VNIVERSITAT DE VALÈNCIA

Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació

Departament de Filologia Anglesa i Alemanya

Doctorado en Lenguas, Literaturas, Culturas y sus Aplicaciones

DISPLACING VICTORIAN WOMEN: MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY POPULAR DRAMA AND THE REPRESENTATION OF FEMALE IDENTITY

TESIS DOCTORAL

Presentada por:

Victoria Puchal Terol

Dirigida por:

Dra. Laura Monrós Gaspar

Valencia, Octubre de 2019

A mi tía y a mi madre, viajeras incombustibles.

A Diego, el mejor compañero de viaje.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

STRUCTURE AND OBJECTIVES

The interest in the figure of the nineteenth-century female traveller first arose in my Master's final dissertation. While examining two plays by Henry James Byron (1835–1884), I observed that a heavily stereotyped female character was repeated in both of the selected case studies: the 'damsel in distress'.[1] The trope of the endangered woman is no novelty, as it is a common literary topos in worldwide literature and popular culture. In fiction, women are often put in dangerous situations (whether by their own innocence or by the cunning hand of the story's antagonist), usually to motivate the male hero to start his adventure and path to final victory. Meanwhile, the damsel in distress will usually be waiting at the end of the hero's journey to be claimed as a trophy. The tradition of the 'trophy' female dates back to classic Greek epics, being Penelope, wife of Odysseus, the most remarkable example of the passive, waiting woman. After Homer's *Odyssey,* 14th-century chivalric epic romances like *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* reaffirmed the role of women as tokens of knowledge and purity. Later on, during the nineteenth century, the Romantics drew from Arthurian stories and characters, rescuing the notion of courtly love and exploiting the stories from the Middle Ages in pieces like John Keats' poem *The Eve of St. Agnes* (1819) and Sir

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[1] My Master's thesis was titled *The Empire on Stage: Racial Stereotypes and the British Empire in Victorian Drama* (2015). It was supervised by Dr. Laura Monrós-Gaspar and submitted at the University of Valencia. My thesis of the ridiculing and belittling of the racial 'Other' on stage, as well as the perpetuation of comic racist stereotypes through drama, was confirmed after examining two of H. J. Byron's burlesque pantomimes: *Robinson Crusoe; or Harlequin Friday* (1860) and the Ferozepore adaptation of his play *Aladdin; or, the Wonderful Scamp!* (1861 [1882]).

Walter Scott's novel *Ivanhoe* (1820).[2] Throughout the nineteenth century, the influence of medieval stories became visible in the fine arts. Exemplary, the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood produced a great number of pieces of medieval inspiration, such as William Holman Hunt's *The Flight of Madeline and Porphyro During the Drunkenness Attending the Revelry (The Eve of St. Agnes)* (1847), taking after Keats' poem. In turn, Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820) had an undeniable influence on the popular stage: only in the same year of its publication, the story was adapted and dramatized in five occasions (White 1927).

As posited in my Master's thesis, both of my selected burlesque pantomimes *Robinson Crusoe* (1860) and *Aladdin!* (1861) included the topos of the lady in distress turned wife by the end of the play. The motif of the endangered woman is repeated in one of the most popular genres of the nineteenth-century theatre: melodramas. Some examples of distressed female characters in melodramas are Nelly Armroyd in Watts Phillips' *Lost in London* (1865), first performed at Wallack's theatre in New York; and Violet, from Dion Boucicault's *Life of an Actress* (Adelphi 1 March 1862), who wanders aimlessly before finding the protection of a man. Pantomimes, also favourite among the Victorians, were characterized by their inclusion of female characters that motivate the male hero in his quest.[3] Indeed, one of the most powerful motivators for the male characters was the prospect of matrimony and/or financial stability.

The fixed destiny of the woman in the adventure or epic narrative is sustained by Joseph Campbell's monomyth theory in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949).

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[2] The theme of St. Agnes was also readapted by Alfred Lord Tennyson, who wrote *St. Agnes' Eve* (1837).

[3] Some examples of female characters that motivate the male hero in his journey are Princess Badroulboudour in H. J. Byron's aforementioned *Aladdin* (1861), and Princess Gorgorina in F. C. Burnand's *The King of the Merrows* (1861). See also subsection 3.3.1. for a deeper analysis on female characters as 'guiding lights' of male protagonists.

According to Campbell (2008 [1949]) epic stories share a basic sequence of actions that shape the journey of the male protagonist; however, the role of a woman is reduced to 'temptress', 'goddess' or hero's prize.[4] In his words, the 'woman is the guide to the sublime acme of sensuous adventure' (Campbell 2008: 97). As a response to the lack of female representation in Campbell's monomyth theory, Maureen Murdock wrote a feminist retake fittingly titled *The Heroine's Journey* (1990). In her volume, Murdock includes a personal interview with Campbell in 1981, where he confirmed that women do not need to make the journey:

> In the whole mythological tradition the woman is *there*. All she has to do is to realize that she's the place that people are trying to get to. When a woman realizes what her wonderful character is, she's not going to get messed up with the notion of being pseudo-male. (Murdock 1990: 2)

Contesting this often-associated passivity of women, Murdock created the ten stages of the heroine's journey, beginning with 'Separation from the feminine': that is, female's search for identity, 'when the "old self" no longer fits… when a woman realizes that she has no sense of self that she can call her own' (Murdock 1990: 5–6).[5] The search for an

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[4] Campbell's monomyth only includes two stages where women have a relevant role, which are 'The meeting with the Goddess' and 'Woman as Temptress'. The meeting with the Goddess implies the hero's encounter with an idolized female, who is put on a pedestal and serves as metaphor of maternal protection. In turn, the 'Woman as Temptress' chapter exposes the dichotomy of women's nature as either good or evil. In this stage, the hero has to face a powerful temptation that attempts to lure him out of his path and destiny. This temptation, according to Campbell's study, takes a female form (the archetype of the temptress is repeated constantly, from Eve in Christian religion, to Galadriel in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954)).

[5] The ten steps that Murdock identifies are: 1. Separation from the feminine; 2. Identification with the masculine and gathering of allies; 3. Road of trials: meeting the ogres and dragons; 4. Finding the illusory boon of success; 5. Awakening to feelings of spiritual aridity: death; 6. Initiation and descent to the Goddess; 7. Urgent yearning to reconnect with the feminine; 8. Healing the mother/daughter split; 9. Healing the wounded masculine; 10. Integration of masculine and feminine (1990: 5).

identity comes with the rejection of that which is imposed upon her by society: the feminine is often classified as 'passive, manipulative, non-productive… unfocused, fickle, too emotional… weak, inferior, [and] dependent' (Murdock 1990: 6).[6] Prior to Murdock's and Campbell's research, Propp (1958) also posited that the common structure of the folktale includes a second step where the protagonist is banned from doing something and subsequently, on the third step, he or she transgresses said ban. Thus, the storyline of the hero progresses after a moment of change or rejection of the imposed.

As suggested by the semantics of Campbell's (1949) monomyth theory and Murdock's (1990) journey of the heroine, a 'journey' implies much more than physical movement. Indeed, the term 'journey' is described by the *OED* as 'an act of travelling from one place to another' but also as 'a long and often difficult process of personal change and development' (*OED* 'journey', n.). Thus, after a series of external circumstances that force a change within, one might travel or make a journey only in his or her own mind. This process of internal transformation is often called a journey, as it implies travelling from one mindset (or nature) to another.[7] Consequently, in this thesis I explore two possible ways of going on a journey: physical and virtual. In these, a series of elements shape the travel experience, like setting boundaries between the known and the unknown, constructing the traveller's identity and idea of self-position, and bringing forward relationships of power between the self and the Other.

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[6] More recent is the work of Frankel (2010), who takes Murdock's (1990) journey of the heroine and combines it with fairy tale approaches such as Warner's in *From the beast to the blonde* (1995) and Gould's *Spinning straw into gold* [2005] (2010).
[7] The *OED* registers the use of 'travel' as synonymous of 'journey' (*OED* 'travel', n.). Thus, in this thesis I indiscriminately use both terms to refer to the act of moving from place to place or, in other words, to the act of displacement.

However, I propose to conceptualize the journey as much more than a physical or virtual displacement; in short, I believe that a journey contends an agency of self, a possibility of voluntary displacement and re-placement outside one's reality. As I shall explore, a journey is most of the time a synonym of change, of personal evolution and growth. In this sense, and as Wolff has expressed elsewhere, there is a need to destabilize the androcentric metaphors of travel to understand female displacement and their marginalizing (1993). This is closely related to the traditional 'passivity' of women, which condemns them to a figurative immobility and thus, leaves the journey —an active endeavour— outside their possibilities.[8]

Hence, one of the questions that arise when trying to understand the female journey is what motivates the female to 'move' in the first place.[9] As a response, Murdock has argued that it is the 'rejection of the feminine' what puts women on a path to self-discovery (1990: 5–6). As she contends, the 'heroine' will undertake a complex journey where at first she imposes to herself the necessity to leave 'feminine' values behind to embrace a male-oriented identity. In other words, she tries to be more like the hero of the adventure story and less like the lady in distress. As Mackay explains, the female quest acquires a revisionist tint whereby the woman tends to look at the past to gain perspective of who she is, and how should she behave (2001: 1–4). The starting point that enables such revision is often a result of negative emotions. Mackay refers to grief and despair as optimal emotions for the development of a self-referential revision (Mackay 2001: 7). In turn, Frankel has argued that the true goal of the female journey is

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[8] Blunt examines a gendered differentiation between the female 'traveller' and the male 'explorer', suggesting 'constructions of the overt masculinity of exploration and the more passive femininity of travel' (1994: 32).

[9] Robinson-Tomsett argues that, by labelling someone as a 'journeyer', a sense of dynamism is instilled upon him or her (2013: 7). This term is used instead of 'passenger', which denotes passivity 'even while being in motion'.

to become an 'archetypal, all-powerful mother' (2010: 4), which falls close to Campbell's contention of woman as 'primarily concerned with fostering' (Murdock 1990: 7). Frankel affirms that the archetype of 'the Mother' does not condemn women to passivity or empty household duties; instead, she explains, women seek to emulate the Mother due to her being 'the vessel of emerging power and source of all life' (2010: 4). By becoming the Mother, she would regain power over others and, most importantly, over herself.

Despite the many attempts to define the female journey and to comprehend its final goal, I believe it is important to remark that the journey endows women with an agency that transcends time and space. Therefore, I understand the journey as an advantageous process through which women are able to rethink their own identity, be it to become an archetypal 'Mother', a 'spiritual warrior', or something else. The motivator of the journey would include a purpose of construction and deconstruction of the self, all the while taking as referential point their outside world and the preconceptions affecting their own existence. By stepping away from the framed ideal of 'womanhood', the journey begins and ends with a revaluation of what it means to be a woman, and a displacement from the norm.

Taking Murdock's 'Separation from the feminine' stage as the starting point of my research, I examine London's 1860s popular theatre to illustrate Victorian women's quest for an identity and place in the restrictive English society, away from the feminine preconception of the self. Therefore, my main interest is to examine the representation of female characters in mid-Victorian entertainment, especially when displaced outside their socially-assigned abode, the private sphere of the home. As I shall contend, such displacement occurs both literally —when a woman steps outside the domestic context

and interacts with the 'outside' world— and figuratively —when a woman undergoes a series of virtual journeys that allow her to broaden and question her own identity and persona. I turn to drama mainly because its complex system of elements that go far beyond the represented on stage: what Jacky Bratton named 'intertheatricality' (2003). According to Bratton's views, no theatrical performance is isolated or independent from its cultural environment; that is, any performance relies on the spectators' previous knowledge, drawing from existing popular plays, spectacles, and even reality. 'Intertheatricality' references the connections between dramatic texts, and at the same time, between dramatic texts and their consumers:

> [Intertheatricality] posits that all entertainments, including the dramas, that are performed within a single theatrical tradition are more or less interdependent. They are uttered in a language, shared by successive generations, which includes not only speech and the systems of the stage —scenery, costume, lighting, and so forth— but also genres, conventions and, very importantly, memory. (Bratton 2003: 37)

Bratton's notion of 'intertheatricality' concurs with the Victorian trend of stereotyping, a series of *double entendres* and symbols shared by a specific cultural group and generation. At the time, drama worked as an effective social manipulator, perpetuating and spreading stereotypes in a similar way to these days' cinema or television. Victorians lived an era of steady and drastic change practically in every area relevant to the development of civilization: transport, science, medicine, humanities, industry, and communication. The improvement of the daily lives of middle-class Victorians brought more leisure time, thus encouraging them to theatre-going, railway travel, and visiting museums and exhibitions. For instance, the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London's Hyde

Park attracted over six million visitors during May and October. The impact of the exhibition remained throughout the latter half of the century, as many of the originally displayed objects were relocated to the South Kensington Museum in 1857. In light of the findings of their more adventurous or studious counterparts, the average citizen of London or the tourist spending time in the metropolis were able to roam through South Kensington and marvel at the art, antiquities, and diverse souvenirs from distant lands; to be metaphorically transported by exhibitions of panoramas depicting both familiar and unknown sceneries; to enjoy nightly performances in the theatres, and to read printed magazines with a plethora of images aimed at positioning the reader as a traveller.

Even though the nineteenth century became a decisive era for travel due to the improvements in transportation, most academic volumes consulted for this thesis focus on the socio-cultural influence of travel and its mechanics rather than on its representation in other genres besides the novel, travelogues, travel guides, travel narratives, or pictorial media like panoramas and publicity pamphlets (Thompson 2002; Hulme and Youngs 2002; Mackenzie 2005; Youngs 2006; Mathieson 2015).[10] Therefore, in this thesis I aim to question the identity of displaced female bodies on the mid-Victorian popular stage, specifically during the 1860s. My definition of 'displaced' women closely follows that of the *Oxford English Dictionary*:

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[10] From the 1970s onwards, travel writing was scrutinized from a cultural and political lens, especially since the rise of postcolonial studies. By means of this academic field, it was possible the recovery of 'lost' voices and the challenging of pre-established colonial power structures. The study of Victorian female travellers also had a breakthrough at the 1960s-70s, with the pioneering work of Middleton (1965) and Barr (1976), who examines female relationships in colonial British India. By the 2000s, the focus shifted to the genre's implications regarding travel's relationship with identity (Driver 2001; Siegel 2004).

1. Take over the place, position, or role of; 1.1. Move (something) from its proper or usual position; 1.2. Force (someone to leave their home, typically because of war, persecution, or natural disaster); 1.3. Remove (someone) from a job or position of authority. (*OED,* v.)

However, the term 'displacement' has been classified as a 'travelling concept' (Bal 2002), as it is employed in areas as complex as physics, engineering and psychoanalysis. I take on Bal's idea of interdisciplinary concepts and I further contribute to the definition of 'displacement' beyond the grounds of exile and migration studies. With the rise of the Freudian theories in the late nineteenth century, the notion of 'displacement' acquired the meaning of a subconscious defence mechanism, 'in which dream thoughts about the self are decentred, appearing instead as Other, but still associated with the self' (Bay-Cheng et al. 2010: 97). According to Bay-Cheng, Kattenbelt and Lavender, contemporary studies of media and theatre take advantage of the link between 'displacement' and 'uncanniness', thus adopting the term (2010). In the end, displacing objects, words, and images, and presenting them under a different light brings a renewed interest and offers a new context within which we can examine them. Thus, I link 'displacement' to mechanisms of self-definition and self-scrutiny, questioning one's self-position in the world.[11]

The idea of moving someone or something out of their determined space brings forward questions of inclusion, exclusion, boundaries, and social constructions. In this

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[11] Philip Fisher (1987) claims that both the assimilation of popular forms on the public imagination and Freud's explanation of the therapeutic process involve three steps: recognition, repetition, and working through. According to Fisher,

> popular forms are frequently repetitive, and they are frequently read almost obsessively, as detective novels, westerns, romances, and pornography are, becoming a part of what might be called a diet of reality that returns again and again to the same motifs so that they might not slip away. (1987: 7)

thesis I argue that the worlds that were represented on the mid-Victorian London entertainments challenged the pre-established spatial and identity boundaries, bringing the opportunity to elaborate complex metaphors of travel and metamorphosis. Such worlds, as I shall further explain, ranged from the imaginary (influenced by fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and fiction literature, among others), to the reproduction of real contexts and places outside the metropolis, such as the British colonies.

As I shall argue in Chapter 1, for the Victorians, the travelling experience was much more than a physical displacement; for example, travelling implied an opportunity for intellectual instruction, which transformed the journey into an educational venture.[12] In this sense, leaving one's usual place shaped the concept of 'home', thus defining 'home' as juxtaposed to everything else (the outside, the Other, abroad). Precisely, to understand the concept of home, one must leave it behind.[13] In short, leaving home for the Victorians would require a meticulous process of self-awareness, self-evaluation, and comparison with everything else that were 'not them'. Therefore, the journey not only entailed a physical displacement, as it also influenced mid-Victorians on a personal, mental level. This process is especially interesting to note, in light of emerging studies like Freud's psychoanalysis towards the second half of the century and Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859); as Youngs contends, 'outward and inward change' preoccupies Victorians almost as much as the nation's international relationships (2013).

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[12] Strong (2014).

[13] Van den Abbeele (1992) establishes that the home or *oikos* 'defines or delimits the movement of travel' (xviii) in the sense that it will become a referral point to define other points. In response to this theory, Blunt (1994) affirms that 'travel seems potentially liberating because of the opportunities for transgression and questioning of ideas formulated at home' (17), yet it is a risky venture, as such transgression might lead to alienation —be it social or spatial.

The journey, be it physical or virtual, would contribute to the Victorians' desire of self-exploration and self-critique. This process of self-exploration would affect not only the nation as a whole, but the citizen as an individual. Thus, the journey would enhance 'self-position', an indispensable element to achieve a sense of realism and reassessment. Byerly remarks the importance of self-position to achieve a realistic immersion in the (virtual) journey (2013a: 7–8). It is important to notice how both physical and virtual journeys would be decisive in the individual's experimentation with a duality of perspectives: the familiar and the strange. Therefore, the individual's self-position would unavoidably influence said experience.[14]

The existence of an authoritative figure or entity contributes to the shaping of the nation, society, and the individual. In scholarly work on travel literature and post-colonial studies, it has been highlighted the importance of the 'contact zone' (Pratt 1992: 7). As Pratt (1992) contends, a contact zone 'emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other'. In this sense, in a contact zone, the traveller will encounter the 'travellee' from an unequal position of power —in a colonial setting the colonizer will stand over the colonized— yet this asymmetry will not hinder an atmosphere of co-presence and interaction. Entering a contact zone would allow us to interact with the 'foreign', a previously unknown perspective. In virtual travel, such contact zone appears in our mind, whereas in physical travel, our real interaction with the foreign in the contact zone will accordingly evidence (un)equal relationships of power. I believe it is extremely useful to understand Victorian 'contact zones' as geographical and historical spaces where feminine identities were negotiated,

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[14] See also Huggan (2001), who defends travel as a vehicle for reassessment and scrutiny of the self and the known.

oftentimes under challenging conditions and public scrutiny. Take, for instance, the controversy over female education throughout the nineteenth century; when women stepped outside their 'homes' —not necessarily a physical space— and ventured into a journey of self-improvement and education, they had to challenge their own identities, incorporating into their mindset the possibility of being an educated woman. However, at the contact zones —universities, schools, or society—, they still found the disapproval and dominance of privileged males. Their discredit, as well as the social sentiment that endowed women with a kind of femininity away from a formal, academic education, would be determinant factors in their life journey. Virtually, this contact zone would alert women of their sex's social and political disadvantages, whereas physically, the contact zone would materialize in lack of public facilities for women and dismissive comments about their educational attempts.

Pratt argues that a contact zone involves the co-presence of subjects 'previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures' (1992: 7), which I believe is an ideal description of earlier gender theories of 'separate spheres' and the growing interactions of males and females in the city of London during the 1860s. While it is true that such co-presence had existed for a long time on determined spaces, it is my contention that the social and political turmoil of the mid-century forced decisive situations of interaction between the sexes that contributed to the female journey to identity formation. Mackay argues that women of the Victorian period participated in a 'creative negativity' whereby they enabled and disguised their 'journeys of self' (2001: 3). According to her contention of the female quest, creative negativity consisted in a series of rhetorical and performative techniques by which certain women of the period construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct themselves. Their actions of self-exploration and

self-referentiality expose the elusiveness of a single-oriented definition of 'women's selfhood'.

In Chapter 1, I address the 1860's latent social revolution as fertile ground for the formation of national identity and self-identity. It is my contention that such instability provoked the questioning of traditional values and the journey to identity formation. Incidentally, in his essay *The Subject and Power,* Foucault focuses on a process of identity transformation from 'individual' to 'subject', usually triggered by external events, or even by the actions that the individual undertakes on its own (1982: 781). As Foucault explains, the existent power relations are what shape the individual into the subject; we are subjects to other's definition of ourselves. In other words, every journey to self-understanding and self-definition struggles against a 'form of power' that continues to categorize and put labels onto us. For the Victorians, these dynamics of power were exerted through the construction of a unique national identity, which resulted in a kind of submission and acceptance of the imposed identity traits. At the same time, Victorian women found themselves defined by the dominant discourse of 'true femininity', which highlights other kind of power relations besides the political and the social. In the end, gender ideology plays an essential role in the negotiations of power and the formation of female identity in the 1860s.

As I shall argue in Chapters 2 and 3 with my analysis of female identity on the mid-Victorian stage, the resulting transformation of the self after a physical journey or a virtual journey will often occur in a situation of crisis or confusion. Youngs (2013) explores the motif of travel in mid-to-late nineteenth century as marker of the era's rapid change from rural to urban society, and as signifier of contemporary anxieties related to socioeconomic and political evolution. Due to the complexity of identity

formation in such a manipulated context, the journey in all its forms provides a great tool through which we can explore a divided society. In other words, in such a delicate moment, travel provided 'a vantage point' from which Victorians could discover, evaluate, and connect their present conditions (Youngs 2013: 9).[15] Furthermore, travelling became a tool for exploring the power relationships in Victorian society, and for questioning them under the revisionist feeling of the era. For us, analysing the way these journeys were explored in the literature, the printed media, and the popular spectacles will shed light into the era's preoccupations.

With this purpose in mind, I have decided to do a cross-genre analysis of mid-Victorian plays performed in London, also taking into account the inevitable and reciprocal influence of other forms of entertainment in the city. Instead of focusing on a single genre, author, or venue, this thesis provides a broader perspective of the representation of female identity and metaphors of travel on the popular stage. This method allows to comprehend the 'audiences' catholicity of experience' (T. Davis 2012: 20), thus obtaining a better understanding of the types of female representation that the public witnessed. I also follow Bratton's (2011) steps in 'mapping' London's 1860s, reviewing the complex interrelationships between space, culture, time, and identity. In her *Making of the West End Stage* (2011), Bratton exposes the necessity of mapping both the material and the conceptual 'terrain' (6) to fully comprehend the Victorians' perception of their own world —and thus, to provide us with a richly descriptive context open to analysis.

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[15] As Youngs contends, the motif of travel in the mid- to late-nineteenth century conveyed a subjacent situation of rapid change, a transition from rural to urban society, and of a latent social revolution (2013: 7–8).

In order to comprehend the social, political, and economical influences of the selected period, Chapter 1, 'Why the 1860s?' offers a glimpse of mid-Victorian London. The chapter is divided into four sections; from Sections 1.1. to 1.3. I explain the decade's strategies to fostering a British identity through popular forms of visual media, museums and exhibitions, popular retellings, and sensational articles related to national pride. I approach the city of London as a contesting ground where the citizens and visitors were allowed to self-scrutiny and self-position. In Section 1.4., I bring forward the situation of women amidst the rise of feminist movements, which demanded attention to pressing matters such as female education. As I shall argue, the insurgent feminism, along with the institution of women's clubs in the 1860s, brought women alternative spaces of their own and a newfound sense of community. However, the advances in gender politics and emerging shift in morality awoke distrustful sentiments and accusatory terms for the 'fast girls', precursors of the fin-de-siècle New Woman.

In Chapter 2, 'Displacement and physical travel', I further define the term 'displacement' and prove its invaluable role in the process of self-definition and identity-forming. As I shall defend, displacement is linked to concepts of spatial and mental boundaries, as well as to the 'hidden geographies' (Kaplan 1996: 144) that define our perception of the world. In Section 2.2., I analyse physical travel and review women's possibilities for physical mobility inside and outside the metropolis. As I shall explain, scrutinising the opportunities for female physical travel allows us to discover material renegotiations of gender roles and class systems. Thus, I discuss the process of travelling as marker of women's status throughout the decade, highlighting issues of passivity versus agency, spatial confinement, and visible (or invisible) femininity. In Section 2.3., I turn to specific examples of physical travel or displacement of female

bodies in the popular drama of the 1860s. I explore women's voluntary physical displacements —such as those taken by female explorers or tourists— and involuntary ones, where the female character suffers from her 'out-of-placedness' in a strange setting —i.e. male dominated spaces and colonial or warring areas. I also question the characters' motives to undergo such journeys and expose the relevance of their displacement in their identity formation.

In Chapter 3, I defend that Victorian popular drama qualified as a 'virtual journey', both for the spectator and the performer. I follow Alison Byerly's (2013a) notion of 'virtual travel' as a tool for personal interaction with realities or perspectives that are unreachable to us in our original position. In her view, virtual travel allows us to redefine and analyse ourselves both from a 'complete detachment' and a 'complete immersion' (7). By presenting alternative spaces and roles, the popular drama of the era brought to light the complexity of women's interrelations outside the private sphere and provided a stage where their myriad identities could be shown and reaffirmed.

In Section 3.3., I thoroughly analyse the virtual journeys of female characters in London's popular plays. As I shall contend, the fictional women represented on stage during the 1860s reflect on contemporary debates of women's place in society. Thus, I scrutinise these female characters in relation to the period's feminine boundaries; in consequence, I propose three representational categories: domesticity, 'out of the home', and sensationalized explorations of female identity. The section on domesticity questions the characters' compliance to the feminine canon, especially in relation to marriage, paternal links, and the familial home. In the second subsection, 'Leaving the home', I turn to those who stray from the canon and contest the definition of femininity. Thus, I include fast girls, strong-minded women, working women, and others whose

active lifestyle and independent self-definition destabilise the period's gender roles. Finally, in 'Sensationalized explorations of female identity', I offer three theatrical motifs of female characters during the 1860s: the foreign or 'Other' woman, the sleeping or unconscious, and the supernatural female body. These tropes allow me to further ground my thesis of witnessing a play as virtual exploration of alternative feminine identities.

The concluding chapter summarises the relationship between reality and fiction, identity and space, home and away, and, most importantly, remarks the importance of Victorian theatre as vehicle for questioning female identities, exploring alternatives, and providing a space for metamorphosis.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

In my study, I have focused on the plays gathered by the Lord Chamberlain's Catalogue of Plays during the 1860s. Moreover, I have also examined the printed copies of other relevant plays performed in London during the rest of the decade. In addition to the drama, I turn to other forms of mid-Victorian London entertainment, such as images and records of nineteenth-century exhibitions and memorabilia to support my thesis. It is important to note the necessity to explore Victorian performance culture beyond the dramatic text, as Booth (1975: 8) and Marcus (2012: 440) have pointed out. For this reason, my thesis is also footed on other forms of contemporary entertainment and mid-Victorian culture, which play an essential role in understanding the actual experience of Victorian audiences. The main sources I have consulted besides the dramatic text are the databases of the British Library, the Senate House Library, the Victoria and Albert's Theatre and Performance Archives, and the British Newspapers Archive.

I turn to the 1860s because of two main reasons: first, the growing British Empire and the rapid developments of the nation brought a general interest in the colonies and the foreign. Through the popular media, theatre, and exhibitions, Londoners and tourists were able to go on a 'virtual journey' visiting imaginary representations of distant lands and peoples. Therefore, and as I shall defend, going to the theatre and witnessing a play, or visiting an exhibition of real objects brought from abroad, was a virtual travel for the spectators who were not able to experience the alternative realities abroad first-hand. Besides, these setups also facilitated the virtual journey of those who had been abroad. In this sense, theatre is in many ways similar to travel literature, as it employs a series of tools such as stage setting, costumes, make-up, and music to transport the spectator and

take him or her on an imaginary journey. Second, I examine the dawn of the 1860s because it fostered the rise of feminism from political to social activism, giving prominence to the topics of women's education, politics, employment and professions, industry, female organization, marriage, and morality.

Due to the nature of this thesis, I perform an interdisciplinary analysis and follow a heterogeneous list of disciplines, such as travel literature, women's studies, cultural studies, spatial studies, and theatre history. Travel literature, and especially female travel literature, gives us the opportunity to inquire into the lives of exceptional women who stepped away from the time's fixed female spaces. Even though travel literature is an old and well-established genre —some of the first examples come from the nineteenth century, when travellers started to narrate their experiences—, the academic texts studying Victorian travel literature have only recently (the 2000s) included amongst its pages the stories of female travellers.[1] However, up until the 2000s, the female traveller and her production as a travel writer had been often relegated to a secondary source or as a mere footnote in the study of the famous male travellers, as in the case of Isabel Arundell (later Lady Burton, wife of the famous Sir Richard Burton), whose work is anecdotic in some of the volumes mentioning her better-known husband.[2]

In reality, nineteenth-century British society showed a growing interest in the position of Western women in relation to colonialism; women were able to be travellers

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[1] For instance, in Spain scholarly works have highlighted the presence of English female travellers in nineteenth-century Spain and have emphasized the role of women as travellers and agents in the production of travel literature (García-Pérez 2007; López-Burgos 2007; Egea 2006, 2009).

[2] Richard Burton (1821–1890) was an explorer, translator, geographer, and writer, among many other things. His work gained the admiration and attention of the Victorian public, especially due to his translation from the French of *The Arabian Nights* (1882) and his and his wife Isabel Burton's travel writing describing their journeys around the globe.

when the journey to the colonies became a safer activity. This might be why, right at the turn of the century, England saw the publication of part anthological, part biographical volumes revealing the underestimated travels of Victorian women.[3] Later on, the literature turned from informative to critical; accordingly, the female roles of the era were studied from points of view such as femininity and social behaviour. The first text to critically expose the different shapes of the Victorian female traveller was Middleton's *Victorian Lady Travellers* (1965), followed by Stevenson's *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa* (1982). The latter already differentiates amongst the roles of wives, missionaries, and vacationers, thus highlighting the motives that brought women outside their homelands during the nineteenth century and revealing their situation of advantage or disadvantage on their journeys depending on their identity.

The nineties also brought an interest for the travel books of Victorian female travellers; an example of this is Morgan's *Place Matters: Gendered Geography in Victorian Women's Travel Books* (1996). It is also interesting to turn to Nelson's *Boys Will Be Girls: The Feminine Ethic and British Children's Fiction, 1857–1917* (1991), which observes travel literature as children literature and the children's attitudes towards the stereotype of the angel in the house. More recently, the influence of women in nineteenth-century travel literature has been highlighted in works like Ferrús (2011), who defends female travel literature as decisive in nineteenth-century national configuration. This, as she contends, is partly due to the growing colonial interrelations

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[3] A clear example of an early anthological and biographical compilation of Victorian female travellers is W. H. Davenport's *Celebrated Women Travellers of the Nineteenth Century* (1882). This volume has been abridged and re-edited numerous times, including recent years' versions (2010, 2016) and it includes travellers such as Madame Ida Pfeiffer, Lady Hester Stanhope, Miss Harriet Martineau, and Miss Isabella Bird.

between continents and the revolutionary power of women over society's perceptions by means of their writing.

For this thesis, the work of Patrick Brantlinger (1998; 2011) is also relevant, as he thoroughly examines the Victorians' perception of the native peoples, as well as the configuration of foreign fears through popular media and literature. His analysis of the colonial male hero, as in the case of Robinson Crusoe, and the stereotyped native (often pejoratively named 'savage'), is an essential basis for my thesis. Furthermore, volumes like Dentith's *Epic and Empire in Nineteenth Century Britain* (2006) borrow on the classical influence of epic narratives that configure the nineteenth-century's imperial adventure or imperial mission. It is important to note the undeniable influence of epic stories on the idea of modernity and colonization present in nineteenth-century Britain, as well as its perpetuation of gender roles and identities. Thus, I have also turned to Gould's *Nineteenth Century Theatre and the Imperial Encounter* (2011), who insists on the decisive effect of culture and popular entertainment on Victorian Empire building. Gould's (2011) contention is that popular plays reproducing important historical, colonial, and military events worked as a bridge for the 'gap between documentary verisimilitude and spectacular entertainment' (2); therefore, and as I shall defend throughout this thesis, the many elements of the Victorian popular drama and entertainments work to perpetuate stereotypes, also providing a space for 'virtual' journeys through the manipulated reproduction of distant (real) lands.

The recent literature on women as travellers in the Victorian era —mainly throughout the 2000s— exposes religious, cultural, and political identifications in the shaping of women's travel accounts (McEwan 2000; Foster and Mills 2002; Anderson 2006). In addition, the recent research on the female traveller pays attention to the

relation between text and the female body, performativity, and sexuality (Birkett 2004; Freeman 2016). For example, Siegel's *Gender, Genre and Identity in Women's Travel Writing* (2004) includes explorations of spectacle and the relationship between travel and domesticity in Victorian women's travel writing, while Richardson's *New Woman and Colonial Adventure Fiction in Victorian Britain: Gender, Genre, and Empire* (2006) explores the shifting of gender boundaries and the incursions of women outside of the domestic realms in light of the fin-de-siècle gender debates and colonial settings. Other pieces explore queer desire and masculinity from the female body, such as Showalter's *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830–1980* (1987)*,* Vicinus' *Intimate Friends: Women Who Loved Women, 1778–1928* (2004) and Marcus' *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (2007). Regarding the role of women in the colonies, scholars like Grewal (1996), Ghose (1998; 2007), and Barr (2011) have thoroughly analysed the motif of the white Englishwoman in India, the memsahib, offering yet another female identity present in the making of the British Empire and the configuration of female self in the Victorian period.

The academic literature linking travel to Victorian theatre is scarce; however, I must highlight McInnis' invaluable contribution to mind-travelling and drama in *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England* (2013). Even though the scope of his study is limited to the dramatic imaginations of playwrights such as Marlowe and Jonson on the seventeenth-century stage, his ground-breaking analogy of playgoing and sightseeing further contributes to the footing of my thesis. As McInnis contends, understanding theatregoing as an immersive, mind-transporting experience will shed

light into the manipulative powers of theatre in the playgoer's opinions, imagination, and identity.

As commented earlier, the 1860s can be considered as a decisive decade for Britain, with the rise of London as the main point of tourist attraction. The metropolis' new conception of transport and communication made possible the opening of the world's first underground railway in 1863, the same year of the first edition of John Murray's *Handbook of Modern London,* which included sections dedicated to Metropolitan Improvement especially addressed to prospective tourists. The underground's rapid means of transportation, as well as the novel concept of descending below the ground and emerging somewhere else, contributed to a new perception of time and space. The ever-changing situation of the metropolis, as well as the rise in criminality, fostered mistrust amongst the most conservative Victorians, who went on to fear rail travel and affirmed that the vibrations, the speed, and the dangerous possibility of traumatic accidents could lead to madness (Milne-Smith 2016: 21). In the end, the rapid development of the railway brought to light an incipient fear of modernity and social interactions, creating a general moral panic triggered by sensational events of murder, madness, and railway attacks.[4]

In order to comprehend the situation of women in the nineteenth century and go beyond the stereotyped Victorian female character, it is necessary to turn to women's studies texts such as Martha Vicinus' *Suffer and Be Still* (1972) and *A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women* (1977). Vicinus is considered as one of the first scholars to compile and examine the role of Victorian women, revising and discrediting

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[4] For further information on railway-attributed madness, attacks on the railway, and the fears that this sensational events symbolized, consult Peter Bailey (2004) and Amy Milne-Smith (2016).

female stereotypes of 'softness' of the era. In both of her previously mentioned volumes, the author explains the situation of women as social and political individuals during the nineteenth century, an agency that is often forgotten when the Victorian role model of a woman first comes to mind. It is important to include as many perspectives and analyses of the situation of women in the (mid-)Victorian period as possible to further comprehend their portrayal in the era's popular media and their reception in their contemporary popular consciousness.

Following Vicinus' lead, during the 1970s, several second-wave feminist literary critics turn their attention to previously under-recognized Victorian female writers. These include Moers' *Literary Women* (1976), Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (1977), and Gilbert and Gubar's canonical *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (1979). While these texts might focus on women as creators of texts, they also discuss their roles as agents instead of as objects in both private and public spheres. Additionally, other authors study the myths surrounding the female body and womanhood in Victorian cultural imagination, including Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth* (1982) and Michie's *The Flesh Made Word: Female Figures and Women's Bodies* (1987). Munich (1989) also explores the nineteenth-century male writers' representation of women, which, she argues, contribute to the myths of womanhood due to their fear of female power and rebellion.

During the 1990s, scholars turn to other sub-canons in women's studies in Victorian England, such as drama, social class, race, and the British Empire. These new texts pay attention to the diverse roles of nineteenth-century women, which were previously unexplored. Some of these are Tracy Davis' *Actresses as Working Women:*

Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture (1991) and Davis and Donkin's *Women and Playwriting in Nineteenth-century Britain* (1999), in which they introduce the figures of female theatre managers, playwrights, and actresses. In addition, in my analysis of the configuration of the female self in the Victorian era I turn to Newey (2005) and Newey and Richards (2010); especially to Newey's *Women's Theatre Writing in Victorian Britain* (2005), where the author sets to identify previously 'invisible' women, thus highlighting the necessary task of a metaphorical 'archaeological' work of uncovering a plurality of women buried underneath a sole stereotype or erased completely from literature. Other foundational texts about nineteenth-century women published in the nineties are *Culture, Class and Gender in the Victorian Novel: Gentlemen, Gents and Working Women* (Young 1999) and *Rule Britannia: Women, Empire and Victorian Writing* (David 1996). These, besides observing the evolution of the lower-middle class Victorian woman, also scrutinize the figures of the governess, the missionary, and the wife or domestic woman. These female roles are also examined by Sharpe (1993), who studies white women in the colonial context. Finally, Michie (1992) dwells on the definition of women's bonds, especially sisterhood and maternity.

As the previously mentioned volumes attest, the socio-political situation of women in Britain during the nineteenth century fostered the rise of the feminist movement in the 1860s. Scholarly volumes comment on the first steps of feminism as an organized movement, when the prettiest and best-dressed women were carefully placed in the front row at meetings (Levine 1987: 22). Feminist initiatives from the 1850s created social clubs and intellectually stimulating circles for women; in the end, the feminist movement provided women physical spaces of their own outside the home. Education matters during the 1860s brought the battle for women's entitlement to

medical training and professional qualification, thus linking women with upper education in universities (Hall [1992] 2002) and with classical scholarship (Stray 2007; Wyles and Hall 2016). For example, Cambridge ran tests for women in 1863, where they proved to have greater results than their male counterparts (Levine 1987: 36). Ultimately, the decade of the 1860s saw the mixing up of social groups that had been separated until then, which transformed London into a multi-layered yet united universe. In this social environment, scholars like Bratton (2011) and Pettersson (2014a; 2014b) have highlighted the novel freedom of the wandering woman or the *flâneuse*. Such a figure was possible due to the ever-growing metropolis and the creation of socio-cultural spaces open to citizens and visitors alike; in short, a time for cultural formation and national selfhood (Poovey 1995; Bratton 2011). Bearing this in mind, I consider that the 1860s constitute an optimal background for female self-discovery and self-transformation: women's physical journeys to the shops, the theatres, or exhibition galleries, were the perfect scenery for a deeper, more complicated virtual personal journey.

In light of these socio-political changes, I also turn to the theatre and its context, bearing in mind the example of the Victorian actress and manageress as agent of change and representative of women outside the private sphere. For this purpose, I have examined the volumes by Tracy C. Davis (2000, 2003, 2007), Kerry Powell (1997, 2004), Katherine Newey (2005), Jane Moody and Daniel O'Quinn (2007), and Jacky Bratton (2003, 2011). Victorian drama made visible the changes that the era brought to women's interactions with the public sphere, including stereotypical female characters and readapting traditional fantasy tales to highlight the gender roles of the period. On stage, fantastic worlds were reshaped into moral indoctrination for children and adults

alike, reworking well-known tales into contemporary social commentary. In fact, this tradition lives on in the British drama, with countless fairy tale versions put on stage every Christmas season all over the country. Again, drama has the power to readapt fantasy tales as re-workings of Victorian reality and as Talairach-Vielmas [2007] (2016) has suggested, the experimental fairy tales and dramatic fantasies of the 1860s worked as a 'bridge' between two seemingly different worlds: the real and the fantastic. In the end, through the turning of morality codes and reality norms the fantastic adaptations emphasized 'the inadequacy of the fairy-tale mode in the exploration of women's lives and predicaments in patriarchal society' (Talairach-Vielmas 2016: 19). The fantastical ambiance of such experimental fairy tales allows women to explore their own realities and 'construction' from a distance, all the while presenting heroines that avoid straying from the 'angelic' canon (Ibid: 20). These idealized representations of women were linked to the moralistic movements that kept censoring those who differed from the national ideal of femininity, employing names such as 'fast girl' to condemn women with 'off-pitched morality' (Nelson and Vallone [1994] 2010) and those that, in the end, dared to explore their own selves outside the prefixed boundaries.

More recently, a growing number of volumes dedicated to both famous and unknown female travellers of the Victorian era are being published. Popular bookstores include in their catalogues anthologies that recount the adventures and travel writing of Victorian and fin-de-siècle women, somehow sensationalized in light of a more barbaric past.[5] The modern literature repeatedly praises these women with adjectives such as

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[5] Such is the case of the compilation of the travel memories of Edith Wharton, *Del viaje como arte: Travesías por España, Italia, Francia y el Mediterráneo* (2016) edited and translated by Teresa Gómez Reus. According to the editor, Edith Wharton employs her 'female gaze' to criticise the Moroccan harems in her journeys, a common oriental motif repeated in the narratives of Victorian female travellers.

'brave' and 'intrepid', and remarks their struggles in their trips to 'the dark continent' or the desert.[6] However, and even though the modern reader might get a glimpse of a day in the life of a female Victorian traveller, these volumes still come across as fictionalized for the sake of bookselling ratings. With a renewed fascination towards the Victorian era, a revival of all-things Victorian has brought us books, television shows, and films inspired by the era's literature, events, and people.[7] These have strived to include silenced female voices, perhaps in light of a fourth-wave of feminism.[8] The current phase of the feminist movement is mainly characterized by its attempts to be all-inclusive and accessible for all, regardless of educational or social background. This atmosphere of gender vindications has fostered a sort of 'trendy' feminism and has transformed an intellectual, social movement into a profitable slogan in mainstream culture. However, the rise in popularity of female narratives has offered us the opportunity to learn more about silenced voices and stories, and so, it provides us with an ideal background to explore the representation of female bodies and identities both on and off stage during the Victorian era. In light of the current social and political

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[6] In Spain, there have been four volumes published and re-edited as best-sellers that had as main point of attraction the sensationalized retelling of the travels of Victorian females: *Viajeras Intrépidas y Aventureras* (2001; 2017), *Las Reinas de África* (2003; 2016), *Las Damas de Oriente* (2005; 2017), and *Cautiva en Arabia* (2009; 2010), all by author and journalist Cristina Morató.

[7] Some of the most recent and successful examples are the television drama series *Victoria* 2016–), produced by the English channel ITV and based on Daisy Goodwin's homonymous novel; the 2017 film adaptation of Peter Ackroyd's neo-victorian novel *Dan Leno and The Limehouse Golem* (1994); the television drama series *The Frankenstein Chronicles* (2015–); or the New York-based fin-de-siècle drama *The Alienist* (2018).

[8] Ealasaid Munro's article *Feminism: A Fourth Wave?* (2013) comments on the rise in awareness amongst young feminists, emphasizing their turning to the internet to give voice to those women who are still being silenced by the mainstream feminist movement. In addition, the word 'feminism' was Merriam-Webster's Word of the Year for 2017. According to their report, the rise in lookups of the word followed public events of the year: the Women's March on Washington, DC in January 2017; the TV series adaptation of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (2017–) and the film *Wonder Woman* (2017); and the social media movement #MeToo, denouncing cases of sexual assault and harassment.

attempts to provide further representations of women, this thesis aims to answer some of the remaining questions related to female representation both on and off the stage in Victorian England. In this thesis I bring forward diverse female identities from the past to guarantee a complete understanding of women's history, thus collaborating with the scholars' ongoing searching and rescuing of female histories as explained in this section.

CHAPTER 1 — WHY THE 1860S?

1.1. National pride: Great Exhibitions (1851 and 1862)

After the success of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the city of London welcomed a second International Exhibition in 1862, highlighting what Bennett names 'the exhibitionary complex' ([1995] 2013: 59–86) of the Victorians. As Bennett posits, both events were celebrated to showcase a hierarchy of civilizations, manipulating the visitor into an exaltation of human achievement. Accordingly, the 1851 Crystal Palace became the symbol of a glorious age, while the following 1862's building projected an even more idealized image of the British Empire, developing in the following years as a museum worth of national and international pilgrimage.

In 1851, Prince Albert allied with Henry Cole, a patron of the arts and industry, and decided to follow the example of Paris' *Exposition des produits de l'industrie française*, where products of French industry were showcased from 1798 to 1849. The British crown, needing to proclaim itself as leader thinker and head of Europe's workforce, endeavoured to display their own industrial discoveries in London's first Great Exhibition in 1851. However, to describe the Great Exhibition of 1851 as a mere platform to showcase Britain's mechanical innovations would be an understatement: as Allardyce Nicoll affirmed, the event 'was a symbol of an age that was passing away and the premonition of an age that was to come' (1946: 1, 7). Indeed, the spectacularity of the venue and the surroundings would have been enough to give prominence to the celebration. Specially built for the occasion, the Crystal Palace opened in May 1st, 1851 in London's Hyde Park, counting over six million visits by the closure of the exhibition in October of the same year. In her journal, Queen Victoria wrote about the opening day

and described it as 'one of the greatest and most glorious of our lives' (qtd. in Gibbs-Smith 1964), remarking the crowds of cheerful people streaming through Green and Hyde Park, the shining surface of the Crystal Palace, and the vastness of the building and its contents (see Fig. 1).[1]

Incidentally, even though the prominent goal of the Exhibition was putting together the advances and conquests of the British nation, the adverts of the era proclaimed diverse objectives: bringing together 'specimens of industry and ingenuity of all nations;' encouraging communication, knowledge, and interchange of ideas amongst nations; stimulating talent and enterprise; giving manufacturers, artisans, and mechanics the opportunity to improve by comparing their productions; stimulating British industry and trade; and improving the human race by promoting social and international harmony (Auerbach 1999: 91). According to official records, the Crystal Palace contained over 100,000 exhibits, provided by nearly 14,000 exhibitors, half of them foreign. The attraction for the overseas was undeniable; for example, among the foreigners stood out the United States' display, where visitors could find Hiram Powers' controversial sculpture, the 'Greek Slave', surrounded by tipis, Native Americans, presidential portraits, and other objects that symbolized national identity and progress. Powers' statue became a symbol of the era that was to come, before the American Civil War (1861–5) and before Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (1863), which legally freed millions of U.S. slaves. Furthermore, the Exhibition displayed pieces of the thriving British Empire, like the India stand, where visitors would find a stuffed elephant adorned by a magnificent howdah, amongst other products that had been sent

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[1] For a thorough compilation of images reproducing the halls of the Crystal Palace in the Great Exhibition of 1851, consult *Comprehensive Pictures of The Great Exhibition of 1851* (1852), published by the Dickinson Brothers from the originals painted for Prince Albert by artists Joseph Nash, Louis Haghe, and David Roberts.

to Queen Victoria by Indian rulers and compiled by the British East India Company (Figs. 2 and 3).[2]

In some way, building the spectacular Crystal Palace and gathering people in London during the 1851 exhibition transformed the metropolis into a space for meeting and interchange. After the bleak 1840s, characterized by Ireland's Great Famine and its ensuing migrations, the 1850s brought a time for reconfiguration and prosperity; if, as W. H. Thackeray put it, the Crystal Palace was 'A palace as for fairy Prince' (*The Times* 1851),[3] its contents and visitors became outer-worldly attractions. Precisely, the material of the building invited the visitor to observe and to be observed at the same time; the Victorians' taste for the visual and the quotidian was an element of attraction of the Exhibition as important as the exhibits themselves.[4]

It is important to go back to the Great Exhibition of 1851 because it set a precedent for the following London International Exhibition of 1862. Even though the International Exhibition of 1862 is less famous than its predecessor, it played a decisive role in the international projection of Britain's global power. At times simply called 'the International of 1862', it was celebrated in South Kensington, from May 1st to November 1st of the same year. On this occasion, the celebration would boast of 'promoting friendly relations among all the nations of the earth [sic]' (*London Evening*

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[2] The American sculpture 'The Greek Slave' by Hiram Powers became a token for the abolitionist movement, being the backdrop of live performances by African American escapees, and one of the favourite topics of discussion of mid-Victorian London's media. In turn, India's exhibit became the visual proof of colonial dominance, 'the brightest jewel in Victoria's crown' (*The Illustrated Exhibitor* 1851).

[3] W. M. Thackeray's *The Meeting of the Nations in Hyde Park* (*The Times* 30 April 1851)

[4] The Victorian's attraction for everyday spaces and peoples is reflected on the journals of the era, where we can find articles such as 'Passing Faces' by Eliza Lynn (*Household Worlds* 1855), where the author describes the streets of London as space for evaluation and ethnographic study. Also relevant to the aspect of street wandering is the *flâneur*, or street-walker, which I shall discuss elsewhere in this thesis.

Standard 29 April 1862: 6), thus emphasizing the international influence of the event. Seeking to start conversations related to science, foreign arts, and industry between nations, the city of London invited foreign Ministers and correspondents from the colonies and from the countries exhibiting; indeed, the Exhibition would boast of the soundness of the British Empire by displaying and maintaining healthy imperial relationships and promoting ideas of hospitality. After the death of Prince Albert in 14 December 1861, the Society of Arts, the Horticultural Society and two Royal Commissions in charge of the celebration were personally supported by Queen Victoria. However, when the opening day arrived, the Queen could not attend to the inauguration and *The Times* reminded its readers that, without the Prince, the exhibition was but 'a mighty mausoleum to his memory' (1 May 1862). Inevitably, the 1862 Exhibition had to measure up with its predecessor, despite its different location and structure. In turn, the exhibits were more spectacular than before, due to the machinery developments of the previous decade, which impressed the media as well as the public.[5] Then again, the affluence of people into the metropolis meant that the city of London became not only a place for meeting and interchange, but also a space for education and transformation. Due to transport improvements, the number of visitors was greater in comparison with those who visited the 1851 Exhibition (6,211,103 as against 6,039,195), including a great number of foreign visitors.[6] The objective of the International Exhibition of 1862

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[5] The *Illustrated London News* commented on the spread of machineries: 'the array of engines and machines is not only wonderful and beautiful in itself, but every machine exhibited has claims upon our attention as playing some part in our daily wants as luxuries or necessities' (May 1862). See more details about London's Great Exhibitions in Hobhouse (2004) [2002], Auerbach (1999), Auerbach and Hoffenberg (2016) [2008], and Shears (2017). See also Fig. 4.

[6] *Reynold's Newspaper* highlighted the opening of a money exchange office inside the Exhibition venue shortly after inauguration day (1 June 1862: 2). This example makes evident the event's interest in welcoming the foreigner and promoting an international spread, especially after inauguration day when 'the inhabitants of China, Japan, Persia, Turkey –men of all

was, as the *London Evening Standard* put it, both for profit and pleasure (29 April 1862: 6), highlighting the twofold purpose of the international event. Incidentally, the occasion brought organized groups from factories, institutions, and schools, including groups patronized by benefactors such as the wives and children of groups of men from Chatham, and girls from the London Orphan Asylum (Hobhouse 2004: 135). As the decade went by, educational travel was made available to artisans and citizens from Britain to foreign events like the 1867 Paris Exhibition, with the purpose of making skilled, competent British workers (Strong 2014: 2–7).

It is important to note that the Great Exhibition of 1851 marked the beginning of what Burn (1964) named 'the mid-Victorian equipoise'; that is, the apparently peaceful atmosphere of England during the 1850s and 1860s. Moreover, Burn affirms that both the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the following London International Exhibition of 1862 contributed to a hierarchical acceptance and peace amongst social classes, as both events were made available for the general public's visit and promoted the illusion of companionship and national identity.[7] Even though the apparent calm in the nation claimed by Burn has been questioned in later volumes reviewing mid-Victorian England, Hoffenberg (2017) [2000] affirms that the exhibitions were important elements in fostering a sense of social union. According to Hoffenberg, the 1851 and 1862 exhibitions

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colours, creeds, and countries– were brought together at this extraordinary confluence of races, realms and religions' (*Reynold's Newspaper* 4 May 1862: 5).

[7] However, recent studies have re-evaluated Burn's theory, questioning the apparent equilibrium of England during the mid-Victorian era. For example, Hewitt's *An Age of Equipoise?* (2017) [2000] offers a reassessment of Burn's *The Age of Equipoise* (1964). In his prologue, Hewitt denies the peaceful mid-Victorian era explained by Burn and brings to light social and political conflicts that question the 'social cement' of the time.

represented the apparent counterpoise of various forces and institutions, such as the middle and working classes, the colonies and England. The exhibitions were not only signs of equipoise, but also the living and material experience of such equipoise (2017: 42).

In this sense, the exhibitions offered the opportunity to boast about innovative, working classes, bringing together individuals from different backgrounds (including the colonies) to be noticed by the middle and working classes, and to be praised by the elite. Furthermore, and as posited in an official meeting before the inauguration day of the 1862 Exhibition, the original intention of both Exhibitions was the promotion of peace and 'goodwill' among the nations of the world. Other scholars, like Auerbach, mention how exhibitions with such size were a place for identity formation and affirmation of British nationalism and imperialism (1999: 228–31).

As commented earlier, Burn's theory of an age of equipoise has been challenged by scholars such as Hewitt [2000] (2017), who makes remarks about the bursting military action that was taking place during the mid-Victorian era, among other socio-political reforms. Incidentally, both Exhibitions were celebrated at the height of the British Empire, soon after victories of the nation: the Great Exhibition of 1851, less than a decade after the First Opium War (1839–42), and the International Exhibition of 1862, two years after the Second Opium War (1856–60). These events forced China to open international treaty ports and made possible the opium trade with England and France. However, at the same time that the city of London was being opened (twice) to the international public and the greatest minds of the era, Britain was fighting other wars overseas. For example, soon after the Great Exhibition of 1851, the British Army won

the Crimean War (1853–6), feeding the national pride through countless and diverse representations of its victorious battles in the popular media of the era.[8]

In conclusion, London's Exhibitions of 1851 and 1862 symbolize the efforts of the country to place itself as a global force, emphasizing the international impact of the colonial missions and its 'rewards' to those back home. The displays of innovative mechanical artefacts, as well as the conquered tokens from the colonies, aim to please the crowds and to appease a growingly Eurocentric society; this comes at a time when, more than ever, the citizens of Britain were concerned by foreign policies as much as by their own, partly due to the democratization of information through the printed press. As the popular reception of the Exhibitions suggest, the 1860s become an optimal decade for the formation of a common, popular consciousness; especially after the success of the 1851 Exhibition, the International of the 1862 set off to prolong the national supremacist feeling by reaching an ever wider audience than before.

1.2. Foreign fears and the racial 'Other'[9]

After the tumultuous 1850s, culminating with the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the 1860s were also characterized by overseas conflicts in which the British Army participated.

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[8] The representations of the Crimean War took diverse forms, including the exhibition of panoramas in the city of London which depicted certain stages of the battle, like the illustrated lecture *Events of the War* (1854)*,* by Grieve and Telbin, and the publication of the journal of Lady Frances Isabella Duberly, an officer's wife, who was better known as 'the Crimean heroine' for her journey next to her husband and his regiment during the war (see Kelly's *Mrs. Duberly's War* (2008)).

[9] According to post-colonial studies, the term 'Other' mostly designates the non-white native as an individual completely alien to the white-centric, 'Western' society. I employ the term 'Other' in this thesis following the ground-breaking work of Said (1978), who argues that the 'Othering' of foreign peoples produced a legitimization of the colonial missions. According to Said's work, differentiating between 'Other' and 'Self' led to the reinforcing of oppressive power structures where 'Occident' ruled over the 'Orient'. For more post-colonial analyses of the controversial colonial missions see Bhabha (1994), Spivak (1988), Pratt (1992), and Hulme and McDougall (2007).

These include the ongoing New Zealand land wars against the Maori population (1845–72), the Second Ashanti War (1863–64) in Africa, and the Bhutan War (1863–4). Inevitably, the Indian Rebellion of 1857 had left its mark on the British population due to its gruesome nature, and therefore, the printed media and the popular representations of the era continued to refer to the violent uprising of the Indian sepoys and rebel civilians. Their eventual defeat could not erase sentiments of discomfort and suspicion towards the racial 'Other' in general, and towards the Indian in particular. That is why, partly, the 1860s were characterized by its colonial advances, where violent colonization was justified as social missions to 'civilise subjects' (Hall 2002) or 'tame savages' (Brantlinger 2011).[10] This ongoing nationalistic sentiment was present in the metropolis with the proliferation of racist representations that soon became part of the popular imaginary, such as minstrel shows or the well-known Jim Crow. In a way, mocking the foreign or the strange became a way to making safe the 'threat' that the British soldiers and so, the British Nation, were enduring overseas (Waters 2007: 95).

As previously contended, the 1860s brought a time for national pride and Reform sentiments, with contradictory sides regarding race and foreign peoples: at the same time that the abolitionist movement rose in England condemning proslavery echoes of the American Civil War, a latent racial fear was spread among the population. Such fear was partly caused by the possibility of a 'servile insurrection', not only originated by foreign conflicts, but also by the latest class conflicts in London during the decade

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[10] The idea of 'taming' in the sense of 'civilizing' is expressed by British geographer Richard Hakluyt, who justified the forceful colonizing missions of the British Empire as a mission to 'tame the barbarian'. In his volume, Brantlinger thoroughly compares the so-called 'taming' to 'cultural genocide' (2011: 19-20).

(Daly 2013: 11).[11] Bringing to mind overseas' insurrections like the 1865 Jamaica Uprising or the Indian Mutiny of 1857, the pro-Reform demonstrations in Trafalgar Square and Hyde Park in 1866 exposed the civil turmoil underneath the calm surface or equipoise of the decade. According to Brantlinger, among other factors that influenced the racial fear and race issues of the 1860s were the evolutionary debates resulting from the publication of controversial anthropological studies dealing with race and humankind, such as Thomas H. Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature* (1863) and its proslavery riposte *On the Negro's Place in Nature* (1863) by anthropologist James Hunt (2011: 112).[12]

Prior to that, the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) had 'excited the whole intellectual world', as *The Atlas* claimed in 1860, thus renewing the public's interest in anthropological questions and humankind, even among the working class. However, Darwin's theories were rejected by the newly founded Anthropological Society of London, created in 1863 by the aforementioned James Hunt and explorer Richard Burton.[13] This society aimed at explaining the diversity of humankind, defending a polygenic approach to racial differences; that is, they affirmed that different

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[11] Tracy C. Davis links the sympathy of Britain for the slaves of America to their bitterness due to losing the American colonies in the eighteenth century (2012: 18). Therefore, the abolitionist movement in England blamed the new States for a cruel, slaver society.

[12] As Brantlinger attests, other determining factors influential on racial fears and racial discussion during the mid-Victorian era are the Indian Rebellion of 1857–8, the American Civil War, the 1865 Jamaica Uprising, Parliamentary Reform, the Irish migration crisis of the 1840s and its resulting *Fenianism*, the second Maori War, and the colonial missions in central Africa (2011: 112).

[13] Prone to disguising himself to gain access to forbidden areas in his travels, Richard Burton was also a member of the Royal Geographical Society, which funded many of his journeys or missions. As a related note, the Royal Geographical Society was founded in 1830, including among its members famous travellers, explorers, and titled and military men like Charles Darwin and David Livingstone. Whilst the Royal Scottish and Manchester Geographical Societies allowed women as members from their foundation in 1884, the Royal Geographical Society did not welcome female fellows until 1913.

races resulted from different beginnings instead of sharing a common source. Such theories supported the belief that foreign peoples were unlike the Saxon race, which was proclaimed as superior and able to rule the other, inferior ones.[14] The reassessment of the species and the discussion of race and humanity resulted in the splitting of humankind in categories, according to which they were judged in terms of morality, intellect, and physical capacities. With the Saxon race placed on top, Victorians judged Tasmanians, Indians, Arabs, Turks, and the Irish as less-able races, while Africans were judged as impossible to live in civilization, with or without the help of the Europeans (Hunt 1863; Brantlinger 2011).

The aforementioned ethnological and anthropological discussions, together with the advances in discovery journeys around the globe and the thriving British Empire, made possible the popularity of human exhibitions in London. Live performances of living foreign people was one of the most demanded entertainments in mid-Victorian London, as it was classified as family entertainment and was available to an all-ages public for a shilling per person.[15] Starting in the early nineteenth century with the success of the exhibit of Sara Baartman, better known as the 'Hottentot Venus', the improved international trade between Europe, Australia, America, Africa, and India favoured the human exhibitions throughout the rest of the century. Even though they are documented since the fifteenth century, the scale and nature of human displays changed

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[14] In his best-selling publication *The Races of Men* (1850), Robert Knox affirms that 'the aim of the Saxon man is the extermination of the dark races' (1850: 466), proclaiming the superiority of the Saxon race, and backing the imperial, civilizing mission of the British Empire.

[15] Few academic volumes focus on the popular racism behind the exhibition of living 'foreign' peoples on the main cities of Europe. Among these, the main scholars discussing these 'live performances' or 'human zoos' are Blanchard et al. (2008) and Qureshi (2011), who thoroughly examines the exhibition of foreigners in Great Britain. See also Sánchez-Gómez (2013), who analyses the three main forms of 'ethnic shows' (commercial, colonial, and missionary).

from the mid-1800s; until then, such shows were temporary, 'often lasting only for a summer, and usually privately financed' (Qureshi 2011: 2).[16]

Before the 1860s, London had fully satisfied the public's appetite for human shows, bringing authentic people from foreign lands and exhibiting them in life-sized 'villages' reproducing their real homes and environments. According to newspapers like the *Illustrated London News*, such exhibitions triggered in the viewer a feeling of superiority, reassurance, and 'popular gratification' (12 June 1847), positioning the visitors as rulers and the exhibited peoples as subjects available for consumption. In a way, visitors to the 'native villages' brought into the metropolis were transformed into what Qureshi classifies as 'armchair anthropologists', participating in the ongoing anthropological debates from the safety and comfort of their own surrounding (2011).[17] The city's plethora of foreign representation made a whole nation's scientific and colonial advances visible to all, metaphorically bringing the 'outside' to the 'inside'. In popular entertainment, minstrelsy profited from the appetite for the foreign, especially with the general interest in the anti-slavery movement and the Civil War in the American South. Following the popularity of T. D. Rice's Jim Crow from the 1830s, the minstrel show gained adepts in the Britain of the 1860s.[18] In minstrel shows, performers

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[16] In 1847, some years before the Great Exhibition of 1851, a group of members of a Bosjesman tribe (Bush People) were brought into London and exhibited at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. The 'repulsive' spectacle, according to the newspaper, was a way to reaffirm the visitor in its moral and racial superiority. It also reminded the Nation about 'the two extremes of humanity' and the extensive civilizing work that remained to be done (*Illustrated London News* 12 June 1847).

[17] For further information of the distinction between an 'armchair anthropologist' and a fieldworker, consult Kuklick's *The Savage Within* (1991:0 89–94) and Logan's *Victorian Fetishism: Intellectuals and Primitives* (2008).

[18] From 1860, the Christy's Minstrels were featured in popular venues such as the Bijou, the Polygraphic Hall and St. James' Hall. They also appeared in dramatic productions like William Brough's *The Nigger's Opera: or, the Darkie that Walked in Her Sleep* (1861) at the Bijou, Haymarket. In other genres, like pantomimes and harlequinades, minstrelsy and blackface

in blackface supposedly imitated the manners of African American slaves, and Christy's Minstrels, an American troupe, profited from Britain's taste for popular folk music, harlequinades, and comedy, intertwining 'authentic' songs from the African American South with British traditional songs (T. Davis 2012: 265–316). Again, impersonating 'authentic' manners of the foreign on London's stages, made possible the audiences' self-assurance of their superior position in the world.

Even though the exhibition of real foreign people had been popular before, the 1860s saw a shift in the interest of London's audiences.[19] With the rise of sensation, the previously acclaimed medieval courts, natural history displays, and picture galleries were rejected in favour of acrobatic spectacles such as Blondin's (Altick 1978: 485). Shows like acrobatics and sensation-tinted performances still appeared to the average citizen as exotic, these being often named after well-known foreign incidents —like the firework shows that took place at the Crystal Palace gardens from 1865; for instance, these pyrotechnic spectacles included the military-inspired 'Battle of Trafalgar' and the Egyptian 'Niagara of Fire' (Altick 1978:486).

As suggested above, exhibitions of the foreign were not limited to humans, and transporting the visitor to another world was dependent on the exhibit's setting, characterization, and environment. During the 1860s, the city of London also patronized the display of exotic plants, animals, and fruits in London. For example, in the Flower Show of 1866, exhibitors participated in a competition of exotic varieties of flowers, while visitors enjoyed the performance of local choirs and bands, and were able to see a

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performers gained the favour of the public. See also Jim Davis (2010: 155–69) for minstrelsy in pantomime.

[19] In the 1880s London welcomed again exhibitionary 'native villages', where the English public could learn the manners, customs, industries, and amusements of the natives with live performers stereotypically characterized (*Aberdeen Evening Express* 19 June 1885) and also patronize subsequent missions into the country exhibited (*Morning Post* 12 January 1885).

live crocodile brought directly from the Nile and confined in a tank for the purpose of

the exhibition (*Clerkenwell News* 26 September, 1866). Such exhibitions were a way to

bring the success of the British Nation right into the home of its citizens. Not too long

before the live Egyptian crocodile in London, in 1863, the country newspapers had

echoed the discovery of the source of the Nile by Captains John Speke and James Grant,

who had returned to the city of London in June of that same year, and who had been

welcomed with all honours by the Royal Geographical Society (see Fig. 5).[20] In his

reception speech, Captain Speke insisted in introducing an African boy to the

welcoming crowd, a fourteen-year-old child who had accompanied him in his journey;

without the boy, he assured, the discovery of the source of the Nile would not have been

possible. In its pages, *The Globe* described the boy as 'an excellent specimen of the

intellectual black type' (23 June 1863), and echoed the insistence of Captain Speke to

put the Government's attention in the education of the brightest of the Africans, in order

to train prospective consuls to work at their service in the near future, and to assist the

British Empire in the improvement of commerce and civilisation ventures.

Speke's stance about the young African boy is a great example of what John

Dryden named 'the noble savage' in 1672.[21] As the antithesis of the common savage,

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[20] Despite the heroic reception held by the Royal Geographical Society in London, Captains Speke and Grant were increasingly disliked by its members in the following years. Unable to present full reports of the Nile source discovery and undermined by Richard Burton's questions about the mission, Captain Speke soon lost the support of the Royal Geographical Society and thus, his funding for further missions in Africa. It was not until the 1870s that Speke and Grant's discovery was confirmed by Henry Stanley's expedition along Lake Victoria. In 1863 Speke published his *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile,* while a year later, Grant published *A Walk Across Africa* (1864), both describing the natives' customs and daily lives.

[21] Ellingson (2001) identifies the noble savage in Dryden's seventeenth-century drama *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards* (1672), where the association of wildness and nature, as opposed to civilization, is seen in the following verses:

I am as free as Nature first made man,
'Ere the base Laws of servitude began,

the noble savage was a well-known trope in the Victorian adaptations of previous favourites, like Aphra Behn's *Ooronoko* (1688) and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).[22] Grant's African boy-helper embodied the qualities of a noble savage: typically a South American, black African, Native American, or Indian, the noble savage is still considered as racially inferior, yet he or she will ally with white characters and recognize their 'racial superiority'. The servile native is often represented in literature and in travel narratives as the 'dignified' servant savage —i.e. the dignified Indian.[23] Such characters are often ready to betray their own people and culture in order to save or help the hero in his colonial venture. As I shall argue in my analysis of female identities in Chapter 3, the noble savage can be represented as either male or female. The noble savage's main motivation is helping the hero, exhibiting a pathological reverence for the colonizer and treating him in a god-like manner. In addition, when the noble savage is a woman, she will often fall in love with the white male hero, starring in a tumultuous, unrequited love story with fatal consequences.

In conclusion, the previous overview of racial representation in the Victorian era attests what Catherine Hall classified as a 'mapping of difference' (2002: 20), due to the Victorians' constant reworking of racial differences. The creation of such 'map' or categorization of human races filtered back to the capital of the British Empire, making

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When wild in woods the noble Savage ran (Dryden 1672: 34).

[22] According to Tracy C. Davis (2012), performance —or representation— necessitates imitation (of something). Thus, in her own words, 'ethnic and racial characters' portrayals both drew on pre-existing impressions and contributed to modifying what was already imprinted on the collective consciousness' (T. Davis 2012: 17).

[23] Mabilat (2008) also highlights the 'quaint' personality attributed to the noble savage, especially in literature and musical representations. This is mainly caused by the fascination of the Victorians with mysticism and the 'Other' culture. As Mabilat contends, quaintness is a quality reserved for non-Islamic cultures, whose individuals, in turn, are generally depicted as dangerous, degenerate, and unredeemable. These 'quaint' foreign characters are clearly exemplified in the popular minstrel shows of the era, like the well-known Christy's Minstrels.

the metropolis a fertile ground for the proliferation of renewed, ever-changing double-entendres related to colonial peoples, racial discussions, and intercultural encounters. With the advances (and loses) of the imperialist mission, the tokens brought from the colonies into London proclaimed the conquest of entire civilizations; the 'taming of savages', represented through the exhibition, mocking, and reifying of both humans and animals, fostered a self-reflective atmosphere of superiority; and definitely, the influence of and the fascination for the foreign, made those who were stuck in the city participant of the country's colonizing missions, showcasing journeys around the globe and incorporating other territories into their own worldview.

1.3. Culture and education in the city

As I have previously mentioned, Victorian prosperity was partly influenced by England's cultural missions. The city of London saw the rise in public, cultural establishments that thrived in fostering educational settings available to all: museums. Such institutions became all the rage in the 1860s, doubling their number from 90 to 180 between 1860 and 1880.[24] The renewed appetite for culture and objects in display may partly be due to the insurgent educational movements rising in the country. In 1861, the Royal Commission on the State of Popular Education in England set the basis of the forthcoming 1870 Elementary Education Act, which recommended provision of minimal elementary education for nearly all children, including those from the lowest social classes, in order to have a responsible citizenship in consonance with the times. Behind this goal also laid the country's motivation to compete globally as a skilled,

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[24] For a detailed analysis on Victorian museums and education, see Kavanagh (1990), Black (2000), and Fyfe (2000).

advanced industrial workforce; therefore, the nation's progress depended partially on the help of its educated working-class.

Thus, the museums and galleries available to the public throughout London became an example of the 'bureaucratization of culture' (Strong 2004: 7), or in other words, museums became examples of what Foucault (1979) would term 'circuits of knowledge': institutions designed to assert authority, defining and regulating power relations such as class, gender, national identity, and behaviour.[25] It is inside museums and galleries where a lower to middle-class citizen could find a model of 'perfect order and perfect elegance', as Ruskin puts it in *Picture Galleries: Their Functions and Formation* (1880). To summarise, for the mid-Victorian visitor, museums were not just spaces for intellectual improvement; museums and their contents, in the end, were idols symbolizing the advances and conquests of a whole nation, the barbaric past, the idolized present, and the desired future. The pieces exhibited were part of one's identity and daily life, to such extent that, going to the museum became a social past time. The improvements in urban transport, especially with the 1867 inauguration of the underground to South Kensington Museum, made possible the affluence of the working-class into these spaces open for both pleasure and instruction.[26] Therefore, besides the inevitable educational function of museums, they also became optimal

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[25] For more information about relations of power/knowledge in governmental institutions consult Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979) and *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Burchell et al. 1991). Also relevant to this topic is Michele M. Strong's *Education, Travel and the "Civilisation" of the Victorian Working Classes* (2014), which analyses travel and tourism as a governmental technology.

[26] Henry Cole, a firm defender of museums as source of both pleasure and instruction, endeavoured to establish the South Kensington Museum as a public, 'educational' venue (*Morning Post* 13 May 1864: 5). See also Altick (1978: 499) for more information on the South Kensington Museum.

spaces for socializing.[27] Incidentally, the *Pall Mall Gazette* noted the large proportion of 'women and girls' who attended the British Museum, for they were 'masters of their own time' (1 November 1867), in contrast to men and boys, whose time seemed to be taken up by other, more urgent duties. Indeed, as the *Pall Mall* attests, women did participate in these Foucauldian 'circuits of knowledge', bringing into the picture their sex's alleged 'refined sensibility' as well as their taste for sensation and consumerism (Hill 2016: 106–7). Especially taking into the account the traditional female inclination to fine arts and their education, by the 1860s, the critics believed that the presence of women in the halls of the museums would elevate the experience, as they would give their husbands a renewed feeling of discovery through their own 'feminine' gaze. Bennett (2013) also remarks the crucial role of women in the museums, as their presence would force working-class men to behave properly out of respect for them. In such a public, self-observational space as the museum, the female visitors were expected to carry out their social duty as moral and decorum standards.

However, the visibility of women in museums and galleries of the city of London had not always been certain. Past the mid-century, a number of facilities welcomed women in the halls of the museum, with the celebration of events such as the

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[27] In 1865, the *Illustrated Times* announced the inauguration of a refreshment room at the British Museum 'for the convenience of visitors' (30 December 1865), thus remarking the socializing factor that came at play in museum-going. The literature of the era finds inspiration in museums and museum-goers, as these offered an optimal environment for interchange and possibility, especially for women. Female authors as Jane Austen or George Eliot draw on the museum space as place for their female characters' growth: in a letter to her sister Cassandra in 1811, Jane Austen wrote about the appeal of museums after her visit to the Liverpool Museum and the British Gallery, where the crowds offered her unlimited inspiration, as she drew on people-watching. In Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) and George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871-2), the plot and museums intersect, making culture and love collide in the same arena. Later on, in Henry James' *A London Life* (1888), the museum becomes the site of education for the foreigner. See more on museums and its relationship with Victorian literature in Barbara J. Black's *On Exhibit* (2000: 108–10).

'conversazioni' and 'soirées', where wives and female relatives of councillors, society members, and other local personalities were invited (Hill 2016: 110). These 'conversazioni' and 'soirées' were at times patronized by ladies from the higher-classes and among their guests it was usual to find Royal members. In short, these contained spaces gave high-class women the opportunity to mingle, to see and be seen, and to foster a sense of community outside their homes.[28] Female citizens of the working- and middle-class also found in the museum a space of their own; by the 1870s, the printed press complained about the overcrowding of the British Museum reading room, which had been as of late mostly taken up by female readers.[29] As Hoberman (2002) suggests, the insurgent feminist and 'New Woman' movement found its place at the reading room from the 1860s, transforming a previously male environment into a space ripe in possibilities for their sex. Even though reading women at the museum were, according to some of the male users, a nuisance and a distraction (*Chambers Journal* 31 August 1861), their increasingly growing admittance into the British Museum's reading room by the end of the century hints the possibilities for displacement of the female body outside the home. As this example hints, from the 1860s, some women replaced

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[28] Some critics argued that these 'conversazioni' especially addressed to women deviated from the cultural and were mere frivolous social gatherings where topics such as fashion or sensation events were discussed instead. However, as the *London Evening Standard* attested, most 'conversazioni' contributed to the philanthropist work of women; for instance, in June 1860 a meeting was held at the South Kensington Museum to raise a fund for building a 'Female School of Art', a well-known institution managed by a woman. Higher-rank genteel members attended, and their contributions proved decisive for the 'young ladies' collaborating in the project (*London Evening Standard* 25 June 1860). Later on, in 1864, the same newspaper echoed a late-night soirée at the South Kensington Museum, where the Prince and Princess of Wales were invited as guests of honour (*LES* 13 May 1864). The Prince and Princess, along with the other upper-class attendants, partied in the Museum until well past midnight.

[29] Hobberman (2012) comments on the architectural design of the British Museum reading room and highlights its assumption of a safe space for women, as it was constructed as a panopticon and it was patrolled by male staff members of the museum. The characteristics of the reading room ensured an optimal, bother-free experience for the reader. In addition, Hoberman also discusses the availability of tables set up especially 'for ladies', evidencing the distinction between genders and the fears of 'contamination' or impertinence.

themselves into a 'feminist counterpublic sphere' (Hoberman 2002: 509), occupying male-dominated public spaces and transforming them into their own. This occurred with universities, colleges, and even clubs, which proved the displacement desires of women in the metropolis.[30]

Outside the museums and galleries, the city of London offered plenty occasions for inspiration and education of the citizens, challenging at times the population's moral standards and evidencing the advances of modernity. The popularity of the 'tableaux vivants', also known as 'living pictures' or 'poses plastiques', symbolize the growing duality of education in the city; tableaux vivants were, in the end, a form that qualified both as entertainment and instruction.[31] Essentially, a tableaux vivant consisted in staged scenes where still, costumed actors —actresses, more often than not— represented a historical event, a masterpiece painting, or a literary passage, most of the times of classical inspiration.[32] As Tracy Davis has suggested, the neoclassical influence of some tableaux vivants legitimized a kind of voyeurism towards the female figure by the pretence of instruction (1991: 125). Indeed, even though most tableaux vivants were publicly exhibited in the music halls of London or even as part of longer theatrical representations like pantomimes on the East and West Ends, some were catered for

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[30] There were growing concerns during the 1860s over female education and their occupation of 'male spaces' at schools and universities. For instance, the decade fostered a discussion on the entitlement of women to medical training and qualification, as well as the availability of evening classes for working-class women. In 1863, Cambridge finally allowed to run tests for women, except in the area of arithmetic (Levine 1987: 35–7). The relationship of women with the text is thoroughly examined in Shattock (2001), who compiles a varied list of essays on Victorian female writers and readers.

[31] According to the *Athenaeum*, London suffered from 'tableau mania' from the 1840s (3 February 1849: 118).

[32] Monrós-Gaspar (2015) highlights the influence of classical Greece and Rome in Victorian culture and entertainment, especially in matters of gender idealization and imperial anxieties.

private to small audiences.[33] To achieve a 'honourable' entertainment and to avoid the censure of the most conservative critics, the tableaux vivant required a complex interplay of mechanical arrangements, costumes, make-up, and in the end, a combination of 'elevated taste' and visual appeal. In a way, tableaux vivants symbolize the duality of entertainment that was present in the city, especially in London's West End: as Donohue explains, behind an aura of respectability, moral (and social) transgression hid (2005: 4–7). If tableaux vivants were heightened representations of somewhat scandalous female bodies for the sake of culture, the city of London was also camouflaging (intentionally or not) a growing revisionist, revolutionary sentiment of leisure and instruction practices.[34]

As Bailey (2003: 23) contends, leisure in the city had a twofold purpose: on the one hand, leisure was understood as 'amusement', an 'empty' form of leisure with no deep purpose; on the other, leisure could be 'recreation', a rational way of renewing and improving oneself by means of an activity.[35] Citizens seeking for any of the two conceptions of leisure could find instant gratification in the mid-Victorian city of London, as the metropolis hosted a myriad of visual, modern culture, due to the improvements in technology, photography, and printing. In consequence, the average

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[33] The *Morning Post* echoes the celebration of a private benefit for 'the distressed Irish', where a series of tableaux vivants was performed. These tableaux took a turn from the traditional Shakespearean, Miltonic, or classical theme and presented a miscellany of history romances, fairy tales, some of theatrical inspiration like *The Babes in the Wood*. As the article points out, the occasion had welcomed royal members like the Duchess of Cambridge and Princess Mary Adelaide of Teck, as well as foreign ministers and members of genteel lineage (*Morning Post* 3 March 1869: 5)

[34] Assael (2006) argues that debates over the 'propriety' of tableaux vivants intensified by the end of the century with the rise of 'the New Woman'. As she contends, the mechanics surrounding these 'living pictures' evolved as the century went by, but the opinions that classified such spectacles as undisciplined remained. In some ways, the popularization of the tableaux conveyed a vulgarization of such, due to the onlooker's uncultured background and their lack of appreciation of the pictures.

[35] See also Nead (2005: 113–4).

roamer would walk past the image-covered windows of shops, which transformed the walker into a voyeur. However, such mass-produced imagery put on display provoked in the spectator a state of 'heightened daydream and fantasy', and was appealing to pedestrians from all directions at the streets (Nead 2005: 149–51). This assault to the senses could be perceived as 'out of place', as Bailey points out [1998] (2003: 195). If, as Bailey suggests, noise of the city was 'sound out of place', then the visual stimuli found in unsuspected areas of the city —like the aforementioned windows of shops or the carefully crafted window displays—, also were displaced. Those stimuli were not supposed to be 'there', assaulting the unsuspecting roamer; however, the novelty of the Victorian city destabilized one's position, making the citizen aware of a city with a life of its own, which encouraged his or her keeping up to prevent being left behind. Almost as in a staged spectacle, or a phantasmagorical show, the city of London is seen as full of artifice and deception; as Flint puts it, the city roamer was overwhelmed by a 'visionary intensity' that leaded to a confusion of perception and imagination, destabilizing one's true memory and displacing the self to an otherworldly, active space, where possibility abounded (2000: 147–8).[36] In short, the dynamism of the city of London encouraged the citizens to put their efforts in evolving with the city, questioning their reality, and preparing for what was waiting outside their comfort area.

As a space for reinventing realities, reinforcing the interchange of ideas, and discovering alternatives, the city of London also catered for what Bailey conceptualizes as 'amusement' (2003, 2014). Especially appealing to the less rational appetites of

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[36] Altick (1978) remarks the popularity of 'dissolving views' as a form of Victorian entertainment, which may have fostered a heightened experience of spectators and their vivid interpretation of the city's stimuli. As Daly (2009) suggests, the 1860s ghost-craze —complete with sensational sightings of ghosts at the streets of London— might have been a symptom of the visual imagination of the Victorians, translating their visual overdose into their everyday lives.

citizens and visitors alike, London also welcomed a 'business of pleasure', a kind of 'portals' leading to an exciting, different kind of entertainment. This modality of amusement was usually found in dances, theatres, or circus, modalities that appeared especially exciting for the public due to their strong sensory appeal. For instance, places such as The Royal Cremorne Gardens (often dubbed the Cremorne Pleasure Gardens), celebrated grand fêtes where the visitor could enjoy spectacular acrobatics, operatic selections, ballet theatre, circus, and even pantomimes in a rural-evoking environment. These events could be as transformative as their own visitors could, and would change programmes from day to night as readily as the public demanded. However, some petitioners in the Chelsea neighbourhood complained of the misplacement of the Cremorne Gardens; throughout the 1860s and until its closure in 1877, many complained of the immoral nature of the gardens.[37] Regardless, the 1860s were the heyday of the Gardens, which were praised as 'the most improved and elevated [in] character' (*London Evening Standard* 15 June 1861) and exemplified the era's own definition of respectability and its evolution with the times (Nead 2005: 128; Bratton 2011: 54). Overall, the popularity of the Cremorne Gardens evidenced the duality of the city of London: by day, the gardens were flocked by respectable families; by night, 'fast men' and women of dubious morality arrived in search of a different kind of pleasure (*The Spectator* 9 September 1865).

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[37] Even though the Cremorne Pleasure Gardens boasted of being placed in a rural-evoking area of London, the growth of the city soon caught up with it and made it lose its appeal. In compensation, sensational spectacles catered for the pleasure-seeking visitor, creating a feeling of otherworldliness away from the urban city. For further information on moral urban geography and the role of the Cremorne Gardens in the city of London's moral landscape, see Howell's discussion on Victorian sexuality and the moralisation of the Cremorne Gardens (2000: 43–66).

As the urbanization of London advanced, the Cremorne Pleasure Gardens lost its rural appeal —the borough of Chelsea was soon to be occupied by the respectable upper class, which condemned the lack of morality of the pleasure-seeking visitor of the Gardens. However, the Gardens' monetary success was replicated throughout the city, where the commercial side of entertainment made inevitable the appearance of morally questionable forms of visual enjoyment along with the improvement of the streets of London. Pleasing the crowds in their appetite for novel entertainment was eased by the lifting of the 'taxes on knowledge' and the publication of cheaper literature and newspapers (Daly 2009: 5–6). The advances in photography were also crucial to the dissemination of photographs of doubtful morality, especially the ones qualified as 'pornographic' depicting actresses and female models in suggestive positions (Nead 2005; Norwood 2017). These photographs were, in certain ways, catering for the same kind of appetite that tableaux vivants satisfied (Novak 2016). However, while photography had an inherent quality of permanence, the tableaux boasted of a 'living' nature. A photograph, in some ways, represented a static reality, unaltered to the eyes of the gazer. Consequently, the feeling of possession of a photograph could have been equal to that of possessing the truth, a piece of history, or even a body. A feeling of possessing an image is also present in photographs of imperialistic nature, which were especially attractive in the 1860s as a vicarious source of information from the colonies. Travel photography acquired a reaffirming purpose, as it reflected the nation's possession and reassured its own position in the world. As Osborne points out,

> For the consumer of images in the metropolitan centres photographs of distant possessions and colonised peoples confirmed their sense of being at the compelling heart of the new world order and relocated their own identities within

it. Travel photography provided middle-class viewers with the means of identifying themselves in and with the global system. (2000: 56)

However, the 'intrepid' spectator, roamer, or consumer in London was able to feel both inside and outside the urban landscape, or ultimately, inside or outside the nation. The city's efforts to cater for every kind of appetite crafted an environment where one could easily be defined by more than one thing at once; for instance, one could visit the horticultural show at the Botanical Gardens or the Cremorne Gardens, which exhibited an 'exotic fernery' with 'grottoed retreats' that brought into the metropolis ferns of South America and East India (*The Era* 13 May 1860). This set up repositioned the viewer and created the illusion of being transported into a foreign natural landscape, without leaving the city.

This kind of revaluation and repositioning of the self is repeated in the optical entertainment of the 1860s: venues like the Cremorne Gardens, or Leicester Square's panoramas, brought into the metropolis chunks of foreign lands with topographical dioramas. These spectacles had an instructive purpose, showing topics ranging from 'the wars in China', 'Scenes in India', 'a tour up the Rhine', to ancient and modern reproductions of foreign cities like Rome, which was created by Burford for the Royal Leicester Square in June 1860. Booth justifies the Victorians taste for panoramas due to the mid-century's 'pictorial culture' (1991: 95). According to Booth, the Victorians appetite for the visual was well fed by magic lantern lectures, art galleries, illustrated magazines, cheap prints of popular paintings, stereoscopes, and the scenic devices of theatre. In addition, panoramic exhibitions were conceived as 'a bourgeois public's substitute for the Grand Tour' (Altick 1978: 180), or, as Byerly suggests, a way of experiencing the journey without the difficulties arising from travel (1997: 12). At the

same time, attending a panorama was free of the moral implications that attending a play or travelling abroad had; respectable families and women of all social classes could visit a panoramic show due to its instructive purpose without risking the dangers that real travel entailed or without enduring public moral scrutiny (Altick 1978: 187).

In the end, panoramic shows emphasized the global ambitions of nineteenth-century's England, as they made possible the reproduction of detailed landscapes that contributed to their mapping of the world.[38] In addition, the aforementioned 'bureaucratization of culture' (Strong 2004) opened up a profitable market of exploitation of the human body and mind; the quest for knowledge and anthropological debate, especially influenced by the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), left its mark in the city's leisure preferences. Breaking boundaries, the visual forms of entertainment and culture brought together the viewer with the viewed, finally creating a renewed experience of knowledge and personal edification. Through the examination of leisure and culture in the city, it is possible to become aware of the duality of London's society, which continued to challenge the boundaries between respectable and improper and, in the end, opened its doors to renovation.

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[38] Panoramic shows inspired a wide range of toys for children, giving them an occasion to experience for themselves the most popular exhibitions in paper reproductions. London's Victoria and Albert Museum of Childhood features in its collection a myriad of optical devices dedicated to the entertainment and instruction of Victorian young (and not so young) citizens. In the museum's catalogue, visitors can find flicker books —small books with sequenced images that, when flicked, gave the impression of movement—, toy panoramas printed in England, and paper peepshows with telescopic views of the Great Exhibition of 1851. These items would be used as souvenir from important events (like the Great Exhibition), or as reminders of historical events (like Queen Victoria's crowning).

1.4. The Woman Question

In 14th June 1862, the *Illustrated Times* opened its London edition with an article entitled 'Woman's work in the world' printed in the cover on top of an illustration of the Netherland's court in the International Exhibition of 1862 (see Fig. 6). Seemingly unrelated to the picture of an exhibition court, the article described the topics of discussion of a recent Social Science Congress, which ranged from the death of Prince Albert, to the progress of foreign countries in social science, the political changes noticeable in Russia, Italy, and France, the American Civil War, and finally, the position of women in England and the means of employment open to them. Under such a suggestive title, the cover of the *Illustrated Times* was mostly taken up by the previously mentioned illustration of an International Exhibition court, featuring right in the middle of a crowd of spectators, the figure of an elegantly dressed woman leaning over a little girl in a motherly, almost instructing stance. Both the article and the illustration are more connected than it seemed at first.

In the following page, the *Illustrated Times* alludes to 'the woman question' as a disconnected attempt to discuss female matters, insisting that 'no one, except one or two female enthusiasts who have found no followers, says that women are qualified by Nature to fill all such positions as hitherto have been reserved exclusively for men' (*Illustrated Times* June 1862: 102). That is to say, the newspaper claims, women should not step outside their boundaries unless they want to fail in their entrepreneurships. The *Illustrated Times* goes further and condemns women as 'the weaker' men, remarking women's inability to excel at areas such as religion, politics, science, literature, and art. This, the article defends, is due to women's lack of imagination and women's inability to be consistent in their goals and education.

Under such a social perception, several women's rights movements flourished in the England of the 1860s. Taking advantage of their moral superiority and their task as pure, nurturing figures, some women of the Victorian era sought to break the boundaries that had them confined at restrictive homes, demanding education at first, and going for the female suffrage later in the century (Levine 1987: 13). Up until then, womanhood had been linked to a domestic environment —what Hall [1992] (2013) identifies as a 'domestic ideology'. That ideology had been questioned some decades before the insurgent women right's movements of the 1860s; during the 1790s, texts like Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) re-evaluated the differences between sexes and argued that the inferior status of women was a result of their situation and environment, and demanded a better education for her female contemporaries to be prepared for the 'real' world.[39] Wollstonecraft and her contemporaries were part of what Shands (1999) identifies as the first wave of feminism, during which the gendered spatial division began to be destabilized and questioned by women, expanding women's horizons and rethinking their possibilities as socio-political beings outside the constraining ideals of the past.

Wollstonescraft's piece came at a time when the dominating Evangelical, nationalistic, family-focused mind-set was put at test by new revolutionist ideals of the labouring classes. Fear arose in England due to the French Revolution, making men and women alike feel the need of putting their homes in order, as the Evangelical religion identified a split between the good, loving home and the hostile, dangerous outside.[40]

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[39] See also Hall (2013), where she thoroughly examines the formation of 'Victorian domestic ideology' and the education of women in 'Part II: Gender and Class.'

[40] Hall (1998) remarks the words of Mary Wollstonecraft (already as Lady Shelley), who attributed the unsettling of the upper classes to the rise of the labouring classes after the French Revolution. According to Wollstonecraft, men sought to put order in their houses after the

Therefore, the role of women was to remain at home to provide a safe, nurturing environment for the family. Later on, Victorian feminist activists would stray from the domestic ideology and defend similar principles to those by Wollstonecraft, demanding a position in the 'outside' world by means of a proper education. This education, they defended, would make women competent in areas such as politics, would deem them able to find 'decent' employment and endeavour in professional ventures, trade and unionism, and even enjoy a better position in their marriages.[41]

What the *Illustrated Times* named as 'one or two female enthusiasts' was, in fact, a rising trend leading numerous groups of middle-class women to gather and foster a sense of community, culminating in the formation of women's clubs, female-led campaigns for women's rights, and the organization of lectures around the city of London.[42] As early as the 1850s, the Langham Place circle of feminists was created by Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, whose contribution to the woman's question proved invaluable.[43] Bodichon collaborated with her friend Bessie Rayner Parkes (later Belloc) and both set off to become two of the most prominent female figures fighting for the amendments of laws regarding women. Prior to the creation of new platforms for

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servile 'insurrection'. In turn, E. P. Thompson [1963] (2002) has argued that 'most men and women of property felt the necessity for putting the houses of the *poor* in order' (60; emphasis added). In the midst of a tumultuous social period, the labouring poor were insisted on the benefits of labour, patience, frugality, sobriety, and religion, as if these acted as contention methods of revolts.

[41] See also Levine (1987) for a thorough study on Victorian feminism.

[42] In 1869, *Tinsley's Magazine* suggested that the formation of female clubs was a result of 'marital abandonment', or loneliness and isolation due to the husbands' custom of spending more time at the club than at home:

> Do they [women] in good faith desire some further social opportunities, equivalent to those which men enjoy at their clubs? Or has the project sprung up through an odd admixture of these various aims — through a curious amalgamation of spite, and satire, and rebellios love of additional freedom? (*Tinsley's Magazine* 1869: 368)

See also Doughan and Gordon (2006: 43–62) for further information about Women's Clubs in Britain.

[43] For further analysis of the figure of Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, see Hirsch [1998] (2010).

women's textual production, Bodichon had published a controversial pamphlet titled *A Brief Summary of the Laws in England Concerning Women* (1854), rectifying John Stuart Mill's omission of important subjects in his *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), such as 'the Contract of Marriage… [and] the Laws concerning Women' (Lacey 2001: 4).

In July 1865, the election of John Stuart Mill as member of the Westminster Parliament brought a renewed attention to the enfranchisement of women, a topic which had been discussed (anonymously at first) by Mill's wife, Harriet Taylor Mill, fourteen years before his arrival to Parliament and that would prove relevant in England from the 1860s onwards until the approval of female suffrage in 1928.[44] Without his wife's influence or the endorsement by some of the most active members of the Kensington Society —an all-female club founded in 1865 to grant women a space for informal discussion of subjects related to the position of women—, Mill's campaign and later win would not have been possible.[45] After a series of letters exchanged by Helen Taylor (Mill's stepdaughter and daughter of the then deceased Harriet Taylor Mill) and Barbara Bodichon during 1866, the petition for single female householders' suffrage was handed to Mill, who presented at the House of Commons a petition for the female vote signed by 1550 middle and upper-class women. Mill's petition was not an assertion of 'woman's rights', according to the newspapers of the era; steering clear from female

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[44] Considered as one of the pioneering women who fought for women's rights in England, Harriet Taylor Mill published in the *Westminster Review* (July 1851: 295–6) an article entitled 'Enfranchisement of Women', echoing the American movement for women's rights, defending the need for education (primary, high schools, universities, medical, legal, and theological), partnership in the industry, and coequal share in the formation and administration of laws. See more about the contribution of John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill to feminist movements of the era in Robson and Robson (1994).

[45] Amongst the members of the Kensington Society were Emily Davies, Barbara Bodichon and Helen Taylor.

radicalisms, the petition did not 'intend to convert… wives and daughters into politicians, nor to disturb the peace of households by hoisting buff and blue on opposite sides of the same table' (*London Daily News* 29 June 1866). The *London Daily News* went on to insist that there was no reason why single female householders should not vote, as they were already paying taxes and enduring the same legal nuisances as other electors. Mill's motion was rejected by 196 to 73.

A year after Mill's petition, Bodichon rewrote her paper *Reasons for the Enfranchisement of Women* (1866) and read it in that year's Social Science Congress held in Manchester, after being turned down by liberal newspapers such as the *Cornhill,* the *Fortnightly,* and the *Macmillan* (Crawford 2003: 69). In this occasion, some newspapers like the *West Middlesex Advertiser and Family Journal* included reviews of Bodichon's article, summarizing her arguments but reserving the newspaper's right to express its opinion. According to Bodichon's words, the female vote would aid women to revise and have a say in unjust legislations and hardships bestowed upon them by a political climate inaccessible to women, such as the difficulties they had to endure to be accepted as tenants of farms. Voting, claimed Bodichon, would be beneficial for the character of women, as well as for their community at large, because by giving the right to vote to some women, others' interest regarding national issues would increase and thus raise 'public spirit' (*West Middlesex Advertiser and Family Journal* 5 January 1867: 3). Bodichon supported her arguments by commenting on the precedent of Sweden and Austria, where women participated as electors since 1865. It was again remarked that the petition was to grant the vote to unmarried women with properties and widows, as well as to qualified women, and not extended to what the newspapers classified as 'wives' and 'daughters'.

Later on, a revised version of Bodichon's paper was published in the *Englishwoman's Review* as 'Authorities and Precedents for Giving the Suffrage to Qualified Women' (1 January 1867). Bodichon's views were reportedly well received and supported by a few female attendants and readers from Manchester, where the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage (MNSWS) was established; however, in the large majority of the country, the attempts to push women's enfranchisement were largely dismissed as unfit and improper, because, as the *Saturday Review* mentioned, women would 'be influenced by irrelevant or secondary considerations' in their political decisions (*Globe* 25 May 1867: 4). In addition to the insurgent feminist movements in England, the end of the American Civil War brought back to the English nation news about the American women's rights movement, which had revived during the mid-1860s in the form of the American Equal Rights Association, the formation of female clubs like the New England Woman's Club in 1868, and the activism of American women to gain the suffrage. Many years had to pass until women gained full voting rights, in the U.S. first, with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment 1919, and in England later, when The Representation of the People Act was passed in July 1928, granting the vote to everyone over the age of 21 (see Fig. 7).

Beyond the enfranchisement of women, often considered as the most radical side of Victorian female activism, the feminism of the mid-and-late-Victorian era was also concerned in other ventures such as morality and prostitution. During the 1860s, a major topic of discussion in England was the Contagious Diseases Act (CDA) (1866), which allowed the authorities to arrest any woman who was suspected to be a prostitute, inside or outside the metropolis, and legitimised any medical exploration or procedure

performed on them (Walkowitz 1992: 23). This measure was taken by the British government after noticing a growing number of male British soldiers suffering from venereal diseases while on duty in the colonies, as well as many men who frequented women of the profession back in the motherland.[46] Especially affecting both the British army and navy, the figures indicated that during the year of 1864, the daily loss was equal to the services of about 586 men per day, according to the *Pall Mall Gazette* (17 February 1866). For this reason, the CDA was insisted as beneficial for both prostitute and soldier, as the newspapers claimed that women of the profession had been more than willing to cooperate and were appreciative of the health benefits the Act implied for them. However, according to the popular opinion, the Act needed further amendments such as 'periodical inspection of public women in the garrison towns under the operation of the Act', 'appointment of a surgeon for the purpose', 'enforcement of punishment for infringing the Act', extending 'the Act to all garrison and seaport towns in the kingdom where troops or ships of war [were] stationed', regulating by law of the Lock hospitals, and 'the more stringent supervision of the streets by the police' (*Pall Mall Gazette* 17 Feb 1866: 11). Such revision was granted and performed between 1866 and 1869, when deeper concerns regarding morality and deviant sexual behaviour

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[46] The CDA reached the British colonial settings, where they received the name of Cantonment Acts (CA). From 1864, the CA took on the CDA's mission to regulate all brothels (or Bazaars) and lock hospitals frequented by British troops stationed in India. Like its homeland version, the CA maintained a register of native women who were 'visited' by Europeans, being also required to undergo monthly medical examinations and to record their medical results. In addition, the British authorities could lock women on the assumption that they were 'infected'. Later on, the passing of the Indian Contagious Diseases Act of 1868 established measures such as 'mandatory registration, medical examinations, enforcement treatment of women and the prevention of known prostitutes from living in specified areas' (Low 1996: 154). The CDAs were repealed in India in 1888, yet a CA remained and legitimised the examination of women in the country until the 1890s. Other colonies where the CDAs were in full force are the Hong Kong, Gibraltar, Fiji, and Cape Colony in South Africa, where the CDAs remained until 1919. See also Levine (2003) for further information on the CDAs in the British colonies.

proliferated among the most conservative sections of society. However, the CDAs were not repealed in England until 1886.

The Contagious Diseases Act is a clear example of the inequalities between women and men during the 1860s; principally, the Act demonstrates that men could dispose of the female body at their own will. Consequently, the Act granted the authorities the opportunity to isolate and condemn a woman as a disease-spreading individual, dehumanising the prostitute and transforming her into a symbol of moral disorder.[47] According to The *Seventh Annual Report of the Midnight Movement for the Recovery of Fallen Women* (1867), where women recounted the causes for their 'fall', the main reasons that lead women to work as prostitutes were summarised as: 'Sweetheart, Soldier, Bad companions, Music Halls, Gay company, Drink', as well as a 'want' and 'slackness of work' (*Pall Mall Gazette* 24 May 1867: 11). This idleness is closely related to what Harriet Taylor Mill had denounced earlier in the century and what the 1860s female movement remarked: the precarious situation of women regarding their education and working prospects. In her plea for women's rights, reprinted in 1868 in London due to the uprising female movement, Taylor Mill exposed the elevated numbers in prostitution, making reference to the controversial private custom of wife-lending between men, and the unpunished connubial rape in England, all the while insisting on the fact that women often had to settle in their roles as mothers and wives because, in many occasions, these were the only options available to them.[48]

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[47] For more on the Victorian prostitute and a woman's sexual 'fall' see Auerbach (1982), Poovey (1988), Walkowitz (1980, 1992), Nord (1995), Andersen (1993), and Attwood (2011).
[48] Wife-lending was, surprisingly, a common habit to show hospitality with visitors or travellers in the American West. Some Native American tribes like the Mandans were reported to participate in this kind of exchange; men gave their wives to the stranger as symbol of welcome (Monger 2004: 296–7). In *Enfranchisement of Women* [1851] (1868), reprinted in London in 1868 during the peak of the echoes about women's rights, Harriet Taylor Mill compares the

Incidentally, the 1860s is a decade where antagonistic attitudes regarding sexuality and gender meet: on the one hand, part of the English society re-evaluates the country's moral standards and sexual questions, scrutinising especially women and their 'maladies'. On the other hand, the rising mid-Victorian feminist movements and the discussion of the 'woman question' propitiate the denouncing of discrimination against the female sex. Such discrimination, the women of the 1860s argue, is blatantly present in the second and third amendments of the Contagious Disease Act in 1866 and 1869, which still did not held men accountable for their sexual behaviour and still condemned women to public rejection and invasive medical procedures.

First, the tight moralistic attitudes of part of the English nation was mainly due to a revival of the religious conscience during the mid-Victorian period, which fostered a social and moral preoccupation about the lives of prostitutes and the social vices that were causing a 'great social evil'. Exemplary, religious congregations organised afternoon meetings for tea and biscuits where a number of 'fallen women' had been invited to, offering help and welcoming them into homes such as the London Reformatory or the Trinity Home (*Morning Advertiser* 10 February, 1860).[49]

However, as commented earlier, a minority rejected the measures taken against the 'social evil' of prostitution due to the questionable procedures it employed. Not all sides welcomed the governmental solution to disease contagion: in 1869, Josephine Butler and Elizabeth Wolstenholme established the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, as a response to the CDA of 1864 and its later

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wife to a piece of 'furniture' of the home in the eyes of the husband, and reminds the reader about her disposable character and life were she is in the hands of a capricious husband (14).

[49] Labelling and condemning women according to their sexual experience became a controversial task during the mid-Victorian period, when euphemisms such as 'soiled dove' and 'fallen woman' became a new way to morally judge women, taking their civil rights away from them (Eltis 2013: 9).

amendments. This association of women focused on the treatment of women from the lowest classes, and the discrimination against them in the execution of the CDA. For instance, the Ladies National Association remarked the lack of empirical evidence needed to bring any woman into court, as the suspicion of a male accuser or authority was enough to put her on trial.[50] In consequence, many charged women had immediately conceded to the accusation and signed away their consent to be surgically examined every twelve months, in fear of being imprisoned should they deny the accusation. Consequently, the Ladies National Association called attention to the loss of freedom, taint of reputation, and helplessness of many affected women, who were subdued to punishments 'of the most degrading kind' (*London Daily News* 31 December, 1869: 5). In addition, they denounced the system as contributing to the popularisation of the practice, making it easier for new customers; in fact, the CDA was far from eradicating the cases of venereal diseases, and as the second half of the century unravelled, the number of men and women affected by syphilis and other STDs increased. Overall, the Ladies National Association advocated for a repeal of the Act and a reformation of the legislation in order to deal with the real causes of the disease spreading and prostitution; in the end, the association insisted on a common demand of the era: better education for all.

The social turmoil of the 1860s left its mark on the media and artistic representations of the period. In terms of textual production, an extensive corpus of newspapers 'for ladies' and 'by ladies' appeared throughout the decade and the latter half of the nineteenth century. When edited by women, these were conceived as a

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[50] The *London Daily News* printed a piece of evidence given before the Parliamentary Committee in a trial against a woman who was thought to be a prostitute. In that occasion, the surgeon present in the court insisted that 'the police are very apt to jump to the conclusion that a woman is a prostitute if they see her out at night' (31 December 1869: 5).

medium of intercommunication rather than as campaigning material, yet the views they included in their newspapers' pages could be seen as radical by a large part of the contemporary society. Targeting a female readership, both the *Macmillan's Magazine* and the *Cornhill* were launched in 1859 and 1860 respectively. The trend was to include 'feminized' areas to appeal to a female readership, including illustrations and leisure and consumer items (Conboy 2004: 140). Bodichon and Rayner Parkes, next to Matilda Hays, became editors of a transgressive, female-focused newspaper, fittingly titled *The English Woman's Journal* (1858–1864).[51] After the failed attempt of passing the Married Woman's Property Bill in 1857, the magazine became an invaluable platform that gave voice to female authors, publishing a diversity of texts ranging from the literary to the political and social.[52] In addition, the journal made more accessible the work of female societies like the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women (SPEW), which managed the applications for employment of women from diverse backgrounds.[53] According to the words of politician Mr. Monckton Milnes, who was

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[51] Other periodicals concerned with the women's rights movement were the *Alexandra Magazine* (1846–65), which merged with the *Englishwoman's Journal* in 1864 to finally become the *Englishwoman's Review* in 1865, lasting until 1910 (Rendall 1987: 112–38) and the *Victoria Magazine* (1863–80), both of which thrived during the 1860s. Others, like *The Lady's Review* (1860) did not last longer than a year. Gray identifies the 1860s as the starting point for authorial recognition to female journalists, highlighting the previous anonymity of women in their newspaper publications (2012: 8–9). Gray (2012) also attributes the change in journalism to a 'New Journalism' due to the growth in mass readership, cheaper printing and publishing of reading material, and the Education Act of 1870.

[52] The Victoria Press, established by Emily Faithfull in London in 1860, printed the *English Woman's Journal* from its inception. Faithfull also ran the monthly the *Victoria Magazine,* created in 1863, through which she advocated for remunerative employment for women. In addition, in the midst of the female education debate that questioned the moral propriety of women accessing higher education, authoresses like Emily Davies in the *Victoria Magazine* (1863) defended reading as a tool for women's intellectual improvement and personal growth. See more on the woman reader in Flint [1993] (2002).

[53] The *London Evening Standard* claimed in July 4th, 1863 that the SPEW had met at Willis's Room in connection with the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science. The female applicants demanding employment were filed under the following categories: governesses of 30–60 years of age who wished to turn to something else, women reduced in

attending an annual meeting of the SPEW, 'women were made as independent as possible in [the] country, while they were not allowed the opportunities by which that independence was to be upheld' (*London Evening Standard* 4 July 1863: 5).[54]

In paintings, the spatial negotiations discussed by the media and the feminist groups were translated into female figures longingly staring out of enclosed spaces, or women casted away from their homes in what is often presented as a bleak exterior. In the period's well-known art, Piehler identifies the dichotomy of the 'sheltered' domestic space opposed to 'the bleak promise of the outside world' (2003: 15–6), and with the common trend of showing the female figure longing for a space outside the home. In paintings, the home may be a symbol of weariness, like in John Everett Millais' *Mariana* (1851), inspired by Lord Alfred Tennyson's homonymous poem. In Millais' *Mariana*, as in other Pre-Raphaelite art, 'spaces relate to the female figure's psychological or social condition' (Pearce 1991: 63). The female role is questioned in the art through the spatial composition of paintings and illustrations; for instance, this is done by differentiating between the 'inside' of a typically female space (a kitchen or sitting room), and the 'outside' (an open sky landscape), as in the example of Jane Bowkett's *Preparing Tea* (1860s).[55]

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circumstances suddenly or gradually and totally untrained, women who had kept house for relatives but were totally untrained, young women from 17 to 25 badly educated who wanted 'anything not menial or anything genteel', governesses who had become deaf, widows of every class wishing to become housekeepers or matrons, and wives of invalid husbands, who asked for writing or any kind of work that could be done at home (*London Evening Standard* 4 July 1863: 5).

[54] Mr. Hastings declared in the annual meeting of the SPEW on the 3rd of July of 1863 that 'in cases where residence at universities was not required… women ought to be eligible to be examined for degrees' (*LES* 4 July 1863: 5).

[55] See also Piehler (2003: 17–8). The work of Jane Maria Bowkett, an understudied Victorian female painter, is examined by Laycock (2009), who argues that her pictures show the class and gender distinctions of the mid-Victorian era, in an attempt to subvert ideologically coded feminine norms.

To summarise, the 1860s constitute an important decade for the formation and organization of women, who went out of their constricted spaces at home and propitiated the ongoing discussion of 'the woman question'. As this section shows, the social and political climate of the 1860s regarding the woman question and feminist activism proves to be ripe in attitudes regarding morality, legal rights, education, employment, and in general, the position of women in a prosperous nation. The 1860s were, in the end, a decade for questioning preconceptions, challenging moral barriers, and bringing forward new possibilities for women; possibilities that, step by step and with the efforts of feminist groups, culminated in realities by the turn of the century. Perhaps the 1860s were not a decade for answering questions, more like a decade for asking them and establishing the grounds of the later suffragist movement that gained strength by 1912–14. Smith [1998] (2013) argues that, in order to understand the women's suffrage campaign of the fin-de-siècle, one must consider earlier Victorian female reform movements such as the ones described in this section. Thus, it is necessary to turn back to the mid-century and establish the 1860s as a decade where reformation sentiments sought 'to eliminate restrictions on women's educational and employment opportunities, gendered pay scales, the sexual double standard, and the legal authority husbands held over their wives' (Smith 2013: 7). Undoubtedly, the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 by which a man could divorce his wife accusing her of adultery, keeping her money and their children, or the fact that a woman lost all her properties to her husband when she married and had no control whatsoever over her earnings (if any), were enough to propel women into the metaphorical and actual streets in protest. The rise in female militancy, as seen with the formation of feminist groups and clubs, made possible the advances of women into the public sphere, the amendment

of discriminatory laws (such as with the establishment of the Married Women's Property Act of 1882), as well as the creation of new platforms through which their voices could be heard. Groups like the Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, or the London and Manchester Suffrage Societies, among others, fought against the underestimation of their male (and female) contemporaries and succeeded in positioning the woman question on top of a growing list of pressing issues to be resolved.[56]

Among the problems addressed by the female movements of the 1860s, one is the narrowness of a prefixed ideal of femininity in the Victorian era. As Vicinus (1972; 1977) has shown, it is important to scrutinise the challenges a woman had to face to follow the ideal path set for her sex, in order to comprehend the nineteenth century's political and social climate. Since the 1970s, feminist scholars involved in the study of women in the Victorian era have also sought to debunk the simplistic dichotomy of 'Angel' and 'Fallen', striving to uncover a wide range of female identities and exposing the complex interrelations between the female body and Victorian society. To continue the uncovering of other female realities, it is necessary to reflect on the mid-Victorian female stereotypes and their socio-political implications. These stereotypical identities, like other stereotypes, attempted to establish order in a chaotic, rapidly changing atmosphere where women were stepping outside their 'boxes' and challenging pre-established feminine identities.

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[56] Holton (1996) and Smith (2013) have argued that the seed of the women's suffrage movement was planted by northern radicalism, especially with the formation of the Manchester Society, which was perceived as more radical than the London Society. The Manchester Society's efforts to bring together the local suffrage societies succeeded with the formation of the National Society for Women's Suffrage in 1867, joining the London National Society for Women's Suffrage and the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage after the defeat of the amendment to the 1867 Reform Bill demanding the enfranchisement of women (Smith 2013: 9).

The stereotypical female identities present in the Victorian social consciousness were set against the 'True Woman' —also known as 'true English woman', the 'Angel in the House' or the 'womanly woman'. With the implication of the existence of a 'True Woman', the other identities came across as 'abnormal', 'false', or 'improper'. That was the case of the Fallen Woman, the American Girl, the strong-minded or emancipated woman, and the 'Girl of the Period' or 'fast girl'. The latter flourished in the 1860s, and found its literary response in the 'sensation heroine', a character that was led by her most 'unnatural' impulses and with a degenerate sexual desire. Even though most of these female identities were a result of the social, political, and sexual codes of the era, they were inevitably heightened and influenced by the literature, the printed media, and the dramatic representations. It is a complicated task to separate the real from the fiction-mediated in these stereotypical identities, yet they nonetheless prove the attempts to escape a prefixed reality —that of the 'True Woman'— and to weaken the moral boundaries of the mid-Victorian era. These also challenge the simplistic dual classification of women in the nineteenth century —Angel / Fallen—, and prove women's possibility of undergoing different identity journeys.

To understand the virtual and physical journeys of women explored in Chapters 2 and 3, in this section I have decided to scrutinise the identities of those women who found no place inside the patriarchal boundaries set for women. These identities remark the social —and moral— displacement of a number of women in the 1860s due to their lack of a 'True' identity, or more significantly, to their lack of place in society. I examine them as mutually interrelated both in real society and in fiction, in a never-ending, two-sided bond of inspiration and influence. For this reason, I turn to the 1860s 'fast girl' or 'Girl of the Period' and the 'sensation heroine', who appeared as the

literary response of the decade's female quest for an identity. As I shall contend, these female identities share the main characteristics of outspokenness and 'degeneration', which underlies their social and moral displacement.

1.4.1. Setting a precedent: the Angel in the House and the Strong-minded Woman

In the previous section, I have discussed what Hall names the Victorians' 'domestic ideology', a patriarchal scheme that placed women in the home in a submissive position (2013). In this context, I refer to 'other' identities of women juxtaposed to the idealised 'Angel in the House' or the 'True woman', the morally accepted female identity. Despite the feminist revisionist feeling and the social advances of women throughout the 1860s, the printed press of the decade continued to defend the 'true woman'. According to some newspapers, the True Woman was superior to the man in her 'domestic empire' containing 'her household, her children [and] her husband' (*Pall Mall Gazette* 24 June 1869: 12), and had a forgiving attitude as she found 'no room in her heart for hatred' (*Broad Arrow* 10 October 1868: 5). As for her own personal lifestyle, she was known to 'choose what is becoming in every novelty' and knew to avoid eccentricities in dress and fashion trends (*Morning Post* 1 April 1868: 7). Overall, the True Woman knew her submissive role in society and was keen to assume a modest stance with 'eyes bent earthward with unmerited shame' (*Morning Advertiser* 7 August 1862: 2).

On the literature, the True Woman was transformed into a celestial being, embodying her sex's superiority in morality and spirituality. In 1854, Coventry Patmore published a narrative poem that perfectly described and perpetuated society's expectations towards women, especially towards wives and daughters. The poem was

reworked and extended in 1862, after the death of Patmore's wife. [57] An 1863 review of Patmore's poem and his idealized angel-wife commended the book's purpose to 'instruct the young… [and] guide and comfort those who [were] still midway in the rocking storm of life's uncertain passage' (*Macmillan's Magazine* 1 May 1863: 8). This review implies young women's necessity to find moral guidance in their life journey, especially after the insurgent 'rocking storm' that was 'the Woman Question'.[58] The popularity of the poem during the rest of the century, as well as its influence in the education of women of the period, made inevitable the questioning of female identities and their (non-)compliance with gender norms.

Among the 1860s' arguments on female education, one of the prevailing questions was how well educated a wife and mother should be. Levine (1987) explains how a great number of women fighting for a better education insisted on academic formation as an essential ingredient of a successful marriage. Women, they insisted, needed to be educated in order to 'maintain intelligent conversations with their husbands' (Levine 1987: 30). However, female education became a controversial topic, especially after the

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[57] Patmore's poem on the Angel in the House was modelled after his wife, Emily Augusta Patmore. Her 'celestial' image was captured in a painting by J. E. Millais in 1851, who was famous for being a member of the Pre-Raphaelite's circle. Queen Victoria herself embodied the 'domestic angel' role in the paintings commissioned by the Royal family, like Winterhalter's *Family of Queen Victoria* (1846) and Horseley's *A Portrait Group of Queen Victoria with Her Children* (c.1865), which emphasized her role as a mother and wife.

[58] The review of Patmore's *Angel in the House* appeared in Macmillan's Magazine (1 May 1863) and was authored by Mrs. Caroline Norton (1808–1877). Mrs. Norton had been the protagonist of a scandalous case of 'criminal conversation' with Lord Melbourne, Whig Prime Minister from July 1834 to November 1834 and again from April 1835 to August 1841. During the legal suit —which concluded with a dismissal of the charges—, Mrs. Norton had been infuriated by the legal rule that prevented wives from testifying in their own defence in such trials, as well as by the permanent stain that an accusation of criminal conversation left in the wives' reputation. During the following years, Mrs. Norton continued to appeal to the public with privately circulated texts urging the reform of married women's property law and the custodial rights of mothers after separation or divorce. Her reformist efforts, motivated by her own life events, influenced the passing of the Custody of Infants Act of 1839 and the Marriage and Divorce Act of 1857. For a thorough biographical note on Caroline Norton, see Rappaport (2001: 496–8).

flourishing reformist initiatives. In this context appeared 'the strong-minded woman', an alternative woman who dared to pursue an academic education or journey outside the familial home. The 'strong-minded woman' was inevitably set against the model-wife 'Angel in the House', whose meek, innocent character positioned her at the top of the moral hierarchy but at the bottom of public life. For some defendants of female suffrage like Mr. Fawcett, the term 'strong-minded woman' was unnecessary: would anyone use the same term to describe a man of intellect? The *Globe* discussed Mr. Fawcett's words by insisting on the intellectual inferiority of women, yet remarked women's supremacy over their own realm, the home (*Globe* 13 April 1868: 2).

With the 'modern disinclination to marriage' due to the rising costs of living, the newspapers blamed young men, reluctant to get married, for the rise of the 'strong-minded woman'. The *Globe* went on to affirm that strong-minded women despised both marriage and the young men of the period, and in consequence, they would arm their unmarried female contemporaries with a career instead of with a husband (13 April 1868). The debate had been going on for a while, as even in 1859, Mrs. Emilius Holcroft had given a lecture on 'The Strong-Minded Woman, one of the great Misnomers of the Day'. Celebrated in the Pimlico Literary Institute of London, the lecture questioned the nature of the strong-minded woman as the embodiment of avarice, craft, and cruelty. However, the lecturer had praised the strong-minded woman's ability of exhibiting 'the attributes of the other sex, when circumstances demand' as long as these did not forsake the claims and duties proper to daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers (*West Middlesex Advertiser and Family Journal* 5 February 1859).

In November 1863, the *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* published an article on strong-minded women once again questioning the role of women in and outside society. The man, the article insists, is the noblest and true monarch of a family, whereas the woman wins over the domestic duties and mishaps, reassuring an optimal home. The author attributes men's rejection of 'female trespassing' in male areas as an undoubtable sign of men's insecurities:

> However sincerely man may admire the qualities of courage, endurance, bodily address, or mental proficiency in woman, his approbation seems tempered with an uneasy feeling of inferiority, where inferiority reflects shame; of awe, where awe seems both humiliating and misplaced. (*Fraser magazine* November 1863: 668)

Men's rejection of the 'strong-minded woman' goes hand in hand with the general perception of such a group of women: stern, unattractive women with no particular becoming quality in the eyes of their counterparts. Ideally, the article continues, women should 'reflect' the qualities admired in men, but only in a 'more subdued' manner (*Fraser magazine* November 1863: 668).

In the end, the stereotyped strong-minded woman was yet another example of attempting to ridicule or diminish a threatening wave of women overstepping boundaries and concealment. According to the era's response to opinionated women, the females had to be discreet in their aspirations and knowledge, lest they overshadowed men. The strong-minded woman of the 1860s foreshadowed the fin-de-siècle's New Woman, an independent, educated female who was socially condemned due to her aspirations and desires outside the familial home.[59] Setting the precedent, the

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[59] By the 1880s, the term strong-minded woman was linked to the New Woman, following the writings of novelist Sara Grand and Ouida (Maria Louise Ramé). The New Woman shared the

so-called strong-minded women paved the way for further socio-political changes by metaphorically giving up their 'celestial' wings and stepping on previously banned grounds. These women's journey outside society's expectations for the female sex would continue throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and would culminate with the female suffrage in 1918. Ultimately, strong-minded women proved that women could be much more than what their contemporary society and morality imposed over them.

However, the threatening female displacement forced a toning down of the revolutionist female discourse and an appeal to those who insisted in keeping women at home. This was done by justifying the 'strengthening' of the female mind as a crucial feature of their role in society. As Millicent Garrett Fawcett argued in her defence of female education, a proper education would cultivate the minds of women to the point of bringing out their mind's 'utmost strength' (1872: 202).[60] From this perspective, the strong-minded woman embodies the stable advances of modernity and its influence in the minds of Victorian women. In a way, the breaking out of the strong-minded epithet serves as breathing space for the diversity of female identities that emerged in the 1860s. Within such a fertile space, it is possible to negotiate the abounding sexual anxieties that surround the progressive liberation of the female body and the multiple reconstructions of female identity during the decade.

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characteristics of the pioneering strong-minded woman, described as a 'degenerate' by some (Nordau 1892), due to their 'loss of femininity' and independency. See more on the New Woman in Showalter (1993), Ledger (1997), Heilmann (2000), and Nelson (2000).

[60] According to Fawcett,

> The likelihood of a girl becoming a mother ought to be to her parents one of the strongest inducements to cultivate her mind in such a manner as to bring out its utmost strength, for upon every mother devolve the most important educational duties… Though it is important to show that higher education would fit women better to perform the duties of married life… the object of girls' education should be to produce not good wives merely, but good women. (1872: 202)

In short, the 1860s leave behind the binary conception of the female body and female identity, raising questions of agency, gendered values, and the construction of female identity. The following examples of the fast girl or 'Girl of the Period', as well as its literary response, the sensation heroine, take advantage of their displacement from the idolised female role and challenge patriarchal values. It is my contention that it is important to examine both the social and the literary because of their undeniable mutual influence. As I shall argue, the social advances of the fast girl are reflected in the sensation heroine who, at the same time, knocks down barriers of gender identity and widens the scope of female selfhood.

1.4.2. The fast girl or the Girl of the Period

In July 1860, the *Morning Post* and the *Globe* questioned the advancing modernity that London was facing by the mid-century. Both newspapers argued that obscenity and immorality had been present in the capital for a long time, yet these had been until then concealed from plain sight, hidden from the 'outer world' (*Morning Post* 16 July 1860: 4). These concerns were founded on the fact that, by the mid-1860s the business of pleasure and leisure in the metropolis could be compared to other industries serving the needs of the city, at least economically and commercially. According to Nead (2005), the *Globe* and the *Morning Post*'s concerns regarding morality in the capital were based on the proliferation of obscene forms of visual and literary culture (2005: 149–50). Incidentally, alluding to what both newspapers warned against in their article, modernity seeped into the youngest members of London's society, who were accused of 'polluting' the decent demeanours by behaving 'conspicuously'. Young men, the newspapers found, had lost their manners when addressing women in public spaces, and

approached them with an excessive familiarity that had been reserved, until then, for private environments of recreation and amusement. Incidentally, the newspapers called for the women of the city as responsible for putting an end to their male counterparts' behaviour; these indecent ways, the articles claimed, would disappear if they were discouraged by the 'young ladies'.

In other words, the media's accusations regarding morality and social behaviour affected both genders but, somehow, putting the blame on women for a decadent youth gained more relevance. The supposed moral and spiritual superiority of women started to quiver, at once threatening the very foundation of Victorian domestic ideology. Soon after the call of attention to improper male youngsters, the *Saturday Review* explained a new term for referring to modern women: the fast girl. In the newspaper's own terms, there were two types of fast girls: the 'not-so-bad' and the 'worst kind'. The first type was defined as follows:

> [A fast girl is] a woman who has lost her respect for men, and for whom men have lost their respect. There may be nothing very bad in her —it is not a question of virtue and vice— but the edge of her modesty is off, and men approach her with a certain feeling of easy insolence. She does something or says something which she is not exactly expected to do or say… She bets a little, and drinks a very little, and even sometimes smokes on the sly… she never does any work, and will never marry any one but an officer. (*Morning Advertiser* 31 July 1860: 3)

However, the second type, the 'worst kind', though not the most prevalent, existed principally in London and was feared to spread into the rest of the country. This kind of fast girl was represented by the young women who were 'in the habit of talking with men on subjects scarcely proper' (*MA* 31 July 1860: 3) in a questionable language.

These girls were, according to the newspaper's definition, mainly from fashionable society, and were prone to 'permit men to forget in their presence the line that separates the impure woman from the pure'. Gossiping, smoking, drinking, and overall forgetting their own place, seemed to be enough to condemn a woman as an adjective that was mostly associated with prostitutes, and to justify disrespectful approaches made by men.[61] Incidentally, up until the 1860s, a husband had been able to bring his wife to court if she was suspected to have engaged in 'criminal conversation' with another man. 'Criminal conversation' was, most of the time, a euphemism for adultery and was a justified reason for divorce. However, the accusation made by the husband could be founded on rumours and suppositions, and the accused wife could not defend herself on court. These trials could irrevocably ruin a woman's reputation, as she was seen as 'damaged goods' of her husband, who demanded a monetary compensation to his wife's seducer. Overall, the litigation arising from criminal conversation silenced women and reduced their existence to mere objects to be disputed in court.

Throughout the rest of the decade, the term 'fast girl' became easily conflated with women with an 'off-set' modesty; women who, in other words, participated in 'male' vices such as drinking, smoking, and betting (Boufis 1993: 101–2). The debate of whether Britain could still take pride in their women was reignited when, in 1868, Eliza Lynn Linton anonymously published an article titled *The Girl of the Period* in the *Saturday Review*. According to Linton, the women of England had lost all similarities to

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[61] The *Oxford English Dictionary* includes a definition of the article 'fast' as 'engaging in or involving activities characterised by excitement, extravagance, and risk-taking' (*OED* adj. 6). This definition explains what Helsinger et al. (1983) identified as an increasing number of Victorian women who rejected the dichotomy of angel and whore and sought to extend women's space without 'forsaking true womanhood' (112).

their past 'fair young English' girls, almost as if a new 'race' of women had been created. Linton describes the girl of the period as:

> … a creature who dyes her hair and paints her face, as the first articles of her personal religion; whose sole idea of life is plenty of fun and luxury; and whose dress is the object of such thought and intellect as she possesses. Her main endeavour in this is to outvie her neighbours in the extravagance of fashion. No matter whether, as in the time of crinolines, she sacrificed decency, or, as now, in the time of trains, she sacrifices cleanliness… With purity of taste she has lost also that far more precious purity and delicacy of perception. (Linton [1868] 1996)

Beyond her manner of dress, the author criticises the contemporary woman's efforts to look and behave, in her opinion, like the 'demi-mondaine' or prostitute rather than the fair young English maid of the past. In short, the girl of the period admires and imitates the demi-mondaine and ends up behaving and feeling the same way, leading her to 'slang, bold talk, and fastness' (Linton 1868). Unlike the girls of Britain's past, Linton affirms that her contemporaries lack in tenderness, love, and domesticity, and, instead of the feminine ideal of nurturing, selfless women, they are enamoured of money and pleasure. Linton's description of the Girl of the Period resonates with that of the strong-minded woman, who seems to primarily focus on herself.[62]

Linton's article, originally published in the *Saturday Review* in March 1868, sparked much interest and soon became a topic of conversation in the country,

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[62] Authors like Henry James commented on Linton's description of modern women, comparing them to burlesque actresses who were 'accustomed to walk alone in the streets of a great city, and to be looked at by all sorts of people' (Buszek 2006: 56). In turn, Lydia Thompson, a British actress well-known among the audiences for her subversive, sexy performances and persona, emulated and mocked Linton's modern girl in a series of carte-de-visite, parodying the girl of the period in a defiant manner (see Fig. 8).

highlighting the concerns about women's roles and identity subjacent in the mid-Victorian era.[63] Women's behaviour was decisive for the future of the nation, as their upbringing had an undeniable effect in the future generations; women, as wives and mothers, exerted their power and influence over the British families. Thus, the moral centre of the nation, the homes, demanded exemplary women: feminine ideals of the past. In the end, Linton's concerns regarding the morality and behaviour of the modern girl seems to echo the concerns of the middle-class, fearing new generations of increasingly independent women. As Linton's article points out, the autonomy of women regarding their choice of clothes or behaviour reflects 'the changing expectations of feminine behaviour' (Moruzi 2009: 11). This classification of women depending on their appearance and behaviour in the public space is exemplified by the previously mentioned Contagious Disease Act, which allowed men to categorise women in the streets. Elsewhere, Linton affirmed that female dress ought to be 'individual and symbolic, so as to indicate clearly the position and character which [a woman] desire[d] to obtain and hold' (*Saturday Review* 1867). With the blurring of the line between the 'proper' and the 'improper', identifying and putting women in metaphorical boxes became an arduous task for those who insisted in restricting women's lives. It was not just a matter of property in dress, but also an issue of moral misdemeanour and 'deterioration of the home' (Tennant 2011: 107). By classifying the non-conforming as

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[63] Moruzi (2009) highlights the importance of Linton's article regarding the discussion of women's roles and position in the English society, commenting on the widespread influence it exerted in the popular conscience. According to Moruzi (2009), 'cows, horses, and ships were named "The Girl of the Period"' (9). The debate about the place of girls in British society went on during the following years, with the publication of articles such as M.A.E.L.'s 'The Girl of the Future' (1870) in *Victoria Magazine* and Sarah Grand's 'The Modern Girl' (1894) in *North American Review,* which coined the 'New Woman' term applied to free-spirited, independent, and career-minded women of the fin-de-siècle (see more on the debates on the duties and identity of young girls and female education in Nelson and Vallone [1994] (2010)).

mere 'girls of the period', Victorian society overlooked the efforts made by women of all backgrounds to reject the dichotomy of angel and whore.

As Moruzi (2009) points out, the problem underlying the 'Girl of the Period' is the difficult self-definition of the English nation during the 1860s. The displacement of modern girls and their 'behavioural' transgressions question English morality and English identity. Far from representing a single female identity, as the epithet might suggest, Fraser et al. argue that the Girl of the Period is an example of a 'multiform being' (2003: 22), which highlights the multifaceted nature of women and the decade's efforts to debunk the simplistic definition of 'woman'. Incidentally, the first issue of *Girl of the Period Miscellany* referred to such debate of the many possibilities opened for the female character.[64] On its first issue, the editors wrote a suggestive article entitled 'What is the Girl of the Period for?' (*GOPM* March 1869: 4–11), addressing the 'female surplus' of the decade, asking for a widening of women's life prospects: 'let us get recognized… that marriage is not the sole, or even the chief end of woman. Let us give her work. Let us give her free leave to do whatever a man does, if she can' (*GOPM* March 1869: 6). As an all-female editorial board, this magazine gives voice to the opinion of many women of the period.

In its satirical commentary of the decade's conception of women, the periodical goes on to confirm the Girl of the Period's purpose of 'Defeminization', an ongoing quest to strip women of the obligation to marry and raise children. Quoting Mill's

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[64] An anonymous 'Miss Echo' published in London a series of magazines entitled *The Girl of the Period Almanack* in 1869, which was promptly followed by *The Girl of the Period Miscellany* on the same year. As a monthly publication, both the *Almanack* and the *Miscellany* were edited by and addressed to women. A series of satirical illustrations, opinion articles, and poetry, continued to debunk Mrs. Linton's definition of the 'Girl of the Period' and humorously describe the 'fast', manly woman of the mid-century. For a thorough review of female fashion and mid-century's anxieties over the Girl of the Period, see Tennant (2011: 103–23).

Principles of Political Economy (1848)*,* the editors insist on letting 'women who *prefer that occupation* [marriage and childbearing] adopt it', yet they urge their contemporaries to refrain from using such a personal decision as an assessing method against other women (*GOPM* March 1869: 6). Later on, in a second editorial article entitled 'The Irony of the Situation' (*GOPM* April 1869: 33–4), the magazine's definition of the Girl of the Period evokes the liberating feminist movements of the decade and warns against the oversimplification of the female mind.[65] As the article contends, 'womanliness is as elastic as an india-rubber band' and, by any means, the controversial Girl of the Period will continue to stretch the boundaries of what it means to be a woman. Furthermore, the so-called Girl of the Period should be reworked into a more appropriate epithet, such as 'Girls of the Period', to emphasize their questioning and destabilizing of the male-oriented, single conception of womanhood. By doing so, we would remark the essential reformative task performed by the plurality of women of the 1860s, and we would highlight the impossibility (and absurdity) of a single form of femininity at any time.

1.4.3. Sensational heroines

As previously contended, the 1860s brought a democratisation of culture, as seen in the public cultural arrangements implemented in the metropolis; governmental initiatives

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[65] Against the unique definition of womanhood, the editors of the *Girl of the Period Miscellany* are conclusive:

> The better Girl of the Period… smiles at both the helots and the revolters. She is not the buffoonery, but… the irony of the situation… Without knowing her own function and without knowing her own message, she says, "Look at me! You will alter us, will you? Never! Observe: we can appear to copy you in some of the least feminine particulars, and yet, in the midst of it all, we simply become more provoking as women than ever we were. What charm have we parted with? None, and, poor fools! You know it. The more we pretend to imitate you the more irritatingly you feel our womanhood…" (April 1869: 34)

exemplified by public exhibitions like the far-reaching International Exhibitions of 1851 and 1862, as well as the rise of leisure activities, allowed for a political and cultural transformation of the crowds.[66] For this main reason, Daly (2009) advocates for the establishment of a sooner date of, what he names, 'the age of crowds' (5). Typically relegated to the fin-de-siècle, the 'age of crowds' could be brought forward to the mid-century due to cultural, economic, and political reasons (Daly 2009: 5). This is due to the main characteristic of 'the age of crowds': a verbalisation of the public's opinions, wants, and needs. As this Chapter attests, this is visible in the 1860s' social and political movements, the proliferation of public organisations and attractions, and the peak of mass production and consumption that was targeted to the average citizen.

Precisely, it is the popular cultural movement of sensation what provides a space for the flourishing of yet another female identity in the mid-Victorian period: the sensation heroine. Before deepening into the characteristics of such a conception of women, it is necessary to define 'sensation' and clarify its decisive influence in the British popular consciousness of the era. According to Daly (2009), sensation can be defined as 'the cultural dominant of the 1860s… a way of describing cultural artefacts that deployed a variety of shock and suspense effects' (4). As Eltis argues, these sensational elements of 'thrilling crimes, pathetic suffering, and devious villainy' are closely linked to the legal atmosphere of the pre-1860s —the passing of the 1857 Matrimonial Causes Act— and the scandalous divorce cases covered by the media

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[66] See Daly's *Sensation and Modernity in the 1860s* (2009) for a more comprehensive analysis of the impact of sensation and sensation fiction in the mid-Victorian era. His research sets a coherent basis for my thesis of the 1860s as a decade of change, of social and political turmoil prior to major culmination of the people's voice being heard. Daly's framework includes the work of renowned scholars like Bailey (1998) and Booth (1991), who remark the influence of leisure and the middle class in Victorian England throughout the last half of the nineteenth century.

(2013: 61–2). As Cox suggests, even though sensation fiction was being produced before the 1860s, it was throughout that decade when it gained the most attention from the media (2019). Indeed, publications like the half-penny and penny press profited from the sensation literature boom, printing recent cases of murder, thievery, or domestic scandals, and making them easily accessible to popular knowledge. In addition, the popularity of sensation novels like Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* (1860), Ellen Wood's *East Lynne* (1861), and Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) shook the literary critics and enthralled the public, who were gripped by plots that challenged the tight morality of the era, presenting the behaviours of average individuals in extreme situations.

The broad impact of sensation fiction in the mid-Victorian era motivates the inclusion of the sensational heroine in this thesis. For reasons mentioned above, it is important to take into account sensation fiction as a newfound genre that took on a fresh stance on the portrayal of women in popular media. Breaking up with the previous conditions of the female dichotomy of angel or strong-minded woman, the sensation heroine exhibits a complexity of character that reevaluates woman's character and presents her as a novelty in the eyes of the reader and/or spectator. However, despite the daring, complex female protagonists in sensation fiction, the critics of the 1860s conflate the sensation heroine with the strong-minded woman, due to her 'unnatural' behaviour; in the *Morning Post,* an article opposes the qualities of 'pretty, genuine, loving, good girl' (22 October 1863: 3) to the sensation heroine, whose 'strong-minded' nature makes her capable of 'bigamy, murder… complicated deception or concentrated revenge'. In addition, it is not unusual to find the term 'strong-minded' next to the 'sensational heroine', as in the *Illustrated Times* (10 June 1865: 10–11), or a reminder

of the sensational heroine's 'abnormal physical characteristics' (*The Atlas* 7 September 1867: 5), making reference to the modern sensation protagonist's dishevelled hair.[67]

Despite the backlash of the critics, sensation had an undeniable influence in the women of the period. Incidentally, the main sensation-seekers, both as producers and consumers of sensation fiction were female. Particularly, mid-Victorian women seemed to be attracted to cases involving murder and divorce, flocking the courts when important trials were being held (Diamond 2004: 4). Most importantly, women were interested in such cases when the protagonists were *other* women. Sensation, despite its dubious morality, seemed to spark in the female sex a notorious self-evaluation and self-consideration, perhaps making them question their own status in society. That, as well as the genre's undermined respectability, contributed to the genre's dismissal as commercial and of low quality; according to Mansel's (1863) article in *The Quarterly Review*, sensation writers lacked the ability to faithfully portray 'real' characters with a reliable 'human nature' (April 1863: 483–4). However, the sensation genre was plagued of events that challenged the steady, stable society that was being promoted, and presented instead a reality where human beings were not predictable and were driven by their psychological and sexual needs instead of by their rational side.[68]

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[67] Hair in the Victorian era plays an important part in current scholarly analysis of female character and female nature, as it signifies a plethora of things. For example, a female's hairstyle could embody her 'stereotyped' character: she could be angelic (when her hair was up and well groomed), or devilish (dishevelled and/or unkempt). Usually in fiction, the madwoman was presented in long, untamed hair, symbolising her downfall to madness and stray from society's rules. For a deeper analysis on female hair and Victorian literature and culture, see Michie (1987), Talairach-Vielmas (2007), Bornay (2010), Monrós-Gaspar (2011), and Ofek (2016).

[68] Zahra (1990) examines the many elements that configure the genre of sensation and goes beyond its simplistic categorization. In her PhD thesis, she posits that the representation of women in 1860s' sensation fiction destabilized the grounds previously set on feminine sexuality, psyche, and in short, women's biological 'nature'.

In turn, recent studies have offered the opportunity to regard sensation fiction as a genre much closer to Victorian realism than it might appear at first; according to Talairach-Vielmas, 'through their distortion of the real, fairy tales, fantasies, and sensation novels illuminated modes of representation particular significant to the construction of femininity' (2007: 1). As in a puzzle, the female character in sensation fiction asks the reader or spectator to put together the pieces and reconsider the feminine. It is in sensational pieces where the woman is sometimes transformed into an ethereal figure, presented in white as in Wilkie Collins' infamous *The Woman in White* (1860) or as a white underwater vision in Dion Boucicault's melodrama *The Colleen Bawn* (1860). Undeniably, the apparition of a 'vulnerable, ethereal [female] figure' in the woods somewhere in France in 1858 marked a decisive influence over sensational pieces in the years that followed (Daly 2009: 3).[69] Additionally, the so-called 'ghost craze' of the 1860s, made the public participant of a myriad of female-like spirit figures; [70] these, as some scholars now defend, might have alluded to the passive, powerless role of women in mid-Victorian society (Stead 1891; Grimes 2011). In a way, and as Warner mentions, fantastic tales and sensation fiction often disguised a 'harshly realistic core' beneath the supernatural tints of the stories ([1995] 2015: xvii).

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[69] The woman in white trope continued to thrive in the 1860s, especially in controversial paintings like Whistler's *The White Girl* (1862) —exhibited in the summer of 1862 at the Berners Street Gallery off Oxford Street, and influential to Millais and the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood— and in the popular drama of the mid-Victorian era, as in the numerous representations and adaptations of Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn* (1860) and the character of Eily O'Connor.

[70] In London, the technique of 'Pepper's Ghost' became all the rage on theatrical stages in 1862–3. This device consisted in a vitreous spectre apparition, an illusion of a live image which was projected on stage and which interacted with the actors. The technique was used in the Adelphi Theatre, the Royal Polytechnic Institution, and a number of music halls, and a great number of plays featured ghost-like characters or allusion to supernatural appearances.

It is also important to note the pervasiveness of the sensation genre during the 1860s, especially considering its influence to the mid-Victorian stage in the form of melodramas. For instance, the previously mentioned *The Colleen Bawn* (1860) by Dion Boucicault became the longest run in the history of the British stage, being performed for nearly three hundred nights at the Adelphi in London's West End (Schoch 2003). Boucicault's sensation melodrama was first performed at the Adelphi and counted with the support of Queen Victoria. The play's Irish female protagonist, Eily O'Connor, quickly became a signature sensation heroine in the minds of the Victorian playgoers (J. Davis 2018: 82). Eily's wronged marriage might have reminded the audience of Mr. Rochester's plot to marry Jane Eyre; as Eltis explains, the public's sympathy towards the suffering of virtuous females would explain her popularity (2013: 62). As *The Colleen Bawn* (1860) attests, the spectacularity of the melodramatic play —like Eily's nearly drowning before the appearance of her heroic (male) saviour— disguise an atmosphere of expectation towards the female body. In fact, melodramatic adaptations of sensation fiction brought to life scenes of 'female suffering and victimization' (Newey 2005: 95), which were especially relevant in light of the female rights movement and the divorce cases with alleged bigamy scandals. For Talairach-Vielmas, sensation in all its forms explores the female paradox, an oscillating capacity of women to be both subject —active heroines fighting for their sexual redemption— and object —pathetic women who commit suicide to right their wrongs (2007: 6).

In conclusion, sensation fiction enciphers unclassifiable women who go beyond the dichotomies imposed onto them. Seeping through every layer of mid-Victorian society, collective consciousness, and popular fiction, the sensation heroine camouflages the subjacent movement for female's rights, as well as it posits the

complexity of the female character, finally dethroning women as celestial beings and humanizing their personas. As main producers of sensation fiction, female authors like Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Ouida, or Mrs. (Ellen) Henry Wood, openly discuss through their fiction debates about women, rejecting the passive figure of women and presenting instead active, assertive heroines, who most of the times are threatening to the domestic female ideal.[71] Characters like Lady Audley bring forward a situation of discontentment regarding female expectations in life, marriage, and the proper female sphere, echoing the vindications of the so-called strong-minded women. Ultimately, the sensation heroine contributes to the undermining of the Victorian patriarchal system, and marks the insurgent feminist movements or the 'woman question' debates that would persist until the fin-de-siècle.

Conclusions

In this Chapter, I support my choice to closely scrutinise the 1860s as a decisive decade for the subsequent years of the Victorian era. As explained above, I turn to the 1860s due to its ripe social context, proving to be a decade for asking questions and demanding answers; the political movements fighting for general education, as well as the rise in gender debates, establish an interesting background for my study. With the focus on the metropolis and its conception as a space for learning, discovering, and maybe assuming realities, I include an overview of the public forms of entertainment as yet another way of emphasising the decade's intention on public education (or perhaps, indoctrination). The city of London's offering of entertainment and exhibitions during

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[71] For a deeper analysis of the women's sensation novel see Pykett [1992] (2006), Pykett ([1994] 2011: 49), and Schipper (2002).

the 1860s, as previously explained, manipulated the citizen's global viewpoint by placing him or her on a superior stance: in a way, the exhibitions contributed to the creation of one common national identity, placing the viewer at the top of a racial hierarchy. This feeling of superiority, fostered by loads of manipulated 'tokens' from the 'outside' world, is decisive in the Victorians' conception of self.

In terms of gender studies, the emphasis is most of the time put on the fin-de-siècle, with the culmination of years of struggle and feminist movements. Due to the lack of clarification and of visible organization, the suffragist movement of the turn of the century is preferred as a field of study over the 1860s' insurgent attempts to assemble a feminist agenda. As this Chapter proves, the mid-nineteenth-century shows a growing number of English women who fought for the social and political improvement of their sex; as the 'Woman Question' implies, the 1860s sets the basis for the changes to come, further defining the conception of 'woman' and 'femininity', and fighting against the belittling expression of 'the soft sex'.

In conclusion, this Chapter 'maps' the 1860s following both Hall (2002) and Bratton (2011): mapping a decade open to interpretation, a period where the city of London welcomed infrastructural changes to welcome possibility and interchange. In the end, this Chapter stresses the importance of a multifaceted London where the exhibitions, spectacles, and streets interrelated with citizens and visitors, feeding on each other. It is important to note this interrelationship to comprehend the daily lives of contemporary citizens and visitors, thus understanding their heightened experiences when visiting a museum or exhibition, walking the constantly evolving streets, or keeping in touch with their nation and their fellow citizens' experiences abroad. Most

importantly, this Chapter establishes the endless possibilities of self-transformation and

self-improvement in a city welcoming the gaze and desires of its inhabitants.

CHAPTER 2 — DISPLACEMENT AND PHYSICAL TRAVEL

2.1. Defining displacement

To fully comprehend the meaning of 'displacement', we must accept its interdisciplinarity and its characteristics as a 'travelling concept' (Bal 2002) and a 'blanket term' (Soroka 2012: xiii). As Bal attests, it is precisely the fluidity of meaning of interdisciplinary concepts like 'displacement' what makes them so relevant in the study of culture (2002: 11). By offering a cross-disciplinary definition of displacement, I intend to support my thesis of displaced female identities in the mid-Victorian period. With this in mind, I explore displacement from a geographical and psychological perspective, but also in relationship with gender, space, and identity. Between 1887 and 1902, Freud's theories of psychoanalysis linked the term 'displacement' to symptoms such as hysteria, obsessional neurosis, and paranoia (Schmidt-Kitsikis 2005: 421–2). Currently, the *OED* includes Freud's definition of 'displacement' as 'the unconscious transfer of an intense emotion from one object to another' (*n.* 3). In this sense, displacement acquires a psychological meaning closely attached to that of substitution, or, in other words, of escapism from reality. In psychology, as well as in other disciplines, displacement usually implies some kind of movement, usually a movement of something or someone from its designed place to another. In short, a psychological approach to 'displacement' would associate it with change.

Most of the studies involving 'displacement' are usually concerned with a geographical movement. These include theories of exile, emigration, expatriation, travel, diaspora, and nomadism (Soroka 2012: 3–5). Additionally, it is usual to conceptualise displacement in postcolonial studies in relation to language, belonging,

and place. Canonical scholars like Said and Bhabha have contributed to an 'exilic' definition of the term, emphasising displacement's direct impact to one's sense of being or self.[1] In both definitions, displacement has to do with a threatening situation where one's personal identity is under attack. According to postcolonial studies, identity is in conversation with our culture, our affiliation, and ultimately, our place of belonging. Consequently, when one suffers from a displacement, he or she will have to struggle to maintain the old identity over the imposed in the new place. In a way, this makes of displacement a nomadic experience, whereby one loses its identity when on the move. However, a more optimistic revision of displacement defines it as

> a celebration of multiplicity and hybridity/syncretism, but one that does not lead into the anti-memory, history-free, spatially attenuated, free-floating, aloof, and ontologically rootless characteristics implied by the concept of nomadology. (Al Deek 2016: 7)

Al Deek's contention makes 'displacement' an advantageous tool for the displaced: in other words, by being displaced, one is capable of re-evaluating his or her identity and to combine 'in tandem' past and present (2016: 7). Ultimately, as Powell suggests, one's identity moves —or changes— as the body does (2012: 300). Closely linked to identity, displacement allows for an open dialogue with ourselves, whereby we can formulate, reformulate, evaluate, and re-evaluate our identity as we go. Displacement acts as a continuous process through which we navigate through 'a change in the politics of identity, the representations of home, and the conceptualisation of belonging

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[1] While Said establishes a direct correlation between exile and displacement with the epithet 'exilic displacement' [1993] (1994), Bhabha defines 'displacement' as 'the fragmented and schizophrenic decentring of the self' (1994: 310). For a thorough overview of displacement in relation with exile, see Al Deek (2016: 1–15).

and affiliation, through the figurative and physical journeying, in time and across space' (Al Deek 2016: 15).

Kaplan antagonises 'displacement' to 'location'; that is, in order to be displaced, one must be dislocated (1996: 2). To put it differently, when we are displaced we are figuratively 'lost'. When we elaborate on the theory of geographical displacement, we encounter a situation in which a body has been moved to be then relocated. Such relocation is often perceived as 'wrong', for it goes against the established or the 'norm'. Thus, we could argue that a displacement usually conveys a negative implication. For instance, exile and emigration have a painful connotation, as the exiled and the emigrant have been forced to move out of his or her 'home' due to adverse circumstances.

As Powell contends, the paths of displacement are 'violent journeys' whereby a renewed system of domination is established to reformulate and destabilise the old order or the old conception of things (2012: 301). As a violent journey, displacement can be seen as a radical change in what is 'natural' and, in the end, it can provoke feelings of discomfort and mourning for the position or 'place' that has been lost. After displacement, a 'figurative third space' between point A and point B can be created, a 'safe space' where a 'hybrid identity' is formed (Powell 2012: 301). A hybrid identity can be confusing for the subject, as the acquisition of certain cultural features is done almost unconsciously and might result contradictory between them. It is a situation of constant confrontation with oneself, in an attempt to finally understand our own nature and finding a sense of belonging. Such process of displacement can be unsettling for some, but pleasurable for others; being figuratively lost, or feeling 'out of place', can lead to a beneficial questioning, reshaping, and reconstituting of one's identity (Kaplan

1996: 31). This kind of sensation is experienced when we visit a foreign country as tourists and experiment with culture and traditions unusual to us.

In this sense, I propose to conceptualise 'displacement' as a result of 'disorientation'. As Ahmed suggests,

> When we are orientated, we might not even notice that we are orientated: we might not even think 'to think' about this point. When we experience disorientation we might notice orientation as something we do not have. (2006: 5–6)

When we are disorientated, we feel 'out of home' or lost (Ahmed 2006: 7). We come to terms with our own 'unplacedness' when we realise we no longer fit into the space we inhabited. Hence, a feeling of displacement dawns on us. This is closely related to Ahmed's concept of 'inhabitance', whereby 'some spaces extend certain bodies' (2006: 11). However, as Ahmed contends,

> When bodies do not extend into space they might feel 'out of place' where they have been given 'a place'… such feelings in turn point to other places, even ones that have yet to be inhabited. (2006: 11)

That 'out of place' feeling is what I suggest will lead to displacement. Such displacement, as previously argued, will not necessarily be negative, as it will give us an opportunity to find our way and take register of different perspectives. However, our disorientation and 'out-of-placedness' might lead us to re-iterate the known —repetition of established social norms and concerns— as method to safety (Foster and Mills 2002: 95).

At this point, it is necessary to define the links between displacement and spatiality. If we are speaking of displaced objects, bodies, and minds, we must also

address the spatial boundaries that confine them.[2] These demarcated zones can be literal —like traced maps and country borders— or concealed —what Kaplan names 'hidden geographies' (1996: 144). These 'hidden geographies' might refer to unspoken social boundaries and political and economic structures that regulate our lives, the way we move through space, and the way in which we interact with each other. In 'Structure and Objectives', I have addressed the mental dichotomy of 'home' and 'Other' that we experience when we travel and how our imagination plays a huge part in our perception of the world (Said 1978; Van den Abbeele 1992). In this sense, we could say that these hidden geographies organise people and place each of us in our 'legitimate' spot, creating a heavily manipulated 'mental map'. Götz and Holmén identify the mental map as a 'theoretical construct not observable in its original repository —the human brain' (2018: 158). These organisations ingrained in our mind will ultimately affect the way we see the world and the way we move.[3]

Our 'hidden geographies' might manifest in actual spatial organisations. As Walker suggests, spatial divisions are physical representations of our social relations or, in the end, of our mental structures (1995: 71). Thus, we can find 'social maps' that delimitate our life experience and that establish existent rules of power. For instance, feminist studies have identified a literal and metaphorical relationship between gender and space:

> [In the literal sense,] space seems to determine the construction of both male and female subjects, who are educated to grow gendered notions of their own identity.

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[2] McDowell explains how spaces are 'fluid and uncertain', defined by socio-spatial practices of their users. At the same time, spaces have defined boundaries that are constructed by socio-political power structures (2003: 4–5). See also Massey (1991) and Smith (1993).

[3] For a postcolonial approach to the mental differentiation between 'Orient' and 'Occident' see Said (1978).

> [In the metaphorical sense,] gender ideologies are complicit with the ways in which space is devised and interpreted, following very strict patterns.[4] (Villegas-López and Domínguez-García 2004: 12)

In other words, in reality, physical spaces are defined by the way we use them and have the power to affect our personal identity. For example, the Victorians traced a gendered mental map whereby women's place was the home (or the private) and men's place was the streets (or the public). Therefore, the home as a physical space became a feminized area and supposedly the domain of the wife, mother, or daughter. In the metaphorical sense, and as Villegas-López and Domínguez-García (2004) suggest, the Victorian streets complied with their masculinized mental map by 'persecuting' —or socially condemning— those displaced women who dared to venture out of their assigned domains.

We could say that, for the mid-Victorians, the existence of displaced women — uncompliant with the gendered spatial organization of their world— entailed a threat to the social and political order. Increasingly, the mid-century sought to provide for those out-of-place women who were making use of public facilities, which eventually normalized their traversing of the urban space. In addition, displaced women learned to 'protect' themselves from the street nuisances by walking in groups or riding the public transport —in spite of the complaining men— to escape moral scrutiny (Walker 1995: 76). From this perspective, displacement can be conceptualized as a conscious or unconscious breaking of boundaries in search of widening one's place. Furthermore, displaced mid-Victorian women were at fault of stepping out of the 'woman' category

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[4] This kind of gendered education is thoroughly explored in Butler's *Gender Trouble* [1990] (2002), who identifies a tridimensional configuration of gender: anatomical sex, gender identity, and gender performance (175). According to Butler, 'gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*' (2002: 179).

and making free use of otherwise unattainable social spaces.[5] This kind of displacement can become problematic for the displaced, as it can lead to a state of 'unbelonging', inhabiting a gender 'limbo' where one feels 'placeless' (McDowell [1999] 2003: 2). In this thesis I argue that transgressive mid-Victorian women who explored the boundaries of the 'female' category, were socially and mentally displaced from the 'norm'. Like in a metamorphosis, this kind of displacement allows for an exchange in which the body (and the mind) connect two or more forms or states at once (Youngs 2013: 8).

In my analysis of mid-Victorian female displacement, I propose to explore the possibilities of virtual displacement. One of the main questions to be asked is whether it is possible to be displaced while remaining physically still. As I shall further explain in Chapter 3, a virtual displacement occurs in one's mind, usually after witnessing a disorienting event or, like in most definitions of displacement, when one is forced to move —only, in this case, it not only entails physical movement, but a mental one. As McDowell attests, displacement can occur as 'result of changing economic, social, and cultural circumstances', where no physical displacement is needed, and, instead, a mental 'renegotiation of gender divisions' occurs (2003: 2). We are able to feel virtually displaced when, in our minds, we explore different realities and try to incorporate them into our own self. For instance, we can feel virtually displaced while watching a dramatic film where the protagonist becomes an orphan and, through emphatic processes, we can attempt to position ourselves in his or her situation. Through virtual displacement, we are being relocated in a foreign place (or situation), but only in our mind. This experience, inevitably, will continue to configure our self-definition —

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[5] McDowell describes 'gender' as a 'set of material social relations' and as a 'symbolic construction' (2003: 7). Moore affirms that gender, as a category, varies 'through space and time' (1988: 12). Butler defines gender as performative and that 'is always a doing' (2002: 34).

female spectators of a melodrama were not transformed into adulterous wives by watching a play where the protagonist was one, but they secondhandedly experienced such emotion and would be forced to experiment with such displacement. In this sense, virtual displacement 'teaches' something: I, the displaced, will have incorporated into my views of the world an otherwise unattainable experience. However, virtual displacement can also be unfruitful; I could lack the empathy or the knowledge to understand what I am experiencing and, thus, my displacement would only be confusing. I would become only an observer, incapable of partaking with the action or benefiting from the experience.[6] In the following sections I explore physical travel as a mode of literal and figurative displacement, and thus as decisive vehicle for questioning one's self-position within the world's structure. As I shall argue, physical travel highlights the problems faced by women in the 1860s in their navigation within and without their assigned 'feminised' spaces.

2.2. Defining physical travel

Having worked through the definitions of displacement it is necessary to refer to physical travel, not as a mere physical movement, but as a social signifier of mid-Victorian identities and power relationships. I believe physical travel provides an advantageous perspective through which we can explore and understand the importance

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[6] Balme links the spectator's identification with the performed as a mode of cathartic response (2008: 74–5). In his study of the effects of theatrical performance in the audience, Balme traces the many reinterpretations of Aristotelian catharsis in theatre theory, noting Lessing's definition of catharsis as 'pity directed at ourselves' (Lessing 1962: No. 75; Balme 2008: 75). From this perspective, we could argue that virtual displacement has the power of provoking in the spectator a similar emotional reaction to that of the cathartic experience. The identification process, as Balme contends, assumes 'the acceptance by the reader or spectator of the fictional or virtual world on the page or stage' (2008: 35).

of social classes, gender roles, and the process of identity formation, especially for women. As Woollacott contends,

> women's physical mobility, around the city and around the world, was tightly linked to modernity's other forms of gender instability, such as that occasioned by women's political and career claims. (2001: 61)

In light of what Mackenzie has described as an 'Empire of travel' (2005: 19), there is a need to establish the Victorians' space-time relationship and their strategies to negotiate with the 'expansion of cultural geography' (Byerly 2013b: 289). As Byerly contends, the popularisation of travel as leisure contributed to the Victorians' altered perception of the world that surrounded them (2013b). As consequence, Kern affirms that, after the mid-century, Britain experienced a 'reorientation of thinking about space and time' due to the destabilising advancing technology and its effect in the daily lives of the Victorians (1983: 1). Such reorientation implies the incorporation of physical spaces not only in mid-Victorian literature, as Byerly suggests, but also in contemporary everyday practices. Thus, we ought to scrutinise the Victorians' interaction with physical spaces —in the metropolis and beyond— to further comprehend material renegotiations of gender roles and class systems.

Previously in this thesis, I have argued that the mid-Victorian period brought more time for leisure, what Bailey (2003) attributes to the social structuring and the improvement of the living conditions of the middle class. The development of both London's metropolitan transport and of Britain's railway network between 1840 and 1860 made possible an expansion of its users' demographics, now comprising the working- and middle-classes as well as the higher classes. Within this context, the pleasures of travelling (and its cultural benefits) could be experienced by a broader

range of people. Beyond the convenience factor, Byerly justifies the appeal of domestic tourism as a reversed manifestation of the period's imperialistic agenda: the exploration of one's own nation, she argues, would boost a national sentiment and pride (2013a: 8). As Baylis puts it, 'for the Victorians, domestic travel became a metaphor for conceptualising nation, serving as an experience both of assimilation and difference' (2014: 398). In this sense, domestic tourism contributed to the formation of a sentiment of 'connectedness' more similar to that of a family than of a country. What is more, country visiting went on to shape the Victorians' self-position, granting them the opportunity to contrast the urban and the rural landscapes, and to experience renewed forms of leisure in their free time. As Blunt attests, travel within Britain performed as 'social exploration', which 'articulated class disparities, educational levels, and attempts to make sense of rapid urbanization' (1994: 34).

Furthermore, according to Strong, the regulation of rail travel and its affordability provoked a situation of mass national travel after the 1850s (2014: 25–6). By the 1870s, the development of third-class rail travel increased the national lower-class tourist numbers, which evidences the structural social changes of the mid-Victorian era (Bailey 2014: 81). The democratisation of railway travel occasioned what Byerly describes as an annihilation of 'the traditional space-time consciousness', which provoked in the mid-Victorians a heightened state of control and reciprocity with their environment (2013b: 290). In other words, railway travel brought the Victorians closer to their surroundings and allowed for a feeling of geographical dominance.[7]

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[7] The improvement of intra-national transport played a decisive role in the popularisation of domestic travel, and at the same time, it emphasised a metaphorical union of the nation, imprinting a vivid image of the railway's 'unified web of black lines stretching across the country' in the minds of the Victorians (Mathieson 2015: 7).

Amidst the rising popularity of home tourism, the literature of the era catered for the Victorians' appetite for instruction and inspiration, producing travel guidebooks that reminded of those that promoted international travel. John Murray's *Handbooks*, which until the 1860s focused in journeys to foreign spots, started to shift their attention to the illustration of the British country's own scenery.[8] The printed media, as well as the entertainments of London, criticised those who were eager to travel to distant places yet were unfamiliar to their country's own 'beauties' (*Illustrated London News* 12 January 1861).[9] The promotion of the nationalistic sentiment was linked to the leisure excursions that the citizens were pursuing in their spare time, which included pilgrimages to houses in the country and to the landscapes that had inspired contemporary authors and painters.[10] These alternative spaces away from the cities became tokens of a 'real' Britain, founded on traditions, folklore, and national history, away from the transient modernity experienced in the city. In this sense, domestic travel in the mid-Victorian period had a twofold implication: on the one hand, the journey to the 'other' England signified a return to the enduring, the fixed reality of a whole nation;[11] on the other, travelling to the countryside became a metaphorical escape from

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[8] While Murray's *Handbooks* from the 1830s and 1840s mainly focus on foreign spots, the 1850–60s turn to areas closer to home. From the late 1850s the spotlight was turned to Kent and Sussex (1858), Berks, Bucks, and Oxfordshire (1860), South Wales (1860), Ireland (1866), and North Wales (1868), to name a few. For a complete examination of Murray's handbooks, see Goodwin and Johnston (2013) and Mathieson (2015: 87–120)

[9] Newspapers like the *Illustrated London News* advertised the increase of home-travelling guidebooks during the 1860s, remarking the 'healthy reaction in favour of rambling over Great Britain' and remarking the country's 'combination of scenery, populous towns, manufacturing and mineral wealth, characteristic populations, [and] local associations' (12 January 1861).

[10] Daly connects the experience of railway travel with that of sensation fiction. According to him, the genre mimicked the 'heightened time-consciousness' of railway travellers, constructing fast-paced plots (2004: 473).

[11] I refer to the characteristics of the rural space as opposed to what Parsons (2000: 21) identifies as the three main experiences of the city: ephemerality, transience, and the chance encounter. Parsons (2000) explores the urban as an alienating and isolating space after her analysis of Baudelaire and Poe's literary work, set in the cities of Paris and London.

a constricting metropolis, in search of leisure time away from the urban responsibilities, health improvement in spa towns or seaside resorts, and cultural tourism.

Female physical travel after the mid-century exemplifies the era's changing gender roles and the attempts to work through the separation of spheres. Along with the female quest to recognise the multiple definitions of 'woman', the social riposte to female physical mobility evidenced the gender barriers that were yet to overcome. In the metropolis, the 'wandering' woman or the 'flâneause' attempts to detach herself from the city's organigram and explores new definitions of femininity. The *OED* defines the term 'flânerie' as 'aimless idle behaviour' (*OED,* n.), being the 'flâneur' the man 'who saunters around observing society' (*OED,* 'flâneur', n.). However, this dictionary does not attest to the female variant of 'flâneuse'. First recognized at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the term 'flâneur' was included in a French pamphlet from 1806 that narrated the life of a man whose life was characterized by his lack of financial or familial responsibility, his participation in the intellectual, bohemian spheres of the city of Paris, and his fascination with his own society while living in an apparent detachment (Parsons 2000: 17).[12] Indeed, the key defining concept of the flâneur seems to be his liminal existence in the urban landscape, occupying a marginal position in society. This interpretation of the flâneur varies depending on his country of origin. Brand (1991) recognises such difference in the perception of the flâneur in French and British society; as she contends, while the French associated flânerie with a sophisticated, extravagant

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[12] Parsons (2000) analyses the definition of the term 'flâneur' / 'flâneuse' in dictionaries like the *Encyclopaedia Larousse* in the nineteenth century and *Webster's 3rd New International Dictionary of the English Language* in 1961. According to her study, in English dictionaries like the *Webster's,* the female form of the term does not appear until the 1960s (Parsons 2000: 17–18).

'artist-dandy', Victorian British society identified the flâneur as a 'shadowy figure', a haunting presence cohabiting the streets of the metropolis in an inconspicuous manner.

In this sense, it is worth to question the purpose of flânerie: is it a voyeur strategy to observe without being observed, or an opportunity to escape society's restrictions through (an aimless) journey? In the urban landscape, one could practically disappear among the multitude and assume an anonymous identity, thus facilitating the experience of metaphorical travel and detachment. The flâneur or flâneuse could aspire to experience different realities through the observation of the crowds, the shops, and ultimately, the urban space.[13] Pettersson understands the main characteristics of the flâneuse —walking, watching, and exploring the public space— as part of the strategies adopted by Victorian women to come to terms with 'their role in the new cityscape' (2014: 97). Thus, by momentarily detaching from their sex's restrictions, the walking woman could explore alternate realities, which were slowly being opened to her.

However, as commented in Section 1.4., wandering the streets did not imply a total anonymity for women. As one could expect, the female flâneuse received a negative implication, due to her lack of place in respectable or 'bourgeois' society (Parsons 2000: 19). Thus, the main characteristic of the flâneuse is her isolation or removal from society, a trait commonly related to the trope of the prostitute and the widow. In a way, the streets and the public space acquired a defining element that 'helped' in the classification of women; as commented earlier, laws like the Contagious Disease Act legitimised the accusing of unchaperoned women for walking the streets under the pretence of exercising prostitution.

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[13] This experience is what I will later propose as a form of virtual travel, in which one can explore an alternate reality in his or her mind. See Chapter 3 for further discussion on virtual travel.

Outside the city, the female traveller was also scrutinised and classified according to her position. If women were supposed to be 'still' or immobile in the metropolis, when they travelled, their particular 'observant' nature made them the perfect complement to the male leaders of the nation:

> [Travellers] constitute two great classes: those who discover, and those who observe —that is, those who penetrate into regions hitherto untrodden by civilized men, and add new lands to the maps of the geographer; and those who simply follow in the track of their bolder or more fortunate predecessors, gathering up fuller, and, it maybe, more accurate information. To the latter class… belong our female travellers. (Davenport 1882: 215)

Davenport's differentiation between active male explorers and 'observant' female travellers follows up the gender conventions existent in the nation. As his description attests, the perfect role for women is that of companion. Davenport's message is clear: women 'simply follow in the track' of the bold, male conquerors. Foster and Mills remind us of the strategies adopted by female travellers, especially in their writings (2002). As they contend, 'for women to adopt the role of the adventure hero by describing the dangers that they have overcome is to undermine their own claims to femininity' (2002: 258). Thus, by positioning themselves as passive, observant companions, women reaffirmed their socially accepted feminine status and complied with the female ideal.

Davenport's description of the female traveller echoes the mid-century's debates about female education and the national necessity to have good-educated, well-trained wives and mothers, and places women back at the tailgate of the gender and social hierarchy. Ferrús explains how female travellers usually fell into two categories: 'wild

women' and 'faithful wives accompanying their husbands' (2011: 19). Such categories attempt to put order to an unruly situation when, in fact, women were travelling much more than before. For some critics, female travel was a question of morality and social improvement: in 1862, *The Illustrated Times* praised the emigration of 'educated young women' as an exercise of 'women's legitimate moralising and civilising influence on society' (14 June 1862).

We need to question the motives that encouraged the travelling habits of mid-Victorian women and what such physical mobility implied for them. Which are the strategies adopted by women when travelling alone? Why are the experiences of female explorers erased from the literature or dismissed as 'observing' discourses? Even though at present we perceive female travellers as proto-feminists who anticipated the fin-de-siècle's suffragist movements (De la Torre 2010), the Victorian period restricted their mobility through constraining travelling rules and strategies to manipulate their self-presentation. For instance, there is a rise in the publication of travel etiquette books addressed to women, like Florence Hartley's *The Ladies' Book of Etiquette, and Manual of Politeness* (1860) or the latter *Hints to Lady Travellers at Home and Abroad* (Campbell-Davidson 1889). These conduct books remarked the importance of 'feminine' behaviour during the journey and reminded female travellers of valid 'unwritten laws' of decorum and domesticity. Moreover, according to Lady Eastlake, the 'peculiar domestic nature of an Englishwoman's life' had prepared her to be an excellent traveller, equipping her with 'the four cardinal virtues of travelling: activity, punctuality, courage and independence' (*Quarterly Review* 1845).

One of the applicable rules for women on a journey was to always carry with them properties that would 'replicate the domestic sphere', such as hot water bottles and

sewing kits (Campbell-Davidson 1889). Famous travellers —and travel writers— insisted in maintaining 'proper' feminine English clothes during their journeys, like Mary Kingsley, who used to wear full skirts in her African explorations. Indeed, as the period's etiquette book recommend, sticking to the English codes of femininity and wearing gender-appropriate clothes became a metaphorical armour of protection against male molestation and offensive behaviour. Above all, conduct books remind their female readers about their 'exposure' during their travels, and insists on preserving female dignity through 'perfect propriety' and courteous behaviour with others (Hartley 1860: 35–9).[14]

In the following sections, I scrutinize female mobility as represented in the popular plays of the 1860s. My selected case studies offer a glimpse of the journeys of female characters both in the metropolis and outside of it, and posit questions of female (dis)placement within society's structure. As I shall argue, the popular drama of the 1860s explores women's incursions in the public space and reinforces ideas of femininity and female propriety.

2.3. Physical journeys of female characters

Through my analysis of the popular plays performed in London during the 1860s, I highlight the role of mid-Victorian popular theatre as influential to women's social and political situation. It is my contention that these plays acted as loudspeaker of the decade's gender debates, featuring complex, mobile female characters that anticipated a changing configuration of femininity. Thus, the following subsections feature plays

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[14] Hartley devotes a chapter to explain the proper behaviour of a lady in her travels, remarking her inherent unprotectedness when she travels, and addressing her in an infantilized tone. Searching for the protection of other ladies (sorority) or that of elderly gentlemen is listed as one of the strategies to avoid unwanted male attentions (1860: 39).

performed at the East and West End, as well as in transpontine venues. I have decided to differentiate between female mobility inside and outside the metropolis, female incursions abroad and in colonial settings, and finally, women's 'violent journeys' and forced displacements. As previously attested, the 'violent journeys' destabilize one's reality and force a re-evaluation of one's place and identity (Powell 2012). As I shall contend, scrutinising the physical journeys of female characters inside and outside the metropolis, as well as understanding the motives for their displacement, will help us understand women's social position during the decade.

2.3.1. Women and the cities

The improvement of the city of London during the latter half of the nineteenth century made possible a renewed urban experience. The rapid expansion of the metropolis patronized the Victorians' appetite for the visual, offering a myriad form of visual entertainment available just by street walking. Over two million people inhabited and roamed the streets of London by the 1860s, all participant of the urban spectacle. These numbers do not include the numerous tourists that enjoyed the attractions available in the city (Daly 2009: 13). Consequently, London's popular plays of the 1860s took advantage of the growing interest in tourism and transport and featured trains, railway stations, hotels, rural lodges, or even boarding houses as setting for their stories. Additionally, the streets of the metropolis became the perfect background to feature the physical displacement of women. These plays make visible Victorian women's 'exposure' to unrequited coquetry by impolite gentlemen, cases of mistaken identities, and other situations related to their out-of-placedness beyond the home.

When the West End's Lyceum staged a one-act farce entitled *117 Arundel Street, Strand* (Addison 24 March 1860), it evidenced that, sometimes, a woman's journey outside the home could provoke chaotic confusion in her family. Addison's plot revolves around Mr. Charles Ludlow and his wife, Mrs. Louisa Ludlow. After leaving their Surrey house, Charles takes a Bachelor's lodging in London because of his job's requirements, while Louisa travels alone to Brighton 'because it's fashionable' (Addison 1860: 9). However, while Louisa has been away, Charles has been flirting with his maid Betsy, who thinks him a bachelor. Louisa, who arrives to the house in an agitated manner, seems to have had an unpleasant train journey back from Brighton:

> LOUISA: I had hoped you would have come. At all events, you might have gone down with me. It's really very disagreeable travelling alone. One gets stared at, and, and…
>
> CHARL: People regard you with looks of admiration.
>
> LOUISA: Exactly so.
>
> CHARL: Can you wonder at it, dear Louisa? Were I a bachelor I'm sure I should do so. (Addison 1860: 27)

Louisa's remarks about her journey evidence women's unprotectedness while travelling alone. During her physical displacement, Louisa is stripped of her 'respectability' resulting from her marriage, and her body is fully exposed to the gaze of unsolicited male admirers. On the train carriage by herself, her identity is erased. The female body is closely scrutinized in these situations of transit, where every 'feminine' element is evaluated to determine the respectability of her persona. In public, the female traveller's clothes are put at test: are her clothes 'respectable' and 'simple' enough? In 1866, the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* provided a 'useful' guide for ladies, advising for a

demure, plain dress to indicate respectability and deportment. As Hill (2017) contends, the periodical articles and the alarming stories published on attacks to women on their domestic journeys highlight the 'unforgiving rigidity of the deportmental and sartorial expectations placed upon women' (Hill 2017: 58).

Because travelling had mainly been catered as a male-oriented experience, the 'out-of-placedness' of women in public transport forced them to behave accordingly to their so-called moral superiority. This meant that, in some occasions, women had to endure the male gaze in their journeys to maintain their status of decency paragons. Even though domestic travel represented a space for possibility for women, the mechanics of railway travel also reformulated gender ideologies.[15] The provision of ladies' compartments evidence the sexual fears arising from unisex train carriages where women could find themselves violated or disturbed by the unsolicited behaviour of men. Even though the experience of travelling outside the metropolis may have offered anonymity and freedom, the actual physical journey inside the enclosed space of the train propitiated a situation of forced familiarity with the other passengers. Despotopoulous (2015) argues that especially the female passengers were not exempt of a feeling of scrutiny in their journeys, what Richter identifies as a type of 'public domesticity' (2005: 69). In this sense, women's identities were forced upon them at all times during their public outings; anonymity for women outside the home would often lead to sensational plots or madness storylines, significantly showing the liminality of women in public life. For mid-Victorian women travelling alone, their femininity became their identity, a visible conformation to gender and society's rules. In this sense,

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[15] Tennant suggests that rail travel 'both engenders and draws attention to instabilities in female identity, exposing the construction… of fashionability and femininity as fragile and complex' (2016: 55).

ascribing to their domestic role —even if they were outside— marked their social status, instilling a respectable reason for their desires of travel.

In Addison's play, Charles inquires on Louisa's behavior on the train after learning that a gentleman had sat opposite her and had addressed her. He questions her respectability and her adherence to the domestic role:

CHARL: I trust you had prudence enough not to answer him and that you left

           the carriage —

LOUISA: On its arrival at the London Bridge Station, not before.

CHARL: Really, I think you might have done so. A modest woman —unless

           she likes indeed admiration— can always —

LOUISA: I couldn't help his speaking or looking —besides, after all it was

           flattering.

CHARL: *(annoyed)* flattering! —an old scoundrel. (Addison 1860: 27–8)

Louisa's inappropriate 'flirtation' exposes her to the insistent advances of the stranger. Belton, the gentleman from the train, follows her to Charles' bachelor house on the grounds of 'love… omnipotent love' (Addison 1860: 30) and, instead of censoring his behavior, Charles reprimands Louisa for her coquetry. Questioning Louisa's journey and purpose outside the home, Charles remarks the social inappropriateness of women travelling alone:

CHARL: … yes, Madam, I say that the impropriety—

LOUISA: *(alarmed)* What is the matter, I merely—

CHARL: *(still violently)* Yes, travelling about in this giddy way —picking up

           on the high road admirers, and—

> LOUISA: Dear Charles —do be calm— I'll not do so again, I'll not go, I'll remain till you can return with me. (Addison 1860: 37–8)

Louisa's physical displacement out of the familial home not only brings her an uncomfortable situation with her husband and a male suitor, but also puts in danger the integrity of her family. By 'leaving' her husband alone in the city, she risks his flirtation with another woman, thus endangering the respectability of her family and her public image. Furthermore, outside the domestic sphere, Louisa is able to experiment with anonymity and a loss of identity; in the city and the train's public space, she finds freedom to reconfigure herself away from her domestic role.

The Strand also featured the travel intrigues of two women in Williams' comedietta *A Race for a Widow* (18 April 1860). After a fortuitous encounter at 'the Druid's Inn' in North Wales, Mrs. Wilmington and Mrs. Pepperpod reflect on a woman's exposure during her physical travel. Mrs. Wilmington, who is believed to be a widow, explains her escaping from bathing season at Aberystwyth:

> MRS. WILM: … I have scarcely been there two days, I have been so annoyed by the troublesome attentions of several insipid admirers who have thought proper to pester me with their absurd civilities that I could endure it no longer and have therefore reluctantly resolved upon retiring to town. (Williams 1860: 4)

Early feminist movements in Britain fought against the 'street annoyances' or 'street impertinences' faced by women in the public spaces (Walkowitz 1998: 2). These 'street annoyances' were mostly resulting from men's advances on unchaperoned women, which had become a social problem for unaccompanied middle-class women who dared to not only walk the street, but to ride the train, attend exhibitions, or even go the theatre

alone.[16] At the same time, the Victorian print media took on the responsibility to warn respectable middle-class women of the perils of stepping outside the domestic area alone. The newspapers' riposte had a twofold implication: on the one hand, these facilitated the raising of women's voices to reclaim their rights to occupy the public space; on the other, the printing of the sensational stories of women who had encountered some kind of harassment in public warned others against following such steps. Walkowitz (1998) posits that a section of the Victorian printed media raised awareness on the violation of women's bodily integrity due to street harassment. In this sense, the newspapers and magazines of the era became an empowering platform for women to narrate personal experiences, 'invoking political and nationalist discourses of freedoms and liberties' related to gender (Walkowitz 1998: 2). On the other hand, Milne-Smith (2016) highlights the underlying message of caution arising from stories of impertinences or even physical attacks to women in public spaces. These 'images of dangers… undercut women's sense of safety' (Milne-Smith 2016: 33), and prompted women to remain safe, especially when navigating the city alone.[17]

For Mrs. Wilmingon, her position as a widow allows her the autonomy to move according to her will, as well as to dispose of the necessary income to travel by herself; however, as she explains, her situation transforms her into 'prey' for the fortune-seeking admirers:

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[16] There is a long history of women occupying the public space of theatres in London linked to prostitution. According to Booth (1991: 64), early in the nineteenth century, both the East and the West Ends were flocked by unaccompanied 'fallen' women. Prostitution remains associated to the theatre business throughout most of the century, conflating actress and prostitute, and fuelling the scrutinizing of women's morality when attending a play alone. See more on Victorian women, theatre, and prostitution in Davis (1988, 1991), Davis and Emeljanow (2001), Pullen (2005), and Powell (2007).

[17] Woltze's painting *The Irritating Gentleman* (1874) clearly depicts men's unwanted advances over women in public transportation.

> MRS. WILM: … I have the misfortune to possess what it is the fashion to call a 'smug little income'. Society really seems to look upon a widow who enjoys a moderate competency as a prize that must be hunted down and appropriated with all possible speed and thus for the last two years I have been subjected to an incessant round of importunities from suitors of every possible grade and station! (Williams 1860: 5)

For the Victorian woman, widowhood could bring her emancipation —monetary and of familial obligations— or ruin her, depending on her husband's legacy.[18] In the case of Mrs. Wilmington, her assumed widowhood allows her to travel by herself during bathing season, yet provokes her being chased through the country by persistent male suitors.[19] As I shall explain in Section 2.3.2., assuming the identity of the widow could also benefit women during their physical travels, especially outside England. However, as explained earlier in this Chapter, gender is inescapable for these characters.

Women's possibility of physical mobility in the Victorian city is determined by the city's facilities for her sex; as Woollacott contends, it was not until the 1880s that London became a welcoming space for women outside the private confines, making available to them department stores, women's clubs, restaurants, and even public toilets

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[18] L. S. Buckingham finds inspiration in the private lives of widows. In *The Merry Widow* (St. James' 31 January 1863), the author censors the lively behaviour of a recently widowed woman —interpreted by Ruth Herbert. In *Silken Fetters* (Haymarket 14 November 1863), the protagonist, believing herself a widow, 'makes fierce love to another [man]' (*Morning Post* 16 November 1863). In both occasions, both characters are harshly condemned for their 'inadequate' relationship with men. In Wigan's *Taming the Truant* (St. James' 19 March 1863), a widow lady helps a married woman in teaching a lesson to her misbehaving husband.

[19] In other occasions, it is the woman's appearance what makes her feel exposed to the eyes of men when alone in a public space. In Oxenford's farce *Beauty or the Beast* (Drury Lane 2 November 1863), a similar situation of mistaken identity occurs, when Mrs. Stubbs, 'an elderly coquette' (*Reynold's Newspaper* 8 November 1863) warns her husband about the unsolicited gaze of a man while 'taking the fresh air on the beach' (Oxenford 1863: 15).

(2001: 60–1). However, as early as the 1850s–60s, the creation of department stores like Whiteley's in West London legitimized the public appearance of middle-class women.[20] With the rise of a capitalist and consumer culture, the mid-Victorian period offered lavish locales available to respectable ladies from the middle- to high-classes, who could roam the store with or without actually purchasing the goods. Rappaport (2000) explains how these contained spaces within the urban landscape also functioned as source of delight for the shopper (or roamer), turning them into spectators and inviting them 'to look at goods and associate that looking with pleasure' (28). She also remarks the influence of the Great Exhibitions of 1851 and 1862 in London's development of the department store. As she contends, the rise in spectacular entertainment and visual exhibitions transformed the store into a spectacle in itself, where the experience of shopping was almost as satisfying as the experience of looking. Similarly to the boasting purpose of the Great Exhibitions, going shopping became a marker of social status, and the space of the department store became an arena where female identities were formed and reaffirmed.

Likewise, the 'opening' of spaces for women after the mid-century posits a problematic redefinition of femininity: on the one hand, favouring female mobility implied an utopic liberation of the female body, allowing for a 'freer' spatial negotiation in the city; on the other, the 'domestication' of the public space —mimicking the safe space reserved for women—, complicated women's reconfiguration outside the private. As Gardner argues, talking about London's 'spectatrices' is a risky venture (2000: 25). We can only speculate about women's experience in the streets and public spaces of

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[20] Walker argues that from the mid-century, the department store sought to become the 'home away from home' for women, 'complementing the home' instead of substituting it (1995: 76). Among these establishments, Walker mentions John Lewis (1864) and Liberty's (1876), both situated in London's West End.

London during the mid-century, especially if we keep in mind their manipulated experience of such. Feminising the public space, as argued above, would inevitably shape women's perception of it. In this sense, women's incursions into the public sphere were heavily monitored, self-contained, and controlled by the social spatial organigram of the city.

On stage, the dramatists took advantage of that and incorporated the peculiarities of female physical displacement in the city. Especially in 1862, and with the occasion of the International Exhibition in South Kensington, the plays reflected comically the 'outing' of women in a bustling city. Brough and Halliday created a farce entitled *The Shilling Day at the Great Exhibition* (Adelphi 9 June 1862), in which Dovebody, a young man, takes his girlfriend Polly to the Great Exhibition. His intentions to 'cultivate' her mind with the Exhibition's displays are dismissed by the girl:

POLLY: Don't talk to me about improving my mind; if my mind's not good enough for you as it is, you can let me alone. There are plenty other young men who will be glad to keep company with me without always wanting to school me…

I don't want my mind improved; and I didn't want you to bring me here at all.

DOVE: I know you didn't, you wanted to stop at home all day and make a bonnet to go out with me in the evening… but didn't I cut the Gordian knot by buying a bonnet ready made for you? (Brough and Halliday 1862: 3)

The farce mocks the female visitor to the Exhibition, making Polly an example of the 'fast girl' of the period, who is only interested in fashion and evening entertainments.

Later on, she will recline over the Exhibition's pedestals, eating and drinking over the pieces (Ibid: 11–2). Her comical displacement and lack of manners highlight women's out of placedness in the city, and more specifically, women's out of placedness in the 'circuits of knowledge'. Additionally, Polly's interest in her bonnet and physical appearance brings forward the mid-Victorian discourse of woman's purpose of parading about a public space and her disinterest in education. Polly's refusal to 'cultivate her mind' echoes the female education debates of the decade, arguing for women's instruction to improve their role as housekeepers and mothers.

With the occasion of the Great Exhibition, the arrival of both national and international tourists in the city was also exploited by the playwrights.[21] At the Princess' Theatre, a humble entertainment entitled *The Boarding House for 1862* (Anonymous 1 June 1862) took advantage of the heterogeneous visitors in the city. Set in a London boarding house, the play further contributes to the lingering idea of 'parading' women in the city.[22] Mrs. Marmaduke, the mother of Angelina and Baby, announces her intention of visiting the city's sights to 'exhibit' her daughters in hopes of finding suitable husbands:

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[21] The growing interest in the sights and entertainments of London is reflected on stage in the most peculiar manners. For instance, in Blanchard's *Riquet and the Tuft,* the witches Mother Shipton and Mother Bunch enjoy a 'broomstick' journey through London, prophesising the city's upcoming technological improvements:

> M SHIPT: London… will grow so large that…
> I can see…
> O'er houses will run wires called telegraphic;
> That underneath the streets will run the traffic
> That every where a bridge will span the stream… (Blanchard *Riquet* 1862: 6)

[22] The Princess' entertainment offers a long list of exemplary visitors, including many women. Among these, Miss Ecke Static and Miss Grimshaw stand out as embodied oppositions of the visitor's response to London —the first is delighted by the sights, and the latter finds faults in each of them. Amidst the varied group of lodgers, we can also find a Medium —Mrs. Tapper—, a singer —Mrs. Quick—, a female critic —Mrs. Critic—, and an actress, —Miss Muddle.

> MRS. MARM: … I've spared no expense with these dear children! And now I've come to show them the Exhibition and store their minds. Why, they're perfect exhibitions themselves. We intend to go around of all the sights of London. (Anonymous *Boarding* 1862: 6)[23]

In Spencer and James' *A Return Ticket to the International Exhibition* (St. James' 3 August 1862), Fanny and Emily Allbutt find out that their father intends to find a husband for them in the Great Exhibition:

> FANNY: … we are twin sisters about to be sacrificed, sold, my dear… Cruel Papa, I say. To insist upon selecting husbands for us from the Great Exhibition, making us a sort of first class medal and presenting us as the reward of merit to some crack brained inventor. I'll not endure it.
>
> EMILY: Woman's lot is to endure.
>
> FANNY: Then I'll not be included in the little lot, to be knocked down perhaps to some self-acting mangle exhibition or other… we might hit upon a scheme for freeing ourselves. (Spencer and James 1860: 4)

Fanny and Emily's plot to free themselves consist in scaring their father, impersonating two aggressive (male) inventors. For Fanny and Emily, exploring the city —and more

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[23] Mrs. Marmaduke mispronounces the sights of London, making evident her cluelessness and her real intentions in the city:

> MRS. MARM: First, there's Miss Polly-technic —I don't know who she is but I believe a lady who keeps a large and significant establishment where there's a young man and a young woman both go under water without any hair, one's a diving man, the other's a diving Belle—. … then, there's Call-an-see-um, the illogical gardens, the National Hall, the Egyptian Gallery, the Puritanical Gardens where the flowers are —and, oh!... the theatres and the consorts, and the Tiddlemonic and the Opera… (Anonymous *Boarding* 1862: 6)

specifically the Great Exhibition— transforms them in walking prizes. Out of their homes, their displacement has a purpose: that of finding a husband. In their case, domestic confinement is preferable to exploring the city and exposing themselves to male scrutiny.

The examples of Fanny and Emily question the integrity and purpose of women stepping out of their homes alone. *The Atlas* had published the story of a young French girl who had travelled alone to London in male disguise to attend the Great Exhibition of 1862 (21 June 1862: 6).[24] The newspaper narrates the encounter of the male accuser —a Sergeant Fenning— with the cross-dressed girl, and explains his decision of bringing her into the police station after questioning her manner of dress and the purpose of her sitting on the steps of the Queen's Hotel. The article addresses the helplessness of solitary females in the city, in terms of their exposure to male instigations and misunderstandings regarding their identity.[25] Like in Spencer and James' play, this event clearly highlights the difficulties women had to face in order to fulfil their desires to explore the streets (and the world). According to Pettersson, women who transgressed gender norms through cross-dressing and city roaming,

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[24] The trend of cross-dressed women is closely linked to the flâneuse, like authoress George Sand, who found in her male attire a freedom of her gender's social restrictions, and allowed her to roam the streets as inspiration for her writing. See also Wolff (1985) for an analysis of the invisible flâneuse.

[25] The incident is narrated in *The Atlas* from the point of view of the male Sergeant as follows:

> The young lady appeared… with her hair cut short, and parted to the side, and dressed in light apparel, such as a young Frenchman would have worn. […] I asked her why she was sitting there, and she said because she was fatigued. She said this in English, which she spoke very well. I then told her that I thought she was a woman, notwithstanding her man's dress, and she admitted she was. I asked her what had made her so tired, and she replied in French, which I did not understand. She got up and was about to walk away, when I stopped her and took her to the police-station. (21 June 1862: 6)

This excerpt shows the signs against female displacement in the city, as the narrator analyses the woman's appearance (femininity markers) and hastens to judge her for her appearance and her noncompliance to his requests.

became 'spectator[s] and interpreter[s] of the urban spectacle', all the way they embodied 'woman's own fluid identity' (2015: 101).[26]

Therefore, if the streets became a metaphorical box whereby the classification of the country's citizens was possible, the act of transcending society's rules and walking the streets unchaperoned became an attempt to 'escape' the domestic confines. In this sense, the journey of the flâneuse or the 'walking woman' signifies the metaphorical aspirations of a great number of women determined to leave behind years of domestic or private confinement. By means of street-walking, the flâneuse could detach herself from an imposed self-image of femininity and could become someone else, despite the many setbacks they could face when walking alone. As commented earlier in this section, mid-Victorian women plotted strategies like cross-dressing and going shopping, which allowed them to explore both the city and themselves in the process. In other occasions, public spaces in the metropolis serve as 'liberating' environments for women. For instance, in Burnand and Williams' farce *The Turkish Bath* (Adelphi 25 April 1861), Miss Angelina and Adolphus sneak into a 'Metropolitan Constantinopolitan Turkish Bath' near Russell Square, London, and profess their love. Miss Angelina runs away from her uncle's home into the city to have a say in her love life; the Turkish bath, in a way, gives her autonomy to decide.

Additionally, Walker further identifies other strategies for 'encouraging women outside', such as the provision of respectable, protected accommodation; segregated women spaces like all-female clubs in the city; and a feminised décor in establishments patronizing a female clientele (1995: 77). These might be perceived as a materialization

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[26] Pettersson (2014, 2015) explores gender identity in relation with the flâneuse and the Victorian spectacular stage. She also scrutinizes the public sphere in relation with the female body, remarking the importance of urban spaces and the configuration of the female urban categories of the flâneuse, the philanthropist, and the prostitute.

of gender difference in the mid-Victorian period, and as additional evidence of the perceived 'out-of-placedness' of women in the public spaces of London. As the examples above suggest, gender was unavoidable for women outside their domestic spheres. Marked by society's expectations for women, their experiences of the public were inevitably influenced by their femininity. As previously stated, the drama features female characters who manage to find strategies to navigate the city in spite of public scrutiny and, in the end, who sought to overcome ideals of immobility. In the following section, I address female mobility and conceptions of female identity outside the city.

2.3.2. Women abroad: the colonial wife and the British tourist

I have previously argued that London aimed to satisfy its citizens' appetite for travelling in the same metropolis. For this reason, plays and entertainments with foreign settings and plots attracted and manipulated the minds of the masses. Some authors exploited the growing interest in the colonies and in tourism, and in the meantime, participated in the questioning of feminine identity of the decade. Such is the case of Tom Taylor, who wrote comedies for the Haymarket, the Lyceum, and the St. James' during the 1860s. Even though Taylor is most remembered for his historical dramas, his versatility allowed him to excel in genres as diverse as the drawing-room drama, melodrama, and comedy.[27] Tolles affirmed that Taylor's farce-comedies for the Haymarket 'helped to popularize the eccentric type of comedy against which Robertson rebelled' (1940: 254). Indeed, with *The Overland Route* (Haymarket 23 February 1860), Taylor commenced

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[27] In Taylor's lifetime, the only collection of his plays that was published was *Historical Dramas* (1877), a collection of his major historical works including *Joan of Arc, Anne Boleyn,* and *Lady Clancarty*, among others. Banham comments on the influence of melodrama, domestic drama, and verse drama in Taylor's historical plays, and remarks Taylor's own concern with the 'serious role of drama and the theatre' during the 1870s (1985: 4).

an exploration of the colonial Indian setting that he would repeat in *Up at the Hills* (22 October 1860) that same year at the St. James'.

In *The Overland Route*, Taylor counted with the patronage of Mr. Buckstone's management at the Haymarket, who maintained the play in the theatre's repertoire until the Bancrofts took over. As late as 1882, the Bancrofts revived Taylor's *Overland Route* after a personal P&O cruise trip to Constantinople, perpetuating the play's take on the Indian Mutiny and highlighting the interest in the intrigues of Britons abroad. Authors like Dion Boucicault exploited the sensation arising from the Indian Mutiny in his successful *Jessie Brown; or, The Relief of Lucknow* (Wallacks Theatre, New York 22 February 1858; Drury Lane 15 September 1862). A year later, the Victoria Theatre in London staged an 'Indian drama' entitled *Nana Sahib; or, A story of Agmer* (Fenton and Osman 1863). Due to the capture of the real Nana Sahib, leader of the Indian mutiny, the interest for the Mutiny rose up again that year in the metropolis. In Fenton and Osman's take of the 'oriental drama', the 'splendid scenery, dresses, and decorations' served as background for the stories of unprotected women in the colonies (*The Era* 15 November 1863). As a patriotic take on the courage of British women, *Nana Sahib* features two examples of female displacement: Mrs. Adams, whose mental exhaustion after the Mutiny is manifested by weeping and mumbling words of destruction (Fenton and Osman 1863: 93), and Marion, a valiant British maiden who, in spite of the Nana Sahib's attempt to force her in marriage, remains strong. These female characters echo contemporary anxieties of female modesty and resilience in a foreign setting.

In Taylor's *The Overland Route*, the extensive character list of military officers, colonial commissioners, adventurers, and servants, served the purpose of dramatizing the social intrigues and personal recollections of their real-life counterparts' stay in

India. Taylor's play remained relevant and representative even in 1882, when it was performed at the Gaiety Theatre in Simla by the Simla Amateur Dramatic Club (Banham 1985: 12). The stories of the three main female leads, Mrs. Sebright, Mrs. Lovibond, and Miss Colepepper, mainly revolve around their romantic involvement with the men aboard the steamer. Mrs. Jenny Sebright, passes as a widow for her own protection:

> MRS. SEB: You know, a prudent married woman, without her husband, has no
>
> chance aboard these horrid P.O. boats. But a widow's always sure
>
> of attentions. (Taylor *Overland* 1860: 17)[28]

Her relatively anonymity on board of the steamer, allows Mrs. Sebright to 'use' men to her own convenience. Taking advantage of her attractiveness as a widow, she encourages Mr. Colepepper —Commissioner of Badgerypore District— and Sir Solomon's attentions. However, when Dexter —a doctor adventurer— reveals her true identity as a married woman, Mrs. Sebright lives in fright of public humiliation. Indeed, the decade's inclination to domestic travel was particularly experienced by women (especially widows), who in need of chaperones, went to lengths of publishing advertisements on the newspapers soliciting female travelling companions.[29] Nestor argues that women's growing participation as travelling companions meant their

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[28] The original cast featured Mrs. Charles Mathews as Mrs. Sebright, who was praised for her 'vivacious brightness' (*London Evening Standard* 27 February 1860).

[29] The *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette* featured a widow's classified advertisement soliciting employment as 'lady housekeeper, travelling companion, or any other position of trust'. The advertisement read as follows:

> 'A Widow Lady is desirous of meeting with an Engagement in either of the above capacities. Very domesticated, kind in illness, good reader aloud, fond of children. Would go abroad if desired. Good references. Age 28. Salary no object.' (22 July 1869: 4)

Other women solicited engagement as travelling companions in exchange of 'a comfortable home' (*Illustrated London News* 27 July 1861: 85). Egg's *The Travelling Companions* (1862) represents two almost identical female travellers in a first-class railway carriage.

incursion outside the domestic and 'freed' them from conventional 'feminine' behaviour (2008: 39). Nevertheless, some claimed that it was not enough to be chaperoned by another woman, as women were vulnerable to theft and physical assault when travelling without the protection of male individuals.[30]

In Taylor's *The Overland Route,* Mrs. Sebright experiments a change behavior and humor after the steamer's shipwreck. The stage directions at the beginning of Act III announce Mrs. Sebright with a *'gay and cheerful'* appearance, wearing '*a coquettish made-up costume and handkerchief tied over her head'* (ibid). As the scene moves on, we learn that Mrs. Sebright has 'developed such a talent for nursing' since their wreckage, and has been tending over other female passengers all night. In spite of her transformation, Mr. Colepepper praises her efforts to remain 'ornamental':

> MRS. SEB: You thought Jenny Sebright more ornamental than useful. I hope
>   I've redeemed my character.
>
> COLEPEPP: You've not discarded the ornamental, I'm happy to see. That dress
>   is monstrously becoming. (Ibid)

Mrs. Sebright's physical transformation takes a secondary role after her displacement; victim of a wreckage, her 'true nature' as a nurturing woman surfaces as redeeming for her 'sinful', coquettish past aboard the ship. For her, the journey positively influences her character, making her rediscover her true value as a tender, feminine caregiver. In short, Mrs. Sebright's physical displacement during the journey and after the shipwreck allows her to learn a moral lesson, which she thinks taught by Dexter: 'how shall I ever

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[30] The *Morning Advertiser* warns women against travelling alone due to their inferior nature when confronted by male thieves in public trains, and reminds them that, for safety reasons, they ought to be in the presence of respectable men at all times (8 April 1864). See also De la Torre (2010), who evaluates Victorian female travellers as unaware proto-feminists who stray away from the prefixed gender norms of the era.

thank you enough for teaching me how much pleasanter it is to wait than to be waited upon' (Taylor *Overland* 1860: 39).[31] In a way, Mrs. Sebright thanks Dexter for his mentorship and for showing her the selfish ways of a 'True Woman'.

The journey aboard the steamer is also a transformative experience for Mrs. Lovibond, who after reuniting with her neglecting husband, learns to forget her 'jealous' ways. Mr. Lovibond is now a successful merchant and has amassed a fortune in Singapore; his new situation leads him to reclaim his wife back, as long as she keeps her meek nature. After being abandoned by her husband, Mrs. Lovibond plies to 'expiate' her harness to him 'by being all meekness and indulgence' (Taylor *Overland* 1860: 16). Indeed, her tender nature after their reunion stuns Mr. Lovibond:

MRS. LOV: I'll do anything you bid me, dear. Good bye, 'till you see me again.

Exit R. *tent*

LOVIBOND: Now I call that a woman; and since she's so changed —she's an angel —better than an angel! She hasn't any wings to fly away with; and she *has* something to sit down upon! (ibid 44)

Lovibond's reference to his wife's lack of wings reminds us of a wife's duty to stay by her husband, no matter what. As a changed wife, Mrs. Lovibond is now bound to her husband. After being away from the home and enduring hardships, she is now a changed woman who has learnt her physical place —by her husband— and her metaphorical place —attending his wishes. In the end, leaving the comfort of their homes is a transformative, subduing experience for both women.

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[31] Dexter is described as the play's hero, an adventurer, a doctor, a newspaper editor, and a volunteer during the mutinies in India. His eventful journey is hinted at during the play, leaving glimpses of Dexter's encounters with the Indian natives throughout. Overall, his role as a mediator and mentor positions him at the top of the moral hierarchy.

A complete success, *The Overland Route* was praised by the audience on its opening night and repeated the nights thereafter. The *London Evening Standard* commended its purpose of amusing the crowds 'by producing a picture of a certain phase of society, drawn with considerable regard to truth, and much humour and breadth' (27 February 1860).[32] However, the newspaper goes on to affirm that 'the characters in the piece are not calculated to enlist the sympathies, or even to interest the audience in their fates' (Ibid). Still, the third female lead, Miss Colepepper, is described as 'the only person in whom the audience feels inclined to take any interest' (Ibid). Miss Colepepper, the daughter of the Commissioner of Badgerypore District, survived a housebreaking by the Indian mutineers thanks to the aid of Dexter. Throughout the play, her main purpose is to make her father know about Dexter's help, and her indebtedness to him leads to a romantic interest on both parts. Notwithstanding, Miss Colepepper is presented as a woman who prefers to avoid social obligations —she escapes the steamer's saloon to read a book and gaze at the skylight in Act II (Taylor *Overland* 1860: 28). In an exchange with Dexter after the wreckage, Miss Colepepper highlights female endurance:

> DEXTER: … Ah! Miss Colepepper, this is life —stripped to the buff. In our artificial world, men are so buckramed, and padded, and corksoled by aids and appliances, that they neither shew nor use their muscles. After all, we may have a few curs among us; but, on the whole, Englishmen peel well; don't they?
>
> MISS COLE: And Englishwomen?

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[32] The play finds inspiration in a recent wreckage of a Peninsular and Oriental steamer at the Red Sea.

DEXTER: What —*you* fishing for a compliment? (Taylor *Overland* 1860: 40)

Indeed, the play's female characters show great examples of female endurance after a physical displacement, all three overcoming a disastrous halt in their journeys —the wreckage. However, despite the play's colonial background, the social intrigues binding the characters with one another overshadow the identity reconfiguration of British women abroad. Additionally, their discomfort in the public spaces of the play further contributes to their perceived of 'out-of-placedness' in such a foreign setting. Away from home, the women from Taylor's play have to struggle with their own femininity in order to survive.

Taking advantage of the success of *The Overland Route*, Taylor created another comedy set in India: *Up at the Hills* (St. James' 22 October 1860). As a venue typically managed by women, the St. James' Theatre was 'in the heart of fashionable London' and thus attracted a particularly polite, middle-class audience (Bratton 2011: 8, 158).[33] Indeed, under the management of the Wigan matrimony from 1860 to 1863, the St. James' prospered with a comic repertoire, patronizing burlesques, dramas of French inspiration, farces, and spectacular extravaganzas. In *Up at the Hills,* Taylor sought to bring a glimpse of Anglo-Indian society to the metropolis, discussing topics such as British women's social morality while in the Station, the soldiers' dubious entertainments, and the reversal of roles in matrimony.

Set 'at a hill station in India', the play focuses on the story of two women: Mrs (Isabella) Colonel Mc Cann —played by Leonora Wigan, the manager— and Mrs.

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[33] Bratton lists the St. James' succession of women tenants and managers: Jenny Vertpré managed the French players in 1835, and was followed by Laura Seymour in 1854 and Fanny Wyndham 1859–60; entering the 1860s, the managers were Leonora Wigan 1860–2, Ruth Herbert 1864–8, Mlle De la Ferte in 1868, and Mrs. John Wood between 1869 and 1874 (Bratton 2011: 8).

(Clara) Eversleigh —played by Ruth Herbert—. As a young widow, Mrs. Eversleigh becomes the 'hostess' of both the audience and the rest of the characters, inviting us to her bungalow in the Indian Hills.[34] With a view of the Himalaya, the play gives vague hints of the geographical situation of the scene, a lack of attention to detail that *The Saturday Review* cared to address:

> People who stay at home must of course borrow their ideas of things abroad from the reports of travelers, who proverbially tell strange tales… Even at the present day, when an unprecedented interest in Indian affairs has been excited by the thrilling horrors of the still recent mutinies, the mass of educated people have no very clear idea whether the Hills are in Bengal or Madras. (6 July 1861: 10)

Even though the newspaper goes on to remark the improbability of the events of the play, Taylor's depiction of Anglo-Indian society got the attention of a large audience, especially due to its resemblance to his previous hit, *The Overland Route* (*Globe* 30 October 1860).[35] In *Up at the Hills,* Taylor tells the story of a young widow, Mrs. Eversleigh, who had exchanged flirtatious letters with Major Stonihurst before her widowhood. Stonihurst, a despicable man who takes advantage of everything and everyone, threatens her to discover their 'criminal conversation' if she does not agree to marry him. However, his plan is ruined after the wife of the Station's Colonel, Mrs. Mc Cann arrives to Mrs. Eversleigh's bungalow and asserts her omnipresent influence, tricking a young ayah (or Indian maid) named Monee to steal the accusatory letters from his bungalow, and leaving him with no proof of Mrs. Eversleigh's 'carelessness'.

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[34] While it is unclear the actual geographical placement of the play, the stage directions in Scene First indicate the sight of '*Himalayah rhododrons*', and a view of '*the vast ridges and profound valleys of the Himalayahs*' (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 3).

[35] A year after its first performance, *The Homeward Mail from India, China and the East* also echoed the lack of veracity in Taylor's description of Anglo-Indian life (17 July 1861).

Following the 'dangerous flirtation' of the widow Mrs. Eversleigh with Major Stonihurst, the audience learns about her dependability on him, and about his aggressive advances to marry her before her year of mourning runs out. Away from the respectability and security of her own home in the motherland, Mrs. Eversleigh is introduced as an unprotected, clueless widow abandoned at her mercy in India. As the story progresses, we understand Mrs. Eversleigh's indebtedness to Stonihurst, who has been helping her with receipts, accounts, and even clothing matters. Her unprotectedness at the Hills is manifested through a series of physical indispositions: she is discovered reclining languidly in a lounging chair, surrounded by her Indian servants (3), and only shows '*great animation*' at the appearance of Stonihurst (6). Her physical 'revival' when she is around her male suitor emphasizes her dependency on him, as well as her physical displacement at such a setting without her (late) husband or children to take care of.[36] As the lone lady of the house, without her husband, she is exposed to the merchants and home servants' scams, and, as Mrs. Mac Cann attests, now that she has lost her husband, her 'tie to India is severed' (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 25).[37]

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[36] *The Saturday Review* went on to comment on the daily lives of British women in India:

> For a lady in India is commonly deprived of those home duties and occupations which brighten and give a perpetual charm to the domestic hearth in England. The care and education of her own children are denied to the mother in a country where she most needs such employment. If not prepared to part with them at an early age, she must run the risk of losing them altogether; and what has she to supply their place and lighten the oppressive leisure which their absence has created? The Englishwoman at home may escape from the dullness and solitude of her own drawing-room by out door exercise and amusements at any hour of the day throughout the year; but the killing sun or merciless hot breeze generally keeps her less fortunate sister in the East a close prisoner to the house, from sunrise to sunset, all the year round. (6 July 1861: 10)

Indeed, as Wagner argues, 'a traveling wife was protected by the presence of her husband against the most powerful of terrorizing influences, namely the solitude, which magnifies perils and weakens resistance' (2015: 176).

[37] Stonihurst preys on Mrs. Eversleigh and makes her believe she would be lost without him:

> STONI: … those fellows would eat you up alive, unprotected female as you are, if you were left to fight them single-handed. But you will be out of your mourning soon. (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 6)

Perhaps it is Mrs. Eversleigh's commented beauty (especially if we take into account the reputation of the actress Ruth Herbert's beauty) what also positions her at the center of the plot as a token for protection.[38] Throughout the play, her moral respectability and her physical integrity are at test; however, in both cases, she is saved by a woman, Mrs. Colonel Mc Cann:

> MRS. EVER: And I have to thank you for this.
>
> MRS. MC C: Yes; without affectation I may say you *have* —nobody but me.
>
> MRS. EVER: I could not have slept with that sword suspended over my head.
>
> MRS. MC C: A sword of your own forging too —they are always the sharpest; and now, good night.
>
> MRS. EVER: Good night.
>
> MRS. MC C: *(taking up her hair)* I don't wonder the flies are caught in this golden web! Poor Tunstall! Is he to be the next eaten, you insatiable little spider? (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 56)

Mrs. Colonel Mc Cann's remark on Mrs. Everslight's beauty as 'entangling' spider web for men partly puts the blame on her. Additionally, Mrs. Eversleigh' flirtatious letters to Stonihurst while she was still married are used as the backbone for female motivation. The menace of making public a 'criminal conversation' and the fear of losing her reputation leads the female protagonist to participate in dubious practices.

Isabella Mc Cann is described as the leader of the Station, in spite of 'only' being the wife of the Colonel. The soldiers rely on her for everything, and affirm that the

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[38] I further describe Ruth Herbert's popularity amongst mid-Victorian audiences in Section 3.3.1.

regiment would 'go to smithereens in a month' if it was not for her work (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 10). Greenway, a military officer, describes her position in the Station:

> GREENWAY: … all the fellows in Our's swear by Mrs. Colonel Mac —she's as good as a mother to us, lectures us and lends us money, and helps us out of scrapes with old Mac Cann. (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 10)

As a 'mother', as Greenway says, Mrs. Mac Cann has the obligation —but also the inclination— to care for the members of her Station. As such, she is aware of every gossip lingering about, and is able to exert her authority even at a house that is not her own. At Mrs. Everleigh's bungalow, Mrs. Mac Cann practically behaves as if it were her own, letting herself in when the hostess is absent and bringing along her two nieces, Kate and Margaret. Her self-position as leader of the community allows her to move along the Station and the Hills at wish, and to quarrel with Stonihurst for Mrs. Eversleigh's reputation. Mrs. Mac Cann's manipulations of the Indian ayah, Monee, and her close relationship with his husband's officers, allow her to outwit Stonihurst and save her friend. Mrs. Mac Cann faces social intrigue in a war-like manner:

> MRS. MC C: Now to the decisive charge of my Waterloo! I've not felt so like being nervous since the first time Hector went into action. (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 50)

In the end, her social manipulations prove successful both for her friend and for her own benefit, as she manages to find acceptable suitors for her just-arrived, 'redundant' nieces. Kate and Margaret displacement to the colony highlight the mid-Victorian

period's 'redundancy of middle-class single women' (Dreher 1993: 3).[39] This situation of 'redundant' women had emerged after the 1851 British census revealed a 'statistical surplus of women'; this data, in combination with the unmarriageable, unemployable situation of many women, provoked the public questioning of the established gender roles. At the same time that the debate of the 'Woman Question' commented on the employment prospects for women from all classes, the surplus of women instigated the necessity of re-evaluation of gender divisions.

In response to such 'problem', feminists of the era patronized female emigration as best 'remedy' for idleness, and as effective means to 'make women happy' (Dreher 1993: 5). The feminist take on emigration differs from *The Illustrated Times'* defence of female emigration as quest for doing 'women's work' outside England —marriage and childbearing— (June 14 1862); in turn, feminist groups leaded by the Langham Place and Maria Rye's *Female Middle-Class Emigration Society* emphasized emigration's main goal of 'independence' and not matrimony (*The English Woman's Journal* March 1861).[40] However, the controversy over the lack of eligible British females in the colonies propitiated the conservative critics' insistences on women's 'natural' work to be done abroad. Thus, a number of women travelled to the colonies in search of a husband. Perhaps as an overstatement, De Courcy describes how

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[39] Dreher references William Rathbone Greg's essay 'Why are women redundant?' (1862), published in the *National Review*. For Greg, the surplus of women were redundant due to their impossibility to fulfil their 'natural' role: marrying a man and bearing children.

[40] Ruiz establishes the *Female Middle Class Emigration Society* (1861–1886) and the *Women's Emigration Society* (1880–1884) as pioneering models of emigration societies in England. As she contends, both were 'short-lived' and eventually problematic due to internal hierarchical power relations (2017). Ruiz (2017) proposes the 1880s as 'decade of paramount importance in the history of British emigration', while I suggest the 1860s as a prelude to the fin-de-siècle's women's rights movement.

in England, a land where women outnumbered marriageable men, a girl without beauty, money or grand relations had little hope [of making a good match]; in India, she was showered with immediate proposals. (2012)[41]

In spite of such an exaggerated statement, women were in fact travelling to the colonies in hopes of profitable matrimony. The custom of sending women to colonial settlements highlights the commodity-like nature of women at the time; like 'trading goods', cargoes of eligible women were shipped to India in order to achieve the Imperial enterprise of the British nation. In this sense, female physical mobility outside the country reinforced established gender roles and constrained the possibilities of women's identity formation. For this reason, many feminists opposed female emigration due to its methods of female confinement in the household. This was because of the usually available jobs offered to female emigrants, generally limited to governess or housemaid. For some feminists, staying in the country would exert pressure on the employment regulations for women and would open up new, desired paths for female enterprise. Hammerton explains how feminists believed that, female emigration was 'an unjust safety valve to siphon off pressure for progressive reform' ([1977] 2013: 57).

In *Up at the Hills,* Kate and Margaret remain unaware of the 'moral atmosphere' and the lingo of the colonial settlement. Their displacement to the colony has a sole purpose: that of finding matrimony. Mrs. Mac Cann comments on the girls' initial out-of-placedness in the settlement:

> MRS. MC C: I've brought my nieces, Katie Neil and Margaret Lovel… they
> arrived at Calcutta on consignment to me just as I was starting, so

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[41] Women travelling to the colonies in search of matrimony were often labelled as 'fishing fleets'. The purpose of 'catching' a rich Company civilian or military officer was incentive enough for those who were willing to fit in society's canons of domestic ideology.

as I had no eligible chaperon to turn them over to, I was forced to bring 'em along with me. After all, Clara, they're likely to do better up here at the Hills, than at the Station.

MRS. EVER: *(aside to her)* Don't make the poor girls uncomfortable.

MRS. MC C: Oh, bless you, they don't understand me any more than if I was talking Tarmul, do you dears? Katie is simplicity itself in a riding habit, and Patty is innocence in a mushroom hat. (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 17)

As the play goes on and they find acceptable suitors for marriage, we understand that the girls had been sent to India with such purpose in mind, and that their destiny was in the sole hands of their aunt, Mrs. Mac Cann. Their situation reminds us of the previously mentioned 'fishing fleets' of women who travelled to India in search of profitable marriages. Both Katie and Margaret are transformed by their stay in the Hills, getting used to the housemaids and complaining about the heat and the idleness. Their initial displacement in the settling is manifested in their physical uneasiness around the native servants or ayahs; after a short period of time, the girls grow accustomed to the rules of the colonies and fully take on their roles as leaders of the household, thus requiring the assistance of the ayahs and reaffirming their perceived superiority in the colony. Margaret is convinced of their 'civilising' duty as Englishwomen in the colonies:

MARGAR: … I hoped I might do a little teaching among the poor heathen children! But I don't feel as if I could manage it.

KATIE: Why should you trouble yourself? Mr. Greenway says white ladies in India mustn't do anything but give orders, or the natives will look down on them.

MARGAR: But it's our duty to teach them, poor things, and set them an example of industry and independence, you know. (Taylor *Hills* 1860: 34)

The representation of a wife's domestic and educational duty while in a colony is repeated throughout the plays of the 1860s. On stage, the colonial wife is usually 'shipped' to her waiting husband-to-be. These kind of pre-arranged matrimonies often provoke in the bride a feeling of displacement, especially after their arrival to a land so different from her own. In there, these characters find the purpose of replicating the Western ideal of domesticity and establishing prosperous families. In Burnand and Williams' *Isle of St. Tropez* (St. James' 19 December 1860), the displacement of the colonial wife is evident, as she is 'removed' from her own place. Henri, the white settler, compares matrimony to prison and a wife's duty to a debt of gratitude.

ESTELLE: Henri, you are much to blame. You took this young girl [Amelie] away from Paris, where she'd been used to gaiety and society, and brought her to this island. She sacrificed everything for you, and yet you love her not.

HENRI: … she was but performing as she thought, a duty, and paying a debt of gratitude… she followed me as a slave follows his master, she came to this place as a prisoner condemned to exile. (Burnand and Williams 1860: 30)

Burnand and Williams' version of the French melodrama *La Dame de St. Tropez* was

staged at the St. James' with great success, and the performance of Mrs. Herbert as the

protagonist Amelie was equally praised for her 'grace and fervour' (*Morning Post* 21

December 1860).[42] In this circumstance, the colonial wife is a mere object to be

exchanged to erase a debt: Amelie marries Henri to save her father from bankruptcy. As

Henri says when realizing Amelie's 'duty', her sacrifice to solve her father's debt

includes her displacement to 'exile', out of 'gaiety and society'. By being physically

removed from the city of Paris, Amelie is forced to reconfigure her identity, and

transform herself into a colonial wife.[43]

On other occasions, the presence of a white woman in a colonial setting

guarantees its correct functioning. For instance, in the Britannia's anonymous *The

Prairie Flower* (16 November 1860), a young French settler in America establishes a

controversial romantic relationship with Zuletta, a 'bright eyed Indian beauty' (*Prairie*

1860: 3).[44] In spite of this, the protagonist, who is also named Henri, has not forgotten

his French love, Eugenie. Eugenie arrives from Paris to Henri's settlement with

intentions to marry him. In a similar melodramatic take, the City of London's *Cahontas,*

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[42] The story was also adapted the following year at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, under the name of *The Island Home* (Calvert 30 March 1861). Reworked into a British story, the female protagonist was named 'Margaret Blake' and was in the same situation of indebtedness to the male protagonist, a debt erased after the celebration of their marriage.

[43] The manuscript record on the Lord Chamberlain's Catalogue of Plays registers the name 'Julie' instead of 'Amelie' (British Library Add. MS 52999 K). According to the *Morning Post* and *The Era*'s reviews, the character was finally named 'Amelie' on opening day (*Morning Post* 21 December 1860; *The Era* 23 December 1860).

[44] The East End's Britannia was known for its vast melodrama production during the mid-century, even though it also featured celebrated burlesques, farces, Shakespearean drama, and pantomimes (Norwood 2009: 135). Norwood identifies playwright Colin Hazlewood as the main contributor to the 1860s melodramatic repertoire of the Britannia, who in 1860 adapted the *Everybody's Journal* serial *The Three Lives* (1859–60), Boucicault's play *The Colleen Bawn* (1860), and Dinah Maria Mulock Craik's novel *A Life for a Life* (1859). For further information about the Britannia's repertoire from the mid-century onwards, consult Norwood (2009).

the Delaware's Daughter (Anonymous 18 April 1860) also partakes in the role of the white woman as token for the family. Set in the early colonial era, *Cahontas* readapts the tale of the Native-American woman in love with the white colonizer. The central character of Cahontas is introduced as the female version of the 'noble savage', while its white counterpart, Mary, represents English femininity.[45] Mary's role in the play is that of reestablishing the social and familial order in the colonial settling. After her supposed death, her husband, Rolfe, had 'married' a native girl. Mary's return —and the eventual death of Cahontas— restore the 'natural order'. Cahontas last words before her passing, attest Mary's purpose in the colony:

> CAHONT: … *(to Mary)* Dear Lady, forgive the wrong the poor untutored Indian maiden did you, and may the Great Spirit forgive me too. Love him as I did, and may your lives for the future be unruffled by a care. Farewell, I'm going from you…
>
> *Kisses the children, leads them to Rolfe and Mary, then joins the hands of the latter. Fixes her eyes on Rolf and dies gazing on him.*
>
> (Anon *Cahontas* 1860: 21)

In both *The Prairie Flower* and *Cahontas*, the displaced white woman arrives to a colonial setting to assert her moral superiority. Both Henri and Rolfe, away from their motherlands, had established dangerous relationships with the native women. As Buzard attests, especially after the 1857 Indian Mutiny the boundaries between colonizers and colonized were reinforced (2007: 438–55). A renewed interest in the emigration of British women to the colonies made evident the racialist fears and the

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[45] Hazlewood also incorporates the figure of the female 'noble savage' in *The gorilla hunt in the Forests of Gabon* (Britannia 11 December 1863).

Imperial mission of preserving the British national character abroad. In addition, in the midst of the Contagious Disease Acts, the colonies sought to sever all suspicious ties binding the native women with their soldiers or settlers; thus, the colony wife was reinforced as Empire builder, 'extirpating' the menace of interracial relationships.[46]

In this sense, it would be a mistake to affirm that physical travelling outside the city liberated Victorian women from domestic confines; as stated above, their physical displacement did not erase the patriarchal discourse that ruled their personal identity and behaviour. However, their identity as 'white' colonizers often superimposed that of 'woman', especially when they were travelling to colonial settings (Blunt 1994; Foster and Mills 2002). Their perception of racial superiority, along with their previously mentioned moral supremacy, allowed for a situation where female colonizers could 'engage with the domestic abroad… both to accede to their own culture's restraints… and to enable questioning of re-visioning' of their own (Foster and Mills 2002: 95).

Part of that Imperial mission of the white woman abroad was repeated when her travel was only for leisure. On the Victorian stage, the British female tourist was mainly represented in a comical way, with the gag often being her difficulties to adapt in her new physical environment. During the 1860s, not many plays include female tourists among their plotlines. In Taylor's *The Brigand and His Banker* (Lyceum 1 October 1860), we can find two British female tourists, Miss Porcupine and Mary Ann, and a native returning to her home, Mademoiselle Photini.[47] Photini, played by Madame

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[46] In Taylor's *Up at the Hills* (St. James 22 October 1860), the final turn of Major Stonihurst marrying the ayah, Monee, would have shocked the audience, especially in light of the racialist discourse of the period.

[47] Mademoiselle Photini is the daughter of the brigand, a 'young Greek lady… just fresh from a Parisian convent' returned to Athens to meet her father (*London Daily News* 2 October 1860). The *Morning Post* described her as 'a girl of refined intellect and romantic enthusiasm' (2

Celeste, emphasizes the pleasant feeling of returning home or, in other words, of being finally placed in one's proper place. She recognizes her homeland as her true, favoured background after living abroad in Paris:

> MLLE PHO: [at the mountains] *(looks about, inhales air with delight)* It seems like a dream —back at last among my darling mountains! My playground, my school room, my temple, my own blue sky overhead! … How often have I longed for this in those weary years of Parisian streets, of city sounds and city odours. My only change from the stagnation of the convent to the rattle of the boulevards!
>
> (Ibid: 3)

Set in Athens, Taylor's comedy profits from the travel intrigues of a group of tourists in Athens, Greece, after their kidnapping by a Greek brigand. While Madame Celeste, the manageress of the Lyceum at the time, was praised for her thorough work redecorating the venue, her choice for the opening piece was questioned by the critics (*The Literary Gazette* 6 October 1860: 279). As an adaptation of the French *Le Roi des Montagnes* (About 1857), Taylor's comedy did not convince neither the critics nor the audience, yet it was described as more of a 'pictorial spectacle than of a comic drama' due to its moving accidents and incidents, as well as its scenic imagery representing Mount Parnes (*Morning Post* 2 October 1860).

In spite of the weak reception, the play's subject on 'the perils of modern tourists' provides a vantage point from which we can examine the stock peculiarities of female tourists. Amongst these, Miss Porcupine stands out as 'a strong-minded British lady'

October 1860). Her true-heartedness is manifested in her attempts to liberate the tourists. Mlle Photini's stay in Paris was supposed to make 'a grande dame' of her (Taylor *Brigand* 1860: 3).

who has travelled to Athens with her niece, Mary Ann.[48] Mrs. Mary Keeley's performance was praised for her 'way of carrying the manners of Portland Place to Mount Parnes' (*The Literary Gazette* 6 October 1860: 279), which remarked the character's out of placedness in Greece. At the beginning of the play, we discover Miss Porcupine as a 'proper' Victorian English lady, who insists on carrying a *Murray's Handbook* to the mountains and who asserts her identity as English. Indeed, Foster and Mills have suggested that in their displacements, female travellers were advised to adhere to a 'domestic familiarity' that allowed them to remain orientated to their own motherland (2002: 8–9).

> MISS POR: Where's that guide?... tell him I beg he'll keep himself to himself, say we're English and when we pay a person to guide us, we don't like his gossiping with strangers… we hired this person for a pleasant little excursion into the mountains and here he has kept us all day clambering among the most horrid precipices. (Taylor *Brigand* 1860: 4)

Miss Porcupine's physical displacement is evident in her uncomfortableness in the mountains, especially after the rest of the tourists suggest having a picnic outside. Her 'dignified' position heavily contrasts with that of her young niece, Mary Anne, who keeps gazing at the nature and at the prospect of adventure in a delighted way. Mary Anne's eagerness for physical displacement is thus attributed to her youth, while Miss Porcupine's stern manner goes hand in hand with her assumed moral and racial

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[48] The Athenaeum highlighted the 'strong-minded' Miss Porcupine as the most interesting character of the play (Athenaeum 6 October 1860: 457).

superiority. As the stock character of the 'strong-minded woman', Miss Porcupine remains adamant to complying with the others' warnings of robbers in the mountains:

> MISS POR: Brigands, indeed —don't talk to me about brigands, my dear. Doesn't Murray say there are no brigands? Besides, aren't we English? If anybody dare touch a hair in our heads, isn't there the Embassy, the Admiral, and Lord Palmerston? (Ibid: 7)

Her blind dependency on a compatriot's book and her dignified stance as an English traveler, testify to the racial and imperial sentiments of the era. She believes she is untouchable due to her privileged position as a white woman partly, but also due to her nationality. In a way, her physical embodiment of the English lady —her crinolined ensemble— reaffirms her identity, in spite of her 'removal' from British society and British land. In H. J. Byron's *Fra Diavolo; or, the Beauty and the Brigands* (Strand 10 September 1860), the threat upon the English female tourist is not only monetary, but also sexual.[49] Lady Allcash, described as a 'lady making her first Tour' (Byron *Fra* 1860: 2) has to resist the 'romantic' advances of Fra Diavolo, the leader of the brigand, while Lord Allcash takes some liberties to seduce the Inn's barmaid, Zerlina. In this occasion, Byron's burlesque exploits the picturesque backgrounds of 'romantic' Italian landscapes and, similarly to the previously mentioned plays, exposes the tourist's exposure to 'depravity' or 'sexual temptation' outside their homes. Thus, a strong feeling of displacement is translated on stage as a perceived 'deviation' or chaotic situation in which the reputation and moral integrity of the female character is put at test.

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[49] Byron's *Fra Diavolo* was first staged at the Strand in April 5th, 1858. Adapted from Auber's eponymous Italian opera and under the management of Miss Ada Swanborough, Byron's version continued to gain the favour of the public.

Female incursions to the continent and the British colonies increased as the illusion of imperial stability settled, and especially during the second half of the century, tourism to colonial settlements attracted a great number of women. As Robinson-Tomsett attests, the pleasure, intra-national trips of middle-class women during the Victorian period used to be concealed in favour of sensational narrations of continental travel and colonial experiences (2013). Back in the metropolis, the newspapers offered countless travel stories of women, usually surrounding international, colonial events like the Indian Mutiny of May 1857, and the Crimean War.[50] These stories perpetuated stereotypes of the female traveller, usually differentiating between the lone, eccentric traveller —such as Mary Kingsley, Isabella Bird, and Ida Pfeiffer— and the companion —military and civil servant wives.[51] As one might expect, the stories written by women usually reflected the authoresses' own femininity and 'domesticity' to avoid moral scrutiny. Consequently, in their stories, authoresses submissively admitted their sex's inability to contribute to wider socio-anthropological dialogues and usually defended their own writing as personal observations and experiences.[52] Their rhetoric hints at a

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[50] The stories surrounding Nana Sahib, the rebel leader of the Indian Mutiny, were echoed in the metropolis in female-authored stories and survival tales. This event was much commented in London, due to the gruesome nature of the Indian soldiers' revolt and the (unproved) massacre of British wives and children (Ghose 1998: 6). As for the Crimean War, Frances Isabella Duberly (commonly known as the 'Crimean Heroine') accompanied her husband to war and published a sensationalist tale *A Journal Kept during the Russian War* (1855). For further information on Mrs. Duberly, see Kelly (2007).

[51] Murias describes Mary Kingsley's own displacement in the metropolis at her return from her African explorations. Her out-of-placedness leads Kingsley to identify as 'the sea-serpent of the season', a fascinating yet somehow repellent creature (Murias 2012: 219).

[52] Blunt references Mary Kingsley's self-deprecation in her writings: Kingsley introduces herself as 'only a woman' (1994: 1). Elsewhere, Isabel Burton highlights the shortcomings of her own sex in an 1859 letter to her mother: 'I wish I were a man. If I were I would be Richard Burton; but, being only a woman, I would be Richard Burton's wife' (Lovell 1998: 331).

prevalent patriarchal construction of women as inferior (Blunt 1994: 1) and highlights the identity constrictions of female travellers outside the metropolis.[53]

It is very rare to find a representative of the self-sufficient female traveller in popular plays from the 1860s. In the two occasions I shall further explore, these characters condemn the physical endurance and the active lifestyles of the professional female traveller. Both examples mirror contemporary female travel writers and subvert their identities as rarities. The most prominent example is that of Columbia Cosmos Cook, from Charles Mathews' comedy *The Soft Sex* (Haymarket 31 August 1861).[54] The purpose of the play, as the *Morning Post* asserts, was

> to make game of Bloomerism, to hold up to ridicule strong-minded women, and to show that a graceful and gentle demeanor and a strict regard to domestic affairs are the qualities which men prize most highly in their wives, and which also conduce most effectively to the happiness of the married state. (2 September 1861: 5)

Indeed, the play partakes on the era's debate over the femininity ideal and the 'exposure' of young women to 'fastness', immorality, and overall improper domestic behavior. Columbia Cosmos Cook is interpreted by Mrs. Wilkins, a habitual in the Haymarket during Buckstone's management. Even though Columbia Cosmos Cook's name evokes in the audience the respectable explorer James Cook, she was described as

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[53] The travel narratives of women abroad were usually addressed to a friend or as journals from private entries. On the printed media, these were usually anonymous, like *The Inner Life of a Shipwreck: A Lady's Narrative, Addressed to a Friend* (*Temple Bar* January 1864: 251–65).

[54] Mathews' comedy might remind of Mark Lemon's previous *The Ladies' Club* (Olympic 1841), where a group of middle-class women solve their idleness establishing a private club. Their debates over the rights of women resonated with the audience, who remembered the play throughout the following years.

a full-blown widow of peripatetic propensities —a Mungo Park in petticoats, who has travelled by herself from the equator to either pole, and who is as proud of the development of her muscles… as if she were a prize-fighter. (*Morning Post* 2 September 1861)

Mrs. Cook subverts and mocks the audiences' mental image of the explorer and offers a laughable female version instead. In Mathews' comedy, the Biggins household is shaken up when Mr. Biggins, an old widower, brings an American woman —Miss Priscilla Cram— as governess for his two daughters, Harriet and Julia. Miss Cram, as one would suspect, turns the girls' education with her 'American ways'. As a guest of Miss Cram, Columbia Cosmos Cook arrives to the Biggins household when the girls' behavior has already been changed. Mrs. Cook, a widow, introduces herself in an assertive manner, entering to the Biggins house unannounced, and making herself comfortable:

COOK: Columbia Cosmos Cook, traveler, naturalist, botanist, a member of the Scientific Institutes of Stockholm, Edinburg, Philadelphia, and Mishmi Novgorod… interested with various scientific missions from Belgium, Sweden, and the Brazils… author of a comparative flora of the Cordilleras, the Andes, and a corrected map of the African Sahara, six papers on the mountains of the moon. Admired, honored, and even adored wherever I have presented myself and above all, universally respected.

BIGGINS: I am lost in admiration.

COOK: I can imagine it. Made prisoner by the Japanese pirates for six whole months in 1852… sold on the banks of the Niger in '56 and

shut up in the harem of the sultan of Yianri… enrolled among the amazon troops of the King of Nahomi in '57. I introduced the European drill and was honoured by the especial affection of the Prince himself… after losing my two first husbands… (Mathews 1861: 59–60)

During her stay at the Biggins house, Mrs. Cook asserts her independence by rejecting Biggins' arm for walking about and by carelessly smoking in the presence of the two men of the house. Mrs. Cook, as token of the strong-minded female traveler, is put at test by the play's 'Angel in the House', Ida. In a conversation discussing female ambition, Ida remarks Mrs. Cook's displacement from the feminine ideal remarking her lack of 'femininity', resulting from her unrestrained physical mobility throughout the globe (Ibid: 83).[55] Mrs. Cook freedom of movement allows her to attempt to seduce Solon, a solicitor who arrives to evict the Biggins family. However, her lack of charm is made evident by his remarks about her body, which features an 'enormous waist' and 'elephantine limbs'; in turn, she proudly boasts about her biceps and muscles (Ibid: 123–4).

Columbia Cosmos Cook embodies the patriarchal defiance of female professional travelers and travel writers. On stage, her physical displacement is also a symbol of her removal from 'respectable' society, plaguing the script with hints for the audience about her out of placedness in the feminine sphere. Her body is disfigured with the purpose of condemning the traveler woman as degenerate. Her unconventional regard of society and of physical and metaphorical boundaries, make of her the perfect example of the

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[55] I shall further scrutinise Mathews's *The Soft Sex* (Haymarket 1862) in Sections 3.3.1. and 3.3.2.. The play features a list of contrasting female characters that fall into the period's stereotypes of the 'True Woman', the 'fast girl', and the 'strong-minded woman'.

defying mid-Victorian woman, searching to expand the definition of 'woman' one trip at a time.

While Columbia Cosmos Cook is a widow, Biddy Cook, is a married woman. As a comic relief in the melodrama *The White Indian; or, the Renegade's Daughter* (Victoria 10 April 1860), Biddy Cook is introduced as an American girl, travelling with her husband, Ezram Cook, through the forests of America. The play features the inevitable encounter with Indian tribes, to which Biddy, instead of recoiling in fear, remains valiant. In a contradictory example, Biddy reaffirms herself in the wilderness, while her husband longs for the comforts of the home:

> EZRAM: Oh, what wouldn't I give to be back home again once more, sitting by the fire eating a dollop of gruel. Lor, how my belly goes grumble, oh why did I give up my snug business of belling office. What an ass to give up hosses.
>
> BIDDY: Don't stand mumbling there, sir, or we never shall get out of the forest. Oh if I was only a man, what wouldn't I do. It's high time you took to petticoats and I donned the— (*White Indian* 1860: 23)

Biddy's discourse reminds of that of Isabel Burton, wife of Richard Burton and also an explorer, who wished to live 'a wild, roving, vagabond life' (Lovell 1998: 330). Her desires to step outside the feminine boundaries and going on adventures further explain her physical displacement —yet, instead of being placed at an uncomfortable position, her desires of adventure are fulfilled. Biddy turns the situation into an occasion for profit:

> BIDDY: … When I get home I shall turn authoress and print a book on the fearful adventures of Biddy Cook —I shall not be able to say

anything about Ezram because he's such a coward. Talk about

Uncle Tom's Cabin? Why, the adventures of Biddy Cook shall

shame them all. I've done my fortune's made, I'm a heroine.

(*White Indian* 1860: 26)

Biddy is a secondary character in the Victoria's melodrama, meant to provoke laughter

in the public and not respect. Her behavior can be perceived as 'silly' or 'boastful', and

the audience would have known about the reproachable nature of female travelers who

turned to writing as a profitable career. As I have previously mentioned, their out of

placedness in the scientific and political discourses made them retort to observational

retellings of their travels, being always forced to remark their texts' private nature.[56]

Modesty and 'freedom from pretension' were, according to Davenport, two of the most

becoming traits of the female travel writer (1882: 215).[57]

These characters' activeness contradicts the decade's simplistic definition of

femininity and thus, exposes the incipient anxieties over gender. Represented on stage

as peculiar women of dubious morality, their displacement could be perceived as

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[56] After the publication of Lady Duff-Gordon's *Letters From Egypt, 1863–65* (1865), *Fraser's Magazine* praises the text's 'freshness and informality' (November 1865: 588). As personal recollections from Lady Duff-Gordon's two-years' residence in Egypt, the book would 'portray pictures of social Arab life' in an 'unforgettable manner'. The magazine's final 'apology' on behalf of the authoress, legitimizes her book's publication:

> The reader will understand at once that these letters were not written specially for publication; and it is their freshness and informality which constitute one of their chief charms; but in giving them to the public, as Mrs. Austin explains in the preface, literally as they were written, she has acted wisely, and is entitled, with her accomplished daughter, to the thanks of the public for a volume that once read will not easily be forgotten. (*Fraser's Magazine* November 1865: 588)

Two years later, the same magazine featured a diary entry of a 'young girl' entitled *First Impressions of America* (October 1867: 534–40). The magazine's footnote reads: 'these pages have no other pretension than that of being genuine extracts from the journal of a very youthful lady visitor to the United States' (*Fraser* October 1867: 534).

[57] In such a manner, Davenport describes the real life traveller Ida Pfeiffer. As he remarks, 'if a spirit like hers, so daring, so persevering, so tenacious, had been given to a man, history would have counted a Magellan or a Captain Cook the more' (1882: 215–6).

uncomfortable to some. In the end, characters like Columbia Cosmos Cook force a situation where female identity can be discussed in different settings, and where the autonomy of the female traveler is put at test. In the following section I shall explore the effects of involuntary displacements in the characters from the decade.

2.3.3. Violent journeys and forced displacements

One of the most repeated characters in the 1860s drama is that of the kidnapped or abducted female. Especially in melodrama, but also in pantomimes and burlesques, we can find 'ladies in distress' who, as previously mentioned, scream for the salvation of the hero. In sensation stories, the melodramatic heroine takes center stage and reclaims the attention of the audience, maintaining an active, suffering stance for the whole of the play (Newey 2018: 149). In pantomimes and burlesques, the female lead comically escapes the clutches of the villain and momentarily transforms herself into an active, valiant woman. As I shall see, their physical displacements and transformations are a result of what I have previously introduced as 'violent journeys' (Powell 2012).

In George Conquest's melodrama *The Pirate's Love; or, the Ocean Birds of Prey* (Grecian 6 September 1860), the scenography transports the audience to the Northern coast of France.[58] As a melodrama with nautical tints, the play includes scenes depicting

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[58] George Conquest had studied four years in France and attended a course at the Royal Academy, which had equipped him with a 'wide Continental culture', a bilingual education, and a disposition to adapt French plays (Fleetwood 1913: 80). Some of Conquest's pantomimes at the Grecian during the 1860s were written in collaboration with Henry Spry, being the most praised *The Blue Bird of Paradise* (Grecian 19 December 1861), *The Spider and the Fly* (Grecian 26 December 1862), and *Harlequin Rik-Rak* (Grecian 24 December 1867), an adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). Better known as a pantomime author and actor, Conquest excelled in acrobatic features on his pantomimes, especially during his residence at the Grecian. The Grecian remained in the hands of the Conquest family from 1851 to 1879, who fostered a spectacular atmosphere with flying ballets, acrobatic effects, and stage

the deck of a pirate ship, where most of the plot is represented. The female presence in the play is scant, featuring only three female characters out of thirteen. However, the relationship between the two female protagonists overshadows the rest of the male intrigues and raises questions of feminine ideology. The leading ladies are introduced as completely antagonistic: Vigo is the threatening daughter of a pirate Captain, whereas Louisa is the 'virginal' daughter of a Doctor.

Vigo has a say in her own identity and placement, especially after she introduces herself as 'the Tigress of the Sea', an imposing epithet that makes others shrink in terror. For Vigo, her social displacement allows her to define herself away from the 'respectable', modifying her own image and identity according to her wishes. However, Louisa's displacement after her orphanhood is uncomfortable, making her mourn her deceased family and go in search of her remaining relative in Santo Domingo. In the play, Louisa is only able to find 'a purpose' after establishing a romantic relationship with Vautrieu. Thus, Louisa's motives change, as she is able to re-place herself within socially accepted boundaries.

Louisa's displacement outside the home is emphasized by comparing her to Vigo. Louisa's first interaction with Vigo occurs in Act II, Scene ii, when she enters a tavern in search of an available ship to take her to her grandmother. The scene makes evident the displacement of Louisa in such a public space, who is compared to Vigo's easy-going attitude in a public house. The women's first encounter highlights a contrast in their gender roles and their own embodiment of femininity. Simone, the tavern-keeper, approaches both women in an attempt to fully understand their (female) identity:

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mechanics. See Fleetwood (1913) for a thorough analysis of the Conquest family and their managerial roles at the Grecian and the Surrey.

LOUISA:	Who is this woman?
SIMONE:	I don't know, it's the first time I've seen her!
LOUISA:	What an extraordinary appearance.
SIMONE:	(*to Vigo*) what does Madame require?
VIGO:	Nothing!
SIMONE:	Then, pray, what business may you have here?
VIGO:	(*drawing dagger. Noise heard*) Who are these people?
SIMONE:	Sailors! (Conquest 1860: 10–11)

After the first encounter, Louisa is consternated by Vigo's appearance: 'what a wild appearance she has. I tremble!'. While Louisa avoids speaking to Vigo directly, Vigo immediately addresses her and invites her to dinner. In an attempt to put both women in a safe space, Simone invites them into a private area, out of the reach of the male sailors and clients of the tavern:

VIGO:	Serve me a dinner for two, your best wines!
SIMONE:	Will my Lady enter this apartment? She will be more private.
VIGO:	No!
SIMONE:	Will Mademoiselle, then?
LOUISA:	Thank you, I will wait there. How strange is this woman! (*Exit*)

(Conquest 1860: 11)

Throughout the rest of the play, Vigo's outspokenness and active nature as the female captain of a pirate ship emphasize Louisa's 'true femininity'. Louisa's physical displacement is visible in the occasions she is outside the home. She is represented as helpless and fragile during her visit to the tavern and in her forceful stay at the pirate deck. However, the feminine traits of Louisa make of her the perfect 'Angel in the

House', especially after nursing Vautrieu to life back in terra firma. Her abduction and estrangement on the pirate ship originate both her physical and mental displacement, instigating her transformation to find a place outside the home. Louisa's passivity throughout the play leads her to forget about her initial purpose —travelling to Santo Domingo to reunite with her grandmother— and makes her fall into the arms of the male protagonist. In a way, Louisa's 'violent journey' propitiates her reconsideration of self and motivates her replacement within a romantic plot.

Conquest addresses Vigo's problematic embodiment of femininity, disdaining her uncompliant behaviour. Echoing the period's female ideal, Vautrieu rejects Vigo in favour of Louisa. In a conversation, Vigo and Louisa discuss the true reason behind a man's love preferences:

VIGO: … but why loves he you —I also am young, beautiful, is it because you have a smooth fair skin? Is it because the blood which runs in your veins is purer than mine?

LOUISA: No, it is because he is powerful, I am weak, because he is brave, and I am timid, because he is violent and I am gentle, because his pride is to command, and mine is to obey, because —

VIGO: Because you are a woman such as nature ordained her to be whilst I — *(sights)* (Conquest 1860: 27)

Indeed, the power of melodrama to differentiate between hero and villain is also extended to the representation and questioning of female sexual morality. By presenting an active, 'degenerate' heroine such as Vigo, the play reinforces Louisa's ideal of femininity. Her abduction is a result of her reckless physical mobility outside the familial home. In the end, Louisa is chastised for her initiative to travel abroad on her

own, feeling completely out of place for the whole duration of the plot before her reuniting with the male hero. Thus, Conquest reinforces Victorian dichotomies of strong and soft sexes and perpetuates the period's gender ideology.

While Conquest's melodrama includes female abduction as marker of women's inherent helplessness, H. J. Byron's pantomime *Robinson Crusoe; or Harlequin Friday and the King of the Caribbee Islands* (Princess' 26 December 1860) features a kidnapped woman as motivator for the male protagonist's journey. Additionally, Jenny Pigtail is also abducted by a pirate, Will Atkins.[59] As a Boxing Day burlesque pantomime, Byron's *Robinson Crusoe* loosely follows Defoe's original story, creating new characters that fit into the genre's stock peculiarities. Thus, Byron creates Jenny Pigtail, the love interest of Crusoe. After a traditional opening of the burlesque in which Jenny's father rejects consenting to their wedding, Crusoe and Jenny are separated by the villains, a band of pirates leaded by Will Atkins. At the end of Scene I, Jenny is dragged out of the stage to the pirates' ship, which eventually shipwrecks and leaves the heroine stranded in an island with her captor.

As leading lady in distress, Jenny Pigtail's physical transformation after her abduction evokes that of the melodramatic heroine: '*Enter* WILL ATKINS, *followed by* JENNY PIGTAIL, *who has her hair down, and has the wild determined manner of melodramatic heroines in the Third Act*' (Byron 1860: 21). Jenny's dishevelled hair would act as signifier of her displacement from 'respectable' society, making the audience understand her extreme situation. In the same scene, Jenny embodies the ideal of female passivity, crying for her lover to come and rescue her:

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[59] Moore identifies in Will Atkins the tradition of the stage pirate, being 'William' a name typically associated with sailors, and 'Atkins' a surname usually linked to an 'unromantic ordinariness of tradesmen and servants' (2011: 233). Selby also exploits the figure of the pirate in his nautical extravaganza *The Pirates of Putney* (Royalty 31 August 1863).

JENNY: Oh, Crusoe! Crusoe! Oh, where art thou, Crusoe?

            … (in great despair, and very loudly) Oh, Crusoe! (Byron 1860:

            21)

However, Jenny finds courage in her new situation and steals Atkins' pistol to defend

her —sexual— honour:[60]

ATKINS: *(fiercely)* You shall be mine, whether willin' or not.

            (Music —as he advances she seizes from his belt a large horse

            pistol, and stands at bay)

JENNY: Willin! You will in coming on be shot,

            Therefore, come on at once! *(wildly)* Ha, ha, ha, ha!

ATKINS: *(mildly)* Miss P., you're not at the Victori-a.

            Though the lorn damsels there you thus burlesque, you

            Will find no gallant tar come to the rescue.

            … And thus I seize you, pretty little dear, you. (Byron 1860: 21)

Jenny's reaction while alone in the island with Atkins contrasts with her initial response

while on British territory. At the end of Scene I, when Atkins and his men are about to

seize her to take her to the ship, she faints. However, she only revives to embrace

Crusoe one last time, before being carried off the stage by Atkins. Her response in the

island, while away from British society, appears as 'melodramatically' active, defending

herself with a pistol and straying from the feminine ideal of prudence and discretion.

Jenny's physical displacement, though forceful, brings her the possibility to explore a

different, more active configuration of the female character. Throughout the rest of the

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[60] Eltis addresses the underlying assumptions of women's sexual vulnerability in licensed and
banned plays during the Victorian era (2013: 5).

play, Jenny remains 'a British maiden bold' (Byron 1860: 25) and keeps other unrequested male suitors at bay —such as the 'Indian' monarch Hoop-de-dooden-doo and his native followers. Her active role in the play again subdues after her encounter with Crusoe, who carries her into Scene VII while she is '*reclining fainting in his arms*' (Byron 1860: 26), escaping from the Indians and Atkins.

There is a dominant portrayal of female characters as accessories to the male hero's adventure, especially in pantomime and burlesque. Byron's take on the legend of St. George and the Dragon, similarly employs the kidnapped woman as incentive for the hero's journey. In a spectacular 'modernised version of the famous history of the seven renowned champions of Christendom' (*LES* 1 January 1864), Byron adapts the story of St. George and transforms it into imperialistic propaganda, where the British hero, George, comes to the rescue of the Egyptian nation and their Princess Sabra, saving both of a terrorizing Dragon. In *St. George and the Dragon; or, the Seven Champions and the Beautiful Princess* (Covent Garden 26 December 1863), we follow George's journey to Egypt, where Princess Sabra is about to be forced to marry the Prince of Ethiopia. However, the Dragon interrupts the scene and 'forbids the match', dragging the Princess out of the stage. Both the King Ritollollemy —Sabra's father— and the 'orientalised' male characters are heavily stereotyped. For instance, the King is described as despotic, warry, and a tyrant, while the Prince of Ethiopia and the King's guards are seen as cowards and as no match for the British hero (Byron 1863: 12–4).

In a similar way to Jenny Pigtail, Princess Sabra finds herself in sexual danger when she arrives to the Dragon's home. When she is about to be drugged by the Dragon, St. George comically switches the drink and makes the villain sleep instead. In spite of being close to saving her, Princess Sabra is again snatched away by the

burlesque's stock villain, the Prince of Ethiopia. The final scene of the burlesque is set in '*A Dismal Wild'*, with '*The* PRINCESS *discovered chained to a stake*' (Byron 1863: 17). Perhaps in her longest utterance, the Princess announces her despair:

> SABRA: Oh, here's a situation 'cause I wouldn't
>
>   Wed that bad Prince; he vowed to me I shouldn't
>
>   Marry another, and he's tied me here,
>
>   A prey to such an agony of fear. (Byron 1863: 17)

At last, the Princess is saved by St. George and returned to her father, who compensates him for his fight with the hand of the Princess.

> KING: Take her, be happy, for you've nobly won her;
>
>   … And may the tale through future ages run,
>
>   Of the great deed St. George to-day has done;
>
>   And may oppression ever sink beneath
>
>   The stalwart Briton crown'd with victory's wreath. (Byron 1863: 17–8)

The play was performed at a time when Egypt was in everyone's minds. During 1863, the printed media had echoed Captain Speke's search for the source of the Nile, and images anthropomorphizing the Egyptian river had effectively configured the audience's imaginations.[61] In addition, the *London Evening Standard* reviewed Byron's play evoking Speke's mission and explaining how the protagonist, St. George, was in search of the source himself. However, the newspaper questioned whether George was in quest of Ingres' sexualized depiction of a river's source in *La Source,* or of the 'more

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[61] The source of the Nile was also the setting of the Grecian's Christmas pantomime of 1868, which was entitled *The Flying Dutchman; or, Harlequin the Riddle of the Sphinx* (Conquest 24 December 1868). This featured an anthropomorphic Nile, renamed as Nilus and interpreted by Clara Denvil.

comfortable looking "party"' that had appeared in *Punch* that same year (*LES* 28 December 1863).[62] As a colonial praise, Byron's *St. George and the Dragon* can be interpreted as the conquering of the British nation over a gendered colonial territory; in this sense, we can understand the character of Princess Sabra as an anthropomorphous representation of Egypt's fertile lands. By being abducted first by a tyrant beast subduing the Egyptian population —the Dragon— and later by the 'barbaric' leader of a neighboring country —the Prince of Ethiopia—, Byron uses Princess Sabra as an accessory for the British Empire; her rescue by St. George can be understood as the British Empire's colonial advances in quest of 'civilization'. Her helplessness and her lack of verbalization —she barely speaks in the play—, remarks the era's gendered differentiation between strong and weak. In addition, as the female embodiment of a country's riches, Princess Sabra reminds British women of their domestic value and their role in the nation.

The 1860s drama explores such alternate, foreign universe in which morality seems to relax and possibilities are abounding for the displaced. Therefore, it is common to find scenes in which female characters go chasing after their men in their adventures, usually to remind them of a romantic relationship. The physical displacement of women can also be a result of their romantic relationship. For instance, Princess Aldegonda wishes to elope with Prince Ahmed in Byron's burlesque *The Pilgrim of Love* (Haymarket 9 April 1860), after complaining about her boredom while being 'locked in a palace'. However, her final determination to remain in the castle to

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[62] *La Source* (1856) by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres shows a nude female body — supposedly a nymph of classical inspiration— holding a clay vessel from which the water of a river springs. Ingres's painting was displayed at the 1862 International Exhibition in London's South Kensington. See Image 5 for *Punch'*s illustration of a male representation of the source of the Nile.

avoid transgressing her father's orders make of her 'a firm and faithful wife' (Byron *Pilgrim* 1860: 39). In this case, Princess Aldegonda's lack of physical displacement contributes to her feminine identity. In Brough's *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia* (Haymarket 26 December 1862), Nekayah transgresses such rules of feminine 'stillness' by following her brother, Rasselas, in his adventures abroad. Furthermore, in Webb's *Piquillo Alliago* (Grecian 4 September 1861)*,* we understand that sometimes, the physical displacement of women is justified in their search for familial belonging. In the Grecian's drama, Carmen travels in male disguise from Algiers to Spain to find her lost father. Her situation as a 'poor, defenceless woman' legitimises Carmen's transvestism and physical travel.

In *The Three Fast Men; or, The Female Robinson Crusoes of America* (Anonymous 8 June 1860), the female characters justify their physical displacement and consequent relaxed behaviour as part of their development as women. The casting details of the Standard's *The Three Fast Men* are unknown, finding only a short advertisement recorded at the *Shoreditch Observer* which states 'Corny O'Rich and Caroline Sourgrief, with songs, Mr. Gardiner Coyne' (9 June 1860).[63] Opposite Bishopsgate Railway Station at London's East End, the Standard Theatre patronized a working-class audience, presumably from the Spitalfields neighborhood (Davis and Emeljanov 2001: 47–8).[64] While it is unclear whether the Standard's *The Three Fast Men* had an original script, it is highly possible that it blatantly copied a burlesque that had been massively popular in America during the previous years. Mullenneaux identifies William B. English as the creator of the 'questionable' original burlesque,

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[63] The anonymous play was poorly advertised, but I have consulted the manuscript record found at Lord Chamberlain's Catalogue of Plays (British Library Add. MS 52003 U).

[64] Davis and Emeljanov describe the Standard's audience mainly consisting of 'tradesmen, mechanics, their children, and silk weavers from Spitalfields' (2001: 48).

which originally opened at the National Theatre before moving to the Bowery Theatre in Boston (2018: 210–11). The original play, featuring the 'Star Sisters' —English's step-daughters of thirteen and fifteen— included novelty acts such as an all-female minstrel scene, revealing comic sketches, song and dance numbers, and costume changes for the sisters.[65]

The Standard's take on *The Three Fast Men* heavily relies on the comic disguise of the female protagonists. In the Standard's piece, the audience follows Fanny, Kitty, and Celia, who undergo a series of comic encounters and costume changes to follow their male lovers and reclaim their attention.[66] Fanny and Kitty dress up as 'Dutch Organ Girls', playing the organ and singing; later on, the girls appear cross-dressed as sailors and in minstrel fashion. Perhaps the play's abundance in breeches roles and lack of decorum instigated the author to include a final apology from the girls:

> CELIA: Remember, if we've acted under cover
>
> It was to reclaim our three adventurous lovers
>
> KITTY: Kind friends, why even the daughter of a registrar
>
> Would become Organ girls and roam afar
>
> FANNY: … but oh, ye men of beards, lords of creation
>
> Are not the ladies the object of your adoration
>
> Why, of course they are. (Anonymous *Three* 1860: 21)

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[65] Mulleneaux includes a thorough analysis of the Star Sisters—who were also known as the Western Sisters—, including a review of their exploitative theatrical career (2018: 210–4). The Star Sisters—Lucille and Helen Western— went on to tour the US with *The Three Fast Men* until their separation and consequent pursuing of engagements in legitimate adult roles.

[66] In Byron's classical burlesque *Pan; or, the Loves of Echo and Narcissus* (Adelphi 10 April 1865) the female protagonists Syrinx and Echo end up on a pirate ship due to a romantic misunderstanding.

Fanny, Celia, and Kitty's cross-dressing is justified in their travels as they go undercover to find their lovers.[67] On other occasions, the physical displacement of the wife resulting in her chasing of her husband, is seen as a nuisance to her. In Draper and Reynold's burlesque *The Chinese Invasion of 1960* (Princess' Theatre 23 March 1863), a Chinese woman, Say-ree, arrives to the Dover cliffs in search of her husband.[68] She complains about the displacement, yet remains active throughout the play, blandishing a sword and pleading for her husband's life. Her displacement, just like Fanny, Celia, and Kitty's, offers an alternative space where the scope of female spaces can be reinterpreted.

Conclusions

This Chapter traces a conceptual and historical map of the many steps to female identity formation. Such map allows us to further comprehend Victorian female strategies for self-creation, self-assurance, and self-formation. It is my contention that the 1860s patronized the growing journeys of women who went in quest of their own definition of femininity. As this Chapter attests, it was not a simple endeavour due to constraining gender roles, political invisibility, and social restrictions. Nevertheless, this Chapter

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[67] Similarly, the neighboring Effingham staged the also anonymous *Fast Married Men* (15 October 1863), in which three women chase their men into a masquerade in London. The identity and displacement of the married woman in such a scene is used as a reprimand to 'fast married men' who go on illicit meetings with other women and force their wives to chase after them:

> MRS. WAT: … you ought to be ashamed of yourselves, you to call yourselves men and yet you go out day after day, night after night, and leave your poor doting foolish wives at home in melancholy seclusion. (Anon 1860: 28)

[68] The burlesque was performed by the Queen's Westminster Rifle Corps, an amateur group, who received the praise of the critics and the audience (*London Evening Standard* 27 March 1863).

explains women's quest to explore new places for themselves in modernity, revising strategies of re-placement within and without the domestic sphere.

In my conceptualization of displacement, I have reviewed its generalized exilic sense; incidentally, my definition follows the same principle of being out of place. Still, I define displacement as both a voluntary or forced 'out-of-placedness' that makes one be physically present, yet mentally absent. In displacement, I feel like I do not belong, like I am not accepted by society. It is a sense of personal movement, even if I do not physically move. My identity changes with me as I move, and my displacement allows me to re-construct myself from a vantage point. In 1860s, women displaced from the norm by non-conforming to gender rules and by exploring the many modern definitions of 'woman' through their everyday practices.

I have argued that displacement can appear as result of what Ahmed has named 'disorientation' (2006). She describes the disoriented as one who feels 'out of home' or lost. That feeling of disorientation provokes in the sufferer a necessary displacement, of being out of place —a sense of not being where one is supposed to. Thus, I propose the possibility of re-placement after such disorientation and displacement. This is achieved through the revision of spatial organizations, gendered spaces, and social and mental maps. These have a self-assuring effect, making us feel self-righteous and provoking a feeling of being properly placed.

Turning to female physical travel, I have argued that it can be perceived as a manifestation of gender instability during the 1860s. As contended in this Chapter, the 'Woman Question' was materialized in the gender re-negotiation of physical spaces both inside and outside the metropolis; thus, the physical mobility of women represents gender mobility during the period. As the many examples of Victorian female travellers

attest, women did not want to remain still, as the domestic ideal dictated; instead, their desires for exploration and displacement from the norm is visible in the female incursions to public spaces. Despite such advancing modernity, in the 1860s, women still had to struggle against the metaphorical 'chase' of gender constrictions, which 'marked' them through sartorial rules, etiquette norms, and spatial cloistering.

In this Chapter's case studies, I have performed a cross-genre analysis of 1860s popular plays, addressing the physical journeys of female characters, in order to paint a broad picture of female physical mobility through spatial boundaries, identities, and the feminine canon. These examples prove that the stage was continuously exposing a plurality of female identities and that was inviting the audience to consider them. As posited in this Chapter, the mid-Victorian stage had room for complex women who told stories of gender spatial restrictions, female companionship, and female possibilities inside and outside their socio-political boundaries. As my case studies show, women's physical mobility both inside and outside the city challenges the pre-established idea of women's displacement in public spaces. As contended in this section, the strategies adopted by women to find a place outside the home attempted to normalize their modern relation to their own culture and their own spaces. On the one hand, women's physical incursions in the public sphere materialize their desires for exploration and unquietness; on the other, the many setbacks they had to overcome evidence society's mobility restrictions for women and the imposing of a domestic identity on women no matter their place.

3.1. Defining virtual travel

On August 11, 1860, the Cremorne Gardens at Chelsea, London, welcomed a brand-new, long announced 'stereoramic diorama' representing a Swiss landscape. According to the press, the artists in charge of the exhibition, Grieve and Telbin, had 'completely revolutionized panoramic painting' due to the realistic effects they had incorporated to the scene (*Reynolds's Newspaper* 12 August 1860: 5). Improving the usual panoramas of the era, Grieve and Telbin's stereorama included theatrical scenes and cut out sets in front of the one-dimensional painted background. In addition, the scene had a cataract with real water, piped at 900 gallons a minute (*The Era* 12 August 1860: 11; Altick 1978: 498). This set up aimed at achieving a three-dimensional effect that positioned the spectator in the place of a tourist contemplating a landscape miles away from the city.[1] In fact, Grieve and Telbin's stereorama dazed the visitors in such a way that *The Era*'s reporter claimed to have experienced a captivating feeling, with his fancy 'dropping the present and the actual' and wandering 'to the pictured scene' (*The Era* 12 August 1860: 11).

Grieve and Telbin's stereorama and its public reception support our understanding of virtual travel. This 'immersive' experience is a tool for undertaking an 'inconclusive' journey, whereby the viewers (or readers) can experiment with different perspectives otherwise unattainable to them (Byerly 2013a: 3). In other words, virtual travel happens

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[1] Richard Altick includes a detailed description of Grieve and Telbin's stereorama and explains that spectators 'stood on an elevated platform in the middle of the space' (1978: 498), and experienced first-hand the realistic set up of a smoking chimney.

similarly to real travel: with a 'temporary relocation', not of the body, but of the mind. Byerly follows Boellstorf in his definition of the virtual: it 'connotes approaching the actual *without arriving there'* (2008: 19). In the aforementioned stereorama exhibition, the visitor embarked on a virtual transportation to Switzerland, leaving the Cremorne Gardens and experiencing smoking chimneys and loud cascades of 'natural' water, yet his or her body never left London. As I shall defend in this section, this process of engagement is similar to what Victorians experienced when attending a play, an opportunity to interact with fictional worlds and people. In my analysis of virtual travel in 1860s popular drama, I accept Byerly's definition and follow her ground-breaking study on virtual travel and Victorian realism, expanding her theorization to mid-Victorian theatre and elaborating on the differences between virtual and physical travel.

Due to shows like the Cremorne Gardens' stereorama, the city of London soon became a place where one could satisfy his or her appetite for travelling from the safe viewpoint of the 'armchair anthropologist' (Qureshi 2011) or the imaginary traveller (Urry 2002: 143). 'Imaginative travel' was possible partly due to the publication of fictional tales of tourists, the memoirs of famous travellers, travel narratives, guidebooks of popular destinations, advertisements, and ephemera including the objects being displayed in museums and exhibitions of foreign civilizations. The century's improvement and shift in transportation motivated the peaking interest in travel literature, which featured new story structures that went beyond the well exploited sea travel narrative (Ferrús 2011: 18). In addition, some travel narratives acquired a scientific rigour due to the rise of the 'specialized narrator-traveller' (Stratta 1994: 107), often a 'naturalist', which legitimized the reading of travel literature as a reliable source of truth. Indeed, the rising popularity of this genre confirms the mid-Victorians' desire

for 'corporal travel', and appears as a way of satisfying their urges with the provision of instructive texts for their consumption (Urry 2002: 143).[2]

Urry's (2002) concept of 'imaginative travel' goes hand in hand with those of 'armchair traveller' (Byerly 2013a) and the previously mentioned 'armchair anthropologist' (Qureshi 2011). An 'armchair traveller', according to the OED, would lack practical or direct experience in actual travelling (*OED,* 'armchair' 1.1.), yet he or she would have been made participant of the journey by other medium —i.e. reading travel tales or visiting panoramas. In this sense, the Victorians' appetite for both the sensational and the realist would nurture a feeling of being 'in', of experiencing a real journey through the imaginary representations of distant places. For them, it was as if the real place had been 'removed' from their original place and brought into their own city. For instance, in 1850, *Punch* included a descriptive review of a Constantinople panorama displayed at the Polytechnic Institution in Regent Street, London. The title of the review, 'Constantinople removed to Regent Street', evoked the feeling of authenticity that the panorama instilled in the audience. The author of the review references the experience of virtual travel:

> The next minute you open your eyes, and find yourself wandering about in the streets of some foreign capital. You have no necessity to leave your seat; only give yourself up to the pictorial influence of the scene, and let your eyes walk instead of your legs. It is more amusing, less fatiguing, and does not wear out shoe-leather. (*Punch* 31 August 1850: 97)

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[2] Amongst the Victorians' favourites were John Murray's *Handbooks for Travellers*, which included volumes on over sixty destinations around the globe, such as New Zealand, India, and Japan. In addition, Murray also published a *Handbook of Modern London* (1863), which featured a section on Metropolitan improvements especially addressed to tourists. According to Buzard (2007), Murray's *Handbooks* were pioneering in differentiating between objective guidebooks and impressionistic travel books. See also Speake (2014: 830).

However, experiencing a virtual visit when attending a show such as the Constantinople panorama, or browsing the corridors of museums and exhibitions, would be determined by the intention of the artists or curators in charge. As Youngs contends,

> the way we imagine places is not simply a private, individual affair, and our responses to them when we visit them are not independent, but are mediated by the culturally constructed representations we have previously encountered. (2006: 2)[3]

In this sense, the manipulated representations of cities like Constantinople, Cairo, or Syria would shape the imaginations of the mid-Victorian English generation. Furthermore, the advances of Britain's colonial missions and their profitable publication of travel narratives, contributed to the formation of ideologies of race that would influence and remain in the collective consciousness for the rest of the nineteenth-century. It is important to highlight the decisive influence of travel narratives in the minds of the Victorians, mainly because these shaped their global perception and (stereotypically) defined actual places and peoples. For those who never got to leave the metropolis, reading travel tales, visiting exhibitions, and consuming representations of the 'exotic', was their only way to experience travelling abroad.[4] Additionally, those who wished to revisit particular moments in time had the opportunity to do so thanks to the virtuality of optical spectacles. For instance, when western England and the suburbs

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[3] Youngs (2006) draws on Said [1958] (1978) and his theory of a Eurocentric society, the crafting of 'the Orient' and the 'Orientals' by means of incomplete impressions of their cultures. Imagining 'the Orient' became part of the Victorian popular culture in a similar way of that of the African American stereotype of the comic black servant, or the Native American stereotype of the tomahawk carrier. In the end, these representations, accepted at the time as trustworthy images, contributed to the (mistaken) popular imaginary of the foreign.

[4] See more on the shaping of racial ideologies through travel writing in the nineteenth century in Bhabha (1990), Pratt (1992), Spivak [1993] (2015), Bridges (2002), Youngs (2006), and Hulme and McDougall (2007).

of London experienced an earthquake in October 1863, the Colosseum, at Regent Park, recovered the 1848 cyclorama of Lisbon's 1755 earthquake in an attempt to attract the audiences' wish to relive the sensation. This moving panorama combined visual and aural effects that thrilled the visitors, offering a 'safer' version of Britain's recent shock. Beneath the theatre, roaring, deafening sounds evoked the shrieks of the Lisboners, and the lighting effects dazed the spectators in such a way that they 'frightened [their] senses' (Altick 1978: 158). In the end, visitors of the Lisbon panorama left in a terrified state, due to the realism of the set up. Virtually, spectators had been made participant of the current topic of discussion in the printed media, and obtained a feeling of being 'in the known'. In the end, panoramic art satisfied the nation's 'travellers at home', according to the *London Daily News* (2 March 1863), which made reference to those in London who enjoyed panoramas as an opportunity to virtual travel and to learn about foreign cities and events.[5]

The Colosseum's cyclorama of Lisbon's earthquake exemplifies what Straus named 'sensory experiencing' (1958: 155), a personal way of feeling the world according to what one is experiencing with his or her senses. According to Straus, 'whatever enters into sensory experience appears as real… only a later reflection may

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[5] It is worth to mention that the stereorama had arrived in London on the 1860s, following the enormous success of panoramas and dioramas, invented by Louis Daguerre in 1822 and favourite among the Londoners for most of the nineteenth century. Beyond the well-known panorama, a number of devices especially created to marvel the public were the magic lantern, the zoetrope, the praxinoscope, the thaumatrope, the mutoscope, and the technique of time-lapse photography that would set the basis of modern cinema. Magic lanterns were all the rage in the 1860s, and newspapers like the *Illustrated Weekly News* printed tips on how to do them at home and to perform a series of experiments ranging from representing 'a storm at sea' to producing 'the appearance of a spectre on a pedestal in the middle of the table' (28 December 1867: 14). The zoetrope and the praxinoscope used mirrors to augment and reflect strips of pictures with an animation sensation. The thaumatrope and the mutoscope also played with the quick succession of images to create an impression of movement. See also Zone (2007) for a detailed account of optical entertainment in the nineteenth-century and its evolution to modern cinema.

reveal something as unreal, a mirage, an illusion' (1958: 159). This process of learning also affects our understanding of things, creating a reciprocal bond between our experiences and our perception of the world and our social life (Arias 2017: 43). Therefore, for the visitor attending the Lisbon cyclorama at the Colosseum, his or her senses would feel the movement, and would hear the sounds as if their bodies were in the midst of an actual earthquake. Potter explores the 'technological imagination' of the Victorians as fostered by the visual spectacles of the era (2018). As he attests,

> perceptual experience, and specifically visual experience, was in many instances conceptualized and articulated via identifiable discourses using visual-technological metaphor and reference. (2018: 3)

In this sense, Potter links visual entertainments to a popular consciousness and mutual understanding, an 'identifiable discursive formation' shared by the Victorians and within which texts, media, and technologies were created. Consequently, the development of visual and technological metaphors shows the importance of such medium as vehicle for understanding and knowing their own world. In light of a 'pictorial' time, when Victorians valued the visual over the verbal and consumed all forms of eye-enticing entertainment and culture, the sensory experience would became a valid way of experiencing the world that surrounded them, provoking a virtual journey in the experimenter's mind.

Experimenting a virtual journey was not restricted to foreign set ups or extraordinary representations. For example, domestic dramas and melodramas with familiar tints became favourites among the audiences of London's East End (Newey 2018: 151), but also of the West End. In short, domestic plays included plots related to home and family, both recurring themes that highlighted the contemporary everyday life

and domestic ideology (Booth 1991: 133; Hall 2013). These representations produced in the public a sense of familiarity, partly due to the use of home-like settings that would impress the audiences for their verisimilitude to what they already knew. As the century went by, the growing interest in the social and the domestic caused the drama to evolve towards a realistic approach, at times with melodramatic tints perhaps or even disguised under fantastic plots. In the end, these domestic plays allowed the spectator to revisit familiar situations, surrounding them with settings and elements easily recognizable in their own personal lives. Domestic plays, despite not being set in foreign lands, also became unexplored territories offered to an audience, inviting them to think and observe their own lives from a different perspective.

It is my contention that virtual travel had a decisive power in the development of the 1860s' social revisionist events. Stauffer has argued that in our study of the Victorians, 'we exploit the virtual to make the past operational' (2015: 1), yet I believe that, for them, the virtual also contributed to their understanding of their own present. For the mid-Victorians, experimenting with different realities would have been a way to work through their own advancing modernity, and an attempt to negotiate with their own reality. Keep explains how 'the virtual is defined not by its verisimilitude but by its apparent alterity' (2015: 248), which makes possible a seemingly 'detachment' from reality when in a virtual journey. However, as I have shown, virtual travel offered mid-Victorians the opportunity to fully immerse in alternative 'realities' from a safe standpoint: the virtual acquires a hypothetical nature of 'as if' that, in the end, becomes a passage through, a tool for their own beneficial self-enhancement and self-understanding. As I shall contend in the following sections, virtuality played an essential role in the mid-Victorians' negotiation with their identity as a nation and as

individuals, inconspicuously contributing to the 'Woman Question' by offering virtual scenarios where female identity could be re-explored and renegotiated.

3.2. Virtual travel in 1860s' popular entertainment

In this section, I explore the influence of travel literature and travel in general to the mid-Victorian popular stages, in light of the avalanche of travel-inspired texts, visual spectacles, exhibitions, and dramatic shows. Above all, I address the complex rhetorical strategies that captured the audience's imagination, as well as the palpable, evoking elements of scenography that mimicked reality. It is my contention that popular drama was a means for virtual travel, taking advantage of the stage's technological and performative improvements to entice the audience's minds and to transport them to different realities. Popular drama as virtual vehicle, as this section attests, will often manipulate the viewers' perception and experience, offering a spatiotemporal milieu where notions of placement —and displacement— could be contested.

Among the methods adopted by popular entertainment to promote virtuality, we find a 'rhetoric of invitation', a set of rhetorical strategies commonly employed in travel guides and other travel-related texts (Byerly 2013a: 13). Frances Power Cobbe, for instance, directly addresses the reader in her book *Cities of the Past:* 'will you follow me, reader, as I enter Cairo, and strive to convey the impressions of a ride through those dim, wonderful streets?' (1864: 55). This invitation for the 'armchair traveller' implies a companionship, a sense of shared experience while reading a travel story. Virtually, the reader is tagging along the writer and vicariously obtaining the sensory experiences of

the narrator.[6] In London, the printed media adopted that rhetoric of invitation and advertised exhibitions and spectacles as shared experiences where piece and viewer worked in tandem. Therefore, visitors of art galleries like The Royal Academy would feel that the pictures 'transport[ed them] in imagination' into the open sea (*Morning Post* 23 May 1867) and those who enjoyed panoramas would find their minds 'captive' to the illusion exhibited before them (*The Era* 12 August 1860).

As previously argued in Chapter 1, the mid-Victorian era favoured the formation of a common British identity in the midst of a global expansion. Partly, that identity had been possible thanks to bringing the experiences of travel into the country, for those unable to participate in the growing business of tourism. Thus, popular entertainment also contributed to patriotism and 'self-knowledge' (Cook 1854: 2). If, as many defended, the travel experience changed the minds and morals of men and had a transformative effect in them, then, attending the theatre or visiting a panoramic exhibition in London produced a similar response. In this sense, popular entertainment fed the minds of Londoners just like the period's tourism: with the imagination. The tourist experience, according to Robinson, is inevitably affected by our imagination and by our preconceptions of other spaces and other cultures (2016: 152). Incidentally, the popular entertainment of the Victorian era draws heavily on the popular imaginary and perhaps, instead of breaking stereotypes of the world, continued to perpetuate them.

It is my contention that Victorian theatre was a successful medium for virtual travel. In her study of virtuality and Victorian entertainment, Byerly questions the possibility for virtual immersion in the theatre:

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[6] For further analysis on Victorian women's travel writing, perspectives, and boundaries, see Frawley [2005] (2017).

Even the most vivid theatrical dramatizations took place on a raised stage, carefully framed by the proscenium, so that the audience understood themselves to be at a safe remove from the action. (2013a: 39)

However, as previously argued, London's theatrical venues were not limited to the raised stage kind; Astley's Amphitheatre, for instance, combined both a stage and a circus arena right in front of the audience, where the performance took place at eye-level. Additionally, during the mid-century, auditorium and stage lightning kept testing ways to fully immerse the audience in the action; even though the light of the auditorium was left on during the duration of the play, it could be lowered for special effects at a particularly shocking scene (Booth 1991: 83). In this way, lightning set the mood of the audience when the nymph Goldenhair reveals herself to a male human in H. J. Byron's *Goldenhair the Good* (St. James' 26 December 1862). On Scene 2, the lighting annotations indicate a 'gloomy… suggestive of ghosts' apartment, where a 'lamp burns on the table and gives a dim and ghostlike light' (Byron *Goldenhair* 1862: 8). Therefore, a dimming of the lights or on the contrary, a sudden rising, could effectively shock the audience and create 'vividness' in the illusions.[7]

Incidentally, E. W. Godwin claimed that we go to the theatre 'to witness such a performance as will place us as nearly as possible as spectators of the original scene or of the thing represented' (*Western Daily Press* 11 October 1864). Godwin, well known for being one of the main leaders of the Aesthetic movement, defended a theatrical stage where everything was meticulously planned, researched, and accurate. For this reason,

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[7] Schoch further explains the mechanism behind ghost-like appearances on stage and the performance's interplay with lighting. Schoch mentions Queen Victoria's own 'overpowering' experience when she attended Boucicault's *The Corsican Brothers* (1852) at the Princess' Theatre. According to the Queen, she had been kept 'in a state of terror and suspense' and had been 'trembling when the play came to an end'. In addition, she noted the 'unearthly effect… impressive and creepy' of the blue, dim lighting (Schoch 2004: 154).

scenographers ought to document themselves when setting a play somewhere of historical relevance or a geographic point of interest. This scenography research was mainly done in churches, libraries, museums, art galleries, and through displacement to the actual site represented in an historical play (Booth 1991: 96). As an architect, Godwin, a Ruskinian follower, advocated for a union of the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture, also on stage.[8] In the 1860s he expressed his opinion on the required 'completeness' of the theatrical stage on the newspapers, reviewing plays performed on the Bristol Theatre Royal and encouraging the authenticity of the actors' costumes and the scenery.[9] As Booth argues, scenery and a strong sense of place in theatre began to gain importance by the late eighteenth and nineteenth century (1990: 5). Thus, Victorian theatre put the emphasis on accuracy and detail on stage, creating a complex interrelationship between the atmospheric effects, the moral message of the play, and the spectator. In this way, melodrama for instance, relied on scenic landscape and natural catastrophes to convey the characters' emotional state, and relied on the audience's (sensory) empathy to get across the message successfully.

From the eighteenth century, the techniques developed onstage would contribute to a shift in the public's perception of theatrical representation, as the theatre would acquire tints of instruction. In addition, the growing interest in tourism and travel and the appliance of technical novelties and pictorial advances made the theatre an optimal space for virtual travel.[10] On stage, fantasy worlds and spectacular events were made

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[8] See Heinrich et al. (2009) for further analysis on Ruskin and his relation to Victorian theatre as space for imagination and exploration.

[9] See more on E. W. Godwin, his relation with Ruskin and the theatre in Newey and Richards (2010: 45–82). See also Booth (1991: 96–8) for an explanation on the 'archaeological dogma' prevalent in the Aesthetic movement and its application to the Victorian stage.

[10] In 'Scenography and technology', Baugh (2007) explains the contribution of scenic artists to the change of attitudes to representation, in addition to the public's growing interest in travel

possible and 'real' to the audience despite their actual veracity. Plays bridged the gap

between verisimilitude and spectacle and offered the audience the chance to both relate

and marvel at the represented (Gould 2011: 1–10).[11] The spectacular element in mid-

Victorian drama was partly due to the need to satisfy audiences who were growing

accustomed to physically experiencing new things. In other words, to succeed in their

transportation to 'other' places, and to touch their feelings, the drama of the era needed

the aid of physical, palpable forms.[12] This explains the success of spectacular venues

like Astley's Amphitheatre, which favoured grand scenography including live

horseback riding actors, performing animals, and gymnastic feats. For instance, Astley's

adaptation of a French drama named *The History of a Flag* (1860) transported the

audience throughout the globe, with scenes set in Paris, Austria, Egypt, and even

Russia. Perhaps reinforcing the political implications of such military spectacle, the

Morning Chronicle praised the beautiful scenery (10 April 1860), while *The Era*

commended the 'very real' military groupings and tableaux (15 April 1860). However,

the shortages of the venue are highlighted by the critics, who went on to note scenery

mistakes such as the misplacement of the Sphynx and reminded the audience of its

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and tourism. Booth (1991) also comments on the pictorial quality of Victorian drama and its aid
to the audience's imagination.

[11] Gould (2011) explores the effects of verisimilar, spectacular representations of imperial tints
in the Britons' perception of the British Empire. Booth (1981) evaluates the spectacular element
in mid-Victorian drama (from the 1850s onwards) and argues that the public taste shifted due to
mechanical improvements. As he contends, spectacularity was a necessary tool for transporting
the Victorian audience to the scene represented.

[12] In 1851, the *Illustrated London News* praised an 'Orientalist display' at London's Egyptian
Hall where a Syrian troupe of 'native musicians, singers, and story-tellers' performed in their
original costumes, accompanied of a diorama of the Holy Land. The newspaper claimed that

> a real addition is made to the knowledge of the fireside tourist, who need not go far from
> his chimney-corner to behold the very persons and manners of which he reads in books of
> adventure and modern travel. (*ILN* 30 August 1851)

See also Ziter (2003) for a thorough analysis of Orientalist representations on the Victorian
stage.

actual distance from the city. From critical reviews like this, we can grasp the common interest in spatial authenticity on stage, and the pursuit for substantial experiences when attending a play.

The quest for verisimilitude on stage led to what Tracy C. Davis names 'souvenir texts' (2012: 164). These performances, often structured like sketches, illustrated the journeys of a male actor protagonist and his adventures around the world.[13] For instance, the Haymarket featured in April 1863 a 'domestic, dramatic apropos sketch' entitled *Buckstone at Home; or, the Manager and his Friends* (1863), aiming to introduce a panorama portraying the journey of the Prince of Wales in his tour of Eastern territories. Grieve, the well-known panoramic artist, was in charge of illustrating the city of Cairo, the Nile, Jerusalem, Jordan, Mount Hermon, Damascus, Beirut, and Constantinople. At the end, the panoramic show concluded with a view of something closer to home: St. George's Chapel at Windsor.[14] This was included as a

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[13] According to Tracy C. Davis (2012), the main characteristic of souvenir texts is the alternation between 'puns, jokes, … jests, songs, characters' banters, comic recitations, *bon mots,* catch-phrases, linking narrative, and appeals to the audience' along with the use of 'third-person narration, dialogue, first-person narration, summary description, and direct address' (164).

[14] The plot of *Buckstone at Home* (1863) highlights the public's favour for panoramas and pictorial art, which are sometimes preferred over other entertainments. It is interesting to see how other genres like burlesques, comedies, and pantomimes make use of panoramas and scenic art to attract the public's appetite for the visual. The *Globe* describes the manager's visual preferences as follows:

> Mr. Buckstone is introduced to us at home, pondering over a masque, which he intends to produce in honour of the marriage of the Prince of Wales. He is dissuaded from this by a Mephistophelean gentleman, who may be regarded as representative of modern ideas, and who tells him that masques have had their day. Thereupon Comedy, Opera, Ballet, and Burlesque each vaunt their popularity, and press their offers of assistance upon the perplexed manager, who, to escape their importunities, determines to avail himself of the resources of pictorial art. (7 April 1863)

Previously, Planché had produced a similar extravaganza in which the Leicester Square panorama was explored and repurposed as background for the play (see the Haymarket's *Mr Buckstone's Voyage Round the Globe (In Leicester Square)* (17 April 1854)).

celebratory image of the marriage of Prince Edward VII with Princess Alexandra of Denmark, evoking the Victorians' taste for royal wedding souvenirs and memorabilia.[15]

As Tracy Davis contends, souvenir texts like the Haymarket's were loosely structured as a travel narrative, retelling the traveller's encounters in his or her journey and highlighting the most interesting events (2012: 164). At the close of *Buckstone at Home* (1863), the character of Britannia, anthropomorphising the British Empire, tells the story of Prince Edward's journey:

BRITAN: … Or turn to where rich Cairo's gardens smile

In endless summer —or to Philoe's isle,

Whose templed shore looks sadly o'er the Nile

Or Baalbec's columns —standing still sublime—

Like ghosts of ages past —forgot by Time:—

Or fair Damascus, city of Delights

That brings us back to our Arabian Nights: —

Or queenly Stamboul —seated in her pride,

A crown'd sultana, o'er the Thracian tide… (24)

In doing so, the Britannia character is inviting the audience to virtually tag along the Prince in his journey throughout the British Empire, describing the experience with sensory-evoking words highlighting the grandeur of the landscape and thus, the grandeur of the occasion. However, the trip comes to an end and the viewer finds himself or herself back in the motherland, back in St. George's Chapel for the occasion

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[15] See Emily Allen's 'Communal Performances: Royal Ritual, Revolution and National Arts' in Davis and Holland (2007: 60–79), where she links the Victorian's craze for collectibles and royal wedding souvenirs with the formation of a collective national identity. As previously mentioned, some fantastical plays of 1863 find inspiration in the prince's story and represent valiant feats on stage (Suter's *The Prince and the Lion King* (Standard 26 December 1863)).

of the royal wedding. In a way, this conclusion symbolizes that every trip must come to an end, and every traveller will eventually find his or her way back home. Similarly, at the final scene of a play, the actors could remind the audience of the role of theatre as a virtual journey; in H. J. Byron's burlesque extravaganza *Ali Baba; or the Thirty-nine Thieves* (Strand 6 April 1863), Ganem and Morgiana address the theatre's limitations:

> GANEM: Remember, that our limits are so narrow,
>
> At times we've scarcely room to wheel a barrow.
>
> Let's hope our stage though *broad* enough for fun,
>
> Is not too *short* we trust for a *long run*.
>
> MORGI: For well one knows, which much our fears assuages,
>
> Long journeys oft are made by *little stages*. (Byron 1863: 38)

This idea of the play as a journey is often repeated in Byron's texts. At the final address of *Ivanhoe* (Strand 26 December 1862), Rowena and Sir Brian say their goodbyes and compare the play with a boat trip:

> ROWE: Our task is o'er,
>
> We've reached the shore,
>
> And only want a hand,
>
> SIR B.: The hand that you
>
> Can offer —do,
>
> To land us on the Strand (Byron 1862: 48)

In this sense, the Victorian play would qualify as virtual travel, offering a similar experience to that of the railway traveller. Thus, both the playgoer and the train passenger remain seated while, through a framed window, they are able to gaze at the world. This kind of experience provokes a 'disorienting yet exhilarating sense of

imaginative detachment from his own physical experience', where the playgoer is capable of moving his or her attention but not their body (Byerly 2013a: 11). As a virtual experience, theatregoing becomes an activity to engage both with one's reality and one's alternative.

As I have contended, souvenir texts offer a glimpse at what Byerly classifies as 'verbal panoramism' (2013a: 33), a link between the pictorial panorama and the literary text. Byerly's approach to a textual evocation of 'the panoramic perspective' (2013a: 33) consists in recognizing the inviting rhetoric of texts like accounts of balloon journeys or experiences with railway transportation. While she recognizes verbal panoramism in testimonials, advertisements, souvenir pamphlets, and the literary work of Dickens and Thakeray, this is a characteristic also applicable to the popular drama of the era. For instance, take a 'drawing-room entertainment' entitled *Popular Illustrations from Real Life* (1860) performed at the Royal Gallery of Illustration by Mr. and Mrs. German Reed. The Reeds were the managers of the Gallery of Illustration, at Regent Street, London, and were known as a respectable duo with upmost taste in their performances. Patronizing an upper-class audience, some of their 'entertainments' fit into the 'souvenir text' category and the drawing-room entertainment.[16] Along with the sketches illustrating their own personal anecdotes, the *Popular Illustrations from Real Life* (1860) incorporated examples of verbal panoramism in their retelling of a past trip they had gone on. The Reeds basically paint a picture with words of what the train

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[16] Bratton thoroughly examines Mrs. German Reed, also known as Priscilla Horton (2011: 46–85). Mrs. Reed symbolizes the ascent of the Victorian actress to manageress of a respectable establishment, highlighting the silenced stories of many successful women of the era. Bratton also remarks Mrs. Reed's leading role in the Reeds enterprises. See also Puchal (2018) for further analysis on Priscilla Horton's life journey.

station looked like before departure, setting the scene in the imagination of the audience and metaphorically unrolling a vivid verbal panorama before them:

REEDS:　　　… and now the station reaching

　　　　　　　We hear the engine screeching

　　　　　　　Impatiently beseeching

　　　　　　　The driver not to stay

　　　　　　　Now friends their leave are taking

　　　　　　　Heads nodding and hands shaking

　　　　　　　The guard the signal making

　　　　　　　Tune's up and we're away. (Reed 1860: 3)

The Reeds' setting of the scene with their words evokes the main characteristic of verbal panoramism, a strategy of presenting a scene and shaping the audience's response to it with descriptive words like 'screeching', thus appealing to their senses. In doing so, the Reeds' aforementioned passage invites the viewers to share their own feeling of impatience and haste. In this way, the panoramic perspective was adopted on the Victorian stage to make the audience participant of imaginary experiences; these experiences were, in the end, equally valid to the physical experiences, and were more convenient for those who deplored the contrivances of real travel.[17] For those accustomed to the mechanics of travel, being made participant in theatres or exhibitions would reignite their own opinions and experiences, allowing them to revisit, in their minds, previous journeys or encounters.

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[17] Verbal panorama is also recognized as an important element in the narratives of travellers and tourists. *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* featured a review of Lady Duff-Gordon's *Letters From Egypt, 1863–65* (1865), praising the ability of travel writing to 'give life-like pictures of the doings and journey-ings' of the travellers themselves (November 1865: 580–88).

In other occasions, verbal panoramism was used to establish the background story of the male adventurer, usually in pantomimes and burlesques. For instance, Verner's *Harlequin and the Willow Pattern Plate* (1860), first performed at the Queen's Theatre, London, spectacularly sets up Scene I with a storm on 'the sea coast of Asia', where the protagonist, Jack Trapplinirons 'arrives safe landed on board his willow Pattern Plate' and explains his previous steps, which are unseen to the audience (Verner 1860: 1).[18] Thus, the playgoer's perception of being 'in the know' enhanced his or her immersion in the plot; this feeling of familiarity with the characters and the story was also due to the countless retellings of popular tales. Fairy tales, traditional legends, literary successes, and plays that referenced famous historical events, served the purpose of creating a comfortable experience in which the audience actively participated in their minds. Verbal panoramism and the rhetoric of invitation often broke the fourth wall and achieved the virtual journey of the audience, who were made to feel as if they were on stage with the characters. In this way, it was common to be invited by a leading character to 'accompany' the characters in their journeys on stage.[19]

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[18] Jack Trapplinirons opening lines explains his journey to the shores of Asia:

JACK: Here I am —Jack Trapplinirons safe arrived in port
     From her majesties ship Britannia, trim and taught
     Rather a curious sort of freight
     To be landed on a piece of plate
     … thanks he to my old plate that saved me from his maw
     I got that there harticle [sic] in the Chinese War
     Presented to me in that same strife
     By an old Chinaman, for saving on his life
     A good action sartrin [sic] meets wish its reward
     As my old Plate can testify, take my word. (Ibid: 1–2)

[19] In Scene 1 of Blanchard's pantomime *Harlequin Sindbad the Sailor* (1863), Undine the Water Spirit invites the audience to tag along the hero, Sindbad:

UNDINE: So come with me, my lads, and our fairy tale will be
     One I don't think very bad for the little folks to see
     Who will see, see, see
     What will be, be, be
     How Sindbad he will stare in the diamond valley deep

Despite these travel-evoking elements, I have not found any scholarly publication that analyses virtual travel in Victorian popular drama. However, McInnis (2013) offers a ground-breaking study on the relation of Renaissance theatre —specifically voyage drama— to travel writing. McInnis establishes an analogy between travel and theatre, defining both experiences as a 'departure from regular work', an 'opposition between the domestic and the exotic', and a mass experience to be largely 'produced' and 'consumed' (2013: 15). Most of the time, Victorian popular drama relies on the audience's familiarity with the performed on stage.[20] As distinctively spectacular, Victorian burlesques and pantomimes cater for the playgoer's desire to break with established routines and, like tourism, playgoing allows for a sensorial engagement with the deviant or the alternate (Urry 2002: 2; McInnis 2013: 1).

One of the questions that arise when considering theatregoing as a form of virtual travel is whether or not the playgoer is able to mentally participate with the plot. Hazlitt has argued that the theatregoer aims 'to identify with characters, feelings and experiences which are foreign to them and, at the same time, satisfy their curiosity, voyeurism and delight in novelty' (1958: 38). Jim Davis has also affirmed that the Victorian playgoer was transformed into a voyeur (2007: 61). While it is difficult to confirm the Victorian audience's theatregoing experience, we can certainly analyse their tastes and the critical responses printed in the media or browse through the repertoires

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> When the Roc conveys him there, where he wouldn't like to keep
> For he'll be, be, be
> Set free, free, free
> Then the old man of the sea, on his shoulders too will ride
> As will very shortly be, shown with other things beside
> Shown by me, me, me
> As you'll see, see, see. (Blanchard *Harlequin Sindbad* 1863: 4)

[20] Davis and Emeljanov reflect on the familiar plots put on the stages of Sadler's Wells, the City of London, and The Queen's Theatre, among others (2001).

of London's favoured venues to understand the public's demands.[21] In addition, I believe that by examining virtual travel in Victorian drama, we can further understand the audiences' process of identity formation. Davis and Holland claim that

> a new conception of social roles and personal identity was being developed and played out both on stage and in the auditorium… The popular theatre, on and off stage, was becoming a new kind of social process for articulating the texture and conditions of urban life. (2007: 96)

As they contend, both the auditorium and the stage became a 'laboratory' where new roles and fashions were negotiated and refined. In this sense, Victorian theatregoing can be perceived as sightseeing, as McInnis (2013) suggests, or as a virtual journey beyond everyday life. Attending a play required an 'imaginative detachment' from one's own physical experience (Byerly 2013a: 11), yet it implied an active reassessment of one's reality. In this sense, I believe that the experience of virtual travel through Victorian drama inevitably went on to challenge and create new conceptions of Victorian social and gender roles. Not only did the playgoer imaginatively construct 'a vivid psycho-physiological experience of distant lands without leaving the theatre' (McInnis 2013: 2), but of modern female identities and definitions as well. Virtual travel in Victorian drama offered much more than alternative scenarios or an approaching to the foreign; it also fostered an environment where gender and social roles could be questioned, a space where female identities could be formed through a self-evaluating immersive

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[21] Tracy C. Davis draws on Jacky Bratton's notion of 'intertheatricality'(2003) to further explain the interrelation between audience and dramatic text. Repertoire, as a 'collective entity constituted from many singular events' (Davis 2012: 13), contends a shared meaning or double-entendres in plays and performances.

experience.[22] The female theatregoer was able to see on stage modern conceptions of what a 'woman' was, and thanks to the vicariousness of theatre, she could imaginatively engage with both realities: the text and her own life.

Gardner questions the existence of a mid-Victorian 'spectatrice' and analyses the female theatregoer's experience (2000). As she contends, the Victorian playhouse was growingly adapted for the female spectator in a process which she names 'feminisation of theatres' (27). Accordingly, the venues' aesthetic renovations, the improvements in private transport, and matinée performances facilitated the increasing attendance of 'respectable' middle-class women. Still, while it is difficult to speculate about the female playgoer's experience, we can argue that the ongoing modification of 'social maps' affected their possibilities to attend a play. However, we must not forget their obvious visibility as women in such place, and their subsequent placement inside 'feminine' norms. Their experience was thus marked by their gender, which often hindered their chances for virtual travel. As Murias has argued, one must be detached or 'lost' in order to effectively reach the true self in the journey (2012: 228); as we have seen, women's difficulties to leave behind their feminine identity might have affected their experience. Regardless, I believe it would be misleading to assume a solely male spectatorship. Women did, in fact, go to the mid-Victorian playhouses, especially after

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[22] Bratton and Featherstone have previously identified the use of the topic of travelling and exploration in relation to female experience (2006: 227–8). In *Victorian Clown* (2006), they include a short piece from the gag-book of comedian Thomas Lawrence where a joke about the boundaries of female experience outside the domestic sphere is transformed into an allegory for female domestic confinement:

> And there was Captain Cook he was a wonderful traveller he sailed three times around the world I wish I could persuade some of our mechanics' wives just to follow Captain Cook's example -no not to sail three times around the world, but to sail three times round their own kitchens and take half as much trouble to dress their husband's dinner as they do to dress themselves. There would be fewer drunkards less starving children and more happy homes in good old England. (Bratton and Featherstone 2006: 228)

the renovation of venues and the ongoing quest for respectability around London's 'theatreland' (T. Davis 1991; Powell 1997; Davis and Emeljanov 2001; Newey 2005: 69).

In the following sections I turn to particular case studies in which the virtual journeys of female characters reflect the era's possibilities for women. As I shall argue, these performances create a 'safe' virtual scenario where the playgoer is able to tag along the characters' virtual journey to self-discovery. Ultimately, by contesting or complying with gender norms, these female characters offered the (female) playgoer the possibility to vicariously break or reaffirm established gender routines and realities.

3.3. Virtual journeys of female characters

In the following subsections I turn to the transformative virtual journeys of female characters on the London stages of the 1860s. It is my contention that the following plays' representation of female virtual journeys testify to the era's situation of women; thus, it is common to find endless examples of faithful wives, devoted daughters, and repentant women who learn their 'lesson' after a series of physical and mental displacements. As one would expect, the rising debate of the Woman Question is translated to the stages as a myriad stories about marriage, female mobility across spheres, and contesting definitions of 'woman' and 'femininity'. With this purpose in mind, I have decided to examine what kinds of women are represented on stage, and to what extent these challenge women's boundaries and self-definitions. As I shall defend, these female characters become optimal paths for virtual exploration through which contemporary female playgoers are capable of self-discovery and self-evaluation.

3.3.1. Domesticity: marriage and familial belonging

As the inevitable destiny, marriage appears on stage as a journey with transformative effects on women. Getting married and establishing a 'blissful' home, as we shall see, is capable of changing even 'strong-minded' women. In Byron's *Cinderella* (Strand 19 December 1860), Clorinda, the oldest step-sister, ponders her options before matrimony:

> CLORINDA: *(aside)* A governess's situation's not
>
> By any means an enviable lot
>
> And marriage, on the other hand, is by
>
> Those who have tried it termed a lot awry.
>
> Papa will make me my own living earn,
>
> Suppose I from a world of worry turn
>
> And be a nun in white —my beauty bury
>
> Oh, that's an un-in-whitening prospect, very
>
> *(turning to him* [DANDINI] *with overwhelming affection)*
>
> Young man, I'm yours. (Byron *Cinderella* 1860: 44)

Clorinda's previous situation —an elderly 'spinster' with no prospects of matrimony— pushes her to accept a marriage proposal, not for love, but for convenience. As previously contended in Section 1.4.5., widening women's life prospects was one of the main purposes of the incipient feminist movements of the 1860s. Thus, Clorinda's private considerations on stage regarding her future are transformed into the worries of a whole generation in the mid-century. In this way, the plays of the decade commence to question the female journey.

In 1860, William Brough created a burlesque for Boxing Night at the St. James's Theatre entitled *Endymion; or, the Naughty Boy who cried for the moon* (26 December 1860). As an adaptation of the classical myth of Endymion, a Shepherd Prince, and Diana, the Moon goddess, Brough's burlesque relies on antiquity to discuss the modern topic of marriage and female submission.[23] As Monrós-Gaspar has argued, the pervasiveness of classical Greek and Roman manifestations throughout the nineteenth-century also infiltrated the Victorian comical stage (2015: 1–16). In this sense, the playwrights' adaptations of well-known classical myths went on to create opportunities to draw attention to unordinary female protagonists, who challenged imposing identities of femininity. Their reworking of familiar female characters contributed to public debates on marriage laws, adultery, and 'strong-mindedness'.[24]

Such is the case of Diana, the protagonist of Brough's burlesque. Mirroring Tennyson's Ida from *The Princess* (1847), Diana has decided to seclude herself and her nymphs in a forest retreat 'in the valley of Gargaphia'. According to the playbill, her motives for seclusion are a 'Great Anti-Matrimonial Scheme' (Brough *Endymion* 1860: 3), an isolation that has left her flirtatious nymphs Polydora, Nyce, and Clymene in a state of boredom:

CLYMENE: This happy-valley life is very slow;

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[23] Brough's influences might have also been John Keats's *Endymion* poem from 1818, as the *Morning Advertiser* suggests (27 December 1860). In the following International Exhition at London's South Kensington, the catalogue also records two instances of the Endymion and Diana myth: Holme Cardwell's sculpture *Diana about to Bathe* (1862) and Edward Davis' sculpture *Diana and Endymion* (1862).

[24] In *Victorian Classical Burlesques* (2015), Monrós-Gaspar offers the examples of Antigone, Alcestis, Medea, and Electra, readapted to the Victorian stage on burlesques by Blanchard (*Antigone Travestie,* Strand 3 February 1845), Talfourd (*Alcestis, the Original Strong-Minded Woman,* Strand 4 July 1850; *Electra in a New Electric Light,* Haymarket 25 April 1859), and R. Brough (*Medea; or, the Best of Mothers,* Olympic 14 July 1856). As Monrós-Gaspar contends, 'the ambivalence of the politics of burlesque with regard to women gives voice to transgressive moulds which remained concealed in other cultural representations' (2015: 12).

No changes —no excitement— no variety.

POLYD: Entirely shut out from all society…

CLYMENE: Sure we were mad of happiness to dream,

From this great anti-matrimonial scheme.

Why did we listen to Diana's teaching,

Of single blessedness for ever preaching? (Ibid: 3)

Diana's retreat is represented as a 'thick forest', perhaps indicating their separation from society's rules and customs. The nymphs whine of not being admired by male suitors when they dance, in spite of Diana's warning of men being 'birds of prey'. The nymphs' complains echo those of many young unchaperoned ladies, unable to leave their homes without male escorts or other women. Eventually, Diana's retreat is threatened by the trespassing of Endymion and Acteon, who are not able to resist the promise of a female space.[25]

Pan and Cupid, the god of love, scheme to break Diana and the nymphs' walls and finally make them fall in love. For Cupid and her mother Venus, Diana's rejection of love and romance is a personal confrontation. When Cupid finally manages to strike Diana with a 'love arrow', its effect is transformative for her. At the opening of Scene III, we discover Diana 'standing in a crescent moon' at the summit of Mount Latmos. Her posture and attitude have changed: love has made her meek and tender-hearted.[26]

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[25] The attractive that impregnable, female-only spaces have for men is a motif commonly repeated during the nineteenth-century. In travel literature, male explorers like Richard Burton boast of their infiltrations in 'oriental' zenanas disguised as 'wandering medical men' (Ghose 1998: 4). On stage, the scene is mirrored in different feminized spaces —private boudoirs, drawing rooms and harems.

[26] Diana was represented by Ruth Herbert both in the original production from December 1860, and its subsequent revival in August 1862 (*The Era* 3 August 1862). Louisa Ruth Herbert (1831–1921) debuted in London's Strand on October 1855, moving on to the Olympic and the St. James' during the following years. She was well known for her beauty and her 'golden' hair,

> DIANA:　　How am I changed —I, who was once so cold,
>
> 　　　　　Now fall in love with all that I behold.
>
> 　　　　　Each new face loved at once, forgot as soon;
>
> 　　　　　Well may they call me "the inconstant moon."
>
> 　　　　　Yet never loved I one so fair as this —
>
> 　　　　　You sleeping beauty! —I must have a kiss!
>
> 　　　　　*(Music. —* DIANA *descends in the moon, approaches* ENDYMION*, and kisses him)* (Ibid: 20)

Diana's stance has changed, as she is shown physically above Endymion in a way that suggests superiority —she gazes upon him while he is asleep, and dares to advance to kiss him in a manner more often attributed to male protagonists in burlesques and pantomimes.[27] For the audience, Endymion's 'unprotectedness' is excused by Diana's 'spell'. Virtually, the spectators have accompanied Diana in her journey from strong-minded woman, rejecting male suitors, to supreme Moon goddess whose powerful gaze dominates her surroundings. In spite of Cupid's spell, she keeps her autonomy to wander through the forest and, ironically, to 'prey' over men in the same manner she previously condemned.

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being a favourite of Rossetti for his paintings at the end of the 1850s. Miss Herbert was also remembered for her leading role in George Roberts' *Lady Audley's Secret* (St. James 28 February 1863). Miss Herbert's performance was commended by the critics of the era, and the play became the only stage version approved by Braddon herself (Newey 2005: 90–1). She went on to manage the St. James's Theatre from 1864 to 1868. Herbert's beauty and popularity outside the theatre would have inevitably shaped the audience's perception of Diana as a flirt.

[27] Male characters are the ones who usually prey on women and daringly advance towards them in search of a kiss in the decade's plays: in *The History of a Flag,* Bandinier takes the liberty of kissing Zara after infiltrating a harem (Young 1860: 36–7); in Brough's *The Sylphide* (Princess' 9 April 1860) a mortal man chases the sylphs with romantic purposes; in Brough and Halliday's *The Pretty Horsebreaker* (Adelphi 13 July 1861) Mr. Sprout insists on kissing Bella, attracted by her dress. Like his female counterpart, the male flirt 'hovers between the socially essential and the socially disruptive' (Gould 2004: 281).

After being 'liberated' from her voluntary solitary confinement, Cupid's arrow has transformed her into a 'flirt'. Her romantic inclinations are volatile, and she falls in love with every man she encounters (Ibid: 30).[28] Perhaps in a commentary regarding the 'fast' girls of the period, Cupid confronts her flirtatious new manner and regains control over her:

CUPID: I did let loose your long pent-up affections,

But not to overflow in all directions.

True love should to one object be confined,

While your aim's at *embracing all mankind*—

Endymion—Pan—Orion—

DIANA: Nay, desist.

CUPID: Acteon now —Shall I complete the list?

The poets have done so; but recollect,

Though classical, such conduct's not correct.

DIANA: No more —forgive me, Cupid, I've been weak.

Weak! I've been mad. What shall I do —oh, speak?

CUPID: Love him who's worthy of you. (Ibid: 31)

Diana's freedom is again constrained by Cupid, who might not be a bird of prey, but nevertheless imposes patriarchal rules over her. In a way, Cupid represents the growing pressures over women to remain dutiful and morally appropriate. Diana, repentant,

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[28] Also borrowing from the classics, Byron's *Orpheus and Eurydice* (Strand 26 December 1863) features Eurydice, described in the play's programme as 'a reformed flirt, who was once flightly abroad, but who's now staid at home'. Interpreted by Ada Swanborough, Eurydice's punishment for her previous flirtations is that of descending to the Hades. The play, and its subsequent readapted revival *Eurydice; or, Little Orpheus and his Lute* (Strand 24 April 1871), feature contemporary topicalities of matrimony, divorce —Proserpine threatens Pluto after learning of his flirtations—, and fidelity. Eurydice, in both occasions, rejects her old promiscuous ways in favour of her husband's happiness.

retires into domestic seclusion for protection; thus, she goes into Endymion's home in the final scene, where Cupid blesses the pair's union after lecturing Diana about being faithful:

> CUPID: … you're sure you're cured though?
>
> DIANA: Quite.
>
> CUPID: No more flirtations.
>
> DIANA: Never more. (Ibid: 35)

The audience follows Diana in her journey from celibacy and self-assurance to complete meekness and submission. Her physical stance, previously represented as arrogant and literally above her male counterparts, has now subdued; by finding love and a suitable partner, Diana has been domesticated and transformed into an ideal representation of femininity.

The St. James' Diana was condemned by *The Era* due to her revealing clothes. Like the 'girls of the period', Diana was judged by her manner of dress. Her costume became a potent signifier of her place in society and the critics questioned her propriety:

> Though we appreciate classic beauty in all its details, we strongly condemn the indelicate —nay, why mince the word— the positive indecency, in which many classic characters are dressed for the stage. However such semi-nude exhibitions of young ladies may please the morbid taste of the sensualist, no father or husband would take either daughter or wife to witness the performance of a half-dressed woman. (30 December 1860)

In spite of the media's condemning remarks, Herbert's beauty in the role of Diana was immortalised by a carte de visite that featured her in costume, sporting the goddess's bow and arrows and crowned by a significant crescent moon on her head. Her stance,

which would remain in the minds of the playgoers, was that of an assertive, active goddess.[29] The final tableau, presenting Endymion and Diana in love, changes the play's discourse by placing her physically over him. *The Examiner* discusses Miss Herbert's final stance, towering over Endymion, who is seen 'at her feet' (23 August 1862). The burlesque's final tableau, which shows both Endymion and Diana ascending on the silver half crescent moon, represents the couple's ascent to marital bliss. However, by placing Diana higher than Endymion, a new contesting ground for marital roles is opened, propitiating the occasion to discuss legal Matrimonial Acts of the decade.

In other occasions, being displaced from the familial home provokes in female characters a feeling of 'madness' or despair. For example, Byron's *Cyril's Success* (New Globe Theatre 28 November 1868) discusses a woman's need to have a successful marriage. As the inaugurating drama selected for the opening of the East End's New Globe Theatre, Byron's play enjoyed a long run. *Cyril's Success* explores the domestic life of Cyril and Kate Cuthbert, a married couple who find themselves amidst a matrimonial crisis. Cyril, a writer and playwright, is estranged from his wife due to his growing popularity. At the same time, Kate complains of Cyril's lack of attentions and unsuccessfully attempts to regain his favours by singing and playing the piano. Overall, Byron's play is abounding in social commentary; as one of his favourite topics, Byron discusses domestic issues such as men's main duty to provide for their wives (1868: 10) and the negative effects that jealousy can have in the lives of married

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[29] Ruth Herbert would continue to be reminded as a poised character of antique inspiration, repeating classical roles in Brough's *Perseus and Andromeda* (St. James's 26 December 1861), in which she played Andromeda.

women. Kate reproaches Cyril's lack of attention and accuses him of preferring his fame over his own wife. Cyril justifies his actions as those of a good husband:

CUTH: Yes! If I am working hard, it is for you! *(she takes seat on foot-stood at end of sofa. They pass their arms around one another)* to make you happy —to give us a splendid home. All for you, darling.

MRS.CUTH: If you spoke oftener like that —there would be room in my heart only for my love. (Byron *Cyril's* 1868: 10)

As the play goes on, the audience accompanies Kate in her journey out of the home. Her reaction to Cyril's lack of attention is translated on stage as an exaggerated tantrum, as she insists on going to the Opera with another man and her problems are put in contrast to other, 'more serious' cases of domestic abuse. The arrival of Miss Grannet, an old school mistress, finally convinces Kate of leaving Cyril. Miss Grannet preaches about the blessedness of living a separated life away from one's husband:

MISS G: On the day I made up my mind to the course I returned to my maiden name and the scholastic establishment of Hollywood House, and went on as if my tyrant had never existed.

MRS. CUTH: What a life of misery you must have led!

MISS G: The happiest of lives! I could do as I liked, go where I liked, buy what I liked. And I had the great satisfaction of knowing that my husband could not marry again while I lived, and while he lived, that no other man could marry me, which is another satisfaction greater still! No, my dear; when you have come to that point when separation threatens, make up your mind. (Byron *Cyril* 1868: 20)

Encouraged by Miss Grannet, a woman who reads the Divorce Court column in the newspapers and is despised by all the men in the play for her rough, unfeminine manners, Kate abandons Cyril due to her suspicions of infidelity. However, Byron's play contrasts the decidedness of Miss Grannet to the repentant Kate; after one year, Kate remains upset about the separation, her mind is absent, and her life remains at a standstill. For the audience, seeing Kate's destitute situation after her breaking of the domestic home, might have acted as a warning. Her final decision to return to her husband after learning of his last literary fiasco evidences the negative influence of Miss Grannet's progressive discourse:

> MRS. CUTH: *(turns fiercely on* MISS G.*)* You —you are the cause of all this.
>
> *(*MISS G. *is greatly amazed)*
>
> MISS G: Catherine Cuthbert, you are —
>
> TITEBOY: She is a woman. I don't believe you are. (Byron *Cyril* 1868: 37)

By stripping Miss Grannet of her feminine identity, the play sets up an example for Kate.[30] Abandoning her husband and remaining remorseless, like in the case of Miss Grannet, is presented as 'unnatural' and degenerate for a woman; Miss Grannet, described as a misanthrope and a tireless defendant of Women's Rights, possesses the stock peculiarities of the old woman and enhances Kate's 'domestication' in the play. Returning to the home, Kate's final address to the audience concludes with a repentant

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[30] The *London Evening Standard* linked the character of Miss Grannet to that of Mrs. Willoughby, the old landlady from Tom Taylor's *The Ticket-of-Leave Man* (Olympic 27 March 1863). Both characters were interpreted by Mrs. Stephens, whose unforgettable performance as the talkative old lady in Taylor's melodrama, would have endured in the minds of the audience (*LES* 30 November 1868).

burying of her face in Cyril's breast. Thus, her shame is manifested and acquitted at the same time.[31]

As a master in the topicalities of domesticity and romantic relationships on stage, H. J. Byron tackles serious issues like domestic abuse and wife neglect.[32] Among his plays, two burlesques revolve around mistreated wives: *Mazourka!; or, the Stick, the Pole and the Tartar* (Strand 27 April 1864) and *Princess Spring-time; or, the Envoy who Stole the King's daughter* (Haymarket 26 December 1864). In both plays, the female protagonists —Mazourka and Princess Springtime— learn to be more compliant to their abusive husbands and to have more patience with their rough manners. In the case of the latter, the story reworks Madame D'Aulnoy's tale *The Princess Mayblossom*, where the original female protagonist kills her abusive, false husband Fanfarinet and returns to her kingdom to find the real one. However, as Richards suggests, in pantomimic adaptations of Madame D'Aulnoy's tales, women's true beauty resides in their 'prudence and discretion', as well as in their obedience to male characters (2015: 60). Thus, Byron erases Fanfarinet's murder and rewards the Princess' patience and endurance with a transformed husband. In this way, Byron represents domestic bliss as a hard-earned path in which the woman must, overall, stay and bear even the most terrible treatment.

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[31] In *The mountain robbers; or, the Blind Sister* (Victoria 3 March 1862), Louise acquits her sins as a 'fallen woman' by returning to her home and saving her aunt from the cunning hands of robbers.

[32] Jim Davis describes Byron's style as light and abundant in puns, and notes that his burlesques were usually aimed at an adult audience (1984: 1–31). Byron's dramas usually dealt with 'marriage, class and money', and mostly featured optimistic endings (ibid: 19). However, Byron found inspiration in popular stories and tales, like in *Puss in a new pair of boots* (Strand 26 December 1861) and *Whittington and his cat!* (Princess' 26 December 1861). Some of his 'serious' drama include *The Babes in the Wood* (Adelphi 18 July 1859), *A Hundred Thousand Pounds* (Prince of Wales' 5 May 1866), *The Lancanshire Lass* (Queen's Theatre 24 July 1868) and *Our Boys* (Strand 16 January 1875).

However, the retributive powers that marriage and domesticity have on women are repeated across dramatic genres. In melodrama, unidentified young women find self-purpose and a sense of identity thanks to romantic relationships and familial belonging. In such cases, their displacement from society is 'resolved' by adhering to the patriarchal norms. For instance, Violet, the female protagonist of Dion Boucicault's acclaimed *Life of an Actress* (Adelphi 1 March 1862), finds a home after her 'adoption' by Grimaldi, an unsuccessful Italian actor. Grimaldi, interpreted by Boucicault himself at the Adelphi, literally takes Violet off the streets and instructs her in the dramatic arts. Paralleling *Pygmalion*, Grimaldi shapes Violet to become an acclaimed actress, shaping her into a daughter-like figure for him. Violet, a beggar girl, is transformed by Grimaldi's paternal lessons:

> VIOLET: [to MALTRAVERS] A year ago I was afraid of you because I was a child —now, my father has taught me to be a woman and I fear you no more. (Boucicault 1862: 26)

In a new domestic environment, Violet is able to confront Maltravers, the villain of the play, while at the beginning, she recoiled in fear.[33] Violet new sense of belonging —and her new education into society— makes of her, as she asserts, a woman. However, her novel identity as a daughter leaves her confused; growing accustomed to being told what to read and how to act while preparing a play, Violet is unable to make decisions of her own while she is in Grimaldi's home. When Wopshot, a comedian from Grimaldi's company, declares his love for her, she remains stunned:

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[33] In Brough's burlesque *The Bohemian Girl* (Bijou 24 May 1861), Arline, a stolen child regains her identity when she returns to her father, Count Arnheim. Arline had grown up thinking herself a 'gypsy', or a social outcast. However, by reuniting with her father and repossessing her true identity, she is able to become 'a fine lady' (Brough 1861: 17). In this occasion, the familial home has a decisive role in the formation of a woman's identity.

VIOLET: Oh, Mr. Wopshot —what have I done to your feelings? … what can I do for you, tell me, oh tell me.

WOPSHOT: Love me, love me in return.

VIOLET: I do.

WOPSHOT: *(delighted)* And you accept me as a husband?

VIOLET: Eh! *(Starts)* A husband? … tell me how I should feel, if I were in love —really, truly in love— as I ought to be! Can you? (Boucicault 1862: 26)

Her inability to process her own emotions and her difficulties to assert her own ground qualify her as still a child in the hands of her father. She is unprepared for life outside the familial home. On the streets, she had been protected by a dog, while now that she is in a home, it is other men who protect her —Grimaldi and Wopshot. However, her new profession as an actress leaves her unprotected to the public eye. Lord Arthur, Violet's male interest, complains of her 'public life':

LORD ART: Tonight you are no longer mine —I must share you with the public. Your name —the dear name I repeat so fondly now, glares at me from every wall and is handed from mouth to mouth. Tonight you will appear and your person, looks —every gesture will be the gaze and comment of the crowd. The objects most sacred and dear to me will be mouthed over in every pothouse in the town —Oh! My very heart feels polluted by this vulgar handling of my love. (Boucicault 1862: 30)

Violet's transgressing of the social codes of gender by her intention to be an actress is condemned by Lord Arthur, whose perception of an actress echoes that of the

contemporary audience. For actresses were seen as extraordinary exceptions to the gender norms, transgressing the boundaries that confined other, ordinary women. As Powell contends, actresses' power over their public was perceived as a threat to patriarchal norms; essentially, the Victorian actress occupied a place that was unreachable to many women (Powell 1997). Their examples, usually condemned by the printed media and the literature, were set as exceptional cases of female autonomy. However, Violet never achieves full independence during her journey, despite of her newfound domesticity and sense of identity. She remains clueless about her correct path, and insists on questioning her decisions by asking her male counterparts: 'Dear Arthur, tell me what I shall do.' (Ibid: 29). Violet rejects any form of self-position or self-definition, thus renouncing to her own identity in favour of being Lord Arthur's wife.

As the play advances, we understand that Violet's uniqueness resides in her 'purity', which is transformed into a valuable object to protect. In the melodramatic fashion, Violet's purity is threatened by Maltravers, who tricks her into his house in an attempt to ruin her reputation. Eventually, Lord Arthur steps in to save Violet's reputation by marrying her, protecting her once again:

> LORD ART: If Violet will accept the reparation, I offer my hand to protect and
> my name to shelter her from the infamy of this night's work.
> (Boucicault 1862: 67)

Thus, marriage as protection is again brought to the audience's minds. In this occasion, marriage protects a woman from infamy, and 'shelters' her against moral displacement. All along the play, Violet has been mentally lost, with no other purpose but that to please her male companions. In the hands of Grimaldi, she becomes a puppet; after her

theatrical debut, the adjectives describing her qualify her as 'the flower of all flowers' or 'the enchantress', suggesting a repossession of herself on stage that is unimaginable for her outside of it. As an actress, she seems to finally find a suitable definition for herself; however, to carry on with her purpose of marriage she must abandon the stage. Powell has argued that marriage was a way to 'neutralise the power and independence of actresses' (1997: 18). In this way, the domestication of the actress (and the woman) is complete.

Assumingly, the debate over the Victorian actress' morality leads Boucicault to leave Violet's destiny in the hands of the audience. On his final address as Grimaldi, he appeals to the public to perform their moral judgement of Violet:

> GRIMALD: You shall forbid her to go! [out of the stage] Is it because dat she is now noble, dat she shall spurn the profession by which she arise? Non! You shall tell her that you also can confer nobility —you gave the crowns to Shakespeare, to Biron, and to Rachel! And dere is one glory in de titles you give, and dat is, dey are immortal. (Boucicault 1862: 84)

I suspect which would have been the audience's riposte, especially after reading *The Era*'s remarks about the play's 'morally objectionable' nature (9 March 1862). Later on, Boucicault's decision to include a prostitute as protagonist of his melodrama *Formosa; or, the Railrowad to Ruin* (Drury Lane 5 August 1869) was thoroughly condemned by the critics. However, his arguments for including in the play 'true knowledge of the world' was that, precisely, of purging 'many a young mind of much perilous stuff' (*St. Pauls* 1869: 76). Boucicault's attempts to expose British society with *Formosa* was, in his own opinion, 'a revolution to the British stage', and, as Eltis suggests, a 'blow for

women's education, free speech, and the right of the theatre to treat serious sexual subjects' (2013: 79–80).

In comic plays, marriage often has the ability to transform the mental capacities of women. In Blanchard's pantomime *Riquet and the Tuft* (Princess' 26 December 1862), Princess Amouretta is introduced as a nuisance for her father; her lack of intellect has been driving away all suitors, and so the King is desperate to 'dispose of her' (Blanchard 1862: 15). Amouretta is described in an infantilized manner, a child who slowly starts to come to her senses after experiencing love for the first time. Indeed, Amouretta describes the voice of her lover as 'he could make me sensible' (Blanchard 1862: 20), and his sole presence seems to have a mental impact on her. Her rapid intellectual transformation after finding a suitable husband is praised by Riquet himself, who beholds his Princess under the light of the female role debate:

RIQUET: You here behold her ready to recite

            Act, lecture, sing, play, dance on any night

            Edit a daily paper, nay, worse task,

            Answer all questions correspondents ask

            Write novels, translate German, construe Homer,

            Or get a first class Medical diploma.

            Conduct a magazine or bravely try

            To colonize New Zealand like Miss Rye.

            Problems in science doesn't care a bit for,

            In fact, there's nothing that she isn't fit for. (Blanchard 1862: 33)

Richards has argued that Blanchard was invested in creating pantomimes with a moral message (2010: 26–7). As he contends, Blanchard had previously emphasized the

importance of 'teaching girls the requisite qualities for womanhood, marriage and family life' (Richards 2010: 26). In *Riquet and the Tuft*, Amouretta is at first described as beautiful, though lacking of intellect. However, as the pantomime advances, it is evident that, for Amouretta, being beautiful is not enough. As she metaphorically 'grows up' and leaves her father's control, Riquet announces her newfound intellectual abilities. Regardless, the moral message reminds the audience that a woman's potential is only fully achieved after fulfilling her matrimonial duties.[34]

In the same way, the drama from the 1860s insists on defining women according to their domestic role. Consequently, it is usual to find devoted or self-sacrificing women who go to great lengths to save their father. On stage, a woman's role as a daughter is her first discernible identity. For instance, burlesques and pantomimes which adapt popular legends or fairy tales, usually introduce on their first or second Scene a daughter who is not afraid of overstepping her assumed female role; thus, when a father is put in danger in comic drama, a daughter will be willing to put herself to work outside the home. In Byron's *Aladdin!; or, the Wonderful Scamp* (Strand 30 March 1862), Princess Badroulboudour fervently suggests working for her father to help him pay his debt off.[35] As she announces, she's 'grown quite tired' of the Palace's

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[34] Boxing Day at the West End's theatres implied the attendance of many families. Jim Davis scrutinizes the behaviour and responses of London's audiences during such a jovial day, questioning their assumed 'unruliness' and revising their active participation in the stories represented on stage (2007: 13–31).

[35] The comic drama mirrors the contemporary father's burden of having daughters, as they were usually considered a nuisance for the household's economy. Usually represented as whimsical, materialistic, and shallow, middle-class daughters are often a worrying topic for fathers. In 1874, an article on 'The Nuisance of having daughters' was reprinted in London after its first apparition at *Melbourne's Punch*. The author, presumably an anonymous father, remarked that 'a man blessed with a houseful of growing up daughters is a fellow to be pitied' (17 September 1874: 375). Among the reasons he listed, he notes the daughter's shortage of liberties: they cannot go to the theatre or the opera alone, or read daily journals of books. A Victorian

'pomp and state' and wants to do something for herself. Leaving the palace, or ultimately the paternal home, has a twofold motivation: on the one hand, the Princess wants to help her father by contributing economically to the household; on the other, she desires to escape the domestic constrictive environment and put her 'talents and abilities' to use (Byron *Aladdin* 1862: 6).[36] However, her intentions are disdained by her father, who assures her that her role is that of being a Princess, not a 'scrubber' in 'plain clothes'. Evidently, as her fate on the play suggests, she goes on to remain first at her father's Palace and then to her husband's, Aladdin.

Those women who dare to challenge their father's wishes are often reprimanded on stage. The Haymarket's production of *The Pilgrim of Love!* (Byron 9 April 1860) adapts one of Washington Irving's orientalist legends from *Legends of the Alhambra* (1829). Accordingly, Byron's 'fairy romance' exploits the picturesque setting of Spain's Andalucía and presents spectacular scenic art by the popular Morris and Fenton.[37] The

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daughter, the media suggests, will need her father's guidance up until she can be 'passed on' to her husband.

[36] The Princess announces her job opportunities, the professions available to women during the 1860s:

> PRINC: *(with fervour)* Pa! I'll work for you; I can make a dress.
> I'll go out as a Nursery Governess;
> Endure the mistress's capricious airs,
> And the proud footman's elevated stares.
> Or as a governess's lot is shady
> From fashionable literary lady
> A novel write in one of the cheap papers,
> Entitled —let's see— "Countesses and Capers"
> By a young lady of high title written,
> The public would most certainly be bitten
> Or I might advertise as do some scamps…
> Or as a last resource by way of making
> A mere existence, I might washing take up
> Though a princess, I'd scour like any scrub
> Not shrink at washing —no, nor pale at tub. (Byron *Aladdin* 1862: 6)

[37] Other plays that exploit the Spanish imagery and picturesque scenography are *Caught in a Trap* (Holl, Princess' 8 February 1860) and *The Maladetta; or, The Spanish maid and the mountain of the accursed* (Britannia 14 May 1863).

play includes a diorama representing Prince Ahmed's journey from Granada to Toledo, which shows the Alhambra Palace, the Guadalquivir River in Cordova, orange trees in Seville, and Toledo's Alcázar, where the Prince stops to search for the Princess.[38] Upon meeting, the Princess expresses her desires to leave the castle with Ahmed: 'I hope —I trust— I beg—you'll take me too' (Byron *Pilgrim* 1860: 20). However, after the couple's intrigues around their eloping, ultimately the Princess decides to stay at her father's palace after Prince Ahmed instigates her to make her choice between himself and her father, the King. Princess Aldegonda's decision and Prince Ahmed's final remarks about a daughter's obedience resound like a moral lesson for the female playgoer:

> PRIN: I cannot wed without papa's consent.
>
> KING: Returned! My Aldegonda —I relent…
>
> Ask what you will —and have!
>
> PRIN: … Upon this carpet join our hands.
>
> KING: Be happy!...
>
> AHMED: My love!
>
> … had you disobeyed him, I confess,
>
> In time I might have grown to love you less;
>
> But, as it is, "respectful admiration"
>
> Is mingled with my ardent adoration.
>
> She who obeys her parents, through her life,

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[38] The Princess Aldegonda was performed by a Miss M. Ternan, who was praised for her feminine manners and whose performance was 'as ladylike as usual, and as a Princess should be' (*Globe* 10 April 1860).

> *Must* make a fond, a firm and faithful wife! (Byron *Pilgrim* 1860:
>
> 39)

Indeed, some comic plays insist on defending a father's authority over women. Usually dependants on their father's choices for their own life journeys, 'True Women' on stage are usually compared to the Shakespearean Cordelia, who defends and supports her father Lear through tough times. In 1862, two father-daughter's relationships are compared to Lear and Cordelia's. In Byron's *Ivanhoe* (Strand 26 December 1862), Rowena tends over her father, Cedric, who is '*lying on a stone bench*'. The stage annotations indicate her protecting yet dishevelled figure, with '*her hair down*', 'suggestive of "*Lear and Cordelia*"' (Byron *Ivanhoe* 1862: 40). Mimicking Ford Madox Brown's painting *Lear and Cordelia* (1849–54), which illustrated Cordelia's attentions to her dying father, Byron's Rowena watches over her father, Cedric, at their tower of imprisonment. Likewise, In Brough's *Prince Amabel; or, the Fairy Roses* (St. James's 25 April 1862), the fair and young Violet confronts her two sisters, Dragonetta and Tartarella, in defence of their father, King Turko. Her speech echoes that of Cordelia's to her sisters Regan and Goneril:

> VIOLET: Shame on you, sisters! Faults let others find
>
> To parents' failings children should be blind.
>
> What if he is harsh, stern, and all the rest of it;
>
> Things might be worse —smile, then, and make the best of it.
>
> Why grumble then, if it sometimes beats you? (18–9)

These plays emphasize a father-daughter relationship as crucial for a woman's self-definition. For some female characters, the absence of a father figure irremediably marks their aspirations in life. In Parselle's melodrama *The Changed Heart* (Surrey 20

January 1860), a stolen daughter dreams about the true identity of her father and wishes to devote herself to him:

> MARGUER: When I was in my convent what I wished above all things was not to quit my solitude, nor to see the world —the dream of every young girl. No. I had but one desire: to devote myself entire to him who had filled my heart from infancy —to my father. My whole life seemed bound up in him. (11)

Mother-daughter relationships are also prominent on stage, but on the comic drama, aging mothers are usually performed in a mocking, subversive way —often interpreted by cross-dressed men—, whereas in melodrama, sensational plotlines revolve around maternal abandonment. In the aforementioned *The Changed Heart* (Surrey 20 January 1860), Pauline's mother is punished for her child's abandonment, ultimately dying as retributive justice after her daughter's reinsertion in 'respectable' society.[39] Indeed, women do not age well on the Victorian stage and their mistakes as mothers are usually more cruelly resolved.

If, as we have seen, a woman was mainly defined by her domestic linkage to her father or husband, her identity —and thus, the modern woman's identity— was reworked on stage through metaphors of femininity. In some occasions, femininity is evaluated according to the woman's vigour —or lack of it— outside her home; in other words, the home becomes the nucleus of female existence, affecting her own identity and sense of self-purpose. In modern feminist discourse, the home is traditionally linked to metaphorical images of female confinement. As Shands (1999) attests, nineteenth-

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[39] An adaptation of Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) at the Britannia theatre revises the controversy of infanticide. In *Jeannie Deans, Deerfoot's Rival* (10 March 1863), the Britannia lightly follows Scott's novel and satirises the protagonist's piousness and goodwill to save her sister.

century feminists attempted to expand women's horizons and boundaries outside the home, yet the century's imagery continues cloistering women inside the private space. With the home as a female dominion, the stage exploits the domestic imagery and links it to female conceptions of identity. In paintings, there is a differentiation of the spatial representation of women, usually establishing a juxtaposition of lady/private space and fallen woman/public space (Pollock 1992: 258). In the mid-nineteenth-century, paintings depicting women in their domestic spheres usually emphasized their maternal roles picturing them surrounded by their family or amidst childbearing, thus evoking the woman of the period's role in society.

One of the main literary symbols of female domesticity is that of Penelope, the 'patient wife' of Ulysses. In 1863, Burnand created a burlesque for the Strand entitled *Patient Penelope; or, the Return of Ulysses* (25 November 1863), in which Ada Swanborough interpreted the female lead.[40] Burnand's suggestive burlesque includes the spectral apparition of Ulysses, who tricks Penelope into believing he is deceased. The hero chastises his wife for what he believes is an excessively flirtatious relationship with Eurymachus in a scene in which he literally 'haunts' Penelope in her home.[41] Ulysses' haunting symbolises Penelope's punishment for transgressing moral and domestic boundaries permitting the entrance of a male suitor into the home. Overall, the burlesque reinforces the century's imagery of patience and home seclusion as main female traits.

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[40] Penelope is the only female character in Burnand's burlesque, yet her suitor Eurymachus was also interpreted by an actress —Maria Simpson. Both Simpson and Swanborough were known for their comic roles, which often included breeches roles.

[41] Burnand takes advantage of the 1863's 'ghost craze' and collaborates with Fenton to incorporate to the burlesque the visual techniques of shadow play. The creation of realistic spectral apparitions had been popularised by Pepper's Ghost in the city.

Other female characters of the decade are metaphorically 'locked' at home due to their husbands' abuse or abandonment. Such is the example of Elvira, from Byron's *Little Don Giovanni* (Prince of Wales's Theatre 26 December 1865), who was 'taken' from her 'mountain home' when she was 'a timid, dove-like and gazelle-eyed thing' (Ibid: 31), only to be left by Don Pedro at their home. In Talfourd and Byron's *The Miller and His Men* (Strand 5 April 1860), Ravina is an abandoned wife who is forced to remain at a cavern, serving her husband's band of robbers. Both women are degraded in their domestic place, suffering from their husband's abandonment and assuming other identities, especially Ravina, whose role in the cavern/house is that of servant instead of wife. In a way, their patience can be perceived as compliance to gender norms and a rejection of autonomy beyond the domestic sphere.

In this way, being patient is a rewarding trait for the female characters on the mid-Victorian stage. For example, the Strand's Cinderella finally meets her well-travelled Prince after his quest for a foreign wife has proved unfruitful. Prince Poppetti's search for a wife abroad would prove premonitory, advancing Prince Edward's marriage to a foreign woman, Princess Alexandra of Denmark, in 1863.[42] The attendant fairy in Byron's *Cinderella* (Strand 26 December 1860) points eligible bachelors into the right direction:

HAREBELL: of course, what right for wives have folks to roam.

People in such cases should look at home. (4)

In the same way, proper 'ladies' wait for their men at home and are transformed into metaphorical lighthouses that guide heroes back home. Like in Homer's epic, the

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[42] Despite Byron's lines advocating for national marriages, Princess Alexandra was warmly welcomed into the Royal family.

popular hero Peter Wilkins sails the seas and meets foreign women who tempt him to forget his own Constantia, whose domestic role compels her to remain at home.[43] Gulliver has to take his wife Mrs. Gulliver along in his journey on the Covent Garden stage, yet she remains silenced until Scene V, where she 'bellows' in fright upon arrival to Lilliput island and plies for her husband's life before the King of Laputa.[44] Robinson Crusoe grows tired of his wife and children and departs for an island adventure in pantomimes, while Mrs. Crusoe, especially created for the Covent Garden stage, is left in 'a sea of troubles', being chased by solicitors and unable to maintain the house without her husband (Byron *Robinson* 1868: 9).[45]

In other occasions, female patience and endurance at home is ultimately rewarded with matrimony. In Byron's *Goldenhair the Good* (St. James's 26 December 1862), Ursula, a housekeeper, 'forgets her place' by pinning for her employer, Gruntz:

> URSULA: … Spilliken says Master's a misanthrope and that he's morbid —
> for my part, I don't know what those terms mean, but I know he's a
> good heart and I love him. Eh, that's not right, I suppose. I'm only
> his housekeeper and I should know my place, but I do love him,
> though he may never know it. (8)

On the programme, Ursula is described as 'a buxom dame', and was interpreted by Mrs. Frank Matthews, the actual wife of the manager and actor taking on the role of Gruntz.

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[43] Blanchard's *Peter Wilkins* (Drury Lane 26 December 1860).

[44] Morton's *Harlequin Gulliver; or, Giants and Dwarfs* (Covent Garden 26 December 1861). A decade later, Byron freely adapts Swift's tale in *The Gaiety Gulliver* (Gaiety 26 December 1879)

[45] After his first successful take of Robinson Crusoe in 1860, Byron created a second pantomimic version for the Covent Garden theatre entitled *Robinson Crusoe; or, Friday and the Fairies!* (20 December 1868). Differing from the 1860's version for the Princess's Theatre, Byron's Covent Garden adaptation includes an 'elderly' Mrs. Crusoe, interpreted by actor Mr. Wilmot.

The Era introduces Ursula as 'a faithful, devoted creature who submits to all of [Gruntz's] ill-humour without a complaint, simply because she loves him' (28 December 1862). The moral of the story rescues the idea of finding a 'true woman' at home, instead of searching for one outside.[46] In Byron's 'fairy fancy', Gruntz fantasizes about a 'fairy' wife, whom he believes would be his only chance to get a 'perfect wife'. A year earlier, George Linley mocked men's desires to get 'perfect' wives in his Covent Garden comic operetta *The Toy-maker* (22 October 1861). Linley's plot revolves around Van Grootz, a toy-maker who decides to create an idealized female wax doll, which will later be transformed into a human wife for his son, Maximillian. Van Grootz describes the perfect wife as follows:

> VAN GRO: ... she must not be proud nor pert
>
>   Ne'er coquet or wish to flirt
>
>   Strive her husband but to please
>
>   Never, never, scold nor tease…
>
>   She must rare talents possess
>
>   In virtue she must shine
>
>   She must not be fond of dress
>
>   At least not dress too fine
>
>   She must be employed at home
>
>   Seldom get about or roam
>
>   Turn a deaf and easeless ear

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[46] As previously noted, Byron has the tendency to include patient wives or patient women in his comic plays, which were often inspired by domestic affairs and romantic intrigues. Another wife rewarded by her patience with her husband's adulterous flirtations is Maria, from *George de Barnwell; or, Harlequin Folly in the Realms of Fancy* (Adelphi 26 December 1862). Maria waits for her husband's return after he establishes a controversial relationship with Lady Millwood, who is represented as a 'femme fatale'.

To Gallants who flutter near (Linley 1962: 9–10)

Van Grootz is tricked by Bertha, the lover of his nephew and a young florist, who impersonates the doll to make him believe his magic spell has been successful. Van Grootz, regretting his spell, tries to murder Bertha after realising her 'imperfection'. In a way, Linley's play criticises men's unrealistic desires and condemns superficial marriages.

Going in quest of an idolized, supernatural wife is exhibited as a perilous journey. In Byron's *Goldenhair,* the bachelor's behaviour drastically changes after his wish is accomplished and after he realises there is no such thing as a perfect fairy wife. After getting rid of Goldenhair, he turns repentant to the ever-patient Ursula:

GRUNTZ: I'm a changed man, Ursula. I've had a lesson that has done me good —no more romantic dreaming about fairy brides and such rubbish —my eyes are opened to a fresh prospect *(holding her out at arm's length)* a pleasant prospect too, Ursula.

URSULA: *(hysterically)* What, what do you mean?

GRUNTZ: What do I mean? That I would ask forgiveness for all my croon and cranky ways, my ungrateful growlings for years. I would ask this of you, Ursula, of you, my friend, my wife! *(opens his arms, Ursula sinks into them)* (Byron *Goldenhair* 1862: 37)

In a way, these plotlines re-signify the 'True Woman' as a place where men can turn to in quest of stability or domesticity.[47] Female endurance at home is linked to female heroism, and a woman's role 'in common life' finds its base at keeping a pleasant,

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[47] Florence Nightingale and her 'silent heroism' (*The Lady's Newspaper* 4 February 1860: 83).

welcoming home.[48] On stage, such feminine paragon is often transformed into caricaturesque representations of female restrictions; for instance, Mathews' moralising comedy *The Soft Sex* (Haymarket 31 August 1861) exploits the character of the True Woman to the point of converting it into a one-dimensional individual. Mathews' comedy offers the character of Ida, an 'affectionate, domesticated girl, brought up in the old-fashioned English style' (*The Morning Post* 2 September 1861). Throughout the play, Ida —interpreted by the author's own wife, Mrs. Charles Mathews— is presented as the cousin and companion of two young girls, Harriet and Julia Biggins. Ida's role in the Biggins house is that to 'finish' the girls' education, 'forming their manners [and] their morals' (Mathews 1861: 8). Accordingly, Ida curates the girls' reading material and decides their social and intellectual activities. As a 'domesticated girl', Ida advocates for a lady's perspective from her own drawing room:

> IDA: Instead of opening the piano, you open the window; the sun shines brightly and you can see all the world go by, pedestrians, equestrians… (Mathews 1861: 10)

Her place and position in the household is destabilized after the arrival of a 'progressive' American lady, Miss Priscilla Cram. Along with Mr. Biggins' 'strong-minded' sister, Mrs. Lucretia Mandwindle, Miss Cram will threaten Ida's domestic reign:

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[48] *The Lady's Newspaper* pleaded for 'womanly cheerfulness' in the home, advocating for an expression of 'gladness' in the 'proper sphere of home' (14 January 1860: 27). Dr. Adams, the author of the article, praises the patient, self-controlled, kind woman as basis for a prosperous home:

> When the strong man has bowed himself, and his brow is knit and creased, you will see how the whole life of a household seems to hang on the frailer form, which, with solicitudes of her own, passing it may be under the 'sacred primal sorrow of her sex', has an eye and an ear for every one but herself, suggestive of expedients, hopeful in extremities, helpful in kind words and affectionate smiles, morning, noon, and night, the medicine, the light, the heart of a whole household. (Ibid)

> LUCRETIA: *(to* IDA*)* your reign is over, young lady, and ours commences.
>
> (Ibid: 50)

Reading between the lines, the audience would understand the actual message of strong-mindedness threatening to overthrow the 'rule' of the 'True Woman'. The play includes antithetical female characters for the sake of simplifying the ongoing debate on female rights, as not too long before opening night, the Social Science Congress of 1861 had featured the papers of feminists Maria Rye, Frances Power Cobbe, and Bessie Rayner Parkes, who defended an enhancement of the educational rights and the working prospects of women.[49] In light of the moment's stirring situation, Ida takes the centre stage to remind the audience of the True Woman's knowledge of her sex, her place, and her duty (*The Sunday Times* 1 September 1861), being the only female character out of six in total that behaves accordingly to her sex's 'duties'. In Act II, the women participate in a debate on women's rights:

> COOK: … Miss Ida rejects our views and has a contempt for strength of mind.
>
> IDA: Oh, pardon me, madam. If by strength of mind you mean that courage which supports us through life's trials and enacts us to defy the malice of others and conquer our own defects, I know of nothing more estimable. But if your strength of mind consists in a vain endeavour to rival man in boldness and effrontery, I own I have no wish to attain it.

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[49] See McCrone for a comprehensive analysis of the decisive role of the Social Science Association in the advancement of Victorian feminist activism (1982).

MS. MAND: … then I suppose your sole ambition is to darn table cloths and hem pocket handkerchiefs?

IDA: … oh, no, Madam, on the contrary. I admit the advantage of strengthening our intellect by every means in our power… it is by such mental cultivation, aunt *(to* MRS. MANDWINDLE*)* that we learn to become more sensible, *(to* MRS. COOK*)* more feminine, *(to* MISS CRAM*)* more seductive in the eyes of others —in one word, more womanly— without which I am afraid we should lose more than we should gain by the argument. If aunt Mandwindle chooses to employ her leisure moments in study and meditation — nay, even in authorship if she has the talent to do so successfully, well and good. But should she wholly neglect the management of her own house and abdicate her domestic throne? I think not… if Miss Cram likes to cultivate the arts and science at proper times and seasons, who shall deny her right to do so? But should she thereby reduce herself to the living skeleton she is? I think not. If Mrs. Cook delights to travel from one end of the earth to the other alone, who shall hinder her? But should she assert that there is no place so fitting for woman's dwelling as the wild Arab's tent? I think not *(rising suddenly)* If Julia loves to seek the solitude of the hills and wander among rocks and precipices, who shall quarrel with her passion for romance? But should she leave the paternal roof in the dead of the night to seek for shelter Heaven knows

where —would that be the conduct of a modest girl? I think not.

(Matthews 1861: 83–4)

Set against the revolutionary manners of the strong-minded characters, Columbia Cosmos Cook —the traveller—, the girls' aunt, Mrs. Lucretia Mandwindle —a female physician who 'emasculates' her husband—, and Miss Cram —an American governess—, Ida's speech defending traditional feminine roles transports the audience to a public discussion on women's rights. Besides, her soliloquy appeals not just to the other characters, but to the playgoer's reason too. Her words surpass the stage and discredit those pronounced by contemporary real female rights activists in female societies, advocating instead for a traditional domestic ideology. Ida goes on to insist on the necessity to remain 'placed' within the boundaries that define a woman, warning the others about their displacement:

MISS CRAM: … But we will let them [men] know, proud as they are, that they are children themselves in our eyes, we will bring them to our feet, we will show them that we are the stronger sex *(all the women:* of course we will*)*

IDA: And there will be an end of you, for the moment you cease to be women, your strength is gone. No, ladies, our best strength lies in our grace, our gentleness, our good humour, those golden threads with which we entwine all hearts by the most forcible of all means. Would we bury the tyrant man to our feet, the proud lord of the creation who after all is for ever but a child in his mother's eyes and a great baby in his wife's? it is not by a frown he can be brought upon his knees, but by a smile. It is useless for his better

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half to shout imperiously 'I will have it so' —no, she must adopt

the tender accents of entreaty and falter out 'if you please, dear'.

(Ibid: 85)

As Ida puts it, women attempting to occupy male-oriented spaces and identities would only result in their loss of place. As she contends in her final address to the 'ladies', 'we must be careful lest while arrogating to ourselves the attributes of man, we do not lose the best prerogative of woman' (Mathews 1861: 138). Ida's claim remarks the importance of being properly placed within one's boundaries, which, in the end, are what define one's identity and existence. Her words reinforce the audience's mental maps configuring a separation of the sexes, emphasizing traditional gender roles and discouraging female mobility through mental and spatial boundaries. To sum up, Ida's speech warns of the growing 'defeminization' and reinforces the period's idea of female trespassing.

As this section attests, the domestic idealization of women on stage redefines women in the eyes of the audience, creating stock characters that simplify a myriad of female identities. Women's subordination under the patriarchal rules of the 1860s is visible in storylines that exploit their candour and unselfishness when the integrity of the family is put at stake. In the case studies I have proposed in this section, women's identity on stage is tightly linked to family belonging; as previously seen, family and heritage constitutes one of the main traits of female identity. Thus, missing such an essential link produces a disorienting existence and, consequently, a feeling of displacement. In the end, the plays show that a feeling of belonging is required for the woman to progress.

However, not even the meekest daughter or the most obedient wife remains untroubled in the storylines of the 1860s. Reinforcing a woman's place on stage through the perpetuation of gender ideologies is a difficult task for the modern playwright, especially when he is urged to be current in his topicalities of choice. Nonetheless, stillness and male dependence continues to be the trending traits of the female protagonist. A strong sense of place usually links the female body with the home or the private sphere. Still, the drama of the 1860s includes female characters that, in spite of their essential binding to familial belonging, express their desires to overstep their 'domesticated spaces'. As I shall analyse in the following section, extraordinary examples of active heroines flourish on stage mirroring gender debates of the decade.

3.3.2. Leaving the home: challenging the identity of the True Woman

In April, 1860, the Adelphi stage introduced the American actress Julia Daly in Galen's comedietta *Our Female American Cousin* (30 April 1860). Her well-known reputation on the other side of the Atlantic facilitated her popularity in London, especially after her successful role of Pamelia in the aforementioned comedy. As Pamelia, Julia Daly exaggerates the 'vulgar' manners of the modern American girl, who is put in contrast with the meek character of the English-born woman. Indeed, Pamelia's displacement upon arrival to an English family home is evidenced by her rough speech and her unruly behaviour.[50] After learning about the arrival of the American girl in the Appleby household, Lady Appleby —the matriarch— assumes Pamelia's displacement from society and compares her to a 'savage':

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[50] The *Morning Advertiser* described Miss Daly in her role as Pamelia as 'a popular delineator of American eccentricities' (20 June 1860), while the *Morning Post* attested to her capacity to 'mirror' reality through a 'magnifying glass of extraordinary power' (1 May 1860).

LADY APP: A savage from America? Good gracious, I hope you will keep her

caged. (Galen 1860: 7)

Evidently, the London stage revels on the 'go-aheadism' of American society —and especially of American women— as markers of the social changes surrounding their own British women.[51] Pamelia is represented as a coarse-mannered girl who destabilises the respectability of an English family due to her easy-goingness around men, her lack of respect for her elder relatives, and her free mobility both inside and outside the family home. As representative of the growing American Women's Rights movement, Pamelia brings to the London stage a threatening picture of the incipient future that was upon English women. In the end, her role not only caricaturizes the contemporary modern American girl, but also reminds the audience of the country's own 'femininity' problem. Even though Galen's comedietta is packed with 'Americanisms', as some newspapers suggest, and the acting of Julia Daly is especially focused on boosting such mannerisms of the stereotypical modern American girl, her final address to the audience seeks to remind them of the artificiality of such role; as Daly states, such picture of an American woman only exists in the audience's imagination:

PAMELIA: I have shown you your idea of an American Woman, such a type as

I am proud to say, only exists in the imagination of old time story

writers. (Galen 1860: 31)

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[51] Two years after the first performance of *Our Female American Cousin,* novelist and critic Anthony Trollope published his memoirs of his American travels in *North America* (1862). Trollope's social commentary on American society and American women brings forward the 'improper' and 'misbehaving female' of the period (*The Athenaeum* 24 May 1862: 687). As Trollope puts it, the contrast between 'ladylike' and 'vulgar', though existent in England, is stronger in America, where women can be 'either charming or odious' (*The Athenaeum* 24 May 1862: 687).

However, Daly's final 'tag' might have been perceived as weak in intention, for the message that comes across witnessing the play as a whole is precisely the opposite. In this way, the go-aheadism of the American girl stresses England's own girl of the period or fast girl.[52]

These kind of female characters are repeated throughout the decade independently of their nationality. Shaped as a 'radical', unfeminine woman who subverts gender roles, the active, strong-minded woman of the 1860s' popular drama mirrors contemporary debates of female education, emancipation, and working opportunities. Some of the examples of female out-of-placedness usually tackle women's displacement from the countryside to the metropolis. Perhaps the most popular country girl in the drama of the 1860s in London is Eily O'Connor, the protagonist of Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn* (Adelphi 10 September 1860). Eily was readapted numerous times in the popular comic drama of London's West and East Ends. These include Byron's burlesque, *Miss Eily O'Connor* (Drury Lane 25 November 1861), where the lead part was interpreted by actor Mr. Atkins, and Brough and Halliday's *The Colleen Bawn Settled at Last* (Lyceum 5 July 1862). The latter was leaded by Lydia Thompson, who interpreted Eily O'Connor in what was supposed to be the sequel of Boucicault's original. As Mrs. Hardress Cregan, Brough and Halliday's Eily translates her displacement from respectable society in her unrefined manners. The Lyceums' take on the story of Eily O'Connor focuses on her incompatibility with the domestic duties of a wife, inadvertently shaming her husband Hardress in front of his upper-class

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[52] The mid-Victorian stages of London receive glimpses of a mistreated America, echoing the incidents of the American Civil War in a melodramatic way. In the anonymous' *Edward the Black Prince* (Victoria 16 December 1862), an actress takes on the role of America and symbolically appears chained to a rock. In Douglass's *Cora; or, the Octoroon Slave of Louisiana* (Pavillion 25 October 1861), Afro-american slavery is both sensationalised and condemned.

friends, struggling to improve her English, and refusing to wear a lady's gown in favour of her old peasant dress. In the end, Brough and Halliday's Eily makes visible the difficulties arising from female physical and class mobility.

Similarly, the protagonist of Brough and Halliday's *The Pretty Horsebreaker; or, a Lament from Belgravia* (Adelphi 13 April 1861) finds herself displaced from respectable society after arriving in London. As the 'wild country cousin' of the Stillon girls, Bella exhibits a problematic unrestricted mobility. Bella's behaviour antagonises her city counterparts': besides her relaxed manners, Bella has different expectations from matrimony than her cousins from Belgravia. In addition, Bella is prone to follow the risky fashion of 'pork pie hats' and 'blue riding habits', catching the attention of male gazers in her rides.[53] Precisely, it is Bella's 'country-like' horseback riding and general nonchalance what attracts the attentions of a wealthy bachelor, Mr. Spout, who falls in love with her after riding next to her in the park:

> BELLA: A horsebreaker, what do you mean?
>
> SPOUT: A horsebreaker —a heartbreaker —a general smasher up of me and all belonging to me —in that pork-pie hat and blue riding habit. Oh! Give us a kiss, I should so like one in that dress. (Brough and Halliday 1860: 20)

Brough and Halliday borrow from the 1861 controversy of 'pretty' female 'horse-breakers', who were said to gather in Rotten Row, Belgravia. The issue of horsebreakers —which became a euphemism for prostitutes and women of 'relaxed' morality— had become so well-known in London that the *Times* published a letter of 'Seven Belgravian

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[53] *Punch* magazine featured a long list of female caricatures drawn by John Leech. Leech's satirical drawings usually commented on public conduct and morality. Leech also addressed female conduct in the city, often linking women's fashion as influential to their character. See more about Leech in Miller (2009).

Mothers', who complained of their daughters' difficulties to secure a husband while such women were around (*Times* 27 June 1861).[54] The sensation surrounding Belgravian morality and the disinclination to marriage of young men sets the backdrop of Brough and Halliday's farce, which concludes reaching for the audience's opinion on feminine morality and marriage:

> BELLA: Yes —when they [her cousins] see us at the altar, they may learn this lesson —the surest way to catch a husband is not to run after him, but to let him run after us, as you ran after me in the park yesterday.
>
> SPOUT: And a very good moral, too. What do you think? *(to Audience)* Don't you think it's a good moral? Say yes. (1861: 23)

The play seems contradictive in its representation of the fast, country girl: on the one hand, Bella rejects the rules of marriage and 'respectable society', describing herself as 'naturally fond of fun' (Brough and Halliday 1861: 5); on the other, her readiness to marry Mr. Spout after his proposal destabilizes her previous identity. Bella embodies an alternative conception of women from the decade, while Brough and Halliday hasten to hide double-meanings in her conversations with Mr. Spout. As she expresses to Mr. Spout, Bella wishes to establish a home outside the city, keeping up her saddle horse riding through the countryside. She is in ecstasy when Mr. Spout reveals their shared

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[54] It is also worthy to mention the popularity of Sir Edwin Landseer's painting *The Taming of the Shrew* (1861), also dubbed *The Pretty Horse-breaker.* Successfully acclaimed as picture of the year at the Royal Academy Exhibition of that year in London, the painting was said to represent a well-known horse-breaker and mistress, Catherine Walters —who was nicknamed as 'Skittles'. Reclining over a brown horse in what looks like a hay barn, the woman in the painting exhibits an uncommon easiness of manner and dominance over the animal. See also Eltis (2013: 73).

passion, and their conversation acquires almost an erotic undertone.[55] In a way, Bella's expectations to remain unbound, even in marriage, go against the period's restrictive gender roles. However, by associating her character to problematic 'horse breakers' or 'libertines', Brough and Halliday link her freedom to the 1860s' trendy 'fastness' and indecency. As Bella's character suggests, fashion trends like the pork pie hats and slang, become other identifiers of the modern displaced fast girl of the period.[56]

Incidentally, young English girls are especially scrutinized in comic drama during the 1860s. In consequence, 'finishing schools' for ladies are a favoured setting of exploration for playwrights, who like to include such female spaces in their dramas. As perfect examples of gendered spaces, boarding schools and finishing schools acquire the attractiveness of peeking into 'female abodes', private spaces where the identity of young girls is formed in a restricted environment. Such settings, I believe, had the same attraction for the male spectator as the exotic seraglios or a lady's private boudoir. To be able to observe a young woman in a female-only background, though fictitious, allows

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[55] Bella expresses her love for saddle horse riding and evokes her desire to ride free in the countryside:

BELLA:	Are you so fond of horse riding, then?
SPOUT:	Oh, mad for it! *(rides in chair)*
BELLA:	So am I! Nothing like a glorious ride across country, over hedges, ditches—
SPOUT:	Stone fences, battlements, turnpike gates—
BELLA:	Brooks, canals, railway cuttings— …
	With the hounds in full cry leading you on—
	… Oh, that's the style!
SPOUT:	Yes, that's the style —give us a kiss, and we'll go out for a ride. (Brough & Halliday 1861: 16)

[56] The *Illustrated Times* published an article on Belgravian Morality, specifically addressing the issue of 'horse-breakers' as indicators of the 'social evil' —prostitution—, and questioning their growing influence in groups of modern girls, specifically in dress and behaviour:

That 'pretty horsebreakers' do prosper and grow in audacity, and that some half dozen of them have become 'fashionable' amongst a certain set of young men, is well known. It may even be that the daughters of Belgravia have adopted pork-pie hats and a slangy style of conversation; but the inference that the whole basket of Belgravian peaches has become more or less discoloured we excuse ourselves from accepting. (6 July 1861)

us to understand the process of formation of female identity. On stage, the male protagonist will often go out of his way to get access to such feminine spaces; for example, in the Strand's farce *My New Place* (Wood 19 November 1863), Tom Larkspur trespasses a girls' boarding school after briefly conversing with Jenny, a young student.[57] Wood's farce introduced the Bristol author and lead actor into the London stage, even though it did not leave much of an imprint in the Strand. Classified as 'not at all deficient in vulgarity' by the *London Daily News* (24 November 1863), the play exploits the comic adventure of Tom in female disguise inside a girls' school. Aside from the controversial and eroticised scene where Tom chases the students to kiss them while he is in female disguise (Wood 1863: 18), the story introduces us to a group of 'fast', flirty girls that dream of leaving the school to pursue other romantic journeys. Under the scrutiny of a 'spinster' school mistress, Miss Verjuice, the girls have to be careful in their flirtatious relations with visiting men. Miss Verjuice is in charge of restricting the girls' romantic musings, prohibiting certain topics of conversation and reading materials like Lord Byron's *Don Juan* (Wood 1863: 12). To prevent Jenny's 'polluting' her school with her libertine example, Miss Verjuice sets a model punishment:

> MISS VERJ: *(to* JENNY*)* you should not pollute my school with so pernicious an example another day. Whoever that exceedingly obtrusive person may be who has had the effrontery clandestinely to address one of my pupils, I think I may assure him my vigilance will

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[57] The Lord Chamberlain's Catalogue of Plays records the character name as 'Jenny' in the original manuscript (Add. MS 53027 K); however, the *Illustrated London News* indicates that she was finally renamed as 'Fanny' (28 November 1863). The following transcripts belong to the manuscript version and so I have decided to leave the original name.

prevent a repetition of such impertinence. Here, at least you are

secure from the insidious approaches of the reprobate…

We must have no lures here to catch the unsteady eyes of the

libertine —so, in future, Miss Trentham, you will always wear a

veil and walk with me.

JENNY: Well, I don't care. There, then. When you were of our age, you

were not so particular, I dare say. That is, if you could get any one

to look at you at all and I don't believe you could unless you are

very much altered… Oh, I don't care a bit there then. I don't mind

if I do leave your school and never come back there, then… (Wood

1863: 13–14)

Barbara Smith Bodichon had argued three years earlier at the National Association for

the Promotion of Social Science of 1860 that the existing schools were still in need of a

'sound, general education' for girls, a formation that would eliminate the existing

'vanity' and 'false ideals of what is lady-like' (*The English Woman's Journal*

November 1860: 6). In turn, the popular drama shows finishing schools and boarding

schools for girls as self-contained spaces where the girl is 'unpolluted' from outside

perversities.[58] On stage, the finishing school is revealed as a recreation of the domestic

environment, where feminine identities are forced upon the 'prisoner' girls. However,

dramatic criticism shows the audience the struggling young women, whose resistance to

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[58] Byron's burlesque *Ill-Treated, Il Trovatore; or, the Mother, the Maiden, and the Musicianer* (Adelphi 21 May 1863) also features a finishing school as a controlled space where a woman's 'propriety' is to be preserved. In Byron's burlesque, the Count sends Leonora to a finishing school in order to separate her from Manrico, a trovadour. As a self-contained space for women, the burlesque's finishing school includes a group of young girls who also daydream about romantic escapades outside the school, are taught about etiquette and lady-like 'charm', and yet, remain resistant to the restrictive feminine norms that are being imposed over them.

the gender rules is manifested in their 'fastness' and in their desire of escaping such spaces.

As an opportunity for self-scrutiny, the comic drama displays the resistance of the 'girl of the period' to such institutions. For example, Brougham's *Pocahontas; or, the Gentle Savage* (Princess' 11 October 1861) conflates the American West conquest with modern society. Thus, the second act transports the audience into a '*picturesque view in Jamestown'*, where the 'Tuscarora Finishing Institution' is placed (Brougham 1861: 10). The extravaganza introduces us to a group of young Native American women with suggestive names such as Poo-tee-pet or Di-mon-di. The girls complain of the useless teachings of the finishing school and of its reclusive nature:

POO-TEE: I wish my Pa would send for me! Oh, dear!

I'm tired of living so *retired* here,

And I've had school enough, I know that well,

To set up any fashionable *belle!*

… no one to talk to of the Upper Ten,

If it were even one of Brown's young men

Just to begin with, for indeed the fact is

I don't know how to flirt for want of practice. (Brougham 1861: 10)

Poo-tee-pet's complaints remind of the criticised fast girls of the period, who were accused of flirting with men and deviating from the gender norms. Brougham's extravaganza attempts to approach the audience to the modern discussion of the fast girl; however, the *Morning Advertiser* warned of the play's failure to adapt its original American humour to its London's reboot (21 October 1861). The manuscript describes

the girls as 'emancipated maidens', referencing the upcoming American women's rights movement and its progressive female members. Later in the play, the girls proceed to call a 'strike' to protest their schoolmate Pocahontas' unwanted marriage, and go on to assemble with their bows and arrows to protect her 'sister', creating the 'Anti-marry-folks-against-their-will Society':

> *Enter Poo-tee-pet, and all the Indian women —they execute sundry manoeuvres and finally form a hollow square around Smith, very pointedly pointing their arrows at the King and company.*

> KING: Why come you here? —as sorrowful spectators?

> POO-TEE: No! on the contrary, we're very gladiators

>   For Freedom every heart with ardour glows,

>   On Woman's Rights we're bent, and bent our bows!

>   Your daughter, dear, must marry whom she may

>   Daughters, you know, should always have their way. (Brougham 1861: 18)

The scene evokes contemporary feelings of female sorority and female companionship, as growingly evidenced by the newly formed female societies and associations both in England and in America. Furthermore, Poo-tee-pet slams the patriarchal conception of women as 'spectators' and presents herself and her group of female protesters as 'gladiators'. Their activeness on stage as defenders of their sex broadly differs from the passiveness of 'daughters' previously analysed in this thesis. Instead of submitting to the domestic and familial confinement, Poo-tee-pet calls for a fair treatment of daughters, advocating for their wants and needs —even if their ultimate intention was a profitable marriage. However, the scene's 'violent' connotation —a group of

'uncivilised' Native Americans blandishing bows and arrows— might have instilled a negative impression on the playgoer. Then again, this group of female 'gladiators' might have had produced a grotesque vision in the eyes of the more conservative members of the audience.[59]

Incidentally, it is Poo-tee-pet's declaration of intentions what might define the theatrical strong-minded woman of the period: a woman with a general dislike for 'spectatorship' and a desire of actively participating in the action, be it as 'gladiator' or as monarch. Such is the case of Burnand's *Dido* (St. James's 11 February 1860), the author's first production in London. With its representation of the tyrannical Queen of Carthage, Burnand's burlesque enjoyed the public's favour and ran for sixty nights at the St. James's, being revived at the New Royalty in 1865 (*The Era Almanack* 1868: 20). Dido, who was interpreted by actor Charles Young, rejects domesticity and confides to her sister, Anna:

> DIDO: *(to* ANNA*)* Perhaps you think I'll sit me down and sew—
>
> If so, my sister, me you little know
>
> Bah! Dam! Dam your needles! Catch me ever setting
>
> Down with my housewife pins and things for knitting
>
> You'll never see me, Anna, in that condition

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[59] The poor reception of *Pocahontas* (Brougham 1861) might have been due to the selected venue. The Princess's Theatre was well-known for its Christmas pantomimes and burlesques during the 1860s, and it had acquired a reputation thanks to the work of Charles Kean, who had been the manager during the 1850s and had favoured Shakespearean revivals. Situated on Oxford Street, the Princess's Theatre mainly attracted an 'affluent' and 'respectable' audience (Davis & Emeljanov 2001: 199). During the 1860s, the venue changed hands frequently: after the successful Kean management, Augustus Harris took over in September 1859, being succeeded by James Vining (1863–1869), and subsequently by Benjamin Webster (1869) and F. B. Chatterton (1870–5).

I'll buckle too fulfilling woman's mission. (Burnand *Dido* 1860:

30)

Dido's volatile mind sets her against her sister when she believes she has been rejected by Eneas; precisely, the strong-minded woman is stereotyped as a mentally unstable creature that produces laughter instead of respect. The popular strong-minded woman borrows from renowned female figures, adopting the controversial manners and actions of 'evil' historical women.[60] In this way, playwrights draw from already existing images of femininity and exploit them according to their will.

Such is the case of Lucrezia Borgia, who seems to inspire authors in their creation of the 'forward', strong-minded woman. During the 1860s, her name and example appears repeatedly in female characters that exhibit a general dislike for gender norms and that stray from the feminine path set for them. The earliest example in the decade is that of Buckingham's *Lucretia Borgia, at Home and All Abroad* (St. James's 3 April 1860). Set in Venice, Buckingham's burlesque takes advantage of Lucrezia's bad reputation and transforms her into a contemporary blue-stocking, more interested in investments and the stock market than in her matrimony. Despite the burlesque's Italian setting, the play borrows from English domesticity rules and gender differentiation. The Duke, Alphonso, reprimands Lucretia for her slacking in domestic tasks and threatens her with a separation:

ALPHO: Unless you change your conduct soon, you'll rue it

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[60] In classical burlesque, Monrós-Gaspar (2015) identifies the strong-minded female protagonist in Blanchard's *Antigone Travestie* (Strand, 1845)*,* Talfourd's *Alcestis, the Original Strong-Minded Woman* (Strand 4 July 1850) and *Electra in a New Electric Light* (Haymarket, April 1859), and Reece's Clytemnestra in *Agamemnon and Cassandra* (1868). Refashioning well-known historical or literary figures into strong-minded women during the 1860s also included Greek mythology —Minerva in Burnand's *Ixion; or, the Man at the Wheel* (New Royalty, 28 September 1863)—, and popular sensation fiction —Lady Audley in Byron's *1863; or, Sensations of the Past Season* (St. James's 26 December 1863).

From morn 'til night you ought to hem and stitch.

If you're a wife, you should behave as such

Sew buttons on my shirts

LUCRET: Alas, I know so.

ALPHO: My collars hem.

LUCRET: The prospect's very *sew-le*.

ALPHO: Mend my old clothes 'til they're as good as new

And dam my hose

LUCRET: No, dam me if I do.

ALPHO: Besides, to more than that your fault amounts.

You ought to cook —

LUCRET: Me —don't I cook accounts?

But I'm a faithful spouse…

Well then, don't mind me —get another wife.

The new Divorce Court'll free you if you please

Yes, but the remedy's worst [sic] than the disease. (Buckingham 1860: 17–8)

Lucretia is ready to dismiss her husband's remarks about her 'poor performance' as a wife, reminding him about the possibility of divorce thanks to the recent 1857 Divorce Act. Her 'deviousness' not only consists in her career-mindedness, but also in her fraudulent economic activities; in other words, her misbehaviour as both a wife and a career-woman, places her apart from her female, well-behaved contemporaries. As an unscrupulous strong-minded woman who forgets her place, her meekness, and her 'femininity', Buckingham's Lucretia warns the audience of the perils of unfemininity.

These images of 'depraved' femininity were shaped after Victor Hugo's play *Lucrezia Borgia* (1833) and its subsequent operatic adaptation by Gaetano Donizetti. Donizetti's opera gained the public's favour in London and was performed between 1839 and 1888. As Pal-Lapinski contends, Donizetti's opera sought to 'normalize Lucrezia' by offering a candid representation of her mother-son relationship with Gennaro, yet filling the story with complicated erotic overtones (2005: 43). This eroticism and displacement of Lucrezia from the feminine norm would endure in the following popular adaptations on the stages of London.

In 1868, Byron rescued Lucrezia Borgia's example to bring forward the 1860s battle for women's medical training, a topic of concern in England after Elizabeth Garret Anderson became the first licensed female medical practitioner in 1865. *The Era* had gone so far as to condemn the medical profession as 'defiling' for the country's 'delicate-minded' women (30 November 1862), and so, despite the educational advances of the decade, a female doctor was still associated to degeneration and female displacement. Indeed, Byron's *Lucretia Borgia, M.D.; or, la Grande Doctresse* (Royal Holborn, 28 October 1868) presents a liberal female physician whose useless prescriptions deem her —and her real-life colleagues— a fraud.[61] On this occasion, Lucretia was performed by travestied actor George Honey, which set a laughable feature to her character in the fashion of the genre's 'old dame'. In her exaggerated manners, Byron's Lucretia experiments with her servant Gubetta, prescribing him poisonous potions and tinctures that leave him in worse health.

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[61] The *London City Press* identifies in Byron's Lucretia the real Dr. Mary Walker, an American physician who had been mocked and ridiculed in her public speeches in England, yet who gained the support of English feminists such as Dr. Elizabeth Garrett, Barbara Bodichon, and Emily Davies (7 November 1868). For more information on Dr. Mary Walker's English tour see Harris (2009: 84–99).

The real Lucrezia Borgia's historiographical background links the female poisoner with 'political power' and thus, with sexuality and appetite (Pal-Lapinski 2005: 43). Therefore, by refashioning Lucrezia into a female doctor, Byron is conflating the quest of 'strong-minded women' to obtain medical educations to their search for political representation. This Lucretia offers a view of the feared modern 'degenerate' female physician, associating her displaced figure to illicit relationships with young male medical students and to marital neglect. Earlier in the decade, Mathews had also used the name of Lucretia in his character of Lucretia Mandwindle, a strong-minded woman who worked 'not with her fingers', but 'with her head' (*The Soft Sex* 1861: 10).[62] Mathews' Lucretia is also at blame of neglecting her husband, ignoring his 'superior' position in the home and relegating all domestic duties to him; her political activities keep her occupied protesting against society's 'false views of woman's social position' (Mathews 1861: 51) and, in short, rejecting the imposed identity of 'woman':

> BIGGS: [to Lucretia, about dinner] … it is your department, what's a woman for but—
>
> LUCRET: *(stopping him)* a woman! Don't talk to me in that way, brother. I disfavour the name, from my very birth I have protested against

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[62] In Mathews' *The Soft Sex* (Haymarket 1861), Mr. Mandwindle describes his wife Lucretia as follows:

> MR. MAND: [she is] superior to myself above all, and I say it with pride: her superiority actually crushes me. When I married her, her father said to me as we came out of church: "Mr. Mandwindle, you may boast of having married a woman such as is seldom seen. My daughter Lucretia never was the girl to lose her time in stitching and darning, and knitting, knotting, and tatting, or any such trumpery, none of your crochet work for her. Her genious doesn't lie in her finger, sir. Expect nothing of that kind from her… she is a woman of mind, of intellect, a woman made shine to dazzle, to rule, to command; a woman, in short, who at her birth only wanted one thing to make her perfect —she ought to have been born a man". (9)

that error of nature… to feel within one's self the energy, the force

of man and to languish in submission, to feel oneself the slave, the

property, the chattel of a Mr. Mandwindle… no, I never can

reconcile myself to the idea that I am a woman.

MR. MAND: But you are, I assure you, you are, Lucretia.

LUCRET: *(touching her forehead)* the sex is here, here. (Matthews 1861: 57–

8)

Lucretia's rejection of the female role and her incapability to see herself represented by

the decade's conception of a woman, exemplify the ongoing discussion on women's

work in the world; however, by setting her up against the idealized Ida —previously

commented in Section 3.3.1.—, Lucretia's strong-mindedness does not allow for a

positivist conception of the modern woman. Instead, these representations of the strong-

minded and fast women as unfavourably displaced from the norm, provoke in the

audience discomfort, rejection, and at most, laughter.

As the many adaptations of a professional, strong-minded Lucretia suggest, the

working opportunities available to women throughout the 1860s were inevitably

parodied on the London stages. For women stepping outside their private homes in

search of a different occupation besides their domestic ones was still seen as a risky

venture for their reputations. Indeed, the theatres of London offer myriad characters

inspired by the working woman of the period, even though they are usually shaped after

dedicated schoolmistresses and coquettish maids who perform the comic stock

characters.[63] Additionally, the theatre borrows from its backstage stories and attempts to

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[63] An example of the dedicated, idealized school-mistress is Goody-Two-Shoes, the protagonist of Blanchard's *Goody Two Shoes; or, Harlequin Cock Robin* (Drury Lane 26 December 1862).

offer a glimpse into the theatrical world by presenting fictional representations of its most characteristic working woman, the actress.[64]

As a pioneering woman, the Victorian actress could be seen both as a cautionary story for girls, and as an emancipatory aspiration. The hard-work of the actress of the period can be seen in Boucicault's interlude *The Young Actress* (Adelphi 30 August 1861) and Byron's *The Rival Othellos* (Strand 25 November 1861). Boucicault's take focuses on Maria, an actress naturally bred in a 'theatrical family' and the daughter of the manager. In an attempt to save her father's company, she hectically fashions herself into a Yorkshire actress, a male German emigrant, and an Irish 'boytrotter' from Skibbereen (Boucicault *Young* 1861: 1). Maria's efforts are revealed to serve the purpose of causing a favourable impression on her father and obtaining his permission to work in the profession. In a way, Maria embodies her sex's desires to expand their horizons of action and opening up new possibilities outside the family. Additionally, Maria's work proves her capability to perform 'outside' her sex's boundaries, impersonating different characters and exposing the malleability of her own identity.

In Byron's *Rival Othellos* (Strand 25 November 1861), Miss Mountfizzer finds in the acting profession refuge after being abandoned by her husband:

The pantomime combined two popular nursery tales, Goody Two Shoes and Cock Robin's death. Goody was performed by Lydia Thompson, who was praised for her transformation into a 'forget-me-not' during the ballet (*Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* 4 January 1863). Throughout the play, Goody has to fight against the jealousness and pettiness of little Tommy Green, one of the pupils in her school.

[64] The figure of the nineteenth-century actress remains a fascinating topic of research. In this section I refer to the actress as a pioneering woman during the 1860s, even though her appearance and relevance precede my decade of study. For a more thorough analysis of Victorian actresses see Tracy C. Davis (1988; 1999; 2000), Davis and Donkin (1991), Marshall (2006; 2011), Mullenneaux (2018), Newey (2005), Pullen (2005), and Norwood (2020). However, there is still extensive work to be done on professional women in the theatre.

MISS MOU: … Mr. William Doo was, and if he lives, *is* my husband —it is only three years since he led me a trembling young bride to the hymeneal altar, he swore to cherish me. I was young and foolish, and believed him. But one morning, about the same time, that he found my little savings have been expended, he informed me that he was a great creature, that he was a poet. His soul wasn't to be fettered, and he should go out, and he didn't coming back —well, he went out and he didn't come back. That being the case, I turned my beauty and talent to account by going on the stage —dropped the name of Doo and adopted that of Miss Mountfizzer. (6)

Overall, Byron reminds his audience of the deceptions of the theatrical world; Miss Mountfizzer escapes her identity of 'abandoned woman' and seeks to create a new one by means of her profession. She renames herself and is presented to the audience as an unmarried woman, perhaps getting rid of all hindrances that would prevent her from succeeding. Outside the home and on stage, she is able to regain possession of herself and of her own identity.

However, the outside world is also shown as dangerous for the 'unprotected female' performer, who will often find herself in need of the patronage of a theatrical family, manager, or male mentor. Such is the case of Fanny Sparks, the protagonist of Morton's *The Pacha of Paradise Place, Pimlico!; or, Turkish Life in London* (St. James's 6 April 1861). Fanny finds herself stranded in Constantinople after growing tired of her job as a milliner and joining the 'Colossal and Unrivalled National

Equestrian Establishment' (Morton 1861: 23).[65] Fanny's tale discovers her intrepidness and forwardness, a desire to prosper in her professional life: she decides to pursue the theatrical life outside her home, London, and she believes that her travels would offer her the chance to live 'exciting' adventures. In a way, Fanny's journey would allow her to grow almost independently in a foreign setting; however, her desires of reconfiguring her own identity are cut short and she finds herself figuratively and literally lost. Then again, in order to survive, Fanny has to continue to 'sell' her body: first, she had been working as a performer, exposing her body publicly in Constantinople; afterwards, she has to present herself as a slave, an 'object' to be sold.[66]

As the story progresses, we understand that Fanny performed and passed as a Georgian slave, aspiring to share the money of her 'sale' with the Clown to buy a passage back to England for herself. In the fashion of the 'absurdity' of a farcical extravaganza, Fanny's mistaken identity finally grants her the opportunity to travel back to London with her new 'master', who turns out to be an Englishman. Her journey in search of professional thrill and independence is reduced to a mere anecdote; as 'an

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[65] Fanny explains her struggles as an outcast female performer in a foreign land:

FANNY: Getting rather tired of the Fancy Straw and Chip Bonnet line, I was tempted to join a certain Colossal and Unrivalled National Equestrian Establishment about to visit Constantinople and astonish the Turks!... but alas, the ungrateful Turks wouldn't come and see us! … Well, the result was that I suddenly found myself an unprotected female wandering about the streets of Constantinople with fifteen pence in my pocket… I accidentally ran against our Clown in the ring; "Fanny", said he, "don't you wish you were back in old England?" "Don't I?" said I. —"There's but one chance for us", said he, "What is it?" said I. —"Let me sell you", said he! (Ibid: 23–24)

[66] I have previously discussed Boucicault's *Life of an Actress* (Adelphi 22 February 1862) and its implications of the public life of an actress. For the consecrated female performer, acting is transformed into an activity for self-realization but also of continuous self-exposure; Julia, the favoured actress in Boucicault's drama, is usually shown surrounded of male admirers in her private boudoir, welcoming guests in her dressing gown, and exhibiting a rare self-assurance due to her well-regarded position. Her 'selling of her body' is converted into a strategy of public assertion and independence. However, in Morton's *Pacha,* Fanny's failed journey to professional success warns women of the difficulties waiting outside the private confines.

English girl in pursuit of adventure' (*Illustrated London News* 20 April 1861), Fanny learns her lesson and returns repentant to her old English sweetheart. In a way, we understand the negative consequences of a woman navigating public life and expressing her progressive, professional desires.

Thus, the professional woman on stage is usually shown as incompetent in her skill; like the aforementioned useless doctress Lucretia Borgia in Byron's burlesque (Royal Holborn, 28 October 1868), female workers in the 1860s drama strive to excel in their profession —and fail. Borrowing from past legends and tales, the playwrights of the decade mock the 'natural impetuosity' of the female sex (*Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 28 December 1863) and transform them into caricaturesqued girls at play. In Brough's *King Arthur; or, the Days and Knights of the Round Table* (Haymarket 26 December 1863), the author adapts the Arthurian myth and borrows from Tennyson's acclaimed *Idylls of the King* (1859). Amongst the usual female characters of sweet Guinevere and evil Morgan le Fay, the rare appearance of Vivien stands out as representative of the real-life female apprentice. The original story presents Vivien as a wicked enchantress novice, whose delusions of grandeur lead her to cast an immobilizing spell over Merlin. In his adaptation, Brough erases Tennyson's undertones of a 'malicious', enthusing Vivien and reduces her threat by transforming her into an incompetent follower.[67] In the printed edition of the play, the character of Vivien is described as 'a *damsel of enquiring mind and curious disposition, who, wishing to be Merlin's pupil, clings round his neck in order to become his (s)collar*' (Brough *King* 1863: 3). The evocative

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[67] In 1863, the Royal Academy exhibition featured Frederick Sandys' oil painting *Vivien* (1863), which exposes an unthreatening version of the enchantress (Taylor 1998: 66–8). A decade later, Julia Margaret Cameron took a series of photographs entitled *Vivien and Merlin* (1874), created at Tennyson's request to illustrate his reedition of *Idylls*. The photographs included handwritten excerpts of passages featuring Merlin and his female pupil (see Fig. 9).

'enquiring mind' suggestively coincides with the epithet 'strong-minded'; indeed, Vivien's insistence leads her to 'spy' on Merlin:

> VIVIEN: Teach me your art. In magic I'd excel;
>
> In studies deep I'd plunge, a *diving belle.*
>
> I've watched you, dodged you, on you played the spy—
>
> Have made myself a feminine Paul Pry
>
> To learn your art. (Brough *King* 1863: 7)[68]

However, as the inferior of Merlin, Vivien stumbles about the stage striving to mend her magical errors. The extravaganza's programme indicates how 'Merlin finds to his cost how women can make fools even of the wisest', and quotes a passage from Tennyson's poem about Vivien's spell over Merlin (Ibid: 4).[69] Despite Vivien's accidental imprisonment of Merlin inside the trunk of a tree, she manages to save Arthur and Guinevere and breaks the spell by the end of the play. Upon his liberation, Merlin recognizes Vivien's good work:

> VIVIEN: *(kneeling)* Forgive me, Merlin, for what has occurred;
>
> I didn't go to do it, 'pon my word.
>
> MERLIN: Girl, say no more. And as I look about me,

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[68] The newspapers and the printed edition of Brough's *King Arthur* indicate that Vivien was interpreted by actress Miss E. Romer. Not much can be found of her identity; Bratton identifies the sisters Ann and Elizabeth Romer, who married William and Robert Brough respectively (2011: 106–7). Presumably, Vivien was interpreted by Elizabeth Romer, the author's sister-in-law. The Romer sisters were first cousins of the acclaimed Emma Romer (later Emma Almond), an opera vocalist who appeared at Covent Garden Theatre and the Lyceum during the 1830s (Middleton *Dictionary of National Biography* 1897: 189–90).

[69] Originally, Vivien casts a spell over Merlin to shut him up on a tree at the forest; in Brough's version, Vivien's spell is a result of her inability to be in control of her 'skill'. Brough quotes Tennyson's passage of Vivien's spell:

> Then in one moment she put forth the charm
> Of woven paces and of waving hands,
> And in the hollow oak he lay as dead. (Tennyson 1859; Brough *King* 1863: 4)

It seems you've got on pretty well without me.

Virtue triumphant —eh? (Brough *King* 1863: 35)

In the end, despite the female protagonist's mistakes, she manages to handle the situation without the help of her mentor. The character of Vivien redeems the contemporary female apprentice / professional, yet at the same time, perpetuates the stereotype of female ignorance and ineptitude.[70] Brough reduces Vivien's fictional threat and mirrors the decade's advances of women in the professional sphere, omitting the sound advances of the nation's female workers.

However, as I have explained, the alternative female characters of the 1860s drama show a self-centered life purpose, often literally and figuratively running away from their gender's social constrictions. I understand these characters as 'active', mainly because of their lack of acceptance of the boundaries set for them and their willing deviation or displacement from the feminine canon. Of course, this does not mean that such female characters entirely reject 'woman's mission'; as I shall explain, the decade's active heroine might also be identified as an abnegated mother or wife. Nevertheless, the main characteristic of the active heroine is that she is not solely identified as such, and her persona is composed by a more complex web of identity traits. While all the previously mentioned characters would qualify as 'active' heroines due to their figurative dismissal of gender norms, there are some others who visibly

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[70] Earlier in 1863, the Haymarket included yet another female apprentice in its repertoire; adapting a French story, Burnand and Williams created the farce *Easy Shaving* (11 June 1863), in which Ninette, a female barber, inherits her father's barber's shop and sees herself entangled with King Charles during the Restoration period. Even though the play focuses more on the romantic intrigues surrounding the 'beautiful' Ninette, her 'hereditary skill' and her capability to run a predominantly masculine business, uncovers alternative professional possibilities for women. The *Illustrated Weekly News* praised actress Louise Keeley's 'smartness' in her performance as Ninette (20 June 1863). Keeley was substituted by Miss Burke in the Haymarket's revival of the farce on November 1868, singing the original song of 'The Maiden and her Linnet' (*The Era* 15 November 1868).

reject the patriarchal rules of the period through a characteristically physical restlessness on stage. These characters physically manifest the uneasiness of 'performing' the female ideal, frantically moving around the stage and both figuratively and literally not hiding from public scrutiny. In the end, the 'active' female character of the 1860s virtually transports the audience to a scenario in which women reject constricted, delicate body movements, and stomp about claiming others' attention.

In her displacement, the active heroine in the 1860s drama usually evidences the idealized feminine canon, especially when she is put in contrast with the 'True Woman'. For example, Conquest's *The Pirate's Love* (Grecian 6 September 1860) featured Vigo, a wild-mannered 'unwomanly' pirate. Vigo's active behaviour on stage is depicted through her fearless use of weapons such as daggers and pistols;[71] especially in sensation pieces, it was usual to see women blandishing firearms during confrontational scenes against the male villain or restlessly moving across the stage. Certainly, Holder identifies the 'peripatetic' nature of female characters in sensation drama, noting their common 'placeless and disoriented' storyline (2011: 77). Such is the case of Jessy Ashton, a serial turned sensation drama written by Melinda Young, who was commonly known as Mrs. Henry Young.[72] *Jessy Ashton; or, The Adventures of a Barmaid* (Effingham, 18 April 1862) features a highly active protagonist who is defined by her continuous escaping from confinement.[73] The play's spatial metaphors enclose Jessy

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[71] I have previously scrutinized Conquest's *The Pirate's Love* in Section 2.3.3.

[72] The serial *Jessy Ashton* was published by *The Welcome Guest, a Journal of Recreative Literature* from November 1861 to March 1862.

[73] The Lord Chamberlain's Catalogue of Plays records the manuscript of another romantic drama by Mrs. Henry Young entitled *The Mexican Bandit; or, The Silver Dagger of Perate* (Pavilion, 26 October 1864). However, Nicoll (1970) only lists two of her extensive production, *The Light of Love; or, The Diamond and the Snowdrop* (Effingham, 25 February 1867) and *Jonathan Wild; or, The Storm on the Thames* (13 July 1868). See also Holder, who rescues Mrs. Henry Young's concealed contribution to mid-Victorian theatre (1999).

first in an underground vault and then inside a house, from which she must escape to regain possession of her life. The setting offers the opportunity for female agency, represented through physical movement; in this way, the play features Jessy climbing up a rope and flinging herself out a flaming building.

Nevertheless, this physical activeness of female characters is not only restricted to sensation drama. In 1861, Buckingham transformed the protagonist of the fairy tale *Red Riding Hood* into a woman who literally escapes from domestic confinement and matrimony. First performed in Boxing Night, *Little Red Riding Hood* (Lyceum 26 December 1861) featured Lydia Thompson as Blondinette, or Little Red Riding Hood. In this occasion, Blondinette runs from Baron Reginald de Wolf, who intends to force her into marriage. Blondinette counts with the aid of two fairies, Florisette and Pertina; the latter describes herself as 'a fast little spirit':

> PERTINA: [to FLORISETTE] You tiresome thing —I hate thy formal ways
>
> Of you, prim fairies of old fashioned days.
>
> I am a fast little spirit and I don't
>
> Want to be fettered —nay, what's more, I won't. (Buckingham *Red* 1861: 3)

Buckingham's Blondinette is the opposite of passive; her association with both fairies grants her the opportunity to magically escape the preying Wolf, who restlessly follows her across England, Scotland, and Ireland. Her journey follows up what the *London Evening Standard* classifies as a 'new-born philanthropic feeling' of rescuing the female

heroine from destruction (27 December 1861). In this way, Blondinette's escape can be seen as a journey to emancipation and freedom from an unrequited marriage.[74]

In order to flee from the Wolf, Blondinette has to pluck a bud from a magical sprig or branch, which instantly transforms her into a tree, bush, or into male form. Every time she needs to run away from the Wolf, Blondinette is magically transformed into a man, a way of refashioning herself and obtaining the necessary tools to fight him. In England, she is first turned into a sailor, acquiring a resilient identity to fight Baron de Wolf before he strikes Colin, Blondinette's sweetheart:

> BARON: See, thus I strike the fatal blow *(going to strike* COLIN —
>
> BLONDINETTE appears as sailor)
>
> BLOND: Ah! Would you?
>
> COLIN: Saved! Now, t'were well for Blondinette to look. *(Exit)…*
>
> BARON: Seize him!
>
> BLOND: Avast!...
>
> Haul down your flag, you bibbers.
>
> … If I don't maul that ugly phiz. (Buckingham 1861: 9–10)

Pulling a bud from the magical branch, Blondinette disappears underground and reappears in Scotland. Followed by the Wolf, she is forced to again transform herself as a man, this time as a Scotchman. When in male attire, Blondinette faces the villain without restrictions, as if she had found strength in her new identity:

> BLOND: [as Scotchman] Nothing of the sort, knight
>
> Although you think me weak, you'll be a fought

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[74] In *Harlequin Rose-in-bloom and the fairies of the enchanted shield* (Effingham 16 December 162), Princess Flimsey Flimsy dresses as a man to escape the romantic advances of the male protagonist. The Princess thus allies with the Fairy Queen Diamondeyes to beat the villain, the Demon King Disorder.

> Dare to lay hands on me, you horrid fright
>
> You'll find that I can scratch and also bite. (Ibid: 18)

Finally escaping to her grandmother's home in Ireland, Blondinette has to again reappear as a man, this time as an 'Irish lad'. Despite her necessity to adopt a male identity to fight her harasser, Blondinette's tirelessness and her sorority with a group of female fairies, make of her a worthy example of the active heroine. Her constant interaction with the scene in quest of freedom is noted by the *London Evening Standard,* which praised the play's dioramas depicting the banks of the Thames, 'the Fall of the Ganawaif', and 'The Lakes of Killarney', all painted by Grieve (27 December 1861). Blondinette's physical movement lasts throughout the entire duration of the play, inviting the audience to virtually tag along her struggles across borders and her incessant efforts to escape marriage's metaphorical 'entrapment'. Additionally, the play makes use of metaphorical nature imagery —the rose, the thistle, and the shamrock—. In every escape, Blondinette leaves behind some sort of flower, which perhaps indicates her straying away from feminine forms. By adopting a male form to fight her stalker, she is also renouncing to her 'feminine' identity and striving to defend herself.[75] In a way, she appears as a novel model of female agency and, with the help of progressive-minded fairies, she shows the power of female self-reliance and sorority.[76]

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[75] In Byron's *Lady Belle Belle; or Fortunio and his Seven Magic Men* (Adelphi 26 December 1863), the female protagonist also dresses as a man —Fortunio— in order to freely go to Court. However, the motive that drives her is saving her father, Count Collywobbol, and Byron uses her story as a moralizing tale for good daughters.

[76] Likewise, in Burnand's *Robin Hood!; or, the Forester's fate!* (Olympic, 26 December 1862), Marian and Alice, her maid, find freedom in their opportunity to refashion themselves as men to escape to the Sherwood Forest:

ROBIN:	Dress, you needn't bring.
MARIAN:	
ALICE:	No dress! The *bare idea* of such a thing!
ROBIN:	No, no! my meaning you misunderstand

However, female agency on stage is also translated into unsafe female curiousness, for women overstepping their boundaries often encounter some sort of disgraceful or threatening situation. In such a way, in Bridgeman's *Bluebeard; or Harlequin and Freedom in her Island Home* (Covent Garden 26 December 1860), Fatima transgresses her spatial boundaries and discovers Bluebeard's 'Blue Chamber', a forbidden room where he keeps his previously deceased wives, beheaded. Her disobedience puts both herself and her sister Anne in danger, forcing her to 'comically' run away from Bluebeard on stage (Bridgeman 1860: 11). That same year, the Adelphi theatre also offered a version of the tale. In Byron's burlesque *Blue Beard! From a New Point of Hue* (Adelphi 26 December 1860), the villain Abomelique warns against female curiosity:

ABOM: … *(fiercely)* Woman! You've been where you should not have been!

… since you did steal a peep, you now must learn

That like cures like, and steel must in return —

… your curiosity has wrought your ruin. (Byron *Blue Beard* 1860: 34)

It is female curiosity throughout the decade what leads women to ask for educational and working opportunities. Even by the final years of the 1860s, women took on the newspapers to reclaim their own identities as 'girls of the period': in an open letter to the editor of *Macmillan's Magazine,* a woman questioned the modern girl's choice of

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We do not live upon a strip of land;
You'll both in archer's dress, or something near it
Be clad…
ALICE: Delightful! (1862: 23)

As the extravaganza goes on, we discover a newly unrestrained Marian, whose disguise allows her to be braver. Thus, by the end of Scene IV the audience follows along as she *'takes a sword out of* ROBIN's *left hand and fights the* SHERIFF', showing an unprecedented mobility. Outside the castle and in the woods, Marian gains possession of her own identity and reworks herself as many times as she wishes to.

leisure and demanded education and working opportunities to appease women's own curiosity for the world (February 1869).[77] In turn, by 1869 new burlesque versions of the Bluebeard tale were being performed at the Crystal Palace and still condemned Fatima and Anne's enquiring minds.[78] As examples of the modern girls' active lifestyles, the active heroine on stage continues to posit questions of female spatial mobility and shapeshifting identity.

3.3.2. Sensationalized explorations of female identity

Among the sensationalized female characters that were being put on stage during the 1860s, we find the foreign woman, who often serves the purpose of providing a background story for the journey of the (male) protagonist. In melodrama, the tragic native woman usually modifies her whole existence upon the arrival of the white colonizer or traveller. For example, the Britannia's production of Gustave Aimard's novel *The Prairie Flower* featured Zuletta, a dedicated Native American whose devotion for Henri, a young French settler, leads her to aspire above her station.[79] Aimard's stories about the American West and life amongst Indian tribes shaped the

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[77] *Macmillan's Magazine, 1859–1907;* February 1869; 19, 112; British Periodicals, p. 323.

[78] The *Pall Mall Gazette* described the Crystal Palace's burlesque version of Bluebeard as abounding in

> the usual puns and parodies, the usual tastefully written dialogue in lame verse, and the inevitable "girl of the period" (who at the Crystal Palace, with rare devotion, sells her chignon to pay her father's debts). (25 June 1869)

Bluebeard ran for years after the opening of the Crystal Palace Theatre in 1869 (Musgrave 1995: 180).

[79] Gustave Aimard —pseudonym of Olivier Gloux— gained the favour of the English public after publishing a series of novels on 'Indian life'. Robert Brough named him 'the great Indian hunter' in his periodical *The Welcome Guest* (1860: v), and praised Aimard's stories for being based upon his own life experiences amongst the 'Indian tribes'. Among Aimard's novels translated into English, we can also find *The Tiger-slayer* (1860), which was adapted twice in 1861, first as *The Pirates of the Savannah* (Anonymous, Surrey 23 March 1861), and afterwards as *The tiger slayer of the Savannah* (Sutter, Effingham 28 April 1861).

imaginations of the mid-Victorian English public. In its anonymous adaptation for the Britannia, the scenery sought to continue the novel's impression on the audience; in its manuscript, the drama indicates a scene 'as wild and romantic as possible', with a 'terrific cataract' and 'gigantic clusters of rocks' (Anonymous *Prairie* 17 November 1860: 1).

The Britannia was situated in Hoxton, at East End London, and mainly catered for its local audience. Even though such audience had been predominantly classified in the reports as 'prostitutes' and 'juvenile delinquents', the Britannia's rebuilding in 1858 inaugurated a new decade of moral respectability. With Samuel Lane as the sole manager of the house, the Britannia soon boasted of the respectable patronage of a working class audience, including families in the boxes and stalls, and local professionals and artisans.[80] As the demographics suggest, the Britannia's repertoire and its 'exoticism' might have catered for the locals' appetite for the foreign and the sensational; accordingly, the venue progressively substituted 'static tableaux' with mechanical effects that provoked a sense of movement on stage, as seen in the Britannia's exclusive use of Pepper's Ghost during the summer of 1863 (Norwood 2009: 141).[81]

Though *The Prairie Flower* (17 November 1860) did not seem to cause much impact, its featuring of sensational romantic plotlines, as well as its tragic foreign

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[80] As an East End venue, its affluence mainly consisted of locals, though the decade's progressive improvement of public transport lines facilitated others' arrival into the area. In 1867, the Shoreditch Station was advertised as the closest to the Britannia, thus reminding the public of its convenient location. See Davis and Emeljanov for further information on the Britannia's audience, location, fees, and management (2001: 73–94).

[81] The *Shoreditch Observer* praised the Britannia's Ghost popularity throughout most of 1863 (21 November 1863). The *London Evening Standard* baptized the Britannia as the 'favourite East-end theatre' and commended its programme's 'most diversified character', which could boast of maintaining its adaptation of *Lady Audley's Secret*, as well as a tapestry of 'singing, dancing, trapezing, negro melodies' and burlesque (2 July 1866).

protagonist, Zuletta, make it worth remembering. Amidst a 'perfect Garden of Eden in [the] wilderness' (*Prairie* 1860: 17), Zuletta's journey to self-discovery offers an optimal opportunity for the audience's immersion both in the protagonist's journey and in the idyllic American wilderness.[82] In the play, Zuletta is presented as a 'poor unsophisticated girl', an obliging 'Indian' whose infatuation with the white colonizer leads her to believe in her inferiority:

> ZULETTA: Zuletta has no friends —save you— and you are so far above her
>
> that she dare not hope you will always be one. (*Prairie* 1860: 4)

However, her disinclination to renounce to her own 'roving life' in the mountains and 'dwell' in the white man's settlement shows her contradictive nature: on the one hand, she desires to be loved by Henri, the French colonizer, and to become her wife; on the other, she is not ready to leave the mountains and is eager to maintain her 'freedom'. Zuletta and Henri's discussion questions female emancipation and expresses a woman's need for marriage:

> HENRI: Now, tell me, are you not tired of your roving life, exposed to every
>
> danger? Why do you not quit the mountains, and dwell with us?
>
> ZULETTA: What, quit the mountains? The hills that I have trod so oft. Give up
>
> by liberty, to live among the pale faces —no! no! in the wild prairie
>
> Zuletta first drew the breath of life, and there will she die…

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[82] The Lord Chamberlain's Catalogue of Plays records a manuscript of a Hazlewood melodrama for the Britannia entitled *The Gorilla Hunt; or, the Forests of Gabon, a Tale of Africa'*. Sent for license in 11 December 1863, the play does not seem to have been performed until 1868. Set in the Coast of Africa, the melodrama features male English travellers who encounter a tribe of sanguinary Indians. Besides the geographical confusion that led the author to include Indians in Africa, it is also worth mentioning Zengaletta, an 'Indian girl' who carries out the role of intermediator between the whites and the tribe. Zengaletta is hospitable with the travellers, and strives to protect them in the forest. According to the *London Evening Standard,* the play also featured 'the American Minstrels and Japanese Tommy', as well as 'Aerial gymnasts' (7 August 1868).

> Zuletta is alone in this great wilderness, with none but the tribe to
> protect her —but she has a daring heart, and is able to defend
> herself from insult or oppression. (*Prairie* 1860: 4)

As a 'wild' Indian, Zuletta is unfit for domestic life. Her incapability to comply with the settlement's rules and (mental) spatial organization is translated into her desire to roam free through the mountains; her free-spiritedness endows her with a transgressive definition of 'woman' and, at the same time, legitimises her fatal destiny. Ultimately, Zuletta sacrifices herself to save Henri, and thus symbolically saves civilization. On her deathbed, Zuletta excuses her incapability to follow the rules of 'great society' and, in a way, suggests the impossibility of a foreign, wild girl to gain access into respectable civilization. Instead of being defined as a 'woman', she finally renames herself as 'the poor Prairie flower' (Ibid: 19).

That same year, the City of London also featured a tragic noble female Indian in its *The Indian Girl; or, Cahontas, the Delaware's Daughter* (Anonymous 24 April 1860). Freely adapting the well-known story of Pocahontas, the City of London reworks her story into a sensational case of bigamy, in which the white settler marries the female Native American after mistakenly believing his own wife and children's death. On stage, Cahontas is also introduced as an active, 'wild' woman, and the audience can see her climbing rocks, saving a dove from an eagle, and carrying a rifle for protection (*Cahontas* 1860: 5–6). Conflating the English ideal, Cahontas is devoted to her father's protection; however, his patriarchal influence is only substituted by that of Rolfe, the white colonizer, who would eventually become her husband. In Act II, Cahontas shows her incapability of civilisation and domestic life after her marriage to Rolfe. As a wife, she is impatient, obstinate, and demanding:

CAHON: I have provided for your wants, encountered dangers for your sake that the chiefs of my Indian race would have shunned. I have climbed the hill's side, found the river to yield me prey, searched the forest for its wild food to give you joy that I might see you pleased and revel in your smiles.

ROLFE: I ask you to depart and when I ask, I desire to be obeyed.

CAHON: Obeyed —and in tones of stern authority.

ROLFE: I am your husband, and being such, demand obedience —again I tell you to depart or else —

CAHON: Or else —what? Come, don't draw in the word, or else you'll beat me to submission. No —that luxury is reserved for the pale faced women of your own fair race, they may endure and take the hand with base servility, that wounds them, but by the Great Spirit of my father's hopes —blood— for me.

ROLFE: Blood, who spoke of blood —besides, what would you do?

CAHON: Place a bullet in that man's brain who would dare to raise his hand against me *(presents rifle)* (Ibid: 13–4)

Despite her ferocious response, Cahontas relents and willingly accepts that their marriage is not valid. After the reappearance of Rolfe's legitimate wife, Mary, Cahontas assumes her outcast fate:

CAHON: … I am the doomed one. I am the martyr, and now for my native wilds. You'll find me in the forest, wreathing flowers to deck my rifle. I'm for the chase, follow who dares, come one, come on. Ha! Ha! Ha! Victory, victory!   *Exit.*

ROLF: Poor bruised flower. (Ibid: 20)

Again, the native girl is renamed as a flower. Cahontas remains untamed, and returns to her father, who she finally protects with her life. Next to her inseparable rifle, Cahontas goes back to 'savage' life; after leaving Rolfe's home, the following scenes show her in 'an outhouse', reclaiming her own fate: she is 'unconquerable' (Ibid: 17). Before dying, Cahontas 'blesses' the union of Rolfe with Mary, acquitting the settler of his sinful bigamy, and defines herself as a 'poor untutored Indian maiden', and finally assumes the blame. As an accessory of the hero's journey to civilisation, Cahontas —just like Zuletta— sacrifices her life to guarantee the prosperity of the family; Cahontas ensures the reunion of Mary with Rolfe, while Zuletta moves over in recognition of the settlers' moral superiority. In the end, both foreign women can only find peace through disinterested sacrifice.

The foreign woman's displacement from the respectable feminine canon prevents her from culminating women's mission of marriage and childbearing. In a melodramatic take, the Surrey produced the successful *The Gitanilla!; or the Children of the Zincali* (Crawford Wilson, Surrey 8 October 1860).[83] Contrary to what one might expect, the play does not follow Cervantes' original plot of *La Gitanilla* (1613) and, instead, borrows from 'parallel features… occurring in other dramas' (*The Era* 14 October 1860).[84] In the Surrey's version, *The Gitanilla* tells the story of an English nobleman,

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[83] *The Era* attributes the play's success to its 'combination of good acting, effective scenery, and general completeness of production' (14 October 1860).

[84] Monrós-Gaspar identifies the influence of Cervantes' *La Gitanilla* (1613) in nineteenth-century theatre from its early years (2017). She also points out the influence of travel narratives like Lady Dunbar's *A Family Tour Round the Coasts of Spain and Portugal during the Winter 1860–1861* (1862) in their perpetuation of the stereotypical gypsy (272). Most remarkably, Monrós-Gaspar lists four burlesque adaptations of *La Gitanilla* during the 1860s: *The Gipsy Maid* (Brough 1861), *The Bohemian Girl* (Brough 1861), *Arline the Lost Child* (Bellingham & Best 1864), and *The Merry Zingara* (Gilbert 1868).

Lord Clifford, who travels to the south of Spain and meets a young gypsy girl, Camilla. Like in the burlesque *Queen and Knave; or, The Rose of Castille* (Towers, Victoria 17 February 1862), the audience is virtually transported to a stereotypical Spanish setting, where picturesque views of 'posadas', mountains, and humble peasants appease the viewer's desires for the romantic.

Borrowing from the popular imagery, *The Gitanilla* reproduces a court of the Alhambra palace, in which Lord Clifford first sees Camilla when she dances for him. Brown, Lord Clifford's valet, describes Camilla's features —'black curly hair, almost to her feet'— and notes his fascination towards the gypsy girl (Crawford 1860: 8). Lord Clifford's obsession with Camilla soon turns in a desire of possession; he desires to take her with him back to his home in Wales, and so he does. To Lord Clifford, Camilla's ethnicity and 'inferiority' legitimizes his intentions of carrying her off without legal marriage. For the traveller, she is something to be conquered or possessed:

CLIFFORD: You shall not go back to that nest of fends —look up, you are mine now. I am rich, powerful. I struggle no longer against destiny for I love you. Look up, we shall not part again.

CAMILLA: They will not let me go —none of our tribe ever married with the Busné.

CLIFFORD: I said not that —there is no necessity. You shall be my loved and cherished one, we shall live together in blissful love —you shall be as my wife, yet not my wife. (Crawford 1860: 9–10)

As a transaction, Camilla finally leaves Spain with Clifford after he trades her for some gold with her father. In Act II, we see a different Camilla; in Lord Clifford's home, she cannot enjoy the legitimate position of a wife, for their marriage had been celebrated in

gypsy fashion. Despite her giving Lord Clifford a son, Juan, she is not able to take on the role of 'lady in the house'. Camilla's displacement in Wales is evidenced by her paleness and her sadness, as she mourns for her original place:

> CAMILLA: Lonely, lonely still. Oh, for the hulls of Spain again where the light soul of the Gitana revelled in liberty, free as the Eagle when he soars above his rocky throne —why am I sad. (Crawford 1860: 18)

Camilla's stay in Wales had been 'shadowed' by Lord Clifford's recent reconnection with Lady Emily, an old sweetheart of him. Camilla has to assume a ghost-like position in his home, as he insists in referring to her as if she was dead. After the arrival of the gypsy Pedrillo, Camilla's old betrothed, Camilla's 'gypsy blood' flows again —and thus, she revives (Crawford 1860: 27). Camilla compares herself with Lady Emily, whose 'pureness' trumps over her own wildness:

> CAMILLA: The lily blossoms in the sunshine, the wild flower withers in the shade. (Crawford 1860: 27)

Rescuing the flower imagery, Camilla identifies herself with a wild flower, pointing out her out-of-placedness from 'civilisation', while she recognizes Lady Emily as a poised lily. She realises she has been displaced by the arrival of Lady Emily, yet she also admits she had never been 'at place' in Lord Clifford's home. His denial of accepting her as a wife and of treating her as a ghost place Camilla in a figurative limbo; away from her own home in Spain, and from her own traditions, she is stripped of her identity. At the same time, she is unable to build a new one without his recognition and, thus, she becomes a mere spectre. Camilla's final words to Lady Emily evoke her final displacement:

> CAMILLA: The wild flower fades, rooted out from his heart so that the lily may blossom there. (Crawford 1860: 35)[85]

Crawford's 'gitanilla' is not a girl stolen from 'civilised' society and raised as a gypsy; instead, this 'true-born' gitanilla shows the foreign woman's difficulties to fit into a society that does not recognize her as a 'true' woman. Zuletta, Cahontas, and Camilla all have to 'measure up' against femininity ideals set up by their white counterparts, and thus, all have to struggle against their own identities. The flower imagery by which they describe themselves position them as passive 'things' to be plucked; however, by recognizing their own 'wilderness', they detach themselves from respectable society and question the restrictive borders of such. To maintain their 'freedom', they must remain wild —and thus, displaced.

Lighter dramatic genres offered similar representations of the 'libertine' gypsy; for example, Byron drew inspiration from Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831) and created a burlesque extravaganza for the Strand. In *Esmeralda; or, the 'Sensation' Goat* (Strand 28 September 1861), the female gypsy dances on the streets of Paris to earn a living.[86] In Scene I, we are first acquainted with Esmeralda after she actively decides to marry a young author, Pierre, who is about to be condemned to death by the gypsy clan. However, we soon understand she does so to escape the incessant romantic advances of men. In other words, she seeks for a kind of protection that

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[85] Camilla dies in the woods, after discovering Lord Clifford declaring his love to Lady Emily. *The Atlas* recognizes Camilla's death as her coming to terms with 'her wrongs' (13 October 1860). Lord Clifford's final death falling down the Devil's Bridge with Pedro was praised by the newspapers due to its 'extremely well painted' scenery and mechanical effects (*The Era* 14 October 1860).

[86] Fanny Josephs played the title role, while two of her male suitors were interpreted by actresses in breeches: Marie Wilton took on the role of Pierre Gringoire and Eleanor Bufton that of Phoebus, the Captain. Gänzl also notes Lydia Thompson's role as Esmeralda in its Dublin performances (2014: 51).

guarantees her autonomy. In Scene II, her desires for freedom antagonise those of matrimony:

> ESMERAL: No joys are there that can compare
>
> With dancing, prancing everywhere.
>
> I'd sooner wear, I do declare,
>
> A dancer's wreath than crowns so rare…
>
> Still, I'd sooner be an
>
> Humble, shabby, me-an,
>
> Poor terpsichorean,
>
> Than o'er kingdoms rule. (Byron, *Esmeralda* 1861: 14)

Esmeralda rejects fitting into the category of a 'Queen', wearing crowns and ruling over kingdoms. Displaced from women's mission to 'rule' the domestic sphere and be 'mistress' of her home, Esmeralda boasts of her 'humble plebeian education' and her roaming the streets. As the story progresses, Esmeralda exhibits an evocative freedom of movement, interacting with the other male characters and escaping their romantic purposes. Byron's burlesque boasted of a steady popularity in the Strand, especially as it followed *Aladdin!; or the Wonderful Scamp*'s success (30 March 1861).[87] The play was revived in 1867, this time under the management of Ada Swanborough, which evidences its favourable reception throughout the decade.

Precisely, the 'oriental' theme that was explored in *Aladdin,* as well as in other popular tales like *Ali Baba, Abon Hassan,* and *Sinbad the Sailor*, usually featured a group of eroticised and exoticised foreign women. Thus, in the previously mentioned *St.*

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[87] *The Morning Chronicle* advised the audience of arriving early and advancing resolutely forward on the pit and gallery (5 October 1861). Byron's reputation in the Strand due to the hundred and fifty nights run of *Aladdin*, favoured the warm welcome of *Esmeralda.*

George and the Dragon (Byron, Covent Garden 26 December 1863), a 'Grand Ballet of the Silver Guards and Odalesques of the Harem' spectacularly displayed the bodies of ballet girls in 'oriental' costume. In 1867, the *Illustrated Weekly News* defined the harem as 'the broad marble halls, and deeply-shaded gardens, where beauty and mystery dwell' (20 July 1867).[88] Accompanying this description, the newspaper featured a full-spread illustration of a harem, where a group of idle, reclining women can be seen (Fig. 10). These women have long, dark hair, which heavily contrasts with their pale skin. They wear revealing clothes and are surrounded by lavish cushions, ornaments, servants, and domestic animals. As Pal-Lapinski suggests, the image of the harem simultaneously evoked

> a feminine utopia and a prison, a domestic space and a brothel, and an ethically
>
> complex topos where white, black, and brown female bodies became inextricably
>
> entangled. (2005: xv)

Indeed, it is not unusual to find melodramas where the chaste white protagonist is threatened by the depraved foreigner and his desire of taking possession of her. For a white English woman, the harem is transformed into a brothel. However, for the white man, the harem is turned into a fascinating female abode. Its restricted access makes of it a recurring 'object' of desire for the traveller. For example, in Young's *The History of a Flag* (Astley's 9 April 1860), the bored girls in the sheik's harem revive after Bandinier manages to enter in disguise. Zara and Selina, two of the slaves of the harem,

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[88] The article went on to address the women of the harem, making distinctions between the wives and the slaves. According to the newspaper,

> The slaves have, as will be supposed, the advantage of being, in much cases, much better educated than the wives; and have, moreover the advantage of being seen before being purchased whereas, the wife is taken on the faith of mere verbal description, and is notunlikely to cause a good deal of disappointment. (*Illustrated Weekly News* 20 July 1867: 373)

receive him with kisses and words of warning, and later help him to escape unharmed. Similarly, in Brough's extravaganza *The Caliph of Bagdad* (Strand 26 December 1867), Camira the slave receives an unidentified man in the harem, infuriating the Caliph, who sends her to prison:

> MESROUR: The harem's laws she has transgressed, which
>
> Love-making oppose,
>
> We'll have no Cupid's arrows here, and certainly no beaux.
>
> HASSAN: That girls to visit on the sly is wrong, may be quite true,
>
> Men will though do it when a chance they have, they always do.
>
> (Brough *Caliph* 1867: 12)

These lines evoke a question of propriety —women chasing men and vice versa—, but also of property; as Ziter contends, the harem imagery on the Victorian stage seeks to appease the audience's search for 'pleasure', displaying grand, lavish scenes of 'Eastern' inspiration (2003: 75). Thus, the male spectator gazing upon European actresses in 'oriental' costume was virtually transported to a place where female submission was more sensual. Additionally, the female slave of the harem as represented on stage posits questions of female independency, ownership, and autonomy. In other words, by being 'stuck' in subservience, the theatrical harem women are inadvertently mirroring contemporary debates of female emancipation. Ghose explains how, by the end of the century, English women like Mary Billington identified in the Indian zenanas 'traditional values of Indian womanhood' and made comparisons with those of the Englishwomen back home (1998: 8). Foster and Mills identify the harem as an ambivalent 'place where women live and converse', whose dualities '(liberty/imprisonment; exoticism/tyranny; activity/idleness) had an especial resonance

for British female visitors' (2002: 16). Thus, these plays expose complex relationships between the observer (the male trespasser) and the observed (the harem girl), or, in other words, between the active and the passive. Saving the cultural distance and despite the racialized representation of these female characters, the aforementioned plays essentially question female disobedience and female placement inside the canons.

As previously contended, the period's ideal of femininity revolved around a pervasive passivity. In fiction, Campbell argues that the woman is most of the times, 'simply there' as an accessory to the journey of the male hero (see Structure and Objectives). Accordingly, mid-Victorian theatre has a tendency of displaying the unconscious bodies of women on stage, usually signifying their vulnerability or ignorance of the events about to occur. Talairach-Vielmas compares the traditional fairy tale to the sensation stories of the 1860s, where the female body is scrutinised by men, and where symbolic passiveness denounces the period's constrictive femininity (2007: 19–20). Thus, the sleeping or unconscious woman on stage might be interpreted as a representation of the powerlessness of women in real life. However, Auerbach notes the 'self-transforming powers' of women 'in trance, death, or actual sleep' (1982: 41), and so we can interpret the awakening of the female character as the awakening of her whole sex.

Besides the obvious example of Perrault's tale *Sleeping Beauty in the Wood,* images of sleeping women permeate the comic and melodramatic theatre of the 1860s.[89] Artists of the period were keen to represent passive, reclining women in their paintings.

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[89] Some of the adaptations of Sleeping Beauty on the Victorian stage are Planché's extravaganza *Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* (Drury Lane, 20 April 1840), with Madame Eliza Vestris in the title role. This was adapted later as *The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood; or, Harlequin Prince Pretty and the Seven Fairy Godmothers* (Douglass, Standard Theatre, 1861); *Sleeping Beauty* (Chambers & Hyde 1863; Soutar 1862), and also as *Jack and Gill and the Sleeping Beauty; or, Harlequin Humpty Dumpty* (Surrey 26 December 1868).

Some of the examples include those by the pre-Raphaelites, being the most prominent examples Millais' *Ophelia* (1852) and Burne-Jones' series *The Legend of Briar Rose* (1885–1890), which was first exhibited in London's Bond Street. Burne-Jones's depiction of *The Rose Bower* includes a group of women asleep amidst blooming roses. John William Godward would later produce a series of paintings featuring idle, reclining female subjects of classical inspiration, with suggestive titles such as *The Bethrothed* (1892), *Girl in Yellow Drapery* (1901), *Dolce Far Niente* (1904), and *The Quiet Pet* (1906). Racialized representations of the female foreigner were also popular, especially after the popularity of Ingres's *Grande Odalisque* (1814), which continued to be exhibited in London in the International Exhinition of Works of Art of 1867 (*Lady's Own Paper* 28 September 1867).

On stage, the audience symbolically awakes at the same time that the female protagonist does; thus, the mise-en-scène presents a woman reclining, usually flanked by male protectors. Such is the case of Elvira, the mistress of Spanish conqueror Pizarro; throughout the 1860s, we can find up to three versions of Sheridan's *Pizarro* (1799), an adaptation of the German *Die Spanier in Peru* (1796).[90] In the *Pizarro* of Marchant (Britannia 10 June 1861), Buckingham (Strand 16 April 1862), and Reade Jr. (Sadler's Wells 27 April 1862), the first scene opens up with a view of the 'interior of Pizarro's tent', where Elvira lies asleep on a couch. The picturesque scenery behind her —a 'mountain view' (Marchant 1861)—, and the setup evoke that of a painting. The audience turns voyeur and gazes upon the exposed body of Elvira, whose awakening would allow her to see Pizarro's true nature as a tyrant.

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[90] Sheridan's *Pizarro* was performed in the Drury Lane theatre, with Sarah Siddons as Elvira, and John Philip Kemble as Rolla, a Peruvian hero. Couture (2013) addresses the effect of Siddons' status as tragic actress and her private identity as a wife and mother in her representation of Sheridan's ambivalent Elvira.

Following Sheridan's plot, Elvira soon turns on Pizarro, rejecting his violent schemes. In the final scene of Marchant's *Pizarro,* the roles reverse and the scene shows a sleeping Pizarro, surveyed by Elvira. Her 'awakening' on the first scene brings her a rare activeness, and finally, she stabs the tyrant:

ELVIRA: [to PIZARRO] you won't use me ill any more, you women hacker.

Yes, from him now I'll require no divorce

I'll go to a convent, a wretched nun I'll be

Think of my sins and live in misery (Marchant 1861: 17)

Elvira's treacherous nature is somewhat controlled by her passive representation at the opening of the plays; in Buckingham's burlesque (Strand 16 April 1862), she plots Pizarro's death after learning his intention of poisoning her.[91] However, the Strand transforms Elvira into an omnipresent wife, whose control over Pizarro makes him suffocate in 'agony' (Ibid: 6). Elvira reminds him of her indispensability in the household —or the tent. In a way, her revival makes her realise of her domestic self-worth:

ELVIRA: Poor little man! Such pangs will trivial be

Compare with yours when you're bereft of me

No one on shirt to sew the missing button

To nicely hash the scraps of cold boiled mutton.

In those stern moments when you most require her

With anguished sobs you'll whisper, poor Elvira! (Buckingham 1862: 27)

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[91] Ada Swanborough took on the role of Alonzo, Pizarro's General. Eleanor Bufton played Elvira, and Fanny Josephs was Ataliba. The *Morning Post* commended Bufton's 'gorgeous attire' as a Spanish lady (22 April 1862).

Awakening as self-revelation is oft employed in melodrama, like in Mrs. Henry Young's *Jessy Ashton* (Effingham, 18 April 1862), where Jessy is constantly fighting against confinement, unconsciousness, and basically, entrapment. In Boucicault's *Life of an Actress* (Adelphi 1 March 1862), Violet awakes disoriented at the house of her kidnapper, Maltravers, who has drugged her with an opiate to leave her 'powerless' against his sexual advances (Ibid: 62). In *Young Girl from the Country* (Howe, Pavilion 23 July 1862), Lizzie is drugged and kidnapped, awakening on a boat en-route to her new life in London. For the audience, the helplessness of these women mirrored social problems of contemporary middle- and working-class women, and thus, the motif of the sleeping woman warns of an imminent awakening, not of the individual, but of the community.[92]

These characters' passivity heavily contrasts with the myriad of fantastical, active bodies that appeared on the West and East End stages during the 1860s. The pantomime fairy, the fairy ballet, and a never-ending contest between good and evil characters transformed the stage into a portal to a parallel universe. Thus, spectacular transformation scenes, innovative mechanical effects, and dazzling costumes and

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[92] Christina Rossetti subverted the 'sleeping beauty' tale in her *The Fairy Prince Who Arrived Too Late*, first published in *Macmillan's Magazine* (May 1863). Written from the point of view of the waiting princess, the poem denounces the Prince's tardiness:

> Too late for love, too late for joy,
> Too late, too late!
> You loitered on the road too long, you trifled at the gate;
> The enchanted dove upon her branch
> Died without a mate;
> The enchanted princess in her tower
> Slept — died behind the grate;
> Her heart was starving all this while
> You made it wait. (Rossetti 1863)

Sumpter also addresses the use of sleeping beauty analogies in the woman question debate of the 1860s, especially in the press (2008: 82–7). These include *Middle Class Education in England: Girls* (Martineau *Cornhill Magazine* 1864), *Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* (Ritchie *Cornhill Magazine* May 1866), and *A Dull Life* (Bodichon *Macmillan's Magazine* 1867).

settings mediated between the real and the possible. Current scholar criticism on Victorian popular drama has offered the opportunity to understand the stage's paradoxical imagery of femininity. Particularly, Newey has addressed the pantomime fairy's ambiguous embodiment of gender and has attested its idealized representation of Victorian femininity (2013: 100). As 'fantastical versions of the "Angel in the House"' (Ibid), these fairies went on to both perpetuate and question contemporary feminine conceptions, tricking the audiences' minds into conflating the fairy's 'bubbly' identity with that of its mortal analogue. In a way, the stage fairy momentaneously transformed the ordinary woman into a 'sparkling favourite' (Coyne 1868).[93]

The *New Monthly Magazine and Humorist* identified the popular fairy as a successor of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595), 'analogous to that of the Grecian nymphs who presided over woods, mountains and springs' (1849: 176). Indeed, it is usual to find scenes where the spectator turns trespasser of the nymphs' private lair, represented as spectacular 'elfin lands in the crystal sphere' (Blanchard *Peter Wilkins* 1860: 18), and enchanted lakes and castle halls (Fenton and Dale *Playing* 1862: 7). These evoke the retreats of classical nymphs, hidden away from the impertinent advances of mortal men and other creatures. However, I believe these also remind of real private boudoirs and enclosed spaces for Victorian women, especially as they

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[93] *The Era Almanack* features 'The Stage Fairy', by author Stirling Coyne (1868: 80–1). Coyne addresses the transformation of the stage fairy upon her stepping on scene, noticing her unattractiveness pre-characterisation and her bountiful future post-development:

> About a month before Christmas, the Stage Fairy makes her first appearance in the grub… near the stage-door of Drury Lane Theatre. In this early period of her existence she certainly is not attractive… with a dingy shawl or cloak wrapped round her slight figure… and a face —mostly pretty, but pinched and pale, as though a gleam of life's sunshine had never fallen upon it— are not suggestive of the sprightliness attributed to fairies. But the Stage Fairy has a brilliant future before her; the Pantomime comes out in all its glory on Boxing-night, when she emerges, fully developed, from a rose or lily, clad in ethereal vesture, and radiant with gems and gold. (Coyne *The Era Almanack* 1868: 80–1)

usually make the audience think about the impropriety of leaving such 'feminised' place. In the secretive manner of the 'oriental' harem, the fairy abode is represented as a magical, 'special' space, where the 'temptress' resides. As Campbell attests, the 'temptress' is a (supernatural) woman who tries to lure the hero out of his journey, usually provoking a halt in his mission (2008).

In Brough's extravaganza *The Sylphide* (Princess' 9 April 1860), Eolia, the mountain sylph, symbolically loses her wings after falling in love with Donald, a mortal.[94] Eolia and her fellow sylphs are protective of their own wings, which we understand, symbolize their free-spiritedness and autonomy. During their courting, Eolia is able to 'bound across the stage' unrestrictedly, to which Donald has to struggle to keep up:

DONALD: Why do you fly me thus?

EOLIA: Alas! Who knows?

            It is my flighty nature, I suppose—

            I cannot help it —sometimes 'tis the breeze

            Calls to me as it whispers 'mongst the trees.

DONALD: If by a breeze away from me you're carried,

            I hope you'll kick up none, dear, when we're married.

EOLIA: Sometimes a gaudy butterfly flits by,

            And tempts me to a race —sometimes I fly

            To catch the linnets 'midst the foliage dark—

            Sometimes I fly much higher *for a lark*—

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[94] The play is inspired by the ballet *La Sylphide* (1832) and its subsequent adaptation, John Barnett's opera *The Mountain Sylph*, which was first produced at the Lyceum Theatre in 1834. The drama of the 1860s borrows from the plots of famous operas, such as Byron's *La! Sonnambula!* (Prince of Wales' 15 April 1865)

The air's my native element.

DONALD: *(embracing her)* My treasure,

You should resist this atmospheric pressure.

EOLIA: I've tried to do so. Would I had no wings—

DONALD: Well, I confess they're rather awkward things.

(unable to get his arm round her waist) (Brough, *Sylphide* 9 April

1860: 15)

In a way, Eolia's character utilises her supernatural nature to symbolise the 'fastness' of the girl of the period. Her wings, uncomfortable for her prospective husband, are in the way, both figuratively and literally; Eolia's flimsy behaviour must be corrected after marriage. Thus, as a sylph, she is unable to reach the coveted position of wife. Finally, after being cursed by Hela the witch, Eolia loses her wings in agony and is transformed into a domestic paragon:

EOLIA: A swindle —I'm fainting—support me—I die!

… (EOLIA *falls on the ground senseless)*

ETHERIA: … Thy sylph you've overcome, but not the woman.

Embrace her, Donald; like yourself, she's human;

No more her elfish tricks your love she'll try with;

Her wings gone, she's no feather left to fly with.

See, she awakes! Life stirs again within her.

EOLIA: *(rising)* Oh, Donald dear, what would you like for dinner?;

… dear, dear, and your shirt-collar wants a button.

DONALD: Oh, happy change! My shirt-fronts cared for—see.

Just when I thought all dickey 'twas with me…

Pattern of all domestic virtues, please

Embrace me.

… 'Tis for the best. Sylphs—fairies—sprites—what not?

A real true-hearted woman bangs the lot. (Ibid: 30–2)

Brough's Eolia survives the loss of her wings, changing the original plot of the *La Sylphide*'s ballet. Originally, the dropping of the wings meant the death of the female sylph. By rewriting the fate of the fairy, Brough is figuratively giving life to a new Eolia, granting her 'permission' to prosper as a good-behaved wife. At the same time, *The Sylphide* posits questions of feminine placement by making obvious Eolia's necessary resignification in order to prosper in her romantic life. It is Eolia's 'manifest difference' (T. Davis 2007: 33) as a supernatural being what makes us understand the liminality of the fairy: even though her aesthetics suggest those of the idealized woman, her unrestrained behaviour, classified as 'fast' even, finally leave her out of the feminine canon. The fairy's exaggerated femininity reminds the female audience of the benefits of moderation and modesty, warning against the growing artificiality of their manner of dress and behaviour.

However, in other occasions, it is precisely the supernatural nature of the female character what endows her with 'feminine' qualities, which forces her to protect herself at all costs. In Conquest and Spry's *Harlequin Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday; or, the Magic Pearl and the Deep Sea Cave* (Grecian, 18 December 1863), the mermaid Pearl must protect her purity —which is symbolised by an actual pearl— from the romantic advances of Robinson Crusoe:

PEARL: Presumptuous youth, you see this pearl?

           This matchless pearl prevents a match with you

> A guard against love —while I wear it, I'm free
>
> CRUSOE: … the pearl removed, Pearl of the sea is mine
>
> By stratagem that gem she must resign.
>
> Lady, permit me to inspect its merit…
>
> My love cries out, you shall be mine, fair stranger! (Conquest and
>
> Spry 1863: 12–3)

Pearl's idealised femininity is thus represented in her supernatural powers. While she is a mermaid, protective of her pearl, she is able to roam chaperoned by Boreas, his companion and protector. As long as she maintains her idealized status as an immaculate pearl, she is to be gazed upon 'as a distant star' (Ibid: 21). After Crusoe's victory and her loss of her 'talisman', her identity changes to that of wife:

> PEARL: Somehow I feel a change steal o'er my heart,
>
> And tho' you've robbed me of my fairy life
>
> I'll be revenged for I will be your wife. (Ibid: 22)

Thus, we understand Pearl's loss of innocence —her 'fairy life'— after Crusoe's seducing; her sudden transformation to wife transports Pearl from the magical grotto in the sea to Crusoe's hut. Her inability to fit as a fairy mermaid anymore provokes in her a necessary displacement into a domestic environment. Like in Etheria's case, Pearl's change of identity is symbolised as a loss. Instead of mourning the 'jewel', the character of Pantomime finally addresses the 'new' Pearl:

> CRUSOE: And Pearl of the Sea —to lose her would be cruel,
>
> For I look on Pearl as my dearest jewel.
>
> PANTOM: The choicest gem that man can gain in life
>
> Is a constant, true, and a loving wife. (Ibid: 27)

The message that comes across is that of a 'coming of age', a necessary transformation that a woman must go through to become a 'true and loving wife'. Pearl's femininity is defined by her purity, her pearl. By being protective of it, she reaffirms her status as paragon of virtue; however, after her violation —Crusoe's man Friday steals her pearl for his master—, she is forced to re-place herself in the next category, 'wife', to avoid rejection. Pearl loses her supernatural status and finds an 'earthly' identity by which she can survive.

Other-worldly women renounce to their 'mighty' status and figuratively get down of their pedestals to establish relationships with mortal men.[95] In this sense, the drama utilises supernatural beings as symbols of 'Othering', especially when addressed to an adult audience. While the fairy spectacle of Christmas pantomimes targets children in their moralising and educational stories, those who attract a mature audience make use of magical plots and peoples to comment on inter-class relationships —and even on inter-racial ones. Tracy Davis has addressed the fairy (or magical creature) symbolism as 'sexualised femininity', asking 'fundamental questions about memory as knowledge, the durability of mortal life span and cultural tradition' (2007: 34). Thus, examining the drama's dysfunctional relationships between a mortal man and a supernatural woman can be a way of recognising the growing fears of societal, familial, sexual, and, essentially, national change.

Most prominently, the transpontine Bower Saloon produced a burlesque fairy spectacle entitled *Playing with Water; or, Pearls of the Rhine* (Fenton and Baldwin 6

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[95] The fairy is usually represented as the patroness of the male hero in pantomimes. Thus, we can find some examples where the Queen of the Fairies protects the adventurer from his foes, like Queen Bee in Byron's *Jack the Giant Killer* (Princess' 26 December 1859), Golconda in Blanchard's *Harlequin Sindbad the Sailor* (Sadler's Wells 26 December 1860), and Queen Mab in Blanchard's *Cherry and Fair Star* (Sadler's Wells 26 December 1861).

February 1862), adapting Wallace's opera *Lurline* (1860).[96] As a minor theatre, the Bower faced licensing controversies during the 1860s and was usually classified as a 'pleasure haunt' (*Vauxhall History*). Undeniably, the Bower's version of the legend of Lurline, the naiad, is filled with sexual innuendos and double-entendres. According to the story, Sir Rudolph and his valet Kuno go on a 'moonlight trip' to the banks of the enchanted lake, where they summon the 'Water Nymphs', the 'hidden treasure' of the lake. These naiads appear before them with 'soft music playing', a contradictive hint of their supposed threat; as Sir Rudolph hints, they 'lure [men] to destruction' (Fenton and Baldwin 1862: 7). Sir Rudolph soon is struck by Lurline's position as Naiad Queen and expresses his marriage intentions, even though he is already betrothed to another. Lurline doubts his courage, until he finally concedes to descend into the lake to her home. This marks a clear class distinction between Sir Rudolph, a 'penniless chief' and Lurline, the naiad Queen, and subverts the established female displacement: in this occasion, it is him the one who leaves his place to settle at hers. However, Sir Rudolph soon changes his mind and wishes to carry her back to his castle:

> SIR RUD: Ah, Lurline, Ah that thou would'st accompany me to the land. Thou knowest not in these caves (certainly pretty in their way) how charming a life it is, to live in a beautiful castle there and enjoy the pleasures of the choice... There… thou should'st be clothed in green and gold… and be the admiration of all who flock the green woods to behold you. (Ibid: 11)

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[96] H. J. Byron also adapts the story of Lurline in his *Beautiful Haidée; or, the Sea Nymph and the Sallee Rovers* (6 April 1863). According to the printed edition of the extravaganza, the story is founded 'on the poem of Don Juan, the Ballad of Lord Bateman, and the Legend of Lurline'.

Lurline is attracted to the idea of an 'earthly' life, and pledges to leave her home with Sir Rudolph. Instead, he abandons her to go to the land and marry his betrothed, Cornerlia, and Lurline is left emaciated. The nymphs surround her and lament her downfall, claiming that her brightness has 'faded' (Ibid: 14). Echoing the period's discourse of 'fallen' women, Lurline learns her lesson and assumes her seclusion away from mortal society, returning to her lake:

> LURLINE: Behold her here, to mow this festive scene
>
> Thy injured bride, the Water Queen
>
> By vows of thine, she has been deceived
>
> Her cavern's depths no more she'll leave
>
> My naiad power revenge shall take
>
> Ev'e I return to my peaceful lake. (Ibid: 16)

Lurline is merciful after Cornelia pleads for her cause and pardons all mortals before returning to her lake. Surrounded by nymphs, the final scene discovers a bright 'Hall of Lillies' to which she retreats, thus emphasizing her different status. Lurline's storyline questions that of the 'femme fatale', and evokes thoughts of fallen women whose purity has been tainted due to their irresponsible relationship with men. However, she falls far from the 'woman as temptress' archetype; instead, the play features Coral, a mischievous nymph who does not accept abandonment.

Coral receives Kuno, Sir Rudolph's valet, after they both arrive in the lake. Coral is playful with Kuno, offering him foods and drink, and offering him 'company' (Ibid: 9). Kuno tricks Coral with promises of marriage in order to escape the lake. Upon

discovering his lie, Coral puts a curse on him, transforming him into half fish, half human:[97]

> CORAL: You're going away, you naughty thing
>
> My breast with rage is burning
>
> To Earth you mean to wend your way
>
> … my power you still are blind too
>
> When by mortals you are caressed,
>
> They'll find your fish behind you. (Ibid: 10)

Kuno returns to land, yet he is 'disconsolate and miserable', 'moping about, muffled up in a large cloak' about the castle. In a way, Kuno's curse reminds of contemporary discussions on venereal diseases and the Contagious Diseases Act. He regrets his visit to the naiads, and laments his new reputation as half fish:

> KUNO: Well, I've made a pretty kettle of fish of myself by going amongst
>
> those infernal sea sharks. I declare, they have changed one half of
>
> my carcass into a dolphin's tail…
>
> I knew it, it's enough to alarm all the women in Christendom. (Ibid:
>
> 12–3)

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[97] The Olympic had produced a fairy extravaganza with a similar plotline, entitled *King of the Merrows; or, the Prince and the piper Dan'* (Burnand 26 December 1861). Founded upon a fairy tale by Palgrave Simpson, this version of inter-class relationships presents Sabrina, a mermaid who is keen to renounce to her life as a mermaid to marry the Prince as a mortal. He promises to 'instruct' her upon her arrival to sound land:

> PRINCE: I will instruct you, though,
>   And teach by pictures which you'll trace on slates
>   Food for the mind is best conveyed by plates.
>   Of course, some novels you have lightly scanned?
> SABRINA: Chiefly down here I've read the works of Sand.
> PRINCE: Some classic reading though you ought to get. (Burnand *King* 1861: 33)

Sabrina finally escapes the sea and sets off with her fiancée, the Prince. The play's optimistic ending makes sense due to its place and time of performance; as a Christmas entertainment, the burlesque was mainly addressed to children.

Kuno is finally released from the curse by Golpho, a water demon, who warns him to 'no more deride / the children of the watery tribe' (Ibid: 14). Kuno and Coral's storyline warns of the perils of mingling with those from a different station, 'Othering' the supernatural women of the lake. Some years later, the amateur group of Oxford University, the 'Shooting Stars', performed the story of Lurline on campus, first on the Assembly Rooms, Leamington (Amcotts 20 December 1867) and later in the Victoria Rooms, Clifton (23 January 1868).[98] Following the example of T. W. Robertson's successful *Caste* (Prince of Wales' 6 April 1867), the final words of Lurline and Sir Rudolf —adapted as Rupert— advise of same-class marriage:

LURLINE: This is the moral of the story

Folks should be content to marrying their sphere…

Naiads! Ne'er with mortals wed!

seek a merman spouse instead!

Never, never, never with a mortal wed!

RUPERT: After the trouble and confusion

Granny, on a love affair no more I'll roam

Sirens avoid! Is my conclusion

If I want to marry, I can look near home.

Mortals! Ne'er with Naiads wed!

Seek a mortal spouse instead!

Never, never, never with a naiad wed! (Amcotts 1867: 46)[99]

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[98] The Shooting Stars also adapted Amcott's version of *Lalla Rook* at the Gallery of Illustration, London (19 and 20 June 1868). On this occasion, they featured two actresses: Miss Elena Angèle and Miss Lennox Grey.
[99] The inability of the 'fairy bride' to fit into the domestic sphere is also repeated in the previously mentioned Byron's *Goldenhair the Good* (St. James' 26 December 1862).

With such representation of women as the 'Other', we understand a pervasive patriarchal discourse. The artificial descriptions of the female body in fairy stories continue to create a different sphere of action for women, be it a 'fairy realm' or an underground grotto. In the end, these warn about the different, the displaced woman with 'wings'. Straying from the earthly dominion seems to be both fascinating —for men— and dangerous —for women. Still, these representations of the supernatural woman suddenly 'defamiliarize reality' and question gender constructs (Talairach-Vielmas 2007: 69). Within this context, it is possible to discern the growing anxieties over the reconfiguration of women, linking their emancipation and redefinition to the fantastic. These analogies, I believe, would discredit the modern woman's conscious replacing into society yet, at the same time, would reflect on the inevitable shape-shifting of women and their transformation throughout the rest of the century. If, as I have described, the 'fairy bride' was unable to fit into domesticity, her victorious journey out of the sea or the woods sent the wrong message of female autonomy and development.

Conclusions

In this Chapter, I propose to conceptualize virtual travel as an immersive experience where we do not need to be physically transported to experience something. Byerly's study on virtual travel through popular entertainment in the city of London serves as basis for my theories of virtual exploration as valid process to work through modernity. As I have argued, virtual travelling exposes the Victorians' mental explorations of the unknown or the 'distant'. Their virtual experiences went on to shape their perception of the world, and their sensory experiencing inevitably reconfigured their self-position and

self-definition. Thus, I have linked virtual travel to theatregoing in London during the 1860s. As I contend, attending a play was transformed into an opportunity for imaginary or mental travelling, especially after the mid-century's technological advances on stage. Borrowing from the travel narrative genre, the popular drama of the period invited the spectator to virtually tag along the character in his or her journey.

Popular plays usually displayed elaborated technical effects that enhanced realism and spectacularity, indispensable in the process of audience immersion. The theatregoer's attention was caught through strong sensorial numbers, especially through music, sound effects, and lightning. These contributed to vivid experiences where the spectator could successfully engage with the story and the journey of the characters, allowing for identification. Therefore, McInnis (2013) likens theatregoing to sightseeing, and recognises in both the same consequences on a personal level. Thus, I have established how the playgoer was able to engage with the character, question his or her own reality, and ultimately rethink his or her own identity and place. Accordingly, Davis and Holland have attested that the transgressive mid-Victorian theatre was, in a way, a 'laboratory' where new identities could be contested in light of the impeding advances of modernity (2007: 96).

However, as my analysis shows, transgressive female characters would often be transformed into pitiful creatures, or into laughable stock characters. The dramatic strong-minded woman, the fast girl of the period, and the foreign woman show the perils of overstepping feminine restrictions. Still, their inclusion in the repertoires of major and minor theatres in London prove the contemporary anxieties on women's place; by examining their peculiarities on stage, we are able to further understand processes of female identity formation during the Victorian era. Most importantly, we

can suggest a reciprocal influential bound between the contemporary audience and the characters, both affecting each other and, eventually, the ongoing discourses on women of the decade.

CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this thesis has been to scrutinise the ways in which the popular theatre from the 1860s reaffirmed or contested the mid-Victorian definition of 'woman'. I have performed a cross-genre analysis of plays performed in London during the 1860s in order to get a broader picture of the decade's perception of women and femininity. As I have proposed, the female characters that were put on the mid-Victorian stage inevitably reflected the period's ongoing debate on the Woman Question and opened up a contesting ground where images of placement and displacement from the feminine canon could be evaluated.

At the beginning of this thesis I questioned the possibilities for Victorian women's mobility outside the boundaries of their sex. As this thesis argues, there is place for 'alternative' conceptions of 'woman' during the mid-Victorian period, when a bursting feminist atmosphere took over London. I contribute to academia by shedding light into an earlier timeframe of the feminist movement and argue that the 'Girl of the Period' or 'fast girl' were preludes of what would later be known as the New Woman. As my thesis has shown, these reconfigurations of the idealised female identity would have not been possible without the influence of popular theatre and its strategies for virtual immersion. Like the protagonist of Murdock's journey of the heroine (1990), I have rejected a dichotomous definition of Victorian women and have strived to show the decade's plurality of female identities. That is where my journey began.

First, I have established the 1860s as an optimal decade for asking questions of self-position both in the nation and in the world. From a broader perspective, I have shown how the metropolis' infrastructural changes, as well as its cultural and

entertainment offering, inevitably shaped the citizens' perception of the world and of themselves. Boasting of a booming British Empire through Great and International Exhibitions (1851 and 1862) can be seen as a strategy to manufacture a common popular consciousness, reinforcing ideas of place in a wider organigram of the world. Anxieties over man's nature were counterbalanced with manipulated representations of the foreign, or the 'Other'. The artificiality and exaggeration of the decade's racial discourse further contribute to understanding the malleability of one's personal identity.

Nevertheless, opening the doors of cultural domes to the general public brought both a democratization of culture and a threatening wave of self-awareness and female nonconformity. As the public spaces were being made available to the population, an inevitable questioning of women's situation in that new reality was bound to happen. Thus, the debates on women's proper place in society remarked the contradicting roles of ladies: were they self-sufficient agents, capable of visiting public exhibitions and elevating them with their unique 'feminine' perception? Or, on the contrary, were they mere subjects to the male gaze and disposition? Breaking from the period's 'domestic ideology' (Hall 2013), the growing feminist movements —for it is difficult to establish a single-oriented feminist movement during the 1860s— sought to supply women with the tools to survive 'outside'. In a way, their mobilisation in quest of women's rights propitiated a situation where a woman was able to pursue her own identity, away from the restrained boundaries of her sex. Organizations fighting against discriminatory laws such as the Contagious Diseases Act (1864, 1869) strived for a plural definition of women, wishing to leave space for women's self-exploration and self-configuration.

As I have shown, the decade is ripe in examples of metaphorical and literal 'marking' of women according to their identity. This classification was mainly

performed from a moral perspective, which meant that, in order to be considered as a woman, one had to comply with a series of rules: if the 'True Woman' ideal was, in fact, the most appropriate place for women, where were the different ones positioned? That is where a sense of displacement can be found, by which the non-True Woman is perceived as a 'female trespasser' or as 'defeminised'. Outside the ideal, the 'traitor to her own sex' had a feeling of unbelonging or displacement.

Thus, I have proposed an alternate definition of 'displacement' beyond previous studies on displacement in exile or migration studies. Through displacement, we can start a dialogue with ourselves and reformulate our identity and belonging. Besides displacement's conception of 'geographical movement', I suggest it can also be a mental process by which, after dislocating from the canon, we are able to explore other possibilities. It is a necessary part in our growing process, as it will make us question social maps and configurations, and will help us to understand ourselves. As I have argued, feeling 'out of place' can be a result of what Ahmed has classified as 'disorientation' (2006). Displacement creates a 'safe space', a liminal space between point A and point B in which we can revise ourselves. Feeling displaced can be disorienting, but also reassuring; through displacement we can be aware of the external elements that influence our perception of the world and of ourselves.

In this thesis, I offer two forms of displacement: physical and virtual. It is my contention that displacement is a concept closely linked to that of travel, as they both imply a sense of movement. We must understand travelling or journeying as a transformative process by which our position in the world is renegotiated. On a journey, we are most aware of our peculiarities, our identity, and in the end, our place. We must relocate ourselves and scrutinize our own ideals in order to advance. As previously

argued, the travel experience of the mid-Victorians was heavily influenced by their preconceived perceptions of the foreign.

The inevitability of gender is contested by Victorian women through re-inventing strategies that allow them to stretch their identities. Women take on the streets and the theatres 'disguised' in male clothes or as the century advanced, in groups. The anonymity of women outside their designed space was almost impossible, and that is due to gender markers: restrictive and inflammable crinolines make their advances through public spaces a slow and dangerous task; temporal casualties like being spotted on the street at the wrong time or the wrong place legitimise men's improper advances and women's wrongful condemnation. Public scrutiny, in the end, is an elemental variable in their mobility. Gender is unavoidable, and thus, the creation of feminised spaces in the city seeks to recreate the safety and welcoming nature of the domestic realm. It creates the illusion of freedom yet, underneath, it is still a manipulated, self-contained space where the female identity of the 'True' woman is reinforced.

Thus, in my analysis of the physical journeys of female characters, I have taken into account women's spatial negotiation. As seen, an involuntary physical dislocation or displacement provokes feelings of despair in women; additionally, it further suggests women's volatile nature. In public contexts, female characters are reminded to maintain their dignity, reputation, and most of all, their respectability. In other words, the woman can leave the domestic sphere, yet the domestic sphere cannot leave the woman. Her whole public image is designed to suggest femininity; for her to maintain such identity, she must comply with spatial norms and behave accordingly. Even abroad, her femininity becomes her identity card and metaphorically protects her from impertinences.

Through the vicariousness of virtual travel, the average citizen was able to experiment with the 'outside' world without leaving his or her city; accordingly, virtual travel implied a relocation not of the body, but of the mind. The popular optical shows in London, the spectacular representations, and the plethora of media that positioned the viewer as traveller, made use of the citizen's capability for imaginative travel (Urry 2002), a virtual immersion in the exhibited. This kind of journey would ultimately affect them in the same way to that of a physical one. In the end, the 'technological imagination' (Potter 2018) of the pictorial-influenced mid-Victorians, propitiated an effective immersive experience. This meant that the possibilities for self-scrutiny were abounding without leaving the city.

I have contested Byerly's implication of the impossibility for virtual travel in Victorian theatre. As I have previously argued, the drama of the period sought to engage the audience not as mere spectators, but as participants of the story performed on stage. The final tag addressed the theatregoer and asked for his or her opinion on the characters' fate; the lighting and sound effects manipulated the viewer's senses; and ultimately, technology allowed recreating the vividness and shocking impression of reality. Definitely, it was possible to feel virtually transported and displaced during the duration of the play. Playwrights borrowed from other genres and rhetorically invited the spectator to become part of the story, to tag along the character in his or her journey. In this sense, it is possible to affirm that the intertextuality and intertheatricality of Victorian drama effectively took the playgoer on a journey. In that journey, the playgoer was able to recognise him or herself in the characters, and vicariously explore unknown settings. Inside the playhouse, the spectator could be whomever he or she wanted. The notion of displacement through playgoing is an interesting aspect to consider, especially

for the mid-Victorian female theatregoer. Despite the difficulties we might encounter in defining the experience of the mid-Victorian theatregoer, we could speculate —as Gardner (2000) suggests— about it. After considering the socio-political background and understanding the decade's growing anxieties on gender and the female role, we can discern contemporary topicalities in the drama and we are able to suggest its influence to and from society.

Recognising the opportunities for virtual travel in the 1860s theatre has set the backbone of my case studies. In the plays I have analysed, both from a virtual and a physical journey perspective, I have identified a myriad female characters that both comply and stray from the unique definition of woman. Describing their virtual life journeys and their physical journeys has proved that there is not a single conception of Victorian women. However, my analysis proves that the drama did, in fact, borrow from real topics of female emancipation and furtherly distorted female identity. The spectator following the female character in her virtual journey to self-realisation, would often find a single-oriented purpose; that is, women's place in the world.

As suggested, female characters often experience a threatening experience when they stray from their sex's expected path. A woman's domestic purpose is usually symbolised by her relationship with her father, her husband, her children, and even her home. The plays I have analysed usually follow the expected female journey of marriage, childbearing, and familial belonging. In other words, women's identity needs to be strongly placed within the domestic realm, and to be linked to the patriarchal system. As I have explained, female characters often define themselves through their relationship with men; lacking such relationship means their figurative loss of place, a disorienting —and terrifying— experience for them. Their desires to leave the domestic

sphere are often met with indecision and remorse; they question their own inclinations to explore the 'outside' and usually find chastising experiences that bring them back to the safety of the home or the male relation. By such storylines, the drama reinforces the place of women and warns about the perils of voluntary or involuntary displacing.

However, other female characters enable the playgoer to virtually follow a modern version of femininity. Such is the case of the fast girls, the Girls of the Period, and the strong-minded women. Though caricaturized on stage, they echo real female incursions in the public sphere, and mimic the 'radical' feminists of the decade. By exaggerating their example, the drama is inadvertently advertising a plurality of women and thus negating the existence of a sole definition of femininity. These alternative women of the stage borrow from intertheatrical markers for veracity purposes, employing easily identifiable names, clothing style, nationality, ethnicities, songs, and even actresses in charge of playing their parts. As I have explained, the displaced, radical woman is usually relatable to popular culture and real-life society's outcasts. For the contemporary viewer, virtually following these women's journeys to self-discovery and self-assessment might have produced contempt, pity, or even laughter. Still, their existence and continuous cross-generic representation, warns us of their relevance in influencing their contemporaries.

A strong, gender-based dichotomy between active (male) and passive (female) is present in the 1860s popular plays I have analysed. On stage, the passive woman —or sleeping woman— mirrors anxieties for women's mobility. Their passivity is understood as unprotectedness in sensation drama, and the plots surrounding women's helplessness in the 'outside' world underlie their sense of displacement in the new scheme of things. The image of the sleeping woman suggests a metaphorical immobility

of the sex, but also a necessity of waking up. Hectic heroines who awake in a foreign surrounding have to fight for their lives and struggle for regaining possession of their own bodies and identity. Actively, they engage with their story and have a say in their own journey. Likewise, the image of the supernatural female being reinforces women's 'Otherness', again putting them in a separated box. As contested, otherworldly women have no place in society and their marked difference is what displaces them from the respectable canon.

Exploring the virtual journeys of female characters to self-definition has allowed me to understand the strategies to reinforce women's position in the world. The correct and incorrect placement of the female body has been an ongoing debate in this thesis, and so speaking about a physical displacement or a physical journey was inevitable. I believe that applying notions from travel studies to my analysis of dramatic female characters has granted me the opportunity to obtain an interdisciplinary picture. Thus, I have revised Victorian women's position in the travel writing genre, and their contemporary experience of physical travel. Despite the prominence of female travellers during the Victorian era, I have discussed their relegation to mere 'observers' and their public perception as defeminised, masculinised professional female explorers. These examples show the Victorian women's inability to achieve both a physical activity as serious geographers, adventurers, or discoverers of new territories and maintaining their feminine identity. Gender roles follow women everywhere, and so their experience of the world is determined by restrictive feminine etiquette and behavioural norms.

This thesis contributes to an ongoing research on Victorian women and it opens up space for questioning a new decade which, I have proved, was decisive for the women's rights movement. In my work, I have strived to fill a temporal gap in the

history of Victorian women and have virtually travelled back to experience their journeys as part of a wider feminist scheme. However, I believe my corpus of analysis could be extended in the future to further question a longer period of time. Additionally, through the lens of virtual travel and my proposition of displacement as a tool for self-scrutiny in Victorian theatre, we could continue to analyse the immersive elements of Victorian drama and their inevitable influence in the audiences' minds.

My selected female characters and case studies could be furtherly contrasted with those from the following decades in order to map women's identification on the Victorian stage and women's journey to the New Woman of the fin de siècle. Moreover, this thesis could set the grounds for other female characters' analysis, such as the feminised, anthropomorphic Britannia in burlesques and pantomimes. From the perspective of postcolonial studies, we could also deepen our analysis of the foreign woman on the Victorian stage. Her representation as part of imagined versions of the colonies, or as part of the British Empire's metaphorical 'possession' could broaden our perceptions of female identity formation during the Victorian period.

CHRONOLOGY

This chronology offers an abridged list of important events and texts mentioned in this thesis and related to women's rights, the British Empire, and other relevant socio-political issues in 1860s' England. The list has been inspired by those of Shattock (2001) and Smith [1998] (2013).

	Events	**Texts**
1857	Indian Mutiny; Matrimonial Causes Act	
1858	*Association for the Sale of Work by Ladies of Limited Means* established; *The English Woman's Journal* founded by Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, Bessie Rayner Parkes, and Matilda Hays (1858–64)	
1859	Langham Place circle founded; Society for Promoting the Employment of Women established	Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species;* George Eliot's *Adam Bede,* Dinah Maria Mulock Craik's *A Life for a Life*
1860	End of the Second Opium War (1856–60); New Zealand Wars (1860–63); The Victoria Press established by Emily Faithfull; The Nightingale Home and Training School for Nurses founded by Florence Nightingale in London	Florence Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing;* George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss;* Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White;* Dion Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn*
1861	Royal Commission on the State of Popular Education in England; *Female Middle Class Emigration Society* (1861–86) established by the Langham Place and Maria Rye; Death of Prince Albert (14 December 1861); American Civil War (1861–5)	Ellen Wood's *East Lynne;* Isabella Beeton's *The Book of Household Management;* George Eliot's *Silas Marner*

1862	London's International Exhibition of 1862; Pepper's Ghost; Expansion of the South Kensington Museum	Coventry Patmore's *Angel in the House* [1854] extended and reprinted; Frances Power Cobbe's *Female Education;* Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market and other Poems;* Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret*
1863	Second Ashanti War (1863–4); Cambridge University opens examination for women; *Anthropological Society of London* created by James Hunt and Richard Burton; Inauguration of London's first Underground Train	Thomas H. Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature;* James Hunt's *On The Negro's Place In Nature* John Murray's *A Handbook for Travellers in Modern London* [1851] reedited and expanded
1864	Contagious Diseases Act; Cantonment Acts in India; Bhutan War (1864–5)	Frances Power Cobbe's *Cities of the Past*
1865	Jamaica Uprising; Kensington Society formed with members Emily Davies, Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon, and Helen Taylor; Salvation Army founded in East London	Lady Duff-Gordon's *Letters from Egypt, 1863–65;* Frances Power Cobbe's *Essays on Woman's Work;* Charlotte Yonge's *The Clever Woman of the Family*
1866	*Englishwoman's Review* founded; M. E. Braddon editor of *Belgravia* 1866–76; Manchester Society for Women's Suffrage established; Women's suffrage petition presented to Parliament by J. S. Mill	Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon's *Reasons for the Enfranchisement of Women;* Elizabeth Gaskell's *Wives and Daughters*; Christina Rossetti's *The Prince's Progress and other Poems*
1867	Second Reform Bill; National Society for Women's Suffrage established; Women's Suffrage petition presented to Parliament	
1868		Harriet Taylor Mill's *Enfranchisement of Women* [1851] reprinted; Eliza Lynn Linton's *The Girl of the Period* (*Saturday Review* 14 March 1868); Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*

1869	Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act established by Josephine Butler and Elizabeth Wolstenholme; First transcontinental railroad in the US; Oxford and Cambridge local examinations made available to women; Municipal Franchise Act allows female ratepayers to vote in municipal elections	Josephine Butler's *Women's Work and Women's Culture;* Jean Ingelow's *Mopsa the Fairy;* John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women*
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RESUMEN

Displacing Victorian women: teatro popular de mediados de siglo XIX y la representación de la identidad femenina

La presente tesis contribuye al actual interés por rescatar las cuestiones de género más obviadas u olvidadas del siglo XIX. Principalmente, se establece la década de los sesenta (1860–1870) como década precursora al movimiento sufragista inglés de finales de siglo y se ofrece una visión temprana de las estrategias adoptadas por las mujeres victorianas para traspasar la constrictiva ideología de género de la época. Comenzamos cuestionándonos los motivos por los cuales las mujeres de los sesenta decidieron empezar su viaje o 'journey' hacia la emancipación, así haciendo referencia a la supuesta pasividad o 'docilidad' de las mujeres. Además, establecemos los vínculos existentes entre los movimientos sociales, políticos y culturales proto-feministas y las formas de entretenimiento populares victorianas, prestando especial atención al teatro.

Nuestra definición de viaje o 'journey' sigue la teoría del monomito de Joseph Campbell (1949) y sus subsiguientes respuestas feministas, más concretamente la de Maureen Murdock (1990). Desde esta perspectiva, el 'journey' consiste en un proceso de cambio o de desarrollo personal que comienza una mujer tras rechazar una definición de feminidad impuesta sobre ella. Así, entendemos que en el 'journey' de una mujer existe un 'displacement' o desplazamiento en busca de algo. Este 'displacement' proporcionará a la mujer un espacio ventajoso desde el cual re-evaluar su lugar y papel en la sociedad, además de un proceso de entendimiento y modificación de su identidad como mujer.

Como estudios de caso, escogemos varias obras de géneros populares (burlesques, comedias, melodramas y farsas) representadas en los West y East Ends, así como en los de más abajo del Támesis (transpontine theatres) de Londres durante la década de los 1860. Nos centramos en la representación femenina de esas obras y analizamos esos procesos de 'displacement' o de exploración de la feminidad. Principalmente, recurrimos al teatro popular por lo que Jacky Bratton denomina 'intertheatricality' o 'interteatricalidad' (2003). Según Bratton, el entretenimiento victoriano y la sociedad coetánea participaban en una relación recíproca mediante la cual se compartía un 'lenguaje' y un entendimiento común (2003: 37). Este concepto es importante para nuestra tesis, ya que demuestra que el teatro del XIX se veía indudablemente influenciado por los sucesos y opiniones del momento, pero que también tenía suficiente poder como para manipular a los espectadores. Precisamente, los estudios de caso de esta tesis no se limitan a un solo género o a un solo establecimiento teatral; en cambio, ampliamos el foco de interés para poder así obtener una visión global de los ejemplos femeninos que estaban siendo representados y los mensajes que estos lanzaban a una sociedad preocupada por el cambio.

Por otro lado, argumentamos que asistir al teatro o a otro modo de entretenimiento durante mediados de siglo se tornaba viaje o 'displacement' en sí mismo. Diferenciamos entre viaje físico y viaje virtual, siendo el primero el que adquiere la función de instrucción durante el siglo XIX y, como se demuestra en esta tesis, muchas veces simboliza una diferencia social y de género. El segundo, el viaje virtual, no necesita movimiento físico y se realiza con la mente o la imaginación. Ambos ejemplos de viaje son examinados con detalle en los capítulos 2 y 3, proporcionándonos un lugar

ventajoso desde el cual podemos examinar estructuras sociales, reivindicaciones femeninas, y avances de la sociedad victoriana.

Como se ha adelantado, esta es una tesis interdisciplinar, en la que se aplican estudios de género para comprender la situación de las mujeres victorianas durante los 1860. También tiene que ver con los estudios teatrales, ya que se analiza elementos del teatro y se eligen textos reales representados durante la época. Los estudios de caso son principalmente manuscritos encontrados en el Lord Chamberlain's Catalogue of Plays de la British Library en Londres y otras obras impresas relevantes de las representadas en los 1860. Además, incorporamos información de otros medios como periódicos contemporáneos (British Newspaper Archive) e imágenes de archivos victorianos (British Library, Senate House Library y Victoria and Albert Theatre and Performance Archives). Esto nos permite ir más allá del texto dramático y de ahondar en la cuestión de la relación teatro-sociedad (Booth 1975; Marcus 2012).

Debido al importante papel del viaje o 'journey', además del desplazamiento o 'displacement' en esta tesis, se aplican también estudios de viaje y de espacio. Ambos campos llevan desde los 90 poniendo el foco en las mujeres, rescatando así voces y experiencias femeninas olvidadas por los libros antológicos de viajes y exploradores victorianos. También se ha ahondado en la relación entre espacio y mujer, especialmente identificando la existencia de espacios feminizados y la dicotomía público-privado. Ambas disciplinas (viajes y espacio) nos ayudan a comprender un poco mejor la situación femenina de mediados de siglo, además de permitirnos conocer las diferentes identidades de las mujeres de la época. Finalmente, debido a la época imperialista que nos atañe, se incorporan elementos de estudios post-coloniales para comprender mejor la situación colonial del Imperio Británico durante el siglo XIX.

El capítulo 1 ofrece una contextualización de la década de los 1860. Está dividido en cuatro secciones que sintetizan los elementos principales a tener en cuenta durante nuestro análisis de los estudios de caso. La sección *1.1. National pride: Great Exhibitions (1851 and 1862)* considera las dos grandes exposiciones celebradas en Londres durante mediados del siglo XIX. Estas 'exhibitions', de carácter internacional y de atractivo mundial, ejemplifican el 'exhibitionary complex' o complejo exhibicionista (Bennett 2013: 59) de los victorianos. Precisamente, estas celebraciones no solo permitían reafirmar la identidad nacional, sino también la individual; mediante la exposición de grandes proezas Británicas, se formaba una única conciencia popular. Además, el visitante era capaz de reforzar y comprender su propio lugar en el mundo, especialmente en uno que cambiaba a una velocidad vertiginosa.

La segunda sección *1.2. Foreign fears and the racial Other* se basa en la teoría de Edward Said sobre el 'Otro' y la consciente diferenciación entre 'Oriente' y 'Occidente' (1978). Examinamos los elementos de los 1860 que indican un creciente sentimiento de superioridad Británico sobre los 'Otros', especialmente motivados por los avances coloniales. La sección analiza los miedos raciales y las teorías de la evolución Darwinianas, popularizadas durante los 1860. También se comprende la maleabilidad de las identidades, remarcando la facilidad del estereotipo en los entretenimientos de la década, como por ejemplo en los 'minstrel shows' o en los 'human zoos'.

La tercera sección *1.3. Culture and education in the city* nos permite revisar la cuestión de la educación en la sociedad Victoriana, y empezar a comprender los espacios públicos como espacios de instrucción y mejora del ciudadano. Los museos y exposiciones de la época permitían a los visitantes convertirse en 'armchair anthropologists' o 'antropólogos de sillón' (Qureshi 2011). De alguna manera, se acerca

el exterior al ciudadano londinense, evitando así su desplazamiento físico más allá de los límites de la ciudad. Según lo argumentado, estos 'circuitos de conocimiento' (Foucault 1979) reforzaban la posición del visitante como objeto pasivo, pero a su vez, le permitían incorporar en su visión del mundo unos elementos a los que no habría podido acceder de otra manera. También remarcamos la importancia de la apertura del espacio público a la mujer, como por ejemplo con la creación de salas de lectura en los museos o incluso clubs sociales exclusivamente femeninos en los que poder debatir sobre temas actuales.

Finalmente, la última sección del primer capítulo, *1.4. The Woman Question* alude a los crecientes debates sobre la situación de las mujeres durante la década de los 1860. Se diferencian entre tres corrientes o identidades femeninas, si bien existían muchas más. Es importante revisar tales identidades para ayudarnos a comprender la pluralidad femenina de la época, muchas veces olvidada y simplificada. Comenzamos haciendo referencia a la ideología doméstica o 'domestic ideology' (Hall 2013), que situaba a las mujeres como líderes del hogar. Si bien el ideal de feminidad estaba ligado al de domesticidad, la década de los 1860 propició el desarrollo de nuevas corrientes feministas que cuestionaban tal relación. Se abren las puertas a la educación femenina y algunas mujeres exigen obtener las mismas herramientas para el 'exterior' o para la vida fuera del hogar. Poco a poco, los 1860 propician la aparición de grupos feministas y la movilización femenina en pos de derechos civiles y políticos. Grupos como el Langham Place (1859) y el Kensington Society Club (1865) reúnen a las mujeres y luchan por proporcionar espacios en los que definir la feminidad de diferentes maneras a las establecidas. Estas pioneras y aquellas mujeres que tenían problemas para ceñirse al rol establecido para las mujeres eran a menudo consideradas como fuera de lo común o, en

definitiva, como 'displaced' o desplazadas. Fuera del canon idealizado, mujeres como las 'fast girls' o la 'girl of the period' eran acusadas de degeneración o de falta de feminidad. En la literatura y la cultura popular, también las heroínas de las 'sensation stories' pecaban de exageradas. En definitiva, estas nuevas voces femeninas de los 1860 nos ayudan a comprender la pluralidad existente y los esfuerzos continuos por ampliar el espectro de feminidad durante mediados de siglo.

En el capítulo 2 proponemos nuestro concepto de 'displacement' o desplazamiento y analizamos el viaje físico como marcador de diferencias sociales, de clase y de género. Si bien 'displacement' se ha utilizado hasta ahora en estudios de migración y exilio, siempre se ha relacionado con un sentimiento de pertenencia o 'belonging'. A través del 'displacement', somos capaces de comenzar un diálogo con nosotros mismos y de re-evaluar nuestra propia identidad. Equiparamos 'displacement' a 'dislocation' (Kaplan 1996), ya que nos provoca un sentimiento de falta de pertenencia o de confusión. También consideramos que el 'displacement' es el siguiente paso a lo que Sara Ahmed llama 'disorientation' o desorientación (2006), es decir, cuando dejamos de sentirnos 'en casa' con nosotros mismos. Tras comprender que ya no estamos en el lugar correcto para nosotros, comienza un proceso de re-colocación en el que debemos no solo evaluarnos a nosotros mismos, sino también a lo que nos rodea.

Generalmente, existen mapas mentales o 'mental maps' que constituyen una geografía oculta o 'hidden geographies' y nos ayudan a comprender y delimitar el mundo (Kaplan 1996). Estos 'mental maps' son culturales y sociales, pero también nos dictan lo que es correcto y lo que no, indicándonos el lugar apropiado para cada persona u objeto. Son este tipo de mapas los que nos ayudan a avanzar en nuestro camino y los que nos ayudan a definirnos a nosotros mismos. Estos mapas mentales muchas veces

están representados físicamente, como por ejemplo en la diferenciación de espacios para distinto uso según el género. Tal y como se ha avanzado con anterioridad, el 'female trespassing' o la invasión femenina más allá del dominio privado durante los 1860, visibiliza la previa diferenciación entre espacios masculinos y femeninos. También considerado como 'displacement', argumentaremos que esta invasión o reevaluación del espacio femenino puede hacerse de manera física o virtual.

En la sección *2.2. Defining physical travel* hacemos alusión al desplazamiento físico femenino de los 1860 como muestra del interés por ir más allá de la única definición de 'mujer'. Poco a poco, las mujeres de mediados de siglo toman el espacio público y buscan recuperar la agencia sobre sus cuerpos. La movilidad femenina, tanto en el día a día como en viajes de larga distancia, adquiere un doble sentido: por un lado, la mujer móvil o viajera es capaz de salir del dominio privado y de explorar nuevas áreas de conocimiento; por otro, corre el riesgo de caer en la 'degeneración' o falta de feminidad por sus muestras de iniciativa o 'actividad'. Así pues, se crean nuevas estrategias para conservar la identidad femenina en el viaje, como por ejemplo asumiendo posturas modestas, siguiendo a rajatabla reglas de etiqueta y decoro en espacios públicos, y en definitiva, interpretando el papel 'correcto' de mujer allá donde fuere. Se recrean espacios públicos con tintes feminizados, creando un 'public domesticity' o domesticidad pública (Richter 2005) y reproduciendo así la seguridad del hogar en recintos públicos como centros comerciales y salones de té. En las calles, las mujeres son visibles gracias a las reglas de vestimenta, exponiéndose a ser clasificadas como prostitutas o 'fast girls' en el caso de saltarse las normas. Leyes como el Contagious Diseases Act legitimaba la detención de las mujeres que se salían de la norma y que paseaban las calles en lugares u horas inusuales.

Por otro lado, las mujeres se desplazan a las colonias Británicas casi como mercancía o como 'madres del imperio'. El viaje se torna misión de domesticidad, buscando crear familias en las colonias y completar el propósito de población. También acuden a las colonias como brújula moral, para asegurar el correcto funcionamiento de las bases militares y los asentamientos. Organizaciones como la Female Middle Class Emigration Society (1861–1886) lucha por promover la emigración de las mujeres más allá de con fines matrimoniales y de establecimiento familiar; así, se busca fomentar el empleo de las mujeres en colonias y otros países, para ofrecer caminos alternativos a las mujeres fuera del matrimonio. En definitiva, se busca cuestionar y desestabilizar lo que comúnmente se entiende como la principal misión de la mujer: el matrimonio y la familia.

Estos rasgos en la movilidad física de las mujeres de los 1860 son examinados en la sección *2.3. Physical Journeys of female characters*. Diferenciamos entre tres tipos de desplazamientos o viajes: los relacionados con las ciudades, espacios y transportes públicos; los que van más allá de la metrópolis y tienen que ver con asentamientos coloniales o lugares de turismo; y finalmente, desplazamientos desestabilizadores que son resultado de los 'violent journeys' o viajes violentos (Powell 2012). Comprendemos que los desplazamientos físicos suelen tener un poder transformativo en los personajes femeninos analizados. Se suele hacer hincapié en las etiquetas de comportamiento durante el viaje, reforzando la feminidad de los personajes a través de vestuario y comportamientos exagerados. La motivación de los personajes para salir de sus hogares suele verse ligada a la persecución de sus maridos o novios; esto vuelve a relacionar a la mujer con su papel como ama de casa o de protectora de lo doméstico. En su desplazamiento por la ciudad y en el transporte público, los personajes femeninos no

logran escapar la mirada masculina ni las restricciones de su género, habiéndose de comportar de ciertas maneras para evitar la censura moral o social. Su relación con los espacios públicos suele verse mediada por un hombre, y su libertad de desplazamiento muchas veces se ve mermada por su género. Las pocas mujeres que son representadas como libres en su desplazamiento físico fuera del hogar (viajeras profesionales y escritoras de viajes) son exageradas hasta el extremo de la de-feminización, convirtiéndolas en figuras de índole masculina, caricaturizadas y ridiculizadas hasta el punto de reducirlas a anécdotas grotescas de lo que puede llegar a ser una mujer perdida.

Finalmente, el capítulo 3 define el viaje virtual y ofrece un análisis de los modos de viaje virtual explorados por los personajes femeninos del teatro de los 1860. Siguiendo la definición de Byerly, el viaje virtual consiste en un desplazamiento temporal realizado con la mente o la imaginación (2013a). Esto nos permite explorar alternativas que, de lo contrario, serían inaccesibles para nosotros. Tiene que ver con el viaje de sillón o 'armchair travel', y nos ayuda a mediar con lo ajeno. Para los victorianos, ir al teatro o visitar exposiciones sobre lugares lejanos servía para realizar viajes imaginarios o 'imaginative travel' (Urry 2002). Esta experiencia es de vital importancia tanto para conocer lo que nos rodea, como para conocernos a nosotros mismos. El viaje virtual, a pesar de ser a través de la imaginación, se torna real para el espectador o el viajero. A través de avances tecnológicos se promueven las experiencias sensoriales o 'sensory experiences' (Straus 1958), que apelan a los sentidos y desplazan al espectador como si de un tren se tratara. Precisamente, la mitad del siglo XIX es la época idónea para explorar los viajes virtuales, ya que con las novedades en la

tecnología y el entretenimiento, la imaginación tecnológica o 'technological imagination' (Potter 2018) de los victorianos propicia tal viaje.

De manera novedosa, esta tesis propone reconocer los poderes para el viaje virtual del teatro del siglo XIX. Aunque previamente McInnis se ha referido al teatro del siglo XVIII como turismo o 'sightseeing' (2013), Byerly ha negado la posibilidad de tal viaje virtual en el teatro victoriano (2013a). Esta tesis demuestra que, por lo contrario, el teatro popular del siglo XIX contaba con las herramientas necesarias para conseguir tal desplazamiento virtual. Gracias a elementos como las mejoras en iluminación, vestimenta, música, escenografía y los avances tecnológicos, el espectador conseguía sentirse atrapado o transportado por lo representado en escena. Además, la búsqueda de la veracidad de lo representado y de trasmitir un 'strong sense of place' (Booth 1990) hacen del teatro victoriano un medio para el viaje virtual. Textos como los 'souvenir texts' (T. Davis 2012), relatando y dramatizando historias de viajes atraían al espectador y le hacían sentirse parte del viaje. Estrategias como el 'verbal panoramism' o panoramismo verbal (Byerly 2013a), prácticamente pintaban un cuadro con palabras para el oyente. Así, el viaje virtual a través del teatro conseguía que espectadores y actores participaran en un interminable discurso reafirmando identidades (con los personajes) y contando historias. La alternativa representada sobre los escenarios permitía al público viajar o sentirse desplazados a una realidad diferente en la que podían explorar realidades nuevas. En el caso de las cuestiones de género o la 'Woman Question', los personajes femeninos de las obras populares contribuyen a la continua evaluación de los cánones y ofrecen nuevas definiciones de lo que significa ser mujer en tan confusa época.

En los estudios de caso de la sección *3.3. Virtual journeys of female characters* analizamos las maneras en las que los personajes femeninos del teatro de los 1860 se ajustan a o se separan de los cánones de viajes femeninos. Estos personajes virtualmente exploran las posibilidades de las mujeres del siglo XIX, ofreciendo caminos de matrimonio, vida familiar y devoción filial. Sin embargo, también se ofrecen viajes alternativos por los cuales las mujeres difieren del ideal de feminidad, viendo así ejemplos de 'fast girls', la 'girl of the period' y mujeres transgresoras que buscan plenitud personal fuera del hogar, siguiendo una profesión o renunciando a la vida privada. Además, ofrecemos ejemplos sensacionalistas de mujeres que ocupan dos extremos: el de la pasividad absoluta, figurativamente expresada mediante el sueño o la inconsciencia, y la de la actividad extrema, normalmente representada por seres sobrenaturales o hadas.

En el caso de los personajes que siguen el camino dictado para las mujeres, observamos que sus deseos de salir del hogar privado suelen ser censurados por la sociedad o los hombres. Para la esposa fiel o la hija obediente, dejar el hogar suele ser señal de confusión o desplazamiento. La identidad de la mujer se ve ligada a la de su familia, siendo una parte esencial para su desarrollo como mujer el verse cobijada en el seno familiar. Así, vemos a huérfanas que desconocen su verdadera identidad y, por tanto, se encuentran perdidas. El sentimiento de lugar solo es recuperado tras retomar lazos familiares o tras una relación de matrimonio. En definitiva, estas mujeres se ven incapaces de explorar la alternativa sin sentirse fuera de lugar.

Las mujeres que se salen de la norma, como las previamente mencionadas, son representadas de manera caricaturizada. Se les cuestiona su propia feminidad debido a su desplazamiento a ámbitos generalmente masculinos y se las 'domestica' a fuerza de

matrimonio y vida familiar. A pesar de ello, el teatro popular muestra las corrientes coetáneas de sororidad entre las mujeres, enseñando grupos de mujeres que se apoyan, ayudan, y conjuntamente colaboran en la creación de la identidad de la otra. Al final, estos personajes encuentran un sentimiento de pertenencia o de lugar dentro de la alternativa.

En las historias sensacionalistas que exploran la definición de feminidad, encontramos que la pasividad de las mujeres es representada a través de personajes femeninos que duermen bajo la mirada atenta de los héroes masculinos. En las 'sensation stories', las mujeres duermen y se despiertan sacudidas por un sentimiento de que desasosiego. De esta manera, el teatro representa las preocupaciones contemporáneas sobre el cuerpo femenino y sobre el lugar de la mujer en la sociedad cambiante. Como si de incógnitas se trataran, estos personajes femeninos se pasean por los escenarios transformados en hadas, espíritus y ninfas. A través de la fantasía, se ejemplifican nuevas identidades femeninas y, al final, se las censura de extrañas o de imposibles. Su 'Otredad' se torna diferencia y, en definitiva, las condena al desplazamiento: no son de este mundo.

En conclusión, esta tesis abre nuevos caminos para la exploración de la identidad femenina representada sobre los escenarios de mediados de siglo XIX en Londres. Ofrecemos el 'displacement' como estrategia de reevaluación de identidades, y proponemos comprender la práctica de ir al teatro como una manera de desplazamiento o viaje virtual. Gracias a esta nueva perspectiva, el análisis de personajes nos permite acercarnos un poco más a las posturas de mediados de siglo relacionadas con la posición de las mujeres. Las preocupaciones sobre el rol cambiante de las mujeres y la progresiva apertura de puertas para el género femenino durante el siglo XIX son representadas

sobre los escenarios con personajes que cuestionan pero también reafirman los roles tradicionales.

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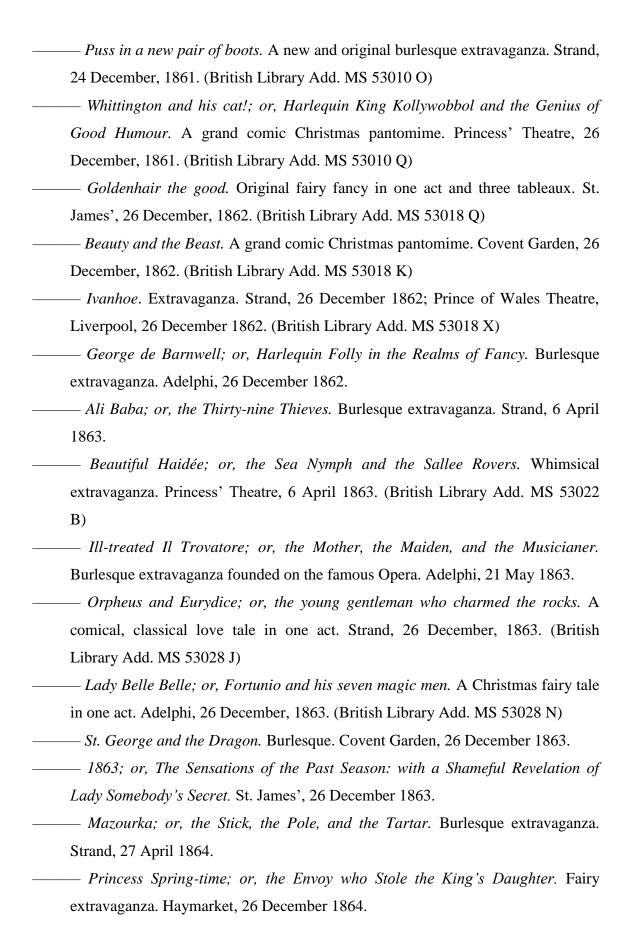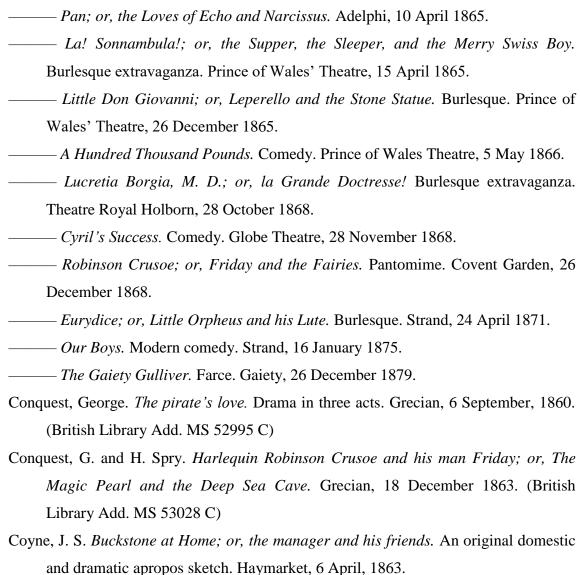
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British Library Electronic Resources

19th Century UK Periodicals

Nineteenth Century Collections Online

Victorian Popular Culture: Music Hall, Theatre and Popular Entertainment

Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals 1824–1900

The British Library Website

Votes for women — https://www.bl.uk/votes-for-women

The British Newspaper Archive

https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

National Women's History Museum

Women's Suffrage Timeline — http://www.crusadeforthevote.org/woman-suffrage-timeline-18401920/

Vauxhall History

Bower Saloon — https://vauxhallhistory.org/bower-saloon/

The Victorian Plays Project

http://victorian.nuigalway.ie/modx/