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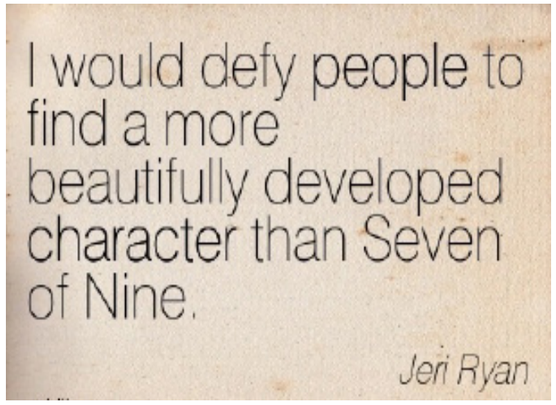

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FROM THE EDITOR

When Birgitte (our Treasurer) and I first got together in order to do some brainstorming, we chose 'resitance is futile' as our theme for the first issue. In retrospect, this turned out to be an apt but also slightly ironic choice. It has taken a while, but the first issue is here at last. We hope you will enjoy the characters who show up: there is King Æthelred, as well as Shelob, a minor character from *The Lord of the Rings*.

One character you will not find in this issue is the one portrayed on the cover: Seven of Nine, a character from *Star Trek: Voyager.* Some will wonder 'why did you put her on the cover, then?' Well, we chose to do so because we felt that she embodies the phrase in a special way. 'Resistance is futile', is the catchphrase that signifies that you are dealing with the Borg, an organic-cyborg race that Seven of Nine initially belongs to. The Borg are a hive-like collective who assimilate species throughout the galaxy in their quest for order, unity and perfection. Running into the Borg is basically synonymous to being assimilated into the hive. Assimilation happened to Magnus and Erin Hansen and their eight year old daughter Annika. It is this little girl who became Seven of Nine until, twenty years later, she ended up on the Voyager ship, permanently disconnected from the Borg. As she believes schedules, structure and efficiency are superior to the convolutedness and unpredictability of human life, she is anything but thrilled. Throughout the show, Seven of Nine relearns to be an individual and everything that comes with it. The story inverts the ominous Borg phrase, as resistance to becoming human again turns out to be futile.

Apart from theme-related articles, there is an opinion piece on the state of feminism, English language acquisition in Egypt by Niko, who lives in Egypt, Albion (of course!) and AIESEC, a non-profit student organisation. We hope you enjoy this issue as much as we did creating it. As Seven of Nine would put it:"Fun will now commence".

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www..pinterest.com

Colophon

Edition
Year 13, Issue 1

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News

FROM THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

These exciting things have happened at the English Department since the publication of the last issue of *The Angler* in May 2017:

On 16 June 2017 a mini-symposium on Old Frisian matters was held, preceding Prof. Bremmer's valedictory lecture. The Fryske Akademie published an article about it (in Dutch), which you can read here: www.fryske-akademy.nl/nl/bremmer/

Thijs Porck has been nominated for the LUS Teaching prize 2017. The winner becomes a member of the Leiden Teachers' Academy and receives 25,000 euros for innovation in their teaching over a period of five years. Sadly, he did not win (boo!). However, you can read an interview with him here (yay!): www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/news/2017/08/lus-teaching-prize-nominee-thijs-porck?

Third-year students of Middle English Philology transcribed two thirteenth-century religious lyrics from Trinity College Cambridge, MS B.14.39. You can read more about this project on Krista Murchison's website: kristamurchison.com/teaching-projects/

On 16 June 2017, the symposium of Nadia van Pelt's Honours Class Controversial Drama: Sex, Politics and the Law in Popular Culture was held. There were three sessions with presentations, each presided over by different guest chairman or chairwoman. The central theme was formed by the frontstage/backstage concept, which plays an important role on Instagram and Netflix, for example. You can read an article about the symposium (in Dutch) here: www.universiteitleiden.nl/nieuws/2017/07/backstage-bij-instagram-en-netflix

In July 2017 Sara Polak received a NWO Kiem grant for a project studying the possible uses of the voice in cultural memory. More details about the project can be found in the university's news article: www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/news/2017/06/nwo-kiem-subsidie-lucas

On 12 September 2017 the book Urban Sociolinguistics: The City as a Linguistic Process and Experience, edited by Dick Smakman, has been published: "Urban Sociolinguistics is a sociolinguistic study of twelve urban settings around the world. Building on William Labov's famous New York Study, the authors demonstrate how language use in these areas is changing based on belief systems, behavioural norms, day-to-day rituals and linguistic practices." Read more about the book (and buy a copy) here: www.bookdepository.com/Urban-Sociolinguistics-Patrick-Heinrich-Dick-Smakman/9781138200371?ref=grid-view&qid=1507282394735&sr=1-1

In September 2017, the yearly Times World University Ranking was published. Leiden's Humanities Faculty ranks 25th in the world, making it the highest ranked Dutch university in the subject area 'Arts and Humanities'. You can find more details on the university's news page: www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/news/2017/09/humanities-leiden-ranked-25th-in-the-world-ranking?

On 8 November 2017 Nadine Akkerman was one of the nine female scientists to receive a Special Recognition Award from the World Cultural Council, "made to talented female researchers who, in the words of the WCC, are particularly skilled at making their research findings accessible to the general public." You can read the announcement from the university and watch a short video with a impression of the research carried out by the award winners here: www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/news/2017/11/wcc-awards-in-leiden

On 6 February 2018 Sara Polak was interviewed by NU.nl about the investigation into the possible Russian influence on American politics, which she likens to "a court intrigue". Read the entire interview (in Dutch) here: www.nu.nl/weekend/5115740/amerikaanse-ruslandonderzoek-donald-trump-in-tegenaanval.html

Nadine Akkerman has written the first study of early modern women spies, entitled *Invisible Agents: Women and Espionage in Seventeenth-Century Britain*. The book is scheduled to be published in July 2018, but is already available to preorder at £20 for a hardback, a very student-friendly price! Read more about the book (and (pre)order a copy) here: global.oup.com/academic/product/invisible-agents-9780198823018?cc=nl&lang=en&

Krista Murchison has been awarded with a grant to create a digital database containing linguistic data for manuscripts from medieval England that contain French literature. In an interview you can read more about this project: pro.europeana.eu/post/medieval-manuscript-databases-krista-murchison-europeana-research-grants-winner

MESSAGE FROM THE OLC

(THE BACHELOR PROGRAMME COMMITTEE)

The OLC (Opleidingscommissie) is a committee consisting of eight members: four tutors and four students. Together, they strive to uphold and improve the quality of the Bachelor program. The OLC meets several times throughout the academic year and decides which courses are to be evaluated. Students are asked to fill out the evaluation forms that are distributed at the end of each semester. The outcome of these evaluations will be discussed and the OLC will then advise course coordinators and the OB if this proves necessary.

The OLC's role is advisory: the ultimate decision-making is done in the OB (Opleidingsbestuur). The OB consists of the Programme Director, Prof. dr. Tieken, one vice-chair, Dr. van Dijkhuizen, and one student member. This year's student member of the OB is Irene Kleiweg. Our Study Coordinator, Tessa Obbens, advises both the OLC and the OB. As you can see, students definitely have a say in matters. So if you are interested in getting involved, you may consider applying for a seat in either the OLC or the OB next academic year.

It is important for students to provide us with constructive feedback. When writing down your comments at the bottom of the questionnaire, make sure that you do not write outside of the square as only text inside of the square is scanned. Forms containing text outside the comment field, inappropriate language, or filled out wrongly (e.g. selecting both or all tutors involved in the course instead of the tutor who actually taught you) are invalid and will be discarded. Please take this into account if you want your voice to be heard.

This year's OLC members are:

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You can reach us via our general email address: olc-engelse-tc@hum.leidenuniv.nl. Do you have something to ask or tell us, but find the official OLC email address a bit scary or want to remain anonymous? Not to worry: you can also email us personally, and we will pass on your comments or questions (anonymously) to the rest of the OLC.

THE WORK OF STEEL
VIKING RAIDSDURING THE REIGN OF ÆTHELRED THE UNREADY

Among other things, the Old Norsemen are known for their raidings of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms during the Early Middle Ages. Until today, the word 'viking' is still debated with regard to its actual meaning. One connotation that is agreed upon is that of someone who goes out for adventure and returns, having acquired fame and fortune. This adventure, however, entailed pillaging, terror and death for the ones on the receiving end. In Early Medieval Britain, periods of raiding took place in the ninth, tenth and early eleventh century. King Æthelred, known as Æthelred the Unready ('ill-advised') ruled Anglo-Saxon England in the late tenth and early eleventh century. This period is also known as the Second Viking Age, when the Norsemen raided with accumulating ferocity. Written sources, as well as fortifications provide us with some insight into this period of Early Medieval England, both into the level of violence, as well as the responses to the incessant attacks from overseas.

The first viking raids occurred in the late ninth century. After many years of apparent quiet, during the reign of King Edgar 'the Peaceable', viking raids on England had resumed in 980, within two years of Æthelred's accession.[1] Æthelred was nicknamed the Unready, which meant 'ill-advised' and he was, overall, portrayed as a weak king in contemporary chronicles. Apparently, the king was unable to keep Anglo-Saxon England unified as well as unable to resist the attacks by Norse tribesmen who went 'vikingr'. From 991 to 1005, the English suffered the worst and most sustained viking onslaught in over a hundred years. The remarkable, not to say desperate, nature of the counter-measures provides a taste of the impact these raids had on Anglo-Saxon England A good impression of the English response emerges from the chronicler's account of the events of 1002. The payment of gafol, or tribute-money, at the very beginning of the year, continued the policy which had first been implemented in the aftermath of the battle of Maldon, in 991, and which has been held ever since to characterize the weakness of King Æthelred's regime. The murder of the king's high-reeve and the subsequent disarray displays the unrest at a governemental level, further disabling the English to offer effective resistance. St. Brice's Day's Massacre ensued, a brutal way of dealing with Danes who were considered suspect. The massacre of 'all the Danish men who were in England', on 13 November 1002, is said to have been precipitated by the discovery of a plot to kill the king and his councillors, and thereby to take control of the kingdom. These accusations had a particular background. In 994, a part of the viking army, had been hired by King Æthelred to serve as a mercenary force . This army had been bought off and was based on the Isle of Wight, They were instructed to protect the country against Vikings. The mercenaries, however, turned against their paymasters in 997. Another group of mercenaries broke faith with the king in 1001. The massacre in November 1002 was probably targeted at such untrustworthy Danes, The brutal retort can be seen as an expression of the deep-rooted anger of the English towards those who had inflicted so much suffering upon them.

Even though the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle barely mentions other responses to viking raids in the 991 -1005 time frame, it points out a pattern of attacks, which only increased in ferocity straight into the last decade of Æthelred's reign.

Some contemporary charters, issued by the king, provide insight into the response to the viking attacks. A key document is King Æthelred's charter granting privileges to Abingdon Abbey This charter was drawn up in 993, and and represents the recognition in high circles that viking raids were a form of divine punishment for wrongdoing At this stage of history, the raids were interpreted as an effect of wrongdoing on the part of the king himself.[2] Taken on their own, some of these charters might represent the last flourish of the monastic reform movement; a few might reflect a special interest in the promotion of the cults of particular saints; and two would show how prominent laymen at King Æthelred's court chose to express their own commitment to the Christian faith. The whole, however, is often greater than the sum of the parts; and together, these written sources represent what a significant aspect of the response of Æthelred to the viking attacks during his reign.[3] It is clear that there was a spiritual interpretation to the plight of the English people.

Written accounts on the viking raids

For our understanding of the viking raids we remain largely dependent on what we learn from the various sets of annals in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. A chronicler writing in the early 980s reports the raids of 980–2 with the detachment of a contemporary witness; a chronicler writing at Winchester early in the first decade of the eleventh century provides a contemporary account of the events of 1001. The author or compiler of the 'main' account of the reign of Æthelred, working in or soon after 1016, has some scrappy material for the 980s; when he starts his continuous narrative, with the raid of 991, it is at once a tale of terror, extortion, futile resistance, and humiliating defeat.[4] Such different angles eventually display an overall idea of the impact of the incessant raids during Æthelred's reign and his seeming inability to end the attack by the Norse tribesmen. Other voices were heard during Æthelred's reign as well, even though these voices speak from a larger distance. The writings by Ælfric and Wulfstan go deeper into both the political and the religious aspect of Anglo-Saxon England under threat.

Ælfric, abbot of Eynsham

In the late 980s the monk Ælfric was sent from the Old Minster, Winchester, to serve as mass-priest and schoolmaster at Cerne Abbey, in Dorset. While at Cerne, Ælfric enjoyed the patronage of Æthelweard, ealdorman of the western provinces (d. c. 998), andof Æthelweard's son Æthelmær, who had been a thegn in the household of King Æthelred the Unready from 983. Æthelmær remained close to the king for the next ten years, through the period of sustained viking attack; but in 1005 he retired from his duties at court, and resolved to live in common with the community of the abbey which he had founded at Eynsham in Oxfordshire.[5] Ælfric had an indirect connection to the royal court through his patron.

The absolute and relative chronology of Ælfric's writings is well established. At Cerne, he had been extraordinarily productive. It was an impressive output, and no doubt the patronage he enjoyed helped in ensuring that his voice was heard. We have to look hard, however, in this large body of writing for allusions to the viking invasions of 991–1005 and for hints of Ælfric's views on the quality of royal government. There is no overt criticism of Æthelred's regime, perhaps for the simple reason that at this stage 'Æthelred's regime' was the regime of his two noble patrons, yet there are clear indications of growing unease.[6]

In his 'private' letter to Archbishop Wulfstan, written between 1002 and 1005, Ælfric expresses his concern that bishops were becoming too closely involved in the judging of thieves and robbers, that they were neglecting their proper duties, and that they were dangerously susceptible to bribery.[7] It is easy to imagine that the activities of the vikings in the later 990s, and in the first five years of the eleventh century, were leading to subterfuge in high places, and to the breaking down of standards of behaviour.

When talking of the establishment of God's laws, Ælfric berates the English for their failure to keep these laws, and for the way they make 'all-new laws' (*eall-niwe gesetnyssa*) which are contrary to the laws of God 'and of all those *witan* who were before us.'[8] Ælfric likens those who abandon their faith in Christ to those Englishmen who submit to the Danes, do the devil's works, and thus betray their own people to death.[9] He must have had in mind Englishmen who had failed to withstand the Danish onslaught, though whether this would have been in 1006–7, or in 1009–12, is impossible to tell.10

What do we learn from this? What factors determined Ælfric's view of the affairs of his day, from his vantage-point at Eynsham? If only to judge from witness-lists in the charters of the period, the leading abbots in the last decade of Æthelred's reign were the abbots of Abingdon, Cholsey, Ely, Glastonbury, Malmesbury, Peterborough, and the New Minster, Winchester.[11] The fact is that Ælfric, abbot of Eynsham, makes no impression whatsoever: he did not attest the Eynsham charter itself, and indeed he cannot be shown to have attested any charters at all. This need not mean that Ælfric was never present at meetings of the king's councillors, simply that he was not among the most prominent in the king's council. It is as if Ælfric had shared in Æthelmær's self-imposed absence from the royal court and household, and perhaps also in a sense of disaffection or detachment from those who were now the influential and driving forces at court; yet since by virtue of his own merits he had a platform of his own, he was able, after 1005, to give expression to his views without fear of compromising his patron and protector's position.[12]

It is important to stress, that his years as abbot of Eynsham coincided with the viking raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12. This was indeed as bad as it could get, and it is not surprising that Ælfric, a member of the clergy, was moved to speak out in such terms. What is compelling is the nature of his analysis. He blames the councillors, who were failing to do their job; he complains about the burdens of taxation, and about all the new laws which run contrary to God's instruction; he complains about bribery and corruption; and he complains about treachery, and bemoans the readiness of some to submit to the Danes. In short, he blames the English, rather than the Danes.

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Of course, the Danes were regarded as the instruments of divine punishment for the sins of the English, so to have blamed them would have been to miss the point.[13]

The viking raids made a deep impact in the 990s, reflected in the Lives of the Saints, and providing a context for Æthelmær's foundation of Eynsham Abbey in the early eleventh century. Ælfric already had views on the way things were going; and when Æthelmær retired, in 1005, he would be able to give vent to them more openly than he had done before. Almost at once the situation became even more desperate for the English, with the raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12; and, if one puts Ælfric's remarks together, one draws that much nearer to an appreciation of the terrible predicament of the English in the closing years of Æthelred's reign.[14] Ælfric's writings from Eynsham were less popular: this was in part due to the fact that his texts were less familiar and that there were fewer texts by him. Another reason was the fact that Archbishop Wulfstan's writings were more popular.[15]

Wulfstan, archbishop of York

Although little is known of his origins, Wulfstan can be numbered among the king's leading advisors at the time of the viking raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12. He had held office as bishop of London from 996 until 1002, and he was archbishop of York from 1002 to 1023; so throughout these years he would have been able to observe the conduct of the kingdom's affairs at close quarters.[16]

Wulfstan is well known to have been involved in drafting the legislation promulgated during the last ten years of Æthelred's reign, and he served the Anglo-Danish regime, in much the same capacity, until his death in 1023.[17] Wulfstan is also renowned as the author of homilies. These texts are far more difficult to date, not least because of the general principle that sermons are made to be recycled; as one preacher said of his own output, 'It is better to hear a good sermon twice than a bad sermon once.'18

To judge from the concluding annals in the 'Northern Recension' of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the murder of Edward the Martyr was regarded in certain quarters with particular horror. In the long annal for 978, we are left in no doubt about the magnitude of the crime: how Edward was buried at Wareham, 'without any royal honours'; how it was the worst deed committed since the English first came to Britain; how he is now after death a heavenly saint; how his earthly kinsmen would not avenge him; and how God has now avenged him.[19]

If we assume that Wulfstan was involved in the production of the 'Northern Recension', he may have taken much the same line. The chronicler's point was, of course, that the English people in general were being punished by God for their complicity in Edward's death (978), in the form of the renewal of the viking invasions (980); so the 'official' enforcement of Edward's cult, at Enham, in 1008, might have been an aspect of Wulfstan's way of helping the English people to avert further punishment. Unfortunately, the vikings did not read the script. Encouraged, no doubt, by tales of the ravaging of England in 1006–7, and evidently not discouraged by the helmeted image of King Æthelred which had appeared on his coins, a new army assembled in Denmark under the leadership of Earl Thorkell, and arrived at Sandwich in early August 1009.[20]

As has been mentioned ealier, the early 990s attacks were seen as a punishment for wrongdoings of the king. By 1009, however, there was clearly a feeling that the vikings came as instruments of divine punishment for the sins of the English people as a whole, requiring an act of penance on a national scale.[21]

The arrival of the 'immense raiding army' at Sandwich in early August 1009 met with an extraordinary response: for a period of three days, in late September, all of the people were to fast, and to process daily to church; and, for as long as the emergency continued, the communities of religious houses were to maintain a programme of intensive prayer. The ship-levy of 1009 had ended in confusion; and, after its arrival, the Viking army had first threatened Canterbury, before taking up position on the Isle of Wight, and from there ravaging Hampshire, Berkshire, and Sussex.[22]

The viking army would appear to have remained at its base on the Isle of Wight, striking out into south central England, for about three months from mid-August to mid-November 1009, at which point it returned eastwards to Kent and took up winter quarters on the Thames, probably at Greenwich. We have no detailed knowledge of the king's movements at this time, and have to make do with the evidence of charters. There was a meeting of the king and his councillors in late December, at which the king granted land in Derbyshire to his thegn Morcar.[23] After Easter (9 April) in 1010, the vikings came to East Anglia, and effectively took control of the region for three months; it was at this time that the relics of St Edmund were said to have been taken to the church of St Gregory in London, where they remained for three yearsIn the summer and autumn the vikings were active again in the Thames valley and in the south-east midlands; and so it went on, for the rest of the year, until they returned to their ships at Christmas. Not one charter has survived from 1010; and if this signifies that relatively few were issued, it might well reflect the turmoil of that year and the interruption of normal business. In 1011 King Æthelred and his councillors sent to the army and asked for peace; but the 'peace' did not stop the vikings from ravaging in small bands, and in mid-September they entered and ransacked Canterbury, capturing Archbishop Ælfheah and taking him back to their ships.[24]

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The two surviving charters issued in 1011, both from the archives of Burton Abbey, emanate from a meeting (or meetings) held before the attack on Canterbury and the capture of Ælfheah; so if not the meeting at which the English had resolved to ask for peace, it was a meeting held later in the year, with the peace already in force.

One of the charters was a grant of land in Derbyshire to a thegn called Æthelmod. The scribe of this charter employed a very distinctive form of pictorial invocation, composed not simply of the Greek letters chi (X) and rho (P), representing the standard invocation of Christ, but also incorporating the Roman letter 'A', attached to the stem of the rho. The resulting device could clearly be read as 'PAX', and was thus, quite appropriately, a combined invocation of Christ and peace. In 1012, Ealdorman Eadric and all the chief councillors gathered at London for two or three weeks in April, in order to supervise the payment of 48,000 pounds to the viking army; a few miles to the east, at Greenwich, the captured archbishop was put violently to death. When the tribute was paid, and oaths of peace were sworn, the Danish army dispersed 'as widely as it had been collected'.[27]

The 'PAX' chrismon captures the mood of the moment, and show how the testimony of law-codes and coins is matched most elegantly by the evidence of charters.[28]

The *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* has long been regarded as an invaluable witness to the dismal state of affairs during Æthelred's reign;[29] so it is important to understand the historical context from which it came, or, perhaps more accurately, the historical contexts in which it developed. As matters stand, the date of the *Sermo Lupi* is not controversial. Both of its modern editors, Dorothy Whitelock (1939, 1963) and Dorothy Bethurum (1957), settled for 1014,[30] and this dating underlies the very effective discussions of the text published in recent years by Stephanie Hollis, Malcolm Godden and Jonathan Wilcox.[31]

The presumption is that the sermon would have formed part of Wulfstan's efforts in that year to galvanise the English into acknowledging and repenting the sins for which they had been so severely punished in the recent past, and so that the most natural context for its composition would have been at the time of or soon after the re-establishment of Æthelred's regime.[32] Wilcox has recently proposed an interesting refinement, in suggesting that the sermon was first delivered to a gathering of the nation's councillors which had assembled at York in February 1014, soon after the death of Sven Forkbeard but some time before Æthelred's return from Normandy.[33]

Although the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* might seem on first reading to have been composed in the heat of the moment, in response to a perceived decline in contemporary standards of behaviour, and an imminent threat of Danish conquest, it is now recognized that even a sermon of this nature has identifiable literary sources and models. When James Cross and Alan Brown looked for the 'literary impetus' of the *Sermo Lupi*, they fastened on a sermon by Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, written in the 920s and addressed ad milites, in which Abbo expounds his view that the sinfulness of the Frankish people had brought punishment and defeat upon them, and that the remedy lay in confession, penance, and righteous living. A copy of the complete text of Abbo's sermon is found in the Copenhagen manuscript of Wulfstan material.[34]

Wulfstan warns the English that *their* sins were worse even than those of the British had been, with the clear implication that just as the British had been conquered by the English, so too would the English now be conquered by the Danes.[35]

In the absence of a contemporary 'portrait' of King Æthelred the Unready,[36] the spectacular images of Henry II, king of Germany, in the Regensburg Sacramentary, made between 1002 and 1014, serve symbolically to remind us of the dignity of the royal office in the early eleventh century,[37] and to draw us closer into Æthelred's world. Homilies and other works written by Ælfric at the time or in the aftermath of the viking raid of 1006–7, and perhaps also at the time of the sack of Oxford in 1009–10, suggest what attitude he might have taken to the developments of the period; and, if we acknowledge the possibility that it originated four or five years before 1014, Wulfstan's *Sermo ad Anglos* takes us to the heart of the period when Thorkell's army was ravaging the country (1009–12).[38] The writings of Ælfric and Wulfstan paint a clear picture of the religious light in which the problems were seen.

It is all too easy for modern historians to condemn King Æthelred and his councillors for looking in this way to prayer, as well as to gold and silver, to do the work of steel;[39] yet there could be no more compelling indication of the predicament in which the God-fearing English people found themselves, in the face of such relentless and overwhelming attack.

It would be just as easy in retrospect to attribute the disastrous outcome of Æthelred's reign to the supposed weaknesses of the king's character, but this would be missing the point. The events of the period 1006–12, from the arrival of a 'great army' at Sandwich in the summer of 1006 to the martyrdom of Archbishop Ælfheah in April 1012 must have left the English in a state of bewilderment and despair. The raids had exposed the weaknesses in the political and other structures of a kingdom only recently unified. Old loyalties were tested,

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people were turned against each other, and many individuals must have decided to follow their own priorities and to protect their own interests. The king and his councillors at the centre, not to mention the ealdormen and reeves in the localities, must have made heavy demands on all holders of bookland and folkland for the various obligations which related to local and national defence; and, well before the introduction of the *heregeld*, in 1012, there may have been new laws, imposing new forms of taxation, to help raise silver and gold for all forms of military expenditure, including of course the huge payments of 'tribute' (*gafol*) in 1006–7 and 1011–12. No doubt fresh opportunities were thereby created for unscrupulous officials to take advantage of the situation.[40] It was indeed a recipe for disaster; and it is no surprise that the reign of King Edgar was reinvented in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries as a period of peace and prosperity, and regarded with the nostalgia that is said to be a symptom of decline.[41]

One should observe in the same connection that Archbishop Ælfheah was not succeeded at Canterbury until 1015, and that it was not until 1018 that Lyfing seems to have recovered primacy over York in the king's charters;[42] so it would appear that from 1012 until 1016, and beyond, the spiritual leadership of the nation belonged to Archbishop Wulfstan, perhaps giving the *Sermo Lupi*, in any of its forms, even greater force. The crucial decisions taken during these years were the payment of *gafol* in 1011–12, and the employment of Thorkell as a mercenary from 1012. Yet at the same time the English had been so seriously weakened by the *combination* of the viking raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12 that the invasions which followed, in 1013 and 1015, appear to have met with little effective resistance.[43]

Whatever one's understanding might be of the circumstances behind the Danish conquest of England, Cnut himself will fully deserve the accolade, for with guidance from Wulfstan, archbishop of York, he soon learnt to discharge the responsibilities of his high office with authority and distinction. Cnut's accession to the whole kingdom of the English marked the beginning of twenty-five years of England's position at the heart of a 'North Sea empire'. However, Cnut's spectacular achievement was made possible by the activities of those who had gone before him. The monument to this is the runestone at Yttergärde, in Uppland, Sweden; for there is no better symbol of the bitter truth, from an English point of view, that Cnut owed his success not so much to the invasion of England in 1013, led by his father, Sven Forkbeard, but more particularly if less directly to the earlier viking raids of 1006–7 and 1009–12, led by Tostig (it seems) and by Thorkell the Tall.[44]

Fortifications: the burh system

Thus far the focus has been on written sources, which may give the impression that the British did not do much to defend themselves apart from paying off the attackers. This is not entirely true. As Gareth Williams points out, during the Anglo-Saxon period defence was strongly linked to the extension of royal authority, and from the mid-tenth century onwards, burhs may have acted more as highly visible symbols of the capacity of the king to defend his people than as an effective defence in their own right. The development of a tight network of burhs played a key role in Alfred's ability to defend Wessex effectively in the latter part of his reign, and a looser form of the burghal structure was instrumental both in the conquest of the kingdoms north of the Thames and in the expansion and maintenance of royal authority within the emerging kingdom of England. However, the failure to impose the burghal system effectively in northern England was both a limiting factor on, and a consequence of, the expansion of royal authority in that area, and it contributed both to the difficulties of defending England against renewed Viking attacks in the late tenth and eleventh centuries and to the wider limitations of royal authority in the north throughout the late Anglo-Saxon period.[45]

Barbara Yorke notes that Stronger fortification and increasing use of garrisons within a co-ordinated framework were important advances and responses to the Vikings' own use of fortifications and methods of fighting but also grew out of a longer tradition of lower level defensible capacity within Wessex. The role of ealdormen in directing defence within their jurisdictions in the ninth century has probably been underestimated because of the (deliberate) focus in the narrative sources on King Alfred. The *Chronicle* annals for the campaigns in the 870s do not name any ealdormen. It is possible, for instance, that Odda (named only by Ealdorman Æthelweard) may have placed watchers not only in Countisbury but in other Roman signal stations along the north Devon coast so that he could receive warning of the approach of just such a fleet. Some aspects of defence were directed from the centre, but it is also likely that ealdormen made their own decisions within their shires. Some aspects of defence in the Viking Age may be poorly recorded, as has been suggested for a system of warning beacons that is ignored in the narrative sources, but seemingly alluded to in charter boundaries.[46] Written sources are obviously framed by their authors' knowledge and intent. Asser and the *Chronicle* compilers seem to focus on King Alfred's achievements to the detriment of wider appreciation of how defence was organized in ninth-century Wessex, but they were at least well-informed and interested in the use of defensive sites.[47] The point emerges more clearly when the accounts of fortress-use in the annals for Alfred, Edward, and Æthelflaed are contrasted with those for the reign of Æthelred II in manuscript C of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The narrative sources have much to offer in the study of Anglo-Saxon fortifications, but always need to be read in the context of the individual circumstances of composition. The point emerges more clearly when the accounts of fortress-use in the annals for Alfred, Edward, and Æthelflaed are contrasted with those for the reign of Æthelred II in manuscript C of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The narrative sources have much to offer in the study of Anglo-Saxon fortifications, but always need to be read in the context of the individual circumstances of composition.48

A political angle

As Ian Howard notes, three periods of Anglo-Saxon history are particularly well documented: the reigns of Alfred the Great, Æthelred (the Unready), and Edward the Confessor. Much has been written about the reigns of Alfred and Edward, but, by comparison, little attention has been paid to the reign of Æthelred. An examination of the sources for Æthelred's reign shows that the overlooked king and his councillors have been victims of propaganda. In the period immediately after his death, Æthelred's failure to combat and defeat invading armies was contrasted unfavourably with the dynamic actions of his son, King Edmund Ironside. It was said that God had punished the English by allowing a Danish conquest and then a Norman conquest of the country because of the murder of King Edward the Martyr, This version of events, which Howard terms "malign propaganda", has been generally accepted over the centuries and it may have been the perceived failures of Æthelred, as a king and as a man, which made this period of history unattractive to historians. Because there has been comparatively little interest in the history of King Æthelred's reign, there have been relatively few scholars to challenge this common perception. Yet the assessment of the king is false. It ignores entirely more than a quarter of a century of progress and consolidation when Æthelred built successfully and prosperously upon the economic and political foundations left by his father, King Edgar.[49]

According to Howard, "the impact on England of invasions during the so-called Second Viking Age has been misunderstood."[50]

England was a country enjoying increasing population, trade and wealth during most, if not all, of King Æthelred's 38-year reign. The king employed mercenary forces, mostly Scandinavians, as did many other rulers at this time. Although there were incursions into England over the land frontiers and there were piratical raids along the English coast, such incursions and raids also occurred during the reigns of Æthelred's predecessors and successors; they should not necessarily be regarded as a distinguishing feature of his reign.[51]

That Æthelred was no weak and indolent king is shown by the fact that many of the most famous warriors of the Second Viking Age were his allies, with Olaf Tryggvason, Thorkell the Tall and St Olaf showing a significant degree of loyalty to his cause. The Scandinavian sources refer to Æthelred with respect. It is true that the viking raids developed from coastal incursions into a full-scale invasion and, finally, a war of conquest; but the later invasions and the conquests by Swein and Cnut were largely possible because they were supported by the indigenous population. The support of Northumbria and the Danelaw for King Swein in 1013 is partly a reflection of a shift in economic and political power to the north and east of England and away from Wessex.[52]

Furthermore, Æthelred did not pay raiders to go away; he paid for winter truces or for the invaders to change their character and become mercenaries acting in his political interests. Though the biased account of events in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle suggests that English forces were unsuccessful and badly led, there seems to be no doubt that armies and fleets were raised to combat the invaders and that they were probably, on occasion, more successful than the ASC would wish to allow – as, for example, in 1004/5 when Swein Forkbeard's army suffered heavy losses in battle and withdrew from England without having forced the English into any sort of negotiation or gafol payment, and also in 1014 when Æthelred's forces re-conquered England.[53]

A] reconstruction of the chronology of events in the sources allows us to understand the nature of the marriage agreement between King Cnut and Queen Emma; in effect, Cnut's 'conquest' of England was based, in part, upon a negotiated settlement with members of the English establishment. It was civil conflict over the succession to the throne of an ailing king which brought about the final disasters of Æthelred's reign and allowed the Danish king, Cnut, an opportunity to establish himself as king of England.[54]

The viking raids during Æthelreds reign induced a despair since these raids were seeminly impossible to stop. Factor that contributed were political instability in Anglo-Saxon England, which is attested for in spiritual writings and the occasional prayer instead of raging against the machine. Since the attacks were not a novelty and the large neglect of the reign of a king, it seems that, in the long haul, resistance seemed futile.

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RESISTANCE IS FUTILE?

REBELLION AGAINST TOTALITARIANISM IN LITERATURE AND FILM

Heroic fights against repression by an authoritarian and/or totalitarian government are a popular theme in both literature and film. Characteristically, these books and movies focus on one or more characters who decide to resist, even though the odds are invariably against them. In this article some well-known novels and movies that deal with this theme are analysed: the graphic novel *V for Vendetta*, the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and the movies *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Star Trek: First Contact*, the *Matrix* trilogy, and the *Star Wars* saga.

Ideas are bulletproof: V for Vendetta

The comic series *V for Vendetta* (1982-1985), written by Alan Moore and illustrated by David Lloyd, has been an inspiration for anarchistic groups such as Anonymous and participants in demonstrations world-wide. The Guy Fawkes mask worn by the main character, V, is a powerful and inspirational image. The historical Guy Fawkes, one of the conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot, briefly features in the comic, insinuating parallels with the plot and the events in the graphic novel:

> *We are told to remember the idea and not the man. Because a man can fail. He can be caught, he can be killed and forgotten. But 400 years later, an idea can still change the world. I have witnessed firsthand the power of ideas. I've seen people kill in the name of them. But you cannot kiss an idea... cannot touch it or hold it.*
>
> *Ideas do not bleed. They do not feel pain. They do not love. And it is not an idea that I miss. It is a man. A man that made me remember the 5th of November. A man that I will never forget.*
>
> -- Alan Moore and David Lloyd, *V for Vendetta*

Moore has given the historical events a little spin (I guess you can say that he took some creative license). It is well-established that the historical Guy Fawkes was a Catholic and the plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament was emphatically not an anarchistic act, but rather an attempt to replace the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I with the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots. The whole affair was, in short, part of a religious power struggle.[1] However, the central theme of *V for Vendetta* is not religion.

V defines himself as an anarchist.[2] Chris Boge observes that "[t]he V symbol, spray-painted on a wall, signifies the victory over mindless uniformity and the disciplinary power of the state".[3] According to V, the absolute power firmly in the hands of a totalitarian and tyrannical government at the start of the graphic novel, should be given back to the people: "People shouldn't be afraid of their government. Governments should be afraid of their people."[4]

As Boge observes, "[i]n the tradition of Plato's *Politeia*

V to Mr Creedy, who is shooting at him:

> "Did you think to *kill* me? There's no flesh or blood within this cloak to kill. There's only an idea. Ideas are bulletproof."
>
> Alan Moore & David Lloyd. *V for Vendetta*

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and Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Alan Moore's acclaimed graphic novel *V for Vendetta* envisages England as a totalitarian state comprised of body parts whose functions help maintain the Leader's power."[5] The ministry of propaganda is called the Mouth, the ministry responsible for the video surveillance of citizens is called the Eye, the ministry responsible for the audio surveillance of citizens is called the Ear. The (secret) police are called The Finger, and the investigation department (comparable to Scotland Yard or the FBI) is named The Nose.

V's revenge targets the representative of the vicious order – the fascist leader known as Adam (the first man?) who broadcasts to the people of London through the 'Voice of Fate' – actually a computer program heading the regime. […] 'Fate' has the maternal aspect of knowing, but in the monstrous sense as 'she' lacks the containing function. Nevertheless, Adam adores her, consults her as a source of knowledge and even falls in love with her in an act of perversion.[6]

Yair Neuman, in a psychoanalytical reading of the comic series, observes that V's vengeance seems impersonal in a very deep sense: It has no individual voice but only the voice of 'duty'. Indeed, it is a moral duty to fight against the fascist regime, but a duty detached from the individuality of the moral agent is always suspected of representing a psychological split. In the novel, this impersonal aspect of revenge has two manifestations associated with 'face' and 'name'. First, V hides behind a mask and thus has no face but that of a historical figure. The face is a mark of individuality. We are hard-wired from birth to identify faces, and the frozen expression of the mask represents a twisted form of the face devoid of humanity and individuality. […] As the plot unfolds, we learn that V was a victim and the sole survivor of a diabolic medical experiment conducted on prisoners in a concentration camp. His room number was 5-V. Another aspect, then, of his lack of individuality is the absence of a name. Even the sign V is polysemous, indicating his cell number in the concentration camp. Again the lack of a real name signifies the lack of individuality.[7]

In the end, however, V's rebellion is not successful:

Despite his death, which is experienced from an impersonal perspective as it is not his death, V gets his final revenge, which is closely associated with a woman and the knowledge she carries like a fetus. Evey, who under his paternal guidance has turned into a vengeful persona, wears V's mask and continues on his mission. […] *Unlike V, however, Evey is motivated to take revenge by her love for V. V's final achievement is to be loved by a woman.* […] *Evey, the daughter/wife/ mother, knows V better than anyone else as she is the one he adopted and educated. Through her name, she also represents the first, archetypical wife and mother Eve (the Biblical Adam's wife), who tasted from the Tree of Knowledge and delivered her knowledge to the generations to come at the price of mortal life. Eve is therefore the archetypical mother as she should have been, loving and containing.* […] *While V's revenge is destined toward (self-)destruction, there seems to be a seed of optimism in Eve's future. Getting even is not her main motivation but justice in its most practical and concrete sense, justice with a face, the real face of V and others who have been masked by the evil of the regime.*[8]

Boge argues that "V's voice may be that of a maniac, and perhaps also that of a madman, but he is a precisely reasoning and calculating maniac who was spawned by the system itself: He was experimented on in a concentration camp, and his vendetta can be seen as an insane person's attempt to cure society from collective madness, from involuntary 'order without justice, without love or liberty.'"[9]

In the case of *V for Vendetta*, resistance was not entirely futile: in the end, all main figures within the fascist regime of the Norsefire party have been killed and the ensuing power vacuum has plunged the city of London into a leaderless chaos. V would have been proud.

If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face – for ever. -- *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Contrary to Moore's graphic novel, Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (also known as *1984*) is an exploration of the author's own past, in a sense. Since its first publication in 1949, *1984* has become a classic and interest in this novel has significantly increased in recent years. The novel's portrayal of an authoritarian and totalitarian state that goes as far as trying to control people's thoughts, shows clear parallels with fascist and communist regimes, both past and present. Orwell wrote the novel "trying chiefly to imagine what communism would be like if it were firmly rooted in the English speaking countries, and was no longer a mere extension of the Russian Foreign Office."[10]

This critical stance may come as a surprise, as George Orwell fought in the Spanish Civil War on the side of POUM, the Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista.[11] Orwell's writings about his experiences resulted in the famous novel *Homage to Catalonia*.

So where does Orwell's criticism come from? Let us start with a (very) brief history of the Spanish Civil War. At the start of the war, in 1936, there were two parties fighting each other: on the one side were the Falange, a fascist movement supported by monarchists, nationalists and (Catholic) conservatives. On the other side were the Republicans, consisting of anarchists, communists and socialists who were supported by communist Russia. During the course of the war, however, a crisis ensued in Russia: Stalin seized absolute power over the Communist Party and had Leon Trotsky murdered. All people opposing Stalin's authoritarian rule were branded "Trotskyist" and either murdered or put into a gulag. As all communist parties worldwide followed the so-called "Moscow" line, this split in the Russian communist party basically divided communists worldwide.

Political fragmentisation happened among the Spanish communists as well. One faction kept supporting Stalin, the other faction opposed Stalin. Naturally, the faction opposing Stalin were immediately branded as Trotskyists and the two groups began fighting each other. This then led to a second front, behind the frontline at which the fascist, monarchist Falange were fought. Many people who were on the communist, Republican side blame this internal struggle within the communist faction for the loss of the war.[12]

Ultimately the Falange won and this led to Francisco Franco's fascist rule over Spain, which lasted until his death in 1975. Orwell, who had literally lived this period of Spanish history, returned to Britain a disillusioned man. He remained a socialist throughout his life, but he was staunchly anti-Stalinist.

Orwell's political views permeate his entire oeuvre, with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as only one example. As Orwell himself puts it: "Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as I understand it."[13] Orwell was a proponent of a federal socialist Europe, a position outlined in his 1947 essay "Toward European Unity," which first appeared in *Partisan Review*.[14] With all this information in the back of our minds, let us take a look at the portrayal of totalitarianism in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

On the sixth day of Hate Week, after the processions, the speeches, the shouting, the singing, the banners, the posters, the films, the waxworks, the rolling of drums and squealing of trumpets, the tramp of marching feet, the grinding of the caterpillars of tanks, the roar of massed planes, the booming of guns – after six days of this, when the great orgasm was quivering to its climax and the general hatred of Eurasia had boiled up into such delirium that if the crowd could have got their hands on the 2,000 Eurasian war-criminals who were to be publicly hanged on the last day of the proceedings, they would unquestionably have torn them to pieces – at just this moment it had been announced that Oceania was not after all at war with Eurasia. Oceania was at war with Eastasia. Eurasia was an ally.[15]

According to Chris Boge, the passage above illustrates how "[o]ne of Orwell's crucial twists lies in making the individual doubt the validity of their mental representations of 'reality' because of a forceful, rapid and incessant erasure of any traces of a stable, unchanging past. […] Orwell's dystopia gives us a world in flux hanging on the strings of an invisible puppeteer with a gigantic eraser."[16] In *1984,* history is constantly rewritten from scratch whenever Oceania switches alliances with the other two world powers – Eurasia and Eastasia.[17] Ervin Xhinaku and Olsa Perna remark that

[l]*iving in the midst of an environment marked by universal surveillance and ubiquitous spying, men in Oceania have either become adepts in the art of dissimulating their feelings, or, even worse, have become so thoroughly debased by the pressures of indoctrination as to feel themselves comfortably at home in slavish captivity. In such circumstances any idea of starting a rebellion against the Party seems outright foolish.*[18]

However, Boge argues that

[u]*ltra-nationalist sentiments form the basis for the fascistic/totalitarian enterprise, and enemies of the state (real or imagined) serve as markers of demarcation in that they help establish and maintain the ideological framework. Put differently, the voice of authority needs a correlative voice of resistance that can be perceived as constantly threatening to undermine it.*[19]

The character of Julia is a perfect example of the fundamental hypocrisy which orders the life of those citizens who, having not yet been entirely brainwashed by the incessant propaganda, have found spiritual refuge behind the mask of social conformity. Pretending to be a fanatically loyal adherent of the Party line, Julia harbours an intense inner hatred of the whole Oceanic system, especially of its puritanical sexual morality.[20]

By decreeing and enforcing a very strict sexual code on its subjects the Party manages to obstruct the natural release of their sexual energies, and, then, to perversely channel them into a beastly hatred directed against the –'enemies of the people'.[21] Interestingly, in his book *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Wilhelm Reich observes that the German fascism employed a similar strategy. Central to Reich's theory is the strong (self-)identification with a führer (which he likens to an authoritarian father figure) and the mother (strongly correlated with the 'motherland'). The suppression by the führer/ authoritarian father causes a (sexual) tension that is ultimately released via violence and channelled

through the party ideology (that builds self-esteem and makes people feel part of a great(er) whole). According to Reich, "nationalistic sentiments are a direct continuation of the sentiments of the authoritarian family. But mystical feelings are also a source of nationalistic ideology. Hence, patriarchal family attitudes and a mystical frame of mind are the basic psychological elements of fascism and imperialistic nationalism in the masses."[22] This makes sense, as it also explains the anti-religious stance of many, if not all, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes: The regime functions as a replacement for religion, as it taps into the feelings of religious ecstasy.

According to Reich, "[w]hile national feeling is derived from the maternal tie (home feeling), mystical sentiments originate in the anti-sexual atmosphere that is inseparately bound to this familial tie. The authoritarian familial tie presupposes the inhibition of sensuous sexuality. Without exception, all children brought up in a patriarchal society are subject to this sensuous inhibition."[23] Therefore, "the patriarchal-authoritarian compulsive order offers sufficient opportunity for sadistic-mystical discharges. The social rationalisation of such behavior effaces its pathological character."[24]

Back to the story of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the omnipresent Big Brother that slowly grows into an even bigger monster. As Xhinaku and Pema note,

> [i]n the end, when all sophisticated methods of surveillance and control have failed to give their due results, the totalitarian regime in Orwell's *1984* […] relapses into the old habit of despotism – subjecting the unprotected individual to extreme physical violence. In *1984* physical violence is represented as an embodiment of absolute evil, which might even be used to symbolize the nature of the whole relationship between the totalitarian state and the people. Unlike the primitive violence of the jungle, however, totalitarian violence is not of a personal or spontaneous kind. The perpetrators of totalitarian violence in *1984* are not portrayed as human beings but as blind impersonal forces that act on their orders with a almost robot-like thoughtless efficiency. Among the many violent scenes in *1984* the one when the two clandestine lovers – Winston and Julia – are caught, arrested and reduced into two trembling pathetic figures by the black uniformed thugs of the political police is particularly suggestive in drawing the contrast between the frailty and vulnerability of the naked human body (Winston and Julia are naked and defenceless in their secret room when they are caught out) and the inexorable anonymous violence of the totalitarian state epitomised by these "*solid men in black uniforms, with iron-shod boots on their feet and truncheons in their hands*."[25]

It seems that their renunciation in the face of totalitarian violence results from an inbuilt fatalistic conception which attributes to the workings of the totalitarian state the same ineluctable rigidity as that of the iron laws of nature or the supreme will of the gods. According to this implicit philosophy of life, acting against the might of the totalitarian juggernaut would be a completely absurd and futile endeavour. In *1984* […], then, even the minds of those who have managed to see through the cruder lies and fabrications of totalitarian propaganda, have been quite unconsciously infused with an ideological fatalism that makes them, in the long run, completely innocuous to the ruling tyranny. This mistaken metaphysicizing of a contingent state of social and political relationships, that the people, if only they understood its true nature, could actually abolish, represents the ultimate triumph of the totalitarian state in achieving and maintaining control over its subjects.[26]

The ending of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* makes it clear that, depressingly, when it comes to Big Brother resistance is indeed futile. Orwell's novel depicts a totalitarianism of the mind, where the victims are seemingly unaware of the fact how oppressed they are.

The Borg in Star Trek: First Contact (1996)

According to Steven Coulter, the Borg, a collective of humanoid cyborgs linked together in a hive-mind and modelled on the earthly superorganisms of ant colonies and beehives, have been the most feared alien race in the *Star Trek* universe. The formidable success of the Borg in assimilating their foes corresponds to the astounding success of superorganisms in our own biosphere. Since the Borg are portrayed as mindless automatons whose only purpose is to turn as many other humanoids into Borg as possible, they may superficially appear to be a metaphor for world Communism as it had been metaphorically represented in Westerns and science fiction from the 1950s onward. However, the Cold War has long since ended and the Borg are as popular as ever in the *Star Trek* franchise.[27]

Robert Tindol's explanation for this is that "this is because they are a modern manifestation of the 400-year-old American captivity narrative – the first distinct literary genre created in the New World. Rather than a metaphoric iteration of the Communist threat, the Borg instead represent the age-old American paranoia of being held in thrall by an Other who would drag Americans where they do not wish to be dragged."[28] As Tindol points out, "[t]he Borg, in other words, are a state of mind and a "bad idea" rather than a ra¬cial or perhaps even an ethnic identity. Seemingly paralleling anti-Communism in its most paranoid manifestations, the fear of the Borg is the fear of a dire fate to which death is decidedly preferable."[29] This becomes clear in the subsequent appearances of the Borg in *Star Trek* episodes, where the viewer learns that a 'borgified' individual retains his awareness and sense of self: his sense of self is caged in the circuits of the Borg collective.

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In this context, the origins of the captivity narrative are better understood. The narrative was originally intended as a lesson in religious rectitude and self-denial, the captivity narrative received its first and arguably most memorable treatment in the account of Mary Rowlandson of her weeks-long experience as a prisoner of the Indians during King Philip's War in the late 17th century. The captivity narrative, therefore, is by no means incompatible with mainstream Christian faith, which stipulates that the protection afforded the hapless pilgrim in the throes of malevolent forces, human or otherwise, does not necessarily take the form of physical survival, but always without fail affords spiritual continuance if the victim maintains faith.[30] Applied to the 'borgified' individual, having become Borg would not denote defeat, since the individual's humanity was retained.

What the early settlers of British North America have in common with their 21st-century descendants is the need for playing out the New World experience as a romantic quest for an elusive "freedom-from." Today, as four centuries ago, we all possess a seemingly bottomless appetite for repeated tellings of the narrative of those who have dramatically fought for their freedom from the Other. In short, the captivity narrative is earlier in our awakening individual consciousnesses and even more visceral than the enjoinder to do good and maintain one's Christian faith. Small wonder that the literary genre continues to have traction in the semi-utopian world of 24th-century *Star Trek*.[31]

The relevance of 24th-century quality of life is by no means a cursory state¬ment, because the entire argument of Star Trek: First Contact is that life on Earth has become near-utopian because the Borg were never permitted a toehold on the planet. This implies that not having been captured has led to a highly civilised societal system. The movie concerns a travel to mid-21st-century America after the Picard crew of the Enterprise has won a skirmish with the Borg some 300 years in the future. Unable to conquer the Federation in a direct battle, the Borg have elected to go back in time and prevent the very history that provided Earth with its puis¬sance and its resistance to outside influence – namely, the original contact with the Vulcans that first notified Earthlings that they were not alone in the universe. This is the "first contact" of the film's title.[32]

In the end, however, Captain Picard and his crew manage to thwart the Borg Queen's attempt to change history. Ironically, the movie does not deal with actually resisting a Borg attack, but rather preventing Borg contact in the first place, in other words: keeping one's mind clean.

Why do we always expect metal ships? *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956, 1978)

The science fiction movie *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, particularly the 1978 remake starring Donald Sutherland and Veronica Carthwright, is a personal favourite of mine. The original, from 1956, "[a]lthough commonly read as a fable about McCarthyism, also expresses profound fear and distrust of the dehumanizing and debilitating force of 1950s middle-class marriage and domesticity."[33]

The pods mount a constant assault on those who question or threaten the social contract defined by the nuclear family and the suburban lifestyle. The alien invasion plot progresses through a series of failed consumptions: uneaten meals, undrunk coffee, unfulfilled desires. When read as a Gothic, Invasion of the Body Snatchers presents a chilling critique of postwar American domestic ideology and its hidden contaminations.[34] When read as a Gothic tale, the sense of the story is clear.

As social documents, Gothic narratives topically address

Jack Bellicec:

"What are you talking about? A space flower?"

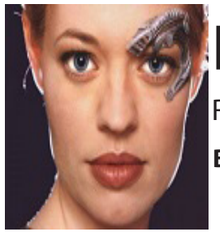
Nancy Bellicec:

"Well why not a space flower? Why do we always expect metal ships?"

Jack Bellicec:

"I've NEVER expected metal ships."

Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1978)



prevailing or sublimated fears of institutions that threaten the essential human. Indeed, as David Punter and Glennis Byron remind us, Gothic narratives appear at times of cultural confusion: the beginning of industrialization, the end of an empire, the rise of the middle class. The vehicle of such conformity in Invasion is sleep, during which humans change into something less. Sleep represents capitulation in Invasion not just to the pods but also to what they represent: the numb, emotionless, quotidian domestic life of Santa Mira. Emotion, resistance, refusal to comply: all of these are marks of individualism. Thus, in Invasion the unconsciousness of sleep parallels that of domestic conformity, both here positioned in the center of the house, the bedroom. Clearly, safety begins at home.[35]

The film addresses an anxiety about cultural institutions that threaten the individual.[36] Postwar American ambivalence about divorce pervades the original *Invasion of the Body Snatchers,* reflecting both anxiety and exhilaration about impermanent marital bonds. The double-bind of the invasion is that, without emotion, not only will divorce be unnecessary, but marriage as well. To take the invasion to its logical extension: once there's no need for procreation, marriage loses its social function. Thus, the projected resolution is entropy, indeed.[37]

What stands out is that there is no bad guy that is being fought, no system that needs to be overturned. The pods occupy a Gothic liminal space, neither food nor fuel: rather than a nurture, they are a means of consumption. These vegetable invaders are perfectly tailored to the Central Valley and its agrarian roots, although the question of their origin and agency remains vexed.[38] What brings them to Santa Mira, and why "now"? Of course, generations of critics have read the pod story as Jack Finney's anti-McCarthyist fable. Finney flatly denied that allegorical reading of his novel.[39]

Although time and tropes change, the two film versions of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* both maintain a subtext of marriage and divorce as part of the Gothic apparatus of the film narratives. Philip Kaufman's 1978 version updates the science to plant pathology and the location to contemporary San Francisco. The city provides Victorian houses and Beaux Arts city buildings as urban Gothic settings for an infestation of parasitic pink-flowered pod-plants. In this case, not divorce but faux marriage is the contaminant. Elizabeth Driscoll (Brooke Adams) shares an Alamo Park Victorian house—locally known as "painted ladies"—with her sports-obsessed dentist boyfriend, Geoffrey (Art Hindle). The unmarried cohabitants lead a lonely life together, marked by Geoffrey's inattention to anything but the game on TV. In sharp contrast with Miles and Becky's house-playing, Elizabeth knows something is seriously wrong when Geoffrey starts acting like a good husband—taking out the trash, picking up after himself, eschewing sports and giving away his tickets. The possible causes for this sudden disinterest in sports reflects Seventies hipster culture: Elizabeth's colleague Matthew Bennell (Donald Sutherland) wonders if Geoffrey might be having an affair, be gay, have a social disease—or be a Republican. Each of these reasons would threaten the family, but none so much as Elizabeth's unspoken expectations of a better partner. The subplot of Elizabeth's ambivalence about her living arrangements continues the thread of the divorce motif in the original film.[40]

The pods in the movie lead to emptiness, a loss of consciousness altogether. Anybody who has seen either version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* knows that, in the end, resistance is futile:

Source: imdb.com/title/tt0077745/

A prison for your Mind: *The Matrix*

The concept of the *Matrix* trilogy (1999, 2003) is similar to *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, except the 'body snatchers' are machines instead of aliens from outer space. The first *Matrix* movie starts sometime after the machines have successfully enslaved the human race, with the exception of a small rebelling band who actively resist the computer-programmed virtual reality world the machines have built for mankind. The rebels have built a heavily fortified city, which is given the Biblical name 'Zion.' Their leader is the charismatic Morpheus, the name of the Greek god of dreams. Other characters have mythological or Biblical names as well: Trinity Seraph (or Seraphim, a heavenly being in Christianity and Judaism that holds the highest rank in the angelic hierarchy),[41] and Niobe (from Greek mythology: Niobe is the prototype of the bereaved mother, weeping for the loss of her children).[42] Another Biblical them is the Oracle's prophesy that Morpheus will find 'The One' who will be the saviour of mankind. Keanu Reeve's character is named Neo, an anagram of 'One,' and he indeed manages to destroy all the Smiths in the Matrix at the end of *Matrix Revolutions* and, in another parallel with the story of Christ, sacrifices his life in order "to save both the Machines and humans."[43]

Thus, at the end of *Matrix Revolutions* (2003)

Neo is unplugged from the Matrix and his body is respectfully carried away by the Machines. The Architect, upon meeting the Oracle, tells her that she "played a very dangerous game" by attempting to change the way the Matrix functioned. The Oracle responds by saying that she understood the risk and knew it was worth taking. She asks the Architect what will become of any humans who want to be unplugged from the Matrix, and the Architect replies that "they will be freed." The Oracle asks the Architect, "Do I have your word?" The Architect answers "What do you think I am? Human?" The closing shot of the film depicts a new dawn on the world of the Matrix […]. *Plant life is shown in the Matrix, and for the first (and last) time the ubiquitous green tint is absent.*[44]

In the *Matrix* trilogy the idiom 'resistance is futile' proves to be incorrect, as long as you have The One on your side and *believe*. The dialogue between the Oracle and the Architect about people who want to be unplugged is particularly interesting, as this implies that there are people who do not wish to be freed.

Rebellions are built on hope: *Star Wars*

We have hope. Rebellions are built on hope! — Jyn Erso
Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (2016)

The *Star Wars* saga (1977 – present) features the Rebel Alliance, led by Leia Organa, locked in a struggle with the Empire. At first glance, the *Star Wars* universe appears to have been neatly divided into good (the rebels, the Jedi) and evil (the Empire, the Sith), particularly in the original trilogy - *A New Hope* (1977), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), and *Return of the Jedi* (1983). Even though the viewer sympathises with the plight of the rebels, in the original trilogy it is ambiguous who is right and who is wrong. *A New Hope* starts *in medias res* (like any good epic), the story of how the situation came about is revealed through the characters. As the protagonist, Anakin Skywalker, sides with the rebel alliance, the narration of the movies is biased in favour of the rebels and against the Empire. Only in the prequels - *The Phantom Menace* (1999), *Attack of the Clones* (2003), and *Revenge of the Sith* (2005) does it become apparent that the Republic has been the victim of a *coup d'état*, legitimating the rebellion against Emperor Palpatine.

Fans are generally not very fond of the prequels, but apart from revealing how Palpatine managed to seize power, one more aspect about the storyline in the prequels makes watching these movies interesting and worthwhile. Democracy is almost universally accepted as the best form of government, something worth dying for. In the *Star Wars* saga, too, the Rebel Alliance tries to reinstate a democratic government at a great cost of life. In the prequels, however, the Republic is depicted as a democracy that is very flawed and, as the story progresses, proves to be fragile and vulnerable. The movies very effectively demonstrate that the system of democracy is not perfect.

Also outside of the *Star Wars* universe, in the real word, this holds true. Winston Churchill has called democracy "the worst form of government except [for] all the others that have been tried from time to time."[45] Temma Kaplan confirms this view:

[t]*he attraction of democracy is that it raises possibilities for creating what the nineteenth-century British philosopher Jeremy Bentham called "the greatest happiness for the greatest number." By the sheer quantity of ideas people reasoning together can promote, democracies increase the chances of achieving peace, justice, and social benefits for all. But, democracy has never come easily and its only chance for gaining what it, more than any other set of practices, might achieve, is by making it ever more inclusive. Since democracy never rests and must continuously be re-created and protected, it is always unstable and threatened with extinction.*[46]

Kaplan recognises 'two fatal flaws' in the democratic system:

Morpheus:

"What is the Matrix? Control. The Matrix is a computer-generated dream world, built to keep us under control."

The Matrix (1999)

Padmé Amidala:

"So this is how liberty dies. With thunderous applause."

Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith (2005)

Accompanying democracy's achievements, most democracies have historically had two fatal flaws: one is the lack of effective routine communication between elected officials and ordinary people needed to share ideas and work out conflicts. The other is that democracies, like authoritarian governments, have tendencies that reach toward expansionism. Even in efforts to grant citizenship and extend democratic rights to previously excluded groups of former slaves, immigrants, and people of different ethnic origins, for example, most democracies have imposed themselves on others, colonizing them and dislodging or suppressing original inhabitants. Often, conflicts even within established democracies have also led to oppressive conditions for some of the population.[47]

It is not difficult to see the parallels, both in the *Star Wars* universe and the world around us. *Return of the Jedi* ends with the fall of the Empire and hints at a restoration of the Republic. In *The Force Awakens* democracy, as well as the restored Republic, is once more under threat. Even the Rebel Alliance of old has been resurrected, this time to fight the fascistic New Order. Will resistance prove to be futile or successful in the long run? *The Last Jedi*, released in December 2017, reveals the next phase in the struggle.

As this short overview demonstrates, both tyranny and rebellion in popular culture take on different shapes and forms: from a mad guy in a Guy Fawkes mask fighting an Orwellian fascistic regime, via a middle class couple facing an alien invasion and a Christ-like hero saving the world from the machines to an intergalactic rag-tag band of rebels fighting against a tyrannic Emperor. These rebellion-against-invasion and rebelling-against-oppression themes invite us rethink our preconceptions about democracy, tyranny, freedom, and slavery.

Notes

1. Another important episode in this power struggle between Catholics and Protestants in early modern England is the so-called 'Babington Plot', which is discussed at length in my article "Babington Plot: Crisis at Court" *The Angler* 1 (2017).
2. Anarchism is a political philosophy that advocates self-governed societies based on voluntary institutions. These are often described as stateless societies, although several authors have defined them more specifically as institutions based on non-hierarchical or free associations. Anarchism holds the state to be undesirable, unnecessary, and harmful. While anti-statism is central, anarchism specifically entails opposing authority or hierarchical organisation in the conduct of all human relations, including—but not limited to—the state system. Anarchism is usually considered a far-left ideology and much of anarchist economics and anarchist legal philosophy reflects anti-authoritarian interpretations of communism, collectivism, syndicalism, mutualism or participatory economics. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anarchism.
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6. Yair Neuman, "On revenge." *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* 17 (2012): 11.
7. *Ibid*., 10.
8. *Ibid*., 12.
9. Moore, *V for Vendetta*, 198 cited in Boge, "'There Were No Longer Any Laws," 274.
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11. "Orwell joined the POUM (Revolutionary Anti-Stalinist Communists) rather than the communist-run International Brigades by chance – but his experiences, in particular his witnessing the communist suppression of the POUM in May 1937, made him sympathetic towards the POUM." George Orwell, *Fighting in Spain* (Penguin Books, 2007), Introduction.
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17. Ervin Xhinaku and Olsa Pema, "The Totalitarian Achievement and Maintenance of Absolute Control over Man in George Orwell's *1984* and Ismail Kadare's *The Palace of Dreams*," *Diversitate si Identitate Culturala in Europa* 12 (2015): 33.
18. *Ibid*., 27.
19. Boge, "'There Were No Longer Any Laws," 270.
20. Xhinaku and Pema, "The Totalitarian Achievement," 27.
21. *Ibid*., 29.
22. Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* edited by Mary Higgins and Chester M. Raphael, M.D. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970): 131.
23. *Ibid*., 136.
24. *Ibid*., 137-138.
25. George Orwell, *Animal Farm and 1984* (2003): 298 cited in Xhinaku and Pema, "The Totalitarian Achievement," 33. Emphasis in original.
26. Xhinaku and Pema, "The Totalitarian Achievement," 34-35.
27. Robert Tindol, "The *Star-Trek* Borg As an All-American Captivity Narrative." *Brno Studies in English* 38 (2012): 151.
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34. Jennifer L. Jenkins, "'Lovelier the Second Time Around': Divorce, Desire, and Gothic Domesticity in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 45 (2012): 478.
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46. Kaplan, *Democracy*, 2.
47. *Ibid*., 3.

Literature

REBELLION AGAINST TOTALITARIANISM IN LITERATURE AND FILM

By Birgitte Breemerkamp

By Niko Eldeeb

SILICON SCREECHING

FEMINISM AND WHERE IT MISSED THE MARK

Women may have reached emancipation in lots of places around the world over the past century, but unfortunately, most women have not yet learnt how to use their newfound freedom. When we look at several statistics, many of these show a lack of female participation in many senior positions, whether it is in government or in the corporate world.

This under representation is not due to a lack of capacity or intelligence. Recently, a male employee[1] at Google, in Silicon Valley, was fired due to spreading a memo to his colleagues about female's supposed lack of talent to do technology (among other things). The employee argued biology and psychometrics, which turned out to be mostly a collection of pseudo-scientific ideas. Whilst everybody has a right to argue whatever they want on as faulty a foundation as they want, it is not advisable to do so on your employer's clock. The employee got sacked, felt discriminated against and took his case to publicise himself on social media. The bloke's time probably would have been better spent on doing some actual research, especially research on Silicon Valley's past. Had the employee done so, he would have known about the many foundational contributions by female employees on the tech field as well as their filling up of many technical jobs in tech during and after WW2 The, by now, ex-employee would additionally have found out how women were pushed out of the technical field of the job market once this field became lucrative. The reason females are not inclined to work in the tech industry today has nothing to do biology, unless one wishes to argue that emailing unsollicited opinions to colleagues during office hours is founded on biological imperatives.

According to a recent UN survey,[2] only 22.8 per cent of all national parliamentarians are women as of June 2016. This is a slow increase from 11.3 per cent in 1995, and, as of October 2017, 11 women are serving as Head of State and 12 are serving as Head of Government, As of January 2017, only 18.3 per cent of government ministers are women; the most commonly held portfolios by women ministers are environment, natural resources, and energy. These are followed by social sectors like social affairs, education and family. These are usually considered not to be very influential posts, whether this is actually the case or not. Looking at the world's top economy, in a recent survey of the S&P 500,[3] women make up 44.7% of total employees. Within this percentage, the numbers seem to decrease: 36.9% of women are mid-level managers, 26.5% are senior-level managers, 21.2% of women hold board seats, 11% of women are top earners, and merely 5.2% of women are CEOs. While looking at corporate governance globally,[4] women are not likely to be found in board rooms. In a recent survey of more than 3000 global companies, it was found that women only hold 14.7% of seats. Looking at those stats, from either a top down or a bottom up perspective, the picture for women does not bring a person to their happy place. Both in career development choices and maximum career achievements, it seems that glass ceilings are still firmly in place, with a few cracks to let some women pass by.

When we skim news sources about women issues in tech, as much of an unhappy picture is displayed. From cultural biases to gendered outreach programs to sexual harassment. This is relevant, especially given the bro-rants that keep popping up in the news every couple of years about how supposedly women cannot do tech. Women's contributions to the foundations of computing science, let alone the computer industry is often overlooked. Instead, even in today's tech companies, women are underrepresented. Recently, Google was revealed to have the highest percentage of its technical staff to be female, but this is as low a percentage as 17.[5] In order to further research the topic, a movement of historical accounting is in vogue now. Women's work during WW2 is finally being credited,[6] ranging from hardware to software development. In this context, it is relevant that the number of women who major in Computer Science has decreased since the 1980s, the numbers went from 34% to 18%.[7] Back then a lot more women used to work in tech (to the point of working as human "computers"[8]), and graduate from tech related schools, today it is the opposite.

So far, the word "woman" has been used consistently. The choice for use of a word from the sociological, rather than the biological field (which would have been 'female') may seem odd. After all, feminism itself never seemed to define the term "woman", what this term is founded upon and what this term entails in the first place. What is a "woman"?

Opinion
SILICON SCREECHING: FEMINISM AND WHERE IT MISSED THE MARK

By Niko Eldeeb

For once you get past the obvious argument of equality of the sexes, women have been sold short on the potential of woman-hood itself. Ever since the right to vote, women have been jumping around in the seemingly never ending quest for more emancipation. A century later, women are left with many hard earned freedoms over their personhood and bodies, but little else.

Is a female a woman? Is a female a wife/girlfriend? Is a female a daughter? Is a female a mother? Looking at those four simplistic questions leaves with you a problem, none of these "identities" stand on their own, they all belong relation to another person/persons. The epithet "woman" is somewhat vague, it is used as a secondary feature to other identities, a "woman" doctor, a "woman" actor, a "woman" politician, etc. The term "woman" seems to denote nothing more than the "female" variant of a certain identity. Since "womanhood" itself was never defined as a potential subjectivity, but a mere accessory or addition, current feminism seems to have built a house with no foundations. Their counter terms, namely "man" and "manhood" are well defined identities. The lack of definition of the terms "woman" and "womanhood" leaves a gap in culture, and it is to the loss of all members of society.

Even though females make up half of our homo sapiens population, in places where they have been emancipated and have been enabled, women still do not occupy equal positions in manufacturing products or running businesses. With regard to occupying positions in the middle market as well as higher ranking positions, females are underrepresented, as the numbers have shown in the discussion so far. The underrepresentation of women in corporate and government has remained a peculiar fact, despite the fact that women have overcome cultural barriers and have closed gaps ranging from education to legal rights.

Women, or females, whichever your perspective is, justifiably pursued inclusion. This was a worthy cause, since political emancipation should not be exclusive to any one biological sex. Unfortunately, after political emancipation, feminism's main goal seemed to get stuck on inclusion and not much more. This inclusion, sadly, did not benefit the female population. The demand for inclusion on a political level makes sense, since government has a finite number of positions. Not demanding inclusion would come down to political suicide. Fields outside of governments assemble along the lines of mutual interest and mutual gains. One can demand inclusion, but if you have nothing substantial to offer, this inclusion will turn out nothing than a panacee. This, in my opinion, has been overlooked by the feminist movement. This means that another approach should have been taken, Demanding inclusion in business will not lead to actual participation nor inclusion, since business and corporate operate on wholly different parameters from government. In the following, I'd like to sketch another take on things.

In a revisionist historical timeline, feminist would have argued for their rights explicitly, from their freedom over their bodies to their freedom of association. An unwavering right to participate in government by taking turns on singular positions (like that of ministers and prime ministers) to demanding proportional representatives. If the fate of entire nations economies and populations are so important, it would not make sense for half of any given population to sit by idly. Women would simply demand those freedoms, take on those responsibilities and affect their futures directly.

With regard to social and financial regulation, feminists would legislate more in favor of freedom of association and dissociation. In this way, women would get to pick and choose the organisations they wanted to associate with. This would pertain both to being employees and to being consumers. Whether firms and associations end up being exclusively female, male or both, a real market competition backed by enabling social regulation would ensue. This would mean that women would no longer be discriminated against or recruited merely for inclusion points and cleaning up a firm's market image. Female consumers would have options to choose from: these options would range from quantity and quality of goods, but as consumers, ultimately could demand the product that caters to their needs.

The feminist movement, rather than choosing the risk of freedom and the thrill of having to stand on their own, went the utopian way. At a certain point, feminists apparently decided to argue against segregation, but the numbers show that this has not yielded the desired results. after all, women are still underrepresented in a number of fields, as has been discussed at the beginning of this article. Feminism overlooked the fact that everything was there to be gained by associating freely, where simply the best and the brightest would be attracted, of both sexes.

Alas, this is all historial fantasy (or shall we say her-storical, pun intended) because it seems women decided that being a feminist was too much to ask Instead, women would gain small concessions, where the actual change was only effectuated with the passing of certain generations who upkept certain discriminating ideas in the first place. The latter has been largely the case in Western countries, rather than an accomplishment of feminism. It seems one can argue that most women never were feminist, and most don't seem interested in more emancipation or rights. This is a pity, since female leadership and female achievement, and its particular perks, have a lot to offer to the world.

Opinion

SILICON SCREECHING: FEMINISM AND WHERE IT MISSED THE MARK

By Niko Eldeeb

On the biological front, many quaint arguments have been brought against females, from the hormonal to the menopausal, from the emotional to the menstrual, from getting pregnant to being incapable of thought once they have become mothers. Many of these arguments have obviously been falling part with the advent of science. The modernisation of birth control is arguably one of the most liberating technologies when it comes to women's rights. , and enabled women to exert control over pregnancy , However, contrary to what one would expect, this did not liberate women with respect to their sexualities.

Female sexual selection is all but established as the leading mechanism by which most species evolve, from birds to humans. The female of the species, whether bird or human, chooses a mate based on aesthetic and survival capacity. A quaint observation might be that the fairly recent, and only limited in its explanatory power, model of the patriarchy made males select a mate. This could imply that women, at a certain point, 'forgot' that they have the power to select a mate.

Women could be enjoying the selection process itself, but too many women still deny their female nature and seem reluctant to take control of it. Rather, they focus on roles in society – being a daugher, a mother and so forth - and defending themselves when it comes to the idiosyncracies of being female. This allows others, whether these others are men or other women, to use sexism against women in general. In the long run, when women do not own their own woman-hood, they end up not being able to own their sexualities either.

After reading this article, some might say that is unfairly being set up with too many expectations for females, After all, there have been significant accomplishments over the past few decades. We must not forget that female emancipation will effectuate changes within other groups.. Feminism has yet to reach its full potential, but this potential will not blossom by demanding ' inclusion' which is basically asking everybody to be nice to you. Women will have to be prepared to play the game the way everybody eventually will have to play it, which is by utilising your own potential and actively pursuing what you want. In general, legislature that gives people rights does not mean much when these rights are not being utilised. Something tells me utilising from a safe and inclusive space will not amount to much.

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Pre-Union Day

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

Behold, dear reader, the fruits of the labours of some of our talented first-year students, written during the Angler Workshop on the Pre-Union Day in May 2017:

There once was a cat from Kent
Who wanted to catch a pheasant
He sang a sweet song
and the bird sang along
And that's how they started a band
-- Charlotte van Driel

There was a young king of King's Landing
Poison was what made his ending
He was hated by all
so they laughed with his fall
His family grieved, but his uncle was merely pretending
-- Lotje van Norren

To write a limerick or two,
is quite an easy thing to do.
Write some words down with a pen,
read your work over again,
and you will see that this fact is quite true.
-- Ellemijn Galjaard

Everything not related to elephants is irrelephant
-- Irene Rozema

There was once an alien from Uranus
who had no idea what a man was
He arrived on planet Earth
and witnessed a birth
And screamed "Isn't that supposed to come from your anus?"
-- Irene Rozema

Haikus are easy
But sometimes they make no sense
Refrigerator
-- Irene Rozema

There once was a bird named Willow
who felt, in her cage, rather sad, so
away she had flown
into the unknown
until she crashed into a window
-- Feline van Dijl

Here I sit and still I doubt
what this tale should be about.
So let's just write and write and write
for this pen does not incur fright.

It sets you free, it sets you loose
no matter what tale you choose,
so let's just write and write and write
and pray you will hence see the light.

Even if there is no story
in it, there might still be glory.
So let's just write and write and write
until you reach the final cite.
-- Jaime van der Meijs

You have a heart of steel in your chest
My mind is as cluttered as my kitchen sink
This poem is written in the most generic of inks
No, my petal, this is not a form of jest

Hearts are a fickle bunch
Beating swiftly at the feel of passion
Falling hard in a suicidal fashion
Yet, they run from treachery, only at the slightest hunch

But when I truly fell
I had my heart's full accord
For I am truly it's utter sovereign lord
Now my heart knows: all is well

By daily proof, you shall me find
To be to you both loving and kind
The heart you hold is true
Only in fairy tales can one love another like I love you
-- Dionne Remmelzwaal

A poem
By Margo de Koning

Thirteen years I had spent
longing for a home I had left behind.
Dreams of a town with enless
roads and glorious mansions and
flowers that smelled like Spring.
Once I returned I hoped
to find back a piece of me,
hidden in the corners and
buried under piles of dust.
Maybe it was still there, a memory
of a lifetime waiting to be
discovered again

Pre-Union Day

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

The Spiders from Mars
By Vita Jansen

Let me tell you a secret. Something almost nobody knows. David Bowie wasn't lying when he said that spiders were from Mars.

Think about it. It makes sense.

No other creature on Earch has eight legs, except for the Octopus (which technically has eight tentacles and no legs, by the way). Of course, Octopi come from Neptune, but that is a story for another time.

Back to the spiders. Spiders also have many eyes, while most creatures on Earth have only two. We can debate whether this is because there are not a lot of interesting things to see down here, whilst Mars is an aesthetically pleasing Wonderland, but we cannot be sure. The FBI and NASA tend to have different opinions on this matter. Personally, I think spiders have so many eyes to avoid the costly expense of glasses.

Lastly, spiders eat flies. Cats do this too, but then again, cats have always been bananas, gobbling up mice, cheese and whipped cream like it's nothing. Who on earth would want to eat flies? Exactly. Ziggy Stardust has come to blow your minds.

Once we loved a butterfly
Don't wonder how, don't ask us why
But we believed what we'd been told
All things that glitter can't be gold

Those jealous conspired to say
Just let that creature fly away
How can it be they have it all
Their pride is headed for a fall

For we're still young and so naïve
We felt the pain, felt the grief
There's still a lot to be unfold
All things that glitter can't be gold

No every day a new joy brings
Our butterfly grow golden wings
It seems we find as we grow old
Some things glitter may be gold

So let us mind what's there to see
Before our hearts become too cold
In spite of all that we've been told
Some things that glitter may be gold

It seems we find as we grow old
Our thing that glitters may be gold
-- Mike van Weert

Linguistics

A LINGUISTIC EXPLORATION OF SHELOB THE GREAT

By Valeria Milić

A LINGUISTIC EXPLORATION OF SHELOB THE GREAT

Given the fact that Tolkien was a linguist, it would be reasonable to assume that a body of linguistic research of Tolkien's writing style would have been established by now. Unfortunately, there has not been much linguistic work done on the author's writing style: sure, there are Flieger, Drout, Agøy and **the** Shippey[1] – who was trained in the same rigorous academic tradition as Tolkien himself – but there has yet to emerge a sound linguistic body of work on Tolkien's literary style.

Ironically, this has not stopped academic circles from rejecting, for instance, *The Lord of the Rings* due to allegedly inferior prose.[2] At first, the idea of researching style linguistically might seem somewhat vague, it may not seem clear how an author's lexical and grammatical choices, for instance, create a certain effect. Linguists Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short composed a a type of checklist . This is a list of features which can be taken into consideration when analysing a literary text. Looking at the grammar, lexis, figures of speech as well as context and cohesion can provide a surprising insight into the how of a text. In addition to this, Ronald Carter and Walter Nash went somewhat further than Leech and Short. Carter and Nash created a model that that describes how a world is built (the so-called Realism Game) and, on the other hand, how an author creates and evokes emotional response within the reader, which is called the Keynoting Game. The Realism Game uses names, descriptions, measurements, in short: everything that will leave the reader with the impression that the world he's immersing himself in is built upon solid foundations. The Keynoting Game, on the other hand, is used to examine how figures of speech, verbs, words and clauses are employed with the aim to sollicit an emotional response from the reader. Carter and Nash's model was also used to demonstrate how ideology is coded in language, but the latter is beyond the scope of this amiable little study. This article will apply keynoting as well as the realism game, combined with Leech and Short's checklist, to a minor character in the Lord of the Rings named Shelob.

The creature is described as "an evil thing in spider-form" who "served no one but herself, drinking the Blood of Elves and Men, bloated and grown fat with endless brooding on her feasts, weaving webs of shadow; for all living things were her food, and her vomit darkness" (707).

The introduction of Shelob is in terms of sound: "a gurgling, bubbling noise, and a long venomous hiss". What follows , and stands out, is the mention of a "bubbling hiss". These words are non-collate in everyday speech, and then there is the fact that such a sound is highly unlikely to exist in phonetical terms. When someone bubbles, the sound they produce is a voiced bilabial stop, when one hisses, the sound is an alveolar fricative, and it is voiceless.[3] Such a term catches the reader's attention and evokes a sense of confusion and wonder what is there in the pass, in the way Sam and Frodo feel confused and do not know what they are dealing with. The description by the narrator then continues in that "there was a creaking as of some great jointed thing that moved with slow purpose in the dark. A reek came on before it" The verb "to creak" is a dynamic verb, denoting a progression over time. The verb is combined with the somewhat unusual "jointed thing", which does not really clarify much: the noun "joint" is not usually used as an adjective either. The combination is grammatically correct, but remains vague. The choice for the noun 'reek', rather than 'smell' denotes the unpleasantness of the smell, 'reek' carries a connotation of something pungent. The reader gets the idea of something negative and threatening from this description, but there is not a clear image: "bubbling hiss" and "jointed thing" that creak leave the reader puzzled. This description is then followed by words that bring across more tangible images: "potencies", "powers of the night" which are "old and strong". Even though there still has not been divulged much about who or what is roaming in the darkness, the reader learns that this is a formidable opponent, who is tied to the earlier history of Middle Earth. "Dark" is here connected to "deep,", which is a common collocation of these words.

1. I am not explaning who Tom Shippey is. Seriously. I'm not.
2. Many books have been sold, though. And keep being sold.
3. Try it.

Finally, a solid piece of information is revealed by the narrator: the reader learns that the threat is female, "She that walked in the darkness." This epithet is simple, yet the use of a capital 'S' and, again, the mention of darkness makes it more ominous. There is a gradual build-up with regard to the information. The descriptions go from vague and odd to becoming more clear, and this build-up mirrors the gradual approach of the creature itself: the reader by now knows that something is coming, something female, from both the depths of Torech Ungol and the depths of the history of Middle Earth itself.

The approach by the monster is described in terms of its eyes, which are "monstrous and abominable" and "bestial and yet filled with purpose and with hideous delight, gloating over their prey trapped beyond all hope of escape". This is in concord with the rest of *The Lord of the Rings*, where the negative characters, from the barrow wights to Gollem, are described in terms of their eyes.[4] What happens next is interesting, as the physical appearance of the beast is described in an almost lighthearted manner: "Cobwebs! Is that all?" is what Sam remarks. This comes across almost as an anti-climax: after all, the world of Middle Earth may not be like everyday reality,but spiders are apparently a thing in Middle Earth as well. This almost conversational tone by Sam is found in the tone of the narrator as well, who then casually drops the name of the beast: Shelob, "who was there before Sauron, and before the first stone of Barad-dûr". What follows is a passage that seems a little disorganised: information is provided to the reader, but it is not clear what information is crucial for the advancement of the plot:

There agelong she had dwelt, an evil thing in spider-form, even such as once of old had lived in the Land of the Elves in the West that is now under the Sea, such as Beren fought in the Mountains of Terror in Doriath, and so came to Lúthien upon the green sward amid the hemlocks in the moonlight long ago. How Shelob came there, flying from ruin, no tale tells, for out of the Dark Years few tales have come. But still she was there, who was there before Sauron, and before the first stone of Barad-dûr; and she served none but herself, drinking the blood of Elves and Men, bloated and grown fat with endless brooding on her feasts, weaving webs of shadow; for all living things were her food, and her vomit darkness. Far and wide her lesser broods, bastards of the miserable mates, her own offspring, that she slew, spread from glen to glen, from the Ephel Dúath to the eastern hills, to Dol Guldur and the fastnesses of Mirkwood. But none could rival her, Shelob the Great, last child of Ungoliant to trouble the unhappy world.

Already, years before, Gollum had beheld her, Sméagol who pried into all dark holes, and in past days he had bowed and worshipped her, and the darkness of her evil will walked through all the ways of his weariness beside him, cutting him off from light and from regret. And he had promised to bring her food. But her lust was not his lust. Little she knew of or cared for towers, or rings, or anything devised by mind or hand, who only desired death for all others, mind and body, and for herself a glut of life. alone, swollen till the mountains could no longer hold her up and the darkness could not contain her.

But that desire was yet far away, and long now had she been hungry, lurking in her den, while the power of Sauron grew, and light and living things forsook his borders; and the city in the valley was dead, and no Elf or Man came near, only the unhappy Orcs. Poor food and wary. But she must eat, and however busily they delved new winding passages from the pass and from their tower, ever she found some way to snare them. But she lusted for sweeter meat. And Gollum had brought it to her. "We'll see, we'll see," he said often to himself, when the evil mood was on him, as he walked the dangerous road from Emyn Muil to Morgul Vale, "we'll see. It may well be, O yes, it may well be that when She throws away the bones and the empty garments, we shall find it, we shall get it, the Precious, a reward for poor Sméagol who brings nice food. And we'll save the Precious, as we promised. O yes. And when we've got it safe, then She'll know it, O yes, then we'll pay Her back, my precious. Then we'll pay everyone back!"

So he thought in an inner chamber of his cunning, which he still hoped to hide from her, even when he had come to her again and had bowed low before her while his companions slept. And as for Sauron: he knew where she lurked. It pleased him that she should dwell there hungry but unabated in malice, a more sure watch upon that ancient path into his land than any other that his skill could have devised. And Orcs, they were useful slaves, but he had them in plenty. If now and again Shelob caught them to stay her appetite, she was welcome: he could spare them. And sometimes as a man may cast a dainty to his cat (his cat he calls her, but she owns him not) Sauron would send her prisoners that he had no better uses for: he would have them driven to her hole, and report brought back to him of the play she made. So they both lived, delighting in their own devices, and feared no assault, nor wrath, nor any end of their wickedness. Never yet had any fly escaped from Shelob's webs, and the greater now was her rage and hunger.

The epithets of Shelob are rather simple but diverse, in addition to the fact that, once her name is revealed, it is mentioned fairly often in the chapters that she appears in. In addition to affirming that the spider goes a long way back in history, this variety also implies that the the spider is not a one-dimensional creature.

4. Sauron would be the ultimate eye.

Linguistics

A LINGUISTIC EXPLORATION OF SHELOB THE GREAT

By Valeria Milić

This type of periphrasing turns out to be a combination of the Keynoting Game and the Realism Game, as the effect is a combination of providing information and evoking a response from the reader. The fact that the representation of Gollum's thoughts show the pronoun 'she' written with a capital 's' again ("…then She'll know it, then we'll pay Her back") and the mention that Gollum "bowed down and worshipped her", brings across that there is something deity-like about the creature as well. Old, powerful and the exertion of her singleminded will, as the quoted passage shows, seem to justify this connotation: the narrator calls her Shelob the Great for a reason. In itself, the passage is fairly cohesive, but the context is not clear. The author's choice to present all this information in the middle of the scene, the fragment maintains tension. Compared to the earlier description of Shelob – or rather, lack of description – this fairly unexpected collection of backstory and information keeps the reader on edge, and makes him want to know what will happen next.

This basic demonstration has not painted a picture of Shelob as much as painted a picture of the paint, and the brushes, that an author uses to construct a character. Tolkien's lexical and grammatical choices, his figures of speech as well as context and cohesion of his text, as well as the ways in which he makes Middle Earth real to his readers, all of this has been shown by taking a closer look at the spider-monster. With a work of the complexities of *Rings*, more can be said and the analysis can go a lot deeper than what has been described so far. The example of the bad guys, and their descriptions in terms of their eyes, has been mentioned. One can look and see whether there are connections between other groups of characters. Another option would be to analyse the style of certain passages in *Rings,* to see how they relate and what they teach us about the style of the novel as a whole. In order to show what sort of insights can be gained, this article will be rounded off by looking at the word that it has been about all along, the word 'spider'.

The word 'spider'is mentioned ten times throughout *The Two Towers:* once it is in reference to Saruman, who was captured by the palantir, which had turned him into "a spider in a steel web." The other nine references pertain either to Gollum, or to Shelob. This may seem somewhat odd, Shelob is hardly powerless in the way Gollum is. Gollum is not compared to a spider in the rest of the book and Saruman seemingly has no connection to either Shelob or Gollum. Placing these three characters within the context of the novel's theme makes things clearer, of course. Shelob is the embodiment of desire, an instinct that drives her forth and it is made clear that this is what her existence is about, "desiring death for all others". It must also not be forgotten that Shelob spiked herself on the Elf blade: "with the driving force of her own cruel will, with strength greater than any warrior's hand, thrust herself upon a bitter spike". Both Gollum and Saruman are characters who are perverted by their desire: Gollum yearns for the Ring and is devoured by his lust for it. Saruman is somewhat in control of his desires and knows how to direct them but he remains a victim of corruption. Against this background, the webs that Shelob weaves entrap someone until that person is nothing but a prisoner,who experiences metaphorical darkness in the sense of despair. In retrospect, the passage that describes Shelob's cobwebs and the despair that Frodo feels cutting through cobwebs that do not let any light through, is suddenly seen in a different light altogether. Even though Shelob is a supporting character that appears mostly in one chapter, is defeated at the beginning of another and nobody knows what happened to her in the end, going a little bit deeper into the how managed to show some of the why.

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Language Acquisition

EGYPTIAN ENGLISH: ACQUIRING A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

By Niko Eldeeb

EGYPTIAN ENGLISH

ACQUIRING A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Even though Egypt is located on the African continent, linguistically and culturally the country is tied to the Middle East. I have been asked to write a little about my experiences with the English language as well as my views on English in my native Egypt. The status of English is a particular one in Egypt, due to several reasons. I was born in 1989 to Egyptian parents in Kuwait, this was a year before Iraq's infamous invasion. My parents left Kuwait and eventually came back, like many others. My brothers went back to their English schools, and I was enrolled when I was old enough. An English school is considered by middle and upper middle class to spend money on to enable their children future educational and career mobility. This meant all subjects were taught in English, all conversations between teachers and students, students and their peers were n English An immersive English -speaking environment was the rule. Arabic language classes and Religion classes were in Arabic, for obvious reasons. Here begin my years of immersion in English. Up until the age of seven, I was surrounded by English, as Arabic was only spoken in Arabic classes as well as at home. Televison channels were in English, and virtually all my books too. It was during this period, that, I later understood in hindsight, English became my first language. As I grew older, my parents decided to move back to Egypt, this was right before I entered prep school. I was enrolled in a language school, which is more affordable than English school, however mostly lower middle class and middle class parents sent their children there, which is very different from an English school. All subjects were taught in Arabic, with the exception of science and math, which were taught in English. Arabic was the language of instruction, as well as conversation between students.

It was then that I started noticing the differences in English and Arabic vocabulary. The words never quite seemed to match up, the sentences I read, wrote or spoke didn't convey exactly what I expected or expressed. This experience made me think about the differences between English and Arabic. Modern English is a language that evolved rapidly over the past few centuries, expanding by taking many loan words from multiple European languages. Arabic, as a language, is regional compared to English Loan words have a shorter, and occasionally a non -existent, history. What is now known as Great Britain was conquered many times throughout history, so adopting words in English has a long tradition. In Arabic, many seemingly modern loan words came into the language over past two centuries. These loan words are, overall, transliterations from other languages, arabissed phonetically and sometimes , these loan words have no actual concept in the Arabic language itself. In the 19th and 20th centuries,[1] an outward looking cultural movement took place in Egypt, later propagating throughout ottoman empire, for which many translation efforts were taking place.

Apart from the difference in span of English and Arabic, the Arabic language is more fragmentalised when compared to the English language. Arabic is fundamentally three languages in one. Depending on where you are in the Middle East, classical Arabic, modern Arabic or colloquial Arabic are spoken. These three forms of Arabic mix freely in a spoken setting, but depending on existing literature, may be strictly separated in writing. However, there is an actual lack of standardisation, when it comes to teaching the Arabic language. This can make it difficult to distinguish which version of Arabic is being used, or should be used. This can lead to miscommunication and, occasionally, people simply not understanding each other properly. For example, Arabic words themselves have different meanings in different dialects when phrased in sentences or conversations, as opposed to what they would be in standard Arabic, referenced in a dictionary or otherwise.

The English language, as I see it, is practically two languages in one. There is the modern global written version, grammar and vocabulary are overall standardised. Then there is spoken English, which has its local dialects and idioms, but this doesn't stop English speakers, regardless of background, to communicate with one another, whether it is in speaking or in writing.

It is safe to assume that the ability to acquire English as a second language is tied to economic class more firmly in the Middle East, than it is in European countries. This brings me to another aspect to discuss: Egypt, and other Arabic -speaking countries have relatively high levels of illiteracy to this day. We can look at UNESCO's reports with regard to literacy in Egypt. This presents us with a couple of challenges, as UNESCO itself will admit to. The definitions certain countries use for literacy sometimes are not the definitions that UNESCO[2] uses. In the case of Egypt, there can be a lack of literacy programmes to begin with so the literacy data are sources from population censes. This censes are not always kept properly, which can disturb the outcomes as well. Despite this, the numbers can give a generic impression which provides some insight into the class of people who only use spoken language, without ever being exposed to much else, let alone a second language.

Looking at a recent UNESCO[3] data, Egyptian youth literacy rate is 92%. However taking a different information source shows a grimmer picture, as news sources referencing CAPMAS (Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics) show, more than 25% of Egypt's population 'illiterate,'[4] or another proclaiming illiteracy rates stand at 14.4% for males, 26% for females.[5] The literacy/illiteracy divide is largely drawn along the urban and rural areas in Egypt. One good illustration of this is the Egyptian Cairo/Giza governates. This is a conglomerate of the capital of Egypt and surrounding 'suburbs' where 20% of Egypt's entire population is located. If there were a count of literate and illiterate people, this anecdotal report would clearly delineate a group of people who are multilingual and a group of people who only use one spoken language. It is not a stretch to imagine that the communication barrier between different economic groups in Egypt is enlarged due to the factor of literacy.

In addition to the standardisation problem of Arabic and the literacy problem, there is the factor that many people who are simply never exposed to another langauge do not properly realise that many of our psychological and sociological attributes are normative within a language itself Apart from noticing differences between my native Arabic language and my acquired second English language, for some reason it was the acquired language that enabled me to form new ideas. English provided me with a cognitive differentiation and whilst this may not be an exclusive trait to English, I did notice that Arabic speakers who learnt English experienced something similar. Arabic speakers from the upper middle class and higher class usually speak English or French, and they would find it difficult to connect to other segments of the population, despite knowing and speaking Arabic fluently. People with access to English/ French books have fundamentally different life and cultural references than just Arabic speakers, a divide that is practically invisible till friction of daily or civic interaction occurs. In my opinion, this point to a cognitive element in second language acquisition. The economic divide and the accompanying literacy problems are likely to display this cognitive element more prominently.

Over time, I noticed that English had become my first language, rather than Arabic. I compartmentalised my schooling and socialisation in Arabic. The books I perused were mostly in English, and later when I got a PC and an internet connection, I only read English texts on the web. The question whether I am bilingual has been resolved in the sense that I feel that the English language covers my needs when it comes to expressing myself, whether it is ideas or otherwise meaningful communication. The many texts available in the English language resulted in an expansive worldview, there were always more topics to learn, more challenging material to understand, and more words (and loan words) to connect the dots. The Arabic language is used in formal settings, talking to my friends and family, but I feel that this is an additional language that I use in a somewhat detached manner.

How Arabic will be taught in the future is a question that has not been resolved as of yet. In school, speakers are taught a mix of texts, entailing both classical and modern Arabic, students learn to read and write in Arabic. But after leaving school, plenty of people do not particularly bother writing in Arabic again, this has in part to do with lack of standarisation which was mentioned earlier, but also percieved lack of (loan) words. Especially in a technological context, many people simple use the Latin script to text over phones, or via social media, that happens despite of Arabic characters being supported fully in keyboards and arabic script in software. The literacy divide in Egypt (and the Middle East in general) and its convergence with the economic divide, means that most people in Egypt are never exposed to another language outside of media settings, such as movies with subtitles. These are the people who mostly deal with Arabic only. The people either deal with Arabic in its spoken form, due to illiteracy. Then, there is the group of people who speak and write Arabic, but they choose the Latin script since they can express themselves better that way, even though they do not speak another language fluently. Lastly, there is the group of people who are multilingual. The English language has contributed to this differentiation.

Language Acquisition

EGYPTIAN ENGLISH: ACQUIRING A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

By Niko Eldeeb

The lack of standardisation of Arabic, the internet and social media, and the slow but certain emergence of English speakers will continue to influnce Egypt. There will emerge a new group of language users who are not bilingual, but monolingual plus, a person who merely employs another language for social or economic reasons, among which I count myself. Then there is the internet. Generally speaking, the world wide web is a unique phenomenon insofar as itis a truly global phenomenon. It takes no specific insight to understand that the internet and social media have only started to influence the world as a whole, but in the final part of my essay, I want to discuss the internet's influence on Egypt.

The use of English in Egypt will be stimulated further by the internet, given that English is the web's dominant language. In the past, the goal of literacy was teach people reading and writing skills in order to enable them to participate in society. The internet is a different equaliser in this respect: people who have access to the internet and the information it provides will still have difficulties participating if their English is not sufficient. Whether the illiterate group will learn to read and write in Arabic or in Latin is a relevant question, given the long-term implications of the web. The other two groups I mentioned earlier will, consciously or unconsciously, use the English language more often. For a country like Egypt, this could imply that second language acquisition, over time, will make a bigger impact than could be expected. This only shows that the biggest changes manifest in unforeseen ways.

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Creative Writing

ROOM OF WHITE

By Jaime van der Meijs

Apart from participating in the writing workshop, Jaime also wrote a short story especially for this issue:

ROOM OF WHITE

"As my condition worsened, I spent every day trying to outrun death. In this room of white, kept alive by wires, needles and nurses. Looking out of the window is one of the few delights that I still have. A chance to look at the happy, outside, world; where everyone is actually alive.

Every day I see people disappear from the hospital, some whose lives had been prolonged, and others who had stopped resisting the inevitable. I can feel that my fight is reaching its end too, but all I can ask myself is: "Was the fight worth it?" All of my life I have lived to the fullest, only for it to end like this. Nobody should have to 'survive' the way I am doing now. So please, son, for your own sake, never stop living your life the way you want to, because death catches up to all."

"Those were his last words, may he rest in peace now." As I sat down, the daze returned and cut me off from the rest of the world.

Albion Association

BOARD 2017-2018

By the Albion Board

AIESEC

Board 2017-2018, Ofermōd:
Ofermōd is a word that originates in the Beorhtnoth tale, which can be found in The Battle of Maldon. The word roughly translates to the Dutch word 'stoutmoedig' or 'overmoed' but without the negative connotations. In English, the term is often described as 'highly spirited', an emotion that this year's board identifies with. Our special thanks go to Dr. Porck, for clarifying the word's etymology and meaning.

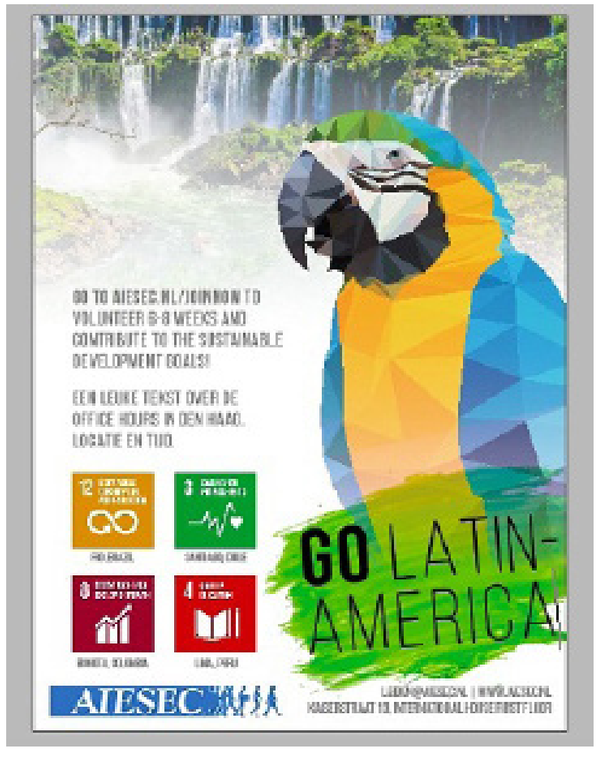
We are all enthusiastic about our study association and we believe that we have shown this throughout the year. Below, you will find the introductions we wrote at the time.

Suze, chair:
I am Suze, this year's chair (yes, that means that you could sit on me, but you probably shouldn't). This mean I am responsible for coordinating our association and the committees which are part of Albion. I am a third year student and I specialise in linguistics, because I am fascinated by the innate human propensity towards communication, especially by the way seemingly arbitrary sounds and tokens are used. I am originally from Twente, but please don't remind me of that. I have a twin sister who is the most magnificent person on this planet. Besides studying, I usually hang out at Prometheus and play board games at Duivelsei. I absolutely love going to concerts and festivals, and dancing. That is all for now, but if you want to get to know me better, join an activity and I shall share more with you, for example my grotesque love of cats.

Celine, treasurer:
My name is Celine and I am this year's Treasurer. This involves handling all financial business, and I organise the book sale as well as the Albion trips. I am majoring in English and International Relations. I was born and bred in Hilversum, but I have lived in Leiden for the past two years. What else would you like to know about me? I am obsessed with New Zealand (and yes, also with Tolkien), syntax and Quentin Tarantino. I also have an amazing (not to be contested) musical taste with heroes such as Ted Neeley, Marcus Mumford and Lin-Manuel Miranda. At this moment my only goal in life is to attain New Zealand citizenship. I really look forward to the rest of this Albion year with my amazing board, and hope to make this a great Anglo-Saxon year for all of you!

Roza, secretary:
Hi! I am Roza, secretary at this year's Albion board. My tasks include keeping minutes and I handle most of the biweekly updates! I am pursuing two bachelor degrees, one in English and one in International Studies. For my English degree, my main interests are the Old English language, as well as American literature and British literature. My taste in authors is varied, ranging from Haruki Murakami, to William Wordsworth and Roddy Doyle. For my other bachelor, I focus on the Eastern Asia region: I am currently learning Korean, and I spend most of my free time practicing this language. Some random facts about me? You could play any Beatles song at any time and I am likely to know the lyrics, which Beatle wrote them and when the song was written! Also, I love Impressionist paintings and I am absolutely in love with anything by Monet. Let's make this an exciting year~ I look forward to seeing you at one of this year's Albion events!

Wierik, assessor extern:
Hiya! I am Wierik, your very own Assessor Extern. This means that I am in charge of Albion's external contacts: meetings with other study associations, university organs, but commercial contacts too. Like most of the other board members, I am a third year English student. I absolutely love the fantasy genre! J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, George R.R. Martin, Brandon Sanderson are among my favourite authors. Besides reading, I enjoy music, either making music or listening to others' music.I like all sorts of genres: rock, pop, classical, but also movie soundtracks, musical soundtracks, even the occasional musical itself. I am not too proud to admit that I know practically all the lyrics to "Hamilton". Apart from music, I like the occasional beer, and I haven't even mentioned how much I like Ireland. I look forward to meeting you during one of our activities!

Annemarije, chief fresher:
Hello, my name is Annemarije Makkinga and I am this year's Chief Fresher. This I my first year, so I am the youngest board member at just 19 years of age. I decided to join because I thought it would be fun, and a good learning experience. So far, being an Albion board member has indeed proven to be heaps of fun! My position as Chief Fresher requires me to make sure contacts between the board and the first year students run smoothly. Both the English department and Albion have vibrant cultures, and we are dedicated to making this a great year. There are a lot of things in store. I look forward to the year and seeing you at all our events!

AIESEC is a non-profit student organisation which is active in 126 countries. Since their aim is to connect student to volunteer projects abroad, this offers plenty of opportunities to do volunteer work abroad. This way, students can experience projects in a hands on manner and work on sustainability goals in cross-cultural environments. They can be found on www.aiesec.nl, and below is an examples of some of the activities AIESEC engages in: