LITERATURE AND TECHNOLOGY: A CYBER READING OF KAREN JOY FOWLER'S NOVEL *WIT'S END*

Luciane Oliveira Müller[1]
Sandra Sirangelo Maggio[2]

RESUMO: Este trabalho propõe uma leitura do romance *Wit's End,* de Karen Joy Fowler, que enfoca a conexão entre literatura e tecnologia. A linguagem é bem atenta para com a tecnologia, provocando conexões interativas com a internet que ampliam o leque de níveis de discurso na narrativa. Este tipo de estrutura faz com que a narrativa se torne turva, forçando o leitor a preencher os espaços de acordo com sua percepção. Se a vida real é grandemente influenciada por esse ambiente tecnológico, o mesmo acontece no universo ficcional, uma vez que a produção literária é também escrita sob influência das novidades tecnológicas.

PALAVRAS CHAVES: Literatura e tecnologia; Karen Joy Fowler; *Wit's End*; Crítica Literária.

ABSTRACT: This work proposes a reading of the novel *Wit's End,* by Karen Joy Fowler, which focuses on the connection between literature and the use of technology. In this work, language is well tuned with technology, provoking interactive connections with the internet which widen the range of narrative layers of discourse. This kind of structure makes the narrative somewhat blurred, forcing the reader to fill in the blanks according to his perception. If real life is greatly influenced by technology, the same is true for the fictional environment, as literary production is also written under the influence of technological novelties.

KEYWORDS: Literature and technology; Karen Joy Fowler; *Wit's End*; Literary Criticism.

> *Rima could see Addison's wireless on her laptop in her bedroom, but no one had given her the key, and until someone did, she was stuck with her own server and the intolerable dial-up.*
>
> Karen Joy Fowler, *Wit's End*

Digital technology has been part of our society for some time now, and its influence can be perceived in almost every aspect of our lives. It is possible to identify this influence in work places, homes, teaching institutions, and also pieces of art such as literature. Also, it is

---

[1] Luciane Oliveira Müller é Mestre em Literaturas de Língua Inglesa, doutoranda em Literaturas de Língua Inglesa do PPG-Letras da UFRGS e bolsista CAPES REUNI junto ao Programa de Apoio à Graduação (PAG: Inglês PROGRAD UFRGS). E-mail: lu.muller@hotmail.com.

[2] Sandra Sirangelo Maggio é Doutora em Literatura Anglo-americana e professora de Literaturas de Língua Inglesa nos programas de Graduação e Pós-graduação em Letras da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul. E-mail: maggio@cpovo.net.

RECORTE – revista eletrônica
ISSN 1807-8591
Mestrado em Letras: Linguagem, Discurso e Cultura / UNINCOR
ANO 9 - N.º 1

possible to assert that the invasion of technological trends can arouse some positive and negative responses. On one hand, there are people who were born under such influence and accept it as something usual. On the other hand, there are those born out of such influence, therefore, they are immigrants into this new virtual sphere of existence. If real life is greatly influenced by this technological environment, the same is true for the fictional universe. According to Professor Luciano Rodrigues Lima, "the dominant genre or the core of an artistic manifestation cannot be clearly discerned anymore: installations are trans-artistic works, performatic and technological. Neither is it possible to separate art from technology." (LIMA, 2012). To do so, Lima states that nowadays art and technology are inseparable; or we can say, they are part of the new technological times.

This way, for the purpose of this work, we choose the 2008 novel *Wit's End* written by the American author Karen Joy Fowler (best known for her 2004 novel *The Jane Austen Book Club*) as an example of this technological influence in literature. It is possible to assert that *Wit's End* is a good example of the new technological times, taking into account that it offers some examples of appropriation of internet resources spreading along the plot, where we meet some blogs, internet Wikipedia files, e-mails and other resources. Such interactivity triggers a non-linear narrative structure that evokes other well-known narratives such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula,* which are similarly written, in the sense that they also have different layers of narrative discourse, and incorporate the top technology available in their time. Both Gothic classics were also written under the influence of novelties in technology, a kind of technology that probably also provoked some discomfort and estrangement, as well as curiosity on part of their contemporary readers.

Normally, a fictional story offers different readers different possibilities of interpretation. It is structurally the function of the narrator to present different literary resources to involve the readers and instigate their curiosity. Sometimes what is written seems not feasible; however, readers should always be aware that they are reading a piece of fiction, and each fiction has its own set of rules. Umberto Eco reminds us, in *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods,* that

> the basic rule in dealing with a work of fiction is that the reader must tacitly accept a fictional agreement, which Coleridge called 'the suspension of disbelief'. The reader has to know that what is being narrated is an imaginary story, but he must not therefore believe that the writer is telling lies. (ECO, 2004, p. 75).

In other words, if something is not *feasible* in the actual world, this does not mean that it is not possible in the fictional world. Each work is a self-contained universe, led by its own rules, which are usually attuned with aesthetic project of taste and style that fits the norms of the time in which the work has been created. Sometimes the most interesting part of a piece of fiction is this characteristic of something being impossible to happen in actual life, but perfectly possible in the fictional world. Likewise, as Fowler seems acquainted with this fictional agreement proposed by Eco, the world depicted in *Wit's End* makes the reader constantly think about 'the suspension of disbelief' along the reading. Also, this novel presents the interesting characteristic of intertwining actual life with fiction; it is possible to say that this is by far one of the greatest traits in this story.

Reading a fictional story is always an adventure, especially when a reader in the actual world realizes that a given fictional character finds that someone she knows in *her* actual world also exists in the fictional universe of a book that this character is reading. This is the context in which the protagonist of Fowler's novel, Rima, is inserted. The different degrees or layers of reality that we find are at least intriguing. At a certain stage in the narrative Rima discovers that her godmother has written a book, named *Ice City*. There is a character in *Ice City,* who murdered his wife. This character is named after Rima's father, Bim Lansill. Rima is horrified as she meets a "made-up man of the same name who killed his wife with her cat and almost got away with it" (FOWLER, 2008, p. 10). This fact makes her pursue information about her father, to find out whether or not he had been a real murderer in his actual life. Rima needs to know if the coincidence is just a poetical device used by the author of *Ice City,* or if it is a real fact in her life. In addition to that, as Rima stays for some time in her godmother's house as a guest, she starts being haunted by some other characters from the novel *Ice City*, such as Pamela Price and Maxwell Lane. By reading *Wit's End,* it soon becomes clear that this story comes from no ordinary wood[3], which many other readers have walked through.

As American booksellers have the habit of publishing some comments and praises on the back cover of the books, in our edition of *Wit's End* we found it interesting that the daily newspaper *The Oregonian* refers to the novel as to "a cyber-gothic-mystery-romance". Such

---

[3] We borrow the term "wood" from Umberto Eco's book *Six Walk in the Fictional Woods*. In Eco's words, "woods are a metaphor for the narrative text, not only for the text of fairy tales but for any narrative text." (ECO, 2004, p. 6).

RECORTE – revista eletrônica
ISSN 1807-8591
Mestrado em Letras: Linguagem, Discurso e Cultura / UNINCOR
ANO 9 - N.º 1

definitions are very broad and hard to seek; however, they give a clear idea of what kind of story the reader will be involved in. Four definitions for only one novel, this may mean something.

We might then pursue some of the arrows indicated by *The Oregonian,* starting with the term 'cyber', a term not so easy to define. A search on the *Oxford Advancer's Learner's Dictionary* led to the entry defining cyber as "connected with electronic communication networks, especially the internet." It goes further, mentioning a prefix which came from the noun "cybernetics", meaning "the study of communication and control, especially concerned with comparing human and animal brains with machines and electronics devices." Besides that, this prefix also originates other terms as cyberspace and cyber literature, among others.

Then, with an eye to this given definition of "cyber" and the relation between literature and internet we draw on Professor Andre de Jesus Neves's ideas, in an attempt to broaden the understanding of the core of cyber literature. This way, according to Neves,

> literature in virtual space becomes a fertile ground for dialogue between cultures, whose dilution and hybridization are unavoidable. In the same way, hegemonic power and authorial autonomy are also altered and become as diluted and hybrid as their correspondent cultural products, as happens with the canon in relation to fan-fiction. (NEVES, 2012)[4]

Although *Wit's End* is not set in a virtual space as the one proposed by Neves, this novel is, a hybrid work of art which mixes literature and cyber trends. Also, the novel mentioned within the novel has been written and is to be published in a virtual space. As Neves pinpoints other characteristics of cyber literature, he states that "it is possible to say that freedom, in cyberspace, and in literature, leads to a flight from reality that allows, often, its recreation as the search of a desirable possible 'reality', as an eternal search for the Grail" [5] (NEVES, 2012). He proposes that both literature and virtual space provide a form of escape from reality. Thus, the question is: "Can we define reality?" In search of an order to answer we draw on Professor Castor Bartolomé Ruiz, who says that if we search for a definition of reality, "we need to cut out all the singularities that do not fit in out theoretical model, and find ourselves compelled to ignore and deny everything that does not take part in the pre-

---

[4] Our translation from the Portuguese original: "a literatura no espaço virtual torna-se um terreno fértil de diálogo entre culturas, cuja diluição e hibridação são inevitáveis. Assim como seus produtos culturais também se diluem, hibridam-se, perdem poder hegemônico e autonomia autoral, como ocorre com os cânones em relação à cultura de fã."

[5] Our translation from the Portuguese original: "é possível dizer que a liberdade no ciberespaço e na literatura conduz à fuga do real que permite, muitas vezes, a sua recriação como a busca de 'uma realidade' desejável, possível, como a eterna busca do Graal."

RECORTE – revista eletrônica
ISSN 1807-8591
Mestrado em Letras: Linguagem, Discurso e Cultura / UNINCOR
ANO 9 - N.º 1

established assumptions".[6] (RUIZ, 2003, p. 45). If reality cannot be defined let's see what other authors say about that. Lima proposes that,

> The essence of the virtual is the representation of reality, simulating a time and a space, or rather, a special temporality and spatiality, in a spectral dimension. This is not a parallel dimension to reality, since the real and the virtual are interconnected, at different levels. The literary – as virtual – is also a form of representation, although it is also more than that, because it has a certain degree of autonomy in relation to the real. (LIMA, 2012).[7]

Likewise, *Wit's End* has this interesting characteristic of intertwining a made-up 'actual' universe and a virtual one. And it is possible to assert that this mixture allows the protagonist Rima to pursue what Neves calls 'a longed for reality'.

Along the narrative the reader discovers that Rima is a 29 year-old woman who lost all her family – her mother (aneurysm) fifteen years ago, young brother (car crash) four years ago, and father (leukemia) recently. Within this sad context, Rima accepts her godmother's invitation to stay with her for some time in this beach house named Wit's End in order to find relief from the pain caused by her father's decease. What she finds in her godmother's house, however, is an atmosphere of mystery and discomfort, where godmother and goddaughter have to find a way of living together.

The story is told by a third person narrator, from Rima's point of view. There we follow Rima's incursions into the (fictional) actual world of Wit's End (Addison's beach house) and the fictional world of *Ice City* (Addison's book). If we consider Umberto Eco's metaphor of the woods, as we reach the end of Fowler's novel *Wit's End* it is possible to see that it comprises some layers of fictional woods. And those woods hide mysteries which mean, in Eco's words, that a text cannot say everything, the reader has to take part in the work, filling in the gaps (ECO, 2004, p. 3), and solving the mysteries. Accordingly, as a choice, we can enter Rima's fictional wood and follow her path and try to decipher her clues as an attempt to unfold the mysteries of Wit's End, the beach , and *Ice City,* Addison's novel*,* in order to shape Rima's life story and the truth about her father and the death of her mother.

---

[6] Our translation from the Portuguese original: "devemos podar todas as singularidades que não se adaptam ao nosso modelo teórico e nos vemos impelidos a ignorar ou negar tudo aquilo que... não se encaixa plenamente nas premissas preestabelecidas."
[7] Our translation from the Portuguese original: "A essência do virtual é a representação da realidade, simulando um tempo e um espaço, ou melhor, uma temporalidade e uma espacialidade especiais, em uma dimensão espectral. Não se trata de uma dimensão paralela do real, pois real e virtual se interligam, em diferentes pontos. O literário - como o virtual - é também representação, embora seja muito mais que isto, pois possui um certo grau de autonomia em relação ao real."

Although Rima has lost her parents and her brother, the one she seems to miss the more is her brother Oliver. He was four years younger than Rima, although this age difference does not seem to matter. From very early they develop a relationship of complicity. She partakes with him her previews knowledge, games, life experience. As a young girl, Rima would play a game she invented and named the 'mirror game'. Some rules from that game are explained in the excerpt below,

> You walked around the house holding a large mirror in front of you, pointing up. You weren't allowed to look at the ground beneath your feet. You looked only into the mirror. This transformed the terrain most familiar to you into something new and strange, a fantasy-land hidden in plain sight above your head in your very own house. You couldn't get anything like the same effect simply lying on your bed looking upward. You had to be seriously disoriented – up down and down up. (FOWLER, 2008, p. 115).

Lately, when Rima realized that Oliver could manage the 'mirror game', she decided to partake it with Oliver and from that moment on, as the passage below shows,

> the world in the mirror was now an actual place. It had a name – Upside-down Town – and a history that Rima was always adding to. Queens, of course, in honor of Alice's *Through the Looking-Glass*, and also because who doesn't like a story with queens in it? Plus a mirror image of Rima (and now Oliver) – kids who looked just like them, but were otherwise opposite in every way. (FOWLER, 2008, p. 118).

Like in a mirror, we see here Rima and Oliver, fictional characters in this book by Fowler, create their own fictional world, where everything is possible. The inclusion of Oliver into the game causes Rima's imaginary world to be invested with reality, it becomes 'an actual place'. If the siblings partake in the same actual place, their imagination can bring them to innumerous imaginary places that we readers cannot access. This is similar to what we have in virtual domains of limited accessed, where only the members are allowed to share a certain simulated reality created. Similarly to Upside-down Town, there is another imaginary place in *Wit's End,* which is Ice City. According to the narrator,

> Ice City is a made-up bar where made-up drinks are served to made-up people. Maxwell Lane is always one of those people. The others are whomever Maxwell wants them to be – people from his past, the famous, the real, the fictional, the living, the dead…Ice City is a state of mind, a psychological destination. Maxwell Lane goes there when he wants to drink more, feel less…*Ice City* the book is about betrayal, the unforeseen consequences of careless actions, the advisability of keeping secrets…Maxwell goes to Ice City in every book, but *Ice City* is the only book that ends in Ice City. (FOWLER, 2008, p. 120)

These imaginary places (Upside-down Town and Ice City) presented by Fowler evoke some well known video games such as *The Sims*[8] and *Second Life*[9]. One of the significant aspects that are similar in those games is the possibility of fleeing from the actual world and the troubles that actual life may offer. Another interesting detail is the fact that Ice City and *The Sims* were created by two different entities with similar names Maxwell Lane (a fictional character) and Maxs (an American company). Furthermore, the narrative also presents a novel written by Addison named *Ice Cit*y. This way, there are two Ice Cities mentioned in *Wit's End* - one is an imaginary place created by a fictional character of Addison's, and the other one is an imaginary universe created by Addison, who is also a fictional character of Fowler's novel. A reader should be very attentive to not mix those stories and misunderstand them. Such twists in reality, actual reality, virtual reality, fictional reality, makes us ultimately think of all those authors, such as Shakespeare, Borges of Pirandello, and all those philosophers and theologians, who indicate the possibility that maybe Fowler, the person, as all of us, the readers - might also be the product of the imagination of a creator external to our present reality.

Thus, *Ice City,* as mentioned before, is a fictional story written by a fictional character in the novel *Wit's End.* The author of *Ice City* is Addison, who is Rima Lansill's godmother, and has also been closely related to Rima's father, Bim Lansill. It is possible to perceive that *Wit's End* is an intriguing story which has the recurrent characteristic of repeating names, as we see here,

> Rima had her own colorful history with fictional characters. Her father had been more fictional than you might guess. A character in Addison's seventh book was named after him – Edward Wilson Lansill – though the name he went by was Bim; even on Rima's birth certificate he was listed as Bim Lansill … Rima's father was a writer too … he was famous enough. But nowhere near as famous as the made-up man of the same name who killed his wife with her own cat and almost got away with it. (FOWLER, 2009, p. 10).

Both characters, Rima and Bim, have some similarities in their biographies; first of all, their stories resemble other fictional stories. Both Bim Lansills, the one from the book *Ice City* and Rima's father, have finished their course, one because the book has already been

---

[8] *The Sims* is a game developed by Maxs and published by electronic Arts. This game is a simulation of the daily activities of one or more virtual persons ('sims') in a suburban household. This source of information is available at, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_sims . Accessed on February 6th, 2012.
[9] *Second Life* is an online virtual world developed by Linden Lab. It enables Second Life users, called Residents, to interact with each other through avatars. Information is available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Life . Accessed on May 16th, 2012.

RECORTE – revista eletrônica
ISSN 1807-8591
Mestrado em Letras: Linguagem, Discurso e Cultura / UNINCOR
ANO 9 - N.º 1

written, and the other one (Rima's father) because he is dead. As for Rima, things happened differently: in her case, "the character came first and she later. Rima was named after the heroine of *Green Mansions*"[10]. (FOWLER, 2009, p. 10). As in the story which originates her name, Rima is a survivor. In *Wit's End* Rima is pursuing her past in order to understand her present and to establish her future.

The fictional world Fowler depicts in *Wit's End* is constructed under the influence of the internet. This cyber piece of literature has different levels of discourse to it. For one thing, this novel evokes an internet file which has many links that go forth and back. As a consequence, the pace of the narrative becomes non-linear. Like in those Renaissance pieces, we have a fictional structure (as the one in Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*), that remind us of a fictional universe woven in a way similarly to the way we sew a quilt. This happens not only on the part of the writer, but also in the interactive moves of the reader, who needs to piece things together as he goes forth and back through letters, e-mails, excerpts of the novel *Ice City*, blogs, to build sense out of the story that is being narrated. Embedded within the main plot, there is also a discussion about the good and bad sides of the internet. In positive terms, the internet is a virtual place where zillions of information are stored and can be, most of the time, accessed with facility. Whenever Rima needs some information she searches for it on the internet. As to a negative side, there is reference to the crimes that are committed by internet users, such as invading private data, or spreading a lie along the net, harming someone else's privacy. This topic is approached by Addison and Rima, when they talk about lack of privacy within the net. In Rima's case, some circumstances related to her brother Oliver's death, which she intended to hide, were revealed because of the internet. When Rima tells Scorch that her brother was killed in a car crash, she changes the facts a little and says that he was killed by a drunk driver. However, Scorch knows that the drunk driver was Oliver. She knows that because of something she read it in Addison's blog.

In effect, *Wit's End* is written under the influence of a cyber concept. In other words, this novel portrays virtual places as the engine which fuels the narrative. On the one hand, there is Rima's imaginary place, like Upside Down Town, which she used to flee from reality when she was a child. On the other hand, there are Addison's inventions of fictional universes like *Ice City,* the novel, and Ice City, the state of mind. Both places partake in the same

---

[10] *Green Mansions* is a novel by William Henry Hudson, written in 1904. This novel tells the story of Rima, a forest dwelling girl who has a story similar to Tarzan's and Mowgli's.

RECORTE – revista eletrônica
ISSN 1807-8591
Mestrado em Letras: Linguagem, Discurso e Cultura / UNINCOR
ANO 9 - N.º 1

premise of escape from the problems reality may offer. Taking into account all the elements rose above – cyber and literature within this interesting fictional universe it is possible to conclude that *Wit's End* is a good example of our contemporary fiction.

In order to close our discussion about this interesting and representative novel, we would like to insert it into the Gothic tradition, by relating the notion of "liquid modernity", proposed by the Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, and the epithet "Gothic" granted to *Wit's End* by *The Oregonian*. As a theoretician, Bauman creates the expression "liquid modernity" to refer to our contemporary times, as opposed to what existed before, in the times of "solid modernity". In solid times, there were rules to be followed, an acknowledged plan of ethics and morality, and a clearer division between religious and moral notions respecting what is good or evil, or right and wrong. There was also a wider gap separating reality and imagination that we have now. We do not mean that one of these systems is better than the other - there are pros and cons to every sort of paradigm - but we stress the fact that we live in times of change. The word "liquid", in Bauman's terminology, indicates how relative things are: as soon as we try to hold something, to examine it, to extract some sense out of it, to come to a conclusion, the thing seems to leak and flow through our fingers.

Times of change, like ours, are fertile grounds for Gothic literature, because that kind of text feeds on the feelings of uncertainty, fear, and anxiety. Thus the accuracy in the multi-ranging label of "cyber-gothic-mystery-romance" used to refer to Fowler's novel. In solid times, if readers considered Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, for instance, no one would argue about the fact that Count Dracula was the villain, as opposed to the five nice gentlemen (Dr. Van Helsing, Dr. Seward, Lord Holmwood, Quincey Morris and Jonathan Harker) who would rescue the ladies in danger. More recent interpretations, however, can take both extremes as representation of different sides of human tendencies. In the same line, the traditional solid reading of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* would have the readers sympathizing with the predicament of young Victor Frankenstein rather than with the horrible creature he created. In liquid, postmodern, post-colonial times, however, the equation good *vs*. evil is not so easily accepted anymore, and most readers would consider Frankenstein's role as the provoker of the catastrophes in the story because of his recklessness and irresponsibility. The fact that the creature is violent and ugly, and also the fact that Frankenstein is noble and well-meaning, are evaluated through different standards in liquid times.

RECORTE – revista eletrônica
ISSN 1807-8591
Mestrado em Letras: Linguagem, Discurso e Cultura / UNINCOR
ANO 9 - N.º 1

We could cast a brief consideration upon the historic development of Gothic trends applied to art, which especially flourishes in times of social change. We can start in the 10th or 11th century, with the building of the first cathedrals. Such great temples are in themselves indications of a period of crisis. During the first millennium of the Christian Era there was no need for such displays of power. It is only when the first Universities are created, and independent ideas start to multiply, that the emphasis on the notion of order, and the threat of punishment, become indispensable mechanisms that keep the social order going. If we advance three more centuries and consider the fusion of mediaeval and renaissance art, in a work such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, we will acknowledge that the formula for writing good poetry was the same formula used to build good Gothic cathedrals: the tripod Beauty - Balance - Simplicity. Beauty, to be taken in the Aristotelian sense; balance, indicating the effect sunny lightness Gothic architecture is supposed to extract. If a person stands at the entrance of a Gothic cathedral, and from there stares fixedly to the altar at the other side and walks slowly through the aisle, the effect provoked should be that of leaving the ground and moving towards the arches above, as if leaving the spheres of the mundane to meet God above. This effect is reached through careful mathematical arrangements and sophisticated techniques that extract the impression of lightness and harmony out of the juxtaposition of huge blocks of granite, marble or sandstone, that are only prevented from falling down because of the tension each block exerts upon its counterpart. As to the effect of simplicity, that is merely an illusory effect. Behind the simplicity of a tale by Chaucer, for instance, the whole content of the Trivium and the Quadrivium[11] can be glimpsed at. Behind the apparent simplicity, the scholarly mind can identify the subtlety and the complexity hidden in the design.

If we again advance further four or five centuries, and move to England in the 18th Century, the meaning of the word Gothic is completely changed. Gothic novels are now a synonym to horror stories. Each single element of the mediaeval tripod Beauty-Balance-Simplicity seems to have collapsed into its opposite. As an effect of centuries of specialization, now things are divided into parts so as to be understood. The more repressive the social rules, the more dichotomist the display of the elements becomes. Works such as *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* or *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* account for the

---

[11] The terms *Trivium* and *Quadrivium* refer to two of the stages in the organization of the educational system in medieval times.

separation, division, of individuality, to the point of splitting the same individuality into two different physical representations of the millenary clash of good *vs*. evil. One further step into our fast time travel through the history of Gothic tradition and we reach the liquid times in which *Wit's End* has been written. Liquid times can be puzzling and perplexing, which, by the way, are impressions suggested by the title of the novel. According to *The American Heritage Dictionary*, being at one's wit's end signifies being "completely puzzled and perplexed, not knowing what to do." In this sense, the title of our cyber-gothic-mystery-romance is so well tuned with our time of social crisis as was the time when William Langland (c. 1377), in the 14th Century, first used the word "wit" to refer to making use of one's mental faculties, in the narrative poem *Piers Ploughman*. If we consider the movements in the evolution of the concept of Gothic art, it seems that the wheel has come full circle.

REFERENCES

AMNER, Christine. (Ed.) *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003.

BAUMAN, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity, 2000.

CHAUCER, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales*. New York: Norton Critical Editions, 2005.

ECO, Umberto. *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*. Translated into English by Robert Lumley. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004.

FOWLER, Karen Joy. *Wit's End*. New York: Plume, 2008.

LANGLAND, William. *The Vision of Piers the Ploughman*. Available at the Gutenberg Project < http://archive.org/details/visionofpiersplo00languoft>. Accessed on March 15th, 2012.

LIMA, Luciano Rodrigues. *O Hipertexto Literário na Internet: apenas o poema em tela ou uma nova arte verbal cibernética?* Available at, http://www.hipertextus.net?volume1/artigo10-luciano-lima.pdf. Accessed on February 22nd, 2012.

NEVES, André de Jesus. *A Literatura Marginal na Internet: o fenômeno fan-fiction como instrumento de disseminação e divulgação das/nas margens*. Available at, http://www.poscritica.uneb.br/revistaponti/arquivos/v1n1/v1n1-153-166.pdf. Accessed on February 22nd, 2012.

OREGONIAN, The. Available at http://biz.oregonian.com/search. Access on March 13th, 2012.

RUIZ, Castor Bartolomé. *Os Paradoxos do Imaginário*. São Leopoldo: Editora Unisinos, 2003.

SHELLEY, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 2nd ed. New York: Norton Critical Editions, 2012.

STEVENSON, Robert Louis. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Oxford: OUP, 2006.

STOKER, Bram. *Dracula.* New York: Norton Critical Editions, 1997.

WEHMEIER, Sally Ed.). *Oxford Advancer's Learner's Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

WILDE, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. New York: Norton Critical Editions, 1988.