

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE MADRID
FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS
DEPARTAMENTO DE LINGÜÍSTICA GENERAL, LENGUAS MODERNAS,
LÓGICA Y FILOSOFÍA DE LA CIENCIA, TEORÍA DE LA LITERATURA Y
LITERATURA COMPARADA

WITH DARK, ROSE-COLOURED GLASSES:
GOTHIC, QUEER AND INTERTEXTUAL LABYRINTHS IN
THE NOVELS BY LOUISE WELSH

PhD THESIS

Author: Eduardo García Agustín
Supervisor: Julia Salmerón Cabañas

May, 2014

I am writing this under an appreciable mental strain, since by tonight I shall be no more.

(H.P. Lovecraft, "Dagon")

PRIOR. Butch. You get butch. (*Imitating.*) 'Hi Cousin Doris, you don't remember me I'm Lou, Rachel's boy.' Lou, not Louis, because if you say Louis they'll hear the sibilant S.

(Tony Kushner, *Angels in America*)

Soft kitty,
Warm kitty,
Little ball of fur.
Happy kitty,
Sleepy kitty,
Purr, purr, pur-r-r.

(*The Big Bang Theory*)

INDEX

INDEX OF FIGURES	7
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	9
INTRODUCTION	11
PART ONE. LOUISE WELSH, WITH DARK, ROSE-COLOURED GLASSES	21
Louise Welsh, now and here	23
1. WITH DARK GLASSES	35
2. WITH ROSE-COLOURED GLASSES	75
PART TWO. INTO THE LABYRINTHS	117
At the entrance to the labyrinths	119
3. THE GOTHIC LABYRINTHS	131
3.1. Gothicising time	144
3.2. Gothicising space	147
3.3. Gothicising selves	157
3.3.1. Lovecraftian characters	159
3.3.2. Ghosts	161
3.3.3. Doppelgängers	167
3.3.4. Vampires	175
3.3.5. Demons and magic	182

4. THE QUEER LABYRINTHS	191
4.1. Queering gazes	198
4.2. Queering couples	222
4.3. Queering femininities	237
5. THE INTERTEXTUAL LABYRINTHS	251
5.1. Intertexting language	280
5.2. Intertexting signs	293
5.3. Intertexting photography	301
CONCLUSIONS	315
LOUISE WELSH, THEN AND THERE	333
WORKS CITED	361

INDEX OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Todorov's linear model of the fantastic (Todorov, 1973: 44)	44
Figure 2: Brooke-Rose's circular model the fantastic, (Brooke-Rose, 1983:84)	45
Figure 3: Cornwell's model of the fantastic (Cornwell, 1990: 39)	46
Figure 4: The paraxial area. (Jackson, 1981: 19)	49
Figure 5: Kern's labyrinth (Aguirre, 2002: 22)	122
Figure 6: The map of William Wilson's World. (<i>The Bullet Trick</i> , n.p.)	156

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The first person I would like to mention in these acknowledgments is Dr Julia Salmerón, whom I deservedly admire as a scholar and a person. In her, I have found both scholar and personal support, advice and encouragement. I feel deeply proud of her having been my supervisor in this PhD thesis. It has been a pleasure to have traversed so many labyrinths together since we embarked on our closeted journey in that gothic bar near the British Council... and those still to come.

Another person I would like to mention in this section is Louise Welsh. It was a pleasure to meet her in Glasgow and to enjoy the incredible conversation that eventually became the section titled “Louise Welsh, Then and There.” I hope we can soon share a glass of Rioja.

I would also like to thank Dr Eulalia Piñeiro, Dr Antonio Ballesteros, Dr Ana González-Rivas, Dr Juan Antonio Suárez and Dr Lucas Platero for agreeing to be part of my Doctoral Thesis Tribunal.

This PhD thesis would have lacked its rose-coloured touch had it not been for my stay at the University of Toronto in 2008 thanks to a Graduate Student Scholarship of the International Council for Canadian Studies and the sponsoring letters by Dr Terrie Goldie and Dr Linda Hutcheon. There, I also had the chance to meet John Greyson, Stephen Andrews, Richard Fung, Tim McCaskell and Kerri Sakamoto. All of you have also been present in the writing of this research.

This final version would not have been possible without the patient proof-reading of Callum McHardy, my first link with Scotland and, without any doubt, my best friend.

Even though it is difficult to summarize in a few lines what they mean to me, I would like to thank my family for many things; among others, their love, support and faith in this thesis. I also know it is not a very *riojana* thing to say, but I do love all of you. To my parents, Berta and Primitivo, because I know for sure that most of the things I have achieved and done in my life have only been possible because they have always been there and I cannot thank them enough. To my brother, Óscar, because he has always been an unconditional support in my life and an example of how dreams can be chased and made true. To my aunts and uncle, Juli, Rosa and Antonio who have always been present in my life, in hard times as well as in good times, and I know they will always be there. To my grandmother Julia, whom I have been missing

so much for so many years. To Lise, the opening of my world to a new language. To my niece Kira and my nephews Marcos and Linus, new stories that are to be written. Last, but not least, to Rafa, for all those weekends at home that will be rewarded.

INTRODUCTION

In his article, “Writing Reading,” Roland Barthes points out a way of reading a novel, a “book” as he writes, that differs widely from the image people have of being immersed in the act of reading or having their attention absorbed in the reading process: “Has it never happened, as you were reading a book, that you kept stopping as you read, not because you weren’t interested, but because you were: because of a flow of ideas, stimuli, associations? In a word, haven’t you ever happened *to read while looking up from your book?*” (Barthes, 1989: 29, italics in the original). Rather than focussing on the book and being immersed in the act of reading, he proposes a completely different way of reading: one where reading is not a continuous action from the beginning till its end but an active approach to reading in which the reader’s mind is triggered by the text itself. Thus, readers feel forced to connect the book with that “flow of ideas, stimuli, associations” which does not necessarily need to be literary references, but images, films, TV programmes, music or even one’s own personal experiences. Were Barthes still alive, he would have experienced first-hand how ICT has managed to change people’s reading habits: in the case of e-books and tablets, readers can stop their reading action and, for example, look up any word they do not know by just clicking on it, opening the corresponding menu and clicking on the options of “definition” or even “translation.” Furthermore, there are some texts, namely blogs and wikis, where some of the key concepts, names of relevant people to the subject, places and so on become hyperlinks that, once clicked on, open new texts that, in turn, are open to other new texts by means of their own hyperlinks. This new type of reading has become so widely spread and entrenched in contemporary society that it is also difficult to read a text – or even a proper book – without feeling the need to google certain terms in order to get a better picture of settings, literary references or proper names that catch a reader’s attention and makes them look up from their book. Obviously, readers can make use of their imagination and picture in their mind settings such as the island of Lismore in Louise Welsh’s *Naming the Bones*. However, if they google “island of Lismore,” one of the settings in that novel, and click on the option “images,” they can see photographs of a sunny, green, idyllic place dominated by its overwhelming castle and surrounded by a calm, deep blue Loch Linnhe. These photographs of the real Lismore conflict with the island of Lismore portrayed in Louise Welsh’s novel. Whereas these photographs, which are thought to reflect reality

as it is and to construct signs that stand for reality, show these sunny landscapes, Murray – the main character in the novel – experiences a different Lismore. In his walking back to Mrs Dunn’s Bed and Breakfast, “Murray fell twice on the way down the hill, [...] the rain came on as Murray had known it would [...] the wind seemed to attack him from all sides, the rain swirling around him, blowing into his face, clouding his vision” (*NTB*, 220, 221). Furthermore, the island is a place where some people feel an inevitable need to commit suicide; there are buried bones of a baby girl sacrificed in a ritual act while those who performed it were high on drugs; its limekilns hide some valuable archaeological remains but they also engulf people that accidentally tread on them. Readers are well-aware that the latter depiction is a fictional, literary description of the island. On the other hand, this fictionalized island of Lismore becomes, in the readers’ mind, more realistic than the one shown in the photographs up to the point that the darker, windier and rainier island constitutes a more realistic portrayal of the island for readers. Even Louise Welsh herself is so conscious of this that she writes in the acknowledgments to her novel that Lismore “is a beautiful island, rich in wildlife and archaeology, situated in Loch Linnhe on the west coast of Scotland. The islanders are friendly, the B&Bs are well kept and welcoming” (*NTB*, 391) and she provides the official webpage of the island for any reader interested in discovering the real Lismore. Both are versions of the same place, though Louise Welsh’s focuses on its dark-side rather than on the bright one. The same applies to any other setting in Louise Welsh’s novels, be they Glasgow, Edinburgh, London or Berlin: they are all more real than any photograph from their corresponding official webpages.¹ Those places become, thus, more difficult to traverse as they do not resemble the ideal images born in the readers’ minds after seeing the photographs. Just as characters get lost in the dark, windy and rainy paths or streets, readers do also stray in such traverses and, altogether, discover that the fictional settings do portray the real settings in a more realistic way than photographs can.

The aim of this research, its actual thesis, is that the novels by Louise Welsh present different labyrinths that characters do traverse and get lost in and, by the same process, readers do also get engaged in the same action. In both cases, characters and

¹ Continuing with the example of the island of Lismore, in www.islandoflismore.com it can be read that the photographs were taken in the month of July, perhaps as a kind of warning (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

readers discover that the labyrinthine understanding of reality becomes, as in the above-mentioned case of the island of Lismore, more real than any other official version of reality. The choice of the traversed labyrinths in this research – the Gothic, the Queer and the Intertextual – as well as the approach adopted do answer some methodological criteria that arise and are rooted on some other personal criteria.

As will be analysed in Part One, there is a proposed gothic mode that tinges the reality of the characters in the novels, which is translated into this research as “dark glasses” mirroring Terrie Goldie’s proposed rose-coloured glasses. The darkening effect of such glasses does actually unveil what is below-the-surface real, resembling the abovementioned example of the photographic and the literary island of Lismore. This darkening of reality acquires a different tone by actually wearing the rose-coloured glasses to perform a queer, rather than homotextual, reading. These two approaches not only add new elements of analysis but do actually complement each other: in both of them, there is an emphasis on the role of the reader to actually see and distinguish what is sometimes hiding in the different signs of the texts. Furthermore, there are several studies that relate the gothic motifs with the understanding of human sexuality as both appealing and frightening, as in the case of vampires, or the dark space of the shadow inhabited by the gothic monsters and the queer individuals alike. Finally, the use of the dark, rose-coloured glasses has the implication that both Gothic and Queer are understood in this research as a “mode” in the manner that Rosemary Jackson (1981: 35) describes the fantastic: both of them are present in the novels that constitute the corpus of research and they can be read as such when wearing the proposed glasses. However, this dark, rose-coloured reading of the novels does not aim, by any means, at being exclusive to any other possible readings.

Obviously, the two proposed readings of the novels could be applied to the novels of Louise Welsh because they allow both a Gothic and a Queer approach to them. In one of the many conversations on contemporary writers, Dr García Agustín, from Aalborg University (Denmark) strongly recommended her work (amongst other British writers) as it had been highly praised by the specialized media and awarded with several prizes. From the first time I read her first novel, *The Cutting Room*, I felt I was constantly reading while looking up from the book. There were undisguised literary references to Edgar Allan Poe and Robert Louis Stevenson in the names of characters or references to their works, but there were also some other veiled references to a Lovecraftian atmosphere; its pages were inhabited by gay men, cross-

genders, burlesque girls and evil characters that get sexually aroused by corpses of beautiful women. Furthermore, the references were not limited to the literary world but also to the cinematographic world, like Sandy, one of the transvestites at the Chelsea Lounge, who is an Olivia Newton-John look-alike, or McKindless's house that looks like Bates Motel from Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960); and musical references, or rather quotes, of songs by Janis Joplin or Louis Armstrong interacting with Rilke's feelings when he listens to them. Each new novel by her did propose new time and place settings, new characters and even new sexualities, such as those of straight men like William Wilson and Murray Watson, or Jane, a pregnant lesbian woman. However, they all appeared to develop and take the dark, rose-coloured readings of *The Cutting Room* even further. As it is explained in Section 1, there is a strong impetus both in literary praise and marketing advertising of her novels – and even in the academic research on her novels – to classify her as a crime-fiction novelist. This contrasts with her emphasis on the gothic elements in her novels and the fact that she is not just a female but a lesbian writer, which is sometimes alluded to, if so, by making some reference to her partner – and also writer – Zoë Strachan. Julia Briggs points out in her article “The Ghost Story” that it is quite remarkable that there have always been many women writers that have written both gothic and ghost stories. She states that:

One obvious explanation for this is that women have taken up popular and saleable kinds of writing because they have so often been driven by economic motives [...] But it may also be that women writers have felt some special affinity with freer and more imaginative modes of expression: Gothic, in particular, often includes some element of rebellion against or resistance to existing social forms (Briggs, 2001: 128).

As a fiction writer with a shade of Gothic, Louise Welsh manages to present bluntly some elements that remain hidden or ignored not only in her fictional reality but in the real world. In a bourgeoised society, she unveils the world of prostitution, violence against women, child abuse or state conspiracies, just to cite a few examples. Besides, as a lesbian writer, she also unveils the existence of a queer world that is not necessarily part of a dark underworld but quite the opposite. In it, clear-cut categories such as straight and gay become blurred: men dress as women without questioning their own masculinity, women picture themselves as men in drag, straight men are read as effeminate, lesbian women want to be biological mothers by any means, husbands are aroused when they photograph their wives having sex with some colleagues of theirs. Furthermore, there is a darker, queer world of cruising in open

spaces, snuff films and rich people willing to pay to witness a girl die, which is strongly connected to the already gothicised world. Consequently, the choice of Louise Welsh's novels both allowed a dark, rose-coloured reading and, altogether, triggered such a reading. Even though she is also a short-story writer, this research focuses only on her five published novels, as including short stories would embark this text on the act of traversing further labyrinths. It is relevant to mention here that in the quotes from each of the five novels, acronyms are used in order to facilitate the literary context of each quote. Therefore, the novels and their corresponding acronyms are the following: *The Cutting Room* (TCR), *Tamburlaine Must Die* (TMD), *The Bullet Trick* (TBT), *Naming the Bones* (NTB) and *The Girl on the Stairs* (TGOTS).

One of the decisions taken in the writing of this research was not to include a short summary of each novel in the introduction to Part One, entitled "Louise Welsh, here and now." There are several reasons for that: on the one hand, too brief a summary of the novels, rather than clarify, would simplify their plot to the extreme and it would imply the omission of characters or events that are discussed thoroughly in the different sections of the research. On the other hand, too detailed a summary would become too confusing in the innumerable recounts of events and characters, not to mention that the literary style and quality would remain way below the standard of Louise Welsh's own prose. Consequently, the final decision was to eliminate such summaries from the final version as characters are usually mentioned with a reference to the novel where they appear. With regard to the events described and analysed, it has been intended to create a coherent reading of them so that this research provides in itself a clear picture of the plot of the novels and what they are narrating.

With the dark, rose-coloured glasses on to read the novels by Louise Welsh, it is possible to distinguish three labyrinths that characters do traverse while trying to discover what is hidden behind: a disturbing, abject photograph, as in *The Cutting Room* and *The Bullet Trick*; some written texts, as in *Tamburlaine Must Die* and *Naming the Bones*; or a bruise on a girl's face, as in *The Girl on the Stairs*. In the act of trying to interpret such signs, characters do embark on a journey that shows them that reality is not as real as it apparently seems. The first labyrinth is constituted by different Gothic labyrinths and in it, reality becomes darkened: the present time becomes paralyzed by the haunting effects of the past, places turn gothicised and acquire a labyrinthine character and characters acquire some monster-like qualities.

As will further be developed in Section 3 of this research, characters either acquire some gothic qualities – such as Adia Kovalyova’s existence as a ghost in *The Cutting Room*, William Wilson becoming his own double in a Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde style in *The Bullet Trick* or Jane becoming a Berliner version of Rosemary, from *Rosemary’s Baby* in *The Girl on the Stairs* – or they are read by other characters as Gothic – Marlowe identifies Bayne with the Devil in *Tamburlaine Must Die* and Montgomery mistakes Sheila, his wife, for the ghost of her sister Gloria in *The Bullet Trick*. However, once they feel they have solved the reading of the triggering, disquieting signs, characters do realize that they cannot perceive the world as they did before traversing the Gothic labyrinths.

The second labyrinth in this research is that formed by the different queer labyrinths and it engages characters in labyrinths of gazes: everybody gazes at and is being gazed at, no matter whether directly or through lenses and mirrors. Some characters do expose themselves freely to such gazing, as William in his shows or Blaize in his theatre performances, but some others are unwillingly observed, as Murray Watson in *Naming the Bones* or Jane in her flat in Berlin. In all the cases, they are not objects to the gaze of others but they also become agents of gaze, with Rilke as an exponent, as he gazes at others in order to be gazed at, an act which indicates a mutual recognition of desire, with the help of his gaydar. The bourgeois coupling also becomes labyrinthine as it opens up to triangulations that lead to further triangulations where sexual desire is not necessarily their main drive: for example two brothers, such as the Watsons, find themselves as vertices of a triangle for the love and proper memory of their father in *Naming the Bones*. Finally, bodies do free enclosed binarisms such as man/woman, male/female, heterosexual/homosexual in their grotto-esque and performing characters.

In the third labyrinth it is possible to traverse several intertextual labyrinths. Characters do read signs that open up to other signs in a labyrinthine way that resembles the way hyperlinks work in webpages, as mentioned above. Their own stories are also understood under the prism of other intertextual references, as for example Poe’s or Stevenson’s, constantly quoted by many characters, or the very names of the main characters: Rilke, Marlowe, William Wilson, Watson and Jane and her son Boy. These intertextual hyperlinks are performed in the use of language, which can stray characters into further labyrinths, such as Jane’s problems with German as a foreign language or some of the inconclusive recounting of the events in

the police transcriptions in the case of all the main characters in the novels. Language, like bodies, acts and possesses a performative power which may disqualify and reinforce the derogative status of some individuals in society, such as gay and lesbian people. However, the latter can also appropriate those derogatory signs and vindicate them as signs of their own identity. Signs, in a wider sense, are thus open in turn, as there is not a univocal relation between signifiers and signifieds. “Queer” is an insult and a self-assumed identity, a photograph is a reflection of reality but it also stands for those who are absent in it and for a past time.

This research aims at pointing out that the traversing of those three labyrinths that, as well as the proposed gothic and queer modes, does not aim at being exclusive: there are certainly more labyrinths at play in the novels by Louise Welsh, such as the Scottish nationalist labyrinth, an identitarian issue that is tackled in most of the academic research on Louise Welsh, as it is pointed out in Part One of this research. Besides, the notion of labyrinth in this research goes beyond the reality inhabited by the characters in the novels. The very writing of this text may sometimes become labyrinthine in itself as it apparently digresses from the main point but it only does that “apparently.” Examples of this can be observed in Part One and the labyrinthine traversing of genres and categories that even leads to the realm of Science Fiction to highlight the importance of the reader’s role in the gothic reading of her novels, or the explanation of Linda Hutcheon’s concept of “historiographic metafiction” in Part Two to note the relation between reality and fiction and how the insertion of some real characters or event in a fictional work does imply a different reading on the reader’s part.

Moreover, the three proposed and analysed labyrinths do also coincide in the relevance granted to the readers: the gothic and the queer modes rely on the reader’s ability to actually read the signs, to acknowledge the gothic and queer elements present in the text, or even to read in the texts some gothic and queer elements that, perhaps, were not intended by Louise Welsh’s to be read as such but can actually be read so. Intertextuality, in turn, also relies on the reader’s recognition of the intertextual references, as well as the possibilities that readers feel impelled not to read the novels in a linear way but in a hyperlink-fashion. An example of this is how Louise Welss makes use of the word Crippen, a signifier which may be empty of signified for most of her non-British readers but whose intentional search for the real referent opens the texts to the life of real Dr Hawley Harvey Crippen. Learning about

the life of this real person, as it will be explained in Section 5 of this research, even allows an intertextual reading of his own life as if he were a character in a Poe-like tale. In the three cases, readers are expected to become active participants in the act of reading. Consequently if, unknowingly in some situations, characters do traverse different labyrinths and get strayed in them, readers alike accompany them on such a journey, searching for clues that can explain what characters are undergoing but getting, altogether, lost in the very same labyrinths. In an intertextual way towards the reader's reality, it proves rather difficult not to discover in the quiet realm of their real lives that their own reality is, somehow, traversed by some Gothic, Queer and Intertextual labyrinths; the drug-addicts awaiting in Embajadores Square (Madrid) for a cheap ride to the Cañada Real in order to get their dose are suddenly read with the dark glasses on, as modern, urban versions of zombies, just as Rita in *The Cutting Room*; whenever the news mentions the dismantling of a brothel where women were forced to prostitute themselves, they become, in the reader's minds, modern ghosts trapped in a haunted place; the demonstrations in France against gay marriage shows how early twenty-first century society is still trapped by the still extant heteronormativity that grants power to some people against other by applying the criteria of who are normal and who are not. Inevitably, readers find themselves deep in the labyrinths with the dark, rose-coloured glasses on where everything seems to be interlinked: the reading of the works by some other contemporary authors from other nationalities, such as Michael Chabon or Betina González; TV series such as *American Horror Story* or *The Following*, which intertexts to the literary world of Edgar Allan Poe and whose soundtrack is mainly gothic rock; new readings of cross-gendering, such as in films like *Romeos* (Sabine Bernardi, 2011) and *Laurence Anyways* (Xavier Dolan, 2012); new modern, psychological vampires, as in *Stoker* (Chan-wook Park, 2013), once again intertexted to Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897); the photographic work by artist Cindy Sherman and her multiple constructions of her own self; exhibitions such as *Ariadne's Thread*, curated by Dr Francisco Jarauta.

In order to traverse all these labyrinths I have made use of a variety of different sources. Firstly, some essential, foundational works on Gothic, Queer and intertextuality by influential authors such as Tzvetan Todorov, Rosemary Jackson, David Punter, Fred Botting, Julia Kristeva, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Butler or Roland Barthes, amongst others. They are used as the basis for the construction of this research and complemented by other contemporary scholars that provide a more

contemporary approach to all those fields. Amongst this group, it is relevant to note the work by Maurizio Ascari, *A Counter-History of Crime Fiction. Supernatural, Gothic, Sensational*, with his questioning of the closed literary canons and the emphasis on the reading process to make connections that go beyond genres. Another relevant text is José Estebán Muñoz's *Cruising Utopia. The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. In it, he locates the Queer in a distant, future then and there that has been frequently been denied to inhabit and he states the fact that the Queer still has a future potentiality. Both these texts do also propose a multidisciplinary reading of their own subjects by not focusing only on literary works but also on films, music and even photography. There is another group of sources that do not fall within the realm of literary criticism but within that of sociology, mainly in Section 4. Some examples are Kendig and Maresca's research "Guessing Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual's Ability to Accurately Estimate their Gaydar" or the research by Margaret Rosario on the behaviour of femmes and butches. Their use is intended to connect the proposed literary labyrinths with the reader's real world in order to show that such labyrinths are also present in real life. There is a group of sources whose origin is the internet: literary reviews from newspapers, but also newspaper articles on diverse topics such as Crippen, online dictionaries, blogs and internet forum that do actually become modern, ICT hyperlinks to this academic research. Finally, this labyrinthine, academic research leads to its final chapter, which is beyond the conclusion and whose title is "Louise Welsh, then and there" in homage to Muñoz's text and also as a voice beyond my own research: my interview with Louise Welsh on the 16th of August, 2013, which may constitute the core of these labyrinths or perhaps an invitation to enter new ones.

PART ONE

**LOUISE WELSH, WITH DARK, ROSE-COLOURED
GLASSES**

Louise Welsh, here and now

Before putting the dark, rose-coloured glasses on, it appears relevant to outline a brief biography of Louise Welsh. I do not intend to attempt to trace some biographical facts in her novels – though it is difficult even for Louise Welsh herself not to let her real self transpire in the pages of her novels. In the 2010 interview to Ben Allan, Louise Welsh explains that her depiction of Berlin in *The Bullet Trick* has nothing to do with her experience there, as she visited Berlin only after the novel had been published, and states that “it’s always tempting to search for the autobiography within the novel, but it’s not relevant in this case” (Allan, 2010). Despite her clear opinion on the matter, Allan insists on the topic when he asks her the following question: “Are there any specific characters or incidents in *The Bullet Trick* that have been grafted straight from your experience?” Her answer was that: “That’s a very nice compliment, but, no, as I said above, there is really no element of autobiography in any of my novels” (Allan, 2010). However, there is a point in her statement: “it’s not relevant in this case.” Two years later, in 2012, she released *The Girl on the Stairs*. In it, she narrates the sense of alienation of a Scottish lesbian girl living in Berlin and who used to own a bookshop when living in Great Britain. Perhaps this is pure chance, or was intentional, in the only novel she has written with a woman as a main character so far². The aim of this section is to point out at some of her most relevant biographical facts and the different awards and scholarships she has received in her literary career to contextualize her work.

Louise Welsh was born on the 1st February, 1965 in London. Her father was a sales representative, according to Freeman (2006), and he worked for the RAF, according to MacLeod (2012). Despite the differences in the biographical facts, in both interviews there is an emphasis on her interest in reading from an early age and the fact that she used to go to local libraries throughout her childhood. She explains that: “because we moved around so much, we didn’t own many books, so we relied on libraries a lot. I’m pretty passionate about libraries” (Freeman, 2006). She liked reading classics, such as *Black Beauty* or *Treasure Island*, but she also enjoyed some gothic novels such as *Dracula* or *The Turn of the Screw*. As she tells Freeman, “I read

² The main character in her forthcoming novel, *A Lovely Way to Burn*, is a girl called Stevie Flint, once more an ambiguous name as Leslie in *The Cutting Room*. Stevie may refer to a woman, as Stevie Nicks from the English band Fleetwood Mac, or to a man, as singer Stevie Wonder or the English wrestler Stevie Flint (perhaps yet another intertextual link?).

in a newspaper that the first adult emotion you have is being scared, that ‘ooh, I’m not enjoying this, but I am’. I guess what I really love are books of sensation. As a child you look for books that give you feelings that aren’t available to you, like fear or sentimentality” (Freeman, 2006). Returning to her father’s job, regardless of whether it was as a sales representative or in the RAF, it implied travelling and that is why she attended several schools until her family eventually settled in Edinburgh, where her parents started to work as teachers. When she left school, she decided to find a job but only lasted eighteen months until she decided to study History at the University of Glasgow as, in her own words, “I wasn’t a very good student, but I did love researching, which I still do” (Freeman, 2006). Perhaps she was not a very good student but the truth is that she obtained her degree and, after that, she opened a second-hand bookshop, called Downside Books, in Glasgow. One of the best memories she has from that time is that “it was like when I was a child – I just read very eclectically, and sometimes without a great deal of discernment. I literally just read what was on the shelves” (Freeman, 2006). In that time she used to write short stories, but the moment that changed her life was when she applied for a creative writing course at the University of Glasgow. She did enjoy the experience, which proved highly positive in her writing career, as it gave her “an awful lot of confidence. For the first time I began to think maybe something could happen. Also, it puts you in a community of writers so you can talk about writing” (Freeman, 2006).

In 2002 she published her first novel, *The Cutting Room*, which received very positive praise by the literary world and won, amongst others, the Crime Writers’ Association John Creasey Memorial Dagger, the Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award, the BBC’s Underground Award and she was chosen by *The Guardian* as one of Britain’s best first novelists. Her second novel, *Tamburlaine Must Die*, – rather a *novella* – was published in 2004, which was adapted for stage in 2007 by Kenny Miller, who had also adapted Louise Welsh’s first novel. With the help of a Hawthornden Fellowship in 2005, Louise Welsh wrote her third novel, *The Bullet Trick*, which was published in 2006. In 2007 and 2008, she received a stipendium at the Internationales Künstlerhaus Villa Concordia in Bamberg (Germany) and in 2008 she was granted the Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship, thanks to which she wrote her fourth novel, *Naming the Bones*, published in 2010. In her writing of her fifth novel, *The Girl on the Stairs*, she benefited from a month-long residency at Villa Hellebosch in Flanders in 2009 and a residency at the University of Iowa International

Writers' Program in 2011. Between 2011 and 2012, she was writer in residence for the University of Glasgow and Glasgow School of Art. Currently, she is about to publish her sixth novel, *A Lovely Way to Burn*³ and has an office in The Briggait, which she uses as a workplace for her writing. Her work has been translated into 20 languages. However, in Spain, as it will be explained below, it has hardly had an impact as only two of her novels have been translated: *The Cutting Room* (*El cuarto oscuro*, Anagrama) in 2004 and *The Bullet Trick* (*El truco de la bala*, Anagrama) in 2008. For several major British broadsheets, she is not only known as a novelist, but also as a short story writer. According to www.louisewelsh.com:

she has also written for the stage, most recently *Panic Patterns* (2010) and also in 2009, wrote the libretto for a fifteen minute opera *Remembrance Day*, music by Stuart MacRae, which was included in Scottish Opera's Five:15 series. She has also presented several radio features, most recently a five part series following in Edwin Muir's footsteps for BBC Radio 4, 'Welsh's Scottish Journey', and 'How to Commit a Murder' for BBC Radio Scotland, both produced by Louise Yeoman. So far, her last participation on a radio show was in BBC Brian Taylor's Big Debate on the 2nd August, 2013.

The scholarly interest aroused by the work of Louise Welsh, can be subdivided into three groups: the first one is that of academic articles that do not deal with her work specifically but they make reference of her as a contemporary, Scottish writer. The second group is that of articles devoted to her work, either in comparison with other writers or simply on her. Finally, there is a number of PhD theses that include her works in the corpus of research. In this section, I make no reference to the literary reviews her novels have received in the British newspapers as they will be used as starting points in Sections 1 and 2 of this research. Before starting with the analysis of some of the scholarly interest, it also seems important to point out how most of them deal, regardless the approach they apply, with Louise Welsh's first novel, *The Cutting Room*, even in such recent articles as Sage (2011).

Amongst the first group, there are some researchers that include Louise Welsh in their research mainly because she writes with Scotland as the setting for her novels and, consequently, they include her amongst some long lists of Scottish writers. In many of these articles, her name is linked to some classic authors, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, or to some of her contemporary writers, such as her partner, Zoë

³ Consequently, this novel cannot be part of this research. However, some reference to it is made in Section 2, Section 5 and in my interview to Louise Welsh which constitutes the final section of this research titled "Louise Welsh, Then and There."

Strachan, or Denisa Mina. For example, in 2005, Durie, Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie mention that, “although Glasgow perhaps still waits for a defining vision” (Durie et al., 2005: 49), there are two young novelists, Louise Welsh and Denise Mina that make use of that city as a setting for their novels (Durie et al, 2005: 49). Even though they do not mention it explicitly, they are referring to Welsh’s first novel, *The Cutting Room*, as the other novel she had published by the time they wrote their article was *Tamburlaine Must Die*, set in Elizabethan London. Another example is found in the article entitled “The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Collector of Scottish Books,” in which Shirey includes Welsh amongst his readings of Scottish literature, which does not only include classic writers such as Sir Walter Scott or James Hogg. As he explains, he got engaged in reading “from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes mysteries to the grimly realist detective fiction of Ian Rankin and Louise Welsh” (Shirey, 2006: 2-3). Kirsteen McCue, in turn, proposes an overview on publications since 1995 that shows the increasing interest in writings by Scottish women. McCue highlights the publishing work by Canongate⁴ as “the one Scottish publisher who is continuing to lead in the presentation of key texts by women nearer home” (McCue, 2003: 530) and she includes Louise Welsh, who had recently been awarded with the Saltire First Book Award *The Cutting Room* as both a work and a writer to bear in mind in and outside Scotland. To McCue, “this novel, about the gay Glasgow auctioneer, Rilke, who comes across a cache of pornographic photographs when he clears a dead man’s house, has created a huge amount of interest and is also in the running for this year’s [2002] £10,000 Guardian First Book Award” (McCue, 2003: 533). The award, however, went to *Everything is Illuminated* by Jonathan Safran Foer.

Bould, in turn, recounts how Louise Welsh was also considered, and eventually not included, in the 2003 *Granta* list of the twenty best young British authors. In his article, he quotes *Granta*’s editor, Ian Jack, making explicit reference to Louise Welsh and the sci-fi writer China Miéville: “Louise Welsh’s *The Cutting Room* is a fine crime novel set in Glasgow. China Miéville is an extraordinary writer of dark fantasy. In the end we rejected both. Personally, I was sorry to see Welsh go” (Bould, 2003: 394). Bould’s point is to illustrate how, despite the fact that many of the best British boom writers do master, and write, science fiction and fantasy, they

⁴ Canongate published Louise Welsh’s first four novels. *The Girl on the Stairs* was published by John Murray, which is also to publish Louise Welsh’s forthcoming trilogy.

tend to be eliminated from many lists, such as *Granta*'s, or they do not receive any important prizes, such as the Booker Prize that, according to him, "continues to be dominated by the variety of bourgeois realism" (Bould, 2003: 395). Therefore, what he aims at by quoting Ian Jack's words is to explain that if he has to choose between a writer of "*fine* crime fiction" and an "*extraordinary* writer of dark fantasy" (Bould, 2003: 394, my emphasis), he chooses the former. His defense of science fiction literature and its relation with Fantasy does not allow him to perceive the fantastic elements in Louise Welsh's novel. If only had he worn some dark glasses, he would also have recognized the Gothic in *The Cutting Room* and the fact that that particular novel by Louise Welsh does not fit in the "bourgeois realism" that wins all the British major prizes either.

In her article "Fictions of Communion: Cotemporary Scottish Prose in the Global Context" (2008), Jelinková tries to examine the importance of national identity as "a category of identification in contemporary Scottish literature" (Jelinková, 2008: 75). In her concluding paragraph, she states that national identity does not seem to be *en vogue* in the most recent writers, amongst who she mentions Louise Welsh and Zoë Strachan – Louise Welsh's partner – and she claims that if they happen to attempt to be concerned with national identity, "they do it in a tongue-in-cheek, ironic, light-hearted, even flippant way" (Jelinková, 2008: 79). Her opinion contrasts with that of other researchers, such as Kelly. In his article entitled "Literary Exchanges. Scotland, Europe and World Literature," Kelly argues the importance of Scottish writers, such as Sir Walter Scott, James Hogg and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (again) not only in British literature but also in World literature. He also attempts to address whether it is possible to talk about a national, Scottish literature. In order to do so, he proposes an overview of all the major literary writers, including not only novels but also poetry and drama. In the section devoted to "The Contemporary Scene: Fiction," he remarks that "Scottish fiction has had a far larger impact in translation than Scottish poetry, and, through the writing of popular authors such as Ian Rankin, Alexander McCall Smith and Louise Welsh has reached a vast audience" (Kelly, 2011: 9). In fact, the exhibition included amongst its many, various writers, Louise Welsh and her novels *The Cutting Room* and *Naming the Bones*. It is interesting to note here that, despite Kelly's opinion of the impact of some Scottish writers by means of translations of their works, the particular case of Louise Welsh in Spain rather contradicts his view, as it has been pointed out above. Only two of her novels have been translated into

Spanish by Susana Contreras for Anagrama and they hardly received any critical interest: only in different literary blogs but not in publications such as *Babelia* or *El Cultural*. It is interesting to note, though, that Alberto del Río published a review of *El cuarto oscuro* in *Lletra de Dona* (2004) where he states that the most outstanding feature of the novel was the extraordinary catalogue of marginal characters and the possibility of Rilke becoming a true, saga-like character once he has moved from Glasgow to Paris (Del Río, 2004, my translation⁵). The importance of such remarks is that, firstly, he coincides with other bloggers who highlight Welsh's mastery of character creation over her failed crime fiction plotting⁶, which relates with Section 1 of this research. Secondly, the open possibility of a future for Rilke also connects with the futurity of Queer proposed in Section 2 of this research.

Returning to the different articles that simply list Louise Welsh amongst other Scottish writers, it proves interesting to refer to a book with such a promising title as Monica Germanà's *Scottish Women's Gothic and Fantastic Writing: Fiction since 1978* (2010). In it, she only makes reference to Louise Welsh in two moments: the first one is when she points out in the foreword that Scotland is witnessing "the emergence of important writers such as Ali Smith, A. L. Kennedy, Louise Welsh and Denise Mina, whose voices have already achieved national and international recognition" (Germanà, 2010: 1-2). Even though it proves quite remarkable that she has written "the first critical work to bring together contemporary women's writing and the Scottish fantasy tradition" and the fact that "this study pioneers an in-depth investigation of largely neglected texts [...] as well as offering new readings of critically acclaimed texts" (Germanà, 2010: 2), it is also true that she devotes more space to Irvine Welsh than to Louise Welsh. The second time Louise Welsh is mentioned is, once again, next to Denise Mina and Germanà writes that:

that the works of contemporary Scottish women writers including Louise Welsh, Denise Mina and the later work of [Alison Louise] Kennedy may not overtly disclose a gender subtext, one could argue, may be the signal of a coming of age, the result of

⁵ In the original: "El extraordinario catálogo de personajes marginales de *El cuarto oscuro* —muchos de ellos sólo apuntados, pendientes de desarrollar— o el cambio final de Glasgow por París con un nuevo caso por delante, apuntan una voluntad de continuidad, de crear una saga de las aventuras del nuevo, ahora sí, detective Rilke."

⁶ For example, user Manuel in <http://unrinconapartado.es/wordpress/2010/08/el-cuarto-oscuro/>, writes that: "*El cuarto oscuro* estaba escrito para ser un libro de intriga, detectivesco. Pero en ese aspecto no está muy logrado, la verdad. La trama es bastante pobre, sin pocas sorpresas, y con un final rápido y algo desordenado que confunde al lector más que otra cosa. Sin embargo, donde cobra toda su fuerza, es en los personajes y la ambientación" (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

a newly acquired confidence that the work of Scottish female writing does not need justifying in terms of either national or gender identity” (Germanà, 2010: 176).

Ignoring whether Mina’s and Kennedy’s works do not overtly disclose a gender subtext, the novels by Louise Welsh do overtly disclose a gender subtext and a labyrinthine annihilation of the male-female, masculine-feminine binaries.

In “Performing Lesbians: Constructing the Self, Constructing the Community,” Heddon does not mention Louise Welsh’s work directly but an adaptation of her first novel. In her article, Heddon notes the still present discrimination against gay men and lesbian women in early twenty-first century society and their invisibility. Within such a context, she highlights the importance of the representation of gay men and lesbian women in the annual Glasgay in the city of Glasgow. As she explains, in the 2003 Glasgay, “there were over 40 events, with artist invited from New York, Toronto and South Africa. The programme included Diamanda Galás at the Scottish Concert Hall [and] a dramatization of Louise Welsh’s crime thriller, *The Cutting Room* at the Citizens Theatre” (Heddon, 2004: 218). The adaptation she makes reference to is Kenny Miller’s version referred to above. With regard to performance, in Section 4 of this research, there is some reference to the 2007 article “Adapting Femininities. The New Burlesque” by Ferreday and how she mentions Louise Welsh’s *The Bullet Trick* as an example of this new burlesque in fiction. In her 2008, she again makes reference to the same novel in a footnote, where she includes *The Bullet Trick* amongst other contemporary cultural items that feature burlesque: “in films (*The Notorious Bettie Page*, *Mrs Henderson Presents*), novels (such as Louise Welsh’s *The Bullet Trick*), and music, in the iconography of Kylie Minogue’s *Showgirl* tour and the stage persona of singers such as Alison Goldfrapp” (Ferreday, 2008: 63).

Within the second group of articles mentioned above, it seems relevant to refer to three of them that are used in Sections 3 and 4 of this research. In 2006, Selinger published his article “Foins and Fakers, Monsters and Makers.” He analyses how poets and poetry are portrayed in seven novels published since 1990 – one of the *Tamburlaine Must Die*. When he deals with Welsh’s novel, he notes her almost cinematographic approach to the novel: “she keeps the camera on as the scene plays out” (Selinger, 2006: 80), as if Welsh’s gaze on the character is focussed through a lens in the same manner as other characters of hers do in her novels. Based on

Selinger's idea of "taking a poem in your mouth," Section 3 of this research proposes a vampiric reading of Walshingham in his appropriation of Marlowe's lines.

In his quite recent article on three new Scottish writers – Janice Galloway, Alison Kennedy and Louise Welsh – Sage aims at identifying "what the nature of this 'nastiness' [mentioned in a quote by Kennedy] is, and where it takes a reader in the[ir] writing" (Sage, 2011: 63). It proves curious to note here that, despite the recent date of the article, Sage decided to focus on Welsh's first novel when, by the time he wrote the article, there were already three other novels of hers published. Once this has been mentioned, in the specific analysis he devotes to *The Cutting Room*, he approaches it as:

[a] hybrid text [that] poses self-consciously as a hard-boiled detective novel, echoing Chandler; but its chapter epigraphs and quotations function, like those of Ann Radcliffe in *Udolpho* (1794) or like Angela Carter's allusions to French Decadence and pornography in 'The Bloody Chamber' (1989), as a tissue of allusions to the perversities of the Romantic Agony, an encyclopaedia of late Victorian and *fin de siècle* erotic and mortuary taste, which puts Glasgow *demi-monde* of auctioneers' rooms, porn-shops and brothels on the European cultural map" (Sage, 2011: 73).

The hybridity Sage refers to in *The Cutting Room* can be extended to all the novels by Louise Welsh, as analysed in this research when proposing the dark glasses in Section 1. There is another interesting point in this quote from Sage's article. As opposed to the already-quoted remark by Durie et al. that Glasgow still waits for a defining version, Sage claims that, at least, the dark side of the city is, in Welsh's novel, already set on the map. The nastiness he describes in *The Cutting Room* is that of some sadistic and masochist desire in some characters, such as McKindless, Anne-Marie, Rose or Rilke himself. He concludes his article stating that "what I take to be her plot's rejection of sadism does not exclude her use of masochism as a base for the 'haunting' of Gothic effects in Rilke's, the witness's, consciousness of the female ghosts of the past" (Sage, 2011: 76). Perhaps, Sage does need to read the novel and the sadism and masochism in it not simply under a gothic prism but also from the perspective of Queer studies, which would definitively shed more light on his interpretation of the novel.

The last article discussed in this section is Miller's "Aesthetic Depersonalization in Louise Welsh' *The Cutting Room*" (2006). Despite the fact that it focuses, once more, on Welsh's first novel, it is the only article – so far – that attempts to deal with a work by Louise Welsh without comparing her work with other

writers or inserting her within any literary movement of new, female Scottish writers. However, he cannot help making some reference to Alasdair Gray's *1982 Janine* (1984) and Zoë Strachan's *Negative Space* (2003). On the latter, he explains that she "also links suffering, depersonalization and art, but uses painting and life-modeling as its metaphors" (Miller, 2006: 73). It may have been perhaps done unintentionally, but the fact that Miller is relating the themes in two novels written in the same year and by two writers that happen to be a couple, raises an alert, in the reader of the article, of the originality of both novels. This is even more obvious when he quotes the following lines from Strachan's novel: "They put this goblet full of red wine beside me, knocked it over and cleaned it up every day. It was meant to be poisoned, I was meant to be dead. I liked it" (Strachan, 2003: 27). These words create an immediate link in the readers' minds with what the girl in the photograph could have felt, had the photographs simply been performed, or even Anne-Marie. There are even some further connections, as Strachan's novel was shortlisted for the Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award the same year that Louise Welsh won it with *The Cutting Room*. Leaving these considerations aside, in his article, Miller proposes some interesting issues, such as the idea of the aesthetic contemplation of women's corpses, such as the girl in the photograph or McKindless's attempt to cut Anne-Marie. He also addresses the mediated gaze to some violent act through the photographic lens, an idea that is present in the labyrinths presented both in Sections 4 and 5 of this research.

In the third group of research on Louise Welsh's work, there are several PhD theses to consider. In 2008, Andrea Virginás defended her thesis entitled *Crime Genres and the Modern-Postmodern Turn: Canons, Gender, Media* at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. She proposes a joint analysis of modernist and postmodernist to crime fiction, including in the latter both verbal and visual texts. In her wide corpus of research, she includes "female authors, writers of classical detective (and gothic) fiction" and "examples of Hollywood film noir" (Virginás, 2008: 10) which constitute for her some mass cultural canons; she also includes postmodernist examples, such as Martin Amis' *Other People: A Mystery Story* (1981), Emmat Tennant's *Woman Beware Woman* (1983), Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* (1996) and Louise Welsh's *The Cutting Room*. In the latter novels, she aims at analysing in them "the presence of high artistic re-appropriation of a mass poetics of crime" (Virginás, 2008: 10). In her analysis of Louise Welsh's novel, attention is given to the Rilke and Rose's

appropriation of the stereotypical crime scenery, the different approach to snuff movies in Louise Welsh's novel and Joel Schumacher's film *8MM* (1999), and to photography. However, she simply retells the story of the different photographs in the novel, such as those found at McKindless's attic or those in the Camera Club, without any reflection on why Louise Welsh makes use of them in her novel.

Under the title *Hard-boiled and Downright Social: The Contemporary Female Tartan Noir*, Petra Katzensteiner presented her PhD thesis at the Universität Wien, Austria, in 2009. Its title clearly makes reference to the new wave of Scottish women writers who write crime fiction. In fact, Katzensteiner focuses, as opposed to the ambitious thesis by Andrea, on three specific texts: Denise Mina's *Garnethill* (1998), Val McDermid's *Hostage to Murder* (2003) and, once again, Louise Welsh's *The Cutting Room*. Her aim is:

[to] examine how and to what extent these three female cutting-edge authors exploit the social potential of the crime genre in order to discuss themes which are socially relevant to the Scottish people and above all to women and challenge established cultural as well as literary conventions to offer refreshingly bold perspectives on Scottish gender politics, nationalism, identity and subjectivity" (Katzensteiner, 2009: 5-6).

In her analysis of Welsh's novel, she notes how Welsh translates gothic elements into a contemporary hard-boiled setting but she does not develop them, focussing on the transformation of Glasgow into a Scottish hard-boiled setting that serves as a critique to "Scotland's postmodern capitalist and gender conditioned culture" (Katzensteiner, 2009: 113). This intention can be observed in her reading of Rilke, whom she reads as a subversion of "Scotland's traditional 'macho' image" (Katzensteiner, 2009: 73) who, "to a certain extent, betray a typically Scottish, socialist working-class ideology" (Katzensteiner, 2009: 74). Thus, she concludes her thesis saying that these three writers have rewritten two of the main issues in Scottish literature: masculinity and class.

In 2008, Inga Simpson submitted her PhD thesis on *Lesbian Detective Fiction: the Outsider Within* at Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia. As opposed to the already discussed PhD theses, this one was written within the "Creative Writing and Literary Studies Discipline" and it consists of "a draft lesbian detective novel, titled *Fatal Development* (75%) and an exegesis containing a critical appraisal of the sub-genre of lesbian detective fiction, and of my own writing process (25%)" (Simpson, 2008: i). Consequently, it does not analyze Louise Welsh's *The*

Cutting Room together with other novels written by lesbian writers but reflects on how the experience of reading these texts influenced or questioned her own writing process. As she explains in her section entitled “motivation:”

As a reader, I was frustrated with the emphasis, in many lesbian detective novels, on romance and lesbian identity, often at the expense of a plot, character and innovation. Where was the lesbian Miss Smilla⁷? Why couldn't Louise Welsh have written a lesbian Rilke? Where was the exploration of contemporary issues, more complex relationships, things common to all readers? Why hadn't more lesbian detectives crossed over to a 'mainstream' readership. As a reader, I thought to myself: *surely I could write a better one of these*. (Simpson, 2008: 2-3, italics in the original).

She also makes another reference to Welsh's novel in the introduction to her writing process. There, she explains how she read the novel as part of her initial research and wonders whether it would have been as successful had it had a lesbian detective as a main character. 2008 was probably too early a date, but her questioning would have been different after the publication of Louise Welsh's *The Girl on the Stairs* in 2012.⁸

After having traversed all the different scholarly interest in the novels by Louise Welsh, it can be stated that, even though the analysis proposed in this PhD thesis may partly coincide with some of the approaches to her work, there is no example which focuses on the five already published novels and, furthermore, none that focuses on her whole work on its own. So far, this is how Louise Welsh has been analyzed: now, it is time to put some dark, rose-coloured glasses on to read the fascinating, labyrinthine Welshian world.

⁷ The main character in Peter Høeg's *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* (1992).

⁸ In her article on the best crime and thriller books in 2012, Laura Wilson includes Welsh's novel as an example of the fact that “2012 has been a particularly good year for psychological thrillers” (Wilson, 2012).

1. WITH DARK GLASSES

In the preface to his book *The Realist Novel*, Dennis Walden defines the approach he has adopted in his research and explains that it starts from the analysis of a specific text by asking, “[t]o what literary type *or genre does* a particular text or piece of writing belong?” (Walder, 1995a: v., italics in the original). The importance of this question lies in the fact that:

Literary genres are classes of literature, grouped according to method or subject. For example, a piece of writing may be a poem, a play or a novel and if it is, say, a novel, it may be one of several kinds of novel. Genres can be interpreted through their formal characteristics, or in terms of their historical context, or both. (Walder, 1995a: v).

Following his approach, it seems reasonable to start the analysis of Louise Welsh’s novels by asking what kind of work they are and, thus, locating them within a corresponding genre or category. The first classification is actually really simple, as they are all novels. The problem arises when trying to specify further what specific type of sub-genre they belong to within the novel genre. In order to do so, it is important to consider both the formal characteristics and/or the historical context, which in this specific case is the early twenty-first century. Before attempting to analyse the formal characteristics, it would seem relevant to devote some attention to some of the literary reviews and praise devoted, in the press, to the different novels by Louise Welsh. As will be pointed out, in these writings there can be found some references to various literary genres, including Gothic, ghost story, crime fiction, detective fiction and mystery amongst others. Therefore, genre classification becomes paradoxically a complicated issue in the approach to a writer that claims she writes her novels with no market-classification in mind.

Regarding the critical praise for her novels, critics have tried to classify Louise Welsh’s novels into a specific literary genre, though every new novel provides a new twist to any previous categorization of her work. When Louise Welsh published her awarded first novel, *The Cutting Room*, in 2002, some literary critics classified it within the field of “detective novels.” Magrs, in his review for *The Guardian*, lists the detective story conventions that Louise Welsh makes use of in her novel:

She understands that every fictional detective is a fetishist. They don’t really want to find all the answers: the body in question, the confrontation with actual flesh. At that point their story would be over. Genre always wants to kill character, to grind it up in

the merciless, mechanical drive towards resolution. Any detective protagonists worth their salt know this and try to involve us, en route, in the fabric of their lives. We get curious detours, red herrings, casual shags. Like the best genre heroes, Rilke has very idiosyncratic adventure (Magrs, 2002).

No doubt these elements are present in Welsh's first novel, but it also proves certain that – partly due to the fact that she was garlanded by the Crime Writers' Association – she was immediately labelled as a "crime fiction" writer. McDowell remarks at the end of her review in *The Independent* that "crime fiction may have its prize-winner at last" (McDowell, 2002) and Johnstone includes this novel in the list of "100 Best Scottish Books of all Time" as a "literary crime novel" (Johnstone, 2005). Her second novel, *Tamburlaine Must Die* was classified within the genre of "historical fiction" (Taylor, 2005), reflecting thus a change in her writing (or not).

Of her third novel, *The Bullet Trick*, Lawson writes that it does not really work: "It is clever and enjoyable, but the story is not quite gripping enough for plot queens, the writing a little short of what prose snobs desire. The trick is missed" (Lawson, 2006). His remark refers to the praise achieved by Welsh from her publishers and critical admirers who consider her able to "make the difference between the genres of crime fiction and literary fiction disappear" (Lawson, 2006). Once again, her writing is labelled as "crime fiction," though this time a certain aspiration to break the boundaries of crime fiction writing is acknowledged.

Naming the Bones was reviewed by Peckham (2010) on the eurocrime webpage devoted to fans of British and European crime fiction. Cameron (2010) reviews her novel in *The Globe and Mail* and she is aware of Welsh's ability to mix crime fiction with other genres when she states that "it's a story about the process of writing as much as it is a mystery. Watson struggles with a problem familiar to writers and detectives alike, how to weigh your relationships against the call of your vocation."

In contrast to all the previous reviews, Unsworth (2012) concludes that Welsh's last novel so far, *The Girl on the Stairs*, "feels like a ghost story" with no reference whatsoever to crime fiction⁹. Tripney (2012) considers that this novel "feels like a psychologically potent cross between "The Yellow Wallpaper" and *Rear*

⁹ However, the summarizing line below the title of the article reads: "A stylish and violent Berlin-set thriller has Cathi Unsworth gripped" (2012).

*Window*¹⁰.” In other words, it is a mixture of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s short story researched by feminist and gothic critics on the one hand and the short story by William Irish – a writer considered as the modern Edgar Allan Poe, because of his mixture of gothic and crime fiction.

In her participation at the Sisters in Crime event in Melbourne in 2007, Welsh explains that, thanks to her teaching of gothic literature in Adult Education “I became more and more interested in the Gothic and I think a lot of those conventions were very fresh in my mind when I started to write this book [*The Cutting Room*]”. In fact, she felt that she followed Gothic rather than crime conventions in her first novel, which contrasts with the above-mentioned reviews of her first – and following – novels. She further adds that genre classification in the process of writing is inevitably linked to satisfying the needs of the literary market rather than those of the writer themselves:

I wasn’t really sure if it fitted into the crime novel genre and I think that’s fine because definitions and categorizations are something, perhaps, that writers shouldn’t think too much about. If you start thinking about that then you’ll start bending what you have to say to fit. When you start to think about the market you’re doomed really (Welsh, 2008b).

Welsh’s reflection on her first novel makes some reference to two issues that will be addressed in this section: the understanding of a literary genre as a category into which literary works fit, and the importance of the reader’s role in such categorization. It is interesting to note in this point what Ascari describes as the two interdependent dimensions that, according to him, define the recognition of a body of literary works as a genre: the fact that “its components share a certain number of conventions and intertextual links, but also on account of the discourses it generates” (Ascari, 2009: 10). Therefore, literary works do not act simply as elements that require classification but as producers of new classifications.

Despite Louise Welsh’s remark on the writer’s doom if they write with a market in mind, the categorization into literary genres performed by the abovementioned critics in their literary sections in influential newspapers creates a potential market of readers for the novels. As Ascari remarks, “a genre may be regarded as a set of models and a theoretical construction that jointly shape the

¹⁰ It should be noted that the use of the verb “to feel like” in both reviews shows an interesting imprecision in the classification of Welsh’s work.

expectations of readers together with the strategies of writers and publishers,” (Ascari, 2009: 10). A potential reader of crime fiction would choose to read a novel as *The Cutting Room* because it is actually described and labelled as a crime fiction novel, but the very same potential reader would probably not read it if it were labelled as Gothic.

Furthermore, Ascari’s remark might be further expanded by adding to the strategies of writers and publishers those of some online stores that include customers’ reviews. In the case of *The Cutting Room*, the review of an anonymous customer in www.amazon.co.uk claims that “this book restored my faith in crime fiction! A dark story, set in a dark city, with a wonderfully dysfunctional hero. Beautifully written and tensely plotted, this is a class act for a first novel” (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014). Therefore, a future potential reader interested in buying crime fiction would consider such a review; not to mention the webpage’s recommendations on similar items to what the potential reader has bought, or what other items previous buyers of that specific item have also bought. In this specific case, apart from listing other novels by Louise Welsh, it includes a selection of novels featuring Patricia Highsmith’s *The Talented Mister Ripley* or Katherine V. Forrest’s *Murder by Tradition: The Kate Delafield Mysteries*, both of them crime fiction novels and written by female authors.

Returning to Louise Welsh’s reflection on her writings, it proves interesting to note that Louise Welsh is more certain about the gothic elements but it is precisely those elements belonging to the crime novel that catch the reviewers’ attention in their articles. This exemplifies the difficulty found in delimiting clear-cut boundaries between some literary genres, mainly due to the fact that crime fiction, as other genres such as science fiction, “owe much to gothic concerns and neither detective fiction nor science fiction can be separated in their origins from such an association” (Bloom, 1998: 2). There are some authors, such as Jack Sullivan, who stress the differences between detective stories, which clarifies and solves an initial problem based on the powers of reason and logic, and ghost stories, which “sabotage the relationship between cause and effect [and whose] parts are self-consistent, but they relate to an inexplicable, irrational whole” (Sullivan, 1978: 124).

On the other hand, the relation between Gothic and crime novels is stressed by other authors; Ascari makes an intentional use of the generic term “crime fiction” as it allows him to explore a wider number of literary texts, and acknowledges the

persistence of gothic and supernatural elements in crime fiction. According to him, this is due to the fact that much of the appeal of contemporary crime fiction resides in the fact that it “invites us to reassess the binary oppositions between scientific detection and revelation as well as that between human and divine justice” (Ascari, 2009: 13).

As opposed to Ascari and other authors, such as Knight, who claims that the common element in all the stories is the fact that there is always a crime (Knight, 2004: xii), Bleiler distinguishes between “detective fiction” and “mystery story” as the former describes the activities of a detective and the latter deals with the resolution of a mystery. He opens up the possibilities of a more specific and more sub-classified approach to genres – there is no “crime novel” but “detective fiction” and “mystery story” –. He acknowledges the existence of many exceptions to his own classification and, what is more relevant, the fact that “the sense of mystery is not limited to those works in which a detective or detectives appear, and mysteries can be found in literary genres as distinct as weird fiction, science fiction, horror fiction, gothic fiction, espionage fiction, religious fiction, suspense fiction, and western fiction” (Bleiler, 1999: xv). His argument can be applied in reverse: gothic can be found in detective fiction and mystery stories. Knight also notes that the difference between detective and mystery stories does not prove reliable as “there are plenty of novels (including some by [Agatha] Christie) without a detective and nearly as many without even a mystery (like most of Patricia Highsmith’s work) (Knight, 2004: xii).

Returning to Sullivan, the fact that the detective makes use of their power of reason and logic does not diminish the inexplicable, irrational acting and behaviour of the criminal. Botting points out that crime “presented a challenge to rationality in a degenerate world of mysterious but distinctly human and corrupt motivations [...] that invoked conventional Gothic figures and strategies” (2002a: 13). Once more, as critics remark, boundaries blur and there appears a certain miscegenation of genres. Raymond Chandler himself, creator of detective Philip Marlowe, listed ten commandment for the detective novel:

1. It must be credibly motivated, both as to the original situation and the dénouement.
2. It must be technically sound as to the methods of murder and detection.
3. It must be realistic in character, setting, and atmosphere. It must be about real people in a real world.
4. It must have a sound story value apart from the mystery elements; i.e., the investigation itself must be an adventure worth reading.

5. It must have enough essential simplicity to be explained easily when the time comes.
6. It must baffle a reasonably intelligent reader.
7. The solution must seem inevitable once revealed.
8. It must not try to do everything at once. If it is a puzzle story operating in a rather cool, reasonable atmosphere, it cannot also be a violent adventure or passionate romance.
9. It must punish the criminal in one way or another, not necessarily by operation of the law [...] If the detective fails to resolve the consequences of the crime, the story is an unresolved chord and leaves irritation behind it.
10. It must be honest with the reader. (quoted in Parsons, 1986: 129).

Considering these ten commandments, it could be argued that the clear categorization of Louise Welsh's novels into the detective genre is, to say the least, problematic. As opposed to commandment number five, her novels are not simple enough to be explained easily. An ideal summary of the novels would require a high number of details in order to make sense of the story, as in all of them there are many apparently unimportant characters or events that prove to be key elements in the development of the plot. An example of a minor character with a major involvement in the events is George Meikle, the bookfinder at the National Library in *Naming the Bones*, who becomes a first-hand witness of Lunan's life at University. As for a minor event that becomes a key element, an example would be, in the same novel, the Saab that follows Watson and Rachel. When Watson sees the same car parked in the Island of Lismore, he immediately realizes that, not only that Fergus is on the island but that he was also the person who was spying on them.

With regard to commandment number seven, none of the novels offer an inevitable solution. Just to cite a couple of examples, both William Wilson in *The Bullet Trick* and Murray Watson in *Naming the Bones* feel guilty for the deaths of Sylvie and Fergus and Christie respectively and both are surprised by the fact that the police have not found any clue that incriminates them in the crime. Besides that, with the exception of Inspector Montgomery in *The Bullet Trick*, who goes to prison charged with the death of his wife, the other crimes remain unsolved by the police and their perpetrators are not punished by the law as they should be, according to commandment nine: The identity of Christopher Marlowe's murderer in *Tamburlaine Must Die* has remained an unsolved mystery since the sixteenth century even in our real world; nobody knows, either, who killed the girl in the photograph in *Soleil et Désolé* in *The Cutting Room* or even if the girl was actually killed; Sam and Bill Junior's deaths are considered as accidental as there is no possibility of proving

Montgomery's real implication in them; the truth about Miranda's death and possible murder will eventually be forgotten once all the people implicated in it are dead; and the same ambiguity lingers in Fergus's accidental or premeditated fall into the limekiln; Frau Becker, the only self-confessed murderer in *The Girl on the Stairs*, enters a residence for people with Alzheimer where her memory loss would absolve her of her crime. Moreover, her mental problem also questions the validity of her own murder confession to Jane. Finally, as will be shown throughout this research, Louise Welsh is honest with the reader as what she presents is much more complicated than a *whodunit* and it manages to baffle a reasonably intelligent reader with the multiple possible readings her novels provide.

The aim of this section is not so much to provide an exhaustive and comprehensive analysis of gothic literature but rather to analyse some of the critical works that have focused on gothic literature and other related genres, such as science fiction, crime fiction and, especially, the fantastic, with which Quéma points out "critical discourses [...] are preternaturally similar" (Quéma, 2004: 87). The criteria to develop this section is double: first, to show the academic difficulty of delimiting clear-cut genre categories for literary works based, in most of the cases, on the reader's response to them. Second, the labyrinth being the key motif of analysis in this research, what it is proposed here is a labyrinthine disposition of argumentation. Even though in certain points it may seem to be maz(e)-ing¹¹, as it bifurcates into categories that are apparently diverting from the main topic, it does actually lead, despite all its meanderings, to the key idea of this section: how the fictional reality that Louise Welsh presents in her novels is not gothic in itself but actually becomes gothicized. Once this point has been clarified, it becomes necessary to enter the labyrinth of literary terms already hinted at in Bleiler above to classify different genres and subgenres.

The starting point in this analysis is Todorov's *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*, published in 1970 and its subsequent translation into English in 1973 as *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Todorov aims at framing the fantastic genre within the field of already established, canonical literary genres and, in order to provide the distinctive features of such a genre, he presents three

¹¹ Part Two of this research explains the difference between the concepts of "labyrinth" and "maze," based on the fact that the latter provides different bifurcations that may lose the person in it, while the former leads directly to the centre.

conditions to be fulfilled by a text so that it can be classified as “fantastic.” These three conditions, which rely mainly on the reader’s reaction to the text, are the following:

First, the text must oblige the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and a supernatural explanation of the events described. Second, this hesitation may also be experienced by a character; thus the reader’s role is so to speak entrusted to a character, and at the same time the hesitation is represented, it becomes one of the themes of the work. [...] Third, the reader must adopt a certain attitude with regard to the text: he will reject allegorical as well as ‘poetic’ interpretations (Todorov, 1973: 33).

Todorov does not give equal value to the three requirements, as the second is not, according to him, compulsory whereas “the first and the third actually constitute the genre” (Todorov, 1973: 33). His definition of the fantastic genre is mainly reader-oriented and it is precisely how the text is received by the reader which may exclude it from the realm of the fantastic and classify it into another genre. Besides, he claims that this fantastic element cannot be found in either allegories or poetry, which was openly criticized by Lem, who denied the validity of Todorov’s model as “a theory of literature either embraces all works or it is no theory” (Lem, 1985: 232) and the fact that “things get worse when it comes to subgenres of the fantastic for which there is no place at all on Todorov’s axis” (Lem, 1974). Todorov reconsiders his model on the fantastic in *Genres in Discourse*, where he simplifies his point and states that:

For simplicity’s sake let us leave aside the three-way identification between the implied reader, the narrator, and the character who bears witness; let us acknowledge that we are dealing with an attitude on the part of the represented narrator. [...] The speech act underlying the fantastic genre is thus, even if we simplify the situation a little, a complex one. Its formula might be rewritten as follows: *I* (a pronoun whose function has been explained) + verb of attitude (such as *believe*, *think*, and so on) + modalization of that verb in the direction of uncertainty (a modalization that operates along two principal lines: verb tense, here the past, which contributes to establishing a distance between narrator and character; and adverbs of manner such as *almost*, *perhaps*, *doubtless*, and so on) along with a subordinate clause describing a supernatural event (Todorov, 1990: 24).

In *Naming the Bones*, Mrs Dunn tells Watson about her visit to the cottage that Archie Lunan, Christie, Robbie and Fergus shared on the island of Lismore, and she does so by turning her memory from her youth into a gothicised version of “Little Red Riding Hood” that has to be told at night as “some things are better spoken of after dark” (NTB, 298). Her recounting of how she was drugged by the boys in the house is full of fantastic speech acts, such as in “I thought I’d been mistaken for dead and

buried alive” (*NTB*, 311), which proves Todorov’s point. However, she also makes use of the same speech acts when she answers Watson’s question on whether she was looking for a friend in Christie that “I think I might have been” (*NTB*, 302). It is quite likely that she was positively certain about her need to meet friends her age at that time but, after experiencing her abject transformation into a gothicised Little Red Riding Hood and into Alice (*NTB*, 309), from *Alice in Wonderland*, her perception of the world and even of herself underwent a change. González-Rivas analyses Peter Pan unveiling the Gothic in the story and concludes that “on occasions, terror does indeed hide behind a veneer of innocence” (González-Rivas and Muñoz Corcuera, 2011: 11). Mrs Dunn did actually experience the terror hiding in the two fairy tales and that changed her completely. As she explains: “the girl who walked down to that blackhouse was nothing like the old lady sitting in front of you today, and yet they both are – were – me” (*NTB*, 301). This old lady is telling her own experience but she does not know whether what she experienced was real or not, up to the point that she cannot even claim whether she was actually not raped. As a consequence, both Watson and the readers of the novel should reach their own conclusions and explanations, which will, in turn, never be confirmed or refuted. Furthermore, after Watson’s experience on the island of Lismore, Mrs Dunn’s story does only remain as a minor anecdote in his personal life. All his initial interest in Lunan’s personal life, and that of the people who shared his life, disappears and he focuses on his works, as Fergus had suggested to him: “Fergus had been right. The poetry was the thing, the life an unfortunate distraction from the art” (*NTB*, 277).

By means of the speech act that Todorov explains, the fantastic becomes present in a text as, according to him, it “lasts only as long as a certain hesitation: a hesitation common to reader and character, who must decide whether or not what they perceive derives from ‘reality’ as it exists in the common opinion” (Todorov, 1973: 41). It is the reader who decides at the end of the story whether what they have read can be explained either by the laws of reality or, by the inability of reality to explain those events and it deals, consequently, with the supernatural. In the former case, the work belongs to the “uncanny” and Todorov quotes Agatha Christie’s *Ten Little Niggers*, which can also be read as detective fiction. In the latter case, it falls in the realm of the “marvellous,” as in *The Arabian Nights* or Marco Polo’s *The Book of Wonders*, a category that is subclassified into four further categories: the hyperbolic, the exotic, the instrumental and the scientific (Todorov, 1973: 69-71). Between the

two extremes, he includes two categories where the fantastic coincides with the uncanny or the marvellous: one is termed “the fantastic uncanny” and in it, “the events that seem supernatural throughout a story receive a rational explanation at the end” (Todorov, 1973: 44). These explanations can be either an accident or a coincidence, dreams, the influence of drugs, tricks and prearranged apparitions, the illusion of the senses and madness (Todorov, 1973: 45). The example he provides is that of the *Manuscrit trouvé à Saragosse* by Potocki. González Salvador also points out that by means of techniques such as the explanation of the event as madness, nightmares, delirium, hallucination or a *mise en scène* to frighten the character (González Salvador, 1980: 56, my translation¹²). The “fantastic marvellous,” in turn, consists of stories that are presented as fantastic but they end up with the acceptance of the supernatural, as in Théophile Gautier’s *La Morte Amoreuse*, according to Todorov. His final scheme is organized as seen in this diagram:

The Uncanny / The Fantastic Uncanny / The Fantastic Marvellous / The Marvellous

Figure 1: Todorov’s linear model of the fantastic (Todorov, 1973: 44)

As can be observed, in this model there is no place for the “Pure Fantastic,” as Lem noted, due to its evanescent character, as “the fantastic [only] occupies the duration of this uncertainty” (Todorov, 1973: 26). It is also interesting to note, as Quéma does, that “while it [Todorov’s model] clearly indicates that the Gothic is not the fantastic, it also defines the Gothic according to categories that determine the fantastic” (Quéma, 2004: 83) as, according to him, there are two tendencies in literary Gothic: “that of the supernatural explained (the ‘uncanny’) [...] and that of the supernatural accepted (the ‘marvellous’)” (Todorov, 1973: 42).

Brooke-Rose (1981) follows Todorov’s model and considers that, due to the difficulty of distinguishing the Pure Fantastic from the uncanny and the marvellous based on ambiguity, an emphasis should be placed on the fact that “this ambiguity concerns only the supernatural (thus in effect falling back on the supernatural as the basic element), or treats such other non-‘fantastic’ texts as a displaced form of the fantastic” (Brooke-Rose, 1981: 65). She also supports her point by summarizing – and translating – the classification by Hamon (1973: 422-3) of the fifteen elements that

¹² In the original: “técnicas tales como la explicación del fenómeno por la locura, la pesadilla, el delirio, la alucinación o una *mise en scène* para aterrorizar al personaje” (González Salvador, 1980: 56).

appear in a realistic text as follows: 1. The appeal to memory (to assure coherence); 2. The psychological motivation of the character; 3. The parallel history; 4. The systematic motivation of proper names; 5. Semiological compensation (illustrations, photographs, drawings, diagrams...); 6. The author's knowledge circulated through substitutes; 7. Redundancy and foreseeability of content (description of the character's social sphere and daily activities); 8. The narrative alibi; 9. Demodalisation; 10. The defocalisation of the hero; 11. Reduction of ambiguity; 12. Reduction of the being/seeing opposition; 13. Accelerated sematisation (rapid explanation of the mystery); 14. A cyclothymic narrative rhythm (each bad phase succeed by a 'good' phase); 15. Exhaustiveness of description. (Brooke-Rose, 1981: 86-89). However, as she notes, most of these characteristics are not only particular to the realistic genre, and she uses science fiction to support her opinion. To her, all but characteristics 3 and, partly, 5, can be applied to science fiction. This shows that, as Brooke-Rose posits, there is always a realistic base in all fantastic narrative, even in fairy tales, as the unreal can only be so "as against the real" and, therefore, these narratives need to have "some point of anchorage in the real" (Brooke-Rose, 1981: 81) in opposition to the real.

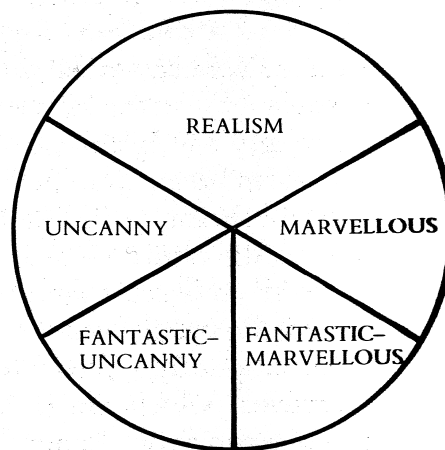


Figure 2: Brooke-Rose's circular model the fantastic, (Brooke-Rose, 1981:84)

On the one hand, as Rapatzikou notes, "she [Brooke-Rose] shakes Todorov's linear representation of fantasy a bit further by introducing a new schema of interpretation" (Rapatzikou, 2004: 50) in which realism is included and either the fantastic, the marvellous and the uncanny maintain a degree of relation with it. On the one hand, her proposed scheme reinforces Todorov's view that the world where the

fantastic takes place is “a world which is indeed our world” (Todorov, 1973: 25). However, she also finds some limitations in Todorov’s definition of the Fantastic genre, as it seems to “have occurred in a relatively narrow historical period, that of the Gothic novel and its brief aftermath” (Brooke-Rose, 1981: 62). Therefore, she concludes that the pure fantastic must be understood as an evanescent “element” rather than a genre, as the hesitation in the reader and/or the character can last longer or not but it, eventually, disappears after an explanation. Harold Bloom, in turn, also disagrees with Todorov’s emphasis on the hesitation in the reader and claims that fantasy involves a sense of being caught up by the “agonistic encounter of deep, strong reading” (Bloom, 1982: 5).

Despite Brooke-Rose’s opinion, other critics, such as Cornwell (1990), have retaken Todorov’s linear model and enlarged it so that it includes the Pure Fantastic and offer a full classification of literary genres:

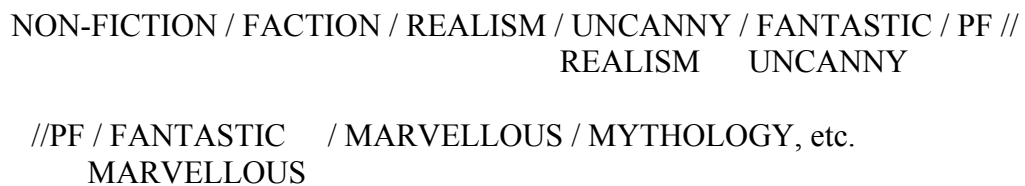


Figure 3: Cornwell’s model of the fantastic (Cornwell, 1990: 39)

Cornwell explains that, to a greater or lesser degree, fantasy is present in all genres. By “non-fiction,” he refers to non-fictional novels, such as biographies or autobiographies. Further to its left, this category would vanish into journalism, history or scientific literature. The genre of “faction” consists of fictionalized historical or political works. “Realism” includes subcategories such as naturalism, critical realism, historical fiction, etc. The “uncanny” is labelled as “uncanny realism” as it deals with real facts that can only be explained in a rational sense. The “Pure Fantastic” (PF) only includes works that maintain Todorov’s hesitation till the end without falling into any of the two possible interpretations. Mythology borders to its right with theology. Finally, the “marvellous” can be classified into three subcategories: “what if?,” “fairy story” and “romance/fantasy.” The problem and main difficulty of trying to classify the different literary genres is that the fantastic is present in all of them in different degrees; a point Ferreras (1995) remarks on when stating that it is very difficult to create hermetic categories as many fantastic stories can present some features typical of the uncanny, the marvellous or even science fiction. Thus, it can be

deduced that those stories that can be classified as Pure Fantastic are not as common as is usually thought (Ferrerias, 1995: 22, my translation¹³).

Trying to fit Welsh into this categorization poses a curious difficulty, as there are no apparent supernatural events in her novels. However, there are a couple of issues to be considered here. The first one is that, as analysed in section 3 of this research, some of the characters in the novels acquire supernatural features in the gothicisation process that assimilates – if not turns – them from human beings into vampires or ghosts; just to cite some examples¹⁴. The same applies to the time and spaces the characters inhabit. The second point is that the final explanation of the events – the discovery of corpses, the arrest of the suspects – does not shed light upon the case and it leaves on the reader a certain impression that the case has been given a solution but it has not actually been solved. The reader and the characters feel the hesitation defined by Todorov, which allows acknowledging the presence of fantastic elements in her novels, but it is obvious that Welsh's writings are not pure fantastic because, as Mathews states on his study on fantasy, “there are no pure genres” (Mathews, 2002: 5). As can be observed in this research, the novels that constitute its corpus are good examples of this miscegenation of genres.

In opposition to genre classification, in *Fantasy: the Literature of Subversion*¹⁵, Jackson develops Todorov's reader-oriented perspective on the fantastic, though not as a literary genre but as a “mode” from which a number of genres emerge. She acknowledges the impossibility of the fantastic existing independently from the real world, but she also states that Todorov's model needs a certain modification: when considering the fantastic as a *mode*, it is possible that it “assumes different generic forms” and thus, by “subverting this unitary vision, the fantastic introduces confusion and alternatives” (Jackson, 1981: 35). She also establishes a parallelism between fantasy and language and, in order to do so, she makes use of the distinction between *langue* and *parole* established by Ferdinand Saussure, summarized by Phillips and Tan as:

¹³ In the original: “Sería vano, evidentemente, el intentar establecer categorías totalmente herméticas; muchos relatos fantásticos pueden presentar aspectos típicos del género extraño, maravilloso o incluso de ciencia-ficción, y aunque los haya en abundancia, los relatos puramente fantásticos no son tan comunes como se tiende a considerar generalmente” (Ferrerias, 1995: 22).

¹⁴ González-Rivas and Muñoz Corcuera (2011) also propose such assimilation into gothic characters in the case of Peter Pan.

¹⁵ It is worth noting that there is a change in terminology: “Fantastic” in Todorov as opposed to “fantasy” in Rosemary Jackson, even though she seems to make use of both terms indistinctively.

Langue represents the “work of a collective intelligence,” which is both internal to each individual and collective, in so far as it is beyond the will of any individual to change. *Parole*, on the other hand, designates individual acts, statements and utterances, events of language use manifesting each time a speaker’s ephemeral individual will through his combination of concepts and his “phonation”—the formal aspects of the utterance (Phillips and Tan, 2005).

To Jackson, “the basic model of fantasy could be seen as a language, or *langue*, from which its various forms, or *paroles* derive” (Jackson, 1981: 7). If, to her, fantasy as a mode functions as the *langue*, the different *paroles* that originate from it range from “the marvellous” to “fantastic” literature, which includes Poe and Lovecraft amongst others, and “related tales of abnormal psychic states, delusion, hallucination, etc.” (Jackson, 1981: 7). Other authors, such as Hutcheon, also make use of Saussure’s distinction to deal with the fantastic, as when she claims that “a theory of fantastic literature must also draw upon a concept of fictive referents (at the level of both *langue* and *parole*) because surely vampires, devils, unicorns and hobbits only exist in words” (Hutcheon, 1984: 98). According to her, it is only through language that one can conceive the possibility and the existence of the absent, the supernatural or the unreal. Though it is true that there are no real vampires, devils or unicorns in our world, Hutcheon misses the point that they do actually stand out for some other signifieds, as it will be shown in this research: there are neither real vampires nor devils, but characters do become vampiric or devilish and act as such. Furthermore, some characters in Louise Welsh’s novels are called by such names: Bayne is called Devil in *Tamburlaine Must Die*; Christie is a witch in *Naming the Bones*; Rilke is a zombie (“The Walking Dead”) and a vampire in *The Cutting Room*; Lunan is sometimes described as Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde in *Naming the Bones*.

Returning to Jackson, she makes use of the term “paraxial” (1981: 19) to define the place of the fantastic. According to Jackson, “a paraxial region is an area in which light rays seem to unite at a point after refraction. In this area, object and image seem to collide, but in fact neither object nor reconstructed image genuinely reside there: nothing does” (Jackson, 1981: 19). She clarifies her point by presenting a diagram where the paraxial can be located, an in-between place that becomes an axis that separates the real (the object) from that which is not (the image).

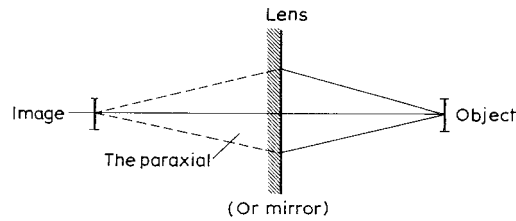


Figure 4: The paraxial area. (Jackson, 1981: 19)

Fantasy “re-combines and inverts the real, but it does not escape it: it exists in a parasitical or symbiotic relation to the real. The fantastic cannot exist independently of the ‘real’ world (1981: 20). The paraxial may better explain what the reader and characters experience: the inability of distinguishing whether what they know is the object or the image¹⁶. This is possible due to the close relationship between Welsh’s literary world and the real world that both characters and readers share. Jackson explains that it is possible to relate the modern fantastic with gothic tales, as introducing the fantastic is “to replace familiarity, comfort, *das Heimlich*, with estrangements, unease, the uncanny. It is also to introduce dark areas, of something completely other and unseen, the spaces outside the limiting frame of the ‘human’ and the ‘real’, outside the control of the ‘word’ and of the ‘look’” (Jackson 1981: 43). Mathews, as opposed to the already mentioned authors, does distinguish between the fantastic and fantasy and he states that the latter is related to other variations of the realistic novel, such as the gothic, horror and science fiction. In all these cases, he claims that there is a realistic anchorage, as the reference to reality is always a referent. In the specific case of science fiction, he states that “it depicts events in a rational universe in which occurrences are subject to reasonable scientific explanation and causality, however futuristic, alien, or inventive the science” (Mathews, 2002: 4). In the case of the gothic tale, he claims that the main difference between fantasy and Gothic is that, in the latter, “despite frightening intrusions from the supernatural, these authors maintain their hold on familiar, material reality, evoking terror precisely because of this realistic grounding” (Mathews, 2002: 4). However, any attempt to create a fantastic being requires the same hold on the familiar. In his book on H.P. Lovecraft, Houellebecq presents a different approach to this topic. According to him,

¹⁶ In Section 5 of this research, attention will be devoted to the photographic image, an element that is recurrent in Louise Welsh’s novels, as it will be argued. The lens of the camera works paraxially with reality, though it distorts reality by inverting it and by its compulsory framing.

despite the fact that the beings and referents in Lovecraft are not real, the continuous use of the same words create an incantatory value, and he names examples of places, such as Miskatonic University, R'lyeh, primordial gods, such as Nyarlathothep, the *Necronomicon* and even words to invoke these gods, such as “Iâ! Iâ! Shub-Niggurath! (Houellebecq, 1999: 23, my translation ¹⁷). Additionally, what Houellebecq claims for Lovecraft's case can also be applied to any of the characters and places in other fantastic texts, such as Tolkien's.

Jackson's understanding of the fantastic as a mode will prove influential on other critics when adapting it to other literary modes: for example in Punter, as will be explained further on, or in Freedman. The latter distinguishes the science fiction genre from other related genres on the basis of both the departure of the science-fictional world from the real world, and makes use in his study of the term “mode” to refer to fantasy and Gothic, but not to science fiction, which, to him, is a “tendency”. Therefore, a science fiction text is that in which a generic tendency is something that happens within that very same text (Freedman, 2000: 21). As he explains, the difference between science fiction and “such essentially ahistorical modes as fantasy or the Gothic” is that the latter “may secretly work to ratify the mundane status quo by presenting no alternative to the latter other than inexplicable discontinuities” (Freedman, 2000: 43). According to this author, the main aspect in the relationship of time and place in science fiction and the actual time and place is not only that they are actually different, but also the fact that both the real and the science fictional time and place are part of a continuum.

As will be developed in Section 3 of this research, Freedman misses that, in the gothicised world of Louise Welsh, the past becomes present to the characters because there is a need to solve some past issues in order to continue with their present lives. Therefore, it cannot be positively claimed that, as the novels are not science fiction – or rather, they do not fit a pure science fiction genre – they are ahistorical. Moreover, *Tamburlaine Must Die* proposes an Elizabethan approach to science fiction as Marlowe is writing his memoirs addressed, as will be discussed further, to future readers in an ideal society. However, that ideal society is not

¹⁷ In the original: “La filiation est même systématiquement renforcée par l'emploi des mêmes *mots*, qui prennent ainsi une valeur incantatoire (les collines sauvages à l'ouest d'Arkham, la Miskatonic University, la cité d'Irem aux mille piliers... R'lyeh, Sarnath, Dagon, Nyarlathothep... et par-dessus tout l'innommable, le blasphématoire *Necronomicon*, dont le nom ne peut être prononcé qu'à voix basse). *Iâ ! Iâ ! Shub-Niggurath ! la chèvre aux mille chevreaux !*” (Houellebecq, 1999: 23).

precisely the actual twenty-first-century society, and modern readers, despite the fact that they are inhabiting a science-fictional society to the mind of a sixteenth-century person – full of technological devices such as cars, mobile phones and so on which might seem as futuristic to him as spaceships and teleportation to a contemporary person – are not precisely the readers Marlowe had in mind when writing his account. Consequently, Marlowe’s ideal reader must then inhabit a future even beyond this age. Welsh’s *Tamburlaine Must Die* can be claimed to bear Freedman’s science fictional tendency, though it is not the most prevalent one in the text, a fact that, according to him, would exclude this from being considered science-fiction as the tendency should “not only be present but dominant” (Freedman, 2000: 22).

Freedman’s research on science fiction starts from a very ambitious premise, as his aim was “to do for science fiction what Georg Lukács does for historical fiction in *The Historical Novel*” (Freedman, 2000: xv), i.e. to stress the importance of a specific literary genre for Marxism, in Lukács’s case, and for critical theory, in Freedman’s. Actually, Lukács explains on the historical novel that what matters is not:

the retelling of great historical events, but the poetic awakening of the people who figured in those events. What matters is that we should re-experience the social and human motives which led men to think, feel and act just as they did in historical reality” (Lukács, 1962: 42).

Freedman, in turn, retakes Lukács’ emphasis on the social change performed by people and claims that “I do believe that both critical theory and science fiction have the potential to play a role in the liberation of humanity from oppression” (Freedman, 2000: xx). He also needs to establish a corpus of works that can be classified as science fiction and, in order to do so, presents two options that prove to be two different poles of opinion. One of them is highly exclusive while the other seems to be more adaptable. His first option refers “only to that body of work in, or that grows directly out of, the American pulp tradition established in 1926 when Hugo Gernsback founded *Amazing Stories*” (Freedman, 2000: 14). The problem of this option is that it excludes the possibility of some canonical texts¹⁸ that can provide a serious foundation to the science fiction genre as it starts in the twentieth century. It is worth noting here that in Todorov’s approach to the fantastic, he describes how the fantastic is a product of the late eighteenth century, developed in the nineteenth

¹⁸ At the end of this section there are some considerations of the importance of canon formation and its relation to what is known as non-canonical literature.

century and which disappears at the beginning of the twentieth century, due mainly to psychoanalysis, as:

[it] has replaced (and thereby made useless) the literature of the fantastic. There is no need to resort to the devil in order to speak of an excessive sexual desire, and none to resort to vampires in order to designate the attraction exerted by corpses: psychoanalysis, and the literature which is directly or indirectly inspired by it, deal with these matters in undisguised terms. (Todorov, 1973: 160).

In both cases, science fiction and the fantastic face a problem of temporal limitation: the fantastic cannot be traced beyond the early twentieth century and science fiction cannot be traced before that time. Freedman is well aware of this problem in his model of literary genre, as it implies the exclusion not only of previous writers, such as Mary Shelley, but also of other twentieth century writers, such as H.G. Wells or C.S. Lewis, who had neither read nor heard of that pulp tradition. The second option that he considers allows the inclusion of authors such as Dante or Milton – which adds a canonical status to the science fiction genre – as they “take the reader far beyond the boundaries of his or her own mundane environment, into strange, awe-inspiring realms thought to be in fact unknown, or at least largely unknown, but not in principle unknowable” (Freedman, 2000: 15). Freedman is aware that this distinctive feature of science fiction borders on what is understood as fantastic, though he does not quote or mention Todorov in his book. In order to avoid such ambiguity, he claims that by creating “rich, complex, but not ultimately fantastic alternative worlds”, Dante and Milton “can be said to write science fiction” (Freedman, 2000: 2000: 15-16). The inclusive option of science fiction may prove useful to Freedman, but it does not clarify the distinction between science fiction and Gothic, for example, apart from the fact that already in the nineteenth century, a writer such as De Quincey claimed that Milton was one of the “forerunners of a lofty genealogy of crime literature” (quoted in Ascari, 2007: 40). Some of the writers of the “sensation novel” in the nineteenth century were much indebted to the gothic tradition and, as Ascari explains, claimed “to be the descendants of a literary lineage they proudly described as rooted in Shakespeare” (Ascari, 2009: 122). When Watson is reading Alan Garrett’s notes on Archie Lunan in *Naming the Bones*, he reads that Lunan was interested in the beyond, which triggers in the researcher’s mind the multiple possibilities of understanding such a note:

Archie's poetry was balanced between the anarchic joy of sex, heavy drinking and a pantheistic rapture. He wondered if Alan Garrett had been referring to the poet's desire to push the limits of the senses, or if there were something else, a religious twist to the poet's life he was unaware of. Maybe he'd been thinking of Archie's science-fiction habit. Was outer space sometimes described as the beyond? (*NTB*, 132).

Watson is not far from the truth when considering the science fictional reading of "the beyond," which will prove to be highly influenced by Lunan's future paternity. On the other hand, he misses the supernatural reading of the beyond as the possibility of returning from death, as Christie retells the same experience in the cottage and her pregnancy and maternity in a gothic mode in her novels. "Christie had found her subject in her first novel, *Sacrifice*: a group of young, overreaching outsiders whose lack of respect towards nature invoked their own fall" (*NTB*, 149). The fact that Christie dismissed the science fiction novel and abandoned it in the labyrinthine corridors of the National Library answers her obsession for the past as she knew Lunan's paternity was never meant to happen: Miranda died as a baby and Lunan was never her biological father. However, while her novels became a success for her fans, literary critics did not have a high opinion on her "horror stories laced with Celtic folklore that sometimes started well, but always descended into a chaos of fantasy and false connections" (*NTB*, 149). On the other hand, Watson's publication of Lunan's science fiction novel turns out to become a classic of the genre "with the potential to attract more readers than the poems ever would" (*NTB*, 388). It is plausible, then, that Todorov was not so wrong when he stated that "the fantastic requires [...] a reaction to events as they occur in the world evoked. For this reason the fantastic can subsist only within fiction; poetry cannot be fantastic" (Todorov, 1973: 60). The audience may react to both Christie's horror novels or Lunan's science fiction novel as they are actually a reaction to events that actually took place. Lunan's poetry, instead, is to become object of more academic attention.

Christie's novels, defined as horror by Murray Watson – an even further genre classification –, lead to the consideration of the more detailed classification of genres that, to most readers, does not distinguish the apparent nuances between horror and Gothic. Cornwell explains that "the branch of the fantastic which is usually termed 'horror'" stems "perhaps from both the high fantasy and ghost story sub-genres, but with more than a touch of Poe" (Cornwell, 1990: 146) and he cites Arthur Machen and William Hope Hodgson as examples of this "mode of fiction" (Cornwell, 1990: 146,

my emphasis). On the one hand, Cornwell, who had developed Todorov's model of genre classification, makes use of Jackson's mode. On the other hand, his critical attempt to create literary categories that can be used in the classification of literary genres becomes "fantasticized" by the use of "perhaps," which suggests an imprecision in his statement, and the expression "more than a touch of Poe," which is not precisely specific. Nicholson, in turn, defines horror as an emotion that arouses a reaction in its audience. Returning briefly to the topic of science fiction in this research, he compares science fiction with horror and he claims that the main difference is "a special relationship with its audiences" (Nicholson, 1998: 249). He explains that "while science fiction uses the intellect as a tool, horror engulfs the reader. Science fiction explores the possibilities of technology and investigates the unknown to bring order. Horror neither explores nor investigates. It experiences or rather its readers react" (Nicholson, 1998: 249). However, there exists the possibility that science fiction and horror co-exist in the same novel, which would invalidate Nicholson's distinction. A search in www.goodreads.com of the key words "horror science fiction novels" offers 934 results including, amongst the many novels written by Stephen King mentioned in that list, *The Running Man* (Paul Michael Glaser, 1982), which shows a dystopian United States. The events narrated in that novel – and its film version (1987) – did actually make readers react. In the 5th June, 2010 entry in talkstephenking.blogspot.com.es, a blog devoted to Stephen King, the writer comments on the opening lines of the film:

"By 2019 the world economy has collapsed." Wow, we're seven years early on that one.
"Food, natural resources and oil are in short supply" I won't comment on that, since right now we're trying to cut the supply of oil from a certain well!
"Television is controlled by the state." I just read a story headlined "Journalism 'Reinvention' Smacks of Government Control, Critics Say" (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014)

As can be observed, it is likely that the novel was written and the film filmed using the intellect as a tool, but it is also true that, in a present-day reading of both, it is inevitable that the reader/viewer feels engulfed by what they read/watch – not to mention that, to a different degree, the issues of world economy, natural resources and the controlling power of the media did also engulf the people of the early 1980's. Fonseca and Pulliam decide to define horror as a genre by describing its different subgenres such as "Ghosts", "Vampires and Werewolves" or "Maniac and

Sociopaths” due to the fact that their attempt at providing a concrete definition fails: “Horror fiction might be called fiction that attempts to warn its readers of a certain danger, of an action or belief that can have negative results” (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 5). As in Cornwell’s case, the modalization of the definition somehow makes it imprecise enough. However, their classification into subgenres is adapted in Section 3 of this research, though not as extensively as they do and, most importantly, not as subgenres, as will be explained further.

Hutchings relates Gothic and horror, and points out the fact that the two terms are frequently used interchangeably. Besides that, there is a popular understanding of horror “as a vulgarised, exploitative version of Gothic” (Hutchings, 1996: 89). He even makes reference to the term “Gothic horror” that “when applied to cinema usually refers to a specific type of horror films [...] one that relies [...] [on] ruined castles, dark dungeons, and the like” (Hutchings, 1996: 89). Clive Bloom is also aware of the interchangeable nature of gothic and horror but he states that both terms do not need to be related. “While ‘horror’ and ‘Gothic’ are often (if not usually) interchangeable, there are, of course, Gothic tales that are not horror fiction [...] and horror tales that contain no real Gothic elements” (Bloom, 2001: 155). The example he provides of the former is Daphne du Maurier’s *Rebecca* and of the latter is Elizabeth Bowen’s “The Cat Jumps.” To him, the modern horror story is a present-day transformation of the Gothic tale while, in turn, “it was Gothicism, with its formality, codification, ritualistic elements and artifice [...] that transformed the old folk tale of terror” (Bloom, 1998: 2). He acknowledges, though, the invention of a neo- or retro-gothic after the 1980s Batman comics and films that turn “the art decó of New York’s skyscrapers” into “the equivalent of the crumbling castles and monastic ruins of the old” (Bloom, 1998: 2). He does not mention the fact that a common – though multimillionaire – person as Bruce Wayne, influenced by the gothic atmosphere of the city, turns into a gothic character himself: a bat, one of the multiple forms adopted by vampires. Furthermore, his attempt to clarify the limits of both genres does actually complicate them even further as he introduces new terms, such as “the tale of terror,” “neo-gothic” and “retro-gothic” which, for the sake of clarity and despite the labyrinthine analysis of genres proposed here, are not detailed. However, it is convenient to bear in mind his updating of the classic gothic motifs when analysing novels by Louise Welsh.

Before focusing on the analysis of what is considered as properly Gothic, it behoves us to reflect on the problem of the categorization of literary genres: on the one hand, one finds the difficulty of using categories assigned to literary works that are virtually identical to the others classified under a different label. As Quéma remarks, “the act of defining the Gothic seems to function like a critical irritant” (2004: 82). When trying to answer the question of “what is horror fiction?” Bloom remarks that “the question is not helped by the multiplicity of apparently substitutable terms to cover the same thing: Gothic tale, ghost tale, terror romance, Gothic horror” (Bloom, 2001: 155). On the other hand, the fact that many of these genres rely, as a classificatory criterion, on the reaction of the reader to the text complicates the labelling process of the works. Using Stephen King as an example of a writer that reflects on the writing of horror fiction, he notes there are three levels in the hierarchy of horror effects on the reader: terror, fear and revulsion (King, 1986). Hogle, in turn, makes use of both “terror” and “horror” as qualifying terms to the concept of Gothic and he describes a gradation from the “terror Gothic” to the “horror Gothic” in which the former

holds characters and readers mostly in anxious suspense about threats to life, safety, and sanity kept largely out of sight or in shadows or suggestions from a hidden past, while the latter confronts the principal characters with the gross violence of physical or psychological dissolution, explicitly shattering the assumed norms (including the repressions) of everyday life with wildly shocking, and even revolting, consequences (Hogle, 2002: 3).

When Petra and Jane move to their new flat in Berlin in *The Girl on the Stairs*, Jane feels hauntingly attracted to the dark *Hinterhaus* she can see from her window in the backyard. Both women discuss the haunting nature of building in the city as it was rebuilt on the horrors of Second World War.¹⁹ Jane ignores the reason why she feels such an attraction to the abandoned backhouse, but she will eventually find out that there is a body buried in it: the corpse of Greta Mann. Following Hogle, this would fall within the realm of the “terror Gothic.” However, when Jane feels threatened by Doctor Alban Mann’s presence in her flat, she slashes one of his arteries in his leg and, once in the *hinterhaus*, provokes intentionally Anna’s fall into the well of the stairs. This violent reaction to her becomes more shocking when the version she gives the police and her family on the events does actually erase her implication in the

¹⁹ This idea will be developed in Section 3 of this research.

events and, most importantly, she does not feel any remorse for that. Though this might seem shocking, the reader of the novel, fully aware of what she has actually done, cannot help feeling certain sympathy for her as Greta's ghost has been released. The revolting aspect of this is not just the fact that there is no moral questioning of the act of killing two human beings, but the individual justification of that act. Being conscious of this can only provoke horror in the reader – and in Jane, if she ever recovers psychologically from her experience. Cavallaro claims that “if horror makes people shiver, terror undermines the foundations of their worlds” (Cavallaro, 2002: 3). Jane's reaction makes readers shiver but it also undermines the foundation of the world the readers inhabit. If the horror Gothic and the terror Gothic can occur in the same narration, it seems more relevant to focus on the qualified noun, the Gothic, and analyse some of the most relevant ideas in it.

Punter (1996: 119) remarks that the term Gothic is presently more widely used than when it originally started and became popular. In 1764 Horace Walpole published his novel *The Castle of Otranto* and one year later its second edition. Despite its success, it did not explode until the 1790s “throughout the British Isles, on the continent of Europe, and briefly in the new United States, particularly for a female readership” (Hogle, 2002: 1). In the preface to his second edition, Walpole states that his aim in writing the novel was the following:

It was an attempt to blend the two kinds of romance, the ancient and the modern. In the former, all was imagination and improbability: in the latter, nature is always intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success. Invention has not been wanting; but the great resources of fancy have been dammed up, by a strict adherence to common life. But if, in the latter species, Nature has cramped imagination, she did but take her revenge, having been totally excluded from old romances. The actions, sentiments, and conversations, of the heroes and heroines of ancient days, were as unnatural as the machines employed to put them in motion (Walpole, 1986: 43).

With his words, he sets one of the main themes of what is considered as gothic literature in a wider sense than that of “the ‘classic’ Gothic canon” (Punter, 1996: viii): the contrast between what is real and what is imaginary, what is realistic and what is Gothic. The invasion of the real by the imaginary was so present after Walpole's novel that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jane Austen wrote *Northanger Abbey* in which she parodies the Gothic conventions by “gain[ing] and keep[ing] the reader's acceptance of the latter [the realistic novel] while proving that former [the Gothic] is false and absurd” (Sarika, 2011: 3). This was, as Lloyd-Smith

points out, because in the early nineteenth century “the Gothic vogue had largely passed and it was frequently occasion for satires and parodies” (Lloyd-Smith, 2001: 115), a fact with which Horner and Zlosnik (2001: 242) agree. Cavallaro, in turn, pinpoints that, behind the parody in Austen’s novel, one encounters “the most fearful facet of the Gothic vision [that] consists of repressive role models which the members of a particular society are systematically, albeit often surreptitiously, required to internalize” (Cavallaro, 2002: 52). In the specific case of Austen’s novel, the fact that Catherine reads her own reality through a Gothic prism may have an apparent comic effect because of the several misunderstood situations, such as Catherine’s expectations of the abbey; however, they also hint at the need of the female characters in the novel to escape their own reality. Ballesteros González explains how gothic literature became one of the narrative channels where writings by women, which were still very limited and embryonic, flew in a very prolific way (Ballesteros, 2013: 94, my translation²⁰). Women lacked so much access to culture and to adequate working regulations that, even in the late nineteenth century, women hardly had any right to education and freedom. Florence Fenwick Miller, a midwife who became a journalist, described in 1890 the situation of women as follows:

Under exclusively man-made laws women have been reduced to the most abject condition of legal slavery in which it is possible for human beings to be held [...] under the arbitrary domination of another's will, and dependent for decent treatment exclusively on the goodness of heart of the individual master (From “*A speech to the National Liberal Club*,” quoted in Wojtczak).

When Isabella and Catherine are talking about the novels they are going to read, what Catherine wants to know is: “are they all horrid, are you sure they are all horrid?” (Austen, 2003: 39). In the act of willingly wanting to feel fear when reading the gothic novels, they are, at least, choosing what they really want to do and feel. By parodying the gothic conventions, Austen is actually pointing at the internalized models that the nineteenth-century members of society did learn to perform.

Returning to the contrast between the real and the imaginary, Punter states that, despite the evolution of the Gothic from its very origins to its most contemporary meanings, there is an element that remains: “Gothic writing is not realistic writing. And as non-realistic and broadly expressionist forms of ‘Gothic’ multiply in England

²⁰ In the original: “Lo gótico [...] se convirtió pronto en uno de los cauces narrativos por los que discurrió de manera prolífica la escritura femenina, hasta entonces muy limitada y embrionaria en Inglaterra” (Ballesteros, 2013: 94).

and America, so has the use of the term ‘Gothic’ has (sic) become more prevalent” (Punter, 1996: 119). He exemplifies the growth of the Gothic in contemporary culture by noting how it has even been used to describe not only a type of music, “but also the whole swathe of fashion, dress, and indeed social behaviour and style associated with the music” (Punter, 1996: 145). It becomes interesting to note the fact that, to him, gothic literature is considered as non-realistic. Punter’s remark recalls the linear model of literary genres proposed by Cornwell (figure 3 above), as the fact that, constituting realism a separate genre category, Gothic would fall into its realm. On the one hand, there are models, such as Brooke-Rose which, as has been shown, do acknowledge the relationship between Realism and other genres, such as the uncanny and the marvellous. On the other hand, twenty-first century reality makes it hard to define a clear-cut line between what is real and realistic. Even though it may seem to be a digression from the topic, it is worth noting that the Gothic music Punter makes reference to was to be blamed for the real Columbine massacre on 20th April, 1999. As the user Kirk0271 explains in the blog “Psych 1001 Section 010 and 011 Fall 2011:”

After this tragedy, many people wanted answers as to why two teenagers were so full of hate and anger that they wanted to shoot and bomb their school. While looking for these answers, the police and the community found out that both of the boys listened to the rocker Marilyn Manson, who is known for his gothic and dark music, which has recurring themes of death and anger. After this correlation was discovered, Manson was given the majority of the blame for the Columbine massacre (Kirk0271, 2011).

While there were some voices critical of this official version – Marilyn Manson amongst them – who stated what, to them, were the main reason for the shooting, i.e. violence in schools and the possession of weapons by civilians, as can be seen in Michael Moore’s film *Bowling for Columbine* (2002), American society felt the need to blame a type of music as if what Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold had actually done was to take Manson’s themes of death and anger literally. However, in the gothicization of the two boys, society reacted against the fact that “what we find so repulsive about studying the reality of crime [...] is the piercing reflection we catch when we steady our glance at those evil men” (Katz, 1988: 324). The question that arises here is whether a fictionalization of such an event as the Columbine Massacre is to be regarded as a realistic fiction or not. When Gus Van Sant released his film *Elephant* (2003), which is based on the massacre at the high school, Ángel Fernández

Santos writes in his review in *El País* that it was a powerful and beautiful terror – or horror – film;²¹ however, it was based on real facts. This contradiction between reality and realistic literature in Punter’s view is perhaps due to the fact that he conceives the realistic novel as a nineteenth century genre of writers such as Austen, Balzac, George Eliot and Tolstoy and not in relation to reality itself. However, as Leffler notes, despite the fact that writers may use the narrative technique and themes of the fantastic and gothic, “they also use a narrative voice that places the stories in a realist tradition [which] induce[s] an atmosphere of consensus reality and at the end the narrator delivers a natural explanation to those events or phenomena that earlier seemed unexplainable or supernatural” (Leffler, 2008: 52). This was also the case throughout the nineteenth century when gothic literature came into vogue thanks, partly, to the “blue books” – cheap editions of novels – and a gothification of the England of that time, as it is exemplified by Cueto when he explains the key role of the English newspapers in the creation of the first mass murderer: Jack the Ripper. According to him, they managed to grant him a quasi-fictional entity, as he became the main character in a gothic melodrama with real settings and, as a serial novel, people learnt the news daily and allowed a certain interaction on the part of the reader (Cueto, 2002: 53, my translation²²). Furthermore, the presence of this first serial killer can be traced in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde and *Dracula* by Bram Stoker (Ballesteros, 2013: 99, my translation²³). In her own gothicisation of her life, Catherine Morland was simply performing what the real people in her times did; and no doubt the real facts of Jack the Ripper’s crimes were far more horrific than anything Catharine might ever have imagined. Punter also seems to distinguish “realistic” from “realism” and the “real.” In his approach to the realist novel, Walder warns readers of the possible understanding of “realistic” in its everyday sense as when “facing the facts (usually gloomy) of a situation, as we do, for example, when we say of someone that he or she has a realistic approach to life,” leaving aside the

²¹ In the original: “Enérgica y bella película de terror, o de horror,” quoted from www.filmaffinity.com. My translation.

²² In the original: “Su importancia no radica en la naturaleza de sus crímenes [...] sino en cómo manipularon su figura los medios de comunicación, hasta el punto de conferirle entidad cuasi ficcional, en hacerlo protagonista de un melodrama gótico con escenarios verídicos y que, como una novela por entregas, era conocido día a día y permitía cierto grado de interactividad por parte del receptor” (Cueto, 2002: 53).

²³ In the original: “[obras que,] sin citarlo explícitamente, se dejan impregnar por la atmósfera creada por el caso [...] del Destripador. Así acontece en *The Picture of Dorian Gray* de Oscar Wilde (1890-1) y en *Drácula* de Bram Stoker (1897)” (Ballesteros, 2013: 99).

aesthetic realm where “the words ‘realism’ or ‘realistic’ refer to the *representation* of reality” (Walder, 1995b: 18). It may not seem realistic, in Walder’s first consideration of the term, to conceive of the fact that a person voluntarily agrees to be cut for money, as Anne-Marie in *The Cutting Room*, or that a group of youngsters slays the body of a new-born baby as in *Naming the Bones*. However, these facts are realistic in the second sense – and even real in the readers’ reality²⁴. It should also be remembered the abovementioned quote by Todorov in which he states that the fantastic takes place in a world which is actually the real world, so that it may provoke the required hesitation in the reader. Besides, as Lord Byron wrote in his poem “Don Juan:” “Tis strange - but true; for truth is always strange; / Stranger than fiction.”

Botting considers that, in its canonical phase, the Gothic “functions as the mirror of eighteenth-century mores and values: a reconstruction of the past as the inverted, mirror image of the present, its darkness allows the reason and virtue of the present a brighter reflection” (Botting, 2001: 5). Louise Welsh’s novels do, literally, reflect reality in a mirror, as in the case of the different mirrors William Wilson uses in *The Bullet Trick*, where his tricks are based on smoke, beautiful women and, obviously, mirrors. Botting adds to his idea of the mirroring of reality in the Gothic that:

examples of virtuous and vicious conduct were held up for the emulation or caution of readers, good examples promoted as models while, in clear contrast, immoral, monstrous figures were presented as objects of disgust, warnings against the consequences of improper ideas and behaviour” (Botting, 2001: 9).

The problem arises when, reflected in the mirror, those examples of vicious conduct become examples of behaviour. In *The Cutting Room*, the first object that catches Rilke’s attention in the McKindless’s house is a carved ivory netsuke that, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* would date from the early eighteenth century. Giving it a closer look, Rilke realises that its motif is not simply erotic, with a man having sex with two women, but sadistic.

What made me drop the ball was the look on the face of the carved man, a leer that pulled you in, a complicit stare that drew attention to the dagger in his hand, for as he

²⁴ The fact that a fake Shao Lin master kills prostitutes and hides their corpses in his gym does not seem realistic in its everyday sense either but it would be realistic in a novel by Louise Welsh and it is actually real. Spanish media are giving full coverage to the murders by Juan Carlos Aguilar in Bilbao. For example, in the online version of El País: http://elpais.com/tag/caso_maestro_shaolin/a/. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.

penetrated one girl with his cock, he stabbed the other through her heart. The features of the stabbed girl were caught between surprise and pain (*TCR*, 17).

Rilke feels terrified at the sight of the carved scene but he quantifies its economic value – “worth several hundred pounds” (*TCR*, 17) – and decides to keep it. What he ignores in that moment is that McKindless did not feel warned by the consequences of the sexual behaviour carved in the netsuke but rather the opposite: he felt excited about the possibility of mimicking such a behaviour. McKindless is a literary character, but his mirroring look at the netsuke simply points out a fact that is real in modern twenty-first century society: the exertion of violence as a source of sexual pleasure. When Rilke visits Trapp and ask about the reality portrayed in the photos of the girl, Trapp mentions the fantasy of many people involving sex and death, but he positively states that, despite the official version that “no snuff movie has ever been made [...] we all know, of course that it has” (*TCR*, 73). Anderson confirms Trapp’s fictional statement: “snuff films were supposed to be an urban legend. And yet, it turns out, now they're real. Thanks to the Internet, people's ability to film and distribute murder to a mass audience has never been easier” (Anderson, 2012). Furthermore, some snuff videos are shown as pieces of news on TV: videos of accidents, drug violence, bombings and executions. All these images provoke in the viewer a Rilke-like reaction when they view them: first they feel horror but, after the constant repetition of the images, they do not feel affected by them; or they even may feel pleasure from the contemplation of such images. If Botting as claims “the social fiction of the mirror is distorted [and] its reflections exceeding the proper balance of identification and correction” (Botting, 2001: 9), the viewers of the new TV snuff insert the distorted image in their lives precisely because of their lack of identification with what they are viewing. Just to cite a revealing example, the video webpage YouTube, whose policy on graphic and violent contents is very restrictive, does include images of the LA Riots in 1992 with real, violent images in it where real people are actually involved in real images of the riots.²⁵ Zipes wonders: “is the violence that we encounter in our everyday lives so much more fantastic than in

²⁵ In the process of revising this section, I have come across the following piece of news in the Spanish newspaper EL PAÍS. In an article titled “La cámara que montón la abogada grabó su propio asesinato a manos de un cliente” (El País, 18 May, 2013) there is a link to a photogallery where the actual killing of Rosa Cobo at the hands of Miguel Folgoso Olmo is shown. Perhaps the distortion in the mirror is not such, but a direct reflection of reality. One day later, the media all over the world gave full coverage of the attack on a British soldier in London and the recorded interviews that a passer-by gave to the terrorists.

literature, films, and the arts that we seek to consume the fantastic like harmless junk food as quick fixes and consolation?” (Zipes, 2008: 2). According to him, the function of the fantastic is “to resist such criminality, and it can do so with irony, joy, sophistication, seriousness, and cunning” (Zipes, 2008: 3).

Returning to the literary Gothic, it underwent an enormous transformation throughout the nineteenth century. From the “gloom of a castle or [...] the dark features of the villain” (Botting, 2002a: 6), horror moved into the realm of the familiar. Michelis points out that:

the anxieties played out in Gothic texts [in the late nineteenth-century] can be related to anxieties about the institution of the family itself and its discursive interrelations such as: fears of degeneration induced by anxieties about a ‘leaking’ social body, that loses its identity (in particular in relation to clear distinctions between race, class, gender and national identity); this trope of the ‘open body’ also incited images of disease and infections, the social body as invaded by what is not ‘proper’ to it (Michelis, 2003: 11).

Despite the fact that Louise Welsh is a contemporary writer, she is quite influenced in her writings by the works of Robert Louis Stevenson. Reflecting on Rilke, the main character in her first novel, she inserts him in a tradition of antiheroes that include William Godwin’s Caleb Williams, Maturin’s Melmoth the Wanderer and Stevenson’s Doctor Jekyll. Focusing specifically on the latter, she notes that “Dr Jekyll embarks on the ill-fated association with the dreadful Mr Hyde in the hope that he can indulge his appetites while displacing the sin” (www.louisewelsh.com). There are innumerable references to *Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde* in her work, but in every single case, she appropriates the literary reference. In her novel, *Naming the Bones*, Murray meets Audrey Garrett and her son, Lewis. When he asks: “Lewis, after RLS?” Mrs Garrett replies sharply: “No, the spelling’s different” (NTB, 121). The anxieties about the institution of the family and the open bodies, characteristic of Stevenson’s age, are present in Welsh, but the spelling is different: the same-sex parents in *The Girl on the Stairs* do present a new model of family in a building where all the inhabitants ask Jane about her husband, but the family who is actually threatened is Jane and Petra’s with the insults painted in red on their door, or Anna’s remark that their son is unfortunate for not having a father. There are also bodies in her novels that are open, such as Marlowe’s in *Tamburlaine Must Die*, literally stabbed several times with a poniard by his different enemies but also stabbed figuratively by Walshingham when he stabs him in the back, both as betrayal or with

his penis. In *The Cutting Room*, drug-addict Rita's face, once beautiful, is now a "gaunt face [with] the creased, dark hollows of her eyes" (*TCR*, 157). Her body is suffering from the effects of drug addiction, but also that of the HIV that has invaded her body. William Wilson in *The Bullet Trick* makes use of his tricks to cut female bodies in two or to create Frankenstein's monster-like composition out of two women's bodies. They are only tricks, but the consequences for him are comparable to those Mary Shelley's doctor actually suffered. As mentioned above, the re-writing of nineteenth-century Gothic literature by Welsh does have a different spelling. Furthermore, this new spelling is possible due not just to the fact that revisiting the canonical Gothic works allow a modern reading of them but also because in its development it has retained the mirror-like quality that it originally possessed. Spooner summarizes the reason why Gothic texts are still relevant to contemporary readers as follows:

Gothic texts deal with a variety of themes just as pertinent to contemporary culture as to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when Gothic novels first achieved popularity: the legacies of the past and its burdens on the present: the radically provisional or divided nature of the self: the construction of peoples or individuals as monstrous or 'other'; the preoccupation with bodies that are modified, grotesque or diseased. Gothic has become so pervasive precisely because it is so apposite to the representation of contemporary concerns (Spooner, 2006: 8).

With the addition of the fact that the legacy of the past does not mean a burden only on the present but also on the places where that past actually took place, such as the Island of Lismore in *Naming the Bones* or Berlin in *The Bullet Trick* and *The Girl on the Stairs*, the themes described by Spooner can be traced in Louise Welsh's novels – though this does not imply the exclusion of other themes. For example, the fact that the work of Robert Louis Stevenson is so present in her novels also implies the presence of a certain Scottish-ness – construing this label mimicking Barthes' "Roman-ness" (Barthes, 1991: 24) – in her work, just to cite an example.

What has been intended so far in this research is to show the problem of the classification of Welsh's novels within the particular literary genre of the Gothic but allowing, furthermore, the possibility of unveiling some gothic features in them that even Welsh herself acknowledges in her writing. Freedman makes reference to the problematic of genre classification because a genre is a "static, merely classificatory intellectual framework that [...] seems to imply: the various genres are understood as a row of so many pigeonholes, and each literary text is expected to fit more or less

unproblematically into one of them” (Freedman, 2000: 21). If, according to Jackson, as has been explained above, the fantastic is a mode with a paraxial relation with reality, there are many authors that adopt the mode-view to refer to the all the post-classic Gothic canon works. Fowler notes how the gothic novel “yielded a gothic mode that outlasted it and was applied to forms as diverse as the maritime adventure, [...] the psychological novel, [...] the short story [...] and the detective story, not to mention various science fiction genres” (Fowler, 1974: 92). According to her, the Gothic would no longer exist as a genre, as opposed to science fiction, but its persistence as a mode allows the possibility of still considering the Gothic as a contemporary literary concept. Hutchings shares Fowler’s view as he considers it as “a distinctive mode which influences a wide range of cultural forms” (1996: 89) and Hogle states that “this highly unstable genre [the Gothic] then scattered its ingredients into various modes” (Hogle, 2002: 1). As a mode, Gothic impregnates these cultural forms, whether these are literary, cinematographic, or musical. Punter also considers that the Gothic began:

as a mode of dealing with the past and thus it has continued to the present day. In the contexts of Scotland and Ireland, different in many ways though they are, that past looks all too often as though it has already been appropriated by another, as though the story of one’s own nation has already ceased to be one’s own to tell (Punter, 2002: 122-123).

Welsh’s novels deal with the continuity of the past in the present, a past that needs to be unburied – in some cases literally, as in *Naming the Bones* or *The Girl on the Stairs* – in order to shed light onto the present situation of the characters and their reality. As Punter points out, the past has sometimes been appropriated by another and it is they, as Glaswegians, except in the case of Christopher Marlowe, that need to reappropriate it and tell their own story, no matter how incomplete or unreliable it proves. The emphasis on the past is a common element in any study on Gothic literature and even a more contemporary researcher, such as Leavenworth, remarks that “The Anglo-American literary Gothic tradition is known for its devoted concern with how the ‘past’ haunts the ‘present’, both within narratives and formally through the recycling of tropes and themes” (Leavenworth, 2010: 9) and points out that one way or another all the gothic novels refer to Walpole’s novel, which he considers as foundational. However, as Alter states, the approach to Gothic in contemporary works

“differs greatly to that of the 18th and 19th century, and even the early 20th century” (Alter, 2012: 43).

As mentioned above, Welsh’s novels do not suit the rigid structures and elements that appear in early gothic fiction. As Botting explains, the foundational Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto*, introduced many of the elements that defined the genre, “like the feudal historical and architectural setting, the deposed noble heir and the ghostly, supernatural machinations” (Botting, 2001: 4). These elements *per se* are not present in her novels, and neither are “the wild landscapes, the ruined castles and abbeys, the dark, dank labyrinths, the marvellous, supernatural events, distant times and customs” (Botting, 2001: 9). However, as will be demonstrated further on, the essence of such elements is present in the modern day Glasgow, London, Berlin or even in the Elizabethan London, spaces that hide “some secrets from the past (*sometimes the recent past*) which haunt the characters, psychologically, physically, or otherwise at the main time of the story” (Hogle, 2002: 2, my emphasis). Besides that, in Louise Welsh’s novels there are no castles, abbeys or labyrinths but there are Victorian houses, as McKindless’s, long corridors in the library, Berlin cabarets, Saint Sebastian’s *Kirche* in Berlin or a *Hinterhaus* in the backyard. Hogle notes the updated character of settings in contemporary gothic texts and he presents a gradation of gothic places that end up in gothicised, rather than gothic, spaces:

Though not always as obviously as in *The Castle of Otranto* or *Dracula*, a Gothic tale usually takes place (at least some of the time) in an antiquated or seemingly antiquated space – be it a castle, a foreign palace, an abbey, a vast prison, a subterranean crypt, a graveyard, a primeval frontier or island, a large old house or theatre, an aging city or urban underworld, a decaying storehouse, factory, laboratory, public building, or some new recreation of an older venue, such as an office with old filing cabinets, an overworked spaceship, or a computer memory (Hogle, 2002: 2).

Times are not distant and there are even some characters who actually lived in that time, as in *The Bullet Trick*, *Naming the Bones* or *The Girl on the Stairs*, but that past is already buried. The present can also be buried, as in *The Cutting Room*, if nobody acts and shows what present Glasgow hides between its walls. Even the present past that Marlowe recounts may help present-day people understand what has so far been ignored. As Sage claims, the Gothic is not just a literary convention but a language “which provides writers with the critical means of transferring an idea of the otherness of the past into the present” (Sage and Lloyd Smith, 1996: 1). The past is

somehow Other, appropriated by Others, and needs to be re-appropriated. Characters need to research, investigate, unveil what is hidden but there. None of them are detectives, but the discovery of a photograph which may be the key to a crime – or rather its remnant -, a piece of cloth in an envelope, some notes that could be the outline of a sci-fi novel, or a bruise on a girl's face, trigger in the characters the urge to discover what these elements stand for. Unknowingly, they start a journey to a past that transcends their personal lives. Punter (1996: 146) explains that memory and reconstruction are germane to the contemporary literature of terror. Except in Marlowe's case, all the characters become engaged in their investigations that are, apparently, unrelated to their lives. Armitt claims that "a Gothic text *becomes* a Gothic text when such fixed demarcations are called into question by the presence of an interloper who interrogates the existence of such boundar[ies]" (Armitt, 1997: 90). There are many examples in Welsh's novels of interlopers who question what is hidden behind the apparent normality of the real: Rilke's discovery of the photograph taken at the *Soleil et Desole* provokes in him a need to discover the true identity of the girl depicted, so that her death can be mourned. Wilson's accidental discovery of the photo of where Gloria Noon was buried, intertwines, even in a narrative sense, with his hellish experience in Berlin. Watson's academic research on Archie Lunan's life possesses him up to the point of him becoming Lunan. Jane's pregnancy and future motherhood turns her into an extraordinary receptor of child abuse and a mirror to her own experience as a possibly neglected child. As she wonders while Petra is in Vienna, "Was her baby's childhood destined to be a rerun of her own? Jane didn't believe in Fate, but sometimes it seemed impossible to escape the life you'd been elected to" (*TGOTS*, 153). The four of them reconstruct pasts that already possess an official version and it is precisely this reconstruction which makes the memory of the deceased return.

As mentioned above, Marlowe's case is different due to the fact that this character is based on an actual person who is fictionally writing from the past. The very act of writing becomes, in him, a need to recount his own version of his story so that his memory survives. Unfortunately for him, this manuscript somehow got lost – obviously within Welsh's literary resurrection of the character – as Marlowe's actual death and its reasons still remain a mystery to all. These five characters give their own voice to some long-forgotten stories but there is a price to pay: as Cavallaro remarks, "consciousness is sharpened by its exposure to the beyond and by intimations that its

maps inevitably exceed the scope of any generic atlas. (Cavallaro, 2002: 16-17). They all learn that the discovery of reality beyond their own reality trespasses their personal stories to become part of something wider at the end of their stories, and this helps them find a peace of mind that they lacked at the beginning. They have reached their own version of the events, though it is also as imperfect and incomplete as the official one.

In his study entitled *The Gothic Vision*, Cavallaro (2002: 21) states that darkness is the basic ingredient that all the narratives discussed in his book share. For her part, Welsh's novels are also set – and developed – in the dark: the night time of Glaswegian streets and pubs, the dark and dirty streets of Elizabethan London, the Berlin Cabarets, the rainy isle of Lismore or the ghostly *Hinterhaus* seen from Jane and Petra's apartment. In the darkness of her novels there hide untold secrets, alternative versions to reality and also alternative sexualities. It is also in the dark that men can obtain pleasure from the view of a woman's body being sliced or shot; men can cruise with other men in parks and toilets; prostitutes can work the streets; voyeurism and infidelities walk hand in hand. The idea of darkness as negative and destructive is, as Cavallaro explains, "counterbalanced by a recognition of its positive aspects. In several traditions, it is associated with primordial chaos and its powers" (Cavallaro, 2002: 23). Out of the real, and their own personal, darkness, characters discover what had remained hidden up till then. This does not mean that their discoveries are always pleasant or that they relieve them from the burden of their existences; but they allow them to start afresh: Rilke travels to Paris, Marlowe prepares himself for eternity, Wilson frees himself from his guilt, Watson feels his life can start away from the oppressive academic world and Jane finds in Boy some life of her own in a foreign city.

The readers of Welsh's novels, key elements in the above-mentioned classifications of literary genres, become spectators to stories that are altogether alien to themselves but also integral. As pointed out in Jackson above, the unease and the uncanny, replace familiarity and comfort. Readers may not live the world that Welsh's characters inhabit but the reality the latter discover pretty much resembles the readers' own reality: crimes, prostitution, murders are all too familiar in the news. As Fonseca and Pulliam state, horror novels – or films – are "like the accident that compels us to rubber-neck, even though we know in our hearts that we really don't want to see other humans broken and bloodied" (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: xvi).

Welsh's readers can get involved in the events depicted, being certain that they are not real but fiction; though feeling the uneasiness provided by the fact that their unreality does not exclude their feasibility. Anderson takes Fonseca and Pulliam's idea to the extreme when they state that "anybody's who's ever rubbernecked at an accident (which is to say everybody) knows it's human nature to want to see gore. It's not morally justifiable to gawk at human suffering, and most people don't indulge in their curiosity. But a lot of people do" (Anderson, 2012). As discussed in Section 3 of this research, the confrontation of the characters with the reality beyond their own reality follows their encounter with the abject and its recognition as an integral part of their selves. After such encounter, there starts a process of self-recognition that will add symbolically – or not – a modern, twenty-first-century gothic touch to spaces and people.

After this brief outline of the problem of genre classification in the case of Gothic, it is possible to reach a conclusion that may assuage the interest of many critics in finding a place for different genres in its corresponding pigeonhole: their belonging to the canon. Bennet relates Literature, with a capital L, with the canonised tradition. According to him, Literature does not simply categorize a particular body of texts but it is "the central, co-ordinating concept of the discourse of literary criticism, supplying the point of reference in relation to which relationships or difference and similarity within the field of writing are articulated" (Bennett, 1986: 238). The consequence of this equivalence of canon and literature implies the exclusion of popular culture out of the realm of Literature and its consideration as a "residual concept" (Bennet, 1986: 238). In *Naming the Bones*, when Murray Watson starts his research on the life of poet Archie Lunan, he is criticised and discouraged not only by his colleagues, as he should devote his sabbatical year to research some big, canonical issue. That is the case of Meikle, the bookfinder, who asks him if all the big names have already been covered. This is due to the fact that the canon, as Guillory explains, "has retained its self-image as an aristocracy of texts" (Guillory, 1983: 175). Murray's scholarly friends do have an aristocratic perception of texts. At his drinking meeting with some other University colleagues at Fowlers, Phyllida seems interested in knowing where he has been. He then explains that he has been at the National Library and he has found some texts written by Lunan. Phyllida feigns a certain fascination and asks: "Find any fabulous new poems?" (*NTB*, 52). Murray notes that they are actually some notes by Lunan for a science fiction novel, to what Phyllida remarks:

“Poor Murray, out to restore and revive, and all you get is half-boiled genre fiction” (NTB, 52). Her comment points out at different considerations about genre and canon. First, her consideration of poetry as a canonical genre worth studying: if Murray is researching a not-so-well known poet, he should at least be lucky enough to find some unknown and unpublished poems. Second, the fact that she considers the science fiction novel as “genre fiction” deprecates the possible value of the novel as it is just a mere repetition of motifs and conventions. Thirdly, she modifies the term “hard-boiled fiction” for “half-boiled fiction.” Without entering the realm of what hard-boiled fiction is – as this would definitely lead this section astray just before its end and, rather than lose its labyrinthine character, it would enter a new labyrinth – it is interesting to note the fact that this type of fiction does actually possess some critical, genre prestige. As Irwin notes when writing on Raymond Chandler’s most popular character, Philip Marlowe, it is after *Poodle Springs* that he tried to “raise hard-boiled fiction into *the realm of high art* by rendering his central character more psychologically complex, more vulnerable to the quotidian pressures of life” (Irwin, 2006: 67, my emphasis). According to Phyllida, then, science fiction does not achieve such participation in the realm of high fiction and remains halfway there, half-boiled. Freedman acknowledges the importance of genre in the process of canon formation and states that “if science fiction has rarely been a privileged genre, this means that the literary powers-that-be have not wished science fiction to function with the social prestige that literature in the stronger senses enjoys” (Freedman, 2000: 29). It can be deduced from his observation that science fiction, together with other genres amongst which the Gothic can be found, are somehow marginalized within canonical literary theory. Actually, their exclusion is not precisely ideologically neutral, as it corresponds to the fact that some “authoritative readers [that] include academic critics and teachers, publishing executives, librarians, editors of journals and reviews, and others” do act in a determinate social context and toward determinate [...] ends” in order to “decide that a certain relatively small number of texts, out of the much vaster number that actually exist, shall be considered – that is, shall be canonized – as literature” (Freedman, 2000: 27). An example of such partiality in criteria by an authoritative reader is Harold Bloom and his *The Western Canon*. In it, he presents a study on twenty-six authors that he considers as the paradigm of the Western canon. His aim is to confront what he labels as “the School of Resentment,” which includes "Feminists, Marxists, Lacanians, New Historicists, Deconstructionists, Semioticians"

(Bloom, 1995: 557) and their attempt to destroy “all intellectual arid aesthetic standards in the humanities and social sciences, in the name of social justice” (1995: 35). It proves curious to note that Bloom’s work has actually become canonical when dealing with the question of the literary canon, together with the fact that he has been widely criticized not only by the very “School of Resentment” but also by some authors, such as French who, besides questioning Bloom’s criteria of selection, ironizes Bloom’s intent when he describes it as

an eloquent testimony to the power of literary art in one man's life, *The Western Canon* is a work of loving enthusiasm and lively intelligence, filled with flashes of illuminating insight. It might better have been given a title like *My Great Books*; but then it would not be selling so many copies. (French, 1994: 118).

One of the reasons for not becoming a best-seller would be the fact that it would state Bloom’s intent too clearly without masking it behind big words such as canon and western. Secondly, it would not be a catchy enough title for an academic book and it would be probably excluded from the realm of canonical critical literary theory and placed in more commercial shelves in the bookshops. The fact that Harold Bloom’s work has been criticised also corresponds to a change undergone by the profile of the literary canon in the last few decades. According to Ascari, the notion of canon has been influenced by such diverse factors as:

the ‘rediscovery’ of women’s writings that had been previously marginalised, an increasing theoretical awareness, the effort to overcome national boundaries in order to study literature on a European or world scale and the tendency to relate literature to the discourses of science, politics and religion within the framework of a semiotics of culture (Ascari, 2009: x).

This shift in the understanding of which literary works can become canonical or not opposes some more conservative readings such as Phyllida’s and proves that canonicity is currently regarded as “the result of a cultural process, and therefore as an object of study in itself” and not as an “essential property of literary texts, authors or genres” (Ascari, 2009: xii). Murray discovers that Lunan’s science fiction novel will probably become more popular, and it could probably be become the object of research by a scholar – perhaps a PhD student – that read it as part of the contemporary canon while Lunan’s poetry book will perhaps remain residual despite its potential as a canonical reading. Perhaps Phyllida would even write and publish an article on it.

Returning to the idea of marginality of some genres in favour of other genres outlined above, it is interesting to note how Aguirre rejects such marginalization of certain genres – citing the Gothic, Western and Detective as examples – and proposes the use of the label “transitional” in the sense of acknowledging their liminal character. As he explains:

it is part of the nature of the liminal that it be ‘transitional’ without being unstable or provisional. If it lacks order, this does not mean it is merely chaotic; if it does not adhere to code, this may be simply because it is experimental (and will mostly be found to adhere to some ‘other’ code or codes than the one we were thinking of); if it is in constant flux, this only means that flux is in the nature of the liminal (Aguirre et al. 2000: 68).

This liminal character of the transitional genres contrasts sharply with the pigeon-hole classification of literary genres as, in that constant flux, literary works do transform and adapt. Freedman’s attempt to find a place for science fiction in the canon of literary genres follows some previous attempts by other authors, such as Todorov and Cornwell with their championing of a fantastic genre. However, as has been pointed out above, these attempts do rather complicate the matter of genre classification even more, with some overlapping between different genres, as in the case of terror, horror and Gothic, and the not-very-clear limits between them. It is also interesting to remark that these authors emphasize the role of readers in the definition of the genres as if they were attempting to provide some critical foundations to the literary taste of those very readers. Louise Welsh does not fit the Gothic genre so closely as to be read only as a gothic novelist. However, Ascari underlines the importance of the act of reading as it always “translates into a selection of elements from the texts we approach, responding to factors as diverse as education, motivation and concentration” (Ascari, 2009: xi). He also notes the fact that the aspects that “we grasp are those that our cultural position and subjectivity enables us to recognise and to relate to other date” (Ascari, 2009: xi). Bearing in mind the importance of one’s own subjectivity in the process of recognition and the corresponding relation to previous readings, this research, from my own cultural position and my own subjectivity, focuses on the non-exclusive and non-excluding Gothic mode in her novels that does not invalidate any other reading mode. Furthermore, if there is an element that is common to most of the critics that have dealt with the Gothic, regardless its consideration as a literary genre or a mode, it is the relevance given to darkness and how places, time, characters and even music are dark. In Section 2 I

make reference to how Goldie describes the homotextual reading of some canonical novels as if read while wearing rose-coloured glasses. However, what I propose in this research is the use of Goldie's glasses but toning them a little darker.

2. WITH ROSE-COLOURED GLASSES

If the previous section of this research started with some reference to some of the critical praise Louise Welsh's novels have received, this one is inspired by one of Mark Lawson's objections to *The Bullet Trick*, in particular, and to what he refers to as "cross-gender narration," in general, in his critical praise in *The Guardian*. According to him, Welsh is not simply a lesbian writer but also one that cannot conceal her own lesbian voice behind the male, heterosexual voice of William Wilson – the main character of her novel –. Curiously enough, her lesbianism impregnates – or should it be "infects" – a male voice up to the point of turning it into a feminine lesbian in the guise of a man: "William occasionally sounds so female that the love-scenes have a presumably unintended lesbian frisson" (Lawson, 2006). He illustrates his point by framing it into his more general approach to what he terms as "cross-gender" narrative. As he explains:

In my reading experience, cross-gender narration most often fails in the business of bodily functions. In books by men, women in middle age often seem to be getting the hang of menstruation. In this book, William pays such elaborate attention to his penis while peeing that he gives the impression of being fairly new to urination. Writers imagining the unfamiliar can forget how standard such actions become to those for whom they are a requirement for life (Lawson, 2006).

In other words, he implies that Welsh, as a lesbian, does ignore what peeing with a penis is like and that is why she over-emphasizes the importance of such a body part in the male body. It could be argued that Lawson perceives Louise Welsh's body as disabled as it lacks the penis and it belongs to a lesbian writer. McRuer points out the equation between physically disabled bodies and those homosexual bodies read as disabled when he claims that "sometimes in contrast to and sometimes in tandem with the strategy of making visible an embodied 'homosexual,' the individual could be understood as disabled in some way; that disability, again, was supposedly legible on the body" (McRuer, 2003: 80-81). According to him, if homosexuality is socially related to a certain disability, heterosexuality is consequently assumed to be able-bodiedness (McRuer, 2003: 87). Louise's disabled homosexual body can only produce, therefore, disabled characters such as William. He sounds female and his consciousness on his own penis turns him into a kind of drag king with a penis in the manner of Petra-Peter in *The Girl on the Stairs*, who even keeps his cock with his outfit "in storage with Mutti's stuff" (*TGOTS*, 84). However, real men – even straight

men – do know the importance of their bodies and their penises, not just in sexual situations. In a research carried out by Brown and Graham on body satisfaction and narcissism of gay and straight men in gyms, they both conclude that “the effect of narcissism on body satisfaction was equal for both straight and gay gym-active males” (Brown and Graham, 2008: 103). Such narcissism in men can be observed both in the working-out area, whose walls are usually covered in mirrors that reflect one’s own image and the image of those around, opening up a world of potential gazes – be they of admiration and/or desire -, as well as in the changing rooms. Llamas and Vidarte also point out at this narcissism towards the bodies of those attending gyms by presenting the character of the *galletón*,²⁶ defined as those who inhabit the gyms in search for a specific constitution of their own subjectivity and who are made out of a white dough (Llamas and Vidarte, 1999: 34, my translation²⁷). This dough is modified by adding colour, as when sunbathing, and by working out one’s muscles as much as possible, sometimes aided by the use of protein supplements. The aim of these *galletones* is to be gazed at as least as much as they gaze at themselves (and to make people want to touch them as much as they touch themselves). In short, they want to be as important to everybody as they are to themselves by achieving an acknowledgement (and love) that exceeds their own self-esteem (or their narcissism) (Llamas and Vidarte, 1999: 35-36, my translation²⁸). Men’s awareness of their own bodies and the fact that they are being gazed at is also common knowledge in forums as for example in the forum posted in www.thestudentroom.co.uk. In it, the user BUSYSTUDENT posts the following:

Hey all,
I've recently joined virgin active and noticed ALOT of guys do not strip naked in the gym when changing, most guys wear shorts while showering especially asian lads and get changed in the toilets/showers.
Personally, myself i dont going nude while changing and in the showers but i feel a bit odd going all nude while other guys are wearing shorts etc

²⁶ Its approximate translation would be “big biscuit.”

²⁷ In the original: “los seres que los pueblan en busca de una determinada constitución de su subjetividad. El galletón se fabrica a partir de una masa blanca” (Llamas and Vidarte, 1999: 34)

²⁸ In the original: “El principio básico del galletón es ser observado, al menos, tanto como se mira él mismo (y que se desee tocarlo tanto como él se toca); que se dé primacía a su aspecto porque él ha comprendido que es eso lo que se le pide, y ha hecho ese sacrificio, precisamente, para satisfacer esa exigencia ajena que demanda excesos musculares. El galletón quiere ser, en definitiva, tan importante para los demás como lo es para sí mismo. O sea, conseguir un reconocimiento (y un amor) que superen su autoestima (o su narcisismo)” (Llamas and Vidarte, 1999: 35-36).

What is it like at your gym - Has everyone gone conscious about how they look or isn't it considered the norm to 'let it all hangout' in the changing room any more?²⁹ (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014)

The different answers this user receives range from the humorous, recommending him to shower at home, to sympathy with the Asian lads' habit of wearing shorts when showering, including those of people who admit they normally strip and shower naked. However, there is one answer by user HERR STAMPER that is quite significant.

If ur a tad insecure about ur willy mate i wouldnt bother but i know a few lads includin myself that have done it and continue to do so. Not so much after gym but whenever i go out on exercises with Royal Marines they're are no private showering facilities so u get used to it after a while³⁰ (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

It proves interesting to mark that HERR STAMPER relates the fact of stripping naked or not in the gym with one's own insecurity on one's "willy." In a place where men are exposed to the gaze of other men and where muscles are developed, there is that one muscle that cannot be expanded through exercise. As this user notes, it is not a matter of size but a matter of security which grants some men the confidence to expose their bodies – leaving aside whether they are exposing their body as a sexually desirable body or not. Llamas and Vidarte explain that the *galletón* is the passive object of gaze, attention, envy or seduction (Llamas and Vidarte, 1999: 36, my translation³¹). However, those who attend the gym and who are not *galletones* cannot escape such objectivation as they inevitably compare their own bodies with those that surround them. It is out of that comparison that HERR STAMPER's insecurity issue arises. Whatever the case, people that work out in the gym do try to mould the white dough of their bodies, acquire a healthy appearance and attempt to resemble the perfect able-body, as McRuer proposes, which is as much a construct as the perfect heterosexual identity. According to McRuer, "the ideal able-bodied identity can never, once and for all, be achieved. Able-bodied identity and heterosexual identity are linked in their mutual impossibility and in their mutual incomprehensibility" (McRuer, 2002: 93). In *Naming the Bones*, Lyn works helping homeless people in Glasgow and, in particular, helping Frankie, a character that is first introduced as "the scruffy man in an electric wheelchair who was rolling along

²⁹ Spelling and grammar as in the original.

³⁰ Spelling and grammar as in the original.

³¹ In the original: "el galletón es pasivo objeto de miradas, atenciones, admiración, envidia o seducción" (Llamas and Vidarte, 1999: 36).

beside her [Lyn]” (*NTB*, 95). He is presented in relation to Lyn, his carer, and she assumes he requires all her help in order to perform his everyday routines, such as shopping. However, he is able to perform with his body different actions that a sympathetic able-body takes for granted he cannot. In the Burger King, Murray Watson feels he has to accompany him to the disabled toilets as he perhaps may need some help, to which Frankie asks:

‘Do you like to watch?’

‘No.’

‘So fuck off. I might not be able to piss standing up any more, but I’m still capable of wiping my own arse’ (*NTB*, 108).

Murray Watson’s sympathetic attempt to help Frankie in a matter he actually does not need any help with, exemplifies what Sandahl claims as one of the points in common between queer theory and disability studies: the fact that they both share a history of injustice: “both have been pathologized by medicine; demonized by religion; discriminated against in housing, employment and education; *stereotyped in representation*; victimized by hate groups; and isolated socially, often in their families of origin” (Sandahl, 2003: 26, my emphasis). No matter how sympathetic Murray feels for Frankie, his statement of independence – and his rude manners too – provokes a reaction in him of prejudice and superiority: to Frankie’s remark on his ability to wipe his own arse, Murray replies: “One of the few pleasures left to you?” (*NTB*, 108). Murray attacks him by disabling him not just in terms of bodily movement but in terms of bodily pleasure. By erasing any possibility of achieving, and feeling, sexual pleasure, his body becomes even more dis-abled and his own sexual identity vanishes in his immobile legs in a wheelchair. Even Lyn assumes his disability has erased in him any potential to feel any desire for a woman or, further still, to make a woman feel desire for him. As she comments when Murray tells her that Frankie fancies her rotten: “they all fancy me. I’m the only woman they get to speak to who isn’t a barmaid” (*NTB*, 112). To a certain extent, her attitude towards him resembles that of the “fag hag” that, according to Maddison, are “women who bond with gay men [and they] do so as a form of political resistance” Maddison, (2000: 22). Though it may be certain that fag hags do “reject particularly dominant, respectable notions of femininity and femaleness” (Maddison, 2000: 22), it is also true that some de-sexualize, and therefore dis-able, their gay friends’ bodies as these women feel they cannot exert sexual desire potential over them. However, reality is

quite different, as they may feel desire for the gay friends' body as they are men's bodies. In her article on the relation between crip and queer, Sandahl notes that both queer and cripple are ever-changing, fluid terms that allow an identification with them despite the fact that one does not originally fit into any of them. As she explains: "though I have never heard of a nondisabled person seriously claim to *be* crip (as heterosexuals have claimed to *be* queer), I would not be surprised by this practice. The fluidity of both terms makes it likely that their boundaries will dissolve" (Sandahl, 2003: 27). Frankie is one good example of an appropriation of the crip as an identity: actually, becoming a crip saved his life. Before that, he was an able, homeless person who decided to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge on the motorway. Instead of dying, he "hit the roof of a lorry, bounced off the edge and onto the central reservation. It should have killed him, but instead he ended up in a chair. [...] But ever since he got out of hospital he seems better. [...] Almost as if suicide's been the making of him" (*NTB*, 112). By becoming a crip, he has learnt to mould his own life and find accommodation within the realm of the normalcy that excluded him when he was an able homeless man. McRuer notes that "a system of compulsory able-bodiedness repeatedly demands that people with disabilities embody for others an affirmative answer to the unspoken question, Yes, but in the end, wouldn't you rather be more like me? (McRuer, 2002: 93). In the conversation at the disabled toilets, he explains to Murray what his advantage is in comparison with people like Murray or Jack Watson: "I'm a project. Lassies like a project. I'll let her [Lyn] reform me, don't you worry" (*NTB*, 109). Frankie's answer to McRuer's question is, definitely, *No, you should like to be like me*. He can pee on his own, he can wipe his own arse and he can feel and provoke sexual desire. And Louise Welsh does also know what a penis is like.

Returning to Lawson's remark on peeing, and not, yet, considering his prejudiced approach to male masculinity by a lesbian writer, it should be noted that standard actions such as peeing are not read under the same prism when performed in the private realm of the home bathroom or in a public toilet. As Billingham notes, "[T]he men's room [...] is a physically charged territory. A space beyond the individual's control, open to the interventions of others, the public washroom inevitably seems more treacherous than the private domain" (Billingham, 2001, 213). Men's genitals are exposed or shown and the male gaze on male bodies is inevitable at the urinals: glimpses, stares or a pretended ignorance of other penises that are

clearly present in the same space. The public toilet is, then, a “zone of confrontation” (Billingham, 2001: 213). And such a zone is also sexed. In his book *Cruising Utopia*, Muñoz explains the conceptual work behind the photographs by artist Tony Just on different men’s rooms. He first selected those run-down public toilets in New York that had been shut down after the HIV/AIDS public health crisis. Then, he scrubbed them and sanitized them turning them into clean spaces. However, as Muñoz explains, “Just’s labor exists only as a ghostly trace in a sparkling men’s room [...] the urinals, tiles, toilets, and fixtures that are the objects of these photo images take on what can only be described as a ghostly aura, and otherworldly glow” (Muñoz, 2009: 40-41). These “ghosts of public sex” (Muñoz, 2009: 41) are present in these zones of confrontation, no matter how hard one scrubs and sanitizes them. Their aura remains just as the aura of the ghostly presences in the Welsh’s novels: Gloria Noon, Greta Mann, the girl in the photographs in *Soleil et Désolé*. A heterosexual man peeing in a public toilet has to confront such ghostly aura, the possibility of the homosexual other in a space that, as Haeming points out, “ignores borderlines which are kept intact under all circumstances outside the tiled premises” (Haeming, 2006, 52). That very same area also becomes a space of recognition for homosexual men in search of the same recognition or a dangerous site of public exposure. In a public toilet Rilke enters to clean himself and sees “a man in a suit lingered at the urinal. He turned before zipping himself away, giving me a could-possibly-be-mistaken-for-carelessness glimpse of his member” (*TCR*, 197). On the one hand, Rilke is not interested in that anonymous man. On the other hand, he knows that were the showing of the man’s penis not accidental, that man could be either “a wanking attendant, or idle police” (*TCR*, 197). Returning briefly to Muñoz’s remark on the ghostly sexual auras present in scrubbed toilets, it is relevant to quote Douglas Crimp’s reflection on the transformation of the sites of sexual encounters after the AIDS pandemic, an abject presence that has tinged sexual pleasure and practices with a shadow of death. As he explains:

Alongside the dismal toll of death, what many of us have lost is a culture of sexual possibility: back rooms, tea rooms, movie houses, and baths; the trucks, the piers, the ramble, the dunes. Sex was everywhere for us, and everything we wanted to venture: Golden showers and water sports, cocksucking and rimming, fucking and fist fucking. Now our untamed impulses are either proscribed once again or shielded from us by latex (Crimp, 2002, 140).

Crimp already mourns for the ghostly aura in sex sites but also for sex itself as it is mediated by the use of latex in order to have safe sex. However, his mourning for the ghostly presences was stated too early after the death of sex and sexual sites. His text “Mourning and Militancy” – to which the previous quote belongs – was originally a paper presented in the summer of 1989 and published that very same year in *October*³². Muñoz was amongst the audience of Douglas Crimp’s talk at the Second National Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference at Yale University and reflects on that moving talk twenty years later. His conclusions after such a time lapse are that, despite the eruption of AIDS and the policies that attempted to close sex sites such as the men’s rooms portrayed in Tony Just’s work, “many gay men have managed to maintain the practices that Crimp lists, as they have been translated in the age of safer sex. Negotiated risks and other tactical decisions have somewhat modified these sexual impulses without entirely stripping them away” (Muñoz, 2009: 34). In the pamphlet Rilke finds in Steenie’s attic, he reads a biased analysis on Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) that affects the gay men and the sexual context where such STDs are transmitted:

Most homosexual encounters occur while drunk, high on drugs AT ORGIES. Activities of homosexuals involve rimming (anilingus), golden showers & fisting. Homosexuals account for 3-4% of all gonorrhoea cases, 60% of all syphilis cases, & 17% of all hospital admissions. They make up only 1-2% of the population. 25-33% of homosexuals are alcoholics (*TCR*, 179-180).

Such facts and figures contradict Muñoz’s utopic – and somehow idealized – perception on the adaptation of sexual practices to the threat of being infected by AIDS and other STDs just as he ignores – perhaps intentionally – the survival of gay sex clubs, bathhouses and saunas in all the major gay urban areas, such as *The Cock* in New York City, *Steamworks* and *The Cellar* in Toronto, *Strong* and *Odarko* in Madrid, *The Pipeworks* and *The Lane* in Glasgow. In them there is “negotiated risk,” but the fact that a practice such as barebacking is negotiated does not imply it loses its deadly potential. In fact, as Dollimore explains, barebacking constitutes an experience of the desire “as daemonic [that] continues to circulate in fantasy, and in ways which are making even the queerest of postmodern radicals pause for thought as they encounter the past they thought they had escaped” (Dollimore, 2001: 21). The daemonic also lingers, then, in sites with ghostly auras. Sáez offers three approaches

³² In 2005 I translated this article into Spanish as “Duelo y Militancia” in Crimp (2005).

to the bareback practices: the first one is the previous negotiation and the certainty about the HIV status of the participants in this sexual practice. The second is the ignorance both of one's and the other's HIV status. The third is the "bug chaser," the intentional search for the virus (Sáez, 2012: 208-209, my translation³³). Sáez presents barebacking within different awareness campaigns on the risk of being infected with HIV. As opposed to this view, Dean writes that "cruising entails a remarkably hospitable disposition towards strangers. Insofar as that is the case, the subculture of bareback promiscuity, far from being ethically irresponsible, may be ethically exemplary" (Dean, 2010: 176). To him, engaging in risky sexual activities implies a way of relating "to others and even become intimately engaged with them without needing to know or identify with them" (Dean, 2010: 211).

Welsh may ignore how a man feels when peeing, but by no means does she overrate the importance of the penis for men. Lawson, in turn, ignores the awareness of men's own bodies in their bodily functions, perhaps as he experiences abjection both to his bodily fluids and to the possibility of being gazed at while urinating. Lawson mentions the elaborate attention to the penis to criticize Welsh's male narrative voice when, in fact, William only pees twice in the whole novel, at least in the presence of the readers. The first time is while sharing the bathroom with Sylvie at Sylvie and Dix's flat in Berlin. "I was midstream when I heard a noise behind me and glanced over my shoulder. Sylvie stood in the doorway wrapped in a thin floral robe. She rubbed her eyes and said, 'Don't mind me.' Then turned on the tap and started to wash her face. It's hard to be nonchalant while peeing, but I did my best" (*TBT*, 118). Not only is there no reference whatsoever to William's penis, which is implied in the context, but it is also relevant to note that he is peeing while being observed/gazed at by a girl who is his object of desire. Moreover, he is not the only one who makes use of the toilet. Sylvie and William swap places and "she seated herself, holding her long dressing-gown around her thighs. She had thick woolly socks on her feet, but I had the impression that other than that she was naked under her robe. A thin trickling filled the room. I did the gentlemanly thing and looked in the mirror" (*TBT*, 118-119). Sylvie's tickling is, actually, more emphasized than William's and he finds Sylvie's

³³ In the original: "En primer lugar [...] se trata de personas que deciden negociar su sexualidad sin utilizar el preservativo, pero no de una forma inconsciente, sino tomando ciertas medidas de seguridad. [...] Otro acercamiento diferente al *bareback* se basa simplemente en la ignorancia. Es decir, aquí el no saber es el principio básico. Hay personas que deciden no conocer su estado serológico, ni saber el estado de la otra persona. [...] El tercer enfoque [...] consiste en la búsqueda intencionada del al infección, en inglés 'bug chaser,' es decir, 'el que busca el bicho' (Saez, 2012: 208-209).

body intimidating both as an observed object and an observing subject. That is the reason why he decides to look for shelter in the world of mirrors and reflections he, as a magician, rules.

Returning to Lawson's remark once again, his emphasis on Welsh's lesbianism as a con to her use of a male narrative voice would be held to be ridiculous if he criticized Isaac Asimov's work as he never travelled to outer space. In other words, he privileges his own perception of his own, "real" masculinity over Welsh's literary masculinities in her texts. In her article on Annie Proulx's "Brokeback Mountain," Isola states that:

After all, a writer does not necessarily have to be gay – or male – or American – to attempt the expression of a gay male American subjectivity. Success here depends on the pen, not the penis or the passport. [...] This time, I let go of the author's gender, sex, and sexuality, and letting go, I read the narrative as it deploys fluid tropes to express a subaltern textual subjectivity (Isola, 2008: 34).

William may not act as a prototypical heterosexual man, according to Lawson, but there is no real correspondence with such a prototypical, male heterosexuality. Lawson is focussing so much on the image of the penis that he forgets about pens, about the fact that William is a fictional character wandering Welsh's fictional world where he strays and doubts about his own self-perception. In his *Cultures of Masculinity*, Edwards proposes a hybridization of gender and sexuality by talking "in terms of gendered sexualities and sexualised genders" (Edwards, 2006: 82). To him, masculinity as a social construct is both related to men and women. As he develops his point, he explains that "masculinity would seem to be all about the body. After all, one can hardly be a man without a male body" (Edwards, 2006: 140). However, he presents a problem when he notes that masculinity does not necessarily pertain to male bodies nor are male bodies necessarily masculine. According to him:

One only has to think of the bodies of young boys, disabled men and elderly or frail men to realise that any such equation is not so simple. Male body does not equal masculine. More problematically still, female bodies can be perceived as masculine or mannish, while a host of chromosomal differences from inter-sex conditions and transsexualism, render any simple or dualistic encoding of male-female to be embodied (Edwards, 2006: 140).

William's masculine body does not resemble even remotely Kolja's *galletón*-like, hyper-masculine body after many hours of acrobatic training and neither is his narrative voice masculine *per se*, but the point here is whether it should actually need

to be that masculine if, on the one hand, prototypical masculinity is constructed and, on the other, masculinity “is not qualitatively different from its relationship to women” (Edwards, 2006: 97). Petra’s body in *The Girl on the Stairs* shows off her masculinity in her clothing but also in her attitudes, as in her youth she was mistaken for a man up to the point that heterosexual women felt attracted to her. The transvestites at the Chelsea Lounge in *The Cutting Room* range from those who cannot conceal their masculinity in the female attire to those who even become a threat to femininity as it is hard to tell whether they are mocking or performing their own feminine masculinity. Furthermore, genders and sexualities are lost in the labyrinthine bodies of some characters when performing genders that are cross-genders themselves, such as Rose who sees herself as a lady-boy or Blaize in *Tamburlaine Must Die*. Besides that, in Louise Welsh’s novels, William’s is not the only masculine voice that narrates his own story³⁴. Rilke and Marlowe also voice their own narrations, though they are not precisely heterosexual males. Therefore, rather than considering whether a lesbian writer can voice a male, it proves more relevant to focus on “textual masculinity,” which, according to Winnbert,

marks a concern with the roles that are played in the text by conformity in behavior and response to traditional social norms and the evocation of icons and stereotypes of masculinity, as well as with what the masculine norm is presented as within a text. Additionally, a focus on textual masculinity emphasizes tropes and figures that are connected with the male characters and thus become intertwined with the text’s presentation of masculinity – a masculinity that may or may not be identified with a male characters (Winnbert, 2008: 5).

It should be said that there is no single masculinity in the same manner as there is not a “textual masculinity,” but rather “textual masculinities” (Winnbert, 2008: 8). William’s masculinity is not stable as he becomes used by a female subject, Sylvie, and he, as in the example given before of him peeing, does not only see but is also seen. Besides that, he is actually exposed in his final version of the Bullet Trick in front of an anonymous, male audience. When he thinks he has actually killed Sylvie, “I sank to the floor, into the warmth of my own piss, putting my head in my hand, feeling a thousand shards of glass rain down on me, scattering across the floor like diamonds spilled by a careless hand” (*TBT*, 346). This is the second time that he pees in public, but this time it is not a conscious act but the reflect reaction to his

³⁴ It renders interesting to note here that Lawson’s literary praise did affect Louise Welsh, as she admits in the last section of this research entitled “Louise Welsh, Then and There.”

fears. And, once more, there is no reference to William's penis. William undergoes a journey into his own personal Hell until he returns as William the Magician again, and as a more complete heterosexual man than Lawson expects from him. Fåhraeus claims that "the dividing line between masculine and feminine, however, is not sex. [...] Dominance, passivity and resistance can all exist within the same subject. (Fåhraeus, 2008: 81). This is, in fact, what creates a complexity in William's character that would be absent were he a conventional, masculine subject. He is not a representation of masculinity as, if so, Welsh would have actually failed in her literary activity. Her 'textual masculinity' "acknowledges that the primary function of fiction is not to *represent* what is given, but to present, or *inaugurate*, what is imaginable" (Winnbert, 2008: 6). Rather than despising her constructions of male – and female – focalizations, one should address why she intends with her representations of

masculinities, male desire, sexuality, homoeroticism at a textual – as opposed to a situational – level? What makes masculine focalization different from feminine focalization? What are the assumptions that underlie these representations? What are the strategies that create them?" (Winnbert, 2008: 2).

Louise Welsh is not simply a female writer who writes men, but a lesbian writer who writes with a wide understanding of the complexities of sexualities, gender and identities. Her case does not fit what Fåhraeus describes when dealing with the theorizing of lesbian fiction, where:

there is frequently an emphasis on heterosexuality as the social norm and on external heterosexual structures battled by and battering the lesbian protagonist (or protagonist couple), usually in an antagonistic relationship so that rewriting heteronormativity is stressed at the content level" (Fåhraeus, 2008: 81).

This heteronormativity mentioned by Fåhraeus does not only refer to heterosexuality but rather to a wider, more abstract concept, though present in what is understood as normal and natural. What is meant by heteronormativity is "the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent – that is, organized as sexuality – but also privileged" (Berlant and Warner, 2003: 180). Welsh goes one step further as she not only rewrites heteronormativity: she shows the fissures of the apparent heterosexual and heteronormative society in the same fashion that she showed the fissures in the social reality perceived by the characters when it was impregnated by a gothic tinge.

Butler explains how these heterosexual men and women are actually construed versions through their performance:

Insofar as heterosexual gender norms produce inapproximable ideals, heterosexuality can be said to operate through the regulated production of hyperbolic versions of “man” and “woman”. These are for the most part compulsory performances, ones which none of us choose, but which each of us is forced to negotiate. I write “forced to negotiate” because the compulsory character of these norms does not always make them efficacious. Such norms are continually haunted by their own inefficacy; hence, the anxiously repeated effort to install and augment their jurisdiction (Butler, 1993a: 26).

In the previous section, the gothic mode employed by Welsh darkened reality. In this section, the already darkened reality is now tinged with a touch of pink, a rose-coloured filter as it is explained further below. Besides that, the novels in this research do not only deal with gay/lesbian issues but they show a wider, queer understanding of reality. Queer implies a widening of perspective which, by no means, is “an attack on what many people routinely name as lesbian or gay but, instead, an appraisal of how queerness is still forming, or in many crucial ways formless” (Muñoz, 2009: 29). Queer, it will be further argued, seems to be an open concept that allows the inclusion of almost anybody. However, it also entails certain controversy not only in what refers to what Queer is but also to the subsequent formation and rise of a queer theory which is quite a controversial matter. Love explains the reasons for the choice of the term “queer” in queer studies and the consequences this choice has on any research on queer theory.

The word “queer,” like “fag” or “dyke” but unlike the more positive “gay” or “lesbian,” is a slur. When queer was adopted in the late 1980s it was chosen because it evoked a long history of insult and abuse – you could hear the hurt in int. Queer theorists drew on the energies of confrontational, stigma-inflected activism of groups like ACT UP and Queer Nation who had first taken up this “forcibly bittersweet” term. The emphasis on injury in queer studies has made critics in this field more willing to investigate the darker aspects of queer representation and experience and to attend to the social, psychic, and corporeal effects of homophobia (Love, 2007: 2).

Queer theory appropriates the shaming insult and uses it as a weapon to find homophobia within heteronormativity. Despite the fact that it is quite a recent discipline, queer theory not only has some detractors but it is also in an ever-changing term, as noted above when dealing with Sandahl’s considerations on the crip, or even one which it is claimed is dead, as O’Rourke (2012) notes. As an example of such problematization it becomes interesting to note how differently the idea of inclusion

and exclusion within the realm of the Queer can be tackled even in two texts published in the same year. On the one hand, Frantzen acknowledges some of the positive effects of queer theory, such as its struggle against the binarism of “homosexual” and “heterosexual” and its aim “to break apart conventional patterns and ways of organizing thought, texts, and images, not to mention culture” (Frantzen, 2000: 7). However, he also points out the fact that, in the rejection of such a binarism, queer theorists also fall into the mistake of creating further binarisms between those who are excluded and those who are included in queer theory. Therefore, he criticizes the fact that it has become a juggernaut that has swept “all work on the history of sex into its domain – all gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transsexuals are queer, any work on the history of same-sex relations is queer” (Frantzen, 2000:6) up to the point of having become, despite its limitations, “the age’s dominant *mode* for writing about sex and gender” (Frantzen, 2000: 6, my emphasis). On the other hand, Roseneil reflects on how queer theory does not only propose a fracturing of a unified homosexual identity but it also “sees the construction of sexual identities around the hierarchically structured binary opposition of homo/heterosexual as inherently stable” (Roseneil, 2000: 2.1.). To her, not only should there be a destabilization of that binarism but also of its very constituents. It is not simply that there are differences between gay men and lesbian women: there are also differences “between the multifarious, and multiple, identifications of those within the ‘queer community’ – lipstick lesbians, s/m-ers, muscle marys, opera queens” (Roseneil, 2000: 2.1.). Furthermore, even heterosexuality needs to be problematized and even queered. Despite the differences between Frantzen’s and Roseneil’s approaches, they have a point in common : Frantzen’s criticism of queer studies from within is an example of what Roseneil considers a tendency in queer studies to auto-critique, which is not far from “an everyday activity for many within contemporary lesbian and gay communities” (Roseneil, 2000: 3.9).

Halberstam also signals some criticism of queer theory when considering that it has focused mainly on the activities of gay men despite the fact that it has sought to “disconnect queerness from an essential definition of homosexuality” and thus “has focused upon queer space and queer sexual practices” (Halberstam, 2003). In order to vindicate the relevance of queer time in queer theory, she destabilizes a binarism that, apparently, falls out of the realm of queer studies: that between adolescence and adulthood. As she explains, queer subculture allows such a redefinition because, as

“many queers refuse and resist the heteronormative imperative of home and family, they also prolong the periods of their life devoted to subcultural participation” (Halberstam, 2003). It is quite interesting to note that in the novels there are hardly any examples of queer subculture clubs as those proposed by Halberstam, with the exception of The Chelsea Lounge in *The Cutting Room* and Petra’s youthful memories of her clubbing times in Berlin and Jane’s images of a not-so-distant London nightlife club. On the other hand, it could be argued that such spaces have been turned local, as for example the Scottish pubs where colleagues gather together or people just go there to drink on their own without being bothered.

The rose-colouring of the dark reality proposed here relates to the extant strong connection between Gothic and Queer. Sedgwick notes the relation between female roles and the rise of gothic literature when she explains that:

the ties of the Gothic novel to an emergent female authorship and readership have been a constant for two centuries, and there has been a history of useful critical attempts to look to the Gothic for explorations of the position of women in relation to the changing shapes of patriarchal domination” (Sedgwick, 1992: 91).

However, this patriarchal domination does not only imply a positioning of women: there are many other individuals that need to position themselves against such a domination: gay men and lesbian women, transvestites and vamps, peeping Toms, amongst many others. If Section 1 of this essay deals with the presence of a gothic mode in Louise Welsh’s novels and Section 3 analyses the gothification of time, place and individuals, this section posits that there is a queering of reality – a queer mode, as it is explained further on – in her novels that, rather than conflicting with the gothic mode already analyzed, complements it. Aguilera remarks how Sedgwick “long ago noted both the historical connection of the Gothic genre (the perfect locus for the trope of the “unspeakable”) with the feminization of the aristocracy (otiose, decorative and ethereal as opposed to the productive, pragmatic and manly values of the bourgeoisie)” (Aguilera, 2012: 77). In *The Girl on the Stairs*, Petra and Jane are throwing a dinner party for Petra’s colleagues. These wealthy guests, invited over to the flat of two lesbian women expecting a child, are occupying a space that seems to be designed for them: “There were a dozen of them gathered round the white table in the sitting room, an almost even number of men and women, mainly around Petra’s age. This was what the room had been styled for, Jane realised, impressing grown-ups, rather than nurturing a child” (*TGOTS*, 113). Jane’s sense of

alienation in the flat and in the city increases to the point that she imagines she is witnessing the scene from outside, through Anna's eyes. Her conclusion is that "She would find the scene bourgeois. It *was* bourgeois" (*TGOTS*, 113). Jane becomes aware that their lives as lesbian mothers do not provoke a gothic effect on those they work with or live with. If vampires, as Gelder explains, "cross back and forth boundaries that should otherwise be secure – the boundaries between humans and animals, humans and God, and, as an expression of a 'polymorphous' sexuality, man and woman" (Gelder, 1994: 70), Petra and Jane has crossed such a boundary but, rather than moving back and forth, are there to stay. Their motherhood does not even shock the elderly Beckers as homosexuality and motherhood – or fatherhood – are no longer perceived as excluding terms. At the same dinner party, she meets Jurgen Tillman, another gay spouse in the party not related to Petra's banking business. He and his boyfriend have also considered the possibility of becoming fathers: "Johannes and I have talked about it, having a child. It seems strange we can have that conversation, but we can and so we do, and then we decide we prefer the life we have" (*TGOTS*, 116). They choose to continue living a life of a queer couple whose main aim is hedonistic rather than procreation – "I like drinking and sailing more than I like the idea of a child" (*TGOTS*, 116). They inhabit, then, Halbestarm's proposed "queer time" but altogether they are also aware of the issue of becoming a "normal" couple with kids. Gay and lesbians are gaining territory in the public sphere with the passing of laws in favour of gay marriage or adoption but, on the other hand and as noted above, many cruising spaces have disappeared in order to create trendy, fashionable neighbourhoods. Rushbrook analyses the relationship between the success of some gay civil rights movements and the recognition of a gay market and some urban transformations, such as "gay and lesbian residential and commercial zones [that] have become increasingly visible to and visited by the public at large" (Rushbrook, 2002: 183). She wonders whether, in such urban transformation, the fact that visible cruising for sex has disappeared is due to a change of tastes or:

had a new class of gay males who sensed a contradiction between "bourgeois" and "queer" moved into the neighbourhood? Does the acceptability that accompanies the arrival of relatively wealthy outsiders result in a new form of self-policing in queer space that is analogous to what exists in 'normal' space?" (Rushbrook, 2002: 197).

Jane's feeling that the party, and probably her own life in Berlin, is bourgeois is shared by other members of the gay community. She and Jurgen are seated together

as spouses, outside the banking world, behaving as good spouses do. Jurgen ironically remarks that “we’re not so different from the heterosexuals after all?” (*TGOTS*, 116). In his book *Virtuous Vice. On Homoeroticism and the Public Sphere*, O’Clarke notes that “by modelling homoerotic life according to a heteronormative standard, the inclusion of lesbians and gay men in the public sphere grants them a sense of entitlement by repudiating that which defies or exceeds their proprietary standard” (O’Clarke, 2000: 6). Petra and Johannes can take their gay spouses to dinner parties as long as they behave as proper spouses, presenting them “as they ‘really are,’ which is to say, ‘just like everyone else’” (O’Clarke, 2000: 6). Jane decides to act like everyone else, like every other pregnant mother, and escapes from the bourgeois milieu to the private realm of her room. Jurgen soon joins her and wakes her up. Outside the conventions of dinner small talk, they both look at the *Hinterhaus* and Jurgen remarks that “It’s black as deep space, blacker, there are stars in outer space” (*TGOTS*, 119). One closes a door to leave a bourgeois dining room and meets pitch-black darkness, darker than any sci-fi space. Jane, for the first time, can acknowledge the feeling of abjection she experiences towards that building. If she had previously told Petra that “I’m getting rather fond of it [the *Hinterhaus*]” (*TGOTS*, 110), now she admits that “it’s like a ghost building. It gives me the creeps” (*TGOTS*, 119). Her urban, bourgeois life is released by the darkened and gothicised building she sees through her bedroom window. If the cities have created trendy gay neighbourhoods that attract both a queer and a straight clientele, it is worth questioning whether “the complicity of queers with this form of domination [of queer spaces by the dominant culture] amounts to consent to the persistence of the city as a regulatory mechanism and to the continued production of new forms of exclusion” (Rushbrook, 2002: 197). If the urban spaces inhabited by Louise Welsh’s characters become labyrinthine in the acknowledgement of a gothic mode in them that gothicises reality, they are also the site for another queer labyrinth that characters traverse and wander. Lee Edelman writes on the roundtable discussion with Dinshaw and Halberstam, among others, that in queer theory “maybe we need to consider that you *don’t* get ‘from here to somewhere else’” (Dinshaw et al., 2007: 195) as queer theorists seem to be caught in a present space that leads them nowhere. As he further develops his idea,

maybe we need to imagine anew, “We’re here, we’re queer, get used to it,” not as the positive assertion of a marginalized identity but as the universal condition of the subject caught up in structural repetition. That’s what makes queerness intolerable,

even to those who call themselves queer: a nonteological negativity that refuses the leavening of piety and with it the dollop of sweetness afforded by messianic hope (Disnhaw et al., 2007: 195).

The “We’re here, we’re queer, get used to it” slogan, created by the collective Queer Nation, traps and imprisons queers in a continuous loop, in an enclosed labyrinth where they wander straying until they discover a hidden turn that allows them to go further, or even better, beyond. As well as the Gothic labyrinths, these queer labyrinths relate to unveiling a true reality beyond appearances: however, this time it adds a rose-coloured tinge to the already dark Gothic labyrinths. In *Male Subjectivities at the Margins* (1992), Silverman claims that: “it is through ideological belief that a society’s ‘reality’ is constituted and sustained, and that a subject lays claim to a normative identity” (Silverman, 1992: 15). However, such “reality” in inverted commas is not real *per se* but a construct. Therefore, “it is fantasy rather than history which determines what is reality for the unconscious” (Silverman, 1992: 18). The same fantasy that, according to Jackson, “exists in a parasitical or symbiotic relation to the real” (Jackson, 1981: 20) becomes, to Silverman, “in some ultimate sense reality for the subject [...] because it articulates, in short, our symbolic positionality, and the *mise-en-scène* of our desire” (Silverman, 1992: 18). As will be shown in Section 4, characters in Louise Welsh’s literary world discover the same reality which, unveiled, shows both its gothicised and its Queer nature. The same gothicised times, places and selves are also queered. It is also interesting to note here how queer identity formation becomes labyrinthine in itself from the very moment that concepts such as sexual orientation come into play. Ahmed (2006) starts from a more generic questioning on the meaning of being oriented in an ever-changing world. As she explains, there is a strong connection between orientation and the space one resides in:

If we know where we are, when we turn this way or that, then we are oriented. We have our bearings. We know what to do to get to this place or that. To be oriented is also to be oriented toward certain objects, those that help us find our way. These are the objects we recognize, such that when we face them, we know which way we are facing. They gather on the ground and also create a ground on which we can gather. Yet objects gather quite differently, creating different grounds. What difference does it make what we are oriented toward? (Ahmed, 2006: 543).

This orientation toward the objects in the spaces one resides in can be extrapolated to the question of sexual orientation. As Ahmed herself explains, by applying this spatial understanding of orientation in relation to what surrounds

individuals and foregrounding the concept of orientation, it is possible to “retheorize this sexualisation of space as well as the spatiality of sexual desire” (Ahmed, 2006: 543). In her proposal on sexual orientation, she starts by paraphrasing Simone de Beauvoir’s statement that “one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Beauvoir, 1977: 295) into “one is not born, but becomes straight” (Ahmed, 2006: 553). By doing so, she questions the assumption that being straight is an unmarked condition whereas other orientations need to deviate from the straight line. She actually plays with the double sense of “straight” as heterosexual orientation and lineal orientation and explains that “to become straight means not only that we have to turn toward the objects given to us by heterosexual culture but also that we must turn away from the objects that takes us off this line. The queer subject within straight culture hence deviates and is made socially present as deviant” (Ahmed, 2006: 554). It may seem that it is an easy task to follow the straight path and not to turn toward objects that distract one from one’s way. However, there are multiple examples in mythology, religion, popular culture, fairy tales and so on that prove how difficult it is to focus on the imposed straight line. Orpheus lost Eurydice for taking his eye off the straight line out of the Underworld, despite the fact that it was Hades’ only caveat on his regaining his wife. Lot’s wife turned into a pillar of salt when looking back while escaping from Sodom, once more the only condition imposed by God on escaping safely from the destruction of the city. Section 4 of this research, which presents the labyrinthine disposition of desires, genders and bodies, shows how difficult it proves, not just to become straight, but to remain straight once in the labyrinth. Even clearly straight characters such as William or Murray Watson become queered and deviant once they wander through the labyrinths of triangulations that open up to further triangulations. They are also exposed to the gaze of other men and women, sometimes willingly and sometimes without being aware of such gazes. It is also important to note here the fact that Ahmed’s point on the straight orientation by heterosexual culture can also be counterpointed by the existence of a queer orientation biased by a queer culture, such as in the so-called “gay ghettos” like Chueca in Madrid, Soho in London, Castro in San Francisco or Church Street in Toronto. Santos Solla points out that those spaces of integration also become, in turn, excluding if one does not fit the new gay prototype, which is young and modern. However, he also points out the fact that such

an excluding characteristic is typical not only of gay spaces but also of heterosexual spaces (Santos Solla, 2002: 95, my translation³⁵). In their deviation from the straight line, these areas are considered to orientate the gay and lesbian population of the cities by offering them spaces to inhabit and also objects of consumption. Leaving this point aside, it is interesting to note how Ahmed also plays with the double sense of Queer. Fonseca Hernández and Quintero Soto explain that the term “queer” does not exist without its counterpoint “straight” and they list the different meanings to both terms. Queer is strange, oblique as opposed to straight which means in continuous position, lying on the shortest path between any two of its points and heterosexual (Fonseca Hernández and Quintero Soto, 2009: 45-46, my translation³⁶). Ahmed, in opposition to the straight orientation of the family, which displays the family in a tree-like diagram, presents an alternative consideration of the queer people when perceived in a straight surrounding. As she notes, “the queer couple in straight space might look like they are slanting, or oblique. The queer bodies, if they gather around the table, might even seem out of line” (Ahmed, 2006: 560). Queer is not straight both in positional and sexual orientation, which leads her to consider queer potential not just as “strange” but also as “oblique.”³⁷ This obliqueness of reality creates an effect that resembles the Gothification of reality proposed in Section 1 of this research and the discovery by the characters in Louise Welsh’s novels that their our reality actually has a labyrinthine disposition. The obliqueness of queer proposed by Ahmed implies a loss of orientation and a repositioning of the apparently ordered times, spaces and directions. The effects of such queering of reality are, in Ahmed’s words, “uncanny: what is familiar, what is passed over in the veil of familiarity, becomes rather strange” (Ahmed, 2006: 565) and this effect resembles that of the dark gothic labyrinth proposed in Section 3. Furthermore, Ahmed proposes that the oblique, queer orientation implies not following certain conventional scripts of “family, inheritance, and child rearing” and opening up “another way to inhabit those forms” (Ahmed, 2006: 569). This oblique orientation points to the future but it also keeps open the

³⁵ In the original: “ese ambiente de integración es al mismo tiempo muy excluyente: se excluye sobre todo a quien no se ajusta al nuevo prototipo de gay, joven, moderno, etc., aunque es cierto que también los locales de ese estilo para heterosexuales son igualmente excluyentes (Santos Solla, 2002: 95).

³⁶ In the original: “El adjetivo ‘queer’ significa ‘raro’, ‘torcido’, ‘extraño’. [...] El vocablo ‘queer’ no existe sin su contraparte ‘straight’ que significa ‘derecho’, ‘recto’, ‘heterosexual’” (Fonseca Hernández and Quintero Soto, 2009: 45-46).

³⁷ This reminds the translation by Llamas of “queer theory” as “teoría torcida” in his *Teoría torcida. Prejuicios y discursos en torno a “la homosexualidad”* (1998), a terminology that he still uses in *Homografías*, his collaboration with Francisco Javier Vidarte.

possibility of “changing directions, of finding other paths, perhaps those that do not clear a common ground, where we can find hope in what goes astray” (Ahmed, 2006: 569-570). While Section 3 of this research shows how the characters in Louise Welsh’s novels inhabit their dark, gothic labyrinths and do remain in them, Section 4 will show how their own disorientation in the rose-coloured, queer labyrinths also helps them find the hope they lacked before going astray.

In his book, *Cruising Utopia. The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, Muñoz claims that “we are not yet queer” (Muñoz, 2009: 1) as queerness is an ideal. He shares with Ahmed the idea of orienting queerness towards the future and thus escaping the “here and now [which] is a prison house” (Muñoz, 2009: 1). That is how Marlowe feels when writing his final account and that is why he addresses it to future readers in a future society. That is also the reason why Archie Lunan decides to start writing his own sci-fi novel. They feel they do not fit the here and now, which renders a reality that imprisons them and so they decide to escape from it. Muñoz notes that “queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world” (Muñoz, 2009: 1). When Meikle tells Murray about his relationship with Lunan and his group when they were younger, he recalls a night when Bobby Robb started talking about reincarnation. As he explains: “Bobby Robb was waxing on about how you could gain access to other worlds, other minds, through rituals. According to him, if you hit on the right spell, you’d be able to outlive death” (*NTB*, 165). In order to do so, in order to escape their own here and now, Bobby Robb suggested the possibility of performing a ritual where the most valuable ingredient was “the blood of an innocent, a virgin” (*NTB*, 166). Meikle ignores that the ritual did actually take place on the island of Lismore and the essential blood used in it was that of Miranda’s, Fergus and Christie’s baby daughter. However, the only one who reaches another world is Lunan, when writing his sci-fi novel and sacrificing himself the night he drowned. The others are haunted by their common past, and they cannot escape their own presents - no matter how hard they try – while fearing their own futures. Bobby covers the walls of his room with magic words to escape any evil; Christie’s body is affected by Multiple Sclerosis and she knows the only option she has got left is to choose the moment of her own death; Fergus’s past publication of a book of Lunan’s poetry as his own also means the impossibility of a future writing career. When Muñoz emphasizes the importance of the future time and place of queerness, he considers queerness as utopian. To him,

there is a present straight time that he defines as that which “tells us there is no future but the here and now or our everyday life. The only futurity promised is that of reproductive majoritarian heterosexuality, the spectacle of the state refurbishing its ranks through overt and subsidized acts of reproduction” (Muñoz, 2009: 22). However, he also acknowledges that, even though one is living inside this straight present time, it is possible to “ask for, desire, and imagine another time and place [which] is to represent and perform a desire that is both utopian and queer” (Muñoz, 2009: 26). In *The Bullet Trick*, William imagined that other time and place when playing tricks as a child in front of the mirror, but he also learns the difficulty of escaping the present. At the age of ten, he tried to show his friend a Houdini-like escape trick, but he failed and his friends kicked him and left him alone in a hut. When his father eventually released him, he had learnt “a fact that has haunted me throughout my return to Glasgow. I can’t stand to be locked up and I was never destined to be an escape artist” (*TBT*, 134). However, in the same London club where his initiation journey started, he realises that he can actually escape the recent past that has haunted him since he thought he had killed Sylvie. Moreover, all the novels by Louise Welsh, so far, end with a potential, future continuation of the lives of the already-darkened, already-queered characters. In fact, when reading each of her novels, one is left with the feeling that there might be more novels with the same character in the manner of Ruth Rendell’s Inspector Wexford, Agatha Christie’s Inspector Poirot or Mrs Marple, or Raymond Chandler’s Philip Marlowe. This idea of future continuation seems to be present in her future novel, *A Lovely Way to Burn*, to be released on 27th of March, 2014, which will be the first part of a trilogy whose plot is summarized in www.amazon.com as follows:

Where is the best place to hide a murder? Amongst a million other deaths. A pandemic is rapidly sweeping the globe. London is a city in crisis, but Stevie Flint is convinced that the sudden death of her boyfriend Simon was not from natural causes. Stevie's search for Simon's killer takes her into the depths of the dying city and into a race with death (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

Stevie Flint is granted a future then and there, which for the other characters by Louise Welsh can only be hinted at in the open-ended nature of the novels.

O’Rourke, in turn, remarks that the opening up of queer theory towards the future proposed, amongst others by Muñoz, has actually brought it back to life (pun intended) even after Sedgwick’s death in April 2009. Quoting his words,

These theorists [Sara Ahmed and José Esteban Muñoz amongst them], a little bit in love with queer theory as lure, return us to the affirmative, revolutionary potential of queer studies, and seek to reimagine a hopeful, forward-reaching, world-making queer theory that matters as the future, as the telepoietic queer event, as the always already not-yet of the democracy to-come and the justice to-come. We might even say, affirming the far-from-dead politics of queer theory, that queer theory is radical democracy, that queer theory is justice, is all about futurity and hope. (O'Rourke, 2012: 133).

The present world is far from being the ideal world that Marlowe envisions when considering the ideal readers of his final account, but it can be stated that it is far better in terms of human and civil rights, at least in the developed countries, and more importantly, it allows the possibility of imagining and picturing Marlowe's ideal world.

This queer orientation toward the future connects with Edelman's already-mentioned concern about being "caught in structural repetition" that implies, as has already been argued, a need to go beyond. When dealing with daemonic desire, Dollimore acknowledges a double time movement: "desire is always desire for something which is not yet; in that sense it is forward-looking, addressed to the future. But desire is also about the past and memory, and in that sense it is about going back. Ecstasy pressured by loss" (Dollimore, 2001: 36). When Murray Watson is writing his book on Archie Lunan in *Naming the Bones*, he is desiring a brighter future career as a scholar, but what he is actually doing is going back in time to the moment when Archie lived in the cottage in Lismore and recovering the multiple triangular relations that Archie, Fergus, Bobby and Christie were engaged in. Dollimore explains how currently "we are increasingly allowed to disregard the past, be it by postmodern history that claims we can't really know it anyways, or by facile millennial speculations about a radically different future in prospect, or just by an education system that fails to give an adequate historical sense" (Dollimore, 2001: 16). Watson experiences such disregard for the past when his colleagues discourage him by considering his research as pointless. However, the past, no matter how dark it is, needs to be recovered in order to understand the present not from a fantasized point of view, as Silverman criticised, but as a mirror to the present. Love focuses on the negative affects of the relationship between the past and the present, a decision that:

comes out of my sense that contemporary critics tend to describe the encounter with the past in idealizing terms. In particular, the models that these critics have used to describe queer cross-historical relations – friendship, love, desire, and community –

seem strangely free of the wounds, the switchbacks, and the false starts that give these structures their specific appeal, their binding power (Love, 2007: 32).

On the island of Lismore, Christie hands Murray some papers with her own memories of her life experiences with Lunan, Fergus and Bobby Robb. On one of them, she recounts their stay at the cottage on the island as follows: “Ours was an era of new societies, ideal communities and communes. [...] But it was soon clear the cottage was too small to house four adults and the sickness which had eventually left me in Glasgow returned with a vengeance” (*NTB*, 336). Murray’s attempt to write a book, from his safe present, that claims the importance of Archie Lunan confronts the truth of a wounded past. The romantic, idealized Archie Lunan, who mysteriously died young while sailing a boat in a storm, was actually the victim of the very members of his ideal, constructed community. In his conversation with Murray on Lunan, Fergus concludes it with an enigmatic statement: “He [Lunan] thought everyone was as good and as loyal as he was, and of course they weren’t” (*NTB*, 292). In the use of the pronoun “they,” Fergus is actually masking his own past and presents his queer relation with Lunan as ideal. However, all the inhabitants of the cottage – Fergus included – betrayed each other, either by having triangular relationships, attributing paternity to the wrong father or even dissecting one’s own baby. On the island of Lismore, Murray Watson discovers that “the experience of queer historical subjects is not at a safe distance from contemporary experience; rather, their social marginality and abjection mirror our own. The relation to the queer past is suffused not only by feelings of regret, despair, and loss but also by the shame of identification” (Love, 2007: 32). Murray identifies physically with the queer, past Lunan in as much as Christie asks him “have you deliberately styled yourself to look like Archie?” (*NTB*, 329). This is not, though, his only identification: he is also betrayed by Fergus in the triangular relationship they have with Rachel, and in all the difficulties he poses to Murray’s research on Lunan. Phyllida advises Murray “never get involved with someone who isn’t available” (*NTB*, 59). Murray misunderstands her unwanted advice as referring exclusively to Rachel, but it actually referred to both Rachel and Lunan. His identification with Lunan drives him to attempt suicide and he, then, attempts to hide the limit of such shameful identification by hiding any hint of his failed suicide: “Jack’s roll-neck had covered the marks of the ligature and Murray had blamed the croak in his voice on a cold combined with a night on the batter”

(*NTB*, 380). In turn, his now queered identification with Lunan is open to future potential after acknowledging and embracing the dark side of his past.

In the same roundtable discussion in which Lee Edelman and Dinshaw participated, Halberstam locates queer time in dark spaces, those same places Jane used to inhabit in her London life before deciding to form her own family with Petra and Boy and moving to Berlin in *The Girl on the Stairs*.

Queer time for me is the dark nightclub, the perverse turn away from the narrative coherence of adolescence – early adulthood – marriage – reproduction – childrearing – retirement – death, the embrace of late childhood in place of early adulthood or immaturity in place of responsibility. It is a theory of queerness as a way of being in the world and a critique of the careful social scripts that usher even the most queer among us through major markers of individual development and into normativity (Dinshaw et al., 2007: 182).

Retaking Jane and Jurgen's conversation on how their queer lives are becoming bourgeois according to heteronormative standards, Jurgen feels intrigued by how Jane chose Boy's father. Contrary to the fact that Petra was the one in charge of arranging all the details, including the sperm donor, Jurgen imagines Jane getting pregnant in a complete different way, "I get the feeling that if it was left up to you, you would have gone to a nightclub and picked up a donor on the dance floor" (*TGOTS*, 117). No matter how concerned Jane is about her new role as a mother, her time is queer and she belongs to the dark spaces and there roots her abject attraction to the *Hinterhaus*. On the other hand, her attempt to hide her queer dark-side behind her perfect pregnant mother outfit – to Jurgen's remark "I imagine you were on a no-smoking, no-alcohol, no-trans-fats diet for months in advance?" she answers "I still am" (*TGOTS*, 116) even though she cannot give up smoking not even for her child's health – leads her to criticise Jurgen and Johannes' decision not to become fathers as immature. To the already quoted comment by Jurgen on his preference of living a hedonistic, queer life, Jane, in an intertextual wink to Archie Lunan, states: "drinking and sailing; you'd better watch you don't drown" (*TGOTS*, 116). She feels safe outside the queer spaces, but she is not. Jurgen's reply – "You, too, in a tide of diapers" (*TGOTS*, 116) – upsets her. No matter what she tries, wherever she lives, she will always inhabit a queer dark space. Queer spaces, as well as gothic spaces, are therefore dark. In his book *Before the Closet. Same-Sex Love from Beowulf to Angels in America* (2000), Frantzen proposes the idea of putting "the shadow on the spotlight, so to speak, and to treat the shadow not just as a place of obscured visibility

but as a figure for the representation of same-sex love” (Frantzen, 2000: 13). As he further explains:

A shadow is more than a patch of darkness outlining an object. [...] A shadow is closely connected to the body whose shade it is, but it is also something else – something more – that belongs to the body but also stands apart from it. Shadows shape our field of vision. Objects only cast shadows but serve as fields for them; shadows define the contours and planes of surfaces, crating variety, complexity, and depth. Shadows are instrumental in creating our perception of objects in three dimensions rather than two (Frantzen, 2000: 14).

When Blaize and Marlowe are drinking in an ale-house, they spot a man who seems interested in them. Marlowe recounts his feelings when he approaches them:

As he stepped from the shadows I could see the ravages drink had wrought, the broken nose skewed half across his face, the scarred mouth sliced in drunken descent against the rim of a tavern table, the deep lines that long restless nights had etched around his eyes. I remembered talk from France, that he had been subjected to the strappado and wondered less that I hadn’t recognised him (*TMD*, 66).

The shadows from which Richard Baynes steps, are an Elizabethan version of Halberstan’s dark queer places where immaturity is embraced in place of responsibility. Baynes has escaped any attempt to be normativized via *strappado*³⁸, as the scars on his body and his broken nose show. He inhabits the dark realm of shadows of taverns and ale-houses. Before catching Baynes’ attention, Blaize mockingly suggests Marlowe that “you and I are the North Star that will guide him to the bar and another drink” (*TMD*, 64). That is why, when Baynes is close to them, he smiles and asks: “Is this how you greet admirers?” (*TMD*, 66). Blaize cannot help feeling proud of himself as he is the only shining star in the shadowy pub. However, he is overshadowed by Marlowe. As Baynes is “an habitué of the theatre” (*TMD*, 68), he assumes that Blaize is a writer as he cannot recall his face from any performance. Blaize stands in Marlowe’s shadow, as his presence is ignored when Marlowe is beside him, but he is also Marlowe’s shadow in the sense that the latter is defined by the former. That is why Blaize becomes Marlowe’s shadowy double of an even more gothic nature than the gothic Peter Pan proposed by González-Rivas and Muñoz Corcuera. If, to them, the figure of Peter Pan is related “with the figure of the vampire, [...] this reflection, or absence of a reflection, also symbolizes a new

³⁸ According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, “strappado” is defined as “a punishment or torture in which the subject is hoisted by rope and allowed to fall its full length; *also*: a machine used to inflict this torture.”

double” (González-Rivas and Muñoz, 2011: 10-11). Blaize, like Peter Pan’s shadow, tries to escape from the body whose shade he is but, just as Peter Pan’s shadow did, he fails. In James M. Barrie’s version, Wendy sews Peter and his shadow back together. In Marlowe’s case, he condemns Bayne to the shadowy world from which he lets him out from time to time. When Baynes does not recognize Bayne as an actor, Marlowe states that “this man is one of the finest players in London” (*TMD*, 69) achieving thus Baynes’s acknowledgment that he may not remember him because of a memory lapse. This contrasts with the moment when Marlowe is about to kill Blaize after discovering he is the real man behind the shadowy Tamburlaine. Just before queerly stabbing him, he tells Blaize: “You were never Tamburlaine, [...] just a half-rate actor” (*TMD*, 138-139). Despite his attempt to become a liberated shadow, he does not succeed; just as in the case of Peter Llewelyn-Davis, the child who inspired the Peter Pan character, who committed suicide “due to his inability to escape his childhood literary shadow” (González Rivas and Muñoz Corcuera, 2011: 2).

There is another aspect to be considered about the dark, shadowy queer spaces in general and in Louise Welsh’s novels in particular. Puar explains that, even though queer spaces are lauded as “the disruption of heterosexual space, rarely is that disruption interrogated also as a disruption of racialized, gendered, and classed spaces,” not to mention that “such disruptions [are] understood in tandem with a claiming of class, gender, and racial privilege as well” (Puar, 2002: 936). According to her, urban queer spaces, usually referred to as “gay ghettos,” are usually associated with “white, upper-and-middle-class gay male enclaves” (Puar, 2002: 936). Despite the fact that her point on the assimilation of “gay” and “upper-and-middle-class gay males” is true to many of the citizens that consider queer spaces via the media³⁹, queer spaces include much more difference both in queer typologies and places. Puar focuses on touristic queer spaces, where the word “ghetto” is not by far “a metaphor of urban space closely associated with isolated and racialized communities; the class and commodification practices of gay neighbourhoods in no way resembles the impoverished and demonized spaces of poor ethnic enclaves. (Puar, 2002: 936). It could be claimed that gay neighbourhoods are “phantasmatic constructions,” borrowing Butler’s term, but they are not real at all. The shiny touristic gay neighbourhoods in city centres are also sewed to their shadowy, suburban

³⁹ The best example to this are the photographs and images that illustrate every year the different Gay Pride parades, such as the MADO, in Madrid, which show mostly white, muscular, gay males.

neighbourhoods populated by more racial, gendered, classed varied people. In Berná Serna's "Cartografía desde los márgenes", he analyses how gipsy gay and lesbian people socialize and live within the gipsy community. As opposed to Puar's assumed white, upper-and-middle-class gay male inhabitants of the queer urban space, Berná Serna presents a completely different reality. When dealing with the topic of the choice of partners, he explains that all the gay and lesbian gipsies in his research have established relations with other men and women of a similar socio-economic status; i.e. non-gipsy or gipsy without basic education, with insecure and temporary work, living in suburban neighbourhoods and belonging to rural families – sometimes from different provinces. Besides that, gay gipsies are in contact with male immigrants, mainly South American (Berná, 2012: 222, my translation⁴⁰).

Returning to Marlowe's example, he is commanded to travel from Walshingham's to London and to accompany a messenger back to London as he has been summoned by the Privy Council. This messenger remains silent all the way until they reach the waterside and wait for a ferry. Then, he points towards a group of strangers on the bank and says: "Soon there will be no pure English left. Just a mix of Blackamoors and Dutch and God knows what" (*TMD*, 16). London's space is disrupted by all these outsiders that remain outside the city limits, gathered on the bank. Londoners do actually fear that miscegenation crosses the river and queers the white British inhabitants of the city. To the messenger's remark, Marlowe answers, annoyed, that "perhaps the Spanish will relaunch the armada and save us from the deluge" (*TMD*, 16). Marlowe is fully aware of the impossibility of maintaining a monolithic construct based on sameness and exclusion of the other. On the other hand, he is also conscious that stating his point of view also complicates his situation as he is locating himself in a disrupted space. As he reflects, his words were "an unwise jest; the kind that often escapes my lips when I'm in my cups or lacking sleep and I worried about it for the rest of the journey, fearing I had added to whatever troubles awaited me" (*TMD*, 16). Marlowe, like some of the gay gipsies, knows he

⁴⁰ In the original: "En cuanto a la elección de pareja, la mayoría de mis informantes han mantenido relaciones con otros hombres y mujeres de un estatus socioeconómico similar; es decir, payos o gitanos sin estudios básicos, con empleos precarios y eventuales, que viven en barrios del extrarradio y proceden de familias originarias del mundo rural o de otras provincias. En este sentido, cabe destacar que, con el cambio en la configuración social y étnica de esos mismos barrios derivada de la llegada de un gran número de inmigrantes extracomunitarios a finales de la década de los 90, los gitanos *gays* mantienen contactos frecuentes con hombres inmigrantes, en su mayoría, sudamericanos" (Berná, 2012: 222).

has to learn how to control or repress gestural affectation or verbal signs of his gay identity or practices (Berná, 2012: 228-229, my translation⁴¹) – or, in Malowe’s specific case, his queer identity.

So far, emphasis has been laid on the similarities between gothic and queer times and places, as both of them are darkened but, together, accommodate queerness in their shadow. If heteronormative spaces and times can be queered, it is no surprise that some gothic characters are used as examples of such situations. Muñoz points out that “ghosts have already been used by some queer scholars to explain the relationship of homosexuality to heteronormative culture” (Muñoz, 2009: 46). In fact, in this section, reference has been made above to the daemonic in barebacking, according to Dollimore, or the ghostly traces in sex spaces according to Muñoz. Obviously, these are not the only examples or the only connections between queer and gothic characters. Case describes the relationship between Queer and vampirism, as both are positioned against the natural, heterosexist society. As she explains, queer sexual practice:

impels one out of the generational production of what has been called ‘life’ and history, and ultimately out of the category of the living. The equation of hetero=sex=life and homo=sex=unlife generated as queer discourse that revealed in proscribed desiring by imagining sexual objects and sexual practices within the realm of the other-than-natural, and the consequent other-than-living. In this discourse new forms of being, or beings, are imagined through desire. And desire is that which wounds – a desire that breaks through the sheath of being as it has been imagined within a heterosexist society. Striking at its very core, queer desire punctuates the life/death and generative/destructive bipolarities that enclose the heterosexist notion of being (Case, 1991: 4).

These bleeding wounds are provoked by a desire to nurture some other-than-natural, other-than-living individuals that escape the constraints of a fictional, monolithic heterosexist society. It is not only the case of Rilke, the (sexual) predatory vampire, or Walshingam, the (emotional) vampire, but that of some blood-thirsty characters, such as McKindless’s sadistic desires or the darkened, voyeuristic audience in *The Bullet Trick*. Obviously, these two examples are extreme cases of desire, though this does not mean that they are excluded from the realm of desire, even in real life. In all these cases, there is a “perverse form of blood letting, of the

⁴¹ In the original: “Encarnarían así la imagen del “buen gitano”, que pasa por ser honrado, ejercer cuidado y respeto por sus mayores, propiciar recursos económicos suficientes para cubrir las necesidades del grupo familiar, y controlar o reprimir, ante otros gitanos, el amaneramiento gestual y las muestras verbales de su identidad o sus prácticas homosexuales” (Berná, 2012: 228-229).

abject transgression of boundaries between the proper and the improper” (Sullivan, 2003: 52).

Retaking at this point, Gelder’s understanding of the vampire as a crosser back and forth of boundaries quoted above, it is possible to relate it to the concept of queer desire. In his text *Sex, Literature and Censorship*, Dollimore proposes a model in which desire and identity are not – and cannot be – fixed. According to him, “identity is contingent and mobile, desire is fluid and even more mobile” (Dollimore, 2001: 22). That is why, according to him, queer theory can accommodate problematic figures that moved back and forth in apparently stable categories such as femininity, masculinity, heterosexuality and homosexuality. Making use of irony – and including himself personally in the remark in an out-of-personal-experience exemplification in queer theory,⁴² he proposes a boundary-crossing identity that is not a vampire but can assume vampiric features: “Hadn’t we theorized the bisexual as the biggest hypocrite of all in the sex arena, a bullshitter, a hedge-sitter, someone who wanted the best of all worlds without committing to any? Yes, yes, came the impatient reply, but that was before. Before what? Before bisexuality was re-theorized by queer theory” (Dollimore, 2001: 23). Without considering the potential of the queer to include any identity and/or desire yet, here it is interesting to quote – despite its length – Dollimore’s description of how a bisexual man feels while participating in a threesome with another man and a woman.

A bisexual male partakes of a threesome in which he watches a man fucking with a woman. His identifications here are multiple: he identifies with the man (he wants to be in his position, having sex with her) but he also wants to be her. And I mean *be* her: he doesn’t just want to be in her position and have the man fuck him as himself (though he wants that too); no, he wants to be fucked by the man with himself in the position of, which is to say, as, the woman. He knows of no pleasure greater than to be fucked by a man, but in this scenario he also wants to be the woman: he wants to be fucked by him in a way he imagines – fantasizes – only a woman can be. Maybe he desires the man through her. And in this same scenario there may be a further kind of pleasure where desire and identification are inflected by voyeurism: for our bisexual male the attractiveness of the male is heightened by the fact that the latter is apparently desired by the woman – he excites the more because he’s desired by her (Dollimore, 2001: 29).

This new queer bisexual man can help explain why shadowy Blaize invites Marlowe to have sex with a prostitute while he is watching, or the pleasure Fergus Bayne experiences when photographing his wife Rachel having sex with other

⁴² The point of “out-of-personal-experience exemplification in queer theory” will be clarified in depth in this very section of this research.

colleagues in his University. However, there are threesomes that do not fit this multiple identification: the queer connection between Rilke and Anne-Marie – the eventual object of desire and love for Rilke’s beloved and idealized Derek – does not answer any bisexual desire but it somehow connects him with the straight, and therefore inaccessible, Derek; William’s involvement in triangular relationship with Sylvie and Ulla does not imply a bisexual character, even though he can acknowledge Kolja’s physical beauty: “Kolja was the easiest to spot. His was the widest chest; the thickest thighs” (*TBT*, 67). Petra’s Peter’s cock remains hidden in a closet and does not interfere in the two girls’ relationship, up to the point that Jane gets pregnant without ever being penetrated.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to know how the woman in the threesome experiences desire or if what Dollimore describes for the experience of desire for a bisexual man applies to a bisexual woman. Whatever the case, desire can unfix identity in the same way as it can return a vampire from death into a non-life. As Dollimore explains: “desire can unfix identity in ways which are liberating; it may compel a gay person to come out, and to experience that incomparable elation which derives from swapping an inauthentic straight identity for an authentic gay one” (Dollimore, 2001: 35). Not only that, it can also “unfix without replacing it [identity] with another. It can wreck us and bring us back to life and maybe both at once” (Dollimore, 2001: 35). That is why he concludes that identity can be “as much about surviving, even evading desire, as about expressing it” (Dollimore, 2001: 35). William learns to survive his heterosexual desire for Sylvie even though in the process he has been about to lose his own identity and become his own hobo double. The same applies to Murray Watson, saved in the last moment by his brother from a certain death by suffocation. In these two cases, the fact that they have met other desires alien to them – or even become objects of desire in unwanted triangles – has led them to question not just what reality actually is, but also the stability of their own masculine heterosexuality. Dollimore points out that:

There is a touching irony in the fact that those most insecure about their heterosexuality are not ‘real men’ but people politically sympathetic to the lesbian and gay cause; they include straight feminists, bisexuals, the men of men’s studies. Certainly, some of the most anxious straights are those men trying not to be heterosexist; men who have internalized feminists, gays and lesbians as their significant others – only to then get trashed by these others for trying to be ‘new men’ (Dollimore, 2001: 41).

This may be the case of Murray Watson, ready to embark on a romantic relationship with Mrs Garreth and unable to understand why she only wanted sex for sex's sake. William, however, despises both women and gay people but he feels he knows how to manipulate them as if they were also part of one of his magic tricks. After their darkened life experience, they have become 'new men' but they have also become aware that there is something queer in them.

There is also a further connection between Gothic and Queer that has not been clearly marked in studies either on Gothic or Queer. As analysed in the previous section, a strong emphasis is placed on the reader in the different researches on any literary genre rooted in Fantastic literature, such as gothic literature or Science Fiction. There are many instances in queer theory criticism that writers do identify with their own theoretical readings. Terry Goldie explains Judith Butler's concepts of "performance" and "performative" by making use of his own body as a living example of such concepts:

There might be a time when I present a performance of masculinity by putting on a false moustache and a police uniform and sing in a parody of the Village People. On the other hand, I am presenting a performative of masculinity as I sit here typing on my computer: I am rather unsure as to how my posture represents masculinity, or why my shorts and tee-shirt are in some obvious way masculine, and yet I am sure that I am reiterating masculine norms which precede, constrain and exceed my control as a performance (Goldie, 2003: 51-52).

By exemplifying Butler's theory in/with his own body – and his own reading of Butler-, Goldie both clarifies and simplifies, in this particular case, two complex and conflictive concepts in queer theory that are key foundations to all the queer thinking and, altogether, shows his own identification with his own queer readings. In a two-way movement, his queer theoretical readings open up new possible readings on his queer personal reading and vice versa. Furthermore, his own personal queer reading of himself opens up the possibility of a further identification of his potential readers with the queer theory he is describing and/or his own personal experience of his readings, becoming thus the starting point of multiple labyrinthine identifications. Goldie is, as mentioned above, not the only case of this personal appropriation of queer theory. Dollimore's concern about the essence of desire and identity is read under the prism of his late coming-out and his sense of exclusion from gay culture.

I had my first gay affair at 28; he was a bit older. It was supposed to be casual. In fact he had made a bet with a third party that he could get me into bed. He could: he did,

and he won his bet. But what neither he nor I reckoned on was that we would fall for each other. [...] The affair ended – though we remain close friends to this day – but not before changing my life, and affecting everything I subsequently thought and wrote. But, contrary to the experience of many gay people, I didn't feel I had discovered my true self. There was a great deal of pressure from gay culture for me to feel and acknowledge that I did; but I didn't – not quite (Dollimore, 2001: 15).

It may be claimed that, in the same way that, as stated in Section 1, readers have a certain preconception of what they are going to read when taking a gothic novel off its shelf, the reader of an academic text on queer theory presupposes both the difficulty of the text and the queer – if not gay or lesbian – identity of the writer. Therefore, it may seem pointless that, in such texts, theory is exemplified with personal anecdotes and appropriations of such a theory. On the other hand, many readers of queer theory do start their research because of their own identification as queer people. The aim is not simply to theorize on what Queer is – or is not – but also to reflect on what one is – or can be. Dollimore's late coming out does not only point at a different time to the present time, when accepting one's homosexuality was, broadly speaking, more complicated, but it also exemplifies the mutability of one's desire and identity with which young, modern readers can identify – or not. Muñoz can now write and answer back all his cousins who mocked the way he walked and moved like a girl, and erase that feeling of shame at himself. In the narration of his own personal experience, he recalls how:

I walk across the red-brick floor and momentarily cross the [TV] screen. Then my oldest cousin calls out, "Look at the way he walks, how he shakes his ass. I wish I had a girlfriend who walked like that!" The other men and boys in the room erupt into laughter. I protest: "What is wrong with they way I walk? I don't understand." The taunts continue, and I am flushed with shame. I rush to my room to hide from this mockery, which I find amazingly painful" (Muñoz, 2009: 68).

Edwards's reflections on the relationship between masculinities and violence would lack an element essential to its full understanding if not exemplified with his own personal story. "*At the age of 22, I was beaten up and put in hospital with my nose broken by five football fans (they wore scarves and similar paraphernalia) on leaving a pub with my boyfriend at the time on the Euston Road in London*" (Edwards, 62-63, italics in the original). Frantzen remarks on the relationship between queer theory and his personal and professional life as he feels his writing has become "honest and engaging" (Frantzen, 2000: 25). In fact, his final chapter, curiously titled "Me and my shadow," starts with how the Korean War changed his life as he felt

forced to move away from his rural environment into a more international one where he was about to discover that there were places where he could fit in.

When I graduated from college in 1969 I was faced with the certainty of being drafted into the U.S. Army, going to basic training and infantry school, and being shipped to Vietnam. I came from a farming community in a county with a tiny draft pool; the Selective Service Board instituted the lottery system too late to apply to me. The kinds of deferment handed out to my college friends were beyond reach. In the hope of avoiding the infantry and combat I enlisted; as a college graduate, luckily, I qualified for language school. The army offered me two alternatives for foreign-language instruction: Korean or Vietnamese. I spent forty-seven weeks studying Korean at a facility outside Washington, D.C., and was sent to Korea in April 1971. I left Korea, and the army, at the end of January 1972. January 1997 found me immersed in thinking about and writing this book (Frantzen, 2000: 294-295).

His book ends with a trip to the same place, where his own awareness of himself as queer started, with three books that helped him stir memories of his past:

They were Will Fellow's *Farm Boys: Lives of Gay men from the Rural Midwest*, a collection of first-person narratives by men who grew up on farms between the 1930s and the 1970s; *Korean works and Days: Notes from the Diary of a Country Priest*, written by Richard Rutt, an Anglican bishop who lived in rural Korea in the 1950s and 1960s; and Bérubé's *Coming Out under Fire*. [...] [it] seems to be a good way to conclude the process of writing about them (Frantzen, 2000: 295).

In this chapter, he also includes some snapshots taken when he first stayed in Korea, presenting what constituted new masculinities to him. He and his shadow, he and his doppelgänger, have travelled together ever since. Despite the fact that Frantzen perceives some failure in queer theory, such as its vague and indirect methods, he also acknowledges how it has helped him – and other queer critics – close “the gap between personal and professional styles in academic writing and helped make that writing newly honest and engaging” (Frantzen, 2000: 25) It is precisely out of his personal experience that he proposes the importance of researching on queer theory in order to “counter the widespread assumption that sexual definition and all it implies (e.g., categories of identity, sexual desire) are supposedly subjects of interest only to homosexuals (just as women's studies supposedly interest only women)” (Frantzen, 2000: 25).

Returning to Case's relationship between Queer and Gothic, it should be noted that the former, like the latter, is a developing significant whose significance varies according to the more or less restricted view of the approach taken. The term ‘queer,’ which started as confrontation to the shame of the subject, provoked, as Butler (1993a: 18) explains, the production of a subject *through* that shaming interpellation.

By the performative repetition of a shaming word, it created a subject class that includes “those who resist or oppose that social form [the heterosexualization of the social bond] as well as those who occupy it without hegemonic social sanction” (Butler, 1993a: 18). In this view, some new light is shed on the point developed previously on Lawson’s prejudiced literary praise of Welsh’s *The Bullet Trick*. It is precisely against this homophobic remark that the queer proves to be a valuable weapon. Butler explains how homophobia attributed failed genders to those that do not fit in the heteronormative model, by degrading them.

Precisely because homophobia often operates through the attribution of a damaged, failed, or otherwise abjected gender to homosexuals, that is, calling gay men “feminine” or calling lesbians “masculine”, and because the homophobic terror over performing homosexual acts, where it exists, is often also a terror over losing proper gender (“no longer being a real or proper man” or “no longer being a real or proper woman”), it seems crucial to retain a theoretical apparatus that will account for how sexuality is regulated through the policing and the shaming of gender (Butler, 1993b: 27).

According to Lawson, William occasionally sounded very female, though in this case this is due to the fact that it is a male, heterosexual narrative voice of a novel written by a female, lesbian writer. However, his attempt to “shaming” Welsh for her queerness shows his incapability to grasp the important idea that it is possible to understand another disquieting facet of Louise Welsh’s novels. William should not be read as a male, heterosexual narrative voice but as a queered male, heterosexual narrative voice. All the characters can find accommodation under the queer umbrella, which, as Berlant and Waner explain, is not just “an umbrella for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and the transgendered” (Berlant and Waner, 1995: 344). Butler explains that the term queer “will be revised, dispelled, rendered obsolete to the extent that it yields to the demands which resist the term precisely because of the exclusions by which it is mobilized” (Butler, 1993a: 20). Developing this understanding of what queer is, Halperin claims that anyone that feels marginalised as a result of their sexual practices can be queer, including “some married couples [...] or even (who knows?) some married couples *with* children – with, perhaps, *very naughty* children” (Halperin, 1995: 62, italics in the original). However, he is aware of the fact that queer may have the effect of (mis)representing everybody as a happy family (Halperin, 1995: 62). Halperin’s use of the family as a metaphor that stands for all those people that can be queer, is not as happy as he presents. On the one hand, in heteronormative society, the

family is a promise of a future beyond the present. As Muñoz explains, queers in general, but more especially those that decide not to have biological children, “are, within the dominant culture, people without a future. They are cast as people who are developmentally stalled, forsaken, who do not have the complete life promised by heterosexual temporality” (Muñoz, 2009: 98). In Louise Welsh’s novels, the only family that remains together is that formed of Jane, Petra and Boy. All the other families either disappear completely, such as the McKindless siblings, who die without any descendant; are badly damaged, such as Murray and Jack Watson, who find some difficulties to overcome their father’s death; or they are completely damaged, such as the Garretts in *Naming the Bones*, where Alan Garrett kills himself in a mysterious car accident. Muñoz adds that “heteronormative culture makes queers think that both the past and the future do not belong to them. All we are allowed to imagine is barely surviving the present” (Muñoz, 2009: 112). However, it is possible to subvert such heteronormative thinking from within. Childless Marlowe writes his final account in order to be read in a future time. Christie fears that her decision not to be a mother when she killed her daughter Miranda, would return from the dead and haunt her future existence with her own past. William, in turn, decides willingly to inhabit his own present after discovering that Sylvie is alive, as the future ahead will clearly be brighter than his recent past. Even Rilke, on a rainy day in Paris, finds the “promise of watered plants and freshly washed pavements” (*TCR*, 294). On the other hand, there are no happy families *per se*. Roseneil points out that “at the start of the twenty-first century there can be few families which do not include at least some members who diverge from traditional heterorelational practices, whether as divorcees, unmarried mothers, lesbians, gay men or bisexual” (Roseneil, 2000). There are queer families as well as queers in the family, but assuming happiness implies a denial of certain realities that threaten queer people: “homophobia continues to exist, particularly in schools, and violence against lesbians and gay men remains a serious problem” (Roseneil, 2000).

Grosz, on the other hand, acknowledges the capacity of the queer to accommodate heterosexual people whose sexual practices are prosecuted by social rules as they are, to a certain extent, queer too. “Heterosexual sadists, pederasts, fetishists, pornographers, pimps, voyeurs, suffer from social sanctions: in a certain sense they too can be regarded as oppressed” (Grosz, 1994: 113). She explains, however, the inappropriateness of such inclusion as it is to “ignore the very real

complicity and phallic rewards of what might be called ‘deviant sexualities’ within patriarchal and heterocentric power relations” (Grosz, 1994: 113). Grosz delimits, then, the undelimited horizon of the Queer that Halperin proposes. Nikki Sullivan points out that non-specific definition of what queer actually is becomes a problem, as it “promotes a sense of inclusivity which is misleading, and worse still, enables exclusory praxis to go unchecked” (Sullivan, 2003: 47). To her, in its indefinition, queer may exclude from its umbrella other issues such as race and become an exclusive club, as opposed to what was originally intended. As she summarizes, “queer theory and/or activism has been accused of being, among other things, male-centred, anti-feminist, and race-blind” (Sullivan, 2003: 48). This approach to the queer remain far from what Butler proposed when she stated that the term “queer” should be employed in order to do political work more effectively as it is “never fully owned, but always and only redeployed, twisted, queered from a prior usage and in the direction of urgent and expanding political purposes” (Butler, 1993a: 19). The use of the noun “queer,” perhaps, has covered, and acquired, such a wide, undefined spectrum of individuals that the term itself needs a certain transformation. Signorile finishes his book *Queer in America* with “A Queer Manifesto” addressed to different potential addressees of his research: all queers, the sympathetic straights, the religious right and, finally to all queer activists. To the latter, he commands them to “focus not on that which divides us – our genders, races, classes, ages, political ideologies – but on the one powerful enemy that we all have in common: the closet. Our diversity is in fact our greatest weapon” (Signorile, 1994: 367). As opposed to the criticism pointed out by Sullivan, queer theory is not closed but rather the opposite: it is moving towards the inclusion of those that were felt to be excluded. It deals with questions of physical and mental disabilities, as McRuer (2002) or Sandahl (2003), lesbian tourism, as Puar (2002), new queer subcultures, as Halberstam (2003), or the different intersections proposed in Platero (2012). Queer critics also feel the need to spread and disseminate the needs and realities of those “new minorities.” As Platero notes, there are still few examples written in Spanish or on Spain that make use of terms such as “homonationalism,” “queer diasporas,” “queer crips” or “pinkwashing” (Platero, 2012: 16). O’Rourke refutes points of view such as Sullivan’s when he explains that, according to some critics, queer theory is “over, passé, moribund, stagnant; or, at worst, dead, its time and its power to wrench frames having come and gone” (O’Rourke, 2012: 127). As opposed to this, he presents queer theory as if returned

from death – once again, a dark, gothic touch in queer theory – with an interest in including everything that seemed to be excluded from it. “Queer Theory, stubbornly vital as a spectre, ghost, took a strange twist in the late nineties and early noughties. [...] Suddenly, queer theorists were interested in ethico-politics, in world politics, in events outside of the texts they were so busy subverting” (O’Rourke, 2012: 129). Queer, thus, follows the task of the feminist and minority perspectives that Suárez already proposed in 1997: “They examine cultural production in terms of its complicitness with Eurocentric, racist, patriarchal, or heterosexist ideologies and, at the same time, they aim to discover alternative forms of sociality, agency, and desire. (Suárez, 1997: 11). Furthermore, queer theory opens up to the future, as explained above, and is far from being fixed and stable. O’Rourke concludes his article by stating how alive the queer ghost is and how it can be:

diagrammed as a post-continental theory of precisely everything, a madly erotically impersonal mode of opening up to and meshing with the strangeness of others, of opening up to the incalculable strangeness of the future to-come, of opening up to aesthetic and political practices that do not yet exist but need to be envisioned as necessarily ec-static modes of stepping out of this enmired place and time to something cosmopolitically “fuller, vaster, more sensual and brighter⁴³” (O’Rourke, 2012: 144).

In her novels, Louise Welsh does queer her characters and settings similarly to the way she makes use of a gothic mode to show alternative readings⁴⁴. However, her use of the queer is not as a concrete noun, a label that classifies the essence of her fictional world, but rather as a verb “to describe a process, a movement between viewer, text, and world, that reinscribes (or queers) each and the relations between them” (Sullivan, 2003: 192). This queering, as well as the impersonal mode proposed by O’Rourke, resembles in many senses the gothic mode proposed in the previous section. In fact, Frantzen points out that, despite all the differences among queer theorists, there are a few agreed-on principles and

one of them is that any text or cultural representation can be ‘queered,’ an operation that sometimes entails the disclosure of homoerotic content [...] and sometimes, less specifically, the analysis of ways in which texts and cultures establish heterosexual standards or imperatives by excluding homosexual possibilities” (Frantzen, 2000: 6).

⁴³ O’Rourke quotes Muñoz (2009: 189) here.

⁴⁴ As it has been pointed out in this section, authors such as Frantzen and Halberstam, as well as Ahmed obliquely, consider queer as a mode.

As well as the gothic mode, this queering mode requires more than Welsh's intentionality in her writing: it implies a corresponding recognition on the reader's part. She, as a lesbian writer, is fully aware that the homosexual, as Beaver states, does interpret any acquainted sign, as s/he "is a prodigious consumer of signs – of hidden meanings, hidden systems, hidden potentiality" (Beaver, 1981: 104-105). This consumerism of signs is what makes the homosexual reader actually read for these signs as s/he "is also already reading, constantly searching for the alphabets of homoerotic possibilities" (Goldie, 2003: 15). This constant search for these alphabets in literary works is what Goldie proposes in *Pink Snow. Homotextual Possibilities in Canadian Fiction*. Here, he uses the term "homotextuality" to explore the gay possibilities in Canadian fiction, re-reading under such perspective some canonical Canadian texts such as Sinclair Ross's *As For Me and My House*, Ernest Buckler's *The Mountain and the Valley* and Timothy Findley's *The Wars*, amongst others. He reads the texts in search for signs that might be read under a gay perspective. As he states, "the homotextual is not what the homosexual writes but what the homosexual reads" (Goldie, 2003, 16) and therefore homotextuality is based then on the recognition of a series of signs which, regardless whether they were written with a gay intent, can be read as so. Beaver explains how "the homosexual is beset by signs, by the urge to interpret whatever transpires, or fails to transpire, between himself and every chance acquaintance" and, therefore, interprets "hidden meanings, hidden systems, hidden potentiality" (Beaver, 1981, 104-05). This does not mean that only homosexuals can do homosexual readings – see, for example, Sedgwick's case herself, married to Hal Sedgwick, a fact that "struck some readers of Ms. Sedgwick's work as anomalous: one of the creators of queer theory was straight" (Grimes, 2009) or the case of some characters in Louise Welsh's novels, such as Watson, who attempts to read scholarly Lunan's life – nor that any homosexual reading can be validated. However, it proves necessary to approach the text through homosexual filters, "we need rose-coloured glasses to see the pink snow" (Goldie, 2003, 14). Furthermore, these "rose-coloured glasses" may expand their scope to perceive not just –sometimes purposely – hidden homosexual signs in the novels, understanding here "homosexual" in a wider sense that includes both men and women. They should actually help read the queered signs in the novels and thus critically engage with "cultural artefacts in order to explore the ways in which meaning and identity is (inter)textually (re)produced" (Sullivan, 2003: 190). Thus, by using the queer glasses,

it is possible to counteract some restrictive views on gender complexities, such as Lawson's, and confront it with what Sedgwick considered as her Axiom 1 in her *Epistemology of the Closet*: "People are different from each other" (Sedgwick, 1990: 22). Despite its apparent obviousness, Sedgwick points out that such a difference is not acknowledged in every person. If, according to Foucault, "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations" (Foucault 1977: 27), Sedgwick notes that knowledge is not, after all, power, though power moves around it. To her, knowledge shares its power with "ignorance and opacity [that] collude or compete with knowledge in mobilizing the flows of energy, desire, goods, meanings, persons" (Sedgwick, 1990: 4). By silencing the queer in society, one is exercising a power over those who are silenced and become, thus, shamed or denied. Under such ignorance, some people are doomed to inhabit *the closet*, which is the "defining structure for gay oppression in this century" (Sedgwick, 1990: 68) – and also in the current century⁴⁵. In the already mentioned literary praise, Welsh is reintroduced into the closet, as her lesbianism is known but ignored, as she is just referred to as a female writer and her novel is only read inside the closet. Outside it, it is just a failed trick or, rather, "the trick is missed" (Lawson, 2006). This shows both the complexity of the closet, as there exists not just one closet, and a further ignorance on the fact that "the gay closet is not a feature only of the lives of gay people" (Sedgwick, 1990: 68). Welsh, in turn, does not inhabit the closet in her private life and her characters, if they do, are offered the possibility of coming out in their realization of what reality actually is and rebel against the "very equivocal privacy afforded by the closet" (Sedgwick, 1990: 71). It should also be noted that closets do not just provide such equivocal privacy to those who would rather inhabit it. There are also many skeletons in the closet – "something shameful and kept secret (as in family)" according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary – willing to occupy their public space. In his queer manifesto, Signorile urges those "closeted in power" to get out of their closets and become heroes. If they remain in their closet, they are going to experience the equivocal privacy of the closet pointed out by Sedgwick. Living in the

⁴⁵ The same week of the Opening Ceremony of the Sochi Winter Games, Javier Fernández, the Spanish ice-skater and flag bearer, asks gay participants in the Games to refrain themselves (El Mundo, 7th February, 2014). His words have been hardly criticised in different media as homophobic. This adds to the wide criticism to the Russian Government for its homophobia to the point that even the doodle in Google is a gay flag with different winter sports in it as a form of support to the LGTB.

closet is living in hell and it is their own personal choice to either burn in hell or escape from it. In Signorile's words: "All of the hell you've lived through – the hiding, the sweating, the crying, the lying – is only going to become more unbearable. Unless you come out, you'll eventually be revealed as just another cowering, sad, self-loathing homosexual" (Signorile, 1994: 365). There are many references to hell in Louise Welsh's novels, as analysed in Section 3 of this research. When Father Walter commits suicide in *The Girl on the Stairs*, Jane thinks that "suicide was a venal sin, a one-way ticket to Hell" (TGOTS, 245). However, Father Walter was already living the hell of remaining silent and not acting in defence of abused Anna. In his inability to become a hero, he chooses to end his life and to condemn himself to inhabit an eternal closet where silence equals death, as in the SILENCE = DEATH Project carried out by ACT UP. As Crimp explains, within the context of ACT UP's project, this motto acquires a further signification in the AIDS activist movement as "we ourselves are silent precisely on the subject of death, on how deeply it affects us" (Crimp, 2002: 131). In Father Walter's case, he is well aware of the deep effect suicidal death can have on him that he decides, willingly, to embrace his eternal damnation.

Muñoz explains that queerness, as opposed to straightness, is filled with the intention to be lost and it is, in fact, "lost in space or lost in relation to the space of heteronormativity" (Muñoz, 2009: 72). He proposes the idea of losing oneself as an intentional act that questions the set mapping of space of the straight mind in a way that resembles Ahmed's consideration of sexual orientation in relation to space. Muñoz further explains that getting lost – and therefore accepting queerness – does not equal in any sense "to hide in a closet or to perform a simple (ontological) disappearing act; it is to veer away from heterosexuality's path" (Muñoz, 2009: 73). As opposed to the closet, Muñoz impels people to assume their queerness, to deviate from the straight line and to get lost – why not – in one's own labyrinths. In Welsh's fictional world there are plenty of characters getting lost in labyrinths full of hidden, sexual bodies, such as Greta's, sadomasochistic practices in an attic, as at the McKindless's, voyeuristic gazes, as Fergus' or the spectators in *The Bullet Trick*, or men in female attire who perform feminine roles, such as Blaize; even lesbian women who want to fulfil their wish to become mothers. It renders a must to make use of the rose-coloured glasses to actually see them in the "critical culture of 'messiness' liberated from the strictures of traditional, social and academic discourse" (Frantzen,

2000: 7). Or, further still, to follow Halberstam's call to turn away from the comfort zone of polite exchange and embrace "a truly political negativity, one that promises, this time, to fail, to make a mess, to fuck shit up, to be loud, unruly, impolite, to breed resentment, to bash back, to speak up and out, to disrupt, assassinate, shock and annihilate, and [...] to make everyone a little less happy. (Halberstam, 2008:154). Not seeing them, and, therefore, ignoring them, does actually mean that one is missing the trick.

PART TWO

INTO THE LABYRINTHS

At the entrance to the labyrinths

Labyrinths have been represented by human beings since prehistoric times. As Jeff Saward notes “there are labyrinth petroglyphs of genuine prehistoric origin to be found in Europe, their antiquity proven by their association with other undoubtedly ancient inscriptions” (Saward). He provides several examples of these prehistoric labyrinths carved on rocks, such as those in Mogor and Chan do Lagoa in Galicia. Labyrinths have developed throughout history, becoming architectural patterns, as in The Cathedral of Chartres, France, names of body parts, such as the vestibular labyrinth of the inner ear, or literary metaphors, as in Borges’s work, or as a word that defines “something highly intricate or convoluted in character, composition, or construction.”⁴⁶ Human beings, far from losing interest in the image of the labyrinth, are becoming more and more interested in it, as Kern notes in his conclusion to *Through the Labyrinth* (2000⁴⁷). In it, he states that, in recent years, there has been a labyrinth revival and “a renewed interest in labyrinths has swept the globe” (Kern, 2000: 311). Though he is referring specifically to architectural labyrinths, his remark can be applied to many other cultural labyrinths. A recent example of this phenomenon is the exhibition entitled “El hilo de Ariadna: Lectores / Navegantes” (“Ariadne’s Thread: Readers / Navigators”), commissioned by Dr Francisco Jarauta and which opened in La Casa del Lector in Madrid on the 17th October, 2012, whose official webpage states that visitors to the exhibition are going to embark on a journey. This journey starts in the classical labyrinth of Knossos, moves through various forms such as the biological structures created by Nature and ends up in the contemporary communication networks⁴⁸. In this exhibition, as it will be further explained, a variety of works from a wide range of artists, such as Jaume Plensa, Antoni Muntadas or Robert Morris, were included. Furthermore, labyrinths have even metamorphosed and adapted some more classical patterns, such as the gothic labyrinth, to modern technological devices, such as the virtual world of videogames.

In the final chapter to Hogle’s *Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Botting writes a concluding chapter that aims at hinting some possible, future

⁴⁶ In <http://www.thefreedictionary.com> (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

⁴⁷ This work is a revised and updated English version of his original catalogue entitled *Labyrinthe* for a labyrinth exhibition held in Milan in 1981 and published by Prestel.

⁴⁸ In the original: “El recorrido se inicia en el laberinto clásico de Cnosos y, pasando por formas como las estructuras biológicas creadas por la Naturaleza, desemboca en las redes de comunicación actuales” in <http://www.fundaciongsr.com>., my translation (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

developments of gothic fiction. In it, he devotes the first part of his article to analyzing the gothic experience achieved by gamers when playing videogames such as *Resident Evil*, *Silent Hill* and, mainly, *Doom*. In the two sections in this research that propose the dark, rose-coloured reading of Louise Welsh's novels, emphasis has been placed on the importance of the reader's identification with the characters. This identification also proves relevant in the case of those playing the gothic videogames Botting describes. Thus, Botting notes that in *Doom*, "its labyrinths, ghostly figures, and monstrous mutants evoke primitive fears and instinctual responses; its violent shocks and graphic images set the pulse racing; its repetitive structure sacrifices imaginative narrative involvement for more immediate sensational pleasure. (Botting, 2002b: 277). In this videogame the gamer plays the role of a marine who has been incarcerated in a base on Mars. Unexpectedly, beings from hell enter the base through the teletransportation gates, annihilating all the human beings there. The marine has to be moved endlessly through labyrinthine corridors shooting at any being he encounters as not doing so implies the gamer's virtual death. Identification with this marine is reinforced firstly because it has no name and, secondly, because the forefront of the screen shows "a hand holding a gun [which] offers an illusion of on-screen involvement, similarly draws the player into the virtual world" (Botting, 2002b: 277). As has already been mentioned, the character and the gamer traverse labyrinthine corridors with no final destination, as the game actually ends with the marine's death brought about by one of the ghostly, mutant beings. The only choice the gamer has is, actually, to continue their way towards their own doom, without any deviation, that leads them to the exit of the Mars base. As Botting explains, "the labyrinths, gloom and postindustrial ruins of *Doom* produce the tense atmosphere of pursuit and disorientation" (Botting, 2002b: 278). It is interesting to remark that both the pursuit and the disorientation are provoked by the identification of the gamers with their characters as there is no real pursuit – the game has no real exit to the labyrinth of corridors – and as there is no real need of orientation – the labyrinth of corridors is unidirectional and it does not offer any bifurcation where the gamer has to make a decision on where to turn to. Besides, the idea of disorientation within the labyrinth is not, by far, an accidental remark in Botting's text. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* provides the following definition to the entry "labyrinth" as "a complicated irregular network of passages or paths, etc; a maze". However, both the labyrinth and the maze are critically understood to refer to different dispositions.

McCaffery deals with both the labyrinth and the maze as “different logics of passage” (McCaffery, 2012: 115). According to him, the latter did not emerge until the late Renaissance and it implies certain complexity as it presents “choices among alternative routes of which some are deliberate dead-ends” (McCaffery, 2012: 115). The labyrinth, in turn, is “linear, deterministic and with zero requirements of choice from its perambulator” (McCaffery, 2012: 115) who, obviously, can never get lost in it. In fact, in the labyrinth, its perambulators get disoriented rather than lost in them, just as the gamers/characters in *Doom*. McCaffery is clearly influenced by the already-mentioned work by Hermann Kern. Actually, his distinction between the two terms does not differ much – not even in the choice of words – from other interpretations done on the work by Kern. Thus, Aguirre summarizes the distinction of the terms labyrinth and maze according to Kern as follows:

Kern (1983/2000) or his translator has found it convenient to employ two existing words, “labyrinth” and “maze”, to designate two types of structure. In the maze, he argues, one can get lost; in the labyrinth, which he holds to be the earlier structure, one cannot. The essence of the labyrinth resides not in the danger of losing one’s way, but in the disorientation it induces (Aguirre, 2002: 21).

Aguirre cannot guarantee that the choice of nouns in the English version has its origin in Kern’s decision to mark in English a non-existent difference in its original German, which only has the term *das Labyrinth*. Even though it may seem to be a digression to the topic – or rather an unexpected twist within the labyrinth -, Jane in *The Girl on the Stairs* discovers how German and English do not have a one-to-one correspondence in vocabulary and some words, such as *lebenspartner* proves to be more neutral than she thinks, as explained in Sections 4 and 5 of this research.

Returning to Aguirre’s argument, he does not require the differentiation between the two alternative – and also excluding, according to the translation of McCaffery’s text – terms “labyrinth” and “maze,” as he focuses on a generated, Cretan-type, seven-circuit labyrinth that serves him. The labyrinth he proposes (figure 5) – and that he labels as “after Kern (1982) – is formed by the four quadrants created out of the two axes helps him apply some observations on the idea of phasing, which is “the factoring of action into several versions of itself” (Aguirre, 2002: 20). As he explains, this labyrinth connects with four observations he had already made. The first one is that the labyrinth “practises systematic *retardation*: instead of reaching straight for the centre, its path is deliberately tortuous. Secondly, through retardation, it *makes*

the structure of advance visible. Thirdly, it sets up, and multiplies, thresholds” (Aguirre, 2002: 23, italics in the original). The fourth observation refers to its “deterministic structure,” as there is only one single path that leads into the labyrinth and out of it. Therefore, it is impossible to lose oneself in it and retardation, thus, “makes this inevitable outcome ‘visible’” (Aguirre, 2002: 23).

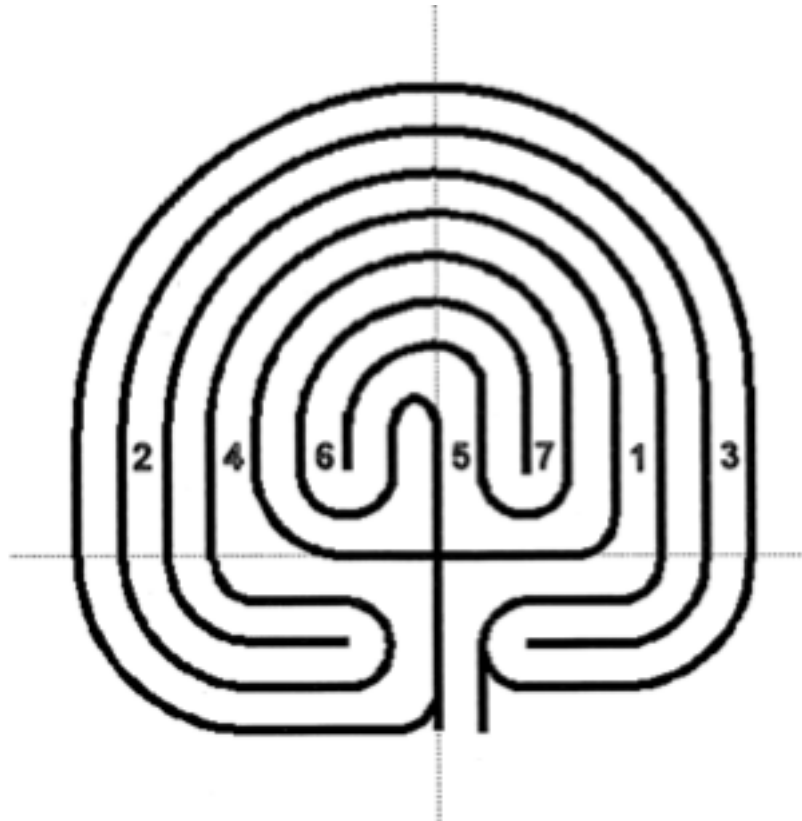


Figure 5: Kern's labyrinth (Aguirre, 2002: 22)

If the labyrinth possesses a deterministic structure, in the very act of entering it, one is already assuming that, no matter how disoriented they may feel, they will eventually arrive at the core of the labyrinth and, further still, return from it by retracing their own steps. However, as it will be analysed in the following sections of this Part Two, one does not necessarily need to know they are traversing a labyrinth and, moreover, they may not even want to get out of it again.

Returning to the already pointed-out categorization and distinction between labyrinths and mazes, it should be stated that it is not as clear-cut as it may seem. Authors such as Tschumi, propose the possibility that “there may be no way out of a labyrinth” (Tschumi, 1996: 43). Despite the fact that McCaffery claims that such a labyrinthine possibility is not feasible, Tschumi proposes a traversing of the labyrinth

in which the time for the perambulator is simply the present, immediate time. As he explains, the labyrinth is the place where “all sensations, all feelings are enhanced, but where no overview is present to provide a clue about how to get out. Occasional consciousness is of little help, for perception in the Labyrinth presupposes immediacy” (Tschumi, 1996: 42). If the characters in Louise Welsh’s novels are unable to grasp the consequences of their present actions, it is, precisely, due to such immediacy. For example, William Wilson is unable to get out of his labyrinthine journey, where apparently there is one bifurcation from the straight line: his own guilt for having killed Sylvie in his final version of the bullet trick. He is unable to grasp the full picture because he can only perceive the immediacy in his dark surrounding on stage. If he had seen further, he might have distinguished the fake blood on Sylvie’s body. Leavenworth, in turn, highlights the importance of the labyrinth in the Gothic and questions the differentiation between labyrinths and mazes. As he explains, “though the labyrinth was frequently rendered as unicursal and systematic in the medieval period, the Gothic labyrinth precludes unity and instead functions to confuse characters’ fears and desires in a space which is alienating in its complexity” (Leavenworth, 2010: 77). He further argues that, by focusing on the individual experience of terror in gothic texts, the distinction between maze-like locations, such as crypts and castles, and more figurative sites, “such as a character’s tortured psyche” (Leavenworth, 2010: 77) disappear. Opinions such as those by Tschumi and Leavenworth stress the difficulty and risk of entering the labyrinth, as one does not now what to expect there, as one may in turn be a-maze(d).

Furthermore, in the differentiation between maze and labyrinth, there is another complication, which is that of the place from where the labyrinth – or maze – is observed. Reed-Doob points out the double perspective of the maze based on two categories of people who relate to it. On the one hand, she refers to the “maze-treaders,” whose “vision ahead and behind is severely constricted and fragmented, [and they] suffer confusion” (Reed-Doob, 1990: 1) and the maze-viewers, who “see the pattern whole, from above or in a diagram, [and] are dazzled by its complex artistry” (Reed-Doob, 1990: 1). It could be argued that the characters in the novels are, in fact, maze-treaders as their vision of the whole, labyrinthine reality that surrounds them is fragmented and they are rather confused. The readers of the novel, on the other hand, could be said to be maze-viewers as, in the act of reading, they are getting the wide picture of the events. The problem arises in the fact that the events

are narrated through the characters' eyes, as in *The Cutting Room*, *Tamburlaine Must Die* or *The Bullet Trick*- similar to how the gamer of *Doom* perceives the labyrinth the marine is traversing –, or through a narrator who is positioned next to the main characters, revealing no more and no less than what characters know, as in *Naming the Bones* and *The Girl on the Stairs*. From the very first moment readers start their reading of the novels, they position themselves – and they are positioned too – next to the characters and, consequently, they also embark and enter the same maze or labyrinth that the characters do. This is so because, as Joyce Carol Oates notes, in genre fiction in general, and in H.P. Lovecraft's work in particular, there is a "tacit contract" between readers and the writer, as the former "understand that they will be manipulated, but the question is how? And when? And with what skill? And to what purpose?" (Oates, 1996). This also applies to Louise Welsh's novels: readers voluntarily agree to be manipulated, even though this may imply that they lose their maze-viewer position to become one more maze-treader. Reed-Doob, rather than clarifying the difference between maze and labyrinth, does complicate it further. First, she proposes the already discussed distinction in the position and the attitude towards the maze. Second, she also points out that labyrinths can become multiform entities, as:

What you see depends on where you stand, and thus, at one and the same time, labyrinths are single (there is one physical structure) and double: they simultaneously incorporate order and disorder, clarity and confusion, unity and multiplicity, artistry and chaos. They may be perceived as path (a linear but circuitous passage to a goal) or as pattern (a complete symmetrical design). They are dynamic form from a maze-walker's perspective and static from a privileged onlooker's point of view (Reed-Doob, 1990: 1).

This understanding of the labyrinth as an ambiguous space that changes depending on how it is approached proves to be an interesting and relevant reading and it provides a starting point for how the idea of the labyrinth is proposed in the following sections of this research. This duplicitous reading of the labyrinth as both dynamic and static, as single and double, as path or pattern, connects with the gothic understanding of a labyrinth as a "demarcated site where oppositions depicted as needful in the narrative blur subversively, forcing a character to struggle to navigate between conflicting conditions, states or concepts" (Leavenworth, 2010: 45). But it also connects with the importance of the readers' standpoint in the act of reading, not just as mere maze-viewers but as a maze-treaders – and not simply of labyrinths as

understood in Gothic genre theory but also in labyrinthine constructions of bodies, desires⁴⁹ and even of the reading process itself. Jones and Stephenson reflect on how artists – and writers can also be included in this category – and the viewers/interpreters – and readers – of their works get “entangled in intersubjective spaces of desire, projection, and identification” (Jones and Stephenson, 1999: 1). They further argue that both artists and viewers, as classed, raced, sexed and gendered subjects, are implicated “within any potential determination of meaning” (Jones and Stephenson, 1999: 1). Furthermore, they also acknowledge the importance of understanding interpretation as an open-ended process that traverses the “complex web of relations among artists, patrons, collectors, and both specialized and non-specialized viewers” (Jones and Stephenson, 1991: 1). Connecting this labyrinthine reading of interpretation with the double reading of the labyrinth proposed by Reed-Doob, characters traverse the labyrinths they encounter in their own literary life as well as they also traverse the labyrinths that readers encounter in their own reading act. This is due to the fact that readers, when projecting and identifying themselves with the novels in the established, tacit contract with the writer, are also projecting their own labyrinths.

In the abovementioned exhibition curated by Dr Jarauta, he explains that his aim when gathering its about twenty works on the myth and image of the labyrinth – in Spanish, as in German, there is only one word, “laberinto,” as a translation to the English words “labyrinth” and “maze” – was to shed some revealing light, as reading is precisely that: entering and unveiling the labyrinth⁵⁰. He also explains how the role of the reader has recently changed from their traversing of the tapestry woven by Ariadne after being rescued from the labyrinth to becoming the navigator *par excellence* of other universes, tracing their own routes in the possible worlds from the processes of interaction and exchange of knowledge and discourses.⁵¹ The exhibition, as has already been hinted at, at the beginning of this section, displays some of the works by Robert Morris, amongst them some of his plans for the *Pontevedra Labyrinth* he designed in 1999, which resembles the labyrinth proposed by Aguirre.

⁴⁹ It seems inevitable here not to make reference to Pedro Almodovar’s classic film *Laberinto de Pasiones* (1982).

⁵⁰ In the original “la idea del mito y la imagen del laberinto arrojan “una luz reveladora” porque “leer es precisamente eso: penetrar y desvelar el laberinto” in <http://www.fundaciongsr.com>, my translation.

⁵¹ In the original: “el nuevo lector, navegante por excelencia de otros universos, el que traza las rutas de los mundos posibles a partir de los procesos de interacción e intercambio de saberes y discursos” in <http://www.fundaciongsr.com>, my translation.

However, his understanding of what a labyrinth is differs widely from the labyrinth/maze distinction pointed out above: “Inside the labyrinth, one gets lost without a compass or a thread” (Morris, 2009, qtd. in <http://hiloariadna.tumblr.com/>). Despite the deterministic character of the labyrinth, whoever enters the labyrinth requires the use of a compass to know their way, or a thread, as the one Ariadne gave Theseus, to be able to find the exit again.

This exhibition also included the works by two other artists whose proposed labyrinths did actually shed some light on my reading of Louise Welsh’s novels. The first one is Jaume Plensa’s *Overflow IV* (2007). This sculpture of a sitting, faceless man formed by intertwined words can be, as Pais (2010) explains, penetrated and it forces the spectator to walk through it, to enter it (Pais, 2010, my translation⁵²). The body, thus, becomes grotto-esque, as it hosts an empty space inside a labyrinth constructed out of words. It is possible, then, to literally read the body, to interpret it and to become lost in the labyrinthine process of reading it from outside and from inside. The other work relevant to this research is Antoni Muntadas’ *The File Room* (1994). It consists on a virtual file where a register is kept on any attempt to censor, not just in the world of art, literature or music, but also in any possible situation. When it was originally devised as an installation work, it actually showed a room full of files where all the censored items were written on cards and classified in their corresponding file. However, there was also a computer where one could click on hyperlinks that opened the corresponding search criteria. These hyperlinks are “dates,” “locations,” “grounds for censorship” and “medium.” As Muntadas himself explained, his work “began as an idea: an abstract construction that became a prototype, a model of an interactive and open system. It prompts our thinking and discussion, and serves as an evolving archive of how the suppression of information has been orchestrated throughout history in different contexts, countries and civilizations.”⁵³ This labyrinth of hyperlinks became somehow a being independent from its own creator, in a Frankenstein’s monster fashion. This installation work, which was originally created for exhibition – and produced – by the Randolph Street Gallery (Chicago, Il.), closed in 1998. However, far from disappearing, the file has been hosted and maintained by the National Coalition Against Censorship since 2001

⁵² In the original: “Una escultura en la que se puede penetrar, te empuja a recorrerla e introducirte en ella” (Pais, 2010).

⁵³ In <http://www.thefileroom.org>

on the webpage <http://www.thefileroom.org> (last accessed on 22nd February, 2014). Moreover, this file is not a closed file at all. Amongst the different hyperlinks offered in the main menu, there is one called “Submit a case here” where the readers/navigators of the file can submit any case of censorship that is not already included in the labyrinth of hyperlinks and it will become part of the work. The installation space of the unidirectional, filing cabinets has been transformed into an interactive, virtual file of linked texts. Muntadas’s proposed labyrinth is not horizontal but transversal, open to further labyrinths; just as Louise Welsh’s novels, whose reading seems to be full of hypertexts that open up the linear and lineal reading of her texts. For example, in Section 5, attention is given to the sign “Crippen,” which links her novels to the life of Dr Hawley Harvey Crippen and entangles the reader into an active, conscious, labyrinthine process of reading how Crippen’s story is linked with the real doctor but also to the Poe-esque reading of his real story, as it will be developed in the abovementioned section. Returning to the interactivity in Muntada’s *The File Room*, it reminds of the “interactive fiction” researched by Leavenworth in *The Gothic in Contemporary Interactive Fictions*. He defines this type of fiction as:

a text-based form of computer-mediated interactive storytelling which may contain gaming elements. [...] Like the majority of interactive fiction that has been produced, *Nevermore*, *Anchorhead*, *Madam Spider’s Web* and *Slouching Towards Bedlam* are wholly text-based, which is to say that they contain no sound or images, and proceed via a series of written output and input exchanges (Leavenworth, 2010: 13)

As in Muntada’s and Plensa’s works, the labyrinths are formed with, and out of, words. In the case of the specific examples of interactive fiction proposed and analyzed by Leavenworth, some of them relate to other already existing gothic texts. For example, *Nevermore* is obviously based on Poe’s poem “The Raven” and *Anchorhead* recreates the atmosphere of H.P. Lovecraft’s tales⁵⁴. In these interactive fictions, the reader is not expected to play a somehow passive role; on the contrary, they participate – interact – in the reading-playing process as a “player character” that, according to Leavenworth, is the “character entity which the player guides or directs in the interactive fiction” (Leavenworth, 2010: 25). The reader-player and the player character interact in a participatory way where the latter presents what they see and the former tells the latter what to do. For example, in *Nevermore*, the first paragraph reads as follows:

⁵⁴ As it will be developed in the following sections, both Poe and Lovecraft will play an important role in the different labyrinths in Louise Welsh’s novels proposed in this research.

Stone walls, wreathed in shadows and velvet curtains, rise into the gloom overhead. The old oak writing desk -- once your father's, now your own -- is wedged beneath the window lattice, with a velvet couch before it. A low fire smoulders in its ancient hearth. To the southeast, a bust of Pallas sits atop an arch with darkness beyond.

If the reader-player writes the command “look at the bust,” the narrative continues as follows: “The eyes of Pallas, Greek goddess of Wisdom, stare back at you from white unblinking marble, under locks of pale sculpted hair. She of all the Classical pantheon was your patron; though now after the horror your studies have wrought, it is hard to look her in the face”. However, if the reader-player types a command such as “move” instead, the player character asks: “What do you want to move?” In such interaction, Leavenworth notes that the reader acts the “traversal,” which includes amongst other actions, “reading and interpreting texts, experimenting with writing commands, making decisions and devising strategies for progression, exploring ‘spaces,’ ‘talking’ to characters and interacting with or using items” (Leavenworth, 2010: 28). In the four interactive texts on which his research focuses, he claims that some gothic effects are produced in such traversality. The aim of such texts is to fulfill the corresponding mission and not to get lost in endless repetitions of texts as one is not acting traversally in an adequate way. Returning to the above-quoted situation presented by the player character, if the reader-player types an action such as “get off the couch,” the player character registers that “you get off the velvet couch” and writes again the already quoted text on the room and the bust of Pallas and, therefore, the reader-player and the payer character get tangled in a no-exit labyrinth until the former guesses the correct command.

There is also some further consideration to bear in mind when traversing these open, labyrinthine interactive texts: the fact that the reader-player is familiar with gothic texts in general and in the case of *Nevermore* or *Anchorhead* of the work by Edgar Allan Poe and Howard Philips Lovecraft respectively in particular should help them traverse the texts and arrive at their end. As can be observed in the quoted texts from *Nevermore*, the use of language, choice of words and grammatical structure resembles that of Poe’s original texts. Besides, as Leavenworth notes in this particular case “as an adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe’s famous poem ‘The Raven,’ *Nevermore* is inherently a self-aware work in which self-reflexivity extends to the remediated use of the Gothic conventions of ‘the unspeakable’ and ‘live burial’ which function in Poe’s poem” (Leavenworth, 2010: 44). In turn, he notes that in the case of *Anchorhead*,

what this interactive text presents in its traversality is how “the stability of space and the scientific basis of life in the universe are dissolved for characters in labyrinths” (Leavenworth, 2010: 45). In the case of Louise Welsh’s novels, characters unknowingly do traverse different labyrinths while in search for the correct answer to a question posed to them. Rilke, for example, starts his labyrinthine journey when he feels the needs to answer the question of the truthfulness of the photographs taken in *Soleil et Désolé*. Marlowe physically starts his journey when abandoning the comfort of Walshingham’s and entering the dark alleys of plague-ridden London trying to answer the question of Tamburlaine’s real identity. William Wilson’s labyrinthine journey between Glasgow, London and Berlin attempts to fill in the absence he perceives in the photograph of Bill Senior and Montgomery. Murray Watson wants to provide Lunan’s only book of poetry with the real account of the poet’s life and death. Jane tries to make the German words she hears through the wall intelligible. Furthermore, in all their cases, the stability of the world as they know is dissolved – just as in the case of the player characters, pointed out by Leavenworth.

Reed-Doob explains that there are two types of labyrinths: “[t]he labyrinth-as-prison is a process of ambages from which one cannot, or thinks one cannot, escape; but there is also a labyrinth with a happy ending, a metaphorical labyrinth-as-progress, carefully shaped by a master architect to direct the worthy wanderer to a profitable end (Reed-Doob, 1990: 56). However, this part of the research proposes that there are many other types of labyrinths and some of them do not become places of imprisonment for those who enter them and some do not lead the maze-treader, the navigator or the reader-player to a profitable end; they rather become sites where one questions the constructedness of what is real and what is not of both characters and readers. In order to actually perceive these labyrinths, one requires the dark, rose-coloured glasses proposed in Part One of this research, pretty much in the manner that the characters in John Carpenter’s film *They Live* (1988)⁵⁵. It is, therefore, within the labyrinths that it is possible to map out alternatives to the constructed, bright urban spaces, the binary classifications of individuals or the linear reading of a text from the first line to the last. Leavenworth notes that “the labyrinth’s significance lies in the subjective effects it produces, both for a character and a reader” (Leavenworth, 2010: 81). In Louise Welsh’s novels, readers may traverse the labyrinths the characters

⁵⁵ Nada, the main character, discovers that, when wearing a specific pair of sunglasses, he sees reality as it is and the real, alien form of many apparently human beings.

encounter and exit them when turning the last page or they may decide to linger there for a while, perceive the world in dark-rose and question their own surrounding reality.

3. THE GOTHIC LABYRINTHS

When characters – and readers – in Louise Welsh’s novels research into the past in order to reconstruct it, they all undergo a process of abjection whereby, according to Hogle, “the most multifarious, inconsistent and conflicted aspects of our beings in the West are ‘thrown off’ onto seemingly repulsive monsters or ghosts that both conceal and reveal this ‘otherness’ from our preferred selves as existing very much *within* ourselves” (Hogle, 2001: 295). It is not possible to trace any traditional Gothic monsters in any of the five novels, as well as there is no hint of a gothic castle or labyrinth, as it has already been hinted in this research in Section 1. However, the journey into the past and the recovery of the memory of those who were buried turns ordinary places and people into unconventional – or perhaps not so – Gothic places and monsters. In their eyes, their world becomes Gothicised. It is in this already mentioned process of abjection that each of the characters discovers, in a Lovecraftian fashion, “that what seemed to be monstrous to him is now a part of his self” (García, 2004: 28). Rilke feels a strong identification with a corpse inasmuch as to become the perfect actor to play a vampire in Derek’s film. Marlowe achieves immortality by becoming Tamburlaine, his own *doppelgänger*. Wilson dies and resurrects on his own journey into his personal hell. Watson is possessed by Lunan’s spirit. Jane becomes a hybrid creature as a pregnant woman involved in an alien, closed society that both includes and excludes her.

In *The Powers of Horror* (1982), Kristeva considers that literature is the most appropriate vehicle to carry the power of abjection into effect. As she explains, “literature may also involve not an ultimate resistance to but an unveiling of the abject: an elaboration, a discharge, and a hollowing out of abjection through the Crisis of the World” (1982: 208). The five novels in this research do actually depict a world in crisis: present day Europe, where consumerism leads to a commodification of desires –and even of human beings that can be bought or rented, as all of them have a price; Marlowe’s Elizabethan Age presented a polarized society of rich and poor people with their own assigned place in society, such as, for example, their disposition in the Elizabethan playhouses. As opposed to the image of the Elizabethan court that pervades mainly in the cinematographic imaginary of contemporary society, poverty was an issue tackled in that age. As Briscoe (2011) explains:

There were several reasons for this increase in poverty. During the reign of Elizabeth I, the population rose from three to four million people. This increase was primarily due to a rise in fertility and a falling death rate and meant, in simple terms, that the country's resources now had to be shared by a greater number of people. Added to this was the problem of rising prices. In the last years of his reign, Henry VIII had debased the coinage which meant that the proportion of gold and silver in the coins was reduced. In 1560 Elizabeth's government took steps to remedy this by replacing all debased coins with new ones, thus restoring the country's currency to its proper levels. This move served to combat the problem of inflation in the early years of her reign (Briscoe, 2011).

However, none of the characters are aware of such world in crisis until it affects them directly or, using Kristeva's words, until they discover that

there looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated" (1982: 1).

The trigger to such awareness is the characters' personal implication in a crime they have not committed, though it may accuse them directly, as in Wilson's case, who feels that he has actually killed Sylvie, or Marlowe's, accused of Kyd's assassination. Crime trespasses the boundaries of law, showing its fragility. The anonymous girl in the photograph; Marlowe's society of betrayal and corruption; Montgomery's crimes in order to continue with his respectable life; Fergus's appropriation of Lunan's work; the dismembering of baby Miranda or Greta Mann's death; they all become abject as they are "immoral, sinister, scheming, and shady: a terror that disassembles, a hatred that smiles, a passion that uses the body for barter instead of inflaming it, a debtor who sells you, a friend who stabs you..." (Kristeva, 1982: 4). Crime buys pleasure, eternity, fame, but the cost to pay is all too high, as the abject beseeches and pulverizes the subject, who "weary of fruitless attempts to identify with something on the outside, finds the impossible within; when it finds the impossible constitute its very *being*, that it *is* none other than abject" (Kristeva, 1982: 5). Rilke is amusingly aware of his spectral appearance from the beginning, as "it's not for nothing they call me the Walking Dead" (*TCR*, 16). However, encountering an image of an actually dead person – his identification with something on the outside – turns him into an actual Walking Dead, as he feels "my body seemed the repository of a dead man. I could think and smoke but all feeling was gone. Inside was nothing" (*TCR*, 154). In the process of naming the unknown girl, Rilke even travels to Soleil et Désolé in a desperate attempt to free himself from the ghost of the girl who has

haunted him since the discovery of her photograph. Once in the real “cutting room,” he starts crying when he realizes that it might not be the real room where the photograph was taken. His tears are not really for her; “I found out I wasn’t crying for the girl in the photograph. I was crying for other victims, present and future” (*TCR*, 293). His encounter with the abject has taught him that it is not alien to him but rather an integral part. His acknowledging of such reality makes him a wiser person as he knows more about the human condition than other characters, such as Rose, do. She complains about them finding rainy weather in Paris after their journey from Glasgow, but Rilke is certain that “it was a different kind of rain. Warmer, softer, with a promise of watered plants and freshly washed pavements” (*TCR*, 294). Rilke is just an example of a character that experiences the abject. Kristeva points out that “the time of abjection is double: a time of oblivion and thunder, of veiled infinity and the moment when revelation bursts forth. (Kristeva, 1982: 9). After his attempt at rescuing the girl from the oblivion of a signified-less photograph, the revelation on past, present and future human cruelty bursts forth so painfully that it takes some time until he accepts the abject as some integral part of himself. Once achieved, he feels exorcised from the Other, the ghost of the girl. His initial attraction to the photograph, perhaps an unconscious identification of a Walking Dead with a corpse, turns the girl into his own abject image on the Lacanian mirror. Thus, abjection

bursts with the shattered mirror where the ego gives up its image in order to contemplate itself in the Other. [...] It is simply a frontier, a repulsive gift that the Other, having become *alter ego*, drops so that “I” does not disappear in it but finds, in that sublime alienation, a forfeited existence. Hence a jouissance in which the subject is swallowed up but in which the Other, in return, keeps the subject from foundering by making it repugnant. (Kristeva, 1982: 9).

The emptiness he felt is now filled with this new knowledge of the world after having experienced abjection. Other people, such as McKindless, do not just confront abjection but rather become abject themselves. There lies the main difference between him and Rilke: the difference between becoming a real monster and simply acknowledging monstrosity as an integral part of himself. Rilke may look like an empty, soulless Walking Dead, but he is now inhabited, so to speak, by the ghostly memory of all those anonymous victims of irrational – or perhaps too rational – violence. As McKindless faked his own death, he dies twice. Anne-Marie, who was about to become a new sliced-for-pleasure girl, shoots McKindless and asks Rilke: “Is it a sin to kill a dead man?” (*TCR*, 276). McKindless is abject in himself inasmuch as

Rilke becomes aware that he “was captured for ever” (*TCR*, 276). Only death can capture him, as if he were some kind of serial killer, a Jason Voorhees in *Friday the 13th* (Cunningham, 1980) who seems to resurrect after having been killed; or even as Freddy Krueger, his supernatural version.

Rilke is just an example of Welsh’s characters that confront the abject. To a certain extent, all the main characters – Rilke, Marlowe, Wilson, Watson and Jane – share the fact that their first encounter with the abject exercises a strong attraction over them up to the point of starting a process of change and transformation. They all become a “deject,” “who places (himself), *separates* (himself), *situates* (himself), and therefore *strays* instead of getting his bearings, desiring, belonging or refusing” (Kristeva, 1982: 8). All these characters stray in their own labyrinths, as will be developed further in this research. Kristeva also points out that a deject, against all logic, “the more he strays, the more he is saved” (Kristeva, 1982: 8). In fact, this can be observed in the lives of many of Louise Welsh’s characters. It is actually in the act of straying that they are all actually saved, as they have faced the abject and they have survived it as modern twenty-first-century Theseuses who have faced their symbolic Minotaur inside the labyrinth. When Marlowe becomes aware of the fact that his life is in danger, as he is accused of writing a libelous and heretical pamphlet signed by a certain Tamburlaine, he realizes that “Hell is on this earth and we are in it” (*TMD*, 78). He walks around the once familiar London that has turned into a labyrinthine, hellish plague-ridden London of taverns, bookshops and playhouses with “a sense of danger, [...] but he cannot help taking the risk at the very moment he sets himself apart. And the more he strays, the more he is saved” (Kristeva, 1982: 8). The more he gets lost in this Earthly Hell, the wiser he becomes, as he has learnt “that life is the only prize worth having” (*TMD*, 140). He may be killed by the Privy Council, but he has also had time to write down his life and his truth in his last account, which will “*lie undiscovered for a long span, in the hope that when these pages are found, the age will be different and my words may be judged by honest eyes*” (*TMD*, 1, italics in the original). His straying has actually saved him. As in Rilke’s case, his confrontation with the abject has unveiled the impossible within. By embracing this knowledge – the fact that he has become immortal -, he considers that no existing law, be it either human or divine, can judge him. Therefore, he ends his account with a curse, “A Curse on Man and God” (*TMD*, 140). No human law can sentence him to

death and no divine law can grant him just the immortality of his soul. He has achieved his own immortality as a human being.

Wilson in *The Bullet Trick* also experiences abjection when he decides to take part in a snuff version of his bullet trick in which the real trick consists in the actual killing of Sylvie: there is no magic that saves the girl. After her death, he is no longer a magician but a criminal, a murderer. He has not just lost Sylvie, the object of his affection, but also his own life both as a magician and as a human being. He gets immersed in a self-damaging mourning for a lost person and his own lost self. He has experienced another facet of the abject, in which:

the abject is the violence of mourning for an “object” that has always already been lost. The abject shatters the wall of repression and its judgments. It takes the ego back to its source on the abominable limits from which, in order to be, the ego has broken away – it assigns it a source in the non-ego, drive, and death (Kristeva, 1982: 15).

By shooting Sylvie, Wilson performs the repressed instincts of those he assumes to be a “rich Yank with a taste for the exotic” (*TBT*, 321) who values his own pleasure above other human lives. Before starting his final trick, Wilson is shocked because the voices from the dark, anonymous audience are in English and not in German, despite the fact that they are in Berlin. Dix explains that “they [Americans] still think Berlin is a place where they can get something they can’t at home” (*TBT*, 321). His audience has had his taste for the abject, though staged. However, Wilson’s abject experience goes beyond: he has actually been able to pull the trigger, he has actually objectualized Sylvie and has lost her. What he ignores is that he had already lost her, or rather, she had never been his. He leaves Berlin and returns to Glasgow where he no longer wants to act as a magician again. He starts a process of self-degradation that turns him into a hobo. With the feeling that he has already lost everything, he goes to the Clyde and meets a tramp whom he finds to be not a mirror image of himself but of his future self. “You’re me. [...] You are the way I’m heading. But just ‘cos you’re me disnae mean I’m you” (*TBT*, 147). This moment of identification has deeper consequences as he becomes an unconscious sleeping witness of the tramp’s murder by some kids. His own survival despite the death of his mirror image implies a turning point in his existence. He is now different from his own image, he is an-Other from the tramp. The latter’s death resurrects, symbolically, Wilson from his process of becoming his own non-ego. “Abjection,” Kristeva explains, “is a resurrection that has gone through death (of the ego). It is an alchemy

that transforms death drive into a start of life, of new significance” (Kristeva, 1982: 15). Wilson’s ego resurrection turns him into the vindicated magician who recognizes the real killers of the tramp. His second chance in his life to deal with the past, clears it up until he is able to, in his free performance at the Panopticon, play his final trick. Ascari describes how the urban space in nineteenth-century crime fiction acquires a panoptical view associated with “the forces of darkness” (Ascari, 2009: 52). It is precisely in a twenty-first-century urban Panopticon that William unveils and unmasks Montgomery – the forces of good, as he was a police officer – showing his relationship with the forces of darkness, with the mafia-like world that Bill represented. Inspector Montgomery is presented in front of an audience of children with Down syndrome as – if not the real murderer – at least the accomplice in the death of Gloria Noon and a man having a suspicious involvement in the deaths of Sam and Bill. Once William Wilson has become himself again, his apparently mismatched and unconnected lives in Berlin, London and Glasgow become one and he is able to focus. Before his final bullet trick, he “tried to push all other thoughts from my mind, whispering a mantra over and over in my head, *concentrate, concentrate, concentrate...*” (*TBT*, 322, italics in the original). However, in his new life in London, his resurrected self provides him with the courage to visit the Soho area where his process of abjection, his death and resurrection, started. “I was making a new life. That meant no avoided streets and no-go areas, and that meant facing up to the past” (*TBT*, 352). Facing up to the past leads him to the discovery that Sylvie is, actually, alive. His problem in Berlin was the lack of concentration he found so necessary to perform his trick. He was tricked both in his own trick and in his personal life, as Sylvie never had a loving interest in him. As he summarizes when leaving the club, “I’d entered the club a murderer and left it absolved” (*TBT*, 362-363). However, having considered himself a murderer will always remain an integral part of his new, resurrected self.

In Fergus’s account of what happened at the cottage in Lismore when he and Lunan returned from Edinburgh, he depicts the remains of a human sacrifice – baby Miranda – performed by Christie and Robb. When they entered the house, they first froze and were unable to grasp the meaning of what they were actually watching. As he tells Watson, “God knows what they’d taken while we’d been in Edinburgh, but all of Bobby Robb’s fantasies about purity and sacrifice had been realized” (*NTB*, 358). Sacrifice, according to Kristeva, “solemnizes the vertical dimension of the sign: the

one that leads from the thing that is left behind, or killed, to the meaning of the word and transcendence” (Kristeva, 1982: 72-73). By sacrificing an innocent baby, they think they may achieve some kind of protection against the demons that had accompanied Robb all throughout his life. When Watson talks to Jack Rathbone, Robb’s former landlord, he describes his room “like a scene of a horror movie” (*NTB*, 249), with the floor covered in writing forming circles surrounding the bed. Undecipherably, there were “numbers and symbols too, like a lot of algebra in a circle round the bed” (*NTB*, 250). After sacrifice, language transcends reality inasmuch as to remain incomprehensible to the rest of the human beings. This was not Robb’s first attempt to execute a human sacrifice, as he had already tried that when Mrs. Dunn visited the house in search for friends of her age on an island that was alien to her. Her pregnancy saved her life, as she was not pure enough – perhaps they were expecting a young virgin – and became a filthy component in the rite of sacrifice. Douglas remarks that “[a] primitive ritual has nothing whatever in common with our ideas of cleanness. [...] Our practices are solidly based on hygiene; theirs are symbolic: we kill germs, they ward off spirits” (Douglas, 2002: 33). The idea of considering a pregnant body as “filthy” and “not pure enough,” contrasts with the fact that her pregnancy is inserted into the realm of what is socially and morally accepted, as she is pregnant to her husband Mr. Dunn. Douglas quotes Professor Harper describing the three degrees of religious purity, which are “the highest is necessary for performing an act of worship; a middle degree is the expected normal condition, and finally there is a state of impurity” (Douglas, 2002: 33). Mrs. Dunn’s state of impurity is to be read within a higher realm than that of the closed society of Lismore: if the four youngsters in the cottage contacted the impure, filthy Mrs. Dunn, “will make either higher categories impure” (Douglas, 2002: 33). The problem that they face is that her purity cannot be regained by bathing, as in the primitive rituals of purification. Mrs. Dunn was excluded from the group and returns to the margin that she inhabited before the visit, as filth “applies only to what relates to a *boundary* and, more particularly, represents the object jettisoned out of that boundary, its other side, a margin” (Kristeva, 1982: 69). The consequence to Mrs. Dunn is the miscarriage of her baby, a fact that she does not relate in a cause-effect relationship with the visit to the house. The consequence to the inhabitants of the house is the need for a purification rite: Miranda’s sacrifice, Christie’s daughter. By excluding filth from the house, by turning it into something abject, one “founds on the henceforth released

side of the 'self and clean' that is thus only (and therefore, always ready) sacred" (Kristeva, 1982: 65). The problem arises when purity is achieved by trespassing on the realm of the taboo: the sacrifice of one's own daughter to some being existing beyond. As in Kristeva's example of Noah's sacrifice after the flood, in which "it would seem as though God had penalized by means of the flood a breach of the order regulated by taboo. The burnt offering set up by Noah must then reestablish the order disturbed by the breaking of taboo" (1982: 94), Christie writes her own Gothicized version of their experience in her novel *Sacrifice*. As an old lady, she sacrifices herself by taking the pill that kills her and offers her life to her deceased daughter, as she is certain her destiny is linked to the discovery of Miranda's corpse. Once her secret is about to be exposed due to the archeologists' works in the area, her life becomes pointless and she kills herself. In the act of re-constructing Lunan's past, Watson unburies corpses, decaying bodies, that had "completely turned into dejection, blurred between the inanimate and the inorganic, a transitional swarming, inseparable lining of a human nature whose life is undistinguishable from the symbolic – the corpse represents fundamental pollution" (Kristeva, 1982: 109). However, the corpses of the victims of a sacrifice that challenged the boundaries of the taboo deserve to be filled with their own, true past: both Lunan and Miranda are resurrected after Watson's research, while Christie will always remain as a writer of novels that "critics sneered" (*NTB*, 149) and Fergus, buried in the limekiln, lived the life of a poetry thief who bought up "second-hand editions for all those years, trying to suppress the work in case someone clicked that it belonged to Archie" (*NTB*, 384). If Kristeva is right when stating that narrative is "the recounting of suffering: fear, disgust, and abjection crying out, they quiet down, concatenated into a story" (1982: 145), Watson's account to his brother Jack of the present events on the island of Lismore releases his painful experience of abjection as he can incorporate his direct involvement in the events, something he cannot perform in his official version to the police: he can never state his witnessing of Fergus's fall into the limekiln, which was categorized as a suicide, even by the people who knew him. The last time Watson and Rachel meet at her office, Rachel seems to believe that Fergus committed suicide because she had told him their affair was over. Watson notes that "Fergus was the least suicidal person I can think of" (*NTB*, 387), as he knows the abject truth, to what Rachel answers with a questioning "Perhaps. But he was distracted. Maybe, just for a moment, he forgot to be careful" (*NTB*, 387). The implications of the recounting of

their abject experience by the different characters in the novels will be further developed in Section 5, with the aim of showing the intentional difficulty they meet when expressing with their language what they have undergone. They do not only inhabit a labyrinth but they also find their own language has become another labyrinth where narratives and words open up other narratives and words.

In *The Girl on the Stairs*, Jane also silences her involvement in the final events that lead to the deaths of Alban Mann and his daughter Anna. Jane, who is an Other in Berlin, a city that is alien to herself and whose language she does not command, is deeply concerned about the possible abuse Anna is suffering from her father, partly as she identifies herself with the young girl and partly because she reads in Anna the main character in a Radcliffean novel. As Kahane notes:

Within an imprisoning structure, a protagonist, typically a young woman whose mother has died, is compelled to seek out the center of a mystery, while vague and usually sexual threats to her person from some powerful male figure hover on the periphery of her consciousness (Kahane, 1985: 334).

Surprisingly for her, Anna defends her father – and any fatherly figure in her life, as *Herr* Becker or Father Walter: “My father loves me better than any mother would. That’s why I feel so sorry for your baby” (*TGOTS*, 128). She hardly knew Greta, her mother as, “when Anna was two years old, Greta walked out in the middle of the night” (*TGOTS*, 61), according to Herr Becker. She only knows that her mother was a former prostitute – and patient of Dr Mann’s – who, according to the official version “went to Hamburg, or maybe America” (*TGOTS*, 61). However, rumours in the house also tell that her husband killed her and buried her in the *Hinterhaus*. Instead of having Anna questioning, as Kahane proposes, “Who died? Has there been a murder? Or merely a disappearance?” (1985: 334), it is Jane who wonders that. In her identification with Anna, Jane becomes the Radcliffean character in her own story. Following clues, such as the shouting through the wall or the bruise on Anna’s face, “she penetrates the obscure recesses of a vast labyrinthean space and discovers a secret room sealed off by its association with death. In this dark, secret center of the Gothic structure, the boundaries of life and death themselves seem confused” (Kahane, 1985: 334). Alban Mann represents to his daughter a third party in the combat of the child to become autonomous from their mother to pursue what Kristeva would have described as “a reluctant struggle against what, having been the mother, will turn into an abject. Repelling, rejecting; repelling itself, rejecting itself. Ab-

jecting” (Kristeva, 1982: 13). That is also the reason why both Jane and her baby become object to her: the possibility of a fatherless child makes her feel the baby will be doomed. It could be argued that she experiences the object and how it:

confronts us, on the one hand, with those fragile states where man strays on the territories of the *animal*. [...] The object confronts us, on the other hand, and this time within our personal archaeology, with our earliest attempts to release the hold of *maternal* entity even before existing outside of her, thanks to the autonomy of language” (1982: 12, 13).

The animal in her is a precocious sexual instinct that turns her into a young victim of abuse but also a girl who is aware of the power her own sexuality provides her with. When Jane meets her at the train station with a group of skinheads, Jane cannot discern whether she is a free member of the group. “The girl joined in, but there was an anxious edge to her laughter” (*TGOTS*, 96). However, when Jane is on the train, she can see “Anna leaning into the tall skinhead’s embrace, both of them laughing crazily at the tumbled Peter Pan. The girl turned and kissed her new beau, her eyes meeting Jane’s as the train sped out of the station” (*TGOTS*, 99). Anna projects onto Jane the confrontation with the object mother that she could not perform with her own mother. She is no longer a child learning a language to become autonomous, but she speaks a language that distances her from her adopted object mother figure: German. In the same incident at the station, she does not address Jane directly but rather uses her skinhead boyfriend to voice her inner thoughts: “‘Her daddy beats her’ And the aged Peter Pan said, ‘Daddy sticks his cock in her.’ [...] ‘She says you are a pregnant lesbian bitch who wants to fuck her’” (*TGOTS*, 98). Anna uses her friends to translate her truth into words that Jane can understand, but the version Jane listens to turns Anna into an object rather than a subject.

Jane confronts Dr. Mann as it is he Anna should feel abjection for. Her defense on purifying the filth in Greta – releasing her from the accusation of being an “evil mother” that abandoned her own daughter – is partly due to her own identification as a mother but also because she does not want any child to feel the absence of a mother as she did. Whenever her mother arrived home late, Jane felt relieved when she heard her mother had arrived home and “shortly afterwards a sliver of light reached briefly into Jane’s bedroom; her own private signal that it was safe to snuggle back under the covers and go to sleep” (*TGOTS*, 108). Jane’s unborn baby serves her “as token of her own authentication” (Kristeva, 1982: 13) as a mother: her

child will never have a father and he might never know who his real, biological father was, but Boy will not be able to have any doubt about the fact that both her and Petra are his mothers. Somehow, the baby who is in her womb, protected and caressed by her, translates, for her, the object of abjection into a fatherly figure he will never have. That is why both mother and child confront the abject/Alban Mann and defeat him in a reversal to the Lacanian mirror stage: rather than Petra and Boy mirroring themselves in Dr Alban, she can only see him as a mirror image of her own abusing father. Unfortunately, their confrontation with the abject does not free Anna, who falls into the well of the staircase when she knows that her father might be dead. In the rite of purifying Greta's memory and body, both Alban and Anna Mann need to be sacrificed. Once they are both dead, Greta is released from the margin of her own story, as her real story had been hidden under the floor of the *Hinterhaus*, and the truth about her murder sees the light out of the darkness of the backhouse when her corpse is found.

Experiencing the abject for the characters in their labyrinthine worlds also leads them into a world of perversion. As Kristeva claims, "the abject is perverse because it neither gives up nor assumes a prohibition, a rule, or a law; but turns them aside, misleads, corrupts; uses them, takes advantage of them, the better to deny them" (Kristeva, 1982: 15). Characters acknowledge this perversion, this abjection that disturbs the order as something that was alien to themselves but that they all feel the need to embrace, to recognize the abject in their/them-selves, to become dejects. Thus, they can also corrupt, falsify their experiences so that they are also free from any guilt, socially innocent in crimes such as Rilke's attempt to profit from the auction of a dead man, Marlowe's murder of Thomas Blaize or Wilson, Watson and Jane's involvement in mysterious deaths. They are fully aware of their abject, perverse, monstified nature – and the monstified spaces they inhabit. It is precisely in this aspect where the gothic mode becomes relevant in the narratives.

As stated in Section 1, Louise Welsh's novels can be read with some dark glasses that acknowledge the elements of the Gothic mode present in her novels. After the confrontation of the characters with the abject and their consequent transformation into dejects, there arises in them a monstrous element that eventually transforms them in less-ordinary people and the places they inhabit into even darker and more sinister settings. Moreover, Gothic relates to a past that is lurking to be remembered. In *The Girl on the Stairs*, Petra explains to Jane that Tielo's apartment was cheap because

“some people don’t like buildings with a past. They worry ghosts will come creeping to their bedside while they sleep” (*TGOTS*, 28). The past of the building is a Nazi past as it was used by the Nazis “as a prison during the war. They tortured people in the basement; there’s a plaque dedicated to the victims on the entrance wall” (*TGOTS*, 29). This plaque remembers the victims, but it also remembers the existence of those Nazi torturers. The ghosts in Petra’s story remain ambiguous as they may refer either to those of the victims but they can also be those of the torturers. Sage explains that:

To see a ghost is to be, as we say, ‘petrified’; and to petrify a culture – to arrest it in the stony space of its own superstition – is a characteristic imaginative manoeuvre of the contemporary Gothic. Once petrified, that culture’s history, even its contemporary history, can be replayed and all its defensive, exclusive mechanisms laid bare either as Past or other; the reader’s habitual assumption of the opposite position (as Present, or Otherless) is then challenged in the act of reading (Sage, 1996: 20).

It could be stated, then, that the ghosts in Tielo’s building act as abject elements that question its exclusion in present time – and even in the real world of the readers. In the specific case of Jane, her problem arises from the fact that she does not only assume the existence of such ghosts but she actually confronts them, which triggers the development of the apparently unconnected events that lead to the actual unburying of an even more recent past: Greta’s corpse in the *Hinterhaus*. Corpses are unburied in the five novels, literally, as Miranda or Gloria Noon; figuratively, as Archie Lunan or Adia Kovalyova in *The Cutting Room*; unburied from historical memory, as Christopher Marlowe; or unsuccessfully unburied, as there is even no trace of their actual death, as the photographed girl Rilke is obsessed with.

As it is confirmed all throughout this research, the labyrinth is not simply an aspect in Gothic stories that is present in Louise Welsh’s novels but it also becomes a key motif in them, as they propose many labyrinths where characters are strayed. In Section 4 a queer mode will prove to turn sexual identities and sexual relationships into another labyrinth, whereas in Section 5 the intertextual reading of the novels together with the opening references of language become a labyrinth of its own. However, characters do not move in just one of these labyrinths but, rather the opposite, they may unknowingly wander and inhabit more than one at a time. The Gothic labyrinths analysed in this section do not only refer to the actual setting of the stories, as a labyrinth is indeed a space, but also to how these stories are narrated. Sage points out that the gothic narratives collapse into *motif*:

an endless labyrinth whose disorientating spirals, instead of obeying that horizontal syntagmatic selection from the rules of narrative which allows readers to feel on their pulses an experience of biography or history, seem to follow the vertical architectonics of allegory; and by doing so, arrest the flow of time and imprison it in a space of the past (Sage, 1996: 20).

The labyrinthine narration of events is highlighted, above all, in *The Bullet Trick*, where narration does not only intertwine the present and the past of the characters, but also the locations – London, Glasgow, Berlin -, which even become the titles of each chapter. As Kristeva points out, “when the limit between inside and outside becomes uncertain, the narrative is what is challenged first. If it continues nevertheless, its makeup changes; its linearity is shattered, it proceeds by flashes, enigmas, short cuts, incompleteness, tangles and cuts” (Kristeva, 1982: 141). It becomes labyrinthine in itself.

The labyrinth, as it has been argued before, is a key element in the gothicisation of Welsh’s literary universe: the narrative labyrinth where events are twisted in such a manner that one can only expect the unexpected to happen; the spatial labyrinth that the characters inhabit and which strays them in their process of reconstructing the past; the psychological labyrinth of the characters’ minds in which, according to Punter:

Gothic takes us on a tour through the labyrinthine corridors of repression, gives us glimpses of the skeletons of dead desires and makes them move again. [...] the phantoms, vampires and monsters of Gothic are for the most part recognisable embodiments of psychological features” (Punter, 1996: 188).

It could also be added that some characters – or even real human beings – can re-embody those stand-for monsters. Adia Kovalyova, the Ukrainian girl forced to live as an imprisoned prostitute in Glasgow in *The Cutting Room*, acquires certain ghostly features as she becomes both invisible to a society that pretends to ignore that trafficking in women exists in civilized, twenty-first century Europe and she is doomed – even haunted – to simply live a life as a mere spectator in a society that she cannot take part in, as she is secluded. Her story could also be described following the characteristics of ghost story pointed out by Hay: “the liminal characteristics of ghosts themselves, between life and death, visibility and invisibility, presence and absence” (Hay, 2011: 22). She resembles a modern updated version of Emily St. Aubert in Ann Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), secluded in a brothel from which she cannot escape. However, as opposed to Emily, Adia does actually lose her own self,

as it will be explained further in this section. She may not be then a complete Radcliffean ghost, but her presence in the novel, as well as the presence of other monsters, updates a Gothic mode. It is not that, as Hay also explains, “a ghost story need not even have a ghost, since many of them describe what *seem* to be hauntings but turn out to be hoaxes or misunderstandings” (Hay, 2011: 22). In Welsh there is no subtle genre categorization into the marvellous/the fantastic/the uncanny, as Todorov proposed, but the use of a Gothic mode to stress a breach in contemporary society, not just in her literary society, through which one can glimpse the abject behind a surface of human rights and welfare states. Jenks summarizes Plato’s parable of the cave, “the journey from the cave into the light and into the essence behind the appearance is the inevitable saga of the seeker after truth; it is a sovereign act because it transcends the conventional categories, and it is finally transgressive because it disrupts and threatens the taken-for-granted world” (Jenks, 2003: 9). In this case, however, reality is rather tinged with a shade of dark.

3.1. Gothicising time

In the process of reconstructing the past events of either their personal stories or those they become involved with, characters move along the labyrinthine disposition of time in which the present and the past lose their linear character. When the first gothic texts were written in the eighteenth century, society was fascinated with “a past of chivalry, violence, magical beings and malevolent aristocrats” (Botting, 2001: 3) while they were also undergoing governmental, social changes, and “ideas about nature, art and subjectivity were also reassessed” (Botting, 2001: 3). The fears in the gothic texts did not only relate to any previous anxieties from a darker time but they also concerned “the crises and changes in the present” (Botting, 2001: 3). Modern, globalized, Western society started the new millennium with the terror attack to the Twin Towers on September, 11th, 2001, an event that, apart from re-shaping the World order, showed that the abject co-exists in our everyday life. As Jenks explains, “there was a burgeoning and near global reaction. A violation had occurred, some line had been crossed. There was a growing consensus that a boundary, perhaps even a universal moral boundary, had been overstepped” (Jenks, 2003: 1). Human monstrosity exceeds, then, that of many literary or film monsters,

though not all. As Sánchez-Navarro points out, what took place on that day had already been watched in hundreds of mainstream Hollywood films, such as *Deep Impact*, *Armageddon*, *The Siege*, *Independence Day*, *Swordfish* or *Mars Attacks* (Sánchez-Navarro, 2002: 270, my translation⁵⁶). It is within this contemporary context that Welsh writes her fiction and all, except for *Tamburlaine Must Die*, are set in early twenty-first century Britain or Berlin. Marlowe, as an exception, writes from his own dark times with the hope that some reader in an impossible future – under our own present perspective – can judge him adequately. “Reader, I cannot imagine what future you inhabit. Perhaps the world is a changed place, where men are honest and war, want and jealousies are all vanquished” (*TMD*, 1). He is offering his potential reader the knowledge he has acquired days before dying on the importance of life above any other prize. However, he also considers the possibility that the world will not change and, therefore, “if you are men like us you will learn nothing” (*TMD*, 1). The other four novels, instead, start their journey into the past: after the accidental discovery of a photograph, as in *The Cutting Room* and *The Bullet Trick*, in the academic research into the life of a former student of his University, as in *Naming the Bones*, or by accidentally hearing some insults in an alien language and seeing a bruise on a teenage girl’s face, as in *The Girl on the Stairs*. The unveiled past is not that “barbarous, medieval and supernatural past” (Longueil, 1923: 453) that Longueil identifies with the beginning of the Gothic in the eighteenth century, but rather a less distant, more contemporary past: the post-Second World War period in a *Soleil et Désolé* that “catered increasingly for a clientele interested in sadism [...] [with] the prettiest torture chamber in Paris” (*TCR*, 289); a recent past that presents youthful atrocities of some respectable people, such as the recently retired Detective Inspector Montgomery in *The Bullet Trick*, Professor Fergus Baine and successful writer Christie Graves in *Naming the Bones*; or even more recent times, as the early twenty-first century when Dr Alban Mann has apparently killed his wife and hidden her corpse, perhaps out of a possession by the Nazi-ghosts, in a manner that resembles that of Jack Torrance in Stephen King’s *The Shining* (1977). Once baby Boy has been born, Tielo is trying to convince his sister Petra to move from their flat after Alban and Anna’s deaths. Petra makes reference to the past events in Tielo’s house: “What

⁵⁶ In the original: “el resto del mundo estaba convencido de que lo ocurrido había sido ya narrado centenares de veces por el *mainstream* de Hollywood [...] Recuérdese títulos como *Deep Impact*, *Armageddon*, *Estado de sitio*, *Independence Day*, *Operación Swordfish* o *Mars Attacks*” (Sánchez-Navarro, 2002: 270).

about your place? You live above an old torture chamber” (*TGOTS*, 276). Hay claims that the ghost story “holds to a model of history as traumatically rather than nostalgically available to us” (Hay, 2011: 15). This proves true when the past that is resurrected is that of the Second World War or its aftermath. There is an ambivalent experiencing of such past events; Kristeva states that:

the atrocities of war are given as the true cause of *fear*. But its violent quasi-mystical permanence raises it from the level of political or even social contingency (where it would be due to oppression) to another level; fear becomes a *token of humanity*, that is, of an appeal to *love* (Kristeva, 1982: 142, italics in the original).

The act of feeling fear turns those who feel it into humans. On the other hand, Hay’s point fails in Tielo’s case. To his twin sister’s question, he answers that “that happened a long time ago” (*TGOTS*, 276), which provokes an irritated response in Petra: “Less than seventy years” (*TGOTS*, 276). Tielo then justifies himself by claiming that, as opposed to the events in the recent past at Jane and Petra’s, “I wasn’t involved” (*TGOTS*, 276). In his case, the past is traumatic when it actually affects the individual rather than the collective. Apart from Tielo, there are other characters in Louise Welsh’s novels that do hold to a nostalgic model of history, such as McKindless and other consumers of snuff pornographic material, willing to relive and re-perform the sadistic acts photographed in *Soleil et Désolé*, losing thus their humanity. The modern ghostly characters in Welsh do not “signify what can no longer be experienced directly, a lived relationship to the past; to make present that absence” (Hay, 2011: 18) as they actually inhabit this present time, if not directly, impersonated by others who may suffer from sex-slavery, child abuse, domestic violence. It is not simply that literature “help readers make sense of their present-day experience [...] in terms of the past” (Hay, 2011: 230); the past in these novels is so present that it is almost present and only needs to be unburied, as the corpses hidden and buried by some respectable citizens. Welsh shows that the dark times which, according to Cavallaro, “are undoubtedly associated with private moments of sorrow, anxiety or doubt. It is when we are most acutely aware of being frightened that we are also pointedly conscious of being alone” (Cavallaro, 2002: 38), are not so distant and they can position the experience of fear “in relation to both personal and social calendars” (Cavallaro, 2002: 38). That is the reason why all the characters feel that unveiling past events frees them from their present fears: gay Rilke feared he can only share his life with Rose, his boss. In his search for the truth behind the photograph of

Montgomery and Bill, William is able to free himself from his transformation into a hobo. Watson, after his experience on the island of Lismore where he has literally to unbury skeletons from the past, manages to escape from the unsatisfactory participation in a triangular relationship with Rachel and Fergus. When he meets Aliah, the curator at his brother Jack's solo exhibition, he knows for sure that his smile to a woman who is not Rachel is somehow forced but, "for the moment that was just how it had to be" (*NTB*, 389). Jane discovers her ability to learn German as a second language without the need of any teach-yourself tapes until she is able to command the language, turning such ability into her own shared secret with her son, Boy. Marlowe remains an exception as, in his present, he is actually inhabiting our past. His aim, as mentioned above, is to be read in a future that could be our present and to translate "the past's monopoly on a certain intelligibility" (Hay, 2011: 230). The other four novels prove that, despite being recipients of Marlowe's manuscript, present society is not fully prepared to assimilate and comprehend his knowledge. If Vallina claims that gothic texts take the reader to a past, dark time where events of a dangerous or hurtful nature can take place, even lodging from criminal actions to events placed in a limiting point between the natural and the supernatural (Vallina, 2011-2012, 479, my translation⁵⁷), the truth is that such a time is still present in the twentieth century, which is still dark and labyrinthine.

3.2. Gothicising space

The landscapes in which all the characters move around and wander in the novels is, apparently, quite different from what Bayer-Berenbaun considers as "now familiar to any school child" – a fact that refers to the high degree of imbuelement of the term Gothic in contemporary society, but also seem to imply a certain disdain for what he understands as Gothic literature - and roots in:

the traditional Gothic paraphernalia [...] established by Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the prototypes of the early Gothic novel. The graveyard and the convent, the moats and drawbridges, dungeons, towers, mysterious trap doors and corridors, rusty hinges, flickering candles, burial vaults,

⁵⁷ In the original: "nos traslada de inmediato a una época pasada, tenebrosa, en la que pueden suceder hechos de índole peligrosa o dañina, pudiendo albergar desde acciones criminales hasta fenómenos situados en un punto que delimita lo natural de lo sobrenatural" (Vallina, 2011-2012, 479).

birthmarks, tolling bells, hidden manuscripts, twilight, ancestral curses – these became the trademarks of the early Gothic novel (Bayer-Berenbaum, 1982: 21).

Louise Welsh's narrations include many of these motifs in an updated twenty-first century version. There are graveyards, as that in Saint Sebastian *Kirche*, where the gate “gave a Hammer Horror groan as she [Jane] pushed it wide and entered the graveyard” (*TGOTS*, 39). There are also mysterious trapdoors and rusty hinges, as those leading to the attic in McKindless house, which “had a Yale and a mortise lock. I struggled for a minute or two [...] then a key turned smoothly in the mortise, the Yale beside it clicked home, I pushed open the trap door and hauled myself in” (*TCR*, 18). There is even a Trapp, who is the man who provides McKindless with snuff material. He is actually a trap between commercial pornography and some more illegal material. There are flickering candles: “I have four candles and one evening in which to write this account” (*TMD*, 1). Burial vaults, as the *Hinterhaus*, as “these buildings are steeped in poor Greta's murder” (*TGOTS*, 273). Hidden manuscripts, such as Marlowe's or Archie Lunan's in the National Library. Dungeons, as the London club where William's wandering journey starts and that he “found the street, walked three blocks, then realised I'd overshoot it and had to retrace my steps” (*TBT*, 9). Even though all these places are not unknown to any of the characters or to any of the potential readers of the novels, there exists a certain element of estrangement in them as they are imbued with a Gothic touch. In fact, as Maruri remarks, in the cities in some horror films, horror takes place in a protected and quiet place when someone, for unknown reasons, violates what is familiar and safe to us, disordering our life (Maruri, 2002: 174, my translation⁵⁸). The importance of places is such that, as Vallina notes when describing a classic gothic novel such as *The Castle of Otranto*, it is precisely the setting, a castle in Walpole's case, that determine the plot and not the characters, but it could also be any other type of building (Vallina, 2011-2012, 478, my translation⁵⁹). It has been previously mentioned that, to Cavallaro, darkness is the motif-in-common in, at least, all the gothic literary works he analyses in his book. Related to his idea of gothic darkness, he defines gothic spaces, and more specifically gothic buildings, as “an aesthetic concept [...] pervaded by disquieting undertones

⁵⁸ In the original: “El terror sucede en un lugar protegido y tranquilo cuando alguien, por razones que no alcanzamos a comprender, viola lo que para nosotros es familiar y seguro, desordenando nuestra vida” (Maruri, 2002: 174).

⁵⁹ In the original: “No serían los personajes quienes determinarían el argumento o el desarrollo de una obra, sino el entorno inmediato, que en el caso de su obra es un castillo, pero que también puede ser cualquier otro tipo de edificación” (Vallina, 2011-2012, 478).

due to its conventional connection with barbarity. The buildings classed as ‘Gothic’ are the ones erected in the Dark Ages over the wrecks of classical civilizations” (Cavallaro, 2002: 85). The gothic sites he has in mind are the more classical gothic spaces such as Walpolean or Radcliffean castles and abbeys, though he is also aware of their development in late twentieth-century texts: “the heir of Gothic castles and mansions is the bourgeois house itself, the location in which disorder is most likely to erupt with devastating repercussions on its owners’ certainties and values” (Cavallaro, 2002: 86). By applying his definition of new gothic spaces to Welsh’s novels, one can find McKindless’s house and its neo-Victorian attic, where his secret interest in pornography, eroticism and an interest for some snuff photographs are kept hidden. Doctor Mann’s *Hinterhaus* is a modern, German version of the House of Usher, which, in its collapse – or rather, its demolition – releases the ghost of Greta Mann. It is worth noting here that, to Kahane, “what I see repeatedly locked into the forbidden center of the Gothic which draws me inward is the spectral presence of a dead-undead mother, archaic and all-encompassing, a ghost signifying the problematics of femininity which the heroine must confront” (Kahane, 1985: 336). Rather than the problematics of femininity, what Louise Welsh’s characters must confront – and not just the heroines, but also her anti-heroes – is the problematics of other models of femininities, as will be developed in Section 4. Furthermore, the reach of the Gothicising element in Welsh’s novels trespasses the walls of the house to impregnate the cities where those houses are. Botting refers to this transposition of gothic spaces when he comments that:

Gothic landscapes are desolate, alienating and full of menace. In the eighteenth century they were wild and mountainous locations. Later the modern city combined the natural and architectural components of Gothic grandeur and wildness, its dark, *labyrinthine* streets suggesting the violence and menace of Gothic castle and forest” (Botting, 2002a: 2, my emphasis).

Through the streets of Glasgow, London or Berlin characters stray in their labyrinthine dispositions and imbue their buildings with their gothic character: University libraries that are tombs of buried knowledge, as in *Naming the Bones*, bookshops where crimes are committed, as in *Tamburlaine Must Die*, cabarets where people pay to experience death, as in *The Bullet Trick*, shops that sell pornography and death, as in *The Cutting Room*, or churches that ghosts visit in search for some spiritual comfort, as in *The Girl on the Stairs*. They all turn darker, they all turn into

“dimensions capable of activating consciousness and helping us situate the experience of fear in its both individual and collective manifestations” (Cavallaro, 2002: 37). Characters experience their own personal fears after encountering the abject lurking in the streets of some familiar sites – though sometimes not so familiar, as Jane’s experience of Berlin, a place that is alien to her but to which she wants to belong. It is then that they face their own fears. As Hay points out when describing the ghost story genre:

any individual ghost story gives an account of a specific and irreducible trauma; some specific haunted mansion, murdered count, or interrupted inheritance. But ghost stories collectively, ghost stories as a genre, deny precisely the irreducibility of those traumas” (Hay, 2011: 2).

Considering the five novels as a whole, rather than as individual stories, may shed some light on some modern, 21st century anxieties and fears that are lurking not just in Welsh’s fictional world but in our own societies. The aim of this section is, then, to analyse how Elizabethan London or contemporary Glasgow and Edinburgh become gothicised and darkened so that they can, as Cavallaro proposes, “situate fearful occurrences in relation to both personal and social geographies” (Cavallaro, 2002: 38).

These personal and social geographies are constructed on winding roads that, in a similar fashion to time, as mentioned above, do not follow a horizontal order. One place does not follow another, but they are set in a labyrinthine disposition. When Marlowe travels to London after his stay at Walsingham’s cottage to escape the effects of the Plague, they “made our way towards the river, along roads edged either side by high, timbered buildings which blocked the sun and cast us into shadow” (*TMD*, 14). London darkens its streets and inhabitants, dooming all of them up to the point that he realizes that “this place could not survive. There was so much energy, so little space. One day the City must surely combust” (*TMD*, 15). Tompkins describes degradation in Gothic romance and relates the degradation and decay of the Gothic architectural motifs, where castles “usually, too, they have at least one ruinous wing” (Tompkins, 1990: 87) with the moral degradation of those who inhabit it and how “the [Gothic] heroine makes her way through dungeons littered with rotting bones, relying on, and inevitable finding, a secret door” (Tompkins, 1990: 88). There are hardly any heroines trapped in a castle in Welsh’s novels, except for Jane, who finds in her rented flat a safe place from the alien city she has moved to, but which also

turns into a site of uneasiness until she appropriates it, and Christie, who decides to live and die on the island of Lismore. The other characters are queers, ambiguous Elizabethan playwrights, magicians that are gazed at by a male audience or academics involved in love – or should it be sexual? – triangles. Besides that, except for the castle on the island of Lismore in *Naming the Bones*, there is no proper castle but a modern reconstruction of the site. In other words, the point is not to find a castle with certain symbolic references but rather the opposite: to find some references that evoke the presence of a symbolic castle, “a labyrinth, a maze, a site of secrets. [...] It can be a place of womb-like security, a refuge from the complex exigencies of the outer world” (Punter and Byron, 2004: 261).

The real castle in Lismore, referred to in the introduction to this research, does indeed have a Gothic atmosphere, but there is no horror lurking in its walls. Watson does not stray inside but rather finds there, in his conversation with Pete, a lodge to stay after his reservation at Mrs Dunn expires, as well as some information on his mobile phone about Fergus paying Robb’s rent and Rachel’s phone call to warn him about an e-mail accidentally sent to him with an attachment of the photograph of both of them having sex at the University. In his visit to the castle, or rather its ruins:

Murray could see the ruined structure perched on top of a plug of rock, silhouetted against the sea. Its walls had been reduced by wind or warfare to crooked columns that pointed towards the sky like a warped crown. [...] Murray tried to envision how the scene must have looked when the castle was whole and occupied by some tribe, but his imagination failed. All he could see was the vista spread before him, like Arcadia restored after the devastation of man (*NTB*, 240).

To him, what the mark of man had destroyed is being recovered again by nature, as what he watches is “a beautiful place to live” (*NTB*, 241). The castle represents the struggle between God and man, as “God’s creation is pitted against man’s in the clash between nature and architecture” (Bayer-Berenbaum, 1982: 23). The apparent winner in this particular struggle has been God, as there only remain empty ruins integrated into the Scottish landscape. On the other hand, the castle remains as an empty reminder of the attempt of man to trespass the boundary imposed by God of not attempting to become god themselves. The castle symbolises the attempt to create stability in a landscape with a continuous flow: “the wind flapped at his waterproof. He turned even though he knew no one was there. But there was something beyond the rustling noise of his hood” (*NTB*, 254). Watson soon discovers that the castle simply signifies that, in the struggle between man and God, whichever

God it was, man lost. It proves inevitable to remember in this point another novel where a man attempts to challenge God and Nature and his consequent defeat; in *Frankenstein*, as Ballesteros points out, only Nature, which Victor Frankenstein transgressed when creating his monster, seems to be victorious” (Ballesteros, 2013: 95). In the castle, “he remembered Alan Garrett’s note, *Interested in the beyond*” (*NTB*, 252) and he will eventually discover that secrets do not remain hidden in the castle, but the whole island is impregnated by them: Christie’s cottage where Miranda was sacrificed, the limekilns that bury Fergus, the small cottage where Watson is about to commit suicide. Watson realizes that, as Aguirre claims:

the haunted domain expands. Not just one particular locus, but the world itself of some specific individual is tainted, has a labyrinthic nature; whereby the Minotaur, bound indeed between four walls, is now restricted only by the four corners of a man’s earth. The haunter is no longer contained by a mere castle, the ghost walks; and man cannot successfully escape because his whole world is a labyrinth (Aguirre, 1990: 121).

The world itself is a labyrinth and the events that took place in Glasgow are also present on the island: Watson receives phone calls that shed light on his understanding of the events; Fergus becomes present on the island both figuratively, as a one of the main reasons that led Lunan to commit suicide, and physically, as he actually travels to the island in order to let his secret remain buried; Watson, possessed by the spirit of Lunan, is rescued by his brother Jack. Despite of the labyrinthine appearance of the daily places he moved around in his hometown, Watson he felt at ease with them. At the university, “he started down the hallway in the other direction and Murray followed him, too polite to let on that he already knew his way around” (*NTB*, 26) and in the library “the corridors’ twists and turns were mapped on his mind. He knew all the cubbyholes and suicide steps” (*NTB*, 44). However, he finds the windy landscape of Lismore unsettling and “[h]e wondered if Lunan had ever walked these paths at night, muddy and drenched to the skin, asking himself what the hell was going on” (*NTB*, 220, 221). He finds himself lost in a labyrinth that, as Botting explains, “seduce[s], excite[s], confuse[s] and disturb[s]” (Botting, 2002a: 84). In his conversation about the island and its beautiful landscape, Pete explains how happy he feels living there, but he is also aware that his children do not particularly agree with him. They are “desperate for bright lights, big city. [...] Meaghan will be off to university next year and I doubt her brother will be far behind” (*NTB*, 241). The inhabitants of the labyrinthine world move around as if they

could freely change their life; they are unaware that there is no such a change as nature, castles or cities do quite often get dark.

Watson's journey from the big city to the island of Lismore is, probably, the exception in Welsh's novels, as characters usually already inhabit cities, as Rilke in Glasgow; they move from the countryside to the city, as Marlowe; they move to a new city, as Jane; or their life is a constant journey between different cities, as William. According to Ascari, the metropolis "came to be regarded as a labyrinth of intersecting stories and place of mystery" (Ascari, 2009: 50). It is actually in a city where the personal stories of all the characters in the novels intersect and they acknowledge the existence of the other characters. It can be remarked that Watson's life intersects with Christie's at the Island of Lismore, but their intersection was quite intentional, as that was his only intent when travelling to the island. However, it is in Glasgow where Rilke's life intersects with that of the girl in the photograph, with Derek, Anne-Marie and with the McKindless. Marlowe's life intersects with Kyd's and Raleigh's. William meets Sylvie and the underworld of a blood-thirsty audience in Berlin. It is also there where Jane's life becomes intrinsically intersected with Anna's up to the point of having an erotic dream with the young girl that ends up in her realisation that "they were sealed, one on top of the other, beneath the floorboards in the backhouse" (*TGOTS*, 242). Cavallaro points out that:

Cities, both ancient and modern, repeatedly stand out as some of the most intriguing of dark places. This is largely due to their contradictory status: they are constructs and, to this extent, foster the illusion that their planners and builders can control their growth; at the same time, they have an almost organic way of developing according to their own rhythms and of creating pockets of mystery and invisibility which are well beyond the control of their inhabitants. (Cavallaro, 2002: 32).

Rilke recounts his way to the cruising area as he knows exactly where to head and when to turn: "I descended towards Gilmorehill Cross, then turned right into Kelvin Ways, avenue of dreams" (*TCR*, 26). He knows where to go and he knows what to do: "Then he was on his knees and it was the usual routine" (*TCR*, 28). However, things do not turn out as expected and his cruising adventure ends when he is taken to the police station: there are rules in the city that rule even transgressive behaviour: "Rule number one of cruising: remember the dangers. You may be mugged or arrested" (*TCR*, 29). At night, the dark cruising area does not fully protect the cruisers, as they can be arrested, but it protects their identity, which is turned into

the anonymous terms “a man” or “a boy.” Dollimore recounts Rupert Haselden⁶⁰’s feelings when visiting the New York Club “The Mineshaft” in the late 1970s as follows:

I had never seen anything like it: fist fucking, racks, and the stench of piss and poppers and everything else and the heat and the men and the light was all red and I remember thinking standing there, adrenalin thundering round me and thinking, ‘This is evil, this is wrong’. I remember being very frightened; it seemed so extreme. But later I was thinking about it a lot, and wanking when thinking about it, and the next thing I knew I was back there and within weeks it felt like home (Dollimore, 2001: 57-58).

After his first frightening experience in “The Mineshaft” and despite the existence of dangers inherent to cruising areas – i.e. being harassed by the police or being infected with AIDS – the places become familiar, they “feel like home”. Rilke, after having discovered the truth about McKindless and when he is on his way to the University to meet professor Sweetman in order to know more about the story of *Soleil et Désolè*, walks that very same cruising area but in full daylight.

A week ago I had walked through Kelvingrove Park towards the five-pointed spire of the university. At last the bad weather had broken. The air was crisp and fresh, the sky a cloudless Tyrolean blue. Daffodils hosted together in golden clusters and pink blossom drifted on the air. The kind of day that invokes a quickening of the heart, intimations of summer, nostalgia for springtimes past. [...] Only a discarded condom by the swings reminded me that this was the scene of my near-arrest. I headed over the bridge and away towards the dark, gothic turrets. I liked it best when I was the only one wearing sunglasses (*TCR*, 285).

After discovering what was hidden in the attic at McKindless’s, the skin trade in the streets of Glasgow, the pornographic films with “*Real Girls from Glasgow*” (*TCR*, 68), he acknowledges in the city its double component: brightness and darkness coexisting. Applying Ascari’s conception of London to Rilke’s Glasgow, it can be described as “a beacon of civilisation and a harbour of vice, two dimensions that have also been regarded as coinciding with the diurnal and nocturnal faces of the city” (Ascari, 2009: 133). However, the brightness of daylight is, actually, a “construct” and an “illusion”, using Cavallaro’s words. Pirie remarks that “the vampire may be the active agent of terror, but the passive agents is the landscape he inhabits” (Pirie, 1977: 41). Rilke, however, is able to choose. Despite the fact that Darkness is beyond the control of the inhabitants of Glasgow, it is more real. That is why Rilke, who is

⁶⁰ Rupert Haselden wrote a letter to *The Guardian* in 1990 noting how full cruising gay bars were despite the AIDS pandemic.

perceived as – and actually acts like – a vampire, protects himself from the sun and, altogether, darkens the daytime city and also feels there “like home”. Cavallaro quotes and translates Calvino and explains that “there is the attraction of the labyrinth itself, of losing oneself in the labyrinth, of representing the absence of escape routes as humankind’s true condition” (Cavallaro, 2002: 30). After having confronted the dark and the bright side of society, Rilke cannot deny his true vampiric self and rather prefers to lose himself in the dark labyrinth he has entered than getting out of it.

Marlowe’s London is still recovering from the fear of Plague and returning to its busy life of markets and theatres. Marlowe, who has been at Walshingham’s house in the countryside for three weeks, feels overwhelmed by its hustle and bustle: “The din of voices, superstitious church chimes, pounding mallets, busy workmen and street bustle, undercut by the smells of livings and livestock” (*TMD*, 15). It is also a city of dark conspiracies; as that of the Privy Council, which transforms every inhabitant of London into an accusing finger to the others so as to keep the city under control. Thus, inhabitants turn places of joy and pleasure, such as taverns, bookshops, theatres, into dark places of death and accusations: in Marlowe’s last visit to Blind Grizzle’s bookshop:

[he] wandered through the bookshelves, past the old man’s empty chair, trying not to trip on any of his booby traps, drawing my sword against the dark and the silence, though it pained my injured hand. I hesitated at the door to Grizzle’s private quarter, then swiftly pushed it wide” (*TMD*, 119).

There he finds both Blind Grizzle and his dog stabbed. The city has become, then, what Botting would describe as “a site of nocturnal corruption and violence, a locus of real horror” (Botting, 2002a: 12) and Marlowe’s realization that his friend Thomas Blaize has betrayed him turns him into an executing hand that slays him in the theatre, a familiar place to both playwright and actor.

In the first pages of *The Bullet Trick*, between the dedication and the quote that precedes William’s story, Louise Welsh depicts a map of the main character’s story: Glasgow, London and Berlin, though they are not lineally disposed but as a circle:



Figure 6: The map of William Wilson's World. (*The Bullet Trick*, n.p.)

This is the only case in which Welsh presents a map to the story, which moves in time, as the present and past events are shuffled in the narration, and place, as William's story of personal loss and recovery develop in the three places. The complexity of William's reality, which deals with illusions and magic tricks, requires, as Calvino notices, "a map of the labyrinth as detailed as possible" (quoted and translated in Cavallaro, 2002: 30). William's wanderings seem to lead him nowhere, in the same way as the narration of his present life seems to be unconnected from his recount of past events – though readers expect, if not know, that there must be some kind of link. At the end of the novel he visits the very same club he works in for Montgomery's party. This time, however, it has been refurbished and it has a different name. "Bill's old club was no longer the blank-faced dive where we'd met on that first night. It had undergone a paint job and a glowing peppermint-green sign proclaimed it BUMPERS" (*TBT*, 357). The first time he entered, he strayed into a life journey between the three already mentioned cities. In his final visit, his whole story makes sense, everything seems to have an explanation and, therefore, it is time to start another journey: "I closed the door of the dressing-room and walked out of the club, into the late-afternoon bustle of Soho" (*TBT*, 362). The circular map of his experience resembles the symbolism of circles, which, according to Beyer, "commonly represent unity, wholeness, and infinity. Without beginning or end, without sides or corners, the circle is also associated with the number one." However, this particular circle is not, on the one hand, a whole, as there is some gap between the cities. On the other hand, this circular labyrinth, in its infiniteness, also bears "an implicit invitation to understand and accept a view of the human condition as one of perpetual wandering and entrapment. Thus, like fear itself, the labyrinth may work as a function of consciousness" (Cavallaro, 2002: 30). William has discovered that, when killing

Sylvie, he committed a kind of suicide that degraded his own self until becoming a hobo. Resurrecting Gloria Noon, on the other hand, resurrects his spirit. In *BUMPERS*, he is certain that the unveiling of the truth behind the bullet trick, i.e. Sylvie's performed death, liberates him from his grief but also turns him again into a wanderer in the whole, infinite circle that maps his life.

Perhaps, as Palacios explains, people are not as afraid of monsters as they are of the places they inhabit, and he exemplifies his point by pointing out that in *Dracula*, what is really frightening is the castle itself, as well as the poorly-lit alleys where Jack the Ripper⁶¹ or the biomorphic spaceships in *Alien* (Palacios, 2002: 194-195). However, the labyrinth where Louise Welsh's characters move is both terrifying, as characters – and readers – stray in them, and a safe area after they all undergo a Gothicization of their selves, becoming thus its denizens.

3.3. Gothicising selves

In their classification of monsters, Fonseca and Pulliam explain that a horror text is:

one that contains a monster, whether it be supernatural, human, or a metaphor for the psychological torment of a guilt-ridden human. These monsters can take on various forms. They can be the walking dead, the living –impaired who stumble around aimlessly chanting “Brains! Brains!” and snacking on anyone in heels [...] the vengeful ghost of a child molester [...] angry strippers, once abused wives and mothers, who will now rid the world of men who would batter those they should protect (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 4).

Welsh's novels are not inhibited by supernatural monsters but rather by humans that acquire monstrous qualities. In the darkening process of her literary world, characters are also touched by a dark shadow of evil that, instead of hiding, emphasizes and highlights their monstrosity. The real world, according to Fonseca, is also populated by horror, that of “drunk drivers who carelessly take away the lives of our loved ones, child molesters who cruelly ruin young lives, and unscrupulous corporations that pollute the environment and downsize the workforce in the name of increased profits” (Fonseca, 1999: xv). The difference between the real and the

⁶¹ It is interesting to note that he mentions Jack the Ripper as if he were another character, as fictional as *Dracula* or *Alien*, which proves the success of Gothicising reality in the nineteenth-century England, as explained in Section 1 of this research.

literary worlds is that, with the latter, readers experienced “the emotion of fear in a controlled setting” (Fonseca, 1999: xv). The comfortable position of being plain, unaffected observers of monstrosity is not as safe as Fonseca claims. The identification of the reader with what they are reading trespasses the boundaries of the page. It is quite a frequent experience that a sudden, familiar noise while reading – as a phone ringing or a book falling on a shelf – provokes some kind of uneasiness in the reader, which is usually followed by a nervous laughter at the, apparently, silly identification of one’s own world and the fictional world. This represents the achievement of a weird atmosphere in a text, as H.P. Lovecraft explains, that:

The one test of the really weird is simply this – whether or not there be excited in the reader a profound sense of dread, and of contact with unknown spheres and powers; a subtle attitude of awed listening, as if for the beating of black wings or the scratching of outside shapes and entities on the known universe’s utmost rim (Lovecraft, 1994: 427).

It may even be the case that readers try to find some fictional elements in their real lives, such as those readers who claim to have read the *Necronomicon*, Lovecraft’s fictional occult book. Facing monstrosity and the abject, even in a literary world, transforms the map of experience by introducing fear and desire, and the subsequent “prospect of boundary dissolution is both alluring and frightening” (Cavallaro, 2002: 174). If the labyrinthine placement of the characters in time and space has already been discussed, their encounter with the monstrous side of human beings will also cast them into a labyrinth of their selves.

When selves encounter the abject, they are actually performing an encounter with some kind of Other. As Mäyra points out, “any self has its Other [...] Our perception of otherness is never neutral; others tend to get meanings in relation to our own ‘centres of signification’” (Mäyra, 1999: 9). Rilke meets the existence of McKindless, a human vampire with a thirst for blood who eventually dies twice, even though the second time is his real death. Investigating this vampire’s matters turns Rilke, whose nickname was “The Walking Dead,” into a Nosferatu in Derek’s film version. “I’m going to make my own version and you would be perfect for the title role. The ancient vampire, end of his line, left to moulder, alone and friendless. The bemused monster who has lived too long” (*TCR*, 241). In his fight against the Other, Rilke discovers that the struggle with the dark Other described by Aguirre:

is not one between two opposing principles, Good and Evil, but between reason and non-reason, between a closed-up Here and an excluded There, between a society false of itself and an aspect of its denied Truth. The adversary is not such because it is evil, but because it is rejected; the man of reason does not oppose it because he is good but because he fears it (Aguirre, 1990: 144).

By rejecting the vampiric character of McKindless and fearing it, Rilke encounters the Other and altogether releases the Other in himself. Following Aguirre, the self and the monster are not the opposing principles in struggle but two facets of the same self. However, this double-faceted nature of the self does not imply the existence of a dual nature in society but rather multiple one. By acknowledging this possibility, in the reconstruction of new versions of subjectivity, “ones that would not be locked into the classic dualisms (soul/body, reason/emotion), has led into partial rehabilitations of the self” (Mäyra 1999: 61). These rehabilitations imply the existence of some monstrous Other in the characters of Welsh’s novels – and even in the readers. This complicates Aguirre’s struggle, as it also takes place within the very self, as characters who want to remain “good” do so just because they are frightened by the possibility of becoming “bad.” However, evil, the abject, is not simply outside them, it is not there, but deep within their/them-selves, lurking till they are released.

3.3.1. Lovecraftian characters

In the previously mentioned classification, carried out by Fonseca and Pulliam, there is no category with the heading of “Lovecraftian.” However, in the process of recognition of the truth that lies behind the surface of contemporary society and in their subsequent straying in the labyrinths of time and place, there are some Lovecraftian characteristics that lurk in the threshold of the unveiled truths. As Lovecraft himself explained in his essay *Supernatural Horror in Literature*:

the true weird tale has something more than secret murder, bloody bones, or a sheeted form clanking chains according to rule. A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces must be present; and there must be a hint, expressed with a seriousness and portentousness becoming its subject, of that most terrible conception of the human brain – a malign and particular suspension or defeat of those fixed laws of Nature which are our only safeguards against the assaults of chaos and the daemons of unplumbed space (Lovecraft, 1994: 426).

All the main characters start a process of self-transformation as they discover that not only human laws, but also the laws of Nature, cannot provide an answer to

their discoveries. In his search for the truth of the girl-in-the-photo's identity, a matter that, apparently, does not concern him directly, Rilke becomes a sort of Lovecraftian character who discovers that there is a reality lingering in society which is there, though not perceived. However, once acknowledged, it is impossible to ignore; even more: the human in Rilke becomes monstrous, a Nosferatu, a vampire who tries to suck all the money out of the business, together with Rose and her boss; in the same manner that he sucks (pun intended) his sexual prey. He behaves, in the manner that Punter describes Lovecraft's characters, "towards haunted surroundings with the mixture of terror and self-sacrifice which has since become a convention of pulp fiction and of many horror films" (Punter, 1996: 41). After their experience of the monstrous and the abject, characters are willing to sacrifice their/them-selves in order to make sense out of the incomprehensible nature of reality they have just discovered. William, considering himself a murderer, faces his darker side and becomes apparently won over by it until he hits the bottom and returns as the magician he truly is. Lovecraftianly, he discovers his hobo-esque side and learns of the criminal Glaswegian underworld not just from the newspapers but his own experience. The possibility to participate in the charity gig at the Old Panopticon, though, offers him the possibility of redemption for his crime. His free performance saves him from Montgomery's criminal intents and frees him, at least legally, from any involvement in the world of crime. Dr Watson, who acts more out of feeling than of logic, discovers that his life is more influenced by the life of Archie Lunan than he could ever imagine. Researching the reasons for his suicide, if it was a suicide at all, takes Murray into a journey of self-discovery about his own life and the lives of those who surround him in his family and academic life. Lovecraftianly again, once the hidden truth is unveiled, his life is forever transformed, up to the point that his personal appearance resembles Lunan, as well as his will to end up with his life after discovering he has been betrayed by those he trusted. Besides that, he discovers the obsession – and absolute fear – of Bobby Robb for the beyond. His fear, that accompanies him till his death, resembles what Smith describes as the threat posed by "the Old Ones or Old Gods [...] waiting unseen for the chance to reclaim their dominion over both the world and humanity" (Smith, 2006: 4). As Bloom points out, the weird, in and for Lovecraft, "is an experiential process *out of which* human experience is born" (Bloom, 2001: 158, italics in the original). Acknowledging the weird is, in fact, researching into true human nature, as Marlowe's discovery of the

influential and fatal job of the Privy Council in eliminating any citizen that may prove abject to the interests of the Crown, or as Jane, the only alien in Berlin society, who is able to perceive abuse beyond some signs that the non-Others to Berlin misread. Cortés explains that monsters are frightening because they show our feared, and therefore repressed, desires. That is why they fascinate and attract as they disquiet and oblige people to abandon the everyday and the banal (Cortés, 1997: 26, my translation⁶²). In the encounter with the abject monstrous, not only characters are both frightened and attracted by it: they also discover the monstrosity in themselves, that they are both dejects and objects, despite their attempt at considering, as Cortés notes, different from the monsters when identifying with normality. Furthermore, readers – a key element in any of the reading process as analysed in Part One of this research – do also feel the attraction to such monstrosity, and identification proves unavoidable in their case too.

3.3.2. Ghosts

In the already quoted conversation between Jane and Petra about the Nazi-ghost that inhabit Tielo's apartment, Jane jokes about a competition between Nazi-ghosts and Ned-ghosts and bets that “our Ned-ghosts could take your Nazi-ghosts at square goes” (*TGOTS*, 28), provoking feeling of upset in Petra and the conclusion that “that's something you have to accept if you want to live in this city. The past is past; Berliners have learnt to come to terms with it” (*TGOTS*, 29). Jane is an alien in the city who must adapt to, rather than change, the functioning of the city. However, Petra's certainty about Berliners having come to terms with their Nazi past proves really naïve. Trauma still lingers in the streets of Berlin and its buildings. Hay explains that:

the ghost is something that comes back, the residue of some traumatic event that has not been dealt with and that therefore returns, the way trauma always does. To be concerned with ghost stories is to be concerned with suffering, with historical catastrophe and the problems of remembering and mourning it (Hay, 2011: 4).

⁶² In the original: “Si los monstruos nos *asustan*, es porque nos están mostrando los deseos propios que tanto tememos y, por ello, reprimimos. Lo monstruoso nos fascina y atrae porque nos inquieta, nos tienta y nos obliga a salir de lo cotidiano y banal” (Cortés, 1997: 26).

Jane learns that the commemorative plaques do not suffice to compensate for all that suffering undergone during the Second World War, not only by Jews, but also by Germans as a whole. Besides that, abjection did not only take place in a fairly past time, the twentieth century. It also took place in her own house, though there was no warfare implication. The only certainty about Greta Mann is that she disappeared, no matter whether voluntarily or not, whether she is still alive or dead, whether her disappearance was related to Dr Alban Mann, the Beckers or the three of them: she has become an absence, a ghostly mother that has haunted the building. Fonseca and Pulliam define ghost stories as:

tales of guilt, guilt often thought to be long buried in the unconscious mind. The ghost or haunted house serves as a portent, or warning, to the haunted person, who is often guilty either of actual wrongdoing or of having (repressed) knowledge of a wrongdoing” (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 41).

However, none of the inhabitants of the house feels haunted by Greta’s ghost, except for Frau Becker, whose altered perception of reality recalls seeing Greta running up the stairs – “her hair was tangled, there were leaves in it, as if she’d just crawled out of the grave, and she was crying. Maybe she was a ghost” (*TGOTS*, 235) – and for Jane, the outsider who wants to live in Berlin with her *lebenspartner* and her soon-to-be-born Boy⁶³, but also needs to release the building from its ghostly inhabitant, to perform an exorcism. Once performed, with Dr Alban’s, Anna’s and *Herr* Becker’s deaths and Heike being interned and Petra realizing that “sometimes I think maybe, if I’d paid more attention and we’d tackled it together, that girl would still be alive” (*TGOTS*, 277), it is in this moment that Greta’s ghost is ready to show: her bones are found by the builders in the *Hinterhaus*. She has been recovered from oblivion and her past can be recounted and accounted with some more real facts. The backhouse can be demolished, in an Usheresque way, but allowing the construction of a new building. History can be built on again but the foundations cannot be altered. Once you discover that truth about life, you have to learn how to cope with it. Jane is aware of that fact as she holds their baby and thinks that

the police had seemed to accept from the outset that Jane had acted in self-defence. The breached loft space and her still-on-file accusation that Alban had abused Anna told their own story, but part of her was still on the alert for the sound of heavy boots running up the stairs” (*TGOTS*, 276).

⁶³ The implications of their baby’s name will be given further attention in Section 4 of this research.

Greta, as a mother, resurrects to confirm that Jane's version, if not fully true, resembles the truth much more than the gossip about her disappearance. Fonseca and Pulliam state that "ghosts exist to seek justice for a wrong they suffered in life, or to protect one of the living from harm. The haunted house, in contrast, can be likened to an abused child" (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 5). Greta failed as a ghostly mother, but once freed from her past, she is willing to protect Boy and Jane, the Others in the building.

Greta's is not the only exorcism performed in Welsh's novels. Rilke, in what used to be the funerary chamber in *Soleil et Désolé*, pays a last homage to silent, unknown and anonymous victims in the place where the portrayed crime was committed, a kind of exorcism that, rather than releasing the victims, comforts the silent knower of 21st century slavery: he acknowledges the existence of the now lamentable victims of sexual abuse and prostitution but cannot free them. In her text, *Frames of War*, Butler presents two concepts that can be linked to ghostly presences in Welsh: grievability and grievable lives. Butler analyses how war creates a distinction between those whose lives can be grieved for and those whose lives cannot. As she defines, grievability is "a presupposition for the life that matters" (Butler, 2009: 14). One cannot celebrate life without presupposing that that life can be lost and, therefore, grieved. However, if a life does not deserve any regard, any testimony and is not grieved for when lost, it becomes "a life that will never have been lived" (Butler, 2009: 14). That becomes, thus, the distinction between grievable lives and un-grievable lives:

specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not first apprehended as living. If certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceived as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these lives are never lived nor lost in the full sense (Butler, 2009: 1).

The girl in the photo undergoes a transformation that changes her un-grievable life into a grievable life. With his statement on McKindless's case, Rilke feels the girl in the photo loses "herself of her bonds, and was addressing me" (*TCR*, 279). In addition, it also releases some unexpected victims from Trapp's business who are willing to talk. Un-grievable lives, then, turn into grievable. However, in contrast to his silent homage, there rises the naked truth of the transcript of evidence by Adia Kovalyova, whose release is the side effect of the police investigation into Trapp and Mr McKindless. In it she narrates the promises she was made of starting anew in

Europe and her transformation into a ghost who peers “through the frosted windows and see people walking by, normal people” (*TCR*, 282). She has been part of the underworld of crime, she has learnt what being a ghost is. Cavallaro explains that “although spectres are traditionally connected with the dead, and the people they haunt with the living, this conventional separation is often quizzed and rendered uncertain by narratives of darkness” (Cavallaro, 2002: 69). She has been haunted by other human beings and, despite the fact that the police save her from Trapp’s clutches, she will never be the person she used to be. She states that “the last bit of me died before they [the police] arrived” (*TCR*, 282). She, as opposed to Rilke, has not just become aware of the existence of hell on Earth: she has actually lived there, a place where “overt sexuality, bestiality and uninhabited sadistic fantasies are just some of the elements figuring in this rich and controversial heritage” (Mäyra, 1999: 68), and now she only wants to go home. Unfortunately for her, home does not represent a safe place: it is just a distancing from her experience. She knows herself lucky because she can return, she has survived, but she is also aware that she will not be the last girl or boy that sets out on a journey from home to hell. And some of them do not return.

Fonseca and Pulliam state that “the proverbial skeleton in the closet is never as dangerous as the closet’s owner, who does not want it to be found” (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 8). Not only is Greta Mann’s skeleton hidden in the closet; there are also some other figurative closets whose owners are willing to kill, if necessary, so that those bones are not found. Miranda, Christie and Fergus’ baby daughter, died mysteriously just before Lunan’s suicide and there are two different versions on her death: Christie’s and Fergus’s. According to her, it was “a sin of omission” (*NTB*, 364); according to him, Miranda was sacrificed. Whichever was true, hearing Miranda’s story and driving to the place where her bones are meant to be buried together with Lunan’s manuscript remind her of W. W. Jacob’s “The Monkey’s Paw” and mixes the memories of both Lunan and Miranda in a story where:

A husband and wife wish for their dead son to be returned from the grave. No sooner is the wish from their mouths than they hear a hideous banging at the door. When they open it, in place of the hale and hearty boy they dreamt of stands a mangled wreck of a corpse half cut to shreds by the wounds that killed him. Wounds that now have the power of endless torment rather than the power of death (*NTB*, 345).

Christie considers Lunan a ghostly memory of the past as she cannot help feeling some certain guilt for his death, but she does not feel Miranda is a haunted soul as she was an innocent victim of a fortuitous accident. However, Lunan and his presumed daughter return from their non-existent graves: a sea that engulfed him in a tempest and a trunk in a hole in the ground on the island of Lismore. Cavallaro points out that ghosts “are frequently egged on by a desire for justice that does to merely point to the instinctive urge to heal a personal injury but also to wider ideological issues” (Cavallaro, 2002: 63). When Christie and Fergus are at Miranda’s burial place with Murray Watson, they do ignore that the latter has been imbued with the spirit of Lunan not just in a figurative sense when trying to reconstruct Lunan’s memory out of unconnected fragments of personal recounts and nonsensical pages in the library: he has actually been possessed by him. He has even undergone a physical transformation that has turned him into an impersonation of Lunan, though only as a first impression: “Archie’s features were finer, almost feminine” (*NTB*, 329). Lunan’s femininity is counter-balanced by Watson’s manly features and both of them become a single entity that is ready to face, and destroy, their common enemy. Curiously enough, after Lunan’s death, Fergus had obliged Lunan’s spirit to unwillingly possess him: he published a poetry book signed by him but that was actually Lunan’s unpublished work. Although Professor James kept a copy, what really betrays Fergus is Lunan’s spirit lingering in his poetry. After his emotional shock on the island and while considering his own suicide, Murray Watson reads the book and writes on the title page “these poems were written by Archie Lunan. That would be the extent of his biography” (*NTB*, 373). In his state of possession, “his” biography is quite an ambiguous possessive as it may relate to Archie’s, Watson’s – or both. Ghosts, according to Cavallaro, symbolize:

our status as biomachines whose functioning depends on the continuous coexistence of birth and death, growth and decay. On the psychological plane, this physical reality is replicated by comparable rhythms of production and destruction, as patently demonstrated by the mind’s proclivity to oscillate between states of hope and states of despair (Cavallaro, 2002: 85).

Murray’s mind oscillates between hope and despair and, as he cannot stand any more betrayals, in the same manner as Lunan could not, decides to end his life. Fortunately, his brother manages to rescue him and Lunan’s spirit all together. Once back in Glasgow, he publishes the second poetry book by Lunan and his unpublished

sci-fi novel. Besides that, on the island of Lismore, Murray did not only unbury Miranda's bones: he also unburied the truth about her, as she was not Lunan's daughter but Fergus's and this fact frees Lunan's ghost from the feeling of guilt that held him back in this world.

In this research, reference has been made to two bodies that had been buried and haunted their burial sites: Greta's in the *Hinterhaus* and Miranda's on the island of Lismore. Furthermore, as it has been stated in this section, both have become ghostly presences and they resemble what Hogle describes as “ghosts, spectres, or monsters [...] that rise from within the antiquated space, or sometimes invade it from alien realms, to manifest unresolved crimes or conflicts that can no longer be successfully buried from view. (Hogle, 2002: 2). However, in Louise Welsh's novels, they are not the only examples. Archie, the man who delivers the material William is going to use in his gig at the Panopticon, says: “People don't just vanish when they die, they're all around us and sometimes we catch sight of them” (*TBT*, 304). His words are the response to Eilidh's mocking comments on the mannequins in the room, which possessed “a vaguely jaunty feel at odds with the otherwise Victorian atmosphere” (*TBT*, 303). His religious belief in a life beyond, together with his age, has turned him into a wise man that knows that “there's more in this world that can be explained” (*TBT*, 304). He is not the only character in *The Bullet Trick* that knows how the world works. Inspector Blunt has discovered the key in many cases of missing people, a literal magic trick. Thus, he is well aware of the distractive power of female assistants. He knows that Montgomery's use of Sylvie's death to threaten William is a kind of bravado. As he explains to William once Montgomery has been arrested, “but he brings her up and you go into a panic. It's an old trick. [...] some women have that effect. Make you imagine all sorts of daft things” (*TBT*, 355). Montgomery, in turn, also panics when he mistakes Sheila, his wife, for her sister Gloria, even though he knows that the latter is dead, as he was actually present when she was buried. Montgomery the magician realises that his magic trick has been unveiled. Gloria Noon did not run away from her home but was killed, whether accidentally or intentionally. Her ghost, as some of the ghosts analysed by Cavallaro, “having been viciously wronged in their lifetime, seek[s] to wreak revenge upon their erstwhile oppressors” (Cavallaro, 2002: 79). Therefore, she possesses her sister. Sheila becomes, thus, a medium that frees Gloria from her compulsory stay amongst the

living and release her sister from her husband's spell. She can now mourn her dead sister.

In *Tamburlaine Must Die*, the false Tamburlaine slays Blind Grizzle and his dog Hector in a very gory way:

his mouth had been slit wide into a harlequin smile and his cheekbones bloodied by a crosshatch of cuts until they resembled the rouged cheeks of a player. The injustice of the old man's death, killed for a rumour of gold, hit me and I lashed out with my good hand, pushing a bookcase to the floor (*TMD*, 120).

The slain bookseller and his dog turn into ghosts willing to help Marlowe wreak revenge upon the fake Tamburlaine for having incriminated Marlowe in a libellous conspiracy that may end his life; and also for their unjust deaths. Marlowe feels "the ghosts of Grizzle and Hector join me, running at my side with a shout and they whispered the name of my enemy soft in my ears. They seemed happy with their role in this poor play without encores" (*TMD*, 125). By amending the wrongs inflicted on the grievable lives of Grizzle and Hector, he acquires the required knowledge to destroy his enemy and to find himself a place in history as one of the greatest playwrights of his time. In order to become immortal, he needs to abandon his human self and die and so Raleigh will "ensure your writings live beyond your death, beyond these troubled times and into the future" (*TMD*, 115).

3.3.3. Doppelgängers

The ghosts already mentioned in the previous section relates to the topic of the subject of the double. Briggs explains that:

It soon becomes apparent that many of the most characteristic motifs of the ghost story, even the very ghosts themselves, are reproductions or simulacra of human beings, and many of the other figures that appear in ghost stories – doubles (or *doppelgänger*), automata, manufactured monster like Frankenstein's, reanimated corpses (or zombies), the golem made from the clay of the dead – are all different forms of reproduction, and that the concept of uncanniness itself is closely connected to disturbing interpretations and the discovery of resisted meanings (Briggs, 2001: 124-125).

Characters in Welsh's novels are possessed by some ghostly memories from the past, as explained above, but they also unfold their multiple personal facets in a Jekyll and Hyde style or turn some other characters into Frankenstein's monster-like

creatures, as William's composite of a body formed of Ulla's and Sylvie's body in the sawing trick.

Rilke, the Walking Dead, realises during the novel that he is far from impersonating the hollow monster, as his external appearance does not match the symbolism of a zombie. Zombies, according to Fonseca and Pulliam, "will always be rebellious and angry children, bent on self-destruction and the destruction of their makers" (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 60). However, there is nothing self-destructive in him, but rather the opposite. Since the discovery of the photograph, his main interest is trying to reconstruct the ungrievable girl's identity so that it can be mourned. He is actually, at least symbolically, reanimating her. However, he does not do so in a scientific way, as Doctor Frankenstein or Lovecraftian Herbert West, but rather as an exorcist, as explained in the previous section. His self-awareness of how he is changing after the events he undergoes confuses his mind, together with Derek's presence, which he finds alluring and disturbing. That is the reason why, when eager to help with his first non-pornographic film, he answers Derek's question "What's the most popular horror film ever?" *'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde?'* "Good guess but no." (TCR, 241, italics in the original). It proves curious, as it will be argued further, that Rilke is not aware of his vampiric self, but the point here is that his answer contradicts Derek's expectations. One of the possible reasons for his confident answer is the influence of McKindless's Victorian house and its attic, whose atmosphere resembles Hyde's – or Usher's, as its owners are Roderick and Madeleine – more than Dracula's Transylvanian castle. However, unknowingly, both Derek and Rilke are bearing in mind the motif of the *doppelgänger*, as, according to Punter, that is "the core Gothic theme of *Jekyll and Hyde*" (Punter, 1996: 9). When Derek thinks of Rilke as the perfect impersonator of Nosferatu, what he is actually taking into account is all the failed versions and impersonations of such a character; i.e. all the failed *doppelgängers*, as faulty doubles. "Things went all wrong with Bela Lugosi. After him it was suavity and Byronic aristocrats, Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing. Fine for a laugh but nothing like the originals, *Nosferatu*" (TCR, 241). Picart and Greek point out that the film *Nosferatu* (Murnau, 1922) meant a "deviation from Stoker's novelistic characterization of the vampire as a well-groomed, impeccably mannered demon, to a skeletal, contorted, and shuffling monster" (Picart and Greek, 2009: 39) and this does not shed much credit on Rilke's appearance. Curiously enough, Rilke and Derek's conversation is interrupted by a phone call from the hospital that

addresses Rilke as Mr McKindless, as he himself had told the hospital staff that he was Mrs McKindless's nephew.

As opposed to Rilke, Marlowe is aware of his duplicity within himself: "as always at such times I felt myself to be two men" (*TMD*, 30): Kit⁶⁴ the playwright, brave and fearless, and silent Christopher "calculating how best to hold onto my life" (*TMD*, 31). The problem arises when Kit, embodied in a false Tamburlaine, gains his own independent existence outside Christopher and threatens the existence of both. As Punter explains when analysing the gothic motifs in *Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, it is:

concerned with the problem of liberation of repressed desires. The discoveries of Darwin combined with psychological developments to produce, first a revelation that his personality contains depths which do not appear on the surface of everyday intercourse, and second, a fear that the other thus postulated may relate to the bestial level which evidences human continuity with the animal world" (Punter, 1996: 5).

Marlowe is falsely accused of having written some heretic libel signed by Tamburlaine, his most popular character. However, the fact that he did not actually write it does not mean that he does not really share this false Tamburlaine's opinions and views. This released Kit's part in Marlowe acts freely and threatens the existence of Christopher, actually provoking his death but also achieving his immortality. Marlowe, aware of the fact that he is an Elizabethan Dr Frankenstein, decides that: "I was his creator and would outdo any angry God. I would destroy my creature turned enemy, just as soon as I knew who he was" (*TMD*, 88). As such, he realizes he has acted God-like-ly when creating life out of his lines but, as opposed to God, is willing to destroy it now that it threatens his existence. When Christopher kills Blaize, the menacing Tamburlaine and his embodied Kit part, he knows for sure he has killed an unworthy impersonator of Tamburlaine. Vardoulakis explains that "Doppelgänger characters" in literature "tend to be associated with evil and the demonic [...] a notion of the subject/subjectivity that is defective, disjointed, split, threatening, spectral" (Vardoulakis, 2006: 100). This is not, however, the case in Marlowe and Tamburlaine. With Blaize's – the fake *doppelgänger* – death, Marlowe realizes Tamburlaine-Kit has taken control over Christopher again and, as if Dr Frankenstein had met his creature and embraced him rather than killed him, he is ready to accept his literary immortality in return for his physical death as "Tamburlaine knows no fear" (*TMD*,

⁶⁴ As in the case of Leslie in *The Cutting Room* analysed in Section 4, Kit is a short form of proper noun that can be used to refer both to a man (Christopher) and a woman (Katherine).

139). Thus, he is now ready to assume his own identity and face whatever destiny he is doomed to and escape the Hell he has been inhabiting until then.

At the age of nine, William plays a game at home that will prove useful in his future career as a magician. He learns that:

if I positioned the mirrors on my mother's dressing-table at a particular angle I could achieve the same effect, myself repeated over and over into infinity. It gave me a strange feeling to see all of these other Williams shadowing my actions. I felt that when I stepped from the glass these other boys did the same and moved on in their own worlds where everything was an inverted image of mine and these Williams were the braves or bullies of their school (*TBT*, 43-44).

The mirror shows him the illusion of unfolding his self into several by creating some *dopplegangers* that might even be more powerful and brave, whose lives are less miserable than his. However, in his world of illusions, it is him that all these powerful entities shadow and imitate. He has control of them. However, back in Glasgow after his last bullet trick, his image on the mirror does not comfort him: "my face puffy from the night before, my skin pale from days spent indoors, my cheeks jowlier than they'd been in Berlin" (*TBT*, 93-94). There is no trick and no illusion left in his reflection now that the magic has gone. Dealing with self-perfection and mirrors inevitably requires at least a short reference to Lacanian mirror stage. As Lacan explains:

We have only to understand the mirror stage as *an identification*, in the full sense that analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image – whose predestination to this phase-effect is sufficiently indicated by the use, in analytic theory, of the ancient term *imago* (Lacan, 2000: 45, italics in the original).

However, William does not want to identify himself with the image in the mirror, where he sees himself but he does not recognise himself in his own image. Unknowingly, he has become his own *dopplegänger* as he has been framed within a wider picture than his bullet trick: he has metamorphosed from the active magician to just a passive assistant, an accessory to distract the perverted viewers of a real crime. As Sylvie eventually explains to William, "your reaction was central to the effect. [...] You couldn't have faked it" (*TBT*, 361). His metamorphosis is not only symbolical: he also undergoes a physical transformation into a hobo, a drunken tramp back in the streets of Glasgow, a wreck of a man that hardly resembles his previous self. If Ballesteros connects intertextually Poe's William Wilson with Captain

America when the latter fights his own double (Ballesteros, 2000: 73, my translation⁶⁵), Louise Welsh's William Wilson rather resembles a fallen superhero that has met his darkest side, his antagonist⁶⁶. He descends, then, into hell, a Glasgow unknown to common citizens where people live and die in the streets. Hobos without a family die ungrieved at the hands of teenagers with no respect for these almost non-human beings. As a *doppelgänger*, his existence poses the question of "how much [...] can one lose – individually, socially, nationally – and still remain a 'man'?" (Punter, 1996: 1). The fact that William becomes the ignorant witness in the murder of a tramp while he is sleeping next to him, which marks him as the only possible murderer, starts the process of awakening of his true self and the recovering control of the reflections in the mirror.

As a magician, William can split his assistant's body in two, though it is also an illusion performed with the mirrors he masters. He inflicts fake pain on Sylvie as she is apparently sawed in two by the merciless magician in front of an audience who experience the Fantastic and have suspended their belief – they know it is a trick but they also feel sympathy for this suffering girl – while her body does not split but doubles: "Sylvie's frightened face and Ulla's kicking feet" (*TBT*, 228). Sylvie's head and Ulla's body become one perfect girl that can be separated and become one again. William feels himself a magic version of doctor Frankenstein whose creature satisfies his darkest desires: "The thought of the women's closely packed flesh sent a thrill through me that had been absent in rehearsals" (*TBT*, 229). Besides that, as in *Frankenstein*, William plays with the audience's inability to decide between its 'reality' and 'falsity' (as with a counterfeit coin or a book)" (Hogle, 2001: 294). In fact, his splitting and reconstruction is only a trick, an illusion, but there are other magicians whose trick cannot be explained except as a transgressive behaviour that "does not deny limits or boundaries, rather [they] exceed them and thus completes them" (Jenks, 2003: 7). Monty the Magician also created a being formed of two different individuals, though here he becomes an integral part of the monster. He is another type of doctor Frankenstein who, rather than creating another creature,

⁶⁵ In the original: "El 'Capi' terminará [...] llegando a enfrentarse a su propio doble de los años 50 [...] cuyo principal referente intertextual cabe encontrarlo en el 'William Wilson' de Edgar Allan Poe" (Ballesteros, 2000: 73).

⁶⁶ Some cinematographic images of the *doppelgänger* in fallen superheroes are: Superman in *Superman III* (Lester, 1983), where, under the effects of kryptonite, he becomes an evil character and eventually splits in two. Spiderman in *Spiderman 3* (Raimi, 2007) wears his new (alien) costume until he realizes that it is a being of its own: Venom.

becomes part of the creature itself, as if he were the embodiment of the wrong popular belief that Frankenstein is actually the monster and the creator falls into popular oblivion. Cortés explains that society, in order to protect itself from the monsters, is divided between *the force of good* (which represents the continuity of the *status quo*) and the force of evil (which introduces an *irrational* behaviour that questions the foundations on which the social is based) in a perpetual battle (Cortés, 1997: 17, my translation⁶⁷). The monster created by Montgomery and Bill Noon is formed precisely of those two opposite sides of society: on the one hand a gangster-like character that is involved in activities of a very illegal nature and on the other hand a firm defender of law and order. They also share secrets that prove once again the duplicitous nature of reality. Montgomery's retirement without arresting Bill for any of his business seems apparently due to the fact that the police cannot always prove the truth of certain crimes. However, their relationship is based on a stronger bond: the existence of a pact of silence as both of them were involved in a crime during their youth. The legend of a runaway wife with a mysterious, unknown lover was not such. The lover was actually Montgomery and Gloria Noon never managed to escape: Bill and Montgomery were witnesses of her death and knowers of her burial place. No matter whether Montgomery is the legs or the head, the witness or the performer, he has played the trick of making a girl disappear. The challenging monster to society's *status quo* survives unharmed until the Frankenstein-like creature is split in two again after Bill's death. However, the shadow of the monster, as in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, "haunts this monster's creator with several losses of foundational meaning: the creature's distortions of Frankenstein's intentions and thus its independence from his original vision" (Hogle, 2001: 294). This acquired unreliability unveils respectable inspector Montgomery and shows his criminal side. That is why, even though he "admitted a lot in the hope that a show of honesty and contrition would validate his denial of involvement in Gloria's death. But the Crown charged him with murder and the jury agreed" (*TBT*, 356). Magic fades and leaves the man alone.

⁶⁷ In the original: "Estos seres diabólicos amenazan la unidad del grupo social y han de ser eliminados para reforzar la coherencia interna e impedir el cuestionamiento jerárquico. Así la sociedad, para protegerse, se divide entre *las fuerzas del bien* (aquellas que representan la continuidad del status quo) y *las fuerzas del mal* (las que introducen una conducta *irrational* que cuestiona las bases sobre las que se sustenta lo social) en perpetuo combate."

In *The Girl on the Stairs*, Petra and Tielo are twin siblings who share both a common past and a present in their own language. When they are with Jane, they both speak English so that she also feels included in their particular twin world. However, they “would switch to German, their own language” (*TGOTS*, 24) when they needed to talk about their private matters. In their shared past, Petra met in Tielo a person with whom she could come out of the closet and Tielo, in turn, identified with the gay scene her sisters moved in:

When Tielo and I were teenagers we started taking the S-Bahn into Berlin and going to gay clubs together. I’d come out to Tielo, but our parents still didn’t know. [...] Androgyny was in fashion: even the straight boys were wearing make-up and jewellery and dyeing their hair. I think part of Tielo wanted to be gay” (*TGOTS*, 81).

Now, in their forties, their connection is still as firm as always up to the point that, when Petra travels for business, Tielo is the one in charge of taking care of Jane, as she is about to deliver the child. To Tielo, Jane and her soon-to-be-born baby become a threat to his relation with his sister, as if they were drifting apart. That is why, in a conversation with Jane, he states that: “You know, I will be a father to your child when it needs one,” to which Jane answers: “Be an uncle to it, that’ll be enough” (*TGOTS*, 135). The pain of his separation from his sister makes him posit a doubt as to the sperm donor’s identity: “I’d proved my fertility and Petra liked the idea that you might have a child with some of her family genes. Even more than that, she liked the idea that the baby might look a bit like her” (*TGOTS*, 208). This test-tube incestuous relationships between the twin siblings resemble, despite its obvious differences, the description Hasan makes of the tradition in some African burial rites, where “the king marries his sister because he [...] may therefore not propagate himself in the children of strange women” (Hasan 2003: 2). Once Petra has been separated from her other half, which in turn has become Jane’s other half, he threatens to double himself in the baby the two women are expecting, as Jane is a strange woman. To Jane, Tielo is both a protecting and a menacing figure, a two-sided, Jekyll and Hyde character. According to Botting, the doubling in Stevenson’s *Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde* “does not establish or fix the boundaries of good and evil, self and other, but discloses the ambivalence of identity and the instability of the social, moral and scientific codes that manufacture distinctions” (Botting, 2002a: 142). Tielo is neither good nor bad, or rather he is good and bad all together. However, Jane’s “unnatural” pregnancy shows his instability towards what is coded as natural in the

world, even though this leads him to claim a biological paternity that trespasses the boundaries of the social codes that reject two siblings as the parents of a child. Pearson states that the incestuous relationship between Madeleine and Roderick in “The Fall of the House of Usher” is due to the fact that:

The reality that Roderick and Madeline created for themselves, their private universe and microcosm in the house provided a kind of reality for them in which they existed with their own rules and sexual practices. Only when the narrator arrives, a man from the world outside of the House of Usher, do the events start to unfold and ultimately their microcosm collapses (Pearson, 2009: 139).

Tielo and Petra, in turn, could be claimed to be another twenty-first-century version of the Ushers⁶⁸, but in this case they had decided to live their separate lives with their respective families. Eventually, he apologizes to Jane for his words, but Jane is not concerned about her baby’s potential father as Boy has two mothers, no matter whether Tielo is actually the father or not.

In his interview with Meikle, a friend of Lunan’s when they were both students, Murray Watson asks about a split in Lunan’s personality, to which Meikle answers: “Jekyll and Hyde? That would be convenient for your book, wouldn’t it? [...] But you could say Archie had two sides to him, the Glaswegian who wasn’t going to take any shit and the mystical islander. Neither of them was a perfect fit” (*NTB*, 33). In his notebook, he scribbles: “2 *personas, hard v mystical, but not J & H*” (*NTB*, 33, italics in the original). It should be noted that, as Cornwell notes, one of the most outstanding features of Stevenson’s creation is that “as everyone knows, ‘Jekyll and Hyde’ as a phrase has entered the language” (Cornwell, 1990: 95). Lunan’s complex personality does not fit the literary classification of tropes but once dead, he is able to possess an academic researcher and turn him into a literal trope: his own *doppelgänger*. Watson is ghostly possessed by Lunan and his body is used to play the Jekyll and Hyde duplicity that Lunan did not. Botting points out how Jekyll and Hyde use each other: “Hyde uses Jekyll to escape reprimand and punishment, while the latter preserves his respectable reputation and enjoys vicarious pleasures in the guise of the former” (Botting, 2002a: 142). In Murray’s case, his physical transformation turns him into an impersonation of Lunan. Christie notes that the fact when she asks him: “Have you deliberately styled yourself to look like Archie?” (*NTB*, 329), as it

⁶⁸ It has already been pointed out that the two siblings in *The Cutting Room* have the same names as the characters in Poe’s tale.

has already been said above. Lunan makes use of Watson's body to defeat both Christie and Fergus, the friends who betrayed him as they had a baby: Miranda. Murray, in turn, has fought the person Professor James describes as "your nemesis, of course. Professor Fergus Baine" (*NTB*, 212): he publishes Lunan's poetry book previously published by Fergus as if they were his own poems and Lunan's unpublished sci-fi novel. As Jack, his brother says, "you did what you set out to do. You resurrected Archie Lunan. Two posthumous books in the same year, that's bound to make a splash" (*NTB*, 388).

3.3.4. Vampires

If the previous section analysed the duplicity of characters and the construction of some characters' doubles, this section develops it to a certain extent as, according to Aguirre, the vampire, "as a haunter of individuals, he belongs [...] in the population of nineteenth-century *Doppelgängers*" (Aguirre, 1990: 135). A vampire searches for prey to satisfy their appetite or to create a lifelong companion, as in the case of Anne Rice's vampires in her Lestat's series. Vampires also add an element of some ambiguous sexuality, as in the case of some vampiric characters in Welsh's novels that are not interested in actually feeding from other humans – leaving the emotional feeding aside – but in penetrating bodies, in turning them into victims of a sudden sexual impulse that does not extend beyond the sexual act. On the other hand, there are many characters that are actually thirsty for real blood, as those men in the photos in *The Cutting Room*, McKindless, the audience of Sylvie's assassination in Berlin, or Marlowe's determination to kill Tamburlaine. Cavallaro provides a hint to explain the presence of the vampire in cultural representations, which also applies to the multiple appropriation of some vampiric characteristics in Welsh's novels: "the myth [of the vampire] has a proclivity to adapt itself with extraordinary versatility to the particular fears and beliefs of each specific age and society in which it manifests itself" (Cavallaro, 2002: 179). As mentioned above, Rilke, despite his zombie-like appearance, becomes the perfect impersonation of Nosferatu to Derek's eyes. But his vampirism does not only show in his physical appearance but also in the way he acts and preys. He is, as Ascari describes Edgar Allan Poe's Dupin, "an uncanny creature of the night, like the predatory vampire" (Ascari, 2009: 49). However, as opposed to Dupin, who was "also a super-hero like Batman, somebody who can pierce the

darkness of the city streets as well as of human hearts” (Ascari, 2009: 49), Rilke does only want to suck all the money out of the business together with Rose, her boss, even to the point of hiding Mrs McKindless’s death to profit from the auction of McKindless’s properties, in the same manner that he sucks his sexual prey. In the toilet, he cruises with Ross and there is no feeling involved but just extracting body fluids from each other: “He came first, spurting against the cistern, cream spunk on white porcelain. I cradled his wilting penis in my hand until I climaxed, sperm fountaining from me in quick muscle pulses; then dripping, slow and viscous, onto his black trousers” (*TCR*, 105). Rilke erases any trace of a self in his victims, thus turning them into objects to be used in order to satisfy his sexual appetite. When he follows Steenie, as he thinks he has got something about McKindless, he is physically attacked by him, though he manages to defend himself. In the attic he finds a paper and reads, amongst other things, the following facts:

Homosexuals fellate almost 100% of their sexual contacts & drink their semen. Semen contains every germ carried in the blood stream, it is the same as drinking raw human blood.

VAMPIRES!

Sperm penetrates the anal wall & dilutes the blood stream, making their urge for semen even stronger. 50% of male syphilis is carried by homosexuals (*TCR*, 179).

This association between homosexual practices and vampires points to what Hughes explains as the representation of the vampire of “the liberation of those sexual activities or desires that have been allegedly proscribed or censored in society or repressed within the self” (Hughes, 2001: 145). However, to Steenie, vampires/homosexuals do not represent a liberation of the self but rather its doom. Sex is related to vice and the “thirst” for bodily fluids is identified with a thirst for blood. On the other hand, there is a fact that is not false, which is the late twentieth and early twenty-first century relationship between unprotected sex, either oral or anal and the possibility of death or disease, though in Steenie’s paper it is misleadingly justified by some statistical data. If 50 % of male syphilis is carried by homosexuals, this means that the other 50 % is carried by heterosexuals, not to mention that there are also hetero- and homosexual women who are also carriers. As mentioned above, there exists a relationship between sexual acts and death, mainly between homosexual men in the popular imaginary. When dealing with anal sex, Bersani refers to the rectum as a grave “in which the masculine ideal (an ideal shared – differently – by men *and* women) of proud subjectivity is buried, then it should be celebrated for its

very potential for death” and which AIDS has literalized up to the point that “it may, finally, be in the gay man’s rectum that he demolishes his own perhaps otherwise uncontrollable identification with a murderous judgement against him” (Bersani, 1998: 222, italics in the original). The modern vampire/homosexual faces his own destruction not by being exposed to the light, but in the same fluids that nurture him in the different cruising areas. However, the risk may lead him to take precautions, but not to refuse a vampiric bite which is “at once oral and yet penetrative” (Hughes, 2001: 145).

In Rilke’s case, the fluid he extracts from his victims, and that he exchanges for his own, is not blood but semen. However, those men in the photographs he found at McKindless’s – and even McKindless himself – do actually feed their sexual impulses with real blood. Rilke’s investigations lead him to discover that the photos were taken in *Soleil et Désolé*, Sunshine and Tears, a popular bathhouse and brothel in Paris between 1893 and 1952. In it, pleasure and pain inhabited hand in hand within its walls. Amongst its rooms with themes of different nationalities, there stood out one called the “funerary chamber” where potential sexual vampires could prey on innocent girls as Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* did. Derek had already been conscious of the sexual link between women and blood when he sees the photos.

How many wan, prone women laid out like that? This is a step further, a step too far you might say, but it’s right slap bang in the tradition of Western art. The innocent drained of blood. The victim of vampires. “The death of a beautiful woman is the most beautiful thing in the world.” Edgar Allan Poe said that” (*TCR*, 80).

The relationship between female beauty and death reminds of Todd who, in *Gender, Art and Death*, asserts that:

imaginative pleasure is sexual, like a feast; feasts bring disease and death in their cups and dainties. The body of the woman in lust is a feast, the dish for every male glutton to eat of. Passion is sickly, gross and voluptuous, It inflames, exhausts, drives mad and relaxes to insentience. Lust is the desperate effort of lascivious weakness flying towards death (Todd, 1993: 107).

McKindless also appreciates the beauty in a dead woman and he tries to fulfil his sexual fantasy. His thirst for human blood turns him into a vampire who returns from his death, as he is officially deceased. Rilke, unknowingly, meets McKindless in the guise of Mr Grieve, the gardener and his first impression is that “the man looked like dead” (*TCR*, 198). What Rilke ignores is that McKindless is trying to buy Anne-Marie so that she lets him cut her and is about to achieve it, as he exerts a vampiric,

hypnotic influence on her. To Anne-Marie, McKindless becomes a vampiric impersonation of Hannibal Lecter whose vampiric and hypnotic gaze, as Picart and Greek note, “becomes inextricable from his blood-soaked, man-eating teeth (which is ambiguously placed in between cannibalism, an atavistic “real-life” horror, and vampirism, a supernatural horror)” (Picart and Greek, 2009: 48). In his attempt to trespass the boundary between life and death, and to taste real blood, vampiric McKindless is captured forever in the realm of the death, as Anne-Marie shoots him in their private show. The vampiric, sadomasochistic act between them had required both the participants’ consent before they started. However, as Edwards points out, “the question often raised here concerns the point at which notions of consent are insufficient, particularly in cases of sexual activity that either involve torture and long-term suffering or are in some way life-threatening” (Edwards, 2006: 49). In this particular case, Anne-Marie recovers her real self despite McKindless’s hypnotism and, rather than stating a clear “no” to him, she reacts as she would have if she had encountered a real vampire: protecting her life above all and killing the threatening monster.

In his labyrinthine life journey between London, Berlin and Glasgow, William travels from considering himself an impersonation of Professor Van Helsing when performing at the London club – “The music died and I cast my gaze across the room, grave as Vincent Price’s Van Helsing revealing the presence of vampires” (*TBT*, 26) – to impersonating Count Dracula himself in his final Bullet Trick in Berlin – “I’d affected an aristocratic accent, Christopher Lee as Count Dracula” (*TBT*, 318). In the labyrinthine map of his geographical and temporal journey, William comes closer and closer to the call of blood. When he first cuts Sylvie to recover the ring, he performs a gory show in front of the audience in which

fake blood from the gel packs concealed in the napkin’s lining spurted red and unforgiving over my gown, face and hair. I spluttered against its bitter tang and laughed like a crazy man. An echoing ripple of laughter came from the audience. They were with us now (*TBT*, 162).

His involvement with Sylvie, and the fact that he is unknowingly participating in Sylvie’s own version of the Bullet Trick, confronts him with real blood: that of Kolja, hit with a computer keyboard, and his own, after being punched. After this incident, he becomes unemployed in a city where nobody, except for Sylvie and Dix, knows him. He is being vampirized by a real vamp, Sylvie, and in his process of

becoming a vampire, “as Van Helsing suggests in *Dracula*, it is to become a ‘man-that-was,’ to be excluded from the company of those whose epistemological and communicational power permits them to perceive and proclaim themselves as ‘normal’” (Hughes, 2001: 150). He is becoming part of the world of shadows where a girl can be killed for money. There is something, though, that goes wrong in this process. When he is certain that he has really killed Sylvie, he does not take the money Dix gives him, a “money I thought was covered in your blood” (*TBT*, 361). His self rejects Sylvie’s vampiric influence, perhaps due to the fact that Sylvie herself was not looking for a lifelong partner. Moreover, his reflections on the mirror, his ability to unfold into many obeying *doppelgängers* also implies that he can be mirrored and, thus, he is not actually a vampire.

There are other vampires that are willing to find a lifelong partner, though they can also sacrifice them. In the very sexual act that Marlowe understands as Walsingham’s exercise of his *droit du seigneur*, he possesses Marlowe physically as:

the rough stabbing of the patron-of poetry’s cock which jarred this poet’s head against the bed’s head took on the rhythm of a gallop, until the Lord released with a groan, holding his pulsing prick firm between my lips because somehow satisfaction would not be complete until the mouth which reads him such fine verse consumed all Walsingham can give (*TMD*, 12).

Walshingham is exercising his sexual *droit of seigneur*, but he is also exercising his literary *droit*, as he recites some lines by Marlowe’s “Hero and Leander: The First Sestiad.” As Selinger points out, “to take a poem in your mouth is partly to submit to it, as Walshingham clearly has given in to the sheer force of Marlowe’s beauty, physical and poetic” (Selinger, 2006: 81). However, he also vampirizes Marlowe’s lines and changes the addressee of such amorous lines: “*And such as knew he was a man would say, / Marlowe, thou art made for amorous play*” (*TMD*, 13), where Marlowe stands for Leander. Thus, he does not only submit to the beauty of the poet and his poems but “as we quote from poems, as Walsingham does, in order to say what we want, we use them, we master them, and make both poet and poem our own” (Selinger, 2006: 81). The vampiric appropriation of Marlowe’s verse does actually have a physical effect of pain, not to mention the fact that Marlowe has been penetrated: “the memory made me smile, thought it twisted something like a fist in my belly” (*TMD*: 13). Walshingham is a vampire who does not necessarily feed on Marlowe’s blood. As Fonseca and Pulliam define, all vampires “must somehow feed

on their victim's vital essences: flesh, blood, emotion, love, even violence" (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 65). Further on, when Marlowe faces the decision of betraying Raleigh or becoming immortal, he learns that his vampiric patron might have been aware of his doomed fate: "now I wondered if he had bedded me because he knew it was the last time we would be together. Maybe he felt a rush of affection for his old protégé. Maybe he thought dead men don't tell tales" (*TMD*, 124). Marlowe realizes that Walshingham had not meant to transform him into an eternal being but just to avoid being implicated in any matter that involves Raleigh and/or the Privy Council. Furthermore, if Louise Welsh's Walshingham is, actually, a literary version of Francis Walshingham (1532 -1590), his vampirism would have further implications, as he would have also betrayed Marlowe even though he is pretending to protect him as he is considered to be one of the possible executors of Marlowe. Frost explains that:

[Francis] Walsingham himself has to become an arch double-dealer, inveigling his friend into a false sense of security and then killing him. However, the secret murder in the street on a dark night or even a typical Renaissance poisoning would have been far more appropriate and easy to hush up (Frost).

Walshingham's vampiric appropriation of Marlowe's lines is not the only example in Welsh. A young Archie Lunan vampirizes a poem in his writing course at University. However, Professor James unmasked him: "The first poem Lunan presented was plagiarised. It was badly written enough to be the work of an undergraduate so there's a good possibility I wouldn't have rumbled him, if I hadn't had a poem published in the same back issue of the journal he'd lifted it from" (*NTB*, 81-82). After that, Lunan became himself and wrote his own poetry, becoming a talented poet. However, he ignored the fact that he and his work would eventually be vampirized by a friend of his. Out of the four in the house in Lismore – Christie, Lunan, Robb and Fergus – only one aims at surviving the others' deaths: Fergus. When Watson discovers the diverse belongings and remains of Lunan in the University Library, there are references to "*Archie Lunan, Bobby Robb and Christie Graves, 7.30pm on Sunday 25th September at The Last Drop*" (*NTB*, 4, italics in the original). However, there is always a fourth presence in the group that is mentioned in the accounts of all the people who met them. As opposed to William's case and his reflections as a proof that he has not been turned into a vampire, as explained before, this invisible presence, which cannot be seen as it escapes any lens, be it photographic or figurative –as some notes that do not mention him -, leaves no trace of his

existence. In the darkness that surrounds his final battle with Christie in Lismore, he shows himself as a true vampire: “His shadow stretched towards them, tall and thin. He’d abandoned his Barbour jacket for a long raincoat which fell in skirted folds to his ankles, giving him the outline of a Victorian hunter” (*NTB*, 354). He could be mistaken at first as a reworking of Professor Van Helsing, a modern Victorian vampire-hunter, but he is not. In Christie’s unpublished memories, she describes his group as follows: “By that time we were a trio plus one. That extra man was vital to our group; Bobby was Renfield to our Dracula. We thought he was harmless” (*NTB*, 336). Renfield, who is one of Stoker’s characters in *Dracula*, has also been coined as a term that describes, according to www.urbandictionary.com, “a human enabler, assistant, patsy or slave to a psychopath. Just as Milo Renfield is a slave to the psychopath Dracula from the novel” and “a person who consumes human blood or allows theirs to be consumed (or both), in the sad delusion that this brings them closer to becoming a vampire; also known as vampire wannabe” (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014). If Lunan turned out to be a ghostly presence and Christie is a witch – as explained below –, “our Dracula” can only be Fergus, the one who remained invisible without any trace from the past. After Lunan’s death, he vampirizes his poems but, in contrast to Walshingham, he erases any trace of Lunan; when Watson reads Fergus’s poetry book, sent to him by James to the island of Lismore, he sees his handsome look in the back cover photo and, reading the poems, he realizes that “these poems were written by Archie Lunan” (*NTB*, 373). Possessed Watson becomes then the van Helsing that gives Fergus the final blow, the one who drives a stake into his heart by republishing the poetry book with Lunan’s name on its cover.

Vampirism in *The Girl on the Stairs* proves more complex than in other novels, as characters suspect others of being vampires. Jane’s first impression of Dr Mann reminds her of a fairy tale “about a mother who had gone to lift her baby from its cradle and found it transformed into a wrinkled old man. In the story the mother had let the old man drink from her breasts, until he drained her dry” (*TGOTS*, 21). Maria, one of the prostitutes who are clients to Dr Mann, tells Jane that Anna’s style shows a certain inclination in her to become a prostitute: “Her make-up, those high heels she loves; all things that prostitutes would wear” (*TGOTS*, 175). This image, together with the strong involvement on the men that know her turns her less into a Lolita – a Berlin 13-year-old nymphet – than into a vamp, “a woman who uses her sex appeal to entrap and exploit men”, according to www.thefreedictionary.com (Last

accessed on 22nd February, 2014). Her vamp, burlesque style makes her look older, “a young woman; she will be eighteen on her next birthday” (*TGOTS*, 226) according to Father Walter, who cannot believe her true age. Herr Becker considers that it is Jane who is a vampire: “I’ve watched the way you look at her, like a vampire” (*TGOTS*, 239). Actually, it is her who tastes Alban’s blood as he cups his hand over her mouth: “Jane sank her teeth into his palm, biting until she tasted blood” (*TGOTS*, 253) and reworks the fairy tale of the old man, a new, modern, Berlin version with a Scottish touch: she cuts his artery and lets him bleed to death. Jane becomes a one night vampire in her need to protect herself and her baby, a temporal vampiric state that, according to Fonseca and Pulliam, appeals: “to both sides of the human experience, both the times when we need to feel strong and invulnerable and the times when we feel weak and vulnerable and seek to deal with this vulnerability vicariously” (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 66).

3.3.5. Demons and magic

In her book *Demonic Texts and Textual Demons*, Mäyra highlights the heterogeneous iconography of demons, as “they may adopt whatever monstrous attributes suit the occasion. In that sense, they are formless” (Mäyra, 1999: 32), though there are some tendencies to present them as human forms with some animal features, such as horns, wings, etc. This combination turns demons into a violation “of the basic boundaries that produce identity; the separation of the human ‘us’ and the animalistic ‘them’ is presented as dangerously confounded in this distorted figure” (Mäyra, 1999: 33). Welsh’s novels present witches and magicians whose power does not derive from God, children who are intended to be possessed by demons – even though they rebel and fight against their fate – , journeys into Hell, the presence of the Devil himself and even of some malign sect-like audience that greet, embrace and even applaud evil.

In her move to Berlin with Petra, her *Lebenspartner*, Jane expects to share her life with her new family in a nice apartment in Berlin. It is precisely there where she will find, as Cavallaro notes, that “the realm of Gothicity, the family and its dwelling are often coterminous” (Cavallaro, 2002: 146). Once installed in her idyllic life, she is fully unaware that it is about to undergo a profound change. Her neighbours, Dr Alban, his daughter Anna and the elderly Herr and Frau Becker, turn her life into a

modern, German version of Ira Levin's – or Roman Polanski's – *Rosemary's Baby*. In her article devoted to *Rosemary's Baby*, Mäyra describes Rosemary's infatuation by the Bramford building as:

The unknown is terrifying, but it is also tempting. The dark, elephantine structure of Bramford is alluring to Rosemary: it has a name, and a history. The clinical anonymity of modern apartments is terrifying to her because it signifies a lack of identity – or lack of history. [...] Bramford is not only an old building; it has also old occupants. The conflict between the young and the old is very noticeable in this environment. Rosemary becomes an emphatically separate and isolated character, sharply contrasted to all the others (Mäyra, 1999: 131).

Even Petra and her twin brother, Tielo, doubt her perception of reality. In fact, Jane suffers from estrangement after moving, not just to a city, but to a country where she has no family – except for her *lebenspartner* – and does not master its language. Besides that, the lurking traces of Berlin's recent history are present in the very same house Berliners inhabit. In her new flat, as Rosemary, she initially undergoes a physical change that turns her from plain Jane into a sexually attractive woman. "Pregnancy might have made her breasts too tender to touch, but they had ripened to glamour-model proportions. She might as well show them off" (*TGOTS*, 13). Petra and Jane are both mothers, but it is only Jane who is changing not only physically but also psychologically. The genderless baby that Petra refers to as a "him", probably as a gender slip, is little by little growing an individual self within her. Petra, as her *lebenspartner*, should worry "about me [Jane] and the baby" (*TGOTS*, 77). When Petra travels to Vienna, Jane faces her pregnancy on her own, the pregnant mother in the wicked house. Her neighbours act strangely: Dr Alban tries to drug – and kill – her, Herr Becker paints homophobic comments on her door, her money to survive while Petra is away is stolen from her flat. Her perseverance in discovering the truth and all the opposition she encounters resembles the "powerful tension between Rosemary's developing initiative and the efforts of the conspirators to keep her under control" (Mäyra, 1999: 138). Despite her neighbours' attempts to silence her, and besides her chaotic situation with no food and an untidy apartment, she feels she is not just a mother expecting a baby. When Tielo suggests her to move with his family so they can look after her, she refuses because "maybe I'm nesting" (*TGOTS*, 205). Her pregnancy does not resemble Rosemary's, as she has not been made pregnant by the Devil. Mark Rose describes as typically characteristic of science fiction the "feelings of self-alienation typically express themselves as narratives of

metamorphosis, stories of the transformation of men into something less than or more than human” (Rose, 1981: 179). She is no longer Jane but rather resembles a character in *Alien the Eighth Passenger* (Ridley Scott, 1979) who is nesting a baby monster. It was part of her, her ovule, but it is also part of some strange sperm donor – or perhaps Tielo’s. It is inside her but it is not her. Besides that, she still looks like Jane, but her personality has changed. It is, as Seed describes, “as if one species has subverted another in a process of invasion which starts with domestic space and which culminates in the usurpation of the very citadel of the self – the human body” (Seed, 1996: 152). When Jane is at the church, she feels her baby kicking hard on her ribs and ignores why it is doing so: is it out of joy or distress? In an Alien fashion, she wonders “if babies in the womb ever broke their mother’s ribs. A child who could do that would surely be a survivor” (*TGOTS*, 216). Piñeiro points out that, in those narratives focussed on the body of a woman, it can be observed that there is a strong anxiety on creativity, giving birth and all that is related to the world of maternity (Piñeiro Gil, 2013: 86, my translation⁶⁹). To Jane, her baby is not a human being but a “little monster” (*TGOTS*, 217) that she carries inside. They both let each other live: she feeds and protects it and it does not kill her in return. Maternity is usually perceived as a joyous moment of giving life to a child, but it also poses the death threat to the mother and/or the child if they do not act jointly to protect and care for each other. As Ute, Tielos’s wife says, “it was Boy that saved her” (*TGOTS*, 275), but Boy also claims for his freedom in return for salvation and he is born a month before expected. After Alban’s death, she feels wetness after her membrane’s rupture. To her this is not accidental but due to the fact that “the child was losing patience with the darkness of its universe and preparing to break free earlier than expected” (*TGOTS*, 259-260). But he has to wait for a few hours till she is able to tell Anna her truth about Anna’s father: he killed her mother. Telling her seems to be simply unveiling the truth so that Anna opened her eyes and faced it, but it actually makes her close them forever as she falls into the well of the stairs. Perhaps Greta Mann or Father Walter fell metaphorically into Hell, but Anna’s fall is literal. Jane’s telling cannot be considered as innocent. Anna has constantly attacked Jane by claiming the importance of having a father, no matter how good or bad he is. “My father loves me better than

⁶⁹ In the original: “En los relatos que se centran en el cuerpo de la mujer [...] se observa que se produce una ansiedad sobre la creatividad, el parto y todo lo relacionado con el mundo de la maternidad” (Piñeiro Gil, 2013: 86).

any mother would. That's why I feel so sorry for your baby" (*TGOTS*, 128). If that had been addressed to plain Jane, that would have hurt her – or not. But it was addressed to pregnant Jane, the woman-and-a-child hybrid, and that makes a difference. She seems to act out of her will as if maternal instinct overcame her reason. It is plausible, then, that hybrid Jane wanted that the last words Anna heard were the child's revenge for having been insulted, as it is actually going to have two mothers. It is not, then, that alienation, as Seed claims, "the change from self into other, can be sometimes traced in the progression of individual sentences" (Seed, 1996: 153). It is actually a single sentence that shows such a change from concerned Jane into Anna's demise.

In this German Bramford-like building, Jane is not possessed by the Devil, but this does not mean the Devil is not present. When Fonseca and Pulliam deal with stories of demonic possession, they point out that most of them feature Catholics, though there are also a few that feature Protestants. According to them, this is due to the fact that:

Catholicism was at one point considered the universal version of Christianity and is therefore a good "default" religion for horror; perhaps it is because Catholicism is more ritual-oriented than other Christian sects, making it the perfect foil (polar opposite) of Satanism, which also values ritual; or perhaps it is because the original possession narratives were produced by a culture that demonized Catholicism, and the tradition or formula simply was continued by later writers (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 100).

Actually, there exists a modern demonization of Catholicism that Berlin's *Sebastiankirche* cannot escape. As Jane tells Father Walter, "Catholic Church has become a byword for paedophiles" (*TGOTS*, 224). As Jane is aware, the Church grants forgiveness to some sinners and refuse it to others in the name of God. God is presented, then, as a father that punishes some sinners to Hell, such as Father Walter or Greta Mann, but allows his other children to commit crimes and remain unpunished if they confess, regardless of the fact that they have committed punishable crimes on Earth. When Jane interrogates Father Walter about what the previous Father knew about Anna and her father, he answers: "you know that if he had [mentioned they way Alban was with Anna], I would not be permitted to discuss it with you" (*TGOTS*, 223). Even Herr Becker, father of two German boys with his wife, committed a sin by having an affair – and obviously sex – with Greta and is positive about the fact of being Anna's real father. He tries to become a father figure

to her, but he eventually abuses her. Jane listens horrified to how Anna excuses all the men that have turned her into a sex victim and wonders “It was as if some girls were marked with a secret brand that only abusers could see” (*TGOTS*, 265). They unknowingly bear the mark of the Devil: Father Engler, who was in the *kirke* before Father Walter, considered Anna as being possessed by the Devil, though she was just a child whose mother had disappeared and that “adopted a grave and said it was her mother’s” (*TGOTS*, 222). To him, the Devil was impersonated in all the prostitutes that came to the church in order to get some spiritual comfort but he had sex with them. He probably had sex with Anna too, a Devil temptress, daughter of a prostitute. To him, Anna was possessed by the Devil and tormented him because “the biggest prize the Devil can win is the soul of a good man” (*TGOTS*, 224). Father God tests some good men and these demonize the objects of abuse as responsible for that abuse.

Christie, the lonely writer that has lived in her house on the island of Lismore, defines herself as “a spellbinder” (*NTB*, 364), a witch that enchants all the men she is in contact with. Actually, her being a witch on an island and mother of a baby girl called Miranda inevitably makes of her a female version of Prospero. On her island, she exercises her power and her control on the spirit of Archie Lunan. Once she dies, the spirit is freed and his work is published. Being a witch clearly connects with the symbolism of triangles and the multiple triangulations that are present throughout the novel. When Murray Watson starts his research on Lunan’s papers at the National Library, he finds “a naïve drawing done in green felt-tip of a woman with a triangular dress for a body” (*NTB*, 3-4). As the novel progresses, it proves obvious that the picture represents Christie. It should also be noted that she is drawn from a triangle, which is a symbol of witchcraft that, according to www.cyberwitchcraft.com, is:

a purely feminine symbol. The three points represent the Triple Goddess of Maiden, Mother, and Crone. The bristles of the broom form a triangle. Inverted, it is the female pubic area. The triangle is a symbol of strength. It cannot be crushed as the narrow point is supported by the wide base (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

Throughout her life, Christie has been the Maiden, the Mother and the Crone. She has exercised her sexuality actively and she has survived the attack of her foe, Fergus. During her stay at the island, she has exerted a process of gothicization on her own life by recounting her personal experiences in her books, such as *Sacrifice*, or reworking other gothic stories, such as “The Monkey’s Paw” by W. W. Jacobs, so that they fit her own life. To Murray Watson, in contrast, she is simply “a jinx, a

magnet for the demisuicides” (*NTB*, 364). Archie kills himself after knowing he had been betrayed by both Christie and Fergus. Dr Garrett crashes his car against the only tree on the road because he was “into risk-taking” (*NTB*, 364). Fergus falls into a limekiln on a journey straight into hell when trying to attack her. Even Murray makes an unsuccessful attempt at killing himself after witnessing Christie’s suicide, partly due to the fact that he cannot stand the possibility of being criminally involved in all those deaths, partly because he cannot cope with such a coarse reality. Christie’s and Fergus’s versions of Miranda’s death depict two different Christies: the mother that accidentally let her baby die or the evil witch that performed a human sacrifice and chopped up her baby girl. Death silences the truth about Miranda’s death, but her bones, once unburied, reveal another hidden truth: the fact that Fergus was her father and, therefore, he was also involved in her death. If Miranda had “become a scapegoat, callously delivered into perilous situations, sacrificed so that the sins of adult society may be redeemed and its so-called certainties may be allowed to thrive unabated” (Cavallaro, 2002: 13), her return from among the Dead aims at positing some justice on her murder and burial.

In *The Bullet Trick*, there are no witches but magicians. In her analysis of *The Escape Artist*, Emma Parker notes that “for women, the subversive or empowering potential of magic is compromised by its androcentricism. [...] while several women perform magic in the novel, the status of magician is reserved for men” (Parker, 2011: 697). In Welsh’s novel there appear two magicians, William and Montgomery, and an apprentice magician, Sylvie, William’s assistant. However, their case is different, as Sylvie, who plays the cut in half, shot-to-death assistant, has become, unnoticed in William’s eyes, a magician who eventually outshines her master. Her appropriation of the bullet trick does not only save her life but also subversively turns a male into her assistant. She has learnt that a magic trick implies a suspension of belief on behalf of the observer: despite the certainty that everything has a rational explanation, the success of a trick lies in trespassing that logical barrier and immersing the viewer in the world of the uncanny, the supernatural. “It’s just an act” (*TBT*, 237), as William explains. However, as he will learn, it is much more than an act. Parker explains that magic “articulates the unspeakable trauma of the past. [...] If magic is a symptom of trauma, it simultaneously offers a means of survival” (Parker, 2011: 692). The past trauma, in this case, is narrated in the last pages of the novel despite the fact that it actually took place at the beginning of William’s story. His trauma, which started

during his stay at the Schall und Rauch, *Cabaret Erotisch*, in Berlin, teaches him two things: that there are real tricks that do not need magic and that there are also illusions that blur people's minds outside the realm of the performance. By performing his final bullet trick, William agrees to trick a blood-thirsty audience willing to pay for an onstage assassination of Sylvie, an "innocent" woman, though he is horrified at the thought of it. He would rather decline all his responsibility in the trick, though he is certain there is only a slight possibility of really killing Sylvie. That is the reason why he suggests the possibility of reversing roles: he would be the one shot but, as Sylvie explains, "You know as well as I do that no one's going to pay big money to watch you getting shot. What they want is the chance to see a pretty lady take a bullet right between the eyes" (*TBT*, 296). Sylvie knows that "women, when allowed on stage at all, are relegated to the traditional female role of glamorous assistant" (Parker, 2011: 697). And Sylvie accepts such a role – apparently. Unknowingly, William is being framed within a wider picture than his bullet trick: he has metamorphosed from the active magician to just a passive assistant, an accessory to distract the perverted viewers of a real crime. As it has previously been quoted in this section, Sylvie eventually explains to William that his reaction was so central to the effect that he could not have faked it (*TBT*, 361). His framing takes place in front of an anonymous audience that, as opposed to those he is used to, willing to suspend their belief in order to enjoy a show, "are not holidaymakers who have wandered off the tourist trail" (*TBT*, 322). The crowd who are expecting a human sacrifice resembles, indeed, the dark worshippers that "see their brand of black magic as an extension of their faith" (Fonseca and Pulliam, 1999: 6). However, their faith here is not so much religious as monetary; as Dix explains to William when he wants to know who is willing to pay to see Sylvie dead: "What does it matter who they are? Sometimes it's better not to know these things. It's a lot of money. It could solve all your problems" (*TBT*, 291). These spectators, as demonic worshipers, situate themselves "ambiguously at the limits of categorical oppositions, as 'me/not me,' 'inside/outside,' 'living/dead.'" The demonic tradition has been eager to exploit all of these. (Mäyra, 1999: 34). With money, they buy their ambiguous position within society and their reification of humans, erasing in them any trace of grievability.

This demonic ritual of blood is also present in the photograph of the unknown girl in McKindless's attic in *The Cutting Room*, where "there are three people, two men and a woman; [...] The men wear monks' habits, coarse robes secured by cord,

long-sleeved and hooded. The hoods throw shadows across their faces, concealing their features” (*TCR*, 35). These quasi-satanic men in monks’ robes are attracted to performing a sacrifice and, besides, shoot it with a camera. The photographs remain an ambivalent object: an object of sexual desire, as in McKindless’ case, but also of uneasiness, as in Rilke’s. It becomes, as Mäyra explains, one of those “things that violate the boundaries of some deep conceptual schemes” and “evoke specially intense reactions” (Mäyra, 1999: 34). Rilke’s experiencing of the demonic becomes “an obsession, because it focuses on something else, something mysteriously inarticulate that lies behind the analogy between death and photography” (Sage, 2011: 73). McKindless, on the other hand, becomes obsessed with the photo up to the point of attempting a performance with Anne-Marie, but the vampiric creature, as mentioned above, is shot by her.

Marlowe also confronts the Privy Council, another demonic-like audience, but as opposed to William or Rilke, he has not only met the Devil, but he has also given him words. One of his most famous plays was *Faustus*, and in his London performance, “some said Lucifer himself attended, curious to see how he was rendered” (*TMD*, 3), a curiosity probably due to the fact that “troublesome and often obnoxious, demons nevertheless continue to figure in our nightmares and even in such waking fantasies as might be granted the name of art” (Mäyra, 1999: 1). It is attractive art on the one hand but, on the other, “it is the Devil speaking, after all” (Mäyra, 1999: 4).

The importance in Welsh’s novels of this demonization of characters is such that, most of them share the same doom: in some moment of their existence, McKindless, Blaize, Montgomery, Fergus, Robb, Dr Mann, Greta or Anna fall into Hell, regardless of whether it is symbolic, real or both. The surviving characters, in turn, can only wonder whether the Hell these demonic, vampiric or ghostly selves encountered in their gothic time-space journey fall into is, in fact, too different to the world they are inhabiting. Quoting Marlowe’s words again, “Hell is on this earth and we are in it” (*TMD*, 78).

4. THE QUEER LABYRINTHS

Before engaging with the labyrinths present in the act of gazing, with the triangulation of desires and with the new labyrinthine femininities, it is well to describe some of the basic aspects that Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick consider key elements to grasp the difference between the concepts of gender and sex. In her groundbreaking book, *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler establishes some concepts that she later develops, and even corrects or specifies in her *Bodies that Matter* (1993). She starts from the dissociation of the cause-effect relationship between sex and gender by pointing out that “gender is culturally constructed” (Butler, 1990: 6) and, therefore, an independent, free-floating artifice that, as a consequence, complicates the monolithic understanding of sex as a fixed notion. As she exemplifies, “*man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one” (Butler, 1990: 6, italics in the original). Bodies, as it will be analysed in this section, are both gendered and sexed and, therefore, signified, though they are not blank surfaces on which to inscribe sex and gender: they are “a set of boundaries, individual and social, politically signified and maintained” (Butler, 1990: 33). Besides, Butler claims that it is rather simplistic to equate sex with nature and gender with culture, as gender “is also the discursive/cultural means by which ‘sexed nature’ or ‘a natural sex’ is produced and established as ‘prediscursive,’ prior to culture, a politically neutral surface *on which* culture acts” (Butler, 1990: 7, italics in the original). This implies that sex is also culturally construed and, therefore, it is not possible to state that sex refers to a primordial category that precedes any social order. She also reinforces this idea when she states that “sex will be shown to be a performatively enacted signification (and hence not “to be)” (Butler, 1990: 33). It is important to remark that, based on this construed prediscursive nature of sex, most of the people that can find accommodation within the term “queer” are perceived as people with a failed gender – as seen in Section 2 of this research – as if sex were a fixed, stable category and gender were applied on sex either with success or failure. These people are those Butler refers to as “incoherent” or “discontinuous” gendered beings as opposed to those that are “intelligible.” The latter are defined as “those which in some sense institute and maintain relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice and desire” (Butler, 1990: 17). Such intelligibility, which implies the

heterosexualization of desire, reinforces the connection between masculine and male in opposition to feminine and female. Furthermore, the “spectres of discontinuity and incoherence” in the intelligible discourse, rather than threatening it, can only be thinkable within the existing norms and thus “constantly prohibited and produced by the very laws that seek to establish casual or expressive lines of connection among biological sex, culturally constituted genders, and the “expression” or “effect” of both in the manifestation of sexual desire through sexual practice” (Butler, 1990: 17). In other words, some cultural configurations of gender are considered as “real” and “hegemonic” despite the fact that such a privileged position is the result of its performativity. Gender is thus engaged in a complex performative act in which what is apparently considered as the expressions of gender, its results, does actually constitute gender itself. And it is precisely this what makes Sedgwick wonder why the category of “sexual orientation” is constituted on the gender of the object choice while there are numerous dimensions that differentiate one person from another, “dimensions that include preference for certain acts, certain zones or sensations, certain physical types, a certain frequency, certain symbolic investments, certain relations of age or power, a certain species, a certain number of participants, and so on” (Sedgwick, 1990: 8).

In his book, *Sex, Literature and Censorship*, Dollimore develops Sedgwick’s concern by stressing the obsession in the binary division between homosexual and heterosexual people according to the sex and/or gender of their (desired) partners while there are other issues in the modern context of AIDS that would allow further classifications by considering, for example, penetrative sex. As he notes:

if sexually transmitted disease cannot be controlled it may even be that a ‘straight’ and ‘gay’ pair doing penetrative sex might be classified as more alike than (for example) two gay pairs in which one is doing penetrative sex and the other is not. Likewise with gay and straight people practising auto-eroticism rather than interpersonal eroticism (Dollimore, 2001: 18).

However, this possible classification hinted at by Dollimore is, unfortunately, far from being real in present time as, following his proposal of classification into penetrative and not penetrative, AIDS is still perceived to be a gay disease. As a recent example of this, Marco Feliciano, appointed to run the Human Rights and Minority Commission in Brazil, has recently stated that “AIDS is a gay cancer” (Roberts, 2013). Opinions, such as his, show the surprisingly prevalence of some

myths and misunderstandings on the true nature of this disease and the problems that arises from the fact that institutions, which should educate people on how to fight AIDS, emit wrong messages. In opposition to Feliciano's remark, it should be remarked how many webpages and blogs on AIDS, such as "HIV AIDS CURE" focus on the true issues of the disease: "the need of the hour is to spread education in regard to HIV/AIDS and to protect your self from getting infected with the virus, irrespective of whether you are straight or you are gay⁷⁰" (2011) (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

Returning to the relation between gender and sex, when subverting the assumptions that gender operates on sex, understood as the reality before the individual and social significations, it is possible to discover that the apparent reality and factuality of sex are, in fact, "phantasmatic constructions [...] that bodies are compelled to approximate, but never can" (Butler, 1990: 146). It is no chance that Butler makes use of the adjective "phantasmatic." On the one hand, these constructions acquire a supernatural nature that implies their impossibility to be fulfilled in the real world. On the other hand, they become haunting "entities" that, despite the fact that they are lingering, remain unnoticed by most people, within the category of factual reality. As in the case of the ghosts in the previous chapter, one must be conscious of their existence and, thus, either assume it and attempt to approximate them or to subvert them. In the latter case, one can *act* gender by "splitting, self-parody, self-criticism, and those hyperbolic exhibitions of 'the natural' that, in their very exaggeration, reveal its fundamentally phantasmatic status" (Butler, 1990: 146-147). When Rose and Rilke in *The Cutting Room* are preparing to go to The Chelsea Lounge on their TV night, Rose mentions the uneasiness she feels with Leslie when he is in drag. As she says: "I'm never sure if he's just making fun of women" (*TCR*, 97). In Leslie's hyperbolic performance of a woman, he is also signaling the construction of what Rose takes for granted as female and feminine. Leslie becomes, thus, a phantasmatic presence that Rose reflects on, identifies with and rejects. In other words, Leslie becomes an abject to Rose. Besides, to Rose "for all that Leslie dresses like a woman, I don't know that he likes them" (*TCR*, 97). On the one hand, when she sees Leslie in drag, she sees a man in women's clothes: her

⁷⁰ In <http://aidshivcure.blogspot.com.es/2011/10/gay-men-and-hiv-aids-facts.html> (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

understanding of “sex” correlates with what Sedgwick explains as a former meaning of sex:

“Sex” has had the meaning of a certain group of irreducible, biological differentiations between members of the species *Homo sapiens* who have XX and those who have XY chromosomes. These include (or are ordinarily thought to include) more or less marked dimorphisms of genital formation, hair growth (in populations that have body hair), fat distribution, hormonal function, and reproductive capacity. “Sex” in this sense [...] is seen as the relatively minimal raw materials on which is then based the social construction of *gender* (Sedgwick, 1990: 28).

To Rose, talking to a XY-chromosomed person dressed as an XX-chromosomed faces her with the fact that, probably, she has also been informed by the very same phantasmatic constructions that Leslie is making use of in his drag performance. Rose is described as follows:

if Maria Callas and Paloma Picasso had married and had a daughter she would look like Rose. Black hair scraped back from her face, pale skin, lips painted torture red. She smokes Dunhill, drinks at least one bottle of red wine a night, wears black and has never married (*TCR*, 11).

Her appearance is that of the new burlesque ‘look,’ which, as will be dealt with below, also signals the construction of the femininity it presents. Rose identifies with the image that Leslie presents of women but at the same time feels certain abjection in such identification. She feels her own construction on her female sex is not exclusive to those who share the XY chromosome. The binarism of male/female is open, then, “to many other binarisms whose apparent connection to chromosomal sex will often be exiguous or non-existent” (Sedgwick, 1990: 28). Returning to Rose’s remark, “I don’t know that he [Leslie] likes them [women]” proves an ambiguous statement which may refer to Leslie’s sexual ambiguity – as he may well be a gay or a heterosexual man in drag, for whom women may or may not be an object of sexual desire – or to the fact that Rose sees in Leslie’s subversive act, against the “real” and the “factic” in sex, a misogynistic parody and mockery of the correspondence of female and feminine. She feels unease as her understanding of the relationship between sex and gender has not undergone any process of questioning. If it had, it would probably resemble what Sedgwick explains in the following manner: “Even usages involving the sex/gender system” within feminist theory are able to use “sex/gender” only to delineate a problematical *space* rather than a crisp distinction” (Sedgwick, 1990: 29). This problematic space opens up the possibilities to people

who want to subvert the assumed categories and show that binary concepts do not only exclude each other – as in the case of male and female – but also many other multiple combinations with each other, or with any other category. By subverting the phantasmatic construction, constructed bodies are “liberated, neither to its ‘natural’ past, nor to its original pleasures, but to an open future of cultural possibilities” (Butler, 1990: 93). Once in the Chelsea Lounge, all the men in drag are referred to as “girls.” Besides, as Rilke notes, “most of the girls are not gay” (*TCR*, 102). The creation of new possibilities does undermine any fixed, fictitious category that proposes a one-to-one relation between sex and gender. In order to do so, these possibilities, though, also have to escape from the constrictions of some performative acts of language that set boundaries on the individuals from the moment they are born and named. In *The Girl on the Stairs*, Petra tells her *lebenspartner* Jane that “our genius is very lucky to have you as one of its mothers. I can’t wait to hear the stories you tell it” (*TGOTS*, 5). This “genius,” the “it” Petra is referring to is their still unborn child. As it has got no name, it is still not girled or boyed and referred to, thus, as a genderless, sexless “it”. However, despite this apparent awareness of the importance of not gendering and sexing the body matter of the baby, which is not a site or surface but “*a process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface*” (Butler, 1993a: 9, italics in the original), Petra cannot help assigning both a sex and a gender to the baby. After the first incident with Dr Mann and Anna, Jane feels upset and they have the following conversation:

‘He’s getting stronger all the time.’
‘He or she.’
‘He or she is getting stronger all the time.’
‘What does it sound like?’
[...] ‘I think he is singing’ (*TGOTS*, 51).

While Jane still feels that, protected in her womb, there is no need for the child to be exposed to the gendered, sexed society to which it is just in the process of belonging, though not yet, Petra is already inscribing it into the realm of the male/masculine – “he” – or at least as one of the terms in the binary opposition “he or she.” The closer the moment of birth is, the more gendered/sexed the baby is for/by Petra. While she is in Vienna, she phones and only asks about the baby, with a doubly upsetting effect on Jane: “Was he moving a lot? *He*, it was always he. Had Jane been playing him music? Was she sticking to the diet they’d agreed?” (*TGOTS*, 143). On

the one hand, Petra's only concerned about Jane inasmuch as she is the bearer of the baby, ignoring the hard time Jane is actually having as a single mother in her last weeks of pregnancy. On the other, her insistence on the use of "he" to refer to the baby annoys Jane up to the point of smoking a cigarette, though she knows she should not. When the baby is born, it is actually a boy, "*our boy*, hers and Petra's, nobody else's" (*TGOTS*, 274, italics in the original), as Petra expected. His gendering and sexing after his birth seems to distort somehow Butler's remark on the moment a doctor assigns a gender on a baby after seeing its genitalia.

Consider the medical interpellation which [...] shifts an infant from an 'it' to a 'she' or a 'he,' and in that naming, the girl is 'girled,' brought into the domain of language and kinship through the interpellation of gender. [...] The naming is at once the setting of a boundary, and also the repeated inculcation of a norm (Butler, 1993a: 7, 8).

In a manner that resembles the difference between causality and casuality in order to explain the supernatural in fantastic tales, one may wonder whether the baby is born a boy as a causal consequence of the previous gendering by one of his mothers or as a casual consequences and it could also have been a girl, had the chromosomes combined in an XX. Besides, there is some literalness similar to that which may take place in gothic tales: the doctor does not only name the body when he states that "It's a boy": he is actually naming the baby. "She takes Boy with her" (*TGOTS*, 277). If Butler explains that sex is "not simply what one has, or a static description of what one is: it will be one of the norms by which the 'one' becomes viable at all, that which qualifies a body for life within the domain of cultural intelligibility" (Butler, 1993a: 2), in Boy's case he is a boy, he has a boy's body and he will be read as a boy from the very moment he is called by his name. Besides, he bears the attributes of a masculine male in his name, but his masculinity will differ from other masculinities. He is the Boy in a female, lesbian family, with apparently little risk of suffering from being castrated by the father in a Freudian manner. Boy is just an example of what Butler means when she writes that "genders can be neither true nor false, neither real nor apparent, neither original nor derived. [...] genders can also be rendered thoroughly and radically *incredible* (Butler, 1990: 141, italics in the original).

The importance of naming in the gendering/sexing process of a boy acquires a more complicated twist in the already mentioned case of Leslie, the disquieting transvestite, to Rose. Leslie is a man who dresses as a woman, regardless of his sexual

orientation. In a sense, he subverts any fixed, preconceived notion of what being a male and a woman is. Moreover, his very own name may be used as a gender weapon to show the illusionary constructions of sex and gender. Leslie may refer both to a boy and a girl.⁷¹ Rilke is aware of the constructive possibilities of Leslie. When he describes his physical appearance, Rilke remarks that “dressed, from a distance, he can be anyone you want him to be” (*TCR*, 52). It could also be added that he can be anyone *he* wants *himself* to be. If, according to Butler:

the practice by which gendering occurs, the embodying of norms, is a compulsory practice, a forcible production, but not for that reason fully determining. To the extent that gender is an assignment, it is an assignment which is never quite carried out according to expectations, whose addressee never quite inhabits the ideal s/he is compelled to approximate. Moreover, this embodying is a repeated process. And one might construe repetition as precisely that which *undermines* the conceit of voluntarist mastery designated by the subject in language (Butler, 1993a: 231).

Leslie manages to embody such undermining by showing that his gender, rather than being determined by language, by his name, actually determines it. Leslie’s body in drag does not look like a woman’s but he does not seem to be disguised as a woman either. “No one would mistake him for a woman, but, for a man in a dress, the effect was pretty smooth” (*TCR*, 103). As a man in a dress, he likes inhabiting in the no-wo/man’s land of lacking sexual definition: he does not want to take any hormones, as “I’m dedicated but I’m not ready to die for the cause yet” (*TCR*, 103) as wearing a dress only means “dressing as he likes and a regular high” (*TCR*, 106), but at the same time, he wants to be addressed as a girl, probably out of the need to belong to a group. Still in the Chelsea Lounge, Rilke and Leslie exchange these lines:

‘Bright boy.’
‘Girl.’
‘Okay, then, clever girl’ (*TCR*, 103).

By dressing himself as a woman, Leslie does not intend to mock women, as Rose feels, nor to become a woman himself. What he does is show how what defines

⁷¹ It is quite curious that there are several internet forums that discuss whether Leslie is a boy’s or a girl’s name. In general, they all agree that it can be both, though many of the participants point out that whenever they think it is more a boy’s or a girl’s name, it depends on the fact that there is a particular man or woman they know with that name. For example: “I think it can work on both genders but I am used to girl more because my Aunt is named Leslie” or “I personally think it’s a girl’s name but there was a famous male actor named Leslie Nielson and I have a male friend named Leslie” in www.boy-or-girl.org. (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

a person as a man or a woman is construed. A man in women's attire does not become a woman nor does this fact imply that he is a homosexual – or in other words, that he is a failed male. The ambigendered, ambisexual Leslie questions “the univocity of sex, the internal coherence of gender, and the binary framework for both sex and gender are considered throughout as regulatory fictions that consolidate and naturalize the convergent power regimes of masculine and heterosexist oppression” (Butler, 1990: 33). Leslie shows that any individual can be freed from the masculine, heterosexist oppression, as it does not only oppress women or homosexual people, but any person. In the queered world that Welsh presents in her novels, characters do not learn only to acknowledge their abjected, monstrous selves but also to accept that they do not fit the binary understanding of sexuality. This is just one step on the path characters traverse in their queered labyrinths. In acknowledgement that they may be sexually abject to the rest of society, they also free themselves from the oppression of trying to fit in constraining categories. Their first step is to look at society in a different way, to change the positions of those who gaze and those who are gazed at.

4.1. Queering gazes

As explained above, there has been some emphasis placed on the importance of analysing how both gender and sex work as phantasmatic constructions, as well as how characters find it difficult to fit into two constructed concepts that are presented as real and natural. That is why a certain nod to the binarisms male/female, masculine/feminine is necessary, binarisms that seem to be inscribed on bodies from the very first moment people are born. However, it is also possible to resist such marking, as shown before in the cases of Leslie and Boy, when understanding sex and gender within the realm of the queer. This section deals with how bodies are gazed at, a gazing that is inserted into the heteronormativity that presents men as active gazers and women as passive objects of gaze. However, it will be shown that the already-mentioned, dark, rose-coloured glasses do mean an important change in the game of gazes played in Louise Welsh's novels. Referring specifically to the cinema, Mulvey (1999: 835). explains the term “scopophilia,” which refers to the pleasure of looking as well as, in the reverse, being looked at. However, at the extreme of the pleasurable act of looking/being looked at, scopophilia meets the realm of “a perversion,

producing obsessive voyeurs and Peeping Toms whose only sexual satisfaction can come from watching, in an active controlling sense, an objectified other” (Mulvey, 1999: 835). In the novels in this research, characters are constantly looking and being looked at. Some of them look at each other in face-to-face encounters, as Rilke in search of identifying other gay males to have sex with, or Anna and Jane constantly looking at each other. Some of them perform in front of audiences, as do Marlowe, William or Sylvie. There are also some who look at the camera, such as Lunan or Montgomery and Bill. Some other look through the camera, such as Fergus taking photos of Watson and Rachel having sex or Derek shooting a snuff porn film. Some others observe and are observed in a mirror, such as William and his multiple tricks involving mirrors or Jane’s mother, whom Jane remembers as follows: “her mother’s face smiling at her in the wardrobe mirror” (*TGOTS*, 108). When Jacqueline Rose reflects on Lacan’s mirror stage, she notes that the moment of the child’s identification “has meaning in relation to the presence and the look of the mother who guarantees its reality for the child. The mother does not [...] mirror the child to itself; she grants an image *to* the child, which her presence instantly deflects” (Rose, 2000: 51- 52). In Jane’s case, on the other hand, her mother’s look is already reflected in a mirror and it could be argued that her identity formation takes place in the paraxial area. There are also some people who ignore they are being observed, as the girl in the photograph. Mulvey points out that “the male figure cannot bear the burden of sexual objectification. Man is reluctant to gaze at his exhibitionist like” (Mulvey, 1999: 838). Nonetheless, except for the characters who can only be looked at as corpses or in their graves, the act of gazing is bidirectional: men, as Mulvey claims, may not bear the burden of sexual objectification, but this does not imply that they are not forced to bear that burden, to be sexualized, not only by their female or male objects of their desire, but by any possible Other.

There are two main characters in Welsh’s novels who, because of their job in the world of entertainment, expose themselves to the gaze of an audience: William the magician and Christopher Marlowe. There are, though, some differences between them. The first time William performs in *The Bullet Trick*, he is in front of the crowd of police officers at Montgomery’s retirement party. There he realizes that the very same audience reacts in a different way depending on who is on stage at that moment. Despite the fact that they are all dressed differently, they all constitute a “macho crowd” (*TBT*, 23). They all are expecting to watch some erotic, female performance

but they have to watch William's magic show first. There is an atmosphere of reciprocal dialogue between performer and audience, a kind of male comradeship with perfectly timed laughter in the adequate moments. However, even the symbolic presence of women, as when Montgomery mentions that after his show they will see the Divines, returns the crowd to an overtly heterosexual male behaviour that turns their sexual impulse into the predominant drive in their lives. Thus, they react with "a stamping of feet and a jungle-drumming of hands against tables" (*TBT*, 29). William understands this reaction as part of the typical, male, celebratory behaviour but, when he introduces his assistant, he realizes that male comradeship has turned into aggressive, sexist behaviour. "Perhaps they weren't such a pleasant audience after all" (*TBT*, 29). Their reaction consists in hurling obscene remarks to a vamped Candy Flossy: "*you can help me out anytime love. You can touch my truncheon. Feel my new extending baton. Try on my handcuffs. Play with my helmet*" (*TBT*, 29, italics in the original). Their reaction may be manifold: first, they could say that she somehow provoked them with her "flossy" look as she is participating in a show of 'adult entertainment,' which, according to Hubbard, is "a nebulous term that collectively describes striptease, exotic dance, lap dancing, pole dancing, burlesque and other erotic performances designed to sexually gratify, titillate and entertain" (Hubbard, 2009: 722). The sexual remarks are, then, considered as socially implied – and expected – in the audience of adult shows. Secondly, all their comments, except for the first one, which is an appropriation of William's introductory comment "She has agreed to help me out" (*TBT*, 29), are all a sexualisation and erotization of the male spectators. They are all police officers and they do not ignore that all the paraphernalia regarding uniforms in general – and police uniforms in particular – is widely fetishized in the sexual imaginary of society. Griffiths, summarizes the conclusions of the research by Bhugra and Padmal on the function of uniforms and their relationship with sexual fantasy and sexual fetishism as follows:

They noted that uniforms can be seen as 'outer skins' that can be material and attractive in sexual terms, and that can enable individuals to display and wield power (which may be important in sexual activities involving sadism and masochism). They also note that each uniform "*denotes not only an image but also a certain authority that goes with it*" (Griffiths, 2012).

The police officers are aware of both their sexual signification and the authority their uniforms convey. Furthermore, they are not only aware of themselves

as eroticised objects but they also eroticize their working tools because of their phallic-truncheon, baton – domination – handcuffs – or fetishist connotations – helmets⁷². Later on in the novel, Montgomery feigns he is arresting Williams in an Irish pub after they have been mistaken for poofs. When he handcuffs William, somebody in the pub shouts: “Oooh, kinky” (*TBT*, 330), reading William’s feigned arrest with fetishist eyes. The question that arises now is how the same male audience reacts in a different way when observing a man and a woman in the *milieu* where such gazing is the same in both cases. In her influential article, Laura Mulvey claims that:

In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness* (Mulvey, 1999: 837).

In his preparation for the trick, William knows the role of women in magic shows and, due to the fact that his audience is constituted only of men, he asks for collaboration from the Divines, the erotic dancers who are performing after him. They read William’s proposal between the lines and state bluntly that “You rely on a pair of tits to stop the punters noticing if you make a balls-up” (*TBT*, 21). They know that fact out of their own experience. Both of them start their show dressed in burkhas and veils, instituting silence among the male audience. It might seem that their clothes, which hide their bodies, would provoke a lack of sexual interest in their audience. However, the effect is the opposite. Ebony and Ivory, as they refer to themselves, perform in front of the audience their own version of the Orient. According to Said, “the Orient at large, therefore vacillates between the West’s contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in - or fear of – novelty” (Said, 1979: 58). The audience is all familiar with the idea of some Islamic women wearing burkhas. However, in the act of showing different parts of their bodies at will, they manage to erotize their own bodies in a way that they would not have, had they been in sexy lingerie from the very beginning. They are not, therefore, the passive objects of the male gaze but the active subjects that control the male gaze. By controlling and exercising this power, they are able to, eventually, buy the very club they are acting at that night and turn it into their own BUMPERS, a club where patrons can be

⁷² A Google search of “Helmet as fetish” provides 2.450.000 results in 0.23 seconds, including several Facebook, Yahoo and Flickr groups devoted to this topic.

spectators of a show that mixes magic and eroticism. In a sense, they seem to literalize Russo's remark on the women in Angela Carter's *Night at the Circus*, where women perform a double function: "Women *as* spectacle, *and* women as producers of spectacle" (Russo, 1994: 165, italics in the original). They are not only producers of spectacle because they know how to master their performing skills; they are also producers of spectacle because they are the partners that run the business. Their refurbished club is decorated with women in some suggestive poses but "all of this decoration was merely an adjunct to the room's focus: a mirrored stage pierced by a silver pole" (*TBT*, 358). In the center of the stage, there is Sylvie, the magician's apprentice who knew how to frame William, the master of mirrors. She managed to trick William and make him believe he had actually killed her. She knew her body exercised some power over him and the rest of the trick was just a matter of "smoke and mirrors, auto-suggestion" (*TBT*, 360). William was tricked because he forgot that he was in control of the reflections, that it was him the audience should look at, no matter whether they were male or female. By imagining Sylvie's spectacted, fragmented body, "the narrative has been frozen; there is no dialogue, no progression of the story" (Jermyn, 2004: 163). Now that he has seen her again, his life can continue, but not before having been reprimanded by Sylvie: "You could of found me William, if you'd care to look. [...] Seek and you shall find" (*TBT*, 360). He knew that "to look at the female body here is to feel uncomfortable, to be perplexed, to want to look away" (Jermy, 2004: 163). However, had he actually looked at her body, he would have realized that everything was staged and he was simply part of the trick.

Tamburlaine's final act also takes place in front of an audience constituted by a group of apprentice players: these are observing Blaize and learning how to play a female role. Blaize is a man in a woman's attire who is willingly playing a woman's role. Marlowe gazes at him while confronting contradictory feelings about his female impersonation. On the one hand, "the objective eye would never cast Blaize in a female role" (*TMD*, 126). On the other hand, "there was no mincing in his walk, hardly any sway at all in fact, just the sensation of soft round hips gliding beneath the skirt" (*TMD*, 126). In a pre-cinematic world, Blaize has turned into an example of ego ideal "as expressed in particular in the star system, the stars centering both screen presence and screen story as they act out a complex process of likeness and difference" (Mulvey, 1999:836). The apprentices observe him spellbound and even Marlowe feels "it should have been a scene to warm the heart of any playwright"

(*TMD*, 126). However, his aim is to unmask the traitor that has betrayed him and has pretended to be part of that star system where “the glamorous impersonates the ordinary” (Mulvey, 1999: 836). After Marlowe’s attack, Blaize is covered in blood and, while observed by the now horrified gaze of the apprentices, Marlowe eliminates any hint of glamour in him: “You’re a half-rate actor and a no-rate poet” (*TMD*, 136). In his attempt to escape his doom, Blaize undresses and his body gets rid of the feminine construction he had signified his own body with. For the second time, Marlowe forgets his intention of killing him, this time when seeing his bare, hairy chest that arouses his sexual desire. However, Blaize dies when trying to betray Marlowe once again: Marlowe sticks his “knife into his [Blaize’s] belly. His eyes rolled back to meet my gaze” (*TBD*, 138). In her description of the different looks in the cinema, Mulvey distinguishes three:

that of the camera as it records the pro-filmic event, that of the audience as it watches the final product, and that of the characters at each other within the screen illusion. The conventions of narrative film deny the first two and subordinate them to the third, the conscious aim being always to eliminate intrusive camera presence and prevent a distancing awareness in the audience. Without these two absences (the material existence of the recording process, the critical reading of the spectator), fictional drama cannot achieve reality, obviousness and truth (Mulvey, 1999: 843).

There is obviously no camera in a narrative text, though readers – in the case of *Tamburlaine Must Die*, both fictional and real readers – actually “see” the story through the eyes of a “focalizer,” “the subject of the gaze” who “sees in place of the reader” (Bal, 2006: 17, 20). Therefore, as a person being focalized, Blaize is not just a subverted, male object of gaze for his audience but also to the focalizer Marlowe and for the readers who are gazing him through Marlowe’s eyes and impregnated with his male desire for him, both sexual and violent. Blaize’s body is gazed at under a multiplicity of eyes that resemble William’s self-gaze in the mirror when he was a child. This multifaceted gaze in a narrative text, which is by no means stated to be exclusive to Welsh’s narrations, shows, if not contradicts, Mulvey’s statement that “this complex interaction of looks is specific to films” (Mulvey, 1999: 844). It is perhaps specific to films if “looks” is understood in a literal sense, as actually seeing those objects. However, in the case of the cinema, such objects are not there but projected on a screen. Moreover, the act of reading also implies the act of seeing a text and, as shown before in Bal’s case, the focalization process in a narration implies the gaze of a subject focalizer on an – or some – object focalized(s).

Returning to Marlowe and Blaize, when they were friends, they were incredible readers of signs, as mentioned in Goldie's quote above. Their need to read signs is due to their belonging to what Nicholas classifies under the term "discreditable identity," which is "one that is both devalued and marked by obvious physical characteristics (e.g. male/female, black, Asian). A discreditable identity is also devalued but may be hidden due to the lack of biological distinctions" (Nicholas, 2004: 63). Nicholas includes gay and bisexual people in the latter description of the term as they need to decode a shared system of meanings to recognize a sameness in the other. Marlowe and Blaize, then, are able to read this discreditable identity in a specific set of behaviours, such as in another man's gaze. In a pub, Marlowe throws his gaze in a fishing-rod style in search for a man to fall into conversation with.

But my eyes were drawn to a lone stranger. A small man in black hose and doublet, with a cape of the same shade lined in red. His face was indistinct, hidden in the tavern shadows and the road brim of his hat, but I could make out deep watchful eyes and a grey goatee beard. I thought he might pass for the Devil and smiled to myself, for had Old Nick requested my soul in exchange for earthly peace I would have obliged and thought him the worse for the bargain (*TMD*, 64).

In this search for an interesting counterpart with whom to engage into conversation with, his eyes meet Richard Bayne's, whom Marlowe knew as they had shared a room in Flushing, the Netherlands, and whose relation had ended abruptly when Bayne accused him of coining and blasphemy. Knowing Marlowe's sexual activity with both men and women, it is no coincidence that the city of Flushing inevitably links their room-sharing with some more sexual activities, as flushing does take place in toilets, a zone of sexual confrontation as explained in section 2. However, focussing on Marlowe's searching gaze, in its capacity to detect conversationalists, resembles what is known as "Gaydar." As Nicholas explains:

The tag Gaydar suggests that members of the gay and lesbian culture along with straight people *familiar* with gay/lesbian culture have an innate remote detector that picks up the behavior of individuals within a specified range. If the behaviour experienced is consistent with the shared social meaning of identity associated with membership in the gay culture, Gaydar is triggered. The receiver of the stimuli is then of the opinion that the person whose behavior caused the "blip" in Gaydar is gay (Nicholas, 2004: 60-61).

One reads signs, but it is in the responding gaze on the one who is gazed at that homosexuality is acknowledged. In the use of the gaydar, one is the subject gazer and the object gazed at; not only that, this splitting into subject/object and the

assumption of the roles of gazer/gazed does not only involve two participants but any in the multiplicity of people in a crowd. When Marlowe acknowledges Blaize's gaze: "that cove seems over interested in us" (*TMD*, 64), his gaydar is triggered. However, had his gaze not received any "blip" stimuli from Bayne, he would have continued with his search for other counterpart gazes. Furthermore, just as conventional radar, as explained in www.howstuffworks.com, "emits a concentrated radio wave and listens for any echo. If there is an object in the path of the radio wave, it will reflect some of the electromagnetic energy, and the radio wave will bounce back to the radar device" (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014), gaydar emits signals to any moving object, whether they are straight or gay, but it only bounces back in the case of gay people.

France widens the concept of gaydar by stating that it is not just "the skill of the viewer so much as the telltale signs most gay people project, the set of traits that make us unmistakably one" (France, 2007). Jane and Petra met at a party where Jane was a waitress and Petra one of the guests. Jane recalls that moment as follows:

she had noticed Petra's gaze flitting down the neck of her neat white waitressing blouse, and known. She'd offered Petra a glass of champagne from her tray, their eyes had met as Petra raised the glass to her lips, and they'd seen that each of them knew and laughed" (*TGOTS*, 112).

Despite the fact that Jane is dressed as a waitress – i.e. not as her real self, as she is actually a bookseller – they both find the traits that make them one. They have found the shared "kind of physical otherness that locates us in our own quadrant of the gender matrix. [...] Whatever that otherness is seems to come from somewhere deep within us. It mostly defies our efforts to disguise it" (France, 2007). In Jane, disguised in her waitress attire, Petra can read her otherness from the other guests and waitresses at the party and the oneness between the two of them. However, their gaydar recognition has an effect probably due to the fact that Petra was probably dressed "like a TV director's idea of a sexy female banker" (*TGOTS*, 10), as she always does on those specific occasions, whereas Jane is dressed as a waitress. They both know they know, but Jane is a bit more unreadable, as the person Petra meets is not the real Jane. That is why "later they had met again in the bookshop, and that, to the surprise of both of them, had been that" (*TGOTS*, 112). On their second encounter, the two girls do not require the use of their gaydar but, on the other hand, the two people meeting are different from those of their first encounter: this time real

Petra is meeting real Jane and, probably influenced by a romantic ideal of fate and destiny, they know there is more than casual sex between them.

France's idea of mutual recognition in gay otherness also implies the possibility of being recognized as gay – and, therefore, as other – by heterosexual people. He himself admits that “most people immediately read me (correctly) as gay” (France, 2007). However, the situation changes when heterosexual men claim to possess a gaydar that works in reverse: rather than finding potential sexual and/or affective partners amongst the crowd, they try to spot the queer one out and establish their relationship on such grounds. The straight gaydar works on the assumption that gay people have an outward appearance that allows their identification as gay people. While William is having a beer in an Irish pub before his gig at the Panopticon, Montgomery appears. He sits next to the Magician as he is aiming at him with his gun. Despite the hustle and buzzle in the pub, as it is Saint Patrick's day, one of the drinkers has read the two men's proximity as gay behaviour. William, who knows how to create illusions in the people who look at him, wants to escape in a Houdini-like way from Montgomery's threat and “threw him [the drinker] a look over the policeman's shoulder and he leered towards us” (*TBT*, 329-330). Edwards claims that:

Staring, joking, or even looking may constitute psychological violence or intimidation within certain contexts or, more particularly, if perceived as violence by the person being looked at or joked about. More subtly still, not doing something or doing something which is otherwise entirely socially acceptable may still be perceived, perhaps correctly, as violence (Edwards, 2006: 45-46).

In this case, the punter feels attacked by William's gaze, though he ignores the fact that the magician is actually performing a gaydar look with his straight radar, therefore performing a homosexual identity he does not have but he knows how to control by the use of stereotypes. His gaze achieves the intended aim and the drinker asks them: ‘You a pair of fucking poofs?’ (*TBT*, 330). His question is not to be read as a merely verification of the perfect functioning of his straight gaydar but as an offensive remark. One of the results in “Guessing Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual's Ability to Accurately Estimate their Gaydar,” research carried out by Kendig and Maresca⁷³, was that “regardless of the condition, participants rated those individuals

⁷³ In it, thirty heterosexual men and women had to guess sexual orientation of twenty-five pictured individuals and state how their perception influenced their feeling of closeness to such individuals. What these researchers found was that “a significant number of participants (76.7%, $p < .002$) overestimated their ability to guess sexual orientation” (Kendig and Maresca, 2004: 71).

they identified as heterosexual as significantly higher on the closeness rating than those individuals they identified as homosexual” (Kendig and Maresca, 2004: 75-76). William, who has initiated the eye contact, states his heterosexuality and questions Montgomery’s: “I think this English git is [a fucking poof], he won’t leave me alone” (*TBT*, 330). As if this drinker were one of the participants in Kendig and Maresca’s research, he feels closer to the now straight William and distant from the so-referred-to-as-gay Montgomery. Without feeling that a gay man can be threatening, he continues with his contemptuous talk about gay people: “That’s is the trouble with fucking faggots, they want to shove it down everyone else’s throats” (*TBT*, 330). Montgomery, who obviously is not a gay man, decides to show his own personality as a way of vanishing any possible trace of homosexuality in the eyes of other straight people and shows his ID as a police officer. The drinker feels threatened now by the two misread gay men and claims he was just asking whether they were fucking poofs out of curiosity. William feels his trick of escapism can still work and tries to fight the drinker’s stereotyped idea of a gay man as “flamboyant, maintain[ing] a higher level of hygiene and style than heterosexual men, and appear feminine in general” (Kendig and Maresca, 2004: 72). He appeals to the drinker’s gaydar by claiming that “your instinct’s right enough though. He is a fucking poof, always up for Gay Pride duty, if you get my drift. Soon as we step outside he’ll be trying to stick it in my arse” (*TBT*, 330). William’s last desperate attempt to escape from Montgomery fails, as the punter already feels threatened by Montgomery, no matter whether he is actually gay or not. From his initial offensive discourse against gay people, he moves into a gay-friendly – though still stereotyped – discourse: “I’ve nothing against poofs myself, like. I mean some of them are a good laugh ... Graham Norton... Kenneth Williams” (*TBT*, 330). In other words, he is not at odds with gay people as long as they belong to the world of television and show business or they are intimidating police officers. Graham Norton is an Irish comic presenter who is the BBC commentator for the Eurovision Song Contest. Kenneth Williams was a comedy actor who had to hide his homosexuality most of his life since homosexuality was a criminal offence in the United Kingdom before 1967. As the English singer John Howard, who wrote and sang the song titled “Who’s Listening? (For Kenneth Williams)” (2010), describes him:

the dichotomy of the man was fascinating, how he was everyone's camp comedic hero but yearned to be taken seriously as an actor; hated the *Carry Ons* but couldn't escape them; had a kind of self-loathing but also found himself beautiful. His friendship with the louche Joe Orton also seemed out of step with his image of every housewife's favourite funny man" (Howard⁷⁴, 2010).

William expands the punter's list of gay celebrities by adding Noël Coward, which provokes a confused look on the drinker. Sir Noël Peirce Coward, English playwright, composer, director and actor, hid his homosexuality as he considered "*any* sexual activities when over-advertised" to be tasteless (Payn, 1994: 248, italics in the original). The drinker's puzzlement may be due to the fact that he actually was ignorant of Coward's homosexuality and, therefore, he can only read in William's words some pejorative intent that categorizes him as a "coward," and consequently not a very "straight" man. Or perhaps he did know about Coward's homosexuality. That is why, as an excuse as to both Coward's personal silenced homosexuality or of the fact that the punter is actually a coward, he considers their conversation finished by using an idiom, which, to a certain extent, is turning a phrase into a stereotype in itself: "I'm just saying, live and let live eh?" (*TBT*, 330). The straight Gaydar, despite its overestimation of their ability to judge sexual orientation accurately, as in Kendig and Maresca's research, finds a logical connection between "you a pair of fucking poofs?" and "live and let live." Perhaps, as Colzato *et al.* conclude in their own research on how homosexuals and heterosexuals differ in their "efficiency to process global and local features of hierarchically-constructed visual stimuli" (Colzato *et al.*, 2010: 1), it is a fact that "homosexuals are more often confronted with lifetime and day-to-day discrimination than heterosexuals [...] and it seems plausible that this causes increased levels of psychological distress in homosexuals" (Colzato *et al.*, 2010: 4). Had the punter been previously exposed to a discrimination comparable to that homosexuals confront in their lifetime by individuals such as himself, he would forget about using his straight Gaydar to spot the gay people in the place and really let others live. As Colzato *et al.* state, "there is a rich perceptual basis for people to develop a reliable gaydar, and homosexuals are apparently better trained in making use of it" (Colzato *et al.*, 2010: 1). Therefore, neither the drinker nor William are trained in making use of the Gaydar and, to William's dismay, his trick of performing a gay gaze fails. Furthermore, in the research carried out by Burn on "Heterosexuals'

⁷⁴ In <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bK93CuxUgqA> (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

Use of ‘Fag’ and ‘Queer’ to Deride One Another,” she concludes that “approximately half of the heterosexuals who engaged in the behavior were not strongly anti-homosexual” (Burn, 2000: 8). Besides, some of these individuals, when they were explained how homosexuals felt when hearing anti-gay language, “may have increased their awareness that their behavior was inconsistent with their attitudes” (Burn, 2000: 9). The patron in the Irish pub may be one of those individuals and he has learnt for good not to use such derogative words even though his straight gaydar is beeping in a Spiderman-fashion.

Vampiric Rilke’s Gaydar is continuously at work in any situation where he can have sex, be it in a cruising area, a toilet or in one of his victims’ flat. He is even aware of Professor Sweetman’s attempt to meet him in a date: “I wonder – he gave an unprofessorial blush – if you would like to meet up for a drink one evening” (*TCR*, 290). This unprofessorial blush connotes the proposition of a drink with a homosexual intent. Rilke is read as a gay man in the same manner as he can read Sweetman as such. According to Majors, “the manner in which gay people recognize other members of their community is manifested through the display of clearly recognized meanings behind demonstrated verbal and non-verbal actions” (quoted in Nicholas, 2004: 65). However, Sweetman’s attempt does not meet a correspondence on Rilke’s part, who answers with unlikely probabilities: “Perhaps when I get back from Paris” (*TCR*, 290) or “I might” (*TCR*, 291). Mutual recognition does not always mean a mutual desire, as Rilke has learnt after falling in love with Derek. In that case, love and sight are connected from the first moment, as Rilke feels when meeting him at the porn shop that “I was too old to call it love at first sight” (*TCR*, 66). Infatuated by him, as William felt for Sylvie, he misreads the signals Derek is emitting: “He made eye contact, raising his eyebrows slightly. Was he flirting with me? I felt the old stirring in the groin but all that showed was I wanted him” (*TCR*, 68). The importance of such eye-contact is relevant as Rilke is fully aware, out of his previous sexual experiences, that gazing and/or gazing back is an almost unequivocal signal that leads to the recognition of gay men and lesbian. In the field research by Nicholas on the functioning of the Gaydar, she aims at exploring the relationship between eye-gaze and Gaydar and answers the following questions:

- 1) Is eye-gaze used in the gay and lesbian community for purposes of identity recognition? If so, What are the types of eye-gaze used?

Is eye-gaze used as a trigger of Gaydar or as a form of reinforcement (affirmation) of a different Gaydar trigger? (Nicholas, 2004: 70).

In her experiment, the answers to question 1 and 3 stress the importance of the gaze as a powerful tool for recognition, though it should also be reinforced by other gestures. Before meeting Derek, Rilke thinks that “the straights think that we have some kind of radar, that there are signals we give off, a mode of dress, style of conversation” (*TCR*, 68). That is probably the reason why Rilke cannot understand why he does not feel any sexual interest for Sweetman: he is intellectually appealing, as he explains Rilke the story of *Soleil et Désolé*, but despite their mutual recognition as gay men, there is no gazing between them. In Derek’s, the situation is different as he seems to be aware of emitting the correct signals to elicit what he wants from Rilke as he knows he is desired. As Rilke wonders: “Was he teasing me? I didn’t want him to go home alone. I wanted to lick his white teeth, bite his lower lip until it bled red blood, warm and sticky, coating his mouth like cherry lip-gloss” (*TCR*, 77). Rilke misreads Derek, to a great extent because he actually wants to misread the signs and imagining his sexual desire is reciprocal. Besides, as Clarkson notes “The straight man’s comfort with being looked at by gay men and women as desirable reflects his new found confidence and strength” (Clarkson, 2005: 240). He knows of the sexual interest he exerts on Rilke and feels comfortable with it. However, Derek is only interested in Rilke’s vampiric side, not as a sexual predator but as a real vampire, as a *Nosferatu* impersonator. In fact, he is symbolically seeing Rilke through a lens other than the human retina: the lens of a camera. Thus, he is placing Rilke in Rosemary Jackson’s proposed “paraxial area,” referred to in Section 1 of this research, where the fantastic can be located, and which turns him into a gothic character. Besides, there is a symbiosis between Derek’s eyes and the camera lens. In the shooting of the amateurish porn film, he is aware of the fact that the girl might have been forced to “act” in that film and “the whole way she looked right into the camera, right at me, her eyes staring into mine as I stared back through the viewfinder” (*TCR*, 235). Their mutual staring relates, though in a darker manner, to what Nicholas describes as one of the Gaydar gazes: the direct stare. It “holds a person’s attraction, signaling that there is a reason that stare was employed” (Nicholas, 204: 72). However, the Gaydar is now being used by a straight man and an abused woman and, therefore, the signals they are emitting are completely different: she is asking for help and he is taking refuge in his position as an observer, though acknowledging altogether that “I felt like

I was killing her” (*TCR*, 235). With the fifty pounds he earns for shooting the film, he goes into a bar and drinks his money up in an attempt to forget what he has done/seen. Trapp and the other people involved in the film do not share that feeling. Miller explains that “*The Cutting Room* is part of a strand of post-war Scottish writing that focuses on the phenomenology of personal relationships, and on how, in particular, other people may be depersonalized, rather than encountered in an “I-thou” relationship” (Miller, 2006: 72). Rilke does depersonalize the men he cruises with: “his name was Ross and he worked with computers. Who cared?” (*TCR*, 105). However, in the case of the porn film, the girl is depersonalized up to the point that she has no name and no possibility of refusing to shoot the film. She is the unwilling, depersonalized, main actress in a film similar to those in “*Real Girls from Glasgow*” (*TCR*, 68). She, as the girl in the photographs, is one more ungrievable life, as her suffering is ignored as long as it provokes pleasure in those who watch her.

A final consideration should be added to the idea of Gaydar, as there is a webpage called www.gaydar.com that owes much more to it than just the name. As is explained in the research carried out by Light, Fletcher and Adam: “the use of the term for the Gaydar group of web sites, of which one of the inscribed aims is to assist people to locate each other through a technologically mediated “gaze”, seems appropriate” (Light *et al.*, 2008: 304). In the specific case of [gaydar.com](http://www.gaydar.com), when creating a profile, a gay man can choose other gay men to engage into a sexual and/or affective relationship according to their provided descriptions and photographs. Its success is due to the fact that it offers “an extension of possibilities for social engagement that an individual can achieve in any single night” (Light *et al.*, 2008: 309). Currently, with the widespread use of smartphones, there are more modern – and immediate – mobile applications that allow the possibility of searching for gay men with the criterion of physical proximity. Some of these are more general, such as Grindr or Benda for gay men or Brenda for lesbian women, and some of them are more specific, such as u4Bear for bear men. In Louise Welsh’s novels there are no men that search the gaydar web looking for sexual partners – they do not even have a smartphone –, but Jane and Petra have an interesting conversation. Jane is going to bed and Petra explains she will go later as “I’ve got some work to finish” (*TGOTS*, 104), to what Jane replies: “Not trawling the Internet for lezbfun.com?” (*TGOTS*, 104). This is an old joke of theirs and they both laugh at it. However, the fact that a person can access dating webpages from their computer in their own house can

become a threat, if there is no prior mutual agreement on such a use of new technologies.⁷⁵ There is no need to pretend a late arrival home after work or a sudden business trip with an attractive colleague to lead a double life. In Section 4 there is further analysis on the possibility of reading Petra and Jane's relation as a butch-femme relation. However, in this point it proves relevant to note some of the presuppositions in the research on jealousy and partner preference carried out by Basset, Pearcey and Dabbs. In their initial approach to their project, they had some preconceived ideas in mind. In the role identification of lesbian women as either a butch or a femme, these researchers assume that the criterion applied by these women follows certain parallelism to the heterosexual – phantasmatic – division into masculine and feminine. Therefore, they expected

butches, like heterosexual males, to emphasize physical attractiveness in partner preference and to become jealous over sexual infidelity. We expected femmes, like heterosexual females, to emphasize resources in partner preference and to become jealous over threats to resources, including time, energy, or commitment (Bassett *et al.*, 2001: 158).

However, there are also some other variables to be considered in their partner preference, such as having a masculine or feminine body type or high or low income. Were this the case, Jane and Petra's joke about Petra surfing the different users' profiles in lezbfun.com would hint the threat Jane feels as Petra would be attracted to other women mainly because of their physical appearance. However, the matter becomes more complicated as, according to the aforementioned research, jealousy also plays a key role in butch-femme relations and what each of them finds desirable in a partner also becomes a threat to the other. In other words, the fact that butches emphasize physical attractiveness in their chosen partners also becomes a reason for the chosen: "regarding jealousy, butches were more jealous of a competitor's resources, while femmes were more jealous of a competitor's appearance" (Bassett *et al.*, 2001: 163). In Jane and Petra's case, Jane is compelled to actually trust Petra and believe she is actually working with the computer. However, she is actually a jealous woman scared of the fact that Petra may leave her for another woman. In a conversation with Frau Becker, she asks Jane: "Have you ever had another woman go

⁷⁵ It is noteworthy that, with the exception of the shared joke on lezbfun.com, there is no other reference to queer internet sites or the use of ICT by the characters in Louise Welsh's novels. Articles such Light *et al.* (2008) or Rak (2005) on weblogs show the relation between deviant identities and the new Internet resources.

after your wife?” to what Jane answers “I’m not sure” (*TGOTS*, 234). This uncertainty leads Frau Becker to the conclusion that “That means yes. So you know what it is to feel jealous” (*TGOTS*, 234). Petra in turn has no reason whatsoever to even consider the possibility that Jane finds another partner with better resources as herself. Just in case, when Petra departs to Vienna, she leaves a violet envelope with money. Jane “put the envelope in a drawer, then took it out again, slid the notes free and counted them: a thousand euros. [...] Petra had never left her money when they were in London” (*TGOTS*, 125). In the act of leaving money, Petra is eliminating the possibility that Jane, angry as she is for being left alone in Berlin, needs to find another potential butch. As explained in Bassett’s research, “butches may become more threatened than femmes if their partner becomes interested in another person who makes more money or has a better job than themselves” (Bassett *et al.*, 2001: 163). Once Petra is in Vienna with her colleague Claudia, Jane discovers a hidden photo in which they are together and, this time, Jane’s potential infidelity is not a laughing matter. All her controlled jealousy wells up as a joke arises. As a femme, she, according to Bassett *et al.*, values “physical appearance as a self-defining attribute. As a result, femmes may become more threatened than butches if their partner becomes interested in another person who is better looking than themselves” (Bassett *et al.*, 2001: 163). The threat this time is not by a better looking femme than Jane but actually by another Jane lookalike dopplegänger, up to the point that Jane even feels she is actually the girl in the photo. “For an instant Jane thought she was the woman in the photograph, with her arm around Petra, but then she saw that although the woman had the same dark curls and pale complexion, she was someone else, someone Jane had never met” (*TGOTS*, 150). Or that is what she thinks. In that moment, her reflection in the mirror returns her an image of “eyes puffy from misery and lack of sleep” (*TGOTS*, 151). Jane is perhaps no longer the girl she used to be and that is why Petra is looking for her ideal image of a femme partner. When they first met and lived in London, “a different Jane was wearing red lipstick and dancing in a basement nightclub, vodka-bright and ready for anything” (*TGOTS*, 24). It may even be the case that Petra found London Jane more attractive than Berlin Jane. Nevertheless, they are both mothers now and the truth is that “Petra was the same as ever. It was Jane who had changed” (*TGOTS*, 93).

In Louise Welsh’s novels there are also some sexual practices that lead to representation of “*aesthetic* contemplation and representation as amongst the armory

of depersonalizing attitudes” (Miller, 2006: 74). The photographs that Rilke finds in the attic showing a girl being mutilated are objects of contemplation rather than proofs of a committed crime. They arouse a certain interest in them, other than pity or uneasiness. When Derek sees the photos, he remarks that “there’s something beautiful about these. [...] I know they’re horrible but there’s a ghastly beauty there. [...] Ach, you know your art history – we’re trained to enjoy these images” (*TCR*, 79). He has actually made a point, as “terrorized, battered, sexually assaulted, mutilated, even dismembered [female] bodies have become part of the grammar of the form” (Dunant, qtd in Munt, 1994: 51). The photos remind him of the famous sentence by Poe, explained in Section 3 of this research, about the beauty in the death of a woman, perhaps influenced by the idea that the aesthetical coupling women and death “involves masking the inevitability of human decomposition” by “having recourse to beauty” (Bronfen, 1992: 62).

After observing how each photo is a close up shot of the girl’s corpse, Rilke is aware of the different photographic techniques the photographer has adopted in order to take the photo and, rather than feeling a certain unease at what is depicted, “I felt peaceful. A little boat on a calm ocean. My mind was completely empty” (*TCR*, 36). It is precisely by such an analysis of the photographic technique that Rilke protects himself from the disquieting effect of the photos. As Miller explains, “the composition of a picture stands as a bulwark against the decomposition of the body” (Miller, 2006: 75). His aesthetic contemplation of the corpse in the photos leads him to contemplate the possibility that the photographs may have been staged though imbued with a certain feeling of authenticity, probably to provoke both fear and pleasure. In the process of discovering the truth behind his own reality, in his gothic journey, he still remains ignorant of whether that girl was actually dissected in the photos, but the possibility of people experiencing both pleasure and pain by observing them without an aesthetic look but with a lascivious gaze. It is not a coincidence, then, that the brothel where the photos were taken is called *Soleil et Désolé*, translated by Professor Sweetman as “‘Sunshine and Tears.’ Sunshine, good times, music, girls, drink and tears...” (*TCR*, 289). In it, pleasure and pain inhabited hand in hand within its walls. In his book on Gothic literature, Cavallaro remarks that “what seems obvious is that narratives of darkness hinge constantly on the interplay of pleasure and pain [...] what the Gothic vision offers is not necessarily a binary opposition whereby either fear leads to pleasure or pleasure leads to fear and hence pain” (Cavallaro,

2002: 58). McKindless experiences pleasure in observing the pain in the photographs as well as, in a gothic twist, he experiences pain when trying to obtain pleasure out of dissecting Anne-Marie's body.

The pleasurable observation of a mutilated body with a mixed gaze of repulsion and joy acquires a different signification when both the male gazers and the female gazed share the knowledge that such dismembering is actually a fiction. William cuts Sylvie's body in two different shows. In the first one, he pretends to cut her in search for a ring she has swallowed and thus exposes her inner body parts to an audience who are enjoying the fake live human dissection: "an echoing ripple of laughter came from the audience" (TBT, 162). In the show, William delves:

shoulder deep into her open wound, pulling out latex guts of her still beating heart, yohohoing as I hauled her intestines the full length of the stage like a reeling routing sailor tearing down the rigging. [...] I pulled a succession of impossible objects from her slim form, a bottle of champagne, a waxen head I'd found in Costume, a bicycle wheel (TBT, 163).

William's grotesque performance of a theatre of anatomy requires the audience's collaboration: in their gaze, they also have to insert themselves within the narrative of the magic trick and, therefore, they collaborate in the show by laughing at what they are watching. Their laughter implies their insertion within the realm of illusions, the same realm in which Rilke wants to remain when he does not want to admit that what he sees in the photographs is actually true. Returning to Sylvie's dissection, it proves interesting to analyze Kuryluk's description of dissecting rooms as *grotto-esque*⁷⁶ spaces, as the "scientific grotto of the curiosities, [where] the inside is turned outside and the dark secrets of the organic become disclosed as the bodily cave is opened up" (Kuryluk, 1987: 28). However, Sylvie's cave shows that she does enclose predictable body organs and some unpredictable ones, such as the wheel or the bottle of champagne. The act of emptying Sylvie's female, passive body – almost a living corpse – implies a previous construction by the male active Williams, his own representation of a woman's body. However, his is a queered representation of a woman's body, as the inclusion of items, apparently, unrelated to the body shows that the representation is "the normative function of a language which is said either to reveal or to distort what is assumed to be true about the category of women" (Butler, 1990: 1). The audience laughs at the presence of alien objects to the female body but,

⁷⁶ Borrowing Russo's spelling of the word (Russo, 1994)

altogether, share with William the grotto-esque quality of bodies and the display of its disorganized parts.

The second time William sees Sylvie is when they have prepared, together with Ulla, the trick where her body is split in two. As in the previous dissected body, “the crowd roared” (*TBT*, 229) despite Sylvie’s pleas for help as she “turned her face to the audience appealing to them” (*TBT*, 228). The audience’s reaction implies the assumption of some power relations between the male magician and his female assistant. As Cavallaro notes when dealing with the work of Poppy Z Brite, the “violent desecrations of the body [are presented] not in order to justify sexual violence but to expose the hypocrisy of whole cultures committed to hiding the pervasiveness of both literal and metaphorical drives to rend, mutilate and dissect through exploitative power relations⁷⁷” (Cavallaro, 2002: 57). Somehow the audience identifies with what they are watching onstage as long as it remains under control. They know there is some logical explanation to the split body, even though they ignore the true nature of the trick. William explains it to Nixie when asking her to be his assistant. However, she refuses to participate as she suffers from claustrophobia.

You lie in here, Nixie, hidden from view. I put the box on the table and help Sylvie into it. She surreptitiously pulls her knees up to her chest and you slide your legs up through the flap on the top of the table, sticking your feet out through the foot holes in the box so the audience think that they belong to Sylvie. Then voilà, I wiled my saw (*TBT*, 205).

After Nixie’s refusal, Ulla substitutes her. Once onstage, William shows a fantasized body of a woman in the box, half Sylvie and half Ulla. This body “can never be understood in relation to the body as real” but to “another culturally instituted fantasy, one that claims the place of the ‘literal’ and the ‘real’” (Butler, 1990: 71). That is why the body the audience gazes at as real is, actually a fantasy and, as such, it can be split in two or joined again at will. However, when the trick undergoes an unexpected turn, they do not know how to react. After the splitting and re-composition of Sylvie’s body, William aims at taking the trick further, now that he has won his audience. He asks for a volunteer in the audience who is cold-blooded

⁷⁷ While revising this section, I read a review on the Swedish / Danish TV series *Bron/Broen* (2011-2014) and how, in the first chapter, there appears a sliced corpse of a woman in the precise middle of Oresund Bridge. Eventually, the detectives in charge discover that that corpse is, actually, half a Danish prostitute and half a Swedish MP. Besides, the killer is defined as an Ethical Terrorist who, in that crime, wants to raise awareness on the fact that some crimes are investigated faster and more efficiently if the person murdered is more socially relevant and respected (Casciari, 2014).

enough to shoot at her. In the process of choosing that man who exercises his power over the bonded female on stage, he spots Dix. He, who is Sylvie's partner, watches the scene "pale and intent from a centre table. His grey eyes, still as ice, caught mine and I faltered, but I had no need to jeopardise the illusion by appealing to someone I might have been seen with" (*TBT*, 231). What William ignores is that Dix learns what the illusionist wants the audience to see in order to prepare a new version of the trick together with Sylvie, who knows in turn how she should be seen by the audience. That is why, rather than showing the trick in their final act when Sylvie is apparently shot, they expose William to the gaze of the audience, turning him thus into a gazed object rather than a subject.

There are also other bodies that are, indeed, hidden from the audience's gaze, though they queerly regain their position in society. This can be the case of hidden corpses, of Gloria in *The Bullet Trick*, Miranda in *Naming the Bones* and Greta in *The Girl on the Stairs*. In the three novels, there are hints that, queerly, point at some absences. The envelope that William steals from Montgomery's pocket contains a photograph that is more revealing in what it hides than in what it shows. "There was no blood, no violence, no murdered corpse or bruised face, but there was something horrid about the image that forced my eyes to stay on it" (*TBT*, 99). In *Naming the Bones*, Watson comes across a list of names in Archie Lunan's papers: "*Danny, Denny, Bobby Boy, Ruby! [...] Ramie, Moon, Jessa, Diana the huntress, Persephone hidden, names can bless or curse unbidden*" (*NTB*, 5, italics in the original). Watson ignores the identity hidden under these lists of names, though he relates them with people Lunan knew or characters for a future novel. In their new apartment, Jane suffers a domestic accident. The doorbell rings and she meets Alban Mann and his daughter Anna. He is holding a bouquet of flowers addressed to Jane and makes an odd remark when seeing the bruise on her face: "Someone's way of saying sorry? [...] Your face" (*TGOTS*, 20). These three examples of present absences posit, on the one hand, a dark reading to the need stressed by Butler of the representation of women "to extend visibility and legitimacy to women as political subjects" (Butler, 1990: 1). This visibility, perceived by extra-sensitive characters in the absences in photos, texts or words, is achieved by questioning the official versions that turned those women into fleeing entities, like Gloria Noon and Greta Mann, who are thought to have escaped and live somewhere else, or even into an unknown presence, as baby Miranda's fate was linked to Lunan's last writings, buried in the limekilns. Their

corpses are hidden, buried and abandoned as they are mute bodies, “awaiting signification [...] awaiting the inscription of the masculine signifier for entrance into language and culture” (Butler, 1990: 147-8). What William, Watson and Jane do is to read and attribute signification to those mute bodies. There is, however, a queering signification as those who introduce them into language and culture by actually naming those gaps cannot precisely inscribe them with a masculine signifier. William is a failed male who is gazed at rather than a gazer. Watson is possessed not only by Lunan’s gaze – in his copy of *Moontide*, Watson sees Lunan’s photograph and he feels “Lunan looked up at him from the front cover. His had once seemed an old face to Murray. Now he could see the youth screened behind the braggadocio of long hair and beard” (*NTB*, 148-9) – but also by his own look, understood here in the sense of “physical appearance.” Jane is a pregnant lesbian girl in a Berlin *milieu* she feels alien to herself. The three of them help rescue three women’s bodies from the “impassé modernist symbolization for the entity marked ‘Woman’ [as] there is only one way out: death, whatever its representation – hysterical breakdown, unconsciousness, loss of visibility, or more literally loss of life” (Russo, 1994: 45). In the process of imbuing life to their dead bodies, they fill the muteness of their bodies with a rebellion against the heteronormative punishment for being abject women: Gloria left her husband for another man and she ‘accidentally’ dies while being observed by them. Miranda is symbolically punished for her mother’s sin, as she had sex with two men at the same time and thus is ignorant of who Miranda’s father is. Greta is a former prostitute who rebels against her male saviour husband. Their corpses, which are real grotto-esque, female bodies as opposed to the performed grotto-esqueness of Sylvie’s body studied above, “emerge as a deviation from the norm” (Russo, 1994: 11) and, therefore, are “defined against the male norm” (Russo, 1994: 11). Their deviation from the male norm leads them towards their death but in the process of reconstructing their corpses, William, Watson and Jane figuratively and literally raise their corpses from their graves. The silencing of the stories buried with the bodies is filled in with, if not the absolute truth, at least a truthful story. By this reconstruction and re-signification, each of the constructed bodies, “ought to question “the body” as a construct of suspect generality when it is figured as passive and prior to discourse” (Butler, 1990: 129). Such a questioning leads, logically, to the new visibility of these female bodies corrupted only on their corporeal form but not imbued by the moral corruption that ended their lives. If Jack Sullivan (1978), as mentioned in Section 1,

stresses that a detective story clarifies and solves an initial problem, these bodies are found in the last section of their novels, with the extreme case of Greta, whose finding actually closes the novel: “I think they’ve found Greta Mann” (*TGOTS*, 279). Rather than being solved, those corrupted, abject bodies are not the source of the detective puzzle but an opening to future questionings on female bodies.

Before concluding this section on how gazes are queered by subverting their subjects and objects or the regaining of the property of the body to be gazed at, there is a need to refer to a non-accidental naming of the social centre where William exposes Montgomery as “the Old Panopticon.” This is a “small by modern theatrical standards, a long room overhung on its left and right by high wooden balconies that I guessed used to house the cheap seats” (*TBT*, 302). In front of the audience, William exposes Montgomery – and his guilt – in a trick without a distracting female body. As opposed to the Gothic, Victorian atmosphere of the theatre he is performing at, it is precisely “visibility [that] becomes a trap,” (Ascari, 2007: 43) as in a real Panopticon. Once he is seen and cheered by the audience, William plays a disappearance magic trick on the former officer who imprisons him in the magic box. After such a display, Montgomery is arrested and he starts paying for his crimes in jail. The Old Panopticon does not function exactly as Foucault’s panopticon, which offered:

a powerful and sophisticated internalized coercion, which was achieved through the constant observation of prisoners, each separated from the other, allowing no interaction, no communication. This modern structure would allow guards to continually see inside each cell from their vantage point in a high central tower, unseen by the prisoners (Mason).

In turn, this space of constant observation as a control mechanism becomes here a site for performances, such as William’s, and the audience does not mean to control or judge those they are gazing at. Montgomery is exposed in front of an audience attending a charity show for children with Down Syndrome and, as William notes, “the hall was in full pantomime mode now” (*TBT*, 334). In this case, the bringers of some moral order to the retired police officer are some especially unprotected children – as they suffer from that Syndrome – when they shout: “Abracadabra!!!” (*TBT*, 336). After that, Montgomery disappears from such innocent eyes to appear to Sheila and Blunt’s.

Jane, however, meets the inquisitive eyes of her neighbours in the building where her apartment is. They all share the knowledge of Greta’s disappearance,

though none of them admit a version other than her official abandoning of her home. In their case, “knowledge linked to power, not only assumes the authority of 'the truth' but has the power to make itself true” (Foucault, 1977: 27). When she meets the Beckers, each of them gives her a different version of Greta’s disappearance. According to Herr Becker, “when Anna was two years old, Greta walked out in the middle of the night” (*TGOTS*, 61) whereas Frau Becker provides a radically different version: “Alban Mann killed his wife and buried her beneath the floorboards in the *Hinterhaus*. [...] He strangled her, up there in his apartment, next door to where you sleep” (*TGOTS*, 61). Their opposing versions are somehow related to their own relation with Greta. Herr Becker suspects he might be Anna’s father, while Frau Becker did feel some sexual attraction towards her up to the point that she “would have liked to marry her” (*TGOTS*, 60). Their triangular relationship will be further developed in this research, but what proves relevant now is how they find in Jane a new object of interest to their own gaze – they are curiously present whenever Jane needs them. Jane, in turn, is gazed at in the panopticon-like building she lives in, but she also contributes to the controlling of the other inhabitants. She is constantly looking at the *Hinterhaus*, as Petra notices: “When I took the lease I imagined you sitting in the lounge, or on the balcony, where it gets the light, no in here. It’s gloomy; all right for sleeping in, but not for during the day” (*TGOTS*, 109). Jane, rather than looking outside to the city with potential novelties for her life, looks inside the building, to the grotto-esque inside that hides Greta’s corrupted corpse as a result of a misogynous attack by the inhabitants of the house. Russo points out that misogyny “identifies this hidden inner space with the visceral. Blood, tears, vomit, excrement – all the detritus of the body that is separated out and placed with terror and revulsion (predominantly, though not exclusively) on the side of the feminine – are down there in the cave of abjection” (Russo, 1996: 2). However, this hatred of women is not only effected by men. Frau Becker answers Jane’s question on what made her think that Alban killed Greta by saying: “I would if she were my wife” (*TGOTS*, 61). In the final moment of anagnorisis after Anna and Alban’s deaths, Herr Becker still wants to exercise his power on the truth by acknowledging Greta’s murder and inculcating Alban. However, Frau Becker cannot help telling the truth. “I remember that he [Alban Mann] killed her, I do remember that now. [...] but I don’t understand why I can still feel the warmth of her throat on my hands” (*TGOTS*, 273). She also exercised her misogyny on a woman whom she both loved and hated, a female misogyny that

Mulvey explains as “the female psyche may well identify with misogynistic revulsion against the female body and attempt to erase signs that mark her physically as feminine” (Mulvey, 1991: 146). In her case, she experienced some queer desire for Greta but underwent a process of female homosexual panic, a queer variation on Sedgwick’s proposed “homosexual panic” which she relates to Gothic as it is “specifically not about homosexuals or the homosexual; instead, heterosexuality is by definition its subject. (Sedgwick, 1992: 116). That is why “through the sheen of tears blinding her vision,” as Herr Becker is being attended by the paramedics, Frau Becker can admit that “you loved poor Greta as much as I did, Heike; enough to know why Herr Mann would want to kill her, and enough to invite her into your dreams” (*TGOTS*, 272-273). In the act of gazing at Greta, she enacts in Frau Becker a queer questioning of the categories of what male/female, feminine/masculine and homosexual/heterosexual is and thus Greta can be loved and hated, desired and feared. Jane, as a gazer of Anna, triggers in her a similar effect that Greta did in Frau Becker, including some homosexual panic. In her article based on Laura Mulvey’s male gaze, Jacobbsson analyses how gazes work in the film *Fatal Attraction* and concludes that:

[it] could perhaps have been a movie with a female gaze and a feminist message, but these intentions were suppressed by the social order of men. This exemplifies the fact that we have not yet reached the position in which we can affirm indisputably, the power of the female gaze. Perhaps this will be the case when the present ideology radically changes” (Jacobbsson, 1999: 26).

Perhaps Jacobbsson, rather than questioning Mulvey’s approach to who gazes and is gazed at in films, actually confirms Mulvey’s points and presents an inconclusive impossibility about a subversion in the act of looking. However, in this section there has been some emphasis on how gaze can be subverted, and even gained, in Louise Welsh’s novels when read under some rose-coloured glasses. It is possible that, if Jacobbsson had emphasized less the “successful” quality in Alex, the female role played by Glenn Close in *Fatal Attraction* (Adrian Lyne, 1987), she would have recognized the stereotyping in an “attractive, independent successful woman” [...] and “the more liberated and successful you are, the lesser are your chances of getting married” (Jacobbsson, 1999: 13, 21). Jane, as pregnant woman with a female *lebenspartner*, is gazed at in the panopticon building but altogether gazes at the other inhabitants in the building. If there was a link between knowledge and

power that had Greta buried in the *Hinterhaus*, now she is freed when her body is found and all those that were involved in her death are no longer in the house: Herr Becker, Alban and Anna are dead and Frau Becker is taken into a residence. Now, it is Jane's turn to create a new order in the house and to control. As Tielo tells Petra: "Alban Mann murdered his daughter. He would have murdered Jane if she hadn't killed him first" (*TGOTS*, 276). Non-German speaking Jane has appropriated language up to the point of inflicting her words with the power of knowledge and her own version is that which becomes true about the event in the house.⁷⁸

After dealing with how the gaze is queered in the novels of this research, it seems relevant to analyze a point that has been hinted at in the last part of this section: if gazing opens up the possibilities of a dichotomous male subject and female object, it is possible to widen the binary relations of characters – understanding "relations" in a wider sense than just merely sexual relations, though they may also be so – by a certain triangulation in them.

4.2. Queering couples

If the previous sections in this chapter owe much to Butler's notions of sex and gender as phantasmatic constructions, this one starts from Sedgwick's term "homosociability" to analyse the multiple relationships in Welsh's work. The intent, however, is not to simply apply this model to the different male bonds in the novels, but rather to go beyond, an intended pun that makes reference to Lunan's "interest in the beyond" (*NTB*, 123), as the scope of Sedgwick's work only includes English male writers until the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth century. It should be first stressed that homosocial and homosexual, "although they are related terms, [...] should not be conflated" (Dickinson, 1999: 6), as the former somehow includes the latter. It is not then, as Martin claims, that "there are no gay men (let alone lesbians) in *Between Men*" (1994: 126), but rather than there is an emphasis on desire rather than on relationships. In other words, Fergus and Watson's case in *Naming the Bones* is an example of homosociability in which both males find strong bonds between

⁷⁸ In Section 5, there will be an analysis on the importance of language and its use on the character's part. Jane is not the only one that modifies the real events in the narration to the police, as Rilke in *The Cutting Room* and Watson in *Naming the Bones* exclude some participants' involvement in the events or modify the agency of such events.

them as they also share the same objects of desire to be possessed: Rachel and Archie Lunan. Sedgwick explains that:

[male homosocial desire] is intended to mark both discriminations and paradoxes. 'Homosocial desire,' to begin with, is a kind of oxymoron: 'Homosocial' is a word occasionally used in history and the social sciences, where it describes social bonds between persons of the same sex; it is a neologism, obviously formed by analogy with 'homosexual,' and just as obviously meant to be distinguished from 'homosexual.' In fact, it is applied to such activities as 'male bonding,' which may, as in our society, be characterized by intense homophobia, fear and hatred of homosexuality. To draw the 'homosocial' back into the orbit of 'desire,' of the potentially erotic, then, is to hypothesize the potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual – a continuum whose visibility, for men, in our society is radically disrupted (Sedgwick, 1992: 1-2).

In Welsh's novels, there are openly homosexual characters, such as Rilke, Jane and Petra, some others that behave homosexually as if there was no signification to their sexual acts yet, as Marlowe, Walshingham and Blaize – or borrowing Frantzen's terminology, they engage into "same-sex relations", as "'homosexuality' and 'homosexuals' were not recognized concepts in the Middle Ages or in the Reinassance" (Frantzen, 2000: 1) – and some others who are not homosexual but they engage in homosocial relationships, as William or Watson, and even suffer from "homosexual panic," which will be dealt with in this section, such as Frau Becker or Anna Mann. By introducing these homosocial bonds in the expected binary relations man/woman, there takes place an opening up of possibilities as desire becomes triangulated, mapping thus a labyrinth of connected triangular bonds. Sedgwick is well aware of the importance of such a geometrical figure, as she explains that

the triangle is useful as a figure by which the 'commonsense' of our intellectual traditions schematizes erotic relations, and because it allows us to condense into a juxtaposition with that folk-perception several somewhat different streams of recent thought" (Sedgwick, 1992: 21).

In Section 3 some reference has been made to the magic symbolism of the triangle, embodied by Christie in *Naming the Bones*. There is no surprise then that such magic triangles cast a spell on the relationships of all the characters involved and force them to wander labyrinths where each of the characters are vertices in different interconnected triangles. In the Fergus-Rachel-Watson triangular relationship in *Naming the Bones*, there are two men who are apparently sharing the same woman. However, Fergus, rather than being the cheated-on husband, is aware from the beginning of their three-side relationship and exercises his power, granted by his

knowledge and by, actually, gazing at them. In a conversation at University, Fergus clearly states that he knows about the affair between Watson and Rachel when he warns him that “whatever went on between you and my wife, it’s over now. Understand?” (*NTB* 155). Sharing his wife with common acquaintances is a sexual fantasy fulfilled in which Rachel plays the role of a sexually-active woman but she is rather an object to her husband’s desires and gaze, as he has seen her having sex in a car with Watson and even photographed them in the office. When Murray asks Fergus if he did not mind sharing her with strangers, he answers: “With strangers, no. It’s part of what binds us together” (*NTB* 291). Fergus knows the value of Rachel as a commodification in male-to-male bonds. In his case, Sedgwick’s point that “the triangular transaction between men of the possession of a woman [...] is simply the most patent subject. The status of the women in this transaction is determiningly a problem” (Sedgwick, 1992: 50) is not only proved certain – though only partially – but also shows itself openly, visibly and not as “a transaction whose structuring presence in other texts it sometimes requires some inferential work to detect” (Sedgwick, 1992: 50). Fergus makes a conscious use of Rachel’s body as a transactional object with Watson but his aim is double: on the one hand it satisfies his voyeuristic, scopophilic pleasure by becoming the dominant active gazer. On the other hand, he uses Rachel as a distractor to Watson’s self-awareness from other triangular relationships Fergus is more interested in hiding. When Watson and Christie have just exhumed Miranda’s body, Fergus appears and tries to distract Watson by feigning that Rachel is actually in his car and explains: “It’s me she loves, Murray, me she married. You were just a diversion. Look at you, crawling around in the mud on an old witch’s errand. You’re not really Rachel’s type” (*NTB*, 355). By focussing on Rachel’s problematic nature to their homosocial bond he seeks to distract the attention from those other triangular relationships in which he participated and which are more relevant to him than the constructed Fergus-Watson-Rachel one. These are those between Christie-Lunan-Fergus, embodied in Miranda’s buried corpse that hides in her DNA the identity of her father, and Lunan-Fergus-Watson’s, embodied in turn in the poetry book that Fergus published as his, but which was actually written by Lunan. Christie subverts in turn her female transactional value by presenting herself – and inserting Fergus too – in another triangular relation in which all the angles are present in that moment: Christie-Fergus-Miranda. “We’re old friends, Fergus. Can’t we come to some arrangement?” (*NTB*, 355). In this new

triangle with two female vertices, Fergus's role reverses as he has to deal and negotiate the female transaction, Miranda, with a female counterpart. They are now inserted in a kind of inverted triangle that suggests "femininity, and homosexuality in alchemical, ancient, and the Aryan discourses" (Isola, 2008: 38). Desire and witchcraft can be found in this manipulation of desires, as there is no possibility of present sexual desire, unless it were some abject kind of necrophilic incest. Christie the Witch, the character who embodies the magic triangle and commands it, casts her spell on Fergus and, as a consequence, he dies buried in the same ground his daughter's body has been hidden in for years.

After Fergus's death, Rachel explains to Watson how her mind changed after discovering he was using the photos for something else other than just pleasure. She, who was aroused by acknowledging potential gazers while having sex, finds it abject when she realises her role was simply a transactional one in her husband's hands. The fact that Watson was blackmailed helped her make up her mind and decide, "I was going to leave him. I told him before he left for the island. The photographs he sent you were the last straw. Well [...] not the photos themselves, the fact that he sent them to you" (*NTB*, 387). It proves relevant that, despite Fergus's death, Watson and Rachel do not continue with their affair, due to the fact that it was triangular in nature from the beginning. Once the triangle disappears, so does their relationship. To his discontent, Watson's comfort and salvation relies then on the family bonds, which are also triangle-shaped. However, when the triangle is touched by family bonds, it acquires new dimensions. The all male Watson family, formed of Murray, Jack and their father, disintegrates when the father suffers from Alzheimer disease. This family, which represented the grouping "together [of] all the bonds that link males to males, and by which males enhance the status of males" (Sedgwick, 1992: 3), loses their bonds as the father dies at the hospital and Murray has a feeling of guilt for letting their father die there. In Jack's work of art, the disease, which Murray feels it should remain in the realm of the private, is recorded and screened in Jack's exhibition. The male body is exposed "to the wine-drinkers" (*NTB*, 18) and gazed at not as a source of power but as an old person whose memory selectively remembers facts from the past but does not recognize the present, exposing in turn the disintegration of the male-bonded family. In the video, the father tells Jack, though he does not recognize him as his son, "I've got two boys, terrific wee fellas. Six and eleven, they are [...] I've no seen them in a long while. They told me they were fine,

but how do they know? Have you seen them, son?⁷⁹” (*NTB*, 19, 379). Murray Watson’s angry reaction at his brother’s work separates them spatially up to the point that he travels to the island of Lismore to do some field-research for his book. This distancing also turns him into an observer of how the existing family, triangular relationship Murray-Jack-Lynn, and in particular the male-female bond between Jack and Lynn does no longer exist and has become volatile, as Jack has abandoned the triangle to engage in his own binary relationship with Cressida. In his attempt at saving his brother’s face, he silences his knowledge on the existence of Cressida and makes use of his words to fit Lynn’s apparent ignorance on the issue of Jack’s infidelity. When Lynn phones, she asks him:

‘I was phoning to check if you’d seen Jack’ [...]
‘Briefly, before his lecture.’
‘So you’re talking?’
‘Not really.’
‘You’ll have to make it up sometime’
‘Maybe’ (*NTB*, 196-197).

Lynn relates Murray’s anger with his brother to his upset at his father’s video-art work, but she ignores it is actually due to the discovery of his brother’s affair. To him, the stable male-male bond is once more disintegrated while there remains, though, a bond of affection and complicity between Murray and his sister-in-law and she helps him to find out some information about Bobby Robb. There is a further difference between the male-male and the male-female bonds that proves relevant to understanding Murray-Jack-Lynn’s relationship: “for a man to undergo even a humiliating change in the course of a relationship with a man still feels like preserving or participating in a sum of male power, while for a man to undergo any change in the course of a relationship with a woman feels like a radical degeneration of substance” (Sedgwick, 1992: 45). When Jack learns that Lynn is expecting his child, he realizes the volatile nature of his relationship with Lynn, as “she won’t have anything to do with me” (*NTB*, 376) and that is why he turns to Murray and looks for comfort in him and accidentally saves his life both physically, as he is about to die hanged from a belt, and emotionally, as his guilt by abandoning their ill father is somehow released when Jack tells him that: “They [workers at the residence] told us there were days, weeks maybe. Dad knew we were doing our best. He was proud of

⁷⁹ In Section 5 of this research there will be a further discussion on this quote in the Jack’s video-art work, though focussing in its repetition within a film.

you, Murray. He loved you. He wouldn't want you to do anything like this. You know that. He'd be fucking furious" (*NTB*, 376). Not only the male-male bond between brothers is restored but also the family order in the male family. After such a restoration, there arises a possibility of further triangulations and Jack introduces Murray to Aliah. However, Murray's exposition to the disintegration and the multiplicity of triangles has taught him of the true, constructed nature of human bonds. That is why, when meeting Aliah, "he put a smile on his face and walked towards her. The smile was forced, everything was forced, but for the moment that was just how it had to be" (*NTB*, 389).

Rilke, accidentally, feels immersed in a triangular relationship that is, to a certain extent, provoked by him, which leads him on to his wandering his own triangular labyrinth. His infatuation for Derek leads him to misread Derek's signals, as explained above. On the other hand, the protective relationship that he establishes with Anne-Marie, the model in *The Camera Club*, is queered as they demolish the impossibility of sexual desire between a gay man and a straight woman. After Anne-Marie's confession that McKindless had offered her money to inflict on her "a small cut, hardly a scar" (*TCR*, 220), the fact that "Anne-Marie had got closer than me" (*TCR*, 214) triggers in Rilke the same fascination that the girl in the photographs exerted on him. Sage explains that:

Anne-Marie provides Rilke here with the mirror-image of his own perversity, as she acts out, at one remove, the part of his dead woman in the photograph; and hence there is a light, erotic attraction which is building between them all through this confessional scene, that ends with them stroking each other protectively, and kissing, straight and gay (Sage, 2011: 75).

Leaving aside Rilke's "perversity" as understood by Sage, it is true that it is an erotic moment between them as he holds her while crying and she raises her lips to his and they kiss. "Tongue touching tongue, tenderly, tip to tip. I opened my eyes and saw that hers were closed. I ran a finger down her spine. She moved closer, small breasts pressing into my chest" (*TCR*, 221). By focussing on the confessional aspect of the scene, Sage misses the fact that, despite the fact that Rilke quickly becomes conscious of the fact that the body he is caressing and kissing is actually a female one, in the act of keeping her eyes closed she is projecting the feelings she is experiencing beyond the limits of Rilke's body. Sage presupposes what Sedgwick explains as the fact that

one has somewhere in reserve a stable and intelligible definition for both what is 'really homosexual' and what is 'really sentimental,' while our [Sedgwick's] historical argument is exactly the opposite: that those definitions are neither historically stable [...] nor internally coherent" (Sedgwick, 1990: 155).

Rilke's lack of sexual desire for Anne-Marie does not mean that he cannot provoke some heterosexual desire in Anne-Marie as an imagined heterosexual male body, as she has her eyes closed while kissing. Rilke is well aware of this and that is why, when he leaves, "they kissed a platonic goodbye" (*TCR*, 221). However, the embrace after Anne-Marie's confession is not their last: when he tries to rescue her from McKindless' attack, he sees his corpse on the floor and he holds her close. Their relationship is impossible and, in an unexpected turn, Anne-Marie, who can only project her sexual desire on Rilke, does actually find it reciprocated in Derek, Rilke's projected sexual object of desire. Rilke, the sexual vampire who fell in love with Derek, realizes that "love's young dream" (*TCR*, 291), exorcises the ghost of the girl in the photograph and feels a new cycle in his life is starting together with Rose, already rejected by Raymond, the police officer, after her incrimination in the McKindless case. As Sage remarks, "it seems that the two rejects, as allies, with drink rather than sexual choice as their cement, are going to settle for a not necessarily faithful domestic life together" (Sage, 2011: 75).

The society portrayed in *Tamburlaine Must Die* is, a male-dominated society, except for the Queen, who is not a character herself in the novel but controls the Privy Council. In fact, in the novel, there are hardly any female characters, except for prostitutes, and even men play female roles in the theatre. Sedgwick notes that:

in any male-dominated society, there is a special relationship between male homosocial (*including* homosexual) desire and the structures for maintaining and transmitting patriarchal power: a relationship founded on an inherent and potentially active structural congruence. For historical reasons, this special relationship may take the form of ideological homophobia, ideological homosexuality, or some highly conflicted but intensively structured combination of the two (Sedgwick, 1992: 25, italics in the original).

In this novel, there exist man-to-man comradeships that merge and blur brotherly love and sexual attraction. This homosocial behaviour is both assumed and feared by men. Men's bodies can both penetrate and be penetrated as a result of sexual intercourse or as a result of a stab. In the panoptical Elizabethan society, where no one can trust anybody as it is infected by spies who work for the Privy Council and

are willing to find evidence of heresy to condemn to death, secrecy in the private realm is a must. Homophobia is, then, “a mechanism for regulating the behaviour of the many by the specific oppression of a few” (Sedgwick, 1992: 88). From this perspective, the constant betrayal undergone by the male characters can be better understood. In the last day before Marlowe’s journey to London, as he has been summoned by the Privy Council, Walsingham, Marlowe’s patron, approaches Marlowe sexually. Their relationship trespasses the sheer status of patronage to be imbued with bonds of homosocial affection. However, their relationship is unequal: Walsingham chooses when and how their affair turns to homosexual intercourse. It has been noted before that the Elizabethan Age was empty of sexual identities based on objects of desire. When analysing Shakespeare’s sonnets, Sedgwick emphasizes that “my point is of course again not that we are here in the presence of homosexuality (which would be anachronistic) but rather (risking anachronism) that we are in the presence of male heterosexual desire” (Sedgwick, 1992: 38). Marlowe’s objectualization as a sexual object can only be read under the master-vassal relation: he wants to “grant my patron his literary *droit du seigneur*” (*TMD*, 12) and becomes, thus, a passive participant in the sexual act: he is first anally penetrated and then mouth-fucked until his patron reaches orgasm and cums in his mouth. As mentioned above male bodies are either sexually penetrated and/or stabbed. In this case, however, the sexual stabbing, “the rough stabbing of the patron-of-poetry’s cock” (*TMD*, 12), becomes a moral and emotional stabbing. If he had assumed that “male homosexual bonds may have a subsumed and marginalized relation to male heterosexuality similar to the relation of femaleness to maleness, but different because [they are] carried out within an already dominantly male-homosocial sphere” (Sedgwick, 1992: 47), once in London, Marlowe realizes of the difficult situation he has got into, awareness grows from the fact that his patron’s exercise of the *droit du seigneur* was not accidental.⁸⁰ From the dismissed suspicions on the connection between their sexual intercourse and his accusation by the Privy Council, his search for Tamburlaine sheds light on the true nature of their relationship: “the homosociability of this world seems embodied fully by its heterosexuality; and its shape is not that of brotherhood, but of extreme, compulsory, and intensely volatile mastery and subordination” (Sedgwick, 1992: 66). All the members of Elizabethan

⁸⁰ As explained of Section 3 of this research, Welsh’s Walsingham seems to be Francis Walsingham, one of the possible implicated persons in real Christopher Marlowe’s death.

society are inserted into mastery and subordination relationships, except for the Queen herself, a fact that queers the heterosexual relationships as she, as Queen, assumes and exercises the male heterosexual order in her clearly homosocial society. It is within this order that Dee can assure Marlowe that “your patron is a weak man. He loves you, but finds Raleigh and the Council more persuasive. He stands between the two and does nothing. [...] He knows many things” (*TMD*, 123). Knowledge is power and so is silencing it, as explained in the first section of this chapter. What Marlowe assumed as part of his duty and a proof of his gratitude was not such. In fact, he had agreed to participate in a depraved sexual act: an act of necrophilia in which he plays the role of a corpse, an inanimate body that is anally and orally penetrated; an act on Walsingham’s part that is a mixture of homosocial love and his last chance to exercise his power over his vassal. He is an empty, grotto-esque body and therefore can be used – and filled in – sexually.

Marlowe also actively plays in the hide-and-seek game of homophobic and homosexual drives. Homosexual behaviour is tolerated within the private realm and provided that sex becomes a commodity in order to achieve something. Marlowe knows it well since his childhood: as a child, he enjoyed the sponsorship of a Knight and then of an Archbishop – as well as Lord Walsingham. However, the possibility of love and the display of affection between men beyond the “cultural” – as in the case of Marlowe’s education – or the economic realms have got fatal consequences. When Blaize is explaining the reasons for his betrayal and his economic problems he says that some men came to his assistance to lend him money. Marlowe asks “for love?” (*TMD*, 133). Blaize laughs and states “the days when my love could bring and income are long past” (*TMD*, 134), implying that, to both of them, their exercise of masculine prostitution was commonplace to them, at least when they were younger. In an age far earlier in time than the emergence of identities, regardless whether sexual or racial, Marlowe inhabits a mainly manly world where women only provide sexual pleasure, as the prostitute, offered by Blaize as comfort, to Marlowe after being attacked by Baynes. “I watched as Blaize undressed the girl, unfastening her bodice, being gentle with her for she was rightly nervous at being alone with two men. [...] Blaize presented her to me like an unwrapped gift” (*TMD*, 76). The prostitute becomes a “ruin of a woman,” a figure that, according to Sedgwick,

is just the right lubricant for an adjustment of differentials of power between landlord and tenant, master and servant, tradesman and customer, or even king and subject. It is not, in fact, just any female figure who can perform this role, however. Imaginary women can: “female” wheeled vehicles can; madwomen, peasant women, the moon, working-class women, prostitutes (Sedgwick, 1992: 76).

The transactional character of the “ruin of the woman” is even further reinforced by the fact that Blaize himself pays for her services, physically enjoyed by Marlowe. “He shook his head and threw me a coin. I caught it and gave it to the girl, adding two of my own” (*TMD*, 78). However, in the creation of an erotic triangle between the prostitute-Marlowe-Blaize, sexual pleasure can be experienced in a manifold way. “An erotic triangle is likely to be experienced in terms of an explicit or implicit assertion of symmetry between genders and between homo- and hetero-social or sexual bonds” (Sedgwick, 1992: 47) and, as such, Blaize transfers onto the prostitute the impossibility of his obtaining sexual pleasure and homosocial/-sexual affection from Marlowe. Marlowe had claimed that he “had always been in love with Tamburlaine” (*TMD*, 55) and, consequently, Blaize desperately tries not just to play the role of Tamburlaine but to actually become him. By doing so, he attempts to become the addressee of Marlowe’s love though knowing for sure the impossibility of such love. Blaize as himself can only satisfy his sexual desire for Marlowe by gazing at him as a silent and observant participant in a threesome with a prostitute whom he pays. This triangular relationship briefly satisfies Blaize’s desire, as, after the economic transaction, he, in turn, enjoys some intimacy with Marlowe: “his breath stroked my face, he reached towards me, then we were together” (*TMD*, 78). However, this does not suffice. When Sedgwick reflects in her *Between Men*, she states that it focussed on “the oppressive effects on women and men of a cultural system in which male-male desire became widely intelligible primarily by being routed through triangular relations involving a woman” (Sedgwick, 1990: 15). Blaize is never perceived by Marlowe as other than a ruin. Despite Blaize’s desire to be admired by Marlowe, his feelings are hurt when he is introduced as “one of the finest players in London” (*TMD*, 69), not as good as to be offered the main role in the play, as in their threesomes, but just a secondary role, a servant that observes but does not participate in the main action taking place. He is, to a certain extent, a ruin of a man. As such, he is aware that the homosocial bonds between them are vanishing. When boundaries between what is homosocially acceptable and homosexually unacceptable are so blurred, a *faux pas* in this undetermined area can turn full-of-affection,

brotherly love into a will for death and destruction where bodies are penetrated, as though by swords, knives or poniards. These penetrating objects become homophobic weapons used as “a disproportionate leverage over the channels of bonding between all pairs of men” (Sedgwick, 1992: 88). In Marlowe’s sadistic stabbing, he annihilates the queer appropriation of his Tamburlaine character but, altogether, is also caught unawares by homosexual desire when seeing Blaize’s hairy chest exposed. Here, Marlowe faces the urge to choose between Blaize’s mortal love and the immortal love of potential, future audiences; and he chooses the immortal one. Mortal love dies at his own hands while he sets up for his journey into eternity: once he has regained Tamburlaine and impersonated him, he can face his honourable death and embrace his destiny, sacrificing his body, Christopher. As Tamburlaine, his life overpowers any human or divine forces and his last words address both: “A Curse on Man and God” (*TMD*, 140). The fictional Marlowe-Tamburlaine does not know, but the very same day he finishes his written account, the real Christopher Marlowe “was knifed to death at a house in Deptford.” Tamburlaine, however, was not. As Isola reflects when dealing with homosocial bonds in Sedgwick, “the narrative may delineate a minor subjectivity; however, this impulse is particularized in terms of larger ideological concerns, which include masculinity and compulsory heterosexuality” (Isola, 2008: 34). Marlowe’s minor homosocial subjectivity is eventually inserted into the compulsory masculinity and heterosexuality of eternity, where homophobia is exerted and erases any hint of homoeroticism.

There are other occasions on which homophobia does not play such a key role in homosocial bonds but rather the exercise of power by the males in the triangle on the female vertex. Bill Noon and inspector Montgomery are two opposing sides of society – a gangster and a police officer – who were involved in the death of Gloria Noon and who decide to establish a pact of silence between them, a bond which is, then, “a tableau of legitimation of ‘modern’ class and gender arrangements [that] is something that takes place on firmly male-homosocial terms: it is a transaction of honor between men over the dead, discredited, or disempowered body of a woman” (Sedgwick, 1992: 137). Gloria Noon’s dead body is, then, another ruin of a woman, a doubly unfaithful woman. Their homosocial bond is self-imposed and, to a certain extent, unnatural, as each of them embodies a male approach to legality. In their own gothicization of their love lives into a Frankenstein-like plot, their “male homosocial desire is at once the most compulsory and the most prohibited of social bonds”

(Sedgwick, 1990: 187). This compulsory social bond turns them into the passive vertices in their triangular relationship with Gloria Noon, who actually played an active role: she used her body to escape a marriage that did not satisfy her. As Monty explains: “we were young... Gloria was bored... she thought it was funny to seduce a policeman... to have lovers on both sides of the law. I was naïve... unsophisticated... easily flattered” (*TBT*, 342). Once dead, her ruined body still remains as the compulsory and prohibited bond between Bill and Montgomery. She resembles what Sedgwick considers “a residue of two potent male figures locked in an epistemologically indissoluble clench of will and desire” (Sedgwick, 1990: 187). However, in Welsh’s role reversal, it is Gloria who, when dying, becomes a residue in the two male’s lives. When Bill dies, there is only one extant version: Montgomery’s, which represents a static version of society where the world of crime commits crimes and honest citizens are simply victims or witness of such crimes. However, there lingers a doubt on this clear-cut division of society, as Bill Noon cannot offer his own version because he is dead. The only certain truth is that, were he alive, nobody would even know about the crime as the pact would remain unbroken. As explained in Section 3, he embodies a variation of doctor Frankenstein that merges with his own creature,⁸¹ but ignores that Gloria would return from her grave to claim justice on her death.

In *The Bullet Trick*, Montgomery and Bill are not the only ones who may have accidentally killed another person. Back in Glasgow, William lights a cigarette and “a slim shadow edged into the doorway, blocking my exit. [...] We faced each other across the lighter’s glow and I wondered if I was looking at my future self” (*TBT*, 45). He tells the boy to “piss off, boy, I’m not looking for company” (*TBT*, 46) and the boy answers: “there’s a lassie round the corner does the business, thirty quid a time” (*TBT*, 46). William feels threatened and suffers from homosexual panic:

the most private, psychologized form in which many twentieth-century western men experience their vulnerability to the social pressure of homophobic blackmail; even for them, however, that is the only one path of control, complementary to public sanctions through the institutions described by Foucault and others as defining and regulating the amorphous territory of “the sexual” (Sedgwick, 1992: 89).

⁸¹ A merging which reminds that of some obsessed scientists in their experiments, as Seth Brundle in David Cronenberg’s *The Fly* (1986).

However it may be true that he offers Williams the services of a “lassie,” defined by the OED as “a girl or a young woman,” that word has a queer definition provided in the gaymart⁸²’s “Queer slang in the Gay 90s.” According to it, a lassie is used “to identify children with gay parents. The term began with a negative connotation assuming that the child would also be gay or lesbian. It has been reclaimed as an affectionate term and a way of children being able to 'code' or identify each other in public.” To the possibility that the boy is not only offering William the services of a boy and, what is more relevant, somehow implying that William might be interested in men, William reacts out of homosexual panic, pushes him and apparently kills him in an accidental Gloria-ish manner. In the boy’s offer, there has been a trespassing of a male’s self-perception of himself as a male, as “for a man to be a man’s man is separated only by an invisible, carefully blurred, always-already-crossed line form being “interested in men” (Sedgwick, 1992: 89). William escapes the crime scene and locks himself in at home and reads the *Evening Times* in search for any news on his crime. “I forced my way through drownings and arson, robberies and knifings. I knew of every murder and at of violence reported in the city. I dreaded sight of my crime, but was never relieved to find it absent” (*TBT*, 47). Had he been in the United States, he would have claimed “homosexual panic” as a defence strategy which, as Sedgwick recounts:

is commonly used to prevent conviction or to lighten sentencing of gay-bashers – a term, as well, that names a key analytic tool in the present study [*Epistemology of the Closet*]. Judicially, a “homosexual panic” defense for a person (typically a man) accused of antigay violence implies that his responsibility for the crime was diminished by a pathological psychological condition, perhaps brought on by an unwanted sexual advance from the man he then attacked (Sedgwick, 1990: 19).

This is not his case, though, and his fear of being arrested for the boy’s death adds to his previous fear of the fact that the truth about Sylvie’s apparent death in their bullet trick surfaces. His initial homosexual panic turns into a kind of agoraphobia that secludes him in his own flat until he eventually forces himself to lead a normal life and meets that boy again on Argyle Street with a bandage on his head. Then he “shoved a tenner into his hand, then the look he gave me was pure love” (*TBT*, 47). William pays for silence and with money he silences the questioning of his own manliness.

⁸² In <http://www.gaymart.com/6fun/slang.html#1> (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

In the section devoted to queering gaze, there has been some reference to the homosexual panic experienced by Frau Becker in her triangular relationship with her husband and Greta Mann. However, *The Girl on the Stairs* presents a further development of triangulation from that presented in *Naming the Bones*: triangular relationships where the bonds are domestic rather than sexual. On the one hand, motherless Anna Mann is somehow adopted by the childless Beckers. In such adoption, they transfer their own desire for Greta onto the young girl. Greta had been a vertex in the triangular relationship between her and the Beckers, playing with Frau Becker's lesbian tendencies. She explains to Jane that "Greta deserved all she got. She kissed me once. She was a good kisser. I kissed her back, but all the time she was sneaking out to the backhouse with Karl [her husband]" (TGOTS, 235). In Anna's maturing body they acknowledge Greta's features and project on her body their desire for her mother. Anna explains to Jane that her constant meetings with Karl Becker are due to the fact that "Herr Becker thinks he's my father. He had sex with my mother, half of Berlin had sex with my mother, but he seems to think he was special. I thought it was funny at first. [...] He began to be possessive, telling me what to do and what not to do, he was becoming even worse than my father" (TGOTS, 266). Frau Becker, in turn, sees Anna as if she were either Greta herself or her ghost: "I saw her. She ran up the stairs just before you arrived. I tried to trip her up but she jumped over my foot. [...] Her hair was tangled, there were leaves in it, as if she'd just crawled out of the grave, and she was crying. Maybe she was a ghost" (TGOTS, 235). As explained above, Frau Becker suffered from homosexual panic as she felt homosexual desire for Greta and sinks in her memory the image of herself strangling her neck. Bersani remarks that "the logic of homosexual desire includes the potential for a loving identification with the gay man's enemies" (Bersani, 1998: 208), even though in this case it is not a gay man but a gay woman that allies herself with her heterosexual husband to destroy Greta as she cannot fully own her. Motherless Anna, in turn, feels a certain fascination for Jane and Petra's world. After stabbing Alban Mann, Jane goes to the *Hinterhaus* in search for Anna and there she finds out that Anna has stolen and collected some small objects that belong to either her or Petra, or both. "A delicate silk slip hung from a nail on the wall, its elegance impossible in the barren space. [...] The slip was Petra's. Jane remembered her complaining of its loss and her own dark suspicions of where she might have left it" (TGOTS, 261). Anna understands Petra and Jane's motherhood as abject, both attractive and repulsive. Her

homosexual panic towards the lesbian mothers can be read under the relationship Bruhm (2001: 270) establishes between Sedgwick's homosexual panic and Lacan's mirror stage, as:

[it] is by means of an identification with the other that he sees the whole gamut of reactions of bearing and display, whose structural ambivalence is clearly revealed in his behaviour, the slave being identified with the despot, the actor with the spectator, the seduced with the seducer" (Lacan, 1977: 19).

This is so as long as Lacan's "he" is substituted by Anna's "she." In the genderless and sexless baby, Anna sees the possibility of being loved not just by one mother but by two – in contrast to her case, where all men want to play a father figure to her but Frau Becker refuses to see her as a daughter, mainly due to physical reasons as she did not give birth to her – and the possibility of being actually loved and desired by two women. Furthermore, as Robson explains, "the conservative right's rhetoric has monolithically constructed the children of sexual minority parents as victims in need of rescue. These children are presumably akin to abused children who will suffer more from contact with their parents than from a deprivation of their parents" (Robson, 2000-2001, 916-917). Anna, as an abused child, feels attracted to the possibility of a new family but nonetheless dreads becoming a twice-abused child. In her last conversation with Jane, she tries to make use of her body, as she has done before with other men, and offers herself to her: "We can be friends if you like" (*TGOTS*, 266). Jane, in spite of the fact that she is holding the same knife she has killed Anna's father with, is not trying to abuse her. Anna, who has never experienced love for its own sake – nor maternal love –, does not know how to handle it, and tries to escape. However, instead of killing Jane under the premises of homosexual panic, she is actually killed by it as she falls into the well of the stairs. Her death ends her intrusive attempt to enter a family triangle that was not hers.

As explained in this section, relationships and, more specifically, triangular relationships that are established on homosocial bonds are queered in Welsh's works: desires are multiplied and a triangular relationship triggers the possibility of each vertex engaging in new triangular relationships in a labyrinthine way. Besides, Sedgwick's limited focus on literary men up to the early twentieth century has been widened, as the possibility that these relationships do not involve two homosocially-bonded men and a woman as a transactional object opens up the spectrum to new desires. However, this opening also implies the fact that homophobia and its

corresponding homosexual panic do not simply exert their controlling and repressing power on men but on any other human being, dead or alive – or even the possibility of self-inflicting such power on one’s self. The next section goes a step further into this queering of reality and aims at analysing how the same bodies that are gazed at and participate in the queered relations explained so far are at once queered in their own performance.

4.3. Queering femininities

In Welsh’s queered literary world there are some characters who embody some gender norms, “certain ideals of femininity and masculinity, ones which are almost always related to the idealization of the heterosexual bond” (Butler, 1993a: 22). There are female characters that embody a hyperfemininity, almost bordering what can be understood as burlesque performance. Anna wears adult make-up to look like an adult woman, but she cleans it from her face when she wants to play her “daughter” role in the building. There are also male characters who embody such hyperfemininity: Leslie and all the girls in the Chelsea Lounge or even Blaize dressed as a female Elizabethan character. Finally, some male also try to embody a modern, twenty-first century masculinity that leaves them unprotected against the new feminine roles in society, as in the case of Murray Watson, who misunderstands Mrs Garret’s sexual approach as a potential loving bond. The problem that they face is that their attempt at embodying such gender norms in the complicated triangular relationships they relate to each other proves quite a complicated matter. In order to understand these embodiments of gender norms, it seems necessary to develop the concepts of “performance” and “performativity” as Judith Butler proposed first in *Gender Trouble* and then in *Body That Matters*. In Section 2 of this research, there is a quote on how Goldie (2003) appropriates and summarizes such complex concepts by explaining that, by putting a moustache on and a police uniform on, he is presenting a performance of masculinity. On the other hand, in his own posture when writing and his clothing, he is presenting a performative masculinity, as he is unawares reiterating some preceding masculine norms. In his drag masculinity, Goldie clarifies the difference that Butler delimits between these two deeply related terms. In both of them repetition plays a key role, but in the case of performance, “this

repetition is at once a re-enactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; and it is in the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation. [...] this ‘action’ is a public action” (Butler, 1990: 140). Goldie’s repetition of the Village People’s masculinity is not “a singular ‘act’ or event, but a ritualized production” (Butler, 1993a: 95) and it is precisely in that ritualization that such masculinity is also recognized, no matter the true sex and gender of the performer. Performativity, on the other hand, is “a reiteration of a norm or a set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition” (Butler, 1993a: 12). Using Goldie’s position when typing his *Pink Snow*, he is presenting a performative masculinity that is taken for granted in any male body. The problem arises when it is a male body that is performing female gender, showing the problematic behind their performance as a female impersonation and their own masculine performativity. It is actually in the case of male drag that Butler provided a certain misleading concept and a, sometimes, assumed identification between performance and performativity. As she herself explains, performativity:

consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer’s “will” or “choice”; further, what is “performed” works to conceal, if not to disavow, what remains opaque, unconscious, unperformable. The reduction of performativity to performance would be a mistake. (Butler, 1993a: 234).

Therefore, in performance there is a certain will in the performer as opposed to performativity where there is no will, no chance to escape it. One unwillingly embodies performativity, as this repetition escapes one’s own perception. However, she finds in drags an example of subversive bodily acts against such uncontrollable nature of performative. Based on Newton’s claim that “drag is a double inversion that says ‘appearance is an illusion’” (Newton, 1972: 103) as one’s essence – the inside – altogether feminine and masculine as well as one’s appearance – the outer – is also masculine and feminine. Consequently, Butler states that there are three dimensions at play in drag: anatomical sex, gender identity and gender performance and the illusionary nature of the three of them in the drag performance “fully subverts the distinction between inner and outer psychic space and effectively mocks both the expressive model of gender and the notion of a true gender identity” (Butler, 1990: 137). Her proposal of drag as an example of performativity led to the wrong

assumption that drag was the paradigm of performativity, but rather that “if drag is performative, that does not mean that all performativity is to be understood as drag” (Butler, 1993a: 231). She further explains that drag is an allegory to “heterosexual melancholy” of a masculine gender that refuses to grieve the masculine as an object of love and/or desire and of a feminine gender that refuses to grieve the feminine as an object of love and/or desire. Consequently, what is performed in drag is “the *sign* of gender, a sign which is not the same as the body it figures, but which cannot be read without it” (Butler, 1993b: 26). However, returning to Goldie’s drag, his sign of gender is the same as the body it figures but, altogether, it also proves that his body cannot really aspire at embodying the masculinity that it points at, no matter how *straight* he sits while writing his academic research (and the pun, in this case, is undoubtedly intended and intentional). Part of this inadequacy of bodies to embody and perform their corresponding phantasmatic gender and sexual constructs was pinpointed above when dealing with Leslie, who is altogether a girl, and a man in drag. In *The Chelsea Lounge*, Rilke, as opposed to Newton’s assertion that appearance is an illusion, is aware of the fact that such an illusion is not enough in most of the cases to drag one’s own gender. His account of the girls at the club is the following:

Some would do fine, at certain angles, in sympathetic lightning. A couple of the girls could pass you by on the street and you’d be none the wiser. One could take a man home, blow him and he’d be thankful. Others could pass for large matrons, accepting that no one really looks at large matrons anyway. But some were fooling nobody. There are things that cannot be hidden; the forty-inch barrel chest, the large hands, size-eleven feet. They could stare at fashion plates, visit the beauty salon, buff their body bare of hair, but they would never be anything but a man in a dress (*TCR*, 106-107).

None of the girls do actually embody the femininity they are trying to perform as their body matters and limits their feminine impersonation. Their performance of the feminine does not grant them feminine performativity, as the latter is “neither free play nor theatrical self-presentation; nor can it be simply equated with performance” (Butler, 1993a: 95). Rilke’s approach as an outsider makes him feel as the judge of gender performativity through drag performance as he feels safe within his own unconscious masculine performativity and his intended masculine performance in a club where only two people are actually dressed in men’s clothes. He is read, though, by one of the girls as a man who feared to drag himself on his first visit to the club

and she suggests that “you would look a lot better with some make-up on” (*TCR*, 108). This make-up would liven up Rilke’s walking dead appearance and it also implies that using make-up does not necessarily involve an element of feminine performance nor it is a performative feminine feature. It should be clearly noted that the person who mentions this to Rilke is “a large girl in a red velvet dress who looked as if she might spend the daylight hours cementing bricks” (*TCR*, 108). His manly body in drag does not only perform femininity but also a rough masculinity, probably as unpretended and performative as whatever his own masculinity actually is. Therefore his dragged body cannot be said to expose or allegorize, as Butler claims,

the mundane psychic and performative practices by which heterosexualized genders form themselves through the renunciation of the *possibility* of homosexuality, a foreclosure which produces a field of heterosexual objects at the same time that it produces a domain of those whom it would be impossible to love” (Butler, 1993b: 25).

This girl does not only dress as a girl in a velvet dress and like wearing make-up but, when not in drag, is actually a happily married heterosexual man whose wife hates make-up and says “that she used to worry I might run off with another woman, but she never thought the other woman would be me” (*TCR*, 108). In his case, he does not expose his own possible homosexuality but, rather the opposite, he has become his own heterosexual object that he finds it possible to love. Moreover, in his make-up and velvet dresses, his wife is not only married to her husband but to her husband and his own femininity, showing once more the triangulating potential in queered relationships. In her husband’s drag, the wife faces the possibility of a lesbian desire, as she may be loved by another “girl” and she might actually feel compelled to love the girl in her husband, as she is an integral part of her husband.

Blaize in drag also presents another questioning on Butler’s theorization on drag. In the previously analysed description of Blaize teaching some students how to perform a feminine role in the theatre, Blaize is not fully dragged but he imitates perfectly the performative movements of a woman. His performed femininity underlines the masculinity of his hairy torso while his masculine features actually underline his skills as a performer. Marlowe experiences ambivalent feelings towards him as his masculine body performing femininity as opposed to what Butler attributes to homophobia, which, as quoted above, the abjection of feminine gay men and masculine lesbians. It is precisely the combination of performative and performed

genders that turn Blaize into a feminine man *and* a masculine female. This ambiguity fills Marlowe with a sexual desire that mixes both hetero- and homo- sexual desires which is highlighted when he undresses: “he unfastened the bodice, dropping the dress to the floor, standing before me in only his britches, exposing the chest I had lain on, the dark hair that tangled across his breast, then trailed like an arrow to his navel and below” (*TMD*, 137). Blaize’s hairy, manly body does not resemble then the man in drag he did some moments ago, but rather his image resembles a burlesque performance in which “much of the eroticism of burlesque centres on the tension between clothing and naked flesh” (Ferreday, 2008: 52). His semi-naked body in britches, an alternative spelling to “breeches,” shows a burlesque male body but still marked by femininity, as he is actually playing now a “breeches role,” defined as:

the role of a male character played by a female. The audience knows that the role is being played by an actress, but the character is treated as male [...]the idea of a woman playing a man’s role and wearing more revealing men’s clothing was very exciting to the audience. Playwrights used these roles as an excuse to show off a lady’s legs in tights and breeches: tight-fitting knee-length pants.⁸³

Blaize’s body transgresses the border that separates performance as a willed action and performative practices. The gazing of this abject body makes Marlowe doubt his initial intent of killing Blaize. However, the homosexual panic of being stabbed by him puts him in guard and “caught him close, sticking my knife deep into his belly” (*TMD*, 138). Blaize’s drag does not, actually oppose “heterosexuality, or that the proliferation of drag will bring down heterosexuality; on the contrary, drag tends to be the allegorization of heterosexuality and its constitutive melancholia” (Butler, 1993b: 27). However, it does not allegorize heterosexuality and its melancholy for the masculine as an object either: Blaize in drag is both masculine and feminine in itself as in his performance of the feminine he does not hide the masculine in him but rather uses it as an enhancer of himself as a man in search for Marlowe’s love and affection. As Durden notes, “by playing a society belle an actor burlesqued the cultural trappings of elite femininity, and perhaps even a specific woman. But he also, at the same time, realistically portrayed a man who burlesqued femininity by dressing in drag” (Durden, 2004: 6). Had he not tried to take advantage of his powerful position over Marlowe and tried to killed him, he might not have been killed by one of his objects of desire. The previous reference to Blaize as a burlesque

⁸³ In <http://lesbianswhatsupwithyouguys.tumblr.com>. (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

performer is not casual. Durden explains the relationship between American Burlesque theatre and the English theatre: “Burlesque was an Americanised version of an English theatrical tradition which for centuries had been associated with love between men” (Durden, 2004: 2) and she notes that John Franceschina claims that “between the sixteenth century and the end of the nineteenth century English theatrical productions represented various evolving ‘homosexualities’” (quoted in Durden, 2004: 2). Other authors, such as Norton, argue that as early as 1650 English theatres were “denounced [...] as the haunts of sodomites” (Norton, 1994: 32). In her 2007 article on the new burlesque, Ferreday explains that:

the new burlesque ‘look’ can be seen across a web of media sites: in films, [...] in novels (such as Louise Welsh’s *The Bullet Trick*) [...] the new burlesque has arisen in popular culture as a counterpoint to the thin, bronzed, blonde ideal of femininity that has otherwise dominated popular culture in the West (Ferreday, 2007).

The Bullet Trick is not, though, the only example in which burlesque femininity is portrayed in Welsh’s novels. Blaize’s body is somehow burlesque in his drag, as explained above. Burlesque is, as Ferreday analyses, an alternative example of performativity to drag. There is, however, an important difference between them as the bodies that perform each are culturally read differently:

While drag is performed by male bodies, and hence potentially from a position of power, a female performer is held to be both complicit with patriarchal power, and herself powerless: the performance thus emanates from a doubly powerless position. Because femininity is imagined as a property of ‘women,’ to parody femininity is to parody oneself and is hence open to being read as a performance of self-hatred” (Ferreday, 2007).

In the conversation between Rose and Rilke quoted above about whether Leslie is making fun of women, it has already been hinted that Rose feels mocked in her own identification with Leslie in drag. In fact, she feels that, as a woman, she is the real impersonation of a man in drag. In the Chelsea Lounge, feeling observed by the bouncers in the club, she asks Rilke: “Do you think they thought I was a lady-boy?” (*TCR*, 100). This possibility of being mistaken for a lady-boy both thrills and scares her. Therefore, Rilke ends their conversation by stating that “Rose, they all want to look like you” (*TCR*, 100). However, looking like her does not mean becoming her. She cannot parody femininity as a lady boy but she can do so as a burlesque girl. She justifies the possibility of being read as “a performance of self-hatred” because she is actually a woman with a woman’s body, not in drag, with a

burlesque look. As opposed to what is expected, her prejudices about who actually performs or who does not perform femininity remain. When Rilke tries to save Sandy, a drag, from the revealing gaze of the video camera, she tells him off for trying to impersonate “the knight in the shining armour” (*TCR*, 117) and criticises him because “it was probably one of the best nights of her life and you ruined it with your carry-on” (*TCR*, 117). It seems as if the female burlesque can look face to face at the female drag, but it does not. She can only perceive Sandy as an Olivia Newton John lookalike, as a parody of a woman. “What’s is to you if they were making fun of her? You think she’s not used to that? Any man who goes out dressed as a woman must be able to handle himself. Things aren’t always as they appear, Rilke, you should know that” (*TCR*, 117-118). The shift from the female pronoun “she” to the masculine pronoun “himself” shows that, despite the affection she may feel for an individual drag, that sympathy, that grievability, does not apply to the majority of men who parody themselves when dressed as women. Somehow, she feels some poetic justice in their public mockery as they voluntarily waive their “position of power” but, however, they can also regain it when performing masculinity. Ferreday notes that burlesque, originally, problematized “the ways in which femininity has been read as an unconscious performance, in opposition to drag, which is seen as a self-aware (and hence potentially subversive) parody” (Ferreday, 2008: 52). However, contemporary burlesque does not reject such an element of parody in their performance, as the “participants in the burlesque scene are highly aware of the possibilities offered by this sense of burlesque as a parody of *femininity* which attempts to work with the tensions inherent in feminine identity: its pleasures *as well as* its constraints and absurdities” (Ferreday, 2008: 58, italics in the original). When Sylvie appears in the special performance of the bullet trick, she “looked magnificent. She wore a long silver robe that shimmered against the light; sparkles flashed from hair dark as coffin wood and her lips were painted in a blood-red black that invited not kisses” (*TBT*, 322). Sylvie’s appearance is pure artifice, and her lipstick colour is both Gothic black and burlesque red, the same that Dita von Teese refers to when she states that “being different is good. It is so scary at first, but it is good. There are so many different ways of getting glamorous, it doesn’t have to be painful [...] Try a new lipstick, a red or a burgundy or a plum, not your usual beige-brown” (Dita von Teese, cited in Hughes, 2007). When undressed to be strapped, she becomes a passive, naked, female body inserted into S/M paraphernalia, which according to Foucault, “is a process of

invention [...] the real creation of new possibilities of pleasure, which people had no idea about previously [...] which has, as one of its main features, what I call the *desexualization* of pleasure” (Foucault, 1997: 165-6). Her naked body with a bullet in her head becomes a new possibility of pleasure for those who observe her, except for William. Sylvie’s naked, burlesque, red-lipped, dark-haired body performs a femininity that needs protection from a man – the knightly ideal that Rilke wanted to impersonate – as well as showing the absurd in her voluntary participation in a S/M practice where she might die. She, as opposed to William, knows of the simulation character of S/M, where

SM participants do not rape, they do rape scenes [...] do not enslave, they do slave scenes [...] do not kidnap, they do capture and bondage scenes [...] As with other kinds of [...] simulations, there appear to be many similarities between the ‘real’ activity and the staged activity [...] But similarity is not sufficient for replication” (Hopkins, 1994: 116).

The staged S/M bullet trick simulates a shooting of a girl, but it does not actually take place. In her final appearance at BUMPERS, she performs a magic trick with a silk handkerchief that she makes disappear and appear from her sex. She first appears dressed in “a smart black business suit edged with white cuffs” (*TBT*, 358) but then “she slid down its zip, dropping the skirt to the floor and kicking it off-stage. Now she was wearing nothing but her underwear and shoes” (*TBT*, 359), a performance more in tune with Dita von Teese’s performances than with the original burlesque performances that “took place in theatres, not strip clubs, and involved elaborate costumes and sets together with spoken dialogue or comic routines, often performed by the striptease artists themselves” (Ferreday, 2008: 49). Sylvie offers herself not just to the male gaze of William’s or of any other potential male viewer, but rather, as one of the opinions stated by Ferreday: “I don’t think it’s ‘just for guys’. I’ve been to burlesque shows where most of the audience is straight women cheering on other straight women. It’s fun!” (posted in the Buts Lounged, quoted in Ferreday, 2008: 61). The Divines are also watching Sylvie’s show and enjoying it as well.

Anne-Marie is also a burlesque performer who offers her burlesque to the conscripted sight of Polaroid cameras. “Before them stood a young girl, in a red and white polka-dot bikini, sparkling eyes and an open smile. A pretty primary schoolteacher, an air hostess, a weather girl. [...] A nineteen-fifties pin-up, naughty, but wholesome” (*TCR*, 86) until she first appears without the bikini top and, finally,

naked. After being photographed naked, the show is over and the cameras are removed from the spectators/clients. By mimicking these different female roles, she “denaturalizes ideology by calling attention to the conventions that encode her as woman; she reproduces femininity with a playful difference, producing knowledge about it: that it is a role and not a nature” (Tyler, 2003: 23). However, what distinguishes Anne-Marie’s show from Sandy’s drag show is that she knows part of the feminine role is to arouse males, as she consciously does, but altogether, she places herself in a position of power as it is she who decides when the show is over and when cameras should be removed. As Ferreday claims, “feminine identities are multiple, and may be experienced as pleasurable” (Ferreday, 2008: 49). However abrupt the end of the show may seem, the audience “left with quiet thank yous, carefully stowing photographs in their pockets as they went” (*TCR*, 87). Their experience of the multiple femininities has actually been pleasurable. Anne-Marie also performs a private show for McKindless, which ends up with her shooting him. McKindless tried to trespass the representation in the S/M when trying to actually cut Anne-Marie and, consequently, the blood-thirsty vampire that “*looks like us*” and therefore jeopardizes “conventional distinctions between human and monster, between life and death, between ourselves and the other” (Holinger, 1997: 201, italics in the original) actually dies. All the perverse aspect that he impersonated when alive is transformed by death, as his “body looked small in death. Head thrown back, pale face raised to the sky, lips frozen in a last ghastly grin, as if caught in a final yearning for life” (*TCR*, 276). He, who had convinced Anne-Marie to be cut a little and actually aroused her sexually, has become a dead body and thus “disqualified, so to speak, as an object of erotic contemplation and desire” (Keft-Kennedy, 2008: 62).

Returning to Ferreday, she explains that ‘new burlesque,’ as opposed to ‘old burlesque’ refers to:

two distinct but intertwined cultural phenomena. Firstly, contemporary burlesque subculture in which women who may be amateur or professional performers take part in staged striptease performances; and secondly, the use of ‘new burlesque’ by the fashion and beauty industries to refer to a specific vintage ‘look,’ a look which [...] has been widely imagined through narratives of excessive, dangerous femininity (Ferreday, 2008: 48).

Sylvie and Anne-Marie are examples of the former type, as they actually perform in shows. There are other burlesque girls who do just adopt the burlesque look, as Anna Mann. The first time Jane sees her, she is in a red coat, with “something

about her high heels and erect posture [that] suggested old Hollywood” (*TGOTS*, 13) and, on her face, “spiked eyelashes, rouged cheeks and red lips, and beneath the make-up, the soft, unformed features of a child” (*TGOTS*, 14). Despite her attempts to look older and the fact that she frames many a man in that, Jane can see the thirteen-year-old in her. As Ferreday comments on Nadine Baggott’s *Beauty Secrets* blog, it seems that performing a highly feminine femininity with the (ab)use of make up, aspiring to have a Hollywood look, as Anna does, does not lead to the aimed femininity but, rather, “the woman who assumes that she can cope with an excessive ‘high maintenance’ look is heading for a fall. She is destined to exceed her boundaries, to ‘bleed everywhere’ and ultimately to embody an abjected form of masculine cross-dressing” (Ferreday, 2008: 56). Anna, literally, ends up bleeding everywhere, as she falls into the staircase well, but not due to the fact that she has adopted her burlesque look. Christie in *Naming the Bones* also performs burlesque femininity at Bobby Robb’s funeral, where she is “dressed in a pale lilac trouser suit, with a pink scarf tied loosely at her neck. The colours should have clashed with her hair, but the ice-cream pallet cleverly set off its russet tones. It would only take a posy of flowers to make her look like a tastefully dressed, mature bride” (*NTB*, 180), a look that is a remnant of her stylish femininity, as “Christie was one of those women who make their own style” (*NTB*, 311-312). If Anne-Marie performed the multiplicity of feminine identities, Christie is an old woman who still knows how to exert her power over the men that surround her. On the other hand, Anna, who is still a child and an adolescent, assumes the burlesque as an undoubling of her child self. When Jane actually meets her, her “face had been cleansed of make-up, exposing perfect skin of the kind favoured by advertisers of natural beauty products. She was still wearing her red coat but her high heels had been replaced by a neat pair of black pumps” (*TGOTS*, 21). If Butler claimed that performativity does not mean that it is possible that “one woke in the morning, perused the closet or some more open space for he gender of choice, donned that gender for the day, and then restored the garment to its place at night” (Butler, 1993a: x), Anna’s belonging to a terrain of sexual determinacy, as she is both a child and a teenager, seems quite capable of performing under different guises, putting femininity on and off. Her burlesque look adds on her another feminine aspect to her already feminine self, distinguishing between:

femininity as additive, as something that is superimposed on some mystical 'authentic' self which cries out to be liberated from the artificially imposed constraints of high heels, makeup and restrictive clothing. [...] the focus on femininity as a process through which bodies are adapted to social norms suggest that there is an unmarked self that precedes adaptation (Ferreday, 2007).

To Jane, Anna's face is a face to be written on, to mark these "artificially imposed constraints" even though the appearance of her natural skin is actually what cosmetic industries are after. Jane herself performs a different type of femininity as she seems to be a femme, or at least to become one with her pregnancy: "Pregnancy might have made her breasts too tender to touch, but they had ripened to glamour-model proportions. She might as well show them off" (*TGOTS*, 13). Dahl defines the term 'femme' "in reference to feminine lesbian, most often coupled with a masculine lesbian, the butch. [...] to most femmes I have interviewed, a feminine aesthetic – that is, clothing, garments, accessories, make up and so on, is central to a femme expression" (Dahl, 2011: 4). Physical appearance seems to be a key element in the distinction between butches and femmes, as noted in the research carried out by Brown et al. where they state that "we found that it was possible to classify homosexual women into two self-reported categories: those who regard themselves as having a 'butch' outlook and those who regard themselves as having a 'femme' outlook" (Brown et al., 2002: 18-120). It seems quite outrageous to claim that all lesbian women self-classified as butches or femme – as well as their aim to find any conclusive evidence on the finger length ratio in butches and femmes – but in Petra and Jane's case it can be claimed that their outlooks and physical appearance allow their categorization into these terms. Petra's clothing is clearly masculine: she sleeps "in a striped cotton pyjamas [...] in the dim light of the child's room it was easy to imagine her as the dashing Peter" (*TGOTS*, 83); her working outfit is also masculine-style, with "white shirt and linen trousers [...] the masculine tailoring was softened by a string of pearls and matching earrings" (*TGOTS*, 91). This adds to the "dashing Peter," her drag king impersonation when she was young. Then, her look was "hair slicked back, dressed in sharp checks and pinstripes, a trilby cocked at a jaunty angle, looking in turn like David Bowie in his Berlin phase and Al Pacino in *Scarface* mode." (*TGOTS*, 82). Her drag king Peter is in fact a fake man with a removable cock who attended strictly straight clubs and knew there were lines he could not trespass: "I couldn't take it any further than kissing, and even that depended on my moustache glue. [...] One false move and the whiskers might have been on her. Not a good look.

Not safe for your health either” (*TGOTS*, 83). Nevertheless, her drag-king Peter was mistaken for a real man by all the girls who saw – and kissed – him, perhaps due to the fact that, as Rosario, Schrimshaw, Hunter and Levy-Warren claim, “there are acknowledged differences in dress and hairstyle, such that some butch women are more likely to be mistaken for men and femme women are more likely to be perceived as heterosexual women” (Rosario et al., 2009: 35). If Petra in drag is mistaken for a man, Jane, on the other hand, is assumed to be a straight girl, as everybody she meets assumes that her *lebenspartner* is a man, partly due to her femme-like physical appearance and partly because of her pregnancy. In their study on femme’s identity formation, Levitt, Gerrish and Hiestand, “Unlike butch women [...] femmes who were politically committed to coming out, verbally had to come out to people with whom they interacted, which was challenging at times” (Levitt et al. 2003: 109). As it will be further argued in Section 5 of this research, the use of Jane’s German to classify Petra as her *lebenspartner* does not precisely help her in her coming out with her neighbours. She is even a femme in her only self-indulgence that allows her the possibility of being somehow naughty in her perfect role as a pregnant mother: smoking. Rosario, Scrimshaw and Hunter note that “there is reason to suggest that women with a more femme self-representation may report higher levels of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use than more butch women” (Rosario et al., 2008: 1004). Jane used to dance vodka-bright in the London night-clubs and she cannot help smoking even though she knows she is hurting her soon-to-be-born baby. However, when she smokes she feels “a combination of guilt and taboo added to the rush of pleasure as the smoke hit the back of her throat and sank down into her lungs. This must be how adulterers felt; being bad was sometimes its own reward” (*TGOTS*, 15). In the previously-mentioned research carried out by Rosario et al. on substance abuse, they explain that femmes may feel more prone than butches to such an abuse because of a late awareness on their sexual orientation and the consequent “less time to resolve their own internalized homophobia than butch women” (Rosario et al., 2008: 1004). Jane’s pregnancy also turns her into a drag straight-mother. As opposed to the idea stated in all the research on butches and femmes cited in this research that butches have masculine personalities and femmes do have feminine personalities, there is a further point of discussion: a certain misconception in the understanding of a butch and femme relationship as a mirror of that of male-female heterosexuals. In its assimilation into the binary phantasmatic heterosexual constructs, it seems that they

assume their share in dichotomies such as active/passive, subject/object, masculine/feminine, but there are some key differences in how pleasure is given and obtained.

The butch's pleasure was represented as the result of giving pleasure to her woman, whilst in heterosexual sex manuals, and popular cultural texts[...] the importance of a man giving pleasure to his woman may have been stressed but this was rarely represented as the ultimate source of his pleasure or as his primary sexual goal. Moreover, in butch-femme writings, the femme (unlike the heterosexual 'feminine' woman) was often described as highly sensual and/or sexual, and as someone who actively seeks out and experiences pleasure. What this seems to suggest is that the active/passive, subject/object dichotomies do not seem to neatly fit the butch-femme relation in the ways in which one might have supposed they would (Sullivan, 2003: 28).

This idea of femme women as active flirtatious agents and butch women as objects of such flirtation, together with the importance for butch women of pleasing their femme is also pointed out in other studies, such as Levitt and Hiestand (2005). In Petra and Jane's relationship, Petra feels guilty for having abandoned Jane in such an important moment as her last weeks of pregnancy, but neither their relationship nor their pregnancy can be read under heteronormative standards. When Jane meets Alban Mann after Father Walter's death, Jane feels a kind of "heterosexual panic" as she feels threatened by the doctor. That is why, to his question on whether she would be okay to be alone, she answers "Petra will be back tonight" (*TGOTS*, 247) as if she would perform the father's role that should fit her as she is not actually pregnant. Aware of the fact she is lying, Alban attempts to insert her into a passive/feminine/object role and assimilates her with other pregnant, heterosexual women: "There's a condition that afflicts some pregnant women. It makes them prone to paranoid delusions. It's a temporary state, but it can be disturbing for them, and for those around them" (*TGOTS*, 247). Alban Mann heterosexualizes Jane's femminity by misleadingly assuming that "either because in their desire for butch women they 'imitate' heterosexuality or because in their gender expressions they 'pass' as straight, which then is taken to mean that femmes are 'less oppressed'" (Dahl, 2011: 4). He tries to make Jane feel guilty for not acting as she should according to how she is read socially or, in his own words, because "you're not thinking straight" (*TGOTS*, 248), read both gendered and ungenderedly – and heteronormatively. Alban's heteronormative harassment of Jane makes her perform a fake passive, defenceless woman and lock herself in her apartment, which altogether is Alban's as the whole

building belongs to him. Jane eventually confronts Alban's heteronormative status and slashes one of his arteries. As opposed to Greta, Jane has been unmanageable for him and for the rest of the inhabitants of the building. Jane's pregnant body embodies a queering of desires, as it proves heterosexuality itself is nothing but an "imaginary logic," quoting Butler, as "to identify as a woman is not necessarily to desire a man; and [...] to desire a woman does not necessarily signal the constituting presence of a masculine identification" (Butler, 1993b: 28). It could also be added that one does not need to have a penis to actually know both its symbolic and its biological function.

If the Gothic mode in the first chapter turned darkened time and places and, consequently, characters wander around the labyrinthine world they inhabit, the queer mode complicates it further. The queering of bodies and relationships inserts the characters into deeper labyrinths where chromosome maps seem to be out-dated. If characters learnt about the duplicitous nature of reality from their loss in the gothic labyrinth, in this simultaneous route in the queer labyrinth, they learn to question their own gender and sexual constructions and get lost in the act of gazing and in the multiple vertices of relationships. The dark, rose glasses do help them question reality but they, rather than clarify their vision and show them what reality actually is, do show them that they have to learn to live with such a blurred vision where limits are transgressed and bodies are sliced into pieces. The next section complicates the labyrinthine and maze-ish nature of reality still further as there is a third labyrinth that superimposes on these two the reading of signs, either verbal or visual in an intertextual way.

5. THE INTERTEXTUAL LABYRINTHS

In the previous section of this research, some of the key points considered in the analysis of the queer mode on the labyrinthine construction of bodies, gender identities and desires were, on the one hand, Beaver's understanding of the homosexual as a "prodigious consumer of signs – of hidden meanings, hidden systems, hidden potentiality" (Beaver, 1981, 104-105) and, on the other, Goldie's homotextual reading of novels. With regard to the latter, his proposal of reading canonical texts with rose-coloured glasses in order to point out and recognize the queer mode in some, i.e. to insert the queer into the official literary discourse, has been adopted in this research, though tinged in Gothic dark, as discussed in Part One. In her *Epistemology of the Closet*, Sedgwick presents as her Axiom 6 that "*The relation of gay studies to debates on the literary canon is, and had best be, tortuous*" (Sedgwick, 1990: 48, italics in the original). If Sedgwick's strategy to dismantle the ignorance that seeks to hide knowledge, consists of acting from within the heteronormative system and showing its inadequacy, her dismantling of the literary canon also aims at such a global aim. As she, herself, explains:

So, too, at the level of the canon. The invaluable forms of critique and dismantlement within the official tradition, the naming as what it is of a hegemonic, homoerotic/homophobic male canon of cultural mastery and coercive erotic double-binding, can be only part of the strategy of an antihomophobic project. It must work in the kind of pincers movement I have already described with the re-creation of minority gay canons from currently noncanonical material. [...] Men who write openly as gay men have also often been excluded from the consensus of the traditional canon and may operate every other minority canon as well, the work or gay/lesbian inquiry requires to be done (Sedgwick, 1990: 58).

In the case of Louise Welsh, she should be also inserted in Sedgwick's gendered neutral "men who write openly as gay," not to mention the idea that, despite some negative literary comment she has received, her literary awards grant her a position within Scottish writers. As an example of this case, Szilágyi includes her in a group of many twentieth and twenty-first century Scottish writer who "invariably engage with the themes of poverty, deprivation, drug addiction, sexual abuse and crime, coupled with the proliferation of Scottish crime fiction as well as 'true crime' writing since the 1980s" (Szilágyi, 2010: 56). She depicts the Scotland Szilágyi describes and turns it into a multifaceted labyrinth of gothicised and queered places and bodies where characters need to learn how to read signs adequately in order to

attempt to grasp the reality of where they are inserted. When Murray Watson starts his research into Archie Lunan's life in *Naming the Bones*, he opens a box with the material on Lunan filed in the National Library. In it, he finds some almost bare pieces of paper except for some words or phrases:

*James Laing stepped out into an ordinary day.
Nothing could have prepared James for the...
James Laing was an ordinary man who inhabited a...
The creature stared down on James with its one ghastly fish eye. It winked (NTB, 3).*

He reacts with nervous laughter at this discovery and fears that, if all of Lunan's material is similar to what he has just read, he might be wasting his time on such a research. This is probably due to his reading of Lunan with his scholar eye. Had he started reading the text as a common reader, he would not just have tried to decode the text in search for information useful to his research: he would also have overcoded, using Barthes' term, the text; in other words, he would have been able to fill in the almost blank pages that Lunan left and that he divides into three categories: "interesting, possible and dross" (*NTB*, 6) in order to "get caught up in details, pick at the minutiae that might unravel the tangled knot of Archie's life" (*NTB*, 6). In his labyrinthine reading of Lunan's papers, Watson becomes aware that writing on his life proves more difficult than scholarly analysing his only published poetry book, up to the point that he gets lost in Lunan's life and his tangled knot also ties together his life and Lunan's. At the end of his academic and personal research, Watson unburies a corpse, Lunan's already-published poetry book and unpublished science fiction novel and Christie's memoirs. Roland Barthes argues that:

It is commonly admitted that to read is to decode: letters, words, meaning, structures, and this is incontestable; but by accumulating decodings (since reading is by rights infinite), by removing the safety catch of meaning, by putting reading into freewheeling (which is its structural vocation), the reader is caught up in a dialectical reversal: finally, he does not decode, he *overcodes*; he does not decipher, he produces, he accumulates languages, he lets himself be infinitely and tirelessly traversed by them: he is that traversal (Barthes, 1989: 42).

Doctor Watson becomes traversal in his overcoded reading of Lunan's life as he can read beyond the surface of the text and insert these apparently senseless pages into the category of interesting as opposed to previous cataloguing, such as Christie's. She "had dismissed the science-fiction novel Archie had been writing as worthless, but the poet's apocalyptic vision might yet turn out to be a classic of the genre, with

the potential to attract more readers than the poems ever would” (*NTB*, 388). In his accumulation of languages – scholar, literary and vital -, he can read those apparently unconnected texts in an intertextual mode and acknowledge in these lines some references to Shelley’s *Frankenstein* in “the creature” or Lovecraft’s “The Shadow Over Innsmouth” in the creature’s fish eye, and appreciate its literary value. However, in Watson’s case, his traversality also goes beyond, as he also reads himself intertextually, becoming a sort of Arthur Conan Doyle’s Doctor Watson, though this time he is a Doctor of Literature. As such, he is well-aware that he has to confront the apparent unreadability of the text, as the latter is; precisely, what impels him to read further. Barthes describes the experience of reading an unreadable text as follows:

Confronted with a text I cannot read, I am, literally, “bewildered”; a vertigo occurs, a disturbance of the semicircular canals: all the “otoliths” fall on just one side; in my hearing (my reading), the signifying mass of the text collapses, is no longer ventilated, balanced by a cultural action (Barthes, 1989: 352).

It is not coincidental that Barthes relates the feeling of bewilderment when confronting a text he cannot read, with the loss of balance as it is located, as well as hearing, in the human ear. To him, texts are unreadable in the same sense as he would not be able to hear such a text, lost in the vestibular labyrinth of the inner ear. In his reading of Lunan’s texts, Watson researches and investigates what those apparently unconnected words means and he gets so lost in the labyrinth of language that he even questions the aim of his own life. It is precisely when he is closer to finding out the truth about Lunan, Christie and Fergus that he loses balance, as he thinks he can see Archie’s face at the window. “His legs kicked and the noose tightened, belt buckle biting into his neck as he’d known it would. There was a rushing in his ears, an ocean’s weight coming towards him, and above it another sound” (*NTB*, 375). In what are potentially the last moments of his life, he feels Archie Lunan is eventually coming back to rescue him as he should have rescued Miranda. However, what really saves Watson is a family link, his brother Jack. He is, actually, another sign reader who is, for his part, lost in his own labyrinth of artistic and visual signs.

Learning how to read unreadable texts – or signs, as will be shown further – becomes as essential to the characters in Louise Welsh’s novels as the fact of reading their own lives intertextually, as well as the actual readers of the texts should do. By placing the act of reading in the labyrinths of the inner ear, as Barthes did, reading itself becomes labyrinthine as it implies reading what characters actually read – or, at

least, should read. Cavallaro points at the identification of the reader with the characters in novels, thus “it is also noteworthy that while a patchwork text reflects its characters’ mixed emotions and sense of confusion, it also has the effect of producing feelings of dislocation in its reader” (Cavallaro, 2002: 114). Readers also get lost in the act of reading in the same manner as characters do and, in many a case, reading intertextually helps them to understand the situation before the characters do. Otherwise, they are also strayed in the narrative until the characters learn how to read – and so do the actual readers.

If Murray Watson’s intertextual self-reference with Doyle’s Doctor Watson starts with his title and surname and his research for the truth behind Lunan’s life and death, Marlowe’s case in *Tamburlaine Must Die* performs a further turn of the screw. The Privy Council accuses him of high treason, as a bill-poster has appeared signed by Tamburlaine, the main character in Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine the Great*, and with some reference to Marlowe’s play *The Massacre of Paris*. The Privy Council assumes that the reference to these two plays indicts Christopher Marlowe directly as the one responsible for such a bill. In order to save his own life, Marlowe has to prove there is no connection between the Tamburlaine who wrote the bill and himself, despite the fact that he has always identified with such a character. From this moment onwards, his life intersects with his own literary work, bearing in mind that the Marlowe in *Tamburlaine Must Die* is not the real Marlowe himself but a fictional recreation by Louise Welsh. As she herself remarks in the author’s note at the end of the novel about the truth behind Marlowe’s death, “Marlowe died at a house in Deptford. We know the date of his death and the three men present. We know the nature of the wounds that killed him. Everything else is educated guesswork, or in this author’s case, a fiction” (*TMD*, 148-149). It should be noted that the novel starts with fictional Marlowe writing his memoirs for a future, ideal reader and it finishes with the real author addressing some present, real readers. The act of writing in this novel is, thus, at play from the very beginning up till the end and it shows, as Barthes points out, that “writing occurs at just the moment when speech ceases, i.e., starting from the moment when we can no longer identify *who is speaking* and when we can establish only that speaking has begun” (Barthes, 1994: 293, italics in the original). The writer who writes what another writer writes becomes a kind of riddle that can only be solved by acknowledging that the real Marlowe becomes an intertextual reference to the fictional Marlowe; furthermore, the works by the real Marlowe become the works by

the fictional Marlowe and they are intertextually imbued with the fictional life of fictional Marlowe⁸⁴. These fictional bodies impersonate the writing, reading and performance of Marlowe's plays; they become narratives in themselves while, at the same time, they are participating in a narrative. As Cavallaro explains, "narratives are also selves, bodies endowed with distinctive identities and sensibilities. Furthermore, the text is not passive. In being written, it simultaneously writes the creative subject by giving form to the author's imaginings, yearnings and fears" (Cavallaro, 2002: 101). In the case of this novel, the text is not only written but rewritten. Marlowe misreads the first letter Blaize hands him which has a piece of plain white linen in it, as he thinks "perhaps it's a comment on my writing. The sender thinks my work empty?" (*TMD*, 63). When he receives a second letter with a small square of scarlet linen, he starts to tie up loose ends: "if it hadn't been for the interview with the Council, the meaning of the strange messages might have eluded me until much later. But suddenly it revealed itself" (*TMD*, 86). Once he starts reading signs, once the narrative he is in becomes more readable, he understands he has become a character in his own play as the coloured pieces of linen refer to how Tamburlaine had decked his siege camp: "First white, offering peace should the enemy surrender. Next red, indicating the execution of all combatants. Finally black, promising death to every last man, woman and child. Not even a dog would survive the slaughter" (*TMD*, 87). Once he starts reading intertextually, he is able to decide to face his intertextual fate as an Elizabethan doctor Frankenstein and confront his own creature, though his, as opposed to Frankenstein's, becomes alive on its own outside its own narrative: "I would destroy my creature turned enemy, just as soon as I knew who he was" (*TMD*, 88). When he discovers Hector and his dog's murdered corpses, he discovers one more envelope which, this time, does not only contain a scrap of linen, now black, but also one word written in white chalk on it: "SOON" (*TMD*, 121). This time, he does not only reinforce his intertextual reading of the pieces of linen, but he also finds out the true identity behind Tamburlaine. It is precisely the written word that betrays the fake Tamburlaine as he fears Marlowe cannot read his intertextual signs properly. Blaize witnessed Marlowe's misreading of the first letter and the word in the last piece of clothing is meant to point at its intertextual reference. However, it also points directly at the hand that wrote it. Blaize forgets that words have the performative

⁸⁴ It should be pointed here that Christopher Marlowe, in his search for Tamburlaine in the Elizabethan underworld, can inevitably read as another fictional Marlowe: Raymond Chandler's Phillip Marlowe.

function of condemning people. In his attempt to betray Marlowe, he assumes he can make use of words, which are actually part of Marlowe's realm, forgetting that, as Cavallaro explains:

Words [...] are ghostly substitutes for the real: abstract signs. They have a physical presence, yet the objects to which they refer are inevitably absent from the page and the voice. Words, like phantasms, are presences unremittingly traversed by absences, paradoxically disembodied bodies (Cavallaro, 2002: 104).

Rilke also learns of absences, though in his case the objects become unreadable signs he needs to read: when he discovers the netsuke in McKindless's attic – where else could it be, intertextually, found? – he cannot read it, he cannot make out what it depicts as the bodies carved in it were:

A complex jigsaw of bodies that formed a perfect sphere my eye found difficult to disentangle. Then, as puzzles do, it all came into focus and I dropped it on the bed. There were three bodies, two female, one male. [...] They gripped each other in an erotic combination impossible in actual life, but that was not what had shocked me. [...] [but] the look on the face of the carved man (*TCR*, 17).

Rilke feels horrified at his discovery but he also appreciates the aesthetic and monetary value, as “it was a truly horrible object and worth several hundred pounds” (*TCR*, 17) and, therefore, decides to keep it. According to Miller, “the other, in Welsh's work, is transformed by an aesthetic depersonalization, and becomes merely a mode of the self's mental substance – ‘a representation in myself,’ to use Kant's words” (Miller, 2006: 87). This may be true in the case of the characters that only admire the aesthetic beauty in the netsuke or the photographs of the anonymous girl in *Soleil et Désolé*, but that is not the case of Rilke, as he himself does not stop himself until he feels he has released the spirit of that girl: he has actually personalized her or, as it could also be read, he has humanized some photographs, some objects that point at an absence. In her “Aesthetics of Silence,” Sontag proposes the following:

Contrast the benign nominalism proposed by Rilke (and proposed and practiced by Francis Ponge) with the brutal nominalism adopted by many other artists. The more familiar recourse of modern art to the aesthetics of the catalogue, the inventory, is not made — as in Rilke — with an eye to “humanizing” things, but rather to confirming their inhumanity, their impersonality, their indifference to and separateness from human concerns (Sontag, 1966: XV).

The Rilke Sontag refers to is, obviously, Rainer Maria Rilke and Welsh's Rilke can only read and be read intertextually with him. His job as an auctioneer helps him appreciate the aesthetic value of the inventory of the deceased's properties and

read in it the life of the owner. When inventorying McKindless's legacy, he "did notice an absence. Usually you get a feel for the person who used to live in the house you're clearing" (*TCR*, 9). He humanizes things as they refer to – they point at – their owner. And it is precisely this humanizing that refutes Miller's argument on the aesthetic personalization in this novel. In fact, Rilke does not identify either with the anonymous girl or McKindless but rather tries to personalize the owner of the photographs and the girl in them. Besides, as Welsh explains, his name also refers to a literary character:

Rilke is named after a poet in homage to Phillip Marlowe, Raymond Chandler's archetypal private eye. Like Marlowe Rilke is intelligent, fond of a dram and chivalrous towards women and police officers. He has his own flawed, but sincerer moral code – is determined to do right, but somehow strays from the path of the righteous at every turn (Welsh⁸⁵).

If Sections 3 and 4 have described how the gothic and the queer modes provide a labyrinthine reading of Welsh's novels, this chapter focuses on what has been briefly outlined hereabove: reading signs becomes in itself new final labyrinths which both readers and characters inhabit. As Cavallaro states:

The quintessentially Gothic text [...] could be described as a composite entity wherein disparate narrative strands parallel the split subjectivities of both characters and readers. No less significantly, however, the notion of textual identity refers to the corporeal status of the narrative itself. Texts are bodies which, in being fashioned by their writers and readers, simultaneously construct the readers' identities by incarnating their most inveterate desires and fears. If it is the case that human subjects articulate ideas and emotions in linguistic form, it is also the case that they, in turn, are spoken and written by language (Cavallaro, 2002: 115).

This process of constructing the identities of characters and readers in the act of reading, opens up the possibilities of innumerable readings not only by innumerable readers, but by the same reader, as in the case of Watson's reading of Lunan's science fiction text, as he first ignored the text and then acknowledged its literary value. Not only does reading become a labyrinth of words but also a literary intertextual labyrinth. Therefore, this section aims at analysing some of the intertextual references in the novels and how they help stray and find the characters in the dark, rose-coloured labyrinths they are traversing. Then, emphasis will be placed on the linguistic signs, as they, on the one hand, may point at their referents and, on the other, may perform several other functions. Finally, the analysis focuses on visual

⁸⁵ In www.louisewelsh.com

signs in the novels, mainly photographs, though this implies a paradox in itself as the photographs in the novels are actually linguistic signs, as there is no actual image in the novels but words.

In her article “Word, Dialogue and Novel,” Kristeva laid the basis for what is understood as “intertextuality.” To her, “the literary word [is] an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings” (Kristeva, 1980: 65). What she proposes is a change in how texts are read: they should not be dealt with in isolation but in dialogue with other texts. The act of reading becomes, then, an act of reading other texts, as “each word (text) is an intersection of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read” (Kristeva, 1980: 66). After Fergus has sunk in the limekiln and Christie has committed suicide, Murray Watson stands frozen until he hears the cawing of a crow.

He [Murray] turned and saw it treading the edge of the path like an old-world minister on his way to kirk. The crow met his stare and set its beak at a quizzical angle. The bird looked scholarly and demonic, and Murray couldn’t chase away the thought that it was Fergus, transformed and returned for his revenge (*NTB*, 369-370).

In this case, it proves inevitable to read in the word “crow” at least a certain synonymy to Poe’s “raven.”

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; nor a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door –
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door – Perched,
and sat, and nothing more (Poe, 2004: 59).

In both, the demonic character of the raven and its scholarly character- as Poe’s is perched upon a bust of Pallas, goddess of wisdom- coincide. Both bring to those who observe them the memory of a certain ghost, Lenore in Poe’s nameless poet’s case and Fergus in Murray’s case. Both of the characters that interact with the birds try to cast them away – “Go on, away with you” (*NTB*, 370) and “Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken! / Leave my loneliness unbroken! – quit the bust above my door! / Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!” (Poe, 2004: 61). In both encounters with the crow/raven, both characters feel doomed: “And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor / Shall be lifted – nevermore!” (Poe, 2004: 61). The answer of the raven, “nevermore” intended, as Poe himself explained, to “dispose the mind to seek a moral

in all that has been previously narrated” (Poe, 2007: 83). In Murray’s case, “he started to walk across the fields towards Pete’s bothy, the rook’s caws granting on his head long after he was out of earshot” (*NTB*, 370). Once in Pete’s bothy, Murray decides to finish his life by hanging himself. It is possible to conclude, then, that the demonic appearance of the crow in *Naming the Bones* is not coincidental but intertextual. When Allen explains Kristeva’s theory on intertextuality, he notes that “a text according to her [Kristeva] is a permutation of texts, an Intertextuality in the space of a given text, in which several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another” (Allen, 2000: 35). Poe’s raven and Welsh’s crow intersect and allow the permutation of both tale and novel. However, the issue of intertextuality in this particular case proves to be more complicated as it could also be noted that a raven and a crow, though they share certain similarities, are “very different in their behaviour, habitat and even have physical characteristics that clearly distinguish them from one another,⁸⁶” such as their feathers, size, wings and even life span. Thus, reading Welsh’s crow intertextually with Poe’s raven may appear to be a bit farfetched, as the words raven and crow are different and they refer to different animals, not to mention the fact that, despite the scholarly look of the crow, it never utters a single word, as opposed to Poe’s “nevermore.” On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Poe’s raven resonates in Welsh’s crow. Martínez Alfaro, quoting Heinrich F. Plett, explains that there has been a change in contemporary writing on the understanding of intertextuality in contemporary fiction:

While all authors re-write the work of predecessors, many contemporary writers *consciously* imitate, quote, plagiarize, parody... extensively. As Heinrich F. Plett (1991: 27) puts it, *ré-écriture* dominates *écriture* in twentieth-century literature: the image for writing has changed from original inscription to parallel script, and writers think less of writing originally and more of re-writing (Martínez Alfaro, 1996: 271).

According to her, Poe re-writes in his raven the raven that appears in Charles Dickens’ *Barnaby Rudge: A Tale of the Riots of Eighty*, where a raven taps at the door, as in his own poem, and can speak. Cornelia King, from the Free Library of Philadelphia, writes that “Poe reviewed *Barnaby Rudge* and criticized Dickens for not using the bird as a more prophetic element in the story. The theory is that Poe wrote ‘The Raven’ (1845) to show how he could do precisely that, use the bird as a prophetic element” (King, 2008). Furthermore, the intertextual reference did not go

⁸⁶ In http://www.diffen.com/difference/Crow_vs_Raven (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

unnoticed in his time, as James Russel Lowell wrote on Poe's raven in his satirical poem "A Fable for Critics," first published anonymously in 1848, as follows:

There comes Poe, with his Raven, like Barnaby Rudge,
Three fifths of him genius and two fifths sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,
In a way to make people of common sense damn metres,
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind (Lowell, 1848).

His criticism on Poe's poetic aestheticism and the nonsensical character of his poem also received an answer by Poe himself, as he himself reviewed "A Fable for Critics" in March 1849 for the *Southern Literary Messenger* and criticises that "Mr. L. should not have meddled with the anapaestic rhythm; it is exceedingly awkward in the hands of one who knows nothing about it and who will persist in fancying that he can write by ear" (quoted in Vellella, 2009), a criticism of Lowell that, actually, reinforces Lowell's point, as Vellella himself notes: "unfortunately, Poe proves Lowell's characterization to be accurate by spending far too much time writing about the *Fable's* structure and poetic meter" (Vellella, 2009). Regardless of whether Lowell was right or not about Poe's style, the point that is actually relevant in this case is Poe's intention of expanding an element from Dickens's text and providing it with the qualities and characteristics he felt were missing in *Barnaby Rudge*, though adapting it to his own style. If Martínez Alfaro states that "the production of art and literature during our century [the twentieth century] has become an act of creation based on a re-cycling of previously existing works" (Martínez Alfaro, 1996: 271), could it be thought that Poe, in the nineteenth century, did actually re-cycle a previous work? Was he a precursor of intertextuality or is it simply that time grants status to some authors whereas contemporary authors still have to show whether they deserve such a status or not? When Murray is at the library reading and classifying Lunan's texts, he exchanges a conversation with George Meikle, the head bookfinder. He asks the scholar: "So have all the big boys been covered then?" (*NTB*, 26). Watson acknowledges in such a remark the echoes of other scholarly criticisms, such as Fergus's, in contrast with his own view on the poet, his:

neglected place in the canon, how his story crossed boundaries not simply of literary style but of a country divided by geography, industry and class. He'd dampened his love of Lunan's poetry from his voice and presented an argument based on scholarship and fact (*NTB*, 27).

Murray tries to insert Archie Lunan into the canon, together with other canonical authors, Poe included. However, he has to face certain reticence not just from other scholars, such as Fergus, but even from a common bookfinder. The latter may not be invested with scholar literary criticism but, as he himself states, “I know a big poser when I see one” (*NTB*, 27), leaving in Watson the doubt as to whether “the words could have been directed towards Murray, Lunan or both” (*NTB*, 27). The criticism of a contemporary author, such as Lunan, focuses on the lack of originality as it is somehow understood that everything has already been written and the task of the contemporary writer consists in re-writing, parodying, plagiarizing canonical works. Returning to the use of “crow” instead of “raven” in Welsh’s novel, it seems relevant to recall Kristeva’s intertextual and dialogic understanding of the writing/reading process, where

the writer’s interlocutor [...] is the writer himself, but as reader of another text. The one who writes is the same as the one who read. Since his interlocutor is a text, he himself is no more than a text rereading itself. The dialogical structure, therefore, appears only in the light of the text elaborating itself as ambivalent in relation to another text (Kristeva, 1980: 86-87).

Welsh seems to be pretty aware of the dialogical character of the act of writing, not so much because she, as twenty-first century writer, re-cycles previous existing works but because she is writing after such intertextual and dialogical theories have been studied, analysed and researched. By turning the raven into a crow, she is consciously pointing at a text, re-writing it and inserting herself inside this re-writing, as Poe’s text has become widely-known to the common public. This is true even to the point that in episode three of the second season of the TV show *The Simpsons*, titled “Treehouse of Horror I,” Lisa reads Poe’s “The Raven” and, in it, Bart appears as the Raven, Homer as the lead character and Marge as Lenore. In this case, it is not an intertextual relationship between the TV show and Poe’s poem but a parodic recreation that, curiously, reverses the conversation between Watson and the bookfinder. Lisa tells her brother: “I’m about to read you a classic tale of terror by Edgar Allan Poe” to what he answers: “Wait a minute. That’s a school book” (*The Simpsons*, 1990). The raven is not so much a canonical, literary reference but some integral part of English-speaking society, as it is school knowledge. Therefore, any reference to it should be, avoiding Bart-like prejudices towards anything that refers to

school, easily pointed at and read for any common reader⁸⁷. In studying Bakhtin's dialogism, Kristeva notes that he "situates the text within history and society, which are seen as texts read by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them" (Kristeva, 1980: 65). Welsh does not only insert herself into (literary) history and society but she also transmutes them by replacing the referent raven with another close referent, the crow. Thus, she does not simply re-cycle Poe's text but she transforms it and inserts it into her own literary word. Actually, Poe, as well as other authors, inhabits the novels by Welsh as they are quoted literally. In *The Cutting Room*, Derek explains when seeing the photographs of the girl in *Soleil et Désolé*: "The death of a beautiful woman is the most beautiful thing in the world' Edgar Allan Poe said that" (TCR, 80), also quoted in Section 3 of this research. In *The Cutting Room*, there is also a club in Glasgow called Usher's that, as opposed to the idea of decay that can be inferred from its name and its intertextual reference to Poe's tale, "there was nothing in the throng of well-dressed men that drew me. They were too clean, too well disposed" (TCR, 148). However, from it Rilke can see a young American boy leaning out of the window who is exposing his body. Rilke cannot help pressing at the intercom and going upstairs to the flat to have sex with him. Opposite the Ushers' Club, sex intertwines with death as Rilke is preparing the young boy to have anal sex with.

In anal sex it is of great importance that your partner is relaxed. Too much resistance can lead to tearing of the anal sphincter, resulting in infection, or a loss of muscle tension, leading to leakage of the back passage – unpleasant. Other possible side effects include a split condom – which may result in the contraction of HIV or several other harmful infections – piles, and a punch in the face for inflicting too much pain (TCR, 152).

As Rilke is learning through his research on the photographs of the anonymous girl, pleasure and pain are connected up to the point that even the very rectum that provides pleasure also has a potential for death, and not just in a figurative sense. As Bersani notes, "AIDS has literalized that potential as the certainty of biological death, and has therefore reinforced the heterosexual association of anal sex

⁸⁷ In 2013 a TV series called *The Following*, created by Kevin Williamson and starred by Kevin Bacon, was released. It depicts "A brilliant and charismatic, yet psychotic serial killer communicates with other active serial killers and activates a cult of believers following his every command" (IMDb, last accessed on the 22nd February, 2014). This serial killer, played by James Purefoy, is a university professor specialized in Gothic literature in general and Edgar Allan Poe in particular. All his crimes, and those of his followers, are inspired by Poe's work, taking Poe's quote on "The death of a beautiful woman" to its more literal and extreme sense.

with a self-annihilation originally and primarily identified with the fantasmatic mystery of an insatiable, unstoppable female sexuality” (Bersani, 1988: 222). Though it is still relevant to see the death potential of gay anal sex, now limited to cases of barebacking, Bersani’s text should be read in the time context when it was written: the late 1980s, when the AIDS pandemic was in a period of rapid increase (MMWR, 2001). The twenty-first century western population has learnt to live with the possibility of contracting AIDS, as Rilke himself, and what to do in order to avoid contagion or not, as such an awareness does not imply that measures are taken, as in the case of bareback sex. While Rilke is having anal sex with this anonymous boy, he fantasizes with the girl in the photograph: “blood-red vision of the orgasm blackout... Here it came ... a wound, red and deep and longing... the dark basement... the slash of blood across her throat... [...] the girl, used and bound, lying dead on her pallet” (*TCR*, 153) and he has an orgasm. The girl in the photographs appears in his fantasy in a Poe-esque way, as the Madeline in “The Fall of the House of Usher” and, rather than lead him to a death out of fear, like Roderick’s, he reaches an orgasmic *la petite mort*. The issue complicates itself more as Rilke already knows a real Madeleine and Roderick: the McKindless siblings. The American boy’s house is close to Usher’s, but the *Hinterhaus* in *The Girl on the Stairs* resembles in many a point Poe’s, as in it there is a corpse buried that returns from death, and both of the buildings collapse. Therefore, all this murdered girls in Louise Welsh’s novels and Poe’s Madeleine Usher share the fact, as Ballesteros points out, that in their return from the other side of existence, by overcoming their physical death, they ironically contravene Poe’s *dictum* of the death of a beautiful woman as the most attractive literary topic (Ballesteros, 2013: 96, my translation⁸⁸). However, in Welsh’s such a collapse of the building is not related to the moral decay of its inhabitants but due to the work of some builders who were demolishing the house so that they can re-built it and sell it, even though their discovery, as “maybe [...] that work on the building’s going to be delayed” (*TGOTS*, 278).

Kristeva points out that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*”

⁸⁸ In the original: “personajes como Ligeia, Morella o Madeline Usher [...] regresan de otro plano de la existencia, sobreponiéndose a la muerte física y, de manera irónica, contraviniendo el propio *dictum* poeniano que señala que el tópico literario más atrayente del mundo era la muerte de una mujer hermosa” (Ballesteros, 2013: 96).

(Kristeva, 1980: 66). Welsh does not only transform and absorb other texts but makes an obvious use of them, as is being shown in the case of Edgar Allan Poe's texts. In *Tamburlaine Must Die*, Blaize describes the effects of the Plague in London as follows:

Each morning I woke to the clang of the charnel wagon's bells as they lurched through the streets, piled high with the bodies of the dead. You should have seen their load. Men and women tumbled together, old embracing young in poses that would have ruined them in life. Respectable ladies who'd guarded their modesty as rich men guard gold, splayed half naked, their flesh exposed for all the world to see. And children, who only the day before had been their parent's delight, tossed carelessly amongst the rest. The men who drove the carts were drunk and so was I, from morning to night (*TMD*, 53).

This situation of death and devastation echoes Poe's Red Death, which "had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. [...] There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution" (Poe, 1994b: 192). As opposed to Poe, Welsh provides the account of the plague by Blaize, one of those inhabitants of London who were not invited to Scadbury, Walshingham's country house, Welsh's double of Poe's Prince Prospero's castellated abbey. Marlowe, on the other hand, was Walshingham's only guest and, despite the fact that only he and his patron stay in the country house, he "didn't see the man ride uninvited into the courtyard, hear the familiar clatter of hooves against cobbles, nor witness the manic roll in the eye of the sweat on the flank of the horse driven too fast" (*TMD*, 8). This bearer of death enters unnoticed, just as the "presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before" (Poe, 1994b: 196), despite the fact that he was "tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave" (Poe, 1994b: 196). Welsh does not only give a voice to one who stays outside the realm of apparent safety from the plague, but also the chance to complain about his abandonment. Blaize addresses these harsh words to Marlowe: "you left me in a town stalked by Plague, never knowing when Death might call, while you rested safe and comfortable" (*TMD*, 52). Poe's tale ends when everybody in the country has died and "Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all" (Poe, 1994b: 198). Welsh's novel ends up with Marlowe's mysterious death in a world full of jealousy and betrayals, but also with the certainty that he has achieved immortality when he does not betray Raleigh to the Privy Council.

When William Wilson meets Bill at the Soho club, Bill addresses him as “Mr Williams” (*TBT*, 13), to what he answers “Mr Wilson” (*TBT*, 13) and Bill corrects himself: “‘Mr *Wilson*,’ he let the emphasis hang on my name as if he was amused I’d bothered to correct him. Letting me know it didn’t matter to him who I was, or perhaps that in his world one name served as well as another” (*TBT*, 13). Perhaps the reason is that William Wilson proves to be such common name and surname for a man, that their combination can only be due to the fact that both of them are false. According to Riffaterre, intertextual reading is “the perception of similar comparabilities from text to text; or it is the assumption that such comparing must be done even if there is no intertext at hand wherein to find comparabilities” (Riffaterre, 1980: 626). Perhaps Bill cannot recall it when meeting William, but there was another literary character that presents himself as follows: “Let me call myself, for the present, William Wilson” (Poe, 1994a: 96) so that he partly attempts to hide the truth about himself, as:

“notwithstanding a noble descent, mine [my name] was one of those everyday appellations which seem, by prescriptive right, to have been, time out of mind, the common property of the mob. In this narrative I have therefore designated myself as William Wilson, - a fictitious title not very dissimilar to the real” (Poe, 1994a: 101).

When Welsh’s William Wilson is introduced by his agent Rich, the man he is introduced to remarks: “Wilson, not a very stagey name” (*TBT*, 5) as it sounds too “common property of the mob”. Poe’s William Wilson is chased after by his own double, also named William Wilson – it would be more adequate to say that the double is also named William Wilson by the narrator – until he finally confronts him in Rome. Then, “a large mirror, - so at first it seemed to me in my confusion – now stood where none had been perceptible before; and, as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced to meet me with a feeble and tottering gait” (Poe, 1994a: 116). Welsh’s William Wilson learnt when he was a child to master mirrors and his own doubles, the multiple self-reflections on them. He actually makes a living out of controlling them to simulate disappearances and impossible sawing in two of helpless girls on stage. The truly named William Wilson learns how to confront his own double, as opposed to Poe’s self-named William Wilson. According to Pearson, in Poe’s tale “the main character discovers his defective moral conscious is split into two personalities and he attempts to murder his morally superior half” (Pearson, 2009: 130). However, in the act

of killing his double, he actually kills himself or, as Cortés claims, we sense there were not two characters but only one (Cortés, 1997: 100, my translation⁸⁹). William Wilson acknowledges such a duplicity in his final words : “*In me thou exist – and, in my deaths, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself*” (Poe, 1994a: 117, italics in the original). As discussed in Section 3, there is a constant reference to duplicity in Welsh’s novels, not just of some characters that have to face their own doubles like twenty-first century Doctor Jekylls and Mister Hydes or contemporary Doctor Frankensteins. Reality also duplicates, and characters go through some unknown labyrinths behind the surface of their apparently immaculate reality. Bakhtin claims that:

there is no unitary language or style in the novel. But at the same time there does exist a center of language (a verbal-ideological center) for the novel. The author (as creator of the novelist whole) cannot be found at any one of the novel’s language levels: he is to be found at the center of organization where all levels intersect” (Bakhtin, 1981: 48-49).

It is then possible to locate Louise Welsh, the writer, in the heart of the labyrinth where all the levels intersect, but it also proves quite obvious that she has orchestrated all these levels so that they become tangled and readers do get lost when trying to reach the centre, if they ever manage to reach it. Up to this point in this research, only some of the intertextual references to Poe’s works in her novels have been referred to as a scholarly intertextual reference – and homage – to Roland Barthes’s analysis of Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Facts of the Case of M. Valdemar” in his “Textual Analysis of a Tale by Edgar Allan Poe” (1994: 261-293), but the truth is that there are multiple intertextual references to other texts, as can be observed throughout this research: references to the works of writers which include, amongst others, Robert Louis Stevenson or Mary Shelley, Furthermore, if Sections 3 and 4 aimed to show how Louise Welsh leads both the characters and readers through some labyrinthine constructions and, in doing so, strays them further, her use of intertextual references also works in the same direction.

As it has been pointed out so far, the task of reading a text partly depends on the writer as she – in this case – is the one who leads the readers through the labyrinthine disposition of her novels and the labyrinthine nature of the literary world

⁸⁹ In the original: “Así, en las últimas líneas del cuento intuimos que no había dos, sino tan sólo uno” (Cortés, 1997: 100).

characters inhabit. However, it is precisely in this wandering around of the reader that they can vindicate that their reading can prove more valid than that which Louise Welsh actually intended. When it is difficult to discern, literally speaking, between real and fictional writers, the theme of authority needs to be questioned. Barthes grants the reader a privileged position in the theme of authority and questions the right of the writer to claim an ultimate meaning on their work. As he reflects:

The author, it is believed, has certain rights over the reader, he constrains him to a certain *meaning* of his work, and this meaning is of course the right one, the real meaning: whence a critical morality of the right meaning (and of its defect, “misreading”): we try to establish *what the author meant*, and not at all *what the reader understands* (Barthes, 1989: 30, italics in the original).

However, he considers that the act of reading is in itself a physical act that implies a re-writing of the original text by interacting with it and decoding the different signs in it. As he himself states, “to read is to make our *body* work [...] at the invitation of the text’s signs” (Barthes, 1989: 31, italics in the original) and, therefore, bodies also matter when entering the realm of the text: once the reader of Louise Welsh’s novels starts reading, they physically enter their gothic and queer labyrinths when trying to read the signs in order to find an exit or, at least, the solution to the mysteries proposed. The problem arises when one discovers that in reading the signs, one is rewriting the text: “a writing always finally refers to another writing and the prospect of the signs is in a sense infinite” (Barthes, 1994: 242). In the introduction to this section there has been some reference to the complex intertextual reading of Louise Welsh’s novels as they open up the possibility of reading and interpreting the signs. For example, the intertextual reading of the proper names of some of the characters, such as Rilke or Watson, sheds light on the rewriting of the novels but, altogether, widens the interpretation of such texts as Rainer Maria Rilke’s or Doyle’s works can also be read intertextually; thus, the bodily act of reading becomes an intertextual route where signs continuously diverge. Paradoxically, this intertextual references do not only point at other works but they are also an integral part of the novels themselves and need to be read both in relation to their sources and as texts themselves. Barthes notes that:

The intertextuality in which any text is apprehended, since it is itself the intertext of another text, cannot be identified with some *origin* of the text: to seek out the “sources,” the “influences,” of a work is to satisfy the myth of filiation; the quotations

a text is made of are anonymous, irrecoverable, and yet *already read*: they are quotations without quotation marks (Barthes, 1989: 60, italics in the original).

In the act of reading, it is possible to pass over some intertextual references as they may be either so commonly assumed that they seem to be irrelevant or so coded that the reader ignores them, though the writer intentionally made use of them⁹⁰. In *The Bullet Trick*, when William goes to talk to Richard Banks, his agent, he states that “I’d tried and failed to work on a James Bond/Money Penny routine with Mrs Pierce, Rich’s steel-grey coiffured and steelier-eyed secretary” (*TBT*, 4). William seems to be aware of the fact that, despite the different actors who have played the role of James Bond⁹¹, “clearly what counts is the charismatic hero, not the actor who happens to carry the burden of the role in this or that film” (Aguirre et al, 2000: 22). However, he is no hero and he is not an actor but a magician and, therefore, the chemistry between him and the secretary does not happen. On the other hand, one may obviously ignore the reference and the sign “James Bond /Money Penny routine” may be blank and empty of signification. To some other readers, this intertextual reference may point directly to Ian Fleming’s James Bond’s novels, as Money Penny is M’s secretary with whom James Bond flirts when he visits at the MI6. Moreover, to some other readers, despite the fact that they may be aware of the literary reference, this reference points to the different James Bond films where James Bond and she exchange some sexually charged comments as he knows for sure that she feels attracted to him, a fact which is evident in the film *Die Another Day* (Lee Tamahori, 2002) when she puts on Q’s virtual reality glasses. What she sees is how Bond enters the room, tells her he loves her and they kiss. These films, in turn, also refer to other texts from the James Bond series, to other secret agent’s narratives or even to some real facts. In other words, in the act of reading, one does not simply read signs but also fills them with some extralinguistic content. In the example given, three possible interpretations have been offered – though not necessarily the only possible ones – but the fact that a reader adopts any of them opens up the understanding of the novel, even though this example does not prove necessarily relevant to the development of the plot. On the other hand, it cannot be said that this intertextual reference is unintended: it has been

⁹⁰ In the section titled “Louise Welsh, Then and There,” Louise Welsh states that her novel *The Bullet Trick* is intentionally connected to the German film *Die Büchse der Pandora* (Georg Wilhelm Pabst, 1929) whereas she admits that she was not aware of the intertextual reference to Tarzan’s family in *The Girl on the Stairs*.

⁹¹ Up to the present time, the actors that have played this role in the cinema are Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, Pierce Brosnan and Daniel Craig.

abovementioned that the Doctor Watson in *Naming the Bones* is not a physician but an academic Doctor and, in this case, the Bond intertextuality mocks the idea of a scene where there are agents, though in this case they are artistic agents and not secret agents with a license to kill. What it clarifies, though, is how important the reception of a text is in the reading of intertextual references as, “like biological success, literary success is wholly a matter of reception, for only those books that resonate powerfully with many people will be published and read and only those organisms that survive to reproduce will reproduce” (KhosraviShakib, 2012: 187). This Darwinian conception of intertextuality explains why some intertextual references may be lost in the act of reading whereas some others are evident and can only be read as such. The first time Jane sees Anna Mann in *The Girl on the Stairs*, she is dressed in a red coat with her hood up getting out of the *Hinterhaus* and crossing the courtyard. Both Jane and the readers read Anna intertextually as a modern, twenty-first century Little Red Riding Hood who is being harassed by her wolf-like father. Altogether, she is not a common Little Red Riding Hood, as her burlesqued, made-up face adds a certain Lolita-esqueness to her. She is a nymphet in red, an updated version of the fairy tale heroine much in the fashion of Amanda Seyfried in Catherine Hardwicke’s film, *Red Riding Hood* (2011), where she is not just an innocent child but a gothicised, sexual girl in love with a lumberjack her parents do not approve of. Angela Carter (1995) also wrote her own Gothicised version of the tale titled “The Company of Wolves,” turning the fairy tale into a metaphor for a sexual awakening and the wolf into a werewolf. This version would in turn have its own filmic version in Neil Jordan’s adaptation of Carter’s tale in 1984. Moreover, the original fairy tale was written by Charles Perrault in 1697 but the best-known version of the tale is its re-writing by the Grimm Brothers in 1812, which added a happy ending to the story and eliminates the blood and sexual implications of the original tale. Welsh, in her own Little Red Riding Hood, retakes the character and locates her in urban Berlin, nymphetically sexualizes her and dooms her to death as there is no nearby lumberjack to rescue her. Even though it seems obvious that the intertextual references to Nabokov’s *Lolita* and Perrault’s and Grimm’s Little Red Riding Hood are present in the character of Anna Mann, it is questionable that Louise Welsh had the 2011 film version in mind when writing her, as the release date of the film almost coincides with the time she was writing her novel, published in 2012. This complicates the issue of intertextuality as, by granting the reader the possibility of re-writing what has already

been written, intertextual references do not point to some past references but also, potentially, to some future ones. As Barthes states, “in what is called inter-textuality, we must include text which come *after*: the sources of a text are not only *before* it, they are also *after* it” (Barthes, 1994: 230, italics in the original). The possibility of sources after the text complicates the scholar analysis of the intertextual reading of a novel, but it rather resembles the actual act of reading. A person does not read the texts chronologically: in a simplifying example, one does not read first those texts written in the nineteenth century and proceed with those written in the twentieth century. This fact implies that it could be hypothetically possible that a reader read first *The Girl on the Stairs* without having read *Lolita* first and when that person read the latter novel, the intertextual references found in it would point, in that specific reader’s case, to Welsh’s novel. Texts do not only come before or after in chronological time but also in the specific time of each particular reader. Were this not complicated and complicating enough, the intertextual references, as in the example of the 2011 film, do not only refer to literary texts, but also to any kind of text, such as films or TV programmes. Pregnant Jane in her new flat in Berlin recalls Rosemary Woodhouse’s arrival at the Bramford building in Ira Levin’s 1967 novel *Rosemary’s Baby*. In Levin’s novel, as in Welsh’s, “the main activity [...] focuses on the construction of a home, and family. Rosemary builds her identity on the traditional role of a wife” (Mäyra, 1999: 129). Jane’s main concern is to protect her baby as well as protecting Anna from the dangers that surround her. Despite the fact that she is in a new city, she hardly explores it as she spends most of her time in the building talking to her neighbours, the Beckers, fighting with Doctor Alban Mann and obsessed with the *Hinterhaus*.

She turned off the light, ready to go back to bed, but instead drew the curtains and stood by the window, staring out at the backhouse. The building was nothing in the dark, just black on blackness, but she knew it was there, staring across the yard, the open shutter winking at her in the breeze (*TGOTS*, 32).

If the Bramford building is “the traditional symbol for the mind, or psyche, with its hidden rooms and underground cellars” (Mäyra, 1999: 129), the house Jane inhabits hides Greta’s corpse buried in its backhouse. Greta embodies the maternal figure Jane wants to be for her own child. Besides, all the inhabitants in the house are, to a certain extent, conscious of both the past and the present events in the building. All of them, except for Anna, know that Greta never left the building and they are all

implicated in her murder. At the end of both novels, an anagnorisis takes place when both Rosemary and Jane discover the truth about the inhabitants of the building as well as acknowledging their own powers. Mäyra points out that the third part of Levin's novel "presents the denouement of the plot, and an *Anagnorisis*, a revelation of true identities. [...] she hides the sedatives her guardians are treating her with, prays, dopes her guard, and arms herself with 'the longest sharpest knife' she can find" (Mäyra, 1999: 139, italics in the original). Jane, in turn, "slipped her hand under the mattress, found Petra's hunting knife, slid it from its sheath and tiptoed silently from the room" (*TGOTS*, 252) and slices one of Mann's arteries. Jane becomes a killer in the house of murder, as she actually kills Alban Mann and provokes Anna's fall into the well of the stairs. She, probably possessed by the spirit of the building – in a manner that resembles another haunted building, Stephen King's Overlook Hotel in *The Shining* (1977) where, according to Jameson, "the ghost is at one with a building of some antiquity" (Jameson, 1981) –, conceals her implication in both deaths: "Alban Mann murdered his daughter. He would have murdered Jane if she hadn't killed him first" (*TGOTS*, 276). Just like Rosemary, once again, Jane remains an ambiguous character: "Rosemary [...] is seduced to join the Satan's party through her desire to be a mother, desire to love. At the same time, she is decisively not a victim any more; she attains a position of authority, and gives the baby a name of her own choosing" (Mäyra, 1999: 141). The baby's paternity has been questioned by the inhabitants of the building, who misread Jane's *lebenspartner* for an absent man; Anna despises the baby for not having a real father; even Thielo, Petra's brother, doubts the possibility of him being the anonymous sperm donor. All these questionings disappear when the inhabitants of the building are either dead or in a residence. She knows for sure, then, that the baby, named Boy, is "*Our boy*, hers and Petra's, nobody else's" (*TGOTS*, 274, italics in the original). Petra, Jane and Boy have become an atypical family, just as that formed by other Jane and Boy. In *Tarzan Finds a Son!* (Richard Thorpe, 1939) Tarzan and Jane together adopt a child that survived a plane crash. The real intention of introducing this new character, which did not appear in Burroughs's Tarzan novels, was to replace Jane's character, played by Maureen O'Sullivan, for this new character, as the actress did not want to continue playing Tarzan's partner. The film originally ended with Jane's death, but the ending was changed as the reaction to its first screening was very negative. In Petra and Jane's case, Jane replaces the apparently overtly masculine, male Tarzan for Petra in

order to actually become a biological mother. The long and busy days and nights in the jungle cannot make Jane pregnant of Tarzan's biological son, while Petra, who only has a fake penis, is able to find the proper semen to fertilize Jane. The intertextual references to the novels by Levin, King and Burroughs are, in turn, intertextualized, as in the case of Ian Fleming's James Bond. The Jane and Boy reference does not belong to the literary work by Burroughs, but to the Hollywood appropriation of the character and his becoming a franchised trademark. Furthermore, it proves quite likely that the intertextual reference that readers have when relating Welsh's novel to *Rosemary's Baby* or to *The Shining* rather refers also to the Hollywood versions directed by Roman Polanski in 1968 and by Stanley Kubrick in 1980 respectively. Actually, when googling both "Rosemary's baby" and "The Shining," the first page of results do not mention the literary references. When Barthes proposed that he would like to read of Balzac's *Sarrasine* in a filmic way – "recalling the camera's first feats in decomposing a horse's trot, I too attempted to "film" the reading of *Sarrasine* in slow motion" (Barthes, 1989: 29) – he could not imagine that the image might replace the word to the point that Tarzan, James Bond, Rosemary or Jack Torrance are perceived, rather than as literary characters, as they were embodied by the different actors that have played – and will play them – Johnnie Weissmuller, Sean Connery, Mia Farrow and Jack Nicholson. Intertextuality implies that the act of reading does not limit itself to relate literary texts intertextually but it opens up to the reading, listening or viewing of any sign. Martínez Alfaro explains that "readers *presuppose* that there is an intertext which gives structural and semantic unity to the work, but the success or failure to locate that intertext on the part of the reader is, in a sense, irrelevant to the experience of intertextual reading" (Martínez Alfaro, 1996: 279, italics in the original). It could be added that the experience of intertextual reading also benefits of erroneously granting some texts, films or TV programmes the status of intertexts, even though the writer probably did not grant them such a status. KhosraviShakib explains that:

Intertextuality, the condition of any text whatsoever, cannot, of course, be reduced to a problem of sources and influences; the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located: of unconscious or automatic quotations, given without quotation marks. Thus writing is always an iteration which is also re-iteration, a re-writing which foregrounds the trace of the various texts it both knowingly and unknowingly places and dis-places. [...] We are living in a world of Intertextuality or hybridity (KhosraviShakib, 2012: 188).

In this world we inhabit, the complication that reading a text implies is that, when reading, readers stray around in a labyrinth that they unknowingly cross or they take the wrong intertextual bifurcation in a maze that, instead of leading them to its core, ends up in a dead-end. In this situation one can either retrace one's steps until the last bifurcation and take another intertextual alternative or, even, trespass the wall that closes the dead-end, becoming thus a ghostly reader. As such, they have to face the fact that any reference in the world they inhabit can become an intertextual reference to what they are reading. As opposed to Mäyra's claim that intertextuality is not "freedom to say everything" as it would "make all textuality inherently demonic, and unable to find any critical power from its endless transgressions and self-reference" (Mäyra, 1999: 102), it is precisely such freedom what characterizes the studies on intertextuality in different gothic or ghost stories. When analysing Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* (1984), Russo refers to the multiplicity of intertextual references that can be found in that novel, which varies from high culture to low culture and:

Not all of them by any means as central to the European canon as Shakespeare, Swift, or Yeats. Allusions abound to twentieth-century artistic and political avant-gardes, to Andrei Bely's *Petersburg*, to Freud, Poe, Bakhtin, and to the marquis de Sade who remains perhaps the most striking influence throughout Carter's work. Equally important, popular culture, which had once produced its own version of critical parody in carnival, reappears and is transformed in modes of display, performances, and reproduction which characterize its institutionalization in the European circus, museums, journalism, and advertising. Nor does Carter limit herself to male producers and performers (Russo, 1994: 161-162).

Hay also explains that "ghost stories, unsurprisingly, do not have a single meaning" (Hay, 2011: 229) as reading them does not only imply locating them in the context when they were written but also in relation to other "ghost stories that precede and follow it, but also with the larger literary history that surrounds it" (Hay, 2011: 229). Both Russo and Hay point out the fact that some texts, amongst which Welsh's are included, cannot be read in isolation but in context and they require a further analysis that goes beyond the academic, as does Lunan's science fiction novel. The fact that they are rapidly categorized into different literary genres related to lower culture, as outlined in Section 1, also implies the need to read them in relation to its high culture sources, as in the example of Poe, but also in relation to more popular culture. Mäyra's proposal for limiting the intertextual power of twenty-first century

novel curiously highlights what Welsh's novels intend: to become demonic in itself by showing the demonic in society.

The first time William enters the Soho Club in *The Bullet Trick*, she tries to flirt with the young girl at the counter and asks her: ““All on your own?’ I was aiming for avuncular, but it sounded like a line that Crippen might have used” (*TBT*, 11). This is not the only time that Crippen is mentioned in Welsh's novels: in *The Girl on the Stairs*, Thielo is trying to calm Jane down and tells her that Dr Alban Mann did not try to poison her because he is a doctor, to what Jane replies: “So was Crippen” (*TGOTS*, 200). Furthermore, Bobby Robb, one of the four people who stayed at the house in Lismore the summer the Archie Lunan committed suicide, is described by Watson as follows: “he was an associate of Archie's, which suggests he was around the fringes of the Edinburgh literary scene in the seventies. He left town for quite a while and only came back recently. He might also have been known as Crippen” (*NTB*, 199) to what Lyn, Murrays's sister-in-law answers that “Crippens are like Jims and Joes in my business, ten a penny” (*NTB*, 199), as she is a caretaker. Lyn probably misrelates Crippen to anything related to cripple, but it actually refers to a real Dr Hawley Harvey Crippen, married to Cora, whose stage name was “Belle Elmore,” and who had an affair, amongst others, with his 28 year old secretary, Ethel Clara Le Neve. In order to carry on with his affair, he decided to kill his wife and

“mixed a medication (hydrobromide of hyoscine, also known as nightshade) in one of Belle's drinks and evidence suggests that he also shot her to assure her death. Neighbor's later reported hearing shouting, pleas for mercy, and what sounded like either a door slamming shut or a distant gun shot. Dr Crippen then proceeds to take his wife's lifeless body to the cellar where he disembowels, decapitates and cuts off her arms and legs before burying the body in the cellar floor. Crippen then continued the affairs as if nothing ever happened” (Nichol, n.d.).

Ethel moved to his house pretending she was his niece and he told his neighbours that Belle had been called to America to attend a sick relative and she had moved there, where she died “in a little town near San Francisco but he could not recall the name” (Nichol, n.d.). The police did not believe his version and searched in his house for her corpse. He feared the body could be found and decided to move to America as father and son, with Ethel in the guise of a boy. In a second search, the police discovered Belle's remains and issued a warrant for Dr Crippen and Ethel. Up to this point, the story resembles some memorable tales by Edgar Allan Poe, as for example the “Tell-tale heart” or “The Black Cat.” Unaware of the fact that such a

warrant has been issued, they are travelling on the SS Montrose and Captain Kendall suspects this father and son as:

I happened to glance through the porthole of my cabin and behind a lifeboat I saw two men. One was squeezing the other's hand. I walked along the boat deck and got into conversation with the elder man. I noticed that there was a mark on the bridge of his nose from wearing spectacles, that he had only recently shaved off a moustache, and that he was growing a beard. The young fellow was very reserved, and I remarked about his cough" (quoted in Nichol).

Following his intuition, he invites them for dinner and observes the son is using safety pins to disguise the curves of a female. It is then when he decides to send the following message to the White Star Line Offices in London: "Have strong suspicions that Crippen – London cellar murderer and accomplice are among Saloon passengers. Moustache taken off – growing beard. Accomplice dressed as boy. Voice manner and build undoubtedly a girl" (quoted in Nichol). London police came aboard before the ship arrived at her destination and Crippen was taken back to London, where he was tried and sentenced to death. He was hanged at Pentonville prison on 28th November, 1910, despite the fact that he declared himself innocent. If Poe's narrator in the "Tell-Tale Heart" was betrayed by the supernatural beating of a heart in his house, Crippen was betrayed by, what was then, modern technology. In all the quoted examples of Welsh making reference to Crippen, she is considering him as one of the most popular murderers in English history, up to the point that he could even have become one of the characters that inhabit her novels. When William talks to the young girl at the club, he wants to sound avuncular, defined in The Concise Oxford Dictionary as "like or of an uncle; kind and friendly, esp. towards a younger person." The fact that he wants to be kind towards the young girl triggers in his mind the comparison with Crippen and his relation with her false niece, Ethel. The need for the intertextual reference to reality in this specific case is such that the translation of this novel into Spanish by Susana Contreras of the above-quoted conversation with the girl is "¿Estás sola? – le pregunté, sonriente. Yo intentaba mostrarme amistoso, pero mis palabras sonaron como una frase que habría podido decir Crippen, el estrangulador de Londres" (Welsh, 2008a: 21). Contreras adds "el estrangulador de Londres," the "London Strangler," which is not actually in Welsh's novel, to clarify the Spanish reader who Crippen was, which can be read in, at least, two ways. The first is that the word Crippen does not point to its referent as much as it does to English readers. The opposite could be stated had the reference been "El

sacamantecas” to an English reader: it would have required some clarification on the translator’s part. The second implication of the specification of Crippen as “the London Strangler” shows a forging of reality on the translator’s part in order to avoid some extra clarification on Crippen. When one reads he was the London Strangler, one understands that William sounds threatening despite his attempt to sound avuncular. On the other hand, it hides Crippen’s story within its very name by transforming him into something he was not. Ironically, the only one who died of suffocation was Crippen himself when hanged at Pentonville Prison. The second mention of Crippen in Welsh’s texts is Jane’s remark to Thielo’s comforting words, which actually refer to Crippen being a doctor and his use of hydrobromide of hyoscine to drug his wife and kill her afterwards. Jane suspects that her fainting at Mann’s flat is not a side effect of her pregnancy but an attempt to kill her. “Mann didn’t touch his coffee. I thought it was because he was too busy talking, but he’d poured it from the same pot as the cup he gave me. He was only bluffing when he pretended to pour one for himself. [...] If you hadn’t come along I might have died” (*TGOTS*, 199-200). In these two cases it could be argued that the name Crippen has acquired, as Butler explains, “a sedimentation, a repetition that congeals, that gives the name its force” (Butler, 1997: 36). Crippen acquires, thus, the citational character of speech, but it also opens up the intertextual labyrinth between reality in the novels and the reality of the readers, functioning as a kind hyperlink – as those in Muntadas’ *File Room*. However, in the case of Bobby Robb, in *Naming the Bones*, though he also resembles Crippen in his (ab)use of drugs, he physically recalls another popular culture icon. Meikle, the bookfinder, describes a scar on his face as follows:

‘Bobby had a scar running from the corner of his mouth up to his eyelid, looked like he’d been lucky to keep his sight. Side-on, it gave him this horrible, sneering smile, a bit like the Penguin [...] You know, the baddie in *Batman*.’
 ‘I think you mean the Joker.’
 ‘Shit. [...] Sideways, he looked like the Joker, but the funny thing was, he was the kind of ugly git women would be attracted to’ (*NTB*, 163).

As has been explained before with the examples of James Bond or Tarzan, the Batman Meikle is referring to is not so much the character that appeared for the first time in May, 1939 in *Detective Comics*, number 27, but to the protagonist of any of the seven Batman films released since Tim Burton’s 1989 version. Actually, it is possible to infer from the Meikle’s mistaking of the Penguin for the Joker that he bears in mind both Burton’s films: *Batman* (1989) and *Batman Returns* (1992) with

Jack Nicholson playing the Joker and Danny DeVito playing the Penguin respectively, as they both make these two characters widely known. Meikle also explains that “Bobby Robb was a walking pharmacy” (*NTB*, 168). However, in Bobby Robb’s case, Welsh intertexts the real doctor Crippen with the Poesque reading of his life. After Robb’s death, Murray contacts John Rathbone, his landlord, who describes the state Robb left the room:

Crippen’s bedroom... well, that was something else. Like a scene from a horror movie. [...] The bed was in the centre of the room and he’d made a kind of circle of words around it. When I first saw it, I thought it was going to be some major confession, where he’d hidden the bodies of hundreds of missing schoolgirls or something, but thank Christ it was just a load of crap (*NTB*, 249).

In addition to his interest in the beyond, his use of drugs transforms him, as if he had cast a spell, into somebody else. When in Lismore, Murray receives an e-mail from Lyn with some information about Robb. In it, she tells Murray that “I asked around about your smiler, Bobby Robb, Crippen as you called him, Crowley as they call him here” (*NTB*, 257). This new nickname points to Aleister Crowley (1875 – 1947),

an infamous occultist and the scribe of *The Book of the Law*, which introduced Thelema to the world. Crowley was an influential member in several occult organizations, including the Golden Dawn, the A.:A., and Ordo Templi Orientis. He was a prolific writer and poet, a world traveller, mountaineer, chess master, artist, yogi, social provocateur, drug addict and sexual libertine. The press loved to demonize him and dubbed Crowley “the wickedest man in the world.”⁹²”

What Lyn has been able to find out about him is that “apparently he was into weirdigan stuff, spells, magic, and wasn’t above dropping a curse or two if it looked like someone might cross him” (*NTB*, 257-258). Crowley, the wickedest man in the world, has been degraded as his name is used to nickname a drunkard who is obsessed with black magic, dissipating with it the shivers that one could feel when hearing the reference to Crippen. Butler claims that the subject is interpellated in language

through a selective process in which the terms of legible and intelligible subjecthood are regulated. The subject is called a name, but ‘who’ the subject is depends as much on the names that he or she is never called: the possibilities for linguistic life are both inaugurated and foreclosed through the name” (Butler, 1997: 41).

⁹² In <http://hermetic.com/crowley/> (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014).

Thus, Bobby Robb needs to be read both as himself and in the different names that he was given in his lifetime, being the latter more adequate to denote him as they cite previous names that acquired connotations that apply to him.

However, reality surpasses fiction and complicates the issue of the citational character of Crippen and it forces, then, a re-reading of what has been written before. As has already been explained, Crippen became one of the most notorious murderers in British history up to the point that in 2011 another technological innovation, the DNA tests, shown that “the remains found at the couple’s home were not hers [Belle’s]” (Nelson, 2011). The conclusions that are drawn from this DNA test show that the tissue was male. This opens up Crippen’s case to two possible explanations: “One possibility is that Crippen murdered someone else and those were the remains discovered. Another possibility is that the celebrated investigators planted the evidence” (Nelson, 2011). More than a hundred years after being hanged, some truth is shed on his case, which also proves that his case still arises some interest to those who read the media. Patrick Crippen, his closest living relative, states that “it is a celebrated horror case but the prosecution was entirely wrong” (quoted in Nelson, 2011). Despite his original similarities with some of Poe’s characters, it has eventually been proved that he was actually a victim of the police trying to close a case as it is becoming popular thanks to the media, as also occurs, for example, in Clint Eastwood’s *Changeling* (2008). The current investigations on Crippen’s case and the fact that there are still some of his relatives fighting for his honour more than a hundred years after his execution exemplifies Hutcheon’s remark that the function of “the past in fiction and in history is [...] to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological” (Hutcheon, 1988b: 110). After the DNA tests, Crippen’s history has to be re-written and, necessarily, has to be re-read in his literary references.

Once the possibilities of intertextuality have been widened from other literary texts to popular culture and, extensively, to the present day and the reality outside the text, it feels right to conclude this section with the application of Hutcheon’s concept of “Historiographic metafiction,” applied mainly to Welsh’s *Tamburlaine Must Die*. In it, Christopher Marlowe moves around a factional Elizabethan world inhabited by some characters who did actually exist, such as Christopher Marlowe himself, Thomas Kyd and Sir Walter Raleigh, but also some who did not, such as Richard Baynes and Thomas Blaize, though they are successfully inserted in the story. The

coexistence of these real and fictional characters is set in the world of the Elizabethan theatre, where male characters, such as Blaize, perform with their own bodies. The Elizabethan theatre is so relevant in the novel that there was a staged version of the novel, adapted by Kenny Miller, released in November, 2007, as noted in Part One., and reviewed in *The Guardian* by Mark Fisher (2007). Hutcheon defines historical metafiction as a “fiction that is intensely, self-reflexive art, but is also grounded in historical, social, and political realities [...] These works are not quite historical novels in the traditional sense, for they are also very metafictional in their attention to the processes of writing, reading, and interpreting” (Hutcheon, 1988a, 13). In them there is a mutual, inseparable relationship between history and fiction, not just an attempt to make literature authentic nor to imbue literary value to historical writings. Actually, they show a two-fold approach to history and realism as they both challenge and take them seriously. In an unnumbered page after the end of her novel and before the “author’s note,” Welsh adds three lines of historical fact: “Christopher Marlowe was knifed to death at a house in Deptford, on the evening of Wednesday 30th May, 1593” (*TMD*, 143) and thus she inserts her own narrative on Marlowe’s last days, that had ended three pages before with Marlowe’s signature and his writing of the date on his manuscript, “30th May 1593” (*TMD*, 140). These lines provoke in the reader a shiver like the last image in a horror film, as it actually kills both the character and its real referent. Hutcheon had already stated in her contribution to the symposium organized at the University of Ottawa in 1986 called “Future Indicative: Literary Theory and Canadian Literature,” that “historiographic metafiction does not deny that reality is or was; it just questions how we *know* that and how it is or was” (1987, 173, italics in the original). In this case, however, Welsh does not question how we know reality and how it is or was but she actually questions how it is possible to ignore reality and how it was not, but it could have been. As she remarks on her “author’s note:”

The death of Christopher Marlowe is a mystery which will never be solved. History has bequeathed us a tantalizing framework of facts – the Elizabethans were as prolific as the Stasi when it came to official documents. Yet the facts can’t tell us the full tale and historians’ theories on Marlowe’s death are ultimately well informed, meticulously researched speculations (*TMD*, 145, italics in the original).

The abundance of official documents and the different historical research on his death have not been more fruitful than any literary re-writing of his life. Hutcheon

refers to the fact that novelist can manipulate the events depicted as “storytellers can certainly silence, exclude, and absent certain events – and people – but [...] historians have done the same” (1988b, 107). However, in Marlowe’s case, the role of the writer is, actually, to include and give voice to events and characters. Marlowe has actually been able to express his version in a written account that, had it really existed, would not have shed any more light on his death than any other document of his time. Hutcheon’s historical metafiction is, thus, also gothicised as Gothic itself, according to Punter:

consists of a series of texts which are always dependent on other texts, texts which they are not, texts which are ceaselessly invoked while no less ceaselessly misread, models of *méconnaissance* in the form of lost manuscript, of misheard message in cyberspace, in the attempt to validate that which cannot be validated, the self-sufficiency, the autonomy of a textuality that is already ruined beyond repair (Punter, 2001: x).

Thus, even historical facts about Marlowe in his lost manuscript, recovered by Welsh, become lost in turn in her literary labyrinth. Once a labyrinthine disposition in the act of reading has been set, the next step is to focus on language, as the different intertexts and their intertextual references cannot be established if they have not been codified before in language. Once again, the fact that language points to and refers to reality does reinforce the feeling of loss in Welsh’s fiction.

5.1. Intertexting language

In the intertextual labyrinth explained above, language plays a key role as “language is the *being* of literature, its very world: all literature is contained in the act of writing [...] Literature thus is alone today in bearing the entire responsibility for language; for though science needs language, it is not, like literature, *within* language” (Barthes, 1989: 3-4, italics in the original). In this Matryoshka-Dolled research where labyrinths are inserted into further labyrinths and, altogether, open up to new ones, language becomes a new labyrinth in which Welsh’s literary work and its different intertextual references, regardless the fact that they are not exclusively literary, wander as language is, in itself, the essence of the literary text. Language acts as a mirror reflecting reality but, in turn, can also distort it. As Aguirre notes:

Language and physical world are two distinct phenomena, of which the first points at the second. Language becomes a mirror of the world. Through the transcendental sign-world, man could reach the Other; now, on an opaque sign-system, man sees only his own world – or fails to see it, and then endeavours to make language conform to its reflective mission” (Aguirre, 1990: 145).

Some of the characters in Welsh’s novels have to recount their own experience to the police and they transform their own experiences into words. They tell the essence of the events, but they also make language conform to their own version. In the chapter called “Transcript” in *The Cutting Room*, Rilke explains that “I told him [Anderson] everything, from the discovery of the photographs to the hold-up in the auction house. Of course, when I say everything, I don’t mean the entire narrative” (*TCR*, 277). His version on the events stresses some points, such as Trapp’s involvement in McKindless’s interest in slicing a girl live, but it also shadows others, such as Les’s or Derek’s involvement. What really annoys him is the fact that, once his evidence is taken, he is told that he is free to go. “I stayed in my seat ready to ask him, ‘Don’t you understand all of this is my fault?’” (*TCR*, 277). Rilke only sees his world and renders his evidence more important than others,’ such as Adia Kovalyova, the ghost in one of Trapp’s massage parlours. Her evidence transcript is actually transcribed literally in the novel and thus Adia is granted the voice and the existence that, until then, she had been deprived of. In the contrast of these two statements, one can recognize the oppositional character of language as it:

organizes person into two oppositions: a correlation of personality, which sets person (*I* or *you*) in opposition to the non-person (*he* or *she*), sign of what is absent, of absence itself; and, within the first great opposition, a correlation of subjectivity sets two persons in opposition, the *I* and the *non-I* (Barthes, 1989: 15-16, italics in the original).

Rilke’s *I* has been addressing all the possible *you*, including readers and characters alike. However, his evidence is abridged by him whereas Adia’s evidence is fully transcribed, dated – 30th April 2001 – and written with a different indentation than the rest of the novel. In the act of transcribing Adia’s evidence, she recovers her own voice and brings her *I* out of the *non-I* she had become. She explains her very own process of depersonalization and dehumanization when she explains her daily mistreatment and how “every day another piece of me died” (*TCR*, 282) and how “the last bit of me died before they [the police] arrived” (*TCR*, 282). Paradoxically, she is not only rescued when she feels she has died: she is already dead when her up-till-

then ungrievable life becomes grievable to the police, who in turn acknowledge the impossibility of avoiding deaths in life such as Adia's as part of their job.

I doubt we'll ever know the full extent of their [Trapp and McKindless's] involvement. In a way the pressure's off, they're out of our jurisdiction. [...] We'll circulate what we have to other forces in Europe, but Trapp will probably start somewhere else. And meanwhile there'll be someone who takes note of Trapp's absence, and slips from the gutter into his shoes, ready to start all over again (*TCR*, 283).

Adia's transcript voices her and gives existence to her as her story is told by herself in the first person, just as it is possible to discover Marlowe in his first person narrative account addressed to a future, better reader. In both cases, as well as any other character who becomes a narrator of their own stories, such as Mrs Dunn, Watson's landlady on Lismore, they start existing in the moment they make use of language to tell their lives. As Barthes remarks:

Man does not exist prior to language, either as a species or as an individual. We never encounter a state where man is separated from language, which he then elaborates in order to "express" what is happening to him: it is language that teaches the definition of man, not the contrary (Barthes, 1989: 13).

In his last days of existence, Marlowe has learnt how volatile and dangerous the spoken words may be, as certain manipulation of his words have condemn him to death. As in gothic tales, words become a problem when they are read literally. Furthermore, written words acquire a power that spoken words do not possess. As Barthes notes, "in the text (contrary to oral narrative) no feature of speech is insignificant" (Barthes, 1994: 137). He is accused of heresy for some opinions he stated when drunk and in a context of bravado in a tavern. When he sees Richard Baynes, Marlowe thinks of him as Old Nick, the devil himself, willing to make him an offer for his soul. Mäyra explains that the demon "signifies a radical doubt and mistrust towards everything outside of thinking; 'history' and 'language' are examples of such profoundly doubtful areas – they create illusory "realities" that have to be exposed, controlled and exorcised by philosophical thought. (Mäyra, 1999: 88). Marlowe should have mistrusted language and remained silent, but he does not. When they enter the tavern, Marlowe is aware of Blaize's excessive interest in both him and Blaize, "that cove seems over interested in us" (*TMD*, 64), though his gaze is misread as a sign of recognition by Marlowe's gaydar. Besides, when he approaches them, both friends are aware of his bad acting as a drunkard. Baynes and Marlowe know

each other well as they shared a room in the Dutch city of Flushing. Both accused each other of blasphemy and were taken to London, though not charged. Curiously enough, Marlowe, who knows himself watched by the Privy Council, puts his need to discover Tamburlaine's real identity before his own safety. As opposed to Baynes, Marlowe does not feign any drunkenness, as he drinks more than he should and what started as a conversation on his plays end up in an improvised, blasphemous speech on the holy conception of the Virgin Mary and on his opinion on the apostles. As a drunk double of himself, Marlowe speaks his mind with his drunkard voice. His language becomes disturbed and, as Ballester points out, "disturbances of language are, then, a register of the struggle of repressed desire to signify" (Ballaster, 1996: 62). The consequences of this speech are double: the most relevant to him is that Blaize would present Marlowe's heresy, in writing, to the Privy Council and the other is that they will use that written transcript to force Marlowe to betray Sir Walter Raleigh: "There in front of me were all my blasphemies of the night before, black on white, crawling across the page" (*TMD*, 103). When he recognizes the written account with his speech of the night before, Marlowe realizes that his words do not belong to him then, as they have been appropriated by the Privy Council. Butler claims that:

This not owning of one's words is there from the start, however, since speaking is always in some ways the speaking of a stranger through and as oneself, the melancholic reiteration of a language that one never chose, that one does not find as an instrument to be used, but that one is, as it were, used by, expropriated in, as the unstable and continuing condition of the 'one' and the 'we,' the ambivalent condition of the power that binds (Butler, 1993a: 242).

Accepting the conditions of the Privy Council would mean the immediate destruction of all the copies of the written document but it would also imply Marlowe's defence by the "We," as "if you sign an affidavit against Raleigh we will destroy this document and aid you in your current difficulties" (*TMD*, 105). Otherwise, he would remain in the realm of the "one" where, "no one can help a man who will not help himself" (*TMD*, 105). The most immediate consequence to his blasphemous words was that Baynes stabbed him in the alley outside the tavern with a poniard in a moment of exaltation of filial love when the two of them are hugging. The piercing of Marlowe's waist recalls more a sexual assault than an attack that leaves physical and emotional wounds. The conspiracy against him has reached another level and this will not be his last wound. The day he is shown the transcript of his blasphemies, he is stabbed in his hand as he tries to grab the incriminatory paper.

Once more, words may hide the truth: as the old man states, “Marlowe has had an accident” (*TMD*, 104) and as such it will be considered unless there is a need to exert more extreme measures if he does not collaborate, as he does not. When Marlowe sets out to write his own account of the events he has undergone in his last days, he has realised that:

we do not freely choose ourselves or our communities, nor are the world into which we are born absolutely determinative ones in which no new meanings can be performed. Instead, subjects and communities are created and sustained by the complex interplay of sameness and difference constitutive of repetition itself (Hollywood, 2002: 115).

Therefore, he writes to a future reader who lives in a better society than his. He aims at giving a new meaning as that is not possible in his own society. In order to do so, this time it is Marlowe himself who writes with his own hand the account of his last days so that they cannot be manipulated or altered as Baynes and the Privy Council did before. However, modern society is not much different from Marlowe’s and, thus, his death still remains a mystery, not just to historians – as mentioned above – but to anybody with an interest in him.

Type *Christopher Marlowe Death* into any Internet search engine and you’ll raise thousands of websites and chat rooms devoted to the poet’s demise. American coroners debate the nature of his wounds, conspiracy theorists think his death a ruse designed to cover escape and believe Marlowe the author of Shakespeare’s better plays. It’s cheering that a mystery, which was a source of conjecture and rumours in the 1590s, still exercises so many 21st-century minds (*TMD*, 145-146, italics in the original).

Marlowe’s transformation into his own literary characters voices him but he also becomes strayed in the labyrinth of language as, as in Barthes’ quote above, literature is *within* language. By choosing to insert himself within language, he has stood up against the very Privy Council that aimed at inserting into the common “we” because in the narrative one “‘chooses’ between several possibilities and this choice at every moment commits the future of the story” (Barthes, 1994: 139). In his particular case, between his human life and his immortal life, he chooses that “men will know of the genius of Christopher Marlowe. Four hundred years hence and beyond they will perform your plays and write your story. Surely. [...] That is the only immortality you would acknowledge?” (*TMD*, 115).

When William has performed his deadly bullet trick, he is amazed at the fact that “someone had done a good job. There was no sign left of my crime, except for a

patch on the floorboards that was cleaner than the rest, where traces of blood and tooth would still be stored, if you knew how to look” (*TBT*, 347). From that moment, he is haunted by Sylvie’s body, or rather, he has been haunted until then in the narrated events in Glasgow, despite the fact that the readers ignored it. This is due to the fact that the novel does not develop in a chronological order, as it should, as there is no hint of a written account by the I-William Wilson that tells the story. It has previously been analysed in Section 3 how William’s world becomes a circular labyrinth of three interrelated cities: London-Berlin-Glasgow. His labyrinthine first-person account on the recent events in his life shows that:

The *I* of the one who writes *I* is not the same as the *I* which is read by *you*. This basic dissymmetry of language [...] is finally beginning to disturb literature by showing it that intersubjectivity, or rather interlocution, cannot be accomplished simply by a pious with about the merits of ‘dialogue,’ but only by a deep, patient, and often circuitous descent into the labyrinths of meaning (Barthes, 1989: 17, italics in the original).

By descending into the labyrinths of meaning, it is possible to read beyond Poe’s very William Wilson and thus read William Wilson the conjurer, who is frequently mistaken for a comedian, as in the conversation at his agent’s – “So, what’s this one? Another comic?” (*TBT*, 5) – or to the girl at the club – “That’s funny, I thought you were a bloody comedian” (*TBT*, 10). The problem is that his narrative, as well as his self, wanders around the labyrinth of the three cities while trying to make sense of the event that haunts him. To him, language proves unable to make a linear narrative out of his life but he ignores this is due to the fact that haunting itself is also a discourse.

It encompasses a number of languages (both verbal and visual), image repertories, performative acts and stylistic devices. These elements constitute a complex rhetoric, central to which is the principle of ambiguity: a blurring of logical distinctions, resulting in the sustained obfuscation of sense, whereby a mood of suspension and undecidability is produced (Cavallaro, 2002: 65).

This haunting discourse obfuscates his senses and provokes in him an inability to decide and to act, as when he becomes a hobo. However, when he decides to act and defend himself against Montgomery’s attack, his senses make out a less and less blurred reality. William fears Montgomery’s arrest would bring back Sylvie’s body from wherever it is being hidden but, reality is not as he expected. “After Montgomery’s arrest I had expected to find myself back in the cells en route for

extradition to a German jail, but Sylvie's name was never mentioned" (*TBT*, 354). Had he not been haunted, he would have known that it was he who had to know how to read the scene of the crime, as he does now in his present time from where his *I* tells his story. Among the several possibilities to his narrative, he chooses to adopt the haunting discourse so that all his *you* necessarily have to go through the same labyrinths he has already gone.

In *Naming the Bones* and *The Girl on the Stairs*, there is a shift in the focalizers as they are not narrated by a subject *I* but by a third person focalizer. The main characters in both novels, Murray Watson and Jane, do not tell their own stories but rather they become the objects of discourse. Butler explains that:

the language of appropriation, instrumentality, and distanciation germane to the epistemological mode also belong to a strategy of domination that pits the "I" against an "Other" and, once that separation is effected, creates an artificial set of questions about the knowability and recoverability of that Other (Butler, 1990: 144).

Watson's and Jane's experiences are appropriated by a third person focalizer that is an Other to the characters but that, in turn, turns them into Others in the narrative dialogue between the narrating *I* and the reader *you*. However, they regain their own *I* when engaged in conversations with other characters. In Murray's final conversation with Rachel, now Fergus's widow, he tells her that he was also on the island of Lismore, where her husband committed suicide. He expects some questions from Rachel on what happened there and he is "unsure of what he would tell her" (*NTB*, 387), but she simply nods and explains that she was going to leave Fergus after he had sent the photographs to Watson and says that: "I couldn't help wondering if it had anything to do with what happened" (*NTB*, 387). He misunderstands her as he thinks she is connecting the photographs Fergus took of them having sex in their office at the University with his suicide attempt. However, Rachel explains herself: "the fact that I was going to leave him. You knew Fergus. He wasn't a clumsy man. He was graceful, cautious despite his recklessness" (*NTB*, 387). Third person Watson decides, then, to silence what he knows in a similar fashion to his manipulation of words in his statement with the police in Oban. "Murray's story that Christie hadn't answered her door, despite his appointment, appeared to be believed, and his connection with Fergus picked over, but not unkindly" (*NTB*, 380). His silencing or his re-elaboration of the real events have a performative potential, as well as Marlowe's words had the performative potential of condemning him. Butler points

out that “speech is bodily, but the body exceeds the speech it occasions; and speech remains irreducible to the bodily means of its enunciation” (Butler, 1997: 155-156). In the apparent locutionary acts of his statements he is actually performing his innocence. Searle pointed out that Austin’s classification of speech acts into locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary added a complication to speech act theory, as both locutionary and illocutionary acts

are one and the same act. Uttering the sentence with a certain meaning is, Austin tells us, performing a certain locutionary act; uttering a sentence with a certain force is performing a certain illocutionary act; but where a certain force is part of the meaning, where the meaning uniquely determines a particular force, there are not two different acts but two different labels for the same act” (Searle, 1968: 407).

Watson’s silencing of the events or the erasing of his witnessing of both Fergus and Christie’s deaths do not simply state or cease to state, but actually perform. His speech reproduces his bodily reaction after Christie’s suicide: “He took off his scarf and wiped the handles and steering wheel clean of fingerprints, not sure why he was bothering, except he supposed he didn’t want his memory associated with any of it” (*NTB*, 370). He performs the erasing of any sign that may lead to his presence just as Sylvie’s signs had been erased after the final bullet trick. Cleaning any human sign from a crime scene bodily performs the consequent silencing of those implicated in it. Jane also silences her implication as witness in Anna’s death, but her case is somehow different as she perceives reality in her mother tongue, English, but reality is in a second language to her, German. In his 1972 article, Selinker starts from Weinrich’s notion of “intertextual identification” in cases of bilingualism that points to the identification “of a phoneme in two languages, or that of a grammatical relationship in two languages, or that of a semantic feature in two languages [...] made by the individual in question in a language contact situation” (Selinker, 1972: 211) and such psychological structure is latent in the brain and activated when learning a second language. After her arrival in Berlin, Jane suffers from estrangement after moving, not just to a city, but to a country where she has no family – except for her *lebenspartner* – and does not master its language. However, she ignores the fact that her latent psychological structure is being activated. In her struggles to learn German, she strays in the different interlanguage stages of her Target Language (TL) learning. Selinker explains that the utterances said by a speaker making use of a Second Language are not:

not identical to the hypothesized corresponding set of utterances which would have been produced by a native speaker of the TL had he attempted to express the same meaning as the learner. Since we can observe that these two sets of utterances are not identical, then in the making of constructs relevant to a theory of second-language learning, one would be completely justified in hypothesizing, perhaps even *compelled* to hypothesize, the existence of a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a TL norm. This linguistic system we will call 'interlanguage' (Selinker, 1972: 214).

That is why her perception of the other true German characters is biased, firstly, by her inability to understand them in their mother tongue and, secondly, by the possible misuse of their English, as to them English is not their TL. People tend to mistake her for American in the same fashion as they misunderstand her pregnancy while asking for the child's father, her husband or her sister. However, one of the few words she can say in German is *lebenspartner*, which refers either to the masculine "husband" and the more neutral "spouse" or "life companion." Thus, even though she feels she is clarifying the misunderstanding of her sexual identity, she does not really achieve it. As Khatib and Ghamari remark in their article on the mutual relations between identity and foreign language learning, one of the reasons they offer as to why the identity of a person speaking in their second/foreign language is different from their identity when speaking in their own language is "the student's lack of ability to communicate at the same level as in their first language" (Katib and Ghamari, 2011: 1705). Her experience with German language proves to be quite complicated as she tries hard to use as much German as she can, but she faces the other people's refusal to speak in German, probably because they trust *their* English rather than *her* German, which could be partly understood as speaking with a foreign accent can cause one to stand out, and some people have a difficult time understanding people when they speak "if their accent is quite heavy" (Katib and Ghamari, 2011: 1706). Regardless of the fact Jane's Scottish accent in her German could be quite heavy, it is also true that the fact everybody addresses her in English implies in her German addressees an image of themselves as linguistically superior to her. When she first meets Father Walter, he asks her "*Hallo, kann ich Ihnen helfen?*" (TGOTS, 40), she answers:

'Nein, danke'

'Are you okay?'

How would she ever learn German when everyone answered her in English (TGOTS, 41).

Father Walter does not only ignore her attempts to speak his mother tongue, he also mistakes her for a prostitute looking for shelter in the *kirke*. It proves evident that Jane feels estranged from society to whom she is an Other. However, her perception of the events taking place there, such as Alban and Anna's relationship, poses an uneasy feeling in those who take part of the We as a group. It is as if the main character in Lovecraft's "The Shadow Over Innsmouth" acknowledged the inhabitants of Innsmouth's Otherness but, instead of changing his understanding of reality, he would transform the Others' self-perception. In his article on Speech Act theory and Ortega y Gasset, García Agustín points out that each language silences some things, as language selects what it wants to say and what it wants to silence. Thus, a difference between languages is established and it will influence in the problem of translation and in each speaker, as, he quotes Ortega y Gasset, it is already imposed by certain set of categories, of mental routes (García Agustín, 2000: 73-74, my translation⁹³). Father Walter changes his mind with regard to Jane when he realizes he was wrong about Anna's age. He thinks she is about to turn eighteen, but she is actually thirteen. Jane corrects the priest and states that "you are mistaken, Father Walter. Dr Mann told me her age himself, and in that at least I believe him" (*TGOTS*, 226). This realization of the truth about Anna makes a change in him and this leads to his suicide – or murder.

The use of Latin, according to González-Rivas and García Jurado, was common in the first Gothic novels as it symbolizes "the fight between paganism and Christianity" on the one hand, but it was also "the language of terror, of the Inquisition, of Maria Tudor, and of so many other people and institutions with horrific connotations in the collective mind of the English people" (González-Rivas and García Jurado, 2008: 3). However, to Jane, it is German what implies a first contact with the abject, a fear of the outside but also of the inside, as when she overhears Petra's conversation with Dr Alban, their neighbour. Even though Jane is adamant that he is abusing his daughter, she feels that her *lebenspartner* does not believe her. "Jane had expected stiff formality, perhaps even anger, but Petra's tone were light and relaxed; Mann's calm. She tried to make out what they were saying, but they were

⁹³ In the original: "Así, cada idioma silencia unas cosas, ya que la lengua selecciona lo que quiere decir y lo que quiere silenciar. Se establece de este modo una diferencia entre las lenguas que influirá en el problema de la traducción y también en cada hablante, ya que le viene impuesto 'un determinado cuadro de categorías, de rutas mentales'" (García Agustín, 2000: 73-74).

talking faster than her *Teach Yourself German* CDs and she could only catch disconnected words: *schwanger ... überreizt*. It was hopeless. She heard them laughing together” (*TGOTS*, 103). German is still alien to her: she feels threatened by it, as she cannot fully understand what is said around her, but she needs to learn it in order to survive in Berlin; even more when their baby is to be born and raised there. She is aware that “since there is no subject *outside* language, since language is what constitutes the subject through and through, the separation of languages is a permanent grief” (Barthes, 1989: 101, italics in the original). This grief widens when she feels betrayed by the translation she is given of the events. In her decoding attempts, she makes use of her extra-linguistic knowledge to decipher what she hears. Despite Petra’s version of her conversation with Dr Alban, she lies in bed “wondering at her own suspicion that Petra had lied, and that she and Alban had been laughing together, at her” (*TGOTS*, 104). The English version she is given of an originally German conversation does not convince her in the same manner as she does not believe the versions of what is happening at Dr Alban’s flat, though they all seem plausible. When Petra travels to Vienna and leaves her alone in her last weeks of pregnancy, she decides to face the abjection she feels with the alien language as well, as even she can acknowledge its performative powers. Annoyed by Anna’s insidious remark that Jane might have a lover, Jane leaves her flat and “she saw the red gloss splashed across the doormat. Jane stared at it, knowing it wasn’t blood, but unsure of what it was. It was only when she looked up and saw the words ‘LESBEN RAUS!’⁹⁴, daubed in large clumsy letters across their front door, that she realised it was paint” (*TGOTS*, 151). She will later learn that the author of such a painting was Herr Becker, but in that very moment, she is facing the performative force of an insult in German. Butler notes that if “performatives cannot always be retethered to their moment of utterances [...] they carry the mnemonic trace of the body in the force that they exercise” (Butler, 1997: 159). The painting on her door carries the trace of Herr Becker’s body, as he was physically there painting the threatening words, and it also marks Jane and Petra’s bodies, as they are read as “LESBEN.”

In order to confront the abject language, she decides to take up her German lessons with the CD again, as she has both motivation and time, as she is on her own with her unborn baby. The problem with CDs is that there is no real interaction in her

⁹⁴ *Raus* is the German word for “out.”

pronunciation lessons and she just repeats the words and mimics a German intonation. However, on this specific occasion, she performs an act of self-identity in the abject language.

Wie heißen Sie bitte?
‘Wie heißen Sie bitte?’
Brigitte Hoffman.
Jane Logan (*TGOTS*, 142).

For once she is not just repeating some words but she is inserting herself into the new language, she is appropriating the abject discourse. This appropriation process is slow but continuous: on her last visit to Father Walter a woman addresses her in German. Jane does not understand all she is saying so she asks for her to repeat. “The woman repeated what she had said, stabbing her index finger impatiently back towards the church. ‘*Danke*’” (*TGOTS*, 217). Her learning German resembles a process of possession in which she is becoming more and more imbued with it up to the point of casting doubts on any non-German version. When two American tourists recount Father Walter’s death to her, she asks them if they are sure. She recounts such uncertainty about the tourists’ version to Alban as “it was just something someone said, a tourist” (*TGOTS*, 246). Kristeva explains that the abject “is simply a frontier, a repulsive gift that the Other, having become *alter ego*, drops so that ‘I’ does not disappear in it but finds, in that sublime alienation, a forfeited existence” (Kristeva, 1982: 9). In her interlanguage appropriation of the abject language, she identifies in the Other as a herself and categorizes those similar to her as Others to herself. She is a victim of the abject German language, but as Kristeva points out, “one thus understands why so many victims of the abject are its fascinated victims – if not its submissive and willing ones” (Kristeva, 1982: 9).

The traumatic experience of Alban’s murder attempt and Anna and Alban’s subsequent deaths provide her with more knowledge about her surrounding reality than she had before. Now she can understand German people in German, as “hospital and police-station visits had given Jane a crash-language course and it was her secret that now she could understand most of what they said” (*TGOTS*, 274). The process of appropriating the abject is completed and German forms an integral part of her. However, she would rather remain an alien to the society around her; they ignore that, as Selinker described, learners of a Target Language develop a series of strategies. As he explains:

It cannot be doubted that various internal strategies on the part of the second-language learner affect to a large extent the surface structures of sentences underlying IL utterances. But exactly what these strategies might be and how they might work is at present pure conjecture. Thus, one can only roughly attribute the source of the examples presented herein to one or another strategy (Selinker, 1972: 219).

Amongst the strategies that he describes, he mentions the oversimplification of the Target Language. Jane actually makes use of it, gothicising it and taking it to the extreme, when she wants to play ignorant when it suits her, faking her own involvement in the surrounding reality, just as she did with Anna's death. Even though she was a witness to how she died accidentally, Jane's version to the police omits this fact and she becomes thus a victim that ignores that Anna is dead. Her Scottishness helps her feign an inability to fully understand the truth just as everybody believes that her lack of command in the German language disables her understanding of what is said. However, she has mutated into a new being: she is not the pregnant Jane who came to Berlin, but the mother of a German child. And as an adult who has achieved native-speaker competence, she "has not been taught this performance through 'explanation and instruction' but ha[s] somehow reactivated this latent language structure" (Selinker, 1972: 230). Furthermore, she is willing to hide her command on the Target Language from all the people who did not believe her interlanguage version of what was happening at the Albans' flat. If they do not trust her language, her capacity to express in words what she is observing and her interpretation of events, they should remain ignorant of her achievements; all but her baby Boy, the only one who had stood by her and given her strength. In her acknowledgements, Louise Welsh, as opposed to her character, thanks Gisela Moon for her help with the translations into German and she herself acknowledges that "any clumsiness or errors in the language, which I have been told I speak with the expertise, but not the charm, of Sally Bowles, are down on me" (*TGOTS*, 279). The irony in her remark is that both the literary and the cinematographic Sally Bowles⁹⁵, as well as the Jane Ross, by whom Isherwood was inspired for his character, were not speakers of German as a First Language, but speaker of their own interlanguage.

Language, regardless of whether it is a First Language or a Target Language, poses some complications in the understanding of the events both on the part of the

⁹⁵ Sally Bowles is the main character in Christopher Isherwood's novella *Sally Bowles* (1937) and Bob Fosse's film *Cabaret* (1972).

characters and the reader. Barthes claims that “the pure ‘representation’ of the ‘real,’ the naked relation of ‘what is’ (or has been) thus appears as a resistance to meaning; this resistance confirms the great mythic opposition of the *true-to-life* (the lifelike) and the *intelligible*” (Barthes, 1989: 146, italics in the original). What exists, what is real, as has been shown above, does not necessarily coincide with what is being told, as neither being ‘real’ and being ‘told’ are in themselves reliable categories. Barthes continues his reasoning by stating that “all this shows that the ‘real’ is supposed to be self-sufficient, that it is strong enough to belie any notion of ‘function,’ that its ‘speech-act’ has no need to be integrated into a structure and that the *having-been-there* of things is a sufficient principle of speech” (Barthes, 1989: 147, italics in the original). However, it is the act of being told and expressed by means of language that it becomes fully real, no matter how unreliable its account is. As in the case of Welsh’s characters analysed in this section, their own accounts of the ‘real’ become more real to the other characters than reality itself.

The route through this labyrinthine language, in which literature – and its intertextuality – exists and becomes more troublesome, is complicated further when considering the different signs that constitute it. In “Style and Image,” Barthes wrecks the binary oppositions that define the text and the sign as twofold structured:

let us take first the opposition of Content and Form, of Signified and Signifier. [...] We can no longer *see* the text as the binary structure of a content and a form; the text is not double, but multiple; in the text, there are only forms, or, more precisely, the text in its totality is only a multiplicity of forms – without (a) content (Barthes, 1989: 93).

The following section analyses the nature of signs in the novels that are object of analysis in this research and delves even further into Welsh’s labyrinthine constructions, even at risk of straying oneself forever.

5.2. Intertexting signs

In his analysis on the role of intertextuality within Discourse Analysis studies, García Agustín notes that the references to other discourses or texts do not run out at the linguistic or textual level, but they are a staging of the social antagonisms, a reflection of the struggle for the sign. This struggle originates because the sign

represents different points of view and social values (García Agustín, 2010: 164-165, my translation⁹⁶). In this struggle for the sign, what is at stake is the appropriation of the real as, as Barthes claims, “there is no object which escapes meaning” (Barthes, 1994: 182). The object, thus, becomes another sign and, as such, is at the intersection of two coordinates: the symbolic and the taxonomic, which he describes as follows:

The first of the coordinates is what I should call a symbolic one: every object has, so to speak, a metaphorical depth, it refers to the *signified*; the object always has at least one signified. [...] The second coordinate of classification, or the taxonomic coordinate (taxonomy is the science of classification); we do not live without having within ourselves, more or less consciously, a certain classification of objects, which is imposed upon us or suggested by our society (Barthes, 1994: 183-184).

In the act of naming people, humans are turned into objects themselves, as it is also possible to find the intersection of these two coordinates in their bodies. In the names we all bear there is a sign that symbolically refers to a signified, a self that is, in turn, multiple as it is an intersection of multiple subjectivities. As Romero explains with the case of sexuality, it is not a separate, exclusive and excluding element that ignores other aspects that interspersedly conform the spaces of possibility for that specific sexuality. Aspects, such as gender position and identity and the extent to which it corresponds, or not, with the normative order, class, the possession – or lack – of the citizen status, the ethnic or racial position, if our “capacities” correspond – or not – with that we understand as “enabling,” amongst others (Romero, 2012: 9-10, my translation⁹⁷). Names do also classify people, as they categorize them into different social groups that range from the private realm of their family to their social or national background. Despite the fact that they, originally, do not designate a specific referent, as in the case of Lunan’s written list of names, they end up becoming the referent to the bodies that bear them. Butler notes the significance of that fact that names “are derived from the *paternal* dispensation of its own name, and the

⁹⁶ In the original: “Las referencias a otros discursos o textos no se agotan en el plano lingüístico o textual, sino que son una escenificación de los antagonismos sociales, reflejo de la lucha por el signo. Esta lucha se origina porque el signo representa diversos puntos de vista y valores sociales” García Agustín, 2010: 164-165).

⁹⁷ In the original: “Estos textos consideran la sexualidad como elemento separado, exclusivo y excluyente que ignora otros aspectos que entreveradamente conforman los espacios de posibilidad de esa sexualidad concreta. Aspectos como son la posición e identidad de género y hasta qué punto se corresponde, o no con el orden normativo, la clase, la posesión o no de estatus de ciudadanía, la posición étnica o racial, si nuestras ‘capacidades’ se corresponden o no con aquello que entendemos como ‘habilitante’, entre otras” (Romero, 2012: 9-10).

performative power of the paternal signifier to “name” is derived from the function of the patronym” (Butler, 1993a: 210, italics in the original).

In this research, there has been some emphasis placed on the non-randomness of the choice of names in the characters because of their intertextual references, as in the cases of Rilke, Watson, William. Furthermore, in the case of characters naming other characters, their choice is also intentional. In the case of nicknames, such as Bobby Robb’s, they objectify him by focussing on a specific characteristic. He is Crippen because of his abuse of drugs, but when social services only perceive in him the fear of the unknown, he becomes Crowley. The two babies in the story are also intentionally given names by other characters. In the case of Miranda, Christie’s buried child in *Naming the Bones*, it has been previously mentioned that, on the island of Lismore, Christie becomes a female version of Shakespeare’s Prospero; consequently, her daughter Miranda has to remain on the island, though in her specific case in its most literal and gothic meaning, as she is buried there. Petra and Jane’s child, Boy is named and read of as a boy since the moment he is born, as explained in section 4. However, names do play another key role in the case of Welsh’s novels, as they reinforce the labyrinthine character of her literary world. Citing the example of Bobby Robb in *Naming the Bones*, he is referred to as Bobby, Robb, Bobby Robb, Crippen and Crowley, depending on who is talking about him. In a sense, this exemplifies how characters do only possess a limited vision of Bobby Robb’s personality, but it also proves misleading when readers want to know who is who in the novels. Even in the case of Christopher Marlowe, who should be known by potential readers as they may have even read or watched his plays, this labyrinthine construction based on names is present. When he presents himself to his future readers, he explains that “My name is Christopher Marlowe, also known as Marle, Morley, Marly, known as Kit, know as Xtopher, son of a Canterbury cobbler” (*TMD*, 2). Rilke also introduces himself in a similar fashion, as he explains that “they call me Rilke to my face, behind my back the Cadaver, Corpse, Walking Dead” (*TCR*, 2). In *The Bullet Trick*, Lawson notes that “names also shift subtly, to keep the reader’s attention: as well as William, also called Will, there is a Bill, who isn’t either of the previous” (Lawson, 2006). Rather than keeping the reader’s attention, it does actually stray readers just as much as character themselves. This is probably why even James/Montgomery/Monty/the Magician, who knows the truth about Gloria Noon’s death, misnames his own wife when she appears after he has confessed the truth to

William Wilson. Sheila Noon has heard the whole story and, for the first time since Gloria's disappearance, she can state: "How could I be Gloria? Gloria's dead" (*TBT*, 341). Doctor Watson, in *Naming the Bones*, is actually Murray Watson. He is referred to by his surname on many an occasion but, curiously enough, Jack, his brother, is never referred to as either Watson nor Jack Watson. It seems one can only be Watson if one is a doctor: otherwise, the ghostly intertextual reference vanishes. In *The Girl on the Stairs*, the proper names the word "father" refer to become tangling, as they refer to Alban Mann, to Father Walter or Father Engler, all of them voluntarily helping the prostitutes in the area with their problems, either physical or spiritual. The Beckers are Herr and Frau Becker to the inhabitants in the house except themselves. They call each other by their proper names: Ulrich and Heike. By inserting herself into their personal story in the house and their implication in Greta's death, Jane eventually refers to Frau Becker by her proper name. As she tells her Boy, "we'll go and visit Heike this week. She loves seeing you" (*TGOTS*, 277).

Signs do not only name characters, but they are also used to classify, or even to stigmatize, characters. In the abovementioned conversation at his agent's office, the man who has mistaken William for a comedian tells William as he is leaving: "Never mind, dear, we all have our dry spells" (*TBT*, 6). He looks for William's complicity by using the word "spells," which falls within the realm of William's job, but it is also read under the expression "dry spells." According to <http://dictionary.reference.com>, it signifies either "a prolonged period of dry weather" or "a period of little or no productivity or activity, low income, etc." (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014). It might be read under the last entry, as William is visiting his agent expecting to be offered a job. On the other hand, "dry spell" points out to another signified. According to www.urbandictionary.com, it refers to "a time in a man's life in which he goes without getting laid for a really long time because he's just that unlucky. Usually happens between girlfriends and lasts from 6 months- X-amount of years..." (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014). William understands the man's remark under this latter meaning and, also playing with words under the category of magic, he tells his agent that "Nobody loves a fairy when they're forty" (*TBT*, 6). "Fairy," according to <http://oxforddictionaries.com> refers to "a small imaginary being of human form that has magical powers, especially a female one" or, in its informal and derogatory use, it is used to categorize "a male homosexual" (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014). William reads the man as a homosexual man and as an abject, as he is a fairy,

but, altogether, William assumes and internalizes the stigmatization of gay men of a certain age within gay culture. By despising the man as a “fairy”, as opposed to the use of “gay” or “homosexual,” and as old, as he is forty, William exercises some power which is not simply that of his magic powers: he is exerting his own power as a heterosexual, young man and, as such, his words speak of his own heterosexual identity, which otherwise is read as unmarked. Words are not isolated entities but, as Cameron and Kulick state, “it is in *discourse* – the use of language in specific contexts – that words acquire meaning. Whenever people argue about words, they are also arguing about the assumptions and values that have clustered around those words in the course of their history of being used” (Cameron and Kulick, 2003: 29, italics in the original). It is precisely within discourse that William locates his own male heterosexuality as the unmarked, prevailing gender. In Berlin, he and Sylvie are at a traffic light. When he is about to cross the street while the traffic light is still red, Sylvie stops him and he excuses himself: “Sorry. [...] Where I come from traffic lights are for the aged, the infirm and the homosexuals” (*TBT*, 104). In his flirting with Sylvie, he is not only positioning himself as a young, intelligent, heterosexual man, but he is also pairing homosexuality with other human beings he despises, as if the three terms were synonyms in themselves as well as exclusive. Besides, he somehow inserts his “amusing” remark within the still widespread theory that homosexuality can be cured as it is simply an illness or a behavioural conduct. In his blog entitled “Behaviourism and Mental Health. An Alternative Perspective on Mental Disorders,” Hickey explains the reason why homosexuality is no longer considered as a mental illness since 1974. As he explains:

What’s noteworthy about this is that the removal of homosexuality from the list of mental illnesses was not triggered by some scientific breakthrough. There was no new fact or set of facts that stimulated this major change. Rather, it was the simple reality that gay people started to kick up a fuss. They gained a voice and began to make themselves heard. And the APA [American Psychiatric Association] reacted with truly astonishing speed. And with good reason. They realized intuitively that a protracted battle would have drawn increasing attention to the spurious nature of their entire taxonomy. So they quickly “cut loose” the gay community and forestalled any radical scrutiny of the DSM system generally (Hickey, 2011).

As he further argues, homosexuality shifted from its status as a mental illness by just one vote, despite the fact that, according to him, homosexuality fulfils the criterion to be considered a mental illness by the APA, as it is “a clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or pattern that occurs in an individual and that

is associated with present distress [...] or disability [...] or with a significantly increased risk of suffering death, pain, disability or an important loss of freedom.” (quoted in Hickey, 2011). William’s remark proves that, to some, the term “homosexuality” still stands for a mental illness, despite the democratic, but unscientific decision of the APA. Besides, Sylvie will prove that he may be young and straight, but he is not, by far, as intelligent as he considers himself.

In Berlin, William makes use of his command of the English language to insult those he feels offended or threatened by, though disguising it with double meanings. When the doorman at the cabaret does not recognize him as one of the performers but he recognizes Ulla, William feels half embarrassed, half upset for the situation and, as he cannot confront the doorman, he plays one of his word tricks on Ulla. To her question to check if he had everything he needed, he answers: “more or less, but I could do with an intro to your chippy” (*TBT*, 143), to which Ulla reacts with the same confusion he felt some minutes before when the doorman did not recognize him. He explains that chippy is “the theatre joiner, carpenter, the man who makes sets” (*TBT*, 143), but Ulla is right when feeling bewildered at the specific use of such a word. “Chippy” is also a slang word for “a promiscuous woman” or “a prostitute,” according to <http://dictionary.reference.com>. And it could also be added that it is so according to William, who mutters when Ulla greets Kolja “Big poof” (*TBT*, 143) and, as there is no possibility of masking the offensive nature of the word, simply explains he said “nothing” (*TBT*, 143). His heterosexist insults perform what Butler labels as the citational character of speech, and, to her, insults “names, injurious names have a history, and at the moment of an utterance, historicity is invoked and reconsolidated” (Turanli, 2009: 413). By invoking such historicity, they are inserted within discourse and assumed by people such as William. Sylvie questions discourse itself when William hits Kolja after William and Ulla find her giving him oral sex. Ulla calls Sylvie “whore” and Koljia explains that what they were doing “was nothing. It meant nothing, like a drink or a cigarette” (*TBT*, 241). William, who has used the citational character of insults with both Ulla and Koljia, feels a sudden rush to defend the two women’s honour, as men do: with his fists. However, rather than being complimented by the women he is protecting, Sylvie asks him: “What’s so terrible about being called a whore?” (*TBT*, 243). She frees the sign “whore” from its citational character and, thus, deprives it from the force that, according to Butler, it is given by sedimentation and repetition. William, on the other

hand, reinforces the citational character of the sign by overreacting. Barthes stated that “meaning is always a phenomenon of culture, a product of culture” (Barthes, 1994: 190). Therefore, if there is a change in culture, meanings can change and this change cannot occur by using one’s fists. In *The Girl on the Stairs*, Jane learns that there are voices through the wall that come from her neighbours’ flat. In one of her first nights in her new home, she overhears some voices in German and, despite her lack of command of the language, she is able to interpret the intonation with which sentences are stated: “she could hear anger in the gunfire delivery” (*TGOTS*, 7). She stands in silence listening to the voices and trying to make out what is happening behind the wall when she gets an uneasy feeling: “It was as if whoever was on the other side sensed her listening, and pressed their mouth against the wall, because suddenly, loud in her ear, a voice screamed ‘*Hure!*’- whore. And a second, higher voice started to laugh” (*TGOTS*, 7). Jane, as opposed to Sylvie, does not question the citational character of the insult but assumes it as hers, no matter how impossible it may prove to be the real addressee of the signifier “*hure*,” which is, besides, in an alien language to her. This is not the only situation in which a wall mediates, both physical – an actual wall – and linguistic – German – between her and her neighbours. She also overhears some shouting at the hallway of the building where she is living and she recognizes Alban’s and his daughter’s voices, which are difficult for her to understand as there is a door between them and they are talking in German. That is the reason why she only knows that there was “a male voice incoherent with anger” (*TGOTS*, 36) and then “Anna’s voice, soft and slightly pleading” (*TGOTS*, 36). Jane suspects something odd is happening between father and daughter and, therefore, wants to actually hear the young girl say that they are having a common father-to-daughter argument. This time the extralinguistic knowledge she makes use of to understand their conversation is a bruise on Anna’s face that Jane attributes to physical abuse by her father, even though Jane herself has another similar bruise due to an accident in her home. In the casual meeting at the underground station, Jane feels Anna needs to be rescued from the gang of people who are with her. However, Anna not only refuses to go with her but she states her intention to stay with her friends and shouts that “my father is a *Whoremeister*” (*TGOTS*, 98). The hybrid word “whoremeister,” according to www.urbandictionary.com, refers to “a pimp, an irresponsible ladies man, or any other form of related low-life who pockets his coin off of live female flesh. Etymology: coined usage, from ‘Whore’ for prostitute and

‘Meister,’ German for ‘Master’” (Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014). Jane focuses on the *meister* that relates to the *hure* she heard before and fails to read the sign in its more literal meaning: Doctor Alban Mann was actually married to Greta, a former prostitute who was, in turn, his client.

In *Naming the Bones*, after their first conversation at the library, Murray Watson meets George Meikle in a café so that he can tell him more personal details about Archie Lunan, as they used to be friends. George tells him of the infatuation Archie felt for Bobby, to which Watson cannot help asking him if he means Archie had homosexual tendencies. The bookfinder’s answer is as follows:

If you’d asked me then, about Archie maybe being gay, I would have called you a poof for thinking it. But looking back, I don’t know. I don’t think so. He never tried anything on with me, but who can say? I guess Archie was the kind of guy that would try anything once, twice if he liked it (*NTB*, 164).

As explained above, meaning as a phenomenon of culture changes throughout time, but it is also the case that signs also change. As Cameron and Kulick claim, “the ‘reality’ of sex does not pre-exist the language in which it is expressed; rather, language *produces* the categories through which we organize our sexual desires, identities and practices” (Cameron and Kulick, 2003: 19, italics in the original). In the conversation exchange between Murray and George, they make use of three terms to relate to the same category of people: “homosexual,” “poof” and “gay.” The most apparent change in signs is George, who acknowledges how his own attitude towards homosexuality has changed from “poof” to “gay.” Murray, instead, makes use of the word “homosexual tendencies” as he cannot believe Lunan was actually gay, though he suspected that in the library when he was studying Lunan’s notes. In one of the papers, he reads a sentence, that he does not know was written by Christie, stating that “I love you and she will love you too” (*NTB*, 22), to which Lunan adds “She loves me! But how can she be so sure that my new love will be a she?” (*NTB*, 22). In that moment, Murray assumes he may have either experimented with sex or have drunk so much that he invariably ended up in someone’s bed, no matter whether they were men or women. However, George’s remark confirms Watson’s suspicions that Lunan was not actually heterosexual. Cameron and Kulick explain that the choice of the terms “homosexual” or “gay” have several implications regardless the fact that they both refer to the same meaning depending on their usage. Quoting their words:

the selection of one or the other can signify the difference between conceptualizing homosexuality as deviance or sickness, and conceptualizing it in other and more positive ways: as an alternative personal and/or political choice, for instance, or simply as one 'natural' variant of human sexuality, less common than heterosexuality but not by that token deserving condemnation. It can also be used by insiders to differentiate between those individuals who are 'out' and those who remain 'closeted' – the latter are 'homosexual' rather than 'gay' because 'gay' connotes a self-ascribed sexual identity, and closeted individuals deny their homosexuality (Cameron and Kulick, 2003: 27).

In his identification with Lunan, Murray is going to discover that he must also adapt his understanding of identities and desires. When he meets Christie so that she tells him everything she knows about Lunan, he explains that "I'd also be very keen to see any other notes, letters or memorabilia you have relating to Archie" (*NTB*, 330). The fact that he addresses Lunan by his first name surprises Christie so much that she feels the urge to ask him: "But you're in love with him?" (*NTB*, 330). In his identification with his object of study, he even acquires the sexual indeterminacy that Archie showed in his writings and behaviour. He realizes that Lunan was better read as "maybe being gay," rather than as having homosexual tendencies.

It has been proved, the labyrinthine nature of words and how they are read opens up new bifurcations rather than leading to an ultimate meaning. The choice of words and the way they are read do have linguistic signs. But not only words matter. In his research, Watson misses photographs of Lunan as he assumes that, by seeing photos of his research object, he would get the full picture of his life. That is why in his conversation with Christie, he says: "You mentioned photographs. [...] I'd appreciate the opportunity to go through them" (*NTB*, 330). In his photographs, he expects to meet the real Archie Lunan, as photography is "too honest a medium for recording superficial aspects of a subject. It searches out the actor behind the make-up and exposes the contrived, the trivial, the artificial, for what they really are" (Weston, 2003: 107). The question is: are photographs that real?

5.3. Intertexting photography

In Welsh's novels, there are signs that are not simply words but also references to photographs and images. At the beginning of this section, reference was made to the importance of the envelopes that Marlowe receives in *Tamburlaine Must*

Die, all of which contain coloured pieces of cloth which, except for the last, have no words on them. These objects are not, obviously, photographs, as it would be anachronistic to state that there were photographs in Elizabethan England, but they function as photographs in the sense that, as Burgin notes:

photographs are *texts* inscribed in terms of what we may call ‘photographic discourse,’ but this discourse, like any other, engages discourse beyond itself, the ‘photographic text’, like any other, is the site of a complex ‘intertextuality’, an overlapping series of previous texts ‘taken for granted’ at a particular cultural and historical conjuncture. These prior texts, those *presupposed* by the photograph, are autonomous; they serve a role in the actual text but do not appear in it, they are latent to the manifest text and may only be read across it ‘symptomatically’ (Burgin, 2003: 131).

The pieces of cloth intertextually relate to the only play by Marlowe that had become a written text while he was alive. In Dee’s deal to save Raleigh’s life in exchange for Marlowe’s immortality, he states that “you may escape your other enemies and Raleigh offers you a considerable thing, the survival of your work. How many great works have died with their author? Of your plays only Tamburlaine is printed in ink” (*TMD*, 123). By relating intertextually to this previous text, the letters become “images” of warning and death and these pieces of cloth become anachronical Elizabethan photographs in the same manner as those photos Watson in *Naming the Bones* receives in an email: “he moved the cursor to the virtual paperclip, ready to click open the attachment, but then the photographs started to slowly unveil themselves without any help” (*NTB*, 259). In her general introduction to *The Photography Reader*, Liz Wells provides a key to understand the importance of photography in general. According to her, it is “a particular sort of image, one which operates through freezing a moment in time, portraying objects, people and places as they appeared within the view of the camera at that moment” (Wells, 2003: 1). However, this portrayal is not as objective as it may apparently seem, as it has contributed to “the dislocation of time and space, enlightening and enlivening history and geography” (Wells, 2003: 1). This reading of the reality portrayed in a photograph does not differ much from the perception of the world that Louise Welsh portrays in her novels. Actually, Louise Welsh herself admits the fascination that photography exercises over her. This fascination arises from the fact that, in them, “the viewer sees a frozen moment, the corner of a room, a smile long dead. Photographs tantalise. We know what they show and yet we cannot trust what we

see.⁹⁸” Welsh, as a photographic literate, using Moholy-Nagy’s term, is well aware of the apparent objectivity in the portrayal of reality by Photography. As in Todorov’s definition of the supernatural in literature, which requires a suspension of belief on the part of the reader and the character, photography requires the photographer’s and the viewer’s belief in the fact that “the photograph could not lie. [...] Thus he was likely to claim that what our eyes saw was an illusion and what the camera saw was the truth” (Szarkowski, 2003: 99). However, the photographer knows for sure, and many of those photographic literate viewers too, that “the factuality of his pictures, no matter how convincing and unarguable, was a different thing than the reality itself” (Szarkowski, 2003: 99). The eye is betrayed by the image, in spite of the fact that it seems more real than words and language. If the use of dark, rose-coloured glasses in this research has shown that reality is multi-layered and cannot be read in a single way, the photographs that portray such reality must, therefore, reflect such multiplicity in reality; or even multiply it further in the mirror game of the lens.

Kuhn explains that photographs are, indeed, evidence, and this becomes misleading to most of the characters in Welsh’s novels that confront the photographs: they are the evidence to something else, despite their apparent objectivity to what they represent. According to Kuhn:

a photograph can be material for interpretation – evidence, in that sense: to be solved, like a riddle; read and decoded, like clues left behind at the scene of a crime. Evidence of this sort, though, can conceal, even as it purports to reveal what it is evidence of (Kuhn, 2002: 13).

Rilke, Watson, William and Jane watch the photographs and question what they are evidence of, no matter how obvious the interpretation may seem: they feel they need to go further into the photograph and discover what the faces portrayed in them actually point to. Photographs are not as reliable as they may seem, and one of the reasons why they cannot be trusted is because, despite their apparent portrayal of the complete reality surrounding the photographer when taking the photo, their scope is limited. Silverman claims that there exists a “180° rule, which dictates that the camera [does] not cover more than 180° in a single shot. This stricture means that the camera always leaves unexplored the other 180° of an implicit circle – the half of the circle which it in fact occupies” (Silverman, 2000: 77). When the viewer of the photograph becomes aware of such a framing in the photograph, they question the

⁹⁸ In www.louisewelsh.com

photograph itself, as they read it as a sign that, as in the relation of signifiers and signifieds in words, is also arbitrary. They realize, then, that, on the one hand, the camera is not an aseptic, objective witness of reality, as it “is hiding things” (Dayan, 1974: 29). On the other hand, they realize that what they took as the real space where the photograph was taken was not such as their “possession of space was only partial, illusory. He feels dispossessed of what he is prevented from seeing. He discovers that he is only authorized to see what happens to be in the axis of the gaze of another spectator, who is ghostly or absent” (Dayan, 1974: 29). In the photo that William steals from Montgomery in *The Bullet Trick*, there are two ghostly presences: Gloria’s buried body, as “there was no blood, no violence, no murdered corpse or bruised face, but there was something horrid about the image that forced my eyes to stay on it” (*TBT*, 99) and the photographer’s, who took the image of “two young men [that] stood grim-faced and weary at the edge of a lake” (*TBT*, 99) and disappeared in their anonymity. Morris states that “the loss of the photographer often proves to be a gain. We see only the photograph. The existence of the visible world is affirmed, and that affirmation is sufficient” (Morris, 2003: 71). The photographer may be lost, but the observers of the photographs can only see what has been framed. Furthermore, by framing the two men and the lake, the photographer consciously hides themselves in their half of the circle and becomes invisible so that none of the characters in the novel feel it awkward that there should be another accomplice that helped them stage their bond. In her *Frames of War*, Butler also points out the importance of framing in the composition of photographs to include and exclude those who are to be read (Butler, 2009: 26). Butler, however, misses a point when focussing on what is left outside the frame and that is the relevance of what is actually framed in the picture. The staged and performative character of photography implies that by depicting certain elements in a photograph, in this particular case Anderson, Bill and the lake, the ghostly photographer is establishing a relationship between them, which is actually what William perceives and haunts him. Szarkowski explains that the subject of photography becomes something else and, rather than being limited by the frame, expands.

If the photographer’s frame surrounded two figures, isolating them from the crowd in which they stood, it created a relationship between those two figures that had not existed before. The central act of photography, the act of choosing and eliminating, forces a concentration on the picture edge – the line that separates in from out – and on the shapes that are created by it (Szarkowski, 2003: 100).

In the act of framing the subjects, photographs do not only isolate them from what could be found outside the frame but they also signify what actually surrounds the subjects inside the photograph. That is why William feels such uneasiness in an apparently casual photograph.

Another factor that is key in the act of taking a photograph is light, either natural or artificial. Moholy-Nagy explains how in the first black-and-white photographs, “light and shadow were for the first time fully revealed” (Moholy-Nagy, 2003: 92). It is, however, with the use of artificial illumination that the contrast between light and shadow is gradated and “a greater animation of surfaces, and a more delicate optical intensification” is ensued (Moholy-Nagy, 2003: 92). Welsh depicts in her novels a darkened world where characters have to subtly see beyond the shadows and appreciate the different surfaces that conform their reality. The relationship of photographs with the Gothic is not just limited to the shadows and darkness they sometimes portray. By freezing subjects, places and time, they all become spectres. All the characters that are portrayed photographically, either voluntarily or forced, remain as if they were dead. Barthes explains that photography can be the object of three practices: “to do, to undergo, to look” and, as he develops his idea, that requires three participants:

The *Operator* is the Photographer. The *Spectator* is ourselves, all of us who glance through collections of photographs – in magazines and newspapers, in books, albums, archives... And the person or thing photographed is the target, the referent, a kind of little simulacrum, any *eidolon* emitted by the object, which I should like to call the *Spectrum* of the Photograph, because this word retains, through its root, a relation to ‘spectacle’ and adds to it that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph: the return of the dead (Barthes, 1981: 9).

When William, Rilke and Watson see the photographs, they perceive in those people portrayed their spectral character – and by “their,” it is implied both the spectators’ and the spectre’s. And as such, they haunt them until they manage to release them and they can leave this world, as it has been explained in Section 3 of this research.

Welsh explains that the starting point to her novel *The Cutting Room* was “a collection of anonymous erotic photographs, stranded images taken by anonymous photographers between 1830 and 1960.”⁹⁹ Consequently, throughout the novel,

⁹⁹ In www.louisewelsh.com

photos play a key role: not only are chapters named by reference to photography: “say cheese”, “The Final Frame”, “Camera Club”, “Inside the frame”, the very nature of photography is essential to understanding the development of the plot. The difference between Anne-Marie’s erotic shows and the private show McKindless wants her to perform relates to the kind of camera used. In her shows, she is watched by her brother Chris while men take polaroids of her. The instant results that these men obtain with the photographs are easy to control – the immediacy of the situation leaves no possibility of further editing – and there is no possibility of a reprint. Anne-Marie knows of the unlimited possibilities of editing and reprinting photographs, as, according to Barthes, “what the Photography reproduces to infinity has occurred only once: the Photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially” (Barthes, 1981: 4). Polaroids, in turn, do not require a film and, despite their motto - “Polaroid. Share Life In An Instant,¹⁰⁰” the instantaneous nature of the camera and its camera allows the possibility of sharing one’s life but avoids its mechanical repetition. An instant in one’s life freezes and it cannot be repeated. That is why the audience at The Camera Club can only shoot at what they see but they cannot act on it. In the private show, McKindless wants to have full control of her poses and the actions. Besides, the use of his camera implies the possibility of an unlimited reprinting and perpetuity to evil.

Posing, saying cheese to the camera, shows a will to please the potential watchers regardless of the intention of whoever is taking the photo. Miller explains that, in *The Cutting Room*, “the eye behind the lens is an ‘I’ behind the lens” as “the window that separates self and other, which puts the other ‘under glass,’ finds a parallel in the image of a lens – interposed between ‘I’ and ‘thou’ – which dominates the poetic texture of Welsh’s narrative” (Miller, 2006: 77). That is the case of Sandy, the TV that performs in front of the video camera at The Chelsea Lounge. Whereas Rilke feels that the cameraman “was dangerous. He took people and killed them with a lens” (*TCR*, 114) as it emphasizes Sandy’s masculine features up to the point of turning her into a grotesque character, she was actually feeling, as Rose explains to Rilke, “the centre of attention and loving it. It was probably one of the best nights of her life and you ruined it with your carry-on.” (*TCR*, 117). What Rilke missed is that, as Barthes notes, one performs a photographic self in front of the camera, as:

¹⁰⁰ In www.polaroid.com Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.

once I feel myself observed by the lens, everything changes: I constitute myself in the process of 'posing,' I instantaneously make another body for myself, I transform myself in advance into an image. This transformation is an active one: I feel that the Photograph creates my body or mortifies it, according to its caprice" (Barthes, 1981: 10).

Rilke misses, on the one hand, the performance of a photographic self on the part of the photographed object and, on the other, the fact that, even though it is necessary that someone shoots a photograph, the action verb should not be mistaken for that of shooting a gun. As Sontag remarks, "the camera [...] is not like a gun; it is not like doing people in, but it is a way of bringing something back. It enables you to transform the world, to miniaturize it" (Sontag, 2003: 62). He would have acknowledged the different meaning of the verb "to shoot," had he not been haunted by the spirit of the unknown girl in *Soleil et Désolé*. She did not pose, and neither did the girl in the porn video that Derek shoots for Trapp. As Miller notes, Derek is the "eye" and the "I" behind the lens, as "this cameral subjectivity is neatly articulated by Derek" (Miller, 2006: 77). It seems odd to consider that, in both these cases, there is uncertainty about the real feelings of the girls: it is uncertain whether the photographed girl was actually hurt, and the girl in the film, as Derek recounts, "the whole way through she looked right into the camera, right at me, her eyes staring into mine angry. [...] I felt like I was killing her" (*TCR*, 235). Shooting with a camera becomes as dangerous as shooting with a gun. McGrath points out that "to take a photograph is to exercise an illusory control, a mastery which is characteristic of voyeurism. But the sexual connotations of the verb are also obvious: the slang for carnal knowledge. It implies a physical penetration of the other while the photograph is a penetration of the space of the other" (McGrath, 2003: 330). By shooting the film, Derek feels it was actually him who had penetrated the body of the girl, who had raped her as his gaze through the camera is not simply a passive gazing but an active one as he is pressing the record button and focusing on the girl. The unknown, probably foreign, girl in the film becomes another ghost, non-existent for most of Glaswegian society but for those who watch porn films such as "Real Girls from Glasgow" (*TCR*, 69). Derek shoots for money, fifty pounds, and rather than acting to stop a crime, declines all responsibility as it was his job, and spends the money on drinks at the pub so that he can forget the look of the ghost.

Characters in this novel also have a price: one only needs to name it and “fresh bidder” (*TCR*, 126). Once achieved, there is a thirst for going further. Possessing the snuff photographs was not enough for Roderick McKindless, who needs to orchestrate and perform his own shots and photograph the real death of a young woman. In her contribution to *Poe Alive in the Century of Anxiety*, Piñeiro describes the importance of portraying the dead by means of photography in the culture of the United States. As she explains, this *post-mortem* photography developed the already existing topic of the *memento mori*, which, as she translates, means: “Remember you are mortal, remember you are going to die” (Piñeiro, 2010: 132), and develops a topic which has “antecedents in late Renaissance painting, in the Middle Ages and the genre that was developed to portray the reminder that we are all mortal” (Piñeiro, 2010: 132). However, McKindless does not actually want to photograph a *memento mori*, but to document the process of dissecting a young woman to death. If *post-mortem* photography, as Piñeiro explains, was a kind of reminder of the social anxiety provoked by the death of a young woman (Piñeiro, 2013: 77, my translation¹⁰¹), McKindless does feel the need to trespass the photographic limit of being simply an observer of this type of photographs. Voyeuristic pleasure, thus, does not suffice and he feels an urge to participate in the sadistic dismembering of a beautiful girl – and to photograph both the act and the girl so that proof of his achievement remains. He even takes it further than the original photos: there will not be any doubt that his photos will show a real death. His plan does not acknowledge a key element in his staging: his victim is Anne-Marie, not an unknown, nameless body. Therefore, it is doomed to fail from the beginning. Anne-Marie defends herself in a way that the unknown girl could not and, thus, her events set in motion the girl’s still images. These constituted a photographic series that McKindless himself aimed at completing by shooting Anne-Marie’s cut body. In his attempt to complete the series, McKindless does not read the photographs isolatedly but as part of a whole into which he inscribes himself. As Moholy-Nagy explains:

The series is no longer a ‘picture,’ and none of the canons of pictorial aesthetics can be applied to it. Here the separate picture loses its identity as such and becomes a detail of assembly, an essential structural element of the whole which is the thing itself. In this concatenation of its separate but inseparable parts a photographic series inspired by a definite purpose can become at once the most potent weapon and the

¹⁰¹ In the original: “Estas manifestaciones artísticas son una suerte de recordatorio de la ansiedad social que provocaba la muerte de la mujer a muy temprana edad” (Piñeiro Gil, 2013: 77).

tenderest lyric. [...] The prerequisite for this revelation is, of course, the realization that a knowledge of photography is just as important as that of the alphabet. The illiterate of the future will be ignorant of the use of camera and pen alike (Moholy-Nagy, 2003: 95).

McKindless is a photographic-literate, as well as Rilke, and that is why both of them become obsessed with the photographic series, though their effect on them is radically different: whereas McKindless feels the series needs completion, Rilke feels the series should never have existed and should never be deployed again. The novel does not resemble either one of those horror films shot by Derek that require special effects and make-up. It is an edited, animated version of a collection of photos, a modern version of a kinoscopic moving picture, though a tricky one too: editing implies choosing and arranging material to create a coherent whole. As Silverman explains:

Equally important to the cinematic organization are the operations of cutting and excluding. It is not merely that the camera is incapable of showing us everything at once, but that it does not wish to do so. We must be shown only enough to know that there is more, and to want that 'more' to be disclosed. A prime agency of disclosure is the cut, which divides one shot from the next. The cut guarantees that both the preceding and the subsequent shots will function as structuring absences to the present shot. These absences make possible a signifying ensemble, convert one shot into a signifier of the next one, and the signified of the preceding one (Silverman, 2000: 80).

And there is many a cut in the story, once again, as in the case of "to shoot" a signifier whose signifieds are intertwined in the plot. Therefore, the cutting room, read as "a room in a film studio where film is cut and edited," according to the Oxford Dictionary, a room where all these isolated photographs, all the isolated and apparently unconnected events become a coherent whole is not other than the literal, refurbished, cutting room in *Soleil et Désolé*.

Jack Watson, Murray's brother in *Naming the Bones*, is a video artist who, in his last exhibition, presents a work in which he is interviewing his recently deceased father, suffering from Alzheimer and interned in a hospital. When Murray watches and hears his own father talking to Jack and how he cannot recognize his own son, "Murray pushed through the black curtains and out into the brightness of the white-painted gallery. Jack was standing where he had left him. Murray shook his head and jogged quickly down the stairs" (*NTB*, 20). He leaves the gallery upset by what he considers his brother's betrayal of their father's memory. However, he does not read in Jack's video art that what Jack has actually achieved is the vindication of the

memory their father had already lost. Eco notes that many people seem to go through a traumatic experience as if they were in a film and, to this fact “there can be only two interpretations: one is the traditional: life is lived as a work of art. The other obliges us to reflect a bit further: it is the visual work (cinema, videotape, mural, comic strip, photograph) that is now part of our memory” (Eco, 2003: 126). Their father’s life becomes a real work of art and, by turning it into images, he becomes part of memory, not only of his sons’ but of any spectator of the exhibition. As memory, it can be recalled again and again, as the brain recalls memories from the past, but without altering the voice, the actual appearance of the memory. Berger explains that “memory is normally embedded in an ongoing experience of a person who is remembering” (quoted in Wells, 2003: 2). However, images can be authentic, or not, depending on how they are used. The first time Murray watches the video, he is not ready to face the fact that the memory of his father that will remain is that of his memory-less dad. When he returns from the island of Lismore, he is now ready to face his own past and he watches the video again in the gallery. The events, words, faces, laughter are exactly the same as the first time he watched them and he knows from the beginning what happens at the end of the video: his father mistakes Jack for a TV presenter, Jack tells him that “You’ve rumbled me” (*NTB*, 20, 380) and his father slapping his knee, happy because this time he has actually been able to remember a face. In his second viewing:

[He] pushed through the black curtain and out into the brightness of the white-painted gallery. Jack was standing where he had left him, his face anxious. Murray gave him a sad smile.

‘Maybe you can let me have a copy.’

His brother reached into his jacket pocket and pulled out a DVD. Murray took it from him and shook his hand (*NTB*, 380).

Murray mimics the same actions he performed the first time he watched the video except for his final reaction. He does not know whether his brother has used the memory of their father correctly or not, but he is now able to understand why and how his brother used that memory. Besides, he has discovered some of the differences between photographs and films. As Wollen distinguishes:

the lover of photography is fascinated both by the instant and by the past. The moment captured in the image is of near-zero duration and located in an ever-receding ‘then’. At the same time, the spectator’s ‘now’, the moment of looking at the image, has no fixed duration. It can be extended as long as fascination lasts and endlessly reiterated as long as curiosity returns. This contrasts sharply with film,

where the sequence of images is presented to the spectator with a predetermined duration and, in general, is only available at a fixed programme time (Wollen, 2003: 76).

What he probably found disquieting in the first screening of Jack's video art installation is the fact of gazing at his father alive and his talking about him as if he were still a child: "I've got two boys, terrific wee fellas. Six and eleven, they are" (*NTB*, 19, 379) and feeling how his father stares at the camera and, thus, stares at him as if he were alive and as if Murray was simply another spectator. Metz explains that "the photographic *take* is immediate and definitive, like death and like the constitution of the fetish in the unconscious, fixed by a glance in childhood, unchanged and always active later" (Metz, 2003: 140, italics in the original). Jack and Murray's father's Alzheimer has erased most of his memories and has stuck to an image of his sons aged six and eleven. Jack's video installation will play again and again his only memory of his children as well as resurrecting him every time the film is screened, showing again his fetishized image of Jack and Murray. To Metz, the difference between film and photography is that "film is more capable of playing on fetishism, photography more capable of itself becoming a fetish" (Metz, 2003: 145). In *The Girl on the Stairs*, Jane also becomes aware of the fetish-status of photography.

The first time Jane hears of Claudia's existence is because Petra, instead of going to her usual spin or yoga lesson, went to "an impromptu game of badminton with Claudia, a previously unheard-of colleague" (*TGOTS*, 46). Learning of this new colleague disquiets Jane as she feels that her abrupt, unheard-of appearance in Petra's life may point to the fact that Petra has hidden her existence on purpose. While Petra is in Vienna, Anna tells Jane that she had seen Petra in Friedrichstrasse and "she was kissing another woman, right there in the street. They looked good together, like they were in love" (*TGOTS*, 128). Claudia's name as an unheard-of threat and Anna's witnessing of Petra kissing another woman makes sense in Jane's head when she accidentally discovers a photograph under the monitor. Barthes notes that photographs are taken and kept so that they are seen and shown in exchanges of photographs in social contexts:

show your photographs to someone – he will immediately show you his: 'Look, this is my brother; this is me as a child,' etc; the Photograph is never anything but an antiphon of 'Look,' 'See,' 'Here it is;' it points a finger at certain *vis-à-vis*, and cannot escape this pure deictic language (Barthes, 1981: 5).

However, there are photographs that are hidden on purpose, like unheard-of names. In the photograph under the monitor Jane thinks she is portrayed in the photograph, but

then she saw that although the woman had the same dark curls and pale complexion, she was someone else, someone Jane had never met. She turned the image over, hoping Petra had written a name on the reverse, but it was blank. Perhaps people only labelled things they were in danger of forgetting. Jane ripped the photo in half and slid it back where she had found it (*TGOTS*, 150).

There are several considerations to be made of Jane's reaction to the hidden photograph and her reading of it as a fetish. The first one is her initial inclusion in the photograph, her self-framing in an image that resembles other familiar photographs in which Petra and Jane are holding each other, but in this particular case, her place is occupied by some unknown person who looks like her but who is not her. Sontag points out that "in a way you are not present, you are passive when you look at the photograph. [...] You are not in the picture, and that is where some of the anxiety comes in" (Sontag, 2003: 64). Jane's anxiety comes in not just as a spectator of an image but at the certainty that she is not there, even though she should actually be there. Her place has been taken by someone she had not met before, by someone she had never heard of, by someone Anna may have seen kissing Petra. The second consideration that is relevant to this case is that Jane looks for a name written on the reverse, a word that can name the unknown girl and, perhaps, introduce her within the realm of "people Jane had met." Burgin explains that "we rarely see a photograph *in use* which does not have a caption or a title, it is more usual to encounter photographs attached to long texts, or with copy superimposed over them. Even a photograph which has no actual writing on or around it is traversed by language when it is 'read' by the viewer" (Burgin, 2003: 131, italics in the original). There is no title to the photograph or a caption: it was left blank under the monitor, but Jane does actually "read" the photograph in her absence, in the girl's presence and in the context of where the photo was consciously hidden: if people only label things they are in danger of forgetting, Petra knows the girl in the photo and has her present. Jane's reaction is to rip the photo in half and leave it where she had found it. Thus, she inserts herself into the narration told by the photograph and, when Petra looks for it, she will know for sure that Jane has been there. After Alban's and Anna's death, Jane overhears Petra's conversation with Thielo and how she admits to having neglected

her *lebenspartner*: “Did I tell you that Jane thought I was having an affair with Claudia from work? She found a photo someone had taken on that team-building weekend my department went on, added two and two together and came up with infidelity” (*TGOTS*, 277). Petra justifies herself by claiming that the problem was that a moment in her life became an image that was misread. Sontag notes that in present society, “the world becomes a series of events that you transform into pictures, and those events have reality, so far as you have the pictures of them” (Sontag, 2003: 61). The photograph only shows a moment in the team-building weekend, just that. Besides, she assigns Jane’s “erroneous” conclusion about Claudia to an anonymous photographer as if that fact exculpated her from any hint of infidelity. However, the authorship of the photograph is not as relevant in this case as the fact that it was found under the monitor. Perhaps it accidentally slid there and lacks, therefore, any further interpretation, but the possibility that she actually hid it there also exists. It is not accidental that Petra exculpates herself before her brother of any infidelity just a moment before telling him Jane’s version of Anna’s accidental death: the meaning of words, as photographs, can be manipulated. This proves certain in Welsh’s novels as all the photographs, videos and films described do not really exist outside the Welsh’s fictional world except as linguistic signs and as part of language. As Walder explains, “unlike a film, say, it [the novel] cannot imitate reality directly. It uses words to give the *illusion* of reality” (Walder, 1995b: 18).

To conclude, it proves relevant and adequate to quote Kuhn’s words on the memories evoked by a photograph. As she writes:

Memories evoked by a photo do not simply spring out of the image itself, but are generated in an intertext of discourses that shift between past and present, spectator and image, and between all these and cultural contexts, historical moments. In all this, the image figures largely as a trace, a clue: necessary, but not sufficient, to the activity of meaning-making; always signalling somewhere else (Kuhn, 2003: 397).

All the characters are haunted by images that become clues and these propel them into a world of intertextuality that leads somewhere else. In their search for the core of the labyrinth, they discover that the main problem is not that of Theseus, who had to face the monster within and find a way back to the exit. They actually discover their monstrous nature within, as they have not simply entered a physical labyrinth that darkens reality. They have also discovered their own labyrinths inside their selves and their bodies. Furthermore, when aiming at recounting their experience, language

becomes a further labyrinth of signs and texts that refer to other signs and texts, up to the point that even the photographic images do not exist but in language. Reality, bodies and language are not three consecutive labyrinths but they rather resemble the circular map of cities in *The Bullet Trick*: the three of them form a whole and there is no way out. The problem arises when the reader, who has followed the characters in their labyrinths expecting them to possess Ariadne's ball of thread as they are recounting their own experience in the labyrinths, realizes that they are also strayed and, moreover, not willing to leave the labyrinths either.

CONCLUSIONS

The structure of this research is clearly divided into two different, though related, parts: on the one hand, the proposal of a Gothic and a Queer approach to the novels by Louise Welsh and, on the other, the reading of different labyrinths by applying such an approach. Part One is more theoretical in the sense that it proposes a Gothic and a Queer reading mode – the dark, rose-coloured glasses proposed in this research – after analysing some of the most relevant contributions to both disciplines. Part Two focuses mainly on the novels by Louise Welsh to lead the argumentation through the different labyrinths. However, both of them share the fact that they are intended to be thorough readings of her novels. The concepts in Part One and Two are mainly exemplified with relevant quotes from the texts, and in both cases there are further, intertextual hyperlink references to other texts.

By proposing the dark, rose-coloured glasses to read the novels by Louise Welsh, my intention was double: on the one hand, I aimed at showing some similarities between gothic and the queer studies. They both require a certain identification with the texts: in the case of Gothic, the reader's suspension of belief and their acceptance of the Gothic conventions are compulsory in order to appreciate – and enjoy – this kind of texts. In the case of Queer, and in particular in the homotextual approach to literature proposed by Goldie, the reader is expected to actively recognize any hint of queer elements behind the apparently ever-present heteronormativity. It has also been pointed out that there exists a certain relation between Gothic texts and Queer as explained by Sedgwick, Aguilera or Gelder amongst others, as Gothic can be read as literature of resistance to the dominant order much in the manner that Queer resists the dominant heteronormative order. Besides, as has also been developed and explained in Part One of this research, both Gothic and Queer share a world of darkness and shadows – usually within a urban *milieu* – that provides shelter to some non-normative activities but, altogether, are also threatening and menacing in themselves. There is also some emphasis on the relevance of how present time is somehow haunted by the past but also opens onto a future time of possibilities, such as the queer utopias proposed by Muñoz or the potential future readers of Louise Welsh's novels, who will be able to identify and understand what characters have gone through in their stories. Moreover, bodies and identities transform, either by actually acquiring monstrous qualities or by engaging

into non-normative sexual behaviours, questioning thus both the construction of what is apparently considered as normal and the very notion of normality.

The second aim of the dark, rose-coloured glasses proposed to read the novels by Louise Welsh is to show the controversy built around these two terms, as, depending on the scholarly approach to either the Gothic or the Queer, they seem to be closed and very specific elements in relation to others or, on the contrary, rather flexible and inclusive. The metaphor of the glasses as a form of approaching the reading act actually reinforces the notion of reading in search of different elements that, even though they may or may not be dominant in the novels, are actually present in them to a higher or lesser degree. That is the reason why I have adapted the notion of a fantastic mode, as in Jackson, or a Gothic mode, as in Punter, to a queer reading of the novels: obviously, it is possible to read all the novels researched here without that gothic and queer mode on,¹⁰² but my proposal does actually enrich the understanding of the novels. Furthermore, the controversy of what both Gothic and Queer include and exclude within them actually constitutes their very own identity: as closed and excluding terms, they are presented in opposition to other categorizations that require their existence of others in order to delimit what actually falls within the realm of the Gothic and the Queer. However, as analysed in Part One of this research, the task of delimiting clear-cut boundaries between different literary genres or different gender identities proves quite complicated and it does show the permeability of such categories to other limiting categories. In the specific case of the novels by Louise Welsh, the Gothic mode complements and enriches the elements of the predominant, according to the literary critics and researchers, crime fiction genre.

The metaphoric dark, rose-coloured glasses do provide a different perspective to the more conventional whodunit conventions and that helps to reveal some non-physical labyrinths that characters and readers alike do traverse in the act of reading, as analysed in Part Two. The understanding of the labyrinth as such is presented in a more ambiguous sense than in those critics who distinguish between “mazes” and “labyrinths.” Labyrinths are, then, a complex and ambiguous space where one gets disoriented. Besides, in labyrinths, both characters and readers adopt an active role as

¹⁰² In the interview to Louise Welsh transcribed in this research in the section entitled “Louise Welsh, then and there,” she herself explains how she would class herself as a Gothic writer despite all the literary praise she receives as a crime fiction writer. On the other hand, she also considers that there is no queer character in her novel *Naming the Bones*; perhaps not if “queer” is considered as a synonym to “gay and lesbian.” However, as shown in this research, that novel allows a queer reading not only of the events narrated in it but also of its characters.

they stray in it but, altogether, they are also collaborating in the construction of such a space: characters do stray in the Gothic, Queer and Intertextual labyrinths they accidentally encounter but they also learn how to adapt to their new milieus and find accommodation in them. Readers do follow the labyrinthine narrative paths that Louise Welsh has arranged in her novels but they also have to be conscious perambulators in the labyrinths if they do not want to miss the trick, quoting Mark Lawson's negative literary praise on *The Bullet Trick*. Departure towards the labyrinth starts after some character has experienced abjection, sometimes in the guise of a crime but not necessarily, as in the case of *Naming the Bones*. However, all the experiences of abjection have something in common: in all of them there is an identification on the part of the character who experiences it to the point that abjection becomes an integral part of their selves. As explained in Section 3, characters and readers become dejects and they eventually realize and even accept the fact that the same monstrosity they acknowledge in their encounter with abjection is, in fact, an integral part of themselves and their lives. Consequently, the time they are living in, the spaces they inhabit and even their own selves as human beings do become tinged with dark as their own experiences become Gothicised. With regard to time, the present of the characters becomes heavily influenced by different pasts, sometimes distant pasts, as the Second World War in *The Girl on the Stairs*, but also a more recent past as in the case of *The Bullet Trick*, *Naming the Bones* or *Tamburlaine Must Die*, even though in the latter his own recent past is a very distant one for a contemporary reader. In this prevalence and influence of the past, the present becomes Gothicised by the haunting experiences that took place in the past, and time becomes immobile and static until characters do find the way to, if not to clarify, at least to acknowledge that those past events may have taken place. Thus, Rilke, for example, will never know what happened to the girl in the photograph nor whether she was actually killed, but acknowledging her existence in the place where *Soleil et Désolé* used to stand unblocks Rilke's present and grants him an opportunity to continue with his life. It is possible to read the lives of William Wilson, Murray Watson and Jane in similar terms. In Marlowe's case, his embracing of immortality prepares him for a future life with the recognition and fame he was always looking for.

Places, as explained in Section 3, are also Gothicised and darkened. As opposed to the clean and safe images of places such as Kelvingrove Way in Glasgow

or Murray's first impression on the island of Lismore, they also acquire a darker and darkened tinge. The same places where students nowadays walk up to University are also the places where gay men go cruising and, in their search for sexual pleasure, they can end up in prison after a police raid. On the touristic island of Lismore there are some corpses and secrets buried, as well as limekilns that may turn a walk around the island into one's own fall into Hell. As analysed in this research, Lismore is the exception in this novel, as it is not an urban space – though it is not the only setting in *Naming the Bones*, but only for the second part of the novel. In the other novels there are not only Scottish cities, such as Glasgow or Edinburgh, but also London, Paris and Berlin. In them, streets and buildings with their shadows and dark sides become part of a labyrinthine disposition where characters stray but also discover relevant truths about themselves. In fact, they would rather embrace its dark side rather than the bright, clear side of the city. In Rilke's case, he prefers to inhabit the world of shadows and darkness rather than walking the streets of Glasgow in broad daylight, perhaps next to a person like Professor Sweetman. Marlowe would rather inhabit the urban world of taverns, even though he is aware that the world of brawling he is inhabiting may actually kill him. William Wilson has discovered the darkest side of life where money may buy death and he accepts it as an integral part of himself. Murray's stay in Lismore also turns him into a wiser person and Jane feels more at ease with the *hinterhaus* and Saint Sebastian's *kirke* than with the city of Berlin. Once they are aware that the time and space they are inhabiting are indeed Gothicised and they feel they do actually belong to them, they become fully conscious that their own selves have also undergone a deep transformation that has changed them from ordinary human beings inhabiting the normal, present world, into contemporary, real Gothic monsters. As it was explained in Section 3, the idea of creating a classification of different monsters in order to analyse the characters was deeply influenced by the classification proposed by Fonseca and Pulliam; however, its adaptation to the needs of this research also implied the elimination of some categories and the inclusion of others. As it has been shown, some characters do fall within the realm of different categories, such as Rilke, who is a walking dead but also a Nosferatu, or William Wilson, who is a magician but he also becomes his own double. This shows the problematic aspect of their new monstrous selves in the labyrinthine world they are inhabiting, shifting from one to another as they are shaped by the circumstances. The inclusion of a category of Lovecraftian characters was motivated by the fact that the

process of transformation of the characters, which is sometimes even physical, as in the cases of William and Jane, resembles in a sense that of some Lovecraftian characters such as those in “The Shadow Over Innsmouth,” to quote just an example, not to mention that, when aware of their transformation, they accept it as an integral part of their new selves. Furthermore, in the case of first-person narrator characters, such as Rilke, Marlowe or William, or in that of other characters who eventually provide an account of their own experience, they all lead readers through the stories until they identify so much with what they are reading that they even justify, understand and even recognize themselves in those characters. Ghostly characters, on the other hand, do require to actually be seen by the other characters, as in the case of Adia in *The Cutting Room* or Gloria in *The Bullet Trick*, who is present in her absence through the photograph. All these ghostly characters, as explained, are haunted by their own past or by the places they are inhabiting and the very act of liberating them from their haunting, as in the cases of the girl in the photograph, Gloria, Archie Lunan and baby Miranda or Greta, also liberates the other characters from their own past hauntings.

The case of doppelgängers proves to be a bit different, as some characters do actually become their own double, as in the case of William Wilson becoming a hobo. In other cases, such as Christopher Marlowe’s, it is only a part of himself, particularly, Tamburlaine, a character from one of his plays, who becomes an independent double whom he has to chase until he eventually recovers that part of his self, up to the point of becoming his own other too. Murray Watson finds in Archie Lunan an object of research with whom he identifies so much up to the point of actually becoming him and undergoing the same fate as Lunan did. In Jane’s case, however, she becomes her own double due to the presence of an alien entity within herself: her baby Boy. Moreover, the presence of two classic literary examples of doppelgänger such as Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde and Frankenstein’s monster are also constant in all the novels. In the former case, it does not only point at the duplicity – or rather, the multiplicity – of the human nature but also to a Scottishness in the identity of both the characters and Louise Welsh. In the case of Frankenstein’s monster, it points at the manipulation of bodies, which is deeply related to the gender issues analysed in Section 4 as women’s bodies are presented as grotto-esque and can be filled by the active male with very unusual objects. Beside, there are constant images of mirrors in which people are reflected, or people make use of, with the

corresponding link to the queer gazes analysed in Section 4 and the key role of photography in the novels analysed in Section 5.

Vampires have only been analysed as a specific kind of *doppelgänger*. However, in their case, they are more related to the world to sexual promiscuity. Rilke, read by Derek's cinematographic eye as a modern impersonator of Nosferatu, actually goes hunting prey on which he feeds sexually, as in the cruising areas or pub toilets. The exchange of bodily fluids provokes abjection in some heteronormative minds, such as Steenie's and his homophobic pamphlet against queer people as transmitters of sexual diseases. In this aspect, modern vampires acquire a more canonical view as there has always been a strong connection between vampirism, sexual promiscuity and death. However, it has been shown that there are many a kind of vampirism present in the novels by Louise Welsh. Thus, Walshingham exercises a type of literary vampirism by appropriating not only Christopher Marlowe's body but also his own words by adapting Marlowe's poetic lines; or Fergus's case of vampirically appropriating the poetic work of Archie Lunan. The last relevant aspect that relates the vampires in these novels with death is the hypnotic effect they provoke in others: McKindless apparently manages to convince Anne-Marie to be cut a little, while the blood-thirsty audience in *The Bullet Trick* eagerly expects that William Wilson will shoot the not-so-innocent Sylvie to death.

In the last section in this labyrinthine journey into the Gothicised selves of the characters in the novels, attention has been given to the different elements related to magic and its relation with devilish presences. As Marlowe writes twice in his own account, "Hell is on Earth" and it is inhabited by devils such as Bayne, who looks like Old Nick. Hell is actually the final destination for many a character in the novels who, besides, actually fall into the ground, such as Fergus, or simply to the ground, as does Anna Mann. There are also some instances of cults of supernatural forces, as in the case of the four young people at the island of Lismore, or even some cult-like behaviour like that of Jane's neighbours in her Berlin flat in a *Rosemary's Baby*-fashion. The world of magic and witchcraft is also present, though the latter is more related to feminine characters such as Christie, which is linked to the queer femininities proposed in Section 4, whereas magic is more related to the role of active males that make use of the female body as distractors for the audience.

With regard to the queer labyrinths that constitutes Section 4, this research starts not only from Butler's differentiation between sex and gender but also by

developing her understanding of sex and gender as constructs. As such, both of them are in fact discontinuous, incoherent spectres in opposition to what is understood as the hegemonic and the real. The notion of what a real man/woman or what the real masculine/feminine are is actually as constructed as any other constructed identity such as the drags or the burlesque. It is relevant to remark how Butler makes use of the terms “phantasmatic constructions” and “spectres” to refer to these sex and gender constructs, as even in the terminology there is a strong connection with the realm of the Gothic, as it is developed in Section 4.

Returning to the idea of labyrinth, characters traverse different queer labyrinths where the already hegemonic and taken-as-real constructs such as man, woman, gay or straight become more confusing and a-mazing in themselves. When Rilke and Rose attend the TV land party at the Chelsea Lounge, they do have to question some assumed preconceptions on what gay is and is not, as in the cases of different transvestites who are, in truth, straight married men with no doubts about their own heterosexuality. Rose herself even understands her own femininity as if it were constructed as a man in drag in a game of body displacements similar to that analysed in the case of Blaize in *Tamburlaine Must Die*. Furthermore, Jane and Petra’s unborn baby is a genderless, sexless entity until he is performatively named, as Butler would argue, with a fully gendered, sexed name such as Boy. Both the dragging and the naming of individuals do actually show that the idea of what a man and a woman are in essence is simply a construction that, in turn, can also be re-constructed. This is achieved mainly by acknowledging and accepting what is Queer in all these characters – and in the readers of the novels, who also feel the urge to question such constructions.

As it has previously been stated, this research has assumed that the different labyrinths proposed in it are complex and imply an active involvement of both characters and readers. That is why the heteronormative understandings of men as active gazers and women and passive gazed objects are thoroughly challenged in Louise Welsh’s novels by characters and readers alike. This research has given great emphasis to the questioning of who should be the bearer of the gaze and the importance of reading and understanding visual signs. With regard to the gaze, it has been proved that Mulvey’s proposed term “scopophilia” and her reduction of the act of gazing prove quite incomplete: there is not such clear-cut disposition of men as gazers and women as gazed objects as she explains. Obviously, there are some

examples of this, as the different examples analysed where men become the audience of a show, mainly in *The Bullet Trick*, but Mulvey does not point out the active roles of women who willingly control the gazes of men: The Divines in *The Bullet Trick* know exactly the power they are invested with by exposing themselves in front of the male audience and they turn these men into passive spectators of their show. Anne-Marie in *The Cutting Room*, controls the male gaze by providing them with Polaroids as the only means to record their experience of her pin-up show. Some of these women even tread one step further, as Sylvie in *The Bullet Trick*: she does not only want to control the male gaze but she also wants to transform a man such as William Wilson into an object of gaze and she actually achieves that in her own version of the bullet trick in front of the American millionaires. Additionally, Mulvey's limitation of her scopophilic gaze to the cinematographic world can be counterbalanced by some analysis of narratology such as Mieke Bal's and her proposed "focalizer" in opposition to the more traditional term of the "narrator."

Mulvey's unidirectionality of the gaze is also questioned when the notion of the gaydar is developed in Section 4. The Gaydar relates first to the rose-coloured reading of the novels proposed in this research as it implies a very specific reading and interpretation of signs on the part of the one who is gazing. However, in the queer labyrinths, the gaydar implies an active game of gazes that may turn the gazer into the gazed and viceversa. As is explained in the abovementioned section, gaydars as opposed to conventional radar, do emit signals that both search for the recognition of other gay men and women but, altogether, also allows the reading of the emitter as a gay man or woman themselves. Marlowe's use of his gaydar helps him find Richard Baynes amongst the group of patrons in the tavern; Rilke's cruising experience in a toilet shows that his gaydar signal emitted the correct stimuli and it also received back the correct stimuli from the other man; Jane and Greta do recognize each other as lesbian women while being in a situation where their own identities are concealed under their working outfits. It has also been demonstrated that this gaydar, far from being a specific quality of gay people, can also be performed by straight people, as in the analysed case of William Wilson in the Irish pub. The problem arises when this straight gaydar, as termed in this research, becomes a weapon to fight one's "homosexual panic" which, as Sedgwick explains, is even a legal term that justifies one's violence to another person when feeling threatened by the other's presumed homosexual identity and intent. In the example of the Irish pub in *The Bullet Trick*,

the patron is ready to exert his violence on the two presumed gay men until he actually feels threatened by those two “gay” men not because he may be sexually assaulted by them but because they are physically stronger than him.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick is another of the pillars in Section 4 of this research, not only for her approach to the homosexual panic already mentioned but also her analysis on homosocial, triangular relations in both *Between Men* and *Epistemology of the Closet*. However, this research has aimed at taking her proposed triangulation of relationships further. If to her, these triangular relationships between two men and a woman implied a certain power exercised over the woman as a kind of commodity, this research has developed her model of triangulation of desire to display a labyrinthine disposition. On the one hand, Sedgwick’s model of triangular relationships between two men and a woman proves quite limited when applied to the literary world of Louise Welsh: the sexual transaction where Blaize pays for the service of a prostitute for Marlowe is a prototypical example of triangular relationships proposed by Sedgwick. However, in the triangular relationship between Gloria Noon-Bill-Montgomery in *The Bullet Trick*, Gloria is not merely a commodity but an active agent that decides who she wants to be sexually involved with. Furthermore, even when she is killed – accidentally or not – she remains as an invisible link between them, obliging them to remain connected in their triangular relationship despite the fact that there is no sexual desire left in it. There also exist in the novels by Louise Welsh some triangular relationships where all the vertices are constituted by women, as in the case of the Jane-Petra-Claudia triangle in *The Girl on the Stairs*. It has also been pointed out that the desire that motivates the formation of such triangular relationships is not simply sexual desire: there are several instances where the drive that impels all the members of the triangle relates to family motivations, such as the idea of fatherhood, as in the case of Fergus-Christie-Lunan, or motherhood, as in the case of Jane-Petra-Tielo. It has also been pointed out above that the triangulation in the novels that constitute the corpus of study in this research does display a labyrinthine disposition. In Section 4 it has been explained how the different vertices of the triangular relationships become new vertices in different triangular relationships. This is not perhaps so much the case of *The Cutting Room* or *Tamburlaine Must Die* as they are Louise Welsh’s first two novels, but it actually becomes more and more complicated in the other three novels. A relevant example is the case of Jane as a vertex not only in the already-mentioned relationship with Petra

and Tielo, but also in those with Petra and Boy, with Petra and Claudia or with Anna and Alban Mann. All of them, in turn, become new vertices of other triangles, turning triangular relationships into complex labyrinthine maps of desire.

The last part of Section 4 focuses again on the work by Judith Butler, particularly on her influential terms “performance” and “performativity.” According to her, performance has to do with the re-enactment of certain gender actions whereas performativity implies the repetition of some assumed patterns by the members of a particular society. Starting from Butler’s example of drag as an example of performativity, the final part of the section questions not only how femininity can be performed in such a drag: it also reflects on how masculinity can also be performed in a drag, not only by women such as Petra but also by men such as Blaize who, being a man, even performs a woman in a man drag, creating thus serious doubts about where the limit can be found between his own masculine performance and his performativity. In the case of *The Cutting Room*, some of the TV’s in the Chelsea Lounge are not able to drag their own masculinity under their woman’s outfit: in their case, by performing the feminine they are actually reinforcing the masculinity performative in them. Whatever the case, drag shows a questioning and a troubling over the essence of what properly becomes masculine and feminine. This is the reason why some deeper analysis of troubling femininities can be found in this research: on the one hand, the burlesque girls who perform and, altogether, parody a specific type of femininity. Rose in *The Cutting Room* actually performs such an extreme femininity that she even feels she can be mistaken for a man in drag in TV Land. Sylvie in *The Bullet Trick* is another example of a burlesque girl who performs an ultra-femininity that eventually turns her into the real magician of the show and the one who actually controls the men onstage, as opposed to what her role as a passive female would require of her. In his final performance in front of his young students, Blaize in *Tamburlaine Must Die* constructs an Elizabethan burlesque girl that hides and exposes his body, though in this case he actually exposes his manly, hairy chest. Anna, in turn, performs a different kind of burlesque that demonstrates the degree to which burlesque femininity is a construct and, altogether, can become a tool of power for a woman: she decides when and where she wants to be burlesque by wearing the thick make-up on her face that turns her into a young adult or by cleansing it off her face and becoming the thirteen-year-old girl that she actually is.

Petra's case unveils a more problematic femininity as she actually performs her masculinity over her femininity. On the one hand, she used to be a drag king in her youth named Peter. As such, she was even able to frame straight girls and she even kissed them, though she knew there was a line she should not cross: despite her fake cock, she was actually a girl and her body would betray her if she tried to have sex with those straight girls. On the other hand, she is now into a relationship with Jane, which resembles, as argued in this research, those established by butches and femmes. As a butch, she is expected to perform a masculine role in the relationship. However, her butch masculinity actually questions and resists the heteronormative it is meant to mimic: as explained in Section 4, butches are more interested in providing pleasure to their femmes than in obtaining from them, as opposed to men in heterosexual and homosexual relationships. Femmes, in turn, are in fact active participants in the mating process as opposed to the passive role women are expected to play in heterosexual mating rituals.

If the previous sections are deeply influenced by the writings of Kristeva and Fonseca and Pulliam, in the case of Section 3, and Butler and Sedgwick in Section 4, Section 5 retakes the concept of homotextuality by Goldie proposed in Part One of this research and relates it with the semiotic approach not only to literature but to the surrounding reality proposed in the writings of Roland Barthes. The aim of Section 5 of this research is not simply to present a third type of labyrinth traversed by characters and readers but also to relate both the Gothic and the Queer to the realm of language, as the corpus is constituted by literary works. If Part One presented the possibility of reading the novels with some dark, rose-coloured glasses, it is therefore relevant to analyse how the different signs in the novels are related to other signs, external to the novels. In both the gothic and the queer readings there is a strong emphasis both on the idea of decoding the different signs that are sometimes hidden or veiled in the texts and on the identification of the readers with the texts. In this section, it has also been shown that the case of intertextuality also requires the ability to decode some hidden and veiled signs as well as the identification with the texts up to the point that the readers may link them with other texts, be they visual or literary, no matter whether it was the author's original intention. In the interview with Louise Welsh that closes this PhD thesis, she shows some surprise when she is told about the intertextual relation between the family formed by Jane, Petra and Boy and that between Tarzan, Jane and Boy. However, she does not invalidate such an intertextual

reading, as she acknowledges there might have been some subconscious relation she had not been consciously aware of when writing. On the other hand, she relates the story of Gloria Noon intertextually with that in the film called *Pandora's Box*. In this case, recognising the intertextual influence of the film in the novel offers a new perspective on the plot but it is also important to note that the reading of the novel without the cinematographic reference does not invalidate any of the readings or the conclusions. The intertextual labyrinths are, therefore, the last labyrinths analysed in this research as they provide an open, hyperlinked reading of the novels that goes beyond the literary, to fall into the realm of reality as it establishes a dialogical relationship with the readers: they do link the different intertextual references to their own cultural knowledge or even to some real events. An example of the latter is the discussed question of the identity of the real Crippen, who can even be read intertextually with the writings by Edgar Allan Poe. However, ignoring the intertextual reference to the popular British murderer does not imply that the novels where the reference is used cannot be understood by readers or that even the character Bobby Robb in *Naming the Bones*, nicknamed Crippen, loses for the readers its essence as a character. Additionally, the names of the characters also become intertextual links that open the text to previous texts, such as in the cases of Rilke, William Wilson or Doctor Watson, but also to reality, as the Christopher Marlowe in *Tamburlaine Must Die* did actually exist, though probably not as the fictional one that is imbued with the personality of another Marlowe: Philip.

With regard to the narrated events, it has been proven than many characters face the task of performing an appropriate reading of the signs they are exposed to. For example, Marlowe has to decipher what the hidden message is in the different pieces of cloth he receives and link them intertextually to his own writings. By means of reading signs adequately, they are all able to unveil certain truths that have remained until then hidden. However, as it is also analysed here, their final accounts are left incomplete intentionally, as language has the ability to provide a further existence to reality: if something is omitted, it somehow has never existed, as the photographers or the absences in the photographs. The reader, though, stands in a privileged position: firstly, they are aware of most of the events. Secondly, they are granted the power to provide a final meaning to the events. The ambiguity in the narrated events in these novels require from the reader the need to decide on what has actually taken place. For example, in the death of McKindless, readers know he has

been shot and Anne-Marie is in the same room. However, the readers are those who need to fill in the gaps that explain such a death: why did Anne-Marie arrange a meeting with him? Was his death intentional? Was it the consequence of Anne-Marie suffering from a panic attack?

As it has been briefly pointed out before, all these intertextual references are inserted within the narration of the events either by the characters themselves or by an accompanying narrator, as in the case of the last two novels by Louise Welsh. Language also becomes labyrinthine not simply because of how the different narrative elements are displayed so that the readers feel the wandering and straying experienced by the characters. Some characters do write accounts on the events that they have undergone as they are fully aware that written words are less volatile than spoken words. Thus, Marlowe writes the account of his final days with the hope that it will remain and even survive the society in which he has lived. In the case of Adia in *The Cutting Room*, the transcription of her police statement grants her an existence as a ghostly prostitute in Glasgow that she lacked before. In all the novels, there is a strong emphasis on the characters' recounting of events, which prove to be rather contradictory rather than complementary. Thus, the events that surrounded the death of Archie Lunan in the island of Lismore will always remain unknown, as any possible account of such events does offer a completely different perspective to that which the others do: readers are the ones expected to decide whether Christie and Bobby actually killed Miranda in a human sacrifice or it was merely an accident. This becomes even more labyrinthine in the case of Jane, who has to learn to adopt and master German as a Second Language. In her case, reality strays in her incomplete interlanguage, which she eventually appropriates and reverses thus the unbalanced power relationship she experiences when trying to communicate in or understand German.

The final parts of Section 5 focus on both the linguistic and the photographic signs – which are in fact linguistic too, as none of the photographs described in the novels actually exist outside the literary world of Louise Welsh. In the case of linguistic signs, they prove the complexity of the relationship between the signifiers and the signifieds, particularly in the case of names and insults. With regard to names, it has been mentioned above that names do complicate the narration by opening up the intertextual reading of the novels as well as creating certain ambiguity with regard to gender issues, such as in the cases of Leslie and Christopher – Kit – Marlowe. As

noted in the interview of Louise Welsh, her forthcoming novel entitled *A Lovely Way to Burn* also features a female character named Stevie, which is both a boy and a girl's name. Names also stray readers in their multiplicity and similarity, as shown with the case of all the Williams, Will, Bill, Bill Jr in *The Bullet Trick*, but also in the different ways characters are addressed to in the novels. With regard to insults, this section has analysed what Butler terms the “citationality” of insults, their insertion within discourse that can be challenged as in the case of “queer” or the word “whore” with which epithet Sylvie in *The Bullet Trick* has no problem whatsoever .

With regard to the photographs and video as fake visual signs, as they are actually linguistic signs in this case, they have allowed some reflections on the nature of photography itself. On the one hand, in the same manner that language does, they provide a constructed account of reality, as opposed to the assumed objectivity they are expected to portray. Furthermore, as in the case of Gothic and the fantastic as understood by Todorov, they imply a suspension of belief on the part of the one who sees them as they need to assume that the photographic eye that shot the photograph was actually photographing reality. However, there are more absences in them than presence: firstly, the photographers themselves, who are not present in the image and whose identities remain either a mystery or are ignored, as in the case of the photograph of Bill and Montgomery in *The Bullet Trick*. Besides, part of the haunting effect of some photographs is that they indicate the presence of some absent elements, such as Gloria in that very same photograph, buried just below the two men who stare at the camera. In her case, as well as in the case of the girl in the photographs at *Soleil et Désolé*, photography has placed them in the paraxial area described by Jackson and that she relates to the fantastic. In the case of the photograph that Jane finds hidden under the monitor, she faces what she fears most: the threat of an anonymous – to her – girl that might be in fact Petra's lover.

Returning to the notion of the photographer, they also manipulate their own versions of reality in the same manner that characters manipulate their statements to the police. In the case of Anne-Marie at the Camera Club, she knows the manipulative character of those photographers who attend her show and that is the reason why she only allows them to use Polaroids as their photographic immediacy prevents any further manipulation. Moreover, in the act of framing, photographers actually include or exclude some people or objects from the final version of what those who see the photographs assume as reality. Besides, as Butler notes, in the act of framing,

photography acquires a performative character in the same way as language does: photographs do not simply show but perform what can or cannot be seen. Altogether, people who pose for a photograph do actually perform in front of the camera, though the camera may actually show the raw true identity of the person photographed, as in the case of Sandy in *The Cutting Room*. Finally, there are some photographs that can only be “read” in isolation, but others constitute a part of a photographic series where they narrate a story in connection with others. Serial photographs may also acquire a time dimension and even a slight idea of movement. However, the latter is complete in the case of Jack Watson’s video art work in *Naming the Bones*. In it, the interview of his father with Alzheimer can be recalled as a ghostly memory of what his father used to be and it can be watched endlessly as it replays a certain past as if it were present time. On the screen, the father appears to his sons as a kind of spectre that, ironically, has lost his memory while the video work itself is a kind of homage to the memory of the father. The readers of the novels, therefore, are also forced to question the apparent reliability and trustfulness of images as they learn how manipulated and manipulating they may be, as well as being aware that, despite the fact these photographs are real in the literary world of Louise Welsh, they are actually as literary and formed by language and words as any other sign in the novels.

As it has been frequently noted in this research, the emphasis on the three labyrinths proposed in this research does not exclude the presence and the existence of some other labyrinths that characters traverse in the literary world presented by Louise Welsh. In order to cite just an example, in the transcription of my conversation with Louise Welsh and some off-the-record remarks she made both on our way from the Briggait to the South Block and back, she connects the emphasis on the past not only with a Gothic mode present in her novels but also with a Scottishness that is present in her work. As she explained to me, Scotland in general and the city of Glasgow in particular has to cohabit with a colonial past that was involved with the slave trade, at the same time as they also justify themselves as if Scotland had just followed the commands of the English within the Empire. In a sense, it was as if they were not to be blamed for that but, at the same time, they should be. Furthermore, the references to the work by Scottish writers such as Robert Louis Stevenson or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle adds that mentioned Scottishness to the gothic and even queer mode present in the work of those authors. However, such Scottishness could be the starting point for future research as it would have widened the scope of the research in

this PhD thesis, which is, in my humble opinion, wide enough and ambitious enough already.

Before finishing this section entitled “Conclusions” and before including the transcription of the interview I had with Louise Welsh during my stay in Glasgow, I would like to recall the personal implication of queer writers in the different works of reference I have used in this research. That is why I would like to finish with two personal anecdotes that are not queer by nature but they offer a perspective on what my implication in this PhD has been like. The first one is related to the long process of attempting to contact Louise Welsh, full of unanswered emails¹⁰³. Inevitably, the image I had in mind was Murray’s rejection letter for an interview with Christie in *Naming the Bones*. When he eventually manages to meet her on the island of Lismore, with the hope that she might grant him some valuable material and the opportunity to interview a person who had actually met and shared part of her life with Archie Lunan, she comments on the physical resemblance between Murray and Archie. Before embarking, literally, on a plane to Glasgow with a fixed date to interview Louise Welsh, I also hoped to obtain some valuable information for my research. As I wrote to her agents in one of my multiple emails, “to me, it would mean a great boost to my text, as I would include that exchange [interview] as a part of my PhD thesis” and also offered in return “more academic interest in Louise Welsh’s work, not only here in Spain, as my research is carried out in English.” In my case, however, I was somehow expecting a Gothic twist to the meeting between interviewer and interviewee. Whereas Murray Watson was interested in the life rather than the work of Archie Lunan and Christie, I had focussed more on the work by Louise Welsh than her life. Therefore, I would not have been surprised if, when meeting her, I had noticed that she was actually styled like me, a remark she found quite funny.

The second anecdote took place while actually in the process of writing this research in one of the many conversations with Dr Salmerón on my research, I claimed that I was trying to write the text in an impersonal style that erased any hint of the personal on behalf of the academic. She immediately commented: “Don’t you realise you’re actually that monster and that queer!” Now, some months later, I can

¹⁰³ Amongst the multiple emails I wrote in preparation for the interview and my stay in Glasgow, there was one in particular that I cannot help feeling a certain embarrassment, though with an amused smile on my face, to Ms Margaret McDonald.

admit that, in the literary world of Louise Welsh, I have read many of the labyrinths that I embark on when confronting a novel, a film or even the reality around and in me. I have read her with dark, rose-coloured glasses because it is I who wear them: metaphorically speaking, obviously.

LOUISE WELSH, THEN AND THERE

Due to the fact that Louise Welsh was immersed in the writing process of her next novel, it took me several attempts via email to contact her in order to arrange a meeting, which eventually took place on the 16th of August, 2013. Our meeting point was The Briggait, once Glasgow's city market for over a hundred years and now the home to artists and writers who have there a space to create and exhibit their work or offices to write, as in her case. The building is located near the River Clyde and, as Louise Welsh herself explained, under one of the nearby bridges William Wilson slept the night the hobo was murdered in *The Bullet Trick*. After meeting in the courtyard, we walked to South Block, a chic café only a five-minute walk from the Briggait, as it was meant to be a quiet place to talk. On our way, we talked about the origin of the building, how the past is a matter of great concern for Scottish people and the importance of the Scottish Independence Referendum in 2014, a key moment in Scottish history, according to Louise Welsh as, regardless of the result, things will inevitably change in Scotland after that.

Once in the café, which was not as quiet as expected – with many guest appearances of the steam coffee machine in the recording of the interview - , we ordered two plain white coffees and sat. Before starting the interview and turning on the voice recorder, I wanted to explain to Louise Welsh that my intention was not to hold a question-and-answer type of interview but rather to have a more fluid conversation. Personally, I feel I succeeded in doing that and it is easy to note throughout the conversation that Louise Welsh's answers become more personal as the conversation advances to the point that she even ends up asking me questions herself. Furthermore, even though I do not mark it in this transcript, there is a moment when I consider the conversation could end and her reaction was to explain that she still had one more hour to continue with the recording. I intentionally eliminated that remark to provide some cohesiveness to the conversation, as it was a sharp break in the otherwise fluid dialogue, but I got the impression that our conversation became more interesting after that halt.

Finally, I would like to state that I write my own name and hers and not Q's. and A's. This is so because, even though there are indeed some questions, it was not meant to be simply that: when the conversation was over she admitted she had enjoyed it and she had liked the idea that I let her time to talk and I did not interrupt

her. As I explained, I was more interested in knowing what she thought than in confirming what I thought beforehand.

Eduardo García Agustín: I have been reading some of the literary reviews on your novels and there is a problem with literary genres, as they tend to classify you as a crime fiction writer since you won the Saltire Award among many other important crime fiction prizes. Are you really a crime fiction writer?

Louise Welsh: I guess it is a circle ... because, first of all, I don't mind being called a crime writer and I think part of that is because in the past some of this fiction has been snagged on and regarded as the thing you buy in the book station, you know, the train station and you throw away and so part of that appeals to me because the kind of book that the man or woman on the bus or the train would read and they would feel frightened of them. I think there are good reasons why I am classed as a crime writer because at the same time there is usually a strong story, you know, a narrator, and I enjoy telling a story and that's the kind of things associated with crime fiction, that usually is some outsider aspect to it, that is the crime often so I guess all of that, specially in *The Cutting Room* I used to be much engaged with the crime conventions. I think after that you establish something, genres usually take you much further than you are. So that idea of the parameters of the genre, which were quite pleasing to me, all the things you can turn around, the idea, for instance, of having a gay protagonist in a kind of genre that often delegates gay people. So, yeah, I enjoy engaging with the crime fiction, so I am not annoyed or distressed that people say that I was crime fiction. Also I suppose it's done me a lot of good. I think possibly I wouldn't have sold so many books. So all of that I don't mind. I don't know how well I fit, you know, and I guess from the readers' perspective I think sometimes a reader may come to the book thinking: Oh, I like those crime books, about murderers. And so I guess that in that aspect I worry a little bit that somebody will want to get one thing and actually get something which is not. Yes, I guess that is my only reserve and I hope to... nobody's ever said to me you can't do this because you're a crime fiction writer so that would be what the problem was and I guess the authors I admire, people I really like, like J.G. Ballard, people that did not know where to fit, sometimes he is kind a science fiction writer... And I guess, in terms of getting better, that would be my dream to be as good a writer as someone like him, so yes, it is fine with me.

E.G.A. As you said, there are some elements from other genres: lots of Gothic in your writings, science fiction too – in a sense.

L.W. I guess if I had to class myself, I would say Gothic, which comes for me before the crime and I like all of that, the unsubtlety of it: I like those bright colours that things are painted in, not being spoilt to go a little bit further, to go over the top. But of course you try to pull it back so it does not become too cranky, you know, and I think agree with that, I suppose in terms of their gender, sexuality, things I am quite interested in and Gothic is always engaged with those subjects and sometimes the gothic is very offensive, sometimes is quite simpler and there is a lot of place in there for a writer to decide to approach it. As I said, I like all of that. The Gothic is often associated with the supernatural, that, although I quite particularly enjoy, I don't particularly want to write about the supernatural elements, but the engagement with the past, the atmosphere, what's around the corner, that sort of stuff is pleasant to my taste.

E.G.A. And actually, it is like characters become kinds of monsters: Rilke is a Walking Dead, he is a Nosferatu impersonator, but in the same novel, the prostitute is ghostly presence, she is in a house, she is haunted by the house and she can't go out, nobody sees her from outside. It is as if they are always haunted by the past

L.W. It is true. Some of those things as calling, as comparing Rilke to Nosferatu is quite conscious, isn't it? In a way I'm quite unsubtle, you know that your reader knows these images so well that hopefully that comes itself. But I guess this idea of an old city in which all the different pasts that lay on top of them, you can almost see, you can almost see them and at the same time travel there and the idea that we walk the same streets as each other but we don't necessarily see the same things and that there are criminal things that we ignore or depravation that we ignore and you get used to it. Sometimes in a city, especially somewhere like London, which is much bigger than Glasgow, you walk along and you see people that are sleeping on the street and actually we walk past and it's quite amazing, I do as well, it's quite amazing that our compassion isn't such that we say. We don't do anything about it.

E.G.A. Related to that, your characters seem to inhabit a kind of a small group in the city, like Rilke with his friends or when he is at the auctions; in the case of Jane and Petra, they live surrounded by Petra's friends. Somehow they discover this outer world, there is a world of prostitutes, a world of transvestites, people

who kill their children, like Christie, so suddenly they discover that reality is not their reality but it's a bit wider.

L.W. Yes, It's funny, I guess that's it. In Rilke I was thinking much on people like Marlowe or Melmoth the Wanderer, who is the night surveillant, they walk alone, don't they, their societies, they walk the streets alone, but I wanted Rilke to have a friendship network, so he has Rose, he has Les, the people he knows from work. So he is alone but he is not completely alone and maybe that is quite a bit due to sexuality as well, as I wanted to show that it is not because he is gay that he is alone, he still has friends. With Jane and Petra, because I wanted to reduce Jane's world, and to have an idea of what they were in London before they moved to Berlin and there they had a more sociable world and she is actually as in one of these photos where everything has shrunk to more or less those two streets, the apartment faces the graveyard, she goes to a market around the road once, it's very claustrophobic. But I think looking back, it's all the unconscious effect of writing about that, as I hadn't quite thought how Gothic that was and I guess the idea of the house with the body and she is carrying this child, she is in the house in the way that the child is inside, her and this is very female gothic, with the containment and you're right there is an outside world, but is it frightening? Is it not frightening? And I guess I wanted to count on that also with the other half which is Petra's Thielo and his wife Ute. It is her Petra and Jane look down on very much, they like her but they are very condescending to her, but actually she turns to be quite nice, you know, she is possibly the most sensible person in the book and she has her priorities right. So that idea of the world as a good place which is not necessarily threatening, and which can also be quite nice. I wanted to add an unpleasant and untidy environment in Thielo and Ute's house so that they do not think about aesthetics, and where children can live in. With Christie and Murray Watson and the island of Lismore... Lismore is very easy to get to, you can travel there very fast from Glasgow and yet it is a completely different world and Murray feels very detached, like he is a hundred miles from Glasgow but he is not, he is very close and he can easily come back. And when his brother... well, maybe there is some kind of connection between those two books...

E.G.A. Yes, I was going to say that, as in both of them, it is easy to notice the importance of the idea of the family. In Petra and Jane's case, it is motherhood and in the case of Murray and Jack, it is fatherhood, though both of them see their father in Jack's video art work, where he is displayed on an on with his

Alzheimer. He can remember them when they were kids but he cannot remember and recognize them now. There is also some other fatherhood, as in Archie Lunan's book: Fergus writes his name on it and publishes it as his. It's like unveiling the paternity of the book in a sense.

L.W. Maybe the friendship and the family thing... in *The Bullet Trick*, William Wilson has this mother: she is important to him and he is important to her but actually they don't speak in the way that families can. And with Jack and Murray, they only have each other, that's the only family they have. Jack can produce art and Murray can only write about poetry, he can't write poetry. He's like to write the poetry and not the criticism. Fergus as well wants to... he steals the poems, with this idea of appropriation, which is taken art. Wanting to be an artist and yet somehow not being able to do it is a strange thing, isn't it? One wants to do something that you can't. There are various jealousies between the brothers and Murray feels his brother has exploited his father and yet it is also the opposite: he really wants to honour his father and he's done it his way. And that also gets Murray and the others too exposed.

E.G.A. In Petra and Jane's case, they have Boy, who is a boy actually. Obviously, there is a connection with Tarzan films, with a new, different type of family: Tarzan was never the biological father of the boy, but here Petra is the real mother, no matter who the sperm donor is.

L.W. I didn't think about that, you know. I used to watch these Johnnie Weissmuller films all the time when I was a child and maybe... I guess Petra and Jane are not man-haters even if they live in a female world, I suppose. There's definitely some playing around with these ideas and these perceptions, you know, of two women living together. It is Dr Mann who lives next door, but it is also a very common name in German and Jane would have probably felt the same if she were a single mother with a doctor. There is a bit of hesitation and the questioning of responsibility: whose is our responsibility? Is it to our own family? Jane has this child who is coming and it should be one of her priorities and yet, does that mean that she should ignore the plight of this child who is next door? And I think people go in different ways, don't they? Sometimes they think: "I have a family and, my goodness, it makes me realize how many vulnerable children there are" and sometimes you simply ignore that. And there is always somewhere in between. And with Jane, I think the child coming but also her past...

E.G.A. There is something about her mother, as she remembers her as a reflection in the mirror and that's also very interesting because many characters do not see one another directly but via a mirror, as in William Wilson's case. He is the master of mirrors and he exposes himself but always reflected in them; or Jane's mother, who sees her daughter in the mirror but not directly: she does not open the door and check that she's sleeping there.

L.W. It's true. I'm just copy-editing a new book that will come out next year and in it a woman finds the body of her boyfriend in bed and the way she finds him... she's come to this house to collect some stuff and she opens the bathroom cabinet in the ensuite and she sees him in bed reflected in the mirror. So it freaks in a sense that this this image we've seen in films, on television, the view through the window, it is also very common, it is as being not quite there. Maybe a little bit like the photographs in *The Cutting Room*, where you see the dead body but you quite not see... she's not quite there but here. I guess in *The Cutting Room* I was just trying not to produce the dead body on the floor, which was less problematic for me.

E.G.A. In the case of Sheila, you never see her body. She is an absence in a photograph of Bill and Montgomery and you know she must be buried there but you have to guess it, as William actually does when he sees that picture. A picture is meant to show everything, as when you take a picture you think that's reality, but here the reality is also hiding something in its image.

L.W. In terms of being a feminist I suppose, I want not to just use the image of the female body as entertainment and yet I'm much, as I said, engaged with that genre. So the photo, the image... With William Wilson, I was thinking about *Pandora's Box*¹⁰⁴, and this idea of the past and that in the end she has to die. So you can enjoy all the excesses but she has to be killed, she's killed in the film by Jack the Ripper. In *The Bullet Trick* I wanted to resurrect her, she's not dead at all, she's there.

E.G.A. She is a ghost coming back from the afterlife who wants to get her revenge and her story to be told.

L.W. She's very much that. And William is a manipulator in terms of vision, of dealing with things that we do not see, he's been at the centre of a different trick and it's as a result of her being dead that he goes through quite a lot.

¹⁰⁴ She is referring here to the German film *Die Büchse der Pandora*, directed by Georg Wilhelm Pabst and based on the novels by Frank Wedekind *Erdgeist* and released on the 30th of January, 1929.

E.G.A. Now that you mention that, in your novels there are references that are not only literary, but there is also some interesting aspects with regard to the names of the characters: they are related to other texts, as in the case of Jane and Boy with the Tarzan films; Rilke with a connection to Rainer Maria Rilke; Marlowe, who is Christopher but he is also Philip; William Wilson, as in Poe's tale; Murray Watson, who is Dr Watson. However, his brother is never Watson but Jack. Besides, names are a bit confusing: William is William, Will, Wilson, Bill. However, in the case of Jack, he is just Jack and not Watson, as his brother Murray.

L.W. Sometimes it has to do with vision as well, perspective, the point of view, that although it's third person we're seeing it from Murray's perspective and to him his brother Jack is Jack. But these names can shift around: with Rilke I was much thinking about a poet that is used as detective... Names are quite hard. I usually try not to use too many fancy names. With *The Girl on the Stairs*, I was thinking for a long time on that book with that building in my head and it changed very much, but I think I always thought of *Jane Eyre*, and that's where this plain Jane's name came through: you just can't find a simpler name than this. And Jane has this imaginative capacity and she is somebody who reads a lot of novels. It is not that you have to trust her because she read too many novels. But at the same time she is also a fairly practical person. I wanted readers to trust her and not to trust her. I so often change names and yes, it can be quite hard.

E.G.A. There are also some characters whose names depend on the person they are naming, as in the case of Leslie, who can be a male or female name, Kit in the case of Christopher Marlowe, or, in the case of your next novel, Stevie, which reminds me of Stevie Nicks and Stevie Wonder. There is some ambiguity in the naming of your characters.

L.W. Stevie is a very physically active character and it is almost like an adventure novel: she is very fast, like somebody who is a presenter in a shop television programme, the TV programmes that sell things to you. She is also very physically fit, very physically active. I think at some point she is eventually called Stephanie. She has got qualities that, although she is a quite feminine character, she's got qualities that would be associated with men. In the book she physically changes as the book goes on: we meet her when she's about to go on a date, she is wearing this dress, she

looks lovely, but by the end of the book she is much more masculine, much more beaten up. I think she goes through a transformation like the ones you see in a film.

E.G.A. Thinking about names and references, there is a special case I would like to talk about, which is Crippen, as you mention him in three of your novels. I didn't know anything about him before and I assumed it was just a name and didn't think of it until I started reading about the life of the real Crippen and how he apparently killed his wife, escaped to Canada, was sentenced to prison. In a sense, I was thinking that his real life could be somehow read under a Poesque perspective. Reality sometimes resembles literature or perhaps it is that, through our readings, we read that reality.

L.W. It's also become one of those phrases that maybe the generation older than me would refer to, like parents and grandparents. It's also interesting to see a photograph of Crippen and he looks... he looked very creepy, like somebody that, if you were on the bus and there was a seat next to him, you might just stand, you know, if it was the last seat. And I guess that visual thing that people looked like him... He is a classic case of British murderer that George Orwell writes about. He says, what else do you have to do that to sit down on a Sunday afternoon and read about crimes. You know, this is horrible, because there is an element of truth in this.

E.G.A. Well, we do that now when we watch the news and you see all those images of people dying in car accidents or in war. We are more used to death now.

L.W. Yes, and then there would be something that, for some reason, will really touch you in a special way. And sometimes fiction also creates those images.

E.G.A. Returning to Crippen again, you said it was a very common reference that people of your generation recognize.

L.W. And it has remained, in a way. I think most people recognize the reference, maybe not the generation younger than me, but I think most people would recognize it.

E.G.A. I mention that because there is a Spanish translation of your novel, *The Bullet Trick*, and I read how the translator had dealt with the Crippen reference. She wrote "Crippen, the London Strangler," which I think it was very funny as she was also changing the reality of the real Crippen. Reality seems to move away and away and at the end you don't get the real person.

L.W. I guess that it kind of works so that she didn't need to explain in a footnote.
(Laughter)

E.G.A. Talking about reality, your novels are not very conclusive about it. When I read your novels, at the end I felt like “was it real?” “did it really happen?” I mean, I went to a reading club session on *The Cutting Room* and everybody seemed to have a different opinion on what actually happens in the novel, as in the killing of Roderick. As a reader, you don't know the story, you have to trust the people who tell the story, but they hide facts: for example, they don't mention somebody who is involved.

L.W. I like to leave enough space for the reader to take part in the story and I suppose, I think, in terms of style I like to be quite descriptive and not to try to pull a fact to make it not too descriptive so that the reader can make their own picture. In terms of plots, I want them to be interested in them, so they also fill these gaps. I guess in *Tamburlaine Must Die*, we don't see Marlow dying. The reader imagines, hopefully, what happens next, I leave enough space. I think in each book there are moments the reader must decide and I guess the most extreme one is the last one (*The Girl on the Stairs*), where actually you can interpret that story in different ways and... I haven't been to any reading group. Sometimes, as a writer you get to attend a reading group and they can ask you, say what they think. I don't think you should tell them... you can answer some questions and that the readers in some way decides: “did he do it? Did he not? Was Jane right? Was she interfering?” I quite like that idea of the readers' opinion and experience: some readers say she was absolutely right and I'm so glad that that man died. Somebody else may say she was interfering too much. I also think the story is much more straightforward, but there are people who don't know what happens and that's what life is like. I think you kind of promise to the readers to make some things up, you shouldn't just have that horrible killing at the end, and you think: “but I just wasted several hours and you told me you would tell me a story and you didn't tell me a story, you just left the ending.” It must have a conclusion, but it doesn't need to be all explained. As you know, I'm very inspired by history and I suppose the gaps in history are part of its appeal. You have facts and then you have these things that remain for ourselves.

E.G.A. At the same time, I have the idea that your characters could continue the story. In the case of *Naming the Bones*, it finishes with Jack introducing Murray to a girl and he thinks: let's see what the future brings, so we ideally imagine

there could be a second part to the novel, in a sense, that their story could continue. And I know you're now writing a trilogy, which is somehow the idea I had when reading *The Cutting Room*. In fact, some reviewers on that novel were expecting the next Rilke novel.

L.W. That was all I had with Rilke. That was the only thing and, commercially, it would have been quite good but I didn't want to, I didn't feel the urge to. I sometimes get offered money to do things and I would like that money but I don't want to do it. So you have to keep faith in those characters. But I like the idea of an active ending and the idea of hope. With Rilke we have a similar feeling as with Murray Watson at the end. He has actually met someone (Professor Sweetman) and they could actually get together. There's hope for love. In Murray's case as well there is hope for love. If it is not her, maybe someone else. He's not such a bad person.

E.G.A. I have to admit that I felt somehow identified with Murray because he's trying to contact Christie, as I was trying to contact you (LAUGHTER) and I was going through the same process.

L.W. I imagine that when you're finishing this book you end up feeling that you are also going into this small world and you dress badly and your workplace is a mess. (LAUGHTER)

E.G.A. Changing the topic completely, in your first three novels, stories are told by your characters, there is a first person narrator, but in your last novels there is a shift in the narrative voice, which is right behind the character. Why that change?

L.W. I think in *Naming the Bones* it was very much... in a way Murray is kind of a writer and he is also slightly detached from the world, as opposed to Marlowe, who is very much a part of that world. Murray is part of a quieter world, the academic world, and I guess I wanted him to be another person and I wanted to him not to have his voice and transmit thus part of the detachment that he has. And maybe a little like Jane too, as she is in a place where she does not fit.

E.G.A. With regard to the narrator, I read a literary review on *The Bullet Trick* by Lawson in *The Guardian*, and he says something that I find quite interesting, which is that he considers your novel as one of the cross-gender novels. What's your opinion? What do you think of that remark?

L.W. Well, he is in the radio a lot, I usually listen to him in a programme that is at quarter past seven and, for a couple of years, every time that he was on, I said a rude

word. (LAUGHTER) We had a horrible name for him in our house. And yes, I didn't like that review, but you know, you just have to keep up the humour. Sometimes you think that he just didn't get it. And sometimes you read the book and you just can't get it. And I feel he did not quite get it. I felt it was a lazy review and that he was probably very busy when he wrote that. People talk a lot about men like women and women like men, and I think the transfer that you do to be inside a different person is so big that the transfer of gender is such a big one.... I think it would be more difficult to transfer into somebody with a different cultural background, so for me to write a Spanish person I would have to live in Spain for a long time as a Spanish person and that, I think, as a British person or a Scottish person, it would be more difficult for me than a gender transfer.

E.G.A. He also says something very funny. He mentions William peeing and how conscious he is about his own penis and, when I was writing about this in my PhD thesis, I wrote that, of course, we all know men are never conscious about their own penises.

L.W. (LAUGHTER) I think I only mention it once.

E.G.A. Of course he pees, but it is not as if he is looking at his penis.

L.W. Yes, he is in the toilet. I guess the reason I had him peeing, I think I wanted to show the relationship between him and Sylvie. It is the kind of thing you do when you get the complicity with somebody normally. And it was that and I think he was more interested than I was. (LAUGHTER)

E.G.A. I was also thinking of cruising in a park or in a toilet, or a gym, where men, even if they are straight, inevitably look at other men and compare themselves with the others. And in the case of gay people, there is also sexual desire at play.

L.W. Yes, that's an extra element. In the street I walked up and down on my way to university [Kelvin Way] twice a day, and often late at night, you observe something, sometimes felt a little edgy, sometimes not.

E.G.A. I also find quite interesting in your novels the different gender constructions. The only reference to real girls is in the porn video in *The Cutting Room*, but all the other people are constructing their own genders, as Rose, who feels she looks like a man in drag, and she feels very proud of that. There are drag queens, drag kings, burlesque girls, who are feminine but in a constructed way. Anna can even choose when she wants to be a woman or a child.

L.W. I guess people go through that phase, you see that in teenagers wanting to be grown-ups and sometimes the edge they cross makes them really, really vulnerable, and that is the contradiction, one we cannot interfere very much, because we cannot say “don’t do that!” but at the same time it is actually something that they must do. As a society we are meant to keep them safe and you feel the vulnerability. I like dressing up much, I like the idea that people can change themselves and I don’t feel that on body modification or things like that. Yesterday I was sitting on the underground and I saw somebody sitting opposite me and I thought. “Oh, gosh, that dress looks good on that woman.” It was a nice dress, perhaps a bit odd, and then I looked a bit closer and it was a man. And I wouldn’t have noticed if I hadn’t been on one more stop. And I like people can decide they want to be something else, I suppose, I would like to live in a society where that wasn’t dangerous. My partner Zoe, she works at the university and she has a student who is from a small town in America and he says that, at the weekends, there are prostitutes at his doorstep. And she answers that, no, they are not prostitutes, they are girls, they have probably been working hard during the week and they are now dressed up for the weekend with tiny mini-skirts, everything on display, as much make-up as they can put on their face, high, high, high heels and, no, they are only dressed up and they just want to enjoy the weekend. That’s ok, they drink too much but they won’t do you any harm. They only tease you. And he says, no, no, no, I can assure you these girls are prostitutes. I used to enjoy that when I was a girl, I don’t do it much now. We used to go clubbing a lot, get as dressed up as you possibly could. We used to go to shops, figure outfits together, and sometimes they fell apart before you finished the night.

E.G.A. Yes, I guess you control your image and you control what you want other people to see.

L.W. It is something that especially young people have to do because... you’re quite dependent on these things. Yes, it’s fun to dress. I’ve been to Edinburgh and when I came back home, at about half past two, we were walking along all of the way to the train station and I used to see all these girls that started on those high heels and ended up walking bare-feet, and that’s a sign of having a good time, I guess. . . I guess the embrace of that, the heaviness of the enjoyment, a lot of this orchestrates in these books: drinking, some drug taking as part of that is also part of the Gothic, it is part of that genre.

E.G.A. Marlowe is somehow writing his final will, his statement to the future, to a future reader that may understand his situation perfectly in an ideal world, somehow as if he were Isaac Asimov imagining a future society. Are we that future he was imagining?

L.W. To me, human nature has not changed much and I suppose that's part of the pleasure of reading the past, you recognize people or voices... so in the sense of technology, we are living in a world of science fiction and yet in terms of our motivations, like love, passion, greed, selfishness, all are the same things that Marlowe and his contemporaries were motivated by. All of these elemental things we read them in his plays we recognize them, even though the language is different. I remember that, when I was writing this book, Marlowe was involved in a court case of a man who killed somebody and he describes the words in the court case. The man he was with had a sword and he takes his sword and says: "come here if you want some of this" and I thought, you could see that in any city street but on the twenty-first century. You want this, so come here. I think he would be amazed that many things haven't changed.

E.G.A. They are also stabbing each other constantly, even sexually, as in the case of Walshingham, who penetrates him the day before his departure. And Marlowe's is not the only body that is opened. William, for example, cuts girls in two and gets weird objects from their inside, or he creates kind of Frankenstein's monsters, half Ulla and half Sylvie, creating thus a perfect female body.

L.W. Yes, I guess that in the world of entertainment we want to see and what's best than seeing women being cut up and I suppose that's maybe a bit of fun on the genre, as well, you know, what is the next victim. In *The Cutting Room* I was exploring the naked female body chopped up, and that's a little bit what William does on stage as well. I suppose when you are writing these books you don't want to think consciously on it because I think that if you think about it too much, then the idea can become too important and it's the story that should be important.

E.G.A. At the end, he is the victim. He thinks he is the main magician but he is actually the male assistant and that's an interesting change as, up to that moment, women are kind of an accessory to the trick and, in this case, the idea that he is the accessory is necessary.

L.W. Yes, and when he sees her, he is pleased to see her. And even though he acknowledges he is furious, he is so really relieved. There is also sort of love affair as

well that's maybe an element of loss, an element of weakness, which perhaps makes him nice after all he has experienced. It is a kind of active ending, and I guess it is about trying to take charge. And in *Naming the Bones*, I wanted Murray to have a different life. When Murray becomes more active, then things change. In William's case, when he becomes a more active agent he manages to resolve things. The passivity he has when he is in Glasgow is a real problem and he needs to be more active.

E.G.A. He actually goes through hell. He's very confident about himself at the beginning and then he becomes a hobo sleeping next to a man that has been beheaded. He needs her mother to lend him money. And it is when he meets his friend and decides to help him with the show at the Panopticon that he starts to recover again.

I guess this idea of different possibilities that he has... well, his mother, I really like his mother. She does what she can and she'd prefer him to come and live with her and look after him. And then, his friend in the book is interested in philosophy and I guess this is why they are together, philosophy and magic, not so different, and these friends have taken different paths, very respectable paths in a way. His woman is a lawyer, he works in University and they have a family and yet their child is Down syndrome... and that is not the end of the world to have a child with disability. In these cases, it shows how one takes different paths.

E.G.A. In your novels, characters are moved by others whose lives are not related at all. Rilke feels moved by the girl in the photograph, William is interested in knowing what happened to Gloria Noon. Jane is interested in Greta's life... and none of them have actually seen nor met them. And Murray too with Archie Lunan. However, they turn these people into their leitmotif.

L.W. Yes and much of that quest is maybe also displacement, you know, now we have something in our lives that perhaps we should tackle and think about, but we put them aside because they are too difficult and we go along this other path but you can't necessarily escape this other thing. For Jane, I suppose, with this baby coming, she is left home, she is left without friends, away from the world that she knows... she's left without economic independence, which is a big thing. In my books, work is important as it helps to define who you are and Jane has left that. She is completely left to rely on Petra and it probably seemed like a good idea when they were talking about it in practical terms. It made sense on paper. And Jane doesn't have anything to hold on to

in this moment and if she had been in London and the same things had happened next door, she would have had more things to occupy her mind in, friend she could have talked about it too, she would have been able to explain herself better to the police... All these things: the isolation, the lack of a job.

E.G.A. Eventually, she appropriates language. First she understands nothing, then she kind of understands things and she tries to speak but nobody pays attention to her and at the end she is able to command German, but it is also like a secret language with Boy, like a secret between a mother and a son. Language, as photography, implies that you never get the full picture of what happens.

L.W. That's interesting and also I guess, is that final picture a warm picture or is it a sinister picture? You know, the vision of the mother and child should be very nice, but I was also thinking of the end of *Rosemary's baby* and there is something comic about that, there is something funny. At the same time it is also very... ughh.

E.G.A. Actually, the building is very similar, with the neighbours. Every time she leaves the flat, she meets her neighbours. Everybody is constantly looking. Even Jane looks through the spyhole to see who is outside or to the *hinterhaus* to see what's going on there. It's a bit like a panopticon.

L.W. Yes, very much I suppose. In Glasgow you can see the centre of the city where most of the people live in apartments, so it's not so uncommon to live in them in Berlin, so this idea of looking at another apartment that you like and the question is you don't really know until you move in: is it ok? Are people noisy? It is also the idea of who you're living with and who's lived there before. Opposite my house there is a park and a little square where you can see the buildings with their windows shining. Even with the idea that people can see you, you see the windows of everybody. You see families living there but at the same time you also think that, if you were in their flat, you would see me in the kitchen. If you wanted to be surveilling at somebody, this is the kind of place to do it. And the truth is that we all do, we all are as in *The Rear Window* idea of this. If you had a broken leg, you would be sitting looking through the window to your neighbours.

E.G.A. And knowing that they are also seeing you. People gaze and at the same they are also gazed.

L.W. Yes. In Jane's case the backhouse is shadow and reflection, intimist, I don't know, the body in the floor... I started to think about it because at the beginning of staying in an apartment block in Berlin and it has this window to the backhouse. And

to and fro, to and fro this girl goes to the backhouse. I was also thinking of the buildings opposite the square and the people who used to live in them before. It's a house in the east of the city, which is very close to the cemetery and if you know those stones there, these cobblestones with the names engraved of the people that you know they had been taken away by the Nazis. This is uncomprehensive and you get an idea of these people who were taken away and murdered and they probably lived in the same house that I was. This idea is what happens to Jane with Greta and I suppose maybe she wouldn't be so interested if it were not for the presence of Anna and the idea of what had happened to Greta could happen to her and then she feels this need to protect her because she is a child rather than a woman, even though Anna sees herself as a woman.

E.G.A. In an interview after *The Bullet Trick*, you are asked about the possibility of reading some biographical facts in your novels and if that Berlin was your Berlin. You answered that you couldn't have written on your own experience in Berlin as you hadn't been there before writing the novel. Can you still say the same after writing *The Girl on the Stairs*. For example, she used to work in a bookshop before moving to Berlin.

L.W. That's a good point. Jane is a bit different. Jane is probably slightly colder than I am. She is definitely a more definite person, even though there is a lot of hesitation in the novel. Yes, I think she's rather different and yet your own experience goes in her: the streets that Jane is occupying, these couple of streets, are very much part of them are I used to live in in Berlin. The idea of the backhouse is very much taken from the place where we were staying, but their apartment is very different. It was a very normal apartment and I wanted them to have... I wanted to take away the economic imperative and I wanted them not to have financial problems so that the other problems could be larger in a way. That is why the apartment is very, very nice, which we didn't have. I guess much of the knowledge that many people have on their own life and the bookshop thing, I wanted her to be engaged with books, with novels, with the idea that there are many different lives that you read and so she has this imaginative capacity or tendency, as well as being a straightforward, down to earth person. So I wanted readers to have reasons to trust Jane and I guess the first reason is that she is a woman (LAUGHTER) because still in western society we don't have so many experts in companies that are women and so, unconsciously, I thought that the fact that she was a person who had less authority, the fact that she is gay, the fact that

she is a lesbian, might lead some people to mistrust her a little bit. The fact that she is pregnant, the fact that she is in a new country, that she is home alone, all these things... but of course there are reasons why we should trust her and one of them is the evidence she hears and also the idea that there might have been something in her past are both the reasons to trust her and mistrust her: maybe something must have happened to her, as we suspect, but maybe it is also the reason why she knows what she is talking about and maybe we should trust her.

E.G.A. But she has killed a man.

L.W. (LAUGHTER) I guess also this idea of... in Britain recently there has been this big, big scandal with entertainers, people who work in the world of entertainment and comedy and the radio were using their popularity to abuse young girls. People that, some to be honest as a child you thought: "oh, I find them frightening"... so this idea that children were scared of these people and negative assumptions, but this people are part of the British world.

E.G.A. Maybe we fictionalize monsters so much as so different from human beings, like werewolves, and then we realize that sometimes monsters are just next to us.

L.W. Absolutely. I hope fortunately it will get better as time goes on. The idea that Dr Mann is respectable and he does this charity work... all the reasons that we trust him are also reasons we might question him as well. And that's unfortunate but it is also part of life and perhaps in my books the people like Rilke become the people we really trust and other people who are more respectable. It's a bit Scottish, I suppose.

E.G.A. There is a funny line in *Naming the Bones* when Murray is talking to Mrs Garrett and she says: "this is my son, Lewis" and he asks: "like RLS" and she replies: "yes, but with a different spelling." It's a bit like appropriating some traditions but, at the same time, changing them. This is us, this is not our past, we are changing that.

L.W. If we read how a person used to live a hundred years ago, we're living much better now. This is a better time to live. (LAUGHTER).

E.G.A. When Roland Barthes was writing about the reader's role, he mentions that sometimes, when you are reading, you look up from the book, making connections with life, images, things you've read somewhere else... My question is: do you write looking up from the book?

L.W. Not always. Sometimes I go away from one to six weeks if I can and sometimes I make a conscious decision to try to move away from anything that makes life worthwhile (laughter). You leave your friends and family and all of this. I try to keep my eyes open, read a lot, I read newspapers, listen to the radio: I want to be connected to the world and I think that is the only way to write something which is relevant. Ideas come from being connected. And that's also part of the reason why I have this little office here rather than writing at home: at home I don't have the experiences of the world and I like to walk through the city or take the underground if the weather is not so good and thus you get your eyes open.

E.G.A. I guess we also have this ideal of a writer but it also means sitting by the desk with the computer on, and to be thinking and thinking and maybe you write a lot... or little.

L.W. Yes, it is a job, actually and you're very lucky to be able to do it, as there are many people who can't. Poets, for example, they need another occupation. It is also why I like working in cooperation as well: the novels are long tasks that you do solo. I am working with some friends in a project for the Commonwealth with architects and we are going to curate a show on Glasgow slavery and Scottish slavery, and we're bringing Scottish Caribbean writers... and poets and filmmakers and they are all coming together for seven days and there will be a series of events. I guess things like that make you feel you are not alone and it's fun talking to other people and getting different ideas and find out other visions. I participate in a radio programme and that's wonderful because you get to read books, you have to read newspaper articles and to find information and... you become an expert. And you interview people who really know what you are talking about and you also get to places you normally don't get access to. You enjoy that, and when I was a bookseller, you go to people's houses. I like all of that because otherwise you get too lonely. Big writers do... well, I think that is why they drink so much. As a writer you can't be lonely, you have to go out.

E.G.A. As I said before, I feel some kind of identification with Murray Watson. When he eventually meets Christie, she says: "have you deliberately styled yourself to look like Archie Lunan?" as he has been so obsessed with his life. But in my case, I have focussed on your novels and not your biography, and I think I read myself in your novels. That's why I imagined that, when I met you, it would be the opposite, that you would be styled like me.

L.W. Oh, it's funny. That's nice thought, and maybe why I'm leaving those gaps so people can occupy the novels as well so they could be part of it. That's the nicest thing because I spend a lot of my time occupied in other people's books being part of those books and filling some parts of them. I went to Edinburgh to a talk about Muriel Spark and the woman on the platform was dressed very smartly and it was as if they had been thinking so much of Muriel Spark that they had chosen this lady because of that.

E.G.A. Something that I find interesting in your novels is insults: there are lots of insults, such as “poof”. Besides, there is another one that I consider quite remarkable, which is “whore.” Jane hears that, though in German, through the wall; or Sylvie, who is insulted when she is caught giving oral sex to Kolja. On the one hand, my question is whether insults create some kind of power relation those who are insulting and those insulted. On the other hand, it reminded me of the word “queer,” which was originally an insult but people appropriated it. In fact, Sylvie says: “what’s so bad about being called a whore?”

L.W. In that book, that insult is really important. In the film, *Pandora's Box*, the woman played by Louise Brooks dies because she is a whore and that is one part of the narration when she ends up in a situation alone with the man who is going to kill her because she is a prostitute herself. In case of the moral art of that story, the convention demands that she must be killed. But in my novel, she doesn't get killed and there are many, many, many worse things than being sexually open or free. It makes me think of a graphic writer who used a word and we asked: “what does it mean? What does that word mean?” and he said: “I can't tell you” but he eventually explained: “well, it is a girl who is a prostitute but it is worse than that because she wouldn't take money for the sex.” So this idea of morality is, you know, really important in that moment of the book. In terms of Jane, I guess I wanted to use a word she could recognize, her German is quite elementary, and the word is not so different. Some words carry better than other the meaning in just a one-syllable word that you might think you've heard or you might have not. Besides, you can imagine somebody saying that but it wouldn't mean that he is going to kill her, you know, she is at a point when she is discovering her sexuality and that can be very difficult... Yes, I wanted to leave the possibility that she might have heard that, she might not. Besides, it might not imply much, but it is definitely a word related to sex.

E.G.A. When Jane confronts the skinheads, one of them is translating what Anna says in German into English and he says: “she says her father was a *whoremeister*.” This hybrid word might imply that he is dealing with prostitutes, but at the same time, he is the husband of a prostitute.

L.W. Yes, that sort of ambiguity... and I like the idea that the skinhead is actually the speaking character. You quite often see young men like that in French, German trains, sitting and you never know if it is a style thing, sometimes you never know.

E.G.A. Perhaps it is a kind of constructed masculinity in the same way as girls become burlesque.

L.W. Yes, and there is also, as you know, this ultramasculine man that are also gay. You have that very difficult thing for gay men, who are meant to be very glamorous but in this case it is very masculine. There is a funny bit in *Trainspotting*, where one of the characters wants to look like his father and he grows a moustache, which is very masculine, but at that point in the 1990s is quite gay style.

E.G.A. Like the Village People.

L.W. Yes. And the father doesn't realize, he's quite pleased with it, but the next day the moustache is gone.

E.G.A. I'm remembering now when Montgomery approaches William Wilson in the Irish pub. They're sitting together, as Montgomery is holding a gun and one of the punters in the pub says: “You're a pair of poofs.” William sees in that his possibility to escape and he says he is being harassed. The punter keeps on insulting them until he discovers that Montgomery is a police officer. Then, he backs up and says: “I've nothing against gay people. As I say, live and let live.”

L.W. There is some comedy there. I picked a guidebook in a bookshop because I wanted to see what it said about Glasgow attitudes to gay people: if it weren't a good idea to be gay or if everything was marvellous and people were happy. And it said that, in general, it's ok to be gay in Glasgow but you wouldn't like to walk holding hands. And I thought it was quite right. All in all it is a very tolerant city, but not everybody is tolerant, so you know, you just have to be careful. So that idea of live and let live... You see there have been a lot of changes, but it hasn't changed the same all over the world, essentially with regard to prejudices and violence. When you think of your own country, you think things are ok, but they could change, with economic problems, a change of government, all that can change.

E.G.A. When Jane is talking to Jurgen, they mention they feel they're becoming too bourgeois: they take their partners to work parties, they can choose whether they want to have children or not...

L.W. Yes, we have this proximity... I suppose it is also when they talk about things like marriage, it seems they are also very boring. In the case of Jane and Petra, I think Petra is more into it, she likes it.

E.G.A. And Petra is the one who hardly changes in the novel, as she is very similar at the end. Jane, on the other hand, changes physically, she rebels against her own body, as when she smokes, which is a kind of weapon against Petra, as she seems to claim that she can do what she wants with her body.

L.W. There is some kind of ambiguity there, as to readers, now in the West in the twenty-first century, seeing a pregnant woman smoking is quite shocking. If you went into a bar and you saw a pregnant woman with a glass of wine and a cigarette, you really would feel shocked. But women of my mother's used to smoke when they were pregnant, some of them would have a glass of wine. I think that is another reason why the reader might trust a hundred per cent Jane because she does these things, she smokes. In American films, there is always this sign that says that when somebody smokes, they are not sexy or mysterious, they are morally compromised.

E.G.A. And you get this TV series like *Mad Men*, where everybody smokes and drinks, and it portrays a glamorous New York and the world of advertising... they are telling you the world was like that before.

L.W. I haven't watched that yet though I've heard it's quite good. I guess this idea of capitalism, which is always present and we occupy this world but... Is it the best model? Is it a consistent model? Well... I don't know.

E.G.A. Returning to your novels, there are some characters who become commodities in a sense. Rilke is in the world of auctions and he knows how to sell things, but he also discovers the world of prostitution, where girls are sold as commodities. Or in the case of Sylvie, they say there is a rich American who is going to pay a lot of money to see her shot to death. Money can buy lots of things.

L.W. I guess, just about anything. I come from a normal background, everybody worked and if you enjoyed your work, that was a great thing, but it was a bit like going to school: you have to go but it was not expected that you enjoyed it. My father was a sales agent and he had the satisfaction of working but his real life was the family life. For some other people it would have been their hobby or being into

nature. Work itself wasn't so satisfying. I guess that idea that you sell your labour is part of the way the system works. For me, I feel I find this incredible escape, this amazing escape. With my friends we used to play this game of what we would be doing in ten years' time and I think of myself as a very old lady cuddling drunks in return for a free drink... and you're right, the idea of commodification, of selling oneself. When I wrote *The Cutting Room*, I was aware of the women trafficking in Glasgow and that was quite shocking: we thought of ourselves as a country that had social problems, but we didn't think we had such a social problem as prostitution. The prostitution that took place was associated with drug-addiction, and that's horrible, because you could think that the problem would be solved if people stopped taking drugs, it would be solved. But the idea that there were people paying for girls is a real shock. Scotland has always been a largely socialist country and that doesn't go with it.

E.G.A. It is kind of a globalising side effect, and it is quite hard to solve as it is global issue, an international issue. There are mafias operating here but also in many other parts of the world.

L.W. I guess it is that idea of that supplying demand, that there are these international gangs that are trafficking with these poor men and women. Here if it were for the fact that people here are engaged with it and that is what's shocking: that we have people that somehow want to use these services and I guess it's the opposite of the burlesque, isn't it? The Berlin cabaret... there's fun in the burlesque and it engages a set of boundaries and that is something completely different. With regard to prostitution, it is the commerce, the violence of the commerce that is the horrible aspect of it.

E.G.A. Now that you mention the burlesque, there is a difference between the shooting of Derek's porn video or the photographs that Rilke finds and Anne-Marie, who is very burlesque, obliging those attending her show to use polaroids so that they can only take photographs which cannot be reprinted or manipulated, whereas other pictures can be manipulated or not. In burlesque there is this kind of control.

L.W. Absolutely. With Dita von Teese, I like her style and attitude, she is just such a pleasure, and I guess this idea of the Camera Club is naturalistic and fun, literally fun. This camera clubs did kind of exist, not perhaps as elaborate as that, but in principle perhaps, photography clubs where men came and there was a model. I think there are also different elements in these camera clubs as these men may not have ever seen a

naked woman before. Behind this, somehow... I loved writing about that. Maybe there is an element, although they are very different countries, an element of that danger that Anna might feel, that Anna might have, I mean, this small element of danger of Anne-Marie as well, as she has his brother who is a bouncer, and yet she takes her step too far. This idea of stepping the line, which is part of the crime fiction and gothic conventions: that last drink that you shouldn't have had, that unwise moment when you do something which is wrong.

E.G.A. And in the case of Sylvie, you imagine that if you had to face that situation, you would never shoot her, but maybe you are there and you pull the trigger.

L.W. Yes, I guess those crimes, well, I don't know what is like in Spain, but you quite often read about these crimes, which I think it is a bit how I imagine that Christopher Marlowe died in real life. They were sitting there, drinking, in a very hot day, they had their swords, all these men together, they had this bragging... most of the murders that happen in Glasgow are between friends, something's gone wrong and then everybody is very sorry: somebody is dead and somebody else is going to jail... a disaster, you know. These are the real murders, not the elaborate.

E.G.A. In Spain we are really concerned about the violence against women and it is even a legal term and a law to protect women who are killed by their partners. And maybe they are a family living next to your apartment and one day he kills her and he commits suicide, or not...

L.W. I guess we have similar campaigns here. When I was a child, for a man to beat his wife the police would come round and the police would say, we can't do anything about this, you have to solve it as it is part of the domestic problems and in the last fifteen, twenty years, it's completely changed and the attitude towards it is that it is a crime.

E.G.A. Something which is quite unrelated to all this is the idea of triangles. I mean, Christie is drawn as a triangle in the papers that Murray finds in the library. On the one hand, triangles are related to magic and on the other it is related to femininity.

L.W. Strange that you should say this because I have... I don't think I've consciously thought of this. (LAUGHTER) But in the book I'm finishing at the moment Stevie is sitting in a car and she draws a triangle on the windscreen, she writes the names of the people who are involved and there is this visual image of the triangle. I don't know,

but it's there. I think a triangle is strong structure and uneven, unbalanced, but I don't know. (LAUGHTER).

E.G.A. I think it also questions the binaries we have in mind, like man/woman, male/female, gay/straight. Besides, in your novels, most of the characters are related into triangular relations. They are entangled into a kind of labyrinth where most of them are connected in one angle. Besides, these relationships are not simply sexual, but also familiar... and even some false triangles, as in the case of Lunan-Christie-Miranda, as he is not her real father.

L.W. It's strange, because I can see all that now but it was not a conscious thing. Maybe it is the imbalance, if it were a square it would be more complete, I guess in my narratives all this tension and imbalance, maybe it's that and that's very strange that you should say that because it's interesting that there are so many triangles that show.

E.G.A. Besides, reality is not that simple to classify. It is not a matter of whether this is good or bad, true or false, this is queer and this is straight. Things are more confusing than that.

L.W. Yes, and I think in terms of sexuality and gender... the book I've just finished, I don't think there isn't any clear character in it. It is interesting for me because when I am writing I do know all about characters: I know Stevie is a straight woman and that's all very straightforward. There aren't any clearly queer characters in the book and in *Naming the Bones*, they are all straight.

E.G.A. But women are very strong, they are not "typical" women... Christie knows how to perform with her body, what to do with her child and she evens sends Fergus straight into hell.

L.W. In Lismore there are many of this limekilns and they have these little things that say don't come closer. And you imagine how dangerous it may be as it is not a nice prospect. For me, I really like Fergus in that book. Maybe that is something I feel... you want to try and get better as a writer and I feel in *The Cutting Room*, the bad character I think it's too bad, I would like him to be more nuanced. And the character as a narrator... I like now to have like a summary of their point of view, and trying to look at everything from their point of view. Now I would also like to see things from his point of view... nobody can simply be such a terrible person, and he can explain: I did this thing and there is this reason. I can feel he loves his wife and these things

with his [Fergus's] wife makes him more human, you know, he is not a nice person but probably by trying and being with the right company, who knows.

E.G.A. He also uses her in this kind of sexual game of sharing her with other colleagues as long as they don't know. That's why Rachel feels betrayed: Murray receives the photograph and that was not what the game was about.

L.W. Yes, he crossed the line and he went too far... So, academics are very strange, you know. (LAUGHTER) I like the obsession one must have with your topic. And I think it's the same with academic study, scientific study... In the case of Murray, his obsession with his book and his father's death isolates him. And his relationship with his brother and the fight isolates him a little bit more. In a sense I think the sabbatical comes to Murray in the wrong time. If he'd had more lectures, he would have tutorials, but actually he passes time and time researching and that's his enemy.

E.G.A. I also like the idea of Hell in your novels. Marlowe writes that hell is on this earth and we live in it. Characters actually fall into hell, like Father Walter, who commits suicide, Anna falls into the well of the stairs or Fergus into the limekiln.

L.W. For Anna, that's not a just death, you know, that's undeserved, that's an undeserved death. She didn't deserve that to happen and it is a dreadful thing. With Fergus, he shouldn't have walked across that, he's taken many roads that he shouldn't have taken. And he's been told don't walk along that path. When that happens I wanted readers to think, yes, I knew that was going to happen but I didn't see it before. I studied a degree in History and specialized in Medieval and I guess I was fascinated by how concrete Hell seemed to be and how people could actually see it: it was painted in glass windows and books. It's common thought to think how people was in Hell, there is a perspective and stuff, but this is mainly a matter of faith. For me, I'm more like Marlowe and this idea of maybe finding it on Earth, you know.

E.G.A. When Marlowe goes to the tavern and meets Bayne... well, from a contemporary perspective, it is as if he were going to a gay bar with his gaydar on and Bayne is the one who responds, the one who gazes back. Marlowe emits some signals with his gaze and recognizes - and is recognized in - Bayne.

L.W. Like a click, yes. It must be great for a gay man to be able to do that. That makes things much easier. Now you have Grindr to do that. Yeah, the Bayne's stuff is something that I found on what we know about Christopher Marlowe: some things are true and some things are not. And with Bayne, we know that this document exists and

we don't know if Bayne actually heard Marlowe say that or whether he was simply making it up, but what we know is that it is a document from the time. But for me, I think we can hear Marlowe's voice in it, it feels true... I don't think he just make it up just because of the way he says it. The discovery of that document is really nice because the Tudors collected so much stuff, they had so much surveillance and it was a bit like wikileaks or something like that. They had so much material that you can't go through it and historians are still working their way through it. I heard this historian discovered this document and the library is about to close and he runs to get a copy done because the library would shut... I love the drama of that moment of the man discovering this document and... I was trying hard to know how to fit this story of the historian in the novel but I didn't know how to do that...

E.G.A. Talking about documents, there are lots of photographs in your novels. As a writer, are pictures worth a thousand words?

L.W. I think most writers pretend to be painters but the painters would rather be writers. Directors would like to be actors... We prefer the other art form because we don't know how difficult it is. I take lots of pictures, I've got a lot of books on photography, I like photography exhibitions, I use the web to see a lot of photographs, I like this idea that everybody has a camera now. I think it helps us to see. I'm not a very good photographer myself. When I'm doing some research for a book, I take photos and then I think out of the blue that I I print them printed out and then I don't look at the so much. It is almost like the act of taking a photo... For instance, I have this book now of photographs of abandoned buildings and it's a bit like trying to get into another world. As you mentioned before a photograph shows and it doesn't show, we can't see around the corner and we don't know what happened before and what happens afterwards, just this moment. Possibly the tantalising nature of it as well. I like these street photographs of city centres and it feels as if you could almost go there but not, it is the past. And the same happens with movies, we've got movies no that are quite interactive and still we cannot move to the past. As I said, I find photography very helpful in my work: what were things made of. You know, this having worked with second-hand books or second-hand clothes is still a big influence: in a couple of hours in a second-hand bookstore you can learn a huge amount. I also spend some time in the library, and University libraries are very quiet, nobody speaks to each other, you sit there with your books and I like the idea that you get to find a

book but there is another book next to it that you didn't know it existed and you pick it.

E.G.A. Actually, related to the idea of reading your novels, I have the impression that they are not linear in the sense that, even though you read them from the beginning to the end, you also read them in a Wikipedia way, as if you had to click on some words or names and read about them, as in the case of Crippen.

L.W. In my office over here I don't have a computer and I have it at home but if I were at home writing I would be watching these programmes on literature because it is too enjoyable! Yes, I switch all of that off, I need some discipline. I think with the books in the library is a bit like that, there is chapter and you start reading about topics in it in other books... By the way, how did you know about the new book?

E.G.A. Well, first I'm one of your followers in Twitter and you twitted recently that you were copy-editing your new book and that the title was *A Lovely Way to Burn*. I googled that and in amazon.co.uk your novel is advertised as a forthcoming novel for 2014 and it also provides a very brief summary of the plot.

L.W. That's interesting because the web is quite amazing, isn't it? I love twitter actually, although I tweet too much.

E.G.A. That is also interesting because, even though you tweet a lot, there is hardly any ICT in your novels: I think Murray has got some problems with the signal of his mobile phone, the photographs he receives via e-mail. Petra and Jane are talking about lezbofun.com... Thinking that we are living that future society for Marlowe, this doesn't seem so future with regard to technology.

L.W. It's true. As you say, it is not too technological. In the book I've just finished, there is a laptop with some documents and Stevie kind of becomes an expert with it, she has to spend some time with it but part of the thing is that everything is collapsing, so the web collapses, the technology collapses. I don't know but the technology and the internet for me are not very dynamic and... I know some people are able to do that, but I don't know how to make it dramatic in a book. In movies you can always see the computer screen and all this stuff and you think, ok, we have to go through this for the plot but it is not interesting, and I think it's that, in a book it is something I find it difficult to invest with drama. I have this friend who is an electronic composer and she took us to see some and the guys making music from their laptop and even though it was good music we thought: there is no point in going to this live performance because it's just three men and they are just there standing

and it is like... they're not dancing, they're not wearing dance clothes... and that is a little bit why I find it hard to dramatize it so much. But I also know there are people who know how to dramatize it really well. Not me, anyway.

E.G.A. As I said, thanks to twitter I knew about your novel. Now with Google, things are very simple now.

L.W. Yes, and I use the computer quite a lot, but in chunks, and now I have this new telephone which is as if it were my computer, which is quite outstanding.

E.G.A. And it is your access to the world. In my case, I don't know now any telephone number because they are all in there. So the moment its battery is off, I cannot even phone my parents.

L.W. Yes, and that is a disaster. I think phones can help us and now you can even check what path you should take to get to a point. I guess in the next two books, the technology is going to be collapsed. (LAUGHTER). I grew up in the seventies and eighties and I did sincerely believe a nuclear bomb would drop and I've always been a bit afraid of technology. That is why, in the back of my mind, I thought: we have to keep concrete records of things in case something happens: the internet can go down, and that's why I thought about writing about what would happened if everything collapsed...

The conversation was over once she realized she had to return to the Briggait as she had a meeting there with other artists. I gave her a bottle of Rioja wine as a token of gratitude for the opportunity of meeting her and hearing her own version of my readings and she thanked me for it and said: "You also knew I like wine thanks to Twitter, didn't you?"

On our walk back to the Briggait, she explained that there was a project afoot to have the bell of the tower working again, which according to her was an excellent opportunity to get access to the tower and have a privileged view of the city. Once there, she said goodbye and told me not to hesitate if I needed anything. Once she entered the building, I started my walk towards Saint Mungo's Cathedral, under a heavier and heavier rain, leaving Louise Welsh then and there.

WORKS CITED

- Aguilera Linde, Mauricio D. "Spaceships and Vampires: Sexual Dissidence in Tennessee William's 'The Knightly Quest'" in *ATLANTIS. Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies*, volume 34, issue 2, December, 2012. 67-83.
- Aguirre, Manuel. *The Closed Space: Horror Fiction and Western symbolism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990.
- Aguirre, Manuel. "The Phasing of Form: A Liminalist Strategy in Fairytales" in Sutton, Philip C. (ed.) *Betwixt-and-between. Essays in Liminal Geography*. The Gateway Press: Madrid, 2002. 13-28.
- Aguirre, Manuel, Roberta Quance and Philip Sutton. *Margins and Thresholds. An Enquiry into the Concept of Liminality in Text Studies*. Madrid: The Gateway Press, 2000.
- Ahmed, Sara. "Orientations. Toward a Queer Phenomenology" in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, volume 12, issue 4, 2006. 543-574.
- Allan, Ben. "Interview with Louise Welsh," www.booksfromScotland.com, last modified: 25 August 2010. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality*. London: Graham Allen Press, 2000.
- Alter, Nicola "Gothic Spaces in Fantasy Fiction: The Creation of Place in Garth Nix's *Sabriel*" in Wieckowska, Katarzyna (ed) *The Gothic: Studies in History, Identity and Space*. Oxford: The Interdisciplinary Press, 2012. 43-51.
- Anderson, Lessley. "Snuff: Murder and torture on the internet, and the people who watch it," www.theverge.com, 13th June, 2012. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Armitt, Lucie. "The Fragile Frames of *The Bloody Chamber*" in Bristow, Joseph and Trev Lynn Broughton (eds.) *The Infernal Desires of Angela Carter*. London: Longman, 1997.
- Ascari, Maurizio. *A Counter-History of Crime Fiction. Supernatural, Gothic, Sensational*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Bakhtin, Michel. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

- Bal, Mieke. "Narration and Focalization" in Bal, Mieke, *A Mieke Bal Reader*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. 3-39.
- Ballaster, Ros. "Wild Nights and Buried Letters: The Gothic 'Unconscious' of Feminist Criticism" in Sage, Victor and Allan Lloyd Smith (eds.), *Modern Gothic. A Reader*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press. 1996. 58-70
- Ballesteros González, Antonio. "La construcción del superhéroe en el cómic americano. Visiones de una épica (post) moderna: los orígenes de Marvel" in Ballesteros, Antoni and Claude Duée (eds.) *Cuatro lecciones sobre el cómic*. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. 2000. 67-95.
- Ballesteros González, Antonio. "De las locas del desván a Lisbeth Salander: Paradigmas de la violencia de género en la narrativa gótica y fantástica anglonorteamericana del siglo XIX" in *Herejía y Belleza: Revista de estudios culturales sobre el movimiento gótico*, Issue 1, 2013. 93-103.
- Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida — Reflections on Photography*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.
- Barthes, Roland. *The Rustle of Language*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 1989.
- Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. New York: The Noonday Press. 1991. 24-26.
- Barthes, Roland. *The Semiotic Challenge*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994. 179-190.
- Bassett, Jonathan, Sharon Pearcey and James M. Dabbs. "Jealousy and Partner Preference among butch and femme lesbians" in *Psychology, Evolution & Gender*. volume 3, issue 2, August, 2001. 155-165.
- Bayer-Berenbaum, Linda. *The Gothic Imagination*. London and Toronto: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982.
- Beauvoir, Simone de, *The Second Sex*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- Beaver, Bruce. "Homosexual Signs (*In Memory of Roland Barthes*)" in *Critical Inquiry*, volume 8, issue 1, 1981. 99-119.
- Bennett, Tony. "Marxism and Popular Culture and 'the Turn to Gramsci'" in Humm, Peter, Paul Stigant and Peter Widdowson *Popular Fictions: Essays in Literature and History*. London: Methuen, 1986. 237-265.

- Berlant, Lauren and Michael Waner. "What Does Queer Theory Teach Us about X?" in *PLMA*, volume 110, issue 2, 1995. 343-349.
- Berlant, Lauren and Michael Waner. "Sex in Public" in Corber, Robert J. and Stephen Valocchi (eds.), *Queer Studies. An Interdisciplinary Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. 170 - 183.
- Berná Serna, David. "Cartografías desde los Márgenes. Gitanos gays en el estado español" in Platero, Raquel (Lucas) (ed.), *Intersecciones: cuerpos y sexualidades en la encrucijada*. Barcelona: Edicions bellaterra, 2012. 217-231.
- Bersani, Leo. "Is the Rectum a Grave?" in Crimp, Douglas (ed.), *AIDS: Cultural Analysis / Cultural Activism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1988.
- Beyer, Catherine. "Circles. Common Meanings of Geometric Shapes," <http://altreligion.about.com>. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Billingham, Susanne E. "Fraternizing with the Enemy: Constructions of Masculinity in the Short Fiction of Timothy Findley" in *Yearbook of English Studies* volume 31, 2001. 205-217.
- Bleiler, Richard J. *Reference Guide to Mystery and Detective Fiction*. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1999.
- Bloom, Clive. "Introduction: Death's Own Backyard. The Nature of Modern Gothic and Horror Fiction" in Bloom, Clive (ed.), *Gothic Horror. A Reader's Guide from Poe to King and Beyond*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1998. 1-22.
- Bloom, Clive. "Horror Fiction: In Search for a Definition" in Punter, David (ed.) *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 155-166
- Bloom, Harold. *Clinamen: Towards a Theory of Fantasy*" in Slusser, George E., Eric S. Rabkin and Robert Scholes (eds.) *Bridges to Fantasy*, Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982.
- Bloom, Harold. *The Western Canon*. London: Macmillan, 1995.
- Botting, Fred. "In Gothic Darkly: Heterotopia, History, Culture" in Punter, David (ed.) *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 3-14.
- Botting, Fred. *Gothic* London: Routledge, 2002a.
- Botting, Fred. "Aftergothic: Consumption, Machines and Black Holes" in Hogle, Jerrold E. *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002b. 277-300.

- Bould, Mark. "What Kind of Monster Are You? Situating the Boom" in *Science Fiction Studies*. volume 30, issue 3, November, 2003. 394-416.
- Briggs, Julia. 'The Ghost Story' in Punter, David (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 122-131.
- Briscoe, Alexandra. "Poverty in Elizabethan England," <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history>, Last updated 17th, February, 2011. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Bronfen, Elisabeth. *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992.
- Brooke-Rose, Christine. *A Rhetoric of the Unreal: Studies in Narrative and Structure, Especially of the Fantastic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Brown, Jack and Doug Graham. "Body Satisfaction in Gym-active Males: An Exploration of Sexuality, Gender, and Narcissism" in *Sex Roles*, volume 59, 2008. 94–106.
- Brown, Windy M., Christopher J. Finn, Bradley M. Cooke and S. Marc Breedlove. "Differences in Finger Length Ratios Between Self-Identified 'Butch' and 'Femme' Lesbians" in *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*, volume 31, issue 1 February, 2002. 117-121.
- Bruhm, Steven. "Picture This: Stephen King's Queer Gothic" in Punter, David (ed.), *A companion to the Gothic*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 269-280.
- Burgin, Victor. "Looking at Photographs" in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 130-137.
- Burn, Shawn Meghan. "Heterosexuals' Use of 'Fag' and 'Queer' to Deride One Another: A Contributor to Heterosexism and Stigma" in *Journal of Homosexuality*, volume 40, 2000. 1–11.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London and New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter. On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*. London and New York: Routledge, 1993a.
- Butler, Judith. "Critically Queer" in *GLQ. A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, Volume 1, Number 1, November, 1993b. 17-32.
- Butler, Judith. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Butler, Judith. *Frames of War. When is Life Grievable?* London, New York: Verso, 2009.

- Cameron, Claire. "The Academic Life? It's Murder" in www.theglobeandmail.com, 23rd December 2010. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Cameron, Deborah and Don Kulick. *Language and Sexuality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Casciari, Hernán. "Unos le dicen 'Bron', otros le dicen 'Broen'" in *eldiario.es*, 11th February, 2014. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Case, Sue-Ellen 'Tracking the Vampire' in *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, volume 3, issue 2, 1991. 1-19.
- Cavallaro, Dani. *The Gothic Vision. Three Centuries of Horror, Terror and Fear*. London and New York: Continuum, 2002.
- Clarkson, Jay. "Contesting Masculinity's Makeover: *Queer Eye*, Consumer Masculinity, and "Straight-Acting" Gays" in *Journal of Communication Inquiry* volume 29, issue 3, July 2005. 235-255.
- Colzato, Lorenza S., Linda van Hooijdonk, Wery P.M. van den Wildenberg and Bernhard Hommel. "Sexual Orientation Biases Attentional Control: a Possible Gaydar Mechanism" in *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7th May, 2010. 1-5.
- Cornwell, Neil. *The Literary Fantastic. From Gothic to Postmodernism*. Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatshead, 1990.
- Cortés, José Miguel G. *Orden y Caos. Un estudio cultural sobre lo monstruoso en el arte*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 1997.
- Crimp, Douglas. "Mourning and Militancy" in *Melancholy and Moralism. Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics*. Massachusetts: MIT, 2002. 129-149.
- Crimp, Douglas. *Posiciones Críticas. Ensayos sobre las políticas de arte y la identidad*. Madrid: Akal, 2005.
- Cueto, Roberto. "Viaje (de ida y vuelta) al terror: El miedo como objeto de consumo" in Domínguez, Vicente (ed.), *Los dominios del miedo*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2002. 43-87.
- Dahl, Ulrika. "Femme on Femme: Reflections on Collaborative Methods and Queer Femm-inist Ethnography" in *SQS*, volume 1, 2011. 1-22.
- Dayan, Daniel. "The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema" in *Film Quarterly*, volume 28, issue 1, Autumn, 1974. 22-31.
- Dean, Tim. *Unlimited Intimacy: Reflections on the Subculture of Barebacking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 2010.

- Dickinson, Peter. *Here is Queer. Nationalisms, Sexualities and the Literatures of Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- Dinshaw, Carolyn, Lee Edelman, Roderick A. Ferguson, Carla Freccero, Elizabeth Freeman, Judith Halberstam, Annamarie Jagose, Christopher Nealon, and Nguyen Tan Hoang. "Theorizing Queer Temporalities. A Roundtable Discussion" in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, volume 13, issue 2-3, 2007. 177-195.
- Dollimore, Jonathan. *Sex, Literature and Censorship*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001.
- Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002 (1966).
- Durden, Michelle. "Not just a Leg Show: Gayness and Male Homoeroticism in Burlesque, 1868 to 1877" in *Thirdspace: A Journal of Feminist Theory & Culture*, volume 3, issue 2, March 2004. 1-18.
- Durie, Alastair, Ian S. Yeoman and Una McMahon-Beattie. "How the History of Scotland Creates a Sense of Place" in *Place Branding*, volume 2, issue 1, 2005. 43-52.
- Eco, Umberto. "A Photograph" in Wells, Liz (ed). *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 126-129.
- Edwards, Tim. *Cultures of Masculinity*. London: Routledge. 2006.
- Fåhraeus, Anna. "Embattled Subjects: The Role of Textual Masculinity in Jeanette Winterson's *Written in the Body*" in *Nordic Journal of English Studies*. volume 7, issue 1, 2008. 81-96.
- Ferreday, Debra. "Adapting Femininities. The New Burlesque" in *M/C Journal. A Journal of Media and Culture*, volume 10, issue 2, May 2007. <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0705/12-ferreday.php> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Ferreday, Debra. "'Showing the Girl': The New Burlesque" *Feminist Theory*, volume 9, issue 47, 2008. 47-65.
- Ferreras, Daniel F. *Lo fantástico en la literatura y el cine. De Edgar A. Poe a Freddy Krueger*. Madrid: Vosa. 1995.
- Fisher, Mark. "Tamburlaine Must Die" in guardian.co.uk/stage, Wednesday, 7th November 2007. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.

- Fonseca, Anthony J. and June Michelle Pulliam. *Hooked on Horror. A guide to Reading Interests in Horror Fiction*. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited Inc., 1999.
- Fonseca Hernández, Carlos and María Luisa Quintero Seco. “La Teoría Queer: la deconstrucción de las sexualidades periféricas” in *Sociológica*, 24, Vol. 24, issue 69. January-April, 2009. 43-60.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punishment*. London: Tavistock, 1977.
- Foucault, Michel. “Sex, Power, and the Politics of Identity” in Rabinow, Paul (ed) *The Foucault Reader*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1997. 340- 372.
- Fowler, Alistair, “The Life and death of Literary Forms” in Cohen, Ralph (ed) *New Directions in Literary History*. London and New York: Routledge, 1974. 77-94.
- France, David. “The Science of Gaydar” in www.nymag.com, 20th June, 2007. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Freedman, Carl. *Critical Theory and Science Fiction*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000.
- Freeman, Hadley. “Black Magic” in www.theguardian.co.uk, Saturday, 12th August, 2006. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- French, R. W.. "Bloom, Harold. The Western Canon [review]" in *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, volume 12, Fall 1994. 117-120.
- Frost, Martin. “The Death of Christopher Marlowe. Interpreting the Coroner's Inquisition on the Death of Marlowe,” <http://martinfrost.ws/welcome.html>. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- García Agustín, Eduardo. “Travelling into the Shadow of Innsmouth” in *British and American Studies*. volume X, 2004. 25-30.
- García Agustín, Óscar. “La teoría del decir: La nueva lingüística según Ortega y Gasset” in *Cuadernos de investigación filológica*, volume xxvi, 2000. 69-80.
- García Agustín, Óscar. *Discurso e institucionalización. Un enfoque sobre el cambio social y lingüístico*. Logroño: Universidad de La Rioja. Servicio de publicaciones, 2010.
- Gelder, Ken. *Reading the Vampire*. London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Germanà, Monica. *Scottish Women's Gothic and Fantastic Writing: Fiction Since 1978*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.

- Goldie, Terry. *Pink Snow. Homotexual Possibilities in Canadian Fiction*. Peterborough Orchard Park: Broadview Press, 2003.
- González-Rivas Fernández, Ana and Francisco García Jurado. "Death and Love in Poe's and Schwob's Readings of the Classics" in *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, volume 10, issue 4, 2008. 1-8.
- González-Rivas Fernández, Ana and Alfonso Muñoz Corcuera. "Gothic Peter Pan," www.inter-disciplinary.net. 2011. 1-13.
- González Salvador, Ana. *Continuidad de lo Fantástico. Por una teoría de la literatura insólita*. Barcelona: El Punto de Vista. Biblioteca de ensayo: Barcelona, 1980.
- Griffiths, Mark. "The Clothes of Play: A Look Inside the World of Uniform Fetishism" in <http://drmarkgriffiths.wordpress.com>. October, 2012. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Grimes, William. "Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, a Pioneer of Gay Studies and a Literary Theorist, Dies at 58," <http://www.nytimes.com>, 15th April, 2009. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. "Experimental Desire: rethinking queer subjectivity" in Copjec, Joan (ed.) *Supposing the Subject*. New York: Verso, 1994. 133-158.
- Guillory, John "The Ideology of Canon-Formation: T. S. Eliot and Cleanth Brooks" in *Critical Inquiry*, volume 10, issue 1, Canons, September, 1983. 173-198.
- Haeming, Anne. *Cultivation as Colonization. The Spatial Basis of Human Creation in the Works of J.M. Coetze and Timothy Findley*. Norderstedt: Books in Demand, 2006.
- Halberstam, Judith. "What's That Smell?: Queer Temporalities and Subcultural Lives" in *The Scholar and Feminist Online*, volume 2, issue 1, Summer 2003. The Barnard Center for Research on Women. www.barnard.edu/sfonline Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Halberstam, Judith. "The Anti-Social Turn in Queer Studies" in *Gender journal of Social Science*, volume 5. issue 2, 2008. 140-156
- Halperin, David. *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Hamon, Phillipe. "Un discours constraint" in *Poétique* 16 (*Le discours réaliste*), 1973. 411-45.

- Hasan, Zia. 2003. "A Castle of Sand: The Theme of Incest in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and The Alexandria Quartet." *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics*, volume 1, 2003. 1-7.
- Heddon, Deidre. "Performing Lesbians: Constructing the Self, Constructing the Community" in Gale, Maggie B. and Viv Gardner (eds.), *Auto/Biography and Identity. Women, Theatre and Performance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004. 217-238.
- Hickey, Phil. "Homosexuality: The Mental Illness that Went Away" in <http://behaviorismandmentalhealth.com>, 8 October, 2011. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Hogle, Jerrold E. "Introduction: The Gothic in Western Culture" in Hogle, Jerrold E. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 1- 20.
- Holinger, Veronica "Fantasies of Absence: The Postmodern Vampire" in Gordon, Joan and Veronica Holinger (eds.), *Blood Read: The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997. 199-212.
- Hollywood, Amy. "Performativity, Citationality, Ritualization" in *History of Religions*, volume 42, issue 2, November, 2002. 93-115.
- Hopkins, Patrick D. "Rethinking Sadomasochism: Feminism, Interpretation and Simulation" in *Hypatia*, volume 9, issue 1, 1994. 116-139.
- Horner, Avril and Sue Zlosnik, "Comic Gothic" in Punter, David (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 242-254.
- Houellebecq, Michel. *H.P. Lovecraft. Contre le monde, contre la vie*. Monaco and Paris: Éditions du Rocher, 1999 (1991)
- Hubbard, Phil. "Opposing Striptopia: The Embattled Spaces of Adult Entertainment" in *Sexualities*. volume 12, issue 6, 2009. 721-745
- Hughes, Beth. "Five Questions for Dita Von Teese," www.sfgate.com, 2007. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Hughes, William. "Fictional Vampires in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" in Punter, David (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 143-154
- Hutcheon, Linda. *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox*. New York and London: Methuen, 1984.

- Hutcheon, Linda. "History and/as Intertext" in Moss, John (ed.). *Future Indicative. Literary Theory and Canadian Literature*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1987. 169 – 184.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *The Canadian Postmodern. A Study of Contemporary English-Canadian Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988a.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Poetics of Postmodernism. History, Theory, Fiction*. London and New York: Routledge, 1988b
- Hutchings, Peter. "Tearing Your Soul Apart: Horror's New Monsters" in Sage, Victor and Allan Lloyd Smith (eds), *Modern Gothic. A Reader*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996. 89-103.
- Irwin, John T. *Unless the Threat of Death Is Behind Them: Hard-Boiled Fiction and Film Noir*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- Isola, Mark John. "Disciplining Desire: The Fluid Textuality of Annie Proulx's 'Brokeback Mountain'" in *Nordic Journal of English Studies*. volume 7 issue 1, 2008. 33-47.
- Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. London and New York: Routledge, 1981
- Jacobsson, Eva-Maria. "A Female Gaze?" in *CID*, volume 51, May 1999. 5-28.
- Jameson, Frederic. "Historicism in *The Shining*," <http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/0098.htm>, 1981. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Jelinková, Ema. "Fictions of Communion: Contemporary Scottish Prose in the Global Context" in *National Literatures in the Globalised World*, Department of English and American Studies. Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. 2008. 75-80.
- Jenks, Chris. *Transgression*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Jermyn, Deborah. "'You Can't Keep a Dead Woman Down: The Female Corpse and Textual Disruption in Contemporary Hollywood.'" in Klaver, Elizabeth (ed.), *Images of the Corpse: From the Renaissance to Cyberspace*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004. 153-168.
- Johnstone, Doug. "Louise Welsh – *The Cutting Room* (2002)" in List.co.uk, 1 January, 2005. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.

- Jones, Amelia and Andrew Stephenson, "Introduction," in A. Jones and A. Stephenson (eds.) *Performing the Body / Performing the Text*. London and New York: Routledge. 1.
- Kahane, Claire. "The Gothic Mirror" in Garner, Shirley Nelson, Claire Kahane and Madelon Springnether (eds.) *The (M)other Tongue*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985. 334-351.
- Katz, Jack. *Seductions of Crime: Moral and Sensual Attractions of Doing Evil*, New York: Basic Books, 1988.
- Katzensteiner, Petra. *Hard-boiled and downright social*. Diplomarbeit, Universität Wien. Philologisch-Kulturwissenschaftliche Fakultät BetreuerIn: Weiss, Rudolf, 2009.
- Keft-Kennedy, Virginia. "Fantasising Masculinity in *Buffyverse* Slash Fiction: Sexuality, Violence, and the Vampire" in *Nordic Journal of English Studies*. volume 7, issue. 1, 2008. 49-80.
- Kelly, Stuart. "Literary Exchanges: Scotland, Europe and World Literature" in *Scottish Writing Exhibition 2011 Catalogue*, Los Angeles, 2011. 1-12.
- Kendig, Connie J. and Nicole Maresca "Guessing Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual's Ability to Accurately Estimate their Gaydar" in *The Id: Graduate Faculty, Psychology Society Bulletin*, volume 2, issue 1, 2004. 71-78.
- Kern, Hermann. *Through the Labyrinth: Designs and Meanings over 5,000 Years*. New York: Prestel, 2000.
- Khatib, Mohammad and Mohammad Reza Ghamari. "Mutual Relations of Identity and Foreign Language Learning: An Overview of Linguistic and Sociolinguistic Approaches to Identity" in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, volume 1, issue 12, December 2011. 1701-1708.
- KhosraviShakib, Mohammad. "Inevitability of Arts from Intertextuality" in *Frontiers of Language and Teaching*, volume 3, 2012. 183-189.
- King, Cornelia "Cremains / Ravens" in Pro Exlibris Archives, 23rd February, 2008. <https://archive.is/44pc6> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- King, Stephen. *Danse Macabre*. London: Futura, 1986.
- Kirk0271. "Did Manson's Music lead to Columbine Massacre?" in "Psych 1001 Section 010 and 011 Fall 2011" October 2, 2011. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.

- Knight, Stephen. *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity*. London: Macmillan, 2004.
- Kristeva, Julia. "Word, Dialogue and Novel" in Roudiez, Leon S. (ed.), *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1980. 64-91.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror. An Essay on Abjection*. Columbia University Press: New York. 1982 (1980).
- Kuhn, Annette. *Family Secrets. Acts of Memory and Imagination* London and New York: Verso, 2002.
- Kuryluk, Ewa. *Salome and Judas in the Cave of Sex: The Grotesque – Origins, Iconography, Techniques*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1987.
- Lacan, Jaques. *Écrits: A Selection*. (1966). Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: W.W. Norton, 1977.
- Lacan, Jaques. "The Mirror Stage" in Gay, Paul du, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman (eds.). *Identity: A Reader*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2000. 44-50.
- Lawson, Mark. "And for her Next Trick..." in *The Guardian*, Saturday, 22 July 2006. <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/jul/22/featuresreviews.guardianreview16> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Leavenworth, Van. *The Gothic in Contemporary Interactive Fictions*. Umeå Studies in Language and Literature, issue 11, 2010.
- Leffler, Yvonne, "Aspects of the Fantastic and the Gothic in Nineteenth-Century Scandinavian Literature" in *Anales. Nueva Epoca*, issue 11, 2008. 49-66
- Lem, Stanislaw. "Todorov's Fantastic Theory of Literature" in *Science Fiction Studies* (www.depauw.edu), volume 1, issue 4, Fall 1974. <http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/4/lem4art.htm> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Lem, Stanislaw. *Microworlds. Writings on Science Fiction and Fantasy*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Achieve Inc., 1985
- Levitt, Heidi M., Elizabeth A. Gerrish and Katherine R. Hiestand. "The Misunderstood Gender: A Model of Modern Femme Identity" in *Sex Roles*, volume 48, issues 3-4, February, 2003. 99-113.

- Levitt, Heidi M. and Katherine R. Hiestand. "Gender within Lesbian Sexuality: Butch and Femme Perspectives" in *Journal of Constructivist Psychology* volume 18, 2005. 39-51.
- Light, Ben, Gordon Fletcher and Alison Adam. "Gay Men, Gaydar and the Commodification of Difference" in *Information Technology & People*, volume 21, issue 3, 2008. 300 – 314
- Llamas, Ricardo. *Teoría torcida. Prejuicios y discursos en torno a "la homosexualidad"*, Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1998.
- Llamas, Ricardo and Francisco Javier Vidarte. *Homografías*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1999.
- Lloyd-Smith, Allan. "Nineteenth-Century American Gothic" in Punter, David (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. 109-121.
- Longueil, Alfred E. 'The Word 'Gothic' in Eighteenth-Century Criticism'. In *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 38, Issue 8. (Dec, 1923). 453-460.
- Lord Byron. *Don Juan*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/21700/21700-h/21700-h.htm>
Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Love, Heather. *Feeling Backward. Loss and the Politics of Queer History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Lovecraft, Howard Philips. "Supernatural Horror in Literature" in Lovecraft, H.P. *Omnibus 2. Dagon and Other Macabre Tales*. London: Harper Collins, 1994. 421-512.
- Lowell, James Russel. "A Fable for Critics," <http://www.readbookonline.net>, 1848.
Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Lukács, Georg. *The Historical Novel*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962.
- MacLeod, Heather. "An Interview with Louise Welsh," www.heathermacleod.co.uk.
24 July, 2012. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Maddison, Stephen. *Fags, Hags and Queer Sisters. Gender Dissent and Heterosocial Bonds in Gay Culture*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000
- Magrs, Paul. "More Tease, Less Strip" in *The Guardian*, Saturday, 31 August, 2002.
<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2002/aug/31/featuresreviews.guardianreview18> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Manuel. "El cuarto oscuro" in <http://unrinconapartado.es/wordpress/2010/08/el-cuarto-oscuro/> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.

- Martin, Robert K. "Introduction" in *Lesbian and Gay Studies*, volume 1, in Robert K. Martin (ed). Special issue of *English Studies in Canada* 20.2, 1994. 125-8.
- Martinez Alfaro, María Jesús. "Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept" in *Atlantis*, XVIII (1-2), 1996. 268-285.
- Maruri, Nicolás. "La ciudad desordenada: El espacio urbano del miedo" in Domínguez, Vicente (ed.), *Los dominios del miedo*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2002. 171-175.
- Mason, Moya K. "Foucault and his Panopticon," www.moyak.com Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Mathews, Richard, *Fantasy. The Liberation of Imagination*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.
- McCaffery, Steve "'To Lose One's Way' (For Snails and Nomads): The Radical Labyrinths of Constant and Arakawa and Gins" in McCaffery, Steve (ed.), *The Darkness of the Present. Poetics, Anachronism, and the Anomaly*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2012.
- McCue, Kirsteen "A Survey of Work on Scottish Women's Writing from 1995" in *Women's Writing*, volume 10, issue 3, 2003. 527-533.
- McDowell, Lesley. "The Cutting Room by Louise Welsh. The Literary Beauty of a Glaswegian Beast", *The Independent*, Friday, 9th August, 2002. <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/the-cutting-room-by-louise-welsh-639353.html> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- McGrath, Roberta. "Re-Reading Edward Weston. Feminism, Photography and Psychoanalysis" in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 327-337.
- McRuer, Robert. "Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence" in Snyder, Sharon L., Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (eds.), *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*. New York: Modern Language Association, 2002. 88-99.
- _____. "As Good as It Gets: Queer Theory and Critical Disability" in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 1-2, 2003, 79-105.
- Michelis, Angelica. "'Dirty Mamma': Horror Vampires, and the Maternal in Late Nineteenth-Century Gothic" in *Critical Survey*, volume 15, issue 3, September 2003. 5-22.

- Miller, Gavin. "Aesthetic Depersonalization in Louise Welsh's *The Cutting Room*" in *Journal of Narrative Theory*, volume 36, issue 1, winter, 2006. 72-89.
- MMWR (2001) "HIV and AIDS – United States, 1981-2000," <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5021a2.htm> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Moholy-Nagy, László. "A New Instrument of Vision" in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 92-96.
- Morris, Wright. "In Our Image" in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 67-75.
- Mulvey, Laura. "A phantasmagoria of the female body: The Work of Cindy Sherman," *New Left Review*, issue 188, July/August 1991. 137-150.
- Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" in Braudy, Leo and Marshall Cohen (eds.), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 833-844.
- Munt, Sally R. *Murder by the Book? Feminism and the Crime Novel*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Muñoz, José Estebán. *Cruising Utopia. The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York and London: New York University Press. 2009.
- Mäyra, Frans Ilkka. *Demonic Texts and Textual Demons. The Demonic Tradition, the Self and Popular Fiction*. Tampere: Tampere University Press, 1999.
- Nelson, Sara. "CSI Proves Dr Crippen was Innocent: DNA Tests Reveal Remains in the Cellar 'Were not his Wife,'" www.dailymail.co.uk, updated 17th January 2011. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Newton, Esther. *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.
- Nichol, Mark M. "The SS Laurentic & the SS Montrose: A story of Murder, disguise, and a Trans-Atlantic Chase," www.titanic-whitestarships.com . Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Nicholas, Cheryl L. "Gaydar: Eye-Gaze as Identity Recognition among Gay Men and Lesbians" in *Sexuality & Culture*, volume 8, issue 1, winter 2004. 60-86.
- Nicholson, John. "On Sex and Horror" in Bloom, Clive (ed.), *Gothic Horror. A Reader's Guide from Poe to King and Beyond*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1998. 249-277.

- Norton, Rictor. *Mother Clap's Molly House: The Gay Subculture in England, 1700-1830*. East Haven: Inbook, 1994.
- Oates, Joyce Carol. "The King of Weird" in *The New York Review of Books*, www.nybooks.com, 31st October, 1996. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014..
- O'Clarke, Eric. *Virtuous Vice. Homoeroticism and the Publish Sphere*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000.
- O'Rourke, Michael. "The Afterlives of Queer Theory" in *Continent*, 2012. 125-144.
- Pais Belín, Laura. "Joya del día. *Overflow IV* de Jaume Plensa," <http://portal.protecuri.org>, 31st May, 2010. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Palacios, Jesús. "Los escenarios del miedo. Un recorrido por los espacios del terror" in Domínguez, Vicente (ed.), *Los dominios del miedo*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2002. 193-215.
- Parker, Emma. "Magic, Diaspora, and Klezbian Desire in Judith Katz's *The Escape Artist*," in *Textual Practice*, volume 25, issue 4, 2011. 689-710.
- Parsons, Nicholas. *The Book of Literary Lists. A Collection of Annotated Lists, Statistics, and Anecdotes Concerning Books*. London: Harper Collins, 1986.
- Payn, Graham. *My Life with Noël Coward*. New York and Tonbridge: Applause Books, 1994.
- Pearson, Kerri. "The Significance of Incest and the Gothic Motif in Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher'" in *Meridian Critic Analele.*, volume XV, issue 2, 2009. 129-141.
- Peckham, Michelle. "Welsh, Louise – *Naming the Bones*," www.eurocrime.co.uk, March 2010. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Picart, Caroline Joan (Kay) and Cecil Greek, "The Compulsions of Real/Reel Serial Killers and Vampires: Toward a Gothic Criminology" in Browning, John Edgar and Caroline Joan (Kay) Picart (eds.), *Draculas, Vampires and Other Undead Forms. Essays on Gender, Race and Culture*. Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press, INC, 2009. 37-62.
- Pirie, David. *The Vampire Cinema*. New York: Crescent Books, 1977
- Piñeiro Gil, Eulalia. "Memento Mori: E.A. Poe's Rituals of Death and the Dead of the Female Body" in Juárez, Luisa (ed.) *Poe Alive in the Century of Anxiety*. Alcalá de Henares: Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin, 2010. 129-137

- Piñeiro Gil, Eulalia. "Pesadillas góticas con cuerpo de mujer en la literatura norteamericana" in *Herejía y Belleza: Revista de estudios culturales sobre el movimiento gótico*, Issue 1, 2013. 73-90.
- Phillips, John and Chrissie Tan. "Langue and Parole" in *The Literary Encyclopedia*. www.litencyc.com, 8th February, 2005. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Platero, Raquel (Lucas). "Introducción. La interseccionalidad como herramienta de estudio de la sexualidad" in Platero, Raquel (Lucas) (ed.), *Intersecciones: cuerpos y sexualidades en la encrucijada*. Barcelona: Edicions bellaterra, 2012. 15-72.
- Poe, Edgar Allan. "William Wilson" in Poe, Edgar Allan, *Selected Tales*. London and New York: Penguin, 1994a. 96-117.
- Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Masque of the Red Death" in Poe, Edgar Allan, *Selected Tales*. London and New York: Penguin, 1994b. 192-198
- Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Raven" in Thompson, Gary Richard (ed.), *The Selected Writings of Edgar Allan Poe*. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004. 58-61.
- Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Philosophy of Composition" in Bloom, Clive (ed.), *Gothic Horror. A Guide for Students and Readers*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. 74-83.
- Puar, Jasbir. "A Transnational Feminist Critique of Queer Tourism" in *Antipode. A Radical Journal of Geography*. volume 34, issue 5, November, 2002. 935-946.
- Punter, David. *The Literature of Terror. A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the present day. Volume 2. The Modern Gothic*. London: Longman, 1996 (1976).
- Punter, David. "Introduction" in Punter, David (ed.), *A Companion to the Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. ix-viv
- Punter, David. "Scottish and Irish Gothic" in Hogle, Jerrold E. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 105-123.
- Punter, David and Glennis Byron. *The Gothic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004.
- Quéma, Anne. "The Gothic and the Fantastic in the Age of Digital Reproduction" in *ESC* volume 30, issue 4, December, 2004. 81-119.
- Rak, Julie. "The Digital Queer: Weblogs and Internet Identity" in *Biography* volume 28, issue 1, Winter, 2005. 166-182.

- Rapatzikou, Tatiani G. *Gothic Motifs in the Fiction of William Gibson*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004.
- Reed-Doob, Penelope. *The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Riffaterre, Michael. "Syllepsis" in *Critical Inquiry*, volume 6, issue 4, 1980. 625-38.
- Río, Alberto del, "Louise Welsh. *El cuarto oscuro*" in *Lletra de Dona*, <http://www.ub.edu/cdona/lletradedona/el-cuarto-oscuro>, 2004. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Roberts, Scott. "Brazil: Anti-gay Evangelical Politician who Believes 'AIDS is a Gay Cancer' Appointed to Run Human Rights Commission," <http://www.pinknews.co.uk>, 3rd April, 2013. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Robson, Ruthann. "Our Children: Kids of Queer Parents & Kids who are Queer: Looking at Sexual Minority Rights from a Different Perspective" in *Albany Law Review*, volume 64, 2000-2001. 915-948.
- Romero Bachiller, Carmen. "Prólogo. Enmarañadxs en las sexualidades (reflexiones para tiempos de crisis)" in Platero, Raquel (Lucas) (ed.), *Intersecciones: cuerpos y sexualidades en la encrucijada*. Barcelona: Edicions bellaterra, 2012. 9-14.
- Rosario, Margaret, Eric W. Shrimshaw and Joyce Hunter. "Butch/Femme Difference in Substance Use and Abuse Among Young Lesbian and Bisexual Women: Examination and Potential Explanations" in *Subst Use Misuse*, volume 43, issue 8-9, 2008. 1002-1015.
- Rosario, Margaret, Eric W. Schrimshaw, Joyce Hunter and Anna Levy-Warren. "The Coming-out Process of Young Lesbian and Bisexual Women: Are There Butch/Femme Differences in Sexual Identity Development?" in *Arch Sex Behav.*, volume 38, issue 1, 2009. 34-49.
- Rose, Jacqueline. "Feminine Sexuality" in Gay, Paul du, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman (eds.), *Identity: A Reader*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2000. 51-68.
- Rose, Mark. *Alien Encounters: Anatomy of Science Fiction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Roseneil, Sasha. "Queer Frameworks and Queer Tendencies: Towards an Understanding of Postmodern Transformations of Sexuality" in *Sociological*

- Research Online* (<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/5/3/roseniel.html>), volume 5, issue 3, 2000. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Rushbrook, Dereka. "Cities, Queer Space, and the Cosmopolitan Tourist" in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, volume 8, issue 1-2, 2002. 183-206.
- Russo, Mary. *The Female Grotesque. Risk, Excess and Modernity*. Routledge: London and New York, 1994.
- Sáez, Javier. "Las políticas del SIDA y la cultura *bear* desde una perspectiva 'interseccional'" in Platero, Raquel (Lucas) (ed.), *Intersecciones: cuerpos y sexualidades en la encrucijada*. Barcelona: Edicions bellaterra, 2012. 199-215.
- Sage, Victor. "The Politics of Petrification: Culture, Religion, History in the Fiction of Iain Banks and John Banville" in Sage, Victor and Allan Lloyd Smith (eds), *Modern Gothic. A Reader*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996. 20-37.
- Sage, Victor. "The Grail, or the Holy Bloodshed . . .!: Cruelty, Darkness and the Body in Janice Galloway, Alison Kennedy and Louise Welsh" *Gothic Studies*, volume 13, issue 2, November 2011. 63-77.
- Sage, Victor and Allan Lloyd Smith. "Introduction" in Sage, Victor and Allan Lloyd Smith (eds.), *Modern Gothic. A Reader*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996: 1-5.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979.
- Sánchez-Navarro, Jordi. "Modernos y peligrosos. Miedo, distopía y paranoia en el cine contemporáneo" in Domínguez, Vicente (ed.), *Los dominios del miedo*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2002. 267-280.
- Sandahl, Carrie. "Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer? Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance" in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. Volume 9, issue 1-2. 2003. 25-56.
- Santos Solla, Xosé M. "Espacios disidentes en los procesos de ordenación territorial" in *Documents d'anàlisi geogràfica*, volume 40, 2002. 69-104.
- Sarika. "Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey: A Parody of Gothic Novels" in *International Referred Research Journal*, volume III, issue 29, June, 2011. 13-14.
- Saward, Jeff. "The First Labyrinths," <http://www.labyrinthos.net> Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.

- Searle, John R. "Austin on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts" in *The Philosophical Review*, volume 77, number 4, October, 1968. 405-424.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 1990.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men. English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992.
- Seed, David. "Alien Invasions by Body Snatchers and Related Vreatures" in Sage, Victor and Allan Lloyd Smith (eds.), *Modern Gothic. A Reader*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996. 152-170.
- Selinger, Eric Murphy. "Foils and Fakers, Monsters and Makers" in *Parnassus: Poetry in Review*; 2006, volume 29 ½. 64-91.
- Selinker, Larry. "Interlanguage" in *International Review of Applied Linguistics In Language Teaching*, volume 10, issue 3, 1972. 209-231.
- Shirey, Ryan. "The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Collector of Scottish Books" in *Neureuther Book Collection Essay Competition*, 2006. Paper 27. 1-7.
- Signorile, Michelangelo. *Queer in America: Sex, the Media and the Closets of Power*. London: Abacus, 1994.
- Silverman, Kaja. *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Silverman, Kaja. "Suture: the Cinematic Model" in Gay, Paul du, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman (eds.), *Identity: A Reader*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2000. 76-86.
- Simpson, Inga Caroline. *Lesbian detective fiction: the outsider within*. PhD thesis, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, 2008.
- Smith, Don G. *H. P. Lovecraft in Pop Culture. The Works and their Adaptations in Films, Television, Comics, Music and Games*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006.
- Sontag, Susan. "The Aesthetics of Silence,"
http://opasquet.fr/dl/papers/Sontag_Aesthetics_of_Silence_2006.pdf. I-XX.
 Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014, 1966.
- Sontag, Susan. "Photography within the humanities" in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 59-66.
- Spooner, Catherine. *Contemporary Gothic*. London: Reaktion, 2006.

- Strachan, Zoë. *Negative Space*. London: Picador, 2003.
- Suárez, Juan Antonio. "Modernism and Gender Trouble" in *Cuadernos de Filología Inglesa*, 6/1, 1997. 9-31.
- Sullivan, Jack. *Elegant Nightmares: The English Short Story from Le Fannu to Blackwood*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1978.
- Sullivan, Nikki. *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003.
- Szarkowski, John. "Introduction to *The Photographer's Eye*" in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 97-102.
- Szilágyi, Aniko, "Scotland is Fucked: Irvine Welsh, Andrew Drennan and the Deconstruction of Nationalism" in *Groundings*. volume 3, April 2010. 55 – 70.
- Taylor, Charles. "'*Tamburlaine Must Die: Play Boy*'" *The New York Times*, 13th February, 2005.
http://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/13/books/review/13TAYLORL.html?_r=0
 Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Todd, Janet. *Gender, Art and Death*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1973.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *Genres in Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Tompkins, Joyce M.S. 'The Gothic Romance' in *The Popular Novel in England, 1770-1800* in Sage, Victor (ed.), *The Gothick Novel*. London: Macmillan, 1990. 87-99.
- Tripney, Natasha. "*The Girl on the Stairs* by Louise Welsh – Review" in *The Observer*, 5th August, 2012.
<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/aug/05/girl-stairs-louise-welsh-review> . Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Turanli, Aydan. "In Pursuit of Ordinary: Performativity in Judith Butler and J. L. Austin" in Munz, V.A., K. Puhl and J. Wang (eds.), *Papers of the 32nd International Wittgenstein Symposia*. Kirchberg am Wechsel: ALWS, 2009. 412-413.
- Tschumi, Bernard. *Architecture and Disjunction*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996.

- Tyler, Carol-Ann. *Female Impersonation*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Unsworth, Cathi. “*The Girl on the Stairs* by Louise Welsh – Review” in *The Guardian*, 31st August, 2012 in <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/aug/31/girl-on-the-stairs-louise-welsh-review>. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Vallina Samperio, Francisco Javier “La casa fortaleza y su dimensión psicológica como recurso temático en Edgar Allan Poe y otros autores” in *Archivium*, volumen LXI-LXII, 2011-2012. 475-502.
- Vardoulakis, Dimitris. “The Return of Negation: The Doppelgänger in Freud’s ‘The Uncanny.’” *SubStance*, volumen 110, 2006. 100-116.
- Veella, Rob. “A Fable for James Russell Lowell,” www.poecalendar.blogspot.com. Sunday, 22nd February, 2009. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Virginás, Andrea. *Crime Genres and the Modern-Postmodern Turn: Canons, Gender, Media*. Cluj-Napoca: Scientia, 2008.
- Walder, Dennis. “Preface” in Walder, Dennis (ed.), *The Realist Novel. Approaching Literature*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995a. v-vi.
- Walder, Dennis. “The Genre Approach” in Walder, Dennis (ed.), *The Realist Novel. Approaching Literature*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995b. 3-32.
- Walpole, Horace. “The Castle of Otranto” in Fairclough, Peter (ed.), *Three Gothic Novels*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986. 37-148.
- Wells, Liz. “General Introduction” in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 1-9.
- Welsh, Louise. *Tamburlaine Must Die*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2004.
- Welsh, Louise. *The Bullet Trick*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2007 (2006).
- Welsh, Louise. *El Truco de la Bala*. (translated by Susana Contreras). Barcelona: Anagrama, 2008a.
- Welsh, Louise. “Crime Writer Louise Welsh Talks,” www.crimeinbooks.com, 13th November, 2008b. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Welsh, Louise. *Naming the Bones*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2010.
- Welsh, Louise. *The Cutting Room*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2011.
- Welsh, Louise. *The Girl on the Stairs*. Edinburgh: John Murray, 2012.
- Welsh, Louise. www.louisewelsh.com Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Weston, Edward. “Seeing Photography” in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 104- 108.

- Wilson, Laura. "Christmas Gifts 2012: The Best Crime and Thriller Books," <http://www.theguardian.com>., Friday 30th November, 2012. Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Winnbert, Jakob, Anna Faahraeus and AnnKatrín Jonsson. "Introduction: Female Masculinity or Textual Masculinity" in *Nordic Journal of English Studies*. volume 7, issue 1, 2008. 1-9.
- Wojtczak, Helena. "Women's Status in Mid 19th-Century England. A Brief Overview," www.hastingspress.co.uk Last accessed on 22nd February, 2014.
- Wollen, Peter. "Fire and Ice" in Wells, Liz (ed.), *The Photography Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2003. 76-80.
- Zipes, Jack. "Why Fantasy Matters Too Much" in *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* volume 10, issue 4, 2008 <http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1392>. 1-12