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Moving Through Paris: The Discontinuous Forms of Julio Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963) and Luisa Futoransky's *De Pe a Pa* (1986)

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ABSTRACT: This essay examines the way in which two late twentieth-century Latin American novelists address movement through the city of Paris. Building on existing work by Julie Jones (1998), Jason Weiss (2003), Axel Gasquet (2007) and especially Marcy E. Schwartz (1999), this project moves beyond a genealogy of Latin American writers in Paris towards a conception of the relationship between narrative form and depictions of urban navigation. It proposes that Julio Cortázar in *Rayuela* (1963) and Luisa Futoransky in *De Pe a Pa* (1986) enact a mode of movement through the discontinuous and episodic forms of their novels, and that the contrast between their depictions of movement, and particularly their depictions of the relationship between fragmentation and continuity within this movement, can be most clearly understood along the axis of gender. That is, while for Oliveira in *Rayuela* movement through the city is largely uninterrupted and can preserve at least an illusion of fluidity, for Laura in *De Pe a Pa* the woman's movement through Paris is always discontinuous, difficult and even dangerous. Futoransky revises that earlier male writer's formulation of movement to draw attention to a masculine complacency which organises *Rayuela* and to propose a new model for female urban navigation.

KEYWORDS: Argentina, Paris, Cortázar, Futoransky, fragment, movement, gender.

In her monograph entitled *Writing Paris: Urban Topographies of Desire in Contemporary Latin American Fiction* (1999), Marcy E. Schwartz argues that late twentieth-century Latin American writers use fiction as a redemptive postcolonial tool in their depictions of Paris. She observes a shift in attitudes towards the French city: early twentieth-century texts such as Ricardo Güiraldes' *Raucho* (1917) depict the contrast between Paris's distant allure and its up-close disenchantment, showing the city 'transformed into a decadent and destructive agent, [paralleling] the shift from an aesthetic of pleasure and luxury toward a revelation of urban modernity's high cost' (Schwartz, *Writing Paris* 20); by the later decades of the twentieth century, however, writers begin to deal with this disillusionment not by discrediting or condemning the urban reality, but by reconstructing space both within and through their literary fictions. It is this late twentieth-century phenomenon which preoccupies Schwartz in that study: '[t]his book illustrates the contradictions of Paris's incorporation into contemporary fiction as a city redesigned by the postcolonial imagination' (3).

I am intrigued by Schwartz's particular analysis of Cortázar's short stories, as she argues that they depend on Parisian architecture both to articulate the Latin American relationship to modernity, and to construct a model for a postcolonial Latin American future. Cortázar's stories, she writes, 'repave the *autopista*, rerail the subway, and re-erect the arcades' (33). Particularly telling here is Schwartz's choice of Parisian locations: both the 'autopista' and the 'subway' are explicitly spaces of moving transport; the 'arcades' imply movement by providing a space for shoppers to stroll along the galleries. Schwartz envisions Cortázar's short stories as doubly mobile, then, reviving and remobilising spaces already associated with motion; they are concerned with movement *through* Paris as a continuation of the movement *to* Paris which preoccupies critics such as David Viñas (1974) and Ángel Rama (1982).[1]

In this essay I will pursue Schwartz's interest in motion to examine two late twentieth-century Latin American novels which figure movement through Paris. I will turn to Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963), a novel widely accepted to be modelled in part on André Breton's *Nadja* (1928), sharing that surrealist novel's wandering protagonist, and to Luisa Futoransky's *De Pe a Pa (o de Pekín a París)* (1986).[2] I have restricted my study to Argentine writers, partly to orient my work in relation to Viñas' study, and to Axel Gasquet's *Los escritores argentinos en París* (2007), and partly in accordance with Laetitia Iturralde's claim that the French-Argentine relationship has always been separate from a colonial context, rooted instead in a literary-artistic exchange: a benevolent 'cultural imperialism' (12). I am aware, nonetheless, that any grouping is provisional, because Latin American writers in Paris did not identify as a coherent movement (Weiss 12); my choice of writers is propelled therefore less by national alignment than by aesthetic similarity. *Rayuela* and *De Pe a Pa* share a commitment to an aesthetic of the fragment, presenting novels with discontinuous forms, and I argue that this discontinuity is central to the novelists' models of movement through Paris.

Cortázar and Futoransky inherit the theme of literary urban

navigation from their predecessors in English and French literature of the 1920s: James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) narrates its protagonists wanderings through Dublin; Virginia Woolf's Clarissa Dalloway walks through the streets of London on her way to buy flowers in that eponymous novel (1923); Breton's protagonist in *Nadja*, of course, wants to lose himself in the very streets of Paris which Oliveira explores in *Rayuela*. Yet these experimental modernists and surrealists enact the movement through strategies of free indirect discourse and stream of consciousness which incorporate different perspectives into a continuous and coherent flow.[3] Writing half a century later, as Latin American immigrants in the French city, Cortázar and Futoransky respond to an ongoing disillusionment with the promised land of Paris by reconfiguring the city as a site of continued search, and they do so through discontinuous, fragmented forms, promoting episodic narratives whose pieces must be carefully navigated by the reader.

The first part of my essay discusses the formal fragmentation of the two novels, and the relationship between these discursive forms and the writers' depictions, within the narratives, of movement through Paris. In the second part of the essay, however, I will consider the role played by gender in these formal and narrative movements, particularly as it underpins the difference between Futoransky and Cortázar's presentations of discontinuous urban navigation. If Nelly Richard and Beatriz Sarlo are interested in the aesthetic of the fragment as a novelistic symptom of dictatorial rule in Latin America (Richard 14; qtd in Corradí 241), I argue that the discontinuity which Cortázar and Futoransky present in *Rayuela* and *De Pe a Pa* is shaped rather by a politics of gender. While Cortázar's protagonist self-consciously inherits a masculine model of wandering from *Ulysses*, Futoransky revises this motion into a feminist model of Parisian navigation, exposing the gendered complacency of her predecessor's depiction of smooth integration and emphasising instead a pragmatic, even dangerous relationship between the fragment and the whole: and between the Latin American individual (especially the Latin American woman) and Paris. Pushing against Stephen Henighan's two models of postcolonial hybridity, which he uses to distinguish between different Latin American writers in Paris (namely, between Miguel Asturias and Alejo Carpentier) (*Two Paths* 1012), I propose in this essay another axis of distinction which understands gender as shaping both Latin American experience in Paris and the literary record of that experience. By analysing *Rayuela* and *Pe a Pa* side by side, and exploring the ways in which the fragmentary form of each novel enacts a mode of urban movement which is modelled by the protagonists, I emphasise the limitations of Cortázar's depiction of masculine Parisian wandering, and draw attention to the ways in which a more contemporary female writer might redesign *his* redesigning of movement through the city.

In his 'Tablero de dirección', Cortázar sets out two possible routes for the reader through *Rayuela*:

> El primer libro se deja leer en la forma corriente, y termina en el capítulo 56, al pie del cual hay tres vistosas estrellitas que equivalen a la palabra *Fin*. Por consiguiente el lector prescindirá sin remordimientos de lo que sigue.
>
> El segundo libro se deja leer empezando por el capítulo 73 y siguiendo luego en el orden que se indica al pie de cada capítulo. (111)

Proposing a reading bound by chronology and by the physical experience of turning the pages of a book, 'el primer libro' traces an obvious literal journey, as Oliveira returns from Paris to Buenos Aires between the first and second sections. The journey of 'el segundo libro' is more figuratively significant, as the reader moves between the main narrative and the 'capítulos prescindibles' which make up the third section of the novel. These 'expendable' chapters comprise fragmentary intertextual quotations, additional scenes which have been excluded from the main narrative (and whose exclusion in favour of other chapters is kept deliberately unclear), and the notes for a novel by Morelli, a fictional author idolised by Oliveira and his intellectual circle of friends in Paris. Morelli's accident during the Parisian chapters ensures that these notes will remain as notes, not realised into narrative, and that the fragments from Meister Eckardt's sermon (536), José Lezama Lima's *Tratados en La Habana* (563), or *The Observer* (662) will remain as unframed quotations.

Critics have devoted hundreds of pages to deciphering the meaning of these expendable chapters, usually concluding that they disrupt any expectation of a linear narrative, but I am particularly intrigued by Jason Weiss's description of the chapters as 'situated in the margins of conventional order'.[4] Trying to organise these chapters in relation to the novel's main narrative, he resorts to a list of varieties:

> some occur in a time and place between the earlier chapters, others stand as further extensions of a scene or offer more elaborate ramifications of various reflections, while others are simply citations from diverse readings that draw the reader outside the story even as they cast light upon it. (89)

As Weiss negotiates this relationship between narrative and fragment, then, he engages with the motion of reading, relying on the prepositions 'between', 'further', and 'outside'. These eccentric prepositions highlight the way in which the expendable chapters derail and distort the traditional route of reading a novel ('la forma corriente'), but still maintain an appearance of continuous movement. The second reading promotes a route which moves between whole and fragment, text and intertext, finished narrative and work-in-progress. It is—or, rather, might appear in retrospect to be—a distinctly postmodern mode of reading, one which forces the reader to recognise fragments as thematically relevant to the

main text, rather than simply generating an abstract atmosphere through their sheer presence. (Compare, for example, the reading practice required by Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962), where the reader must move between the fictional poem and the fictional footnotes on that poem in order to comprehend the plot, to that required by T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), where the (non-critic) reader most likely glances at the footnotes and absorbs a vague and general sense of breadth, without physically moving their eyes between poem and notes every other line.)

Cortázar combines the literary and literal implications of the fragment in a passage from 'La muñeca rota' (1969) which describes his literary technique 'en los años de *Rayuela*':

> La saturación llegó a tal punto que lo único honrado era aceptar sin discusión esa lluvia de meteoritos que entraban por ventanas de calles, libros, diálogos, azares, cotidianos, y convertirlos en pasajes, fragmentos, capítulos prescindibles o imprescindibles. (4)

Saúl Yurkievich interprets this passage as capturing the way in which the Argentine writer 'abre, como nadie lo había hecho antes en lengua castellana, la textualidad literaria a la profusa proliferación de los discursos de afuera' (Yurkievich, *al calor de tu sombra* 197). According to 'La muñeca rota', Cortázar's literary strategy is twofold: first, he accepts the intrusion of cultural and textual fragments; then, he transforms them into literary objects of his own. The focus, however, through the quasi-heroic adjective 'honrado', meaning 'honest' or 'honourable', is on the acceptance, the willing absorption of, the openness to, the fragment, which then becomes integrated into the literary system (see how 'fragmentos', when surrounded by 'pasajes' and 'capítulos', becomes a unit of writing). Cortázar's strategy is one which, through passive acceptance, integrates the fragment into a coherent and continuous textual movement.

The autobiographical resonance of *Rayuela*'s opening gestures to the centrality of the artist figure to Cortázar's text. The novel features three masculine authors: Oliveira, who is an effortless artist and whose work the reader never accesses, Morelli, the revered author whose work makes up the 'capítulos prescindibles'—and Cortázar himself, whose control over the reading options becomes immediately apparent in the 'tablero'. The predicament of the artist preoccupies Futoransky's novel, too, but while in *Rayuela* the artist is effortless, assumed and read, Laura's artistic status in *De Pe a Pa* is achieved with no such ease. An enlightening parallel for Cortázar's model of the male artist's movement can be found in Juan José Saer's *Las nubes* (1997), another late twentieth-century Argentine novel set (and written) in Paris. There, an Argentine profesor—an institutionalised artist, perhaps, and significantly a male one—declares that 'como las ventanas están siempre abiertas para aprovechar las corrientes del aire, existe entre la ciudad y la casa una especie de continuidad' (14). Saer's vision shares with Cortázar's an elision of the boundary between the concrete and the ephemeral, signposted in each case by weather imagery but resonating throughout the lines. Cortázar's list slips from streets and books to non-concrete but audible conversations, to the grammatically ambiguous 'azares, cotidianos' (which Weiss translates as an adjectival phrase, producing 'everyday coincidences' (89)); Saer uses the tangible flowing of breeze as a metaphor for the exchange of an ephemeral atmosphere between the inside and outside of the professor's apartment. This slippage, as it appears in Cortázar's words in 'La muñeca rota' aligns the writer's description of creative process with a physical movement through the city, and his model for literary intertextuality with one for the negotiation of literal obstacles in urban space. As the male artist moves through Paris, the abstract and the concrete come together for him, allowing him to easily create art out of the gifts offered by the world around him.

The structure of *De Pe a Pa* similarly thwarts expectations of a linear reading process. Through the novel's title, Futoransky teases the reader with the possibility of alphabetical flow, and the association of the second chapter with the letter 'b', followed by the dictionary entries for 'casa', 'divan', 'espejo', 'fiambre', 'gallo' and 'hospital' in order, appears to fulfil this promise of linear organisation. When the reader reaches Chapter X, however, with its play on the letter 'a'—'el abrasar y abrazar, el abredor, el abrigo' (98)—any expectation of continuity is thwarted. The title is at this point reinterpreted not as embracing alphabetical order, but as distracting from the linear pilgrimage between Argentina and Paris by introducing the city of Peking. Even within individual chapters, Futoransky disrupts any expectation of reading 'en la forma corriente'. While in *Rayuela* Cortázar separates the Parisian chapters and the Argentine ones under different titles (and even in the second, experimental reading, the scenes in Paris are kept apart from those in Buenos Aires, so that at least the fundamental direction of movement from Europe to Latin America is preserved), Futoransky without warning inserts Argentine childhood memories into descriptive sequences in the Parisian present. Take, for example, the first chapter, in which Laura meditates on the promises made to her by Djagó about their future together. She resents that 'no me dio el número de teléfono de la casa', and this sparks a reflection on the significance of the 'teléfono de casa' versus the 'teléfono particular', through her experience of her father's clandestine telephone conversations with other women (16). The tense mutates from the present—'anida un resintimiento'—to the near past—'no me dio'—to the general pattern of the past—'tenía', 'franqueaban'—to the specific past of a childhood scene remembered in the historic present—'hace ruido de beso'—within the same paragraph; Futoransky does not announce the shift, but guides the reader associatively, via a shared theme, between past and present, Argentina and Paris.

When Futoransky does include titles within her chapters, as when she signposts 'anotaciones mañaneras de Laura' (84) or, more dramatically, 'FLASHBACK' (72), they only draw attention to their own arbitrariness, and to the decided absence of titles at other points in the prose which are perhaps more obscurely connected.

Through what must be a self-conscious performance of these titles, then—and even, when she labels Chapter X 'salteable' (98), a direct engagement with Cortázar's 'capítulos prescindibles'—Futoransky seems to expose the relative conservatism of Cortázar's apparent experimentalism, as his obsession with categorisation and his loyalty to the unit of the chapter reinforce his ties to traditional narrative form. Futoransky establishes herself as a more formally radical novelist than her predecessor by refusing to provide the reader with organising titles or logical chapter breaks, instead relishing the separateness of the fragments of her text. Working along the same lines as the critics Lucille Kerr and Santiago Colas, who would later express scepticism about the choice which Cortázar appears to offer the reader in his 'tablero', Futoransky reveals the reality of the authority of these reading instructions, and thus begins to undermine Cortázar's proposition of a fluid, integrated movement through the novel—and through Paris.[5]

Futoransky's approach to movement through the city is illuminated, like Cortázar's, by a description of her creative process which appears in a separate publication (in her 1983 text, *Son cuentos chinos*):

> Lo que hacía conscientemente era acumular cuartillas de conversaciones que oía en el día, de pláticas telefónicas, de lo que veía en el periódico, de lo que me contaba María Josefa cuando volvía del trabajo. Era pura grafomanía: el objetivo era acumular un mínimo de cien cuartillas, ponerlas en la mesa para hacer, después, una novela. Era tener una masa de material, como plastilina o barro. (109-110)

As Cortázar does in 'La muñeca rota', Futoransky emphasises the everyday ('que oía en el día') and the abundance of material ('cien cuartillas', 'una masa de material'), but her vision of the relationship between the fragments diverges significantly from that of the earlier writer. While Cortázar's formulation 'la saturación llegó a tal punto' is distinctly impersonal, evoking a mysterious force which releases these fragments (see the miraculous connotations of weather in 'la lluvia de meteoritos'), Futoransky emphasises the personal—and conscious—responsibility to collect the fragments: 'lo que *hacía conscientemente* era acumular cuartillas' (italics mine). She goes on to depict herself laying out these fragments on the table, reordering them into a novel, and the material simplicity of the verb 'poner' replaces the myth of creativity with an image of deliberate physical effort. It is this same effort which Futoransky demands of the readers of *De Pe a Pa*, who must work to figure out the relationship between the fragmented memories and Parisian experiences, between the scenes in Argentina, Paris and Peking, between the dispersed and complex perceptions of Paris, and between the linguistic experiments and more traditional narrative sections. The attitude of acceptance of, and reliance on, integrated continuity which Cortázar encourages in the reader of *Rayuela* is not enough for Futoransky. Her newfound attention to the female predicament renders Cortázar's model complacently insufficient.

The difference between the kinds of artist which Cortázar and Futoransky depict, and the ease or difficulty of their vocation which is central to each text, becomes obvious here through the distinctly gendered setting of Futoransky's creative production in *Son cuentos chinos*. The inspiration for the artist, as she describes it, comes from telephone calls overheard in the home, or from passages read in the newspaper, a literature associated particularly with the domestic reader; the artistic construction itself is put together on a piece of domestic furniture, 'la mesa', rather than in a professional studio. While Cortázar's artistic process—and hence his characters' mode of urban navigation—is constructed out of inflated literature ('libros') and the city itself ('calles'), Futoransky replaces these terms with the diminished size and exhausting effort of the domestic scene. It is the intricacies of this gendered difference which I will unpick in the following section, through attention to the narrative depictions of the characters' smooth or discontinuous, simple or fraught, progress through Paris.

This formal modelling of urban navigation leaks into the texts' narratives. Oliveira's movement through Paris within the plot of *Rayuela* can certainly be characterised by the encounter with, but then the smooth integration of, fragmentary interruptions, diversions, and intertextual influences. Wandering through the city at night, he encounters various women—Berthe Trepat, Pola, Emmanuèle—whom, Julie Jones writes, he collects like 'found objects', possessing them as fragments which will help him understand the code of Paris (33-35). His movement through Paris is generally uninhibited; he is open to the city, as represented in his reception of la Maga's gifts which transform his apartment into a kind of Parisian collage: 'un dibujo de Klee al lado de un espejo sucio' (132). Cortázar characterises Oliveira's movement through the city by the same intertextual openness which he expresses in 'La muñeca rota', and this image of the collaged Klee postcard in particular links the Club's obsession with intellectual literary, musical and artistic references to Oliveira's more general navigation of the urban space. Oliveira showcases what José Luis Abellán, the Spanish essayist residing in Paris in the 1980s, observes as the city's 'capacidad de ósmosis [que] se lleva a asimilar todo lo que le echen' (47), as he easily integrates—'asimiliar'—physical obstacles and intertextual influences into a smooth model of movement.

As the novel progresses, the reader becomes increasingly aware that this mode of urban navigation—the smooth integration of the fragment—is not simply incidental, but even desirable. When Oliveira is entrusted with the key to Morelli's apartment, and tasked with organising the chapters of that writer's latest novel, he is disappointed that this moment of joy should interrupt the predictable continuity of his sadness ('la alegría inútil en mitad de la peor tristeza') and wonders whether 'todavía, a lo mejor, se podía salir a la calle y seguir andando, una llave en el bolsillo' (739). He is willing to push

away joy in order to maintain the comfort of continuous feeling and experience. Oliveira clings onto the fluid narrative of his wandering through Paris with the frantic repetition of 'todavía'; he would prefer to maintain the fallacy of continuous movement rather than display the reality of the fragments—this moment of happiness, but also the fragmentary notes for Morelli's novel—which have already been integrated into such motion. Jones interprets Oliveira's handing over of the key—'como si rindiera una ciudad'—as a surrender of the possibility of ever understanding the Parisian textual code (32), but her analysis overlooks his original reluctance to take the key which I have foregrounded here. I argue, instead, that the simile (and the quasi-heavenly 'rayo de sol' which shines down on the handover) draws attention to the unmistakeably heroic ego-narrative which Oliveira has contrived, and the constructedness of the continuity which he chooses at this moment. Put simply, Cortázar presents Oliveira's ability to integrate the fragment and therefore move smoothly through Paris as a desirable state achieved by the figure of the male artist.

Yet throughout Cortázar's novel, it is exclusively the male characters who experience urban navigation as an integration of the fragment into a continuous movement; women in *Rayuela* do not have the privilege of enjoying or creating such continuity. Berthe, for example, cannot enter her own apartment because her lover is in there with another man (Cortázar, *Rayuela* 265) and thus, far from proceeding along a route which integrates diversionary or interruptive fragments, she is preoccupied with trying to enter her own domestic space. When Gregorovius describes his childhood experience of crawling over a carpet decorated with a map of the city of Ofir (281), he can only apply the urban movement to la Maga by transforming the literal motion—'atravesaba las murallas guardadas por guerreros negros armados de lanzas'—into a maternal, potentially psychoanalytical evocation of childhood: 'ahora que lo pienso también usted está tirada sobre una alfombra. ¿Qué representa su dibujo? ¡Ah, infancia perdida, cercanía, cercanía!' The terms of la Maga's permeation of the city, in other words, cannot be the same as Gregorovius's own.

The bitter irony is that while Oliveira absorbs la Maga's strategy of urban navigation (as I described earlier), when she is receptive to *his* ideas and accepts them 'por pura ósmosis' (156), the result is devastating. La Maga allows the members of the Club to come into the flat she shares with her baby Rocamadour—and, for a time, with Oliveira—to produce their endless flow of intellectual conversation. Cortázar rarely shows the members entering apartments, instead opening chapters with the characters already in place (like actors positioned on a stage when the curtain goes up) and thus he implies a total permeability of the apartments into which the members enter almost uninvited. When Rocamadour dies, la Maga's elegy compares the group, including herself, to 'hongos, crecemos en los pasamanos de las escaleras, en piezas oscuras donde huele a sebo' (337), transforming their glorious intertextual intellectualism into an invasive fungus which has broken into the apartment and destroyed the child. La Maga opens the elegiac lament with a Surrealist deployment of symbol: 'Rocamadour, ya sé que es como un espejo. Estás durmiendo o mirándote los pies. Yo aquí sostengo un espejo y creo que sos vos' (335). The Surrealist tendency to juxtapose unexpected objects has morphed here into la Maga's perception of equivalence between her son and the mirror ('creo que sos vos'); and the switching between third-person description ('es como un espejo') and second-person address ('te escribo') shows la Maga alternately as Surrealist artist and maternal elegist. Crucially, both roles confirm the speaker's control and the powerlessness of the object, Rocamadour. The elegy mutates into an expression of Surrealist invasion and domination, and thus here the group's obsession with remaining open to—and then integrating into their speech and action—every fragment of intertext has become fatal. Yet this chapter is short, and Cortázar's engagement with the problem of this model of movement for the female is fleeting.

Cortázar also emphasises the effect on the female of an absorptive approach to the fragment in one of the scenes in the mental asylum which Oliveira, Traveler and Talita take over in Buenos Aires. (I will come to the significance of this scene's Argentine rather than Parisian setting in due course.) In that scene, Oliveira watches Talita playing on the hopscotch and mistakes her for la Maga, but also for '[una] figura de rosa', confused by the shadows and the evening light. He soon realises his error:

> Mirándola con un desencanto irónico, Oliveira reconoció su error, vio que el rosa no era rosa, que Talita llevaba una blusa de un gris ceniciento y una pollera probablemente blanca. (474)

'Desencanto' is a peculiar word to use here. It ties the scene's pink tinge, which at first seems to rub off from the pink uniforms of the asylum patients ('la piyama rosa' to which Oliveira refers even on the previous page), to the pink of rose-tinted perspective, and thus portrays the reality of sanity, the cold 'gris' and 'blanca', as the other side of disillusionment. Talita is, significantly, the object of this integration of colours, imagination and reality, and she recounts her feelings about being mistaken for la Maga to Traveler in Chapter 55, resisting 'afiebradamente' his lack of interest and insisting 'en contar, en contarse y, naturalmente, en contarle' (484).

This chapter, however, is the only one not included in the pattern of the second reading of the novel, and thus Talita's articulation of her feelings dissolves into thin air. The threat which Cortázar's model of movement poses for the female is downplayed, and the author is preoccupied, instead, with the effect on Oliveira of absorbing the atmosphere of the mental asylum: that is, it drives him to the edge of drastic action, and he almost throws himself out of the window. I am careful to emphasise 'almost' and 'the edge of', as Cortázar is deliberately ambiguous about this finale. Steven Boldy argues that the different endings to the novel (if, indeed, one can use such chronological terms to talk about Cortázar's text) might be

simultaneously possible, as 'they belong in a sense to the different genres that *Rayuela* combines'; 'what Cortázar is perhaps asking is that we should read the novel and the world simultaneously according to several genres' (Boldy, *Rayuela* 137).[6] By aligning Oliveira's story with 'the world' in this way (and thus elevating it to universality), Boldy both underlines and reproduces Cortázar's focus on the masculine experience of the integration of the fragment in *Rayuela*. Of course, this scene takes place not in Paris but in Buenos Aires and thus the model of dangerous absorption which it maps out (and which, because it features la Maga, is undeniably related to Oliveira's Parisian experience) takes on a tone of retrospective revelation. In other words, Cortázar underlines the fact that Oliveira does not learn this lesson while in Paris, but there remains intent on—and unaware of the dangers of—openness to intertextuality. Even in this Buenos Aires scene, however, the different implications of this model of movement for male and female characters is de-emphasised. Here and in the sequence with Rocamadour, Cortázar moves quickly past the female experience to focus on the significance of urban navigation for the male character. I will now further confirm this masculine complacency of *Rayuela* by turning to *De Pe a Pa*, in which Futoransky explicitly foregrounds the question of gender within her depiction of Parisian navigation.

The clearest example of Laura's attempted navigation of Paris appears in her search for an apartment—'la búsqueda de departamento' (Futoransky, *De Pe a Pa* 35)—which occupies the third chapter.[7] Critics of *Rayuela* have analysed that novel's fixation on the search as a spiritual, metaphysical pursuit; Futoransky replaces this singular Search with a series of pragmatic, and yet equally elusive, searches—to find regular work, to get published, to find a place to live—and the vision of effortless male artistry is replaced once again with the domestic realities of female existence.[8] Laura's search represents both the movement of immigration *to* Paris, as it symbolises her attempt to be accepted into French society, and the movement of acclimation *through* Paris, as she navigates the difficulties of finding accommodation. As Gasquet describes the impossibility of Laura's success—'la casa propia no es ya una utopía (realizable) sino pura quimera' (225)—he implies the endlessness of her searching movement through the city.

The search for a flat is itself made up of accumulating plurals: the prospective apartments which Laura visits combine into a collage of absences—'una pieza generalmente poco soleada, a veces sin baño, otras sin cocina; otras sin baño, cocina ni acensor' (35)—, as do the multiple friends with whom she stays while she hunts for a place of her own—'las experiencias transcurridas en las casas por las que deambula' (36). Gone is the artistic collage of Klee postcards, mirrors and fallen leaves which comprises Oliveira's apartment in *Rayuela*. The accumulation of episodes becomes bitterly epic, as Laura, with a jaundiced irony, describes the endless movement between apartments as 'la odisea' (38). The friends' apartments are themselves collages of other people's rubbish, 'siempre acumulando lo que les va dejando la gente cuando ya no da más y se larga, cosas que ellos nunca tiran y configuran una gran masa heterogénea de basura' (37): a sordid distortion of the romanticised 'mercados de objetos usados' which define Héctor's memories of Paris in Saer's short story 'A medio borrar' (2005: 56), or the collection of modern art in Gertrude Stein's Parisian studio in the early twentieth century (Kennedy 67). This sentence echoes, too, language from Futoransky's description of her creative process, repeating both the verb 'acumular' ('acumulando') and the 'gran masa' of material. These resonances imply that this rubbish has the potential to become creatively productive, but is instead excess waste, neither thrown away nor serving any purpose. By transplanting her creative process onto Laura's practical objective—finding an apartment—Futoransky shows that, in practice, the management of fragments, and the movement through Paris, is even more difficult than a deliberate accumulation and organisation; the fragments reveal themselves as disappointing waste, not the promising 'meteoritos' of intertext. Movement through the city involves, for Futoransky's protagonist, a constant effort to wrench both literal obstacles and fragments of literary influence into a narrative of and for survival. This movement, for Laura, is distinctly inflected by her gender.

She lunches with the editor of a feminist literary magazine, and the editor's life reinforces the necessary model of non-smooth combination of parts which structures the life of a creative woman:

> Raquel tiene que irse temprano porque debe pasar por la Biblioteca del Pompidou a buscar materiales para la revista. Además es madre de un bebé de cuatro meses y su marido, comerciante, la comprende muy poco. Si bien cuenta con dos muchachas que la ayudan, ella debe andar detrás de todo, y para más hoy tiene gente a cenar, así que figúrate mi circo cotidiano. (42)

Raquel inhabits the roles of literary editor, mother and hostess simultaneously; Futoransky's prose here expands from the initial 'porque' and the first, literary excuse, to deny this simple, single reason, evoking with its controlled piling up of clauses the garrulousness of a woman in a rush. The image from *Son cuentos chinos* of laying out the pieces on a table seems especially relevant here: Raquel must construct a narrative—a timetable—out of the different elements of her life, yet she does so not out of a desire to create, but out of a determination to defend her creativity from competing preoccupations. At this point Laura—through Futoransky—vitriolically mocks the misplaced, even contrived, enthusiasm of this feminist magazine and its editors, and I would argue that she resists facing up to the reality of the effort involved in integration because she desperately wants the Paris illusion to be true; she wants to believe that she can 'abrazar [...] la cosmogonía de lo mítico literario' (14).

Yet if at this stage Laura refuses to accept the feminine mode of movement which Raquel enacts, a later scene in the novel reinforces the inevitable danger of the woman's existence in the city when, a single chapter after she moves in, Laura's flat is broken into.

The 'puerta saltada' (1986: 53) transforms the relished permeability of 'por la ventana' in Cortázar's 'La muñeca rota' (or the 'ventanas abiertas' in Saer's *Las nubes*) into a threatening penetration. Laura is wracked with terrified questions:

> ¿Y si hubieran sido los chinos? ¿O por qué no el inquilino anterior que no había querido entregar sus llaves? ¿O esos tipos que hoy a la mañana blindaban la puerta del vecino? ¿Y si fuera una campaña de amedrentamiento de los servicios argentinos? ¿Y si M., el vampiro negro, volvía esta noche?... (53-4)

Linguistic grammatical defaults create an assumption of aggressive masculinity here. That is, 'el inquilino anterior', 'los chinos' and 'el vampiro negro' all portray the perpetrator as male, turning the break-in into a symbolic penetration which threatens, or at least carries connotations of, a sexual assault. This masculine aggressor is foreshadowed in Laura's earlier experience of apartment-hunting, as she nearly moves in with a Latin American student involved with a violent lover. As the student warns, 'sería muy peligroso para ambas, ya que cuando el tipo viniera a buscarla, cosa que seguramente haría tirando la puerta abaja, al darse cuenta de que Laura también era latioamericana, se las tomaría con ella para que le dijera dónde estaba La Becaria, y Laura seguro que la informaría todo ya que el francés siempre andaba armado' (38). Adding a tone of racial assumption to the assertion of female vulnerability, this conditional experience increases the sense of danger which underlies the aftermath of Laura's real break-in. Futoransky also deploys the conditional mood in this later description; the repetition of conditional constructions—'si hubieran sido' and 'si... volvía'—generates fear in the unknown, just as the ellipsis at the end of the passage leaves a space for the reader to fill in the imagined horrors to come. Laura cannot leave her apartment open, permeable to the atmosphere and intertexts of Paris like the open windows in Saer or Cortázar's quotations, because, as a woman, she is in danger of being assaulted. Writing about the depiction of domestic space in women's writing and feminist thought, Schwartz comments that these narratives return to the domestic setting in order to 'transform 'home' into a voyeuristic scene or a charged metafictional zone' and to 'reveal the tortuous nature of urban interiors' (Schwartz, 'Short Circuits' 5). Indeed for Futoransky in *De Pe a Pa*, the domestic interior is neither the inspiring collage that Cortázar describes, nor the airy, window-opened space in Saer's novel; Laura's flat is a victim of masculine penetration, watched, invaded and transformed from a site of comfort into one of fear.

In this light, Raquel's frantic scheduling is confirmed as a valid strategy for controlling the terrifying fragmentation of the female Latin American experience in Paris. When the break-in leaves Laura as an insomniac, she lies awake listening to the sounds of her neighbours' phone calls, calls which morph into conversations with Laura herself, creating a collage of first and third person. The physical invasion of her home in the break-in is mirrored by this auditory and verbal invasion of the voices of her neighbours which blur her individuality into community. It is only the physical layout of the page which salvages some order from this potential linguistic chaos. That is, just as Schwartz identifies the dictionary definitions throughout Futoransky's text as an attempt to catalogue an incomprehensible (urban) reality (*Writing Paris* 140), I make a case for the significance of traditional speech markers and pagination, which reframe this chaotic, collaged experience within comprehensible linguistic structures. Futoransky literalises Raquel's timetabling technique by emphasising, rather than temporal separations between activities, spatial separations between words, but the principle of organisation as a strategy for survival persists.

The trajectory of the narrative scenes, too, is crucial; by placing the scene with Raquel before the scene of the break-in, Futoransky shows the evolution of Laura's attitude. Within *De Pe a Pa*, then, Futoransky first re-enacts—in the scene with Raquel—and then renews—through the tragedy of the burgled house and the new strategy of urban movement which this demands of Laura—the masculine narrative of movement through Paris which Cortázar unfolds in *Rayuela*, and thus she both depicts at the level of character and emphasises at the level of reader the necessity of this new strategy. She replaces Cortázar's model of integration with one of deliberate and difficult effort: rejecting a luxurious creation of continuity and foregrounding a struggle for survival.

I want to conclude by (re)turning to the endings of the two novels, in order to consider the ways in which Cortázar and Futoransky figure the possibility of any resolution to this movement through Paris. I have evoked these novels as being thematically obsessed with, as well as formally structured by, movement through the city, and thus I have begun to depict them as endlessly mobile, keeping their protagonists constantly itinerant. Yet Cortázar's novel makes a case for resolution, as Oliveira, in both readings, returns to Buenos Aires; the challenge of the navigation of Paris has been solved by a reversal of the journey that preoccupies Viñas and Rama: a return to Latin America.

The concept of 'ending' is a fraught one in *Rayuela*, however, as the two reading routes sketched out in the 'tablero' end with different parts of the text. The 'primer libro' ends with Chapter 56, when Oliveira, as I have already discussed, is in the mental asylum in Buenos Aires, and is caught, finally, between multiple possible conclusions. The 'segundo libro' ends with the reader alternating between chapters 58 and 131, directed between the two in a dizzying and endless circular motion. Both endings, then, are structured by a refusal or deferral of conclusion, and the substitution of uncertainty and expansion, as meaning is multiplied in the first reading, and magnified in the second. Cortázar's endings, by deferring conclusion in this way, undermine the smoothness of his proposed model of movement through Paris and point to the method as dissatisfying and unfinished. The two endings of Cortázar's novel seem

to themselves invite, and even perhaps initiate, Futoransky's project twenty years later.

Futoransky concludes *De Pe a Pa* by explicitly addressing 'quienes se interesan en el destino de los protagonistas de la historia luego de alguna situación límite en la trama literaria' (123): she lists seven details about the life of the protagonist and institutions after the end of the novel. These details are signposted by alphabetical markers which evoke the alphabetical framing of the novel's title, and enact, once again, the writer's deliberate wrenching of the informational fragments into a continuous narrative order. Futoransky's ending is deliberate and laboured, as she re-fragments experience and refuses both the miraculous simultaneity with whose creation Cortázar is preoccupied, but also, crucially, the dissatisfaction that his endings produce. She thus brings to a climax her critique of, and indeed also her solution to, the inconclusiveness and impossibility of that earlier writer's masculine complacency about urban navigation. If the form of *Rayuela* betrays, in its two possible finales, the limitations of Cortázar's own model of movement through the city, the form of *De Pe a Pa* enacts, transforms and participates in, until its very final pages, Futoransky's depiction of the female Parisian itinerary as always fragmented, discontinuous, and even dangerous.

NOTES

[1] Rama writes that 'desde el viaje de Esteban Echeverría, en 1825, hasta el viaje de Julio Cortázar en 1953 [*sic*], no hay interrupción en el fluir de escritores latinoamericanos que van a París' (Rama, *Panoramas* 107). Viñas, writing eight years earlier, divides this uninterrupted flow into historical segments, drawing out a trajectory from the pre-1810 'viaje colonial' (149), through the mid-nineteenth-century 'viaje utilitario' (154) and the late nineteenth-century 'viaje consumidor' (175), to the 'viaje estético' of the early twentieth century. These critics' exclusive focus on the transatlantic itinerary allows them to avoid looking directly at the city at the end of that journey.

[2] Julie Jones gives a particularly detailed comparison of the two novels and their protagonists (28-30).

[3] Lida Aronne Amestoy's *Cortázar: la novela mandala* (1972) offers an extensive comparison of *Rayuela* and *Ulysses*. Gerald Martin labels the most emblematic Latin American novels of the 1960s with the adjective 'Joycean', referring to a shared quest for totality, a use of mythology, a complex relationship to history, a heightened awareness of language and a preoccupation with consciousness (Martin, *Labyrinth* 59-60).

[4] Donald Shaw and Santiago Juan-Navarro make a case for the self-referentiality of the expendable chapters, which 'corresponde [...] al elemento de "comentario" por parte del autor' (Shaw 95) as 'the novel provides its own metatext, which comments and theorises about itself' (Juan-Navarro 198). Steven Boldy addresses these chapters both in his 1980 monograph on Cortázar, and then again in his 1990 essay on *Rayuela*, focusing on the way in which they 'subvert the causality of the main narrative' (Boldy, *Novels* 30) or juxtapose registers which invite contemplation of tonal conventionality (Boldy, *Rayuela* 130).

[5] Kerr argues that 'the freedom offered the reader figure is the freedom to choose not among an unlimited number of texts (or readings) but between 'two books' defined beforehand' (29); Colas rephrases this in terms of formal 'function': 'the tablero's 'intended function – to liberate the reader from the structures of bourgeois rationality and utility – as *function* negates its ability to achieve the intended effect' (45-6). Jéssica Pujol Duran pursues this line of thinking to make a case for *Rayuela* as an 'open' text, in Umberto Eco's sense of *The Open Work* (1962), rather than a 'free' one. The text is a 'compilation of experiments', whose possible interpretations are firmly controlled by Cortázar; the reader can control only the order in which these interpretations are revealed and indulged (72, 198).

[6] Boldy lists these as: Oliveira goes mad, commits suicide by throwing himself out of the window, or plans to see a film with Gekrepten (as occurs in the expendable chapters) (Boldy, *Rayuela* 89). In 1990, Boldy modifies these, stretching realism: 'that la Maga has returned in spirit through Talita as a sort of medium or zombie; that Oliveira is going mad; that a sort of collective psychic and existential revolution has overcome the group' (Boldy, *Novels* 137).

[7] In the novel's final footnote, Futoransky admits a correlation between protagonist and author: 'Laura (Falena) Kaplansky fue un personaje que creé con parte de mi melancolía, mi mirada, mis alegrías, dolores y tristeza.' (123) It is this admission which justifies my statement of parallelism between Futoransky's declaration of her creative process in *Son cuentos chinos* and Laura's actions within *De Pe a Pa*.

[8] Jaime Alazraki characterises both Cortázar's short stories and his novels by 'a quest for authenticity' (12). Viñas addresses a search for '[e]l 'cielo' rayueliano' (123). Boldy defines the search by precisely its lack of distinct definition: 'there is an intuitive, visceral certainty that something is very wrong in the world, but at the same time there is a refusal or inability to define what is wrong' (31).

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