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THE BARRY PLACE IN STANLEY KUBRICK'S *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*

"It's funny how the colors of the world only seem really real when you viddy them on the screen" says Burgess (2011: 72) in his novel, and later Stanley Kubrick shows it in his adaptation of *A Clockwork Orange.* Kubrick presents us with a dystopia, a world much too similar to ours, where the abuse of power is omnipresent, where violence and vulgarity creep in all the levels of society. Under the protective cloak of the temporal discrepancy between the two worlds – the plot is set in a near future – the reality of *A Clockwork Orange* remains a reflection of ours, it allows us to observe from a viewer's perspective our own world from a safe distance. This paper proposes to be a guide to the viewer, and question the efficiency of the criminal justice system and of rehabilitation; to reflect on the nature of free will; but above all, on society's responsibility in juvenile crime.

Several methods have been used throughout the study. One of these is the narrative method, because the life story of Alex DeLarge was the pretext for the movie, and subsequently for this paper. Also, the viewer's perspective over the events is mostly through Alex's eyes. But research data was combined with the personal narrative. Grounded theory was used to derive general theories from the processes involved in the film. But most of all, the paper relies on a psychological interpretation of *A Clockwork Orange.*

Soon after its release, Kubrick withdrew the movie from distribution, due to the repeated attacks it suffered from both the critics and the general public. The film had its premiere in December, 1971 in New York, and only in January 1972 did it premiere in London. Shortly after, in 1974, Kubrick decided to withdraw the movie from England. The main reason behind his action was that the rash in youth crimes was blamed on the movie. Indeed there were several crimes which had a startling resemblance to those committed in *A Clockwork Orange***.** Out of these crimes the three most famous are the murder of a homeless man by a 16 year old; the stabbing to death of a younger boy by a 16 year old dressed in the Clockwork Orange gang's uniform; the gang rape of a Dutch girl by a group of youth who sang "Singin' in the Rain". Also, the first 15 minutes of the movie slap the viewer with almost overwhelming scenes of vulgarity and violence. It all starts in the Korova milkbar, where under-aged teenagers drink milk plus, that is milk mixed with drugs. The milkbar is cluttered with tables and milk dispensers in the form of naked women in various sexually provoking poses. Then follow a series of 'ultra violent' behaviours in a rapid succession: the beating of a homeless man, the interruption of a gang rape

by Alex and his droogs, the battle with that rival gang, a car theft, forcing other cars off the road, the beating of an old writer and the rape of his wife in front of him. However, Kubrick presented these scenes in a highly stylized manner, so there is not a lot of graphical violence in the movie to shock the viewer, but rather the moral implications of these acts is what disturbs the public. Also, Alex DeLarge, who committed all these atrocities, was presented in an endearing manner. So, instead of creating a gap between the antihero and the public, Kubrick succeeded to bring them closer together by investing Alex with the good looks of Malcolm McDowell, he remains by far the most attractive protagonist in the movie; great command of language; and as McDougal (2003:10) observes "the repeated use of 'my brother' when addressing the reader (a variant of Baudelaire's famous line 'Hypocrite lecteur – mon semblable – mon frère' ['Hypocritical reader – my likeness – my brother']) and the many references to himself as 'your humble narrator' together help establish an intimate relationship between Alex and the reader"; taste in classical music, which comes in contrast with the overwhelming kitsch of his world. Instead of passing judgement on a juvenile offender, the viewer is lured to watch events unfold from his perspective.

From a psychological perspective Alex falls into the category of secondary psychopaths. Psychopathy is represented by the presence of a specific conglomerate of personality features, like: remorselessness, callousness, deceitfulness, egocentricity, failure to form close emotional bonds, superficial charm (Lilienfeld, 1998 cited in Skeem et al. 2003: 514). However, experts distinguished primary and secondary variants of psychopathy and Alex falls into the latter category. As Mealey (1995, cited in Skeem et al. 2003: 523) states, secondary psychopaths, unlike the primary ones, are not born this way, they become so through evolutionary adaptation. These individuals deal with mistreatment by detaching themselves from their surroundings, until gradually they become emotionally blunted. Another differentiating feature identified this time by Karpman (1941, cited in Skeem et al. 2003: 529) is that secondary psychopaths are more impulsive than primary ones. Alex is drawn to crimes of opportunity and passion: he attacks the old homeless man, not for material gain, but simply because he "could never stand to see anyone like that, whatever his age might be, but more especially when he was real old like this one was", as Alex confesses in the movie. The famous attack on the old writer and his wife, was not a planned one either, Alex spontaneously chose their residence. Also, secondary psychopaths who are competitively disadvantaged by low socio-economic status or inconsistent discipline tend to seek out alternative peer groups in which they can compensate for their disadvantages by holding the power (Mealey, 1995, cited in Skeem et al. 2003: 523), which is why his droogs are so important to him. So the four friends committed crimes for economic gain as well, mostly to keep Alex's three friends satisfied. Unlike their leader, they possessed the primary psychopath's need for planned crimes and material gain from them. This was after all what made them turn against their leader. Alex lives in wrecked working-class housing projects, he is clearly part of the lower socio-economical level and his relationship with his

parents is distant. Also, the vulgar graffiti from the walls of his building, the kitsch erotic art that is to be found everywhere and the generalized abuse of power qualify his surroundings as appropriate for nurturing a secondary psychopath. Therefore, the main implication of Alex being a secondary psychopath is that his condition can be traced back to his environment.

Once Alex enters the prison, to pay for his crimes, he becomes a subject of a total institution, and according to Goffman (1957), his entire being is encompassed by the system. This characteristic is not only specific to the prison system from *A Clockwork Orange*, but to prisons in general. Goffman (1957) presented the defining characteristics of total institutions and they are not found under this form under normal social circumstances. All the daily activities take place under the same authority and in the same place. In our society we run our activities under different authorities and in different places. Also, these take place in the company of similar others, while in society we interact with more groups. All of these activities are part of a greater plan, which represents the aims of the institution. Lastly, the members of the total institution are subjected to an echelon authority, where any member of the staff has the power to discipline any inmate. We do have forms of echelon authority in our society too, like the police, but our interaction with them is not constant.

Another characteristic of a total institution is the mortification process, which is represented in the movie step by step. This process follows a strict script, presented in detail by Goffman (1957). As the inmate enters the institution he is assigned a number, this will substitute for his name. Alex DeLarge becomes number 655321. All personal items are removed, so the prisoner takes nothing of his former life into the institution. Soon after he enters, Alex must empty his pockets, where he had: one half bar of chocolate, one bunch of keys on a white metal ring, one packet of cigarettes, two plastic ball pens, one black, one red, one pocket comb – black, plastic –, one address book – imitation, red leather –, one white metal wristlet watch. Afterwards he must undress and almost all of his personal belongings are stored away, except the chocolate and cigarettes. Then an intrusive strip search is performed, which can also be seen in the movie, where a guard makes sure that Alex does not smuggle in anything inside the prison. Finally, he is clothed in a prison issued uniform. Therefore the mortification process is a symbolical stripping of the social self.

However, the inmate does not passively take all this change, he adapts to the situation, and Alex copes with the new environment by adopting an opportunistic approach and incorporates elements from the four types of adaptation described by Goffman (1957): situational withdrawal, rebellious line, colonization, conversion. The first is specific to patients in mental hospitals and is considered to be an irreversible way of adaptation, because the patient undergoes regression and becomes unresponsive to stimulus that is not in his immediate proximity. Inmates who adopt the rebellious line refuse to cooperate with the staff and defy the system. Through colonization, an inmate constructs himself a satisfactory life inside the institution. Often the outside world is used as an argument for the benefits of the existence

behind the prison walls. The last form of adaptation is conversion, where the inmate seemingly incorporates the institution's view of himself, and his purpose is to become the perfect inmate. Alex apparently underwent conversion, and tries to be a model prisoner. He says 'sir' at the right times, treats the staff members respectfully, helps out the prison chaplain with his sermon, but underneath this devotion there is rebellion. His actions suggest that he took on the beliefs of the institution, but actually he merely adopted this strategy in order to slowly procure an early release.

The Ludovico Treatment offers Alex exactly what he was waiting for, an opportunity for early release, but this treatment stretches the limits of correctional interventions. Fogel (in Lichtenberg, Lune and McManimon 2004: 432) noted that rehabilitation is quite unlikely in the prison system as long as it is presented as an incentive for early release. This is the case in *A Clockwork Orange* too, as Alex eagerly accepts to participate in the experiment just so he can get out sooner, not because he thinks that his ways are wrong and that he needs to change. Also, the voluntary participation of Alex is questionable. He is kept unaware of the implications of the process and the method used, he is only told that there is a cure and that the method will involve watching films. The Ludovico Treatment proved to be aversion therapy, in which undesirable behaviour is coupled with an unpleasant consequence. Alex is forced to watch videos with violent images while in a drugged state, experiencing unpleasant physical sensations, as described by Dr. Brodsky in the movie: "the drug will cause the subject to experience a death-like paralysis together with deep feelings of terror and helplessness". But what is even more severe, is that a consent once given, can be withdrawn at any time by the participant, during the experiment. The doctors conducting the research ignore Alex's pleads to be released and they finish the treatment on him. Also, as McDougal (2003:6) observes, "the Ludovico treatment becomes a metafictional moment that forces us to reflect on our own activity as film viewers". During the procedure, Alex becomes a film viewer, but he is deprived of the choice to watch or not these disturbing images. We as viewers still have the possibility to.

Furthermore, the Ludovico treatment proves to be an inhumane procedure. Alex is stripped of his humanity when his free will is taken away from him through this correctional experiment. He no longer possesses the ability to choose to do the right, or the wrong thing, he becomes physically sick even at the thought of violence, and this prevents him to act. The prison chaplain is the only one who seems concerned about this effect of the treatment, while everybody else views it as a complete success. Also, Alex is deprived of his ability to defend himself, which is a basic human right. The latter part of the movie, in which he is released back into society and all of Alex's previous victims seek retribution, only proves that there is also an adaptational role of aggression, it permits self-defence.

In the end, it becomes clear that "Alex lives in a sadistic world, only slightly different from our own, in which everyone who has power over others manifests this power with more or less indifferent cruelty" (Lichtenberg, Lune, and McManimon 2004: 434). There seems to be a strong undercurrent in the world of *A Clockwork*

Orange of a vulgar and kitsch art, which seems to be incorporated by the main protagonist's lifestyle. In Kolker's (2003: 28) perspective, "the cultural landscape has itself degenerated into a kind of general, eroticized slum". Alex brings this undercurrent to the forefront and celebrates it. The essential role played by the environment and society in juvenile crime is also underlined by Alex being a secondary psychopath. So, in the end Alex is the key that opens up to us his clockwork world, which proves to be quite similar to ours. Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* is far from those movies, which "satisfy without intruding, without asking serious questions" (Kolker, 2003: 22).

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CHARACTERS' IDENTITIES IN *THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD*

Zora Neale Hurston's most famous novel is often considered her most representative novel because it encompasses elements characteristic to all her other writings: folklore, southern dialect, humour, biography and her keen spirit of observation. They create a unique fictional universe entirely populated with African Americans. She constructs her novels through the use of identities which influence each other, thus making the study of identities indispensable to grasping the meaning of the novel. The present analysis will compare and contrast four of the most illustrative components of the identities of Janie Crawford and her grandmother, Nanny Crawford, namely their aspirations and achievements, as well as their perceptions of loneliness and independence.

Janie, the central character, is presented through moments of her life which define her identity. The novel is the narration of her evolution, told to her friend Phoebe, whom she inspires. Janie's exhilarating journey is both rooted in and strongly contrasting with that of her Nanny. The old woman, who has experienced slavery and sexual abuse, is suspicious and afraid of all men. She never marries, but she dedicates herself to raising and marrying Janie. She dies within a month of achieving this goal. As the novel unfolds and Nanny's influence starts to fade, the contrast between the two women becomes more and more relevant to the construction of character.

In terms of aspirations, the characters share such dreams. Both characters have aspirations, but different ones. Janie's dream is to be able to dream, her belief being that "the dream is the truth. […] act and do things accordingly" (Hurston 1978: 9). Consequently, she dreams to see the world, to find love and experience passion, to be free to explore new things that are inaccessible to her as a woman, such as speaking in public, having a fortune, or playing chess and hunting. As she goes along, she engenders dream after dream, constantly enchanted by this new-found freedom of dreaming. Her highest aspiration, a childhood wish to "struggle with life" (Hurston 1978: 25), eventually becomes clearly articulated throughout the novel as the wish to have a lively spirit. Her lively, even restless spirit is what drives her to break rules and disobey the order of things and it is what eventually makes her a fulfilled woman, who can live in peace and satisfaction regardless of her situation.

By contrast, her grandmother's aspirations are more practical: she wishes for safety and respectability. Experience taught her that men, although violent and cruel,

can offer social safety and respectability to a woman through marriage, yet she never married. Thus, although in the community where they lived Nanny was appreciated and looked up to, she still yearned for a man to grant her respect and safety. For this, she placed all her wishes in her daughter, Leafy, only to have them eventually transformed by a white man's sexual abuse into a scarring disillusion. Leafy's only achievement is Janie, who ironically is both her best contribution to the world and the result of the tragic rape which had destroyed her and kept her from ever achieving anything else.

Given a second chance with young Janie, Nanny decides to try again. She succeeds by forcing the girl to marry a man who can provide both wealth and respectability, and she sets the girl on the only path towards safety known to Nanny. Her authority coerces Janie, who submits. The two dreams then collide and soon Nanny's own words "nothing can't stop you from wishing" (Hurston 1978: 31), meant to encourage Janie to follow Nanny's advice, give her the courage to follow her own dream, forsaking the old woman's aspirations once she is gone.

Paradoxically, by trying to impose her aspirations on Janie with so much passion, Nanny teaches Janie more than she intended: not only that "[y]ou can't beat nobody down so low till you can rob'em of they will" (Hurston 1978: 31), but also about the importance of passion and perseverance in pursuing aspirations. The qualities which sustained her through a lifetime of hardship eventually turn against her, equipping Janie with the passion that makes it impossible for the girl to ignore her own aspirations and personality. Nevertheless, her drive to pursue her dreams makes Janie the accomplished woman she turns out to be, a feature undoubtedly springing from what Nanny was and what she taught Janie she could be.

Achievements also define the two characters. The more aspirations a character has, the more achievements the reader can identify in the text. Janie starts with the aspiration to struggle with life, and she achieves this to such an extent that, as she emerges stronger from many trials at the end of the novel, she becomes surrounded by an aura of legend for her friend who knows her story and who declares she has physically grown taller from just listening to such an account.

Another achievement of Janie's is keeping her lively spirit throughout two marriages deprived of happiness. This spirit is represented by her ability to think, speak and, most of all, dream. Defending herself against Logan is simple because Janie does not love him. She thus speaks her mind after a while, regardless of how deeply she might hurt him. The fight against Joe is, on the other hand, not so easy. Love and the fact that this marriage has been her own choice keep Janie from hurting or disgracing Joe publicly and privately. Her spirit is almost destroyed for twenty years due to her faithfulness to a one-sided feeling. As she realizes she is no longer considered a wife, as promised, but an extension of Joe's persona and power, she finds it within her to fight back, for the main form this fight had taken during the prior two decades, silence, brings her to the point where she can almost no longer fight when she decides to. Eventually, she finds the courage to speak her mind in

public, an area she has been kept from speaking in, and she symbolically reclaims her split and dominated spirit:

> To overcome the self-division imposed by Jody, she struggles to engage in public talking. This struggle culminates when, after Joe calls her an old woman, she ridicules his sexual potency[…]. Jody retreats to his deathbed, sick from a bad liver and a wounded ego. (Goldstein, 2009: 50)

An even greater achievement, which enriches her and leads her to find true independence, is love. She chooses to love again after Jody, and this time she is loved back in a liberating manner. Along with this achievement come other smaller ones, such as financial independence, freedom to play male games or the possibility to use her oratorical abilities in public in the new community where they move. The relationship with Tea Cake gives Janie the thrill and companionship she had dreamed of as a little girl, both physically and spiritually, but most of all it offers her the possibility to achieve inner growth.

Nanny's achievements are considerably smaller, as are her dreams. She never achieves social safety and respectability as she understands them because she never marries, giving this up for her daughter's well-being, whom she cannot achieve them for. Her only two brief achievements are the financial security she has when able to buy a house, and the ability to convince Janie to temporarily adopt her vision of life and marry Logan. Her achievement does not last long, but she dies before finding this out. She lives her last days enjoying her house and the status that Janie has acquired. Thus, while her niece went off to live fully, Nanny settled with enjoying her survival, the purpose she had set for herself in life. Both characters eventually emerge as physical survivors of many tragic situations, even if Nanny only grows stronger in will but weaker in passion, while Janie grows stronger in will and stronger in passion.

The characters' views on loneliness and independence are also relevant for their identity. Janie is introduced to the reader at a time when she has already discovered the cruelty of her loneliness. As a young girl, she does not know how to address this anguish, so she makes the most logical assumption permitted by the context of a household where marriage was most highly valued, namely she concludes that loneliness is driven away by a husband:

> Did marriage end the cosmic loneliness of the unmated? Did marriage compel love like sun the day? […] Husbands and wives always loved each other, and that was what marriage meant. It was just so. Janie felt glad of the thought, for then it wouldn't seem so destructive and mouldy. She wouldn't be lonely anymore. (Hurston 1978: 38)

After going through two marriages, however, she reaches a different conclusion. She comes to know that mere company is not communion, and that

having the space around oneself populated does not make the space inside feel less empty.

In the case of her first marriage, she does not love and is not loved back. The little infatuation there is in the relationship on Logan's part quickly fades away and what is left is just the co-habitation of two very different people. The lack of love is doubled by the lack of communication, which is unavoidable as it is rooted in the differences between a woman who dreams and feels deeply and a man who is preoccupied solely with work. Surprisingly, the lack of communication gradually transforms itself into Janie's chosen form of protest against a marriage which has brought her only disappointment: "She knew now that marriage did not make love. Janie's first dream was dead, so she became a woman" (Hurston 1978: 44). The realization that marriage does not drive loneliness away causes the brutal destruction of Janie's innocent dream of communion, forcing her to mature into a woman.

Against all odds, this experience leaves her the hope that what is impossible for the institution of marriage is possible for love. She continues to dream of finding relief from loneliness in another person. This is what motivates her to choose Joe when she decides to make a change. His promise: "…if you think Ah aims to tole you off and make a dog outa you, youse wrong. Ah wants to make a wife outa you" (Hurston 1978: 50) is the promise of communion in Janie's eyes. Even so, she soon finds out that Joe loves himself too much to allow feelings for anyone else and she soon finds herself all alone with her love. After two decades of feeling lonely and unloved in spite of loving, she loses all hope in both love and marriage as shelters from loneliness.

Surprisingly, when loneliness seems without escape, she meets Tea Cake, her guide towards the discovery of the cure to loneliness. She once again begins to believe that that cure is love, and although this time love is shared, loneliness makes its way back into the woman's heart, accompanied by jealousy. While she looks for the cure to loneliness in others, she is always disappointed and lonely. She only understands how to defeat it when she learns what independence is, when she can give up believing in what Nanny had taught her about women who cannot make it alone, and when she dares to actually stand alone, both financially and socially. Just as she cannot find fulfilment while entrapped in male-dominated marriages, she cannot fight loneliness while she is entrapped in the idea that she cannot stand alone. Fortunately, she is able to grasp the correct concepts and, thus, to replace one feeling with the other, as she gradually understands each of the two realities and starts practicing them.

For Janie, independence is not the absence of anybody who is not wanted, it is rather, in part, the ability to choose the presence of whomever one wants there. While she does choose Joe at the beginning of their relationship, as she has to have her "own mind squeezed and crowded out tuh make room" (Hurston 1978: 71) for Joe's way of thinking, they start to drift apart and she no longer wants his presence. Joe's universe is not Janie's universe, and so she is not able or allowed to communicate and develop. Thus she comes to be aware of the fact that she can be

lonely while being surrounded by people, if she cannot choose who surrounds her. However, when she can choose the company she desires, she no longer feels lonely.

Independence, manifested as the ability to choose one's company, one's dreams and one's priorities, empowers her to fulfil her deepest interior aspirations and needs. This ability to develop as a person is the other part which eventually leads her to conquer loneliness. Once she understands that she is the one who should and who has the ability to have control over her own choices and evolution, she no longer feels alone. She finds herself. The end of this journey towards independence is considered by most critics to be Tea Cake's death. Interpretations such as McGowan's consider Tea Cake's death as the moment when Janie truly becomes independent, by choosing to take control and save her own life when she is faced with the choice:

> Tea Cake firmly asserts his control over Janie, and in this sense, it is a symptom of their relationship. And because this control continues to exist in the relationship with Tea Cake, Janie must kill him; [this act] allows Janie to obtain a momentary freedom, to lose her submission to the Other. She becomes, […] one that bears the weight of a suffocating freedom. Though Tea Cake is a liberatory force in the novel, he also dominates in a new and more pernicious way […], and it is this domination that Janie attempts to move beyond when she shoots him. (McGowan, 2009: 51)

The text seems to prove this theory as after Tea Cake, whom she wants in her life, dies, she does not feel lonely. She has now become: "[…] the emergent speaking woman who 'looks like [Janie's] own daughter,' [and] has full control of her own text only after she has murdered Tea Cake – her rabidly jealous lover" (Miles 2009: 72). While taking control of her life and finally becoming self-reliant and free from domination, Janie does not lose the wish for communion in spirit. She knows she can choose to keep Tea Cake in her soul, just as she chose to love him despite his temper:

> He could never be dead until she had finished feeling and thinking. The kiss of memory made pictures of love and light against the wall. Here was peace. She pulled in her horizon like a great fish-net. Pulled it from around the waist of the world and draped it over her shoulder. So much of life in its meshes! She called in her soul to come and see. (Hurston 1978: 286)

By using memory, feeling and thought, Janie creates a rich interior universe for herself, from which she feeds her soul constantly, thus becoming able not to base her wellbeing on exterior circumstances. Although circumstances have separated her from Tea Cake, she keeps the spiritual relationship to him, thus defeating the tyranny of a person's physical loss by the internalization of that person's memory. This is the final step in achieving full independence. The paradox of being lonely in the crowd is thus juxtaposed by Hurston with the paradox of being accompanied in complete physical loneliness in order to show the true nature of the character's new-found cure for loneliness.

For Nanny, loneliness is not a concern at all. Her pragmatism leaves little room for interior turmoil, and the little metaphysical turmoil she goes through is connected to achieving independence, which she sees as the status of being safe and respected. While for Janie independence is a state, for Nanny it is a status. While vital to both, independence is perceived differently. For the granddaughter, loneliness is incompatible with independence. For the grandmother, loneliness is a necessary and altogether acceptable price to pay in order to be independent from the will of the strangers around.

Nanny's view that Logan will insure Janie with "uh prop tuh lean on all yo' bawn days, and big protection, and everybody got tuh tip dey hat tuh you and call you Mis' Killicks […] (Hurston 1978: 41) is relevant for how she sees independence: a shelter from the intentions of outsiders to harm and treat her badly. Nevertheless, the grandmother is aware that the same kind of shelter is not provided within the same marriage: "[…] de white man throw down de load and tell the nigger man tuh pick it up. He pick it up because he have tuh, but he don't tote it. He hand it to his womenfolks" (Hurston 1978: 29). Thus her view of independence equals not having to be mistreated by strangers, but accepting the absolute authority of just one person: the husband.

The granddaughter shares this view for a while, until after Jody's death when "Janie realizes that she had accepting her grandmother's blind faith in the slave owners' ideals—that owning things counts more than exploring the horizon" (Goldstein 2009: 50). As Janie is guided to achieve independence, it becomes clear that what she has achieved is true independence. Nanny never gets the chance to learn what true independence is or to achieve it, having been so deeply immersed in slavery. By comparison to Janie, her limited perspective becomes obvious: she has settled for male-provided social safety, convinced that it was true independence.

The analysis of the two characters' aspirations and achievements, as well as their views on loneliness and independence, better brings to light the way in which they are constructed. Janie is the embodiment of the generation which can aspire to more than just the coverage of basic needs. She starts with small aspirations and, after defeating disappointment and abuse, goes on to achieve these aspirations and to dream of bigger ones. She learns that women can be independent and they only achieve this by breaking away from male domination, which she does, a gesture made possible by her development to which Nanny's passion and words gave birth and to which, ironically, Tea Cake himself most greatly contributed. She even passes on her knowledge, inspiring another woman to fight for her ideals. Furthermore, she goes on living her newfound independence and peace, which feeds on the rich interior life she has learnt to develop.

Nanny does not truly dream, nevertheless managing to achieve what she aspires to mostly: financial security. Paradoxically, she also achieves what she does not want, namely Janie's ability to dream, a direct consequence of Nanny's drive to achieve what she considers important. The combative, strong spirit they share is

what enables Janie eventually to aspire and achieve, to be independent, defeat loneliness, love and live a more thrilling life that Nanny.

Zora Neale Hurston presents two black female identities which shape each other and complete each other. One is the doer, who sets the path and provides a basis. The other is the dreamer who lives out the undreamt dreams of the doer, being what the doer had probably wanted to be herself, had she been equipped to dream. Each influences the other, and neither would have been the same without the other. The novel is enriched by the similarities and differences between the two characters, which have great potential for complexity and reader interpretation.

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LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY: SPEECH STYLES IN VARIOUS SOCIAL CONTEXTS

The purpose of this paper is to outline the interrelation between *language* and *society* and to highlight how these two different fields have been able to co-constitute each other. Society has always had the power to generate and diversify language, allowing speakers to express themselves in a variety of ways, depending on the social context, their intentions and audience.

According to John J. Gumperz, "phonetic change, borrowing, language mixture and language shift, they all occur because of social forces" not "as a result of the segmentation of older entities into newer and smaller subgroups"(Gumperz, 2009: 69). This influence can be seen in dialogue because society is the environment that allows us to manifest our language, to enrich our vocabulary and achieve a personal linguistic identity so that we can select the proper words to address certain people. This paper is concerned with speech styles and the social factors (practices, relations, structures) that shape them.

When engaging someone in a conversation or when speaking before an audience, *language style* plays an important part in delivering an eloquent and accurate message. Over the centuries, scholars have defined and redefined style from an abstract and broad perspective. According to Samuel Wesley, it is "the dress of thought"; Jonathan Swift describes style as "proper words in proper places" and W.B. Yeats considers it to be "high breeding in words and arguments" (Crystal, 1993: 66). This constant characterization of style, whether in speaking or writing, has been possible due to changes in society and mentality.

One of the most interesting aspects about style in speaking is the way we adapt it according to the circumstances that occur during a speech or conversation which enable us to choose particular linguistic alternatives over others. According to Allan Bell, speech "style involves the ways in which the same speakers talk differently on different occasions rather than the ways in which different speakers talk differently from each other." (Coupland and Jaworski, 1997: 240) Most of the times, speech style adaptation depends on the audience and the setting that influence the amount of attention we put into the way that we talk. When addressing a larger group of people, speakers usually make sure that they are not ambiguous and their vocabulary and use of language is concise and accurate.

Speech variety can be best observed in everyday conversations that highlight the frequency of the changes that occur during our dialogues; we change from a

technical discourse, to a colloquial discourse and then to a standard discourse in a matter of hours. This instance can be best illustrated in an academic environment. When academics talk to each other, whether it is about linguistics, literature, history and so on, they use a specialized variety of language that is in accordance with their competence and profession. Consequently, they do not have to worry if the complexity of the words used might baffle the interlocutor. On the other hand, students might feel threatened by the lack of familiarity or clarity of such a specialized language, so their lecturers have to adjust their speech and lose the technical terms, in order to be comprehensible to those who do not have the appropriate background and cannot assimilate the information properly. In linguistics, this is referred to as *convergence*, the process through which two people with different social backgrounds have to alter their speech so that they become more alike. These types of modifications have been noticed in several areas of language, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, speech rate, use of pause, and utterance length (Crystal, 1993: 51).

Although it is universally accepted that language style automatically implies the terms *formal* and *informal*, nowadays, with the emerging technology, it is harder and harder to distinguish between the two. If two decades ago we only preferred the traditional means of communication (telephones, letters, etc.), today we can chose from a variety of resources to help us convey information more quickly and conveniently. The internet, with its on-line interaction, is the main source that changes the way we look at communication; everything can happen on-line (job interviews, conferences etc.), which automatically alters the style that we use in order to reach the ones we want to contact. If the rules used to be pretty clear when addressing someone face to face, nobody could determine exactly what is 'appropriate' in order to address an on-line audience. Even the writing style has changed; when people write a blog, they do not know exactly who is going to read their posts so they have to balance the *formal* and *informal* in such a way that they can be credible and appealing at the same time.

Apart from its ability to facilitate the way we approach other speakers, style can also be used in order to conjure up a certain image of ourselves through our linguistic features that allow us to redefine ourselves in connection to our audience. For example, English speaking countries use the British Received Pronunciation in order to make associations with the aristocracy. The same thing can be said about pop singers and their accent; British singers have adopted features of the American English in order to associate themselves with the prestige of American popular music (Coupland and Jaworski, 1997: 248). Institutions, as well as people, have used style in order to promote a corporate identity. Although most newspapers use the same linguistic characteristics, they all rely on style so that they can be different from the others. "The same principle applies to the study of banks, commercial products, broadcasting channels, and any organization which requires an identity and public image" (Crystal, 1993: 67).

In conclusion, we can agree that society has always governed the way we use our language, influencing our choice of grammatical constructions, vocabulary and style from the available resources of the language, depending on the occasion. David Crystal states that "in theory, we can say anything we like. In practice, we follow a large number of social rules that constrain the way we speak" (Crystal, 1993: 120).

Basically, we have at our disposal a range of forms which we can use in order to determine how our message can be interpreted, how we view the context or topic of speech and how we can align ourselves with the audience. But in the end, it is the social context that enables us to select the proper words so that we can distinguish ourselves in a conversation and move linguistically closer to our interlocutor(s).

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JEWISH IDENTITY IN WOODY ALLEN'S WORK

As one of the most famous figures of the contemporary American-Jewish scene, Woody Allen has made a name for himself through both hard work and a tint of scandal that surrounds his work and life. Born into a Jewish family, Allan Stewart Konigsberg was brought up according to his parents' faith and attended Hebrew school for 8 years. Unlike his main characters, who are most often neurotic intellectuals, school does not seem to have been Woody's main focus, baseball and joking around having played a more important role during his early years. Although he never actually graduated from college, he managed to earn more money than both his parents together in his late teenage years.

The issue of the Jewish identity in an American context is what lies at the core of his entire creation. Far from being an easy topic of discussion, what is generally referred to as 'Jewish identity' has been defined and re-defined in time and it is still considered debatable. Once the state of Israel was founded, the issue became even more problematic, since the question of who should be eligible for the Law of Return arose. From a religious point of view things are somewhat clear: one is considered Jewish if he/she is born of a Jewish mother (in *Orthodox Judaism*) or if he/she has converted to Judaism and follows the Halakhah (the Jewish Law). Still, the large number of secular (non-religious) Jews determines new approaches to a question as old as the Jewish people itself: *Who is a Jew?* For example, in Israel, as Amos Oz expresses in his books, being a Jew is connected to living in a secular, modern state. Still, Jewish communities exist outside of Israel as well, and the issue of identity is a complex one regardless of whom it is that we are bringing into discussion. But when it comes to a people that has been living without a state of its own for such a long time, a clear straight answer seems almost impossible (Sacks 1997). Nevertheless, Jewishness as an *ethnicity* is an idea that is nowadays strongly connected to the Holocaust and the Nazi Party, and it has been proven to be wrong by the fact that there are Jewish communities of all races (Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Ethiopian Jews, etc.).

One of the most noticeable ways in which Jewish identity (especially in America) is manifested is what is commonly known as the 'Jewish humour'. According to Freud, this kind of wit is a way of self-defense the Jewish people have built as a result of ages of persecutions (Abrami). Characterized by self-criticism/ self-irony, neurosis/ paranoia and sometimes the usage of Yiddish/Hebrew words, this type of humour has been made famous by 20th century comedians such as Eddie

Cantor, Sid Caesar, Jerry Lewis, Buddy Hackett, although the history of their 'ethnic' humour goes further back in time. The Borscht Belt (a chain of hotels, restaurants and summer resorts frequently visited by the Jewish New Yorkers) is the place where names such as those mentioned above have become popular and where Woody Allen himself started his career as a stand-up comedian (Duma 2004: 78).

Drawing inspiration from a number of sources (starting with the French New Wave cinema and European directors such as Ingmar Bergman and Federico Fellini and moving on to the American Charlie Chaplin and the Marx Brothers), Allen's work undoubtedly follows the Jewish American legacy and its 'ethnic' humour (which mostly relies on Jewish stereotypes). 'Special' family relationships, clumsy and unlucky characters, a constant fear of persecution, debating and discussing instead of taking action and, last but not least, a rather twisted view on God and religion - they are all trademarks of the 20th century Jewish-American stage in general, and of Woody's 'Jewishness' in particular (Duma 2004).

The relation to the (Jewish) family in Allen's work seems to be the exact reverse of the typical Hollywood image and it could be defined in a comical way by the following fragment of *No Kaddish for Weinstein*:

> […] he suffered from injustices and persecutions, because of his religion mostly from his parents. True, the old man was a member of the synagogue, and his mother too, but they could never accept the fact that their son was Jewish. "How did it happen?" his father asked, bewildered (Allen 1998:116).

The overly critical, stereotypical Jewish mother could not have been missed from the family portrait either: in *Oedipus Wrecks*, Woody Allen transforms the main character's mother in a giant image floating over New York and telling strangers her son's most embarrassing stories (Duma 2004:59).

The *Schlemiel* and the *Schlimazel* are characters inspired by Jewish Folklore who are awkward and who always seem to complete each other in their bad luck and ineptitude. For example, in *Take the money and run,* Virgil Starkwell is a failed bank robber who never manages to take his plans of stealing a great deal of money to a 'happy end' (Duma 2004: 77). The same typology is featured in *Selections from the Allen Notebooks*:

Idea for story: a man awakens to find his parrot has been made Secretary of Agriculture. He is consumed with jealousy and shoots himself, but unfortunately the gun the type with a little flag that pops out, with the word 'Bang' on it. The flag pokes his eye out, and lives - a chastened human being who, for the first time, enjoys the simple pleasures of life, like farming or sitting on an air hose. (Allen 1998:7-8)

The Holocaust obsession also hovers over Allen's work in a constant manner: in *Manhattan*, Isaak's girlfriend accuses him of having been given "fits of rage, Jewish, liberal paranoia" and in *Annie Hall*, one of Alvy Singer's lines describes the typically Jewish paranoia:

> No, I don't! You know, I was in a record store. Listen to this - so I know there's this big tall blond crew-cutted guy and he's lookin' at me in a funny way and smiling and he's saying, "Yes, we have a sale this week on Wagner." Wagner, Max, Wagner - so I know what he's really tryin' to tell me very significantly Wagner.' (Allen in Duma 2004: 80-81).

A technique that is frequently encountered in Woody Allen's work is that of the "rambling discourse." Of course, the result is a comic one, but at the base of this technique stands something that seems to be typically Jewish. According to Judith Stora, the large number of comments and interpretations made by Jewish scholars over time led them to the discovery of the fact that ambiguity underlies every aspect of existence: everything is both true and false and action cannot be taken in either direction. This can only result in an ironic view on life itself. For example, in *Love and Death*, Boris complains that "his problem is that he sees both sides of every issue." This idea also shows up in a line of *Shadows and Fog*: "You know who has these thoughts? Schultz the tailor. He thinks nothing is real at all...and that everything exists only in the dream of a dog" (Allen in Duma 2004: 80-81). The same happens in Woody Allen's writing:

> Do I believe in God? I did, until Mother's accident. She fell on some meat loaf, and it penetrated her spleen. She lay in a coma for months, unable to do anything but sing "Granada" to an imaginary herring. Why was this woman in the prime of life so afflicted-because in her youth she dared to defy convention and got married with a brown paper bag on her head? And how can I believe in God when just last week I got my tongue caught in the roller of an electric typewriter? I am plagued by doubts. What if everything is an illusion and nothing exists? In that case, I definitely overpaid for my carpet. If God would give me some clear sign! Like making a large deposit in my name at a Swiss bank (Allen,1998: 10).

The relationship with Judaism as a religion (and, implicitly, with its God) appears to be the trickiest and most intriguing issue in Woody Allen's entire career. Of course, the American showbiz had met Jewish people long before he appeared in the spotlight. But there seems to be something more than a subtle bitterness added to Allen's jokes and this is, probably, what makes him original: sometimes the almost stereotypical self-irony becomes self-sarcasm and the thin line between it and anti-Semitism seems easy to trespass. The figure of a rabbi can often be found at the centre of Allen's religious jokes. Most of the times, they are pure irony poked at bigotry, like in one of his short stories, *Hassidic Tales*. Still, the jokes become, at times, hard to take, sharp and borderline vulgar, like in the famous scene of *Every Thing You Always Wanted to Know About Sex * But Were Afraid to Ask*, where a rabbi gets to act out on TV his perverted sexual fantasies (Duma 2004: 31-32).

Frequently described as a "self-loathing Jew," Allen replied to it by doing what he always does: he poked fun at it: "Hey, I may hate myself, but not because I'm Jewish" (Allen 1997). Whether he actually hates his own kind or not is, in the

end, a matter of point of view. Most of his "consumers" would agree, though, that the ironic view on religion does not limit itself to Judaism. It is rather pointed at all forms of organized religion and the many hints made at the Jewish religion are just the result of Woody Allen having been raised in this particular context. Nevertheless, the idea of some sort of Higher Power does seem to exist in his life and the main arguments for this are his own words:

> The truth is that whenever the subject turns to ameliorating mankind's condition, my mind turns to more profound matters: man's lack of a spiritual centre, for example - or his existential terror. The empty universe is another item that scares me, along with eternal annihilation, aging, terminal illness and the absence of God in a hostile, raging void (Allen in Greenberg 1998).

More than a Jewish trademark, Woody Allen is the embodiment of the 20th century as a whole. He is postmodern, but, as the era in which he lives, he is the result of many that came before him. He is both an intellectual and a clown. He is the survival of cinema as a form of art in a place where the movies have been an industry for quite a long time now. He is a believer and a sceptic. And, regardless of his actual religious beliefs, he is in the front line of a culture within a culture: the American Jewry, to which he has been bringing his own contribution.

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COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN IN CARVER'S *WHERE I'M CALLING FROM*?

Raymond Carver was born in 1938 and died in 1988, and was one of the greatest postmodernist short story writers. He was labelled as being a "dirty realist" and a "minimalist," and his stories are known as "minimalist masterpieces" (Nesset 1995: 29). Not only is he one of the rare post-war writers to be born into a working class background, but the world he portrays in his early stories is mainly working class.

Carver's vision

The fragmentariness and the absence of connection, features of postmodernism, are to be identified not only in Carver's alienated characters, but also in the form of the short story itself. The reason why he wrote short stories was that he did not have a stable vision of the world. He considered that in order to write a novel, one has to find coherence in the world he lives in and believe in a reason for existence. This was not the case for Carver who claimed in his essays *Fires* that his vision was of a fragmented world "My world was one that seems to change gears and directions, along with its rules, every day" (Carver 1989: 35).

Carver was a minimalist writer in what form is concerned (he uses short words, sentences and paragraphs), as well as in terms of style (his language is a spare one, with simple sentences, a "non-emotive" tone) and material (his works contain few characters, little background and development, few settings and little action). Like all minimalist writers, he considered that less is more. The writers who influenced him most were Anton Chekhov and Ernest Hemingway. The similarity between his work and that of the latter was noticed by Powell who claimed that Carver's stories are "shaped like an iceberg...with the true conflict seven-eighths submerged" (Powell 1994: 647).

Blocking communication

The theme of communication or the lack of it is central in Carver's work, as suggested by the titles of the first two collections: *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?* and *What We Talk About When We Talk about Love.* As far as style is concerned, the use of indeterminate words is a notable strategy used by Carver in his short stories in order to suggest vagueness. Words like "thing", "something," or the quantifier "some" hint to the characters' inarticulateness and their inability to express themselves. Carver's

characters seem to look for a way to express themselves, but the words used by them are inadequate. For example, in *The Student's Wife,* when Nan asks her husband what he likes, he answers: "I don't know. Lots of things," which alludes to his lack of identity. Jack and the narrator of *Cathedral* use the same idiom to describe how impressed they are by Carl's water pipe: That's really something (Carver 2001: 74).

The indeterminate words are also used to suggest a boundary to the past, the absence of any roots, of a memory that is ungraspable as it is the case in *What's in Alaska?*: "That reminds me, I read something in the paper […] I can't remember now"(Carver 2001: 79). Carver's characters' future is also indeterminate; cut in a godless world, they seem to find themselves lacking direction. In *Fat*, the character says: "I know I was after something. But I don't know what." (Carver 2001)

Another interesting example is in *Gazebo,* when the past "everything", the present "thing" and the future "anything" are equally indeterminate. "There was this funny thing of anything could happen now that we realized everything had"(Carver 2001: 145) Therefore, not knowing the past, being unable to give sense to the future and living in an uncertain present leads to a lack of self-knowledge and thus to an incapacity to communicate. "Unable to find engaging work, meaningful relationships, or fulfilling lives, they drift, drink, and struggle to understand why they do what they do and what they want" (Shuman 2002: 255).

Another means of expressing the communication breakdown occurs in *A Serious Talk*, which is an ironic title, since there is a clear antonymy between it and the story's message. "Serious talks" are an illusion, they are never really possible in the context of postmodernism where everything is about fragmentariness, incompleteness and vagueness (Alb 2013). This is reflected by the narrator's thoughts: "He was not certain, but he thought he had proved something. He hoped he had made something clear. The thing was, they had to have a serious talk soon. There were things that need talking about, important things that had to be discussed" (Carver 2001: 169). The "serious talk" Burt wants to have with his ex-wife is continually postponed and the message of the story is that the characters are speaking without actually communicating anything. The use of indeterminate words emphasizes that the topic of conversation is likewise indeterminate.

In some cases, Carver uses modals in order to evoke capacity of talking. In *Nobody Said Anything* the teenage narrator "tries to think of something more to say" to the woman, but "couldn't think of anything more to say" (Carver 2001: 8). The use of the modal "could" underlines that it is not so much that the characters do not want to speak, but that they do not know what to say.

Another aspect of Carver's short stories is the obsessive repetition of I/he/she/we said which marks pauses in the dialogue and also draws attention to the lack of essence in the communication, to the fact that this is all the characters say.

A relevant example is found in *What's in Alaska?*

"Are you guys serious?" Helen said.
"Very serious," Jack said.

"About Alaska," Helen said.
He stared at her.
"I thought you said something," Helen said.(Carver 2001: 79)

Carver uses a plethora of ellipsis to mark pauses in the narrative. Often, ellipsis is used to evoke long pauses. In the story *Where I'm Calling From?,* the narrator uses this technique in order to let the reader fill in the temporal gaps. "Near dawn he hears footsteps on the porch"(Carver 2001: 135), "Weeks later, she said"(Carver 2001: 161), "A week or so into the new year"(Carver 2001: 250).

Discursive vs. contextual non-communication

In some stories, the characters deliberately choose not to speak and the communication breakdown is a choice. "Indeed, characters' silences, indicative of their inability to communicate with other characters, reflect a recurring theme in Carver's fiction. Often his stories are about discourse itself, ways people communicate or fail to communicate, demonstrating consequences of various modes of discourse" (Champion 1997). This is the case in *Gazebo* where the narrator does not answer Holly's question about having sex with Juanita in his bed although he presumably knows the answer: I don't have anything to say"(Carver 2001: 143). Another example is in *Feathers*, where the narrator admits that his relationship with Bud has changed after their visit to their home: "But I've gotten careful with what I say to him" (Carver 2001: 265).

Of course, Carver is not trying to say that talking necessarily entails communication. In *A Serious Talk*, although Vera and Burt "did a little talking" (Carver 2001: 163), they still never deal with the essence, the subject that seems to be on Burt's mind: "What'd you want to talk about, anyway?"(Carver 2001: 165) Moreover, Carver suggests that sometimes speaking only blocks the communication; in *Where I'm Calling From*, the narrator says: "The last time we talked on the phone, we screamed at each other."(Carver 2001: 209) This may simply be because one person is not listening or simply refuses to speak to the other, as in *Put Yourself in My Shoes* and *Vitamins*: "'I can't come now, Mayer said/'We found out some horrible news this morning,' Paula continued, as if she had not heard him."(Carver 2001: 94-95)

Verbal vs. non-verbal communication

Not only the verbal act of speech blocks communication, but also the non-verbal communication. In *What Do You Do in San Francisco?*, the narrator says:

> We seldom exchanged a word, just nodded at each other if our eyes happened to meet, which wasn't often. He was suffering, though-anybody could see that –and I wanted to help the boy somehow, if I could. But I didn't know what to say exactly. [...] When I got to him, he suddenly turned on me and there was such a look on his face it *froze the words in my mouth*"(Carver 2001: 61, my italics).

The gaze only reflects misunderstanding at the non-verbal level. In *What's in Alaska*?, there are two couples: Carl-Helen and Mary-Jack. Carl seems to be flirting with Mary:

> [He] saw Carl reach up to the shelf in the cupboard. He saw Mary move against Carl from behind and put her arms around his waist.
> "Are you guys serious?" Helen said.
> "Very serious," Jack said.
> "About Alaska," Helen said.
> He stared at her.
> "I thought you said something," Helen said. (Carver 2001: 78)

Jack is staring at Helen in surprise that she does not really seem to understand that her boyfriend is flirting with his girlfriend. Helen's answer to both, Jack's remark and his staring suggest that she is unable to "read" the verbal as well as non-verbal language. Helen does not perceive any meaning there. This is confirmed in a later scene.

> "We have to go," Jack said.
> "What's your hurry?" Carl said.
> "Stay a little longer," Helen said. "You don't have to go yet."
> Jack stared at Mary, who was staring at Carl. (82)

The direction of Jack's gaze again provides the answer: he wants them both to go because he wants to break the bond between Carl and Mary. In *Feathers*, the gaze emphasizes a gap within a couple, when the narrator wrongly interprets Fran's body language.

> "I didn't know what to say to this. Neither did Fran. But I knew Fran would have plenty to say about it later. [..] Fran turned her eyes to me. She drew her lip under. But she didn't say anything. (Carver 2001: 343)
> Frank just looked at her.[..]"Can I hold the baby?" Fran said. She said it like it would be a favor if Olivia would let her. (Carver 2001: 351)

Indeed, the narrator is convinced that he and his wife are on the same wave length concerning the aspect of having children. "But one thing we didn't wish for was kids. The reason we didn't have kids was that we didn't want kids. Maybe sometimes, we said to each other."(Carver 2001: 334)

Later on, Fran expresses regret at not having seen her sister's child (Carver 2001: 346), then admits she wants to have a child (Carver 2001: 354). In this respect, the narrator of *Feathers* resembles that of *Blackbird Pie*: both men take it for granted that their wives and themselves want the same things and both see their authority called into question by their wives' voices. The narrator does associate his power

with language when he admits: „but for the first time in my life I felt at a loss for words"(Carver 2001: 508).

Conclusion

All in all, Carver's collection *Where I'm Calling From?* depicts in a flawless manner a problem that occurs in postmodernism, that is the communication breakdown. By analysing his narrative strategies, one can understand their convergence that leads to the central theme of his short stories – hollowness in the context of postmodernism.

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