

*Cognitive-genetic narratology and the fictional mind in *To the lighthouse**

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Introduction

ALTHOUGH MODERNIST WRITERS CLAIMED TO “LOOK WITHIN” and portray the workings of the mind rather than the material world “out there”, recent criticism has punctured their self-established myth of an “inward turn” by demonstrating how fictional minds in modernist narratives can be considered from the perspective of the extended mind theory. David Herman (2011) has convincingly shown that modernist evocations of the mind, despite innovative narratological techniques such as stream-of-consciousness or interior monologue, can actually be analysed as distributed forms of cognition. Dirk Van Hulle (2014) has reinforced Herman’s suggestions and demonstrated the possibilities of adding a genetic approach. This paper wishes to underline both Herman’s as Van Hulle’s suggestions by examining two chapters from Virginia Woolf’s *To the lighthouse* (1927), thus further demonstrating how the modernists’ intuitive shaping of fictional “extended minds” was informed by their own cognitive experiences with “thinking on paper”. The cognitive processes at work during Woolf’s writing can be traced in manuscripts, drafts and notebooks and clearly demonstrate the “extended mind” at work. By taking into account the cognitive aspect of the production of storyworlds through an examination of a work’s genesis, a third dimension can be added to recent developments in cognitive narratology, a domain which, so far, has been mainly concerned with the levels of the narrative and the reader. Furthermore, this paper will elaborate on the theoretical implications of combining genetic criticism and cognitive narratology, not only for a further renegotiation of the modernist project but also for the concept of authorship within the domain of genetic criticism. The central aim of my further research will be to investigate if the application of the theories of distributed cognition can provide a re-definition of literary authorship and authorial intention.

Genetic criticism and authorship

Genetic criticism, or *critique génétique*, has been defined by Daniel Ferrer as “*la science de l’invention écrite*”² since its aim entails the study of the writing process of a literary work through the collection, cataloguing and examination of manuscripts, notebooks and drafts that constitute the genetic dossier of a published work. Since any writing process necessarily implies a sense of human creative agency,³ it is unavoidable to touch upon the delicate subject of “authorship” whilst performing the genetic-critical analysis of any given work. This explains why genetic criticism is placed alongside various disciplines such as discourse analysis and literary sociology in assertions of the “resurrection” of the author within literary theory.⁴ The notion of an author’s resurrection necessarily implies his previous death and this event was proclaimed by the major theoreticians of post-structuralism, who took the tenets of

² FERRER, D. *Logiques du brouillon: modèles pour une critique génétique*. Paris: Seuil, 2001, p. 184.

³ BUSHELL, S. *Text as process: creative composition in Wordsworth, Tennyson and Dickinson*. Charlottesville, London: University of Virginia Press, 2009, p. 42.

⁴ GRÜTTEMEIER, R. *Auteursintentie. Een beknopte geschiedenis*. Antwerpen, Apeldoorn: Garant. Colleges Literatuur, 2011, p. 99.

New Criticism's intentional fallacy⁵ one step further in asserting the loss of any authorial centre in a text. Especially in Roland Barthes' "The death of the author" (1967) and *S/Z* (1970) the necessarily variable and undeterminable meaning of texts was demonstrated by pointing out that any discourse, including a literary text, can be shown to be full of gaps and contradictions that do not lead to any centre of signification. Since no text contains a definite meaning, it is futile to find out what the original meaning or intention of the author would have been.⁶

Grounded in and reacting to phenomenological philosophy^{7, 8}, post-structuralism shed light on the manner in which any subject and any text is constrained by language, to the extent that "language speaks us" as Jacques Lacan articulated the matter in 1966 in his *Ecrits*⁹ and "all telling modifies what is being told, so that [...] what is told is always the telling".¹⁰ This assumption imposes the relativity and changeability of textual meaning: "it changes those who participate in it and exists not in consciousness but in engagement with the world, and this implies that meaning is grounded in a shared subject matter that pre-exists the creator".¹¹ Thus in post-structuralism's rejection of authorial intention we find a concept of consciousness that is based on a denial of a dualistic mind-world split: the subject does not merely express its "inner self" to the "outside world", since it is in the first place constituted by that outer reality, language forming an essential part of it. In this sense, cognition and consciousness must be regarded as "intralinguistic effects or metaphors" that have arisen out of a linguistic order that evolved before language was even consciously mastered.¹² To find meaning in a work, it is necessary to do away with the idea of a rational human mind at the centre of human communication (Barthes' and Derrida's "metaphysics of presence") and accept the "text" as a field of relations and language as a signifying system that does not express, but precedes and conditions thought.¹³

Thus post-structuralism illuminated - together with concepts such as "genius", "originality" and "oeuvre" - the unsustainability of a particular historical conception of the author as controlling presence, as unique individual expressing his most inner thoughts and replaced it with a model of authorship as constituted by a pre-existing language totality.¹⁴ It opened up new insights into the extent to which creative consciousness is understood to control process and dismissed the location of agency as entirely interior.¹⁵ A fundamental notion in this respect was Julia Kristeva's redefinition of the text as "productivity" and her development of the concept of "intertextuality", claiming that all forms of discourse or text are based on the transformation of other systems of signs. In the same period, literary authors themselves started stressing the character of their works as processes and genetic criticism was established as a new literary approach.¹⁶ Although poststructuralist,

⁵ Discussed by Wimsatt and Beardsley's famous essay "The intentional fallacy" (1946) in which they stated that the meaning or evaluation of a literary work cannot be derived from the intention of the author, in as far as this intention could ever be revealed.

⁶ EAGLETON, T. *Literary theory: an introduction*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001, pp. 121-30; Grüttemeier, R. Op. cit., 2011, pp. 91-6; Lodge, D. *Consciousness and the novel*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002, p. 104.

⁷ Phenomenology as it emerged in the first half of the twentieth century, with Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty as two of its main propagators.

⁸ BURKE, S. *The death and return of the author: criticism and subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998, pp.14-5; Bushell, S. Op. cit., 2009, p. 52.

⁹ Quoted in CAUGHIE, P. L. "Postmodern and poststructuralist approaches to Virginia Woolf." In: *Palgrave advances in Virginia Woolf studies*, edited by Anna Snaith. Palgrave/Macmillan, 2007, p. 6. <http://ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=english_facpubs>.

¹⁰ HOWARD, 1974, p. ix.

¹¹ BUSHELL, S. Op. cit., 2009, p. 52.

¹² BURKE, S. Op. cit., 1998, p. 15.

¹³ CAUGHIE, P. Op. cit., 2007, pp. 7-8.

¹⁴ BUSHELL, S. Op. cit., 2009, p. 47; CAUGHIE, P. Op. cit., 2007, pp. 8-9.

¹⁵ BUSHELL, S. Op. cit., 2009, p.42.

¹⁶ VAN HULLE, D. *Textual awareness: a genetic study of late manuscripts by Joyce, Proust & Mann*. Editorial theory and genetic criticism. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004, p. 3.

anti-authorial rhetoric has been punctured¹⁷ and not all branches of literary theory have accepted the reduction of literature to an impersonal play of signification, the problem of the author remains deeply controversial to this day.¹⁸ It may even be called one of genetic criticism's merits to be able to gain ground and thrive as a critical movement in "a theoretical climate so immersed in anti-authorialism".¹⁹

In one sense, genetic criticism can be regarded as a "true child" of the structuralist and poststructuralist movements, seeing their mutual emphasis on "the text as a mobile, multistranded entity, overflowing with referential codes".²⁰ However, like post-structuralism, genetic criticism dismisses the structuralist approach of the text as a closed system that "brackets" everyday social practices²¹ and cuts off the text from its genesis²² and in this sense the structuralist analysis of texts as clearly bounded sets can be regarded as the exact opposite of genetic study.²³ While it does accept the text as mobile, genetic criticism refuses to ignore its genesis, partly because this only leads to a sacralization of the text instead of the author, and in that way does not resolve anything.²⁴ Thus, instead of simply emphasizing the importance of text over author, genetic critics have contributed to the awareness of several texts and thus proven the validity of interpreting underlying manuscripts, drafts and notebooks to understanding the writing process and the interpretation of a published text.

From the onset in the 1970s genetic critics have been aware of the theoretical concerns regarding authorial intention and the criticism their own practice might invoke, and have attempted to define authorship in different ways. Although the practice has been described by some genetic critics, such as Almuth Grésillon,²⁵ as emerging out of a Romantic desire to be close to or identify with the author through the study of manuscripts or notebooks,²⁶ many other approaches to authorship have been formulated. In fact many theoretical accounts emphasize that the interpretation of underlying versions and the studying of the intertextual web that has informed a published text, does not amount to trying to retrieve an author's intentions and indeed, one of the merits of genetic-critical studies is the puncture of the Romantic conception of the autonomous and isolated author.²⁷ Instead, and in concordance with one of the forerunners of genetic criticism, Edgar Allan Poe,^{28 29} genetic-critical analyses have been able to lay bare the mechanical processes of writing as well as the extra-textual sources that may have served as sources of input to this process and therefore underline the "role of the author as a craftsman rather than a divinely inspired genius".³⁰ In this respect, John Bryant has pointed out the

¹⁷ See for example Burke (1992) and Downey (2007).

¹⁸ BURKE, S. Op. cit., 1998, pp.18-23.

¹⁹ DAVIS, O. The author at work in genetic criticism. *Paragraph* 25 (1), 2002, p. 101.

²⁰ DEPPMAN, J. et al. *Genetic criticism: texts and avant-textes*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, p. 5.

²¹ CAUGHIE, P. L. "Postmodern and poststructuralist approaches to Virginia Woolf." In: *Palgrave advances in Virginia Woolf studies*, edited by Anna Snaith. Palgrave/Macmillan, 2007, p. 4. <http://ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=english_facpubs>.

²² VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2004, p. 3.

²³ HAY, L. "Genetic criticism: origins and perspectives." In: *Genetic criticism: texts and avant-textes*, edited by Jed Deppman, Daniel Ferrer and Michael Groden. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, p. 20.

²⁴ DEPPMAN, J. et al., Op. cit., 2004, p. 5.

²⁵ "Passion d'être au plus près d'un texte aimé puisqu'on assiste quasiment à sa renaissance, passion de toucher à l'authenticité que représente l'autographe, de voir le corps de l'écriture s'inscrire sur la page; passion fugace et inavouée de s'identifier, le temps d'une descente et d'une remontée dans l'archéologie du texte, au créateur, d'entrer en fusion avec lui." GRÉSILLON, A. *Eléments de critique génétique*. Lire les manuscrits modernes (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994), p. 13. Quoted in and translated by DAVIS, O. 2002, p. 93: "The joy of being as close as possible to a text you adore, for you are present at what is almost its rebirth; the joy of coming into contact with the authenticity that handwriting represents, of seeing the body of the writing inscribe itself on the page; the fleeting and unacknowledged joy of identifying yourself, in the time it takes to descend into and resurface from the archaeology of the text, with its creator, of becoming one with him."

²⁶ For this reason, the practice has been criticized. See for example Jenny (2000) and Davis (2002).

²⁷ VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2004, p. 26, p. 41.

²⁸ Poe's *The philosophy of composition*, 1846, translated as *Genèse d'un poème*, became one of the foundational texts of French genetic criticism.

²⁹ DEPPMAN, J. et al. Op. cit., 2004, p. 3.

³⁰ VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2004, p. 7.

difference between the concepts of *writer* and *author*, hereby emphasizing genetic criticism's concerns with writing processes rather than with the sociology of authorship.³¹ In asserting that the writing process as such must be the subject of investigation, rather than the writer or author themselves, Jean Bellemin-Noël deemed it even possible to omit any mention of these human, individual centres of agency. In 1972, in *Le Texte et l'avant-texte* he characterized the aim of genetic criticism as showing

[...] to what extent poems write themselves despite, or even against, authors who believe they are implementing their writerly craft; to find any uncontrolled -perhaps uncontrollable- forces that were mobilized without the author's knowledge.³²

The study of genetic materials therefore reveals the way writers are never autonomous but constantly shaped by sociocultural givens and the texts they produce speak of social structures, ideologies and cultural traditions.³³ Sally Bushell, building on Peter Shillingsburg's distinction between "intention to mean" and "intention to do" characterizes the creative process as a dynamic interplay between a writer's creative intentionality and the compositional context within which intentional acts occur. Intention must be regarded as an "ongoing event within the process [...] constantly being changed and redirected by the unintentional contexts with which it engages".³⁴ Such assertions indicate a clear affinity with poststructuralist accounts that emphasize intertextuality, whereby every text is "a node within a network", as Michel Foucault argued in *The archaeology of knowledge*,³⁵ and the way every text and subject are shaped by the discourses they are grounded in and constituted by.

Genetic criticism and distributed cognition

Although different approaches towards the issue of authorship within genetic criticism have been advanced, a new perspective may be put forward by investigating developments in cognitive science of the last few decades. Cognitive science is interested in understanding the nature and working of the mind and entails various disciplines such as neuroscience, biology, robotics, and philosophy. It is only logical that genetic critics would be interested in this domain since understanding the nature of literary creation may be regarded as part of the larger problems of the mind and manuscripts can be seen as the, albeit fragmentary, records of mental processes.³⁶ A new impetus to reconciling genetic criticism with a poststructuralist denial of a centre of authorship in any text may be provided by the philosophical paradigm of distributed or situated cognition. I wish to illuminate this proposition with a case study that will offer a genetic and narratological analysis of two scenes in Virginia Woolf's *To the lighthouse*. My aim is to suggest the common ground of genetic criticism, post-structuralism and recent developments in cognitive science and explore the theoretical implications of combining a narratological and cognitive-genetic approach to a canonical modernist text.

³¹ BRYANT, J. *The fluid text: a theory of revision and editing for book and screen*. Editorial theory and literary criticism. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005, p.11.

³² Quoted in DEPPMAN, J. et al. Op. cit., 2004, p. 8.

³³ HAY, L. Op. cit., 2004, p. 23.

³⁴ BUSHELL, S. Op. cit., 2009, pp. 54-61.

³⁵ 1969, quoted in CAUGHIE, P. L., 2007, p. 7.

³⁶ SHILLINGSBURG, P. L. *Resisting texts: authority and submission in constructions of meaning*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 1997

The mind has always been of interest to literary writers and many have investigated and presented its working in different ways. A writer who was overtly interested in the issue of consciousness and the mechanisms behind literary creation was Virginia Woolf. In regard of the writing process of *To the lighthouse*, written between 1925 and 1927, she stated in a diary entry that it seemed to have flowed from her “in a great, apparently involuntary, rush” like “(b)lowing bubbles out of a pipe”. Although she first deemed the whole process one of exorcism, she eventually came to regard the writing itself as a way of creating a mental image that she did not have before: “I used to think of (father) & mother daily; but writing (it), *laid them in my mind...*”³⁷ This testimony forms an adequate illustration of a specific cognitive process that goes on while writing, a process which, according to theories of distributed cognition, would not be possible without the writing tools (paper, pen, typewriter etc.) at hand. It is through writing about her parents, through carefully selecting words on paper, being confronted with these words, critically scrutinizing the images so created and adjusting them, that finally Woolf possesses, creates or receives an image of her parents “in her mind”. Although Woolf, as she often does, employs imagery that strongly affirms a Cartesian mind-body divide, she testifies to a cognitive process that clearly resists this dualism. According to a dualistic, cognitivist perspective on writing, an author would possess some mental image, a “representation” that they wish to express and thus transpose to the piece of paper in front of them. Woolf, however, admits that it is through the act of writing itself that the image or memory of her parents is created and becomes a graspable or discussable “reality”, it becomes something much more defined than before. In this way the act of writing may be regarded as an act of thinking as such. The cognitive process that takes place is not only dependent on an environmental vehicle outside the writer’s head. It is actually constituted by that vehicle.

This conception of writing clearly underscores the theory of the “extended mind”, also known as “active externalism”. In their foundational article “The extended mind” (1998) Andy Clark and David Chalmers demonstrate that certain cognitive processes do not take place “inside” the head but in fact loop out into the world and entail a tight coupling between a thinking agent and an external environment, which figures as some sort of scaffolding structure. The brain then is a pattern-recognition and pattern-completion engine with limited problem-solving abilities, which we have learned to amplify with cognitive technologies in our environment. In this sense, certain cognitive processes transcend the skin-and-skull boundary and do not simply depend on an environmental structure, but are actually partly constituted by it. Writing then must be regarded as an interaction between neural processes, bodily processes, and the manipulation of written sentences. The on-going cognitive process does not merely take place inside the head, but needs writing vehicles to allow storage and manipulations that ensure the completion of cognitive tasks that would be difficult or impossible without.³⁸ In this sense, language as such, written or spoken, may be regarded as the ultimate environmental “artefact”³⁹ that has reshaped human cognition. As Merlin Donald argues in *Origins of the modern mind* (1991), it has allowed for memory to be stored outside the mind.⁴⁰ Creativity, in its most general sense, can be explained then as the on-going process of continual loops between brain and world and imaginative abilities are extended by putting things on paper.⁴¹

³⁷ WOOLF, V. *The diary of Virginia Woolf*. Edited by Anne Olivier Bell and Andrew McNeillie. 5 Volumes. London: Hogarth Press, 1977-84. 1928, November 28, *Diaries* Vol. 3, p. 208, my italics.

³⁸ MENARY, R. Writing as thinking. *Language Sciences* 29, 2007, p. 622. doi: 10.1016/j.langsci.2007.01.005

³⁹ CLARK, A. *Being there: putting brain, body, and world together again*. Cambridge, MA, London: The MIT Press, 1997, pp. 193-213.

⁴⁰ Quoted in MENARY, R. Op. cit., 2007, p. 625.

⁴¹ DARTNALL, T.H. “Creativity, cognition and cyborgs: the extended mind hypothesis as an explanatory framework for creativity research.” In: *The creative enterprise: culture*, edited by Tony Davila, Marc J. Epstein and Robert D. Shelton, 99-122. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007, p. 115.

The notion of the extended mind is one of the new ways of thinking about the mind that has been developing in cognitive science in the last few decades. Alongside other frameworks such as the embedded, the embodied and the enactive mind it forms the postcognitivist paradigm of distributed or situated cognition, which is essentially anti-Cartesian in foregrounding the “inextricable tangles of feedback, feedforward, and feedaround loops that continuously criss-cross the boundaries of brain, body and world,” also referred to as the “porous” model in contrast to the “brainbound” model.⁴²

Virginia Woolf, To the lighthouse

As David Herman (2011) and Dirk Van Hulle (2014) have demonstrated, Woolf and other modernist authors form interesting case studies to re-investigate from the perspective of distributed cognition because the rhetoric these writers employed to defend and justify their innovative writing style was filled with references to a Cartesian inner/outer model of the mind but the fictional characters they created, actually display supreme examples of distributed cognition and thus disrupt the classic dualism of mind versus body. The new form of writing Woolf helped establish within the vast field of literary modernism, has received different labels, such as “psychological” or “introverted” novel or “new realism” in contemporary and later criticism⁴³ and shares innovative techniques such as interior monologue, disruption of temporal continuity and stream-of-consciousness, with authors including Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce and William Faulkner. Being one of the most notable theoretical thinkers of literary Modernism, Woolf’s most cited phrases - such as her appeal to “[l]ook within and ... examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day”⁴⁴ - have contributed to the continual interpretation of these writers’ literary practices as an inward turn rather than a presentation of the world-as-experienced. However, it has been demonstrated that the fictional narratives these modernists created can be labelled no more of an inward turn than the realistic fiction of their “material” predecessors can.⁴⁵ In fact, narratological analyses from the perspective of distributed cognition have proven fertile in demonstrating that the character portrayals in these narratives form clear illustrations of the extended, the embodied and the enactive mind at work.

Many scenes in Woolf’s *To the lighthouse* are traditionally described as exemplary instances of stream-of-consciousness, whereby the reader enters the character’s mind and is provided the opportunity to follow the whimsical flux of thought fragments, impressions, emotions and all other things that constitute especially Mrs Ramsay’s “ordinary mind” on days of summer spent at the holiday home in Scotland. The following analysis attempts to show how an investigation of Woolf’s manuscripts from the perspective of the extended mind may help in illuminating her writing process. In terms of exogenesis⁴⁶ I will elaborate on the manner in

⁴² CLARK, A. “Embodied, embedded, and extended cognition.” In: *The Cambridge handbook of cognitive science*, edited by Keith Frankish and William M. Ramsey. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 277.

⁴³ FLETCHER, J. and BRADBURY, M. “The introverted novel.” In *Modernism. 1890-1930*, edited by Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlan. Penguin Guides to European Literature. New York: Penguin Books, 1976, pp. 394-415; PARSONS, D. *Theorists of the modern novel: James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf*. Routledge Critical Thinkers. London, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 10

⁴⁴ WOOLF, V. “Modern fiction.” In: *The common Reader*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Limited. [1919] 1938, p. 148.

⁴⁵ HERMAN, D. “1880-1945. Re-minding modernism.” In: *The emergence of mind: representations of consciousness in narrative discourse in English*, edited by David Herman. *Frontiers of Narrative*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011; VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2014.

⁴⁶ This term was introduced by Raymonde Debray Genette and is used to denote external source texts concerning the writing process (VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2014, p. 14).

which Woolf - in a late stage of her writing - made a number of decisions that have determined the interpretation of the novel to this day. On the level of endogenesis⁴⁷ I will clarify how Woolf deliberately narrowed a crucial scene down to the mental functioning of Mrs Ramsay in order to invoke a stream-of-consciousness, but nevertheless established an image of a woman's mind in constant interaction with her environment, thereby placing special emphasis on the distributed workings of memory. Furthermore, I will suggest that Woolf's interaction with her own manuscripts may have provided her insight into the working of her own mind and informed the portrayal of Mrs Ramsay's mind at work. The interpretation of these manuscripts will then form an aid in formulating a new perspective on the notion of authorship within genetic criticism.

⁴⁷ Endogenesis then focuses on the actual writing of drafts, which also includes the assimilation of the external information in the actual work (VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2013, p. 230).

In Chapter Eleven (85-89) in the first part of the novel "The window", we encounter Mrs Ramsay, mother of eight children, but at present completely alone, sitting by the window, knitting and reflecting on herself, her life and the necessity and pleasures of being alone. Mr Ramsay is in the neighbourhood but throughout the entire scene the couple does not speak with each other. Mrs Ramsay's mind is "filled" with a number of things. She thinks about the disappointment of her son James, who cannot go to the lighthouse the day after. She is certain that children never forget such things (85-6). A particular phrase "pops into her head": "We are in the hands of God" (86-7). She notices the light beam of the lighthouse, with which she heavily identifies (86, 88). The stream of consciousness Woolf has thus created is one which would encourage a reader to believe that Mrs Ramsay's thoughts and feelings are hermetically sealed off and that she finds intense pleasure in the freedom of roaming around in her own mind, without any children, guests or servants to bother her while doing so. Although we also get an insight into Mr Ramsay's mind, the two protagonists do not literally communicate with each other and this intensifies the feeling of lonely introspection. The impossibility of communication is underscored by Mr Ramsay's heartache at not being able to "reach her" (89), and this "remoteness pained him" (88). And indeed, Mrs Ramsay believes her real self to be a "wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others". People only know each other by superficial things, phrases, actions: "Beneath it is all dark, it is all spreading, it is unfathomably deep; but now and again we rise to the surface and that is what you see us by" (85). The imagery Woolf uses to describe the mind is diverse, but a sense of deepness, darkness and concealment prevails. Next to the examples already mentioned, it is notable that twice she uses the image of a "floor" to talk about mental experiences: "There rose ... off the floor of the mind ... a mist, a bride to meet her lover" (87) and "waves of pure delight raced over the floor of her mind" (89). It is clear that the focus of this chapter is the mind of Mrs Ramsay, the tension between "real" and "superficial" self, the impossibility of "real" communication and notably, the function of memory: children never forget anything and Mrs Ramsay is confronted with a phrase she remembers but fails to recognize as her own.

Endogenesis and the working of memory

Examination of the initial holograph drafts⁴⁸ from which this particular scene emerged, reveals that Woolf in the course of her writing process deliberately narrowed the entire scene down to the “internal” mental life of Mrs Ramsay and re-organized her original draft so as to allow as little as possible intrusion from “outside”. Thus, in construing this scene, Woolf was aiming to bring into practice her own device to “look within” and reveal the “flickering” of the mind by presenting her protagonist as isolated as possible, even if this sense of isolation might not have come to her in a spontaneous or instinctive way while writing.

The first version of the scene, written on February 22, 1926 (*Holograph* 211) begins with Mrs Ramsay reading a story to James and being released from this task by nanny Mildred. In the final edition, this rather interactive part is transposed to the end of the previous chapter, thus allowing chapter eleven to begin with Mrs Ramsay sitting alone at the window, alone as she can be in a house filled with people who during the daytime continuously intrude upon her inner musings. In the draft version this complete isolation was disrupted by her speaking to her husband: she says to Mr Ramsay “how at the back of her mind, she did not despair”. But in the final edition husband and wife do not speak to each other at all. In the holograph (213) manuscript the narrative continues from that point and Mrs Ramsay is reminded of a phrase “they” and “her mother” used to say: “We are in the hands of the Lord” (213). In the published text, however, any mention of “they” or “her mother” is omitted from the narrative and Mrs Ramsay keeps wondering where the phrase that has just popped into her mind might possibly have come from. It is never disclosed that it was a phrase “they” or her mother used and it is presented as entering Mrs Ramsay’s mind “out of the blue”, as something that has been put into her mind: “Who had said it? not she” (86). In the original holograph version and in the typescripts⁴⁹ Mrs Ramsay clearly remembers her mother using the phrase and she seems to appropriate it, seeing it fit for the context, but then the narrator adds: “She did not mean it.”

This concern about the emergence or retrieval of memories, and about the way the process of remembering is presented in the narrative, as well as the repeated statements on the memories of children demonstrate the importance of the matter to Woolf while writing the novel. It may indeed come as no surprise since it has been well established that Woolf, by writing the novel, aimed to reconstruct her own childhood memories and to sketch a portrait of her parents.⁵⁰ Keeping in mind the diary note in which Woolf testifies that the memories seemed to come to her involuntarily and that through writing, her parents had been “laid in her mind”, it may be suggested that Woolf became aware of the way memory works through writing. It is therefore remarkable that in her first draft she presented a classic model of memory: the protagonist remembers something her mother says. However, through confrontation with her own writing process, she became aware of the limitations of such a model.

A traditional understanding of memory would indeed connect certain images and textual bits and pieces to exact events or people that played an important role in our lives once. It might seem natural to apprehend the mind as a storage room full of memories that are kept there like archival pieces. And indeed, classic accounts of memory do regard the mind as a “wax block” on which memories are impressed or as an “aviary” in which fluttering memories have been trapped only to be caught by our conscious efforts to remember them.⁵¹ These models, however, have been punctured by connectionist models of memory⁵² that describe memory as a non-computational process of invention and revision. This non-archival model of memory is characterized by continual change and adaptation and denies the possibility of

⁴⁸ Fully transcribed on <<http://www.woolfonline.com/>>.

⁴⁹ Sent to Charles Mauron. <<http://www.woolfonline.com/>>.

⁵⁰ Proof for this can be found in many diary entries. The following was written on Thursday 14 May 1925: “I’m now all on the strain with desire to stop journalism & get on to *To the lighthouse*. This is going to be fairly short: to have father’s character done complete in it; & mothers; & St Ives; & childhood; & all the usual things I try to put in—life, death &c. But the centre is father’s character, sitting in a boat, reciting *We perished*, each alone, while he crushes a dying mackerel— However, I must refrain. I must write a few little stories first, & let the *Lighthouse* simmer, adding to it between tea & dinner till it is complete for writing out.”

⁵¹ ELKINS, K. *Middling memories and dreams of oblivion: configurations of a non-archival memory in Baudelaire and Proust*. *Discourse* 24 (3), 2002, pp. 55-9. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41389655>>.

⁵² BOLLES, E. *Remembering and forgetting: an inquiry into the nature of memory*. New York: Walker and Company, 1988; ROSENFELD, I. *The invention of memory: a new view of the brain*. Basic Books: New York, 1988; SCHAFFER, D. L. *Memory distortion: how minds, brains and societies reconstruct the past*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995.

storing all past experiences in our mind, as a computer stores data on a hard drive. Seeing the fact that this is a model of remembering that relies heavily on piecing together a memory “that is recollected only after encountering a fragment that reminds us of it in the external world” and remembering entails a “continual looping process - modification followed by re-evaluation - that continues until I ‘recognize’ the recollection”,⁵³ memory must be regarded as a form of distributed cognition and in this way the external environment becomes an essential extension to our mind. When the mind recognizes fragments in its environment and uses these interactions as an “iterated series of pattern-completing computations” we can come to see it as an “associative engine”⁵⁴ that not only depends on the environment but is also constituted by it. In this sense the mind is rather empty and memories are not “stored” but constantly “created” by the mind’s involvement with the environment.

⁵³ ELKINS, K. Op. cit., 2002, p. 49.

⁵⁴ CLARK, A. Op. cit., 1997, p. 53.

Essential then is the fact that Woolf in her initial manuscripts seemed to present the functioning of memory in a traditional cognitivist way, as a form of “retrieval from a stored symbolic database”, but replaced this by a different view of memory that functions more as “pattern re-creation” whereby cognition becomes “decentralized” and the environment can be regarded as “an active resource”.⁵⁵ This is the view of memory endorsed by propagators of distributed cognition today. Mrs Ramsay’s confrontation with a phrase that “pops” up in her head rather than her remembering her mother saying that phrase, comes closer to an idea of mind that is not dualistically separated from the world, but forms a whole, in the sense that they function together intrinsically and their mutual boundaries are not that straightforward to determine. Investigation of the manuscripts that led up to the definite scene confirms that Woolf was aware of a difference between these two modes of presentation.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 83.

The mind is the world

To reinforce this suggestion, the scene may be reconsidered from a narratological, postcognitivist framework in order to demonstrate that Mrs Ramsay’s mind is not isolated but in fact determined by the constant engagement with her environment, and thus inseparably embedded in contexts for action and interaction.⁵⁶ This sense of engagement may be labelled a characteristic of an enactive or embodied model of the mind, which opposes earlier accounts of cognition as being a representational mechanism that receives informational input and through inner computations transforms these into output under the guise of behaviour such as linguistic utterances. This traditional model of input versus output, subject versus object and mind versus world, is thus replaced by an enactivist model whereby cognition is regarded as the enactment of world and mind. Cognitive processes cannot be separated from sensory and motor processes, perception and action⁵⁷ and mental states are to be understood in relation to “affordances”. Gibson defines these affordances in *An Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (1979) as action possibilities tightly imbricated with local environments for acting.⁵⁸ Thus we should regard Mrs Ramsay’s mind-wandering as arising out of previous interactions with material and social surroundings, that now give rise to the world she experiences or enacts.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ HERMAN, D. Op. cit., 2011, p. 249.

⁵⁷ VARELA, F. et al. *The embodied mind: cognitive science and human experience*. Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1991, pp. 172-3.

⁵⁸ Quoted in HERMAN, D. Op. cit., 2011, p. 257

⁵⁹ Ibidem, p. 259.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live by* (1980) is one of the pioneering works on situated cognition and explains how our experience of certain abstract notions, such as love or self, depends on the particular body we have and how that body interacts with its surroundings. In this sense cognition must be regarded as dynamic sensorimotor activity whereby an agent's knowledge of the world emerges through its bodily engagement with the environment.⁶⁰ This conception of the embodied mind is especially useful seeing how Mrs Ramsay's metaphorical language in this particular scene is completely determined by the environment that surrounds her. She sees the darkness of the night, the horizon above the dark sea and the lighthouse that is casting its light beams over the water. The language she uses to describe her own self completely mirrors this exterior scene: she sees her inner self as a wedge of darkness (like the light beam), it is deep and has a surface (like the sea) and in her imagination her mental horizon is limitless. Mrs Ramsay's sense of self is clearly informed by her surroundings, by what she sees at that moment and what her body has experienced in those surroundings before. According to an enactive approach to the mind, notions of "deepness" or "surface" only acquire meaning because we have acted on the world before, because we have physically experienced how it feels to be in deep waters, and this illustrates how the mind is a system based on experiences in and of the world.

Furthermore, this approach characterizes the mind as a mechanism that enacts the world in which it operates, in order to make useful distinctions that are based on the human organism's own characteristics. Thus cognition and environment become simultaneously enacted. The world appears to the perceiver as affording certain kinds of interactions, and the perceiver uses the world with his body and mind in the afforded manner.⁶¹ In characterizing the enactment of a world as a domain of distinctions that is inseparable from the structure embodied by the cognitive system of the perceiving agent, enactivism can also be traced back to the biologist Jakob von Uexküll's sense of *Umwelt* construction, whereby the concept of "*Umwelt*" stands for the specific and unique model any organism has of the world, and this model, this "interpretation" of the world, is made up of the characteristics of the world that are meaningful to that organism.⁶² Thus, in the creation of storyworlds modernist writers can be seen as "*Umwelt* researchers" who enact the world of their characters in a way that is meaningful and distinctive to them. Woolf's engagement with the *Umwelt* of her manuscripts may have informed the *Umwelt* she created in her stories. In this specific example we see how her decision to portray the working of memory in an essentially distributed and fragmented sense, only took form after being confronted with the mechanism of her own memory during her writing process. Seeing the interactive character of writing, the recurrence of "action loops" between mind and manuscript, it is logical that she portrayed the working of Mrs Ramsay's mind in the same way. This shows that "her experience with manuscripts as an instrumental extension of her own mind during the creative process serves as a model for evoking the workings of her characters' minds".⁶³

Enactivist and embodied models of the mind also bear witness to predecessors such as Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who contributed to establishing the phenomenological tradition of the mind by emphasizing the continuity and difficulty of

⁶⁰ WILSON, R. and FOGLIA, L. "Embodied cognition", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), edited by Edward N. Zalta. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/embodied-cognition/>>. Accessed: 5 October 2014.

⁶¹ VARELA, F. et al. Op. cit., 1991, pp. 172-7.

⁶² HERMAN, D., Op. cit., 2011, pp. 265-6; VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2014, p. 121.

⁶³ VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2014, p. 125.

distinguishing between inner subject and outer object. One of phenomenology's main topics is the way any experience of the world is obstructed, limited or determined because we experience everything through language.⁶⁴ Linguistically shaped concepts and ideas determine the meaning and content of any given experience although these meanings cannot be equalled to those experiences as such. This also explains how the notion of embodied experience is not limited to individual experience, but depends on shared cultural modes of experience, language being one of the principal shared cultural practices.⁶⁵ The holograph drafts of *To the lighthouse* reveal Woolf was very aware of the way reality is "created" by the perceiving subject and the importance of language as one of the fundamental tenets in an organism's cognitive system and enactment of the world. In her initial drafts, she expresses an awareness of the constraints imposed by language in human experience when she states that Mrs Ramsay does not possess the language to express herself:

She watched the lighthouse for a minute or two. There was no reply. For in asking this or that of life, in praying, questioning, *one must have at one's command language*, which she had not; one must altogether be made differently; for in her, *for she never saw things, or formulated things*; but only opposed to fate, what she ... was, that she did not by any means give way; & was able to understand without moving from her chair. (*Holograph* 215, my italics)

Although this entire passage is omitted from the final text, it may be of help in interpreting Woolf's concerns at the moment of creating this particular scene. Furthermore, the insistence on language as a determining factor in an agent's perception and enactment of the world, as expressed in phenomenologist and enactivist accounts corresponds to a poststructuralist emphasis on the way every subject is grounded in and determined by language.

The acknowledgement of language as an exterior force determining the working of the inner mind, implies a failure of a traditional dualism of mind versus world and strong indications exist that modernist writers were aware of the breakdown of this Cartesian dualism and would have objected to the characterization of their writing as an "inward turn". The intellectual climate of the first half of the twentieth century testifies to a great scepticism towards this dualism. Proof of this attitude can be found in a 1926 Times Literary Supplement article titled "The dethronement of Descartes", in A.O. Lovejoy's *Revolt against dualism* (1929) or T.S. Eliot's *Clark Lectures* at Trinity College, Cambridge.⁶⁶ Even in the nineteenth century, doubts were formulated concerning the mind-body divide in relation to literature, as becomes clear from Vanessa L. Ryan's discussion (2009) of James Sully's interpretation of the "psychological novels" of George Eliot. Furthermore, even if modernist writers employed a rhetoric charged with dualistic metaphors that seem to confirm the Cartesian divide between mind and body, there are instances in their critical writing that contradict this stance. Exemplary in this respect is Woolf's essay *Modern fiction* that has come to be regarded as the supreme pamphlet for the modernist "inward turn" because in it Woolf praises James Joyce's literary method as an adequate way of portraying the inner working of the mind. However, what most

⁶⁴ SMITH, D. W. "Phenomenology", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), edited by Edward N. Zalta. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/phenomenology/>>. Accessed: 12 November 2014.

⁶⁵ VARELA, F. et al. Op. cit., 1991, p. 149.

⁶⁶ BROOKER, J. S. "T.S. Eliot and the revolt against dualism: his dissertation of F.H. Bradley in its intellectual context." In: *T.S. Eliot: man and poet*, edited by Laura Cowan. Vol. 2. Orono, University of Maine: The National Poetry Foundation, 1990, pp. 304-5

accounts neglect to mention is that Woolf is not entirely convinced of Joyce's method and still seems to be missing something.⁶⁷ She therefore spends the rest of the essay distancing herself from the literary method that she has just promoted since she cannot completely agree with its concentration on one individual mind, since it fails to "acknowledge the interaction of consciousness with the world around it":⁶⁸

Is it due to the method that we feel neither jovial nor magnanimous, but centred in a self which, in spite of its tremor or susceptibility, never embraces or creates what is outside itself and beyond? Does the emphasis laid, perhaps didactically, upon indecency, contribute to the effect of something angular and isolated? ... did not the reading of *Ulysses* suggest how much of life is excluded or ignored, and did it not come with a shock to open *Tristram Shandy* or even *Pendennis* and be by them convinced that there are not only other aspects of life, but more important ones into the bargain.⁶⁹

To Woolf more is necessary than simply turning "inward" and recording the impressions that fall upon that mind. In her critical and personal writing, Woolf condemns not only the materialism of the Edwardians but also the egoism of the moderns, exemplified by Joyce and Dorothy Richardson, whose rendering of the self-absorbed mind fails to capture the permeability of consciousness and relativity of identity:

What the unity shall be I have yet to discover: the theme is a blank to me; but I see immense possibilities in the form I hit upon more or less by chance two weeks ago. I suppose the danger is the damned egotistical self; which ruins Joyce & [Dorothy] Richardson to my mind: is one pliant & rich enough to provide a wall from the book from oneself without its becoming, as in Joyce & Richardson, narrowing & restricting?⁷⁰

In her early writing, it is clear that Woolf was still very much struggling to define what exactly she wished to convey in her own fiction, but in her later autobiographical "A Sketch of the Past" she more clearly denounces a Cartesian dualism that separates internal mind from external world, and these doubts may well have informed her own literary endeavours. In this memoir Woolf elaborates on her conception of the "self" and clarifies the changeability of anyone's personality. She sees herself as "a fish in a stream"⁷¹ and senses "that behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we - I mean all human beings - are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art... we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself."⁷² Thus she presents the self a "finely tuned mechanism, sensitive as a seismograph to the slightest vibration in the social environment, and hence volatile like the flux and multiplicity of experience to which it is exposed."⁷³ The fact that people are essentially a part of the world, of a shared stream, is what blurs the outer limits of personality and makes it unstable. The self responds to the forces outside in a way that makes its own boundaries blurred and its core non-existent. It was Woolf's ambition to capture in writing these moments of clarity, when the unreality of the Cartesian distinction between inner self and outer reality becomes apparent.

⁶⁷ WOOLF, V. "Modern fiction." In: *The common reader*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Limited. [1919] 1938, pp. 150-1.

⁶⁸ PARSONS, D. *Theorists of the modern novel: James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf*. Routledge Critical Thinkers. London, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 50.

⁶⁹ WOOLF, V. "Modern fiction." In: *The common reader*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Limited. [1919] 1938, pp. 150-1.

⁷⁰ WOOLF, V. Op. cit., 1977-84. [1920, January 26, *Diaries* Vol. 2, p. 14].

⁷¹ WOOLF, V. *Moments of being*. Edited by Jeanne Schulkind. San Diego, New York, London: A Harvest Book, [1938] 1985, p. 80.

⁷² Ibidem, p. 72.

⁷³ SCHULKIND, J. In WOOLF, V. Op. cit., 1985, p. 14.

Exogenesis and children's stories

Returning to Chapter Eleven then, the idea of memory that Woolf develops in this scene and the omitted notion of language as a determining factor in a subject's enactment of the world and self, corresponds with the poststructuralist notion of the subject being determined by and lost in the discourses that make up his being and it is especially in this sense that genetic criticism, post-structuralism and models of distributed cognition find common ground. Manuscript research of yet another scene in *To the lighthouse* may offer more evidence and demonstrate further how genetic analysis provides insight into the working of the extended mind as an associative engine. Throughout the first part of the novel Mrs Ramsay is reading a fairy tale to her son James. In the published text this is Grimm's fairy tale of *The fisherman and his wife*, also known as *The flounder*. But in the original manuscripts, Woolf was undecided and what was first "the story of the three dwarfs"⁷⁴ became "the story of the Woodman's daughter" later on.⁷⁵ She decided to use the *Fisherman* tale while revising her original drafts and typing them out in October 1926, and she quotes it literally in the text. She used the text from Margaret Hunt's translation of *Grimm's household tales* in Bohn's Standard Library Edition and she also wrote in the words of a number of other texts, such as Shakespeare's "98th Sonnet" and William Browne's *Sirens song*.⁷⁶ The fact that she decided to use the utterly misogynist *Fisherman* fairy tale and not the other tales is not unimportant since it has had a considerable impact on the interpretation of the entire novel as an attack on patriarchy and a pamphlet for feminism.⁷⁷

Apart from these direct references to the fairy tale, Woolf rewrote large parts of the text and in chapter ten, right after quoting a number of lines from the fairy tale, she lets Mrs Ramsay wander in her own thoughts while reading the story to her son:

Mrs Ramsay wondered, reading and thinking, quite easily, both at the same time; for the story of the *Fisherman and his wife* was like the bass gently accompanying a tune, which now and then ran up unexpectedly into the melody. And when should she be told? [...] She was responsible to Minta's parents – the Owl and the Poker. Her nicknames for them shot into her mind as she read.⁷⁸

While reading, Mrs Ramsay's thoughts and memories are triggered by the text she has in front of her. The reference to these nicknames can be found in the holograph drafts but they are inserted in the margins of the notebook. It is not clear when exactly Woolf made these additional notes to the text. Perhaps Woolf inserted the nicknames while re-reading her first draft materials, or perhaps while contemplating a better choice of fairy tale or perhaps she only thought of the nicknames while interweaving the *Fisherman* fairy tale to her original text. What is the link between the *Fisherman* tale and these anthropomorphic characters? The owl and the poker are not characters in any of Grimm's tales but they do figure in a children's book that was published in the late nineteenth century: Edward Lear's *Nonsense songs, stories, botany, and alphabets* (1871). The owl and the poker are not featured as a duo in this work, but they do play a part in two separate rhymes: "The owl and the pussy-cat" and "The broom, the shovel,

⁷⁴ WOOLF, V. *Initial holograph drafts, typescripts sent to Charles Mauron, corrected proofs supplied to Harcourt Brace, of To the lighthouse*. Woolf Online. Edited by Julia Briggs and Peter Shillingsburg, (1926-7) 2013, p. 73. <<http://www.woolfonline.com/?node=content/text/transcriptions&project=1&taxa=6>>. Accessed: 12 October 2014.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 96, p.101, p. 103, p. 104.

⁷⁶ BRIGGS, J. *Virginia Woolf: an inner life*. London: Penguin Books, 2006, p. 179, p. 446.

⁷⁷ See for instance Rubini (2006) and Hui (2014).

⁷⁸ WOOLF, V. *Op. cit.*, 2013, p. 77.

the poker and the tongs". From the preserved collaborative family journal of Woolf and her siblings, "Hyde Park Gate News", we know that Edward Lear was one of the children's authors that Woolf grew up with.⁷⁹ If we assume Woolf inserted the notes in a later stage of writing, the traces of the writing process may reveal the mind to be an "associative engine" and this claim is reinforced when we know the characters of the owl and the poker in both of Lear's stories perform the role of subservient admirer of a beautiful female figure, thus echoing the fisherman who obeys his wife unconditionally, leading both into utter catastrophe. This is not to claim that Mrs Ramsay thinks of Minta's parents in this sense. What it could reveal however, is the way the mind works while writing and it also illustrates what Mrs Ramsay claims in this scene: that reading and thinking occur at the same time. It demonstrates that memories and knowledge are not stored in our archival memory and instantaneously gathered when they are needed. The mind works in an associative manner and an author may gain insight into their own life, mind and memory by writing as such, in ways that would be impossible without the "scaffolding" structure provided by the "environment", be it the manipulation of writing tools immediately at hand, the interaction with manuscripts or the reading of children's stories a long time ago. Furthermore, the analysis of the writing process forms an illustration of poststructuralist accounts of intertextuality in the sense that this literary work can be shown to be full of references to other signifying systems, other texts, and the author may be regarded as a node within a vast network of intertextual relations that he or she might not even be aware of. The merit of a genetic-critical analysis lies exactly in the possibility of uncovering these relations and thus laying bare the distribution of mind across the world it acts upon.

Conclusion

From the above, it may be suggested that a postcognitivist model of distributed cognition forms a confirmation of Barthes' resistance to a "metaphysics of presence", in the sense that the human mind as the ultimate centre of communication cannot be maintained, since mind is distributed across world and body. Furthermore, it allows for an insistence on genetic material as a valid and indispensable source in interpreting any writing process since it bears the physical traces of distributed cognition at work while de-emphasizing the central role the author plays in this process. Thus, applying the model of the extended mind to genetic criticism - by some deemed to be a form of "biographism"⁸⁰ or a "romantic" discipline aimed at resurrecting the author⁸¹ - affirms that the poststructuralist denial of origins to authorial consciousness must not be necessarily apprehended as a denial of intention but, as Sally Bushell formulates it, as an appeal to "redefine the nature of intention, which can no longer be about the externalization of inner thought".⁸² It illustrates her assertion that concepts such as externalization, expression, inner self - emerging from an old dualistic conception of mind versus body - in relation to language and meaning are too limited to understand mind and world.

The reconciliation between genetic criticism, the paradigm of distributed cognition and post-structuralism's dismissal of authorial intention proposed here is only a first exploration of problems to be untangled. Furthermore, a number of limitations to the exercise must be kept in mind. First of all, when claiming that the study of the writing process via careful examining

⁷⁹ LEE, H. To the gate house. *Guardian*, January 14, 2006. <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/jan/14/classics.virginiawoolf>>.

⁸⁰ VAN HULLE, D. *Textual awareness: a genetic study of late manuscripts by Joyce, Proust & Mann*. Editorial theory and genetic criticism. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004, p. 5.

⁸¹ FALCONER, G. Genetic criticism. *Comparative Literature* 45 (1), 1993, p. 8. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1771303>>; GRÜTTMEIER, R. *Auteursintentie. Een beknopte geschiedenis*. Antwerpen, Apeldoorn: Garant. Colleges Literatuur, 2011, p. 99.

⁸² BUSHELL, S. Op. cit., 2009, p. 49.

of manuscripts and notebooks may provide insight into the working of the writer's mind, we must be careful not to present this undertaking as resulting in a "complete" or "objective" view of the human mind. What accounts of distributed cognition reveal first and foremost, is that the human mind cannot be reduced to a machine-like apparatus that receives input from its environment, transforms these into representations and then expresses these as output in the form of human behaviour such as speech, art or writing. Especially the theories of the embodied and enactive mind prove to us how essential (unconscious) action movements and sensorimotor experience are for the development of cognitive processes. Language and literature are essentially representational and form only a part of the workings of the (conscious) mind. Therefore, in studying the genetic dossier of a work of literature we must be aware that all we are tracing are conscious reflections of the writer, and that the large part of sensory experiences (sound, touch, smells, which may have influenced the writer at the moment of writing) cannot be traced in these material documents as such. Thus this exercise can only affirm Louis Hay when he states that "even the most detailed and well-conserved documentation reveals but a fraction of the complicated mental processes to which it bears witness. The ink on the page is not the writing itself".⁸³ Additionally, any sense of the diversity of literature will affirm that each writer and each "writing mind" is unique. This sense of uniqueness must be acknowledged and respected, and every literary critic must be wary of generating a universal model of the mind that sweeps away the very specificity of a literary work and its creator.

A final caveat is concerned with the objectiveness of any genetic-critical analysis. Although genetic criticism may present a more concrete or materialistic practice than many other, equally valuable, approaches within the domain of literary criticism, a true form of objectiveness is difficult to attain and interpretations of gaps, omissions and changes in manuscripts are as subjective as those interpretations are in regard of a "final", published text. However, even if the account is never fully objective or complete, an undeniable merit of any genetic-critical analysis lies in the coherence it brings into the historical raw materials, especially if the researcher is aware that he is hereby creating his own narrative.⁸⁴

⁸³ HAY, L. "Does text exist?". In: *Studies in bibliography: papers of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia*. Transl. Jocelyn Matthew, edited by Hans Walter Gabler. 41, 1988, pp. 68-9.

⁸⁴ VAN HULLE, D. Op. cit., 2014, p. 120.

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