

The Journal of Kitsch, Camp and Mass Culture

Volume 2 / 2019

THE KALEIDOSCOPIC EXPERIENCE WITHIN EVERYDAY-LIFE: ON AUTHORSHIP, INTERTEXTUAL NARRATIVE, STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND MULTIFRACTALITY

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1. Is the author really dead? Our identity as observers in kaleidoscopic experience

Carl Gustav Jung referred to the *mandala* as an image from the Eastern cultural tradition that presents a kaleidoscopic condition, as a representative archetype that comes from the self-unconscious. This archetype could be present in all the human beings and escape from the individual self.¹ In Jung's words, we can consider it as "the reflection of the real image" that has the person who projects the referred image, who would be the "author" somehow. The idea of a collective authorship implies not having a unique author anymore, by suggesting there is a collective connection regarding the creation of kaleidoscopic images. In addition, this connection is related to the moment when we project this image, which seems to work like a connective network or is present in proposals with an intertextual narrative.

In 1968, Roland Barthes discussed the text nature in *The death of the author*, specifically concerning the existence of an author "behind the text". For instance, the significance of his proposal is supposed to be completely focused on the reader, who participates within the reading far from any biographical conception about the author. This way, the reader will have a real immersion within the text. On the other hand, the Barthesian conception has been discussed in relation to the intertextual discourse previously proposed by Julia Kristeva.² In 1966, Kristeva named to this narrative as "intertextual" two years before Barthes introduced the death of the author conception. Kristeva did not refer to the dead author, because what she investigated was the existence of an absent author in the case of intertextuality. Therefore, the presence of many voices along with the author's voice would merge into a collective narrative, similarly to the same idea



expressed by Jung regarding the *mandala* creation process. Certainly, through intertextual writings a non-authorship agency started in 20th century. For example, we find Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Pessoa, Woolf or Joyce among other writers whose texts were characteristic by the absence of the author's voice in the search of giving to their writings the referred collective sense.

Barthes expressed that nobody thought on the reader, since everything was focused on the author as an "egocentric" agent. In fact, he concluded his publication with a statement: "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author." Far from Barthes' idea, in the intertextual texts the reader is quite important. It is because the reader has a key role as a player concerning the layers that are present within intertextual writings. Reading the text, the reader has to make his own interpretation connecting his thought to different authors and ideas. On intertextuality, Standford Friedman stated that the texts compose "a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of the analysis instead of static structures." Then, when reading an intertextual text, we would have an active attitude within the reader, who has to analyse and get into the relational processes that the text produces. Given this circumstance, shall we continue accepting the death of the author? In intertextual writings we have an active author that somehow works as a reader, having in mind the reader's interpretation. On account of that, if the author creates an intertextual writing made by the conjunction of many voices or elements, we find that authorship works differently comparing it to the traditional notion of "authorship".

The agreement on Barthes' statements on giving significance to the reader that he presents in *The Death of the Author*, as well as Foucault's conception in *What is an Author*, are certainly necessary. In any case, the death of the author was introduced in the authorship agency when women started to be recognised as authors. Taking this into account, do we have to consider that the author is really dead? Shall we accept the death of the author considering that, as Nancy K. Miller expressed, we finally admit "the death of the author" when women were starting to be recognised as authors⁵?

Actually, we find interesting statements from this period expressed by women writers in this regard. For example, in the poetry of Alejandra Pizarnik: "I wake up from my dead body, I looked for the one I am," or authors like Inger Christensen. In 1969, when the death of the author and intertextuality were respectively proposed by Barthes and Kristeva, Christensen published this poem: "I' don't want to vanish / 'I' am the one who has written the above / and the one writing the following / 'I' will not pretend that I am dead." The poem was part of a book that she named as *It*. This book works as a critique to systems in society and reflects on the human being relationship within the world and reality – even by experiencing fiction as an accepted system introduced into a deep kaleidoscopic view. It seems like an intertextual writing that attempts to create a total image in which everything remains connected, just the type of



image that Julio Cortázar presents in *Hopscotch*, a kaleidoscopic *imago mundi*. *It* is closer to a phenomenological approach, since it contains some conceptions created by human beings as fictions in opposition to the nature of cycle processes. From a phenomenological perspective, it is referring to an embodied authorship that participates of reality through the experience of real but also fictional elements, like it happens within the kaleidoscope. *Hopscotch* works as a game, so the reader's attitude could be totally active, as well as the reader's interpretation, that can always be the right one – even when the reader gets to a different approach far from Cortázar suggestions. This way, Cortázar presented this book as an intertextual playground for the reader also referring to the author as the first observer of kaleidoscopic image:

Morelli, the author, would be the first amazed observer of this world into its acquired coherence. [...] A crystallization where nothing would remain subsumed, but where a lucid eye might peep into the kaleidoscope and understand the great polychromatic rose, understand it as a figure, an *imago mundi* that outside the kaleidoscope would be dissolved into a provincial living room, or a concert of aunts having tea and Bagley biscuits.⁹

Certainly, both in the cases of Cortázar and Christensen, they are not working as the traditional authors. Actually, they pay attention to the reader/observer through intertextual and participatory proposals that present a kaleidoscopic method, structure and narrative. Given these examples, we can notice the rebirth of the author as reader/observer when the kaleidoscopic perception is involved: "the author, would be the first amazed observer of this world" regarding the kaleidoscopic image creation as an author and the perception of seeing the kaleidoscopic image as a reader/observer. This fact also takes place specifically without the conception we had on the author as an egocentric agent which constituted the Barthes' critique. The title of Christensen's book, "It", is actually very close to the notion we have on intertextuality, since "It" is what we would find where the author is not. Christensen claimed the author as an alive subject in her writings: "I will not pretend I am dead". However, the impersonal "It" is the title of the book, which is closer to the author's absence and also to the statements proposed by Barthes and Kristeva: "For both Barthes and Kristeva, the text – an "it" – draws, makes, enters, and dialogues with its intertexts." Considering the writing of intertextual texts – not relating to Christensen's book, but to the absent author – "the birth of the text's as 'it' – the-text-as-it – also introduces the concept of the text-as-psyche."11 If the text-as-psyche is what replaces the dead author, there is a different type of authorship that claims the subject, "I", as an "it", concerning the intertextual discourse in the kaleidoscopic perception, where the author should be alive from a different perspective. To conclude this part, it should be noted the next citation on intertextuality - the



double, the other's [life] texts – by Kristeva: "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations, any text is the absorption and transformation of another" in which "intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity, and a poetic language is read as at least double.¹²

This different model of authorship is connected to the observer/reader, closer to the psyche than to the ego. If the author is dead, then we lose the property of discussing on the first person experience. For instance, the place that the author should take regarding the kaleidoscopic understanding would be situated in the space in-between the mirrors: "It", where the author is not but still observing, as Cortázar's view with reference to kaleidoscopic image. Like *Hopscotch* or *It*, everything works into a continuous reflection pattern. Actually, the author is not there when talking about intertextuality, but still there is an active author who decides not to take place within the text. According to Miller, "only those who have it [status as subjects] can play with not having it."13 Many cases in the context of artistic research manifest that the author is present, not absent and, consequently, "dead" from a conceptual viewpoint. Actually many artists and researchers are talking about their own experiences within reality.14 Therefore, these perspectives contradict the notion of having a dead author: "the idea of situatedness, or emphasis on personal experience" in artistic research. 15 The philosopher Ortega y Gasset said that "I am I and my circumstance,"16 a statement that is similar to physics understanding, where the object of study is always related to its context according the open system theory - where the system has external interactions.¹⁷ As a result, it is important to consider the death and the rebirth of the author from a different conception: "I" as an "it". The author's role as an interpreter within the world, like the reader/observer does when perceiving kaleidoscopic experiences or methodologies.

2. The embodiment within kaleidoscopic everyday-life experience, stream of consciousness and multifractality (James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and Julio Cortázar)

The narrative had to work "from the inside out" in Cortázar's perspective, although the most generic process is precisely the opposite one – a narrator who intervenes within the action of the characters. When there is a narrator in Cortázar's writings, we find another person that works as the narrator-witness, ¹⁸ aiming to generate the identification of the reader regarding the text. Fundamentally, referring to the feeling that the subject "is reading something that was born by itself", as Cortázar said¹9, thanks to the mediation of the narrator that would not manifest any presence.

In many works of literature, we do not find any narrative directionality from the narrator to the characters. In contrast, within this type of literary works the narration is focused on the characters that tell and/or live the action by themselves. Usually this type of "literaty" work present a multifractal structure, such as *Hopscotch* of Cortázar and other examples like *The Waves*



of Virginia Woolf. A recent publication demonstrated that the literary texts that presents this narrative approach are fractal²⁰. The researchers specifically noted that the majority of the titles that present a multifractal structure belong to the *Stream of consciousness* literary style, whose main purpose is to represent the thoughts and feelings that are going through the minds of the characters, usually employing the inner monologue technique.

Finnegans Wake of James Joyce presents the most complicated multifractal, as well as the *Ulysses*, which constitutes an interesting case. If we divide this book into two parts – the second one approximately staring from chapter 11 – the *Ulysses* presents a monofractal structure in the first part while having a multifractal in the second one. Surprisingly, the second part of the *Ulysses* shares significant similarities with *Hopscotch*'s multifractal structure²¹. Kaleidoscopic image presents a fractal structure, since it is made of identical repetitions of the same motif. Taking this into account, it is interesting that authors like Cortázar, Woolf or Joyce that referred to kaleidoscopic image or presented a kaleidoscopic narrative in their work also produced multifractal literary texts.

Virginia Woolf and Roger Fry referred to symbols that represented both life and death. In the case of Woolf, they were identified as the clock, the film stock and the kaleidoscope. According to Woolf, the writer has to recognise how "our lives are pieces in a pattern." In this sense, we have to find these patterns²⁴ and join all the atoms that compose this total image. This way, the creative writing is understood as the cohesion of elements into a kaleidoscopic sense. For example, when Woolf related to the creation of a character, she refers to the subject in permanent relationship to experience. This type of character could be immersed within a different identity conception and considered as a subject that is in the world with an embodied attitude.

Actually, the subject cannot be separate from the daily-life environment, since the individual human beings simultaneously co-experience their own being and their relationship within the world. Regarding this feeling, we find in Woolf's thought how the kaleidoscope – a kaleidoscopic perception of reality – would start crystallising into harmony over the everyday context, similarly to Cortázar's statement in this regard. At the same time, the new images that appear during this perceptive process are related to the embodiment within a kaleidoscopic vision of reality. Consequently, these new types of image would be generated both in unity sense and with the *liveliness sense* of life.²⁷ As we see, the connection between kaleidoscopic image and life experience is very important in the creative work of Woolf and Fry. We also find this perspective concerning to the author as reader/observer within experience, even regarding the nature of the characters that Woolf presents in an intertextual manner.

The co-experience opens a new way of authorship where the author's experience is contextualised within the media. Regarding this practice, we find an *embodied authorship*. Cortázar



referred to the author as the reader in this regard, along with the author's attitude in relation to the creation of kaleidoscopic image, as it was previously introduced. At this point, Cortázar alludes to the *Ulysses* of Joyce and presents co-experience in this form:

A third possibility: that of making an accomplice of the reader, a traveling companion. Into a simultaneous experience, provided that the reading will abolish reader's time and substitute author's time. Thus the reader would be able to become coparticipant and cosufferer of the experience through which the novelist is passing, *at the same moment and in the same form*. ²⁸

In Virginia Woolf's literary work, we find an invisible network of relationships that contributes to produce the aforementioned co-experience. Although at first glance this "invisible network" is not detectable, it exists when is revealed into a "multiplicity" that becomes "unity". ²⁹ This state of thinking is also present in the philosophy of María Zambrano, who approaches this issue similarly to Woolf, through the revelation idea. To reveal something in Zambrano's philosophy means to show the connections that an object of study has, instead of being focused individually within the object. ³⁰ This type of connective understanding also appears in another literary work connected to the kaleidoscope and written by Vladimir Nabokov: *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*. In this case, the main character tries to discover the real life of his brother, Sebastian Knight, a writer that had already died and wrote a book named as *Kaleidoscope*, among others. The significance of this book was related to the methods of composition, not to the narrative style or the characters. In addition, not only the methods, but also the happenstance and the relation between the characters are what create the kaleidoscopic sense. ³¹ This kind of kaleidoscopic sense is also present in the chance encounters throughout *Hopscotch*, regarding the relationship between Horacio and La Maga, which are the main characters of the book, among other examples.

3. The Andalusian girl in the *Ulysses*. An experimental writing that investigates on the connection between kaleidoscopic experience and intertextual narrative through the detection of identical motifs.

In this section I would like to present an interpretation based on the experience I had in a creative writing lecture at Aalto University course on November 11, 2016. It was Friday and just before starting the class I knew about the Leonard Cohen's death. Afterwards, we read the ending of the *Ulysses*. I already knew it, but that time I felt it had a different meaning because of my own experience. In the following paragraph it is the referred passage, which belongs to the Molly's soliloguy in the *Ulysses*:



Ronda with the old windows of the posadas 2 glancing eyes a lattice hid for her lover to kiss the iron and the wineshops half open at night and the castanets and the night we missed the boat at Algeciras the watchman going about serene with his lamp and O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and the pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.³²

This citation belongs to the second part of the *Ulysses*, which is multifractal. In this regard, I intertwined two events that were supposed not to be connected – Cohen's death and the Molly's monolog in the *Ulysses* – based on my personal experience on that day and the repetition of the same motifs, as we will see. In that way, it should be noted that repetition is precisely what generates fractal geometry thanks to the iterative structure that this geometry presents. Some days later I knew that Cohen died on November 7, when he was in his bed.³³ On that day my father showed me a song played by Leonard Cohen because my grandmother died on that day in 2014. None of us knew that Cohen already died on November 7, like my grandmother. She was an Andalusian girl like me or the Andalusian girls that are present in the Molly's monolog in the *Ulysses*. During her soliloquy, all the action is happening in Molly's mind while she is lying in her bed near her husband. Afterwards, I also discovered that Molly's bed is a second hand bed. In the text she was thinking that "the old bumpy bed jingly always reminds me of old Cohen."³⁴ I read that Cohen was the previous owner of Molly's bed, what kept me thinking in this paradoxical connection.

We should consider that Molly works as the Penelope's character in the *Ulysses*. Penelope is one of the main characters in the *Odyssey*, by Homero. In the *Ulysses* we find that Molly works as "a new Penelope", since she is not the wife who waits for her husband to come back as Penelope did, but a free contradictory woman that is involved with other men. The distance between Molly and her husband is not physical but emotional, so she wonders how they got to that situation as a couple. Finally, she finished her monolog remembering her husband's marriage proposal when she says "Yes". Many things are related to Greece somehow and I remember that



Cohen had a house in Hydra Island, where he lived for a period of time. Then I thought about a speech by Cohen, when he won a literary prize in Spain. He referred to Federico García Lorca, a poet that was born in Andalusia, and talked about a Spanish guitarist who taught him how to play guitar. The main issue regarding these "moments of being" as well as regarding the *Ulysses* might be the intertextuality, "a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of the analysis instead of static structures," where "there are always other words in a word, other texts in a text." ³⁶

In the text I wrote on November 11, 2016, we find how personal experience and my relationship with the *Ulysses* as a reader was also able to give new layers of meaning to a text that already existed: the *Ulysses*. The text I wrote applying an intertextual approach as well as a stream of consciousness style can be understood as an experimental writing exercise. It investigates on the connection between kaleidoscopic experience and intertextual narrative, on the basis of the detection of identical motifs that surprisingly get correlated in a concrete frame of time (Cohen, Andalusia, November 7, *Ulysses*, etc.). This story is originated in relation to the referred motifs and, at the same time, highly correlated to my own biography and the place where I come from. Therefore, it also corresponds to the application of an embodiment attitude within the world and reality, in which I am situated both as an author and reader/observer. This approximation to the authorship practice, as we saw in the beginning of this paper, is present in the collective voice regarding kaleidoscopic experience and intertextual narrative. To conclude this part, the related text of this section is presented below.

Helsinki (Finland), November 11, 2016

The Andalusian girl in the *Ulysses*

There is a photograph of my grandmother when she was young and somehow everything remains connected like the nature of the images in *Camera Lucida*. Here the notebook seems to be empty since there is a poem behind the blank page near this one. Empty as the blue sky that I can see behind the glass of the window the sky wasn't there for one month but to write in English something like this has become very usual, just like the sun's absence even though it is the first time I live with no sun for a long time I feel there is only one sentence I am able to read within the notebook: "I was a flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls do". I am the Andalusian girl in this notebook in this empty sky of memories and the kiss near the Moorish wall I'm not an English speaker but sometimes I remember my place of origin when I am far away and I think in the nothingness, the notebooks or the empty sky just like this one today just like the disappearance of my mother tongue in my everyday life and the light of the Andalusian sun the memories when I walk through the forest it's snowing



and I think about my name. Today in the early morning I read in the newspaper that Leonard Cohen died yes I was in the bus on the way to Otaniemi looking at the islands while the sea is getting frozen yes he had an Andalusian insight just like me my grandmother and her green eyes the girls in the *Ulysses* monolog when Molly was young. There was a time in which the sun was always shining and everything seemed to remain forever yes when all of us were young yes all of us we didn't lose together the faculty of remaining present. The Andalusian girl monolog is spoken in Molly's mind at the same time she works both as the simile and antithesis of Penelope from the Odissey. Some days after that day I knew that Cohen had died some days before, on November 7, when he was in his bed. November 7 was the day I listened a Cohen's song because my grandmother died on that day in 2014 yes none of us knew that Cohen did already die on that day like my grandma did two years before. She was an Andalusian girl like me or the girls from the Molly's monolog in the *Ulysses*. During her soliloguy all the action is happening in Molly's mind while she is lying in her bed near her husband. But one hour ago I discovered that Molly's bed the place where she is lying while she is spoken to herself is a second hand bed, so she says, "the old bumpy bed jingly always reminds me of old Cohen." Then is when I realise that Cohen is the last name of the previous owner of Molly's bed yes it kept me thinking in this paradoxical connection because there is a poem behind every blank page when the snow covers everything but now there is no possibility to come back and change anything. Another identity and the emptiness in my thoughts those are able to keep me thinking in this story, if there was any. I had a flower in my hair like the Andalusian girls use to do near the Moorish wall but I suppose I have to come back to nothing yes one more time. The flower was yellow like the sun in the paintings of the children and empty as my heart when I realise that I don't know if still I am that Andalusian girl yes with a yellow flower in her hair.

4. Conclusion

Having presented the cases of Cortázar, Woolf and Joyce in relation to the stream of consciousness literary style and multifractality, it can be concluded that the kaleidoscopic experience is highly related to intertextual narrative in literary works. Specifically, a different type of authorship is detected regarding to this creative practice. In this way, the "alive author" works as the reader/observer concerning the kaleidoscopic experience, with an embodied attitude within reality and everyday-life in a connective way. At the same time, the production of creative writings based on the personal experience allows an intertextual approach, adding complementary layers of meaning to the already existing ones.



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- ² Susan Standford Friedman, "Weavings: Intertextuality and the (re)birth of the author," in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 146-180.
- ³ Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author", in *Image, music, text*, by Roland Barthes (New York: Fontana Press, 1977), 148.
- ⁴ Standford Friedman, "Weavings: Intertextuality and the (re)birth of the author," in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History* (1991), 147.
- ⁵ Nancy K. Miller, "Changing the Subject: Authorship, Writing and the Reader", in *Feminist Studies Critical Studies*, ed. Teresa de Lauretis (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986), 107.
- ⁶ The citations with a reference source in Spanish were translated to English by the author of this paper.
- ⁷ Alejandra Pizarnik, Alejandra Pizarnik: Poesía completa (Barcelona: Lumen, 2007), 243.
- ⁸ Inger Christensen, *It* (New York: New Directions, 2006), 52.
- ⁹ Julio Cortázar, Rayuela (Madrid: Cátedra, 1994), 647.
- ¹⁰ Standford Friedman, "Weavings: Intertextuality and the (re)birth of the author," in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History* (1991), 150.
- 11 Ibid.
- ¹² Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon Roundiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1984), 66.
- ¹³ Nancy K. Miller, "The Text's Heroine: A Feminist Critic and Her Fictions," *Diacritics*, 12, 2 (1982): 53, https://doi.org/10.2307/464679 (accessed October 27, 2019).
- ¹⁴ Mika Hannula, Juha Suoranta and Tere Vadén, *Artistic Research: Theories, Methods and Practices* (Helsinki: Academy of Fine Arts, 2005), 5.
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- 16 José Ortega y Gasset, Meditaciones Del Quijote (Madrid: Cátedra, 2005), 77.
- ¹⁷ Salvador Miret Artés, Mecánica cuántica (Madrid: CSIC, 2015), 15.
- 18 Jaime Alazraki, Hacia Cortázar: aproximaciones a su obra (Barcelona: Anthropos, 1994), 137.
- ¹⁹ Cited in Alazraki, *Hacia Cortázar: aproximaciones a su obra* (1994), 138.
- ²⁰ Stanislaw Drozdz *et al.*, "Quantifying origin and character of long-range correlations in narrative texts," *Information Sciences*, 331 (2016): 32-44, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ins.2015.10.023 (accessed October 27, 2019).
- 21 Ibid.
- ²² Ann Banfield, *La mesa fantasma: Virginia Woolf, Roger Fry, Bertrand Russell y el modernismo* (Madrid: Machado Libros, 2016), 283-284.
- ²³ Virginia Woolf, *Moments of being* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1985), 30.
- ²⁴ Virginia Woolf, Collected essays (London: The Hogarth Press, 1966), 107.
- ²⁵ Banfield, La mesa fantasma: Virginia Woolf, Roger Fry, Bertrand Russell y el modernismo (2016), 366.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 371.
- ²⁷ Virginia Woolf, Robert Fry: A Biography (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1940), 164.
- ²⁸ Cortázar, Rayuela (1994), 560.
- ²⁹ Virginia Woolf, *Jacob's room* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1922), 131.
- 30 María Zambrano, El hombre y lo divino (Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007), 14.
- ³¹ Vladimir Nabokov, La verdadera vida de Sebastian Knight (Barcelona: Anagrama, 1999).
- ³² Joyce, *Ulysses* (2008), 1644-1645.
- ³³ Claire Phipps, "Leonard Cohen Died After Fall at His Los Angeles Home," *The Guardian*, November 17, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/nov/17/leonard-cohen-died-fall-home-sleep-night (accessed October 27, 2019).





³⁴ Joyce, *Ulysses* (2008), 1618.

 $^{^{35}}$ Standford Friedman, "Weavings: Intertextuality and the (re)birth of the author," in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History* (1991), 147.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Joyce, *Ulysses* (2008), 1618.