i vari mezzi grammaticali sono considerati varianti di uno stesso espediente in quanto tutti, indistintamente, servono a rappresentare, pur attraverso percorsi specifici per ogni lingua, degli schemi mentali generali (cf. Haspelmath 2007, 2010; Iggesen 2013).

Tabella 1. Unità linguistiche di natura non verbale del linguaggio spaziale in italiano e in ungherese

ELEMENTI DELLA CATEGORIA P		
	ITALIANO	UNGHERESE
Elementi collegati al verbo	particelle locative in sostituzione di prefissi	preverbi
Elementi collegati al nome	preposizioni	suffissi di Casi locativi; posposizioni nude e posposizioni reggenti suffissi di Caso
Elementi indipendenti	avverbiali	avverbiali

Allargando il confronto strutturale con la prospettiva funzionale e cognitiva abbiamo applicato all'analisi la teoria del 'prototipo' e proceduto con una categorizzazione linguistica che contemplatesse le unità linguistiche sotto esame su un *continuum* più rappresentativo delle loro proprietà dal carattere in alcuni casi categorico e in altri graduale nel processo di grammaticalizzazione in cui sono coinvolte.

La grammaticalizzazione, il fenomeno cioè che vede forme linguistiche libere perdere gradualmente il loro significato lessicale oltre che la loro autonomia sia fonologica, sia morfosintattica fino a diventare forme non più libere ed aventi un valore grammaticale, trova la sua applicazione tradizionalmente negli studi di stampo diacronico. Tuttavia nella linguistica contemporanea è diventato uno dei concetti fondamentali anche della tipologia e come fattore esplicativo ha un ruolo cruciale nelle analisi grammaticali

verbi sintagmatici (traduzione dell'inglese *phrasal verbs*) (Simone 1997, Masini 2006, Vicario 2008), verbi analitici (Vicario 1997).

3 La denominazione deriva dai termini, preposizione e posposizione rispettivamente, utilizzati nella letteratura specialistica per fare riferimento alla posizione sintattica (precedente o seguente rispetto alla testa) delle adposizioni.

(cf. Dér 2005). Ad essa è legata la nozione della polisemia per la quale i diversi significati di una stessa parola sono correlati tra loro, in modo da formare reti semantiche organizzate intorno ad un senso primario. I nuovi valori semantici nel corso della grammaticalizzazione convivono per un periodo più o meno lungo con quelli vecchi. Questa sovrapposizione, che è la conseguenza dell'estensione semantica del vocabolo per cui i diversi significati etimologicamente e semanticamente correlati della parola polisemica si conservano nella lingua, spiega in modo naturale aspetti che nelle grammatiche descrittive tradizionali improntate a una categorizzazione discreta, impostata cioè su valori binari, risultavano problematici e non trovavano una soluzione soddisfacente (cf. la classificazione non univoca di elementi che tipicamente veicolano relazioni di spazio: in ungherese la stessa parola è classificata come avverbio, come preverbo e posposizione; in italiano la stessa unità linguistica funge a volte da avverbio e a volte da preposizione o, nelle costruzioni verbo-locativo dell'italiano contemporaneo, da particella locativa).

Gli elementi P derivano da pronomi e nomi indicanti tipicamente luogo, parti di oggetti rilevanti da un punto di vista spaziale e parti del corpo (cf. Jackendoff 1996, 14-5). Gli avverbi rappresentano il primo stadio della grammaticalizzazione. Lo strato più antico degli avverbi ungheresi è lessicalizzato da forme pronominali aventi dei suffissi locativi<sup>4</sup> (D. Máta 2003, 220-5), le quali, in seguito alla perdita della trasparenza morfologica manifesta in gradi diversi, sono state rivalutate come avverbi. Quasi tutti gli avverbi del proto-ungherese (1000 a.C.-896) rappresentano espressioni dello spazio (Zsilinszky 2003, 195). Gli avverbi locativi sono da sempre caratterizzati da una morfologia ambigua: possono cambiare la classe morfologica della parola senza alcuna modifica formale. Si vedano i seguenti esempi in cui lo stesso lessema ha la funzione ora di avverbio (mantenendo il suo status di partenza), ora di posposizione (quando è legato a un nome) e poi ancora di preverbo (accanto a un verbo, in posizione di modificatore verbale):

- |  |   |                                  |  |  |                |
|--|---|----------------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| (3)  | Közel<br>vicino                           | nem<br>non                       | találtunk<br>trovammo                  | semmi-t.<br>niente-Acc.                      | (AVERBIO)      |
| 'Vicino non abbiamo trovato niente.'               |   |                                  |  |  |                |
| (4)  | Az egyetem-hez<br>la università-Allativus | közel<br>vicino                  | van<br>c'è                             | egy kitűnő kávézó.<br>una ottima caffetteria | (POSPOSIZIONE) |
| 'Vicino all'università c'è un'ottima caffetteria.' |   |                                  |  |  |                |
| (5)  | A cica<br>il miccio                       | közel-bújt<br>vicino-si strusciò | gazdá-já-hoz.<br>padrone-suo-Allativus | (PREVERBO)                                   |                |
| 'Il miccio si è strusciato al suo padrone.'        |   |                                  |  |  |                |

4 Gli avverbi locativi marginalmente si formano anche tramite composizione.

Le posposizioni possono nascere anche direttamente da nomi. L'ungherese possiede due tipi di posposizioni: 1. quelle (di formazione più antica) che seguono un NP 'nudo':

(6)	A	ház	mellett	parkoltam.
	la	casa	vicino	parcheggiai
		'Ho parcheggiato vicino alla casa.'		

e 2. quelle che reggono un NP con suffisso di Caso (locativo):<sup>5</sup>

(7)	A	ház-hoz	közel	parkoltam.
	la	casa-Allativus	vicino	parcheggiai
		'Ho parcheggiato vicino alla casa.'		

Le posposizioni più antiche derivano da nomi indicanti la cosa posseduta in strutture possessive in cui il possessore non è marcato: ecco perché esse reggono un nome 'nudo' (es. (6)). Nell'epoca dell'ungherese antico (896-1526) la struttura possessiva, che continua a fare da base per la formazione delle posposizioni, diventa marcata obbligatoriamente sul nome che designa la cosa posseduta e facoltativamente sul possessore. Le posposizioni che hanno origine in questo periodo esibiscono un comportamento equivoco: alcune si uniformano alla struttura delle posposizioni più antiche (es. (8)), altre possono accompagnarsi sia a un nome nudo, visto che il Genitivo-Dativo sul possessore è facoltativo anche nella struttura di origine (es. (9)a), sia a uno marcato dal Caso Genitivo-Dativo con chiaro riferimento alla configurazione di derivazione (es. (9b)):<sup>6</sup>

(8)	Az út	ment-é-n	nyárfák	állnak.
	la strada	lungo (=andamento-suo-Superessivus)	pioppi	stanno (in piedi)
	'Lungo la strada ci sono dei pioppo.'			

5 La posposizione *mellett* indica un maggior grado di vicinanza rispetto a *-hoz közel*.

6 Nelle strutture di (9) il nome retto dalla posposizione ha la restrizione semantica di [+HUM]. Con riferimento [-HUM] si usa la stessa configurazione sintattica, ma con il Caso Superessivo invece che Inessivo:

(9) c.	Az állomás		<i>hely-é-n</i>	parko-t	létesítettek.
	la stazione		luogo-suo-Superessivus	parco-Acc.	realizzarono
	'Al posto della stazione fu costruito un parco.'				
d.	Az állomás-nak	a	<i>hely-é-n</i>	parko-t	létesítettek.
	la stazione-Gen./Dat.	il	luogo-suo-Superessivus	parco-Acc.	realizzarono
	'Al posto della stazione fu costruito un parco.'				

- (9) a. Dávid hely-é-ben nem mennék el.  
 Davide luogo-suo-Inessivus non andrei via (Preverbo)  
 Al posto di Davide non ci andrei.
- b. Dávid-nak a hely-é-ben nem mennék el.  
 Davide-Gen./Dat. il luogo-suo-Inessivus non andrei via (Preverbo)  
 'Al posto di Davide non ci andrei.'

La formazione delle posposizioni reggenti un nome avente un suffisso di Caso è più recente e in continuo aumento dall'epoca dell'antico ungherese fino ad oggi. La maggior parte di esse si grammaticalizza da nomi o avverbi che nella struttura di partenza si trovavano in posizione di apposizione accanto a un nome avente un Caso locativo. Gli elementi rivalutati come posposizioni reggono lo stesso Caso che il nome della configurazione di origine esibisce:

- (10) Egy napo-t töltött Dávid-tól távol.  
 un giorno-Acc. passò Davide-Ablativus lontano  
 'Ha passato un giorno lontano da Davide.'

Nel caso delle posposizioni che reggono un NP con Caso locativo il processo della grammaticalizzazione è più complesso rispetto a quello delle posposizioni più antiche perché esso è ciclico. Una posposizione che ha origine da una struttura possessiva acquisisce lo status di avverbio indipendente che a sua volta costituirà la base per un nuovo processo di grammaticalizzazione. Prendiamo come esempio la formazione della posposizione (-n) *belül* (dentro) che ha origine dal nome *bél* (intestino, l'interno) e dal suffisso dell'Ablativus (antico) *-l*. Nella prima tappa da avverbio esprime relazione di spazio da solo, ma non più con il valore dell'Ablativo, bensì di Locativo stato in luogo:

- (11) Megváltozott: kívül és belül teljesen új formá-t kapott.  
 cambiò fuori e dentro completamente nuova forma-Acc. ricevette  
 'È cambiato: dentro e fuori ha preso una forma completamente nuova.'

La conformazione avverbiale partecipa a un nuovo processo di grammaticalizzazione. Accanto a un nome marcato con il Caso Superessivus ha il ruolo di apposizione con la funzione di puntualizzare il senso (locativo) del nome:

- (12) a házo-n, belül  
 la casa-Superessivus dentro  
 'nella casa, dentro'

In seguito all'uso frequente e la conseguente rianalisi l'elemento appositivo si rivaluta come posposizione che regge un SN con Caso Superessivus:

(13)	A	ház	a	városfalo-n	belül	található.
	la	casa	la	cinta-muraria-Superessivus	dentro	trovabile

‘La casa si trova all’interno della cinta muraria.’

Le posposizioni che reggono un NP con Caso (locativo) si trovano in uno stadio intermedio tra i morfemi liberi e quelli legati. I due tipi di posposizioni testimoniano di una gradazione sofisticata e minuta in questa lingua del processo di grammaticalizzazione che non si ferma qui.

Le posposizioni più grammaticalizzate danno origine ai suffissi locativi tramite l’agglutinazione.<sup>7</sup> Vediamo il percorso attraverso un esempio:

1. in strutture possessive il nome indicante la cosa posseduta, perdendo la sua indipendenza lessicale e sintattica, diventa posposizione: *bél* (intestino, l’interno) > *bele* (il suo interno) > *belen* (nel suo interno) > *a ház belen* (all’interno della casa = dentro la casa);
2. la posposizione, trovandosi in posizione non accentuata, si riduce nella forma e perde la sua autonomia e in posizione proclitica si agglutina al nome retto: *a ház belen* > *a ház ben* > *a házben* (dentro la casa);
3. seguendo le regole dell’armonia vocalica si forma la variante velare del suffisso che viene utilizzata con temi nominali velari: *a házban* (dentro la casa).

Nelle lingue uraliche, il cui rappresentante qui è l’ungherese, aventi un sistema di Casi ricco, i Casi locativi rappresentano una percentuale alta del totale dei Casi. In ungherese dei 18 Casi 10 sono locativi.<sup>8</sup> Una delle caratteristiche principali del sistema dei Casi locativi ugro-finnico è costituita dalla distinzione formale dei suffissi veicolanti relazioni di moto da, stato in e moto a luogo: una strutturazione orizzontale che coinvolge anche gli avverbi e le posposizioni. Nell’ambito dei suffissi tale impianto si è ampliato ulteriormente specializzandosi con forme dedicate all’indicazione delle relazioni di spazio interne, esterne con contatto ed esterne senza contatto (strutturazione verticale) creando così un sottosistema ben articolato e circoscritto all’interno del sistema dei Casi (cf. tab. 2):

<sup>7</sup> Oltre all’agglutinazione, che rappresenta la modalità più produttiva in assoluto della formazione dei suffissi locativi, altre due procedure contribuiscono ad arricchire il sistema. Il suffisso del Superessivus (-on, -en, -ön: tre varianti per l’armonia vocalica) deriva dalla desinenza polisemica -N tramite la specializzazione funzionale di quest’ultima. Il morfema del Caso Terminativus (-ig) ha invece origine dal congiungersi di due suffissi lativi antichi (del proto-ungherese).

<sup>8</sup> L’importanza che i mezzi di espressione dello spazio rivestono da sempre nel sistema linguistico ungherese è testimoniata anche dal fatto che dei cinque suffissi sicuri dell’protoungherese (sei, se consideriamo anche lo Ø) quattro sono locativi, con una tendenza di differenziazione prevalente nell’ambito lativo, quindi dell’indicazione di moto a luogo. Il quinto, l’Accusativus, poteva avere anche valore locativo.

Tabella 2. Suffissi locativi ungheresi<sup>9</sup>

	<b>Moto da luogo</b>	<b>Stato in luogo</b>	<b>Moto a luogo</b>
Relazioni interne	Elativus -BÓL / -BŐL	Inessivus -BAN / -BEN	Illativus -BA / -BE
Relazioni esterne con contatto	Delativus -RÓL / -RŐL	Superessivus -N / -ON / -EN / -ÖN	Sublativus -RA / -RE
Relazioni esterne senza contatto	Ablativus -TÓL / -TŐL	Adessivus -NÁL / -NÉL	Allativus -HOZ / -HEZ / -HÖZ

Parallelamente alle posposizioni, dall'epoca dell'ungherese antico in poi, nascono anche dei preverbi dagli stessi elementi avverbiali che danno origine alle posposizioni e suffissi, più precisamente dalle loro forme recanti il suffisso del caso Lativus (\*-i > -á/-é). Questo processo di grammaticalizzazione e la rivalutazione degli avverbi in preverbi avviene in seguito al frequente uso degli avverbi con verbi di moto e di verbi di dislocazione in generale. I preverbi più antichi sono monosillabici in conseguenza della riduzione formale:

(14) *belé* > *bé* > *be* (dentro con valore di 'moto a')

Si noti la simmetria tra l'uso del preverbo *be* e il suffisso Illativus *-BA/-BE* (della stessa origine) in (15):

(15) Dávid      beme gy      a      ház-ba.  
 Davide      dentro (Preverbo)-va      la      casa-Illativus  
 'Davide entra nella casa.'

In posizione enclitica gli avverbi perdono il loro accento creando un'unica unità col verbo dal punto di vista intonazionale. Inoltre, la loro funzione originaria di indicatori di direzionalità si amplia acquisendo valori semantici astratti come l'espressione dell'inizio, della fine, del risultato, della momentaneità, ecc. dell'azione, finché diventano (anche) particelle aspettuali:

<sup>9</sup> Le molteplici varianti dei suffissi sono dovute alla legge dell'armonia vocalica, fenomeno fonetico per il quale le vocali presenti nella desinenza di una parola adeguano il proprio tono (palatale o velare) a quello del tema lessicale:

a ház-BAN  
 la casa-Inessivus  
 'nella casa'

a szekrény-BEN  
 il armadio-Inessivus  
 'nell'armadio'

- (16) significato avverbiale > significato avverbiale + indicazione associata dell'azione verbale / aspetto > indicazione dell'azione verbale / aspetto

I preverbi più recenti come *ide / oda* (con indicazione deittica di avvicinamento), *vissza* (indietro) e altri sono bisillabici perché il suffisso (Lativus) dell'avverbio di partenza non si è ridotto. Nell'epoca dell'ungherese medio (1526-1772) continua la formazione dei preverbi sia tramite il cambiamento di classe morfologica descritto sopra, sia partendo da strutture dove accanto a un nome recante un suffisso di caso (locativo) l'avverbio in posizione di apposizione si lega poi al verbo. Si noti anche la simmetria tra il preverbo e la posposizione *-alá* in (17b):

- (17) a. A           pokol-ra                   alá           kerül.  
           il           inferno-Sublativus       sotto       va a finire  
           'Va a finire all'inferno, sotto.'
- b. Alá-bújik                                   az           ágy       alá.  
       Sotto (Preverbo)-si infila       il       letto       sotto  
       'Si infila sotto il letto.'

Nell'ungherese moderno (dal 1772 in poi) siamo testimoni di una modalità nuova di produzione di preverbi: vengono derivati direttamente da nomi recanti un suffisso locativo, saltando lo stadio avverbiale. Si veda per esempio l'uso preverbale di *félbe* (a metà: *fél* + Caso Illativus):

- (18) Félbe-vágja                           a       kenyere-t.  
       a metà (Preverbo)-taglia       il       Pane-Acc.  
       'Taglia il pane a metà.'

Per quanto riguarda la famiglia linguistica indoeuropea molti studiosi si sono pronunciati a favore dell'origine comune degli elementi P (cf. C. Lehmann 1995, W.P. Lehmann 1974) giungendo alla conclusione che in seguito a dei processi di grammaticalizzazione gli avverbi liberi, grazie alla loro mobilità sintattica e legandosi a nomi, sono diventati preposizioni, mentre unendosi ai verbi in posizione preverbale hanno dato origine a prefissi, in quella postverbale a particelle:

1. Non la vedi perché è *su / sopra*. (avverbio)
2. Davide ha dormito *sul / sopra* il divano. (preposizione)
3. L'abitazione è stata *sopraelevata* di un metro. (prefisso)
4. Davide è sopra il tetto: è salito *su* per riparare una telecamera. (il *su* qui è una particella locativa nella costruzione VS)

In italiano i prefissi, la produttività dei quali rispetto al latino è assai ridotta, e soprattutto le particelle locative delle costruzioni VS, che in seguito alla progressiva opacizzazione delle forme prefissate stanno



subentrando a questi, sono elementi dallo status incerto collocabili tra la categoria degli avverbi e quella delle preposizioni (cf. Iacobini, Masini 2006, 2007; Masini 2005, 2006). La diffusione delle costruzioni VS rientra in una tendenza evolutiva che vede la sostituzione delle forme sintetiche con forme analitiche (Cordin 2011), sviluppo in cui prevalgono i fattori tipologici e strutturali su quelli areali (Iacobini, Masini 2006; Simone 2008; Vicario 1997, 2008).

La trattazione delle costruzioni VS manca nelle grammatiche italiane nonostante il fatto che si tratti di espressioni piuttosto consolidate sia nell'italiano standard, sia nei dialetti, soprattutto settentrionali. Le cause probabilmente sono da ricercare nei diversi gradi di lessicalizzazione/grammaticalizzazione e nelle diverse tipologie di modificazione semantica di questi costrutti, che rendono ardua la categorizzazione discreta e binaria applicata dalle grammatiche di impostazione tradizionale.

Sembra lecito affermare in riferimento a tutt'e due le lingue che costituiscono l'oggetto del presente lavoro, che l'origine comune dei vari elementi formali i quali concorrono nella resa del linguaggio spaziale renda conto delle correlazioni esistenti tra di essi a livello strutturale. L'identità funzionale dei suffissi e delle posposizioni locative come delle preposizioni è spiegabile col fatto che essi si sono grammaticalizzati da avverbi i quali, accanto a un nome, sono diventati preposizioni nell'italiano, posposizioni nell'ungherese, e alcune di queste ultime si sono ridotte ulteriormente e agglutinate al nome stesso. Nel ruolo di modificatore verbale troviamo invece preverbi nell'ungherese e particelle nell'italiano. Questa tendenza evolutiva nel campo degli elementi che esprimono le relazioni spaziali è ancora in atto nella sincronia (cf. nell'ungherese il processo di preverbalizzazione degli avverbi e delle posposizioni, nell'italiano la diffusione delle costruzioni VS e quindi l'affermarsi nella lingua delle particelle locative). Tale processo di grammaticalizzazione (cf. tab. 3) si sviluppa gradualmente e gli elementi che vi partecipano vanno collocati su un *continuum* i cui due poli nel caso delle espressioni locative sono costituiti da una parte dalla categoria degli avverbi, dall'altra da quella dei suffissi/preposizioni. Le posposizioni, i preverbi, i prefissi e le particelle rappresentano forme intermedie in evoluzione e come tali vanno caratterizzati indicando se mostrano tratti più tipicamente avverbiali o hanno delle proprietà che li avvicinano di più alla categoria dei suffissi/preposizioni. La gradualità osservata a livello strutturale va di pari passo con una progressiva desemantizzazione degli elementi in questione.

Tabella 3. Grammaticalizzazione degli elementi P (analisi nostra in base a Lehmann, C. 1995 e Hopper, Traugott 1993)

Direzione/grado della grammaticalizzazione	Fase della grammaticalizzazione	Ungherese	Italiano
1.	entrate lessicali (avverbiali) indipendenti con riferimento locativo collegate a un'altra unità lessicale	✓	✓
2.	locuzioni posposizionali / preposizionali	✓	✓
3.	posposizioni nude / preposizioni secondarie (improprie)	✓	✓
4.	posposizioni reggenti suffissi di Caso / preposizioni primarie (proprie)	✓	✓
5.	suffisso agglutinato di Caso	✓	—
6.	elemento flessivo di Caso	—	—
7.	morfema zero	—	—

## 5 Conclusione

Il nostro studio ha evidenziato il fatto che quella complessità semantica di cui si parlava sopra si sposa con un'articolazione complessa a livello formale: l'informazione spaziale è codificata da più unità linguistiche correlate di varia provenienza morfologica e disposte in diverse parti della frase. Fenomeni che a prima vista sembrano privi di qualsiasi punto di contatto possono essere però ricondotti a dei processi linguistici comuni evidenziando chiaramente come tutte le strutture linguistiche coinvolte nell'espressione degli eventi di localizzazione e di dislocazione spaziali si ricolleghino non solo a livello semantico ma anche a quello formale. La descrizione di una relazione spaziale può essere paragonata alla creazione di un *puzzle* dove ogni tassello deve tornare al suo posto in modo da rendere il quadro completo e ben visibile.

L'ungherese ha un linguaggio spaziale molto ricco, dispone cioè di numerosi mezzi specializzati per la descrizione dello spazio. In questo modo la codifica del dominio semantico in questione avviene direttamente con forme linguistiche univoche. Di fronte a una strutturazione precisa e reticolare eseguita con molti strumenti troviamo un sistema più schematico e dai contorni meno definiti nell'italiano, ma l'evoluzione e la strutturazione del linguaggio spaziale segue in ambedue le lingue gli stessi principi generali che abbiamo riportato in § 4.

La nostra analisi si è collocata nell'ambito della tipologia semantica, una disciplina giovane che è appena agli inizi del suo sviluppo. Si auspica di dare vita ad ulteriori indagini le quali in una prospettiva interdisciplinare ma con metodi scientifici unificati saranno in grado di svelare il processo complesso della concettualizzazione nella ricostruzione del mondo attraverso lingue differenti e di offrire un panorama più completo sulla realizzazione del componente semantico nelle forme linguistiche.

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# **Explicit Teaching of Syntactic Movement in Passive Sentences and Relative Clauses**

## **The Case of a Romanian/Italian Sequential Bilingual Child**

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**Abstract** This study presents a language learning approach involving the explicit teaching of syntactic movement to a sequential bilingual (Romanian-Italian) child aged 7;4, who was exposed to Italian at the age of 3. The child was assessed on her general skills in Italian and on production and comprehension of relative clauses (RCs) and passive sentences (PSs). Her performance was assessed before and after the teaching period. At the first administration, she had low results in all tests compared to monolingual Italian children. After the period of explicit teaching, improvement was observed especially in PSs. In the use of RCs, improvement was less evident, especially in production, but it is worth noticing that metalinguistic awareness was developed.

**Summary** 1 Language Acquisition in a Bilingual Context. – 2 Linguistic Properties of Relative Clauses and Passive Sentences and their Acquisition. – 2.1 Relative Clauses. – 2.2 Passive Sentences. – 3 Explicit Syntactic Teaching: Previous Studies. – 4 The Experiment: the Pre-Teaching Phase. – 4.1 Participants. – 4.2 Test di Comprensione Grammaticale per Bambini (TCGB): Task and Results. – 4.3 RCs Production: the Elicitation Task and Results. – 4.4 Relative Clauses Comprehension: Task and Results. – 4.5 Passive Sentences Production: the Elicitation Task and Results. – 4.6 Passive Sentences Comprehension: Task and Results. – 5 Discussion. – 6 The Explicit Syntactic Teaching Phase. – 7 Post-Teaching Results. – 8 Discussion and Conclusion.

**Keywords** Bilingualism. Explicit syntactic teaching. Passive sentences. Relative clauses.

## **1 Language Acquisition in a Bilingual Context**


This study investigates the effect of explicit syntactic teaching of Italian relative clauses (RC) and passive sentences (PS), in JM, a 7 years old sequential bilingual speaker. JM was born from Romanian immigrant parents in Italy, moved to Romania at the age of 8 months and went back to Italy at the age of 3. Accordingly, JM was first exposed to Romanian for her first 3 years of life and then to Italian.

Some researchers claim that the particular situation of bilingual children born and grown up mainly in their host country, but with immigrant parents, could have remarkable consequences on their linguistic experience:

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**DOI 10.14277/2499-1562/AnnOc-51-17-18**

Submission 2017-03-13 | Acceptance 2017-04-19

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according to some authors (Páez, Tabors, López 2007, Verhoeven et al. 2007), migrants' children show lower level of accuracy than their monolingual peers, and show moreover a drop in both languages skills. Oral and writing competencies are compromised, especially reading and writing.

An important distinction is between sequential and simultaneous bilingualism, which depend on the age of onset (AO) of each linguistic system. Most researchers generally agree with an arbitrary cut off age, namely 3 years (McLaughlin 1978), beyond which a situation of simultaneous bilingualism switches to sequential. Age 3 actually refers to the age of onset of one of the two languages: if exposure of L2 starts at a point which lays between birth and this age, we deal with a case of simultaneous bilingualism; if second language acquisition begins at or after the 3rd year of life, but before puberty, it is a sequential bilingualism situation.

Even though different critical periods for different linguistic domains have been detected, most studies agree on the fact that a child experiences a situation of sequential L2 acquisition when (s)he is exposed to only one language, the one spoken by his/her parents and relatives, from birth, and starts experiencing a second language in kindergarten or in pre-school day care environments (Lesaux, Rupp, Siegel 2007; Genesee 2008). This is usually the case of migrants' children.

Some studies detect a sharp difference between simultaneous and sequential second language acquisition, while others claim that no matter what the AO is, if the first exposure to L2 is before the closure of the critical period, the child can attain a native-like proficiency in his/her second language.

Another issue which has been deeply debated as far as this distinction is concerned, is the modality through which sequential bilinguals acquire their L2: are the phases and the strategies similar to L1 acquisition or do they differ to some extent?

Several studies were carried out on this topic. Some authors, including McLaughlin (1978), support the idea that L2 acquisition does not differ too much from L1 acquisition, whereas others (Hakuta, Butler, Witt 2000; Meisel 2008) demonstrate that a difference between L1 and L2 development actually exists.

What is important to notice, however, is that every experiment brings with it an amount of variables which must be taken into consideration. Considering the AO as the only variable, comparing bilinguals between them may be simplistic: Unsworth et al. (2012) firmly state that a complex interplay between amount of input and AO influences the way children acquire their L2. These main features characterizing bilingualism, especially the sequential one, are of great interest with regard to the study presented in this article. The addressee of the experiment is, in fact, a sequential bilingual child who had been exposed to Romanian from birth and was first exposed to Italian around the age of 3.



A crucial role is also played by an amount of other factors, which affect economic, social, and personal spheres (Paradis, Nicoladis, Genesee 2000; Bhatia, Ritchie 2006; Genesee et al. 2006). In particular, economic circumstances, race, immigration status, health, educational environment, geographic location, parents' (especially mother's) grade of education, level of integration achieved by the child's family, or only by the child, with the respect to the L2 speaking community (Genesee et al. 2006).

A case that is worth mentioning is the bilingual experience of immigrants' children. The linguistic experience of those immigrant people's children who are either born in their host country or come there with their parents at a very early age, is particularly interesting as, on the one hand, very few light has been shed so far onto it and, on the other hand, there are many factors (psychological, economic, social, *inter alia*) which deeply affect their second language acquisition. Adults who have to migrate from their native country, usually for economic or socio-political unfavourable reasons, reach the host country with a solid native language and are rarely able to acquire the language of the host community at a high level. What happens, instead, to the children who still have to acquire their L1 completely? According to Páez, Tabors and López (2007) children of immigrants may show significantly lower levels of accuracy with respect to their monolingual peers in their general linguistic abilities such as literary and oral language skills. These difficulties may be observed in the acquisition of both L1 and L2.

Relatively recent studies demonstrate that those who attended preschool in their early years, not only experienced an effortless and fully successful second language acquisition, but had also more positive outcomes in their later school experiences (Hyltenstam, Abrahamsson 2003 for English; Spiess et al. 2003, for German; Beltrame 2011, for Italian). Spiess et al. (2003) report that 51% of immigrants who had previously attended German kindergarten went to secondary school, compared to the 21% who did not experience preschool activities.

Since the majority of children of immigrant people speak their own language at home, kindergarten attendance has been identified as a crucial propeller towards the use and the acquisition of the second language (Beltrame 2011).

JM is sequential bilingual child living in Italy, but exposed to the Romanian language at home. Following previous studies on the incomplete language acquisition reached by immigrants' children (Páez, Tabors, López 2007; Verhoeven et al. 2007), we expect that also JM will show some difficulties in the acquisition of some linguistic properties of the Italian language. Through the use of standardized and non-standardized tools, we aim at investigating her linguistic competence, in order to identify the vulnerable aspects of grammar and propose some teaching activities. In addition, we want to verify whether the explicit syntactic teaching ac-

tivities contribute to the acceleration of her language development and whether the teaching of some properties can contribute to the improvement of other properties that were not taught.

## 2 Linguistic Properties of Relative Clauses and Passive Sentences and their Acquisition

### 2.1 Relative Clauses

The RCs investigated in this study are subordinate sentences introduced by the complementizer *che* 'that', intended to modify a nominal element, which is defined as the head of the relative clause (Cinque 1982; Bianchi 1999).

The type of RC we are going to deal with is the restrictive right-branching one. The modified element moves from its original position to a position in the left periphery of the clause and leaves a copy. Movement can involve either the subject or the object, therefore subject relative clause (SR) as in (1) and object relative clause (OR) (2) are derived:

- (1) Il topo che <il topo> spinge le galline  
'The mouse that <the mouse> pushes the hens
- (2) Il topo che le galline spingono <il topo>  
'The mouse that the hens push <the mouse>

Being Italian a *pro-drop* language, it is possible for the subject to occupy a post-verbal position (Rizzi 1982). Hence, relative clauses can be built with a post-verbal subject (ORps), as we can see in (3):

- (3) Il topo che spingono le galline  
The mouse that push the hens<sub>SUBJ</sub>  
'The mouse that the hens push'

RCs are complex sentences due to the presence of syntactic movement, non-canonical word order, and long-distance dependencies between the moved constituent and its original position. Because of their complex structure and the complex relations involved, the acquisition of relative clauses is highly debated. All studies however converge on the fact that SRs are easier than ORs in both production and comprehension tasks. In production, the percentage of accuracy of SRs is 61% between the age of 3;0--3;11, around 90% at the age of 4 (Belletti, Contemori 2010), and approaches 100% at adolescence and adulthood. As for ORs, their percentage of occurrence is 37% at the age of 3, 52% at the age of 4, and 45% at the age of 5 and 6. They increase until the age of 6 and 7, and then they start to decrease, being

replaced by causative constructions and passive relatives (Re 2010). In some cases, ORs are produced with resumptive clitic pronouns. The presence of these elements is observed in child and spoken colloquial language by people of different socio-economic backgrounds (Guasti, Cardinaletti 2003).

In comprehension, SRs are well-mastered at the age of 3 years, while ORs, and especially ORps, are quite problematic and some difficulties are found even in adolescents (Adani 2011, Volpato 2012). What facilitates the comprehension of ORs by monolingual typically-developing children and adolescents is the presence of number dissimilarities between the RC head and the RC subject (Adani et al. 2010, Volpato 2012). To our knowledge, no such information is available for bilingual children.

## 2.2 Passive Sentences

PSs are complex structures presenting a marked word order and derived through a reorganization of the grammatical functions. In addition, the verb morphology changes; in Italian, it is formed by the auxiliary *essere* (to be) or *venire* (to come) followed by the past participle of the main verb. The agent of the action can be expressed by a PP, called *by-phrase*. The patient of the active sentence become the subject of the passive one, with which the verb agrees in number and gender.

According to early approaches (Jaeggli 1986), the NP object moves from its original position after the verb to the Spec/IP position and leaves a coindexed trace in the embedded position, forming a chain.

Recent approaches to the derivation of PSs (Collins 2005) suggest that these structures are derived through a mechanism called *Smuggling*. The derivation of passives involves two steps, as (4) shows:

- (4)  $[_{TP} \text{Marco is } [_{\text{VoiceP}} \text{pushed } <\text{Marco}> \text{ by } [_{\text{VP}} \text{Sara } <\text{pushed Marco } >]]]$
- |-----|-----|

According to locality principles (Rizzi 1990, 2004), the movement of the internal argument (the patient) is blocked by the presence of the external argument (the agent), with which it shares features. In the smuggling approach, the first movement involves the whole VP (verb + object) past the external argument. The presence of the verb licenses the *smuggling* of the object to a position higher than the subject (SpecVoiceP). A further movement involves the patient, which reaches the A-position in the left edge of the sentence, namely Spec/TP.

The acquisition of PSs represents a much debated issue cross-linguistically. The question is whether the passive voice is correctly represented since the early stages of language acquisition or it is acquired later, at the age of 5-6 years. For Italian, few studies exist on this topic (Manetti 2013;

Volpato et al. 2013, 2014, 2016). Manetti's study (2013) was carried out through three experiments devoted to assess passive clauses production in 12 Italian-speaking children aged between 3;5 and 4;6. Results showed that under priming, children produced PSs with both *essere* (to be) and *venire* (to come), demonstrating that they already master long verbal passive clauses at the age of 4.

Volpato et al. (2016)'s study investigated the comprehension of PSs in 75 Italian-speaking children aged between 3;4 and 6;2. Three variables were taken into account: actional vs non-actional verbs, absence or presence of the *by*-phrase, the use of auxiliary *essere* (to be) or *venire* (to come). Results demonstrated that children understand sentences containing actional verbs better, and that there is no significant difference between PSs with and without the *by*-phrase or between the two auxiliaries *essere* and *venire*. This is an important result since a PS with the auxiliary *venire* can only be interpreted as an eventive passive: therefore, it provides support to the fact that A-chains are available to children from the earliest stages of language acquisition.

### 3 Explicit Syntactic Teaching: Previous Studies

Explicit syntactic teaching is based on a meta-linguistic approach: it is carried out through the presentation of the processes laying behind a linguistic phenomenon, with the aim to reach *comprehension* rather than mere *acceptation* of the rules. This path has been shown to be really helpful in several conditions, especially with individuals affected by brain (Thompson et al. 2003; Thompson, Shapiro 2005), sensory (D'Ortenzio 2015) or specific language impairment (Ebbels & van der Lely 2001; Levy, Friedmann 2009), and also with the purpose of accelerating language acquisition in very young children (Roth 1984).

Ebbels & van der Lely's (2001) study was carried out with four English-speaking children aged between 11;8 and 12;9 affected by syntactic Specific Language Impairment (SySLI). The focus of the intervention was on the use of PSs and Wh-questions. It used a codified visual scheme which identified theta-roles, syntactic dependencies, grammatical categories, morphological inflections, and hierarchic relations through the use of colours and shapes. After treatment, all participants showed improved performance in both production and comprehension.

Levy and Friedmann's (2009) treatment took as addressee a Hebrew-speaking SySLI boy aged 12;2. The structures assessed before, during, and after the treatment, both in comprehension and production, were RCs, PSs, focalizations, and other movement-derived structures.

Argument structure, Thematic Criterion and syntactic movement were explained. The use of colours was crucial. Thanks to Gal's inventiveness,

it was possible to use a metaphor in order to understand better these notions: verbs were compared to some officials who, according to their grade, could exercise their command upon the soldiers, which represented the arguments. It was very important to take advantage of the patient's interests, in order to make the therapy lighter and more agreeable.

After this introduction, the Thematic Criterion was explained to Gal and, after that, syntactic movement was introduced. The experimenters made great use of cards with one word written on each of them, to make the movement issue clearer and more tangible. The phenomenon was indeed *shown* to Gal, through cards movement. Chains and traces were explained to the patient by using colours. After this part, characterized by high tangibility, a more abstract phase including oral tasks began. The participant's performance during and after treatment was astonishing: his final scores were almost all at ceiling, ranging from 90 to 100%.

Thompson and Shapiro (2005) focused on a sample of subjects affected by non-fluent agrammatic aphasia and found that the syntactic treatment of some structures, besides improving them, can have positive effects on similar untreated structures, leading to generalization effects. The intervention was useful to increase the MLU of grammatical sentences and the VP production, to improve the processing of verb argument structure, also consisting in a more correct use of theta-roles, and to bring positive outcomes on adjunct production.

D'Ortenzio's (2015) intervention involved comprehension and production of RCs and mainly followed Levy and Friedmann's (2009) procedure. The addressee of the study was an Italian-speaking deaf child aged 8;4 implanted at the age of 2;7. The intervention was useful and had positive outcomes on different linguistic and grammatical aspects of the language. Great importance was given to the child's interests: characters from 'Geronimo Stilton' were used in the submitted sentences. Post-treatment results were excellent: the child performed at ceiling in every type of RC, both in comprehension and production.

These teaching approaches started from the linguistic properties that were simpler and preserved in the grammar of the participants (as for instance, argument structure, simple sentences, and SRs), proceeding with more difficult properties (ORs) in order to help them develop a meta-linguistic competence and to obtain generalization effects also in other structures that were not directly considered during the teaching activities (wh-questions, ORps).

Roth's (1984) study constitutes a very interesting experiment as it was addressed to a group of 18 very young typically-developing children (age range: 3;6-4;6 years), in order to verify whether it would be possible to accelerate children's language acquisition by explicitly teaching them linguistic structures beyond their developmental mastery. The structures which were involved in the study are RCs. Some toys were used and ma-

nipulated during the activities, in order to literally show the relations between the arguments. A significant improvement in children's performance was observed after the syntactic explicit teaching. The study made it possible to determine that direct intervention can accelerate young children's language development.

In this study the linguistic competence of JM is assessed in order to identify the linguistic properties that were found to be problematic. On the basis of these outcomes, some teaching activities are proposed, starting from the simplest aspects of grammar, as previous studies suggested. In addition, a further aspect that was investigated was the effectiveness of the explicit syntactic teaching activities in order to determine whether they contribute to the acceleration of JM's language development and whether the teaching of some properties can contribute to the improvement of other properties that were not taught.

## 4 The Experiment: the Pre-Teaching Phase

This study was carried out in three phases: pre-teaching testing, explicit syntactic teaching, and post-teaching testing. In both the pre- and the post-teaching phase, JM was assessed on her general level of Italian and her comprehension and production of both RCs and PSs.

### 4.1 Participants

JM is sequential bilingual child speaking Romanian and Italian. She was 7;4 at the time of the first test administration. Both parents are native speakers of Romanian, the language which is mainly spoken at JM's home. The child was born in Italy, but went to Romania at the age of 8 months, where she stayed until the age of 3. When she came back to Italy, she attended kindergarten and began her exposure to her L2. Her parents were not submitted to any formal interview, but during normal conversation, her mother provided the information provided above. The child has one brother, who was about one year old at the time of the experiment, and therefore too young for linguistic assessment. JM did not attend kindergarten, was not submitted to any language therapy or other programs for language promotion. She was attending the second year of primary school at the time of the experiment.

The child's performance was compared to that of two control groups (CG). As far as RCs were concerned, JM's performance was compared to a control group that included 6 monolingual Italian-speaking children aged between 7;2 and 7;9 (mean age: 7;5), whereas for the passive experiment, the control group is composed of 7 children of comparable linguistic age,

selected on the basis of the scores obtained in the standardized comprehension test (TCGB), aged between 5;10 and 6;2 (mean age: 6;0).<sup>1</sup> All the children included in the CG groups were either monolingual speakers of Italian or they spoke Italian and the Venetian variety of the place in which they lived. They did not show any language impairment, hearing or mental disabilities.

#### 4.2 Test di Comprensione Grammaticale per Bambini (TCGB): Task and Results

JM was evaluated in her general level of Italian comprehension using the TCGB (Chilosi, Cipriani 2006), a standardized comprehension test for children ranging in age from 3;6 to 8 years. It is composed of 76 stimuli, which investigate several types of structures (locative complements; verbal and nominal inflectional morphology; affirmative active sentences; negative active sentences; affirmative PSs; negative PSs; RCs; sentences containing dative complements).

For every stimulus, the child had to select the correct picture out of four possible choices after listening the sentence read by the experimenter. The error scores assigned to every item are 0 if the child answers correctly, 0.5 if the child answers correctly after a repetition and 1.5 if the answer is incorrect even after a repetition. The results are to be compared to normative sample's data provided with the materials.

The whole test was submitted to JM in a quiet room at her school and lasted 30 minutes.

JM's overall error score was 9 and matched that of monolingual Italian-speaking children aged 6; hence, she was below her age-peers. The most problematic structures were those containing locative complements and PSs.

#### 4.3 RCs Production: the Elicitation Task and Results

The RCs elicitation task was created by Volpato (2010) following Friedmann and Szterman's (2006) model for Hebrew. It is a preference task in which the child has to express his/her preference between two options, being forced to produce a RC. It is composed of 36 stimuli, 12 eliciting a SR, 12 eliciting an OR (involving animate subjects and objects), and 12 requiring the production of a filler sentence (SVO or SV sentence with

<sup>1</sup> We would have preferred to compare JM with her age-peers on passives as well, but no existing data are available yet on passive sentences as regards this age range. However, already at the age of 6 children show levels of accuracy approaching 100% in particular in sentences with actional verbs (Author et al. 2016).

animate subjects and inanimate objects). All verbs are transitive and reversible, in order to make the child rely on syntactic cues and not on pragmatic ones. Figure 1 and (5) show an example of stimulus for the elicitation of a SR:

- (5) There are two pictures. In the former, the children stroke the cat. In the latter, the children hit the cat. Which children do you like? Start with 'I like the children...' or 'The children...'

**Target:** '(I like) the children that stroke/hit the cat.'



Figure 1. Elicitation of a subject relative

The number and percentage of target sentences produced by JM are shown in table 1:

Table 1. Number and % of target sentences in the production task

Type of sentences	JM		CG	
	No.	%	No.	%
SRs	10/12	83%	72/72	100%
ORs	0/12	0%	20/72	28%

All filler sentences were correctly produced. When SRs and ORs were elicited, answering strategies different from the target one were found, especially in the case of ORs. From a qualitative point of view, JM's strategies in order to avoid ORs were examined and compared to the CG of comparable chronological age 7;5. The most frequent constructions in JM's production were ambiguous sentences, which had a twofold interpretation between SR and ORp (*Mi piace il bambino che abbraccia la mamma* - 'I like the child that hugs the mother'). This strategy is rarely found in the CG group. This fact is remarkable as JM shows a pattern which differs from the one of her monolingual peers, even if her productions are grammatically acceptable. In two cases, she used a SR instead of producing an OR, therefore either she changed the head of the relative, or she inverted the



thematic roles; in two other cases, she produced ORs with a clitic pronoun (*Mi piace il bambino che il leone lo segue* - 'I like the child that the lion chases him'), a strategy that was also used by the CG group.

In most cases, the CG group produced causative (*Il bambino che si fa lavare dal papà* 'The child that has himself washed by the father') and passive (*Il bambino che è lavato dal papà* 'The child that is washed by the father') constructions. Differently from the CG's participants, JM never recurred to these constructions.

#### 4.4 Relative Clauses Comprehension: Task and Results

The test assessing RCs comprehension was created by Volpato (2010), following Friedmann and Novogrodsky's (2004) model. It is composed of 48 experimental stimuli and 20 filler sentences.

The child is shown two figures, representing same actions and characters, but reversed theta-roles. After having heard a RC read by the experimenter, (s)he has to pinpoint at the right character who is the head of the just heard sentence.

All verbs are transitive and reversible, number features are manipulated on both DPs, and the characters are chosen in order not to influence the child's performance with semantic or pragmatic cues. Figure 2 shows an example of item matching the SR\_SG\_PL *Tocca/Indica il coniglio che colpisce i topi* 'Touch the rabbit who hits the mice'.<sup>2</sup>

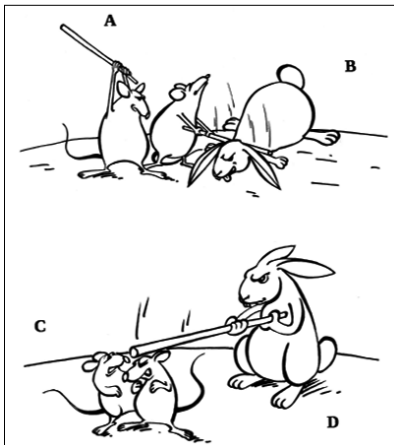


Figure 2. Example of an experimental trial

<sup>2</sup> In this abbreviation and in those in table 4, SG identifies a singular DP and PL identifies a plural DP. The first DP is the relative head, the second is the DP occurring inside the relative clause.

Eight different kinds of sentences were assessed, grouped into 3 bigger types: SRs, ORs with preverbal subject, ORs with post-verbal subject (ORp).

Table 2 represents JM's performance compared to CG's one in each condition:

Table 2. JM's relative clauses comprehension compared to the control group (CG)

Type of sentence	JM%	CG%
	M	M (SD)
SR_SG_PL	100%	100% (0%)
SR_PL_SG	100%	100% (0%)
OR_SG_SG	67%	89% (20%)
OR_PL_PL	50%	94% (9%)
OR_SG_PL	67%	97% (7%)
OR_PL_SG	67%	92% (9%)
ORp_SG_PL	0%	81% (19%)
ORp_PL_SG	0%	69% (27%)
TOT	62%	92%

Filler sentences were correctly produced by all participants. If we compare JM's performance with the means of the CG group, it is evident that she shows lower levels of accuracy than the CG group in the comprehension of both OR and ORps. The comprehension of the latter type is especially problematic.

#### 4.5 Passive Sentences Production: the Elicitation Task and Results

The test we used for the elicitation of PSs was developed by Verin (2010). It is a picture description task administered with a Power Point presentation. It is composed of 24 experimental items. Twelve items contain actional verbs (*spingere* 'push', *colpire* 'beat', *imboccare* 'feed', *prendere a calci* 'kick', *inseguire* 'chase', *baciare* 'kiss') and 12 contain non-actional verbs (*sentire* 'hear', *vedere* 'see', *amare* 'love', *annusare* 'smell'). The battery also included 12 filler sentences. All verbs are transitive, reversible and either actional or non-actional. In some items, the *by*-phrase can be omitted, whereas in some other items, it is compulsory. Figures 3 and (6) shows an example of an experimental item testing the use of an actional verb with an obligatory *by*-phrase.

- (6) **Experimenter:** *Ci sono due foto. Nella prima foto Sara spinge Marco, nella seconda foto la mamma spinge Sara. Cosa succede a Marco nella prima foto?*  
 ‘There are two pictures. In the first one Sara pushes Marco, in the second one the mum pushes Marco. What happens to Marco in the first picture?’  
**Target:** *Marco è/viene spinto da Sara.*  
 ‘Marco is pushed by Sara.’

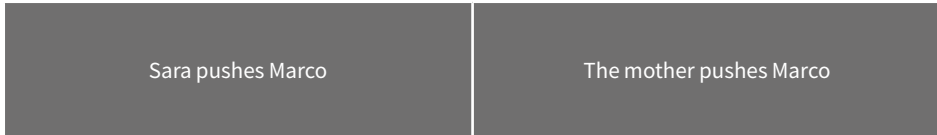


Figure 3. Experimental trial eliciting a passive sentence

JM did not produce any passives. From a qualitative point of view, JM’s strategies were compared to those used by a CG with a mean age of 6, as there are no available data on PSs production by JM’s Italian-speaking peers. PSs were never produced by anyone. While the most recurrent structure among CG’s children were SVO sentences with correct thematic roles, the main constructions which JM recurred to were SVO sentences with reversed thematic roles, as the following example shows:

- (7) **JM:** *Sara colpisce il papà.*  
 ‘Sara hits her father.’  
**Target:** *Sara è colpita dal papà.*  
 ‘Sara is hit by her father.’

#### 4.6 Passive Sentences Comprehension: Task and Results

The test we used was the one adapted to Italian by Verin (2010) from the Greek version developed by Driva and Terzi (2008). It is composed of 40 experimental stimuli and 10 filler items. The child was shown three pictures on the computer screen and the experimenter read a PS. After that, the participant should indicate the correct image. Three variables were taken into account: actional vs non-actional verb, auxiliary *essere* (to be) vs *venire* (to come), and presence or absence of the *by*-phrase. All experimental conditions are shown in table 3:

Table 3. Experimental conditions

Actional verbs	<i>essere</i>	In quale foto Marco è spinto? 'In which picture is being Marco pushed?'
	<i>essere + by-phrase</i>	In quale foto Marco è spinto da Sara? 'In which picture is being Marco pushed by Sara?'
	<i>venire</i>	In quale foto Marco viene spinto? 'In which picture is being Marco pushed?'
	<i>venire + by-phrase</i>	In quale foto Marco viene spinto da Sara? 'In which picture is Marco being pushed by Sara?'
Non-actional verbs	<i>essere</i>	In quale foto Marco è visto? 'In which picture is Marco seen?'
	<i>essere + by-phrase</i>	In quale foto Marco è visto da Sara? 'In which picture is Marco seen by Sara?'
	<i>venire</i>	In quale foto Marco viene visto? 'In which picture is Marco seen?'
	<i>venire + by-phrase</i>	In quale foto Marco viene visto da Sara? 'In which picture is Marco seen by Sara?'

Sara pushes Marco		Marco pushes Sara
	The mother pushes Marco	

Figure 4. Experimental sentence

Figure 4 shows an example of an experimental item matching the sentence *In quale figura Marco è/viene spinto da Sara?* (In which picture is Marco being pushed by Sara?).

In the item showed in figure 4, two types of error were possible: either the selection of the picture displaying reversed theta-roles (RR error: Marco pushes Sara) or the selection of the picture in which the agent changes (CA error: The mother pushes Marco).

Table 4 provides JM's results on PSs comprehension compared to those of the control group (CG).

Table 4. Percentage of accuracy of JM and CG (SD in brackets) on PS comprehension (Yes condition identifies long passives and No condition short passives)

Age Groups	By-Phrase	Act. verbs	Act. verbs	Non-act. verbs	Non-act. verbs
		Aux. <i>essere</i>	Aux. <i>venire</i>	Aux. <i>essere</i>	Aux. <i>venire</i>
JM	Yes	100%	83%	0%	25%
	No	83%	100%	25%	25%
CG	Yes	100% (0%)	93% (26%)	71% (46%)	86% (36%)
	No	100% (0%)	100% (0%)	75% (44%)	100% (0%)

In the CG group, the performance on actional verbs is at ceiling in almost all conditions. Lower percentages of accuracy are instead found with non-actional verbs. For JM, the percentages of accuracy are lower than in the CG group in almost all conditions. A remarkable difference is especially found in the use of non-actional verbs. When the correct picture was not selected, in most cases, children choose the picture in which the characters were the same but theta-roles were reversed.

## 5 Discussion

In the pre-teaching phase, JM was tested to check her baseline level of linguistic competence in Italian. Considering the different tasks, her performance was lower than chronological age peers, and in some cases, also than younger control children. JM never produced unambiguous ORps (she uttered ambiguous sentences, and we are not sure that they actually are ORps). The reasons of this pattern may be found in her linguistic background: the fact that Romanian, her L1, has unmarked ORs with post-verbal subjects (8) may lead us to the hypothesis that her ambiguous sentences are to be interpreted as ORps. However, the failed comprehension of ORps does not fully support this hypothesis.

- (8) Băiatul care îl caută mama  
 Boy.the that cliticACC 3<sub>rd</sub> MASC SG look.forPRES 3<sub>rd</sub> SG mother  
 'The boy that mother is looking for'.

Moreover, JM uttered two ORs with clitic pronouns. Since in standard Romanian, clitic insertion is obligatory in RCs (Sevcenco et al. 2011) (9), these productions may be due to interference from Romanian; note however that Italian child language also makes a frequent use of this construction (10).

- (9) Băiatul care îl cauți  
 Boy.the that cliticACC 3<sub>RD</sub> MASC SG look.forPRES 2<sub>ND</sub> SG  
 'The boy that you are looking for.'
- (10) Il ragazzo, che l'ho visto.  
 The boy<sub>i</sub> that him<sub>i,cl</sub> (I) saw.  
 'The boy whom I saw.'

As regards PSs, it was peculiar that JM produced many SVO sentences with reversed thematic roles. The fact that this kind of mistake did not occur in the comprehension task may let us hypothesize that it was not related to the verb thematic structure. One reason we hypothesized was that the 'stress' of being repetitively asked to begin the sentence in an uncommon way, namely with the patient of the action, could have led JM to focus on the structure of the sentence – in order to perform the task correctly rather than on the event she had to describe.

JM's data seem to support the claim that immigrants' children may persist in having some difficulties in the acquisition of some properties of their L2 (Páez, Tabors, López 2007).

## 6 The Explicit Syntactic Teaching Phase

After the analysis of JM's performance in the various tasks, the intervention process was planned. The sessions of explicit syntactic teaching began in October 2015 and lasted three months. They consisted in ten weekly meetings, each of them lasting from 45 to 60 minutes.

Argument structure and the notion of reversible and irreversible transitive verbs were introduced following Levi and Friedmann's (2009) and, especially, Ebbels and van der Lely's (2001) methodology through a large use of shape and colours. Hence, in this first session, JM was presented with lots of pieces of paper of different colours and shapes, like those shown in figure 5.

The categories of words were subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, intransitive verbs, transitive reversible verbs, transitive irreversible verbs, and ditransitive verbs. JM was asked to build simple sentences using one subject, one verb and, if appropriate, one direct and one indirect object. She formed 10 sentences. We observed with her that some verbs were accompanied by only one argument, while other verbs may be combined with two or even three arguments.

After this first step, JM was shown the difference between reversible and irreversible verbs. She was asked to observe that among the sentences which she had built up, some of those with one verb and two characters maintained a grammatical and acceptable status even though we switched the order of the characters (11-12), whereas the structure is weird or unacceptable if the same change occurs in other sentences (13-14).



Figure 5. The coloured pieces of paper we used for explicit teaching



Figure 6. The 'stage' used to explain the thematic criterion



Figure 7. The activities done to present movement in SRs



Figure 8. The activities done to present movement in SRs

- (11) Le maestre sgridano Paolo.  
'The teachers scold Paolo.'
- (12) Paolo sgrida le maestre.  
'Paolo scolds the teachers.'
- (13) I bambini comprano la pizza.  
'The children buy pizza.'
- (14) ??La pizza compra i bambini.  
'??Pizza buys the children.'

During the second meeting, we checked the topics taught in the previous week. A grammatical judgement activity was designed for JM, relying on the use of shapes and colours. The sentences were written on a sheet and JM had to put next to them a little circle-shaped piece of paper, representing either a sad or a happy face, according to the judgement she gave to each item. The activity was carried out within a 'role-playing game': the experimenter was the student who had written the sentences and JM was the teacher. Besides loving the activity, the child managed to complete it in a very good way.

After this step, the Thematic Criterion was introduced comparing verbs and a theatre. A paper 'stage' was built, onto which JM was asked to imagine that the verbs ('the directors') put their arguments ('the actors') and gave them specific roles. Some of the directors could afford only one actor, while others could have two or even three actors. All the actors had to be on the stage, otherwise the play would not have worked. In this way, the notions of subject ('the protagonist'), patient, beneficiary, theme, and adjunct were introduced.

The following step consisted in introducing to JM the derivation of SRs and ORs. JM was presented with a simple SVO sentence, then a little sheet with '*mi piace*' ('I like') was added at the beginning of the clause. The movement done by the subject or the object to reach the position at the right of *mi piace* 'I like' was shown to the girl. After this movement, we showed that a trace was left in the original position of the moved element. The trace was represented as a footprint (or a pawprint, if the subject was an animal), with a 'T' written on it; the notion of chain was then explained and shown using paper clips attached between them. To conclude, the 'magical word' *che* ('that') was added, written on a bow-shaped piece of paper, to symbolize the idea of 'blending', as figure 7 shows. JM had no problem in understanding these issues and showed great autonomy, already from the first items, in performing the movement in a correct way.

The step forward consisted in asking JM to write some sentences on her copybook and transform them into SRs and ORs. Also in these tasks, JM succeeded in doing the activity very well. Following previous studies on syntactic teaching, we introduced SRs and ORs, presenting SRs in the different combinations of number features, with the aim of verifying whether improvement would have been observed also with ORs.

To introduce PSs, eighteen pictures representing actions were shown to JM. Some of the chosen verbs were the same used by Verin (2010) in her test on passive structures, and all of them were transitive and reversible. For every picture, we pronounced an SVO sentence (*la ragazza pettina il gatto* 'The girl combs the cat'). After that, JM chose one photo she liked, starting from which the experimenter built up the first passive sentence. The first observation was that the sentence could begin in another way, namely with the patient *il gatto* ('the cat'). To do so, some movements were necessary. Inspired by Collin's (2005) theory of *Smuggling*, paper cases were introduced to explain the process: the subject was put into a little case, whereas the verb and the object were put into a bigger case. The first step consisted in the movement of the bigger case leftwards, i.e. past the subject. Afterwards, the bigger case could open and let the object out.

In order to make the subject-patient and the verb agree, a 'helper' (*aiutante*, which is a synonym of 'auxiliary') arrived. It was written in a heart-shaped piece of paper to symbolize agreement, the 'peace' it was responsible for. To complete the process, one 'magical word' was neces-



sary to make the reader remember that the actor (the agent) of the action was the girl, therefore the 'da' ('by') had to be put before the agent. JM liked this task very much.

The final step was dedicated to a session of reviewing all the issues JM had dealt with. It was carried out in the form of a game, using the model of the famous '*Gioco dell'oca*' (known as 'Snakes and ladders' in English). For every box, the child was administered either an activity on argument structure, Thematic Criterion, RCs or PSs, or some little games or riddles. It proved to be an original and fun way to make a revision of the whole program, which JM enjoyed a lot.

## 7 Post-Teaching Results

JM was assessed again a week past the end of explicit teaching, therefore two months after the pre-treatment testing phase. The materials we used were the same as in the pre-teaching testing phase.

In the TCGB test, the data analysis shows that JM's performance slightly improved, especially in the use of PSs, reducing the value of the error score (7 instead of 9 in the pre-test assessment). The PSs contained in the TCGB test, which were observed to be problematic at the first administration, improved after the teaching sessions reducing also in this case the value of the error score (1.5 instead of 2.5 in the pre-test assessment). In the RC production, the percentage of SRs reached ceiling levels (100%), while target ORs were still missing from their productions. From a qualitative point of view, the strategies adopted by JM when ORs were targeted were similar to the ones in the pre-treatment session, as table 5 shows.

Table 4. Answers strategies used by JM when ORs were targeted before and after the teaching sessions

	Before teaching		After teaching	
	No.	%	No.	%
SR (role inversion) i bambini che sgridano la maestra 'the children that scold the teacher'	2/12	17%	2/12	17%
Ambiguous sentences il bambino che lava il papà 'the child that washes the father'	8/12	67%	7/12	58%
OR + clitic pronoun il bambino che il dottore lo visita 'the child that the doctor visits him'	2/12	17%	2/12	17%
Simple SVO I nonni baciano i bambini 'the grandparents kiss the children'	0/12	0%	1/12	8%

In the RC comprehension task, a slight improvement was observed for some structures with respect to the pre-teaching results, although the level of accuracy remained behind that of age peers. Unexpectedly, during the post-teaching testing, JM showed lower accuracy in the ORs in the mismatch conditions as opposed to ORs in the match conditions. In addition, there was also an increase in the number of ORps, which were not taught during the training activities.

Table 5. JM's relative clauses comprehension before and after treatment

	Pre-teaching %	Post-teaching %	CG
SR_PL_SG	100%	100%	100%
SR_SG_PL	100%	100%	100%
OR_SG_SG	67%	83%	89%
OR_PL_PL	50%	83%	94%
OR_PL_SG	67%	50%	92%
OR_SG_PL	67%	50%	97%
ORp_PL_SG	0%	17%	69%
ORp_SG_PL	0%	67%	81%
TOT	67%	72%	92%

Differently from RCs, the intervention on PSs gave encouraging results. While PSs were absent before the explicit teaching, after it the percentage of target productions reached 42%. From a qualitative perspective, the strategies used by JM were more or less the same as in the pre-teaching testing session. It is however interesting to notice that the child improved on theta-roles assignment errors (tab. 7). The uttered PSs were all with the auxiliary *essere* ('to be') and with the *by*-phrase; actional-verbs were preferred to non-actional ones.

Table 6. JM's strategies on passives elicitation task before and after explicit teaching

	Pre-teaching %	Post-teaching %
Passive sentences	0%	42%
SVO (correct theta)	25%	17%
SVO (incorrect theta)	42%	13%
Structures with clitic pronoun	4%	8%
Other structures (correct theta)	8%	21%
Other structures (incorrect theta)	21%	0%

The most positive results were observed in the passive comprehension task, where JM performed at ceiling in all conditions.

## 8 Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, a sequential bilingual Romanian-Italian child was tested on complex sentences and was given training on the derivation of these constructions using the explicit teaching approach. As far as RCs are concerned, slight improvement has been recorded. One interesting issue, which would be worth of further research, was the atypical pattern shown by JM in ORs with number mismatch, compared to match conditions. While monolingual Italian-speaking peers are facilitated by mismatch conditions in parsing ORs (Adani et al. 2010, Volpato 2012), number dissimilarities did not constitute a helping clue for our participant, even though the child was presented with sentences displaying different combinations of number features. These patterns made us think about what happens in standard Romanian: the verb, indeed, presents the same form both for the 3rd person singular and plural.<sup>3</sup> These characteristics, therefore, suggested that maybe JM, influenced by her L1, may feel confused when the two verbs in the sentence present dissimilar number features. In future research, these properties as well as the use of ORps deserve more in-depth investigations in the teaching process and more activities with these properties should be proposed, in order to verify whether comprehension would improve.

As regards PSs, the obtained scores are much more encouraging.

Some observation can be made with respect to this difference between the two constructions.

As regard RCs, not having manipulated number features enough during the explicit training activities might have been a weakness in the whole program.

As we cannot disregard the possibility of an influence from JM's L1, it would be interesting to assess her on the same constructions in Romanian: this might shed light on the reasons of the pattern shown in RCs, as we could hypothesize that the difficulty be related not only to Italian, but to her general linguistic system.

It is crucial to remember, however, that the acquisition of PSs reaches 100% at the age of 6-7 years old, whereas ORs could be problematic even for older children (Adani 2011, Volpato 2010).

In conclusion, we have shown that explicit syntactic teaching of complex relative and passive structures can be effective in sequential bilingualism. However, we have to consider that a certain amount of variables might

3 This feature, interestingly, is found also in a variety of Venetian dialect, namely the one spoken in the environment where JM lives now:

(1) *I canta.*  
 (they) subj.CL sing3<sub>d</sub>SING  
 'They sing'

have influenced the results. For instance, the fact that JM actually preferred the activities on PSs should not be underestimated with respect to the outcomes of the experiment.

In conclusion, we must also not keep unmentioned the effectiveness of the explicit teaching on the general attitude of the child towards her language environment. Indeed, an increasing reflective approach has characterized JM during explicit teaching, demonstrated by her increasingly positive attitude towards the activities. The child's metalinguistic awareness has developed during this period and has helped her to understand that being able to think about one's own language can have extremely positive outcomes. According to Kaushanskaya and Marian (2009), this ability is emphasized in bilingual people: a further reason to enhance the advantages of explicit teaching with bilingual children.

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# Non-Topicalized Preverbal Subjects in Brazilian Portuguese, Compared to Italian

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**Abstract** This paper investigates the syntax of non-topicalized preverbal subjects in Brazilian Portuguese (BP). In BP, both locative PPs and locative DPs can occur in preverbal position: *Na escola do Pedro aceita cartão de crédito*; *A escola do Pedro aceita cartão de crédito*. In the latter case, the verb agrees with the locative. In BP, it is also possible to find non-argument constituents triggering verbal agreement, as in *Essa estante cabe muitos livros*. These sentences have been analysed as innovative constructions restricted to BP. This paper shows that some of the above structures are also present in other languages, e.g. Italian; not all of them are therefore innovative constructions of BP, and subcases need to be differentiated. The hypothesis is that sentences with preverbal non-argumental subjects have the same syntax as sentences with argumental subjects. What seems to occur in some cases is a modification in the verb thematic grid. We interpret BP's "flexible diathesis" patterns as revealing that in this grammar, a variety of verbs have undergone a modification of their thematic grid which their counterparts in European Portuguese and other Romance languages did not.

**Summary** 1 Introduction. – 2 The Position of Preverbal Subjects in BP: Left-Periphery or SpecTP?. – 3 The Semantic Import of Preverbal Subjects Versus Topics. – 4 More Than One Preverbal Subject Position. – 5 Preverbal Locative PPs in BP. – 5.1 The Fronted PP Is not Left-Dislocated. – 6 Preverbal 'Locative' DPs Are 'True' Subjects. – 7 Other Preverbal Locative DPs. – 8 Preverbal Genitive/Possessive DPs. – 9 Preverbal Theme DPs. – 10 Concluding Remarks.

**Keywords** Syntax. Locative preverbal subjects. Agreement. Brazilian Portuguese.

## 1 Introduction

In this paper, we investigate the syntax of non-topicalized preverbal subjects of Brazilian Portuguese (henceforth BP) in a comparative perspective with Italian.<sup>1</sup> The basic word order of BP is SVO, with the initial position

1 We would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for comments and helpful suggestions. Needless to say, all errors are ours.

usually being filled. BP is classified as a partial null subject language (Kato, Negrão 2000).

We first show that in BP, preverbal subject DPs behave differently from topics. The discussion about the syntax of non-topicalized preverbal subjects in BP will be useful to analyse sentence-initial locative PPs and DPs. We show that they occur in the preverbal subject position on a par with non-topicalized logical subjects and are not left-dislocated. Examples of constructions with preverbal locative PPs are provided in (1) (Avelar 2009; Avelar, Cyrino 2008; Avelar, Galves 2011, 2013). The locative PP occurs in preverbal position, and the verb may be singular or plural. In both cases, an arbitrary interpretation of the subject is obtained, an interpretation that occurs in other Romance languages only in the plural.

- (1) a. Naquela loja vende/vendem livros.  
in that store sells/sell books  
b. Na rádio da universidade toca/tocam as minhas músicas prediletas.  
on radio of.the university plays/play my songs favorite

The locative phrase can also appear in preverbal position without the preposition, i.e. as a DP (2). In this case, number agreement with the preverbal DP is obligatory.

- (2) a. Aquela loja vende/\*vendem livros.  
that store sells/\*sell books  
b. A rádio da universidade toca/\*tocam as minhas músicas prediletas.  
the radio of.the university play/\*play my songs favorite

Some authors classify sentences (1)-(2) as innovative constructions of BP (cf. Pontes 1987; Galves 2001; Negrão, Viotti 2008, 2011, 2014; Avelar 2009; Avelar, Galves 2011, 2013; Munhoz, Naves 2012). They also argue that this type of sentences is restricted to topic-prominent languages and classify BP as a discourse-oriented language, as opposed to subject-prominent languages like European Portuguese, Italian, English, etc. The contrast between (1) and (2) suggests that preverbal locative PPs should not receive the same syntactic treatment as preverbal 'locative' DPs. The preverbal DP can also be a 'possessive' phrase (examples (3) from Avelar, Galves 2013, 113).<sup>2</sup>

2 Costa (2010, 134 fn.1) notes that sentences such as *Os meus vizinhos morreram a mãe* ('my neighbors died-3pl the mother') and *As minhas duas árvores apodreceram a raiz* ('my two trees rotten-3pl the root') are not natural to some BP speakers. According to him, this marginality questions the productivity of this process in BP. The first author of this paper has different grammaticality judgments from Avelar and Galves (2011, 2013) with respect to some of the sentences discussed. In general, we think that preverbal 'locative' DPs are

- (3) a. As crianças estão nascendo o dentinho.  
 the children are being born the tooth-DIM  
 b. Os carros acabaram a gasolina no meio da viagem.  
 the cars finish the gasoline in.the middle of.the trip

The authors follow Pontes (1987) in classifying preverbal DPs that are not logical subjects as 'subject-topics' in A'-position (Avelar, Galves 2011). We will show that this analysis makes wrong empirical predictions about BP. There is no evidence that the structural position of the subject is of type A' and the DP in (3) occurs in topic position. On the contrary, these data support the hypothesis that in addition to the default subject position, related to the Case-agreement system, one further subject position exists, as suggested by Cardinaletti (1997, 2004) on the basis of Italian data.

The goal of this paper is to analyze the different instances of non-topicalized preverbal subjects found in BP. We first show that licensing conditions for preverbal subjects and topics are different, which is presumably connected to their different syntactic positions. We also propose a non-uniform analysis for preverbal locative PPs and DPs, both different from topics in BP. All data are compared with Italian in order to show that some of the structures analysed as innovative and restricted to BP in previous literature are indeed also present in this language and that the two languages share a similar syntax but differ in the lexical properties of different classes of verbs.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2 we give a general description of the status of preverbal subjects in BP and show that preverbal subjects and topics occur in different positions. Section 3 presents their different semantic properties. Section 4 discusses the two preverbal subject positions. In section 5 we discuss the properties of preverbal locative PPs in BP and show that they are not left-dislocated, but occur in the highest subject position SpecSubjP. In sections 6 and 7, we present the properties of preverbal locative DPs in BP. In sections 8 and 9, preverbal possessive and theme DPs are discussed. Sections 5 to 8 also contain the comparison with Italian. Section 10 concludes the paper.

more natural than preverbal genitive/possessive DPs, which are restricted to the class of unaccusative verbs. A sentence with the displacement of the theme/patient DP (*Meu jardim destruiu todo com a reforma* 'my garden has destroyed all with the reform', see (76a) below) is more natural, as Negrão and Viotti (2014) show.

## 2 The Position of Preverbal Subjects in BP: Left-Periphery or SpecTP?

In BP, subjects appear in preverbal position with all verbs: transitive (4a), unergative (4b), and unaccusative verbs (4c).

- (4) a. Maria comprou uma casa.  
Maria bought a house  
b. João canta nos fins de semana.  
João sings on the weekends  
c. Pedro chegou.  
Pedro arrived

Some authors argue that in BP, preverbal subjects are left-dislocated in a position of the CP domain (Galves 2001; Kato, Negrão 2000), on a par with what has been proposed for null subject languages (Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou 1998; Barbosa 2000, 2006; Ordóñez 1997). Other authors however argue that in null subject languages, preverbal subjects occupy a position in the TP domain (Cardinaletti 1997; Costa, Duarte 2002; Goodall 1999, 2001; Suñer 2003).

Cardinaletti (2004) argues that it is not possible to distinguish null and non-null subject languages on the basis of the position of preverbal subjects: a topic position (A'-position) in the former and a 'real' subject position (A-position) in the latter. Such a parametric difference would make wrong empirical and theoretical predictions, since it implies a semantic difference between simple sentences in the two types of languages, contrary to fact. Both (5) and (6) may appear in out-of-the-blue contexts and may answer the question *What happened?*, while sentences with left-dislocated topics cannot (see (7a) and (22) below). No topic analysis of the subject seems to be motivated for (5) and (6), and no structural difference should hence be stipulated between Italian (5) and English (6).

- (5) Un bambino ha rotto il vetro.  
(6) A child broke the window.

We argue that preverbal subjects in BP behave like preverbal subjects in Italian (Cardinaletti 1997, 2004), Spanish (Suñer 2003), European Portuguese (Costa, Duarte 2002) and English (Cardinaletti 1997, 2004; Rizzi 2005). Preverbal subjects may be topics, as in (7a), but need not be, as in (7b).

- (7) a. A Maria, ontem, ela comprou uma casa.  
the Maria, yesterday, she bought a house  
b. A Maria comprou uma casa.

Sentence (7a) cannot be used to answer the question *What happened?*, while (7b) can. In (7a), we take the preverbal subject DP *a Maria* to occupy SpecTopP, while the resumptive pronoun *ela* 'she' occupies the canonical subject position SpecTP. We take the non-topicalized subject *a Maria* in (7b) to occur in this position. An argument that *ela* indeed occupies the subject position is provided by (8a), where both the subject and the object are dislocated and the resumptive pronoun follows the object; if *ela* precedes the dislocated object, the sentence is ungrammatical (8b).<sup>3</sup>

- (8) a. A Maria, esse livro ela comprou.  
       the Mary, this book she bought  
       b. \*A Maria, ela esse livro comprou.  
       the Mary, she this book bought

Pires (2007) notes that the contrast between the full and the reduced form of *você(s)* 'you' in BP can be naturally cast in terms of the strong/weak pronoun distinction along the lines of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999). While the strong pronoun *você* may be left-dislocated (9a) and precede a topicalized object (10a), the reduced pronoun *cê* cannot (9b) and (10b) and must occur in a lower position, internal to the sentence, as clearly shown by sentence (10c), which we add to Pires' (2007, 132) examples (9) and (10a-b):

- (9) a. Você, (vo)cê pode convidar o seu pai.  
       you, you can invite the your father  
       b. \*Cê, cê pode convidar o seu pai.  
       you, you can invite the your father  
 (10) a. Você, o seu pai cê pode convidar.  
       you, the your father you can invite  
       b. \*Cê, o seu pai cê pode convidar.  
       you, the your father you can invite  
       c. \*Você, cê o seu pai pode convidar.  
       you, you the your father can invite

Consider now Italian sentences with Aux-to-Comp and complementizer-deletion. Preverbal subjects are allowed ((11a) and (12a)), while left-dislocated elements are not ((11b) and (12b)) (Cardinaletti 1997, 43-4).

3 *Ela* in (7) behaves like Italian weak pronoun *egli*, which cannot be left-dislocated (Cardinaletti, Starke 1999, 68).

(i) \*Egli a Gianni [pro non gli ha parlato].  
       he to Gianni not to-him has spoken

- (11) a. Avendo Gianni telefonato a Maria,...  
having Gianni called to Maria,...
- b. \*Avendo a Roma vissuto per venti anni, conosce un pò tutto.  
having in Rome lived for twenty years, [it] knows a little all
- (12) a. Credevo Gianni avesse telefonato a Maria.  
[I] believed Gianni had called to Maria
- b. ??Credevo a Roma Gianni (ci) avesse vissuto per venti anni.  
[I] believed in Rome Gianni (there) had lived for twenty years

The contrast between the a. and b. sentences indicates that the preverbal subject *Gianni* should not be in the same position as the fronted PP *a Roma*. If preverbal subjects were left-dislocated, contrasts like these would remain mysterious.

A similar argument can be built for BP. Subject-verb inversion occurs in conditional subordinate sentences without complementizer (13a); this type of inversion is an instance of verb movement to C. The subject follows the raised verb and cannot precede it ((13a) vs (13b)), unless it is left-dislocated (13c). Other complements have the opposite distribution: they cannot follow the raised verb ((14a) and (15a)) and must precede it ((14b) and (15b)).<sup>4</sup>

- (13) a. Tivesse o João dado o livro para Maria...  
had the John given the book to Mary...
- b. \*O João tivesse dado o livro para Maria...  
the John had given the book to Mary...
- c. O João tivesse ele dado o livro para Maria...  
the John had he given the book to Mary...
- (14) a. \*Tivesse o livro o João dado (ele) para Maria...  
had the book the John given (it) to Mary...
- b. O livro tivesse o João dado ele para Maria...  
the book had the John given it to Mary...
- (15) a. \*Tivesse para Maria o João dado o livro...  
had to Mary the John given the book...
- b. Para Maria tivesse o João dado o livro pra ela...  
to Mary had the John given the book to her...

Wh-extraction also provides evidence to differentiate between a left-dislocated position (SpecTopP) and an A-position (SpecTP) for preverbal subjects in BP. The contrast between (16a) and (16b-c) can be explained in terms of minimality. The movement of the wh-phrase is possible in (16a) because the preverbal subject *Ana* is in an A-position. The wh-phrase which

4 Sentence (14a) ameliorates if the fronted object *o livro* is a contrastive focus.

crosses over a dislocated topic determines a (weak) degradation (16b-c) because a violation of minimality is at stake (cf. Rizzi 1990).

- (16) a. Quem<sub>i</sub> (que) [<sub>TP</sub> a Ana convidou t<sub>i</sub> pra festa]?  
 who (that) the Ana invited t to-the party  
 b. ??Quem<sub>i</sub> (que) [<sub>TOPP</sub> a Ana, [<sub>TP</sub> ela convidou t<sub>i</sub> pra festa]?  
 who that the Ana she invited t to-the party  
 c. ??Quem<sub>i</sub> (que) [<sub>TOPP</sub> a Ana, [<sub>TOPP</sub> pra festa [<sub>TP</sub> ela convidou t<sub>i</sub>]?  
 who that the Ana to-the party she invited t

Clauses with fronted topics are also islands for extraction in Spanish (17a) (example from Goodall 2001, 201), Catalan (18a) and EP (19a) (examples from Sheehan 2015), whereas clauses with preverbal subjects are not, (17b), (18b) and (19b).

- (17) a. \*A quién crees [que el premio se lo dieron]?  
 to whom think-2sg that the prize cl.dat cl.acc gave  
 b. A quién crees [que Juan le dio el premio]?  
 to whom think-2sg that Juan cl.dat gave the prize  
 (18) a. \*A qui creus [que el premi el van donar]?  
 to whom think-2sg that the prize cl.acc gave  
 b. A qui creus [que en Joan va donar el premi]?  
 to whom think-2sg that the Joan gave the prize  
 (19) a. \*A quem achas [que o prémio o deram no ano passado]?  
 to whom think-2sg that the prize cl.acc gave in.the last year  
 b. A quem achas [que o Rei deu o prémio no ano passado]?  
 to whom think-2sg that the king gave the prize in.the last year

These examples provide strong support for the hypothesis that in null subject languages, not all preverbal subjects are left-dislocated, and that subjects and topics are not structurally equivalent.

Quarezemin (2016) further notes that if the subject were in an A'-position, the contrast between the preverbal subject in (20) and the dislocated object in (21) would not be expected in the question-answer contexts that require a new information, non-contrastive focus.<sup>5</sup> According to Rizzi (1997), the left periphery of the sentence is only available for contrastive focus, while non-contrastive focus occurs in a lower position. It is legiti-

5 BP differs from Italian, where new information subjects are postverbal:

- (i) A: Chi ha chiamato?                      B: Ha chiamato Gianni.  
 who called?                                      called Gianni  
 (ii) A: Chi ha comprato la macchina?      B: L'ha comprata Maria.  
 who bought the car                              it bought Maria

mate to conclude that the preverbal subject in (20b) occurs in a lower position than the object in (21b).

- (20) a. Quem comprou o carro?  
who bought the car  
b. A Maria comprou o carro.  
the Mary bought the car
- (21) a. O que a Maria comprou?  
what did the Mary buy  
b. #O carro a Maria comprou.<sup>1</sup>  
the car the Mary bought  
c. \*O carro comprou a Maria.  
the car bought the Mary

<sup>1</sup> The # sign indicates that the sentence is well formed, but inappropriate in that question-answer context. If the focus has the contrastive interpretation, correcting a previous statement, the sentence is possible (*O CARRO Maria comprou, não a casa* 'THE CAR Mary bought, not the house').

### 3 The Semantic Import of Preverbal Subjects Versus Topics

Preverbal subjects share the aboutness property with topics: the described event is presented as being about the fronted argument. Rizzi (2005) shows that preverbal subjects however differ from topics in that they do not require discourse-linking. Preverbal subjects are fully felicitous when they express new information in out-of-the-blue contexts ("What happened?") (22A, A'); in this context, a (CILD) topic is not felicitous (22A'', A''') (Rizzi 2005, 210) (also see (5)-(7) above).

- (22) Q: Che cosa è successo?  
What happened?  
A: Un camion ha tamponato un autobus.  
A truck bumped into a bus.  
A': Un autobus è stato tamponato da un camion.  
A bus was bumped into by a truck.  
A'': # Un autobus/l'autobus per Roma, un camion lo ha tamponato.  
A bus/the bus for Rome, a truck bumped into it.  
A''': # Un autobus/l'autobus per Roma, lo ha tamponato un camion.  
A bus/the bus to Roma, bumped into it a truck.

In the out-of-the-blue context in (22), an indefinite (new information) initial subject is fine both in active and passive sentences (22A, A'), while a topic is not felicitous, whether definite or indefinite, whether in preverbal or postverbal position (22A'', A'''). In conclusion, a topic involves aboutness and D-linking, while a subject only involves aboutness. This is clear



evidence that a full functional unification of the notion of subject and topic is not possible.

Another aspect that distinguishes preverbal subjects from topics is related to the class of elements that can occur in the two positions. Quantifiers, for instance, can occur as subjects but cannot be topicalized. See the contrast for Spanish in (23), from Goodall (2001). The same contrast arises in BP (24) and Italian (25). A negative quantifier cannot be topicalized (a), but it can occur in subject position (b).

- (23) a. \*A nadie Juan lo ha visto.  
to no one Juan him has seen  
b. Nadie ha visto a Juan.  
no one has seen to Juan
- (24) a. \*Ninguém, o João (não) viu.  
to nobody, the João (not) saw  
b. Ninguém viu o João.  
nobody saw the João
- (25) a. \*Nessuno, Gianni lo ha visto.  
no one, Gianni him has seen  
b. Nessuno ha visto Gianni.  
no one has seen Gianni

These facts are usually interpreted as showing that the left-dislocated position and the subject position should be kept distinct even in null subject languages like Italian and Spanish (see Barbosa 2000 for a different analysis).

According to Barbosa (2000), the embedded subject is left-dislocated in apparent cases of hyper-raising (26). The author points out that specific indefinites (27) are impossible in this type of construction because they are incompatible with the topic interpretation, while definite DPs (26a) and bare nouns (26b) are possible.

- (26) a. As crianças parece que gostam de sorvete.  
the children seems that like ice cream  
b. Livros de romance parece que se esgotaram.  
books of novels seems that cl-3 sold out-pl
- (27) \*Umás crianças parece que estão perdidas.  
some children seems that are lost-pl

If preverbal subjects were left-dislocated to a topic position, it would be expected that this same contrast appears in 'regular' SV clauses. Duarte and Figueiredo Silva (2016, 236) note that this contrast does not hold.<sup>6</sup>

- (28) a. Os perfumes franceses esgotaram-se.  
the perfumes French sold out-pl-cl-3  
b. Uns perfumes franceses esgotaram-se.  
some perfumes French sold out-pl-cl-3

These facts confirm that the preverbal subject of BP is not left-dislocated and should not be interpreted as a topic in 'regular' SV clauses.

#### 4 More Than One Preverbal Subject Position

Belletti and Rizzi (1988) observe that in Italian, nominals bearing an inherent (dative) Case with the so-called *piacere* class of psych-verbs occur in subject position; they do not interfere with movement, while a movement chain which crosses over a dislocated topic determines a (weak) degradation, as observed by Rizzi (2005, 207).

- (30) a. Le idee che a Gianni piacciono di più sono queste.  
the ideas that to Gianni please most are these  
b. ?(?) Le idee che a Gianni Maria raccomanda sono queste.  
the ideas that to Gianni Maria recommends are these

Cardinaletti (1997; 2004, 122-5) shows that the pattern is more general. In addition to preverbal datives, other preverbal XPs such as locatives and predicates in inverse copular constructions occur in preverbal position and behave as subjects against topics:

- (31) a. A Gianni è piaciuto il regalo.  
to Gianni is pleased the gift  
b. Su Gianni è caduta una grande disgrazia.  
on Gianni is fallen a big misfortune  
c. La causa della rivolta sono Gianni e Maria.  
the cause of the riot are Gianni and Maria

The preverbal constituents in (31) (dative, locative and predicative, respectively) behave like preverbal DP subjects in that they enter Aux-to-Comp

<sup>6</sup> Although in BP, proclisis is generalized at the beginning of sentences, speakers still accept sentences with enclitic *se* as in (28) (cf. Reis 2017).

and complementizer-deletion constructions, which do not allow left-dislocated items, as shown in (11) and (12) above (examples from Cardinaletti 1997, 2004):

- (32) a. Essendo a Gianni piaciuto il regalo,...  
being to Gianni 'pleased' the gift...  
b. Credevo a Gianni piacesse il regalo.  
[I] believed to Gianni 'pleased' the gift
- (33) a. Essendo su Gianni caduta una grande disgrazia,...  
being on Gianni fallen a big misfortune...  
b. Credo su Gianni sia caduta una grande disgrazia.  
[I] believe on Gianni is fallen big misfortune
- (34) a. Essendo la causa della rivolta Gianni e Maria,...  
being the cause of the riot Gianni and Maria...  
b. Credevo la causa della rivolta fossero Gianni e Maria.  
[I] believed the cause of the riot were Gianni and Maria

Cardinaletti (1997, 2004) argues that the requirements of the Case-agreement system are insufficiently general to motivate XP movement to the subject position and that some kind of interpretive requirement linked to the subject position may be the factor motivating movement to subject. The author proposed a multiple subject position approach, according to which subject-related features are encoded in two heads in the Inflectional domain below Fin: Case and phi-features are checked in SpecTP, where weak subjects occur; the Subject of Predication feature is checked in SpecSubjP, where DP subjects and strong pronouns occur. Dative and locative PP fronting found with unaccusative verbs targets the highest preverbal subject position, SpecSubjP, which hosts full subject DPs, as shown in (35).

- (35) a. [<sub>SubjP</sub> a Gianni<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> è [<sub>VP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> piaciuto il regalo ]]]  
to Gianni is pleased the present  
b. [<sub>SubjP</sub> su Gianni<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> è [<sub>VP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> caduta una grande disgrazia]]]  
on Gianni is fallen a big misfortune

In inverse copular sentences, in which the predicative DP moves to the preverbal position and the grammatical subject remains postverbally, a difference between Italian and English emerges in subject-verb agreement.

- (36) a. Gianni e Maria sono la causa della rivolta.  
b. La causa della rivolta sono Gianni e Maria.
- (37) a. John and Mary are the cause of the riot.  
b. The cause of the riot is John and Mary.

Cardinaletti (1997, 2004) proposed that in English, the predicative DP checks both the subject-of-predication feature and case/phi-features, which results in verb agreement with the fronted predicate DP, as shown in (38a). In Italian, the predicative DP moves directly to SpecSubjP, where it checks the subject-of-predication feature. Because of the pro-drop status of Italian, the grammatical subject remains in postverbal position and checks nominative case and phi-features covertly, as shown in (38b).

- (38) a. [<sub>SubjP</sub> The cause of the riot<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> is [<sub>SC</sub> John and Mary t<sub>i</sub>]]]  
 b. [<sub>SubjP</sub> La causa della rivolta<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> *pro*<sub>expl</sub> sono [<sub>SC</sub> Gianni e Maria t<sub>i</sub>]]]

BP shows the same behavior as Italian. The predicative DP moves to the preverbal position, and the verb agrees with the postverbal subject.<sup>7</sup>

- (39) a. Os jovens são o futuro da nação.  
 the young-pl are the future of the nation  
 b. O futuro da nação são os jovens.  
 the future of the nation are the young-pl  
 c. [<sub>SubjP</sub> O futuro da nação [<sub>TP</sub> *pro*<sub>expl</sub> são [<sub>SC</sub> os jovens t<sub>i</sub>]]]

These sentences confirm that the requirements of the Case-agreement system are not general enough to motivate movement to the subject position. In this analysis, the semantic property of subjects is encoded in the syntax through a morphosyntactic feature ('Subject of predication').

In conclusion, the notion of subject of predication differs from the notion of topic. The subject of predication pertains to the logical structure of the sentence (subject–predicate), while topic refers to the information structure of the sentence (given–new). As we saw in section 3, DPs that are subjects of predication are not topics and may occur in out-of-the-blue sentences with transitive verbs. Moreover, SpecSubjP is a position reserved for specific types of XPs and does not cause minimality effects.

## 5 Preverbal Locative PPs in BP

In BP, it is common to find sentences with locative PPs in preverbal position with no grammatical subject, as in (40) (cf. Avelar 2009; Avelar, Cyrino 2008; Avelar, Galves 2011, 2013).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> In BP, the verb can also agree with the fronted predicate: *O futuro da nação é os jovens*. We analyse this sentence as the English case in (38a).

<sup>8</sup> Example (40b) is from Avelar, Galvez 2013, 111. We adapted the other examples.

- (40) a. Naquela loja vende livros.  
in that store sells books
- b. Na escola aceita cartão de crédito.  
at school accepts credit card
- c. No computador imprime fotos.  
on the computer prints photos
- d. Na rádio da universidade toca as melhores músicas.  
on radio of the university plays the best songs

Two analyses have been proposed for (40). On the one hand, Pontes (1987) and Galves (2001) take the PP to be left-dislocated and suggest that the existence of sentences like (40) is related to the topic-prominent status of BP. On the other hand, Avelar (2009) argues that the locative PP in (40) occurs in SpecTP, the same position occupied by subject DPs. For Avelar and Galves (2011), SpecTP is an A'-position.

Fronting of locative PPs is not motivated by Case, since the preposition is already a case marker. It also does not occur due to the need of checking phi-features, since PPs do not agree with the verb (see sentence *Nas rádios da universidade toca as melhores músicas* 'on-the radios of the university plays the best songs', where the DP inside the PP is plural but the verb is singular). What motivates the occurrence of PPs in preverbal position? Avelar (2009, 243) discusses raising constructions to show that like DPs, locative PPs cannot stop in the subject position of the infinitive clause because they would not be assigned Case.

- (41) a. Parece trabalhar muita gente naquele shopping.  
it seems to work a lot of people in that mall
- b. Naquele shopping parece trabalhar muita gente.  
in that mall seems to work a lot of people
- c. \*Parece naquele shopping trabalhar muita gente.  
it seems in that mall to work a lot of people

The author assumes that preverbal locative PPs have a nominal behavior. According to Avelar (2009, 241), the head of the locative phrase is not the preposition, but the adverbial pronoun that precedes it, which can be phonologically null or realized: (*aqui*) *na sala* ('(here) in the room'), (*aí*) *embaixo da mesa* ('(there) under the table'), (*lá*) *na cidade* ('(there) in the city'). The locative PP is originated as an adjunct and undergoes movement to SpecTP when the adverbial pronoun requiring Case enters the derivation.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See Alexiadou and Carvalho (forthcoming) for a different analysis of the sentences with preverbal locative PPs. For these authors, the locative PP is the external argument of the verb in impersonal constructions in BP.

In what follows, we show that preverbal locative PPs are not left-dislocated, but pattern with non-topicalized preverbal subjects. Exploiting the two preverbal subject hypothesis, we will suggest that there is no need to postulate an adverbial head and that preverbal locative PPs occur in SpecSubjP.

### 5.1 The Fronted PP Is not Left-Dislocated

In this section, we show that in BP, preverbal locative PPs pattern with preverbal subjects and do not occur in the CP domain.

First note that BP sentences with preverbal locative PPs are different from English sentences with locative inversion. Rizzi and Shlonsky (2006, 344) observe that long extraction of a temporal adjunct is ill-formed over a topic (42a) and over a preposed locative (42b) while being perfectly grammatical over an embedded subject (42c).

- (42) a. \*When did he say that into the room Jack walked t?  
 b. \*When did he say that into the room walked Jack t?  
 c. When did he say that Jack walked into the room t?

Rizzi and Shlonsky (2006) also observe that I-to-C movement cannot apply across locative inversion. This would be unexpected if the PP locative were spelled out in subject position.

- (43) a. \*Is in the room sitting my old brother?  
 b. \*Did down the hill roll the baby?

In (43), the Top head blocks movement of the verb to Force (Rizzi 1997). Rizzi and Shlonsky (2006) conclude that in English locative inversion, the fronted locative moves to a final landing site in the left periphery.

In BP, preverbal locative PPs behave differently from both fronted locatives in English and left-dislocated objects in BP. Long extraction of a temporal adjunct over the preverbal locative PP (44a) is possible (differently from (43a)), while long extraction of a temporal adjunct over a (non-focalized) dislocated object is not (44b-c). The same contrast is found with relative clauses in (45), where the preverbal locative PP does not cause any interference (45a), whereas the dislocated PP does (45b).

- (44) a. Quando ele disse que na escola aceita cartão de crédito?  
 when did he say that at school accepts credit card  
 b. ??Quando ele disse que cartão de crédito na escola aceita?  
 when did he say that credit card at school accepts  
 c. ??Quando ele disse que para os alunos a escola dá cartão de crédito?  
 when did he say that to the students the school gives credit card

- (45) a. O cartão de crédito que na escola aceita/aceitam é o Visa.  
the credit card that at school accepts is the Visa  
b. ??O cartão de crédito que para os alunos dão é o Visa.  
the credit card that to the students give is the Visa

Although constructions such as Aux-to-Comp are not fully productive in BP, a contrast is indeed found between (46), which contain a preverbal locative PPs, and the sentences (14a) and (15a) above, which contain a left-dislocated XP.

- (46) a. Tivesse na rádio tocado as melhores músicas,...  
had on radio played the best songs  
b. Tivesse no computador impresso as fotos,....  
had on the computer printed the photos

The ungrammaticality of sentences like (14a) and (15a) arises from the fact that the TOP head activated by the dislocated object blocks the movement of the auxiliary to C (as in English (43)). The contrast between (46) and (14a) and (15a) suggests that in BP, preverbal locative PPs do not occur in left-dislocated position.

Although preverbal locative PPs are not left-dislocated and pattern like subjects structurally, they clearly do not check phi-features or Case. In the hypothesis that there is more than one preverbal subject position in the inflectional domain (Cardinaletti 1997, 2004), fronted PPs are taken to occur in SpecSubjP, as shown in (47). The subject position specTP is occupied by impersonal, generic *pro* (Negrão, Viotti 2011).<sup>10</sup>

- |         |  |  |  |
|---------|--|--|--|
| (47) a. | [ <sub>SubjP</sub> Naquela loja <sub>i</sub><br>in.that store                          | [ <sub>TP</sub> <i>pro</i> <sub>genérico</sub> vende<br><i>pro</i> <sub>generic</sub> sells    | [ <sub>VP</sub> t <sub>i</sub> livros]]<br>books                       |
| b.      | [ <sub>SubjP</sub> Na escola <sub>i</sub><br>at school                                 | [ <sub>TP</sub> <i>pro</i> <sub>genérico</sub> aceita<br><i>pro</i> <sub>generic</sub> accepts | [ <sub>VP</sub> t <sub>i</sub> cartão de crédito]]<br>credit card      |
| c.      | [ <sub>SubjP</sub> Na rádio da universidade <sub>i</sub><br>on radio of the university | [ <sub>TP</sub> <i>pro</i> <sub>genérico</sub> toca<br><i>pro</i> <sub>generic</sub> plays     | [ <sub>VP</sub> t <sub>i</sub> as melhores músicas]]<br>the best songs |

**10** This interpretation is confirmed by the fact that the null subject cannot be coindexed with the subject of the matrix sentence (i).

- (i) O Pedro<sub>j</sub> disse que na escola *pro*<sub>j</sub> aceita cartão de crédito.  
the Pedro said that at school \_\_\_ accepts credit card

Coreference is possible when the locative is a contrastive focus (Avelar, Cyrino 2008, 56). The grammatical sentence in (ii) does not contain an instance of preverbal locative PP.

- (ii) O Pedro<sub>j</sub> disse que NAQUELA LOJA (e não em outra), *pro*<sub>j</sub> / ele<sub>j</sub> vende livros.  
the Pedro said that IN THAT STORE (and not in another), (he) sells books

The possibility of 3rd person singular agreement is related to the fact that BP is losing impersonal *se*.<sup>11</sup> This is considered to be a relevant parameter of variation between BP and European Portuguese (Galves 2001, Cyrino 2007). The European Portuguese counterparts of (47) display impersonal *se* (48a), on a par with Italian (48b):

- (48) a. Na escola aceita-se cartão de crédito.  
at school accepts-cl-3 credit card  
b. A scuola si accetta le carte di credito.  
at school *si* accepts the credit cards

Note that BP generic sentences also allow plural agreement on the verb (49), a possibility also found in European Portuguese and Italian (50):

- (49) a. [<sub>SubjP</sub> Naquela loja<sub>i</sub> in.that store [<sub>TP</sub> *pro*<sub>genérico</sub> vendem [<sub>VP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> livros]]]  
*pro*<sub>genérico</sub> sell books  
b. [<sub>SubjP</sub> Na escola<sub>i</sub> at school [<sub>TP</sub> *pro*<sub>genérico</sub> aceitam [<sub>VP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> cartão de crédito]]]  
*pro*<sub>genérico</sub> accept credit card  
c. [<sub>SubjP</sub> Na rádio da universidade<sub>i</sub> on radio of the university [<sub>TP</sub> *pro*<sub>genérico</sub> tocam [<sub>VP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> as melhores músicas]]]  
*pro*<sub>genérico</sub> play the best songs
- (50) a. Na escola aceitam cartão de crédito.  
at school [they] accept credit card  
b. A scuola accettano le carte di credito.  
at school [they] accept the credit cards

According to Cinque (1988), the interaction between the type of verb and tense (generic or specified) triggers the arbitrary interpretation of the subject pronoun.

It should be pointed out that the impersonal interpretation of sentences with locative PP of BP should not be associated with the preverbal position of this constituent, since it also arises when the locative occurs in sentence final position.

- (51) a. Vende(m) livros naquela loja.  
sells(3pl) books in that store  
b. Aceita(m) cartão de crédito na escola.  
accepts(3pl) credit card at school  
c. Imprime(m) fotos no computador.  
prints(3pl) photos on the computer  
d. Toca(m) as melhores músicas na rádio da universidade.  
plays(3pl) the best songs on the radio of the university

11 The process is not complete yet. The sentences in (47) are also possible with impersonal *se* (cf. (54c)).



Sentences without the locative PP are however ungrammatical, cf. *\*Aceita/\*Aceitam cartão de crédito* (accept(s) credit card). For the discussion of the contribution of locative PPs in BP sentences like (47) without *se*, see Negrão and Viotti (2008). As discussed by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999, 158), locative PPs are necessary to provide a range-restriction to impersonal generic subjects, whether null or realized by weak pronouns.<sup>12</sup> See Alexiadou and Carvalho (forthcoming) for a different analysis in which the PP is the subject of the clause and no null subject is involved.

In conclusion, movement of locative PPs to the preverbal subject position is triggered by the property of being the subject of predication, as happens with dative and locative PP fronting in Italian. The facts presented so far show that sentences with preverbal locative PPs in BP should not be compared to English locative inversion, in which the moved PP occupies a position in the left periphery of the sentence (Rizzi, Shlonsky 2006). These facts also allow us to question the classification of BP as a topic-prominent language. This classification is presumably not necessary. That it may indeed be wrong for BP is argued for by Kenedy (2014) on the basis of experimental data. We refer the interested reader to this work.

## 6 Preverbal 'Locative' DPs Are 'True' Subjects

Avelar and Cyrino (2008) observe that the preposition can be eliminated from the sentences we discussed in section 5, without resulting in any apparent change in the meaning of the sentence or in the thematic role attributed to the constituent in preverbal position. All sentences in (40) above have a counterpart with a preverbal DP:

- (53) a. Aquela loja vende livros.  
 b. A escola aceita cartão de crédito.  
 c. O computador imprime fotos.  
 d. A rádio da universidade toca as melhores músicas.

Preverbal 'locative' DPs behave differently from preverbal locative PPs. The latter can appear at the end of sentence (54a), do not agree with the verb (54b), can cooccur with impersonal *se* (54c) and do not allow subject resumptive pronouns (54d). With preverbal 'locative' DPs, the situation is the opposite (55):

12 A locative PP is not necessary in sentences with impersonal *se*:

- (i) a. Aceita-se cartão de crédito.  
 b. Si accettano carte di credito.

- (54) a. Toca/tocam as melhores músicas na rádio da universidade.  
[it] plays/play the best songs on radio of the university  
b. Na rádio da universidade toca/tocam as melhores músicas.  
on radio of the university plays/play the best songs  
c. Na rádio da universidade toca-se/tocam-se as melhores músicas.  
on radio of the university plays-cl/play-cl the best songs  
d. \*Na rádio da universidade, ela<sub>i</sub> toca as melhores músicas.  
on radio of the university she plays the best songs
- (55) a. \*Toca as melhores músicas a rádio da universidade.  
plays the best songs the radio of the university  
b. \*A rádio da universidade tocam as melhores músicas.  
the radio of the university play the best songs  
c. \*A rádio da universidade toca-se as melhores músicas.  
the radio of the university play-cl the best songs  
d. A rádio da universidade, ela<sub>i</sub> toca as melhores músicas.  
the radio of the university she plays the best songs

In (55), the 'locative' DP cannot appear in final position because BP does not allow VOS; agreement is obligatory; impersonal *se* is impossible as it is always incompatible with realized subjects; the resumptive pronoun is possible because the subject can be left-dislocated (cf. (7a) above). According to Munhoz, Naves (2012, 251 fn. 1), in these sentences the subject is thematically labeled as 'agent' or 'cause'. In other words, the sentences in (53) with preverbal 'locative' DPs have the same properties as transitive sentences. Munhoz and Naves (2012, 253-4) also show that the transitive verbs in (56) have a canonical behavior with respect to passivation and cliticization.

- (56) a. A Livraria do Chiquinho vende livros acadêmicos.  
the Chiquinho's bookstore sells academic books  
b. Livros acadêmicos são vendidos na/pela Livraria do Chiquinho.  
academic books are sold at/by the Chiquinho's bookstore  
c. A Livraria do Chiquinho os vende/vende eles.  
the Chiquinho's bookstore them sells/sells them

What differentiates a sentence like *Aquela loja vende livros* ('That store sells books') from *A Ana vende livros* ('The Ana sells books') is the animacy feature of the preverbal subject DP. The preverbal DPs of the sentences in (53) all bear the following set of features: [-human], [-animate], [+specific], [+definite].

To confirm that preverbal 'locative' DPs occur in subject position, we take up two of the tests we used in section 3: extraction and Aux-to-Comp movement. With respect to the first test, the sentences with preverbal



- (61) a. Questo negozio vende libri antichi.  
this store sells books old
- b. La scuola accetta le carte di credito.  
the school accepts credit cards
- c. Il computer stampa le foto.  
the computer prints photos
- d. La radio dell'università riproduce le più belle canzoni.  
the radio of the university plays the best songs

It is thus not necessary to associate the existence of sentences with preverbal locative subjects to a discourse macroparameter, classifying BP as a topic-prominent language. To accommodate preverbal 'locative' DPs, it is also not necessary to stipulate that SpecTP is an A'-position in BP.

## 7 Other Preverbal Locative DPs

Avelar and Galves (2011, 2013) suggest that BP is a topic-prominent language also on the basis of what they call 'locative agreement'. Constituents with locative interpretation can agree with the verb, as in the examples provided by Avelar and Galves (2013, 107).

- (62) a. As ruas do centro não tão passando ônibus.  
the downtown streets are not passing bus
- b. Não tá passando ônibus nas ruas do centro.  
is not passing bus in the downtown streets
- (63) a. Aqueles quartos só cabem uma pessoa.  
those rooms only fit-3pl one person
- b. Só cabe uma pessoa naqueles quartos.  
only fits one person in those rooms

The preverbal locative DPs occurring in (62a) and (63a) are interpreted by the authors as sentential topics with the function of adverbial adjuncts. This is clearly shown by the paraphrases in (b), in which the locatives contain the preposition. These constructions resemble the so-called 'subject-topic' sentences discussed by Pontes (1987, 34-5), which also occur with biargumental unaccusative verbs.

- (64) Essa casa bate sol.  
that house hits sun

The locative DP occurs in subject position and is not left-dislocated, as shown by the fact that it allows extraction (65) and can appear in out-of-the-blue contexts (66).

- (65) a. O que João disse que as ruas do centro não tão passando?  
what did John say that the streets of downtown are not passing?  
b. Quando João disse que as ruas do centro não tão passando ônibus?  
when did John say that the streets of downtown are not passing buses?
- (66) a. O que aconteceu?  
what happened?  
b. As ruas do centro não tão passando ônibus.  
the downtown streets are not passing bus

Although the locative DP occurs in subject position, we argue that the sentences in (62a), (63a) and (64) should receive a syntactic-semantic treatment different from the sentences in (53) above. We thus disagree with Avelar and Galves (2013), who treat the two types of sentences as belonging to one and the same construction.

Munhoz and Naves (2012, 253-4) show that the unaccusative verbs that license the 'subject-topic' construction behave differently from the transitive verbs in (56) with respect to passivation and cliticization, as shown in (67).

- (67) a. Essa casa bate bastante sol.  
that house hits a lot sun  
b. \*Bastante sol é batido por essa/nessa casa./ \*Essa casa é batida por bastante sol.  
a lot sun is beaten by that/in that house/ that house is beaten by a lot sun  
c. \*Essa casa o bate/bate ele./ \*O sol a bate/bate ela.  
that house it hits/ hits it / the sun it hits / hits her

We agree with Negrão and Viotti (2008) that a change in the thematic grid of the verb is what makes the locative argument become the external argument of the verb. The authors observe that it is not possible to correlate this change with the loss of unaccusative *se*, since in these contexts its use renders the sentence ungrammatical, cf. \**As ruas do centro não se tão passando ônibus* (The downtown streets are not passing bus). These sentences do not have the same semantics as the sentences with preverbal locative PPs analysed in section 5.

Note that in Italian, the counterparts of (62a), (63a) and (64) all contain a preverbal locative PP (68). This PP occurs in SpecSubjP, as shown by the fact that Aux-to-Comp is allowed (69).

- (68) a. Nelle strade del centro passa il tram.  
in the downtown streets passes the tramway  
b. In quelle stanze si adatta una sola persona.  
in those rooms fits one person  
c. Su quelle case batte il sole.  
on those houses hits sun

- (69) a. Essendo nelle strade del centro passato sempre il tram,...  
being in the downtown streets passed always the tramway,...
- b. Essendosi in quelle stanze adattata una sola persona,...  
being in those rooms fit one person
- c. Avendo su quelle case battuto il sole per tutto il giorno,...  
having on those houses hitten the sun for the whole day,...

The contrast between (62a), (63a) and (64) on the one hand and (68) on the other indicates that BP goes through a process in which the locative becomes a DP with argument properties in the subject position, while it remains a locative PP in subject position in Italian. Thus, the *location* is the subject of the sentence in both languages, but this happens with a partly different syntax.

## 8 Preverbal Genitive/Possessive DPs

The so-called 'subject-topic' sentences discussed by Pontes (1987, 34-5) also include sentences where the preverbal DP is a genitive/possessive, as in (70a) (cf. also Andrade, Galves 2014). Another example is (70b), taken from Avelar and Galves (2013, 113). These cases are typically restricted to monoargumental unaccusative verbs.

- (70) a. O carro furou o pneu.  
the car punctured the tire
- b. As crianças estão nascendo o dentinho.  
the children are being born the tooth-DIM

Once again, it is possible to show that the preverbal DP occurs in subject position (SpecSubjP) and is not dislocated.

- (71) a. Tivesse o carro furado o pneu, eles não teriam viajado.  
had the car punctured the tire, they would not have traveled
- b. Tivesse as crianças nascido o dentinho, elas estariam aborrecidas.  
had the children born the tooth-DIM, they would be bored
- (72) O que aconteceu?  
what happened?
- a. O carro furou o pneu.  
the car punctured the tire
- b. As crianças estão nascendo o dentinho.  
the children are being born the tooth-DIM

The genitive/possessive relation between the preverbal and the postverbal DP is realized in Italian via a preverbal dative PP in SpecSubjP.

- (73) a. Alla macchina si è bucata una gomma.  
 b. Al bambino sta nascendo un dentino.
- (74) Essendo al bambino nato un dentino,  
 being to the child born a tooth-DIM,...

As above, although the syntactic position of the fronted elements is the same (SpecSubjP) in the two languages, BP verbs have undergone a lexical change that is not found in Italian with the same verbs. In other words, thematic roles that are realized as dative PPs in Italian are externalized as DPs in BP. This change may be related to the loss of dative case in this language. Differently from European Portuguese (and Italian), BP dative complements are not realized with preposition 'a', but with the preposition *para* (examples from Figueiredo Silva 2007, 85).

- (75) a. A Maria deu o livro ao João.                   (°<sup>ok</sup> in EP, °<sup>?</sup>  in BP)  
 b. A Maria deu o livro pro João.                   (°<sup>?</sup>  in EP, °<sup>ok</sup> in BP)  
 the Maria gave the book to João

## 9 Preverbal Theme DPs

BP also displays sentences like (76), in which the theme/patient argument appears in preverbal subject position and agrees with the verb in number and person (examples from Negrão, Viotti 2010, 38-9).

- (76) a. Meu jardim destruiu todo com a reforma.  
 my garden destroyed every with the reform  
 b. O programa que eu queria não instalou.  
 the program that I wanted did not install

Negrão and Viotti (2008, 2010) call these sentences “absolute constructions” and suggest that the verb undergoes a process of ergativization, modifying its diathesis. According to the authors, there was a change in the quality of the thematic roles of the verb arguments. They also draw attention to the fact that all their examples come from spontaneous speech. As further evidence that these sentences are productive in BP, Negrão and Viotti (2014, 317) present an example taken from an advertising campaign, (78), in which plural agreement on the verb confirms that the theme/patient argument behaves as a subject.

- (78) A cada um minuto quatro coisas vendem.  
 to each one minute four things sell

In Italian, this type of sentences obligatorily display unaccusative *si*.

- (79) a. Il mio giardino si è distrutto tutto con la riforma.  
my garden destroyed all with the reform  
b. Il programma che volevo non si è installato.  
the program that I wanted did not install  
c. Ogni minuto si vendono quattro cose.  
each one minute cl sell four things

In both languages, the agentive, external argument cannot be expressed (sentence (80a) from Avelar, Galves 2013, 129).

- (80) a. \*Minhas casas tão construindo o arquiteto.  
my houses are building the architect  
b. \*Il programma che volevo non si è installato l'operatore.  
the program that I wanted did not install the operator  
c. L'operatore non ha installato il programma che volevo.  
the operator did not install the program that I wanted

The difference between BP and Italian is thus minimal and concerns the lexical representation of the verb. In Italian, most anticausative verbs are built with unaccusative *si*, in BP the process is more similar to English where no lexical item signals the anticausative status of the verb (cf. verbs like *break*, *sink*, *move*, etc.).<sup>14</sup> This phenomenon has been correlated by Galves (2001) and Cyrino (2007) to the fact that BP is losing unaccusative *se*. For a different analysis, see Negrão and Viotti (2008).

## 10 Concluding Remarks

In this paper, we have suggested that BP preverbal subjects do not occur in the left periphery. We have also provided compelling evidence against the analysis of preverbal locative PPs and DPs as left-dislocated topics. We have shown with a number of tests that these constituents occur in SpecSubjP, where they check the subject-of-predication feature. We have however argued for a non-uniform analysis of preverbal locative PPs and DPs: the former are related to an impersonal interpretation, the latter have the same behavior as the external arguments of transitive verbs. We have also discussed BP sentences where a change in the thematic grid of the verb allows locatives, genitives/possessives, and themes to be promoted to subjects.

<sup>14</sup> Note that English *destroy* and *build* do not have an unaccusative version (*\*the garden destroyed*, *\*the house built*). This should be related to the lexical properties of this language.



The Italian data presented in the paper show that not all instances of preverbal locative PPs and DPs are innovative constructions of BP, and subcases need to be differentiated. Moreover, the data show that it is not necessary to associate the existence of sentences with preverbal non-argumental subjects to a discourse macroparameter, classifying BP as a topic-prominent language. To accommodate preverbal locative DPs, it is also not necessary to stipulate that SpecTP is an A'-position in BP.

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