Reading *Literary Theory* between the Lines of *Creative Writing*: The Dialectics of Theory and Practice in the Creative Writing Pedagogy

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ABSTRACT: Literary theory and critical writing have been traditionally perceived as being in tension, either silently ignoring or polemically rejecting each other. In this paper we argue that literary theory and creative writing are interconnected on various levels. By acknowledging this fact, theory may be profitably deployed in the creative writing class, in order to enhance creative writers' sense of literary mechanisms, conventions, and purposes in specific sociocultural contexts. In this way, theory informs students not only in relation to the poetics, but also to the pragmatics of the literary phenomenon. Theory askes creative writers to contemplate on how they themselves are socially, ideologically and culturally positioned as writers (and as readers) of literature, and how their activity is enmeshed in a broader process of personal and communal identity formation through language and literary representation.

KEY-WORDS: literary theory, creative writing

1. INTRODUCTION

A multifaceted contention between literary theory and creative writing has been noted by scholars and practitioners in both areas, the former supposedly being "abstract and rigorous, governed by the dictates of logic and reason", "expository, rhetorical, scholarly, objective"; the latter being "concrete and sensuous, subject to the caprice and impulse of inspiration", as well as "imaginative, paratactic, impressionistic, subjective" (Parras, 2005, p. 157; cf. Iamarino, 2015, Parini, 1994).[1] As put by Morley (2013, p. 38) "literary theory generally has little impact on the way creative writers go about their business".[2] Such a disharmony or even conflict between literary theory and creative writing seems to date back to the first emergence of the latter as a subject in American Universities, while the perceived schism between it and theory is sometimes considered "as a means of retaining this disciplinary identity. This is because Theory called into question the privileged category of literature, the *raison d'être* of Creative Writing" (Dawson, 2005, p. 4).

The main aim of the paper is to emphasize, in contrast, the theoretical underpinnings that inevitably determine many important aspects of the creative writing practice. That is, even if unadmitted, issues traditionally studied in the field of literary theory and criticism arise at every stage of the creative writing process. Such issues include, among others, the aim of creative writing as an academic (or school) subject, the syllabus or literary "canon" in creative writing classes, the evaluation of creative writing products by students, authorship and authorial intention, originality, intertextuality, genre, style, audience, etc. Thus, the necessary common ground shared by theory and practice calls for a theoretically informed approach of teaching and studying creative writing. Such an approach is, moreover, imperative as Creative Writing Studies is an increasingly expanding academic discipline worldwide, in an on-going and dynamic process of (re)defining its theoretical, critical, and pedagogic conditions in the area of the Humanities and Cultural Studies (Dawson, 2015; Ward, 2018). In following, we will discuss only a few areas of convergence between literary theory and creative writing practice: certain theoretical assumptions about the aim and purpose of creative writing, in general, as well as issues of genre, author, authority, and representation.

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[1] Literary theory is used as a hypernym to refer to various theoretical branches, schools, concepts, critical assumptions, etc. that are connected to the reading, analysis, and interpretation of literary texts (from New Criticism and formalism to deconstruction, post-modernism and cultural theory).

[2] Cf. Ramey (2007, p. 45): "If the goal is to make new art rather than analyse art which already exists, theory has tended to be perceived as antithetical to creative writing's fundamental stress on freedom, receptivity to the new and unfamiliar, and experimentation".

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2. THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT CREATIVE WRITING

One of the main questions that concern the very existence of creative writing as a field of study and practice is its content and aim: what exactly does creative writing purport to do? To paraphrase Socrates' question to the sophist Protagoras, "In what shall students of creative writing become better, and to what will their progress be?" (Plato, *Protagoras*, 318c). There does not seem to be a single answer to the above questions. In fact, definitions of creative writing vary considerably, ranging from published works of literature (fiction, poetry, drama), to texts in literary (sub)genres produced by students of creative writing workshops/classes, to any writing which is "original", "unconventional", "expressive", etc., within the framework of any textual genre. As McVey, (2008, p. 289) argues "any writing, from the published instructions for using a power drill to the most esoteric literary poetry, uses the raw materials of language, experience, knowledge, textual sources and the author's own ideas and imaginings to bring something into existence that did not exist before. In other words, all writing in creative writing".

To our mind, however, such a definition undermines the field's differentiating feature, which is a novel and unique approach to literature "from within", fostering a better understanding of the way in which literary texts work. Creative writing (or at least the type of creative writing in which we are interested in this paper), is approached as a discipline in a specific educational context (more or less formal/typical), consisting of a "body of knowledge" and "a set of pedagogical practices" (Dawson, 2005, p. 21), and having as a basic aim the systematic study of literature through writing in the literary genre. As Roberts Scholes has articulated (Scholes, 1986; Scholes et al., 2002), an effective way to understand a text is to produce it; consequently, by introducing students to the codes and textual mechanisms on which literary texts draw, they can understand and appreciate them more deeply and rewardingly. Creative Writing, thus, is not viewed as a practical apprenticeship for prospective (or aspirant) writers, but rather in terms of a literary pedagogy, closely linking writing to reading works of literature. The production of texts in the genre of literature is, undoubtedly, the core of creative writing, yet it is occasioned by reading literature ("reading as a writer") and leads, in turn, back to reading it in a more informed and profound way.[3]

It is evident in such a definition of creative writing its close connection to matters that concerned literary theory from the very beginning of its emergence. These include the study of the norms that relate to the literary genre (eg. the "laws", "rules", "techniques" etc. that constitute the literary craft), the features and properties of "literariness", matters of the "literary canon", authorial intention, meaning, interpretation, aesthetic value, intertextuality, etc., and the changing conventions that are connected to the production and reception of literature as literature, in general. Teachers and students of creative writing cannot ignore the fundamental issue of what literature is considered to *be* and to *do* in the specific sociocultural context they themselves practice literary reading and writing. As Green argues, "if students are to learn from literature rather than rehash outdated pentameter ideological statements, we need to train them in new methods of reading. Here, scholarship and theory have valuable gifts to offer the creative writing workshop in the form of cultural studies and antifoundational theory" (Green, 2001, p. 155). Such an approach informs students of creative writing not only about the aesthetics and poetics, but also about the pragmatics of literature, and what it means to write a novel or a poem for real-life audiences and social communities.

Dawson (2005, pp. 161-179) proposes three models in which the negotiation of theory and creative practice may be categorized: a) the *integration model*, which sees the writing workshop as a means of establishing a dialogue between writers and critics over the nature of literature, employing theory as a means of literary appreciation and critique; b) the *avant-garde model*, which encourages various forms of avant-garde and experimental writing, challenging the assumptions about lyric poetry, literary realism and linear narrative (eg. metafiction, hypertext fiction, fictocriticism, etc.); c) the *political model*, which focuses on the sociocultural parameters of literary production and reception, reforming the writing workshop as a site of political contestation, within the area of Cultural Studies.

As may be gathered from the above discussion, teachers and scholars in the creative writing field have begun to gradually recognize the importance of a wholistic approach to literature, from diction, language and text organization to the way literary works are used in various social contexts, and to the specific purposes they fulfil, in the broader area of identity and social representation politics. As Heck (2015, pp. 47-48) stresses, "Creative writing is at the nexus between the personal and the political. It therefore

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[3] Such an approach reflects the original conception of creative writing as a means to "correct" the view of literature being disseminated in the universities of the time (the beginning of the twentieth century), by imparting the understanding of literature through a use of it. In Myer's words, "creative writing was originally conceived as a means of teaching literature from the inside, as familiar experience, rather than from the outside, as exotic phenomenon" (Myers, 2006, pp. 8-9). However, Dawson (2005, p. 164) views such an approach to creative writing as reducing its value "to an adjunct or pedagogical tool for Literary Studies". In his view, creative writing should be redefined as a discipline within a larger sociological poetics, which can contribute to the dialogue between academic analysis, social discourse and public policy. In this framework, "within the workshop the literary work can be conceptualized as a zone of social contestation not by dismantling the desire to craft an individual work of art, or by policing literary representation of identity in the service of social justice, but by exploring how the compositional process is a mode of social intervention at the level of discourse" (Dawson, 2005, p. 214).

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needs to be self-reflexive and engaged with theory to understand how it is positioned within socio-political and institutional discourses, just as writers need to be self-aware in order to articulate what their praxis is about and how it is situated within these discourses". Literary theory, encompassing a detailed study of literary works' *textuality*, *intertextuality* and *contextuality*, emerges as a necessary addendum to the creative writing workshop, affording creative writers with the possibility to appreciate the social, cultural, historical, psychological, rhetorical and philosophical aspects that permeate the polysemous literary phenomenon.

1. Genre theory

Prospective writers will inevitably concern themselves with issues of genre from the very beginning of their creative activity. In fact, one cannot read or write a text unless in the framework of certain generic norms and expectations (Fludernik, 2000; Frow, 2005; Strong, Dowd & Stevenson, 2006). Genres are discourse categories which are "ready-made" for the transmitter and the receiver of texts, in specific historical and cultural contexts. They comprise, that is, a kind of cultural stock assumptions from which one can draw for the coding and decoding of linguistic messages. For instance, when taking up the writing of a newspaper article, a poem or a formal letter, one more or less consciously performs one's activity within the parameters that govern the composition of the above text types, while also (tacitly) taking for granted that the recipient also shares some degree of such a textual knowledge. The recipient of the text, on the other hand, based on his/her prior experience as to the features of the texts that belong to a specific genre, when reading expects certain patterns in a text's organization, style, purpose, content, etc.

An author or a group of authors (eg. literary trends or movements) may, of course, elicit significant change by producing texts that modify a genre or sub-genre, overturning or altering, in various degrees, the "horizon of expectations" of the recipients.[4] Such modifications usually reflect or accompany wider changes in the thought, perception and artistic expression within the larger socio-cultural and ideological context. Genre, thus, is a relatively stable, but at the same time evolving and dynamic concept. As Culler stressed, "to write a poem or a novel is immediately to engage with a literary tradition or at the very least with a certain idea of the pome or the novel. The activity is made possible by the existence of the genre, which the author can write against, certainly, whose conventions he may attempt to subvert, but which is none the less the context within which his activity takes place, as surely as the failure to keep a promise is made possible by the institution of promising" (Culler, 2004, p. 135).

There are various models of applying genre theory into pedagogical practice. For instance, the guidelines for analyzing genres which are proposed by Devitt, Reiff & Bawarshi (2004, pp. 93-94) may be utilized in genre reading, writing and critical awareness within creative writing workshops. In specific, the following processes are identified:

1. *Collecting samples of the genre*: asking the students to look for samples of the genre from various sources and places [eg. poems or short stories].

2. *Identifying the scene and describing the situation in which the genre is used*: the students should try to identify the setting (where the genre appears, how it is transmitted and used, with what other genres it interacts), the subject (what are the usual topics, issues, ideas, questions etc. addressed by the genre), the participants (who writes the texts in this genre, what characteristics these writers possess, under what circumstances and in what medium they write, who reads the texts, what roles readers of the texts perform, what characteristics these readers possess, under what circumstances they read) and the purposes (why readers write this genre and why readers read it, that is, what purposes the genre fulfills for the people who use it) [eg. what are the circumstances of poems' or short stories' production and reception in modern world? Who writes/reads poems or short stories and why? etc.].

3. *Identifying and describing patterns in the genre's features*: students should observe the recurrent features that the samples of the genre share, as far as content, rhetorical aspects, structure, format, diction, etc. are concerned [eg. what are poems/short stories usually about? What is excluded? How is the content treated and structured? In what format are poems/short stories presented? What is their usual length? What kind of style, syntax, grammar, tone, voice, etc. is used? etc.].

4. *Analyzing what the identified patterns reveal about the situation and scene*: the students reflect on what these rhetorical patterns and textual features reveal about the genre, its situation and the scene in which it is used. For instance, what do participants have to know or believe, in order to understand or appreciate the genre? Who is invited into the genre and who is excluded from it? What

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[4] As Jauss stressed, "the historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees. For it is only through the process of its mediation that the work enters into the changing horizon-of-experience of a continuity in which the perpetual inversion occurs from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them the historicity of literature as well as its communicative character presupposes a dialogical and at once processslike relationship between work, audience, and new work that can be conceived in the relations between message and receiver as well as between question and answer, problem and solution (Jauss, 1982, p. 19). Moreover, "a literary event can continue to have an effect only if those who come after it still or once again respond to it —if there are readers who again appropriate the past work or authors who want to imitate, outdo, or refute it. The coherence of literature as an event is primarily mediated in the horizon of expectations of the literary experience of contemporary and later readers, critics, and authors" (Jauss, 1982, p. 22).

values, beliefs, goals, assumptions etc. are revealed through the genre's patterns? How is the subject of the genre treated? What content is considered important and what is ignored? What actions are made possible/impossible by the genre? What attitude toward readers and/or the world is implied in it? etc.

The above genre analysis may lead, consequently, from reading to writing: having selected a specific genre (or having been assigned one), a creative writer may choose the "persona" he/she will present in order to be persuasive as a writer, take into account the expectations of the readers regarding the genre, its purpose or effects, its subject matter and the way it is treated, its format, organization, style, etc. As Devitt, Reiff & Bawarshi (2004, p. 97) argue, "the better you are able to read and understand the patterns of a genre, the better you will become at knowing what purpose these patterns serve and how to make use of them in your writing".

In general, despite the nowadays common beliefs that "individual talent is all that matters" or that "originality supersedes rigid generic conventions and rules" –notions often deliberately cultivated in many creative writing workshops– generic categories and norms perform a crucial role in the text production and reception. As Fishelov (1997, pp. 660-661) stresses, "the individual talent always puts its mark on the social conventions, but is also coerced by them. […] A writer who wishes to contribute to a generic tradition has to take into account what has been done before he or she entered the scene". In fact, teaching writing and reading, in general, may benefit greatly from genre scholarship, as it provides writers and readers with a necessary compass to navigate in the multiplicity and instability of contemporary texts and contexts (cf. Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Cope & Kalantzis, 2014; Devitt, 2008; Johns, 2009; Knapp & Watkins, 2005).[5] Genre emerges, thus, as a common ground of convergence between literary theory and writing practice, theory increasing critical and reflective awareness of practice.

A basic knowledge concerning literary genres, their formal characteristics and rhetorical patterns (eg. content, tone, language, style, structure, etc.) is thus a sine qua non in creative writing courses, in order for students to make more effective writing choices. Genre theory informs writing practice as to the integral connection among writers, readers, texts, textual conventions, and the social contexts, in which genres are used as means of communication. As Rain (2007, pp. 61-62) notes, "beginning writers are often uncertain even about whether to write poetry or drama, fiction or screenplays. […] Most writers find themselves only through much trial and error. In the meantime, each work has to be written in one form or another, and the writer needs to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the given form". Moreover, creative writers need to attain a deep understanding of generic forms, structures, styles, functions, and, in general, poetics and aesthetics, not only so as to produce more effective and appealing texts, but also to critique and potentially transform generic conventions, or at least subvert reader expectations in novel and creative fashions.[6] Such a generic understanding is enhanced by systematic reading of and about genres, necessarily combined with exercise in producing texts in alternative genres, for as Freedman (2005, p. 173) argues, "full genre knowledge (in all its subtlety and complexity) only becomes available *as a result of having written*. First comes the achievement or performance, with the tacit knowledge implied, and then, through that, the meta-awareness which can flower into conscious reflexive knowledge".

2. Author, authority, and representation

An often-misconceived notion about creative writing is its identification with personal/therapeutic writing, the written expression, that is, of the writer's subjective experiences, feelings, thoughts, ideas and reflections. As argued, however, if by creative writing we refer to systematic training in writing in literary genres, healing, introspecting, discovering, improving or empowering oneself, are only side benefits, not the main purpose of the process, or the defining element of the texts produced (Kuhl, 2005, pp. 4 - 5). The fact that literary production can be motivated or enriched in various ways by personal experience does not mean that it necessarily depends on it as a source of inspiration or that it is exhausted in its expression and representation. If this were true, authors would only (be able to) write about subjects of which they had first-hand experience. On the contrary, great works of literature are products of phantasy, imagination, the experience of other people, of reading literary and other texts, etc.

An interest of the prospective writer in self-expression should not overlook the crucial importance of narrative/poetic art and artistic creation, governed, as seen above, by genre-specific rules and conventions. Any "truth" in the content of the text produced by the students, in the sense of capturing or representing the creative writer's world or phyche, is inevitably linked to the way in which the impression of such a truth is achieved by means of linguistic and literary devices. The creative writing teacher

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[5] Cf. Devitt (2000, p. 714): "Writers and readers must enact many genres and must position themselves in multiple situations. Genre scholarship is poised to help explain how they meet such a complex challenge. Sharing our theories of genre would give us a way of talking with students about the complexity of reading and writing, whether by dead white males of the canon or live Latina females of the writing class. With a shared understanding of what genre is and how it operates, teachers in English departments could help students read and write flexibly, with an eye to the rhetorical function of discourse but without becoming fixed in a single genre or single set of formal conventions".

[6] As Neale (2009, p. 12) argues, "genre in its many guises is an exciting tool to use, to rebel against, to play with – but most of all to be aware of".

should thus stress the importance of writing craft and literary artistry that take precedence in creative workshops, as long as the aim of such workshops is indeed creative writing rather than expressive or therapeutic writing.

Moreover, even writing about oneself, as for instance in autobiography, is never a straightforward process of committing one's life-experience to writing. Putting aside issues of self-critical monitoring of the text, as well as intentional misrepresentation for reasons of self-assertion, justification, rationalization of one's actions, etc., there is always the effect of memory, the unconscious and the linguistic and generic conventions of the autobiographical discourse that shape the traits of the "written self". In fact, autobiography is considered as "de-facement" or a mode of reading (de Man, 1979), while modern theory stresses that however "candid" an autobiographical text might be, it shares, nonetheless, the features and conventions of narrative fiction, such as the selection of the events to be included, their emplotment by causal and logical connections, the attempt to be interesting to the reader, etc. These strong links between autobiography and fiction is stressed by the widespread use of the terms "autobiografiction" and "autofiction" (Saunders, 2010, p. 7). However "real" the writer tries to render his/her textual self, the latter is always a construct, a fictional character that abides by the laws and the craft of plot and character sketching.

This fact is especially evident, apart from autobiographical texts, in all first-person writings. It is of utter importance for creative writers (and readers) to be able to distinguish between the entities of the concrete author, the abstract author, the narrator, and the character, as this is a means of better understanding the function of narrative works and the generation of meaning in the narrative genre, in general. According to Schmid (2010, pp. 34-51), the *concrete author* is the real historical figure, existing outside and independently of the work. The *abstract author* is an image reconstructed by the reader through the symptoms or indexical signs within the work; it is a semantic structure of the text, a creative entity whose (conscious or unconscious) intention is realized *in* the work and *as* a work of literature (cf. *implied author*, Booth, 1983; *hypothetical* or *postulated author*, Kindt & Müller, 2006).[7] The text is conceived by the reader as the abstract author's creation, reflecting his/her ideological and aesthetic norms. However, the abstract author is not a mouthpiece of the concrete author. As Schmid (2010, p. 49) argues, "it is not unusual for authors to experiment with their views in their works and to test their own convictions. Many authors realize possibilities in their work which must remain unrealized in life, and take up positions which, for whatever reasons, they would not want to, or be able to, propose in real life. In ideological respects, the abstract author can be more radical and less compromising than the concrete author ever has been in reality, or –phrased more carefully– than we imagine him or her as having been, based on the available historical sources".

The *narrator*, on the other hand, is an invented figure within the fictional world; it is a represented entity. In fact, the creative writer may draw upon a number of choices, as far as the mediation of the narrative is concerned (of the impression of the lack of any kind of mediation; see, for instance, Bal, 2017; Fludernik, 1996; Genette, 1986; Stanzel, 1988): a) the deployment of an *explicit* narrator, that makes his/her/its presence as narrative agency more or less explicit to the reader (eg. name him/herself, provide information about his/her life, views, etc.);[8] b) the use of an *implicit* narrator, whose presence is indirectly inferred by the reader, by means of textual features, such as the selection of the narrative events, the textual organization and presentation of the narrative, signs of evaluation, etc.;[9] c) the use of a *character as reflector*, which produces an illusion of immediacy of presentation (or non-narration),[10] d) the deployment of *"mimetic" modes*, such as dialogue or monologue: the story is "portrayed" without mediating narrative entity, thus building an impression of a "shown" (re)presentation of the events (Chatman, 1993, p. 92); e) the (supposedly) *mere citation or recording* of "files", "documents", etc., allowing for the reader to construct some form of coherent narrative (cf. documentary realism, documentary fiction, Foley, 1986; Sauerberg, 1991).

The characters are also fictive narrative constructs as is the narrator. There may exist grave differences among various characters' values and ideologies in the same work, as well as the ones between characters' and narrator's (and/or of abstract/concrete authors, for that matter). Characters' roles and sketching, together with plot development, play a pivotal role in the narrative's appeal to the readers, as well as its effectiveness in relation to its specific purpose. Moreover, immediately linked to the above types of narrative mediation is the notion of *focalization*, the perception (in the broad sense of the term) through which the story is *mediated* and represented to the reader (Hühn et al., 2009; Niederhoff, 2009; Nieragden, 2002). Focalization is a means

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[7] Cf. the "image" or "idea" of the author (Genette, 1988, p. 148), an inferred authorial element, which serves as a "semantic center of the work, which exists independently of any declarations by the author" (Schmid, 2010, p. 43).

[8] Such an explicit narrator may have anthropomorphic characteristics of be a non-human or inanimate entity, eg. an animal, a plant or an object (Bernaerts et al., 2014).

[9] Whereas in the case of explicit narration the narrator may be either homodiegetic or heterodiegetic (Genette, 1986; cf. the traditional terms of first- and third-person, accordingly), implicit narration tends to be heterodiegetic. In homodiegetic narration, the narrator participates in the fictional world as a main character, a minor character or an observer (Lanser, 1981, p. 160).

[10] Cf. Stanzel (1981, p. 7): "The reflector-character's main function is to reflect, i.e., to mirror in his consciousness what is going on in the world outside or inside himself. A reflector-character never narrates in the sense of verbalizing his perceptions, thoughts and feelings, since he does not attempt to communicate his perceptions or thoughts to the reader. This produces the illusion in the reader that he obtains an unmediated and direct view of the fictional world, seeing it with the eyes of the reflector-character".

of manipulating readers' sympathy and/or empathy with the character and their motives, and, in consequence, the interpretation of the story (van Peer & Pander Maat, 1996, 2001).[11]

It is important for creative writers to study in detail the above concepts, as implemented in existing literary texts, and familiarize themselves with techniques, such as time structure, setting, characterization, etc., in order to be able to deploy them in constructing effective and appealing narratives. As shown above, narratology may provide the creative writers with concepts, principles, and methods that will help them realize techniques that are successfully used by accomplished authors, which they may try out selectively, modify or develop in their own work. Moreover, as Keen (2015, p. xi) argues, "one of the precepts of narrative poetics, the descriptive theory of narrative, is to emphasize possibilities even when examples do not readily come to mind". It is only by understanding, for instance, subtle discriminations among narrative entities that can a writer take in his/her work ironical distance, dissociating him/herself as an author from the ideological values of the narrator and/or the characters, as is the case with *unreliable narration* (Booth, 1983) or *discordant narration* –allowing thus for more narrative choices and more accurate and richer interpretations of them (Booth, 1983; Cohn, 2000).[12]

It is true that a stock "technical" vocabulary comprising critical terms, such as first-/third-person narratives, round/flat characters, point of view, flashback, showing/telling, etc. has been in use in creative writing workshops for quite some time (Camoin, 1994). Yet, narrative theory offers a way to go beyond the rather simplistic, mechanistic and superficial way in which such terms are used, and contribute in deepening their understanding of them. Narratology, that is, may prove a useful tool for writers to fully understand the multi-layered process of meaning making, as different choices in narrative mediation, as studied, described and categorized in narrative theory, result, as a rule, in different narrative re-creations, diverse ideologies, values, stances, and, accordingly, different processes of comprehension and interpretation of the narrative constructs.[13] Thus, theory may lead to self-reflection and critical thinking about the writing process, as well as to contemplating on the question what story about the self and the world ones wishes to write, and to what end.

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[11] Similarly, the "poetic speaker" or "persona" does not necessarily voice the real poet's views or attitudes, but is rather a poetic device or effect. In fact, "voice" in poetry may refer to different concepts and entities. Smith (2015, p. 12) notes the distinction between: a. different voices (personae or pre-personae, as not yet determined as speaker or because disembodied), b. different vocal lines (polyphony, syncopation, counterpoint, etc.), c. different vocal attitudes (registers, address, embodied vs disembodied, etc.) and d. different voicings (demanded of a reader or of performance). T. S. Eliot (Eliot, 1957, p. 89) distinguishes between three voices of poetry: "the first voice is the voice of the poet talking to himself -or to nobody. The second is the voice of the poet addressing an audience, whether large or small. The third is the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking in verse; when he is saying, not what he would say in his own person, but only what he can say within the limits of one imaginary character addressing another imaginary character. The distinction between the first and the second voice, between the poet speaking to himself and the poet speaking to other people, points to the problem of poetic communication; the distinction between the poet addressing other people in either his own voice or an assumed voice, and the poet inventing speech in which imaginary characters address each other, points to the problem of the difference between dramatic, quasi-dramatic, and non-dramatic verse".

[12] Cf. Booth (1983, pp. 158-159), "[…] I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), *unreliable* when he does not. It is true that most of the great reliable narrators indulge in large amounts of incidental irony, and they are thus 'unreliable' in the sense of being potentially deceptive. But difficult irony is not sufficient to make a narrator unreliable. Nore is unreliability ordinarily a matter of lying, although deliberately deceptive narrators have been a major resource of some modern novelists […]. It is most often a matter of what James calls inconscience; the narrator is mistaken, or he believes himself to have qualities which the author denies him. Or, as in Huckleberry Finn, the narrator claims to be naturally wicked while the author silently praises his virtues behind his back. Unreliable narrators thus differ markedly depending on how far and in what direction they depart from their author's norms". In Cohn's terms, a narrator who is mis- or disinformed, unwilling or unable to tell what "actually" happened falls within "factual unreliability", whereas a narrator who is normatively inappropriate for the story he/she tells (i.e. his/her ideology clashed with his/her tale) is considered as discordant narration (Cohn, 2000).

[13] In Hühn's (2009, p. 1). terms, the narrative representation is shaped, in the selection, combination, perspectivization, interpretation, evaluation of elements, by the agency that produces it, while the author "may delegate mediation, particularly in fictional narration, to some intermediary agent or agents, typically a narrator (narrator's voice) and, at a lower level, to one or more characters (character's perspective) located within the happenings (in verbal texts) and, according to some theorists, to the recording apparatus and/or voice-over (in film). This process of transforming and transmitting the story in the discourse, is what is meant by mediation in the broadest sense. As Bundgaard (2010, p. 65) stresses, "mediacy -and thus narration- consists in asking 'what happens if I tell things this way, and not that way?' (and semiotic analysis of texts consists in asking what is the meaning effect of telling things this and not that way?')".

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CONCLUSION

The false and detrimental dichotomy between literary theory and creative writing practice is increasingly more evident to creative writing scholars and practitioners (Dawson, 2005, Heck, 2015; Ramey, 2007; Wandor, 2008). In fact, theory is already present in the creative writing workshop, even if unadmitted (Parras, 2005, p. 158). As argued above, if a systematic introduction to theoretical issues is accepted in creative writing classes, students may have easy and prompt access to an array of concepts, techniques, principles, and methods that have been deployed by antecedents in their literary production; these may then be profitably used to enhance and enrich their own writing practice, and to generate new practice (which may lead, in turn, to new theoretical and critical formulations). Most importantly, however, literary theory informs students as to the "larger picture" of the literary *praxis*: how they themselves are socially, ideologically and culturally positioned as writers (and readers) of literature, and how their activity is enmeshed in a broader process of personal and communal identity formation through language and literary representation. As such, theory is not only useful, but rather essential for the development of an epistemology of creative writing as a distinct academic discipline, and as a valuable pedagogical tool within the realm of literary study and teaching.

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