Van Heijnsbergen, T. (2010) *William Lithgow's "Fierce Castalian Veine": travel writing and the re-location of identity.* In: McGinley, K.J. and Royan, N. (eds.) The Apparelling of Truth: Literature and Literary Culture in the Reign of James VI. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, UK, pp. 223-240. ISBN 9781443818735

http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/25743/

Deposited on: 21 November 2013

WILLIAM LITHGOW'S "FIERCE CASTALIAN VEINE": TRAVEL WRITING AND THE RE-LOCATION OF IDENTITY

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I

The present paper investigates the use William Lithgow (*ca*. 1582– *ca*. 1645) made of travel writing as a means to engage, through literary means, with Scotland as a decentred society after the Union of the Crowns and with his own consequent sense of dislocation. As the analysis below indicates, Lithgow's earlier writing conveys a longing for the days in which Scots still had a court-centred group of poets developing their own style of writing. James VI's departure to London had robbed the latter of their main focus and binding ingredient. Lithgow's publications all date from the post-1603 period, when the theological parameters that dominated Scottish cultural expression were generally not conducive to the growth of literary—in the modern sense of "creative"—writing. However, travel writing, like Petrarchan lyric a mimesis of instability, offered a format for the display of the metamorphic resourcefulness (and, thus, of fissures within the self) that the period demanded. It thus potentially allowed Lithgow to confront contemporary godly norms with discontinuous secular experience.

Travel writing is today usually troped as part of the postmodern and postcolonial "project of de-essentializing both researcher and subject of research" which views the subject as an amoeba-like shapeshifter, embracing identity as impermanent, fluid, decentred (Wolff 1993, 226). Lithgow is indeed capable of using a literary persona and its rhetorical modes to trigger a wealth of different readings and engage creatively with the foreign, and he shows an awareness of the capacity of texts to suggest several layers of meaning. The most remarkable of his prose travel narratives is that of his journey to Jerusalem in his *Totall Discourse*

(Lithgow 1640b), which yokes together the extremes of profane experience and sacred location most dramatically. After sailing to Constantinople from Italy, he becomes a pedestrian knight errant in the final approach to the Holy Land, proudly disdaining any horse or vehicle in his picaresque adventures. Nevertheless, although thus critical of gratuitous excess, Lithgow does enjoy the good life, especially if it is free. Thus, on one occasion he carouses with a stranger until they are fastened together "in the last plunge of understanding", an evocative description that makes us aware of the distinction between the physical body recording the experience of travel on the one hand and the recording mind itself on the other: the latter literally has to take leave of its senses as the body continues to pursue its Bakhtinian trajectory (Lithgow 1640b, 223).[1] In such moments of self-abandonment, Lithgow steps outside himself to observe human foibles rather than to impose strict moral regulations on them. Similarly, in the following extract, we find our pilgrim naked in a tree, after swimming in the river Jordan, when his companions are attacked:

> I saw them at a martiall combate: which sight gave mee suddenly, the threatning of despaire: not knowing whether to stay intrenched, within the circumdating leaves, to approove the events of my auspicuous fortunes: Or in prosecuting a relief, to be participant of their doubtfull deliverance. In the end pondering, I … leapt downe from the tree, leaving my *Turkish* cloathes lying upon the ground, tooke onely in my hand the rod & *Shasse* which I wore on my head; and ranne starke naked above a quarter of a mile amongst thistles, and sharpe pointed grasse, which pittifully be pricked the soles of my feete, but the feare of death for the present expel'd the griefe of that unlooked for paine. Approaching on the safe side of my company, one of our Souldiers broak forth on horsebacke, being determined to kill mee for my staying behind: Yea, and three times stroke at mee with his halfe-pike; but his horse being at his speede, I prevented his cruelty, first by falling downe, next by running in amongst the thickest of the Pilgrimes, recovering the *Guardians* face, which when the *Guardian* espied; and saw my naked body, hee presently pulled off his gray gowne, and threw it to me whereby I might hide the secrets of nature: By which meanes (in the space of an houre) I was cloathed three manner of wayes: First, like a *Turke*: Secondly, like a wild *Arabian*: And thirdly, like a grey *Frier*, which was a barbarous, a savage and a religious habit.

> (Lithgow 1640b, 258–59)

This passage introduces several literary dimensions: in an exotic setting a self-romancing thistled Pict conveys his fascination with metamorphosis and plural identities in baroque language. Such terms of reference signal connections between Lithgow's travel writing and other literary discourses

and genres, and suggest that Lithgow was aware of having at his disposal a wide range of voices by means of which narrative can explore the heterogeneous nature of human identity, opening up spaces between author and narrator where literary features such as irony and ambiguity can come into being.

However, the number of such literarily exploratory moments in Lithgow's travel writing are too infrequent to sustain a narrative voice throughout which embraces, without silencing, all others. Lithgow's travel writing does not seek to create rhetorical postures for open-ended self-scrutiny: Lithgow's traveller already knows what he will discover (God's plan). Thus, James Burns has noted how Lithgow's literary echoes of early Protestant martyrology dramatize his role in a divine drama. Lithgow literarifies his encounter with the Spanish Inquisition as part of a "heavenly-ordained plan", linking the chronology of his tortures to Christmas, Lent, and Easter, with his suffering ending in salvation and redemption (J. R. Burns 1997, 118, 122, 229–40, 244–54). Again, in Constantinople, Lithgow teams up with a Frenchman to buy—with the Frenchman's money—a female slave on the slave market to give her back her freedom. They purchase a Dalmatian widow and rent a room for her. The next morning Lithgow, as he now tells us he had always suspected (1640b, 137), finds that the Frenchman has abused his position of power vis-à-vis the widow overnight, and he immediately collars this papist. But one wonders why, if Lithgow suspected, he did not prevent. To Lithgow, catching out the Catholic in order to prove a point about Catholicism is more important than preventing sexual exploitation. In real life as well as in its retrospective emplotment, both the Frenchman and the widow serve a preconceived politico-religious purpose along didactic narrative formulae.

This is typical of Lithgow's travel writing; he uses the genre to instance a self-sufficient moral self, "to make present to himself a conceptual schema which would give him immediate access to a certain authenticity", and "achieve a certain immediacy (of knowledge, of presence) through the realization of a priorly conceived project" (Abbeele 1980, 9, 13). This contradicts the way in which travel is today more usually analysed in postmodern and postcolonial criticism. There is little place in Lithgow's writing for modern "ethical imperatives of travel as a mode of encounter with difference that leads to the performative enactment of 'becoming other'", nor for Deleuze's "nomadic subject" who no longer knows the concept of home but assumes instead that we are always travelling, and that there is no longer any difference between rest and motion, or home and travel (Islam 1996, vii; Abbeele 1980, 13).

Consequently, as noted by J. R. Burns (1997, 43), Lithgow is represented by most modern critics as a reactionary, pugnacious bigot. Even positive comments, such as that his writing is vivid and has pace, conviction, and pungency of phrase, often imply limitations because of the overall aim of most analyses to express an opinion on Lithgow's opinions rather than analyse his use of literary techniques to influence reader response (Penrose 1952, 228, 323; Chew 1937, 39).

Yet Lithgow's implicit resistance to modern theoretical perspectives is exactly what makes him a fascinating literary traveller, because it sharply delineates his writing as paradoxical, a site of inner conflict. The latter is enhanced by the realities of travel in the regions that Lithgow visited: they were such that, in order to progress or even simply survive, he had to practice the very "nomadic" shape-shifting identity that his writing was trying to erase. Such tensions between author and text are further increased by the fact that, paradoxically, the categories through which Lithgow seeks to impose a totalizing, post-Reformation cultural identity—authority and ritual, religion and superstition, and their relations to sexual desire—as well as the genre of travel writing through which he chose to do so, are potentially quite heteroglossic. Moreover, because it is normally dynamic and self-referential, yoking together empirical observation with subjective experience, travel writing on many levels personalizes and thus intensifies such tensions between the manufacture of totalizing experience on the one hand and its disruption on the other.

The remainder of this chapter seeks to illustrate that Lithgow does articulate a constructive theory of travel, and that his writing does explore the literary representation of identity in relation to the experience of travel. To do so, this chapter uses non-postcolonial travel theory as the more applicable to Lithgow's writing.[2] Secondly, it takes into consideration Lithgow's verse: critics have tended to ignore Lithgow's volumes of poetry as well as the poems that regularly interrupt his prose travelogues, while editors have usually left out the commendatory poems to Lithgow by fellow authors, even though these shed considerable light on why he wrote and was read.[3] Finally, this chapter also provides new angles on Lithgow by aligning his literary practice with late-medieval and sixteenth-century Scottish writing rather than with early seventeenth-century English (travel-)writing, within the context of which it is more usually critically presented. This sharpens our appreciation of Lithgow's use of literary features—such as his use of rhetorical postures—that are continued from earlier Scottish writing, in defiance of cultural discontinuities introduced by the Union of the Crowns.

II

Lithgow developed a philosophy of travel as *Selbstbildung*; in *The Pilgrimes Farewell* travelling is "the light of Nature" that teaches how to "twixt good and ill discearne", a manifest echo of the educational bias of earlier humanist literature where literature was a form of moral philosophy, persuading the reader to commit to virtue through eloquently presented exempla thereof (Lithgow 1618, B4^v, C3^r).[4] That contemporary readers indeed made a conceptual link between travel and education is confirmed by one of the dedicatory epistles to the *Pilgrimes Farewell*, which holds that poems are "Trauelles to thy Minde" that provide "light" (ibid., A3^v). The opening of the most complete edition of Lithgow's travels thus urges young men to travel abroad so that they would be, "by sight and knowledge of forraine soyles and Lawes, growing more judicious", in contrast to the "insinuating hom[e]lings … pratling Parrots" who, lacking the experience that travel can bring, should not be given high office (Lithgow 1640b, 1–2).[5]

This emphasis on travel as practical civic experience takes on more existential dimensions in Lithgow's introduction to his second journey. After a short disquisition on how academic sciences are subdivided, Lithgow adds a new one:

> the most necessary, to wit, the science of the world. This is it above al things that preferreth men to honors, and the charges that make great houses and Reipublicks to flourish, and render the actions, and words of them who possesse it it [*sic*], agreeable both to great and small. This science is onely acquisted by conversation, and haunting the company of the most experimented: by divers discourses, reports by writs, or by a lively voice in communicating with strangers; and in the judicious consideration of the fashion of the living one with an other. And above all, and principally by Travellers, and Voyagers in divers Regions, and remote places, whose experience confirmeth the true Science thereof; and can best draw the anatomy of humane condition.
>
> <div align="right">(Lithgow 1640b, 341)</div>

As this passage indicates, Lithgow has a categorical, normative mindset, looking to authorize rather than question institutionalized interpretations of events. Nevertheless, detailing the reasons for his travels does trigger a more investigative, inward-looking tone. The above continues,

> to an unconstant disposition, every accident is a constelation, by which best thoughts are diversified, & driven from the center of deepest resolution: whiles contrariwise the sound set man, though by opportunity

altereth his pace, yet still keepeth his way, serveth time for advantage, not for feare; but as the Sun setteth to rise againe, so he changeth his course, to continue his purpose. Wherein touching my particular, whether discontent or curiosity drove me to this second perambulation, it is best reserved to my own knowledge: As for the opinion of others, I little care either for there sweetest temper, or their sowrest censure; for they that hunt after other mens fancies … love better to paint the bare fashion and outsides of themselves, then to rectify or repaire, there owne defects and errours.

<div align="right">(Ibid., 341–42)</div>

Lithgow travels to teach both home and abroad a lesson by becoming the "experimented" self-justifying Protestant of superior understanding who can travel among the faithless yet keep his inner self intact. This goes against modern-day thinking about literary travel; nevertheless, it represents a means of troping travel too, but responding more to pre-modern ideas regarding individuality and as to how and to what ends literature can educate and enlighten. Just like modern literary travel writing, Lithgow combines a desire for transcendence with an expression of inwardness that, based on "the accumulation of experiences gleaned from cultural interaction", allows the individual to position the self in a social space in order to master it (Abbeele 1980, 5; Clifford 1989, 177, 183).

 Lithgow's travel writing deliberately denigrates the bookish use of experience that we might associate with more medieval or academic writing. In his verse, lines such as those in his *Pilgrimes Farewell* (1618)—"I haue small Learning, yet I learne to frame / My VVill agreeing to my wandring Mind" (B1ʳ) and "I had rather see one Land / Be true eye-sight, than all the VVorlde by Cairt" (B3ᵛ)—evoke the mindset of somebody who believes in the *vita activa* of travel. But in Lithgow's prose it is attended by the emphatic desire to limit the very movement of meaning that modern thinking has come to associate with literary imagination and subjectivity; Lithgow uses literary techniques to impose, rather than remove, a foreclosed mindset on experience. From the modern vantage point, that represents an anti-literary ethos. However, it relies no less than its postmodern equivalent on literature to develop an approach to the uses of human experience, i.e. on rhetoric, literature in the early modern sense, as a form of moral philosophy that persuades the reader to commit to virtue through eloquently presented exempla thereof, therefore employing many voices and rhetorical layers within one text. Such a rhetorical understanding of literature, in tandem with a belief in the "authenticity"—because grounded in Scripture—of meaning, allowed sixteenth-century Scottish writing to convey a profound understanding of

the fact that language does not describe reality but projects appearances while seeking moral schemes, designing literary protagonists as exemplary types. As the opportunist shape-shifter, Lithgow's travelling persona can therefore most fruitfully be analysed according to the tenets of contemporary Scottish literature, with its continued emphasis on the rhetorical worldview.[6]

Lithgow's verse casts interesting light on this aspect of his writing. Unlike his prose, his poetry explicitly discusses the discrepancy between the moral-essentialist author and his quasi-"nomadic" persona. *The Pilgrimes Farewell*, Lithgow's first poetry volume—unlike the *Totall Discourse* published in Edinburgh rather than in London, which may indicate its more intimate, confessional context—opens with "A Conflict betweene the Pilgrime and his Muse" (1618, B3^r–C4^r), the importance of which is further foregrounded by the volume's subtitle: *wherein is contained, in way of dialogue, the ioyes and miseries of peregrination*. In this dialogue, the muse tries to dissuade the pilgrim from travelling, trenchantly commenting on his motivations. Thus, she refers to his claim that travel is "the light of Nature" as merely "wittie shiftes" (B4^v) and "shifting of thy wittes" (C1^r):

> Better it were at home to serue thy GOD,
> Than wandring still, to wander quite astray:
> Thou canst not trauaile, keepe thy conscience too.
>
> (C3^r)

The muse forces the pilgrim to admit that travelling can compromise one's conscience, but the latter argues that such adaptation to circumstances in order to advance one's "science of the world" is permissible, and, in any case, travellers, "As manie home-bred heere Domestickes doe, / In changing State, can change their Conscience too" (C3^r). This Machiavellian confession may surprise those who have read only Lithgow's prose—it is in verse that Lithgow more explicitly confronts the conflict between his inner self-image and his (persona's) outward practice, and where he creates a less one-dimensional identity for himself in response. As Lithgow himself says in the *Totall Discourse*, anxiety and mishap "made my Muse to express what my sorrowfull prose cannot perform" (1640b, 198). Even though the muse is arguably ultimately just a ploy to allow Lithgow to present the pilgrim as someone with an outgoing mind yet also with a "self-evident" morality, this nonetheless instances an author using literary representation—here a combination of psychomachia with at least the semblance of humanist dialogue—to work out contradictions within both himself and his writing.

The above poem turns into a most paradoxical confession, since it forces Lithgow's traveller-persona to concede that he dissimulates in order to achieve a voice of moral authority with which to berate those who dissimulate. Quite apart from any morally questionable acts that Lithgow's on-the-road opportunism may have involved—such as plundering two corpses he chanced to come across (Lithgow 1640b, 354–55)—the discrepancy between inner and outer that this defence of dissimulation involved clearly troubled the Protestant traveller. As the muse says in *The Pilgrimes Farewell*, "That's not the VVay to Heauen, / To make the Euen to glee, the Gleede [squint-eyed] looke euen" (Lithgow 1618, C3[v]). Lithgow is uneasy with his own position and possibly also here reveals an awareness of the fact that his writing proves disloyal to the integrity and "honesty" (in both the late-medieval and early modern senses, of "honour" and "sincerity" respectively) that his medium itself (literature) was increasingly seen as providing. In other words, he shows a literary awareness of the relationship between the psychology of experience and the nature of the medium in which he communicates it. The latter not only belies the brusqueness of both his writing style and his judgemental mindset, but also instances a metafictional understanding that characterized earlier Scottish literature. That Lithgow indeed had a metafictional appreciation of travel writing as an inner theatre appears from references to travel—in opening passages to key poems, moreover—as a "tragicke stadge of sorrow" (1618, B3[r]) providing "Comedian Scenes of love / Vpon a golden Stage" (1640b, 110).

All the ingredients to trigger a more inward-looking dimension are thus present, while the "Conflict" also signals that Lithgow's writing could not but express, whilst seeking to erase, the polysemous nature of experience. This paradox is brought into even sharper relief by the fact that Lithgow's insistence on speaking forthrightly is repeatedly contradicted by his traveller-persona's practice. Travelling may thus, in combination with the effects of engaging in the process of literary creativity, have forced Lithgow into an engagement with otherness after all, if only within himself. The "science of the world" which Lithgow pursued in order to justify his moral judgements could not but force upon his conscience an awareness of dualities within his self (or at least of discrepancies between his inner self and his utterances) which he struggled to reconcile within his Protestant self-image. All this also exposed the highly subjective nature of Lithgow's pretended objectivity: from a modern point of view, his exploitation of the genre of travel writing in particular cannot but deconstruct itself, and thus the author. Crucially, however, in later work Lithgow does not seek to explore such unsettling deconstructions; on the

contrary, the constant rewriting of his travelogues over the years mark a process of self-justification in order to forestall these.

In spite of his emphasis on experience, he thus rules out one type of experience that was elsewhere increasingly seen as a powerful "science of the world" itself: literature, in particular writing that no longer emphasized what we share but rather what sets us apart. Lithgow instead continued a sixteenth-century way of finding identity, namely "a growth of awareness through an inward journey, a journey towards self for the sake of God" rather than "the isolation of a particular, unique self unlike all others". Locating identity thus involved "a deliberate exclusion from the ordinary world and entry into a state of 'liminality' leading to a re-integration in the community—a spiritual finding of the self through a rite of passage" (Gray 2001, 15, 18). In these terms, and even though he grounds any such "rite of passage" in collective social identity, Lithgow's constant redrafting of his travelogues over several decades does instance a literary project by which he found an identity (if not "got to know the self"), sought to integrate it into the community, and dramatized the progress of his spiritual life within salvation history (J. R. Burns 1997, 52, 62).

In all this, Lithgow has a fixed end in sight, a continuous self as a home for the undivided essence of a godly identity. To secure this, medieval writers already had frequently used "the image of human life as a journey or a pilgrimage which ends in a fixed point of being—the heavenly Jerusalem, the peace of God, the final harbour of death and immortality" (Gray 2001, 14). Travel, like amatory verse, can in such anti-"nomadic" fashion provide the template for a journey to, as Sir Thomas Wyatt puts it in his paraphrase of Psalm 51, an "inward Zion", the "heart's Jerusalem" (1978, 209), a place of wholeness and stability within the self, and, thus, within society. Lithgow inscribed himself into that tradition, but characteristically "experimented" the image by *literally* travelling to Jerusalem.

Lithgow's verse thus functions as an *accessus* to his prose travel writing, forcing the latter to reveal what it masked, namely that it was still trying to *achieve* the moral coherence that it projects as given, and also how it was trying to do so. This also gives us a better view of Lithgow's literary dimensions. The remainder of this paper will illustrate how Lithgow's writing is in many ways informed by Scottish and European writing, often going back to late medieval sensibilities.

III

Verse also regularly features within Lithgow's prose narratives, where it similarly self-dramatizes and "literarifies". Here is Lithgow, on a very cold night on top of a promontory in Greece, asked to "stand Centinell" over a travelling company pursued by Turks:

> I Wander in exile,
>   As though my Pilgrimage:
> Were sweete Comedian Scenes of love
>   Vpon a golden Stage.
>
>   (Lithgow 1640b, 110)

The speaker calls himself "a vagabonding Guest", caught in ceaseless lateral movement, "oft changing to and fro", an "ever-moving I, / To restlesse journeys thrald" (p. 111), lines that indicate that there *is* a legacy of literature and, concomitantly, intellectual thought in Lithgow's writing. This promontory becomes Lithgow's Mont Ventoux, or rather an ironic Scottish pastiche thereof, depicting a frozen complainer in a deserted, windswept landscape, who dramatizes his place in the divine comedy of existence by drawing upon the same relationship between travel and inwardness as Petrarch had done. Moreover, it is located near Mount Parnassus, another mountain with a great pedigree in European literature and one that Lithgow indeed describes a few pages later (1640b, 118–19). Such ironic literary juxtapositions are brought into sharper relief by the many Parnassian references in the "Epistle dedicatorie" to *The Pilgrimes Farewell* (1618, A2^r), while the foregrounding of iconic mountains elsewhere in his writing further underlines how Lithgow blends the traveller's with the writer's priorities, both seeking a commanding perspective in order to map the fragments of experience. Thus, Tinto Hill, the "Mont Ventoux" of his native Lanarkshire, is foregrounded as "the greatest Mountaine that the Boundes [of Lanarkshire] can see" (1618, G3^v)—i.e. the emphasis is not on the traveller seeing the mountain but on the mountain looking out as far as the eye can see, in order to "draw" something of "the anatomy of humane condition" from it.[7]

In line with these echoes of European literature are those of Scottish literary texts. The last words of the "Centinell" are dedicated to his king, and emulate the style of another royalist, whose "quicke" and even "fierce *Castalian* veine" of writing Lithgow recommended in *The Pilgrimes Farewell* (1618, H4^r) and in *Scotlands Welcome to Her Native Sonn, and Soveraigne Lord, King Charles* (1633, A3^r): lines such as "Since in this dying life, / A life in death I take" (1640b, 112) mirror the paradoxical

style of Drummond's *Poems* (1616, printed by Andro Hart, who also printed *The Pilgrimes Farewell* in 1618), while Lithgow's "No state but change" (1618, C2^v) anticipates Drummond's "All onely constant is in constant Change" in his 1623 *Flowres of Sion* (W. Drummond 1913, II:5), with Lithgow's characteristic emphasis on the political over and above the spiritual meaning of such a statement. In the "Prologve" to *Scotlands Welcome* we are asked to find in Scotland "the sole Idea of thy Countryes mind" (p. [4]), a striking application of Drummond's neo-Platonic conceit in which a lover's face represents the "Idea" of love, the complementary, missing part of the self that makes the self complete again (W. Drummond 1913, I:6). Lithgow's metaphoric transfer indicates that "home" fulfils that function too.

The contents and heading of another poem in *The Pilgrimes Farewell*— "To his vnknowne, knowne; and knowne, vnknowne Loue, These now knowne Lines, an vnknowne Breast shall moue" (1618, G2^r)—are close kin to the dense sonnets of William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, whose "true *Castalian* fire" Lithgow recommends in *Scotlands Welcome* (1933, H4^r). Lithgow's persona here looks inward and laments: "I stable stand, and yet I stand in doubt", and "suspectes the Shaddow, for a substant Show" (1618, G2^r). Alexander had already applied such play with substances and shadows to Petrarchan postures, and Lithgow clearly imitates this in lines such as: "I rejoyce, that my delay is such … I builde the Hiue, but dare not sucke the Flowre" (G2^r). Lithgow was well acquainted with Alexander as well as with his verse. Alexander wrote a commendatory poem to Lithgow's first two travel-books (Lithgow 1614, A2^v; 1616, A2^v), while *Scotlands Welcome* ends (G3^r) by suggesting that Canada, which Lithgow sees as "Nova Scotia", should be named Alexandria after the poet, who became Viscount of Canada in 1633.

There are also striking echoes in Lithgow's verse of Robert Ayton, like Drummond and Alexander included by Lithgow in his roll-call of contemporary writers (1618, H4$^{r–v}$), a panoramic list that in itself indicates Lithgow's literary inclinations. Thus, Lithgow salutes the Clyde as a "famous Flood" (1618, G3^v), echoing Ayton's sonnet on the Tweed, "Faire famous flood, which sometyme did devyde" (Ayton 1963, 167). Moreover, the last couplet in Lithgow's poem only rhymes in Scots ("I feele" / "Fareweele"), a trick it learned from Ayton's poem, which has "farewell" / "reveale" (ll. 6, 8). This is particularly poignant intertextuality, since Ayton's poem marked Scotland's last farewell to King James, as he crossed the Tweed to take up residence in London in 1603. Both poems tell their respective rivers to flow to the Thames and speak to it of Scottish woes, a memorable image of a lordless nation.

Ayton's poem must have presented an iconic image to those who knew it, but its echoes and concerns are largely lost upon readers who lack a Scottish cultural memory.

Such literary echoes go back to the medieval period, often similarly operating on a national scale. At the end of *Scotlands Welcome* Lithgow says:

> O! if that Kings ! as they are Kings would look,
> And read lyke records of as blak a book:
> Sure they would see great errours they commit
> …
> Yet he is happy, makes anothers fall,
> A warning to prevent vntymely thrall.
>
> $(1633, E4^v–F1^r)$

Here he is combining the advice to princes genre, a fundamentally important genre in medieval Scottish literature, with the more generally moral-didactic strain of writing already seen in Barbour's *Bruce* (1997): "wys men sayis he is happy / That be other will him chasty" (Bk I, ll. 121–22).[8] This is the vernacular version of "Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautem" ("happy is he who is made cautious by the perils experienced by others"), an extremely popular maxim also quoted, for example, in Robert Henryson's "The Trial of the Fox" (Henryson 1981, 34–47; l. 1033), in *The Complaynt of Scotland* of 1549/50 (A. M. Stewart 1979, 128), and by James VI (see Heijnsbergen 2002, 78).[9] Adam Abell, referring to this adage as "the sentence of the poeit", like Barbour and Lithgow (see below, on "extremes") linked it to the ability to know a thing by its opposite. Such a combination leads to knowledge of society and thus—in Lithgow's thinking—of the self; its absence, Abell implies, leads to the fall of "precelland men" (Thorson 1998, 1).

In such passages, Lithgow harks back to European literary writing through Scots precursors. The "Prologve" to *Scotlands Welcome* also contains more purely literary echoes of earlier writing; Lithgow's appeal to "read, misconster not, but wysely looke / If reason be, the Mistrisse of my Booke" (1633, [4]), resembles closely several passages in Gavin Douglas's prologues to his *Eneados* of 1513 which fully endorse the humanist admonition to readers to read, and read again, which itself goes back to at least Boccaccio.[10]

There is also evidence of a Protestant literary style, particularly in Lithgow's paradoxical appeal to the muses to inspire him with plainness:

> I bring no Stones from *Pactole*, Orient Gemmes,
> …
> I search not *Iris*, square-spread clowdie VVinges,
> Nor of the strange *Herculian Hydra* singes,
> These Franticke Fansies, I account as vaine,
> In Vulgare Verse, my FAREVVELS I explaine.
>
> <div align="right">(Lithgow 1618, A2ʳ)</div>

This echoes Alexander Hume, who in "Of the Day Estivall" (1902, 25–33) likewise pre-empts religious objections against his enamelled celebration of the natural world by stating that when the sun rises in his poem it is

> Nocht guided be na Phaeton
> Nor trained in a chyre,
> Bot be the high and haly On,
> Quhilk dois all where impire.
>
> <div align="right">(ll. 109–12)</div>

Similar protestations of a godly plain style are also found throughout the "Prologve" to *Scotlands Welcome*. Most crucially, Lithgow shares with Knox the ability to fictionalize himself into a chosen vessel of God's word, as well as an engaging narrative flair that maximizes the vernacular ability to equate firmness of resolve and plainness of language with truth. Representing personal points of view as objective reportage in this manner, Lithgow, like Knox, effectively blurs the boundaries between such reportage, propaganda, and autobiography. Opinion is imposed indirectly through the orchestration of monologues and events and through the rhetorical claim of plain-style writing to self-evident moral truth. The subversive edge of such writing can feel liberating, for example in its aphoristic quality and its ability to perform conviction in a plain style, which Knox in his turn had inherited from David Lyndsay.[11]

The above examples do not just represent echoes of world literature, but also deliberate interaction with Scottish literary texts and traditions. Lithgow is seeking to map a new world by those reference points of the old that match his Protestant view of himself and of God's creation. For this, he applies a range of literary techniques: from psychomachia in staged dialogue to advice to princes, from prophecy and plain-style complaint to allegory (in *Scotlands Welcome*) and baroque diction, Lithgow's writing manifests its author's awareness of earlier Scottish literature. Studying Lithgow's work within the latter context rather than within that of seventeenth-century English travel writing enables a more accurate assessment of his use of literature in dealing with human experience.

Taking all this into account, one concept offers itself from within Lithgow's own work as a catalyst towards reaching a conclusion about his literary achievement, namely that of framing experience through categorising it in terms of extremes. Travel theory has sought to distinguish between explorer, traveller and tourist: "The genuine traveller … is in the middle between the two extremes. If the explorer moves toward the risks of the formless and the unknown, the tourist moves toward the security of pure cliché" (Fussell 1980, 39). Clifford comments that such distinctions can only be made in a culture in which "home and abroad are still clearly divided". But that, of course, is exactly the conceptual world in (or perhaps: towards) which Lithgow wrote, one in which "the genuine, reflective traveller, 'mediating' extremes, … moves across a landscape where things are in place—home and abroad, us and them—where one can go 'out' and 'return' with a representable experience or a discovery of interest to a stable community of readers" (Clifford 1989, 178). Lithgow embraces such a notion of mediating extremes: "I gladlie in Extreames must walke, whiles on this masse I fare" (1618, H4^r) and "My Soyle I loue, but I am borne to wander. / And I am glad, when I Extreames imbrace" (1618, C3^v) are just two of many key places in which Lithgow shows he thinks in binaries. Perhaps none is more critically placed than the one at the heart of the poem in which he stands sentinel in Greece:

> Extreamly do I live,
> Extreams are all my joy,
> I finde in deepe extremities,
> Extreams, extream annoy.
> (Lithgow 1640b, 111–12; first published in Lithgow1614, A4^r)

Greeting the Clyde in his later poem, Lithgow worked such intense if unfocussed energy into a more purposeful complexity when he combined it with mourning for a lost "home", pitting a search for origins against the contrary pull of an ever-widening world of dislocating experience, "Spring" *versus* "Sea":

> Two contrarie extreames, wee haue in meeting,
> I vpward climbe, and thou fall'st downe amaine.
> I search thy Spring, and thou the Westerne Sea:
> So farewell Flood, yet stay, and mourne with mee.
> (Lithgow 1618, G2^v–G3^r)

Passages like this gesture towards a contemporary poetics in which writers, seeking, paradoxically, to catch the contrarieties of human

experience within one linguistic construct, exploited as well as contained extremes by giving a text and its metaphorical language its own principle of infinite opposition. Such internalized oppositions exist in Lithgow's earlier writing, as the examples above indicate, but later work increasingly sought to defuse them, a development that followed Lithgow's cessation of travel and a correspondent change of textual settings from abroad to Scotland itself. Initially, there still remained an internal textual dialogue between mutually defining extremes. Thus, the "Prologve" to *Scotlands Welcome* tells us: "For twixt like two, the golden meane may rest, / Nether too bitter, nor too sweet is best" (1633, [4]), an Aristotelian thought already central to Barbour's *Bruce* (1997), which had also applied the notion of extremes ("contrar thingis evermar / discoveryngis off the tother ar", Bk I, ll. 241–42) to the concept of the golden mean (Bk VI, ll. 338–49). Both latter passages appear immediately after key apostrophic speeches, exposing a didactic formula that was clearly still current in Lithgow's era.[12] Indeed, contemporaries elsewhere linked together travelling, the desire to map extremes of imaginary as well as real landscapes, and peace of mind in a striking manner: a poem found on the back of a Pont map of part of Scotland discusses the connections between extremes, the golden mean, and tranquillity of mind.[13]

Increasingly, though, Lithgow overtly prioritized one extreme over the other, and eventually there remained little of the "fierce Castalian veine" once attributed to Lithgow and with which he himself subsequently credited Drummond, seemingly referring to a more autonomous literary imagination (Lithgow 1618, A3^v; Lithgow 1633, A3^r). Instead of travel, learning has now become the "light of Nature", ruling over experience and pointing more directly towards God instead (1633, C3^r), a marked change from Lithgow's previous emphasis on first-hand experience and on not being content when "incentred in one Soyle" (1618, A3^r). In the revisions of his travel narratives, Lithgow increasingly made the voice of the opportunist traveller subservient to that of the self-righteous martyr. This gradually eroded the more literary features of his writing, which included moving particular passages to less prominent positions in revised editions. Thus, the "Centinell" poem opens the earlier editions (Lithgow 1614 and 1616, A3^v–A4^v), but later ones instead foreground writing that portrays Lithgow as a Protestant martyr, tucking the introspective "Centinell" away inside the prose narrative (Lithgow 1623, 65–68; Lithgow 1632 and 1640b, 110–13). Present-day readers tend to encounter Lithgow in the 1632 edition or its later revisions, in which Lithgow's self-editing imposes quite inflexible hierarchies upon any internal contrariety. Travel—or indeed writing—to Lithgow no longer contains any element of inquiry in

these later editions, but is subject to a pre-imposed pattern of redemption, including self-sanctification, revelation and martyrdom; Lithgow has travelled home and found his voice (J. R. Burns 1997, 235). In *The Gushing Teares of Godly Sorrovv*, he tellingly rewrites his own quintessentially humanist lines, quoted above: "Then read, misconster not, but wisely looke, / If I divinely, keep a divine stile" (1640a, A4^v). Any encounter of reason and experience with literature is now subsumed into a higher project. Lithgow in the same volume asks God: "teach me to disclaime / My self" (B1^r); it is only from within the ready-made confessional mode of a systematised faith that Lithgow finally sought to encounter difference or the "other"—or at least explore selflessness—safe from the potential loss of self or identity. Ultimately, he lacks the "complex ability to engage with a text both from a position of identity and in an encounter which also (potentially) *changes* that identity" (Wolff 1993, 227; her italics). Lithgow instead increasingly made his travel writing provide a comforting sense of authenticity in order to manufacture a totalizing identity and cultural metanarrative out of their feared absence.

Lithgow's later publications thus effectively seek to nullify the more open-ended aspects of literary writing that earlier Scottish texts had sought to nurture, even though Lithgow initially used many features of that earlier tradition. He thus opts out of the evolution of an autonomous literary "science of the world". Crucially, however, we have sought to analyse Lithgow's ultimate refusal to use literature to genuinely re-locate identity in the light of experience largely from within his own writing rather than through the imposition of our own sensibilities.

IV

Lithgow's work thus becomes the locus of a residual heteroglossia as well as of its suppression.[14] This to some extent mirrors his indebtedness to pre-Reformation (Scottish and thus earlier European) literature and post-Reformation sensibilities respectively. The latter provide a template that could be applied more widely in research into seventeenth-century Scottish literature, which has tended to ignore the earlier Scottish and European influences in favour of more contemporary English ones, not surprisingly often finding a lack thereof. Such criticism is often content merely to diagnose this defect, rather than return Lithgow to the cultural and intellectual interconnections between sixteenth-, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish texts and *their* re-locations of identity instead.

An awareness of such a "residual" presence of earlier Scottish writing in seventeenth-century or indeed later literature might also bring out how

Lithgow's writing anticipates modern-day analyses of the link between "Scottishness" and imaginative spaces "where extremes meet". Co-textualized by Dunbar, Urquhart—or indeed Rabelais—and MacDiarmid, the fact that Lithgow likes "being caught as eccentrically as possible" in his writing (naked up a tree wearing a turban, for example) and "makes no attempt to pull himself together into a consistent character" no longer imply negative criticism but confirm his place within the more radically paradoxical sensibilities of Scottish literature, where such eccentricity—in the original sense of "away from the centre"—and inconsistency are often part of the dynamics of writing itself (D. Reid 2001, 530, 532, 533).[15] With such a historicised critical context in place, we can assess within literary terms Lithgow's failure to carry over from earlier writing the ability—adapting Scott Fitzgerald's definition of a first-rate intelligence— to hold two opposing ideas simultaneously in mind and still retain the ability to write, truly embracing extremes to develop a literarily experimented "science of the world".

Finally, the above investigation into Lithgow's work also contributes to present-day discussions on how essentialist masculinity informs ideas about Scotland—or indeed other nations—in that Lithgow's work "marks for critical inspection a (phallo)logocentric myth … a desire to limit movement by constructing a singular place" (Morris 1988, 3). In his protection of such a fixed, continuous self, Lithgow fits emphatically into "a masculinist tradition inscribing 'home' as the site both of frustrating containment (home as dull) and of truth to be rediscovered (home as real)", and as such perhaps also embodies a flight from women (Morris 1988, 12; Wolff 1993, 231). If we replace the "female" element in this by the "foreign", Lithgow's travel writing could be said to represent "the male investment in strong ego-boundaries, and the consequent and continuing fear of engulfment (in the [foreign]) and loss of self" (Wolff 1993, 231).[16]

Only if one is in a position to actively implement "the total narrative of the subject" of Scottish literature can such revisions of individual texts or authors be made.[17] It is the scholarship of Rod Lyall, himself a well-travelled inquirer into Scottish matters, that has helped to bring together such a "total narrative" that now allows us to look afresh at writers such as Lithgow, particularly through carefully calibrated attention to transhistorical poetics, measured use of theory, and informed textual analysis. That combination will be crucial not just to open up the sixteenth and early seventeenth century further but also to shape the framework for future critical discussions within the disciplines of Scottish and early modern literature.

Notes

[1] Earlier versions of *The Totall Discourse* were published in 1614, 1616, 1623 and 1632. The first three editions had a partly different title: *A Most Delectable, and Trve Discourse, of an admired and painefull Peregrination from Scotland, to the most famous Kingdomes in* Europe, Asia, *and* Affricke.

[2] Kamps and Singh (2001, 2–3) stress the need to apply to pre-1750 texts different theories of "colonialism", travel, and its link with identity-formation.

[3] Thus, Gilbert Phelps's edition justifies such omissions of verse from Lithgow's travel writing by stating that the commendatory verses have "a purely contemporary application", and that Lithgow's own verses are only interesting "in a few cases where they carry the flow of the narrative" (Lithgow 1974, 20). Such editorial emphasis on prose and plot turns Lithgow's travel narratives into lively but rather one-dimensional books.

[4] On the humanist educational aspect, see Heijnsbergen 2006, 229.

[5] This is one of many topoi that Lithgow shares with contemporary travel writing. See Mitsi 2004, 24.

[6] On such a rhetorical worldview, see Lanham 1976. On the Scottish context and the development of these ideas therein, Heijnsbergen 1998.

[7] Likewise, the opening couplet of his "Pilgrims Farewell to Northberwicke *Lawe*" begins with a similar play on mountains as both viewed and viewer: "Thou steepie Hill, so circling piramiz'd, / That for a Prospect, serues East *Louthiane* Landes" (1618, E4^v).

[8] On the Scottish advice to princes tradition, see Mapstone 1986.

[9] See also Bawcutt 2001a, 87, 94.

[10] See Prol. 1, l. 107; Prol. 6, l. 12; "Tyme, space and dait", l. 23 (Douglas 1957–64, II:6; III:1; IV:194)

[11] On the rhetorical uses of plain style in this period, see Graham 1994.

[12] Lithgow most likely knew Barbour's text, which was printed in 1616 and again in 1620 by Andro Hart, who also printed Lithgow's *Pilgrimes Farewell* in 1618. The title of Lithgow's first three editions of his travelogue (*A Most Delectable, and True Discourse*) clearly echoes Barbour's famous opening lines on how the best stories are both "delitabill" and "suthfast" (true) even if "bot fabill", while the "doubill plesance" of such true histories as noted by Barbour is paralleled by Lithgow's opening sentence of "The Prologue to the Reader" in *The Totall Discourse*: "If good Bookes may be termed wise guides, then certainely true *Histories* may be termed perfit *Oracles*" (Lithgow 1640b, A1^r).

[13] See Bawcutt 1993, 7–9, 13, 16, which also draws attention to the new uses of the word "extreme" in this period.

[14] This phrasing is modelled on Dunnigan 2004b, 113.

[15] On the "off-centre" poetics of early modern Scottish writing, see "Introduction" in Heijnsbergen and Royan 2002, ix–xxx.

[16] On the link between travel and masculinity, see also Mitsi 2004, 26–29.

[17] See Robb 2007, 68, in a chapter that emphasizes Rod Lyall's crucial role in the development of the Department of Scottish Literature in Glasgow University.