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«YOUR WINES ARE AS FOREIGN AS YOUR SENTIMENTS»: THE QUIXOTE AS LITERARY AND POLITICAL ALIEN IN THE ENGLISH ANTI-JACOBIN NOVEL

*«Your Wines are as Foreign as Your Sentiments»:
el Quijote como extranjero literario y político
en la novela anti-jacobina inglesa*

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RESUMEN: En el presente trabajo se consideran tres novelas anti-jacobinas, *The History of Sir George Warrington, or the Political Quixote* (1797), *The Infernal Quixote. A Tale of the Day* (1801), y *The Heroine, or Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader* (1813), y su contribución a la tradición quijotesca en la literatura británica a través de la concepción del Quijote como ser doblemente alienado, tanto desde el punto de vista epistemológico como político, y de su lectura negativa de la *extranjerización* del personaje quijotesco en el contexto de la respuesta a la Revolución Francesa en Gran Bretaña, en claro contraste con

la interpretación radical e idealizada del Quijote desarrollada de forma paralela en esta época.

Palabras clave: quijotismo, novela anti-jacobina, extranjero.

ABSTRACT: The present paper discusses three anti-jacobin novels, *The History of Sir George Warrington, or the Political Quixote* (1797), *The Infernal Quixote. A Tale of the Day* (1801), and *The Heroine, or Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader* (1813), and their contribution to the tradition of quixotism in British literature by means of their conception of the Quixote as a doubly-estranged character, both from an epistemological and a political point of view, and of their negative reading of the quixotic *foreignness* in the context of the aftermath to the French Revolution in Great Britain, in clear contrast to the radical and idealized interpretation of the Quixote developed coevally at this time.

Key words: quixotism, anti-jacobin novel, foreignness.

The presence of Don Quixote in English literature has not taken the shape of one particular form –as we encounter translations, editions, plays or novels inspired by Cervantes’ work–, nor has the interpretation and appropriation made of its main character been anything but rich and compelling. Don Quixote, the character, as myth or *ideologeme* has lived a life of its own, independent from the text which bore him, and has served opposing views throughout its trajectory in the English language¹. A case in point would be the two very contradictory approaches which coexisted in the last decade of the eighteenth century until the 1820s and in which the different interpellations of the Quixote and his estrangement were made to conform to the political agenda of two groups of writers: on the one hand, one encountered the radical interpretation of quixotism, and, on the other hand, its conservative and counterrevolutionary reading. Although both approaches bore in common the idea of estrangement which is at the core of the conception of quixotism, their interpretation of it was biased by their different ideological purposes. Hence, even if they shared a view of the Quixote as alien, authors identified as radical exalted the Quixote as an

1. OSCAR MANDEL identifies Don Quixote as one of the myths of Western civilization and hence open to diverse interpretations and uses (1958, 155), while JAMES IFFLAND employs the term *ideologeme* to refer to Don Quixote’s role as universal symbol appropriated by innumerable authors throughout the four centuries since its publication (1987, 26).

idealistic hero in an undeserving world, while conservative writers read him as a dangerous figure in an otherwise stable society². In other words, on the one hand, the Quixotes were associated in radical fiction with the figure of the *wanderer* because of their innate superior qualities and their desire not to follow limited social conventions, while, on the other hand, their nature as eternal foreigners, on account of their inability to conform to society even in their own country, was identified by anti-Jacobin writers with the political, economic, social, and cultural unrest which was a consequence of another type of foreignness: the presence of French émigrés in Britain, as well as the import of their products or ideas into British soil.

Both the quixotic and the French seen as foreign to British culture merged in a series of satirical novels which appeared in this period of thirty years and which portrayed a two-fold alienated character, first, because of his or her quixotic delusion and, secondly, because of the association of this Quixote with foreign values. This dual emphasis on the character's alienation answers to the two-fold concept of epistemological and political foreignness. Don Quixote is estranged from those around him by his distorted perception of reality based on the assumptions he has drawn from literature, and so are his quixotic British descendants. However, placed within the powerful anti-Jacobin discourse of the late eighteenth century, quixotism gains a new political dimension characterised by its Francophobia. Anti-radical novels, then, present a correlation between the Quixote and the French foreigner which converges in a British character who will be doubly estranged from society by his condition of Quixote and revolutionary. In order to reflect on this double comment on foreignness in this particular train of the appropriation of the Quixote in English literature, this essay will analyse three novels belonging both to the quixotic tradition and to the so-called anti-Jacobin novel: *The History of Sir George Warrington, or the Political Quixote* (1797), by Jane and Elisabeth Purbeck (c. 1789-1802)³; *The Infernal Quixote. A Tale of the Day* (1801), by Charles

2. Of course, *society* is not employed in the sense of an institutionalized totality but as a small and connected group of people, in this case the professional middle-class to which most of the conservative writers belong, and whose concerns, especially with social order and the connection between property and propriety, are made obvious throughout their texts.

3. Though attributed to «the Author of the Female Quixote», there has been some debate on the authorship of this novel, with several critics arguing forth and against the authorship of Lennox or the Purbeck sisters. In this article we will assume the later identity of the authors, of whose personal life little is known besides the approximate dates provided by WYNNE-DAVIES (2010). We base our assumption on the similarities found in both the Political

Lucas (1769-1854); and *The Heroine, or Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader* (1813), by Eaton Stannard Barrett (1786-1820).

Don Quixote, the novel, and Don Quixote, the Spanish hidalgo created by Cervantes, were early appropriated by British authors. *Don Quixote*, as text, was read, translated and adapted to the English language and taste, and the work suffered several modifications throughout the centuries in its process of nationalization to adapt its language and discourse to the British changing sensibilities⁴. Don Quixote first entered British literature as an old Castillian hidalgo who experienced a series of mock-heroic adventures on Spanish ground. The popularity of Cervantes' character was immediate and he soon was a well-recognizable stereotype of a compulsive reader or idealist dreamer who became foreign to his own society by his different language, dress and, especially, behaviour, all adopted from literary models. Moreover, the old knight was perceived as either a buffoon who epitomised Spain's nostalgia for its glorious imperialist past, and was, thus, an emblem of the decadence of Spanish society, or, quite the opposite, as a hero who rose over the degraded everyday life in Golden Age Spain and served as contrast to the *picaros* and cruel noblemen that inhabited Spanish society. This polarization was not limited to the reading of Don Quixote as Spanish national symbol, but was also characteristic of a more universal interpretation of the knight, as he was displaced from his context of seventeenth century Spain to be transformed into a universal symbol which could be appropriated by different countries and cultures, and could be made to answer their own national idiosyncrasies or to «fit in» their own ideological discourses (Iffland 1987, 28). In this dual reading of Don Quixote he is seen

and the Benevolent Quixote, and the fact that the second edition has changed its authorial attribution to «By the author of the Benevolent Quixote». Moreover, in the *British Critic* for January 1797 the editors include a note which aims to correct an «accidental error» of their last number and inform their readers that *Sir George* was written, not by the author of *The Female Quixote*, but by the author of the *Benelovent Quixote* (2010). Most critics ascribe the first attribution to the commercial interest of the publisher (see Jerry C. Beasley's «Charlotte Lennox» in *Dictionary of Literary Biographies*, vol. 39, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Gale, 1985, pp. 306-312; or Betty Schellenberg's *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 101).

4. For a comprehensive and thorough comment on the various translations and appropriations of the text, see James Fitzmaurice-Kelly's classic *Cervantes in England*, London, Henry Frowde, 1905; Edwin B. Knowles' essential «Cervantes and English Literature» in *Cervantes Across the Centuries*, Ángel Flores and MJ Bernadete (eds.), New Cork, The Dryden Press, 1947, pp. 267-293; or Juan Bautista Avalle-Arce's «Quijotes y quijotismos del inglés», *Ojancano* 2 (1989), pp. 58-66.

as either *hero* or *fool*⁵, and the stereotype or *principle* of quixotism would be employed by authors to embody the characteristics of a national hero (Ortega 1987, 30) or to create their own Quixotes in different ages to make fun of the spiritual sickness of the moment.

Both interpretations coexist throughout the eighteenth century; nevertheless, the positions are radicalised in the last decade of the century, with the popularity of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary fictions. Hence, the «ideological Quixote» (Staves 1972, 201), which provided a vehicle for satirical humour or comment through his «unique blend of madness, naivety and idealism» (Britton 1993, 22), served both political discourses. The radical interpretation of the Quixote has been identified by Gary Kelly in Jacobin novels such as Robert Bage's *Man As He Is* (1792) and Thomas Holcroft's *Adventures of Hugh Trevor* (1794-7). Kelly describes the radical Quixote as «an idealistic young man pursuing virtue in a society corrupted by court government and culture» and states that radical novels «suggest that only revolution can make the world fit for such “Quixotes”» (2001, 146). The positive reading of the revolutionary or Francophile Quixote has also been intelligently analysed by Susan Staves (1972, 210-212) and P. J. Pardo (2007, 147-148) in Charlotte Smith's *The Old Manor House* (1793) and *The Young Philosopher* (1798). Especially in the later novel, Smith uses the figure of the quixotic hero to highlight the deficiencies of the English system and transforms her ideological Quixote from «satiric object to Rousseauistic hero» (Staves 1972, 212)⁶. The hero's quixotism derives from his Romantic and radical, aesthetic and ideological, idealism, learnt from his readings, and is in permanent conflict with an undeserving world, an interpretation founded in Henry Fielding's satirical quixotic plot in which the deluded character is a morally superior fool who can become an *instrument* to criticise the surrounding world, as seen in his novel *Joseph Andrews* (1742) (Pardo 1997, 140). Coeval to Smith's revolutionary quixotism and to the more extended Romantic vision of the Quixote as hero, at the end of the

5. The dual nature of the Quixote has been amply documented and analyzed in Susan Staves' «Don Quixote in Eighteenth-Century England», *Comparative Literature* 24.3 (1972), pp. 193-214; and most famously in John J. Allen's seminal *Don Quixote: Hero or Fool?*, Parts I and II, Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 1969, 1979.

6. Smith's critique of «things as they are» in English society and her portrayal of radical idealism as producing its own exiles is amply discussed in Angela Keane's chapter entitled «Exiles and émigrés: the wanderings of Charlotte Smith» (2001, 81-107), in which she also explores Smith's cosmopolitanism and the figure of the exile, which is relevant as well for our subsequent discussion on the diverse approaches to the concepts of nationalism and the émigré in the texts of this period.

century conservative discourse also appropriated the quixotic myth with a reading of the Quixote as an alien to society, though with a clearly negative connotation, in what could be seen as a literary response to the political climate, and, more specifically, to the Aliens Acts of 1793 and 1798⁷. Rather than following Fielding's model, the authors of these anti-radical novels returned to the satirical interpretation of the Quixote-like figure as *butt of* rather than *instrument for* the author's attack, found in works such as Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (I, 1663; II, 1664; III, 1678) and its later development in Richard Graves' *The Spiritual Quixote* (1773) (Pardo 2007, 151). Conservative authors then portrayed a Quixote who is foreign to his or her own society due to his or her idiosyncrasies and radical ideology which clash with more prescriptive and, in the author's view, more acceptable behaviour and principles.

Following the Spanish model, more in these three novels we encounter the quixotic protagonists rambling through the country in a wild quest to fulfil their aspirations and becoming estranged in the process. Sir George Warrington and Cherry Wilkinson, the heroine of Barrett's novel, both abandon their home and the duties which correspond to their status in society. Sir George's quixotism is identified as extreme benevolence and a desire to do good to others, and as the adscription to manners that do not belong to his time or place and which distort his vision of society:

From a total want of knowledge of the world, and of the general character of men, and from a guileless mind, whose first principle was benevolence, he had such an idea of equality corresponding with the manners of the golden age. [...] In the wildness and vivacity of his imagination, he formed pictures of bliss that never really existed, and only in Arcadia ever ideally: he fancied all vice would be banished society; and that every man [...] would cultivate those virtues alone which distinguished our first parents before the fall (I, 187-188).

As a consequence, Sir George, in his role of foolish philanthropic philosopher and inheritor of Don Quixote, decides to wander through the country and be the means of helping his fellow citizens. In so doing, he loses his identity as a member of the landed gentry, seen as the core

7. The Aliens Act of 1793, conceived at first as merely a temporary measure, was toughened by Parliament in 1798 because of the Irish insurrection and the threat of French invasion (SCHULTE 2003, 57), two events which we see reflected in novels such as *The Infernal Quixote* or *The Heroine*. As will be later stated, in clear parallelism with the political events, then, there was an increased production and radicalization of anti-Jacobin writing.

of the British system. For conservatives, «liberty existed so that property would be protected» (Verhoeven 2005, xxix); Sir George hence betrays their essential concern when he neglects his property. Moreover, he befriends Mr Davenport, a low class rogue. Sir George's delusion, like Don Quixote's, has blurred the boundaries between classes and bans him from finding his place in society. While all the other characters are certain of their status, position and identity, Sir George is not because his identity is based on his «imagination», «pictures [...] that never existed» or on his fancies, hence placing him in a different realm to the surrounding world of reality and rendering his perceptions and values foreign to the other characters as happened with Don Quixote.

More radical is Cherry's stance: she abandons her dutiful role as daughter and escapes her home in order to live adventures. She entirely renounces her identity and rewrites herself as a heroine of romance. First, she becomes estranged from her father by rejecting him and his authority: «Pondering on the cruel conduct of my reputed father, [...], I was struck with the sudden notion that the man was not my father at all. In short, *I began with wishing this the case, and have ended with believing it*» (emphasis added, 1909, 12). Next, she changes her name to assume a more heroic identity: from Cherry Wilkinson she is transformed into Cherubina de Willoughby, in clear parallelism with Alonso Quijano's conversion into Don Quixote de la Mancha. Her language and dress will be those learnt from romances: she will deliver fine speeches full of sentiment and will wear delicate muslins to elope. As Don Quixote, her name, her speech, her dress and her behaviour are different from those of her country and age, to the point of not being understood by plain British men such as Jerry Sullivan, her companion, and of becoming the amazement of the crowds for her obvious difference. Once again, her chivalric realm of experience, as in the case of Don Quixote, makes her an alien in society. Finally, by trying to fulfil her heroic aspirations, she subverts the domestic role that the conservative discourse attributed to women and claims her place in the world as a heroine. She states that «a mere home is my horror» (1909, 98) and decides to «roam through the wide world» (17). She leaves her secure place at home, and defies all social rules as she elopes. She justifies her actions thus: «I see plainly, that if adventure does not come to me, I must go to adventure. And indeed, I am authorized in doing so by the example of my sister heroines» (26). Within the frame of Barrett's anti-radical discourse, Cherry/Cherubina is then doubly-estranged because, as a heroine, she cannot belong to the *proper* female realm of the household, while, as a woman, she cannot play a conspicuous part in the world. She hence belongs nowhere, and the tension between her chivalric aspirations and her role as woman, between her individual desires and the codes

of society, is maintained throughout the novel. Her chivalric language, dress and values transform her into a foreign figure and do not allow her happy acceptance in society; until she renounces them and returns to the path of a proper daughter and wife she is not to be granted her integration.

Once more appropriating what Iffland identified as the core of the quixotism developed in the eighteenth century, the idea of the individual against the world (1987, 26), the Purbeck sisters and Barrett emphasise Don Quixote's role as a symbol of difference and alienation in a universal quest for a system of reference. Whether interpreted as an epistemological, ideological or moral conflict, or all three as is the case of Sir George and Cherry, quixotism is characterised by its liminality, by the impossibility of belonging, and by the nature of the Quixote as eternally alien. Michel Foucault described Don Quixote as a man whose perception is distorted, whose conflict remains between *reality* and *imagination*, between history and story or truth and falseness, and famously portrayed him as shifting «d'un en-deça du monde à un au-delà» in his *Narrenschiff*, «fuyante et absolute limite», belonging to both and to neither at the same time (1972, 53). Until these Quixotes do not adapt once again their perception of the world to that of the surrounding characters, they will never lose their foreignness.

Finally, Lord James Marauder, the quixotic protagonist of *The Infernal Quixote* is especially characterised by his foreignness and estrangement. His very own name, coming from the French *maraud* or vagabond, and the English meaning of the word, «to rove or raid for plunder», highlights his rambling nature. Marauder travels around the Continent, and his economic and political interests are divided between England and Ireland. When he travels to the latter, he literally renounces to his English identity and becomes Patrick McGinnis to fulfil his evil aspirations of power and revenge. Even if he is a wealthy landlord, he poses as a United Irishman educated in France to foment revolution and support the French invasion to enhance his political and financial situation. Hence his quixotic obsessions also motivate his foreign identity. As Marauder/McGinnis he belongs nowhere but this fact has not the positive connotations of the *wanderer* in Smith's novels: rather than a «man of the world» as he defines himself (I, 86-87), in this case his no-belonging is a mirror of his inevitable foreignness in any society ruled by moral values that clash with his own selfish motives. He is a foreigner both in England and Ireland for this reason. In the end, Marauder is driven insane and sways between fits of sanity and madness –as he himself tells the surgeon who attends him: «if *he* is mad, there is reason in it» (emphasis added, IV, 347), proving his complete estrangement even from himself in his assumed character. On his way from England to Ireland to be prosecuted for his crimes he commits suicide jumping from a cliff, again in

a liminal space between two worlds. The claim of his English identity and his integration in society are made impossible.

Estrangement from society is not the only consequence of quixotism. In these novels the Quixote is not merely alienated from society, but rather poses a threat to it. The greatest danger of quixotism in this context comes from his or her association with foreign figures, in this case, the French. As with all matters concerning the Revolution, the vision of foreigners in their own country, and of the presence of French citizens and products in Britain, was made to serve a political agenda. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, the main concern was the impact the consequences of such revolution and the subsequent war with France would have on British society and economy. With the enormous emigration waves that arrived to British shores and the open intellectual commerce that took place with France before 1793, and even continued more moderately after that date despite the war, the understanding of these foreign figures and their impact on British culture became the core of many radical and antiradical discussions and writings. French foreigners in Britain became in a way objectified, they became texts to be read and interpreted for the audiences in the hands of both parties, they were material to be used in political propaganda. At the same time, French writings were assumed to have the same effects on the morals of young Britons as the influence of the foreigners, and were hence accused of seducing and corrupting their readers, therefore being attributed the qualities of those same foreigners. France and everything French at this time obviously centred much of the fiction and non-fiction which appeared in Britain; the essential events taking place in Paris and their effect on the surrounding nations, added to the fact that Britain was the country that received a greater number of refugees –an estimated 30,000 only in 1792– (Schulte 2003, 57), would be enough to justify the interest that both French emigrants and the texts produced in France had in such an unstable age. The interest in the French country and character can be seen, for instance, in the testimonies which British citizens in France sent home and which portrayed opposed accounts of the French character; Edmund Burke's and Helen Maria Williams's writings serving as sufficiently known examples⁸. Both Burke and Williams could be said to represent the very

8. Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) is well known and has received ample critical attention; Helen Maria Williams, living in Paris and famously participating in its cultural life as regent of a salon and a publisher, wrote *Letters Written in France* which appeared on the same year as Burke's work. For an interesting comment of the engagement of Williams and other radical and anti-radical women writers with Burke and the representation of the French, see CRACIUN, 2005, pp. 1-12. On Williams's role as

divergent views of the French that characterised this period. The presence of French foreigners in Britain also allowed two interpretations. On the one hand, French émigrés were seen as *victims* of the Revolution, especially the numerous French refugee priests who fled to England soon after 1789. Hannah More and Frances Burney, among others, wrote several tracts to raise awareness of the difficulties of the French émigrés. In 1793 More wrote *Considerations on religion and public education*, while Burney published the pamphlet *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy*, after her marriage with the French Monsieur d'Arblay the previous year. Charlotte Smith contributed as well with a poem entitled «The Emigrants», published the same year. Pitt's government also used them as part of a campaign to convey the message of Britain's humanity and generosity and their status as greatest opponent to republican France⁹. On the other hand, a distinction was made between *beneficial* and *pernicious* emigrants. In words of Lord Glenville, who had introduced the Alien Bill, the precautionary measures were «not directed against those refugees who had fled from the terror of the Revolution»; in his opinion, only those «“who would pull down church and state, religion and God, morale and happiness” should be debarred from entering the realm» (Schulter 2003, 57). This negative attitude towards *dangerous* French influence in Britain became radicalized in later years and progressively permeated the conservative fiction of the time. The increasing flux of French emigrants of various political alliances, the attempts of French invasion in Pembrokeshire and, more importantly, the Irish Rebellion of 1798, increased the general paranoia that the revolutionary threat was breeding at home and marked the start of the peak years of reaction, from 1798 to 1801, when the majority of the overtly political conservative

writer and *salonnier*, her ideology and description of herself as *une patriote universelle*, see KEANE 2001, 48-80.

9. On the responses to French émigrés, especially the clergy, see CRACIUN 2005, 147-149. The presence of the refugees of the Revolution and its consequences for the country has been thoroughly explained by Kirsty CARPENTER (1999), who also reflects on Pitt's use of the government's support to the French émigrés as part of his campaign to acknowledge the superiority of the British Protestant nation. Parliamentary speeches at the time employ this rhetoric of British superiority: «Nothing cuts so severely into the feelings of the French rebels, as the noble and liberal manner in which the English have relieved those Loyalists whom they have expatriated. It convinces them that their conduct and their new system of Government are detested in this country; as well as in all other civilized parts of the world; [...]» (*Public Advertiser*, 8 October 1792, qtd. in CARPENTER 1999, 161-162).

novels appeared (Verhoeven 2005, xi) and a less positive approach to the figure of the French foreigner on British soil was developed¹⁰.

This political tension has, of course, its reflection in novels as well. In *The Young Philosopher* Smith articulates a radical vision of cosmopolitanism based on four elements which were highly controversial in Britain in the 1790s:

- (1) a rejection of «national character» in general; (2) a rejection of British, or even English, distinctness, whether in terms of genealogy, geography, politics, or virtue; (3) a refusal to be bound by the conventions or prejudices specific to place; (4) an appreciation, even idealization, of the transnational, whether in persons, literature, politics or place (Craciun 2005, 154).

Smith rejects the idea of «nationality» and responds to the «revolutionary crisis (philosophical, political, sexual) by forging a new imaginative possibility available to European men as well as women –the citizen of the world» (Craciun 2005, 154), a concept she had already developed in her first and most radical revolutionary novel, *Desmond* (1792), in which the main character is an English republican and a self-confessed «citizen of the world» (89) and where a plan is developed for an Anglo-French «circle of friends» to retire together to the English countryside (414).

However, anti-radical novels very understandably offer the opposed view. Rather than advocating for universal citizenship, counterrevolutionary authors stress the existence of a national identity constructed in opposition to foreigners who contradict those values which the conservative discourse placed at the core of the concept of Britishness. What is more, foreigners, instead of searching for integration and coexistence as was announced in the abovementioned tracts, were presented in these novels willing to maintain their national ways. Not only were they portrayed as remaining thoroughly French, but also as threatening to impose their principles on British citizens; a picture reflecting warnings issued in conservative circles against the lax morals of Madame de Stäel and the group of well-known noble Frenchmen and women which took residence in Juniper Hall, for

10. The positive attitude towards the Catholic French possibly changed by its association with Popism and the «turbulent Catholics of Ireland» (GILLEY 1988, 34), linked with the threat of the Irish rebellion. Their great number of Catholics –some 7.000 in total (GILLEY 1988, 34), with 4.000 priests only in 1792 (SCHULTER 2003, 57)– also contributed to raise the concern of the Anglican church for its reinforcement of what had been a minor strand in the spectrum of non-established religion in England (GILLEY 1988, 34).

instance¹¹. However, it was not only French citizens who posed a danger for British society. Together with nationalized French men and women, these novels introduced the characters of the British Jacobins, whose Francophilia converted them to foreigners in the eyes of the conservative writers. British Jacobins were equally condemned with the French ones owing to their common ideology and principles. Therefore, a recurrent presence in these anti-Jacobin novels was the caricature of «the “new philosophy” of the British radicals, to show their utopian schemes as, first, chimerical, and second, productive only of evil» (Grenby 2001, 11). It is in the conversion to this «new philosophy» where the danger of quixotism lies; the incapability of the Quixotes to critically read the foreign texts, whether people or printed books, and their naive willingness to align with foreign values result in their greater power of disruption and their double-estrangement as Francophile Quixotes, as idealists and revolutionaries. As butt of the author’s satire, the Quixote becomes in anti-Jacobin fiction «an impractical dupe of “Jacobin” intriguers, conspirators, and seducers» (Kelly 2001, 146). However, it was not only the deluded character who was criticised, a greater condemnation fell on the «proponents of such schemes [...] only out for individual gain, simply exploiting any fool thoughtless enough to fall into the ambit of the new philosophy» (Grenby 2001, 11). In the eyes of the conservative writers, both French and British radicals pose a similar threat to the stability of British society because of their shared interest in spreading their dangerous ideas and their equal capability of making new converts to radical philosophy. Among both the French and the British, Jacobinism was then habitually presented in these novels as «a ruthless assault on hierarchy, status and wealth [...] as nothing but the cover for levellers, social climbers and corrupted nobles» (Grenby 2001, 12), as is made manifest in these anti-Jacobin novels.

In the Purbecks’ novel, Sir George, confined by an accident, devours radical political treatises among which «were Paine’s Rights of Man, a History of the French Revolution, and a variety of books written evidently in its favour; some of them containing a description [...] of the cruelties practiced on the people by those in power» (I, 32-33). Not acquainted with the ways

11. Before her marriage to d’Arblay, Frances Burney did avoid visiting the party at Juniper Hall because of the rumours of the scandalous life of her otherwise admired Mde. De Stäel and the fact that she was suspected of having an affair with Narbonne, with whom she lived at the Hall. Stäel, as would be Wollstonecraft, was amply criticised for the political radical dimension of her writing, especially concerning women (CARLSON 2000, 326). For more details on the reactions within the Burney family and the literary circles of the time see, for example, HARMAN 2001, 229-253.

of the world, he is incapable of reading them critically as does his mentor Mr. Thompson. These readings inspire in him the aforementioned idealised visions of society which the Jacobin defence of the benevolent natural state of man leads to. The source of his delusion becomes obvious in his language, especially in the references to Thomas Paine, which permeate the text. The allusion to his work *Rights of Man* is evidenced by the use of such revolutionary language as «oppressed nation» (I, 33), «hero», «slavery and subjection» (I, 31), quoted from the particular discourse of radicalism. However, this grandiloquent language is more often than not used in a mocking way as it will be contradicted by the facts Sir George encounters. In his rambles he will discover that his utopian ideas, rather than a source of goodness, can become a threat to the property of others: his enthusiast talk with Mr. Goldney inspires the latter's butler to steal his money on the «principles of equality» (II, 17-19), while Mr. Thorton's footman feels himself justified by these ideas of «liberty and equality» to run away with his master's eldest daughter, depriving him of two of his possessions: his money and, more importantly, his daughter, the means through which he can gain wealth and consequence through a good marriage (I, 104). Moreover, the «oppressed nation» is a nation of happy workers only stirred by Francophile radicals; the «hero» causes more trouble than offers help, while the freedom of the British nation is constantly contrasted with the repression of fear experienced in France. Sir George tries to act out the role of hero and defender of freedom, only to be left facing the foolishness of his intentions and becoming an enemy to the stability of his own nation.

Sir George also offers a comment on the dangers of misreading those characters with foreign interests. The innocent and generous Sir George misinterprets Mr. Davenport, his Francophile nemesis and one of those social climbers recurrent in anti-Jacobin fiction. In consequence, Davenport manipulates the hero, concealing «as much as possible the horrible consequences which had ensued, and would still ensue, from the French Revolution» (II, 123). Davenport allures the hero into planning a trip to France to partake in the glorious events happening there, and into giving to the Jacobin cause extreme amounts of money, which will be used for his personal gain. He even convinces him to engage in a mutiny against a supposedly exploitative employer, and honourable man who just happened to be Davenport's enemy. This upheaval, which also involves a gullible mob of lower-class men directed by Sir George under his foolish delusion of following a good cause, almost ends with the hero's death. Finally, much of Sir George's awakening to his foolish idealism will depend on his discovery of the true nature of the treacherous Davenport.

Sir George will also have to open his eyes to the terrible events taking place on the other side of the channel. In *Sir George*, the accounts of the massacres occurring in France are conveyed through two means which reflect those the British public had in real life: the direct testimony of those who had witnessed the horror and the presence of *objective* accounts in the newspapers of the day. In the first case, we hear of the destruction of nunneries and of the persecution of the innocent through Louisa Moreland's tale of her escape from under the Reign of Terror; the fact that Louisa is a British émigré clearly allows the victimization of refugees without posing a conflict with the anti-French message of the novel. Finally, the young Quixote is partly cured from his delusion by the reading of British newspapers which do not offer an idealistic account of the Revolution, but a *truthful* one of the terror caused by the French government. The opinion of sensible and informed British men, reflected in these newspapers, also echoes the terrors of France. Hence, Mr Thompson, the protagonist's mentor, dissuades him from travelling to that country by stating that he may go just «to be cut to pieces perhaps, and the like of that, as they are now doing to one another» (I, 40). Once his perception of France and the Francophiles is *restored* he can become once again the epitome of British stability: he attains a virtuous wife and recovers his control over wealth and state.

Sir George is not the only British character who has misread foreign texts and ideals. The authors also portray a female Quixote, Miss Charlotte Thornton, who «used to walk about the Park all day long reading French novels» (I, 107). Her character is described as «romantic and sentimental», but the greater blame for her quixotic behaviour is attributed to her education under the influence of a French governess and her passion for reading novels. Her library is described thus:

Rousseau's *Eloise*, and several other French novels of the worst tendency, and some English ones, appeared to have been much read; whilst *Telema-chus*, the *Spectator*, *Madame Genlis's* works, *Advice to a Daughter*, *Mrs. Chapone's Letters*, with many others of the same kind, seemed perfectly new, but were covered with dust (I, 138).

Miss Charlotte «formed her mind upon the principles she had met with in her studies» (I, 123) and hence expected some adventure to befall her. When her footman, decided to become his master's «equal», uses the literary conventions of her favourite books, he is able to persuade her to elope with him. Miss Charlotte is then seduced by her French readings and by her lover's employment of their style, and strays from the path of virtue, in the same way other female characters in Lucas's and Barrett's novels will do. Though only a secondary character, by consenting to run away and

leave her home and her duty, Miss Charlotte represents an example of the female Quixote in anti-Jacobin fiction who, as a woman, is «a figure for the subvertible, seducible element in a social class» and is subject to the villain's machinations, who «in anti-Jacobin novels aims to subvert the state by subverting «domestic woman' and domesticity» (Kelly 2001, 146). Her footman, by leading her astray and by aiming to marry her, has subverted the established order so precious to the conservative discourse. However, Miss Charlotte is not completely ruined and can return to her proper place beside her father.

Inscribed in the peak years of reaction, in Lucas' comment on radical quixotism, the French and their British followers are more conspicuously condemned. From the first pages, he emphatically condemns radicalism as «diabolism» (II, 224) and the Demagogues of France as «the lowest slaves of hell» (I, v), with Marauder as their Miltonic «Prince» (IV, 89). Moreover, he openly criticises the trend of identifying those delusional radicals with the «salving term of INFERNAL QUIXOTES» and what he sees as the fashion of the present day, that of ranking «all assassins and self-murderers under the general name of MADMEN» (II, 224)¹². In this sense, Marauder's is «not the usual relationship of a quixote figure», for while «other characters are taken in by what they read; he knows better» (Staves 1972, 201). He is rather an example of the kind of corrupted noble portrayed in anti-radical fiction who will employ Jacobinism to deceive others and to fulfil his personal interests. Therefore, he is the one being misread by the Irish peasants he leads to rebellion or, more explicitly, by Emily Bellaire, the girl he seduces and abandons.

In the same way she misinterprets Marauder's intentions, Emily misreads the French writings he provides, from Rousseau to French tales and novels by Voltaire and Diderot. The French language is identified as the «very language of deceit» (I, 173) which is employed by Marauder and these writers to hide the terrible situation of women in France under the cover of a defence of female freedom in the form of the redundancy of matrimony. Marauder highlights the fact that these ideas owe their dissemination to the French when he ironically states: «After all the abuse we have given our neighbours, the French, they have nobly broken through this foolish tie [marriage], and generously given to the female that freedom she so well

12. This reference to more than one Quixote has been asserted by Susan STAVES when she explains that «Lucas might more accurately have called his novel *The Infernal Quixotes*, since it is peopled with a host of fanatics and radicals. Some are philosophical sceptics, some militant atheists, others masons, and still others radical democrats» (1972, 201). All instances are seen from Lucas's anti-revolutionary point of view as mad quixotes.

knows how to use» (I, 167). Hence the texts identified with the foreigners owing to their language and ideas have been exposed as false and dangerous to the basis of British stability, marriage and the family, when introduced in the country¹³. In contrast to these foreign texts, Lucas quotes Hannah More in a footnote to this passage, stressing the difference between the works of the French and that of a sound English writer¹⁴.

This identification of the books with the foreigners is emphasised with the parallelism drawn by Lucas in the passage of Emily's seduction between the role played by French texts and emigrants. The author explains that «among the French Emigrants who flocked to this country» Marauder had chosen «the most conspicuous for their consequence and abilities» (I, 215). These emigrants, «Dukes and Nobles of the first ranks» (I, 215), accepted Marauder's keeping of Emily as his mistress, as we are told that «*Madame la Duchesse* without any squeamishness, never refused the company of *la belle Emily*» (I, 216). Moreover, Emily is now made fit for their company by her Francophile readings and sympathies:

Emily, who was much better read in the French than English writers, found the society of the lively émigrés much to her taste; and she very soon became an adept in the Voltairian philosophy, which a charming Marchioness assisted in explaining to her (I, 216).

These members of nobility –possibly drawn from real French circles such as the abovementioned Madame de Stäel's– are not revolutionary, but their moral and their philosophy are nevertheless pernicious. Lucas does allow some decency among French emigrants, as he states that «there were many of the *ci-devant* inferior Nobility, and even *pauvre Madames refugees*,

13. As RICETTI has pointed out, the novel at this time becomes part of the process of adapting older social structures to modern conditions, and in so doing «an institution like the family and marriage [...] is dramatized in many novels as both problem and solution, especially for female characters» (1999, 7). These domestic arrangements appear in this form of conservative fiction as «bulwarks against instability and moral corruption in the public world» (1999, 7). For an interesting comment on the concept of the family as the core of the Enlightened reform see Tomaselli's «The most public sphere of all: the family» in *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere, 1700-1830*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 239-256 or Eva Bannet's *The Domestic Revolution. Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel*, Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins UP, 2000.

14. Identified as «the most influential woman living in England in the Romantic era» by Anne K. MELLOR (2000, 13), among Hannah More's numerous achievements, Mellor states that «her writings contributed to the prevention of a French-style, violent revolution in England» (2000, 14). This opinion of her influence as a writer is obviously shared by Lucas.

who would have refused his [Marauder's] favours [...] but they were not the people Mr. Marauder thought worthy his acquaintance» (I, 216); however, the reader knows of those emigrants by mere hearsay, they are not given any representation in the novel, while the debased ones are.

As happened in the Purbecks' novel, there is more than one deluded character in *The Infernal Quixote*. Another striking example of the dangers of misreading is found in Mr. and Mrs. Cloudley –whose surname clearly refers to how clouded their judgment is by the new ideology. With them, Lucas portrays a wonderfully comic radical couple, whom, together with their progeny –with the very revolutionary names of Lucretia, Amazonia, Brutus, Voltaire and Tom Pain (sic)– are the greatest example of the corruption French notions imply. Mrs. *Maria* Cloudley, who reads and writes all day and who has «the largest library in the kingdom of female authors» (II, 360), has several affairs and none of her children are legitimate. In the end, she elopes with a young man, while her liberal husband runs mad.

This couple is obviously modelled on Godwin and Wollstonecraft. A.D. Harvey has identified the main target of anti-Revolutionary novels in «those ideologues who taught new standards of individual conduct», among which, of course, Godwin and his wife were singled out (1977, 291). The fact that Mrs. Cloudley's name is *Maria* may also point to Wollstonecraft, and the latter's well-known defence of revolutionary France and scandalous life –she lived in France with her lover Imlay, giving birth to her daughter Fanny, the whole of which Godwin had published in an amply-read memoir of his wife's life– stresses the negative connotations of Mrs. Cloudley's association with France and brings to the reader's mind a true-life character with a parallel story. Moreover, within the frame of a quixotic narrative, this association with Wollstonecraft is especially relevant. Richard Polwhele, in his famous poem *The Unsex'd Females: A Poem* (1798) had identified Wollstonecraft with Rousseau's romances and their pernicious effects on women's virtue (line 71), as well as with those girls who «with equal ease, in body or in mind, / to Gallic freaks or Gallic faith resign'd» (lines 19-20). What is more, she is presented as the main example of those «unsex'd female writers» who «instruct, or confuse, us and themselves, in the labyrinth of politics, or turn us wild with Gallic frenzy», as he stated in the epigraph to the poem. She is also the model for other «unsexed» writers such as Barbauld (91), Robinson (93), Smith (95) or Hays (104). Wollstonecraft is then both deluded and deluding in her Francophilia and thereby dangerous for female readers. As Jeanne Moskal has asserted, Polwhele's criticism is directed against both Wollstonecraft's «Jacobin politics» and «gender politics» (2000, 31), against her rendition of *mind* and *body* to Gallic faith. Mrs. Cloudley, with her radical ideals and lenient morals, then becomes one more example of how the

conservative writers followed Polwhele and transformed the motif of the female Quixote into «a staple of anti-Jacobin and anti-Wollstonecraft rhetoric» (Moskal 2000, 31), something this novel has in common with both the Purbeck's and Barrett's contribution to anti-radical quixotic fiction.

As she sets out for adventure, Cherry imitates Don Quixote as a much more rambling Quixote who menaces to disrupt her social order and is hence a more overtly «unsex'd» woman «raised by the spectre of Wollstonecraft» (Moskal 2000, 32). This is made clear when she outspokenly proclaims that she «despises the common law of England» (1909, 29). Instead of the said law, she will acquire her political notions from the speeches she had read «in the daily prints» (248), which are permeated by Jacobin radical propaganda. Cherry becomes a political leader and talks a mob of Irishmen into becoming her supporters. Her speech to her little army is a brilliant example of Barrett's parody of Jacobin discourse:

I promise to them all such laws and institutions as shall secure their happiness. I will acknowledge the majesty of the people. (*Applause*) I will give to them a full, fair, and free representation. (*Applause*) And I will grant them a radical reform; or in other words, a revival of the feudal system. (*Shouts of applause*) I will assume no monarchical prerogatives that are unjust; if I should, do not forget that people have always the power and the right to depose a tyrant.

I promise that there shall be no dilapidated hopes and resources; no army of mercenaries, no army of spies, no inquisition or private property, no degraded aristocracy, no oppressed people, no confiding parliament, no irresponsible minister. (*Acclamation*) In short, I promise every thing. (*Thunders of acclamation*).

Each man shall have an acre of ground, a cottage, and an annual salary. (*Long life to you! cried the troops. That is the best thing you have said!*) Such is the constitution, such are the privileges that I propound to you (1909, 248).

Moreover, Cherry relishes her role as political leader, and reaches the conclusion that «the same qualities which have made me so good a heroine, would, if I were a man, have made me just as illustrious a patriot» (1909, 249). Moskal's insightful comment on this passage points out the link Barrett establishes in this comparison between the realms of female heroism or Quixotism with the political territory forbidden to women (2000, 32). Therefore, in the conservative frame of mind Francophile female Quixotes are again doubly alienated because of their radical and gender politics, and become daughters of such dangerous mothers as the British Jacobin Mary Wollstonecraft.

As for Cherry's gender politics, it has been stated how she renounces to the role of dutiful daughter and wife, and desires to live the adventurous and romantic plots found in her novels. These heroic disruptive aspirations she will adopt from a set of French novels in which she will find the example of prior heroines who will condone the fact that she breaks all propriety when she elopes, lives under the roof of an unmarried man such as Betterton, allows the fortune-hunter actor Grundy to make love to her, blows up a house, storms another, conquers a castle, remains a whole night in prison and claims to be who she is not. Barrett overtly makes French fiction the object of his attack and develops his parody of romance. By placing a young female reader at the core of his novel, he gives «new life to the negative associations of gender, genre, and the novel» (Kelly 1990, 226) which had been present in Lucas's tale of Emily's seduction and in Maria Cloudley's affair and elopement. Barrett considers that the most dangerous import from France is no doubt their novels, those works that Cherry has misread and whose example she recurrently quotes to justify her decision to leave her house and ramble through the world, exposing herself and others to some dangers and innumerable ridiculous situations. At the end of the novel, Robert Stuart, her suitor, states the pernicious effects of those readings:

In a country where morals are on the decline, novels always fall several degrees below the standard of national virtue: [...]. Thus, *since France became depraved, her novels have become dissolute; and since her social system arrived at its extreme of vicious refinement, they too have adopted that last master-stroke of refined vice, which wins the heart by the chastest aphorisms, and then corrupts it by the most alluring pictures of villainy* (emphasis added, 1909, 293).

Novels are seen as instruments of seduction which can lead young girls astray. The connection between intellectual and physical seduction and corruption is then made, even if more subtlety than in the Purbecks' or Lucas's novels. These novels embody the same morals exposed by Marauder, for instance, and hence become as dangerous for women's virtue as him. In a similar way, Cherry misreads two unprincipled men who are also associated with the French: Betterton, another corrupted nobleman, and Abraham Grundy, an actor and social climber. They both conspire to fool Cherry using the language and conventions of the romances she has read into marrying the latter; in that way, we are told, Grundy would gain advantage of her fortune, and his friend Betterton of her body. Stuart, the hero and symbol of Britishness, describes Betterton's morals thus: «Your wines are as *foreign* as your sentiments» (1909, 98). With this brief statement, Barrett

raises in his readers the consciousness that one may be born in Britain and nevertheless still be identified as foreign to it, something which stands as an accusation in this sentence. Stuart clearly identifies Betterton and his insidious designs with French ideology and politics. He is not only helping to ruin British economy with the import of French products at a time of war and delicate economical balance, but he also threatens a greater good: women's virtue and by implication the main British institution, the family. In addition, Grundy, when impersonating the fake heroic Montmorenci to fool Cherry, declares he was born in France and that: «I may return, in disguise, to my native country, and petition Napoleon to restore my forfeited estates» (61); once again the villain is identified as Francophile and even connected with Napoleon. In contrast with such characters, well-informed British men, with studies and properties, defend the rejection of such ideals. Stuart, then, becomes the example of such man; somehow announcing the model of Victorian conservative bourgeois gentleman, he is the embodiment of the *status quo* especially in his role as the preserver of Cherry's wealth and virtue as her suitor and later husband.

With the comment on the characters' incapability to read critically, we come full circle to the source of their quixotism, hence once again linking their delusion with foreign texts they are unable to interpret, whether the motives of the Francophile characters or the subtle amorality of the books of French origin or influence. The final danger of quixotism would be the alienation of the quixotic self by means of the distorted perception of their own persona and the world they inhabit which answers to the particular set of literary or ideological principles they hold as system of reference to interpret reality. As has been mentioned, this form of alienation, intrinsic to quixotism, was present in previous British works inspired by Cervantes' masterpiece; for instance, in Butler's or Graves' quixotic novels in which their delusion takes the shape of exalted Methodism. What is particularly relevant in these anti-radical novels at the turn of the century is their political discourse and their negative reading of that alienation as opposed to the coeval radical interpretation at the time. The contribution of these works to the tradition of quixotism in Britain hence lies in the association of the quixotic figure with France to highlight the foreignness of quixotism in British society. Therefore, these novels move beyond the psychological and social interpretation of foreignness as isolation and displacement inherent in quixotism, and portray the Quixotes as being danger of losing their British identity. This can be effected by the threat of literal emigration, as is the case of Sir George and his plans to travel to France, by the association and even marriage with Francophile characters, which is a danger Cherry is highly exposed to, or, as Marauder, by literally transposing nationalities and

identities to fulfil political ambitions. In the case of the female Quixotes, the threat of alienation is greater, as their delusion may even transform them into «unsex'd» women: masculine heroines very distant from the British ideal of a domestic woman who have lost their place in the household without the possibility of gaining one in the world. Finally, besides the Quixotes' alienation and loss of identity, their behaviour brings consequences on a greater scale, transforming their quixotism in a matter of national importance, not only in the more political context of the French invasion and Irish rebellion in Lucas's novel, but by the import of foreign elements which will corrupt the sacred British household and thus undermine the centre of what is essentially British.

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