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Into the Futures of their Makers: A cognitive poetic analysis of reversals, accelerations and shifts in time in the poems of Eavan Boland

1. Introduction

In the chapter that follows I intend to examine the theoretical crossing points between the new mobilities paradigm (Sheller and Urry 2006), Text World Theory (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007), and Stockwell's (2009, 2011) model of literary resonance, in order to generate a framework through which the reversals, accelerations and shifts in time in the work of contemporary Irish poet, Eavan Boland may be effectively analysed. Several of Boland's poems contain challenges to temporal and/or spatial normality in order to make wider points about the nature of reality as we remember and re-experience it. For this reason her work offers a challenging test to the framework proposed.

I will begin by outlining the new mobilities paradigm, and follow this with brief outlines of Text World Theory and Stockwell's model of literary resonance in order to show why they may be effectively combined as a theoretical framework which can be used to address imaginative movement and mobile sense-making. This is followed by the analysis of several examples, and some conclusions drawn from those analyses.

2. The new mobilities paradigm

According to Sheller and Urry (2006: 217) mobilities research is primarily concerned with the patterning, timing and causation of face-to-face co-presence and the observation of the ways in which people may move. The paradigm emerged from the social sciences and has developed out of work in a wide variety of disciplines including anthropology, geography and sociology (208). Sheller and Urry assert that this new paradigm calls into question conventional sedentarist approaches that normalise place

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and stability, and their attendant meanings, while positioning change and placelessness as abnormal (208). They identified several research directions that focus on mobile ethnographies, imagination and memory, and cyber research. Sheller and Urry also highlight new directions which are emerging in the paradigm such as: examinations of the mechanisms by which one can be virtually present while physically absent and other transformations of 'time-space scapes' (209); connective networks and systems which contribute to our 'liquid modernity' through 'zones of connectivity' and 'attachments' (210-211); and re-territorializations which allow us to reimagine our relationship to place. They suggest that this approach can also lead to a questioning of our 'linear assumptions about temporality' (214) and how we experience the narrative of events through the 'affective vehicle' of our corporeal bodies in order to construct 'emotional geographies' as we move through and make sense of the world (216).

Several different but analogous facets of mobilities research were identified by Büscher and Urry (2009: 101). These differentiate between corporeal movement, physical movement, imaginative travel, virtual travel and communicative travel. Both sets of researchers also discuss 'places of inbetweenness' (Sheller and Urry 2006: 218) or interspaces (Sheller and Urry 2006: 219; Büscher and Urry 2009: 110) which may be defined as places of 'connected co-presence in which various kinds of meeting-ness are held' (Sheller and Urry 2006: 219).

Such a definition of 'interspace' may apply to the medium which facilitates imagined meeting or imagined travel by acting as the 'interspace' between the imaginations of the sender and the receiver (the written text in literature for example) and also to imagined 'places on the move' (Büscher and Urry 2009: 110) evoked by the text in the mind of the reader. Imagined travel can open up the possibility of studying counterfactual or impossible co-presences and movements such as reversals of time which often occur in metaphoric journeys and visitations in literature, and afford us the

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opportunity to analyse how literature uses such movements to tell us something about the real world and about ourselves. In this way, the work of literature can function as an interspace, which facilitates the meeting or journey that would not otherwise be possible, and facilitates the 'connected co-presence' of the reader and the characters, and the reader's journey into the text as that text is realized, both in the sense of being understood, and in the sense of being made 'real' in the mind of the reader.

Urry (2004: 32) talks of inhabited machines, giving the examples of mobile phones and individual televisions, as machines which 're-order Euclidian time-space relations' (35) through various acts of bending, stretching and compressing. Through interactions with these inhabited machines others can be made 'uncannily present' by being near and distant, present and absent simultaneously. Richards in the preface to his *Principles of Literary Criticism* argued that 'a book is a machine to think with' (1925: 1). I would argue that extends to poems too. If that is true, and I believe that it is, then they too are inhabited machines, less obviously technological, but no less capable of making the distant proximate, and the absent present, sometimes very uncannily so. In the imagination presence and absence, proximity and distance are not opposed, and in literature, which is a product of the imagination, some interesting answers may be found to Callon and Law's (2004: 3) question about what happens when they are not.

The new mobilities paradigm is in part intended to undermine 'existing linear assumptions' related to temporality and time, for instance, the assumption that actors perform only one action at a time and that events occur in linear order. A poem is a cohabited vehicle containing a poet and a reader in a discourse-world, which permits virtual or mental travel to other places or times in the act of imaginative creation and recreation. As readers moving through a poem, our normal experience of time can be challenged by sudden temporal shifts, reversals, or co-presences of older and younger enactors, and other devices which act to problematize our perception of time in the real

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world. Such challenges can foreground the relationship between the temporal ordering of the elements that the poem presents, and the way the poet has chosen to represent them. In section four of this chapter, I analyse example poems by Eavan Boland in order to understand what insights such manipulations and underminings of existing linear temporal and narrative structures offer their readers. In order to achieve this, I have used a cognitive poetic framework that combines Text World Theory and Stockwell's model of literary resonance, both of which are described in the following sections.

3. Cognitive Poetic Framework

   3.1 Text World Theory

Text World Theory was developed by Paul Werth (1999) and has been further amplified in recent years by Joanna Gavins (2007). While Gavins' version of the theory reconfigures several aspects of Werth's original structure, particularly in relation to the way 'departures' are seen as operating, the basic theory remains structurally very similar. Both versions include a discourse-world where participants interact in a language act, and include the cultural and contextual information that informs the language act. Both versions include the text-world, which is the reader's mental representation of the world as it is built up using information contained in the text. This information includes the various world-building elements referred to, and function-advancing propositions which may be descriptive of the environment, tell us more about character, offer points of view, or may be used to move the narrative plot forward.

   The main structural differences in Werth's and Gavins' versions of the theory are apparent in how they deal with the reader's imaginative movements from the main

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text-world into other text-worlds. Werth positions these movements at the level below the main text-world, and refers to them as 'departures' into 'sub-worlds'. These departures are classified according to three main types: deictic, attitudinal, and epistemic departures (Werth 1999: 216). Deictic departures are initiated by movements in time or space; attitudinal departures offer representations of character's thoughts, intentions and beliefs; epistemic departures are engendered by propositions that are hypothetical, counterfactual, conditional or otherwise modal.

Gavins' version of the theory resists this notion of hierarchy by using the terms 'world-switch', which are equivalent to Werth's deictic departures, and 'modal-worlds', which reconceptualise attitudinal and epistemic departures in terms of three types of modality: deontic (relating to duty or compulsion); boulomaic (relating to wishes and desires); and epistemic, (concerned with perceptions of truth, and hypothetical or conditional worlds). The epistemic also includes indirect speech and thought, and free indirect speech, since any type of filtering through the viewpoint of a character is unverifiable. Gavins' model and terminology indicates that the world being switched to, or the world expressed by a particular modality can exist at the same level as the main text-world, and does not have to be subordinate to it.

The two versions also differ in the way they approach negation, in Werth's model, it may be described as an epistemic 'sub-world' since it involves a change of world definition through deletion (Werth 1999: 252). In Gavins' model, which draws on work by Hidalgo-Downing (2000, 2002), various types of 'negative world' may be created, for example, a negative epistemic modal-world may be created, where a character believes that another character does not wish them harm, when in fact they do.

Because Gavins' version of the theory removes the hierarchical aspects with regard to the main text-world and other worlds that arise in the text, this also has

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important considerations for how metaphor can operate within Text World Theory. As we process metaphor, both the representation of the originating text-world and the other worlds created by the metaphor remain active in attention, this means that we may produce a blended world at the same level as the originating world, and readers process these text-worlds at the same time. This can allow the reader to 'toggle' between them, just as one perceptually toggles between bi-stable reversible figures of duck and rabbit in that visual illusion.

3.2 Resonance

In his model of literary resonance, Peter Stockwell (2009, 2011) has adapted Carstensen's (2007) ideas on how attentional foci may be established and moved, and applied them to inform literary readings. In Carstensen's terms, figures may be thought of as positive blobs, possessing edges that are processed simultaneously as part of the shape. In the same way, negative blobs consist only of edges, and focus attention on the gap or absence. This gestalt processing can be extended to structured or unstructured collections of blobs, so structures like children in a class photo, or a herd of animals are perceived as connected or contiguous. Likewise, attentional foci can change through processes that signify apparent motion (shifts), changes in apparent size (zooms), or through sudden appearance or colour change (changes of state).

Attractors, described by Stockwell as conceptual effects, such as newness, agency, or aesthetic difference from the norm, can also be said to be figures. These will operate on a salience scale, depending on whether they relate, from most to least salient, to people (particularly speaking people), ill-defined groups, objects, landscape, or abstractions. Figures that are attended to may be maintained in attention, they may be occluded in our attention by another more salient figure, or they may decay as our

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attention gradually disengages because they have ceased to do anything salient or interesting. A 'lacuna' or 'felt absence' may be experienced where an attractor is occluded in attention by another attractor, but still possess some resonance. Stockwell describes this 'felt absence' as 'something unspecified or removed, rather than never having been mentioned at all' (Stockwell 2011: 43).

Text World Theory and Stockwell's Model of literary resonance act as complementary ways of analysing the cognitive effects of imagined movements in time and space, which are created in the mind of a reader by the experience of reading a literary text. Text World Theory offers a way of analysing the structural relations of the various worlds within a text, and identifying the linguistic cues and structures that cause them to come into being. What Stockwell's model adds is a way of seeing these structures and movements between them in dynamic relation through the monitoring of attentional focus, and how that changes, and why it changes, as the reader progresses through the text. This enriches the analysis of texts by adding a 'real time' aspect to the analysis that captures the very fluid movements between text-worlds, and mechanisms by which these worlds may change in terms of their attentional relation, moving forward and back in the reader's attentional focus, and in some cases, being re-activated several times after periods of occlusion and decay.

This theoretical framework can be integrated with the concerns of the new mobilities paradigm, because 'mobilities theorists pay close attention to the infrastructures, technical objects, prostheses and embodied practices' that inform the spatial and material conditions related to mobility (Sheller 2011: 4). These include items as basic as shoes or road networks, or as advanced as satellite navigation systems, computer coding systems, and air traffic control systems that play a part in population movements, and consideration of structural aspects of the world which may facilitate or impede movement. However, there is also a growing concern with the

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temporal aspects of mobility, and this can extend to 'mobile sense-making' (Jensen 2010 cited in Sheller 2011: 4). Text-world theorists pay close attention to the infrastructure of the worlds they analyse, both in terms of the imaginative movements within and between them that the reader engages in, but also in their imaginative relation to each other within the wider structure, and infrastructure of the text. The technical objects, prostheses and embodied practices mentioned above can also be drawn into parallel relation with the world-building elements and processes that the text-world theorist analyses in terms of their function in building and sustaining the text-world, but also in certain cases, the linguistic cues and mechanisms from which readers infer the need to construct alternate text-worlds.

Stockwell's literary resonance model affords the opportunity to analyse these relationships and movements in terms of their dynamics, the changes in attentional privilege afforded to each at a particular time, and the mechanisms by which these changes operate. This allows a way of discussing the inter- and intra-world movements that are made in attention around the imaginative spaces constructed by the text-worlds. In this way, Text World Theory offers a way of approaching the spatial and material aspects of imaginative movement and mobile sense making, while the resonance model offers a way of integrating the temporal aspects with the spatial and material, to produce a deeper and more three-dimensional analytical model for understanding the sense-making mechanisms of the reader as they imaginatively travel through the text.

The following section shows this framework in action by applying it to a number of examples drawn from the poetry of the Irish poet Eavan Boland, whose work is widely admired for its vision in making the personal political, representing the female experience, and also for the use of tropes which are related to metamorphosis, transition, and sometimes elision or absence. My interest in using her work for this

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chapter stems from her striking use of the counterfactual image, particularly in relation to manipulations of time-space relations.

4. Analysis

In her Petrarchan sonnet 'Is it Still the Same' from the collection *Code* (2001: 47), Boland uses a series of questions, beginning with the run-on title, to create in the mind of the reader affirmative and negative versions of the resulting text-world, while at the same time populating both versions with the same world-building elements. As we can see from the title and octave of the sonnet quoted below, the title contains the pronoun 'it', which is anaphorically ambiguous at this point, and since it cannot be resolved backwards, because it is right at the beginning of the poem, the reader must attempt to resolve it forwards.

> Is It Still the Same
>
> young woman who climbs the stairs,
> who closes a child's door,
> who goes to her table
> in a room at the back of a house?
> The same unlighted corridor?
> The same night air
> over the wheelbarrows and rain-tanks?
> The same inky sky and pin-bright stars?
>
> Boland (2001: 47)

Due to the reader's prior experience with similar utterances, the title, as a unit of sense, is taken to be a question, which may relate to the previous memory of a place or action. This initial interpretation is fleeting however, as the 'it' of the title is soon resolved as 'the young woman' of line one. The set of questions, which begin with the run on title and which extend over the first eight lines of the poem, open two geminal (or twin) epistemic worlds created by the potential for affirmative and negative responses to the questions. These are epistemic modal-worlds because they relate to

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the potential beliefs of the speaker (and reader) of the poem in relation to whether the world-building elements described are 'the same' or not. In one epistemic world, we imagine it *is* still the same young woman who climbs the stairs, closes a child's door and goes to her table in a room at the back of the house to write, and in another epistemic world we imagine that it *is not* the same woman. The 'it' of the title is attached in turn to each of the world-building elements 'the same unlighted corridor' (line 5); 'the same night air' (line 6); 'the same inky sky and pin-bright stars' (line 8). The reader, since they cannot know which of these geminal epistemic text-worlds is true, is invited to hold both possibilities equally active in mind. The reader at this point can be thought of as imaginatively inhabiting both worlds. This, of course, goes against the reader's normal corporeal experience, but may also suggest to them the opening up of imaginative possibilities that the physical world does not allow. This in turn makes the poem the 'inhabited vehicle' through which the reader undergoes this imaginative transition. The poem contains, but also constrains the worlds that the reader is invited into.

The poem's use of a series of different elements in quick succession as possible candidates to attach to the 'it' of the title allows the affirmative and negative possibilities to be repeatedly reinforced in each case, thereby maintaining both as attractors, and foregrounding the anaphoric ambiguity generated by the pronoun, and maintaining it in attention, while also maintaining both 'affirmative' and 'negative' epistemic modal-worlds in the reader's attention, through reinforcing the equal possibilities of truth as each world-building element is, in turn, assigned as referent for the 'it' of the title. At the same time, in focusing the reader's attention first on the actions of the young woman, and then introducing these new questions related to her environment, the reader's attention is disengaged from her, and moved to the various attractors which emerge through the actions in the questions. She is subject to decay

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as a figure, while the actions and particulars of the environment are drawn forward in attention by being zoomed in on, in the process becoming figures separated from their ground. One might see this as allowing the reader's imaginative re-enactment of the corporeal experience of physically encountering an unfamiliar place, looking around them, focusing on different elements, in order to build up a coherent image of the new surroundings.

The reader constructs the identity of the speaker of the poem as Boland herself, because in the absence of any information to the contrary we tend to assume a deictic centre for the speaker as I, here, now, for the narrative voice which Werth (1994: 82) takes by convention to operate in the discourse-world. In the affirmative epistemic world, the reader constructs the idea that the older Boland watches her younger self, in her memory, performing these actions. In the negative epistemic world, the reader must believe that the older Boland imagines watching another young woman, who must therefore be a generation below Boland, undertake the same actions that Boland herself had done.

In both of these worlds there is a tension between what is possible or likely in the real world, and what is possible in the imaginative world. It is not possible in the real world to be physically co-present in the act of observation of an earlier version of the self, but one can imaginatively do so quite easily. One can do this as an act of remembering the circumstances and the feelings at the time, but one can also re-experience the events from the perspective of the current self, where one knows outcomes and consequences, and where one has developed perspective and perhaps detachment from the original situation. It is also not usually possible to observe strangers at such close quarters in intimate surroundings without having some form of interaction with them, and without the very fact of one's presence changing the circumstances of what is being observed. However, again the poem draws attention to

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the fact that we can quite easily do so in the imaginative space, and that this can be a very privileged viewpoint.

From Line 9 after the *volta* Boland enters a different phase of the poem. The negation 'you can see nothing of her' teases the reader using the ambiguous pronoun 'you' to either directly address the reader or as a generic 'you' which in Hiberno-English is commonly used instead of the Standard English 'one'.

> You can see nothing of her, but her head
> bent over the page, her hand moving,
> moving again, and her hair.
> I wrote like that once.
> But this is different:
> This time, when she looks up, I will be there.

<div align="right">(Boland 2001: 47)</div>

The reader, of course, can see nothing of the woman, unless the poet chooses to show them. And what she chooses to show them is significant. The poet focuses on the bowed head and the moving hand of the writer. But the head bowed in the act of writing obscures the identity of the young woman and maintains the indeterminacy instigated by the questions as an attractor in the poem. In line 11 the poet observes 'I wrote like that once.' This deictic world-switch into the past originates from both the affirmative and negative versions of the text-world. This may be taken either to reinforce the perceived identity between the younger and older versions of Boland, or as a more general observation that she too had faced the same challenges. The comparison maintains the twinned aspect of the text-worlds, prevents the decay of either, and reinforces the indeterminacy. The final two lines are similarly ambiguous: 'But this is different:/ This time, when she looks up, I will be there.' In the deictic shift that occurs from the 'affirmative' version of the epistemic modal-world, it will indeed be different, if the younger Boland looks up to find the older Boland there. Since the younger Boland had never looked up from writing to find herself observed by an older

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iteration, and since her younger iteration has up to this point been unaware of the older iteration's presence; and given the context of the utterance as part of a poem, where we are conditioned to expect metaphoric use of language, then the reader is invited to infer a metaphoric reading, that established female writers were not present to be looked up to by the younger Boland.

In the equivalent deictic shift from the 'negative' version of the epistemic modal-world, a young writer will find an older writer present when she 'looks up'. Again, since in the real world, writers tend not to find older, more established poets observing them when they look up from writing, we are again invited to infer that in the metaphoric sense there will be an older female writer present to look up to for this young writer (perhaps as representative of her generation), where there wasn't for the younger Boland. Both readings are true. Female poets of the generation before Boland were not visible in the canon of Irish literature; indeed several influential anthologies of Irish poetry have no female representation at all, and Anne Fogarty (1999: 257) has drawn attention to what she calls

> the unwritten history of Irish women's poetry from the 1930s onwards and to the way in which even in absentia it succeeds in casting a shadow over and shaping later pronouncements about the thwarted nature of a female literary tradition in the country.

So the two versions of the epistemic worlds operate to reinforce the idea of the felt absence of senior female poets when the younger Boland was beginning to write, but also assert that Boland is herself now such a presence for the young female poets currently emerging. The question in the title 'Is it Still the Same' now takes on a new resonance and finds a new answer through Boland's virtual journey. Some of the challenges faced by women writers are still the same, particularly in terms of managing demanding roles, but it is different, and it is different because she has been, and is, present. Through the construction of these two text-worlds, Boland questions the
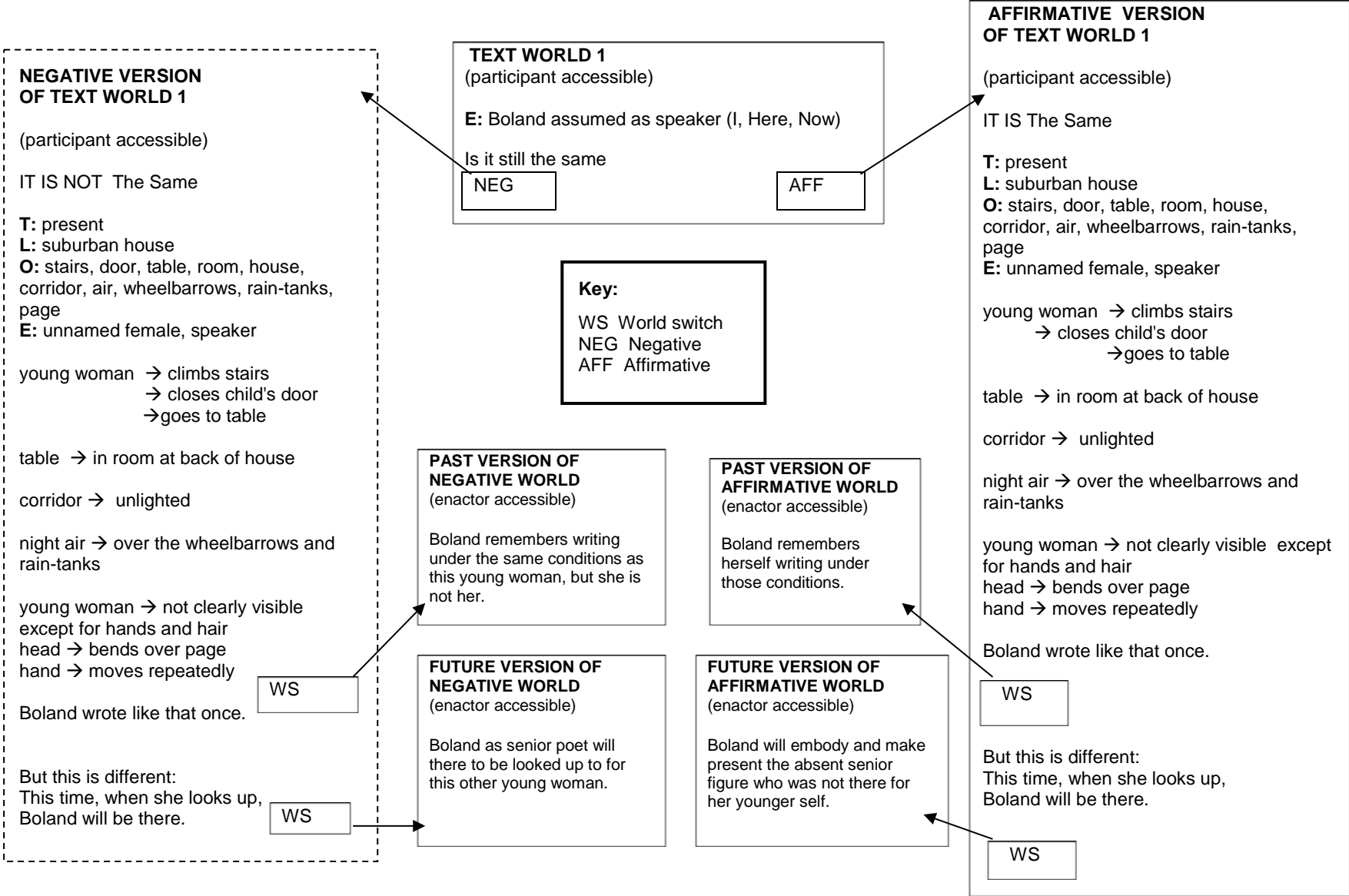
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nature of what it means to be 'present' for the next generation of writers. She is rather virtually present in the poem because she is the unseen observer. At the same time, she embodies the absence she felt as a young writer, of visible senior female poets she could 'look up to'. The young woman is portrayed as being surrounded by darkness: 'unlighted corridor', 'night air', 'inky sky', and she is obscured. This may be taken to resonate metaphorically as signifying the young poet's isolation and struggle in the darkness without a major female 'guiding light' while Boland was a young, unpublished and 'obscure' poet.

In this way, the poem draw attention to Boland's struggle, in the darkness of a formative part of her career, to create for herself a poetry that addressed the cultural circumstances in which she found herself, both as woman and poet. It highlights the fact that this struggle was carried on without the benefit of a valued and apparent lineage of Irish female poets to draw upon, or use as a model to help her reconcile the various demands upon her as she struggled to initiate her career. The poem also draws attention to the duality of Boland's presence now, as just such an inspirational figure for poets, coming after her. She is physically present as a model of what can be achieved in terms of career and status, but she is also metaphorically present as a 'body of work' which will remain after her physical presence, for other poets. This body of work serves to demonstrate to women in similar circumstances that it is possible to succeed, despite the conflicting demands that may be made upon them. Boland's figure embodies the absence, both in terms of a physical poet that could be turned to as a model, and in terms of the sustained, successful and valued body of work from Irish women poets absent from the canon during her own formative years as a poet. The ambiguous nature of Boland's figure in the poem draws attention to both. She is 'there' for them, but the younger poet in both cases cannot 'see' her.

Figure 4.1 Text World Diagram for 'Is it Still the Same'

NEGATIVE VERSION OF TEXT WORLD 1

(participant accessible)

IT IS NOT The Same

T: present
L: suburban house
O: stairs, door, table, room, house, corridor, air, wheelbarrows, rain-tanks, page
E: unnamed female, speaker

young woman → climbs stairs
→ closes child's door
→goes to table

table → in room at back of house

corridor → unlighted

night air → over the wheelbarrows and rain-tanks

young woman → not clearly visible except for hands and hair
head → bends over page
hand → moves repeatedly

Boland wrote like that once.

But this is different:
This time, when she looks up,
Boland will be there.

WS

WS

TEXT WORLD 1
(participant accessible)

E: Boland assumed as speaker (I, Here, Now)

Is it still the same
NEG   AFF

Key:

WS World switch
NEG Negative
AFF Affirmative

PAST VERSION OF NEGATIVE WORLD
(enactor accessible)

Boland remembers writing under the same conditions as this young woman, but she is not her.

PAST VERSION OF AFFIRMATIVE WORLD
(enactor accessible)

Boland remembers herself writing under those conditions.

FUTURE VERSION OF NEGATIVE WORLD
(enactor accessible)

Boland as senior poet will there to be looked up to for this other young woman.

FUTURE VERSION OF AFFIRMATIVE WORLD
(enactor accessible)

Boland will embody and make present the absent senior figure who was not there for her younger self.

AFFIRMATIVE VERSION OF TEXT WORLD 1

(participant accessible)

IT IS The Same

T: present
L: suburban house
O: stairs, door, table, room, house, corridor, air, wheelbarrows, rain-tanks, page
E: unnamed female, speaker

young woman → climbs stairs
→ closes child's door
→goes to table

table → in room at back of house

corridor → unlighted

night air → over the wheelbarrows and rain-tanks

young woman → not clearly visible except for hands and hair
head → bends over page
hand → moves repeatedly

Boland wrote like that once.

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But this is different:
This time, when she looks up,
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WS

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The poem serves as an inhabited machine, with Boland uncannily both present and absent, both as the writer of the poem, present as voice, but physically separated from the reader in space and time, and from the woman she observes, who occupies different text-worlds. She is a character in her own poem, the embodiment of an absence and an observing presence. This is an important aspect of the poem, the watching figure we take to be Boland is an empowered figure, privileged as observer, able to move imaginatively between worlds, and able to dictate what the reader sees and experiences in her role of narrative mediator. She exemplifies the powerful and privileged position of the poet, a position too often denied to women writing in Ireland during Boland's formative years, but one that, as Boland shows, is achievable now, and for which she can serve as guide.

This figuring of the self in the poem resonates strongly with Boland's lines from 'Anna Liffey' (Boland 1995: 201) that '[i]t has taken me / All my strength to do this. // Becoming a figure in a poem'. The relationship between these different text-worlds is presented diagrammatically in Figure 4.1 below.

As a second example, we can examine another imagined journey Boland makes in the same collection. In 'A Marriage for the Millennium', the narrator of the poem leaves the house and undertakes a journey that involves 'driving the whole distance of [her] marriage'. What we witness next is a series of reversals and unravellings:

Ceramic turned to glass, circuits to transistors.

Old rowans were saplings.
Roads were no longer wide.
Children disappeared from their beds.
Wives, without warning, suddenly became children.

Computer games became codes again.
The codes were folded
back into the futures of their makers.
Their makers woke from sleep, weeping for milk. (Boland, 2001: 22)

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This is a very striking way of imaginatively travelling back to the start of the marriage, both in the sense of the amount of time that these reversals signify, because the writers of computer games are babies and radios have transistors again, and also because the reversals create a deictic world-switch by using different versions of world-building elements that make up the current text-world to map directly back to different versions of themselves in the earlier text-world, so wives become children, old rowans become saplings, roads become narrower. It's the same people, same trees, same roads, just earlier versions as they were in an earlier text-world. This strategy makes the reader feel both the pace of the reversal, which is almost instantaneous, but also, because the world-building elements are basically the same, just earlier enactors of the same entities, the past is rendered familiar and accessible. This is also striking because of the fact that it engenders a co-presence because each early enactor is presented in direct reference to its later version. This imaginative bringing of the two versions into apposition allows us to see both the unusual nature of the reversal, and also to experience the power of the imaginative journey which evokes them. This suggests that we need not think about the narrative of our lives linearly, as the prevailing sedentarist paradigm would indicate that we do, but that we are capable of thinking about this narrative much more flexibly, and that this flexibility creates some striking emotional effects and insights.

In Stockwell's model, the effects generated by the text may be thought of as shifts, zooms and state changes which can capture attention and form attractors. As each state change is focused on in turn, we shift to it, and zoom in on it. Each in turn is an attractor, which we are asked to attend to while it transforms. Then each attractor is occluded by the new attractor, which is generated by the next shift, zoom, and state change as the list progresses. Interestingly, because these transformations are

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presented in language, which operates serially over time, it obscures the fact that the transformations may be taking place simultaneously. There is some sense of this in the rapidity with which each new attractor is presented almost as though our gaze is being directed very quickly from one to the other to catch them in the act of transformation. The imagined action is reminiscent of a series of saccades.

As readers we find ourselves in the 'interspace' between these two text-worlds, travelling simultaneously in two vehicles. We are in the car with the narrator of the poem, and also in the poem with the poet. The poem acts as an interspace facilitating the connected co-presence of the two versions of each enactor, and the connected co-presence of the two text-worlds generated by their transformations. The machine of the poem has reordered and compressed Euclidean time-space (Urry 2004), rendering the past both proximate and distant, absent and present. Proximate and present by being evoked in the poem and populated by enactors of entities from the present text-world, but rendered distant and absent through showing the extent of the change each enactor undergoes in order to manifest in the earlier text-world. Indeed some enactors disappear altogether. Such an act of negation makes their disappearance into a felt absence in the earlier text-world.

Boland has also used this same strategy elsewhere: in 'A Dream of Colony' (1998: 27), she uses reversal to create a text-world where the effects of war are negated through the power of language:

> Each phrase of ours,
> holding still for a moment in the stormy air,
> raised an unburned house
> …
> Unturned that corner
> the assassin eased around and aimed from.
> Undid. Unsaid:

This undoing signalled in the last line above creates two versions of the text-world, using a twinning effect through the deictic shift to a time before the house was

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burned, and before the assassin crept around the corner and fired. This is similar to the twinning effect achieved by the deictic switch created by the reversal discussed in 'A Marriage for the Millennium', in that the world-building elements in each of the worlds are the same. However, in this case the effect of the deictic world-switch is not simply to restore the world-building elements to their former states, but also to allow them to imaginatively exist as both negative and positive versions, both unburned and burned house, real and potential assassin, who, in the earlier version has not yet carried out the act of violence, and may still change tack. It also strikingly evokes a felt absence in the poem. The assassin's victim is simultaneously murdered and restored to life. These evoke – through the morphological negations – the potential for healing through the poem, the potential to undo the violence and suggest a restorative function. This resonates with Boland's assertion of the power of language that 'We say *like* or *as* and the world is' (Boland 2007: 36 italics in original) expressed in the poem 'Of Shadow. Of Simile'*.* 'A Dream of Colony' exemplifies this power of language to create and change worlds, and to make conflicting worlds co-present, by keeping both versions of the text-world, before and after, negative and positive, available and prominent in attention, in such a way as to allow the reader to toggle between them bringing the reality of the acts and their consequences into sharp focus. It also problematizes the negative and positive versions of the world, because the linguistically positive world, where the house is burned and the assassin has acted, is more inherently negative than the linguistically negative version of the world, where the house is unburned and the assassin's act is undone. This linguistically negative world is inherently positive through its imaginative act of restoration, exposing the tension between the linguistic polarity and the actual polarity described by the circumstances.

5. Conclusion

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In many of her poems Boland poses a version of Callon and Law's question regarding what happens when presence and absence, proximity and distance are not mutually exclusive. As we have seen in the examples analysed, Boland's use of twin text-worlds can be both startling and potent, making the reader both see and feel the effects of imagined journeys and juxtapositions of past and present and different enactors of the same character within a single space. As Boland put it an interview (Villar and Boland 2006: 64)

> Where poetry excels is as a method of experience, not expression. It has a unique capacity to render an experience in a fresh, unsettling way. I don't write a poem to express an experience, but to experience it again.

This quotation demonstrates that Boland sees poetry as a way of collapsing temporal and spatial boundaries in order to place both the poet and the reader 'in the moment' and to re-embody remembered experience in order to experience it anew, and to change how the experiencer thinks about the experience. Poetry is a cultural practice that allows the mobilization of a changed context to re-experience and to change experiences. It makes 'the familiar strange, and the strange familiar' (attributed to Coleridge by Eliot 1950: 259). Applying a cognitive poetic framework constructed from Text World Theory and Stockwell's Model of literary resonance allows us to track the reader's progress and processes through the text and rigorously analyse the linguistic cues and mental spaces activated at different times. The analysis demonstrates how such a framework may elucidate the ways in which poetry can address the new mobilities paradigm's concerns and questions regarding the infrastructures of imaginative travel, and how these may be 'mobilized, or performed, through ongoing sociotechnical and cultural practices' (Sheller 2011: 2). The framework provides a way to describe, analyse and understand how poetry collapses boundaries between then and now, and between here and there, making them co-present. It draws out the mechanisms by which the poem operates as an interspace where meeting-ness is

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facilitated, and functions as an inhabited machine which, through its workings, has the

potential to problematize the very nature of presences and absences, distance and

proximity.

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