

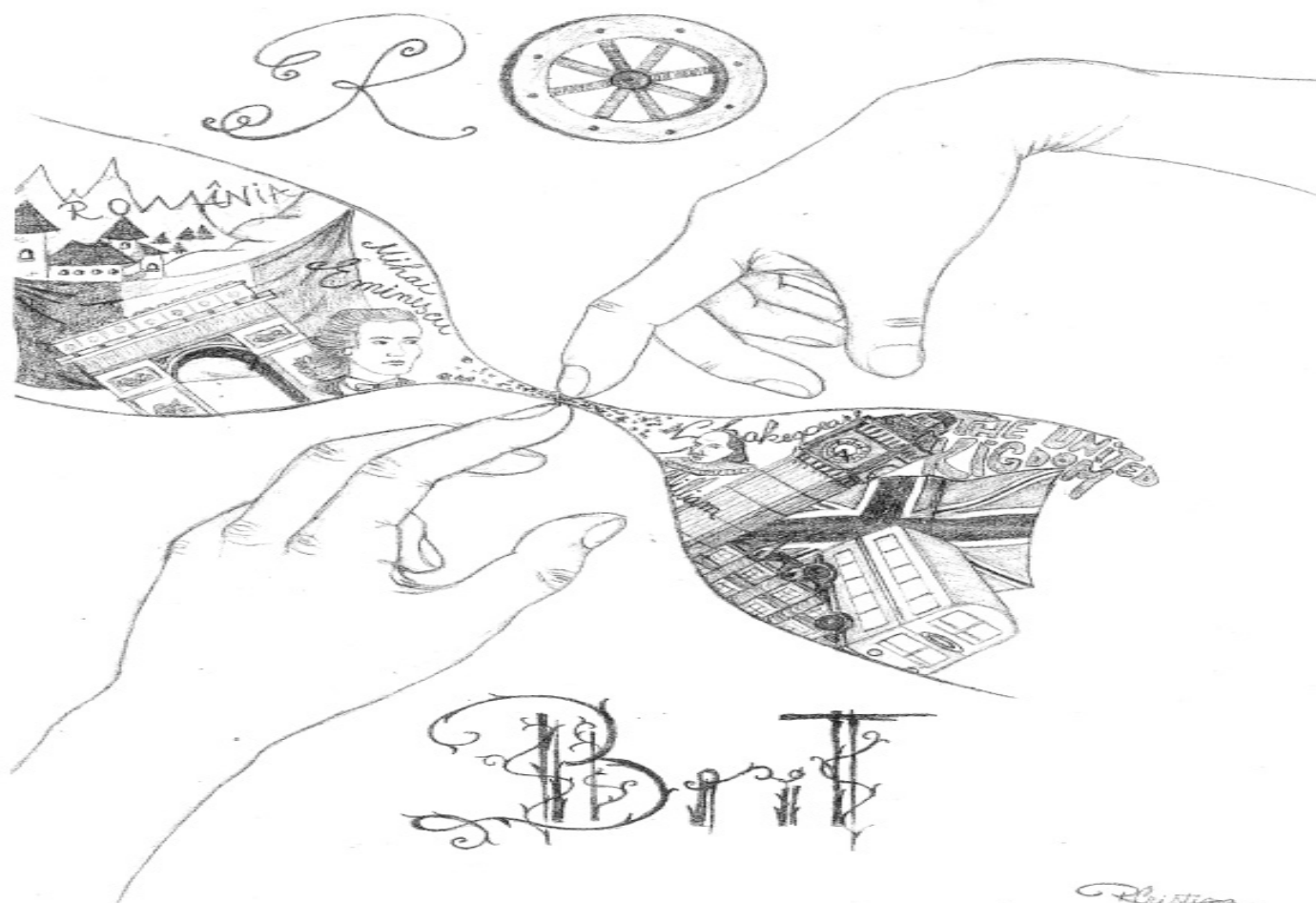


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RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL

RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL is an annual English journal dedicated to publishing papers written by students in the Faculty of Letters (and not only), under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures from “Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacău. This journal intends to encourage students to take more initiative in engaging in the English studies, providing at the same time the opportunity for them to have their research and creative writing published. Thus, RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL invites English-speaking students to contribute to the journal through submitting original articles. The journal welcomes submissions on English language, literature and culture, its purpose being to provide a channel for the publication of original work by Romanian students who love the English language. This is an excellent opportunity for students to allow their research to be seen by their colleagues and to participate in a promising endeavour.

RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL este o revistă anuală în limba engleză dedicată publicării lucrărilor scrise de către studenții din cadrul Facultății de Litere (și nu numai), sub auspiciile Departamentului de Limbi și Literaturi Străine de la Universitatea “Vasile Alecsandri” din Bacău. RO-BRIT STUDENT JOURNAL intenționează să încurajeze studenții vorbitori de limba engleză să scrie și să publice în limba engleză articole cu privire la limbă, literatură și cultură, scopul principal al revistei fiind acela de a oferi un canal pentru publicarea de lucrări originale de către studenții români care iubesc limba engleză. Aceasta este o oportunitate excelentă pentru studenți de a permite ca cercetarea lor să fie văzută de colegii lor și de a participa la un efort promițător.

“I am an Asian in New York” – The Figure of the Father in Sigrid Nunez’s *Chang* and Hisaye Yamamoto’s “Morning Rain”

Daniela Angheluș, III, RE

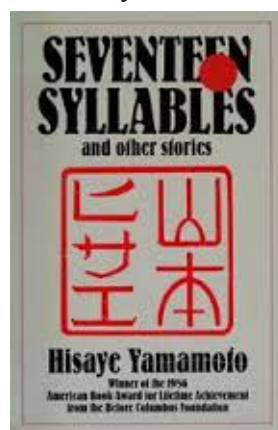
Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciuc

The issue of being an Asian immigrant in America represented for many generations a cultural, social and psychological clash between parents and children – fact presented in social studies and exploited in literature. Asian immigrant parents developed tense relations with their Asian-American children because they belonged to different generations, but mainly because they were formed, educated in different spaces – Asia, respectively America. Each generation identified itself more with their mother-country, so parents found themselves to be more Asian than American, but their children more American than Asian. Because the members of the same family identified themselves with different ethnicities, the children found it hard to understand their parents and vice versa.

In addition to this, it is known that within a patriarchal family structure, women were almost always the oppressed ones and men were the oppressors. Many of them encountered difficulties in expressing their thoughts and feelings, especially in the relationship with their daughters¹, who were supposed to follow the same unfortunate path. The gap between generations made it even more difficult for mothers to connect with their daughters and they remained a mysterious symbol.

Because of this, many writings developed and illustrated the relationship between mothers and daughters with the purpose of understanding it, but only a few focused on the father-daughter relationship. Two of the Asian-American writers who explored this topic are Hisaye Yamamoto (born of Japanese parents) in *Morning Rain* (published in the collection of short stories *Seventeen Syllables*) and Sigrid Nunez (born of a Chinese-Panamanian father and a German mother) in *Chang* (published in “*The Threepenny Review*”). But even though for both of the stories the relationship between father and daughter is a central point, the way in which it is rendered is different: *Morning Rain* presents only one short episode between Mr. Endo and his daughter, Sadako, while *Chang* is more like an attempt of the daughter to (re)create an image of her father after his death.

The figure of the father in both texts is similar in some respects, but it differs in others. If we read the stories from the perspective presented by Naoko Sugiyama in *Issei Mothers’ Silence, Nissei Daughters’ Stories: The Short Fiction of Hisaye Yamamoto*, generalizing the Japanese reality as the entire Asian



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reality, then we can notice that the father has the status of a woman in the family. In *Chang*, it seems that the roles of the parents are inverted: the mother acts more like a man and the father like a woman, while in *Morning Rain* the father somehow seems to be a substitute of the mother, as she is dead.

The first and most important indicator of a woman’s oppressed position within the family is the silence in which they are forced to submerge. Women had to be silent and fulfill the demands of daily life as mothers, wives, daughters or nurturers and nothing more.² As a consequence

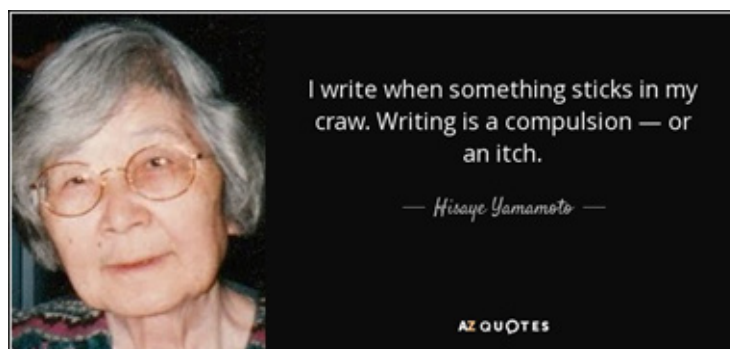
¹ Sugiyama, Naoko, *Issei Mother’s Silence, Nissei Daughter’s Stories: The Short Fiction of Hisaye Yamamoto*. “Comparative Literature Studies”, Vol. 33, No.1, East-West Issue (1996), p. 2.

² Sugiyama, Naoko. *Issei Mother’s Silence, Nissei Daughter’s Stories: The Short Fiction of Hisaye Yamamoto*. “Comparative Literature Studies”, Vol. 33, No.1, East-West Issue (1996), p. 1.

of being a woman in a patriarchal society and, implicitly, a patriarchal family most probably dominated by fear and aggression, they could not speak up their feelings and emotions.

In this pattern of a woman reduced to silence because of men, I think that Chang fits best. He is of mixed origins, a Chinese-Panamanian, who wishes to have been a pure Chinese. He marries a German woman, who was sure about the superiority of her race (which can be interpreted as male superiority) and with whom he has three daughters. He is the only man in the family – a family which seems to be matriarchal – and his status is closer to the one of a woman's in the patriarchal families than to that of a man's. In their family, love between the parents seems to be non-existent and the relation between them is reduced to exercising one's power: the wife dominates her husband verbally and the husband chooses silence as “a form of passive resistance or resentment”³, just as the oppressed generally women do. The fact that they could not communicate properly because of their different languages – he spoke Chinese and she spoke German – made this tension between them even bigger. In time, because they had to manage living in an English speaking world and because their daughters were born and raised with this language, they learned English too. The mother already knew some English from school and she got better and better, while the father spoke little English – this represents another reason for her to prove her superiority and to make him feel inferior. Moreover, his daughters looked down on him because they could not understand his silence and the reasons of his “failure to master English”(Nunez, 1989: 1). Here we can even talk about the “emasculatation” of the Asian-American man⁴, as Chang performed “feminized” forms of work⁵, such as waiter in a restaurant or dishwasher in the kitchen of a hospital.

In the same respect, Mr. Endo from *Morning Rain* is presented as a quiet man. But this time, as we do not have any reasons to believe that he adopts silence as a form of resistance against oppression, the reason of his silence could only be linked to gender and ethnicity: for Japanese or Japanese-Americans, silence is a “highly esteemed sign of modesty, fortitude and self-control”⁶. Even though Chang's silence can be understood in this way too, as “taciturnity [...] is an Oriental trait” (Nunez, 1989: 6) it seems to be more complex than that.



Both fathers are presented as isolated figures. They seem to live in their inside world more than they do in the outside world and this can be interpreted as a sign of retreat from the world in which they are not understood – “I believe much of his life was a secret from us” (Nunez, 1989: 7). They stand out by their willing or unwilling habit of staying alone: Chang always eats alone after his family eats and instead of joining them in the living room to watch television, he stays alone in the kitchen “staring at the wall” (Nunez, 1989: 9), which is for his wife and daughters a reason to joke about. Mr. Endo, on the other hand, is a widower who probably eats alone at home because he has no other option, but even when he is in visit at his daughter he eats alone because “she had eaten much earlier with her husband”(Yamamoto, 1952: 1). Language also plays a very important role in their isolation. They both have native languages different from their children's: Chang speaks Chinese and Mr. Endo speaks Japanese, but their daughters speak English. The difference between them is that one is understood by his daughter and they only talk with each other in Japanese and the other is completely separated by his moth-

3 Idem, p. 2.

4 Wong, Sau-ling C.; J. Santa Ana, Jeffrey. *Gender and Sexuality in Asian American Literature*. “Signs”, Vol. 25, No. 1 Autumn 1999, p. 175.

5 Idem, p. 178.

6 Sugiyama, Naoko. *op.cit.*, p. 2.

er-tongue as no one from his family speaks Chinese – he was “the only Chinese thing”(Nunez, 1989: 7) in their house – and the only way to communicate is English, language that he does not speak too well.

Both daughters watch their fathers from a distance. They do not just look at their fathers, but they watch them. They see them as something different, away from them, and the gap that they were separated by was given by more than a simple generation – “we had no culture in common” (Nunez, 1989: 6). I think the verb to watch was used on purpose in order to underline a specific idea: they did not know their fathers, nor did they understand them, so the only thing that they could do was observe. Mr. Endo’s daughter watches him in the present, but Chang’s daughter watches him in the past, in her memories. They both discover gradually how little they know their fathers, as Chang’s daughter realizes while trying to recompose the image of her father: “The facts I know about his life are incredibly, unbearably few” (Nunez, 1989: 6), or as Mr. Endo’s daughter realizes when she finds out that her father cannot hear the rain: “They stared at each other for a moment, father and daughter, he not really seeing her and she as though seeing him for the first time”(Yamamoto, 1952: 1).

The images of the father in *Chang* and *Morning Rain* are not identical, but still they have the most important things in common: silence and isolation. Even though usually mothers were the ones who remained a mystery for their daughters, these two stories brought the father into the foreground and he is the one seen as the mystery, the unknown by their daughters.



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ALICE - Character Analysis

Cătălina Sofrone, II, EF

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Cătălina Bălinișteanu-Furdu

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a fascinating 1865 novel written by Lewis Carroll who opens the gates to a surreal world. Lewis Carroll created a new kind of children's literature using modern ideas and materials. A side of Lewis Carroll never grew up and that is why his stories are successful and full of imagination. Even if his work was written for children, it can be fully understood by mature people. The features that characterize Carroll's work are imagination, humour and nonsense. Carroll's book is full of imagery, symbols and themes. As for symbols, we have the rabbit hole which represents the place for new beginnings, the doors that represents the different paths we can choose in life, the key that symbolizes our decision which opens the door that leads us to our destiny, the white and red roses that symbolize innocence and passion, and so many others. In the book there are also several important themes like nonsense, loneliness, nature, children and animals, time and space. In Wonderland time is psychological because it passes slowly, the events take place only in the character's mind and life is not linear.

Every character in the book seems to refer to real persons. The main character Alice, the Victorian English girl, is based on a real life girl named Alice Liddell who inspired Carroll to write these adventures during a boat trip. This is how Alice Liddell becomes the heroine of famous adventures and the image of a cheerful and curious Alice.

The plot of the book follows a basic hero's journey. Alice was bored, she wanted more meaning to her life so when she falls asleep, she is driven by hallucinations and she embarks on a series of adventures from the moment she sees the White Rabbit, she follows him and falls down through the rabbit hole. The reason Alice follows the rabbit is out of pure curiosity. In Wonderland Alice always gives good advice to herself but rarely follows it. The girl is not mature, not totally satisfied with her life, but before facing those big challenges and terrifying emotional aspects of herself she makes friends and because she is extremely sociable, she finds common interests with all of them. Alice encounters talking animals, peculiar and fabulous creatures that indicate the primitive nature of her subconscious. The first character she meets is the White Rabbit which Alice follows into Wonderland. She also meets the Mad Hatter, the crazy character from a crazy world who has overcome some tests through his life, the Cheshire cat that tricks her, disappearing and leaving behind her grin. The encounter with the Caterpillar helps her move to the next level, and although it makes Alice angry but it also provides knowledge about the mushroom; the Duchess causes Alice discomfort because she is too violent and tyrannical, as well as the Queen of the Red Hearts that is enigmatic, domineering in her holding the power. Throughout the book Alice encounters many characters that help her develop.

The heroine surprises the reader, she is an English girl, coming from a wealthy family, dressed in light colours, being curious and intrigued about the world she is in. Alice is not exactly unique, the author wants us to see the world through her eyes, therefore her face is not visible.

Like all Victorian children she is polite, friendly, modest, but often the world of nonsense irritates her, she is tired of being corrected by some illogical creatures, therefore she suffers severe consequences for being impulsive, like her changes in size in the scene when she drinks the potion labelled "Drink me" that tastes like everything she likes and when she eats the cake labelled "Eat me". Alice has an inadequate behaviour and she needs to control herself, but these size changes represent her transcendence, her actual physical transformation. Another minus for her is that she is not very diplomatic when she is talking to the mouse about her cat Dinah and how she likes to hunt rats and mice, and later when she confesses to the scared mother pigeon for having eaten eggs. Alice is confused by the pigeon for considering her a serpent after she has eaten the mushroom.

But being just a little girl that makes mistakes like everybody else, with her friendly and open attitude, she learns many things, she accepts the impossible in her journey and masters all challenges she is given. In Wonderland everything is taken literally, everything seems to be upside down which can be interpreted differently by anyone ranging from a simple recreational world to an enigma or a riddle. Alice has no one to help her in this maze, she feels lonely and even doubts her existence.

When she falls in the imaginary world, Alice is confronted with the reality where rules from her world do not apply, the normal world is turned upside down. But this fantasy world is part of her reality and Alice realizes that her ingenuity becomes ignorance. Even so, Alice, with her ingenuity and need to find the meaning of things, is rational in a universe where the intellect cannot master but the supernatural is accepted.

However, Alice becomes greater than ever and grows beyond her mad dream. Going through so many things, getting to know so many strange characters she begins to mature. But when Alice begins to become a free mature girl, she wakes up returning to reality, realizing it has all been a dream.

In conclusion, Alice is the key character in this book, she defends her world and the Victorian way of thinking, she is the symbol of purity, innocence and creativity. Wonderland is her safe world, the perfect example of what human mind is capable of.

Symbolical Places and Names in “Great Expectations”

Narcis Ilie, II, EF

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Cătălina Bălinișteanu-Furdu

There are a lot of symbols in this 19th century novel which follows the personal growth and development of an orphan nicknamed Pip, hence the novel's characterization as a Bildungsroman (novel of formation or a “coming-of-age story”). Dickens makes use of symbols to suggest some cultural paradigms or to give more depth to his characters, to give more insight into their feelings and emotions. At the same time this usage of symbols offers the novel another layer; more specifically this novel can be read either as a book that follows the boy's trails, or as a book that makes comments on the 19th century Victorian society and which has a didactic message for the readers.

The symbols can be identified even from the first chapter. The graveyard where Pip comes to visit graves of his parents, brothers and sisters becomes gradually a symbol. Even though the graveyard is not usually seen as a place where one might spend his/her leisure time, but more like a creepy and sinister place, Pip does not seem to be bothered by it, instead he perceives it as a refuge, a quiet, safe place where he cannot be repressed by anyone, especially by Mrs. Joe Gargery, his sister, who raised him “by hand”.

At the same time the graveyard is the place where Pip's destiny changes when he meets the convict who will later become his benefactor. Despite the fact that the boy helps the convict because he is scared of him and his threats ‘haunt’ him, their relationship seems to evolve for a moment due to the fact that they share a common loneliness and a similar marginalization from society. This could be one of the reasons why Pip chooses not to tell anyone anything about the situation and why he still helps him.

Another place where Pip likes to wander about represents the marshes, a location which shares the same characteristics as the graveyard for being a safe place, but also representing the idea of freedom and of refuge. In the marshes we can also identify more symbols: the unstable muddy ground and the mists which may indicate the uncertainty felt by the child.

The mists/ the fog and the mud are also present in London, this city being described as muddy and foggy. These elements may imply the new opportunities offered by a city like London which creates further uncertainty and instability for the protagonist caused by the shabby grounds that must be stepped on carefully and the blindness given by the fog or the mists. These two symbols seem to complement each other and to be bound to Pip's emotions and feelings throughout the novel.

Symbolical names are given by Dickens to different places and characters. The village where Pip grew up is named Cooling, possibly hinting at the lack of emotional warmth felt by him during his childhood. Miss Havisham's house is named Satis House which could derive from the first half of the word “satisfaction”, but given the state of the house this may suggest exactly the opposite for both Pip (his expectations and love for Estella), Miss Havisham (her marriage, her relation to Estella) or even for Estella (her own expectations).

The name Pip itself is a symbol that suggests the character's youth, innocence and attests the genre of the novel (Bildungsroman) by comparing Pip with a seed which has not yet sprouted or bloomed. Furthermore, there is Estella's name which has its origin in the Spanish word “stella” (star) implying that Pip's romantic expectations with the girl are like stars beautiful and unreachable.

Miss Havisham's name could also have some symbolical traits since it is formed by combining the verb “to have” (to possess) and the word “ham” which in Old English meant “home” or “village” hinting at her fortune, possessions and status. Miss Havisham itself may be regarded as a symbol representing the old confronted with the change, the new being incapable or unwilling to change, to adapt and to accept the

truth. This is proven by her clothes, her stopped clocks, her behaviour and her house. She wants to stop time to a moment that has long passed and to keep her beauty, but she fails to accept the reality and to adapt to it. From this perspective Miss Havisham may represent that decline of aristocracy that fails to adapt to the Victorian industrialization and capitalism and the rise of bourgeoisie that seizes this opportunity and is rewarded for it.

So it can be clearly seen that Charles Dickens makes a great use of symbols using them cleverly to highlight his ideas and to give his characters new shades and more depth.

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Pip's Construction of Identity in Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations"

Corina Mocanu, II, RE

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Cătălina Bălinișteanu-Furdu

The Victorian Age was the period of Queen Victoria's reign (1837 – 1901). In the field of literature Victorianism reveals the 19th century attitudes and culture with a focus on morals. This period was characterized by concepts such as domesticity, stability and respectability. Charles Dickens was an English writer and social critic regarded as one of the greatest novelist of the Victorian Age. From childhood he left school to work in a factory, after his father had been incarcerated, living a poor life, specific to the lower class.

His work as a writer can be divided into three periods. In his first period (1836 –1841) he wrote comical and picaresque novels (the most important ones being *The Pickwick Papers* and *The Adventures of Oliver Twist*). The second period (1842 –1848) was characterized by the critics as the period in which the author revealed his disillusion regarding the morals in Victorianism (during which he wrote *Dombey and Son* and *A Christmas Carol*). Regarding the last period (1849 –1870), this is considered the most prolific period (*David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Hard Times*, *Great Expectations*). In most of these novels the author deals with the problem of identity crisis, the relationships between the individual and society and the struggle between tradition and innovation (in the context of the Industrial Revolution, all new machines were considered better than the traditional working hands), specific to the Victorian era. This period was a transition from the rationalism of the Georgian period to a more romantic and mystic period with regard to religion, social values and arts. From about 1760 to around 1820-1840 there was a period of transition to the new manufacturing processes known in history as 'The Industrial Revolution'. This event marks a major point in history: Britain changes from a rural society to an urban one, becoming the most important economic power in the world. But in terms of social changes, industrialization leads to alienation and depersonalization.



This phenomenon was dealt with in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (published in three volumes in 1861). The novel presents the story of the orphan Pip (a distortion and transformation of the author's identity), a story about a young boy confused about his own life, who is not sure about who he is and who he will be. The purpose of this essay is to reveal Pip's crisis of identity throughout the novel and, in the end, to unveil the reconstruction of his identity.

The protagonist's name, Pip, (a nickname, in fact, composed of the first and the last part of the name Philip Pirrip) symbolizes the protagonist's attempt to evolve from the margins of society to its centre. This expectation depicts the relationship between master and servant (a cultural paradigm specific to Dickens' work). In this sense, a lowborn is not able to evolve in order to become a gentleman, as in Pip's case, whose great expectation is to be one. On the other hand, Pip's name announces the Bildungsroman, a tale of a young boy whose identity is distorted as it is shaping, but which is reconstructed in the end.

In the first page of the novel Pip defines the condition of the orphan, one of the recurrent motifs in Dickens' work, as being an undefined person who actually names himself: "I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip" (pg. 1).

Pip lives with his sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, the wife of the blacksmith Joe Gargery. His sister does not omit to remind him everyday that she raised him 'by her hands'. From this perspective, Gail Turley Houston says in her article (The (Re)production of the Self in 'Great Expectations'): "Of course 'raised by hand', meaning literally the laborious and usually unsuccessful Victorian practice of feeding orphans or abandoned infants by hand rather than by bringing in a wetnurse"¹. As it can be noticed in the novel, Pip is deprived of motherly love and affection. Houston further says "Pip is not born, he is made"², as in the spirit of the Industrial Revolution England raised its children in factories from an early age, depriving them of motherly love. As it is clear, Pip is not happy in his sister's house, and, when he meets Estella, he knows that living as a low class member is not what he really wants. So the great expectation which sprouts in his mind was to become a gentleman and to marry Estella.

Speaking about Pip's identity, this is characterized by remorse, guilt and shame. From this perspective, Jack P. Rawlins, in his work *Studies on English Literature*, explains that most critics view *Great Expectations* as either a story of "Pip's personal moral failure," or of "society's moral failure"³.

Harold Bloom, in his work *Charles Dickens's "Great Expectations"* suggests that Pip inherited sins from the 'father'. He considered himself guilty of the primordial sin inherited from his father whenever he saw Magwitch as if "the world's guilt is his guilt", so he helped Magwitch by stealing and by bringing him food. He did not want to steal food and help the convict but he was scared and felt guilty inside, knowing that if he did not help the convict, this would kill him. Through this event Pip gained his consciousness, he began to understand what was right and what was wrong and this reformed him into a new Pip. Also, Harold Bloom speaks about the remorse of conscience when he discovered that his actions might be the reason of Mrs. Joe Gargery's invalidity, as the next step in Pip's realization of his own consciousness.

In his childhood, Pip was treated by most of the adults, like a 'thing'. Mrs. Joe Gargery, Mr. Pumblechook and Mr. Wopsle used to manipulate Pip and felt virtuous when they made Pip feel guilty and diminished: "Upon which my sister fixed me with her eye, and said, in a low reproachful voice, 'Do you hear that? Be grateful.' 'Especially,' said Mr. Pumblechook, 'be grateful, boy, to them which brought you up by hand.' Mrs. Hubble shook her head, and contemplating me with a mournful presentiment that I should come to no good, asked, 'Why is it that the young are never grateful?' This moral mystery seemed too much for the company until Mr. Hubble tersely solved it by saying, 'Naturally vicious.' Everybody then murmured 'True!' and looked at me in a particularly unpleasant and personal manner" (pg. 42).

Regarding Mr. Joe Gargery's attitude in the family and its impact on Pip's construction, it must be said that Pip considered Joe his equal. Pip thinks his sister "must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand" (pg. 12). When he discovered that Joe was fearful and tense because of his sister's intimidation, Pip wanted a change and the wish of getting a new life got bigger.

The most important role in Pip's identity formation was played by Estella. When he met Estella he became aware of his own social identity/status and, as it was said by the critic Badri Raina, Pip was filled with "self rejection, in trying to brew a new identity for himself"⁴. Estella also made Pip feel guilty: "I took the opportunity of being alone in the courtyard, to look at my coarse hands and my common boots. My opinion of those accessories was not favourable. They had never troubled me before, but they troubled me now, as vulgar appendages. I determined to ask Joe why he had ever taught me to call those picture-cards, Jacks, which ought to be called knaves. I wished Joe had been rather more genteelly brought up, and then I should have been so too." (pg. 108)

1 Houston, Gail Turley; 'Pip' and 'Property: The (Re)production of The Self in "Great Expectations"', *The Johns Hopkins University Press*, 1992, p. 20.

2 idem, p. 17.

3 Rawlins, Jack P., *Studies on English Literature – "Great Expectations: Dickens and the Betrayal of the Child"*, Rice University, 1983, p. 667.

4 Raina, Badri, *Dickens and the Dialectic of Growth*, Wayne State University Press, 1987, p. 543;

In the novel *Estella*, too plays the role of an object. She is used by Miss Havisham in order to seduce Pip just to break his heart. This strategy represents a revenge for Miss Havisham's ruined life. On the other hand, *Estella* becomes an object which is gradually building Pip's identity. The moment when Pip met *Estella* was the first time in the novel when the protagonist realized that he really wanted to change his life. He wanted to change his clothing, his looks and he was humiliated to realize his own social class. He was unaware that Miss Havisham was just using *Estella* to break his heart. But deep inside, Pip was also playing

a game with his own self by misleading himself into believing that he would be happy with *Estella* after marriage. He was madly in love with her but subconsciously he knew that marrying her was the only way to become a part of the high society.



Pip thought Miss Havisham provided him with money for his education. So he believed that Miss Havisham wanted him to marry *Estella*. When he came back to visit Biddy he behaved snobbishly, he still had not

found his own self then. He did not realize what was important in his life. He did not realize that Uncle Joe and Biddy had loved and admired him ever since he was a child. The moment in which Pip found out the truth about his benefactor he felt guilty again. But after this event he realized that he was wasting his time with unimportant goals. Critics say that at this point Pip became aware of the fact that his life was not like a fairy tale, he was not a Prince and *Estella* was not the Princess. a

The end of the novel presents a new Pip. He finally realized that rank and wealth are not the main things one needs in order to have a peaceful life. He realized that the persons who really loved and cared for him were Biddy and Joe. He understood that if a woman truly loved a man she would marry him no matter the social class. We can see in the end of the novel a new, more mature Pip, with a healthy view on life, love and society, a new Pip who has found his new identity.



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Thematic Approach to “Great Expectations”

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Everybody has great expectations. In Dickens’ novel, these great expectations are not related just to the main character. All characters try to have a better life or are in search for identity. According to this fact, we can say that this novel is based on personal development, it is a novel of transition, of contrasts. We can observe at Dickens a real pleasure in seeing his characters experiencing unusual things and from a narratological point of view we can also observe that time and space are directly related to these situations.

Even the novel starts with the cemetery, the church, (as a place and as a symbol) which is in this work a symbol of safety, of joy and comfort, for the main character. Pip feels safe here because he is close to his parents and to his brothers. In spite of the fact that the cemetery is generally a symbol for the underworld, for fears and death, Pip feels comfortable here. He has never met his family, but the tombstones are reflections of their appearance. The character deduces that his mother had freckles and that his brothers were short. The motif of the orphan makes the cemetery a private space where two of the central themes of the novel take contour: the search of a real family and the search for the identity.

On the other hand, the cemetery is connected with the introduction of the symbols of the trap and prison and with the motifs of crime and criminality. These are not only related to the first scenes because they appear in the whole content of the novel. We can observe a Gothic manner of relating events which includes the pathetic fallacy, when nature reflects the feelings of the protagonist. For example, whenever Pip does not know what to do or whenever he is in a crossroad mists appear in the description inserted in the novel which make things very difficult to see. We have mists in the graveyard and when Pip leaves for the town but also when Orlick tries to kill him. The symbol of prison is also very good represented in the novel because even the sister’s house represents a kind of prison for Pip. He feels enclosed/ trapped because he is a marionette for everybody and he feels guilty about stealing the pie and about helping the criminal in the graveyard. In spite of the fact that Pip is the main character, he is not a subject in this novel because he is not treated so well like he should have been (a trait specific for the Victorian Age). When that prison breaker meets Pip in the cemetery and tells him to bring him some food, the boy is nothing but a puppet in criminal’s hands. He did not have the right of saying something and he is not allowed to speak in his house either. If he were just an ordinary child, he would go to the police but Pip is not a hero. He does not prove yet that he possesses the real qualities to a hero/ a subject.

Staying close to this gothic pattern revealed by the prison symbol and by the cemetery we can see the contrast between darkness and light. A majority of scenes takes place in the dark. For example, the cemetery ‘adventures’ happen in the evening or during night and also in Miss Havisham’s house there is no natural light. Everybody has candles there for keeping the real world away from Miss Havisham. All spaces in the novel are dark. Even Pip’s flat in London looks darker when it rains. Estella represents the dark side for Pip despite the fact that he likes her and her name is a Spanish equivalent for “star”.

The novel is full of other contrasts, too. The contrast between people’s roles in a family or in the society or in real life is well represented in Great Expectations. In Pip’s family the one who decides is Pip’s sister and not Joe as we could imagine if we were not talking about Dickens. All roles seem to be inverted. Woman holds the control in the novel and she appears under a large variety of personalities in spite of the fact that all of them are abusive. While Pip’s sister is from the countryside, Estella and Miss Havisham live in town. While Estella is young, Miss Havisham is old, but they attract men just to break their hearts. Miss Havisham revenges her grief through Estella, so Pip falls in their trap.

The contrast between social classes is also very evident in the novel. Pip is from a modest family. Joe is a blacksmith and Mrs. Joe Gargery is just a housewife. He goes in town once a week with Mrs. Pumblechook.

The only citizen that Pip knows is this man and even though he barely knows how to write and read, he is very ambitious and concentrated on self-improvement intellectually (after visiting Satis House he no longer wants to be a blacksmith). He longs for educational improvement. On the other side, Miss Havisham and Estella live in town and they are part of bourgeoisie. They live in a big and luxurious house. Satis House represents the world of the upper class to which Pip wishes he belonged. When he sees Satis House, he wants to be a gentleman. He feels awful when Estella makes fun of him because he had ugly hands, gross and thick boots and because he calls the Jacks with another appellation: the knaves. At the first visit at Satis House, Pip meets a man that proposes him to fight and 'meet' Miss Havisham's hanged ghost in the beer factory. Everything related to that house inflicts him fear. He tries to get over his native condition and he falls involuntarily for Estella which seems to be a younger version of Miss Havisham.

Satis House is a strange residence controlled by the feminine power. Like I have said before, Satis House is a dark place with no natural lights inside. The invitation that Pip receives to come and play can be interpreted as a gate to a new world which attracts him like a magnet despite of the fact that he is hurt and humiliated in there. Pip is still just a 'seed'. He is very little, very young and he is at the beginning of his life. Miss Havisham is an old rich woman (even her name indicates that; she owns a "-ham" which is like owning a city) who was jilted when she was young on her wedding day. In his room, the notion of time takes contour. She is dressed in her old wedding dress with one shoe put on and she seems as if she were ready to get married. All preparations are made. The cake is on the table and it resembles the residence of a spider community (symbol of degradation and creepiness). Her room is full of stopped clocks which represent the old lady's refusal to move on. We can say that she suffered a mental breakdown because she categorically refuses to take off this dress and to leave the mansion. The dress is very significant in the novel. If in the past, at twenty minutes to nine, the dress was new and white, in the episode where Pip meets Miss Havisham for the first time, the dress is old and yellowish. The wedding dress is the symbol for decay and for the time which flies. At the end of the novel, the dress burns. The black colour which it now has represents the result of the alteration process.

The whole novel is full of hidden meanings. It includes a large variety of themes, symbols and motifs. According to Dickens' artistic imaginary, *Great Expectations* is a very rich novel. He combines Gothic and Victorian features, he changes the classic significance of some symbols (the graveyard – from death to comfort; the dress – from beauty and femininity to sadness and decay), he creates innovative and unusual characters and situations. The novel is said to be a Bildungsroman because it follows the self-improvement theme. Furthermore, it includes a unique reality because it includes all social classes: from peasantry (Joe for example) to middle class (Mr. Pumblechook) and then to bourgeoisie (Miss Havisham).

In my opinion, it is interesting that Dickens does not follow just the main character's evolution; the other characters, too suffer great transformations (related, of course, to their great expectations).

The Paradox of Man's Sovereignty in Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations"

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The Victorian Era focused on issues related to the individual reality of human being. Also we can observe careful attention falls on the idea of family, the family life (when we talk about family, we refer to the general atmosphere of the home, relationships that are established among family members, how they feel around the family). Another important thing brought up is how marriage, family are perceived. In this era we find both types of family in which marriage is an economic and social contract and families that find, in this context, true happiness and spiritual fulfilment.

Since the late Middle Ages, more exactly early Renaissance, the woman has been defined by the following phrase "miseria humanae conditionis"¹. What church priests understood by „miseria" was merely a correspondence between the biblical Eve and the original sin. The woman was also reduced to the the phrase, "janua diabole"² as Tertullian says. For that matter, Tertullian together with Chrysostomos proposed to answer the question "who is the woman?". So their response was a long enumeration of vices like: the necessary evil, the elementary temptation, the home danger, the essence of evil, the enemy of friendship. Aristotle considered that the woman was the "error of nature", the idea which was taken over by Thomas Aquinas, too. Thomas Aquinas called the woman "mas occasionatus", that is an imperfect and worthless man. Later, the work entitled "Ob die Weiber Menschen sein oder nicht?", published in Germany in anonymity, created a stir especially because the answer of the question, from the title of work, was negative.

During the 14th century there appeared writers like Geoffrey Chaucer with "The Wife of Bath", Giovanni Boccaccio „Concerning Famous Women" (The models of this work were the work of Plutarch "Moralia, Bravery of Women" and biographies about men written by Petrarch) and "Decamerone", where the woman corresponds to a satirical image.

In England, in 1589, the first controversial reaction of a woman took place which was hidden under the pseudonym Jane and Agnes with the title "Her Protection of Women". In her writing she denies men's superiority and sovereignty placing even more emphasis on the cowardice of men. It is worth noting the fact that the polemic, the pamphlet and the pseudonym were characteristic for "querelle" in Britain, especially in the 16th and 17th centuries. Moreover, during this time, the virgins Mary-Tattle-well and Joan-hit-him-home communicated (through the work called "The women's sharpe revenge") to that "male gender" the fragility with which they were endowed by nature. Thus, the women are not allowed to learn nothing more than to please the men's instincts.³

It is known that it became a common thing to attribute Victorian or bourgeois society a clearly outlined specific image of the relations between the sexes: a stiff separation and distinctive spheres for men and women, a net boundary between the private nature of feminine existence and the public nature of male existence. The idea that circulated in the Victorian Era, and not only, referred to the fact that "work" and the "world" are things that relate strictly to men and the "home" and "domestic life" are associated with women. This concept is described by the image of women in the shape of "angel in the home". This image comes from Coventry Patmore's poem "The Angel in the House" (1855) and it was also combined with the discourse on the dignity of women, about her fate as the housewife, wife and mother and about her role as the guardian of morals, religion and culture.

¹ Pope Innocent III debate about this notion in the work "About wretchedness of human life"

² Devil's trap – idem

³ Gisella Bock – Femeia în istoria Europei: din Evul Mediu până în zilele noastre, translated by Mariana Cristina Bărbulescu, Polirom, Iași, 2002.

In the perspective of the passing of time, these clarifications and real relationship between the sexes are defined to be the critical point in the history of the woman: the trajectory of political and social environmental modernization, Victorian society meant replacing the early modern era (the golden age of the mixture of sexes and of the authority of the woman) with the sudden rupture of the sexes and a rigorous division of labour, which have been preserved until late in the 20th century.

In *Great Expectations*, Charles Dickens brings a new approach regarding the construction of the characters. As I mentioned in the above lines, the history has always been governed by mentalities and prejudices which placed the woman in the preconceived roles and places. If other novels reflect the Victorian society as being in a close relationship with the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of man, Dickens's novel brings in the foreground the woman (the role it plays in the relationships with the people around her, how she influences the way of thinking and emotional states of others and it is also described the woman's inner world). What is somehow strange is that even though there are many male characters in the plot, in the collective mentality there will remain imprinted the female characters' images and actions in the novel. We defined this fact as being a paradox of a society dominated by men's sovereignty. It is interesting to note that although the author of the novel is man, he does not exaggerate with the manly vigor, with masculinity, with power, with the exacerbated possession manifested by men. After the lecturer has read the entire novel, it will keep alive in his/her memory the women's image in this novel. The author uses these artistic methods of building female character and, in this way his work will gain both comic and satirical visions.

We will focus the attention on the notion of family and we will see how it was distorted and adapted in Dickens's novel (from the first chapters of the novel). Pip begins the story as a young orphan boy being raised by his sister and brother-in-law in the marsh country of Kent. It can be seen how Pip is not a member of an accomplished family. Moreover, Dickens places the action around Christmas time, to better emphasize the antithesis between home warmth and welcoming atmosphere to the eve celebrations and how it was described in the work. So we will follow the hostility with which Mrs. Joe Gargery controls both, her husband's activity and that of her brother. Although in the families of the Victorian period, the man was considered the master of house and the woman was his subject, in this universe painted by the Dickens the roles are reversed. Mrs. Joe Gargery is a deviation from the Victorian family. She assumes the role of head of the family and she controls and dictates all actions of the men in the house. An interesting aspect appears in the way she was called-she is known as Mrs. Joe, wife of Mr. Joe Gargery. If we were to go on this premise, I thought the lack of a proper name as being a kind of cancellation of her identity and, also, a method by which a woman stands behind her husband (she does not have her own identity but rather appeal to the husband in order to identify herself in the society). This would be valid if we summarize only to name and we ignore the rest of the plot but if we take into consideration Mrs. Joe Gargery's role and actions in the family, it can be seen how the Dickens satirically altered the image of the husband's sovereignty. Despite the name "Mrs. Joe Gargery", her character highlights the power and strength of a domineering woman (it is a transfer of identity and roles).

Another aspect that reinforces the transfer of power and sovereignty is illustrated in the brother-sister relationship. It is known that the birth of a boy in the family is a means of endless happiness and fulfilment because through him the family name will be transmitted over time in the society, he will be the heir of the entire property, he is respected in the family, especially if he has younger brothers or sisters. At the same time as man, and possibly older brother, he has the right to exercise certain actions on the family's smallest members that he considered beneficial for education and family image in the society. In Dickens's novel, the protagonist Pip although he is a boy, is not seen by his sister and the rest of the family as one of the central figures of the house. Pip is beaten, scolded and restricted by his sister, she considers that she gives him an education dignified for that social class which they belong to. The pressure and the terror that covers Pip can be seen when he steals food for that convict. Although the convict has a frightening

appearance and behaviour, Pip is not as scared of a possible punishment from him, if he did not fulfil his command, rather than he is terrified for an eventual punishment and quarrel from his sister, if she discovers that the food prepared for Christmas was stolen by him. More exactly, the terror which from home is more oppressive than the one exercised by the outside world, in this case the convict.

If we were to take into account Douglas Brooks-Davies' words, Pip's sister, or more precisely, her behaviour leads to the boy's desire to recover that lost paradise. The symbolism is much more interesting while his desire is related to the Christmas period. The boy is looking for peace, warmth and parental love in the cemetery. We can say that he actually wants a reconstruction of an ideal moment in which his parents would play a key role. Christmas with them is a *Paradise Lost* and what he feels at home with her sister and relatives, is just an impulse, a huge desire to recover the perfect environment, the image of Edenic happiness.

It may not be the most suitable context but I want to make a short reference to French literary space. In France of 1862, Victor Hugo finishes writing his famous masterpiece "*Les Misérables*". It is a novel in which social classes are extremely well defined and the condition of the orphan seems to be similar. I remember the events through which the little Cosette passes in the house of spouses Thenardier. Cosette was left in the care of the family by Fantine, her mother who did not have enough resources to grow and educate her. At the Thenardiers, the little girl is subjected to abuses especially from the supposed mother and her two daughters. The woman is the one who submits and insults the child and the man is the one who works in the house, overshadowed by his wife. Both, Cosette and Pip, are the victims of the society with some unfavourable laws for their social status.

Another aspect that confirms that paradox is education. In a discussion that Joe has with Pip, he admits his cultural lacks and also shows interest to learn more, only on the condition that his wife would not find out about it. We should not forget that we live in a society where women had no access to education, and this is not the men's case.

Even if it is a temporary difference for nearly a century, Mary Astell in the third edition of her work *Reflection upon Marriage* she counterarguments the theory of "natural inferiority of our sex". She places power on the same scale whether it is manifested in politics or within the family. She raises the question: if the absolute sovereignty is considered to be harmful and can be avoided, so why should people integrate it in the family? It is unnecessary sovereignty even more as within a family the roles are already established by agreement or not (the oppressor and the subject). "If all men were born free, how is it that all women are born slaves?" (pg. 23) We can say that Dickens used in his novel all abuses that the women were subjected to then, to build them a memorable image.

Another thing that we need to mention is that the women do not have a voice in the narration. The female characters' speech, the actions and the feelings are rendered by "indirect voice". They are described through the men's eyes and most of the time the image is distorted and subjective. In *Great Expectations* Pip is the one who mirrors everything that the feminine characters do.

His sister's death represents a crucial moment in Pip's life. It is an important moment in his maturation process because he suffers an emotional shock. He realizes how much he estranged from his family and how much he has begun to judge people in terms of social and cultural environment, especially when he started to lead a life of debauchery in London, getting tangled in more debts. He realizes that whatever their social status and whatever their behaviour towards him might be over time, they will remain his only family.

In the Victorian Age besides married women, there were increasingly many unmarried women

who decided to shape their lives on their own forces and in many different ways. Thus, 'the angel of the house' really existed, but quite rarely. Despite the fact that Dickens' novel is a novel of becoming, a "Bildungsroman" and that has as reference point Pip, the character that marks, shocks and draws the attention is Miss Havisham. In my opinion she depicts the female pride, the pride of a woman who loved wholeheartedly and she was betrayed. Her suffering is transformed into an immeasurable hate against men so not only will she make them suffer but she will also encourage other women to do it - Estella. In the character's construction we meet all kinds of social, cultural and economic aspects of this historical period. The rich Miss Havisham demonstrates that women participated in various ways at the economic transformations. Through the inheritances and the marriages, they have contributed, in various ways, to the growth of capital. The idea that only men work and women only take care of the family is cancelled.

Douglas Brooks-Davies links Dickens' novel to Shakespeare's masterpiece, Hamlet. It is known that Dickens, in order to capture the nature of character and to be able to build such a personality as Miss Havisham, he had to visit a asylum in which there were hospitalized more women than men. The same thing was done by all actors/actresses, who wanted to perform Ophelia's part from Hamlet. Being a man himself, Dickens realized that the only ones guilty for these women's status are the men. Both Ophelia and Miss Havisham are victims of male betrayal. But Dickens found a balance. The punishment for male characters is neither ignored nor forgotten. Magwitch is outcast and rejected to the margin of society. Miss Havisham feels the same, marginalized and forgotten by people that she loved. Thus, the critic Douglas Brooks-Davies considered them a kind of Pip's second family. The way in which the plot continues to unfold determines the analysis in connection with Freudian psychoanalysis. Miss Havisham, both a bride and a pseudo mother for Pip, is what Freud would later label "the mother as object of Oedipal desire". Freud believes that all boys during childhood suffer from this complex which is manifested by obliterating the father. So, the same thing also happens in Pip's case: "Miss Havisham's bridal status is a wish-fulfilment on Pip's part, a holding of his mother in his imagination as a perceptual virgin, waiting for him, abandoned and thus sexually unassailable by the "father" Compeyson"¹. So, Miss Havisham, not only becomes an object noticeable carefully in terms of psychoanalysis but she also becomes the object of suffering and Pip's desire of fulfillment. She is the engine which governs Pip's actions.

The name that Dickens has chosen for this character is very interesting because it tells more about the character's moral and economical status. "-ham" is a suffix derived from the Anglo-Saxon invasion, meaning "farm", "a smaller settlement"²; "-s-" is a letter of connection between two words in German language; "havi-" is thought to come from the verb "to have"/"to possess"/"to own". After we decided the etymology we can say that Miss Havisham is the owner of a fortune but at the same time she also owns the human puppets (Pip and Estella). Also from an etymological point of view we can analyze the name of Miss Havisham's house. "Satis" is considered to be a shortening of satisfaction, more exactly the expectations, desires and hopes are reduced to half. The woman during that period was entitled to fulfilment in any forms and in order to highlight this, Dickens punished Miss Havisham (but does not destroy her memorable image).

Another aspect that shows the women's empowerment in a men's world is the way in which Miss Havisham is dressed. In order to show as good as possible the Victorian fashion style we have to emphasize the defining element of the outfit – namely the corset. In the Victorian Age, you had no place in public without a corset. The aristocracy and style were dictated by a thin waist. The servants, inclusively, wore corsets, but they were strongly fastened because they needed freedom to move, to bend down and to clean. The dress was large and very voluminous, being adopted the so-called "second Rococo" style. In an indirect way, these clothes represent the women's constraints, the suffering they were forced to endure. In opposition to this we have Miss Havisham who again makes an exception to the rule. Her dress is smoothly, large and comfortable which shows her rebellious nature, the desire to release herself from the societal constraints. It is possible that this attitude and this style of clothing to be dictated by her traumatic love experience.

¹ Brooks-Davies, Douglas, *Great Expectations*, 1989, Penguin, pg. 43.

² McDowall, David, *An Illustrated History of Britain*, 1989, Longman, 455.

Perhaps her complete look would have been different if she had had a marriage according to the Victorian principles. The fact that she wears only one shoe indicates the fact that more than half of her spiritual and material possessions were cancelled with the loss of a great love. She feels her satisfaction increases when Pip suffers because Estella who is aware that she is loved by him, continues to laugh at his social condition and his inability to reach her expectations. This behaviour is justified; the whole blame belongs to the man (a very realistic approach especially coming from a male author).

Another woman who leaves her mark on the protagonist is Estella. She is the most feared weapon that Miss Havisham uses against men. She is also the product of Miss Havisham's previous disappointments. Miss Havisham expresses through Estella her repugnance against men. She was educated that she should not sympathize with men, not transmit her feelings or emotions. She grows up in this manner, she is unable to understand Pip's love. But this behaviour will be punished later by the author who will provide a balance between the actions performed by both sexes. She will marry a man who will beat and subjugate her. From the moment she escapes Miss Havisham's spell, she discovers a new stage in her maturation. Although she can be considered an orphan like Pip, because Miss Havisham took her in her house and educated her as her own child, Estella is attributed a status far superior to Pip. We have two young people who were not brought up by their parents and who acquire diametrically opposed behaviours. Estella is herself the engine that dictates all Pip's wishes. Her aristocratic way of behaving, her education, the fact that comes from a higher social class made him want to overcome his own limitations. This creates his desire to become a gentleman, his desire to climb the social ladder, and all with an ultimate goal: Estella's love for him. Miss Havisham teaches her to be mischievous with Pip both in order to revenge on men but also to prevent Estella from an eventual disappointment.

Despite the fact that all female characters in this novel play a crucial role in Pip's formation and that all of them destroy the patriarchal sovereignty and rebuild their own world, a world led by women, all female characters will be punished through death (spiritual or biological death). Perhaps this is where the male narrator intervenes (he gave them during his pages an illusion of power supremacy that through their attempts they could be superior to men, but in the end these women are punished). The victory at the end of the novel seems to be, thus, in Pip's hands.

In conclusion, I believe that the novel *Great Expectations* demolishes a world dominated by men power and rebuilds a world where the woman is the generator of all actions and feelings. Charles Dickens chooses beforehand to pay attention to the feminist movement of the 19th century. Mrs. Joe Gargery, Miss Havisham and Estella are undoubtedly the memorable figures of this novel. They manage to break the barriers of prejudices and of the Victorian values. Dickens makes through them an exception to the rule, an exception to the social hierarchy. Hence, the paradox of the men's sovereignty arises in the world depicted by Charles Dickens.

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Gender Approach to William Makepeace Thackeray's "Vanity Fair"

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Vanity Fair is an English novel written by William Makepeace Thackeray which presents Rebecca Sharp's and Amelia Sedley's lives during and after the Napoleonic Wars, in a society where greed, materialism and vanity rule. They are two very different women through which Thackeray succeeds in constructing numerous aspects, situations and reflections of women's lives at that time. The author's focus is not only on the vision of women in society, but also on the vanity of its inhabitants.

In the opening chapters, Thackeray presents these two women in the same place but each of them having a different past and a different story. Then the author separates them, in two distinct spaces, intending to reflect how vanity influences society. Amelia will show that aspect in the private space, where the key-words are home and heart, and Rebecca will be sent in the public space, which is controlled by social status and social climbing.

In my opinion, the author constructs through Rebecca Sharp a kind of feminist character. Thackeray's feminist perspective leads to important aspects of gender and gender roles in the Victorian culture. The cultural genders establish the identity of a person according to the restrictions imposed by society. In the Victorian Age we talk about restriction of space. Woman is the mistress of the private space. For instance, in *Vanity Fair*, we could refer to Mrs. Sedley or Amelia Sedley.

We can also talk about restriction of voice. Women do not have a 'voice' in the narratives. They have an indirect voice and their words are transmitted by a man. In this novel, this situation can be reflected by Mrs. Sedley in the opening chapters. During Rebecca's first days at their house we can observe that the dialogue is mostly between this young girl and Mr. Sedley and Joseph Sedley. Mrs. Sedley's opinions, ideas or gestures are not presented. The narrator focuses only on men's decisions and actions and women are left somewhere in the background.

In the Victorian novel, female characters are connected to different objects: mirror, knitting, jewellery, clothes and the bed, all these indicate their gendered roles.

The mirror is the symbol of the narcissistic side of a character, which is interested only in her beauty. For example, Lady Crawley is described as working "that worsted day and night, or other pieces like it" and also looking in the mirror with the regret that she is losing her beauty ("Her roses faded out of her cheeks, and the pretty freshness left her figure after the birth of a couple of children, and she became a mere machine...", "...her eyes are always weeping for the loss of her beauty." – chapter IX).

Jewelleries and clothes are usually symbols of the husband's fortune. When a woman displays a lot of jewellery, she attracts the attention and respect of others. For instance, Miss Swartz manages to get the sympathy of George's father and sisters, showing her fortune with "...her favourite amber-coloured satin with turquoise bracelets, countless rings, flowers, feathers, and all sorts of tags and gimcracks, about as elegantly decorated as a she chimney-sweep on May-day..." (pag. 203).

The bed is an object to which female characters are connected because in the Victorian novel usually women and children were sick. In *Vanity Fair* the bed is a symbol of disease in Miss Crawley's case. Every time she was sick, she was described as lying in bed with all her relatives around her ("That bundle contained Miss Crawley, who was conveyed upstairs forthwith, and put into a bed and chamber warmed properly as for the reception of an invalid." – pag. 154).

Generally, women are believed to be the educators of children but only up to a certain age. Their major role is to provide for the child's moral values. This is why Rebecca Sharp, in the opening chapters, will be brought to the Crawleys. She will have to be the new governess for lady Crawley's two daughters.

This novel presents mostly the patriarchal society, where men control everything and women had little significance. But there is one exception represented by Rebecca Sharp. The phallogentric order, in which men are in the centre and give orders to others, is inverted by this female character. Her intention is to change her position in this society dominated by men. In my opinion, she is a castrating woman. She takes the control not only over her husband, but even over Miss Crawley, Amelia, George Osborne, Mrs. Bute, sir Pit Crawley and others.



Rebecca is a very intelligent woman, who used her abilities of manipulation since she was a child ("Many a dun had she talked to, and turned away from her father's door; many a tradesman had she coaxed and wheedled into good-humour, and into the granting of one meal more." – pag. 4). She knows how people want her to behave and think and that is why she is a very good actress. This the reason why the author describes her by using that metaphor: "In describing this siren, singing and smiling, coaxing and cajoling (...) They look pretty enough when they sit upon a rock, twangling their harps and combing their hair, and sing, and beckon to you to come and hold the looking-glass; but when they sink into their native element, depend on it those mermaids are about no good, and we had best not examine the fiendish marine cannibals, revelling and feasting on their wretched pickled victims." – pag. 607

Through her beauty and intelligence, Rebecca will win Sir Pit Crawley's heart, who later will make her a proposal - [verify image 2]. At that moment he finds out that she is already married to his son, Rawdon Crawley. Exactly like his father, Rawdon is controlled by this woman. Rebecca was interested in this man because he was to inherit a large part of his aunt's fortune. She teaches him how to behave, what persons should keep beside him and how to manipulate the others. For instance, all letters sent by Rawdon Crawley

to Miss Crawley are, in fact, written by Rebecca, trying to get again her sympathy and material support. She also influences him to win George Osborne's money at their games ("It is very likely that this worthy couple never absolutely conspired and agreed together in so many words the one to cajole the young gentleman, whilst the other won his money at cards – but they understood each other perfectly well." – chapter XXIX).



Even if she is married, Rebecca Sharp uses her qualities to seduce and influence other male characters, in order to get "gloves and flowers". She also seduces George Osborne, the husband of her only friend, Amelia ("His wife saw the one part at least of the bouquet-scene. It was quite natural that George should come at Rebecca's request to get her scarf and flowers: it was no more than he had done twenty times before in the course of the last few days, but now it was too much for her." – chapter XXIX). About Rebecca Sharp, we can say that she reflects a kind of gender inversion by the lack of feminine traits. She does not show any affection to her husband or her son. She is only interested in improving her social status and in getting the respect of others.

Another exception from the society dominated by male characters is Miss Crawley. Through her incredible fortune and social status, she is always well treated by the others, having all their attention and false sympathy ("She looks very apoplectic, the dear soul; no wonder her brothers are anxious about her. You should see them struggling to settle her cushions, or to hand her coffee!" – chapter XI).

Returning to the aspects of the patriarchal society reflected by the novel, we can observe that the male characters outnumber the female ones. The narrator's focus is only on two major women, Rebecca and Amelia, while the male characters are more numerous (Rawdon Crawley, George Osborne, Mr. Osborne, William Dobbin, Jos Sedley and others).

The image of the ideal Victorian woman is reflected by Thackeray through another female character: Amelia. She seems to be based on the ideas transmitted by Coventry Patmore's poem *The Angel in the House*. In his opinion, the ideal Victorian woman was devoted and submissive to her husband, passive, powerless, charming, self-sacrificing and pure, qualities represented by Amelia.



In the opening chapters the narrator presents the fact that everybody shows sympathy and affection to Amelia (“she had such a kindly, smiling, tender, gentle, generous heart of her own, as won the love of everybody who came near her” – chapter 1). Placing her near Rebecca is a strategy through which the author makes Amelia look more virtuous. Miss Sedley simply adores her husband and she is able to do anything to make him love her the same. She is devoted to George Osborne and ready to follow him everywhere. Amelia is described as being beautiful, but this is not her major quality which makes gentlemen be interested in her. The majority of male characters need to have power and control over the others. Her feebleness and submissiveness satisfy this necessity. During the action of the novel, Amelia guides her life on the base of morality. In contrast with her, Rebecca Sharp lives a life totally opposed to her friend’s moral values. This is probably because of her education received from parents with a lower social status.

Withal, it can be observed the fact that the female characters’ names are changed during the novel. Amelia will be called Emmy and Rebecca will be Becky. This is another proof for the idea that women were not taken seriously. Only male characters have the same name during the action and they have always mentioned the last name and the first name together.

In conclusion, William Makepeace Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair* reflects the gender roles in the patriarchal society, focusing on female wish of emancipation and education, the men’s necessity of power and the upper class’ vanity. Even if the author used Rebecca Sharp to illustrate the patriarchal deterioration, she is ultimately the most punished character in the book just to accentuate the Victorian principles and restrictions.



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Motifs and symbols in “Wuthering Heights”

Alina Berceanu, II, RE

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Cătălina Bălinișteanu-Furdu

I have chosen to write about Emily Brontë's novel, *Wuthering Heights*, a novel which combines elements of Romanticism, Realism and also Gothic elements because I wanted to discuss about the motif of the orphan (insisting upon Heathcliff's evolution), the motif of the double (the existence of Heathcliff's double in the character of Hareton, an orphan who seems to share the same destiny) and the symbol of the ghost (Catherine's eternal presence in Heathcliff's life).

Wuthering Heights centres around the story of the gypsy orphan Heathcliff. Nelly Dean starts her story on the day in which Mr. Earnshaw, upon returning from Liverpool, brings home little Heathcliff. Our first image of Heathcliff displays us a “dirty, ragged, black-haired child” described as “a gipsy brat” (p. 25). The motif of the orphan is connected to the social conditions of the Victorian Age in England. As an orphan Heathcliff's presence has a major impact on both houses. On the one hand, there is Heathcliff's refusal to approach the Earnshaw children (Catherine and Hindley) which can be seen as Heathcliff's refusal to step outside his social condition, but also as his powerful personality and vanity. This is the reason for which Heathcliff will be seen as an intruder by the others, he will become the object of the family's anxieties, conflicts and disharmony. For the Earnshaws and the Lintons, Heathcliff will remain “the other”, a homeless orphan with no identity. On the other hand, Heathcliff embraces his condition and proves that he prefers isolation, that it is his choice.

Another link to this literary motif is Heathcliff's strong and wild personality. Having no identity and no support from his parents, Heathcliff builds his own persona devoid of the socially imposed codes of behaviour. Although in the beginning Heathcliff is a powerless child oppressed and tyrannized by Hindley, he remains a free spirit and displays passion for freedom.

As an orphan, Heathcliff has no name and when the family gives him the name Heathcliff, he is obliged to assume the identity of that name. The name “Heathcliff” is strongly connected to religion and is based on the word “heathen”, thus influencing his violent nature and sometimes giving the other characters the reason to compare him to a demon. In my opinion, the name “Heathcliff” can also be interpreted as coming from the words “heat” and “cliff”, which exposes his passionate love for Catherine, for freedom and “cliff” describes his stubbornness and strong will.

As I have mentioned, another important point in my essay is the motif of the double which can be seen in the presence of another orphan, Hareton. Thus the two motifs are strongly connected to each other. The motif of the double in *Wuthering Heights* can be seen in many aspects: two houses (*Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange*), two families, two Catherine's, two love stories and of course two orphans (Heathcliff and Hareton). In a way, Hareton becomes Heathcliff's double through the orphan's common destiny: he is also oppressed and tyrannized, he is also in love with Catherine and he also displays the same violent behaviour. What is different about Hareton is that although he is an orphan, he has an identity, he knows his parents as opposed to Heathcliff whose origins remain surrounded by mystery.

Another side to the motif of the double is some characters' double nature (Heathcliff and Catherine). For example, Heathcliff changes from the oppressed to the oppressor and Catherine is torn between wanting to be with Heathcliff and wanting to be with Edgar. There is an opposition in the set of moral values which influence the characters. For example, Catherine's double desires: wanting Heathcliff out of love and choosing Edgar out of the desire for a better/ equal social status. The motif of the double brings a change into the novel through the characters from the second generation (young Catherine and Hareton), the doubles of the first generation (old Catherine and Heathcliff) that managed to change their destinies and representing an end to tragedy and a hope for the future.

One of the gothic elements of the novel is the presence of the ghost, an important symbol being Catherine's ghost. What is important is the first time that Catherine's ghost makes its appearance in the novel. It is seen by Lockwood, the narrator of the story who interprets this presence as a nightmare. In my opinion, the fact that the ghosts first appeared to the narrator proves that she wants to be a part of the story, that she wants her voice to be heard by the reader. Another interpretation to the symbol of the ghost lies in the very origin of its apparition. What I mean is that Catherine's ghost would not have been part of the story if it had not been for Heathcliff's curse upon her death. In trying to recapture Catherine, Heathcliff curses Catherine's death and asks to be hunted by her ghost so as to have her close to him even after she is gone. Heathcliff's desire to be together with Catherine even after her death explains the majority of his actions in the novel (such as the acquisition of the two mansions: Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange; his control and power over everyone who is associated with Catherine). Even the manner in which Heathcliff dies is connected to the symbol of the ghost: hunted by her memory, he desires to join her in the afterlife and dies in Catherine's bed.

In conclusion, I chose to analyse these motifs and symbols because they bring into focus the tragic destiny of two of the main characters, Heathcliff and Hareton.

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Clad Yourself in Fashion Culture! Exhibition in Paris

Paula Turnea, III, TI

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suci

While I was studying abroad, in France, at Université de Poitiers, I planned a city-break to Paris because it seemed the right thing to do while living in France for 5 months, don't you agree?

I managed to visit everything I had planned to, in my short 3 days' trip and, luckily enough, by mistake, I found out that there was a fashion exhibition held at Musée des Arts décoratifs that's just on the other side of the Louvre museum.

The fashion exhibition was called "Fashion Forward – Three Centuries of Fashion (1715–2016)" and it was open for almost 5 months, April to August 2016.



Musée des Arts décoratifs from Paris has one of the largest fashion collections in the world, with over 150.000 pieces of garments and accessories, designed by world's greatest fashion designers, from 1715 to our days.

The "Fashion Forward" exhibition comprised 300 of those pieces, carefully curated and displayed in a setting that took you back in time to the days when Charles Worth designed his first dresses and then made you travel in the future with the futuristic creations of Balmain, John Galiano, Comme des Garçons, Karl Lagerfeld, Valentino and many others.



The exhibition showcased the very beginnings of the dress, high-heel, handbag and accessories and the way the clothes you were wearing said a lot about you and your social class back in those days.

It was a panorama of fashion history over several centuries where you could see the passage from the heavy crinoline and court dresses to more light ones, later marking the emancipation of women when they started wearing trousers and reaching nowadays when fashion is a mixture of shapes, colours and fabrics, with no restrictive rules, apparently.



Being a fashion enthusiast, this exhibition gave me the opportunity to better understand why fashion is such an important part of our life and has been so for centuries and also the once-in-a-lifetime chance maybe, to see and take pictures of world's most beautiful creations, designed by the most famous designers of all times.



Cultural Event in Asturias, Oviedo, Spain – Princess of Asturias Awards

Carlota Alonso, II, MA student, University of Oviedo, Spain
Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suci

The University of Oviedo, Spain is one of the Universities with which the Faculty of Letters from “Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacău has had an Erasmus agreement since 2014. The productive cooperation has consisted in receiving students to study within the Erasmus+ Programme, but also in such collaborations as exchanging academic and cultural experiences and materials. The current material is the result of such an exchange.

Once every October, the University of Oviedo, located in the namesake city in Northern Spain, witnesses the celebration of the Princess of Asturias Awards. They are yearly given in an academic ceremony and they foster scientific, cultural and humanistic values. Therefore, our city hosts for some days influential personalities coming from very diverse disciplines: arts, communication, social sciences, scientific and technological research, sports, literature, international relations and cooperation.



It is easy to feel proud to receive such wonderful and enriching visits; as language students, we are usually particularly interested in those connected to literature and arts, maybe even communication and social sciences. This 2016, Richard Ford, a North American writer famous for *The Sportswriter* (1982), took part in a Q&A session in our Faculty.

Ford began the session by talking about the translation of his works, which is something that not everybody does, that is, shedding light onto this, often, invisible industry. As he mentioned as an anecdote, when he was younger, he used to think that Chekov was American. Ford continued talking, showing his warm personality: “I do not believe in cannons”, he said, to then give some advice to the students who were gathered there: “Never let people tell you what to do. And if they do, do not pay attention to them”.



Academic concerns gave place to a discussion about present-day issues in the field of culture. Firstly, he mentioned how great it was the fact that Bob Dylan had been awarded the Nobel Prize; his main argument in favour of this controversial decision was that Dylan has produced good work, and we should always celebrate good works. Secondly, he moved into more serious topics, such as the racism against Afro-Americans that still exist in today's America. On this, he made a call for action: "Arguments on race issues must come from all collectives, it is completely irresponsible for us to let only Afro-Americans speak. We all need to talk; and we may make some people angry, but it is the way it should be".

University life gets truly transformed during this week in which the Princess of Asturias Awards take place. We, as students, have the opportunity to leave the classrooms and step closer to the real world, making the links between all what we study and live more evident than ever. And moreover, events such as this one provide an account of the interdisciplinary nature that exists within the realm of humanities, which is paramount to apprehend its usefulness. Students who come to our University during the first term of the academic year will have the opportunity to enjoy these awards. Do not miss them!

About Dignity. In Men's World Women Must Be Dignified

Cornelia-Gabriela Jitaru, II, CRP
Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

Each of us was born receiving the same quantity of dignity. Therefore, I cannot understand why some people consider that they have received more, why they give it up so easily or why some of them try to let others without this precious gift that everyone was endowed with.

But still, what is dignity? Is it something like pride or hubris? Is it something that allows the individual to master the other with a dominant attitude?

Well, from my point of view, dignity is an attitude, I dare say, is a virtue that allows us, "social animals", to be people, real people with respect and self-esteem, people who have the courage to say NO, even when others might say YES. There are people who notice that they are on the wrong path and although they no longer have the resources, they decide to engage on a new, better one.

This is what dignity means to me! But, can we talk about dignity in this society? Definitely, yes! But there are a few who decided to be different, risking to appear abnormal, in an environment where values, true values, seem to have evaporated.

As we know, the earth is populated by individuals, individuals who are divided into men and women. What a great harmony, what a great communion, so many shared values would be if everyone would understand their status and they would not try to dominate each other.

We live in a time when women want emancipation, they want equality of sexes and rumour says that the "wish was fulfilled" but, if we look around, we will see that this thing was done only half or worse, just on the surface ... as some say, "artificially".

Women...fragile and strong at the same time, delicate and courageous, elegant, gentle, intelligent and attractive, are now vulgar. In their desire to be like a men, some women were humiliated and became more like men, forgetting their true qualities and forgetting the fact that both men and women were created for different purposes, but equally important.

It is true that women are perseverant and they want more from life, they want to be equal with men, they want to be appreciated and independent, but not at the cost of dignity. It is also true that they are able to occupy the highest positions in organizations, but most often, even their spouses do not give them the vote of confidence.

What can women do? They can fight, fight and fight for their rights, but without being ridiculous. Maybe someday men and women will understand what some of women already knew, in the first years of life: "The woman was created to give life." Everything she makes or animates turns into reality. This is she, "weaker Sex" as some would call her or the "fairsex" as others would call her.

I admire this pattern of women, but in a world that wants to be open-minded, these values were long time forgotten or even not found. In this regard, we generally encounter two major types of women: the obedient woman and the unscrupulous woman. In the first category we find women who, although they are not respected in their environment they continue to live in the same way. In the second one there are those who, in order to get where they want, they are capable of anything, even to lose their dignity.

I must say that without dignity, human begins resemble with animals without reason, freedom and dignity that are the most important elements that made him different and special.

This subject can be inexhaustible, but, I hope that one day, both men and women will rediscover the quintessential harmonious life which must have a solid foundation focused on dignity.

In the end, I can say that we need dignity in a world that seems to sink into dirt and I conclude by quoting Dr. Roopleen, a famous motivational counsellor: "To be able to live each day with honour, respect and dignity is the greatest achievement of all".

Bucuria. The success story of a Moldavian symbol

Tatiana Captaciuc & Elena Lungu, I, AA

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Mihaela Culea

1. Introduction. Company history



Hello, I am Bucuria! I am a company that produces sweets and I was born in September 1946. I became the greatest Moldavian company which specializes in producing all kinds of sugary confectionery. The trademark Bucuria joint-stock company is “the visit card of Moldova. Today it is the largest enterprise producing confectionery in the Republic of Moldova. For more than six decades the company gives joy to the children and grown-ups, totally corresponding to the motto – Life is sweeter with us...”, as

the company's site mentions¹. It started in 1946 from the association of some small manufacturers and now it produces the amazing number of 37 tons of confectionery items daily.

Over the last years the company's range of products has expanded, which has generated an increasing demand. Popular items sold in the company's specialized stores include: candies (Lapte de pasăre, Do-re-mi, Inspirație, Moldova, Gloria, Dorința, Livada Moldovei, Meteorit, Chișinăul de seară), caramels (Frutic, Fulgușor, Răcușori). The company's cakes also seem to be in great demand, for example Lapte de pasăre and also the marmalade (Jelli Fruit), the wafers (Artek), or the biscuits (Magie Plus).

In order to reveal the main aspects of Bucuria's success story, in the following parts of this article we will carry out a SWOT analysis of the company and we will also present an interview given by Dima Rusu, one of the managers of Bucuria store in Bacău, who gave us his permission to publish the interview.

2. A SWOT analysis of Bucuria

In this section we will sketch a SWOT analysis² of Bucuria not as specialists but as Moldavian citizens who have knowledge of the economic and political climate in their home country and from the standpoint of students in economic sciences who have supplemented their experience with first-hand information about a new environment, the Romanian one. This short article does not seek to promote the brand as such, but rather to uncover the special features that make this company's products symbolical for Moldova. Being far away from home we have observed that Bucuria's sweets are appreciated even here, in Romania, and we feel proud of it. That is why we have decided to do a short presentation of this company that means a lot for us, because the unique taste and flavour remind us of our country.

Strong Points

Tradition, or the recourse to tradition, is Bucuria's strongest point because people can identify these products with authenticity, age-old recipes, and quality. The product range and diversity come next. Bucuria has a large range of products such as candies, waffles, fruit jellies, biscuits, toffees, drops, cookies and others. At the moment, it has an amazing portfolio of about 450 types of products. Also, the products that they offer have a high quality and because of that they have become a national symbol. Bucuria also produces special sweets for people with diabetes, so its adaptability to the latest demands of the market is also visible. Bucuria is a permanent participant in republican and international exhibitions, laureate of the most prestigious diplomas and prizes in its field. The high qualification and professional expertise of its staff in combination with the application of new modern technologies ensure the firm's high quality of its production.

¹ <http://www.bucuria.md/en/about-company-en/company-history-en>, accessed January 20, 2017.

² According to https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/swot_analysis, the term refers to a study undertaken by an organization with the purpose of identifying its internal strengths and weaknesses, and its external opportunities and threats (accessed January 20, 2017).

Weaknesses

Unfortunately, Moldova, a country which is situated in SE Europe, the home of Bucuria, is not a part of the European Union. Because of that, Bucuria does not have the possibility to expand, that is why it has a small market share. Its presence on the European market is thus limited in comparison with its potential. Also, it does not have an active and focused marketing campaign with clear goals and strategies.

Opportunities

A series of most important principles in the activity of the company may be considered opportunities for the future: to pay attention to the interests and needs of the society, to the creation of a favourable business climate, to the maintaining of decent conditions of work, to pay attention to the social, physical and spiritual welfare of the persons. In this respect, the company tries to ensure a stable development of its business, and shows increasing concern not only for the economic and technological, but also for the social component. Bucuria is interested in following the principles of social responsibility, related to the creation of new working places, the implementation of social programs for the personnel, tax payment, etc. That is why Bucuria will further develop itself and will achieve the wide recognition of increasing numbers of customers. The high quality of its sweets and unforgettable taste will promote Bucuria's brand in whole world.

Threats

The unstable economic position of Moldova may negatively influence the development of the firm. Another considerable threat is the high competition in this field. There are many companies which produce sweets and they have a strong and recognized brand while Bucuria lacks this component or is insufficiently developed. The growing strength of its competitors may thus be a threat.

3. Bucuria in Bacău

Bucuria has started to expand its business to Romania, too. Even in Bacău a store was opened, Basarab Vin, which offers us the best of Bucuria's products and wines from Cricova. All these are made exclusively in Moldova, and the product range is very diverse, and so are the prices. The owners of this store are Ion Cucerescu and Dima Rusu, and they are waiting for you every day and are very willing to answer any of your questions.

Below is given a short interview with Dima Rusu:

I: "Why did you choose Bucuria?"

DR: "Because Bucuria is happiness for me. It has been my dream since childhood to have a personal store with sweets because every time I eat candies I feel fulfilled."

I: "And are you happy right now?"

DR: "Of course, because at 24 I have already managed to achieve my dream. The last step that will make my life sweeter is to find a beautiful wife."

I: "What was the most difficult thing in setting up the business?"

DR: "I think that the most difficult thing was finding the money. Because we were students when we tried to open a store and we did not have enough money, so because of that it was hard. But, as we were young, we had lots of ideas and we did our best in order to fulfill our dream."

I: "Can you do a short SWOT analysis of Basarab Vin?"

DR: "I think that the strongest point of Basarab Vin is having the largest range of products in Bacău. And the most important weakness is the absence of advertising. A threat may be the low prices of autochthonous products because our products are imported and have a high quality but a higher price. Basarab Vin also has the opportunity to expand into other towns like Onești, Buhuși, Comănești, Roman and Piatra-Neamț. At the moment we have Cricova, Purcari, Calarasi alcohol drinks and now we want to introduce new ones as Asconi and Mileștii Mici."

I: "Which, in your opinion, is the strongest point of Bucuria in general?"

DR: "In my opinion, Bucuria's strongest point comprises autochthonous raw materials and uniqueness."

I: "Finally, what piece of advice can you give to students who are at the beginning of the road that leads to their dreams?"

DR: "I think that the most important thing is to never give up and to believe in your own abilities."

Webography

<http://www.bucuria.md/en/about-company-en/company-history-en>, accessed January 20, 2017.

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/swot_analysis, accessed January 20, 2017.



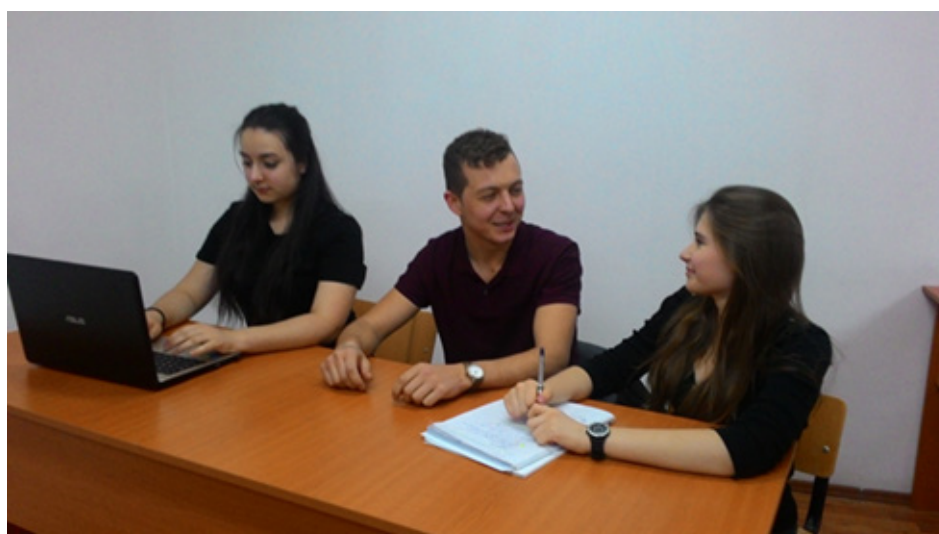
Dima Rusu



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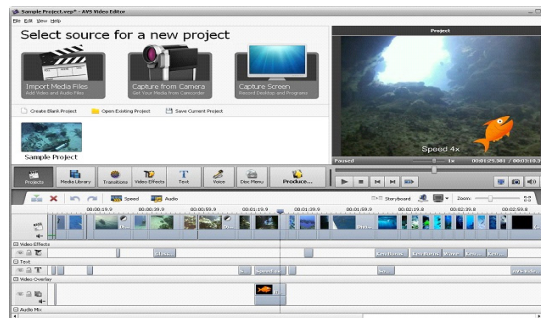
Maria Corban, II, CTI

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Gabriela Andrioai

Gone are the days when creating a short film or documentary was a task of technical expertise. One should be quite a professional in order to deal with editing and related tasks. However, nowadays, after the dawn of all these revolutionary technologies and their day-to-day applications, video editing too has become an easy-to-accomplish task if you know which video editors to use.

In the past, creating a short film or documentary was something that you could not accomplish unless you were a professional. Now all you need in order to make a good video is some software that you can comfortably use and a couple of good ideas. Some of you might think that you need serious skills, and a lot of practice but, the truth is you only need to learn how to use editing software properly and be creative. Those having a lot of experience might create better videos but, as a matter of fact, the difference between them and the beginners is not as obvious as one might think, since the functions of good editing software can make miracles. Some examples of such programmes are: AVS Video Editor, Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro, Sony Vegas Movie Studio and so on.

AVS Video Editor can be the first choice when you are looking for an easy to use, professional-quality-rich & quick video editor for your Windows computers. AVS Video Editor, developed by Online Media Technologies, offers a number of notable features such as a huge amount of effects, support for Blu-ray videos, multilingual support, the ability to share videos directly through platforms like Facebook, Flickr and MySpace and a very useful feature such as stabilization. Considering these, AVS Video Editor is one of the best video editing software for Windows.

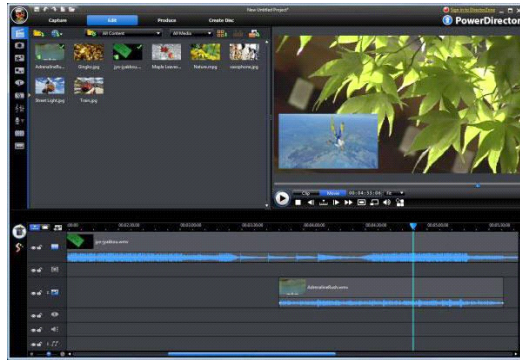


Sony Vegas Pro 13 offers support for everything a professional video editor requires. You can import media from multiple devices (including HD video), use more than 300 filters and special effects, and use specific tools to work with text layers and subtitles. The app also lets you easily optimize the image quality of your content with various tools. The app has a huge number of sound effects to choose from, support for VST plug-ins and it can give you a very high degree of control over sound settings.



There are countless options for video editing software, but not all of them are created equally. Unfortunately, some of them do not have support for 4K editing although nowadays, there are plenty applications that can create 4k video (Ultra HD).

Ultra Cyber Link Power Director 12 offers a unique combination of high-end performance and advanced editing features. It's remarkably easy to use, making video editing accessible to creators of all levels, a huge selection of customizable design tools, including unique alpha transitions, animated titles, particles and PiP objects, providing the freedom to explore creativity and reflect it in unique videos.



Sony Film Studio 13 Platinum: edit 4K and stereoscopic 3D files natively on the timeline, applying colour correction and video effects, selecting from dual edit modes, and uploading the finished masterpiece directly to Facebook™ or YouTube™. With Movie Studio Platinum the possibilities are endless.



Using your creativity and a proper software you might be surprised by the results, but don't think that what you did was enough, because in this world enough is never enough, and not even the best is actually the best and with time you will get to where you want to be, and like every other aspiring editor you will want more, you will want to be better, you will want to be praised by everyone for your work, because it is such a good feeling.



If you think this is something you would like to do then don't waste any more time. There is plenty of free software just waiting to help you make your way in order to become a good creator! Good Luck!

Webography

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Let's Talk about



Cătălin-Florin Diaconu, II, TI

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Gabriela Andrioai

The golden age of American animation was that part of history in which U.S animation began with the advent of sound cartoons from 1928 until the late 1960s when the animated shorts started to lose popularity because of television animation.

Many of the most iconic cartoon characters emerged from this period, characters like Mickey Mouse, Tom and Jerry, Donald Duck, Popeye, Goofy, the first animated adaptation of Superman and many others. In this period, featured length animation also began, Walt Disney's first films being 15.011 the most popular at that time.



Today, computer software can be used to produce incredible results, both classically drawn animation and CG animation. In some cases, like the making of a Naruto film, the key frames are drawn by hand and then scanned and, with the use of computer, extra frames and colour can be added to everything. Computer technology has enhanced the way art is created, especially since there are some artists who can combine hand drawing with computer drawing and in a couple of weeks of learning the proper way of using such a program even a single person can make short animations that will leave anyone speechless. Even though artists can use different methods for their work, animation is still split up in 4 different types: Stop Motion Animation, 3D Animation, 2D Classic hand drawn animation and the Paper cut out.

Computer-generated animations are more convenient than other more physically based processes, constructing miniatures for crowd scenes because it allows the creation of images that would not be feasible using any other technology. To create the illusion of movement, an image is displayed on the monitor of a computer and repeatedly replaced by a new image that is similar to it, and advancing slightly in time, usually at a rate of 24 or 30 seconds. This technique is identical to how the illusion of movement is achieved with television and motion pictures.



For 3D animations, objects are modelled on the computer monitor and 3D figures are rigged with a virtual skeleton. For 2D figure animations, separate illustrations and separate transparent layers are used with or without that virtual skeleton. Then the eyes, mouth, clothes, etc. of the figure are moved by the animator on key frames. The differences in appearance between key frames are automatically calculated by the computer in a process known as morphing. Finally, the animation is rendered. An almost endless variety of computer-generated images is possible with this technology; the designer is limited only by his or her own imagination.

Have you ever heard of “South Park”? You might find it a rather simple animation but, in fact, it took a decently sized group of people, a separate lip sync department and 120 hours a week to produce just one episode. You can imagine the amount of effort put into what seems to be a simple animation.



I will not name any animation software mainly because there are too many and all of them have their own pros and cons. I hope this has turned your interest towards animation, because I believe it to be something that can entertain you for a lifetime!

Webography

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enjoy!

Petru Duhlicher, II, TI

Coordinator: PhD Professor's Assistant Gabriela Andrioai

There is a multitude of programming languages today: C, C++, Microsoft Visual Basic®, COBOL, C#, Java, and so on. Computer programming languages allow us to give instructions to a computer in a language that computer understands. The fraction of the language that a computer can understand is called “binary.” Translating programming language into binary is known as “compiling.” Each language, from C# Language to Python, has its own distinct features, though many times there is a unity between programming languages. Such languages allow computers to quickly and efficiently process large and complex basis of information. Programming languages should be chosen based on their strengths for performing certain tasks; the problem to solve should determine the language to use.

C# for example is a multi-paradigm programming language very useful in Information Technology which has been developed by Microsoft. The most recent version, C# 6.0, was released in 2015 and it was designed with the purpose of competing with Java which similar in design with C++.

C# versus Java



James Gosling, who created the Java programming language in 1994, and Bill Joy, a co-founder of Sun Microsystems, the originator of Java, called C# an “imitation” of Java with reliability, productivity and security deleted. As Java came before C# it is quite normal that C# learned from both the strengths and weaknesses of Java, just as Java learned from other programming languages. If Java were perfect, then there would have been no reason to create C# and if the latter is perfect, then I do not see any reason to create a new programming language. However, both C# and Java are good oriented programming languages in present, so it is impossible not to compare them.



It is not important whether Java and C# are almost identical programming languages or whether C# is a much closer version to C++ in its design, what matters is to correctly determine which language to use in certain situations. Since the release of C# 2.0 in November 2005, the C# and Java languages have evolved on increasingly divergent trajectories, becoming somewhat less similar. Furthermore, C# has added several major features to accommodate functional-style programming which enable C# programmers to use functional programming techniques, such as closures, when it is advantageous to their application.

WHY the name C#? The name “C sharp” was inspired by the musical notation where a sharp indicates that the written note should be made a semitone higher in pitch. This is similar to the language name of C++, where “++” indicates that a variable should be incremented by 1. The sharp symbol also resembles a ligature of four “+” symbols (in a two-by-two grid), further implying that the language is an increment of C++.

Below are the advantages of C#:

- Easy to learn
- Object and component oriented

- Part of .NET framework
- The C# language is intended to be a simple, modern, general-purpose, object-oriented programming language.



- The language, and implementations thereof, should provide support for software engineering principles such as strong type checking, detection of attempts to use uninitialized variables, and automatic garbage collection. Software robustness, durability, and programmer productivity are also important.

- The language is intended for use in developing software components which are suitable for deployment in distributed environments.

- Portability is very important for source code and programmers, especially for those who are already familiar with C and C++.

- C# is intended to be suitable for writing applications in the case of both hosted and embedded systems, ranging from the very large that use sophisticated operating systems, down to the very small having dedicated functions.

- Although C# applications are intended to be economical with regard to memory and processing power requirements, the language was not intended to compete directly on performance and size with C or assembly language.

Both Java and C# were designed to be type-safe. C# is easy to learn and I hope you will find it interesting, especially those who like to work with big numbers. It seems to have more built-in language features and runs on any operating system that has an installed CLR. If you do not have limited development time use, a good type-safe, powerful language like C# is the best choice.



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My Story

Corina Maxinas, I, RE

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Nadia-Nicoleta Morărașu

For the past years, England has been for many Romanians a land of opportunities to study, work and travel... For me, it was the land of opportunities for people with physical disabilities like me. Before going on, I have to underline the fact that I am one of the lucky ones. I was born under a lucky star because I was raised in the most wonderful family who loves me deeply and I love them. My parents did everything that was possible for my recovery and I am so grateful for it.

I have never been angry with my disability. I have always felt that all my life experience shaped me in the woman I am today, a great one if I may add, and having this disability is a part of me. I have often asked myself in my youth "If I am ok with my disability (the one who has to live with it), why do others have a problem with it?" In this respect, I have been kind of disappointed with how my fellow citizens saw people with disabilities.

At the age of 24, I got the chance to go to England and live in London for two years. It was exactly what I needed at that time, as I was asking myself more and more often if there was anybody who would be willing to see beyond the physical imperfection.

My living in England was a radical change from this point of view. I discovered myself as a woman and also discovered a society in which being with disability is no reason for rejection and pity. I also felt relaxed because, for the first time in my life, I didn't feel that creating friendships is hard work. Going to London helped me to understand that people can relate to me differently. Nobody can be liked by everybody, so it is best to be surrounded by people who like and love you. The others simply do not matter. I had to return to Romania and I have to confess with delight that things start to change for the better here, too, slowly, but I can feel the changes. I believe that my being here, by interacting with people every day I contribute to the change. I am glad to help other people like me become self-confident and accept themselves just as they are

Erasmus in Bordeaux – the Greatest Adventure of My Life

Ioana Popescu, III, EF

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Nadia-Nicoleta Morărașu

“Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure... than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.” – Theodore Roosevelt

“When you see an opportunity you have to seize it!” These were the words that my mother told me every day, words that I ended up using as my life motto. I’m the type of person who likes to get involved in as many activities as possible and my taste for adventure and new things always drove me in some of the most interesting and exciting environments – from English camps to EU funded international projects – I’ve done them all! So, when I told my mother I wanted to go in France for 5 months to study with an Erasmus scholarship she was overwhelmed not only with joy but also with concerns.

Although my adventurous personality drove me to apply, once arrived in France I suddenly realized that I was in a foreign country, with minimum speaking skills of the French language and with an extremely tight budget which was at war with the high prices there. As any university student suffering from social anxiety would do, I panicked, a lot, and there were dozens of reasons for me to do it. I was short on money, classes seemed impossible and the weather was depressing.

When I woke up from my panicking state, I saw that a month had already passed and I hadn’t done anything productive. Hence, I decided that it was time I rethought my strategy; I couldn’t just keep going on running in circles. After all, I was in France, in Bordeaux, one of the most wonderful cities and I had 4 more months to discover this country. And that’s exactly what I did. Instead of seeing classes as impossible I took them as a challenge to improve my skills. Working with headphones and orally reproducing English texts for the first time? No problem! Six page essays on modern French poetry that I couldn’t understand logically? No problem! English mash-up of grammar, syntax, morphology, semantics and a bit of philosophy taught in French? Well... at least I did my best.

Next on my list was the social part of my journey. Even though French people are not the most sociable nation, I tried my best, and to my surprise I made friends from all over the globe but France. I tasted out-of-this-world spicy Indian dishes, I learnt a bit of Arab, I befriended a guy from New Guinea, I discovered the everyday life of a Romanian girl studying in Germany, I met two Italians as terrified of speaking French as I was and I found out that somewhere in Africa there’s a country called Djibouti. All these people I met had one thing in common – their love for their country. Each and every one of them was proud of their nationality and was eager to tell everyone about how beautiful their country and their culture are. It wasn’t long before I discovered that somewhere deep inside me there was a very patriotic girl hiding, waiting to shine and dismantle all the wrong ideas and stereotypes that existed about Romania.

For me, going to Bordeaux as an Erasmus student was a real challenge, but I am grateful I had the opportunity to experience it, because it gave me the chance to grow as a person and as a student. Although I didn’t come back with perfect grades or extremely improved French, I came back as a different, better person than I left. Needless to say, when I finally arrived home I felt homesick for France. It wasn’t Paradise, but it was, is, and will always be my second home where I discovered parts of me I didn’t know of. Bordeaux will always be in my heart as the place I grew in emotionally and spiritually and I can say open heartedly that an Erasmus scholarship there is worth it. But keep in mind that financial support from your family will be desperately needed and an open-mind is a must if you want to make the most out of the experience as a whole.

Personal Growth – My Erasmus Experience in Poitiers, France

Paula Turnea, III, TI

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suci

The first two weeks went by really slowly because I was alone and hadn't met anyone there so I was just going to classes and coming back home. I was also trying to cope with the fact that they were teaching English in French but I managed to adjust to their fast French speaking and get the important information.

After two weeks I finally made some friends, none of them French, of course. They were, Romanian, Moldavian, Lebanese and a girl from Kazakhstan. From that moment on, my Erasmus life got a lot easier and fun.

Last year I applied for an Erasmus Scholarship in France, and luckily enough (well, it wasn't all just pure luck) I got it.

I left for France on the 7th of January 2016 and I was supposed to spend a semester as a student at Université de Poitiers, in the west-central region of France. It's a rainy, but beautiful city.

It was a little scary at first because I was alone there, I didn't know anyone in my dorm or my class and it took me a while to adapt to the new city and most important, to my new school.

Everything seemed really hard and I was already missing home, especially because it took a couple of days to get Internet access (the tragedy!).

We started hanging out a lot, cooking, watching movies, wandering around the city and making one-day trips to the nearby cities of Poitiers, to Bordeaux and a 3 days' trip to Paris, of course.



The City Hall of Poitiers





Bordeaux



La Rochelle

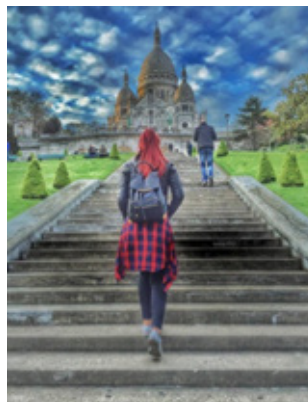
La Rochelle is a beautiful city, a seaport on the Bay of Biscay, a part of the Atlantic Ocean. They have an Aquarium, where we spent almost all day admiring one the strangest and most amazing water creatures.



Before I left, we stayed for 3 days in Paris and I got to visit everything I had planned to, in just 3 days. It was amazing, Paris is beautiful (yeah, like that's new!)



Outlaw in Paris, part 1



Besides the travelling, my Erasmus experience was also great because I got to meet new people, experience a different educational system, learn a great deal of new things, improve my French and last, but not least, try new types of food from different countries.

I remember now the feeling I had before I arrived in France, I was so afraid I wouldn't adapt, that I wouldn't pass my exam and after the first week that went by without making new friends, I was sure I was going to spend my next 4 months alone (I'm a drama queen) and now, I look at the photos with me and my friends, friends with whom I keep in touch to this day, and I can't believe that time went by so fast, that I had such a great time and that I did pass all my exams.

It wasn't all peaches and cream, especially in class where I felt like an alien, I can't say that I had much contact with my French fellows but I made friends with the other Erasmus students I met in my French class for Erasmus. Also, the effort was higher for me since I had English courses taught in French and some of the times I didn't quite understand and I had to spend hours online, searching on the matter so I could be well prepared and have good results.

All in all, I remember now only the good times and I'm grateful I had the opportunity to live abroad, make new friends, gain knowledge and broaden my horizons.

It was a great experience and I encourage everyone to try it, at least once in a lifetime.

More than a Tale to Tell – My Erasmus Experience in Torun, Poland

Iulia Chiriluş, III, TI

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciu

My experience in Torun was... it is difficult to say how it was, because when you are in a foreign country every day is counted, every day matters and all you have to do is just to think about what you should do to make it worth the while. I was in Poland with the Erasmus+ programme, so I was an Erasmus student and all I had to do was learn and be happy. But I also had to be careful to keep the balance between learning and having fun. That was the first rule for being successful and happy, a rule that helped me. Thanks to those persons from the Office for International Relations, I found out this rule. Great persons, friendly people, always ready to help. I want to mention that the collaboration with them was absolutely perfect.

Everyone was so enthusiastic and happy about my departure; I was equally excited and scared, because when you are in your country and your family and friends find out that you will be in a foreign country to study, to travel, to meet new people from a different culture, they are the first to be enthusiastic about this and happy for you. However, you only know about the beautiful things that you will see there, because when you arrive there, everything will be so different for you and you will be in shock. I was in shock and I think that I had many sudden, upsetting and surprising events. That was just the beginning and I had to be ready for everything. I have a motto: "If you ever wonder why God makes you go through hard things, it is because He knows that you will succeed." I am a Christian and I believe in God and I really know that He will help me every time... and He did.

I really liked Poland, I really liked Torun, the city is one of the best places in the world, but I really missed my home. I was there for five months, but it was enough for me to understand how much my family matters to me. Do you love your parents? Of course you do, everyone does. But now, I have realized how much I love my family and how many things I have learnt. Moreover, I had to organize myself in each and every of my daily activities... It is interesting how much that situation changed me, because when you are home, you are familiar with everything, but there, everything was different. For me, it had a strong impact, I had difficult days, moments of hesitation and tension but in the end I realized that I had achieved a lot of things. The linguistic barrier combined with other psychological aspects contributed to my delayed adjustment, but this way I grew as an individual. When you speak in English for almost five months and when you try to explain to an old lady from the store using English mixed with Polish, trust me, your English becomes better and your vocabulary is improved.

Apart from this academic growth, I also had the opportunity to develop through the relationships I developed. I met people from all over the world and I travelled in six beautiful cities in Poland. One of my favourite cities is Krakow, but also worth mentioning are Poznan, Wroclaw, Warsaw and Gdansk. I also visited Auschwitz twice and it was strange and sad at the same time – I was sadly impressed by Auschwitz, but I am happy because I had the chance to understand better human suffering, fact which made me wish not to want to visit it again. But that is another story, one not to merry. However, worth mentioning is the fact that every town in Poland has its culture, traditions and these cannot be fully explained in words.



In Torun, there were more than 80 Erasmus students from Spain, Italy, France, Bulgaria, Croatia, Portugal, etc., but most of them were from different cities from Turkey. Turkish people were everywhere. My flatmate was also Turkish – she introduced me to all her friends. Not to forget, I'm saying this loud and clear – Turkish people are the best! They cook more times per day, they are the best chefs and they made a special dinner, a Turkish dinner and every student was invited to eat. You were always invited to eat with them, they were hospitable and very generous.

There are a lot of things that remained in my head, beautiful things, beautiful moments that are very difficult to be expressed in words. Every day was a great day, every night was a noisy night. ESN always organised trips in different cities, parties in clubs, sports activities and they were always prepared for Erasmus students, always eager to help and to make them not only feel good, but have the best time in their lives.

It is known that every experience has its bad moments and I also had some... I failed my first test in English grammar, I was so scared that I learnt for modal verbs several days, they did not seem that difficult, but they were difficult, and I was thinking "What I am doing here? If I cannot pass a simple test, what will I do in an exam?" In that moment, all I wanted was to come back home, I acted like a coward. I had to study, I had to study hard, because the system is different from here. British English comes first, if you want you can choose American English instead, but it is different, there are other courses for it. I had some problems with choosing my courses, because some of them were in Polish and I studied Polish for two weeks and it was...oh, so hard but Romanian students were given some sort of exemption. But I can say that I enriched my vocabulary with: "dziendobry" ("good morning") "dobrywieczór" ("good night"), and "dziękujębardzo" ("thank you so much").

Listing methodically my experience in Poland, I can say the following:

1. (jeden) My Polish experience was not like my Polish language.
2. (dwa) Polish people have this "distance", they set a barrier between them and strangers. Probably, they take precautions in a very serious way. You have to gain their trust first, they are amiable and they want to help but...sometimes I had the feeling that they do not know how to help.
3. (trzy) Poland is a beautiful country, Torun is a beautiful town, full of history, full of tourists and it is like a rich city when it comes to various activities, sports events, workshops and parties of all kinds but information is spread in such a way that everyone knows about all that. Everyone is informed about everything and they are together every time.
4. (cztery) Visit: Krakow, Wroclaw, Poznan, Warsaw, Gdansk to see the Baltic Sea.
5. (pięć) Pierogi – national dish. They are very delicious.
6. (sześć) Poland is situated in the middle of Europe, it is easy to travel in different directions, to different countries. Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Bratislava and Minsk are close to Torun.
7. (siedem) Poland is not like Romania but it has some common points. It is cheap, prices are good and when you have a scholarship in euro, prices are very good for you.
8. (osiem) Your scholarship is enough for you to live there very good, you can afford almost everything and this gives you the chance to travel, you can save some money and you can travel in every city.
9. (dziewięć) About study... Polish teachers are very serious when it comes to education, they are very serious about presence at courses and they have a complicated system named USOS, but it was complicated just five weeks and then it was a great help. On that system you can see everything that you search for, it helps you. It can be used to send and to receive messages from teachers, they upload homework and materials for the next week and at the end, you can see your grades at exams there.
10. (dziesięć) Polish people are so nationalists, if you are in Poland, you have to speak Polish, or at least, to know some Polish. They appreciate this.
11. (jedenaście) My room was 511 and because I did not know how to say this number in Polish, every time I asked for the key from the reception I was saying "pięć, jedenaście" (5 and 11), that was after two weeks because before that I said "pięć, jeden, jaden" (five, one, one) but it was too foolish, I had to show that I know some Polish because...that's bring us back to no. 10.

I now chose to underline some positive aspects, because maybe you saw more hardships than satisfactions. Lucky me, I had six amazing days of travelling. Visiting by day, travelling by night... great trip, but great tiredness, too. I was in Vienna and Berlin and I stayed three days in Vienna and three days in Berlin and every single moment mattered. It is wonderful to have the opportunity to travel, to visit new places, beautiful cities and beautiful countries. You need money, not a lot of money, because you can choose to stay in a hostel rather than a hotel, you can search for some cheap restaurants and you can save money some time before the trip.



Perhaps few people have the chance to travel, but the Erasmus+ Programme gave me this chance. When you see different cultures, traditions, different people and you see their behaviour, many people tend to borrow from their habits and so did I!

My final advice to you all: love, laugh, travel and be happy! Erasmus is something that cannot be compared with anything. It brings you people, friends, different chances, opportunities for visiting, travelling and most important, it makes you a better person. I've met a lot of people, I've made friends from all over the world, I am happy. Do something that will bring you not only memories, but also a good overview of anything or anyone. Go with Erasmus, visit Poland, visit Torun, eat Pierogi (Polish Dumplings). However, whatever you do, don't eat beetroot soup or soup with plums, a traditional Polish dish!

Me and the European Culture – My Erasmus Experience in Liège, Belgium

Camelia Ciobanu, III, EF

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciu

Me...

Who am I? My name is Camelia Ciobanu and I am student at Faculty of Letters, “Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacău, English-French study programme. In my opinion I think I am a person who wants to discover the entire world in more ways than one, so I chose to go in Erasmus. I also wanted to improve my skills in French language.



STUDYING
WORKING
TRAVELLING

Where did I go?

I was in Belgium, in Liège, between 26th January and 24th June 2016, as a student Erasmus at HELMo (Haute Ecole Libre Mosane) Sainte-Croix. It is a kind of university preparing students to become teachers. Liège is a medieval and beautiful city with a lot of foreigners from all over the world. It looks like our Braşov.

Where did I live?

I stayed in a host with a family, more exactly with Madame Quiévy, a gentle lady. In this time, I realized that I don't like to cook at all, but in extreme cases only, for survival. It was very interesting, pleasant and special, but no matter how warm the people near you may be, I think there is no place like home.



Experience at the University

The most important thing in this experience was to attend courses and to discover another educational system. To be honest, in the first weeks I didn't understand very well the language but I was very interested in listening how French is spoken by native people. Each teacher had another teaching style, but they all got my attention in their own particular way. For example, once, in a French Literature lecture, the teacher gave us a paper with a text and we had to create a sketch to represent the story. I was impressed by the implication of the students. In another day, a known writer, Nicolas Ancion, was invited to take part in some activities presenting aspects of his life and his books.

I also participated in the International Week, a project initiated by the University from Liège, during which I met students from Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Spain. The main theme was “Let’s integrate differences!”. We discussed about “What is multiculturalism?”, “A philosophical walk” and other interesting topics. Another activity was to go in a primary school, in classes for observation.

Their culture

Firstly, I noticed that people are very interested in protecting the environment and in promoting the local traditions and local products. There, people are educated to appreciate and to preserve culture. Secondly, at the gastronomical level, I observed that in Belgium, beer, chocolate and the frites (French fries) are everywhere. Thirdly, they encourage cultural initiatives of a different kind – for example, on the first Sunday of each month the entrance in museums is [free](#). And last but not least, I really want to share with you the fact that I was in the county library to borrow some books and I was amazed to see how many people were there!

My journeys

In my free time I visited other places from Liège, other cities from Belgium: Bruges, Gent but also other cities from France (Lille and Paris) as well as other countries such as Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. I made the most of this opportunity of travelling during my Erasmus scholarship so as to see other cultures first hand and, as a student in Letters, really outline a wide scope of cultural knowledge.

...the end... or maybe not?!

For me, each day of this experience taught me something about life, about school, about how to be a good teacher, about the role of citizens in society. I think that I don’t have to talk about this adventure, it’s necessary to live it! I am grateful because I had this chance to explore another places. On this occasion, I had the opportunity to know myself better. I see myself changed and transformed in a good way. Thank you, Erasmus!

Thessaloniki, Greece: An Enchanting Place

Ana Andronache, III, EF

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Mihaela Culea

My experience as an Erasmus+ student began on the 11th of February 2016, when I braced myself and left home heading for Thessaloniki, Greece, all on my own. I had never left home before that moment, without my mother or my brothers, so I wanted to change that by discovering a completely different country. Someone once said: “You can’t discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore”, and so I set forth to discover new oceans...

Once I arrived there, I was welcomed warmly by my roommate, a German student named Alina and, in the following days, by the teachers, the coordinator and other Erasmus+ coordinators. I never felt lonely or lost in Thessaloniki, although the city and the university where I studied are way bigger than what I had at home. The fact that almost everyone knew a little bit of English, like the sellers in the kiosks, the ticket clerk in the bus, and even the older people, helped me a lot. Additionally, people have such a good heart there, always ready to help you.

What was of utmost interest was to discover new methods and techniques to learn English at Aristotle University and I appreciated that all the classes were in English and only in English. With the help of the teachers, I managed to understand their new system. I even attended a Greek course and obtained a diploma in the end which I was very proud of!

You should never be worried about food in this city. All the students of the university benefit from free meals every day at the university canteen. This is also a place where you can meet new Erasmus students or make friends with the persons having lunch near you. Good food and friends are the best combination for any time of the day. Also, when the canteen is closed for a holiday, you can always try the street food which is always cheap and delicious. You can never starve in Thessaloniki because there is the free canteen for students with three rich meals every day, even in the weekends. This is a great advantage for Erasmus+ students as they can save the money they would normally spend on food for other needs.

The university library is very spacious, modern and has an extended time schedule which is very convenient when the weather is pretty hot. There is free wifi for the students, a gym and sports grounds for various sports that can be used for free.

I also wanted to take advantage of my time there to enjoy as much as possible the chance to travel and to know better the history and culture of the Greek people. In almost every weekend, trips with other Erasmus+ students were organized. I went to the famous place called Meteora and on the Thassos Island, which impresses with its magnificent beaches, like the Marble beach. I visited many other interesting places in the city and also I stepped for the first time on a boat.

Life in Thessaloniki is affordable. There are so many students there (Greek or foreign, like me), therefore you can find a cosy apartment near the university and establish with the owner a suitable price.

Thessaloniki is a dreamy city for living, studying and ... feeling like home. It is fairly large in size, with many university students populating it. Everything is mainly found at the center of the city, which can be found very easily. If you are not sure about where you are, just go downhill and you will find yourself by the sea and very close to the center. As a former student wrote on the student blog <http://www.studyinthessaloniki.gr/student-blog/>, “theatres, museums, cultural events, historic places, festivals, parades, sport activities and nightlife are just a few to mention of how vibrant the city life can be in everyday of the week. There is so much you can learn and see because every corner has history within”. The weather is also perfect and you will leave home with an enviable tan.

If you rent an apartment near the center, you can go to your classes either on foot or by bus, since you are just a few minutes away from the university. The transportation is half the regular price if you are a student and the best part is that most buses have air conditioning in the torrid days. And when you want to free your mind, just take a walk by the beautiful seaside and relax by listening to the wave sounds. Every problem disappears when you become one with that breathtaking sunset.

My time in Thessaloniki cannot be summed up in a few lines. I will remember all the friends I made for a lifetime, all the discoveries, all the enriching experiences, that I would have never enjoyed if I had stayed in Bacău! The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, so dare to become an Erasmus+ student, why not, in Thessaloniki!

When you hear for the first time about the Erasmus+ Programme, a lot of thoughts may come to your mind and you may experience some contradictory feelings like fear, curiosity, enthusiasm, etc. What is actually Erasmus+ Programme? Well, theoretically speaking, Erasmus+ is the European Commission's Programme for education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014–2020. But, practically, it is much more than that...

Erasmus + offers you the opportunity to learn (for one or two semesters) in a different country, to experience a culture different from yours, to interact with people of different nationalities and to strike up a friendship which may continue longer than you can imagine. More than that, you have the opportunity to travel much more than you did before.

What did this experience mean for me? It meant more than I would have thought. During my stay I had the opportunity to learn in an educational system different from the Romanian one. I interacted with Polish professors and I can surely say that the teaching method is totally different from ours; students are more independent, at courses, they fathom the material studied by itself, dealing with some issues and topics that have not been understood.

Being in Torun (Poland) for a semester, I had the opportunity to get familiar with a different culture than mine, to fit in their environment and to participate in various extracurricular activities organized by the International Programmes Office and Erasmus Student Network from Nicolaus Copernicus University. With the support of the International Programmes Office, we initiated a blog, where we had the opportunity to write about our experience, to share our thoughts with others, to talk about the particularities of being an Erasmus Student in Torun and why not, to help the future international students of UMK.

In five months I got to travel to 6 different cities in Poland (each of them being special in its own) and to two cities in Europe. I've come to rediscover myself, to laugh and cry along with some people whom I loved so much, to travel with them, to be more resourceful and to take risks. I've learned to accept others around me, to be more tolerant, to accept and to love myself and listen through my heart. I lived unforgettable sensations, but also disappointments, I fell, I got up and went forward.

This experience totally changed my view on many things in my life; I did not regret one second that I got to taste and live it. For this great experience and for all the good things that happened in my life and for all the changes I passed through, I want to thank our professors, who have motivated and supported us always, to Polish professors, who have helped and understood us, ESN volunteers and IPO, who have done their best to make our stay as unforgettable as possible. Will I ever forget this experience? Certainly not!

Still Confused about BREXIT?

Gabriela Tăbăcaru, II, MA LEPC
Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Mihaela Culea

A very hot topic in 2016 was BREXIT. Young or old, teenager or adult, everyone must have heard this term at some point in the past few months, since the media has become a boiling pot, activated by endless, passionate discussions on the referendum held in Britain. And yet, there may be people out there, just like me and you, who still get confused about this Brexit situation.

1. What is BREXIT?

The term is a short version for “British exit” (a blend of British/Britain and exit)¹, which refers to the referendum held on 23rd June 2016 in which the British voters opted to leave the European Union (EU). But to walk away from a 59 years old union may be a bit more complicated than it seems. The UK is the first member who has ever decided to leave, and its departure will consist in a complex process of approximately 2 years of negotiations, starting from the moment when article 50 will be triggered.

Now, what is this small article which stands in the way? Apparently, it is stipulated in the Lisbon Treaty – an agreement which became law in 2009 and was designed to make the EU more democratic, transparent and efficient – which contains the rules for exit.² But since there has never actually been an exit before, these rules are quite brief, which may make the two years of negotiations take even longer.

1.1 What led to holding a referendum?

There have been many factors regarding the balance between advantages and disadvantages of EU membership. However, polling data suggest that the main reason for holding a referendum was the general attitude towards immigration.

One of the most valued principles in the EU is the ‘Freedom of Movement’, which, apart from easy travelling, also refers to the movement of goods, capital and services. This very principle has been generating a great amount of complaints in the UK, since it involves the right of citizens from any country in the European Economic Area, EEA (plus Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein) to work in the UK under the same conditions as British citizens. Those who advocate the Brexit believe that this has led to a lack of control over UK borders, which causes mass immigration and strains public services.

In reality, the reverse is more likely to be true. Research at University College London found that EEA migrants pay their way for public services and more. The Freedom of Movement does not let in immigrants that contribute less than those from outside the EU. Furthermore, the UK is importing young, healthy and highly skilled immigrants from the EU, while exporting several hundred thousand more costly pensioners to countries such as Spain and France.

Moreover, the predictions of future economic growth made by the Office for Budget Responsibility are predicated on continued net immigration. Without these movements, the national financial situation would be considerably worse.³

2. After BREXIT

The declaration of the result brought about a few immediate changes. Two of the most striking facts were that the pound fell to its lowest level since 1985 and David Cameron resigned as Prime Minister.

1 <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/brexit>,

http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/brexit_1, accessed January 20, 2017

2 Wilkinson, Michael; Midgley, Robert, “What is Article 50? The only explanation you need to read”, in The Telegraph, 25 January 2017

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/what-is-article-50-the-only-explanation-you-need-to-read/>, accessed January 30, 2017.

3 McKee, Martin; Galsworthy, Michael J., “Brexit: a confused concept that threatens public health”, in The Journal of Public Health, no. 38(1)/ 2016, pp. 3-5. Retrieved from <https://academic.oup.com/jpubhealth/article/38/1/3/2362882/Brexit-a-confused-concept-that-threatens-public>, accessed January 30, 2017.

The new Prime Minister, Theresa May (also Leader of the Conservative Party), has announced a 12-point plan for Brexit talks, and she revealed that the UK is leaving the EU's single market in order to take back control over immigration and laws in this country, advocating a clean break from the EU.¹ But if untying Britain from the old membership was a piece of cake, creating a new life outside the EU can prove to be very difficult even for such a strong economic leader. It would be harder agreeing on a new trading relationship, establishing what tariffs and other barriers to entry are permitted, and agreeing on obligations such as free movement. For a quick recovery, hundreds of Treasury lawyers and experts would have to be hired for areas such as health and safety, financial services and employment, where Britain lost competence to Brussels. Meanwhile, a Trade Ministry will be required, with hundreds of new negotiators, to establish new deals around the world. Such a process, EU leaders claim, could take another five years.²

2.1 What does Brexit mean for the economy?

As an undesired consequence, Britain may have to face a financial decrease, since the foreign companies may be less likely to invest here and could relocate their headquarters. Pro-EU campaigners believe that Brexit will hit the British economy hard, for it relies on the free movement of EU migrant workers such as health professionals or agricultural workers. Since the EU has made it clear that Britain needed to allow the free movement of EU workers if it stayed in the internal market, the UK is preparing to leave the EU's single market in order to no longer have to accept the 'free movement of people'. Some Europhiles have also said that Brexit will compromise the UK's ability to fight cross-border crime and terrorism in Europe. David Cameron even suggested that ISIS leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, "would be happy" when Britain leaves.

However, Brexit supporters argue that EU countries have every incentive to keep trading with the UK, which is a large importer of goods and services. Moreover, the election of Donald Trump as the next US President means that Britain is now at the "front of the queue" for a US trade deal. Now that Britain voted to leave the EU, it will no longer have to contribute billions of pounds a year towards the European Union's budget.

2.2 The Brexit and the rights of EU nationals living in the UK

It is unclear whether the EU nationals who live in the UK will still be allowed to keep their residence following the Brexit vote. While the Prime Minister, Theresa May, refused to guarantee the EU nationals their right to remain, in order to avoid an increased level of immigration before Britain finally leaves the bloc, there are voices in the opposition who support the foreigners. Mrs. Leadsom, one of Mrs. May's rivals for the Tory leadership, said: "I commit today to guaranteeing the rights of our EU friends who have come here to live and work. We must give them certainty there is no way they will be bargaining chips in our negotiations."

2.3 How does Brexit influence education?

It is only natural that students from the EU be concerned about their future in the light of the current political situation. Their chances of getting a decent job following the vote will much depend on the visa and immigration rule put in place. Since the European Economic Area (EEA) will lose Britain, the tuition fees, the UK scholarships/bursaries for EU students and even the Erasmus mobility program may suffer changes which are unlikely to be in the benefit of the EU students. Leaving the EU would allow universities to charge EU students higher fees. This could also restrict the number of researchers and students coming in the UK, bringing an end to UK taxpayers' "subsidies" for students coming from Europe, as well as restricting the number of British students who wish to study in Europe. This could further reduce the strength of British universities.

¹ Foster, Alice, "What is Brexit and what is going to happen now that Britain has voted to LEAVE the EU?", 25 January 25 2016, updated January 25 2017, <http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/645667/Brexit-EU-European-Union-Referendum-David-Cameron-Economic-Impact-UK-EU-exit-leave>, accessed January 30, 2017.

² Wilkinson, Michael; Midgley, Robert, 2017, art. cit.

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Considering the situation, a student may even wonder whether he is still welcome to study in the UK anyway. Professor Sir David Greenaway, vice-chancellor of the University of Nottingham and chair of the Russell Group, comes with an answer to this question: “We simply will not tolerate abuse of this sort and any student or staff member who experiences racism or xenophobia on or off our campuses can be assured this will be taken extremely seriously. Now more than ever we should ensure our campuses are places where diversity is welcomed, cherished and respected.”⁴

3. How do people feel about Brexit?

Despite the fact that he acknowledges the disadvantages, William Hague, former leader of the House of Commons, is one of the few political critics who voted to stay in the EU: “To end up destroying the United Kingdom and gravely weakening the European Union would not be a very clever day’s work. So, even as a long-standing critic of so much of that struggling organisation, I am unlikely in 2016 to vote to leave it.”⁵

According to YouGov polling, his opinion is shared by 75% of the young voters in the UK, who voted to remain in the EU. Anyway, the public opinion is divided into those who support the Brexit and those who do not.

1 Foster, Alice, 2017, art. cit.

2 Wilkinson, Michael; Midgley, Robert, 2017, art. cit.

3 Elite Education Group, “What does the Brexit mean for education?”, <http://www.eliteeducationgroup.co.uk/what-does-the-brexit-mean-for-education/>, accessed January 30, 2017.

4 Jones, Harrison, “What does Brexit mean for students? We answer your FAQs”, in The Guardian, 12 July 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/jul/12/what-does-brexit-mean-for-students-we-answer-your-faqs>, accessed January 30, 2017.

5 Hague, W., “Why I will be voting to stay in Europe”, in The Telegraph, 22 December 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/eureferendum/12064244/Why-I-will-be-voting-to-stay-in-Europe.html>, accessed January 30, 2017.

One of the remaining 25% of the youngsters who voted for the Brexit says that “The only regrets and concerns I have is the way the referendum was won – for example claims that £350m would be given to the NHS (National Health Service). I think leaving, however, was the best idea.”¹

Alka Sehgal Cuthbert, 54 years old, from London, is another Brexit supporter: “I am very pleased with my decision. I voted Leave and I am very pleased with my decision. I’m glad that after years of politics being technocratic, soul-destroying and tedious, people in Britain experienced an inkling of what politics has been – and could – be again.”²

From the statements of those who voted Remain, we can notice an increased sensibility and a thoughtful way of seeing the world and humankind. For example, Allan Collins, 85, from Scotland, voted Remain and brings arguments from his life experience: “At my age I lived through the dark days of a divided Europe. I saw the human wrecks caused by the First World War, and the devastation of the second. All because of a divided Europe.”³

Conclusion

As a Romanian citizen, the British exit from the European Union bloc is a topical theme and a matter of interest given that the entire Europe may be affected by this departure. As a master student in English language and culture and British-related topics, my concern refers to the manner in which Brexit will influence various aspects of British history and culture and Britain’s relations with other European states and, as I want to stay informed on how things will evolve, I can only hope they will take a turn for the better!

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¹ Marsh, Sarah; Obordo, Rachel, “Guardian readers”, “Brexit means Brexit: how do those who voted Leave and Remain feel now?”, in The Guardian, 3 October 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/oct/03/brexit-means-brexite-how-do-those-who-voted-leave-and-remain-feel-now>, accessed January 30, 2017.

² *Ibidem*

³ *Ibidem*

Wilkinson, Michael; Midgley, Robert, “What is Article 50? The only explanation you need to read”, in The Telegraph, 25 January 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/what-is-article-50-the-only-explanation-you-need-to-read/>, accessed January 30, 2017.
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Faya Ornia Goretti has been an associate professor with the University of Oviedo, Spain since 2012. She graduated from the University of Valladolid, Spain and she is specialized in translation of medical texts, corrective phonetics, English for professional purposes, etc. She is also a certified translator and interpreter in English and German, and coordinator of summer courses of English for professional purposes at the University of Oviedo. With a vast international experience (research stays at Oxford, Cambridge and Heidelberg) and numerous lectures and articles published, Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti can be an important member of any academic body.

Student: What are your studies and career orientation? What type of research do you conduct?

Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: I have studied Translation and Interpretation (University of Valladolid) in English and German. My field of research is translation (mainly, medical translation), localization, corpus linguistics, contrastive linguistics and text typology.

Student: How do the subjects, you are teaching, help students in their future careers as translators?

Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: In the Degree of English studies, I teach “Phonetics” and “Translation and Localization”.

Phonetics: It’s a core course of the second year of the degree of English Studies. This subject helps students recognize and produce English sounds. It is very useful for future interpreters (i.e. spoken communication), but also for translators (let’s imagine that a text says “here” instead of “hear” or “pair” instead of “pear”. The translator can easily recognize the error if he knows how to pronounce these words correctly – they are homophones, i.e. they sound the same)

Translation and Localization: It is an optional course of the fourth year of the degree of English Studies. This subject pays special attention to cultures and helps students understand the difference between confusing terms, such as “translation” and “localization”. Moreover, students work with different computer-assisted translation tools (CAT-tools) and face different translation challenges (different texts and different communicative situations).

Student: What opportunities for a future career may a student studying translation and interpretation have in nowadays’ context of exchange and information at a professional level?

Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: There is a wide range of opportunities for a student studying translation and interpretation: translator and reviewer (freelance, for a company or at an organism such as the EU or the UN) and for different kind of texts (webpages, videogames, literary, journalistic or specialized texts, etc.), interpreter (linking, consecutive, simultaneous), project coordinator and project manager, management tasks at university dealing with Erasmus students, teacher, lecturer, embassy employee, tourist guide, airport employee, etc.

Student: How do you divide your work between research and the didactic activity?

Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: Most of my courses take place on the second semester (i.e. from February to June), so I try to do my research (papers, conferences and research stays at other universities) during the first semester (i.e. from September to January), and I focus on teaching on the second semester.

Student: What do you think about the Erasmus programme? Did the manner in which you perceived the Erasmus experience change over time?

Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: I think it is a very helpful and useful programme for students. It is a great opportunity to live in a different country, practise the language and learn more about the culture of that country (guided tours are frequent for Erasmus students). They will also get in touch with students around the world – this helps them open their minds and understand other people. It is said that you really learn how your own language works when you learn a different language. And I think that you learn more about your culture when you compare it with other cultures. You learn different lifestyles, habits, customs, etc. The Erasmus programme has changed a bit along the years (particularly regarding requirements and grants), but I think the essence remains the same.

Student: Do you see a big difference in mentality between Spanish students and foreign Erasmus students?

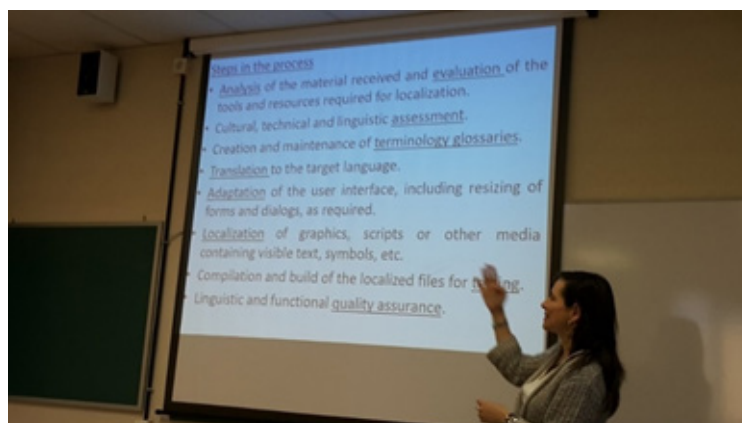
Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: I can't generalise, it depends on each student (age, interest, previous studies, etc.). Anyway, I wouldn't say it is a difference in "mentality", but in "behaviour". These are two very common examples: I try to get partitive lessons in which students can guess and discuss things. However, Spanish people tend to remain quiet in class and they rarely participate. When there are Erasmus students in my group, I am happy because they usually participate and encourage Spanish students to do the same (and I think that this helps to break the ice and creates a nice learning environment); Spanish students rarely work during their degree. However, many Erasmus students do and they see it as a normal thing. I think it is good for Spanish students to see how other must arrange their time and comply with their obligations.

Student: What recommends Oviedo as a very good choice for an Erasmus mobility?

Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: Oviedo is the capital of Asturias – a mountainous region with a lot of customs and history, and with very beautiful landscapes. Oviedo is a very beautiful medium-sized city, so you'll find everything but at the same time it's easy to get everywhere on foot. The University of Oviedo is an active university which offers many degrees and opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate students. In addition, Spanish is pronounced clearly, which makes it easier to understand by foreign students.

Student: Would you consider coming to Romania for an Erasmus mobility, seeing the level of education we develop here through the Romanian students who came to Oviedo in the last two years?

Dr. Faya Ornia Goretti: Yes, of course. The Romanian Erasmus student that attended my "Translation and Localization" course in 2015–2016 was excellent. She took the course very seriously. She used to participate a lot in class and her contributions were very interesting. So, I have a very good impression of Romanian students who come to Oviedo.



The Perks of Being an Erasmus Student at Your Home University

Ecaterina Apostu, II, EF

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciu

I have always been a dreamer. I started to be more and more fascinated by this great and beautiful world, by its wonders, people and cultures. I desired to know more about the world, but actually this was the best way to discover myself.

My experience as a foreign student started last year, in October, when I came from the Republic of Moldova to study at the university in Bacau. The Erasmus+ Programme represented a goal that I wanted to achieve from the beginning, but I had to wait one more year to experience it. Fortunately, I received great news this autumn, a friend of mine came with an exciting idea – she proposed to create an ESN (Erasmus Student Network) organization here, in Bacău.

She was an Erasmus student in Italy, an experience that made her realize how helpful and pleasant it is when somebody is waiting for you upon arrival in a foreign university part of the Erasmus network, when somebody takes care of you, and helps you have a wonderful experience even though you are alone in a whole new place. A lot of you will not understand what ESN is – is it somehow a dish?

Well, no, of course not... Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is a non-profit international student organisation. Our mission is to represent international students guided by the principle of “students helping students”. Essentially, we are the helping hand of the Erasmus students, a great family with creative and open-minded people.

At this moment, there are 11 local sections, in 10 Romanian cities, and after we tried hard to form a new section here, in Bacău, we can proudly announce that we have recently succeeded in doing this. The idea seemed pretty interesting to me, and I decided to join the volunteers group.

Two months have passed from the moment when I met the Erasmus people for the first time, and since then my life has changed a lot. I gained lifetime friends, and I met beautiful people. We had funny moments, parties, dinners, we laughed and we cried together. We celebrated birthdays and holidays, we had long days together and white nights, trips and all kinds of adventures.

For me this group is a part of my soul, it is the best thing I have done while being a student so far, and even if I will go in my own Erasmus+ exchange, I will miss them, and I will never forget them, no matter if we meet again or not.

Somebody once said: “The Erasmus experience has been the best of your life so far, without a doubt, and it’s also the worst without a doubt – this is something that no one back at your home will truly understand”. But I dare say that I experienced how it is to be an Erasmus student even while being at my home university (because I am in a foreign academic centre), and I can stop dreaming about my future Erasmus experience.

My advice to all of you is to step out of your comfort zone, try new experiences, be a volunteer, and then an Erasmus student, this is the best that one can do while being a student.

CS ESN Bacău is waiting for you to experience it, and to share the best moments with our amazing team.

Studenthood – Your Path towards the Future

Andreea-Larisa Chițu, III, EF

Corrdinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciuc



The most important thing about being a student is that it is a time of your life when you can dedicate yourself pretty much entirely to something that really interests you. If you enjoy writing sonnets, an English course is a great place to be, if you are passionate about grammar you can take grammar courses in English or French.

Because I have always had a great desire of learning English and French grammar, I chose the Faculty of Letters, from “Vasile Alecsandri” University of Bacău, studying English-French, both literature and grammar.

My experience as a student at this Faculty made me realize that this is my place and I really love what I’m doing and what I’m studying. I learnt a lot of new things, I met a lot of people and I made some friendships. I fell and I made mistakes but I got up again with fresh forces.

Studenthood is very beautiful but also a challenge for yourself, you have to learn very much, you have to do homework, make projects, you have to pass all the exams. All these things being done will help you because that’s why they exist. They are part of your process of formation as a future individual. The period is very important for the student himself, for he has to be up and doing in the acquisition of knowledge in the formation of his character and in making contact with the world around him. “Knowledge is power” is a popular aphorism. It means that knowledge is more powerful than physical strength and no great work can be done without knowledge.

Education is the pivot of each individual’s development and the means of him/her becoming a useful member of society. With every page one reads, with every line one writes and with every word searched in the dictionary one progresses, heads for better. A piece of advice which I can now give you: “Don’t let the time fly without doing something that it is worth because you won’t have the same chance as now”.

From this great experience I wished to become more flexible, to let go of all my fears, to move on and be bolder. Generally, I have fulfilled these. One other great achievement for me is speaking in public. I can say that this was my worst nightmare and it still is sometimes.

My studenthood seems to me easier because of my lovely friends that I met here. The feelings of panic, fear, despair and worry disappeared thanks to them. In this period of life, you have to know what friendships to make.

The professors must be listened to, especially when they say: “Don’t learn one day before the exam, it will be very difficult for you”! This is the oldest lesson in the book, and one which we never learn.

In conclusion, studenthood is a special period in life, searching for a better version of yourself. Learning, maturity and progression are some representative words for the life as a student.

Learn, be mature and progress!

Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life. (Confucius)

Tips for Speaking in Public

Anca- Elena Borto, III, CRP

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

Being a student at Communication and Public Relation implies learning how to interlink with the media, how to create contact with the journalists, how to represent an organization in public. But one thing that many people are afraid of is public speaking.

There are several researches about how the fear of speaking in public affects people. There are some strategies and rules that can help people get rid of some of their emotions.



Firstly, before presenting your speech in front of a public, you need to know how to write your speech. A speech depends on the subject you are going to talk about. A speech needs to be written according to the audience. For example, if your audience is formed of students, the speech needs to be attractive, innovative, but without too many technical words. The speech has to be written after some standards: the introduction, two or three arguments and the conclusion. The speech needs to be clear and brief. The material should be listened to with pleasure and it should generate a reaction.

Secondly, an important field in public speaking is the body language. You should pay attention to how you are dressed, to your posture, gestures and facial expression. Visual contact is the most important thing. You must keep eye contact with your audience during 70% of the time. You should adopt a good posture. At the same time, gestures and how you move your body are also important aspects. If you

don't pay attention to all these details, the message will not be appropriately reached by the audience. You must concentrate on what you are doing, you must have confidence in yourself, give up thinking about fears and doubts, and you must believe that you can present a speech. Be natural in front of the audience.

As a conclusion, if you follow these few steps that help you have a great presence in front of the public and if you have a very well written speech, you cannot fail. Nobody was born as a great speaker, but everybody can make a good speech.

Introvert vs. Extrovert

Ioana Ciuraru-Andrica, II, CRP
Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

“Community gives us warmth, while solitude gives us the light.” – Carl Gustav Jung

I’m sure you have already heard of these terms and you have the temptation to believe that the introvert is a shy, withdrawn person and the extrovert is a sociable person, always in the center of attention.

The first who defined these two terms was the Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung in the 20th century. He stated that every person has two traits, which do not, however, manifest equally. One is dominant and is manifested in various ways, depending on the situation. So yes, each of us is introverted, more or less.

If you think about your past, definitely you had some moments when “you unleashed” to some extent, if you are introverted, or you felt the need to interiorize yourself and see how you feel or in what direction your life is heading, if you are an extrovert. As an introvert you probably believe that it is something wrong with you, that the extrovert would be better in terms of communication. After all, what is your fault if you need some silence and solitude and you do not feel like starting conversations all the time? Perhaps you are thinking that you need to socialize, but something is holding you up and you do not realize what the extroverts have and you do not have. They have nothing extra or minus, they just have other ways of communicating.



A confusion is that introverts are not sociable or that they do not know how to socialize. The reality is that there exist very sociable introverts as well as antisocial extroverts. But what is the difference between them in terms of communication? The introvert prefers to talk about a subject that is sure upon, having a clear purpose in conversation. He does not really like the superficial discussions. He can have a genuine discussion relatively easy, but he cannot open too quickly to someone. His power occurs when he has a one to one conversation. The extrovert’s power occurs when he stands in his social circles. Let’s see why some people need a lot of persons around them and others need solitude.

An introvert needs quiet and solitude and his energy decreases depending on the number of people around him and the social excitement that surrounds him. An extrovert needs as many people around him as possible, but he loses energy if he is alone. He needs different experiences and he feels he must know as many people as possible.

They are like two “mental programs” and no man should be considered inferior because he is using one program or another. Both introverted and extroverted people can achieve their potential in their own way. It makes no sense to imitate what is or what makes an extrovert. You have to do what you like and never forget to connect with your own self, to contemplate different aspects of your life. I have to say that I am doing this and I am sure it is a healthy thing to do. My moments of calm and solitude – I will not give up on them for anything in the world. I like to watch the stars, to watch the nature and I also like to analyze my own feelings. You can discover yourself by doing these things. I have to admit that I was introverted, and I still am. But I also have changed, from a person who never stood out and was afraid of people, to one who likes to start a conversation and maintain it.

We all have moments when we are introverted or extroverted. The most important thing is to stay authentic and true to what you want and what you feel, and also to accept yourself. You need to spend time alone to feel refreshed and there is nothing wrong with that. Do not try to be something you are not just for the sake of those around you. People who care about you will accept you anyway. Learn from people around you, learn to discover yourself and to be a better person than you were yesterday. Enjoy the community's warmth and the solitude's light.

Baby Shoes – or Making a Short Story Long

Maria Bocicov, III, CRP

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

*Ernest Hemingway once won a bet by crafting a six-word short story that can make people cry.
Here it is: “For sale: baby shoes, never worn.”*

Once upon a time there used to live a man who was looking for real love. He was searching for it incessantly, but every woman he met, wasn't good for him. He was looking for a nice, simple, smart woman. He had been hurt, he had suffered, but one day, love found him. He met a girl, a very nice, and simple, and smart girl and he felt that she was the one. They began dating and spending a lot of time together, and one day he realized that she was truly perfect for him. He proposed to her. The answer was YES. He was the happiest man in the world; loving and being loved back was absolutely amazing.

They had a nice wedding, everyone was happy for them. Friends, family, relatives: everyone was there to enjoy such a beautiful moment of life. It was autumn, and he thought that this fall was the most perfect fall of his life.

This man was incredibly happy. He had finally realized what happiness meant. His last wish was to have a baby. Autumn passed, winter passed and spring passed too, and the baby hadn't appeared yet. He was still hoping. When summer came, he went to a shop, and bought baby shoes thinking that maybe by buying baby shoes, God would see what was missing in his life, and He would send him a baby. So he bought the baby shoes, and decided not to tell his wife about them. All day long he touched them, looked at them and thought about that awesome moment when he would have a daughter or a son.

But the reality is sad sometimes, and one day all his happiness was taken away. His wife died in a car accident. He was destroyed, he knew he would never love anyone again. He was addicted to his first true love. He cried a lot, he suffered and his heart was broken. It is such a horrible pain to lose someone you love! It is almost impossible to get over this.

This man never got over his pain. All he had was baby shoes.

One night, he had a dream. His wife told him that she was pregnant, and he would be a father, but all he had to do was to sell the shoes. When he got up he had tears in his eyes. But he decided to do this. He went to a shop, and everyone could see what it was written on a big white paper: “Baby shoes. Never worn.”

This is a very sad story, but I hope you all realize that sadness is not having a bad day or simply being hurt by someone, or not having money to buy new pants. NO. True sadness is when you lose the love of your life and then have to sell baby shoes that have never been worn.

People, our life is fragile. Be happy and accept what you have, love what you have, appreciate every little thing in your life. Maybe you are not the only person in the world who's having a bad day. Maybe someone is having a worse day than yours.

Enjoy every second!

Quotes to Live by in 2017

“Celebrate what you want to see more of.” - Tom Peters

Silvia Prisecaru, III, CRP

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

We all need a bit of inspiration or motivation from time to time, or we need to create an image about who we really are/ wish to be. Or maybe we just feel the need to define ourselves in a few words, or we need something to guide our actions through life. We look for something to define us as personality and individuals and sometimes we end up using quotes from people that are known to have reached certain kind of success or wisdom.

Don't get me wrong, I agree with “a transfer of wisdom”, but we should be careful of the context in which the quote was placed. Let's remember those collections of inspiring fitness quotes over pictures of drinking (if you don't know them is worth googling, for a good laugh)

I was watching the other day a speech delivered by Michelle Obama, that had a nice quote “when they go low, we go high”. It is a really nice thing to say and follow if you have a context in which you should have moral values, ethic, dignity, show fair play. You should NOT follow the advice if you are on a battlefield, in open fire if they go low, you should probably stay low too. This reminds me of another quote “when in Rome, do like Romans”. Doesn't that sound really cool?!?! Just add a hash tag in front of it and a selfie, and you hit the fame on your Instagram. But do you really want to be a Roman if in the Rome where you are, Romans do drugs or smoke? If you are a victim of domestic violence, should you really turn the other cheek??

I decided to write this article because it is a madness over the social networks with kids posting memes with all kinds of quotes (by the way, I was guilty of that too), that sound really cool but they don't actually get the context in which they should be used. Can a kindergarten teacher post YOLO (you only live once)? Or can a priest say “not my circus, not my monkeys”?

The abuse of using super cool quotes can also raise the standards we have.” A day without laughter is a day wasted” - Charlie Chaplin. What??? Seriously??? I know it sounds good but it doesn't mean you should actually laugh each day, because we are humans and we have bad days and good days. How would good days be good, if there were not bad ones? So a day without laughter is good and for sure it's not wasted because it makes you appreciate the days that are good. We can't actually laugh each day and it is okay if we don't because we do need emotional diversity and we can't skip from laughing to crying very fast. Besides that, close your eyes and imagine a person that laughs all the time, crazy right?

Raising the standards way too high makes it really hard to achieve, which in time will make us really depressed, with a low self esteem.

My point is stop throwing a selfie with a quote, read very well and think what the quote really means and in which context it should be used or else you might end up like this really cute naïve girl posting “Intelligence is running after me, but I'm faster” she really had no idea what she was saying, she just thought it sounded really cool.

#2017 #stop #quote abuse # not so smart

You Are What You Love Pascal Bruckner's "Evil Angels"

Laura Andros, II, CRP

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Raluca Galița

I am Laura and I am a bookaholic. The addiction I have manifests itself in irresistible attractions towards books and the themes discussed between their pages. Often, the characters involved in the story manage to enchant me, as well, being very similar to my personality or living familiar situations, which allows me either to find answers, or to comfort my inner ocean of senses.

A book I recently enjoyed and which I highly recommend brought to life feelings buried a long time ago, memories that I never wanted to break out. I believe you know how a special book feels like, it is ten times more powerful, more decisive. Only wonderful words can describe the book that moved me to the depth of my soul, this is the book that I wanted to write myself. And of course, being now my favorite, it is matchless.

Written by Pascal Bruckner, "Evil Angels", with the original French title "Lunes de fiel", tells the story of two couples, caught on a passenger ship, heading from Marseille to Istanbul. Two passionate impulses, two narrators, the story is passed from one man to another. The book shows, subtly, the tumultuous and fiery history of Franz and Rebecca, in comparison with Didier and Beatrice's lifeless union that faces the crisis of the modern couple. Meeting Rebecca, Didier sees in her shining eyes the unrestrained attraction for the beauty she possesses, a charm his own fiancée lacks. But the thing he doesn't know is that Rebecca is not exactly the bright image of an oriental enchantress, she is able and will cut as easily as she was once cut. Franz, Rebecca's husband, trapped in a wheelchair, promises to give his wife as a present for a night, if Didier is willing to hear their story. This is how their 5 days-voyage turns into a glance to past, a crack in the ideal like a ceramics present that changes dramatically the future of the four characters, all affected by the encounter.

Let's start with the beginning.

Scene/Day 1: Didier meets Rebecca. Being foolishly attracted to the young-oriental lady, he thinks to reject her, only because of the Beatrice's presence, his fiancée, but never, actually, suppressing his insane desire. The image of Rebecca lures him in a crafty trap her own husband has prepared. To spend a minute more in her company, Didier is now a prisoner between Rebecca and Franz, who wants to tell him the story of their couple and how unusual and colourful they were, making him see the grey, defunct couple he is in. Franz and Rebecca met 5 years before, he was older, she was 18. A young and beautiful child, with oriental looks, naïve and loveable, Rebecca falls in love with the mature doctor Franz. Their intimacy, the emotion that grows between them is as radiant as the sun. Rebecca is the most delicious, gracious, sensual woman he has ever met. Her glance, her movements, her way of loving becomes his addiction. She is different every day and his only wish is to relish forever her scent and taste her savoury lips.

Scene/Day2: But after two years of loving Rebecca, Franz realizes he wants back his liberty. He wants to attend parties surrounded by other beautiful women, he rejects attachment and commitment and now Rebecca turns out to be a torture for him. He decides to get rid of the burden and chases away his wife, treating her like a useless fabric, but she doesn't leave. He comes home accompanied by "Mesdames" he paid, insulting Rebecca and comparing her to them or even insisting she watches all his dirty actions. She accepts anything except to leave. They fight, they scream, things get broken, Rebecca is violently beaten, still she doesn't go away. All the misery Franz did towards her personality, all the discrimination about her (she was a Jewish hairstylist, not born in France, she never studied), the insults and the palms she received, Rebecca suffered in silence, because she loved him. She accepted any abuse, but to be with her lover. "Be with any woman, but don't leave me" (Rebecca)

To send her away somehow and regain his space, Franz organizes a trip. They get on a ship, Rebecca being grateful he finally changed and understood how much she loved him. He tells Rebecca he goes to check the luggage and he never comes back. Rebecca is left alone on the ship and disappears from Franz's life for almost a year.

Maybe now will be the convenient time to explain my feelings that burst out during the reading. I noticed Rebecca was spiritually and psychologically very attached to that temporary character in her life. Franz demolished her inner youth and outside beauty, her confidence and even her joy. And I realize there is a great number of women, who are subjugated by their partner's wish, but what life do they live? I have seen lovely, sweet girls, in love with their dreams and, at the same time, gloomed by a sharp wickedness. I gave myself time to contemplate, to remember my past experiences and I knew I didn't want to go back to the "state of someone's false love slave". Rebecca lost, in the shadow of her ephemeral lover, every single smile, thought, hope, erasing day by day her life's brilliance. Through Rebecca I was taken back to my past, where, once, I myself drowned in a lie with honey taste. I was totally drunk with his charm, his presence, I required his perfume and his touch along with my every breath. I danced on his songs, dressed in his favourite colours, played the characters he asked, belonging entirely to him. I used to laugh frankly, deeply in love, being grateful for this handsome man in my life, but standing on the edge of the abyss, of a disaster.

I was living a heavenly enthusiasm, so I never wanted to leave. I was too much in love, he was pretty much my world. I never realized then I was sitting at a table where love was no more served, I had a relationship that was dampening me on the inside. To make the incision less painful, he pushed me away. I begged and implored, it didn't work. Then I struggled to erase, to forgive, to be happy as a child, again. Only I know how painful was to feel my young, fragile heart torn apart, learning what love is. But love will never mean attachment. And more, it will never truly mean abuse and punishment. When someone loves you, they support, encourage and trust you. But you don't suppress your personality or your vocation because someone steps on them. You support each other and grow together.

Reading "Lunes de fiel", I realized I was far away from the past and that I don't belong there anymore. I survived and I still believe in love. Rebecca did the same, but she won a revenge. What she did, how she acted, what she said and how Franz woke up in a wheelchair, but, even more, what happened to Didier and Beatrice and why he ended up in a prison because of those too, you will discover by reading the book I recommend. You will be shocked!

In the end, there's only one more idea I want to mention. In life, everything matters: your family, your studies, your lovers, but nothing matters more than you, your happiness and the freedom of your soul. You can and you will stand up straight, because a woman who loves and values herself, gets in this life everything she wants!



Toni Morrison's "Recitatif" – a Recital beyond the Race

Daniela Angheluş, III, RE

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciu

Toni Morrison's only short story is a type of writing which exploits postmodernity ambiguities, but also introduces an ethical issue as old as the hills – tolerance and lack of prejudice.

While reading the story, the idea that intrigued me the most was the ambiguity of race. From the beginning, Twyla, the protagonist, makes us aware of the fact that her new roommate from the orphanage, Roberta, is "a girl from a whole other race" than hers, but none of their races is specified: most probably one is white and one is black. Because I couldn't match them with their race, it was quite confusing for me to follow the action but at the same time it led me to a prejudgment-free way of reading, as I couldn't attribute their features and actions to their race.

I found it really interesting that throughout the story I could identify both of the girls with both races – sometimes I thought that Twyla was black and Roberta was white and sometimes I thought the opposite. For example, when Twyla met Roberta for the first time, her attitude and her mother's comments about the other race ("they never washed their hair and they smelled funny") made me think that she is the white one, but when their mothers came to see them, the superior attitude that Roberta's mother had when she met Twyla and her mother, Mary, and the refusal of shaking hands with them made me think that Roberta is the white one ("Roberta's mother looked down at me and then looked down at Mary too"). These two similar attitudes were attributed to both races, which might mean that race is not a valid criterion for characterizing a person, no matter how close they seem to be to the stereotypes of that race.

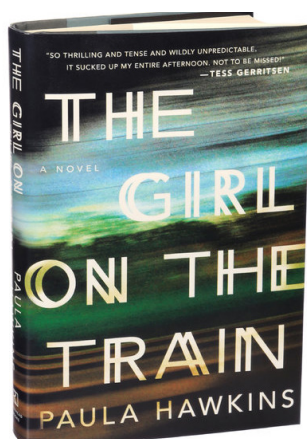


I truly like the way in which Toni Morrison wrote a story about race, without saying anything about it. We only know that there are people of different races, but we have no clue about their race – so what we can see in this story is just people, who may look different but are so alike. Be human, be free! Just be!

“The Girl on the Train” by Paula Hawkins

Ioana Popescu, III, EF

Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciuc



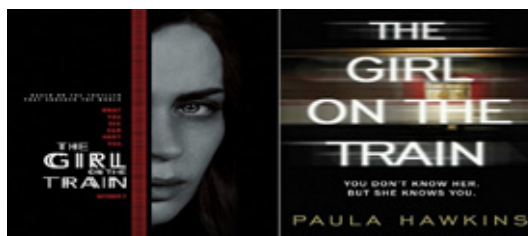
Everyone who has read this book sees it as an echo of *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn, both of them illustrating through their characters people that are closer to the real versions instead of trying to build perfection. In *The Girl on the Train* the characters are flawed, just like in real life; each of them has their own draw-backs, obsessions and addictions. The complexity of the characters throughout the book makes the readers doubt each of them, trying to unravel the real personalities that are hidden under fake appearances and idyllic first encounters.

This narrative of the book is skilfully told through the eyes of the three main characters whose lives cross paths – all of them being women. The most important one is Rachel, followed by Megan and Anna. Our first encounter with Rachel is on her daily commute by train home from London and although she may seem as a typical worker going home after work, she has four cans of pre-mixed gin and tonic in her bag. This small detail of her journey makes it clear for the readers that she's an alcoholic, a fact that will play an important role in the thickening of the plot.

We become passengers of the same train taking her home, going with her along the backs of the houses in her old neighbourhood, and we learn about her ex-husband Tom and his new wife Anna and their neighbours, who Rachel named Jess and Jason. Because she can't bear to look at her old house, she develops an obsession with the other couple which she considers perfect. The action of the book starts when Jess – who was actually called Megan disappears and Rachel tries to talk to the police about it but is dismissed as unreliable due to her alcohol abuse problem which makes her prone to blackouts.

Through her book, Paula Hawkins manages to emphasize the unreliability of fixed identities and pre-conceptions – putting in contrast Rachel, who is self-pitying and overweight with a drinking habit, the idealized wife Megan and Anna who stands triumphantly in Rachel's place. Also, the men of the book, Rachel's ex-husband Tom and the presumably grieving husband, Scott, have their places and identities on shifting sands. As we go further in the book, we realize that, just as in real life, people are not always what they seem to be.

The intertwining of timeframes and perspectives that Hawkins uses skilfully in her book thicken the plot and build considerable suspense, while also giving us feelings of pity and empathy for a not-so-common central character. This book is a true life experience, and makes us try to understand its characters instead of judging them. We live in a life of appearances and misconceptions, fact wonderfully contoured in Hawkins' book. The trust is found in the most uncommon and less expected places, making the readers more tolerant and open-minded to new ways of interpreting real-life situations that may look crystal clear at a first glance.



**“And if...” by Mihai Eminescu
(translation)**

Ioana Popescu, III, EF
Coordinator: PhD Lecturer Andreia-Irina Suciu



And if the branches tap my windows
And poplars start to shiver
It's to have you in my thoughts
And slowly bring you nearer.

And if the stars shine on the pond
Lighting its blackest corners
It's for my soul to heal its wound,
Calming my thought's deep waters.

And if the heavy clouds still part
Leaving the moon all gleaming
It's to forever fill my heart
With your soft face's lining.

*Și dacă ramuri bat îngeam
Și se cutremur plopilor,
E ca în minte să te am
Și-ncet să te apropii.*

*Și dacă stele bat în lac
Adîncu-I luminîndu-l,
E ca durerea mea s-o-mpac
Înseninîndu-mi gândul.*

*Și dacă norii deși se duc
De iese-n luciuluna,
E ca amîntesă-mi aduc
De tine-ntotdeauna.*