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The Citizen and the Vagabond: Key Figures in the History of Mobility

Year: 2022

Migrations and contacts

Edited by: Frank, Michael C ; Schreier, Daniel

SPELL

Swiss Papers in English Language and Literature

41 · 2022

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General Editor's Preface

SPELL (Swiss Papers in English Language and Literature) is a publication of SAUTE, the Swiss Association of University Teachers of English. Established in 1984, it first appeared every second year, was published annually from 1994 to 2008 and has since appeared three times within two years. Since 2022, SPELL is published open access as an online journal. A full backlist is available from e-periodica.ch: www.e-periodica.ch/digbib/volumes?UID=spe-001.

Every second year, SPELL publishes a selection of papers given at the biennial symposia organised by SAUTE. Non-symposium volumes usually have as their starting point papers given at other conferences organised by the Swiss network of Anglophone Studies, in particular conferences of SANAS, the Swiss Association for North American Studies and SAMEMES, the Swiss Association of Medieval and Early Modern English Studies. Decisions concerning topics and editors of individual issues are made by the Annual General Meeting of SAUTE two years before the year of publication.

SPELL publishes peer-reviewed, original work devoted to the study of the English language as well as Anglophone literatures and cultures. Contributions are usually by participants at the conferences mentioned, but editors are free to consider other proposals or solicit further contributions. SPELL gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences (SAGW).

Information on all aspects of SPELL, including volumes planned for the future, is available from the General Editor, Professor Ina Habermann, University of Basel, Department of English, CH-4051 Basel, Switzerland, ina.habermann@unibas.ch. Information about past volumes of SPELL, the journal's Advisory Board and about SAUTE can be found on www.saute.ch.

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Introduction:
Mobilities in Literature and Language

Migrant "crises"

In May last year, we had the pleasure of organising the biennial conference of the Swiss Association of University Teachers of English (SAUTE) in Zurich. One of the special features of SAUTE conferences is their interdisciplinary character: they bring together scholars from all subfields of English Studies, addressing topics of interest to both linguists and literary critics. The theme of the 2021 conference – and the present issue of *SPELL* – was inspired by the recent "mobilities turn" in the social sciences, which proposes new ways of conceptualising the world. As Noel Castree, Rob Kitchin and Alisdair Rogers phrase it in their *Dictionary of Human Geography*, the mobilities turn, "rather than understanding the world as largely fixed with some movement between locations, views the world as fluid and always in motion" (320). Instead of thinking of people and their material contexts as being "rooted in places," advocates of the mobilities turn assume that these contexts are constituted by the movements of, and interactions between, people – the "mobile practices" that bring social phenomena into being (320). This entails a shift of focus from the (static) social structures and physical environments that precede and surround us to the movements and activities that we perform within them, a reorientation with obvious relevance to the fields of sociology and human geography, where the mobilities turn first gained traction.

But how does this pertain to the discipline of English Studies? Can the "new mobilities paradigm" (Sheller and Urry) be productively applied to the study of language and literature? Doing so would need to involve more than considering speech and writing as ways of communicating about and conceptualising mobilities, although this is one important contribution that we can make to the field. In a previous issue of *SPELL*, published in 2012, Annette Kern-Stähler and David Britain briefly touch upon the "new mobilities paradigm" in social theory; they observe that, "In linguistic, literary and cultural studies, [...] mobility and movement have been receiving critical attention for at least two decades," and they go on

to ask how "mobilities, both mundane and dramatic, are represented, narrated, performed and negotiated in literature and discourse" (11). Building and expanding on this question, the present volume draws on the interdisciplinary field of mobilities studies to approach language and literature not just as *reflections of (and on)* mobile practices, but also as *products of* these practices.

Besides its academic significance, the topic of *Migrations and Contact* has an important political dimension. In the public discourse of the last ten years, migration has predominantly been framed in terms of "crisis." In the summer of 2014, a surge of unaccompanied minors on America's southwest border prompted President Barack Obama to declare a "humanitarian crisis" in the Rio Grande Valley; between May and July alone, border authorities had apprehended more than 40,000 children there (The White House). At that same time, three years into the war in Syria, the phenomenon that would become known as Europe's "refugee and migrant crisis" began to intensify, reaching its peak in 2015, when 1.3 million people applied for asylum in the member states of the EU, Norway and Switzerland (Pew Research Center). Since then, hostility to immigration has reshaped national and international politics on both sides of the Atlantic, and it continues to boost right-wing populist parties and movements across the Western world.

In the spring and summer of 2016, the Leave Campaign in Britain successfully played on anti-immigration sentiments. One of its notorious slogans was "Turkey (population 76 million) is joining the EU. Vote Leave, take back control" (see Boffey and Helm). The accompanying poster suggested that remaining in the EU would amount to an open-door policy for Turkish immigrants, with the UK/EU passport representing the metaphorical open door. Justice Secretary and former journalist Michael Gove, one of the figureheads of the Leave Campaign, claimed that Turkey and other Eastern-European countries could join the EU as early as 2020 and that this would lead to an influx of up to 5.2 million people (a population the size of Scotland) arriving in the UK; this, Gove added, would make the UK National Health Service unsustainable by 2030 (Mason). Nigel Farage, the leader of the UK Independence Party, took the xenophobic rhetoric of the Leave campaign several steps further. One week prior to the EU referendum vote, he proudly unveiled a billboard showing a long queue of predominantly male Middle Eastern refugees below the red-lettered headline "BREAKING POINT," followed by the caption: "The EU has failed us all" (see Hopkins). The photograph shows Syrians on the border of Croatia and Slovenia, but the billboard does not provide

any information about the context. Commentators on social media were quick to point out parallels to a Nazi propaganda film shot during World War II, excerpts of which had recently been shown in an episode of the 2005 BBC documentary series *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the "Final Solution"* (Hopkins).

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Atlantic, Donald Trump made illegal immigration to the US one of the leading topics of his presidency. Continuing in campaign mode even after he had entered the White House, Trump did not tire of repeating the Twitter-friendly refrain "Build a wall," which he later elaborated into the miniature poem (tweeted twice within two minutes) "BUILD A WALL & CRIME WILL FALL" (see "Trump Has a New Rhyming Slogan"). Trump's imaginary wall can serve as a symbol of the anti-immigration backlash of the two-thousand-teens, illustrating the extent to which xenophobic discourse has entered the political mainstream. Calls for a stricter policing of borders imply that mobility can – and must – be limited and that contact with certain people or populations can – and must – be stopped.

Against this background, the present collection of essays aims to approach the issue of *Migrations and Contacts* from a historically and culturally comparative perspective. Scholars in the field of English Studies are well qualified to do so, as both the English language and anglophone literatures provide ample reminders of the crucial role cross-cultural encounters and exchanges have played throughout history – and continue to play in the contemporary world. From the Roman, Viking and Norman invasions of Britain through the expansion of the British Empire to the growth of America's political, economic and cultural sphere of influence in today's globalised world, the English language has continuously absorbed elements from other languages, and it has diversified into a multiplicity of context-derived varieties. This development has produced the "English Language Complex" (McArthur 56) which can be subdivided into distinct classes of native-speaker varieties (standard, regional and social dialects) as well as second- or foreign-language varieties (pidgins and creoles, immigrant and hybridised varieties, etc.). As Edgard Schneider notes, "Language contact has been ubiquitous in the history of English, and it has also shaped the newly emergent varieties of the language in a fundamental way" (148). If English is a "contact language" (Schreier and Hundt), then the study of its historical and regional varieties calls for a mobility-sensitive approach. According to Jan Blommaert, this is now truer than ever: in the current age of globalisation, "We [...] see that the mobility of people also involves the mobility of linguistic and

sociolinguistic resources" (4). For Blommaert, language is "no longer tied to stable and resident communities" but "moves across the globe" (blurb). From this, he deduces the necessity of a new "*sociolinguistics of mobility*" designed for the analysis of "language-in-motion" rather than "language-in-place" (5, emphasis in original).

Similar things can be said about English-language *literatures*. In formerly colonised countries and their diasporas, the emergence of "New Englishes" (Schneider) as second-language varieties went hand in hand with the emergence of "New Literatures in English." Today, these global anglophone literatures are "no longer simply 'postcolonial'," as they have transcended their historical roots in colonialism: "just like the English language they have come to employ as first or second language, [the new literatures in English] are not only shaped by local circumstances and experiences, but also by globalization processes and intricate networks of transcultural connections" (Sarkowsky and Schulze-Engler 177). Even beyond colonialism and globalisation, English-language literature has a long history of contact with literatures in other languages. Literary forms are themselves subject to migrations and spatial and cultural translations, and their relationship to mobility is often multi-layered. For instance, it is possible to view genres such as travel writing as both "agents and products of mobilities," as a British research centre devoted to the study of literary and cultural mobilities notes on its webpage (Mobilities in Literature and Culture Research Centre).

The field of *theory* provides another area of application for the new mobilities paradigm. As early as 1982, Edward Said observed that, "Like people and schools of criticism, ideas, and theories *travel* – from person to person, from situation to situation, from one period to another" (226). Said's essay "Traveling Theory" is an example of the very phenomenon it describes, as its titular concept is itself a travelling one. As such, it reappears in Mieke Bal's 2002 study *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, even if Bal herself seems to be unaware of the fact (see Frank 61–63). Even before the rise of the "new mobilities paradigm," literary scholars employed the metaphor of travel to describe the transnational and transdisciplinary circulation of ideas.

The "new mobilities paradigm"

As cultural theorist Doris Bachmann-Medick helpfully points out, "turns" such as the linguistic turn, the cultural turn and their numerous offshoots

not only redirect scholarly attention to a previously neglected phenomenon (such as, in the present instance, mobility); they also establish a new way of *understanding* that phenomenon. In Bachmann-Medick's words, "We can only speak of a turn if [...] the new research focus shifts from the object level of new fields of inquiry to the level of analytical categories and concepts" (16). Turns transform an "initially descriptive term" into an "operative concept" (17). The linguistic turn set the example by using language – or, more precisely, a post-Saussurean understanding of language – as a model to explain various other phenomena. For proponents of the linguistic turn, things as diverse as the unconscious, myth and culture are structured like a language – semiotic systems of meaning-making.

In a similar fashion, the new mobilities paradigm reframes social phenomena through the lens of mobility, assuming that the social world is constituted by a complex interplay of different kinds of mobilities. From that perspective, "mobility" is more than an object of study; it is an analytical category that can be applied to a wide range of phenomena. In his ground-breaking book *Sociology beyond Societies* (2000), John Urry shifts the focus of social mobility studies from the *vertical* axis of movement up or down the class ladder to different types of *horizontal* mobility (3). The most obvious instance of horizontal mobility is what he terms "corporeal mobility," that is, the movement of people on foot or by vehicle; from this Urry distinguishes the "mobilities of objects" such as consumer goods, "imaginative mobilities" enabled by television, as well as computer-based "virtual travel" (see the chapter "Travellings," 49–76; see also *Mobilities*).

The concept of the "new mobilities paradigm" was introduced in an eponymous essay co-authored by John Urry and Mimi Sheller in 2006, in which they assert that prior to what they term the mobilities turn, "[s]ocial science ha[d] largely ignored or trivialised the importance of the systematic movements of people for work and family life, for leisure and pleasure, and for politics and protest" (208). Accordingly, the new mobilities paradigm is designed to challenge the "'a-mobile'" (208) nature of much social science research. The mobilities turn, in the way Sheller and Urry conceive it, builds on and extends the previous "spatial turn." As Sheller explains in a more recent essay, the spatial turn involved a social-constructivist reconceptualisation of space. Whereas formerly, space had been thought of as an entity that precedes social reality, a passive backdrop or container for human activity, theorists like Henri Lefebvre and Doreen Massey advanced a relational understanding of space (Sheller 624). For Massey, space is something that is "always under construction," and it is

"constituted through interactions," the "product of interrelations" (9). Sheller and Urry hold that despite this emphasis on interactions and inter-relations, the spatial turn has not always entailed a consideration of movement. They note a general lack of attention to "how the spatialities of social life presuppose (and frequently involve conflict over) both the actual and the imagined movement of people from place to place, person to person, event to event" (Sheller and Urry 208).

As tends to be the case with "turns," not everything about the "new mobility paradigm" is new. Rather than constituting clean breaks with the past, turns often lead to a rediscovery and reappraisal of pioneering previous work. To give one example: in 1992, the historical anthropologist James Clifford introduced the concept of "travelling cultures" to argue against the static concept of the "field" (98–99) in traditional ethnography. According to Clifford, an ethnic group is not simply "there" in a fixed geographical location, where the anthropologist can find it and observe it like a feature of the landscape. Rather, the members of the group are constantly moving both within and across the boundaries of their community. Any account of "culture," Clifford's essay insists, must do justice to the fact that cultures travel, meaning that scholars need to adjust their observational methods and representational strategies accordingly. Later, Clifford proposed a shift of focus from the territorial "roots" of communities to the "routes" that shape their daily lives. Clifford's 1997 book *Routes* is based on the "assumption of movement," setting forth a "view of human location as constituted by displacement as much as by stasis" (2). According to Clifford, cultures need to be understood as being *en route* – or, "on the move," as Tim Cresswell, one of the most prominent representatives of the mobilities turn in the field of geography, would later phrase it (*On the Move*).

There is a certain danger involved in establishing mobility as a universal norm, however, especially when scholars take a privileged Western lifestyle as the starting point for a general social theory of mobility. In their book *Mobile Lives*, Anthony Elliott and John Urry introduce the concept of the "mobile life" by describing the example of a British-based scholar travelling to a conference in New York (1–2). Peter Adey's *Mobility* similarly illustrates the "ubiquity of mobility" (2) by describing the author's own commute to work at different British universities. Adey concludes this introductory section by conceding that "We are all differently abled, and how the world enables or constrains our mobility can be crucial for the living of a good life" (4). Yet his choice of opening example illustrates the extent to which advocates of the mobilities turn identify

"mobile lives" with their own experiences as able-bodied academics in what Elliott and Urry term the "rich north" (3, 5, 7–9, and passim), although the cited authors are, of course, well aware of the social inequalities regarding mobility opportunities (see especially the chapter "Politics" in Adey 104–66). Adey notes that while "neoliberal ideology celebrates unfettered mobility for people and things" (Adey 109) – an attitude that mobilities studies needs to be careful not to reproduce – mobility is, in fact, unevenly distributed.

As Zygmunt Bauman has argued, globalisation divides the world as much as it unites it, and one way in which this division manifests itself is unequal access to mobility: "Mobility climbs to the rank of the uppermost among the coveted values – and the freedom to move, perpetually a scarce and unequally distributed commodity, fast becomes the main stratifying factor of our late-modern or postmodern times" (2). According to Bauman, today's world is stratified by a "global hierarchy of mobility" (69–76), and the "concentration of capital, finance and all other resources of choice and effective action" goes hand in hand with the "*concentration of freedom* to move and to act" (70, emphasis in original). Mobility, then, is not a global one-size-fits-all phenomenon but a result of localised conditions, needs and opportunities. Scholars of migration have long distinguished between "pull" factors (or economic incentives) and "push" factors driving population movement, with the latter including war, political persecution, natural disaster and famine. If there is involuntary or forced mobility, then there is also "forced immobility," when migrants become stuck in transit, finding themselves in a "state of rightless being" (Stock 11). Mobility, to conclude, is a "resource that is differentially accessed" (Cresswell, "Towards" 21), and it cannot be understood without its counterpart, immobility.

In an essay on the politics of mobility, Tim Cresswell contends that mobilities are both produced by and productive of power relations ("Towards" 21), which is why they need to be considered in relation to the political and societal structures in which they are enacted. In order to do justice to this fact, Cresswell makes power an integral part of his definition of mobility, in which he distinguishes mobility from mere movement. Thus, if we assume that movement, as such, is the simple displacement of a person or an object from one location to another, then mobility can be understood as movement "imbued with meaning and power" (*On the Move* 4). Movement becomes mobility as soon as we consider it in relation to "contexts of power" (2). For Cresswell, understanding mobility means to examine the representational strategies that surround movement

and endow it with ideological meaning (3). This perspective is of particular interest to scholars of language and literature, as it assumes that mobile practices are informed by cultural representations as much as by corporeal movement. In that regard, mobility consists of both discursive and material, embodied components.

Outline of this volume

Tim Cresswell is also the author of the first contribution to this volume, which builds on his extensive previous work in this field. Cresswell's oeuvre includes both scholarly and creative texts. His three volumes of poetry – *Soil* (2013), *Fence* (2015) and *Plastiglomerate* (2020) – are closely related to his academic work on human geography, which has two main foci: place and mobility. Following in the footsteps of the great Yi-Fu Tuan, to whom it is dedicated, Cresswell's 2008 book *Place: An Introduction* defines place as "space invested with meaning in the context of power" (12). As we just saw, Cresswell later used this definition as the basis for his theory of mobility, according to which "mobility exists in the same relation to movement as place does to location ("Towards" 18). The relationship between space and power was already the topic of Cresswell's PhD thesis, *In Place/Out of Place* (1998), which explores normative assumptions about how particular places can and should be used – as well as transgressive acts that challenge the spatial order by appropriating places for different, deviant purposes.

Tim Cresswell's other field of expertise is mobility. While sociologists like John Urry advocated a "new mobilities paradigm" for the study of human societies, Cresswell developed a parallel version of the mobilities turn for human geography. Besides the previously mentioned *On the Move* – his tour de force through the history of mobility in the modern era – Cresswell has written a history of the American tramp as a social type (*The Tramp*). In his contribution to the present volume, he takes up the "tourist and vagabond" binary introduced by Zygmunt Bauman in his work on globalisation. Bauman originally proposed this dichotomy to distinguish between two opposing but related forms of mobility in the contemporary world: the voluntarily mobility of first-world consumers and the forced mobility of the human "waste" of globalisation (*Globalization* 92; see also *Wasted Lives*). Bauman writes: "The tourists travel because *they want to*; the vagabonds because *they have no other bearable choice*" (*Globalization* 93, emphases in original). As this quotation

shows, Bauman himself employs the term "vagabond" – somewhat ana-chronistically – to describe a figure of postmodernity. By contrast, Cress-well offers a historical perspective on vagrancy as a form of mobility that has long been perceived as a threat to settled societies. Cresswell's ex-amples range from the city-state of late-fifteenth, early-sixteenth-century Bern to Malta and the EU during the refugee crisis of the last decade. In each case, the figure of the vagabond was perceived as a challenge to a place-bound conception of identity (i.e. identity as belonging to a spa-tially defined community). Cresswell concludes that in today's world, mobility is determined by citizenship and unequal access to citizenship rights; the concept of the "citizen" continues to be defined against that of the vagabond, whose mobility is relegated to the realm of illegitimacy.

The next chapter complements Cresswell's discussion of the "mobility of the wandering poor" in early modern Bern by offering a sociolinguistic analysis of the "Language and Mobility of Late Modern English Paupers." In England during the First Industrial Revolution, poor citizens appealed for financial support to their home parishes by sending in so-called pauper letters. Anne-Christine Gardner, Anita Auer and Mark Iten have analysed a sample of such letters written between c. 1795 and 1834. In their contribution to this volume, they explore the relationship between language and patterns of mobility. Their goal in doing so is twofold: on the one hand, they wish to gain insight into the paupers' motivations for migrating across the English South, often far away from their homes; on the other hand, they are interested in how language variation in pauper petitions sheds light on the English dialect landscape of the period under investigation. Using examples from Dorset and Cumberland as cases in point, Gardner, Auer and Iten demonstrate that it is difficult to reconstruct the authors' origins based on the language used in their letters. Though local non-standard features do appear in these ego-documents (and are remarkably persistent), there is no clear match between the parish of legal settlement and the place of birth and origin of the writers of the letters. However, the social meta-data indicate how far paupers travelled at the time (on occasion more than 100 kilometres away from their parish, for example from Southampton to London and Cornwall). The presence of non-standard and dialect features in the pauper petitions can be product-ively interpreted through the lens of dialect contact; descriptive feature profiles illustrate the regional persistence of dialect features at the time.

Following this discussion of "language on the move" is a chapter on "literature on the move." Travel writing is a literary form that, more than any other, is the product of mobility. In his contribution to this volume,

Martin Mühlheim offers an informative and insightful reading of the 1858 travel diary "Scenes in the Interior of Liberia" by James L. Sims. The nation of Liberia on the west coast of Africa was originally created by the American Colonization Society to provide a new home to formerly enslaved people, far away from the United States of America, where there were fears that the emancipation of slaves would lead to either a rebellion or miscegenation. After three decades as a private colony, Liberia was proclaimed an independent republic in 1847, the second black republic in history. Unavoidably, the colonial origins of Liberia led to tensions between the African American settlers – freed slaves who were suddenly cast into the role of missionaries and colonists – and the indigenous African population. At the same time, there was opposition to the colonisation of Liberia among African Americans in the US. Americo-Liberian settlers such as James L. Sims (who had moved to the colony in 1851) therefore found themselves in peculiar in-between position as "black antislavery settler-colonists." As Mühlheim demonstrates, Sims attempted to navigate this fraught subject position by strategically deploying intertextual references to works as diverse as Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Lord Byron's *Don Juan*. Displaying the author's erudition, these references reinforce the various themes of Sims' travelogue – most notably, that of the "black-white man's burden," that is, the mission of "civilizing" the indigenous population. Even though Mühlheim does not explicitly make that point, Sims' many references to works from different periods and genres also illustrate the mobility of literary texts, elements of which can be transferred and adapted to new contexts, where they acquire new meaning.

The next chapter introduces the interdisciplinary field of border studies, which is of special relevance to the present volume. Nowhere does the uneven distribution of mobility become more obvious than at national borders, which are zones of selective permeability. Over the last two decades, border studies scholars such as political geographer David Newman have shifted the focus from the "static nature of border lines" ("Borders and Bordering" 172) to the "dynamics of the bordering process as it impacts society and space" ("Contemporary" 73). Newman holds that if we wish to understand the phenomenon of "bordering," we need to consider the actors and activities involved in the processes of demarcating and managing borders, as well as the ways in which these processes impact the daily lives of those who reside in, or attempt to travel through, the transitional space of the borderland ("Borders and Bordering" 173). Against this background, it is interesting that the 2013 computer game

Papers, Please places the player in the position of a border officer. In this role, the player is compelled to follow instructions and to obey the ever-changing protocols for allowing individuals to cross the border. In an elegant analysis, literary scholar and film critic Alan Mattli argues that while *Papers, Please* successfully dramatises the ethical dilemmas facing immigration inspectors, it conspicuously fails to engage with its own historical moment. The game is set during the Cold War in the fictional Eastern European state of Arstotzka. By choosing an early-1980s setting and resuscitating the "Iron Curtain," *Papers, Please* avoids the complexities of the current geopolitical situation. Moreover, as Mattli points out, the game relies on a surprisingly simplistic understanding of borders as clear-cut lines of separation rather than areas of contact which are subject to continuous processes of de- and re-bordering.

The topic of migration is also discussed by Gerold Schneider and Maud Reveilhac, who offer a corpus-linguistic perspective on migration discourse on the social media platform Twitter. In the wake of the political developments outlined at the beginning of this Introduction, migration has become a widely debated issue. Schneider and Reveilhac compare data from five English-speaking countries on three different continents to identify both general and local tendencies. Their point of departure is that previous research on attitudes to migration has neglected social media commentaries as sources of public opinion. To address this lacuna, they apply automated content analysis techniques to both opinion surveys and samples of Twitter posts. They consider tweets by random users, interested users and politicians, which they compare to the findings of opinion polls. As they demonstrate, both sets of data show a good correlation between *salience* of migration and *sentiment* towards migration (measured by frequency and tonality in the case of Twitter posts). The authors develop an innovative methodological approach aiming to bridge computational linguistics and cultural studies and to thus work towards a "culturomics" combining digital and traditional analytical tools. Their aim is to enhance our understanding of how the discursive framing of migration impacts public opinion, and to examine the extent to which migration discourse correlates with contextual factors such as immigration policies and elite polarisation.

In his comparative analysis of two recent novels by Kamila Shamsie and Chuck Palahniuk, Niklas Cyril Fischer uses the concept of mobility in a more metaphorical sense to describe "Migrations of Sound." Drawing on the burgeoning field of "literary studies of sound," Fischer proposes a reconceptualisation of listening as a mode of intersubjective understand-

ing that is prone to failure. Fischer's main point is that, while it is tempting to follow postcolonial critics in equating listening with attention to, and "ethical openness" for, the voice of an Other, this equation of listening with understanding "neglects the curious foreclosure of intersubjective understanding inherent in the physical act of listening." Addressing listening in its concrete sensory dimension (rather than in a more abstract sense), Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017) and Palahniuk's *The Invention of Sound* (2020) feature protagonists who are endowed with "keen auditory sensibility." Significantly, however, this ability to *listen* does not translate into an ability to empathise with, let alone *understand*, others. Instead, the protagonists' concentration on sound makes them deaf to the causes and contexts of these sounds. In Palahniuk's novel, this is made glaringly obvious when the character of Mitzi Ives, who makes a career out of producing screams for Hollywood films, begins to deploy actual torture to satisfy the movie industry's desire for ever more authentic effects. Shamsie's *Home Fire* is more subtle in the way it addresses the ethics of listening. Using motifs from Sophocles' *Antigone*, the novel is set against the backdrop of the war in Syria and the "grooming" of young Muslims by the Islamic State. Shamsie combines her narrative of radicalisation with a critique of counter-terrorism policies in Britain, where the Home Office has the power to revoke the citizenship of any dual national suspected of terrorism. This is another striking instance of the phenomenon of "forced immobility" mentioned earlier in this Introduction: in *Home Fire*, the fictional Home Secretary Karamat Lone decrees that, even after his death, the nineteen-year-old ISIS recruit Parvaiz Pasha cannot return to Britain.

The volume closes with an essay by Andy Kirkpatrick, a leading expert on "World Englishes." Taking his cue from the work of Braj B. Kachru, Kirkpatrick argues that English has become an indigenous Asian language. In the context of trade and colonialism, English took root in various regions of the Asian continent, where it came into contact with and was shaped by local languages. In the process, it diversified into a range of regional varieties, or "Asian Englishes." At the same time, English developed into a *lingua franca* within Asia, enabling transnational communication between multilingual speakers. In his reconstruction of these processes, Kirkpatrick focuses on the different creative and functional purposes that the English language has served, and continues to serve, within Asia. He emphasises that English has taken on several unexpected roles, in domains that traditionally used to be reserved for local languages, such as religion and law. His examples include the teaching of English at Islamic religious schools, or madrassas, in

Indonesia, as well as the influence of British Common Law on the legal systems of Asian countries from Bangladesh to Singapore. While this is a legacy of imperialism, Kirkpatrick is convinced that Asian Englishes are able to authentically reflect their speakers' cultural experiences, histories and identities by adapting English to their needs. Kirkpatrick draws on Asian Anglophone literatures to illustrate this creative appropriation of English.

The three contributions from English linguistics thus offer different yet complementary perspectives on the relationship between language, migration and contact. Applying sociolinguistic and corpus-linguistic methodologies, they demonstrate that the study of the English language can make important contributions to the mobilities turn. It allows us to scrutinise the role of framing in the public discourse on migration, and it shows that language itself is shaped by mobility: varieties move along with their speakers, and they are transformed in situations of language contact. Similarly, the three contributions on English-language literatures and the computer game *Papers, Please* illustrate that texts from different genres and media not only engage with the issue of migration by *thematising* (or, in the case of the computer game, simulating) forms of mobility and forced immobility; they can also be seen as the *products* of mobile practices such as travelling. Most importantly, perhaps, all case studies collected in this volume provide evidence of a key point made by Tim Cresswell in his chapter, namely that mobility is "totally wrapped up in power and politics." The various contributions discuss extreme forms of social inequality (such as pauperism), colonial and postcolonial power relations, discriminatory border policies and social media discourses on migration in which the voices of the migrants themselves remain inaudible. Language and literature give meaning to material and embodied forms of (im)mobility; at the same time, they remind us that "Movement, like space, is both an outcome of power and a tool in the production, reproduction and possible transformation of systematically asymmetrical hierarchies of power and privilege."

* * *

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The Citizen and the Vagabond:
Key Figures in the History of Mobilities

The purpose of this essay is to explore mobility, and particularly the politics of mobility, through specific figures who are formed through and marked by their mobility and immobility. These are the figures of the citizen and the vagabond. The paper builds on the foundational work of Zygmunt Bauman and his discussion of the Tourist and the Vagabond. In his accounts, the focus is on levels of volition in the mobility of the figures alongside the pleasure, or lack of pleasure, associated with mobility. In my account, building on citizenship studies, the figures are mapped onto a continuum of power and participation in civil society and everyday life. The paper is illustrated by historical and contemporary case studies including the identification of vagabonds in Switzerland during the fifteenth century, the policing of black bodies in Florida four hundred years later, and the selective production of citizenship in Malta in recent years. These are framed within a wider account of the the politics of mobility from within the interdisciplinary field of mobility studies.

Keywords: mobility; citizens; vagabonds; politics; figures

Introduction

The purpose of this essay[1] is to explore mobility, and particularly the politics of mobility, through particular figures who are formed through and marked by their mobility and immobility. These are the figures of the citizen and the vagabond. Before doing that, however, I want to make clear what I mean by mobility.

Mobility has become a key concept across the humanities, social sciences and arts thanks to the advent of what has been called the new mo-

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[1] While there is no previously published paper in this form, elements are taken from previously published work including Cresswell "Citizenship in Worlds of Mobility"; Cresswell "The Prosthetic Citizen"; Cresswell "The Vagrant/Vagabond."

bilities paradigm or mobilities turn around the turn of the century. Mobility theory starts from the recognition that mobility had previously appeared as logically, morally and politically secondary to concerns that emphasised versions of fixity, boundedness and rootedness. The anthropologist Liisa Malkki referred to this as a sedentary metaphysics – a set of beliefs that prioritised rooted, bounded and relatively fixed spaces and places in a way that made mobility conceptually and politically suspect. Similar beliefs were identified by scholars such as John Urry and Mimi Sheller as being widespread across disciplines (Sheller and Urry). They asked, instead, what happens when we start with mobility rather than making it secondary to the arrangements of spaces and places? What if we take mobility seriously?

Drawing on the work of Malkki, Sheller, Urry and others, my take on mobility insists, in line with Henri Lefebvre's theorisation of space, on mobility as a social product. It includes three aspects that are almost always interrelated and never exist in a pure form: movement, meaning and practice (Cresswell *On the Move*). Movement refers to physical movement between locations. Like Lefebvre's representations of space, this refers to the dominant view of planners, governments and transport operators. It is usually quantifiable and often mapped. It is the lines and arrows that appear of maps to denote the size, frequency, speed, and direction of flows of people, things and ideas. Meaning recognises that movements are culturally and socially encoded. The lines on the map are never all there is. These lines are filled with significance. Travel and journeys, from the daily commute to the hike to the North Pole, are meaningful parts of our more than human life. This is exactly why journeys form the basis of so many of our stories from epic poems to modern novels. From *The Odyssey* to *Ulysses*. Mobile practice is the third element of mobility. Similar to Lefebvre's spatial practice, this recognises that we *do* mobility in both mundane and extraordinary ways. We walk, we drive, we sail, we fly, we crawl, we swagger, we march. How we do mobility makes a difference. These differences cannot be conveyed by the technocratic plans that only really convey movement.

So, these are the three aspects of a fully socialised and fully cultural notion of mobility. Mobility includes movement but also exceeds it. The relationship between movement and mobility is not unlike the difference between location and place. The dot on the map that marks location is transformed once we know the place it signifies. Mobility is to movement as place is to location.

The next step in my development of the idea of mobility is to recognise that it is totally wrapped up in power and politics (Cresswell, "Towards a Politics of Mobility"). This is true of movement. The lines and arrows on maps reflect established patterns of power. Where we can go, how often we go, how fast we go, what direction we go in – all these are dependent on who 'we' are and how 'we' are positioned in distributions of power. Movement, like space, is both an outcome of power and a tool in the production, reproduction and possible transformation of systematically asymmetrical hierarchies of power and privilege. Meaning, too, is saturated with power. Car ads sell us sex and prestige. Road movies convince us of the power of mobility as rebellion. We are convinced that mobility is about modernity, or progress, or, alternatively, it is about the forces that threaten to undo these things. A lot depends on what meanings mobility is given and who it is that authorises these meanings. Finally, practice is political. How we move tells us a lot about who we are in relation to systematically asymmetrical relations of power. Do we travel easily through the streets of the city or are we frequently stopped, whether walking or driving? These questions are entangled with race. Do we travel first class, or in economy, do we drive or take the bus, do we flow unimpeded through the airport or do we embark on a boat that is barely seaworthy to cross the Mediterranean or the English Channel? This, then, is the basis of an approach to mobility. Mobility is Movement + Meaning + Practice in the context of power.

It is with that in mind that I focus on two figures who illuminate the politics of mobility – the citizen and the vagabond. These paired figures draw on and are inspired by Zygmunt Bauman's related discussion of the tourist and vagabond. Bauman used these figures in his diagnosis of the condition of postmodernity. The difference between the tourist and the vagabond, marked, in his terms, the "principal division of the postmodern society" (*Tourists and Vagabonds* 5). The tourist was the "hero" of postmodernity and the vagabond was the "victim." They were united by their mobility.

Bauman contrasted both the tourist and the vagabond with the figure of the pilgrim. The pilgrim, to Bauman, was the mobile figure that best represented modernity – a figure who followed a known, linear path which was "orderly, determined, predictable, insured" (*Tourists and Vagabonds* 8). The travels of the pilgrim, Bauman tells us, no longer make sense in a world where time and space have become fractured and values uncertain – the world he elsewhere refers to as "liquid" (*Liquid Modernity*). In a liquid world, Bauman tells us, the postmodern strategy is to

avoid being fixed. Key to this identity is the tourists feeling that she is "in control" – that her mobilities are mobilities of volition, equatable with agency. They are also connected to pleasure as the tourist is a hedonist.

Avoiding being fixed is the strategy of the tourist – "the masters supreme of melting the solids and unfixing the fixed" (Bauman *Tourists and Vagabonds* 11). Bauman describes, or, perhaps, constructs, the figure of the tourist as a person whose mobilities are guided by whims and desires, who rarely connects in any meaningful way with the places she passes through. It is a life spent on the move and never arriving. Clearly, Bauman's tourist is a figure that rarely maps on to actually-existing tourists. Bauman's tourist is a figure to think with. The tourist, however, is not the only mobile figure Bauman thinks with.

> But not all wanderers are on the move because they prefer being on the move to staying put. Many would perhaps refuse to embark on a life of wandering were they asked, but they had not been asked in the first place. If they are on the move, it is because they have been pushed from behind – having been first uprooted by a force too powerful, and often too mysterious, to resist. They see their plight as anything but the manifestation of freedom. Freedom, autonomy, independence – if they appear in their vocabulary at all – come invariably in the future tense. For them, to be free means not to have to wander around. To have a home and to be allowed to stay inside. These are the vagabonds; dark moons reflecting the shine of bright suns; the mutants of postmodern evolution, the unfit rejects of the brave new species. The vagabonds are the waste of the world which has dedicated itself to tourists [*sic*] services. (*Tourists and Vagabonds* 14)

The vagabond, in Bauman's account, is the tourist's mirror image. The vagabond shares the characteristic of mobility with the tourist. Mobility is what unites them. Their mobilities are also related – they provide services to the tourists. As with the tourist, Bauman's vagabond is a figure to think with. He uses the term vagabond to refer to people who are compelled to move, and whose movement is necessary for the tourists. We might think here of the people, often immigrants, who work in hotels, or drive taxis, or clean airports. Every bit as mobile as the tourist, but otherwise opposite. The vagabond figure includes the migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

Bauman's account of the tourist and the vagabond is based on his claim that mobility has become the activity and value *par excellence* of liquid postmodern life. The twin figures show how a hierarchy of mobility exists, with the pure tourist at one end and the pure vagabond at the other.

They also reveal how forms and figures of mobility are functionally dependent on each other.

> The vagabonds, the victims of the world which made the tourists into its heroes, have their uses, after all; as the sociologists love to say – they are 'functional.' It is difficult to live in their neighbourhood, but it is unthinkable to live without them. It is their all too blatant hardships that reduce one's own worries to marginal inconveniences. It is their evident unhappiness that inspires the rest to thank God daily for having made them tourists. (*Tourists and Vagabonds* 15)

There is something anachronistic about Bauman's use of the vagabond figure to discuss postmodernity. Few actually use the term vagabond to refer to migrants, refugees, or even the homeless these days. It is a term we are more likely to associate with Elizabethan England than we are with postmodernity.

Here, I am less concerned with diagnosing the condition of postmodernity and more concerned with deeper historical continuities that have led us to where we are. Bauman's anachronistic use of the figure of the vagabond is suggestive, and I intend to consider this figure a little more literally and in relation to another figure formed through mobility – the figure of the citizen. While the continuum linking the tourist to the vagabond focusses our attention on agency and pleasure, the one connecting the citizen to the vagabond is centred on belonging and politics. As with Bauman's work, I mobilise these historical characters as figures whose meanings are rooted in their histories and literal existence but whose significance exceeds these limits.

The Construction of Citizens and Vagabonds in Fifteenth Century Bern

At the end of the fifteenth century, in Bern, Switzerland, inhabitants began to notice bedraggled strangers arriving from elsewhere, begging for alms. The population of the city at the time was something under 5000 people. Not a small village but certainly small enough to be a knowable community. These new people were not known. They were wandering strangers carrying with them the scent of other places. Something needed to be done.

In a fine-tuned evocation of the politics of mobile identities the Bern Council of 1481 decided to expel all poor people who were not citizens of

Bern (excluding pilgrims who were asked to move on more politely). A later edict of 1483 reiterated the wish to be freed of the wandering poor, this time picking out those wandering beggars who spoke French for particular loathing. This was repeated in 1503, 1510 and 1515. As well as wayfaring paupers, Gypsies, pilgrims and an assortment of other travellers were asked to leave – and to never return (Groebner 178–181). Clearly, the council of Bern was upset for over 30 years. They were upset by a group of people who were both poor and mobile. They had, of course, always been poor people in Bern and elsewhere. The problem was that these wayfaring vagrants were not locatable. They produced anxiety because they were not legible within the clear hierarchies and geographies of medieval Europe. This was a world in which everyone had their place both geographically and socially. The poor were tied to the soil both through backbreaking labour and through law. They belonged to places and it was the responsibility of those places to look after them. The Council of Bern, then, was responding to the mobility of the wandering poor. These were people without place and 'masterless men' (Beier).

All of the edicts from 1483 to 1515 in Bern demanded the expulsion of the wandering poor. But as the number of these wanderers increased it became increasingly difficult to tell who they were. They also had to be differentiated from (sometimes) legitimate wanderers such as pilgrims and merchants. In a small town, where everyone is known, this is not difficult, but as more and more wanderers turn up this becomes complicated. By 1527 the Council of Bern required all the deserving poor (that is the poor who belong to Bern) to wear badges identifying them as worthy of alms. The authorities kept lists of all those entitled to wear these badges. Forms of identification became a key tool in distinguishing between two kinds of people, two figures. One who belonged and deserved charity, and one who did not belong, and could be moved on. These events are outlined by the historian Valentin Groebner in his book *Who Are You?*, where he charts how the very notion of identity in a modern sense was invented in fifteenth-century Berne, where the supposed threat of the new mobile people led to the poor being issued identity documents to prove they were worthy of alms. By the middle of the sixteenth century similar ordinances could be found across Europe. From 1530, for instance, all those practicing beggars in England were supposed to carry a byllet (ticket) when begging for alms (Aydelotte 143; Groebner).

Across medieval Europe authorities responded to the presence of the wandering poor by differentiating the worthy (because local) poor from their wayfaring (and thus unworthy) counterparts by issuing forms of

identification to those who are legitimate and refusing such identification to those who were not. Such a strategy also required forms of regulation in the form of people who could check identification and then punish or expel those who were too mobile. Punishment could be harsh, ranging from expulsion to branding and whipping. In 1571 those who were unfortunate enough to be caught in Bern having already been expelled were branded on the forehead with an iron cross (Groebner 115).

In these early appearances of the vagabond, in Bern and elsewhere, we can trace how this mobile subject was brought into being as a nightmare figure for a settled society – "the advanced troops or guerrilla units of post traditional chaos" as Zygmunt Bauman has called them (*Life in Fragments* 94). We can see how the vagrant became central to the construction of particular laws. These vagrancy laws would travel across the world over several 100 years. We can see how particular kinds of mobile subjects were given identities through papers, badges and other forms of identification that became necessary to the process of labelling. We can see how practices and technologies of surveillance were brought into being to keep the new enemy in view. We can see how the process of identification took the form of primitive biometrics via branding. All of these are reflected in aspects of life today; they continue to identify and bring into being suspicious, mobile subjects – dangerous travellers – alternative mobilities. The vagrant is there in the increasing number of anti-homelessness laws that are proliferating in the twenty-first century (Mitchell). He's there in the biometric passport, he is there too in the iris scanner and fingerprint reader. The vagrant continues to haunt the nightmares of the modern state. Nightmares which frequently feature the threatening traveller, the unworthy wanderer practicing unwanted ingress.

In reaction to the newly mobile poor such as that in Bern we see how new relations of mobility were being formed. Certain kinds of mobility were being formed both in relation to other forms of mobility and in relation to investments in place-boundedness. In Bern, if you had the right document, you possessed a form of identification that suggested you were worthy of alms and were allowed to beg. If you had no papers then you did not. Groebner argued that the act of begging was central to the creation of what we now know as modern identity papers. Mobility was central here as it was only the mobile strangers arriving in ever-larger numbers as the systems of feudalism broke down that provoked the need to be certain who someone was. The emergence of a class of wandering poor went hand in hand with the emergence of the merchant as a figure at the heart of new forms of trade over long distances. The mercantile class de-

pended on new forms of legitimate mobility and circulation. Our notions of belonging and citizenship changed as the scale of authority over correct and incorrect mobility moved from the city to the new nation-state (Torpey). A key part of this was the establishment of identities in the literal sense of your ID – the papers that prove that you are you. Importantly this was not purely about individual identity – but group membership. If you had the right papers you belonged and could move freely. If you did not, your mobilities were immediately suspect. You could be moved on or punished. This was one place where the identity of the citizen was being created through its differentiation from another mobile identity – that of the vagabond, or vagrant.

Policing Black Bodies in Jacksonville, Florida.

About 400 years after the edicts of Bern, two black men, Jimmy Lee Smith and Milton Henry, were waiting, one cold, weekday morning, for a car a friend had promised to lend them on a street in downtown Jacksonville in Florida. They needed the call to apply for much needed employment in a produce company. Smith worked off and on in the produce industry and helped to organise a local black political group. Henry was an 18-year-old high school student. On that morning, Smith had no jacket, so they went briefly into a dry-cleaning shop in the hope of staying warm. They were soon asked to leave. Still fighting the cold, they walked up and down the street looking for their friend. Seeing Smith and Henry pass by their store several times the store owners became wary of the two companions and called the police. Two police officers searched the men and found neither had a weapon. Nevertheless, they were arrested due to the lack of identification on the two men and distrust concerning their story. They were arrested on a charge of vagrancy according to the Jacksonville ordinance code 26–57 which read:

> Rogues and vagabonds, or dissolute persons who go about begging, common gamblers, persons who use juggling or unlawful games or plays, common drunkards, common night walkers, thieves, pilferers or pickpockets, traders in stolen property, lewd, wanton and lascivious persons, keepers of gambling places, common railers and brawlers, [405 U.S. 156, 157] persons wandering or strolling around from place to place without any lawful purpose or object, habitual loafers, disorderly persons, persons neglecting all lawful business and habitually spending their time by frequenting houses of ill fame, gaming houses, or places where alcoholic beverages are sold or served, persons able to work per but habitually liv-

ing upon the earnings of their wives or minor children shall be deemed vagrants and, upon conviction in the Municipal Court shall be punished as provided for class D offenses. (Jacksonville Ordinance Code 26–57, qtd. in District Court of Appeal Florida 156)

The case of Smith and Harris came before the Supreme Court of the United States of America on 8 December 1971. They were named in *Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville* (District Court of Appeal Florida 156) as two of eight defendants who had been convicted in a Florida Municipal Court of violating the vagrancy ordinance. The conviction had been affirmed on appeal by a Florida Circuit Court. Their co-defendants had been convicted on charges of vagrancy as well as "being a common thief," "loitering" and "prowling by auto."[2] The U.S. Supreme Court overthrew the convictions on the grounds of the ordinance was too vague and encouraged arbitrary arrests at the hands of an unfettered police force. Their decision was informed by a working knowledge of the history of vagrancy law that had been imported wholesale from medieval England. These are the words of Judge Douglas.

> The history is an often-told tale. The breakup of feudal estates in England led to labor shortages which in turn resulted in the Statutes of Laborers, designed to stabilize the labor force by prohibiting increases in wages and prohibiting the movement of workers from their home areas in search of improved conditions. Later vagrancy laws became criminal aspects of the poor laws. The series of laws passed in England on the subject became increasingly severe.... the conditions which spawned these laws may be gone, but the archaic classifications remain. (District Court of Appeal Florida 161–162).

In fact, vagrancy laws had been used in the United States for over 150 years. *Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville* had become a well-known case because it pointed out the absurdity and archaic nature of such laws that effectively allowed police to decide what kinds of activities would fit the term 'vagrant.' Vagrancy was a crime of identity rather than identification of a particular action. In the years following 1972, most states and Canada abolished vagrancy laws and replaced them with new codes specifying kinds of behaviour most often associated with the homeless. The Safe Streets Acts of Ontario and British Columbia passed in 1999, for instance, criminalised 'aggressive' soliciting, and the unsafe disposal of needles

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2   "Prowling by auto" is not listed in Jacksonville's vagrancy statute but the Florida District Court of Appeal had construed this as a variant of "wandering or strolling from place to place" in a previous case.

and condoms. In effect they reintroduced vagrancy laws through the back door (O'Brassill-Kulfan).

    We can see here how the figure of the vagabond casts a long shadow over the history of mobilities. The figures created by the edicts of Bern, and in Elizabethan England were encoded into law as vagrancy acts and these vagrancy acts became globalised through the mobilities of empire. It was moments such as the creation of Bern's edicts, and the vagrancy laws of England, that fed into the laws that were used to stop and arrest Smith and Harris. The vagabond figure haunts any number of moments in which people's mobilities are deemed suspicious – often leading to arrest, incarceration, and even death. What *Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville* illustrates is how mobilities have been racialised. The vagabond has become black. Black mobilities, and particularly the mobilities of black men, have been frequently described and treated as suspicious and threatening. Black men and women are more likely to be stopped while walking or driving in the United States and elsewhere. Often, they are incarcerated and sometimes, as we have seen all too often, they are killed. The link between vagabondage and race was quite literal in the American South during both the period of slavery and in the years following the emancipation of enslaved black people. Vagrancy acts were used to arrest free black people and effectively re-enslave them as criminals who could be sold into servitude or forced into labour – effectively enslaving them again. Similar uses of vagrancy statutes occurred in the West Indies as Demetrius Eudell has shown regarding the laws surrounding the end of slavery which made departure from the estates on which they had been slaves prohibitively difficult. Lisa Lowe has shown how vagrancy laws were used in Hong Kong in the mid–nineteenth century by colonial governments to prosecute the dislocated peasants from China who were labelled as outcast transients. "Vagrancy," she writes, "was an available category through which the colonial state could manage the Chinese population by disciplining and dividing 'good' workers from 'bad' vagrant" (121). As with the edicts of Bern, the twenty or so ordinances passed by the Second Governor of Hong Kong, Sir John Francis Davis, used techniques of governance including registration lists and passes to control the mobility of the vagabonds – in this case, Chinese people – both within Hong Kong and across its borders. The Chinese, for instance, "were required to carry a registration card at all times and faced imprisonment or deportation if not registered" (124). Lowe shows how the ordinances were used to "legislate Chinese colonial difference" (124) and they did this largely through the governance of mobilities.

In all of these cases, and particularly in the attempt to define Smith and Harris as vagrants, the process of definition is conceptually and practically linked to the status of the mobile figure of the citizen. While vagabonds are those who move about and are unable to give a satisfactory account of themselves, citizens are those who are lawfully entitled to move, both within the space they are citizens of, and across borders according to international law. Moving freely, or being stopped, are the attributes of citizens and vagabonds. They exist in relation to each other. In so far as literal citizens are not able to move freely either within the space they are citizens of, or across its borders into other spaces, then they are experientially and politically something less than citizens. The experience of Smith and Harris, and the experience of countless other black and brown people reveal how citizenship as a legal identity and citizenship as lived are often at odds. In addition to racialised others, homeless people, gypsies and travellers, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people, and many others are frequently treated in ways that make citizenship a dubious notion. The citizenship scholar, Engin Isin, has noted how the citizen figure is produced through a logic of othering rather than a logic of exclusion:

> The logic of exclusion assumes that the categories of strangers and outsiders, such as women, slaves, peasants, metics, immigrants, refugees, and clients, preexisted citizenship and that, once defined, it excluded them. (3)

The logic of othering, on the other hand, suggests that the citizen and its others came into being as part of the same logic, simultaneously. Thus, in the Greek Polis, "slaves were not simply excluded from citizenship but made citizenship possible by their very formulation" (Isin 3). Even within the logic of othering there is a binary of citizen and other. In the citizenship literature a number of other figures have been formulated to interrupt the either/or logic of citizen/alien. 'Shadow citizens,' 'barely citizens,' and 'insurgent citizens' are all ways of describing people who are legally citizens but are not treated as such – they all focus our attention on notions of spatial and mobility justice (Sheller).

Critical geographers have subjected the abstractions of citizenship and rights to a number of critiques (Blomley and Pratt; Bullen and Whitehead; Chouinard; Desforges et al.; Kobayashi and Ray; Painter and Philo; Peake and Ray). The observation that the seemingly universal figure of the citizen operates within particular spaces links these different critiques. Critical geographers argue that we need to consider the uneven distribution of citizenship rights as they are lived in situ, paying attention to how the spatiality of social life places some individuals in Linda Peake

and Brian Ray's terms "at the margins of visibility for justice" (184). In addition to this are the realities of the material production of different mobilities (Cresswell, "The Production of Mobilities"). The entanglement of citizenship and rights naturalises mobility as the property of individual, moving, able-bodied citizens. The idea of a freedom to move, for instance, assumes a certain kind of normal body with access to the resources to do so. These assumptions produce "shadow citizens" such as the mobility-impaired, disabled person. Geographer Vera Chouinard has outlined the spaces of shadow citizenship for disabled people in Canada where, in her words, the "law as discursively represented and law as lived are fundamentally at odds" (165). Black people frequently inhabit these spaces.

Black people in major cities across the West are far more likely to be stopped by police due to racial profiling and the mythical crime of "driving while black" (Bloch; Harris). In post–9/11 London, people of Middle Eastern appearance are increasingly stopped by the police on suspicion of activities associated with terrorism. Racial profiling also appears to take place in airports in Western nations where non-white people are frequently stopped and searched at customs or before boarding a flight. Black bodies have been, and continue to be, constantly surveilled, stopped or asked to move on as Simone Browne has persuasively shown in her book *Dark Matters* that traces histories of techniques and strategies for controlling the mobilities of black people, including the slave ship, the branding of enslaved people, slave passes, and laws that mandated the carrying of candles after dark so that black people could be seen.

In the majority of cases, the shadow citizens may be legal citizens but the inhabitation of this category and the rights that come with it are mostly meaningless in everyday life. The shadow citizen inhabits a world which is neither the polis of the citizen nor its excluded other. Their legal status of citizen makes little difference and seems ineffectual in the face of the possibilities open to the denizens of gated communities and elite spaces of flow. They are a product of an uneven material geography of power.

Producing Citizens and Vagabonds in Malta

This brings me to my final story – a story of two journeys that brings us right up to date in our exploration of the role of mobility and immobility in the production of the citizen and the vagabond.

The first journey is instigated by a Vietnamese businessman. Let's call him Dahn. This particular journey involves the flight of his private jet from Hanoi to Malta International Airport, just southwest of the Maltese capital, Valetta.[3] Dahn himself is not on the plane. He sends one of his gaggle of personal assistants. The Hanoi-Valetta route is not well travelled but it is a route that has a particular utility for a businessman such as Dahn. Dahn is one of the global 0.1 percent. He is very wealthy. On board, with his assistant, is some important paperwork. Dahn wants to rent a villa in Malta and he wants to do this as soon as possible. It is not that he desires frequent holidays on the Mediterranean island. He simply needs to sign a lease on a property – a property that will remain empty. The goal is not the property but the reward that will come one year after the lease is signed and Dahn can claim residency. In the following year Dahn will find time in his schedule for a brief visit to Malta in order to claim his residency card. He will spend no more time in Malta over the next year. Once residency has been established, after twelve months of leasing an empty property, this super-elite avatar of a global world will visit one more time to claim the passport that comes with citizenship of Malta and, more importantly, the European Union. To qualify as a "resident" under the "Individual Investor Program," Dahn will have to make a contribution of 650,000 euros to the Maltese government and acquire 150,000 euros of stocks and bonds in Maltese companies. He will also have to prove he has health insurance. Needless to say, he does.

The journey of Dahn's assistant on his private jet is Dahn's response to a scheme that the Maltese government hopes will raise 2 billion euros which equals 25% of the island's GDP. It turns out that the two times the new citizens must visit the island is a dramatic improvement on an earlier version of the scheme where the global elite could simply pay. The residency requirement is a new hurdle they must cross. Dahn was alerted to this opportunity by a German business colleague who sent him a link to the scheme which was described in the following way on the website of "Identity Malta" – the office that administers the programme:

> The Individual Investor Programme is designed to attract to Malta's shores applicants who can share their talent, expertise and business connections. It is the first citizenship programme in the European Union to be recognized by the European Commission.
> Applicants are subject to a thorough due diligence process which guarantees that only reputable applicants acquire Maltese citizenship. Moreover,

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[3]   This story is based on the article by Jenny Anderson.

> applications from countries where international sanctions apply may not
> be accepted. Applications from a particular country can also be excluded
> on the basis of a Government policy decision.
> Malta offers great opportunities to applicants of the IIP and their families,
> including a high standard of living, a stable political system and a robust
> economy.
> The IIP is your chance to be part of Malta's success story.

Let's call our second traveller Mohammed.[4] Let's say he is from Ethiopia.
Mohammed does not have a private jet. Instead he pays a smuggler 1000
euros to get him from Libya to Malta. Mohammed was part of a minority
political grouping in his home country and his life is now threatened. His
journey to Libya overland through Sudan took days on top of several
overcrowded trucks through desert landscapes. At various points along
the way he was strip-searched by Sudanese authorities and bandits who
robbed him of his few remaining possessions of value. On several occa-
sions he was beaten with spades. In Benghazi he was briefly locked in a
shipping container while his captors waited for money to arrive. When it
arrived, he was moved to Tripoli where he transferred 1000 euros to a
smuggler for a place on a boat to Malta.

Eventually Mohammed was placed on a small, barely seaworthy boat
with dozens of other refugees from Syria, Somalia, Mali and Eritrea, all
of whom had made similarly tortuous journeys. What followed was a
week at sea, sleeping on deck, with diminishing food, water, and fuel.
Many of his companions died along the way and were thrown into the
sea.[5] They had joined the over 5000 deaths that had occurred in the Medi-
terranean in 2016. Eventually the boat arrived near the Malta Freeport
where Mohammed and the remaining passengers were forced to wait five
hours before disembarking. Mohammed had not been able to move or
exercise during the journey and could not stand up without extreme
muscle pain.

Mohammed was moved to the Hal Far Immigration Reception Center,
built on an old Royal Air Force base. Despite its name, Hal Far is actually
a detention centre and Mohammed was to spend six months there before
being moved to Ta' Kandja – a cage-like detention centre with dry rot and
mould on the walls in an old prison with only the most basic facilities. He

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4   While this story is fictional, it is based on narratives such as these: "Rahel's
     Journey from Ethiopia to Libya"; Cacciottolo; Konate.
5   There were 5,143 recorded deaths in the Mediterranean Sea in 2016 according
     to the United Nations' International Organization for Migration ("Mediter-
     ranean Migrant Arrivals").

is likely to be there for over a year, spending 22 hours per day in the two dormitories, before his fate is decided (Mutwira).

Perhaps, during one of Dahn's brief visits to Malta, he found himself within a few miles of Mohammed. It is highly unlikely they ever met. They inhabited different worlds. In 2017-2018 Dahn would have been one of around 330 people who applied to the Malta Citizenship by Investment Programme in the year (see Chetcuti). In 2012 Mohammed would have been one of 2,775 people arriving by boat. Recent years have seen fewer migrants in detention as Malta dropped its automatic detention policy following an agreement with Italy in 2015, which agreed to disembark all migrants rescued in the Central Mediterranean. Despite their differences, these two journeys are connected. In both of these cases, geographies of citizenship are tangled up with meanings and practices of mobility, as well as emerging senses of borders as things which are being relocated and multiplied in such a way that they can no longer be simply reduced to the black lines on a political world map (Rumford).

Dahn and Mohammed are both attempting to become citizens of the European Union. The idea of the citizen has, of course, long been attached to two geographies, the geography of a particular place or territory that the citizen belongs to (originally the city-state, then the medieval market city then the nation-state in the classic formulation) and a geography of mobility. The citizen belongs to a place and is able to move within that place and across its borders (Cresswell, "Citizenship in Worlds of Mobility"; Cresswell, "The Prosthetic Citizen"). It has increasingly been argued that those geographies are being reconfigured. One form of reconfiguration is the new global elite for whom, it is argued, national boundaries are becoming less and less important. These are the private-jet owners – the inhabitants of a smooth space of flows in which bodies move alongside capital at a global scale. Another form of reconfiguration, as we have seen, is the vagabond shadow-citizen who is increasingly incarcerated within ever more limited worlds. For the vagabonds, even being a member of a nation-state does not appear to bring the full parcel of rights you might expect.

This question of the meaning of borders and the meaning of citizenship has become particularly acute in the European Union where the promotion of mobility as an ideal has been matched by the removal of internal borders (particularly in the Schengen zone) and the strengthening of external borders. Etienne Balibar, the French political theorist, has argued that the whole of Europe has become a "borderland" in which the external borders have been replicated internally along lines of race and national

identity such that some Europeans (ones with dark skins mostly) experience borderness as part of daily life – not just at an actual political border. What is happening in Malta is part of this process of "bordering" and the reconfiguration of geographies of citizenship.

Malta is simultaneously the site of the European Union's first and only approved citizenship-by-investment programme *and* an important site of a "fortress Europe" policy of mass incarceration of African immigrants arriving, uninvited, by boat. On 12 October 2013, the BBC reported the Maltese Prime Minister Joseph Muscat as saying that the Mediterranean was turning into a cemetery due to the number of Africans who were drowning in and around Malta during attempts to enter the European Union. "I don't know how many more people need to die at sea" he said, "before something gets done" ("Mediterranean 'a Cemetery'"). Part of Muscat's complaint was that the European Union was doing nothing and leaving it up to Malta (and Italy) to deal with what was an EU problem. Between then and now the issue of dangerous attempts by Africans and Syrians to migrate in unseaworthy and overcrowded boats has become many times worse. Muscat attempted to have some of the migrants flown back to Libya against their wishes. Malta, he pointed out, is an island with 400,000 people that was struggling to deal with tens of thousands of uninvited guests. Now, they are stuck within a unique regime of mandatory detention. The states of the EU, meanwhile, do not want the immigrants either and effectively use Malta in its historic role as fortress island. The geographer Alison Mountz has been examining this use of islands as sites for the management of global migration – where the process of 'bordering' gets relocated "offshore." Malta becomes part of what Alison Mountz calls "the enforcement archipelago" – a collection of islands that includes Guantanamo, Christmas Island, the Canary Islands and Lampedusa.

The situation in Malta illustrates the increasingly stark politics of mobility in today's mobile world. In one case we see a set of laws made up to encourage Maltese and thus EU citizenship based on money and a spurious notion of residency. On the other we see the policing of citizenship through the outsourcing and offshoring of border construction. Malta is a semi-permeable membrane. The Maltese *Immigration Act* that regulates the African arrivals defines a group known as 'prohibited immigrants' – immigrants who are not authorised or whose authorisation is invalid because they are unable to support themselves or their families (Government of Malta 6). Once labelled in this way the immigrants are issued a "removal order" which requires that they are removed from Malta – an action that cannot actually take place. Any person with a removal order

can then be detained. In contrast, the chief executive of 'Identity Malta' wants to attract what he calls the "real high flyers" in order to "add value to our country" through the enrolment of their ideas and networks. Clearly there are other networks they would rather not be part of.

While Bauman diagnosed postmodernity through the figures of the tourist and the vagabond, I have chosen to focus, instead, on the citizen and the vagabond through an exploration of the edicts of Bern, Papachristou v. City of Jacksonville and the politics of mobility in present-day Malta. Both the citizen and the vagabond are figures who are partly defined by their mobilities, mobilities which, as I have shown, exist in relation to each other and combine to illuminate the politics of mobility. Their entangled careers show us how mobility exceeds the technicalities of movement and plays important cultural and political roles in the production, reproduction and transformation of systematically asymmetrical power relations that are informed by distinctly geographical imaginations. These imaginations construct mobility as both a right which is embodied in the figure of the citizen and a threat that is embodied in the figure of the vagabond.

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Language and Mobility of
Late Modern English Paupers

This article explores the relationship between the language of paupers and patterns of mobility in Late Modern England. Based on samples from a pauper letter corpus (c. 1795-1834), the study investigates (a) reasons for paupers to migrate, and (b) to what extent speech and dialect reflections in pauper letters allow us to determine whether the writers' home parishes can also shed light on their dialect origins. To illustrate these different aspects, data from Dorset and Cumberland are presented and viewed in the context of different types of historical data as well as contemporary sources. The two case studies lead to the conclusion that we cannot assume that the parish of legal settlement is also the place where the writer's dialect was acquired. Nevertheless, if non-standard and dialect features are contained in the pauper letters, they can provide clues about the wider dialect area from which the writers of the letters originate.

Keywords: pauper letters; mobility; dialects; Dorset; Cumberland

1 Introduction

During the first Industrial Revolution, many members of the lower social orders in England moved around the country in order to find employment, particularly in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. We can investigate migration patterns of the labouring poor through pauper letters which were written under the Old Poor Law in England during the period c. 1795-1834. Anyone "in distress" had the right to apply for "out-relief" if they had migrated and lived outside the parish in which they had formal settlement, or "home parish," for short. If the officials accepted the applicants' claims, relief was typically offered in the form of money, or the paupers were removed from their current domicile to their home parish, effectively initiating return migration (see Whyte 280; Auer & Fairman 78; Laitinen & Auer 189). Migration can be defined as "a change of normal residence within Britain," "irrespective of the distance moved or the

duration of stay at an address," while the term "emigration" is reserved for "a residential move from Britain to another country" (Pooley & Turnbull 8).

Despite the fact that the labouring poor received but limited schooling (Auer, Gardner & Iten forthcoming; Gardner forthcoming; Gardner submitted), owing to compulsory elementary education only having been introduced in England with the Second Education Act in 1880 (Stephens 78, Crone 163), they had to write letters to their parish of legal settlement in order to apply for out-relief. Based on a corpus of more than 2,000 pauper letters from 39 counties, we investigate this unique data source as part of the SNSF-funded research project "The Language of the Labouring Poor in Late Modern England." The aim of the project is to gain a better understanding of the role of social stratification in real-time linguistic change, that is, we explore in what way language use and linguistic change differ across the different social layers. Based on the new lower-class data, we also aim to complement the 'traditional' history of written English which is largely based on the language use of the better educated layers of society (cf. Romaine).

In this article we focus on the relationship between language and mobility of Late Modern English paupers and the possibilities that the data provide for linguistic studies. Section 2 briefly describes the make-up of the corpus of the labouring poor and related procedures. In Section 3, we examine reasons why the poor typically migrated away from their home parish, drawing both on statistical data for the period based on 16,091 life histories by family historians (Pooley & Turnbull) as well as comments made by the paupers in applications for out-relief collected for our project. In Section 4, we explore the mobility patterns of paupers applying for out-relief to parishes in Dorset. Two linguistic case studies are then presented in Section 5, exploring to what extent dialect reflections emerging from letters can help us determine whether the writers' home parishes are likely also their linguistic anchoring point. It does not necessarily follow that someone's home parish is identical to their place of birth since settlement could also be gained later in life elsewhere through other mechanisms. In our first case study (Section 5.1) we investigate a set of letters from Charls Ann Green to her Dorset home parish, Wimborne, identifying dialect features through variant spellings and consulting modern dialect surveys. The second case study (Section 5.2) aims to identify dialect features in a set of letters by Moses Tyson, as well as some other individual pauper letters, from Cumberland. This is done by considering contemporary meta-linguistic comments about the Cumberland dialect.

Challenges related to the study of dialect reflections and mobility will also be considered. Finally, we conclude in Section 6 with a summary and future research directions.

2 The Corpus of the Labouring Poor: Data and Procedures

The pauper letter samples that serve as the basis for this paper are part of the previously mentioned corpus of c. 2,000 pauper letters. Philologically accurate transcriptions have been made of copies or facsimiles of the letters held in archives all over England. To ensure a high level of consistency, the transcriptions have been checked by at least three project members. In addition to the diplomatic transcriptions, the project team has also prepared a plain-text version, a normalised transcription, an XML version, and detailed metadata extracted from the material such as date, domicile, parish of legal settlement, social information about the applicant, reason/topic for poor relief application, and related letters.

As part of the transcription process, we also try to elucidate who actually wrote or encoded the letters. Since literacy levels were not high at the time (see Section 1), some paupers may have had help when preparing the letters. Yet for linguistic analyses it is crucial to know whether a letter is autographical, that is, written by the poor relief applicant who also signed with their name, or non-autographical, that is, encoded by a helping hand. For the latter, it is useful to distinguish, roughly, between persons from the applicant's social circle with sufficient education to be able to pen a letter, and more professional hands, such as clerks or parish officials, where typically the handwriting is very neat, sometimes with flourishes, and letter-writing conventions (e.g. layout) are observed. However, Thomas Sokoll notes that "professional writers … were apparently only very rarely resorted to" (65). He further states that "[i]n many cases […] it can […] be presumed that people either wrote their letters themselves or had them written by someone who was close to them." In either case the letter can be regarded as authentic.

Figure 1. First page of letter by Richard Jones, 26 December c. 1813, HE/EA/1[1]

Figure 1 illustrates a letter by a pauper which we assume to be authentic on the basis of the general findings by Sokoll and Steven King, also taking into account the handwriting, layout and spelling displayed in the letter. The same holds for the seven letters by Moses Tyson written between 1828 and 1830, which are examined in the second case study in Section 5.2. Sometimes several letters survive by one pauper which were written by the same hand over a stretch of more than three years. It is very likely that the applicant is also the writer since it would be unlikely that the same person would have helped the applicant over such a long period (King 37; Sokoll 64). This is the case with the eight letters by Charls Ann Green written between 1820 and 1826, which form the basis of the linguistic case study in Section 5.1. The question of authorship is not para-

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[1]   This image is reproduced with the kind permission of the Herefordshire Archive Service.

mount for the letters discussed in Sections 3 and 4 and will not be discussed in detail since they are not analysed linguistically, but mined for factual content relating to migration patterns. The sample also contains letters written by officials, discussing the fate of paupers (e.g. Martha Gilmore in Andover who is legally settled in Sturminster Marshall). The dataset underlying the analysis of migration patterns in Section 4 is presented in the Appendix and includes name of pauper, year of writing, number of letters, parish of legal settlement, domicile and migration distance.

3 The Migrating Poor

In order to gain a deeper understanding of migration patterns of the British population after 1750, Colin Pooley and Jean Turnbull evaluated 16,091 life histories from a broad spectrum of society, such as agricultural labourers, domestic servants, (semi-)skilled manual and non-manual workers, as well as higher-ranked professional workers. They found that the two most common reasons for migrating in the period from 1750 to 1839 are, firstly, work, which accounts for 47.8% of all moves, and secondly, marriage, which explains 26.5% of all moves. Infrequent other reasons include housing, a crisis, war service or retirement (Pooley & Turnbull 72). Unemployment as a cause for migration was particularly prevalent from the 1810s onwards (Levitt 160). According to Carol Beardmore, "in the post-Napoleonic War period rural poverty was an ever-present threat" (144), with a significant mismatch between level of wages and cost of living, meaning that workers in rural areas often struggled to earn enough to keep themselves above subsistence levels.

   A breakdown of the data reveals that men were significantly more likely to move for work than women (see Table 1), whereas marriage entailed migration more often for women than for men. By age group, work is the strongest factor for migration in those under 20 and between 40 and 59, while among the different age groups marriage plays the most important role for those aged 20 to 39. Among lower-ranked occupational groups, those in domestic service moved for work by far the most (83.7%), whereas the rate is at average levels for agricultural and unskilled manual workers as well as farmers (between 50% and 56.8%). Work-related moves were most often undertaken not by individuals (50.2%), but by the nuclear family unit (67.2%) (Pooley & Turnbull 73). The migration radius of farmers and unskilled agricultural workers was

below 20 km on average (19.4 km and 16.7 km, respectively), compared with unskilled manual workers (20.3 km), unpaid households (27.8 km) and those in domestic service (41.9 km) (Pooley & Turnbull 68). Agricultural labourers often relied on their local reputation for employment as a farm-hand (Pooley & Turnbull 153), and like unskilled manual workers they were "constrained by low wages and the operation of local and regional labour markets" (70).

	Sex		Age group		
	Men	Women	< 20	20–39	40–59
Work	51.5%	36.6%	54.9%	44.4%	54.3%
Marriage	20.7%	44.5%	12.3%	36.2%	7.7%

Table 1. Percentage of paupers migrating for work and marriage
by sex and age group (based on Pooley & Turnbull 73)

The writers of poor relief letters in our corpus were often agricultural labourers or manual workers, people with an often unspecified "trade" (see (1) below), who were underemployed or in search of employment, but also the infirm and/or elderly who were no longer fit to work. Letters from able-bodied poor usually contain an explanation of why relief was needed and how they had exhausted all possible alternatives, sometimes offering accounts of how they had migrated in hopes of finding work elsewhere. Others explain in their applications why they would prefer to receive pecuniary aid rather than being removed to their home parish, the reason often being the prospect of paid work at their current domicile.[2] The case of Thomas Merrey, writing from Birmingham to Ludgershall (Buckinghamshire) on 11 November 1810 to obtain out-relief, illustrates many of these points. In (1) he states that, in this time of high unemployment, he spent 13 weeks moving about the country trying to find work, trying to be as little burdensome to his parish as possible, and travelling c. 1,930 km ("12 hunderd Miles") in the process. Whether his estimate was correct or not, Merrey's example at the very least testifies to the migratory burden placed upon the unemployed at the time. His only prospect of work is "the promes oF a Winters Shop" in Birmingham, so he asks the parish overseers for money to tie him over.

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2   On the rhetoric of pauper letters see also King (187–188).

(1) Genteelmen i haue Been traueling 13 Weeks out oF Work and i haue got the promes oF a Winters Shop and iF i L[^o OVERWRITES u^]se it i shall uerreylikely Not Got Work all Winter as our trade is uerry Dead som hundards oF Men is out oF Work at this time and i Can Not Work at aney thing Else i traueled 12 hunderd Miles in that 13 Weeks Gentelmen i Do this to put you to as Little Carges as i can (BU/LU/1)

Families were sometimes separated when the male breadwinner had to leave his home, taking the initiative to find work by going tramping. Mary Wheeler describes this, and her resulting destitution, on 7 November (no year) in (2):

(2) my Husband Wheeler has left me here with[out] Subsistance or any means to procure a living for myself and Child and is gone on Tramp seeking work (BU/WO/14)

When families did migrate together on limited funds, this could equally cause considerable hardship. On 26 December c. 1813, Richard Jones outlines to the overseers of Eardisland (Herefordshire) the toll his work migration has taken on the health of his family, particularly his children (see also Figure 1):

(3) Sir I am Sorry to in form you that whe are in Carmarthan whe are in Very grate distreſs to of my Little Children his Very hill i Cant go no farder tal the do gat Battar i am Sorry to in form you what hardship whe have bin throw whe have traveld throw wat and dry night and day whe have done a great ingery to our Por Little Childran and our Salves I have not got a Sixpance Sance i laft Eardisland (HE/EA/1)

Jones had migrated the great distance of c. 125 km to Carmarthen in South West Wales. Finding himself unable to travel any further, he states that he and his family have taken up residence in Wales ("I have got a Room") and asks for financial support from his home parish.

Not everyone was physically able to move around the country tramping. At an earlier stage, William Martin had migrated from Beverley (Yorkshire) to Leeds, at c. 82 km distance, but was no longer mobile; he writes on 2 December 1832 of his complaints in (4):

(4) And i ham so lame that i ham Not able to tramp to sek Work (YO(E)/BE/38)

As this suggests, the migrating poor primarily travelled on foot; perhaps they were sometimes also able to get a (mostly) free ride on a cart. Yet, as

the pauper correspondence in our corpus highlights, travelling with vehicles of any sort was forbiddingly expensive for them.

Even when migration was an option, this also posed a risk since success in finding employment elsewhere was not guaranteed. As John Jump notes on 15 October 1831 in (5), the whole family was uprooted, but to no avail:

> (5) I then had hopes of Getting work at Oldham where we Moved to but when we had Changed our abode I was disappointed in getting work (ST/UX/8)

Jump writes to the overseers of Uttoxeter (Staffordshire) from Oldham, which lies to the northeast of Manchester, at a distance of c. 86 km to his home parish.

The mobile poor represented in these examples taken from our corpus, migrating to and from various counties within Britain, travelled much larger distances than what we would expect given the findings by Pooley and Turnbull outlined at the beginning of this section. It is possible that individuals applying for poor relief are underrepresented in their data, although poor law records were consulted (25). As the authors themselves observe, "it is often the poorest members of society who are most invisible in the written records" (13). The destitute mostly only "appear when they seek relief from the authorities" (13) and are often not represented in important sources used to reconstruct life histories, such as rate books, directories and electoral registers (23). Also, personal letters and diaries of the labouring poor do not survive in great numbers, not least on account of limited funds and education.

The pauper letters collected for our project thus fill a significant gap in migration history, providing important insights into an underrepresented section of society. In the following section we explore the migration patterns of paupers who had moved away from their home parishes in Dorset, to see whether the reasons and distances travelled match those presented in the examples given in this section. We also consider the socioeconomic conditions in Dorset during the Old Poor Law which may have triggered migration and investigate whether typical migration trajectories can be discovered. In a second step, we analyse the language of a subset of pauper letters in Section 5 in order to determine whether they offer any evidence for regional features which point towards possible migration origins.

4 Language and Migration of Paupers with Legal Settlement in Dorset

This section focuses on paupers applying for out-relief from their parish of legal settlement in Dorset, examining the migration patterns of these paupers, including distances travelled and typical trajectories in their movements. The analysis is based on 50 letters written between 1800 and 1835 by, or on behalf of, 27 paupers and their families (see Section 2 regarding authenticity of authorship). All of them have a legal settlement in one of six Dorset parishes (marked with a "P" in Figure 2), listed from west to east: Beaminster (3 paupers / 9 letters), Glanvilles Wootton (1 pauper / 1 letter), Buckland Newton (3 paupers / 4 letters), Blandford Forum (9 paupers / 17 letters), Sturminster Marshall (6 paupers / 8 letters), and Wimborne (7 paupers / 14 letters).

Figure 2. Six Dorset parishes receiving applications for out-relief[3]

The following maps pinpoint each parish where the paupers moved to and wrote from, highlighting the most prominent migration patterns. A table detailing name of pauper, year of writing, number of letters, parish of legal origin, domicile and migration distance can be found in the Appendix.

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[3] All maps (Figures 2–8) were created with Google Maps (Map data ©2021 Google).

Letters written to the parish of Wimborne display a very typical migration pattern (Figure 3). The paupers mainly moved eastwards, but also westwards, along the coastline, or up to London. Their destinations, from west to east, were Bridport, Cheselbourne, Bournemouth, Lymington, Portsmouth, Chichester, and London. Coastal towns with or near harbours could provide profitable trade as well as employment in the maritime sector, and were often home to small industry. London has, of course, been a magnet for those seeking work for centuries, and it also provided a wide spectrum of opportunities during the period of the Old Poor Law. The areas just outside London offered the second highest agricultural wages in the country. Towns in general were an attractive destination for migration for agricultural labourers with the promise of higher wages than in rural areas: the presence of (small) industry with even higher wages reduced the number of local workers in the agricultural sector (Redford 68–69).
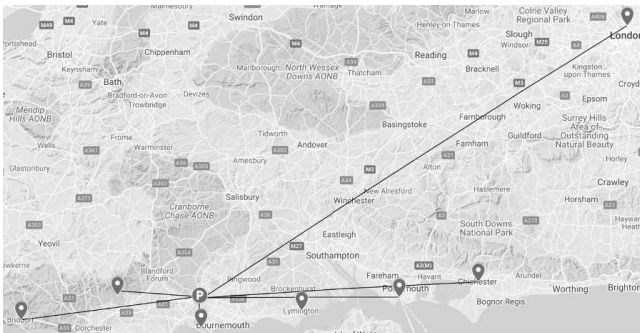
Figure 3. Migration destinations of paupers legally settled in Wimborne

The pull along the coast and towards London also becomes evident from paupers with legal settlement in the parish of Sturminster Marshall (Figure 4). They migrated to Bank, Lyndhurst, Andover, Southampton, and Egham Hill (from west to east), respectively.

There is very little migration inland towards the north and none to northern England, confirming general migration trends observed at the time (Redford 48). The parish of Buckland Newton offers two examples (Figure 5) of paupers moving to Longburton (Dorset) and Frome (Somerset), a smaller clothing centre (Redford 45).

Figure 4.
Migration destinations of paupers legally settled in Sturminster Marshall

Figure 5.
Migration destinations of paupers legally settled in Buckland Newton

One additional example of inland northwards migration, to Gillingham, is provided by the parish of Blandford Forum (Figure 6). Most of our data, a third of all letters, comes from this parish, and the migration patterns neatly mirror those seen before: the pull to move towards London and along the coast, even as far west as Plymouth. From west to east, the migration destinations are Plymouth, Netherbury, Beaminster, Gillingham, Poole, Lyndhurst, Brentford, and London.

Figure 6. Migration destinations of paupers legally settled in Blandford Forum

Among the Dorset parishes, Beaminster (Figure 7) lies the furthest to the west. The three paupers writing back to this parish also stayed on the coast, moving to Weymouth and Poole (listed west to east), but also to the very distant Penzance, and nearby lead industry, in the far west.

Figure 7. Migration destinations of paupers legally settled in Beaminster

Lastly, Glanvilles Wootton (Figure 8) is referenced by only one pauper, an outlier, who moved the furthest away – to Norwich in Norfolk, a trading hub with a significant worsted and textile industry (Redford 42–43). Unfortunately, there is no indication in the letter as to what may have caused this extreme case of long-distance migration.
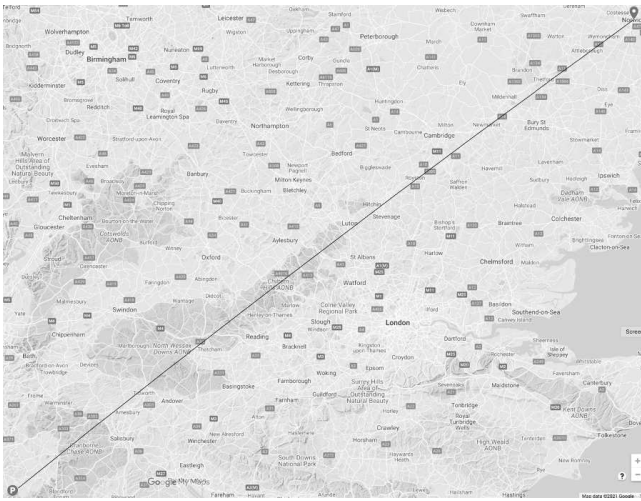
Figure 8. Migration destination of pauper legally settled in Glanvilles Wootton

The directions in which paupers legally settled in Dorset moved neatly mirror general migration patterns within England at the time. Pooley and Turnbull (354) also document migration along the coastline, the significant influence exerted by London, and even moves towards the more distant or remote Penzance and Norwich. There is, however, something unusual about the distances travelled by the Dorset paupers. On average they move much further away than the general population or low-income households between 1750 and 1839. In Figure 9, each line represents one pauper from our dataset and the distance between them and their parish of legal settlement (detailed information on the paupers is provided in the Appendix).[4] On average they migrated about 87 km, whereas the average distance moved by the general population barely reached 38 km (Pooley & Turnbull 65). The average is even lower, below 28 km, for low-income groups such as agricultural labourers, unskilled manual workers and unpaid households (see Section 3). These are the occupational groups that the paupers represented in our corpus resemble the most. What is so unusual is that about half the general population only moved along a distance of under 10 km (Pooley & Turnbull 65), whereas this is only the

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[4]   The distance was calculated on the basis of the most direct route on existing roads rather than taking a direct line between origin and destination. We do not know the exact routes the migrating poor took and, if they stopped at other destinations first before settling on the one recorded in the letters, they may have travelled even further than indicated.

case for about 7% of the Dorset paupers. In contrast, c. 60% of them un-
dertake long-distance migration, that is, over 50 km, which was only ob-
served for 19% of the general population at the time (Pooley & Turnbull
65).
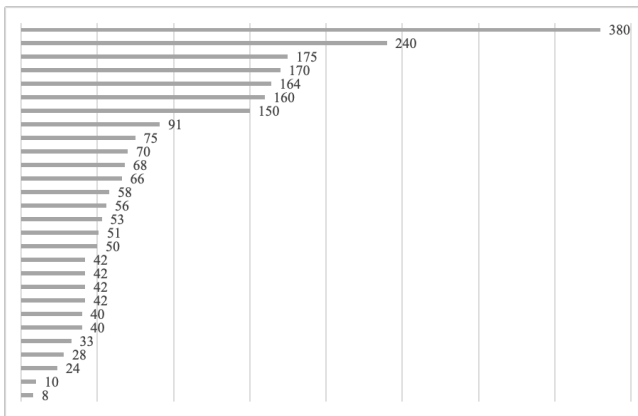
Figure 9. Distance migrated from parish of legal settlement (km)

In their letters the paupers unfortunately reveal very little about their mo-
tivation for moving or their occupation. However, one pauper legally
settled in Dorset did move to find work as reported by Dinah Munday on
13 February c. 1825 in (6), writing from Chichester to Wimborne:

> (6) my Husband is out of employ and have left this place in search of work
> (DO/WM/11)

This case evidences additional mobility beyond the initial migration away
from the home parishes and serves as a reminder that the migration des-
tinations identified in Figures 2–7 above might only represent one stop in
a series of moves. In fact, in the period 1820 to 1849, people moved an
average of 4.5 times, many moving just once, but others over 13 times
(Pooley & Turnbull 59). Another applicant for poor relief, Charls Ann
Green, writes from London to Wimborne on 9 August in the 1820s in or-
der to obtain financial support, expressly trying to prevent her family
from being removed to their legal parish of settlement in Dorset (see (7))
– her husband had satisfactory employment in London, but had injured
himself and was only temporarily unable to work.

(7) and them I must Come down in the Countrey and that I Donte wish as My
    Husband as gote a good Shop of work to goe to wen he is able to goe
    (DO/WM/10)

We will revisit Green's letters again in Section 5.1.

Despite the lack of substantial evidence from the letters collected for
Dorset, it seems likely, also considering the findings from Pooley and
Turnbull and pauper letters from other counties presented in Section 3,
that many paupers had changed abode on account of work. Regarding the
socio-economic situation in Dorset, Beardmore states that "Dorset itself
became synonymous with poor living conditions and low wages" (144).
Wages rarely covered living costs, and an agricultural labourer earned less
in Dorset than anywhere else in England (Snell 375). Times were particu-
larly difficult after the Napoleonic Wars, especially in the 1820s and
1830s when there was a surplus of agricultural labourers (Redford 94).
Food prices also soared as a result of the "Year Without a Summer"
(1816) after the volcanic eruption of Mt. Tambora in Indonesia a year
earlier, which adversely affected the climate on a global level, with un-
usually cold and wet weather causing food shortages and famines across
Europe (Brönnimann & Krämer). At the close of the 1830s the proportion
of paupers in Dorset was among the highest in the country (Levitt 161).
The paupers in our case study undoubtedly found themselves in moments
of personal and socio-economic crisis and decided to migrate in the hopes
of finding better conditions elsewhere.

5 Dialect Usage and the Origin of the Paupers

The pauper letters in our corpus originate from 39 different counties, and
from the letters themselves we rarely learn where an applicant was born
and raised. We cannot automatically assume that the parish of legal set-
tlement is an indication of the provenance of a person and their original
dialect. As already indicated in Section 1, there were many ways in which
settlement rights could be established. According to Whyte,

> [s]ettlement rights could be established on the basis of birth, marriage,
> and, in the nineteenth century, from a father's or even grandfather's parish
> of settlement. Other mechanisms, such as renting property worth £10 per
> annum, a year's agricultural service, completing an apprenticeship, paying
> taxes or serving in a parish office for a year were also grounds for gaining
> a settlement. (280)

Settlement rights could therefore also have been gained on a short-term basis (see Auer & Fairman). In the absence of further evidence, for example from other parish records, we explore the language of the letters with a view to finding dialect reflections. In the following we present two linguistic case studies focusing on two individuals with links with Dorset and Cumberland, respectively. Considering relevant metalinguistic information and examining the language of their letters in detail allows us to gather clues about the linguistic anchoring points of the writers.

5.1 *Case Study 1: Dorset*

In our first case study we investigate a set of letters from Charls Ann Green (986 words) in order to determine to what extent dialect reflections can be linked to a parish of legal settlement as the location where this dialect was acquired. Between 1820 and 1826, Green wrote seven letters from London to her home parish, Wimborne, in Dorset, and one undated letter survives as well. In order to identify dialect features in Green's letters, we take note of variant spellings and compare their likely pronunciation with features listed by modern sociolinguistic studies based on twentieth-century data (Wells; Wakelin; Ihalainen; Altendorf & Watt; Wagner). As mentioned in Section 1, the labouring poor generally received only little schooling at the time. In consequence, many non-standard spellings can be found in pauper letters which can be suggestive of how the writers would have pronounced words with such variant spellings.

A phonological feature typical for the South West is the "West Country burr," or hyper-rhoticity, meaning the pronunciation of /r/ after vowels, even if a word does not originally contain this consonant (Wells 341–343; Altendorf & Watt 214, 218). Charls Ann Green seems to have had this feature, writing "a torll" for *at all*, and "Laſtorll St" (for Laystall St). She probably pronounced the FACE vowel in the first syllable as a monophthong, that is, /le:/, just like the spelling "the" for *they* suggests the pronunciation /ðe:/ (Wakelin 27). The KIT vowel is lowered in "poseble" (for *possible*) and "set" (for *sit*) (Wakelin 21), but appears centralised or even backed in "woush" (for *wish*), which is not mentioned in studies based on modern data but confirmed as a feature in the nineteenth-century Dorset variety spoken by William Barnes (1801-1886) (Burton 534). Further phonological features include *h*-dropping and hypercorrect *h*-insertion as in "is Broken harm" (Altendorf & Watt 219), as well as the

pronunciation of short [ʊ] before /l/ in "triful" in "A ſmall triful to pay My Rent" (Ihalainen 255). Lastly, "fust" (for *first*) illustrates a shortening of the vowel with subsequent assimilation of /r/ to /st/. In a poem from 1802, William Holloway uses this word, with a voiced initial fricative, in "When vust I heard thy tuenful voice" (Wakelin 31; 150).

Common for the South West are also morphological features such as universal -*s* in "I hoes" and "we oes" (Ihalainen 213), as well as uninflected *do* as in "if She donte have some Money by Monday" (Ihalainen 213). On a syntactic level we find a *for to* + infinitive construction with the meaning 'in order to,' illustrated in "for to pay my way" (Wakelin 38). The final example, "My Husband hande Mendes very Slow," contains two different features found in the South West: the occurrence of the simple form rather than the progressive and the use of an adjectival form as an adverb (Wakelin 38; Wagner 431), as well as the omission of the genitive suffix which is otherwise undocumented for this county.

All these features suggest that Charls Ann Green may very well have roots in Wimborne, her parish of legal settlement, but certainly in the South West more generally. In one of her letters, she does wistfully exclaim "I woush I was in the Country a gane" (DO/WM/6). While we cannot establish a firm link between dialect provenance and the parish of legal origin (see Section 2), there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the parish does provide an anchoring point in that the dialect reflections in Green's letters are representative of the broader (dialect) area in which the parish is situated.

5.2 *Case Study 2: Cumberland*

In the previous subsection we identified dialect features in letters written to a parish in Dorset by comparing variant spellings with data drawn from modern dialect studies. For our second case study we focus on speech reflections and related methodological challenges in pauper letters from Cumberland. The main focus of the latter case study is on a set of seven letters (1,393 words) by Moses Tyson that were written during the period September 1828 to February 1830 and sent from Whitehaven to the parish of Millom, both of which were historically located in the county of Cumberland. Tyson, who was in his mid-70s, and his wife, who was in her mid-80s then, had therefore moved c. 50 km away from their parish of legal settlement but remained in Cumberland.

In order to determine characteristics of the Cumberland dialect during the Late Modern English period, which will allow for a comparison with the pauper letters, we considered meta-linguistic comments in Robert Ferguson's *Dialect of Cumberland* (1873), William Dickinson's *Glossary of Words and Phrases Pertaining to the Dialect of Cumberland* (1878), glossaries of ballads and poems in the Cumberland, as well as Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898-1905). To start with, Dickinson describes the different dialect regions in Cumberland as follows:

> The most clearly defined band or belt of dialect extends across the centre of the county, [...] To the southward of this district the words and the mode of pronunciation and expression gradually merge into those of Lancashire; to the northward, into the Scotch, and to the extreme north-east, into the Northumbrian, partaking in some measure of the burr peculiar to parts of that county. (v)

This definition already indicates, as is often the case with dialects, that clear-cut dialect boundaries are difficult to determine. As regards the nineteenth-century Cumberland dialect, Ferguson (224; 227–229) observes the following features:

- the use of *I is, Thou is* and *They is*;
- "the introduction of a phonetic *r*, most common in words beginning with *st*," for example "*scrow, strunts, strunty, straddelt*, for *scow, stunts, stunts, staddelt*, as well as *sharps* for *shaups, cherts* for *cheets, purdy* for *puddy*";
- "[t]he dropping of *l*, as in *fowthy* for *fulthy, fotter* for *falter*, &c., is a predominant feature in the Northern dialects generally, but is carried to a greater extent with us than in the others";
- old plurals, for example *owsen*, "*een, kye, shoon*"; "*childer* also is sometimes heard";
- "as elsewhere through the Northern dialect, we dispense with *s* as the sign of the genitive," for example *that's Bill meear*;
- variation in the formation of preterites, for example "*see, seed; sell, salt; come, com; creep, crap; bring, bring; beat, bet; spreed, speed*, &c. Also *split, splat; stick, stack*, &c.";
- "[s]o also in the past participle," for example "*get, gitten; come, cummen or cumt; stand, stooden; brest, brossen; find, fand or fun*, &c."

Ferguson's observations can be complemented by those of Dickinson (vi), who identified a range of features in his glossary, notably the contraction of *the* into *t'* (southern and centrals parts of the county); entire absence of the terminative *-ing* in all words of more than one syllable, and its being substituted by *in*, and more frequently *an*, and its retention in monosyllabic words; the affix *-ed* is compensated by an abbreviated *'t*; *-ly* and *-ish* are in frequent use as approximatives or diminutives, for example *coldy*, *coldish*, *wetly*, *wettish*; the terminative *ght* in *right*, *tight*, *sight*, and similar words, was formerly and even within living memory pronounced as *resht*, *tesht*, *seesht*, etc., or by aspirating the *gh*; a few words are common to both extremes of the county which are not used centrally, as *craa*, *haak*, etc., for *crow*, *hawk*; *one another* as *yannanudder*; *did thou* as *dudta*; as well as many contractions, corruptions, and combinations. It is noteworthy that some of these features are not only restricted to Cumberland but are considered Northern dialect features more generally (see Ihalainen 213–214).

Whether Cumberland features can also be found in the pauper letter sample will be illustrated through one of Moses Tyson's letters below. Selected features are highlighted in bold:

> Whithaven December the 4 - - - 1828
> Mr hartleey Sir I am Sorey that I have to Right
> a Gain But hard Need Maks Me Do it for our
> Money is **Dun** as it will be 2 Months Since we Gott
> it be for I Gett it and it only Leaves **hus** onley 1=S= =2=d=
> for Boath of **hus** to Live on per weeke when **our Rent and**
> **Coals is paid** Sir it is Conston Ever weeks So I
> humby Begg of you to Send **hus Sum thing** with william
> Bell as Soon as you Can and I hope the Lord will
> Give you a Blessing for it and Repeay you Dubel for
> it I have been vear Bad thes 4 weeks but I hope I Shall
> Gett Better a Geain in a Short time Sir My wife is
> a Littel Beter but is veary weake at **prisent**
> and whether She will Recover or Nott I Cannot tell
> only the wis God Knosit   So I pray to God bless you
> and all your [^un INSERTED^]takings   So I **hever** Remen your
>   Humbel Sarvent Moses Tyſon
> [^ADDRESS^]
> to Mr Hartley
> hover Seaer
> of Millom parish
>
> [Cumbria Archive Centre, Barrow-in-Furness: Millom, BPR10/O5/2]

In the letter, we can find several speech reflections, notably *dun* and *sumthing* for *done* and *something*. We also find raising of /e/ to /i/, for example *prisent* for *present*. Apart from that, *our Rent and Coals* is followed by a verb in the singular, and we can find examples of *h*-insertion in *hus* for *us* and *hever* for *ever*.

In Moses Tyson's other letters, more examples of raising of /e/ to /i/ are observed in *Rinte* for *rent, frind* for *friend,* and *Blisin* for *blessing*. The latter example also illustrates the absence of final -*g*, as commented on by Dickinson in his glossary (1878: vi). Similarly, we find *atendin* for *attending*, and *Shilins* for *Shillings*. In addition to the *h*-insertion examples already given, some of Tyson's letters also contain *h*-insertion in *ham* for *am* (which is in variation with *am*). An example of *h*-dropping is found in one of the letters in *She as been*, and thus in the verb *has*. Another example mentioned in the meta-linguistic comments and present in the letters is the lexical item *Childer* for *children*. According to Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary*, this variant can be found in Northumberland, Durham and Cumberland. He notes that "The usual expression is 'bairns' or 'barns' – 'childer' is more in use by those of Irish descent." Dickinson confirms that "a considerable portion of the labouring population, occupied in mining, draining, and other earth-works, consists of Irishmen" in Cumberland (vii). The second example present in the meta-linguistic comments concerns the variation in the formation of preterite forms where Tyson uses *Ritt* and *Rotte* for *wrote*. Similar features to those found in Tyson's letters can be found in other letters from Cumberland, for instance a regular use of *childer* for *children*, *sendin* and *goin* without the final -*g*, *Christmis* for *Christmas*, *muney* for *money*, as well as *John Porter and his too Brothers works,* and *your parisher are*.

In line with the Dorset example, the question to be discussed in the Cumberland case study, and particularly the Tyson letters, is whether the language use and speech reflections in the pauper letters allow us to anchor the writer in a specific dialect area. Based on the oral features found in Tyson's letters, but also in other letters from Cumberland, particularly the FOOT-STRUT split, many of the writers can clearly be identified as Northern dialect speakers. As for identifying a specific county and/or precise dialect region, the use of specific lexical items such as *childer* for *children* allows us to narrow the writer's dialect origin, even though this may still encompass several counties. The address of the writer (if known) and that of the parish of legal settlement also allow us to shed light on the migration radius of the paupers (see Section 4). In the case of Moses Tyson, he and his wife moved within Cumberland and therefore would

have stayed in the same (broad) dialect region. We are unfortunately not able to reconstruct any other movement, except what the letters reveal, and we therefore do not know about possible other dialect influence. Nevertheless, larger-scale comparison of pauper letters from different counties may allow us to identify differences in speech and dialect reflections in the future. More generally, the pauper letter corpus contains single letters from different applicants as well as multiple letters from the same pauper and sometimes the same writer (for details regarding the authenticity of pauper letters, see Section 2 and Gardner submitted, in preparation). While single letters by a pauper/writer may contain some relevant speech/dialect features, also depending on the writing training they have received, it could become easier to determine the dialect origin when we have more letters and therefore more linguistic features at our disposal.

6 Concluding remarks

It was the aim of this article to look at the relationship between language and mobility of Late Modern English paupers and the possibilities that the data provides for linguistic studies. As we were able to show, mobility can be traced very well on the basis of pauper letters: on the one hand, because we can trace the places where the letters were sent from and to and, on the other hand, because local dialect or oral features make a persistent appearance in written documents. We do, however, have to be aware that the places from which the letters claiming out-relief were sent may not always have been the pauper's final destination. Moreover, as discussed in Section 2, it is not always possible to determine who the writer of the letter was and, therefore, how authentic the letter is. Future research on other counties in our corpus will show whether the findings for Dorset are locally specific or whether the propensity for long-distance migration can also be observed elsewhere. It is also conceivable that our findings are linked to the specific period we are investigating, related to the Old Poor Law (c. 1795-1834). The fact that Pooley and Turnbull, in contrast, cover a period of 90 years, reaching far back into the eighteenth century, may obfuscate a temporary rise in migration distance in the earlier nineteenth century. Yet Pooley and Turnbull also investigate subsequent periods and find that average distances do not rise significantly until 1920 – and even then the average migration distance across the general population is only 55.5 km, still a good 30 km lower than that of the Dorset paupers.

Our case studies also suggest that there is no direct link between the parish of legal settlement and dialect acquisition. Nevertheless, in the letters we do sometimes find dialect and non-standard features which can give us a clue about a writer's origins. In the case of Charls Ann Green and Moses Tyson, there is enough evidence in their letters to suggest that Green's dialect roots lie in the South West and Tyson's in the North West, where their respective home parishes were situated. Once our corpus of pauper letters is complete, we will be able to test the reliability of such broad links between home parish and larger dialect area more extensively. We will also be able to see whether a larger dataset, and a larger collection of linguistic profiles and dialect features, will allow us to make a more fine-grained assessment of a writer's regional origins.

To conclude, letters written by less educated applicants are a valuable source for historical dialect studies since they can contain evidence of features which are receding or already lost by the time modern dialect surveys were undertaken. By tracking the migration patterns of paupers, we can trace possible pathways in the dissemination of local features. Even though we are dealing with small data sets and take a qualitative approach at this point, this does allow us to zoom in more closely on the data and identify detailed elements that a quantitative approach may overlook. Taking these results together in the future will allow us to identify patterns on a larger scale. Our corpus of pauper letters will be accompanied by detailed metadata information which allows users to easily access information concerning date, domicile and parish of legal settlement. In further steps we intend to document non-standard linguistic features in the metadata as well and provide a mapping tool so that the location and dissemination routes of features can be made available visually. Data gathered from pauper letters thus help close a gap in historical dialect studies and push the boundaries of the discipline back in time.[5]

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Appendix

The table below presents the dataset on which the discussion in Section 4 is based. The entries in the table are first sorted by parish of legal settlement, then by distance.

Pauper	Year(s)	No. of letters	Parish of legal settlement	Domicile	Distance (km)
Sarah Liddon	1824	1	Beaminster	Weymouth	40
John Bartlett	1834	4	Beaminster	Poole	66
Catherine & Henry Mills	1834-1835	4	Beaminster	Penzance	240
Philip Parsons	1800	1	Blandford Forum	Gillingham	24
Sara Pittney	1804	1	Blandford Forum	Lyndhurst	42
Samuel Lance	1800	1	Blandford Forum	Poole	42
Augustine Morgan	1803-1810	9	Blandford Forum	Beaminster	51
Daniel Stevens	1804	1	Blandford Forum	Netherbury	53
Thomas Atkins	1809	1	Blandford Forum	Brentford	160
James Headen	1810	1	Blandford Forum	Plymouth	170
Jane Donnason	1809	1	Blandford Forum	London	175
John Young	1802	1	Buckland Newton	Longburton	10
Harriott Davage	1834	1	Buckland Newton	Frome	50
Simon Warr	1803	1	Glanville Wootton	Norwich	380
Unknown	1802	1	Sturminster Marshall	Bank	42

Jane Fhithyan	1817-1820	2	Sturminster Marshall	Lyndhurst	42
Mary Shenton	1817-1820	3	Sturminster Marshall	Southampton	56
Martha Gilmore	1817	1	Sturminster Marshall	Andover	75
Susannah Fuller	1811	1	Sturminster Marshall	Egham Hill	150
Unknown	1827	1	Wimborne	Poole	8
William Flatcher	1833	1	Wimborne	Cheselbourne	28
James Dacombe	1820	1	Wimborne	Lymington	33
Jacob Powell	1819	1	Wimborne	Bridport	58
H Kendle	1826	1	Wimborne	Gosport	70
Dinah Munday	1825	1	Wimborne	Chichester	91
Charls Ann Green	1820-1826	8	Wimborne	London	164

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"Black But Comely": Settler-Colonial Identity, African Whiteness, and Intertextuality in James L. Sims's Travel Narrative "Scenes in the Interior of Liberia" (1858)

Constructing a coherent sense of communal identity was far from easy for early Americo-Liberian settlers. They felt the need (a) to distinguish themselves from a racist 'white civilisation' while nevertheless claiming to be among the 'civilised'; (b) to set themselves apart from black Americans in the U.S. while remaining equally committed to anti-slavery and abolition; and (c) to emphasise their superiority over indigenous 'heathens' while at the same time staking their own claim to 'true Africanness.' From previous studies, we know a great deal about the material challenges of life on the shores of West Africa. But how did Americo-Liberians grapple with the ideological and psychological complexities of their contradictory position as black anti-slavery settler-colonists? This essay argues that mid-nineteenth-century narratives of exploration into the black republic's hinterland are a particularly promising source for scholars interested in examining how Americo-Liberians sought to contain the conflicting push and pulls that threatened to unravel their attempts at self-definition. More specifically, the essay demonstrates that in one such travel narrative – J. L. Sims's "Scenes in the Interior of Liberia" (1858) – intertextual references are not merely ornamental, but instead deployed strategically, in an attempt to stabilise the disconcerting volatility of Americo-Liberian settler identity.

Keywords: travel writing; intertextuality; settler-colonialism; Liberian literature; collective identity

Introduction: Negotiating Difference
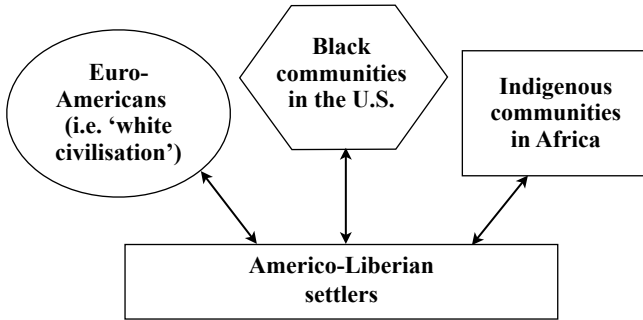
Figure 1: Three Vectors of Difference
Americo-Liberian settlers suffered from a sort of redoubled
double consciousness because they had to negotiate their
settler-colonial identity in relation to three different groups.

"[T]wo warring ideals in one dark body": This is how, in 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois famously described the "double-consciousness" of black men and women in the United States, who – he posited – suffered continually under the burden "of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" (364–365). And yet, maintaining a coherent sense of self was arguably even more complex a task for the small band of Americo-Liberian settlers who, in 1847, established an independent black republic on the shores of West Africa. Indeed, having recently been 'repatriated' to their African 'homeland,' these former inhabitants of the U.S. – some born free, others enslaved – could be said to have laboured under a sort of redoubled double-consciousness. This is to say, Americo-Liberian settlers saw themselves not only through their own eyes and through those of 'white civilisation,' but also through the disapproving looks of black Americans (who, for the most part, opposed African colonisation) as well as through the watchful gaze of the indigenous African communities that surrounded the newcomers' coastal settlements (Figure 1). Much excellent scholarly work documents how the settlers dealt with the material challenges of life on the shores of West Africa: "the penury, isolation, hardship, and death that stymied early development" (Clegg 88). But how did Americo-Liberians grapple with the ideological and psychological complexities of their contradictory position as black anti-slavery settler-colonists? How did they attempt to cope with the "bitter internal division" that, increasingly, came to characterise the settler communities (Fairhead

et al. 18)? In short, how did they seek to contain the conflicting push and pulls that threatened to unravel any coherent attempt at self-definition?

The question of settler identity was explicitly negotiated in Liberian newspapers, poetry, and political declarations and oratory (see, for example, Lambert 5). In addition, David Kazanjian has shown that "the hundreds of letters written by formerly enslaved black settlers to their family, friends, and former masters in the United States" are a vital source for enhancing – and complicating – our understanding of Americo-Liberian identity (867). However, one of the most promising sources for addressing the question of settler-colonial identity are narratives of exploration into the black republic's interior or hinterland (see Douglass-Chin, "Liberia as American Diaspora" 215). In such accounts, Americo-Liberian travellers recorded their direct encounters with indigenous groups, while at the same time addressing a literate audience of fellow settlers and, importantly, white as well as black readers across the Atlantic. This latter point is especially pertinent in the case of James L. Sims's 1858 travel narrative "Scenes in the Interior of Liberia."

Sims had emigrated to Liberia from Norfolk, Virginia, in 1851, and he composed his account at a time when the black emigration movement had been regaining traction in the U.S., due to the growing despair among black communities caused by the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act (1850) and the Supreme Court's infamous Dred Scott decision (1857; e.g. Ciment 102; Clegg 172–174; Mills 132). Accordingly, Sims not only engaged explicitly with the way he saw (and was in turn seen) by his 'heathen black brethren' and his fellow Americo-Liberians in West Africa; as a recent arrival in Liberia he would also have been keenly aware that his narrative would very likely make its way back to the United States, where it would be printed and circulated as part of the ongoing "Abolitionist Propaganda War" surrounding African colonisation (Everill 81; as noted in Fairhead et al. 49, Sims's narrative was indeed soon published in "near-complete extracts" in the *Maryland Colonization Journal,* the *Philadelphia Colonization Herald*, and the *New-York Colonization Journal*). But how exactly did Sims address the conflicting demands and expectations of these diverse audiences, while at the same time maintaining a sufficiently coherent identity for himself and his Americo-Liberian compatriots?

In this essay, I will argue that one key literary strategy of 'identity management' in Sims's travel narrative is his extensive use of a wide variety of intertextual references: religious, ethnographic, and poetic (for a complete list, see appendix). Far from merely ornamental, these inter-

textual references prove central to Sims's self-fashioning project. Indeed, it is precisely through the strategic deployment of intertexts that Sims attempts to stabilise the disconcerting volatility of Americo-Liberian settler-colonial identity.

African Whiteness: Colonisation and Liberian Identity

To begin to untangle the threads of Americo-Liberian identity, we must examine the specific context of Sims's journey into the Liberian hinterland, and in particular the state of relations between settlers and indigenous groups. Despite the fact that Liberia had recently become an independent republic, the settlers continued to lead "a precarious existence" in a "few scattered settlements along the coast," and they were keenly aware that development depended, among other things, "on trade relations with the far interior" (Fairhead et al. 14, 28). However, to develop their direct trade with the interior, settlers had to engage with the indigenous groups in their immediate vicinity, in relation to whom the question of land acquisition had long been "a source of misunderstanding and conflict" (Sawyer 77). Indeed, the main competitors of the Americo-Liberian merchants in inland trade were the "well-established African chiefs" of their neighbouring communities (Sawyer 89), who were, understandably, keen to resist the settler's attempts to avoid paying "'transit' duties" (Fairhead et al. 17). This, in turn, is one reason why "Liberians contrasted their problematic engagement with immediately neighboring populations – often imaged as hostile, disorganized, heathen, crude, and naked – with the images of civility, piety, and literacy of peoples in the far interior" (23); fantasies of fortune were projected onto the Africans inhabiting the more distant hinterland where, as the settlers recognised, any "meaningful and permanent administrative presence was […] unfeasible" (Mark-Thiesen and Mihatsch 896), while the indigenous groups that lived closer to home tended to be portrayed as obdurate pagan obstacles to the forward march of Christian commerce. This attitude emerges in Sims's narrative, too, when he claims that the morals of the indigenous groups in the interior were "far superior to those of the natives living near the beach, who have had intercourse with foreigners" (123). At the same time, Sims is keen to deflect racist claims about any inherent inferiority of black people in general, insisting that "there are white men in America and Europe who can do things with as much brutal apathy as the blackest and most woolly-headed Negro that ever sweltered beneath the burning rays

of an African sun" (123). The indigenous Africans are thus both fundamentally equal to all other human beings, yet also sadly in need of redemption and uplift through the civilising mission of Americo-Liberian settlers.

The settler-colonists' identity was not, however, shaped solely through their ambivalent relations with indigenous neighbours; it also unfolded against the backdrop of the idea of African 'repatriation,' which had emerged long prior to the settlement on the West African coast from the 1820s onwards. Two driving forces provided the impetus among Euro-Americans for the idea of 'repatriation': the twin spectres of revolution and miscegenation. The former – slave revolt and revolution – was of course a constant worry in the slave-holding U.S. republic, and the presence of free blacks in particular posed a seemingly intractable challenge. The solution, for some, was displacement: sending these potentially unruly black subjects 'back' to Africa, their ancestral homeland. Indeed, as Lorenzo Veracini convincingly argues in *The World Turned Inside Out*, proponents of settler colonialism more generally have consistently regarded it as an "an *alternative* to revolution" – irrespective of whether they found "revolution likely and yet abhorrent" or "desirable but impossible" (8). Commenting specifically on the case of Liberia, Veracini notes that white Americans evidently belonged to the former group, regarding black emigration as a way to neutralise the threat of revolutionary violence, while the future settlers themselves – or, more precisely, those among them who migrated to West Africa voluntarily – would, for the most part, have welcomed an anti-slavery revolution in the U.S. but simply did not regard it as likely (158–159).

For many Euro-American proponents of African colonisation, however, revolution was only one worry, as miscegenation constituted a second 'black threat' to white republican stability. As early as 1785, for example, Thomas Jefferson was perturbed by the idea that the "slave, when made free, might mix with […] his master" – and to avoid such a "staining of the blood" he proposed that free blacks "be removed beyond the reach of mixture" (209–210). According to Brendon Mills, "Jefferson likely did more than any other individual in the early republic to initially popularize the concept of creating colonies for former slaves," yet he was far from exceptional, as "both slaveholders and antislavery advocates alike echoed these sentiments" (10). Indeed, as Robert Murray insists, it is surely no coincidence that African "colonization and Indian Removal emerged as racial remedies for the United States at the same historical moment"; both, after all, were underpinned by the same aversion to hy-

bridity and 'racial mixture' (77). In 1816, the idea of African colonisation became institutionalised in the American Colonization Society (ACS), and between 1820 and 1860, the ACS transported some 10,000 people from the U.S. to Africa (Clegg 197), where they enjoyed a new type of political freedom, but also suffered from scarcity, high mortality rates, and the separation from loved ones who remained in the U.S., sometimes involuntarily. At the same time, colonisation as a strategy of "ethnic puri-fication" had proved controversial from the start (Moses xiv), and most free African Americans were in fact "unwilling to become settlers in Liberia" (Mills 5; see Shick 7). Indeed, as Robert Murray has shown, to most free people of colour in the U.S. the Americo-Liberian settlers seemed "little more than black-masked whites hoping to emulate the white enslavers in the United States" (136).

In a similar vein, the indigenous groups in West Africa regarded the Americo-Liberians, not as true 'black' sisters and brothers, but as 'white' strangers and foreigners. Murray has examined in detail what he terms the settlers' "African whiteness," and this seemingly paradoxical notion is clearly reflected in James L. Sims's travel narrative, when he describes how he was perceived by members of the "Goulah and Passah people":

> I was a 'white man' – white because I was a 'Merica man' – 'Merica man, because I Sarvy book,' and every body who 'Sarvy book,' except the Mandingoes, are 'white.' They say the Mandingoes would be white too if they would only dress like white people. (95)

For indigenous Africans, Sims's narrative makes clear, the terms 'black' and 'white' did not primarily signify skin colour, let alone imply any sort of racial essence, but referred instead to a particular set of cultural signifi-ers: a style of dress and, importantly, the settlers' ability to read ("Sarvy book").

Africa Delivered: Literature, the Civilising Mission, and Torquato Tasso

This kind of 'book knowledge' was, moreover, important for both the propaganda of the ACS's Euro-American colonisationists and for the Americo-Liberians' own understanding of their settler communities as a vanguard of commerce, Christianity, and civilisation on the supposedly benighted shores of West Africa. The centrality of literature as a marker of

Liberian progress can be seen, for example, in an anonymous piece from
the February 1836 edition of the *Southern Literary Messenger*:

> We are perfectly serious in speaking of *Liberian Literature.* Yes – in
> Liberia, […] where, thirteen years and a half ago, the tangled and pathless
> forest frowned in a silence unbroken save by the roar of wild beasts, the
> fury of the tornado, the whoop of the man-stealer, or the agonizing shrieks
> of his victims on being torn from their homes to brave the horrors of the
> Middle Passage and of the West Indies – in Liberia, the English language
> is now spoken; the English spirit is breathed; English Literature exists;
> and with it, exist those comforts, virtues, and pleasures, which the exist-
> ence of Literature necessarily implies. (158)

In a series of colonialist tropes, the author evokes the brutish wilderness
of Africa – only to claim that this savage space has now been tamed by
the Americo-Liberian settlers, who brought with them from the U.S. the
English language, spirit, and "Literature." Of course, the reality of settler
existence was far more precarious and, to the embarrassment of Americo-
Liberians, included widespread illiteracy. Thomas W. Shick has docu-
mented the settlers' efforts to organise schools despite a lack of qualified
teachers (55). Shick has shown, too, how the establishment of literary
organisations, together with religious associations, was meant to encour-
age the settlers to work together for the common good, even as they also
constituted civilisational bulwarks against the supposedly detrimental
influence of their 'savage' African neighbours (53). What Sarah Meer has
written about slave narratives in the U.S. thus applies to the Liberian
scene as well, for what mattered to the settler-colonists was the very ges-
ture "of placing their lives – symbolically their selves – in the realm of
letters, learning, and books" (Meer 74). In other words, the very existence
of newspapers and other types of literature in Liberia constituted a form
of cultural capital that was seen to vindicate the settler-colonial project as
such.

   This commitment to the civilising mission is also expressed directly in
Americo-Liberian poetry of the time. For example, in "Lines Written on
Seeing Cape Mount" (1847), H. L. Wall emphasises that Liberia is "not
the offspring of grasping ambitious thirst" but instead devoted to "arts,
sciences, literature, commerce combined." Similarly, the speaker of
"Liberian Ministers Praying Fervently, for the Spread of the Gospel Over
Their Country" (1854, signed R. H. G.) urges:

Let darkness from our country take its flight:
Let heathens cease to break thy holy laws,
And turn to Christ – partake in christian [sic] joys.
And thus equip them for the pilg[r]im's fight.

In these two poems from the *Liberia Herald*, civilising the "heathens" is as important a goal as the "love of liberty" that – according to Liberia's official state seal (Figure 2) – brought the Americo-Liberian settlers to West Africa in the first place. Accordingly, in "Eulogy on the Institutions of Liberia" (1854, also signed R. H. G), we learn that "Liberia's schools of learning" will fight "thro' the shades of darkness" – a darkness that is explicitly tied to the absence of 'true religion' and literacy.
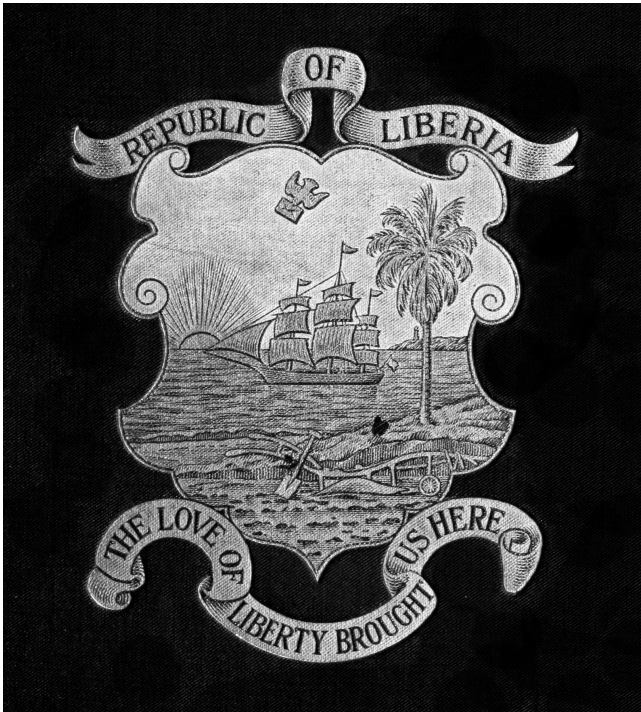
Figure 2: The National Seal of Liberia
Like the very name Liberia, the republic's official seal emphasises
the centrality of liberty for its self-definition (from the cover of
Johnston's 1906 monograph *Liberia*).

Read against this backdrop, Sims's inclusion in his travel narrative of a reference to Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* (1581) can be seen as an indirect assertion of the 'crusading spirit' of Americo-Liberian settlement. Sims quotes Tasso's description of an unusually beautiful bird as part of his own paean to the beauty of the African landscape:

> With purple beak, and rainbow colors flung
> At random o'er his plumes, among the rest,
> Was one preeminent; his supple tongue
> A gift like human eloquence possessed,
> And with such art and copious numbers sung,
> That all who heard, a prodigy confessed.
>
> (Tasso, qtd. in Sims 100; see appendix, #3)

Richard Douglass-Chin – to my knowledge the only critic to have analysed nineteenth-century Liberian travel narratives from a literary point of view – is partly right in regarding this passage as expressive of a "Romantic" sensibility that renders the "African landscape […] in terms of aesthetic interpretation" ("Landscapes" 242); after all, Sims's narrative was written at a time when Romanticism had profoundly reshaped the genre of travel narratives more generally, into a form that records "not only a literal journey but also a metaphorical 'inner' journey of self-discovery and maturation" (Thompson 117). However, Douglass-Chin's emphasis on the "Romantic" spirit of this passage is also misleading because he fails to acknowledge that these verses are in fact taken from a Renaissance epic. Importantly, Tasso's epic constitutes a mythologised account of the First Crusade, focusing among other things on such themes as the struggle against 'non-believers' and the "progress from Fall to Redemption" (Fichter 267). More specifically, the passage Sims quotes is taken from the section of *Jerusalem Delivered* that is set in the garden of Armida: a pagan sorceress who converts to Christianity in the final stanzas of Tasso's text (see Gough 524). Naturally, the theme of conversion would have resonated with Americo-Liberians like Sims, as would the poem's emphasis on internal divisions and "distractions that kept the crusaders from their primary tasks" (Davie vii). The crusading epic of *Jerusalem Delivered*, this is to say, echoed some of the key concerns of an Americo-Liberian settler community with complex, divided loyalties that nevertheless saw itself as entrusted with a mission to Christianise the 'heathens' in their very own promised land.

Intertexts: Travel Narratives between Conventionality and Self-Expression

To argue that some of the intertextual references in Sims's narrative carry very specific interpretive significance is, of course, not to say that intertextuality as such ought to be considered unusual within the broader genre of travel writing. For example, Carl Thompson argues that invoking the figure of Robinson Crusoe is an entirely conventional gesture in "male accounts of heroic travel," where it is used to signify "self-sufficiency and survival against all odds" (190). This gendered dimension is important in the present context, for as Robert Murray suggests, "[t]he rhetoric surrounding Liberia, from both its Euro-American supporters and African American settlers, focused on a masculine civilizing mission, taming both the landscape of Africa and its inhabitants" (118). It therefore ought not to come as a surprise that Sims references Crusoe early on in his narrative, when describing how he and the twenty-seven indigenous Africans that accompanied him on his journey traversed "a dark gloomy forest":

> Robinson Crusoe, on his lonely isle, never wished more sincerely for the sight of a sail than I did for an opening in the bush. About four o'clock, to my great joy, we reached a large open field, with a few fruit trees, and a stream of delicious water. To us, the place was a little paradise on earth. I felt like one just released from a long and weary bondage. (94)

It is striking that Sims sees no contradiction here between, on the one hand, comparing himself to Robinson Crusoe – who in many ways "embodies the ideology of white supremacy" (Thomson 90) – and, on the other, describing his experience in the African jungle as a release from "bondage": a term that clearly invokes the rhetoric of anti-slavery. In this, Sims is not unlike Euro-American colonisationists, who routinely embraced both an anticolonial, revolutionary republicanism and the idea that Liberia was "the vanguard of the United States' global republican mission," thus collapsing "anticolonial and settler-colonial frameworks within a common ethos of Eurocentric civilizationism" (Mills 55–56).

    In a very real sense, moreover, Sims stakes his claim to being 'civilised' precisely by including a broad range of intertexts, beyond the conventional reference to Robinson Crusoe. Sarah Meer's comments on the use of intertextuality in U.S. slave narratives are pertinent here:

> [O]ne important indicator of slave narratives' sense of their own place in the world of letters lies in their intertextuality, their insistence on making reference to other texts. […] Insofar as slave narratives must insist on

what their narrators share with their readers – human qualities like de-
cency, domesticity, and familial affections, and cultural attributes, in
which Christian and American values loom large – it is not surprising to
find the narratives demonstrate this commonality in their form as well as
in their content. Thus the narratives make allusions, borrow phrases, and
use quotations to attest to their access to a shared culture. (Meer 74)

As documented in the appendix, Sims's twenty-page narrative contains
nineteen different intertextual references to this "shared culture": novels,
Shakespearean drama, secular and religious poetry, missionary tracts,
travel narratives, historical writings, and the Bible. Indeed, the fact that
Sims always uses quotation marks when incorporating an intertext shows
that he wanted his audience to notice and appreciate these references as
such. In a later, postmodern context, travel narratives featuring such inter-
textual multi-voicedness may, perhaps, constitute an attempt to decentre
the "monologic imperiousness of vision" that characterised earlier, Euro-
centric versions of the genre (Thompson 127). In a mid-nineteenth-cen-
tury Liberian context, however, Sims's conspicuous inclusion of intertexts
instead serves to stabilise a beleaguered settler-colonial identity, as a sign
of cultural distinction that bolsters Americo-Liberians' claims to 'civilisa-
tion' and African whiteness.[1]

A lengthy excerpt from Sims's "Scenes in the Interior of Liberia" may
serve to illustrate how, precisely, the deployment of different intertexts
allows him to navigate the fraught territory of Americo-Liberian identity
– which, as we have seen, requires a simultaneous identification with and
distancing from indigenous Africans. Describing a region called Barlain,
Sims admires what he regards as the comparative sophistication of its
inhabitants:

> They are the most industrious people in this part of Africa, and, with the
> exception of the Manni-Mohammedans, are the most civilized. […] They
> are very hospitable to strangers, and even kind to their enemies, and, as a
> general thing, they are milder and more placid than any of their neighbors;
> but regularity of life, and industry, honesty, and a "reverential regard for
> their parents and rulers," are the most prominent traits in the character of
> the Barlains.
>
> The soil is exceedingly fertile, producing the finest sugar cane, to-
> bacco, corn, cotton and ground-peas I ever saw in Africa. […] In short,

---

[1]   That the inclusion of intertexts can be a stabilising as well as a decentralising
force constitutes one example for what Michel Foucault has termed the "tacti-
cal polyvalence of discourses" (100).

> Barlain is one of the most productive spots I have met with, and it is cer-
> tainly
>
> > "—A goodly sight to see
> > What heaven hath done for this delicious land,
> > What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree,
> > What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand."
>
> Nature has certainly dealt out her blessings in some parts of Africa with a
> lavishing hand. India is not the only place where "every prospect pleases."
> (108)

Sims begins this passage by praising the inhabitants of Barlain, noting in
particular their hospitality and placidity – traits that may be laudable in
certain contexts, but that are also rather convenient for a settler-colonial
trader like himself. Moreover, by highlighting that the people of Barlain
are "even kind to their enemies," Sims styles them as 'Christians in wait-
ing' – and the first of the three intertextual references in this passage (i.e.
the phrase "reverential regard for their parents and rulers") is appropri-
ately taken from T. J. Bowen's 1857 book *Central Africa*, which in its
subtitle stresses the centrality of "*Missionary Labors*" (appendix, #7).

More tellingly still, the two other intertextual references in this pas-
sage serve to qualify Sims's initial praise of the peaceful, semi-Christ-like
Barlains. Sims prepares the ground for this rhetorical move by shifting the
emphasis of his praise from the native Africans to the country they inhab-
it: from "the character of the Barlains" to Barlain as "one of the most pro-
ductive spots." He then proceeds to quote four lines from Canto I, stanza
15 in Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (appendix, #8). In this
and the following stanzas, Byron's speaker contrasts the beauty of the
Portuguese landscape with the character of the Portuguese: a nation so
"swoln with ignorance and pride" (Canto I, stanza 16; line 222) that one
puzzles over why Nature would "waste […its] wonders" on such "paltry
slaves" (Canto I, stanza 18; lines 234–235). Having initially praised the
character of a group of indigenous Africans – no doubt to counter Euro-
Americans' racist assumptions about the inborn inferiority of all black
people – Sims's intertextual reference to Byron immediately undercuts the
idea that they might be considered equal to the Americo-Liberian settlers;
they may be hospitable and kind, but as heathens they are nevertheless
also "swoln with ignorance" and thus undeserving of the bounteous land
that they inhabit.

The third intertextual reference in Sims's passage well and truly ham-
mers home the point that even the "most civilized" Barlains are inferior to

black Christian settler-colonists from the United States. The phrase "every prospect pleases" comes, as Sims's reference to India confirms, from a "Missionary Hymn" by Reginald Heber, an English clergyman who served as Bishop of Calcutta from 1823 until his death in 1826. Like Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Heber's hymn contrasts the "prospect that pleases" with its "vile" inhabitants: "In vain with lavish kindness / The gifts of God are strown, / The Heathen in his blindness / Bows down to wood and stone" (see appendix, #9). The implication of this triad of intertextual references – Bowen, Byron, and Heber – thus becomes clear. No matter how nearly civilised the "reverential" Barlains may be, they nevertheless remain in "Heathen […] blindness," and, like all other indigenous Africans, they therefore depend for racial uplift on the benevolent Christian paternalism of Americo-Liberian settler-colonists like Sims.

Abolitionist Colonisers: Byronic Blackness

As Sims continues to strive for a depiction of Africans as less uncivilised than Euro-Americans might expect, yet still not civilised enough to be able to do without the blessings brought to West Africa by Americo-Liberian settler-colonists, his strategic use of intertextuality gains in complexity and, perhaps, playfulness, too. To demonstrate this, we must examine another long excerpt from Sims's narrative that likewise includes references to three different intertexts:

> According to tradition, Barlain was once inhabited by the Kpellays, the most uncivilized, with the exception of a portion of the Pessahs, I have yet seen. King Bassee, great grand-father of the present King, drove the Kpellays out and took possession of the country. The Kpellays, however, have been waging a very destructive war with them ever since. However, there have been no wars in Barlain now for several years. The last fight they had with the Kpellays, if what they say be true, was bloody in the extreme. […]
>   "Long time the victory in even balance hung."
>   However, the Barlains prevailed. The Kpellays were put to flight. […] The Barlains pursued them to the banks of the river, where many of them, seeing no way to escape, plunged in and perished. Several bush fights took place after this. At length, "grim" visaged war smoothed his wrinkled front in Barlain, and "capered nimbly" over (perhaps) to Russia, where "brain spattering" was carried on in a more civilized manner. (113)

On the surface, this depiction of protracted 'intertribal' warfare confirms Euro-American stereotypes of African savagery and might therefore play directly into the hands of white supremacists.

However, the intertextual references included in this passage all serve to dilute and qualify such a racist assessment. The first quotation, for example – "Long time the victory in even balance hung" – is taken from William Jones's poem "Caissa: or, The Game of Chess" (1763; appendix, #12), which depicts a flirtatious chess match between the nymph Delia and the shepherd Daphnis. In the present context, what matters is that the game of chess does not, of course, pitch black against black (as is the case in the warlike African scenes in which the quotation appears). Instead, the game revolves around "two bold kings [who] contend with vain alarms, / In ivory this, and that in ebon arms" (Jones 51), i.e. a conflict of white against black. As one would expect, Jones's poem continues to emphasise the contrasting colours of the pieces on the board: how they stay "[t]rue to the colour, which at first they chose" (54), and how they "rush from black to white, from white to black" (55). Even the final line of the poem – "And peaceful slept the sable hero's shade" – emphasises the question of colour, in a parodic echo of the last line of Pope's translation of the *Iliad* ("And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade"; Jones 62n1). The inclusion of Jones's poem, in short, complicates the black-vs.-black dynamic of the tribal conflicts that Sims describes by juxtaposing them with a game that manifestly pits white against black, as if to remind the racist segment of his audience that "destructive war" is not the exclusive preserve of supposedly more barbaric and villainous Africans. The next intertextual reference, moreover, reinforces this point, as the image of a "'grim' visaged war" that "smoothed his wrinkled front" and then "capered nimbly" to a different location echoes a set of lines from act 1, scene 1 of William Shakespeare's *Richard III* (appendix, #13). In this way, Sims not only references one of the most villainous (and white!) characters of all time, but also reminds his readers that Shakespeare's eminently civilised history plays are filled to the brim with blood-soaked content (in the case of *Richard III*, the protracted dynastic strife known as the War of the Roses, 1455–1485).

Importantly, if these first two intertextual references to "Caissa" and *Richard III* merely pose an implicit challenge to stereotypes concerning black barbarity, the third intertext included in this passage, Byron's *Don Juan* (1819-1824; appendix, #14), renders Sims's caveat more explicit. In part, this has to do with Byron's general stature within black abolitionist literature. As Matt Sandler has shown, "practically every well-known

black writer of the nineteenth century quoted the poet and worked through his influence" (29). Among other things, these "Black Romantics […] saw in Byron's commitment to Greek independence an example of how to pledge oneself to the cause of others' freedom" (41). Sandler notes that *Childe Harolde's Pilgrimage* (1812-1818) in particular served as a source of inspiration to black abolitionist authors (26–27), and we have already seen that Sims's narrative includes a reference to this work. According to Sandler, what appealed to black Romantics about Byron is that his texts presented them with "a renegade, exiled form of masculinity, grappling with deep psychosexual pain and alienation," while at the same time "identifying that struggle with the revolutionary spirit of the age" (29). Black abolitionist authors thus reinterpreted the torments and resilience of the Byronic hero in light of the trauma of, and the struggle against, the evils of slavery. Accordingly, Sims's inclusion of Byron, in and of itself, evoked a fiercely abolitionist sensitivity that was bound to resonate with audiences in the U.S. – especially with black Americans, who tended to view Liberian colonisation with skepticism, to the point of questioning the settlers' commitment to anti-slavery.

Moreover, while any reference to Byron by a mid-nineteenth-century Americo-Liberian would have evoked the way in which black abolitionists appropriated the English poet's work, Sims's specific reference to *Don Juan* highlights more directly that the barbarity of war is certainly not limited to indigenous Africans or people of colour more generally. In the above passage from Sims's narrative, the description of war as a "brain spattering" activity is taken from stanza 4 of Canto IX in *Don Juan* (appendix, #14). The latter constitutes a bitter attack on the Duke of Wellington, arising out of Byron's "conviction that all the bloodshed of the Napoleonic wars had only reestablished the legitimacy of tyranny in Europe" (Marchand 39).[2] A European hero like Wellington – Byron writes – might well be glorified as "Saviour of the Nations" or "Europe's Liberator," but in fact such men merely lead lives full of "assault and battery," while leaving the masses "still enslaved" (Canto IX, stanza 5; lines 35 and 39–40). This is not to say that Byron was a pacifist who rejected war *per se*; after all, he explicitly writes that "War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art / Unless her cause by Right be sanctified" (Canto IX, stanza 4; lines 27–28). However, the point to be made regarding Sims's reference to this passage from *Don Juan* is that barbaric violence is clearly not limited

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[2]   See John Lauber, who reads *Don Juan* as an anti-epic in which Homeric heroes were "no more deserving of honor than their modern counterparts who will spill blood in even greater quantities" (619).

to 'savage' Africans, but has long been part of European 'high culture,' too – though, as Sims sarcastically suggests, in a supposedly "more civilized manner."

In this context, the term *savage* itself deserves some attention, for unlike the seemingly similar term *primitive*, *savage* denotes a lack of civilisation but not any irredeemable backwardness. Robert Murray has summarised succinctly the argument put forward by earlier scholars:

> Savagery denotes a horizontal spatial relationship: a side by side evaluation of two things determined by a value judgment. Most importantly, savagery lacks a temporal element. […] The "savage" can become tamed by changing his or her thinking and adopting "civilized" patterns of life; lines can be crossed within this framework. "Primitive," however, replaces the spatial hierarchy with a temporal one. Within this model of thinking, Europe has simply progressed beyond its neighbors. […P]rimitiveness suggests an inability to progress from a sort of defect. (79)

Importantly, the idea that the term *savage* constitutes a less fundamental type of othering than the concept of the *primitive* does not imply that the former is necessarily harmless; indeed, accusations of savagery could easily serve as a "useful excuse for the violent suppression of indigenous Africans" whenever they "refused to adopt 'civilized' manners" (Murray 80).

Still, as Murray asserts, it is significant that "the term 'primitive' is almost completely absent from the colonization rhetoric presented in the *African Repository and Colonial Journal* [i.e. the ACS's key publication] and the letters pouring in from Liberia" (80), as the possibility to civilise 'heathens' was a key ideological justification for African colonisation. Similarly, throughout his narrative Sims refrains from using the term *primitive*; instead, he consistently refers to "savage" people and practices (102, 104, 113, 121). In this, Sims differs from a later Americo-Liberian traveller, Benjamin J. K. Anderson, who in his *Narrative of a Journey to Musardu, the Capital of the Western Mandingoes* (1870) does at one point use the term *primitive*, when commenting on the "primitive, barbarian industry" of some native Africans that he encounters (188). Perhaps Anderson's use of the term constitutes a first textual trace of a broader paradigm shift among the settler-colonists from *savagery* to *primitivism*? Could this, in other words, be a first textual symptom of how Americo-Liberian views of their indigenous neighbours hardened in the second half of the nineteenth century, from a relatively flexible Christian paternalism to a more rigid, pseudo-scientific, and evolutionist racism? These are in-

triguing historical questions – but sadly they exceed the scope of the present inquiry.

Conclusion: The Textual Repercussions of the Black-White Man's Burden

This essay has not provided a fully-fledged reading of James L. Sims's "Scenes in the Interior of Liberia"; it does not, for example, analyse the text's narrative structure, its techniques of characterisation, or its use of figurative language. More broadly, much critical work remains to be done in the field of Liberian travel writing. In addition to a thorough examination of the paradigm shift from *savagery* and *primitivism*, for example, a systematic consideration of these travel narratives' gender dynamics would surely prove fruitful, given that, by and large, the "colonizationists advanced their agendas through politics and public forums dominated by men" (Murray 118). Moreover, if Lorenzo Veracini is right in suggesting that most nineteenth-century settler colonists dreamed of neutralising class conflict through spatial displacement (15–16), then one might profitably interrogate Sims's and other travel writers' rhetorical strategies with a view to the increasing social differentiation within Americo-Liberian settler society, which was occasioned in part by "the shift within Liberian immigration from free blacks and mulattoes to poor and less worldly manumitted slaves" (Ciment 102), as well as by the increasing presence of recaptured Africans (Shick 66–71) and a small but important group of immigrants from Barbados (e.g. Banton 14–16). Did increasing diversity and incipient class conflict in the settlers' small coastal settlements engender a desire for further displacement, in the form of a more aggressive push into the far interior? Or was this primarily a reaction to the increasing pressure exerted, from the 1870s onwards, by the imperial powers of Britain and France? And how are such internal and external conflicts refracted in later Americo-Liberian travel narratives like Anderson's, for example in their depiction of indigenous Africans?

What the argument has shown, however, is that the numerous intertextual references in Sims's narrative constitute more than merely an attempt by a black author to stake his claim for literature and civilisation – though, importantly, they are that as well. Beyond such claims to be regarded as 'civilised,' Sims's intertexts serve rhetorically specific functions: to emphasise the 'crusading spirit' of Liberian colonisation (e.g. by referencing Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*); to highlight the sup-

posed discrepancy between, on the one hand, an African landscape favoured by God and, on the other, the sometimes kind but nevertheless heathen inhabitants of this same landscape (Bowen, Byron, and Heber); and to deflect racist images of black people as inherently more violent and barbaric than the proponents of 'white civilisation' (e.g. *Richard III*). For Sims, "Africa is Africa all over" (123); in a proto–pan-African gesture of inclusion, he imagines all black people as sharing a common, indelible bond. At the same time, Sims makes it clear that indigenous Africans can only develop their full potential through contact with those 'civilised' black Americans who, by migrating to Liberia, acquired independence and African whiteness. In short, indigenous Africans might be "black but comely," as Sims puts it, quoting chapter 1, verse 5 of the Song of Solomon (KJV); nevertheless, they cannot do without the uplift that only Americo-Liberian settler-colonists can provide, as part of their civilising mission. The tone of Sims's text may, as Fairhead et al. have noted, be surprisingly "humorous" (49), yet his narrative is shaped profoundly by this 'black-white man's burden': to re-fashion himself from an African American into an Americo-Liberian; to vindicate the Liberian settler-colonial endeavour as such; and to stave off the competing and conflicting ideological claims of indigenous Africans, of Euro-Americans, and of black abolitionists in the U.S.[3] The dexterity with which Sims has confronted this task should not blind us to the fact that his intertextual balancing act remains a merely imaginary solution to the intractable social contradictions of Americo-Liberian existence – contradictions that would continue to haunt the Republic of Liberia well into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.[4]

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[3] In *The Journal of an African Cruiser*, Horatio Bridge reports that an African king referred to the Liberian settlers as "*black-white* people" (45).

[4] See Fredric Jameson, who argues that the "production of aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right, with the function of inventing imaginary or formal 'solutions' to unresolvable social contradictions" (64).

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Appendix: Overview of Intertextual References in James L. Sims's "Scenes from the Interior of Liberia" (1858)

#	Quotation from Sims's Narrative (incl. page number)	Bibliographical Entry	Source Text — Corresponding Passage (incl. page number)
1	"Robinson Crusoe, on his lonely isle, never wished more sincerely for the sight of a sail that I did for an opening in the bush." (94)	**Defoe, Daniel. The Life and Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe. [first published in 1719]**	n.a.
2	"It is said by some writer that when the sun goes down all Africa dances." (97)	**Golberry, Silvester Meinrad Xavier [Sylvain Meinrad Xavier de Golbéry]. Travels in Africa. 1802. Translated by W. Mudford, 2nd ed., vol. 2, London, Jones and Bumford, 1808.**	"[I]t may be asserted, that during half of every night in the year, all Africa is dancing." (246)
3	"'With purple beak, and rainbow colors flung / At random o'er his plumes, among the rest, / Was one pre-eminent; his supple tongue / A gift like human eloquence possessed, / And with such art and copious numbers sung, / That all who heard, a prodigy confessed.'" (100)	**Tasso, Torquato. "The Song of the Bird in the Garden of Armida: Translated from the 'Jerusalem Delivered' of Torquato Tasso – Canto xvi.12." 1581. Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, February 1845, p. 84.**	"With purple beak, and rainbow colours flung / At random o'er his plumes, among the rest / Was one pre-eminent; his supple tongue / A gift like human eloquence possessed, / And with such art and copious numbers sung, / That all who heard, a prodigy confessed; / The birds grew mute, and, charmed by his sweet lay, / The rustling breezes ceased through heaven to play."

#	Quotation from Sims's Narrative (incl. page number)	Bibliographical Entry	Source Text	
			Corresponding Passage (incl. page number)	
4	"Hapless children of men, when shall the cherub hope smile on you from heaven, and with a compassionate voice, call you to the pleasures of reason?" (105)	**Whelpley, Samuel. *A Compend of History from the Earliest Times.* 1st rev. ed., vol. 1, Philadelphia, Kimber & Conrad, 1808.**	"Hapless children of men! when shall light and order pervade the cheerless regions where you dwell? What power shall heave the adamantine bars which secure the gates of your dungeon, and bring you forth? When shall the cherub hope smile on you from heaven, and, with a compassionate voice, call you to the pleasures of reason—to the delights of immortality?" (110–111) **Note:** A bit earlier, the source states that "[t]here is no certain evidence that the Africans are inferior to the Asiatics or Europeans in their natural make [...]." (110)	
5	"If a correct account could be given of all the wars fought in Africa, during the last century, together with the suffering and desolation that inevitably must have followed, it would be a tale too horrible for 'ears of flesh and blood' [...]." (105)	**Shakespeare, William. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.* c. 1600. *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, edited by Gary Taylor et al., Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 1993–2100.**	"GHOST [...] But that I am forbid to tell the secrets of my prison house I could tell a tale whose lightest word Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood, make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres, Thy knotted and combinèd locks to part, And each particular hair to stand on end, Like quills upon the fearful porcupine. But this eternal blazon must not be To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O list!" (2017, lines 13–22; act 1, scene 5)	
6	"When they have accumulated a considerable amount of goods, they invariably return to their own country: they are as restless as Tartars, and in making bargains will 'cavil on the ninth part of a hair.'" (106)	**Shakespeare, William. *The History of Henry the Fourth.* c. 1597. *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, edited by Gary Taylor et al., Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 1275–1354.**	"HOTSPUR I do not care. I'll give thrice so much land To any well-deserving friend; But in the way of bargain, mark ye me, I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair." (1318, lines 132–135; act 3, scene 1)	

#	Quotation from Sims's Narrative (incl. page number)	Bibliographical Entry	Source Text Corresponding Passage (incl. page number)
7	"They are very hospitable to strangers, and even kind to their enemies, and, as a general thing, they are milder and more placid than any of their neighbors; but regularity of life, industry, honesty, and a 'reverential regard for their parents and rulers,' are the most prominent traits in the character of the Barlains." (108)	Bowen, T. J. *Central Africa: Adventures and Missionary Labors in Several Countries in the Interior of Africa, from 1849 to 1856.* Charleston, Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1857.	"Another virtue of these people is a reverential regard for their parents and rulers, and in fact, for all superiors." (290)
8	"In short, Barlain is one of the most productive spots I have met with, and it is certainly '—A goodly sight to see What heaven hath done for this delicious land, What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree, What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand.'	Lord Byron. *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. A Romaunt.* 2nd ed, London, John Murray, 1812, pp. 15–17.	"Oh, Christ! it is a goodly sight to see What Heaven hat done for this delicious land, What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree! What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!" (15; Canto I.15, lines 1–4)
9	Nature has certainly dealt out her blessings in some parts of Africa with a lavishing hand. India is not the only place where 'every prospect pleases.' (108)	[Heber, Reginald]. "Missionary Hymn." *Hymns Adapted to the Sunday Services of the Church of England: To Which Are Added, Prayers for Sunday Schools Etc.* 4th ed., Dublin, Samuel B. Oldham, 1802, p. 115. [Attributed to Heber in: Cogswell, William. *The Assistant to Family Religion, in Six Parts.* Boston, Crocker & Brewster, 1827, pp. 347–348.]	"What though the spicy breezes Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle, Though every prospect pleases, And only man is vile; In vain with lavish kindness The gifts of God are strown, The Heathen in his blindness Bows down to wood and stone." (347)

#	Quotation from Sims's Narrative (incl. page number)	Bibliographical Entry	Source Text
			Corresponding Passage (incl. page number)
10	"The principle *Sali-Shirong* is called *Ngamu*: and like 'Eugun,' the great devil of the Yoruba people (as described by an American traveller) is a 'tall fellow,' (about ten feet) 'fantastically clad from face to foot,' and is, with some tribes, 'a personification of the executive or vindictive power of the government, but all women are required to believe that he is a terrible spirit who takes vengeance on violators of the law.'" (110	Bowen, T. J. *Central Africa: Adventures and Missionary Labors in Several Countries in the Interior of Africa, from 1849 to 1856.* Charleston, Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1857.	"As the grand órisha of the Egbás, Oro is a personification of the executive or vindictive power of the government, but all women are required to believe that he is a terrible spirit who takes vengeance on violators of the law.* * Another personification of executive power is called *Egugun*, literally bones. Egugun is represented by a tall fellow, fantastically clad from face to foot, who appears in the streets with a drawn sword in his hands, and speaks in a hoarse sepulchral voice." (141)
11	"All the tribes I met with have some notions of a supreme being, 'the unknown, the cause and preserver of all things,' they have a name for God, but are ignorant of his true character." (111)	Bowen, T. J. *Central Africa: Adventures and Missionary Labors in Several Countries in the Interior of Africa, from 1849 to 1856.* Charleston, Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1857.	"No man has ever believed in two gods, or that the Jupiters and Astartes which he worshipped, were really gods at all. To some they were merely personifications, to others real persons, but all have looked beyond these to THE GOD, the Unknown, the Cause and Preserver of all things." (310)
12	"'Long time the victory in even balance hung.'	Jones, William. "Caissa; or, The Game of Chess." 1763. *The Works of the British Poets, with Lives of the Authors,* edited by Robert Walsh, Jr., vol. 35, Philadelphia, Samuel F. Bradford, 1822, pp. 51–62.	"Long time the war in equal balance hung; Till, unforeseen, an ivory courser sprung, And, wildly prancing in an evil hour, Attack'd at once the monarch and the tower [...]." (60)

#	Quotation from Sims's Narrative (incl. page number)	Bibliographical Entry	Source Text — Corresponding Passage (incl. page number)
13	"However, the Barlains prevailed. The Kpellays were put to flight: a youth hewed himself a passage through the ranks of the Kpellays, and cut away the bridge which cut off the retreat of the enemy. The Barlains pursued them to the banks of the river, where many of them, seing no way to escape, plunged in and perished. Several bush fights took place after this. At length, 'grim' visaged war smoothed his wrinkled front in Barlain, and 'capered nimbly' over (perhaps) to Russia, where 'brain spattering' was carried on in a more civilized manner." (113)	Shakespeare, William. *The History of Henry the Fourth*. c. 1597. *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, edited by Gary Taylor et al., Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 1275–1354.	"RICHARD DUKE OF GLOUCESTER [...] Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front, / And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds / To fright the souls of fearful adversaries, / He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber / To the lascivious pleasing of a lute." (548, lines 10–14; act 1, scene 1)
14		Lord Byron. *Don Juan: In Two Volumes.* 1819–1824. Vol. 2, Philadelphia, R. W. Pomeroy, 1841.	"You are 'the best of cut-throats:' —do not start; / The phrase is Shakespeare's, and not misapplied: / War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art, / Unless her cause by right be sanctified." (47; Canto IX.4)
15	"'The rice was planted, and so was the gree gree, and the time came when 'seeds feel the influence of the sun, and unfold themselves in the bosom of the earth, and spring up and grow.'" (115)	Sturm, Christopher C. [Christoph Christian Sturm]. Reflections on the Works of God in Nature and Providence, for Every Day in the Year. 1772–1776. Translated by Adam Clarke, New York, Abraham Paul, 1824.	"[The sun] is the source of life, sensation and joy: for his salutary and vivifying rays are diffused through all the kingdoms of nature. Seeds feel his influence, and unfold themselves in the bosom of the earth. By him all plants and vegetables spring and grow up." (170)
16	"King Bahmo was 'black but comely,' with a countenance indicating shrewdness and intelligence." (119)	Bible: Song of Solomon 1:5 (KJV)	"*I am* black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon."

#	Quotation from Sims's Narrative (incl. page number)	Source Text	
		Bibliographical Entry	Corresponding Passage (incl. page number)
17	"[T]he Manni people are, for the most part, grave, serious, and thoughtful, and rigid adherents of the Koran. The American missionary, Mr. Bowen, speaking of these people, says: 'I was told of a class of devotees in the tribe, who abstain from war and traffic, and refuse to shake hands with another man's wife.' This is strictly true.'" (120)	**Bowen, T. J. *Central Africa: Adventures and Missionary Labors in Several Countries in the Interior of Africa, from 1849 to 1856.* Charleston, Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1857.**	"I was told of a class of devotees in the tribe, who abstain from war and traffic, and refuse to shake hands with another man's wife." (42)
18	"On the 15th of August, I bade adieu to Suloang—Suloang, whose 'melancholy loveliness, once seen, can never be forgotten.'" (120)	**M[ackay], C[harles]. "Transatlantic Sketches: Savannah and the Sea Islands." *The Illustrated London News*, 3 July 1858, p. 3.**	"But of all the scenery in and about Savannah the Cemetery of Bonaventura is the most remarkable. There is nothing like it in America, or perhaps in the world. Its melancholy loveliness, once seen, can never be forgotten."
19	"A Bousa man, named Sukea, was the favorite performer. His favorite theme was a story called 'Yandomah,' which is not inferior to any of the stories contained in the 'Arabian Nights.'" (120)	***Arabian Nights.* [first English translation c. 1706]**	n.a.

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Policing the Border in Lucas Pope's Computer Game *Papers, Please*

Lucas Pope's 2013 video game *Papers, Please* places the player-character in the position of an immigration inspector in a fictional Eastern Bloc nation. Since its release, the game has garnered enthusiastic responses, being celebrated by critics as an essential dramatisation of the ethical dilemmas associated with the migratory flows and fraught border politics of the post–9/11 world. However, this essay argues that this reputation must be scrutinised: for while *Papers, Please* indeed illustrates some of the contradictions at the heart of contemporary border policy – such as immigrant-receiving states' pragmatic application of exclusionary immigration practices that run contrary to their self-professed liberal-democratic ideals – it also engages in a 'universalising' abstraction of the border space, which limits its feasibility as a lens through which to view 2010s border discourses. Drawing from current research in Border Studies, a close reading of Pope's game illustrates how its geo-historical setting and its omission of crucial phenomena associated with the twenty-first-century border, such as the interactional processes of bordering and the existence of 'bi-cultural' borderscapes, ultimately render it a liberal-democratic fantasy, according to which the conflicts engendered by the enforced geopolitical border are abstract questions of morality and ethics rather than practical socio-political questions.

Keywords: video games; border politics; migration; rebordering

Introduction

In his list of the best video games released in 2013, critic Simon Parkin rewarded the small-budget production *Papers, Please* with the top spot, calling it, "Grim yet affecting, it's a game that may change your attitude the next time you're in line at the airport" (par. 8). This assessment is indicative of the impact and legacy of independent game designer Lucas Pope's most significant and most widely discussed work to date – a status

it has achieved in no small part thanks to its gameplay built on the ethical conundrums that arise from working at a heavily policed border checkpoint in a fictional Eastern European country. In fact, *Papers, Please* has earned a reputation in mainstream discourse as a prime argument for the video game medium's contested status as a 'legitimate' art form, with Naomi Alderman claiming in a 2015 *Guardian* column that "it's hard to imagine how you could opine on the future of literature without having played […] the sombre and engrossing *Papers, Please*" (par. 7). Similarly, Paul Formosa, Malcolm Ryan, and Dan Staines, in a 2016 paper written from the perspective of game design, laud Pope's indie hit as an "ethically notable" video game (211) that sheds light on the as yet largely untapped potential of morally challenging ludic narratives being told in a systemic rather than a tightly scripted way (see 223).

More specialised engagements with *Papers, Please*, meanwhile, read it as a moral philosophy-infused commentary on contemporary debates surrounding migration and border protection. In a 2019 essay on the ethics of *Papers, Please*, Miguel Sicart, invoking players' readiness to identify with the characters they play in video games, asks, "How does one balance the risk of barring innocent migrants against the threat of terrorism?" and "Do players place their personal, financial well-being above that of their fellow citizens, their state, or those seeking asylum?" ("Ethics" 153). Jess Morrissette, while applying the theory of Weberian bureaucracy in a 2017 discussion of Pope's game, highlights the apparently searing relevance of *Papers, Please* in no uncertain terms: drawing on United Nations statistics of the global population of displaced persons (see par. 5), thus favouring an even more hands-on comparison with the realities of global migration than Sicart, she contends that the game "leverages its repetitious gameplay and bleak narrative to represent a debate that shapes the lives of millions of people around the world on a daily basis" (par. 40). Indeed, "the semiotically enriched mechanics accomplish something that an entire library filled with Weber's writings could never do," namely grant players "an opportunity to essentially break free from the rule-bound iron cage and explore dangerous moral choices in a system that rewards blind obedience" (par. 40).

Thus, what commentators such as Sicart or Morrissette ultimately seem to argue is that *Papers, Please* manages to distil current discourses around border politics into a universally comprehensible ludic framework, in keeping with Sicart's 2014 claim that "[playing] is a way of explaining the world, others, and ourselves" (*Play* 6). However, there is a flaw in conceiving of this particular game in such grandiose, thematically precise

terms. For while *Papers, Please* does work as a 'moral philosophy simulator' – a space where players are encouraged to think through and engage with the abstract moral dilemmas associated with the phenomenon of the enforced geopolitical border – I argue that its alleged 'universalisation' of the border experience is exactly why it is ultimately an unsuitable lens through which to view the topical border crises Pope draws thematic inspiration from (and which seem to be the reason that many critics hail *Papers, Please* as a searing commentary on the here and now). Drawing from current research in Border Studies, it is my argument that the game's conception of the border and the migration discourses that surround it is historical rather than contemporary: for Pope, the border is a mere line of demarcation that separates one geopolitical territory from the other, when it is more accurate to think of it as the dynamic, non-static, multidimensional result of a *bordering* process, which is relevant not just for the geographic boundary line, but also for the entire *borderscape* that adjoins it and which is marked by hybrid cultures, identities, and practices. That the game undertakes a somewhat simplistic framing of the border in this way is noteworthy because, in doing so, it contributes to the popular understanding of borders – it fosters a perceived public 'knowledge'; a *border imaginary*. The fact that *Papers, Please* is widely read as a pointed reflection of current border politics regardless may therefore speak to a desire among the commentariat for these politics to be more theoretical, more philosophical, than they are.

Following a brief explanation of the most salient aspects of the game's story and gameplay as well as an overview over the relevant theory, my discussion will be divided into two main sections: first, I shall read *Papers, Please* as a critical engagement with the basic concept of the geopolitical *border* as a material fact, as a site of conflict between liberal democracies' self-professed anti-exclusionary values and their pragmatic application of exclusionary practices at the border. In a second step, I will explore how the game's universalisation, or 'flattening,' of the in-game border – i.e. its lack of recognition that borders are social products resulting from *bordering* processes – ultimately renders it an untenably abstract portrayal, which in turn calls into the question the validity of the widely disseminated claim that *Papers, Please* is a roundly progressive border narrative.

Border(scape) Politics in Theory and Practice

Opening in November 1982, *Papers, Please* sees the player take charge of
an unnamed protagonist starting a new job – the highly coveted position
of immigration inspector at the East Grestin border checkpoint between
the fictional Eastern Bloc nations of Kolechia and Arstotzka. The latter,
which is also the player-character's home country, has recently ended its
long-standing military hostilities with Kolechia and is starting to readmit
immigration applicants, albeit warily, if not outright reluctantly. The
gameplay is dedicated to managing the influx of Kolechians, Imporians,
Republians, Antegrians, Obristanians, United Federation citizens, as well
as Arstotzkans wishing to return to their native home. In more concrete
terms, this means leafing through stacks of paperwork, official communi-
cation, and labyrinthine protocol to ascertain whether the person stand-
ing in the cramped checkpoint booth is who they claim to be and is in
possession of the necessary documentation. This task is complicated by a
steady increase in the complexity of admission regulations – caused by
terrorist attacks, foreign agents gaining legal entrance, shifts in state
policy, and extraordinary events in foreign nations – as well as the prot-
agonist's struggle to process enough applicants over the course of a day in
order to be able to afford rent, food, heating, and medication for their
family upon returning home in the evening.

   On the surface, *Papers, Please* indeed dramatises the fundamentally
paradoxical, ethically problematic nature of enforced geopolitical borders,
as shall be explored in more detail in the next section. This contested
status of borders is an area of debate that is of particular import in the
context of the Cold War and its aftermath, because, as Anton A. Kireev
writes in his chapter on the state border in a 2015 introductory volume on
Border Studies he co-edited, this historical moment ushered in a new era
of state borders: "only at the end of the twentieth century," Kireev con-
tends, "has the world in general become a system of sovereign, i.e. at least
formally independent nation-states" (99), in contrast to the prevalence of
satellite, vassal, and puppet states prior to the fall of the Soviet Union and
the bipartite order of competing global superpowers. In this new era of
nation-statehood, borders are often a prominent site of conflict between
the self-professed 'liberal-humanist values' of many immigrant-receiving
countries, such as the United States or European Union member states,
and their more utilitarian and exclusionary impulses and traditions, ac-
cording to which the restriction of immigration and the rigid hierarchisa-
tion of citizens and non-citizens may seem like political and economic

necessities. As Jennifer Bickham Mendez and Nancy A. Naples write in their introduction to *Border Politics: Social Movements, Collective Identities, and Globalization*: "Liberal conceptualizations of citizenship and human rights are founded on a concept of universal personhood equated with an autonomous, property-owning individual who acts within a masculinized public sphere and is assumed to be both male and heterosexual" (18). In other words, critical border discourse challenges the 'Minority World's' application of the Enlightenment values that allegedly underpin its politics, as it lays bare the normative logic inscribed in even the most emphatically egalitarian liberal democracy.[1]

There is, then, an ideological contradiction at the heart of the geopolitical *border* as a material fact, just as there is a contradiction at the heart of the very concept of a demarcating boundary. To invoke Yuri M. Lotman's seminal work on the topic, 1990's *Universe of the Mind*, "The notion of boundary is an ambivalent one: it both separates and unifies. It is always the boundary of something and so belongs to both frontier cultures" (136). Borders are barriers as well as bridges between distinct but inextricable spaces. By way of example, one could point to the fact that the United States and Mexico, in a sense, both 'begin' and 'stop' at the Rio Grande, or at the border checkpoints between the neighbouring cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. The separation has significant legal, political, and social ramifications, ranging from currency and public signage to legal drinking age, police jurisdiction, and, not least, immigration requirements. Yet the influence of either semiotic space is not subject to the same kind of limitation: 'Mexican' (or 'Chihuahuan') and 'American' (or 'Texan') culture clash, blend, evolve, and potentially converge at the border that notionally keeps them apart. As will become clear later on, *Papers, Please* does not consider this attribute to a great extent, thus calling into question its own applicability to ongoing border discourses.

Thus, the cultural phenomenon of the border relies on much more than the mere presence of a geopolitical demarcation, as it is, in the words of Henk van Houtum and Stephen F. Wolfe, "an imagined-and-lived-reality" (132). Borders may be a physical reality, but they are also discursively produced – through "contingent, ongoing processes with dimensions stretching beyond the geopolitical boundary line" (Nyman and Schimanski 5). They are, in keeping with Lotman's models of semiotic space and the semiosphere (see 125), predicated on a shared understanding on

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[1]   'Minority World' is used as a less loaded synonym for 'Global North' here. For a succinct discussion of this terminological issue, see Marc Silver's 2015 article.

what differentiates 'here' from 'there,' on "a shared truth" (van Houtum and Wolfe 132). This necessitates an expansion of the concept of the border from the proverbial 'line in the sand' into the more multidimensional image of the *borderscape*, which encompasses the liminal spaces adjoining the line as well. Many terms have been coined in order to give expression to this reality of interactional border-drawing (see Nyman and Schimanski 5), with the most salient and useful one, especially to the discussion at hand, being that of *bordering*: illustrating the dynamism at play in the borderscape (see Newman 172), it describes "a continual space-fixing process" that, through social and cultural practice, keeps a border intact and discursively meaningful (van Houtum and Wolfe 132). This expanded definition, too, contrasts with Pope's game, whose dramatisation of a hard border, as I shall illustrate in due course, does not entertain the possibility of an overlapping Arstotzkan-Kolechian borderscape culture.

It must be noted that, being a work of art, *Papers, Please* of course does not have an obligation to accurately reflect contemporary geopolitics in this way. Its rather simplistic notion of borders is nevertheless noteworthy because, as a work of art, it also plays an active role in the bordering process, in suffusing the border space with cultural meaning, in creating so-called *border imaginaries* that ultimately help shape the popular understanding of borders and border-crossings (see Schimanski and Wolfe 150). After all, as Wolfe and Mireille Rosello argue, "The social and institutional practices that manage (inter)national and regional borders involve or rely on cultural productions" (6): the reality of the border(scape) influences the art that thematises the border(scape), which in turn produces a warped collective 'knowledge' of what the border(scape) is and what happens there – a knowledge that eventually finds its way back to the border(scape) in the form of political and social practice. "The signifying practices of the border," Rosello and Wolfe contend, "are not created passively or all at once but take place over time and are often over-written and reinterpreted by creator and audience alike" (6). *Papers, Please*, then, is embedded within a larger process of meaning-making that is significant on the level of both aesthetics and politics, as border policy, particularly in liberal democracies, is subject to public sentiment and popular notions widely accepted as true.

Thus, what I hope to demonstrate in the following is that Pope's ludic framework is very much cognisant of the contradiction at the heart of liberal-democratic border policy – that the *border* as a material reality is effectively antithetical to the Minority World's supposedly anti-exclusionary ideology. However, *Papers, Please*, as a work that contributes to ex-

isting *border imaginaries*, is content to leave it at that: its border is a 'line in the sand,' a barrier to be crossed or bounced off of, rather than a result of *bordering* processes – rather than a membrane that both separates and connects, that brings into being a borderscape that is marked by overlap, interconnectedness, and liminality.

The Physical Border as an Ethical Dilemma

With the help of Bickham Mendez and Naples, I have already outlined how the concept of the enforced border effectively highlights a conflict at the heart of liberal notions of statehood and citizenship. Indeed, Pope's game does recreate this tension between liberalism in theory and practice, between hard borders as an ethical problem and a stabilising force ensuring the continued cohesion of the state. Although Arstotzka is an ostensibly totalitarian, stereotypically 'dystopian' setting – the specifics of which will be under discussion later – its draconian border regime is not depicted as being entirely frivolous. On the one hand, in the context of the narrative, Arstotzka appears to be a desirable enough migrant destination, judging from the never-shortening queue in front of the inspector's booth and the steady stream of would-be immigrants brandishing work permits. On the other hand, the checkpoint also becomes the site of multiple terrorist attacks over the course of the game, committed by people the player-character has carefully vetted and assiduously processed only moments before. This reflects the ethical grey area that is the geopolitical border: because of the protagonist's limited viewpoint as an expendable cog in the vast Arstotzkan state machine, "[p]layers never know whether an action is 'good' or 'evil' or what long-term consequences their choices might have," thus finding themselves unable to make informed, 'morally right' decisions. "A player might commiserate with an innocent-looking man who begs to enter the country to visit a dying mother only to learn afterward that the man was a murderer" (Sicart, "Ethics" 151). If one accepts the reality, severity, and urgency of such dangers – dangers that play a significant part in the narrative progression of *Papers, Please* – one might even be inclined to accept the increasingly arcane paperwork requirements, and perhaps even the intrusive full-body scanner, the tranquilliser gun, or the sniper rifle introduced at later points in the story, as adequate preventive procedures. Indeed, because one does not have access to a more encompassing view of the political situation in and around Arstotzka, let alone any means of gaining further insight into the history

or psychology of the people one processes, one has little choice but to acquiesce to the demands of one's unseen superiors.

At the same time, however, it is difficult not to draw parallels between Arstotzka tightening its immigration controls in response to a violent incident at the border and the overzealous, often at least latently racist border-policing measures taken by the United States and many European countries after the traumatic attacks of 9/11 in the U.S., 11M in Madrid, and 7/7 in London (see Bickham Mendez and Naples 8). In part, this occurs through the game's re-enactment of the somewhat paradoxical evolution of borders in the age of digital connectedness and globalised economic structures. Bickham Mendez and Naples point out that "[g]lobalization has involved integration and interconnection, but also fragmentation and particularization" (7); so "the 'debordering' of economies coexists with 'rebordering' in the form of the reenforcement of racial-ethnic boundaries and the reterritorialization of nation-states through newly configured forms of governmentality, national security initiatives, and intensified surveillance of populations" (8). In *Papers, Please*, this is reflected in the opening of the Arstotzkan economy to migrant workers from formerly hostile territories and the simultaneous deployment of drastic, nationality-based efforts to protect the border and the state from undesirable interlopers – efforts which the player-character is very much at the centre of.

More specifically, however, Pope's game also dramatises the process of dehumanisation at work in the media landscape, political rhetoric, and targeted exclusionary border policy of the War on Terror era. Following the real-world terrorist attacks mentioned above, "ethnic minorities associated with Islam in most Western countries […] experienced increased negative attention from the media, police and security forces, and indeed from agitated citizenry" (Poynting and Perry 151). In the United States, from where Lucas Pope hails, this climate of fear was used to legitimise not only the weakening of certain civil rights, particularly those of Muslims (see Alsultany 162), but also the Iraq War, whose justification was famously predicated on exceedingly dubious intelligence (see Kessler par. 13). The Arstotzkan equivalent to this phenomenon in public discourse is the way in which the game's protagonist receives information about the world they inhabit and try to survive in. Harking back to Pope's 2012 browser game *The Republia Times*, in which players take on the role of a newspaper editor who must manipulate news stories in an authoritarian government's favour, *Papers, Please* prominently features newspaper headlines conveying 'the official version' of events happening at the border and elsewhere. It is here that attacks are framed as terrorist acts com-

mitted by foreigners working for hostile powers. It is here that the Arstotzkan economy is characterised as a booming marvel attracting workers from all over the geopolitical region. It is here that one learns that certain neighbouring countries' public infrastructures appear to be failing, that foreign governments are insidiously staging economic block-ades, that "Kolechians are crazy." Given the dystopian atmosphere of the game, this 'official version' naturally invites scepticism regarding the veracity of such reports. Yet, players ultimately have little choice but to modify their actions in accordance with this framing of the world, as the game's incentive structure "trains players to dehumanize the travellers they process" (Formosa et al. 215), to behave as the xenophobic state me-dia demands, to replace notions of individuality and nuanced differenti-ation with a flattened-out belief in collective guilt by (national) associ-ation.

Breaching admission protocol either inadvertently or deliberately, such as by denying entry to a 'deserving' person or approving an immig-ration application in spite of missing or faulty paperwork, results in writ-ten warnings. If one bends the rules too many times in a day, one is sub-ject to financial penalties. Should the offences accumulate beyond an ac-ceptable point, the player-character is dismissed and arrested, which ends the game prematurely. In addition, because one is paid daily, based on the number of applicants processed on a given day, and because part of the playing challenge is to efficiently invest one's sparse, usually insufficient income in rent, food, heating, and medication according to the protagon-ist's family's needs, the game effectively asks the player to privilege quick, decisive, robotically precise action over pondering the nuances and ramifications of individual decisions. As a result, the more one succeeds in mentally reducing applicants to dehumanised clusters of analysable data hiding potentially incriminating details, the more one is rewarded by the game.

Through this knowing incentivisation of dehumanising migrants, as well as through its depiction of the border as a site of conflict between 'liberal-humanist values' and normative liberal notions of statehood and citizenship, it becomes clear that *Papers, Please* explicitly operates in the delicate liminal space that is the policed geopolitical border after the fall of the Iron Curtain. By making terrorist attacks by (ostensibly) foreign agitators a key feature of the game's narrative progression, Pope acknow-ledges that, at least in certain contexts, there may be a case for enforced national boundaries as an instrument of safeguarding a nation-state's sta-bility. However, because this acknowledgment is set against a signally

dystopian backdrop, players are also encouraged to question the ethics of such measures; just as they are invited to be doubtful about the accuracy of the state-sanctioned information they are given – even though they must ultimately still follow it in order to successfully play the game.[2] In short, the implied 'ideal' player of *Papers, Please* – most likely a person in their 20s or 30s, living in an immigrant-receiving country in the Minority World – is constantly challenged to square their own 'liberal-humanist values' with the oppressive demands and needs of the Arstotzkan border. They are confronted with the moral dilemma of navigating the line between (possibly) necessity-driven governance and dictatorial government overreach, between illegal moral principle (such as helping 'undeserving' immigration applicants) and legal cruelty (such as making use of the sniper rifle), between wanting to 'do good' and ensuring the protagonist's own personal and familial survival.

The Abstracted Border

Aside from this engagement with the border as a geographic and political fact, however, the game's feasibility as a reflection of contemporary border issues is much more limited, as Pope conceives of the border(scape) as little more than a line of demarcation, rather than as a dynamic, interactionally produced space. Indeed, beyond these theoretical, broadly philosophical invocations of the ethical dilemmas and moral quandaries associated with the post-Cold War border, *Papers, Please* is not a particularly helpful lens through which to view border discourse in the twenty-first century. In part, this is due to the fictionalised period setting, which, in trying unsuccessfully to circumnavigate ideological specificity, maybe somewhat inadvertently presents outdated geopolitical realities. In a 2014 interview with *VG247*'s Johnny Cullen, Pope outlined one of the fundamental concerns of his vision of Arstotzka and its Eastern Bloc-inspired environs:

> [T]he game never ever uses the word "comrade." When I hired people to localize the game, I gave them specific instructions not to use the word "comrade" or its translated equivalent. That's because, to me, it's richer

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2   *Papers, Please* admittedly does not lock the player in the role of authoritarian collaborator, as one of the game's 20 possible endings is the successful overthrow of the Arstotzkan regime at the hands of the shadowy EZIC organisation, whom the player can aid (or hinder) in their subversive efforts.

that it's not specifically anything. If you use the word comrade, it's obvi-
ously Soviet Russian people talking. And to me, that would have hurt it a
bit. (Pope, qtd. in Cullen par. 41)

The problem with such protestations is that the attempt at universalising
the East Grestin border checkpoint between Arstotzka and Kolechia ulti-
mately falls short, because the game nevertheless seems to recall the
rather stereotypical portrayals of 'Communist Russia' that abounded in
Cold War–era American popular culture and have persisted in one way or
another even after the fall of the Soviet Union.

   This is already visible in the game's very premise, as both the wintry
1980s setting and the fact that the protagonist is given the immigration
inspector's job through the "October labor lottery" evoke popular 'Soviet'
images from the Western imaginary – from the allegedly anti-meritocratic
Communist ethos to the perennially frozen 'Mother Russia,' glimpsed in
Audre Lorde's "Notes from a Trip to Russia" (see 17) and Sylvester Stal-
lone's *Rocky IV* alike. *Papers, Please*'s general aesthetics follow suit: the
title card features blocky letters in a mock-brutalist style, with the capital
*E*s looking like reversed *3*s and the capital *S*s looking like reversed *Z*s,
which calls to mind the long-standing Western practice of using letter
reversals and 'false friend' homoglyphs to create Faux Cyrillic typo-
graphy in an attempt to mimic Russian (see Caudle 123). Similarly, the
labour lottery logo, which appears at the start of the game, depicts the
black silhouette of a hand clutching a hammer against a red-and-orange
background – an image rife with socialist connotations: the nod to the
hammer-and-sickle symbol and the use of red and a darkish shade of yel-
low echo a number of Communist-era state flags, both past (U.S.S.R.,
People's Republic of the Congo) and present (China, Vietnam, Angola).
Finally, both the level design and accompanying music appear to be
strongly influenced by popular vistas of Russia during the Cold War. The
game's synthesised main theme, a military marching track identified as
the Arstotzkan national anthem, mixes monotonous drum beats (which are
actually generated by bass saxhorns) with pizzicato strings that are remin-
iscent of the emblematic sound of the balalaika, resulting in a soundscape
that is eminently comparable to previous iterations of 'Soviet' music, en-
countered in media texts as diverse as John McTiernan's 1990 spy thriller
The Hunt for Red October (Basil Poledouris, "Hymn to Red October")
and the 1993 *Simpsons* episode "Krusty Gets Kancelled" and its brief
spoof of Eastern European animation, entitled "Worker and Parasite."
Meanwhile, the view from inside the inspector's booth, where the vast
majority of the game takes place, consists of the protagonist's own desk,

which is strewn with papers and equipped with official stamps, tapping into clichés concerning Communist bureaucracies; the processing space, which is dominated by shades of brown and dingy linoleum green, evoking the image of cheap, 'depressing' Eastern Bloc building practices; as well as a bird's-eye view of the East Grestin border checkpoint: located in the upper third of the game's main level screen, the scene is one of brutalist dilapidation, all cracked grey concrete and faded chalk marks, while outside the inspector's booth, there is a never-shortening line of black-silhouetted immigration applicants, seemingly mirroring the infamously iconic breadlines generally associated with the failure of Communist states' planned economies (see Burns par. 8).

Considering these aspects of *Papers, Please*, Pope's decision to excise the word "comrade" from the game ultimately does very little to dissuade people from reading the setting as "Soviet Russian," calling into doubt his claim that the game takes place in an anonymised geo-historical vacuum. Indeed, the game is still very much rooted in a historical period of border discourse, one which predates what Kireev identifies as the point at which sovereign nation-statehood became the global norm. The borders of the Eastern Bloc – even the fiercely contested one imagined by Pope, which does not seem to have the equivalent of a Warsaw Pact in place – are not those between the U.S. and Mexico, between Turkey and Syria, between the European Union and European non-member states, to name just a few of the geopolitical fault lines that constitute the thematic backdrop to *Papers, Please*. There are no hybrid cultures, no cross-border identities, no visible practices of bordering other than the political and militaristic land claims expressed by totalitarian Arstotzka's central command. The setting of Pope's game is, in short, largely divorced from the laws and mechanisms of global interconnectedness and globalised economic flows, which are foundational to twenty-first-century border politics. The world into which *Papers, Please* was released was, and is, one of transnational movements and hybrid identities, of hyper-mobile populations crossing comparatively permeable borders, of labour being one of the most economically and demographically significant export goods – a world where immigrant-receiving countries "contend with a set of irreconcilable issues stemming from the growing demand for inexpensive labor combined with the perceived threat that new immigrants pose to the social and cultural cohesion of nations, fueling contests over political identities and social membership" (Bickham Mendez and Naples 6).

Although *Papers, Please* invokes this latter conflict at least in theory, as has been discussed previously, the border between Arstotzka and Kole-

chia, which is historically situated yet presented as a quasi-universal abstraction, is missing many of the key sites of human conflict associated with modern discourses of bordering processes, border-crossings, and (im)migration. As Kireev writes, "Like many other social systems, state borders exist not only at the level of explicit, public and documented manifestations, but in an informal latent level" (103). Bickham Mendez and Naples use even more concrete terms: "the militarization and policing of borders is interwoven with and reinforces hierarchies of gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and race" (13). In some marginal cases, Pope's game toys with this idea: for example, at one point, the player-character has the option to subject a person named Sonya Hawk, who is presenting as a woman in terms of name, clothing, and hairstyle, to a full-body scan because her sex is given as male on her passport. Doing so shows that, in the logic of the game's abstract style of displaying naked bodies, Sonya Hawk has a penis, revealing that she is, evidently, transgender.

Elsewhere, the way in which policed borders reinforce hierarchies of class – and, in addition, the classification of neurodivergent people as fundamentally undesirable individuals – is illustrated through a recurring character identified as Jorji Costava. A bumbling would-be con man in his 50s, whose status as a comic relief character is underscored by his being named after the doltish *Seinfeld* character George Costanza, Jorji makes his first appearance on the protagonist's third day of work: entering the inspector's booth without any documentation, he claims, "Arstotzka so great, passport not required," before leaving when asked any further questions. In the following, he intermittently returns, first holding a cheap imitation passport he has obviously drawn himself, then holding a seemingly valid passport but lacking an additional entry permit, and later trying to smuggle contraband into Arstotzka. In spite of all the rejection and legal punishment his stunts lead to, however, he remains a vocal supporter of the Arstotzkan regime, regularly uttering phrases like, "Glory to Arstotzka!" or "Arstotzka the best." While this enthusiasm is certainly to be taken with a grain of salt, given that Jorji seems to be trying everything to ingratiate himself to the player-character, his crudely naïve, consistently optimistic attempts at crossing the border do suggest that there is at least a degree of sincerity to his protestations. And yet, for all his eagerness, he is thwarted by the border system: not only does he appear to have no legal means of obtaining the proper documentation, possibly as a result of his confused mental state; he, unlike other immigration hopefuls one encounters, also makes no attempt to bribe the protagonist before his eventual successful entry, suggesting that he lacks the financial means to

do so. When he finally does manage to scrape together all the necessary paperwork to cross the border into Arstotzka, on the eleventh day of in-game time, the feat is revealed to be of a financial nature: "Look at all good papers," he proudly tells the player-character. "Was not easy. Or cheap! Haha!" Promises of patriotic loyalty did not do the trick for Jorji, and his unconventional behaviour seems to have actively held him back in his quest to immigrate. Only after he invokes the power of money, rising above his class, so to speak, does he gain the right to traverse the policed border.

However, by virtue of being set in an imagined, broadly stereotypical Eastern Europe of the 1980s, *Papers, Please* is also devoid of two essential discursive fields relating to current debates about migration and (re)bordering – religion and race. Bickham Mendez and Naples point out that global migration patterns in the 2010s have prompted an American, a European, and also an Australian "backlash against multiculturalism and the perceived cultural, economic, and social threat posed by international migration," as well as a predominantly Western European trend of even mainstream right-of-centre political parties pursuing "anti-Islam and closed-border platforms" (8). Pope's game, conversely, does not mention religion at all, as the practice is presumably outlawed in authoritarian Arstotzka and its similarly Communist-coded neighbour states. Moreover, in keeping with its stylised setting, *Papers, Please* also reduces 'ethnic' differences to differences in fictional nationalities: the most important signifier of otherness is whether an immigration applicant hails from Kolechia, the formerly hostile regime to the north and west of Arstotzka. Kolechian travellers are, for the most part of the game, subject to the most intrusive, most dehumanising of checks; more so than those with passports issued in Obristan, Antegria, Republia, Impor, or the United Federation; and significantly more so than those with Arstotzkan papers (at least initially). After the protagonist's first day on the job, where only Arstotzkan applicants with acceptable documentation are allowed to enter the country, the country gradually opens its gates to more and more immigrants. But following a suicide bombing on the sixth day, committed by a Kolechian entrant with valid papers, all Kolechians are henceforth required to undergo a body search. On day 19, however, even this distinction is flattened out somewhat as, at the beginning of that day, the daily briefing bulletin instructs the player-character to deny entry to all Imporian applicants – an Arstotzkan act of retaliation against the trade sanctions introduced by the government of Impor. In the end, this system of internally coherent, citizenship-based privilege breaks down entirely: first, fol-

lowing the temporary barring of Imporian entrants, citizens of the United Federation are also kept from crossing the border due to a polio outbreak in the Federation on day 25. Not long after, on day 28, the situation escalates into outright police state totalitarianism, when the protagonist is instructed to confiscate all Arstotzkan passports, signalling measures to stop cross-border movements altogether, no matter the applicant's nationality or direction of travel. Differences in fictional nationality, then, are highly significant to the world and gameplay of *Papers, Please*, but they are also, as has been demonstrated, anything but stable indicators of privilege.

Moreover, since there are no distinctive and consistent visual cues separating said nationalities, apart from the mildly differing design of the official documentation applicants pass over the inspection booth counter, it is virtually impossible for the game to activate racial or xenophobic biases in the real-world player's decision-making. The characters the protagonist interacts with are, without fail, presented in a style that recalls generic animated depictions of white people, with most of them, regardless of fictional nationality, being given stereotypically 'Eastern European' clothes or hairstyles, and some government officials' character design recalling popular images of military officers from Imperial or Nazi Germany. Likewise, skin colour, to the extent that it is even a noteworthy presence in the game, has no connection to individuals' places of origin, let alone the material reality outside of Pope's game world: generated randomly, people's skins are animated in stylised hues of blue, yellow, green, and beige. In short, skin colour is simply not a factor in *Papers, Please*. This stands in stark contrast to public discourses of migration and bordering processes, where racially motivated xenophobia is effectively ubiquitous: one does not have to look further than the numerous white nationalism-adjacent statements from long-term Republican Congressman Steve King, some of which predate the release of Pope's game (see Ta); former U.S. President Donald Trump's infamous take on "shithole countries" (Vitali et al. par. 1); or the many examples of European politicians and government officials making use of racist anti-immigrant rhetoric (see Marlowe par. 2; de La Baume par. 3; Falkenbach 88). Functionally excising questions of race and ethnicity in a discursive context such as this seems a curious omission on the part of a game concerned with the ethics of immigration policy and practice. Indeed, it points to *Papers, Please* being a more suitable contribution to the canon of philosophical games – defined by Lars Konzack as games that "express and present philosophical ideas in a game system" (34) – than to that of contemporary migration and border narratives.

In light of this apparent unsuitability, it is pertinent to consider why *Papers, Please* has garnered such thematic attention in the first place. Its success in dramatising some of the ethical concerns underlying the concept of policed geopolitical borders means that it may well "change your attitude the next time you're in line at the airport," as Simon Parkin would have it. However, the attempt to interpret this success as an indication that the game also functions as an intricate commentary on twenty-first-century border issues is undercut by Pope's failure to sufficiently disentangle *Papers, Please* from its aesthetic and thematic Cold War trappings. Indeed, the game displays an outdated, even somewhat limited understanding of the constitution and (tenuous) fixation of borders – one that is situated in a historical context that, following Kireev, predates the current mechanisms governing geopolitical boundaries. As a result of this simplistic view, which pays no mind to the cultural and political productivity of cross-border contacts, or to the active bordering processes occurring in the borderscape, *Papers, Please* inadvertently promotes an exclusionary view of the border, buying into the constrictive cultural imaginary of it as a fixed 'line in the sand' separating 'here' and 'there,' 'us' and 'them.' Considering this, it seems highly notable that the game has nonetheless garnered a reputation for being a key border and migration text of the 2010s, in spite of its relative lack of engagement with and specificity regarding contemporary border and migration discourses. Indeed, the fact that it has inspired such enthusiastic responses may speak to an altogether different impulse on the part of its audience, or at least the commentariat. In framing a heavily abstracted, severely pared-down depiction of a fictionalised border as a way of understanding the dynamics at play at, say, the U.S.–Mexico border in the mid-2010s, one engages in an awkward but perhaps soothingly cathartic act of simplification, in the fortification of a self-exonerating liberal border imaginary: to deem *Papers, Please* a searing reckoning with present-day border politics is to naïvely assume that current debates surrounding immigration are ultimately a question of ethical theory rather than socio-political practice.

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Assessing How Attitudes to Migration in Social Media Complement Public Attitudes Found in Opinion Surveys

This article compares migration discourses in traditional opinion surveys and social media in a cross-country perspective among five English-speaking countries. Despite the extensive survey research on migration, social media discussions on migration remain understudied, and little is known about its potential complementarity to survey findings. On the basis of automated content analysis, we present insights into the salience of and sentiment about migration by comparing both data sources. We also investigate which societal factors and framing of migration influence the salience of social media discussions. We find support that, overall, there is a good correlation between salience of and sentiment toward migration, both in surveys and on social media. We also demonstrate that societal factors significantly impact the salience of migration online. The observed dynamics may nevertheless differ depending on the sample of users, thus demonstrating the different incentives that motivate users to engage with the migration topic online. Methodologically, our contribution also demonstrates the necessity to reflect on the impact of different data collection strategies on the obtained findings.

Keywords: migration; opinion survey; social media; framing; content analysis

1 Introduction

Migration has been dominating media and political discourse worldwide, especially with respect to the European refugee crisis since 2011 and Trump's 'build the wall' campaign in 2016. Previous studies have mapped migration discourses in traditional media (Vliegenthart & Boomgaarden), conventional channels of party communication (Charteris-Black), and politicians' social media accounts (Heidenreich et al.; Combei et al.).

However, studies comparing different countries and different data sources on migration remain scarce (Eberl et al.).

The proposed study investigates the extent to which migration discourses on social media can provide a complementary understanding of attitudes to migration in traditional opinion surveys. It also investigates what factors explain the prevalence of migration discussions on social media, especially in relation to societal factors (for example, migration integration policies and elite polarisation on the topic), public attitudes (such as acceptance of migration and migrants), and framings of migrants (for instance, generic framing of policy issues and specific depiction of migrants). Regarding framing, we draw from the definition of Entman, who suggests that framing is inherently part of communication and implies choosing "a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation" (164), as well as from Matthes and Kohring in our choice of a quantitative approach. We distinguish between generic frames, which offer a systematic platform for comparison across frames, and issue-specific frames, which allow for "great specificity and detail" (de Vreese, Peter, & Semetko 108). In other words, whereas issue-specific frames emphasise unique ways to contextualise a topic (for example, migrants as victims or criminals), generic frames promote a particular discourse (for instance economic or cultural) that has obvious relevance to a bigger set of topics within which the unique topic (e.g. migration) is located (Brüggemann & D'Angelo).

To date, opinion surveys remain the main way to assess public attention and attitudes towards migration and its different societal dimensions. However, social media also offer opportunities for spontaneous discussions of these topics, without the intervention of pre-defined survey interests. Although Twitter users are not representative of national populations (Ceron), they form a politically interested audience whose voices about migration are likely to interact with the current public debate. Given the important impact of social media on political views and outcomes (Zhuravskaya et al. 429), it is critical to examine whether social media serve as a reflection of or a substitute to broader public attitudes. More specifically, previous studies have demonstrated the potential influence of anti-immigration social media groups in shaping broader audiences' migration-related attitudes (Törnberg & Wahlström). However, beside these most active user groups, we still know little about what influences the general salience and sentiment found in online discussions about migration.

Our study analyses migration discourses on the Twitter accounts of followers of major political accounts across 5 English-speaking countries (United States, Britain, Ireland, New Zealand and Australia) and compares the obtained results to attitudes found in opinion surveys. In a first step, overall comparisons are conducted, both in terms of issue salience and tonality. For instance, we display insights into the extent to which the salience of online migration discussions on social media is congruent with the perceived importance of migration measured in surveys in the selected countries. Furthermore, we correlate the online sentiment about migration with a sample of relevant attitudinal dimensions inspired from survey research. In a second step, we strive to disentangle the impacts of societal factors and public opinion on the salience of online messages about migration. To address these research interests, we complement several data sources to extract migration-related opinions, most notably social media messages and opinion survey responses.

Another contribution of the present study is to build a bridge between the fields of linguistics – using computational linguistic methods – and cultural studies. Michel et al. argue that their approach of analysing correlations between lexical frequency and time (e.g. frequency peaks), opens up an entirely new field of research, which they call *culturomics*.

> [T]his approach can provide insights about fields as diverse as lexicography, the evolution of grammar, collective memory, the adoption of technology, the pursuit of fame, censorship, and historical epidemiology. Culturomics extends the boundaries of rigorous quantitative inquiry to a wide array of new phenomena spanning the social sciences and the humanities. (1)

We use more advanced computational approaches (supervised classification, see Section 3), which allow us to focus on relevant (generic and specific) framings of migration in a cross-country perspective. Importantly, we also assess how different tweet collection strategies impact similarities between social media and survey attitudinal distributions. The proposed methodology – based on automated content analyses and the linking between social media and surveys – can be extended to other countries and to other research arenas where comparison between data sources is valuable to provide a more nuanced view of a phenomenon.

2 Study Background

2.1 *Salience of Migration and Attitudes Towards It*

There are notable global surveys that include questions on immigration and immigrants, such as the *Gallup World Poll*, the *International Social Survey Program*, the *World Values Survey*, and the *Ipsos Global Trends Survey*. All cover a large cross-section of countries and contain multiple waves in which the same general questions are asked to respondents. Specific question items also serve to build global trend indicators, such as Gallup's *Migrant Acceptance Index*. Surveys of public attitudes toward immigration have shown that the salience of immigration as an issue has varied wildly over time (Dempster, Leach & Hargrave 25). In particular, the salience of immigration has risen in Europe over the last decade. Regardless of the salience, it is also notable that attitudes toward immigration actually improved in most European countries (Gonzalez-Barrera & Connor).

Beyond survey research, other studies found that public attitudes on immigration are increasingly expressed online, especially in the discursive construction of immigrants and refugees (Ekman 606). Yet, compared to nationally representative samples of respondents, social media users are usually unrepresentative of national populations (Ceron). Furthermore, social media platforms are likely to be polarising spaces (Krasodomski-Jones), thereby, starkly contrasting with the calibrated setting of opinion surveys. For these reasons, the online debate on immigration does not necessarily reflect public opinion but rather creates a space which amplifies the strongest views (Rutter & Carter 35). For instance, posts that are no longer socially acceptable in a face-to-face conversation and that contain prejudiced and hateful comments on immigration can reach a wide audience through social media (Rutter & Carter 165). As a result, the connection between social media messages and public opinion measures on the migration debate remains generally hard to disentangle.

On the one hand, it is complicated to evaluate the impact of social media coverage of immigration on how the broader public views immigrants and immigration. This is notably due to the fact that it is difficult to discern whether people learn their political views from social media pages (or threads), or whether they choose to consult social media pages that reflect their existing political views.

On the other hand, it is also unclear how public opinion and contextual factors affect the salience of immigration debates on social media. This

is because it generally remains unclear whether social media serve to amplify or substitute public opinion (see similar discussion about elite communication by Castanho Silva & Proksch) and these platforms may have a similar amplification effect as news media (Gilardi et al. 42). According to the substitution logic, social media would just serve as another channel for people to express similar attitudes as during face-to-face interactions. Aggregated patterns of social media discussions should thus reflect similar trends found in surveys, despite the non-representativity of social media users. With respect to the amplifier logic, social media present tools for more personalised, and perhaps also more polarised, messages which may not be expressed in other arenas, thus circumventing the mainstream debate. Therefore, aggregated patterns of social media discussions should display quite a different distribution than opinion surveys.

Despite their inherent unrepresentativeness, social media data can provide statistics to make informed policy and programme decisions (Japec et al. 846). The topic of migration is no exception here. Drawing from these premises, research has been undertaken to better understand whether social media data can produce distributions of attitudes and salience similar to those from survey data. Concerning attitudes, Amaya et al. take a critical view: with respect to the salience of discussions, the broad correlation between frequency and opinion is generally accepted (173). Roberts and Wanta, for instance, investigate the correlation between media coverage and private electronic conversations. Ghanem states that a strong correlation has been recognised, and that salience may be the best predictor:

> Agenda-setting studies have focused on how frequently an issue is mentioned in the media. The frequency with which a topic is mentioned probably has a more powerful influence than any particular framing mechanism (Ghanem 12)

In this article, we aim to better understand the congruence between surveys and social media messages on the sentiment and salience of immigration. We therefore raise two overarching research hypotheses. First, we hypothesise that the salience of migration online correlates with the extent to which migration is perceived as an important concern in representative opinion surveys. Second, we hypothesise that the tonality related to migration online correlates with the overall satisfaction toward migration found in representative opinion surveys. We answer these two hypotheses relying on correlations comparing salience and support towards migration

between different groups of Twitter users and responses from survey respondents.

2.2 *Impact of Contextual and Political Factors on the Salience of Migration-Related Tweets*

In connection to real-world events, several factors can explain variation in the salience of social media messages referring to migration. For instance, salience can be influenced by contextual factors, such as the type of institutional response to migration related issues (e.g. integration policies). It can also be linked to political factors, such as the degree of party polarisation with respect to the topic of migration.

Overall, surveys demonstrate that salience increases when immigration is perceived as problematic and decreases when it is perceived as being under control (see Blinder & Richards). As such, the institutional capacities to deal with migration related issues can decisively impact the salience of migration debates. For instance, national and local governments are responsible for integration policies which help facilitate immigrants becoming part of the host country (such as through schools, workplaces, and communities). The *Migrant Integration Policy Index*[2] is a tool dedicated to account for policies undertaken to integrate migrants in host countries.

Demonstrating the connection between political rhetoric and public attitudes to migration is a more complicated task. However, whereas the ability of politicians to directly influence attitudes through their rhetoric is unclear, the political rhetoric has a clearer influence over the salience of an issue (Hatton 19). For instance, the anti-immigration rhetoric has the potential to make "attitudes towards immigration more consequential for voting behaviour" (Rooduijn par. 7).

In this article, we aim to better understand how institutional settings (namely, the institutional responsiveness to migration) and the degree of elite polarisation impact the salience of social media messages about migration. We therefore add two further overarching research hypotheses. Our third hypothesis states that the salience of tweets related to migration is more pronounced when societal and political factors (migrant integration policy and elite polarisation) are unfavourable to migrants and immigration. Our fourth hypothesis suggests that the salience of tweets re-

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[2]   The *Migrant Integration Policy Index* can be found at www.mipex.eu/.

lated to migration is correlated with lower levels of public acceptance of migration. We aim to address these hypotheses relying on multivariate regression.

2.3 *Impact of Specific and Generic Frames on the Salience of Migration-Related Tweets*

Immigration debates have been increasingly marked by a rhetoric of emergency and threat (for example, calls for stricter policing of borders and the limitation of mobility). From a survey perspective, Dempster, Leach and Hargrave have noticed important implications for the interpretation of opinion data on migration. In particular, the authors note inherent contradictions in the messages received from these surveys as people can seemingly hold two opposite views. For instance, within the same survey, people can hold the opinion that immigrants both take jobs and create jobs (14). Duffy (207) suggests this inherent contradiction may be due to the framing of the question, or to the level at which respondents prioritise the impacts of migration (namely, locally, nationally, or internationally).

Despite being 'gold-standard' for measuring public opinion, surveys can also test a limited and pre-defined set of dimensions, and are vulnerable to changes in methodologies and timing (Crawley, 2005). Compared to social media messages which explicitly refer to the perceived important (or problematic) aspect of migration, it is often difficult to know what respondents are thinking about when they answer a survey question. In surveys, the wording of a question is of utmost importance as it should be unambiguous and unequivocal.

That said, survey data are a valuable barometer of public attitudes, especially when consistent over time and between waves. Survey data are also useful for calibration purposes with other types of opinion data, such as social media messages, especially when comparing different framings of migration. For instance, surveys have particularly focused on the impacts of migrants and migration, typically assessed in terms of economic, social, and cultural burdens for the country. Yet, it is unknown how these more or less positive assessments of migrants impact the salience of social media discussions about migration.

This generic framing of migration is usually complemented by more specific narratives about migrants in public discussions. For instance, there is some evidence that people adopt elite rhetoric to a certain degree, either negatively (Doherty 57) or positively (Crawley & McMahon 13).

For instance, the anti-immigration rhetoric is at the core of far-right populism (Schwartz et al.), immigrant movements being described as invasions and narratives drawing on the concerns that people may perceive refugees and migrants as a challenge to values and culture, a source of terror and crime, and a threat to living standards, jobs, and public services (ODI & Chatham House 1), which form main frames against which the impact of migration are assessed. Social media have been shown to play a decisive role in the spread of the populist rhetoric, notably anti-immigration (Ernst et al. 18), and also in the depiction of migrants as a threat (Lorenzetti 87).

Several studies have investigated the specific depiction of migrants and asylum seekers (see Milioni & Spyridou; Van Gorp). More recently, O'Regan and Riordan relied on a combination of methods in corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis to explore the representation of refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrants. This research has been essentially applied to the study of news articles, and more rarely to social media messages (de Rosa et al.). A common finding of these studies is that migrants and asylum seekers are mainly described as 'innocent victims' or 'intruders.' Furthermore, while asylum seekers can generate empathy, this is less the case for migrants who are also perceived as 'profiteers.' The depiction of migrants in negative or positive terms has implications on countries' choices to develop exclusion or inclusion policies.

In this article, we aim to better understand what framings of migrants and migration impact the salience of social media messages. We therefore add one last overarching research hypothesis that the salience of tweets related to migration is positively associated with discussions about migrants and migration using a threat related rhetoric. To test this hypothesis we conduct multivariate regression, but we also rely on close-reading of a sample of tweets, as well as on the interpretation of important words related to the generic frames.

3 Data and Methods

3.1 *Twitter Data Collection*

We collected two samples of Twitter users relying on a similar data collection strategy. These two samples differ in the choice of 'seed accounts' from which followers are extracted. For the selected followers, we then collected the last 3'200 tweets (which corresponds to the authorised limit by the Twitter API). We identified tweets related to migration based on the following list of search queries: *".*migration.* | migrant.* | immigrant.* | emigrant.* | foreigner.* | asyl.* | refugee.* | undocumented worker* | guest worker* | foreign worker* | freedom of movement | free movement"*. We then retrieved the followers of these seed accounts (max. 75'000 followers for each of the seed accounts authorised by the Twitter API) and applied filters to keep the most relevant Twitter accounts.[3] For each sample of Twitter followers, we decided to take random samples of 100'000 followers to keep the tweet collection stage reasonable in time and size. We also decided to include only tweets emitted after January 2019 in our final dataset of tweets about migration. The main reason for this is that we wanted to equilibrate the tweets of users with different dates of account creation and tweeting frequency as much as possible.

Concerning the first sample, we identified central media and party accounts for each country of interest (United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand). The distribution of this random sample of followers is given by country in Table 1. The size of the final dataset contains 310,247 tweets from 27,649 unique users. Overall, between 25% to 39% of users tweeted about migration. The overall tweeting frequency about migration in our sample has a mean of 11 and a standard deviation of 34 (with a maximum of 1 and a maximum of 2382).

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[3]   We apply some filters to keep only relevant users in our sample of followers. Notably, we apply the following filters: the user has to provide a minimal description in the user profile field, the user account must have been created before 2020-01-01, the number of emitted tweets must be 'reasonable' (above 5 per year and below 10'000 per year), and the main language of the account must be English.

RANDOM SAMPLE OF TWITTER USERS

	Selected followers	Sample of 100'000 followers	Followers tweeting about migration	Number of tweets
US	98363	14324	5303 (37%)	51219 (ratio: 9.7)
UK	161458	23508	9364 (39%)	106110 (ratio: 11.3)
Ireland	96406	14189	4263 (30%)	45707 (ratio: 10.8)
Australia	174618	25343	6647 (26%)	85556 (ratio: 12.9)
New Zealand	57740	8179	2072 (25%)	21655 (ratio: 10.4)
	588585	**85543**	**27649**	**310247**

INTERESTED TWITTER USERS

	Selected followers	Sample of 100'000 followers	Followers tweeting about migration	Number of tweets
US	12058554	20000	7481 (37%)	88976 (ratio: 14.4)
UK	8515174	20000	7361 (37%)	94535 (ratio: 14.8)
Ireland	1002356	20000	4943 (25%)	53038 (ratio: 12.0)
Australia	1125590	20000	5614 (28%)	83312 (ratio: 16.9)
New Zealand	520743	20000	3567 (18%)	27142 (ratio: 8.4)
	23222417	**100000**	**28966**	**347003**

POLITICIANS

	Selected politicians	Politicians tweeting about migration	Number of tweets
US	873	311 (36%)	30572 (ratio: 98.3)
UK	590	454 (77%)	7291 (ratio: 16.1)
Ireland	150	87 (58%)	825 (ratio: 9.5)
Australia	134	77 (57%)	1057 (ratio: 13.8)
New Zealand	204	37 (18%)	710 (ratio:19.2)
	1951	**966**	**40455**

Table 1. Description of the samples of Twitter followers and politicians

Concerning the second sample, we identified central politicians' accounts for each country. To identify the relevant politicians' accounts, we relied on the Twitter Parliamentarian Database (van Vliet et al.).[4] We selected the politicians who were active in parliament from the year 2019 onward. The distribution of this politically interested sample of followers is given by country in Table 1. The size of the final dataset contains 347,003 tweets from 28,966 unique users. Overall, between 18% and 37% of users tweeted about migration. The overall tweeting frequency about migration in our sample has a mean of 14 and a standard deviation of 43 (with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 2941).

We also give a description of the Twitter sample of the 1,951 identified politicians in Table 1. Among the entire sample of politicians, 966 (50%) tweeted about migration. This left us with a total of 40,455 emitted tweets. The overall tweeting frequency about migration in our sample has a mean of 28 and a standard deviation of 50 (with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 457).

3.2 *Survey Data from Representative National Samples of the Population*

We test our hypotheses 1 and 2 by relying on the comparison between the collected tweets and measurements from opinion surveys. We present the comparisons between Twitter and survey data using visualisations in the form of scatter plots.

Hypothesis 1 centres on the salience of migration. On Twitter, we measure salience as the proportion of sent tweets related to migration by country. In surveys, we rely on the 'most important concern' question item, which asks respondents to mention what they perceive as the most important policy issue facing the country. We use data from the 2019 *Eurobarometer* for the United Kingdom and Ireland, from the 2021 *Survey of US adults* for the United States, and from the 2019 *Roy Morgan* survey for Australia and New Zealand. To measure salience, we rely on the proportion of respondents mentioning migration as the most important concern.

Hypothesis 2 focuses on the sentiment towards migration. On Twitter, we measure sentiment using the *sentimentr R* package (Rinker) which calculates text polarity sentiment in the English language at the sentence

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4   The data can be found here: www.figshare.com/articles/dataset/The_Twitter_
     Parliamentarian_Database/10120685.

level. In surveys, we rely on the combination of question items asking respondents to assess the impacts of migration on cultural, social and economic dimensions. Data from the 2019 *European Social Survey[5]* are used for the United Kingdom and Ireland, while data from the 2019 *World Values Survey[6]* are used for Australia, New Zealand and the United States. To make the survey items most comparable and to account for the degree of positivity toward migration, we sum up the proportion of respondents rating the impact of migration positively on the three mentioned dimensions (cultural, social, and economical).

3.3 *Statistical Model Specifications*

We test our hypotheses 3 to 5 using linear regression modelling. The dependent variable is the logged number of tweets mentioning migration for each Twitter follower. According to our hypotheses, this salience of migration at the user level can be explained by several independent variables.

To test hypothesis 3, we include contextual factors, namely an integration policy index (the aforementioned *Migrant Integration Policy Index*, MIPEX) and a measure of elite polarisation. The MIPEX summarises policy indicators to create a multi-dimensional picture of migrants' opportunities to participate in society. Lower values indicate more restrictive policies whereas higher values indicate more integrative policies. The measure of political polarisation is based on the expert coding of the positiveness toward migration for the political parties within each of our selected countries. The coding is done by the experts from *Manifesto Pro-*

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[5]   The question items are: 'Country's cultural life undermined or enriched by immigrants' (answer scale from 0 to 10, where 0 states that the cultural life is undermined and 10 states that the cultural life is enriched), 'Immigrants make country worse or better place to live' (answer scale from 0 to 10, where 0 states 'worse place to live' and 10 states 'better place to live'), 'Immigration bad or good for country's economy' (answer scale from 0 to 10, where 0 states 'bad for the economy' and 10 states 'good for the economy').

[6]   The question items are: 'Immigration in your country: Strengthens cultural diversity' (answer scale from 1 to 3, where 1 states 'disagree' and 3 states 'agree'), 'Immigration in your country: Leads to social conflict' (answer scale from 1 to 3, where 1 states 'disagree' and 3 states 'agree'), 'Impact of immigrants on the development of the country' (answer scale from 1 to 5, where 1 states 'rather bad' and 5 states 'very good').

ject.[7] For each country, we calculated the level of polarisation by taking the absolute difference between the higher and the lower party value for viewing immigration as positively impacting the national way of life.[8]

To test our hypothesis 4, we include a public opinion measure of migration acceptance, the Gallup's *Migrant Acceptance Index*. The index is based on three questions that Gallup asked in 138 countries in 2016 and in the U.S. and Canada in 2017. The index is a sum of the points across three questions: whether people think migrants living in their country, becoming their neighbours and marrying into their families are good things or bad things. It has a maximum possible score of 9.0 (all three are good things) and a minimum possible score of zero (all three are bad things).

To test our hypothesis 5, we include general and specific framings of migration on Twitter. To classify the tweets along general policy issues, we build a classifier to assign tweets among the following categories: *civil rights*, *culture & identity*, *economy*, *foreign policy*, *law & order*, and *welfare*. These categories have been determined theoretically and inspired from survey research. To extract a sample of emblematic tweets corresponding to these categories in view of training the classification model, we annotated the tweets using the policy issue *Lexicoder* dictionary. After preprocessing (most notably, removal of stop-words, removal of punctuation, lemmatisation, and generation of bigrams), we trained an ensemble model based on Random Forest and Gradient Boosting Machine using the *R* package *h2o* (LeDell et al., 2018). The accuracy of the classifier is shown in Table 2.

We also consider specific frames of migrants in terms of 'victims' and 'criminals' using lists of search queries. The list for 'victim' which we use is ".*victim.* | .*scapegoat.*". The list for 'criminal' reads as ".*criminal.* | .*rapist.* | .*rape.* | .*murder.* | .*illegal.* | .*intruder.* | .*alien.*".

Finally, we also include a number of control variables in our regressions. For instance, we control for users' tweeting frequency because this can be a strong predictor of the number of migration related tweets, since it accounts for users' general level of online activity. We also include user's mean sentiment on immigration.

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[7]   More information can be found at www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu.

[8]   For more information see the codebook: www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu/ down/data/2021a/codebooks/codebook_MPDataset_MPDS2021a.pdf.

Generic frames	Original Lexi-coder categories	Twitter sample of politically interested users				Twitter sample of random users			
		preci-sion	recall	F1	accu-racy	preci-sion	recall	F1	accu-racy
civil rights	civil rights	0.78	0.79	0.79	0.87	0.78	0.67	0.72	0.82
culture & identity	culture, educa-tion, religion	0.72	0.67	0.69	0.81	0.66	0.64	0.65	0.80
economics	labour, macro-economics	0.72	0.70	0.71	0.83	0.72	0.66	0.69	0.81
foreign policy	international affairs, defence	0.76	0.75	0.75	0.86	0.68	0.72	0.70	0.83
law order	crime	0.80	0.84	0.82	0.88	0.77	0.83	0.80	0.87
welfare	healthcare, hous-ing, social wel-fare	0.79	0.78	0.78	0.86	0.67	0.70	0.68	0.81

Table 2.
Accuracy of the classifier for the generic frames in both samples of Twitter users
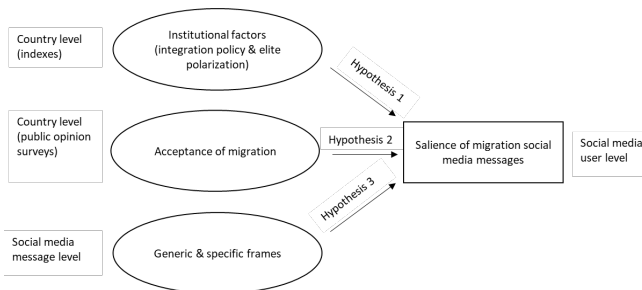
Figure 1.
Conceptual framework summarising the explanatory factors of the salience of migration on Twitter

4 Results

4.1 *Comparing the Salience of and Tonality toward Migration Online and Offline*

The salience of migration as a topic of social media discussion relates to its visibility and can be compared to survey respondents' perceived importance of the topic. Furthermore, the sentiment (or tonality) of social media discussions about migration is important to understand the evaluations of online users as compared to representative samples of the population.
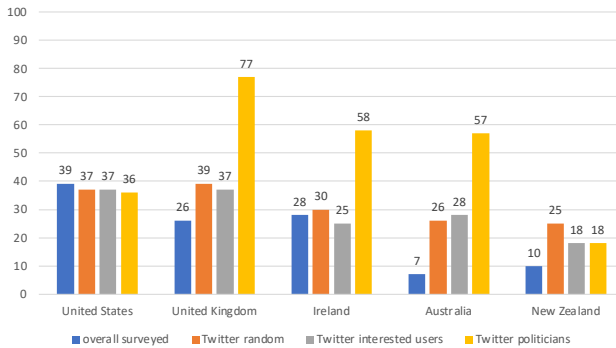
Figure 2. Salience of migration on Twitter for our different samples of users and in public opinion surveys by country

Figure 2 displays the salience of migration related discussion on social media for our different samples of Twitter users (random users, interested users, and politicians) and compares it to the survey distribution related to respondents' perceived importance of migration as a policy concern. The salience is given as a percentage of the number of tweets mentioning migration of the total of the collected tweets of users from each sample. We observe that in a majority of countries (Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom) politicians pay more attention to migration than Twitter users and survey respondents, which is probably related to Brexit in the case of the UK and possibly Ireland, the contested detention policy in Australia. Furthermore, when taking different samples of Twitter users (random and interested users), we end up with similar distributions in

most countries. Pearson correlation between the salience of migration in surveys compared to the different Twitter samples indicate that the correlation is the highest with the random sample of Twitter users (0.81), followed by the sample of interested users (0.67), and politicians (0.16).

Figure 3 displays the correlation between sentiment toward migration on Twitter (for both samples of Twitter users and for politicians) and the percentage of public support for migration in public opinion surveys. The Pearson correlation between the sentiment of migration in surveys compared to the different Twitter samples indicate that the correlation is the highest with the interested sample of Twitter users (0.94), followed by the sample of random users (0.80), and politicians (0.38). The ascent on Figure 3 is much steeper for interested Twitter users than for random Twitter users, thus indicating polarisation and the fact that this is a more indicative user group. The fact that the correlation is much lower from the plot including politicians is particularly due to the outlier behaviour of the politicians from the United Kingdom on Twitter. This can be explained by the fact that the political discourse is much more polarised than in other countries due to discussions surrounding Brexit.
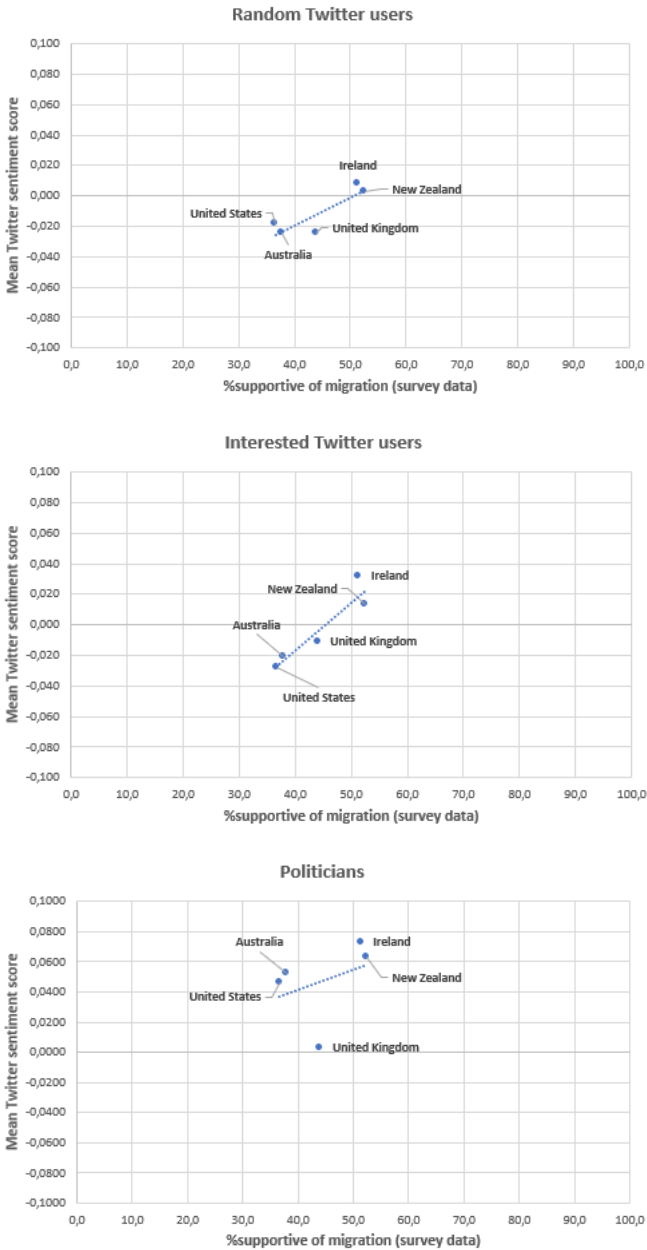
Figure 3. Correlation between sentiment toward migration on Twitter
(for both samples of Twitter users and for politicians) and the percentage of
public support to migration in public opinion surveys, split by country

The differences in sentiment distribution for the samples of Twitter users are displayed in Figure 4. Overall, we can see that the sentiment score is much lower for politicians than in the other Twitter samples. Random users have a mean of 0.37, compared to the mean sentiment of interested users of 0.53. The difference is highly significant at $p<0.001$ (t-test). Random users compared to politicians, who have a mean sentiment of 0.05 $p<0.001$ (t-test), also deliver a highly significant difference at $p<0.001$ (t-test). Finally, interested users versus politicians is also significant at $p<0.01$ (t-test).

Furthermore, the sample of politicians shows a more polarised distribution of sentiment than the sample of users. The standard deviation of both random users and interested users is 0.05, while the standard deviation of politicians is 0.13. We also observe that some of the most negative tweets come from the politicians, possibly aiming to incite their followers. The most negative tweets in the sample of politicians forcefully reject right-wing immigration policies, but there are also negative statements about immigrants. The most positive tweets are related to the advantages of highly skilled immigrants for the receiving country. We first thought that the positivity of interested users may sometimes be due to them applauding the politicians they follow rather than the topic of migration, but the data shows very few such instances.
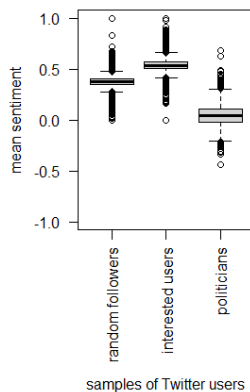
Figure 4.
Distribution of sentiment in tweets for both samples of
Twitter users and for politicians

4.2 *Explaining the Salience of Tweets about Migration*

In this section, we discuss the visibility of migration on social media and focus on the impact of the salience on migration in online discussions at the user level. We especially focus on how several factors impact the salience of online discussions about migration at the user level. To do so, we link social media messages, survey data, and societal indicators by applying linear regression models as explained in Section 3. We predict the salience of random twitter users in Model 1, and the salience of interested twitter users in Model 2. As predicting factors, we on the one hand use societal variables like Gallup's Migration Acceptance Index, elite polarisation, the Migration indexation Index (MIPEX; Section 2). On the other hand, we add linguistic factors, namely sentiment and specific content features which are indicative of generic frames, specific frames. The result is given in Table 3.

With respect to societal factors, we note several interesting effects. First, the level of elite polarisation slightly, but significantly, impacts the salience of migration discussions. This impact is negative, which means that higher levels of elite polarisation tend to be associated with a decreased salience of migration discussions online, thereby suggesting migration is discussed less prominently. Second, the effect of the index about migration integration policies is also negatively associated with the salience of migration on social media. This suggests that the salience of migration discussions on social media is higher when there are fewer institutional responses dedicated to the integration of migrants.

With respect to the connection between social media and public opinion, Table 3 shows that migration acceptance significantly impacts the level of salience of migration for both of our Twitter samples, random and interested users. However, while the effect is negative for the former, it is positive for the latter. This suggests that the more polarised sample of Twitter users is more likely to tweet about migration when the level of public acceptance is high at the country level, which indicates that this sample of users may be more likely to gather dissenting voices on migration.

Regarding the generic policy issue frames of migration, there are notable differences between both samples of Twitter users. In a nutshell, *economy*, *foreign policy*, and *law & order* framings have the effect of opposing direction between our samples of Twitter users. A possible explanation is that both groups of users pay attention to different narratives feeding into similar generic and specific framings. For the example of *eco-*

nomy, the development of the economy is of more direct concern to the general population (see James Carville's famous quote from Clinton's campaign in 1992, "it's the economy, stupid") than to interested users, who may be willing to sacrifice economic success to the benefit of political or ideological views. Examples of tweets from random users supporting this interpretation are:

(1) @JoshVanVeen @philipsophy But why don't they go down the economic populist route? That's where the open lane is. I think they'll fail with rw populism: anti-immigration & culture wars. First one is irrelevant with borders closed & who's concerned with culture war issues with an economic crisis coming?

(2) Immigration Bill before parliament today. A Bill that would block entry to all care workers, cleaners, shop workers, delivery drivers & other low paid key workers who we clap for every week. Our @JCWI UK polling shows people do not want this. #r4today https://t.co/MJVxdVjp5K

The following is an example of a tweet from an interested user explicitly giving low precedence to economic issues:

(3) @SenatorLeahy @DHSOIG What a Joke, support your country, we're being overrun by illegal migrants. Do your damn job fraudulent hacking hypocrite

Similar arguments can be adduced in the discussion of the *welfare* frame. Namely, migrants are more likely to be constructed as being given unfair access to benefits and threatening the welfare State. For instance, an interested user writes,

(4) Eighty. Six. Million. Dollars.For hotel rooms. To house illegal immigrants. "Scoop: ICE securing hotel rooms to hold growing number of migrant families" https://t.co/xZyoFmh7IU

The correlation to welfare is high among interested users because many of them ask for support to migrants, particularly in difficult situations which coincide with immigration waves. (5) is from an interested user, (6) from a random user:

(5) I've been moved by the plight of refugees risking their lives in unimaginable ways to get to a safe place. I'm not much of a runner but I'm pledging to run 22 miles in September. Please sponsor me! <U+0001F64F> Thank you. <U+0001F496> @everydayherouk #everythingcounts https://t.co/KXRE5hEhZ1

(6) @lilibellmia @BlueSea1964 "The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good." – Samuel Johnson. After the Golden Age Illegal Immigrants & the WALL = MOOT. Nobody should have to LIVE in FEAR. Put yourselves in their SHOES. https:// t.co/81zdWVspxE

Regarding the issue-specific framing of migrants, both the samples of interested and random users put emphasis on frames depicting migrants as 'criminals.' An example from random users is given in (7).

(7) Who voted for mass open door immigration and who wanted to see the sort of aggressive scenes on the streets of Britain we are witnessing in Batley? Multi culturalism has never in history ever worked. It can't. The left have caused this. I was called a racist.

Compared to the sample of interested users, where the 'victim' frame is frequent, such as in (8), it is under-represented in tweets from random users but can also be found, for instance (9).

(8) @DavidFrankal She is trying to copy the Australian asylum system by sticking them in unspeakable camps like in Nauru and PNG. You only have to watch @4corners docus to see how bad they are.

(9) Trump shared a video that begins "the only good Democrat is a dead Democrat." Remember: when he referred to immigrants & asylum seekers as an "invasion", an "infestation", as "animals" they – and anyone perceived to be an immigrant – became targets. 23 people murdered in El Paso.

In view of investigating the variations in the narrative about migration, we do not only measure the direct impact of generic frames, but also to their effect in conjunction with tonality. To do so, we include interaction terms between generic frames and sentiment in tweets. Figures 5 and 6 display the results for the mean (and +/- 1 standard deviation) of sentiment. For the interested Twitter users, *economy* and *sentiment* are particularly strongly correlated (pane C): a more positive sentiment leads to more tweets on economy. But also *law & order* is strongly correlated to sentiment (pane E) with interested users: here, a more negative sentiment leads to more tweets. Indeed, more negative opinions about *economy* and *law & order* appear more often within the sample of interested users compared to the random user sample. Examples with strong negative sen-

timent from interested users are given in (10), which is from *law & order*, and (11), from *economy*.

(10) This is evil. Days after immigrants were gunned down in El Paso, Trump is continuing the attacks on immigrant families. Our job is to reject Trump's racist agenda, end the terror inflicted on immigrant communities and bring families together, not tear them apart. https://t.co/NAjZes02Aw

(11) And by the way, this India immigration bill (HR.1044 & S.386) is a disaster. It's a big-tech subsidy. India would dominate all employment green cards for the next decade. Is this what they call diversity? Shame on @MikeLeeforUtah. https://t.co/hKBgpWB599

The most strongly correlated factors for the random users are *foreign policy* and *sentiment*. Examples in this class are given in (12) and (13).

(12) @Nigel Farage @BorisJohnson No. Boris is wet, weak & woke and will happily accept mass immigration on an even larger scale than Blair.

(13) Our PM is shocked at alleged war crimes by our #SAS in Afghanistan while being part of a political party that for past 20 years has been demonising & dehumanising Muslim refugees from the Middle East. What message do you think this sent and what culture did this foster? #auspol

The strong correlation indicates that foreign policy kindles the strongest feelings, and that sentiment among the general public is typically higher. Non-experts tend to associate migration first and foremost with foreign policy.

Concerning the control variables, there is a small, but significant and negative effect of the users' sentiment, suggesting that online discussions about migration are generally unfavourable towards migration. Furthermore, the tweeting frequency has a significant and positive effect, suggesting that users who rely more heavily on Twitter are also more likely to address the topic of migration. Here it would be tempting to compare the effect size of the tweeting frequency between the two groups, which is higher for interested users. But this is statistically not permissible, as the sample sizes, which affect absolute frequency weights, are different.

	Model 1 Random users	Model 2 Interested users
(Intercept)	-0.03 (0.01) ***	0.06 (0.01) ***
Gallup's Migration Acceptance Index	-0.03 (0.01) ***	0.06 (0.01) ***
Elite polarisation	-0.03 (0.00) ***	-0.04 (0.00) ***
Migration integration index (MIPEX)	-0.10 (0.01) ***	-0.07 (0.00) ***
Generic frames		
civil rights	7.37 (1.07) ***	17.21 (2.13) ***
culture & identity	33.52 (1.19) ***	12.56 (0.98) ***
economy	12.12 (0.71) ***	-52.50 (2.69) ***
foreign policy	-20.36 (1.60) ***	0.55 (0.37)
law & order	-2.89 (0.93) **	23.52 (1.27) ***
welfare	19.68 (0.84) ***	6.04 (0.94) ***
Generic frames x sentiment		
civil rights x sentiment	-16.41 (2.59) ***	-27.94 (3.72) ***
culture & identity x sentiment	-74.07 (2.79) ***	-18.77 (1.63) ***
economy x sentiment	-27.56 (1.86) ***	96.99 (4.89) ***
foreign policy x sentiment	52.43 (4.24) ***	1.27 (0.68)
law & order x sentiment	10.08 (2.51) ***	-42.06 (2.34) ***
welfare x sentiment	-45.63 (2.13) ***	-9.69 (1.66) ***
Specific frames		
criminal	0.21 (0.02) ***	0.77 (0.07) ***
victim	-1.97 (0.10) ***	0.04 (0.04)
Sentiment on Twitter	-0.03 (0.00) ***	-0.04 (0.00) ***
Tweeting frequency	0.26 (0.00) ***	0.34 (0.01) ***
R^2	0.46	0.46
Num. obs.	29498	25172

Table 3. Linear regression model explaining salience of tweets (log transformed)
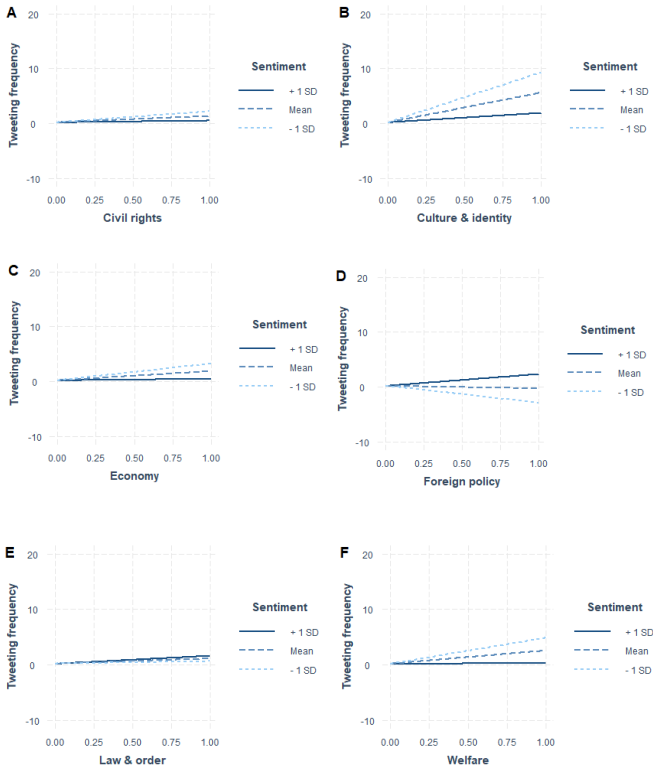
Figure 5.
Interactions between generic frames and sentiment in tweets for the
sample of random Twitter users
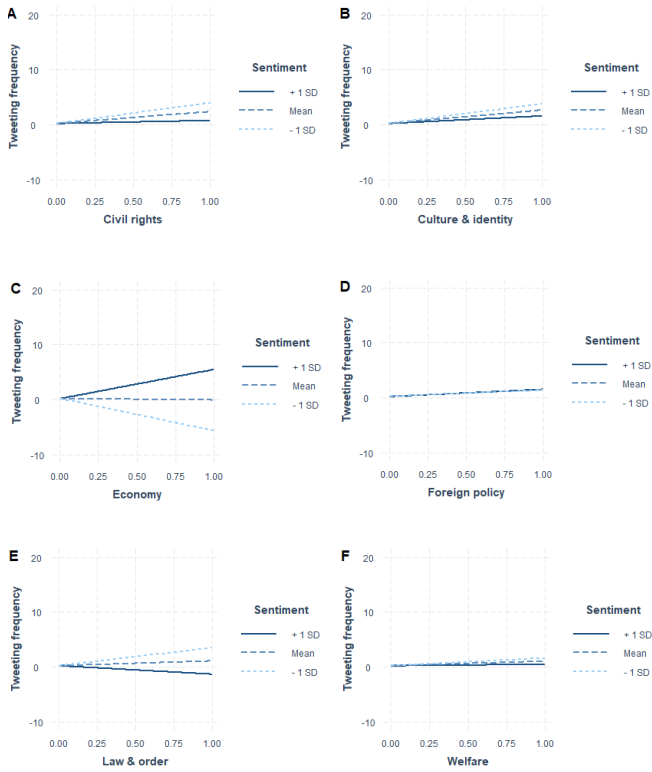
Figure 6.
Interactions between generic frames and sentiment in tweets for the
sample of interested Twitter users

Interested users are much more specific and engaged. This is shown in Figure 7 which extracts the most discriminatory words for each generic frame using the *tf-idf* measure. This is a classic measure to detect keywords, that is, to reflect how important a word is to a document in a collection or corpus.

Major differences can be observed in *foreign policy* where the two Twitter samples tend to adopt different behaviours. For instance, the random samples rather engage in a broadcasting style of communication by citing 'hot' events (e.g. Brexit, flee), typical entities (e.g. Macron, Erdogan), and agreements (e.g. pact) of the public debate. The interested users tend to be more engaged in the migration debate by using more specific terms that link migration to direct political events (e.g. election, council) and concrete policy making (e.g. fairness, dialogue).

A similar logic applies to the economy, where the random users cite numbers and figures (e.g. billions, yearly), whereas the interested users are more engaged with concrete policy measures (e.g. wage for all, stimulus) and refer to ways of life (e.g. dreams, growth).

With respect to civil rights, the random users are, again, rather nonspecific and call to overarching principles (e.g. constitution, equity), whereas interested users refer to specific social movements and events (e.g. migrants' lives matter, migrants stuck offshore).
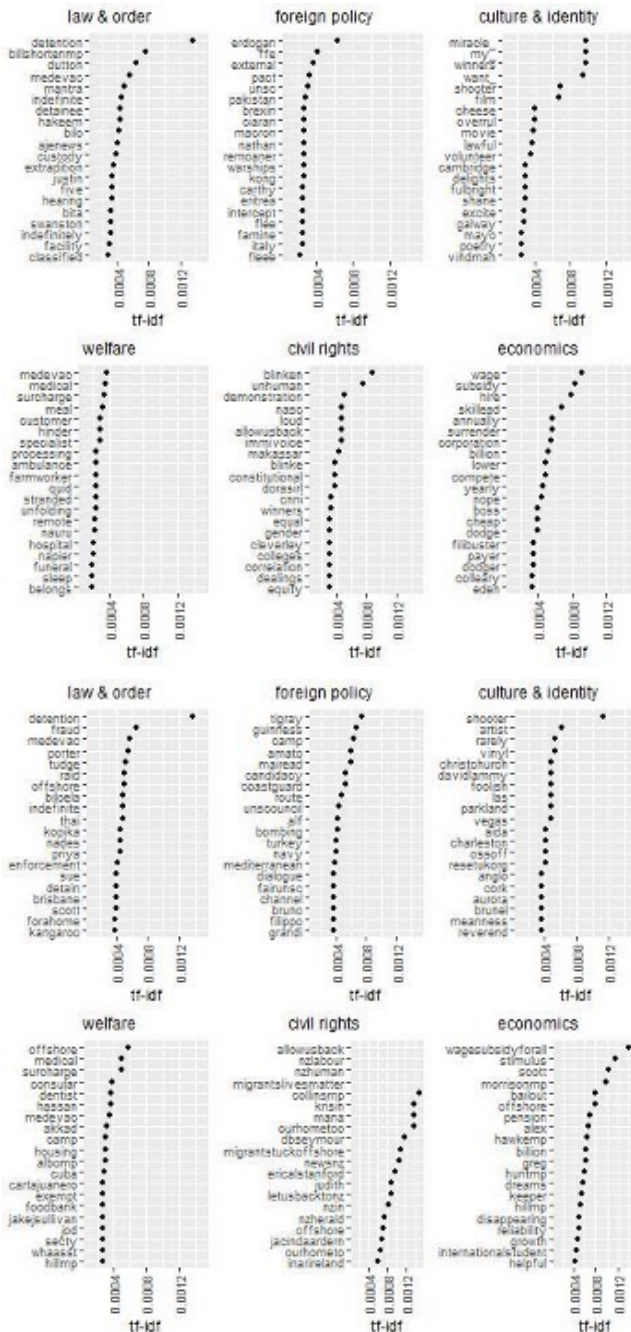
Figure 7. Top words by generic frame for the sample of
random users (left pane) and interested users (right pane)

5 Discussion of the Main Findings and Concluding Remarks

In our study, we proposed to compare migration discourses in traditional opinion surveys and social media in a cross-country perspective among five English-speaking countries. Let us discuss our main findings with reference to our initial hypotheses.

5.1 *Main Findings*

Hypothesis 1: the salience of migration online correlates with the extent to which migration is perceived as an important concern in representative opinion surveys

We can answer this hypothesis positively. Pearson correlation between the salience of migration in surveys and on Twitter shows a high correlation of 0.81 with the random sample of Twitter users. This indicates that salience can be used as a good approximation to surveys. Correlation to interested users and politicians is lower, which is also expected as polls aim to capture the stance of the general population.

Hypothesis 2: the tonality related to migration online correlates with the overall satisfaction toward migration found in representative opinion surveys

We can answer this hypothesis positively. We observe a very high Pearson correlation of 0.94 between the sentiment on migration in surveys compared to the interested Twitter users, and a high correlation of 0.80 to the random users. While we find a good match between social media and surveys, we do not claim that Twitter users are representative of the national populations. Rather, it merely suggests that there is a shared public mood at the national level when looking at aggregated measures between survey respondents and social media users. The merit of relying on two different samples of users enabled us to show how it might influence sentiment distributions, particularly with respect to interested Twitter users, which overrepresent engaged, politically active or strongly opinionated users. Our study thus nuances earlier findings that sceptically concluded that social media users are not representative of the population by showing that users produce significantly different averages in sentiment compared to survey respondents, especially by being less supportive of migra-

tion (see Amaya et al.'s study on Reddit). Our aim was not to construct equivalent distributions of sentiment toward migration as found in opinion surveys, but to use both data sources in tandem to better understand how public attitudes toward migration interplay.

The fact that the correlation of sentiment is higher than the one of salience indicates, on the one hand, that it is worth adding a linguistic analysis, albeit simple and not adapted to the domain. On the other hand, it may also suggest a revision to Ghanem's statement that "[t]he frequency with which a topic is mentioned probably has a more powerful influence than any particular framing mechanism" (12). It is also worth observing that politicians only correlate with 0.38.

Hypothesis 3: the salience of tweets related to migration is more pronounced when societal and political factors (migrant integration policy and elite polarisation) are unfavourable to migrants and immigration

We found no support for this hypothesis. Indeed, higher levels of elite polarisation tend to be associated with a decreased salience of migration discussions online, which contradicts the direction of our hypothesis. It could be that if the elite is devised on a topic, then it may mostly affect citizens' positions on an issue but not necessarily their perceived importance of the issues. Furthermore, the MIPEX is also in the opposite direction from what we hypothesised. This could be explained by the fact that social media discussions on migration are most likely to take place in countries where integration mechanisms are scarce.

Hypothesis 4: the salience of tweets related to migration is correlated with lower levels of public acceptance of migration

Gallup's *Migrant Acceptance Index* is a significant factor in the regression analysis. However, its effect is negative, as expected, only for the random sample, while it is positive for the sample of interested users. We suggest that this could be linked to the fact that, in contexts where there is a high public acceptance of migration, interested users are likely to voice their positions, perhaps in a dissenting direction and as a counter-reaction movement to the general acceptance of migrants. On the reverse, the random sample of users tend to be less involved in migration discussions on social media when the acceptance of migration is high and, thereby, presumably perceived as under control.

Hypothesis 5: the salience of tweets related to migration is positively as-sociated with discussions about migrants and migration using a threat related rhetoric

We could confirm this hypothesis in several respects. For instance, we showed that the *law & order* frame is especially prevalent for interested users, especially from a standpoint on migration. We also noticed that there are different affordances according to our samples of users to pay attention to generic frames. For instance, the development of the economy is of more direct concern to the random sample than to interested users, who balance economic concerns with the benefit of political or ideologic-al views. When looking at the specific depictions of migrants, we noticed that they are more prominently characterised with the *criminal* rather than the *victim* frame.

Migrants and migration are thus generally associated as being a threat to the country of arrival. However, a closer look at the top words used in each generic frame also allows us to derive more positive attitudes to-wards migrants, namely through concerns related to the threat to life for immigrants on their journey.

5.2 *Study Limitations*

Our sample provided a cross-country analysis including only English-speaking countries. However, future studies would benefit from including other regions of the world and additional countries. For instance, it would be interesting to compare multiple receiving European countries. How-ever, this poses additional challenges due to the language variety. Fur-thermore, the countries included in our sample are essentially receiving countries. Other studies could also envisage conducting temporal ana-lyses, such as the study of Yantseva comparing multiple media sources.

Moreover, although we implemented different tweet collection strategies, it may well be that limiting our analysis to the followers of political accounts excludes groups of users with different ideas about mi-gration. However, we are confident that we could sample users with enough variation in the countries and ideological orientations. We re-commend that similar and other collection strategies be made for the sake of comparability between countries and years of analysis, but also for different social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok).

Another limitation lies in the use of a dictionary-based approach for sentiment analysis. In the future, it may be possible to use more machine-learning algorithms with domain specific validation. Furthermore, we should note that sentiment contained in tweets does not necessarily equate the stance of a speaker toward migration. Future improvements could also be made in this direction to render social media data more comparable to surveyed attitudes.

Additionally, Twitter represents an important source of social media discussions. However, we encourage future research to additionally use other platforms, such as Reddit or Youtube (see Lee & Nerghes), but also to use other types of content, such as pictures or videos, to study attitudes towards migration.

Finally, the perceived importance and specific framings of migration may alter citizens' perceptions of and attitudes toward migration or migrants (Vliegenthart & Boomgaarden 309). To analyse such relationships, most studies have relied on public opinion data from (panel-)surveys that link to aggregate analyses of relevant media coverage (Eberl et al. 210). However, future research needs to test the influence of migration discourse on public opinion by integrating broader media samples, including and social media.

The salience of migration and the tonality with which it is publicly discussed are important as they may influence broader public opinions on migration and migrants. Albeit this relationship has been tested by combining (panel) surveys with media analysis (see review by Eberl et al.), it is so far understudied with respect to social media discourses. A notable exception is the study of Heidenreich et al., who focused on party communication on social media. Our study contributes to this line of inquiry and provides an approach that can be usefully extended to other countries and frames of migration.

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Migrations of Sound:
Listening and Intersubjectivity
in Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* and
Chuck Palahniuk's *The Invention of Sound*

The proliferation of literary studies of sound has productively complicated the idea of what it means to 'listen' to texts. In postcolonial criticism, listening as a form of attention often provides a framework for thinking about the ethical encounter with the Other. This case has been made for Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* (2017), a novel that traces the fate of three British Muslims of Pakistani descent in a retelling of Sophocles' *Antigone*. Critics have read the novel's preoccupation with various forms of auditory sensibility in terms of the cultural politics of listening. Listening here is understood as a metaphor for conscious attention to the Other and a means of ensuring intersubjectivity where vision and other senses either fail or actively prevent it. Shamsie's novel, however, also demonstrates that listening as a metaphor for diligent attention to Otherness demands greater awareness of the qualities of listening as a sensory act. This is particularly important because an examination of this act reveals the ambiguous effect of listening, which in turn complicates its abstract understanding as a moral act. This essay investigates this dynamic by comparing Shamsie's exploration of the intersubjective nature of listening with Chuck Palahniuk's exploration of the same idea in *The Invention of Sound* (2020), a novel featuring a protagonist strikingly similar to Shamsie's Parvaiz as regards their auditory sensibilities. It concludes that listening as a sensory experience is far more ambivalent, ethically speaking, than abstract conceptions of sound and listening suggest.

Keywords: sound; hearing; listening; intersubjectivity; Kamila Shamsie; Chuck Palahniuk

Introduction

Like its linguistic and affective predecessors, the sonic turn in the humanities denotes a broad field of intellectual investigation that neither has a clear starting point nor a narrow theoretical focus.[1] This turn has had its own development in literary studies. Unlike the study of poetry, in which the sound of words can be investigated *as* sound, or of music in literature, for which sonic phenomena can be studied *through* text, the study of sound in novels faces a peculiar challenge. Unless its practitioners are content to describe and analyse representations of sound, they will have to develop frameworks for conceiving of sound in novels as an abstraction to make the concept meaningful for literary analysis. Consequently, the study of novels in sonic terms has proliferated in two directions: on the one hand, historical investigations into the relationship between literary innovation and sound technologies and, on the other, the literary examination of texts as objects whose inner working is best described in terms of sound. While the former approach has been highly productive in shedding light on the ways sound technologies, such as the telephone, gramophone, radio, and sound cinema, shaped writing in modernity,[2] the latter has productively complicated the question of how one can understand what it means to 'listen' to novels.

Philipp Schweighauser, author of *The Noises of American Literature, 1890-1985: Toward a History of Literary Acoustics* (2006), a landmark publication in the field of literary studies of sound, locates his own turn towards an abstract conception of sound in the context of the rudimentary overview of sound in novel studies given above. In a retrospective on literary acoustics published nearly a decade after *The Noises of American*

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[1] I share Hans-Joachim Braun's scepticism about the usefulness of proclaiming a sonic (or acoustic or auditory) turn. As Braun points out, the number of supposed turns in various cultural disciplines are frequently connected to "the competition for intra- and extra-academic resources" (91) rather than a genuine scholarly re-orientation; however, if the number of publications concerned with sound in the humanities alone suffices to establish such a turn, there can be little doubt about its existence.

[2] Consider, for example, Sam Halliday's *Sonic Modernity: Representing Sound in Literature, Culture and the Arts* (2013) and the collections *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies* (1998) edited by Adalaide Morris; *Vibratory Modernism* (2013) edited by Anthony Enns and Shelley Trower; and *Sounding Modernism: Rhythm and Sonic Mediation in Modern Literature and Film* (2017) edited by Julian Murphet, Helen Groth, and Penelope Hone.

Literature, he describes the realisation that the analysis of the "representational strategies" writers in different eras use to "capture something of the acoustic worlds of their time" ("Literary" 476) warranted a broader scope than that afforded by the mere representation of sound. To put it differently, Schweighauser came to see that to confine oneself to the representation of sound as sound, and of listening as an auditory-sensory process, would unnecessarily restrict the field of literary acoustics to charting descriptions of sound. Finding this approach incapable of accommodating the conceptual sound or, in this case, noise, of modernist texts – their "rhythmic structures; their jarring juxtaposition of different media, genres, and styles; and their textual dislocations and fragmentations" – Schweighauser looked for other means of investigating how texts become "sounding objects" ("Literary" 476). Broadly speaking, noise, in this approach, is turned into an abstraction to offer a framework for analysing stylistic qualities of literary texts, listening into a mode of attention to such stylistic qualities. This conceptual move has positioned sound and listening as highly productive concepts for the analysis not only of texts but of any network of competing discourses. While this approach has been most prevalent in cultural studies, for example in the work of Michel Serres, Jacques Attali, and William R. Paulson, it has more recently become popular in postcolonial and critical race studies.

Global migration and the increased contact between different cultural expressions pressingly raises the issue of who has a right to speak and, crucially, who is heard. Although hearing here can refer to auditory attention, multicultural societies require a much broader notion of listening to tackle xenophobic opposition to cultural integration and emancipation. Claire Chambers, for example, building on the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, frames listening "as a type of responsiveness or an ethical openness rather than listening *per se*" (169). In the same vein, Nicole Brittingham Furlonge posits listening as a means of exploring the "lower frequencies of representation" of race, gender, and class (2). As much as an auditory-sensory understanding of listening serves as the basis for a reconfiguration of listening as a mode of attention to text in the tradition outlined above, it here becomes a metaphor for a conscious effort involved in acknowledging, respecting, and understanding Otherness. As is the case with the abstraction of sound and listening for stylistic analysis, this abstract conceptualisation of listening has obvious merit. It becomes problematic, however, when listening as ethical openness is considered a corrective to other forms of (literal or metaphorical) sensory perception. Rehana Ahmed, for example, claims that listening in multicultural con-

texts can signal the need for "a means of communicating across difference that bypasses the distorting properties of the image" (1154). The problem does not relate to the potential of listening as metaphor for intersubjective understanding but to its echoes with what Jonathan Sterne discusses as the audio-visual litany.

Named to highlight the dogmatic nature in which sound and hearing are often posed as a counterpart to vision, the litany consists of a series of oversimplifying juxtapositions: "hearing is concerned with interiors, vision is concerned with surfaces"; "hearing places us inside an event, seeing gives us a perspective on the event"; "hearing is about affect, vision is about intellect" (Sterne 15). Here it is important to point out that hearing and listening are not synonymous. Listening implies an intentionality that already exhibits metaphorical shading. As Roland Barthes argues, hearing is "a physiological phenomenon," listening a "psychological act." Listening, therefore, cannot be described only with recourse to "acoustics and the physiology of the ear" (245); rather, the analysis of listening requires an analysis of the listening subject and its relation to the object of listening. Since Sterne is concerned with a critique of sweeping generalisations about the properties and effects of the ear and eye as sensory organs, his argument concentrates on hearing rather than listening; however, if one substitutes listening for hearing in the audio-visual litany, one begins to see its applicability to frameworks in which listening does not simply represent a complementary but a more reliable form of intersubjectivity than that provided by vision: an ethical openness to the Other that makes interiority and affect intelligible across visible cultural, racial, ethnic, and personal differences. While I do not wish to suggest that listening, understood as mode of attention to Otherness, cannot function as a corrective to visual-based biases, I contend that such a metaphorical understanding of listening often neglects the curious foreclosure of intersubjective understanding inherent in the physical act of listening.

The present essay seeks to elaborate on the relationship between acute auditory attention and the failure of intersubjectivity by analysing two contemporary novels featuring characters who possess a highly developed ear: Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*, which was first published in 2017, and Chuck Palahniuk's *The Invention of Sound*, published in 2020. Shamsie's novel offers the foundation for my analysis of listening as a mode of intersubjective understanding because its engagement with sound has already evoked critical commentary in the context of postcolonial studies. Shamsie was born in Karachi in Pakistan and moved to Britain at the age of thirty-four (Shamsie, "Exiled"). The novel tells the story of the Pasha

family, particularly the siblings Isma, Aneeka, and Parvaiz, British Muslims of Pakistani descent. Aside from the biographical resonance, Shamsie's novel is best understood as a postcolonial novel because it engages with her personal anxiety about her status as a postcolonial citizen in Britain, particularly in light of British anti-Muslim sentiment at the peak activity of Daesh. Even though Shamsie was made a British citizen and therefore became a dual passport holder before the publication of the novel, she found that the once so solid status of citizenship could all too quickly dissolve into air (Shamsie, "Kamila"). An amendment to the British Nationality Act introduced in April 2003 – that is, less than two years after the 9/11 attacks – granted the British Secretary of State the power to strip British nationals of their citizenship if the Secretary was satisfied that "the person has done anything seriously prejudicial to the vital interests" of the United Kingdom or British overseas territories (Parliament of the United Kingdom, point 2). While this fate did not befall Shamsie, it does one of her characters: Parvaiz Pasha, a young man who is recruited into Daesh and dies while trying to flee the terror organisation. The central conflict in *Home Fire* revolves around the battle of Aneeka, Parvaiz's twin sister, first to allow her brother to return to England, then to have the body of her brother, a British citizen with a claim to Pakistani citizenship, brought back to Britain. She faces the opposition of the novel's Home Secretary, who, invoking the amendment, has stripped Parvaiz of his citizenship and refuses to allow him back into the country, neither dead nor alive. Chambers reads the novel's depiction of the debate over this question, as well as more general questions about the conflict between national and cultural allegiance, in terms of an abstract "politics of listening," more specifically the question, "can the oppressor listen?" (170), on which the novel has much to offer its readers. The novel, however, also pays close attention to listening as a sensory act and, more importantly, to how such listening can prevent or elude openness to the Other.

To illustrate this thesis, I draw on Palahniuk's novel. While his at times hallucinatory text about a Hollywood sound effects specialist does not engage with the same questions as Shamsie's book, it offers a detailed description of the intersubjective quality of sensory listening. Both novels feature protagonists with a heightened sense of hearing that put this sense to professional use – and both employ their abilities to foreclose sympathetic or empathetic engagement with the Other. I will demonstrate how sound, a primary means of human contact, is an ambiguous guarantor of understanding. In its most basic form, sound is a dynamic phenomenon; its being is defined by movement and vibration. Sound does not only mi-

grate with people who bring the sounds of their own culture and voice to places in which they might not have been heard before. Sound continually migrates between individuals and thereby establishes a particular form of contact between them. This essay is concerned with the question of what the ethical dimension of this contact – literal, physical, sound waves emanating from one person and entering another's ear – might be. The answer, as I will suggest, is far more ambivalent than abstract conceptions of sound and listening suggest.

Home Fire: "Nothing but getting the sound right mattered"

Home Fire is a modern retelling of Sophocles' *Antigone*, and it is more obviously "saturated with noise" (Chambers 191) than many other novels. Parvaiz Pasha, Shamsie's version of Polynices and brother to Aneeka (Antigone), his twin, and Isma (Ismene), is the principal reason the novel resounds with various forms of sound and noise.[3] Parvaiz is born with a heightened sense of hearing. As a result, the strand of the narrative focalised through him – the novel is told in five separate parts each centred on one of the protagonists – offers detailed descriptions of sounds, both in the present of the narrative as well is in his memories. For example, he remembers a domestic scene in which he is cooking with Aneeka, cutting onions as her "sous-chef":

> The playlist compiled by their guitarist cousin in Karachi streamed through the speakers – chimta and bass guitar, dholak and drums; overlaid onto it, the sound of Parvaiz's knife cutting through the yielding onions, hitting the hardness of the board beneath; two slim bracelets on Aneeka's wrist clinking together as she measured out ingredients; low hum from the refrigerator; a train pulling into Preston Road station almost precisely at

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3   Much like hearing and listening, sound and noise are not synonymous. As a metaphor, noise has had an illustrious career in cultural studies derived from Shannon's definition in "The Mathematical Theory of Communication," which represents a crucial document in the transformation of noise into an abstract concept of interference as it appears in the work of Serres, Attali, and Paulson. The concept has more slowly been gaining traction in literary studies in the past twenty years. While, to my knowledge, Schweighauser's monograph remains the only sustained engagement with noise and literature, Wai Chee Dimock's "Theory of Resonance" offers a touchstone for conceiving of literary history as noise. More recent readings of noise in literature include Kessous and Sykes.

the same moment as another train was pulling out; the banter of twins. (Shamsie, *Home* 117)

His attention to the everyday soundscape also makes his siblings more attentive to the sounds and noises they encounter. At the beginning of the novel, his older sister Isma moves to Massachusetts to pursue a doctorate in sociology under the supervision of her mentor and friend Hira Shah. When Isma is invited to have dinner at Hira's house, the meal preparation is interrupted by "a strange music" – "a whistling, high-pitched twangi-ness" (11). Eventually, Isma discovers the source of the sound: hail rain-ing against icicles suspended from the roof. "Parvaiz, a boy never to be seen without his headphones and a mic," Isma thinks, "would have lain out here for as long as the song continued, the wet snow seeping through his clothes, the thud of hail beating down on him, uncaring of anything except capturing something previously unheard" (12). Even if Parvaiz's sensitivity to sound surfaces in the narratives of the other protagonists, it is his own that serves as the primary carrier for the acoustic mediation of the novel. Isma's description of Parvaiz's fascination with unusual sounds, however, should not be taken as indicative of an infatuation with the sonically exceptional. To the contrary, Parvaiz is obsessed with sounds most people do not notice for their commonness. The most pointed ex-ample of his auditory fixation is his monumental sound-art project titled "Preston Road Station Heard from the Garden Shed."

As its title indicates, the project consists of recordings made on the roof of the garden shed at the back of the Pasha family's home near Pre-ston Road Station. More specifically, it consists of 1,440 one-minute-long recordings, that is, twenty-four hours, that an "ideal listener would play between midnight of one day and the next – a soundscape of every minute of a day from his perch, recorded over 1,440 days" (131). Aside from an incidental recording of Aneeka's voice captured when she climbs up to talk to him, the sound project only records the everyday soundscape. Un-like most other people, Parvaiz notices sounds in terms of their sonic qualities. At one point, he is accosted by a group of boys while recording with his phone and microphone. They beat him up and steal his phone before they pull away in their car. Lying on the ground, Parvaiz listens "as the boys' car screeched past him. The sound envelope: slow attack, short sustain, long decay. Nothing to hear that he hadn't heard before" (123). Envelope, attack, sustain, and decay are technical terms describing the way a sound is heard, in this case, a slow build-up, a brief moment of the sound at its loudest, and a slow decrease in volume. The extent of the "acuteness of his hearing" (121), his sensitivity to the qualitative aspects

of sound, becomes most apparent when Parvaiz meets Farooq, the man who recruits him into Daesh.

Farooq appeals to Parvaiz by feeding the young man legendary stories about his father, Adil Pasha, whom Parvaiz has never truly known. Adil Pasha was taken into American custody after becoming a jihadist and was held at Bagram. He died from the consequences of 'enhanced interrogation techniques' while being transferred to Guantanamo. Part of Farooq's recruitment strategy pivots on tales of the torture methods to which Parvaiz's father was subjected. This includes being chained to the ground while squatting down in a position that neither allows for toppling over nor for sitting down. During one of Parvaiz's visit to Farooq's flat, which he shares with two other men, they overwhelm Parvaiz and chain him up in exactly this position:

> The chain was so short that it was impossible either to straighten up or topple over entirely, and he could only remain hunched in a squatting position, the pressure on his back increasing by the minute. What started as discomfort eventually became pain, shooting from his back down through his legs. When he tried to move – tried to find a way to roll onto his side – the chains cut into his flesh. (136)

In spite of the pain, Parvaiz still notices the sounds around him. To drown out his screaming and begging, Farooq's flatmates turn up the volume of the action video game they are playing to the maximum. But the "sound designer hadn't accounted for cheap speakers," and to Parvaiz's ears, "the crackling and distortion were more intolerable than the gunfire and death screams" issuing from the television (137). The scene evokes a practice that has come to be known as an 'enhanced interrogation technique,' a legal euphemism for torture coined in the wake of the 9/11 attacks for the purpose of providing a lawful basis for torture (Chwastiak 494). It depicts one technique specifically named in a 2002 memorandum to John Rizzo, the then Acting General Counsel of the CIA: cramped confinement (Bybee 2). It also includes a technique not directly named in the memorandum: sustained exposure to loud noise (Cusick; Stafford Smith). While the memorandum does not speak about sonic torture directly, it does take note of the potential of loud noise as an interrogation technique in the description of 'walling.' Walling refers to standing an individual up with their back against a flexible wall and then slamming their shoulder blades into it. Bybee, the author of the memorandum, notes having been previously informed that "the false wall is in part constructed to create a loud sound when the individual hits it, which will further shock or surprise the

individual. In part, the idea is to create a sound that will make the impact seem far worse than it is and that will be far worse than any injury that might result from the action" (2).

What is notable about this scene is Parvaiz's listening. Shamsie does not dwell on the volume of the sound, usually the most excruciating aspect of being exposed to sonic torture (Hill 218), but concentrates on the quality or, rather, lack of quality, of the sounds. Although in the novel it is not made clear whether Parvaiz does this because his heightened auditory sensibility allows him to do so or if he purposefully focuses on the sounds in order to distract himself from his pain, the scene offers a first illustration of how attention to sound as sound can result in willed inattention to something else. While in this scene the object of inattention is not another human being but his own pain, the novel explicitly develops this idea later on.

Once Parvaiz joins Daesh and has undergone basic combat training, he is assigned to the media wing as a sound producer. Shamsie takes particular care to draw out "auditory media's capacity to affect sensibilities" (Chambers 191) in the hands of fundamentalists. Charged with setting up the microphones for the recording of a beheading, Parvaiz observes Abu Raees, his superior, interacting with the executioner to determine the position of the microphones for maximum effect: "The executioner pointed off to the side and Abu Raees walked in the direction he was gesturing, just a few feet away. They were anticipating the trajectory of the man's head when it left his shoulders. Working out where to place the mics" (Shamsie *Home* 168). Unable to stomach this set up, let alone the beheading itself, Parvaiz vomits and is sent back to the car:

> For days and days after that, he worked in the studio on sound effects of beheadings, crucifixions, whipping. This was both a test and a punishment. In the studio, he had control of himself. Abstracting himself to that place where nothing but getting the sound right mattered. The fascination of discovering the different pitch and timbre of a nail through flesh, a blade through flesh. (169–170)

Parvaiz explicitly turns his auditory sensibility into a means of self-protection, and in doing so, he practices what in music contexts is known as reduced listening.

Michel Chion describes this practice, which was first defined by Pierre Schaeffer, a pioneering figure of *musique concrète,*[4] as "the listening mode that focuses on the traits of the sound itself, independent of its cause and of its meaning. Reduced listening takes the sound – verbal, played on an instrument, noises, or whatever – as itself the object to be observed instead of as a vehicle for something else" (29). To be clear, Parvaiz's mode of listening only shares the quality of attention with reduced listening. The purpose of the latter is to arrive at a more objective understanding of sounds. A common experience among people practicing reduced listening for the first time is the recognition of how deeply our listening is grounded in interpreting sounds as expressions of particular causes. Parvaiz is not trying to understand the sounds better without recourse to their causes; rather, his strained attention suppresses them. The reason reduced listening offers a useful paradigm for his listening is because it points out that this suppression is not the result of a lack but, to the contrary, a surplus of attention. In this function, listening acquires the traits attributed to seeing in the audio-visual litany: it becomes a means of assessing the surface rather than the essence of a sound, its exterior qualities rather than its semantic qualities. Most importantly, it transforms sounds from a carrier of affect into an intellectual object.

While *Home Fire* certainly admonishes its readers "to interpret what we hear with care, especially when the cultural other is speaking, in order to move through the reductive signs and symbols that seduce or repel, or do both together" (Ahmed 1154), the novel also complicates the notion of hearing – and listening – with care. To put it differently, the novel demonstrates that listening as a metaphor for diligent attention to Otherness demands greater awareness of the qualities of auditory-sensory listening, the act in which the metaphor is grounded. This is particularly important because an examination of this act reveals the ambiguous effect of listening, which in turn complicates its abstraction as an ethical process. Shamsie's portrayal of Parvaiz's listening reconfigures the framework in which listening serves as a metaphor for attention that functions as a corrective for biases, and it recasts listening with greater nuance as a dynamic of Other-oriented attention and willed, self-focused inattention. Chambers, whose argument represents the most sustained engagement with sound in *Home Fire* to date, is alert to this quality of listening. She argues that Shamsie "removes some of the noise surrounding such public matters as

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[4]   The name derives from a compositional technique that uses prefabricated recordings, often field recordings of everyday sounds, as the basis for musical pieces rather than abstract musical notes.

belonging, assimilation, difference, and justice" (182) in the context of the public debate about the rights of young British citizens wanting to return to England after joining Daesh. This awareness of the internal working of attention and inattention might also contribute to Chambers' carefully hedged positioning of metaphorical listening, which "seems for the most part to be productive and have ethical value" (200), even though she does not dwell on specific examples of how listening might either fail or prevent intersubjectivity. Shamsie's portrayal of different modes of sensory listening in Parvaiz's narrative emphasises that listening, in the absence of ear lids, does not allow for closing one's ears, but that it does allow for listening so intently as to no longer hear what happens at other frequencies – and what happens to another human being. This dimension of listening receives more sustained engagement in Palahniuk's novel, to which I will turn now before returning to *Home Fire* in the conclusion.

The Invention of Sound: "You knew how to control the recording levels and the brightness"

Palahniuk's *The Invention of Sound*, far from advocating listening as a means for preventing intersubjectivity, begins by illustrating the communal nature of sound and listening, particularly the involuntary community afforded by sonic impulses. It opens with an ambulance racing down a street, which leads all the dogs within earshot of the siren to imitate its wail:

> And for that long going-by they were all members of the same pack. And the howls of all dogs, they were one howl. And that howl was so loud it drowned out the siren. Until the sound that had united them all had vanished, and their howling sustained itself. For no dog could bear to abandon, first, that rare moment of their communion. (Palahniuk 3)

Mitzi Ives, one of the novel's protagonists, explains this response in terms of limbic resonance, that is, a visceral affective response hard-wired into the limbic system, a relic of humanity's amphibian past, that governs basic emotions and drives.[5] She learns of this involuntary human respons-

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5   The term "limbic system" was coined by Paul D. MacLean to replace what he previously called the "visceral brain." According to Paul LeDoux, the limbic system "evolved to mediate visceral functions and affective behaviors, including feeding, defense, fighting, and reproduction. It underlies the visceral or emotional life of the individual" (98–99).

iveness to acoustic stimuli at the outset of her career as a Foley artist. Foley art refers to the creation of realistic sounds for films in post-production. It is a practice that has its origin in the recognition that many sounds in real life do not sound realistic enough within the context of a motion picture if they simply are recorded during filming. Instead of actual rain fall, rain on film is "really the sound of ball bearings in a wooden box tipped to one side" and thunder "a sheet of flexible aluminum waved in the air" (102). Ives Foley Arts, Mitzi's company, specialises in human screams, particularly screams occurring during murder and torture, and it is the first scream she sells commercially that offers her insight into what she calls limbic resonance.

When the film producer who will buy her first scream listens to the audio on earphones sitting across from Mitzi, she observes how he

> was reduced to being merely a body. His mouth gaped to mimic the sound. That was the hallmark of the best gesture or catchphrase. Like a fishhook, it sank barbs into the audience and became part of them. A parasite, this scream was […] The producer's mouth yawned, dropping his chin into his neck, and the all of him reared back as if Mitzi had shot or stabbed him. (33–34)

The scream or, rather, listening to it, unearths a fundamental human connection. The producer's eyes "bugged and clamped shut as if suffering the same pain" (34) the actor in the recording had imitated. Although it is not entirely clear what it means to be "merely a body," one can locate the response along a Cartesian division of mind and body, with the latter standing broadly for that which eludes conscious thought and which does not submit to the "cerebral cortex, that grim disciplinarian" – to stay within in the neurological realm and to borrow a phrase from Christopher Isherwood (3). While the Cartesian conception of the human has lost much of its currency after the affective turn, the idea of hardwired, involuntary responses moving below the threshold of consciousness or as preceding conscious attention seems to have gained greater acceptance. In his discussion of the bodily autonomy of affect and its relation to higher functions of the brain, such as cognition and volition, Brian Massumi warns his readers not to see affect as "a pre-reflexive, romantically raw domain of primitive experiential richness":

> It is not that. First, because something happening out of mind in a body directly absorbing its outside cannot exactly said to be experienced. Second, because volition, cognition, and presumably other 'higher' functions usually presumed to be in the mind, figured as a mysterious contain-

er of mental entities that is somehow separate from body and brain, are present and active in that now not-so-'raw' domain. (Massumi 90)

This framework has proven popular in sound studies, particularly in work on the ontology of sound and noise.[6] More remarkable in the quoted scene is the intersubjective quality of listening to the scream since the nameless producer seems to share an affective state with the screamer.

Later in her career, Mitzi will record what she calls "the Jimmy scream" in homage to the "Wilhelm scream" and the "Howie scream," two of the most illustrious screams in film history that have been used in countless films. Unlike its acoustic forebears, the Jimmy scream causes a much more severe reaction in those who hear it. If a siren functions as a primal sound that causes dogs to join in, then the Jimmy scream becomes a cry like "Walt Whitman's *barbaric yawp*" that evokes "the primal scream of everyone who heard it" (Palahniuk 147), resulting in a catastrophe at the Academy Awards, where an audience of movie stars, directors, and producers are involuntarily drawn into such a yawp that causes the building to collapse: "The synchronized limbic systems of three and a half thousand people. All of them spurred to hit the same note, like dogs howling along with a fire engine. Hitting the perfect frequency and volume needed to shatter a building as if it were a champagne glass" (169). Although not all screenings of the film featuring the Jimmy scream end as disastrously as the Academy Awards, on two occasions cinemas collapse for the same reason. This is ultimately the reason the film is nominated for Best Sound for the prestigious awards: "Not nominated due to being something good, but nominated due to politics and how the industry needed to prove [...] that moviegoing was safe" (160). This demonstration fails, which begs the question what sets the Jimmy scream apart from other screams. According to the logic of the novel, limbic resonance leads those who hear it to bodily mimic the pain that caused the scream in the first place, or the pain the actor screaming for the recording is trying to convey, which in turn causes a communal scream whose intensity is capable of shattering entire buildings. In other words, the source of its intensity is located in the cause of the sound; therefore, a look at the scene of its production will clarify this point.

As a rule, Mitzi receives a script and a description of a scene during which an actor's actual scream will have to be overdubbed with one of her creations. Unlike other Foley artists, Mitzi is too sensitive to the nu-

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6   See, for example, Goodman and Hainge. For a critique of such approaches, see Kane.

ances of human screams, which differ from the sound of thunder or of bone breaking, to deal in simulacra. If she is asked to dub the scream of a woman repeatedly stabbed in her vagina, she delivers a track whose title "Praying Girl, Stabbed Brutally, Rapid Exsanguination" is as much a description of the scene in the film as the scene of the recording's production. Additionally, Mitzi is careful to imitate the scene as authentically as possible. During a meeting with Schlo, the producer who tasks her with creating the audio for this scene, she asks him for the make of the knife used in the scene. Then she wants to know if the victim is stabbed once or multiple times, because "with a multiple there would be the sound of the knife coming out. A suction noise. A sucking followed by the rush of blood or air from inside the wound. It was complicated" (21). She also adopts this model for the recording of the Jimmy scream or, as it was first called, "Riverside Thugster, Sudden and Traumatic Orchiectomy." If the term orchiectomy is unfamiliar, Palahniuk's description of its production should provide sufficient clarity.

The scene begins with the Riverside Thugster, that is, Jimmy, waking up after being drugged, tied up spread-eagle on a wooden platform:

> Mitzi had tied a long strand of piano wire to a hook in the studio ceiling. This led down to where a small noose lay against his sunken belly. She looped the noose around the top of his scrotum and cinched it snug … She placed a gloved hand on a cold metal handle and cranked it half a rotation. The handles drove squeaky gears. The mechanism was archaic and rusty and hadn't been used…She muscled it, and the platform lowered until the wire to the ceiling drew taut … the platform would lower while Jimmy's wrists and ankles would stay bound at the original height. If he could keep his entire body rigid, the noose wouldn't pull tighter and do any damage. As long as he could hold all of his muscles tensed and keep his body hanging stiffly in space, he'd keep his testicles. (90–92)

Without spoiling more of the action, the existence of the Jimmy scream in the world of *The Invention of Sound* provides a clue as to what happens next.

The reason for the excessive response to the Jimmy scream is the excessive brutality and painfulness of the experience it communicates. The film industry as presented in the novel measures the value of a scream (and this value, in the case of Ives Foley Arts, is in the five-figure range) by its ability to disturb an audience to such a degree that it needs to consume a film repeatedly: "the only way a person had to process an experience so troubling was by sharing it […] A troubled person wanted everyone else to see and hear it on the big screen. Multiple times. Ticket after

ticket. Until the experience stopped leaving them so shaken" (27). In this view, the Jimmy scream is perfect, were it not for the fact that most people who hear it in the proximity of others end up underneath a pile of rubble. The Jimmy scream, then, functions as a sardonic comment on the commodification of pain, on the transformation of humans into human resources. In this regard, the novel can be read as a critique of an industry that thrives on the fungibility of authenticity, or at least it does so until it has taken in more than its tympan can suffer. If it was not for Mitzi, *The Invention of Sound*, and the Jimmy scream in particular, could be read as a confirmation of the values attributed to hearing in the audio-visual litany.

Unlike other people, Mitzi remains curiously unaffected by any of the screams she records. This might not seem particularly curious in view of her ability to torture and kill people, which clearly indicates a psychopathic tendency and attendant inability to feel empathy, were it not for the revelation that Mitzi neither tortured nor murdered anyone herself – she only manages the recordings. Without going into the details of this revelation, it is important to point out that she habitually drugs herself with Ambien and wine before she begins her work, which is the reason she considers herself the murderer until she discovers the truth. If Mitzi is not a psychopath, the question of why she remains unaffected by the screams that reduce other people to being merely a body becomes more pressing. On several occasions, readers witness how she browses through her large archive of recorded screams without showing any particular emotion. The novel does not explicitly contextualise this seeming disaffection as an act of concentrated attention to sound *as* sound, as is the case for Parvaiz, but the text strongly implies a similar strategy on Mitzi's part, be it conscious or not.

The novel unusually insists on the specificity of the technical set-up for Mitzi's seemingly gruesome recordings, for example, for the "Praying Girl" recording, once again featuring the subject tied up underneath an array of microphones:

> She [Mitzi] lowered a Shure Vocal SM57 until it almost touched the girl's lips. Next to it, an old-school ribbon mic waited, like something left over from Orson Welles's radio days. Reaching in from other directions were can mics. A shotgun mic dangled down. Each connected to its own preamp. She waited for the girl to speak, watching for the needles to jump on each of the VU meters in this, her palace of analog. (41–42)

In that moment, the young woman wakes up from a drug-induced slumber, expressing relief when she recognises Mitzi, with whom she talked at

a restaurant and who invited her for a recording. Mitzi seems unaware of the woman other than as a recording subject: "I need to check my levels. Can you tell me what you had for breakfast?" The answer to this question leads to further acoustic calibrations: "The popping *p's* and *b's* pegged the analog needles into the red. Over-saturating the recording, making it warm. But clipping the digital, turning it into useless static. Mitzi pulled the Shure back a little more" (42). I said that the novel *unusually* insists on the details of the set-up because it repeats it word-for-word in a later passage (181). This repetition seems, in part, intended to instil in readers a vague sense of déjà-vu that accompanies Mitzi's Ambien-and-wine-addled short-term memory. It also comments on Hollywood's basic economic premise of "turning people's basic humanity into something that could be bought and sold" (34). Additionally, and for the purposes of my argument, most importantly, the insistence on the elaborate technical set-up, which in turn hints at Mitzi's obsession with getting the sound right, contextualises Mitzi's disaffection as a form of inattention mediated through concentrated attention on an object: sound. It is, in part, by focusing on the popping p's and b's that Mitzi manages to dissociate herself from her victims. Mitzi, who, like Parvaiz, has a much keener sense of the properties of sound than most people, uses this ability to distract herself from what the sounds represent. As in Parvaiz's case, a keen auditory sensibility can be turned against intersubjective understanding.

Conclusion: More of the Same Heard from the Garden Shed

The purpose of this essay has not been to dwell on listening as a sensory act to debunk the ethical potential of a metaphorical conception of listening. Instead, I contend that the ready availability of listening as a metaphor for understanding runs the risk of falling in line with an easy celebration of sound as a means of affective intersubjectivity. Attentive listening, I hope to have shown, is as much a matter of intellection and intersubjective distance as it is of sympathy and understanding. To conclude, I want to indicate a way in which attentive listening understood in concrete and sensory terms might yet provide a means of bridging the divide between humans at odds with each other. To do so, I need to return to *Home Fire* and Parvaiz's sound project as well as his radicalisation.

Shamsie makes clear that one reason Parvaiz gravitates towards Farooq is not simply his yearning for a masculine father figure but the fact that this older man takes his acoustic sensitivity seriously – or at least

feigns interest in it. He is the only person who offers to listen to Parvaiz's recordings, a reel of sound effects he is compiling to be sent out to video game companies in the hope of securing a job. Farooq also appeals to Parvaiz's interest more directly during his recruitment. In the Caliphate, Farooq promises him, "someone like you would find himself working in a state-of-the-art studio" (Shamsie 144). In contrast, Isma and Aneeka respond less enthusiastically, if not dismissively, to Parvaiz's interest in sound. This is understandable given that Parvaiz's idea of future planning consists of working on said reel of video game sound effects. Confronted with his older sister's hard-faced pragmatism, he feels indignant at Isma not having faith in him being "good enough to find work doing what he loved, [that she] didn't see that his sound reel was as much of an investment in the future as Aneeka's law degree" (119). While Aneeka does not adopt this stance towards his plans, she is blithely uninterested in them. For example, she good-humouredly ridicules his sound project as "More of the Same Heard from the Garden Shed," and it is this project, more specifically her sonic presence in this project, that becomes the most damning indication in the novel that the people in Parvaiz's lives failed to listen to him – not because they did not listen to his words, but because they failed to listen to what he listens to.

During one recording session, Aneeka, who has not seen much of Parvaiz at the time, climbs up onto the shed and asks him what is on his mind. Her question is caught on the recording. "It might be nice to leave in that 'Where are you these days?' between 20:13 and 20:14," Parvaiz thinks; it would be "the only human voice" in the audio files making up his project. While waiting for his plane to take off from London to Istanbul and, eventually, to Raqqa, Parvaiz searches his phone for this audio file. He uploads it to a shared cloud account and then deletes Aneeka from his phone. Aside from its obvious sentimentality, which is not devoid of the mock-heroic gesture of a young man believing himself on the way to glory and righteous action, the gesture expresses a complex affectivity: as a track excised from his larger project, rather than the entire project itself, it retains a passive-aggressive note, suggesting that Aneeka would not care for the parts that do not contain her voice. In this regard, the gesture is an accusation, and it suggests that the soundscape, that which Parvaiz was listening to, would have been an opportunity to understand him in a way that he came to believe only someone like Farooq could. Literal listening, in this perspective, might offer a means for sympathy, but rather than listening to another person, meaningful intersubjectivity might emerge from the type of shared listening that had its heyday in the (first)

era of mix tapes. In other words, to understand someone by listening to what they are listening to.[7]

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Is English an Asian Language?

In this chapter I shall argue that English has become an indigenous Asian language. After extensive language contact, Asian varieties of English have developed, so that it is now a language not only *in* Asia but *of* Asia (Kachru, "English" 102–103). Indeed, I shall show how English has extended into perhaps unexpected roles, roles traditionally filled by local languages. I shall support the argument by providing examples of Asian varieties of English and of Asian literatures written in English which illustrate how the cultures of Asia are reflected in these literatures. The tension between those authors who feel that they have been able to 'stretch' and reshape English to reflect their own cultural experiences and those who see writing in English as a form of cultural treason will be reviewed. I shall also give examples of the wide range of functions for which English is currently used within Asia, functions which Asian languages might normally be expected to fulfil. The teaching of English for Islamic values and purposes in the mosque schools of Indonesia and the continued use of English in many Asian legal systems will be given as two instances of this. The article will also distinguish between 1) the roles played by Asian varieties of English – primarily, but not exclusively, as markers of cultural identity – and 2) the role of English as a lingua franca within Asia – primarily, but not exclusively, as a medium of communication between communities and cultures. I shall conclude by asking whether English as an Asian language is threatening the roles and status of languages in Asia.

Keywords: English as an Asian language; Asian literature in English; English as a lingua franca; Asian varieties of English; post-colonialism

1 English Users in Asia

English has been spoken in Asia for at least 500 years. It arrived in India at the beginning of the seventeenth century when Queen Elizabeth I granted a group of traders a monopoly who then established the East India Company (EIC). They started trading in Calcutta (Kolkata), Bombay

(Mumbai) and later Madras (Chennai) (Gilmour). The presence of the East India company did not mean that a whole host of English speakers suddenly descended on the sub-continent. One reason for this was that missionaries, who normally swiftly follow traders, were banned by the EIC for fear that they would cause unrest "with their zeal and enthusiasm for conversion" (Gilmour 17). The majority of English speakers in India at the time were soldiers. Even by 1850, there were only 10,000 British civilians in Asia. What gave English a firm foothold was the English *Education Act* of 1835 and Macaulay's (in)famous "Minute on Indian Education" in the same year. The *Education Act* identified funds for the education of Indians, including the teaching of English.

Parts of Macaulay's "Minute" makes uncomfortable reading today, although some contemporary proponents of the use of English as a medium of instruction in universities in non-Anglophone countries may still believe Macaulay's assertions.

> [...] English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic [...]. It may be safely said that the literature now extant in that language (i.e. English) is of far greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together. (Sharp 57–58)

It is important to stress that the British only aimed to teach English to an elite group of Indians so that they might become, in Macaulay's words, "Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (Sharp 57). While, initially, English was taught to the upper classes, demand for English grew, precisely because it was seen as a passport to becoming a member of the elite. There has been much debate and controversy within India about the role of English. Both Gandhi and Nehru had hoped that independence would see English removed from India and replaced by Hindi (Graddol 52). Speakers of Indian languages other than Hindi, on the other hand, campaigned for the retention of English. For example, students at Bangalore University adopted the slogan "Kill kill Hindi. Kiss kiss English" (Kirkpatrick "Is English" 14; Nault 80). Today, English operates across a wide range of functions (D'Souza 145–159) and remains as an official associate language. Today, the population of India stands at some 1.3 billion. A recent survey (Bolton & Bacon-Shone 49–80; see Table 1 below) places the number of English users in India today at 260 million, representing about 20 percent of the population. As will be illustrated below, it is a language now adopted by people of lower social status, including members of the so-called 'Untouchable' caste, the Dalits.

To turn now to China, the most highly populated country in Asia, the same survey (see Table 2 below) places the number of English users in China even higher than in India with a figure of 276 million. This is a remarkable figure not least because, unlike India, China was never a colony of an English-speaking empire. English never attained any institutional or official role in China as was the case in those countries of Asia which were colonies of Britain (such as Sri Lanka and Malaysia) or of the United States (for instance, the Philippines). Bolton recounts the first contact between British traders and the Chinese as recorded in volumes 1 and 2 of *The Travels of Peter Mundy*, published in the seventeenth century (182–183). Trade between the British and the Chinese, primarily conducted through middlemen known as *compradors*, soon developed, as did a contact language known as 'pidgin' (or business) English (Bolton 182). Unlike in India, missionaries followed traders and they established schools across China, where English was often taught alongside local vernaculars. It was China's ignominious defeat in the Opium Wars of the mid–nineteenth century that made the weakening Qing Dynasty realise the importance of learning English for acquiring modern technologies, the lack of which had caused their defeat. Since then, China has enjoyed a love-hate relationship with English, often portrayed as the language of the enemy, the language of the running dogs of imperialism, or instead as a crucial and valuable tool. Today, it is the second language of education in China, after the national language, *Putonghua*, and its written form, Modern Standard Chinese, and is introduced as a compulsory subject from Grade 3 of primary school.

India and China provide the majority of English speakers in Asia, but there are millions of English speakers in other Asian countries. Bolton and Bacon-Shone (53; 60) have calculated the total number of English users in Asia, using data from surveys and government censuses. Table 1 lists countries which were colonies of English-speaking empires and Table 2 lists those that were not. Both tables have been slightly adapted. Note that Myanmar, while it was a colony of Britain, is placed in Table 2 as, after the military coup in 1962, the country virtually became closed and English was removed from all curricula and its functions radically reduced. The total number of English speakers in Asia is therefore approaching 800 million. This is more than the total number of those who speak English as a first language. There is no doubt, therefore, that English is in Asia.

Society	Current estimates	Approx. total of English speakers
Singapore	80%	3.1 million
Philippines	65%	66.7 million
Brunei	60%	0.2 million
Hong Kong	53%	3.9 million
Malaysia	50%	15.5 million
Pakistan	25%	50.9 million
Sri Lanka	25%	5.3 million
Bangladesh	20%	32.6 million
India	20%	260.0 million
Total		**438.2 million**

Table 1. English speakers in post-colonial countries

Nepal	30%	8.5 million
Macau	28%	0.2 million
China	20%	276.0 million
Myanmar (Burma)	10%	5.2 million
Japan	10%	12.5 million
South Korea	10%	5.1 million
Taiwan	10%	2.4 million
Thailand	10%	6.5 million
Vietnam	10%	4.6 million
Cambodia	5%	0.8 million
Indonesia	5%	13.0 million
Laos	5%	0.3 million
Total		**335.1 million**

Table 2. English speakers in countries with no historical English colonial rule

2 Uses of English in Asia

In arguing that English is both in and of Asia, Kachru ("English" 102–103) lists five uses of English. They are:

(i)   as a vehicle of linguistic communication across distinct linguistic and cultural groups;

(ii) as a nativised medium for articulating local identities within and across Asia;

(iii) as one of the Pan-Asian languages of creativity;

(iv) as a language that has developed its own subvarieties indicating penetration at various levels;

(v)   as a language that continues to elicit a unique love-hate relationship that, nevertheless, has not seriously impeded its spread, function and prestige.

The first use here, as a vehicle of linguistic communication across distinct linguistic and cultural groups, is evidenced by the numbers reported in the tables above. Later in the paper, examples of the use of English as a lingua franca by Asian multilinguals will be provided in support.

Use (ii), as a nativised medium for articulating local identities within and across Asia is evidenced by the development of different varieties of Asian English. These nativised indigenised L2 varieties have typically developed in countries which were colonies of English speaking empires. In the context of Asia, examples include Bruneian English, Filipino English, Indian English, Malaysian English, Singaporean English and Sri Lankan English. For some people in places such as the Philippines and Singapore, these indigenised varieties have actually become their speakers' first languages. Schneider has proposed that colonial and postcolonial varieties of English go through the following five stages of development:

(i)   The Foundation Stage. This is when English arrives in a new territory.

(ii) Exonormative stabilisation. This is when the educated variety of the colonial country becomes established as a norm and is the classroom model. This period also sees the development of elite bilingualism.

(iii) Nativisation. The nativisation phase sees the adoption of local phonological, structural and cultural features as a new variety of English develops.

(iv) Endonormative stabilisation. This typically occurs after independence and the local variety becomes established and is seen as socially acceptable and respectable.

(v) Differentiation. At this stage, the new variety starts to develop sub-varieties.

These varieties are situated at different stages and at which stage to place the different Asian varieties of English is the subject of debate (e.g. Deterding; Evans; Buschfeld et al., Hundt). However, it is argued here that the mature varieties such as Indian, Filipino and Singaporean have reached the final stage in that different sub-varieties of these Englishes can be readily distinguished. Example (1) below is of colloquial Singaporean English and it exemplifies Kachru's second use, as a nativised medium for communicating local identities. In the example, an administrator is bemoaning the fact that a contractor appears to have gone missing. As with all varieties of World Englishes, Singaporean English is a contact variety characterised by code-mixing and translanguaging. This excerpt includes Chinese dialect (in italics) and Malay (underlined; Pulau Ubin is the name of an island):

(1) Pulau Ubin *zuo mo*? Makan seafood or phatoh? Emails he takes like 2 days later. Then when I reply to ask further, lagi 2 days gone

'Why Pulau Ubin? Is he there for seafood or a date? He takes two days to answer his emails and when I replied with more questions, another two days go by.' (Cavallero et al. 422)

The translation into 'standard' English is necessary, as only speakers of this variety will be able to understand it. These contact varieties of World English act very much as identity markers and are, by definition, used with people who share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds. For example, in the excerpt above, the combined use of Malay, Chinese and English marks the speaker's identity as a speaker of this variety of English. As will be illustrated below, this identity function is reduced when Asian multilinguals are using English as a lingua franca as then they are, by definition, interacting with people who do not share similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This is not to say, however, that when used as a lingua franca, the language does not express identity, only that its major function becomes one of communication.

Educated varieties of Asian Englishes are also seen in mature varieties of Asian Englishes. These will naturally contain words from local lan-

guage in the same way that Australian English has borrowed words from Australian Aboriginal languages. *Kangaroo*, *koala* and *boomerang* are just three of hundreds of such borrowings (Dixon et al.). Words from local languages are needed to explain or portray local phenomena. Items of food, clothing and terms for local customs are commonly borrowed. Such borrowing can also reflect creativity and humour in the development of neologisms. In 2018, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) called for new words from Filipino English and then published several of those supplied by Filipinos who responded to the call. One such word was *trapo*. As the *OED* commentary notes:

> But perhaps no other word is more quintessentially Filipino than the word *trapo* – a derogatory term for a politician perceived as belonging to a conventional and corrupt ruling class. *Trapo i*s a combination of the two words that make up the English phrase *traditional politician*, but it is also the Spanish word for a cleaning cloth, which has also been borrowed into Tagalog and other Philippine languages. This elevates *trapo* from a simple portmanteau to a clever and provocative play on words that equates a corrupt politician to a dirty rag, and from a mere loanword to a five-letter distillation of centuries of Philippine political, cultural, and linguistic history. ("Trapo," *Oxford English Dictionary* Supplement)

Examples (2) and (3) below come from different varieties of Indian English. Example (2) comes from a teenage journal and records two young girls chatting.

> (2) Two rival groups are out to have fun … you know generally indulge in *dhamal* and pass time. So, what do they do? They pick on a *bechaara bakra* who has just entered college (D'Souza 152)

Dhamal is of Sanskrit origin and traditionally referred to a type of Sufi dance but now refers to dance in general. *Beechara bakra* are Hindi words which mean 'poor goat.'

Example (3) is literary and taken from an academic book discussing Indian literature written in English. It contains no code mixing but is marked by Indian rhetorical tropes in its use of extended metaphor and what Kachru has called 'phrase-mongering' (*Indianization* 40).

> (3) Years ago, a slender sapling from a foreign field was grafted by "pale hands" on the mighty and many-branched Indian banyan tree. It has kept growing vigorously and now an organic part of its parent tree it has spread its own probing roots into the brown soil below. (Naik & Narayan 253)

This third example illustrates use of a World English as a literary medium for expressing the culture and lived experiences of its new users. It is worth noting that code-switching here is not limited to linguistic borrowing from local languages but also includes the borrowing of stylistic and rhetorical tropes. This use fulfils the third function on Kachru's list above, where English functions as one of the Pan-Asian languages of creativity. And it is to Asian literatures in English that I now turn.

3 Asian Literatures in English

While some authors feel that their variety of English can be shaped to reflect accurately their own background and culture, others feel that to write in English is a form of "cultural treason" (Wikkramasinha, qtd. in Canagarajah 375) and results in "psychological amputation" (Schmied 119). Perhaps the best-known voice arguing against the use of English to create local literary works is that of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, the Kenyan writer who now writes primarily in Kikuyu, his native language. In his book, *Decolonising the Mind*, he writes that, "In Kenya, English became more than a language: it was the language and all the others had to bow before it in deference" (11). He goes on to report that children who were found to be speaking Kikuyu in school were forced to wear "a metal plate round the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY" (11). Perhaps what was even worse, students were encouraged to tell on their fellows if they were caught speaking Kikuyu: "Thus children were turned into witch-hunters and, in the process, were being taught the lucrative value of being a traitor to one's immediate community" (11). But as Ngũgĩ goes on to say "Language, any language has a dual culture: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture" (13). The question that arises is whether it is possible for English, in the guise of a local contact variety, to be a carrier of the culture of its new speakers. Many writers from Asian colonial backgrounds believe that it can. The Indian novelist and poet, Raja Rao, argued that,

> We shall have English with us and amongst us, and not as our guest or friend, but as one of our own, of our castes, our creed, our sect and of our tradition […]. We cannot write like the English. We should not. We can only write like Indians. (qtd. in Srivastava & Sharma 190–205)

The Pakistani novelist, Bapsi Sidhwa, expressed similar sentiments in arguing that English could be adapted to suit local needs and contexts.

"English […] is no longer a monopoly of the British. We the ex-colonised have subjugated the language, beaten it on its head and made it ours" (231). The Filipino poet, Abad, has said almost exactly the same thing: "English is now ours. We have colonised it too" (170). And in their opening speech at the 2021 Swiss Association of University Teachers of English (SAUTE) *Migrations and Contacts* conference, Michael Frank and Daniel Schreier cited Salman Rushdie's belief that, "the English language has ceased to be the sole possession of the English."

I shall give below some examples of Asian literatures written in English to illustrate that English can be adapted to successfully reflect the cultures of the Asian authors writing in English. In this way, English has thus become a Pan-Asian language of creativity. The first example (4) comes from the Sri Lankan poet, Lakdasa Wikkramasinha, the writer cited above who felt that to write in English was a form of cultural treason. Fortunately, he still continued to write in English and left poetry of great beauty. This poem is called "The Cobra" and recounts the death of the narrator's wife, killed by a cobra, which has subsequently been killed by the villagers (perhaps – see below) and whose head has been hung up for all to see.

(4) The Cobra

Your great hood was like a flag
hung up there
in the village
Endlessly the people came to Weragoda
watched you (your eyes like braziers)
standing somewhat afar
They stood before you in obeisance. Death,
The powers of the paramitas, took you to heaven
However
The sky, vertical, is where you are now
shadowing the sun, curling round and round my mind
They whisper death stories
but it was only my woman, Dunkiriniya,
the very lamp of my heart
that died.

Sri Lankan scholars such as Arjuna Parakrama and D.C.R.A. Goonetilleka have criticised the poem on the grounds that a dead cobra's head could not look like a flag or that its eyes could be like braziers (Dissanayake). In contrast, others have pointed out that the cobra must have been alive when the villagers came to view it – that explains why they stood 'some-

what afar.' But surely the main point is that it is a beautiful poem that illustrates the poet's linguistic and cultural affiliations. 'Paramitas' is a Buddhist term referring to the noble character traits associated with enlightened beings.

Abayasekera has discussed a number of Sri Lankan migrant writers, who now live in North America and the United Kingdom and asked whether migrant writers can write authentically about the countries of their birth. One such novel, Anuk Arudpragasam's *A Passage North*, takes the devastation of Sri Lanka's civil war as its theme and has recently been nominated for the Booker Prize. The author, who was born in Sri Lanka and is a frequent visitor, has noted that the book is "more about witnessing violence from afar than it is about experiencing it up close," but this reflects his own experience of witnessing the violence from afar – in his case from the capital, Colombo (Arudpragasam).

A migrant writer who has written compellingly about the land of his birth is the Chinese novelist Ha Jin, who now lives in Boston. Example (5) is an excerpt from one of his short stories, "In Defence of Foreignness." The head of a unit is interviewing a new arrival.

(5) "Your name?" the chief asked, apparently reading out the question from a form.
"Chiu Maguang"
"Age"
"Thirty-four"
"Profession?"
"Lecturer"
"Work unit?"
"Harbin University"
"Political status?"
"Communist Party member"

Two questions from this short dialogue are worthy of comment. The first is the use of the phrase 'work unit.' This is a direct translation of the Chinese term *danwei*. A *danwei* is much more than simply a place of work. For example, state owned enterprises would provide their workers housing, health care and education for the children. The question 'Political status?' also reflects life in a China ruled by the Communist Party. "A person's political status can be as a Communist Party Member, a Youth League Member, a Young Pioneer or simply a member of the masses" (Xu 286). This brief record of an interrogation, while written in English, is infused with Chinese culture. Yet Ha Jin is careful not to translate Chinese idioms directly into English but rather to paraphrase them. For

example, the literal translation of a Chinese idiom referring to investing in a questionable business venture is "to hit a dog with a pork bun." This he renders as "to hit a dog with a meatball" as he feels this better suits the context (Ha Jin 466). This is an example of what Pitzl has called "remeta-phorisation" (317), although in Ha Jin's case this is carefully planned and not an *ad hoc* construction, as are Pitzl's examples. But he is in no doubt that English can reflect the cultures of its new users and that English is immeasurably enhanced by this process: "One unique glory that English has is a body of literature created by writers to whom English is not a given but an acquisition" (Ha Jin 461).

Writing in English when it is an acquired language is not without its struggles of course. Ha Jin cites this excerpt from Salman Rushdie's *Imaginary Homelands*:

> Those of us who do use English do so in spite of our ambiguity towards it, or perhaps because of that, perhaps because we can find in that linguistic struggle a reflection of other struggles within ourselves and the influences at work upon our societies. To conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free. (Rushdie 17, qtd. in Ha Jin 468)

This leads back to Ngũgi's *Decolonising the Mind* and his assertion that "Language, any language has a dual culture: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture" (13). The examples of Asian literatures in English cited above suggest that English, in its guise as an Asian variety of English, can carry the culture of its new users. An Asian variety of English can therefore help decolonise the mind. As Lim et al. have argued,

> While it is undeniable that the English language is a legacy of British conquest and colonialism, and English is often regarded in Asian societies as a language of commerce and technology, Asian literature in English shows the critical and creative potential of the language beyond such instrumental uses… these writers… use English within their own terms to recollect histories, remember journeys, and represent conflicts within and between the communities and nation-states situated in the vast expanse of Asia. (806, ellipses in original)

In this way, English robustly fulfils Kachru's third use, as a Pan-Asian language of creativity. I now turn to consider the fourth function Kachru enumerated, that English is a language that has developed its own sub-varieties, indicating penetration at various levels. We saw above that mature varieties of Asian Englishes have developed their own sub-varieties.

Here, I focus on the wide range of contexts in which English is now used in many Asian settings and this will also further illustrate the development of sub-varieties. First, the role of English in liberating the so-called 'Untouchables' caste of India, the Dalits, will be briefly reviewed.

In an article that presents a cogent counter-argument to Phillipson's theory of Linguistic Imperialism (Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*) and his categorisation of English as a 'Linguafrankensteinia' (Phillipson, "Lingua franca"), Choudhury records how the Dalits have espoused English as a language of liberation from the Brahmanic caste system:

> one has to acknowledge the fact that (western/colonial) 'modernity' that comes with English is something that is not accessible to the 'untouchables' – the Dalits and Bahujans whose marginalisation has been justified over centuries by dominant varieties of Hinduism. (Choudhury 115)

Choudhury then quotes the Dalit writer, Limbale, pointing out the advantages of there being an English translation of his autobiography:

> Because of English translation I get [a] world platform to present myself and my community […]. We want liberty, fraternity, freedom. We want to eradicate this cruel Hindu caste system. This message reached out [to the] world at large through English translation. (Choudhury 116)

Choudhury is also at pains to point out that this espousal of English as a language of liberation among the Dalits is not a postcolonial phenomenon. Savitribai Phule, "a crusader for girl education" (Choudhury 116), wrote poems in the 1850s urging the learning of English. The final stanza of the poem "Learn English" (117) reads,

> To learn English
> To dispel all woes
> Throw away the authority
> of the Brahmin and his teachings
> Break the shackles of caste.

Choudhury thus concludes that, far from being a 'linguafrankensteinia,' in a context such as India, "English has been an agency for the empowerment of subalternised groups like the Dalits" (118). As Brutt-Griffler argued some twenty years ago, English "owes its existence as a world language in large part to the struggle against imperialism, and not to imperialism alone," ix) In the example above, English is being used by Dalits as a potential tool of liberation from "the shackles of caste."

4 Penetration of English: Religion and Law

The second role that English is playing to be discussed here is related to the first in that English is playing a major role in religions across Asia (Kirkpatrick, "Is English"). Here I shall focus on its role in Islam. English is currently taught in many *madrassas*, schools which specialise in Islamic instruction and which are often attached to mosques. In Bangladesh, both state and privately run *madrassas* offer English in response to government demands that their curriculum be modernised, although the students' scores in this subject are lower than those in public education (World Bank). The situation is somewhat different in Pakistan, where there are some 4000 *madrassas*, the majority being operated by the Sunni sect of Islam. The government has long been trying to persuade these schools to offer English but with little success to date. The opposition to English comes from the *Ulema*, the Council of Muslim scholars, who fear English as it is seen to challenge their view of the world. As Rahman reports, "the average *madrassa* student still has a medieval perception of the world" (5).

English is also taught in the *madrassas* of Indonesia, although, as there are some 40,000 of these, most of which are privately operated, it is difficult to generalise. However, Nashruddin, an Indonesian English teacher who spent ten years teaching at a *madrassa* in the Indonesian province of Western Java has recounted his experiences. He notes the value of English for his students as they can use English to counter the perception that Islam is a religion of violence and terrorism. "Muslims can counter this untruth by telling people embracing different religions that Islam does not support terrorism" (69). Nashruddin adds that a major goal of learning English is to "provide students with adequate knowledge and skills in using English language in their daily lives (e.g., in conversation)" so that, for example, "students are able to explain how to perform *shalat*, how many pillars of Islam there are, and what Islam is" (76; also see Kirkpatrick, "Is English" 152–155).

Boarding schools attached to mosques in Indonesia are called *pesantren* and many of these too have introduced English into their curricula. One might expect that parents would be cautious about allowing their children access to English for fear that they will be introduced to values that run counter to their own. However, as Didin Fahrudin notes, parents are happy for their children to enrol in courses with titles such as 'English for Islamic purposes.' A simple example of what this might mean is that students are taught to append the Arabic phrase *Insya'Allah* (Allah will-

ing) to all sentences expressing plans for the future, as would be the case when using Arabic, Indonesian and many of the other languages of Indonesia.

The role of English as a proselytiser of Islam in the Indonesian context has been recounted by Anita Dewi. She asked university academic staff their views of the role and place of English. The staff represented a number of different universities – including Islamic, Christian and secular – in the city of Yogyakarta. None of the staff surveyed perceived English as a threat. The Muslim staff reported that English could benefit them and their religion saying, for example, "[English] is also necessary for us to master English for proselytising," "English helps the development of my religion," and "English can deliver information about my religion" (22).

A further area where English has penetrated in many countries across Asia is the law. As Powell has reported, the legal systems of Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan and Singapore remain based on the system of Common Law introduced by the British. This was also the case in Hong Kong where legislation is enacted in both Chinese and English. However, as Bolton et al. note,

> There are hundreds of thousands of reported cases which form the basis of the common law, and it would obviously be impractical to attempt to translate these into Chinese. While in future there is likely to be an increasing number of judgments in Hong Kong delivered in Chinese, English will continue to be the only medium in which the majority of judgments from overseas is reported. (460)

At the time of writing, the legal system inherited by the people of Hong Kong is being replaced by the Chinese judicial system; and many would argue that losing this colonial legacy will be to their disadvantage.

The legal role English is playing in parts of Asia can perhaps best be represented as follows:

India,	English remains a language of the law and sole language of the Supreme Court
Pakistan	English as official language, but Urdu also allowed in the Supreme Court
Bangladesh	Muslim and Hindu marriages regulated through English
Philippines	English most used language of the courts Shariah law has been codified in English for Muslim population

Malaysia	Malay used but English still allowed
	(In the provinces of Eastern Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak), English is sole language of law)

<div align="right">(Powell 863–886)</div>

This brief treatment of the role English is playing in areas such as religion and the law illustrates its penetration at the national level. When considering the Asian region as a whole, English is the default medium for legal and trade matters and for dispute arbitration. English is the sole working language of the ten nations that make up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The South Asian Association of Regional Co-operation (SAARC) holds its meetings in English (Kirkpatrick, "Is English"). This role of English as a lingua franca across Asia will be considered in the next section of the article.

5 English as an Asian Lingua Franca

So far, the functions English is playing in Asia have been reviewed. These functions have been fulfilled through the development of regional varieties of English that reflect the cultures and lived experiences of their speakers. The regional varieties of English are used as markers of identity among people who share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As such, they are characterised by code-mixing and borrowing from the local languages that form their speakers' linguistic repertoire. Thus, for instance, the example of colloquial Singaporean English provided in (1) above comprises borrowings from Malay and Chinese. The poem, "The Cobra," contains a host of Sri Lankan cultural references.

When English is being used as a lingua franca it is a medium of communication that has been chosen by people who come from different linguistic backgrounds but who share a knowledge of English. The use of English as a lingua franca has been defined by Seidlhofer as "any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice" (7). Lingua franca speakers are less likely to code mix as they know their interlocutors come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Below are examples taken from the Asian Corpus of English (ACE), a corpus of naturally occurring English being used as a lingua franca by Asian multilinguals (ACE is freely accessible for researchers at www.corpus.eduhk.hk/ace/). That English is a common choice of a lingua franca among these Asian multilinguals is

further evidence that it has become a language not only in Asia but of Asia. Examples of Asian multilinguals talking about language have been deliberately chosen here to illustrate their attitudes to and uses of English. Example (6) records a Bruneian female (S2), who is ethnically Chinese, talking about the languages she grew up with. Her interlocutors are a Filipina (S1), a Thai male (S3) and a Vietnamese female (S4). SX indicates that it is not possible to determine who is speaking and SX-f means that a female is speaking but it is not possible to determine which one (see also Kirkpatrick, "Is English" 65)

> (6) S2: my first language when i fam- when i'm at home in the family are actually dialect chinese dialects i speak a few languages well i speak to my father in a different dialect i speak to my mother in a different dialect-kay so that is when i am at the age of one one to three one to four
> SX-family
> S3: chinese dialect
> S1: growing
> S2: so two dialects growing at the same time and at the same time our neighbours spoke malay
> S4: mhm
> S2: we live in an area where there were a lot of malays there were a lot of malays li- living in the area as well
> S1: your mother's chinese
> S2: my father's chinese my mother is chinese
> S2: erm so but we spo- i spoke dialect chinese: so i had so i grew up with a lot of languages around me
> S1: that's interesting
> S2: and i don't i don't actually remember how i i only knew that i was drilled in grammar but erm i felt for a ve- very long time that even when i was i can still think back and i was in kindergarten i could understand the teacher
> SX-f: okay
> S2: and she spoke erm english
> S2: at that time so it wasn't a major difficulty because i was so small and so young
> S1: eah yeah so what would you say is er what is your first language now
> S2: definitely english now i mean english has become i think in english i
> S3: English english
> S4: so you have so you have your mo- mother tongue father tongue
> S2: in the language i use most
> S1: neighbourhood tongue

In this excerpt, the Bruneian explains that she grew up speaking different varieties of Chinese with her parents and Malay with her neighbours. She also started learning English when she went to school and now feels that

English has become her strongest language. In the second example from ACE, (7), an Indonesian male (S1) is talking to a Chinese-Malay female (S2) about the daughter of a mutual friend who is in England training as an English teacher (see also Kirkpatrick, "Is English" 66–67).

(7) S2: and she's she is been:: er: england before or not she's been in england before or not
S1: yes: been
S2: yah been she has been in england before or not
S1: before yes she's stu- er: she was study there
S2: uh-huh you sure
S1: yah:
S2: er i just last time we go to her room then i saw her daughter's picture daughter daughter's
S1: she graduated in england
S2: hh
S1: for the undergraduate
S2: o:h that's why she's:
S1: yah for the degree program that's why
S2: yah she speaks
S1: she can speak
S2: a lot yah
S1: english properly
S2: mhm
S1: and then even she cannot speak malay (laughter)
S2: she cannot
S1: she cannot er i mean she can but not fluently yah
S2: just a few oh
S1: she cannot speak engli- er:: malay fluently
S2: she's still here or she's already
S1: she's still here she she's: she teaches the: english course

In their conversation, the speakers note that their friend's daughter can speak English 'properly,' by which she means a native speaker standard, but that she now cannot speak Malay fluently. These two examples from ACE show how in multilingual contexts which are typical across Asia a learned language, English, can become a speaker's dominant language, replacing the speaker's mother tongue. I have described elsewhere (e.g. Kirkpatrick, "Is English" 162–178; Kirkpatrick & Liddicoat) how the adoption of English as the second language of education (after the respective national language) in many Asian school systems is threatening the existence of many Asian languages, so I will not repeat those arguments here. The adoption of English as the second language of education is, however, further evidence of its position as a language *of* as well as *in* Asia.

6 Conclusion

In this article I have argued that English has now become an Asian language. I have illustrated how English now fulfils the five uses enumerated by Kachru ("English" 102–103). It is used 1) as a vehicle of linguistic communication across distinct linguistic and cultural groups and 2) as a nativised medium for articulating local identities within and across Asia. The rise of Asian literatures in English makes English one of the Pan-Asian languages of creativity. And its role in a host of different contexts from literary uses to its use in law, education, religion and as the regional lingua franca across Asia has seen the development of sub-varieties and its penetration at various different levels. The debates and controversies surrounding its use as a literary language also illustrate that English continues to 'enjoy' a unique love-hate relationship among its speakers, but this has not seriously impeded its spread, function and prestige. On the contrary, its spread and reach is increasing across Asia as its speakers see the pragmatic value of learning the language. In addition to the functions illustrated above, the rapid increase in the use of English as a medium of instruction in Asian institutions of higher education is just one example (Fenton-Smith et al., Barnard & Hasim, Kirkpatrick & Knagg). This all points to the fact that English not only fulfils the five functions that Kachru originally formulated, but has now extended into new functions which previously have been fulfilled by local languages. This even includes fulfilling functions typically fulfilled by the national language as is the case in education where English has increasingly become the medium of instruction.

New nativised and nativising varieties of English have developed to adequately fulfil these functions. These new varieties are characterised by contact with local languages, evident in code-mixing and borrowing. These new varieties also reflect the cultures and lived experiences of their speakers so much so that they have given rise to literatures in English. To repeat the point made by Lim et al. above, Asian writers "use English within their own terms to recollect histories, remember journeys, and represent conflicts within and between the communities and nation-states situated in the vast expanse of Asia" (806). In this way, as seen with the adoption of English as a language of struggle by the Dalits, English can itself be re-shaped to be a conduit for decolonising the mind.

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