

LIFE AND LYRICISM IN CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVE; EMOTION, MOOD, AND GENRE AS GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

VIDA Y LIRISMO EN LA NARRATIVA CONTEMPORÁNEA; EMOCIÓN, AMBIENTE, Y GÉNERO
LITERARIO COMO PERSPECTIVAS GLOBALES

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Abstract: Global Perspectives consider the relationship between literature, language, and perception, as well as how literature and language 'do' conflict and complicate notions of mood, emotion, and genre. Lyricism in global narratives has the ability to disrupt time and generate a further expansion of genre. With a short study on the mode of writing by Julio Llamazares and Anne Carson, this article discusses enactive forms of perception, referring to enactive experience as the way to describe a text's capacity to activate our mental need to attend to a text, disorienting in its form or temporality, and our perception of the realities of the world, including isolation and digital remove. Making a reference to Gumbrecht's *Stimmung* and Deleuze's rhizome, it considers how phenomenology of the present becomes a primordial task after globalization, and how priority is given to developing an analysis which identifies dehumanizing effects in

contemporary societies. The article later refers to Martha Nussbaum's theory of emotion and concludes by recognizing the importance of sensorial perception and emotion in literary studies in the twenty-first century.

Keywords: Globalization; Post-national; Mood; Lyricism; Poetic narrative, Literary studies; Emotion; Genre.

Resumen: Este artículo estudia la capacidad o perspectiva global de narrativas contemporáneas, y considera la relación entre la literatura, el lenguaje, y la percepción, junto con la manera en la que presentan conflictos y complican la noción de género literario, ambiente, y emoción. A través de un estudio breve del modo de narrativa en Julio Llamazares y Anne Carson, este artículo estudia formas activas de percepción. El autor considera la "experiencia activa" como la capacidad de un texto para activar nuestra atención mental, a menudo a través de una forma narrativa o una temporalidad desorientadora, así como nuestra percepción de realidades sociales a nivel mundial, incluyendo el aislamiento y la reclusión digitales. Se hacen referencias al concepto de *Stimmung* de Gumbrecht y al rizoma de Deleuze, y se apunta a cómo una fenomenología del presente es una tarea primordial en la era de la postglobalización, y a la necesidad de desarrollar análisis que identifiquen los efectos deshumanizadores en las sociedades contemporáneas. Finalmente, este artículo también hace referencia a la teoría de emoción de Martha Nussbaum y concluye con un reconocimiento de la importancia de la percepción sensorial y el estudio de la emoción en los estudios literarios del siglo XXI.

Palabras clave: globalización; posnacional; presencia; lirismo; narrativa poética; estudios literarios; emoción; género.

Global narratives are a result of constant and multiple exchanges at a global level, cultural and otherwise, and are characterized by an outward look and a planetary conscience which has affected modes of reading and writing (Cuya Gavilano 288-89)¹. My theory focuses on how lyricism has permeated our writing practice. I have elsewhere focused on postnational qualities of poetic narrative, partly around the themes of isolation and digital remove (Ramos, "Postnational Genres" 174). In this article, I discuss the

¹ "[N]arrativas [...] que se caracterizan por una mirada hacia fuera, además de una consciencia planetaria que afecta los diferentes modos de escribir y leer".

poetics of emotion and presence through a brief commentary on the mode of writing. The texts I mention here, *The Beauty of the Husband* and “Cassandra Float Can” by Anne Carson as well as *La Lluvia amarilla* and *Primavera extremeña* by Julio Llamazares, also illustrate enactive forms of perception. I refer to enactive experience as the way to describe a text’s capacity to activate our mental need to attend to the text, often disorienting in its form or temporality, and our perception of world’s realities. I consider how literature and language ‘do’ conflict with a focus on notions not only of genre but also of mood, and emotion. I propose that the lyricism I identify in the selected texts has indeed the ability to disrupt time and generate a further expansion of genre into narrative, autobiography, and performance. This also contributes to their capacity as global perspectives.

The definition of world literature according to David Damrosch considers global and local contexts. On the one hand, we can describe world literature as an experience of “distance reading” by the reader and also a “conversation” with other times and spaces (Santiáñez 36). On the other hand, when literature *circulates*, to use Damrosch’s term, and gets immersed in the world, it has the capacity to transpose and reflect back to its own local place. This dynamic, in turn, produces various perspectives that I call global. This contemporary mode of reading and writing out of globalization is threaded by lyricism. While globalization is clearly present, “the emergence of transnational entities, weakening of private rights, the advent of the *global cities* and digitization are some of the main factors for the remaking of the national citizen as a world citizen” (Santiáñez 32), perhaps never before in such an obvious way as during the COVID-19 pandemic—in our endless workdays on Zoom, virtual conferences, birthdays, weddings, and funerals—the reaffirmation of borders is paradoxically simultaneously strengthened as each country and even state decreed their confinement protocols and lockdowns (Ramos, “Postnational Genres” 187). In 2020 and 2021, we all experienced the reality of new border controls and bans imposed between countries. Thus, one can see our world as an interconnected rhizome (*rizoma literario*) beyond the nation (Cuya Gavilano 288)² and yet, in that Damroschian sense, a world that is still intrinsically rooted to each land and origin.

In Carson’s and Llamazares’ works, this world in flux is transcoded onto the form of the text. Their texts, in different ways, recreate the oscillation between poetry’s imme-

2 I agree with Cuya Gavilano on the point—which would be interesting to put in a deeper conversation with world literature in another essay—that the production of narratives beyond the nation are a product of creative processes and tensions based on not only transatlantic but also intercontinental, regional and ultimately worldwide cultural currents “en un sentido deleuziano: como rizomas literarios a nivel planetario”.

diacy and narrative's *durée*³, which enhances creative processes and tensions by the capacity of their form to evoke a feeling traveling to a deeper realm, taking residence in the body, as a sort of embodied rhythm or motion meant not to be completely grasped or fully accessible. In this rhythm of embrace and denial of reality, the disruption of genre and time is embodied into their semantic tension.

I. Lyricism and Mood; Globalization and the Experience of Language.

Globalization ignores presence, physical spaces⁴, and face-to-face meetings (Galindo 319). Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari are, perhaps, the best example of a trend in modern philosophy which criticizes a transcendentalist program and aims to overcome all anthropocentrism claiming the overdetermination of man by the decisions of impersonal agents (microbiotic particles, data flows and so on) (Galindo 312). Also, Reinhart Koselleck writes about modern thought as an inversion from symmetrical to asymmetrical time which rests "entre el espacio de la experiencia y su horizonte de expectativas" (Maura Zorita 348-49)⁵.

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht discusses in *Lento presente* a peculiar form of distrust as language in modernity roams in search of its *Stimmung* or mood of its time.

La primera traducción que ofrecen los diccionarios en inglés es *mood* en el doble sentido de la palabra: alude a ese sentimiento tan interior y subjetivo que no puede ser expresado mediante conceptos; pero también hace referencia al sentido más objetivo de un ambiente, que a veces parece envolvernos e influenciarnos como individuos o grupos.

[...] pero quiero anotar que el tono, la atmósfera o el aroma nunca se independizan totalmente de los componentes materiales del texto, y en especial de la prosodia textual, pues la *Stimmung* se refiere a una dimensión que afecta materialmente al lector (168-169)⁶.

Mood (*Stimmung*), in a poetologico-philosophical context, is an intersubjective quality emerging from the relationship between the reader and the literary work. Although it is

3 As per Henri Bergson in *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1889), where he distinguishes between time as we actually experience it, real duration (*durée*), and the mechanistic time of science; the latter—so he believed—based on a misperception.

4 Based on Jose Luis Villacañas' thesis of Modernity, not as an overcoming but as an emphasis on Gnosticism (the ability to deny, to form and to technify the body).

5 "[B]etween a space of experience and its horizon of expectation". My translation.

6 "The first translation of *Stimmung* is mood in the double sense of the word: an internal and subjective sense that cannot be expressed through concepts; and a reference to a more objective sense of ambience, which can influence both individuals and groups [...] [but] I want to note that tone, atmosphere, or scent are not independent from the material elements of the text, and in particular, its prosody, since *Stimmung* refers to the capacity of the text to materially affect the reader". My translation. This quote corresponds to the text of the Spanish translation. A version of *Lento Presente* was published in English as *Our Broad Present* in 2014.

connected in a natural way with the aesthetic contemplation of a given cultural text, it constitutes an epistemological category “*Stimmung* is an aesthetic quality emerging in the process of a cultural text’s reception, formed as a result of objective and subjective factors in the process” (Ronge 70-71).

For Leo Spitzer, *Stimmung* is understood as “unity of feelings experienced by a person face to face with his environment, (a landscape, nature, one’s fellow humans) and would comprehend and weld together the objective (factual) and subjective (psychological) into one harmonious unity” (quoted in Agamben 89).

In all instances, the phenomenology of the present becomes a primordial task. Priority is given to developing a more rigorous analysis which identifies dehumanizing effects in contemporary societies. Gumbrecht thinks of an alternative because he has also diagnosed modern society with having an accelerated and dis-incarnated life. In *Atmosphere, Mood, Stimmung: On a Hidden Potential of Literature*, Gumbrecht writes of the need to find a third position between two extreme positions on literature’s relationship to reality (2).

At one extreme, we find the tradition of the linguistic turn and deconstruction which a priori rejects any possibility whatsoever of linguistic reference to the world outside of language; and at the other, we find cultural studies, for which there have never existed any circumstance that could undermine literature’s referential capabilities (Gumbrecht, *Atmosphere, Mood, Stimmung* 1). Gumbrecht’s position on this issue (which is, in that aspect, close to Agamben’s interpretation of Spitzer) is to maintain that the pathology of accelerated modernity is the same as the pathology which contemporary globalization has inherited: devaluation of the body as a constituent part of subjectivity. Gumbrecht holds that both deconstruction and Deleuze’s thesis on virtuality are key categories of globalization understood as endless circulation of meaning. Mood is an intermediate position and so are these texts or works that I present in this article, since they are a result of the text’s referential aspirations (everything that the texts seek to *present*) but to an equal extent also of its material aspects, such as their form, media, or prosody.

II. Lyricism and Genre; Global Perspectives in Anne Carson and Julio Llamazares.

Anne Carson

As Anne Carson said in a 2016 interview, “if prose is a house, poetry is a man on fire running quite fast through it” (“Anne Carson: ‘I do not believe in art as therapy’”).

Anne Carson⁷ has written a wealth of texts from 1981 to her most recent text *H of H Playbook* in 2021. Carson has held a number of writing residencies including those at NYU and Stanford University in 2013. Her writing is adequately not categorized by genre but referenced as *scholarly texts* under possibly unlimited lists such as novels, poetry, libretti, comic book, scripts, essays, plays. Her texts *The Beauty of the Husband* (2001) and *Float* (2016) are two examples of the relationship between the presence of lyricism across genres and global perspectivity.

The Beauty of the Husband, subtitled *A Novel in 29 tangos*, is as per its back cover, “an essay on Keats’ idea that beauty is truth, and is also the story of a marriage”. Carson addresses universal themes such as truth, love, and trust, while releasing the narrative from the yoke of genre and letting form expand into 29 moves that, like in dance, take us up, around, and up and close to the self-referential subject, whom we identify as both personal and global.

I. [...] A DEDICATION HAS TO BE FLAWED IF A BOOK IS TO REMAIN FREE.

A wound gives off its own light
surgeons say.

If all the lamps in the house were turned out
you could dress this wound
by what shines from it.

Fair reader I offer merely an analogy.

A delay (5).

VII. BUT TO HONOR TRUTH WHICH IS SMOOTH DIVINE AND LIVES AMONG THE GODS WE MUST (WITH PLATO) DANCE LYING WHICH LIVES DOWN BELOW AMID THE MASS OF MEN BOTH TRAGIC AND ROUGH

All myth is an enriched pattern,
a two-faced proposition,
allowing its operator to say one thing and mean another, to lead a double life.
Hence the notion found early in ancient thought that all poets are liars.
And from the true lies of poetry
trickled out a question.

What really connects words and things? (33).

⁷ Anne Carson was born in Toronto, Canada in 1950. She attended the University of Toronto, earning her BA, MA and PhD in Classics. Carson has taught at McGill University, Princeton University, Emory University, California College of the Arts, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Michigan. She currently teaches in New York University’s creative writing program.

Each *tango* is preceded by a roman numeral and a discursive title in all caps. The reader is called out to listen and to be both protagonist and accomplice, à la Baude- laire “Hypocrite lecteur — mon semblable, — mon frère !” (34)⁸, yet we are now, in this lyrical wink, trusted instead of criticized, we are believed to be gender-neutral *fair readers* instead of a *hypocrite-brother*. Yet ambiguity remains in the poet’s paradox, from *true lies trickles out* the connection between matter and language. The relationship between truth and lyric is a subject hinted for an upcoming study, but for the purpose of this article I will merely stop at the global reach that this twenty-first century mixed genre narrative can offer us. The lyrical infusion is not only atmospheric, with Keats as overall frame and greeter for each of the sections (which are preceded by a short quote from Keats) but is also present in each line by way of metareference, verse form, alliterative cadence or use of lyrical devices. For instance, in the previous excerpt, we experience how *wound* is re-signified as true light instead of *the lamp*, (the usual light generating source) so that is the pain that shines, and is both *light* and *delay*, and, in an alliterative resonance, possibly *de- light*. Carson’s tangos carry the synchronicity and immediacy of lyricism that open up a range of emotions over narrative time and develop new ways of giving access to interiority. Therefore, lyricism grows as a form of memory and perception in the narrative.

As in other works such as *Nox*⁹ by Carson¹⁰, *Float* is not only a collection of texts but an artifact and an active reading experience. In particular, “Cassandra Float Can”, one of its twenty-two chapbooks, offers an experience that includes the material and textual form. The text opens with the sentence, “Everywhere Cassandra ran Cassandra found she could float. How did she float? With her float can” (“Original Cut” 1)¹¹. Poetic devices such as repetition are afoot from the start, the name of Cassandra resounding between the alliterative “a” of “ran” and the flat stop on “float” that is carried into the next sentence with a new tone upward, preceding a question mark and then holding itself up in mid-sentence to land on another three-letter word “can”. One could say this is a rhyming play collapsing “Cassandra” and “ran” into “can” to end the move as a short circular flight (Ramos, “Postnational Genres” 179).

8 “Hypocrite reader—my fellow, —my brother!”. My translation.

9 Published in 2010 as a sturdy grey box filled with an unfolding manuscript of poetry, letters, sketches, and photographs in honor of her late brother.

10 See *Decreation: Poetry, Essays, Opera* (2005) and *Antigonick* (2012) as well as its performances in Sweden and New Orleans by Anne Carson. For recent studies on Anne Carson see Aitken; Alford; Noel-Tod; and the volume edited by Wilkinson. New scholarship on Carson is quickly appearing in Latin America and Europe.

11 The chapbook *Cassandra Float Can* has three sections; “Cassandra Float Can Original Cut”, “Cassandra Float Can Birthday Cut”, and “Cassandra Float Can Final Cut”.

Who is Cassandra? For a dime she will tell you the swimming pool is full of blood. Like spacetime, she is nonlinear, nonnarrative and the most beautiful of Priam's daughters according to Homer who says that when she stood up to prophecy she shone like a lamp in a bomb shelter [...] The longer you look at her the more fiercely you have to struggle to see her light which seems to sink its beam into you at hotter and hotter frequency ("Cassandra Float Can" 1).

The text, like its performance, read by Carson via Zoom on October 12, 2020 in her acceptance speech for the Princess of Asturias award ceremony, generates new creations and experiences, whether it is through the virtual reading of the text accompanied by images projected to interact with the viewer during the performance or through the juxtaposition of her writing and the art of Gordon Matta Clark (GMC) to which she refers in the text.

What GMC liked to do was to cut things, usually big things. He split a house in half in New Jersey in 1974. He cut a huge circular and boat-shaped holes in the walls, floors and ceilings of a Paris office block in 1977. He made a diagonal pattern of spherical cuts up through the floors, ceilings, and roof of a Chicago apartment complex in 1978 [...] He said various things about these cuts. He liked the way light passed alive across the floor. He wondered how it would be to sit and watch this passage of light over the span of, say, a year. He wanted to make volume visible.

[...] [GMC's] method was to cut away at surfaces until he could see what was inside.

[...] GMC had a twin brother [...] who died by jumping out of a window in 1976. I also had a brother [...] I wonder if having a brother who comes and goes from his mind all the time might make a person especially aware of holes and splits and disruptions. There is a thin edge that appears where no edge is scheduled (6-9).

If GMC wants to make the viewer *see* volume, then Carson wants to make light visible. She shows the shining wound, Cassandra's nonlinear beauty, and the pursuit of light—and struggle to see it—"passed alive across the floor", *beamed into us*, into the inside. The text embodies presence and the mood of our time; the floating sensation, the cracks of light unveiled, the repetition of sounds, and the circularity, or at least non-linearity, of her writing is alerting us of a tension, "the edge where no edge is scheduled".

Cassandra's is a conundrum of the veil, where is the edge of the new, where is the edge of belief? Is it possible to believe something truly unbelievable? How does that begin? Is there a crack of light under the door? How do you know to see it as a light? (1).

Carson's casting of words and images cuts through time, space, and genre *in the thin edge* of the new. Float and floating become metaphors for distance and existence, and Cassandra is an image to visualize the sharpness of light. Though narrative, and

references (ancient and modern alike) might twist and turn, we are not attached to their arrangement or afraid of the loss of linearity. The experience of the text remains primarily synchronic and stays present in our memory and our emotion.

Julio Llamazares

Julio Llamazares, like Anne Carson, writes contemporary forms of enactive perception embracing rhizomic narratives. *Primavera extremeña* is Julio Llamazares' last book, but it is preceded by a long writing history ("Mi visión de la realidad es poética" 1). From the acclaimed novel *La lluvia amarilla*¹² in 1988 to *Primavera extremeña* in 2020 we can speak of "novels of the land". As critic David Henn points out, a novel of the "landscape" is reminiscent of naturalist (715) and transcendentalist sensibilities, while being concerned with local societies' transformation around globalization.

La lluvia amarilla was a "novel of the land" that recreated the interaction between nature and the human being through the voice of an imaginary character (Andrés) alone in a decaying town lost in the high mountains of Huesca. In this novel, chapters are short; they repeat their structure and sustain a theme, just as stanzas of a poem and measures¹³ of music in a musical composition. What is perceived activates our own memory and creates images through repetition¹⁴.

Ahora veo *el tejado de Bescós recortándose en la luna*. La noche borra todo lo demás, incluso la ventana y los barrotes de la cama. Siento, eso sí, la presencia obsesiva de mi cuerpo —ese dolor de humo bajo el pecho, en los pulmones—, pero mis ojos sólo ven *el tejado de Bescós recortándose en la luna* [...] abro otra vez los ojos, y encuentro solamente este dolor de humo bajo el pecho, en los pulmones, la claridad borrosa de la ventana, a un lado de la cama, y el círculo amarillo de *la luna recortando a lo lejos el tejado de Bescós* (39-42, my emphasis)¹⁵.

The pattern of repetition of "el tejado de Bescós recortándose en la luna" is an example of how the regularity of patterns creates a rhythm which accompanies the reader as a sort of soundtrack in the reading, generating an expectation of its continuance¹⁶. The

12 This novel obtained the Jorge Guillén Award and was finalist of the National Literary Award for Narrative in 1989.

13 Beats contained within a segment of time (between vertical bars).

14 See the cognitive study on foregrounding by David S. Miall, "The Experience of Literariness".

15 "I can see the roof of Bescós' house silhouetted against the moon. The night obscures everything else, even the window and the bars on the bedstead. I can feel the obsessive presence of my own body—the vague ache of smoke in my chest—but my eyes can see only the roof Bescós' house silhouetted against the moon [...] I open my eyes again, I find only this dull ache of smoke in my chest, in my lungs, and the blurred grey clarity of the window to one side of the bed, and the yellow circle of the moon silhouetting the roof of Bescós' house beyond". *The Yellow Rain* 30-33, my emphasis.

16 Berger's musicological study at the CCRMA center at Stanford on neural net modeling of musical expecta-

novel takes place in the 1960s but was written in the late 1980s, at a historical moment when the country became increasingly globalized and rural communities were further abandoned. It corresponds with themes of travel, migration, and movement, while addressing emotions of loss but also solidarity. The experience of the body (in the “lungs”, “chest”), “ese dolor de humo bajo el pecho, en los pulmones”, as an obsessive presence, “presencia obsesiva de mi cuerpo”, represents the solitude and decay outside of the body in the town of Ainielle. Therefore, the text is connected to mass movements of migration following the advent of globalization in Spain and is able to convey a sensorial and spatial experience which is both plural and personal.

The reader of *La lluvia amarilla* feels compelled to return, literally and metaphorically, to the abandoned rural town of Ainielle, and by extension to all the similarly abandoned lands of the north of Spain. By returning to the text, the reader returns to the social question that emerged in the text; the impact of urban migration in twentieth-century Spain. The ecological concern surrounding a dying community is carried onto the page as Llamazares portrays the disappearance of rural communities in Huesca and the Sobrepuerto areas in the north of the country. *La lluvia amarilla* has the potential to affect change in a powerful and immediate way, actualizing a social memory and, in a way, making it part of our contemporary ‘collective imagination’. First, from the lyrical form of the text, and then, from its ability to make us return and reread, he succeeds in offering a contemporary experience of a real moment in Spanish history. The writer, through active lyricism, enriches the world. The reader, in turn, is seduced to perceive it and even though we are not asked to evaluate the world openly, neither are we allowed to consider it self-sufficient. The particular experience in the novel by Llamazares speaks to a particular historical reality, but is rooted in the global experience of lyricism in its prose.

Primavera extremeña, published almost forty years later, recreates again the symbiotic nature-human relationship while removing the veil of fiction and using chronicle as its genre. The book recounts the experience of confinement from March to June 2020 in a little town in the Sierra de Lagares in Extremadura, where he and his family found refuge during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, away from the capital Madrid where the virus devastated the population and took close to ten thousand lives in the span of only two weeks during the month of March (Rincón et al.). The book, subtitled *Apuntes del natural* [Notes on nature]¹⁷, is a chronicle of personal notes and memories of the everyday experience of Llamazares and his family with an attention to the landscape

tions exemplifies one possible approach to the study of lyrical or poetic rhythm. See Berger and Turow.

17 All English translations of *Primavera extremeña* in this section are my own, unless otherwise stated. There is no other existing translation of the text as of December 2022.

and the natural environment. In Llamazares' book, memory is addressed as a theme through introspective reflections, and is also experienced through the rhythm of the text's prose and its interaction with accompanying illustrations (Ramos, "Postnational Genres" 182).

We encounter seventeen watercolor paintings by Llamazares' friend, painter and former chief conservator and curator of Munich's New Art Gallery, Konrad Laudénbacher, created to accompany the twenty-five chapters. The relationship between image and text also becomes a symbiosis that morphs throughout the book, from smaller illustrations to two-page illustrations ranging in density and color (primarily reds, yellows, black, and greens), and connects a sense of the pagan and the divine.

We read, "es todo un privilegio poder asistir al milagro de la primavera en un lugar en el que todas las bendiciones caían sobre un paisaje lleno ya de ellas" (71)¹⁸. Thus, Spring is what is still unchanged, what fills us and enriches us beyond comprehension, as *miracle* and *privilege*.

The color symbolism could point to its pairing with black usually representing the world of the dead in catholic liturgy or even Greek mythology (Cubero 61). We visualize single images of grapes, shoots, grass (*uvas, brotes, hierba*), "el reflejo del sol en la hierba [...] y las uvas de la viña [...] aún empezaban a brotar (27)"¹⁹, and perceive them synchronically as in reading poetry. Spring is a key image and metaphor that stands for hope and that brings him (and us, in reading it) to the present moment (Ramos, "Postnational Genres" 185). The unrooting (like the rhizome) is therefore local for Llamazares, but the idea of the future is global and present for the entire world, like a sky above us all, a "mundo entero en suspenso...como el cielo, [convertido] en un montón de preguntas" (47)²⁰. Llamazares' lyricism is an expression of a direct relationship between the individual and the world in conflict. It shows lyricism as central in communicating the spirit of the land and its inhabitants.

Lyrical prose in the texts by Anne Carson and Julio Llamazares make present a mood of its time strongly determined by its sequencing, or the articulation of its parts. The way in which language is used in the lyrical prose text offers reiterations of words, images, sentences, or sounds that allow for multiple perspectives. Carson uses repetition to call the *fair* reader into the present moment, (literally) calling us to "this" page of the reading, to asks us, *how do you see?* In addition to repetition her text is also

18 "It is a real privilege to be present for the miracle of spring in a place where blessings rained over a landscape already full of them".

19 "[S]unlight was reflected onto the grass [...] and the grapes on the vines [...] had just begun to sprout".

20 "an entire world at a standstill [...] like our sky [turned] into a pile of questions".

personal. Llamazares also uses repetition poetic devices, illustrations, and the genre of chronicle to bring in presence and awareness of the individual and the whole. These lyrical texts activate and enhance critical knowledge of a social and historical reality. Inside and outside converge and ultimately fuse the imagined and the reasoned. There is a *welcoming* in the experience of internal and external conflict which can also free us from it.

Their vision of the world, twisted between myth and memory, or image and word, enacts an agitated, alive, and unreliable historical landscape. These narratives aspire not merely to present parts and pieces interconnected, but rather show the splintering of a social world through agents of disintegration. I suggest there is a deepening of our grasp on ourselves as bodies, and beings in time and history, where emotions gain a narrative temporality, in contemporary lyrical texts.

III. Contemporary Narratives; Poetics of Emotion.

We have seen in these texts how lyricism is adapted to narrative with the use of repetition, rhythm, and multiple genres. Patterns from poetry, chronicle, memoir, song, and meditation are used to structure emotion and enact individual and collective perception. The texts' formal tension is itself a melting of genre conventions while addressing particular social tensions of our post- and pre-pandemic world. I considered these narratives as forms of awareness precisely because they make present conflict, criticism, and active forms of feeling. Lyricism is a prevalent contemporary vehicle to inquire into memory and self in current societies.

If experience is what happens as a result of the way the world affects us, as Alva Nöe's work on perception reminds us, then the perception of lyricism is part of our experience (Nöe 209). In other words, the emotional world of the protagonist and reader is such an experience. The experience of rhythmic prose becomes a form of emotion that triggers a form of *active perception* which is at once transformative for the reader and for their view of the particular socio-political question that emerged from the text (be it impermanence of art, language, survival, or nature.)

I concluded that the way remembering exists in these texts is closer indeed to an act of perception, in its synchronicity and immediacy resembling poetic forms. They awake a collective consciousness and a perceptive process of reading as emotional and bodily experiences. Lyricism in narrative is a form of critical dissent that I continue to identify and study and that I do not get to explore here.

In the last decades we have seen an increase in multiform novels that attempt to

relate (and create) a way to experience changing paradigms in today's world, from Roberto Bolaños' novels of disruption to Paul Auster's and Haruki Murakami's multi-threaded stories to, as we have seen, Anne Carson's multi-form poetry or Julio Llamazares' novels of the land. In our advancing twenty-first century forms, genres, and media increasingly interact and digitally multiply and redefine boundaries. The literary objects in which I am interested yield not only intellectual insight but emotional insight through perceptive and bodily experiences. According to Donna Haraway, in the context of social-feminism in the twenty-first century (the age of the cyborg), "the stakes in the border war have been the territories of production, reproduction, and imagination [...] [there is] pleasure in the confusion of boundaries and responsibility in their construction" (150). It is partly that responsibility and pleasure that fuels my work.

Emotions shape the landscape of our mental and social lives. Like "geological upheavals in a landscape, they mark our lives as uneven, uncertain, and prone to reversal", according to Martha Nussbaum (1). And indeed, as the "geological upheavals" a traveler might discover in a landscape where recently only a flat space could be seen, we gain sight of peaks and valleys in experiencing lyricism. As the geography of diverse landscapes, such an experience is at times "uneven", "uncertain", and "prone to reversal". It was Proust, recalls Nussbaum, who called emotions "geological upheavals of thought". This terminology refers to three main elements of lyricism in narrative which I identify; enacted perception, ambiguity of genre, and its ability to embody global critiques and issues in the world. At the core of my argument, I consider emotions as a part of a system of ethical reasoning, therefore regarding reason as not the exclusive domain of analytical intellect. I side with Proust and Nussbaum in their approach to the relationship between self and world, which calls for subjecting ourselves to the examination and experience of emotion, knowing that "we will not be able to understand ourselves well enough to talk good sense in ethics" (2) unless we do. Such an examination of the self occurs in lyrical narratives.

Texts in which the reader's experience of emotion can result on an enhanced critical knowledge of the world and history are good conduits for enacting global perspectives. Lyrical narratives can be both the mediation of self and world and, themselves, a mediating space. Narratives mimic and articulate the thematic of social being, of being with others at a time of radical historical change, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, I am arguing a critical connection between form and social space. These narratives and many others studied on the advent of globalization (Ramos, "Beyond the border" 257-272) can be thought of as what Lyotard in *Discours, Figure* would call a destabilizing work of events in structures that allow the opening up of the energy which

renders them mobile (Crome and Williams 13). This mobility is achieved by changing and multiplying structures, voices or genres as it might be, and by introducing intense feelings and desires into them.

Martha Nussbaum, refers specifically to repetitive emotions in her theory of grief, and calls for “understand[ing] emotions as a certain sort of vision or recognition, as value-laden ways of understanding the world” (Nussbaum 88). The residue or resonance of the event (be it war, relocation, a pandemic, or the witnessing of destruction) is felt through the form of the text and aroused physiologically in the reader who perceives (affective resonance) the feeling, as a form of *Stimmung* in Gumbrecht’s and Agamben’s sense. This over-definition precipitates a state similar to sensorial perception. As Perloff writes on Wittgenstein’s ideas of language-games, the meaning of words is constituted by the function they perform within a given language-game (20). The contemporary lyrical narrative is itself a “given language-game” where common attributes to objects and words are tampered with. The “geography” of the world as seen by emotions shows displacement, movement, and differences of depth.

The recognizable presence of lyrical qualities in contemporary narrative texts and other humanistic expressions today aids to shape a modern value-system that is emotion-laden. Perhaps not so unlike vernacular prose did on the onset of the Renaissance, lyrical narratives free us from one paradigm and welcomes us to another, which in our advancing twenty-first century is one of acceptance of mixed forms, expanded consciousness, mixed genres, and emotion as a form of reason.

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