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- ¹ In the wake of the narrative turn in social sciences¹, Marina Lambrou's publication explores the dark continent of narratology: disnarration. As she analyses the stylistics of the unmentioned in various storytelling forms – from newspaper articles to Victorian novels and contemporary films – the Kingston University professor seems to agree with semiologist Roland Barthes' now-famous statement: "The narratives of the world are numberless. Narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances [...] narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural"². Indeed, Lambrou's study regards narrative as a universal form which is to gather from the examples she analyses. Focusing on one particular dimension of narratology coined by Gerald Prince in an eponymous article³ published in *Style* – "The Disnarrated" – this book aims at expanding Prince's narratological conception of events that do not happen but are referred to in narratives. As the first systematic study on disnarration, this publication intends to show the extensive uses of an unconventional narrative technique, while describing its stylistic constants.
- ² In the first two chapters of the book, Marina Lambrou presents an overview of some key theories of narratology to situate the disnarrated within a broader narrative scheme where storytelling is regarded as a universal activity. These summaries of the main texts in the study of narratives provide a clear and synthetic view of the field, which may certainly interest readers who are not acquainted with narratology. Bringing together narratologists like Todorov and Forster and sociolinguists such as Labov and Waletzky, Lambrou shows the interconnections between these fields despite their bifurcated focus – on fictional narratives for the former and on factual narratives for the latter. These first chapters also serve Lambrou's intention to distinguish narrativity and tellability⁴ as "the unmentioned" she analyses in her study illustrates the links between them. In the midst of this general introduction, Prince's disnarrated category of narrative refusal emerges in its different manifestations: ellipses or textual

gap, negation and hypothetical conditional structures. These gaps that the audiences are invited to fill in are later discussed in relation to Possible Worlds Theory⁵. Both counterfactual divergence (Dannenber⁶) and forking paths (Borges⁷) are introduced to situate the disnarrated within a philosophical view of reality. By situating the disnarrated within this theoretical framework, Lambrou illuminates the unnatural qualities of this type of narrative as it violates basic expectations of plot structure and temporality.

- 3 Chapters 3, 4 and 5 each examine disnarration in a given genre of narratives. Whereas chapters 3 and 4 analyze disnarration in factual narratives, the former focusing on personal narratives produced by children and the latter targeting news stories, chapter 5 solely deals with fictional narratives among diverse genres: John Fowle's novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), Tobias Wolff's short story *Bullet in the Brain* (1996) and Damien Chazelle's film *La La Land* (2016). Drawing a bridge between theory and concrete examples, the stylistic analysis is more detailed in these chapters. For instance, the analyses of children's personal narratives are grounded on the methodology developed by Labov and Waletzky, as it decomposes interviews into Abstract, Orientation, Complicating Action, Evaluation, Coda (which consist of the different phases of a personal narrative), at the same time adding the category of "Disnarration" to point out a specific phenomenon in narratives recalling near-death experiences. In a similar manner, Lambrou's study of disnarrated news stories draws from Bednarek and Caple's theoretical framework⁸ while highlighting three of their categories - Negativity, Superlativeness, and Impact - as central to disnarration. Finally, the way the three fictional narratives are analyzed seems to be more autonomous. Chapter 5 is indeed divided into three separate developments dwelling on the specific devices used to convey disnarration in each text. The attention to the particularities of these narratives allows the reader to further understand the different forms and functions of the disnarrated. Despite the specificity of this very chapter, it presents many argumentative similarities with the two preceding chapters, which thereby allows the reader to retain the overall linguistic forms found in both factual and fictional narratives: degree adverbs, negation, and hypothetical clauses.
- 4 In the introduction, Lambrou stated that her aim was to go beyond fiction, to showcase a wide range of uses of disnarration across a variety of storytelling genres apart from the expected fictional texts. However, by letting fictional texts have the final word, the structure of the book doesn't reflect that ambition. One might have thought the author would have begun with the expected examples of disnarration before presenting more surprising and challenging examples. As for the personal fictional examples used, they are mainly drawn from popular culture (Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* p. 23, or Damien Chazelle's *La La Land* p. 94), but neither does the introduction mention this choice, nor is it ever grounded in the course of the analysis - whereas a development on the very "modern" trend of disnarration as an unconventional yet popular scheme would have been greatly appreciated. Finally, readers may be warned that the editing of the book includes abstracts and references at the beginning of each chapter, as well as for the introduction and conclusion, which allows reading any sections independently from the rest of the book, but simultaneously results in a patchwork-like structure. For instance, the repurposing of Lambrou's 2005 study of Cypriot children's personal narratives in chapter 3 feeds that impression, even though some readers may certainly value this additional genre within the variety of uses explored.

- 5 To conclude, this short book opens many possibilities for the study of narratives in the scientific fields of film studies, journalism, linguistics, and literature, while expanding the scope of a now fundamental form of storytelling. The paradoxical tellability of the possible yet unreal infuses this engaging work by inviting readers to walk along many paths to be explored...
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NOTES

1. The “narrative turn” is a concept invented years after the fact to designate a wide-spread interest in the 1980s in storytelling, beyond the field of literature, and a general appraisal of narratives which drew from the work of structuralists from the 1960s.
2. Barthes Roland, “Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives”, *Image-Music-Text*, London, Fontana, 1977, p. 79, first edition 1966.
3. Prince Gerald, “The Disnarrated.”, *Style*, vol. 22, n° 1, 1988, p.1-8, available online: www.jstor.org/stable/42945681.
4. According to Lambrou: “Tellability is what makes a story worth telling in the first place so there must be some kind of intrinsic interest in the so what? point of the story.” (p. 17-18).
5. “Possible Worlds” is a philosophical theory based in logic. At a micro-textual level, it focuses on the modal status of a proposition. The concept of “possible worlds” is most commonly attributed to Gottfried Leibniz. However, it is often used in literary studies to address notions of truth in fictionality.
6. In *Coincidence and Counterfactuality*, Hilary Dannenberg identifies two eponymous plot strategies in fiction, which constructed around pivotal moments of characters’ personal trajectories which converge or diverge. See Dannenberg Hilary, *Coincidence and Counterfactuality*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2008.
7. Borges’s short story “The Garden of Forking Paths”, has been the basis for numerous literary and media scholars. In it, a character by the name of Ts’ui Pên has written a novel to be discovered after his death in which all possible outcomes of an event occur simultaneously, each one itself leading to further proliferations of possibilities. See Borges Jorge-Luis, “The Garden of Forking Paths”, *Collected Fictions*, London, Penguin, 2000, first edition 1944.
8. Bednarek and Caple identified a set of values attached to news discourse. These include but are not limited to Negativity, Impact, Timeliness, Proximity and Prominence. The presence of these values assures the likelihood that the event will register as newsworthy and result in a publication: See Bednarek Monika, Caple Helen, *The discourse of News Values*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2017.

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