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Melding Identities: The Kailyard and Victorian Society
in James Barrie's *Peter and Wendy*.

Treball de Fi de Grau/ BA dissertation

Author: Sara Gómez Calvete

Supervisor: Dr. Andrew Monnickendam

Departament de Filologia Anglesa i de Germanística

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“Second to the right, and straight on till morning”
(James M. Barrie, *Peter and Wendy*, 1911)

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Abstract

In 1888, James Matthew Barrie fathered the Kailyard movement, the novels were based on Scotland's past rural communities, which resisted industrialization, however the serialized stories idealized the idea of Scotland for the middle-class Victorians in England. The nature of this new fiction gave way to a wave of harsh criticism often intended as a punishment for the author's accomplishments and proceeded to diminish his work. In consequence, at the publication of his novelized *Peter and Wendy* (1911), his identity was divided into a Scottish writer and English playwright.

The aim of this paper is to reconcile the two identities, divided across time by scholars and critics, through the analysis of the novel *Peter and Wendy* (1911) and the tropes showcased in Kailyard novels, such as *A Window in Thrums* (1889). Both stories gravitate towards certain elements that accentuate the difference between the child and the adult. Landscape is treated as a physical barrier, whereas growth is emotional and intellectually censored and encouraged in the communities. Furthermore, motherhood is a performative role used for different purposes in the instruction of a child but shared in attitudes, which gives power to the woman at home. In this project, I will not only propose past Scottish influences but contemporary to the author as well. Through a close reading of text, I will identify subtle marks of the emerging New Woman of the 1890s represented by the moral decay of Captain Hook. The correlation between past and present influences, will unify the two identities James Barrie embodies.

Keywords: Scottish Literature, Kailyard, James M. Barrie, Children's Literature, *Peter and Wendy*, Victorian Era, New Woman.

Introduction

James Mathew Barrie's Kailyard fiction has been object of devotion by the mass audiences and of rage by the critics. Born in Kirriemuir 1860, the Scottish author draws inspiration from the pre-industrialization rural communities of his native land described by his mother. Thus, the feeling of nostalgia and idealization is as strong as the resilience of the religious communities he portrays in the stories. Published in 1888, *Auld Lichts Idylls* was the first compilation of short stories, which initiated the Kailyard literary movement and propelled Barrie to fame in the industrialized Victorian Britain.

Before that, Barrie had studied in Edinburgh where he refined his skills in theatre and prose. Born the son of a weaver, his economic status was above the average in the village and the opportunities for a better education flourished before him. After his training, Barrie left for London to never come back to Scotland. This decision would later cost him the dwindling of his reputation and credibility as an author, as accusations of selling his home as a *Locus Amoenus* for the English readers, while Scotland was deeply industrialized, became the basis for criticism of the Kailyard. The critic's contentiousness for sentimentalism and anti-Scottishness created the figure of the fallen Scottish author, thus this gave way to the Londoner playwright Barrie.

Peter and Wendy ever since its theatrical release in 1904 and novelistic adaptation in 1911 has too been object of admiration and analysis alike. The author's contribution to children's literature raised several questions of his public and private life, as it was known he had a close relationship with his mother and afterwards with the Llewyn-Davies family. This newfound fascination did not fall short to muddy the analysis of not only this work, but previous ones as well with the notion of the Oedipus-complex. Once again, the author is pinned under a tag which does not allow other reinterpretations based on critical analysis to exist.

In this paper, I aim to merge the two identities Barrie has been given by critics, the Scottish outcast and the children's literature playwright. Thus, I argue as the same author, who has succeeded in fathering a literary movement and a children's play, his influences should be interchangeable within the texts. To prove this statement, I will analyse through a close reading of the text, the novelisation of *Peter and Wendy*, to find elements and attitudes which are shared with the Kailyard movement. In addition, to further prove that the influences not only come from a psychological damaged past, I will evaluate the emergence of the New Woman, a contemporary movement, in relation to the character's interactions.

Few studies focus on the relation between the theoretical frameworks mentioned previously, thence I propose to narrow the analyses to the following tropes. On the one hand, the treatment of the space as means to keep the child separated from the adult is similar and complementary to the notion of keeping separated emotional and intellectual growth, as means to safeguard a tradition. This tradition is then translated into the sense of community and the censorship put in place to sustain the separation between what is a token for Kailyard, parochial and rural from England's decaying industrialization. Furthermore, the performative roles set around motherhood, modify the power dynamics for the woman at home and engage with new existing attitudes, each of them representative of an expectation based on the Kailyard woman, the English Victorian woman, or the New Woman as a new construct. Finally, the environment to which motherhood is confined in will be analysed as well, with the pertinent references to the Kailyard as all these concepts will be further shown intrinsically connected with the presence of the text in the following section below.

1. Victorian Scotland, Kailyard and tropes.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Scotland had suffered a deep industrialization of its main cities, young country men and women were plucked from their rural villages to join the workforce of the textile industry and even crossed the border to England, where they found not only more diversity in jobs, but also in morals. This phenomenon deeply affected the social fabric of its community, having long been governed by the Presbyterian dictates of the Free Kirk. The parochial institution, morally conservative and extremely protective of its rural way of life, had been in decline for as long as the country had been colonized by the industrialization. From the deterioration of the former evangelical bucolic life, the Kailyard movement surges:

But the Kailyard is against change, and when it looks to the past- usually one generation back – it describes a timeless stasis of isolated rural communities whose dramas revolve around the minister or the dominie – arrivals, departures, weddings, funerals and the pitfalls of petty presumption. It must be admitted that these themes belong within the Scottish tradition of feeling and domestic realism, but it has sadly dwindled to a sentimentalised subgenre. (Watson, 1984:315)

Characterised by its simple versions of pastoral Scotland rather than serious historical representation, Kailyard fiction arranges its exotics scenes of caricatured backwards folk figures around interchangeable conventional tropes and themes of love, covenantry, and sentimentalised rural life to contribute to a mythic depiction of Scottish history. (Cook, 1999:1053)

Along with the patronage of Presbyterian ministers, the first Kailyard stories were published in the *British Weekly*, an evangelical journal established in London. Together with its main proponent Rev. William R. Nicoll, James Barrie broke into the literary market of popular literature in Britain with his *Auld Licht Idylls* (1888) and later novel *A Window in Thrums* (1889). Thus, Barrie became the father of Kailyard, together with S. R. Crockett and Ian Maclaren, who would join him. The latter wrote *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (1894), which reached new heights in popularity “quarter of a million copies were quickly sold, half a million in the States- figures so phenomenal at any period that we may wonder exactly wherein the attraction lay.” (Blake, 1951:31)

However, to understand the origin of the literary movement known as Kailyard, it is important to look back on the historical precedence beyond the contemporary issues during its publication. The *Auld Licht Idylls* stories, known as the first belonging to this movement, draw inspiration from the mid-nineteenth century Victorian Scotland Barrie's mother knew. Margaret Ogilvy based her stories on childhood memories (Nash, 2007), hence why the Kailyard is intrinsically tied to a nostalgic feeling. Furthermore, the secession of the Auld Lichts from the Established Kirk in 1733 and the later disruption of the Kirk in 1843, allowed small bodies of Presbyterianism to take over the education and social etiquette of rural Scotland. This religious background transpired onto Ogilvy's tales and contributed to the resistance against industrialization, a symbol of modernity that would be rejected by the Kirk. To further comprehend this movement, I will exemplify the general marks of the Kailyard with the following extract pertaining to the first chapter of *A Window in Thrums* and explain some of the main tropes included in these kinds of stories:

Ah, that brae¹! The history of tragic little Thrums is sunk into it like the stones it swallows in the winter. We have all found the brae long and steep in the spring of life. Do you remember how the child you once were sat at the foot of it and wondered if a new world began at the top? It climbs form a shallow burn, and we used to sit on the brig a long time before venturing to climb. As boys we ran up the brae. As men and women, young and in our prime, we almost forgot that it was there. But the autumn of the life comes, and the brae grows steeper, then the winter, and once again we are as the child pausing apprehensively on the brig. Yet are we no longer the child; we look now for no new world at the top, only for a little garden of kail and potatoes, but there may be a line of daises, white and red, on each side of the narrow footpath, and honeysuckle over the door. Life is not always hard, even after backs grow bent, and we all know braes lead only to the grave. (Barrie, 1889:100)

This paragraph is preceded by the description of the brae and the house which sits up top, however, that is the physical description of the setting. In this instance, Barrie sets the tone of the novel as well. The author appeals to the passing of time through the seasons

¹ Scottish for hill or hillside.

and the cycle of life and death. He entertains the idea of youth and its imagination as a tool to create an entire new world at the top. While he describes the passing seasons, Barrie ages the child physically, unable to climb, and mentally by showing the truth of the braise; a rural functional garden seeded with food and wildflowers. At the end, the build-up is paid off by stating the futility of life, of climbing the braise as we all end in the grave. Thus, Kailyard relies on the topics of life and death, the passing of time and the idealization of the past, in this case, through the experience of a child.

Jess's rarest possession was, perhaps, the christening robe that even people at a distance came to borrow. Her mother could count up a hundred persons who had been baptized in it. Every one of the hundred, I believe is dead, and even I cannot now pick out Jess's and Hendry's grave; but I heard recently that christening robe is still in use. (Barrie, 1889:101)

In this other instance, Christianity is placed at the centre of the narrative after the presentation of the braise. The narrator previously gives a very brief explanation of the family who lives atop of the braise, to then redirect the attention towards this piece of clothing, which has survived generations and multiple families. The christening robe serves as a reminder of the power and prevalence of the Kirk in Scotland, though it is addressed subtly rather than directly. This token reminds us that the Kailyard has at its very centre the question of faith and not individual, but collective and shared. Therefore, the community is tightly bound by the authority of the Presbyterian church or Auld Lights, instead of the state. As a result, the figure of the minister or school master (who also belongs to the Presbyterian church) will be crucial as it stands as a representative of the core of the community and narratives within the Kailyard novels.

In conjunction with these themes, we find the narrator as an unreliable subject. "In each of his works of fiction Barrie's narrators are self-conscious literary artists." (Nash, 2007:62) this is noticeable by the uses of 'I' and 'we', which the latter knowingly includes the reader as an accomplice to the opinions the narrator presents. Often, Barrie will

express irony through the narration, which leans on the edge of mocking the inhabitants of Thrums. This attitude will be criticized by Geduld and other critics, not only because the characters are Scottish, but because they are also loosely based on Barrie's native town Kirriemuir.

He 'miniaturizes' its society [...] and in place of a changing social scene he writes a series of brief vignettes [...] As vignettes do, these depend on single moments of pathos or comic discomfiture, and the result is static, knowing and patronizing. (Donaldson, 1986:317)

1.1 Criticisms and accusations.

Nevertheless, after the critic J. H. Millar coined the term Kailyard in 1903, no other critics have been able to evade the negative connotations the word 'cabbage-patch' entails. The origin of the term itself stems from an Ian Maclaren's verse in *Beside the Bonnie Brier Brush* (1894) a collection of short stories, which followed the already published *Auld Licht Idylls* and *A Window in Thrums*. From those who constituted the "Kailyard School" Barrie has been the most discussed and criticised, by far, throughout the years. Both, George Blake in his *Barrie and the Kailyard School* (1951) and Harry M. Geduld in *Sir James Barrie* (1971) have been two of the harshest critics. Accusing the author of sentimentalism and anti-nationalistic Scottishness "the Kailyard version of Scottish life as a crude betrayal of the national dignity" (Blake, 1951:89) This continued slander across the twentieth century became the seed from which many would think of Kailyard as an adjective for lesser quality literature. Though Barrie found an immense amount of success in both Britain and the United States "Kailyard novels continued to be bestsellers in Britain throughout the period of 1888-1901, and, for a six year period [...] Kailyard authors ranked in the top ten annually in the American best-seller lists." (Cook, 1999:1054) For foreigners, the Kailyard narratives came to be representative of what Scotland was at the turn of the nineteenth century. However, for Scottish nationals living

abroad, it became a medium of connection to their homeland “Ces textes, [...] répondent à une attente de lecteurs exilés de leur monde rural originel” (Berton, 2010:4)

This dichotomy between the critics and the readers came to a point of contention, where the demand for narratives reporting on the living conditions in factories for the Scottish working class was unmet “La cause de la condamnation de ces romans et récits labellisés école potagère² réside dans l’absence de romans traitant le mal de vivre dans les villes industrielles.” (Berton, 2010:4) as an exchange to please the middle-class readers which “demonstrated more interest in the morally affirmative and conservative sensibilities of these national tales” (Cook, 1999:1053) Therefore, Barrie’s works forced critics to accept popular literature as legitimate, however it was still dismissed as the public opinion was considered unintelligent. By the same token, mingling personal tribulations of the author’s life provided a scapegoat for those critics, who refused to examine the texts within their contexts.

Furthermore, the success of critics not only relied on their own capricious arguments, but it was also supported by the new emerging theories on psychoanalysis created by Sigmund Freud. Indeed, the Oedipus-Complex damaged the analysis of James Barrie’s work, as his texts became prove for diagnosis, especially after the publication of the biography of his mother *Margaret Ogilvy* (1896). Critics, such as Blake and Geduld, take this theory as a crutch to justify their statements about his texts. Yet, with many other studies³ questioning the actual validity of Freud’s theories, their assertions crumble under current reviews. Moreover, with further insight provided by R.D.S. Jack in *Beyond Freud*

² Kailyard School

³ Simon, Bennett. “Is the Oedipus Complex Still the Cornerstone of Psychoanalysis? Three Obstacles to Answering the Question.” *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, vol. 39, no. 3, 1991, pp. 641–68. *Crossref*, doi:10.1177/000306519103900303.

and the Kailyard, Barrie's texts are defended through his own mastery "To assume that Barrie is a poor realist whose entire opus can be explained in terms of one rather outdated psychological tag without confronting his own claims to be deep and myriad-minded suggests Milton's "fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never comes out and sees her adversary." (*Areopagitica* 12)." (Jack, 2010:31)

It is worth noting as well, that Barrie was influenced by Freud, as he uses his popular theories of the mind to describe how the children visit the Neverland "I don't know whether you have seen a map of a person's mind. Doctors sometimes draw maps of other parts of you, and your own map can become intensely interesting" (Barrie, 1911:73) However, the authorial intent of using contemporary theories as an inspiration for the text is vastly different from seemingly acknowledging similarities between one's experiences and said theories.

1.2 New Woman and children's education in Late Victorian society.

Incidentally, the focus of this project does not only rely on the *Kailyard*, but also on the influences James Barrie received in London, after his move in 1885, and around the Llewyn-Davies family in 1897. In this section, I will briefly touch on the idea of children's education in Victorian Britain and the emergence of the New Woman, as one aims to retain tradition through teachings in childhood and the other challenges the *status quo* through feminist ideas.

The question of the New Woman appeared in the British press as early as 1880 - 1890, thus the term was finally coined in 1894. Sparking controversy in the bourgeois late-Victorian society, the articles debated the figure of women beyond their duty to be mothers and wives. Consequently, opposers of this new discussion resorted to portraying the New Woman as morally decadent, because of her tendencies towards sexual

proclivity, masculine mannerisms and over-educated in matters that had not been women's concern before. By way of defaming the New Woman, the bourgeois kept secure the practice that allowed them to stay socially relevant and economically solvent, *ergo* marriage "One of the defining features of arguments against the New Woman in the 1890's was the supposition that she posed a threat to the institution of marriage." (Ledger, 2007:153) Described as a 'journalistic phenomenon' (Ledger) many authors took upon themselves to express their thoughts about this wave of feminist claims, among them the prolific writer Margaret Oliphant, who admittedly advocated against it. In turn, she reviewed James Barrie's first works, Kailyard fiction, "Margaret Oliphant praised Barrie's early rural novels for their 'extraordinarily literal truth'" (Walton, 2015:142) which aided in his rise to fame and recognition within the London literary circles. Barrie's artistic growth coincided with the popularity of women's fiction "New Woman fiction became a central and massively popular feature of fin de siècle culture: between 1883 and 1900 over 100 novels were written about the New Woman." (Ledger, 2007:158) Hence why I contend James Barrie must have been influenced by this social movement as it not only crowded the press, but also upset his bourgeois audience, who was the main consumer of his Kailyard fiction.

As far as the changing attitudes towards adults had gone, children were still raised on traditional values. Education was both seen as a privilege and a duty, though class mattered, showing an aptitude for intellect was seen as respectable and oftentimes offered the chance for social mobility. Peculiarly, Victorian children did not start learning English literature, instead Scottish nursery rhymes were preferred for younger audiences "The fashionable late-Victorian theory that the progress from child to adult recapitulated the progress from 'primitive' to more developed cultures, was easily interpreted as indicating

that children would naturally be attracted to ‘ancient’, more ‘primitive’, literature.” (Blair, 2019:93) the quote underlyingly expresses the idea that Scottish literature may be lesser than English, as the children learn through text written by and for adults.

It is also important to be aware of the content of these texts, for them to be considered suited for children “The Scottish verse tradition is also firmly located in a misty, nostalgic, Scottish past, rather than in a sense of Scotland as a powerful contributor to Victorian Britain’s imperial. Industrial, and cultural dominance.” (Blair, 2019:93) Indeed, these features are shared with the Kailyard movement, which is underappreciated for the same reasons. Thus, even if these features are preferable for children, the negative connotations qualify this education as patronising the idea: “the nature of childhood ‘innocence’ as a dominant construction for childhood” (Vallone, 2009:179)

James Barrie, as any other author, must have been aware of the education children received, especially so after having established a friendship with the Llewyn-Davies family, who he took care of after the parents of the 5 children passed away. The family that famously inspired the tales of Peter Pan were raised as late-Victorian British men, the texts they must have read carried the following ideal “Texts that stress the importance of leading the child out of vulnerable childhood and into productive citizenship.” (Vallone, 2009:178) Consequently, the influences of the two instances presented in this segment, would be present in the *Peter and Wendy* (1911) novel; for the purpose of this project, I will analyse it based on the theoretical framework presented above.

2. *Peter and Wendy* (1911)

In this section, I will focus on the analysis of the 1911 *Peter and Wendy* novel. Through a close reading of the text, I will identify Kailyard tropes found not only in the performative roles the characters portray, but also within the treatment of those characters

by other external aspects such as the landscape, social circumstances, and expectations. It is important to clarify, that I will not draw direct parallels between character archetypes belonging to this children's tale and other Kailyard works written by Barrie. Acknowledging influences or nuanced and explicit patterns, should not interfere with the main analysis concerning the field of children's literature. For the purpose of this project, I will only address the parts of the narrative which contain and are more representative of the topics discussed in the section above. By the same token, I will also avoid the criticism of the Kailyard based on the Oedipus-complex.

2.1 Kailyard landscape.

The novel starts its story within the house of a middle-class Victorian family in the city of London. However, the most important setting is the island of Neverland, which acquires the status of an almost character because of its dynamic changes and apparent self-governance.

These are probably roads in the island; for the Neverland is always more or less an island, with astonishing splashes of colour here and there, and coral reefs and rakish-looking craft in the offing, and savages and lonely lairs, and gnomes who are mostly tailors, and caves through which a river runs [...] and a hut fast going to decay (Barrie, 1911:73)

As first described by the narrator, the island is presented as an imaginary territory full of clusters of adventures. Though the Neverland embodies and contains the desires of children who visit it in their minds upon going to sleep, its physical presence will later encompass not only their desires, but also the perils of adventure because of the nature of constant movement in the island.

Access to the Neverland relies on the imagination of the children, which analogous to that concept is the idea of the escapism present in the Kailyard fiction. Escapism in the Scottish tales is reflected in a sense of community, a sheltered life within the structure of a Christian family and the idealisation of a rural landscape. Nonetheless,

escapism for the children is not about fleeing the industrialization to ruralness. The imagination of the children allows the escapist fantasy of a land where there is no parental authority and the desires for freedom are fulfilled. The characters motives in the novel (Wendy and her brothers) are completely different from their Kailyard counterparts, but they end up being wrapped in the same settings, as the landscape of the island is heavily influenced by the same escapism seen in Kailyard. Though, it is not necessary for the characters to fully envision and embody what Scottish movement portrays.

Furthermore, the first description of the brae in *A Window in Thrums* (see page 8) has some parallelisms regarding the perception of the Neverland. The child at the bottom of the brae is excited to see top, where there is supposedly a world of possibilities, however as adults, they become aware that at the top there is just a rural space with little to no imagination, as the adults already expect the mediocre setting. This scene is parallel to the top of the brae being Neverland for the Darling children and the adults barely reaching said top through their memories:

Her mother had been questioning her. [Wendy]

‘But who is he, my pet?’

‘He is Peter Pan, you know, mother.’

At first Mrs Darling did not know, but after thinking back into her childhood she just remembered a Peter Pan who was said to live with the fairies. (Barrie, 1911:75)

In contrast, the island comes alive when it senses the presence of a child “Feeling that Peter was on his way back, the Neverland had again woke into life” (Barrie, 1911:112) Yet, by the end of the novel, we see a repeating pattern as Wendy becomes a mother, that to be able to reach Neverland (top of the brae in terms of imagination) one must be a child, as Wendy’s daughter expresses:

‘If only I could go with you,’ Wendy sighed.

‘You see you can’t fly,’ said Jane. (Barrie, 1911:225)

Peter and Wendy toys with the idea of the Neverland and its rules quite often, however London is not really shown other than through the Darling family. As criticised in the Kailyard “Le plus grand reproche fait aux textes de «l’école potagère» est qu’ils se limitent à l’Ecosse rurale et que l’Ecosse urbaine avec ses drames est occultée.” (Berton, 2010:5) the industrialized Dickensian city is hidden by putting up front the idealized version of the landscapes. In turn, the glimpses of late-Victorian society are only seen in the character’s expectations, as well as Kailyard performances.

2.2 Peter Pan, community, and censorship.

Part of my thesis statement contends that the inhabitants of the Neverland share resemblance to aspects of Kailyard tropes. In this subsection I will analyse the figure of Peter, Wendy and the Lost Boys, which includes Wendy’s brothers, John and Michael. In essence, Peter Pan is a child that challenges the ideal of a Victorian childhood, as Barrie expresses in the last line of the novel “so long as children are gay and innocent and heartless” (Barrie, 1911:226) Though, this affirmation suggest a changing view from the naiveté of Victorian childhood to an Edwardian victimized perspective, Peter still encapsulates some attitudes that can be drawn back to the Kailyard, since Barrie works with “liminal spaces between childhood and adulthood, and fantasy and reality[...] portray imaginative and political relationships between Scotland and England.” (Hansen, 2019:282) Peter’s power stems from his capacity to master his imagination, which then spews in the real world, unlike the other children, he moulds the reality to his own idealisation. His leadership is also in a way tyrannical, the Lost Boys fear his ‘justice’ and obey any of his orders without questioning. For instance, Tinkerbell lies to the boys and tells them that Peter orders to shoot Wendy as she flies into Neverland:

Tink’s reply rang out: ‘Peter wants you to shoot the Wendy.’

It was not in their nature to question when Peter ordered.

‘Let us do what Peter wishes,’ cried the simple boys. ‘Quick, bows and arrows.’
(Barrie, 1911:122)

Inherent to any leadership, there is a set of rules and consequences for it to stay in place, for the Lost Boys growing up is the ultimate sin. Becoming an adult, represents leaving Neverland, its status and significance. At the cost of forgetting about the island and selling it to themselves as a childhood fantasy. This betrayal resembles the criticisms James Barrie received for leaving Kirriemuir in search of jobs in the big city, much like many rural men who left their villages in Scotland to work at factories placed, for instance, in Glasgow. Neverland becomes the equivalent for the rural area and growing up evolves into the acceptance of industrialization, modernity, hence moving on from past traditions to create future ones.

Faced with this possibility, Peter shrewdly invents ways to keep his control over the boys and their impending growth. For instance, as mentioned in the preceding section, the children must fit into the tree trunks to go inside the home, not only that, but “Peter measures you for your tree as carefully as for a suit of clothes” (Barrie, 1911:133) Whenever the boys do no longer fit inside the trunk Peter disposes of them “The boys on the island vary, according in numbers, of course, as they get killed [...] when they seem to be growing up, which is against the rules, Peter thins them out;” (Barrie, 1911:112)

Admittedly, killing the boys who break the rules can be translated into being forced away from the community. The other place to go is back to London, where growing up is encouraged, as one becomes a Victorian middle-class citizen. This theme ties to the last chapter of the *Auld Licht Idylls* ‘A Literary Club’, where the minister bans a literature club which “talks openly of Shakespeare” (Barrie, 1889:90) In the story there is a ‘fond admiration for the members scrappy intellectualism’ (Hansen, 2019:287) that becomes squashed by the minister and punishes the intellectual growth the people crave. Furthermore, Tammis, a member of the club, hides a Shakespeare book from his wife

before being discovered, then the minister “landed Tammas in the Auld Licht kirk before the year was out [...] Christy buried Shakespeare in the yard.” (Barrie, 1889:90)

In hindsight, the censure experienced by Tammas resembles a lot the attitudes Peter has with the boys, denying physical and mental growth keeps them within the ‘Neverland Kirk’. Most importantly, the concept they are both denied are British values, as the boys are not allowed to return to London and Shakespeare represents a big part of the core cultural texts that form British identity. Thus, I would argue *Peter and Wendy* portrays similar attitudes found in the Kailyard novel, as the figures of leadership within the communities suppress any progress that threatens the *status quo* previously established by the same ones leading.

2.3 Wendy and Kailyard motherhood.

Consequently, the Darling siblings challenge the existing hierarchy and codes in the Neverland. Unlike the Lost Boys, they have not forgotten their parents nor their British Victorian upbringing. In turn, it affects the dynamics between Wendy, Peter, and the rest of the characters. This subsection will focus on Wendy, her influence, and the roles she performs within the story.

Wendy reaches the island at a liminal age, where she starts to shed her childish behaviours and evolves into a young teenager. This ambivalence gives way to a conflict of desires and predisposed learnt attitudes, which is then translated into the performative role she is given within the community of the Lost Boys. At the beginning of the novel, we see Mr. and Mrs. Darling recalling their children playing in the nursery, Wendy and her brothers were recreating their birth, while roleplaying parental figures as a form of play:

She had found her two older children playing at being herself and father on the occasion of Wendy’s birth, and John was saying:
‘I am happy to inform you, Mrs Darling, that you are now a mother,’ in just such a tone as Mr. Darling himself may have used on the real occasion.

Wendy had danced with joy, just as the real Mrs Darling must have done. (Barrie, 1911:80)

At home, she already showcases a predisposition for motherhood by emulating her own mother. As argued by Rodney M.D. Fierce, Mrs. Darling acts as a colonizer that institutes Englishness within her children “but particularly for Wendy whom she fashions as a perfect mimesis of English domesticity.” (Fierce, 2019:211) This article explores the power dynamics between Wendy, as the colonizer through English domesticity and Peter, as ‘the indigenous Other’. However, I contend that the attitudes Wendy utilizes to exert her power belong to the idea of motherhood seen in Kailyard, while Peter’s expectation of her as mother deconstruct her ideal of an English family.

Motherhood within the Kailyard novels is tied to the notion of the woman at home and the education of the children “a mother knee is described as a ‘desk for [a son’s] instruction” (Walton, 2015:143) Mothers are in control of the space that surrounds and guides their sons, yet their means of living are frugal, as dictated by the religious Auld Licht for instance, in *A Window in Thrums*. Households in Kailyard settings are fairly rural and earn a modest pay. Thus, it encourages women (the ones not ‘working’) to be skilful and resourceful. This attitude is deeply tied to the care of children “modest home comforts are equated with the nurturing endurance of human relationships.” (Walton, 2015:144) Mirroring this situation, we find the Darling family in *Peter and Wendy* struggling to manage finances to keep their children.

[Mr. Darling] sat on the edge of Mrs. Darling’s bed, holding her hand and calculating expenses, while she looked at him imploringly.[...] of course, they had a nurse. As they were poor, owing to the amount of milk the children drank, this nurse was a prim Newfoundland dog, called Nana. (Barrie, 1911:70-71)

The parents may not obey the frugality of the Kirk, but instead they answer to the Victorian societal expectations, hence why their resourcefulness takes form in the presence of Nana. Alas, this aspect belongs to the Kailyard household, rather than

English. Furthermore, Mrs. Darling constitutes the role model from which Wendy takes after, therefore the concept of frugality is repeated in Neverland as well:

Wendy's favourite time for sewing and darning was after they had all gone to sleep. Then as she expressed it, she had a breathing time for herself; and she occupied it in making new things for them, and putting double pieces on the knees (Barrie, 1911:135)

By keeping a tidy house and creating a comforting nurturing space for the children, it allows Wendy to then transform them into 'dutiful British subjects' (Fierce) as Mrs. Darling does back in England with her own family. For instance, to keep her brother from forgetting their parents (or more likely their British Victorian roots) she asks them questions each night about the colour of their eyes or hair and encourages the Lost Boys to remember their families as well. However, Peter Pan resists Wendy's intention, while he does play along as the figure of the father, he only sees it as a play. Thus, when Wendy asks him, what feelings does he harbour towards her, Peter breaks the construction of the family she has created.

'Peter' she asked, trying to speak firmly, 'What are your exact thoughts for me?'
'Those of a devoted son, Wendy.' (Barrie, 1911:162)

In this dialogue, Peter reveals his true feelings about seeing himself as a son rather than a father, not only breaking Wendy's fantasy but also showcasing the expectations he had for her as a mother. The devotion he expresses is very much present in the relationship between mothers and sons in the Kailyard, where the mother must put education as a top priority so her son can leave the home and have a chance in society. In turn, the son "must work hard, achieve success, maintain allegiance to his home and Protestant upbringing, and seek fulfilment in an ultimate return to the mother. [...] 'ecstasy' is achieved through the emotional and physical unity of embrace with the delighted mother." (Walton, 2015:143) For this to happen, Wendy cannot continue to try and transform Peter into an English man, as it would confine him within a society that values etiquette more than

giving him tools to grow and fly away from home, have his adventures, and come back to the comfort of a mother. However, Wendy cannot surrender her idea of motherhood, as she only knows the ways of Mrs. Darling and she decides to leave Neverland with the Lost Boys, whom she can turn into English men.

The tragic separation of the two characters is grander than one thinks, Peter's nature does not allow him to really grow up, thus he comes back to Wendy's home to take her daughter "“He does so need a mother,’ Jane said” (Barrie, 1911:225) and repeats the circle generationally taking Margaret after, Wendy's granddaughter. Moreover, there is a repeating pattern to this scene, Mrs. Darling spends the nights waiting by the window, and so does Wendy and later will Jane. Much like Jess in *A Window in Thrums*, a disabled woman, who sits by the window waiting for her son to come back. Conclusive to this section, Peter repeats the same pattern of a devoted son coming to the window of his mother, like the Kailyard characters have done before him.

Jess's window was a beacon by night to travellers in the dark, and it will be so in the future when there are none to remember Jess. There are many such windows still, with loving faces behind them. From them we watch for the friends and relatives who are coming back, and some, alas! watch in vain. (Barrie, 1889:102)

2.4 The Angel in the House and the moral decay of Captain Hook.

James Barrie's themes in his novels touch on the value of tradition and the role of its characters in it. Still, the circulation of New Woman fiction at the time of Barrie's writing was extremely popular, well-known, and feared by the middle-class bourgeois. What would be called the *fin de siècle* era, involved a decay in morality that is personified by the figure of the pirate in *Peter and Wendy*. In this last section, I contend Captain Hook challenges the construct of the Victorian woman by offering attitudes corresponding to the moral decay.

During her stay in Neverland, Wendy spends a great part of her time taking care of the home, cooking, cleaning and caring after the boys “Really there were whole weeks when, except perhaps with a stocking in the evening, she was never above ground” (Barrie, 1911:135) On her first day in the Neverland, the boys build a house around her to protect her after being shot by Tootles, one of the Lost Boys, and before that Wendy had been spending her time at home in London. This behaviour was rewarded as an English mother and by the Kailyard community as well, as the Free Kirk led and encouraged women to take care of the home as a token for the education of their children. In this private space, the woman holds power and Wendy can wield her previously mentioned colonization, as Peter controls the exterior. Nevertheless, the pirates also have control over the exterior and shortly after her arrival is known, Wendy’s role becomes coveted “‘Captain,’ said Smee ‘could we not kidnap these boy’s mother and make her our mother?’” (Barrie, 1911:146) Upon hearing this during an encounter with the pirates, Wendy shouts that she would never be their mother.

The pirates are not only despicable because of their nature on the island, but because their captain is a fallen Eton man. Eton college was founded in 1440 as the “The King's College of Our Lady of Eton besides Wyndsor” and so the school obeys the English monarchy. Captain Hook, finds himself troubled because of his past and current nature:

But above all he retained the passion for good form. Good form! However much he may have degenerated, he still knew that this is all that matters. (Barrie, 1911:188)

Captain Hook is aware of his own moral decay, as much as anyone who surrounds him, and once he has kidnapped Wendy and offers her the position of a mother aboard the *Jolly Roger* ship, she again denies him. However, the type of motherhood they are offering her is very different from the one she conceives. Inside the ship, she would no

longer have a home to be confined in, she would instead be joining a crew with, again, decayed morals. The definition of the Angel in the House *per se* is having a home to attend to. The freedom that she is offered is the one the New Woman claims for herself, even if it is considered in an immoral environment. Furthermore, Smee (Captain Hook's right hand) offers Wendy to be his mother in exchange for saving her, to which she claims: "I would almost rather have no children at all,' she said disdainfully" (Barrie, 1911:193) This statement is shared by the New Woman too in a positive sense, yet in this instance, it stands for the idea that no children should be existing in a space where tradition has collapsed. Thus, Wendy chooses to stay within the construct of motherhood created by Victorian values.

3. Conclusion

Scotland has become the inspiration for many authors past and present, native to the land or not. James Matthew Barrie was no different when he established the Kailyard movement, taking not only inspiration from the land but from the community as well. Deeply shaped by the secession of the Kirk, Auld Licht values have survived in the form of anecdotal fiction, which at the time of this publication were very well received by the masses of English middle-class Victorians. However, criticisms diminished the movement to a sentimental and antinationalistic current, gatekeeping the influences the Kailyard has had on following novels and attitudes. Shortly after, Barrie was tagged as a children's literature author due to the success of the stories involving Peter Pan, and then he was buried under an Oedipus-complex, which took away his credibility as a talented author.

As the thesis of this paper suggests, Barrie has consequently been divided into two identities, a Scottish writer and an English playwright. This idea fails to acknowledge that

as a father of a new movement, the Kailyard, there would be a presence of these elements in his later texts. To prove this, I have analysed some of the key elements in the novelised story of *Peter and Wendy* which are related to the Kailyard. Such as the treatment of the landscape and geography as means to separate the adult and the child within the narrative. This is both present in the brae in *A Window in Thrums* and in the intangible state of Neverland for the ones who have lost imagination. The importance of the community and the censorship kept in order to preserve tradition is also mirrored in Peter's drastic measures and the burial of English tokens in the Kailyard. Most importantly, the performative role that is motherhood in the novel is deeply entrenched into the notion of motherhood in Kailyard as well, this is both performed by Wendy and Mrs. Darling. Yet, the use of this conception for the creation of 'English subjects' fails to grapple with ideals of Peter. Similarly happens with the moral decay of Captain Hook, as his offering of New Woman perspectives is alternately rejected by Wendy in hopes of retaining Victorian tradition.

Finally, I would suggest that this project has successfully found a direct link between Barrie's texts, deemed as belonging to different branches of study, Scottish and children's literature. This dissertation has then proved that there is no disconnection between the author's identities, therefore I would propose that the existence of the Scottish writer and English playwright has never been justified. This project's ambition hopes to inspire a revision of Barrie's *opus* through a critical lens that does not rely on belittling a legitimate movement, psychological misconceptions, or separations of his persona. Further studies may also include comparing texts across his drama and prose in search of interchangeable tropes, as means to further reckon that the full scope of James M. Barrie fiction stems from a single individual.

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